

RHODEO



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Affiliate



Pic: Rycherde Walters

Keeping the home fires burning

RHODEO: What is Cosag?

Vuyo Kahla: As the name denotes, it's a group of concerned students who came together because there was a serious crisis on campus. It consists of individual students who belong to student political organisations, and others who don't belong to any organisation.

R: Why was it formed?

VK: Students felt we had to address the crisis created by the wage dispute. Students supported a legitimate cause - a living wage for university workers. They also felt there was a cry on campus that students weren't getting what they'd paid for - nutritious food, hygienic conditions and because of this, they felt conditions were not conducive to proper learning.

R: Why did you decide to disrupt lectures?

VK: Disrupting lectures was undesirable. No-one in Cosag desired that. However, students within Cosag and other organisations had tried various ways of highlighting the workers' plight and how this plight affected students.

R: In what way had you tried this?

VK: Before the disruptions there had been four meetings to resolve the issue. An SRC delegation had been sent to meet the Vice-Principal (Dr Smout) to ensure the crisis was quickly resolved. They also asked him for assurance that students would not be involved in scab labour. This was because we felt that scabbing would result in a racial polarisation of the student body.

Unfortunately, nothing came out of that meeting. Secondly, students marched to the Drostdy Lawns last Monday to present a memorandum of demands to the administration - it was received by Smout and we had hoped to receive a response by 16h30 that afternoon as there was a sense of urgency in the matter. The V-P himself had also promised that he would quickly bring it to his colleagues' attention. We got no response.

Given that, Cosag decided on disruptions. But before we even embarked on the disruptions on Tuesday, we attempted to meet with the Vice-Chancellor (Dr Henderson) to find out why there hadn't been proper response to the demands as had been promised. We discovered he and the Dean of Students (Dr Motara) knew nothing of the memorandum or its contents. We therefore felt the administration wasn't serious in addressing our concerns. This also emerged in discussions with the V-C when he wasn't coming out with anything constructive in response to the memorandum.

R: Besides the scab labour demand, Cosag also demanded a speedy resolution to the crisis in wage negotiations and for the police to move off campus. When you did discuss these demands with the administration, what emerged?

VK: They avoided addressing the demands by arguing that Cosag didn't have majority support. Around the no scabbing demand, the V-C said students had the freedom of choice to do what they wanted to do. We acknowledge the right to freedom of choice too, but it is important that it be informed by ethical issues. We also feel that it is the duty of the V-C to ensure that students should not be polarised on an issue as minor as scabbing.

We also demanded the police be withdrawn from campus as we felt their presence was highly provocative in a situation as highly charged as it was last week. There were already allegations of student harassment by police

Tokyo Sexwale's face dropped when he heard Rhodes had its very own Cosag ... and he smilingly shook his head when he was told "it's the progressive one". Cosag has come under fire over the last two weeks after it co-ordinated the disruption of student lectures during the workers' strike. RHODEO spoke to Vuyo Kahla, from Cosag's steering committee.



A Cosag member leads a toyi-toyi on StPeters Lawns.

Pic: Taryn Cass

through the surveillance of student political activists. Moreover, the local peace committee had brought to our attention that if students exercised their right to march to the administration, there was surely going to be a bloodbath.

On Tuesday, Captain Hackard of the SAP's Internal Stability Unit also warned us not to be involved in a march or similar forms of action would result in violence. We felt that the police's remarks were a reflection of their interest in a violent confrontation with students - the best solution to that was to get the police off campus.

Around the question of a speedy resolution to the wage crisis, the administration claimed negotiations were continuing but refused to commit themselves to a speedy resolution, particularly around the demand for a living wage. Worst of all, it was insulting to find that the Chief Executive Officer of the university, the V-C, didn't even know what a living wage was.

R: Did Cosag achieve its objectives in disrupting lectures?

VK: Yes we did. One, we got students talking - our action challenged student apathy. It made it possible for the SRC to convene a student body meeting of unprecedented numbers. It also made it possible for students to find out what was the real problem and why Cosag directed its actions against them and not admin - we were then able to explain to students (as we had done in the vari-

ous disruptions) that the action was primarily directed at the university administration which had locked itself into a safe haven.

Furthermore, the action indirectly brought pressure on the administration because after we had explained the situation, students came out in full support of Nehawu's demands for a living wage, as well as financial transparency.

As a result of the first mass student body meeting last Wednesday, students committed themselves to unity and racial harmony and refused to be used as pawns in the wage dispute. That is the most important thing that we have achieved.

R: Some students are calling the disruptions intimidation. What does Cosag think of this?

VK: It's not intimidation in the sense that there was no conscious intention on the part of Cosag to intimidate students but rather it was an attempt to engage them in meaningful discussions and to educate them of the workers' living conditions.

R: Do you think students have a right to attend lectures?

VK: Yes.

R: Then why did you disrupt them?

VK: Whilst acknowledging their right to attend lectures, we believe that we had a duty to inform them of a further right - the right to life for the workers, so that they could make concrete decisions as to which two was a superior right. Rights in general

have to be informed by ethical considerations. For instance, whilst we believe people have the right to freedom of speech, it doesn't mean we support racist or sexist speech. Therefore, in every right there's an ethical bearing. If somebody refuses to note this distinction, then he or she has a very narrow conception of what a right is.

R: Cosag members have been accused in the media of physical violence against staff and students, as well as damage to university property and a post-graduate's research project. What is your response?

VK: All I can say is that they are all empty allegations or purely propaganda because no-one has laid charges of assault against any Cosag member or the group itself.

R: Two Cosag members were allegedly assaulted by a member of staff. Is this true?

VK: Yes, it is true and we've laid criminal charges against those members of staff.

R: Twenty-two students have received letters of restraint and disciplinary warning notes from the administration. You are one of those students. What are the implications of the letter?

VK: A Senate meeting discussed the matter last week and Senate was informed that those notes merely served as restraining orders against the students concerned. Hence it was put clearly that the recipients of these notes were confined to their residences or the Student Union building.

However, such strictures could

be relaxed upon an agreement that the persons concerned should commit themselves not to be involved in further disruptive activities. Since I was involved in discussions with the V-C on how to normalise the situation on campus, I felt that the restraining order effectively stopped me from being involved in further discussions with him. This act is harsher than Hernus Kriel's national swoop on the PAC leadership which effectively derailed negotiations. I'm also involved in the planning committee for the Rhodes University Summit on August 21 and therefore wonder whether this wasn't an attempt at putting the summit processes in jeopardy.

R: How do you feel personally about the possibility of further disciplinary action or prosecution?

VK: It is up to the administration if it really believes it to be fair to prosecute further. It has become clear that some students are arguing that would be in conflict with the spirit of reconciliation now prevailing on campus. However, I would not like to deal in detail around issues pertaining to the disciplinary hearing as the matter is still sub judice. There is a legal representative on behalf of the twenty-two students handling the matter.

R: Some students are calling the disciplinary actions victimisation. Do you think this is the correct term?

VK: Yes, it is victimisation, particularly when I note that the intended prosecutions merely deal with the symptoms of the problem, not the problem itself - that being the wage dispute. It also shows the admin's fear of constructive discussions and instead opting for strong-arm tactics.

R: What about racial victimisation?

Yes, it is this too. By attempting to label offenders as merely African students whilst Cosag is non-racial, and an approximately equal number of black AND white students were involved in Cosag's activities. To this date, all but one student who received a restraining order are African.

R: A petition has been circulated calling for those students who disrupted lectures to receive proper disciplinary action. What is your response to this?

VK: It is quite a pity to notice how a small number of students are seeking a form of the Nuremberg Trials. It is a further disappointment to note that the V-C is alleged as having promoted this petition by advising some students to initiate the petition. If this is the case, it would undermine the confidence of progressive students in the V-C, who is supposed to stand above student politics.

R: Does Cosag have a further role to play on campus, now that negotiations are back on track and the strike has been suspended?

VK: Yes. One of ensuring that the negotiations are successful and also informing students that the workers' demands for a living wage have still not been met, and they need to continuously support them in this just cause. It also has to play a role in uniting students from different political persuasions in the healing process.

R: Do you think this "healing process" the SRC is calling for will work? What does it entail?

VK: I hope it will work. But for it to work, it is important for us students to commit ourselves to truth, justice, and equity. Furthermore, the admin should also give support to this process by ensuring that it avoids at all costs, anything that will put strain to this much-needed process.

3

Wits Union under fire

THREE gunmen invaded Jubilee Hall residence at Wits University at 10 am on 5 July.

Delegates from the National Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) were staying there for the duration of the conference held on the campus. The delegates were the suspected targets of the attack.

According to Sarah Kumene, a worker involved: "One man in blue overalls came in and repoted that he was waiting for somebody. He waited for one and a half hours in the foyer."

The president of Nehawu apparently went in, this man went to one of the workers and said that the person has waited for was not coming and that he was leaving.

He went out for a few seconds and came back with two other men wearing similar overalls, all three armed with guns.

George Shikwambana, the Jubilee security guard on duty was held at gun-point. The female workers were ordered to enter the reception and lie face-down on the ground. One of the armed men said to Kunene, who was hiding behind the curtains, "He sefebe tswa ["Hey, bitch - out"], "Stop screaming we will not shoot you." She went out and joined the others in the reception.

The three men went in the direction of the rooms, apparently following the Nehawu president. One came out and peeped in the reception and went back again.

The workers decided to run to Senate House. They met Denise Hooper-Box, Jubilee warden, on the way and informed her of the incident. They went to Wits security and called the police.

Police asked the workers whether they wanted to lay charges against the intruders. The workers declined since no-one was injured.

Mr Bob Marley, assistant general secretary of Nehawu, a delegate at the conference, said that it could not be confirmed whether the intruders were looking for the Nehawu president or not.

Hooper-Box said that a meeting was organised with Nehawu to

discuss security measures during their stay at Jubilee.

Wits security promised to increase the number of guards at Jubilee during the weekend and until the end of the conference.

Hooper-Box and Nazim Rander, accomodation officer, agreed that the front door of Jubilee would be kept locked during the term and that students would have to use their access cards.

The door will be opened at lunch because of students from other reses lunch at Jubes. She added that she would organise a meeting with Jubes House committee to discuss the security measures. - Sasnews.

New RMR studio

RHODEO Reporters

RHODES Music Radio has finally left their old, rather inadequate studio and have moved into the 'Honeymoon Suite Studio' at the top of the Union Building. Champagne corks popped (almost) and glasses were raised as the studio was officially opened at a cheese and wine evening on July 28. Station director, Tony Lankester, broadcast the opening of the studio which cost R15 000, money that RMR will have to pay back to the University over a period of three years. With a budget of R9000 a year, RMR raises the rest of its funds through advertising. The new equipment and larger work space will enable RMR to continue contributing to the university.

"The reason its called the 'honeymoon suite' is because it's so much larger than anything we've had before," Tony said.

SRC: What's been done

Karuna Gopal

THIS is the response of most students when asked for their opinion of the SRC: It seems to be the general view of students that the SRC has promised to take up several issues on behalf of the student body but have yet to produce positive results. Topics like the extension of intervisiting hours, uppermost on the list of student demands, have been highlighted but remain to be dealt with.

However, the SRC has not remained dormant in the face of such strong criticism, and has responded by calling a SRC Referendum beginning on 9 August.

"The issues at hand are important ones and it's impossible to solve them overnight. They have to travel to various levels of authority in the University's administration department before a resolution can be reached," SRC President Ibrahim Seedat said.

The programme for the week long referendum will hinge around student opinion elicited from campus polls. The SRC is relying on the help of residence senior students and oppie representatives in executing the effort.

The referendum will focus on grievances that have been forwarded to the Council and which have been the centres of debate, including the need to effectively combat the increasing rate of campus rape, the transformation of RAG and the issue of extended intervisiting hours, which has culled much student support.

