WORK IN PROGRESS

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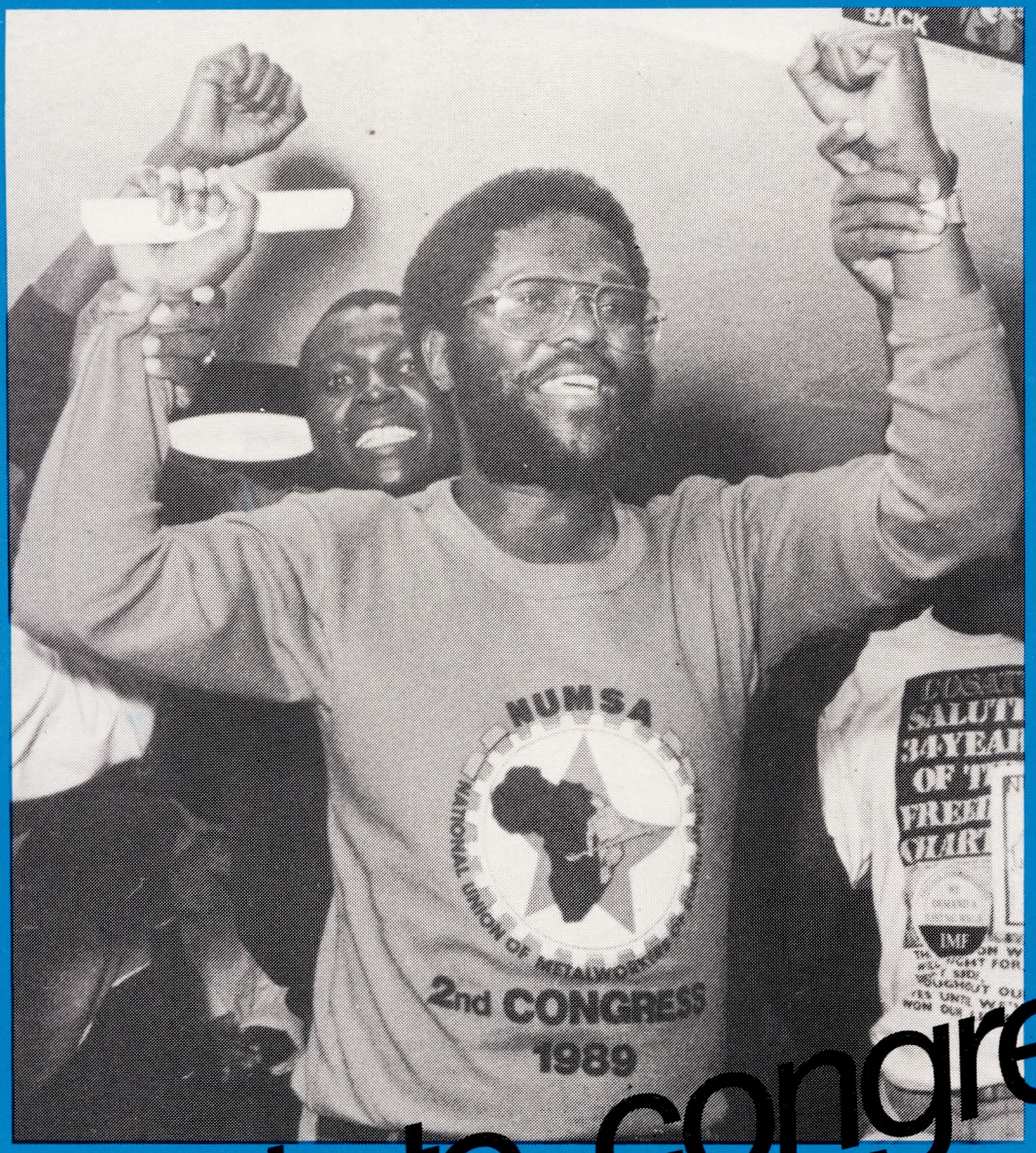


Roads to congress

INSIDE:

Transkei Inquest

The road ahead for the mass democratic movement

Soweto's rent boycott

Garment workers - a look at the history

E D I T O R I A L

South Africa is moving into its fourth year of continuous emergency rule. And with the exception of a few months during 1986, some areas are entering their fifth year under these conditions.

The effects of permanent emergency rule have been traumatic and wide ranging. Under emergency rule, a fundamentally anti-democratic state has been able to impose itself on an unwilling people without being subject to scrutiny, discussion or legal opposition. And while South Africa pre-emergency had almost none of the rights and freedoms associated with democracy, the last few years have stripped society of the last vestiges of rule by consent.

The nature of the emergency has changed. It began as an aggressive attack on the mass democratic movement and the situation of 'ungovernability' that popular insurrection created. It has changed to become an all-encompassing political strategy, a last defence against ideas which refuse to die. For while organisations have been smashed, the ideas and aspirations which grew from the turbulent early 1980s are showing signs of re-emerging.

In this context it may well be true that this government cannot rule without recourse to emergency powers of enormous magnitude. It may also be true that suppression of information, debate and opposition, and unrestrained powers for security forces, are a necessary precondition for an apartheid government to rule a subject people.

Government sources have often argued that emergency powers are designed to create a stable context for 'reform'. But what reforms of substance have been offered since the first emergency was declared in July 1985? Looking nervously over a shoulder at far-right interests threatened by the most superficial aspects of deracialisation is hardly an indication of reform.

Proposals for a consultative council incorporating Africans are not only tired and bankrupt. Their uncomfortable similarities to the 'toy telephone' Native Representative Council of the 1940s ensures that even the most moderate of black interests will spurn such ideas. Only the discredited, the opportunistic, or those with no following or power base can contemplate participation.

Emergency rule - like so many of the preconditions for maintaining apartheid - has created further disease and distortion in society. When the state's institutions of repression - notably police and military - have the free reign granted by emergency powers, it is no surprise that death squads operate seemingly without reprisals. When members of the 'security forces' have the power to incarcerate apartheid's opponents indefinitely, it is no surprise that assassinations, abductions and 'dirty tricks' departments flourish as additional means to remove organised opposition and resistence.

It is six weeks since David Webster's death swelled the growing record of political assassinations, assaults and abductions.

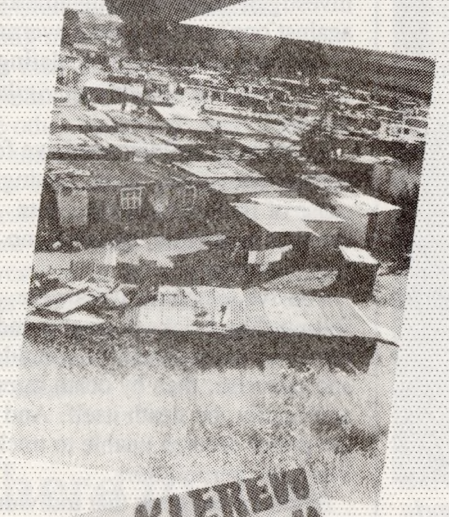
Over 12 years of publishing, David was a good friend to *Work In Progress*, writing for, distributing and supporting the publication. He was guest speaker at *WIP's* tenth anniversay celebration. And while police seem unable to find those specifically responsible for his murder, those who have created the atmosphere of emergency rule are the real culprits. It is but one small step from exercising legal powers to detain, ban and suppress, to the extra-legal actions of assassination and terror.

Emergency rule will presumably continue until at least after the September general election. The National Party is keen to stay as far from the international spotlight as possible until after these elections. In particular, the new American administration, while clearly right wing, may have new and unpleasant approaches to sanctions and international pressure on South Africa.

Internally, the opposition which can be generated in the election - be it from the far right or from those committed to democracy - clearly worries a government based on such shaky foundations. Government planners will still recall the organised resistance to the election of Indian and coloured houses which made such a mockery of the tricameral constitutional initiative.

When a government, bankrupt in ideas and initiative,is bent on holding power for its own sake - and has means like the state of emergency to enforce is rule - the prospects for any constructive negotiated change are indeed bleak.

C O N T E N T S



They always get away!

POLICE investigations into the assassination of Dr David Webster appear - not surprisingly - to have ground to a halt.

Immediately after the murder, there was a flurry of activity: the investigation was headed by Colonel Floris Mostert, head of the Brixton murder and robbery squad. He, in turn, worked under the supervision of a more senior police officer, General Joubert. Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok - unusually - expressed condolences to those close to Webster. He also announced a reward of R10 000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the assassins.

Within days, police released three identikits of possible suspects. The detailed, life-like quality of these, led some observers to believe they were drawings of photographs, or that police had an informant who knew the suspects well. Others suspected the identikits were a hoax, designed to indicate investigative activity where there was none.

Soon even the appearance of activity died down. Mostert left for a holiday in Portugal. A source at Brixton admitted that only two members of the police were engaged full-time in the investigation. Police withdrew the identikits - but took a week to notify the media of this. Lawyers acting in the matter were told that police had a further two identikits of suspects. Weeks later these had still not been released to the media, family or friends of Webster.

Information given to police about previous threats made against Webster - notably by a member of the security police - did not appear to be followed up, and those who witnessed these threats were not interviewed by police investigators.

As with previous assassinations of anti-apartheid activists, nothing has emerged from police investigations.

There are those who believe that this failure on the part of police reflects a lack of enthusiasm in investigating attacks against anti-apartheid elements.

Dr David Webster, a vibrant and totally committed opponent of apartheid, was assassinated outside his home by unknown gunmen on the morning of 1 May.

Others go further, claiming that police actively protect right- wing vigilante and death squads - possibly because their members are drawn from within the ranks of the SAP itself.

This may indeed be the case - especially in the light of police failure to solve the hundreds of cases, over many years, where anti-apartheid figures have been attacked in some way.

This list of unsolved cases ranges from the sixty-plus assassinations thus far recorded by human rights monitoring groups, to assaults, abductions, attempted murders, petrol bombing of individuals and property, hurling of bricks through windows, slashing of car tyres, tampering with vehicles, mutilation of household pets, spraying of abusive slogans and the like.

And these activities, aimed at opponents of apartheid, go back twenty years and more. Almost without exception, perpetrators of these crimes have not been apprehended or tried. This writer can recall only two trials emerging from these activities in the past twenty years. One involved a Cape Town group called 'Scorpio', the other a Transvaal-based terror squad which aimed, inter alia, to poison water supplies and scatter tacks on civilian roads.

There is no doubt that police failure - over two decades - to successfully investigate these ongoing attacks against opponents of the government, created the climate for escalating acts of terror by hit squads and vigilante groups.

Those responsible must have felt - with justification - an increasing sense of immunity as their acts brought no arrests, no trials, no imprisonment.

Abusive telephone calls were followed by bricks through windows, bricks by shots aimed to intimidate and terrorise, then by death threats - and finally, by death itself. And still the police seemed unable to track down the perpetrators.

Evidence suggests that individual police investigations were not carried out with the energy, resources and seriousness which they deserved. Security police investigations into the activities of government opponents - by analogy - have been carried out with great dedication, and have usually been based on the massive array of powers which police hold in South Africa.

