



# SPEAK

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VOLUME ONE

NUMBER 3

Price 10c

MARCH 1983

# Shack dwellers living in fear

UNCERTAINTY still surrounds the fate of Soweto shack-dwellers who live in constant fear of demolition.

The Soweto Council and the West Rand Administration Board have declared them 'illegal' squatters.

In October last year, hundreds of shack dwellers were fined for erecting illegal structures.

After paying fines the squatters went back to their shacks.

'I was prepared to pay a second fine rather than stay in a veld like an animal,' one shack-dweller, Mrs Elizabeth Ngubene said.

This first attempt by the authorities to force 'illegal' Johannesburg Africans back to the Bantustans failed.

The government then began demolishing the shacks, confiscated property found inside and charged people for transport and storage of the property.

Thousands of angry Orlando East residents gathered at a local church and marched to the homes of community councillors.

The Soweto councillors had asked residents to approach them for loans to add extra rooms to shabby two and three bedroomed houses.

Residents complained 90 percent of people could not qualify for these loans, either because they are pensioners or because their wages are too low.

Residents said the councillors represented only themselves at Soweto Council meetings, and vowed not to vote in the coming community council elections.

Residents first started building shacks about five years ago when the housing shortage became very serious.

Families erected tin-shacks in their yards to provide themselves with homes.

A community leader said not a single house had been built in Orlando since 1958.

In one yard, eleven families were squeezed into eight different shacks.

The shack dwellers vary from newly-wed couples and extended families, to migrant workers who do not want to be separated from their families.

'All they want is a roof over their heads,' said Mr Ngakane of the Orlando Civic Association.

The Orlando Civic Association, which is part of the Soweto Civic Association, is trying everything possible to resist the demolitions.

It has presently instituted a court interdict to stop the government from continuing with the demolitions.

All shack-dwellers and owners are included in this interdict.

## Katlehong shacks wiped out by Erab

SINCE November, the East Rand Administration Board (Erab) has demolished over 1,000 shacks in Katlehong.

There are twice as many shacks in Katlehong as houses. Most people living in shacks are on the waiting list for homes and are thus entitled to stay in an urban area.

Erab claims only 20 percent of the shack dwellers are 'legals', therefore they can demolish shacks. They are supported in this by the Katlehong Community Council.

Residents say many of the demolished shacks belong to 'legals', however they reject the distinction between 'legal' and 'illegal' residents.



Thousands of people all over the country have no homes and whatever miserable shelter that is found, is taken away too.

demolitions were strongly condemned and the unions committed themselves to fight the issue.

'It is not enough to oppose the demolitions,' said a resident, 'we need to demand proper homes.' She pointed to the appalling health conditions.

In some cases up to 12 or 16 shacks have been erected in a single yard.

The shack dwellers use the same facilities as the house residents causing massive overloading of the sewerage and water system.

The sewerage system has not worked since October and in some areas pipes have burst, flooding houses and shacks.

The community council said they could do nothing about the situation because they have no money.

Angry residents ask where then did they get R2 million to build new community council offices.

Mr Sam Ntuli of the East Rand People's Organisation (Erapo) said one has to look at the employment situation in Katlehong to understand why shacks are being demolished. 'When there were many jobs, and workers needed places to stay, the mayor of the community council invited workers to build shacks,' he said. 'Now workers are being retrenched, the authorities are forcing the workers to go back to the Bantustans by demolishing the shacks.' Many of the shack-dwellers are members of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union. At a Germiston shop steward council meeting the

## Labour Party's false promises

THE ad-hoc Anti-President's Council Committee, formed at a recent meeting of community and student organisations to oppose the government's proposals, has condemned the Labour Party's decision to participate in the 'government's new deal'.

In a statement, the Anti P.C. Committee said the Labour Party would not be able to remove the Apartheid system. 'They will not have any power to change the Group Areas Act, segregated education, influx control, and other evil laws. They will not solve the housing crisis and they are therefore

making false promises to the people.'

The committee said it was 'ridiculous for the Labour Party to claim it has the community's support.'

'Less than 150 people out of a population of approximately 90,000 in the Eldorado Park complex, passed a vote of confidence in them.'

The statement also denounced the Labour Party for starting the violence at its recent meetings.

'The Labour Party stands condemned for calling in the police to harass and disperse those opposing the constitutional proposals,' the

statement said.

Prominent members of the community are represented on the Anti P.C. Committee.

These include Dr Ismail Mohammed who played a leading role in the recent campaign against high rents, and former Labour Party members Mr George du Plessis and Mr Bill Jardine.

Dr Mohammed said the Anti P.C. Committee was needed to spearhead widespread opposition to the government's proposals.

'This campaign has been initiated because of our yearning for a free South Africa in which all will share,' he said.

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# F.R.A. forces drop in electricity deposit

PRESSURE from Lenasia residents last month, brought an electricity deposit of R130 payable to the Peri Urban Board down to R60.

Residents in four extensions received letters from the Johannesburg City Council in January demanding a new water and electricity deposit of R130. The letter explained the Peri Urban Board was to now provide services for these areas.

These services were

previously provided through the Johannesburg City Council, and residents had already paid the council deposits of R50 for water and electricity.

The increase was immediately rejected.

Many meetings organised by the residents associations of extensions 8,9,10 and 11 followed.

Residents complained they could not afford the increase and demanded to know why these areas were not under the control of the Johannesburg

municipality as the rest of Lenasia was.

A petition rejecting the increase and control over these areas by the Peri Urban Board was handed in.

Pressure from the community forced the board to meet a Federation of Residents Association (F.R.A.) delegation.

Asked why the board's deposit was so much more than the City Council's, Mr van Schalkwyk, assistant secretary of the board said, 'Johannesburg has more money

and greater resources'.

Mr Sadha Veeran, a spokesperson for the F.R.A. and a waiter working in Johannesburg, rejected the explanation.

'We have a right to enjoy the little benefits other people of Johannesburg enjoy,' he said. 'All our lives we have worked in Johannesburg and contributed through rates and taxes. We are also responsible for making Johannesburg what it is today.'

Strong protest from residents forced the



Extension 9 residents gather in a backyard to discuss the high electricity deposit.

board to reduce the deposit to R60.

At report back meetings, residents decided to pay the R60, but vowed to continue the struggle against being administered by the Peri Urban Board.

