



South African women and the struggle for freedom
 ■ See centrespread

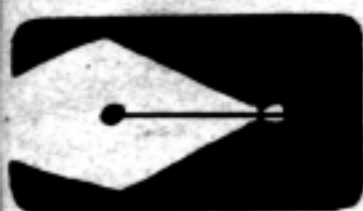


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SASPU



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Approximately 250 armed policemen invaded the campus daily.

Oppression at Westville



Students were locked out of the cafe and library and ordered off campus

THE STUDENT boycott at the University of Durban Westville is now into its sixth week with students working hard to enlist community support for their stand.

The students initially went out over three issues:

- they had to write exams on June 16th, a day of commemoration for most South Africans.
- The University Administration refused to investigate grievances of physiology students who were being taught Human physiology by a Zoologist.
- 600 school students in Natal were expelled over the Republic Day Period for anti-Republic Day activities. (The students have now been re-admitted under harsh restrictions).



Alf Karrim re-admitted to Westville

Matters on the campus came to a head when students called for a boycott of June examinations. The boycott call was highly successful according to figures released in the U.D.N. News with 90 percent of students not writing.

The university authorities responded to the boycott by calling in the police, supposedly to protect those writing exams from being "intimidated".

Student sources said however that all students were ordered off the campus, after the cafe and library had been locked.

According to U.D.N. News approximately 250 armed policemen invaded the campus daily.

The confrontation aura on the campus was heightened by the new rector Professor Greyling's statement that "this year there is an all out war and in these conditions even the innocent must suffer".

On 9 June the Rector slapped an all out ban on student meetings on campus, despite requests not to from staff and students.

Three students — one of them SRC President Alf Karrim — were suspended from university.

The students then called a meeting at Vedic Hall to call for normalisation of the campus situation. One speaker at the meeting said, "the ball is now in the administrations' hands. It's up to them now to normalise things by acceding to our demands."

The student' conditions for normalisation on campus were the immediate removal of police from the campus, the disarming of campus security guards, the reinstatement of the three students and the lifting of the ban on student meetings.

A letter stating the student demands was sent to the rector. Both the rector and vice-rector were away at the time, and the registrar replied in their absence saying that

- June exams would not be repeated.
- staff appointments were not negotiable.
- police had been removed from campus and the ban on meetings lifted.
- campus security guards carried weapons for their own self defence.
- he could not comment on the suspension of the three students.

The situation at Westville is at present still in flux. Students are working to explain the issues to the community, following adverse press over the boycott.

According to acting President Brits Hansjee, "we will stop the boycott immediately upon the university authorities acceding to our demands and our preconditions for negotiation".

Vaal Committee opposes SAIC elections

A 13-PERSON Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee (TASC) has elected to organise a boycott of the SAIC elections in November.

Dr Essop Jassat, a former member of the Transvaal Indian Congress, heads the committee, together with Drs Ram Saloojee and Ismail Cachalia who are its Vice-Chairpersons. Others on the committee are Mr I Momoniat (secretary), Mr P Naidoo (assistant secretary), Mr A Moonda (treasurer) and Mr N Pahad (publicity secretary).

In a statement issued to SASPU the committee pointed out that the SAIC had been rejected by the Indian community ever since it was imposed in 1964. However, the lack of an organised anti-government political organisation meant that opportunists could jump on the bandwagon

posing as leaders when popular leaders like Yusuf Dadoo, Ahmed Kathrada, Malvi Saloojee and Nelson Mandela were either banned, imprisoned or exiled.

The SAIC was first imposed in 1964 as a nominated body called the National Indian Council. In an attempt to diffuse widespread opposition to this council, the Government allowed half the members to be elected by electoral colleges made up of local management or consultative committees.

However, this plan was just as unsuccessful and the Government announced a new 45 member committee, of whom 40 were to be elected in 1979 on a common voters roll. When the registration of voters failed, the Government tried to coerce people to register by threatening to fine people R50 if they re-

fused to register as voters.

"The move to have elections should not be seen as a change in the Government's attitude — Apartheid is going through a crisis. Neighbouring countries like Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Angola have been liberated. Namibia will soon be liberated. Internally, labour strikes, school boycotts, community resistance and struggle, the failure of the Government's homeland policies and so on all threaten the very existence of apartheid.

"Consequently the Government tried to win friends inside the country through creating a black middle class, total strategy and in its attempt to win the 'hearts and minds' of the people.

"The SAIC still remains an ethnic body which is powerless. The right to vote implies the right to the shar-

ing of power. The SAIC is a mere dummy body, aimed to strengthen Apartheid and white domination."

The TASC committee found it principles and demands of the Freedom Charter which still serves as the only document guiding us in our struggle for a non-racial, democratic and free South Africa.

"The illusions of change are merely geared to divert us from the principles and demands of the freedom charter which still serves as the only document guiding us in our struggle for a non-racial, democratic and free South Africa.

TASC said the recent bannings of Sammy Adelman, the Cachalia Brothers, Andrew Boraine, Sophie Mthembu and others reveals that not much has changed in South Africa.

"The Government will only allow

dissent if it is done within its own structures. In particular, the bannings of George Sewpersadh, A Chetty and Azar and Firoz Cachalia clear the way for the Government to go ahead with its SAIC elections."

The committee intends to launch an intensive campaign against the SAIC elections, and hopes to come out and co-operate with people from all over the Transvaal. Mass meetings will be held in all major areas in the Transvaal, the first of which is to be held in Lenasia on August 19 at the Civic Centre.

"The TASC calls upon all freedom-loving and democratic South Africans to actively reject and destroy these institutions of Apartheid and commit themselves to meaningful change and the creation of a non-racial, democratic and just South Africa," the statement concluded.

Meer — AD has crucial decision

THE OUTCOME of the trial of Fatima Meer in which the internationally-acclaimed sociologist is accused of contravening her banning order on four counts, could have far reaching effects on the lives of 156 restricted people in South Africa.

For the first time since the Suppression of Communism Act was passed in parliament in 1950, the validity and authenticity of an entire banning order are to be contested by the defence at the trial which has been remanded to July 26.

Senior Counsel for Mrs Meer, Advocate Ismail Mahomed, stated at the preliminary hearing that a document purporting to be signed by a person describing himself as Jimmy Kruger, Minister of Justice, and further purporting to place restrictions on Mrs Fatima Meer, had been served on Meer. He added that the validity and authenticity of the banning order was in dispute.

Advocate Mahomed, who is well known for his work in challenging and finding legal loopholes in the not-so-water-tight apartheid system, has an impressive record to his career including his appointment as judge of the Supreme Court of Botswana and his appointment to the Appellate Division of Swaziland and Lesotho.

In opening the defence he told the court that Mrs Meer would admit that she was present at the Gandhi Settlement, but disputed the allegation that she was on the grounds of an educational institution.

The boundaries of the magisterial district of Durban are also being questioned as the defence denies that Mrs Meer left the city area.

Mrs Meer recently took another swipe at the restrictions imposed by banning orders when the Supreme Court judged that a previous conviction for contravening her banning order be set aside because of an

'incorrigibly obscure' definition used in the order by the Minister of Justice in reference to 'social gatherings'.

The Attorney General of Natal was later granted leave to appeal against this decision, but the appeal has not yet gone to court.

July 26 will be closely watched by those presently restricted by the State and many others threatened by the curtailment of their individual liberties.

Advocate Mahomed is assisted by Mr C Mailer and instructed by George Sewpersadh and Company. Mr J Garr will appear for the State.



48 Cape Town students demonstrating at a recent international meat conference.

"Meat" protest students on trial

48 STUDENTS from the University of Cape Town are to appear in court next month charged with contravening the Riotous Assemblies Act.

The charges arose after they were arrested for protesting outside the Good Hope Center on 27 May.

They were protesting under the banner "International meat bosses condone worker oppression" — against the conflict in the meat industry over the past year in which more than 800 Cape Town meatworkers were dismissed during an industry-wide strike in mid-1980.

The meatworkers have been struggling for a long time. They demand recognition of their democratically elected, non-racial workers committees vital to their struggle against appalling working conditions and low pay.

They were widely supported in the community by a meat boycott and fundraising activities — but 800 fired workers were never reinstated.

Management in fact cooperated with the state, and a number of workers were endorsed back to the

homelands and other meat workers and union officials were detained and harassed.

Since the strike conditions have deteriorated even further, but workers have attempted to reorganise themselves. Largely, their attempts have been throttled by the meat bosses, who have intimidated and victimised potential leaders and other workers.

And it was in this context that the OPIC international meat-producers' conference was held in Cape Town.

Despite pressure from the International Labour Organisation, foreign delegates attended, and Cape Town meat bosses attempted to create the impression they were in harmony with their workers.

An open letter written by the General Workers' Union to all delegates informed them of conditions and labour relations in the meat industry and drew attention to last year's strike — but most of the letters mysteriously disappeared from the registration desk before the conference began.

Union takes 'car' bosses to court

JUDGEMENT was reserved in the Supreme Court, Cape Town this week in an urgent application brought against Leyland SA by the Leyland Union of Motor and Rub-

ber Workers and nine of its members.

The application called for an order declaring Leyland's dismissal of 1 900 workers on May 20 a

"wrongful breach" of their contracts of employment.

The applicants contended that Leyland went against the terms of its employment contract.

In argument for the applicants it was stated that they were not properly dismissed and "we must go back and follow the procedures".

Leyland contended that in negotiations that took place in December 1980, wage increases were settled and this settlement was valid for a year.

The company also contended that in view of its commitments, it was compelled to dismiss the striking workers and employ new people. It was argued on Leyland's behalf that the dismissal of the workers followed a breach of contract and was therefore not unlawful.

Mr CP Plewman, SC, and Mr J Brassel, instructed by AM Omar and Omar and Co, appeared for the union and the Leyland workers.

Mr C Cohen SC and Mr M Odes, instructed by Syfret, Godlonton, Fuller, Moore Inc appeared for Leyland.



Cosas exec. member 'Oupe' Masaku

Cosas calls for release of leaders

THE Congress of South African Students (Cosas) has strongly criticized recent state action against its members.

A statement released by Cosas's national executive committee claimed that security police were intensifying their activities against the organisation and had detained a large number of members, including its president, Wantu Zenzile who is being held under Section Six of the Terrorism Act. Cosas's first

president, Ephraim Mogale is serving an eight year sentence on Robben Island.

The statement said these actions were aimed at uprooting the students' voice, and called for the immediate and unconditional release of all detained Cosas members.

Measures such as bannings, detentions and jailings would never prevent students from striving to achieve a just and democratic society, the statement said.

NO BANNING or detention will deter the student movement from opposing the government. If anything, it will intensify the efforts of students to contribute to the fight against oppression, racism and exploitation.

This was the clear message that emerged from a mass meeting at Wits

The meeting, attended by over 1 500 students, was called to protest against the banning and the detention of national and Wits student leaders.

Acting Nusas President Jonty Joffe, recently elected to fill the gap created by the banning of Nusas President Andrew Boraine, said "the message should go out from this meeting that we are not scared, but we are angry. The very fact that we are here indicates our intention not only to continue, but to intensify our efforts to contribute to this fight against racism, exploitation and oppression."

Mr Joffe said it would be wrong to claim that the current wave of bannings was purely a result of anti-Republic Day activities.

We can however fairly accurately say that they represent an attack on the general democratic movement which was particularly strong during the "celebrations" and articulated the feelings and aspirations of the majority of South Africans."

He went on to say that a broad democratic front was emerging in South African politics. Its general features were that it "is based on the foundation of a commitment to a non-racial society in South Africa as well as on the participation of the majority in shaping their own lives. It operates under the guiding light of the Freedom Charter".

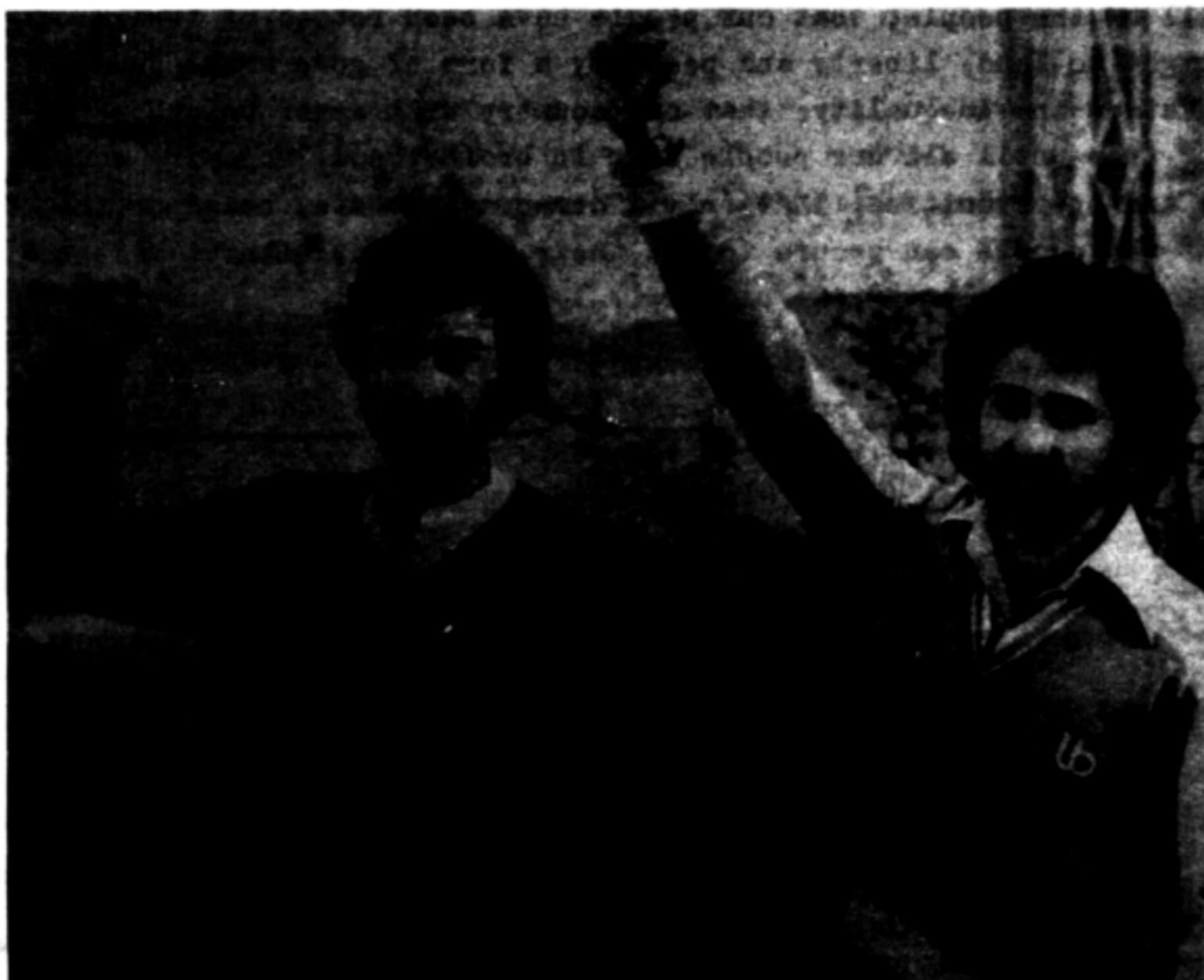
Also addressing the meeting was Wits Black Students Society, Chairperson David Johnson, who was detained for two weeks in the recent clampdown.

He accused the state of cowardice for the banning of Wits SRC President Sammy Adelman.

"By banning him, the state has shown us that it is scared of the growing non-racial student movement in this country, and of the ideas and aspirations of the oppressed majority. It is scared of leaders such as Nelson Mandela.

"Thus they revert to such inhuman measures as detentions and ban-

Banning won't stop us mass meeting vows



Above: Firoz and Azhar Cachalia, the two brothers from Wits' Black Students Society, both were banned on the same day. Above right: Sammy Adelman, Wits SRC President, was the first to get his banning order. Below right: Nusas President Andrew Boraine was banned after being released from detention.

nings, and are supported by lackeys of the state and political opportunists that talk of 'white so-called radicals such as one pipsqueak called Sammy Adelman'".

Mr Johnson recalled the time he met Firoz and Azhar Cachalia on the tenth floor of John Vorster Square where they were detained for a short time.

It was only later that he learnt they were to be banned.

"The only way I can do justice to my comrades is — while I can still talk — to pledge and dedicate my whole existence to the struggle and challenge the state to try and ban 20 million people," he said to cheers from the audience.

Mr Johnson spoke out angrily against right-wing informers on the

campus. We must stop talking to Nationalist thugs that masquerade as students on this campus, bargaining for peace and tranquility whilst they openly defy student government and declare publicly that there will be open warfare, and while it openly associates with the state."

Dr Alex Boraine, PFP MP for Pinelands and the father of Andrew Boraine, said that many white South Africans dismiss victims of bannings and detentions as misfits and troublemakers.

"But," said Dr Boraine, "if fitting into society means choosing the safe road, the sitting on the fence, the holding of privilege at the expense of others, then let us hope for more misfits in society."

"If taking a stand against injustice,

against exploitation, against inhumanity earns the title troublemaker, then let us work harder for more troublemakers in South African society."

Dr Boraine said that if one were to apply the logic of the South African government, then it was actually the Minister of Justice, the Prime Minister and all his cabinet who should be banned.

"It is this government which is the biggest threat to public order in South Africa. It is their laws and their actions which cause the law itself to be called into disrespect.

"Every time they transgress the rule of law, they encourage the opponents of their action to disrespect the law. That is why they have become a risk in our society and by their own logic, should be either de-



tained or banned, or both".

Dr Boraine added that constantly heartless and reckless actions were taking place, like the actions taken against residents at Nyahga and Langa recently.

On that basis economic exploitation, the Group Areas Act, pass laws, influx control, separate educational systems and race classification should all be banned.

"In short, the banning of any law or custom which degrades people on the grounds of race, colour, sex or class."

Mr Cachalia, father of the banned Azhar and Firoz and vice-chairperson of the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee, appealed to the youth of today to take up the struggle where the older generation left off.

He said bannings had no place in a country based upon the will of the people and upon true democracy.

"Law in South Africa is blatantly and unashamedly an instrument for the consolidation of white minority rule. The law has been emptied of all principles, all substance. All that remains is the outer shell of Apartheid, of white political supremacy."

