

Organisations speak on the
Freedom Charter
see centre

International campaigns
against apartheid -
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After a long silence
Saspu National is
back again. We
won our appeal
against an
effective
Publications
Control Board ban.
But like the rest of
the media, we are
still restricted
under emergency
regulations.

LIBERAL SOCIETY
1987-12-15

SASPU



NATIONAL

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Govan Mbeki addresses a Johannesburg press conference, on the right is UDF co-president Albertina Sisulu and Winnie Mandela. Mbeki has been met with an overwhelming response inside and outside the country

YEARS OF campaigning for the release of political prisoners saw a great moment when Govan Mbeki stood unbowed and free in a Port Elizabeth press conference.

"The ideas for which I went to jail in 1964 and for which the ANC stands, I still embrace.

"I am still a member of the Communist Party and I still embrace Marxist views", he declared.

His declaration emphasised why for many years he has been seen as an embodiment of the alliance between the ANC and the SACP.

Mbeki, a former secretary of the Umkhonto we Sizwe High Command and South African Communist Party (SACP) central committee member, and national chairman of the African National Congress at the time of its banning, has been met with an overwhelming response from progressive organisations and ordinary people throughout the country.

South Africans inside and outside the country were joined by many foreign governments and organisations in different parts of the world in welcoming Mbeki home.

But the demand for the release of other political prisoners and detainees, the unbanning of the ANC, the return of exiles and the lifting of the state of emergency reverberated amidst the joy of Mbeki's return.

The ANC welcomed Mbeki's release as a victory for its campaign to free all South African political prisoners and pledged to intensify the campaign.

The ANC also demanded of the government that Mbeki be allowed to "speak to the people". Mbeki was "listed" immediately after the PE press conference and he therefore cannot be quoted in SA.

The organisation said Mbeki had emerged from 23 years in jail on Robben Island "unbowed and unbroken and a legend" in the minds of many South Africans.

"Even as we receive him with joy and renewed determination, we remain acutely aware that his release in a real sense also means a change of address from the confines of Robben Island into the prison house of South Africa," the ANC added.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) has hailed Mbeki's release as "a great gain for the working class struggle in our country".

"We believe that among the many factors which contributed to our comrade's release, the mass struggle of workers and youth over the past two years has been the most decisive," said a Cosatu statement.

"Comrade Mbeki has struggled, and suffered, all his adult life for the cause of socialism - which millions of workers now see as the only solution to the poverty and hardship caused by the bosses' profit system. Workers throughout the country are looking to Comrade Mbeki to strengthen us and guide us and lead us in the struggle for a workers' future.

"Comrade Govan Mbeki is our leader - a leader of the working class and for the working class. Comrade Mbeki - through our organisation

Cosatu and through our struggle we will be doing all we can to help you to help us to make our common vision of a society free from all exploitation a reality in our country.

"For Cosatu the special significance of Comrade Mbeki's release is that the ANC and SACP, which are major factors to the resolution of our country's problems and which we want to see unbanned and able to operate freely, are now openly part of the internal political process through Comrade Mbeki."

The statement concluded by calling for the release of all political prisoners and detainees, the unbanning of all banned organisations and the lifting of the State of Emergency.

UDF President Albertina Sisulu said in a statement: "The UDF is elated at the release of its patron and one of the giants of our struggle, Comrade Govan Mbeki. For the oppressed and exploited of this country and indeed all democratically minded South Africans, this is a most important day and moment of our history.

"Following his release, we expect and hope that Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners and detainees would be released as soon as possible. Our joy is, however, tempered by the fact that Comrade Mbeki remains listed."

"Furthermore, South Africa is in the grips of its harshest State of Emergency with the entire leadership of the UDF in prison or trying to evade arrest. This was the climate in 1963 when the Rivonia Trialists were arrested - a climate which Comrade Mbeki finds once again."

"The UDF calls on all South Africans to treat the release of Comrade Mbeki with the dignity that this occasion demands. Let us build and consolidate the unity that has characterised our struggle against apartheid and exploitation for the past few years," concluded the statement.

The Release Mandela Campaign welcomed Mbeki's release but said, "We reject Pretoria's innuendo that comrade Mbeki's release should be treated as a "test case" before the release of other political prisoners.

"We believe that the continued imprisonment of our leaders, the continued banning of the African National Congress, and putting into exile the most important participants in the resolution of the current logjam in our country - are the tests which Pretoria has to pass if it is sincerely committed to change", they said.

"If the South African government desires a negotiated settlement, then as they are the sole problem party that caused apartheid, the ball is in their court. By delaying the release of all our leaders, Pretoria is in fact prolonging the ongoing violence and political instability that have become the order of the day in whole country. The people of South Africa say: Abandon all your fears and act now". There have been constant rumours and speculation about the significance of Mbeki's release. Some have seen it as a step towards negotiations or finding a solution for South Africa's problems. Mbeki rejected this. "A solution is not found with one man. Many people are involved".

BACK TO A BIGGER ISLAND

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Supplement
on the
Freedom Charter

Adopted in 1955 at the Congress of the People in Kliptown the Freedom Charter is the only document that represents the ideals and aspirations of all South Africa's people.

Today the Charter is taking its rightful place among the people and

numerous organisations have adopted it as their guiding document in the struggle for a non-racial and democratic SA.

In this supplement, the UDF, Co-satu, Sayco, the NUM, Fawu and the RMC speak about the Charter in the past, present and future.

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN



UDF AND COSATU UNITE

COSATU and UDF have accused the police of trying to torpedo peace talks in the violence-torn Pietermaritzburg townships.

Efforts to settle the conflict between Inkatha 'warlords' and UDF and Cosatu supporters have been repeatedly interrupted with the detention and restriction of at least 33 key UDF and Cosatu negotiators.

In the battle, which has claimed at least 170 lives, the police has clearly chosen sides. While 280 UDF/Cosatu supporters are in detention, the UDF says: "Not a single Inkatha member has to our knowledge been detained - despite the fact that there is strong evidence to show that some Inkatha members are centrally involved in the perpetration of township violence."

"This police action has seriously jeopardised the peace process," says Cosatu. "Instead of taking action against those about whom there is documented evidence of violence and criminal action, it seems they are detaining those who are involved from our side in the peace talks."

Supporters of the KwaNatal Indaba, particularly the commercial media and business, stand accused of a 'conspiracy of silence' about Inkatha violence.

Once again the peace talks are under way. But, warns Cosatu, safeguards need to be built in to guarantee the talks' success in building a lasting peace. These include:

- all parties publicly condemning the Pietermaritzburg violence;
- forced recruitment must be condemned and all parties publicly endorse the principles of freedom of association and expression;
- the main perpetrators of organised violence, the warlords, must be arrested and prosecuted.

The latest peace efforts come in the wake of months of uncontrollable political violence.

The past few months have seen a dramatic escalation in this violence. Official figures stand at 52 deaths in the past month.

But the UDF says many incidents have not been reported and believes the death toll is much higher.

UDF and Cosatu say there is no doubt that Inkatha members are centrally involved in the township violence and that it is also evident that "a lot of the violence is designed to directly benefit Inkatha - particularly the attempt to force people to join the organisation".

There have been several successful court interdicts recently by Cosatu/UDF preventing the 'warlords' from using violence. They have also attempted to inform



An Edenvale resident speaks at a meeting to discuss the violence

and motivate the public to intervene to halt the intensifying violence.

A joint UDF/Cosatu memorandum says: "Inkatha-supporting vigilantes are responsible for literally a 'reign of terror' in the townships. Their victims are not just Cosatu and UDF members, but a substantial number of people not linked to any political or trade union organisation."

The memorandum says recently there has been a backlash from the community against the vigilantes and admits Cosatu and UDF sympathisers and other members of the community fought back physically in self-defence against Inkatha members.

"But it is beyond doubt that the main perpetrators of the violence are Inkatha-supporting vigilantes and that they are responsible for the escalation of violence since August 1985", the memorandum added.

Independent legal research conducted last month alleged that Inkatha vigilante violence had dramatically increased in the last six months.

• During the first eight months of 1987, approximately 75 deaths were attributed to Inkatha vigilante violence.

• In September, there were approximately 25 deaths as a result of Inkatha attacks.

• In the first two weeks of October, at least 15 residents of Maritzburg townships died in Inkatha attacks.

The lawyers continue: "There is, without question, violence perpetrated against Inkatha in the area. However, our information revealed that in the substantial majority of these incidents non-Inkatha members were retaliating and not launching 'first strikes'."

"In addition, we observed that Inkatha members were, on many occasions armed with firearms, in

contrast to non-Inkatha members who, with few exceptions, did not have access to such weapons."

Cosatu and UDF say it has been very difficult to bring this information to light. Many people fear for their lives if they are found exposing the vigilantes.

In addition, the state of emergency regulations restrict what can be published: "Police permission often has to be sought for the publication of information on the violence. The police are not providing the press with adequate information. The police subsume some of the vigilante attacks under the general crime rate statistics, instead of recording them for what they are."

Cosatu and UDF also accuse the press of not reporting adequately on what is happening.

"Most of the newspapers have committed themselves fully to the Indaba and that might make them less inclined to expose the role of Inkatha supporters in the violence; there is also the threat of legal action by Inkatha; and finally there have allegedly been cases of reporters being intimidated by vigilantes in the townships, if they do not present a certain kind of picture."

A major problem is the difficulty identifying the killers. "They wear balaclavas. They are active at night. They are sometimes total strangers not known to be living in the areas in which they commit their crimes. Only the bodies of the victims are found. There is no trace of who the killers are."

Attacks on members of progressive organisations

The Cosatu/UDF document notes that "the violence usually follows the setting up of progressive structures or the launching of campaigns by



Gladys Sengweni in the remains of what was once her home. She lost her husband, daughter and home in alleged Inkatha vigilante attacks.

progressive organisations. The aim is clear: it is to prevent the growth of these organisations. It is to stamp out all non-Inkatha political activity."

The lawyer's research concluded that the violence is characteristically directed at Cosatu members and "so-called comrades for their support for, allegiance to or affiliation with the UDF."

Countless examples suggest that this is the trend in the violence:

• After the launch of the Imbali Civic Association in mid-1985, the chairperson's house was burnt by vigilantes;

• During last year's 'Christmas Against the Emergency', called by Cosatu, UDF and the SACC, people in PMB were asked to switch off their lights for an hour on the night of December 16. Vigilantes stoned

houses that had switched their lights off and tried to force people to switch them on again.

• During the stayaway against the white elections on May 5 and 6, vigilantes attacked bus drivers, blaming them for the success of the stayaway. The drivers are members of the Cosatu-affiliated Transport and General Workers Union.

• During a meeting to launch the Sweetwaters Youth Organisation (SYO) on May 5, those attending the meeting were attacked by Inkatha Youth Brigade members. SYO members fled into the mountains. When they returned, they were shot at from a combi, owned by an Uwusa member. A newly elected SYO committee member died from bullet and stab wounds.

Years that made a people's hero

GOVAN Mbeki, born in 1910 in the Transkei, is as old as the Union of South Africa. Throughout his life he has fought the laws entrenched in the South African Act of 1910 which granted political rights only to the white minority.

His family lost their land under the 1913 Land Act, and friends were forced to go to the towns to earn wages to survive.

His first contact with organised politics was through his cousin Robert who belonged to the first African trade union, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union. Seeing the ICU present the bosses with united worker demands and action made a great impression on young Govan.

Mbeki's first contact with Marxism was in matric in 1933, when he came into contact with Communist Party member Eddie Roux.

The plight of the oppressed and exploited masses coupled with exposure to Marxist political thought had a powerful impact.

Driven by the desire to see change Mbeki joined the ANC in 1935 and participated in the activities opposing the "Hertzog Bills".

He obtained his B.A in 1937 and completed a Diploma in Education.

After being dismissed from teaching for his political views, Mbeki turned to journalism and edited the Territorial Magazine from 1938 to 1944, using it as a forum to express his views.

Together with Tambo, Mandela and Lembede, Mbeki was prominent in the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944.

Mbeki and other militant youth helped change the ANC into a more mass based organisation believing in mass action rather than appeals and petitions to force the government to change. By 1949 the Youth League's 'Programme of Action' was adopted by the ANC. Massive anti-government protests and boycotts began with the 1952 Defiance Campaign.

Mbeki became one of the most

Govan Mbeki speaks at Johannesburg press conference.



Singing and chanting at Cosatu's July congress where the Charter was adopted

WORKERS BACK FC

THE MASSIVE Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) - representing over 700,000 workers - adopted the Freedom Charter at its July Congress this year as part of its political policy resolution.

"The Congress of the People was representative of all the patriotic forces in our country," said the resolution.

"The Congress adopted a programme of minimum demands which became known as the Freedom Charter: today a rallying point and which enjoys mass support among our people."

"The Charter encompasses the minimum demands of the democratic majority which lay the basis for the building of a non-exploitative society."

The congress resolution said the Charter is "a guiding document which reflects the views and aspirations of the majority of the oppressed and exploited in our struggle against national oppression and economic exploitation."

Cosatu resolved to "develop and strengthen amongst all workers a coherent working class understanding of the demands of the FC and encourage the fullest discussion on socialism and democracy within our structures and amongst all progressive and democratic forces."

Cosatu leaders say Cosatu adopted the Charter "because our workers, together with the vast majority of people in South Africa, support the Charter's demands and identify with the democratic way in which the Charter was drawn up."

"The demands of the Charter are minimum worker demands. Workers want what we see in the Charter. For example, we want the monopolies, banks and mines to be nationalised under our control and we want to govern our country," says Cosatu.

"We want to abolish all apartheid laws, the right to meet and speak, jobs for all, a Living Wage, a 40 hour week, decent housing, free medical care and so on."

"These things are not new things. They are things we have been fighting for for a long time. The main question for us is: what do the demands of the Charter mean to us as workers and how are we going to win them?"

On the question of how the FC relates to the attainment of Socialism, Cosatu says: "The demands of the Charter are completely relevant to our



ongoing struggle for Socialism. No capitalist country in the world - even the social democratic countries - has been able to guarantee to its people all the demands that are in the Charter.

"It's likely therefore that only a socialist government and system will be able to fully implement the demands of the Charter, on the road to the complete socialisation of production and distribution in South Africa."

Only through the leadership of the working class could the Charter's goals be reached: "What we will be stressing - and this is the link between the Charter and our struggle for socialism - is that only under the leadership of the working class can the demands of the Charter really be won and socialism achieved."

For this reason it is vital to link the Charter demands to working class struggle, says Cosatu. "The FC is a dynamic and living document, whose demands are given shape through the struggles waged on the ground."

"So we see the FC demand around housing coming alive in the Num's struggle to bring the migrant worker hostels under the control of democratically elected worker committees, and in the rent struggles of our members in the townships. Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign calls for family housing near places of work."

Through events like the Cosatu cultural day, the demand that "the doors of learning and culture shall be opened" are being translated into reality, says Cosatu. "In the struggle to build working class culture, we are throwing off the chains of



General secretary Jay Naidoo lifted shoulder-high after the congress

ideological bondage, and implementing the demand."

"Our Living Wage Campaign is another concrete struggle linked to the demand 'the people shall share in the country's wealth.' The campaign highlights the fact that the current economic order does not meet the needs of the majority of people."

"Cosatu is committed to ridding South Africa of national oppression and to building democracy - so that 'the people shall govern'. We understand this clause in terms of the fight to build a democratic society which gives us control over our lives at the school, community and factory level. We further believe that the majority of the people are workers, and that working class interests should be paramount in the new society."

"The demands of the Charter are political demands. They are also working class demands. They are demands that must be won as part of the total emancipation of our society."

The Charter linked directly to Cosatu's political role. "Cosatu's congress has once again seen the federation address itself directly to the political and economic crisis facing the country - we have set out more clearly our political position:

which sees no retreat from our forefront role in the struggle against oppression and exploitation."

Cosatu's political stance has been widely welcomed, but the federation has faced criticism from some circles.

"Since our Congress there have been those who have spoken out against our adoption of the FC which they claim is 'divisive,'" said Cosatu leaders. "Cosatu has heard this position often before. In fact, on almost every occasion when the political way forward for Cosatu has been discussed, this concern has been put forward."

"But at the end of the day this has always been an extreme minority view. It has never received much support from workers. The overwhelming majority in Cosatu's ranks - and this includes our affiliates - have opted for the FC as a political weapon in the struggle for National Liberation and Socialism."

"This is the way democracy works in Cosatu. We discuss an issue, we hear what everybody has to say and then we decide. The majority position becomes the position of the organisation. The minority positions still exist."

Cosatu stressed that "They still have a right to argue their case and be heard in our structures - but they also have a duty to respect the position of

the majority - to be loyal to it and to build it inside and outside of our ranks. This is the true meaning of democracy."

"Cosatu's resolution recognises that the FC was drawn up by the patriotic forces in our country in 1955. It was not drawn up by a cosy club of intellectuals but by thousands of volunteers and activists on the ground collecting the views and demands of the majority of oppressed and exploited for a non-racial and democratic South Africa."

They explained why the Charter still has such relevance. "These demands still today reflect the vision of millions of workers, youth and unemployed in South Africa. Till this day the FC still is the most representative and democratic document reflecting the minimum demands of the people."

"Successive Apartheid governments have tried to bury the Charter - but it has proved resilient and is today surfacing powerfully in the consciousness of the democratic movement."

"There are those who take the FC as a bible - something to bow to; there are others who have a fanatical hatred of the Charter; and there are those who are the mainstream of the democratic movement, like ourselves, who see it as a potent weapon of struggle."

"One of the favourite criticisms from some quarters is that the FC does not address the needs and demands of workers. Cosatu rejects this emphatically. We believe that political and democratic rights are crucial working class demands."

The Charter is important in informing the way Cosatu relates to other organisations says Cosatu. "Cosatu believes that as a trade union we cannot effectively enter the terrain of political struggle without defining how we relate to other democratic forces and militant sectors who have historically been in the frontline of the struggle to end oppression and exploitation."

"This is why Cosatu has turned to the FC and declared that the best alliances for the working class are those with 'non-racial democratic organisations with a proven record of struggle and who subscribe to a programme that has the support of the workers.' As an organisation we remain independent although committed to co-operation and joint struggle with our democratic allies."

"A political weapon in the struggle for national liberation and socialism."

AGAINST NATAL WARLORDS



Edenvale residents meet to discuss defence against Inkatha supporting vigilantes.

©A pamphlet issued in the name of Inkatha last year called on all UDF members in Imbali and Dambuza Road to leave the areas.

Cosatu and UDF say that the vigilantes consider certain areas to be "our territory." They try to exert complete control over the area. "Once the vigilantes have claimed a territory as 'theirs' they do not tolerate the presence of any organisation or individual that is not part of them."

Both the Cosatu/UDF and lawyers documents describe a trend towards what have been called "warlords". Cosatu and UDF say "Certain key figures can be identified with much of the violence in each area. These are people known to be Inkatha members and officials. They expect total obedience to them and their organisation."

A national pattern

UDF and Cosatu point out that the violence fits into a national pattern. "It is clear that the violence in the townships of PMB is not random. It represents a systematic campaign of destabilisation of progressive organisations. It is also the result of a major forced recruitment drive into Inkatha of entire communities in certain areas."

"The vigilante phenomenon in the

townships of PMB also fits into a broader regional and national pattern. Is it simply a coincidence that the first vigilante attacks in PMB occurred in August 1985 at the time that vigilante attacks in other parts of the country were stepped up and the first state of emergency was being put into operation?

"Is it simply a coincidence that the vigilante attacks in PMB tailed off during the first few months of the second state of emergency - and at a time when vigilante attacks nationally were in a state of lull?"

"We find it difficult to believe that it was simply coincidental. This together with the alleged inaction of the police in relation to vigilante violence makes us believe that what our organisations and members have experienced locally is simply part of the broader attempts of the state and conservative forces to crush progressive organisations."

Police complicity

Organisations have also pointed to direct and indirect support of certain policemen for the vigilantes. Residents have persistently complained that police do not act against the vigilantes even when they are identified as being responsible for the attacks. Lawyers have collected affidavits supporting these claims.

The police are also accused of refusing to intervene or provide protection for residents against vigilante attacks. In some cases, say the UDF and Cosatu, the police "have been identified by residents to have actually participated in the attacks together with the vigilantes."

©It has been alleged in recent court documents filed in the PMB Supreme Court that in or about June 1987, in Slangspuit, Themba Kunene's house and tuckshop were attacked. Inkatha leader Zuma and others were named as the assailants. It was claimed that though the events had transpired over three months ago, and notwithstanding that full reports had been made to the police naming those responsible, no action had been taken thus far.

©In another Slangspuit incident, the report of which was set forth in the legal action, it was alleged that Sergeant Nene of the Plessislaer Police station, refused to take a statement from the victim, Mrs Makhosazana Hadebe, and advised the complainant that her best course was to join Inkatha.

©In the Harewood area there is concrete evidence linking Sichizo Zuma to unlawful activities, yet police have held him and then released him shortly thereafter.

©In a number of instances the police were called while an attack was in progress, but they either did not

arrive at all, or only arrived after the event. For example on October 4 1987 the house of Willie Mpulo aged 48 was attacked, allegedly by Inkatha, and his son Bhekabantu murdered. While the attack was in progress one of Mpulo's children, Busisiwe, ran to the Hilton police station to ask for assistance. Help was promised, but never arrived.

©Policemen attacked youth in the Mgwagwa area. On September 6 1987, SAP member Dumisani Ngwengwe allegedly participated in an attack on Mgwagwa youth, while in May SAP member Sampson Mbanjwa allegedly assaulted a youth.

©According to a statement, on 6 August during an attack by Inkatha members on a group of "comrades" in the Nlazatshe area a number of policemen intervened. "They drew fire arms and chased us. One of these police vans loaded in the Inkatha people and also chased us. The police cornered us and ordered us to get into the waiting van. They then called the Inkatha members and told them to beat us".

©It has also been reported that Slangspuit Inkatha leader Zuma was alleged to have been given a firearm by Officer Warber, a member of the Security branch. It was claimed that when Zuma was arrested for crimes against Themba Kunene, he was released immediately after Officer Warber interceded on his behalf.

The emergency

Police bias is also reflected in the use of emergency regulations to detain people. When the emergency was declared it was justified as being necessary in order to "reduce the level of violence in the townships".

"The fact, however," say Cosatu and UDF, "is that in the PMB situation, no Inkatha member or vigilante has, to our knowledge ever had to face the full brunt of emergency rule."

"In the Midlands area about 200 people linked to our organisations were detained at some stage or another - including the joint secretary of the Natal Midlands UDF, Skhumbuzo Ngwenya who was kept in detention for twelve months and later redetained along with Martin Wittenberg. Alfred Ndlovu, the Cosatu Regional Chairperson is at present detained under emergency regulations."

"Such blow-for-blow escalations of violence could have been halted if the police had taken decisive action against these warlords and their gangs. Why such groups can continue to function for so long raises very serious questions about the role of the police. In these circumstances it is little wonder that people become frustrated and lose faith in the law."

No democratic controls

Cosatu and UDF say that the conflict is generated by a lack of democracy. "The underlying reason for the bloodletting in PMB is the lack of a democratic process in South Africa. In a situation where organisations do not have to prove their popular support, it is possible for conservative groupings which do not have significant popular support to emerge and to impose themselves on the population."

"Because their political message is more palatable to official circles than that of their more "radical" rivals, it seems that the police are willing to turn a blind eye to some of their coercive practices. In this situation any kind of resistance to these grouping will launch a spiral of violence."

"The more they lose the support of the population due to the use of force, the more desperate they become and the more willing they are to resort to force to bolster their political position."



Jubilation in the streets as Mbeki returns to PE townships

important political figure in the ANC stronghold of the Eastern Cape. He was active in making PE one of the few areas in which organisation was sufficiently entrenched for the street committee based "M-Plan" to operate.

Mbeki was a delegate at the 1953 ANC Cape Congress when a motion to draft "A Freedom Charter" was adopted.

By then he had been expelled for the second time from teaching for having organised coal workers in Ladysmith.

He then went back to journalism. As editor of New Age, Mbeki wrote of the aspirations of the oppressed and exploited. Combining political activity and journalism, he turned the newspaper into the mouthpiece of the Congress movement.

In 1955, at a time when many ANC leaders were being restricted, Mbeki did not hesitate to help lead the campaign which led to the adoption of the Freedom Charter. In 1956 the ANC adopted the Charter and elected Mbeki as its national chairman.

Together with 155 others, Mbeki

was charged in 1956 with treason for the role he played in leading the Charter and Defiance campaigns. They were all finally acquitted in 1961.

Mbeki's period as national organiser saw ANC led bus boycotts in Alexander and Evaton, opposition to Bantu Education, demonstrations against pass laws, the pro-farmworker potato boycott and the Sharpeville massacre.

In 1960 Mbeki was detained for five months under the first state of emergency. He joined the outlawed South African Communist Party in 1961 and soon became a member of its central committee.

Then the ANC was banned and Mbeki was a key delegate to the conference which decided to form Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the ANC.

He went underground in 1963, after being acquitted on a charge under the Explosives Act, and joined the MK High Command. He was arrested later that year with other high ranking MK commanders in Rivonia. In 1964 Mbeki, Mandela, Sisulu, Kathrada, Goldberg, Motsaedi, Mhlaba and Mlangeni, the core of MK High Command, were all sentenced to life imprisonment for sabotage and attempting to overthrow the government.

Mbeki comes home...

●from page 1

"I don't think any solution in the country can really be arrived at by keeping the ANC out," he said on the question of negotiations with the ANC.

He echoed the cornerstone of the Freedom Charter's principles, which he helped draft, when he said: "We all belong to South Africa - South Africa belongs to all of us. With this as a premise, it appears to me it should not be difficult to find solutions towards what are said to be the problems."

Asked whether the government had made any progress towards finding a solution, he said he didn't think a solution was within reach along the lines that are being followed. A solution necessitated the unbanning of the ANC and other organisations and the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners.

Mbeki's release comes after an abortive attempt by the State President P.W. Botha to release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners on condition they renounce violence.

Like Mandela, Mbeki and other political prisoners refused

conditional release. They insisted that apartheid is responsible for the violence that has gripped the country, and demanded that Botha be the first to dismantle apartheid and renounce violence.

The government backed down on attaching conditions for the release of political prisoners. Mbeki was unconditionally freed. After the PE press conference Mbeki was asked whether he knew he was a "listed communist" and could not be quoted. Mbeki said: "I have been informed that I am released unconditionally and I don't expect that to be the case."

That was about the last thing that Mbeki said which could be printed. The Bureau of Information immediately announced that, besides the PE press conference statements, Mbeki could no longer be quoted.

But by then he had already made his political views clear.

Mbeki said the alliance between the ANC and SACP is crucial in the struggle for liberation.

"I don't think the ANC made any mistake in forming an alliance with an organisation that shared its views and the relationship between the Communist Party and the ANC is clear," he said.



Not long after its fourth anniversary the UDF adopted the Freedom Charter. Here the UDF looks at each clause of the Charter and how it relates to the situation today.

THE UDF

a few farmers who control thousands of hectares. These farms employ workers who earn miserable wages and have few rights.

There are also vast tracts of land which are completely empty and unused. This land is owned by barons and absentee landlords who keep it and sell it later at a profit.

The peasants who once lived on this land have been forced to leave through removals, cattle culling and anti-squating laws. As a result there is a great land hunger amongst our people, especially those who live in the bantustans and on the "white" farms.

The Charter says that the land will be shared among those who work it: the large farming corporations will be put under the control of the people in the same way as the major industries, in order to provide for the benefit of the people.

The land will be made available to rural families who wish to farm it either collectively or as individual peasants. The state will assist these farmers to develop their farms by providing seed, fertilizer and projects to conserve soil and water in order that scientific farming methods can be used.

ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW!

At present the majority of South Africans live in fear of the law. They do not see it as something which protects them, but as something which threatens their daily lives.

Apartheid officials have the power to act a judge, jury and executioner.

In the magistrate courts, poverty stricken people are sentenced to years imprisonment for stealing food to feed their hungry children. Black and white receive different sentences for the same offences.

The Charter envisages a system of people's justice not apartheid justice where the laws and courts will act as the protectors of the people, not as weapons of oppression. People regardless of race will be judged equally.

Everyone will have the right to a fair trial, unlike the kangaroo courts of the regime.

Imprisonment will only be for people who commit serious crimes.

Prison sentences will not aim to punish and to brutalise, but to try and rehabilitate offenders and turn them into constructive members of society.

The enforcers of the law shall be the servants and protectors of the people. Unlike today, the police and army will be accountable to the people and will defend the new democracy against the forces of reaction. No soldier or policeman will be above the law.

ALL SHALL ENJOY EQUAL HUMAN RIGHTS!

The apartheid system deprives the people of their human rights.

Tens of thousands of people have been detained under security laws and emergency regulations. It has been made a crime to organise, speak or meet openly.

Today the townships are under a stage of siege. House to house searches and raids are common. The security forces, kitskonstabels and vigilantes terrorise our people.

Trespass laws have now replaced the old pass laws as a means of removing people from the cities. Laws controlling squatting and "illegal aliens" are used as a new form of influx control to stop people living and working where they choose.

All South Africans will have freedom of movement, to live and work where they choose.

People will have the right to speak and organise freely, and practice their religion. But does this mean that the AWB will be free to propagate their fascist views? No, the practice and preaching of racism will be a punishable offence.

THERE SHALL BE WORK AND SECURITY!

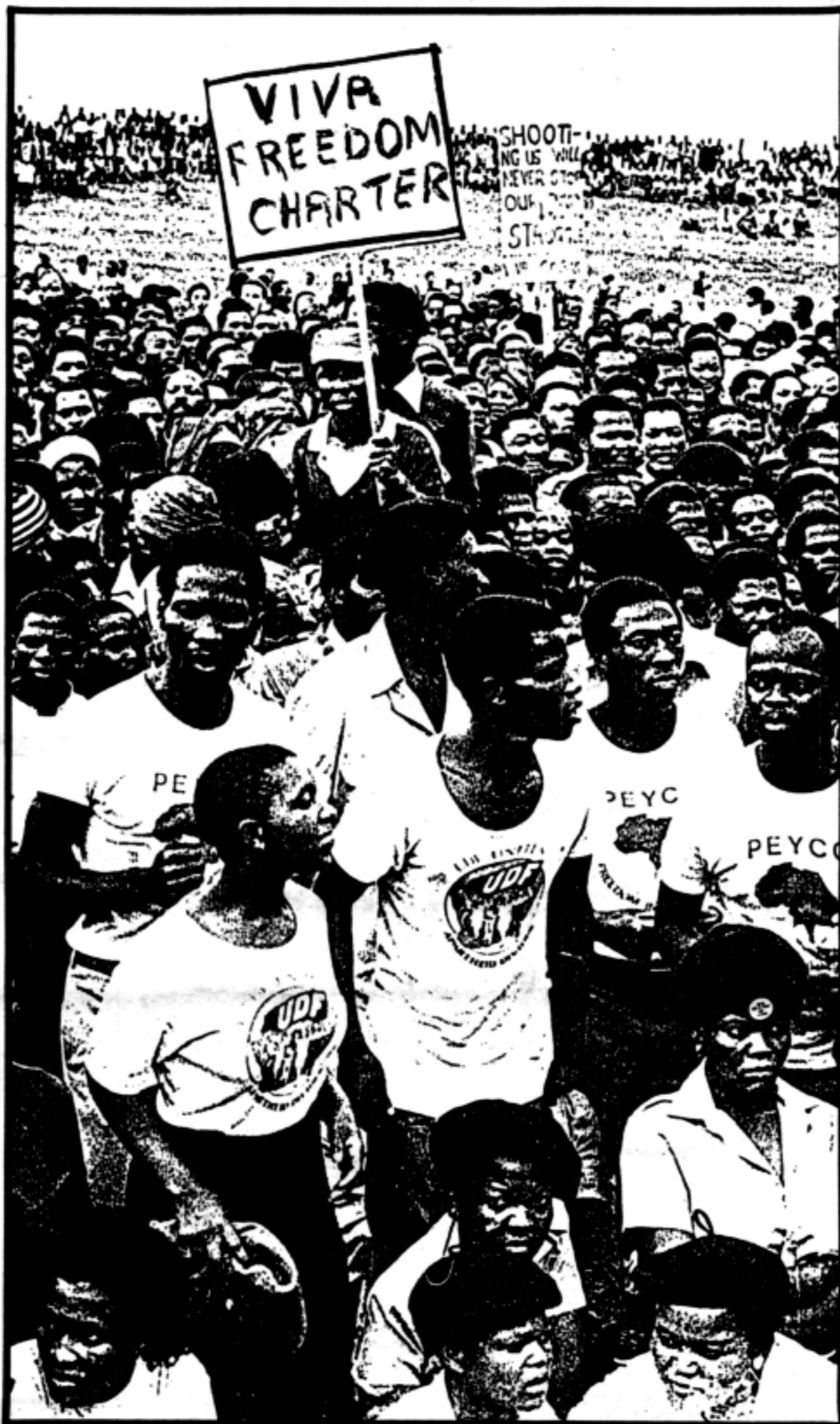
About six million people are without work in our country.

Hundreds of thousands of young people have no hope of getting work. And you can only receive unemployment insurance if you have worked.

For the people who have not worked there is no security and no means of survival. Despite all talk of abolishing racial discrimination at the workplace, the bosses still do not apply the principle of equal pay for white and black workers.

Thousands of people who work as domestics, farmworkers, and in the government

●to page 4



ON THE CHARTER

economy.

At present the vast wealth of the country, the mines, land, fisheries and industries are controlled by a few monopoly companies. The profits from these industries produced by the sweat of our people go into the pockets of a few white bosses.

The majority do not benefit from the wealth of the country and live in poverty.

The charter says it is wrong for a few massive companies to control the wealth of the country for their own benefit rather than all the people sharing in the wealth. In order to achieve this, the Charter says the banks, monopolies and mines will be nationalised by the people.

This will place control of the commanding heights of the country's economy in the hands of the people, particularly the working people.

The products and wealth will then be planned and shared so that the people as a whole benefit.

It is this wealth that will provide the education, health services and housing our people need.

This does not mean that small businesses will not be allowed. The Charter says that all restrictions which apartheid places on the rights of non-monopoly traders and businesses will be removed. Business will be regulated to prevent the development of monopolies.

THE LAND SHALL BE SHARED AMONG THOSE WHO WORK IT!

The land is the national heritage of the people of South Africa. But the majority have been robbed of their land by force.

The Land Act of 1913 forbids our people from owning land outside the bantustans. In the bantustans people are crowded onto land that is unable to support them.

In the rest of the country the land is owned by

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

At present the majority of people in our country do not govern: we do not have the right to vote, nor do we have any say over the making of the laws which controls our lives.

Instead we are ruled by bodies of minority rule like the tricameral parliament, the black local authorities, bantustan and tribal authorities.

All these bodies were forced on us by the apartheid rulers of this country. These are the bodies which enforce all apartheid laws. The people do not regard these bodies as legitimate because they were imposed on us against our will.

The Charter says that all bodies of minority rule shall be scrapped and replaced by democratic organs of peoples power.

The democratic organs being built today by our people in the towns, villages and factories will lay the basis for the government of the people.

When we say the people shall govern, which people are we saying will rule our country? In the first place when we talk about the people, we mean all the people who live in the country irrespective of race, colour or creed.

We are talking about workers, students, mothers, traders, professionals, people living on the land, etc. No one will be excluded from taking part in the government on the basis of his or her colour, religion or ethnic grouping, provided that they support a just, democratic and non-racial society.

At the same time no one group or individual will have special rights or privileges. Democracy means that every citizen will be equal in the eyes of the state, and the rights of each individual will be protected by the state.

When we say that the people will govern our country, it does not mean that people who actively support and promote apartheid and oppose a non-racial democracy will continue ruling.

All apartheid bodies like the tricameral parliament, the community councillors and bantustan governments will be totally dismantled, as will all other scheme to create new apartheid structures (National Statutory Council, Regional Services Councils, Indabas and so on.)

The "people shall govern" means that democratic bodies controlled by the people shall rule and share in the running of the country from the smallest village to the highest body in the land, the parliament of the people. These bodies will be democratic in the true sense in that they will be accountable and recallable by the people who elected them.

ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS!

This clause of the Charter is aimed at ending racial domination and division which apartheid has imposed on our people; while recognising the rights of all groups to develop their culture in a democratic South Africa.

Under Apartheid the promotion of ethnicity and racial separation is used to divide the people and maintain white minority rule.

When the government says it wants people to identify with their own cultures, it does this in a way that is aimed at dividing the people and making them see themselves as inferior or different.

In the new South Africa envisaged by the Charter, people's culture will be stripped of the bonds of racism.

People will have an equal right to develop their language and customs. This will be strengthened by the fact that all groups will be equal before the law and will have equal rights to education.

Racism will be outlawed. The state will encourage people to express the progressive elements of their cultures so we can develop a new South African culture, as part of a united, non-racial South Africa.

THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH!

For the people to really govern, it is necessary that they share in the country's wealth. Meaningful liberation requires that the people as a whole have control over the country's

Sharpeville six, sentenced for killing a Vaal councillor;
 1. Mojalefa Reginald Sefatsa
 2. Oupa Moses Diniso
 3. Duma Joshua Khumalo
 4. Francis Don Mokhesi
 5. Reid Malebo Mokoena
 6. Theresa Ramashamola
 One sentenced for killing a Tembisa policeman
 7. Johannes Moseki.
 Three sentenced for killing Oudtshoorn councillor.
 8. Desmond Majola
 9. Dickson Madikane
 10. Patrick Mangida
 Two sentenced for killing Sebokeng policeman.
 11. Daniel Maleke
 12. Josiah Tsawane
 One sentenced for killing woman police informer in Colesberg.
 13. Paul Setlaba

ACTIVISTS ON DEATH ROW

Four Addo Youth Congress members sentenced for 'killing' farmer and wife.
 14. Similo Lennox Wonci
 15. Christopher Mziwoxolo Makaleni
 16. Ndumiso Silo Sephenuko
 17. Machezuana Menze
 ANC member sentenced for bombings in Durban.
 18. Robert McBride
 Three NUM members sentenced for killing team leaders at Vaal Reef.
 19. Tjelubuyo Mgedezi
 20. Solomon Mangaliso Nogwati
 21. Paulos Tsietsi Tshehlana
 Six activists from Queenstown
 22. Mzwandile Gqeba
 23. Whanto Silinga

24. Lundi Wana
 25. Thembinkosi Press Feet
 26. Mzwandile Mnzini
 27. Monde Tingwe
 One sentenced for killing Soweto policeman
 28. Philip Bhkizizwe Ngidi
 Two sentenced for killing Soshanguve policeman
 29. Oupa Josias Mbobane
 30. Sibusiso Senele Masuku
 One sentenced for killing Cape Town community councillor.
 31. Michael Lukas
 One sentenced for killing a Tembisa community councillor.
 32. Joseph Chidi
 Three Peyco members
 33. Vuyisile Goni of Walmer township,

34. Tshepo Litsone of Motherwell (for killing of police informer)
 35. Mlondolozzi Gxothiwe of kwaKhakele (for killing of policeman)
 One Uitenhage Youth Congress member sentenced for killing police informer:
 36. Gilindoda Gxekwa
 Three Stinkwater Youth Congress members, Bophuthatswana, sentenced for people's court which led to killing of informer:
 37. Daisy Modise
 38. Thomas Chauke
 39. Johannes Thsabalala
 Two sentenced for the killing of Burgersdorp cafe owner

40. Menzi Tafeni
 41. Nico Ledube Mnyamana
 Three sentenced for killing of police informers in Stutterheim
 42. Mxolisi Malgas
 43. Michael Mambukwe
 44. Lulamile Maneli
 One sentenced for killing of a policeman in PE
 45. Mtutuzeli Bottoman Ngqandu
 One sentenced to death in Ciskei for killing alleged vigilante:
 46. Thembisile Beneti
FIVE ALREADY EXECUTED:
 ●Aleks Matshape Matsepane and Solomon Mankopane from Tzaneen executed December 1986.
 ●Welile Webushe from Jansenville, executed August 1987.
 ●Moses Nmyanda Jantjies and Mlamli Wellington Mielies, executed September 1987.

Styco is working towards the people governing SA

THE YOUTH won't be satisfied with anything less than the control of the country by the people, says the Southern Transvaal Youth Congress (Styco).

One year after its launch in November last year, Styco looks at some of the obstacles on the road and how to overcome them.

Styco's first months were devoted to strengthening their structures in preparation for the launch of their mother body, the SA Youth Congress (Sayco) which had taken four years to build. This meant involving local youth congresses in "one united body which was to be our guiding torch in the struggle".

After the launch, armed with the slogan "Every youth a congress member", Styco set about popularising Sayco as the first phase of the youth programme of action. "This encouraged many more young people to join Sayco."

Styco had to revive and strengthen youth and other popular township structures weakened by the state of emergency - which it says was declared in order to "counter gains made by the people against oppression and exploitation".

They said the youth had an important part to play in implementing the UDF's call to "Defend, consolidate and advance"

"It was our task as the youth to build the popular structures, to speak to our parents to join those structures, to form street committees and get that taste of democracy, so we can plan together how are we going to advance to a democratic SA."

State-run youth structures and youth "education" camps aimed to "counter and ultimately render our youth congresses ineffective," says Styco. "They are attempts to brainwash the youth to support the government and its oppressive policies."

"But these are failing because of the fact that most of our youth structures are rooted in the communities." As part of the process of building democratic youth structures, Styco attempted to "convince and encourage the misguided youth in state structures to come back into popular and progressive structures. Here they are educated about the role they could play in bringing about a new, non-racial society without exploitation."

Styco says that in the past a lot of work went into mobilising youth into organisations, but political education has been neglected.

Now a programme of political education at local, zonal, regional and national levels is unfolding in Sayco structures.



Styco exec members, Jacobs, Maphetho and Lekgoro.

"We have set up education departments in our youth structures and through these we hope to engage our members in political education, for example on the Freedom Charter, exchanging views about our understanding of the nature of SA society, the causes of exploitation and oppression and how the oppressed and exploited people can change this society."

The escalation of vigilante attacks on the broad democratic movement, especially the youth, has made Styco "aware that people active in vigilante activities are drawn from the ranks of the oppressed masses".

"For one reason or another they have been misguided to act in the interests of the ruling class by engaging in these vigilante atrocities."

"Styco takes it as its duty to convince and win over these people to its side, lest they become the reactionary Unita's and MNR's of the future SA."

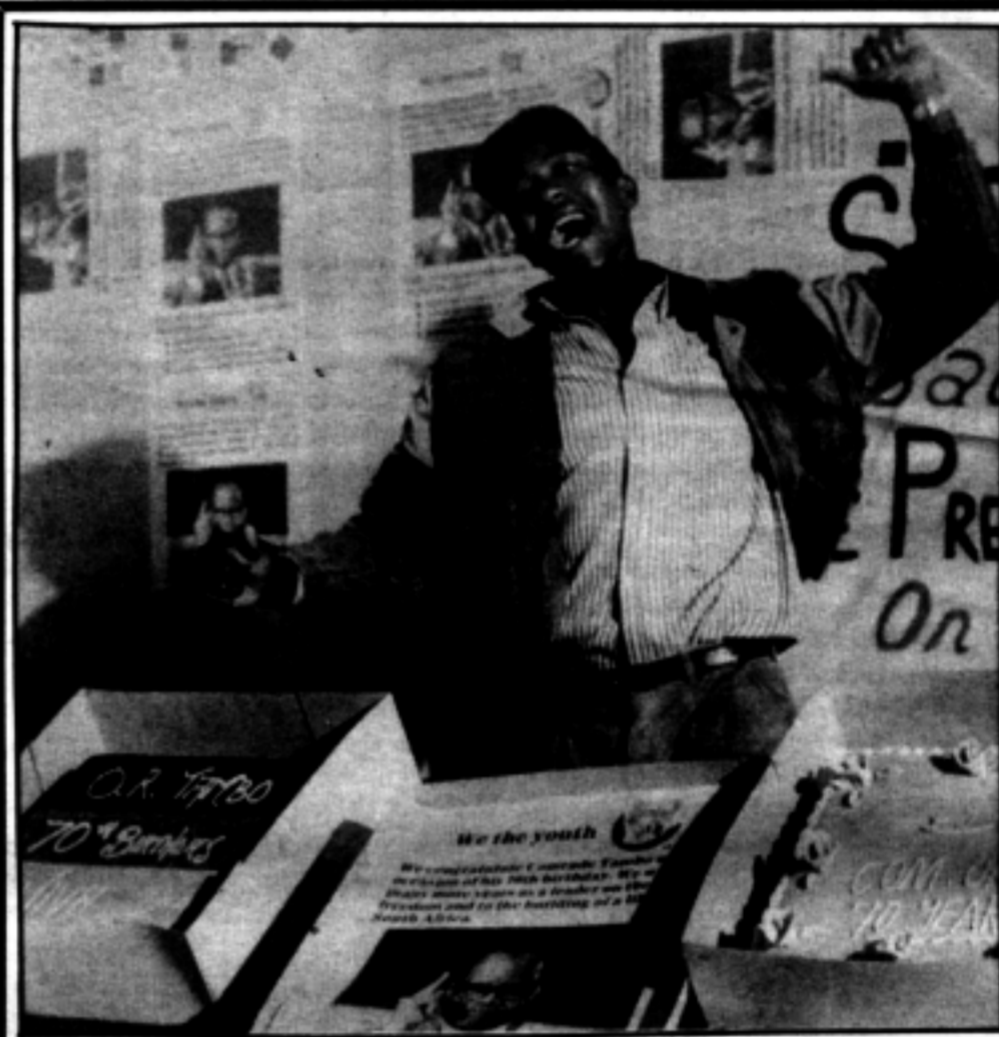
"But", caution Styco leaders, "we reserve the right to defend ourselves when attacked by these vigilantes, while in the process of trying to win them over to our side."