A member of the South

African Indian Council (SAIC), Mr Naran Daya, came under attack for holding discussions with the Peri Urban Board on behalf of residents.

One resident accused him of being an opportunist for claiming the victory of the people.

The meetings also passed resolutions condemning the formation of any advisory body for these extensions.

The F.R.A. is to submit a memorandum outlining residents' grievances to the Peri Urban Board.

## Evictions persist despite judge's ruling

MORE cases of tenants persecuted under the Group Areas Act has been reported.

Earlier this month Indian and coloured tenants of Branksome Towers and Del Monico Court in Joubert Park were issued with eviction notices by their landlords.

Two tenants, Mr Vassan Archy and Ms Angela Woods of Mayfair, were prosecuted under the Group areas Act and appeared in the Johannesburg Magistrates Court.

Both cases have been postponed to 17 March.

Mr Monty Narsoo, the organising secretary of Actstop, an organisation which defends 'illegal' tenants, said there appeared to be a change in tactics by the group areas police.

'Following judgement in the Govender case the police now seem to be pressurising landlords to evict 'illegal' tenants rather than charge them,' he said.

The decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Mrs Gladys Govender is significant.

The court ruled no person could be evicted under the Group Areas Act without a full enquiry into his or her personal circumstances and the availability of alternative accommodation.



## LYL Festival rolling off to a good start

ONE of the exciting events during the Lenasia Youth League's (LYL) Festival held over December vacation.

Many youth organisations from different areas participated in the week long programme. Representatives all agreed the Festival helped in many ways to strengthen the solidarity between youth and their organisations.

The Youth League itself increased its membership and popularity as a result of the Festival, and hopes to carry this forward through ongoing activity for the youth of Lenasia.

## Windies display racism at anti-tour protest

A PROTEST against the West Indies cricket tour was held at Jan Smuts Airport. About 40 people carried placards condemning the tour, and handed pamphlets to the players.

The Windies were leaving for Durban to play their last test match. According to a witness, several players rammed their luggage trolleys into the legs of demonstrators.

Another cricketer was heard to refer to a demonstrator as a 'makoela' which is a derogatory term for an Indian.

The Windies tour has been condemned by many organisations. Mr Hassan Howa, president of the non-racial South African Cricket Board, an affiliate of Sacos, criticised the large amounts of money spent

on the tour.

He said the money spent on one West Indian cricketer could fund local township cricketers for eight years.

He also condemned the government for spending millions of rand promoting sport and breaking the international sports boycott. He pointed out that the government has spent up to R60,000 on full page



Mr Hassan Howa

advertisements in newspapers overseas stating their case.

## Reiger Park residents - 'we were tricked'

OCCUPANTS of 52 new houses in Reiger Park on the East Rand have decided to stop further payments to the Boksburg Town Council until a contract stating they have bought the houses is drawn up.

Residents claim to have been tricked into occupying houses they believed they bought.

Understanding they were to later sign contracts stating the houses were bought, residents paid a deposit and signed 'temporary contracts'.

The council then issued notices demanding rent.

A meeting of residents refused to pay rent and demanded an explanation from the council.

Residents also complained of the poor quality of the houses.

'The walls are cracked, the roof leaks and the doors don't work properly,' a resident said.

Matters were made worse last year, when a light storm brought down carports and caused serious damage.

'It resulted in the death of two dogs, and a child suffering a fractured hip,' another resident, Mr Amos van Weren said.

'My wife was injured when a corrugated iron sheet crashed through our kitchen window.'

A spokesperson for the Reiger Park Ratepayers and Tenants Association expressed dismay at the council's reluctance to act on complaints as a result of the storm.

Court action is also being considered against the authorities.

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# No service No charge - say tenants

THE Co-ordinating Residents Action Committee (CRAC) demanded service charge increases be reduced, at a recent meeting with the Johannesburg City Council.

A CRAC delegation finally met with the city council after it demanded residents pay increases in service charges or face eviction.

Service charges is part of rent, and is a charge for services like sewerage, rubbish removal, water, etc.

CRAC said the increases were not justified when council homes and flats suffer from poor facilities, improper maintenance and general negligence.

'There is also widespread unemployment, and the cost of basic essentials is rising all the time.'

The council was questioned on why people living in the same block of flats for example, paid unequal amounts in service charges when the services provided are the same for everyone.

The council denied people paid unequal amounts, but said it would look into the matter.

The council said the price of petrol used in council trucks justified the increase.

Fears of eviction have forced some people to pay the increase, but many have resisted.

Eldorado Park residents refused to pay.

On the day they were to be evicted, residents forced the council to back down.

The council said there was a 'misunderstanding'.

CRAC also condemned the attitude of Coloured Management Committee (CMC) members who sat in on the meeting.

A CRAC delegate who said she could not afford any increases - particularly rent - was told by a CMC member to live in a cheaper house.

When she pointed out she already lived in the cheapest house the council provided, he said she should ask her boss to pay her less.



A council official of the City Council caught by surprise by a CRAC delegation.

# Residents suspicious of council's sale of homes

PERSISTENT and united action against high rents by the coloured community last year forced the Johannesburg City Council to postpone rent increases to July 1983.

At the same time as the Council announced the postponement, though, it threatened residents with

heavy increases if they did not buy their homes.

Community leaders say the Council even 'hinted' it would evict people who refused to buy their homes to make way for those who want to.

Not surprisingly, the Council's desire to sell homes, and even flats to tenants, has met with suspicion.

Community organisations have warned residents against the conditions under which homes are for sale.

A spokesperson for the Riverlea Action Committee said: 'This could do residents more harm than good. While many people want to own their homes, life could become much harder in years to come if the homes are bought under conditions not in the interest of residents.' He listed the following examples:

- monthly rental instalments are too high,
- interest rates are too high,
- residents will have to pay for all maintenance and any defects themselves,
- rent paid over many

years will not be accepted as part payment for the homes,

● the selling price of homes is much more than it cost the Council to build them.

Residents are demanding to participate in drawing up the deeds of sale.

In Newclare and Westbury, flat tenants are dead against buying their flats.

It is clear to see why.

The flats suffer from leaking roofs, damp walls and serious overcrowding. They were meant to be temporary until the Council could allocate homes, but tenants have lived there for over 15 years.

