

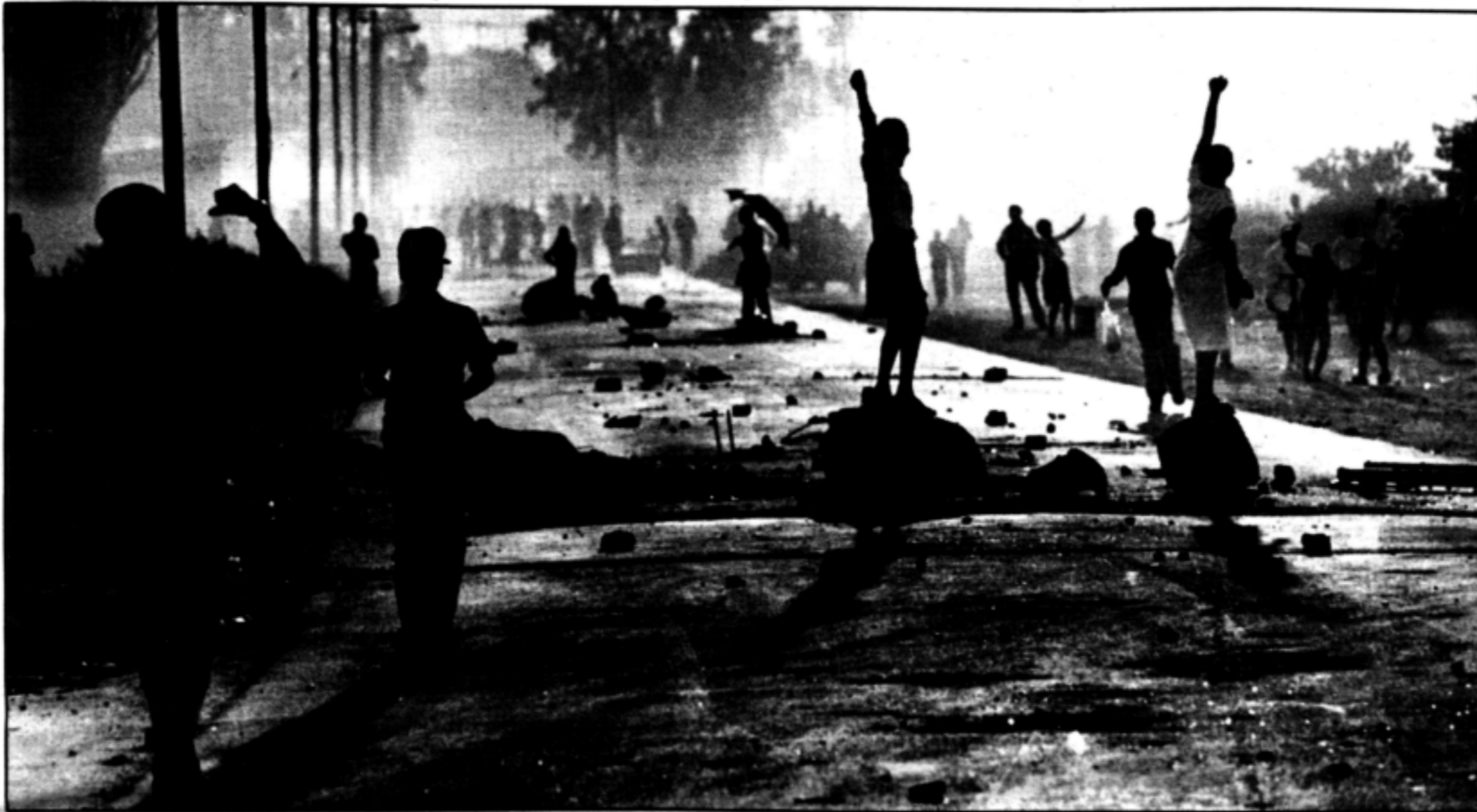
SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY



SPEAK demands the immediate release of our chairperson, Murphy Morobe and all other detainees.

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Clenched fists and barricades — the people take to the streets

Christmas will be very quiet as people mourn

Christmas this year is expected to be a lot more quiet as communities throughout the Transvaal respond to a call by numerous organisations for a "Black Christmas".

The call which has the backing of the United Democratic Front, Fosatu, Azapo and the Federation of South African Women has been made in respect to the many victims of recent unrest, and friends and families grieving their loss.

For people affected by the

unrest, and almost everyone in the townships is in some way or the other Christmas is a sad time without their loved ones, who are dead, in hospital, or in jail.

Christmas is also difficult to celebrate for the thousands who have lost their jobs.

'A dark cloud has descended on our townships,' a unionist said.

'With over 150 people dead, our leaders detained, many people arrested, others still nursing injuries we have nothing to

celebrate.'

At a meeting convened by the United Democratic Front, many worker, student, political, women and youth organisations endorsed "Black Christmas" call.

The organisations are asking people to cut down on luxuries and to buy only essentials for Christmas.

People are also urged not to hold Christmas parties or to moderate celebrations.

The UDF is to print a special Christmas card

which calls on people to remember those killed, detained, and dying of hunger in the Bantustans.

'Never forget an injury to one is an injury to all,' it ends.

These cards will be sold by affiliate organisations of the UDF.

'People are urged to buy these cards instead of the ordinary Christmas cards,' a UDF official said.

Mass and prayer meetings are to be held all over the Transvaal to spread the message about

Black Christmas.

In different areas organisations are deciding on different forms of activity to implement Black Christmas.

'The Black Christmas campaign will show the government and the bosses that we are still united and determined to fight for our demands,' a speaker at the meeting said.

Organisations said the demands that have not been met include:

●The police and army must leave our townships and end

their campaign of terror.

●Detainees must be released.

●Students demands must be met.

●Workers dismissed during the stay-away must be reinstated.

This is the second time in almost ten years that a call for a Black Christmas has been made. The first time was in 1976 after 600 people were killed in a nationwide uprising.

Christmas that year was extremely quiet.

UDF youth plan to celebrate the year of the youth

Youth and student organisations affiliated to the United Democratic Front and representing youth organisations country-wide met recently in Lenasia to discuss International Youth Year (IYY).

The UDF National Executive Committee called on its affiliated youth organisations to discuss the viability of taking up the IYY.

'Taking into account that the youth face problems like unemployment, inferior education, conscription and various other things which make the lives of young people a misery and contribute to the degradation of young people, it was agreed that the IYY become an opportunity to highlight the conditions of the people, and particularly the youth of South Africa,' a spokesperson said.

The IYY was also seen as an opportunity to mobilise and reach out to the masses of young people to take up issues like education, sporting activities and conscription.

The meeting set up a National Interim Committee to form local and regional committees and prepare for a national launch early next year.

The UDF and its youth affiliates called on the youth of South Africa to actively participate in the IYY and to make their voices heard.

The theme of the IYY is "participation, development and peace."

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Detentions:
How many more?

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The people of the Vaal talk

Centrespread



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New local government — no benefit

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Death confronts us all

'Death confronts each and every family' This is how a Sebokeng resident described the situation in the township. It is a situation faced by many people in many townships

While the police and councillors tell stories of agitators shot dead threatening them with stones and petrol bombs, residents tell stories of peaceful protests met with bullets, teargas and sjamboks.

They tell stories of young children shot dead while on their way to buy bread; of little babies suffocating after breathing in teargas; of women killed by stray bullets on their way to back yard toilets

Over one hundred people have died as a result of police action in recent months

Speak pays tribute to the strength and courage of the communities affected, and extends its condolences to the friends and families of all those who have died.



Thousands have attended the funerals of victims of the uprisings - as they do here in Thokoza.

Mineworkers still suffer despite legal strike

A calm has returned to the mines after a brief one-day strike on September 17 - but life will never be the same again for the mineworkers and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). They will always remember the violence which accompanied their historic strike. It was the first time black mineworkers went on a legal strike in South Africa.

But, said NUM's general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa, it did not seem to matter in the end whether the strike was legal or not - police exercised little restraint during the strike.

Police used buckshot, rubber bullets and teargas at Waterpan - a section of the Western Areas Mine - when mine authorities called them in 'to restore order.'

At the end of the

strike the death toll was nine, with several hundred mineworkers injured. "Police just moved in and started to shoot rubber bullets and buckshot," said Mr Ramaphosa.

"Our members are beginning to ask themselves whether or not it is worth it to engage in a legal strike when police action is just as harsh as in the event of an illegal strike."

Mr Ramaphosa said NUM was investigating legal action against the police.

"Our members' wish to engage in peaceful legal industrial action was severely interfered with when police harassed and intimidated our members on a number of Free State mines," he said.

"We are sad that our members had to pay such a heavy price to achieve their demands. The strategies we had set

up would have ensured a peaceful strike."

The Chamber of Mines made a last-minute concession on September 16 - a day before the strike was to take place.

But by then it was too late to inform NUM's 40 000 members on the eight mines affected that the Chamber had changed its offer, and improved its leave pay arrangements.

"We believed all



Cyril Ramaphosa, NUM general secretary: 'peaceful action was severely interfered with by police.'

along that the dispute could be settled," said Mr Ramaphosa. "But the Chamber wanted a showdown with the union in the hope of destroying us before we became a bigger threat to them in later years."

"The strike proved once and for all that NUM has the support of the workers. It should be an indication that once we have taken a decision to strike, we will go ahead."

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Westbury residents demand a better housing deal

WESTBURY - Residents of Westbury Extension 3 are not paying increased rent to the Johannesburg City Council until there is agreement on conditions under which homes are to be bought by residents.

The sale of homes comes after a long battle by residents for the development of the slum area.

Numerous campaigns waged by the Westbury Residents Action Committee (Wrac) finally forced the council to build better homes. The building of the houses was made possible by a loan from the Department of Community Development.

But the conditions of sale are unacceptable to residents.

Residents reject the choice of 'buy or rent' put to them by the council. As far as they are concerned they have already started paying towards their

houses.

Monthly rent paid by tenants, not only pays for the services in the area, but is also repayment of the loan to the Department of Community Development.

"We are not prepared to go to any bank to get a loan. It is besides our pockets," one resident said.

In a petition drawn up by residents, the following demands were put to the council:

- Rent paid thus far must be seen as a deposit on the buying price of the houses.

- Instalments to be paid must remain the same as the current rent, so that people have enough money for basic necessities.

- Those who can afford to pay more should be allowed to do so, but nobody should be forced to pay more than the normal rent.

- Houses should not be sold for more than their original price. A

newspaper reported in 1981 that the houses cost R4000 to R5000. Residents reject the R12 000 to R14 000 the council is now demanding.

"We are being robbed in broad daylight," a resident said. ● Instalments should be decreased for unemployed people until they find jobs.

- An insurance policy whereby the beneficiaries own the house when its owner dies. The policy should also cover damage by natural causes.

- Pensioners should not be moved out of the area. A pensioner's rent (instalment) should also be seen as payment for the house, except where children buy the house for the pensioner.

- A 25% reduction in the selling price to compensate for defects through bad building standards.

Diepkloof Civic slams Putco service

DIEPKLOOF - Putco sees it fit to increase bus fares by 12,5% but does not keep to the promises it made to Diepkloof residents concerning the inadequate service in the area.

For months the Diepkloof Civic Association (DCA) has been calling meetings, sent delegations, and wrote to Putco demanding that services be improved.

Putco either made certain promises or promised "to look into the matter", yet nothing has come of their promises, residents say.

The DCA had



Putco bus service under attack from Diepkloof residents

demanding that trip cards allowing for a set number of trips be introduced because the present system of weekly and monthly cards works against commuters when there is a public holiday or a commuter is off sick.

Putco replied that other companies

which introduced trip cards are making a loss.

But a DCA official pointed out that: "If these trip cards were not profitable then other companies would surely discontinue them."

"Putco is trying everything to 'stick' to their present system."

To DCA's demand that pensioners and the physically disabled be allowed free on the buses, Putco said this was done on pensioners pay out day.

"Obviously crippled people could ride the buses free during off peak hours," Putco said. But pensioners

cannot ride free all the time because Putco would not be able to control it.

However, argued the civic, what might not be obvious to Putco may be obvious to the DCA. The DCA wanted Putco to decide upon definite criteria and they volunteered to print iden-

tity documents for all disabled people and pensioners. Putco evaded the issue by promising to refer it to the board of directors.

A DCA official said Putco should provide pensioners free transport "since these people contributed to Putco's wealth when they were young."

"If Putco can sponsor able bodied football teams, then why not the more deserving pensioners," he asked.

In April, Putco made numerous other promises to the DCA. These include:

- Printing and distributing of bus time-

tables.

- Allowing residents to name major bus stops and terminals.

- Introducing new routes within, and between Diepkloof and other Soweto areas if the DCA proved the need for them.

None of these promises have been met.

On bus fare increases, the DCA says Putco promised to consult the community. But when Putco applied to the Road Transportation Board to increase fares in December, the DCA was merely informed.



The way forward for women's organisation in the Transvaal will be discussed at a women's conference on December 8 and 9. All women are welcome to attend.

