

WORK

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PROGRESS

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CROSSROADS
THE DESTRUCTION OF A SYMBOL

IN THIS ISSUE

Vigilantes in Natal
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Editorial

A number of articles originally planned for publication in this issue of WIP have been held over. This is not only because of the constraints of state of emergency regulations. WIP editors and contributors also felt that the continuation of some debates would not be constructive in the present political climate.

Actions taken in terms of the state of emergency have severely damaged WIP systems of distribution. The lateness of this issue is largely because of time spent on reconstituting distribution points. The editors trust readers will understand this inevitable rescheduling of production dates.

During the past two months an independent evaluator has been assessing the nature, function and content of WIP. This has involved a readership survey, as well as in-depth interviews with distributors and representatives of readership constituencies. The major findings and recommendations of the evaluator, as well as responses from the WIP collective, will be published in the next issue.

Many thanks to readers who responded to the survey questionnaire, and to distributors who gave up time to be interviewed.

Some subscribers, especially those living outside South Africa, have experienced problems in receipt of WIP. Copies are posted out to all subscribers, and non-receipt is due to postal interference. Systems to overcome this difficulty are currently under investigation.

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The nature of **Work In Progress**, which is to stimulate debate and present views on a wide range of issues, ensures that the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial collective.

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Popular Resistance and Popular Repression

Crossroads — The Destruction of a Symbol

Clashes in Crossroads earlier this year left thousands of squatter families homeless. JOSETTE COLE examines the roots of this conflict, arguing that the decision of progressive groups to align themselves with non-progressive squatter leaders resulted in a political tragedy.

During May and June of this year, one of the most brutal forced removals of squatter communities took place in the Cape Peninsula. In two separate, but related, para-military operations, 'wit-doeke' from Old Crossroads and nearby Site C in Khayelitsha, allegedly with SADF and SAP support, rid the area of the four most coherent and resistant squatter communities in the Peninsula - Nyanga Bush, Nyanga Extension, Portland Cement and KTC.

Along with their destruction went the image of Crossroads as a symbol of defiance and resistance to state strategies of removal; and the dream of progressives to incorporate Crossroads into their political movement.

What follows provides background to the recent conflict in the Crossroads complex and aims to stimulate debate on broader political issues confronting the progressive movement in the Cape Peninsula.

For political opponents of apartheid, the recent removals and pivotal role of 'wit-doeke' have been both a military and political defeat. Valuable lessons for future political practice and involvement in squatter struggles may be learned in the process of reflection and debate.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

Crossroads is the largest and longest-surviving African squatter community in

Josette Cole is a field worker for the Surplus People Project (Western Cape). Between 1978 and 1983, she worked in Crossroads as a community worker.

the Cape Peninsula. Specific traditions of resistance, organisation, and social control evolved in its 11-year existence. Any group hoping to influence the community politically must understand these traditions.

The original Crossroads squatters settled on the land bounded by Klipfontein Road, Landsdowne Road and Mahobe Drive. During the early years - 1975 to 1978 - the area was administered and controlled by three local committees - the Sizamile, Noxolo and Womens' committees. Under the Sizamile and Noxolo committees, a network of 'home-guards' and wardsmen dealt with localised disputes and issues of petty crime. These committees formed the basis of a local authority structure, operating independently of local state structures.

During these early years the community became something of a liberated zone in the midst of highly-controlled black townships. Crossroads was a place of opportunity for those with alternative economic and political projects. Conflict and internal power struggles did exist but, on the whole, residents felt part of the community decision-making process and a limited form of democracy operated.

The 1979 Crossroads 'reprieve' announced by then Minister of Co-operation and Development, Piet Koornhof, saw a change in the balance of forces in the squatter camp. Shifting state strategies towards Crossroads were the result of a combination of factors - community resistance; local and international support for the community's struggle; and a growing realisation on the part of 'verligte' Nationalists, the SADF and monopoly capital, that more sophisticated methods

were necessary to maintain control over the country's urban black population.

Within months of the Koornhof 'deal' - which provided for the establishment of a new township, and the division of the community into 'insiders' and 'outsiders' - a new political alliance sought control over Crossroads.

AN AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP

In August 1979, local authority fell under a new centralised body - the executive committee. Johnson Ngxobongwana was elected chairman and under his leadership bureaucratic and authoritarian tendencies became entrenched. In the period leading up to the elections, for example, both the Sizamile and Noxolo committees were arbitrarily dissolved. The 'home-guards' and wardsmen systems, formerly attached to both committee structures, now fell under the direct control of the executive, as did all former community structures, eg creches and schools.

The 1979 election was challenged by members of the Womens' and Sizamile committees, most of whom had been bypassed in the decision to centralise control in the community. Those who dissented soon found themselves marginalised targets of various forms of repression. Political control was to be maintained at all costs and, when necessary, 'dissidents' were physically removed by the community 'police'.

The pattern of coercive control was firmly established when, in November 1979, two former Sizamile supporters were hacked to death with pangas and knives.

Less than a year after being set up, divisions developed inside the executive committee. Power struggles between Ngxobongwana and vice-chairman Oliver Memani culminated in the executive dividing into two distinct groups.

In 1981, when other squatter groupings began to challenge the state for the right to live and work in the Western Cape, Crossroads had already become the battleground of a small bureaucratic elite.

Despite these divisions, Crossroads remained a crucial community in the politics of the Cape Peninsula. While power struggles continued to plague Crossroads, other groups were eager to

form alliances with its leadership, especially Ngxobongwana. The struggle for political control of Crossroads intensified.

PROGRESSIVE GROUPS MOBILISE

Political organisation and mobilisation took root in the Western Cape in the early 1980s. But the community-supported campaigns - ie schools, bus and meat boycotts - which mobilised black townships, largely by-passed Old and New Crossroads.

Direct political intervention in squatter community struggles by progressive groups began with the Nyanga Bush struggle of 1981. At first the Nyanga Bush committee rejected the support of a number of community organisations and trade unions. A lack of experience, dearth of resources, and the absence of long-standing relationships with the squatters on the part of political activists, prevented any meaningful intervention by the embryonic progressive movement at this time. But in 1982, when the squatters divided into two groups - the Sand Dune squatters and Cathedral Group - progressive organisations were able to establish a political presence in the squatter camps. However, the Cathedral Group, led by Mali Hoza, consistently rejected the support of the progressive movement.

The first real attempt to incorporate Old Crossroads and Ngxobongwana into progressive community politics took place in 1982 during the establishment of a civic association in the Western Cape. After meetings with Old Crossroads' leadership and residents, Ngxobongwana was elected its first chairman.

Old and New Crossroads were now formally part of the progressive movement in the Cape Peninsula, but this remained a nominal alliance. Internal politics remained the primary concern of squatter community leadership (and many residents), rather than broader political issues.

Squatter leadership was also intent on accumulating capital. From the beginning of the 1980s, community 'taxes' escalated in Old Crossroads. Residents were expected to pay for some leaders' salaries, Ngxobongwana's cars, lawyers'



The 'wit-doeke', allegedly with SADF and SAP support, smashed the squatter communities in one of the most brutal forced removals

fees, and a variety of other 'community' needs. Crossroads soon developed the reputation of being one of the most expensive black communities in which to live.

Struggles between Memani and Ngxobongwana for overall political and economic control of the area eventually erupted in a battle between their supporters in April 1983. The strength of Ngxobongwana and his 'police' was evident - the eight men who died in the conflict were all related to the Memani 'committee'. A significant feature of the April conflict was the presence of men wearing 'wit-doeke'.

CONTINUING THE ALLIANCE

In spite of repressive political practices in Old Crossroads, progressive organisations continued to seek an alliance with its leadership. This seemed necessary in the light of increased state pressure on squatter

communities. And with Koornhof's announcement about establishing Khayelitsha - a large dormitory township on Cape Town's outskirts to resettle the Peninsula's legal African population - a unified resistance to these plans developed.

The uncertain future of the growing 'illegal' squatter population in the Cape Peninsula proved a catalyst for political mobilisation. In the course of resistance to removals these communities strengthened alliances with progressive organisations and political activists.

The mid-1983 formation of the United Democratic Front increasingly politicised squatter struggles in the Peninsula. The strategic importance of Old Crossroads in any major campaign against removals in the Western Cape was undisputed. But fostering an alliance with leadership whose political practice was far from 'progressive' would turn out to be a political miscalculation for the progressive movement.

In December 1983 there was another outbreak of violence in Old Crossroads. Scores of residents' homes were

demolished and hundreds fled the area. Although the Ngxobongwana leadership was clearly in the forefront of this second demonstration of popular repression, the UDF and its affiliate organisation, the Western Cape Civic Association (WCCA) - of which Ngxobongwana was still chairman - issued a public statement of 'neutrality'.

UDF and WCCA's failure to intervene at this moment of crisis in Old Crossroads undermined the UDF's political support amongst those who were the targets of repression.

It also put the UDF in the invidious position of supporting a leadership in Old Crossroads which some cited as the primary reason why they were moving to Khayelitsha. For many of those who moved to Khayelitsha did so to escape the Ngxobongwana group.

STRUGGLES FOR LAND AND CONTROL

Political dynamics and related struggles became much more complex in squatter communities from 1984 to 1986. The size of the squatter population in what was now known as the Crossroads complex and nearby KTC grew rapidly during 1984. This expansion was due to natural increase - migration from drought-stricken rural areas, and over-population of surrounding black townships. The Crossroads complex visibly mushroomed after Nyanga Bush and Cathedral Squatters were given de facto recognition by the Western Cape Development Board (WCDB) in July 1984.

For the first time since 1981 the WCDB granted permission for additional shelters to be built. It also installed extra water taps, toilets, and roads in the area, giving squatters a sense of semi-permanency. This was part of a public acknowledgement by local state officials that influx control policies were failing in the Western Cape. In August 1984 the WCDB put the official 'illegal' Peninsula squatter population in the region of at least 100 000.

With escalating economic crisis and increasing political mobilisation in the country's urban black communities, the state began the search for new strategies of control. Outright repression continued, together with reformist strategies.

The first evidence of a shift in

strategy towards Peninsula squatters was Co-operation and Development Minister Viljoen's announcement of October 1984, stating that all squatters in the area - legal or illegal - would be resettled in site and service schemes at Khayelitsha. As in 1983, with the Khayelitsha announcement, the state had provided progressive organisations and squatter communities with a focus for mobilisation. When this statement of intent was followed by the arrival of a Tswana-speaking removal squad in Khayelitsha in early 1985, frustrations and tensions surfaced into open violent conflict between the squatters and police.

During 1985, squatter communities of the Cape Peninsula became a central battle-ground for contending social and political forces. A significant feature of early struggles was the visible alliance between militant activists, many who were members of UDF affiliates, and the squatter communities.

ESCALATING CONFLICT

Throughout 1985, the progressive movements' rhetorical support for local struggles in black townships and squatter areas gained material substance. The first indication of this was a rent struggle in New Crossroads, led by United Womens' Organisation (UWO), Cape Youth Congress (CAYCO) and WCCA activists. In the midst of the campaign Ngxobongwana, who had been asked to address a public meeting in the community, was arrested along with a number of 'comrades' from these organisations. These arrests followed an outbreak of conflict where houses of 'collaborators' were smashed and burnt.

Ongoing violent resistance left at least 18 people - mostly youths - dead. But there were clear indications of the growing presence and influence of UDF-affiliated organisations.

The state realised the critical importance of breaking this alliance and unified resistance. Within days of the first conflict Viljoen announced the effective divide and rule strategies involving concessions at Old Crossroads and the surrounding black townships.

A long sought-after upgrade of Old Crossroads was offered, as was Phase 2 of New Crossroads - promised by Koornhof

since 1979. Black township residents, formerly under threat of removal to Khayelitsha, were offered 99-year leasehold. The 'concessions' satisfied demands of some residents in the townships and Old Crossroads, but essentially they divided the community. The fragile unity of squatter communities and surrounding townships became increasingly fragmented. Competing interests within these groups soon became open divisions.

The first indication of real division and restructuring was when a number of smaller camps in the Crossroads complex and the Cathedral Squatters decided to move to a new site and service scheme at Khayelitsha - Site C.

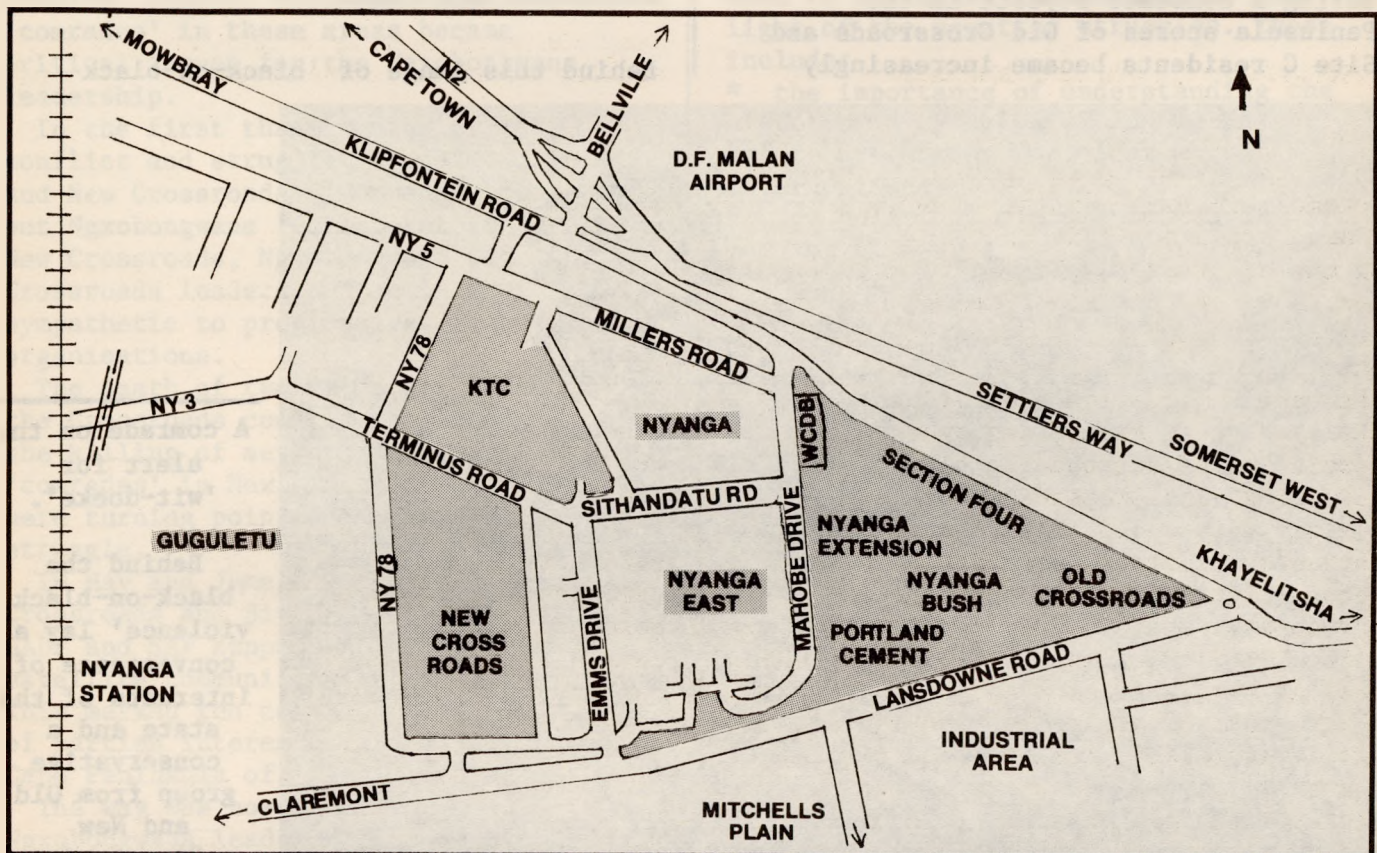
At least 35 000 squatters moved to Site C in response to the WCDB promise of 18-month residence permits and assistance with finding jobs if people

would find supportive allies to accomplish this project - allies from inside the Crossroads complex itself, where social dynamics were rapidly changing.

ACTIVISTS CHALLENGE NGXOBONGWANA

After the New Crossroads rent struggle and the February 1985 conflict, growing dissatisfaction inside Old Crossroads focused on the politics of progressive organisations, especially the youth. Many of the more conservative residents felt the youth had overstepped the limits.