If the Council decides to sell the flats, they would become permanent.

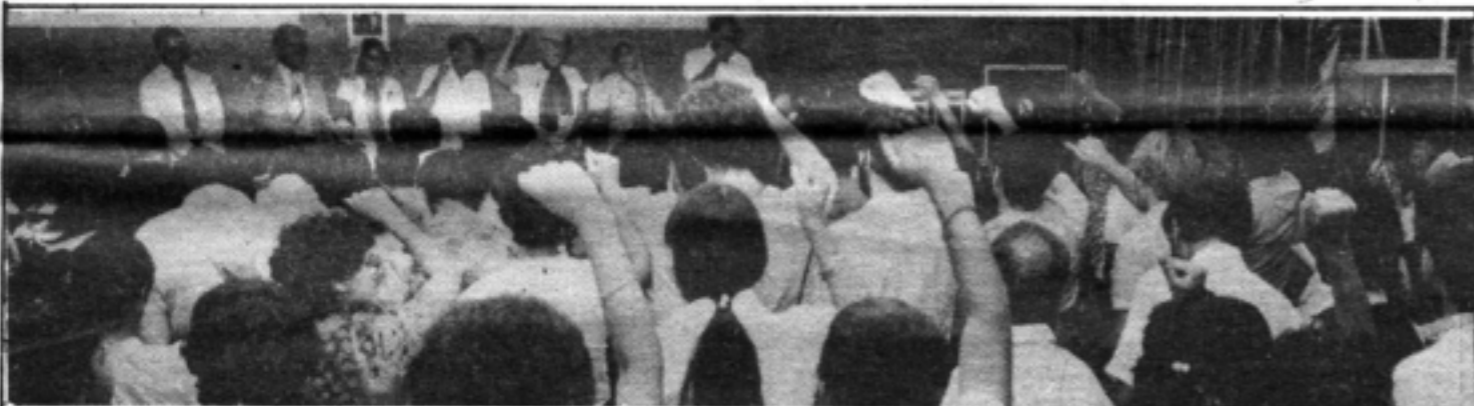
Dr Ismail Mohamed of the Newclare Action Committee said this would mean:

- increased overcrowding as no room exists for extensions,
- people buying dwellings without owning the ground on which it is built,
- maintenance and repair cost falling on the shoulders of the tenants.

'These flats are not fit to live in, let alone be bought,' he said.

'It is the duty of the government to decently house people.'

Residents feel the Council, through warnings of higher rents and evictions, is trying to break the growing unity of the community.



The national anthem is sung at the meeting to commemorate the death of the past TIC president

# Inspiring last message from past TIC leader

A MEETING to pay tribute to Molvi Saloojee soon after his death was hushed as Molvi's daughter Miriam read out his last message to the packed hall.

Molvi Saloojee, past president of the Transvaal Indian Congress, died from a heart attack at the age of 76. He died the day he was to open the first congress of the Transvaal Anti-Saia Committee.

In his message, dictated a few hours before he died, Molvi said:

'Owing to ill health I am

unable to open the Congress. Though physically I am in hospital, my heart and soul is with the freedom fighters of South Africa.'

'Sons and daughters of South Africa, I salute you for taking the stand in rejecting the proposals of the President's Council. Even if full participation is granted to Indians and coloureds we still reject it. Freedom to all South Africans or no freedom at all.'

'In my vision I see the burning flame of

freedom. I may not be with you to share the triumph of a free South Africa, but I am proud that I played my part. Keep the flag of freedom high.'

Molvi Saloojee first joined the Transvaal Indian Congress in the early 1940's.

In 1964 Molvi was banned for ten years while serving as President of the TIC. Unbanned in 1974 and still determined to make his contribution, Molvi played a prominent role during the anti-Saia



Molvi Saloojee campaign in 1981.

Speakers at the emotional meeting included Rev Frank Chikane, Dr Essop Jassat, Molvi's granddaughter Tasneem Moola, and his longstanding colleague, Mrs Helen Joseph.

# 1000 in boycott call

KAGISO residents are refusing to pay the 60 per cent increase in their rents.

Over 1,000 residents packed the local Anglican Church hall and pledged not to pay the new rents.

They also called for the immediate resignation of the community council, and decided to boycott all businesses owned by community councillors. A petition was circulated calling for their resignation.

'The community councillors must go - they live aloof from the people they are supposed to represent,' said Mr George Moilpa, secretary of the Krugersdorp Resident's Organisation.

Dr Piet Koornhof, Minister of Co-operation and Development, was

also strongly criticised at the meeting. Last year a petition was sent to him protesting about the increased rents, but he never replied.

The residents will continue to pay their old rents until the Minister replies to their call to reduce rents.

# Education should benefit society

'STUDENTS must relate to struggles taking place in the factories and communities.'

Joe Phaahla, President of Azaso, told Black Student Society (BSS) members at a meeting

during orientation week at the University of the Witwatersrand.

He said black students saw themselves as part of a 'stream' working for democracy.

'Before one is a student, one is a member of society.'

The right to be educated is granted to us

by society with the hope that the skills we learn will be used for the benefit of society,' he said.

This influenced the need for a national student organisation like Azaso.

1983 will see the strengthening of Azaso branches on all campuses, and intense preparations for the Education Charter campaign.

The Education Charter will be a democratic document listing the education demands of workers, students and the community

# Age limit law stops students continuing school

PARENTS, teachers and pupils are angry about rules controlling the admission of pupils to school by the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Circulars sent to all 'African' Schools in the Johannesburg area by the DET said that without the permission of the Director-General:

- no person older than 16 years will be admitted or allowed to continue primary school

- no person older than 18 years will be admitted or allowed to continue standards 6 to 8

- no person older than 20 years will be admitted or allowed to continue standards 9 and 10.

The restriction also applies to pupils,

- who 'without good reason' interrupted their studies and have reached the age limit

- who failed and have reached the age limit.

A further regulation states no transfer from one secondary school to another will be permitted.

A statement by the Soweto Teachers Action Committee condemned the age limit law.

'It has become clear our children's educational advancement is being impeded.'

'Given the rottenness of the education system and the inhibiting environment both at school and at home, our pupils can-

not hope to complete before they are 20,' the statement said.

Mass meetings attended by hundreds of parents and pupils registered angry protest against the age limit.