Transvaal women to form organisation

Forward we march

'Women unite against Botha's new deal' was the call of Transvaal women during the recent anti-election campaign.

This year's National Womens Day programme was the most widely supported in almost 20 years. Close to 3000 women representing 16 groups from all areas in the Transvaal took part in the four day programme.

The call against GST, conscription, passes, forced removals and the Apartheid constitution was heard throughout the country.

In the Transvaal, the

women who participated came from churches, the rural areas, domestic workers, the factories and the communities.

"But this programme was only the beginning," an organiser of the Transvaal Interim Committee said.

"We have learnt how to organise. We met women from other areas and saw that our problems are one.

Many people sat up and have come to see how important it is for our women to be united and organised."

In June, a workshop decided to hold a conference to form a womens organisation.

The conference will be held on December 8 and 9.

"Now that August 9 is behind us, it is time to plan ahead," a member of one of the women's groups said. "We believe that a womens organisation in the Transvaal will unite us and fight for our rights. We know that we too have a role to play in the struggle for a better future for our children."

The Interim Committee will be reaching out to women in the rural areas in preparation for the conference.

Women's groups who would like to be part of the con-

ference are welcome to join the Interim Committee.

"We have a rich tradition of organisation and mobilisation of women in our country," an organiser said.

"We draw our strength from the Women's Charter adopted by the Federation of South African Women in 1954.

"We call all people's organisations to support our women. We believe that our people can never be free while our women are in chains".

For further information, contact Speak at 339-3975

Scraping barrel to find 'leaders'

Extremely low polls were recorded in management committee elections in a number of townships recently as people refused to go to the polls.

2,8% and 6,1% is all that candidates in two Lenasia wards can boast as their claim to representation. In the five other wards in Lenasia, candidates were appointed to the management committee unopposed.

"The fact that so few people offered themselves as candidates shows the extent to which these bodies are discredited," a spokesperson for the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) said.

Organisations which called for a boycott of the elections -- the TIC, Federation of Residents Association (FRA), the Lenasia Football Association (LFA) -- condemned individuals who are still prepared to serve on these dummy bodies 'despite the communities overwhelming rejection'.

A statement issued by the organisations said: 'The management committee has failed to address the day to day problems and needs of our people...it allows discredited individuals to parade as leaders. Those who participate do so for their own selfish interests while our people's sufferings go unheeded.'

The TIC said that out of a total of 45 000 eligible voters in Lenasia, only 0,28% had cast their votes.

The percentage polls in Noordgesig, Eldorado Park and Riverlea were not released to the press.

'The polls were probably so low that the authorities are embarrassed to make them public', a resident in Riverlea said.

While in Noordgesig, residents said not more than 400 people had voted in their area.

'The non-participation of people in the elections proves that people have no confidence in the ability of these individuals who offer themselves as candidates to represent the needs of the community,' said a spokesperson from the Transvaal Anti-PC.

'They are showing they reject undemocratic government bodies,' she said.



Education for democracy

"March forward to a people's education," is the slogan for the Education Charter Campaign recently launched by school pupils, university students and democratically minded teachers from all over the Transvaal.

In tribute to the thousands of students whose schools were closed down as a result of their protests for a decent education, the

Transvaal launch took place in Atteridgeville.

A heavy police presence did not deter the more than thousand delegates crowded in a church hall in the township.

"The Education Charter must be a document of the people, by the people and for the people," Frank Chikane, vice-president of the UDF said.

"The campaign will give us a chance to go to our people, talk to our people and give them a chance to explain exactly what kind of education they want for themselves and their children."

"The Charter will not be drawn up by a few people - everybody will be able to have a hand. The UDF stands fully behind this democratic act," Rev. Chikane said.

Organisers intend the charter to spell out the educational demands, not only of students, but also of their parents and teachers.

Lulu Johnson, the president of Cosas, said at a conference before the launch that the "charter must be a guiding light in our struggles for a non-racial democratic education system in years to come".

The vice-president of Azaso said the campaign can help build 'people's organisations'.

"Regional education charter committees have been elected in most regions and student/parent and teacher action committees will also be formed," he said.

"In this way parent-student and teacher-student relationships can be fostered and

the whole community can be rallied together to voice their demands".

Amanda Kwadi of the Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw) told the launch how in 1953 when the government closed down schools after boycotts, mothers turned their two roomed houses into schools to give their children an alternative education.

Community roars with favour as workers down Simba crown

United action by workers and the community forced Simba Quix to reinstate 464 workers who were fired from the Isando factory in August.

The workers - all members of the Sweet Food and Allied Workers' Union (SFAWU) - called for a country-wide boycott of all Simba products

Traders, community and student organisations and trade unions rallied to the call.

The workers went on strike after management refused to reinstate three colleagues dismissed in May. The company argued that the period for a wildcat strike without dismissals was 72 hours.

Management refused to reconsider its actions, saying that it had problems communicating with black workers and had decided to replace them with a coloured workforce.

SFAWU challenged

this decision alleging racism on the part of the company. They called for a boycott of all Simba products.

Workers issued pamphlets, stickers and posters to inform people about the boycott and to rally support for it.

The employment of coloured workers to replace Africans angered the Reiger Park Tenants and Ratepayers Association and the Boksburg Youth.

It was pointed out

that once coloureds joined unions and made demands, they could face the same fate as their African brothers and sisters.

Many of the coloured workers resigned after they realised they were being used to replace the African workers.

"We couldn't take jobs of people who have been working there for so many years and who could lose their Section 10 rights," said Leonard Louw - one of those

who resigned.

The pressure of the boycott and SFAWU's renewed efforts for reinstatement won the workers a double victory.

Early in November Simba Quix and SFAWU announced that all the workers would be reinstated and they would receive "interim relief pay" for November and December.

In a joint statement SFAWU and Simba said it was agreed that the workers would return on January 2 and that the boycott would be called off immediately.

The statement added

Huhudi victory, but it's 'limited'

HUHUDI - The people of Huhudi have a promise from Pretoria that their township will not be destroyed - but they ask, will only some of them be allowed to go on living there? If so, the government faces a head-on battle led by the Huhudi Civic Association (Huca) to ensure that not a single person will be forced out of the township.

Huca views Minister Gerrit Viljoen's reprieve of the township near Vryburg not as an outright victory, but as just one battle in a continuous struggle. "We rejoice that Huhudi will remain, but this is only a chip off the rock" was its immediate reaction to the announcement.

Huca points out that Dr Viljoen set some disturbing conditions when he announced that Huhudi would not be removed in its entirety to Pudimoe in Bophuthatswana.

The first of these was that the 14 000-strong township be developed within its existing boundaries. Huca points out that the township is grossly overcrowded as a result of a 14-year building freeze. Although some vacant stands will now be open for development this will not solve the problem, it says.

To speak of the full development of Huhudi "within its present boundaries is a contradiction in terms," says Huca.



Flashback to 1983: Huhudi residents begin their fight to keep their homes. After a long battle they won

Unless overcrowding can be eased, the quality of life cannot be substantially improved.

A second major point of concern is that the renewal of Huhudi will depend on the ability of residents to pay. Huca says that the people have had to pay unreasonably high rents for years for decaying buildings. It believes they have built up enough credit in this way to expect subsidies on develop-

ment.

Thirdly, condemned dwellings - which make up about one third of the township - are to be demolished. It is not clear what will happen to the tenants of these homes - especially if they do not have the cash to redevelop the sites in a way acceptable to the authorities.

Finally, the question of urban rights and ejection of the 'illegals' was not addressed by Dr Viljoen's announcement.

Huca says that in a township where black settlement predated the arrival of whites "people haven't taken section 10 rights seriously". As one member puts it "We've presumed we've always been here." As a result many people haven't bothered to get their documents in order.

Others born in the township have been forced to leave their families behind and take work elsewhere. The law is such that

they may have lost their birth right to live in Huhudi.

The reprieve of Huhudi was negotiated by Pretoria with representatives of the Huhudi business community and the community council. The door was firmly shut on Huca, which commands a following of thousands in the township.

Huca suspects that the township is being retained for the sake of a convenient labour supply and that the

parties who spoke to the government did not defend the surplus people - the 'illegals', the unemployed and the old.

On the eve of the reprieve over 1 000 residents resolved to stand united. And the unusually politicised rural township roared its approval when United Democratic Front President Mrs Albertina Sisulu warned that removals were a ploy to break the political resistance that was taking root in the townships.

Indira Gandhi's guiding light still kindles our struggle

'The Indian Community should be guided by the principles which Indira Gandhi stood for in the choices that they make in this country.'

This was the theme of the memorial service for Indira Gandhi held by the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) East Rand branch in Actonville.

Similar meetings were organised by the Womens Cultural Society in Johannesburg, and by the Yuvak Mandal, TIC, Hindu Seva Samaj and other religious organisations in Lenasia.

The meetings were all extremely well attended by all sections of the community. Religious songs, 'bhajans' and freedom songs were chanted in tribute to Indira Gandhi.

Speakers at the prayer meetings included Mr A.R. Dawood, Dr Sam Carim, Albertina Sisulu, a UDF presi-



Albertina Sisulu praised Mrs. Gandhi and Ella Ramgobin, great grand daughter of Mahatma Gandhi.

'In paying tribute to Indira, one could either shed tears and forget what she stood for or one would integrate what she stood for in the work that we do,' said Ella Ramgobin at the Actonville meeting.

It was Indira's plea that if the Indian community wanted to be considered part of Africa they would have to identify with the aspirations of the majority of the people.

Indira Gandhi's government took an active stand against apartheid. In 1947, India was the first

country to highlight the plight of South Africa's oppressed people at the United Nations.

Recently, Indira Gandhi, called on South Africans of Indian origin not to vote in the recent elections.

Like the oppressed people of this country, Mrs Gandhi's government also regards the Rajbansis and the Hendrickses, as traitors to the cause of democracy, a TIC statement said.

'In view of the fact that Mrs Gandhi had been a staunch fighter against apartheid, Congress considers as hypocritical the expression of condolences by PW Botha, Rajbansi, Reddy and Poovalingum,' said the statement.

Indira also pledged unwavering commitment to the struggle of the Namibian people in the last statement she made concerning Southern Africa.

ALEXANDRA - Over 1 000 people of all ages and from all walks of life packed the Mobuhle Hall in Alexandra for a Cultural Day organised by the Alexandra Youth Congress (Ayco).

The occasion was also a celebration of the first anniversary of Ayco.

In his first anniversary message, the president of Ayco, Paul Mashatile, praised the youth of Alexandra for building an organisation catering for their aspirations.

He encouraged the youth to continue involving themselves in the activities of their organisation.

Activities like this cultural day, he said, gathered the youth to

Ayco - Sow the seeds for a national culture

share ideas and explore their potential.

Items on the programme included: ●Gumboot dancing by the local Thabisong Youth Club.

●A poem by a member of the Thusong Youth Club which described how working people live in overcrowded homes and had to wake up early to get to work.

●Singing by a joint choir from the Alexandra branch of Cosas and Ayco.

●A play by the Thabisong Youth Club depicting the barriers between men and women and the domination of women

by men.

The Mapantsula jivers thrilled the audience with their acrobatic antics. A member of Ayco described the jive as a reflection of the type of life oppressed people live.

The chairperson of Ayco delivered a paper on the role of culture in society and emphasised the need to organise around culture.

Breakdancing, Mapantsula jive and other kinds of culture need to be accepted on the basis that they are for the people and by the people, and developed to their fullest, he said.

'We need to develop a national culture for the people, of the people and by the people'.

An Ayco organiser said the Cultural Day was one of their most successful activities, 'bringing the youth together to learn, share and develop their skills'.

It has also brought about solidarity and a unity of the youth of Alex, he said.

The Chairperson of the Ayco Education and Cultural Committee, closed the programme with a vote of thanks to all those who performed and who attended from far and near.

Jodac pulls an ace over ban on meetings

JOHANNESBURG - An unusual leaflet was issued by the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (Jodac) when their plans to hold a protest meeting on the eve of the opening of the new parliament was disrupted by the ban on all meetings until 30 September.

The leaflet, entitled

"This is not an invitation to a public meeting", called on all democratic whites to support and join democratic organizations.

The low poll in the coloured and Indian elections, the failure of the Black Local Authorities and the widespread school boycotts were high-

lighted in the leaflet.

"These issues contrast starkly with the pomp, parade and propoganda issuing from the opening of the new parliament," it read.

"Government ministers must be finding it increasingly difficult to sleep at night - their constitutional strategy is collapsing in the

face of widespread opposition."

The leaflet was posted to all Jodac members who would have attended the meeting to voice their opposition to the new deal, police action in the Vaal and other townships, and the government's onslaught against the UDF.

TIC pledges solidarity with UDF

LENASIA - The massive boycott of the August elections was not only a victory for Indians and coloureds but for Africans as well, former Azaso president Tiego Moseneke told a mass meeting in Lenasia.

The meeting called by the Transvaal Indian Congress to demand the release of all detainees and to express solidarity with the UDF was attended

by about 1000 people. "I thank the Indian and coloured people, and I know I do not speak for myself - for displaying their solidarity with the African people by boycotting the elections," said Mr Moseneke.