The use of unemployed youth as paid apartheid informers and vigilantes has made the organisation of this sector an urgent priority. "Unemployment is used by the state and the capitalist ruling class against the people and their struggle for liberation," says Styco.

"The oppressed and exploited can be used against each other in order to survive. This allows the state and its capitalist backers to continue their system of domination over our people."

"Unemployment is causing terrible bitterness among the people. They are expected to pay rent, clothe their children, and fulfill so many other human needs. The answer of the state has been to evict these very people from their houses. Styco, under the umbrella of Sayco, demands "houses, security and comfort".

"We know very well that to end unemployment, there is a dire need to end exploitation and apartheid,"



A SLOGAN from a Styco leader at ANC president Oliver Tambo's seventieth birthday celebration in Johannesburg. A common call at the celebration was for the unbanning of the ANC, the release of political prisoners and the safe return of exiles.

United action by the youth can bring liberation day nearer, said a Sayco speaker. "Comrades have been in prison and in exile for a long time and it is our task to ensure their release and return". Tambo will one day walk the streets of SA together with other exiled and imprisoned political leaders, said the RMC.

Styco said it was committed to fight for these demands and for the total dismantling of apartheid. It added that negotiations could only take place if these were based on the total transfer of power to the people as a whole. Tambo is a time-tested leader, said the NUM. "Thatcher and Ronald Reagan say Tambo is a terrorist, but we know for a fact that they are terrorists because they fuel Apartheid," said Sayco. It called on the West to impose sanctions on SA to "enable us to march faster to freedom".

says Styco. "Unemployed workers' organisations can serve as a weapon of unity of all unemployed to challenge the state and the ruling class and to end this monster of unemployment."

Styco says it is currently, together with Cosatu, building unemployed workers' organisations. This, they say, also helps to strengthen the alliance between community organisations, including the youth, and Cosatu.

Already the youth are actively involved in Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign, but they say, this still needs more work on the ground.

"We organise working, unemployed, student, religious and sporting youth. All these make up Styco, but the unemployed and working youth should be in the leadership of the youth."

Styco is also paying greater attention to women and their role in the struggle. "When Sayco was launched, and also in our region, we realised the lack of women's participation in our youth and other structures."

"We believe and are striving for a society free from any form of oppression, exploitation and inequality. To this end, we had to set ourselves clear tasks to organise

women." Styco says they don't see women's place as being in the kitchen and looking after the children. They see the need for women to participate actively in the struggle, not only to liberate themselves, but the entire society.

These questions are dealt with in Styco workshops and seminars attended by both male and female youth. "We seriously focus on the causes of women's oppression, its history, women in other countries, but most importantly - ways and means of combatting it now and preparing for the new and free future SA."

More white youth need to be drawn into Sayco, says Styco, they can't be left to the SAP and SADF. "In line with the principle of non-racialism which we adhere to jealously, we want to show them there is a home for them in the democratic movement."

In its final message, Styco said "the youth in Styco will only be satisfied if the people of this country run and control the country. The people must control their own lives and determine what should be done."

"It is not that we want to see black faces in the government. We want to see an end to apartheid oppression and economic exploitation."

Empty apartheid dungeons

PW BOTHA claims SA has no political prisoners. But this won't stop the growing call for their release.

October 10 took on a new meaning when progressive organisations joined the rest of the world in commemorating the United Nations' International Day of solidarity with South African Political Prisoners.

"While some celebrate Krugers Day, progressive sections of the population remember their heroes and heroines who are languishing in the apartheid dungeons", said a speaker at a rally organised by the Release Mandela Campaign and the Detainees Support Committee.

The rally reaffirmed a "total commitment to the unconditional release of all political prisoners and the unbanning of the African National Congress".

"The people that are portrayed as terrorists and criminals are hailed as matrys and heroes," said the RMC's Dali Mpofo.

George Mashamba, recently released from Robben Island, told the rally that the fight for the release of political prisoners is the fight for the liberation of the oppressed.

"The morale of the inmates is often boosted by news that the people are fighting and working hard for the liberation struggle outside", he said.

NTvI residents barred from MK man's funeral

THE SADF and police allowed only close family members to attend the funeral of slain activist, Andrew Mehlape, from Mankweng near Pietersburg.

Mehlape, a policeman's son and an Umkhonto we Sizwe guerilla, was killed in a confrontation with police at the end of September.

Thousands of residents from Mankweng and surrounding villages, and Turfloop university students were turned away from the funeral.

Mehlape was an active member of the Congress of SA Students (Cosas), the Mankweng Youth Congress and the Mankweng Civic. A Northern Transvaal Youth Congress (Notyco) statement said he "grew up in the North experiencing the problems and difficulties of day to day struggles. He was a good resident of Mankweng township and loved his people. He lived for freedom and peace and against oppression and exploitation."

But apartheid forces' action against his people had an effect on him.

"Soon after Cosas was banned, when he was a matric student, he left the country to join the ANC's military wing. His activities were unknown until recently, when he clashed in battle with the police."



Celebrating UDF's third birthday last year

Houses and education, peace and friendship

from FC page 3

departments do not have maximum working hours and minimum wages laid down for them by law.

The Charter provides for a forty-hour working week and a national minimum (living) wage for all workers.

All workers will be guaranteed a minimum wage, paid holidays, sick leave, a forty hour working week and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers.

The viciousness with which the regime has responded to the Living Wage Campaign shows that a living wage will never be guaranteed under apartheid.

The history of our country has seen bosses working with the state to make every attempt to crush the trade-union movement. Workers have been forced to join sweetheart unions and laws have been passed to prevent unions from representing the interests of the working class.

The Charter says all workers shall be free to form democratic trade unions.

The Charter says that every citizen will have the right and duty to work. Through state control of the monopolies, banks and mines, the government will try to minimise unemployment. Those without jobs will be supported by the state so that their families do not starve.

In addition the workers will be guaranteed a minimum wage, paid holidays, sick leave, a forty hour working week and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers.

THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED TO ALL!

The education crisis is one of the major issues facing our communities.

For over ten years, our courageous youth have fought gutter education. They have demanded the right to equal, free and non-racial education.

They have demanded free textbooks, an end to corporal punishment and sexual harassment of female students and the right to elect SRCs.

The response of the DET has been to issue ID cards, to announce school curfews, to force students to register or face expulsion and to harass teachers who sympathise with student demands.

The Charter aims to solve the education crisis by abolishing bantu education and putting in its place a system of peoples education that will allow all to realise their potential.

It also plans mass education for adults who have suffered because of poor apartheid education. EACH ONE TEACH ONE! Schools will be put under the control of the people through democratically elected SRCs and PTSAs.

Knowledge and learning are heritage of mankind. The aim of education in a democratic South Africa will be to make this heritage available to all our people.

The libraries, parks, universities, museums and theatres will be made geared towards serving the people.

At present our people are being fed third rate culture through radio and TV. They are prevented from developing a rich people's culture of art, theatre and poetry.

Our poets and artists have few venues and facilities. The Charter envisage a society where these restrictions will no longer exist and a new South African culture will develop, taking the best from the existing cultures in our country and building on these.

THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY AND COMFORT!

In our country there is presently a housing shortage of over a million units. Even people with houses have no security.

Over four million people have been forcibly removed from their homes, squatter camps have been destroyed, in the "white" areas homes have been demolished and people evicted under the Group Areas Act, and in the townships many are being evicted for refusing to pay high rents.

Instead of building houses the government spends millions on the SADF and police, and on paying their puppets.

While many of our people are homeless, 37 000 housing units stand empty in the white areas.

Unemployment has meant that many families are unable to feed themselves and thousands of children die every year from malnutrition. While this happens, food companies and farmers dump thousands of tons of food or feed them to animals in order to keep prices up.

There is no adequate care for the very young, the aged and those orphaned. Many children and old people live in the streets of our cities and beg for a living. White general hospitals stand empty, while patients in black hospitals are forced to lie on the floor between beds because there is not enough space for them in the wards.

The Charter says everyone should be decently housed at rents they can afford. The state will keep the prices of food and other essentials down.

Proper facilities, roads and services shall be provided in all areas. There will be sports facilities available for all. There will be free and proper health care.

THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP!

The apartheid government not only wages war on the majority of people in South Africa, but has also declared war against its Southern African neighbours.

The Pretoria regime has been accused of supporting the MNR in Mozambique, UNITA in Angola and dissidents in Zimbabwe. The regime has also been responsible for launching raids against its neighbours under the guise of hitting ANC bases.

The Freedom Charter wants to see a South Africa in which the country will live in peace with its neighbours and respect the rights and sovereignty of all nations. There shall be peace and friendship both inside and outside South Africa and towards other peoples of the world.

Apartheid and the aggression of the regime threatens world peace and increases the danger of nuclear war.

A democratic South Africa will be part of the Non Aligned Movement and will commit itself to nuclear disarmament and world peace.



IN THE space of seven short years the NUM has become one of South Africa's most powerful unions. This progress has been attributed to NUM's solid organisational and political direction which is informed by the Freedom Charter. Saspu National spoke to NUM about what the Charter means for mineworkers.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS LEADING UP TO NUM'S ADOPTION OF THE CHARTER?

Our union was at one stage an affiliate of Cusa. There was no political direction there, for workers and members of Cusa. It

was only when our union dis-affiliated from Cusa that our members started grappling with political issues.

The process started with rigorous debate around Cosatu's political policy adopted in December 1985. This raised the question of what our political direction

should be. The debate culminated in February this year when at our congress we adopted the FC as a guiding document.

At our 1986 congress we elected an honorary life president who was a mineworker at one point in his life and who had contributed to the workers' struggle and the struggle more generally. Nelson Mandela was elected, giving the debates much greater impetus.

We held a national seminar soon after our congress where we looked at the Charter. Small groups took a clause and studied them in detail. That process was repeated at a regional level and from there it was taken to the branches, into the hostels, and into the shafts. From there it was brought back to the congress for adoption.

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WHY DID NUM ADOPT THE FC?

We are fighting for a democratic society, against oppression which is brought about by apartheid. By fighting with the democratic majority for this democracy, we also place on the agenda the issues we are fighting in the mines - exploitation and capitalism.

But we situate our fight against the capitalist system within that national democratic struggle.

The FC lays a basis to unify the broad democratic majority in that struggle for national democracy.

It is in the mines where we see the most brutal form of apartheid - the migrant labour system in its most naked form. People are uprooted from their homes in the so-called homelands, brought to the mines, put in hostels up to 24 in a room, and fed terrible food. At the same time at an economic level, you see the most brutal exploitation.

In the mines the lowest wage is in the gold and coal mines of R240 a month. And the miners are messed around by whites, be it a white miner or the general manager. So there is experience of both oppressions or both exploitations in a very singular form, not in two separate forms.

To our members those 'two' struggles are one single struggle. From experience our members say there has always been a link in a very concrete way between national oppression and economic exploitation.

HOW HAS THE FC BEEN LINKED PRACTICALLY TO THE MINeworkERS STRUGGLES?

After the election of Mandela as honorary life president, work was done to inform workers of Mandela's history, and the struggles he waged as a mineworker in Crown Mines and against national oppression.

From this workers got more interested in understanding politics outside their workplaces. Not every member of the union was aware of the FC itself.

So we popularised the clauses of the FC, holding seminars around the clauses that address their problems at the workplace. We cited clauses that say the people, the workers, must control their lives, make their own decisions at all levels and in all spheres of our society.

That is why the February, 1987 congress theme was 'Mineworkers Should Take Control' and why the congress addressed this issue to a large extent.

We then started campaigns around the migrant labour and hostel systems. Workers came out clearly in rejecting the hated systems which for years has affected their lives. Some have been so badly affected to the extent where their families were broken up because they had to spend so much time at the mines.

In Witbank workers tried to implement the resolution against the migrant labour and hostel systems. Workers brought their wives and girlfriends into the hostels to live with them. In most cases this took place in Amcoal mines, which is part of Anglo American, which is regarded as liberal by some people. In a way, then, mineworkers have started to implement the Charter by trying to take control.



STOP THE HANGINGS



Mass demands to stop executions

DESPITE pleas for clemency from organisations throughout the country and internationally, the government has gone ahead with the execution of five young South Africans on death row.

Spearheaded by the South African Youth Congress (Sayco), the "Save the Patriots Campaign", which demands an end to the hanging of political prisoners and activists, was launched in July this year.

A wide range of democratic organisations have backed the campaign, including the UDF, the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu), the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the Release Mandela Campaign, the National Education Crisis Committee and the National Students' Co-ordinating Committee.

The campaign demands that "for political, humanitarian and moral reasons", the SA government must not hang those on death row and must sign the Geneva Convention. Captured activists who have taken up arms against apartheid must be given prisoner of war (POW) status.

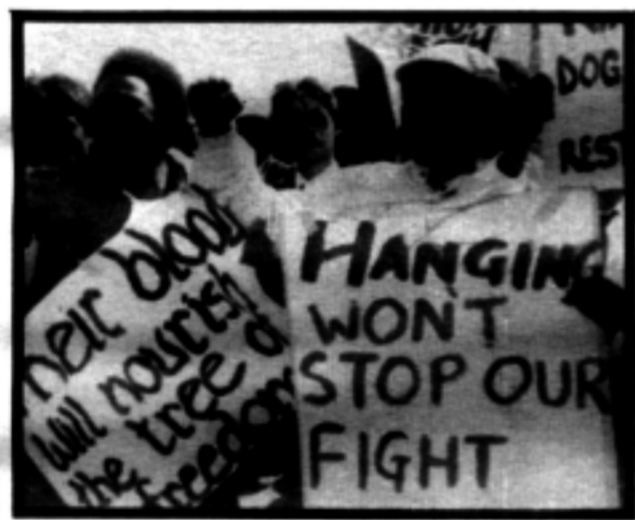
Close to fifty political activists held at Pretoria Central Prison still face execution. And the list gets longer and longer as activists in numerous political trials get the death sentence.

The 600 000-strong Sayco and its affiliates nationwide have put the campaign top on their agenda and have set up national and regional campaign committees.

"We are determined to stop all further executions, and we are joining forces to ensure this", said a national campaign committee spokesperson.

"Most of the young South Africans presently on death row have been sentenced for actions arising out of the war between South Africa's people and Apartheid." "Their acts were political, not criminal. Their 'crime' was to say they would no longer tolerate a system of perpetual misery and suffering, no longer tolerate a system which always answered cries for decent housing and education, affordable rents and a living wage, for basic human survival, with bullets. Their crime was to strive for a democratic SA."

"Hanging these young South Africans will not solve anything. It will only deepen the anger and frustration, the determination and resolve of thousands of young people, who like those on death row,



Left: Cape Town protest at hanging of Uitenhage activists Mamli Mielles and Moses Jantjies. Right: A prison official informs the families of Mielles and Jantjies that they have been executed.



are striving for a non-racial and democratic South Africa."

The sentencing to death of fellow political activists has prompted the youth to question the present legal system and its relationship to apartheid. And the campaign aims to popularise the Freedom Charter clause "All shall be equal before the law".

The campaign takes the form of petitions and letters of protest against the hangings. These are to be sent to bodies such as the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement. First to sign the petition was UDF co-president Albertina Sisulu, followed by relatives of death row activists.

"Letters of protest are being signed by our people daily," said a campaign spokesperson, "they have been coming in from all over the country".

Sayco's target is 32000 signatures and it has urged all progressive forces to actively back the campaign, not only to save those currently on death row, but those who may be sentenced in future.

"In your local townships and villages, in the churches and schools, in your organisation, street to street, collect signatures to show that our people are opposed to the hanging of our compatriots," said a campaign spokesperson.

"When one is hanged it affects the families, it affects their communities, it affects the whole country."

Governments seen as sympathetic to Apartheid have been called on to throw their weight behind the campaign by putting pressure on the SA government. A campaign

spokesperson warned that these governments, by constantly supporting the SA government, would be responsible for the ongoing civil war.

"The Pretoria government is responsible for violence and must be put on trial. We are appealing to the British, American and West German governments who defend apartheid in many international forums to stop doing so."

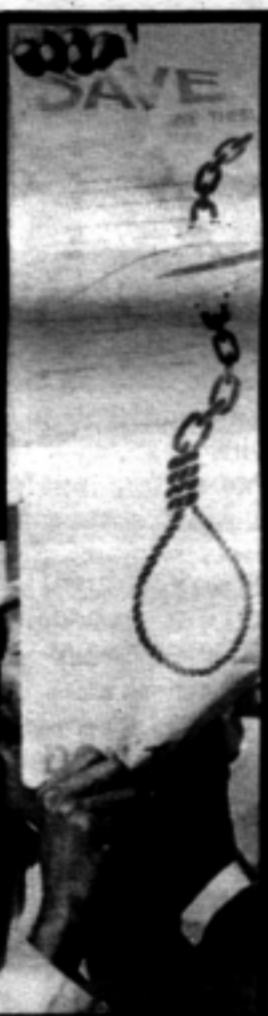
"If they are interested in ending the civil war and apartheid in this country they should show us that they support our struggle by implementing tough measures against this government."

The spokesperson said the West German government had called on the SA government to reprieve two Uitenhage activists, Jantjies and Mielles before they were hanged. But he said the government had ignored the call and further pressure was obviously needed.

Three mineworkers are currently on death row and both NUM and Cosatu have cited this as a reason for their support of the campaign.

The Northern Transvaal Youth Congress (Notyco) has also been directly affected - two activists from the Tzaneen area have already been hanged. Notyco strongly condemned this and said it had strengthened their resolve to save others facing execution.

"The execution of political prisoners will not stop our struggle for freedom and justice", said the PE Youth Congress (Peyco). They condemned the imposition of the death sentence on political prisoners, including three Peyco members and one Uitenhage Youth Congress



Protesters with campaign poster in Johannesburg streets.

member.

The Detainees Parents' Support Committee has noted that "the efforts of the State to criminalise political opponents through the courts, have gone beyond the stage of banned books and illegal gatherings, through to treason, terrorism and subversion, and now feature attempts to thrust murder charges upon political activists".

THE GENEVA CONVENTION

The demand that the SA government sign the Geneva Convention and apply its POW provisions to captured Umkhonto we Sizwe members has been a key aspect of the campaign. Both the UDF and Cosatu have resolved to campaign for this.

The UDF's National Working Committee earlier this year said SA was involved in a civil war in which the minority government was seeking to criminalise and even execute increasing numbers of opponents.

Cosatu's July national congress resolved to actively support the Save the Patriots campaign and to campaign for the "abolition of capital punishment meted out against

political activists". It noted that while the ANC had signed and observed the Geneva Convention provisions, the SA government has refused to do so and had executed many of those fighting for a democratic SA.

According to legal experts the Geneva Conventions dealing with the treatment of POWs have been signed by more governments than any other international treaty. By June 1977, 143 states - the whole of the organised international community - were bound by these rules. One of these is that POWs are not to be executed.

In the 1960s and 70s the international community, in the United Nations and other forums, resolved that:

- the policy of apartheid and racial discrimination is an international crime;
- colonised countries and people have a right to independence;
- movements representing colonised people had a right to use armed struggle "to secure the full exercise of their right to self-determination and independence if the colonial power persists in opposing their national aspirations".

While the 1949 Geneva Conventions applied to international conflicts between different states, the 1977 Protocols extended this to cover "armed conflicts in which people are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination."

In SA, the ANC is engaged in armed conflict with the government. So the 1977 protocols intended the Geneva Convention and the protection of POWs to apply to soldiers of both sides in the conflict.

The ANC has signed and observed the provisions but the SA government has refused to do so. ANC guerilla, Robert McBride, is currently on death row. Other ANC members who have been hanged since 1979 include Solomon Mahlangu, Simon Mogoerane, Jerry Mosololi, Ben Moloise and Marcus Motaung.

Observers say by signing the Conventions, the SA government will be forced to admit that the nature of the SA conflict is one of a civil war. It also knows that this implies recognising and legitimizing the ANC, adding to pressure for the organisation be unbanned.

THE CHARTER ON THE MINES

for greater control over their lives.

The FC embodies the struggle for democracy which unions have been involved in on the shop floor. It talks about a society where the people will govern, which is the kind of society we want and the kind of workplaces we want. We are struggling for workers to have a say in the control and running of the mine and in how the profits will be distributed.

One other important point is that the FC talks about peace and friendship with our neighbours. We are one of the few unions that have been able to build up those kind of links with workers in neighbouring countries through the Southern African Miners Federation and through our active support for our comrades in Namibia.

Because the FC was drawn up from the demands the people made in the door to door collections it embodies literally every struggle that we are involved in today.

So be it against migrant labour, be it the struggle for housing, whatever the case may be, one can relate those struggles back to the demands in the FC. Those demands have not been met today, and that is why the FC is still relevant to us as workers today.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE ECONOMY NOW AND IN THE FUTURE?

The present political and economic system is controlled by a few people, against the interests of the majority of people in this country.

There are only seven monopolies which reap massive profits.

Especially during recessions like we have now, the monopolies take over small companies and rationalise, destroying people's jobs and livelihoods. At the same time they reap massive profits, which they invest in other countries.

Because monopoly capitalists are interested only in profits

they are not capable of resolving the most fundamental problems in our country - problems of unemployment and poverty. To sustain their high profits they pay R240 a month to mine workers and invest in countries where they can continue high profit.

We believe that the restructuring of our society is an absolute necessity, where the economy will be controlled, not by a few people for profits sake, but where production in this country must be controlled by workers for the benefit of all the people. So at our congress, our theme was mineworkers take control, and we demand the nationalisation of our mines under workers control. Which will mean that the wealth of the country must be shared equally amongst the people. That is a struggle we are involved in and a struggle which is taking place on the ground now.

So in building this new society, we want to instill those democratic practices, even in the economy, even in the mines.

YOU HAVE SAID THAT WE MUST START BUILDING THE NEW SOCIETY TODAY. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

In our methods of struggle we must be democratic. In our organisations the majority must be in control. At present the oppressed majority are working class. We must strive towards a society where the working class will dominate and control society in the interests of all. To achieve that the working class has to, within the struggle today, exert its leadership role, taking all other oppressed people with it in that struggle, teaching those other oppressed people its own democratic values and practices.

HOW IS YOUR CAMPAIGN AROUND HOSTELS AND MIGRANT LABOUR BEING TAKEN UP?

At present there are negotiations going on relating to democratising the hostel system. We demand that the bosses issue a statement of intent and at the same time introduce a democratic system of elected hostel representatives who will run the hostel.

At the same time we are fighting for the complete eradication of the hostel system.

We ourselves are abolishing the migrant labour and hostel system. Despite the bosses stated opposition of the migrant labour system, the mine bosses have benefitted a lot from the migrant labour and the hostel system.

They are not going to abolish a system which is in their own material interest. The only way that that system can be destroyed is when we actually engage the bosses.



Above left: Num president Mohlatsi, above: Cosatu president Barayi, below left: Num general secretary Ramaphosa



Our members have played an important role in popularising Cosatu's living wage campaign. The campaign is around some of the clauses of the FC. We are calling for the minimum living wage. We are calling for better conditions of employment and living conditions as promised by the FC.

In the FC there are short term, medium term and long term demands which also have to be popularised. There are no major differences between those three sets of demands.

COULD YOU EXPLAIN HOW YOU SEE THESE DEMANDS?

In the short term, for example, we have embarked on a campaign for the recognition of the right of freedom of association. On many occasions management has acted against members who try to join a democratic mine union.

When workers are on legal or other strikes in support of their demands, management usually calls in the police. That in itself shows management has no respect for freedom of association, as promised by the Labour Relations Act.

Other short term demands are to increase wages and get a minimum living wage, and to improve conditions of employment and living conditions.

If we look into medium term demands, we are talking of abolishing migrant labour. When we look at why we call for this we see there are short-term things involved: it breaks up families; it keeps workers isolated from the community.

So it is only now that workers are starting to realise their role in the national democratic struggle by getting out of these hostels and forging links with other progressive organisations



Num members at Num congress.

in the community.

Together they demand to be able to stay with their families, freely interact with other members of the community and be part of the organisations in the community.

Then we have the long term demands which are ultimately the control of the society by the working class, the democratic majority. The long term demands involve the complete attainment of the demands in the FC.

The FC is not necessarily a socialist document, but it does lay the basis for the transformation of the society into a socialist one. Unless we realise the demands of the FC, we will not be in a position to win our struggle against national oppression and economic exploitation.

Our members are not only interested in ideals, but also in the material improvement of their lives. This will give them the necessary confidence and strength to intensify their struggle

Lebowa police killed Nchabeleng but his ideals live on

AN INQUEST magistrate found Lebowa riot police responsible for the death of veteran congress activist and former Northern Transvaal UDF president, Peter Nchabeleng.

Nchabeleng died less than 13 hours after being detained from his home in Apel, Sekhukhuland, by a large contingent of SADF soldiers, SA and Lebowa police in April last year.

The post-mortem stated that Nchabeleng's body was covered with bruises

from being beaten. Massive bleeding under the skin caused shock and Nchabeleng became unconscious.

Nchabeleng's death sparked protests and condemnation from a wide range of organisations, including the UDF, Cosatu, SACC and DPSC. Paying tribute to Nchabeleng, the UDF said the replacement of tribal authorities by democratic committees had given people a taste of democracy and a sense of their own strength.

The bantustans were intended to be

reservoirs of cheap labour and dumping grounds of surplus people posing no danger to the Apartheid system. "The active participation of these people in the liberation struggle marks the beginning of the end for apartheid".

"Let us carry forward the spirit of Nchabeleng. Let us strengthen the democratic movement by building our structures in the factories, schools, villages and townships where we live and let the ideas of Nchabeleng bear fruit," said Cosatu.

The UDF at the time rejected "with contempt" claims by pro-government sources that Nchabeleng died of a heart attack and attempts to link his detention to "witchburning".

Seventeen months after his death an inquest found that 59-year-old Nchabeleng, a healthy man at the time of his arrest, had died from injuries inflicted by Lebowa riot police.

Lawyers for the Nchabeleng family say that the police "at a very high level" attempted to conceal how Nchabeleng died.

The inquest heard that a Lebowa policeman Malopo only started investigations three months after the death. This was despite a postmortem which clearly showed that Nchabeleng had been seriously assaulted. But none of the statements taken from riot police mentioned assaults or interrogation.

Malopo knew some of these were false, but still handed them in as evidence, said lawyers. Both the riot police who assaulted Nchabeleng and Malopo could face charges.

VIGILANTES are being recruited to defend bantustan structures in the Northern Transvaal area of Sekhukhuland.

"These vigilante groups are not autonomous, as the homeland would like us to believe. They are part and parcel of the so-called Thari ya Sechaba, whose main aim is to flush out opposition and make Lebowa a safe place for the smooth running of the bantustan divide and rule system", said activists from the Sekhukhuland Youth Organisation (Seyo), an umbrella structure affiliated to Notyco.

Bantustan rule in Lebowa hasn't run smoothly for at least three years now. This has been mainly due to the growth of popular organisations like youth congresses and village and action committees in the area.

"People refused to be ruled in the same old way and set about replacing tribal authorities with popular authority," said the activists. Pressure from villagers led some chiefs to resign or stay away from bantustan structures.

"Had it not been for direct police and army intervention, there would no longer be a thing called the Lebowa government," they said.

Security force action severely weakened popular organisations, but according to Seyo, has failed to crush them.

Unpopular chiefs, allegedly with backing from South African security forces, are now recruiting vigilante squads to help them defend bantustan rule.

"Their task is to defend the status quo in favour of the chiefs, the bantustan and Pretoria."

Adding insult to injury, some Sekhukhuland chiefs have tried to force villagers to pay for the vigilantes. Villagers found out that a R10 tribal levy on them were told to pay was to be used to pay the "official guards" to protect the chief.

"This is clear proof that these chiefs have lost their traditional powers of ruling according to the wishes of the people like it was in the old days,"

Vigilantes back bantustan rule

Banners of the Sekhukhuland Youth Organisation held high at funeral of UDF president, Peter Nchabeleng last year.



said the Seyo activists. "They have been reduced to mere cogs in the military machine."

This view is reinforced by allegations that some chiefs are working closely with the SADF, SAP and Lebowa police.

Activists said vigilante activity is strong in areas where popular organisations exist.

●At Mhlaletse vigilantes are trained in the nearby mountains.

These vigilantes wait to pounce on any activist who tries to make a move. Whenever they hear people chanting songs or hear of a mass rally, then they attack", said a Seyo activist.

●At Phaahla-Manoge, known for its fierce resistance against tribal authorities in the fifties, a vigilante

group was organised after the formation of the Phaahla-Manoge Action Committee.

"The chief organised unorganised youth against members of the Action Committee and three members were evicted from the village. Some Committee members are relatives of the chief, but defence of the homeland system knows no blood relationship. It's either you are for the system or against it", said Seyo activists.

●At Madibong vigilante activity grew after the return of Chief Kgolokoe who was forced into "exile" after an activist was killed in clashes with the chief last year.

"Under the threat of this vigilante group, couples who married during

the chief's absence have to pay a levy of R300. Burial Societies have to pay R200 to the chief."

The activists said vigilantes are recruited from the unemployed and unorganised youth and "elderly conservative men".

"Traditionally the chief's kraal has "palace" police to protect the chief and maintain "law and order". The chiefs are using this tribal custom to organise these reactionary groupings."

"A few malcontents, some teachers and misguided students were another fertile ground for the chiefs to reorganise to retain their hegemony in the homeland."

"This was largely due to the absence

of progressive teachers' organisations. But at present there is a Neusa working committee which aims to organise the teachers and remove them from the feet of the homeland, the chiefs and the government."

Seyo said local police stations were also industries for the manufacture of vigilantes. "Some of the vigilantes are former activists who know the tricks and strategies of comrades."

"Some youth, especially the unemployed, are won over by entertainment and liquor and so on."

"They get enticed by having privileges available to them for the first time. They become willing to do anything the chiefs want. Large sums of money are poured in to keep them in the framework of the system."

Asked how the vigilantes have affected organisation, the activists said state of emergency conditions had forced organisations to use new methods of struggle. The vigilantes were not yet sophisticated enough to identify these.

"When we don't sing or chant it becomes more difficult for them to differentiate us from ordinary people."

But the youth's presence is still felt. Pamphlets condemning Lebowa's Thari ya Sechaba are distributed and progressive slogans are graffitied on many walls.

"This is part of a process of organising groups to give political direction and to counter government propaganda", say the activists. Youth in the area are also forming groups to defend the people against vigilantes.

DESPITE heavy blows from detentions, imprisonment and vigilante death squads, the Northern Transvaal Youth Congress (Notyco) continues to inspire the rural youth.

Notyco will be one year old at the end of November. A regional affiliate of the South African Youth Congress (Sayco), Notyco estimates a membership of 200 000 youth in its village and township youth congress affiliates.

While repression weakened youth structures, these are being revived and strengthened at local and regional levels.

"We are once more proving that we will not be stopped in our fight for liberation," said Notyco.

"The oppressed masses experience extreme want and misery. There has been a considerable increase in activity of those who refuse to tolerate bondage and lack of political rights. The situation is highly charged and tense."

Attempts to recruit and train youth to fight against activists and organisations were failing.

"Notyco stepped up its offensive by organising the youth and consolidating their alliance with the their parents, the villagers and workers"

Notyco inspires rural youth despite the blows

A key Notyco campaign has been to popularise the Freedom Charter, adopted by Notyco as a guiding document.

"The Charter calls for rural struggle to do away with the bantustan system and all it stands for. It says the land shall be shared among those who work it. The Charter calls for the equal development of cities and countryside."

"The rural people demand their right to the land. Their demand must be developed to make them aware and to take initiative to challenge the situation."

Notyco has taken up a wide range of national campaigns and activities including:

- Save the Patriots.
- Popularising Sayco and Notyco.
- The Living Wage campaign, par-

ticipating in workers' strike support committees and organising the unemployed.

●Anti-bantustan and Anti-independence campaigns.

The Northern Transvaal includes four bantustans - KwaNdebele, Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda. The youth have been pressuring chiefs to resign from bantustan structures. Anti-independence campaigns are being fought in KwaNdebele and Venda.

●Land rights.
●Release of political prisoners and detainees.
●Childcare campaign.

Underlying all these campaigns, says Notyco, is the importance of organisation.

the people, raising their political understanding and bringing about their active involvement in struggle and in the issues of daily concern to us all.

"Organisation is more than just a constitution or a committee. Organisation gives unity and involvement, structure, form and content, consistency and political direction. For us it means fulfilling a key requirement in our national liberation struggle."

"We organise because we have been denied full political rights and access to the wealth of the country. The daily lot of our people is one of poverty and hardship. We have been denied a democratic say and control over our lives."

"The rural oppressed masses have no automatic power to change this situation, but we share common

problems and by taking them up together we raise the level of political awareness of our people. We learn that there are reasons for our life of misery, oppression and exploitation.

"We learn that our problems can be overcome. We learn the power of and need for united action. We develop confidence in our own ability to make decisions, to take charge of our lives, and to influence the course and outcome of events."

"Notyco calls on all the people to participate in the discussion of problems and decision making. This guarantees not only that the decisions are correct, but also that the people are consciously committed to their implementation."

"The councils, bantustans, management committees and other puppet bodies are undemocratic and unable to do anything about our problems. We must gain the strength and power to challenge oppression and overcome it. Organisation is our tool to build this strength and power. Power must be extended to the whole oppressed population."

"We know that our struggle will be long. But history has proved that no amount of brutality can stop liberty from experiencing itself."

SAYCO SPEAKS

WHY IS THE PROCESS OF DRAWING UP THE CHARTER SO SIGNIFICANT?

The FC was drawn up after consultation with the people, by the delegates of the people, after the people themselves have made demands.

That very process was democratic in that it was the people deciding for themselves what kind of a society they would like to live in in future, given the present apartheid colonialist regime and society under which they are living.

So with the Charter, it was not for the leaders, it was for the people themselves to decide. And it was not just organisations, but the people in general.

Before that the ANC did have its own programmatic document, the African Claims, about how they saw the struggle and how they as an organisation see a future SA. Other organisations also had their own programmes.

But now a national kind of demand had to be made which did not depend on the views of this or that organisation, but on all the people, whether members of organisations or not.

What was needed, given the alliances that had been developing in the process of struggle, was a more open kind of demand. Demands made by all the people of SA had to be drawn up.

That is the significance of the Charter - that it cannot be ascribed to one organisation or individual.

Hence the process to collect the demands that ultimately led up to the drawing of the charter began. It involved the students, it involved the workers, women, all sectors, through organisations and through individuals in the streets.

The fact that all sectors of the people were involved in this process proves that in SA today there isn't any other document that can stand up to the FC.

The charter is more than just a set of demands. Because here the people themselves consciously make demands, the demands that they in their daily lives would like to see implemented.

When it is the masses that make demands and implement those demands consciously, then a process of fundamental change has begun.

Because in this process people in their millions, conscious people, participate in struggle in order to bring down, in SA, an oppressive and exploitative system and replace it with a free society.

The Charter is a certain kind of document in that the political, social and economic order that it envisages, cannot be imposed within the present political, social and economic order.

This present order needs to be broken down completely before the demands enshrined in the Charter can be met.

WHY AT THAT POINT WAS THE CHARTER DRAWN UP?

In our history, we find that our people have been struggling separately. Their unity has been a product of a series of activities, united fronts and many other united actions by our people.

In 1912 when the ANC was formed, its main distinguishing aim was to bring together all Africans in SA so as to be able to confront the common enemy of colonialism.

In the process of struggle, other organisations like APO which stood for the coloured people's rights, and the NIC that championed the cause of the Indian community, were also formed. They were championing the rights of their people, as separated by the government from other people.

At this time there were no socialist countries in the world.

Certain events, such as the first world war, the Russian revolution and the formation of the Communist Party of SA (CPSA) in 1921 dramatically changed the whole outlook of the South African liberation movement.

It was not by chance that non-racialism in SA was first championed by the CPSA, not the ANC, NIC or APO. This was done in the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union and in the ANC.

Bonds between individuals in the ANC and the CPSA developed into bonds between organisations and today there is integration on

the ground.

In this period people had joined hands in a form of united front. The most important one was the Xuma, Naicker, Dadoo alliance between the ANC and the South African Indian Congress.

There was also the June 26 Freedom Day, called by the ANC to protest against the banning of the CPSA in 1950, and joint support of the 1946 miners strike in 1946.

During those very big years we saw our people coming together in struggle, in action, from all organisations, from all walks of life, joining hands in a common struggle and implementing this idea of bringing these different organisations together.

The coming to power of the Nationalist Party formed and helped facilitate this process. There was no longer any difference as to who they would strike. During those years, the NP took away the remaining rights of our so-called coloured people. That also opened the eyes of the African leaders that the coloured community like the African community, have no political rights.

All these concrete conditions determined the new tactics of struggle. But these new tactics of struggle had to be informed by a new vision before they could be implemented.

It was no longer a case of building an African nation of Africans alone, people had to think of a new South African society, a non-racial South African society.

That is why this idea of the Freedom Charter did not come earlier or after that time, but



"Every campaign, every action we take, is guided



ETVI youth find their political home in Sayco

THE SAYCO motto "every youth a congress member" has been taken to heart in the Eastern Transvaal.

After the Lowveld Youth Movement (Loyomo) collapsed, due to lack of regional support and repression, the youth vowed to re-organise themselves in a more advanced and sophisticated manner.

"We learned from our mistakes. Now we will concentrate on organising on a local level first, then on a regional one," explained an Etyco spokesperson.

Left with no political home after the collapse of Loyomo, the youth faced the challenge of rebuilding youth organisation. "We started to organise ourselves under the banner of Sayco in 1987. A regional Sayco interim committee was set up to facilitate the launch of a fully-fledged regional organisation," said the spokesperson.

Organising under repressive conditions wasn't easy.

"We had to adapt our methods of organisation to suit the present conditions. We have established ten working units to co-ordinate activities and lay the basis for a permanent mouthpiece for the youth."

The interim structure has already embarked on a number of campaigns like the "Save the Patriots" campaign and popularising the Freedom Charter.

Since the start of the Emergency, there has been an increase in the number of vigilante groups and an escalation of their activities against activists and organisations.

In Ermelo, a vigilante group known as "Sharp" has emerged. "Their programme is to harass activists and distribute pamphlets to try and win the hearts and minds of people.

"Little do they realise that the activists they harass are sons and daughters of the very people they are trying to win over," said the spokesperson.

In Standerton a vigilante group called "Pirates" have declared war on activists, attacking them and their homes.

A vigilante group called "Champion Squad", under the leadership of Chief L.L. Mogane, operates in the area from Graskop to Bushbuckridge. This group has connections with AWB supporters.

"The chief himself confirmed this. He said he was approached by a group of AWB people and some black men to ask his permission to 'put comrades on the right track'," said the spokesperson.

In the Witrivier area, activists also have to contend with the AWB.

"At one time AWB supporters shot two youths. Due to fear of being detained, the matter was not reported to the police and consequently there were no reprisals," said the spokesperson.

But although activists are angry with the vigilantes, they believe that some of them can be won over. "These people have been misled in to believing that they have a stake to defend in the apartheid system."

"It is only when we organise and politicise our people that we will remove the threat of vigilantes. But in the meantime we have to defend ourselves," said the spokesperson.

Self-defence committees have been formed at Graskop, Bushbuckridge, Hazyview, Nelspruit, Zwelitsha, Ngodini, Barbeton, Belfast, Machadodorp, Standerton, Witbank, Leandra and Middelburg.

"The Mozambique terrorist organisation, MNR, is also active in the Gazankulu, Hazyview, and Bushbuckridge areas.

"They approach activists pretending to be from the ANC and offer them boobytrapped handgrenades. In Acornhoek last year a student died from such an offer," said the spokesperson.

On top of this, the state is still trying to win the hearts and minds of the youth.

"They have introduced the widely rejected DET camps for schoolkids to brainwash them against their struggle at school and the community at large," said the spokesperson.



Machel remembered

THOUSANDS of people flocked to the remote Eastern Transvaal area of Mbusini near KaNgwane to commemorate the death of the late Mozambican president Samora Moises Machel.

Above are scenes from the commemoration service, held at the site where Machel's plane crashed under mysterious circumstances.

Speakers at the service, organised by SAYCO, UDF and COSATU, praised Machel as a great leader and condemned the role of Pretoria in destabilising the Southern African region.

A joint statement said "the youth and workers of the whole Southern Africa have a common goal; that of ending apartheid and exploitation in South Africa and the creation of a peaceful region in Southern Africa under the democratic leadership and control of the oppressed and exploited".

"This was the vision of Samora Machel. This is the vision of socialism in Southern Africa. The workers of Southern Africa will never let it die. Through our struggle, our sacrifices and our hopes we will keep the memory of Samora Machel alive this year and every year.

Students battle at Mgwenya

FOR MORE than three years, students at Mgwenya College in the Eastern Transvaal have been battling with the college administration.

The SRC spoke to Saspu National about their struggles.

"When we came to the college in 1984, we found an SRC already in existence. But it was an undemocratic, institutional SRC. The administration had drafted its constitution to control students' activities."

A democratic SRC was eventually set up after students drafted their own constitution. But the battle was not over.

"The administration seeks to crush our victory, but we cannot give in. Our gains are the product of bitter struggle. We will defend them to the end."

Open conflict at the college started in 1985 when Dean of Student Affairs, Tlou, suspended pregnant female students. "Tlou was given an

ultimatum to leave the campus within 78 hours. The rector summoned students to a meeting, only to be ambushed and attacked by cops wearing balaclavas, carrying sjamboks and pickhandles. Fourteen students were detained and the college was closed down."

When the college reopened the SRC had been suspended. This met with a violent response. Government cars were overturned and burnt, property was damaged and the college was again closed.

"When we reopened again, we found that the white rector had been replaced by a black, Mr Ndlala. They probably thought our struggle is a racial one. This shows the administration's lack of insight into our problems."

In 1986 there were class boycotts, and a food boycott in protest against unhygienic kitchen facilities, and dirty and monotonous food.

When the SRC was to be elected in March 1987, a student mass meeting discussed the SRC constitution and the suspension of three students and resolved to boycott classes.

"Ndlala closed the college. He invited our parents through Radio Swazi and letters to discuss the closure. But parents demanded to know why students were not invited to present their story at the meeting."

"Of course, the rector was not at all times acting unilaterally, but on behalf of the Governing Council - a government created institution consisting of a magistrate, a policeman, a priest, a circuit inspector, the rector and his deputy. We don't recognise this institution and we didn't elect the people on it.

"The parent meeting failed to resolve the problem but the college reopened. As soon as the situation normalised, the rector called in SRC members one by one. He forced them to sign documents that said the SRC was responsible for the class and food boycott. He threatened to expel the whole SRC if there were further boycotts.

"But," said the SRC, "threats or no threats, our struggle for democratic people's education continues."

ON THE CHARTER



People Govern

"The People Shall Govern" says banner carried by youth in 1983 Durban protest march against the hanging of six ANC guerillas



during that very time. It had to come then because of these given material conditions.

HOW AND WHY DID SAYCO ADOPT THE CHARTER?

Sayco developed out of the process of struggle itself. It was formed on the basis of the existence of youth organisations in local townships and villages throughout the country.

Many of these local youth congresses had already adopted the FC and were guided by the FC as part of the UDF, even before the UDF adopted the Charter. The youth have always been in the forefront, the most radical elements within the UDF. This is one factor.

The other factor is that Sayco arose after Cosas which adopted the FC and non-racialism from its inception. This idea of non-racialism was implanted in the youth congresses and

taken up by our youth.

When Cosas was formed non-racialism and the non-racial approach to the struggle made a breakthrough.