The increasing challenges from CAYCO and UWO activists began when Ngxobongwana was in jail between January



The Crossroads and KTC squatter communities

'voluntarily' moved to the area. The larger camps inside the Crossroads complex, namely Nyanga Bush, Nyanga Extension and Portland Cement, refused the Board's offer, arguing for full rights to live and work in the Western Cape.

From mid-1985, the WCDB was faced with the problem of implementing 'orderly urbanisation' with an unwilling constituency. Before very long they

and April 1985, and focussed on the way in which money was raised in both Old and New Crossroads. Allegations of corruption became a major threat to the committees in Old and New Crossroads, both of which were under the control of the Ngxobongwana group.

The promise of an upgraded scheme for Old Crossroads and Phase 2 of New Crossroads depended upon the removal of a significant percentage of the

squatters in Crossroads complex.

Ngxobongwana was committed to this option. On his return to Old Crossroads in June after his acquittal, the convergence of interests between the Ngxobongwana group and the state in ridding the area of the satellite communities and 'comrades' began to fall into place and take effect. The intensified level of militant confrontation between 'comrades' from these areas and the Ngxobongwana group added new dimensions to the growing battle for legitimacy and control over the future of Crossroads complex and KTC.

There were significant developments in squatter areas between July and October, when the state of emergency was extended to the Western Cape. Areas of the Crossroads complex became virtual 'no-go' places for the SAP and SADF, and during a consumer boycott in the Peninsula scores of Old Crossroads and Site C residents became increasingly

bitter about the comrades' political methods.

There were widespread reports of residents caught with what were considered 'illegitimate' consumer items, being forced to drink washing powder or fish oil. Social groups - both inside and outside of Crossroads - with a specific interest in ridding the area of 'dissidents', found a growing residue of grievances which could be exploited.

In late December, when many CAYCO and UWO township activists were released from detention, they found themselves targets of the first major right-wing attack on 'comrades'. At the forefront of these attacks were the 'wit-doeke' of Old Crossroads and Site C.

CONVERGING INTERESTS

Behind this image of 'black-on-black



A comrade on the alert for 'wit-doeke'.

Behind the 'black-on-black violence' lay a convergence of interests of the state and a conservative group from Old and New Crossroads fighting for economic and political survival.

violence' lay the coincidence of interests of the state and a political grouping from Old and New Crossroads fighting for economic and political survival. From mid-1985, there were clear indications that Ngxobongwana and his local 'officials' had broken with the progressive movement in the Cape Peninsula.

A central reason for this 'break' was political activists' attempts to discredit existing leadership during Ngxobongwana's absence. Allegations of corruption against the committees operating in these areas threatened Ngxobongwana and his leadership. From the moment Ngxobongwana returned to Old Crossroads, after his acquittal in the case related to the New Crossroads' rent struggle, he went on a major offensive against 'comrades' and the remaining squatter communities in the Crossroads complex. Control over land and 'comrades' in these areas became critical issues for the Ngxobongwana leadership.

In the first three months of 1986, conflict and struggle intensified in Old and New Crossroads. 'Comrades' routed out Ngxobongwana 'collaborators' from New Crossroads, Ngxobongwana removed Old Crossroads leaders and activists sympathetic to progressive organisations.

The death of two white policemen in the Crossroads complex in February, and the killing of seven 'wit-doeke' by 'comrades' in New Crossroads in March, were turning points in the ongoing struggle.

In May and June 'wit-doeke' from Old Crossroads and Site C - allegedly with SADF and SAP support - razed the satellite communities to the ground. This marked the convergence of a number of parties interested in ridding the Cape Peninsula of 'dissident' groupings.

The way was now clear for the Ngxobongwana leadership to maintain

control of New and Old Crossroads; for the security forces to reclaim control over former 'no-go' areas; and for the WCDB to continue with its 'orderly urbanisation' policies in the Cape Peninsula.

The declaration of the state of emergency on 12 June was something of an anti-climax in the aftermath of such a show of brutal repression. For the first time since 1985 the progressive movement in the Cape Peninsula was visibly on the defensive.

LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

The events leading up to the conflict in Crossroads remain a political tragedy. To understand this, a number of issues need to be raised and debated in the light of the squatter struggles. These include:

- * the importance of understanding the history and dynamics of communities before attempting political intervention;
- * the political miscalculation of forming alliances with non-progressive leadership no matter how 'popular' the leader(s) may appear;
- * the critical importance of grassroots organisation within communities, as opposed to interventionist politics;
- * the necessity of condemning popular repression at all levels;
- * the need to win over conservative groupings to the progressive movement;
- * the political importance of reflecting on political practice within the progressive movement, eg the indiscriminate use of the 'necklace'.

Unless these issues are addressed by political activists and organisations, hopes for a truly transformed and liberated South Africa remain a pipe-dream.

Natal Vigilantes

'At War with UDF, COSATU and the ANC'

Inkatha claims commitment to policy of non-violence. But allegations of Inkatha-linked vigilante action against UDF and COSATU supporters in Natal continue. And there is evidence that senior Inkatha and KwaZulu officials are involved in the violent suppression of opposition. A resident from one of Natal's African townships reports.*

Inkatha's claimed image of non-violence is in jeopardy as allegations of its involvement in vigilante action grow.

Inkatha president, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, has flatly denied accusations levelled against Inkatha. But Inkatha central committee and KwaZulu Legislative Assembly members make no bones about their 'programme of action' which aims at making Inkatha the only functioning political organisation in Natal. Their message is clear. 'We are at war with the UDF, COSATU and the ANC'.

And Inkatha central committee member Thomas Shabalala, who claims to control Durban's 'impis', has said that he 'longs for the day when there will be open war between the UDF and Inkatha - it will prove who is who in the political battle'.

VIGILANTES FORM UNDER 'CODE 26'

Code 26 is an electoral district for the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly. It incorporates townships to the North and West of Durban. The area is said to be the force behind the impis, and vigilante leaders associated with Inkatha boast about their achievements under 'Code 26'.

According to vigilante leaders, the decision to launch vigilante actions against UDF elements in Natal townships was taken at a meeting attended by Inkatha branch chairmen and KwaZulu councillors from Code 26. Certainly, much of the vigilante action

of the past year has taken place in townships within the area - Clermont, Ntuzuma, KwaMashu, Inanda and Hambanati.

When heavily-armed vigilante groups first moved into the streets of KwaMashu and Umlazi last August, the commercial media hailed them as 'Inkatha peace-keeping forces' quelling the unrest. But 'keeping the peace' soon turned into midnight raids on homes of people identified as 'Inkatha enemies'.

In many cases, perpetrators of violence were identified by victims. Hundreds of affidavits and sworn statements were made to the Legal Resources Centre, Black Sash, and lawyers. But only a few arrests have been made - one ironically where a policeman was an accidental victim of an attack.

For the past 11 months, the war in these townships has been between UDF and Inkatha supporters. But recently COSATU has found itself in the firing line after the emergence of hostilities between it and Inkatha. These led to the formation of a rival union - the pro-free enterprise and anti-disinvestment United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA).

The case of ex-Metal and Allied Workers Union shop steward, Bheki Msomi, is typical of allegations to emerge from townships. In an affidavit he described how, at about midnight, a group of men, some carrying guns, arrived at his Umlazi home. The group included Winnington Sabelo, a KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and Inkatha central committee member. Having ransacked the house they 'forced me into a white econobus, punching and prodding me with an assegai. I was taken to a local hotel owned by another Inkatha man, where I was hit with sticks, knobkerries and

*At the request of the contributor, WIP editors have withheld his name.



Thomas Shabalala, a KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and Inkatha central committee member, turned his Lindelani shack community into the headquarters of impi vigilantes formed to 'stamp out the UDF-created unrest'.

butts of guns. I was handcuffed while being severely beaten'.

Msomi was then handed over to Umlazi police and held at the police station for two days. 'On the night of my release my home was petrol-bombed by attackers whom I positively identified. I was severely burnt and admitted to hospital with my younger brother who was shot in the head and paralysed' during the attack. The Msomi house was burnt to the ground, and everything inside was destroyed.

'During my stay in hospital I was recognised by a man who had been party to the attack. He behaved suspiciously and I asked for an early discharge from the hospital as I feared for my life'.

When a lawyer acting for Msomi attempted to lay a complaint against Sabelo at the Umlazi police station, he was allegedly told that Sabelo could not be charged because he was a senior member of Inkatha.

Lawyers acting for Msomi intend to bring a civil claim against Sabelo. But they are currently waiting for a decision from the attorney-general on whether to charge Sabelo with attempted murder and arson.

A number of legal actions concerning vigilante activity are pending in the Natal courts. In some, allegations of KwaZulu police collusion with vigilantes have been made. In Natal courts:

- * two Inkatha youth brigade members and two KwaZulu policemen were charged with attacking the home of COSATU's regional secretary;
- * an Inkatha Women's Brigade member was restrained by the Durban Supreme Court from threatening a UDF activist and his family, or damaging their property;
- * a KwaMashu Inkatha leader was restrained by the supreme court from assaulting or abducting a widow whose husband had been killed in a vigilante attack in May;
- * an Inkatha leader and councillor from Umlazi, Zithulele Ngcobo, faces a murder charge following the killing of an Umlazi Youth League member.

SHABALALA'S PRIVATE ARMY

In another court action, the Durban Supreme Court granted a temporary interdict restraining Thomas Mandla Shabalala, a prominent Inkatha member in

Lindelani, from assaulting a couple in the area who support the UDF.

Thomas Shabalala is a KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and Inkatha central committee member. He has turned his 100 000-strong Lindelani shack community into the headquarters of widely-feared impi combatants. In an interview, he disclosed that the decision to form the impis, whom he refers to as 'abavikeli' (protectors), was taken at a meeting of all Inkatha branch chairmen and KwaZulu councillors under Code 26. The aim was to 'stamp out the UDF-created unrest'.

Shabalala sees this plan of action as similar to the M-plan - Nelson Mandela's plan for liberated areas. But in this case, the aim is to secure Natal for Inkatha.

Vigilantes under his command and that of his chief lieutenant, Emmanuel 'Phondolwendlovu' Khanyile, receive R24 each per 'mission' - although it was not clear from the interview what these missions are.

Shabalala alone commands a personal army of 208, each paid R130 a month. This salary is raised from the R3 monthly contribution each household is forced to pay in the 9 000 shack settlement.

Apart from this, Shabalala says that because Lindelani is 'Inkatha territory', residents have to pay an Inkatha membership subscription of R10. Those unable to afford this pay in kind - often through labour. Employed workers have to pay an additional UWUSA membership fee of R10. In Shabalala's words, 'Lindelani is no home for UDF and COSATU, as townships like Chesterville, Lamontville, Clermont and others are no home for Inkatha'.

At the March National Education Crisis Conference (NECC) held in Durban, two busloads of armed men attacked conference delegates. PUTCO disclosed that the two buses transporting armed men to the NECC meeting were hired out to Inkatha members. And one of the mini-buses accompanying the armed attackers was traced to the KwaZulu Department of Works, headed by Inkatha deputy general-secretary Simon Gumede.

At the time, Buthelezi denied Inkatha involvement in the attack, and asked: 'Why should we be blamed for attacks by people wearing Inkatha uniform?' He went

on to accuse the NECC of being 'in cahoots with the ANC'.

But surprisingly, Shabalala confirmed that his supporters did go to the conference in two buses to 'attend as other black parents concerned with the education of their children'.

THE STRUGGLE FOR NATAL

Buthelezi is caught in a dilemma. If he publicly condones attacks by Inkatha members, he will compromise Inkatha's much-publicised policy of 'non-violence'. But if he publicly reprimands senior colleagues involved in vigilante activities he may lose scores of militant supporters.

COSATU, despite having suffered as a result of political hostilities, has thus far avoided an open battle. It was only recently that the Natal COSATU region called on its members to form defence units in factories and townships against attacks by what it called 'state-sponsored Inkatha functionaries'. It then released a dossier of 'incidents of violence, threats of violence and assaults on unionists in Natal. This contained affidavits and sworn statements which implicated 'senior Inkatha functionaries, KwaZulu and South African police, and three KwaZulu cabinet members'.

Attempts to obtain Inkatha's response to these allegations have been unsuccessful. A Durban Sunday newspaper contacted the cabinet ministers named in the dossier for comment. But lawyers representing Inkatha threatened to bring an interdict against the newspaper to stop it publishing the contents of the dossier. Likewise, attempts by a Johannesburg-based weekly newspaper to obtain Inkatha comment drew a blank.

Attacks and counter-attacks in the struggle for the political soul of Natal continue unabated. Vigilante activity has spread to distant townships in Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle and Empangeni. As the battle-lines are drawn, not only Inkatha's credibility in the urban areas, but its claimed policy of non-violence, are at stake.

Ethnic Persecution in Bophuthatswana

The Corruption Cover-Up

The Bophuthatswana government's official terror tactics against non-Tswana residents is rooted in its fear of well-organised opposition which could uncover its high degree of corruption. KAREN JOCHELSON compiled this review from Transvaal Rural Aid and Development Programme reports.

David Mokale, Bophuthatswana Minister of Land and Urban Affairs, told the 1980-82 Wiechers Commission of Enquiry into Local and Regional Government in Bophuthatswana that no local government had been established in Winterveld, an area inhabited mainly by non-Tswanas, for fear of stimulating organised opposition to the government. If local people became dissatisfied and restless, he said, they would be treated in a direct and brutal way: 'Ons sal hulle opneuk'.

Since 'independence' in 1977, the Bophuthatswana government has waged war on the approximately 1,5-million non-Tswana residents in its territory. Systematically, using brute force and 'law', it attempted to rid the bantustan of what it calls 'illegal squatters'.

Intimidation was publicly justified by President Mangope and other cabinet ministers in 'patriotic' terms. Non-Tswana 'squatters' were the 'biggest menace' threatening the future of the nation, 'a cancer which must be cut out'. But neither 'ethnic purification', overcrowding, 'squattling' nor 'legality' were at the root of attempted removals.

The jingoism of ministers and media aimed among other things to whip up antagonism against non-Tswanas, diverting attention from Bophuthatswana's problems. Opposition to Mangope's ruling National Democratic Party certainly extends beyond non-Tswanas. Rampant bribery, corruption, intimidation, land dispossession, action against trade unions and workers, and harassment of the opposition party has led to growing disillusionment with 'independence'.

The campaign against non-Tswanas has seen three distinct phases.

Beginning in 1978, the government

sanctioned frequent and violent raids on non-Tswana residents. Embarrassed by Bophuthatswana excesses, leaders of the other bantustans finally sent a delegation to Piet Koornhof, then South Africa's Minister of Co-operation and Development, to complain. South African pressure led to a temporary cessation of the raids, and the government embarked on more subtle tactics.

The second stage, modelled on South Africa's 'voluntary' forced removals, aimed to make life so difficult that non-Tswanas would 'willingly' leave the territory.

The third stage involved Bophuthatswana's 'Nigerian option', which aimed to expel all foreign workers from the territory.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRESSURES

Bophuthatswana authorities rejected non-Tswana applications for citizenship and residency even when people were legally entitled to them. Passes were not granted or renewed and work-seeker permits were refused.

Reduced to a state of legal non-existence, non-Tswanas were denied access to formal labour markets, except when unscrupulous employers took advantage of their poverty-stricken desperation. Sexual harassment at labour bureaux and by personnel managers was commonplace. Refusal to grant trading licences, destruction of goods, heavy fines and police raids put an end to non-Tswana attempts to enter the informal sector.

In areas like Moreteli 1 and Odi 2, where non-Tswanas make up 80% of the

population, services and facilities were not developed or even withdrawn. Schools, clinics, water supply, roads, and bus services were affected.

But few people left. Most had been dumped there after South African removals and had nowhere else to go.

THE NIGERIAN OPTION

In August 1983 the Bophuthatswana government resorted to more desperate measures. The amendment of the Land Control Act marked the beginning of the third phase. Minister Mokale later referred to it as an effective strategy designed to lead to the prosecution and purging of 'infested' areas. The Act was described as Bophuthatswana's 'Nigerian option', with which it aimed to expel all 'foreign' workers.

In Bophuthatswanan law, non-Tswanas may apply for citizenship after five years' residence. But the Land Control amendment made it illegal for anyone without citizenship or a valid residence permit to reside in the 'homeland' or lease land for business purposes. Most non-Tswanas had their applications refused, or were told that as 'illegals' and 'squatters' they had no rights to citizenship. Offenders were liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding R600 or six months imprisonment.