Referring to the unrest in the Vaal, he said, Law and Order Minister Louis le Grange has the audacity to blame 'agitators' and the UDF of being behind the unrest.

"It is an insult to our people. The recent events are a direct result of the sufferings of our people."

He warned the community not to be fooled by the government when it "goes out of its way to use incidents such as looting of Indian shops in the Vaal to divide the oppressed people".

Dr Allan Boesak said the UDF is not responsible for the

thousands of laws which people abhor.

He warned the government it will 'pay dearly' if the UDF is banned.

Dr Boesak also spoke of his trip overseas to address foreign governments on the situation in South Africa.

"It is not fair to leave them to the propaganda of the South African consulates in their countries," he

said.

"I told them that the main problem with the constitution, is the constitution itself and not the fact that it excludes Africans.

"The people in South Africa want to pick their own leaders and draw up their own constitution."

Natal Indian Congress executive member Zac Yacoob spoke on his unsuccessful bid to see Margret



Zac Yacoob

Thatcher to force her to intervene on behalf of the Durban Six holed up in the British

consulate.

"I came to the conclusion that Britain is a supporter of the South African Government. The only reason she did not kick the UDF and NIC leaders out of the consulate is because she is scared she may lose more votes to the Labour Party in the next elections."

A message of solidarity from the three remaining UDF leaders in the consulate - Archie Gumede, Billy Nair and Paul David - was read at the meeting.

Naledi civic wins victory for residents

NALEDI - Naledi residents have won their fight for the suspension of a R5 wiring fee for electricity.

The West Rand Development Board (WRDB) agreed to suspend the fee after meeting with a delegation led by the Naledi Civic Association (NCA).

The delegation was a result of a residents meeting called by the NCA to discuss the many problems concerning electricity.

Complaints

Residents complaints included:

- High electricity bills
- The R5 wiring fee
- The fact that residents who installed their own electricity have to pay the same price as those whose electricity was installed by the Soweto Council.

Residents decided not to pay their accounts unless their problems were seen to.

The meeting also decided that the NCA send a delegation to WRDB. Street representatives were elected to collect evidence for the delegation.

Residents gave the NCA copies of their high bills and letters from the Board.

Delegation

When the NCA delegation met Nico Malan, WRDB Director, he said electricity bills were high and everybody had to pay the same amount because electricity was being upgraded.

This means that electricity cables are being repaired and also new cables being laid.

However as one resident commented: "We are not seeing the benefits of upgrading, but only feeling the financial pinch."

High costs

"We wanted to know why the costs were so high in comparison with other companies, and why did WRDB have to choose such an expensive company to be responsible for upgrading," a member of the delegation said.

"We also questioned why WRDB buys electricity from Eskom when it is cheaper to obtain from the Johannesburg City Council."

"Malan promised to take up the case of high electricity bills. We demanded to be informed when meters are read so that when the meter readers come, we can see how our meters are read."

"Malan also said it may be possible for residents to pay the full amount for wiring and cabling instead of paying a levy each month," the member said.

"Residents will pay less this way because they won't have to pay interest."

Meters

The NCA is also demanding that electricity meters be set up in residents' yards and not in the streets.

The NCA took up the problem of electricity after carrying out a survey in Naledi to find out what problems residents face. Other problems include: street lighting, bad transport services and water meters.

The Naledi Civic intends looking into these problems in the future.



Residents at a Soweto Civic Association meeting

SCA calls for strong organisation

SOWETO - "To ensure that our demands are met and goals achieved we must build organisations with clearly defined realistic goals and strengthen existing organisations."

This call for unity and strong democratic organisations was made by the Soweto Civic Association (SCA) recently.

Branches of the SCA have taken up this call. Presently two of the branches - the Diepkloof Civic

Association and the Naledi Civic Association are fighting against high electricity charges, inefficient transport services, and pension problems affecting their areas.

In its statement the SCA urged all students and teachers, workers, traders and professionals to help build and strengthen people's organisations.

The SCA stands for the scrapping of all undemocratic laws and of the community councils.

The SCA calls for democratically elected representatives of the people, democratic, free and compulsory education, and adequate medical and health care.

Its demands are:

- Scrapping the electricity levy and levy paid for upgrading the sewerage system.
- Proper maintenance of the township
- Provision for the aged and pensioners.
- Building of houses for rental.
- Decrease of the present rents.

Still no reply from Board on rent complaints

DIEPKLOOF - More than five months have passed and still the West Rand Development Board has not responded to a Diepkloof Civic Association (DCA) memorandum complaining about rent and services in the area.

The memorandum - sent in May - called for clarification on how rent is determined; condemned raids on rent defaulters; and complained about the unnecessary delay and discourtesy residents experience at rent offices.

DCA demanded that raids on the rent defaulters be scrapped and that notices be sent to those concerned to remind them to pay.

Tenants must be given the right to present their case before being evicted, the DCA said.

The DCA suggested that since pensioners have worked all their lives contributing to South Africa and received very little money, they should not be charged rent.

Pensioners must also be spared the "dehumanising experience" of waiting for their pensions in long queues in severe weather.

"Instead their pensions should be sent to the post office to be collected at any time."

The continuous interruption of elec-

tricity bills also cause residents much concern.

"The digging and redigging of trenches leaves one with a feeling that those assigned to do the work do not know their work", the DCA said.

It demanded that:

- Electricity meters be correctly read at regular intervals.
- Electricity bills be made simple so that residents can understand them.
- If electricity is going to be cut off for a long period, consumers get at least 30 days notice.
- About high water bills, the DCA says that either the old meters are faulty or that meter readers estimate water consumption instead of actually reading the meters.

Water is also cut off without prior notification.

DCA demanded that if water is to be cut off then:

- Public hailers be used to alert people.
- Residents be notified at least one day in advance.
- Mobile tankers supply emergency water.

While residents pay for the maintenance of streets, refuse and sewerage removal, water and electricity supplies, these services are not adequately provided and in many cases not at all, said the DCA.

New parliament did not stop rent increase

REIGER PARK - Only a week after the August elections, Reiger Park residents were rudely awakened

- some as early as 4.30am - to be informed by Boksburg Town Council officials of a R10 rent increase effective from October 1.

Residents are furious over the increases and the manner in which they were informed.

"We are very much annoyed," one resident said.

"These increases come just after the Coloured elections. This is proof that the Coloured Manage-

ment Committee and the new parliaments are toothless. Not one of them objected. They may even have agreed," he said.

Residents were woken up to sign notices confirming they had been informed about the increases.

"It seems the council is using a 'cloak and dagger' approach to inform people of the increases," another resident said.

"It can best be described as 'donkerwerk is konkelwerk'," said the resident.

Mr. George du Plessis, of the Transvaal

Anti-PC and secretary of Reiger Park Tenants and Ratepayers Association, said residents had approached him to see what could be done about the increases.

Many residents told him they would not be able to afford the increases.

Nothing will stop the people's march to freedom

Today, thousands of pupils are on boycott demanding their education rights. Entire communities take to street against rent increases. More and more workers down tools for higher wages and better working conditions. Community councillors resign daily and massive stay aways shake the Government.

Bannings and bullets, army and police, tear-gas, and sjamboks, dogs and detentions, fail to stop the growing waves of resistance.

South Africa is in a state of civil war.

When the government first introduced its new constitution, its new parliament and its community councils — it talked of change for the better. This is the only way to ensure peace, progress and stability, it said. Yet South Africa has never more been racked by such turmoil.

Democratic organisations of the people long warned that implementing the new constitution against the will of the people will only cause greater strife and conflict in our country. Who today can deny this truth.

Townships burning

The townships are burning — not because of instigators and agitators — but because a minority government stubbornly holds on to its undemocratic rule through brute force.

Under the new constitution, life for the majority of our people has become more difficult.

Bankrupt local town councils bulldoze rent and service charge increases. Waiting lists for homes grow longer under the new housing policy. Influx control and Group Area laws are tighter. Overcrowded classrooms, the age-limit law, corporal punishment, poor schooling facilities — all get worse under an unequal education system. Working people struggle to survive under retrenchment and unemployment, low wages and high prices.

Disastrous policies

The uprisings in our country are a direct result of the disastrous policies of the government.

Is it not clear to the government and its supporters that the new constitution has failed? That their strategy for maintaining Apartheid has not worked ... and cannot work?

By continuing to forcibly secure white domination and privilege for the few, the government is pushing South Africa headlong into violent confrontation.

The people want nothing less than an equal say in an undivided South Africa. Their resolve and determination to achieve such a future grows in bounds every day.

Nothing but the granting of full political rights and the fair distribution of the country's wealth will stop this march for freedom.

Hamba kahle Bongani!

Bongani Khumalo was shot dead in Soweto on September 13 during recent unrest. Police claim he threw a petrol bomb at them. Eye-witnesses say other circumstances surround his death.

Bongani who was an executive member of COSAS, always stood up for the rights of students, and a colleague pays tribute to him here for his contribution to the struggle for a democratic education.



Comrade Bongani Khumalo was a non-violent student just fighting for democratic rights in our country.

Bongani was born in Natal in 1963. At the age of 19, he saw the need to oppose the unjust education system. He joined Cosas, not just for the sake of being a member, but to actively involve himself with the problems

experienced by his fellow students. He knew students could only win their demands through struggle; through unity and through organization.

Bongani was a true democrat, and his commitment ran deep. His stand for educational rights was legiti-

mate.

The minority rulers fail to realise that it is not Bongani who is the "instigator", but separate and unequal education. The bullet that claimed Bongani's life will not solve the education problems students have.

We students mourn the loss of a brother who sacrificed for our futures, and our parents mourn the loss of a dedicated and responsible son.

We will never forget Bongani's contribution to the cause for peace and justice, and we commit ourselves to continuing the struggle he gave his life for.

Hamba Kahle.



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

Congrats Tutu on peace prize

I want to congratulate Bishop Tutu on being awarded the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for his opposition to apartheid. At the same time the Nationalist Government is being reminded that during its rule two South African opponents of apartheid have been awarded this prize.

In 1960, Chief Albert Luthuli, then president of ANC, was awarded this prize.

The award of the Noble prize also acknowledges the fact that the the South African governments' apartheid policy has been universally condemned.

However it seems to me that the powers in

Pretoria are completely insensitive to criticism and would rather bury their heads in the sand then face reality.

Theresa Peters
Bosmont

Councillors only there to oppress

The past few months have proved that stooge community councils are only there to oppress us further.

The community councils are not given any money by the government, yet we pay the same taxes as the whites. But the councillors are too spineless to say that the government must do something about this.

Instead they decide to raise our rents

because that is the only way they can make money. These councillors know very well that our people cannot afford to pay as much as half their small wages for rent, but the people's problems don't seem to worry them.

Now they say that the rent issue in the Vaal Triangle was the spade work of 'agitators'. Can't they face the fact that the people were just not happy with the set up? The community was never consulted when councillors decided to just increase rents left and right.

Resistance was displayed by unity of the entire community. Houses of the drivers of rent increases were attacked. People were expressing their anger by attacking shops and big houses which are owned by those coun-

cillors anyway. They get rich on our sweat.

The people demanded that the councillors resign because they do not represent the grievances of the people, instead they carry out their masters plan. No wonder the people are turning the townships upside down - even though leaders of the rent resistance are in jail. Who is the agitator then?

Simon
Sharpeville

Consulate 3 highlights detention

We would like to express our admiration for the role the Consulate Six, who have now become the Consulate Three, are playing in the struggle.

The consulate drama has definitely highlighted the crazy powers of the South African government when it comes to detention without trial.

It has played a major role in exposing the government's lie of reform, and in reversing any gains the government may have made in the international arena with regard to its image.

It has also decisively exposed to all peace and freedom loving people the world over that the British Government actively collaborates with Apartheid.

We also salute the wives and children of these UDF and NIC leaders; the sacrifice is theirs as well, and they are constantly in our thoughts and prayers.

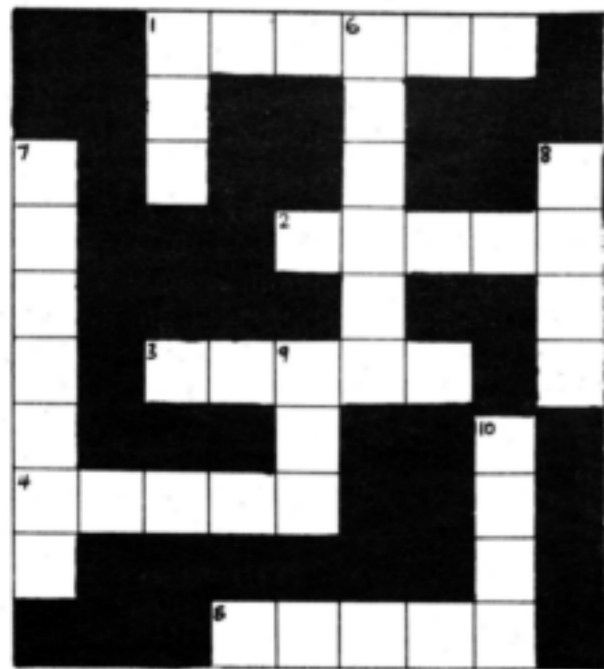
May you gain strength and courage as you so willingly and unselfishly stand up for the rights of our people.