A member of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) said: 'Age is not a handicap towards learning.'

Petitions being circulated by an Anti Age Limit Committee de-

mand:

- the DET scrap the age limit regulations
  - all 'over aged' students be allowed to return to school unconditionally.
- A spokesperson for the committee said the age limit law reflected the broader crisis in education.

He called on all democratic organisations, parents, teachers and students to support the stand against the age limit restriction.



Dr Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reform Churches, has emerged as a rallying force against apartheid and the PC proposals.

# One moment at Eshowe which fanned the fury of the nation

WHEN Adam was tempted to eat forbidden fruit by the devil, it resulted in his banishment from Heaven. The lesson of satisfying short term temptations which could result in long term pain, is as old as Adam himself. Unfortunately this lesson was lost on the Labour Party (LP). Its decision to take part in the government's constitutional arrangement forever put it on a side against the people. This was expressed clearly by the outcome of Labour Party meetings in the Cape and Transvaal. University of the Western Cape students said, 'The Labour Party's action has unleashed such anger in the community, that the possibility of peaceful meetings is small. The words rang true with each successive meeting ending in chaos, and with the Labour Party rejected. ●There was a near riot in Stellenbosch. ●In Eden Park, Alberton, the LP was met with jeers and was called 'traitors'. ●The Easterns meeting in Pretoria was disrupted with the LP accused of 'agreeing to send our father and brothers to the border'. ●A riot broke out in Reiger Park and several people were arrested. ●In Eldorado Park,

Johannesburg, seargos was fired on 500 people demonstrating against the LP. The rejection of the LP by the community it claims to represent, made it call in the police. Hendriks, the party's leader, was reported at one of the meetings to have asked Jac Rabe, Transvaal leader, why the police were not on hand. For the community, the presence of police at LP meetings simply confirmed the side the LP had chosen. Even a Labour Party member said, 'Their presence at our meeting is a kiss of death'. But the 'kiss of death' for the LP came the moment it decided to take

part in the government's plans. It is the government's plans which people all over the country have in fact rejected. A spokesperson for the anti-PC committee in the Transvaal said: 'The LP decision is an acceptance of the President's Council (IPC) proposals and Nationalist Party guidelines. They're accepting something which is not in the interests of our people'. Student organisations, trade unions, community organisations and religious bodies have all protested against the government's proposals. At the congress of the Transvaal anti-Saic committee, delegates from all over the country

representing hundreds of organisations, rejected the government's proposals and called on all people to resist them. A key speaker at the congress was Dr Allan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. He said the proposals are 'morally wrong and unacceptable'. 'There will not be opportunity to change laws pertaining to racial classification, the group areas and separate education'. In other parts of the country like Port Elizabeth and East London, committees have been formed to resist the proposals. Trade unions, including the South African Allied Workers Union, Food and Canning Workers Union, General and Allied Workers Union, Federation of South African Trade Unions and the General Workers Union, have strongly attacked the proposals as not being in the interests of the workers. National student organisations like Azaso, Coss and Nuss have said the proposals simply restructure Apartheid in a more sophisticated way. The South African Catholic Bishop's Conference rejected the proposals as unjust. Azapo rejected the proposals at its annual congress and said those participating in the PC are selling their birthright. The 19,000 member Cape Professional Teachers Association said the proposals do not end unequal education. The Transvaal anti-Saic Committee and the Natal Indian Congress said the government has been driven into a corner and now wants to force Indians and Coloureds to support white domination and join the army to defend Apartheid. The proposals are unacceptable to the Islamic Council of South Africa because racial separation is still the corner stone, 'with the lot of the vast majority of the deprived remaining unchanged'. Even within the Labour Party, the proposals faced rejection. Some members resigned in protest against the party's decision. No doubt the government's proposals have unleashed massive opposition. Far from P W Botha's assertion that the proposals 'ensure peace and stability' for all in South Africa.



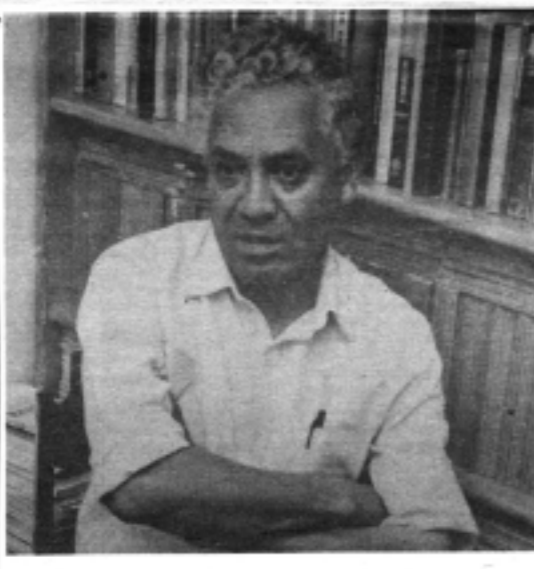
Samson Ndoo - General and Allied Workers Union. The proposals are intended to create division in the ranks of those struggling for genuine change. Professor Jerry Coovadia - Natal Indian Congress. White domination will not end nor will white control of political and economic power end. Archbishop Dennis Hurley - South African Catholic Bishops Conference. It imparts to the Indians and Coloureds only limited participation in the ruling of the country. Mr George du Plessis - Anti-PC Committee. The three chamber parliament will be another toy telephone given to the Coloureds and Indians to fool around with. Mr N G Patel - Transvaal Anti-Saic Committee. The government wants to legitimate its domination by trying to co-opt our support.



Delegates at the congress where the truth behind the government's proposals was exposed.

## Veterans put a TIC back into congress clock

OLD Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) officials met recently for the first time in over 20 years to discuss the revival of the TIC. Veterans of the TIC and members of the Transvaal Anti-Saic Committee (Tasc) decided to convene a special general meeting of the TIC in late April to re-launch the organisation. The move to revive the TIC, the premier Indian political organisation in the province for over three decades, was overwhelmingly supported by delegates at the Transvaal Anti-Saic (TASC) Committee's Congress. The resolution moved by Mr Rasek Parekh, a former TIC executive member, called on the TASC to approach old TIC members and call a public meeting to revive the TIC. Dr Essop Jaana, in his keynote speech, referred to the need for a political organisation able to meet the demands created by the new political situation. He said the unity of the Indian people during the Anti-Saic campaigns needed to be consolidated. 'We are called upon to express an even greater unity in the times that lie ahead.'