May 1984 saw the first reported raids under the new legislation. The target was Bosplaas, a township near Babelegi. Two hundred residents opted to defend themselves in court, the first time non-Tswana residents tried to contest their treatment and legal status in court. It was also a test case for the state. A senior public prosecutor under direct instructions from the attorney-general was seconded from Pretoria.

Bosplaas residents consist of different ethnic groups. Most people lived in the area before 'independence' was declared and many were born there. Landowners moved from urban areas to buy land offered by Pretoria Smallholdings immediately after the Second World War.

Their tenants were evicted from 'black spots' like Cullinan, Eersterus and Lady Selbourne; from cleared mission lands and white farms; and from East Rand townships where there was a chronic shortage of housing. Many who could not afford to move to Winterveld or

Mabopane, or who were not resettled in areas like Stinkwater, chose Bosplaas where rents were lower than elsewhere. Many more were moved to the area when their employers relocated factories or built new plants at Babelegi, Rosslyn, Brits and Garankuwa. A minority of tenants moved to the area to be near husbands or wives working in the Pretoria area.

Tenants got permission from landowners and the Bantu Commissioner to reside in the area. The Commissioner authorised residency permits and endorsed their reference books.

The tenants, who constitute almost the entire population, were told early in 1984 not to pay rent as they would be moved to Pankop, 100 kilometres away. At the time it was rumoured that this part of Bophuthatswana would be incorporated into KwaNdebele. The move would conveniently get rid of several thousand Bophuthatswana 'squatters' while moving a sizable black population away from the Pretoria area.

On Monday 16 April 1984, police told Bosplaas residents to stay at home on the coming Wednesday as 'the army would be visiting them'. Possibly because of press presence, the army did not arrive. Instead a government minister addressed a meeting of chiefs, tribal and community councillors, police and other local dignitaries, denouncing the presence of non-Tswanas in the area.

THE RAIDS BEGIN

In May, using the amended Land Control Act, hundreds of Bosplaas residents were indiscriminately arrested. Police displayed total disregard for legal process, believing that since people were illiterate or ignorant of the law, police action would not be challenged. Police led people to believe they were paying bail when in fact they had paid admission of guilt fines, and vice versa.

Many people unable to pay bail were held in prison for two weeks before being brought to court. They were denied visits by relatives, and food and clothes parcels. Relatives and defence lawyers were given false information by police, who denied that they had arrested certain people.

The courts refused to accept pleas of

not guilty and requests for postponement and defence. Many people paid admission of guilt fines to avoid being dismissed from work.

Bosplaas residents' first court appearance with a defence team was on 11 July. The state claimed that it was a 'simple case'. Advocate Paul Shapiro, for the defence, argued on the contrary that it was not a simple case but a test case. 'At stake is the right of thousands of people to exist', he said. As the defence had been impeded by police in preparing its defence, Shapiro requested that the case be postponed. The magistrate granted the postponement, but insisted that there be no further delays.

The case recommenced on 12 September. Despite objections from the defence, the case was postponed another five times at the request of the state.

Notwithstanding appeals in court, the accused out on bail were frequently rearrested on the same charges, harassed and intimidated. Only with extreme difficulty could they persuade police to open dockets for charges of police assault, torture, wrongful arrest and imprisonment.

Many of the accused were assaulted by police and threatened that if they pursued their legal defence they would be assaulted and arrested. One of the accused reported that while he was being assaulted the police told him, 'We are doing this to teach other people what will happen to them if they get lawyers'.

At one stage the senior public prosecutor threatened that if a postponement was refused, the state would 'withdraw all the charges and re-arrest all these people on the same charges as they come out of court'.

Not only did the accused face police intimidation, nearly all lost pay because they were absent from work to attend court; some lost their jobs.

Indiscriminate arrests of non-Tswanas continued during the case. In one instance a thousand people were arrested in a single police swoop. In another, 600 people were prosecuted in one day without any legal defence: with the courts full, cases were 'tried' in batches of ten in the corridors and even in the cells.

The Bosplaas defence advocate commented: 'The defence is left with an impression that where the accused do not have legal representation the state gets

a prosecution through as quickly as possible... When the state finds itself faced with legal representation, then all of a sudden it is not ready'.

For the defendants the position was clear: 'The actions taken by the police, in conjunction with the proceedings, or rather the lack of proceedings, of this court...are a chronicle of contempt for the due process of law, let alone justice, in Bophuthatswana'.

IN BAD FAITH

The defence team had evidence to show that 80% of the people arrested had the legal right to be in the area.

A major defence argument was that the Land Control Act itself was male fide - in bad faith - in that it aimed directly at providing the state with supposedly legal means of harassing and evicting non-Tswanas. Further, it transgressed Bophuthatswana's Bill of Rights.

But more threatening was a dossier on alleged corruption by local authorities.

Investigation showed that the Bosplaas local authority had not only been improperly constituted - and was thus a legal and political nullity not entitled to issue permits relevant to the case - but that it had been taxing people illegally, and falsifying receipts issued against such payments. The defence's exposure of these frauds was highly embarrassing to the state.

On 11 October 1985, 18 months after the case began, the state withdrew charges against the accused.

No formal investigations were undertaken by the attorney-general or the police into the stark evidence of government corruption.

THE JAKKALSDANS CASE

Arrests and intimidation of non-Tswanas continued on the same scale. On 31 October the state began a second case in the Garankuwa magistrate's court. It involved 70 Jakkalsdans residents charged with 'illegal squatting' under the Land Control Act. As the state had failed to win a single conviction in the Bosplaas case, it became imperative, if it was to retain any legitimacy at all,

to win convictions against the Jakkalsdans people. So this, too, became a test case.

Jakkalsdans is in the Winterveld region and, as in Bosplaas, most non-Tswana residents are legally entitled to live in the area.

At Bosplaas the state's strategy was to try to stop people from defending themselves in court. Hence the intimidation, harassment, brutal assaults and torture of Bosplaas residents. These tactics failed.

At Jakkalsdans different tactics were used. Because the Jakkalsdans community was better organised, because the state was aware that more police violence in the area could lead to widespread unrest, and perhaps because of the lesson of Bosplaas, the state decided that if it could not stop the people coming to court, it could try to stop the lawyers.

First, the state tried to set the case for a day when the defence team was unavailable.

Then it argued that as defence attorney GSS Maluleka was banned from entering Bophuthatswana, counsel's brief was invalid.

Finally, four days before the case began, the main defence witness, Wits Professor Jeremy Keenan, was banned from entering Bophuthatswana.

The focus of the case shifted from the 'squatting' issue to the attempt to prohibit Keenan from giving evidence. When defence counsel informed the court that it did not recognise the banning as valid, and that Keenan had defied the ban and was present in court in the interests of justice, the magistrate charged both Advocate Shapiro and Keenan with contempt of court.

On 21 February 1986 the state withdrew contempt charges against Keenan. He was, however, warned that if he was found in Bophuthatswana again he would be beaten up by police. Keenan's lawyers subsequently served a summons on President Mangope in his capacity as Minister of Justice, demanding damages for wrongful arrest.

Before the case resumed on 18 March, defence lawyers applied to the Garankuwa court for Keenan to be served with a subpoena instructing him to appear in court to give evidence. The court served the subpoena. But as Keenan had been threatened with violence he remained at the 'border' while counsel requested the court to grant him indemnity against

arrest by police so that he could honour the subpoena. The court refused indemnity.

THE EMBARRASSING AFFIDAVIT

As it was clear that the state was not prepared to allow Keenan to give evidence, the defence decided to apply to the court for his evidence to be taken in South Africa on commission. To this end Keenan lodged an affidavit with the defence lawyers which was to be submitted to court. It outlined the thrust of the evidence he wished to give on behalf of the Jakkalsdans residents.

The affidavit stated that evidence would be given along four lines:

1. That the majority of the accused were legally entitled to be in the area;
2. That the state had made it impossible for many people to comply with certain legal regulations;
3. That the state had actively, continuously and knowingly violated the country's Bill of Rights as promulgated in the Bophuthatswana Constitution Act of 1977, had shown disregard for due legal process and acted irregularly in this and other 'squatter' court cases;
4. That the state's action against the Jakkalsdans people as well as all other 'squatters' in the Winterveld area was male fide.

Amplifying the third line of evidence, the affidavit said evidence would be submitted to show:

- * That the state had developed a strategem designed to deny the accused a proper defence, to which they were entitled in terms of the country's constitution;
- * That the police had deliberately and knowingly obstructed the enquiries of lawyers acting in defence of 'squatters';
- * That people arrested under the Land Control Act (as amended) had been forced to pay admission of guilt fines to police when they had a legal right to be in the area and when they wished to defend themselves against such charges in court;
- * That people arrested under the Land Control Act (as amended) had not only been wrongfully and unlawfully imprisoned, but had been assaulted and otherwise maltreated while in prison;
- * That the police had intimidated,

harassed and assaulted people in order, in their own words, 'to teach people what happens when they get white lawyers to defend them in court';

* That the police had wrongfully and unlawfully rearrested and fined people on bail and awaiting trial for the same charge under which they had been first arrested;

* That the Bophuthatswana police, in the course of carrying out 'squatter' raids, had brutally assaulted and tortured not only people whom they had arrested, but innocent passers-by;

* That complaints and dockets had only been laid and opened against police after extreme difficulty and in the face of extreme intimidation;

* That no proper enquiry and/or investigation had been undertaken into these cases;

* That the police and their minister had acted in violation of the country's Bill of Rights and with disregard to the rulings of the courts.

Concerning the fourth line of evidence, the affidavit said that evidence would be submitted to show that the authorities' aim in wanting to evict these people from Bophuthatswana was not simply because of overcrowding, 'squattling', or their 'illegality', as most of them had legal rights to live in the area. Nor was the object purely a matter of jingoism, though this played an important ideological part in the state's actions, nor was it a desire for the 'ethnic purification' of Bophuthatswana.

FEAR OF OPPOSITION

Rather, evidence would be submitted to show that the main purpose underlying the state's actions was to deny these people the citizenship to which they were lawfully entitled. The purpose behind this, it would be submitted, was to deny them political rights, as the government feared this could stimulate organised party political opposition.

The affidavit stated that evidence would be submitted that the ruling

Bophuthatswana Democratic Party under President Lucas Mangope had undertaken a concerted and successful campaign to ensure that not one elected seat fell to a member of the opposition. This involved harassing and intimidating opposition members, and balloting irregularities prior to and during the 1982 general election.

Evidence would be submitted, the affidavit said, to indicate that one reason for the ruling party going to these lengths was to prevent members of the opposition, either through election or appointment to public office, from gaining the right to question and examine the country's financial dealings.

The affidavit stated evidence would be submitted that senior members of government had been systematically engaged in large-scale corruption and embezzlement of the country's finances and resources.

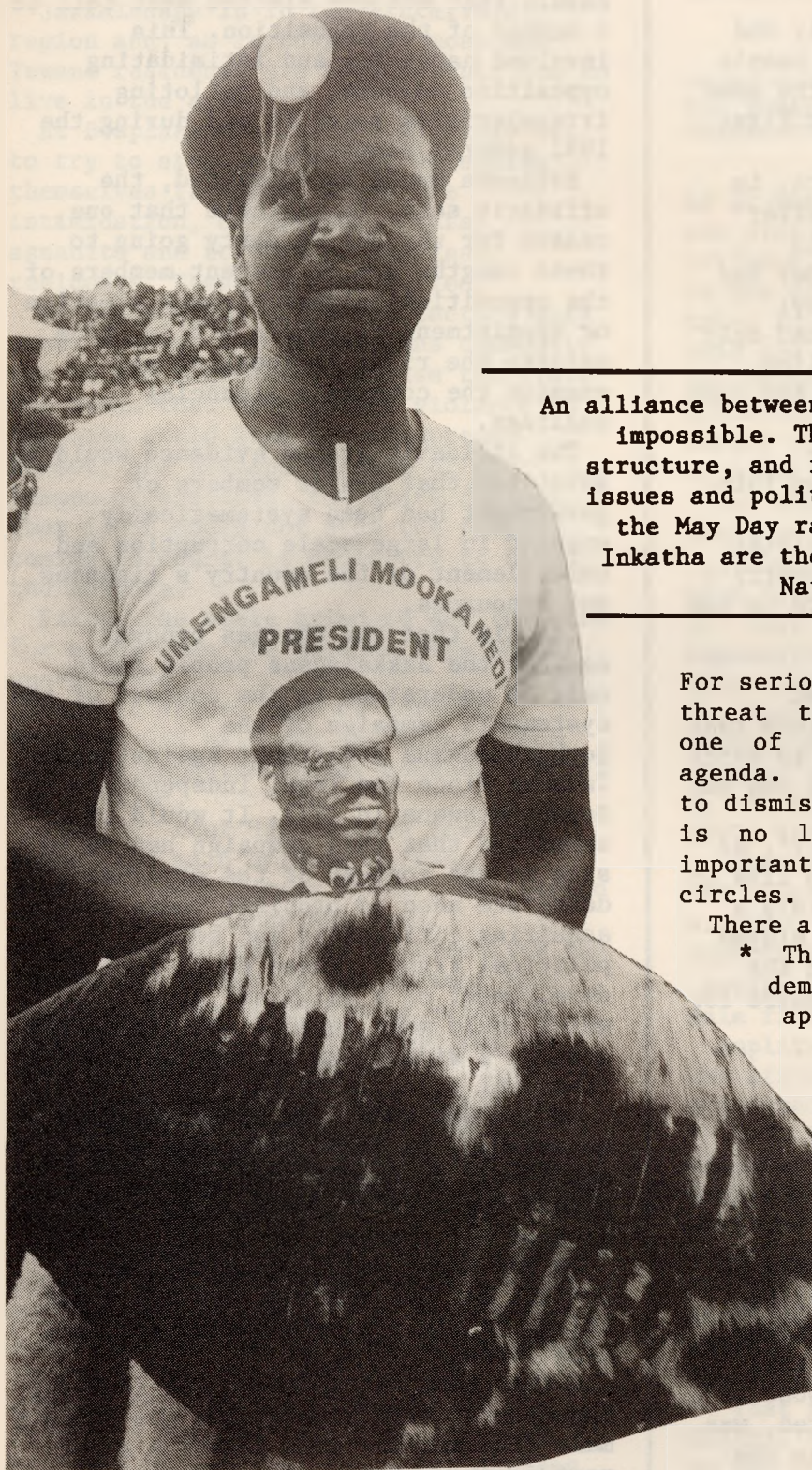
It said that the charges brought against the Jakkalsdams people could only be understood in the context of the systematic campaign of the Bophuthatswana government against non-Tswanas since the legal independence of Bophuthatswana in 1977. It would be submitted that this campaign had to be seen in the context of the government's desperate need to prohibit these people acquiring citizenship and hence political rights. These could lead to development of a political opposition which could make demands and expose the country's widespread corruption and financial irregularities.

On 12 June 1986, the Bophuthatswana government, no doubt realising that it would only be further embarrassed by persisting with the case, once again dropped all charges.

In the three years since the Land Control Act was amended, the state has failed to win a single conviction in a case defended in court.

Rather than intimidating and removing 'squatters' from Winterveld, the state's male fide actions have played a major part in stimulating organisation and more widespread popular resistance to the apartheid state and its appendages.

Lessons from May Day



An alliance between COSATU and Inkatha in Natal is impossible. This is because of Inkatha's structure, and its hostility to working-class issues and politics. But, argues MIKE MORRIS, the May Day rallies show that COSATU and Inkatha are the only two serious forces in Natal's townships.

For serious trade unionists in Natal the threat that Inkatha and UWUSA pose is one of the most pressing items on the agenda. If there was an initial attempt to dismiss the issue as irrelevant, this is no longer the case in a number of important trade union and political circles.

There are three main reasons for this:

- * The Kings Park May Day rally demonstrated that Inkatha has mass appeal in Natal including serious working-class support;
- * the daily struggles Natal COSATU unions are engaged in to hold their members in factories;
- * Inkatha members' violent onslaught on leading UDF and COSATU members in the African townships, to the extent that the UDF organisational presence in most African townships in Natal is now fairly minimal.