Congress supporter
Lenasia

Crossword solutions

1. strike 2. Simba 3. Jodan 4. Nensa 5. Putco 1. (dow) 7. Bongani 8. Vaal 9. DCA 10. Ayo

CROSSWORD



Across

1. Black mineworkers went on a legal....
2.chips were recently boycotted by the community.
3. A democratic group in Johannesburg.
4. A non-racial teachers organisation.
5. The Diepkloof Civic Association is fighting against increases by this company.

Down

6.Ghandi was assassinated in October 1984.
7.was shot dead in Soweto by police.
8. A township where there has been a major uprising against rent increases.
9. The sent a memorandum to the West Rand Development board complaining about rents and services in the area.
10. had a successful cultural day.

Subscribe!

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Name: _____
Address: _____

	S A	Overseas
Individual	R 5 00	R15 00
Organisation	R15 00	R30 00

Student Representative Councils: Cosas vs DET

When Atteridgeville students' demand for SRC's at the beginning of the year was not heeded, they went on boycott for six weeks and their schools were closed.

In Alexandra, students at Minerva High School held a successful boycott to back their demand for an SRC. The demand was met by school authorities. Yet the victory turned sour with the SRC being constantly harassed by the school authorities. It was eventually banned when it did not obey the rules.

Nevertheless pressure from students forced DET to consider their demand and they agreed to 'Pupil Representative Councils' earlier this year. Students however immediately rejected these bodies.

They are the prefect system in disguise, students said.

Students would be given the right to elect "representatives" to the body, but they would need to be approved by the authorities and carry out instructions and duties of principals.

So students intensified their struggle — in August schools in Tembisa and other East Rand townships began to

boycott classes. With over 200 000 students out of classes, the government was forced to make another concession.

The DET said yes to SRC's — but only to SRC's with a constitution drawn up by the DET. They said the SRC's could have no dealings with Cosas and could not affiliate to it.

'The Minister ignores the voice of our students. And then when our children are dead he comes back with a bogus type constitution as if they are not fit to draw up their own constitution', a UDF spokesperson said.

Cosas is convinced DET is not sincere in its offer. DET wants SRC's to help the school authorities maintain order in schools.

Cosas continue to demand democratic SRC's:

●With a constitution drawn up by students in consultation with parents.

●Where any student, irrespective of age or time spent at school can be a member.

●Which can be affiliated to any local or national student body.

There are many differences between the constitution proposed by

DET and a constitution drafted by Cosas. We will look at some of the differences.

COMPOSITION

DET: Only students who have attended a school for two or continuous school terms before the election date may be elected to the SRC.

Cosas: Any student can be elected — at a meeting of all students.

FUNCTION

DET: Student leaders should help maintain order and discipline.

Cosas: The SRC should seek to promote self-discipline amongst students without the use of brutal or emotional measures.

Students are ill-disciplined and teachers are forced to use corporal punishment against them because of bad school conditions. This does not motivate students to learn. The solution to ill-discipline is not to ask student leaders to discipline others but to correct conditions in schools.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

DET: The SRC should encourage students to attend school, study hard and should moti-

vate and help 'under achievers'.

Cosas: The SRC should assist students in solving their problems and take up student grievances to improve student ability to learn. It should also make students aware of the laws which protect their interests, for example, school uniforms are not compulsory and there are regulations which limit the use of corporal punishment.

RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS AND TEACHERS

DET: Says nothing about the role an SRC can play in the relationship between students and parents. It says the SRC should help teachers enforce discipline.

Cosas: The SRC should create a good working relationship between students and staff and between students and parents.

PERIOD OF OFFICE

DET: The SRC is reconstituted each year. A student already serving on the SRC is not automatically a member of the SRC for the following year. Such a student may be elected if she/he complies with the require-

ments.

Cosas: The SRC is elected each year. Students may be re-elected unless a ruling is made to the contrary by a disciplinary committee — made up of students, and not the school authorities.

Cosas says the DET requirements may be used by school authorities to prevent an SRC member they don't like from standing again.

MEETINGS

DET: A copy of the written agenda of SRC meetings must be handed to a teacher in charge of student affairs at least two days before the meeting. No provision is made for general meetings of all students.

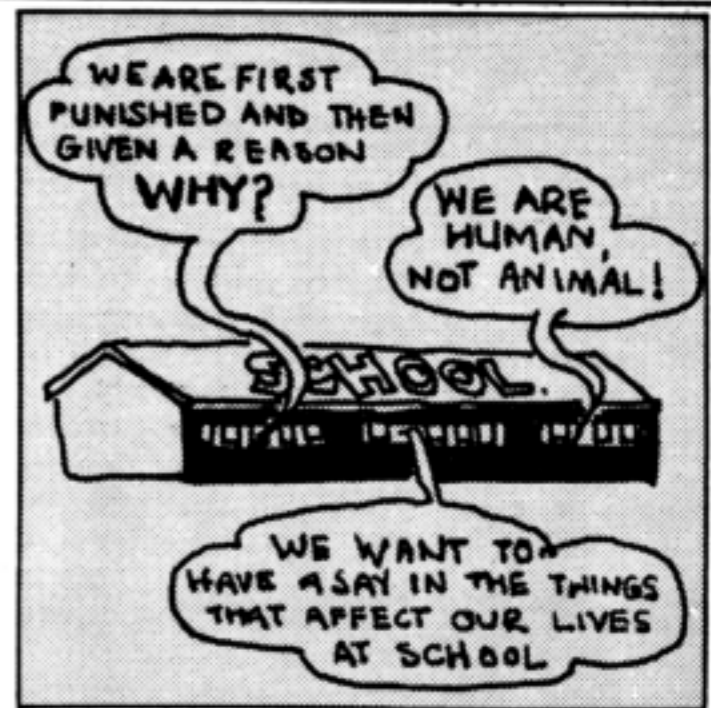
Cosas: The SRC can call council meetings whenever it is necessary.

Cosas says giving copies of the agenda to the teachers before meetings is a restriction on the SRC's freedom.

SPORT

DET: The SRC should organise cheer leaders, a team supporters club, and sing songs, and a first aid service for sports meetings.

Cosas: The SRC should organise sport activities and take care of sport



facilities.

Cosas stresses that there should be a balance between sport and lessons. They object to good sportspersons frequently being taken out of classes to win credit for their schools in competitions.

CULTURE

DET: The SRC should help organise an art exhibition, hobbies exhibition, choir and folksong group. They are also expected to make announcements about school outings.

COSAS: The SRC should arrange films, plays, discussions and reading for students and encourage them to discuss and evaluate them.

Cosas has problems with cultural activity often suggested by school authorities. They either try and reinforce tribalism or promote Western culture as superior.

Cosas would like students to express themselves in their own plays, music, songs and dances.

DEBATE

DET: The constitution does not mention debates.

Cosas: The SRC should organise regular debates on educative topics. Debates should also be organised between students from different schools to assist in establishing understanding between students.

AFFILIATION

DET: The constitution does not deal with affiliation to student or other bodies.

Cosas: The SRC can affiliate to Cosas

Through affiliation to a national organisation like Cosas, students from different SRC's and schools can meet and share experiences. In this way SRC's can grow stronger.

All over the Transvaal students are joining the Congress of South African Students (Cosas). Presently Cosas has 40 branches from Pietersburg to the Vaal and each branch has at least 50 members. In Atteridgeville, Cosas has about 5 000 signed up members.

How does Cosas work?

All students can become members of Cosas. Cosas is made up of different branches.

In some parts of the country, a branch is made up of all the students from one township. In other parts one school makes up a branch.

At schools where there are Student Representative Councils (SRC's), SRC members can affiliate to Cosas and elect members of a branch committee.

Cosas members have to pay R1.00 per year to belong to Cosas.

Branches

Branches meet once a month to plan Cosas activities for their branch, recruit members and discuss fundraising and other issues.

At the beginning of each year the branches elect a branch committee consisting of eight

How Cosas works



Thumbs up for Cosas!

people including a chair, vice-chair, secretary, organiser and publicity secretary.

The branch committees are in charge of the day to day work of Cosas. Where there are SRC's, the branch committee is also responsible for reviewing the progress of the SRC.

The branch committee can decide to call public meetings, run educational programmes,

and initiate cultural activities.

It is also responsible for implementing national projects. For example it is the responsibility of the branch committee to implement the Education Charter Campaign in its area.

Regional Committees

When there are three or more branch committees in one region, the branches elect a eight

meagre wages while white education is free.

'By making us pay when we can't afford to, by denying us textbooks and other facilities, the authorities are denying us the ability to learn,' a Cosas spokesperson said.

Teachers must be qualified to teach

72 percent of black teachers are unqualified. Students find it difficult to learn from unqualified teachers.

Worse still many teachers

person regional committee.

This committee supervises and co-ordinates the activities of all the branches in the area and reviews their progress. Members of the regional committee regularly visit the different branches.

For example, when a particular branch is not doing very well, the regional committee will make concrete suggestions on how that branch can regain support.

The regional committee calls delegates from all branches to a joint meeting once every few months.

Through the regional committee, the different branches can exchange information and learn from one another's successes and mistakes.

The regional committee also functions as the link between the national executive committee of Cosas and branches.

There is one regional committee for the whole of the Transvaal.

National Executive Committee

The members of the national executive committee are elected by the national congress.

The national executive runs

Cosas at a national level and carries out decisions decided upon at the national congress. It reviews the progress of the organisations as a whole.

The national executive committee consists of a president, vice president, general secretary, national organiser, administrative secretary and treasurer.

National Executive Council

The national executive council meets four times a year to co-ordinate and supervise activities and review the progress of Cosas. Members of the national executive committee, delegates from the regional committee and delegates from branches sit on the council.

Reports given at the national executive council keep national office bearers in touch with the problems experienced at a local level.

National Congress

Once a year all branches come together at the national congress. It is the supreme policy making body of Cosas.

All major decisions are made here and the national executive committee is elected.

'If you have a school where the teacher is frustrated and the student is frustrated, then there will be corporal punishment,' says Frank Chikane, UDF vice president.

'One needs to sympathise with the teachers who are teaching an unteachable system.'

Many students are given more lashes than stipulated in DET regulations. The regulations stipulate a daily maximum of four strikes per pupil. Girls are not supposed to receive corporal punishment.

While there are regulations, there is no one to check whether they are being followed.

We want a democratic education

No free textbooks, lack of adequate school facilities and unqualified teachers makes the failure rate at schools very high.

The reason boils down to one thing the government does not want to spend money on black education.

Parents have to fork out money for school fees from their

students. come to school drunk, make jokes, and abuse students instead of teaching.

Victimisation of certain students by teachers is rife. Women students tell many stories of how they are forced to 'fall in love with the teachers'.

Students are demanding that teachers stop colluding with the security police and that the DET increase the number of qualified teachers.

They are also demanding an end to sexual abuse of female

students.

Police and army out

At one Soweto school, police threw teargas in the classrooms. As students fled they were sjambokked and teargassed.

Students tell countless stories of such police provocation.

Students are also unhappy about the use of army teachers by the DET.

'The DET must stop inviting police, the security police and the SADF into school affairs,' students demand.

The numbers of detainees just grows and grows

On the eve of the August elections, police swooped on the homes of leaders of the TIC, RMC and UDF. 17 people were detained

They were the first in a long line of detentions.

Since then many hundreds of people have

been detained — student leaders, community leaders, UDF officials, trade unionists and clergymen have all been picked up as opposition to the government's policies intensified.

Presently about 230 people are in deten-

tion. The number of detainees has not been so high since 1976.

The most recent detentions have been of the Stay Away Committee leaders.

Thami Mali, Oupa Monareng, Themba Nonhlantane and Moses Mayekiso were all picked up two days

after the November 5 and 6 stay away.

A day later, the president of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu) Chris Dlamini was taken from work.

Also detained at the same time was Peter Makgopa, regional chairperson of the

Congress of South African Students.

Nusas president Kate Philip was detained a week later.

Murpheson Morobe, UDF organiser and chairperson of the Speak Executive was detained shortly after returning from Britain and the United Nations

where he attempted to secure the release of the

Consulate detainees. He now shares a similar fate.

In the Vaal, almost the entire Vaal Civic Association leadership is behind bars. The chairperson of the civic, Father McCamel was the one

of the last to get picked up

●All recent detainees have been placed under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act.

Popo Molefe, general secretary of the UDF is the only recent detainee to be placed under Section 28.

Release our leaders!

Detention under Section 28

Terror Lekota, Ram Saloojee, Essop Jassat, Curtis Nkondo and Aubrey Mokoena are among the UDF leaders presently in preventative detention. Once they are released anything they say can never be quoted.

Their crime?

The Minister of Law and Order believes they may have been thinking of endangering the security of the State.

Section 28 of the Internal Security Act spells out under what conditions people in preventative detention are held:

●A person can be detained for any length of time. Abel Dube has been in preventative detention since 21 April 1982. In effect he is serving a jail sentence without ever going to court.