**SPEAK** interviews Dr Mohamed, chairperson of the Ad-hoc Anti-PC Committee on the government's reform proposals. Dr Mohamed, a lecturer in mathematics at the University of the Witwatersrand, plays an active role in the problems facing his community. He is also the chairperson of the Co-ordinating Residents' Action Committee. 'The present situation in the country demands that we unite and organise ourselves,' he said. Earlier in the conference, Mr Thozarile Gqweta, president of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) called for the revival of TIC and was strongly supported by Mr Samson Ndoo, president of the General and Allied Workers Union (GAWU). TIC is one of the oldest political organisations in the Transvaal. It was formed before the formation of Union in 1910. Under the leadership of Dr Yusuf Dadoo, Moli Saloojee and Nana Sita, it was in the forefront of the Passive Resistance Campaign, and was one of the organisations to spearhead the Defiance Campaign. In 1956 the TIC together with the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) became members of the Congress Alliance and signatories to the Freedom Charter. With the banning of the ANC and the PAC, the leadership on the TIC came under severe repression, with many banned, jailed, or exiled. A speaker at the congress said the TIC had acquired a hard won legitimacy in the struggle for the liberation of all people of South Africa.

## Anti-PC Committee set to counter proposals

with people in different areas. We distributed a leaflet informing the community of what has happened. Why do you reject the government's proposals? The main thing is that it is attempting to co-opt a section of the oppressed people, who will go into the P.C. and thereby hope to entrench an apartheid system. The real problems, the day to day problems, in terms of housing, rents, bus and transport problems, we don't believe that those problems can be solved by the P.C. Power will still rest with the white group, the allocation of money will come from the white section by its voting rights - by the ratio of 1:24. I cannot see that any meaningful changes will be made. Of course co-optation of a section of the oppressed means a division of the people. It means one is dividing the whole struggle for a democratic South Africa. But we were surprised at the extent to which the Labour Party went along. In any case there has been a feeling in the community for some time that the P.C. proposals are an attempt to co-opt sections of the oppressed into working and entrenching an Apartheid system. And people felt the need therefore to organise against that situation. For that reason people from community organisations set up the committee to counter the proposals and the attempts at co-optation and entrenchment of white minority rule and the apartheid system. What has the committee done up to now? The committee has approached various people in the community, in the factories, teachers, doctors to rally them around the body. There is general opposition as I said. The committee has met

representatives. People that are nominated by the president. The president is the first instance will be appointed by and large by the white section, because of their numbers. You cannot expect the Party would have been split on this decision. A major split should have taken place. It's really come as a shock to many people that the Labour Party has taken this decision. In fact I believe people feel absolutely betrayed that they are being portrayed in a sense as now wanting to share house with our oppressors. It's really arrogant for the Labour Party to say it goes in to represent and struggle for all within the black community, when in fact the vast majority have rejected that. The Labour Party has no mandate to say that it can go in and negotiate on behalf of the black community. From the opposition to Urban Bantu Councils, and community councils it is clear the African community rejects these institutions. For the Labour Party to go in on the explanation that it is negotiating for all, it is in fact betraying the struggle. It has lost credibility over a number of years. I don't know if I can recount the figures for you, but basically in 1969 the Labour Party must have got something like 45 percent of the votes. In 1975 it got 16 percent. If one sees that the number of people that registered was probably 10 percent of the population, they really got something like 8 percent of the votes. They were in a downward phase, losing credibility all the time. For that reason it was not sufficient simply to reject

credibility within the community, it would have to throw in its lot with the whole democratic struggle. And I think it has not got the stomach for that difficult struggle ahead. The easiest way out was to go in, to delude people and to say we are going in, in an attempt to produce changes from within. Look at the history of the Labour Party. They also went into the CRC with the understanding to close it down. But they continued in there for many, many years, and this has made no difference to the lives of people. In fact life in many ways became worse. In a way their decision is misguided, but the Labour Party from its outlook had no choice. It has lost credibility over a number of years. I don't know if I can recount the figures for you, but basically in 1969 the Labour Party must have got something like 45 percent of the votes. In 1975 it got 16 percent. If one sees that the number of people that registered was probably 10 percent of the population, they really got something like 8 percent of the votes. They were in a downward phase, losing credibility all the time. For that reason it was not sufficient simply to reject

having its meetings with the police called in and seargos being fired. How do you feel about this? I think the opposition to the Labour Party had been projected as the trouble makers, as the ones who stirred up things. But it's enough for the community to see in fact that the Labour Party had to come with the police and various elements that attacked those who disagreed with the Labour Party. Otherwise it couldn't possibly hold its meetings within these communities. People do not accept the kind of stand that the Labour Party is advocating. The Labour Party could only do that with the backing of the South African Police. And if there was any That must be absolutely alarming. This is the thing that most discredit the Labour Party in the eyes of the community, that the government is prepared to back it up in that sort of way. When we want to put our opposing views, we do not have the halls because they are controlled by people who will not let us have them. We do not have protection from harassment by the police when we have meetings against things like high rents and housing. At these meetings, the police come in as an intimidating force to us. But here Le Grange can talk about the Labour Party having an armed wing to protect itself. I think Hendriks and others have probably seen the implications of this, and were quick to explain it as a statement made by Rabe in the heat of the moment. The Labour Party often asks those who oppose participation what the alternative is. What would you say in the alternative? The alternative lies with the people. The Labour Party has presented the alternatives as either one goes into the P.C. or you embrace force and violence, by sneering, trying to say violence is the only alternative of the people who oppose. But clearly our strength lies with the people. In organised communities, schools and factories. Collectively we

## P.C. divides UDF unites

At the end of the Transvaal Anti-Saic Committee's (TASC) two day congress, delegates pledged to fight together side by side against the government's reform proposals, and formed a United Democratic Front (UDF) to do this. The UDF comes at a time when the government is seen to be increasing its efforts to divide the people. A statement by the committee formed to study the possibility of a united front, called all people to unite in struggle against 'the devious scheme to divide the people'. The UDF is an organisation to unite workers, students, communities and all people regardless of race. It is based on the principle of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

other oppressed and democratic minded people striving for a democratic country. People will have to work in the Trade Unions waging the battles for fair wages, fair working conditions, in the schools struggling for a democratic education, in the community for housing and low rents. We must co-operate with other communities as envisaged at United Democratic Front level, moving in the direction of a non-racial society. Apartheid and the laws of the country divided us; living in separate groups, and so therefore over the years, problems have arisen. There is an absolute need therefore that one responds to communities within their particular settings. People find themselves together as 'Indian' people or 'coloured' people. There is a need to organise at that level. Realising the realities of how we live, one welcomes in fact the formation of the TIC to rally the Indian community in the same sense one wants to rally the coloured community as well as the African community. To have vehicles based in the various communities is taking recognition of the realities. We must organise people at all levels of society and move forward to a non-racial, united and democratic society.



