

Message from CAHAC

1982 has been a difficult year for community organisation. Organisations did not take up campaigns in the same way as they did in 1981. But our residents and tenants Associations have grown in number and in strength.

Our message to all people for 1983 is; Times will be harder. To cope with this organisations need to be very strong. Such strength will come through working in our residents or tenants Associations.

We look to 1983 with commitment. Commitment to strengthening organisations where it counts in the community. Put your shoulder to the wheel in your organisations.

Media Workers Association of South Africa

THE Media Workers Association of South Africa wishes all its members and all Grassroots readers a happy Christmas and New Year.

MWASA is a trade union for all workers in the newspaper, printing, packaging and associated industries. We know these companies have made huge profits for 1982 amounting to millions of rands made by your sweat. Yet workers will face Christmas with very little in their pockets.

1983 will be a bad year for business, say the bosses. They will have to cut costs. By this they mean low wages, no increases and unemployment.

To protect ourselves against these threats, we must join democratic trade unions - that is, unions that speak for the rights of workers.

Food and Canning Workers Union African Food and Canning Workers Union

WE wish all our members a sincere Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

To the unorganised workers - join your trade unions. To the organised workers - build up your unions.

Let 1983 be a year of organising the unorganised into trade unions.

To trade unions and community organisations: realise the need for working together.

Remember: Unity is Strength. An Injury to One is an Injury to All.

Western Province Senior School Sports Union

FOR sportsmen and women, the past year has been one of many achievements. The most important was the great unity that had been found among the non-racial sporting organisations.

This unity brought about the first Sacos festival where our finest players from all over the country gathered. The unity was also shown by the way the people rejected the tours of overseas sporting teams.

With these victories that we had we can of course expect that the Government will try to break our unity. Already we can see how the Orderly Movement Bill, the PC proposals and the HSRC proposals on sport will be used to divide the people and their organisations.

Our task in the new year is to defy these way that seek to separate us from our brothers and sisters.

End of year messages

United Women's Organisation

LET us prepare ourselves for 1983. We will not allow the Government to destroy our lives.

The Government and bosses increased the price of bread, train fares, and rents to squeeze us for extra profit. Through the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, the Government is trying to turn the Africans into slave workers without the right to family life or the right to live in their own country.

The UWO calls on all women to come forward, join hands and unite. Let us work together in 1983 and face these difficulties.

DON'T STARVE — ORGANISE

For the oppressed 1983 will be a difficult year.

This is clear from the thousands of workers that the bosses laid off.

It is clear from the continuing pass raids and the destruction of family life.

It is clear from the government's determination to win the Coloured and Indian people over to their side through the President's Council.

Throughout 1982 the organisations of the people have grown.

Organise

The further strengthening of these organisations through our participation is the only answer to the attacks on our livelihood.

The power to overcome these difficulties lies in our own hands.

We must meet the government and bosses' attempts to let us starve for example through increasing the price of bread and transport with our determination to survive. Don't starve - organise!

A tribute to political prisoners

ON THE prison island outside Cape Town, more than 400 political prisoners will not be with their families this Christmas. A number of these families live and work in Cape Town.

They will not be alone this year. On December 9 they will come together in Heideveld. There will be lunch and entertainment for all and fun and games for the children.

This party will be organised by the Detainees Parent Support Committee. This is the organisation caring for detainees in Cape Town.

It will not only be the families of Robben Island prisoners who will be honoured but also those who have loved ones who are banned or on trial.

To share experiences at a time of togetherness will strengthen us for the year that lies ahead.

If you would like to contact the committee write to P.O. Box 368, Salt River 7925 or phone Grassroots at 432117.

Defence Force hijacks children

TWO weeks ago mothers in Mbekweni came home after a hard day's work to find their children gone.

"They have gone to an army camp," they were told.

The mothers were very angry. Some of them were members of the Mbekweni branch of the United Womens Organisation (UWO).

They then set about finding out how the 23 school-children, all aged about 14, had been taken to the Bantu Administration Camp.

The UWO women came together and approached the Mbekweni branch of the Western Cape Civic Association. These two organisations then called together the children's pa-

rents.

Some of the parents had seen the Bantu Administration Board forms asking them permission to take the children camping.

Some parents had even signed the forms. But most of the parents had not even seen the forms at all.

They heard there were children who

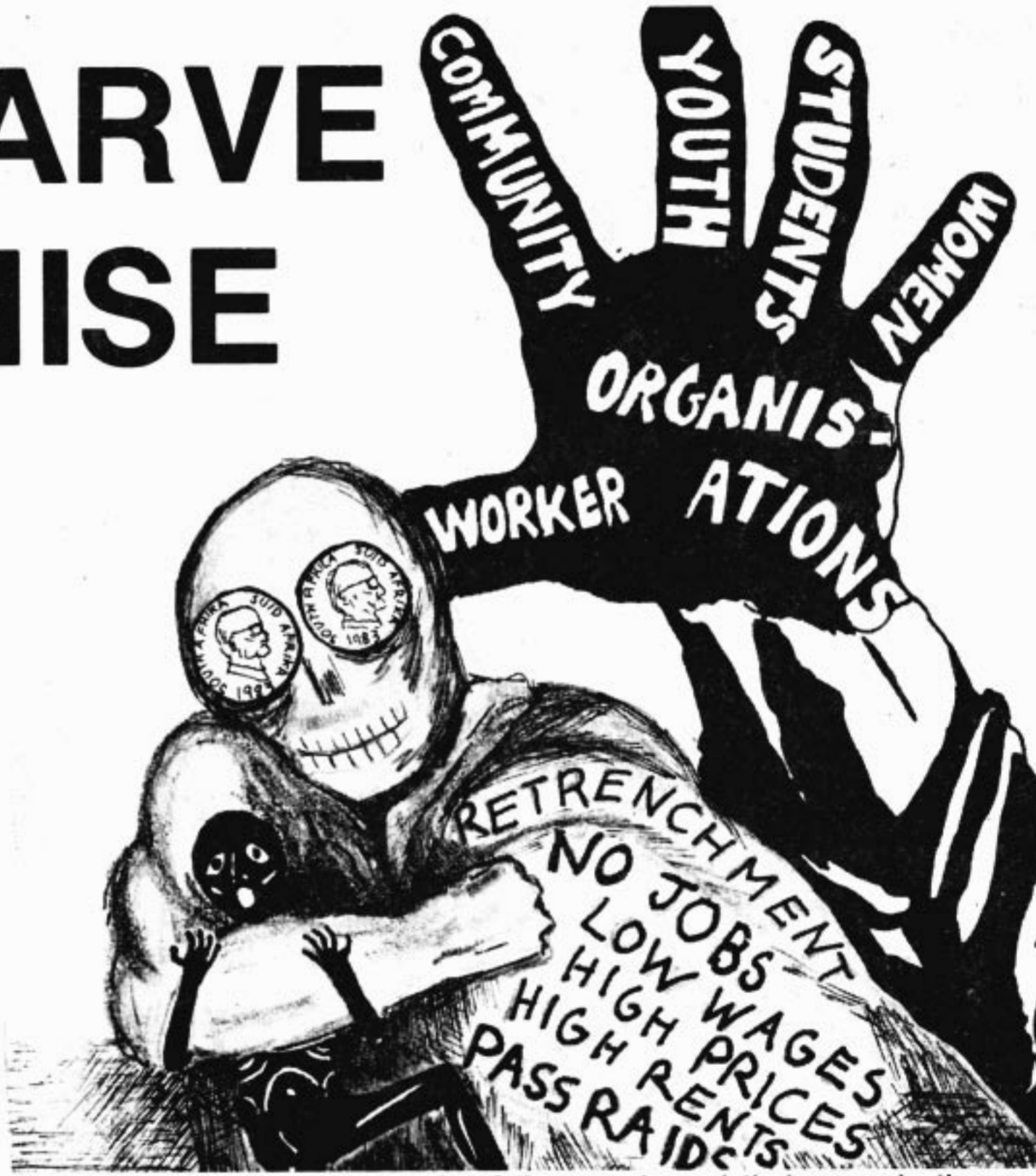
had signed for their friends after seeing the army-trucks loaded with fruit and meat.

When the parents looked closely at the forms they became even more angry. The forms stated that if their child was injured at the camp, the parents would be responsible. The BAAB would not pay for any

damages.

They approached the headmaster and discovered that the inspector had put pressure on him to allow the children to be taken to the camps.

Later the parents heard of one headmaster who had refused to send the children into the hands of the BAAB and SADF.



The future lies in the hands of the people and their organisations

Fishermen win demand for higher wages

THE opening of the crayfish season in the Cape has been marked by two wage rises for the fishermen of Hout Bay.

Both the day fishermen and those out for six weeks at a time have negotiated increases.

About 200 men who spend long dangerous hours on the sea have organised themselves and elected a committee to represent them in negotiations with their bosses.

Earlier this month, two crews of 22 men due to leave on a six week trip refused to leave Hout Bay harbour until their wages were raised.

They had been paid R6 a day plus a R1,10

"We earn nothing we will not go out to sea until we are satisfied."

commission on every 100 crayfish caught. They were asking the bosses for R10 a day plus the old commission.

However, after two days of negotiations, the fishermen accepted an increase in the commission of R2 per 100 crayfish on one boat and R1,50 on the other. The wages were different because on the Constantiaberg they only had to catch the kreef while on Die

Pikkewyn they had to clean and pack them as well.

The two boats left port the next day . . . 24 hours late . . . the fishermen smiling and waving to their friends and families.

But their troubles were not over. Two days later, Die Pikkewyn nearly sank off Plettenberg Bay, after water came through a hole in the anchorhold.

For months, the fishermen have complained that their boats were not safe. Even though there had been heavy weather all the way from Hout Bay to Plettenberg Bay, the fishermen's committee said the boat could not have been seaworthy to have so nearly sunk.

After lengthy negotiations, it was decided that crew on crayfishing boats who go out on the day trips would be paid 7 cents a man for each kilo of crayfish. The skipper would get 19 cents and drivers, 10 cents.

Previously fishermen were paid 48 cents per kilo, which was shared out unequally among eight men.

At a meeting in Hout Bay, one fisher-

man said they worked for "nothing".

"We get up early to leave our houses and when we come back we never know if we will live another day."

Another said: "Every year the bosses say they are going to raise our wages. But at the end of every season, we get the same as before. So this year we must be firm. We must not go out to sea until we are satisfied."

Drowned

Many others said they knew the crayfish was sold at very high prices.

"We must ask the bosses what the kreef is worth. We sail on stormy seas and risk our lives to catch fish for them. There are many of us who have been drowned or who have lost fingers or hands in accidents on board," said a crewman.

A man who works as a driver on the boat said he fully supported the demand for more wages.

"We sometimes stand for 12 hours on our own. We have eight lives in our hands. Any man's life is in danger. It is because of this danger that we are asking that we are able to see why we work. Any man has a big responsibility on the boat. Why can't the bosses show the same responsibility to us and pay us more money," he said.



Fishermen work long hours doing dangerous work and earn low wages.

Bosses give in after roadworkers strike

ABOUT 350 national roadworkers at Beaufort West won a big victory when they went on a 10 day strike in solidarity with a fellow

worker who was unfairly fired.

The worker was fired by the Cape Provincial Administration's senior engineer at Beaufort West after he was absent from work.

In spite of the fact that he brought a doctor's certificate, the boss accused him of being drunk and not having a proper reason for missing work.

The workers immediately got together and downed tools. They told the boss that if a worker can be fired when he brings a doctor's certificate then none of their jobs were safe.

The boss then said that all the workers were fired. He would only re-employ some of them and their wages would go down to the minimum, as they had broken their contracts.

The workers refused to budge. They would not return to work under those conditions

and until their colleague had been reinstated.

Meanwhile, roadworkers in other towns such as Middelburg and Worcester threatened to strike if the Beaufort West workers were not taken back.

Recognition

Faced with the prospect of all their road workers coming out on strike, the big bosses in Cape Town held a meeting with worker representatives.

They agreed to take all the workers back, including the one who had been unjustly dismissed. All wages for the period on strike were paid.

In addition, the administration has agreed to recognise a six-member committee as representative of the worker.

And in future doctor's certificates will be accepted on face value.

CINE 400 BUILDING

COLLEGE ROAD
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GALAXY - DISCO

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"OPEN SIX NIGHTS A WEEK"

MONDAY - SATURDAY

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DAILY 10.30 A.M. - 7.30 A.M.