●Nobody can see a detainee without special permission.

●Most serious is that a person detained under this section is "listed". This means that they may never be quoted.

The Minister of Law and Order has to give written reasons for detaining a person under Section 28. In Natal, the Supreme court declared the detentions orders served on detainees invalid because the Minister had not provided them with suffi-

cient reasons and they were released.

However new detention orders were immediately issued. The Minister added one sentence:

"No other information can, in my opinion, be disclosed without detriment to public interest and the maintenance of law and order."

Not even the many laws which the government has at its disposal, could convict them of any offence, so they are being detained to 'prevent' them from committing any offence.

In the Transvaal people are being held in preventative detention under Section 28 of the Internal Security Act of 1982.

Invalid

In Natal seven people were originally placed in preventative detention. They were released after a supreme court action declared the detention orders invalid, but were forced to take refuge in the British consulate when le Grange issued re-detention orders.

Their names are by now very familiar - Archie Gumede, Paul David and Billy Nair are still in the British consulate while George Sewpersadh, Mewa Ramgobin and MJ Naidoo were re-detained the moment they left the consu-

late.

An attempt by lawyers to appeal against this action failed.

There are three other sections in the Internal Security Act which allow the authorities to arrest or detain people.

Section 29

●Section 29 allows the police to detain a person for as long as they wish in order to interrogate them. The detainee is kept in solitary confinement without access to lawyers, family or friends.

Section 31

●Under Section 31 of the Act, a person can be detained as a potential state witness in a trial. They can be held until the trial ends but not for longer than six months.

Section 50

●Section 50 of the Act allows any police officer to detain a person for 48 hours if that person is suspected of causing unrest. Police detain people under this section during demonstrations, marches and when so called "stone throwing" occurs.

The security police do not have to release information on detentions and detainees and they are able to prevent publication of information about detainees.

Aubrey Mokoena - RMC

Aubrey Mokoena is at present publicity secretary of the Release Mandela Committee (RMC) and also serves on the United Democratic Front (UDF) national executive.

Aubrey's political involvement started at Turfloop university, where he was studying for a B.A. degree. He was unable to complete his degree there, because then

president of the SRC, he was "fired" from the university.

Aubrey was active in the South African Students' organization (Saso), the Black People's Convention and served as a Director of the Black Community Programme in the early seventies.

He was first detained in 1974 for almost a year. In 1976, he was again detained for about 9 months. Six

months after his release he was imprisoned at Modderbee for ten months.

When Aubrey was released in November 1978, a five year banning order was slapped on him. His banning order was lifted in July last year.

He worked for Premier Milling for five years, but was "asked to leave" in April 1984.

Aubrey is married



and has a five year old son, Mandela.

Essop Jassat - TIC

Dr. Jassat, a medical doctor and family man, was first banned for ten years in the 1960's and served a short prison sentence for breaking his banning order.

He played a leading role in the resistance of the early 1950's -

Under the leadership of Yusuf Dadoo and inspired by people like Ahmed Kathrada, Dr. Jassat joined the

Youth Congress Movement.

Dr. Jassat was active in student politics when studying at Wits. He qualified as a doctor shortly before the government cracked down on the Congress Alliance in the early 60's.

Dr. Jassat then channelled his energies into community organizations. He became active in the

Johannesburg Indian Social Welfare Association (JISWA) of which he is now chairperson. He was elected vice chairperson of the Witwatersrand Education Committee (whose main concern is African Education). He is also actively involved in NAMDA, the alternative Medical Association set up during the Biko



inquest. Dr. Jassat is presently TIC president and a patron of the UDF.

Curtis Nkondo - RMC

Curtis Nkondo, 56, was elected president of the National Education of South Africa (NEUSA), in September 1983, when his three year banning order was lifted.

After resigning from teaching with about 300 other teachers when he was involved with the Soweto

Teachers Action Committee, Curtis was detained from October 1978 to August 1979.

He was released and spent one night at home with his family, when he was re-detained and sentenced to solitary confinement in Bethal prison.

After his release from Bethal, Curtis

was served with a three year banning order. He worked for an American Computer Company until his banning order expired and was then fired by this Company.

Since then, Curtis has been unable to find any sort of employment.

He is also an active member of the



Transvaal UDF and serves as president of the Release Mandela Committee (RMC).

Terror Lekota - UDF

Patrick "Terror" Lekota is one of those people whom prison only strengthens.

Terror was sentenced to six years imprisonment on Robben Island in December 1976 after being found guilty of "conspiring to commit acts capa-

ble of endangering the maintenance of law and order."

Terror, 36, was born in Kroonstad in the Free State. He is married and now living in Natal. He was nicknamed "Terror" because of his ability as a soccer player and

not because of any inclination towards terrorism.

Before his arrest in 1976, he was a permanent organiser of the outlawed South African Students' Organisation (Saso). He is now national publicity secretary of the



United Democratic Front (UDF).

R A M Saloojee - TIC

Dr Saloojee is a vice-president of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and chairperson of the Federation of Residents Association (FRA).

Dr Saloojee was a pioneer leader of Lenasia in the 1960's when Lenasia was nothing more than a

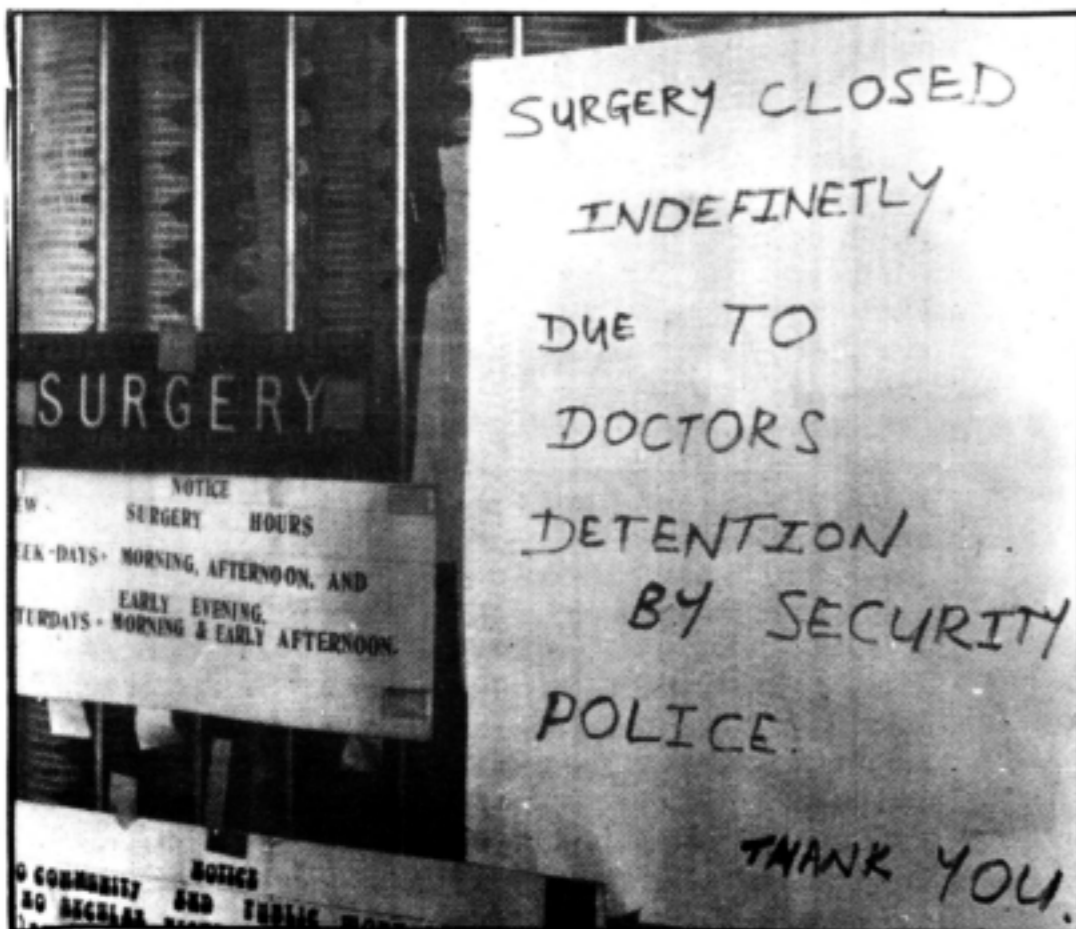
dustbowl. After a brief period as chairman of the Lenasia Management Committee, he dealt the LMC a deathblow when he led a mass revolt against the Johannesburg City Council. This followed frustration with the lack of power and

intransigence of the authorities. Not a single LMC election since has been supported by more than 5% of registered voters.

In 1981, Dr Saloojee joined Essop Jassat on the Anti-SAIC Committee and led a successful campaign



against the SAIC.



Notice at Dr R A M Saloojee's surgery the day after his detention



Thousands attend a meeting at the height of the uprising



Police moving into the township



Masses pay tribute to those who gave their lives for the people

Solidarity with people of the Vaal

Soweto Civic Association

We compliment the community of the Vaal Triangle. You have done your utmost to teach the Government peaceful ways of living together. You have responded to the acts of aggression and the ball is now in the enemy's court to bring about peace.

United Democratic Front

UDF salutes the heroic people of the Vaal. Your struggle has sparked off the renewed spirit of resistance throughout the country. Together with our people elsewhere you have shaken the apartheid system to its very roots. Over the Christmas period our people sorrow over the many who have died for our freedom. Despite all the losses, the determination of the people continues to grow. Nothing is more inspiring.

Transvaal Indian Congress

Congress expresses its deepest concern at the actions of the government against the democratic struggles of the people of the Vaal. We fully support the people's legitimate demands, and call on the apartheid regime to stop all repressive measures against our people.

Transvaal Anti-PC Committee

We pledge our solidarity with the people of the Vaal. We are actively with you in your fight against high rents and the unjust education system. Although many miles from you we hear your voice and stand with you.

Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee

Jodac condemns the numerous detentions, the army invasion, police violence and midnight raids which we see as an attempt to crush the people's spirit and their organisations like the Vaal Civic Association and Vaal Cosas. Yet the Vaal people have shown they will not be defeated.

Westbury Residents Committee

Like our people in the Vaal, we know very well the frustrations when the authorities refuse to listen to our legitimate grievances and instead condemn us to their dummy bodies. It is encouraging to see our people are not scared by the police and army. We salute our comrades, and pledge not to give up our own efforts in the struggle against our common enemy.

Who will pay for the damage to property?

The Government cannot pay for these damages. The people themselves must pay. In fact the rent increases have to be even higher, unless we get a good Samaritan somewhere.

How many councillors are here with you? (At the board office)

There are no councillors staying here. We don't stay here, I don't want to disclose where I am staying.

Vaal residents stand united

The Vaal remains tense. Anything at anytime can be expected.

These are the words of an Evaton resident as he eyes a hippo coming down the street.

Since September, when protests against a rent increase imposed by the Lekoa Town Council began, not a single person in the Vaal Triangle townships has paid any rent increase. And schools remain deserted with a 100 percent student boycott in force.

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But the Government forced its new councils on the people and the councillors did not resign.

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The Government's violent response to real grievances angered the community.

Every step taken by the Government to crush the uprising and enforce 'law and order' provoked greater resistance.

Despite everything the Government threw at the community and perhaps even because of it the people of the Vaal are today, through their bitter experiences, more united, more aware, more determined.

Development board officials going house to house with the police and the army to get residents to pay something towards rent, anything R2-00, R2-50 have not received a cent.

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The unity of the people runs deep, and includes all sections of the community young and old, men and women, worker, student, teacher, hostel dweller and priest.

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It is such arrests and detentions which have brought about the high level of unity and determination in the community.

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Unity has also grown through

greater understanding of one another's problems and the way in which they are linked.

Parents for example totally identify with the demands of their school going children.

One mother said: 'At first I did not really understand what was the complaint of students until I got the answer from them in the funeral of their friend and saw what was happening.'

'Students are our sons and daughters. We the parents must pay everything for them school fees, books, uniforms and so on. The higher the rent, the less there is money for all this, and so the worse it gets for the students.'

Students confirm parent support for their demands. 'Our unity with our parents cannot be easily weakened by police and their teargas,' one said.

Probably the biggest grievance and cause of anger in the townships after high rents and undemocratic community councils, is the police action taken against residents.

Residents speak bitterly of police violence in response to their demands. They tell horrific stories of shootings, sjambok beatings, tearsmoke-cannisters were even dropped from the air, of injuries suffered and of death.

'The police must leave us so we can discuss our problems,' a resident said. 'As long as the police and army surround the township there won't be any peace.'

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'Also they cannot go and write exams when their classmates are in prison.'

The SADF presence is also seen as intimidation and having nothing to do with 'protection and peace'.

Peace will not come about if the Government shouts 'Agitator!' when the people cry 'Asinam-all!'

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'Our problem is rents. Some earn about R40-R45 per week and other are unemployed. Take in consideration also the GST. The councillors force you to have lodgers if you can't afford rent. With some families they try to force them out of their homes. These problems extend into the married life of couples and destroy families.'