But even if individual police probes had made use of greater resources, it is doubtful that there would have been a higher success rate.

These acts of right-wing terror cannot be properly investigated or assessed individually, nor are they best probed by the SAP's criminal divisions. They are profoundly political crimes, and as such require investigation as a whole, as part of a course of conduct by individuals and organisations involved in conspiracies, secrecy and perhaps even cell structures.

This is why a criminal squad investigation of an individual act of right-wing terror is unlikely to succeed - even if the will to succeed is there.

A full investigation of right-wing attacks is urgently required. Evidence and patterns need to be sifted and assessed, police dockets covering decades should be

examined, and individuals must be questioned.

Individual police officers, investigating single incidents, cannot take on this responsibility. It requires a fearless and independent commission, with powers to subpoena documents and individuals, hear evidence, and draw inferences from a broad course of conduct spanning many years.

Only then can acts like the assassination of David Webster, and all the other 'unsolved' acts of blatant terror and crime, be solved, the culprits dealt with, and further death and destruction avoided.

Those who stand in the way of such an investigation must, ultimately, be seen as condoning the illegal harassment, assault and assassination of apartheid's opponents.

Glenn Moss

Where to now Alexandra?

ALEXANDRA township lit up with memories of militancy and people's power as thousands crowded the streets. It was 24 April, 1989: Moses Mayekiso, Obed Bapela, Richard Mdakane, Mzwanele Mayekiso and Paul Tshabalala had returned home.

They had last seen the township two-and-a-half years earlier, when they were detained under the emergency regulations. Many changes had occurred during their long spell in detention and their subsequent trial on charges of subversion - the state of emergency, the collapse of township structures, and new strategies within the mass democratic movement, the labour movement, the state and their respective allies.

Here, the Alex Five talk about these issues, the present situation, and the future.

✻ *Township structures*

Moss Mayekiso: During the uprisings in 1986, the state resorted to military occupation of the townships and declared a state of emergency. This action went hand in glove with police brutality, restrictions, banning orders, the murder of activists by unknown murder squads, vigilante activities and other repressive measures which enabled the state to crush the organs of people's power.

But the revolutionary spirit of the working class is still very much alive. The welcome we received by the people in Alex and their enthusiasm to start building again has proved this.

Bapela: But it was also due to some weaknesses in township structures that the emergency could cripple our organisations. We fell short of developing a broad second-level leadership, so when the leaders were detained the masses were left directionless.

It is not clear how much is being done practically to alter the situation, but workshops are being held on understanding our current situation and our direction. At the same time we must not under-estimate the state of emergency, with its immense powers of control and restrictions.

✻ *The way forward*

Moss Mayekiso: Prior to our detention, Cosatu was still new and finding its feet. Things were not clear on which direction to take. Now we have resolutions on how to practically move forward, to re-structure community organisations and build alliances. Also, political organisations and trade unions are coming together in a more non-sectarian spirit. We must be careful this time to move slowly and build firmly.

Bapela: We are finding more common ground and moving towards working collectively. The anti-apartheid conference expresses this collective initiative where people from outside the movement are being drawn in on issues.

✻ *Conditions in Alex*

Moss Mayekiso: The state is using the Brazilian option - taking leaders out of communities, trying to buy the hearts and minds of the people by pumping money in and trying to improve living conditions - trying to bribe the community.

But this has not worked. Living conditions in the community as a whole have not changed. The shanty dwellers are still there - they have no taps, toilets or electricity.

They are also selling stands to whoever is prepared to buy them.

The yard where I lived in Alex has been sold and the room I was occupying for R7 a month is going for R35 a month.

The state has seen that it cannot force high rents on people so it has thrown the ball in the stand-owners' court. We are worried that the stand-owners and the tenants will not see eye to eye in rent boycotts. Conditions are in fact worse. Previously we co- operated with each other and organised ourselves to improve the situation. But now there is no immediate resistance.

Bapela: There is a major housing problem for the majority of the people in Alex. The few new houses being built are very expensive, and are of poor quality. Already people are complaining that walls are cracking.

There is also the problem of the bridge connecting Alexandra to the main road out of the township. The bridge floods whenever it rains and people have no access in and out the township.

Mzwanele Mayekiso: A class of petty bourgeois is being developed in Alex in the form of home-owners and stand-owners. These people in turn exploit their tenants. They charge high rentals and people are not happy with this situation.

Tshabalala: The shanty dwellers are faced with forced removals. A few weeks ago, in 8th Avenue, municipal police bulldozed 60 shacks, leaving 63 families stranded. Last week seven shacks were burnt down by unknown people. The council is also threatening to move shack dwellers to Orange Farm near Evaton, far from where they work.

✻ *Reviving Alex structures*

Moss Mayekiso: When we were acquitted, people expected us to go back to Alex immediately, and start forming the Alex Action Committee (AAC) and embark on radical action. But we now prefer to crawl before we can walk.

Back row: Richard Mdakane, Mzwanele Mayekiso. Front row: Moses Mayekiso, Paul Tshabalala, Obed Bapela

We are definitely going back there. But for my part, it is obviously not wise for me to just jump into an open house and make myself vulnerable to attacks. Although we could be killed anywhere, we would still like to feel secure, especially to feel a bit relaxed when we sleep at night. So our houses must be secure before we move in.

We are already involved in a process of reviving the AAC. But as I said we must move slowly and more steadily.

Tshabalala: The AAC has already started. It is still very small at the moment, but there are representatives of the people. We have already met with the council over the removal of shanty dwellers.

✻ *Negotiations*

Moss Mayekiso: Like it or not, negotiations are taking place in some form at different levels, and there are feelers on negotiations on a broader level. As yet there is no set programme around this. But a process is taking place.

In our situation I don't think we will ever be able to march to Pretoria with arms and take over. We have to be realistic.

The Thatchers and the Reagans, together with the SADF, will not make a revolutionary takeover possible. The frontline states and even the Soviets are backing a negotiated settlement for South Africa.

But what type of negotiations, and on what conditions, are things we have to think about carefully. Our situation is similar to the Namibian situation, except maybe we won't be as disadvantaged as the Namibians, who did not even participate in the negotiation process.

We must go to the negotiating table from a position of power, with all our organisations - they have to be unbanned first.

It will be a battle to even go to the negotiating table. We will have to pressurise them (the state).

Bapela: We must be clear that negotiations will not take place on their terms. They want the ANC to denounce violence but are not prepared to confine the SADF to its base, and they want the ANC to break its alliance with the SACP. Negotiations that will serve the interests of the working class cannot take place on their terms.

Mzwanele Mayekiso: At most, a negotiated settlement will end apartheid and lead to a mixed economy, but it is a process in the struggle for socialism.

I cannot see a negotiated settlement taking place in the near future. We are still far from getting to the negotiating table, as both the state and the democratic forces want to negotiate from a position of power.

✻ *Alliances*

Moss Mayekiso: In all class struggles you will find people who are enemies but who pretend to be our friends and have their own tactics to buy the working class.

If we want to undercut the power of the state we might be forced to make tactical alliances with other classes and other people closely linked to some state structures. But in doing so we must not compromise our principles.

If we go into these alliances ignorant, we could betray the class struggle and socialism. Therefore we must clearly state our interests, the interests of the working class - that is, socialism. To shy away from talking about socialism because we might alienate some people is hypocrisy. To say socialism is not on the agenda, that the youth and workers are not ready for socialism, is a betrayal of the working class.

✻ *The way forward*

Mdakane: There must free and open discussion within organisations about socialism. Previously our structures were loose and rudimentary and we made mistakes, but we have learnt from our struggles.

The leadership of the mass democratic movement must be controlled by the masses, be

accountable to the masses and subject to recall. We must grow from the bottom up.

Mzwanele Mayekiso: I believe the trade unions and the community must discuss the Freedom Charter as a starting point in our struggle. The rank and file should not only know the Freedom Charter in name - they must be educated on the demands contained in it and how it fits into our struggle.

We must rebuild the street committees again but with more discipline and planning before we embark on any action.

Moss Mayekiso: As I see it, and as the National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) sees it, the way forward is to build solid organisations with a centralised structure. We must not use western or eastern models of socialism - our conditions are different. The working class here must lead the struggle and decide what kind of socialism they want. And as I said earlier, negotiations should only take place on our terms, taking into account the class struggle.

Shareen Singh

The road ahead

WHEN Oscar Mpetha returned to Cape Town in 1964 after a four-year jail term for furthering the aims of the just-banned African National Congress (ANC), he found himself in a political desert. Former friends and political colleagues nervously averted their eyes or hastily crossed the road to avoid his greeting. As a former Cape chairman of the ANC, he was not a healthy friend to have.

The state of emergency declared on March 31, 1960, had seen 11 000 activists detained, the mass movements of the time banned or politically decimated, and the challenge to apartheid brutally blunted.

The emergency had lasted five months. But the chill it cast over Mpetha personally and the extra-parliamentary opposition generally, lasted more than 10 years.

An altogether more substantial affair, the current emergency has lasted more than seven times as long as that of 1960, has seen more than 2 000 die in political violence, and more than three times as many detained - many for almost three years. It has also brought to bear unprecedented restrictions on the entire press, rather than limiting its focus - as it did in 1960 - to the non-establishment opposition publications.

A further factor is that the authorities imposed the current emergency on June 12, 1986, with most of the special powers granted them under the 1960 emergency regulations - the right to arrest without a warrant, the right to detain without trial, the power to prohibit organisations from undertaking any or all activities, and the power to prohibit meetings - already in the statute books.

But when Mpetha is released from his current five-year sentence next year, he is unlikely to face a community too fearful to greet him.

Against this background, and with the current emergency about to enter its fourth year as WIP went to press, the leaders of three of its primary organisational targets assess the impact of the past three years.

Mohamed Valli Moosa, acting general secretary of the United Democratic Front (UDF) at the time of its banning on 12 February 1988.

Mohamed Valli Moosa, acting general secretary of the United Democratic Front (UDF) at the time of its banning on 12 February 1988.

✻ *The emergency's impact*

The main aims were to smash resistance and the growing mass movement inside the country, to re-establish the state's authority in black areas, and to use the atmosphere of stability it believed would follow to introduce political reforms. Essentially, it hoped to alter the political terrain sufficiently for it to be able to marginalise those seeking fundamental change.

There is no doubt that the instruction which went down to the ordinary policeman and soldier was to go out and smash the United Democratic Front (UDF) wherever it is found. The UDF was attacked at every level, from national to local branches of youth congresses, women's organisations etc. This succeeded in breaking down the communications networks within the UDF - that was our biggest blow.

But the UDF is not smashed.

There was a real lull after the emergency in 1960. But this emergency just has not struck deep enough, the militancy is still there, the building blocks of the UDF are still there. The people who ran the organisations are still there. The essential ingredients of our organisation are still there.

The structures which have suffered under the emergency can be revived - all the essential elements are there.

And next time it will be more difficult for repression to set them back as much.