Other issues include the controversial stance taken by some students calling for the renaming of residences. Suggestions have already been made that the names of Jan Smuts, Piet Retief and Prince Alfred residences be replaced by Chris Hani and Oliver Tambo as a sign of the times.

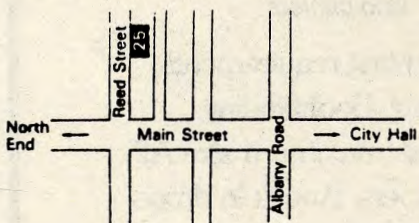
Rhodes and Rhodes Music Radio (RMR), the two 'student voices', will not escape unscathed either. The SRC will be looking for feedback regarding the successes and flaws of the two societies. Results of the polls will be formulated and published by the Statistics Department.

Ibrahim said, "Ultimately, the aim of the Referendum is to establish a structured base from which the new SRC can work to address these matters."

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RHODES S·R·C RHODES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

What has the SRC done for you lately?

JUST DID IT!...in the second term.

- Face 2 Face Day
- Rhythm of Rhodes III
- Rhythm of Rhodes IV
- SRC/Cargo Megaparty
- United Campus Fun Run
- AIDS Week
- Prof Brian du Toit: Impressions of Rhodes
- Patrick Lekota: Students and elections
- Zach de Beer: How to build a united SA
- All Students Transformation Forum
- Reviewing intervisiting, symbols, names, Council composition
- Chris Hani Memorial Day
- Candlelit Peace Forum
- Non-homophobia poster campaign
- Petition for a new chairperson of the Club Committee (Union)
- We won the right to hold SRC discos in the Union until 2 am
- Community Day/Environment Day
- Senior Students Council
- Class Rep Council
- Organised transport to PE on June 13
- Student Assembly (Parliament)
- Part of Senate Sexual Harassment Committee
- Part of VC's Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Participated in local Peace Committee
- Jeremy Taylor concert

And next term, we bring you more...

- United Campus parties
- A campuswide Referendum on topical issues affecting students
- A sitting of the Student Assembly
- A Food Rep Workshop
- A massive Student Festival, with a host of activities catering for the entire student body
- Changes to intervisiting rules
- Opening of SRC Resource Centre
- SRC Newsforums discussing current affairs
- Noticeboards outside Kaif
- SRC Face to Face Magazine
- And finally SRC Elections and a
- Massive United Campus Farewell Party for the Just Did It SRC

We welcome your suggestions and comments;
please contact your nearest SRC member.

JUST Do It '93

ECC to ceasefire

JOHANNESBURG - AFTER ten years of fighting conscription into an apartheid army, the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) is winding up its activities in anticipation of the end to conscription once a transitional executive is installed.

To mark its imminent and happy demise, the ECC hosted a Peace Festival at Wits two weeks ago.

Guests included British Journalist of the Year, Maggie O'Kane, journalist, Joseph Hanlon, as well as leading figures from political parties and other organisations.

The Festival, opened by Nelson Mandela, examined the issues of violence, militarisation and transition in South Africa.

Sessions looked at the integration and role of the armed forces, a peace-keeping force, violence and the Peace Accord, and the possibilities for a peace movement in South Africa.

Festival organiser, Jonathan Aker, said: "The Festival was a great success. It brought together a wide range of people and promoted discussion about issues that are vital to our future."

"The ECC played a very important role in the struggle against apartheid, and we didn't want that to die out."

The ECC formed in 1983, became active in 1984 with a "Focus on Namibia" campaign, highlighting the role of the SADF in Namibia and Angola. The organisation formally launched in October 1984.

Committed to working for a "just peace in our land", the ECC organised cultural anti-conscription events which were hugely successful. Later campaigns included "troops out of the townships" and support for conscientious objectors on trial for refusing to serve on the SADF.

The ECC worked closely with the democratic movement, while also managing to appeal to conscripts. The ECC also had its share of interference from the state. State-funded organisations such as Veterans for Victory were set up with the aim of discrediting the organisation.

In 1988, the ECC was banned and was forced to operate underground before unbanning itself in 1989. Since 1990 it has campaigned for an end to the call-up and even unsuccessfully petitioned the Supreme Court to declare the racist call-up illegal.

At present, no conscientious objectors are in prison, although several are standing trial.

An ad hoc anti-militarisation movement is in the process of launching and will focus on demilitarising South Africa, and the present conflict in Angola. The movement is likely to be called "Ceasefire." - Sasnews.

Bop to drop Admin

UNIBO - THE ongoing crisis at the University of Bophuthatswana (Unibo) remains unresolved despite the presentation of a set of demands by students and staff at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park.

This followed a meeting at the Wits Great Hall earlier in the day, attended by Wits staff and students, to discuss a way forward on the Unibo situation.

According to the Unibo SRC vice-president, Gaba Tabane, "The gathering could not be decisive. Another meeting will have to be held to formulate a way forward."

A delegation of three Unibo students was allowed to present the memorandum at the World Trade Centre. Dr Sarel Eloff, territory delegate at the negotiating forum, received the memorandum and promised to forward it to the relevant body.

It was revealed that the entire Unibo administration has been dismissed, and there is a belief amongst students that they will be replaced by Potchefstroom management.

Concerns have also been raised about the apparent inactivity of the ANC alliance in all the deliberations.

In a statement issued by Uduza, the Unibo SRC and Na-

tional Education Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu), it was maintained that "The staff and students at Unibo can point to a long history of repression at the hands of the homeland regime."

In the meantime, staff are employed to do nothing and the students are barred from campus.

The memorandum included concerns over the continued closure of the university by the Bophuthatswana government, the

recent amendments to the University of Bophuthatswana Act, which impact negatively on the conditions of service of Unibo employees, and the continued erosion of university autonomy and academic freedom.

The memorandum also pointed out that the current Unibo council is undemocratically constituted and is serving the interests of the Bophuthatswana government, rather than those of education. - Sasnews.

RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications for the Rhodes Scholarships for 1994 close on 1 September 1993. Applications are invited from men and women, regardless of race or creed who are ordinarily resident in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho or Swaziland.

Candidates should normally have a first degree and have attained results to satisfy the admission requirements of Oxford University.

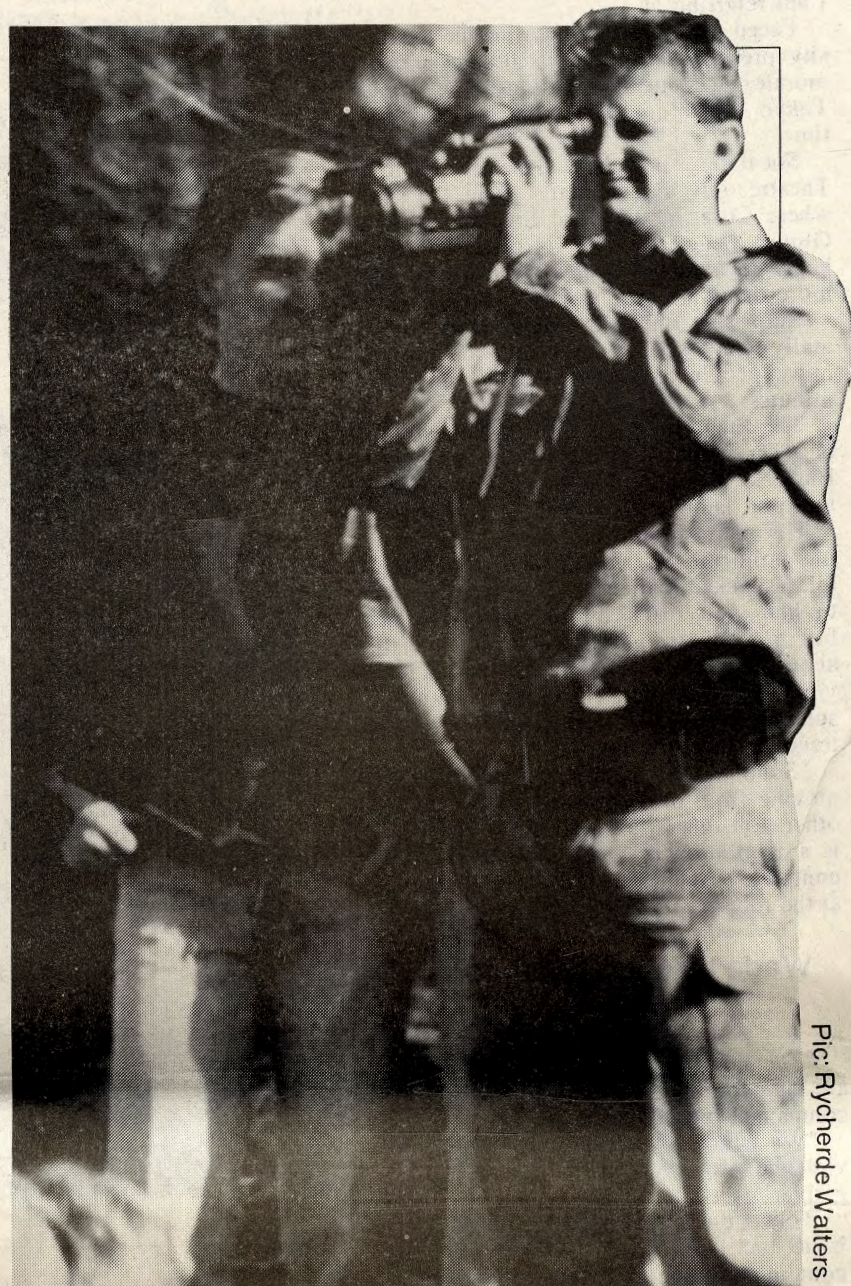
Candidates are judged in terms of the criteria laid down by the Will of Cecil John Rhodes. These include literary and scholastic attainments, qualities of leadership, feelings of compassion for one's fellows and good physical health.

Rhodes' Will expressly provides that "no student shall be qualified or disqualified for election to a Scholarship on account of race or religious opinions".

Candidates must be unmarried and under 27 at 1 October 1994.

For details write to the General Secretary for Rhodes Scholarships, PO Box 41468, Craighall, 2024.

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to your back
- it's a bit silly.**



Pic: Rycherde Walters

Big Brother is watching you: an SAP officer films demonstrations during last week's strike.

STUDENT MEDIA AWARDS '93

This year the **Weekly Mail & Guardian**, in conjunction with **SASPU**, are running a student media competition. The deadline for entries is August 31

The entry categories are:

- Best student newspaper
- Best design for a student newspaper
- Student journalist of the year
- Student photographer of the year
- Best student radio station
- Best student broadcaster of the year

Entry forms are available from your SASPU office on campus or the SRC office.

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Sanja Goehre

THERE is a lot a journalist can recreate on paper - a lot a journalist can say with words. But when it comes to an atmosphere or a dynamic personality, all that one can really write is: "You should have been there".

People who went to see Tokyo Sexwale speak at the Aiesec lecture on Wednesday and later at the Great Hall know what I am referring to.

Faced with biased reporting in university press releases and local newspapers, morale for some was hitting a low - and Tokyo could not have come at a better time.

Speaking in the General Lecture Theatre only a few metres from the spot where Cosag (Concerned Students Action Group) staged most of its protest, Tokyo kept the attention span of the crowd for more than an hour and a half.

Surprising only because when talk normally centres around politics or economics, people tend to switch off after 10 minutes.

The theme of his talk was supposed to be "The Political Economy facing Future Business Leaders" but he only really hit that part later in his speech.

His main focus was what was happening politically at a national level. Tokyo told a packed audience: "I want to be able to help you reach informed positions as future thinkers," and proceeded to talk about the transformation of our society, violence, transition mechanisms and a summary of what the ANC would like entrenched in a constitution.

"South Africa is in transition. We are moving from one form of society into another. But this is not a reformist change, it is a revolutionary change. It has to be a complete change, a fundamental change at the roots of society," he said.

Wade through documents

"The contradictions within our society are ripe for this change, but they are accompanied by violence.