Ever since laws geared to the interests of the few had been passed there had been resistance in South Africa.

"We did not accept those impositions without resisting because we are people and lay claim to all the achievements of human civilization", he emphasised.

"From Sharpeville to the 1976 uprising, the elements of people's resistance and government brutality have been inextricably mixed. This is the context in which our young people, dedicated to a new South Africa and a better life for its people, have been motivated. And for that life, they are being forced to suffer bannings and detentions."

Mr Cachalia concluded his speech by quoting the timeless words of Nehru, a past Prime Minister of India who said "There is no easy walk to freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to walk through the valley of the shadow of death again and again before we reach the mountaintops of our desires".

Police shoot teargas at protesting squatters

POLICE fired teargas from close range at a crowd of over 1000 protesting squatters who gathered outside a court in Langa last week. The crowd — consisting mainly of women — were protesting the arrest of nearly 1000 people at a squatter camp near Crossroads.

The arrested squatters were charged with living in the Cape Peninsular for more than 72 hours and failing to produce documents on demand.

At the Langa court where they were to be tried 300 squatters who had not been arrested in the raids gathered on a field nearby.

The crowd, consisting of the relatives of the men and women on trial, moved to the court and demanded to speak to police officials.

They demanded to be arrested and sent to Polsmoor with the others, but the only police answer was to tell them to disperse.

After dispersing for a short time the crowd — which had grown considerably — walked back and repeated their demands. Again they

were told to disperse. By the time they gathered outside the courts for the third time more than 1000 people were present.

Extra police arrived and stood in a line between the crowd and the court. The people again demanded to be arrested or that the squatters on trial be released.

As the crowd grew in size police activity became more frantic. While negotiations between police and the crowd were underway, teargas was fired at close range. A cordon was formed around the court and the crowd gradually dispersed.

It was after a raid by Western Cape Administration Board officials in the early hours of the morning that the squatters were picked up and taken to the police cells.

Two courts at Langa were hastily convened and another special court set up at the Mannenburg police station. The public prosecutor was operating at the Mannenburg court and to cope with the large number of accused, policeman acted as prosecutors at the two courts.

At Langa the courts were

packed, with hundreds more waiting outside. Most of the charged were not represented.

A plea of guilty gave them sixty days or R60. A plea of not guilty meant a week long remand to Pollsmoor prison and a further appearance.

Despite the protests the regularity of the court appearances was not disrupted.

At the end of the day's proceedings the protesting squatters returned to the bushes and their plastic shelters. Most of them had been camping near crossroads for several months but were forced to leave Langa when removals were stepped up at the beginning of the year. Migrant workers staying in single sex hostels were evicted at the same time and no alternative homes were provided.

The women, who came to Cape Town because they were not prepared to face starvation in the bantustans, were staying with their husbands illegally. Life for an 'illegal' in Cape Town is one of endless harassment. As one woman put it: "We risk jail, fines and being sent

back to the homelands if we are caught".

And just last week many were caught and face the dangers of being in the Peninsular 'illegally'.

Factories who employed migrants in the Langa area had been instructed to provide housing for them but it was not economical to do so. At the same time a utility company which was empowered to enter into a 60 year lease agreement with the Administration Board and Community Council was established. It provides 7.5 million to prospective home owners with section 10 rights. Many of the homes they moved into were the old single quarters which had been renovated.

The states low cost housing policy has cut down its cost by millions. Another effect is that it provides services for a stabilised Petit bourgeois workforce. Those who are employed are useful to the state and so housing is provided for them.

The unemployed, illegal and the rightless need to be controlled and removed from the urban areas.

The raids against the squatters near Crossroads are another in the long line of attempts to control the population. The arrested face possible deportation to the homelands. But this has not deterred the people from returning in the past. The risk of arrest is not to much of an alternative to the prospect of starving.

"Ford tries to force racial split in factory"

PORT ELIZABETH — After a 17-day strike workers who were led by management to believe they could return to work on Monday, June 8, arrived at two of Ford's plants — only to be turned away.

Officials of the Motor and Component Workers Union of South Africa (Macwusa) claim that Ford management had deliberately allowed the "misunderstanding" to develop.

Bypassing the union, Ford management had issued slips to some workers on Friday informing them that the engine plant would re-open on Monday, the Cortina plant on Thursday, and the Neave plant on the following Monday.

So while the engine plant opened on Monday, workers arriving at the other two plants were confronted with closed gates and were told to return at the new times.

At a meeting that morning the workers decided to accept Ford management's conditions for returning.

But all was not well on the engine plant front. The workers there were told they would be expected to teach a "coloured" employee his job. If a black worker was fired for refusing to do so, the rest would walk out.

The night-shift workers attended this meeting immediately after reporting for duty.

On Tuesday, 9 June, one of the ex-strikers refused to instruct a new employee and was promptly fired. He allegedly refused to accept his dismissal, and also refused to leave the plant or return his overall.

Security personnel were called to take his overall and remove him from the plant. A scuffle broke out, and when workers rushed to assist their colleague one of the security guards allegedly drew a revolver

and held it to the fired worker's head.

Then the 500 engine-plant workers gathered in front of the plant and were told by management representative to return to work or leave.

Ford released a statement saying that the new employees had been recruited to operate a proposed double night shift at the plant.

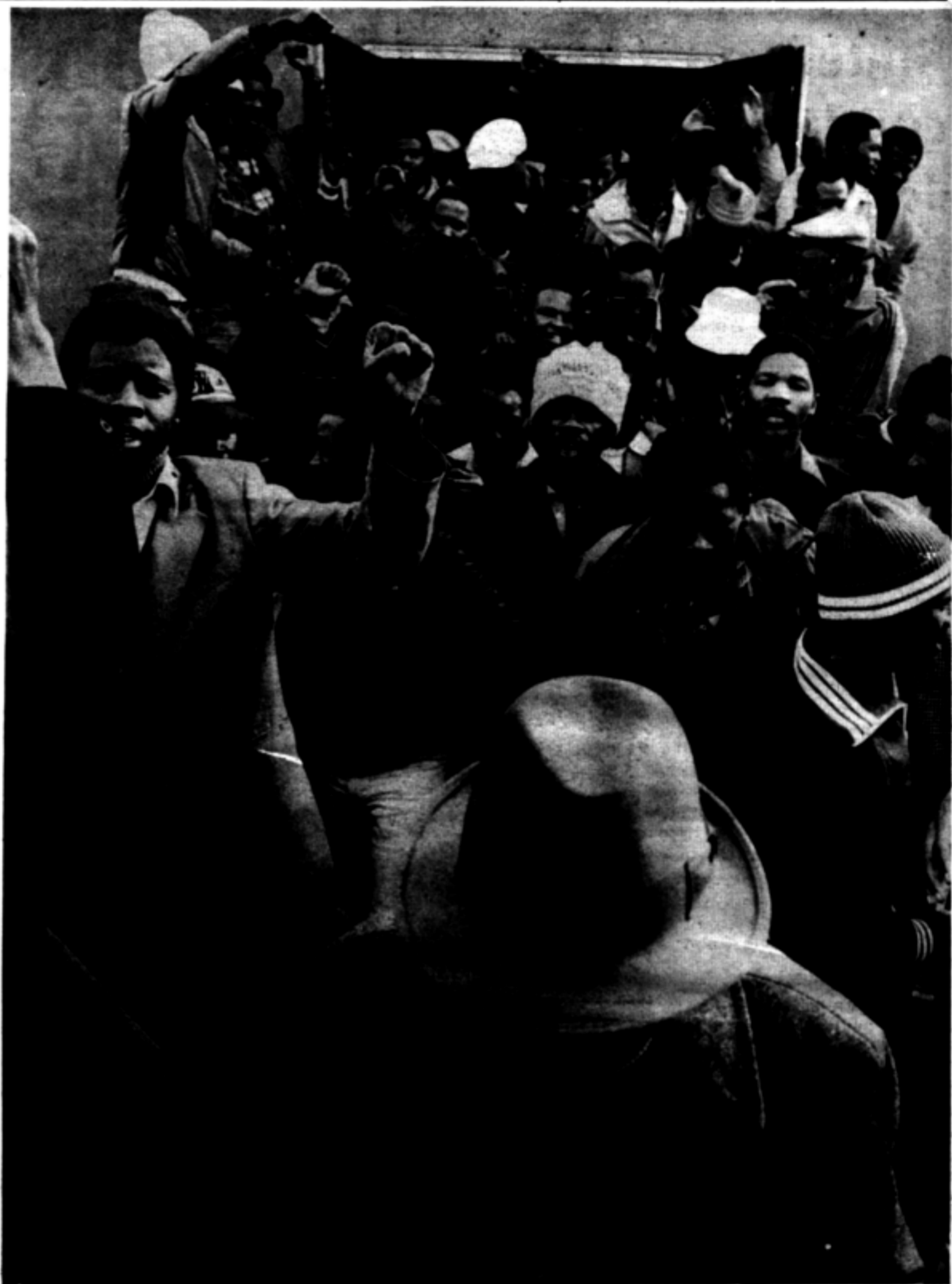
Macwusa leadership held a meeting with Ford management on Tuesday afternoon, at which the organising secretary, Government Zini, and the general secretary, Dennis Neer, were informed that they were being removed from Ford's salaried pay roll and would become hourly-paid workers with immediate effect.

At this meeting Macwusa understood that the workers would be able to return to the engine plant the following day. An agreement with management that Macwusa would give the company a day's notice before the return of striking workers, was not seen by the union as referring to what they had regarded as a "temporary disruption".

At a meeting that night the workers decided to return to work the following day and agreed to train the new employees. They also decided not to react to the demotion of the two union officials, as control over events was being taken out of their hands by Ford management.

When the workers arrived at the engine plant on Wednesday, June 10, they were turned away. A Ford official informed them that Macwusa had not given management the required day's notice of the workers' intention to return.

The engine plant opened and workers returned on Thursday.



Ford workers leave the premises at the start of a 17 day strike

The organising secretary of Macwusa, Mr Zini, released a statement in which he said that Ford's demotion of Mr Neer and himself did not come as a surprise.

In an attack on the National Union of Motor and Rubber Workers of South Africa (Numarwosa), a Fosatu affiliate, Mr Zini said that it was ironic that representatives of pro-management unions that had agreed to the "ill fated concept of company-paid shop stewards" had not suffered the same fate.

He gave an assurance to "coloured" workers at the motor company that Macwusa was non-racial and bore them no grudge and would "never allow this to develop into a racial issue".

In response the secretary of Numarwosa, Freddy Sauls, said it was unfortunate that Macwusa was being used by Ford management to divide workers along racial lines.

Labour observers feel that Ford's actions in fostering "misunderstandings" and demoting the two

union officials were designed to spread confusion and destroy worker confidence in Macwusa — Ford was in fact attempting to take control of the situation out of the hands of the workers, and put them in a position where they were reacting instead of acting.

Management's statement that the position of Macwusa's detained chairperson, Dumile Makanda, was "a matter between ourselves and the employee concerned" seemed to indicate that Mr Makanda would also be demoted on his release.

"Council, you're taking our rent!"

COUNCIL, you take our rent. You must maintain the houses' was the demand of more than 1 500 people who had gathered in Bonteheuwel recently to protest against the way the City Council has been refusing to do maintenance for all these years, even though the people have always paid their rent for repairs to the houses which are badly built.

People came from all over the cape flats to protest as a united body against what is a problem in all City Council areas — The Council refuses to repair the houses.

Community organisations belonging to the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC) brought in busloads of tenants from Lavender Hill, Steenberg, Hanover Park, Factretion, Bokmakierie, Bridgetown, Silvertown, Kewtown, Eureka Estate, Clark's Estate, Avon Estate, Mitchells Plain, Manenberg and Ocean View to show support for the campaign to

A mass meeting in Bonteheuwel has united community support against the City Council.

force the Council to maintain the houses.

Representatives from many areas gave messages of support at the meeting.

'We are all affected by the Council's poor maintenance of our houses and we need to stand together to force them to maintain the houses, was the message brought by many of the speakers.

Under the banners 'A people united will never be defeated' and 'An injury to one is an injury to all' the people WERE united as they decided to refuse to pay for repairs and to demand that the Council drop the new lease.

This lease states that all new tenants and those on the transfer list have to pay for the repairs done to

their houses. Speakers at the meeting said that even old tenants have in the past been forced to pay for repairs.

As a speaker read out a resolution saying 'We must go back into our communities and organise so that our community organisations can be strong when we confront council,' the people applauded and raised their hands in agreement.

A banner hanging above the stage saying 'Die Council vat ons rent. Hulle moet die huise maintain' explained the feelings of the people and also their demands.

A speaker from CAHAC explained just what the Council did with the people's money.

'They lost millions of rands on the Good Hope Centre, Cape Town

Symphony Orchestra, Hartleyvale, Cape Town Civic Centre, Cape Town Festival, Republic Festival. Why do they say they don't have money to repair the houses?

'We are asking them now: What happened to the money we have paid as part of our rent that was supposed to be used for repairs and the money they received for the sale of Bloemhof Flats?

'The reason why Council waste our money is because we don't have the privilege to vote them out of power.

'We must force the Council to look at the way they are wasting our money. They can say they have no

money, but when we say we don't have, they threaten us with eviction,' he said.

Another speaker said the new lease was like tying a rope around the people's necks. He said the Council has also increased the deposits for new tenants without consulting the people.

The old deposit of ten rand for subeconomic and R15 for economic houses have been increased to a month's rent. This is supposed to be repaid when the people move out, but in most cases it is never done.

'Maintenance of houses should be paid by the homeowner. We do not have the same privileges as homeowners, neither do the houses comply with building regulations. So how can we pay for maintenance,' he said.

Another speaker said the people must strengthen their organisations if they wanted to overcome their problems.

'The Council is well-organised. We must be better organised. We must elect our own leaders', he said.

Statement condemns detentions of Union leaders

A STATEMENT roundly condemning the recent spate of detentions has been released by the independent trade union movement.

The statement was signed by the South African Food and Canning Workers Union (AFCWU), the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (CCAWUSA), the Black Municipal Workers Union (BMWU), the General and Allied Workers Union (GAWU), the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA), CUSA and Holtelica.

"We note in anger, that the authorities have not seen fit to release any of the trade unionists detained in their prisons. Instead the most striking development has been the further detentions of one member of Mwasa, 33 members of Saawu and 4 from Macwusa, as well as the arrest of more community and student leaders," the statement said.

"We condemn all these detentions in the strongest terms. As far as the detentions of Mr Joe Mavi (President of BMWU), Mr Sisa Njikelana (Vice-President of Saawu), and the Macwusa leaders are concerned, we can only conclude that their transferal to Section 10 of the Internal Security Act means that the state is unable to charge them even with the heavily loaded arsenal of repressive security laws at its disposal.

"It is appropriate that at this time of large scale crackdowns on the Trade Union Movement the public should become aware of the state's plans for dealing with independent trade unionism.

"We would like to say that these heavy handed actions will not achieve industrial peace. They serve only to make the workers more suspicious of the state's attitude towards trade unions, we therefore again call on the government to release all the detained trade unionists with the least possible delay.

"Failing this we pledge that we will do all in our power to ensure that the work of the affected unions does not suffer because of the moral and practical support we can provide."

A PROMINENT Uitenhage community leader has accused the Federation of South African Trade Unions in the Eastern Cape of planning to infiltrate community organisations for its own ends.

Fosatu have rejected the allegation but have admitted that there is no bar on Fosatu members joining community organisations and standing for elections to the executive committee.

This is a significant shift in Fosatu policy which has maintained that trade unionists should not be involved in civic or "political matters".

The former president of the interim executive of the executive of the

Uitenhage Black Civic Organisation, (Ubco), Mr Thomas Kobese, said he had resigned as secretary of the Ubco executive last month because the elections were "undemocratic" and rigged in favour of Fosatu supporters.

At the meeting, the president of the Fosatu-affiliated National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers (Numarwosa), Mr Jurie Harris, was elected Ubco treasurer.



GAWU President Samson Ndou.

R2 for motor workers

A MINIMUM wage of R2 an hour for unskilled male workers came into force at a Uitenhage factory this week.

The minimum, negotiated by the workers' committee of the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers (Numarwosa) at the Swedish SKF bearings plant, is believed to be the highest in force in South Africa at the moment.

The minimum rate for women will be R1,80.

Mr Freddie Sauls, general secretary of Numarwosa, said that the agreement would mean that a male worker would collect about R360 a month before tax once he had served a probationary period.

But while this was a step in the right direction, it had 'nothing to do' with a just wage.

Ultimately, a just wage was a political question, and involved an equitable distribution of the wealth of the country.

Mr Sauls said the vast majority of companies in South Africa could pay a minimum wage in excess of R2, and that if they were really concerned with the welfare of their employees, they should pay at least that basic amount.

"In most centres there are companies that can afford to pay their workers a minimum of R3 or R4 an hour," he said.

He said he thought the new min-

Workers hit hard by new pension laws

A NUMBER of worker disputes have arisen after changes in the laws governing company pension schemes were proposed last year.

Black workers believe that as the people most affected by this, they should have had a major say in drawing up the new legislation.

Instead, the proposals came after debate between the State, insurance companies and management in consultation with white union officials.

SASPU NATIONAL looks at why the issue has become such an important one to black workers.

The most important changes the government wants to introduce are the following:

- Workers won't be allowed to withdraw their own contributions to the fund, plus interest if they resign or are dismissed. Until now this has been possible and only the employers contribution has remained in the fund. The proposal change keeps as much money in the pension fund for as long possible.

- Only a maximum of one-third of the accumulated pension money will be paid out in a lump sum when a worker retires. The rest will be paid in monthly instalments. Until now many workers have been able to draw the full sum at once.

- One of the aims of the proposals is to include more workers in pension schemes and also improve be-

nefits. The changes will however, cost workers the choice of when they can withdraw their pension contributions and how much they can get at any one time.

Many feel that these measures are another example of unnecessary state interference in private pension funds.

The problems that are experienced with the State's administration of both unemployment insurance funds and pensions, have made many workers sceptical about the motives behind the new proposals.

Some bosses are crying out that the state is interfering in their private pension schemes. Most however see it in their interests to support the new scheme. They will now be released from their responsibility towards workers in the field of pensions.

