

SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY



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Elections
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Big no to constitution as elections draw near

THOUSANDS of people have rejected the Government's new constitution under which elections for Indian and coloured chambers of Parliament are to take place in August.

Reports from around the country talk of feverish activity as the biggest issue facing the country nears its climax.

The elections, to be held on the 22nd and 28th of August, is seen as an issue which concerns all South Africans.

The African community in particular is leading the call for a boycott of the elections.

Mr. Popo Molefe, the national secretary of the United Democratic Front (UDF), said the central issue was the 'denationalisation of the African people'.

'We call on our people in Eldorado Park, Reiger Park, Actonville and Lenasia, to boycott the August elections.'

'We call on our people to refuse to be partners in the crime of Apartheid against the majority of South Africans.'

Albertina Sisulu, a vice president of the



UDF and the wife of imprisoned leader Walter Sisulu, said Indian and coloured people should not vote because the constitution's sole purpose is to entrench Apartheid.

'The new constitution is aimed a dividing our people in the light of the present unity created by the UDF,' she said.

The call to reject the constitution is being backed by intense activity in townships around the country.

In Huhudi, Lamontville, Atteridgeville, Soweto — thousands upon thousands are signing UDF Million Signature Campaign forms which says 'No to depriving African people of their birthright' and calls for the creation of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. 12 500 signatures were collected at Crossroads alone in a single three

hour blitz.

At mass meetings in Kimberley, Vryburg, Sobantu, Grahamstown — thousands more have made known their opposition to the constitution and the elections.

In the communities being called on to vote, the outcome of the elections already seems decided.

Attendances at meetings called by organisations advocating a boycott have been larger than any of the few organised by parties contesting the elections. Many parties and individuals standing for election have not even called open meetings.

Thousands in these communities have pledged to stay away from the polls through signing Million Signature Campaign forms.

'If anything, this is a

clear measure of opposition to the elections,' one observer commented.

'By what yardstick do the pro-election people claim support for their position.'

'And while many people have registered as voters, the Government and its supporters are in for a shock when they realise that none of these people have any intention of voting,' he added.

Leading the boycott campaign in the Transvaal are the Transvaal Anti-PC Committee and the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC).

House to house visits conducted by these organisations have included Riverlea, Eldorado Park, Bosmont, Newclare, Coronationville, Western Township, Lenasia, Laudium, Actonville, Central Johannesburg, Azaadville, Nelspruit,

Barbeton and Carolina.

Tens of thousands of leaflets and posters covering every available space gives the organisations and overwhelming presence in the community.

Workshop discussions are being held regularly, and even plays on the constitution have been performed in many areas.

'It is clear that there is a groundswell of dissatisfaction and anger throughout all sections of the oppressed community,' Prof Ismail Mohamed,

chairperson of the Transvaal Anti-PC said. He said the people rejected the Government's offer to make them junior partners in Apartheid.

Mr. Ismail Momoniat, the secretary of the TIC,

said the people rejected 'Botha's plans being imposed on them'.

'This is clear through our contact with the community and the various ways in which opposition to the constitution is being expressed.

'The only decent thing for people who are offering themselves as candidates to do, is to step down.'

In the Western Cape, the UDF has collected over 100 000 signatures

The communities of Mitchells Plan, Belhar, and Kensington recently marched on the City Council to protest against local government policies under the new constitution. In Natal, the Natal Indian Congress and United Committee of Concern, have received enthusiastic support from the 51 000 homes so far

covered. The NIC and TIC recently conducted joint house visits in Newcastle.

'Shopping centres, stations, bus stops, churches, mosques and temples also provided the Natal organisations with many thousands of signatures against the constitution.

At at least two meetings of the Solidarity Party, a party contesting the election, the people present passed a vote of no confidence in the party.

Democratic whites in all the provinces are also actively supporting the campaign.

Meetings and signature blitzes organised by the Johannesburg

Democratic Action Committee have been very successful, and the Association of Durban Democrats was recently formed.

The UDF is to set up Joint Planning Councils involving representatives of all the communities, to co-ordinate the non racial and united campaign against the constitution.

Its is clear that only a constitution drawn up by all of South Africa's people we will be supported.

INSIDE



To struggle for tomorrow is **WOMEN'S** fight today

Page 12

Did you know that scooter drivers have a union?

page 10

Western residents put their foot down

page 3

Germiston fed up with promises

Page 11

Got a cold or flu?



Turn to page 14 and go to bed

0 years after Rivonia, the call grows louder...

Release Mandela Now !

THE campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners is gaining momentum.

The 27 Release Mandela Committee 'units' have been set up throughout the country; pamphlets, posters, stickers and Shirts have been distributed, and a national conference is held recently.

The call for the release of Mandela has

grown louder with this being his 20th year of life imprisonment since the infamous Rivonia Trial.

'In terms of international legal practice, a life sentence is generally considered to be 20 years imprisonment. Hence we call for the unconditional release of all other political prisoners now,' says a poster of the Transvaal Release Mandela Committee (RMC) produced to

commemorate the anniversary.

And as the country nears the August elections for the Indian and coloured chambers of Parliament, more and more organisations are supporting the call for his release.

'Now is the time to talk to the people's true leaders,' said a June 16th leaflet issued by the Transvaal Indian Congress.

'We demand the release of Nelson

Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada and all other political prisoners'.

The campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela was first launched in 1980 by the then legal Sunday Post newspaper.

Amongst those who expressed their support for the campaign were presidents, Samora Machel of Mozambique and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

Since 1980, more

than a million people throughout the world have signed petitions for the release of Mandela and all other political prisoners.

The RMC said the present campaign was launched because of the 'realisation by many South Africans that without the wise contribution of Mandela and others, South Africa will never experience a stable democracy or know lasting peace'.

'In the eyes of many South Africans and the international community, Mandela symbolises all those who have been imprisoned for representing the views and aspirations of the oppressed people of our country.'

'Mandela represents all those who stand for the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony with equal opportunities.'



Despite many difficulties, including the banning of its meetings, the RMC campaign is growing stronger all the time.

The RMC is presently planning services to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Rivonia Trial.

Brass band birthday for Fed

THE 30th anniversary of the Women's Federation of South Africa was celebrated in style in Pretoria, the metropolis, where in 1956 the Federation organised a massive march of 50 000 women to protest against pass laws.

Fourteen women's organisations from all parts of the Transvaal came together to hold a rally in Mamelodi, which in the words of the onlooker, 'made one think for a moment that Apartheid was truly dead and buried'.

Busloads from Soweto, Alexandra, Kagiso and as far away as Gazankulu and Pietersburg invaded the streets of Mamelodi.

Led by brass band and drum majorettes wearing UDF T-shirts, the crowd marched to the meeting venue.

They had cause to celebrate. On their shoulders they carried Dorothy Nyembe - MaNyembe - just released after serving 8 years in prison.

But it was the spirit of the meeting - the feeling that once again women were beginning to organise and that women's voices were being heard - that was the best welcome for

old Federation of South African Women leader, Dorothy Nyembe.

Addressing the meeting of over 1 000 people she said, 'I did not expect women to be still this active when I was in jail. It gives me even more courage to see that women have not given up the fight for their rights, the rights of all peace loving South Africans'.

The common call at the meeting was for women to unite and organise in the face of more and more suffering that women have to bear.

'To struggle for tomorrow is a woman's fight today', sang Jessica Sherman in a song honouring women.

Zinzi Mandela and Mzwakhe carried their message in poetry while the Ganankanya women's group from the Northern Transvaal graced the gathering with a dance.

A women's group from Izaneen also sang a song they composed about the hardships of rural areas.

'We are working hard on the farms of the rich farmers mixing mud, waking at 4 am as if we are donkeys, but getting no pay', said Tshebo Khumbane from the group.



Women travelled from Gazankulu to celebrate Fed's 30th anniversary.

Speaking very powerfully, she called on people to pay tribute to the women who are forced to look after their children alone.

'The fathers are working on the rich mines, but their children are a pitiful sight,' she said.

The six hour meeting climaxed with Dorothy Nyembe's speech. She was introduced by Francis Baard who was once a cell mate of hers and fellow leader in the Women's Federation in the 1950's.

She described MaNyembe as a tireless fighter for women's rights.

MaNyembe helped organise the 1956 massive pass march to Pretoria and in her home town, Durban, organised a campaign against beer halls at the beginning of 1960.

Speaking in Zulu, MaNyembe praised the United Democratic Front for uniting the people and condemned the new constitution, 'which is striving to win Indian and coloureds away from the African people to weaken our strength and divide our people'.

She attacked people who are scared of standing up against wrong and challenged such people to come

out into the open and attach their signatures to the UDF 1-million signature campaign.

'I am not here to talk about my experiences in jail,' she said, 'I am here to tell you that the struggle continues despite all setbacks we are faced with.'

However, her time in jail was not easy, as a pamphlet distributed by the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee at the meeting pointed out.

MaNyembe and her fellow women prisoners were held in isolation for a long time, refused books and given bad and too little food.

The pamphlet called



MaDorothy Nyembe

on people to remember the fourteen women political prisoners who are still behind bars.

The meeting resolved to build and strengthen women's organisations, and called on all organisations to help women in this task.

Transvaal Indian Congress branches out in East Rand

members of the branch go out to meet people in the community.

'We are confident that there will be a low poll on the East Rand despite the fact that at least six candidates are standing,' said Mr Joe Francis, who was elected chairperson of the branch.

'Most of these candidates have a history in institutions such as

the SAIC which we have already rejected,' he said.

At the conference to launch the branch, a 20 person executive council was elected. The two vice presidents are Dr Ismail Cachalia from Actonville and Dr Vallabh Jaga from Nigel. Firoz Cachalia also from Actonville, is the secretary.

A week after the branch was launched, it called a mass meeting in Actonville attended by 600 people. Terror Lekota, UDF publicity secretary and George Sewpersadh from the Natal Indian Congress addressed the meeting.

The branch was launched at an afternoon conference at-

tended by about 250 people.

'In the weeks ahead we are going to have to face up to the state's propaganda especially through the media,' said Essop Jassat, chairperson of the TIC in his opening address.

'We can only combat this by organising ourselves into structures which can carry

our message to the people,' he said, motivating the formation of the branch.

Billy Nair, recently released after 19 years on Robben Island, gave an account of the history of the Indian's people fight for freedom for all in South Africa.

The branch received messages of support from many organisations including the Katlehong Youth Steering Committee and Moya from Tembisa.

Bosmont gets it together

BOSMONT residents were called on to unite at a recent community evening organised by the Bosmont Residents Association Ad-hoc Committee.

Mr Gary Davids, a member of the committee, said it was only through organisation that the community would achieve anything.

'We may share common plights and experiences, but it is only as an organisational body that we can achieve any success,' he said.

Guest speaker, Rev Dough Matthews, a preacher in the Lutheran Church, pointed out the need for a resident's association in Bosmont.

'The so-called Management Committees have been created to become the mouthpiece of residents at white municipal meetings, yet we do not see any positive results,' Rev Matthews said.

'These organisations have been devised by the white regime to promote Apartheid.'

He said the people would soon be forced to accept the Tricameral Parliament.

'This so-called change is the last stand taken by the regime to preserve Apartheid,' he said.

Rev Matthews said the church also has a role to play in righting the wrongs in our country.

The programme for the evening included two plays by the Shakti Creative Arts Workshop from Lenasia, poetry by Chris van Wyk and Achmat Dangor, an exhibition of photographs by Afrapix, and the display of artwork by students from the CJB High School.

Angry protest at superintendent's office as

Western Township says no to moving

WESTERN township residents recently protested at the offices of the local superintendent against threats by the City Council to move them to other areas.

The action by residents followed notices calling on them to report to the superintendent's office to agree to a transfer.

The council wants to move residents to make way for the building of new houses. This comes after years of struggle by residents under their organisation, the Westbury Residents Action Committee (WRAC), and repeated demands for the development of the area.

In a letter to the City Council's director of housing, Mr Wilsnach, residents said they wanted to move directly into the new houses without having to vacate the township as



Angry Western residents confront the City Council on plans to move them out of the township

there is sufficient vacant ground in the area to begin building.

'We cannot see why each household has to suffer the trauma and inconvenience of having to move house twice.'

Residents also fear

they may not be able to move back to the area once they have moved out.

After pressure from residents, Mr Wilsnach said only sub-tenants were being offered alternative accommodation. Registered te-

nants would remain in their old houses until the new ones were ready.

A petition presented by residents to the City Council states:

- Sub-tenants who qualify for accommodation of their own must be housed separately, and if they so wish, by the time the registered tenant moves.

- The houses to be built must be of good quality and approved by residents.

- Rent must be such that every tenant can afford to pay.

- The Council must consult with residents throughout the period of development.

Support for the residents has come from many organisations, including the Coordinating Residents Action Committee (Crac) and the Witwatersrand Council of Churches.

People sign for UDF without fear

THE UDF has condemned the intimidation of the public and of UDF workers when collecting signatures for its One Million Signature Campaign (MSC).

At a recent signature blitz in Johannesburg, policemen photographed and followed UDF workers, and unknown persons in cars without number plates snatched signed forms.

On house visits in different areas, UDF affiliated organisations are also being harassed. Mysterious pamphlets have been distributed calling on people not to sign.

But despite this, people continue to sign in their thousands.

Over 250 000 signatures have already been collected countrywide.

Murpheson Morobe, the Transvaal MSC co-ordinator, said people are not fooled by Government

propaganda or the attempt to portray the campaign as illegal.

'It is within our rights

to take a stand against the new constitution and Koornhof laws,' he said.

'No action can be taken against anyone who signs and joins hands with thousands around the country in a common stand against apartheid.'

'The government is only further exposing its fear of UDF support and the people's united opposition.'

He said the campaign

was important to confirm our unity in rejecting the government's new laws.

'Especially when Botha is parading overseas and telling people his policies have popular support.

'We can also expect the government to claim high polls in the August elections by the way the registration figures have been worked out.'

The Million

Award for UDF

The United Democratic Front (UDF) was recently awarded the 'Let Live' peace prize in Sweden.

The award acknowledged the UDF's contribution to struggling for a just and democratic South Africa in which all will live in peace and harmony.

Accepting the award on behalf of the UDF, Murpheson Morobe, Transvaal co-ordinator of the Million Signature Campaign, said it should belong to Nelson Mandela, and paid tribute to South Africa's jailed, banned, and exiled leaders.

He said the new constitution was aimed at lending Botha international credibility.

While Botha presents a face of reform, the true face of South Africa is one of denationalisation, pass laws, imprisonment and the deprivation of schooling.

Mr Morobe said the award gave the UDF international recognition, and showed that the workers of Sweden reject apartheid and want to make the ideals of the declaration of human rights a reality throughout the world.



The Soweto Women's Group protesting against the increase in sales tax

Soweto women on the move

SOWETO women held a placard demonstration against the rise in GST immediately after a meeting to launch the Soweto Women's Group.

'The women have really moved their organisation into action fast,' one observer commented as the singing crowd attracted passersby.

The increase in GST was condemned by Amanda Kwadi in her speech at the meeting.

'The increase in GST shows where the intentions of the Government really lies,' she said. 'It is certainly not with the aspirations of the people.'

'Many essential things like tinned food, paraffin, soap, candles, medicine and school uniforms are not exempt from sales tax.'

'The poor, to whom the brunt of this new



Amanda Kwadi

increase.'

She said matters are made worse by the Government using this money to fund 'tin-pot homeland dictators and the SADF'

Albertina Sisulu a president of the UDF spoke of the proud history of women in the struggle for freedom in this country.

In the 1960's the Federation of South African Women, like

many other organisations, was silenced, she said.

'But today, many of the grassroots organisations which the Government tried to destroy are re-establishing themselves.'

Ma Sisulu urged women to actively involve themselves in organisation and to take their place as women in the struggle for democracy.

Dr Motlana of the Soweto Civic Association, praised the will and strength of women who have defied laws, and against impossible odds, managed to maintain their families.

Ester Malinga, who was elected chairperson of a 21 member committee, read a message of support from the UDF.

The meeting was attended by women from many other areas.