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POPPY'S

The poor man's friend
THE POOR MAN'S FRIEND
WE PROVIDE COMPLETE
MEAT SERVICE

We provide complete meat service
at lowest prices in town



OF DISTINCTION

OF ATHLONE
BE YOUR JEWELLER

Athlone City Centre
Athlone

Metro Cinema Complex
Symphony Walk
Town Centre
Mitchells Plain

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Day hospital campaign

"THE government can build the Good Hope Centre which is hardly used, but when it comes to seeing to the people's health then there is no money". This is what an angry resident said during the campaign to have the day hospital which was closed six years ago reopened in Bonteheuwel.

The campaign is being organised by the Bonteheuwel Civic Association. Others complained about all the trouble it took to travel to other areas to obtain medical treatment and the high price of bus fares to get there and back. The campaign is being organised by the Bonteheuwel Civic

Association. They have conducted a survey in the area to find out just how badly a day hospital is needed. The BCA have also sent a letter to the Day Hospitals Association asking why the day hospital had been closed in the first place. The DHO replied

but the BCA rejected the reasons given for closing the day hospital. Residents are also upset because the DHO sent a copy of their reply to the local Management Committee. The residents said that they regarded the BCA as being the representatives of the peo-

ple. At present the BCA is holding a series of house meetings at which rent, maintenance and health are discussed. At a house meeting one tenant said: "Poor building material, very damp walls and cold houses are causing a lot of sick-

ness. We cannot afford private doctors." The BCA plan to follow the house meetings with area meetings. Meetings are also planned with the churches in the area to inform them of the campaign and to see what part they can play in it. The Association also wants to strength-

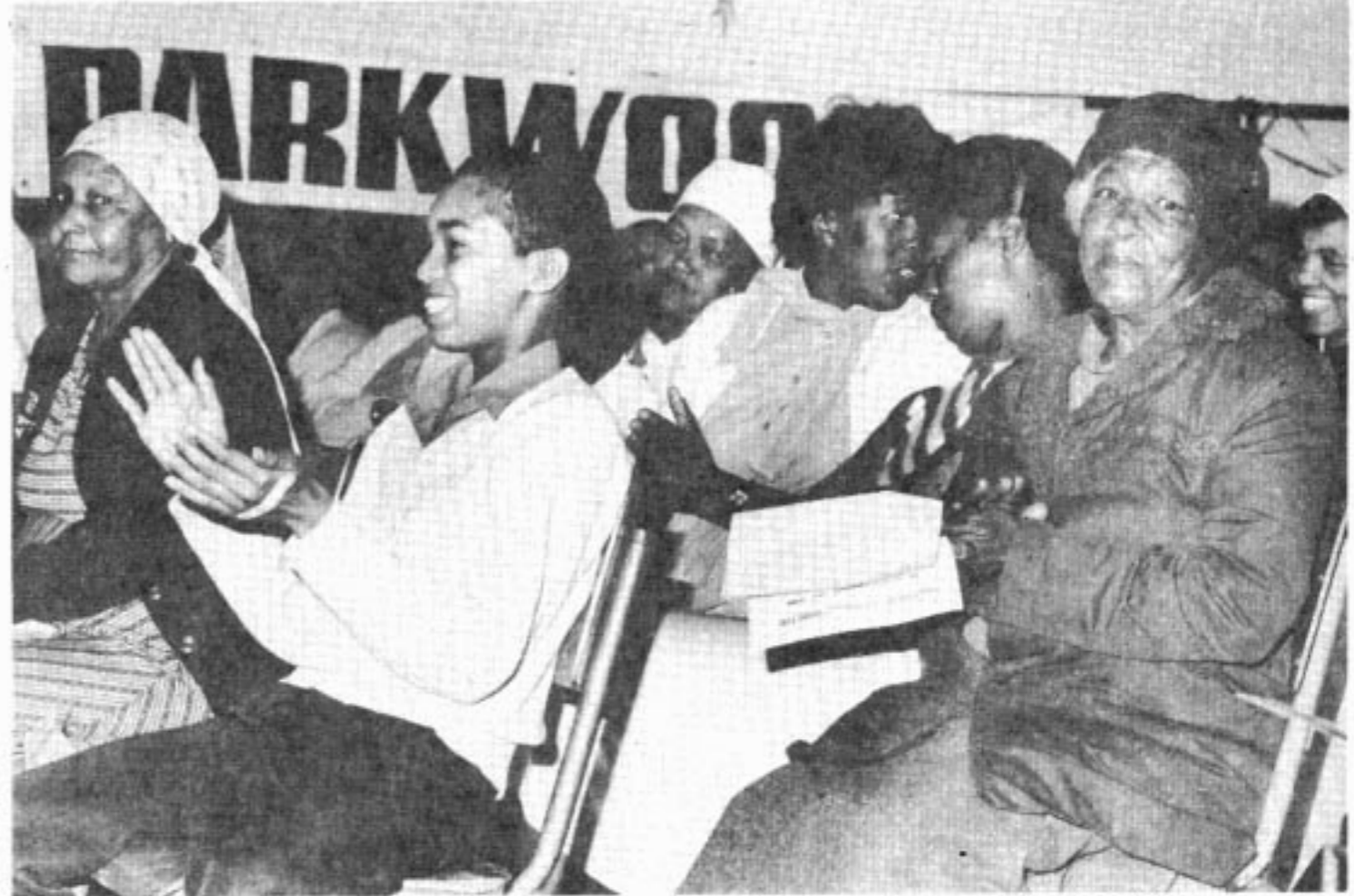
en relations with the churches. Many people are eager to join the campaign to have the Day Hospital reopened. When members of the Bonteheuwel Civic Association handed out pamphlets in the area, residents strongly backed the Action taken by the Association.

Angry tenants demand repairs

PARKWOOD tenants stood up in force last month and demanded that Council repair their homes. 300 tenants decided at a mass meeting to send a delegation to the local rent office and the City Council in Cape Town to demand that their broken homes be repaired. The meeting was organised by the Parkwood Working Committee and held at the Community Centre on November 25. After only 13 years, the houses in Parkwood

are in a very bad condition. The walls and ceilings are cracked and let water in. Windows have broken fittings which make it impossible to open them. Rain comes in under the doors and at the windows. Because of this, the houses are very damp and mouldy and our people get very sick. Council says it has no money to repair the houses they own. In the next financial year Council has put aside only R700 000 for maintenance of more

than 40 000 houses while they will lose R2,2 million on the Cape Town City Orchestra. The meeting decided to support their fellow workers in their struggle for the right to work and live where they choose. People said they would resist the Proposed Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill and the pass raids were strongly condemned.



"Repair our homes", said Parkwood residents at a public meeting.

Shiba's Shoe Stores

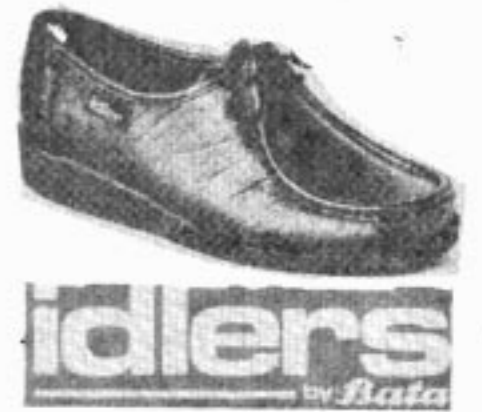
PARKFAIR CENTRE
(OPP LANDDROST HOTEL)
LANSDOWNE

GATESVILLE SHOPPING CENTRE
KLIPFONTEIN ROAD RYLANDS
(OPP. POST OFFICE)

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SUPPLIED TO CLUBS
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Oscar Mpetha — a people's leader

ON Thursday December 16, we will remember the heroes of our struggle — those men and women who have suffered for us, fought for us, struggled with us and died for us.

December 16 is Heroes Day. All over the country, this will be the day when our thoughts will turn to the many who have shown us the way forward.

If there is one man who has truly shown us the way here in the Cape, it is Oscar

Mpetha.

His life's story tells of courage and dedication, a courage and dedication which many of our great leaders have shown.

Today, 72-year-old Oscar sits in prison — an awaiting-trial prisoner.

On Heroes Day, the grey walls of Pollsmoor Prison will have been his home for more than two years.

At a time when we pay tribute to our heroes, we must remember him. We must

share in his dedication. We must follow his example.

In the words of those who organised alongside him over the years, we tell of his life experiences.

On this page, some of the voices which cry out for his leadership are heard.

The voices say "the struggle needs you, Oscar. You have shown us the way. We will always remember."

'Freedom in our lifetime'



Ray Alexander (centre) discussing Union issues with Bettie du Toit (far left), Oscar Mpetha, General Secretary, A-FCWU (second left), Maria Williams (second right) and David Jaantjies (far right), c. 1952.

HE is a person who always works for change, a person who organised workers for the political movement.

Never did he say no, never did he hesitate, never did he stand back. A true leader, a hero of our people — this is Oscar Mpetha.

Born in 1909 in Mount Fletcher, his life story tells of sacrifice and dedication. And Grassroots spoke to those who worked closely with him. The people who organised side by side with Oscar told of the early days when he first joined the union.

They spoke of the days when Oscar was a worker at a fish factory in Saldanha. This was where the Food and Canning Workers' Union found him in 1943. Oscar soon became secretary of the local branch.

"At the time the unions were not racially divided," they said. "Oscar was so good that he even managed to organise white women into the union. But by 1947, the government was to change this. Africans were forced to belong to separate unions, and the African Food and Canning Workers' Union was formed," they said.

In 1951, he became the union's general secretary, a po-

sition he held for many years.

"But Oscar was not only prominent in the workers' struggle. He would always organise people for the political struggle.

"Oscar joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1951. Very soon he became regional secretary. In 1955 he became Vice-President of the ANC in the Cape. He held this position until the organisation was banned," his friends said.

A woman who worked closely with Oscar in the union spoke about how they organised the workers at a factory in Wolseley.

This is her story:

"I remember the union had a problem at the canning factory in Wolseley. The year was 1954. Our branch was very weak at the factory. The workers were afraid to speak of their problems. The union needed to know the workers' problems to be able to put the workers' case at the Conciliation Board meeting. This was where the bosses and the union met.

"The workers were not strong enough to stand up to the bosses to put their case. The union decided to send Oscar and myself to find work at the factory.

"Oscar wore his oldest

clothes as he queued with the men looking for work. I could see him from a distance where I was standing with the women. We both got jobs, Oscar with the men and I with the women.

"Within a week, we were able to speak to the workers and gather all the information. It was Oscar who spoke out for the workers at the Conciliation Board meeting a few weeks later, and were the bosses surprised.

"By that time, we both had left the factory. Oscar did not even wait for his pay packet. Yes, that was Oscar. He was prepared to do anything for the workers' struggle.

Liz Abrahams, the Food and Canning Workers' Union's secretary in Paarl, said:

"I met Oscar at a lunch-hour meeting at Langeberg where I was working. He came with Ray Alexander. At the meeting I came to know Oscar as a very capable leader. He played an important role in SACTU. This South African Congress of Trade Unions was an umbrella body of workers and unions. Oscar and I represented the Cape Western region.

"It was always Oscar who took the lead in discussions. At the conference Oscar showed us the way.

"Our offices were next to the SACTU offices in Victoria Street, Cape Town. The employers did not like SACTU at all. But SACTU was well-known all over, on the farms and in the cities.

"Oscar and other members of the ANC, the women's movement and the Youth League gave one day every week to SACTU work. Every Tuesday we would go with other volunteers, to organise other workers, like the brick workers and the cement workers. We directed them to the SACTU offices and they became members.

"Oscar was forced to leave the union when he was banned in 1963. He joined again in 1978. At that time many of us who had been banned, came back to the union.

"We found Oscar again at an ice-cream factory in Parow. He was working as a security guard. Even there he had never stopped organising.

He agreed to come work for the union again.

"We relied a lot on Oscar. He was in East London at the time of Fattis and Monis strike. At first, we carried on without him, but when the problems started we had to call on Oscar.

"Oscar will do anything in his



power to bring about change. He always spoke about 'Freedom in my lifetime'. People always said Oscar had no family, because he was never at home."

Mildred Lessea said Oscar always showed a way out of problems.

"I remember we were preparing for a conference in Durban. It was a SACTU conference and all the organisations went.

"We had a breakaway group who was also preparing for the conference.

Dedicated

"Oscar came that night and said we had to re-organise all our members. We had a policy where every year the members rejoin. Me, Oscar and others worked throughout the night. It was a Friday night and we decided to wake up people and get them to pay 25 cents joining fees. We got the people to attend the meeting and we were in the majority so far."