The state, management and insurers argue that a national preservation fund will improve the quality of life of pensioners.

In a country like South Africa where wages are low and unemployment high, pensions have been an important source of money during hard times when people are out of work.

The average life expectancy of black men in South Africa is still about 50 years - it is hard to see how people will benefit more from the proposed fund if money can only be withdrawn once a worker retires or turns 60.

Management and insurers have interests in seeing the growth of large preserved funds. The money can be used for their investments. Larger profits can be drawn if greater sums of money are invested over a longer period.

The money that the workers contribute year after year, together with the bosses contributions are invested to benefit the bosses.

The workers are having to pay part of their wages into funds and the returns that they are getting are shrinking given the spiralling inflation rate. The proposed pension legislation will hardly alleviate the workers' burden. If anything it will make it worse.

Ubco leader in walk-out over allegations of Fosatu infiltration

In a surprise move earlier this year, Mr Kobese resigned as Fosatu secretary in Uitenhage to join the rival Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union of South Africa.

He said he was dissatisfied with the union in the area and at least 200 Goodyear workers, where Mr Kobese works, left the Fosatu-affiliated National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers to join Macwusa as well.

Mr Kobese said that conflict between the two unions - which is most serious at Ford and General Motors - should not be brought into Ubco.

There has, however, been growing antagonism between the two

motor unions, ever since workers at Ford's Cortina plant rejected the Fosatu union during the 1979 Ford strike and formed their own Ford Workers Committee (FWC).

The FWC was affiliated to the then mass-based civic organisation, Pebco, lead by Mr Thozamile Botha. The move was criticised by Fosatu unionists who said unions should not be involved in "civic matters".

In an interview, Mr Kobese said although Macwusa had "good relations" with the Pebco leadership at present, this was because of "goodwill" between the organisations and not a planned strategy. Both organisations retained their independence.

He said Fosatu had violated the autonomy of Ubco and was attempting to use the organisation to improve its image in Uitenhage.

Mr Kobese said at least half the members of the new executive had not been democratically elected at a recent meeting - called to elect a new executive to replace the interim executive - but had merely been nominated.

Mr Kobese, who did not stand for the position of chairman, was elected secretary.

Soon after the meeting however, Mr Kobese objected to the way the elections had been conducted and criticised the new executive's policy of not co-operating with other civic

associations.

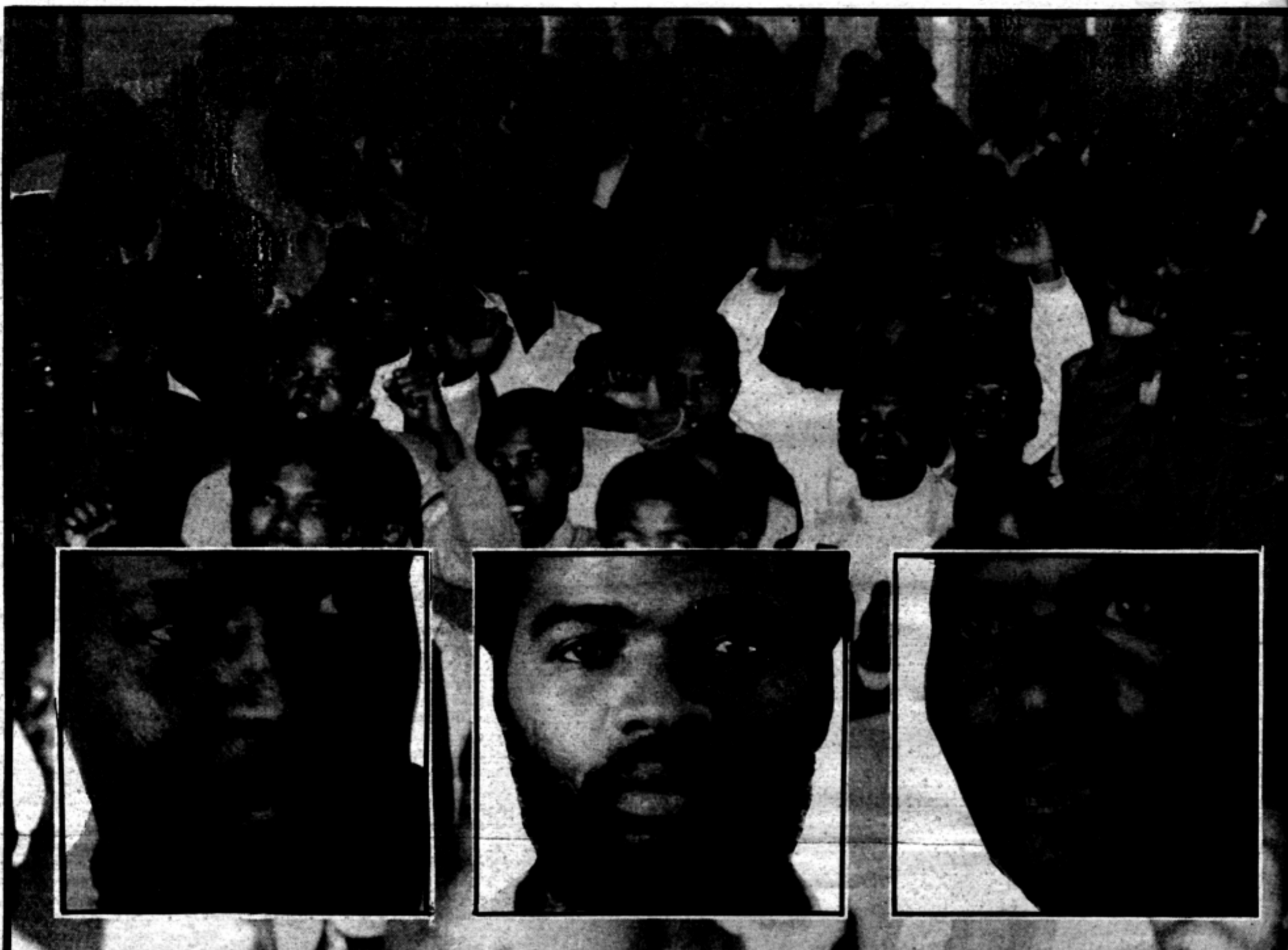
He said Ubco would soon find itself "organising in self-isolation" and would become an organisation with little support.

The executive initially refused to accept his resignation but later declared he had resigned at a mass meeting last month.

Mr Kobese said he was barred from speaking at the meeting attended by prominent Fosatu unionists, Mr Fred Sauls, secretary of Numarwosa, and Mr Les Keteldas, regional secretary of Fosatu in Port Elizabeth.

The acting secretary of Fosatu in Uitenhage, Mr Edwin Maepe, said there were "no plans for the union to take over Ubco". He said the president of Numarwosa, Mr Jurie Harris, had been a Ubco member for "quite some time".

"Mr Kobese should not lose sight of the fact that the community is made up of workers and Fosatu members form the majority of the entire workforce in Uitenhage," he said.



Background — workers show their support for SAAWU. Inset from left to right — Eric Mntonga, chairperson Wilson Rowntree executive committee member, Bangumzi Sifingo, Branch executive committee, Herbert Barnabas, SAAWU National Organizer.

'Unity should be the watchword of the union movement'

SAAWU calls for unity between progressive trade unions 'so that they can speak with one voice'

Q: When and where was SAAWU started?

A: SAAWU's headquarters are in Durban. In fact that's where SAAWU started and then from there it was extended to East London. You know prior to the advent of SAAWU in East London the workers were totally un-unionised. In fact East London was declared a starting point in 1980 so we had to concentrate on East London. Because as I said the workers in East London were totally un-unionised. So it was felt that we should stay in the East London area to sort of, you know, arouse the consciousness of the workers to a commendable level of awareness. To create a powerful base, and then we can move from this powerful base to other places as well. Mr Barnabas who is our national organiser is a full time official — he's going to organise the Reef and I think we'll be moving to the Free State pretty soon, and the Western Cape as well. It's going to be an easy job I think, because the success of SAAWU is along the course of development of the trade union movement in South Africa since 1919.

Q: What is SAAWU's attitude to registration?

A: We believe that if we go and register, we will be embracing all those draconian laws which amount to a genocide against the working class and the black workers in particular. So we can't participate in the act of our own oppression and exploitation — that's why we say no dice to registration.

In any capitalist society there are two contending forces — that is the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The state will always side with the bosses — they will try to repress the feelings of the workers or try to quell the movements of the workers which are aimed at the total liberation of the working class and the toiling masses in this country.

Q: How are workers organised within SAAWU?

A: Like I said initially we organise the workers and if we have more than 60 percent members we start approaching

management. We believe in organising the workers first. They must know what they want — they must know that there is a need to join a trade union — then we approach management. Organising the workers is in fact our major task in helping the toiling masses.

Q: Do you believe in collective leadership?

A: Yes, we believe that leadership should be collective — as I said initially we don't want to create a bureaucracy. We want workers to be the decision makers. We further firmly believe in active mass participation and mass participatory democracy. And with that philosophy we are sure to be in a position to bring in all the workers and all democratic minded people.

Q: Do you see the struggle as non-racial?

A: Yes we believe that South Africa has got a non-racial future — we have looked beyond the horizon and we want to start right away now in organising our people in conformity with a future non-racial South Africa. We believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it — black or white. The future of South Africa is in

the hands of its workers — only the workers in alliance with all other progressive minded sections of the community can build a happy life for all South Africans. But workers should be the vanguard.

Q: What is SAAWU's relationship to Macwusa?

A: Macwusa have the same "line" and we have a good relationship. At some stage we hope to come closer together and form one united front. In fact this is what we're aiming for — that all the genuinely progressive trade unions will at some stage come together and speak with one voice.

The strategy of all progressive trade unions is to organise the workers as is the case down there in Port Elizabeth. All the Macwusa members were at one stage members of another union. Our strategy is one of mass participatory democracy — one of active participation of the workers. The strategy of progressive unions is different from other unions in that we believe in worker control of the body and mass commitment of the workers — all the workers. So we organise the workers and then the workers

will join the ranks of any progressive union. We don't consider the academics and the intellectuals who don't really have the interests of the workers at heart — we're trying to state the case as it is.

Q: Should trade unions organise outside the factories?

A: The exploitation does not end on the shop floor, it goes beyond the factories to the locations. In the locations we experience other forms of exploitation rents, housing, the compounds, paying for children's education and so on. It doesn't end on the shop floor and even the labour laws are being made by the politicians that I referred to earlier.

Q: Do you think that trade unions should align themselves with political groups or get involved in politics?

A: We believe that trade unionism should extend beyond the shop floor to the squalid conditions we live under in the locations or villages. In fact we believe that if you are pricked by a thorn you must use another one to take it out — our fate was decided for us long ago by politicians (in the houses of parlia-

ment). If we wanted to solve the problem we must act politically — there is no other way.

Q: Could you explain SAAWU's tension with the "Ciskeian authorities"?

A: In the "Ciskei" we are fighting a three fold problem. The bosses, the South African authorities and now the so called "Ciskeian government" which is assuming the role of a junior partner in the exploitation and oppression of the fellow black South Africans.

And now, Sebe is on record having said that trade unions are redundant in the so called Ciskeian territory. He is trying to end the support that SAAWU enjoys from the workers. We have difficulty trying to find halls there to hold our meetings and even offices. This alone shows that Sebe is anti-worker, if I may say so. The workers are the people who will be dragged unwillingly into so called independence. He does not want to please them.

Q: Do you think that there are too many general workers unions?

You know SAAWU is constituted as a federation — in fact it is a federation, but seeing that the workers, or the working class of South Africa was in the hands of some irrelevant trade unions SAAWU had to go out of its way to organise workers on the shop floor. That is SAAWU is presently operating as a General union, but at some stage we shall try — in fact we are doing — we are organising the workers according to the type of job they are engaged in and we shall assist them to form unions of their own. We shall organise them along industrial lines and at some stage into sub-unions of SAAWU.

In East London we've already got sub-unions like the Chemical and Allied Workers Union, the Sweet and Beverage Workers Union, an Road Sea Transport Allied Workers Union — it is the intention of SAAWU to group these industries into sub-unions so they can stand on their own feet pushing on a common line.

How many of Inkatha's members see Mandela as their leader. Not all, but . . .

POLITICAL OPPOSITION in South Africa is a complicated business. As widespread as it is inevitable it involves a confusing variety of actors and scripts.

From Buthelezi to Biko, Van Zyl Slabbert to Slovo, the political observer is bombarded by a wide range of political alternatives and claims to credibility.

Some work within the system, others outside it. Some have taken up arms, others not. Some base their opposition on race alone. Others increasingly identify capitalism as the real enemy.

The Matanzimas and Thebehalis of South Africa have chosen to accept positions within government-created bantustan parliaments and community councils, but have attracted little popular support. Indeed, low polls and assassination attempts show the extent to which people are resisting these instructions.

There is no getting away from the fact that black people do not and will not believe that the Pretoria government has their interests at heart when creating these organs of "self determination". There is no carrot or stick that will convince them otherwise.

Where does Buthelezi fit into the picture? Does he not represent five million Zulus and many others despite his position in bantustan politics. Inkatha claims a membership of 300 000, wears the colours of the African National Congress (black, green and gold) and sings the anthem N'kosi Sikelele.

Some point out that Buthelezi and Inkatha have been attacked from all quarters — ranging from the ANC and the BC movement to Bishop Tutu and Motlana.

A convincing line of criticism has come from those who point to his role as a bantustan official.

They say the bantustans are no more than pools of surplus labour — preventing the flow of prospective workseekers to the towns and resettling those recently out of work.

The harshest aspects of Apartheid — labour control — form part of Buthelezi's function as a bantustan minister. Helping the government administer its resettlement programme and influx control measures has given Buthelezi enough to answer for.

Probably his most exposing piece of Apartheid dirty work came last year during the schools boycotts. For years at loggerheads with students at Ngoye (Zululand University), Buthelezi ran into opposition from school pupils as well. In both cases he responded with violence, and clashes between his klerie-wielding henchmen and students did a lot to destroy his image as a leader in the liberation struggle.

At the height of this confrontation Buthelezi moved himself further away from the "liberation camp" by failing to support the Free Mandela Campaign.

Ultimately, the acid test of Buthelezi's claims to support may be to ask how many of his Inkatha supporters would see Mandela as their true leader.

This leaves us with two principal groupings, divided roughly by their stand on the issue of race and class.

Some argue that the root problem in SA is race prejudice and the racial discrimination flowing from that. Their solution has been to urge the psychological emancipation of black people from the yoke of a slave mentality. Once this has been accomplished, they argue, black people will be in a position to liberate themselves.

Historically, however, the trend has been to go beyond a solely racial consciousness by looking at the reasons for racism. People's attitudes, it is argued, are products of their social environment and not the other way round. Hence it is the society and not merely its psychology that needs to be examined and challenged.



Chief Gatsha Buthelezi

Adherents to this position argued that the development of apartheid can be traced back to particular needs experienced by capitalists at the time, and point to the fact that the basis of apartheid remains the control and supply of labour at very cheap rates. This is not to reduce racism to a rationale for capitalist exploitation, but it is to argue that the two have a direct link and that apartheid and capitalism have grown up hand in hand.

Apartheid, in this view, remains the target, but not as an end in itself. Rather it is the vehicle for an assault on capitalism which is seen as the real enemy. Because apartheid provides SA capitalism with its cutting edge, the struggle against the latter must proceed via an attack on the former.

This approach — which goes beyond apartheid as the only enemy — prevailed during the hey-day of mass protest in the fifties, with the Congress Alliance adopting a steadfastly non-racial approach. With the development of BC during the 70's, however, there was a swing towards a more rigidly racial approach. But developments during the last couple of years have accelerated the trend towards a non-racial, anti-exploitation strategy. The militant youth, at the forefront of so much protest, have come to adopt an increasingly sophisticated analysis of SA society, and one which has placed more emphasis on exploitation has the foundation for political oppression.

The growth of organisation has endorsed this approach — the fastest growing organisations being those that are taking up crucial aspects of oppression but linking them to the underlying factors of exploitation.

Progressive trade unions, community organisations, and student organisations have moved beyond black consciousness to a non-racial position. Working class in charac-

ter, they have sought to take up the most pressing problems facing the working class, and to use these to promote organisation and awareness. This has given them a support base of organised and aware workers — something they accuse the black consciousness movement of never managing to achieve.

Black consciousness has also recognised that power lies with the workers. In shifting the emphasis of the struggle to the working class, they have been reluctant to abandon their racial analysis of the South African situation. This has pushed them in to the awkward position of arguing that all black people are workers and all whites are exploiters. Having collapsed race and class into one and the same thing, the official line to emerge from some quarters within the black consciousness camp is that race determines class.

While the major thrusts of action and organisation bypass BC and create the most significant force of democratic and mass based organisation to be reckoned with since the fifties, a statement of democratic intention drawn up in 1955 has formed the rallying point for the new wave of organisation.

The collection of minimum demands formulated by representatives of a wide range of organisations after a nationwide campaign was designed to draw together the aspirations of the majority of South Africans. It sets out a broad based democratic vision of South Africa.

Its unique appeal lies in the fact that it provides a stark contrast to the anti-democratic system of apartheid, without becoming ideologically exclusive. This makes it widely acceptable to democratic groups as a statement of their broad aims and provides them with a set of minimum demands to which they can relate resistance to various aspects of apartheid.

Organisations are finding that these demands for political rights, housing, work, education, land and so on are as relevant today as they were 26 years ago. They also provide something of a yardstick against which to measure the relevance of their demands and their progress towards a democratic society.

This racially exclusive approach clashes directly with the non-racial stand taken by those who believe that the struggle against apartheid must never become an end in itself, lest the symptom be mistaken for the cause.

Victory against apartheid, they argue, without a far reaching restructuring of society, would simply open up the fruits of a highly unequal society for a small black middle class to share. Because the roots of economic and political inequality lie in a system of racial exploitation, the removal of exploitation from society becomes the real and immediate goal of the struggle.

According to this approach then, the struggle against apartheid is necessary because it acts as the vehicle through which capitalist exploitation takes place. It is not an anti-white struggle, but a struggle against a network of coercive laws which curb and control the working class. Any person, white or black, taking advantage of those laws to profit from the exploitation of their fellow South Africans, becomes an enemy of the people and a target in the struggle.