These events may have produced a more sober perspective on

Inkatha's ability to disrupt trade union and alternative political organisation in Natal. But they have not necessarily been accompanied by a sound and critical analysis of what this development represents. There is enormous pressure to import the same tactics and strategies being used in other parts of the country and to deny the specific regional characteristics of

Running a trade union requires more than political rhetoric

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Natal. This makes it extremely difficult for those organisations opposed to Inkatha to develop the appropriate tactics and strategy for Natal.

This denial of the regional specificity of Natal is an understandable, but nonetheless highly inadequate, reaction to capital and Inkatha's attempt to assert the 'uniqueness' of Natal and hence the necessity for what they have termed 'the KwaNatal option'.

Phillip Van Niekerk's article on Inkatha and May Day in Durban (WIP 42) is interesting precisely because he both acknowledges the regional specificity of Natal and the necessity of coming to terms with the peculiar political place that Inkatha occupies within this region. The main thrust of his argument - that May Day in Durban demonstrated serious support for Inkatha amongst Zulu workers - is undoubtedly correct. Between 50 000 and 70 000 people attended the Kings Park rally whilst COSATU's Curries Fountain rally only attracted 8 000-12 000. Van Niekerk, however, misses some of the important complexities of this phenomenon and hence is not able to suggest the appropriate strategy and tactics for COSATU in the region.

THE MAY DAY RALLIES

Van Niekerk argues that once COSATU entered Inkatha's terrain (ie the political arena) Inkatha had no choice but to take the battle to COSATU by entering into its own terrain (ie trade unionism). Hence the strategic decision to set up UWUSA in order to undermine COSATU in the factories and the consequent tactical choice of May Day to ostensibly launch UWUSA.

In fact the main point of the Kings Park rally was to embarrass COSATU politically by demonstrating Inkatha's support amongst the African urban and rural community. Based simply on the relative attendance numbers, this political objective was in the main achieved.

But was it strategically wise of Inkatha to launch UWUSA via May Day to achieve this political aim? And if not, what are the implications for trade union and political struggles in this region? How can they gain from what I

will suggest is a strategic error on Inkatha's part?

Notwithstanding the clear support Buthelezi demonstrated by the Kings Park rally he made a serious mistake both in the short and the long term. His cleverest move would have been to remain solely on the political terrain with which he was already familiar, and fairly well grounded in - Inkatha's ethnic appeals to 'Zulu nationality' and a conservative 'bourgeois democratic' solution. By moving into the trade union terrain he ironically decreased the potential short-term support he could have demonstrated in his Kings Park rally. And in the long term he also laid his organisation open to being shown to be incompetent in this new and unfamiliar terrain of factory-based struggles.

This difficult issue of Zulu cultural and ethnic identity which so strikingly pervades Natal, and is the reactionary basis of Buthelezi's power base in Inkatha, will not necessarily carry the same weight as factory-based struggles over working and service conditions.

Ironically Buthelezi could even have increased the crowd attending the Kings Park rally if it had not been linked to an alternative trade union organisation. Zulu workers are loyal to their Zulu ethnicity - an issue that is very poorly understood - but they are also loyal to the trade unions that have struggled so hard to alter conditions on the factory floor. Many workers who might well have attended a rally by virtue of their membership of Inkatha, or political agreement with Buthelezi, or ethnic identification, or tribal loyalty, were faced with having to support a rival union by going to Kings Park because the rally was publicised as the launch of UWUSA. As a result many of them chose rather to stay away precisely because they realised that, notwithstanding their political/ cultural/ethnic sentiments, attending also meant supporting a rival union in direct competition with their own union.

In the build-up to May Day one of the strongest arguments that organisers and shop stewards in COSATU were able to use in the clashes amongst union members in their factories was that going to the Kings Park rally was not in fact attending an Inkatha rally but a rival union meeting. In a number of factories the workers agreed, in order to avoid further divisive conflict over the

issue, that union members who wanted to demonstrate their support for Inkatha should rather just stay at home. In many cases this is what occurred, and union members attended neither May Day rally.

Some staunch Inkatha supporters suprisingly attended the Curries Fountain COSATU rally precisely because, as one worker who is also a member of the Kwa Mashu amabutho put it:

'The pamphlet calling us to Kings Park was signed by another union. We don't know that union. We know Inkatha and we know our own union, but we don't know this other union and we won't support another union except our own'.

Whilst the Kings Park rally attracted a clear cross-section of the Zulu speaking-population in class and occupational terms, including a fairly large contingent of rural youth, Inkatha's appeal to the African urban youth is limited. Its recent attempt to call a 16 June rally around the issue of education, with Buthelezi as the main speaker, attracted, according to newspaper reports, only between 3 000 and 6 000.

On the other hand, the COSATU May Day rally at Curries Fountain was much more solidly working-class in its composition. This in itself is very interesting. The rally was a joint affair between COSATU and the UDF and the latter was formally given equal, and indeed in practice more than equal, status in the organisation of the event and in access to the platform. Yet, despite this, the crowd was overwhelmingly composed of organised workers from the COSATU unions.

So, under extremely favourable conditions, the UDF/Natal Indian Congress did not seem able to pull in a large number of additional, non-union supporters. The Durban Labour Monitoring Group estimated the composition of the crowd to be about 80% organised workers from COSATU unions whilst the majority of the remaining 20% were black students and unemployed youth.

The inability of the NIC to attract Indian participants to the rally was very marked. This was all the more so since there were a large number of Indian workers who were not at work on that day, primarily due to the Garment Workers Union negotiating the day off through the regional industrial council.

There are some obvious questions that spring to mind when faced with the logic of this numbers exercise: does taking account of the regional specificity of

Natal mean that COSATU should do an about face and form a tactical alliance with Inkatha? Should Inkatha not be accorded the same status as other nationalist movements, and therefore should COSATU not be willing to work with Inkatha, given the fact that it has demonstrated its greater appeal in this region?

These are important questions that have to be seriously asked and answered. Otherwise one is at an organisational loss to provide workers who are Inkatha members with the answers to questions which, even if they are not openly expressing, they are certainly thinking about.

Answers also depend on the organisational and class perspective from which the questions are posed. A working-class organisation like COSATU, which is committed to working-class leadership, working-class democratic structures for decision-making, and has shown clear tendencies towards socialist solutions, will have a different perspective from a more nationalist organisation dominated by the petty bourgeoisie.

A TACTICAL ALLIANCE WITH INKATHA?

Without going into too much detail on Inkatha, there are critical characteristics of this organisation which make it extremely problematic for COSATU to attempt to strike up a long-term strategical alliance with it.

There is an important history in Natal between Inkatha and COSATU's predecessor (the Federation of South African Trade Unions - FOSATU) which has great bearing on this issue. FOSATU was able to coexist uneasily with Inkatha whilst it built up its trade union base in Natal. But this was increasingly breaking down as FOSATU attempted to take a more political lead on community and national issues in the region.

For example, FOSATU made a number of attempts to gain Inkatha's co-operation over the consumer boycott in mid-1985 in order to avoid violence and ensure the maximum grassroots pressure on the state. These bore no fruit: Inkatha never demonstrated a public willingness to back the consumer boycott and mobilise its members to take any overt supportive action on the issue. Inkatha's attitude vacillated between

passive inactivity and active hostility. By the latter months of 1985 both FOSATU and Inkatha were heading for a showdown of some sorts - the only issue was when and on whose tactical ground this would occur.

So, although it is debatable as to whether the COSATU leadership chose the right time, terrain, or style in allowing this conflict to surface, it is not very surprising that it broke out into the open so bitterly. For Inkatha displays characteristics that make it opposed to working-class practices. Although it is part and parcel of a capitalist society, it displays some of the characteristics of a pre-capitalist ethnic or nationalist movement where decision-making structures are based on ethnically-ascribed power relations.

The most common form that this takes is the tribal power ascribed to representatives of the royal Zulu line (known as the 'mtwanas') who, by virtue of this status, are now granted enormous power and act as the repository of wisdom.

The source of this power does not just fall onto any member of the royal Zulu line but is contested by all those who accept it as the legitimate form of exercising power. This results in the adoption and spread of practices of personalised power in decision making which spreads far beyond rural tribal structures into all forms of social and political organisation.

INKATHA'S POLITICAL STYLE

By all accounts this is a style that permeates Inkatha - whether one is talking about the top of the organisation where power is really concentrated or the smallest Inkatha leader in any particular community. It is what makes it possible for workers (both pro- and anti-Inkatha) to speak, with some material substance, of Buthelezi as synonymous with the organisation itself. It is what also grants such enormous ideological legitimacy to local Inkatha leaders, smaller self-styled 'mtwanas', who rule in particular areas like latterday Chinese warlords.

Of course, the material basis of the power of the local Inkatha leadership is much more complex and derived from the varied functions they perform in the

communities they preside over give and protection to.

But the important point is that the manner in which power is located within the structures of Inkatha is incompatible with the manner in which the larger COSATU unions attempt to distribute power. That is why the first task and potential conflict any serious trade unionist often faces in a newly-recruited Natal factory is tactfully to break the practice of nominating one of the 'mtwanas' in the factory as the spokesperson for the workers. Instead, this practice is replaced with democratically-elected shop steward committees, report backs, strict mandates etc.

This is not simply a matter of degrees of democracy, or the inadequate utilisation of democratic structures and procedures - it is that these structures are of another character altogether. There seems to be no practice of direct democracy within Inkatha. This makes it very difficult for an organisation like COSATU to mesh with Inkatha in any mobilising campaign.

CONFLICT BETWEEN COSATU AND INKATHA

There are other more obvious, and perhaps even more important, reasons why COSATU could not easily fit into an alliance with Inkatha. The latter's hitherto unsympathetic attitude to working class-issues and working-class politics is shown by:

- * Buthelezi's condemnation of the SASOL stayaway and his constant references to unions being acceptable if they stick to factory issues only;
- * its easy recourse to violence to resolve differences of line rather than democratic argument (eg the National Union of Mineworkers' claim that UWUSA broke up the NUM strike at Hlobane);
- * its lack of structures of direct democracy (the method of appointing UWUSA office bearers);
- * its refusal thus far to mobilise its members behind a grassroots campaign (the Natal consumer boycott);
- * its one-sided reliance on the public projected image of Buthelezi and diplomatic manoeuvres (the absence of any grassroots political style behind the KwaNatal indaba);
- * its highly-sympathetic attitude to capitalism, strong links with monopoly

SOUND FACTORY ORGANISATION



Zulu workers - choosing between ethnic identity and union loyalty.

The fundamental point is that struggles in the factories over economic issues have a dynamic of their own and take place differently from political/cultural issues. The latter may have disruptive effects on factory-based struggles. But they are unlikely to displace them as the principal issues around which workers unite and mobilise as long as there is sound organisation, and as long as union organisers and shop stewards spend a large amount of their time servicing these workers. UWUSA is therefore unlikely to be able to gain majority membership in, and hence take, many well-organised factories from COSATU unions.

The most likely result in these factories is that a small but vociferous pocket of workers will go over to UWUSA and play a disruptive role similar to the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) in Natal a few years back. Organisers in COSATU unions dealing with the effects of such small opposition groupings will find themselves having to spend an inordinate amount of time overcoming splits and divisions, repairing the effects of small

capital and rabidly anti-socialist perspective.

These political practices are all highly problematic for COSATU. As long as they prevail within Inkatha it is extremely unlikely that any tactical alliances can be struck between the organisations.

Furthermore UWUSA, as a rival union whose sole reason for existence is to take away COSATU members, exacerbates the tension. For it makes anything other than active hostility the only appropriate response at the moment.

What then are the long-term implications of a severe conflict between COSATU and Inkatha, and particularly what effects will UWUSA have on COSATU organisation in the factories?

mistakes, responding to vociferous criticism, and realistically countering highly inflated promises.

Badly organised, or unorganised factories where the benefits of belonging to a COSATU union are not readily apparent to the workers will more than likely go over to UWUSA since no alternative terrain of factory-based struggles will have been established. This has already happened to a number of COSATU unions in Natal.

Inkatha will then face the same problem that SAAWU in Natal faced in previous years. It is one thing recruiting unorganised or poorly-organised workers on the basis of highly-inflated promises, but quite another thing to deliver the goods once they have all joined. Inkatha will soon

find that running a trade union in even a partially successful manner requires far more than political rhetoric.

Notwithstanding the difference in political position, Inkatha will in this respect be in the same position as the small general unions affiliated to the UDF found themselves in over the past few years.

DEFINING THE BATTLEGROUND

A lot depends on how the COSATU unions handle the issue of Inkatha/UWUSA in their factories. It is a fundamental error, and grist to Buthelezi's mill, to fight Inkatha on its own terms.

Derogatory references to Zulu ethnicity, to KwaZulu as just another bantustan, personalised attacks on Buthelezi, etc, are counterproductive. If COSATU unions forget what brought them their strength and shift the terrain of struggle away from the correct handling of bread and butter issues in the factories, and principles of union organisation, then they will undoubtedly lose. For then they will be engaging Inkatha on its strong points - ie what attracts ordinary Zulu workers to the organisation in the first place - rather than exploiting the strategic mistake Inkatha made in trying to take the struggle to COSATU on the terrain of union-based issues.

Inkatha and UWUSA are weakest on factory-based issues, on factory organisation, on bread and butter mobilisation, on factory and union-based democratic structures, and on dealing with contradictions in a democratic manner. This is borne out by the undemocratic top-down manner in which UWUSA was formed, and by the fact that its office-bearers are mostly well-known black capitalists and personnel managers.

As long as UWUSA is unable to handle these issues in a manner familiar to well-organised COSATU members, it is unlikely to make major inroads into members' union affiliation, irrespective of political sympathies. But this depends on the COSATU unions constantly focusing on these issues themselves, using democratic methods (as opposed to violent coercion) to win over workers attracted to UWUSA, and not allowing themselves to be diverted by the

political red herrings that Buthelezi constantly throws at them.

METHODS OF STRUGGLE

The question of method is important.

There are basically two methods to defend a factory against UWUSA:

- * violence against those who join UWUSA or try to organise for UWUSA, thereby coercing any with doubts to remain COSATU members, or

- * democratically working through the points at issue in order to maintain the unity of the members in the factory.

The deceptively easiest method to use is coercion. In the current circumstances it seems natural and fair since very often Inkatha members attempt to use coercion or the implied threat of coercion in order to make inroads or drive out opposition. Notwithstanding its seductive allure, coercion is in principle a bad method of keeping members. It advances the struggle for a clearer ideological line not one inch; and utilising the methods of ones opposition in this case merely reinforces reactionary practices, thereby undercutting the unions' case for democratic worker practices.

If, for example, COSATU unions try to physically force UWUSA members out of their factories, this gives all the moral justification in the world for Inkatha to pursue its practice of driving UDF and COSATU leaders out of the black townships they control. Coercion is also impractical when one's opponents are able either to legally counteract attempts at coercion or use violence more effectively than oneself.

Furthermore, as history should have taught us by now, once the practice of using violence to resolve essentially organisational problems is entrenched, it is a small step to use coercion to resolve other ideological differences. Invariably when this occurs, it is the left and the working-class organisations that are at the receiving end.

Although COSATU unions have not been sufficiently consistent in ensuring that the correct methods of fighting UWUSA have prevailed in their factories, there are a number of important successful counter-examples to coercion. Perhaps one of the most impressive is that of SA Tioxide which is one of the few COSATU

factories in the Umbogintwini area - an area well known for its recent violent crushing of any grouping outside of the ambit of Zulu ethnic politics. UWUSA has made no headway here despite the most favourable of circumstances.

This is primarily because the COSATU union's shop stewards, apart from concentrating on factory issues, have also held weekly general meetings at work to discuss critically and clarify their union's policies, COSATU's policies and Inkatha's policies. This practice has forced UWUSA members to argue their case rather than just making emotively ethnic appeals (calls for 'a Zulu union') and they have been unable to convince workers that UWUSA is a viable alternative.

DEBATING CLASS ISSUES

Politically, UWUSA/Inkatha can profitably be tackled on their overt and vociferous support for capitalism and free enterprise as the solution for the working class in this country. By coming out so strongly on this issue, and by handing over the leadership of UWUSA to black capitalists, Inkatha has itself raised the possibility for other forces to question and criticise its political line without impinging on the ethnic sensibilities of its members. This also raises the opportunity for other

alternatives to the one put forward by Inkatha.

Inkatha, whether it intended to or not, has opened up the possibility of a serious debate on class issues. The ground has been laid for other organisational forces, particularly the COSATU unions, to take advantage of this opportunity and put forward alternative political lines, strategies and social systems.