Valspan residents send letter to Dr. Koornhof

DR Piet Koornhof, the Minister of Co-operation and Development, has been urged not to continue with the forced removal of residents from Valspan, a township 120 km north of Kimberley.

In a letter to the minister from the township's community council, the chairperson says:

'We implore you to let those remain in Valspan who wish to develop a harmonious, prosperous community, and not to continue with this subtle, yet forced removal.

'We feel as a Community Council that we have not been treated as a representative

body of the people, but as 'boys'. We are no longer consulted on matters and we feel the Government does not therefore take the structure of the Community Council seriously.'

The Government wants to move residents to Pampierstad, 31 km away in Bophuthatswana.

Residents refuse to move. They will lose their Section 10 rights after moving and fear losing the right to live and work in an urban area.

In Valspan residents walk to work. If moved to Pampierstad, much money and time will be spent travelling.

The authorities have been forcing residents

to move in a very subtle way by trying to make conditions at Valspan unbearable.

Since 1964 residents have not been able to renovate their homes. Homes are very overcrowded and breaking down.

Services are barely provided. There are communal toilets and rubbish is removed only once every fortnight. Yet rents and rates go up.

Residents believe their rent money is being used to build Pampierstad.

Valspan rents are to increase soon to R13-50, but it is still far lower than the R30 in Pampierstad.

Many people earn between R20 and R30

in domestic jobs or piece work. Others are pensioners. This means a large number of people will not be able to survive in Pampierstad.

Residents say government officials constantly harass and intimidate individuals.

One pensioner, Mr Richard Nkomo, was arrested and questioned why he would not move.

'Moving family by family is fragmenting our community,' one resident said.

'Some have moved against their will, while others are staying, because even though they are afraid, they will not survive in Pampierstad.'

United action brings victory

A united stand by workers and students at the Medical University of South Africa (Medunsa) near Pretoria, recently led to the reinstatement of a dismissed catering worker, Mr Michael Moeketsi.



Students refuse to eat in canteen in support of a fired worker.

The worker, who runs the student canteen at Medunsa, is employed by the catering company Fedics. Mr Moeketsi was dismissed after the company alleged he was responsible for food gone missing from the kitchen. His 48 fellow workers immediately

downed tools and demanded his reinstatement. In order to keep things running smoothly the company brought in workers from other areas. This strategy failed, however, when 3 000 students on campus refused to eat in the canteen in solidarity

with the striking workers.

Worker representatives, including Ms Poppy Magongwa, CCAWUSA's Pretoria Branch Secretary, demanded Mr Moeketsi's reinstatement. They added other demands to improve the poor work-

ing conditions. Management said they were prepared to reinstate Mr Moeketsi, but only at another establishment. This was rejected by the workers and the students.

Students then took their protest a step further by refusing to attend lectures. They

vowed this would continue until Mr Moeketsi was back at work in their canteen.

This combined action by the students and workers had its effect. Management agreed to reinstate Mr Moeketsi at Medunsa. They also agreed to giving backdated increases to

those workers who had not received any, better uniforms and maternity leave.

In addition to the unity of students and workers, there was also another important aspect to the strike.

Medunsa is situated in that part of South Africa called Bophuthatswana.

While South African unions have been told they may no longer operate there, workers demonstrated their feeling that they do not wish to be divided.

Church hall burns in mystery fire

A mysterious fire burnt down part of Small Farm's Roman Catholic Church in Sebokeng recently.

The Church is a well known venue for community, youth, women and trade union meetings.

'We believe this is the work of opponents of freedom loving people in this country,' said the Vaal branch of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas).

A speaker at a recent meeting in Vaal said that security police came to the church the next day to enquire about the fire although the police had not been informed.

The Small Farms Church hall is one of the only halls available for community meetings. The Orange Vaal Administration

Board has threatened all churches in the area that their leases would be withdrawn if they let organisations such as trade unions and civic organisations use their halls.

However the land on which the Small Farms church is built is not owned by the Administration Board.

The church and organisations in the Vaal have appealed for donations to rebuild the hall.

Although the hall is insured, the church also wants to renovate the hall and will need more money.

Donations can be sent or taken to the Roman Catholic Church at Small Farms, or given to members of organisations such as the Vaal Cosas branch or the Vaal Civic Association.

SRC's to be set up at Vaal schools

VAAL students have decided to set up Student Representative Councils at their schools.

'We must follow the example of the Pretoria students', the chairperson of the Vaal Cosas branch said.

'They have laid the foundations for Student Representative Councils throughout South Africa.'

The students pledged solidarity with the Pretoria students whose schools have

been closed down.

The chairperson warned that the Government may be able to shake a tree, but will not be able to pick up what comes down. The Pretoria students will not give up their fight for a dynamic, new and democratic education, he said.

The students appointed two organisers who will be responsible for initiating Student Representative Councils in the Vaal area.



Parking is a serious problem for scooter drivers.

Scooter drivers urged to sign petition No parking for scooters

SASDU is petitioning the Johannesburg City Council for more parking space for scooter drivers.

Lack of parking, especially at the General Post Office in Jeppe Street, is one of the biggest complaints of Johannesburg scooter

drivers. The General Post Office is a common stop for drivers collecting and delivering mail for thousands of Johannesburg companies who have post boxes there.

Sasdu is also appeal-

ing to traffic officers to be more considerate towards scooter drivers.

'They should realise that scooter drivers often have urgent medicines or air tickets to deliver and cannot afford to waste time looking for parking,'

says Sasdu chairperson. Lucky Mhlavivana.

All scooter drivers are urged to sign the petition which is available at the union's office in Chancellor House, 25 Fox Street, Johannesburg.

Council neglects residents

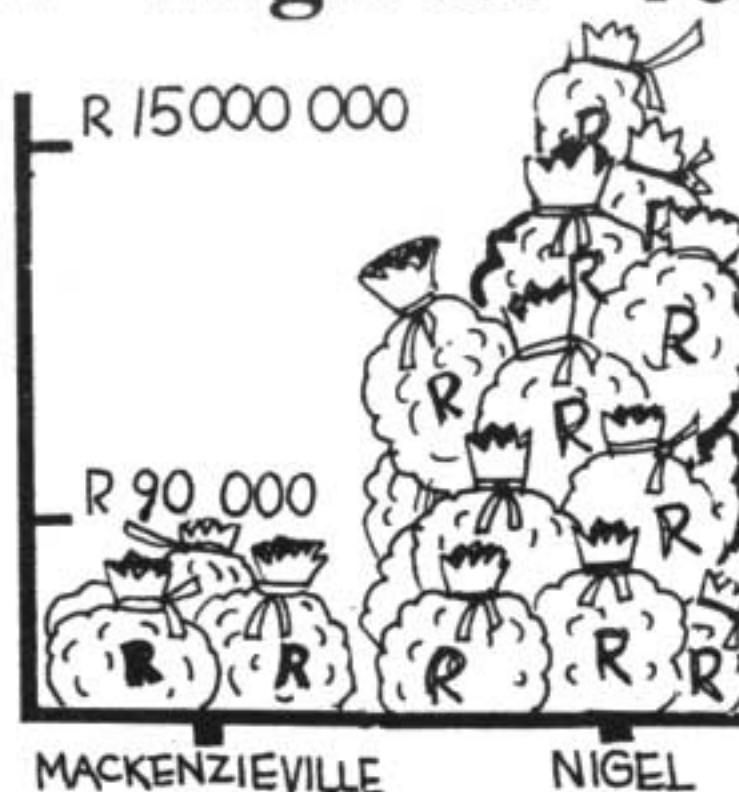
THE budget allocated by the Nigel Town Council to the Indian Group Area, Mackenzieville, stands at a meagre R90 000 out of a total budget of R15 million, according to the chairperson of the Mackenzieville Indian Association, Mr Thakor Gandhi.

For residents this means no homes, no street lights, no sporting facilities, a bucket sewerage system and gravel roads.

A resident said there had been no change in the area for the last 40 years.

The Mackenzieville Indian Association was formed several decades ago when people in the area were faced with forced removals under the Group Areas Act.

'The people were not even notified where



they were going to be moved to' one resident said.

Mackenzieville was only declared a Group Area in 1981 although people have lived there since 1939.

'The area has remained in a state of

sheer neglect all this time with the authorities not taking responsibility,' another resident said.

Mr Gandhi said the task of the Association now was to see to the development of houses and services in the

area. Although representation has been made to the Town Council on numerous occasions, there has been no improvement in the area. People still live in backyards and overcrowded conditions.

Mr Gandhi said the authorities had only laid on sewerage facilities in the old part of Mackenzieville. Other amenities like tarred roads and street lighting have not been provided.

'There is too much red tape, and one has to go through about 40 departments demanding this area be developed,' he said.

Mr Gandhi was recently re-elected as chairperson of the Association at a meeting attended by 500 people.

There can be no reform as long as people opposed to low wages and poor living conditions can be detained in solitary confinement without access to family, friends and lawyers', said

a statement released by Gawu, Sasdu, Mgwusa, UDF, Descom and the Detainees Parents Support Committee.

Where else can we meet?

It is becoming more and more difficult for democratic organisations to find venues to hold meetings. From the Vaal to Tembisa, the authorities are ordering churches not to allow organisations to use their premises.

Church ministers in Tembisa were recently warned:

● Not to allow any meetings on church premises.

● If an organisation wants to hold a meeting at a church the organisation must give a copy of its constitution to the church minister who in turn must give it to the security police before permission is granted.

● If church ministers do not follow these instructions, they will be held responsible for any 'irregularities' which may occur.

'The Government wants to control our churches,' a spokesperson for the Tembisa youth movement, Moya, said.

'Our key weapon to fight for a better society is organisation,' he said.

'Without a venue for our meetings it is more difficult to organise, to get to other people, meet in large numbers, co-ordinate our activities and share experiences.'

'But this will not deter us from organising the youth to a better and brighter future.'

Moya has called on all organisations, individuals and churches to join hands in solving the problem of venues.

Unionists detained

BOTHA's government is claiming to South Africa and the outside world that Apartheid is reforming.

But less than two months before elections for the new tricameral Parliament, security police have swooped on and detained many people.

Four trade unionists who have been the recent targets of detention are Amos Masodo and Rita Ndzanga from the General and Allied Workers' Union

'There can be no reform as long as people opposed to low wages and poor living conditions can be detained in solitary confinement without access to family, friends and lawyers', said a statement released by Gawu, Sasdu, Mgwusa, UDF, Descom and the Detainees Parents Support Committee.

Council feast fails to fool

A FEAST organised by the Evaton Town Council to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Evaton and the setting up of the new town council turned out a flop after members of the Vaal Civic Association, Vaal Cosas branch and Vaal Youth Steering Committee demonstrated with placards outside the feast.

The Director - General of the Department of Co-operation and Development was the guest speaker.

The commercial press said as many as 15 000 people attended the feast, held at the local stadium.

However the Vaal Civic Association say this is not true.

'We would be surprised if as many as 1000 people attended.'

'And about 400 of these were entertainers - girl guides, school choirs, tribal dancers and church bands.'

Of the people who did come, many turned back after responding to the call of the demonstrators. Posters held by the protestors read: 'Don't feast with disciples of torture' and 'Namuhla niyadla, kusasa nizolamba nizobe nilala phandle'.

Others left the stadium angry about the degrading way they had been treated. One person tore off her

Evaton Vigilante badge and joined the demonstration.

'Basibizela ukuzoganga ngathi - They invited us to play with us,' complained pensioners who could not understand why they had been invited.

They were made to pay a R3 entrance fee and only offered sorgum beer and cans of cold drink.

'The Evaton Town Council is trying to create some credibility among the people,' a member of the Vaal Civic Association (VCA) said.

'But the Town Council must realise they are not recognised by the majority. We will not be fooled by things like feast.'

'People are not going to accept a feast which will be followed by rent

and tariff increases', said one demonstrator.

The demonstrators said they could not feast when people are starving and struggling to make ends meet.

They accused the council of secretly organising the feast. 'They only announced it a few days before it was meant to happen, because they were too scared of the peoples

anger,' a member of the VCA said.

'The council have brought more misery and suffering and have not fulfilled their election promises,' he said.

'We hope that in the future people shall be more aware that councils deprive them of their living and feast on our bones.'

He called on people to join democratic organisations. 'We see democratic civic associations as the only alternative to fight for residents rights.'

Promises - all lies say Vaal residents

PROMISES made by community councillors during their election campaign last year are not being kept.

In Evaton, councillors promised to save residents from losing their freehold rights and from being moved to Brits.

'Since its introduction, the town council has not retrieved one plot to their rightful owners,' a member of the Evaton Residents Association (ERA) said.

The ERA says more residents are being evicted from their houses and property because they are in areas with rentals or taxes.

'The Government is trying to tax people out of Evaton to the rural

areas by demanding high rents, dog taxes and many other levies that people cannot afford.'

Evaton is one of the few remaining areas in South Africa where Black people still own their homes. The Government has been trying to end this for years.

The people of Evaton bought their land in 1904 and the Government has no right to take the land away.

The ERA, an affiliate of the Vaal Civic Association, has committed itself to fighting for the future of Evaton. It has for a long time now battled against the community council and the Evaton Town Council.

Call to end war

'THE South African government has no interest in stopping the war and bringing peace to Namibia,' Mr. Anton Lubowski, a Windhoek advocate and Swapo member told a public meeting organised by the Johannesburg End Conscription Committee (EEC).

The EEC is calling for an end to compulsory conscription into the South African Defence Force.

Mr. Lubowski said South Africa had forced a dictatorship onto Namibia in the form of a one-man government.

'The majority of the people have no freedom of political organisation, have no recourse to the law,

there is no Parliament to enact laws and

there is no democracy in any sense of the word,' he said.

'That is why Koevoet, the Security Police unit there, has no consideration for

human rights and justice.'

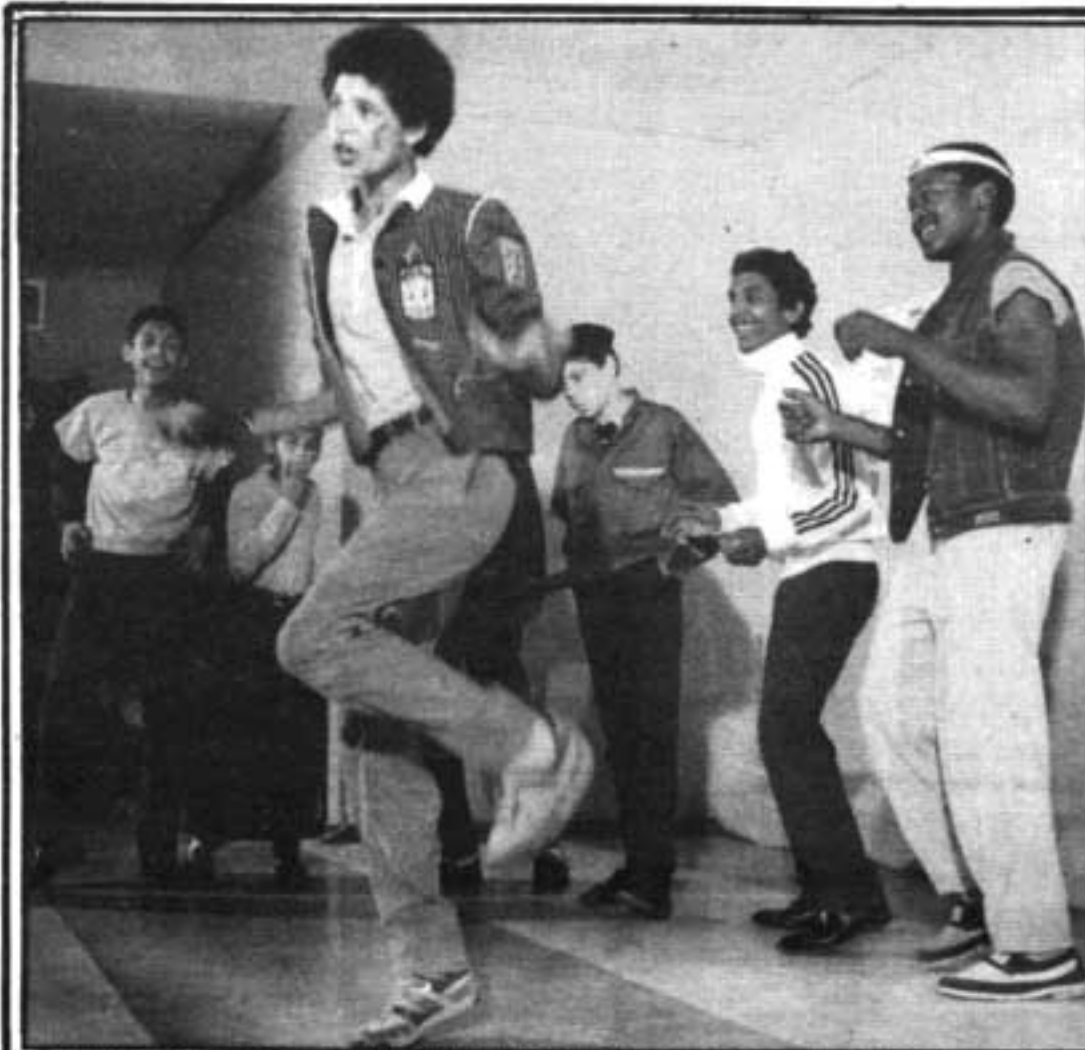
Mr. Lubowski said this is why he joined Swapo. 'It came as a natural thing to join in the struggle for freedom and peace.'