People spoke about Oscar's commitment in spite of being harassed by the state.

"He was a good organiser. He never saw his work in the ANC and the union as being separate."

At the time of his detention, Oscar Mpetha was the chairman of the Nyanga Residents' Association and an organiser of the Food and Canning Workers' Union.

At an age when many people think of retiring and taking life easy, Oscar was still as dedicated to the struggle as when he was young.

While the Supreme Court in Cape Town listens to evidence against Oscar, the people have shown their support for him and the other accused.

Again and again the call has been heard: 'Oscar Mpetha is no criminal. He is our leader.'

'No electricity only high fuel bills'

MRS JOHNSON and her husband moved into Valhalla Park three years ago. She was desperate at the time as she could not find any other place to stay.

But there was no electricity in Valhalla Park and Mrs Johnson says her stay in the area has been hell.

A member of the Valhalla

Park Tenants Association spoke to Mrs Johnson. She spoke about the many serious problems she has experienced because of the lack of electricity.

She explained that during winter she and her husband had a big job to keep out the cold and dampness from their home. She felt that if they had elec-

tricity, this could be avoided.

On the occasions her children get sick, she said, she has to keep the paraffin lamps burning throughout the night. Because of the fumes produced by the paraffin lamps, it is difficult for the children to get better.

This, of course, causes her medical expenses to be very high.

Mrs Johnson is very worried about the fact that five houses in Valhalla Park burnt down recently because of lack of electricity. She fears this could also happen to herself or any other resident.

There is no recreation for Mrs Johnsons children because of the lack of electricity. The

children cannot even watch television at night so it forces them out onto the streets.

Mrs Johnson ended off by pointing out that if she had electricity,, it would cost her about R20 a month. But instead she has to waste R65 a month on paraffin, gas, candles, etc.

"As far as people of Bishop Lavis and other Cape Town communities are concerned, Koeberg may as well have been built in the Northern Transvaal."

THE building of the Koeberg nuclear power station will make no difference to the campaign of the residents of Bishop Lavis to get electricity.

In fact, the people of Cape Town (and of Atlantis in particular) face all the dangers of having Koeberg so nearby but will not benefit at all.

"As far as the people of Bishop Lavis and other Cape Town communities are concerned, Koeberg may as well have been built in the Northern Transvaal. They would have got exactly the same benefit from it," said one

expert.

What is more, there is enough electricity without Koeberg to provide Bishop Lavis and other communities with electricity — but the Government will not provide the funds to make electricity available.

Nor will the Citizens Housing League, that is responsible for the running of Bishop Lavis, use the reserve funds it has to provide electricity. CHL says it has other important things to see to.

Shortage of electricity is no problem — there is enough to go round. But the CHL is sitting

and waiting for the Government to provide the money — and no one can say when that will be.

Why will Cape Town communities have no particular advantage from Koeberg? The reason is that the electricity produced by Koeberg will become part of the single supply that provides the whole of South Africa with electricity. This includes electricity produced by other power stations all over the country.

But the method used to make electricity at Koeberg is different from that used anywhere

else in the country — and it can be extremely dangerous if there is an accident at the power station.

All electricity is made in a process that uses steam provided by boiling water. In most power station the heat to boil the water comes from burning coal. But at Koeberg, the heat comes from splitting uranium atoms. If something goes wrong in this process it can be extremely dangerous because radioactivity could be released which has very harmful effects on all forms of life.

If a serious accident occurred, thousands of people could die of cancer, the countryside would be destroyed and parents could have deformed children in future years.

That is why many residents of Atlantis, and the whole of Cape Town are protesting that Koeberg was built too close to a densely populated area.

They have to face all the dangers and insecurity of living near Koeberg — and have no particular benefits.

CHC ignores people's demands

THE struggle for electricity in Bishop Lavis has been going on for 21 years now. And still the Citizens housing league does not want to do anything about it.

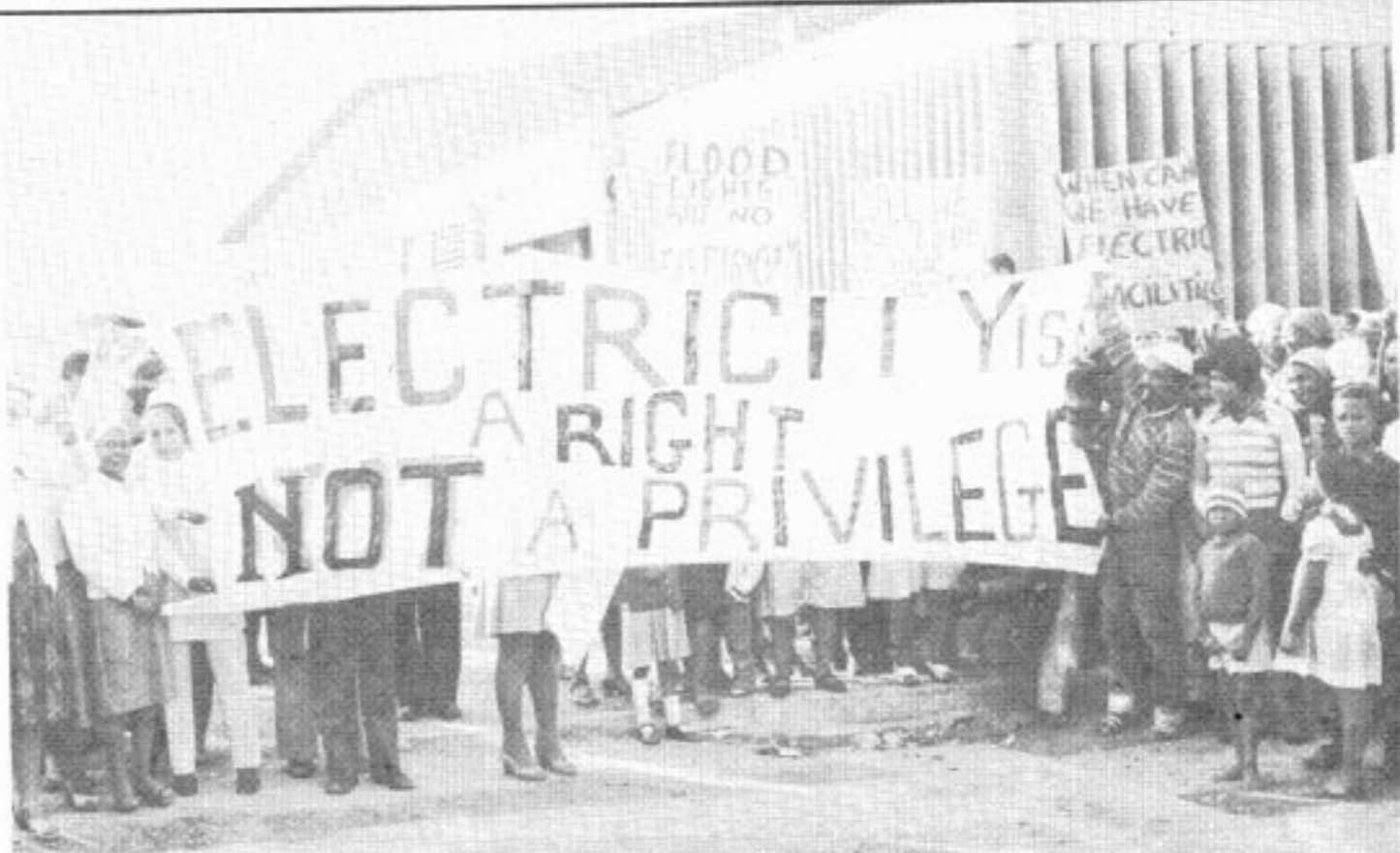
The CHL has once again shown a total disregard for the peoples demands. CHL has decided to build Montana, an area close to Bishop Lavis which will cost R5 million rand. Electricity for Bishop Lavis would have cost CHL R2,5 million.

When Bishop Lavis Action Committee inter-

viewed Mrs Brown, a tenant of Bishop Lavis, the following is what she had to say about CHL's latest move.

"I think this is most disgusting. Last year, when our delegation went to CHL, CHL promised us electricity in Bishop Lavis was top of their list. Now instead, they are building luxury houses for other people. CHL must not for one minute think we will tolerate this situation any longer. We are paying through

our necks for fuel, we are paying through our necks for rent. Why the devil then can CHL not see to it that our homes are electrified. With the high rents we have to pay, CHL should not have difficulty in giving us electricity. The action convinces me that the Housing League does not care at all about its tenants. As long as CHL receives our high rental fees, they are quite satisfied. To the devil with Bishop Lavis's tenants struggle to survive.



Bishop Lavis residents continue with the fight for lights.

We are getting tired of working

SEMENTDAM is a section of Bellville South which for the past 21 years, has had no electricity.

The tenants of Sementdam feel that because they pay rent, it is their right to have electricity. The Bellville South Housing Action Committee has done much to assist the people of Sementdam in their struggle.

An interview done with a Sementdam resident shows the great need for electricity in the area. This is what Aunty Nett has to

say.

Question: Aunty Nett, How long have you been staying in Sementdam?

Answer: For two years now.

Question: What is it like not to have electricity in your home, Aunty Nett?

Answer: A living hell. I spend a fortune every month on fuel. I also have to buy 10 packets of candles, 8 gallons paraffin and wood to the value of R24. This all amounts to about R45 for the month. If I had electri-

city my expenses would have been much less. This township was built 21 years ago and since then the municipality has made no effort to install electricity. They have only made promises, but that was where it remained. The municipality must remember that we are getting tired of waiting and struggling.

Question: What are your views of the Action Committee?

Answer: The committee is of great help and assistance to us.

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COMMENT

Looking ahead to the new year

THE YEAR 1982 will be remembered by our people. Not for any major victories that we've gained, but because of the many attacks by the government on our people. Even though we have a long history of being repressed, the attacks seem to have increased this year.

Not only have our living standards been attacked, but we have also seen an increase in repressive laws to control us, and attempts to divide us through the Presidents Council.

In 1982 we have seen the prices of basic food-stuffs like bread, and other necessities like bus-fares and rents, rise out of the reach of many people. Our people are being forced to starve.

The government is spending more and more money on guns. This money could have been used for housing and food subsidies. Hundreds are losing their jobs. Many more will probably be put off in the next few months.

Repression

Detention and other security laws have been made stricter. The Koornhof Bills will have complete control over the lives of all Africans. With the Presidents Council proposals, these bills will try and divide the "coloureds" and "indians" from the other oppressed people by luring them closer to the government.

In the face of this onslaught, we must look at how we have resisted. Have we responded properly to the government's attack and has our resistance been most effective? What kind of mistakes have we made?

The past year was not one of mass campaigns. After the rents campaign at the start of the year, people said we would consolidate our organisations. It appears that this did not happen. Have we been able to sustain our organisations or do our people get frustrated when they cannot see concrete attempts and victories by our organisations?

The Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC) has grown this year. From a small group of people last year, it now has 26 organisations under its umbrella. One of its aims is to involve more and more people. Has it been able to achieve this?

Challenges

Last year, the trade unions came together at Langa to discuss unity. Today the debate still continues. Is there really no basis for unity of the unions?

The United Women's Organisation (UWO) took up the issue of the rising bread price. Eventually the campaign had to be called off. Will we learn from our mistakes?

Our people are confronted with the terror of the Koornhof Bills. Lengthy meetings are held to discuss whether pamphlets, posters or workshops would be most effective. Maybe we will still be debating while the bills become law.

Is it not time for us to start looking at the issues we take up and the tools we use? One cannot say that the small issues we use to build up our organisations, are not important. However, should we not reach a stage where we bridge this level of organisation?

Cynical though it may sound, these questions have to be considered. What are the alternatives we can offer? Are we merely repeating the things we have already done in other situations?

With these things in mind, we enter the new year.

IS there no basis for trade union unity? This is the question that many people are asking all over the country.

Can we honestly say that there is no basis for unity at a time when the labour movement is growing stronger and workers are waging their struggle with great determination and militancy.

Can there be no basis for unity when the labour movement needs to strengthen itself against attempts by the state and the bosses to divide it?

The upswing in the workers' struggle has been met with state harassment, detentions, bannings and the death in detention of a trade unionist.

Recession

In recent years, labour legislation has been passed to divide and control the workers and their trade unions.

This year, thousands of workers have been faced with retrenchments due to unemployment as the country plunges deeper and deeper into recession.

Is this not the time for unity in the labour movement so that the interests of workers can be protected?

Labour

This is not the first time that trade unions have tried to forge unity. The struggle for a united labour movement has been a long one.

There have been many attempts in the past that we can draw on.