This was similar to the breakthrough in 1955 when the FC was adopted. In 1956 when the FC

was adopted, not by the Congress Alliance, but by the ANC in particular, non-racialism won over what we call narrow nationalism.

But the banning of organisations suppressed the idea of non-racialism and brought up racial approaches again. Until non-racialism made another breakthrough. So this informed the formation of Sayco as it did the youth congresses throughout the country.

Sayco is the product of the National Youth Organisation (NYO) interim committee. In the process leading to the launch of Sayco the NYO discussed and consulted not just the structures of Sayco, but also its ideological line.

This was necessary because we are all agreed that the youth are not homogeneous, they are found in every strata, in every class. But as members of the working people and as people who are interested in the future the youth could not take any other route, but a route that points to the future.

In SA the route that points to the future is the route that is applied in the FC itself. Hence the NYO discussed the FC, and Sayco adopted it.

HAVE ALL SAYCO AFFILIATES ADOPTED THE CHARTER?

At the moment all Sayco affiliates have adopted the FC, formally or informally. Not that we have made this a precondition.

Some church youth groupings like Casa and YCS, have on their own and without any insistence from Sayco, adopted the FC and have applied for membership to Sayco.

We realise that the FC represents a certain level of political consciousness that needs to be developed and we can't assume it. Organisations join Sayco because they want to participate in struggle. And it is in this struggle that their views will be evolved and changed, that they will begin to understand the FC and adopt it.

We are not saying those who haven't adopted the Charter should not come into Sayco. It is not an imposition on anyone, it is not the closing of doors. Youth congresses must join Sayco. And Sayco's political vision must be learnt within its structures.

We do not expect youth congresses to come into Sayco already having this vision. Sayco has got the duty to teach the youth this. Sayco has chosen a direct and definite political line and adopted the FC. This doesn't mean that everyone in Sayco understands the FC, but we know that it is Sayco's duty to teach and introduce that line to its members and to the youth in general.

HOW IS THE CHARTER LINKED TO THE STRUGGLES OF THE YOUTH?

The youth have participated in the formation of structures of popular control, through guidance from the Charter itself.

Sayco leadership and structures have consciously encouraged this. Through participation in these structures, Sayco has

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by our understanding of the Freedom Charter"

Free State youth form Sayco region

DESPITE repression and the emergency, the Free State Youth Congress has been launched and has affiliated to Sayco, joining hands with other regional and local youth congresses.

Fryco leaders said the idea of launching the organisation was born out of consultation and hard work initiated by the Free State Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee was set up in March this year to co-ordinate, plan and facilitate the launch of the youth congress.

In all, 36 local youth congresses with an estimated membership of about 200 000 had to be consulted. This set the stage for the formation of Fryco.

At its launching congress, Winnie Mandela and Terror Lekota, the UDF publicity Secretary who is presently standing trial for treason, were elected honorary presidents of Fryco.

Speaking at the launch, Fryco president Smangalish Madlakazela called for the unbanning of the ANC, the lifting of the state of emergency, the release of political prisoners, the return of exiles and the repeal of apartheid laws. "Without the ANC there won't be any solution to the country's problems," he said.

Madlakazela said Fryco would cement the alliance between workers and the youth by forging links with all progressive trade unions in the Free State.



Flashback to 1984 - youth celebrating in the streets of the Free State's Thabong township, Welkom. pic: City Press

He sent fraternal greetings to Cosatu. He saluted them for adopting the Freedom Charter which he said contains "minimum workers' demands." He called on workers to take the lead in the national democratic struggle.

Madlakazela said the youth movement must also forge links with student congresses to fight apartheid

education. He called on the DET to accede to students' demands for democratic SRCs.

Fryco adopted the Freedom Charter as a "basis for the advance of a democratic republic of South Africa."

The youth congress also resolved to popularise the document

through workshops and group discussions.

Some of the resolutions passed by Fryco at its launch congress are:

- to block the proposed establishment of a US-backed Mangaung Youth Society.

- to call on teachers in the Free State to join progressive organisations under the leadership of the National

Education Union of South Africa.

- to call on the DET to unconditionally reinstate all students who were detained in the Free State.

- to call for the unbanning of the ANC.

- to forge an alliance with progressive unions and recognising the central role of the working class in the national democratic struggle.

- to encourage unemployed youth to join progressive unions for the unemployed and working youth to join Cosatu affiliated unions.

- to fight alongside communities in their battle for reduced rents and against evictions.

- to support Botshabelo youth and community in their resistance against incorporation into the Qwaqwa homeland.

- to fight against state propoganda and to ensure the survival of the congress.

- to call on the Frontline States to observe the principles of the UN Charter on Refugees and exiled people and pledged their support for the letter which was sent by Sayco to the Frontline states.

- to pledge support for the Save the Patriots Campaign and abolition of capital punishment.

- to call on the government to recognise the Geneva Convention Protocol on the position of political prisoners and to accord prisoner of war status to captured guerillas.

- to call on the youth in reactionary council-backed organisations to resign.

Bantustan loyalty is Ximoko's aim

TWO PRO-BANTUSTAN organisations in Gazankulu are coercing people sign up as members. The groups are Ximoko xa Rixaka and the Gazankulu Women's Association, Gwa.

Ximoko is projected by the Gazankulu government as a "national cultural organisation", in the style of Kwazulu's Inkatha. Ximoko's constitution states that it aims to "foster the spirit of patriotism and a strong sense of unity based on loyalty first to Gazankulu and then to South Africa."

Ximoko was recently revived by Gazankulu chief minister Ntsanwisi, known for his support for Apartheid and promoting tribalism. He welcomed Botha's new National Council.

Anyone who is "loyal to Gazankulu first" may become a member of Ximoko. Local activists say that people opposing the bantustan policy are Ximoko's target.

Ximoko's constitution is contradictory: it tries to portray

itself as free from homeland control, as well as putting 'Gazankulu first'. The constitution also aims "To work for the destruction of the bourgeois mentality and foster free enterprise."

Membership is compulsory for all Gazankulu government employees and many residents say they have been forced to pay R5 membership fees.

Members are encouraged to fight other organisations. "Their rallies always attack the UDF, Sayco, ANC, SACP and Cosatu as subversive," said an activist.

Gwa, a Ximoko affiliate, is aimed at promoting tribalism among women. Its president is constitutionally the wife of Gazankulu's chief minister.

All women working for the Gazankulu civil service are forced to join Gwa and wear Gwa uniforms during rallies.

Notyco wants to expose Gwa and organise the women of Gazankulu: "Gwa has never raised a finger about the sufferings of the women in



Blowing their own trumpet and building tribalism and bantustan loyalty in Gazankulu

Gazankulu. They only want to foster the aims of the Gazankulu government in the minds of the women.

"Our task is to make these women understand that our people will never be free until the women are free; that tribalism will not free them from exploitation and discrimination.

"Notyco encourages them to join political organisations and fight against national oppression and economic exploitation and all forms of discrimination."

Phayco revives youth and works with Cosatu

STEPS HAVE recently been taken to revive youth organisation in Phalaborwa. The Phalaborwa Youth Congress (Phayco) an affiliate of the Northern Transvaal Youth Congress (Notyco), will bring together the youth of four villages and two townships in the area.

An interim committee of ten members elected from different villages and townships is spearheading the rebuilding of youth organisation, which has been hard-hit by the emergencies.

A Phayco spokesperson said Lulekane and Namakgale and Mashishimale village used to have their own youth congresses.

"But repression weakened these structures. So activists in Namakgale made it their task to revive them and incorporate them into a bigger Phayco."

The relationship between Phayco and Cosatu is close. "Through Cosatu we are given platforms to encourage the formation of youth structures in the different communities.

"Youth in Cosatu are co-operating, they have a clearer understanding of the struggle as a whole. Three of our office bearers are shopstewards and organisers.

The Cosatu local has saluted the revival of Phayco, saying this would

help solve problems of tribalism planted amongst the people.

Phalaborwa is becoming a key target of Gazankulu and Lebowa tribalism.

A meeting organised by Gazankulu's Ximoko xa Rixaka revealed plans to:

- install chief minister Ntsanwisi as the chief of Lulekane. Activists say this is because he will be stepping down as chief minister next year.

- Residents alleged that Gazankulu Police are forcing them to pay R15 each - R10 for Ntsanwisi as their future chief and R5 for membership of Ximoko.

- kick all non-Shangaans out of Lulekane,

- force all Shangaans living in Namakgale to move to Lulekane. 1500 Shangaan speaking scholars have been instructed to leave Namakgale school by 1 January next year. Shangaan-speaking workers have been promised R5000 loans to buy or build houses and local mines, PMC and Foskor have bought stands in Lulekane for their Shangaan employees.

- Phayco and Notyco have strongly condemned what they call "a campaign to promote tribalism among our people". The youth plan to mount their own campaign against the new moves.

Cayco's week of political education

THE CAPE Youth Congress (Cayco) held a week-long education workshop to expose Cayco members to the tradition of the democratic movement and to develop a better understanding of working class struggle.

Cayco's Education Officer said the Focus Week was organised because there was a lack of understanding of the nature of our struggle and our society.

"We had learnt about the Charter's historical background, the conditions and the form of struggle that led to its drawing up and subsequent adoption. We realised that members of Cayco did not yet understand National Democratic Struggle (NDS) and the Freedom Charter.

"We were also aware of the great

enthusiasm amongst the youth for socialism, but there was a lack of understanding of the role that NDS and the Charter could play in the attainment of socialism," said Cayco.

Themes discussed at the focus week included the role of the youth and women in the NDS, trade unions and the Freedom Charter, Internal Colonialism and People's Power.

The workshop noted that youth have always been at the forefront of community struggle and that youth structures are a training ground for activists.

"The role of the youth must be defined in relation to other constituencies. The youth cannot operate isolated from Cosatu, civics

and other progressive organisations," said Cayco.

The absence of women in youth structures was identified as a great weakness for the youth. The vast majority of working class youth are also still outside Sayco.

A member of the United Women's Congress delivered a paper on women and NDS outlining the position of women in society, in the family and other areas.

The speaker spoke about sexism in progressive organisations: "We see most organisations are dominated by men. This must end. The role of women activists is not writing minutes or making tea. As long as women are not liberated in organisations, or at home, we will never be free."

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brought about and developed a new understanding of what this means.

Every campaign that we take up is guided by this political programme in the Charter.

Sayco has launched the Save the Patriots campaign because we are concerned about the law of the country. The demand for a fair trial is very explicit in the FC.

We are talking about the law of the people. The guidelines for this are defined in the FC - that all people must be equal before the law. This law must serve the people and protect them. Because the law is supposed to regulate the relations between people. It must recognise equal individual rights.

Sayco and the national democratic struggle challenges SA's status because it is not based on the will of the people. This is why our struggle is justified.

HOW DO OTHER SAYCO ACTIVITIES RELATE TO THE CHARTER?

Our student sector is taking up the demand in the Charter that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened. So they are taking up the issue of people's education.

Together with the youth generally they are expanding the idea of education. Education is not only in schools, but also outside schools. Education should be relevant to our daily lives and it should be able to direct us and guide us in our struggle.

Sayco has opened up a cultural committee that has the task of promoting progressive elements of culture in order to develop a new South African culture.

We also have a labour committee because of the fact that there are working youth inside and outside the trade union movement. And it is the task of a political organisation such as Sayco to give political direction to these working youth.

Every kind of action we take, the tactics and everything, are derived from our own understanding of the FC.

Not that we think that the FC has a number of meanings. It has, only if we take into consideration the number of people, classes and strata that believe in the FC.

But we are saying that at the point of implementation the FC shall assume only one meaning. We cannot create a number of realities based on the FC.

WHAT DOES THE FC MEAN FOR STRUGGLES TODAY?

Our goal has been defined in the FC, but we don't see the FC as something static that should only be achieved in the future.

The changing circumstances of struggle mean that our forms of struggle and organisation change from time to time. For example, today under the state of emergency people are talking of the need to defend themselves, propaganda and security.

The seeds of a future government are being planted today, and this is also informed by the FC.

When we say that the people shall govern, we do not mean that the people should struggle to become candidates every five years, but that the people shall daily administer their lives through their own structures.

Sayco as an organisation has developed quite a new interpretation of these structures. And this is due to our own understanding of the FC.

WHAT IS THIS NEW UNDERSTANDING?

Today there are certain questions we need to develop sharply in order to find proper direction out of the present situation.

Initially people thought that the simple formation of a civic, a street and a block committee was enough. We are saying this is only a beginning.



WCape youth protest the closing of Langa high school, prosecution of teachers and killing of alleged ANC guerilla Ashley Kriel.

In these structures, struggles around immediate issues and the administrative aspect have mostly been dominant. We are saying these structures need to address themselves to the question of political power. For example, street committee members need to understand how every local issue is linked to political power.

We don't mean the street committee should march to Pretoria.

But that street committee should make it a point that it takes responsibility for the running of affairs there. And it must be able to defend itself and make sure that it can't be crushed.

HOW DOES SAYCO VIEW RELIGION AND THE CHARTER?

Sayco has set up a religious liason committee because we believe that religious youth have a stake in the politics and the economy of this country. The Charter says that irrespective of creed or belief, people should have all their rights.

So Sayco has opened to the religious youth, motivated by the own religion, to join Sayco. Because we believe that religion forms part of the social consciousness of our people. It derives from people's material life.

Religious youth, together with other youth, want to eat, clothe themselves and take care of their children, they want peace. So they see the world from the religious point of view.

No religion can live above these basic needs. They can't separate

their religion from themselves as social beings. So their religion must take sides. It is only when they participate alongside other social sectors in the struggle that they can achieve whatever they are praying for in their prayers.

Our religious structure is non-denominational because there is a difference between the laws of a church, the denomination, and religion itself.

WE SHALL NOT RETREAT

The youth display their messages and militancy at Uitenhage mass funeral in 1985.

HOW HAVE THE YOUTH POPULARISED THE FC?

Through our education and publicity departments the youth have been printing and reading the FC and making it indigenous in Sayco itself. So there is a FC as adopted by Sayco.

As we said, we have also taken up campaigns that are informed by the FC.

We have had workshops at different levels which are aimed at educating the youth and also discussing our understanding of the charter with other sectors and organisations, like the trade unions, civics and students.

Our concern is that it should not only be popularised so that people know it exists, but that our people who have drawn it should be guided by it in their daily struggles. So we need to develop a common understanding of the Charter.

Not that we can't have united action without that common understanding, but we should strive in this very united action to develop a common view of South African society.

Sayco has received debate with open hands and an open heart. That is one way of popularising the Charter. In Sayco we have not allowed one viewpoint to be imposed over the others.

We have allowed constructive debate to continue around the Charter. Because we believe that the deep understanding of the FC can only come through debates, debates that are aimed at sharpening the forms of struggle that we implement in practice. That is how we are popularising the FC.

WHAT ROLE CAN THE YOUTH PLAY?

The youth have a definite and special role to play in relation to the charter as a beacon of the future.

The youth are a special sector in our society. They are referred to as the shock troops, the

most energetic, not only in the implementation of programmes, but also in the search for light and truth.

That is why the youth are so important. Most organisations rely on the youth to advance their programmes, political education and other needs of the democratic movement. Even in the apartheid ranks it is the youth that are implementing programmes.

For us also, it is the youth who of necessity must fill up the most forward trenches - at the ideological, political and economic level. They have that special task.

Because they are not a class, they can't evolve a coherent theory of life on their own. This makes them search for the theory that will best serve them.

Mostly they are not attached and they want to see things changed - unlike their parents who would just accept things because they have lived long with it.

For example, the fight against superstition is being spearheaded by the youth. The parents would say: we have grown up under the witchdoctor and we have reached this old age. We think he has a role to play.

But the youth will always question these things. Because they haven't got the fears of their parents. They are most adventurous. This is informed by their very search for light, for a theory to guide them in life. You don't need to be a philosopher to evolve a theory that should guide you.

Everyone has a way in which he sees the world. And this is built in through a process of socialisation and internalisation. During this process the youth tend to question certain established norms and customs that don't fit with their search for a theory of life. This is one thing that makes the youth the most energised or galvanised sector of society.

They are not the ones who have all the tools to bring it about. But they are the ones who implement these programmes, more energetically and more rigourously than any other sector.

HOW DOES THE CHARTER HELP BUILD ORGANISATIONS?

Today more than ever before, our people, everyone, black and white, are concerned with their future. Some want to know wether they will still be allowed to live in SA, capitalists would like to know if their factories will be safe-guarded in the future and so on.

The FC gives people a chance to discuss the nature of society that they would like to live in in the future. And everyone would like to see his interests met in the FC.

But these interests are social interests, so people come together to form organisations. The residents find their own interests catered for in the FC, they form a civic, and they are guided by the demands in the FC. The students also, and every other grouping. Even some of the capitalists, the petty bourgeoisie, realise that the FC allows them to have the right to trade wherever they will in the future.

That is how the Charter or any idea that finds expression in the concrete material experience of our people, leads them to organise in the first place.

The Charter contains the ideas that derive from the SA reality, and it is for this reason that people organise around the demands that are found in the FC.

DO ANY CLAUSES IN THE FC APPLY MORE TO THE YOUTH?

All clauses apply to the youth. We cannot separate the different clauses. The Charter speaks of a new social, economic, political and cultural order in SA. This is necessitated by history itself. So it cannot be seen in pieces. It is one whole transitional period.

All clauses are a dialectical unity. In the creation of a unitary, non-racial and democratic SA we can't do away with any of the demands. So we cannot really argue one

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After twenty year wait Irene marries imprisoned Wilton Mkwayi

WHEN the Umkhonto we Sizwe High Command was cornered in Rivonia in 1963 Wilton Zimasile Mkwayi managed to evade the dragnet thrown by the security police.

He went abroad for military training but was instructed to return to South Africa by the leadership of the ANC. Mkwayi became Commander in Chief of MK inside the country, replacing Nelson Mandela. By this time he was the most wanted member of the ANC and the South African Communist Party. He continued working to build

MK's underground structures.

One day he was spotted by security police in Soweto. They shot at him, wounding him in the thigh. But he escaped and friends took him to a local nursing sister in Orlando West. She removed the bullet and dressed his wound. The nursing sister was none other than his future wife, Irene.

From underground Wilton Mkwayi kept contact with Irene. But in late 1965 he was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island after a trial known as the

small Rivonia Trial.

On the Island, Wilton applied for permission to marry Irene. The authorities refused and the two then married in a "customary" way in 1967.

Irene Mkwayi, who is a co-president of the Release Mandela Campaign, said that it was always their wish to marry by Christian rites. But it took prison authorities twenty years to allow the wedding to take place - in Cape Town's Pollsmoor Prison.

At a service on 30 October, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and a

panel of ministers blessed the rings and the following morning Irene went to the prison.

"Wilton was brought from Robben Island specially for the wedding," said Mrs Mkwayi. "He was wearing a dark suit - a privilege he had once in 23 years. Mandela was the so-called best man. No one was allowed into prison except the lawyer and the minister."

After the ceremony, Mrs Mkwayi came out to meet a cheering crowd. Hooters blared and there were ululations in the streets outside

Pollsmoor.

Cape Town's United Women's Congress organised a big luncheon in a township church and that evening organisations affiliated to the UDF threw a reception party for the couple.

UDF Western Cape chairman, Dallah Omar read Wilton Mkwayi's statement from the dock. Speakers praised Mrs Mkwayi for her endurance and called others to show such dedication and hope.

Needs Camp's future uncertain

NEARLY two years after they were forcefully removed from Kuni village in Ciskei, people in Needs Camp still have no permanent home.

The community is waiting for the final outcome of a court case in which neighbouring farmers are trying to get them removed from the camp.

The farmers claimed the refugees stole cattle and that the area was unsuitable for a large settlement. The farmers had lost the case, but an appeal is due to be heard next year. Until then the camp's future hangs in the balance.

If the farmers win the appeal, the community may be moved somewhere else in South Africa, or Needs Camp may be incorporated into Ciskei.

Government officials have denied the area is to be incorporated into the

Ciskei, but residents say they have seen a recent map showing Needs Camps as part of the Ciskei.

Local National Party member of parliament, Peet de Pontes has mentioned co-operation with Ciskei to find a new site for the Needs Camp people. "I believe it should move, but if it can't move, it can't stay as it is. It should be upgraded into a proper town," he said.

Residents want a permanent place to stay. "When we were along the road (after being removed from Kuni village) we told the South African authorities that we don't want to move from the roadside unless we are assured that the place we are going to is a permanent one," said one resident.

Despite bad conditions at the camp, residents are prepared to stay there. But they are determined not to fall under the Ciskei. They say if the area is incorporated into the bantustan, they would rather move.

They were first kicked out of the Ciskei in January last year in an attempt by Ciskei authorities to suppress popular opposition.

Ciskei's Director of Communications, Headman Sontunzi said at the time that the people were kicked out because of their misdeeds. "They spread instability in the area by killing people, assaulting government officials, and burning their property," he claimed. The community has repeatedly denied the claims.

Needs Camp is patrolled by the SADF, supposedly in order to maintain law and order. "When we were initially removed by Ciskei, we were termed arsonists. Maybe the SADF is here to keep an eye on us," said one resident, "We don't feel at ease with the army here."

Residents said the authorities had taken over the temporary school and built a temporary clinic, but demands for ploughing fields and the right to keep their own stock have not been met.

Whatever the outcome of the court case, the residents are adamant the Ciskei has nothing to offer them. "We have no interest in going back to Ciskei" they said.

New Council moves against rent boycott in Cambridge

THE FUTURE of the residents of Cambridge location, on the outskirts of East London, hangs in the balance.

The local Town Council has launched a campaign of intimidation, possibly in response to the township's three-year old rent boycott.

Cambridge, a township of about 100 one-roomed houses, falls under the Gomo Town Council. Like most of the Border region, it has been hard hit by unemployment. Some people survive by selling vegetables while a few of the women are domestic workers in nearby white suburbs.

Residents say the town council sent them circulars instructing them to submit their house permits to the administration offices. On arrival at the offices, the permits were confiscated. They would only be returned to them if they paid their rent.

The spokesperson of the local civic, the Duncan Village Residents Association, said the rent boycott started in 1985 when residents protested against paying R35. 47 for one roomed houses.

"The residents also demanded an end to the threats of removing the people of Duncan Village, the improvement of housing in the township, and an explanation of what their rent money is used for. They said rent should be paid to the City Council rather than the former East Cape Development Board.

"Until now our demands have not been met. The latest moves are aimed at breaking the unity of the people of Cambridge. But the people are standing firm in their demands," said the Duncan Village spokesperson.

Gomo Town Council has announced their intention to upgrade the township, but the residents noted that the information was released to the commercial press and the people were not consulted.



Potsdam women and children with belongings all packed up and ready to attempt another move from the Ciskei into South Africa

Potsdam calls for international help

FOR THE second time this year Potsdam residents fled the Ciskei but were turned back by South African authorities. An earlier attempt in February suffered the same fate.

Four years ago they were unwillingly removed from Blue Rock - in South Africa - and dumped in Potsdam in the Ciskei.

But the people of Potsdam are resolute that they will not remain under Ciskei rule. Their attempts to flee the bantustan followed allegations of intense harassment by Ciskei police and vigilantes.

Residents raised funds to rent two trucks to take them and their belongings across the border.

"We are happy today, tonight we'll sleep in South Africa. We don't have to dream of Ciskei police anymore," said one excited, but determined resident just before the move at the beginning of September.

The community of about 2400

people had planned to cross the border to Arnoldton near their original home in Blue Rock.

But before the first group reached Arnoldton the place, the owner of the land laid a complaint and the South African police stepped in.

The group were trucked back to Potsdam to rejoin the rest of the people who had already dismantled their shacks in preparation for the move. Their possessions were dumped on a field some distance from their homes.

While their latest attempt failed, residents don't see this as a waste of time and money. "It showed people at large that we don't want to live in the Ciskei", they said.

The refugees have now appealed to the international community to intervene and to put pressure on the South African government to resolve the plight of the people of Potsdam.

Letters have been sent to the embassies of West Germany, France, The Netherlands, Britain, USA, Norway and Canada.

The letter, signed on behalf of the women of Potsdam, says: "We want you to talk to the South African government and ask them for a residential place for us in South Africa."

"We are like doves, we came to Potsdam with more children than we have now and we need your help.

"We are living under a reign of terror in Potsdam ever since we arrived here in 1983. We were taken from Blue Rock in South Africa, being told we would be given houses in Mdantsane but we were taken to Potsdam and have been beaten ever since we arrived."

A Potsdam community leader Zola Nozewu was recently murdered by vigilantes.

Dimbaza youth join hands with parents

DESPITE the brutality of the Ciskei government, the Dimbaza Youth Congress (Diyco) has managed to keep operating.

Saspu National spoke to leaders of the Youth Congress about the situation in the township.

They said many activists are still locked up in the Ciskei jails - over 40 Dimbaza residents are known to be detained under the Ciskei National Security Act.

"We have managed, to some extent, to shift the burden of resistance from our shoulders to the masses," said Bonisile.

"This happened by way of forming

mass structures where they never existed before and through the revival of organisations which had been dealt a serious blow by the unholy alliance between Ciskei and South Africa.

"Our Youth Congress realized that it is not the task of the Civic Association alone to challenge the social evils inherent in the Ciskei. We felt that we were also deeply affected by these inadequacies.

"For us there is no difference between organising the parents and the youth. Of importance, is the need to fight side by side with other sectors within our community."

Bonisile went on to say "the poverty wages earned by employees in the Ciskei firms, coupled with the coerced acceptance of the Bantustans, led the youth congress to also participate in the formation of workers' defence committees.

"Ciskei refuses to recognise progressive unions in the Ciskei."

"There are serious shortages of basic necessities in Dimbaza," said another local activist, Xolile.

"Sometimes there are virtually no health facilities or clean water, there is no transport to link our area with the town. But fighting these problems generates a spirit of

cooperation amongst the people," Xolile said.

Diyco's activity has attracted repression: "When the activities of Diyco reached throughout Dimbaza, the Ciskei security police detained many of our members."

Bonisile believes that the aim of these detentions was to frighten the youth away from taking part in youth activities, while also trying to crush the youth body.

"We in Diyco know the struggles with Ciskei are just short term campaigns," said Bonisile, "but the broader one is for a democratic future in South Africa."



Miners lift Num president shoulder-high at Num congress

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HOW IS HEALTH AND SAFETY LINKED TO THE FC?

The FC demands not only work but security and safety in that work. Safety in mining is a most important issue.

Cyril (NUM secretary general) once said it is more important than wages because you have to be alive to earn your wages. About 600 miners die every year as a result of accidents alone. Last year it was over 700 people. In September 1983 69 people were killed in Hlobane. That month 30000 workers sat down for half an hour protesting against the lack of safety measures.

After the Kinross disaster in 1986, on 1 October 300 000 mineworkers protested for a whole day along with 275 000 workers from other Cosatu affiliates. That shows the intensification of the struggle for safety. There is an ongoing struggle for safety stewards to be recognised. It is an ongoing struggle for bosses to put safety before profits.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE DEMAND FOR A LIVING WAGE?

The campaign itself has an immediate demand for a living wage that can, but won't, be met by the mining bosses. But we see it more as a long term demand because within a capitalist society workers will never be paid a living wage.

On the one hand one has galloping inflation. On the other hand the bosses are making record profits year after year without paying workers the same percentage of profit they are making.

So workers will only be paid a living wage in a transformed society where workers actually control the means of production.

YOU HAVE ADOPTED THE CHARTER AND ALSO SOCIALISM IN YOUR POLITICAL POLICY. HOW DO THEY RELATE?

In our resolution we state that we are striving for a democratic socialist society controlled by the working class.

Socialism is a political and economic system opposed to capitalism. Socialism will meet the political, social and economic needs not only of workers, but all the oppressed people. Under capitalism profits are enjoyed by a very small group of people. Under socialism the means of production will be controlled by the working class, and the surplus that is produced will be shared amongst all the people.

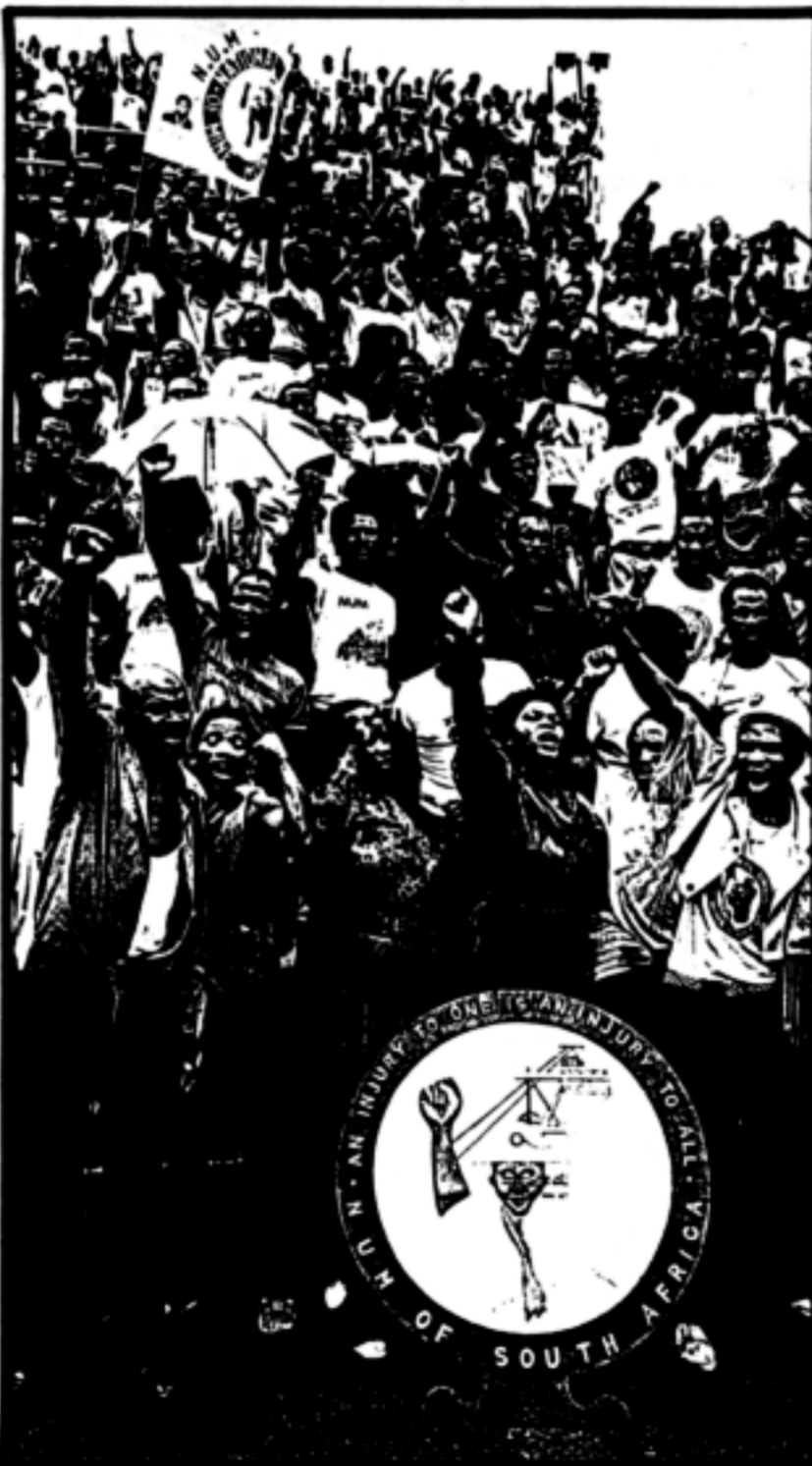
Workers won't just nationalise the means of production, but we have got to control it as well. So it will be a society where workers will rule. This will eradicate hunger, poverty and disease because the surplus will be used in such a way to meet the needs of the society. Under socialism society will be controlled by the majority. This will address other needs like education, health, safety, etc.

That's why our members say that we are part of the national democratic struggle, that we endorse the FC, and our ultimate objective is the building of a democratic socialist society.

We are saying this society can only come about when the working class becomes the leading force in the national democratic struggle. Our ultimate objective is building socialism.

So what we are saying very clearly is that it is only when we build socialism that the needs of workers throughout society will be met. It is clear that capitalism is an international system that needs an international response.

"We are part of the national democratic struggle, we endorse the Freedom Charter and our ultimate objective is the building of a democratic socialist society."



HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PROGRESSIVE ORGANISATIONS?

The Cosatu resolution adopted at the inaugural congress was very weak in some aspects.

We realised that we had to clearly define what we meant by a 'progressive organisation'. Our definition was: it must be a mass based organisation, with constituencies, accountability, and whose interests are compatible with that of the working class.

NUM adopted the FC because of our identification with the national democratic struggle. The FC has mass support among the youth, students, women and others. It is only within that struggle that we will be able to build our leading role in society, to take other oppressed classes with us towards a new democratic society.

We are not saying we must only build alliances with organisations that have adopted the FC. That is not our criteria. Rather, we say that NUM and ultimately Cosatu, having adopted the FC, clearly identify ourselves broadly with the democratic movement in this country. Specifically with organisations who are part of the democratic movement, are mass based, are accountable to their members, and whose interests are compatible with that of the working class.

With these organisations we can build disciplined alliances, even if they have not adopted the FC. For mass-based organisations to adopt the FC is a process, like it was a process with the NUM.

We don't expect everybody we are working with today to adopt the FC. We are seeing it the other way around, that organisations adopting the FC do so through a grassroots decision.

At the Cosatu congress we took this one step further. We called for permanent structures to be formed between Cosatu and its allies, the youth, women etc. The relationship we want with other organisations must be based on what work they do on the ground, not whether they have adopted the FC.

Having permanent structures at national, regional and local levels alone will not be enough. It is the role of these structures to encourage their members to take part in the community struggles themselves, be part of the street committees and civic organisations or whatever progressive organisations there are in the community. When our members mix with the community it is not as a NUM member, but as part of the community.

We must go beyond establishing structures where it is only the leadership that participates. People from all levels of the organisation must be elected to positions in those structures which coordinate activities between ourselves and other progressive organisations.

The rank and file membership has a role to play. They cannot only play their role in the trade unions.

WHAT PROGRESS HAS THERE BEEN IN BUILDING THESE ALLIANCES?

The one problem is isolation, created by the hostel system. The hostels are built in such a way that it makes it very difficult for our members to communicate with people living outside the hostel.

But in some areas like Kimberley there is political integration between our members and community based organisations, like the youth, the students and the civic organisations in that area.

In places like Witbank our members have been participating in township activities with community based organisations. So in those areas where we have mines or members living in specific communities we do have participation from our members.

The process has been unfolding slowly even before we adopted the resolution. Some time ago in the Free State you found the leadership of the union beginning to engage with Cosas before it was banned. That obviously influenced our direction as well.

So while we have had some good influence on the youth or students, it has also influenced the direction of our union.

THE National Education Crises Committee consultative conference, held at Wits University in September, rejected the government's proposed Education Laws Amendment Bill and resolved to reiterate its demand for the right to work towards people's education in and outside schools and to unite all community sectors for this purpose.

In an unprecedented move, the government requested NECC to comment on the proposed Bill which would bring all schools and institutions for the education of black persons under the Minister of Education and Development Aid.

At a hastily convened conference, about 200 delegates from the NECC's 10 regions and representatives from various progressive organisations in the country rejected the contents of the Bill, and called for its withdrawal. The NECC was initially given three days to respond, but rejected this deadline, stating that it needed time to fully consult with all its regions and representatives.

National co-ordinator Eric Molobi said the government's approach came as a surprise in view of the fact that many NECC leaders are in detention. He also made reference to the Government Gazette dated 9 January 1987, which effectively prevents the NECC from holding gatherings where discussion on alternative education takes place.

Speaking at the two-day conference, Molobi said the struggles in the education front must be seen as a dialectical process of the entire society as it strives for complete transformation from its present social formation.

The proposed Bill will, amongst other things, redefine 'school' as "any school, special school, pre-primary school, school of industries, reform school, class, part-time class, night school, college, technical college, centre institute or any other institution for the education of black persons", and bring them all under the Minister of Education and Development Aid, F W de Klerk.

It will also empower the Minister to suspend the activities of any school or class. Technikons will have their admission policies more strictly monitored, while greater power will be held to regulate "the entering of the premises of public schools by pupils of such schools" and "the discharge of teachers".

NECC

Yes to People's Education, No to Education Bill



NECC's Eric Molobi (centre) with representatives from Sansco, Nusas and Neusa.

Addressing delegates at the conference Sansco President Billy Ramokgopa said of the Bill, and other proposed Bills, that they "are an extension of the emergency into the labour field, university campuses and any other area that could still avoid some of the stipulated restrictions.

"The Government's strategy at this point is to regain control at all levels, to crush or silence the democratic movement and win over certain sections of the community such as the academics and employers," he said.

While the conference centered on the Bill, discussion around other areas was held. Decisions made at the conference included that NECC would:

- form an interim structure, with a

Flashback: Students at a parents' meeting to push for their demands.

view to launching a National Executive Committee,

- work with other organisations to form a national teachers union,
- call on progressive academics to form a national academics association,
- co-operate on the Education Charter Campaign.

The delegates present also called for an intensification of the academic

boycott.

Eric Molobi announced that despite repression, NECC had established sub-committees to research text books for History, English and Mathematics that would be more appropriate for the conditions of South African pupils. The History text book has already been completed and this was shown to the delegates when the conference opened.

Hazyview teachers strike for their demands

A STRIKE of over 400 teachers in the Eastern Transvaal areas of Hazyview, Ngodini and Ka-Nyamazane has ended in victory after negotiations between the National Education Union of SA (Neusa), representing teachers, and Ka-Ngwane's Department of Education and Culture.

Teachers demands for payment of salary increases and the supply of prescribed books and stationery were met. Teachers were paid for the time they were on strike. Three teachers detained during the strike were released.

Teachers said, "We ran out of stationery, and as a result some secondary schools could not function."

Another grievance was the Ka-Ngwane education department's refusal to pay out salary increases.

The teachers sent a petition to the Department of Education and Culture, asking them to address the crisis or face a sit-in at the end of July.

A teachers meeting was declared illegal by the bantustan's educational department on July 2. Police surrounded the venue and ordered people to disperse.

By the end of July the teachers' demands had not been met, and they were forced to take action.

Because the problem also affected students and their parents, teachers understood the need for democratic consultation. Meetings with parents and SRCs resolved to support the teachers sit-in. In addition, students sent a ten point petition to the authorities:

- against bantustan control of education,
- demanding free textbooks and stationery,
- no more overcrowding in classes,
- sufficient educational equipment,
- better library facilities,
- electricity for the schools,
- sanitary facilities to be installed,
- implement teachers salary increments,
- stop forcing students to study Swazi as a compulsory vernacular,
- free supply of food and transport subsidy for students.

Neusa adopts Freedom Charter

THE National Educational Union of South Africa (NEUSA), has adopted the Freedom Charter at its second national conference held in Durban as their "undisputed and authentic programme of action and as our basic as well as minimum demands for national liberation."

Delegates at the conference have also reiterated their call for a single, free, non-racial and non-sexist democratic education as envisaged in the Charter and laid down the question of non-racialism as one of its bases for working towards greater unity amongst teachers.

ANC leader Govan Mbeki, who was recently released after serving 23 years of a life sentence from Robben Island, was elected honorary president of Neusa.

"Comrade Mbeki resisted as a teacher against apartheid education and has thus set a precedent for teachers' resistance," says Neusa.

Curtis Nkondo, who was elected president, stressed his rejection for racial education which he said promotes individualism among students.

In his address he called for the abolition of:

- all forms of oppression and exploitation of the black majority;
- the Bantustan system
- tricameral system
- and the continued dehumanisation of the masses through forced removals, poverty and bad social conditions.

Attempts by Inkatha and the KwaZulu government to involve Neusa in the Indaba were exposed and the conference passed a resolution in which they strongly rejected the recommendations of the Education report which was drafted by the Buthelezi Commission.

There were other major resolutions which were adopted at the conference:

ON THE INDABA

The conference resolved to reject the Indaba and its Education recommendations because:

- the Indaba was not a democratic process and its main agenda does not change the privilege and class divisions

● the Education recommendations entrench ethnic and language differences which is in line with the Indaba's proposal to fragment South Africa.

The acceptance of negotiations towards teachers unity with the following as the basis for negotiation:

- non-racialism
- affiliation to the UDF
- acceptance of the Freedom Charter
- working towards a single organisation
- working towards affiliation to COSATU.

ON JMC'S

Noting that the state has embarked on a generalised offensive against NEUSA and the broad democratic movement manifested in mass detentions, police harassment, vigilante groups and the devisive strategy of the Joint Management Committees, delegates resolved to campaign against and isolate these reactionary structures and those who collaborate with them in order to expose their sinister aims for the oppressed majority.

ON THE ADOPTION OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER

Realising that we in NEUSA are operating and are bound by the broader democratic principles and disciplines, and that we are fighting for a non-racial and democratic South Africa based on the will of the people, we therefore resolve to adopt the Freedom Charter as our undisputed and authentic programme of action and as our basic as well as minimum demands for national liberation.

ON PEOPLE'S EDUCATION

Believing that People's Education is a dynamic process with the aim of facilitating the establishment of a free and non-racial South Africa, Neusa resolves to inform itself fully of the principle of People's Education through dialogue, consultation and practice, and to work together with the NECC and other progressive organisations to ensure that People's Education is implemented in such a way that communities are not misled by so-called "alternative education" instead.

NEUSA reiterated its call for a single and non-racial education.

National teachers body on the way

MOVES are underway to unite teachers in a national teachers organisation.

At a meeting in Johannesburg recently, teachers organisations from all over the country committed themselves to form the new body by mid-1988. A steering committee was set up to prepare for the national launch.

Present at the meeting were: four regions of the National Education Union of SA (Neusa), the Democratic Teachers Union (Detu), the East London Progressive Teachers Union (ELPTU), Education for an Aware SA (Edasa), the Progressive Teachers' League (PTL) and the Western Cape Teachers' Union (Wectu).

Among the aims of the new teachers union will be to "establish a unitary, non-racial education system, to democratise schools, to end sexist practises in schools and to implement people's education".

All teachers and their organisations have been invited to join the initiative.

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clause can be implemented and the others not.

The Nationalists say traders can trade wherever they like. But that is not the implementation of the FC. It has got nothing to do with the governing of the people, or the society envisaged by the Charter. It is the opening up of the present regime in order to sustain itself.

Different sectors, students, for example, can concentrate on certain clauses in the FC. But they are not actually removing that clause or isolating it from the others. They are amplifying it and mobilising around what affects them immediately. This brings them into the national democratic struggle.

WHY HAS SUPPORT FOR THE CHARTER ROCKETED SO MUCH RECENTLY?

The recent open struggles of the people have thrust the nature of post-apartheid society into the forefront more than ever before. This is why the Charter has gained this momentum.

The question of what kind of society people would like to see has been at the centre of these struggles. Organisations that were conservative or cautious, were catapulted into talking about these issues. This is not only in the people's camp. Imperialism has reacted with equal vigour and rigour.

This has not come of its own accord. This is the decade of liberation and it is dedicated to the FC movement. People have been consciously working and directing actions of our people in their local struggles and connecting them directly to political power and the making of a new society.

The growth in the mass democratic movement and the forces of the national democratic struggle has brought this question more sharply to the fore. That is why the document of the people had to come up so decisively now with the decisive actions of our people.

HOW HAVE OPPONENTS OF THE CHARTER REACTED?

Ever since the treason trial in 1956, the first trial of the Charter, they have been trying to prove that the FC is a communist document.

They knew it was not. But since 1945 imperialist and all reactionary forces throughout the world have waged a widespread and successful campaign against communism. During that period they could describe anything that opposes them as communist and get away with it.

At the core of these anti-communist campaigns, was their desire to safeguard their own interests. This is why they have attacked the FC as communist. But they have failed to portray it as that.

Not that the FC is anti-communist. The FC is in fact anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist. But at the same time it is not a communist or a socialist document, and it was never intended to be such.

Having failed to portray the FC as a communist document they are now looking into other avenues to bypass the FC and to impose their own interests, their own wishes, on the people of SA.

All other documents, like the so-called Azanian Manifesto could not compete with the FC. Non-racialism triumphed over the racial point of view.

So now they are looking into more subtle ways, research and so on, to come up with a new document for the future of SA.

All of this has the very same content as the anti-communist campaigns that the imperialists have been waging throughout the world. That content is the safeguarding of their interests in a new society.

HOW DO YOU VIEW UDF AND COSATU'S ADOPTION OF THE CHARTER?

No movement or organisation that is concerned with the well-being of its members can progress or move forward a single step without a theory.

The UDF is a coalition of a number of organisations, whose immediate target is the destruction of apartheid rule. Within it there are socialists and non-socialists. They agreed on the UDF declaration to bring different sectors into united action.