'South Africa is the reason why the war does not stop,' he said. Can you then blame the youth when they object being forced into the army where they have to fight their own brothers and sisters?' he asked.

He called on all South Africans to put pressure on the Government from within the country, to end the war in Namibia.

'We want an end to the uncertainty of our future; and an end to the untold suffering to all sections,' he said.

'We call on the occupying South African power to give us our freedom, we call for an end for people to fight in an unjust war.'



Break dancing - Michael Jackson style at tenants social evening

Fun get-together for Johannesburg tenants

The newly formed Johannesburg Action Group (Jag) organised a successful social evening recently.

The evening aimed to cater for the needs of 'illegal' tenants in Johannesburg.

Being an 'illegal' dweller, also means no services and amenities

like schools, creches, recreation and entertainment.

Jag brought tenants together, not only to share their common experience, but their talents as well.

A play produced by tenants very aptly depicted the life of an 'illegal' tenant in Johannesburg.

Everyone had their share of fun, including the children who so cleverly put an act together.

During a break for refreshments, tenants got a chance to meet and talk to each other.

The evening ended with a film show, Under Fire.

Speak elects executive

OVER 100 people, representing close to 40 organisations, attended the 1st Annual General Meeting of the non-profit community newspaper Speak last month.

The AGM and the process leading up to it, put the newspaper on a firmer footing, the Speak organiser, Mr Feizel Mamdoo, said.

He said much discussion with organisations took place in the weeks before the AGM.

'One of the things we did was carry out a questionnaire with member organisations which provided valuable feedback and suggestions.'

'In-depth discussions took place on the need, nature and role of the community newspaper

and provided us with guidelines on content and direction.'

Mr Mamdoo said it was in the nature of such a newspaper to be rooted in the community through its democratic representatives.'

'The community newspaper does not exist in isolation. It is fully a part of the communities it represents. It is geared towards advancing the interests of our communities; an organ for expression, and a tool to be used in promoting our efforts against daily hardship.'

'When did anyone hear of the commercial newspaper having general meetings with its readership, the people who distribute the paper, those who con-



Popo Molefe, calls on organisations to support Speak at 1st AGM

tribute articles, or the communities it reports on,' Mr Mamdoo asked.

'Unlike the commercial newspapers, we are not motivated by profit and controlled by big business.'

The AGM of a community newspaper like Speak is one form through which it is democratically controlled

The guest speaker at the AGM, Mr Popo Molefe, national secretary of the UDF, called on all democratic organisations to intensify their support for the newspaper.

The AGM broke into groups to discuss:

- The nature of the community newspaper.
- Writing.
- Distribution.

An executive committee elected to manage the project includes Murpheson Morobe (chairperson), Leslie Seleke, Krish Naidoo (treasurer), Vincent Mogane, Kanti Parshotam, Hazy Ntsibanyoni, and Figo Madlala.

The chairperson for the day was Rev Frank Chikane.

City rally for rural people

'WE reject the practice of forced removals and pledge to support those who resist being forcibly relocated'.

This resolution was adopted unanimously by more than 300 people at a recent rally to protest against removals.

The rally, one of several around the country, was held at the Coronationville Hall and organised by the Witwatersrand Council of Churches.

The Rev Frank Chikane, a vice-president of the United Democratic Front, said forced removals depicted a war situation in this country.

'The government now wants to complete the confinement of black people. Relocations is part and parcel of the apartheid strategy.'

Attacking the new constitution, Rev Chikane called on all the coloured and Indian people to reject and boycott the August elections.

Mr Moses Ngema, community leader of KwaNgema, the Eastern Transvaal community facing relocation, also addressed the rally.

'No way are we going to agree to go to a place where we are going to die,' said Mr Ngema. 'We are requesting the government not to take us to that place.'

Mr Ngema said they were born there. 'Our fathers and forefathers told us we are going to stay there for life'.

Rev S Luckett, of the Anglican church told the rally one of the main reasons the government wanted to relocate people is in the interests of national security. Due to the increasing discontent, the masses are becoming a threat to the minority.

'The church should fully understand the oppressiveness of Apartheid,' he said.

SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

Of concern to us all

We are today faced with an issue which is of concern to all freedom-loving South Africans.

Under the new constitution the Government has introduced, Indian and coloured people are being called on to vote for a three-chamber Parliament in August.

The implication of this move by the Government and our response to it is far reaching.

A vote in this election, for any party or individual, will be a vote in support of the Government's new constitution.

A constitution through which African people are being denied citizenship and forcibly moved to poverty stricken Bantustans.

A constitution through which new community councils in the townships are making life more unbearable.

A constitution which plans autonomy for 'Indian and coloured areas', making residents pay for basic services themselves.

A constitution under which no more houses are to be built, and which has made the Group Areas Act harsher.

Indian and coloured people are being asked to be jointly responsible for passing laws against African people, threatening a unity which has been painfully built over many decades through common experiences and joint struggle.

Little wonder then that our people have taken a united stand against the constitution.

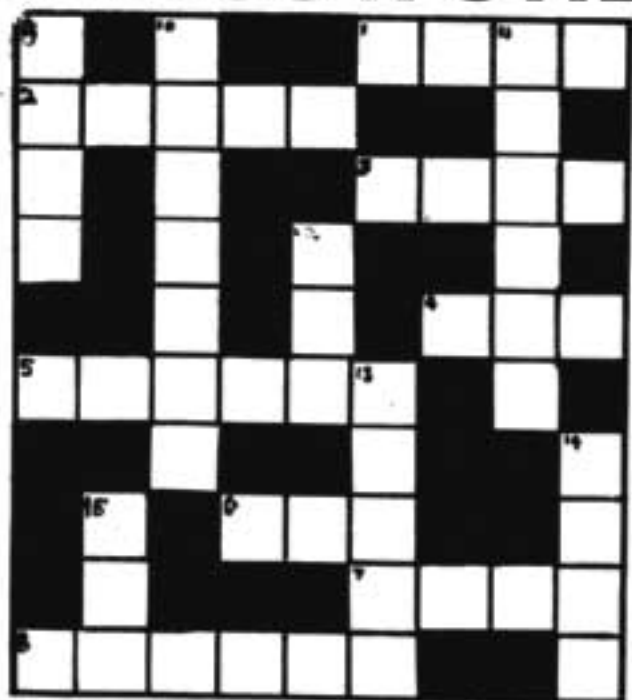
Ongoing resistance to forced removals, the low polls in elections for new community councils earlier this year, and the continuing calls for councillors to resign is a clear statement of rejection.

Nothing short of an equal say in an undivided South Africa is what the people want.

The united stand being taken by the Indian and coloured communities, shown through large attendances at mass meetings and thousands of signatures for the UDF's Million Signature Campaign, is clear identification with this demand.

Such united action will no doubt be taken even further as we approach the elections, and a massive boycott of the elections will confirm our determination to build a new South Africa. A united South Africa where all shall live as equals in peace and harmony.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- The book reviewed in this edition of Speak is called State of
- Your community newspaper
- The cost of rent, food and transport these days is very
- Gone up from 7% to 10%
- and safety is becoming an issue many workers are taking up through their unions
- Abbreviation for a residents association in the Vaal area
- This civic association demonstrated at a feast organised by the Evaton Town Council
- Scooter driving is very dangerous and can result in an

DOWN

- Abbreviation for a national women's organisation
- Valspan is faced with forced
- In this month, elections for coloureds and Indians will be held
- Even though the women's charter was written 30 years ago, not a single demand has been
- We all know of the feeling and 'stuffy head' that tells us we are getting flu.
- buying is one way of getting more out of your money
- There was for everyone at the JAG evening



Share your ideas, comments and suggestions. Write to us at: Speak In P.O. Box 261677 Excom Johannesburg 2023

Junior partners of apartheid

DO the elections mean Ja or Nee or Ja-Nee?

So much is being said by the papers about the elections. Are these elections to endorse the November 2 referendum or something different?

For those who are supposed to be going to the polls, it's a matter of going to the ballot box or bullet box. The elections will be meaning a lot to our Indian and Coloured brothers and sisters. The elections will mean that Indians and Coloureds will not only be conscripted into the fascist army but will be saying to us ('Africans') that 'you are a problem, sort yourselves out'.

It will mean that they say to us that we must starve in the homelands; that our education should be inferior; we must not have a share in the economy; that no houses must be built in the townships.

It means they are supporting the uprooting of people from their homes and the shooting of more Saul Mkhizes, and of course ensuring that Namibia does not become independent.

The elections mean that Indians and coloureds will be junior partners in this unholy company.

Whether a person votes for x or y or x/y it won't mean anything except that Botha and Malan will still be controlling the government and the economy.

Those who are standing as candidates must accept

the consequences. We are confident the majority of Indian and coloured people will not be fooled into voting. Don't vote Katlehong

Any change must include the majority

Dear Speak WE have just a few weeks left before the Indians and coloureds will be given an opportunity to vote in the grand elections, so generously provided to us by the Prime Minister.

Hey bravo! It's election time - make way for the clowns - the circus has begun! We have a host of clowns who find the circus profession a very secure and well paid vocation.

Grand turnout for Azaso

ABOUT 1 000 delegates and observers from 20 universities, technikons and colleges attended the 4th Annual Congress of the Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso).

The spirited gathering held four days of discussion on the Government's new admissions policy, the placing of Fort Hare under Ciskei control, the granting of 'autonomy' to the University of Durban-Westville and University of the Western Cape, and the possible placing of these campuses under 'Indian and coloured parliaments'.

Azaso president, Tiego Moseneke, said the main area of struggle for a student organisation is education.

'We however know that our demand for a non-racial and democratic education system will never be met in this unjust order. This therefore necessitates our consistent participation in the broader struggle of our people.'

Open sessions at the Congress provided delegates and

observers with talks by an impressive list of speakers.

No venues for Katlehong youth

IT is an uphill battle for the youth of Katlehong. But despite many attempts by the authorities to deter them, they have come together and formed the Katlehong Youth League Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee was elected at a symposium held at the end of April. About 200 people attended the symposium.

The organisers of the symposium struggled to find a venue. After months of being turned down by most church ministers, the NG Kerk agreed to let them use their church hall.

The Steering Committee was mandated by the meeting to draw up a constitution to look into getting a 'home' for the organisation.

A report back meeting was held in a disused and broken down creche. It was obtained from a youth club who was using it temporarily and who were keen to work with the Katlehong Youth Steering Committee.

However the creche is owned by the East



Rand Administration Board. They got to hear of the meeting and officials questioned members of the youth club. The youth club was too scared to let the Steering Committee use their venue again.

A second meeting planned by the Katlehong Youth League was thus unable to take place because they could not find a venue.

'We believe that the security police are intimidating church ministers to refuse us the use of their church halls,' a member of the Steering Committee said.

For my part, I feel that it is a futile exercise to vote in the elections.

Firstly, with the given ratio of 4 whites, 2 coloureds and 1 Indian, it is blatantly clear that the clowns cannot produce equality in parliament.

Secondly, the African people, who form the largest section of our population are totally excluded. It's as if the great magician, P.W. simply made them disappear with his magic wand.

We who live outside the circus know very well that 20 million African people do indeed exist. So, if we are looking for a solution to the present apartheid system, then any change must include the majority of the people.

Let us stand together and refuse to allow P.W. to divide us. Let us tell him that we will not accept his generous offerings unless he extends to all the people of South Africa complete and unqualified equality.

J. Meyer
Eldorado Park

Zola Budd South Africa's ticket?

SHE is only 18 years old. A natural athlete. She is a picture of innocence. In just a few months she has become the wonder of the athletics world.

So why is there such a

big fuss over Zola Budd?

The problem is that she was born in South Africa, has grown up in this country where she was given all the chances to become a great athlete - a chance that has been denied to millions of other children because they were not born white.

It is precisely because of this that South Africa is barred, from the Olympics and major international sport like cricket and soccer.

The message of the world is clear - get rid of Apartheid, and South Africa will be re-admitted to international sport.

Because of South Africa's isolation it has tried to get into international sport through the backdoor.

The Greater London Council has disputed the image of 'an innocent young girl who is only interested in running', because there is an orchestrated and deliberate strategy designed to bring South Africa out of its isolation.

The sporting isolation of South Africa has served well the interests of the majority of this country's people.

Denounce Apartheid if you are not part of this Government's strategy Zola. If you are, then I am afraid our sympathy must lie with a far greater cause - the lives of millions in our country.

Sportsmen Benoni

LYL launch new paper

THE Lenasia Youth League has stopped publication of its newsletter, contact, and has launched a youth newspaper, The Young Leader.

The two issues of the newspaper produced to date have been well received by the youth of Lenasia.

The Young Leader is distributed door to door, on sports fields and at cultural activities.

A spokesperson for the Youth League said there were many reasons for doing away with contact.

'Since the Youth League was formed in 1982, the organisation has gained tremendous momentum and popularity.'

'To be able to reach out to youth broadly, it was necessary to publish a newspaper, and not just a newsletter like contact which was aimed primarily at scholars.'

The last issue of The Young Leader carried articles on the Government's new constitution and called on young people to boycott the August elections.

Dead body neglected by police

IN A letter to the City Council the Westbury Women's Group responded angrily to the way in which a rape and murder case in the area was

handled.

The Women's Group said:

● Townships are neglected and built in a way which allows for perfect opportunities to attack innocent people.

● The police asked onlookers who had gathered in the afternoon to disperse. Despite people leaving peacefully a police dog was unleashed and a woman was seriously bitten.

● Although the murder was reported to the police early that morning, the dead woman's body was only removed at 8pm that night, after many people, including children had to pass by.

● The local superintendent dismissed residents' concerns and refused to see a representative of the Women's Group.

'Street maintenance is appalling. Street lighting is inadequate.'

'We demand that the City Council takes immediate steps to rectify this situation by clearing the bushes from this area.'

Crossword solutions

1. Fear 2. speak 3. high 4. 12. met 13. heavy 14. 10. removals 11. August 15. 8. injury 9. FSAW 7. 5. health 6. era 7. 1. fear 2. speak 3. high 4.

More and more workers demand safer working conditions

We cannot buy new lungs

HEALTH AND Safety in the workplace has become an issue many workers are taking up through their unions. About 300 000 work related accidents resulting in 2 500 deaths are reported every year. Thousands more workers become sick because of exposure to dust, chemicals, heat and noise at the workplace.

Workers are usually blamed when they suffer accidents or fall sick, and are called careless and unhygienic.

Factory owners are not willing to spend money making machinery safe or providing adequate protection for workers as this will eat into their profits.

But more and more workers are challenging this as they fight for better working conditions.

Two years ago workers from the National Union Textile Workers (NUTW) began a campaign

against Brown Lung.