In doing this, COSATU could have an important impact on township organisation in Natal. Of all the social forces in Natal's black townships, only two currently have a major organisational presence: Inkatha, which dominates; and COSATU, whose influence is spreading to other social groupings seeking an alternative to Inkatha.

COSATU could profitably take some initiative in the townships to forge a class alliance based on a socialist line, encouraging the adoption of working-class ideological and organisational principles. But this requires it to avoid a policy of ideologically and politically following behind other organisations.

Instead, if COSATU aggressively pursues an independent socialist line, the possibility exists for it to push popular consciousness and practices in Natal beyond the parameters set by the KwaNatal option, and even purely national-democratic solutions, towards an open discussion on the merits of socialism.

The Port Alfred Women's Stayaway

Uniting against Rape

When police refused to charge a rapist, African women of Port Alfred launched a week-long stayaway in protest. WIP visited the township and interviewed representatives of the Port Alfred Women's Organisation and other community bodies. KALLY FORREST and KAREN JOCKELSON report on the stayaway.

In the early hours of Saturday 3 May, Maliwe Glass was raped and assaulted in a stadium of Port Alfred's African township. The 59-year-old woman was brutally slashed across her thighs and stomach before the rapist left.

A man went to call her brother and brought him to the stadium. But Mrs Glass identified this man, a 'hefty bully in his forties', as the rapist. When the police arrived, they arrested him. Mrs Glass was taken to Settlers Hospital in Grahamstown.

By 4 o'clock that afternoon the arrested man had been released from the Port Alfred police station without being charged for assault or rape.

The African women of Port Alfred were infuriated. 'He is a known rapist and has been reported for previous assaults, but never charged. Women fear him. The police never do anything', said Koleka Nkwinti, a member of the Port Alfred Women's Organisation (PAWO).

TAKING ACTION

On Sunday 3 May, PAWO held its regular meeting, which is attended by most women in the township. Those present decided to protest against Mrs Glass's rape and the police attitude to it.

PAWO felt that rape was an issue that should be dealt with specifically by the women's organisation. But this was not seen by men or women as divisive. 'Men and women are united in struggle' was a common response from those questioned on this point.

PAWO also decided to demonstrate against the detention of five students arrested two days before the rape.

The school in Port Alfred is run by a governing committee of parents, teachers and students. On Friday 1 May, a group of students was collecting money for school funds from residents and singing and marching in the streets. Police arrived, teargassed and shot them with rubber bullets. They also arrested five schoolgirls, who were detained for two weeks.

Angered by the arrests and rape, women decided to organise a stayaway for Monday 4 May. Women decided the stayaway would be indefinite: it would end only when the rapist was brought to justice and the school students released. In fact it lasted seven days.

WOMEN'S DEMANDS

PAWO demanded that white women get in touch with them so that they could explain problems faced by African women. Nkwinti explained: 'All women, whether black or white, fear rape. We felt that white women would be sympathetic. We hoped that those with husbands in the police would be able to explain the township situation to them, and help them to understand what releasing a known rapist meant to us'.

Only African women took part in the stayaway. Coloured women living in the nearby township offered no support. African township residents say the coloured township is reactionary, with a number of coloured policemen controlling the coloured township.

The stayaway was supported by all African working women in the township. Several thousand stayed away from work. Most are domestic workers, and a few are

employed in factories or shops. Said one woman, 'We decided not to send a delegation to the white town to present our demands. When women did not arrive for work they would realise something was happening and try to find out'.

The day after the stayaway began, a white woman journalist was sent to the township to investigate it. PAWO members explained the problems facing African women. Then they took the journalist to Mrs Glass, who told her the story of the rape. She also showed the journalist her injuries.

But the response was disappointing. 'The white community was unsympathetic and just got angry. They doubted our word, questioning why we had not taken action before if this man was known to have attacked in the past. We think white women were only worried about the work they now had to do in their own houses', commented one PAWO member.

On Wednesday that week, the Port Alfred Employers' Federation approached the township's civic organisation. Employers had previously negotiated with the civic association during consumer boycotts. The Federation ignored PAWO. But the women's organisation was adamant that any negotiations should be conducted only with them and warned the civic not to negotiate on their behalf.

'We did not want men involved in organising or negotiating around the stayaway. Men are not victims of rape', explained Nkwinti. 'In any case we did not wish to speak to the Employers' Federation, but to the white women of Port Alfred.'

The next day the Employers' Federation sent a letter to the civic, saying they had attempted to negotiate, but were now giving up. The women were angered that their organisation kept being ignored.

On Saturday a group of white women went to the township to talk to a PAWO delegation. They met at the township civic's advice office. The PAWO delegation told the white women that

they would return to work as soon as their demands were met. 'But the white women were still unsympathetic. They insisted that the rapist had been charged and given bail. This was not true. Either they were lying, or the police lied to them'.

The African women had described the town as reactionary - a place made up of Afrikaans and English speakers with a lot of ex-Rhodesians. But they still found the callous attitude of the white women suprising.

On Monday, a week after the stayaway

began, a group of white English-speaking women approached the PAWO delegation and agreed to talk. They were taken on a tour of the township; they seemed sincere and promised to try to establish ongoing communication between the African and white women of Port Alfred. The delegation reported back to PAWO members later that day. Women agreed to return to work the next day.



Koleka Nkwinti - member of Port Alfred Women's Organisation

ACTIVISTS DETAINED

In the early hours of Tuesday 6 May, police detained Koleka Nkwinti, three members of the PAWO

delegation, the chairwoman of the Port Alfred Youth Congress (PAYCO), Koleka Nkwinti's husband and brother-in-law and seven other male members of community organisations. The women delegation members were released later in the day. The PAYCO leader had not been involved in the stayaway.

Koleka Nkwinti was held under section 50 of the Internal Security Act. She was interrogated about the stayaway during her two weeks in detention.

'The police asked me who was behind the stayaway. They couldn't believe women organised it themselves. They detained the male activists because they think men are behind everything women do', she said.

Nkwinti felt the stayaway had raised women's consciousness and made them more confident. Women organised food parcels

for her, hired a car to visit her, and negotiated with prison authorities in Alexandria, the town about 80 kilometres away where Nkwinti was held.

Responding to the detentions, the Port Alfred Residents' Civic Organisation launched a consumer boycott to demand the release of detainees.

The detentions and the consumer boycott made further contact with the white women impossible at this stage.

ANOTHER FORM OF OPPRESSION

The rapist was afforded police protection and escorted around the township by police during the stayaway. He was eventually charged with assault. But his house was burned down, and he no longer lives in the community.

Rape is usually a hidden issue in communities, with the victim often blamed for the assault. Families and the victim are often humiliated and ashamed to talk about the rape, a PAWO member pointed out. But in Port Alfred, people began to discuss grievances and common experiences. As community organisation developed, people recognised sexual assault as another form of oppression and as an attack on women's dignity.

'Sexual harassment is dealt with and spoken about openly in the community. A woman's word is trusted because everyone works together. Even if a woman is a drunkard, rape is unjustifiable - in fact it's worse since she's more vulnerable. Our men do not think women provoke rape in any way. Women do not experience humiliation when talking about sexual harassment, but community support,' said a PAWO member.

ROOTS OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATION

The stayaway was a remarkable demonstration of strength for an organisation only launched in March 1986.

When PAWO was first founded, it concerned itself with 'disciplining school students', whom it felt were 'getting out of hand'. Women felt communication between the youth and community was needed. They visited schools and discussed the responsibility



Gugile Nkwinti, PARCO member, was detained after the stayaway. Police 'think men are behind everything women do', said a PAWO member.

of students to their community. They argued that the youth needed to consult with other organisations, and not act unilaterally. The message was 'struggle is important, but discipline is too'.

Since then, PAWO has embarked on joint projects with the youth, aimed at creating recreational facilities and opportunities for the youth. Members are making or buying recreational equipment like musical instruments.

Another project is a handicraft centre in a disused beerhall. This is owned by a local businessman, and had been burned down and rebuilt, but never re-opened. The community is trying to buy it. If successful, the hall will operate as a self-help centre, in an attempt to cope with massive local unemployment, and will include a nursery school.

THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Other organisations in Port Alfred are the Port Alfred Residents' Civic Organisation (PARCO), Nonzamo Students' Guardian Association (NOSGA), Port Alfred Workers' Union (PAWU), a general

workers' union affiliated to SAAWU, and the Pensioners' Association (PAPA).

Twelve members, men and women, are appointed from each organisation to sit on the 48-person central committee. There are as yet no representatives from PAWO on the central committee, which takes decisions involving the whole community.

Street and area committees responsible to the central committee were established by June last year. No posters or pamphlets are needed to advertise meetings as street committees work effectively and fast.

PARCO established an advice office to deal with a range of legal and practical problems facing residents. It also set up a creche and a pre-primary school.

When the Eastern Cape Development Board threatened to remove the township's cemetery, PARCO organised against this by co-ordinating cemetery cleaning campaigns. Pensioners are responsible for providing flowers for graves. As a further gesture of community ownership, money was collected for a tombstone dedicated to the community's ancestors who lived and died in Port Alfred.

NOSGA was launched in 1983. It represents students at the primary,

secondary and high schools. Its first action was to dismiss the principal from the high school. The community took over the school, which is run by a parent-teacher-student association. It also pressurises authorities for better facilities.

PAPA was formed when it became apparent that pensioners were being paid different amounts. After negotiations with the Development Board, each pensioner receives the R158 due to him or her every two months.

PAPA is seeking different premises for pensioners to collect their pensions. At present pensioners must go to the Development Board's offices in the township to collect payments and are often forced to pay rent, thereby breaking the rent boycott begun last year.

Port Alfred is regarded as a model of township organisation in the area. Activists from surrounding towns keep in contact with developments in Port Alfred to see how street committees, the civic and the central committee work. The emergence of a strong women's organisation making its mark on township politics may thus have far-reaching effects.

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'Oukasie' — the Old Brits Location

Forced Removals Continue

Forced removals have not stopped in South Africa. Government policy on the old Brits location - 'Oukasie' - shows this clearly. But Oukasie residents have not passively accepted removal. The Brits Action Committee, together with a strong trade union movement in the area, has led community resistance to the planned removal to Lethlabile. The Transvaal Rural Action Committee reports.

In February 1985 the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Gerrit Viljoen, announced that all forced removals would stop. But the case of the old Brits location clearly proves that the South African government has not renounced this policy, but is merely pursuing it in a more sophisticated way. Government remains determined to move the people of the old Brits location to Lethlabile, a resettlement area bordering Bophuthatswana.

A SKETCH OF THE OLD BRITS LOCATION

Government has not built a house in the location since it was established 55 years ago in the 1930s. The rent and service charges on the original state housing, a few tin shacks, is R24 a month. The only services are refuse removal and removal of night-soil. The location has a bucket latrine system. There are no tarred roads, no drainage, no electricity and no street lighting. The community gets its water from 54 taps placed across the location.

The great majority of 'Oukasie' residents live in privately-built houses. Plot-holders built houses to accommodate not only their own families but also the many location residents who do not have their own homes. The approximately 1 000 landlords own their houses, but not the land on which they stand; there is no freehold in Oukasie.

Stands are generally very crowded,

The Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC) has worked closely with Brits location residents to oppose the removal to Lethlabile.

with in some cases 30 families occupying a large plot. There are on average three families per stand with as many as eight people sharing a room.

This overcrowding is due to the government's refusal to build more houses or to allow people to occupy land outside of the very small area proclaimed for African occupation. Adjoining farmland is available, but government refuses to allocate more land for expansion. In the past, as the location became increasingly crowded, the population spilled over onto farmland, and was forced to provide a certain amount of free labour in lieu of rent.

The location's condition clearly reveals a deliberate policy of government neglect. Through severe limits on money allocated, it has allowed the township to decline.

But in spite of this, the location with its population of 15 000 people (now reduced to about 10 000) has the vitality characteristic of a small, densely-populated village. Most people living in Oukasie were born there and feel they belong. It has strong community solidarity; since most employed residents work in nearby factories they also share a common work experience. Strong neighbourhood support networks built up over the years, too, help residents to survive the effects of recession and unemployment.

The location is very different to government-built townships. Housing design and street layout vary considerably. There are a number of solidly built, attractive houses and, unusually, an abundance of trees. The community recently made several parks, symbols of resistance to removal to Lethlabile. One is called 'Survival

Park', another, 'We Will Not Move'.

Most residents work in one of the approximately 40 large factories in the area. Examples are Firestone, Alfa Romeo (recently closed), Afrox, Lumex, Cliff's Engineering, ATC, Bosch and Steelbrite (B&S). Many of these are multinationals or have strong financial and technical links with multinationals. Since unionisation began in 1982, Brits has a history of strong trade union organisation and struggle.

Most of the members of the Brits Action Committee, formed to fight the removals, are actively involved or experienced in trade union organisation.

LETHLABILE

Government spokesmen say Lethlabile is a model township. The question is, what model? It looks like any other resettlement camp. There are 175 houses (for sale at R4 000, half the original price. The 'bargain' rate is designed to entice people to move). But most families live in appalling conditions, in tents or prefabricated corrugated iron shacks measuring about nine square metres each.

They are expected to build a house on the allocated site within two years. But



Senzeni Park - 'What did we do?' - a recently built people's park and symbol of resistance to removal.

The location's great advantage to workers is that it is only four kilometres from the Brits industrial area - within walking distance. Lethlabile residents must pay up to R30 per month on transport.

Unemployment in the old Brits location is very high. The recession (and perhaps some employers' desire to move away from an organised workforce) led to the closure in March 1984 of one of the two Steelbrite factories with a loss of 850 jobs; the Alfa Romeo closure in 1985 which cost about 1 200 jobs; and the Putco bus-building section which closed with the loss of 400 jobs. If people are moved to Lethlabile, 24 kilometres away from the industrial area, unemployed workers will find it still more difficult to find jobs.

given the very high unemployment in the area, most families will not be able to afford to build, and Lethlabile will become a worse slum than the Brits location.

A strange feature of Lethlabile is its cemetery. Most unconventionally, graves were dug prior to their occupants becoming available. So the landscape offers some 500 open graves, most of them waterlogged.

Lethlabile's only advantage over Oukasie is that each plot has a tap and a flush toilet. The question is why in 55 years government has not provided similar facilities in the old location.

Possibly the most negative thing about Lethlabile is where it is. Not only is it far from the Brits industrial area, but it borders Bophuthatswana. Government

has promised not to incorporate it into Bophuthatswana, but such promises have been broken before. Its location makes the likelihood of incorporation strong.

Residents of Lethlabile would then come under the authority of that bantustan's intensely repressive, union-bashing administration, with severe consequences for the many activists and unionists in the area. They would also face losing their South African citizenship, and South African urban residence rights.

Recent instances of the South African government breaking its word on non-incorporation are provided by the Ekangala and Vleifontein townships. Their residents were told they would not become part of any bantustan. Subsequently Vleifontein was incorporated into Venda and Ekangala is to become part of KwaNdebele.

THE PROCESS OF REMOVAL

No consultation

The removal decision has been brewing for some time. According to the Nationalist MP for Brits, JP Grobler, he has been working on the removal since 1977. He asserted too that the community had been consulted and were moving voluntarily.

It is untrue that residents of the old Brits location were adequately consulted. The community was not consulted and was given no opportunity to discuss the issue. Residents were first told of the impending removal to Lethlabile in December 1985 at a meeting called by the community council.

The community councillors now all live in Lethlabile, and were elected by a small proportion of Oukasie residents. Presumably they were the objects of government consultation.

Parliament was informed of the government's intention definitely to remove the Brits location to Lethlabile in February 1986.

After that, things moved swiftly. All the 175 houses already built in Lethlabile have been sold and about 800 sites allocated. About 4 000 people have moved to Lethlabile.

But this does not mean that Grobler's assertion that most old Brits location residents want to move, or that those

who have moved have done so voluntarily, is correct.

Carrot and stick

There are incentives to move: government supplies free buses for people to view Lethlabile, and pays for all removal costs. Businessmen were promised loans to establish new stores if they moved.

Deliberate government neglect of the old location has produced poor conditions that have driven some residents to move in hope of better prospects. But other factors also came into play.