In addition, the credibility of the UDF is still intact - if anything, it has risen, as has that of the leading UDF activists. One of the reasons for this is that most of them won their own release, either by escaping or going on hunger strike.

We also feel the militancy of the people and the resistance has not been crushed.

There was the three-day stayaway last year, the biggest action in our entire history. The response to the municipal elections was also significant - it proved that the regime can do what it likes, ordinary people are just not going to believe it.

And the rent boycotts - they've banned the organisations, they've destroyed street committees, but three years of the emergency hasn't been able to make ordinary residents go out and pay rent.

✻ *The future*

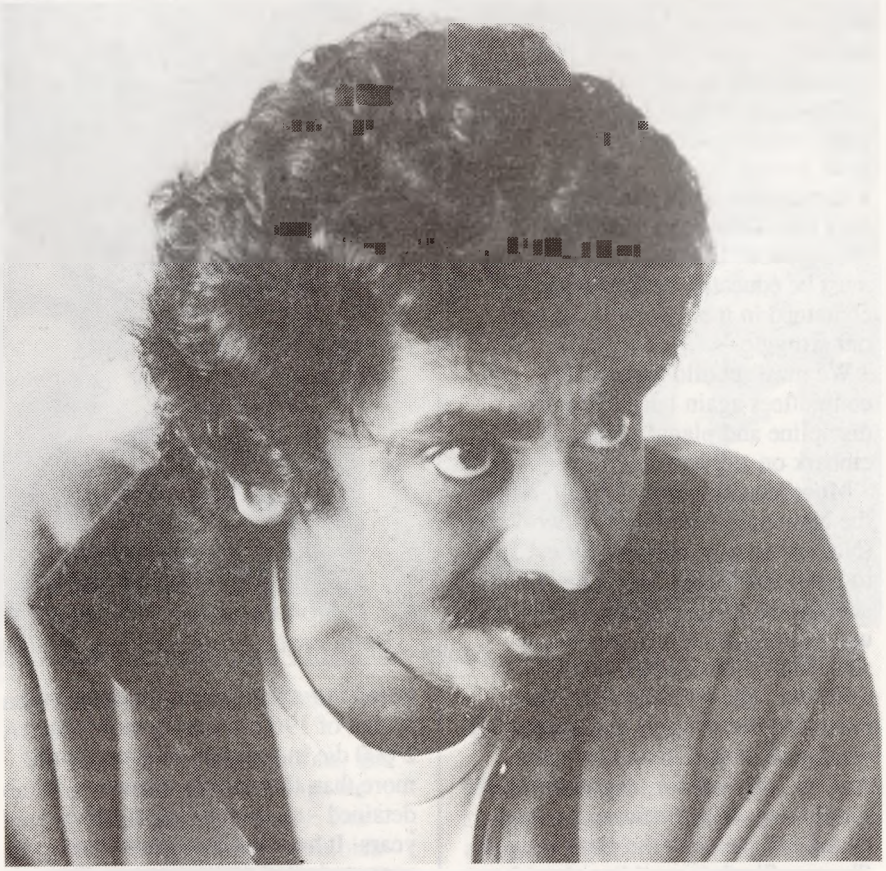
We are confident that the organisations hit by the emergency will revive. At the same time, there have been important developments pointing to a broadening of the base of resistance: the workers' summit, the moves towards unity among teachers, the soccer unity talks, a tremendous amount of work on the cultural front, the formation of Namibia solidarity committees. The list goes on.

✻ *The state*

The emergency hasn't created the climate in which the state could introduce reforms. The crisis is as deep as ever.

In 1983 we said the National Party's political direction was unworkable, but at least they had a direction ... the tri-cameral parliament, black local authorities. Now they have no direction at all.

Even those within the National Party are beginning to lose their confidence. The party does not have that strong authoritative centre which it has always relied on. The resignation of Chris Heunis reinforces the point that they have no ideas of their own.



Jay Naidoo, general secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), restricted in February last year.

They have tried the emergency, mass detentions, treason trials, almost everything a government can try. What level of oppression can they go to without seriously disrupting the economy and their international relations?

None of that has helped them out of the crisis, or crushed the opposition forces. In a sense the only thing for FW de Klerk to do is to start talking to Oliver Tambo. But they are not going to do that ... they are probably hoping the west will bail them out in some way.

I don't want to say simply that they're going to step up repression. If they think logically, they will know it's not going to help them.

I can't say, though, that they are going to allow free opposition political activity. I know they're not going to do that either.

Nor is the regime yet at a point where it is prepared for negotiations - without free opposition activity, negotiations cannot take place.

We need to isolate the regime - not only internationally, as has been done already, but inside the country. That opens up the possibility for building some kind of coalition that will maximise the isolation of the regime.

That is going to be the key thrust of our work in the near future.

(Because the UDF is restricted, Moosa was speaking in his personal capacity).

Jay Naidoo, general secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), restricted in February last year.

✻ *The emergency's impact*

The initial period had a severe impact, disrupting lines of communication we had built during the uprisings of 1984-85. Mass detentions also had an impact. We were not able to co-ordinate activities, or even to communicate effectively.

It lead to a paralysis in which there was no clear programme through which we could advance the struggle. Increasingly the burden was placed on the shoulders of

Simon Ntombela, publicity secretary of the South African Youth Congress when it was restricted in February 1988.

Cosatu; it was catapulted into the centre of the political stage. This led to important developments, but also caused some problems. And those took some time to work through.

But by 1987 and 1988, particularly 1988, one began to see a restructuring taking place ... very serious attempts being made to address the strengths and weaknesses of the mass democratic movement (MDM).

The emergency going into its third year was not as effective as in the first two. People were developing different ways of dealing with repression. The manifestations of that were the ongoing resistance - militant struggles of workers, ongoing student problems on many campuses, and the ongoing rent struggles.

A crisis for the state was caused by the campaign and actions around detainees this year (particularly the hunger strikes) which undermined the effectiveness of the emergency - one of the main prongs of the emergency was the detention of key activists.

(The state) was forced to adjust its views. They've imposed their restriction orders on ex-detainees, but these are doomed to failure - you cannot restrict so many people and still be able to monitor them and reduce their political role.

After three years we have suffered quite serious damage to our structures and communications. But overall one could say that we have been able to regroup and adapt to conditions. That is what is leading to a keener spirit of optimism in the MDM.

✻ *The future*

We've learned the need to consolidate and entrench grassroots structures as our only means of survival.

Particularly after the judgement in the Mayekiso case, people have started making a new effort to rebuild street committees. But more than just street committees, one is talking about restructuring the MDM in its various formations, to the extent of trying to develop a more concrete process of building organisations. At that level there is a lot of work going on ... attempts to build unity of teachers, health workers, attempts to organise cultural workers, these are all manifestations of how the MDM is responding to repression.

The months and years ahead will require the MDM to be very introspective, to be able to systematically evaluate our strengths and weaknesses, to be able to formulate a clear programme that allows our struggle to be dictated by the core forces of the liberation movement. Those core forces are the mass-based organisations in our community, as represented primarily by Cosatu and the United Democratic Front (UDF).

This will also allow us to galvanise and unify forces even outside the MDM into accepting our leadership and our programme. So the months ahead are particularly critical for deciding the direction of our struggle. We have got to assert the leadership of the MDM and we have got to do it in a very decisive way.

✻ *The state*

The state is undergoing a severe crisis as manifested by the resignation of Heunis and other cabinet ministers, and the leadership crisis. They are under pressure from the forces of imperialism, and at the same time they recognise that their reform strategies have failed to win any significant collaboration on the part of the oppressed.

So they are in a cul de sac, and need something radically new to rescue them. Their latest debacle is the National Forum, which was an attempt to rescue themselves ... even there a conservative body like United Municipalities of South Africa (Umsa) has suspended members who participated in the forum.

Whatever strategies we develop, whether in relation to strengthening the MDM or broadening our base, our objective is to intensify the mass struggle. It is only through mass resistance that one is able to achieve what are the minimum conditions we are demanding for a new South Africa. Those are the demands of the Freedom Charter.

The correctness of our strategies and tactics will be dictated by their acceptance by the people.

Ephraim Nkoe and Simon Ntombela, education officer and publicity secretary of the South African Youth Congress when it was restricted in February 1988.

✻ *The emergency's impact*

The mass democratic movement has suffered serious setbacks. We have not been able to operate openly, and a broad layer of activists have been jailed.

The emergency was used as a legal umbrella for other forms of repression - vigilante attacks, death squads, and assassinations.

Despite the setbacks the state has been unable to shift support from the liberation movement to its reform offerings.

The municipal elections and the rent boycotts demonstrate that.

These reforms have paralleled the emergency as an attempt to legitimise the state internally and internationally as a force for peace.

They have failed. The state still governs without consent, and there is no indication that this will change.

The state has therefore not succeeded in taking the political initiative from the MDM.

✻ *The future*

Nkoe: The fact that we have been forced to work semi- clandestinely does not mean that, like the ANC, we are forced to continue operating underground. Our immediate objective now is to create the legal space to enable us to work openly.

The campaign by detainees to win their freedom was a major victory for the MDM - the hunger strike gained the release of hundreds of leading activists.

There is still a long way to go, but it has enabled us to hasten the process of rebuilding and re-organising our structures.

Our next objective is to have the restrictions on ex-detainees lifted, and then to challenge the restrictions placed on the organisations themselves.

At some point the restrictions on individuals and on organisations will be defied. But we will need to build to ensure that we are strong and organised enough for that defiance to succeed. The object is to win ourselves legal space - to end the restrictions, not simply to defy.

Ntombela: We need to keep sustained pressure on the state. Past and current pressure has already caused divisions and disruptions within the regime.

Nkoe: Even under the emergency, the profile and stature of the ANC is being elevated. It is seen as the force capable of resolving the conflict in our country. It has had a huge impact on the white community. The queues of people outside its headquarters in Lusaka seeking to learn more about it demonstrates that.

Our actions need to be located in a strategy capable of winning broad support from all South Africans. Actions such as anti- racism campaigns - even in areas as indirect as sport. Danie Craven's contact with the ANC on international rugby links was a demonstration of the growing recognition of the ANC's centrality, and a channel into the white community.

✻ *The state*

Ntombela: The state is seeking a way out of the crisis; that is why it is offering these reforms. But it is trying to achieve the impossible - retaining the support of some white voters, and winning sympathy for its reform.

As we rebuild, our tactics in regard to the state will be informed by concrete conditions.

We will have to take account of changing dynamics within the regime: the internal divisions, the effect of widespread corruption, leadership squabbles etc.

But it is clear that our pressure is having an effect. To maintain the status quo permanently, the regime will literally have to hold guns against the temples of millions of people.

That is impossible and its attempts to do so under the emergency have substantially weakened its international image.

(Nkoe and Ntombela were speaking in their personal capacities).