Brown Lung is caused by the breathing in of cotton dust in textile factories. People suffering from the disease have difficulty breathing and are eventually left with permanently damaged lungs.

Bosses do not tell workers about Brown Lung and do not investigate to see if workers suffer from this disease.

Until 1982, only one worker in South Africa was found to have Brown Lung. The NUTW campaign soon changed this.

Workers were first told of the dangers of working in dusty areas. The union then employed its own doctor to check members.

Successful campaign

Despite strong resistance from some employers, the campaign has been very successful.

Up to 16 workers out of every 100 have been found to have signs of Brown Lung. Through union action some of these workers have been moved to less dusty areas in the factories. In the process not a single worker lost a job.

25 workers were found to have severe Brown Lung. The union claimed Workmen's Compensation for each of them. But the money they have been granted is very little and will not compensate for the damage done to their health. The union says, 'You cannot buy new lungs.'

Health and Safety agreements are now being negotiated at some of these textile factories to prevent other workers from getting this serious disease.

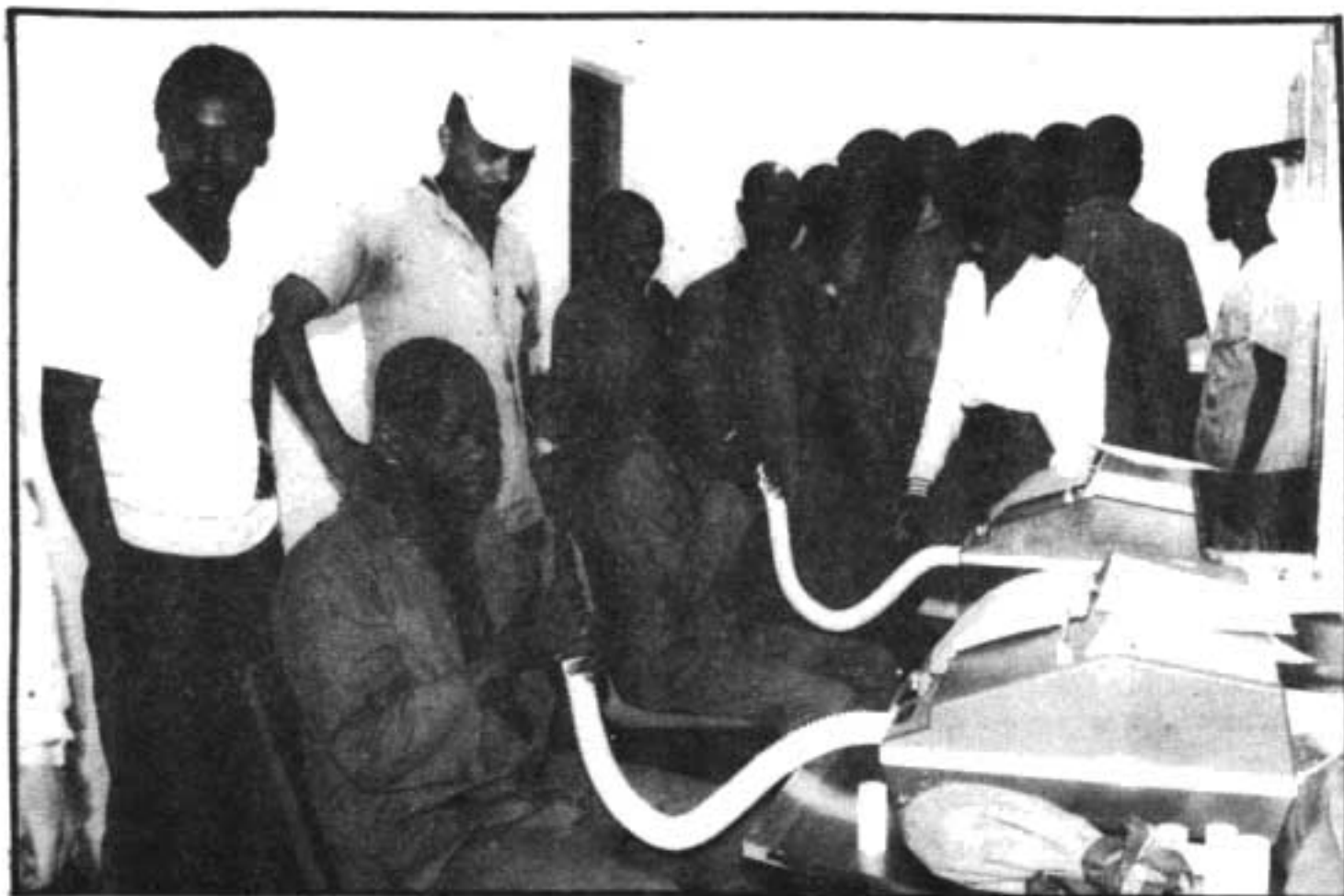
Pregnant Workers

Workers in other industries are also fighting to protect themselves from work place dangers.

The Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (CCAWUSA) has negotiated a maternity agreement with O.K. Bazaars.

Women are often fired when they fall pregnant even though they need work to support themselves and their children.

Women workers at O.K. Bazaars now get 12 months off to have their babies and to care for them. They are given the same or



Testing to see whether workers' lungs are healthy

similar job without drop in salary when they return.

Pregnant workers are also protected from doing work which is dangerous for their pregnancy.

Pregnant workers are also protected from doing work which is dangerous for their pregnancy.

Mine Deaths

Deaths and injury are constant threats in the mines.

Health and Safety is a top priority for the National Union of

Mineworkers (NUM).

'You've got to be alive or uninjured to earn the wages,' says Cyril Ramaphosa, General Secretary of the union.

Last year at Hlobane coal mine near Vryheid, one of the worst mining disasters in South African history occurred.

A methane gas explosion killed 68 miners and injured many others.

For the first time ever, black mineworkers participated in the inquiry following the disaster.

New law

However while workers have been organising and educating themselves, the Government and bosses have been working together to prevent Health and Safety becoming an issue workers can take up on the shop floor.

A new law, the Machinery and Occupational Safety Act (1983), is soon to be implemented.

It will require factories with a work force of more than 50 to set up safety committees.

Factory owners may choose the members of the committees, and these will not guarantee the interests of workers.

Workers are beginning to resist the setting up of such committees and demand that negotiation around health and safety issues remain with the established shop steward committees.

These struggles and many more show that only strong worker organisation will keep the issue of Health and Safety where it belongs, under worker control.

Face to face with Speak — the paper for the people

Speak has just held its first AGM. Speak organiser, Feisel Mamdoo, provides some insights into the workings of the newspaper.

How was Speak started?
The idea of a community newspaper was first raised at a seminar of community organisations in 1981.

At that point, ongoing community work was just developing in some areas and people were organising themselves around housing and other issues.

It was the failure of the commercial newspapers to give coverage to these struggles which prompted the need for a newspaper of our own.

And in August 1982 the first issue of Speak was produced.

What is different about Speak?

Speak is a non-profit community newspaper initiated by our communities. It does not have as its objective the mak-

ing of profit.

It exists because our communities lack a collective voice through which to talk of daily hardships and the efforts being made to overcome these hardships.

One has seen more and more people realising that this plight is not a natural accident, but arises out of conscious policies of this government.

So more and more people are coming together, forming organisations and taking up their problems in a united way.

Speak is a newspaper which encourages these efforts and the participation of our people in solving their problems. Speak promotes the unity that our people are building, not only within specific communities, but across different communities.

Speak does not claim to be an independent, objec-

tive observer. The reality in South Africa is that the vast majority of people are suffering under a system of oppression and exploitation, and we are fully a part of that reality.

Speak is thus accountable to our people and democratically controlled.

What is the role of Speak?

Speak plays an important role in keeping different communities informed of what is happening in other communities. And community or youth organisations for example, may also learn of the work of student organisations, or the issues which are of importance to trade unions.

In this way peoples' experiences are shared and perspectives broadened.

This information can even give people a sense of solidarity and confidence. What might seem to be isolated problems and struggles are linked.

Distribution of the newspaper by organisations may also provide something concrete around which more people can be drawn into the activities of an organisation.

Distribution also allows organisations to maintain contact with its broader membership and constituency.

Through this contact, to promote the organisation and to discuss its activities, and to keep in touch with the issues concerning people.

The newspaper plays an important role in documenting our day to day struggles and in reflecting on past ex-



Speak Organiser Feisel Mamdoo

periences and drawing on lessons so as to equip us for future struggles.

SPEAK

How does Speak work?

People — in our communities, factories, schools — have formed organisations to take up their problems and represent their interests. It is through these organisations that Speak is directed and controlled — its work carried out, its policies determined.

All these organisations come together once a year, and once after every three issues, to discuss the progress of the newspaper, assess past issues, consider problems the project may be experiencing and discuss any other business which may be important.

On a more frequent basis, this control is ex-

ercised by an Executive Committee which carries out the mandate of organisations.

Speak works in a way which allows for maximum possible participation.

News articles, features, suggestions, all come from people in the community. People write about what is important to them.

The paper is then produced and distributed by organisations.

One can see that Speak's life-blood is the community. Without having its base in the community the community newspaper can't survive.

SPEAK
How would you assess the development of Speak?

Speak's development needs perhaps to be assessed at two levels.

At one level we must look at the extent to which Speak is regularly produced and in a way which is most accessible to its readership.

This refers to the level of internal organisation in Speak, its resources and skills.

At the other level we need to assess Speak in terms of the number of people it reaches, its popularity and usefulness to organisations.

As a young project, we have done fairly well in producing eight issues with limited resources.

The readability and presentation of the paper is good, as organisations felt in a questionnaire we carried out.

However, for the paper to play a more meaningful role, it will need to come out much more regularly.

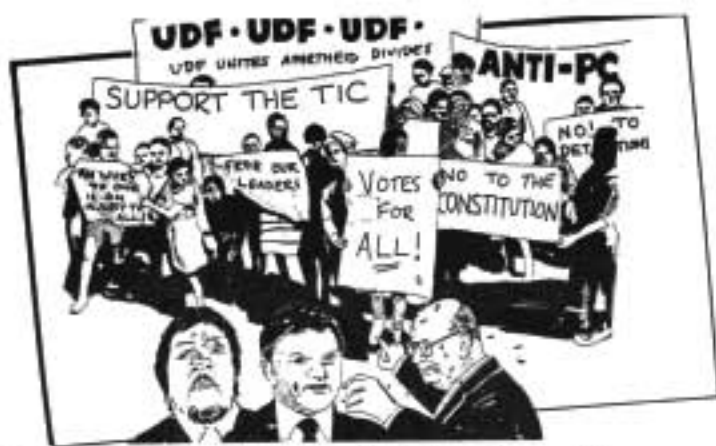
With a circulation of 40 000 presently, the newspaper is obviously not as well known as the established press. But in some areas it is very well known, and liked.

Organisations have found the newspaper to be informative, and through ongoing discussion, are considering ways of more fully integrating it into their work.

Producing Speak for just over a year has taught us a lot. Through this experience we have learned what it takes to produce a community newspaper — what production of a community newspaper demands.

This experience has left us with a sound basis on which to build.

Speak's first AGM and the process leading up to it, helped in consolidating this experience and opening up fresh avenues for further development.



The same old stories

THE Government has never been successful in forcing people to accept dummy bodies. Barely eight months ago, African people were called on by the Government to vote for new and supposedly more powerful town and village councils. These new bodies were meant to be capable of representing the interests of township residents. Yet despite all the promises the election candidates made, the people were not fooled. Not more than 90 percent of the people nationwide voted for these new councils. They heeded the call of the United Democratic Front and democratic civic organisations to reject these bodies as powerless and undemocratic.

And now — eight months later — for anybody who may have had any doubts — they are proving to be as ineffective as people believed they would be. Most town and village councils have not only been able to carry out their election promises, they have also gone back on their word. The election candidates — almost without exception — promised to do something about the high rents. Yet rent increases have once more been announced for most townships. In Daveyton the rents have been increased by 200 percent sparking off one of the biggest meetings ever held on the East Rand. High on the list of demands at the meeting was that the entire

Daveyton Town Council should resign as they failed to represent the residents of Daveyton. Speaking at the meeting, Mr G Ndlovu from the Tembisa Civic Association said that Pretoria was still dictating terms to the councils and condemned the Local Authorities Act as meaningless and useless. Tembisa has also been hit by a rent increase, as has Attaridgeville, Saulsville and Kagiso. In Kagiso, the village council is still awaiting ministerial approval for a massive R14 hike in service charges. When it comes through it will be backdated to July 1984, meaning people can expect huge bills in the near future. Nor are the new bodies being any easier on residents with rent arrears. In Mohlakeng more than 200 families, among them pensioners, were arrested by the now called — West Rand Development Board. In the face of thousands of complaints about high electricity bills in Soweto, the Soweto Town Council was reluctant to increase the R5 electricity levy to R17. Yet the councillors agreed to increase water tariffs by R2,15. One or two more naive councillors are attempting to wage a battle from within. All indications are that they are unsuccessful. In Tembisa, when a councillor protested about the proposed rent hike and even called a public meeting, he was brought to task at a closed meeting of the council.

...share and share alike...

All issue close to the heart of many thousands of people is that of conscription into the South African Defence Force. Signs are that one of the roles expected of the new tricameral Parliament is to conscript Indians and coloureds. Some parties fielding candidates have even supported the bill for conscription. Mr. Charles Julius of the Reformed Freedom Party actually went to see the Government to offer the services of coloured men in defence of the border. He said, 'with South Africa now prepared to share power, my party believes that we should share and share alike in everything, including defence of the country's borders.' Mr Poovalingam of the Solidarity Party has visited the border at the invitation of the SADF and now talks of 'our boys on the border'.

Dynamite from the Raj

'We have the dynamite to release to the public when the election campaign heats up,' so said Mr A Rajbansal of the National People's Party a few months ago. Now with elections just around the corner, Mr Rajbansal has put forward the following reason why people should vote for him. 'The NPP leadership got non-white jockeys approved to non-white bookmakers in business.' Real dynamite, Mr Rajbansal — real dynamite!

Why thousands do not support apartheid elections

What's the use of voting. Everything is still the same. We're old, we didn't go to school, we're not educated, but we've got the common sense to know that everything is still the same. In fact it's worse now. Mrs Williams Westbury

I am very sad. How can the Government leave out the majority? This constitution will lead to chaos because the Africans realise that the Government is trying to divide all the Black people. The Africans regard the Indians and coloureds as their own brothers and sisters. But now the Government wants them to feel closer to the Whites. Mr Aagripta Kubbhaka Alexandra

A giant leap in the wrong direction



Government supporters say

The constitution brings about change for the better, it is a step in the right direction.

The people's leaders say..

There is no fundamental change, only an adjustment of the same system. While the Government is talking of change and a better deal, it is tightening the screws on the people. Its new housing policy, the rise in GST, a host of increases on essentials, will severely affect the people, and working people in particular. The Government is creating a false impression of reform. It will open a beach here, a CBD there, and even widen the terms of reference of the select committee looking into the Mixed Marriages Act — all dangle as carrots in an attempt to woo sections of our people into the white laager. But even some of these so-called concessions are a disguise to increase the burden on our people. More people — the so-called illegal tenants in white areas — will be adversely affected by the provisions of the Strydom Committee which investigated the Group Areas Act, than those that may benefit by the possible opening of a few CBD's. And if there has been any change, then it is the result, not of the Government's good heart, but because of years of struggle by our people. Rev Frank Chikane United Democratic Front

Government supporters say

The people's leaders say...