An important negative pressure is that once a landlord has agreed to move - generally after being offered a large lump sum in compensation - he must demolish all dwellings on his plot regardless of their condition. All tenants have to move out. The site is then frozen for any future development or occupation. Thus many of the people who moved were ex-tenants of landlords who opted to go to Lethlabile. The lack of alternative accommodation forced the ex-tenants out.

Since January 1986 residents who requested empty Development Board houses or stands have been turned down. The Development Board's policy was to tear down houses as soon as they became vacant. In one case a Brits Action Committee member applying for a vacant stand or house was instructed to tell his lawyer to 'shove the application up his arse'. The Board's policy was subsequently successfully challenged in court.

People seeking jobs through the labour bureau in the Brits industrial complex are being asked when they intend moving to Lethlabile - another pressure to move.

For the last six years residents of the old Brits location have been forced by the government to bury their dead in Lethlabile. This is despite the fact that there is land available to extend the old Brits location cemetery. After a great deal of pressure, the Development Board recently gave permission for a person to be buried in the old Brits location.

Repression, harassment and violence

A very important factor hastening

the movement of people from Oukasie was police action and the emergence of vigilantes. Many residents of the old location decided to move because of rumours that they would be victimised, and some young people moved with their parents who were afraid to stay.

Leaders of the anti-removal struggle faced petrol-bombings, a grenade attack and a murderous bomb attack. An almost continuous police presence in what was previously a very peaceful location severely dampened the determination of a sizeable part of the population to stay.

After February 1986, the old peace was gone, and the Brits Action Committee faced intense police surveillance. (The present whereabouts of committee members may not be reported).

For two nights after a public meeting towards the end of February, police virtually occupied the township. None of the Brits Action Committee could sleep at home for fear of arrest or attack. The house of its public relations officer was invaded by some 60 police and soldiers. After a meeting between the Action Committee, its lawyer and the police, police presence in the location decreased.

In the early morning of 7 March, the houses of the chairperson of the Action Committee, Marshall Buys, and the president of the Young Christian Workers, Jacob Mohatshe, were petrol-bombed. Residents were fired on when they tried to pursue the attackers. Nobody was hurt in these two attacks, though two rooms in the Buys' house were badly burnt.

A public meeting in a church hall that evening to discuss the petrol-bombing was teargassed. Many people were badly cut by glass as they desperately tried to escape from the packed hall. The teargassing followed a speaker's request that the soldiers crawling towards the hall go home as they were not protecting the people.

On Saturday morning, 8 March, the chairperson of the Brits Action Committee was arrested and charged with arson. Charges were subsequently withdrawn, and he was released three days later.

In the early hours of Tuesday, 11 March, the house of the secretary of the Action Committee, Sello Ramakobye, was petrol-bombed. Immediately afterwards the home of parents of a leading activist, Leonard Brown, was hand-grenaded. Nobody has yet been arrested

in connection with the incidents. Brown was detained on 15 April, and subsequently charged with attempted murder and intimidation.

Tuesday, 27 May was a tragic day in the Brits struggle. A lethal home-made bomb was thrown into the house of MAWU organiser David Modimoeng. His wife Joyce was killed as the house was ripped apart. Miraculously, Modimoeng and his children were not badly hurt.

Employers' silence

Employers, by initially remaining silent on the removal issue and by offering loans to workers to build in Lethlabile, played a major role in encouraging the movement to Lethlabile. Workers are questioning why employers never offered loans to workers to improve their homes in the old Brits location.

HOW THE STRUGGLE IS WAGED

Community mobilisation

Despite violence and harassment, community mobilisation against the removal is successful. By the end of the first week in March approximately 4 000 people had signed a petition against the removal. From early December 1985, regular and well-attended public meetings were called by the Brits Action Committee. These meetings resolved to fight the removal to the bitter end.

The Action Committee was also instrumental in forming BRIYO, the Brits Youth Organisation. The youth became very active in organising to resist the removal.

The Brits Action Committee has a number of highly specific and concrete objectives, and has put forward a series of demands on behalf of the community.

Action Committee demands

The Action Committee has demanded that:

- * The old location's main road be tarred;
- * A proper sewerage and drainage system be built;
- * Proper schools be built;
- * Land in the surrounding area be purchased and freehold rights be

extended as promised;

- * Township stands be sold to residents;
- * A graveyard be made and corpses exhumed from the new one in Lethlabile.

and Allied Workers Union, the National Automobile and Allied Workers Union, the Brits Action Committee and the Transvaal Rural Action Committee met the



Lethlabile - the new 'model' township

Committee projects

The committee's projects are equally practical. They aim to:

- * Help people who need stands to get and occupy them;
- * Help businesspeople who apply for licences to trade in the old location;
- * Embark on self-help projects, including building proper brick toilets on all the stands, making parks and providing assistance for temporary housing to tenants and 'rebellious family members' rendered homeless by a landlord's move;
- * Retain surveyors to assess the actual values of the houses in the old township.
- * Establish if Lethlabile is habitable.

Trade union action

The Action Committee, through the trade unions, is putting pressure on the large employers in the area to challenge the removal.

The National Automobile and Allied Workers Union - NAAWU - has already challenged Firestone as to why it donated \$15 000 for building a creche in Lethlabile, and the firm has promised to reconsider the decision. Firestone was also challenged about granting loans to people wanting to move to Lethlabile. This issue is still under discussion.

Towards the end of March, the Metal

managements of organised factories in the area. Also present were representatives of the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI) and the Steel, Engineering, and Iron Federation of South Africa (SEIFSA).

The employer organisations and managements were asked to put pressure on government to drop the decision to relocate the old location. The FCI and SEIFSA subsequently contacted the government on the removal issue.

A further meeting with employers was held at the end of April. They were called on to make a public statement voicing their objection to any forced removal of old Brits location residents and to any intention to deproclaim the location. The FCI and SEIFSA agreed, and also committed themselves to help finance the upgrading of the location.

This meeting had other results. Local Nationalist MP Grobler agreed to see the Action Committee. At this historic meeting, he agreed that nobody would be forced to move from the old Brits location. But he refused to guarantee that the location would not be deproclaimed as an African area. If the location is deproclaimed, everybody classified African will have to move.

International worker organisations were also been drawn in. The International Metalworkers Federation sent a telex to State President PW Botha strongly condemning the government's attempts to remove the old Brits location.

The upgrading report

Another important aspect of the Brits struggle is the plan to present a report to the community, government and employers illustrating that upgrading the old Brits location is physically and financially possible. A team of professionals has been assembled and is working closely with the community in drawing up the report.

The legal strategy

The Development Board's decision not to allocate vacant stands or houses to Brits residents was challenged in the Supreme Court. The judge ruled in favour of the Brits resident who applied for the first available house or stand, ordering the Board to allocate the first available house to the applicant.

As a consequence, the Board will have to consider every application for a house or vacant site and will be challenged in court if it does not agree to a reasonable request. It was also instructed to stop demolition of houses, failing which it will be taken to court. The Development Board has now allocated a further six houses to Oukasie residents.

WHY DOES GOVERNMENT WANT THE MOVE?

Official reasons for the removal are a supposed land shortage hindering expansion of the old location, and the claim that the old Brits location is a slum.

As indicated, the location adjoins extensive farmland, and there is little doubt that if the government was willing it could buy the land required.

The argument that the Brits location is a slum requires more serious attention. Though it has some solid houses and appealing features, there is some truth in the official view - though of course the main reason is deliberate official neglect, the effects of which could, with time and money, be reversed.

Why then did government not allocate money used to build Lethlabile to upgrade and extend the Brits location?

A central, if tacit, factor behind the official desire to move Oukasie seems to

be its proximity to the white group area of the town, especially to the recently built white suburb of Elandsrand. There is little doubt that many white residents of Brits would be delighted to see the location moved 20 kilometres further away out of sight and mind, and that they have pressured their MP to this effect.

Brits' white residents are a conservative electorate: in the 1981 election the ultra-rightwing HNP obtained 3 517 votes while the National Party obtained 5 362 votes, a majority of only 1 845. Recently Deputy Information Minister Louis Nel was prevented from addressing a Brits National Party meeting by ultra-rightwingers. The need to placate these and retain support for the governing party is an important factor in recent pressures on the old location.

Another possible reason for the removal could be government and employer determination to smash the strong trade unions that emerged in the Brits area. Incorporating Lethlabile into Bophuthatswana would weaken the union movement.

'WE ARE HERE TO STAY'

To date government has refused publicly to announce that the old Brits location is no longer under threat of removal to Lethlabile. If, despite the gains and commitments made in negotiation with employer and government representatives, the removal goes ahead, it will prove yet again that forced removal is still on the agenda - and that official promises cannot be trusted.

Whether the government will use the present state of emergency and actions taken under its provisions to try to obliterate resistance to removal, and reverse the community's gains so far, remains to be seen.

Still, the remaining residents of the old Brits location are adamant that they are not going to move. Their legal victories, and the victimisation and death of unionists, seem to have strengthened this resolve. Moving to Lethlabile is non-negotiable. In the old Brits location they are still saying, 'Ga go mo re yang, re dula go na mo': 'We are not going anywhere, we are here to stay'.

COURTS

Passtoors Begins 10 Year Sentence

Helene Passtoors and Klaas de Jonge arrived in Mozambique in time for a funeral. The victims of a South African Defence Force raid on the Maputo suburb of Matola were being buried. The date was 8 February 1981.

Five years on, Passtoors was convicted of treason and began a sentence in a South African prison. Her ex-husband, Klaas De Jonge, having escaped from security police custody, was living the life of a fugitive, confined to a floor in the old Dutch embassy in Pretoria.

In the five years since they first arrived in Mozambique, the events which shaped Southern Africa in the 1980s also formed their lives. South Africa gave material and military support to the rebel MNR as part of its plan to destabilise Mozambique's FRELIMO government; Ruth First, scientific director of the African Studies Centre at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, was killed in her office by a letter-bomb widely believed to be the work of South African agents; First's husband, senior ANC and SACP official Joe Slovo, recruited Passtoors to work for the ANC.

Passtoors was employed by the Mozambican government as a linguistics expert at the university. There she became close to Ruth First, regarding her as the mentor of research into human sciences in Mozambique. First's murder, in August 1982, severely affected both Passtoors and De Jonge. In the period of pre-Nkomati Mozambique, they mixed socially and politically with ANC members and other South African exiles.

By February 1985, Passtoors had taken up temporary residence in Johannesburg, and was registered for a doctorate in linguistics at the University of Witwatersrand. She and De Jonge had separated - later divorced - and he was living in Harare.

Passtoors agreed to continue her ANC activities in South Africa, but the organisation advised her to remain inactive for six months. This was to establish whether she was the subject of any South African investigations. The advice was good, for soon after her arrival in Johannesburg, members of the National Intelligence Service placed her under observation. By June 1985, her telephone was permanently bugged, and

security police even monitored a conversation between Passtoors and an ANC member in a Durban hotel.

Towards the end of June, Klaas de Jonge contacted Passtoors, and asked her assistance in establishing an arms cache near Halfway House, between Pretoria and Johannesburg. On 22 June, security policeman Pitout saw Passtoors pick up De Jonge in her car, and drive to Halfway House. They returned to the same spot that evening in De Jonge's car, and set up the arms cache.

De Jonge was arrested the next day on his way to Botswana. In a secret compartment in his car police found a map detailing the location of the Halfway House cache, and a coded message from Passtoors.

Police kept his detention secret as they maintained surveillance on Passtoors. Finally, on 28 June, security police detained Passtoors, holding her in solitary confinement until her first appearance in court on 28 February 1986.

When she appeared in court, Passtoors faced charges of treason and terrorism. The state's case against her rested on an alleged conspiracy between her, the ANC and its members and supporters. The state alleged that Passtoors had been involved in various activities on behalf of the ANC. These included:

- * the establishment of arms caches. According to the state, Passtoors and De Jonge were responsible for two arms caches near the Umfolozi game reserve in Natal; one at Riverside Road, Amanzimtoti; two at Muldersdrift; and one at Halfway House.

- * reconnaissance and identification of targets for sabotage. The state alleged that, during 1981 and 1982, Passtoors and De Jonge conducted a reconnaissance of the strategic oil pipeline from the coast to Johannesburg, particularly the pumping stations of Mhlabatini, Quaggasnek, Kendal and Scheepersnek, and the rail bridge crossing the Umfolozi river.

- * communicating and liaising with the ANC and establishing a communications network. The state claimed Passtoors obtained a post box under a false name at the Braamfontein, Johannesburg, post office; sent information to the ANC with De Jonge and her daughter, Brigitte van Leynseele; established a 'dead letter

box' in Lenasia; and learnt a secret code for communicating with the ANC.

* establishing an escape route for ANC member Ismail Ebrahim. This activity, codenamed 'Operation Mango, involved a senior ANC operative (Ismail Ebrahim) who was also Passtoors' lover. Ebrahim, released after serving 15 years on Robben Island for his involvement with Umkhonto we Sizwe, was restricted to the Durban magisterial district. According to the state, Passtoors planned to assist Ebrahim to escape from South Africa.

She acted as a link between Ebrahim and ANC members Ronnie Kasrils (codename 'Tony') and Dr Dlamini (codename 'Joan'); she travelled to the Eastern Transvaal to reconnoitre an area near Swaziland to be used as an escape route. While in this area she stayed in various hotels under false names. On 7 and 11 June Passtoors went to Swaziland to liaise with the ANC about Operation Mango. On 17 June she bought three maps of the planned escape area, and that night flew to Durban to meet Ebrahim at the Blue Waters Hotel where they discussed the escape plan. Security-police tape-recorded the meeting.

At the start of her trial, held in the Johannesburg Rand Supreme Court, Passtoors pleaded not guilty to all charges. But she did acknowledge a number of the state's claims, admitted that she was a supporter of the ANC and associated herself with its aims. To this end, she communicated with the ANC, applied for a post box under a false name, and learnt secret codes.

She also admitted Ismail Ebrahim was an ANC member, and that an intimate relationship developed between them during 1984 in Swaziland. They continued to see each other during 1985, when Passtoors had taken up residence in Johannesburg and Ebrahim was illegally in South Africa. Passtoors acknowledged undertaking Operation Mango to assist Ebrahim in escaping from South Africa.

Regarding the Umfolozi, Amanzimtoti, Muldersdrift and Halfway House arms caches, Passtoors admitted knowledge of these, and pointed out their positions to police after her arrest. But she denied that she knew the exact contents of these caches.

Finally, Passtoors admitted that, on 27 June 1986, she gave her daughter a letter for an ANC member in Harare.

While many of the facts of the case were not in dispute, Passtoors denied that she was guilty of treason, as she did not owe allegiance to the South African state. As a Dutch and Belgian citizen, only resident in South Africa from February-June 1985, the defence contended that she could not be found guilty of treason. After lengthy legal argument, presiding judge Spoelstra found that the nature of Passtoors' residence in South Africa did create a duty of allegiance to the state, and that she was therefore guilty of treason. However, he found her not guilty of terrorism.

Many of the specific allegations levelled by the state were not proved. For example, while she admitted knowledge of a number of arms caches, she was found responsible for establishing only the Halfway House one; and the claim that she identified sabotage targets for the ANC was not established in evidence.

The Halfway House arms cache, set up jointly by De Jonge and Passtoors, contained the following:

- * 8 SZ6 demolition charges
- * 2 SZ3 demolition charges
- * 5 electrical detonators
- * 10 MD5M mechanical detonators
- * 1 portable radio with transmitter
- * 1 radio signal receiver
- * 1 battery charger
- * 1 radio antenna.

While Passtoors did not give evidence on the merits of the case against her, she did enter the witness box to give evidence in mitigation of sentence. Dressed in ANC colours, she explained to the judge that as a child born during the second world war, whose parents experienced the Nazi invasion, she believed it was her moral duty to involve herself in the South African struggle, and to oppose racism and colonialism. Her experiences in post-war Europe, in America when the Vietnam war was at its height, in Zaire, and in a colonially-devastated Mozambique threatened by South African attacks, had deeply influenced her views on politics.

In Mozambique she became aware the emancipation of the Southern African sub-continent was dependent on South African liberation. So when approached to assist the ANC in Maputo, she saw it as a question of duty, not choice.

Asked whether she had not considered

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her four children before becoming involved in dangerous activities, she replied: 'I owed it to my children. They were born in Africa. They saw the things I saw, the poverty, the inequality. The time would come when they would say "Mama, it's nice you say all this, but what have you actually done?"'