Lifestyles of the rich and famous

A Zimbabwe cabinet minister has killed himself and five others have resigned in the past month following exposure of their involvement in a major government corruption scandal involving resale of new cars. Two senior civil servants have also quit following publication of a commission of enquiry appointed by Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe. Further resignations are expected as the commission continues its investigations. The scandal was first exposed by journalists on the *Bulawayo Chronicle.*

While *Chronicle* editor Geoff Nyarota has since been elbowed out of journalism for his troubles, the scandal he named 'Willowgate' continued to be the focus of widespread public anger over the vast gulf between the early socialist rhetoric of Mugabe's ruling Zanu (PF) party and mounting evidence of personal enrichment by many of the country's political leaders.

Willowgate involves senior government officials using their positions to buy new cars - in extremely short supply in Zimbabwe and, by law, sold at controlled prices - then re-selling them at vastly inflated prices. In the illegal Willowgate market, a Toyota Cressida changed hands for more than R100 000.

Willowgate has its roots in the nature of the Zimbabwe struggle for independence, and the development of the economy since then.

When Zimbabwe's war-time leaders returned from Mozambique in 1980 they owned nothing. They had sacrificed the best, and most financially productive, years of their lives to jail, active exile or underground activity, mobilising peasants.

At independence Zimbabwe had few choices. The late President Samora Machel told Robert Mugabe not to follow Mozambique's example, and lose its skilled white citizens. Many white Rhodesians did

Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe - rooting out corruption

flee south after Zimbabwe's independence. And any economic policy more daring than 'capitalism with a conscience' would have added thousands to their number, seriously disrupting the economy.

Mugabe's government was also seriously restricted by the Lancaster House constitution which prohibited any expropriation of private property, including land - almost half of which remains in white hands, in a predominantly peasant country. The options facing the new government were further limited by the knowledge that Pretoria - able to cripple the economy overnight by shutting down Zimbabwe's transport routes - was watching it closely.

During Zimbabwe's war of independence, Zanu (PF) focused its activities almost exclusively among the rural peasant population. The struggle itself was two-dimensional - guerrilla conflict and sanctions. Despite its Marxist overtones, Zanu (PF) had little contact with urban, industrial workers - who kept the wheels of Ian Smith's industry turning while peasants fought and suffered.

When worker discontent combined with the euphoria of independence to spark a wave of strikes, the new government crushed them with chilly indifference. For most there is still no legal right to strike.

Before and after independence, little was done in schools, party cells, women and youth organisations to promote awareness of what a transformation to socialism would mean, nor the demands that such an upheaval would make. The rhetoric was one thing, but the inherited colonial economy geared for 250 000 whites was another.

In the first years, the economy buckled under enormous pressure to extend health and education. Taxation soared. The result was an oppressively regulated, ham-strung, inefficient capitalist economy, where the average return in industry can be less than from fixed deposits at the post office.

As the gap between the rhetoric and reality grew, so too did the cost of living. The gap between rich and poor widened in real terms beyond anything experienced in Rhodesian days.

Few salaried workers can afford to buy a house, even in the former townships. None can afford a new car. The government can no longer afford to buy white-owned land for re-settlement by peasants. There is no new investment to provide jobs. Only one in three voters at next year's general election will be employed. The numbers of landless are growing.

Zimbabwe's first generation political elite, faced an entirely different situation. Forced into an intimate embrace of both capitalism and local capitalists, and alienated from their natural, worker, constituency, many took for themselves what they could not take for the people.

They quickly set about grabbing what they could. And today many have accumulated considerable wealth as the owners of formerly white-owned commercial farms, luxury homes, bakeries, butcheries, bottle stores and other businesses.

A senior government official critical of the rush for riches said recently: 'Only the genuine socialists or those who are too stupid aren't getting richer'.

In an attempt to halt the scramble for wealth, Zanu (PF) introduced a leadership code in 1984, limiting what its leadership could own - restricting land ownership, for example, to 50 hectares. But by then the race for properties and commercial enterprises was almost over. The code has, in any event, not yet been implemented.

The race for wealth continued, however, with party leaders using their influence to buy new cars at a controlled price, and used a massive shortage of vehicles to sell the cars at three times their cost.

They collaborated with the private sector who desperately needed vehicles for business and were prepared to pay through the nose. By selling cars at above the controlled price they broke a law introduced because of Zimbabwe's inability to generate sufficient foreign currency to import enough kits for assembly.

They were also guilty of using political clout to jump the waiting list and buying new cars direct from the assembly plant instead of joining the queue at retail outlets. It was a game only the rich could play.

With the average farm and domestic worker, who together form the largest labour block, earning less than R150 a month, only those with the hard cash, and lots of it, could buy a new car in the first place. Only those with political clout had contacts with a private sector happy to fork out R100 000 for a Toyota Cressida.

Vocal criticism of corruption leading to Willowgate came from students and politicised workers.

Willowgate itself is the first major exposure of high-level corruption, made possible by a combination of mounting public anger, and dogged journalism by Nyarota and his staff in the face of threats from senior government officials. The journalists were also fed information by furious workers at the Willowvale car assembly plant which gave the scandal its name.

Willowgate may have been a turning point. But there are almost certainly scandals as yet unexposed, which may be far more serious than profiteering in second-hand cars.

Putting the dead on trial

An inquest in the Transkei has raised several questions about police conduct in the bantustan. Police are trying to justify shooting suspected guerillas rather than arresting them - and they are also working closely with South African police during their operations. LOUISE FLANAGAN looks at the evidence.

ON a Friday afternoon in February last year, brewery representative Zolile Sangoni was driving through Umtata in his Honda Ballade. He was giving a lift to a friend, Thozamile Nkume.

The men stopped at the magistrate's courts to fetch Zonwabele Mayaphi, who had spent the morning at a sabotage and murder trial where his brother was one of the accused. The three drove to a butchery to buy lunch, picking up a fourth man, Lizo Macanda, along the way.

They bought meat, braaied and ate it with a group of customers in the butcher's backyard. They then got back into their car and drove off, intending to drop off Macanda and Mayaphi in an Umtata suburb.

But they never reached their destination. As they left the butchery, an unmarked white minibus with a false Transkei registration pulled out behind and followed them. In the minibus were a South African security policeman, a Transkei security policeman and three informers.

After following the Honda for a while, the driver of the minibus

indicated to Sangoni to pull over to the side of the road, which he did.

The South African policeman, armed with an AK47 assault rifle, leapt out of the minibus and opened fire on the Honda. Seconds later the Transkei policeman joined him. Passers-by ducked for cover as bullets whizzed past.

When the dust settled on the blood-spattered car, Macanda and Sangoni were dead, Nkume was critically injured and Mayaphi was screaming in pain. He died soon afterwards.

The Transkei policeman got back into the minibus and left with the informers, two women and a man. The South African remained at the scene and was soon joined by another South African policeman. The two stood next to the shattered Honda with the dead and dying victims still in it, shook hands and laughed. A witness later said it looked as though the second man was congratulating the killer.

These are the details which were pieced together at an inquest which started in Umtata in March this year, more than a year after the shooting. The inquest resumes in June.

The fact that the inquest happened at all is surprising. There have been no inquests in several similar incidents implicating police 'death squads'. And police attempted to cover up this incident as well.

However, while the inquest has highlighted some details of questionable South African and Transkei police activities in the territory, the state appears to be turning the case into a trial of the dead victims in order to exonerate the police killers.

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that police tried to cover up the incident when it first happened. In the days immediately following the shooting, Transkei police denied any involvement.

'When we arrived at the scene, security police from Umtata... told us they did not know what had happened and had found the motor vehicle as it was then', said lawyers for the victims in a letter to the Commissioner of Police, General Leonard Kawe, a few days later.

But on that same Friday afternoon, police armed with pistols and rifles surrounded Mayaphi's father's house in Umtata. One of them broke a window with his rifle butt and the group searched the house. Both black and white policemen were involved, indicating SAP involvement.

The state appears to be turning the case into a trial of the dead victims in order to exonerate the police killers

The following day, lawyer Lungisile Stofile saw a kombi fitting the description of the killers' vehicle outside Mayaphi's house. When he approached, the kombi sped away. After a chase through Umtata, the white kombi sought refuge - at the back of the local police station.

Stofile and his companion, Vuma Ntikinca of the Prisoners' Welfare Programme, tried to report the incident - but instead Ntikinca was arrested.

'The incident was reported to a constable at the charge office who went to investigate, carrying a rifle. He was stopped just in time by a plain-clothed young man - possibly also a policeman - who told him the constable should not go near the back of the police station as the security police at the back were armed to the teeth and ready to shoot', said Stofile and his partners in a subsequent letter to the police.

'Soon thereafter a lot of Transkei security police congregated with walkie-talkies, and it was then that Ntikinca's car was searched, his cameras taken away and he was arrested and detained - the very person who had successfully chased the killers into the police station and had reported the matter for further attention by the police'.

A few days later police finally admitted responsibility. They identified Macanda as a trained guerilla known as 'MK Gift' and claimed he had tried to throw a grenade at them. They also said they had found a grenade, a pistol and ammunition in the car, although Nkume emphatically denied either seeing any or seeing police find any.

A year later, after several delays, including an allegation from family lawyers that the state was waiting for a 'sympathetic' magistrate to be available, the inquest started.

There was more conflict at the start of the inquest. Lawyers for the victims' families were obliged to bring a court order forcing the state to give them copies of the inquest documents, which legally should be available to all parties.

The unspoken, but most crucial, issue at the heart of the inquest is whether or not police have the right to shoot suspected guerillas on sight. Lawyers for the families argue that the killing was completely unprovoked, there was no attempt made to arrest the victims and instead police tried to cover up the incident afterwards. The state and police maintain that at least one of the group - Macanda - was a guerilla and that he tried to throw a grenade at them.

Whether Macanda was armed or not seems to be immaterial. The overwhelming impression the evidence gives is that police made no attempt to arrest him - they simply gunned him down. His three companions were unlucky enough to get in the way, and were shot primarily because the police associated them with the alleged guerilla.

The police justified their actions in two ways: firstly, that Macanda was armed and tried to attack them; secondly, that he was a trained guerilla. One of the policemen went so far as to say he shot at all four victims because he regarded them all as 'terrorists'.

Both South African and Transkei police openly admitted their involvement in the shooting. South African security policeman Sergeant Mpumelelo Madliwa, based in East London, told the court he had been 'on duty' in

Umtata with Transkei policeman Constable Bongani Wana on the day of the attack. With them were three informers - two women and a man whom police refused to identify in court - who had travelled with Madliwa from East London.

'We were trying to assist the Transkei police because they summoned us to assist them in their fight against terrorism', Madliwa said in a statement to the inquest court.

On arriving at Umtata police station, Madliwa said, he was given an AK47 rifle, an Uzzi sub-machine gun, a BXP machine gun and a 9 mm pistol. The false registration plate on the white minibus was 'camouflage', he said.

Madliwa could not clarify the SAP's involvement in Transkei, nor could he explain to the court why he was armed with an AK47, a weapon traditionally associated with guerrillas.

Madliwa's account confirmed that there was no attempt to arrest the group. He said one of the informers pointed out Macanda as a trained guerilla while the victims were at the butchery.