The UDF's initial demands evolved and developed in the process of struggle. As we said, the central question was what kind of society are we creating. This has developed and occupied the minds of every person and every organisation that is serious about the resolution of the SA problem.



UDF and Cosatu's adoption of the Charter actually marks their maturity and political direction. It has mapped out a definite line of march for them, unlike previously.

The fact that both the Front and the labour movement have adopted similar lines of march on the political terrain is important for the advancement of our struggle in SA.

It marks a stage in the process of broadening the United Democratic Front. We can now look forward to an alliance and coalition of organisations such as Sayco, Cosatu and all national, regional and local people's formations coming together in the broader United Democratic Front.

This will auger well for the realisation of working class leadership of the struggle, not only in theory and practice of other sectors in the UDF but also by direct physical participation of workers in people's political formations on and off the factory floor.

The united democratic front of all the progressive classes, strata and social groupings which are by their nature compelled to struggle against apartheid colonialism is a necessary condition for the victory of our struggle.

And with organised workers, as organised workers under Cosatu and not just as individuals, paving the way toward joining hands with Sayco and other progressive organisations rallied around the demands in the FC, the foundation of national unity shall have been firmly established.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT THOSE WHO HAVE NOT ADOPTED THE CHARTER?

We believe it is the duty of Sayco and our other organisations to determine a clear political line for its members.

But no-one demands adoption of the Charter for membership to these organisations. Because the Charter demands a certain level of political development. And these organisations realise that they are schools in which members must attain this political consciousness.

Adopting the FC sets a goal in developing people's consciousness, a vision to be learnt by members in that organisation.

It does not close doors for people who have not adopted the charter. It has opened things up so that people can join the organisation and learn about the charter. Because these organisations are schools in which people must learn what we are fighting for.

For example, one criterion for membership of these organisations is that you must be against the present system, motivated by whatever views, against this apartheid government. As to what kind of society you would like to see, that must be evolved in the course of struggle itself.

Organisations have a right and the duty to work out their political direction and to put certain goals for their members and their political consciousness. They have a right and a duty to educate their members about this political direction. That is why we say these organisations are schools of struggle.

For example, the trade unions are schools of socialism, not socialism itself. They have to take their members from one step to another, from one stage of political development to the other, until they reach a socialist consciousness.

The FC contains the very experience of the people. But we do not demand that members have the political consciousness to see that the post-apartheid society should be exactly as the FC puts it. We only demand that they must be against the present system and within our structures, which are schools, share with us their experiences, so that together we can form this new society.

This also applies to organisations that have not adopted the Charter. No individual or organisation is more important than the struggle itself.

Those that have a correct understanding of the situation have a duty, not to impose this understanding on others, but to educate them and win them over to this position.

There are organisations that are for change, but not necessarily change as enshrined in the FC. So in our relations with these

organisations, we need to exercise an element of self-discipline, of respecting the views of other people, meanwhile we are educating them about the FC and winning them over.

This is not around tables, but in the crucible of practice, in the struggle itself. This is where we must build unity and win them over to the broader movement, not in debates that are devoid of action.

HOW AND WHEN DO YOU ENVISAGE THE FC BEING IMPLEMENTED?

We cannot calculate mathematically, or say on this day we will be starting to implement this or that clause of the Charter. This is a process that develops and matures within the struggle.

The FC is not just a list of demands. We have said it cannot be implemented within the present social, economic and political order. But it can begin to be implemented in the process of struggle itself.

For example, mineworkers want to run the hostels. People are occupying empty flats in the white areas. There are struggles around housing. But the demand for housing, security and comfort for all cannot be satisfied within the present political, economic and social order.

Today the apartheid capitalist state is trying to instill in our people the idea that the responsibility to build houses rests in the private hands. But our understanding and what the charter says, is that this is a state responsibility. And this can only take place when there is a democratic government.

Our people need to develop that consciousness, of the social, political and economic institutions of the future, in the process of struggle. But they can't create them in their completeness today.

WHAT TYPE OF SOCIETY DOES THE CHARTER ENVISAGE?

When we say the Charter is not a capitalist document, nor a socialist document, it is not a matter of tactics, it is the truth about the FC. Our understanding of what socialism is and what capitalism is, brings us to this conclusion.

It is true that under apartheid colonialism, which is capitalist, the demands of the FC cannot be achieved. It is also true that the implementation of the FC does not mean socialism.

The Charter describes a transitional period, a special stage, between capitalism and socialism, between apartheid colonialist society and socialism.

Whether there is national oppression or not, there will always be a special phase of transition between capitalism and socialism. During this phase, one mode of production is transformed into a new one.

This period of transition is a historically necessary period that cannot be jumped or wished away. If we see socialism as not just a slogan, that it needs the building up and the attaining of certain, definite social, economic and political and cultural institutions and ideas, then this is a necessary period.

The type of democracy practised during this stage will be people's democracy. But socialist societies also have people's democracy. The question is, what kind of people's democracy do people have under a transitional period?

In this period, people no longer just find themselves within a certain political, economic and social system. People themselves consciously plan it.

So under people's democracy, our people, the oppressed and exploited will be governing. And the core the oppressed and exploited is the working class. We all know that democracy is a form of rule. Democracy is always class democracy. So people's democracy is the democracy of the oppressed and exploited.

But this is not automatic, it cannot be assumed, it does not come of its own accord. It needs to be built into the national liberation movement today. Working class leadership needs to be not just emphasised, but practised.

So this democracy must be built, like the very implementation of the Charter itself. It would in fact be determined by the social forces that come to power in the future.

CAN YOU COMMENT ON ATTEMPTS TO COMPARE THE FC TO OTHER DOCUMENTS?

The FC is incomparable. But maybe if we compromise and compare it, we note that all these other documents have been drawn and cobbled above the heads of the people. They are solutions from intellectuals, imposed on the

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HANDS OFF UNIVERSITIES

HANDS OFF our universities was the cry when nearly 20 000 university students and staff marched in protest against the De Klerk regulations. The protest was the largest in the history of SA's universities.

The regulations are seen as an attempt to force the universities to become law enforcement agencies - as part of Apartheid's system of ideological control and repression. They set certain conditions which universities have to meet - or have their state subsidies cut.

De Klerk's initial proposals effectively banned the National Union of SA Students (Nusas), but this was dropped after earlier protests.

Nusas leaders believe that they, along with the South African National Students Congress (Sansco), are still major targets of the regulations.

Why has Nusas come under this attack? Nusas and Sansco have been at the forefront of anti-apartheid activities on the liberal, mainly white campuses for many years.

Nusas' 1987 theme, "Education for a free SA", reflected the link between education struggles and the broader struggle for liberation and social and economic equality.

Nusas' priorities have been to strengthen their non-racial alliance with Sansco; to intensify efforts to democratise the universities; to organise on Afrikaans campuses; to link white students to the democratic movement; to mobilise students against apartheid; and to strengthen Nusas structures and unity.

THE WHITE ELECTIONS

A key campaign was the "One Person One Vote" campaign during the all-white elections. Run jointly with Sansco, it strengthened Nusas and Sansco's non-racial alliance.

Nusas argued that whether or not students voted in the elections, they would have to choose between continued minority rule and majority rule. Real democracy would have to ensure equal participation of all South Africans in the political process, and guarantee that everyone could share in SA's wealth.

Of 14 000 students voting in a nationwide campus poll, 86% backed "One Person One Vote". This demonstrated to SA and the world that thousands of students support a democratic, non-racial election in SA.

THE REFERENDA

In what was termed a "victory for non-racialism and the democratic movement as a whole", Nusas won referenda at Rhodes and Pietermaritzburg universities.

In the referenda, pro- and anti-affiliation teams campaign for support for two weeks. Students then vote "yes" or "no" to their SRC's affiliation to Nusas.

Opposing Nusas was the so-called National Student's Federation - believed to be a front for the Nationalist Party. The NSF relies on expensive media and smear tactics.

New government regulations aim to crush progressive student organisations and make the universities tools of Apartheid. Here NUSAS looks at the background to this and why NUSAS is a target.

But it is organisationally weak with no coherent political programme.

The referenda were the first since Nusas affiliated to the UDF and it was feared this could turn white students away from Nusas. The NSF also tried to link Nusas and Sansco to the 'ANC-SACP' alliance.

Nusas said it was proud of its links with the UDF and Sansco, which threw its full weight behind Nusas.

CHALLENGING THE ADMINS

Nusas' ongoing work has been to challenge the administrations to commit the universities and their resources to the struggle for a democratic society.

The universities are seen as serving the interests of big business and the white community. Their top decision making structures represent only these sectors and many courses are biased towards maintaining the status quo.

At the same time, progressives have won important gains in the universities. Progressive departments have been established, progressive organisations have operated relatively freely and students have been able to speak out in favour of democratic change.

Nusas has assisted in building organisations aimed at changing the universities and challenges students to use their skills in the interests of all people and not just in their own interests.

Students and academics have rallied behind this call, forging organisations like Engineers Against Apartheid, Nusas Law and Health Directives, Students Community Action Group, the Students' Teaching Education Project and so on.

This work seems to threaten the apartheid government, which knows that universities are key to its ability to reproduce apartheid ideology and to train professionals who work in the interests of the minority.

AFRIKAANS CAMPUSES

Students at Afrikaans campuses have shown increasing interest in Nusas, especially because of its links with the democratic movement. Over the

Above and right: Scenes from the De Klerk protest march at Wits. The march involved 20000 students and staff from different universities in the biggest protests in South African universities' history.



last two years Nusas' Stellenbosch branch has attracted a surprisingly large number of students, and managed to force its administration to lift a ban on its activities.

Pretoria University students set up a Nusas steering committee. But the SRC, determined to keep progressive ideas off their campus, banned their activities.

The Star later reported that Pretoria and RAU SRC members had attended lectures at Military Intelligence - a direct state attempt to frustrate Nusas's attempts to organise on Afrikaans campuses.

A RAU group, Africans Against Apartheid, is to form a Nusas sub-committee. Existing links with groups at UPE and Durban Technikon will hopefully grow in 1988.

It seems more Afrikaans students will realise that apartheid offers them no future and will turn to the democratic movement. While branches may be small, Nusas feels it can gain ground on these previously unorganised campuses.

ATTACKS ON NUSAS

Nusas faces co-ordinated attacks from the state and the right wing. Through the press and smear pamphlets, progressive students are labelled 'campus radicals', anarchists and 'violent thugs'.

To provoke student response, right wing organisations have invited controversial speakers such as community councillor Thamsanqa Linda, to the campuses. Linda was chased off UCT campus after the NSF refused to postpone the meeting where he was to speak.

The liberal press then criticised the universities and called for severe

action against students. Anonymous smear pamphlets were produced and letters were sent to parents and the press. Soon the government felt confident to act against students, claiming to want to 'protect freedom of speech and academic freedom' on the campuses.

This was when De Klerk introduced his notorious conditions. The universities are threatened with heavy subsidy cuts unless they crack down on militant students. Administrations are required to prevent 'illegal gatherings' and the promotion of 'illegal organisations', and to make sure that students who call class or product boycotts are punished.

In effect the administrations are being called on to declare mini "states of emergency" on to the campuses. Students view this as an attempt to force the universities to side with the Nationalist government and to do the police's dirty work. It is also seen as an attempt to undermine student organisations.

The unity of students and staff in the De Klerk protest march was significant. But this alliance with the administration will not stop Nusas and Sansco's struggle for democratic change in the universities.

Students will have to be increasingly vigilant and organised to ensure the universities do not slide back into apartheid's grasp.

SPIES

The state continues to attempt to infiltrate Nusas, not only to get information, but to sow division and to provoke students into activity that could damage the organisation.

Danie Pretorius, who infiltrated Nusas at UCT and later confessed to being a spy, said the security police

sought to find out about divisions within and between Nusas and Sansco - with the aim of exacerbating them. An affidavit said he urged students to throw stones at the police during protests - after which two students were shot with birdshot.

Nusas is an open and legal organisation, but it has long been aware that spies do more than inform. Nusas has embarked on a drive to make infiltration of the organisation more difficult.

LOOKING TO 1988

The many challenges facing Nusas in 1988 will be top on the agenda at its annual policy-making Congress in December.

Nusas will need to further strengthen its non-racial alliance with Sansco and build genuine non-racialism on the campuses. Many students don't understand the differences between multi- and non-racialism.

Nusas needs to build an understanding of how universities are still undemocratic.

Nusas' work in the white student community complements the work of the democratic movement. To do this effectively it needs the flexibility to work broadly on campus.

Nusas needs to be clear on how it relates to new initiatives in the white community, such as Five Freedoms Forums.

There is an obvious need for progressive organisations under the banner of the democratic movement, as well as broader initiatives which improve access to the white community.

Progressives must be clear on how and why they enter alliances with sectors outside the democratic movement. These sectors have their own programmes and agendas and in working with them progressives have to ensure that they are complementing the programme of the democratic movement.

Explaining the democratic movement to new students, fresh from 12 years of apartheid education, is another task for Nusas. Government propaganda has been intent on discrediting the UDF, Cosatu and other democratic organisations. Students need to understand that there can be no political solution without these organisations - and without the participation of banned organisations.

New areas of organisation will have to be reached. On the English language campuses key sites such as the residences have been neglected for many years - leaving them open to right-wing forces. At the same time Nusas needs to expand its efforts to organise Afrikaans campuses.

And at a time when the universities are increasingly under pressure from government and reformist sectors, Nusas must unite with Sansco, the NECC and progressive academics to defend, consolidate and advance the gains already made in the universities. The universities must continue to be pressurised into accepting that they should be serving the interests of the people.

FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION



HOW DID FAWU ADOPT THE CHARTER?

The Charter is not new to us. One of the unions which merged to join Fawu, the Food and Canning Workers' Union was formed in 1941. And it participated directly when the Charter was drawn up in 1955.

So we were part of the adoption of the Charter then.

Our re-adoption of the Charter was discussed in the different unions before we merged and again at three national meetings since October last year. It was decided the branches,

regions and factories should discuss it to reaffirm our stand. Our NEC meeting in June finally endorsed the re-adoption of the FC.

A lot of energy was put into making sure every member discussed and knew the Charter, not only the union leadership and officials. You can discuss the charter with any of our members and they will know it. In every branch and in factory general meetings our members discussed the clauses.

Through discussing the charter union organisers found old Sactu members, who know it by heart. They said to the organisers, you are still young, I was there. The Charter reached so many people at the time.

WHY IS THE CHARTER STILL RELEVANT NOW?

When the Charter was drawn up a wide number of people participated so it represents the aspirations of the majority. It was democratic. It's still alive today because its demands have not been met. It is a dynamic document: you could think it was drawn up yesterday.

HOW DO YOU LINK THE CHARTER TO UNION STRUGGLES?

Workers' demands are not separate from those of the Charter. During strikes workers discuss it. During a sleep-in, workers were given copies of the Charter, the next day they were

still discussing it. Workers have composed songs about the Charter, or included clauses in their songs.

We also organise farmworkers at Farmfare. Since shopstewards from different factories and regional committee structures discussed the Charter they were inspired to go in the evenings to organise on the farms. Goods from the farms are taken to

FAWU

Fawu national executive members at the union's launch.



factories for processing; after reading the FC shopstewards linked the farm and the factory workers. Now we have organised ten of these farms.

HOW DOES THE FC RELATE TO SOCIALISM?

The Charter's demands must be satisfied immediately. But in the process of achieving these demands we have to discuss socialism.

It does away with capitalism, and socialism must follow capitalism. The Charter rallies other classes against the enemy, capitalist class, and for the working class.

Workers want the mode of production to change. The Charter says the wealth shall be shared, so the working class is the major one addressed in the FC. It speaks of their experience, in the language of the people so they understand it.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE WORKERS' CHARTER?

It talks only in terms of trade unions, which are part of the working class, but they are not the working class. Trade unions can't fight on their own, they need to go into alliances.

A trade union is a reformist organisation. It fights for better working conditions, higher wages and so on, which don't necessarily fundamentally change the system we are fighting. If a union sticks to these things alone it won't be progressive. A workers charter would alienate unions from the community, making them purely concerned with trade union issues. The working class is not only workers organised in trade unions, it is not only people who are employed, who have jobs.

The FC is both a strategic and a tactical document. It is a rallying point for all classes. We are not talking of alienating other classes. Shopowners, teachers, all these middle class people have grievances against the government because the government protects the interests of the capitalist class.

The Charter rallies people who are subjugated, however they experience this. These groups must rally around the FC to change this government that protects the interests of the greedy minority.

The FC unites workers with all people with the same problems. If workers unite with other people they can assert working class leadership.

Through trade unions workers can realise their consciousness, to know their class position.

We also find students and youth having advanced working class theory. In an alliance with workers, the different sectors can share their experiences and develop their understanding further.

We have to break the weakest link in the chain. The government protects capitalism - the two are hand in glove. With the state of emergency and hippos in the townships, capitalism is still protected. So we must rally people against the government. We can't destroy capitalism leaving the government as it is.

government, we want to take over power. But who are the people? Like democracy, it can be given different meanings. When we talk about the people we are talking about the majority, the working class. When we say the people shall govern we are talking about the working class.

The FC embodies the aspirations of the majority: it is about people's democracy, a transition to socialism.

CAN THE FC'S DEMANDS BE MET UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM?

Not a single demand has ever been met without bloodshed. They are not won through melting the hearts of the capitalists, but through the struggles of the workers. Some of the demands in the FC can be achieved, but it is a struggle to get them.



WHEN DID RMC ADOPT THE CHARTER?

We adopted the charter twice - first in Orlando West while we were a pioneer group in a small house in Dube in 1983. We adopted it again on 28 May 1984 at a national gathering.

The issue concerning the RMC at that time was what to do about the tricameral system and the Black Local Authorities which were about to be introduced. The question we asked ourselves was, what should we say to people if we ask them not to vote for the Local Authorities? People asked us who should be put instead in those positions which haven't been filled.

We could not encourage anybody to stand for the elections because our leaders were incarcerated in jails throughout the country. We had to campaign for the release of the authentic leaders: not that they should come and occupy these different municipal portfolios but they should be in the central government of our country.

We now had to take our campaign to the people. We asked ourselves what our guiding principle was going to be. And we decided that when we went to the people to talk about the release of our leaders the Freedom Charter would be our document.

The Dube group adopted the Charter and affiliated to the UDF. Since we were one group of people who had made this decision we set about a process consulting directly with the masses at public meetings where we asked for mandates. And even though the system would not allow us to hold our meetings the Freedom Charter was again adopted by the RMC at a 1984 national conference.

HOW DOES RMC USE THE CHARTER?

RMC adopted "The people shall govern" as its motto. When we go out it is important for us to make people



understand that Mandela symbolises the resistance of all oppressed people, he's a progressive leader and a democrat. We decided that the campaign must focus on Mandela, but we are not only campaigning for his release: he is a symbol.

The RMC is a campaign with muscle, it has working groups and networks around the country. We have seven objectives. We campaign and work for the unconditional release of the people's leader, Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners - including people that do not recognise the Freedom Charter as a working document; the return of the exiles; the unconditional unbanning of political organisations; the dismantling of apartheid; an understanding the Charter as a beacon of hope and the corner stone of the future South Africa that we envisage; and lastly a progressive mental climate where people see one another as human beings in a non-racial democratic South Africa.

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE UDF AND COSATU'S ADOPTION OF THE FC?

It will affect the campaign in a very positive way. We are encouraged by the exposure that the Charter has been given. A broad spectrum of people's organisations throughout the country should adopt the Charter. It enhances our work.

RELEASE MANDELA CAMPAIGN

RMC



WHAT DOES THE CHARTER REPRESENT?

We see the FC as having its place in history, as well as current and future significance. Prior to 1955 no document spelt out the demands of the people. People had many grievances against apartheid, but they had not been codified. That was achieved in 1955, not only by the 3000 delegates but people who had gone to farms, factories, compounds, businesses and campuses. The Charter shows that our struggle is not just an invention of today.

The FC is important today because it is able to give the community that we want to mobilise now a vision of the future. It says "here are the demands of the future." It also prevents the oppressors from saying that our struggle is directionless, they know that these people have alternatives.

The future significance of the FC is that after change has come we'll need a kind of a bridge from the present to the future. That bridge is the Freedom Charter.

The FC is self explanatory. It is based on the views and aspirations of the people. It spells out principles of egalitarianism, that is people must be equal, there must be fairness, there

must be freedom. That is the bottom line of the FC, it says things must be equal. People shall be equal, there shall be an equal distribution of wealth. There is nothing bourgeois about equality and fairness in the distribution of justice.

HOW DOES RMC POPULARISE THE FC?

Since 1983 we have been to rallies, meetings, conferences, workshops and funerals preaching the Freedom Charter. We've been to the mines, selling RMC T-shirts, calendars, posters, stickers and distributing pamphlets.

We bought space in newspapers and advertised to popularise the Freedom Charter. All these efforts have popularised the FC. The process is continuing and it is going to intensify.

HOW IS THE FC LINKED TO THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS?

The strength of the campaign can only be measured qualitatively, not quantitatively. One cannot say we have done 50% of the work, our target is to convert 30 million South Africans regardless of colour, race or creed as espoused in the FC, but we hope that liberation comes long before that. It will take a long time. But when the workers have adopted the FC, the youth, plus the UDF, then we are beyond the 50% mark.

Then we must go to the people, through street committees, civic associations and so on, and get more people adopting it. Then we'll have reached the 75% mark. And then we will only be left with those ruling us against our will and the people who still espouse Black Consciousness. That will be the last lot to deal with.

Education issues are high on Cosatu agenda

THE NEED to organise workers around education, cultural, and womens' issues was emphasised at Cosatu's first education conference in October. The conference was a follow up to resolutions taken at Cosatu's July congress.

Speaking at the conference, Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo said Cosatu had recognised the importance of these issues since its first congress. But the federation had been engaged in other organisational activity, particularly consolidation. "This process has been essential and rightfully so, because it is on the basis of strong organisational cohesion that real progress can be made in the crucial area of women, culture and education."

Highlighting the urgency of the tasks of building socialism in SA, he said "in order to carry out the complete and fundamental transformation of society we need to deepen our working class understanding on all aspects of society. We will betray the militant struggles if we fail to provide the avenues for discussion and reflection and sharing of experience both on the nature of struggle and the kind of society we are building."

On the need to organise defence against attacks by government agents

and vigilantes, he said: "One pillar of defence rests on building powerful organisation that is grounded in democratic practices.

"The other pillar rests on building political consciousness through a process of education and rigorous and critical debate. This gives us the capacity to win the majority of our people to our views and programme, even those elements who are opposed to us."

Naidoo also emphasised the need to build the united front alliance between national, non-racial and democratic organisations emerging amongst the organised workers, youth, students, women, civics and in rural areas.

The conference made recommendations on education, culture and women and set up structures to deal with these issues.

"Education is a lifelong process by society to master and control spiritual and material reality. It is interdependent with other aspects of

society and is based on how society is structured. It is characteristic of society and different in a collective society as compared with a society based on individualism," said the commission on people's education.

The present education system was seen as a "weapon to further the ideology of capitalism, to reproduce and defend present values and to promote sexism and racialism. It is used to perpetuate capitalism using racialism as a reinforcement thus dividing the working class so that it will not be effective in the fight against capitalism."

Recommendations on Cosatu's role in building people's education included:

- to actively build the National Education Crisis Committee to be a "mass based democratic organisation"

- to help form and strengthen democratic Parent, Teacher and Student Associations at local, regional and national levels.

- to involve Cosatu in the Education Charter Campaign to "add the workers' voice and muscle to the programme."

- to address the illiteracy problem along with other progressive organisations. Such a campaign would help build workers' control and confidence.

- Cosatu should allocate resources and hold night classes with the assistance of the youth and students.

- Education around people's holidays like May Day, June 16, March 21 and August 9 should be run with "our allies in the united front."

The conference stressed the importance of educating workers on Cosatu's political policy around the Freedom Charter, United Front, disciplined alliances, socialism and democracy, sanctions, disinvestment and class theory.

Culture could also help cement Cosatu's relationship with its democratic allies and build unity between workers and Cosatu

affiliates. As an organised section of the working class, it was felt Cosatu must give direction and contribute to working class culture.

"All Cosatu culture departments and activists must attempt to keep well informed about cultural developments in the country - so as to give guidance whenever necessary and to defend the interests of Cosatu, the working class and the national democratic struggle," said a conference report.

"Workers democracy and participation should be a cultural guide in all Cosatu culture developments and activities." Resources should be directed to local culture structures like shop stewards councils and local culture units.

The conference committed itself to build women's participation and leadership in Cosatu and proposed that Cosatu locals establish forums of women workers.

A planning committee of women representatives from affiliates and active Cosatu locals would plan for next year's women's conference and liaise with Cosatu's National Education Committee.

The importance of Cosatu media was also stressed and recommendations made around issues such as training, distribution and media structures.

Unity wins victory for Mercedes workers

ONE OF East London's longest strikes in years, at Mercedes Benz, ended with a resounding victory for the workers.

The nine week strike was sparked by management's refusal to meet workers' demands for R5 an hour minimum wage. Negotiations deadlocked and the 2800 striking workers, members of the National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa), were dismissed.

But local and international solidarity with the workers eventually forced management to back down and negotiate with Numsa. They finally agreed to increase the minimum hourly wage from R3.50 to R4.50 and to reinstate all dismissed workers unconditionally. The company also committed itself to further wage increases in 1988.

The strike brought production to a standstill and, according to Numsa spokesperson Viwe Gxarisa, "the intransigence of the management resulted in R300 million losses for the company."

Gxarisa said international support, together with "the unfaltering unity of the workers" had played an important role in resolving the strike.

Cosatu affiliated unions threatened to take solidarity action at their individual plants throughout the Eastern Cape.

"Cosatu will not accept nor tolerate the action of companies which revert to mass dismissals as a weapon of resolving industrial disputes," said a statement issued by the Cosatu local.

A Numsa national shopstewards council took a decision to put pressure on other motor manufacturers to intervene in the Mercedes Benz strike.

A meeting of Eastern Cape shop stewards in Port Elizabeth, decided that shopstewards from Delta, Samcor and Volkswagen would visit East London to discuss plans and strategies on how to implement their support for the striking workers.

On the international front, Numsa officials addressed workers and shop stewards in West Germany and won support from the giant German Metal Workers Union to put pressure on Mercedes' parent company, Daimler Benz.



Striking workers outside the Mercedes Benz factory in East London.

Youth workers organise Letaba

CLOSE co-operation between youth and union activists has led workers at Letaba Forest Plantation (LFP), a timber processing factory in Tzaneen, to join Cosatu.

LFP workers said they used to be members of a Nactu-affiliated union. "The bosses wielded more power than the workers in this union," they said. "We didn't have an effective say in the affairs of the union, it was run by the bosses."

But outside the factory, young workers had discussions and workshops with the Northern Transvaal Youth Congress. "It is here that we came to know more about Cosatu and how it works," say the LFP workers.

"After these workshops we found a reliable home in the principles and policies of Cosatu. Cosatu asked Notyco to help the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union (Pwawu) organise in Tzaneen.

"A meeting was held with the LFP workers to discuss their withdrawal from the 'sweetheart' union and to join Cosatu. The meeting was a great success, attended by approximately 600 workers. At the end, they signed up with Pwawu."

A temporary shop stewards committee has been set up to represent the workers in the plant. "We are now going to take up the

Cosatu Living Wage Campaign. Wage negotiations haven't been held for the past four years."

"Meanwhile, the management is aware that Pwawu is an affiliate of Cosatu and that it now represents the workers in that plant. They are not only angry but, confused as well. They simply cannot understand how Cosatu organised under their nose."

Eastern Transvaal workers advance

DESPITE repression, including the burning of Cosatu's regional offices, workers in the Eastern Transvaal are advancing the campaign for a living wage and other demands.

Workers organised by Fawu at ICS have won wage increases and at I&J and Jessie Dairy in Nelspruit, workers won May 1 and June 16 as paid holidays and a ban on overtime.

Striking Pwawu members at the Kangwane Sappi Mill were arrested when management called in the police. Cosatu has also faced an attack from Kangwane's Inyandza union, the National Sugar Refinery and Allied Workers' Union, which organisers say is openly collaborating with the bosses.

A Cultural Co-ordinating committee has been formed which aims to "portray the bosses as they really are" and to "make our people see themselves as striving for what is theirs." Cultural activities will not

only portray the workers struggle, but also "the struggles of the youth and our communities."

A Cosatu spokesperson in the region said workers in Kangwane were discussing socialism - on the shopfloor and in the community.

"Workers are starting to realise that their struggles in the factories for better working conditions and a living wage are not divorced from struggles going on in the townships. The struggle of the workers is intertwined with the political struggle of the masses.

Alliances built as bosses bash Fawu

STRIKE WAVES in the Western Cape food industry have highlighted bosses' attempts to smash the Food and Allied Workers' Union, a Cosatu affiliate.

At the same time, organisers say support for striking workers has helped build the alliance between Cosatu and community-based organisations, putting the United Front idea into practice.

●Recently 600 workers at the Spekenham meat processing factory in Cape Town were dismissed after a 15 week strike. Fawu sees this as part of a campaign to crush the union's strength at subsidiaries of Vleis Sentraal, which controls a large part of the meat industry.

Vleis Sentraal falls under Imperial Cold Storage (ICS), indirectly owned

by the giant Barlow Rand group.

The strike started in August after bosses blocked negotiations around wage increases and a recognition agreement with the workers' union, Fawu. During the strike, mass based organisations in CT set up a support committee which raised funds and ran support programmes for striking workers.

●In Saldanha Bay 528 Sea Harvest workers were dismissed after a strike around wage demands in September. Sea Harvest falls under ICS which has also dismissed about 1500 striking workers in the Transvaal.

Striking Saldanha Bay workers and other residents in the local Diazville township met heavy repression. Workers collecting food parcels at the local civic hall were arrested and clashes with police led to a student being shot dead and four workers wounded. Students boycotted exams demanding the workers' reinstatement.

Latest reports indicate that bosses are willing to re-employ 300 of the workers who were originally on strike. The remaining 228 who came out in solidarity would only be employed only when vacancies arise.

●In October, Fawu-organised bakeries occupied factories for a week, demanding a minimum wage of R160 a week.

The strike ended when Silver Leaf, Good Hope and Duens workers settled for R134 per week. The Good Hope and Silver Leaf bosses agreed to further wage negotiations in 1988.

●from FC page 10

people.

This is unlike the FC and its definite democratic process of collecting demands from the people themselves. This process was followed meticulously.

No other document had this democratic process of the people stating this is the nature of the society they would like.

The charter is the only document that was drawn by the people and adopted by them. It encompasses and enshrines the bitter experience of our people, not the experience of this or that leader or organisation, but of the people themselves.

That is why even the ANC had to adopt the Charter, because it is not a natural document of the ANC, as an organisation. It is a document of the people of SA as a whole. What the ANC did as the people's movement was to lead and organise our people in campaign to draw up the FC.

And all organisations that are concerned with the total liberation of our people, from national and economic oppression and exploitation, must take into cognisance these demands of our people. Hence the ANC and all these organisations have adopted the FC.

You cannot say these things about the Azanian manifesto, the apartheid constitution or even about the ANC's African Claims or what ever PAC document that is not known to our people.

The people know the FC more than they know the constitution of apartheid SA. Because they have drawn these things. Because the FC enshrines the ideals of our people, their very experience.

We won't even have to go into the content, whether this document is socialist or what. What is important is that we are struggling for our people and we should be directed by their needs. The FC distinguishes itself in that sense.

HOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE CLAUSE: "THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH"?

Our struggle is against apartheid rule, and this rule is sustained by a particular economic base - monopoly capital, and international finance capital. For us to do away with this system, we need to remove the economic base from under its feet.

And this can only be done through nationalisation, through the transfer of the economic basis, particularly of monopoly industries, mines and the banks into the hands of the people as a whole.

This transfer of ownership to the people is also a process, it moves in stages. A people's government must initially appropriate these properties, the process referred to as nationalisation. But this doesn't complete the process. Nationalisation can take place even under capitalist production.

One way or the other, our people, the oppressed and exploited, must determine the administration, the use and the ownership of these means of production, and the distribution of the wealth that they commonly produce.

So we talk of a movement from nationalisation to socialisation where all the working people led by the working class take over control.

This is the only concrete meaning that the FC can have in practice. You cannot have a transfer of ownership to the people as a whole, of the mines, for instance, without the process of nationalisation followed by socialisation.

If the clause about the wealth is removed from the FC, there is no way, for instance, that we are going to be able to build houses for our people. If the state is without funds, how are we going to be able to build schools for our people, to develop the rural areas and bring them to the level of the cities.

We can't do these things if major finance industries and institutions still serve private and individual profit, when the social surplus is



used for only a small group of people.

The Charter therefore predetermines that the democratic state must immediately seize the social surplus and use it in the interests of all the people, in order to meet the demands of our people on education, housing, health and so on.

The Charter therefore predetermines that the state must seize the social surplus and use it in the interests of all the people, in order to meet the demands of our people on education, housing, health and other grievances.

The SA economy is based mainly on the mines, on gold, it is a gold economy. Most of its revenue comes from the mines.

If we leave this revenue in the hands of private individuals, there is no way in which the state will have funds at its disposal to build houses and so on. Mines are important in the building of a new economy.

The banks control the flow of money. So the state will have to seize the banks. If it does not, there is a possibility that some of the state's programmes, in education, housing and others, can be frustrated by the banks refusing to release funds to the state. So the flow of funds must be controlled by the state, so that the state can direct it in the right channels, to satisfy the right targets.

This goes for monopoly industries also. We need to nationalise them and bring them under the control of the cabinet, in order to distribute the wealth they produce in accordance with the needs of the people. If we leave them in private hands they will continue to service private needs and private profit.

This also goes for monopoly industries. 80 percent of SA's economy is controlled by Anglo American and a handful control the rest. This monopoly control is found in most industries. For example 87 percent of all recording and music production is owned by Gallo which is indirectly owned by Anglo American. This allows them to distort and derail SA culture in the interests of big business.

Monopoly control of news media by the government's Nasionale Pers and Anglo American's Argus group means control and manipulation of news and information in mass circulation news-papers. This, together with control over the music industry, has meant a few individuals deprive the majority of the society of its material life, and in a hundred and one ways subvert, control and mould its cultural and spiritual life.

The success of our liberation, the success of building of a new South African society free socially, culturally, politically and economically from oppression and exploitation is therefore inextricably bound with the immediate elimination of monopoly industries.

This will be done by transferring its ownership to the people as a whole by a democratic state based on the will of the people.

WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY THE CLAUSE ON THE LAND?

The present system is based on the maintenance of feudal relations, in the bantustans in particular, in order to enhance and fit into its exploitative machine.

The bantustans have been confined to 13% plus of the land in SA. Other land is in the hands of white farmers employing black workers.

The Charter does not just say the land shall be shared among those who work it. It also gives the objective for such a move. It says, in order to banish famine and land hunger, we need to divide the land amongst those who work it. So it is in the interests of maximising social production, of food and other things.

The implementation of this clause will, for example, have the effect of collectivising and introducing new methods of farming to those of our people, the rural people, who have already as peasants been destroyed by this system.

This clause says, dams, seeds and implements shall be given to the tillers. It does not mean that each individual is going to have his own dam, or his own tractor. But these implements will be made available to the people and by so doing, collectivise them and destroy the individualism that is inherent in the peasantry.

It will also have the effect of developing the rural areas and bringing it in line with the cities. In this way we shall have succeeded in stemming the depopulation of the countryside.

People will necessarily migrate from areas where resources are scarce to other areas. But the equal development of the countryside and the cities, as envisaged in this clause will also ensure equal distribution of our people. So rural depopulation and other hazardous processes will come to a standstill. This also develops the ecology and other natural phenomenon that are necessary for the maintenance of life.

The methods entailed in this clause will also do away with feudal relations that exist between the chiefs and the people.

Freedom songs after National Education Crisis meeting in Durban last year.

The chiefs used to be accountable to the people, and directed by them. Historically the ANC worked with the chiefs to win the support of the people and to build an African nation. But the apartheid government usurped that strategy to enhance division and maintain apartheid rule.

So this clause is not aimed at destroying the chiefs. Its intention is to let the people govern themselves through their own recognised and democratically elected leadership and to have a say in the land and how it is used. Let the chief be accountable to the people and directed by them. So it will bring a new character to old rule.

We are saying to the present chiefs, if they are still chiefs - let them lead their people into battle against what actually deprives these people of their land, of their houses, of their development in general.

WHAT IS MEANT BY NATIONAL GROUPS IN THE CHARTER?

Some people would say that the charter talks of the four nation theory, that is not true.

Apartheid has maintained racial and ethnic divisions in order to enhance their own rule. Apartheid has divided our people into Africans, who are indigenous people, Indian people, so-called coloured people and whites who have evolved into natives of SA, but are not indigenous.

The charter refers to the coloured people, the Indian people, the African community, and the white community as national groups.

But the coloured, Indian and African groups are not different racial groups. National groups have nothing to do with races, but they have everything to do with the divisions which exist in SA today, created by Apartheid.

Because our struggle is a nation building one, a national democratic struggle, we regard all these groupings as belonging to one future nation. So these national groups are prospective parts, not just static parts. They are the building blocks of the future South African nation that will be neither coloured, Indian, African or white. It will be one South African nation.

As cadres and serious practical workers in our liberation struggle, we are not simply interested in the fact that the Africans, coloured and Indians enjoy no social, economic, political, cultural and economic freedom in our country. No.

In order to fight effectively against these apartheid divisions and deprivations, we need to understand how each of these apartheid-differentiated national groups have come to lose their rights in history.

This helps us not to gloss over these apartheid created divisions by simply ignoring them in quasi-revolutionism sloganeering like the noises we hear from the opponents of our Freedom Charter-based revolution. No. It helps us to understand apartheid and also understand our people truly and fully as a people with a definite history.

It is this understanding that has actually helped us to formulate clearly and unambiguously the only solution to these divisions which is unity of our people as a people irrespective of race, colour, creed and sex - non-racialism.

In this respect non-racialism is the only possible South African liberation scenario which calls for the complete destruction of racism, ethnicity etc. and which is derived from the realities of the SA situation itself.

Today we know that the ideal of building an African nation is still an integral part of the building of the South African non-racial nation.

This is the process called broad nationalism as opposed to reactionary African-tribalist and exclusivist nationalism of the defunct PAC and the racial exclusivism of Azapo which reactionism can only be compared to the NP-AWB-CP-HNP circle.





Unity and determination - the key to the workers' victory in South Africa's biggest strike

NUM strike wins tactical victory for mineworkers

SOUTH AFRICA's biggest legal strike didn't just rock the mining industry.

When the National Union of Mineworkers (Num) began to organise determinedly around Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign, they disturbed the balance of the most sensitive spot of the South African economy.

Gold and coal miners forged ahead with the struggle for a living wage, the numbers of miners joining the strike soaring to over 340 000, affecting 44 gold mines and collieries.

On the eve of the strike, solidarity action was initiated by the Num Strike Support Committee. The committee was the product of co-ordination by community, student, youth and women's organisations. Among the participants were the UDF, Sayco, Fedtraw, Namda, SCA, NECC, Sosco, Nusas, Sansco, TIC, Jodac, HWA, VCA, Descom, the Ikageng Civic, LYL, Neusa and others.

The support committee's task was to assist with the provision of transport, food, accommodation and medical services. They also helped publicise and monitor the strike.

41 years after the first major black mineworkers strike in 1946, miners' demands are still essentially the same. The fight against starvation wages and poor working conditions continues.

Num's demands were:

- a 30% wage increase
- 30 days paid leave a year
- danger pay
- June 16th as a paid holiday
- improved death benefits

In anticipation state intervention on the side of the mine bosses, Cosatu's Central Executive Committee (CEC) issued a warning to the state not to intervene. In an attempt to prevent the violent repression of the miners, as was the case in '46 and '84, Cosatu threatened solidarity action. To minimise casualties on the mines, Num sent striking workers home.

This tactic appeared to have been well-calculated. Striking miners expressed fears that the bosses would use brutal methods to break the strike. By the time workers were sent home four had already lost their lives.

Meanwhile Minister of Manpower, Pietie du Plessis assured mine bosses

and other industrialists that new legislation to protect their profits was in the pipeline. "Too much power on either side would lead to revolution," he said. He added that care had to be taken to ensure that black trade unions were not "hijacked by radicals."

With the start of the strike the entire machinery of repression was set in motion.

The mineworkers undertook the campaign with only the weapon of strike at their disposal. The mine owners, on the other hand, were prepared to respond violently with their well-organised private army.

Mine security forces are tailored along the same lines as the SADF. The mineworkers faced security officials dressed in olive green fatigues resembling army gear, armed with rifles, rubber bullets, batons and teargas. Like the police and soldiers in the townships, the mine soldiers travel in Casspirs.

But the links are closer than just appearances. Anglo's chief spokesperson, Bobby Godsell disclosed that the commander of their private army is in fact Major-general Tony Roux, previously of the South African Air Force.

The mine security personnel is experienced: most were police or soldiers, others have had experience in security firms.

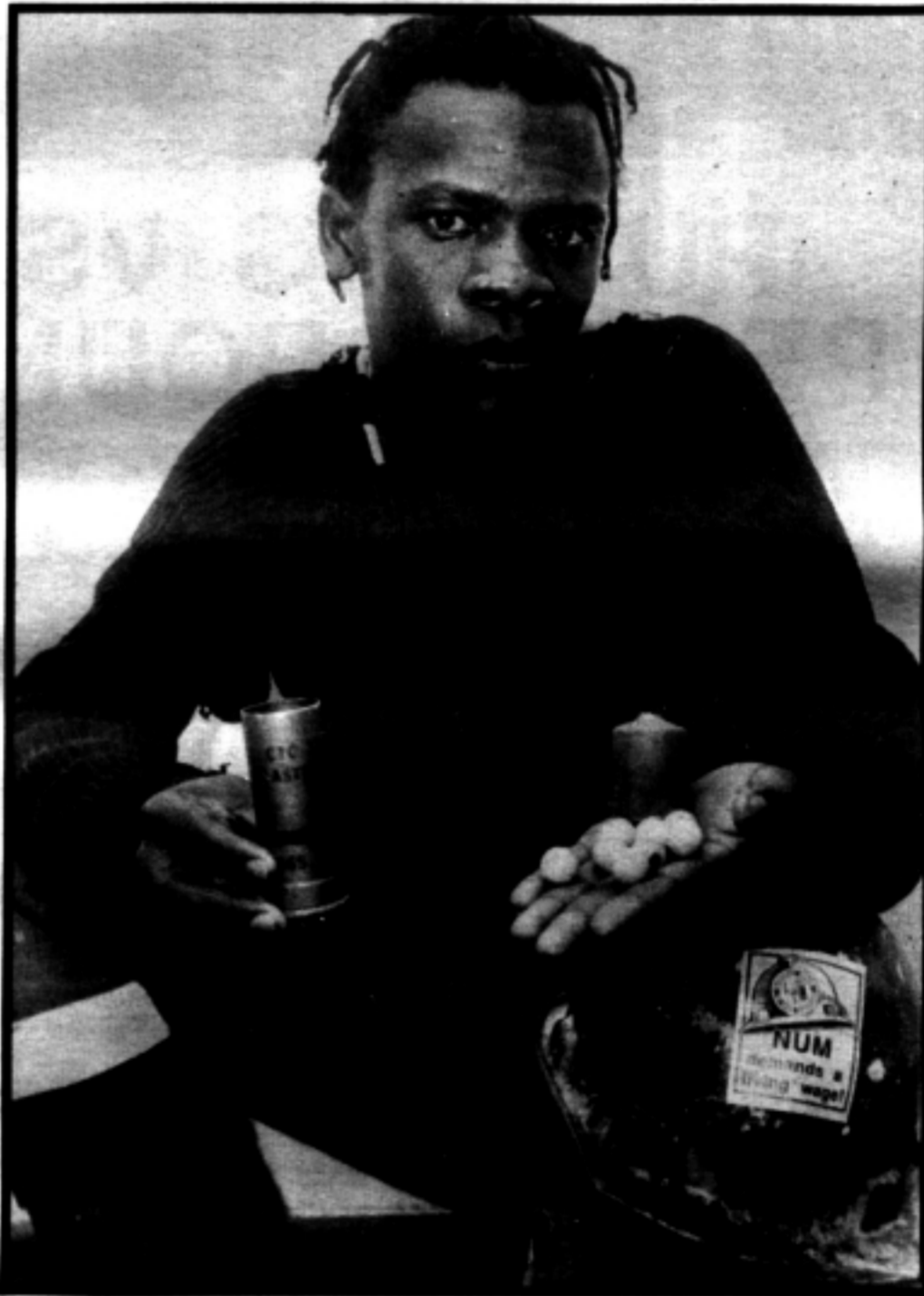
White miners openly sided with mine security. Some offered assistance in the running of roadblocks on the mines and volunteered to act as a back-up unit to the army.