### PC cannot change rules

To my sorrow and fear we are in for a high jump. From my age, the last quarter of my life will be just as miserable as the past if not worse. Our suffering is getting too much. With the half-hearted P.C. offered to us, it still will not serve the needs of

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the poor and oppressed black communities. It surely will be a good service only to the top Labour Party leaders who have already overcome poverty and depression.

### SPEAK CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- DOWN**
- (1) Forced to leave school because of the new .....
  - (2) 1982 was declared International Year of .....
  - (5) Died in detention in February 1982.
  - (7) Proposal which attempts to divide our community.
  - (8) The rebel cricket ..... that caused controversy in SA.
  - (9) No normal ..... in an abnormal society.
  - (11) CRAC was formed in response to high .....

- ACROSS**
- (1) Abbreviation for Actonville Residents' Action Committee.
  - (4) Name of youth organisation that staged a successful festival in Lenasia last year.
  - (6) Adequate ..... should be provided at reasonable prices for homeless people.
  - (10) The ..... Party has gone against the wishes of the community by deciding to take part in the PC.
  - (12) 'Tireless fighter for Peace, Freedom and Democracy' ..... Saloojee.
  - (13) ..... Stop is an organisation fighting eviction of people under the Group Areas Act.
  - (14) National student body for black university students.

as for a place like Western where the higher class pass and just give us a side look, we are now forced by the Johannesburg City Council to buy these old slum houses and to rebuild them on our own expense after 22 years.

We have never had a future and the same applies to our teenagers. New houses have been built in the same conditions as the old slum, even with the Labour Party coloured management committees around us.

After 22 years of long suffering what will the rest of our lives be with the Presidents Council.

I can't see what change the P.C. will bring if the Government itself can't make the change. The P.C. will not be able to change rules. What purpose will they serve for the oppressed people.

We can only see the ghost of the late C.R.C. arise from the grave. Without the black people we cannot make South Africa a real Christian peaceful country.

Old slum resident Western.

### Tours do nothing good

The government wastes vast sums of money in order to entice sportsmen and women to come to SA while we, the true citizens of this country, are retrenched, pay high costs for food, clothing, transport and housing.

Only we know of the hardship and suffering of our people.

I am sure that I echo the views of the majority of Speak readers when I condemn the West Indian Cricket tour of South Africa.

S Patel Benoni.

## Union unity at Aggett meeting

1500 PEOPLE commemorated the first anniversary of the death in detention of Dr Neil Aggett at a meeting in Johannesburg on 5 February.

Dr Aggett was the secretary of the Transvaal branch of the African Food and Canning Workers Union.

Although the hall was packed, more people had been expected from the East Rand and Tembisa. However the buses did not arrive.

Every speaker condemned the findings of the inquest which found no-one responsible for Dr Aggett's death.

They also remembered the death in detention of Ernest Dipale. Dipale was found hanged in his cell at John Vorster Square.

The meeting was addressed by representatives of community and trade union organisations as well as friends and people who had worked with Dr Aggett.

The need for unity was the message hammered home by the speakers.

'Neil died for the work to which he dedicated himself; the formation of a strong, united and democratic trade union movement,' said Mr Israil Mokatle of the African Food and Canning Workers Union.

Neil fought tirelessly against divisions and disunity, in an effort to build up solidarity between unions, he said.

'The urgent need of the time,' said Sydney Mofumado of the General and Allied Workers Union, 'is to increase unity.'

'The best way to commemorate Neil is the unity of the trade union movement,' said Mr Phillip Masia of the Orange Vaal General Workers Union.

Speakers also emphasised the need to carry on the work that Dr Aggett had been doing.

### Women lead in Geluksdal

A RECENT mass meeting of Geluksdal residents decided to form an organisation to repre-



sent all people in that area and take up general community issues.

The Geluksdaal Women's League, which led the fight against recent rent increases, is to now transform itself into the Geluksdaal Residents Action Committee.

Mrs Helen Morgan, a leading member of the Women's League, said the Geluksdaal liaison committee was 'inactive'.

'Women decided to get on their feet and fight against the high rents. Our organisation grew and many men got involved too.'

'We will join up with the Co-ordinating Residents Action Committee (CRAC) and continue to struggle for our rights,' she said.

### Ukusa AGM

THE community newspaper in Durban, Ukusa, recently held its first annual general meeting.

The meeting was attended by more than 100 people representing 40 community, worker and student organisations.

Total control of Ukusa was handed over to these organisations. An Ukusa Media Association was set up to which all community, student and worker organisations can belong as members.

Ukusa was started in March 1981. In the beginning not many copies were sold.

In early 1982, a conference of community based and other interested organisations was held to try to find ways of

making Ukusa more successful. It was decided that the organisations should play a more active role in Ukusa by writing news and distributing the paper.

Now they distribute three times as many copies.

### Civic gets bus fares reduced

THE Mohlakeng Civic Association (Moca) has won a bus fare victory for some township residents.

At a meeting between the Greyhound bus company and Moca representatives it was agreed that scholar fares be excluded from the general fare increase in March.

Greyhound also agreed to demands by Moca that pensioners on their way to collect their pensions be allowed on buses free.

However fares for the majority of Mohlakeng residents will go up on 1 March.

The Greyhound manager also agreed to investigate Moca demands for bus shelters and for the reintroduction of round-the township routes in Mohlakeng. These were withdrawn during the 1976 uprisings.

### ARAC says council intransigent

THE Benoni Town Council has refused to refund Actonville residents overcharged for electricity.