'By that time the terrorist was busy having a braai with three others whom we could not recognise', said Madliwa. 'After the braai the four of them got into a brownish Ballade and drove off. About 300 to 400 metres away from the butchery I ordered Wana to flick the vehicle's lights to signal the terrorists' vehicle to stop'.

At that stage, Sangoni was driving the car, Mayaphi was seated next to him in the front seat, and Macanda and Nkume were in the back seat.

Madliwa claimed he was forced to shoot in self-defence: 'The terrorists' vehicle came to a stop and we stopped a few metres behind them. I first got out and as I was approaching their vehicle with an AK47 in my hand I saw Gift getting out of the car. He was busy pulling a hand-grenade out of a bandage wrapped around his waist.

'I ordered him to stop and raise his hands but he ignored me and jumped back into the car and shouted to the others that they should fight. Then he ordered the driver to go.

'I could see he was trying to get the hand-grenade out... I opened fire on him, right behind him. I moved to the left to avoid the handgrenade, and Constable Wana joined me in the shooting.

Madliwa decided to shoot them because, as far as he was concerned, they were all 'terrorists'.

'I called for a ceasefire when I saw all the occupants of the car did not return our fire, and inspected the people in the car. I discovered that two of them were already dead (Gift and Sangoni) whilst the two (Mayaphi and Nkume) were still alive'.

Madliwa admitted that he had noticed nothing unusual about the behaviour of the others but had decided to shoot them because, as far as he was concerned, they were all 'terrorists' since Macanda had shouted at them to fight.

He was unable to explain how he could have seen Macanda holding a hand-grenade if he was standing directly behind the car when he started shooting.

Madliwa said he was later joined at the scene by Warrant Officer JJ le Roux of the East London security branch, and two more Transkei policemen. He said police subsequently found a M-75 hand-grenade, a cocked Makarov pistol and ammunition in a bandage wrapped around Macanda's waist.

Wana's evidence was similar to Madliwa's. His story also gave no indication of any attempt to arrest the suspects.

A ballistics report from WO le Roux noted that there were over 40 bullet holes in the Honda, some made by bullets which passed straight through the vehicle. According to autopsy reports, a total of 17 bullets hit the victims. According to police evidence, the ballistics report, and photographs handed to the court, the bullets were fired from behind the vehicle and the left side, as the police moved around it.

Eye witnesses and the sole survivor of the attack told the court a different story.

In his evidence, Nkume stated that there had not been any arms in the car and that none of the victims tried to shoot at the policemen.

'Zolile (Sangoni) stopped the vehicle and Lizo (Macanda) opened the door in an attempt to get out. Before he was completely out, one of the occupants of the kombi fired some shots towards our car', he said. 'After some time the firing ceased and I observed that Macanda was lying motionless on the back seat and Zolile Sangoni was lying motionless on the front seat. Zonwabele Mayaphi was screaming on the front seat.

'The people who were shooting approached the car. They asked who we were and I introduced myself as Thozamile Nkume. I later noticed that there were two white people at the scene.

'The police identified Lizo Macanda as the man they were looking for. I was searched and nothing was found on my person'.

Nkume was taken to hospital and spent some time in intensive care, under police guard. He was subsequently detained for about a month.

Another witness, Fumanekile Mncela, said he had been walking down the road when the shooting started: 'I heard a shot and noticed that the passengers from the kombi were shooting at the passengers of the car'.

Unlike the police, Mncela claimed the shooting was carried out by a man and a woman. The police denied that any of the women - the informers - took part in the shooting or were even armed.

The exact role of the informers is not clear yet. But a woman has been mentioned as participating in other 'death squad' killings, particularly that of student leader Bathandwa Ndondo.

Both Mncela and Nkume told how

General Bantu Holomisa: 'South Africa must not use Transkei like a sort of cowboy training area, nor should we use South Africa like that'.

the second policeman - apparently le Roux - arrived, shook hands with Madliwa and laughed.

Police evidence attempted to prove that Macanda was a trained guerrilla. In effect the police put the dead man on trial - with evidence that appears to have nothing to do with the actual incident, but rather seems designed to provide justification for gunning down the group.

Several documents before the inquest infer that the three who died were 'comrades' or involved in guerrilla activity.

There is a statement from Mayaphi's landlord, Mongezi Jama, who was nowhere near the scene of the incident but instead attempts to link both Mayaphi and Sangoni with Macanda. Jama said the three knew each other well and 'were always using Zolile Sangoni's car which was involved in the shooting incident. I objected to their frequent meetings at my house on many occasions', said Jama.

After one such objection, 'Gift (Macanda) told me openly that they were comrades and that I should keep my mouth shut or I would meet my death. They all supported Gift's instruction and instructed me to keep away from them. Fearing for my life I then kept quiet. I had not seen any of their weapons. I know generally that the name comrade is usually used by the terrorists'.

Another statement, from a 'Mr X', also has nothing to do with the shooting incident. Instead, 'Mr X', who said he was a former member of the military wing of the ANC, identified Macanda as a member of Umkhonto weSizwe.

A statement from a Transkei Police captain also identifies Macanda as an Umkhonto member.

Additional documents handed in were copies of identity documents giving Macanda's real name as Thembisile Gladman Mgibe, his fingerprint records and an anonymous pamphlet condemning the shooting that ended 'Long live Zonwabele, MK Gift and Zolile. Viva the spirit of no surrender!'

The inquest has once again raised the issue of South African police involvement in Transkei.

Madliwa was unable - or unwilling - to give any more details of SAP activities in the territory. Also, counsel appearing for both policemen requested that such questions not be asked. Nevertheless, the incident does serve to highlight the conflict between the two police forces and the Transkei's military government over unpublicised co-operation and activities.

There have long been allegations of South African police involvement in Transkei incidents. Not only are there frequent - and still recent - allegations of swapping of detainees without extradition agreements (an example is the case of Lungisa Livingstone Matutu, recently acquitted on terrorism charges in Transkei, who told the court he was arrested in Bophuthatswana, handed to the SAP and then taken over the border to be handed over to Transkei without the accompanying paperwork), but there are also allegations of routine border crossings in 'follow-up operations' and chases.

South African police were implicated in the murder of Bathandwa Ndondo in 1985 and also in the botched kidnapping of Umtata lawyer Joseph Mzwakhe Miso in late 1987.

In a revealing interview recently, military ruler Major-General Bantu Holomisa admitted that the 'informal co-operation' was still a problem.

Referring to the shooting under investigation in the inquest, Holomisa said he was aware of SAP involvement in the shooting. 'On that score we were embarrassed. We were hardly in power a month then', he said.

Holomisa was unequivocal in his condemnation of both this 'unofficial' co-operation between the police forces and of attacks of this type.

'We told the policemen they must cease doing this. If they want to be assisted, whatever operation, if they want to arrest somebody, then the army is there and that is their next line.

'We can co-ordinate that, without any killing. We will assist them.

'Then we debated the question of South Africa assisting us. We stated it must be at an information exchange level only - not to actually come into the country with weapons to operate here. I made it clear, the commissioner of police and the military council told them, so they know. And it has been quiet ever since then', he said.

He concluded: 'We believe that to be respected by the international community you've got to define your borders, and people must operate professionally. South Africa must not use Transkei like a sort of cowboy training area, nor should we use South Africa like that'.

Numsa: 'Organised workers have a duty to rebuild working-class organisations'

Roads to Cosatu congress

At a time when unions and the mass democratic movement as a whole are looking at rebuilding fallen structures, Cosatu's two largest unions have proposed significant political policy resolutions at their respective congresses. SHAREEN SINGH looks at some of the issues the labour movement has placed on its political programme.

THE time has come to seriously look at rebuilding organisations and structures which collapsed, or were smashed, over three years of the state of emergency. On this point there is broad agreement in the labour movement. The differences come when the debate turns to how this process will take place.

No one is under the illusion that the state has been defeated. However, it is definitely in crisis economically and politically, and these weaknesses can be used to advantage.

In turn, the mass democratic movement is slowly taking stock, and emerging with renewed energy to tackle oppression.

Debate is taking place both in political and labour organisations on the structure, form and political direction of the movement. And one of the first tasks will be the rebuilding of

NUM: resolved 'to expose the weakness of the ruling class, thereby deepening the apartheid state's crisis'

grassroots organisation.

The Cosatu congress, to be held in July, will debate policy which will shape the federation's political direction for the next two years.

The National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), currently the two largest Cosatu affiliates, both had national congresses recently.

Their different positions on how to rebuild the democratic movement, and the question of negotiations, will fuel debate at the federation's congress.

Another firm political policy has come out of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (Actwusa), which is to merge with the Garment and Allied Workers Union (Gawu) in September. The new union - which will have over 187 000 members - will become the second biggest Cosatu affiliate.

Actwusa's proposal for a 'workers' charter' raises the crucial question of how workers' rights can be ensured in a post-apartheid constitution.

Below are outlines of various resolutions passed at the Numsa and NUM congresses.

Reflecting on the two years since its launch in 1987, this year's Numsa congress felt previous resolutions on the Freedom Charter, working-class alliances, and the development of a working-class programme of action, had not been put into practice.

Numsa stated that since organisations of the mass democratic movement had been smashed, there were no clearly defined structures with mass support with which the union could forge a disciplined united-front alliance. The union said organised workers had a duty to

rebuild working-class organisations, which would be the foundation for a national, mass, united-front alliance of all democratic working-class organisations.

The union stressed that attempts to include forces outside the mass democratic movement would weaken and distract workers from their principle task of building this united front.

Numsa re-affirmed its 1987 political policy on the Freedom Charter, on the mass united-front alliance and on the need for a working-class political programme, and stressed its belief that the working class must take the leading role in the struggle for democracy and socialism.

It also agreed to consult with Cosatu and the democratic movement on the rebuilding of the mass democratic movement from federalism to centralism.

In this newly-built democratic movement, 'every street shall have a democratically-elected street committee; every area, an area committee; every town a local general council; every region a regional committee of elected representatives from all towns. The national democratic movement shall be built from elected representatives of the regional committees'.

Numsa stated that Cosatu and its allies should lead the process of transformation and rebuilding of structures. To this end, Numsa recommended that Cosatu employ full-time project organisers. Lastly, Numsa stressed that in the process of rebuilding, the trade union movement would have to retain its independence and structures.

Numsa said Cosatu should forge disciplined alliances with the structures of the mass democratic movement at local, regional and national levels. Local, regional and national issues should be used as tools to rebuild structures at all levels.

Numsa argued that the centralised mass democratic movement should form sub-structures of youth or women, at all levels, as the need arises. And at local and regional levels, democratic organisations of the working class should be free to form tactical, ad-hoc, alliances with anti-apartheid organisations from other sectors of the community. Examples given were taxi-owners and

traders. The nature of the alliance would depend on local conditions.

However, Numsa rejected 'any alliance, whether tactical or strategic, with representatives of big capital, homeland opposition parties and participants in tri-cameral and other local government structures, until they have shown in action that they support the principles, policy and strategy of the mass democratic movement'.

The union argued that while Cosatu would be the driving force, the structures of the movement should be open to any oppressed and exploited resident elected to a street committee, irrespective of political persuasion, ideology or affiliation.