Her activities around Operation Mango and the Halfway House arms cache ran counter to her brief to lie low for the first six months in South Africa. But she believed her assistance was necessary.

Passtoors was in detention for eight months. Towards the end of December, after nearly six months in solitary confinement at John Vorster Square, she experienced severe depression and emotional exhaustion. For ten days she was unable to walk and was finally admitted to the Johannesburg General Hospital for four weeks.

Early in January 1986, Passtoors wrote to the doctor treating her, explaining the nature of her illness. 'Dear Doctor', she wrote. 'It is easier to write this than to talk of tomorrow. If you wonder why I feel sick, whether it be depression or exhaustion, please consider the following: I have been detained under Section 29 (of the Internal Security Act) for six-and-a-half months, and there is no end in view. For all these months there has not been one moment that I was not watched on video monitor by the wardresses. I have not once gone to the toilet, done exercises without feeling acutely humiliated. I have not once been able to express anger or frustration by innocent means such as throwing my comb against a wall or pounding my fists without causing a major stir, being video-taped and reported to the security police.

'There is not one day that I have not been reminded of the many people who have committed suicide in this place. My whole cell has been equipped with so-called suicide prevention means - the video camera, perspex plates, bricked-in toilet bowl...I have only to look at the window and I see Neil Aggett hanging there...

'Perspex plates soundproof the cell to a considerable degree, so that any voices are reduced to a mumble, if heard

at all. There are metal blinds before the windows which exclude daylight and even my view of the sky.

'Then, as special treatment for me, a bug, a microphone was installed in my cell in early September in such a way that it was made sure I knew it. Ever since then I was not only watched, but every natural body sound, every mumble in my sleep, was taped and listened to directly...The inhibition became such that even when I broke down one day in November, I was unable to sob in my cell...

'Ten days ago I felt my last strength slip away. I was exhausted and my body has taken over ever since. I was engulfed by deep sadness and strong feelings of tenderness at the same time. Now I only feel more or less in control as long as I stay in my "bed" in my cell and left alone'.

After four weeks in hospital Passtoors returned to John Vorster Square and Section 29 detention.

As an African linguist of international repute, Passtoors lectured at the University of Leiden before moving to Eduard Mondlane University where she served as an assistant professor.

In passing sentence, Justice Spoelstra noted that she had refused to reply to questions which would reveal ANC activities, except where these were already known by the police. He also indicated that Passtoors' role was possibly larger than had been shown in the trial.

The judge said he did not hold it against Passtoors that she appeared in court in ANC colours. 'This merely serves to prove your deep and utter commitment to the ANC', he said.

Spoelstra also noted that acts of treason normally flow from deep-seated and firm political conviction, and that such convictions are not often changed by arrest, detention or prosecution. 'Your attitude that your convictions were strengthened by what you experienced after your arrest is neither strange nor unexpected', he said.

In the Rand Supreme Court, on 19 May 1986, Justice Spoelstra sentenced Helene Passtoors to 10 years imprisonment for treason. Her alleged co-conspirator, Klaas de Jonge, remains in the Dutch embassy, Pretoria.

Strikes and Disputes: Transvaal

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Afgate	MAWU		02.06-03.06.86	When management decided to take action against those who had not come to work during the Tembisa stayaways, workers downed tools and slept overnight in the factory. The next day the company agreed to withdraw all disciplinary cases, and workers ended the strike.
Barlow Rand Alrode	MAWU	700	20.05-04.06.86	On 20 May workers held a one-day strike protesting against harassment of black workers. Following delays in establishing a recognition agreement, workers began a sleep-in strike on 26 May demanding a wage increase of R1,50/hour. The strike ended when the company agreed to conclude negotiations over outstanding clauses in the recognition agreement, and to discuss the wage demands.
BTR Dunlop Benoni	CWIU	500	29.05-04.06.86	Workers went on strike over wage demands and alleged the company had failed to negotiate in good faith. The CWIU accused management of repeatedly rejecting union proposals on annual leave, annual bonuses, maternity leave, public holidays, shift allowances and a reduction in working hours. BTR offered a 15c/hour increase, a 6% increase on the minimum rate and less on higher rates. The union demanded R1,07/hour increase for low grade workers bringing the minimum rate to R3,20/hour compared to the current rate of R2,43/hour. The strike ended when, on 4 June, the company obtained an interdict restraining the union from picketing the plant, intimidating anyone entering the premises and damaging company property. Workers returned to work the next day and management agreed to continue negotiating.
Coca Cola Bottling Clayville	FAWU	1 600	23.06.86	About 300 workers went on strike at the Clayville plant in Olifantsfontein, Midrand, in protest against the dismissal of a colleague accused of fraud by management. They allege management did not give him a fair hearing. By 4 July the strike had spread to Coca Cola's Devlin (780 workers) and Wadeville (300) plants, and Vaal Bottlers (250). FAWU, (the Food and Allied Workers Union), is a new COSATU affiliate, formed through union mergers at the beginning of June. The union consists of more than 60 000 members from SFAWU, FCWU, GWU, SAAWU, and RAWU.
Colgate-Palmolive Boksburg	CWIU	350	26.06.86	The company signed a wage agreement granting a 17% across-the-board increase. This brings the minimum monthly wage to R683,84 - one of the highest minimums in the country. The company also agreed to 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays for 1987.
Dobsonville Town Council		2 000	04.06.86	Dobsonville council employees, excluding council police, threatened to strike because of the council's failure to grant them pay increases. Over 50 workers staged a sit-in at the offices, but were dispersed when they tried to hold a meeting. Workers said management agreed to a 10% increase retrospective to 1 September 1985 during negotiations. Workers had demanded a 12% increase from April. Only police were granted a 12% increase from June and an additional R50 for the past two months.
Foschini	CCAWUSA	250	25.04-09.06.86	CCAWUSA began a national strike at 55 Foschini stores following the retrenchment of 301 workers countrywide. Management ignored the union's requests for short-time or reduced working hours as an alternative to retrenchment. CCAWUSA demanded reinstatement and negotiation on work-sharing schemes. On 3 May negotiations deadlocked.

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				On 14 May about 30 workers staged a sleep-in strike at the company's Isando warehouse. On 16 May Foschini obtained a supreme court interdict preventing workers from occupying the warehouse. COSATU threatened to launch a boycott of stores in the Foschini group, which includes Page Stores, Markhams and American Swiss. CCAWUSA threatened to call out its 60 000 members in a solidarity strike. Workers ignored Foschini's ultimatum to return to work or face dismissal on 26 May. Sixty-six strikers were dismissed. Thirteen were arrested outside Foschini stores and two were detained under the Internal Security Act. On 2 June, Foschini agreed to a request from CCAWUSA to refer the dispute to mediation and undertook to suspend dismissals. Strikers returned to work on 9 June, six weeks after the strike began. It was agreed that the retrenched workers would receive R575 severance pay and two weeks pay for each year of service; no victimisation or disciplinary action against strikers would take place and they would receive 75% of their salaries by 17 June; management would withdraw termination notices issued to workers who had ignored the ultimatum to return to work.
GEC Benoni, Germiston, Springs, Welkom	MAWU	1 300	April-06.06.86	At the end of April, workers at GEC's Springs plant staged a work stoppage in support of wage demands. The union alleged that management called in the army to remove workers from the plant. Workers returned to work on 2 May but staged a go-slow in protest. Management dismissed 48 workers on 19 May and told MAWU they would be replaced by white workers. A strike began on 16 May at GEC Knights, but by 20 May had spread to both the Springs and Germiston factories. A GEC depot in Welkom also stopped work. Workers demanded a wage increase of R1/h across-the-board, company-level bargaining and the reinstatement of 48 dismissed colleagues. MAWU accused GEC of anti-unionism: for three years the company had delayed stop order facilities, shop steward recognition and other basic rights. GEC also attempted to protect white unions by trying to force MAWU to accept that all issues for negotiation should be brought up jointly by all unions in the company. On 4 June about 150 workers staged a sit-in at GEC headquarters. Initially, they bussed to GEC's Parktown offices to deliver a letter to the managing director. While there, they staged a placard demonstration outside the offices in the rain, but managed to get inside when the company's financial director came to speak to them. On 5 June management locked out strikers and police arrested 198 workers at the Springs plant. Eventually the company agreed to meet shop stewards and union officials on 6 June. After several meetings between management and worker representatives, the 49 dismissed workers were reinstated, and GEC committed itself to negotiating a full recognition agreement at the three plants by the end of July.
Highveld Steel	MAWU	4500	20.05.86	Workers went on strike demanding the reinstatement of four colleagues dismissed after a national one-hour stoppage on 17 April. This was in protest against SEIFSA's refusal to negotiate a living wage. All workers who participated in the 17 April stoppage were given written warnings, but seven, who had already received final warnings, were dismissed. After appeals by shop stewards, three were taken back. Workers returned to work on 20 May when it was agreed to refer the dismissal of the remaining four to a mediator. The four dismissed workers were reinstated pending mediation. As a result of mediation, the four were permanently reinstated.

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				According to MAWU, Highveld Steel was the only company in the metal industry to take disciplinary action over the 17 April stoppage.
KwaNdebele Public Service			15.07.86	Public servants went on strike in protest against the planned 'independence' of the KwaNdebele bantustan in December. The stoppage affected 27 clinics, schools, magistrates courts and post offices. The strike was resumed three days later.
Mitchell Cotts Benoni	MAWU	200	12.06.86	When management attempted to reduce both working hours and wages, 200 workers went on strike. Later the same day management backed down, and agreed to pay workers for time lost during the strike.
Noristan	SACWU	320	12.03.86	Workers went on strike following the dismissal of 60 workers for allegedly sabotaging production. Workers ignored an ultimatum to return to work on 13 March and were dismissed. Noristan and SACWU agreed to mediation. In May, mediation collapsed when Noristan agreed to rehire only 130 workers.
Ozasteel East Rand	MIWUSA	50	17.07.86	The company agreed to reduce the working week from 45 to 40 hours/week. Workers would receive a 10% across-the-board increase from 1 July with further increases in January. Those with less than a year's service will now be paid a minimum wage of R128,80/week compared to the old rate of R116,69/week. The weekly rate for employees with up to six years service will rise from R117,69 to R129,60/week.
Pioneer Concrete Johannesburg, Boksburg Pta, VD Biyl, Vereenig	BAMCWU	800	26.05.86	Workers at five plants downed tools in protest against dismissals of colleagues from the Boksburg and Johannesburg plants. The fired workers were accused of being drunk on duty and misappropriating company funds.
Recycling Plastics	CWIU		04.07.86	The union recently concluded an agreement granting women six months maternity leave, one month of which is paid at full wages; the right to return to their jobs after maternity leave; and ante- and post-natal checkups. An across-the-board increase of 45c was also agreed to, bringing the minimum wage to R2,15/hour.
SA Breweries Pretoria	FBWU		17.07.86	At the conclusion of wage negotiations, SAB agreed to a 27% wage increase and to the recognition of 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays. FBWU will try to negotiate the same conditions for SAB's Nelspruit plant.
SA Cutlery	SABS	46	Jan-June 1986	On 30 January 250 workers refused to start work until management discussed the year-long delay in establishing union stop order facilities. The company responded by evicting the workers and dismissing 46, including four shop stewards, all described as agitators. SABS declared a dispute and lodged an application for reinstatement with the industrial court. The dispute was also referred to the metal industrial council where the parties agreed to mediation. At the second mediation meeting the company announced that it was in provisional liquidation. Nevertheless the court found that the dismissals were unfair and ordered reinstatement of the workers. Since the company is in liquidation it is likely that the workers will be regarded as preferential creditors.

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Sandvik Brakpan, Springs, Benoni, Krugersdorp	MAWU SEAWU		June 1986	Following lengthy wage talks which began in March the unions won a R3,50/hour minimum wage, May Day as a public holiday and an agreement that workers will not lose their attendance bonuses if they report up to 10 minutes late for work. Sandvik workers have been boycotting overtime since February.
Sasko Flour (Premier Milling)	FAWU		06.06-	On 6 June more than 270 workers began a sleep-in strike at the Pretoria Bon Accord plant in protest against the retrenchment of 42 workers and the company's failure to follow accepted retrenchment principles. The retrenched workers defied a management ultimatum to collect their final pay packets and retrenchment benefits on 6 June. Strikers also ignored management's ultimatum to return to work on 9 June and 244 were dismissed. They refused to leave the premises and the company obtained an interdict the next day to evict them. Workers at Premier's Pretoria West plant and at the independent Ruto Flour Mill held solidarity strikes on 10 June.
Sasol	CWIU	14 700	05.07.86	Sasol declared a dispute at Secunda after the union rejected its offer of a minimum wage of R216/month for 8 700 workers. The union demanded a new minimum of R312/month. The company also rejected CWIU's request for a reduction of working hours from 51 hours a week. At the Sasol 2 and 3 plants the union declared a dispute with the company following its rejection of Sasol's offer of R450/month minimum wage. CWIU demanded R615/month. COSATU meetings were banned at Secunda and CWIU officials were harassed. The union has accused Sasol of taking advantage of the state of emergency. Sasol denied these allegations.
Securitas Langlaagte	GAWU		18.05.86	A personnel manager was attacked and his car set alight in a dispute over working hours and wage increases. Workers allege the manager did not explain their grievances to management and took bribes. Workers were paid R127,61 fortnightly irrespective of years of service and received a 50c/day increase after two years. The manager demanded they work longer hours. Workers went on strike and 12 people were arrested but released on bail. Management agreed to increase wages by 15% from 16 June.
SEIFSA	IMF unions		15.04.86	MAWU, EAWU and SEAWU, representing more than 40 000 workers, imposed a national overtime ban from 19 May in protest against SEIFSA's failure to meet IMF union demands. These were for a living wage of R3,50/hour, an across-the-board increase of 50c/hour, recognition of May Day as a paid holiday, a 40-hour working week without loss of pay, right to strike without dismissal, six months paid maternity leave with job guarantee, no SEIFSA factory to make products for the police or army, and an undertaking from employers not to involve the police or defence force in labour matters. On 25 April MAWU and EAWU declared a dispute with SEIFSA. A third round of talks, which began on 5 June, deadlocked when SEIFSA said its wage offer was final. SABS, EAWU and the Eastern Province and Border Engineering and General Union also declared a dispute with SEIFSA. At a further meeting on 27 June SEIFSA raised its wage offer from a 28c/hour increase to a 32c/hour increase bringing the minimum rate to R2,22/hour. SABS recommended that its members accept the offer on the condition that employers agreed to resolve several issues including levels of collective bargaining, redefinition of job categories and wage structures. At MAWU's congress on 3-5 July the union rejected SEIFSA's offer and decided to arrange strike

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				ballots among its 44 000 members to establish support for a legal national strike. In mid-July, work stoppages in support of IMF demands occurred at Baldwin in Brakpan, Central Brass in Roodepoort and Elbard Products in Krugersdorp.
Sentrachem, Karbochem, NCP, Fedmis, Agrihold Newcastle, Sasolburg, Germiston, Pretoria, Kempton Park	SACWU	3 000	12.05 -	Workers went on strike after four months of wage negotiations and the failure of a conciliation board to resolve the dispute. SACWU demanded an across-the-board monthly increase of R250 on top of the present minimum of R450. SACWU accused the company of offering black workers less than it granted white workers in the same grades in 1984. On 19 May a group of workers picketed Sentrachem head office. On 23 May Germiston NCP obtained an eviction order against 736 workers occupying the factory and an interdict preventing them from occupying the premises unless authorised to do so. Police and SADF forcibly evicted the workers.
Switchking Wynberg	MAWU	200	12.05.86	MAWU demanded a 75c/hour increase and workers staged a go-slow strike in support of this. On 13 May they began a sit-in strike. The next day management dismissed the workers, closed the factory for an indefinite period, and threatened to move the factory to Babelegi and cut staffing by 20-30%. Switchking refused to bargain at plant level while annual wage negotiations were in progress.
Twins-Propan Wadeville	CWIU	280	11.07-14.07.86	Workers went on strike demanding R50/week increase, reduced working hours, maternity and paternity leave and 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays. The company offered R21/week increase bringing the minimum wage to R131/week, with a one hour reduction in working hours, or R25/week increase with other demands to be discussed later. On 14 July workers slept on factory premises and the following day were sacked. On the same day, when workers agreed to end their strike, they were reinstated.
Tembisa Town Council	SABMAWU	1 000	19.05-23.05.86	Workers from the sanitation, administration, police, parks, recreation, treasury and electricity departments went on strike demanding R700 minimum monthly wage, reinstatement of three dismissed colleagues, recognition of SABMAWU, and the dismissal of three white officials who were abusive to black workers. Workers were also upset about the deduction of pay from those who stayed away from work on 14 March to attend a funeral. The council said it would reply to the grievances on 23 June. Workers were instructed by letter to return to work on 23 May or face dismissal. The council fired its workforce and began recruiting new workers. SABMAWU threatened to call out thousands of workers employed by the East Rand Development Board. On 29 May the council brought an urgent application to the supreme court to evict council employees from their homes. Scab workers abandoned their jobs after warnings from residents. Youths launched a refuse removal campaign at the beginning of June but were stopped by police who also allegedly confiscated trucks borrowed from local businessmen. On 4 June scabs carrying out refuse removal were attacked by a group of youths. On 10 June, 68 workers were arrested in pre-dawn raids and charged with trespassing in council-owned houses. Many workers were allegedly detained on 3 July outside council offices. On 3 July five dismissed workers brought an urgent application to the Rand Supreme Court asking for their dismissal to be declared unlawful and for reinstatement. The judge found that the dismissals

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				were unlawful and thus null and void. But he said it was futile for the court to order their reinstatement because the mutual trust between the council and the fired workers had been irreparably damaged.
Wrightech Boksburg	MAWU	620	16.06-23.06.86	Workers demanded a R1 across-the-board increase, and rejected guidelines for negotiations proposed by management. When negotiations broke down workers locked the factory gates to ensure that management continued negotiating and did not go home. The gates were later opened after events which may not be reported in terms of state of emergency regulations. On 23 June workers were dismissed. Police action occurred which also may not be reported. Two days later workers returned to work without loss of benefits when the company agreed to a 40c across-the-board increase with immediate effect and an attendance bonus of 10c/hour from 1 July. According to MAWU, coloured workers from the SABS joined in the action, and workers were able to show management a united front.