A long campaign led by the Actonville Residents Action Committee (ARAC) against the high

electricity bills, included a petition drive and a meeting with the Actonville Management Committee.

- ARAC demanded:
- residents be refunded for the period overcharged
  - meters be regularly read and checked
  - residents be consulted on any increase
  - a card system be introduced
  - residents be informed at least 5 days before any electricity cut

Pressure from ARAC resulted in the last two demands being met.

The Town Council, however, refuses to refund residents.

Mr Padotan, chairperson of ARAC, accused the council of 'intransigence'.

'They refuse to recognise our grievances are legitimate. Even after admitting estimations were made where meters were inaccessible, and some were read for 6 week periods instead of 4,' he said.

### No shack raids in Vaal for a while

SHACK dwellers in the Vaal area have been given a temporary reprieve.

The Vaal Community Council decided to stop all raids and arrests until they had discussed the matter with the housing director, Mr Nicholas Louw.

The shack situation is becoming critical as thousands of people flock to the Vaal townships in search of work. Shacks spring up to accommodate them.

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# Orderly Movement how it affects you

**THE Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill** may be law by 1984.

The new laws will make life for most African people worse.

People will be forced to the Bantustans where there is no land and no jobs.

The government is also trying to push all the problems of the cities like unemployment, housing and education to the Bantustans.

## THE NEW LAW SAYS:

●No person may be in town at night between 10 pm and 5 am the

next day unless they have a permit and an approved place to stay. If anyone is found anywhere in town at night, they will be arrested.

●People living in squatter camps can be moved to any place decided by the Director-General. If such an order is made the people cannot go to court to try and stop the removal.

## ONLY THESE PEOPLE CAN LIVE IN TOWN:

●People who qualify as 'Permanent Urban Residents' (PUR). These are people who

- have lived in one

town ever since they were born

- have been registered in one job in one town for 10 years, or have a permit to live in one town for 15 years

- own houses under 99 year leasehold if they are citizens of South Africa or an 'independent' Bantustan.

●People who are South African citizens and have been legally living in a town for 10 years. This means people not from Transkei, Ciskei, Bophutatswana and Venda.

●People who were born in town, only if both their parents are qualified as PUR.

●Visitors with special permits, for only 14

days a year.

●People in hospital, until they are discharged.

●Night shift workers who have a permit to be in that job.

●People who are registered to look for work, if they have a permit.

## THE PUNISHMENTS:

●Anyone who allows a person to stay in their house at night without a permit, can be fined R500 or sent to jail for 6 months.

●Any person found in town between 10pm and 5am without a permit can be fined R500 or sent to jail for 6



Pushing people to the Bantustans where there is even less hope for a good life.

●A person found working or looking for work without a permit can be fined R500 or sent to jail for 6 months.

●Anyone who gives work to an un-registered person can

be fined R5000 or jailed for 12 months. These new laws are very strict. They will make the pass laws much worse.

All over the country people are against these laws.

In Soweto, at a

meeting of the Soweto Civic Association (SCA) these laws were attacked by community leaders.

The SCA said everyone must know what the laws really mean so people can fight against it.

# T B can be easily caught

## WHAT IS TB?

TB (tuberculosis) is an infection. It is caused by a germ which usually settles in people's lungs.

In South Africa doctors see 45,000 cases of TB every year. However, many people do not know when they have TB and so their cases are never recorded. In reality as many as 150,000 people may have the disease.



## WHY DO WE GET TB?

We are more likely to get TB because our houses are of poor quality and they are often overcrowded. Many of us do not have enough good food to eat, so our bodies are not strong and healthy.

We catch TB more easily if working conditions are unhealthy, especially on the mines. When workers go home, they take the sickness with them. Then their families and friends can also get TB.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU HAVE TB?

- You cough a lot, especially when you wake up.
- You feel hot during the afternoon and you sweat at night.
- You lose weight and become weak.
- You may have a pain in your chest or back.

When TB gets very bad, you cough up blood, your skin goes pale, and your voice gets very soft and scratchy.



## HOW CAN WE STOP THE SPREAD OF TB?

There will be less TB only when all people have jobs, good wages, and proper houses to live in. But even now there are steps we can take to control the spread of TB.

It is very easy to catch TB from someone who has it. If there is someone in your home who has TB you must be very careful:

- Everyone in the house should go to the nearest clinic for a medical check and TB tests.
- Children must be vaccinated against TB.
- Do not use each others handkerchiefs. Use tissues if necessary.
- Nobody should spit. In this way you can stop TB germs from spreading.
- Try to eat well to build up your health. Give young children milk to drink.

The persons who have TB must:

- Cover their mouth when coughing and never spit.
- Sleep as far away from children as possible.
- Remember to take their medicine.

## HOW IS TB TREATED?

TB can be cured. If you show any signs of TB, you must go to a clinic. At the clinic they will take an X-ray and do a sputum test.

If your TB is very bad, you will be given injections every day. Everyone with TB must also take pills.

Sometimes it takes as long as 2 years to cure TB. You must take the pills all this time. You must try to eat good food.



X-RAY



# Retrenchments - you could be next

## RETRENCHMENT - YOU COULD BE NEXT

EVERY day, workers all over SA are losing their jobs or being 'retrenched'.

Bosses are saying 'times are bad' and they are being forced to dismiss workers. For workers this means they are suddenly being thrown out of their jobs. This means no money for rent, repossession of furniture bought on Hire Purchase, and no money for food. Those who manage to keep their jobs know there are thousands of unemployed workers waiting to replace them if they complain about their wages or working conditions.

## WHY DOES RETRENCHMENT OCCUR?

Retrenchment occurs during an economic crisis called 'recession'.

During a recession, the bosses try to maintain their rate of profit. They do this at the expense of workers by cutting back on their labour costs, and dismissing large numbers of workers. While bosses and government say that retrenchments are unavoidable during a recession, they forget that a recession follows a 'boom' period in the economy.

In a 'boom' period bosses make very great profits. In fact SA had one of its greatest boom periods in its economy in the '79 to '82 period.

Bosses could use the high profits made in this period to support workers during the recession. Instead the workers who made the profits for the company are now put onto the streets. Moreover during recession inflation increases. Workers are faced with a rocketing of prices in household subsistence goods which makes their burden even heavier.