Numsa was also clear on the process of political settlement. The union stated that any negotiated settlement could only have meaning in a context of free and open political association, assembly and debate, in the true spirit of worker control.

The congress outlined the minimum conditions for a negotiated settlement:

* unbanning of all banned organisations;
* release of all detained or imprisoned leaders;
* return of all exiles;
* confinement of the SAP and SADF to barracks; and
* lifting of the state of emergency and the repeal of all security legislation.

The congress resolved to actively oppose any secret and/or open negotiations for a political settlement without the above conditions being met.

The Numsa congress, held on the 18-21 May, committed itself to strengthen the organisation and unity of the working class in its struggle for a socialist South Africa.

Its contribution to worker unity is a significant one. Close on two years after its formation, Numsa membership has grown by 45% - from 136 000 in May 1987 to 188 013 in December 1988. Numsa's emphasis on building solid trade union structures on the ground has no doubt contributed to the rapid increase in membership, despite massive retrenchments in the industry.

The congress adopted a unique approach to the concept of building working-class leadership. Only worker delegates could speak - no union officials took part in the discussions and debates. Officials also sat separately from their delegations, curbing any influence from above during the debates.

Some important lessons were learned from this. It was evident that in some areas, workers tended to depend strongly on union officials to voice their opinions. Worker delegates from these regions struggled to adequately debate and motivate some resolutions.

Numsa general secretary Moses Mayekiso said the congress had shown the need to work harder in developing a strong national worker leadership.

What was clear, however, was that the seven original unions which merged to form Numsa had been successfully consolidated into one union. There were no divisions, politically or structurally, reflecting original union divisions.

Of the ten resolutions adopted at the NUM congress, the most likely to be debated at the Cosatu congress are those on the anti-apartheid coalition, the anti-apartheid conference and the constitutional guidelines.

The NUM congress called for an anti-apartheid coalition to be formed. In its motivation the union stated that 'the regime is exploiting divisions that currently exist in our population; under the apartheid regime there is

no guarantee of human rights and the racist government has mismanaged the economic resources, resulting in an unemployment crisis'. The union resolved:

* to expose the weakness of the ruling class, thereby deepening the apartheid state's crisis;
* that democratic forces in South Africa must communicate with all the parties that have been to Lusaka; and
* that Cosatu and the UDF should form the core of an anti- apartheid coalition since the two organisations already agree on basic principles.

In a separate resolution the congress discussed the idea of an anti-apartheid conference. The NUM said the state had tried, with all its repressive tactics, to crush the mass democratic movement. It had banned the UDF and other progressive organisations, imposed restrictions on Cosatu, introduced the amended Labour Relations Act, and banned the Anti-Apartheid Conference planned for late last year.

The NUM stated that while the workers' summit had been important, it was not a substitute for the Anti-Apartheid Conference.

Therefore the union urged Cosatu to reconvene the conference during 1989.

NUM assistant general secretary Marcel Golding explained the difference between the Anti-Apartheid Conference and the coalition as the difference between an alliance and a support group.

The coalition will bring together forces in building a 'fighting alliance' against the regime. The coalition will include fewer organisations than the large number proposed for the Anti-Apartheid Conference. Parties to the conference will, however, demonstrate and rally support for the coalition. The union had not yet worked out the structure of the coalition.

Golding said the NUM fully supported the list of organisations which were to attend the 1988 Anti-Apartheid Conference.

In recent months there has been a lot of discussion around the ANC's proposed constitutional guidelines. Certainly, they will be of great interest at the Cosatu congress.

The current apartheid constitution was never intended to protect the

interest and basic human rights of the majority of South Africans. The NUM believes apartheid and capitalism can be crushed - but only if the re-structuring of the state begins now. Also, the process must be based on the Freedom Charter, and must aim to achieve a non-racial society with co-operation and reconciliation between the different communities. When the means of production belong to the working class, says the NUM, workers will be free of exploitation.

To begin the process the NUM resolved:

* that the mass democratic movement should start discussions on a democratic constitutional dispensation in South Africa;
* that these discussions must address the ANC's constitutional guidelines;
* that the NUM forms local structures where mineworkers can discuss the constitutional guidelines. They should also ask other Cosatu affiliates to participate.

The NUM congress, held on the 12-16 April, was the first national congress since the 1987 wage strike. The congress was a good reflection of the state of the union.

Mineworkers 'took control' in 1987. But it was also the year when miners and their union sustained severe losses, particularly during the strike. By mid-1988 the union had still not entirely recovered from the strike. It was consequently not in a position to give much support to the three-day stayaway in early June.

The current context of ongoing harassment has not made the task of rebuilding the union any easier: NUM offices are visited regularly by security police; union officials and shop-stewards are often arrested; bosses are pressing miners to accept shares as a condition of employment; bosses are closing down union offices on mine property and blocking union officials' access to members. In addition, retrenchments on the mines are soaring.

The NUM lost over 50 000 members after the strike. General membership was somewhat disillusioned and the union had to pick up the pieces and begin again - building and strengthening structures where they had collapsed, consolidating membership.

In the process the NUM started a rigorous education programme. It concentrated on negotiation skills, conditions of work, discussions on unity, and analysis of the 1987 strike.

The union believes its education programme helped develop a more active and confident leadership in the past year.

The Save the Patriots and the Health and Safety campaigns - both started before the strike - were revived and intensified. And the union made major gains in the area of health and safety. Six agreements have been signed so far, and the union has declared a dispute with the Chamber of Mines over the union's right to negotiate health and safety at chamber level.

The anti-repression campaign - launched in March this year as a response to mounting state and employer repression - monitors all forms of repression on the mines, and reports trends to the membership. The union has raised the possibility of forming defence committees on the mines.

The NUM's membership has declined by almost 30 000: from 261 000 paid-up members in July 1987 to 233 025 in early 1989. Large- scale retrenchments of about 8 000 did a lot to erode membership in the first four months of this year.

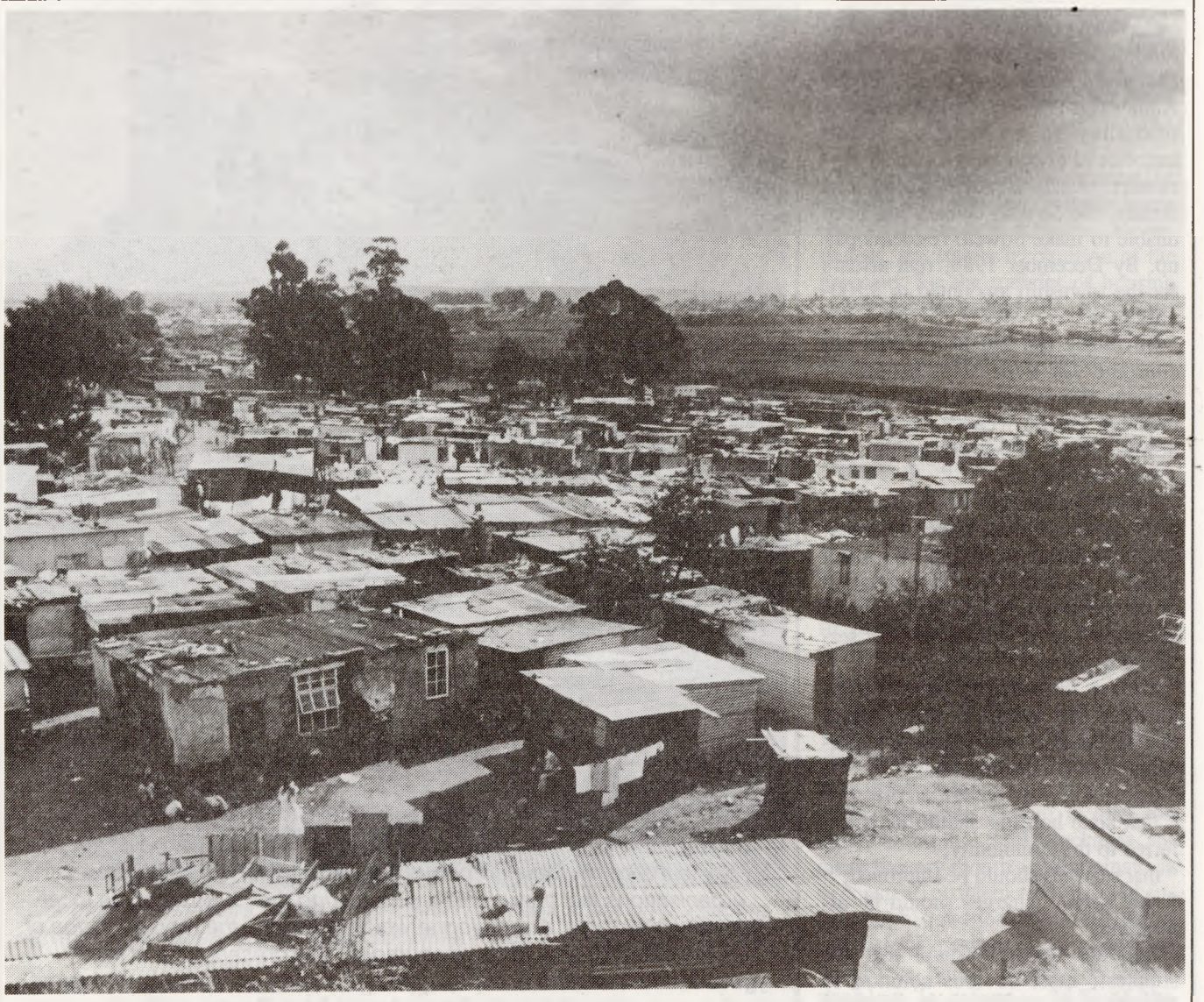
However, NUM president James Mohlatsi said that although the union had not shown much growth in numbers, enormous progress had been made in rebuilding and strengthening structures on the ground.

LET THE PEOPLE SPEAK!

Shell urges Government to:

1. **End the State of Emergency**
2. **Release and unban all political leaders**
3. **Lift restrictions on democratic organisations**
4. **Allow and encourage freedom of expression**

LET
JUNE 10
FREE THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS



Soweto's three year boycott

As South Africans have become less and less able to afford even life's basic necessities, they have often taken matters into their own hands. Rent boycotts have become a common way for communities to say that, until conditions and services get better, they will not pay. Boycotts also reflect communities' fundamental rejection of the Black Local Authorities system. PLANACT outlines the reasons behind the Soweto rent boycott, which has continued since June 1986.

THE state would like to create the impression that the Soweto rent boycott is a result of the climate of 'ungovernability'. But research has clearly identified that socio-economic conditions in general, and the effects of the economic crisis on township households in particular, are behind the three-year protest.

For a long time, the people of Soweto have found even the council service charges to be a financial burden. And there is widespread discontent over the poor standard of these services.

Certainly, ongoing township conditions have only served to reinforce the perception that Black Local Authorities (BLAs) are illegitimate - that they in no way serve the interests of people they claim to represent. And, despite pleas and threats, the Soweto council has been unable to make Soweto residents pay up. By December 1988, rent arrears for the township amounted to R200-million.