The earliest efforts can be traced to the 1920's and the formation of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU).

Although the life of this organisation was short, the ICU did not leave South Africa unchanged.

As the first non-racial organisation in the country, the ICU did not only fight for the rights of workers on the factory floor. It also fought for the political rights of workers.

In later years, ICU was literally torn apart by political problems, lack of democracy, problems with leadership, and corruption.

But, in spite of this, the ICU certainly started to light up the way.

In the years following the ICU, there were many efforts at trade union unity.

Majority

But, these organisations failed to meet the needs of the majority of the workers.

The birth of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in March 1955, opened a new phase in the workers struggle in our country.

Today, Sactu is still known as the single, most important federation of trade unions which has existed not only in the history of the labour movement, but also, in the broader struggle for a free and democratic South Africa.

The 1950's was a time of mass struggle and defiance by the oppressed in this country. A united trade union movement was needed to defend and advance the interests of the workers.

Is there no basis for unity?

JUST OVER a year ago great hopes were raised. There were speculations that at last a united labour movement was in sight. This was the general response to the attempts at unity between the independent trade unions when they met at a summit meeting held in Langa last year. It was the first time in 20 years that the trade unions met to work towards laying a common basis for unity.

But, these hopes were short lived. The unity talks broke down at a meeting in Port Elizabeth in June this year. "There was no basis for unity at this stage", said trade unionists after the meeting.

And, at this point, a united labour movement seems a step or two out of reach.

In this story, Grassroots looks at some of the issues which have been raised in the search for unity among the independent trade unions.

Following in the tradition of the ICU, the new federation stood for non-racialism and to defend the interests of all workers irrespective of their racial classification. Further, it committed itself to the strengthening of existing trade unions and the organisation of the unorganised.

Contribution

But, Sactu's contribution was not only confined to the struggle on the factory floor. Its involvement extended beyond the work place to the community. Sactu militants believed that to fight only for the economic rights of workers on the factory floor, and not for the political rights of workers who have no voice in our country, would be a betrayal of the interests of workers.

It was because of Sactu's position on the economic and the political struggle, that it became a party to the congress alliance together with the African National Congress, the Congress of Democrats, the South African Indian Congress and the Coloured People's Congress.

Charter

And, when the Freedom Charter was adopted, the voice of the workers was heard. Although Sactu believed that it needed an independent policy to fully represent the interests of the workers, it stood firm in its commitment to mobilise the people behind the demands of the Freedom Charter.

Sactu understood the limitations of the Freedom Charter. But, at the same time, it saw the Freedom Charter as laying the foundation stone for the full emancipation of the working class, free from racial oppression and class exploitation.

And, because Sactu was an organisation of the working class, it also believed in the historical role that workers would play. That is, that the workers together with their allies, will lead the struggle for national democracy.

But, the life of this federation of unions was a short one. The harsh state repression in the 1960's, arrests and banning of organisations, forced Sactu into exile. A big vacuum remained. Smaller federations came into being to fill the vacuum.

These federations were based mainly on a Black Consciousness philosophy. The Durban strikes of 1973, marked the re-awakening of the workers struggle. Following this, we see the emergence of another non-racial federation - the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu). Today, Fosatu is a strong organisation claiming a large membership. But, there were many political differences,

particularly, on the question of registration. Many independent trade unions did not join this federation.

Independent

Today, there is no one federation which could claim to be truly representative of all the independent trade unions in the country.

In recent times, the attack by the state and the bosses has created a need for unity to defend the interests of the workers. Renewed efforts at unity are once again being pursued.

Why the urgent need for unity at this point?

Members of the trade union movement have said the following:

- There is the need for the trade unions to strengthen itself against attempts by the state and the bosses to divide it.

- a united labour movement will give workers a voice.

- workers need the support of fellow unions in their fight against the bosses who are adopting a hard line approach.

- competition between unions and organising against each other could be eliminated.

- the organisation of the unorganised and the strengthening of existing unions is another priority.

But, of great political importance is the unity of the working class. A united labour movement to advance the struggle for a free and democratic South Africa.

Political

To believe that workers need only to protect themselves against the bosses, is to reduce the struggle to a worker-boss one. Such a narrow economic view to the trade union struggle, loses sight of how the state protects the bosses interests. The fight against the exploitation of workers is also a fight against the state for political power. A narrow economic view must be criticised in the strongest terms. However trade unions will be guided by the concrete situation in deciding what the level of political involvement should be at a given point in time.

In conclusion, the unity talks have been torn apart by these issues and questions as to whether unions should register and participate in industrial councils.

The last two were the burning issues which resulted in the breakdown of the unity talks in Port Elizabeth in June this year.

Registration

One block of trade unions argued that registration is there to divide and control workers and their organisations. They argued that great political gains have been made by forcing the bosses to recognise unregistered unions.

The success of the Trident Marine workers in forcing the bosses to negotiate outside the industrial council, was seen as a great political victory for the workers.

But, still other unions have argued that registration has brought little or no gains for registered or unregistered unions. This is perhaps an extreme view.

Whatever the merits of these arguments, can we sacrifice unity at this stage on a tactical issue such as registration?

Would an alliance between independent trade unions not be a step forward in fighting the divisions caused by registration and industrial councils? These are important questions that we should be asking ourselves.

Renew

Recently in Cape Town, the Food and Canning Workers Union and the African Food and Canning Workers Union called a meeting of community organisations and trade unions to inform them of the efforts at unity. The community organisations welcome efforts to strengthen the relationship between community organisations and trade unions.

The community organisations also endorsed the efforts at unity and called for a united labour movement of all independent, democratic trade unions.

We have faith in the workers and their trade unions to renew the efforts at unity in the new year.

Have our tools become blunt?



Where to now?

Dear Grassroots,

ANOTHER year has drawn to a close. Again, it is important for everybody in organisations to look back on the past year and plan the work of the organisation for 1983. I think it is very important that that such thinking and planning is not only left to the leaders of organisations. Every active member must be involved.

In many ways 1982 was different from 1981.

Last year we saw big campaigns in the different communities: The EPC, Bonteheuwel

maintenance, BLAC electricity and the rents campaign are now all history. In 1981 we saw people uniting and confronting councils about the problems which they were experiencing.

At least once a month-people from different areas were bussed into town or marched on their local rent offices.

These efforts in many cases saw people who had never been involved before gaining a new courage and becoming active in their local residents association.

The method used

namely confronting Council was therefore an important way of drawing in people and forcing the Councils to change their decisions. But, like any tool which is used too often it became blunt. No longer do the people or the Councils become excited about such protests. At the end of the rents campaign, early in 1982, we were thus left with

- a bigger job - living standards were worsening
- a smaller workforce - people who were previously active were beginning to lose hope

• and blunt tools.

It looks as though people in the organisations had not planned for this. We went into these campaigns without thinking far enough ahead.

Perhaps we thought that we would never run out of energy or that people would always be excited by the methods we were using.

It would be incorrect to believe that these campaigns were useless. They were very important because through them democratic organisations were established and people became confident in their organisations.

Our task in 1983 will be more difficult. Conditions will become worse -

- The cost of living will increase further.
- wages will not rise.
- More of us will be unemployed.

The organisations which we have built must be strengthened. This is a job for all of us.

Let us think of how this will be done. Let us think about our own involvement in this. Discuss it with our neighbours and friends. Let us enter 1983 with clear ideas of where our organisations are heading.

ONCE again we are looking over another year which is coming to an end. We are looking back and want to know how far we have come in our fight for a new society. We are also looking at CAHAC, our mother civic body which has grown much stronger over this year. Many areas joined during the Rent Struggle, which has fought under the banner of CAHAC at the beginning of this year.

How are we going to strengthen CAHAC next year? How will we win more areas for CAHAC? How will we keep those which are in CAHAC?

Unity is strength. We must unite under the banner of CAHAC but

unity for what? What do we get from this unity? When areas are having problems, CAHAC and its officials must be there more often to give assistance.

If areas are strong, CAHAC will be strong. How can we make our different organisations strong? How can we stop our organisations going like a see-saw: the one moment very active, and the next completely inactive?

For the last two years, working in the areas meant getting people together around a problem they felt strongly about. After a few months the work comes to a stop.

Organising around problems in our area is not bad. But we must

start looking for those things to draw people for a longer period. The advice offices written about in the last GRASSROOTS in areas like Lotus River and Heideveld are good examples. Services like this are needed to strengthen our organisations.

I hope that in the new year, we will make more time to stop and look back at our work. Have we looked at the mistakes and good things that we achieved? In order to better our organisation this is very necessary.

With these few thoughts, I wish CAHAC all the best for the coming year.

Long Live CAHAC
CAHAC SUPPORTER



Join civic unity is strength

'Een drag maak mag'

Baie mense met allerhande probleme het na my gekom om hulp. Ons mense het huislike probleme, geldelike probleme en die council wat nie ons huise wil regmaak nie. Ek het nie gemaak dat ons 'n organisasie in ons gebied het nie.

Maar op 'n dag het 'n vrou wat Grassroots

verkoop met my gepraat. Die vrou het aan die civic behoort. Sy het my baie bly gemaak toe sy my vertel dat daar 'n metode is om ons probleme op te los.

Deur saamstaan het sy aan my gesê en alles regkry. Sy het my vertel dat die civic daar is om ons te help om ons probleme op te los.

vir ons die krag en die wysheid om ons probleme op te los. Ek het toe ook 'n member van die civic geword en ook baie van my vriende met probleme daarheen verwys.

Ons organisasie is nog jonk en het nog baie probleme, maar laat ons almal saamstaan om hierdie saamleer op te los.

Eendrag maak mag.
Mrs Marks
Steenberg

T.M.
Kensington

Lym
invites
soccer fans

Dear Grassroots

The Soccer Team of the Lansdowne Youth Movement would like to play against other youth groups.

The last match we played was against the Kensington Faceron Youth Association in Lansdowne. Our visitors beat us 2 - 1.

After the match both youth groups' members each had a plate of curry which was made by one of our members. We spoke about our youths. A LYM member played the guitar and we sang Bob Marley's "Redemption Song"

The results of the matches are not important to us. It is the chance to share ideas that is.

We would like youth movements to write to the secretary or contact either Gustav Bock at 770856 or Gregory April at 774657 to arrange a match.

Yours in the struggle
The soccer committee
LYM

Dear Grassroots,

My Daddy was a fisherman and my Mommy worked in the fish factories. They had five children.

In those days things were not as expensive as today. But still there were problems, my parents used to get very little money at that time.

They worked hard but have nothing. They could not save any money because of the high cost of living.

Only now because the factory workers and fishermen have joined the Food and Canning Workers Union are wages increasing.

When I got married six years ago I moved into a Council house. Then I could see the expenses of living in a rented house. Electricity, rent and maintenance we must pay for.

We are not satisfied with how things are. At that time we used to think "What can we do" we must just accept.

The Hout Bay Action Committee was formed by the people of Hout Bay this year. Some people are under the wrong impression. They think that the Action Committee has got to do with politics. My husband is a deacon in the church and that is why he was a bit against it.

Some people still look at the Action

Committee and think "What can they do to get things right here?"

My husband advised me to go to the Action Committee meetings to see for myself. When I came there by hearing all the peoples ideas I was quite interested.

I could see that it is actually going to be a help for us if we all stand together, like the workers have stood together in the Union.

In the Action Committee all the members

speak out and share their ideas on how to solve the many, many problems in our community. I can see that the more members that join the Action Committee, the stronger it will be.

My message to the people of Hout Bay is to join the Action Committee. What we must do is to show our people that Unity is Strength.

M. Nicholas
Hout Bay Harbour

Hoedam is ons arm?



Liewe Grassroots

My naam is John. Ek is 10 jaar oud en is in st 3C. Ek lees Grassroots, want my ouers koop dit. Ek hou van Grassroots lees, maar sommige stories kan ek nie verstaan nie.

Ek wil vir julle 'n storie vertel. Ek het vir my pa gevra waar hy werk toe sê hy by 'n kar regmaker plek in Parow. Toe vra ek watter werk doen hy toe sê hy 10 kare 'n dag. Toe vra ek weer

wat is die waarde van elke kar toe sê hy naby R60,00.

My maak elke dag R600,00 vir die baas en hy werk vyf dae 'n week en hy maak elke week 3000,00. Dit is baie geld.

Toe vra ek hom hoekom hy verdien toe sê hy R75,00. Toe vra ek hom of die baas hom help wanneer hy werk. Is jy mal? Hy is die baas en hy werk nie. Ons werk!!!