"We cannot avoid a certain amount of violence - for every positive there is a negative."

Tokyo did not expand on the violence issue but launched immediately into the contentious issue of a Transitional Executive Council (TEC). For him, these transitional mechanisms are the only means by which we can move from one society to another. He sees the TEC as the only way South Africa can "ensure the present government does not enjoy monopoly. The TEC must be in charge of media, the elections, foreign affairs and the security forces which include the army, the police and the intelligence service."

Pic: Rycherde Walters

Tokyo talks



Last words:

"Workers must challenge each student: Teach me how to vote. You know we cannot bring money here but the Administration is here, the students are here. One of your slogans must be: Each student teach one worker how to vote." - Tokyo Sexwale.

He urged the audience to wade through all the documents, words, political correctness and distortions coming out of the World Trade Centre and ask themselves at the end of the day: "Do we have transitional mechanisms?"

Tokyo also reiterated the ANC's call for a Constituent Assembly to draw up a constitution as it was dangerous for the World Trade Centre forum to do so. "Nobody elected those representatives, so they are only speaking for themselves ...

But some people are against a Constituent Assembly because some parties know very well they are going to do very badly ... And if these people agree to the transitional mechanisms, then the process is on to what they fear most: an election."

"That's a sweet constitution," Tokyo said with a smile after he outlined its basic components, "but our people cannot eat the national anthem, symbols, the constitution. The greater question is the economy of this country."

Do you remember those shrieks of dismay that echoed through South Africa after Nelson Mandela came out of prison and spoke one word: nationalisation?

Now all that was heard was a silence tinged almost with relief as Tokyo spoke of a mixed economy and of "economic patriotism" - something which big business had not developed yet but should. "There are funds which are locked within South Africa, so before we consult the IMF or the World Bank we must tell big business to apply economic patriotism."

"Whether something would be nationalised or not would depend on the balance of evidence," he said. "Some gold mines are in debt. If they were nationalised, the government would also be in debt. So you have to ask: Do you then give the mine to the private sector to take away?"

Nationalisation

Because "we are fanatic about economic liberation," the ANC has thought through other ways to stimulate the economy.

"We fill the whole country with factories at secondary level and examine our financial sectors. There are huge corporations that compete with the man in the street. We cannot subject both to the same interest rates. The business sector must realise its responsibility."

And so Tokyo emphasised a rethinking of VAT on "food, school things, children's food" ("you cannot tax children") unemployment and housing.

But for those who have been following ANC statements in the media, there was essentially nothing new. Most people are aware of the critical housing shortage ("We are short of 10 million housing units") and our unemployment rate quoted at 40 per cent.

Even Tokyo's plea: "Pass the message on: 'Whites should not run from South Africa. This is your country'," surprised nobody. We have heard this from the ANC before.

So what was it that made people listen?

One supporter looked at him toyi-toying on the stage in the Great Hall and said: "I love Tokyo, but when I see him toyi-toying so well, I know he truly cares about his people."

Wellspring of the struggle

History Lecturer and Chairperson of the ANC Town and Campus Unit, Dr Julia Wells, is probably "one of the few people who have been recruited to the struggle by their domestic workers". Lukanyo Mnyanda spoke to her.

JULIA WELLS, 42, hails from the USA and first visited the country 23 years ago when she developed an interest in South African history. She has been living in South Africa since January. She has spent most of the last 23 years working for the ANC in Zimbabwe.

Wells has a PhD from the university of Columbia. She tells me her PhD thesis, *The role of African women in resistance* is about to be published by WITS Press.

She has written a number of books about the role played by women in history, especially African history, with her latest offering called *We Now Demand*.

Her research has led to her meeting people like Helen Joseph and Lillian Ngoyi whom she interviewed in the late 1970s for her studies on women resistance to pass laws.

These women have had a "big effect" on Julia Wells and she believes that "ANC slogans and freedom songs should be improved and give more recognition to women".

She is presently doing a 3rd-year course about women in African history. "It involves students searching for old sources and I am very pleased to find that students are reading twice as much," she says.

Wells is married to fellow history lecturer Dr Julian Cobbing and has a nine-year-old daughter.

She says being a housewife, a historian and chairperson of the ANC Town Unit can be "a heavy workload, but I am very mindful to keep a balance between my family and work commitments".

"The ANC Town and Campus Unit is one of 10 units in the Fingo Village Branch and is also the smallest unit. We haven't had any meetings yet, but there has been a lot of interest from individual

students".

I questioned her about the ANC becoming more bureaucratic, making it difficult for people to make contact with the organisation. She attributed this to the period of political transition placing heavy demands on full-time staff and on financial constraints making it difficult to open an ANC office.

'ANC bureaucracy'

"Yes, the ANC is becoming more bureaucratic and this has to be addressed because the ANC needs the people, the ANC IS the people," she adds.

With South Africa's first democratic elections scheduled to take place in less than eight months, she says: "We are very active in preparing for election and have organised training workshops which will reach the student body within a week or two".

She says there is another general voter education workshop which will be run in co-operation with several Non-Government Organisations. These will be aimed at the community in general and not specifically ANC supporters. "We plan to

visit every house at least three times," she says.

Despite all the problems in the country, she is still optimistic about South Africa's future. She says "the long and difficult period of negotiation, and the disruption and violence from the extremes has left many people feeling quite insecure. I do believe, however, that the vast majority of South Africans want to move forward in non-violent ways".

On Transformation at Rhodes? "I am not actively involved as I am only a short-

term guest." (Dr Wells has applied for a full-time position in the History Department.)

"It is necessary to talk about Transformation, but I fear that students could be asking for superficial changes. I believe that concerns should go much deeper than just name-changes."

She believes that it could be "useful if the university council had more women and blacks, but we must avoid superficial tokenism".

Is she a socialist? "I am a 'materialist', that's a historian's euphemism for socialist."

Off to vote!

Jonathan Davis

NINE months ahead of the date set for South Africa's first democratic elections, a line of people are filing past a cardboard ballot box in a dingy community hall in Grahamstown.

"Those monitors must stand this side of the polling-booth," a man standing at the door instructs. The "monitors" obediently move to the other side of the booth, also made of cardboard.

The "voters" filing into the hall pretend to hand an identity document to an "electoral official" who pretends to examine and stamp it. They pretend to have their hands examined for ink visible only under ultra-violet light, indicating they have voted before. Their hands are then marked with a blackboard marker to prevent them re-voting.

For most of the people gathered in the hall this strange mime is the closest they have ever come to participating in an election. It's a scene which is repeating itself with increasing regularity across the country as programmes to prepare and educate voters for South Africa's first all-inclusive polls get underway.

This is the first workshop for prospective voter-trainers in the area, and about 25 people from civics, trade unions and local student representative councils are attending. The workshop is run by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS), an organisation based at the University of the Western Cape. The centre has been running the workshops since November 1991. Similar projects to provide non-partisan voter education are also being undertaken by the South African Council of Churches and the Black Sash. Most political parties are also expected to make attempts to educate their voters.

The mock election with cardboard props is a vital part of an intensive two-day workshop, allowing people who have never been inside a polling station to practice voting before the day. Such hands-on experience will be important for large numbers of people in places like Grahamstown, where functional illiteracy is said to run as high as 80 percent.

Kaya, one of the representatives from a local SRC plans to carry out voter education at his highschool in the coming months. He found his first taste of voting "a dignified process", he reports. He says he is looking forward to re-exercising his right on April 23.

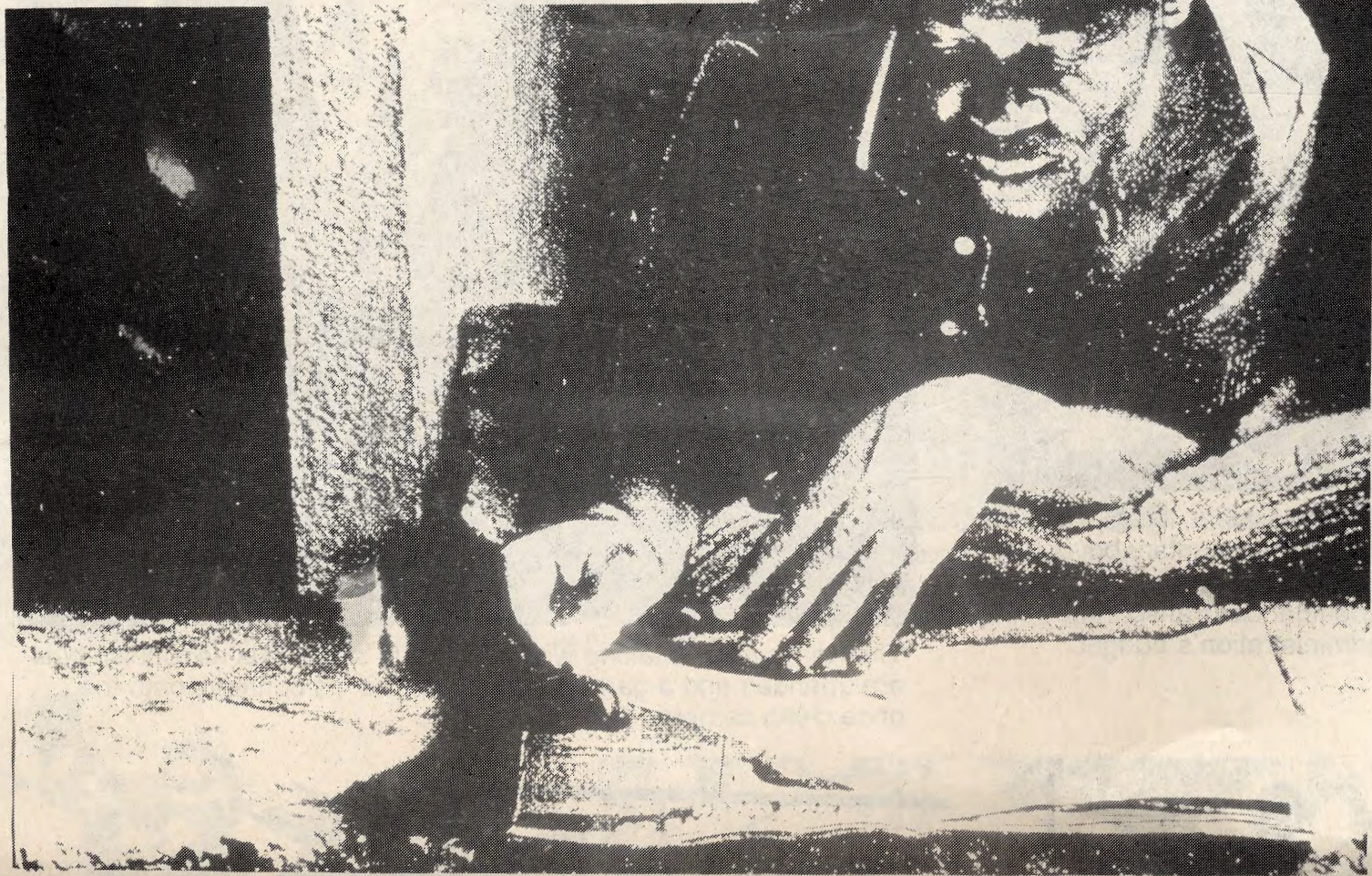
"a dignified process"

The walls of the hall bear several posters showing mock-ups of the expected ballot paper, or colour illustrations of the voting process. Other posters simply exhort people to vote; listing housing, education and health services among the benefits they stand to gain.

The voter education campaign has two essential aspects; education and motivation, CDS's Robert Mopp, who has travelled up from Cape Town to run the workshop, explains. While education of a population completely unused to voting is important to ensure elections are as representative, free and fair as possible, it is also necessary to motivate people left apathetic and cynical by decades of political exclusion.

"People don't make correlations between voting and improving their lives," Mopp says. "They say 'nothings going to change, what's going to be different after these elections?'"