## HOW THE BOSSES BENEFIT FROM RETRENCHMENT

Bosses use retrenchment to weaken and disorganise worker organisation in the factory, e.g. by dismissing union leadership. But those workers who remain in employment are very overworked because bosses want to maintain a high level of production, and because these workers are often also doing the jobs of the retrenched workers.

If workers complain about the long hours and overwork, they are threatened with retrenchment.

Bosses use retrenchment to reorganise their factories and to replace workers with machinery.

Bosses sometimes provoke strikes when they want to retrench workers. This happened on the East Rand last

year when workers in many factories went on strike. The bosses dismissed the workers and re-employed them selectively. Many workers did not get their jobs back. The bosses benefitted because they effectively retrenched workers without paying any compensation for retrenchment.

It is only in factories where worker organisation is strong, that trade unions have negotiated with the bosses on the alternatives to and procedures of retrenchment.

## WHICH WORKERS AND WHAT SECTORS ARE AFFECTED BY RETRENCHMENT

Workers in all race groups and in all job categories, i.e. skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled face retrenchment.

At Iscor, 40 percent of 5,000 workers who were retrenched were white, and the remainder black. One of the largest groups affected are the unskilled workers.

The group hardest hit by retrenchment are the contract workers. Once they lose their jobs in the towns, they cannot find new jobs for themselves. Instead they are forced back to the homelands where jobs are scarce, or where they have to wait to be re-recruited for new employment in the cities. It will be even harder for these workers to get jobs in the cities once the 'Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons' bill becomes a law.

Almost all sectors have been affected by retrenchment. Those hardest hit have been the motor, metal, engineering, textile and mining industries.

At Solcast in Benoni, 600 workers lost their jobs in one day, and at the Veldspun textile factory in Uitenhage, 600 workers were retrenched, and a strike was used to dismiss a further 300 workers. At Sigma (motor company) in Pretoria, 1,350 workers were retrenched in 1982 and two-thirds of the remaining work-force went on short-time. In the mining industry in eight months in 1982, 15,000 workers lost their jobs. At one mine, West Rand Consolidated mine of the Gencor group, 3,340 workers lost their jobs when production was cut back.

This is how retrenchment affects larger factories. But there are many smaller factories, where workers are unorganised and whose retrenchments we do not hear about.

When a manager of a large East Rand Company was asked what he intended to do about 60 black workers facing retrenchment at his firm, he answered, 'What do you expect? We can't do anything. If you think this is bad ... the avalanche is

still coming!'

## WORKERS' RESPONSE TO RETRENCHMENT

The progressive trade union movement has refused to accept that 'nothing can be done about retrenchment'. The Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) says 'these companies did not retrench to stay in business but to maintain high profits'.

They further claim that

companies enjoyed record profits for some years due to the efforts of workers but nothing had been set aside to keep workers employed during recession.

The Council of Unions of SA (CUSA) at their national conference emphasised that everything should be done to cut costs before dismissing workers, and that special protection must be given to contract workers.

The South African

Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU), the General Workers' Union (GWU), the Federation of SA Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the Council of Unions of SA (CUSA) have all been faced with the problem of retrenchment, and have discussed strategies of how to fight it.

Trade Unions emphasise that all workers have the right to work and that the burden of lower wages must be shared equally by all

workers. But the trade unions are faced with the combined problem of building and strengthening their existing organisation, while at the same time protecting workers against retrenchment, which itself serves to weaken organisation.

## UNION STRATEGIES TO FIGHT RETRENCHMENT

Workers' most effective weapon is in their UNITY and COLLECTIVE ACTION. Workers need to work out strategies for dealing with retrenchment in their organisation.

Different trade unions have put forward suggestions on how they plan to fight retrenchment. Some of the alternatives suggested are:

- Managements must give factory committees or unions long notice of an intended retrenchment and provide full information explaining why a retrenchment is necessary. The time and information allows workers to think of alternatives to retrenchment.
- All overtime must be stopped. The bosses cannot be retrenching workers and still have enough work for overtime.
- Another alternative to retrenchment is short-time. By working short-time the number of hours which all workers work is reduced, so that the burden of the lack of work is shared. In the motor industry workers take unpaid leave in cycles, e.g. in a factory in Cape Town, all workers are taking 3 months leave in cycles over two years to prevent 40 workers being retrenched.

If retrenchment has to take place then the trade unions have suggested the following guidelines.

- 'Last in, first out' - workers with the shortest service be retrenched first. This prevents the bosses from getting rid of older workers who have given long years of service to the company.
- Workers must receive severance/redundancy pay according to the number of years they have served the company.
- The names and addresses of retrenched workers must be kept by the com-

pany, and they must be offered jobs first, if the company decides to re-employ workers.

- Bosses must use their contacts in other factories to find jobs for the retrenched workers.
- Workers must be made aware of their UIF rights - because they have contributed to these benefits.

Workers can fight retrenchment in different ways. However it is only in a society where there are neither booms and recessions that workers can be protected against retrenchment. During boom periods, there is still unemployment, rising cost of living and wages are never high enough to uplift the workers' standard of living. During recession this situation worsens. Thus neither booms nor recessions benefit the workers.

## THE LONG TERM FIGHT AGAINST RETRENCHMENT

Workers can fight retrenchment in different ways. However it is only in a society where there are neither booms and recessions that workers can be protected against retrenchment. During boom periods, there is still unemployment, rising cost of living and wages are never high enough to uplift the workers' standard of living. During recession this situation worsens. Thus neither booms nor recessions benefit the workers.

A member of the General Workers' Union said:

'In a different kind of society, factories will always be working because workers will have the money to buy the goods they need, factories will produce goods that workers need, and workers will work shorter working hours, and have more time to spend on their leisure.'

Workers must be assured of the RIGHT TO WORK and have a say in HOW THE ECONOMY IS RUN and the allocation of resources.

In our present society the government chooses to spend vast sums of money of defence, administering influx control, and propping up apartheid laws, rather than on social services such as education, housing, health and transport.

In our present situation of high unemployment the government could spend more on job creation schemes, shortening the working week, and less on machinery and more on people.

Workers today face many problems. But it is only by UNITING, ORGANISING and forming STRONG WORKER ORGANISATIONS that workers will be able to meet the challenge facing them.



It is very difficult for retrenched worker to find new jobs. They may queue patiently for many days in slight hope of regaining employment.

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