Management claimed the presence of the private force on the mines was to protect the property and lives of those on the mines.

In carrying out their duty of 'protecting human lives' the private force has been accused of excessive action.

The story was told by injured miners at Num's Johannesburg offices. Many had broken limbs, missing teeth, bruised and swollen bodies as a result of clashes with mine security.

Num president, Motlatsi said "The mining bosses declared war on us; there was no doubt that the mining houses were determined to break our strike with the help of the SAP whatever it took. We had been determined to carry on until we won, but we had to revise and re-strategise



Harmony Gold Mine shaftsteward with teargas and rubber bullets fired by mine security forces

our approach to the entire matter."

Tactics used by the Chamber and state to crush the strike included:

- spreading false information about the strike, telling workers that the strike was called off by Num
- at Vaal Reefs, Harmony and Western Deep levels workers were forced to go underground at gunpoint
- a vicious cycle of assaults on individuals by mine security and police; raids on union offices by security police.
- detention and harassment of shop-stewards and officials.

Altogether 11 mineworkers were killed during clashes between striking workers and mine security. 500 were injured and over 400 were detained.

Despite this, the mineworkers continued to strike undeterred. Their unity, determination, discipline and morale frustrated the Chamber's attempt to crush the strike by force. The Chamber embarked on a new strategy - to eliminate Num from the mines.

Tens of thousands of mineworkers were dismissed: shaft by shaft union members and participants in the strike

were singled out.

Negotiations collapsed but the Chamber pushed ahead with its timetable of dismissals, threatening Num's very existence.

The union repeated the proposed wage increase was the key to settlement of the strike but the Chamber stuck to its initial offer. Scabs from rural areas and neighbouring countries were brought in to break the strike.

As the number of dismissed workers reached 40 000, Num's education officer, Kgalema Motlanthe, said "The Chamber of Mines decided to destroy the union. They were going to dismiss every single union member. We were faced with little option: to continue the strike would result in our entire membership being dismissed from the mines and removed from their compounds. Rather than afford the Chamber the opportunity of wiping out the entire union and the labour movement in SA we had to retreat."

When Num took this tactical decision the Chamber did not move from its initial wage offer, but made concessions on death benefits and



Mine security attacked strikers in many areas: this miner was injured at Welkom

agreed to a 10 percent rise in leave allowance and agreed to reinstate all dismissed workers but with loss of benefits."

Num's general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa added "The Chamber thought it could teach us a lesson, but instead they helped us build a strong foundation for further victories."

So Num's retreat was a tactical move, allowing it to regroup and re-strategise. The mine bosses, on the other hand, lost R250 million and more than 5 million days of work.

President of the Chamber of Mines, Naas Steenkamp said, "Maybe there is now greater realism on both sides. The employer has learned that the union has muscle, organisational capacity, determination and skill."

Organisationally the strike represented a resounding victory for the miners and the entire working class movement. Under Num's leadership, the workers conducted the strike with determination and morale.

The disciplined unity of the workers, which took the mine bosses by surprise, is a solid basis from which future victories can be won. The extent to which the workers' leaders remained in touch with their membership was also vital.

Meanwhile, Num has taken issue with the Chamber over the reinstatement of dismissed workers.

Ramaphosa concludes that "This struggle was only a dress rehearsal for the struggle that lies ahead. It has laid a golden foundation for the future. Our struggle for a living wage continues and by 1988 more significant gains will have been made."



Jubilant outside the KwaNdebele Legislative Assembly after "independence" plans were dropped last year. But this year the bantustan's rulers are trying again.

KWANDEBELE

PUPPETS VS. THE PEOPLE, ROUND TWO

BLOOD FLOWED in KwaNdebele when the people opposed independence last year.

But the bantustan and its new chief minister Majosi Mahlangu are still trying to force independence down people's throats.

Mass resistance and anger forced the KwaNdebele Legislative Assembly to drop its independence plans last year.

Opposing independence were the vast majority of the population of the poverty stricken bantustan, including white farmers and civil servants. Key forces in the war were the youth and the Royal Family.

Only a small fraction of the population, the KwaNdebele government and its armed Mbokodo vigilantes, supported independence.

The SAP and SADF initially played a low-profile role, but as conflict developed, this became more overt.

The KwaNdebele government relied on the brute force of the Mbokodo to crush resistance to independence.

Their close relationship was an open secret. Past Chief Minister Simon Skosana and his deputy Piet Ntuli were Mbokodo president and vice-president. About half their cabinet were also Mbokodo members.

Mbokodo's savagery made united resistance literally a matter of life and death for the people of KwaNdebele. "What makes us come together is Mbokodo", said one youth activist, "it harassed people to such an extent that everyone was aware of its activities."

Mbokodo's actions were met with

tremendous anger and before long the group could no longer operate. The property of Mbokodo members, many of them shopkeepers and taxi owners, was destroyed. Piet Ntuli was killed in a car bomb explosion.

The anti-independence war took many different forms: school boycotts, stayaways, demonstrations and strikes.

The people finally presented their ultimatum at a mass meeting. They demanded that the Mbokodo disband, that independence plans be scrapped and that the KwaNdebele Legislative Assembly and cabinet resign because it had accepted independence claiming a mandate from the people.

A reportback on the demands was postponed for the funeral of Jacob Skosana, an activist killed by the Mbokodo. When a crowd of more than 25000 later gathered to hear the reportback, security forces moved in and fired teargas, rubber bullets and buckshot.

These actions triggered off violence aimed at Mbokodo and the police.

Confrontation continued until August when the decision to take independence was abandoned.

This year new attempts have been made to secure independence. Ex-Mbokodo members are reorganised in the new Kitskonstabels, including those still facing criminal charges for their earlier actions. Said youth activists, "They are given cars and guns to patrol each and every village. They are harassing people and paying revenge against those who are anti-independence."

The KwaNdebele government is also trying to win people's hearts said the youth activists. "But they have got a problem, they invite people to feasts at the stadium and at the cathedral, they invite school children, but only a few show up".

Pro-independence propaganda pamphlets are distributed in the villages at night, telling people to back independence and attacking the royal family.

The opposition of the royal family, chiefs and indunas has been a vital factor in the failure of the independence initiative.

Attempts to get chiefs and indunas to persuade the king to accept independence have failed. They have insisted that independence goes against their people's mandate.

With many chiefs and indunas detained and others in hiding, the government has imposed new indunas. A majority vote from the new indunas could replace Mapoch, who is in hiding, with a pro-independence king.

In June this year the bantustan government went to ask the state president to grant KwaNdebele independence. This time the SA government was more cautious and sent them back to obtain "a mandate". The bantustan government has since embarked on a campaign to force people to take out KwaNdebele citizenship. This they say, is a "mandate".

Civil servants get fired and old people can't get pensions unless they have KwaNdebele citizenship. And those who refuse citizenship run the risk of detention.

Attempts have also been made to force residents of Moutse, who have

fiercely resisted incorporation into KwaNdebele, to accept bantustan citizenship.

At Philadelphia hospital, nurses who reject independence have been sacked, supposedly on financial grounds.

But local activists said that in the same week the government bought thirty cars for the KwaNdebele police.

"Why didn't they pay the nurses instead? There is a shortage of nurses and doctors at the hospital. The government just wants the police to help them get independence. They don't think of the suffering people of KwaNdebele."

Meanwhile detentions of those opposing independence continue. This includes teachers and students from Mandlathu, Kameelrivier and Waterval Boven, and a circuit inspector. Even Siyabuswa's anti-independence chief magistrate is in hiding fearing victimisation.

Activists say last year's battle was won through unity, but without any formal organisations. Now this is seen as a priority.

Repressive conditions mean that meetings are underground.

"We have a coordinating committee for the students, youth and old people," said youth activists. "We are preparing to form street and village committees in every village. There is unity among the people and they are eager to fight this thing. We want to form organisations for the people, of the people and by the people."

"APARTHEID has separated us from our people, now we are going back to them," says the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa).

Contralesa was formed at the end of September by 38 sub-chiefs from KwaNdebele and Moutse and it is the first organisation of its kind in the country.

The organisation aims to unite all traditional leaders in the country, to build and deepen democratic relationships with the youth, workers and all sectors of the population and to take up demands jointly with the communities.

Speaking about chiefs who sided with the people in the past, Contralesa said, "We recall with pride and dignity leaders such as Cetshwayo, Matikwane, Nyabela, Moshoeshe, Sekhukhune, Ramabulana, Dinizulu, Luthuli and now the most noble son of Africa, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela - who is also of royal birth."

"Most of them have been subjected

Chiefs go back to their people

to imprisonment, banishment and all other known forms of atrocities committed by Pretoria against its opponents," says Contralesa.

The organisation condemns "those of our traditional leaders who have been manipulated by apartheid to become collaborators and serve in the structures that have been created by the regime to further enhance the oppression and exploitation of our people."

The Contralesa chiefs argue that decisions like the acceptance of independence must be a mandate from the people and not from Pretoria.

Progressive organisations have welcomed the formation of Contralesa. The Northern Transvaal UDF said, "It is a great achievement to see chiefs coming back to their people. We call on all chiefs to resign and join Contralesa and become part of the oppressed people's struggle for liberation."

"We are proud that traditional leaders are beginning to realise the truth. The struggle in the bantustan is not only against independence but against the whole bantustan machinery," said Sayco.

Youth leaders have pointed out that the ANC worked with chiefs in the past to win the support of the people and to build an African nation.



Victims of the Mbokodo

pic: Sowetan

"But the apartheid regime usurped that strategy and used the chiefs to enhance division among the people", they said.

"We have a long history of chiefs who fought on the side of the people. We believe in such kind of chiefs. It is our intention to let the people govern themselves through their own

recognised and democratically elected leadership.

"Let the present chiefs, if they are still chiefs, lead their people in the fight against what actually deprives their people of their land, their houses, of their development in general. Let them be accountable to the people and directed by them."

FOR A long time the Venda government has suppressed information about opposition to its rule.

Northern Transvaal Youth Congress (Notyco) activists from Venda spoke to Saspu National about struggles against "independence" and bantustan rule.

They stressed that "Our campaign against the dummy Venda independence must not be isolated from the broad national democratic struggle in the whole of South Africa."

The Anti-Venda Independence Campaign was formed in 1986. It includes organisations like the Northern Transvaal Action Committee, Education Crisis and Detainees committees, and youth congresses.

"Independence means slavery, it means a 300-strong police force, a 3000-strong defence force, a vigilante-type youth league whose duty is to harass us and deployment of 6000 combined forces of the SA and Venda Defence Force (VDF)."

The activists said Venda was like a police "state". "The actions of the Venda government are notorious. The 'Maintenance of Law and Order Act of 1985' outlaws any opposition to homeland rule. This year at least 16 people have been detained under this law."

"The Venda repression machinery has already claimed lives of people in detention," they say. Tshifiwa Muofhe and Tshikode Tshivase are known to have died at the hands of the Venda security police.

Last year three rallies were held in Venda. But for the past year, detentions, frequent road blocks and army occupation of villages have allowed little open activity.

Despite these problems, says Notyco, the campaign is being revived. "It is still at an embryonic stage because of the lack of political awareness among the people".

They said the campaign doesn't have clearcut methods. But mobilising and organising people around their problems and grievances is seen as a key strategy.

"The payment of taxes is a chain around the necks of the poor farm workers but they haven't been organised against this form of exploitation," said the youth.

"Trade unions are not allowed to operate in Venda and as a result, workers are not organised. Workers only earn R50-R60 a month."

"South African firms have moved to Venda to enjoy the smooth-running exploitation of unprotected Venda workers."

"The working members of our youth congresses discuss methods and strategies of organising the workers. It may be a long time before there can be trade unions in Venda - but we are optimistic."

"Women support the campaign because they are forced to pay for water, firewood, and for grass to roof their houses. It is compulsory for them to join burial societies where they have to pay six rand. Their husbands are mostly working in the mines and cities."

The activists said youth and students are the most militant and active sector of resistance in the bantustan.

There have been clashes with police and frequent boycotts at schools and at the University of Venda (Unive) since last year. Grievances such as racist teachers, unqualified lecturers, detentions and police action have led to the boycotts.

In one incident, trouble started when students complained about unqualified lecturers. "The police were called in and started beating students. Venda government vehicles were burned and there was a riot."

The SRC and the Azaso (now Sansco) branch on the campus were banned last year, but are operating again.

"The universities were gearing up for a national sporting event organised by the All University Sport Committee."

"Unive authorities were desperate for the university to be represented. They were forced to allow the SRC



VENDA

The Lion of the North still lives in the people

Since Venda's "independence" in 1979 people's conditions have moved from bad to worse. But struggles in the bantustan now aim to awaken the spirit of resistance of the past.

Students are a key sector of resistance in Venda. Above and right: village youth on the run during clashes between police and students.



pics: Sowetan

to operate again. This victory earned the students a chance to reorganise a Sansco branch and working committee."

The Unive victory inspired high school students to campaign for SRCs. Two schools, Rewandani and Thambathira now have SRCs.

"But these are short term victories which need to be consolidated at all costs," say the Notyco activists.

Attempts are also being made to consolidate and defend other advances. "Since the formation of the Northern Transvaal People's Congress we have attempted to set up village committees in Venda. But it is a long process involving many risks."

"There are meetings going on to educate the people about the situation in Venda. When they have a fuller understanding we can introduce village committees. But at this stage we feel not enough has been done."

"If we created committees without this it could be disastrous, because some of the villagers still have confidence in the Venda government. These are the lessons we learnt from

other villages in the Northern Transvaal.

"At times we are forced to adopt defensive methods as a mobilising strategy. For example, the village opposite the president's (Mphephu) residence is to be removed so he may have 'decent neighbours'. This area is occupied by peasants who cause him great embarrassment."

"The villagers are angry but they can't do anything about it. Everybody talks about Mphephu being the only one who is enjoying the benefits of 'independence.' The intervention of activists can raise the people's consciousness," they say.

The Venda government has responded to the growing resistance by moving the VDF into specific villages for lengthy periods of time and setting up their own youth structures.

"Youths and students were taken to camps at places called Rupepe, Mayemi and Alba Centre. They tried to inculcate Venda patriotism and respect for the homeland government. This led to the formation of the Venda Youth

League.

"The youths received crash courses in the use of arms and ammunition. The most brainwashed ones were armed with pistols to wipe out activists."

"The Venda Youth League has working relations with the Thari ya Sechaba vigilante-type structure of Lebowa and Ximoko xa Rixaka in Gazankulu. Their mission is to ensure that their bantustans are here to stay," say the Notyco activists.

In forming the Venda Youth League, the minister of police said he wants to "make the Northern Transvaal Action Committee, which is an internal wing of the ANC, to die a true death".

For the SA government, the Far Northern Transvaal border has top priority when it comes to "security". The SA Commissioner of Police recently told villagers to be on the lookout for ANC "terrorists" who cross the Limpopo into SA.

SA has also been using the VDF in the war in Namibia. But the Notyco activists have discovered rumblings of discontent.

Brits, boers and bantustan rule

THE PEOPLE of Venda have a long history of resistance to domination. The Venda speaking people are mostly descendants of clans who immigrated from Zimbabwe in the 14th century. Around 1836 the Voortrekkers arrived in the Northern Transvaal and set up a town called Schoemansdal.

For many years the Boer settlers had a stable relationship with the local people. But conflict developed after the boers hunted out game in the area. They started demanding the people's land and labour.

Powerful Venda regiments under Makhado Ramabulana (known as the Lion of the North or the Night Fighter) attacked Schoemansdal and the boers fled.

But in 1898 the boers launched an attack against Mphephu Ramabulana, who had succeeded Makhado. The royal kraal was burnt down and over the next months more than 400 people were massacred.

The boers established the town that is known today as Louis Trichard. Mphephu was forced to cross the Limpopo and sought refuge in British ruled Rhodesia.

When the Anglo Boer War broke out in 1899, Mphephu's people aligned themselves with the British to defeat the boers.

After the war Mphephu returned and there was widespread hope that the new British administration would be less reactionary than Kruger's government had been.

But the British had no rewards for their wartime allies. Instead they introduced more control. They imposed more taxes and streamlined recruitment of cheap labour for the mines. They seized land and weapons from the people.

A few years after the formation of the Union of South Africa, a Venda chief, Chief Tshivase led his people in a campaign of resistance, but they were forced to surrender. Tshivase was deported to Hammanskraal near Pretoria where he died in 1952.

During the 1950s, the architect of apartheid, then Minister of Native Affairs Hendrik Verwoerd visited the Northern Transvaal. In the next period, the Tshivase, Mphafudi, Mphephu, Ramabulana, Tshikonelo, Molenge and Tshimofhe Tenghe tribal authorities were set up.

The people's land was put under the control of tribal authorities. Some were resettled in the barren land which was later named Gazankulu.

The position of the people of Venda moved from bad to worse after independence. While children have no classrooms, Mphephu and his henchmen build themselves big mansions and enrich themselves.

"Many members of the VDF refuse to go to Namibia to fight Swapo. They say they are being misused to defend SA's illegal occupation of Namibia and to block Swapo from taking power as a popular organisation of the Namibian people."

"You might think these words come from me," said a Venda activist, "but this was actually said by the unhappy VDF members on their return from the Operational Zone in Northern Namibia. One of their colleagues was killed in a skirmish with the People's Liberation Army of Namibia."

"It is not clear whether they are motivated by cowardice or a political principle. We know they went to Namibia during the rainy season when Swapo fighters mounted a heavy offensive."

Mphephu fears that losing the support of his defence force will be the end of the homeland government.

This would be a victory but the task is a much bigger one, say the Notyco activists. "The people are aware that they are faced with a duty of building one nation, one government of the people of South Africa."

OBITUARY

Norah Toleni of Cape Town and Greta Ncapai of Soweto, both veterans of struggles in the 1950s, have been laid to rest.

Norah Toleni

Born on December 19, 1919, Baba Norah Toleni was an active member of both the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress in the Western Cape until they were banned in 1950 and 1960 respectively.

Along with leaders such as Annie Selinga and Diana Maphile, she was an active participant in many historic campaigns against apartheid. Among these were the Defiance Campaign, the Anti-Pass campaign and the Potato Boycott.

She was detained for a long period together with other congress women, including Florence Mafikeng.

When the ANC was banned she remained in the country to continue her political work.

At the time of her death she was a member of the United Women's Congress, the Western Cape Civic Association and the Release Mandela Campaign. During the 1986 rent boycott Comrade Toleni and other women led a protest march to the Western Cape Development Offices.

The people of South Africa and particularly of the Western Cape will remember her courage.

Greta Ncapai

Mom-G, as she was affectionately referred to by her comrades in the Release Mandela Campaign and the Federation of Transvaal Women,



Greta Ncapai

never accepted that old age brings fatigue.

She refused to believe that she might die before she tasted freedom. She was determined to be involved whenever she was called upon to do so.

Greta Nomvikiviki Ncapai was born in 1912, in the Tsolo village in the Transkei. After receiving her secondary education in Qumbu in the late 1930s, she took a diploma in teaching and then returned to teach at the same village school she had attended. A few years later she left teaching and took up nursing.

During this period, at the invitation of Alfred Nzo, now the Secretary General of the African National Congress, she joined the ANC in East London.

After Greta married she settled in

Johannesburg where she worked closely with other leaders of the congress movement like Lillian Ngoyi, Albertina Sisulu, Ida Mtswana and many others.

Appearing in court in 1983 with Amanda Kwadi and Albertina Sisulu in a law suit against their illegal detention, Mom-G told the magistrate that she was in the RMC to fight for the release of political prisoners.

Mom-G didn't want to die before Mandela was freed. She always posed this question to the RMC: "When are you going to call me to join you to fetch Nelson?"

Greta died from a diabetic coma after a short illness, at Baragwanath hospital.

The Release Mandela Campaign and the Federation of Transvaal Women paid tribute to her.

Women look at what is to be done

of all of us, both men and women".

"Women are sometimes their worst oppressors, so we must not only change the attitudes of our men, but also the attitudes of our own women."

These issues were the responsibility of all progressive organisations. "For instance, when we take up education, we must look at how we are going to involve women in education. We must help our women to build themselves."

On family planning, the conference felt that "the responsibility for contraception must not be for women only, it should be a joint effort between both men and women, with respect for the woman and support for her. If it is a joint responsibility, it ceases to be a pressure on her. Our struggle is to remove these pressures."

The conference mood was one of critical and constructive discussion. "One of the questions that came up was why we need a women's organisation. We looked at this very earnestly and it must continue to be discussed but some of us feel very strongly that there is a need for a women's organisation.

"Historically women have not been

educated. You cannot put women in an organisation and think that a miracle will happen. This is one reason why today there are only two women in the National Executive of the ANC. We've got to question why, because the women of South Africa have a long history of struggle."

The delegates concluded that "the reason is that we as women and the organisation itself have not paid enough attention to the development of women. We have allowed women to continue in the kitchen and the men happy oppressing their wives."

"We are speaking of the upliftment of the women, and you can only begin to attend to the special case of women if you have a women's organisation that can look specifically into the disadvantages of women and address them."

One problem when women participate in organisations, they said, is that in meetings only a few women will speak while the others keep quiet because they lack confidence. The men on the other hand will be more articulate.

"We cannot be sentimental about these questions. We've got to be practical. We wish that there could be one organisation where both men and women could talk together, address problems and articulate the ideals and objectives of both men and women, but it doesn't happen that way."

"The reality of our situation is that our women have been kept down all their lives. We must address this question as we address all questions. We must address it politically, not emotionally. We must look towards the future of the men and women, the future of the nation."

making and sewing co-operatives.

Apart from branches and working groups, NOW has media and education sub-committees. An organising sub-committee evaluates the work of the others and strategises on the organisation's progress. An affiliate of the UDF, NOW also works with civics, youth structures, and so on around community issues.

"We have experienced problems with detention and vigilantes," says NOW.

Sayco is getting to

EVER SINCE their founding congress earlier this year the South African Youth Congress (Sayco) has been concerned about the low level of women's participation in the organisation.

Sayco National Executive member, Dipuo Peters, spoke at a Nusas conference on women about the reasons for this and how it can be changed.

Sayco has recognised that the lack of women's participation now is partly a result of the way the youth organised in the past. "Throughout the conferences leading up to the formation of Sayco the participation of women was very low", said Dipuo.

"At some stages there were no women involved, only men were there, or only one woman was present."

Having identified the problem, Sayco began to develop strategies to resolve it. "At the launching conference it was decided that because of the low participation of women, we couldn't have a national women's organiser.

"As we didn't have forums for women to participate, at a local level

participation of women was limited and that there were no structures or forums for young women to discuss and debate and strategise.

"Realising this, Sayco decided that now is the time for young men and women, the few that were involved, to organise the others," said Dipuo.

But the basic question of why

Roots of problem

women had not participated remained, and Sayco began to analyse the roots of the problem. "The problems that contribute to the low participation of women are basically traditional."

"They stem from our forefathers, from our history as black people. Traditionally leadership roles had been limited and to a certain extent confined to the menfolk, women were not allowed to participate in any kraal meetings, which were like parliament discussions.

"Women were told that they had to remain at home. A woman's place is in the kitchen and to look after the children. And that is the reason why we have this problem now, because

UDFWCO to unite women in the Front



Veteran women's leader and UDF president, Albertina Sisulu.

THE UDF Women's Congress (UDFWCO) was launched in Cape Town in April this year. The women's congress unites the six women's organisations affiliated to the UDF.

At the launch the delegates noted that although women are active in most UDF affiliates, there are few women leaders. UDF affiliates fail to challenge discrimination against women at work, in the home and in political organisation. Women lack the confidence and skills to participate actively. Often men do not listen to women's views, and sexual harassment sometimes takes place in organisations.

UDFWCO believes that "The struggle against apartheid and exploitation cannot be victorious while women are in bondage. We cannot build a democratic future when women are oppressed and unable to participate fully in all aspects of society."

UDFWCO says it will strive to educate men and women in all

affiliates of the the UDF about women's oppression, encourage UDF activities to bring about the full participation of women, to eradicate sexism from our ranks.

They will promote a vision of a non-sexist future South Africa among progressive organisations, raising women's issues in the UDF and taking UDF campaigns into women's organisations.

They resolved to train women to become leaders who are clear about the struggle for liberation, accountable, committed to work in the organisation and who represent working class women.

UDFWCO policy on women and work says: "We believe that women have the right to live and work where they choose, to maternity benefits, child care, a healthy work environment, equal pay, education and job security." They encourage women to join trade unions and stand in solidarity with worker action. UDFWCO also supports the campaign for a living wage.

The Women's Charter and the Freedom Charter were both adopted. "We commit ourselves to democracy in our organisations. We believe that a government must be based on the will of the people. We stand united behind the demand for one person one vote for all South Africans."

"Democracy," said UDFWCO, "means full control over our lives. It means participation by the people in decision making about all aspects of their lives." The launching of the UDF Women's Congress, takes a step towards this democratic control.

Working on the ground is the way for NOW

THE NATAL Organisation of Women (NOW) has grown considerably since its formation in 1983.

It initially had members in Durban townships like Lamontville and KwaMashu. Now women from Empangeni, Pietermaritzburg and Natal rural areas are also part of the organisation. And according to NOW activists, almost all the townships around Durban have branches.

The branches organise around

issues, needs and projects identified by women in their branch. So while the Pietermaritzburg branch has organised a creche, Lamontville is involved in a knitting project. Other branches take up civic issues such as transport, education and rent, soup kitchens for pensioners and orphans and all-night vigils against attacks by vigilantes.

To organise unemployed women, NOW also runs projects such as shoe

the roots of what holds young women back

we've been socialised into these things, to say 'my position is to sit at home and cook' and so on."

"When a girl comes home from school, there's nothing else to do but to look after younger sisters or to do the house chores.

"When it comes to going out and discussing issues that affect the community, that is said to be the duty of men," said Dipuo.

"I think there's a complex on the part of women, the fact that traditionally they have been accorded the status of being minors.

"Even now, women are not allowed to sign a leasehold, it's either the husband or the eldest son. If she doesn't have a son, or the husband is late, then it's up to her.

"Socially young women are not exposed to the dynamics and political activity like their male counterparts. Their participation and analysis of the situation is thus very weak."

"As young women, we've got the tendency of turning social issues against ourselves. Like this family planning issue. I know that housing problems are a social problem,

inflation is not my problem alone.

"Overpopulation is not my problem alone, but I'm going to take it and turn it against my body, go for the family planning and the likes and say I don't want to be seen as a cause of these problems, forgetting that you are not the only person who brings life into this earth.

"Traditionally women are not expected to sit and discuss with their male counterparts, women are not prepared to voice their opinions at public gatherings.

"We are not prepared to voice our

Educating women

opinions because we've been told that a man's word is the last and the first, whatever you say it's not going to be considered."

The attitudes towards educating women, said Dipuo, posed further problems. "Our grandfathers used to say it's useless for a girl to be taken to school because she's going to be married and then she'll be working for the her husband and the family will have lost out.

"In most black communities educated women are not married. In the minds of our men an educated woman is very dangerous. If women go to school, they go up to standard six, so long as they can write their names and the likes, and be able to communicate with their masters or wherever they're going to work, and compete with their male counterparts. That's why we have a problem at present.

"In schools you have women outnumbering the boys at the primary, and higher primary levels, but when it comes to secondary school and matric the numbers start to diminish.

"Start to ask yourself why. Women think 'it's useless for me to go on because if I go on I'm not going to get married, so it's useless, why should I try and compete with a man?'"

Speaking about the strict rules of social status, she said the general attitude was that "a man should always be on top so that he can drag me up the social ladder. If a woman is educated that man is going to drag her down to the level where he is, but when a man is educated, the wife is also being dragged to that position.

"A doctor's wife is 'Doctor So and So's wife' but when it's a woman doctor, the husband is nothing, he's just in the background. The wife doesn't want to be seen with him. It gives us problems when we organise women, especially young women."

Sayco was strategising ways to deal

Political theory

with these problems, said Dipuo. "We in Sayco intend increasing or developing women's participation by sharpening their political theory.

"Young women should know that they have to play a role next to their men. They don't have to be behind their men, or in front of their men, but side by side.

"We don't want to be shadows of our husbands in future, or shadows of our brothers, or our sons, like being called this one is so and so's wife, that's why she has decided to be involved.

"And young women are not prepared to participate in front of their boyfriends. They think 'maybe I'll make a blunder and then he's going to

laugh at me or get rid of me and get another one who's better than myself.'

"These things are pushing us far behind our men. We want to try and bridge this gap. We want to extend political activity and programmes to include women up to the leadership level, shedding all traces of being the shadows of their husbands, brothers and sons."

Dipuo commented to the Nusas delegates: "We ask ourselves why our white counterparts have got so many women in their structures. Maybe you people here could give us the magic potion for accepting women into your structures.

"Sayco is still a young organisation so we're trying to get hints from long existing, older organisations. We know that Sayco is the largest, but it is still young, and we're still learning.

Concluding, Dipuo stressed that "we must practice and preach at the same time. If we say something, we must do it. No-one will be left behind. If we can get rid of all these myths and stories about women, we are going to prosper in our struggle."



WCape Fed saw launch

Unions tackle more than women's wages

Trade unions are one forum where women's issues can be dealt with collectively.

TRADE UNIONS can tackle a range of problems that face women.

A Cosatu women's representative spoke recently about how the unions are organising women.

She said most women suffer inequality in three ways, they are exploited as workers and oppressed as black people and as women.

In the trade union, she said, women are organised as workers: "We're talking about organising women around issues like wages, working conditions and so forth. The trade union can be totally blind to the different experiences of men and women, but even if they are, benefits are experienced by women in that organisation."

But trade unions can also address women's oppression. "Women are the carers of the old, the sick and the young, and the family as a whole, and those problems impinge on trade union work at every stage: they appear in meetings through under-participation, through poor attendance, and other ways."

Because the extra responsibilities that women face interfere with their trade union participation they are issues that the trade union must consider, she said. They are collective issues that need to be solved collectively rather than personal problems that the individual should deal with.

An example was maternity leave, where a number of victories had been

won. "Existing structures, decision making and committees, not separate organisation, have been responsible for taking up issues that particularly advantage women."

"A new and exciting development came with this year's declaration of the Cosatu Living Wage campaign," she said. The Campaign demands a living wage for all, decent education and decent training, job security and decent housing.

Women workers have particularly good reasons to participate in the Campaign. A recent national study of nearly 1 000 women workers found that one out of every three working women is the only breadwinner in the family. Wages are low and inflation high, so even if the family has other income, the woman's wage is a vital component.

The Campaign is especially important to women because women are generally expected to be the homemakers, for making sure that the needs of the family are met. Not only do they have to manage on starvation wages, but less money means more work and longer hours. For example, it's cheaper to buy in town - but then heavy parcels must be carried a long way home on overcrowded public transport. Low wages mean that women cannot afford labour-saving devices like washing machines, even if she has electricity.



Above: Fedsaw anniversary rally in 1984 Right: Union member makes a point.

Women are often forced to take jobs for badly paid work - more than half a million women are employed in domestic work in South Africa - or women may be obliged to take jobs in the lowest paying grades. Women workers may be paid lower wages than men: even though this is illegal many employers have found ways to get around this.

Women need a 40 hour working week, says Cosatu. One reason is that some workers work such long hours that they do the work of two people. Bosses do this so they do not have to employ more people or pay more wages. A 40 hour week without loss of pay will force them to employ more people and create more jobs.

After working long hours at their jobs, most women have to put in hours of work at home, a second shift. Some men help with the housework, but usually it is seen as 'women's work'. Until men and women learn to share housework more equally, a 40-hour week will help women who have to do 'a second shift' by giving them more time at home.

If women are working 'two shifts' it is hard to find the time to be politically active. Mam Lydia explains why so many women drop out of trade unions: "They start to feel the pressure at home. It's dangerous for women to attend meetings late at night. She also knows that when she goes home she will find everything as she left it. Her husband will be sitting idle. And he might not believe she has been to a meeting. This makes her retreat. She does not want to lose her family for the union, even if she is committed to it. So organisation becomes weakened."

Sometimes women are sexually harassed at work. They might be forced to sleep with the supervisor if they want to keep their job. If they work long hours, they go home when it is late and dark. Sometimes women are assaulted and raped. A 40 hour week can protect women from assault because they could go home when it is light and safer.

Cosatu demands six months paid



maternity leave and that women be allowed to return to work after the baby is born, and that they should not lose benefits like pension or medical aid. Unions like Cawusa, Mawu and CWIU have already won demands like this.

Proper maternity leave means that women workers need not worry about hiding their pregnancy. They need not continue to do work that might endanger the health of the baby. If they want to have the child, they won't have to consider ending the pregnancy by having a dangerous backstreet abortion. After the child is born, the mother will be able to make sure that it is well cared for in the important first months.

Cosatu's Living Wage includes the money needed to bring up children properly - to make sure they have a safe place to stay and proper facilities for play. The National Automobile and Allied Workers Union has negotiated with BMW to provide a creche for their children.

Cosatu says that unions can help women both by fighting for the rights that affect all workers and by taking union responsibility for the additional work that women do.

And through the Living Wage Campaign Cosatu is doing more than just raising issues that are important now. As the organiser said, "the ways in which we organise now will clearly determine the kind of future that we're building. It will determine the liberation that we make."

International spotlight turns to SA children's plight under apartheid

THE PLIGHT of South Africa's children, highlighted at the International Conference on Children, Repression and the Law in Apartheid South Africa, brought international attention to Southern Africa.

Convened by veteran Anti-Apartheid campaigner and British Anti-Apartheid Movement chairman, Archbishop 'Isithwalandwe' Trevor Huddleston, the conference was held in Harare, Zimbabwe.

It brought together 300 South Africans, from inside the country and those in exile, and over 200 representatives of 150 organisations throughout the world.

Children and their mothers, representatives of the ANC, Swapo and Palestine Liberation Organisation, UDF, lawyers, doctors, social workers, religious bodies and members of civic, youth, students, women's organisations and trade unions were there.

The ANC was represented by National Executive members, President Oliver Tambo, Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Zuma, Ruth Mompoti, Getrude Shope, Thomas Nkobi, Mzwai Piliso, Aziz Pahad, James Stuart, Joe Slovo, and others from different levels of the organisation.

Opening the conference, Zimbabwe premier Robert Mugabe said he sincerely hoped the conference would "enhance international awareness of the terrible plight and situation of the weakest and most vulnerable of the South African population, namely the black children, the most helpless victims of the evil monster that is apartheid."

"It is they who are malnourished, mis-educated and above all are daily jailed, maimed and murdered by Apartheid."

"When a regime refuses to release an 11 year old child on bail because this 11 year old child would be a danger to the security of the state, then there must be something drastically wrong with those adults."

"No amount of propaganda will distract us from removing this grossly inhuman system of apartheid," said SA Council of Churches general secretary Rev Frank Chikane.

For the first time since emergency regulations effectively barred press coverage of detention, the international community was able to gain a deeper insight into life under Apartheid's State of Emergency.

According to the government statistics which give a partial indication of violence against the children, for the 1984-6 period, 300 were killed, 1000 wounded, 11000 detained without trial, 18000 arrested on charges arising out of protest and 17300 were awaiting trial in police cells.

During the conference the Minister of Law and Order telexed Dr Beyers Naude, saying that less than 10 children were in detention. Naude replied that "there shouldn't have been one."

Children who have been in detention - some still living in SA and others who have left the country - gave testimony about their experiences.

Walter Sisulu Young Pioneers waiting for their turn to perform at the Harare conference closing rally



Professionals such as doctors and social workers who deal with ex-detainees on a daily basis, gave a scientific analysis of the harmful effects of detention on the young. This was backed up by information compiled by the Detainees Parents Support Committee.

Members of liberation movements spoke about how they cope with these effects in ex-detainees who go into exile to join their ranks.

"The theme of this conference is fitting and is taking place at a very critical time in the struggle for national liberation in Namibia and South Africa," said a Swapo representative.

"We are fighting in order to create conditions that would be conducive to the care, protection and peaceful development of children, so that they may grow and reach adulthood. The army of occupation destroys schools, hospitals, clinics, leaving black Namibian children without facilities."

He quoted from a Namibian child's statement: "The white soldiers ordered a black soldier to make fire, then the white soldier ordered me to sit on the fire, but I refused. He grabbed me and forcibly threw me into the flames." The child sustained third degree burns.

The representative from the Soviet Union said, "The South African government refers to these brutalised children as criminals. In fact in South Africa there is only one criminal, and that is the South African government. These children are heroes."

Lisbet Palme, the wife of the late former Premier of Sweden, Olaf Palme quoted her husband: "A system like apartheid cannot be reformed, it can only be abolished. It is by taking joint responsibility that we can contribute towards abolishing the apartheid system. This system can live on because it gets support from outside."

"If the support is pulled away and turned into resistance, Apartheid cannot endure. If the world decides to abolish apartheid, apartheid will disappear", she said.

South Africa's destabilising role in Southern Africa also had severe effects on children. Palme quoted from a speech by Mozambique's president Chissano on a visit to Sweden: "Small boys between eight and ten years of age were recruited

by the bandits. They were trained for bestial acts - even to kill children and women.

"How can children performing these acts ever grow up to human beings? What can be a deeper degradation of human dignity?"

At the conference's closing rally Zimbabwean university students, pupils from Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, the Walter Sisulu Pioneers, choral groups and South African artists staged a cultural show.

Last to speak were President Oliver Tambo and Angela Davis of the US Communist Party. "The children in South Africa are refusing to adapt to apartheid...we know that victory is just over the horizon, South Africa and Namibia will be free," said Davis.

A conference declaration read by Dr Beyers Naude said: "We strongly condemn all those who collaborate with the regime in executing its policies; in particular the lawyers who lend legitimacy to an inhuman and illegitimate system and the medical practitioners who conspire in keeping secret the brutality against children."

"We call upon the international community to sever all relations with professional bodies which fail to condemn these practices. We commit ourselves to act in a concerted way to keep the world aware of the plight of South Africa's children."

"We urge lawyers, medical practitioners, social and religious workers and all others whose work involves special responsibilities for children, to play a part in the struggle to protect the children of South Africa and help free them from apartheid."

"We appeal to the international community to work for the imposition of sanctions against the regime, and urge all governments to declare their support for all those who, even at risk to themselves, are prepared to act in defence of the children of South Africa."

Said Commonwealth Secretary Ramphal: "We pledge ourselves collectively and as individuals, to use all our resources to work towards the realisation of a united non-racial and democratic South Africa and thereby ensure a speedy end to Apartheid whose violence spares neither her young - in South Africa, Namibia and throughout Southern Africa."

SOUTH AFRICA has a number of international links - economic, military, political, diplomatic, sporting and cultural and so on.

"These links are not between SA and the rest of the world, but between white SA and the rest of the world."

"These international links benefit and strengthen apartheid," say the South Africans. They argue that attempts to remove apartheid had to ensure that all its taps of support were turned off.

"As early as 1959 Chief Luthuli said that the world must act to isolate and stop support for apartheid."

SUCCESSSES

The international campaign of solidarity with the people of SA and the campaign to isolate apartheid has scored a lot of successes since 1959, say the South Africans.

"The overwhelming majority of the international community rejects apartheid and feels an obligation to act against it."

"This message has gone across the globe - this is an important victory because it weakens apartheid and makes it easier for South Africans to remove it."

"There is not a thinking person in the world today who doesn't know that it is wrong to play sport with, maintain economic relations with, or supply weapons to apartheid SA."

"Even the Apartheid government has accepted that it has lost the battle for the allegiance of the international community."

"The SA government is fighting to keep the allegiance of only a handful of countries like the US, Britain, West Germany, France, Israel and Portugal."

"But as far as the rest of the world is concerned, they don't even really try. They know those countries are against apartheid and can't be won back."

GOVERNMENT REJECTED

"The SA government does not have a seat in the United Nations General Assembly, because the General Assembly took a formal decision that this government is not representative of the people of SA and therefore could not be part of the UN General Assembly."

"So that chair remains empty until a government of SA is formed which is truly representative of the people of SA."

"In the OAU and in the Non-Aligned Movement there is no SA government representative. The liberation movement is there, recognised as representing the people of SA."

"In the field of sport, SA is no longer allowed in the Olympic movement. It has been expelled from the International Football Federation. There are very many other international bodies where the apartheid government no longer represents the people of SA."

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are seen as central in the isolation of apartheid.

"Everybody has responded to the call made in 1959 for the international community to cut off links with apartheid: sanctions are part of that process."

"There is virtually no country in the world which has not, in an official sense, imposed sanctions against apartheid, but those sanctions are necessarily enforced."

"This is an important success, because the principle of sanctions is no longer contested. What may be contested is the extent of those sanctions, their duration and so on."

But even governments which oppose sanctions, have imposed them. "Even a country like the US has formally imposed sanctions against apartheid. And long before that, the US, Great Britain, France and everybody else had imposed an arms embargo against SA as a result of a mandatory

Camp



Anti-apartheid demonstrations, from

ACR

International abhorrence of apartheid has spread overnight. Saspu National anti-apartheid activists are leading an international campaign against the apartheid system.



Children, parents and teachers march

resolution of the UN Security Council.

PEOPLE'S SANCTIONS

Pressure from the ordinary people of different countries has often been key in pushing governments to take action against apartheid. One example was last year's US Congress decision to impose limited sanctions.

"That decision did not come from congressional reps and senators, it came from the mass pressure of the US people."

"Representatives and senators began to see that their seats in Congress depended to some extent on how they addressed the question of Apartheid. So they took decisions in favour of sanctions."

"It has taken a lot of mobilisation from groups opposing apartheid. As people get to know about apartheid, as they engage in activities, a powerful world anti-apartheid movement has developed."

Increasingly in the last two years, the idea of non-governmental sanctions have been put forward.

"Particularly in the major Western countries, we have tried to indicate to ordinary people that they have a responsibility to impose sanctions and to not merely sit and wait and say our governments must legislate for sanctions."

For example transport workers refuse to handle goods to and from SA, people withdraw their accounts from banks that give loans to SA or withdraw investments in companies that have SA subsidiaries.

This, according to overseas sources, is part of the pressure that resulted in the US congress imposing sanctions.

"It was clearly a massive popular campaign of people's sanctions, of



aigning against Apartheid



1 to 6: 1. New York; 2. London - anti-Botha demonstration; 3. Filipinos against Apartheid placard; 4. Call for sanctions; 5,6. Toronto sanctions demonstration; pics: Afrapix

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IMPACT OF SANCTIONS

Anti-apartheid activists argue that, while the SA government may deny it, the sanctions campaign has had an important, though sometimes hidden, impact. They see this as contributing to the crisis of the apartheid system.

"In 1985 the SA stock exchange and foreign exchange transactions had to be closed because of action taken by American banks, by Chase Manhattan, not to extend loans to SA."

"It is true that Chase Manhattan said it was entirely a commercial decision, but it is also true that it lifted US public pressure on them to stop extending loans to Pretoria.

This led to a crisis in South African business circles.

"Maybe it was a coincidence, but soon after that, a delegation of businessmen, led by Gavin Relly went to meet the ANC. So it has an effect."

The blocking of loans to SA, have had a serious effect on the apartheid economy.

"It is predicted that in order to sustain a certain level of economic activity, SA will have to offer interest rates three or four times higher than the rest of the world. Nobody is going to lend them money at anything but those sorts of rates.

The South African government is aware that this is a cost on the economy.

"Even the limited sanctions that have been imposed have had an important impact. The US sanctions, for example, involved withdrawing the SA sugar quota, throwing the SA sugar industry into a complete panic, because they would no longer be able to sell enormous quantities of sugar



Anti-apartheid march in London last year

in the US. They started saying, why are they being punished for the sins of apartheid.

"But they won't talk about these things openly because they are trying to put forward the notion that we can ride the storm out."

The US also terminated SAA's landing rights in the US.

"SAA has been involved in all sorts of schemes to lease out their aircraft to various countries, so that SAA flies under the national flags of other countries."

"The fact that they even went to court to sue the US government for the termination of that contract, indicated that they know the impact sanctions have."

SOME RECOGNISE THE ANC

"Sanctions are one reflection of how the overwhelming majority of the

countries treat the issue of the apartheid's legitimacy. Because they reject its legitimacy, they ask who are the legitimate representatives of the people of SA?"

"So a number of countries have gone beyond that to recognise the ANC as the legitimate representative of the people of SA."

Some examples they cite are:

●On international occasions in Zambia attended by representatives from different countries, the Zambian state flies the ANC flag among all the other flags of the world. "They recognise it as the flag of the people of SA."