'Our concern is some principals force students to change their uniforms as soon as they join school. Uniforms are expensive. They don't consult us, they make their own arrangements with shops that sell uniforms.'

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'For long we said that we have problems. But they don't listen. They just make the people frustrated.'

'What is happening now is that anger has grown in our townships. When people were marching peacefully they were met with bullets of trigger happy boys. Later most people were shot along the way from work and some at bus-stops.'

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The truth from the people themselves

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The Minister of Law and Order, Louis le Grange who probably has never been to the Vaal before expels events there after a fact-finding mission by helicopter.

But the people of the Vaal themselves talk from hearts filled with pain and anger. They talk from dark, overcrowded homes under the weight of high rents and unemployment; from long pension lines with a pittance at its end; through broken windows in packed classrooms; from dusty streets lined with soldiers; from the back of hippos and from hospital beds. They even talk from the refuge of freshly-dug graves, under heavy tearsmoke, at funerals broken up by the police.

Residents expressed their feelings and views to SPEAK when it visited the township. The residents spoken to included students, a clerk, a pensioner, a technician and an unemployed mother.

To protect themselves they did not mention their names. This is what they had to say....



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to sjambok everyone in the streets after 6pm.'

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.....ON COUNCILLORS.....

'We want the mayor to resign. We are suffering because of him. If they can just meet our demands there won't be trouble in the township.'

'They are undemocratic and useless. Only a handful of Jabass puppets.'

'They present themselves to the people as their saviours. They said that they will lower the rents, but they are raising it.'

.....ON THE SCHOOLS BOYCOTT.....

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— why they aren't going to school, they will tell you they are afraid of policemen with sjamboks.'

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'We are concerned about harassment that takes place when the parents leave their children and go to work.'

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.....ON AGITATORS.....

'The idea that the UDF is responsible for the unrest is false. We had all these problems before. We stood up as residents to take up the matters. Unless the Government sees to our problems there shall not be peace.'

What do the councillors have to say.....?

The chairman of the Lekoa Town Council, Mr Esau Mahlatsi held a press conference just after the Vaal uprising. These are some of the things he said in response to questions put to him.

Do you agree with Minister L-Grange that high rents was but the issue responsible for the unrest? Of course the rent issue is not

the cause of the unrest. I agree with him entirely. Some people used rent in order to cause trouble. These are the agitators and instigators. I don't think rent is the immediate problem. After all, temporary accommodation is available for those who cannot pay the high rent.

There has been a call for you to resign. Will you? I might resign if people I repre-

sent demand it — that is those who have voted for me.

Don't you think the community as a whole wants your resignation? The whole of Vaal was engulfed by unrest.

I think only a few people participated.

Did you expect any trouble to break out here?

Vaal is a very peaceful area. I never thought we needed pro-

tection. The increment of R5,90 can be afforded by people. As soon as the rent increase is gazetted it will come into effect. Those who cannot afford it, their case would be looked into. There is no society of rich people only. Our society has both the rich and the poor.

What do you think of the way the grievances of the people — and the unrest — was handled?

One of the mistakes is that there were few police to counteract the violence, otherwise our houses would not have been burned.

What is your comment on allegations that children were shot while playing in a yard?

I will not comment on that. I don't know of any children who were shot while playing. That can be referred to the police.



Thousands attend a meeting at the height of the uprising



Police moving into the township



Masses pay tribute to those who gave their lives for the people

Solidarity with people of the Vaal

Soweto Civic Association

We compliment the community of the Vaal Triangle. You have done your utmost to teach the Government peaceful ways of living together. You have responded to the acts of aggression and the ball is now in the enemy's court to bring about peace.

United Democratic Front

UDF salutes the heroic people of the Vaal. Your struggle has sparked off the renewed spirit of resistance throughout the country. Together with our people elsewhere you have shaken the apartheid system to its very roots. Over the Christmas period our people sorrow over the many who have died for our freedom. Despite all the losses, the determination of the people continues to grow. Nothing is more inspiring.

Transvaal Indian Congress

Congress expresses its deepest concern at the actions of the government against the democratic struggles of the people of the Vaal. We fully support the people's legitimate demands, and call on the apartheid regime to stop all repressive measures against our people.

Transvaal Anti-PC Committee

We pledge our solidarity with the people of the Vaal. We are actively with you in your fight against high rents and the unjust education system. Although many miles from you we hear your voice and stand with you.

Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee

Jodac condemns the numerous detentions, the army invasion, police violence and midnight raids which we see as an attempt to crush the people's spirit and their organisations like the Vaal Civic Association and Vaal Cosas. Yet the Vaal people have shown they will not be defeated.

Westbury Residents Committee

Like our people in the Vaal, we know very well the frustrations when the authorities refuse to listen to our legitimate grievances and instead condemn us to their dummy bodies. It is encouraging to see our people are not scared by the police and army. We salute our comrades, and pledge not to give up our own efforts in the struggle against our common enemy.

Who will pay for the damage to property?

The Government cannot pay for these damages. The people themselves must pay. In fact the rent increases have to be even higher, unless we get a good Samaritan somewhere.

How many councillors are here with you? (At the board office)

There are no councillors staying here. We don't stay here, I don't want to disclose where I am staying.

Vaal residents stand united

The Vaal remains tense. Anything at anytime can be expected.

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Where you can get help

An Information Service Centre has been set up by organisations in the Vaal to help victims of the unrest.

Organisations behind the scheme include the Vaal Civic Association, Cosas, the Vaal Youth Congress steering committee, the Evaton Ratepayers Association and priests from the Vaal Solidarity Group.

The problems which the Information Service Centre will be handling include:

- Keeping records and seeking legal aid for people detained and arrested.
- Offering medical help to people injured in the unrest.
- Offering financial help where possible in cases where breadwinners of families are detained or have been killed in police action.
- Helping to cover the burial costs of people who were killed in the unrest.

The UDF and some of its affiliates will help in this scheme.

The Centre will be at the NG Kerk in Zone 13, Sebokeng. It will be open every Saturday from 9.00 am.

It will also be open at certain times during the week. The times will be posted on noticeboards at the church.

What do the councillors have to say ?

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All over the Transvaal students say:

We want to learn but conditions make it impossible



"We have been forced out of class by real grievances," say students on boycott throughout the Transvaal.

'We want to learn but the conditions at school do not make it possible.'

No textbooks, high failure rates, unqualified teachers, the age limit law, sexual harassment of female students, corporal punishment for the slightest offence, and hundreds of other grievances have brought students together to demand that something be done.

They demand:

- The scrapping of the age limit law which prevents older students from attending school. *

- The free supply of textbooks.

- An end to sexual abuse of female students.

- Better qualified teachers.

- The application of corporal punishment as laid down by Department of Education and Training (DET) regulations.

The most important demand is that Democratic Student Representative Councils (SRC) be allowed to operate in schools.

It can only be through SRC's that students can effectively fight for their rights.

Since the beginning of the year, students have called meetings, sent delegations to school authorities, and finally — when all other means failed — boycotted classes.

Still their demands are not listened to. Instead, the government sent in the police force. Many have died — killed by police bullets — others injured, detained or charged.

Students now also demand the release of all detained colleagues and the dropping of charges against those charged.

The boycotts and the closure of schools has disrupted students studies to such an extent that many students felt it was impossible to write the exams at the end of the year.

While the DET made some concessions for students to write at the beginning of next year, students are not satisfied. They demand that students and parents have the right to decide when exams can be written.

It has taken a year of united student action — and more recently united action with parents during the stay away — for the government to acknowledge that students have grievances that cannot simply be ignored. No amount of sjamboks, detentions and shootings have deterred them.

The DET now says it will allow SRC's and no longer implement the age limit law.

Yet these concessions fall short of students demands. The DET wants to decide on the SRC con-

stitution and there is no guarantee that the age limit law will still not be used to victimise students.

The DET has said nothing about allocating more money towards black education. There have been no promises of free textbooks, better trained teachers and the lowering of school fees.

The Congress of South African Students (Cosas) has been at the forefront of the student struggle. Cosas branches are active in most townships.

Speak looks at Cosas and the demands of the students.

We want democratic SRC's

Students everywhere are demanding that they be allowed to form SRC's in their schools to draw up their own constitution, and themselves decide who can be elected.

The only way to achieve better conditions at schools is through united action. Students say Students Representative Councils (SRC's) can unite students to fight for their rights.

The Cosas constitution contains a draft constitution for an SRC. The draft constitution sees the role of SRC as:

- Promoting better understanding amongst students.

- Promoting better understanding and co-operation between students and teachers.

- Promoting a greater understanding about matters concerning education.

- Encouraging a serious approach from students.

We want the age limit law to go

In 1981 the government introduced an age limit law which said that students over the age of 20 in Matric, and 18 in Standard 8, were no longer allowed to attend school.

The age limit law has not been applied in all cases. It has only been applied to certain students — mainly Cosas members and students who stand up against the school authorities.

The DET argues that it is inconvenient to have children



Cosas executive members (from l to r): Lulu Johnson, Kenny Fihla (detained), Mpho Lekgoro, Alan Postu, Sheperd Mati and Thlabane Mogashoa

A message from the Cosas Regional Committee to students and parents

To parents, workers, teachers, youth and fellow students.

“We have made it clear since the beginning of the year that we want to learn, but our obstacle is bad conditions in our schools.

We did not come out of classes because we don't want to go to school as supporters of Pretoria say. But we were forced out because we were subjected to hateful treatment everyday. We came out on boycott because we wanted to see those hateful practices done away with.

Neither were we instigated by any organisation for its own gains. Bad conditions like the age limit law, lack of textbooks and the non-existence of democratic Students Representative Councils have instigated and agitated us into action.

Instead of considering our demands DET has called in the police to our schools and townships to shoot and kill. Today, it is not only the SAP in our townships but the SADF as well.

The SADF is not in our townships to 'protect' us as town councillors and others say, but is there to suppress us. Today many have been killed, some are detained and some are in hospitals. The DET says we should consider going back to school. This is a move we are at all times prepared to take. But not while at the same time conditions in our schools remain as bad as when we started to fight to have them improved. And not while many of our student leaders are in detention.

The DET claims it has met our demand for democratic representation.

Yet we never demanded that it draw up a constitution for us and tell us who and who not, is to serve in our SRC's.

We are not boycotting for its own sake. We are aware that our parents work hard to get meagre wages so that we can get school fees, textbooks and school uniforms. We are demanding that the DET subsidise our education which will help our parents a lot. We are fighting for a better education and a better future for all the people in our land. So we call on our parents to support us.

To students let us unite and remain so and strengthen our fight to improve conditions in our schools. Because without unity we are weak and through united action we shall achieve our democratic goal. ”

over 20 still at school. But Cosas say it is the 'the system that makes us still go to school at 20'.

'If there was compulsory education and good schools we would all have passed matric at 16.'

'Only 50 percent of black students pass while 95 percent of white students do. But then the government spends R2 000 on each white child and only R195 on each black child a year.'

Many students leave school to earn money for school fees. When they want to come back,

they can't. If there was free education, or if their parents earned more, there would be no need to leave school.

After pressure from students, DET was forced to make changes. It announced in October that pupils over the set age limits would in future be allowed to attend school unless the DET Director General refuses permission on educational grounds.

Yet the law has not been scrapped and there is no guarantee that it will still not be used to vic-

timise students.

'We don't want corporal punishment.'

'The kind of punishment we get is not aimed to make us learn and see the importance of education,' say students.

Corporal punishment is a result of the bad education system. If teachers are not qualified to teach and don't have textbooks and other facilities, then the students can't understand them and they need a stick to beat up children.

There has been no change for the better. Things in fact have become far worse.

There have been no commitments to build more houses, only rent increases and talk of evictions. No increase in the bread subsidy, only a price increase.

The new constitution has failed and has only brought about more strife.

On election day and immediately after, the country was plunged into violent confrontation between police and people protesting against high rents, gutter education and dummy representation.

The one-time candidates now MP's maintain a deafening silence. What happened to their promises of being able to change Apartheid from the inside?

'It seems that their R48 000 cheque blinds them to the realities in our country', said a TIC member.

Rents have been increased in the townships.

'This was to be expected. Who will pay Hendrickse, Rajbansi and company?' asked an Anti-PC member.

'We, the man in the street have to!'

It did not take long for the new tricameral MP's to show their true colours as being no different from the old SAIC's and CRC's mere puppet bodies.

Before the elections hundreds of volunteers from the TIC,

Transvaal Anti-PC Committee

Let us not sacrifice our unity.

Let us continue to resist SADF attempts to win the hearts and minds of our children.

Let us continue to demand compulsory and equal education; unite against high rents and demand the essential services and basic rights that are denied us.

We see the way forward not only as boycotting elections, but in pledging our continued support in building and strengthening democratic people's organisations.

United Democratic Front

Our task is to continue mobilising opposition until all dummy councils, the Apartheid parliaments and the Bantustans are completely dismantled.