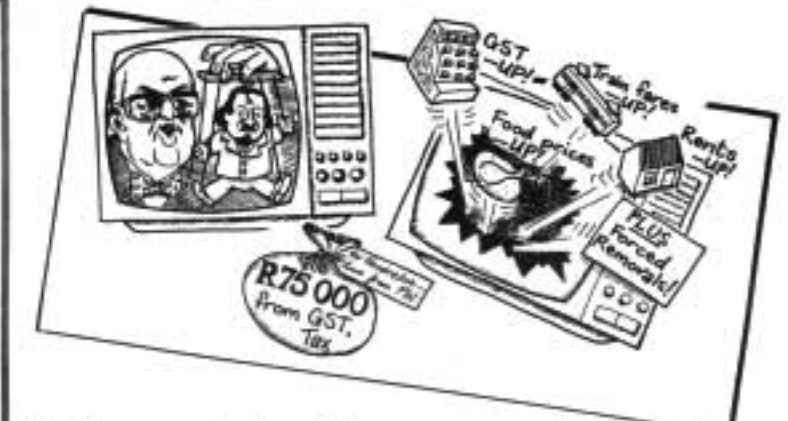
Our alternatives of building non-violent resistance to the violence of the system cannot be morally challenged. Our opponents have labelled us intimidators. But their acceptance of the tricameral Parliament is a treaty with those who have wrought so much of abuse on millions. The choice is whether we march in the armies of Apartheid violence or mobilise for peaceful solutions. Through the ballot box of the tricameral Parliament we do not want to become the custodians of the bullets that flow from Apartheid. The inherent conflicts of our society is not addressed by the new constitution. Rather it makes us more vulnerable to the devastation



Ek is 78 jaar oud. Van daer of het my voorvaders niks gekry nie — wat sal ons nou kry. Ons sal nooit iets goeds vanaf die Nasionale kry nie. Hendrickse noum myself 'n predikant. Hoe gaan sy voor die Here staan en so wat by vir die mense gedoen het. Hulle verkoop die mense. Mr Ghundi Eldorado Park



I'll never vote. I don't want to stay in Houghton, that's what Rajbansal and Mayet are fighting for. They're fighting for their own pockets. I want equal rights. Everything else doesn't matter. It's the same as the LMC and the SAIC which the people rejected a long time ago. Leave the Africans out and it will never work. Mr Ebrahim Moosa Lenasia



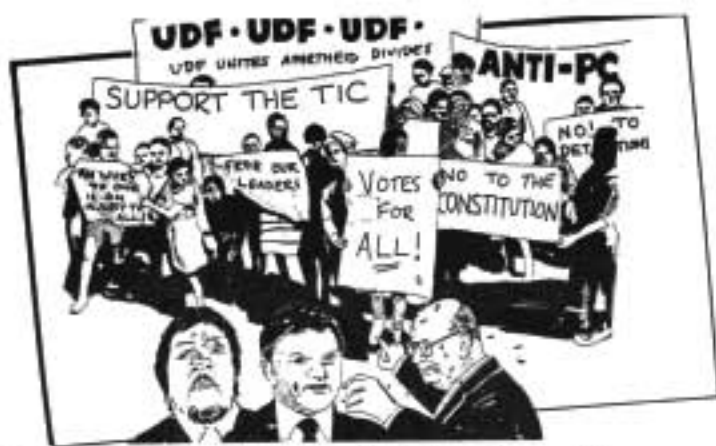
Big chiefs speak with forked tongue

MOST candidates offering themselves for election to the Indian and coloured chambers of parliament are people who have long been rejected as ineffective puppets. Those who have not been nominated, have either formed their own parties or indicated their intention to stand as independents. It seems some of them want to loose out on piece of the pie. And a fat piece it will be for those who manage to persuade enough of their relatives, friends and even clients to vote for them. Behind all the big talk of change from within, a better deal, etc. etc. people question the intentions of candidates as they abandon one party for another. Are candidates not more motivated by an eagerness to make some bucks rather than serving the interests of the community? And the bucks are attractive. If candidates are elected: ● their basic salary will be about R40 000 per year. For a minister it is as high as R75 000. ● they can travel virtually free around the country. ● they are eligible for large tax concessions. ● they are entitled to free houses. Roumor has it that the Government is very concerned about the political experience of many of the candidates conducting election campaigns. While the Labour Party has been running 'political strategy seminars' for its members, other parties have not been so lucky. The LP seminars are being organised by Communist, a Public Relations firm, who some believe not so coincidentally has directors closely associated with the Nationalist Party. Communist has also been approached to run the Labour Party campaign and, it was reported in a Sunday paper, Communist is raising money for the party from Nationalist businessmen. In addition, Communist's managing director is writing a book on the life of Alan Hendrickse which is timed to come out on the eve of the elections. All the media, Government propaganda, election campaigning and promises are not going to turn wilrots into leaders. The people putting themselves forward as candidates have never been popular. More often than not they have a long history of acting against the people's interests in Government bodies like the SAIC, CRC and Management Committees. These are hardly the people who are going to achieve gains for the community through the tricameral parliament, let alone have the power to force Botha to move away from Apartheid. The community does not believe people who are alleged to be involved in housing scandals. Salaam Mayet has constantly been promising houses to people. He eventually persuaded the white local authorities to give over Reisswood to Indian people. Whites did not want to live there any longer because the land on which the houses were built was unstable. Yet Mayet thought it fit enough for Indians. It was even more fitting, it is alleged, to buy many of the houses and sell them at a tremendous profit to families in desperate need for accommodation. In Laudium, Boetie Abranjee is allegedly behind a housing scandal where plots were not allocated according to the waiting list. Abranjee also owns a newspaper which is distributed in the area. A recent article threatened that people who put up powers can be shot. Dennis Wilby of the Lenasia Management Committee name also comes up often when people talk about unfair allocation of plots. In Saldanha Bay, a Labour Party leader, Abe Williams, owns

This constitution is doomed to fail. It won't solve any problems. It is just one of the strategies to divide people. They want Indian and coloured people to act as a buffer between the Whites and the Africans. Mr Linda Maphisa Soweto



The whole new deal is not acceptable. Give the people what they want. The Government is forcing their plans down our throats. We can only stand together. Mr Jimmy Jones Eldorado Park



The same old stories

THE Government has never been successful in forcing people to accept dummy bodies. Barely eight months ago, African people were called on by the Government to vote for new and supposedly more powerful town and village councils. These new bodies were meant to be capable of representing the interests of township residents. Yet despite all the promises the election candidates made, the people were not fooled. Not more than 90 percent of the people nationwide voted for these new councils. They heeded the call of the United Democratic Front and democratic civic organisations to reject these bodies as powerless and undemocratic.

And now — eight months later — for anybody who may have had any doubts — they are proving to be as ineffective as people believed they would be. Most town and village councils have not only been able to carry out their election promises, they have also gone back on their word. The election candidates — almost without exception — promised to do something about the high rents. Yet rent increases have once more been announced for most townships. In Daveyton the rents have been increased by 200 percent sparking off one of the biggest meetings ever held on the East Rand. High on the list of demands at the meeting was that the entire

Daveyton Town Council should resign as they failed to represent the residents of Daveyton. Speaking at the meeting, Mr G Ndlovu from the Tembisa Civic Association said that Pretoria was still dictating terms to the councils and condemned the Local Authorities Act as meaningless and useless. Tembisa has also been hit by a rent increase, as has Attaridgeville, Saulsville and Kagiso. In Kagiso, the village council is still awaiting ministerial approval for a massive R14 hike in service charges. When it comes through it will be backdated to July 1984, meaning people can expect huge bills in the near future. Nor are the new bodies being any easier on residents with rent arrears. In Mohlakeng more than 200 families, among them pensioners, were arrested by the now called — West Rand Development Board. In the face of thousands of complaints about high electricity bills in Soweto, the Soweto Town Council was reluctant to increase the R5 electricity levy to R17. Yet the councillors agreed to increase water tariffs by R2,15. One or two more naive councillors are attempting to wage a battle from within. All indications are that they are unsuccessful. In Tembisa, when a councillor protested about the proposed rent hike and even called a public meeting, he was brought to task at a closed meeting of the council.

...share and share alike...

All issue close to the heart of many thousands of people is that of conscription into the South African Defence Force. Signs are that one of the roles expected of the new tricameral Parliament is to conscript Indians and coloureds. Some parties fielding candidates have even supported the bill for conscription. Mr. Charles Julius of the Reformed Freedom Party actually went to see the Government to offer the services of coloured men in defence of the border. He said, 'with South Africa now prepared to share power, my party believes that we should share and share alike in everything, including defence of the country's borders.' Mr Poovalingam of the Solidarity Party has visited the border at the invitation of the SADF and now talks of 'our boys on the border'.

Dynamite from the Raj

'We have the dynamite to release to the public when the election campaign heats up,' so said Mr A Rajbansal of the National People's Party a few months ago. Now with elections just around the corner, Mr Rajbansal has put forward the following reason why people should vote for him. 'The NPP leadership got non-white jockeys approved to non-white bookmakers in business.' Real dynamite, Mr Rajbansal — real dynamite!

Why thousands do not support apartheid elections

What's the use of voting. Everything is still the same. We're old, we didn't go to school, we're not educated, but we've got the common sense to know that everything is still the same. In fact it's worse now.

Mrs Williams Westbury

I am very sad. How can the Government leave out the majority? This constitution will lead to chaos because the Africans realise that the Government is trying to divide all the Black people. The Africans regard the Indians and coloureds as their own brothers and sisters. But now the Government wants them to feel closer to the Whites.

Mr Aagripta Kubbhaka Alexandra

Ek is 78 jaar oud. Van daer of het my voorvaders niks gekry nie — wat sal ons nou kry. Ons sal nooit iets goeds vanaf die Nasionale kry nie. Handbolske noum myself 'n predikant. Hoe gaan sy voor die Here staan en so wat by vir die mense gedoen het. Hulle verkoop die mense.

Mr Ghundi Eldorado Park

I'll never vote. I don't want to stay in Houghton, that's what Rajbansal and Mayet are fighting for. They're fighting for their own pockets. I want equal rights. Everything else doesn't matter. It's the same as the LMC and the SAIC which the people rejected a long time ago. Leave the Africans out and it will never work.

Mr Ebrahim Moosa Lenasia

This constitution is doomed to fail. It won't solve any problems. It is just one of the strategies to divide people. They want Indian and coloured people to act as a buffer between the Whites and the Africans.

Mr Linda Maphisa Soweto

The whole new deal is not acceptable. Give the people what they want. The Government is forcing their plans down our throats. We can only stand together.

Mr Jimmy Jones Eldorado Park

A giant leap in the wrong direction



Government supporters say

The constitution brings about change for the better, it is a step in the right direction.

The people's leaders say..

There is no fundamental change, only an adjustment of the same system. While the Government is talking of change and a better deal, it is tightening the screws on the people. Its new housing policy, the rise in GST, a host of increases on essentials, will severely affect the people, and working people in particular. The Government is creating a false impression of reform. It will open a beach here, a CBD there, and even widen the terms of reference of the select committee looking into the Mixed Marriages Act — all dangle as carrots in an attempt to woo sections of our people into the white laager. But even some of these so-called concessions are a disguise to increase the burden on our people. More people — the so-called illegal tenants in white areas — will be adversely affected by the provisions of the Strydom Committee which investigated the Group Areas Act, than those that may benefit by the possible opening of a few CBD's. And if there has been any change, then it is the result, not of the Government's good heart, but because of years of struggle by our people.

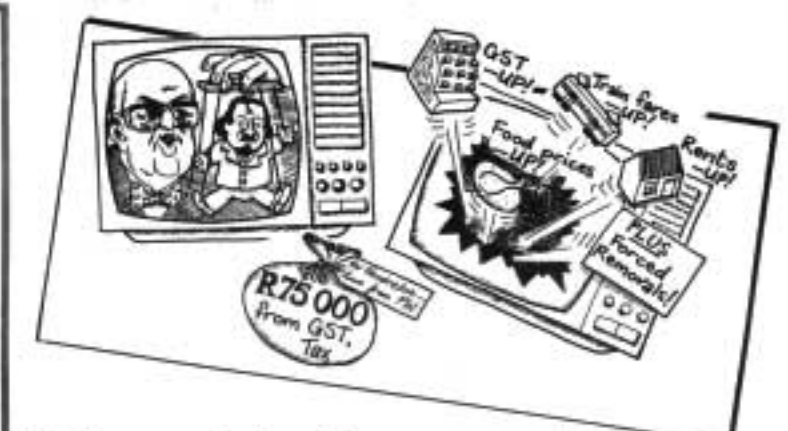
Rev Frank Chikane United Democratic Front

Government supporters say

To reject the constitution is to choose violence and chaos.

The people's leaders say...

Our alternatives of building non-violent resistance to the violence of the system cannot be morally challenged. Our opponents have labelled us intimidators. But their acceptance of the tricameral Parliament is a treaty with those who have wrought so much of abuse on millions. The choice is whether we march in the armies of Apartheid violence or mobilise for peaceful solutions. Through the ballot box of the tricameral Parliament we do not want to become the custodians of the bullets that flow from Apartheid. The inherent conflicts of our society is not addressed by the new constitution. Rather it makes us more vulnerable to the devastation



Big chiefs speak with forked tongue

MOST candidates offering themselves for election to the Indian and coloured chambers of parliament are people who have long been rejected as ineffective puppets. Those who have not been nominated, have either formed their own parties or indicated their intention to stand as independents. It seems some of them want to loose out on piece of the pie. And a fat piece it will be for those who manage to persuade enough of their relatives, friends and even clients to vote for them. Behind all the big talk of change from within, a better deal, etc. etc. people question the intentions of candidates as they abandon one party for another. Are candidates not more motivated by an eagerness to make some bucks rather than serving the interests of the community? And the bucks are attractive. If candidates are elected: their basic salary will be about R40 000 per year. For a minister it is as high as R75 000. They can travel virtually free around the country. They are eligible for large tax concessions. They are entitled to free houses. Rumor has it that the Government is very concerned about the political experience of many of the candidates conducting election campaigns. While the Labour Party has been running 'political strategy seminars' for its members, other parties have not been so lucky. The LP seminars are being organised by Communist, a Public Relations firm, who some believe not so coincidentally has directors closely associated with the Nationalist Party. Communist has also been approached to run the Labour Party campaign and, it was reported in a Sunday paper, Communist is raising money for the party from Nationalist businessmen. In addition, Communist's managing director is writing a book on the life of Alan Hendrickse which is timed to come out on the eve of the elections. All the media, Government propaganda, election campaigning and promises are not going to turn wilrots into leaders. The people putting themselves forward as candidates have never been popular. More often than not they have a long history of acting against the people's interests in Government bodies like the SAIC, CRC and Management Committees. These are hardly the people who are going to achieve gains for the community through the tricameral parliament, let alone have the power to force Botha to move away from Apartheid. The community does not believe people who are alleged to be involved in housing scandals. Salaam Mayet has constantly been promising houses to people. He eventually persuaded the white local authorities to give over Reisswood to Indian people. Whites did not want to live there any longer because the land on which the houses were built was unstable. Yet Mayet thought it fit enough for Indians. It was even more fitting, it is alleged, to buy many of the houses and sell them at a tremendous profit to families in desperate need for accommodation. In Laudium, Boetie Abramjee is allegedly behind a housing scandal where plots were not allocated according to the waiting list. Abramjee also owns a newspaper which is distributed in the area. A recent article threatened that people who put up powers can be shot. Dennis Nkay of the Lenasia Management Committee name also comes up often when people talk about unfair allocation of plots. In Saldanha Bay, a Labour Party leader, Abe Williams, owns

Government supporters say

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THOUSANDS of people make a living as scooter drivers. Many spend up to eight hours a day on their bikes, darting in and out of traffic under all weather conditions.

Working to tight schedules, the drivers run the risk of traffic fines if they drive too fast, but if they don't their bosses shout at them for being late.

Under the best of conditions, bike driving is not safe. It is all the more dangerous when one is constantly driving for long hours under pressure. And more so when one's boss does not care about keeping the bikes in good condition.

Some drivers call their bikes 'coffins on two wheels'.

It was the anger about the number of accidents experienced and the unsympathetic attitude of bosses that first brought scooter drivers together in Johannesburg in 1981.

Hundreds attended a meeting held in a Johannesburg park and the Johannesburg Scooter Drivers Association was formed. It has since grown and in 1983 became a union to more effectively take up the demands of scooter drivers and fight for better working

conditions.

The South African Scooter Drivers Union (Sasdu) attracted many members and now has area committees in Randburg, Germiston, Johannesburg, Benoni, Pretoria, Wynberg and Sandton.