Likewise, anyone standing up to challenge those laws and the exploitation they make possible, is a democrat and an ally of the people.

On the surface of things, black consciousness does appear to clash with this approach. Black consciousness ideologues have refused to acknowledge the role played by progressive whites, and steadfastly

refuse to accept that they have a contribution to make to the 'black mans struggle'.

The youth however have turned increasingly to the non-racial, anti-exploitation line. Using black consciousness as a starting point to politicise people, they have insisted on drawing out the links between apartheid and exploitation, and stressed the need for the struggle to 'go all the way' and extend democracy not only in the formal parliamentary sense, but into the home, the factory, the school, the community, the bureaucracy, even the health system.

And it is the youth who have set the pace since '76, in word and deed. The 1976 uprisings launched a whole new generation of activities who pushed ahead to organise their communities, their factories, their fellow women, artists, sportspeople.

As the pupils of 76 became the workers of 79/80, we have seen an increase in worker organisation in the factories. No longer concerned to bargain simply for a few concessions within the system, the workers of today are refusing to see their problems at work in isolation from the rest of their oppressive existence, and are starting to wield their economic power effectively in support of more far reaching demands.

Students, trade unions, community groups, women groups and organisations active in many areas of activity are increasingly stating that there can be no substitute for struggle.

Instead, a congress of democratic people would provide those struggling for freedom the opportunity formulating a programme of democratic demands to guide them in the construction of a democratic South Africa.

Wrab boils up a recipe for a black buffer class



The government subsidises Soweto electricity to the tune of R4 million a year



The propertied middle class — a 'bulwark against revolution'?

The new regime brings in a host of changes. The end effect? Much the same . . .

IF ALL goes according to plan, Soweto is dramatically poised to become a transformed township of thousands of home owners administered by economically viable local authorities, probably on a regional basis.

The plan is prompted by a new regime, which swept into the Albert Steet headquarters of the West Rand Administration Board (Wrab) 18 months ago just as the government began to change its attitude towards the provision of houses for blacks.

The government is now committed to selling all Soweto's rented accommodation, and to establishing an urban, propertied middle class as a 'bulwark against revolution.' Wrab's new regime is chaired by Mr John Knoetze, captain of the establishment of seven model townships in the Vaal Triangle, and some of his most trusted lieutenants from the Orange Vaal Administration Board.

Knoetze's plan — which he has given three years to become fully operational — envisages large-scale home ownership, preferably under the 99-year leasehold scheme, the phasing out of government subsidies, higher monthly rent payments, the uplifting of social amenities, and the running of townships on an economic basis.

The government currently subsidises services to the tune of R6-million a year for water, R4-million for electricity and R4-million for sewerage. Residents pay an average rent of R30 a month, R3,25 of which goes to the interest redemption on loans for building houses.

Knoetze believes the housing backlog — which stands at some 35 000 units and increases every year by 13% of 5000 — will be partially eliminated by increasing the density by 50% within Soweto's present borders.

Private enterprise will also be fully involved in providing housing in two phases — first, by developing land already developed by government funds, and secondly, by developing raw land when it becomes available.

The plan will go into full swing once a R352-million scheme to establish infrastructural services such as water, electricity and sewerage has been completed. Meanwhile, the building of up to 15 000 houses over three years is proceeding.

By 1984, according to Knoetze all available land in Soweto will be developed, all services will be provided, 25 000 to 30 000 telephone lines will be operating, and there will be a shorter waiting list for houses. Freeway passes will be completed and parks and social amenities uplifted.

People will be paying for services on an economic basis and the community councils will be economically viable municipalities.

Density will be increased by building new flats and houses, and by generally redeveloping existing houses, including altering single quarters to family accommodation providing better single quarters and demolishing houses where necessary.

Knoetze's plan is based on his personal picture of Soweto. He maintains the township has a population of one million "legal" residents — although it is unofficially twice that — and which will have a population of two million by the year 2000.

He also accepts the Bureau of Market Research's figure of R390 monthly income per household, and believes 85% of the residents are in an economic position to buy a house because of the good opportunities on the Reef.

He believes too little is being paid for rent, that governments subsidies should be scrapped, that residents are spending unrealistic amounts on "non-essential luxuries", and are overcommitted to hire purchase.

He also believes that the underprivileged are the responsibility of the government, and Soweto's "rich" should make substantial contributions to helping the poor.

So far, the new regime has made hardly any impact on housing. Knoetze says this is because of the special problems he inherited when he joined Wrab. These problems, which seriously stalled the building of new houses, were the lack of approved housing schemes, and infrastructural services.

He also inherited the bitter legacy of the 1976 Soweto uprisings, after which increases in tariff services were effectively put to a stop. The township was already falling into arrears, and soon accumulated funds and profits from liquor were exhausted in the running of township services.

Now, the obstacle in the way of rapid housing development,



The West Rand Administration Board builds 1 000 houses a year, compared to the Johannesburg City Council's 5 000

says, is a backlog in serviced stands, and the obstacle in the way of selling houses is a backlog in surveying older stands.

Since 1973 when Wrab took over, 7 770 houses have been built from Department of Community Development funds, and at least 438 houses have been built out of Wrab funds, giving an overall total of 8 208 houses — or a non-remarkable total of 1 000 a year.

The small number of houses built by Wrab and the government stands in stark contrast to the vigorous building programme pursued by the Johannesburg City Council, which built up to 2 000 homes a year or 35 a day — and up to 5 000 a year when the programme was in top gear.

Once the obstacles are removed, the full impact of home ownership — the axis of the plan — will be felt in transforming the township.

The government is committed to selling all houses in Soweto, preferably on a 99-year leasehold basis, a scheme which gives people "qualified" under the Black (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act title to the land and anything on it.

"With the stroke of a pen, leasehold can be changed to freehold. There will be no need to re-register. Leasehold is a step in the right direction," Knoetze says.

The other scheme open to the residents is the home ownership scheme, which allows for the putting down of a 10% deposit for a loan of R10 000 and 20% for over R10 000, which is paid off in monthly instalments over 30 years. The owner can then occupy his house forever.

Knoetze's home-grown scheme for selling houses is as follows: houses are sold at market value and not at cost price, a portion of the sale goes to the Department of Community Development to pay off outstanding loans, part is tied up as security so building societies can advance a loan, and part goes into the community councils kitty for further development of the area.

This is his example: If a house cost R2 000, it should be sold for R10 000 to allow the building society to use the security to advance the money. If R200 is outstanding on the house, that R200 should be paid to the Department of Community Development, and the remaining R800 should go into the



WRAB hopes to create a property market, but who will it benefit?

kitty for redevelopment.

Government subsidies will be phased out and monthly payments will be increased to enhance the economic viability of the community councils. A property market will also be created.

Knoetze is adamant that people have not paid off their houses over the years through rent payments, that the homes are government property and that the government has been paying for them. Nothing is more selfish, he says, than the wholesale conversion of tenancy to ownership.

Detractors say the only people to benefit from this plan will be the government, Wrab and the community councils.

Soweto households contain sometimes up to 20 people, and when members of a household move into their own homes, the average income of R390 will drop dramatically, and residents will not be able to afford higher monthly payments.

By upgrading community councils into independent local authorities, the workers of Soweto will be subsidising Johannesburg, which

will make no contribution at all to the running of the township.

The Knoetze plan is also seen as part of a new strategy to create an urban, propertied, middle class on the one hand, and to give powerful community councils the task of enforcing the most hated aspects of apartheid.

By upgrading community councils into powerful local authorities, the government will create a class of "collaborators" which will depend on the favours and protection of separate development for its livelihood.

This class will be responsible for controlling the urban mass in the same way as the homeland governments are responsible for controlling the rural mass.

They will also act as fronts for government agencies by enforcing some of the most hated aspects of apartheid such as influx control.

Although they will be responsible for providing housing and for uplifting social life in the townships, they will also be responsible for the unpopular aspects of township life

such as lock-outs and evictions for rent arrears and the increases in tariff charges.

The devolving of more power on community councils is seen as a compensation for the failure of homeland governments in controlling the masses of migrant workers, who shift between the rural areas and the core economies.

The lack of influence of the homeland governments was felt deeply during the uprising in Soweto in 1976, when the government temporarily lost political control. It was also pressurised into recognising the permanence of urban blacks.

The search was soon on for a new group of urban "collaborators" — and in 1977, the Community Councils Act was passed. A few years later, Mr P.W. Botha said in a major speech community councils would be upgraded to fully-fledged municipalities, thereby giving de jure recognition to urban blacks.

This new group of urban "collaborators" will also be responsible for protecting the urban, propertied black, middle class — at the ex-

pense of the rural mass.

The new middle class will be protected by their rights under the Black (Urban Areas) Consolidated

Act, and if all goes according to plan, this group will contribute to political stability by having a vested interest in the status quo.

The government hopes its reforms will prevent what it calls a "revolution of rising expectations" from spilling over into other areas. This could happen under certain conditions.

The first condition arises out of a state of "violent equilibrium". In a deadlocked situation, the black middle class may perceive it has more to gain and less to lose by identifying with the white power structure.

This stance could also buy time for the introduction of reforms.

The government also hopes to attach the resources of the private sector. Knoetze himself and Soweto's "mayor" Mr David Thebehali, are members of the Viljoen Commission of Inquiry into ways of involving the private sector in the provision of houses for the blacks. The recommendations are to be submitted to the government in the next few weeks.

Some believe the private sector should add its weight to change — in its own interest.

Although reform is the preserve of the state, the South African government has introduced reforms on an ad hoc basis because of social unrest and international pressure.

In order for South African capitalism to reserve a future for itself, it needs to control the pace and direction of change while fighting unilaterally for reform.

It is highly probable private enterprise will be given a chance to save itself — and the government — by being allowed to provide housing for blacks.

The opposing forces, however, will not be happy merely to see an improvement in conditions and piecemeal reforms taking place. Struggles over housing around South Africa have been for free and adequate houses for all, a demand which the government will be unable to meet.

25 YEARS AGO — on the 9th August 1956, in a massive display of non-racial solidarity, 20 000 women marched on the Union buildings in Pretoria against the extension of passes to African women.

The women of South Africa were expressing their resistance to all of the measures that increased their oppression and their exploitation.

Influx control and the migrant labour system, of which it is an important part, are for women the most hated aspects of apartheid.

Passes restrict and control the movements of their men. Having a pass — or not having one — stops people from getting proper jobs and housing.

The marching women had seen how migrant labour meant they were forced to spend their lives in distant poverty-stricken "homelands" whilst their men were forced to work in far-off cities for meagre wages.

When women were to be subjected to the same system as the men, it was obvious that they had to resist.

Throughout South Africa, the women led by leaders like Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Ray Alexander, Rahima Moosa, Elizabeth Mafekeng, Francis Baard and Florence Mkhize took part in the anti-pass campaign.

In the most remote rural areas all over South Africa women burned their passes. They risked jail, heavy fines, and the loss of their jobs rather than submit to the will of the government.

After a massive campaign the march by 20 000 women to Pretoria in 1956 was the climax.

The women's anti-pass campaign took place during one of the most important decades of defiance in the history of South Africa. In the '50's the Congress Alliance emerged as a powerful force and it actively supported the defiance of the women that was organised by the Federation of South African Women.

The women saw themselves as an integral part of any struggle for democracy and justice in South Africa. A year earlier when the anti-pass campaign was beginning to gain momentum, they — together with thousands of other South African democrats — put forward their demands to the Congress of the People for inclusion in the Freedom Charter.

The women demanded that they be granted the right to participate fully in government; that they should have proper housing at a cost which they could afford; that they should be allowed to live and work where they wished; that there should be free universal education for all children; that there should be proper social services and security for all people including pensions, maternity benefits, health and child-care facilities.

In formulating these basic rights the women were speaking as workers, mothers, and as members of oppressed communities.

The demands that they put forward were an expression of the problems that they faced in these situations.

The nation-wide resistance to passes for women was eventually crushed by heavy-handed repression, and the banning of the ANC in 1960 meant that for many years the demands of the people that had been made in the Freedom Charter were not heard.

By this year, the 25th anniversary of the march to Pretoria, the demands that the women made in 1955 and 1956 have not yet been met.

On the contrary, the situation has deteriorated. The extension of passes to women has meant that for many there is no chance of being able to find work where they can

On August 9, 1956 20 000 women marched to the offices of the Prime Minister

Knock Knock Knock

We're still in union at the door

earn enough money to support their families.

This is especially so for the women who are shut up in the rural ghettos of the so-called "homelands". Here they are forced to endure sickness, poverty, and unemployment.

For those who decide to take the chance and move "illegally" to the towns they face a life of constant insecurity as members of one or other squatter community.

The only work available for the women locked up in poverty-stricken homelands by the pass-law system is farm labour, and for the 'illegals' in towns, domestic menial tasks which pay notoriously low wages.

The housing crisis which outraged women in the 50's exists today in a far worse form. The ghettos of urban South Africa are filled far beyond overflowing. The government has not built houses — instead it has demanded that more and more people 'resettle themselves' in the homelands. When people refuse to move voluntarily the system hunts them down and forcefully removes them. It is also harder for women who are not married, and who are the sole supporters of their families, to be able to find proper accommodation.

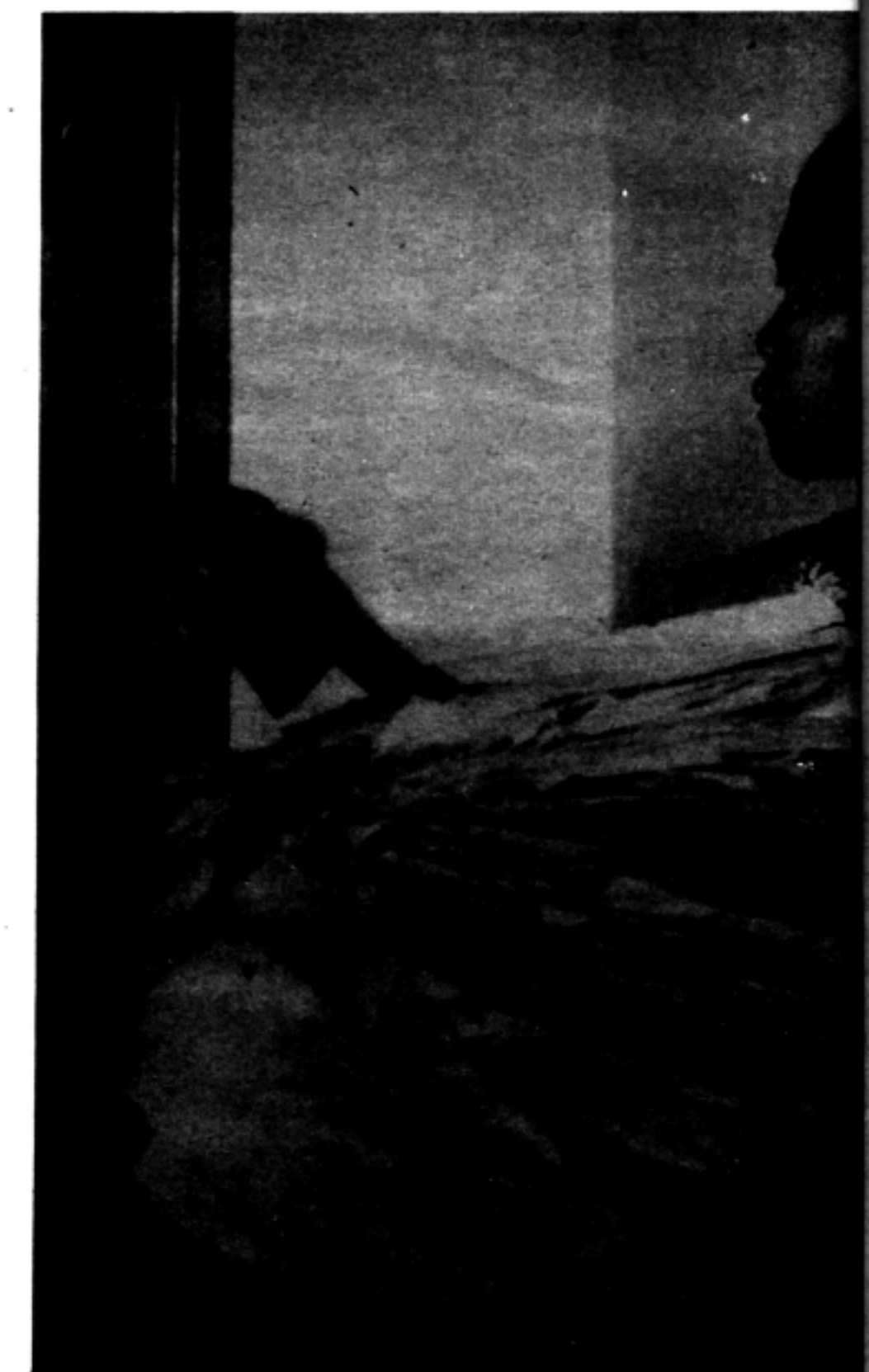
The education system — at the time of FSAW'S emergence as target of the people's anger because of the introduction of Bantu Education to the schools — is still being actively resisted by students all over the country. In this they have the support of their parents.

The meagre wages that people earn have hardly improved at all. If anything the spiralling inflation rate has made it harder now for families to make ends meet. The dramatic increase in unemployment means that less money has to provide for more people. For women — who bear the ultimate responsibility of stretching their money to buy food and clothes — life has become a constant battle for survival.

Despite the increase in suffering

and exploitation they have been forced to endure, the battle against the system has never stopped. In recent years, with the renewed intensification of resistance to oppression, women have once again been in the forefront.

As workers, women have stood up to strike when their democratic demands for recognition of their unions and for living wages have not been met. Women were in the frontline during the Sea Harvest strike in Cape Town, and during last



Armed with thousands of petitions the leaders of the Federation of South African Women



A massive display of non-racial solidarity — 20 000 women at the Union Buildings

year's Frame strike in Durban.

The success of consumer boycotts in recent years is to a large extent due to the solidarity shown by women. Because it is they who are responsible for the household and the buying of food, it was they who carried out the common decisions not to buy Fattis and Monis products, and not to buy red meat.