Maar dit is nie reg

nie, want as jy my pa se R75,00 afterk van R3000,00 dan bly daar R2925,00 vir die baas en hy doen niks nie en my pa kry net R75,00 vir ons almal in die huis.

Daarom bly ons arm en die baas kan mooi kare ry en sy kinders kan alles kry en muskiers gaan hulle ook onse baase wees sonder om te werk.

Is dit Kapitalisme?

John(Belhar)

Thinking about the future

I am a labourer with Std. 6. I don't want to be a labourer all my life because the bosses they don't care about labourers.

I was thinking about the future. I was think about going to the army to find a future. I was thinking about a house, security and comfort for my family.

But when I realized the situation in which our people are divided in and the way "die Boere" treat our people, I then realized that it is hopeless to go and fight for that which we don't know about.

Why must we go and fight for a land which is not ours, a land which

M.
Hout Bay Harbour

forefathers, a land which is governed and controlled by a white minority?

Why must we go and fight for a land in which we have no future?

Now I realize that going to the army means that our brains and our energy are going to be used against our own people.

Now I realize that I should rather use my energy and brains to work for my people and with my people in the struggle against "die Boere".

We the oppressed should unite in our struggle for our future.

Unity is Strength.

Some people still look at the Action

was stolen from our



Only poor bear burden

THERE has always been unemployment in South Africa. Even in the boom periods, thousands of workers could not get jobs. Now things are getting worse. We are in a recession, and the problems are just beginning to bite.

Every day workers are sent packing. They are told to leave their jobs and begin the soul-destroying task of trying to find new work. Many young students cannot get jobs after years at school. Early-morning queues of desperate people looking for jobs, get longer and longer. Yet there is no end in sight. The problem will be in our communities for a long time.

There is a recession in South Africa. There is a sales slump on the market. Trade is slack and overseas countries do not want to buy South African goods. So factories lie idle and machines are still, while people who would like to earn a living must sit around and wait.

It is only the poor who bear the burden of unemployment. It is the

ordinary workers who get laid off, for whom vacancies are closed. The reason is clear. As one worker said: "If we do not have a say, how can we expect to get jobs?"

In good times the bosses get rich. They make huge profits, some of which is spent on luxuries such as swimming-pools or expensive buildings such as the Civic Centre.

But when trade is slack, the bosses forget all about the people who worked for them in the past. The bosses forget who made the good times possible.

The bosses simply see the workers as a cost that they must get rid of to keep up their profits. They cut costs with no feeling for the human effects. Throughout the world, the workers are paying for the bad times.

In South Africa, companies such as Anglo-American and Federale Volks own many factories and businesses. It is no problem to them to close down some of these factories.

The big companies also often prefer to use machinery rather than workers. It is cheaper for them to replace hundreds of workers with machines that can do their jobs. Machines are also more reliable - they do not strike, nor do they get sick. Machines are also more reliable - they do not strike, nor do they get sick.

Of course, it is mostly blacks who lose their jobs. Blacks are often hired from technical training; it is hard to get a decent education. Skilled workers are imported from overseas.

Unemployment is here to stay - or so it seems. With the recession, things are getting worse. But workers know it is they who pay the price. So it is they who will have to fight for their right to work.

The people will have to rely on their own strength and resources. The economic system will never itself create the jobs people need. Workers under capitalism will always risk being thrown out the streets.

Dumped in community with no jobs

THE workers are like rubbish to the bosses. When they do not send our labour, they dump us in the community, without jobs and food...

And it is in the community that we suffer. Some of us are evicted from our homes. Our children go hungry. The youth turn to crime. Young people may join the apartheid army to die on the border.

The next two years will be very bad. Thousands of workers in the

Cape are told: "Sorry, there is no more work. We don't need you any more."

This the bosses call retrenchment. And it is happening at many factories.

So, this year will be a difficult festive season, with no spirit of Christmas for the unemployed.

And, unemployment and short-time will increase over the next two years. So community organisations will be tested.

The unemployment issue will show if our organisations can protect the community.

We spoke to one of our big organisations in Cape Town. It is called CAHAC, and stands for Cape Area Housing Action Committee. This is their view:

"We know that unemployment in South Africa is due to politics. But, the people are asking what we can do. The apartheid system is the fire.

Unemployment is only the smoke. But, how can we keep the smoke out of our eyes while we are fighting to get out the fire?"

CAHAC says to the people: discuss the unemployment problem. Ask your civic organisation to do something about it. Here are some ideas. Discuss it further.

SOUP KITCHENS: The churches and social workers give soup when there is a great unemployment. But, they come from outside to help us. And we depend on them. We cannot then easily stand on our own legs. Most our organisations give soup to the unemployed, and explain why they are poor and unemployed, asks CAHAC.

BUYING CO-OPS: In Worcester and Genadendal, the civic have co-ops. This is when a lot of families stand together to buy food and vegetables. In this way, the food is cheaper. So the community can benefit and the unemployed can buy food more cheaply.

Unemployment is

At the 10th time, says Cahac we must not fall in the trap of charity.

"All our projects must show how the capitalist system is to blame.

"We need to tackle unemployment in a political way, and yet do everything to keep the people together and fight the everyday problems of the people."

We must show that the government does not care about the people. They buy more guns every day. The money they spend on the army they must use for the unemployed.



The goldmine is gone, Ma. It is no better, you do want to help me."

At the union is standing up for the unemployed workers must talk to their shop-stewards because that will become worse next year.

Monica Capelo, worker on short-time.

GENERAL WORKERS UNION



IN July 1982, a cutback of work led to the retrenchment of 13 workers at a marine engineering firm (Trident). Workers are all members of the General Workers Union.

In a show of worker unity, workers with urban residence rights offered to accept retrenchment in the place of contract workers (contract workers would have been deported to the homelands without hope of finding jobs).

Workers of GWU at Durban Long (in Bellville) have agreed to go on unpaid leave for three months rather than be retrenched.

SOUTH AFRICAN ALLIED WORKERS UNION (SAAWU)



SAAWU won a retrenchment agreement at Dely metal plant in East London. After 1 200 workers went on strike, management agreed not to retrench workers. Instead workers would take one month's unpaid leave on a rotation system.

SAAWU has been trying to set up a union for the unemployed.

NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION



NAAWU has had retrenchment clauses in their agreements since the early 1970's.

A spokesman for the union said: "Unemployment is one of the evils of the capitalist system. When the economy is strong, it is the labour of the worker which produces high profits. But in a recession, it is the worker who suffers most."

"We do not think an unemployment benefit fund, using money of progressive trade unions, will work. We do not have the money to support such a relief fund."

NATIONAL UNION OF TEXTILE WORKERS



"We must not just fight to improve retrenchment procedures, but to understand the system," a spokesperson said. "Workers see that work is a right, not a privilege - their organised strength is the solution."

NUTW politicises its members about unemployment in a variety of ways: Publications, training seminars for shop-stewards, general meetings with members to discuss retrenchment. Shop stewards explain and discuss retrenchment at lunch breaks.

FOOD AND CANNING WORKERS UNION



"Retrenchments are used by the bosses to victimise union members," say organisers. In all agreements, the committee and the union try to include procedures on retrenchment including alternatives like unpaid leave, early retirement, bosses helping to find employment elsewhere. In some areas workers contribute to a fund that can be used for individual cases of hardship.

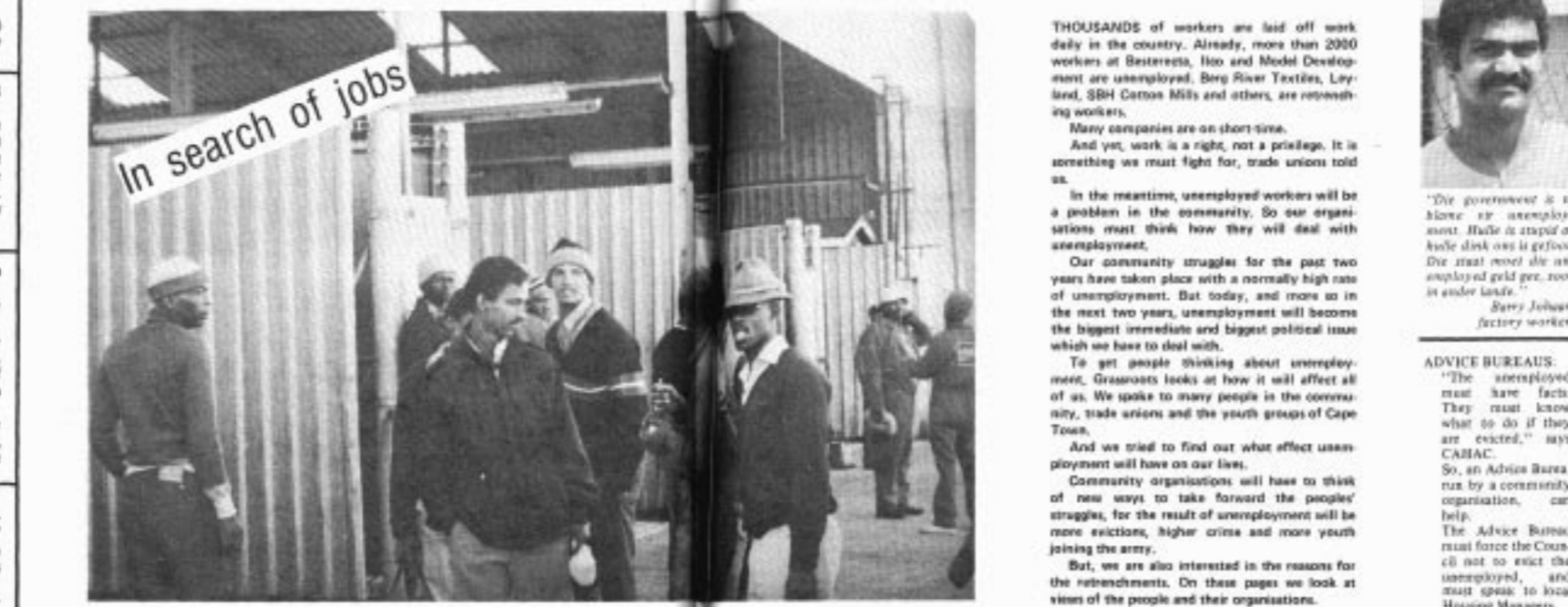
METAL AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION



MAWU sees retrenchment as a major issue - proposals to fight it include short-time, early retirement, with full pension and bonus, but is first out.

MAWU demands full reasons for each retrenchment. MAWU wants the bosses to set up a fund to help the workers through bad times.

THE RIGHT TO WORK



'Must belong to union'

"DURING these bad times when so many workers are losing their jobs it is a must to belong to a trade union that can protect us from too much hardship."

These are the words of a worker who has been out of a job for nearly five months.

A contract worker Mr Stanford Jarboe was retrenched in July from a large Cape Town engineering firm, Trident Marine.

Like thousands of others in the city his life has become a daily struggle of worrying about what his children will eat, how he will pay the rent and, because he is a contract worker, whether he will be allowed to stay in Cape Town.

He was one of 13 workers retrenched from Trident. But of those 13 there were only two contract workers.

Essen others, who had rights to stay permanently in the city, volunteered to be retrenched to save other contract workers from having to return to a life of starvation in the homelands.

The workers, all members of the General Workers' Union, negotiated retrenchment with management when they learnt that employers had plans to retrench some of them.

One of the workers who had volunteered to

EVERY year thousands leave school to look for work. But thousands are already without jobs and many more are losing their jobs. Where will our youth get jobs?

Youth groups are beginning to feel the effects of unemployment and are discussing the causes and effects of unemployment. Grassroots spoke to youth in Elites River and Mitchell's Plain.

We found that young people are becoming desperate and many are turning to crime in despair. Family relations become strained and young people become disillusioned and instead because they cannot contribute to the household income.

Some young people

Unemployment strikes at the youth

are turning towards the army as an alternative. One youth, Fanie Hendricks, said: "Dit ul etradit wie ons army toe te gaan. Hulle ul 'n man 'n living daar kange."

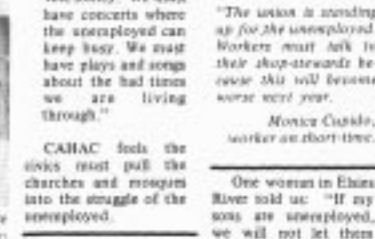
But most young people had different views. "I won't go to the army because it is legal murder. You are used to kill people and could also get killed," said Patrick Abruhan of Elites River.

Leon Daniels said: "What's the use of fighting together on the border, but in the community you can't be together."