Half a million were spoilt in Angola's first democratic elections, in an electorate of only about 4 million. This is why



CDI believes it is important to educate people about the process, procedure and mechanics of voting, as well as about the meaning and practice of democracy.

"All voters, we feel, have a right to be educated, and we provide that," Mopp says.

Mopp emphasises the importance of setting up local voter education forums, as groups such as CDS will not be able to reach all the potential voters. Mopp hopes the local Black Sash and the South African Council of Churches, who are both planning programs in the area, will co-operate.

All three groups already hold positions on the steering committee of the Independent Forum for Electoral Education (IFEE). The IFEE hopes their non-partisan voter education programmes will be recognised and accredited by the Independent Electoral Commission.

The IFEE has received funding of R20 million from the European Community for voter education.

CDS's programme, called Project Vote, is aimed primarily at reaching "community educators", who in turn will do actual voter education. The educators are supplied with a training kit, including a manual, posters, flashcards for training illiterate voters, and their own cardboard ballot box and polling booth to set up their own mock voting stations.

"We are trying to call them voting stations," Mopp tells his audience. "Polling Station sounds too much like police station."

It's a reminder that this is not an ordinary election, but an exercise taking place amidst fear, suspicion, ignorance and illiteracy.

Mopp admits access to voters in rural areas presents a serious obstacle. Not only are workers often dispersed over a wide area, but farmers are presently under no obligation to allow trainers onto their farms. Mopp hopes the Independent Electoral Commission will step in to oblige farmers to allow trainers to their land.

Access and illiteracy are expected to present serious problems in depressed rural areas such as the Eastern Cape.

CDS has produced a leaflet in several local languages aimed at voters them-

selves, which can be slipped into community newspapers or other publications; as well as a training video. The centre is also involved in Voteline, a voter-education programme on Radio Metro.

In essence, Mopp's workshop provides a model by which the trainers will run their own voter education sessions. The emphasis in the workshop is on participation. Mopp asks participants to list what they consider the prerequisites for free and fair elections. "Access to the media," suggests one participant. "No intimidation," says another. Several other responses follow.

Mopp writes the answers up on a large sheet of paper stuck to the board. In response to the first two suggestions, he explains about the problems of access to the media certain parties are said to experience. He also explains the expected electoral monitoring procedure and the regulations requiring all security force members to remain a certain distance from voting stations.

CDI is aware that an educated electorate will also act as a safeguard against election fraud. The tasks of the electoral officers and monitors are explained before the mock election, and participants watch carefully as the ballot boxes are sealed before voting, and emptied afterwards.

Nevertheless, many questions regarding the elections remain unanswered. The mock ballot-sheets the project uses for training can only roughly approximate what the actual forms will look like - it is not even clear yet what parties will be participating. The arrangements to be made for illiterate people are not known, nor whether votes will be counted in regional centres or at a central point.

The workshops also include an important 'motivational' element. "Why vote?" Mopp asks his audience. The expected answers, according to the trainer's manual, fall into two categories. It is important to vote to ensure democracy, which "represents everything apartheid is not". It is also important to vote to ensure a new government which will provide peace, jobs and housing and education as good as that currently enjoyed by whites.

In each case, the precedent is the evils of apartheid. Programmes such as Project Vote walk a narrow path between non-partisanship and the condemnation of the past. But in order to gain popular support they must be seen to reject the existing political order.

Mopp, explaining the programme's position, wraps it up in a neat slogan - "non-partisan but non-neutral". That means Project Vote can carry out voter education which supports no particular party, but which is firmly in support of an anti-apartheid democratic tradition.

'opportunity to misinform'

"We are now moving from apartheid to democracy. We provide people with the necessary tools and framework to make an informed choice," Mopp says.

"That means we could be educating National Party voters," a disturbed participant points out. Mopp agrees that this is part of the cost of non-partisanship.

The real effect this impartial voter education has in South African communities lies in the hands of these trainee-educators. There is plenty of opportunity to misinform or mislead inexperienced or illiterate voters. Trainers are expected to teach people how to vote and to motivate them to do so. They are expected to teach illiterate people how to recognise the party of their choice on the ballot-sheet. They are also supposed to tell people something of the principles, policies and history of each of the parties. Whether next year's elections are to be democratic, free and fair depends very much on their trustworthiness.

The queue at the mock voting station moves on and I hand over my invisible identity document. The 'official' pauses then shakes his head and hands my document back. The 'electoral officer' confirms my fears. I cannot vote, I am a victim of that peculiarly South African syndrome - my "papers are not in order".

I catch the glint in the official's eye. The irony of the situation is suddenly clear - I am the only white in the room. Soon everyone is chuckling, but for me the sting of not being able to vote is real.

Last week's strike action provided some of the strongest images since the 1980s, the era of burning tyres and police intervention. Rycherde Walters, Taryn Cass, Adam Welz and Dror Eyal captured some of the most potent of these in black and white.

Striking



SRC President, Ibrahim Seedat, calls for a voluntary boycott of lectures, an end to scab labour and financial transparency in the administration's budget.



The Kaif is littered, along with most parts of campus as rubbish bins are upended and a garbage truck empties its contents onto the once clean campus.



Students disrupt lectures in an attempt to pressure the administration to meet workers' demands. Identified students receive disciplinary notes from the administration and (at the time of going to press) faced further possible disciplinary action.



Striking workers are confined to the area in front of the administration buildings during the latter part of the strike.



The police raise their weapons and student leaders are forced to negotiate for over 1000 students to march to the administration.



A local peace committee meets as the strike is suspended and a turn to work.

pictures



Students gather in the administration quad to hear the results of discussions Cosag has had with the administration.



Some students are restless to get back to work. This student studies in front of a mass of marching students.



The Sunday Times alleged 40 tyres were burning outside the administration. Hardly. But the odd one is wheeled onto campus.



Member expresses his feelings and workers get ready to re-



The local peace committee helps lessen tensions arising from police presence on campus. Here, a concerned student finds out what the latest happenings are.



It takes all kinds of students to unite as a body in support of workers' demands. Here, Muslim women clap to the sounds of a freedom song.

EDITORIAL

WE SAW the reawakening of a student activism we thought had died with the 80s.

Some might say students were forced into an awareness of issues and nobody on campus could have been unaware of the crisis, but *RHODEO* congratulates those students who actually got off their butts and did something about their convictions.

Whether the politics practised by students during the worker strike was "right" or not, is not the issue. The issue is that there WAS politics practised.

For too long now, Rhodes has been the site of a crippling student apathy in which everything is always someone else's business. One wonders what crisis it will take next to keep student activism alive, or will the dissatisfaction disappear as soon as dining halls reopen?

But the controversy is not over. Some of the students who did stick their necks out in support of the workers last week now face disciplinary action for their involvement in the disruption of lectures. One must question whether this will become admin's standard response to students who cross the boundary of what is considered "acceptable protestbehaviour".

It is vital that students fight for representation in the upcoming SRC elections and hold the newly elected body accountable. It is equally important that the new SRC takes a firm stand on student issues.

This month sees *RHODEO*'s annual changeover where a new collective will be elected. The importance of a student newspaper as a recording instrument of events for current examination and future reflection must never be taken for granted.

But a student newspaper's role might have to go beyond this. *RHODEO* members criticised the biased reporting of the local press and the administration's press releases - but did nothing about it. We know we should have brought out a special edition during the strike to allay students' fears and quell the vicious rumours that were spread through various channels. We hope *RHODEO* will be more active in providing this type of response in the future.

CREDITORIAL

Ingrid (I don't want to be anything), Sanja (Oh no, I left out ten centimetres on this page!), Michelle (I'd prefer to stick pins in my eyes than go bromide now), Lukhanyo (I'm too tired to think now), Caryl, Angiea, Wanda (you didn't take a picture of me), Rycherde (you hero), Adam, Peter (aunty), Thabang (Thank God it's my last paste up), Antony, Kammy (I hate that blue disk), Nerisha (don't I even get any sick leave?), Dani, Kathrine, Jon, Gerhard, Dror, Simon, Ross, Daya, Karuna, Tess, Taryn, Robin, Sasnews, Madge, the strikers (for providing good copy), Durex, Rooibos, Paula's, the SEX WAIL and the Gender Forum's free wine.

Dear RHODEO



Kill the slogan

ATA time when there is urgent need in this country for active work to start building a unity in this country that is vital for future justice and peace to prevail, I was disturbed the other night to hear intoxicated students chanting the slogan "Kill the Boer, kill the farmer." Before we start chanting emotive slogans we should be cognisant of the underlying implications.

Firstly, since the ANC leadership has disowned the slogan and advised against its use, by chanting it we are expressing openly our disenchantment, even contempt, for our leadership. In doing so we undermine the ANC and its attempts to win hearts and minds in the lead up (hopefully) to the elections. It is vital at this stage to participate actively in the process of winning further support and avoid actions which will alienate people who may otherwise be won over.

A second important consideration is the actual message underlying the slogan. By chanting "kill the boer" we are tacitly endorsing ethnicity. It is on the basis of ethnicity that the right wing groups and the Inkatha Freedom Party demand the right to self determination. In other words by chanting "kill the boer" we are legitimising Buthelezi and the right wing's pullout of the negotiations and their demands for self-governing states. As evidenced by the situation in Bosnia following the adoption of the Vance-Owen plan which legitimised ethnicity in that country, any steps which do so are extremely dangerous and should be avoided at all costs. We are all South Africans first and foremost and need to work together to unify and rebuild our fragmented nation.

Forward to a just and peaceful South Africa! Long live the ANC!

Yours in the struggle
Nick Lydall

Streets behind

FOLLOWING an article entitled "Homeless Again" published in your April issue which contained unhelpful and incorrect information. On behalf of Masincedane Children's Project - an organisation which has, as its aims and objectives, the welfare of the children in the streets of Grahamstown, I now put the story in its true perspective.

The problem of the "Street Children" in Grahamstown was taken up by the then Grahamstown Action Committee, and now Masincedane Children's Project, three years ago. While recognising that there have been inevitable problems in establishing this project - particularly since the organisation largely comprises of unpaid volunteer members - we now have a strong Committee which is dedicated to solving the problems of the children mentioned above. And a constitution for the organisation is about to be finished.

Informed education is being conducted at Sacched daily where the children are also fed and taken care of. Over the weekend lunch and supper is arranged

through the kind offices of volunteers from the Trinity Presbyterian Church of SA, the Assembly of God and the Cathedral.

However, a night shelter is urgently needed and is in the process of being established. We realise and acknowledge that the problem is a complex one and that it won't be solved overnight. And in this regard we welcome help from any source. Anybody wishing to assist should get in touch with me or follow the direction given in our posters on campus. Perhaps your journalists i.e. Eugene de Klerk and Linda Camara may be among the first to volunteer.

Chris Ndzengu
Acting Chairperson

Homeless again

I REFER to a recent article in your publication entitled "Homeless Again" written by Eugene de Klerk and Linda Camara.

This article has caused me grave concern, and I would like to comment on a few aspects of it. My overall impression was that this article was an attempt at investigative reporting, which has certainly not resulted in any positive benefit to the community, but has rather caused much resentment and bitterness.

The Street Children's Project was initiated as an attempt to assist these children to improve their quality of life. Two Social Workers from Grahamstown Child and Family Welfare Society are members of this committee and assist with professional services. There is a move afoot at present to have this committee co-opted to become a sub-committee of the Child and Family Welfare Society, as is the practice in other centres. There is most certainly no "conspiracy" to have the shelter under our control. Our only interest is that the project should be viable and operate in the best interests of the children. I resent the use of the word "conspiracy" as it is incitive and assumes underhand manoeuvres, which is certainly not the case. The Child Welfare Movement is one which is regarded with the greatest respect in this country. I would like your reporters to do some research in this respect and also advise them that research is necessary before such an article is written.

The statement that there are no true street children in Grahamstown, is absolutely untrue. If a child is living by his wits on the streets he is a street child. Whether or not he has a home in the township is not relevant.