The masses are the makers of change. So strengthen our organisations at the grassroots level; ensure the active participation of the people in all our democratic organisations - be they civic associations, trade unions, women's youth or student organisations.

Long live the UDF — ban Apartheid!

Transvaal Indian Congress

We call on our people to swell the ranks of Congress and become active members of the organisation.

Join, build and strengthen democratic organisations of the people.

The success of our struggles outside of parliament and puppet bodies depend on our preparedness to strengthen our unity, to be organised and to fight for that which is rightfully ours.

Forward to the Freedom Charter!

After the elections for the tricameral parliament

We need to go forward



People flocked to meetings during the campaign to show their rejection of the new deal.

Anti-PC and other UDF affiliates went door to door, town to town, distributing thousands of leaflets and talking to hundreds of people, spreading the message of the dangers of voting for the new parliament.

They were proved correct and the embarrassingly low polls showed clearly that the people were not fooled.

Everything the UDF said in its anti-election campaign has been proved true. There is:

- Greater hardship.
- More conflict and violence.
- The threat of Indian and coloured people being forced to join the army still looms.

But through refusing to vote, the people have scored many victories:

- The Government is even more exposed as illegitimate.
- There is greater unity and solidarity of the oppressed people.
- Many, many more of us are aware, and prepared to fight Apartheid.

Our organisations have grown stronger and our people are united under them.

● The Government is scared of forcing us into the army because we have shown we do not support it.

Now, we must build on the victories won during the campaign for the fight against the new constitution is far from over.

The tricameral parliament is going to make other laws which will be against the people's interests. We have to oppose them.

'During the past year the UDF has inspired an enthusiasm and spirit of political participation that has not been seen for more than a quarter of a century,' said UDF vice president George du Plessis.

But the Government is far from defeated. They are as determined as ever to divide and disorganise us.

'Dangers and difficulties that may lie ahead have not deterred us in the past and they must not frighten us now,' he said.



Police attempt to quell peoples' protests

'We must be prepared for them. Our organisations must be strong and our activities must reflect our strength and resoluteness.

The UDF and its affiliates have called on people to swell the ranks of organisations

and become active members.

'Unless our organisations build themselves into a powerful force able to oppose the government at every turn, our struggle will not move forward,' said George du Plessis.

Ratanda residents force town councillors to resign

Nobody in Ratanda is prepared to stand for election to the town council as a result of the efforts of the newly formed, Ratanda Civic Association.

The previous council resigned following protests by residents against their decision to increase rents without consultation.

The residents of Ratanda, a small township near Heidelberg, are also refusing to pay the rent increases imposed in August. So far no action has been taken against them.

Speak spoke to some members of the newly formed Ratanda Civic Association about their organisation and how the community forced the council to resign.

How did the rent protests begin?

Residents received notices in July informing them of increases of R5,50 as from August 1 and another increase of R3,60 on December 1. The notice from the East Rand Development Board said that the

increases had been agreed upon by the council.

We had not been consulted and we were not told why the rents were to be increased.

When we heard over the radio that a meeting was to be called by the councillors, many angry residents

attended. But when we arrived the hall was locked and there was no sign of the councillors.

The people present for the meeting decided to form a civic and to go and call the councillors to the meeting to tell us why the rents were increased.

Two people were delegated to fetch the council chairman. They did not find him at home but at a shebeen where he was drunk.

They brought him to the residents waiting for the meeting. He said we must come back the following night.

The following night he did not appear again and this time could not be found.

However we managed to track down another member of the council who promised a third meeting for the next Sunday.

The councillors did not arrive again and we were forced to go to their homes and fetch them.

Some of the members of the Ratanda Civic Association are now being charged under the Intimidation Act for "intimidating" the council members to come to the meeting.

At the meeting we demanded to know why we were not consulted about the increases. The councillors denied they had agreed to raise rents although the board said they had in a pamphlet. The three councillors present said they would resign from the council.



Mr. Mhlomi — resigned chairperson of Ratanda town council

We also held a meeting with the board and some of the councillors. The councillors and the board fought amongst themselves about whether or not the council had agreed to the rent increases.

We wanted to know why the rents had to be raised. The board said they had to increase rents to pay the debt of the Ratanda Council. They showed us the financial statements.

However when we looked closely at the financial statements we saw where the money went to make them in debt.

For example from June last year to June this year, the seven

councillors salaries were increased by R129 000. The increases for workers who work for the Board was only R115 000 and there are many workers.

When did people decide not to pay the rent hike?

We called a public meeting to discuss the increases where we decided to carry on paying the normal rent. 4000 people attended the meeting.

Has anything happened to the residents?

The board told us that if we don't pay the increases they will close our water pumps and electricity. But they have not done so - yet.

When did the councillors resign?

The three councillors present at the first meeting were forced to resign. However two to three weeks later they went back on their decision.

So we and the Vigilante Party - which was also formed to oppose the rent hike -

called a meeting with the whole council, after which they all decided to resign.

We pointed out to them that they had no power to solve the peoples' problems.

Presently the board is organising new elections for the 24th of

November. But we are telling the people why we feel we should not participate in the elections and why they should not vote.

What are your reasons?

Councillors are just being used as puppets - as buffers between the central government and the community.

The council used to decide everything themselves without ever asking the opinion of the people. They only called two public meetings in four years.

We in the civic do not want to do anything without a mandate from the people. Also we do not want the people to pay us and we don't want money from the board.

WE MAKE THE WORLD

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



The message of the UDF has spread far and wide. The women travelled all the way from Northern Transvaal to join the first anniversary celebrations of the UDF. Their traditional songs and dances in support of the UDF were applauded by 3 000 strong crowd.

The sounds of change

Tunes of change



The Poet in Action

His music and words tell of dirty streets and old houses; of overcrowding and early morning queues to work. His poems speak of the pride of the people and their determination to struggle for a better future.

Democratic trade unions, civic organisations and youth organisations are challenging the propaganda of the government in many different ways — through poetry, songs, plays and dances.

The songs and dances of the migrant workers speak of their homesickness, loneliness and the harshness of life in the hostels.

Music and dance of women from rural areas tell of life outside the cities and of the hardships people suffer — no water, no electricity, no shops, no firewood.

One learns how people cope and how they solve their problems; that those problems are not unique and that the people

who experience them are not alone.

Songs, music and plays also organise the people in a more direct way.

In the trade unions, workers have used plays and songs to bring the message of trade unionism to unorganised workers.

In the Dunlop workers' play, workers in the audience recognise themselves.

On stage, the actors portray their powerless and humiliation before foreman and bosses. They learn that when workers unite they can fight for and win better working conditions.

Plays are also used to bring people together. The Johannesburg Action Group (Jag) organised a social

evening to do just that for hundreds of 'illegal' tenants who live in Johannesburg's 'twilight zone'.

During the recent anti-election campaign, satire and comedy was used to show what a sham the new constitution is. A quivering P.W. Botha plotted and schemed to divide us the oppressed people and make apartheid strong. The election results prove that the people were not fooled.

Songs, plays, music and dance of the people reflect a common struggle and common suffering.

In music and words the message is spread, and strength is inspired to struggle for a better future.



Women's voice
Through dramatic verse, we are reminded of the importance of organising women.



Drum majorettes added spirit to the rally in Mamelodi to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Women's Federation.



Workers message Union members from Dunlop factory in Durban spread their message to fellow workers. Through their play they tell workers about the importance of organising strong unions to face the bosses.

New local authorities can't solve problems

In line with all other changes the government has made under its new constitution to strengthen apartheid, it is to change the system of local government for Indian and coloured areas.

The changes it wants to make are all not yet clear. Many long reports have been prepared and many recommendations have been made after discussions within government committees.

Some recommendations have been drafted into bills and passed by parliament, while others remain unfinished.

Yet whatever is finally decided on, it is already doomed to failure. The people themselves have not been consulted, and like the new parliament, the local government changes are aimed at dividing the people - while at the same time placing a heavier burden on communities.

Speak looks at what the government has already decided upon, some of the things still being thought about, and what these moves will mean for the affected communities.

Local government presently

Under the present system of local government, whites elect town councils. Town councils appoint management committees which are responsible for the administration of local affairs in white towns, as well as in adjoining Indian and coloured areas.

Indian and coloured people are entitled to elect management committees. These committees are very different from the white management committees. They merely ADVISE the white management committees.

Recently some management committees have had their pow-

ers extended to include functions of the town councils. Civic organisations see this extension of powers as a move towards granting of 'autonomy' to Indian and coloured townships - cutting off their access to money from the white councils and placing a greater burden on residents to develop their areas.

The town councils get their money from rents and rates - and from the government. The government's money is usually used for building new homes, roads and buildings, while rents and rates are used for maintenance.

New voting qualifications



One man without property = one vote



One man with two property = two votes



One man with lots of properties = many votes



One man who owns a company = two or more votes.

Changes to present set-up

The government has thus far decided on four important things:

- Elections for Indian and coloured management committees are postponed to 1985 unless nomination and election dates have already been set.

- Provincial councils are to be scrapped.

- Regional services councils are to be introduced.

- New voting qualifications are to be introduced.

The government has not yet clearly set out:

- What the new functions of the management committees will be.

- Where the new local government bodies will get their money from.

- How black local authorities will be represented.

Regional services councils

The government has drawn up a bill on regional services councils which is to be debated early next year. These councils are meant to be in charge of the provision of certain services within a specific region.

The government decides what areas will make up a region, and then all the local government bodies like management com-

mittees and white town councils will send representatives to this council.

This council will then make decisions about services such as water, electricity, sewerage and roads. These decisions will no longer be made by local town council.

The regional services council will meet only ten times a year and its meetings do not have to be open to the public.

Representation on the regional services council is unequal.

The number of votes a local authority has depends on the amount of rates and rents it gets from its residents. Therefore the poor areas - coloured and Indian - will have fewer votes than the richer white areas.

End of provincial councils

Provincial councils will be scrapped when their term of office expires and they will be replaced with government appointed executive councils under the chairmanship of provincial administrators.

This is part of the new structure of tight control over the local government and is intended to prevent local authorities from deviating from central government policies.

These new executive councils will possibly be responsible for services like provincial roads, nature conservation and some health services which can be provided on a provincial wide basis, they say.

Postponement of elections

The elections for coloureds and Indian management committees will take place at the same time as the introduction of the regional service councils. This will be in 1986. Where elections have already occurred, new elections will be held.

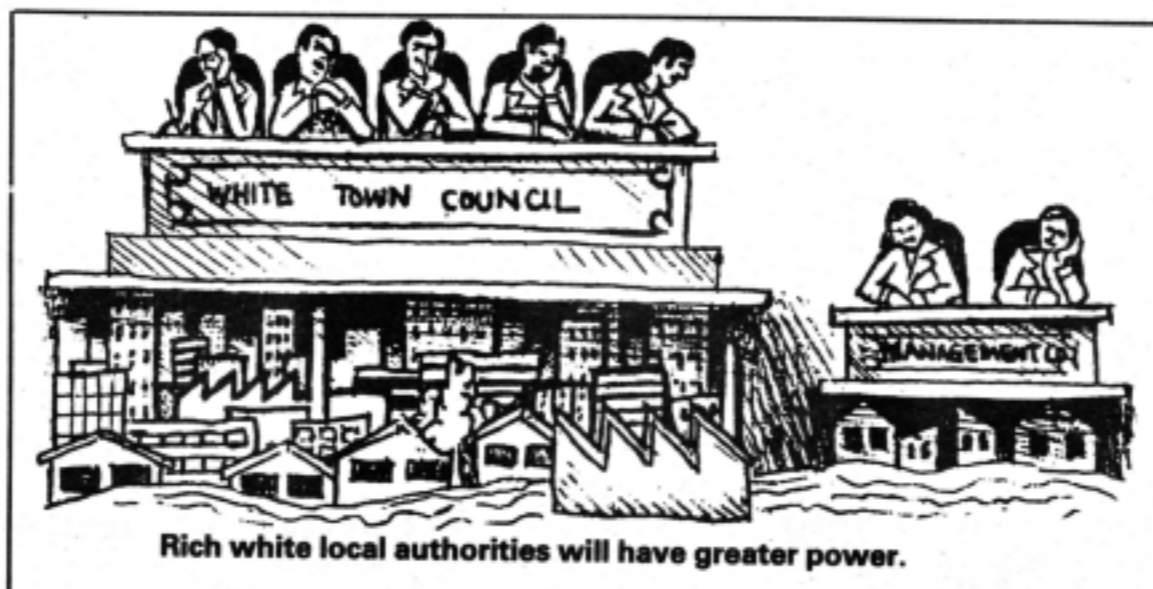
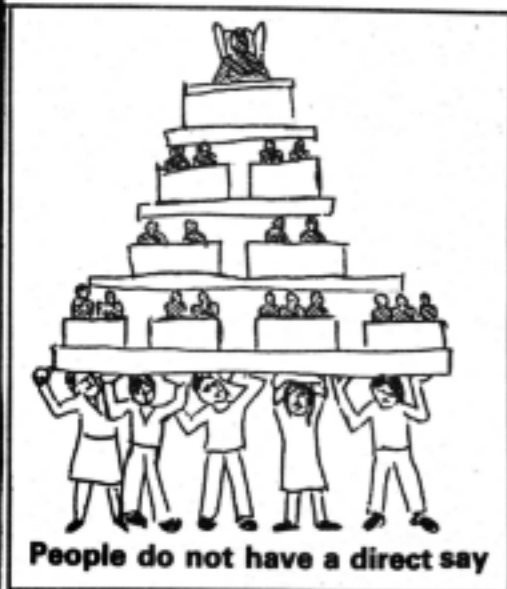
The minister is no doubt hoping that at that stage he will be clearer about their role and powers.