Leonard Daniels said: "Our wages and living conditions differ. Why should I support an unjust system like apartheid?"

"People who go to the army are stupid. He should regard them as sell-outs. They betray their own people," said James Abruhan, also of Elites River.

Members of the Mitchell's Plain Youth Movement's branch in Tafelsig also expressed their views on unemployment.



The union is standing up for the unemployed workers must talk to their shop-stewards because that will become worse next year.

Monica Capelo, worker on short-time.



"My main point is dit die meeste word afgedank deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Regering. Dit is 'n slegte manier om te werk te stop."

Leon David, student from Elites River.



To the trade unions, CAHAC says: "Let us join hands and fight the system which causes unemployment. The unemployment issue shows we are organising the same people."

"Our went nie waarvoor ons afgedank is nie. Sommige het gesê, maar daar is net gne daar is nie werk nie," said Collin.

Felicity added: "Dis nou bonussyd daeres word die reuse afgesit. Die base wil nie betaal nie."

Enaice said: "Die grifboos is grootloos. Hulle is nie bereid om die mens te help nie."

"Ours firm het 'n union, maar die union is baie partydig. Selfs die wage inspektor word ookkoop," concluded Allan.

GENERAL WORKERS UNION

IN July 1982, a cutback of work led to the retrenchment of 13 workers at a marine engineering firm (Trident). Workers are all members of the General Workers Union.

SAAWU won a retrenchment agreement at Dely metal plant in East London. After 1 200 workers went on strike, management agreed not to retrench workers.

NAAWU has had retrenchment clauses in their agreements since the early 1970's. A spokesman for the union said: "Unemployment is one of the evils of the capitalist system. When the economy is strong, it is the labour of the worker which produces high profits. But in a recession, it is the worker who suffers most."

NUTW politicises its members about unemployment in a variety of ways: Publications, training seminars for shop-stewards, general meetings with members to discuss retrenchment. Shop stewards explain and discuss retrenchment at lunch breaks.

"Retrenchments are used by the bosses to victimise union members," say organisers. In all agreements, the committee and the union try to include procedures on retrenchment including alternatives like unpaid leave, early retirement, bosses helping to find employment elsewhere. In some areas workers contribute to a fund that can be used for individual cases of hardship.

MAWU sees retrenchment as a major issue - proposals to fight it include short-time, early retirement, with full pension and bonus, but is first out. MAWU demands full reasons for each retrenchment. MAWU wants the bosses to set up a fund to help the workers through bad times.

The workers, all members of the General Workers' Union, negotiated retrenchment with management when they learnt that employers had plans to retrench some of them. One of the workers who had volunteered to

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CAPE AREAS HOUSING ACTION COMMITTEE



Strong community spirit in L'Hill

A STRONG working committee was elected at the Lavender Hill Residents Association's first Annual General Meeting.

The committee of 23 will serve the community for the coming

year.

The meeting, was very lively although the attendance was not as good as was expected.

Throughout the meeting people loudly applauded the speakers. They also clapped for a woman who jumped up and said she would now tell all her friends that there was an Association for all residents of Lavender Hill. She said she did not know about the Association before.

From the way the meeting went, one could feel that a strong community spirit is developing in the area.

Houtbay works towards unity

THE Hout Bay Action Committee has fought against many problems in the Harbour area.

The Committee has also worked towards unity between the churches, trade unions, youth, sport clubs and women's organisations in the area.

The committee has its meetings on Tuesday nights between 8 and 10 p.m. All residents are welcome to attend and join the committee for united action on the problems facing the community.

Homes repaired

CITY Council has finally started repairing peoples broken homes in the Kensington/Factreton area.

Baths, sinks and other things are being replaced. This follows the demand by the Kensington and Factreton Ratepayers and Tenants Association for people's homes to be maintained.

The Association held its Annual General Meeting on November 22. A number of new

Belhar sportsfield

THE Belhar Civic Association has sent a delegation to the Divisional Council about the sportsfield in the area.

Their demand is that the Sportsfield be built in a more central place, so that people can reach it easily from Old and New Belhar.

They are waiting for a reply from Divisional Council.

News in brief news in brief

Advice office for Worcester

MORE and more people are coming to the advice office opened by the Worcester Housing Action Committee last month. The office is at 33A Le Suer Street.

Three members of the organisation work in the office between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. from Mondays to Fridays and between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

Others from the Action Committee help whenever they can. "We have had a good response. Every day up

to 6 people with various problems come to see us. More and more people are coming in every day.

"Unemployed residents and workers who are fired also come to the office to seek advice. Residents with housing problems visit us to look for solutions.

"Residents who were involved in organisations in the past also visit us at the office," the Action Committee member said.

But the people working in the office are also still learning. They do some of their preparation from reading the Grassroots advice pages.

Parents' evening

THE Hanover Park Civic Youth Wing is having their third annual Parents Evening on Wednesday 15

December 1982. The event will be held at the Hanover Park Civic Centre.

Party for old people

IF YOU would like to spend an afternoon with other old people in Lotus River, come to the Saint Clements Hall on December 16 at 12 noon.

Lunch will be served and entertainment provided until 4 p.m. Phone Mrs Williams at 734575 for any information. The party is organised by the Lotus River/Grassy Park Residents Association.

Parents of present and former youth members are invited to the event, where they are entertained by the youth.

Items planned for the evening are: a sketch on retrenched workers, poetry reading with music, jazznastics, group singing and the highlight of the evening, a play by the Community Theatre Company called "Living the Act".

There will also be speakers from the Youth Wing as well as from the Civic Association.



BBSK residents discuss problems.

BBSK workshop

ON Saturday afternoon 13 November, the BBSK (Bokmakierie, Bridgetown Silverton and Kewtown) Residents Association held a workshop to discuss the problems tenants experienced and how these problems can be solved.

The workshop was organised by the workshop committee of the BBSK Residents Association.

Tenants used the first half of the workshop to discuss the increasing gap between wages, pensions, etc.

and the cost of living.

After a discussion on maintenance, the session was ended off with a film show.

The second session followed after two breaks for snacks. BBSK's slogan was used during the discussion. The slogan reads: Workers and tenants in your factories and townships unite to defend your living standards.

Tenants have requested more workshops like this because it helped them to discuss many problems and think about it.

HOUSES, SECURITY, COMFORT

ADVICE

Who will get your belongings

THE one event that is certain to happen at some stage or other in our lives, is that we die. That is, of course, the end of your worries. What concerns us here is that friends and relatives pass away and we are left with the problem of winding up the dead person's affairs. Most people go to a lawyer, but it is not always necessary and often expensive to go to a lawyer.

All your belongings form your Estate when you die. The Estate has assets and liabilities. What are assets? — these are the things that

you own. And your liabilities? — what you owe. A car is an asset and a debt a liability.

Should someone you know die, then you should go to the Master's Office, 15th Floor, Metlife Building, Roeland Street, Cape Town, to report the death.

If there is a Last Will and Testament signed by the deceased this should be lodged with the Master within 14 days of the death. If you fail to do so, it is a criminal offence.

Someone has to be appointed by the Master of the Supreme Court to handle the affairs of the Estate. Normally he will have to give security for payment of the debts of the Estate, unless he is exempted in a Will from having to give security i.e. put up money to the amount of the debts.

The person appointed by the Master to handle the Estate is called the Executor. If it is a small Estate, e.g. the property is less than R15 000,00, then the Master will

appoint a member of the family to handle the Estate.

The person appointed by the Master will have to draw up an Account in which all the assets are totalled up and the debts subtracted, leaving a balance which will go to the heirs. The heirs will have to acknowledge that they have received what is due to them.

Only then is the estate completed and if the Master is satisfied, he will release the Executor or the Master's representative from his or her responsibility.

Making your will

IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE A WILL?

IT IS important to have a will. In your will you state your wishes about what happens to the things you own after you are dead.

If you have no will, what happens to your belongings after your death? The law decides this; and what it decides, might not be what you wish.

A person who makes a will is called a TESTATOR if he is a man, and a TESTATRIX if she is a woman. All the belongings and possessions you leave when you die, form your ESTATE.

If you do not have a will there can be problems with your estate e.g. you may have a bank account. If you don't make a will saying who must get the money in your bank account, the account can't be used for a long time.

WHO CAN MAKE A WILL?

The law says that every person who is 16 and over may make a will if at the time of making the will, this person understands what it means to make a will and what the results of making a will are.

HOW DO YOU MAKE A WILL?

A will should be in paragraphs which say simply and clearly what the TESTATORS/TESTATRIX'S wishes are.

On this page is an example of

LAST WILL

I, the undersigned, (1) _____
 (2) unmarried/married within community of property to (3) _____
 declare the following to be my last will.

1. I revoke all former testamentary dispositions made by me.
2. I appoint (4) _____
 as executor of my will and I exempt him/her from furnishing security. I empower my executor to sell assets of my estate by private treaty as well as by public auction.
3. As heir to my estate I appoint (5) _____

IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand at
 this _____ day of _____, 1982,
 in the presence of the subscribing witnesses, I the Testator and the said witness all being present together at the same time and signing our names in the presence of one another.

AS WITNESSES:

1.
2.

TESTATOR/TESTATRIX

such a will.

WHAT IS AN EXECUTOR?

This is a person who manages the dead persons belongings. He

may be appointed in the will. The executor collects the belongings, pays the debts and gives the heirs what is left. The executor handles money

and must be chosen carefully.

The heir is the person who inherits. You can have more than one heir.

WHO CANNOT BENEFIT

FROM A WILL?

The following people cannot be left anything in a will.

- (a) Someone who is a witness to a will.
- (b) Someone who is asked by the Testator
- (c) Someone who is asked by the Testator/Testatrix to sign a will.
- (d) The husbands/wives or dependants of the people in (a) and (b).
- (e) Someone who writes the will, unless the Testator/Testatrix says in the will after signing it that this person can inherit.
- (f) Someone who forces the Testator/Testatrix to leave him/her something in the will.
- (f) Someone who has wrongly caused the death of the Testator/Testatrix.

CAN YOU CHANGE YOUR WILL?

Yes you can. A will can be changed or added to at any time, by writing out the changes and another page and adding to the will. This is called a codicil.

A Testator/Testatrix can even scrap his/her will.

WHO DRAWS UP WILLS

WILLS are often drawn up by Lawyers. They charge a fee of R35,00. A will does not have to be drawn up by a Lawyer.

Any person can draw up his own will, but a will is valid only if it follows all the rules

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Advice looks at aged

Genadendal old age survey

You don't need to be an expert

IN the last issue, GRASSROOTS reported on a project with the old people of Genadendal.

Many of our readers have asked how the Genadendal people did their survey. So, GRASSROOTS interviewed some of the people who were involved with the project.

Why did the Genadendal people decide on a community project?

From talking to small groups of people in church, in the shops, and at work, it looked like many old people were unhappy about

their health and their lives.

So, what happened next?

A group of people from the community got together and talked about it.

They decided to form a committee, and they invited all those who were interested to join their committee. On the committee there were young people and old people, men and women, because everybody was interested.

But how could the committee make decisions for the old people?

No they didn't. They felt that they had to find out what the old people needed most. It wouldn't be right to decide for them.

So, the committee sat down and said: "We all know some old people. Let us make a list of problems we think they may have, and then take the list to them in the form of questions."

If they didn't like this, they could have asked any nonsense question, isn't it?

No. With every question they said: "If we get an answer, what are we

going to do with it. If the answers don't help us to help the old people, we must throw the question out."

And that is what they did. Without knowing it, this committee was designing a

Survey

When they knew what questions to ask, how did they go to the old people?

The committee divided Genadendal into different areas, and two members of the committee were sent to each area.

They visited every house in every street, and spent a long time

talking to the old people.

They asked them questions like, "Wie gaan haal jou pensioen by die poskantoor?"

They knew that that was a good question, because if there was nobody to fetch the pension, the committee would be able to help by finding people to do this.

They also asked, "Wie sny jou toonnaels" and "Wie help jou met die huiswerk?"

These were also good questions, because if there were difficulties with these jobs, perhaps the committee could organise the youth to

WE asked people whether there were old people active in their community organizations. Other than the project at Grassy Park, nothing seems to be going on. Why is this?

- Are they weak and helpless?
- Are they unable to teach us anything?
- Are they a nuisance?
- Do young people think old people are responsible for the present situation in our country?

It is true that some old people are weak because of illness. It is true that some old people have not been active in the struggle. It is also true that many are lonely and alone because people avoid or ignore them. But this does not mean that they have nothing to offer. Can we afford to ignore them?