There is no intention at all to hand over the shelter to Child Welfare. Our role here is that of facilitation. We cannot overemphasise the vital and important role of the volunteer in this project. The prime aim of the organisation is to see that the street children get shelter, food, clothing and education and ultimately after intensive case work by a Social Worker, are returned to their families. All the efforts made by this organisation and

Child Welfare are in the best interests of these children, in order to secure a better future for them.

If your reporters would like to discuss any of the above with me, I would be delighted to provide them with some research material, which should have been obtained prior to their investigation. It would then have become apparent to them that the in-fighting within the organisation is something which should have been dealt with internally by the committee without airing it publicly, and that the best interests of the children could have been served by an article informing your reader of the excellent service offered by the members of the Street Children's Project. What a wonderful thing it would be if your reporters and other Rhodes students would get involved and participate in improving the lot of those less fortunate than themselves.

Mrs P. Blecher
Professional Consultant

Dear RHODEO

Paid anger

I WANT to express my anger at the behaviour of students who disrupted lectures during the strike action. The students who attended lectures chose to be there. We came to university for an education and our parents have sacrificed for us to be here. We pay to attend lectures and the lecturers are paid to teach us. Those who choose to demonstrate have a right to do that if they wish. But no student has a right to force us out of our lectures, intimidate us or disrupt our education in any way. If they don't want an education, that is their problem. But they must not force their opinions on the rest of us.

Carol Hobson

Sasco who?

I, AS an ordinary Rhodes, student am fed to the back teeth with the "demands" of some presumptuous student organisation called SASCO. Who are they? What do they represent and perhaps more importantly who do they represent? I do not remember (and strangely enough neither do my friends) being asked to vote for them or to give them a mandate. So on what basis do they rest their "demands" for the democratisation of Rhodes? Who are they to demand the closure of the University? Who are they to demand the changing of certain res names? Who are they to demand the removal of some university staff members from office?

Every group is dissatisfied about something but this does not give us the right to march around demanding that the situation be instantly rectified to our satisfaction with threats to back up our demands. If this is someone's warped concept of democracy I'd rather live in a dictatorship. Surely the key to democracy is tolerance. Yes you can feel aggrieved at the names of certain of the reses and that Rhodes does not close down on certain days but it does not give you the right to interfere with the majority of students' view that things are fine as they are and that any change if it is to be lasting and beneficial must come about reasonably and rationally and in accordance with the wishes of the majority.

I would remind these students who are unhappy with what they perceive to be Rhodes's colonial attitudes that there are other universities in this country who will willingly accommodate their viewpoints and perhaps they should rather study there. They certainly will not be missed by the silent majority of Rhodes students who are justifiably proud of our university.

B.M. Bead

Oh Sasco!

TOTHE toyi-toying SASCO:

You are on the right side; you are trying to solve the problems of the country (and I'm not trying to be ironic). However I could actually imagine you being happy for eventually finding a justifiable reason for protesting. As a matter of fact I would like this letter to express my deepest gratitude for showing all students and the rest of the world a way in which ALL problems can be solved: underpaid workers-toyi-toying

- unemployment-toyi-toying
- too small economic growth-toyi-toying
- low business confidence resulting in low foreign investment-toyi-toying
- lack of education-toyi-toying

I suppose toyi-toying could also help with pollution and such unimportant things like personal crisis.

Today, after being assured at a house meeting that there would be no intimidation, I decided to go to my Ecos tut - a mistake. It was interrupted and I can't in fact remember when I was so scared before (I don't think it ever happened but in case you are wondering I did not grow up in a nice, white, little suburb but in Eastern Europe and "things" there also happening there). Why was it interrupted? We don't know somehow the wage dispute does not seem to be the main cause, but rather the love of toyi-toying and singing/protesting.

Democratic principle about giving US the choice if after 5 minutes of toyi-toying performance we would like to continue our tut was not given to us. So...was it then the choice of the majority? Hardly; the majority is too scared to express any opinions in case somebody could see them as not being Liberal enough. It rather seems to me that a 50-60 people (more were not toyi-toying) are terrorising (sorry but I think only this word expressed that what I meant) the rest of campus. How about voting if we want lectures?

So what can we do now? Not much...be scared, hungry, feel threatened, or write a letter to RHODEO. And when it's really gets bad...toyi-toyi

Anna Kwaitkowska
(not toyi-toying yet)

And we marched forth

Indressa Naidoo

I HEARD protestors clambered through airducts to get into lecture halls; that one student's arm was severed by a spear. Radio South Africa said students had to flee during a lecture because of a bomb scare. Sheesh! What reporting and what fun!

And did we have fun, trying to toyi-toyi but not being able to master the intricate footwork of the marchers in front and clap our hands at the same time, while trying to hum along to the songs because we didn't know the words.

Well, with the student protest and new methods of garbage disposal, admin was in a tizzy behind sombre curtains and the hasty decision that windows actually worked better than doors. I guess they decided that students were the most terrifying beasts when on stampede together or perhaps they were subtly perturbed by our raised fists and cries of "AMAND-LA!". Sigh. At least we have pictures to prove it. Everyone had a field day taking photographs of the live action, Rhodes-style, to send home to gran and gramps. I do too! After all, we're all budding journalists, aren't we?

And that's about it. We'll all have ... er ... real food again, clean laundry, crumb-free carpets and empty ashtrays soon and Grahamstown shall be back to normal. The caspiers and SAP can go back to snoozing at the station instead. I suppose it was more excitement than they had in a while.

Ciao, then, we will reconvene at Kaif Lawns for briefing during the next strike and there is no need to carry your lunch and other instruments!



Fuck off!

Postbags have been chock-a-block. It's been a trying time, let's face it. A dear old lady hurrying out of Admin, clutching a couple of flaccid succulents, summed it up terribly well, "They're not getting my pot-plants", she said.

Confusion does indeed reign. How else could you account for an SRC bash at THE VIC???

Dear Aunty Madge

dreamtunes

I haven't slept peacefully in a week. I keep on hearing these freedom songs in my dreams. I don't know if I'm hallucinating but I could have sworn that I saw a bunch of people toyi-toying outside my room. Could you tell me what's happening?

Confused

Now dear, we all sleep in now and then, but this is perhaps overdoing it. Are you exhausted or just plain bored? It must be all that dark wood and gloomy lighting. Try double glazing (Get some of those nice folk dancing outside your tower to help) and go home now and then. Mrs Muppet is surely missing you by now.

i want my jersey back

I saw a worker wearing my green Benetton jersey (or was it my Hilton Weiner?). Anyway, when I confronted him, he said something about redistribution and "the people shall share"! I am despondent. What shall I do?

Disenfranchised

Speak to those darlings who, as we speak, are putting together a little clause about discipline during THAT STRIKE. Either that, or embrace socialism with a warm heart.

budding muzo

I hear that one can get a music credit for bell-ringing from the music department. I wonder if it is possible for this department to consider awarding credits for exceptional ability to sing freedom songs (which I don't understand, yet) during marches?

In tune

No, but the SRC is offering a course in 'Politically Correct Tunes and Rhythms'. Anyone interested should contact Comrade Smout immediately. Gum boots optional.

toyi-robics

Please could you confirm the rumour that the industrial socio department is seriously considering offering a course in industrial aerobics (otherwise known as toyi-toying), to be run by an expert in Admin?

PS. Will this mean a R200 fee increase?

Out of sync

See last letter. R200? You'll be lucky sweetie. I hope it's your final year.

this one's been watching too many 007 movies

I think they have my photograph. Am I going to be on TV? I know my mom and dad told me not to get involved in any political protest but all my friends were toyi-toying, and I didn't want to feel excluded. I signed a petition. Will I get excluded after all?

Persecuted

The psychology department has a very good counselling service and failing that there's always Neurotics Anonymous. Based in the law department.

holey underwear!

I've got this problem. I'm so embarrassed. I don't have any clean underwear. The only pair I have left is green and has holes in it. I have timeously been here to collect my laundry. Have the laundry times changed? Or is my watch broken?

Washed Out

Yes, The times have indeed changed ...and you thought the washbasin was to fill the kettle and shine the teeth. Anyway, dear, we all smelt the same.

bye-bye, nike

I have just come up with a brilliant idea and figured out how Rhodes can meet the workers' demands for a wage increase. We can get all the toyi-toying liberals to pool their Ray Bans and designer jeans, Nikes and Reeboks for a public auction. Surely the money generated in this humanitarian endeavour will ensure that we have enough money for these poor people?

Bleeding heart

Get real, honey. This isn't an AIDS celebrity bash. Rhodes students are TERRIBLY poor. That's why they're here.

san-tastic

I broke my leg trying to toyi-toyi. When I went to San they gave me this packet of salt and some funny pink pills and instructed me to gargle twice daily. I've done so for 3 consecutive days and the swelling has not gone down. What should I do?

Inflamed

I've spoken to THAT woman and apparently she thought you said 'head'. She has promised that if you go back she'll see to your leg. With lashings of codliver oil. Don't forget they're getting ready for those ruffians from P.E. and her mind's not as focussed as it usually is.

crooked peace signs

I smell and couldn't have a bath because there was no hot water. People look at me funny because my fingers have gone crooked from making peace signs this week. So much has happened, I read about it in Grocotts and about a dude called Dr Snout (not sure about the spelling).

Informed

How can I tell you this? That wasn't actually the peace sign. Winston Churchill made the same mistake once. I'm surprised you're even alive to tell the tale. Those men in mufti had VERY big guns. And dear, a word of advice, rather don't read Grocotts.

Venus Flytrapeze

"Why do people most hate those artists or image-makers who mirror, or present, their actions and most love those image-makers who lie, lull and soothe? Perhaps people prefer to be ignorant, but don't want to admit this." - Kathy Acker. In Memoriam to Identity

Michelle Willmers

FROM *Cold Storage* to Kathy Acker. The Venus Flytrapeze Theatre Company is set to break new ground in experimental theatre this month with a stage production of Kathy Acker's *Blood and Guts in High School*.

The Drama Department's annual Mini-Fest on August 28-29 is the annual opportunity for drama students wishing to stage anything they wish to write, direct or act in themselves.

Founders of the Company, Stacy Hardy and Tamara Guhrs, have decided to use this opportunity to stage the Acker production adapted from the novel by the same name.

The Venus Flytrapeze Theatre Company is headed by Hardy and Guhrs and consists of a group of drama students. Their first production, *Cold Storage*, was staged at the festival this year and had an excellent public response. *Blood and Guts* is the next brave step.

Acker is a controversial writer, but

Stacy feels people tend to think the work tackled by the company is more controversial than it actually is. "The language in *Blood and Guts* is crude and hard-hitting, but it's also beautiful at the same time."

Tamara says she's never heard of the work being done in play form, but she's tired of everyone doing the same old "safe" stuff and not plugging into the technology and resources surrounding them. "*Blood and Guts* is different, it's an experiment in mixed media and it's fast," she says.

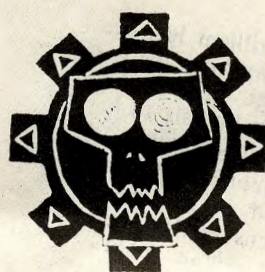
Venus Flytrapeze is out to break the grounds of conventional theatre. If *Cold Storage* is anything to go by, *Blood and Guts* will definitely hold one or two surprises.

Tamara and Stacy agree that *Blood and Guts* is a love story. Girl is member of a gang, sold into white slavery, becomes someone's personal prostitute and finds her true self in the land of the monster.

For more details, see *Blood and Guts*, Rhodes Theatre, August 28.



The best of luck to all Rhodes sports teams for the upcoming Intervarsity matches. We hope the weekend will be enjoyable and appeal to students who consume alcohol to do so in a responsible manner and be considerate to others.