Women have resisted the attempts to force them to live in the homelands where there is no future, and where life is a constant battle

for food, for money, for wood, for water . . .

In Modderdam, Crossroads, and now from the Langa barracks women have shown clearly that pass laws or not, they will continue to resist being shut into the homelands where all that is to be found is starvation. Women have said before — and will say again — rather the jails and fines than the bantustans.

Women have also stood up in



Women stand knocking at the office door of the then Prime Minister J. G. Strydom. Initially they were denied access to his office because 'there were members from all racial groups'.

and we're not going away until . . .



After a massive campaign the march by 20 000 women to Pretoria in '56 was the climax

of their communities to resist attempts to force upon them increases, to make them ac-housing that is not fit for hu-habitation, that does not even e the most basic amenities.

Durban, the women of townships united on a mass to rejection of higher rents Community Councils were that were taken up under the ship of the Women's Federa-

tion. In the Cape women were prominent in the Parent-Student Committees formed during the school boycotts, and have taken up the challenge to fight for their communities under the banner of the United Women's Organisation.

The reason that women have played such an active part in recent resistance, is a simple one. For them, all of these issues are immediate and they are urgent. As in many other countries, one of the major responsibilities of women is

caring for children and the home. This extra job is theirs even if they spend an 8 or 10 hour day slaving in factory and field.

When children are threatened by teargas and police batons, when skyrocketing rents mean that families face eviction, it is natural that women should come forward to participate in the struggle for justice and a fairer distribution of the country's resources.

However, this is not always the case. Years of being shut in the

home have made many women believe that it is not for them to take action — that they should rather wait for their husbands and children to lead the way. Today there are women who are still reluctant to come forward.

This is why it is so important that there is happening the small beginnings of the re-emergence of women's movements in South Africa. It is only in unity with other women that it is possible to fight the myth that 'a women's place is in the

home' and to allow for the full participation of women in the struggle for a more just and democratic future.

The struggle of the women of South Africa is not unique. It is similar to the struggles that have been fought by women elsewhere. In countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia there has been the important recognition that women must organise, not to fight against men,

but to fight with men in a common battle for a better future.

At the same time, there has been the realisation that part of this struggle is to convince both men and women that age-old ideas about the subservience and inferiority of women must be eradicated. Such myths, can only work against the common struggle of the oppressed people.

Today, women are taking up this challenge with renewed vigour and determination. They know well that "That's why it's really necessary that we throw out forever the idea that the woman should stay here and not get involved in unions or political matters because even if she's only at home she's part of the whole system of oppression".

In celebrating August 9th as National Women's Day — in recalling one of the most inspiring events in the history of the people's struggle in South Africa, we are recognising the importance of the contribution that women have for the struggle.

To buy or the choice

IS IT better to remain tenants in Group Areas or to purchase homes offered by the government?

This is the question that has been bothering many community organisations and one which the Durban Housing Action Committee DHAC has recently attempted to answer.

DHAC organised a workshop to discuss the sale and purchase of sub-economic housing and many community organisations attended.

The government and various city councils have been offering sub-economic dwellings for sale to tenants. But there was a catch — the selling prices were much higher than the original cost.

In response, several communities in Durban — such as Springfield and Chatsworth — have been struggling to reduce selling prices. As a result the government changed the interest rates structure as from July 1980.

However communities still need to see whether it is in their interest to remain tenants or purchase homes. The DHAC workshop aimed to formulate guidelines for communities facing this problem.

Virgil Bonhomme of DHAC opened the workshop with a call for solidarity amongst progressive organisations all over the country to strengthen the fight against the Department of Community Development. He warned the Durban City Council for its attitude and actions over the rent struggle which he described as "insulting" and "injurious". The rent struggle, he stated, is part of a wider struggle which will continue to grow in strength. He warned the Council that the communities will never forget the switching off of the electricity of rent boycotters and made it clear that the hatred caused by the Council has produced a great militancy in the communities.

"Housing is a right, not a privilege. It is the duty of the Government to provide secure and adequate housing for all."

While the workshop focussed on home ownership, the issue was placed in its wider context. Housing in South Africa was seen to be a political issue. Papers, discussion groups and area reports offered a useful opportunity for groups throughout the country to establish contact and exchange ideas.

Peter Wilkinson of the Institute



of African Studies gave a paper on the Economics of Housing. He said the political nature of this area is linked to economics.

Mr Wilkinson placed housing within the context of the development of capitalism in South Africa. Before capitalism people provided their own housing and other needs. With the spread of capitalism these needs came to be supplied by specialists.

In the area of housing, he said, building firms provided housing, their aim being profits.

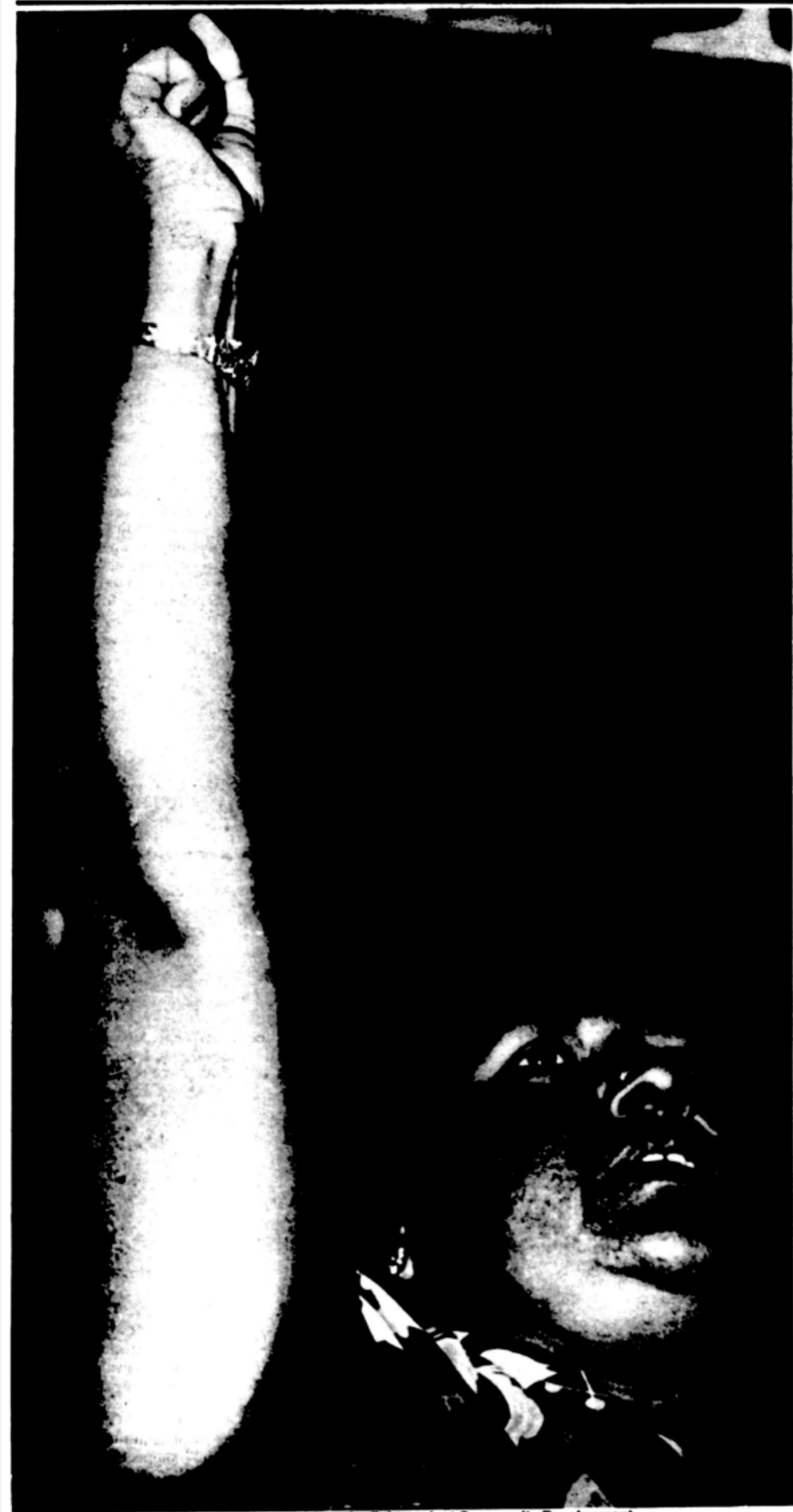
'The government must give secure housing to all'

In this way, housing has become a commodity and a market has developed for it. But, the housing market in South Africa is inadequate to supply housing for all at a price they can afford.

Mr Wilkinson said all of those involved in housing operate to secure profits: landowners and property speculators; building firms; estate agents; building societies and landlords. Most people are forced out of this "private" sector because of the cost involved (building societies only provide loans to people with secure, relatively high incomes).

Mr Wilkinson outlined the alternatives. The first is the slum option when people overcrowd existing accommodation and are exploited by landlords who cash in on the need for accommodation. The second is squatting — where people provide their own housing independent of the private market.

These options, he said, fail to fulfill the basic functions of housing and in many cases lead to ill-health. Those who benefit from capitalism



Call comes to strengthen the fight against Community Development

The grand scheme of '73 becomes the

ANGLO-AMERICAN workers at the corporation's Johannesburg head office have begun to organise themselves to resist new pension legislation — they saw the new proposals worked against their interests.

The new struggle against the pension proposals is not confined to Anglo workers — more and more workers are beginning to demand the new pension schemes work to their benefit.

The 1973 Anglo pension fund for its head office workers — cleaners, clerks, typist, etc — was supposed to be one of the most liberal schemes for black workers introduced at the time.

Unlike many other companies, the workers were forced to join the ANMERCOSA. The workers were never given a detailed introduction

to the fund, but they believed the following things:

- If workers resign, or are dismissed before the age of 60, they receive their contributions plus interest;
- At retirement they receive their own and Anglo's contributions plus interest;
- If a worker dies before or after retirement his/her dependents receive a lump sum of contributions plus interest;
- On retirement, workers would receive their pensions in lump-sum form.

In 1975, the Anglo workers became dissatisfied with their pension fund, and talked of withdrawing from the fund.

This was after they noticed a former worker's widow making many futile trips to head office to try and get her husband's money.

Workers began to worry that the fund was not all it was made out to be. They went to management and asked for explanations, voicing their fears about their families' futures.

Management evaded the workers' call for explanations, and instead offered a management-run educational programme to explain to workers.

For some time after this, the Anglo Workers were disorganised.

Since 1975, workers have remained unhappy about the scheme. They felt they could not change the scheme, but it was better than nothing.

When workers heard of the proposed legislation — a draft bill was expected in March 1981 — they began to organise against the issue of preservation.

By this time, most of almost 700

workers were members of the unregistered General Allied Workers' Union (GAWU).

The workers say this was a state attempt to control pension funds, but soon saw their bosses were also interested in those changes.

Anglo-American is a multinational corporation including industrial (mining and manufacturing) and financial activities (insurance companies).

Like other financiers and some industrialists, Anglo is interested to see investable funds grow bigger.

Further, like other companies, Anglo believes workers resign "To lay their hands on pension money". Anglo hopes more skilled and better paid workers will be tied to their jobs once the legislation is passed.

The Anglo workers approached management through the Employees' Representative Council

(ERC) on 18 February, 1981. The workers discussed the issue, and the ERC promised to take their problems to top management.

The workers decided to elect their own committee of 6 workers to fight the pension issue, because they had no confidence in the ERC.

This workers' committee met Mr Brown, the actuary in charge of pensions, and objected to the proposal of freezing pension funds. They said this went against the 1973 contract.

Brown dismissed worker fears and said preservation was a good idea. He gave the example of preserved British schemes.

Workers pointed out that South Africa, unlike Britain, had no democracy.

In South Africa the state could not be trusted to protect black workers' interests, and guarantee

to resist—that's of the ghettos



George Sewpersahd — banned NIC President

Community to resist proposed removals

THE residents of St Wendolins are proud of their village, the community and their achievements. Ask anyone you meet there about their feelings towards the proposals to move them to Kwa Ndengezi or Kwa Dalseka and the answer is always the same, "We don't want to go".

The St Wendolins community near Pinetown is closely knit, lively and self-sufficient. They stand to lose all this security when they are removed to the newly established townships, where the box-like houses stand out row upon row.

It is easy to see why a community as colourful as St Wendolins would not willingly 'resettle' in these alien, dismal surroundings amongst strangers.

A few years ago a vigilante group was established to protect the community. This was done on their own initiative as there was a need for responsible security guards.

The group has been successful in keeping down the crime rate through the confiscation of dangerous weapons. This is a fine example of the resourcefulness of the community, which has always found difficulty in contacting the police during times of emergency.

The welfare committee was founded to voice the needs of the community and to call meetings together and act on resolutions.

There are numerous womens organisations which meet periodically to discuss church, welfare, and other matters, and the members of these groups are involved in teaching each other domestic skills.

St Wendolins boasts a lovely old school building on mission-owned land. Both parents and pupils are proud of their schools and the parents are able to exercise a certain amount of control over the affairs of the school.

Their removal to another strange school threatens to destroy this security, and many parents have expressed fears about the 'township elements' which will most likely intrude into the school environment.

The self-sufficiency of the community is further evident from the informal activities which occur. Orchards and well maintained vegetable gardens indicate productivity and years of diligent labour. The new plots in the townships are too small and too steep to permit such activity.

Financially, the residents will become more impoverished than ever before when they are moved. Whereas they now pay between R5 per annum to the mission for rent and R6 per month to landlords in the townships the cheapest houses are R16 per month and the most expensive is R35.

Transport costs will be doubled and so will the length of the journey from Kwa Ndengezi.

The minister of Co-operation and Development, Dr Koornhof, has been quoted as saying that people will not be forced to move and that removals are conducted in a humane manner. The people already removed have by and large denied that they want to move, despite official claims that everyone is moving voluntarily.

The St Wendolin community expressed misgivings about the fact that they were never even consulted on the issue of removal, which affects them very deeply and threatens to destroy their whole way of life, while the future offers no viable advantages.



The state has most to gain, but people still want to own their own homes

see slums and squatting as a threat to social order: they often become "hotbeds" of crime and political agitation, they threaten the dominant ideas of private property and authority and most importantly, they fail to keep the workforce healthy and thus productivity is affected.

Mr Wilkinson suggested that it is under these conditions that the State intervenes since it is its task to maintain existing social order. Thus the State is forced to provide public housing for those excluded from the private sector. However, the State is unable to provide housing for all — the problem being the amount of money available and the distribution of that money.

Mr Wilkinson added that the implementation of the Group Areas Act has involved the destruction of already-existing housing on a massive scale thereby increasing the burden on State expenditure.

There are two costs involved in the provision of state housing: building cost (which is fixed) and

maintenance. The State covers some of the capital cost with a fixed amount. But, running costs are constantly rising and the local authority

'Slums' are seen as threats to the SA social order

passes the buck onto the tenants (hence ever-increasing rents). This is so only for "Coloured" and "Indian" housing — the State keeps a much tighter control over "African" housing.

In 1973 the State removed control from the local authorities and set up Administration Boards — clearly illustrating the role housing plays in maintaining the status quo.

Garth Seneque of Natal University discussed State housing policy. He dealt more directly with the issue of home ownership and offered an analysis of why the State is

presently encouraging home ownership and offered an analysis of why the State is presently encouraging home ownership. He also focussed on the central question of who benefits most from this system.

He said owner-occupancy and private renting serve an ideological function by involving people in the payment of mortgages and instalments, and discouraging them from strikes, boycotts and the like.

Individual contact with the authorities works against the community solidarity which is created by collective tenancy. It also supposedly gives people a "stake in the system" so they will be less likely to "rock the boat".

Ultimately the state and local authorities benefit since the cost of maintenance is lumped directly onto the owner.

Mr Seneque said the recent upsurge in resistance amongst communities over housing has thrust the housing issue firmly into the politi-

cal arena. The State has tried to develop strategies to diffuse solidarity and resistance.

A representative of the Cape Housing Action Committee (CAHAC) gave a brief account of the nature of the housing struggle in the Cape area. He stressed the need for national contact between DHAC, CAHAC and other organisations.

Housing issues have been thrust into the spotlight

Reports were also given by members of the Asherville Housing Committee and the Chatsworth Housing Action Committee on the nature of their struggles and how their community organisations came about and grew in strength.

The results of a survey on people's attitudes to home ownership were read out. The survey was conducted by DHAC and showed that most people were in favour of purchasing homes but said the prices are too high. Many of the dwellings are in poor condition.

A central part of the workshop was the discussion groups in which people discussed the pros and cons of home ownership and attempted to formulate guidelines for the communities involved. Although there was consensus that the State had more to gain than anyone else, it was noted that most people do want to buy homes.

It was suggested the communities should be informed of the reasons for the State's offer so that existing community solidarity be maintained.

A tribute was paid to George Sewpersahd, President of the Natal Indian Congress who was recently served with his second five-year banning order and could therefore not attend the workshop.

*!;?X&‡%! idea of '81

the payment of pensions. Also, in Britain the private pensions schemes add to the large state scheme which is funded out of taxation.

In South Africa state pensions are so bad workers are forced to rely solely on private company pensions. Black workers pay taxes, but once they receive a company pension, they no longer qualify for a state pension.

Many meetings followed between workers and management at Anglo. They discussed the rules of the scheme, the preservation issue, and the possibility of withdrawing from the scheme, but management remained evasive.

Workers were told they could only withdraw and be reimbursed if they resigned. Re-employment was not guaranteed.

The workers held a protest meeting on 28 April, and this led to a further meeting with Brown, a Mr Morgan and ERC chairperson Philip Baum: it ended in deadlock.

The committee of 6 then wrote to the operating committee of Anglo. Once again they received an evasive reply from Mr Relly, the Vice Chairman.

By that time, all black workers demanded reimbursement of all pension contributions. It was clear management was not prepared to resist the proposed legislation or to raise objections on the workers' behalf.

In reply to another letter from the workers, Mr N Oppenheimer stated the company's position:

• In future workers would not receive more than 1/2 of their pensions

in lump sum;

• Workers had to wait for the Bill before rejecting the proposed legislation on preservation.

The workers have rejected this response.

It is clear management is applying stalling tactics — when the legislation is passed, workers will be forced to accept preservation. The Anglo bosses are not prepared to reject the proposed legislation.