Obviously the stalemate could not continue for ever. The people of Soweto therefore, decided to take positive action. They elected the Soweto People's Delegation (SPD) to act on their behalf.

The SPD commissioned research to provide them with concrete facts. The delegation identified two main issues to be addressed: an evaluation of the existing housing stock, and an assessment of the current level of service provision.

Planact, on behalf of the SPD, undertook the research. They found that in essence, what Soweto's residents were demanding was:

* that rent arrears be written off;
* that state housing should be transferred to the community;
* that services should be improved;
* that service charges should be affordable.

And the research found that the simplest, most obvious solution to Soweto's problems was to consolidate Soweto and Johannesburg into a single tax base, rather than the separate ones existing at present.

Most Soweto residents surveyed said socio-economic factors were behind the decision to boycott rents. Only then did people express political reasons such as bringing problems to the attention of the authorities, forcing the SADF out of the townships and ending the state of emergency. The level of intimidation during the boycott was found to be very small.

The government's position on payment of arrears remains clear and uncompromising. Sowetans must repay the outstanding loans as well as the 'bridging finance' loaned by Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) to make up for the council's lost rent income.

The township is currently faced with a combined debt of almost R1-billion, including rent arrears, the TPA's 'bridging finance' loan, the current estimated budget deficit of the Soweto City Council, as well as the outstanding loans used to improve services, finance an electrification programme and so on.

Sowetans are tired of inadequate sewerage and water drainage.

'The illegitimacy of the black local authorities is a national political issue. Some indications existed before the clamp-down on black political organisations that they were re-considering their boycott of the local authority structures. Any dialogue which broadens the representation of the councils should be encouraged. The present form of local government structure is not optimal and should not stand in the way of such dialogue'. Development Bank Report 1988

The conditions in the townships which precipitated the protest action have not changed, they have worsened. In addition, the boycott has raised the general political consciousness of Soweto residents. In fact, the roots of the boycott can be traced to the struggles over housing costs led by the Committee of Ten in the late 1970s. So it is unlikely that households will be willing, or able, to contribute financially to resolve Soweto's debt crisis.

In this context, the SPD argues, the council should not even consider a policy which assumes households will pay the arrears. Such a policy will simply fail. The SPD's first demand therefore, is that the rent arrears be written off.

The Central Wits Regional Services Council, faced with the reality, recognises that insistence on repayment is not feasible. It has suggested that other means be found to subsidise the SCC.

In turn, the council - as indicated in mayoral speeches - is rhetorically committed to scrapping arrears.

However, the state sees only two options: raising funds from public or private sources to eliminate the arrears amount, or transforming current arrears into a long-term loan that is incorporated into a future fiscal system.

It is no secret that there is a huge lack of basic housing in most South African townships. Currently Soweto has about 118 300 houses. The Development Bank estimates that at least 66 000 new units are needed. About 26 000

Over the past ten years, some R400-million has been spent on upgrading services such as electricity, water supplies, roads and sewerage. But the quality of services remains extremely poor.

families (250 000 people) are on the waiting list for houses. This situation has meant great overcrowding, and with it high rents for small rooms - R80 for a single room without plumbing is not unusual. And it is not likely to improve. The state has withdrawn from providing large-scale housing, leaving the field to the private sector and individuals. These houses are accessible only to the top 13% of the market.

Since the start of the government's 'great sale' of township housing to local residents in July 1983, 34% are now owned by local residents. The rest belong to the state. But, the SPD argues, for various economic, cultural and common-law reasons, Soweto tenants have legitimate, entrenched rights to the houses they live in - the houses are de facto community assets.

Both the state and the community agree that the most sensible solution is transferring ownership of the houses to the residents. Where they differ is on how this should take place.

Those within the state definitely believe private home ownership is desirable. But motives vary. For some, privatised housing means political stability - residents will have their 'stake in the system'. For others, privatisation will encourage free market allocation of resources according to income - the class dimension.

The state favours a market-based method of transfer to individuals or privatisation. The SPD argues that this is not adequate. The age, quality and the economic position of the housing areas must be considered, and there should be a flexible formula for transfer of ownership.

To ensure that those at the bottom of the housing pile were not adversely affected by large-scale ownership transfers, the delegation proposed the creation of a community housing trust. The trust would use proceeds of sales of council houses to build houses for lower-income groups in Soweto. The trust would also direct future housing policy in the township.

Government and community reasons for wanting private home ownership are very different. Nevertheless, the state's recognition of the necessity for the transfer of housing to private ownership is a significant concession to the popular community demand for security of tenure.

Over the past ten years, some R400-million has been spent in Soweto on upgrading services such as electricity, water supplies, stormwater drainage, roads and sewerage reticulation. Despite this, the quality of services remains extremely poor. The water system is in danger of collapse. Mains are under-sized and badly maintained. And it will take five years before all current Soweto houses have inside water connections. Constant water cuts have also been viewed as pressure to get people to pay rents.

The sewerage system is also too small to cope - 400 blockages are cleared every month - and drainage is a constant problem. Water cuts increase blockages, and all these conditions present a very serious hazard to public health. A related problem is refuse - 34% of the households surveyed said it was seldom collected.

Most roads in the township are in a bad state, and less than 10% have adequate stormwater drainage. This means properties, gardens and building foundations are damaged by flood waters.

The hardships are not only physical. The continually deteriorating situation disturbs both the physical and mental well-being of the community, and has the potential to reach crisis proportions.

The Soweto delegation contended that infrastructural services had to be upgraded to decent, acceptable standards. The delegation also said mechanisms had to be found to ensure full community participation in decision-making around service. This would avoid the poor results of the electrification and other upgrading projects of the last decade.

All state bodies accept that present infrastructural services are

inadequate, poorly maintained and in dire need of improvement. Yet there is no overall state plan to remedy the situation.

The Wits RSC has determined standards for service provision, while its Infrastructure Working Group has calculated the finance needed to provide all communities within its juridical area with such a level of service.

The Development Bank argues that no short-term solutions are possible and recommends a five year plan to 'depoliticise' municipal services. This, it suggests, can be achieved through a combination of 'community participation', employment of private contractors, privatisation, and education programmes 'to change perceptions'.

In the long term, the DBSA observes, problem solving will have to be based on 'a sound institutional capacity' and an improved source of income. These ideas have merit, but were only expressed at a level of generality.

The Wits RSC has formed a more concrete set of plans. In essence however, it is providing money to upgrade existing infrastructure and not funding the maintenance and operation of municipal services.

Overall, there is no state strategy for the large-scale upgrading of infrastructure. The Development Bank devised general principals, the RSC financed some relatively small-scale projects. The SCC is bankrupt and can no longer afford to maintain its existing infrastructure.

None of the necessary improvements are cheap. And most Sowetans cannot afford current service charges, according to the delegation. However, any long-term solution would have to involve working out affordable service charges. Placing unrealistic financial burdens on township residents will merely worsen political instability. Obviously then, upgrading service infrastructures will have to be subsidised, utilising public and private finances from outside the township. The most obvious source is the Johannesburg rate account.

Before 1972, the Johannesburg City Council's (JCC) rate account subsidised the administration of Soweto. In that year the JCC contributed R2-million to Soweto's running. In 1973, the West Rand Administration Board took over the township and set out to run it on a basis of 'self-sufficiency'.

Nonetheless, Johannesburg's economy remains strongly dependent on the labour and consumer power of Sowetans. In 1987 alone, the estimated 283 000 Sowetans working in Johannesburg earned over R2-billion - they spent about R1,4-billion (or 70%) of that in Johannesburg's Central Business District, contributing significantly to its economic growth. But since Soweto's demarcation as a 'separate city', its residents do not benefit from Johannesburg's economic prosperity.

Johannesburg's healthy economic base generates considerable income for its city council. Its 1988/89 budget was R1,2-billion for administration, upkeep and development of Johannesburg. This also included a 55% rebate to all white ratepayers - generated in part from the R1-billion spent in Johannesburg's CBD by Sowetans. Yet the JCC provides no money at all for Soweto's upkeep.

Only apartheid keeps Soweto and Johannesburg from being seen as a single functional urban economy. The Soweto delegation argued that until this is done, no development policy formulated for Soweto can be successful - there will be no money to pay for it. The basic principle underlying a feasible development policy must therefore be the notion of a single tax base for Soweto and Johannesburg.

The state has recognised that financial self-sufficiency is not practicable in townships. It is approaching service costs in three ways. Firstly, the RSCs will subsidise the cost of the three bulk services: water, electricity and sewerage reticulation. The RSC will pay the suppliers of these services from a single account financed by all the local authorities. It is also recognised that BLA's will never recover all costs of services from residents. The authorities cannot withhold services, so the services will have to be subsidised.

Secondly, the state wishes to privatise service provision. This means residents will have no recourse to publicly-accountable bodies if costs increase.

Thirdly, the state envisages stringent legal measures to force people to pay service charges and/or rates that approximate the cost of the services they use. This means poorer residents will be squeezed out and replaced with occupants willing and able to pay the full charges. Yet again, the state has failed to address the crucial aspect of the segmented tax base of the apartheid city.

The RSCs emerged from the state's recognition that the divided apartheid city has created numerous problems. It acknowledged that Regional Services Councils (RSCs) were introduced to redress economic imbalance between 'developed' and 'less developed' areas. But revenue being raised at the local level leaves in tact the economic base of the divided city. The RSC superstructure will improve, but will not resolve the fundamental problem.

It has been recommended in a Department of Finance report that the RSCs should increasingly provide development finance. This implies a far greater role for metropolitan government in 'own affairs' - an evident government policy response to the deepening crisis of the divided city.

The suggestions to change policy

A planned response

THE information in this article is based on a report commissioned by the Soweto People's Delegation, which has been meeting with the Soweto city council since December 1988 in an attempt to resolve the township's three-year rent boycott.

Soweto residents mandated the delegation to act on their behalf following the restriction of the Soweto Civic Association. It included Cyril Ramaphosa, Rev Frank Chikane, Albertina Sisulu, Rev Lebamang Sebidi, Ellen Kuzwayo and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

During the first meeting, the delegation indicated that it would conduct research into the problems of Soweto, of which the boycott was merely the most dramatic manifestation. The delegation undertook to return to the negotiation table with proposals for the resolution of the crisis. The research, prepared for the delegation by Planact, was released at a press conference in March.

Poor conditions and disrupted and poor quality services have serious consequences for the community's physical and mental health.

do not come from political quarters. Clearly, a NP-controlled white municipality will not willingly support policy that threatens the privileged economic status of its white ratepayers. And this may be the ultimate stumbling block.

State responses to the question of a single tax base remain constrained by the limitations of a national policy framework which continues to protect the interests of its white citizens. Nonetheless, powerful institutional and business interests have indicated support for the notion.

No matter how all these problems are resolved, the Soweto People's Delegation has stressed that any decisions should be made democratically, with community involvement at all levels of policy formulation.