Outward Bound

THE more astute amongst you will notice that there is now a name at the bottom of this column. We wanted the column to be a voice for the gay community as a whole. With the benefit of hindsight we've realised that that's something of a tall order. Writing is never objective - when you're dealing with a contentious issue, even less so. And, after all, I do write it and it may prove beneficial knowing who is behind the pen. Now if there is something you don't agree with, rather than a mythical mass, there is a single person to berate and I encourage you all to debate what is said here.

Moving on. Drugged (with fatigue of course) *RHODEO* editors and staff forgot to ask for Outward Bound last issue, so the LONG awaited article from ye olde correspondent in Boston had to wait even longer. Turns out it was just as well, because since then he has sent a mass of

bumph about various overseas Pride Marches, and Clinton's decision about pixies in the military. These all tie it up rather nicely. Since 1969 and the Stonewall riots in New York, it's been tradition for Gay Pride Marches to take place in the early (northern) summer months of June and July. The result is a seething mass of pixiedom on the trot at much the same time across the whole northern hemisphere. Boston saw 200,000 march on June 26 and 27, New York 5,000,000 the weekend before, Moscow, believe it or not, 9,000, Paris 48,000, London 55,000, and of course San Francisco a staggering half a million. And that's just the big ones. All over Europe and the States, in most cities, there was a presence.

In the USA, following on Clinton's cowardly reversal on the issue of allowing gays to come out in the military, most marchers were asked to carry signs indicating what their job was, to show the diversity of the community. No prizes for guessing who got the most attention. Yup, the soldiers. Although the matter is still not final, it looks as if Clinton will give in to the fascists in the military. Word from Washington is that the powerful gay lobby that was instrumental in his election are fighting mad, as too is Hilary. Way to go. Let her run the place. That'd wipe the silly grin off his face.

Over the pond, on the pimple in the North Sea, there is a serial killer stalking the streets of London. He has promised to kill a gay man every week, and police are no closer to catching him than they were 2 months ago. He has struck three times to date, probably more. Forensic examiners are now dragging up other bodies they think may have been the killer's work. The London Pride march was badly attended partly as a result of the killing, they think, although that sounds dodgy to me. It's great tabloid fodder and the papers have been chock-a-block with horror stories of the apparent S & M psycho. But every cloud has a silver lining, they say, and this one's is the closer links



being forged between the police and the community to catch the man (or) woman. Although after the debacle with the Spanner Trial, it is going to take a great deal to get many gay people to trust a copper again.

Last item from the smoggy isle is the delightful news that an ex-rabbi has declared genetic engineering a splendid way of limiting the birth of homosexuals, and should be taken up just as soon as possible. Fabulous. The mind boggles. Who was it that less than 50 years ago was nearly exterminated as a result of just such a policy. Jewish leaders were quick to dismiss the man as a few wagons short of a lager, but not before a number of groups had agreed with his basic premise - that given a choice, society should do away with its gay element. That such thinking can exist today is beyond belief, and highlights just why Pride marches exist. We are here and more than worthwhile. We have contributed proportionally more than any other group in history. As the direct action group ACT-UP says, *silence equals death*.

Yes, yes, but what does all this have to do with our unwashed dishes? Too much. But let's stay positive. Closer to home,

and something that may be useful to you, is a squizz through the latest books to hit both the public and varsity library. Kate Skinner in the campus library is a mine of info should you want to go further and is more than eager to help. Warning though, don't be seen in her presence *sans* red ribbon.

In no particular order, and titles only due to space, here are the top five:

Tales of the City. GHT Library. The greatest set of 6 books around. Don't start during exams. Please - indulge yourselves.

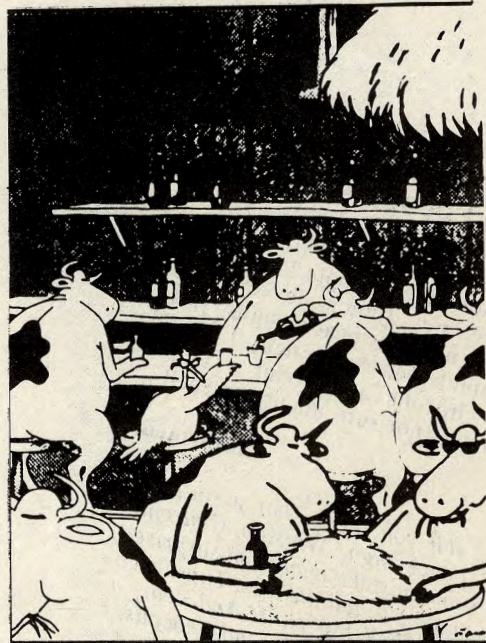
Coming Out - an act of love. GHT Library. New (1992) book. Large section on letters of coming out to parents, brothers, etc. Some very funny.

Not in front of the Audience. RU Library. 1992. Great look at gay stage history.

Violent Betrayal. RU Library. 1992. Abuse in lesbian relationships. Worthwhile.

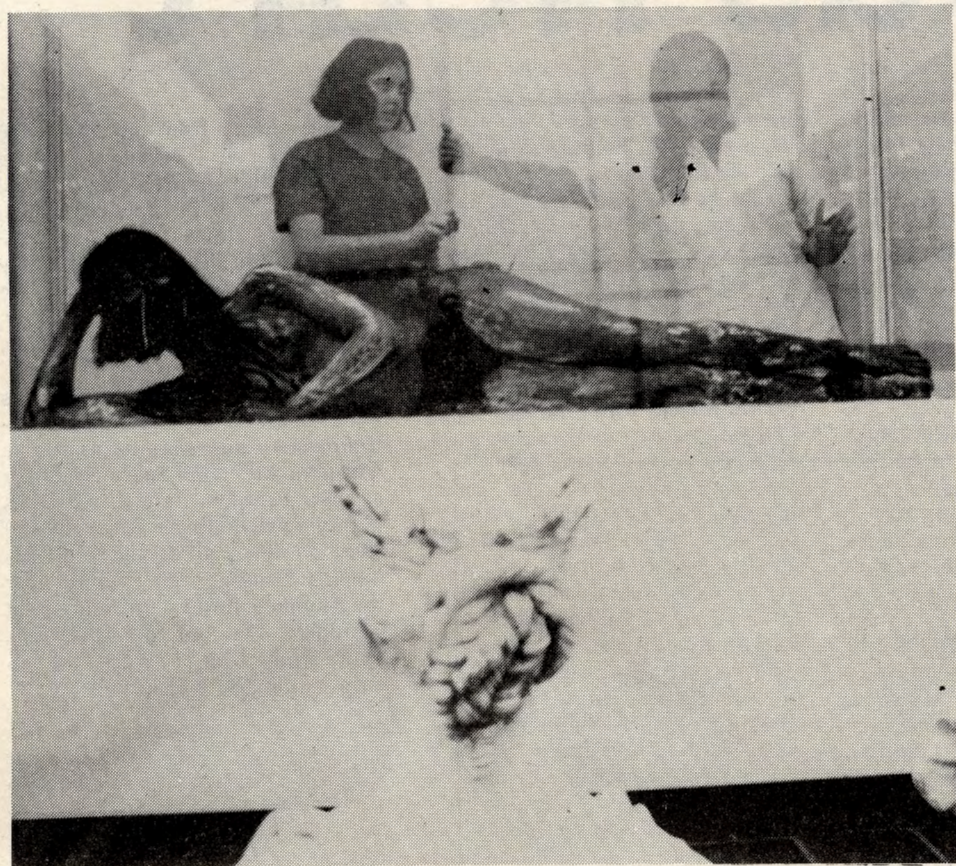
The Life to Come. GHT & RU Libraries. Anyone wanting their ideas on E.M. Forster blown to bits read this. Basically, it's classy Edwardian porn, shedding a revealing light on the famous author.

Peter Frost



Vera looked around the room. Not another chicken anywhere. And then it struck her — this was a hay bar.

Just not cricket Cut the Crap



Pic: Adam Welz

Dror Eyal

SOUNDTRACK: *Beers, Steers and queers*
Dead-pool: The people singing outside my window at 3 in the morning.

Snacks: Take-away pizza

"Well, you join us here on Rhodes campus for what promises to be a review of the latest happenings on the cultural scene. As if Iqbal is here in the commentary box with me... As if, this is the fifth day of "industrial action" by the Rhodes workers, is it not?"

"That's correct, Jack. Misleading, however, as there are two industrial events happening on campus today - the art crit which delivered all it had promised and proved to be one of the most interesting crits I have seen on campus. The other, of course, is the military hardware display which can be seen just outside of the main art school.

"Also on Rhodes campus?"

"Indeed. It seems that a group of artists wanted to start afresh with a different style of music."

"Many would claim that they succeeded. The crit was an impressive break with the past, a curious mix of abstract instrumental textures and aggressive dances."

"But today's performance from Fiona and Julia Pole has been no less eccentric."

"Indeed. I was impressed by their assured opening; slyly self-referential, but disarmingly humorous."

"Indeed, and it's humour we've come to expect from the team. Yet I detect a trace of bitterness in the encasing of a female, clad only in body paint, in a glass case; a trace of satirical comment, even, in

the track 'Caspers'. Let's have another look at that..."

"Yes, notice the clever use of a news report from the Gulf War, continuing the logical link to the black smoke issuing from the fire in front of admin."

"Oh, but we've had a surprise now... It appears that we are ourselves featured, commenting on a cricket match."

"Yes, an intense, and, I might say, typically English piece of ambient cardiovascular conditioning from Giselle and crew."

"I gather we've got a couple of tear gas grenades coming up in a few minutes. A court order has been issued, 'there will be no more violence'. There will be a full autopsy on the hitman."

"Astonishing, yet at the same time it's a logical one-up on their CRASH, made from reassembled crash victims."

"Indeed. I wonder how Eric Clapton will take it."

"I find myself thinking of George."

"Really?"

"Yes. Specifically, his theory on the evolution of man. It's not the same style as Desmond Morris, but I'm sure you can see the resemblance."

"Yes, a more dancey, up-tempo Darwin perhaps. A little more laid-back and ambient in other places. The same reliance on found sound and wry humour, though."

"Yes. I particularly liked 'Demokles', with its rhythmic samples of children coughing, built into the wire frame."

"Apparently built by a psychopath with a penchant for wire."

"So, another splendid performance on Rhodes campus, consolidating their earlier success."

WHILE the workers stay away, students still drink, smoke and play.

So what do you do, with your 20 bucks a day?

In a bid to gain quicker access to the great field, one dark, disorderly and drunk evening, a friend of mine came face to face with the realisation that walls are very solid things.

After the bottle of Sambuca, and a joint or two - although I do believe it could have been more - he ran headlong, full speed into the solid brick wall that is generally known as the Great Hall.

Lying splattered, bruised and bashed in the gutter, he was completely shocked to find that he had not actually gone through the wall. Until the moment after he had crunched every bone in his body, he had honestly believed he would make it through.

Besides shedding doubt on the concept of mind over matter, I found it curious that drugs could have such a smashing effect. After telling the story at a pub, roars of fermenting breath laughed and recanted all the silly things that had happened to them - ranging from excreting in public places to ... well, I'm sure you all have your own little stories. But, when I told the story to some smokers of joints, they agreed what actually happened was that the wall-banger had not in fact hit the wall, but rather that he had hit another stoned person who had been attempting the same feat from the other side, thus causing them to collide in the center of cement and stone.

Noticeable difference between heads and ruggers, isn't there?

Some students weren't so sure though:

"Both stimulate the mind, and you don't become yourself, so they're the same thing. Alcohol as well as dagga is a form of cowardly escapism," - says a very clean BPharm II student.

"The main problem is a sociological one, alcohol drinkers dominate, and marijuana smokers have not asserted themselves, both are bad and are actually the same thing," - says a very clean BJourn II student.

Thus spake the students who had never used or abused either. They see my friend - the wall crasher - as a wall crasher, whether he was flying in heaven or shouting and slurring down hell.