More votes for the rich

In a new Act passed in July, people who own property will be allowed extra votes depending on the value of the property they own. How this is to work is still to be decided by the Minister of Constitutional Planning.

Companies trust and other institutions like the Child Welfare Society will also be allowed to vote on behalf of dead people who have left behind sums of money.

What will the new bodies mean



No direct and equal say.

The real seat of power is the central government and there are many bodies - advisory, nominated and so called 'representative' bodies - between the central government and the people.

At the highest level, the Minister of Constitutional Development has the final say. He decides how disputes can be solved. He can establish and dissolve regional councils as he sees fit. He does not have to listen to the people's demands.

At the next level of power there is the provincial administrator who nominates members of the regional councils. He can

choose who he thinks will serve the government's interests best.

Then there will be the regional services councils on which local authorities like management committees will be represented in proportion to their wealth. White local authorities are richer than black local authorities, so they will have more say.

There is no guarantee that all these bodies will act in accordance with residents' demands and wishes.

People's needs not met.

In many areas there are inadequate services - roads are bad, there are no street lights, the sewerage system in not

maintained and there are no ambulances or fire engines.

The provision of these services will now be decided by the regional councils. However because the white local authorities are wealthier they will have more votes and therefore more control of the regional councils.

The proposed laws say nothing about how rich local authorities can subsidise poor local authorities. There is no way that regional councils are forced to channel money into poorer areas.

The regional councils can decide to allocate money for parks and paddling pools in white areas while Indian and

coloured townships still need decent roads and street lights.

Group Areas Act remain

Local government bodies will have no authority to change the Group Areas Act. They have no power to change policies; there only power is to carry out apartheid policy.

Higher rents and rates.

In white areas the town councils get a lot of money in rates from big factories and businesses.

Local authorities in Indian and coloured areas can only get money by increasing rents and rates on people's homes.

Indian and coloured people who in fact subsidise the development of white areas through working there do not benefit from rates of businesses and factories there. The government has made some promises about introducing a local government tax - but this burden will also fall on the shoulders of residents.

Worse housing shortage

The government is no longer taking any responsibility for building houses for people. They say it is the responsibility of local bodies, of the private sector and of people themselves.

New local bodies will share fate of councils

'Don't vote for apartheid' was the call of the UDF last November when elections for the new community councils - the Black Local Authorities - for African people took place.

'The new councils will be powerless bodies - unable to solve our housing and other problems,' the UDF warned.

'They will get their money by raising rents and water and light accounts', it said.

In less than a year, what the UDF said has been correct.

The new town and village councils have done nothing except to make the people angry by raising rents, water and service charges, bus fares, funeral charges, ambulance service fees and site rents.

The UDF and the peoples' civic organisations also warned that the government's policies will cause greater tension

At least ten councils in the Transvaal have decided to suspend rent increases in the face of the strong opposition

Many other are too scared to introduce increases.

The people who stood for election as councillors have often been targets of people's anger.

Few councillors remain in the townships amongst the people they are supposed to represent. Most are hiding. Others have resigned.

Four councillors were killed in the Vaal Triangle and many others have had their houses and cars burnt down or damaged.

'Will Indian and coloured local bodies face a similar fate', many people ask. After all their function is also to administer unpopular apartheid policy.

for us



Local bodies will be more open to bribery

The local authorities will not be able to build more houses because they have no money.

They will be forced to increase rents and rates. Many people will not be able to afford these increases and will be evicted. The number of homeless will grow, and overcrowding will get worse.

Slums will develop as people squat in yards, backrooms and garages.

More corruption.

The waiting lists for houses are long. If no more houses are to be built, people will be forced to buy 'through the back door' at unreasonable prices.

ADVICE



Your legal rights to a pension

Every aged, disabled or blind person has a legal right to a pension. The law says that if a person qualifies for a pension, the government has to pay it.

Everyone pays tax to the government. The tax of the people should be used for the people — like caring for old people.

Thousands of people entitled to a pension are not getting one. One of the reasons is that the government does not make it easy for black people to get pensions.

In this article SPEAK explains the present law, and discusses some common problems pensioners face.

Who can apply for a pension?

●Women over 60 and men over 65 can apply for an old-age pension.

●People who are more than 50% disabled, and who have been disabled for more than a year, can apply for a disability grant.

●Blind people can apply for a blind pension.

African people who apply for pensions must not have an income of more than R29.50 a month.

Where must you apply for a pension?

At the magistrate's office, commissioner's office or office of the Department of coloured or Indian affairs in the area where you live.

If you are unable to go to the pension office because of age or ill health, then a clerk from the office can be asked to visit you to make an application.

When can you apply?

Most pension offices set down certain days. Sometimes it is possible to apply on any day of the week, sometimes only on one day every two months.

How is an application made?

To apply for a pension you must

take:

●Your reference book, identity document or passport. ●Proof that you live in the area where you are applying.

●Proof of your age. Documents which help work out your age are a birth certificate, baptism certificate, school records or marriage certificate.

●Your marriage certificate if married.

●Divorce papers if divorced.

●Your husband's death certificate if widowed.

The clerk will ask questions to find out how much money or food you are already getting each month. This is called the 'means test'.

African people whose food and money comes to more than R29.50 a month will not be given a pension.

If you are applying for a disability grant, the clerk at the pension office will give you a form to take to the district surgeon who will examine you.

How long does it take to get the money.

It should take two months before you start getting the pension. You should get paid from the day you applied. So if you only get your first pension three months after you applied your first payment should be back pay for those three months.

Most people wait five or six months before they start getting their pension.

In some areas — especially the Bantustans pensioners only get back pay from the time the application has been approved.

When are pensions paid?

Pensions are paid every two months. The pay out points are usually at community halls, commissioners' offices and post offices.

How much do you get?

The maximum pension is R57 a month for African people, and R103 for coloureds and Indians.

The amount you get is based on your income.

If you apply for a pension a few years after you have reached the age to qualify for a pension, then you are entitled to an extra amount of money each year.

What happens if you are too sick or too old to collect your pension?

Someone else can be given permission to collect it for you. This is called 'power of attorney'. A person who has power of attorney is called a procurator.

What is the review system?

Old age pensioners who have

procurators and people who get disability grants have to be reviewed every six months. This means that the pension office wants to check if you are alive or still sick.

The pension office is worried that procurators may go on collecting money after the pensioner has died.

If you are permanently disabled you should not have to be reviewed.

If you are not reviewed in time you will stop getting the money.

If the money stops and only starts again a few months after a review has been done, you should get back pay. Sometimes pensioners do not get back pay. This is against the law.

Some problems pensioners face and suggestions for what can be done about them:

Age assessment

All pension applications go to Pretoria. In Pretoria they often have the wrong age, so when the forms come back, the people are told they are not old enough.

If this happens to you, go to a magistrate and make a statement about your age. If someone else in the family can remember your date of birth that person should also make a statement.

Disabled people

Sometimes clerks will only accept a disabled person's application if that person is 100% disabled. This is wrong. You have the right to apply if you are over 50% disabled.

Delays

If you have waited longer than three months after applying for a pension, you should go to the pension office and complain.

It is better if a lot of people complain together.

At the payouts

Sometimes people have to wait a long time at pay-out points. Sometimes there is no shelter. Sometimes the pension clerks

arrive late and they do not finish paying all the people.

All the problems at the pay-out points must be discussed by the community. It might be a good idea to choose a committee which takes up these problems with the magistrate.

The biggest problem

The biggest problem is that the government does not care for workers once they are old and sick.

But something has to be done about these few rights you do have.

If you have a problem you should:

●Know what your rights are and demand them.

●Get together with others who also have problems and go together to complain.

●Carry on demanding your rights until you succeed.

●Ask to see the magistrate or district pension officer if a clerk does not help you properly. If they cannot help you, write to the person in charge of pensions in the government.

●Write to, or tell the newspapers about your problem.



SPEAK

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY



Parents support students' demands

SOWETO — A delegation from the Soweto Parent Committee recently met with the deputy minister of the Department of Education and Training (DET) to present the department a memorandum of student grievances and suggestions for correcting them.

The delegation led by Rev. Manas Buthelezi, included Rev. Frank Chikane from the UDF and Mr. Isaac Mogase from the SCA. The delegation was a result of numerous public meetings between parents and students to resolve the schools crisis.

Limited

The Soweto Parents Committee, elected at a joint parent-student meeting on 21 October met with limited success.

The deputy minister in an attempt to avoid a deadlock, promised to refer the parents' grievances to the minister.

The Soweto Parents Committee urged the DET to take the following action 'to safeguard the education and future of our children'.

Democratic

●The DET must agree to students' demands for democratic SRC's which they said needed to have a democratic constitution, be democratically elected, and be allowed to operate democratically.

They proposed that an 'SRC Constitution Committee' be established consisting of all interested parties which would produce an acceptable constitution.

●Measures be taken to ensure meaningful participation of parents in the education of their children.

sary powers and ability to address the crisis'.

●The age limit regulations must be completely scrapped 'until free and compulsory education is introduced'. This will make the regulation superfluous.

●Students must be provided with all the necessary textbooks, and facilities must be equal with those of white schools, 'since we parents are taxed equally whether we are black or white'.

●Corporal punishment be administered strictly according to the rules of the DET. The committee stressed that the democratic interaction of teachers, students and parents will reduce the necessity for corporal punishment and could ensure that it is reasonably administered.

●All detained students be released and allowed to write exams as soon as possible.

●In areas affected by unrest, students be allowed to write exams in February 1985 after one month of concentrated tuition in order to make up for time lost.

'The current situation in our townships is not conducive to serious study and concentration for students writing exams,' the parents said.

The Soweto Parents Committee concluded their memorandum by saying that their proposals were interim measures.

'Unless the government dismantles Apartheid and allows for a non-racial democratic and undivided South Africa, there is no way the situation in South Africa can be nor-



The people are determined to govern themselves - and they cannot all be put in jail

In a massive protest against government policies

Thousands heeded stayaway call

Despite smear pamphlets and posters calling on people to defy their organisations and go to work, the two-day stayaway of November 5 and 6 was a massive success.

The stayaway — called by trade union, civic and student organisations, — was called to show parent support for student demands, the rejection of the army and police in townships, and the government's handling of people's grievances against high rents, GST and high food prices.

In many areas more than 90 percent of workers observed the stayaway call.

'Loosing two days wages is nothing,' one worker on the East Rand said, 'when we are already dying a slow death.'

A leading trade unionist said the stayaway was not a 'gamble'.

'The stayaway

its success.'

In Ratanda, near Heidelberg, where residents recently united in a fight against high rents, the entire township did not go to work.

In the Vaal, where nobody is unaffected by the turmoil following rent protests, as many as 90 percent of people stayed away.

Business districts on the East Rand recorded absences of up to 100 percent.

All shops in Actonville were closed as traders observed the call.

School pupils also supported the stayaway by boycotting classes. As many as 400 000 pupils did not attend classes — despite exams.

Even Putco admitted that passenger figures had not dropped so sharply since 1976.

Explaining why workers supported the demands of students, the trade unionist said demands for democratic SRC's and the scrapping of the

'As workers we are fighting for democratically elected shop steward committees in the factories and therefore it is our duty to support the same demand — for democratically elected SRC's in the schools.'

'If the age-limit law is implemented, a lot of students will be out of school and will increase the numbers of unemployed.'

'Gone are the days when a company could dismiss older workers and replace them with young people. The unions decide on dismissals and will not allow older workers to be replaced so easily.'

'Workers are paying for the education of their children and so my pocket should tell me when my child should finish school,' he said, 'not a law'.

Trade unions worked hard to organise the stayaway. It was first discussed with union members, and when

speaking to unorganised workers.

Hostel dwellers especially were visited to explain the stayaway call.

Hostel dwellers were very supportive, unionists say.

Bus drivers and taxi associations were also approached to stop their services.

Rev Frank Chikane, a UDF vice-president, condemned the detention of members of the stayaway committee.

'Detentions can only deepen the crisis,' he said.

'This is because the people are determined to govern themselves - and they cannot all be put in jail.'

Rev Chikane said the big question in the townships is whether it is at all possible to avoid anymore violence.

'People have looked into all the ways and means of making protests peaceful, yet there is no peaceful action which does not produce violence.'



The guns behind the teargas

they get teargassed, and behind the teargas there are guns.'

The government should listen to the voice of the people and get rid of apartheid, he said.

Rev Chikane warned that the protest was an important signal, not only to the government, but also to the bosses.

'As long as the bosses see money as more important than justice, the