Stories in past issues of Grassroots have shown how much those who are now old have sacrificed. Their experiences can teach us. Remember how the women marched to Pretoria to demand their rights? And Mrs Silanga who to this day refuses to carry a pass? These are the people who today are called old.

Talking to old people it seems obvious that they want to be involved. They have a lot to offer. They would like to share their experiences.

In these pages there are some issues around which old people could be involved in community organizations.

help the old people.

What did the committee do with all the forms? There must have been hundreds!

When all the old people had been visited, the committee put all their forms together into areas.

They took a big piece of newspaper. They counted all the answers that people gave, and wrote it down

on the paper.

They did this with every question in each area. So, now they know what the problems are in every area, and they can decide to organise around the problems.

Perhaps they can do this in house meetings, where the committee and the old people of one area can meet and talk about the problems over a cup of tea.

'Denied our basic right'

"WE HAVE been denied our basic rights in South Africa. We see brutal repression all around us, like with the recent pass raids. The government also wants

to divide our organisations with the Presidents Council proposals. "We know that our only weapon against all this is democratic organisations. The people

of Kensington/Factretion have shown the value of organisation in recent months. We had forced Council to change their decision on Afdakkies and the Valuation Court decision on land values in the area.

"This weapon, organisation must be strengthened."

This was said by Mr Wilfred Rhodes in his address to the Annual General Meeting of the Kensington/Factretion Ratepayers and Tenants Association on November 22.

ber 22.

The A.G.M. was attended by more than 150 ratepayers and tenants as well as members of the Kensington/Factretion Youth Association and the Kensington branch of the United Womens Organisation. The Youth and U.W.O. brought with them messages of support for the Civic.

The guest speaker was Mr May Prins who stressed the importance of unity through organisations.

"Through this we can achieve relief from the harsh conditions of life imposed on us by the State through the City Council," he said.

MCA's fight brings results

THE City Council has started repairing some maisonettes on Manenberg, after a delegation from the Manenberg Civic Association went to see them about the problem.

The delegation went to see the City Engineer on Monday, November 22 about the state of the new maisonettes in the Duinefontein area of Manenberg.

They took complaint sheets from tenants in the area and a memorandum. They demanded that the Council see to the necessary repairs immediately.

About four months ago, two members of the MCA were part of a group of tenants who were moved into a maisonette scheme built for the Council by the firm L.T.A.

They brought complaints to their local branch meeting of the civic.

"Our house is badly finished off. The doors don't open or close properly, the plugs don't work, a window pane and handle are broken. There are holes in the walls and the floor covering has bubbles all over. To make things worse, the maisonettes are built on an open field which must have been used as a rubbish

dump because there's piles of vullis in the backyard.

"We complained to the local rent office three times and eventually they told us that we had to do the repairs ourselves", one tenant complained.

Other members in the branch who have lived in maisonettes built by L.T.A. for over a year, also complained and said that they were still waiting on the

Repairs

The branch decided to do a survey of the new maisonettes.

Many of the complaints that people made were the same, and all people who had been to the Council were still waiting for them to come. A meeting was then called in the area.

At the meeting the tenants decided that they had to stand together and demand that the council do initial repairs.

Complaint sheets were filled in and a delegation elected to see the city engineer.

He told the delegation that although the tenants had six months in which to lodge complaints, the council did not have to

see that these repairs were done within six months. But he did say that the local housing office was responsible for taking complaints and that the council would see that the most urgent repairs were done as soon as possible, and the costs deducted from the amount the Council owed L.T.A.

He promised to reply to the Civic in writing within 14 days.

He also said that the MCA complaint sheets would be accepted as legitimate and used to assess which complaints were serious.

On the Wednesday and Thursday after the delegation's visit to the Council, L.T.A. workers went to all the new maisonettes and gave tenants complaint forms. A few tenants even had their damages repaired.

One of the workers told a member of the Civic, "Dis nie die Council wat ons wakker gemaak het nie. Dit was die Civic."

"We must fight for better housing for all tenants."

• On Monday, November 29 the L.T.A. workers were busy doing repairs to many of the maisonettes.

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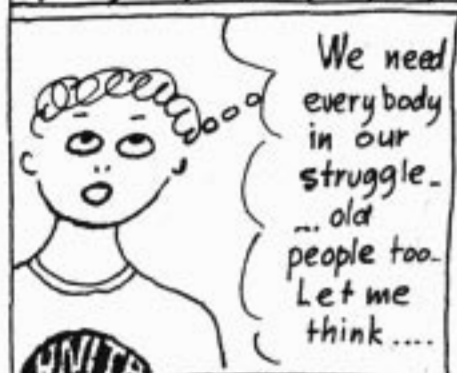


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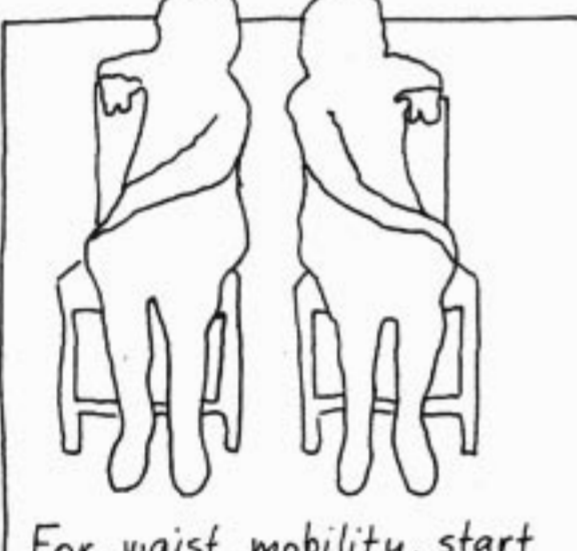
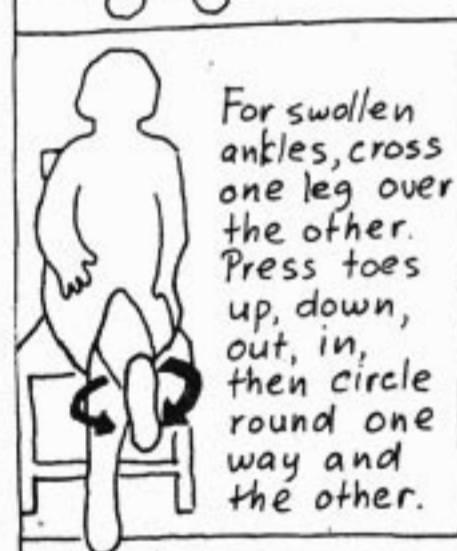
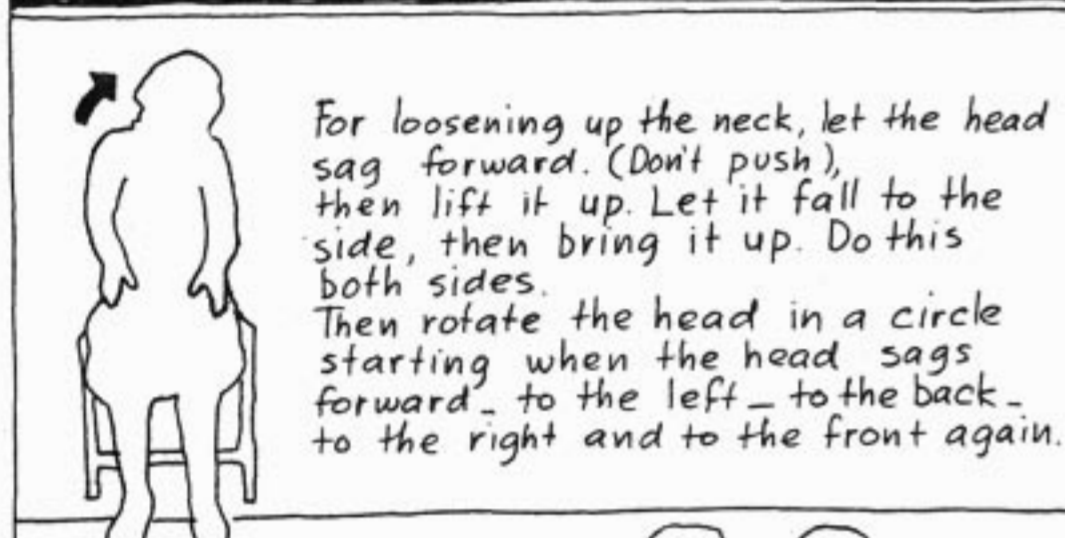
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ADVICE



Ann made a plan. She visited many people to find out whether they were interested in starting a keep fit class. She looked in some books for suitable exercises. She knew that older people should not strain themselves.

HERE ARE SOME EXERCISES SHE DID WITH THEM ↓



OUMA IS FIT TO ORGANISE

AS WE grow older, many of us suffer from stiff and painful joints. We can't do the things we want to do.

This is more of a problem for people who are overweight. Why? The extra weight that the knees and hips have to carry, causes an extra strain on these and other joints. Sometimes the loss of one kilogram of bodyweight may relieve the hip joint of three kilograms of pressure.

It is best not to rely on the medicines that doctors give out for this problem. Some of these medicines are very strong and can have harmful effects, such as stomach ulcers.

Wrapping sore, stiff, creaking joints in newspaper does no harm and may even help some who suffer this problem. It is always good to keep stiff joints warm.

Exercises *do* help. They are necessary to keep the aching joints moving. NEVER STRAIN. Most exercises can be done sitting in a chair. It is only for exercising the hip joint that you have to stand and hold a chair.

Daily exercises can help us to lead a more active and pain-free life.

Few benefits for our old

THERE are not many housing or transport allowances for old people.

Both City Council and Divisional Council say that old people can have downstairs flats if they want them.

But they have to wait until one becomes empty and this can take a long time.

The City Council allows people over 60 years old to have a house even if they don't have children ('dependents') living with them.

The City Council gives a small rent reduction to some people who get a pension. Pensioners are charged 'subeconomic' rents if their pensions are less than R200 per month.

Everybody else has to earn under R150 per month to be charged

subeconomic rentals.

Divisional Council does not give a rent allowance to old people - they are treated the same as everyone else.

On City Tramways buses, people who have a pension from the government are charged 10c on pension day if they have to catch the bus to fetch their pension.

On the trains anyone over 60 years old can get a "40-off" card which means that they can get a reduction of 40 per cent on all rail fares.

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"Better buses for Belhar" - Belca



Train fares up again

BELHAR residents are fighting for a proper bus service and lower bus fares in their area.

At a mass meeting more than 300 residents decided to send a delegation to City Tramways to state the demands of the people. The meeting was called by the Belhar Civic Association (BELCA).

The delegation went on Tuesday, November 30. They showed City Tramways a survey which found that most people would prefer to use the bus if the service was direct.

At the moment, most people have to

take more than one bus if they want to travel anywhere out of the area.

"This means we have to spend more money and it is also very inconvenient," a Belca spokesperson said.

The Belca delegation was not satisfied after the meeting with City Tramways.

"It appears as if they are trying to make us tired. But we will not give up. We will carry on fighting for a proper bus service," a spokesperson said.

At the mass meeting many people signed a petition for the proper

bus service. The people said that apartheid was one of the causes of problems like poor bus services.

In their survey, Belca found that most people living in Belhar worked in Parow, Tygerberg, Cape Town, Elsie's River and Bell-

ville. At the moment 67 percent of the people travelled by train while 10 percent travelled by bus. Belca's survey found that 15 percent would prefer to travel by train and 80 percent by bus if they had a direct service.

About 74 percent of all pupils travelled by train and 16 percent by bus. However, 86 percent would prefer to travel by bus.

Buses brought pupils closer to their schools and were more convenient during the rainy season.

NINE months ago train fares went up by 15%. Now from 1 January 1983 the fares will go up again by 10%. This was announced by the Minister of Transport Services.

When fares went up 9 months ago return tickets on all routes

were scrapped by the Railways.

This means that we have to buy two single tickets which cost more than a return. The price of these single tickets were also increased then by 15%.

Now we are also faced with another increase of 10%. The biggest increase will be on the Cape Town - Mitchells Plain route.

A third class weekly along this route will be increased from R2 to R2,40.

A third class monthly will be increased from R8,70 to R10.

The same government that forced our people into Mitchells Plain through the Group Areas Act now expects us to carry this burden out of our low wages.

All the increases on the different routes will add up to R350 000 per month for the Railways.



"We will carry on fighting for a proper bus service," says Belhar residents.

Civic dance

HANOVER Park Civic Association is holding a fund-raising dance on the 10th December 1982.

We are asking organisations to support

our effort. For tickets/further information, contact A Fritz of 22-7803 (work) or 638-3870 (home).