●The ANC representative in the German Democratic Republic formally presents letters of credence, like the ambassadors of any other country.

●Some time back, the ANC Treasurer General led a delegation to



ANC president Oliver Tambo speaking at the United Nations in Geneva last year.

Czechoslovakia. "When they arrived, they found that there was a military guard of honour. The Treasurer General had to inspect the troops and formally take the salute. Two national anthems were played - the Czech anthem and Nkosi Sikelel'Afrika."

●Sweden has formal agreements with the ANC. Every year the ANC and Sweden have bilateral negotiations to spell out a protocol. This is signed by both sides along the same lines as any other government which has relations with Sweden.

This recognition of the ANC, according to exiled activists, is a recognition of the legitimacy of the forces that stand for a democratic SA. It is seen as an indication of the success of the international campaign to isolate the apartheid government.

"Once countries say the apartheid state is illegitimate, then the political forces fighting for a democratic state are recognised as the legitimate representatives of that future state."

This international recognition of the ANC as representatives of SA's people also takes the form of official ANC offices all over the world, with ANC representatives accredited to different governments.

The ANC has offices throughout Africa. Most of Western Europe has also given this status to the ANC. Offices are also to open in Moscow, India, Japan and Canada.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES

"There is hardly any corner of the world that you can go where you won't find an anti-apartheid group of one kind or another," say activists.

But while most of the world agrees that apartheid must go, various world forces have different approaches to the issue.

"The socialist countries have in principle not had any relations of any kind with SA for decades. So when the demand comes, isolate apartheid SA, it really applies to the Western countries which continue to maintain these relations," say anti-apartheid activists. "The socialist, African and Non-Aligned countries go beyond the point of saying we are against apartheid. They say we are for the liberation of the oppressed people and for the creation of a democratic country."

"They have not only imposed sanctions and cut links to isolate apartheid, but they also give direct assistance to the forces that are for the creation of a democratic SA."

THE WESTERN POWERS

"The Western powers continue to maintain extensive relations with apartheid and give sustenance to apartheid. The call for sanctions is in practice directed towards those countries."

"At the same time their governments and official institutions don't assist the forces that are opposed to apartheid to strengthen them in getting rid of the system."

"But non-governmental forces provide non-military assistance which might come in any form, scholarships, assistance with food or health or other elements."

"The Western powers have a position that they must influence the outcome of the struggle in SA."

"In practice, they therefore don't take the position that the apartheid regime is illegitimate, we will cut links with it."

"They say we will support the forces of democracy but want to maintain contact with both sides of the conflict. This is in order to influence both sides to reach some kind of resolution which will to one extent or another protect the perceived interests of the Western powers."

The anti-apartheid activists say there has been a lot of "manoeuvring" by Western powers, particularly on the question of negotiations. They have put forward a position which counterposes sanctions and negotiations.

"The Western powers know that the possibility of negotiations doesn't exist but they raise it insistently, partly to ensure that they don't have to impose sanctions."

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

While major Western powers have been anti-ANC, there have been new developments on their approach to the ANC in the past 18 months.

According to international analysts, the Western powers have been forced to recognise the ANC's central position in SA politics, whether they recognise the legitimacy of the ANC or not.

"For instance, ANC president Oliver Tambo has had many meetings with leading representatives of various Western powers. This represents a

What was the significance of the Dakar talks?

The Dakar discussions have to be understood in the context of our efforts to reach into the white population. We don't recognise that the National Party or any of these other white political formations have an exclusive right of access to the white population of our country.

We are committed to a process of exposing white South Africans to the ideas of the movement, away from racism and winning them towards democratic positions and into the struggle.

The fact that we had so many of our white compatriots, particularly Afrikaners, wanting to meet the ANC, was important. And we agreed on certain basic positions in the course of the discussions.

There were some who proceed from a position of group rights and said any resolution of the South African problem must include this.

This we challenge very strongly. We do not accept that is how we should define the South African population politically. There are two contending forces - one a force for racism and reaction and another one for democracy and progress.

The joint communique released after the talks reflected a genuine understanding of the correctness of this position among a lot of the people who came.

This is why they were prepared to append their names to this declaration which called for a united, democratic and non-racial SA and which spoke about one person one vote. This represented a defeat for positions which speak about group rights.

Those who go back and work, particularly in the white community, winning over many more whites towards those democratic positions, to that extent they are helping the democratic movement as a whole. That is a very important contribution to the liberation struggle.

What type of government was envisaged for a future SA?

The people who came from home were interested in the views of the movement on the question of forms of government in a liberated SA.

The ANC does not have any constitutional blueprint, that is for the people to decide. So we could not say there will be two chambers of parliament, elected on this or that basis, or this is how constituencies will be structured and so on.

But it was important for us to define certain things that we insist on, for example the issue of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

This means a complete rejection of a notion of groups. And any new constitutional structure would not be based on groups. In a united, democratic and non-racial SA we would therefore recognise the rights of individuals and not the rights of groups. This would mean a system of one person one vote and an entrenched bill of rights to protect the rights of individuals.

But we cannot have what Botha and others are demanding - a bill of rights that entrenches group rights of groups. Because that, in our view, perpetuates apartheid.

We also discussed the judiciary. If you are talking about an entrenched bill of rights, you need a judiciary that respects those rights.

In SA today the judiciary has been made part of the enforcement and entrenchment of the apartheid system. It has to enforce apartheid laws.

So you would have a transformation of that judiciary to supervise and ensure the protection of democratic rights against any tendency to restore privilege to the privileged sections of our community.

In that context we explained that the

MORE THAN AN OUTING IN AFRICA

The effects of the Dakar talks between the ANC and a delegation of mainly white Afrikaners are being felt more than five months later.

Here the ANC speaks about some of the issues covered in the talks. Other issues we are unable to publish.



Clockwise: Group snapshot of the delegates; The late president of Burkina Faso, Sankara with ANC NEC member Thabo Mbeki; Mbeki and Beyers Naude lay foundation stone of anti-apartheid monument in Onagadougou; Afrikaner poet Breytenbach gets off the plane, Van Zyl Slabbert and Alex Boraine in the background.

ANC is saying there must be a transfer of power to the people. We have never ever said there must be a transfer of power to the ANC. We say a transfer of power to the people. Let the people, let everybody participate in this political process and let the people exercise power.

If they recognise and democratically choose ANC representatives to whatever structure of government, that is for the people to decide.

What was discussed about the post-apartheid economy?

There is an obvious need to radically restructure the South African economy, including the ownership of that economy.

As a matter of urgency, the democratic government in SA will be faced with the task of attending to the very enormous problems of the impoverishment of the black people in the country.

This is not an issue that could be postponed. So much has to be done about the standard of living of the people. The government must therefore be able to dispose of substantial resources in order to attend to those questions.

One wouldn't expect the Anglo American Corporation or any of these companies to suddenly become charitable institutions. Their task is to make profit, and they'll make profit. They won't attend to the millions of children who are suffering from malnutrition.

The state has to do this. But where does the state find the resources if they are all in the hands of private corporations? So in view of the practical needs of the democratic

revolution, you have to address the question of the ownership and control of this economy.

This is what lies at the base of the demand for a takeover of the monopolies in the country. This is needed to address the issue of the standard of living of the people. And to break a very important hold that these big corporations have on the lives of the people.

Clearly a democratic South Africa can never be truly democratic if there are two or three boards of directors which in fact decide the lives of millions of people by virtue of their control of important economic resources. This is not democratic.

We made the point that even a country like the US has anti-trust legislation to stop the building up of monopolies the size of the Anglo American Corporation. It is clearly undemocratic that half a dozen directors should control the lives of millions of people, because these people's livelihood depends on the AAC and its subsidiaries.

So we must break that up. We must address the issue of the racial question and the national question because that private economy is also in white hands. We can't have a national democratic revolution which does not address that element. What we are really putting forward

are the perspectives in the Freedom Charter. So our second major point was to reaffirm the position stated in the Freedom Charter.

We have also stated that we firmly believe in a democratic process and this whole matter has to be put to the people. If there is to be a democratic election, we say this is our platform, elect us on this basis. Anybody who has a programme, let them put it to the people and the people will decide.

We don't have a detailed plan with regard to the forms of control and ownership of this economy. It's obvious that the working class would have to play a very important and a very central role in that process of control and direction of the economy.

But you also have a government, in addition to a working class movement, which must have a say in the creation of wealth and in the disposal of the wealth that is created. All those different elements within any society have a role to play.

In some countries there is democratic discussion to work out national economic objectives and how these objectives can be realised. They don't just give it to a central planning office to work it out.

You need to say here is a proposal, and get a document distributed and let it be discussed everywhere. This is a form of participation by the masses of the people in the direction

of this economy. This is a valuable experience. The SA economy is integrated in a million ways. For example, a decision taken by workers in the East Rand has got to be related to a decision taken by the Richards Bay dock workers who export what the East Rand workers have produced.

So the particular form of participation for instance, of the working class in the control and management and direction of this economy is a very complicated question. But the principle of it is of course there - that democratisation is not just democratisation of political life, there also has to be democratisation of the economic life. Hence you need to address the question of ownership.

If just over one thousand whites own the private economy, as is the case now, and you leave that intact, you can't say you have democratised the country.

What was the view on the role of the delegates on their return to SA?

What we expected of the people who came from within the country to Dakar, is that all of them had basically rejected the apartheid system, certainly in some of its forms as it expresses racism and racial domination. And the people who came had rejected that.



Left: Dakar, Senegal -Grethe Fox, Trudie de Ridder and Hardy Botha read the Dakar daily newspaper along with ANC exec member Aziz Pahad and Tony Trew,



Above: Mbeki and local youth plant a tree in Onagadougou; another group pic.

Mac Maharaj, ANC exec, chats with delegates.

Support for democratic SA around the world

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recognition by the Western powers that you can't resolve the South African question without the ANC.

"These relations and contacts do not necessarily reflect a change of attitude, but they represent a recognition of the political reality in SA that the ANC is a central factor to the resolution of the problem."

Anti-apartheid activists say that this recognition and contact is not aimed at supporting the struggle of the people of SA.

"It is aimed at positioning these Western powers so that they are able to influence developments in SA in a direction which, in their calculation, would help protect and defend their interests."

Despite this, they see the new developments as an important victory.

PUPPET OF MOSCOW

The Western powers, like PW Botha, have for many years said that the ANC is a puppet of Moscow and that it should therefore be opposed.

"Only a few years ago the Reagan administration wouldn't have anything to do with the ANC because they said it was terrorist and a puppet of Moscow and so on."

"That strategy has failed. Because of the way the South African struggle has developed they have felt compelled to deal with the ANC at official levels. At the same time they have continued to campaign to say the ANC is communist dominated, it's a puppet of Moscow and all that."

TAMBO MEETS SHULTZ

When Tambo met Shultz, the US Secretary of State early this year, Shultz is said to have questioned the nature and extent of the ANC's relations with Moscow.

Journalists say Tambo informed Shultz that he had had a meeting with Soviet Communist Party general secretary Gorbachev two months earlier. Tambo had understood from Gorbachev that the Soviet Union did not pursue special interests in Southern Africa.

In its conduct in the region it was not acting in competition with the US. But as far as SA was concerned, the USSR was opposed to apartheid and supported the ANC because it thought that apartheid should end.

Tambo is said to have put to Shultz that the ANC hears that the US administration is opposed to apartheid, says apartheid must go and to that extent supported the democratic perspective for SA.

"Tambo therefore suggested that the US administration get in touch with the Soviet government to see in what ways they could join hands to get rid of a system which they both agree should go."

"The point was made very clearly that, as with other Southern African countries, the ANC doesn't want the East-West conflict injected into struggles taking place in the region, and that the important thing was the liberation of the people of SA. If the US and the USSR could join hands to assist in achieving that objective as

requests from the white community to address them on what transpired in Dakar. Some people have about 60 meetings lined up to the end of the year to address whites who want to know what the movement said. Some are going around talking to white farmers who also want to know.

An important process of education of the white community is taking place. Part of its importance is because it is being carried out by people who are accepted, respected and known in the Afrikaner community. They are Afrikaners, professionals, establishment people. It is unlike if we came, the Afrikaner community would say this is one is just making propaganda.

But when this process is carried out by someone from their community, in the end it gets people to say why have we been misinformed all these years? And now you will have an Afrikaner professor going around saying what you have been told about the ANC is not true, that is not what the ANC stands for. That is very important.

Given the Reagan administration's negative attitude towards the ANC, how do you view their applause of the Dakar talks?

Reagan had no alternative really. The US administration has been arguing in favour of a negotiated settlement of the South African question.

The talks were not negotiations, but the fact was that the ANC was talking to these white South Africans, and they clearly couldn't say they are against it.

The second element is that the Reagan Administration would like to distort this process of the ANC mobilising the white community and confine us only to that.

They want to say look, why don't you abandon everything else because here is a way out, you can talk. Stop fighting and continue with the whole process and everyone will come to common positions and apartheid will go away.

The Reagan Administration wants to be part of the process of any change that takes place in our country. The letter Reagan wrote to the President of Senegal welcoming these discussions, was part of that process of the US administration placing itself in such a position that we should consider it relevant to the process of change, as a supportive force.

They want to be part of the process at all times because they naturally want to influence any change in SA in accordance with their own interests.

In the end, from our experience, everybody in the world, the socialist countries, everybody, was pleased. The OAU summit congratulated the ANC on the Dakar initiative. The only person in the world who wasn't pleased was Botha, for obvious reasons.

advance it, not as a separate, parallel white force, but within the context of the democratic movement. Not as some force that stands there on its own, but as part of the democratic forces.

For example, the university law professors, can introduce the Freedom Charter to their students. Because you can't discuss future legal systems and so on without this. Let them discuss and debate it, compare it with whatever other proposals. This is a practical contribution they could make. Some people there were film makers. What is their responsibility as a film maker who is against apartheid - make films against apartheid, and so on.

Many of the people who came left with some conviction that they discovered that they did indeed have a relevance to the democratic struggle. And having understood the necessity for themselves to elaborate ways and means and methods of involvement in the struggle, this releases their own initiative.

Has this been effective?

An important feature of the Dakar talks is that there has been enormous interest among the people in the country, particularly the white population, in what happened in Dakar.

A number of delegates who came to Dakar have been inundated with

quickly as possible, it would be welcomed.

Anti-apartheid activists saw the proposal as confronting the charge that the ANC was a puppet of Moscow.

"The responsibility was put on the US administration to act together with the Soviet Union against apartheid."

NEW SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

"A new system of international relations is being built between the people of SA and the rest of the world.

"These relations at present include relations with a country's government, with the democratic parties, political parties of that country, their trade union movement, religious formations, the popular organisations of the youth, women and so on, and with the Anti-Apartheid Movements in those countries.

"These are the type of international relations which a democratic SA will inherit - not a system based on ideological allegiances, but based on the people of SA's own programme, the Freedom Charter.

"It's a system of relations with people who are in favour of democracy, non-racialism, independence, national sovereignty, the right to self-determination, peace, and equal co-operation among the peoples."

"Those are the only principles which govern the formation of this system of international relations. Because the partners in the struggle against apartheid themselves have a view that SA must become this united, democratic, non-racial independent non-aligned country, peaceful and not committing war against anybody else.

"That system is being born, and it is clear for anybody to see, that it is not focussed on building up a special relationship with the USSR.

"There is a special relationship with the USSR because of its assistance in the struggle against apartheid. But equally there is a special relationship with Sweden, with Zambia, India and so on. There are many other such countries in the world who have a special relationship with the people of SA, because of their involvement in their struggle, because of their understanding of their cause and because of their willingness to go any distance to ensure that the perspective of a democratic SA succeeds.

"It was important to suggest to Shultz that it would be perfectly in order and desirable that they and the USSR should act together to get rid of Apartheid.

"It's not in the interests of SA's people to get dragged into a conflict between two major powers, scrambling over the future of our country. We want their support. But the future of our country and the future of the region of Southern Africa must be determined by the people of the region."

"Therefore we wouldn't in any sense accept a situation of domination by anybody."



Cosatu and NUNW allies in trenches of struggle

STRONG ties of solidarity and unity between Namibian and South African workers are growing daily, said Namibian trade union leader and former Robben Island prisoner, Ben Uulenga.

Addressing the Cosatu national congress on behalf of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) he said this unity was born and was growing in the workers struggle against a common enemy.

"In Namibia we don't see your struggle as isolated from ours or ours from yours. We see our struggle as one united struggle against exploitation and oppression. "We are allies in the trenches of struggle," he said.

Uulenga, whose words were enthusiastically received by the 1500 delegates at the congress, took back to the workers of Namibia pledges of increased support from Cosatu.

The Congress noted the "historic resurgence in worker resistance leading to the formation of Nafau, Mun, Manwu and the revival of the National Union of Namibian Workers."

Cosatu declared its "preparedness to take solidarity action if the NUNW or any of its affiliates come under attack" from either the employers, the interim administration or the SA government.

The congress resolution noted the continued colonisation of Namibia by the apartheid government, the suppression of the Namibian people's organisation, Swapo, and the imposition of a puppet interim regime on the people of Namibia.

Cosatu condemned and rejected "the notorious linkage of the decolonisation process of Namibia to the issue



Workers march home after May Day rally in Katatura.

of Cuban troops" and "attempts to promote collaborationist unions to counter the efforts of NUNW".

The congress also resolved to:

- fully support the campaign to implement UN resolution 435 as a step towards establishing true Namibian independence.
- fully support NUNW and its

affiliates to gain full recognition in the factories, shops and mines where they are organised.

- promote all forms of material support, educational training and resources to consolidate NUNW and its affiliates.
- to encourage its affiliates to build concrete links and offer concrete

support to the affiliates of NUNW in each industrial sector.

In his speech, Uulenga said the Cosatu congress was taking place at a difficult and testing moment in the struggle of South African and Namibian workers.

Commenting on the State of Emergency and attacks on Cosatu, he

said, Namibian workers and people as a whole were facing the same type of repression.

"There are raids against the workers daily, in Namibian townships, especially Katatura and Luderitz. Workers are dying."

"To Cosatu comrades in this hard struggle, we in Namibia pledge our solidarity and full co-operation. In Namibia we also cry an injury to one is an injury to all."

Attacks against Cosatu had failed to break it, he said. "In the past few months you have succeeded in emerging strongly and more united in the face of repression"

"The formation of new industrial unions is enough proof of your determination," he said.

The struggle of SA workers led by Cosatu was an important part of the international struggle against the world system of exploitation, he said.

"We know racial oppression has the cooperation and assistance of the giant imperialist states of USA, Britain and others."

European, Asian, Latin American and African workers were facing imperialist aggression.

Attempts to undermine the freedom of Angola, Mozambique and other frontline states also had the support of imperialist forces.

He said the Namibian people had long been fighting against colonialist exploitation and repression. Under Swapo's leadership workers were participating in this and marching forward, he said.

"In the past two years Namibian workers have taken determined steps to organise more fully so they can contribute in a greater way to liberation, progress and socialism."

ALL FRONTS FOR

Namibia's liberation struggle is gaining more muscle as different sectors of the Namibian people get organised.

NAMIBIAN workers see their struggles for improved working conditions and better wages as an integral part of the struggle for the immediate and total liberation of Namibia from colonial occupation.

Saspu National spoke to NUNW leaders about Swapo and organisation in the communities.

They said the demand for the liberation of Namibia is foremost in the minds of workers. And many NUNW members are also Swapo members or supporters and see the union as complementing Swapo.

"The main problem is that Namibia is a colony of South Africa. For more than 100 years we have been a colony."

"So in Namibia workers issues are connected to the colonial system, it is mixed with the desire of all Namibians to be independent."

SWAPO

"If we look at our history, Swapo is the only liberation movement in Namibia enjoying mass support. Over the years Swapo has proved itself and its commitment to struggle until victory is achieved."

The union leaders were very critical



Spectator at Swapo rally in Arandis near Swakopmund after being shot by police rubber bullets.

of other political groups operating in Namibia saying, "they pretended to be part of the liberation movement and now history has proved they are not."

"If they are serious about liberation, they should join Swapo as a progressive force. The struggle shouldn't remain in splinters."

Swapo's key aims and objectives include:

- To fight relentlessly for the immediate and total liberation of Namibia from colonial and imperialist occupation.
- To ensure that a people's government exercises effective control over the means of production and distribution and pursues a policy which facilitates the way to social ownership of all the resources of the country.

Politicisation of the Namibian masses and the development of mass organisation are key aspects of

Swapo's political programme, said the union leaders.

"The whole masses of the people must be involved. Their contribution is vital to end colonialism and establish a people's government. So we need conscientisation, mobilisation and organisation in such a way that in all fields people know their role and contribution - especially the workers and the youth in the forefront."

"So Swapo's political programme addresses itself to fighting for national independence as a means to acquire power to be utilised in continuing the struggle to reorganise society. The struggle does not end after independence - Swapo has the aim of building scientific socialism."

"The working class, the most exploited group, is the only one which has the potential to change society."

"So in our whole analysis we are not



Police keep watch at rally.

just looking for a black government that is different in colour from the previous government. The aim is not only to end South African occupation. The aim is to reorganise society so that we end exploitation by overthrowing the whole system of capitalism. "To achieve this, Swapo will have to develop beyond what it is today and be transformed into a working class party capable of changing the whole society."

SWAPO STRUCTURES

Swapo has a number of structures and these include the Swapo Youth League, Women's Council, the Elders Council and a cultural group called Bazuka. There are also Swapo branches throughout Namibia in places like Tsumeb, Walvis Bay, Luderitz and Windhoek.

"Swapo's stronghold is in Katatura near Windhoek where an estimated

75% of residents are members."

The township is divided into different sections. "Each section holds general meetings and representatives from the different sections meet regularly."

These structures were developed at a time when Swapo meetings were banned.

"While Swapo meetings are now officially legal, they are still effectively banned. Meetings are broken up by police, with no provocation and without the government taking legal steps to stop them", says a union leader.

KATATURA PETITION

Workers in Katatura have not confined their struggles to the factory floor.

"Anger was sparked when a 43%

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Namibian workers are getting organised

NUNW and MUN leader Ben Uulenga: "In the past two years Namibian workers have taken determined steps to organise more fully so they can contribute in a greater way to liberation, progress and socialism."



NAMIBIA'S trade union movement is set to become a powerful weapon in the country's liberation struggle.

The National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) has three affiliated industrial trade unions with an estimated membership of over 30000.

The NUNW is affiliated to the South West African People's Organisation (Swapo), and struggles waged by workers on the factory floor are seen

as part of the intensification of the struggle for Namibian independence.

Attempts to build the trade union movement in Namibia started in 1969 when Swapo set up a Labour Department to train unionists.

This was followed by massive contract workers' strikes in 1971. But it was only towards the late seventies that workers organisation began to get off the ground in the country.

In February 1978 workers in Windhoek staged a general strike in protest against the shooting of 26 workers.

"For the first time in 1978 attempts were made to organise the workers. This was the time when something could be done to assist workers to organise themselves into trade unions", says Namibian Food and Allied Workers Union (Nafau) general secretary, John Pandeni.

Workers committees were formed and affiliated themselves to the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW). At the time NUNW was a general union with branches in the main towns and mines.

The SA government tried to counter the NUNW's growing influence by changing labour laws. Unions with 'political affiliations' were refused registration and denied legal negotiating rights.

But the NUNW continued to grow rapidly and there were a series of strikes on major mines including Tsumeb.

"But before the federation could consolidate itself, there was a clampdown aimed at suppressing its growth," says Pandeni. "Union officials and leaders were arrested and jailed, material was confiscated and union offices closed down."

"Then there was a lull in the workers movement. Apart from the ongoing initiatives from Swapo, nothing was done directly to organise workers on the shopfloor".

"In late 1985, a group of Swapo members came together to seriously consider ways of re-organising workers to take a leading role in the struggle."

"A steering committee was established the following year to revive the trade unions. The committee began by establishing contact with workers. They discussed with workers and explained the necessity and importance of trade unions, the workers struggle and organising themselves to improve their life and their conditions. This led to the formation of workers' committees in different industries."

"We started by considering the strategic industries, for example food. We organised strongly there, in places like Swavleis meat processing, Okahandja Breweries, and others in Windhoek and Swakopmund", explained Pandeni.

"Namibia is not highly industrialised and we have to travel long distances because factories and other places are scattered all over. Small towns usually have only one butchery and one bakery, so in most industries we concentrated in Windhoek".

Through hard work and consistent organising, workers committees were established at workplaces throughout the food industry.

By September 1986 it was felt the time was right. For the first time, representatives of 6000 workers in the food and beverage industry came together at a congress to officially launch Nafau. A central committee was elected and later a national executive. Membership figures have risen sharply and Nafau now has over 12000 members.

The organisers also gave attention to the mining and metal industries and workers committees were set up in every mine. This laid the basis for the launching of the Mineworkers Union of Namibia (MUN) on 23 November last year with a membership of 10000.

In May this year the Metal and Allied Namibian Workers Union (Manwu) was also launched with delegates from 31 workers committees. Manwu has already grown to about 40 workers committees and membership is estimated at between 8000 and 10000.

Nafau, MUN and Manwu are all affiliated to the NUNW which is being run by the steering committee set up in 1986. The objective is that the NUNW should finally comprise of unions in all industries.

Workers committees and shopsteward councils are also being set up in the public sector including the municipalities, post offices and railways. Once organisation is strong enough, national unions will also be launched in these sectors.

NO EASY ROAD

The task of setting up the unions was not an easy one. Manwu secretary general, Barnabus Tjizu, says this was achieved through sheer luck and determination.

Initially, people had been organising from their homes because there were no offices.

"When we started setting up workers' committees, no-one had basic training in organising and trade unionism, but we felt that something must be done. We had no funds and our field workers had to go without pay or allowance for eight months. Only last year some comrades came to Cosatu to see how they organise, and got some training", he said.

Despite the difficulties, Namibian unionists have continued to organise the workers relentlessly.

PUPPET UNIONS

Another problem NUNW organisers faced was the legacy of puppet unions.

Said Tjizu: "These unions were not working for the benefit of the workers. The organisers were stealing workers' money, handing out membership cards but doing nothing. So we had to prove to the workers that we are worlds apart from these other people who came to them".

"Now the trade union is well established and workers are coming to the office in great numbers. This includes even workers in government controlled sectors like hospitals". Poor working conditions and low wages is one major reason for the rapid growth of the NUNW.

Estimated wages in the food industry are between R150 and R180 a month and less than R100 on the railways. Municipal workers get a nett salary of R58 after deductions for accomodation had been made. Building construction is even worse, with workers getting 40c an hour - about R76 a month.

Apart from wage increases, key workers' demands are:

- Overtime pay
- Transport allowance to and from work
- Maternity leave
- Recognition of democratic trade unions. At present, none of the NUNW unions have recognition agreements. Management will only talk to registered trade unions.

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FREEDOM



Swapo supporters at Swapo rally

The people's movement in Namibia

SWAPO enjoys enormous support from the Namibian masses, says Swapo spokesperson Ghiteb.

He told Saspu National, "The people of Namibia know that Swapo is their movement and their liberator. Even the white population, especially the German and English speaking people, are now joining the movement. The so-called interim government has no support", he said.

Delegations of businessmen, academics and professionals had also met Swapo to discuss the situation in Namibia.

Ghiteb says Swapo welcomes whites into the organisation as they are also Namibians. "Our struggle is not against them but against the apartheid

system imposed by Pretoria and its illegal occupation of Namibia in defiance of the international community", said Ghiteb.

He blames the SA government and the Reagan Administration for delaying the implementation of United Nations Resolution 435. This is because they know Swapo would win any open election in Namibia.

"Our movement has been calling for a ceasefire from the Pretoria government. Nujoma called for this again recently, and said he is prepared to meet them. But the Botha government is not prepared to do this," he said.

One delaying tactic, says Ghiteb, is linking the Namibian question to the withdrawal of Cubans from Angola.

"Angola is a sovereign state and the Cuban presence in that country has nothing to do with the Namibian issue. It is ridiculous to link independence with the Cubans in Angola", he said.

"Our struggle in Namibia has been going on since 1945 and the Cubans only came to Angola in 1974. So what has the Cuban withdrawal from Angola to do with the Namibian issue", he asked.

He said Angola had firmly supported the Namibian liberation struggle by giving sanctuary to Namibians and providing refugee camps. This had meant Angola suffered frequent attacks from South African forces.

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bus fare increase, coming after increases for services, was announced," said the union leaders. "Meanwhile, workers' wages had only increased by about 10% or even less."

A large meeting was held in Katutura and a petition, listing people's demands and grievances was drawn up.

Activists went door to door and collected 12 000 signatures which were presented to the mayor and the advisory boards.

"People involved in labour and in the liberation movement, are taking up the grievances of the community, coming up with a plan of action. Community issues also succeed in mobilising the workers around daily issues that affect them."

"For us in the labour movement, we may initiate action around a community issue. Once the people stand up and take it, then we fall back because we have much work to do in building the union."

UNEMPLOYED

Workers in Katutura are also assisting the unemployed.

"The ranks of the unemployed have been swelled by people who run away from the North down to the city in Windhoek because of the war there. Their fields have been burnt down or run over by casspirs."

"There are developments in the community and structures are coming up. People are being organised. Some can't get jobs because they are Swapo members."

Workers living in a hostel in Katutura township tried to take up the unemployment problem - estimated to be more than 50% in the area.

"Comrades in the hostels advised these people to sell food, soap and other items and they will get their support because people will no longer buy from town."

"Now all over Katutura you find self-employed people with plates selling food and other items, backyard mechanics, pannel beaters and so on."

"Workers realised that the government can't provide them with anything. So they have tried in their own way to solve it."

The government replied by invading the hostel in Katutura in June. A large contingent of soldiers, police and Koevoets surrounded the hostels and many people were detained and some were injured as the hostel was combed.

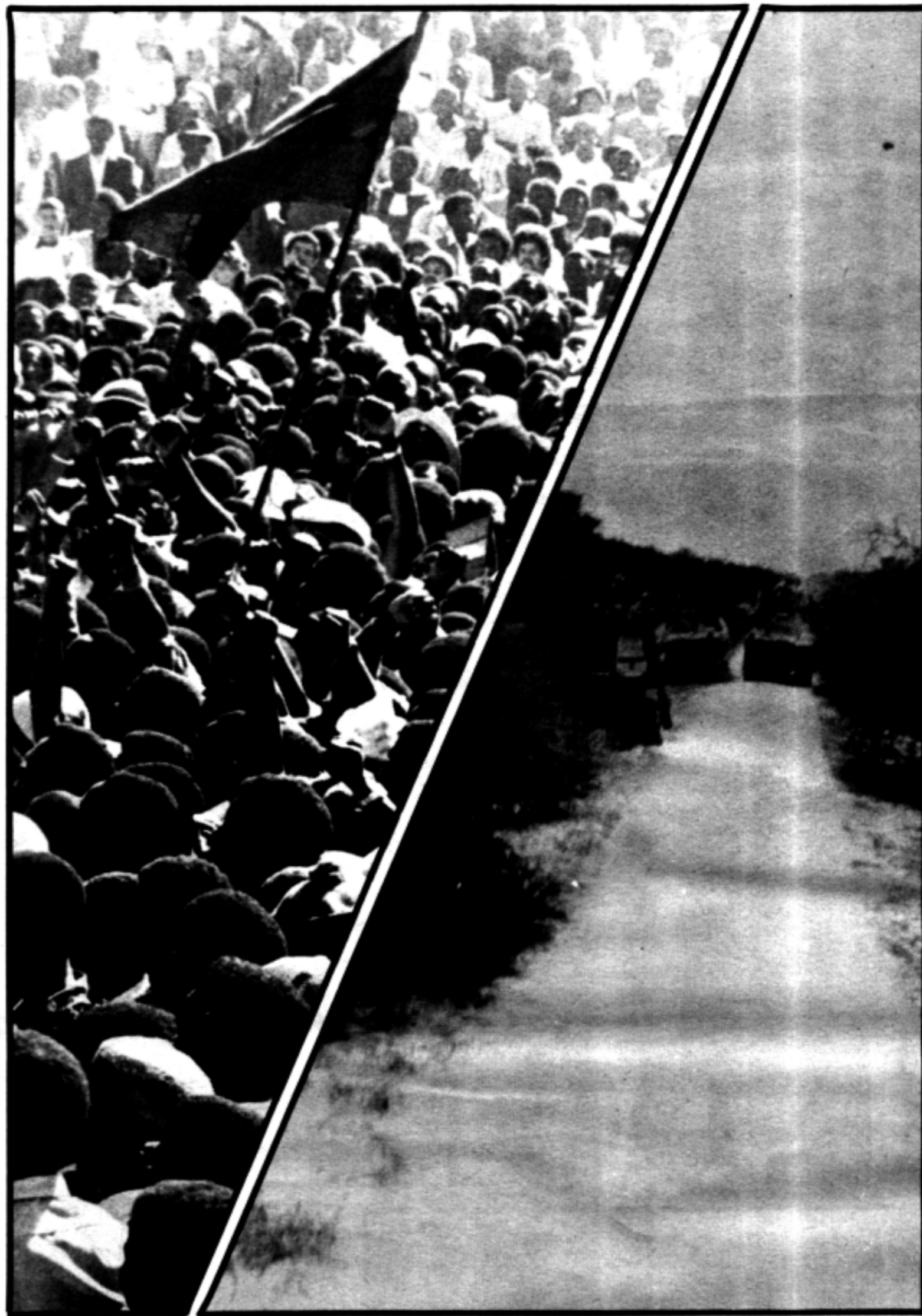
TSUMEB CONSUMER BOYCOTT

In another development, members of the Mineworkers Union of Namibia initiated a consumer boycott in Tsumeb in June. They were protesting against low wages, high prices of basic necessities including food, and demanding an end to the war.

"Workers had grievances not only linked to the mine, but related to the whole buying system in Tsumeb."

"People only bought in the township and the boycott received massive support from the residents."

"The miners want to show the



Two faces of Namibia: Swapo flag raised above a 10000 strong crowd at Swapo rally in Katutura; Tanks in the Northern war zone.

conditions they are living in. They are putting their demands to the mine management, the business people, who also employ some of the workers, and the government. They want to pressurise business people to put pressure on the management and the government."

As the boycott was having its impact felt, 4 600 workers at three Tsumeb copper mines went on strike in what is believed to be the biggest in Namibia's labour history since the seventies.

The miners were demanding:

- 120% wage increases
- A 45 hour working week

- paid annual leave
- free mattresses for concrete slabs in the hostels
- an end to the contract labour system
- an end to racial discrimination
- an unequivocal statement from the company stating its opposition to the war waged by South Africa in the north of Namibia.

SWAPO YOUTH LEAGUE

The youth are seen as a key sector of organisation and have played a key role in the growing resistance in Namibia.

"There was a time when Swapo meetings were banned and the Youth League played a very important role in forcing the government to reverse the decision."

"The Swapo Youth League is not only to organise Swapo members - their aim is to organise the unorganised youth. They are engaged in different projects and groups in the community."

"There are no full-time field workers and the youth are always willing to help out during their free time. They also hold seminars, workshops and group discussions."

"They are building consciousness

Workers unite in NUNW

But fellow Nafau workers there said they wouldn't touch anything from Okahandja. They stopped working to pressurise management to meet the demands.

HOSTILE BOSSES

While Namibian workers have welcomed the NUNW unions with open arms, the bosses are openly hostile. And they don't hesitate to call in Koevoet, the army and the police when faced with united worker demands.

"Bosses would chase us away, they

won't even listen or give us a chance to approach the workers. So we contact the workers during their lunch break, and speak to them in groups. The main aim is to talk to the workers and we use every possible means to achieve that", said a unionist.

WORKERS WANT LIBERATION

In Namibia, workers' issues are not separate from the struggle for liberation, say NUNW organisers.

"Whatever they achieve in the

labour movement in terms of better wages and working conditions, the demand for the liberation of Namibia is foremost in workers' minds."

"Workers in Namibia have made the same demands as Swapo. These include the implementation of the United Nations resolution 435 to end the war and the withdrawal of the South African forces from Namibia".

"The movement's aims are first and foremost. Most union members are also Swapo members or supporters.

The NUNW says the better the workers are organised, the more they can correctly play their role in the struggle.

and political understanding and theory. They are the people who will lead in the future, so it is vital that they make themselves aware."

"The youth form the backbone of the Liberation Army (PLAN) as they constitute the greater part of the fighters."

"They played a vital role in organising trade unions and have been supportive during strikes."

"The government's homeland policy has failed because the youth have always been in the forefront of the battle to oppose the move."

WOMEN

Women in Namibia are seen to have an important role and are organised in the Swapo Women's Council.

"The task of the Swapo Women's Council is to organise women as part of the oppressed community to take part in the liberation struggle."

"African women are still rated as a possession and there is the long history of looking down upon them. It is the task of women comrades to liberate other women from the idea that they are minors and are only good to make children and stay at home."

"The problem is similar everywhere. Women are oppressed exploited by the bosses and the capitalist system. Women are also discriminated against, exploited and oppressed by men. They get less education are not given the chance to prove their worth."

"We have to overcome these problems and the solution must come from both sides. Women must participate and men must accept them as equals."

"The opportunity must be given to all without discriminating on the basis of sex. In Swapo, women are involved in all sectors - they are fighters, political organisers and mechanics and on the battle field, they fight alongside men."

EDUCATION

On the education front, the pro-Swapo Namibian National Student Organisation (NANSO) is organising students.

But they face an extremely hostile attitude from the authorities and in some cases they are banned from going into the schools.

"There have been attempts by pro-government minority groups to block Nanso's activities by creating opposing student bodies. But they were never seen in action and soon collapsed, now just a few names remain."

"Students have rejected the government school curriculum and in some private schools, people have started looking at history from the perception of the oppressed. People have started looking back into our history noting events such as Kassinga Day."

Alternative education is beginning to emerge.

"Comrades abroad have started writing history and social study books from the perspective of the oppressed and others are receiving training there."

"The liberation process should go along with training to enable people to be capable of taking over."

The education level is very low in Namibia and the churches are helping out in running pre-schools because this is one area neglected by the government.

"But this is changing. A group of women in Windhoek, who were fired from their jobs because of their political activities, are now organising literacy classes for kids of our comrades."

One of the women, who only studied up to Standard 7, started teaching the children English and people's history which deals with people's heroes, Swapo - its symbols and slogans.

"The liberation of Namibia goes beyond physical liberation of that country. It includes mental liberation."

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Public holidays. For the first time this year about 35000 workers throughout Namibia held massive May Day rallies in places like Tsumeb, Windhoek, Swakopmund, Luderitz, Oranjemund and Marienthal.

Already workers in different parts of the country have staged solidarity strikes. When workers organised by Nafau at the Swavleis meat processing factory in Okahandja went on strike, management closed the factory and transferred slaughtered cattle to Swavleis in Windhoek.

SWAZILAND

Playing South Africa's game?

A joint Swazi-SA campaign to smash ANC operations in Swaziland have led to allegations that the country is fast becoming SA's favourite bantustan.

TENSION is mounting over Swaziland's growing collaboration with South Africa.

Since the death of King Sobhuza II in 1982, there have been widespread reports of killings, abductions, deportations, arrests, seizure of arms and trials of ANC members in Swaziland. And South African agents are said to have a free reign in Swaziland.

"South African agents and MNR bandits move freely and heavily armed while ANC members have to hide from Swazi police and army", said one observer.

These developments are contrary to Swaziland's historical ties with the ANC. In 1912 Swaziland's queen regent or Indlovukazi, as she known, represented Swaziland at the founding conference of the South African Native National Congress, renamed the ANC in 1923.

Swaziland and the ANC maintained these ties and when the organisation was banned in 1960, it relied on moral, political and material support from friendly countries abroad.

When Swaziland gained independence from Britain in 1968, the legacy of support for the ANC continued and it gave sanctuary to South African exiles.

King Sobhuza is known to have had cordial relations with the former general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP) the late Moses Mabhida.

During Sobhuza's reign there was only one reported abduction of two ANC members from Swaziland to South Africa. The Swaziland government protested vehemently to Pretoria saying it viewed the action as "a violation of the territorial integrity of our country".

The two abducted ANC members were Joseph Nduli and Cleopus Ndlovu, UDF co-president Curnick Ndlovu's brother. They were convicted of treason in 1977 along with Harry Gwala, Meyiwa, Mdlalose, Nene and Xaba and are now serving life sentences on Robben Island.

"King Sobhuza was a diplomat. He did not offer military bases to the ANC, but at the same time he didn't hinder its day to day activities", said a Swazi citizen.

Sobhuza's funeral was attended by a high powered ANC delegation including President Oliver Tambo and Mabhida. Ironically, not far from them sat the SA government delegation led by Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha.

Bitter power struggles for control of the Liqoqo - Swaziland's supreme ruling body - followed Sobhuza's death.

"The different forces were divided on how to deal with the ANC, given Swaziland's economic dependence on South Africa. Of course the same question faced Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe due to the military and economic pressure from South Africa", said a political analyst.

Pro-SA government forces, led by Prince Sozisa, Sishaya Nxumalo and Foreign Affairs Minister Richard Dlamini eventually won the day. The queen regent was deposed and cabinet ministers, policemen and princes were dismissed and detained.

The new ruling group wasted little time and in 1982 went on to sign a

secret "peace pact" with the SA government. The pact was only revealed in 1984 after Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord with SA.

"The timing of this revelation was carefully planned", said an observer. "It was aimed at canvassing international opinion that, if Mozambique, a relatively stronger country than Swaziland, could be forced to sign a peace pact with Pretoria, what else could Swaziland do? So Swaziland decided to side with the SA government and sacrifice the ANC."

Swaziland's cooperation with SA did not go unnoticed by other African states. Already in 1982 there was talk of expelling Swaziland from the Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC) - whose aim is to break Southern African countries' economic dependence on SA.

In another development, the SA government made a deal with Swaziland to cede Ingwavuma, a piece of land on SA's Northern Zululand border, to Swaziland. This would have given the landlocked country access to the sea.

While the deal failed, political observers saw it as a ploy by SA to win further co-operation from Swaziland on the security front. Both the people of Ingwavuma and the ANC condemned the deal.

In the wake of growing ANC guerrilla activity and mass mobilisation and organisation inside SA, Pretoria threatened to clamp down on neighbouring countries which accommodated the ANC.

One of the first to be hit was Maseru, Lesotho. Only two weeks before the Maseru raid, Swazi Prime Minister, Prince Mabandla Dlamini, made a surprise announcement that detention without trial was to be re-introduced, mainly to control "the refugee problem". This marked the beginning of a series of anti-ANC measures.

At the same time a bill was hastily pushed through parliament introducing heavier sentences for possession of arms. Stringent travel restrictions were imposed on refugees. Within days of the Maseru raid, 27 ANC members in Swaziland were rounded up in a huge paramilitary operation.

The deputy-Prime Minister's office, responsible for of refugees, said it knew nothing about the arrests as they were ordered from "higher up". Meanwhile, allegations that certain Swazi police were working with SA emerged.

"For some time South Africa has recruited its own agents from within the Swazi police, including top police officials. One was suspected to have been instrumental in the kidnapping of ANC members from Bunya police station," said a Swazi national.

Swazi Commissioner of Police Titus Msibi made a public call for people not to accommodate ANC members and to inform the police of their presence.

There were also allegations that detainees were interrogated by both the Swazi and South African police.

"The detainees were driven blindfolded to create the impression that they were being taken back to South Africa, only to arrive at a military camp outside Mbabane", said a Swazi national.

The Swaziland government, when



Top: ANC guerilla shot dead by Swazi police, above left: Arms cache seized by Swazi police, above right: notorious Swazi Commissioner of Police, Msibi and friend.



questioned about the allegations, claimed no knowledge of the situation and said it would investigate them, said one journalist.

But reports of killings and abductions, roadblocks and raids aimed at ANC members continued. Some recent incidents include:

①In December 1986, 11 people were killed and five were kidnapped from Swaziland to South Africa.

②On 15th December, a former Robben Island prisoner exiled in Swaziland, Ebrahim Ismael, was kidnapped at gunpoint from his home in Swaziland and handed over to the security police headquarters in Pretoria. He is presently on trial in Piet Retief.

In papers filed before the court Ismael claimed that South African security agents were responsible for his kidnapping, that this was illegal and that South African courts have no jurisdiction to try him. The South African Police have denied this and the trial is continuing.

③In May 1987, a South African exile, Theophilus Dlodlo was killed. South African Sheila Nyanda and a Swiss couple were kidnapped from

Swaziland and handed over to SA.

A South African exile, Danger Nyoni's son was killed in the incident.

In his response, Swazi Prime Minister Sotja Dlamini blamed "one of the neighbouring countries for the assassination and called on "all our neighbours to respect our national independence and territorial integrity".