The workers at Anglo have shown in their struggle the most powerful worker weapon is unity.

In the struggle over pensions, there are many strong forces against the workers, but the state and the bosses will have to listen to the worker demands if they take a united stand.

Yes we CAN feed all those starving children

It just needs some REAL changes

IN THE last few decades, a number of myths about population size or what is otherwise referred to as the population explosion, have developed and become generally accepted:

- Third World countries are poor because they have high birth rates.
- A reduction in the population growth rate is the answer to Third World development.
- Third World people have big families because they don't know better.
- There will soon be more people in the world than can be fed.
- Since the Third World holds the largest population, it is the Third World population that is using up the largest proportion of the world's resources.

How are these myths used in South Africa?

To quote the HSRC "Without a reduction in the present rate of growth in population numbers, we have little, if any, hope of success in directing the material living conditions of the population along the right channels."

This view blames the poverty of the average South African on the size of its families. Looking at South Africa's history we find the real causes. Economic processes set in motion with colonialism removed people's rights to the land on which they lived and worked to produce food for their own livelihoods — it systematically excluded African producers from the markets on which they were dependent for selling their products — it forced men off their land because they were needed to labour in the mines, and later in other industries.

This undermined the ability of these people to continue their food production, while they provided the labour that produced the gold on which our country's wealth rests — wealth which went to the colonial-



Deprived of the right to health people are deprived of the right to life.

ists and not to the workers themselves.

A history of incredible industrial growth and prosperity for those who took control, and of steadily increasing suffering in terms of health, family life, and general social welfare for the majority. This is the process of poverty.

In 1972, Black mothers in rural South Africa had an average of 6.5 children. White mothers in the O.F.S. had an average of 6.2 children. Of the 6.5 Black children just over half survived. Of the 6.2 white children, 6 survived.

It is not the number of children in a community that determines its infant mortality rate. Rather, it is the position of the community in that society that determines this.

Some are protected by our country's politico-economic structure, and those without political or economic rights are also deprived of the right to health, and in this case, of the right to life.

For the average middle class South African family today, it is common to consider the costs of rearing a child before deciding how many to have. These costs include everything from nappies to dentists to holidays to university. And there are no necessary returns.

The grown child, an expensive product, then leaves and goes off to start the process again. But for many people in South Africa, this logic does not hold. For them, another child means only another mouth to feed in terms of costs, and this is really a marginal difference in relation to the expected returns.

As soon as that child can walk, she or he will contribute to the family, be it in assisting in the housework, or in herding cows.

In an urban setting, the child may sell newspapers or do odd jobs to bring back some income to the family. By taking over housework, children allow their parents to leave the house in search of paid work, the more adults able to find jobs, the more chance of eating.

But even more importantly, we live in a country where pensions, sick pay, and social security benefits in general are hard if not impossible to come by. In this situation, old people rely totally on their children to support them in their old age. Thus it is a rational choice for the black working class to have many children. Only when our social and economic structures are different will this change.

Social research on this subject shows that when people's standard



'Of 6.5 children just over half survived.'

THE RECENT announcement by Colgate Palmolive and the Chemical Workers Industrial Union that they had agreed to a settlement of the dispute for Union recognition represents a major victory for the workers' struggle in South Africa.

After a 16 month battle, management has been forced to concede the principle of in-plant negotiations over wages and working conditions. It has dropped its demand that the Union enter the Industrial Council, an idea central not only to its own strategy for restricting workers' rights, but also to the programme of organised capital and the state.

The Colgate dispute represented a test case: the centrepiece of the new state/management industrial relations strategy had been directly challenged and overturned.

As one worker representative insisted at a FOSATU shop stewards council in the midst of the dispute, "If Colgate workers win, we all win. If they lose, we all lose".

The Chemical Workers Industrial Union, backed by FOSATU, developed a two-pronged strategy against the Colgate management. Firstly, a Conciliation Board was appointed which allowed for the

Colgate workers win recognition after legal strike action

calling of a legal strike 30 days after negotiations had become deadlocked. Secondly, and immediately after deadlock had been reached, a boycott of Colgate products was called by FOSATU. Management was now faced with a near certain strike and a growing consumer boycott.

In addition, FOSATU used its links with the international trade union movement to apply secondary pressure on Colgate overseas. At the time of Colgate's capitulation to its workers, efforts were underway in Britain, United States and Spain to bring pressure to bear on Colgate in those countries.

But, the main struggle was in South Africa itself. Here the 30 day "cooling off" period insisted upon

by the law was used to build up solidarity both inside and outside the factory. Lunchtime meetings were held by Colgate workers in the factory canteen in open breach of factory rules, where songs and slogans were devised. Meetings with other FOSATU unions were arranged, a strike levy was proposed, and a strike ballot was held at which only four of the eligible workers voted "no".

At the same time, the boycott of Colgate products got underway and began to bite in the two weeks before the planned strike. Pamphlets and stickers were circulated and plastered over many commercial and industrial areas. Colgate workers addressed meetings during Republic Day "celebrations" and

on June 16th. Nurses', taxi drivers', shopkeepers' and civic associations were approached to pledge their support. Many did: shopkeepers in some areas began removing Colgate products from their shelves, and workers advised Colgate salesmen to stay away from their area until a settlement had been reached.

Most effective of all, were the activities of other FOSATU affiliates. Shop Steward councils met in FOSATU 'locals' all over South Africa to affirm their solidarity with the Colgate workers struggle. Workers in the 6000 strong Volks-wagen factory at Uitenhage, in the 2000 strong Salcast factory in Benoni, in the 1500 strong Alusaf factory in Richards Bay, and in many other plants, stuck Colgate boycott

stickers to their overalls as they reported to work. Trucks and buses driven by Transport and General Workers Union members were covered with pamphlets and stickers.

Management objected, but the workers would not budge, and particularly in the East Rand, employers became increasingly apprehensive of a general sympathy strike.

Colgate is alleged to have responded by giving out free samples of products in the township and embarking on a massive advertising campaign. This had limited effect: workers redoubled their efforts; supermarkets were "stickered"; schoolchildren gave out pamphlets and are reported to have stoned a Colgate vehicle distributing free samples in Duduza township on the East Rand.

In this context of mounting militancy, and with the prospect of a massive escalation of internal and overseas pressure should the strike take place, Colgate management backed down. Managements' unity on the issue of Industrial Councils had been temporarily broken, and a bridgehead for the further extension of workers rights had been won.



'infant mortality rates of 250 per 1000 and a norm of under nutrition for the majority'



Population size is not the problem

- they must be given detailed information about the health hazards of many of these contraceptives and
- they must be given thorough physical checkups to determine which contraceptives best suit their physical makeup.

To give such a service, contraception must be provided within a wider framework of preventative health care rather than in exclusive, so-called, "Family Planning" clinics where the goal is population control. Here the norm is the physical exploitation of women. This occurs on two levels.

Firstly, internationally, we witness the dumping of contraceptives which are considered dangerous for use in the States and Western Europe. And also, experimentation with new types of contraceptives takes place all over the Third World, exposing thousands of women to unknown and often potentially lethal dangers.

Secondly, in South Africa, the state has made population control a number one priority. State clinics carry very few different contraceptives, and it is widely known that contraceptives are administered without concern for the physical well-being or the personal needs of the woman concerned.

And all of this in South Africa where we have shown population size not to be the problem. The problem is poverty and all its social consequences.

The cause lies in South Africa's colonial history — the building of wealth in the hands of a few through the labour of the majority. And so the situation remains today. The problem of poverty will only be solved through fundamental changes in the social, political and economic structures of our country.

■ Extracts from a speech by Barbara Klugman.

of living improves, the size of their families decreases.

Our problem is not a problem of population but one of poverty. One of the State's researchers writes, "if the present growth rate in population is maintained, the limits of agricultural production and of food supply in South Africa will be reached sooner than the world in general . . . An awareness of the costs involved in our population explosion is now much in evidence," Here again we have a calculation of available resources through a comparison between population growth rate and GNP.

The Sanlam Economic Research Department projected that South Africa would have one of the highest growth rates in the industrialized world this year. Yet we witness infant mortality rates as high as 250 per 1000 and a norm of under-nutrition for the majority of our people. Were wealth indeed divided equally amongst the people, there would no longer be a food crisis; there would no longer appear to be a population crisis.

What is the present situation with food in South Africa? The relationship between population increase, food increase and the demand for

food from 1953 to 1972 was as follows:

- The annual increase in population was 2,4%
- The annual increase in food production was 3,9%
- The annual increase in demand for food was 3,2%.

In other words more food was produced than was needed to feed the population. In the case of cereal in particular, the annual increase in cereal production was 5% and the annual increase in demand for cereal production was 2,2%. There is no shortage of food here.

So why the poverty? Because an increase in food production doesn't imply an increased availability of food. There are two specific aspects to this contradiction. They are:

- the export of food and the control of local prices by marketing boards.

Between 1970 and 1975 South Africa's exports of agricultural products more than doubled.

- Its export of food, animal, fish and fishery products trebled.
- Its food imports in 1975 were a quarter as much as exports, and almost all of a luxury quality.

In other words, South Africa is

exporting food because people in South Africa can't afford to pay for it.

Why they can't afford to is apparently not the government's or industry's business. The cost of food in South Africa is high. It is high because prices of basic foods are controlled by market control boards whose interests are those of the producers not the consumers.

We have witnessed the dumping of milk, stockpiling of butter and the adding of dried eggs to stock feed, all to maintain a situation of apparent scarcity so that prices remain high and this in a country with such high rates of malnutrition.

The recent hike in the price of maize is the most immediate example of a food policy which is concerned with profit and not with people. South Africa has produced a record crop of maize, easily enough to feed its population. But the maize board and government have decided otherwise. South Africa has been exporting maize at a loss. The board has decided to raise the consumer cost of maize to make up for their loss. So, even less people will be able to buy the food that constitutes their staple diet.

The rise in the price of maize will

push up the price of mealie meal by at least 10 percent and will have a ripple effect on other food prices. The head of the Maize Board said that of this bumper crop, 6.1 million tons would be needed for local consumption and the surplus would be just over 7 million. In other words, were we living in a just society where resources were not controlled by a few at the expense of the majority, South Africa could provide ample food for the entire population.

And then they tell us that the size of our population causes its poverty.

It is important to spell out, the practical implications of the population scare. Contraception, in itself, is potentially a great liberator for women and people in general.

It allows people the right to control their bodies.

The right to decide how many children they want, if any the right to look after their health.

But it is not always used with this in mind. In order to fulfill a positive function, contraception must be provided in a very specific way —

- women must be given as many choices as possible in types of contraceptives.

Gumbi sentenced to five years under Terrorism Act

A Newcastle man, Mr Joseph Gumbi 24 was sentenced to five years imprisonment under the Terrorism Act in a Durban Regional Court last month.

After sentence was passed Mr Gumbi turned to the court and raised his fist and cried "Amandla". He was then handed his one year old child by his mother to say goodbye to while his wife sat and wept.

The two other charges facing Mr Gumbi of furthering the aims of communism and attempting to defeat the aims of justice were dropped.

Before sentence was passed, the defence counsel, Mr P Langa addressed the court and said that the magistrate should take into account that Mr Gumbi did not have the constitutional means for promoting change open to him and that he was only attempting to obtain information on the options open to him.

He said that Mr Gumbi had written many letters to different people trying to get information. "He was looking for a way out of his situation but had not yet made up his mind what to do. He is now on his way to jail but still he does not have a solution and leaves behind grieving fam-

ily and friends," Mr Langa told the court.

The magistrate after finding Mr Gumbi guilty of inciting people to leave the country and undergo military training accepted the request by the prosecutor, Mr M.G. Roberts, that the minimum sentence of five years be imposed. Mr. P. J. du Plessis said in passing sentence that the aspects that favoured the accused was that he was still young and that he "was only at the stage of preparation."

"The court must impose a sentence which will hurt the accused and warn others of the consequences if they commit these offences," Plessis said.

The state's case against Mr Gumbi rested on two letters written by the accused, the evidence of a number of state witnesses, and a statement made by Mr Gumbi

his detention before a Newcastle magistrate on October 1, 1980.

The two letters were written to Radio Freedom, the broadcasting station for the African National Congress.

The first letter was written on August 20, 1980 where he wrote "I am prepared to fight for a black freedom. I wish to enquire as to what I should do should I wish to join "Umkhonto-We-Sizwe". I am also enquiring as to how to contact you should I wish to leave the country. I am saying this because I am tired of the boere regime and its apartheid. Power to the people."

The second letter on October 6, 1980 was written in response to an article which appeared in Drum magazine which contained allegations made by a man who left South Africa to undergo military training and then subsequently returned.

The letter stated, "In the name of the liberation struggle I send you this article which I think if the claims contained in it are true will discourage many would-be -umkhonto-we-sizwe guerillas — like myself. Will you please explain what the conditions really are in the camps? Ours in the struggle."

The accused's statement, which was accepted by the magistrate was contested by the defence who argued that it was not made of his own free will and that he had been assaulted by the police. When asked by the defence why he made the statement, Mr Gumbi said "I could not do otherwise in the situation." He added that he would not have made it had he not been assaulted. He told the court that he was handcuffed, blindfolded with a wet cloth and an elastic band was tied around his penis and was forced through

kicking and hitting to do frog jumps. He lost consciousness and when he came around he was lying wet on the floor from being splashed with water and from his own urine. He also told the court how he was held out of the fourth floor window of the police station with his head pointing downwards.

When he was questioned as to why he did not tell the magistrate, Mr Gumbi said, "I was afraid because I knew that the police would victimise me. They accompanied me to the magistrate and stood at the office door."

In the summing up of the state's evidence one witness Mr Bongani Mpanza was singled out as a good witness, by the prosecutor who said that many of the other witnesses had not been satisfactory. Mr Mpanza told the court how the accused had given him a lift into Newcastle and forced him to learn the words of freedom songs through hitting him on the shoulders. One witness Stanley M. Zwane told the court that he had been assaulted by the police.

The defence has lodged an appeal against the judgement and sentence of Joseph Gumbi and are making a bail application.

Solidarity and union power in East Cape

THE EASTERN Cape has for many years been a melting pot for labour and community issues, and this year proved no exception.

In May, when thousands of workers at Ford, Firestone and General Motors downed tools, the multinational motor corporations were for the first time faced with the power of the independent trade unions.

Solidarity strikes are now the order of the day in Port Elizabeth indicating, observers believe, that workers are now prepared to take action against all bosses and not just those for whom they work.

The dispute had its roots in a walkout in January this year at Firestone when workers expressed their dissatisfaction with the proposed pensions legislation.

Most of the workers were re-employed little over a week later — but for 150 there were no jobs.

These men appealed for aid to the Motor Assembly and Component Workers' Union (Macwusa), formed after dissatisfied workers broke away from what they saw as Fosatu's 'pro-management' National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers after last year's strikes.

In mid-May, Ford's Cortina plant closed after several hundred workers refused to handle Firestone tyres.

The strike swiftly spread to Ford's other two plants, to General Motors and to Firestone itself.

It was Ford that was most seriously affected. As the dispute dragged on, the motor giant steadfastly refused (officially, at any rate) to pressurise Firestone into re-hiring the dismissed men, or, as Macwusa demanded, to stop buying Firestone tyres.

Ford obtains parts and products from more than 300 suppliers, and clearly management feared it would be setting a dangerous precedent if it gave in to Macwusa's demands.

But it set a very expensive precedent by not doing so.

Ford's bill in lost production for the four-week stoppage was a staggering R4,5 million, while its workers lost an estimated

R1 200 000 in wages.

The workers went back when Firestone agreed to re-employ a number of the workers immediately, and the rest as vacancies arose.

Confusion still exists over the precise terms of the settlement. Macwusa understands the tyre company has guaranteed to take back all the workers, while Firestone's Managing Director Peter Morum, maintains they won't take back 'troublemakers'.

Other forces, of course, played their part in the dispute.

A mysterious pamphlet was put out urging all black people in Port Elizabeth to remove the Firestone tyres from their cars and bring them to the Macwusa offices, where the union would pay them for the tyres.

Although Macwusa may have agreed with the spirit of the pamphlet; it was an obvious attempt to smear the union, which would not have had the funds for such an exercise.

Macwusa meetings over the weekend that climaxed the Republic festivities, were banned just as it appeared that the strike was nearing its end.

As the strike ended, Macwusa's chairman, Dumile Makanda, and three organisers were detained, a move which, police claimed, had nothing to do with the strikes.

For many workers the incident brought back memories of 1977, when Thozamile Botha was detained and then banned immediately after the conclusion of the Ford strikes.

Last week five Numarwosa organisers involved in a strike at Dorbyl in Uitenhage, were also detained. Numarwosa has threatened not to handle Dorbyl products at Ford and Volkswagen if Dorbyl persists in its attempts to recruit scab labour.

Macwusa is contemplating similar action, this time over the dismissal of 160 workers at Repco in Port Elizabeth, which also supplies parts to the motor giants.

Meanwhile, Makanda and his colleagues are still in detention, and are now being held under section six of the Terrorism Act.



Eastern Cape workers . . . action against all bosses, not only those that they work for.

WORKERS at the Union Cooperative Bark and Sugar Mill are bringing two actions against their employers — one challenging their dismissal since they contend that the events constitute a lock-out — but more importantly the second is a spoliation action.

Workers claim they have been evicted from their accommodation illegally. Management says the workers left their jobs voluntarily.

In an affidavit to the Court workers said that in terms of the Bantu Labour Relations Regulation Act or in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act, the actions of the Company amount to a lock-out.

The outcome of the Union Cooperative Bark and Sugar Mill case will only be resolved on August 22, when the judge will hear oral evidence to resolve disputes of fact in the case.

Dalton case is significant for housed workers

The legal case is of massive significance to the rights of workers housed in Company compounds and already one worker has won his case — the implication being that in future disputes of a similar nature, workers cannot be evicted from their quarters unless it is by a court order, which they can defend.

The dispute began on Tuesday, March 31, when work stopped because workers believed they were unfairly treated by

their employers.

"For many years we have received food from the company, but this was stopped on March 31, and we will now have to buy our own food. We will not get any money to buy this food. True we did get a 17 percent wage increase, but so did all workers in the sugar industry and in some companies where food was stopped they got this increase and extra money to buy food."