Kinky Girl

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Join Elsie's River Youth

REACH one, Teach one. This is the motto of the Elsie's River Youth Movement.

The youth movement was formed in 1981 when young people from our area got together and decided it was their duty to help their community.

We realise we are only a small part of the community but believe that with the working together of all young people they can build a better community.

Many of our youth first started to think about having an organisation after the 1976 riots and the school boycotts in 1980. The riots and boycotts made



many people think about what was going on around them.

They then formed the Elsie's River Action Committee which represented all the high schools in Elsie's River.

During the exams, things were quiet for a while and some students lost interest. But in

1981 a few youth again got together and discussed the idea of forming a youth movement in the area. Soon after the Elsie's River Youth Movement was born.

The youth group is at present divided into three committees. These are the Community Committee, Educational Committee and a Sports and Recreational Committee.

We hope all young people from Elsie's River will see the need to join our body. We have a firm commitment to serve our people but this can only be done if we all work together to form a strong Youth Movement.

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MERRYDALE AVENUE, PORTLANDS

Our sounds of Africa Amampondo



THE magical rhythms of the bongo drums hold the audience spellbound. Their music is rich and earthy, and when it touches you, you become part of it. Their music expresses the feelings of Mother Africa with an intensity that no western music can capture. This is the music of Amampondo.

Amampondo is a group of street musicians from Langa, who are committed to the kind of music they grew up with. The music they play goes back centuries and is part of the rich cultural history of our people. It is essentially music by the people for the people. Once their audience get to know the traditional rhythms of their music they cannot help but join in.

Amampondo is five musicians and three dancers. They compose their own music, based on the traditional songs of their forefathers. They do not play western instruments at all. They rely only on the beautiful sounding instruments of traditional Africa. The instruments come from all over Africa. Their Marimbas are from Zimbabwe, akadindas from Uganda, bongos from Zimbabwe, Zambia and Kenya, mbiras from Zimbabwe, chopi xylophones from Mozambique and Africans-xylophones.

Their colourful costumes come from Swaziland and they also wear traditional bead jewellery.

The group started after being inspired by an open air concert held in Guguletu called 'The Sounds of Africa Return to the Town' about 18 months ago. They started playing in the streets of Langa with only one bongo drum. They then played in the streets of the city, where they exposed even more people to the earthy and traditional rhythms of their music.

Recently the group performed at the Culture and Resistance festival in Gaborone, Botswana. Here they played with artists like Hugh Masakela and Dollar Brand. The message to Amampondo from these great players were to 'stick to our kind of music, the music of the South of Africa'.

As Amampondo take their music to the people they intend play-

ing at schools all over the Cape Flats. They see this as a chance for them to learn more about their own culture while teaching children about our proud cultural heritage of music.

Instruments

The group hopes to become full time musicians next year. However at the moment they are struggling to get the instruments they need.

The group have always made themselves available to play at church and community functions. A few months ago, for example, they played a Missa Africana (African Mass) at the St. George's Cathedral.

They hope to perform at St. Francis in Langa during the month of December.



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It expresses the feelings of Mother Africa with an intensity that no western music can capture.
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THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Nkosi si'keke ' Afrika
 Male phakamis'phondo Iwayo
 Yiva nemithanazo
 yethu Nkosi si'kele
 Thina lusapho Iwayo. x 2

Woza moya
 Nkosi sikelela
 Nkosi sikelela
 Woza moya oyingcwele
 Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho Iwayo

Morena boloka sechaba saheso
 Ufedise dintwa le matswenye o x 2
 Osiboluke x 2
 Osiboluke morena siboluke
 Sechaba saheso
 Sechaba sa Afrika.
 Makube njalo x 2
 Kude kube nguna phakade x 2

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

God bless Africa
 Let her fame spread far and wide
 Hear our prayer
 May God bless us

Come, spirit, come
 Come, holy spirit
 Come bless us, her children
 May the Spirit remain with us.

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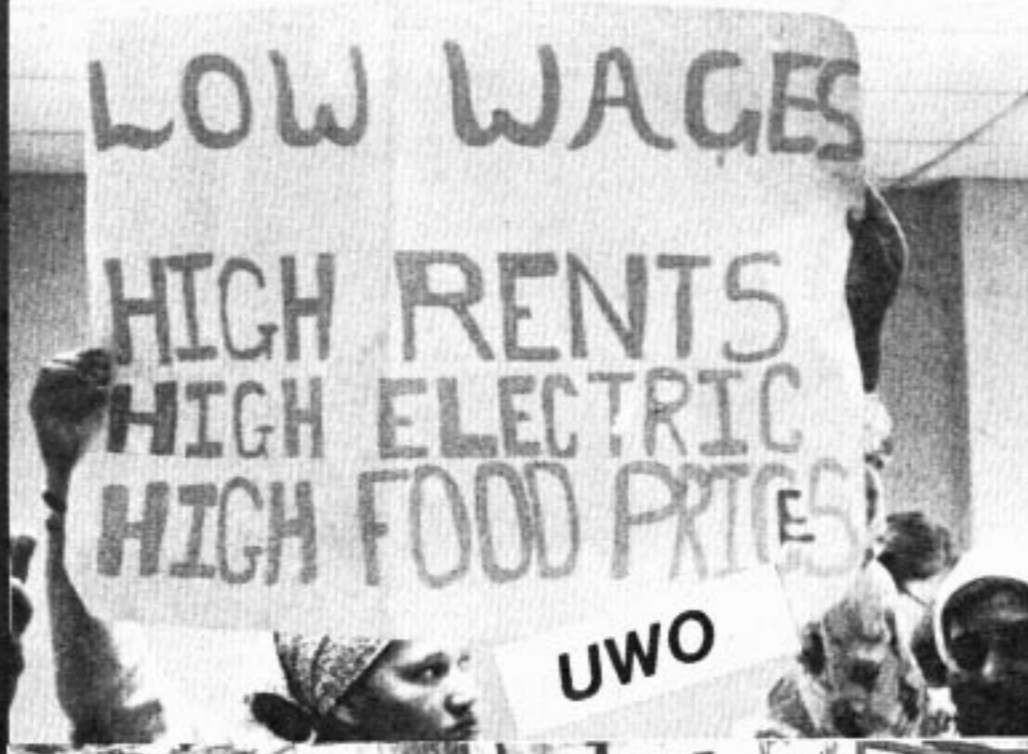
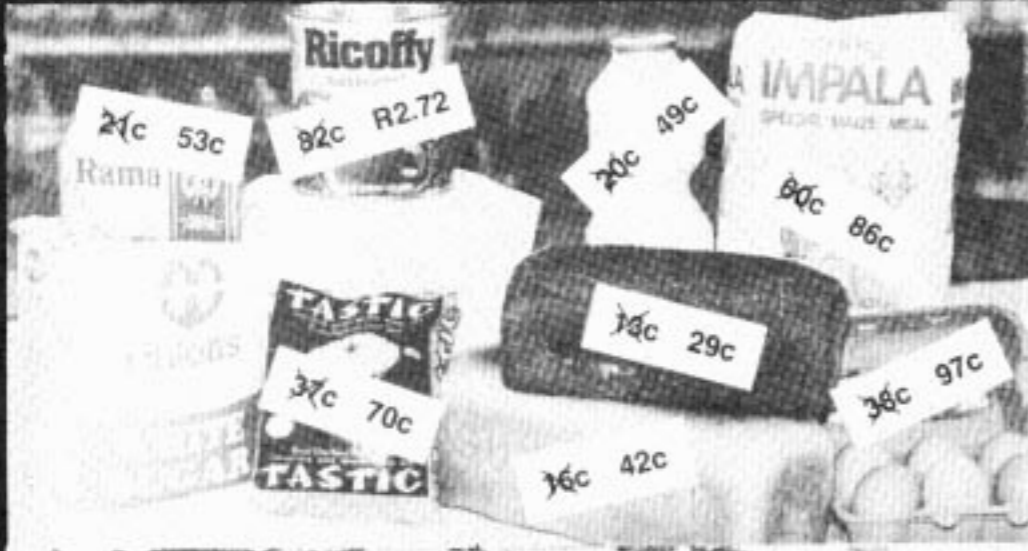
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We wish our customers well over
 the Festive Season

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YOUTH

GWU



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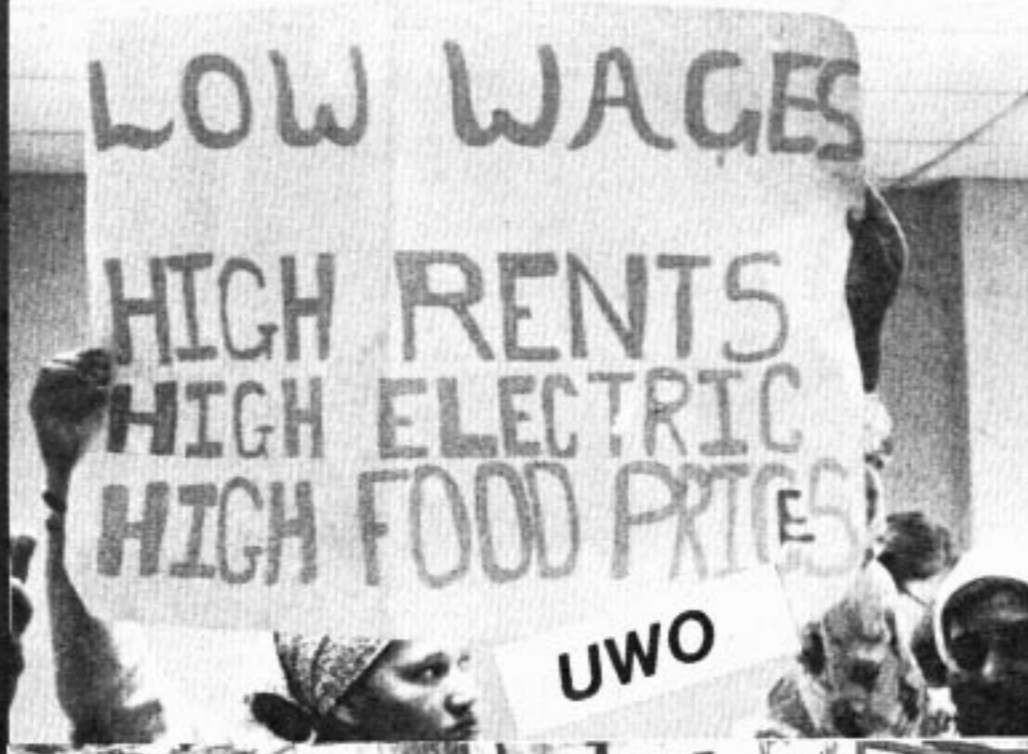
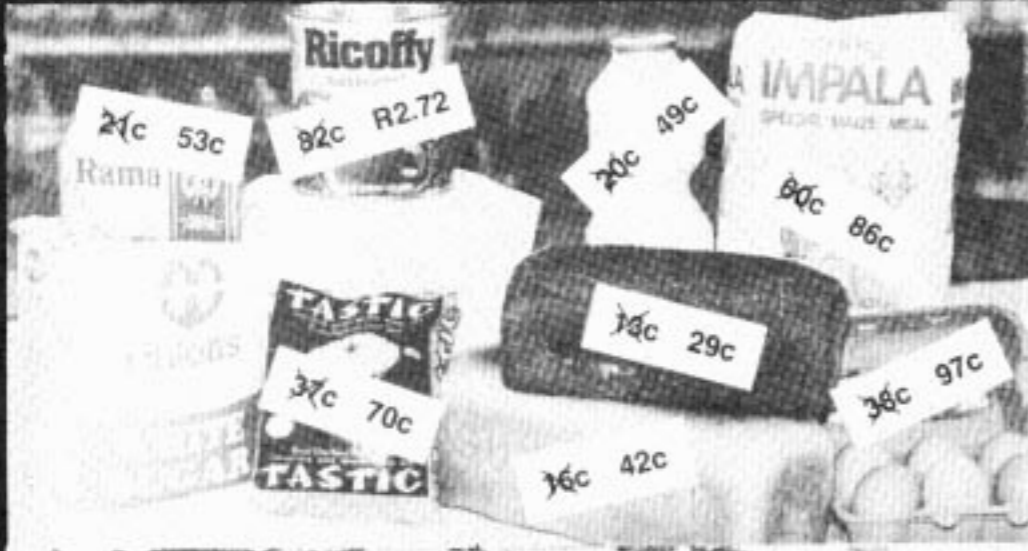
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AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL...



YOUTH



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