'Ask any scooter driver and they will have heard of Sasdu,' Lucky Mhlayivana, chairperson of the union said.

Many drivers come to the union with complaints about low wages, no safety clothing, unroadworthy bikes and no insurance or sick pay in the event of an accident.

The union explains to workers their rights and takes up complaints with their bosses.

One member, for example, was involved in an accident. When he returned to work after recovering from an injury, he was blamed for the accident and dismissed on the grounds that he had bad eyesight.

The union was not going to allow his boss to get away with this. They suggested the member have his eyesight checked at St. John's Eye Hospital.

The hospital said his sight was perfect for scooter driving. The union wrote to his boss

We call our bikes 'Coffins on two wheels'

...drivers demand...!

SCOOTER driving is a very dangerous job Sasdu says. They have drawn up a list of basic demands for all scooter drivers to ensure they are adequately protected.

●All scooter drivers must be insured.

Many drivers fear accidents where they may lose their lives or become permanently disabled. If bosses take out life insurance policies for their drivers, at least they and their families will have some money in difficult times.

●All scooter drivers must be on medical aid.

While scooter drivers can get Workmen's Compensation money from the Government if they are involved in an accident, Workmen's Compensation does not cover them for all the sicknesses they get from scooter driving. Drivers easily catch colds on rainy days and often have lung problems because of car fumes and the dusty air. Others suffer kidney problems and rheumatism from sitting on their bikes for long hours.

demanding he be reinstated. A few days later he was.

In another case, a union member was ticketed by a traffic officer for defective

●All scooter drivers must be supplied with safety clothing

Sasdu demands all drivers be given good quality helmets, hand gloves, gum boots, rain suits and kidney belts. They also demand bikes be fitted with visors and windshields.

●Scooter bikes must be roadworthy.

Sasdu says they hear innumerable stories of drivers having accidents because of smooth tyres or defective brakes. Bosses' reluctance to spend money on scooter bikes, cost many scooter drivers their lives.

●Scooter drivers must not be forced to pay traffic fines

When drivers get traffic fines, it is usually not the result of their personal negligence, says Sasdu.

They get fines because:

- their bikes are unroadworthy
- they are speeding to deliver an urgent parcel
- they are parked illegally because there is inadequate parking and they are in a hurry.

brakes and smooth tyres. His boss insisted he pay, although it is the boss's responsibility to care for bikes. After a letter from the union, the boss agreed to pay.

Sasdu also protects its members from being ripped off by unscrupulous lawyers. They say lawyers 'patrol hospitals' asking doctors to refer acci-



dent cases to them.

'These lawyers then take up the cases and take the lion's share of the third party insurance,' says Lucky Mhlayivana.

'We refer our members to good lawyers who charge reasonable rates,' he said.

'Sometimes union members even write to us to come and visit them in hospital to help them fix up their Workmen's Compensation.'

Sasdu sometimes also plays a unique role as an employment bureau for scooter drivers. Union members help find jobs for other members who have been fired or have resigned. The union's reputation has spread so far that even employers and employment agencies phone them.

But Sasdu does not let employers take them for a ride. They ensure that workers for whom they find jobs, get decent wages and conditions of work.

'We are fortunate in that there is a shortage of scooter drivers,' the chairperson said. 'This puts us in a strong position to demand better conditions.'

Scooter drivers work everywhere. Air freight companies, travel agencies, drug com-

panies, offices and banks. Scooter drivers are required to collect and deliver urgent parcels and letters.

But not all drivers are messengers and delivery men. Some have even riskier work, like collecting hire purchase money.

One furniture store in Johannesburg employs 400 drivers to collect hire purchase instalments.

These drivers work in constant fear of being beaten up by people who do not want to pay.

Many have to work at night when people are at home. In the townships, roads are bad and there are no street lights. Not only are the chances of having an accident greater, but so are the chances of being attacked and robbed.

To meet these needs of the growing membership, the union has three organisers — Vusi Nkomo, Reginald Nkosi and Vusi Luvuno. The chairperson is Lucky Mhlayivana and Stanley Moutloatse is the secretary.

Anybody interested in joining Sasdu can contact the union at 25 Fox Street on the 2nd floor of Chancellor House, or phone 836-7117.

SPEAK spoke to some scooter drivers about their conditions at work, the problems they face and why they decided to join the South African Scooter Drivers Union.

Q: What problems do scooter drivers face?

Billie: We scooter drivers share the same problems. We have to be on our scooters the whole day, driving far distances without lunch and for a salary which is not good.

Often the bosses are not sympathetic. If you tell them that the scooter bike is not perfect and it needs a tune up, they become furious. They shout at you and complain that you ask for many things.

But we need many things. We need rain suits to protect us when it rains. Our helmets get worn out and we need to be supplied with good gloves. The gloves they give us are plastic which can't protect you during an accident.

Reginald: We do not get kidney belts to protect us. These are very important because if you don't wear

Speak interviews members of Sasdu

them, you can suffer from kidney problems. All scooter drivers should have kidney belts.

Billie: But our biggest complaint is wages. In Johannesburg the starting wage is R95 per week but it should be more because tax is more. Increments should also come closer together. We need money to save — for a rainy day.

Q: Do you fear getting involved in an accident?

Billie: Scooter driving is a very risky business and many drivers get injured and even die in accidents.

I want to request car drivers to look out for us because I have been missed many times by cars. When I have spoken to the car drivers they said they did not see me. Car drivers always say they don't see us.

Billie: Some bosses take it easy. Some dismiss you after you have been involved in an accident. Others force us to pay for the damages.

The bosses do not give us sick pay if we are injured. When you are sick they don't realise you need to eat. Very few bosses agree to medical aid schemes and life insurance for us.

Simon: Two months ago, a scooter driver from the Florida branch of my firm died during an accident. His boss shouted at him so he drove fast and had an accident.

After he died his boss started to ask where he stayed and who his wife was. They only ask these things when it is too late.

I have fallen off my bike twice and have been forced to continue working with injuries.

Q: Simon, you have recently been fired from Budget Travel in Randburg. Can you explain what happened?

Simon: I asked my manager for leave but he kept refusing. Then, last Wednesday, when I was given leave, he said I must go forever.

They told me that I have worked nicely for them, but I must not come back.

They always treated me badly. Once when my bike was broken, the manager said I broke the bike and that I must pay half. He said it is the system of the company to make the workers pay half but it is the first time that I had heard of such a thing.

So I used to take the bike home because I paid for the repairs. The manager found out and asked me why. Well, I

said I took it because I also paid for it. He accused me of pinching the bike. But how can I pinch the bike when I come to work every day?

Because I used to take the bike home, I put in R3 petrol each day. The manager said I must also pay R50 for the service. But I said I can't pay. That is the money I am supposed to feed my children with.

This is why I think they chased me away from work. I worked for Budget Travel for a year and one month. The same thing happened to the previous driver — when he asked for leave they decided to fire him.

Willie: The bosses like to keep changing workers because they can keep wages low. When they have to pay a bonus, they decide to chase you away.



Simon — fired for asking for leave

Q: How did you find out about the union?

Simon: A friend told me. I asked him where the offices were and came to find out.

Willie: I was organised at the post office. Lucky, the Sasdu chairperson, was distributing pamphlets at the General Post Office where we always park our bikes. I asked him about the union. He told me it was important to protest when the job is bad and to see that people are fairly treated.

He asked me if I knew about Workman's Compensation, sick leave, sick pay, death benefits, notice pay, UIF etc. I realised that these

were very important things and decided to join the union.

Q: How can the union help you?

Simon: I joined the union because I had problems at work about expressing my rights and making demands for protection. The union helps us to be represented.

Willie: Scooter drivers have the same problems. With unity we can look after each other. For example, if a scooter driver is stuck on the way we stop and help and share the little knowledge we have. If a scooter driver is knocked by a car we wait until the ambulance comes.

Reginald: I joined the scooter drivers union when it was an association. After I joined there was a split between those who wanted it to remain an association and those who wanted a union. I decided to opt for the union because the union helps us improve our working conditions. I did not only want to belong to a burial society. The union helps us with all our problems.

Bad conditions in Germiston

People in Asiatic Bazaar, Germiston Location, on the East Rand, have for years now lived under unbearable conditions.

Overcrowded shanties, water logged streets, and the bucket sewerage system are just some of the problems residents have to put up with.

But more and more residents are coming together to take up these issues. Recently the Housing Committee of Concern was formed and residents have been engaged in a running battle with the Germiston City Council and the area's Consultative Committee, a Government appointed body.

THE Germiston City Council has made Asiatic Bazaar a slum by refusing to maintain it for years. Roads are totally neglected, there is no drainage, and worst of all the ancient bucket sewerage system still exists.

Residents at the so-called 'Asiatic Bazaar' have been promised better houses for years. In the meantime the area has degenerated into object squalor.

'The removal of these 'shit-buckets' would turn the

stomach of any unaccustomed visitor,' one resident commented.

The buckets are first carted out and placed on the side of the streets, just a few steps away from people's front doors. There they stand until the 'Kakabali Truck' comes and takes them away.

Residents complain that buckets are often accidentally knocked over by motorists or even kicked over by trouble makers.

'The Kakabali truck arrives about two hours later and when the contents of the buckets are poured into the tank, often more spillage happens leaving an obnoxious stink hanging in the air.'

The township is grossly overcrowded. Families use every room in their houses for sleeping — even the kitchen floor — while many others

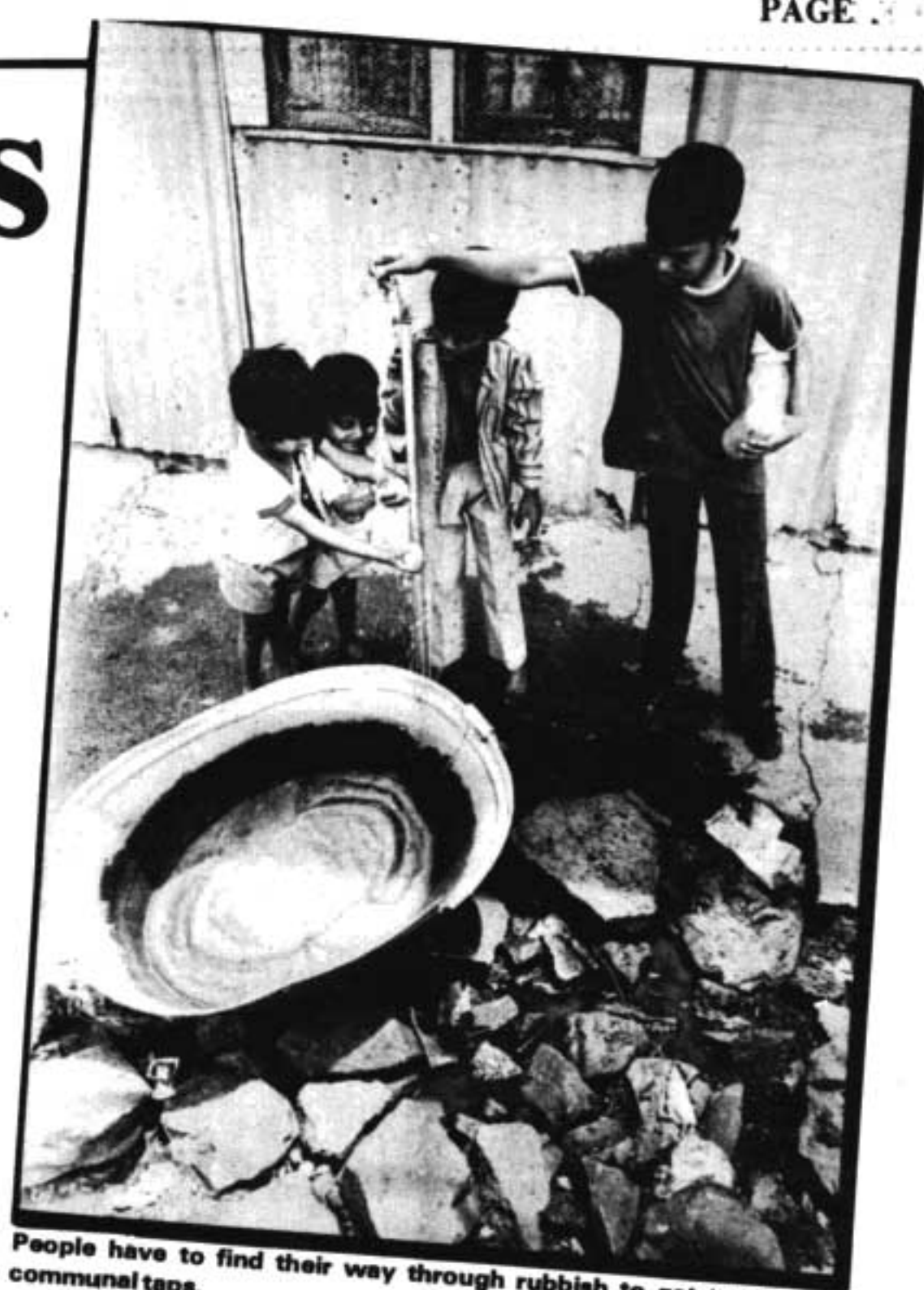
have erected shanties. Many families are forced to share a single yard with one communal toilet.

'We constantly fear that our children will get sick from this unhealthy environment.'

The streets have no gutters, so foul smelling water from bathrooms and toilets line the sides of the streets.

Tenants have become victims of unscrupulous landlords who pay a nominal R10 ground fee to the City Council but subject their tenants to rentals of up to R60 per month for a one room shanty.

When residents have called on the Germiston City Council to improve conditions in the town, they have been told that because they do not own the land and are not ratepayers, costs would have to be borne by



People have to find their way through rubbish to get to the communal taps.

the white ratepayers and therefore the area cannot be developed.

However many residents did own the land many years ago, before

it was expropriated by the City Council. 'The Council wanted to move us under the Group Areas Act. We are barred from own-

ing the land and then punished for not paying rates,' said a member of the Housing Committee of Concern.



There are no gutters, only rivers of filth down the sides of streets.

Committee of concern voices people's demands

THE Housing Committee of Concern has highlighted some of the problems residents are concerned about. These include:

Land and rentals are too high.

'We are being forcibly removed because of the Group Areas Act,' say residents. 'Thus the Government should subsidise our rents and the price of buying the land.'

Residents who earn over R451 per month have been told in a circular from the City Council they would have to arrange their own finances to buy a council house. Residents are alarmed by this since building societies will not give them loans unless they earn substantially more than R450 per month.

Residents who earn over R650 per month will not even be provided with houses—they will have to build their own and arrange their own finance.

Many residents fear how implementation of the new constitution will affect them when they move.

'Will we have to tar our own roads and build our own school,' a resident said. Under the new constitution, local authorities are meant to be self financing.

The school board has said the primary school will only move in 1986. Until then primary school children will have to travel 30 km to the Asiatic Bazaar each day.

There are no shops at Palm Ridge presently, and transport to town is also poor.

Consultative Committee too scared to meet people

The story is familiar. Once more the promises of self-appointed representatives fall through. The residents are fed up to their teeth.

HOW can members of the Consultative Committee who are incapable of managing housing in a small community of four streets, aspire to become 'National leaders of our community', asked a resident.

He reflects the feeling of most people in 'Asiatic Bazaar' township in Germiston.

At least three members of the Consultative Committee are thought to be standing for the House of Deputies in the forthcoming elections.

Residents are on the verge of being moved to new homes 30km away, and are very concerned about their future. Yet the Germiston Consultative Committee refuses to answer their basic questions.

The Consultative Committee has been cancelling meetings with residents and refuses to accept a residents' demand for a mass meeting where the move can be explained.

The Germiston City

Council has turned the area into a slum by refusing to maintain it while constantly promising decent houses.

These promises have never been met. Now, on the eve of the elections, the City Council has begun work on basic services at a place called Palm Ridge 30km away.

Palm Ridge is far from the people's places of work and not nearby rail transport. 'Yet most of us have resigned ourselves to accepting the move if only to get away from the miserable conditions in the Asiatic Bazaar,' said a resident.