In an affidavit to the Court,

Cyprian Ngewu said workers were provided with dry rations of mealie meal, samp, beans, salt and stew weekly. They were also given neat twice a week.

"Such rations are a part of our remuneration and although we do not pay for them, they are taken into account when our pay is calculated," he said.

In a statement issued by the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers Union, the workers said that on hearing they were to receive no compensation for the loss of food they sent their committee to speak to management. Management refused to talk and the workers were told to go away and return to work on Thursday at 10 a.m.

In spite of repeated attempts to get Management to change their minds they remained rigid in their decision to withdraw the

food allowance and offer no extra monetary compensation.

On Thursday, police arrested more than 400 workers for trespassing on the factory grounds. "On the very ground that we work and had all our belongings," said a worker.

The workers were taken to New Hanover Hall, where the trial was to be held and after Alec Erwin, a FOSATU official, had signed bail for them, all the accused were released. Union buses took them back to the factory in Dalton where they were told to pack their belongings and leave immediately. After heated argument, Management agreed to provide transport to various centres in Natal from which they would have to find their way "home". Costs covering accommodation, transport and legal fees have soared to well over R10 000.

Big finance threatens art in America

By playing the money game, is art becoming a 'slave of the system'?

IN 1976 big business in America set aside more than 250 million dollars for the funding of art alone.

In the same year over 29 000 United States corporations became patrons of the arts, including huge multinationals such as IBM, IT&T, Corning, various oil companies and others.

Questions have recently been asked in America as to what the effects of this kind of funding have on the art world and the development of the nations' culture.

Although most agree that subsidising the development of a nation's culture is of great importance, there are definite drawbacks when it is subsidised by big business.

The business syndrome in America lays stress on achievement and economic growth. From this point of view the most successful members of society are those controlling the vast corporation or those who have 'made it' in the public realm.

It is the corporations who are most interested in keeping this belief going and who are the financiers of huge exhibitions at the biggest art galleries in America.

This brand of philosophy, one would expect, would not do too much to foster new ideas in the art world.

As well as funding these public exhibitions the corporations are also major purchasers of paintings and works of art. For example Pepsi Co's art collection includes people such as Louis Nevelson, Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Moore and David Smith.

Some of the corporations also sponsor state-wide art competitions. Prizes are awarded and large quantities of the work are bought by the big businesses.

The significant point about this support by the corporations is that most of them stipulate that donations be restricted to tax-exempt organisations so that practically all of the money spent is tax deductible.

Corporate support is more than double that given by the Federal Governments' National Endowment for the Arts. The public relations factor is an important consideration for the donors. Most see themselves as leaders in society and therefore feel it their duty to support the cultural life of the nation. Concern over public image is clearly implied.

Some corporations' relationships with the arts is less subtle than merely giving financial support. Spring Mills textiles for example introduced a series of textiles using designs adapted from art works at the Metropolitan Museum. The artists concerned received royalties for these designs. Polaroid encourages renowned photographers to use their product and then uses these photographs in their adverts.

This emphasis on the financial aspect of American cultural life has had several quite serious repercussions in the art world. The stress on achievement and financial gain has created a crisis for the artist who's values have become distorted. Motives for creating art have become altered as people become more and more consumed with the feverish desire for money — lots of money.

Radicalism and innovation are slowly dying down, the major cause being the increasing dependency of artists on the bureaucratic machinery which governs the art scene in America. Art has become a commodity, to be marketed and sold to the consumer. The system goes further than merely organising and administering art, it directs the aims and ambitions of the artists who wish to gain recognition. Because the major concern of artists is to sell their work, articles must be produced which appeal to the values of the consumer, and the patron. The traditional role of the artist in society is that of critic. Artists have always had the freedom to comment on the weaknesses and evils of the society prevailing at the time. Artists cannot continue to do this and still expect to subsist out of the society which he is condemning, conformity has now replaced avant-gardism.

The artist, in contrast to the corporate and business values of the rest of society, has always represented a spiritual attitude or consciousness. This attitude no longer exists as Art has become "Big Business". "Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art" (Andy Warhol).

In order to "make it" in America one has to have a dealer who acts as an agent on the artists behalf. The artist is sold to the public and to the patrons — namely the corporation. All the artist has to do is carry on producing enough work for the dealer to sell. The value of art is no longer judged in the context of art — it is judged in terms of the price it can fetch.

The collective corporate consciousness of America has succeeded in destroying individuality almost completely. "Cash, I just am not happy when I don't have it. The minute I have it I have to spend it and I just buy stupid things". Warhol's attitude epitomizes that of many artists today. One no longer has to be aesthetic to be an artist.

Success in terms of financial status is more important than success in terms of art. If art doesn't sell then it is worthless. It is no longer fashionable to create art that fulfills the spirituality of the artist. "The victories of progress seem bought by the loss of character"

Once artists give up their autonomy and become compliant employees of the corporations, they have lost their identity as artists. For they can no longer be the conscience of the people once they are slaves to the system.

An EXHIBITION by VICTOR GORDON



sponsored by the
da VINCI tobacco co.

Art at culture day expresses common community problems

ART is a very powerful means of expression and effectively highlights problems facing people in their struggle against oppression.

Community organisations and youth groups from all over the Western Cape came together to present a cultural day, "Ukhanyo", at the St. Frances Cultural Centre in Langa, Cape Town, last month.

Groups that participated came from Guguletu, Elsies River, Mitchells Plain, Hanover Park, Bestehuwel, Paarl and Landsdown where there are community organisations of differing strength.

Through the medium of plays, music, poetry and dancing the groups reflected the problems ex-

perienced in their areas and how these could be overcome.

"Although the groups reflected different forms of problems, a number of common features show that we all live under the same system", an organiser said. "By bringing together people from different areas, we are trying to break down some of the barriers created by the system. This also stimulates groups to produce work reflecting the struggles taking place in the townships so that it is accessible, acceptable and appeals to the oppressed masses", she said.

The programme included traditional art forms such as dancing and singing. The preservation of

these traditions shows a continuing resistance against the domination of a so-called 'superior culture'.

Plays dealt with various problems: the importance of approach when interviewing people for questionnaires on specific problems; the present council farce, a society which creates skollies, the traumas of suffering under the Group Areas Act, the hardships faced by an 'Indian' woman and her 'African' boyfriend because of their desire to marry.

Some read their own poetry and the audience sang 'Freedom songs'. The day concluded with the singing of the National anthem 'Nkosi Sikelil Africa'.

Swinging



For years they those Merry

BETWEEN 1930 and the mid 1950's the black music scene in South Africa was dominated by large and powerful swing bands.

Today jazz fans who remember the era will spend hours arguing about which was the best band at the time.

This is the story of one of the bands that have often been put into the top spot of the era — the Merry Blackbirds.

The period was one of immense social upheaval for the black people of this country. In the thirties reports of overcrowding, soil erosion and starvation in the rural areas — that blacks had been squashed into after the 1913 Land Act — were widespread. Thousands of people abandoned the countryside to eke out a living in the towns.

Not everyone experienced this upheaval in the same way. Some came as workers in the mines and factories of Jo'burg, others as clerks, teachers or professional men. Some were unable to find jobs. Class divisions in urban black society rapidly developed.

And this was expressed in the new cultural and musical patterns that emerged in black urban living areas. The Merry Blackbirds came to symbolize the values, aspirations, lifestyle and predicament of one group in this wide variety of classes that grew up in the city — the small but vocal black middle class.

The origins of the band reflect the class origins and values of the men and women who "made it". The band was born in 1932, in a tenement building in Rocky Street, Doornfontein called Rugby Terrace — which was only demolished recently. This was in one of the more fashionable areas of what was otherwise a big slum area in Jo'burg at that time.

Already class divisions had created different musical forms and places of entertainment. The work-

in the slums



The band used to turn out at performances "very smart — with kitty bows, nugget shines and gold cuff links".

were the brassiest black band in town. Then Blackbirds ran into a spot of trouble . . .

ing class and unemployed danced and drank to wild marabi music in the slumyard shacks of shebeen queens while teachers and omabalane (clerks) preferred the more sedate environment of places like the Bantu Mens Social Centre, the Springbok Hall of Vrededorp and the New Inchape Palace de Dance where according to one observer "the european type of dance was followed exclusively."

At these posh halls people were entertained by ragtime and vocal groups that adopted names like the Darktown Strutters, the Hever Hivers and the African Own Entertainers.

This environment was perfectly

The workers danced and drank to the wild stairs of Maali music

sued to the style and values of the people who came together to form the Merry Blackbirds. The idea to form the band came from a man called Griffiths Motsieloa — a black music promoter who had just returned from London where he had been studying elocution. He persuaded Peter Rezant, a classically trained violinist who came from Lesotho and was schooled at the Cape's St. Mathews Institution to team up with his wife Emily Motsieloa and the Merry Blackbirds were born.

"I first met Griffiths Motsieloa when he came down to Lesotho with his singing group the African Darkies. At that time I was a rag-timer and a great fan of Layton and Johnstone — I used to buy all their records. So when Griffiths' show arrived it was great and when they left I felt like a man standing in the desert with nothing around me. 'They're taking everything from my life', I thought — and that is the thing that influenced me to come to Jo'burg." This is how Peter Rezant explained his decision to form the band.

At that time there were only two other bands in Jo'burg. The Japanese Express was a small combination of a violin, trombone, piano and drums. They were led by a man called George "Makalman" Boswell — "die man wad die viool op sy pens gespeel het". The other band was known as the Jazz Revelers and led by Sonny Groenewald — the first man to introduce the saxophone into black South African music.

The Merry Blackbirds first followed the example of these bands, starting as a 5 piece combo. Rezant and a man called Isaac Shuping from Mossel Bay were on violins, Emily Motsieloa on piano and a trombone and drums were added. But the band did not stay small. Rezant decided to learn the saxophone and began expanding the brass section of the band.

This big brass sound made an immediate hit in the elite dance halls for blacks in Jo'burg. Then in 1936 they made their first impression on white South Africans when they played at the Empire Exhibition on a show boat in the middle of the Zoo Lake. In 1937 Griffiths Motsieloa formed a new vocal group called "De Pitch Black Follies" and teamed up with the Merry Blackbirds to go on a record breaking tour of South Africa.

From that time on the band began to move into the entertainment world of middle class whites. Throughout the forties and fifties they were a very popular attraction at white night clubs in Jo'burg. There were very few white bands who could match the big powerful sound of the Merry Blackbirds and the other black bands like the Jazz Maniacs and the Harlem Swingsters.

Rezant explains why this was the case, "The white bands were usually much smaller than ours. They were professionals you see, and it did not pay them to have a big band. Now we played music for the love of it and we were all working during

the day — so we could afford to form larger groups."

According to Rezant the band was designed to be a "spectacle" and performed best when called upon to play at large fetés and fund raising events. These ranged from the Cavalcades that were organized to collect money for the Goovernor Generals 'war time fund' to an annual event organized by the Communist Party where according to Rezant funds were collected to finance The Guardian — the Party's newspaper.

Because of these strong links with white entertainment circles the band did not contribute to the development of indigenous jazz forms — unlike the other big bands like the Harlem Swingsters — and the Jazz Maniacs who were far more strongly rooted in the popular culture of South Africa's townships.

While these bands were self con-

Very few white bands could match the big black sound

sciously developing a blend of imported American swing and the early marabi rhythms of the slumyards, the Merry Blackbirds insisted on playing strictly according to the Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Glen Miller orchestrations that they imported from America. Because of this there was a strong emphasis on technical music standards and no one could join the band without first going through a strict audition to see that they could read music.

Todd Matshikiza writing in Drum remembers how the band used to turn out at its performances, "Very smart — with kitty bows, nugget shines, toothbrush smiles and gold cuff links."

"Yes", says Rezant "as far as the white jobs were concerned our appearance was very important because we knew we were going to mix up with the top class. I mean the

type of people we were going to play to were the top class, not even the middle class. I used to play for the Barlows and the Schlesingers — that circle of people and one of the other class affairs that we used to play for was the graduation parties of Wits students. Oh yes, that's the thing that kept me in music otherwise I wouldn't have played at all. The hours were too long playing for blacks — from 8 in the evening to 4 in the morning."

This identification with white middle class tastes and values clearly reveal the class origins of the band. Their career also shows the frustration of a small black middle class caught at that time between their rejection of popular township culture and the repressive nature of class rule in South Africa.

In the late forties the band came under increasing pressure from white musicians who objected to the competition offered from bands that they could not rival in size and musical power. So they exercised their political power instead. A white musicians union was formed that began to put pressure on managers of nightclubs and other music organizers to limit the employment of black bands. When the Jazz Maniacs attempted to block the unions activities by applying for membership they were refused.

"This is the kind of thing that would happen" says Resant "We were offered a contract to play at the Wembley stadium. So the musician's union phones up the manger and tells him not to let us play. When he refused they phoned up the police who threatened to withdraw this guys licence. So we didn't get that job."

Exploitation in the recording industry was also a factor that the band had to cope with. Recording companies would at that time offer black bands about £1 for recording one side of a 78 speed disc with no royalties or copyright protection.

But other forces affected the bands career. Rezant remembers

how small the exposure was that the band got from the SABC. In the early fifties they were given a spot on the "Bantu" radio programmes. Rezant managed to avoid the pressure from SABC management to play rural ethnic music — an obvious attempt to bolster the ideology of apartheid — and for a while played American swing live over the air for half an hour on Saturday mornings. However this arrangement came to an abrupt end when the SABC demanded to record these life sessions without paying any royalties and the band left the studios in defiance.

Finally it was legislation passed

We played for all the top people. For people like the Schlesingers

by the newly elected Nationalist government that destroyed the band's career. Rezant argues that the bands appearance at Communist Party functions prompted the government to pass legislation that undercut the band's ability to get jobs at white functions — which the band depended on for their livelihood.

"The white man has got a voice you see. So wherever we appeared he would oppose us until the law was then read that blacks should not play at any place of entertainment where liquor is served — that simply blotted us out." This is how Peter Rezant sums up the situation when the band members decided to pack their instruments and retire.

Although their class allegiances cut the band off from any contribution to black South African music, the band did set a musical standard that was an inspiration to other bands. Also, despite their clear identification with white middle class values the band displayed a proud defiance when faced with the propaganda and commercial pressures of the official media.

Marathon man Bruce explains THAT black armband

BRUCE FORDYCE — winner of the 1981 Comrades Marathon — doesn't only win athletics meetings. He has run for the Wits SRC and has been elected. He has also run against white opinion and has come through with flying colours.

Before setting out to challenge the country's best in the premier race of the year Bruce donned a black armband to protest against the celebration of twenty years of the Apartheid Republic.

Despite having abuse and tomatoes thrown at him during the race Bruce took the trophy.

Q: Why did you wear an armband when you ran the Comrades?

A: I saw it on two levels — firstly, the festival aspect and secondly, just the running aspect. I agree with the view that there's no cause to celebrate in *all* spheres, social, political, economic and sporting. If Comrades was not linked to the festival I probably wouldn't have worn the armband.

Since the 1960 Olympic Games — the last that South Africans went to South African sportspeople have had to schlenter their way into international sport and each of them have had individual difficulties competing.

Because of its affiliation to the Republic Day Festivities, the Comrades forced everyone who ran it to make a choice. The average businessmen, lawyer or executive will just take part unthinkingly. For people like me they were forcing a withdrawal. But I had been training for the race for ages, so I refused to do that. I was going to make a statement to the press but then the armband idea came up, so that's why I wore it. The statement was there throughout the race, not just for a moment as would have happened with a press statement. It also became a group protest, not an individual stand.

The comments I made indicated that people didn't know what the armband meant. People would clap as my armband was shielded, then they'd see it and say "What's that for?" They thought it was black power or something. To others it was anti the Comrades being linked to Republic Day insofar as the race went. To me it was obviously more. It was forced on me. The Comrades has never before been ruled over or dictated to. Not that it's had such a great past either. The 1975 Comrades was the first which allowed blacks to run — a 'great breakthrough'. Then some official said that they must wear ethnic tags. Vincent Rakabele had to wear 'Sotho' on his chest or something. The officials also made too many 'Zulu' tags and not enough 'Sotho' so when they ran out of one they just used the other. It was a total farce.

The same happened with women (when they also first ran in 1975) — Isavel Rosch Kelly finished 75th this year and the Comrades is thought to be too tough for women.

Q: Do you think sport and politics should be separated?

A: You can't divorce the two. Everyone approves of the fact that Comrades is a 'multi-racial event'. But that is not the same as non-racialism. But you try to explain the difference to people on the side of the road.

Bruce Fordyce:

people thought

the armband meant Black

Power or something

You have to make choices every minute in South Africa, but at some stage you have to turn inwards as well. That is what I did — I refused to pull out, but at the same time I made a statement. There is no alternative body that is good enough so I made the statement an individual one. I don't know enough about Sacos to comment on them.

Whichever way you look at it sport is competitive. People challenge one another in sport and one has excellence — which is not a bad thing. It's for the good of the sport. I haven't discarded Sacos. One thing I can say — they need the Jomo Sono's of the world. It would boost them.

Q: Do you support Sacos' policies with regard to sport?

A: They say you can use educational facilities but not sporting facilities. But sport is education of the body. If a person goes to university to further his or her education then playing sport is an important aspect to that — even just a social game of squash. I can't see the use of sports facilities on campus as propping up the system any more than just using educational facilities.

Q: What do you see as being the distinction between multi-racial sport and non-racial sport?

A: To have non-racial sport in South Africa is impossible because people come from different backgrounds with different laws governing them. South Africa is proud of its multiracial sport but they're making people compete on the basis of colour — 'mixed teams' are based on colour. For example Errol Tobias should be chosen on merit not because of his colour. Every time someone is chosen who isn't white, the press goes berserk. In this country at present there are laws which exist which entrench inequality. And since sport is part of society you can't have equal sport within an unequal society.

Q: What do you think of the international boycott against South Africa?

A: I think it is a tragedy for the individual sportsperson but it has been instrumental in getting changes made in South Africa. Sports people then leave South Africa and people begin to feel the pressure. Because of this officials are being forced to make changes. We tend to forget our history — in the late '60's they wouldn't allow a New Zealand team with Maori's in it to come over. Now a Maori comes to South Africa and they herald the fact.