Strikes and Disputes: Natal

BTR Dunlop Durban	MAWU	1 200	25.06 -	Workers went on a legal strike following a strike ballot. They rejected management's offer of an 11% increase for lowest-paid workers and 6% for highest-paid workers arguing that it fell below the inflation rate of 19%. They dropped demands relating to long service, overtime rates, the shift system and May Day. MAWU demanded a 50c/hour across-the-board increase, raising the minimum wage to R3,00. Workers picketed the main gate and prevented vehicles entering or leaving. On 27 June BTR obtained a temporary court order restraining union members from entering company premises without management consent. Workers were also compelled to leave the factory premises. Management denied MAWU's claims that workers were forcibly evicted from the premises and that it was using emergency regulations to break the strike. Management has offered to pay a 50c across-the-board increase, but only if the union will extend this agreement beyond 12 months. MAWU has rejected this offer.
Clover Dairies Congella	SFAWU	600	23.05.86	A 15-hour strike ended when three workers, who were alleged to be listing workers' names on UWUSA membership forms without their consent, were suspended. The Durban Supreme Court granted a restraining order against four workers, including a SFAWU shop steward, who allegedly threatened two UWUSA members with death.
Interpak	PWAWU		12.06.86	Workers went on strike protesting against the dismissal of a shop steward. Interpak agreed to pay workers for the day on strike and the steward's status was altered to suspension, rather than dismissal, when negotiations to resolve the dispute began.
Republican Press	PWAWU SATU		17.07.86	SATU's urgent application to prevent PWAWU intimidating SATU members at Republican Press in Durban and Kohler Corrugated Board in Boksburg was dismissed in the Rand Supreme Court. SATU alleged that on 15 July PWAWU members forced SATU members to leave the Durban plant premises.

COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
Toyota SA Prospecton Durban	NAAWU	1 500	10.07-14.07.86	Workers gathered outside the plant and began picketing for higher wages after the company announced that short time would be introduced the next week. Strikers said they would return to work on 14 July while negotiations continued.
Sizani Mazulu bus service	TGWU		17.07.86	Workers stopped work for eight hours when management refused to suspend a driver who was causing conflict by recruiting for UWUSA. The drivers wanted the man suspended until 18 May when it was planned to discuss the issue at a union meeting. Instead they discussed it during the stoppage.

Strikes and Disputes: Mines

Chamber of Mines	NUM		23.05.86	<p>At the beginning of annual wage talks the Chamber demanded agreement on preconditions to negotiations before tabling a wage offer. The Chamber demanded that negotiations apply only to mines where NUM is represented; unresolved matters from 1985 wage negotiations should not affect current wage talks since NUM had the right to strike on those mines where disputes still existed; issues on which parties could not agree or which fell by the wayside should not be allowed to appear later as issues of dispute; any settlement reached should be regarded as full and final; no cost-related changes in conditions of employment would be implemented before 1 July; and the union should accept various exemptions to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. NUM refused to accept these preconditions as they undermined its bargaining position.</p> <p>NUM demanded 45% across-the-board wage increase, reduction in working hours from 90 to 80 hours a fortnight, 44 days annual leave, holiday leave allowance of 100%, May Day as a paid holiday, improved shift allowances and improved funeral and death benefit schemes. NUM also demanded six months paid maternity leave and up to six months additional unpaid leave if a worker or child suffered from illness before or after childbirth, guarantee of similar pay and benefits when women return to work and the right of fathers to be given time off when their children are born.</p> <p>In June the Chamber offered wage increases of 17% for workers in the lowest categories and 12% in the highest categories; a two-hour reduction in working hours; an undertaking that workers who return from leave would be guaranteed the same jobs, pay and conditions held previously, subject to the worker reporting for duty on or before the date he was due back; improvements in the death benefit scheme; and paternity leave.</p> <p>The Chamber said it would consider the union's maternity proposals, and also suggested that it and the union make representations to government for the appointment of a commission of inquiry to consider making 1 May a public holiday. If the commission did not make its findings known before 1 February 1987 the Chamber was prepared to re-open negotiations with the union.</p> <p>Chamber monthly minimum rates for underground gold miners are between R193 and R600, with an average of R390. Benefits such as food, medical attention and accommodation amount to R139/month.</p> <p>A further issue is the scrapping of job reservation. NUM said it reserved the right to introduce the issue into wage talks if it was not satisfied with the government's progress in scrapping job reservation. The Chamber, white unions and NUM are presently having separate talks on the issue.</p> <p>With the declaration of the state of emergency NUM was prevented from holding several report-back meetings with its members and one unionist was unable to attend the talks as he was in hiding.</p> <p>NUM dropped its wage demand to 30%. On 24 June the Chamber made a final offer of increases ranging</p>
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COMPANY AND AREA	UNION	WORKERS	DATE	EVENTS AND OUTCOME
				<p>between 15-20%. NUM agreed that the increases be implemented on 1 July even though union members had not accepted them. The Chamber offered to reduce working hours by two hours per fortnight, improve existing provisions for maternity leave and the death benefit scheme, and gave guarantees about job security for union members.</p> <p>When NUM and the Chamber met on 2 July the union rejected the offer and declared a dispute with the Chamber. NUM said its demand of a 30% increase was reasonable given that the mines saw a 38% increase in working profit last year.</p>
Ergo (Anglo American) Brakpan	NUM	800	09.06-12.06.86	Workers began a sleep-in strike over demands for a wage increase of 45% when negotiations reached deadlock. Ergo offered only 14,5%. Ergo said the strike was illegal in terms of its recognition agreement with the union, which allows for 16 days in which the union and management are obliged to resolve their differences. Workers returned to work after negotiations with management.
Greenside Colliery (Goldfields) Witbank	NUM	2 000	03.06-05.06.86	<p>Management dismissed workers on 5 June following several ultimatums to return to work. The company said repeated requests for reasons behind the strike were ignored. NUM said the strike related to the dismissal of a shaft steward who was involved in May Day activities. According to the union, it had applied for recognition at the mine and the company was using every opportunity to undermine it.</p> <p>On 11 June the supreme court granted a final order evicting 476 dismissed workers from the hostels and ruled that their dismissal was lawful.</p>
Hlobane Collieries (Isacor) Vryheid		3 000-4 000	06.06-10.06.86	<p>Eleven miners were killed and more than 115 injured in what police described as faction fights between Zulus, and Pondos and Xhosas, and what some newspapers described as UWUSA/NUM conflicts. Police used rubber bullets and teargas to quell the fighting. About 988 NUM members decided to leave the mine.</p> <p>NUM denied the clash was caused by a direct dispute between UWUSA and NUM. It claimed that mine security called in non-mine workers during a peaceful strike. A NUM organiser was hounded from the mine premises. Mine security then permitted non-mine workers to enter the shaft to attack workers and break the strike. NUM condemned attacks by 'Inkatha thugs'. Iscor confirmed that the clash was not a direct conflict between the two unions. UWUSA was not prepared to deny Inkatha supporters might have been involved, but blamed the clash on NUM.</p>
Matla Colliery (Gencor) Witbank		2 300	08.07-16.07.86	On 10 July Gencor was forced to close one of the two collieries following a strike by miners and acts of industrial sabotage. Workers went on strike again on 15 July in solidarity with 900 workers who were locked out by management the previous day. These workers had rejected a management demand to sign an undertaking to return to work and not to damage mine property. On 15 July both mines were closed due to sabotage. Workers returned to work the next day and negotiations continued.

The regular Work In Progress strikes and disputes table is by no means a complete record of current labour action. Limitations on information gathering, and space limits, dictate that the table reflects only a very small sample of strikes and disputes in particular regions.

LABOUR

16 June Stayaway

An estimated 1 500 000 workers stayed away from work on 16 June. According to the Labour Monitoring Group, stayaway figures in the PWV area were higher than on May Day. Cape Town stayaway figures increased from 15% for May Day to 35% for 16 June, while Port Elizabeth experienced a virtual total stayaway on both days. The stayaway was poorly supported on the mines, except for the Eastern Transvaal collieries.

Most factories and retail outlets reported full staff attendance the following day.

Employer associations adopted a 'no work, no pay' policy for 16 June. Several companies declared the day a paid holiday. They included: Premier Food Industries, Colgate-Palmolive, Coca Cola, Davis Gelatine, Millets Fashions, Acoustic Fibreglass Insulations, Kodak (SA), BP, Mobil, Shell, Jazz Stores, Black Chain, and Cashbuild. Anglo American closed its head office at noon to allow employees to attend commemorative services. The Sandton Town Council closed its offices but maintained essential services.

Pamphlets distributed in East Rand townships promised residents they would be paid between R10 and R50 a day if they stayed away from work. The pamphlets claimed the money could be collected from any UDF, COSATU or civic office. COSATU and UDF denied responsibility for the pamphlets.

State of Emergency

In protest against the state of emergency and detention of union leaders, CCAWUSA members held sporadic strikes - mainly on the Reef - from 13 June. By 24 June almost 100 stores were affected. About 3 000 workers took action at OK Bazaars, Checkers, Woolworths, CNA Gallo, and Pick 'n Pay. Frasers, EMI, Shamrock and Nels Dairy outlets were also affected.

A delegation of retail chain employers began meeting with Minister of Law and Order, Louis le Grange, on 20 June to discuss the detention of unionists and the negative affect it had on labour relations.

Workers in Johannesburg returned to work on 28 June and Pretoria stores on 1 July.

CCAWUSA and seven retailers - Checkers, CNA Gallo, Frasers, OK Bazaars, Pick 'n Pay, Woolworths and Garlicks - agreed that detained employees would not lose their jobs; each company would release two shop stewards for a period of special leave to assist in running the union's Johannesburg office, the first week being paid for by the companies and the arrangement to be reviewed after two weeks; companies would not compromise on their 'no work, no pay' principle, but would consider requests for wage advances to lessen hardships caused by pay deductions due to strike action; no workers would be victimised for striking.

CCAWUSA's initial demands were that all detained workers should be paid for the period they were in detention, two shop stewards should be released until the situation returned to normal, and strikers should be paid in full for the period spent on strike.

Fourteen pharmaceutical companies were also hit by strikes protesting against the detention of unionists. The companies included Twins Pharmaceutical Holdings, Roche Products, Beecham SA, Richardson-Vicks, Scherag, Wyeth, and Smith, Kline and French. Four employer representatives met Manpower Director General, Piet van der Merwe, on 26 June. Van der Merwe agreed to act as a go-between for employers and the Minister of Law and Order.

At least 222 unionists are believed to have been detained. They include unionists, mostly shop stewards, from MAWU (36), CCAWUSA (16), NUTW (11), SAAWU (11), PWAU (9), NUM (8), NAAWU (8), FAWU (7), TAWU (7), SACWU (3), and FBWU (2). Eight unionists were released from detention at the end of June. Unionists made up 11,5% of total detainees, of which about 85% are from COSATU unions. About 740 workers were detained en masse at their factories while on strike at Nels Dairies.

The unions coped with the detentions and unionists on the run in three ways: shopfloor workers took over union administration, and assumed direct responsibility for negotiations. Office bearers took annual leave to fill in for negotiating teams. But negotiations in the mining, metal and food industries were disrupted. Report-backs were not allowed, or disrupted.

LABOUR

On 2 July, following a secret meeting, COSATU issued demands which it believed were essential to enable legitimate union activities to continue. Demands included: an end to victimisation and intimidation of unionists and workers, release of detained workers, end to repression and move to democratic resolution of SA's problems, no detained COSATU member should be dismissed or lose pay for the period detained, employers should allow COSATU members to meet for two hours each week during working hours without loss of pay to discuss union business, employers should make telephones and telexes available to unionists. It set 10 July as a deadline for meeting the demands.

On 8 July the government banned unions from holding indoor meetings in the Johannesburg and Roodepoort areas. Unions affected by the ban were COSATU, CUSA, NUM, MAWU, and CCAWUSA. The next day the ban on union gatherings was withdrawn and explained away as an 'error'.

COSATU called for a nationwide day of action on 14 July. Unions in each region decided what form of action was most appropriate. Four collieries were affected by protest strike action including Matla (2 500), Arnot (2 000), Duvha (800) and Kriel (1 200). At Rietspruit colliery a partial stayaway occurred and 140 workers from the Anglo American Erfdeel gold mine refused to work.

The Labour Monitoring Group recorded a 24% stayaway among blacks in the PWV area though some factories such as Kelloggs recorded a total stayaway. In Port Elizabeth, 30% of workers stayed away. In the Pinetown-Durban industrial belt unions decided on appropriate action at their places of work. Western Cape unions withdrew from the day of action due to difficulties in organising in a state of emergency. Northern Natal unions were exempted from the day of action because most COSATU leaders from the area were in detention.

Mines and the Emergency

Leaders of NUM voted on 1 July to protest against the detention of ten senior officials under emergency regulations.

When the emergency was declared NUM urged the Chamber of Mines to come out strongly against it. The Chamber's statement that the emergency had imposed constraints on the union's negotiating team 'which could impact negatively on industrial relations in the mining industry and on the collective bargaining process' did not satisfy NUM, which believed employers could intervene more directly with the state.

On 3 July 2 000 miners went on strike at four De Beers mines in Kimberley - Du Toitspan, De Beers, Bultfontein, and Wesselton mines. Five members of the Kimberley NUM executive committee were in detention. In addition to the demand that unionists be freed, workers also demanded that pay increases be backdated to 1 May. De Beers said that pay increases had not been agreed to because NUM's wage demands were only received on 30 June and the recognition agreement had not been finalised due to the emergency and the consequent absence of officials. The strike and negotiations continued.

About 1 200 workers stopped work on 8 July at De Beers Finch mine.

Workers at the five De Beers mines returned to work on 9 July after assurances from management that it was making representations to the government about detained workers.

In Welkom, at the No 7 shaft of Free State Geduld (Anglo American), 8 000 miners staged a go-slow on 4 July in protest against the emergency detentions. Workers went underground but refused to report to their work stations. Management said only 5 000 workers were involved. They were joined by workers from shaft No 4 two days later. On 7 July the shaft was closed because of unsafe working conditions due to the strike. The shafts were reopened on 9 July.

About 6 500 workers at Gencor's Grootvlei mine near Springs and 1 250 at its Marievale mine near Nigel began working half-shifts on 6 July. Workers returned to normal schedules two days later.

At Amcoal's Kriel colliery 1 000 mine workers began working short shifts on 7 July. They also held a two-hour work stoppage on the same day.

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