But alack, as with all pleasurable things, the law comes into effect. And driving. And aggression. And economics. And science.

Marijuana is illegal, alcohol is not. Scientifically, there is a lack of any conclusive evidence that dope has any hazardous, deteriorating effects on physical well-being (besides suspected chromosome breakdown, which colour TV and aspirin do to you, anyway). Psychologically, however, it seems to become central

to thoughts and emotions of heavy users and furthermore results in what has been termed "amotivational syndrome" - loss of energy and lack of interest in planned activity. Tests were conducted in Jamaica (of all places) where the marijuana is strong and frequently used. Findings found and results resulted in no substantial evidence that health risks were involved.

So again, and back to the vox, why are there no pot-pubs?

"Because the government makes more bucks out of booze," wheezed a red-eyed brain pan-fried BA I student.

"If I went to a bar and saw somebody scotchmoking, I'd think 'Jesus that's scaly', but it's just because of convention. Smoking is seen as dirty, and therefore has more of a scotchigma," asserted a non-smoking BCom III student.

But social conventions aside, many students were concerned about the performance of both - like what happens to Car A running on alcohol fumes, and Car B with the smoky exhaust: if you were hitching to PE and two cars stopped, one driver with a beer in hand and two in his brain, and another with a cloud of dube smogging in his car, which would you feel safe to climb into?

"Alcohol is not such an altered state of consciousness, but people on dope are more scary, because they generally tend to freak out," said a drinking and smoking BCom I student.

"Dope is an induced pleasurable state, but alcohol makes you aggressive. It's a better buzz, and I would trust that person more," said a drinking and smoking BJourn II student.

I wondered who, if they were president, would legalise - the chant that has echoed down many Rastafarian croonings?

Unanimously everyone answered yes.

But I'm sure my objectivity is questionable (nudge nudge wink wink) as is everyone's. If science has inconclusive evidence, and the authorities just don't like it's smell, can we not afford to be subjective and smoke what we believe to be the greener grass?

But back to my friend, on one equally dark and disorderly night. He entered the Garden of Eden, commonly known as Bots, and became Adam, commonly characterised by being naked. He awoke the next morning, nude and cold, cuddled under a bridge.

No dope, no alcohol had induced this oneness with nature and removal from nurture...

A chemically-designed and comically coloured piece of paper had.

Do we banish and condemn the snake to its belly, and label it scaly, or do we just

slide with our own "drugs" whatever they may be, and stop invading other people's missions?

The Grapevine

IT'S that time of the year again, with SRC elections looming. Successful candidates not only get a guaranteed 12 months agony and ecstasy, they win valuable Brownie points for their CV. The grand prize of SRC presidency comes with an office (with a good view of the pool), a telephone (to use and abuse), a Kombi (12 months unlimited mileage or your first accident - whichever comes first) and a laser printer (to take home during the holidays).

It is with much sadness that the Grapevine has come to hear we have

lost one of Grahamstown's most colourful characters. It appears that the perennially weird, post-structuralist anti-establishmentarian Anthony Collins frustrated by his inability to win the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award, is off to the States. We will certainly miss Anthony who proved that pretentiousness can be elevated to an art, well - fuck-you nihilism to a science and aptly demonstrated that the ability to play a musical instrument is not necessarily a prerequisite for playing at the Vic.

The third term is traditionally a frenzy of activity but last week was

simply too much. Aiesec Commerce Week, Islamic Week, Divinity Week and Industrial Relations Dispute Week - all in a mere five days.

It appears that the workers' strike was all an elaborate hoax. It was a complex ploy, staged by the outgoing SRC to give students a true sense of the traditional Rhodes Experience (re: mid-1980s). It was staged to show all those native Sandtonians, Capetonians and Zimbabweans how to make placards, how to toy-toy and that Caspers are not just friendly ghosts. For those of you who want your laundry, your meals and your lectures back and are tired of standing ankle-deep in rubbish - sit back, relax and enjoy the typical English-Speaking-Liberal-South-African-University experience.

In an interesting spin-off of the strike, several members of that bourgeois, exploitive, capitalist-lacky oppressive class - university lecturers have been heard wimpering "...but we only got a 5 percent pay increase this year" - can we be far from images of the Eastern Cape's disgruntled Intelligentsia throwing rubbish into the fountain and toyi-toying on the lawns outside Admin.

Not all students who didn't participate in the strike are apathetic. It seems that some rather irate students are more concerned with saving the whale than saving the people. After admin's elaborate fountain was trashed, ten or so very emotional students quickly cleared the rubbish out the fish's (rather oblivious) way. "Give the fish a swimming wage"?

My traitorous heart

Peter Frost

IT WILL be called "The Dark Age" by some, the Rhodes Weigh-Less Plan by others, and the best entertainment Grahamstown has seen since Smout lost the elastic in his Y-fronts by still others. Admin resembled the *Les Misérables* set, barricaded against the revolting povo, its ex-Rhodes-

sian inmates warbling: "We shall overcome".

But THAT STRIKE was more than a lesson the in no-nos of siege-diplomacy. It proved once and for all that South African Man is not New, or even second-hand, but terminally-challenged and forgotten by God because even she doesn't give a toss. I'm talking of course about the Great Famine.

It started out, as all res stories do, with a neanderthal testosterone cry: "WAAAAAA! Eighty bucks. Let's get pissed ma man!" Friday night and the world was a splendid place. Bucks in the pocket, meat-market at the Vic, jorl at the Union. The essentials of life. "Let's party!"

Next morning, heavy beneath a dog-breath cloud of Tequila Slammer and Toxic-Sludge, the

light dawns. Empty pockets and even emptier bellies. And now? Let the fun begin.

If you made your way through the rows of paralytic Oppies watching, you would have seen the "OK Route". Clueless but starving, they cruised the dysfunctional aisles in search of kwik-'n-easy. Poor lambs. How were they to know that The Bazaar separ-

ates its cheese from the rest of the dairy products - across the entire length of the shop? Or that Baked Beans need to be opened with a tin-opener? And just what the fuck IS Tofu? For many, it is the first (and last) foray into the world of Betty Crocker. Mother, res, girlfriend, wife. Who needs home economics?

By midday Saturday the shop's been emptied of Ryvita, Cup-a-Soup, coke and Mevrou Ball's se Tuisgemakte Blatjang. (Chutney sarms). Tempers flare. Livid faces betray well-hidden racist expletives as the last of the pig-balls Vienna Sausages go. Funny how the stomach throws up long-silent prejudice. "Ja, but this is serious man. How can I work on an empty stomach?" How indeed.

Take away the cooks and industry could crumble

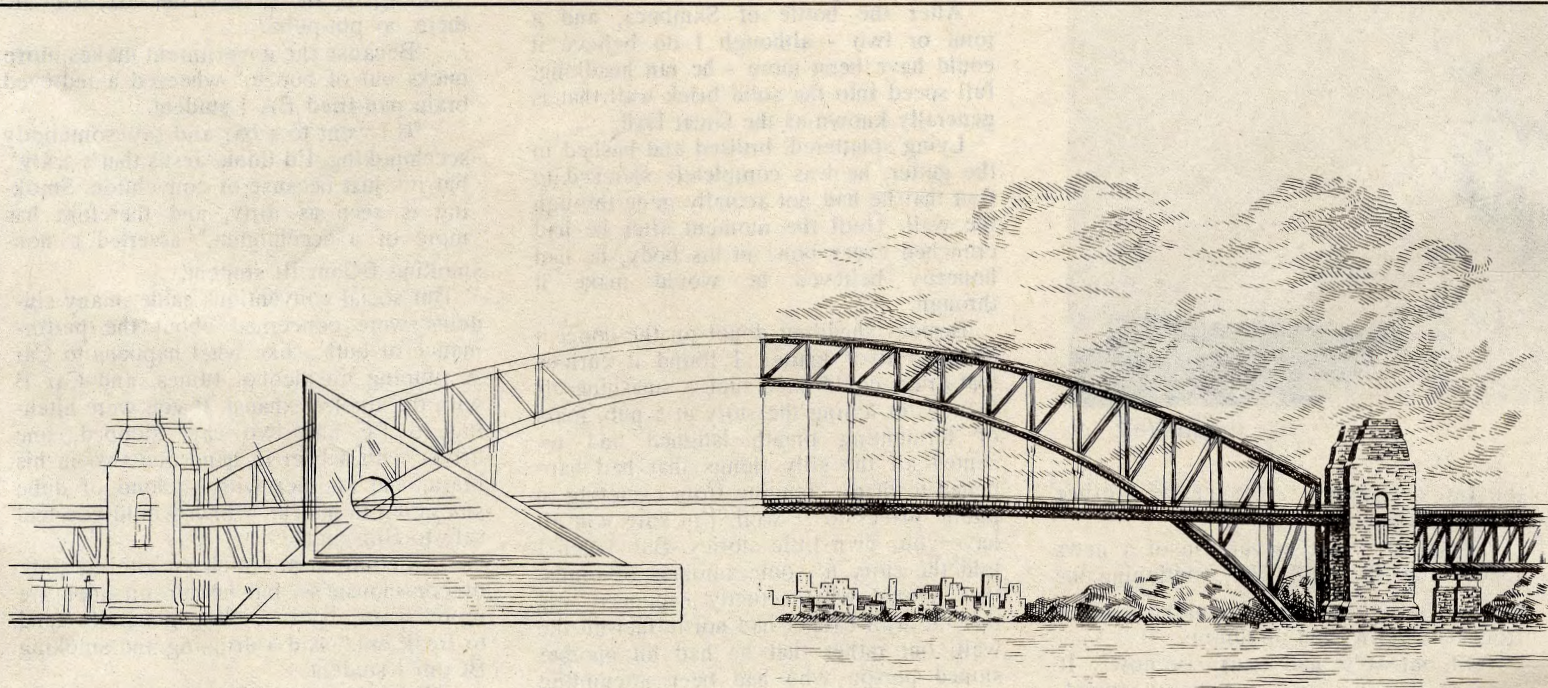
But we stray. Back to the mirth. OK, so no more Ryvita or yoghurt, and fuck me if I'm walking to Checkers, so what's left? "Hey, don't you know anyone in digs? What about that strange oke, the friend of your sister's? Dodgy, but hey, desperate times ... and he's got a kitchen. Off."

Strange Oke is getting ready to get up, it being only 1 o'clock. Is run over in the kitchen getting his caffeine fix by the invasion of the butter-snatchers. "Howz it goin'?" Grand. Thanks hey. Check you later."

It only works once, so, like the proverbial post-nuclear hounds, they take it to the streets. Pale, gaunt salvators, future leaders and husbands all, bug-eye Dulce's and fantasise outside the Spur. The Spur? Oh God, no. Not that desperate, surely. It is a sad spectacle. If an army marches on its stomach, the boardroom is no different. Take away the cooks, and industry could crumble. There's an idea.

post nuclear hounds

That night at the Vic, the talk is not of who kicks ass in the sack, but who gives good dinner. The homely shine. Their time has come. Except, as Stallone's ex said, "If this is the future, well, MOTHERFUCKA, leave me out." It ain't over 'til the fat lady sings, and she's on top form. And she's got your laundry. Viva, on with the struggle.



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RHODEO

SPORTING RHODEO is the Rhodes student's guide to campus, local, national and international sporting events. It includes any issues which you may find interesting. Contributions, suggestions or results can be put in the RHODEO post box, or sent to the SRC offices through internal mail.

Making waves at the Gunston 500

Karuna Gopal

IT WAS sun, fun, action, and that's what you got from just sitting on the beach.

I'm talking about the 1993 Beach Festival and its main attraction, the Gunston 500, South Africa's premier surfing event. It all happened at Durban's North Beach in July and attracted surfing greats from around the world, including defending champion, Hawaiian, Sunny Garcia.

The beachfront rocked to the powerful rhythms of Radio 5 and Capital 604 everyday for the duration of the competition. This mingled with awed gasps as spectators watched the pros riding the waves and excited giggles as female fans crowded for autographs from Baywatch star Kelly Slater, who actually surfs!