Q: How did your interest in running develop?

A: The first time I heard about the Comrades Marathon was at school. At school I wasn't pushed so I was really enjoying running and learnt how to enjoy it. But then I came to varsity and lost interest until 1976. I played a rugby game and felt exhausted. Just after that I saw the Comrades on TV. I thought about running it then but I never dreamt of winning. In '77 I ran my first Comrades and came 43rd, in '78 I came 14th. In '79 I got serious and came third, in '80 second and '81 first. My times improved every year as well. I'll go again because I'm getting better. Danny Biggs (who was also wearing an armband) came fifth and was the first novice home.

Q: What do you think of the press coverage of the Marathon?

A: The press and PFP supported the Republic Day Festivities in the last instance, so I'm not surprised about their coverage. The SABC TV were perplexed about what to do about the armband. I felt it during the race when they were filming and commentating. The Comrades was shown at 6.00 pm and not again I am told. From a sporting angle they gave it fair coverage but they dropped the issue of the armband. If they were an independent service they would have ex-

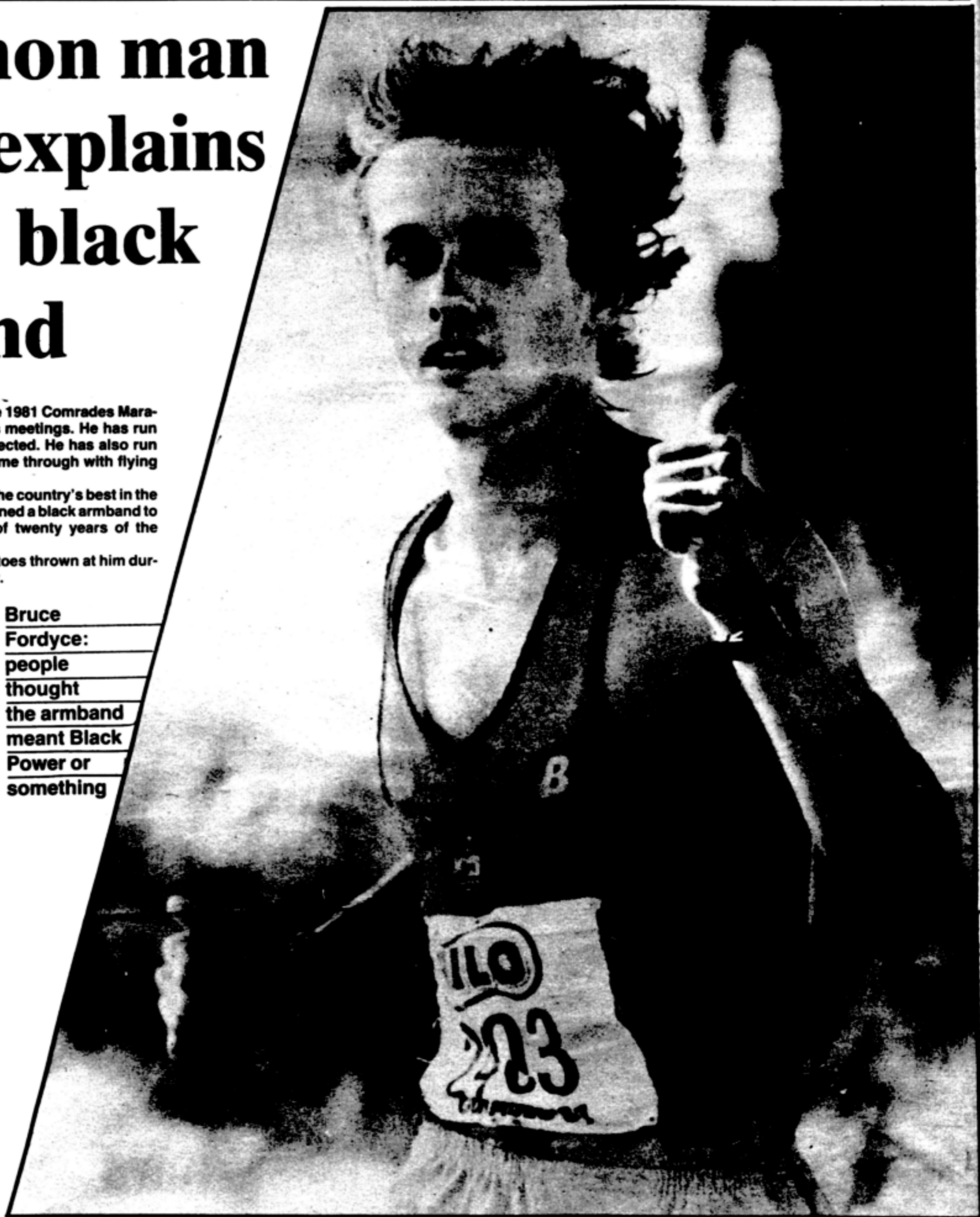
plained the stand we took but they are controlled. They were also short on coverage of Danny Biggs who wore an armband and all others wearing armbands were cut out. The liberal press didn't cover it well either. They didn't try to explain the issue but rather went for the sensational aspect. SABC asked me about it but it hasn't been on the air.

Q: How do you feel about the future of sport in South Africa?

A: South African sport is good, incredible if one looks at their performance without international competition. Football is *the* sport in South Africa — the mass sport is not rugby.

Apartheid will be dropped in sport but the societal background will not be improved. And, as we all know, the background conditions are most important in the striving for non-racial sport in a racial society.

Athletics appears to be 'multi-racial' but when we (Wits) went down to Durban, the first time we woke up to the fact that we had a black in the team was when we went to the beach. Things on the 'periphery' of the sporting world make you more aware of the racial society in which we live.





HISTORY OF BLACK WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA...

Black Women Today...



THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF S.A. IS HIERARCHICAL



Black women are at the **BOTTOM** of the pile; oppressed both by **APARTHEID** and their traditionally **SUBSERVANT ROLES**

THE LAW OF APARTHEID STATES an african and/or plural, is not a citizen of South Africa. Africans are only allowed in white urban areas to sell their labour power. They must not be burdened with superficial appendages, such as wives, children and dependents who could not provide services...

.... So most Black women and children get sent to the "HOMELANDS" **BANTUSTAN** ... WHERE MUCH OF THE SOIL IS ARID ... CHILDREN are often sent to work on nearby white farms ...



HEALTH CARE IS MINIMAL ... AND MANY CHILDREN DIE FROM ILLNESS OR MALNUTRITION



.... SO THE MEN SEARCH FOR JOBS, BUT EMPLOYMENT IS SCARCE



AND IF THEY SUCCEED IN FINDING JOBS IN THE CITY, THEIR WIVES WILL ONLY SEE THEM FOR TWO WEEKS A YEAR!

WHEN THEY RETURN, THEY ARE VIRTUALLY STRANGERS



AND MAY STOP SENDING MONEY



THESE HARDSHIPS DRIVE MANY WOMEN TO THE TOWNS



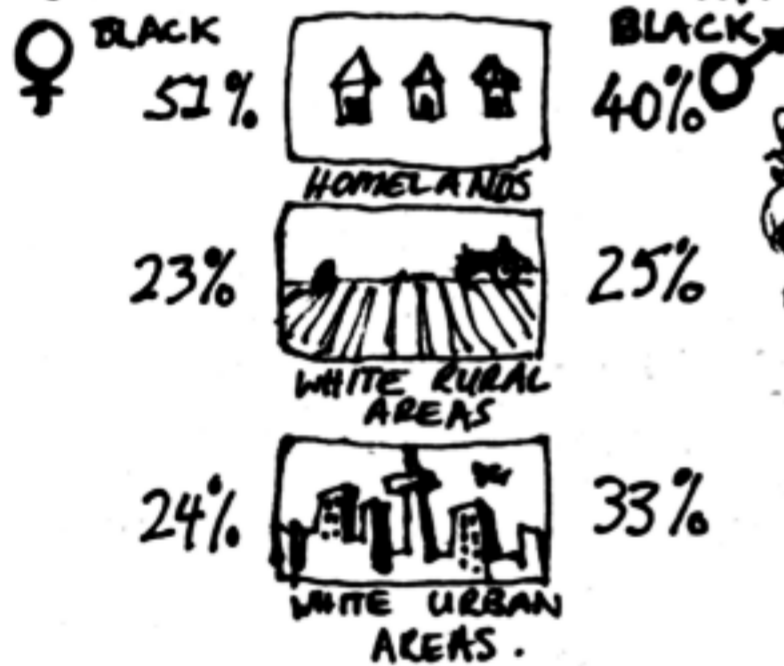
BUT



SECTION 10:

NO AFRICAN may remain in 'white' areas unless he proves that:
 a) He/she has lived there continuously since birth; or
 b) He/she has worked continuously for one employer for at least ten years, or has lived there lawfully and continuously for 15 years, and has not been convicted of any serious offence or been employed elsewhere;
 c) He/she is the wife/child under 18 of someone in the above category;
 d) He/she has special permission.

FEW MEN QUALIFY UNDER SECTION 10 - AND EVEN FEWER WOMEN ...



MOST BLACK WOMEN ARE EMPLOYED AS DOMESTIC SERVANTS - THESE JOBS ARE INSECURE, AND THEY ARE LIKELY TO CHANGE EMPLOYERS FREQUENTLY - TO GET HIGHER WAGES BECAUSE OF PREGNANCY OR FOR OTHER REASONS.



IF WOMEN DO, TECHNICALLY, QUALIFY UNDER SECTION 10, THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FIND PROOF



EMPLOYMENT IS SCARCE and having obtained a residence permit, women may be expelled if deemed 'UNDESIRABLE' or IDLE



"IDLE BANTU": ANY potentially economically active person who is unemployed, fired too often, REFUSES ALLOCATED JOBS FROM LABOUR OFFICE



BECAUSE OF THE HOUSING SHORTAGE ACCOMMODATION IS DIFFICULT TO FIND. A WOMAN MAY NOT BE A REGISTERED TENANT, AND IF HER HUSBAND DIVORCES HER OR DIES, SHE WILL BE THROWN OUT OF THE HOUSE THAT THEY HAD OCCUPIED.



OR SHE MAY BE ALLOWED TO STAY, BUT HER CHILDREN ARE FORCED TO GO - SO MANY WOMEN TOLERATE UNHAPPY MARRIAGES



SOME BUILD THEIR OWN HOUSES, WHICH ARE USUALLY SOON DEMOLISHED



WOMEN NEED NOT ONLY RESIDENCE RIGHTS, BUT MONEY TO LIVE ON



GOSH! YES, I SUPPOSE THEY DO, DAMN IT ALL...

UNEMPLOYMENT IS HIGH AND WAGES ARE LOW, SO MANY WOMEN ARE FORCED TO WORK, EITHER TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR HUSBANDS INCOME, OR AS THE SOLE BREADWINNER OF THE FAMILY

ON AVERAGE, OUT OF EVERY 100 WORKING BLACK WOMEN, 72 WILL BE DOMESTIC OR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS...



JOB THAT ARE EXHAUSTING, INSECURE, DEGRADING AND BADLY PAID.

THE AVERAGE WOMAN LEAVES FOR WORK AT ABOUT 5:00 AM



STASIE



AND SHE MAY RETURN AFTER DARK

TO DANGEROUS TOWNSHIP STREETS



WHEN THEY FINALLY ARRIVE HOME, THEY HAVE TO ATTEND TO HOME AND FAMILY



TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS ARE OVERCROWDED AND CHILD CARE CENTRES ARE SCARCE - THE WORKING WOMAN FREQUENTLY HAS TO LEAVE HER CHILDREN TO THEIR OWN DEVICES



THE PRESENT
EXISTENCE OF BLACK WOMEN IN S.A. IS ONE OF HARDSHIP AND OPPRESSION. How has this situation developed historically? AND HOW HAVE THEY FOUGHT TO

RESIST

They have fought in many ways over the years, the most notable act of resistance being the **ANTI-PASS CAMPAIGN** in 1956
HOW THIS CAME ABOUT

IN 1955, MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS ANNOUNCED THAT THAT AFRICAN WOMEN WERE TO BE ISSUED WITH **PASSES**



..... **THIS** WAS THE IMPERUS FOR THE FIRST MAJOR PROTEST IN OCTOBER 1955, WHEN 2000 WOMEN CONVERGED IN PRETORIA TO VOICE OPPOSITION AND SIGN PROTESTS.



IN 1954 THE FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN WAS FORMED - UNITING WOMEN OF ALL RACES AGAINST RACIAL AND SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION. (F.S.A.W.)

MEN WERE IN MOST CASES **SHOCKED** BY THIS



WELL-CO-ORDINATED AND **BOLD STANID**... THE CAMPAIGN INTENSIFIED IN 1956...

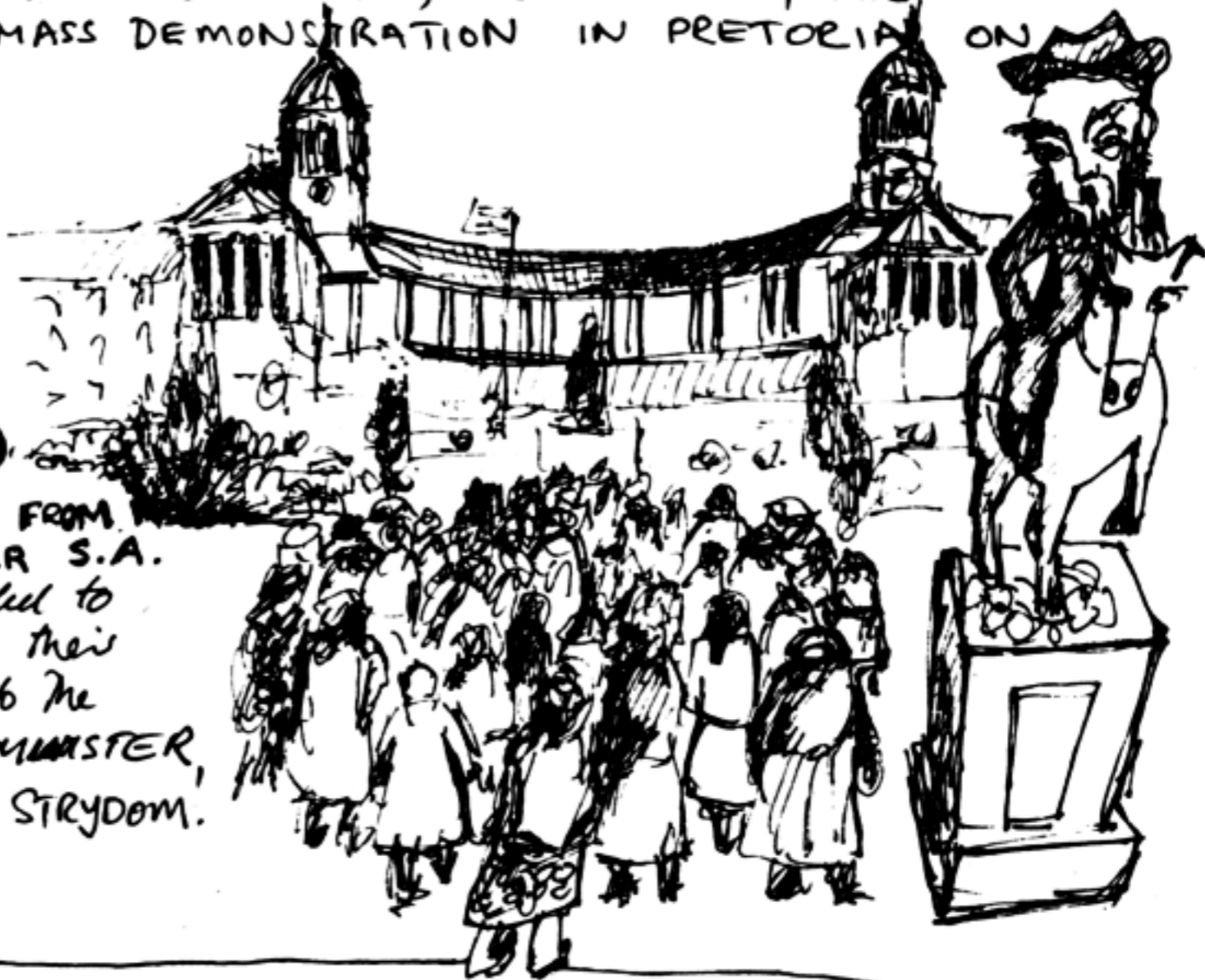
SPEARHEADED BY THE F.S.A.W, THE A.N.C. WOMENS LEAGUE, AND S.A.C.T.U, THE CAMPAIGN CULMINATED IN A MASS DEMONSTRATION IN PRETORIA ON

THE 9th August 1956

NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

20000 WOMEN FROM ALL OVER S.A. assembled to present their protest to the PRIME MINISTER, JOHANNES STRYDOM.

"IF THE HUSBAND IS TO BE ARRESTED, AND THE MOTHER, WHAT ABOUT THE CHILD??"



Strydom you have struck a rock, you have touched the women



THE FOUR LEADERS, LILIAN NGOYI, RAHIMA MOOSA, SOPHIE WILLIAMS AND HELEN JOSEPH, LEFT THOUSANDS OF PETITION FORMS AT THE DOOR OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, AND AFTER 30 MINUTES OF COMPLETE SILENCE, THE WOMEN SANG FREEDOM SONGS AND THEN DISPERSED, ENDING ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLY ORGANISED DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE HISTORY OF WOMEN'S STRUGGLES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

BUT - IT DIDN'T STOP HERE!



Despite intense State

repression, women have once again been organising against oppression. Women workers played a leading role in the Sea Harvest strike in Cape Town, and in the 1980 Frame Strike in Durban. Women have also supported consumer boycotts, such as the Fatti's + Monis present Wilson-Rowntree boycott in 'homelands', as the Crossroads in Soweto, Thembisa and Durban, increases. AND WOMEN WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR A MORE JUST AND DEMOCRATIC FUTURE.

again been organising against played a leading role in the Town, and in the 1980 Frame have also supported consumer boycott; Red meat boycott and the Women have resisted being dumped and Langa barracks issues show. women have fought against Rent

AND WOMEN WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR A MORE JUST AND DEMOCRATIC FUTURE.