④On 14 July, three senior SADF Officials were reported to have visited Swaziland secretly. They were welcomed at the Matsapa Airport by Swazi Defence Minister Fanono Dube.

Within days of their arrival, three men were arrested in a house where an AK rifle and five magazines were found.

⑤Two senior ANC members, Cassius Maake and Charles Dikeledi, and a Mozambican woman were killed in broad daylight.

⑥In August, Swazi police arrested a certain "Comrade September". He was transferred to a remote police station near the South African border. From there he was kidnapped by unknown agents and

taken to SA.

⑦On 16 October, a Mozambican employed by the Swazi transport department, Max Thimbele, was given a four day deportation notice because he allegedly had links with ANC exiles.

A wide range of activists interviewed inside the country have expressed grave concern over the SAP-Swazi alliance. They have also pointed out that the Swazi strategy is short-sighted, given that "a democratic government will one day be in power" in SA.

The giant South African Youth Congress (Sayco) has said that South Africans in exile are constantly being kidnapped and killed with the full knowledge and active collaboration of the governments of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland and that these governments are deporting refugees into the hands of the SA government.

Sayco has sent letters to these governments demanding that they "stop harassing our comrades in exile" and has called on the people of these countries to actively challenge and stop their governments' collaboration with SA.

THE RENT YOKE

OVER THE YEARS

RESIDENTS in over 50 townships are still refusing to pay rent. And Development Boards and Community Councils face financial ruin. These rent struggles have been closely linked to residents' rejection of the community council system. Residents saw the councils as part and parcel of the Apartheid system. They felt the councils continued to deny them real political power. And this lack of political power was the root cause of housing shortages, rent hikes, overcrowding, appalling township conditions and many other grievances of residents.

Government township structures

While there were rent struggles during the fifties, these were overshadowed by mass protests and campaigns spearheaded by the Congress Alliance.

More recent rent struggles date back to 1972 and 1973 when the government set up 22 Bantu Affairs Administration Boards (BAABs) to administer all African townships outside the bantustans.

Before this, townships had been under the control of local municipal authorities who administered and financed their neighbouring townships. For example, the Johannesburg City Council administered Soweto.

The Administration Boards were set up because the government felt that the municipal authorities were not applying influx control strictly enough.

The Boards were put in charge of nearly everything in the townships. They decided on where people lived and worked, housing and rents, services like water and rubbish removal and who got trading licences.

But they had no financial base and residents had to pay for the upkeep and development of their townships.

The Boards' major sources of income were rents from houses, trading sites and hostels and sale of beer and liquor from beerhalls owned by the boards.

In the sixties the government had set up Urban Bantu Councils (UBCs) to replace the defunct Advisory Boards. The UBC's were supposed to advise the Administration Boards on what township residents thought.

But the UBC's never had any credibility and communities throughout the country rejected them as stooge bodies, calling them "United Bantu Crooks" and "Useless Boys Clubs".

Administration Board rule was a disaster for many communities and conditions in the townships grew worse. People were forced to pay more money for less houses and poorer services.

The boards used their "blackjacks" to evict people who were behind with rent, or who did not have housing permits.

By 1976, conditions in the townships were worse than ever before. There was a shortage of houses, rents were going up and services were very bad.

Broader context

But it was not just township conditions which were changing at this time. The South African economy entered a depression from 1972. Many workers were laid off and unemployment figures reached over 2 million. In 1973 massive strikes in Durban signalled the renewed growth of trade unions. And on South Africa's borders, the liberation of Mozambique and Angola in 1975 gave hope and inspiration to the oppressed.

Organisations like the Black People Convention were beginning to organise in literacy and community projects.

Open rejection of Bantu Education was growing and a mood of militancy was spreading among school and university students. Students staged demonstrations and began to organise themselves under the banner of organisations like the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and the South African Students' Movement (SASM).

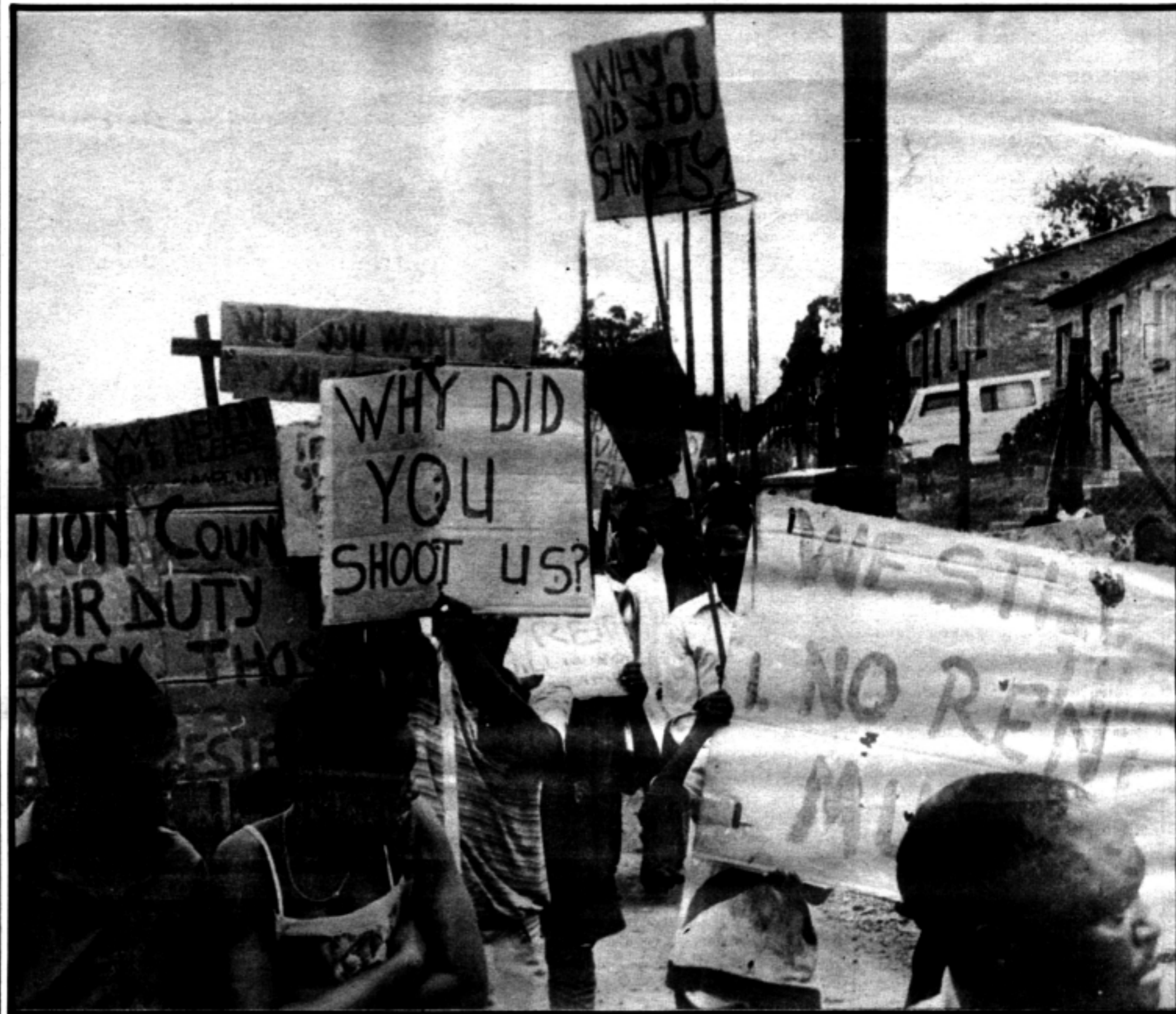
The government's attempts to enforce Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in African schools sparked the already simmering anger of students.

This led to the outbreak of the June 16 student uprisings in Soweto. The uprisings and soon spread throughout the country and continued throughout 1977.

The Administration Boards and the UBC's were key targets of students' anger. The boards' property was destroyed by fire, resulting in the loss of millions of rands.

In April 1977 the West Rand Administration Board (Wrab) backed by the Soweto UBC, announced an 80% rent increase.

The Soweto Student's Representative Council (SSRC) spearheaded a campaign against the increases and demanded that UBC members resign. WRAB suspended the increase and the UBC soon collapsed.



1982: Sobantu residents march in protest against rent increases and police shootings

Community Councils

When the UBC collapsed, the government introduced the community councils in 1977 as their new formula to control the townships. The government claimed these councils would give Africans a greater say in running their townships.

The councils were responsible for allocating houses, hostel beds and trading sites, and for providing township services. But influx control, labour allocation and finance were still controlled by the Administration Boards. And in most townships the Boards still controlled the allocation of housing.

Power was still firmly in the hands of the boards and the government. The Minister of Cooperation and Development had to approve the councils' decisions and he could add on new members, or close down the councils altogether.

It was clear that the community councils would not give the people any real power. An SSRC statement said, "We don't want to be in charge of roads and rubbish. We want real and meaningful power to run our lives outside the system of apartheid".

Mass protests and organisations emerge

In the wake of 1976, popular organisations emerged, voicing residents' grievances around issues such as high rents, township services, shack demolitions, busfare increases, and councillor corruption.

● In 1979, PE residents in Zwide and Kwa-Ford organise around increased water charges.

● August 1979: Soweto, Dobsonville and Diepmeadow residents force the councils to drop 100% increases in service charges.

● A residents' meeting in Cradock demands that the community council be abolished, house rentals and bus fares be reduced and decide to boycott public transport.

These struggles spread and continued into the eighties and those waged in 1982 include:

● February: Kallehong residents form a committee to oppose the community council elections.

● The Vaal Cosas branch holds meetings to protest against rent and electricity charge increases.

● March: The Langa Resident's Association fights bachelor quarters' rent increases and wins in court. The judge rules that only the Minister of Co-operation and Development is entitled to increase rents, and not the Western Cape Administration Board (WCAB).

● April: A 40% rent increase in Ikageng sparks protests by students and parents in which three people were shot. Councillors opposing the increase are threatened with expulsion.

● A PE Black Civic Organisation meeting where residents protest against high rents, resolves to boycott councillors' businesses.

● Kwazakhele Residents Association demands affordable rents. It demands the indefinite closure of ECAB liquor outlets unless rent increases are dropped.

● Over 50 women march to the Soweto Council to protest against the pulling down of shacks in Jabavu.

● A Dobsonville residents' meeting rejects a rent increase and calls for the councillors' immediate resignation.

● June: Gugulethu residents gather to stop board officials pulling down shacks.

● Grahamstown residents unite under the Central Ratepayers Association in response to rent increases.

● A Daveyton councillor is shot dead, and three others and ERAB officials receive death threats.

● August: Over 1 000 people from KwaNdengezi boycott buses after a 20% fare increase.

● October: Three rent increases in Sobantu, Pietermaritzburg, spark militant protests in which three people are shot. Board offices and councillors' homes are stoned and the boards' liquor outlets closed down after a bread and beer boycott.

● 300 Mamelodi women march on the superintendents' office to protest against a rent increase.

● Evictions spark a boycott of WCAB beerhalls and councillors' businesses in Gugulethu.

● An Evaton Ratepayers Association meeting condemns the rising of water tariffs.

● Mohlakeng Civic calls for a boycott of increased rents and lodger's permits after councillors refuse to give an explanation for the increase. The boycott is suspended after eviction threats.

● November: A Kagiso Residents Organisation meeting decides not to pay R10 rent increases.

● The Tembisa Action Committee is set up in response to rent increases and attracts large support in mass meetings to protest the increases.

● Kensington, Sharpeville residents reject the

Struggles around rent are being waged in townships throughout the country. Saspu National looks at township control and rent struggles since the seventies.



1980: Soweto rent demonstration outside council chambers.



The ugly face of evictions - PE pensioners thrown into the street with their belongings.

Board's order to pay R25.50 "arrears" in service charges.

In many areas these battles gave rise to the formation of community organisations and the struggle continued into 1983.

●The newly formed Duduza Civic Association succeeds in forcing the council to suspend a R9 increase for the installation of a sewerage system. The increase was dropped in February 1983.

●Residents in the Durban townships of Chesterville, Lamontville, Klaarwater, Hambanati and Shakaville form the Joint Rent Action Committee and boycott rent increases. Police intervene and four people, including two children, are killed. Administration Board offices and the mayor's house in Lamontville are set on fire. Offices in Chesterville were also set alight.

Prominent councillors in Chesterville and Lamontville resign and affirm their support for JORAC.

●Lingelihle, Cradock, residents resist rent increases. The Cradock Residents Association (CRADORA) is formed.

Mounting pressure from residents force the board to drop the increases and the entire council resigns. Many councillors join CRADORA.

Koornhof's new plan

In the face of nationwide rejection of community councils and growing resistance in townships throughout the country, Koornhof went back to his drawing board. His task was to provide the government with a new plan for political control over the townships.

"The councils are a vehicle for a purpose. If the vehicle doesn't fulfill the purpose, I will change the vehicle to suit the purpose," said Koornhof.

In 1982 the Black Local Authorities Act and the Community Development Bill were introduced. The councils now became "town and village councils" and the administration boards were changed into "Development Boards".

The duty of the town councils was to maintain, administer and control townships facilities and also to provide services which had previously been under the Boards.

But the Minister of Co-operation and Development, through the boards, still had final say over the councils. Government propaganda stressed that councils would enjoy financial independence, autonomy and self-determination.

But residents remained the only major source of income for councils. They had to pay for their own housing, services and electricity.

This was in line with the government's Rickert Commission, which had said, "Black communities should bear a greater part of the total burden in connection with the provision of services in their own communities."

Community leaders pointed out that the new plan was a political question, and said that residents would now be expected to pay for their own oppression.

"They are put there by oppressors to oppress us. The councils cannot have the interests of the people at heart. They will not demand houses, security and comfort for all, because they carry out the orders of the government rather than listen to the demands of the people."

The new set-up fuelled the residents' resistance. Across the country progressive organisations under the banner of the UDF mounted a campaign against the Local Authorities.

Communities nationwide boycotted the November 1983 elections for the councils and polls averaged less than 15 per cent.

Councillors increase rents

Throughout 1984 rent increases met with fierce opposition from the residents.

The increases came in the midst of a deepening economic recession. The cost of living was rocketing, but people's wages remained low. More and more people were jobless and many were living below the breadline.

The common call spreading to townships throughout the country was for "rents we can afford" and the resignation of councillors.

Residents in Rathanda and Tumahole near Parys refused to pay rent increases and called on councillors to resign.

On 3 September the whole Vaal was engulfed in flames following rent increases. Residents began a rent boycott and demanded the resignation of councillors and the reduction of rents.

In many townships rent protests took place alongside student uprisings.

Student uprisings

By 1984, previously local and sporadic student protests and were becoming nationwide. Branches of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) mushroomed and won mass

support among black school students. The government refused to meet students demands. And in large parts of the country Bantu education ground to a halt as students boycotted classes.

This mobilisation did not end at the school gates. Students joined forces with their parents and other residents.

This marked a period of communitywide resistance. Unlike the 1976 uprisings, all sectors of the community were now involved.

This growing unity between different sectors and organisations was symbolised in the massive November 1984 Transvaal stayaway.

Initiated by Cosas, the stayaway was backed by 36 organisations including the UDF and Fosatu. The whole of the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging came to a standstill as workers, students and other residents stayed away in support of common demands.

Nationwide rent protests

By 1985 the country was in a state of "ungovernability" as many townships became no-go zones with barricades of burning tyres. Groups of youths attacked hippos and casspirs with stones, petrol bombs.

By early 1986 at least 25 townships in different parts of the country were boycotting rent. This increased to more than 50 by the end of that year with talk of regional and national rent boycotts.

Residents saw the boycotts as a peaceful way to push their short term demands for:

- affordable rents,
- resignation of councillors,
- improved township conditions,
- democratic control of townships,
- an end to the state of emergency,
- release of detainees,
- troops out of the townships.

As in the early eighties, residents' grievances around rent led to the birth of community organisations and swelled existing ones.

But a new development now was the growth of residents structures such as street committees in the townships.

In many areas boycotts were initiated and organised by civic structures and had the support of the entire community.

In other areas, boycotts were spontaneous and often due to the fact that residents just couldn't afford to pay rent.

Protests were taken various forms like rent default, attacks on councillors' homes and businesses, council and administration board offices.

Councillors were isolated in the community and many went into

hiding as they feared continued attacks. Council businesses and facilities were boycotted.

Black policemen were also isolated in the township. Many were forced to leave and live in police camps with their families, and some even chose to live in prison cells for safety.

Financial Losses

Development Boards and Town Councils were losing millions of rands through the rent boycotts, and launched a national campaign to force people to pay rent. Their strategies included:

- forced evictions,
- legal action, such as summonses to appear in court,
- seizure of residents' movable property,
- cutting of electricity and water and other township services.

In some areas residents sent their civic representatives to negotiate with government authorities, but negotiations deadlocked.

State of Emergency

Community structures and the rent boycotts were key targets of the two state of emergencies imposed in 1985 and 1986.

Massive detentions severely weakened many organisations. But the town councils still had serious problems in getting residents to pay rent. They intensified their attempts to force residents to pay up.

Repressive conditions meant that organisations developed new structures and strategies. They could no longer rely only on pamphlets or mass meetings.

In many cases evictions of rent defaulters and other problems facing residents increased their need to come together with other residents.

Of necessity residents and their organisations have had to strengthen their structures and methods of communication. And increasingly they have relied on street meetings, area meetings, shop steward structures, word of mouth and house meetings.

Today the deadlock over rents still hasn't been resolved.

SEPTEMBER 3 marked the third anniversary of the outbreak of the 1984 Vaal uprisings in protest over rent increases. About 80 people were killed and at least a hundred more injured in the protests.

There had been mass protests in other townships. But the Vaal uprisings marked the growth of mass based organisation throughout the country and put mass rejection of apartheid rule firmly on the map.

Other protests had been mainly student and youth based. But in the Vaal uprisings, all sectors of the community - students, youth, workers and other residents stood as one.

Unlike the lull which followed the 1960 Sharpeville massacre, the outbreak of the 1984 Vaal uprisings was followed by prolonged and widespread civil uprisings.

These uprisings were not only confined to major centres but spread to townships and villages throughout the country - an expression of people's deep anger and frustration.

Vaal residents had strongly rejected the government imposed community councils and in 1983 formed their own organisation, the Vaal Civic Association (VCA).

In the schools, students had formed a branch of the now-banned Congress of South African Students (Cosas) to fight for their demands.

"The sudden upsurge in anger came with the introduction of high rentals without any discussion with the people", said a Vaal Civic Association spokesperson.

Average rents in the Vaal were already R62.50. This was, according to a University of Port Elizabeth report, higher than any urban black township in the country.

In August 1984 the Lekoa Town Council unilaterally announced an increase of R5.90.

At a series of meetings, amid shouts of "Asinamali" and "Amandla", residents unanimously resolved not to pay the increases. Residents speaking at the meetings warned the council not to go ahead with the move as they could not afford to pay more.

Among the reasons cited were unemployment, daily retrenchments, the recession, the high cost of living and having to pay for services which the council was not providing.

At the same time, councillors in the area were reported to have allocated themselves bottle stores, liquor and business licenses. This confirmed residents' suspicions that councillors were in the system to enrich themselves at the people's expense.

The Lekoa Town Council's intransigence and refusal to heed residents'

Residents resolve to stay away

warnings to drop the increases, made tempers flare.

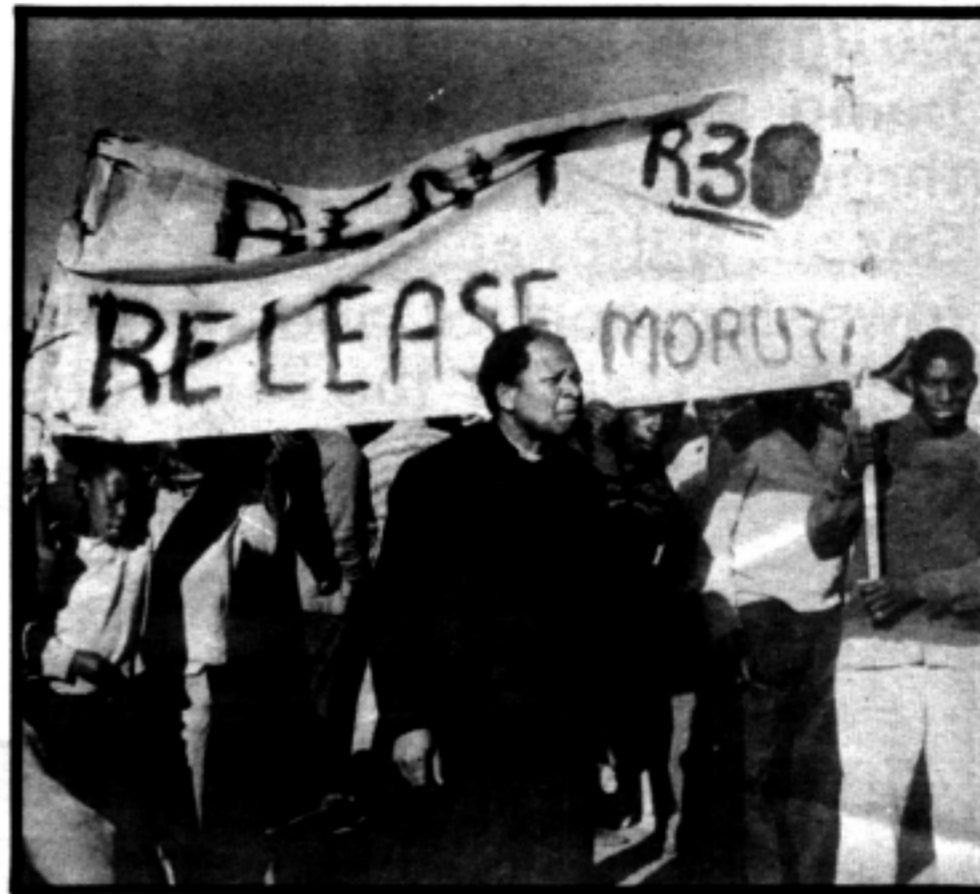
On Sunday September 2, residents at three mass meetings in the Vaal resolved to stay away from work and school. There would be a peaceful march to the administration board offices. Here the a delegation mandated by residents would discuss the rent issue with the officials.

The events which followed sent shock waves across the country and into the international community.

On Monday September 3, the entire community joined the stay away. The VCA said even those who had elected the council stayed away, "which shows the extent of the people's frustration".

Students joined thousands of residents in the stay away. In the pattern of the school boycotts, peaceful protests were met with force.

The first day was a series of running battles between police and residents. Police at first used rubber bullets and teargas, but then turned to live ammunition. By the end of that day, almost all the houses belonging to councillors were burned down and



ANNIVERSARY

four councillors were left dead.

Scores of people were killed in police shootings and many more were injured. The next day official figures listed 26 dead and 48 injured, but residents' estimates were much higher. It was reported that Sebokeng Hospital was full. Police placed a ban on information about the injured.

More than 35 people were arrested and many were missing. Buses weren't running and as food ran out there were reports of people being shot by white farmers when they went to shops on the Golden Highway.

On Wednesday, September 5, massive police contingents watched as a crowd of about 4000 gathered outside the Lekoa Administration Board offices bearing a white flag. A delegation met Board officials and put residents' demands for a drop in rents, the release of detainees, and no police interference in victims' funerals.

It was revealed that the Lekoa Town Council had no legal right to impose increases as they had neither been approved by the Department of Co-operation and Development, nor gazetted.

Further negotiations between residents' representatives and Board officials deadlocked. Representatives' attempts to report back to residents were thwarted as meetings were banned.

But residents remained firm in their demands:

- Councillors must resign,
- Rent must be decreased,
- An independent inquiry into the allocation of business sites.
- The release of detainees and the withdrawal of police.

At mass funerals for victims of the uprisings, community leaders restated demands and warned of further conflict.

"There has been Sharpeville 1960, the second Sharpeville in 1984, and there shall be the third Sharpeville, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth ... and the tenth Sharpeville for as long as the government of South Africa refuses to listen to the people's demands and dismantle Apartheid altogether", said one speaker.

"The councillors must resign. They don't represent our people, so the case is closed. They are defunct, they are not operating, they have lost control of the situation. For their own safety they must resign and leave the townships, and rents must go down."

Councillors left the Vaal townships. But most refused to resign. Lekoa Mayor Mahlatsi emerged from hiding to announce that rent increases would go ahead as soon as they had been gazetted.

He backed Minister of Law and

More than three years ago the Vaal townships erupted. The spark was an increase in rent. The flames have died down, but the roots of the uprisings remain.

Order, Le Grange and blamed the uprisings on "certain individuals and organisations", complaining that there had been too few police to crush the protests.

In the aftermath of the uprisings, progressive organisations such as the VCA and the UDF set about carrying out relief work among residents. But attempts to get food, doctors and lawyers into the area were hampered by severe security measures.

VCA activists assisting bereaved families said they were being singled out for police harassment.

Clinics were set up as residents reported people being arrested on being discharged from hospitals.

Vaal organisations set up an Information Service Centre to:

- To keep records and seek legal aid for detainees in the area;
- To offer financial assistance, where possible, in cases where breadwinners of families are in detention, or have been killed during protests;
- To contribute to the burial costs of victims of uprisings;
- To provide food parcels to affected families.

Despite a united campaign by the town council, development board, the army and police, the entire Vaal community continued to boycott rents.

Orange-Vaal Development Board police went door-to-door ordering people to pay rent. Sharpeville residents were threatened with eviction while in Boipatong they were given stern warnings. In Bophelong the township superintendent threatened to confiscate resident's furniture.

Officials also tried to persuade residents to pay small amounts, even if it was R2 or R2,50

Town Clerk N.P. Louw said if the community was not prepared to pay rent, it would have to go without basic services. In Sebokeng water and electricity were cut off.

Pamphlets signed by Louw threatened residents with legal action, unless they paid their rent.

Sebokeng became the first townships to be occupied by the SADF. This was to become a permanent feature of township life

THE VAAL IN FLAMES



Flashback to SN's coverage of the uprisings, September 1984.

throughout the country.

The "seal and search" Operation Palmiet was launched just before midnight on October 22, 1984. 7000 SADF soldiers and a large number of police with hippos, armed cars, tanks and helicopters, surrounded and sealed off Sebokeng township. Houses to house raids were conducted and those residents not arrested were marked with red ink.

The SADF then moved on to Boipatong and Sharpeville and joined Development Board officials in raids on hostel dwellers and on squatters at Grasmere farm.

Hostel dwellers paid R45 fines which went towards rent arrears, while others were fined for trespassing and pass law infringement.

But residents remained undeterred and the Vaal township residents gave massive support to the two day Transvaal stayaway at the beginning of November. Among the demands were the withdrawal of police and the army from townships and the reduction of rents. At the same time the council tried a new tactic to get residents to pay up.

In November, the Lekoa Town Council sent stop-order forms to employers, instructing them to deduct rent from workers' wages.

No to rents off wages

At a meeting in Sharpeville, residents resolved not to sign the stop-order forms. They also decided that people whose money had already been deducted should claim it back, as they had not authorised the deductions. Trade unions also made it known that they would never accept the wage deductions.

The stop-order tactic was thwarted after the Sharpeville Civic Association, acting on behalf of residents took the matter to court.

In an out of court settlement in May 1985, the Minister of Post and Telecommunications undertook not to deduct any monies for rent from workers' salaries.

In February 1985 Lekoa Town Secretary Ben Scott announced that 350 000 Vaal residents, who continued to refuse to pay rent, would be evicted from their homes.

Civic leaders warned Scott that implementing this threat would stir up anger and a repeat of the September uprisings. Then Minister Gerrit Viljoen announced that Vaal residents would be given twelve months to pay off their rent arrears.

But residents were adamant that they owed the council nothing as they had long paid off their houses.

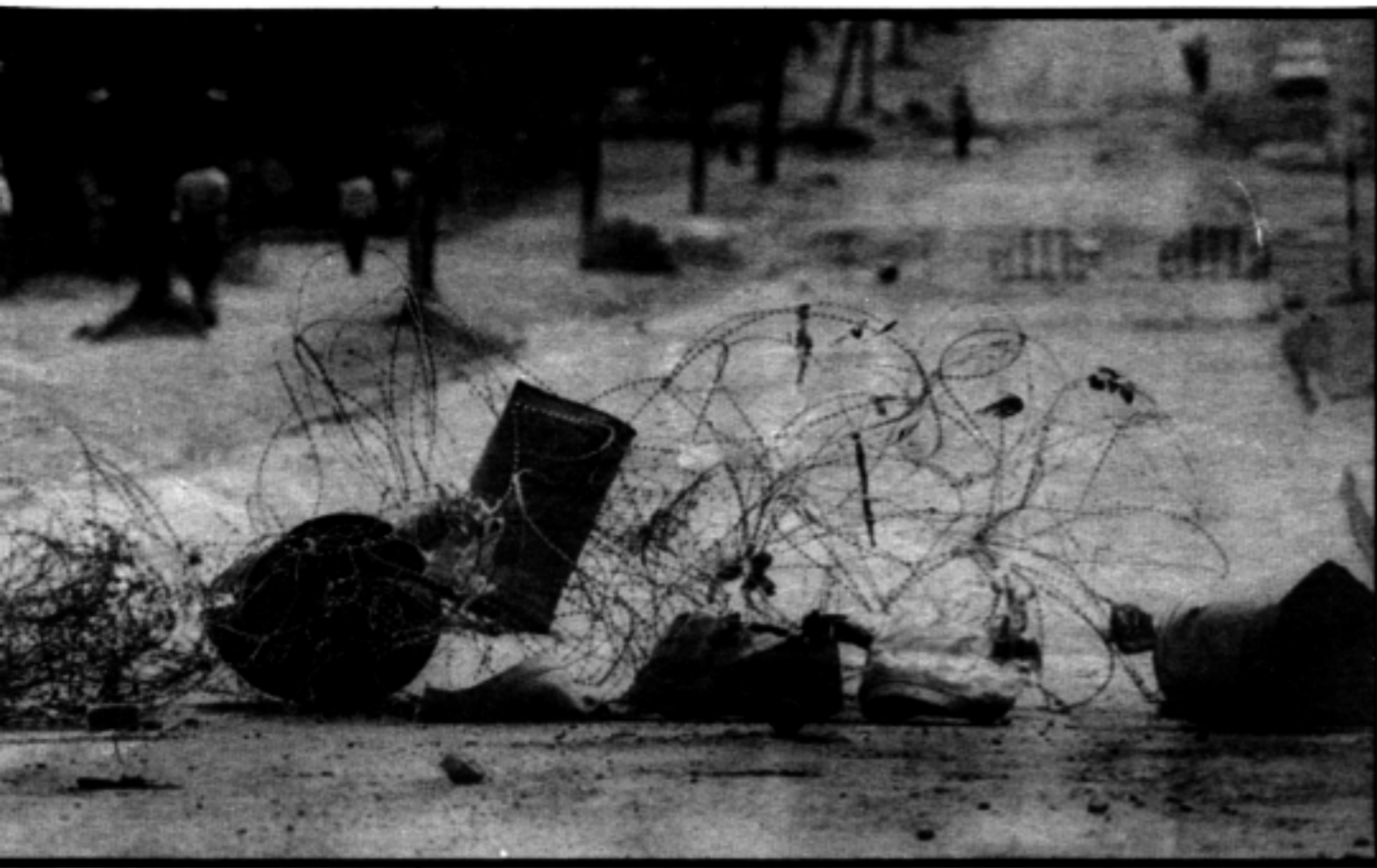
In a desperate attempt to recover millions of rands lost during the rent boycott, the Executive Committee of the Lekoa Town Council had gone back to the drawing board. In November 1985 they came up with a document entitled: Strategy and Tactics to collect rent arrears.

The document, uncovered by civic leaders, revealed the town council's new plans to make residents pay rent and blow life into the Black Local Authority. It included short term plans to collect rent and more long term campaigns to win residents' hearts and minds.

The document dealt with:

● LEGAL ACTION: Residents who had not paid their rent would be issued with summonses to appear in court. If they failed to appear in court, they could be given jail sentences. Regular weekend jail sentences would also be applied.

● LEGISLATION: The Department of Constitutional Development would be asked to pass new



pics: City Press

OF ANGER

From left to right: After marching to the Admin Board offices residents wait as a delegation takes their demands to the authorities; Banner outside the offices; Barricades of barbed wire and burning tires were a familiar sight during the uprisings; a young victim slain in the street. Below: one of the many mass funerals for victims.



legislation forcing employers to take workers' rent off their wages.

●**YOUTHS:** Youths would be recruited as Liaison Officers. This would include first year students doing the Municipal Administration and Finance course at Vista University. They would do house visits to inform residents about the local authorities and to encourage parents to pay rent.

●**SECURITY FORCES:** Hostel fees would be collected "through combined action with the security forces". Municipal police, community guards and SAP members, co-ordinated under the command of the SAP, would also deal with "rebellious youth".

●**MEDIA:** An intensive media propaganda campaign would be launched. The aim would be to get residents to support local authorities and to pay rent. Radio Sesotho, TV 2 and 3 and local Vaal newspapers would be used for this purpose. The propaganda campaign would also be promoted in schools, beer halls, labour offices and in taxis, buses and trains.

●**TIMING:** The timing of increases and their possible effects would be

considered. Intensive "climate creation action" would create a favourable climate in which increases would be accepted.

But even these more sophisticated "strategies and tactics" of the council failed to deliver the goods.

Other attempts to smash the boycott and the structures of the VCA and other progressive organisations were the detentions and charging of many community leaders and activists. Among them were VCA leaders and

VCA leaders on trial

priests presently in the Delmas Treason Trial.

Six other Vaal activists are presently on death row for killing a councillor, and two for killing a Sebokeng policeman.

Even this has not deterred residents' determination. "We stand by our leaders. Removing them from our midst does not solve our problems, it just makes us firmer. The government must reduce rent", said one resident.

Evictions are among the most consistent methods used to break the boycotts.

The town council issues eviction notices at the rate of 100 per week throughout the Vaal Triangle. But even this does not produce the results and civic activists say the evictions have actually contributed to mobilising residents. After a family has been evicted, civic members, students and neighbours more the evicted family and their belongings back into the house.

More recently, the council has tried to recover money lost in the boycotts through attaching people's property.

Council police have confiscated valuables such as television set, fridge, radio, furniture and other household property. People have had to pay about R400 to get their property back and this money is taken towards rent payment.

Many people have refused to pay this money and instead, battles have broken out between residents and council police.

The Vaal rent boycott is now going for its fourth year and countryside councils and boards have sunk into irretrievable debt.

Pressure to pay hots up as rent debt mounts

RESIDENTS in the Vaal townships of Sebokeng, Sharpeville, Evaton, Bophelong and Boipatong have not paid rent since the September 1984 uprisings, despite strong pressure from the authorities.

Saspu National spoke to a Vaal Civic Association (VCA) representative about the rent issue and organisation in the Vaal.

The Lekoa Town Council has made numerous attempts to encourage residents to pay their rent and service charges.

But civic leaders cite a number of reasons for the continued rent deadlock in the area. These include:

●The high rate of unemployment in the Vaal. A VCA member explains, "It is not a question of whether people would afford or not because even if rents were to be drastically reduced, many people would still be unable to pay."

●Many community leaders and other residents are in detention and others are standing trial. According to civic leaders this is standing in the way of a possible settlement of the rent issue.

Among those on trial are VCA leaders, who, along with top UDF leaders, are charged with treason as a result of actions arising from the events of 1984.

"Residents are demanding their release and that of other detainees before the rent issue can be fully settled", said a VCA spokesperson.

●A thirty-year lease. Residents say they were promised that their houses would belong to them after they had occupied them for thirty years. They would only have to pay for services like water and refuse removal.

Said the VCA, "This has not happened, so people have taken what belongs to them."

Bad township conditions, high rents and the Black Local Authorities Act have been a rallying points of the VCA since its launch in September 1983.

"Therefore residents were mobilised around these issues that affected them," says the VCA, and rent payment remains a key issue affecting Vaal residents. They say that in dealing with the rent issue, they also intend to highlight its political content. In the face of residents' continued refusal to pay up, the town

council has used many methods to force resident to pay.

Residents were initially issued with summonses to appear in court for failing to pay rent arrears. Residents took these summonses to their different local civics and were defended by lawyers.

"A Supreme Court case in this matter has since been postponed indefinitely and the council is no longer sending summonses," says the VCA.

When the summonses failed to deliver the goods, the council applied for summary judgements against rent defaulters. A number of residents were sentenced to serve weekend jail terms.

"But residents marched on the Administration Board's offices to protest against these jailings. After that the weekend jail terms stopped," said the Civic.

The next step was evictions. The messenger of the court would bring the eviction notices. And along with the Greenbeans (Council police) and the Bloomers (kitskonstabels) would conduct the evictions, in some cases under the watchful eye of the SAP and SADF.

In Bophelong alone, between 50 and 100 people have been thrown out of their houses since evictions started in the Vaal in January last year.

"But people would reinstate themselves in their houses as soon as the cops have gone away," says the VCA.

Those targeted for eviction have been scattered throughout the townships, but the response has often come from more than just the evicted family.

In some areas evictions have led to disruption of schools as students left classes to defend and reinstate evicted families. And there have been clashes between residents and council police guarding the houses where the evictions took place.

The council has also tried to put pressure on residents by forcing them to sign a declaration of intent to pay rent arrears.

The council has attempted to recover rent arrears by seizing residents' property. TV sets, fridges, furniture and other valuable household goods have been taken.

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Funeral procession for slain victim in Mamelodi

pic: Sowetan

THE 1985 MAMELODI massacre in which over 21 people were killed by the security forces when 50 000 residents led by women marched on the administration board offices, sent shock waves throughout the world and added yet another chapter in Apartheid's bloody history.

The residents were marching to the offices to demand the withdrawal of troops from the townships, the lifting of restrictions on funerals, the resignation of councillors and the dropping of high rents.

When police opened fire on peaceful march led by women, the response was unequivocal: "You have struck the women, you have dislodged a boulder, Asikhokhe, no more rent payment!"

The events of that day, strengthened the call for the withdrawal of troops in the townships.

The call for "Asikhokhe", which started spontaneously, reverberated around Mamelodi and received widespread support from the residents.

Many townships across the country were already boycotting rent in rejection of the community council system.

In Mamelodi, this had to be co-ordinated. At the time, there were only two organisations in the township, the Mamelodi Youth Organisation (Mayo) and Zakheni Women's Organisation who were now faced with this task. But their structures could not effectively deal with civic issues.

This led to the formation of the Mamelodi Civic Association (MCA) after an interim committee of seven was set up.

Emphasis was put on organisation of

ASIKOKHE

The call that changed the face of Mamelodi

On November 21, 1985 security forces opened fire on a Mamelodi rent protest march. Two years later the rent deadlock is still unresolved. Here the Mamelodi Civic Association gives some background to the issue.

the township and 33 section committees, with their respective street committees, were developed. This laid the basis for the emergence structures in the area and for the first time Mamelodi residents had a taste of democracy.

Block committees were also formed in the hostels after differences between residents and hostel inmates were settled.

The civic association set about its task of co-ordinating and popularising the rent boycott. Legal advice was sought for people who had been paying rent through stop orders and were advised that they could cancel them.

The MCA said people who had paid rent secretly also joined the boycott when they realised that the money they had paid was not reflected in their rent slips.

The town council's authority to increase rent in 1984 was also challenged in court. A test case on behalf of residents was won and the council was ordered to repay R10.90 to residents. The court ruled that residents had overpaid this amount since 1984. The council lost an appeal against the ruling.

As the boycott gained momentum, the council, backed by the SADF and the police, used many tactics to break the residents' determination.

When essential services like refuse removal were stopped, residents responded by organising cleaning campaigns.

Parks were set up and these were named after popular leaders like Nelson Mandela, and "for the first time the township was clean", said a civic member.

Harassment spilled over to the

hostels as they were invaded and sealed off by cops. About 200 hostel inmates were arrested daily and false information was spread saying the civic has called off the rent boycott. "But the people could see through this, and they continued to support the boycott," says the MCA.

While this was happening Mayor Ndlazi appeared regularly on television claiming that people were paying rent.

Meanwhile, the council continued to issue notices threatening residents with evictions. These notices were issued three days before the eviction.

"One family was evicted and when school children saw it happen, they moved the family back into the house. This shows the determination of the people here," said a civic member.

Residents have also been advised to

deliver all summonses to lawyers acting for the civic and then make affidavits.

Civic leaders say many residents receive notices instructing them to report at the offices in connection with electrical faults and family problems. When they arrive at the offices they are told to pay their arrears and threatened with eviction.

The council also uses a divide and rule method by switching off lights for certain houses and leaving others with their lights on. Residents have since realised that it is a tactic used to create an impression that some people are paying rent.

The council has achieved little in its endeavour to force residents to pay. Presently, there is legislation under way to force employers to deduct money for rent from workers' salary.

The state of emergency had an adverse effect on organisation in Mamelodi, as with other areas throughout the country. But now organisation is emerging again.

The struggles in Mamelodi have not been centered around high rents only.

An anti-crime campaign was launched. "The situation became normal and the crime rate dropped considerably", said a civic spokesperson.

When the council cuts off the lights for certain houses, people devise means to share the use of electricity. They make cooking facilities available or use extension cords to help those whose electricity has been cut off.

These joint ventures have helped bring people together and strengthen their determination.

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Said a Bophelong Civic spokesperson, "they first evict a family and then confiscate furniture and other household property."

"Council police demand R400 in order to have your property returned and this money goes towards rent payment. But people do not pay this money."

More recently the council has encouraged residents to buy their houses at "reduced prices". Some companies are giving their employees loans for this.

But even this seems to have little hope of success. The majority of residents can't afford even the reduced prices. And, according to the VCA, the

Organisation is the key says VCA

majority of residents still maintain that they cannot buy what belongs to them.

The move is also seen as another attempt to get rent "through the back door". Those few residents who have gone to buy their houses are shocked to realise any payment they make is first deducted off their rent arrears.

Meanwhile the civic has sought legal advice on the rent issue.

On behalf of residents, the Bophelong civic has sent a memorandum to Lekoa Town Clerk Nic Louw stating that houses in

Bophelong have long been paid off and residents have decided to stop paying rent.

Louw has not yet replied to the memorandum.

So the rent issue remains deadlocked with community leaders calling on the government to intervene and write off rent arrears.

Organisation

The VCA sees the building and strengthening of organisation as a key

priority.

The civic and its structures haven't yet managed to recover since it was severely crippled by repression. This includes the detention and charging of leading activists in 1984 and again during the two state of emergencies.

"But we have managed to pull through and we have now set up an interim committee representing the whole Vaal", says a VCA organiser.

"We are working hard to build grassroots structures like street and zonal committees and to strengthen co-ordination between civics of

various townships in the Vaal.

"We have been having contact with Cosatu to tackle some of the problems, especially the rent issue, and more especially the one concerning loans which have been given to workers by some companies."

"We want to have ongoing, permanent and principled relations with Cosatu and other democratic structures."

"The youth are also in the forefront in involving residents in a more direct way in defending themselves against raids and eviction."

"We have to involve all the sections of our community, including teachers, nurses, doctors and other upper-class people who are presently unorganised."

THE UNITED Nations designated 1987 as the Year of Shelter for the Homeless. The South African government on the other hand, by its policy of removals, has rendered the people of Mogopa, in the Western Transvaal, homeless.

The Mogopa people were forcibly removed from their land in 1984 and have been battling to return there ever since.

"We are going back to Mogop", declared one of the leaders recently.

He said the Mogopa people first trekked from the Free State in 1912 after "greedy white farmers" had tried to force them to share their livestock with them. They crossed the Vaal River into the Transvaal.

With part of their livestock they bought a farm known as Swartrand and were given a title deed for the farm by the then government.

In the beginning life was not easy as there was a shortage of water. They had to get water from neighbouring farms. They then decided to bore waterholes. "We dug for water with our own hands."

At first there was enough land for everyone. "We shared it equally amongst ourselves. Rainfall was good and it allowed for ploughing as well as cattle grazing and breeding."

Later the Mogopa people bought another farm, Hartebeeslaagte, to accommodate their growing population. Again title deeds were issued.

They built clinics, schools, churches and erected windmills. "We did this with our own sweat and blood. The government did not subsidise any of these projects. Ultimately we became almost self-sufficient, and we even started selling some of our grain produce to the Venterdorp Granary."

Life went on peacefully until 1984 when the South African government decided to move the people. Along with the local headman, the majority of the people were strongly against the removals. But the government conspired with an unpopular headman, Jacob More, who had earlier been deposed by the villagers. He and a group of his followers agreed to move to Pachsdraai, an arid camp near the Bophuthatswana border.