The Gunston 500, itself, began with preliminary rounds and then person-on-person elimination heats, with Australian Gary Elkerton gliding his way to victory

and Hawaiian Rochelle Gallad snatching the Women's Championship title.

Capetonian Justin Strong kept South African pride riding high by finishing an equal fifth place after knocking out top international seed Damien Hardman in earlier heats.

The atmosphere on Durban's beachfront couldn't have been more exhilarating. For the more terrestrial sun-worshippers there were beach volley-ball tournaments, flea-markets galore and

the ever popular Bikini Open(s) but whether you were in the surf or on the shore it was, "one hundred percent pure adrenalin.", as one surfer put it.

The crowd comprising of an assortment of hardcore surf enthusiasts, artsy folk, holidaymakers and suited business executives on their lunchbreaks, was a spectacle to marvel at. Words like 'tunnel' 'awesome' and 'kicking' were the lingo of the day, and to those don't understand - "get with it, dude!"

Doolan for coach

Anthony Sguazzin

UNDER the guidance of new coach, Greg Doolan, Rhodes University Rugby Club has become involved in a number of projects aimed at improving and promoting rugby in Grahamstown's townships.

Previously, the club's involvement in developmental rugby was limited to an occasional coaching session at nearby coloured or black schools, but it has now taken some concrete steps towards developing a permanent rugby culture within the townships.

The 30 most promising players in the under 13 and under 16 age groups were determined by trials. Skills training sessions are now held weekly at the club grounds. In addition, Doolan has coached at coloured and black schools as far afield as Port Alfred.

The club has also become involved with many teams from Grahamstown's townships. Coaching sessions have been held at these clubs and the clubs floodlit grounds have been made available to them.

Rhodes' Rugby team has tried to play matches against one of these clubs weekly either at the university grounds or in the township, attracting as many as 3000 spectators.

This policy of community involvement has had a number of spin off benefits for the club. These include increased attendance at games due to people from the townships beginning to attend matches at the university. Doolan feels this policy can only "foster better relations between the club and the community at large."

Apart from winning the young township people's interest in rugby, the club is trying to create a number of rugby scholarships which will make the attendance of more students from the townships at Rhodes University possible.

An early benefitor of this scheme is first team player Pepsi Twaku, who originates from one of Grahamstown's townships and is on a full rugby scholarship.



Pic: Taryn Cass

Sue Krell, striker for Rhodes women's first team, outruns a player from St Peters. The final score was 1-1. Rhodes are expecting a tough match against UPE at Intervarsity, particularly because two of the team's most experienced players are not able to play.

Underdog Rhodes set to topple UPE

Russel Matthews

AFTER 17 years without a win at Intervarsity, Rhodes' 1st XV rugby side have their best ever chance of upsetting UPE.

With Grahamstown this year host to the Port Elizabeth university, high-flying Rhodes will be determined to continue their impressive run of form on Saturday.

To date Rhodes has recorded one of their most successful seasons ever with victories over Parks, Zwide and Correctional Services. Much of this recent success can be attributed to the services of Coach Greg Doolan and

Captain Hendrik Weber. Weber joined Rhodes this season after playing for Despatch and Eastern Province last year.

Doolan - who hails from Taranaki, New Zealand - along with the rugged Weber, have brought a new urgency to the side. With modern innovative coaching methods and a great deal of hard work, they have turned Rhodes into one of the more feared teams in the league.

With Garth Wakeford and Chad O'Riordan, both standing at 6ft 6", and Dan McAlister, at 6ft 5", Rhodes definitely has the edge in height over UPE and are expected to dominate the lineouts.

The solid front row combination of Hilton Brown, Garryn Forman and Brendon Grant has had an excellent season and is expected to more than hold its own in the scrummage.

The Rhodes pack has excelled in developing second, third and fourth phases of play with hard driving off the base of set pieces. It is this ability that has enabled them to develop point-scoring situations; that they continue to do this on Saturday is essential if Rhodes are to win.

A great deal of responsibility lies on the shoulders of new fly-half, Alister Firth. Starting the

season in the U21 ranks, Firth was promoted into the 1st team after showing impressive form with the boot and a good all-round tactical awareness. He has played with increasing confidence and maturity and will be a key figure in the Rhodes effort on Saturday.

The Rhodes side has also been boosted by the return of former Eastern Province scrum half, Rich Lurie. In the few games he has played this season, he has made a phenomenal difference to the Rhodes' three quarters. Considered by Doolan to be developing in the Garth Wright mould,

he has a vital role to play in getting the Rhodes backline away.

UPE's strength lies in their speed on the wings and there is little doubt that should their forwards win enough ball, they will attempt to stretch Rhodes out wide. Their backline, however, has been disrupted with the loss of Eastern Province flyhalf, Greg Millar.

On Saturday Rhodes go into the encounter as the underdogs, if previous years are anything to go by. However, Doolan has faith that if his team can play to their potential, they will not lose.

From anarchy to chaos

David Storey, outgoing Senior Regional Co-ordinator of the Wits-Vaal Regional Peace Committee, came to Rhodes last Tuesday to give a talk on the National Peace Accord - what is it, is it working, is it our last hope, or is it a toothless token? Thabang Motsoasele went to find out.

THE National Peace Accord (NPA), signed on September 14 1991, was touted by its signatories as the harbinger of a new, peaceful South Africa. Instead, violence continues to spiral way out of control, with the result that major political parties are now calling on the government to crack down on the violence in places like the Reef. Peace seems to be further and further away, a nebulous concept which is merely spoken about, not practised.

Since the NPA was signed, there have been several attacks levelled at it, and many people seem to be convinced of its utter failure to contain or even stop the rapidly escalating violence in the country. Transkei's leader, Major General Bantu Holomisa, has described the NPA as "a dismal failure ... a big public relations exercise".

David argues that, at least as far as the Wits-Vaal region is concerned, these accusations are unfounded.

The NPA was signed by all the major political parties, including the ANC-Co-satu-SACP alliance, the NP and the IFP, in a climate in which "violence was becoming the main issue in the negotiation process. In fact, the ANC insisted on putting the issue of violence first on the negotiation agenda," says David.

"It is a product of the transition period, the first multi-party agreement to be signed during the interim period," he says.

"South Africa has a history of violence. There has never been any transfer of power that has happened without it. Violence was used to enforce apartheid, and it was used to fight the system.

"Even during the transition period, the country is still violent. For example, last month, more than 500 people died in political violence, 252 of them from the Wits-Vaal region. Since 1990, more than 10000 have died in politically-motivated violence.

"Conflict is intrinsic to any society. Violence is the most basic form of solving the conflict," David says.

'a history of violence'

In any society there is conflict arising out of competition for resources. The fewer resources there are to go around, the more intense the conflict. In South Africa, the breakdown in the legitimacy of traditional structures which ensure competition happens as peacefully as possible (eg, police, the courts), has created a situation in which violence has increasingly been seen as the only option in gaining ground in the competition for resources.

Ironically, violence can break out because money has been allocated for development in resource-strapped areas and no-one can agree on how and where to spend the money. "The absence of politi-



Pic: Adam Welz

cal legitimacy is most apparent at the grassroots level. There is also virtually no socio-economic development, and the violence is the worst in these areas," says David.

"Violence tends to mirror the conflicts within society. During the transition, the spectrum of political expression is expanding, while the institutional mechanisms for the normal expression of these aspirations is rapidly narrowing."

This has led to the current wave of violence, as people become bolder and more vicious in their bid to gain power, any power.

The NPA was established to deal with this situation.

"It is the first multiparty agreement in which consensus was reached. It was the first test of the organisational capacity of the parties. They had to ensure that they had people at all levels to fill the structures set up under the accord," David explains.

"It was a bold and brave step for many, since people that had been enemies for decades now had to put their trust in each other. It both created the mechanisms for dealing with violence and represented an ideal that all parties had to strive for.

"While elitist in the way it started - there was no consultation with grassroots on its establishment - the success of the local structures has inverted the top-down impact of the accord. It empowers people at grassroots level, which is important. There is no other institution besides the NPA which has the legitimacy to broker agreements and implement them. It is an alternative symbol, another route which people can choose besides the violence," he says.

"It is flexible enough to adapt to changes. Once consensus has been reached (each member of the national, regional and local committees has veto powers) it can be an incredibly powerful tool. It is also at its weakest when violence breaks out."

One of the problems which David pointed out was the difficulty in setting up local committees when there is no violence in an area, yet it is especially difficult to set them up when violence breaks out. In a peaceful situation, it is almost impossible to see the need for a local peace committee. Yet when violence breaks out, as it did in Eldorado Park during a taxi war a few months ago, everyone begins to shout for the peace committees. The proverbial vicious circle.

"Our job is 60 percent peace-making. That is, resolving issues which cause conflict and lead to violence. We strive to move from anarchy to chaos. Peace-keeping includes on-ground intervention between warring factions. We have to form relationships with individual sectors of the community.

'Expect anything and trust no-one'

"In this situation, nothing is certain. Laws don't exist in some of these areas. Organisations fight amongst themselves and with each other. You have to ask yourself - when violence breaks out, will this person be able to do something? The SAP is the one solid thing you cannot depend on. Rationality doesn't exist, emotions are high. Our motto is, expect anything and trust no-one.

"For example, a few weeks ago there was a group of about 50 people, armed with sticks and spears, running after an impi of about 5 000. I stopped them and asked, 'What are you going to do when you get there?' Their answer was simple. 'Moer them.' It seemed to be beyond them that this impi, many of whom were armed with guns and AKs, would totally decimate them.

"There is no trust of political processes, the anger is getting worse, and the brutality is getting worse. You get incidents where bodies are exhumed and burned, of bodies being stolen from mortuaries."

On the subject of 'cultural weapons', the government has not been willing to do anything decisive about it, so the ANC has quietly begun to arm its own people in the same way. When there is a march, whether ANC or IFP, the people there are armed to the teeth with 'cultural weapons.' There is a stand-off now. Think back to the last time you heard or read about the ANC asking the government to do something about the issue.

"We don't worry about knob-kerries, sticks or spears. The AKs are our serious worry now. You just keep your head down and crisis manage as much as you can."

In the Wits-Vaal region, the peace committee has drawn up a legal document which says the security forces cannot declare an unrest area without consultation.

'The AKs are our serious worry now'

"Where there have been unrest areas declared without it, it hasn't been implemented. It is more a public relations exercise that anything else - the police have admitted this.

"We also have an accredited visitors programme, to try and restore law and order. Under the programme, members of the committee can visit any jail unannounced. When they get there, they are provided with a building plan of the jail. We can then demand access to any room, we can interview any prisoner about anything. We then fill in a form in quadruplicate, a copy of which goes to the Commanding Officer.

If there was something wrong, he can be asked, 'How did you let this happen? What did you do about it once you found out about it?'

"In this way, we try to build up trust between the community and the police. Any stations which are still torturing people also have to be careful because they don't know who will be coming through that door. We are making jails safer for people so that others are more willing to report offenders."

At the moment, anyone who reports an offender is in danger because the offender may die from police brutality in prison, in which case the person who reported him or her also dies.

Wits-Vaal has also implemented a communication system called JOCC (Joint Operations Communication Centre), which is outfitted with a mobile radio system. Marshals in the PWV area have radios they use to report an impending attack. In the JOCC, there are army, police and peace committee representatives. As soon as the message is heard, they move into the area.

The JOCCs have proved to work so well at preventing violence that two areas in Natal are now going to run the system.

For the future, the Wits-Vaal region is planning on spending about R150000 on the training of 400 marshals. The training will be on unarmed defence, design of rallies, and the ANC and IFP is jointly involved in the training. The peace committee is also looking at converting double-decker buses into JOCCs. David estimates that about 4000 marshals need to be trained for the elections for his region alone.



Pic: Adam Welz