The unco-operative attitude of the Germiston City Council and the Germiston Consultative Committee spurred people to come together to form a Housing Committee of Concern.

'We are very perturbed because we are getting no news about the move. Also some people made enquiries about getting bonds for the new houses we are meant to buy in Palm

Ridge and experienced many difficulties. So we decided to come together and say we are concerned,' explained a founding member of the Housing Committee of Concern.

The Committee of Concern is open to all residents who are concerned and since it began about a month ago, many people have joined.

They are demanding that the Consultative Committee and the City Council come and answer the people at a mass meeting.

A meeting called by the Consultative Committee was cancelled after an unexpectedly large number of seething residents turned up. Frightened by the large turnout, the Consultative Committee cancelled it on the pretext that the premises were too small, and that they need to get larger premises.

Another meeting was never called. Residents were instead invited in small groups to eight separate meetings — each of one hour 15

minutes long.

The community was outraged by the invitations.

'We have waited a lifetime for better homes, and we are being given a mere 1hr 15 minutes to ask when we will move, how much it will cost and so on,' read a pamphlet issued by the Housing Committee of Concern.

'We refuse to be subjected to divide and rule tactics,' it said. The pamphlet demanded a single mass meeting.

The authorities promptly cancelled the meetings — the same day in fact. And since then, despite repeated calls, they have made no attempt to call a mass meeting.

'These people cannot claim to represent us,' said the Housing Committee of Concern.

'Far from being the voice of the people it claims to be, they unashamedly conduct themselves as His Master's Voice — stifling dissent and dissatisfaction.'

'They do not convey our demands to the

City Council. They only convey excuse after excuse from the Germiston City Council to us.'

'We in the Housing Committee of Concern do not want to be like the Consultative Committee — communicating between the council and the people.'

'That is why we want a mass meeting. The council must come and meet all the people. We can't make a list of all the grievances the people have.'

'And now members of the Consultative Committee are all jumping on the parliamentary bandwagon,' one elderly resident said.

'They think they are going to fight for the community. I'm telling you it's a stepping stone for self gain,' he said referring to the perks that members of the new tricameral parliament will get.

'They also have first access to all the papers to feather their own nests,' he added. 'For example they have first option on the stands at Palm Ridge.'



Women in the rural areas have kept pace with the growth of women's organisation around the country

Fed's story goes back to the 50's

This year women all over the country are celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Federation of South Africa Women (Fedsaw).

The women's Federation began with a National Convention of Women in Johannesburg on April 17, 1954. It was felt women from different areas needed to come together under one umbrella and together strive to improve their conditions.

The National Conference adopted a 'Women's Charter' which listed the demands of women at that time. Today, not a single demand has yet been met.

The Conference was the first time women had come together in such big way. It was also the first step towards formalising an organisation which was to develop into a huge national body.

And for many women this was their first visit to Johannesburg — and probably their very first long journey away from home.

The Conference provided a break from the daily routine of work for women from the townships and factories. It enabled women to discuss the conditions they faced in the different areas they came from.

The primary demand of women at that time was the removal of all laws which made Black people suffer. And secondly they were concerned about the special problems women suffered. The Women's Charter says it all so well.

Two years later, in 1956, Fedsaw was formally launched.

Fedsaw knew that without the support of ALL the people of South Africa, freedom could never come. Fedsaw therefore strove to reach out to all women in order that they may also participate in the big, single fight for improving the lot of the people of South Africa.

The anti-pass campaign of 1956 was the biggest campaign Fedsaw undertook.

20 000 women were organised outside the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the issuing of passes to African women.

It was a national campaign, reaching out to women from every corner of South Africa.

Fedsaw also organised women around rent increases of sub-economic housing schemes in all locations. Letters were sent to all

regional affiliates calling on them to fight against the increases.

In 1957, Fedsaw worked with the Federation of South African Nurses and Midwives to oppose the Nursing Act of 1957. This Act meant that all nurses and midwives would have to take out passes in order to register in their jobs.

Two years later Fedsaw organised a very successful campaign against beerhalls in Cato Manor, Durban. Women protested against the shutting down of their own beer breweries in the townships.

In 1961 Fedsaw fought against the bread price increase. Women from the Western Cape went to the Minister of Finance to oppose the proposed bread price increase.

Fedsaw was also involved in opposing train and bus fare increases in various places.



Francis Beard — veteran women's leader

After the grim experience of Sharpeville in 1960, thousands of people were arrested and the people's organisations and leaders banned. The victims included Lilian Ngoyi and Helen Joseph — both executive members of Fedsaw. The ANC Women's League, which was affiliated to Fedsaw, was outlawed. The activities of Fedsaw were severely disrupted.

But today, 30 years on, we see the re-birth of Fedsaw through the re-emergence of women's organisations throughout the country.

Fedsaw has survived the test of time. Today, with a proud tradition behind it, it is ready for the increasing challenges facing the women of South Africa.

Nationwide this year the call has been...

WOMEN AWAKE AMAKHOSIKAZI VUKANI!

Why women organise

The need for women to be organised is as pressing as ever.

In trade unions, civic organisations and student bodies it has been stressed that no country can be completely free unless its women too are free.

Women bear the heaviest burdens in our society.

High prices, lack of creches, high rents and bad schools for their children are problems which often give women the biggest headaches. For it is women who are largely responsible for looking after their families.

And women face many problems of their own.

Taxes are heavier for married women than for other people.

Some employers are reluctant to employ women because they have to leave work when they get pregnant. This excuse is often used by employers to employ women on a temporary basis only, placing women in a very insecure position.

Women in rural areas are not allowed to come to the towns to look for work and their husbands, sons or fathers do not make enough money to send home.

It is women who are most often robbed, assaulted and raped in

unlit streets, or who are inconvenienced because of lack of transport, especially at night.

Women have come together to form organisations to take up these issues. They need to be aware of their exploitation and to see and know their rights.

Women are united by their common need — the need to struggle against the hardship they suffer as oppressed and exploited women.

Women's organisations can ensure the participation of women in the broader fight for freedom.

The voice of the women must be heard!

Getting together in

There could be no better way of honouring Women's Day on the 9th of August and the 30th anniversary of the Federation of South African Women than to build women's organisations.

All over the Transvaal — in fact all over the country — women's organisations are springing up to tackle the day to day problems women face.

Women have come together to help themselves. They have formed bulk buying schemes to ease the high cost of living, started vegetable gardens to feed their families and are teaching each other sewing in order to make a living in the face of increasing unemployment.

When faced with forced removals, eviction or high rents, women no longer remain silent. Together with their menfolk, they oppose such moves.

Forming Organisations

Recently, the Soweto Women's Group was launched.

The Vaal Women's Organisation and the Bosmont Women's Group were also officially launched at meetings this year. In Mamelodi the Zakhani Women's Group has brought women together and in Alexandra women have formed the Alexandra Women's Organisation.

In other parts of the Transvaal, women meet informally while in parts of the Northern Transvaal, women are organised in co-operatives to grow vegetables.

Through being involved in women's organisations, women can develop the confidence and



Women often take the lead on issues which affect the community

awareness to make their demands heard wherever they are: in the factories, in the homes or in the schools," said Amanda Kwadi of the Soweto Women's Group.

These organisations are organising women in many different ways but with the common goal of involving women in the fight for a better country.

Buying co-ops

Women, as mothers, struggle to feed and care for their families in the face of ever rising prices.

So some women's organisations have started buying co-operatives to help women buy more with less money. Women come

together in small groups to buy groceries in bulk and then share them out amongst themselves. Buying in bulk at big supermarkets is cheaper than each person buying separately at township shops.

Sometimes women who are not members of the women's organisation which organised the buying group, decide to join the organisation after belonging to the group and meeting women who are members.

Sewing and knitting

In such times it is becoming more difficult for women to find jobs. Many women cannot go to work because they have young

The Women's Charter

Preamble: We, the women of South Africa, wives and mothers, working women and housewives, Africans, Indians, Europeans and Coloureds, hereby declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that discriminate against us as women.

Poor and Rich: These are evils that do not need to exist. They exist because the society in which we live is divided into poor and rich, into non-European and European. They exist because there are privileges for the few, discrimination and harsh treatment for the many. The women have stood and will stand shoulder to shoulder with our menfolk in a common struggle against poverty, race and class discrimination, and the evils of the colour-bar.

Large numbers of women today are in fact the sole breadwinners and heads of their families.

A Single Society: We women do not form a society separate from the men. There is only one society, and it is made up of both men and women. As women we share the problems and anxieties of our men, and join hands with them to remove social evils and obstacles to progress.

Forever Minors: Nevertheless, the laws and practices derived from earlier and different states of society are still applied to them. They are responsible for their own person and their children. Yet the law seeks to enforce upon them the status of a minor.

Women's Lot: We women share with our menfolk the cares and anxieties imposed by poverty and its evils. As wives and mothers, it falls upon us to make small wages stretch a long way. It is we who feel the cries of our children when they are sick and hungry. It is our lot to keep and care for the homes that are too small, broken and dirty to be kept clean. We know the burden of looking after children and our land when our husbands are away in the mines, on the farms and in towns earning our daily bread.

Need for Education: We also recognise that large numbers of our women folk continue to be bound by traditional practices and conventions, and fail to realize that these have become obsolete and a brake on progress.

National Liberation: As members of the National Liberation movement and trade unions, in and through our various organisations, we march forward with our men in the struggle for liberation and the defence of the working people.

It is our intention to carry out a nation-wide programme of education that will bring home to the men and women of all national groups the realization that freedom cannot be won for any one section or for the people as a whole as long as women are kept in bondage.

Equality for Women: We resolve to struggle for the removal of laws and customs that deny African women the right to own, inherit or alienate property.

An Appeal: We appeal to all progressive organisations, to members of the great National Liberation movement, to the trade unions, and working class organisations, to the churches, educational and welfare organisations, to all progressive men and women who have the interest of our people at heart, to join with us in this great noble endeavour.

Women who labour: Thousands of African women, like Indian, Coloured and European women, are employed today in factories, homes, offices, shops, on farms and in professions such as nursing, teaching and the like. As unmarried women, widows or divorcees, they have to fend for themselves, often without assistance of the male relative. Many of them are responsible not only for their own livelihood but also that of their children.

many different ways.....



Meetings called to discuss the problems women face are well attended

children to care for. A common project in women's organisations is to teach women to sew and knit. Women can then sell what they have made to help make ends met.

Women in rural areas often make crafts to sell in the cities. In one area, women sewed uniforms for all members of their organisation. Sometimes women sew clothes and raise funds for their organisation.

One women's organisation also teaches members typing to help them get jobs.

Child minding

Many working mothers, or mothers who want to look for work, pay a lot of money to child minders to look after their children. Others leave their children in the care of people whom they do not trust, or who are too old to properly care for their children.

Women who cannot find anybody to look after their children, suffer because they cannot go out to look for work. In one area several women who

live closely by each other decided to come together and find one person to look after their children. They would then be free to work and look for work.

Such child minding schemes, or even the setting up of creches, are regarded as important projects by many women's organisations.

Helping out

With so many people barely managing to survive, women's organisations are helping people share whatever they have with others.

In one area the women collected old clothes for people in a much poorer community nearby.

In another area a women's buying co-operative donates some of their groceries to a needy family.

And in another area, the women's organisation bought plates for providing food at a big meeting they held. Now they lend these plates to families holding funerals. Because of this they are becoming very popular in the township.



Setting up creches is regarded as important projects by women's organisations

Sharing information

Faced with thousands of tasks each day, women often do not have time to read and find out about things they want to know of.

So in meetings called by women's organisations they discuss things which women otherwise would not have known about.

Some of the things discussed by women's organisations are:

- Legal rights.
 - How to raise bursaries for students.
 - How the new tax laws affect women.
 - Contraception.
- Teaching women to read and

write is also an important activity some organisations are planning.

Fund raising

Lack of money is one of the big problems facing new organisations. Yet women have not allowed themselves to be defeated or demoralised by this. Apart from paying whatever they can afford towards membership fees, they have raised money for their organisations through jumble sales, braais, and the sale of cold drinks or food at meetings and soccer matches.

Uniting with other organisations

Women in some areas have linked up with other organisa-

tions in their area to jointly fight for their rights — against issues like high rents, evictions and removals. These are issues which affect all the people in the community, so women have joined with others to strengthen the community's united stand.

In areas where organisations are campaigning against the new constitution, women are also involved — taking part in house meetings, mass meetings and joining in protests.

Getting together

As women's organisations grow, they want to share their experiences and learn from others as well as plan joint activities which can take forward their struggle as a whole.

Already over 100 women from different parts of the Transvaal came together at a Conference of Women on 31 March this year.

The theme of the conference was organising women, and speakers talked of the problems women face and what women have done, and could do, about them.

At the end of the conference, the people present formed a co-ordinating committee to help women's organisations grow with the ultimate aim of drawing all women's organisations under the umbrella of the Federation of South African Women.

Women in the Transvaal have also come together to jointly celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Women's Federation at a mass rally in Pretoria.

'The rally was an inspiration to us all to draw strength from and to organise even harder,' a member of the co-ordinating committee said.

Since the rally, the message of women's organisations has spread.

In Leandra, residents who have come together to oppose being moved, heard what women were doing in other parts of the Transvaal. They invited some women from Soweto to come and speak at one of their meetings.



Colds and Flu, has it got you?

WE all know of the heavy feeling and 'stuffy head' that tells us we are getting a cold or developing 'flu'.

Both the common cold and influenza, which is the proper name for flu, are infections caused by viruses. A virus is something like a germ.

The viruses do not stay the same, but change from time to time. Because of this, a person will get colds or flu again and again.

It is not like the measles virus, for example, which a person only gets once in life.

Winter is the usual time for getting such infections, but they are common all year round.

How does a person catch a cold or get flu?

Mucus from the nose and saliva from the mouth are full of viruses.

The air breathed, coughed or sneezed by an infected person may infect others nearby.

It is not true that colds are caused by getting wet or physically cold. However infection is more likely if the body's resistance is weak, as in chronic illness, tiredness, stress or depression.

Some people call the common cold 'flu', but this is not true. They are caused by different types of virus and the symptoms,

although similar, are not exactly the same.

What are the symptoms of the common cold?

- Headache and a stuffy feeling in the head.
- Running nose.
- Cough.
- Poor appetite.
- Normal temperature (although the person may get hot or cold) sometimes slightly raised.
- Lack of energy.

These symptoms last for about three days but it can take a week before they have disappeared.

What are the symptoms of flu?

- Headache.
- Painful muscles and back.
- High temperature, but feeling cold.
- Sweating.
- General weakness.
- Cough.
- Sneezing.

How do you treat colds and flus?

- It is usually not necessary to see a doctor.
- Go to bed and rest.
- Do not use too many blankets — the body must lose its extra heat.
- Drink a lot of liquids to replace fluids lost because of the fever.
- To bring down a very high temperature, cover the body with a wet towel or sheet.
- Painkillers help relieve symp-

toms. They also bring the temperature down. Aspirins or Paracetamol are both good. Follow the dosage directions on the box.

- Hot lemon or honey drinks may soothe throats and coughs.
- Do not smoke.
- Steam inhalation may help decongest the nasal passages.

When should one consult a doctor?

Most of the time colds and flu get better without medicines. Antibiotics are not effective against viral infections.

Occasionally, the cold can lead on to a more serious infection.

It is necessary to see a doctor if:

- The person has chronic lung disease or emphysema, heart disease or diabetes (high blood sugar).
- Green or yellow phlegm is coughed up.
- A high temperature remains for more than three days.
- Earache or a running ear develops.
- A stiff neck develops that cannot be bent forwards.

However, it is seldom that these complications develop.

How can a person prevent getting a cold or flu?

- By doing regular exercise.
- Stop smoking.
- Eating healthy food with fresh fruit and vegetables.

These may help, but colds and flu are very common. Almost everybody suffers from them.



Food is cheap in bulk

ONE way of saving money and ensuring that it goes a longer way is to buy food in bulk together with other people. Food is much cheaper if people buy it together and share it out.