Deputations

The Mogopa people sent a number of deputations and letters to the government. At one such meeting, Deputy Minister of Education and Development Aid, Hendrick Tempel proposed that the people should move to Potgietershoogte, Rooiwal and Kafferskraal. These areas were to be consolidated into one area.

"We asked Tempel, if we accept these areas, would we have security of tenure, security of title deeds and South African citizenship, would the land be incorporated into Bophuthatswana, and would the land be equal in size to the our land at Mogopa."

The Deputy Minister gave no assurances except that the land could be incorporated into Bophuthatswana. This would mean that the SA government would have no authority over them and they would be at the mercy of the bantustan government. The people rejected the offer.

The government then issued a ten day ultimatum to the people to move to Pachsdraai. National and international pressures and the Mogopa people's resolve to resist the removal forced the government to backtrack for a while. But on the 14th of February 1984, they were forcibly removed to Pachsdraai.

The Mogopa people lodged a case against the removal with the Appellate Division. But while the case was being heard, the government used the notorious Expropriation Act to seize the Mogopa people's land. The court ruled in favour of the Mogopa people. But they could not go back because their land was now in the hands of the government.

"We decided to go to Bethanie - just

MOGOPA



The battle to go back to the land continues

Above: Members of the uprooted Mogopa community stand around, their belongings loaded into trucks. Right: A speaker at a meeting of Mogopa people - "We will return to our land". Below: The pain of forced removal.



to get a shield from our paramount chief. With the help of the South African Council of Churches and the Transvaal Rural Action Committee we managed to do that."

But life at Bethanie was miserable. The land was not workable, pension schemes were suspended, water facilities were bad, as a result of which many people died.

At Bethanie they met the Machavie people who had also been forcibly removed from their land in 1971. The two communities shared a common desire - to resist being put into resettlement areas and to continue the struggle for their birth right.

Life became more and more unbearable at Bethanie. The SACC and TRAC investigated the possibility of securing farms for the two communities, near their original farms. This was possible due to "reforms" in section 5 of the Black Administration Act, which allowed black people to buy land near white farms.

Eventually the farm Holgat was purchased for the Mogopa and Machavie people as well as for Holgat farmworkers. The project

was known as the Botshabelo Trust. The farm belonged to the Hermansburg Mission and had been on sale for a long time. The scheme was legal and the government was informed of the move.

On July 7, 1987, just as the farm was about to be transferred to the people, the government again expropriated the land.

The government said the land was expropriated for 'public purposes' to expand the Bethel Mission School into an agricultural college. But when the Botshabelo Trust bought Holgat, the Bethel Mission land was not included.

It was also reliably learnt that the government acted out of pressure from surrounding white farmers who could not bear the sight of blacks farming next to them.

Homeless again

The Mogopa people were once again left homeless and with no land. "We are being treated, not as people, but as animals to be herded around or birds that can live in the sky with no home on earth."

In preparation for the move to Holgat, the Mogopa and Machavie people had made extensive plans about how to run the project collectively. They had discussed issues such as farming, housing, cattle, crops, water and working committees. They had come to accept each other and learnt a lot from each others experience.

"All our plans have been destroyed by a letter from the government...we believe the government's reason for expropriating the farm was to defeat our plans for the future," said a Mogopa leader.

He said both groups resolved to fight the Expropriation Act. Failing that, they would struggle according to their means and history. Seeing that it is difficult to fight the Expropriation Act which is nothing but an expansion of the apartheid laws, the Mogopa people had no choice but to "go back and reclaim our farm."

Determined to return, they appealed to progressive organisations, nationally and internationally, to support them and to be witness to their peaceful long march back to Mogopa.

"We are well aware of the risks involved in the proposed march, but it is our moral right to go back. The government might call us criminals. Nevertheless we are determined to go back. We'll stop at nothing for now we have no land!"

Frightened by the determination of the Mogopa people to march with courage back to their land, the Minister of Education and Development Aid, Dr. Gerrit Viljoen sent an urgent telex pleading for a meeting with the Mogopa people's representative. Convinced

by the legitimate demand for their land and the legal ground on which they stood, the people had nothing to fear.

At a mass meeting to discuss the minister's proposal the people resolved to send their representatives to meet the minister.

On the 5th September, at Pretoria's Union Buildings, the Mogopa people met the minister.

He offered them land at Boshoeck and Vaalkop, near Bophuthatswana.

The Mogopa people stuck to their earlier stand of rejecting any land associated with Bophuthatswana. While the land was still part of SA, they suspected it would be incorporated into the bantustan.

"We rejected his offer out of hand. We don't want to be part of any homeland government because we also don't want to lose our South African citizenship merely to

Minister responds

become Bophuthatswana citizens," said their leader.

The delegation pointed out to the minister that nothing short of the land at Mogopa will satisfy them.

The minister responded that this was against government policy, and he could not offer them Mogopa. Nonetheless, he was "prepared to solve the problem once and for all, and to avoid conflict".

"We then pointed out to him that we would rather be resettled at 'free' land like Mathopestad and Matlala or we will move from Bethanie to Mogopa on the 12th September," said a spokesperson for the Mogopa people.

Preparations for the long march back to Mogopa were already at an advanced stage. Trucks had been hired, people were packing their belongings and awaiting call for the march to begin when the government came up with another offer.

The Minister backtracked from his initial position and offered the Mogopa people a temporary resettlement area at Onderstepoort.

"Onderstepoort can accommodate all of us on a temporary basis... it has schools and enough water supply. It is better than the desperate situation under which we were living in in Bethanie. Originally the place was meant for the resettlement of the Mathopestad people. Due to the resistance of the Mathopes combined with the the protracted struggle of the Mogopa people, the Mathopes were relieved," said a Mogopa spokesperson.

The Onderstepoort offer is "of course a temporary victory for us, since the government has failed to force us to accept resettlement at Pachsdraai".

The Minister offered tin shacks for accommodation and trucks to ferry the people to Onderstepoort. This was seen as an attempt by the government to win the trust of the people and push aside support organisations such as Trac and SACC which have been involved in helping in accommodation, food, transport and clothing. The Minister also offered to pay pensions to the aged which was stopped a while ago.

The temporary resettlement expires after three months, after which the Minister, having consulted with the cabinet, will have to offer an acceptable permanent alternative.

The people of Mogopa are resolute: "We will never give up our struggles until we are back in our place of birth - Mogopa."

THE DAY THE POSTMAN NEVER

POST OFFICE workers recently won their battle against the government's Post and Telecommunications Department.

For nearly six weeks the 20000 strong Post and Telecommunications Workers Association (Potwa) led their strike in support of demands including equal wages and an end to unfair dismissals and to the racist attitudes of management.

Potwa president, Vusi Kumalo and vice president Bob Mabaso spoke to Saspu National about the strike and the formation of Potwa.

Why was POTWA formed?

The Post and Telecommunications Department is state-owned. Working conditions are terrible and management is seen as racist. For years there was no vehicle through which the workers could channel their grievances.

After 1976 management had to introduce the liason committee system to contain the militancy of the workers. Workers never took them seriously. White men always chaired the meetings. The problem was always racism, it was impossible for there to be a 'neutral' white chairperson in that atmosphere. Liason committee members were always chosen by the management.

In some cases, the chairperson himself was the cause of trouble, and the worker would have to lodge a complaint with the committee chaired by the person causing the problem.

Black workers didn't have the option of taking their problems to any structure above the Liason Committee, and it was accountable to nobody. There was no proper bargaining. All the management could do was to act as an arbitrator although they themselves were the problem.

So the very fact that there is apartheid, racism, discrimination and inequality in the post office - all those problems led to the formation of Potwa.

How did you finally overthrow the Liason Committee system?

The liason committee system proved increasingly useless. Anger and frustration built up. There were sporadic confrontations by individual workers who could no longer tolerate their oppression.

Some supposedly 'co-opted' people on the liason committee who were not happy with it were useful when we started forming our own organisation.

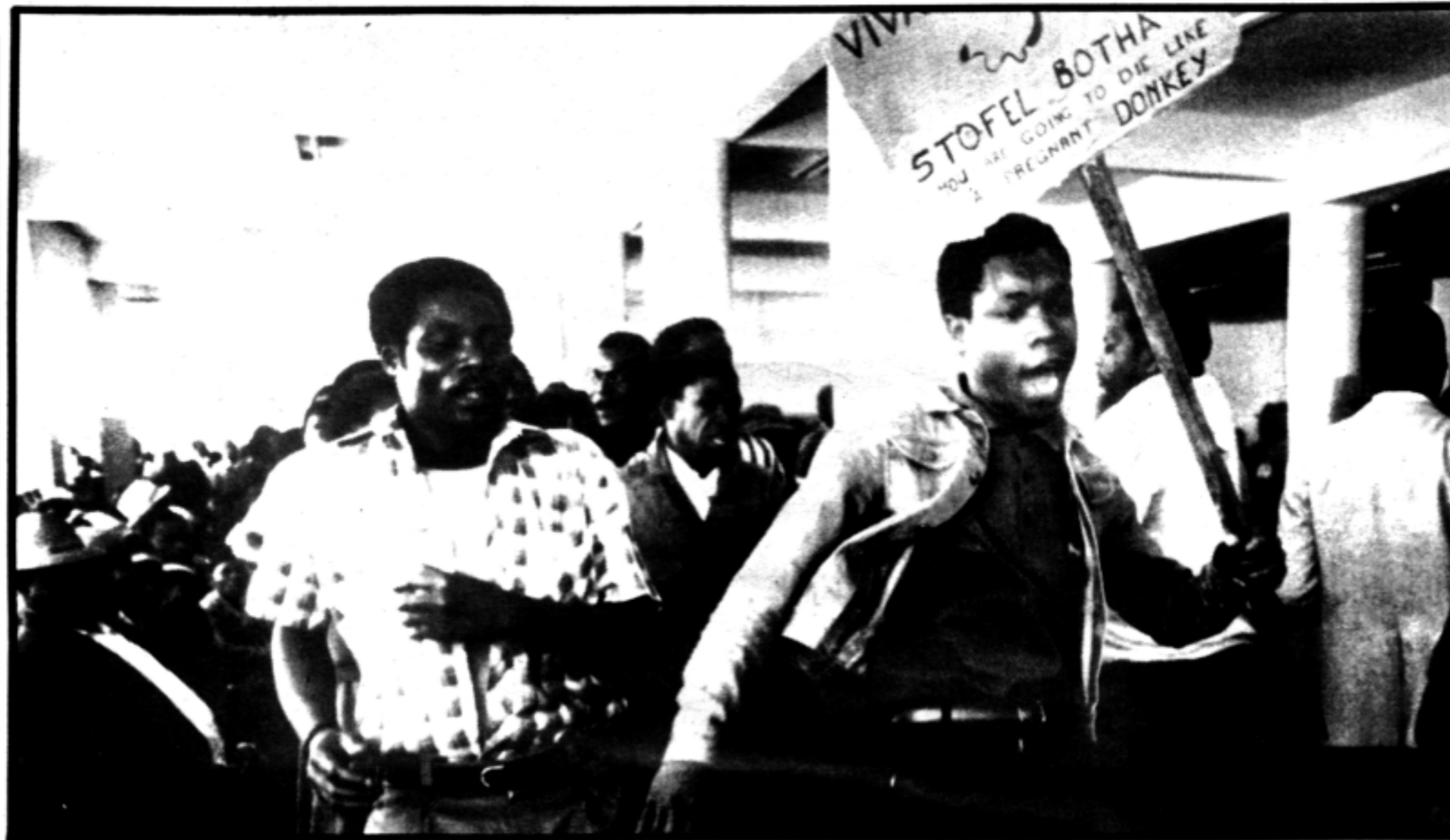
In unorganised plants workers are always afraid to participate in the formation of trade unions. So the dissatisfied elements in the Liason Committees were the ones who freed the workers from their fears, telling them we need an organisation of our own where we can sit on our own at our own time and discuss our problems.

Workers in the Post and Telecommunication sector wanted something to deal with the practical problems they faced. They formed themselves into staff associations, management could not do anything without their approval.

Many plants all over the country started forming staff associations which took up issues at the shopfloor level. We brought the staff associations together to form a bigger association. That is how the Liason Committees collapsed and how Potwa came into being.

Has the growth of Cosatu contributed to the unionisation of postal workers and why have there been so many strikes in this sector?

The workers throughout the country



Potwa members singing and dancing their way to victory.

Potwa leaders speak about the union behind the strike that led to a victory for postal workers.

are moving to a certain level. There have been many contributing factors, including Cosatu's positive influence.

There are deep-rooted difficulties which workers experience so as soon as there was a way to address them it was used. It indicates how many difficulties the workers had prior to the existence of Potwa.

Demands in individual plants are quite similar. Most of the disputes are about unfair dismissal.

Are the strikes usually initiated by skilled or unskilled workers?

The situation is in most cases spontaneous. In Potwa we don't categorise workers. Unfair dismissals happen in both the engineering and the administration departments.

In the Eastern Cape there was a clerk involved and in Power Park it was a labourer. But in Potwa we treat each others as workers - there is no classification.

What effect do strikes have on the telecommunication system?

It has a tremendous effect on the communication system of South Africa as a whole. The business sector was severely affected. Some telephones and telexes were out of order and there weren't enough people to repair them.

The autobanks were also affected because they also rely on the cables supplied by the post office to link with the central data exchange of the banks.

What issues did Potwa discuss with the Minister of Post and Telecommunications?

First we told the Minister that it is Potwa's policy to negotiate. Second, we impressed upon them that the situation was getting out of hand for both parties: as days went by without problems being resolved, the workers' anger increased.

Management was uncompromising saying that they would not accede to our demands. We said let us not let



Determination is written on their faces as P.O. workers resolve to continue their strike.

the situation reach an explosive level, let us put our heads together for the benefit of all parties.

At the end of it all we have to come and sit at a conference table and start negotiations, so why don't we start now, without involving third parties like the police and the army and without using mass dismissals.

We also discussed the living wage, wage parity, issues from the Eastern Cape and Chucnespoort as well as detentions associated with the work stoppage.

The Minister thought he was coming to dictate to us. He was totally against compromise and concession and was obstinate throughout the meeting. Eventually he walked out.

Then the Postal, Telephone and Telegraph International (TTI), threatened to cut communication links between South Africa's ambassadors abroad and Pretoria if the workers' problems weren't addressed.

Owing to the intervention of the TTI, the Department was forced to

resume negotiations with Potwa.

How do you view the TTI's role?

PW Botha always says that external pressure cannot bring about change in this country. They won't show that they're taking the threat seriously because it is external. I think the real pressure comes from Potwa but we welcome the solidarity those people showed.

The TTI played a mediatory role between the Department and Potwa and held talks with the minister and got the him to listen to the demands of the workers.

Without the TTI we wouldn't have settled the dispute yet. The minister was forced to send the deputy Post Master General to speak to Potwa.

What agreements were reached in the second round of negotiations?

We first discussed what we call

supervision parity whereby blacks of the same rank as whites cannot supervise whites. We felt that if a white person is below a black in rank he must be under that black supervisor.

The other part of parity was in salary. On July 1, the post office introduced new salary scales for everyone irrespective of race or colour. As soon as blacks were part of this new system, they were automatically taken down two notches.

With the introduction of the new scales, people lost their chance of promotion. Potwa fought for the abolition of this system.

We also fought for the equality of salaries of workers in the same rank irrespective of colour or race.

The agreement we reached was that a new mechanism has to be introduced by the Department based on parity as we see it. Potwa and management agreed that they will jointly assess and monitor the implementation of this agreement and report in April next year.

On the parity issue we realised that we weren't only fighting management and the department but also the government. When we took on the issue of supervision of whites by blacks it became a political issue.

We realised that as Potwa alone we cannot win. It meant that all the public sector workers must look into strategies of handling the issues together. Because the problem of discrimination reigns supreme in this sector.

On the dismissals of those who were on strike, we agreed that all those workers will have to reapply. We made it clear to the management that if there is any victimisation we will take legal action. Any violation of these agreements will be reported through the shopstewards.

The management agreed to a pay the labourers R380 which they accepted, subject to review. The minimum which the workers want is R450.

On the Eastern Cape issue, where workers had been on strike since June 23, we reached a deadlock. The case is about sixty workers who were dismissed around 1985 and early this year. We agreed that Potwa will

CAME

"Potwa does not regard its fight in isolation. This is a fight of our people against the government. Potwa is only part of the struggle to help us realise our rights."

bring the case up with management and substantiate whether they were fairly or unfairly dismissed.

If there was unfair dismissal, the department was to re-employ them. Initially they said that they were not prepared to re-employ them, all they could do with them would be to put them on a priority list until vacancies occur. We hope to prove unfairness and get the workers jobs back.

What did you discuss about police harassment?

We told them that since police had been harassing us, we were of the opinion that the Department of Post and Telecommunication and the Department of Police work together.

They did nothing to stop the police from coming. Also management had given us the guarantee that no supervisor would harass striking workers but Potwa found that the Post Office had had a hand in the detention of the postal workers.

One morning a white supervisor from Alberton was in the company of the security police who detained three comrades from Vosloorus.

Has Potwa received support from other organisations?

We have support and solidarity from people in many sectors. We are not alone.

We are fighting for a common goal, all of us, although in different ways. Everybody is behind us.

What is Potwa's position on non-racialism?

Potwa's constitution is non-racial. Some workers are activists in progressive organisations in the community which will lay the conditions for the growth of Potwa into a true non-racial trade union.

Attempts have been made to organise the Indian and so-called Coloured workers. Before Potwa came into being, there were separate Associations for the so-called Coloureds and the Indians.

How many branches does Potwa have?

We have eight regions: Port Natal, OFS, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Northern Cape, South Eastern Transvaal, Northern Transvaal, and the Witwatersrand region.

All these regions are strong except for the Northern Cape, around Kimberley. Here we have problems, but these will be attended to.

Will Potwa align itself with any of the major labour federations?

That will be answered by our Congress. We have always believed that that question has to be answered by our members. At the Congress we will take a firm stand.

Potwa official addresses workers at union meeting held at Soweto's Regina Mundi.

Do you have any other message from Potwa?

That Potwa does not regard its fight in isolation. This is a fight of our people against the government. Potwa is only part the struggle to help us realise our rights. We start at the plant level, fighting for bread and

butter issues, but our goal is the total transfer of power from the undemocratic minority to the democratic majority.

Potwa's message to the people of this country is that they must come out in support of the efforts of all workers and the people in this cause.

We endorse the efforts to create one union one federation in one country.

Municipal workers score a first from Soweto Council

After a week-long strike municipal workers have won recognition for their union, Mwusa.

FOLLOWING a week long strike in August by municipal workers, the Soweto Council has acceded to worker demands for better wages and working conditions and an end to unfair dismissals.

The basis has been laid for the formation of the giant Municipal Workers Union of South Africa (MWUSA) as a force through which workers in this sector will push their demands forward in a co-ordinated and united action.

For decades, workers in this sector have had no democratic representation. Their voices were never heard alongside other workers in the state controlled public sectors such as the South African Transport Services and the Post and Telecommunications Department.

Mwusa organisers said the much publicised strikes in the mining industry and the Post and Telecommunications Department had an impact on the municipal workers in Soweto.

The strike, which started on Monday August 17, took place at nine Soweto Council offices. All sectors of the council workers, including clerks and some Council police, downed tools in support of their demands.

Mwusa says tempers flared when Soweto mayor Nelson Botile told council drivers that they would have to pay R2 500 whenever they were involved in accidents when driving council vehicles. But Mwusa says that workers refused to bind themselves to anything until they had consulted their union.

"They ignored Botile's instruction and held their own meeting the next day. They they decided on other demands and not to go to work until their demands had been met. They also demanded that Botile apologise for the bad things he was reported to have said to them.

"The mayor was forced to apologise, but the workers stood by their other demands. They refused to go back to work until they had met the entire Executive Committee of the Soweto Council in order to present their grievances".

A committee of ten people was elected to take the workers' demands to the Council Executive meeting scheduled to take place after the outbreak of the strike. All categories of workers were represented in the meeting which resolved to meet with the Council management.

Issues raised by the workers included:

●Unfair dismissals: Workers complained that they were victimised and dismissed unfairly whenever they raised grievances with the council.

●Wage increases: Workers said the council had not fulfilled its promise, made in early April, to increase their wages by 12,5 and 20 percent.

Mwusa says it was discovered that the council had been silent about money for the increases received from Pretoria.

Reliable sources say the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning, Chris Heunis, reprimanded the mayor for not paying out the increases.

●Underpaid drivers: People employed as labourers who had drivers licences were forced to work as drivers but were not paid drivers' wages.

●Discrimination: White employees of the council were given better paid jobs than their black colleagues who were suitably qualified. Workers complained that a number of whites had not passed matric and some presented forged certificates when they applied for jobs.

●Staff Associations: Workers demanded that staff associations should be scrapped because they had failed to take up workers' grievances. The associations were headed by superintendents, and other committee members were appointed by management.

A monthly subscription fee of R5 was deducted from workers' wages to maintain a body which they had not elected.

Workers demanded the freedom to belong to a union or an association of their own choice.

The municipal workers strike placed great pressure on the Soweto Council. Services were discontinued and the council's work was disrupted. The council eventually met all workers' demands.

The Council agreed not to victimise the workers. Instead, any problem between the management and the workers would in future be tackled jointly by the union and the management.

The demand for the freedom of association was also won along with the recognition of the union. Mwusa announced that they are now the sole representative of the workers in the Soweto Council.

In consolidating and defending the gains made, Mwusa says:

"We do not believe that this victory is the end of the game. It actually marks the beginning of the first step, that is massive unionisation of the workers. From there we will decide what further steps to take".

After the outbreak of the strike many workers swelled the ranks of Mwusa and a record 1 832 workers joined the union. Many workers joined the few drivers and cleaners who started the union and paid-up membership rose to well over 3000.

"Workers must take control of union structures, attend meetings and make decisions themselves," said Mwusa. "The union is the workers and the workers are the union."

"This victory is not the end of the game. It is the first step towards the massive unionisation of workers."

ORGANISING farmworkers is an uphill battle, but despite huge obstacles, the trade union movement has started the climb.

They have been horrified at workers conditions. "Farm workers are still living under feudalism," says Sebastian Hempte of Fawu (Food and Allied Workers Union), a Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) affiliate.

In addition to Fawu, the National Union of Farmworkers, the Orange Vaal General Workers Union and the South African Allied Workers Union are also organising farmworkers. Some progress has been made, with 20 000 of the 860 000 farm workers organised.

In committing itself to organising farmworkers, Cosatu has taken on a formidable enemy - and an organised one. Commercial farmers in South Africa are the most determined bastion of Apartheid racism, and the backbone of the far right in South African politics.

They see themselves as the heart and soul of the Afrikaner nation, in the tradition of their colonial forebears.

In many areas they have formed their own paramilitary vigilante squads, under the leadership of the neo-fascist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB).

They are also tightly integrated into the SADF's civil defence networks.

For farmworkers life is hell. "They are isolated on these huge farms miles from town, and therefore very vulnerable," says Hempte.

They live in debt to their employers, their wages not sufficient to cover the goods they are forced to buy at the expensive farmstores, their movement is controlled by Apartheid laws.

Many workers, especially seasonal workers, are still paid in kind, leaving them to try to sell the produce, or in the case of the tot-system, to drink themselves into alcoholism - a factor making organisation even more difficult.

The workers have no legal protection. Their exclusion from the labour relations act means they can be hired and fired at will. They have no right to organise and no protection from victimisation or from unfair labour practices.

Organising on the farms is no easy task. But trade unions are going into battle against this bastion of Apartheid exploitation.



And practices are often unfair. In one of the few incidents to come to court, Johannes Bekker was charged with flogging a woman farmworker for making a noise in the sleeping quarters.

Bekker had taken her into the barn, and ordered her to lie down on a table. When she refused, she was beaten with a sjambok. She ran and hid behind a piece of machinery. Bekker then threw pieces of concrete at her. He and his 13-year old son then caught her, tied her hands and legs and both assaulted her.

Bekker admitted guilt but argued that it is "a long-standing traditional practice," to flog workers. He also stated that "I am responsible for the workers like a father. I have a fatherly responsibility towards them as long as they live on my farm."

As punishment for these actions the court fined Bekker a mere R50.

In another incident, a farm manager was found guilty of kidnapping a farmworker's child, handcuffing him in his garage overnight, and assaulting him. The child, Henry Zondi, died of head injuries the next day. The farm manager was fined R650.

Although legal protection may be extended to farmworkers at some stage, the government has stalled publication of a report which some feel suggests the extension.

The report was completed in 1984 by the National Manpower Commission. Its delay has prompted lawyers to believe that it recommends legal action for farmworkers which will give

ON THE

them the rights fought for by industrial workers for 60 years and finally won in 1979.

Until then, organising farmworkers is a risky business for trade unionists and workers alike. The first problem is to get access to the farm workers. "The farms are private property so we can't just enter and organise. The only way is standing there at the gate of the farm, waiting for the workers to knock off. You have to get them to leave the farm property."

But even talking to the union can put the farmworkers jobs in danger. "On one farm, 19 workers were fired, evicted and then arrested for trespass just for signing union forms, says Hempte. "And if farm workers are dismissed, then to be honest, there's very little you can do."

In Graaff Reinett, the local priest was also a UDF supporter, and was able to visit the farms to conduct services and ceremonies, and to organise.

But after his detention and attacks on his church, few farmers would let him onto their land, petrol bomb attacks put his life in danger and farmworkers were afraid that further contact with

NEARLY HALF the black South African workforce is unemployed. 300 000 black school leavers join the job market each year.

Retrenchments continue to spiral, and the heaviest burden of the current economic crisis is being shifted onto the shoulders of the working class.

But the unemployed are organising to fight back - under the banner of the Unemployed Workers Coordinating Committee, (UWCC).

An unemployed workers' organiser explains how unemployment devastates people's lives.

"We know the suffering, the pain, the horror of unemployment. We know the daily struggle to survive without a job. The daily struggle against starvation. The daily suffering of the children. The broken home. The tensions between youth and parents. Some escape to suicide, others turn to heavy drinking to cover the pain," he says.

The unemployed do not know how they are going to feed their families from one day to the next. They face eviction from their houses if they don't pay rent. They are desperate. And this desperation can lead them into conflict with employed workers - which suits the interests of the bosses and the state.

"In every capitalist country the bosses need unemployment to weaken the power of the workers, to keep wages down, and weaken the strength of the employed," the organiser explains.

Building organisation that strengthens unity between employed and unemployed workers is an urgent priority, so that capital cannot play them off against each other.

"The problems of the unemployed are also the problems of the workers in the factories, and their problems are ours," he says. "We call for support from the unions in our struggle - support from the industrial strength and the strike weapon of the employed."

"At the same time, the organised unemployed will mobilise support for the unions. So when workers are on strike, the organised unemployed can help stop scabbing and build solidarity in the community," he says.

Shop steward locals, which draw together shop stewards from all factories in the area, are key forums in which issues of general working class concern are discussed. Representatives from community, student and youth organisations also attend.

"The locals can become places where problems facing the working

people are discussed, where decisions are made on a broader basis - and not on the basis of narrow trade union considerations."

The locals are seen as one place where unity can be developed.

This unity is urgent because the plight of the unemployed is being exploited as part of the attempts to divide and rule the townships, and destroy the democratic forces.

Some unemployed workers have been recruited into the "kitskonstabels" - the municipal police that enforce control of the discredited black community councils. The "green beans" (so called because of their uniforms) have been responsible for evicting rent-defaulters from their homes, as part of the council strategy to break the rent boycotts.

The unemployed may also be recruited by the criminal vigilante gangs that terrorise the townships, targeting progressive activists and their families, petrol bombing their houses, kidnapping and torturing them.

The vigilante gangs are among the most serious enemies of progressive organisation, and activists have little recourse to protection from their criminal activities.

For unpoliticised sectors of the unemployed, faced with the loss of self esteem, sense of impotence that comes with unemployment, the power and the payment for being a vigilante is a powerful incentive.

Unemployed workers' organisation therefore has to confront the issue of survival, to initiate strategies of struggle that create jobs, and to build solidarity in action with organised workers and the community.

Organisations emphasise that unemployment is a problem rooted in capitalism: "The workers' solution to unemployment is to organise and build their strength to cut out the root of the problem - to end the bosses' profit system and organise the economy according to workers needs."

Each struggle for short term demands must build the strength of organisation for the next offensive. "The working class learns through experience and action, not just

AMALOVA



words," the organiser explains.

"Our action and demands have to show workers that the profit system is rotten. They have to show the workers the need to build their strength. And they have to raise the

It is within this framework that the UWCC has targeted its key demands. These are reflected in Cosatu's resolutions on unemployment. They say: Defend all jobs; a shorter working week and a ban on overtime; improved unemployment benefits for all workers; build public works to provide jobs; build co-operatives.

The UWCC sees the campaign calling for public works as a strong demand. The struggle to win it can involve all workers. The process also involves consulting the community about what their needs are, and this consolidates unity.

The more the government refuses to accept this demand, the more they expose whose interests they serve. Because, for example, there is a desperate shortage of housing, the unemployed are offering to build houses, at a living wage.

If the government refuses, it exposes that it is not interested in providing jobs or houses, no matter what it says. And if this demand is won, workers can then struggle for maximum control over the decision-making process - over what work is done, wages and funding.

"Public works sow the seeds of an alternative in the very practice workers are involved in: determining their needs, their conditions, their wages, deciding on the type of public works they need most. This is a seed that will bear

Organising the unemployed and uniting them with other sectors is key to a future which serves the needs of people rather than profit.



fruit in a future society, under workers control," the organiser explains.

Another strategy for creating jobs is by building co-operatives. In some townships, forms of co-operatives have emerged in the process of struggle.

In Queenstown, for example, during the consumer boycott, the street committees organised to train the unemployed in skills ranging from upholstery to shoe-mending. A sewing co-operative was also set up.

In Port Alfred, the consumer boycott also made unemployment worse, as white shops closed down. Through the street committees, an agricultural co-op was set up, with the youth, the unemployed and the pensioners cultivating all the back-

yard plots on behalf of the community.

But unemployed organisers point out that co-operatives producing goods for sale have certain limitations in South Africa at present. They have to compete in a capitalist market, if they want to survive economically. The struggle for survival can end up taking precedence over all else.

They do not challenge the government or the bosses to take responsibility for the unemployment their system has caused. However, if they are large enough, they can be experiments in worker management. "But if this is our aim, the workers who build the co-ops have to be very clear about it. And they need to remain linked in to the struggles



Natal farmworkers: they were fired and evicted after going on strike against an 11-hour working day, R55 a month wages and bad conditions. But the battle has just begun.

FARMS

him would lead to their victimisation as well.

But workers are continuing to fight. A Durban law firm has challenged the eviction of 900 workers from a state-owned tea farm.

The Supreme Court challenge follows the eviction by police of the workers from the Sapekoe Tea Estate near Pietermaritzburg after they went on strike in protest against an 11-hour day, bad conditions and a wage of R55 a month plus a bowl of mealie meal each day.

Despite an original undertaking, management refused to discuss the demands and fired the workers. Six shopstewards on the farm were arrested and the rest of the workforce was left penniless with nowhere to go.

There was a brief promise of re-employment after union lawyers threatened to take action but only 80 of the original workforce were re-employed. The rest are either staying in a tent settlement at nearby Ezitindeni or have gone back home - mainly to the Transkei.

The lawyers are claiming that the farmers took the law into

their own hands in evicting the workers. If they win, all the workers will have to be reaccommodated.

The unions have decided that large farms like Sapekoe are the best places to start their fight rather than small, conservative private farms. "On private farms, we haven't moved an inch," says a Fawu organiser.

Larger farms are often owned by industrial monopoly corporations. This can make them more receptive to trade unions, as they have already been forced to accept trade unions in their industry. "Monopoly capital has experience in dealing with trade unions in industry, and sees them as a necessary evil," says Hempe.

Fawu has found it tactically necessary to deal with the urban-based management of the monopolies rather than the farm managers, many of whom have not come to terms with workers flexing their collective muscle, and still rely solely on repression to deal with worker organisation.

Fawu has taken advantage of the embarrassment such repression could cause the monopolies, who don't want their carefully cultivated liberal images destroyed.

Worker solidarity remains one of the strongest weapons farmworkers have. "At one abattoir, the workers are organised by Fawu. So when farmers bring in the cows, these workers boycott certain of them in solidarity with struggles being waged by farmworkers, they refused to slaughter the cows."

Farmers are learning how vulnerable their crops and animals

are to worker action. A whole hall of chickens died at Farm Fare's Eastern Cape farm because the workers were not feeding them, forcing Farm Fare to become the first agribusiness to sign a national agreement with FAWU.

And Fawu are confident that the other industrial monopolies that have farming wings, like Anglo American, SA Breweries and Premier Milling, will follow. "They will probably not cause us too many hassles, once we can prove our representivity," said Hempe.

Fawu's campaign still faces many problems. "Farmworkers expectations are now so high they want everything and they want it today: posturepaedic mattresses, TV, gramophones, better wages, better schooling, social security - everything people want in an advanced society," says Hempe.

Because farmworkers live on farms, many of their demands are around housing conditions, schooling and other issues that have been taken up by civic and student structures in the townships. The unions have tried to link farmworkers with other organisation around such issues, but this has proved to be exceptionally difficult.

The difficulty again is that there are so few opportunities for making contact as workers are so rarely able to leave the farms.

And the isolation of farmworkers from township struggles has other implications too. In the Eastern Cape, where farmers have retrenched workers, they have often invited the kits-konstabels recruiters on to their farms, to offer alternative employment to retrench farmworkers.

The kits-konstabels fall under the discredited community councils and impose township control with the SAP and SADF.

Hempe has reached the conclusion that "the only real solution to the plight of the farmworkers is going to be a change in ownership and control of the land."

"Already workers in Fawu are discussing the clause in the Freedom Charter which says 'the land shall be shared by those who work it.' We are discussing what this means because in a future democratic South Africa the farms will be needed to provide food for the people."

UNIT

outside the co-ops," the organiser explains.

"If we are careful about the kind of co-ops we build, this will help solve this problem. For example, a caterers co-op serving food to union workers could mean direct links with workers on a daily basis."

In order to spread jobs among more workers, Cosatu unions have started the fight for a shorter working week, and a ban on overtime. On the East Rand, the trade unions have taken this struggle to heart. "Twelve factories have agreed to a ban on overtime," says the publicity secretary of the Springs shop stewards local. "Now unemployed workers are taken to do this work."

There is also a struggle for improved unemployment benefits, and the UWCC is involved in challenging the many cases of corruption and inefficiency that deprive workers of even the limited state support to which they can get access.

"It is better to solve such cases through organisation than through litigation," he explains.

"When workers went collectively to one Unemployment Insurance Fund office to sort out a complaint, the administrators were worried, because part of the problem was corruption. They sorted out the problem very quickly, and as a result, the office was moved into the township.

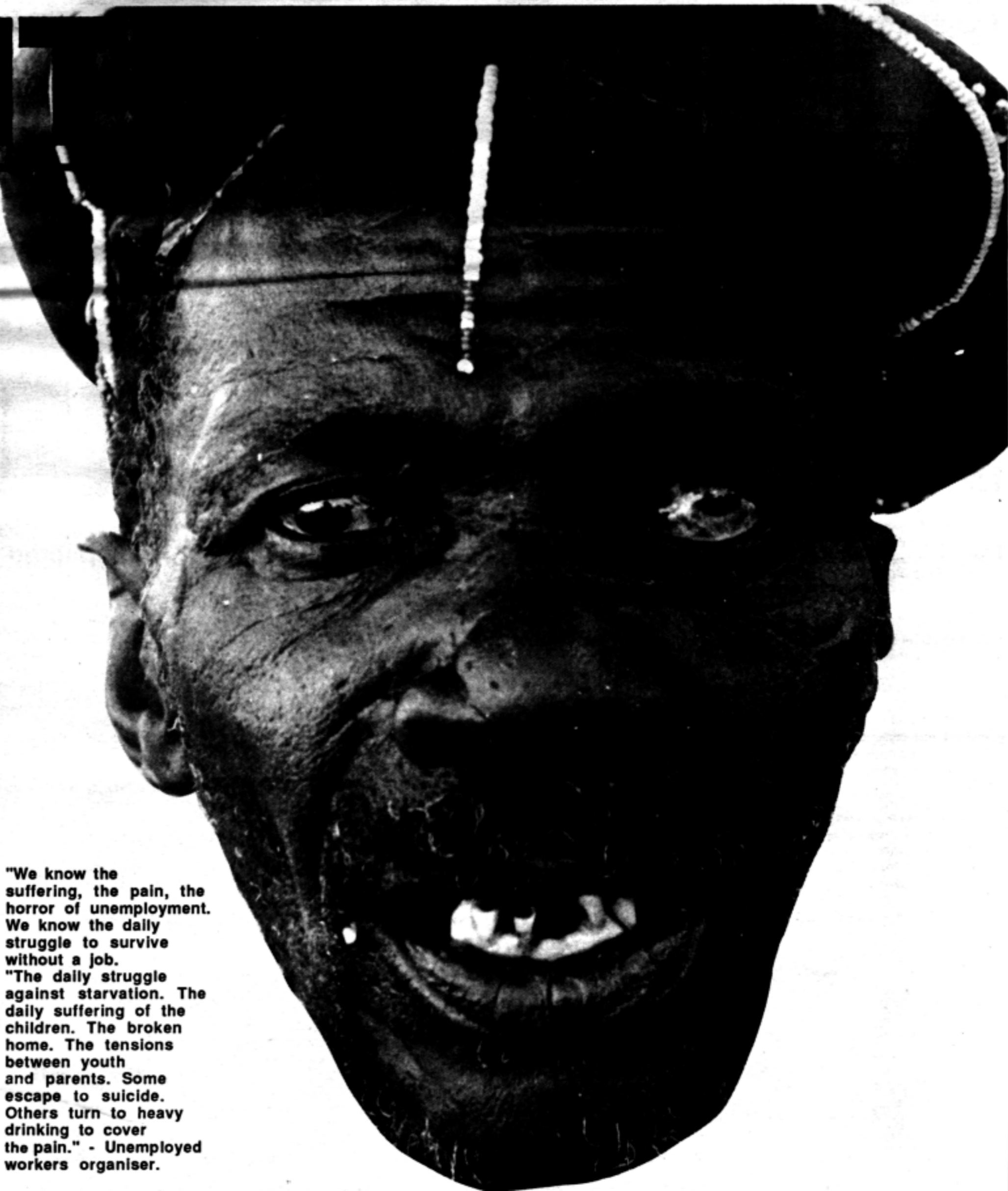
"This showed workers the crucial lesson of the workers struggle - that they win nothing without using their organisational strength."

The long queues at the Unemployed Insurance Fund counter are also a key place to organise and popularise the UWCC.

All over South Africa, the unemployed are waking up to the reality that through organisation and unity, they can not only solve their problems of survival, but, side by side with employed workers and all organised sectors of the community, they can start to challenge the root causes of the system of unemployment, and build a future in which the economy is organised not for profit, but to serve the needs of the people.

"We know the suffering, the pain, the horror of unemployment. We know the daily struggle to survive without a job.

"The daily struggle against starvation. The daily suffering of the children. The broken home. The tensions between youth and parents. Some escape to suicide. Others turn to heavy drinking to cover the pain." - Unemployed workers organiser.



TAMBO

A tried and tested leader



ACTIVITIES

OR, as he is popularly known, featured prominently during the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign in 1952 alongside Mandela and Sisulu.

Sisulu was banned in 1954, while he was still secretary general of the ANC, and Tambo served in his place before officially becoming the secretary general in 1955.

In 1955 many prominent leaders of the ANC were restricted by banning orders, so Tambo represented the ANC in the National Action Council, which brought together the demands of the people in the Freedom Charter.

In 1956, Tambo was among 156 Congress leaders charged with treason.

As he was standing trial in 1956, he married Mmatlala Adelaide Tshukudu, then a student at Orlando High School and also a member of the ANC.

In 1958, he was elected ANC deputy president, a position he held until the ANC was banned. The following year he was served with a five-year banning order.

Tambo left the country a week after the Sharpeville massacre on March 21 1960 to set up the ANC's External Mission and mobilise international support for the struggle.

After his departure, the South African government instituted measures aimed at wiping out the ANC - the declaration of the first State of Emergency on the April 4, 1960 and the banning of the ANC four days later.

Tambo led the ANC in its bleakest hour, after the banning of the organisation, the detention and suppression of its members and the imprisonment of many of its leaders.

After its banning, the ANC adopted armed struggle as a means to end apartheid and on 16 December 1961 Umkhonto we Sizwe, its military wing, was launched.

The ANC External Mission set up military training camps in Tanzania and other African states.

Among the first operations conducted by trained guerillas was the Wankie Operation in 1967, undertaken jointly by the ANC and Zipra. Tambo saw the guerillas into battle.

In 1969, the ANC held its first national consultative conference at Morogoro in Tanzania. The conference was attended by members from all the levels of the ANC and was an important milestone in the history of the organisation.

At the end of the conference, all ranks of the ANC reaffirmed their support for Tambo's leadership and he was elected ANC president. He succeeded Chief Albert Lutuli who had died in 1967.

Throughout the years he has been a unifying force in the ANC and has earned respect from the entire membership of the organisation.

Today, after 27 years in exile he has undoubtedly emerged as a leader of the people of South Africa.



On 27 October ANC president Oliver Reginald Tambo turned 70. A tried and tested leader, he is respected by friends and foes alike.

The youth were unhappy with what they called the "humbleness of the ANC leadership towards apartheid".

Tambo was instrumental in the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944, becoming its first national secretary. He then served as its Transvaal president and in 1948-49 was National vice-president.

In this period the Youth League drew up a programme which was to change the ANC. Adopted as the ANC's Programme of Action at the ANC National Congress in 1949, it set out a new strategy of mass mobilisation and defiant action.

In 1946 Tambo had been elected to the Transvaal ANC executive, and in 1949, he, Mandela and Sisulu were elected to the ANC national executive.

The years that followed, Tambo rose through the ranks of the national executive. He served as acting general secretary, general secretary, deputy president, and acting president until his election as president at the ANC's Morogoro conference in 1969.

THE LAWYER

At the same time as playing a leading role in the ANC, Tambo ran a popular law firm in partnership with Nelson Mandela.

A close associate had this to say about it: "When the offices opened in the morning, people just poured in. It was respected for handling cases of mainly victims of apartheid laws - the pass laws, group areas, forced

removals and so on. The interesting thing was that the majority of their clients were poor people. So Tambo and Mandela did not make money like many other lawyers.

"They didn't just practise law. They were still deeply involved with the work of the ANC. Many of their clients were also ANC members.

"During the Alexandra bus boycott they went out to Soweto and organised solidarity action with the people of Alexandra. Scores of people were later charged for having taken part in the bus boycott and the solidarity action. Mandela and Tambo appeared for them."

Tambo also defended current Swapo leader Sam Nujoma and others in a political trial in Windhoek.

THE SEVENTIETH birthday of ANC President Oliver Tambo on October 27 was celebrated by South Africans throughout the world.

Tambo is five years younger than the ANC, which marked its 75th anniversary on 8 January this year. His name has become inseparably linked to the ANC.

He has steered the ANC during some of its most decisive years. And under his leadership, the ANC has become the key organisation in providing a lasting solution to South Africa's problems.

His strong leadership qualities have always been admired by all who have known and worked with him. He is received with honour by leaders and governments throughout the world.

In the eyes of the South African government, however, Tambo is regarded as the public enemy number one, a "terrorist leader", a heathen of great magnitude and a blood-thirsty Moscow-controlled communist.

This prominent South African leader was born in 1917 in the rural town of Bizana in the then Cape Colony. Oliver Reginald Tambo comes from a poor Christian family and is still known to be a Christian.

At the age of seven, he began his formal education at the Ludeke Methodist School in the Bizana district and completed his primary education at the Holy Cross Mission. He then moved to Johannesburg, completing his high school education at the St Peters College.

After matriculating, he went on to the University College of Fort Hare, in Alice and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1941.

It was at Fort Hare that his political career began. Here he met Nelson Mandela, who was to become his friend, colleague and comrade in the ANC.

Tambo took up students' interests while on campus, playing a leading role in their demands for a Student Representative Council (SRC) at the college. He was expelled from the university for having led a student boycott around this issue, and could not proceed with his studies for a BSc Honours Degree.

In 1942 Tambo returned to Johannesburg as a maths and science teacher at St Peters.

Some of his students later played prominent roles in South African politics. Among these was Duma Nokwe who became the first African advocate in South Africa and later became the general secretary of the ANC.

Tambo soon became deeply involved in the ANC. He teamed up with other young militants, like Mandela, Sisulu, Ashby Mda, Anton Lembede, "Congress" Mbata, Duma Nokwe, David Bopape, William Conco, Patrick Molaoa, Archie Gumede.