In the Vaal triangle, the Vaal Women's Organisation (VWO) is setting up bulk buying schemes to help women in the organisation feed their families better.

SPEAK spoke to the Vaal Women's Organisation about bulk buying.

SPEAK: Why did you start a bulk buying scheme?

VWO: It is cheaper to buy a lot of groceries. For example if you are 12 women and you buy a dozen articles together, each article will be cheaper if you had to buy each article separately.

We also go to a big supermarket where things are cheaper than in the township.

SPEAK: How did the bulk buying scheme start?

VWO: Three of us got together and decided we wanted to buy groceries together and then share them out. Soon we grew to 17 women, but then we decided to split. Now there are six in our group and there are also other groups.

SPEAK: How does the scheme work?

VWO: We buy groceries once a month. We draw up a programme and everybody in the group has a turn to go and buy groceries. We usually go in two's.

We meet once a month and decide what to buy and discuss what we bought last month. We discuss how we can improve our buying.

During our meeting we draw up a shopping list. The women who go shopping compare prices and buy the cheaper things.

We came to a point in our meetings when we said we should not just discuss about groceries. We should think of other people — those that can not eat because they have no money. So we decided that every time

we bought groceries we would put the 'odd ones' on one side. For example if there were 15 articles in a packet and we were four, we would put three on one side. We would make a grocery parcel with the odd ones which we would donate to a needy family.

SPEAK: How much money do you spend each month?

VWO: Each person used to give R50 each month and the women who did the shopping collect the money.

At one stage we decided to do bulk buying with less money. We decided only to spend R40. We discouraged ourselves from buying anything that is not a necessity like tomato sauce. We don't buy luxuries.

SPEAK: Where do you buy your groceries?

VWO: We go to a big supermarket in town. We are thinking of going to one of the supermarkets in the township and asking them to make a deal with us. We want to tell them we are so many women and can they sell things cheaper to us.

SPEAK: How do you transport all the groceries you buy?

VWO: We ask somebody who has a van to transport us. It is sometimes a problem. We would like to make a deal with a supermarket like O.K. Bazaars because they also deliver groceries.

SPEAK: How does the bulk buying scheme fit in with the work of the Vaal Women's Organisation?

VWO: We started bulk buying about two years before the formation of the VWO.

But since we have started the VWO, we have been very keen to start bulk buying. Already a group has begun in another zone.

There are 19 women in this group who bought for the first time this month. Initially they were not members of the VWO but after they bought their groceries they decided to ask us to come and address them about the VWO. After the meeting they decided to join us.

They are planning a jumble sale to raise money for bulk buying.

UDF workshop brings civics together

CIVIC organisations from many different areas came together recently at a UDF education workshop to discuss their work.

Organisations from the Vaal, Soweto, Alexandra, the East Rand and Pretoria took part in the two days of discussion.

The workshop, organised by the UDF's education committee, involved sessions on:

- An assessment of the

anti-community councils campaign.

- The struggles of civics in African communities and how they relate to such struggles in the 'Indian and coloured areas', the rural areas, and the struggle against the new constitution.
- The relationship of civic organisations to the UDF.
- The Black Local Authorities Act.
- Organisational skills — like the setting of goals and planning.

A member of the education committee said the workshop was 'extremely valuable' for civic organisations.

'It is was good for civics to come together to learn about other civics and share their ideas, methods of work and experiences.'

A report of the workshop compiled by the education committee summarised some of the conclusions reached by the civics.

- The campaign

against the community councils was successful and involved much work — public meetings, media, house visits, placard demonstrations — but would have been more effective with more house meetings, greater access to venues, and better planning.

'In the campaign we gained experience. We politicised, people and also allowed them a chance to voice their grievances. This

boosted the civics and in some areas helped to build strong civics

'Also we formed links between different organisations. The problems is that many of these gains were not consolidated because there was no follow up,' the report says.

- The problems faced in youth organisations, civics, in rural areas, trade unions and political organisations are all linked because they are all caused by

the Government in its attempts to 'reorganise oppression'.

The only way to oppose them effectively, is to make sure our struggles are united. The struggles on all fronts must be linked in a common attack on oppression and exploitation.

- Civics need to be strengthened by getting more members, leadership and skills training, clear programmes of action, realistic evaluations of

strengths and weaknesses, ongoing work between campaigns, discipline, effective planning and distribution of tasks, etc.

The education committee said the workshop sessions raised a lot of questions that need much more discussion.

'But they were useful because we began to discuss them and they can be taken up again — in our civics and in other education sessions.

WE MAKE THE WORLD DIT!

A page of music, dance, plays, films, books and poetry.

Pasopa Wena!

Plays

1976 was in many ways a watershed in the history of South Africa. The events of that year also had a profound effect on the direction of black theatre.

'Black Dog — Inj'emenyama!' is a product of the energy and power injected into protest theatre by 1976.

The play, workshoped by Barney Simon and the cast, frighteningly reflects the pain and agony of life in South Africa through the lives of the six characters.

The play opens with a powerful image — student leader Inj'emenyama swinging a chain above his head like the blades of a helicopter in flight.

The chain is a symbol of slavery and oppression. The audience is immediately thrust into the context of the play

— the suffering caused by Apartheid.

But the play is not only about suffering. It is also about resistance. 1976, when the only weapons of school children were dustbins, stones and bottles, is talked about. Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe are also mentioned.

Initially the central focus is on Raymond Marshall (played by Neil McCarthy). He seems a typical young white — a hard working pupil, school prefect and good sportsman.

He joins the army straight after school. In the army, they are taught exactly the opposite of what 1976 taught black school kids — not to question, but just to accept, uncritically.

'If you start thinking,' says Marshall, 'you're

stuffed. When he eventually does begin thinking, after seeing a photograph of a slain guerilla and his girlfriend, he falls apart.

'Suddenly I didn't understand what we were into,' he confesses.

It is a remark similar to that made by Inj'emenyama's sister Mandisa (Gcina Mhlope) after the school protests. 'Our heads were exploding,' she bubbles. 'This is our education.'

Migrant worker Gwababa Ngubane, portrayed brilliantly by James Mthoba, also begins to question himself after initially taking part in ruthless attacks on the boycotting children.

Rita, an Afrikaner, is first a coy, irritatingly naive little girl. But, through Marshall, she is introduced to the



Talented Gcina Mhlope in Barney Simon's Black Dog — Inj'emenyama

harsher realities of life.

Mandisa, who initially is only concerned with her looks, gradually also begins the process of

questioning.

It is Inj'emenyama (John Ledwaba) and Benny Booyens (Kurt Egelhof), who seems to understand from the

start what is really going on.

Through their eyes we see South Africa for what it is. The play ends on an

ominous note with a warning: 'Pasopa wena!' (Watch out, you!)

This is protest theatre at its best.

Jodac welcomes Bandiete



Mzwakhe and his group Khuvangano read poetry at the Jodac Cultural evening

AN EXCITING evening of South African culture was recently organised by the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (Jodac) culture group.

On the programme were poems by Jeremy Cronin who was released from Pretoria Central last year, and Chris van Wyk, a well-known poet from Riverlea.

A dramatic presentation of poetry and freedom songs by Khuvangano, a Soweto cultural group famous for their powerful production of Isandhlwana, songs by Jessica Sherman on her guitar, excerpts by Colin Purkey from his

detention diary and a satirical sketch on the President's Council by Ayub Mayet, made up the rest of the programme.

Jeremy Cronin's prison poetry provided a vivid account of life behind bars and was particularly fitting for the evening. In the audience were a number of former political prisoners — otherwise known as 'bandiete'. Many had spent time at Pretoria Maximum Security, on Robben Island or lengthy periods in detention all over South Africa. Even David Kitson, who had tasted freedom for only a few days was there.

Raymond Sutner, himself an ex-bandiete, was an absolute delight as compere. He introduced the ex-bandiete right through the evening and each received warm ovations for their contribution to the struggle.

Although the happening was congenial, it did not detract from the weight of the message carried by the poems, songs and readings.

Ending with a resounding rendition of Nkosi Sikelele iAfrika, the evening left the audience full of praise for the Jodac culture group. Many hoped other such events were not very far off.

POETS CORNER

Jeremy Cronin recently released from six years in Pretoria Central Prison has published a book of poetry.

The poems were composed in jail and memorised by Cronin. Two poems reflecting his life behind bars are printed below.

Overhead is mesh,
To one side the morgue,
To one side the gallows
wing, this
Is our yard

Into which a raggedy
By happenstance
Butterfly has flown,
Fluttering
Halfway to panic
Halfway to give a damn

Springtime has come.
The years flow into
each other.
The struggle goes on.

I SAW YOUR MOTHER

I saw your mother
with two guards
through a glass plate
for one quarter hour
on the day that you
died.

'Extra visit, special
favour'
I was told, and warned
'The visit will be stopped
if politics is discussed.
verstaan — understand!'
On the day that you
died.



Jeremy Cronin reads a poem he wrote in jail

I couldn't place
my arm around her,
around your mother
when she sobbed.

Fifteen minutes up
I was led
back to the workshop.
Your death, my wife,
One crime they
managed
not to perpetrate
on the day that you
died.

Jeremy Cronin

Books 1980 - 'A State of Fear'

CAPE Town writer, Menan du Plessis's first novel 'A State of Fear' is an exciting work.

It is set in a time of open unrest - the meat boycotts, bus boycotts, and school boycotts of 1980.

Anna Rossouw, a young white teacher at a Coloured high school, shelters two of her pupils when they arrive on her doorstep.

They are involved in some kind of political resistance, though Anna never quite knows what.

Anna's concern for them is central to her attempt to understand herself within the disturbed society of which she is a part and yet not a part.

What is of central importance, it seems, is the basic questions

which face people everywhere throughout the world - questions about the meaning of life.

Anna's brother accidentally commits suicide after being in and out of several mental asylums.

'For years now I've longed for politics that would be more profound than revolution itself, yet still sim-

ple enough to explain the fate of my own brother to me,' she agonises.

She is also tortured by the deaths of school children during confrontations with the police.

'If they are to die' she feels, it seems impossible that there can be any recognisable meaning left to the word 'tomorrow'.

It is a brilliant work, providing some terrifying glimpses into the politics of South Africa.

The writing is excellent, the central characters fully developed and the themes investigated extensively. But the author offers no answers — perhaps because there are none.



SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY



Spread
the
word

LP 'chair throwers' do it yet again

LABOUR Party violence against UDF supporters at a meeting in Actonville has been condemned by the UDF's national secretary, Popo Molefe.

'These are acts of desperation by a party that has run out of lies to convince the coloured community to vote for the apartheid constitution.

'Acts of violence calculated to tarnish the image of the UDF will not make the Front a fellow traveller in this cause,' he said.

Mr Molefe said the Labour Party's violence would not win it any support.

'The masses from all communities clearly identify with the UDF. They see the UDF as the champion of resistance against the new constitution and the Labour Party as a mere tool in the hands of the oppressors.'

The Labour Party meeting was called by Salaam Mayet, Management Committee chairman in Actonville who has joined the Labour Party.

Tension was high between supporters of the Labour Party (LP) and the UDF.

'The violence began when LP supporters forcefully tried to hush UDF singers,' one person at the meeting said.

'A young women UDF supporter was slapped across the face by a LP supporter and then chaos ensued.'

She said LP supporters began chanting to the 150 strong UDF crowd, 'get out, get out'.

'Huge strapping LP men began picking up chairs and threatening to throw them. Then all of a sudden an enormous fat man threw his chair with full force at

a young unsuspecting women behind him.'

Chairs began flying as UDF supporters fled. But worse was still to come.

'We were met by a strong contingent of armed riot squad cops and vicious dogs as we were leaving the hall.'

'They began to beat up everybody with their batons.'

'Another victim said he saw LP supporters pointing out specific UDF supporters to the police.

Eight UDF supporters who were so badly injured that they could not run away, were arrested by the police and kept for the night, despite the fact that they were injured.

Nearby residents opened up their doors to shelter and assist the battered and bruised UDF supporters while doctors from the neighbourhood went to the scene to attend to the injured.

'We came here so peacefully to listen to them, but now they kicked us out. I'll never forget,' remarked an elderly woman from Actonville. Yet very few people from Actonville actually attended.

'The people at the meeting were not from Actonville,' commented one member of the TIC East Rand branch.

'The LP must have bussed in their supporters from other areas,' he said.

'The actions of the LP supporters at the meeting makes a farce of their slogan — 'LP for non-violence', commented a disillusioned supporter.

'This is not the first time that the LP has initiated violence at their meetings,' he said. 'In fact the LP are fast becoming known as 'chair-throwers'.'

Explain yourself Mr Poovalingum!!!

Pat Poovalingam of the Solidarity Party has been challenged to explain to the African people why he accepts the new constitution and has agreed to participate in elections for the Indian chamber of Parliament.

In a letter to Mr Poovanlingam, Moisoa 'Terror' Lekota, publicity secretary of the United Democratic Front (UDF), says:

You have found it proper to persuade the people of this country and South Africans of Indian origin in particular to accept and participate in this constitution. Your attitude amounts to an endorsement of African exclusion by the White minority.

May I remind you that behind African and Indian history in this country lies

a rich history of joint resistance to successive White governments. Our people were together in the early part of this century when Africans were persecuted by the 1913 Land Acts and Indians were being refused residential rights in the Transvaal. The delegations of the Indian and African Congress campaigned together at Versailles at the end of World War 1.

The African and Indian Congresses were the first to sign a pact in 1946 and they fought together around the Indian Ghetto Acts in Durban. We were together at the Congress of the People even as our people are still together in the United Democratic Front today.

In the light of the present constitutional developments I wish to invite you to a public meeting spon-

sored by the UDF or by yourself and at a venue to be arranged between you and me so that you may explain to me and other Black South Africans, especially African people why you have chosen to trample under the work of our forefathers. Indeed, why you have become part of the process of setting our people up against each other.

This letter is written in all sincerity and deep sense of urgency. The African people of our country want to know from you Mr Poovalingam why you are turning your back on them and joining the Nationalists'

Popo Molefe, the national secretary of the UDF has also issued a statement challenging the Labour Party.

'We challenge Jac Rabie and his colleagues to come to Soweto, Pretoria and the Vaal to explain to the African people how they will present them and on whose mandate.'

At the time of going to press none of the parties had replied.



Terror Lekota UDF Publicity Secretary

Anti-constitution bodies harassed

WHILE Chris Heunis, the Minister of Constitutional Development has said he hoped Indians and coloureds will be afforded the opportunity by others to freely participate in the democratic process without intimidation, it is organisations campaigning against the new constitution who have on many occasions been harassed.

The Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the Transvaal Anti-PC, both UDF affiliates leading the campaign against the August elections, said harassment and intimidation was taking place in many different ways.

Posters put up by the Anti-PC have had their tops ripped off so as to distort the organisation's message and be read in a way which misleads people.

Putting up posters is becoming difficult as Management Committees threaten to prosecute people who put up posters without their permission.

Many smear leaflets have been mysteriously produced and dis-



Organisations opposing the elections are being harassed

tributed. In March fake posters claiming TIC support for the constitution were plastered over original posters which clearly rejected the constitution.

'A leaflet we distributed quite widely was banned, for no apparent reason,' a TIC member said.

'But we appealed against the banning and were successful.'

'What was quite disturbing was the way in which some of our

members were detained and questioned when distributing the leaflet on house visits,' he said.

The police claimed the leaflet was banned. This was before it actually was — and handcuffed one TIC member in the street and took him in for questioning.

'This was clearly an attempt, not only at harassing us, but also at intimidating the community who witnessed everything.'

The community is being intimidated in other ways too.

People are being told that if they do not vote

they will be fined and imprisoned.

'This is absolute nonsense,' Terror Lekota of the UDF said.

'People have a right not to vote. It is not illegal not to vote. Nothing can be done to anyone who does not vote.'

Pensioners are being told their grants will be cut off, and many people are threatened with not getting houses if they refuse to vote.

Organisations calling people not to vote in the elections said the community should not be frightened by these lies and threats.

'These disparate actions and low levels to which the Government and its supporters are sinking only exposes their lack of credibility.'

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