The Soweto delegation exposed the root causes of the rent boycott. Government strategy to resolve the problem has not even gone this far. Rather it has incorporated a range of policies from various authorities at local, regional and central level.

Consequently, over the past few years, Sowetans have experienced repression, intimidation, evictions, disrupted services, media campaigns, promises of upgrading and local negotiations - all to coerce or cajole people into paying rent and service charges.

Different strategies have come and gone, but the rent boycott continues.

Often proposals put forward by one interested party within the state has contradicted those presented by others. For example, the Soweto City Council suggested reducing rents and service charges, but the TPA remains adamant: residents must pay charges that will cover services and the repayment of the 'bridging finance'.

The only consistent point about the various state strategies is that the state - unlike the community - has no coherent plan for the resolution of the crisis.

The Wits JMC has tried to co-ordinate various strategies of disparate state structures. It has also worked hard at keeping representative community structures out of the process. In both cases there is little evidence of success.

The JMC has nonetheless, moved to establish its own negotiation forum. Interestingly, this initiative took place shortly after the initial meeting between the Soweto People's Delegation and the Soweto City Council. The JMC forum involves consultation with 'community leaders' , but it specifically excludes the SPD and the now-banned Soweto Civic Association (SCA). The JMC has also firmly recommended that the negotiations between the SPD and the SCC be discontinued.

The state does not have a coherent plan of action for dealing with the Soweto rent crisis. Soweto residents have however, through the delegation, directly contested existing structures of authority at local state level. The delegation - in what has been called 'urban trade unionism' - presented short-term and attainable goals in its negotiations with the council.

Sowetans recognise that theirs is the most concrete set of proposals to date. This has led them to challenge the state's interpretations of 'negotiation' and 'consultation'.

The townships residents have expressed a willingness to engage in meaningful negotiations. But Sowetans believe that if negotiations are to be meaningful, they - and not the state - will decide who best represents the community's interests.

The early 1950s: members of the Garment Workers Union stage a protest through the streets of Johannesburg. Their general secretary Solly Sachs was bannned and ordered to resign from the union.

The late 1980s: Garment workers today are set to merge into one giant industrial union. 187 000 strong, the new union will play a significant role in the formation of Cosatu's future policy.

Garment workers: a huge new union

On 16 September, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union of South Africa (Actwusa) and the Garment and Allied Workers Union (Gawu) will merge to form the second biggest union in South Africa. SHAREEN SINGH traces the paths the unions have taken to reach this point.

THE garment industry has a long, powerful history of trade union organisation. But the road to merger has not been an easy one for the unions: their history is one of rivalry and clashes.

Very different traditions of union organisation made all previous attempts at unity unsuccessful. But as policy within the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) is one union per industry, merger attempts continued.

Many unity talks later, at their national congresses in April 1989, both Actwusa and Gawu resolved to proceed with the merger - unconditionally.

With a membership of over 187 000, the new union will effectively tie up all garment, textile and leather workers into one national union. And the industry will be almost totally unionised.

The history of the garment union goes back 70 years to 1918, when a craft union, the Witwatersrand Tailors Association, was formed. Later this became the Garment Workers Union of South Africa (Gwusa). In 1928, under the leadership of Solly Sachs, Gwusa became a registered union.

At the time most workers employed in the industry were poor white Afrikaner women. After the second world war all industries experienced labour shortages and began to employ black workers. Employers could also pay these workers less than white workers. In response Gwusa stepped up its battle to get black workers covered by the Industrial Conciliation Act. And by 1955 the racial composition of the industry had changed - only 32% of the workforce was white.

While Afrikaner women still represented the majority in the garment industry, they suffered extreme exploitation: starvation wages; long hours - up to 48 hours a week; and in some cases, women worked for six months before qualifying as paid workers.

The conditions meant many of these women were open to the idea of a union. Straight from the factory floor Johanna and Hester Cornelius, Anna Scheepers and Katie Viljoen were some of the women who, with Solly Sachs, worked unflinchingly to organise garment workers. They waged militant battles against both employers and government. From 1928 to 1932, these women staged over 100 work stoppages and strikes, sending ripples of unrest through the industry.

The women saw themselves as workers, and few were concerned about race. But Afrikaner Nationalism was a potent force in the 1930s. The Broederbond set out to unite all Afrikaners irrespective of class. These ideological initiatives interfered with the work of Gwusa and other unions with predominantly Afrikaner membership.

On the one hand, Afrikaner nationalism called on them to unite separately from 'foreign' influences and remain loyal to the Boer culture. On the other hand, their trade union called on them to overcome personal prejudices and organise as workers, irrespective of the race of their fellow workers.

To avoid racial conflict however, when African women workers joined Gwusa they were organised in a separate section of the union, 'the number two branch'. Only black women could join. The 1924 Industrial Conciliation Act prevented black men from joining registered trade unions and they were organised separately in the unregistered South African Clothing Workers Union (Sacwu).

The 'number two branch' did not last long. In 1952 the Native Labour Act (Settlement of Disputes) outlawed multiracial unions, and African women in Gwusa formed the Garment Workers Union of African Women with Lucy Mvubelo as general secretary.

In the 1950s Sacwu became a member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu). Sacwu secretary Viola Hashe, one of the two women officials in the all-male union, became Sactu vice president. She was banned in 1963 under the Suppression of Communism Act.

In 1961 Sacwu and the Garment Workers Union of African Women merged to form the National Union of Clothing Workers (NUCW). Still forced by apartheid to organise separately, Gwusa and NUCW nonetheless maintained a close relationship, and operated as parallel unions.

At this stage Gwusa, with its large number of coloured members, tended

to dominate the NUCW. The NUCW could not negotiate wages in the Industrial Council and was forced to accept wages and working conditions negotiated by Gwusa.

Although workers were not free from racial prejudice, most recognised the need for class solidarity - this provided the basis for the co-operative relationship. They shared resources and fought many employers as a single union.

One of Gwusa's most significant gains was in 1948: through arbitration it won a 40-hour week and a substantial wage increase at industrial council level.

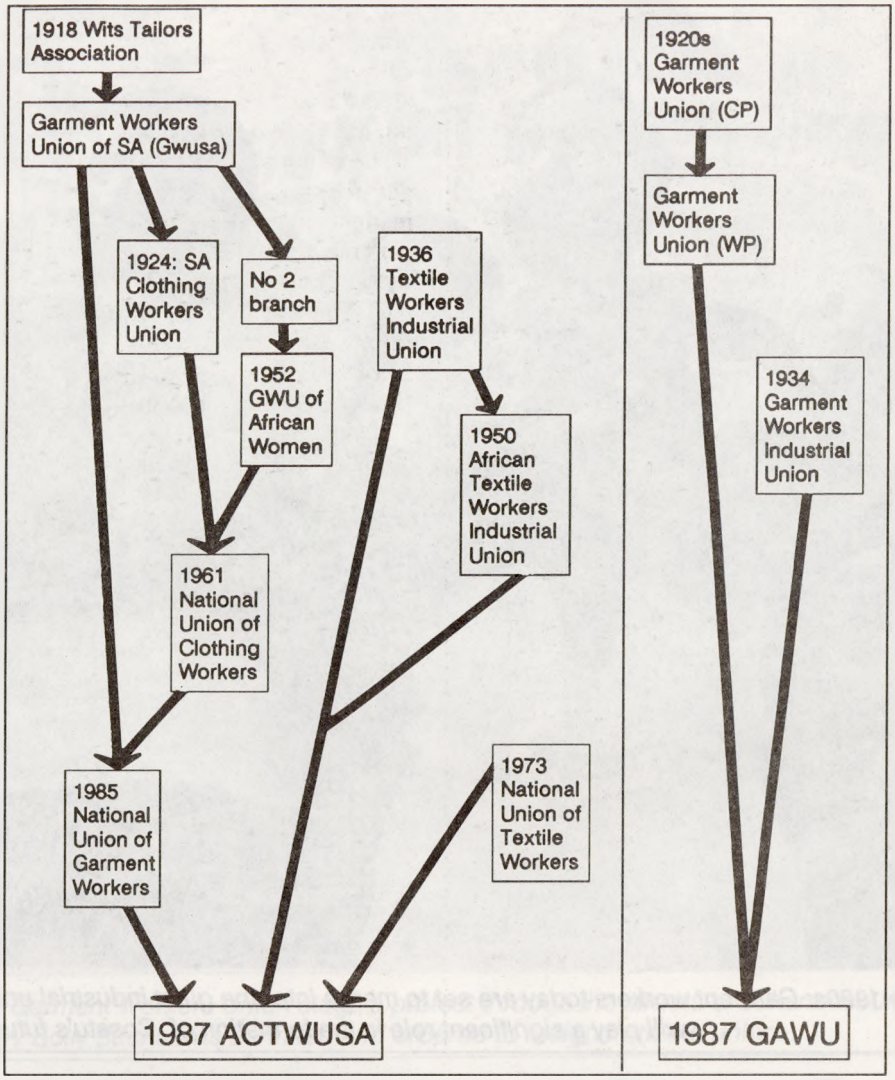
The union also fought the 1956 Industrial Conciliation Act which made provision for job reservation. The union called for a strike: garment factories on the Reef were effectively closed for three days. Other protests followed and after a long battle Gwusa became the first union to succeed in getting the legislation lifted.

The union also fought a long and bitter battle against the Physical Planning Act. This law prohibited an employer from employing more than one black for every two and half whites. After a nine-year battle, the act was cancelled.

In 1952 Gwusa leader Solly Sachs received a banning order and an order for him to resign from the union. A massive crowd of about 20 000 garment, leather and textile workers gathered at the Johannesburg City Hall steps to protest against the banning. The meeting was violently dispersed by police, leaving hundreds injured.

Gwusa leadership, firmly committed to trade union and worker unity, were instrumental in organising and setting up trade unions in other sectors, as well as giving financial assistance. Workers in the tobacco, hat, wine and spirit, radio and television, brushes and broom, food and canning and textile sectors were organised by Gwusa officials and members. Ccawusa, today one of the most militant unions in the country, was started with assistance from Gwusa.

In the 1960s Gwusa lost much of its fighting spirit. After Sachs left, the union became dominated by conservative white leaders who were involved in forming the Trade Union Council of South Africa (Tucsa). Tucsa policy was to exclude unions with African membership.



After almost 20 years of working as parallel unions, in August 1985 Gwusa and NUCW merged - the Wiehahn recommendations had made racially-mixed unions possible at last. Gwusa with about 6 000 white and coloured members amalgamated with the NUCW's 26 000 African members to form the National Union of Garment Workers (NUGW).

Shortly afterwards, in 1986, NUGW disaffiliated from Tucsa. At the time Tucsa was in crisis: trying to please members across the political spectrum, and failing miserably, it was effectively neutralising union militancy.

NUGW was not the only union to accuse Tucsa of lack of direction. In particular NUGW condemned Tucsa's lack of support for June 16 and May-Day commemorations.

Another significant union in the industry was the Textile Workers Industrial Union (TWIU). It registered in 1936 and organised workers irrespective of race. However, also to avoid racial conflict, coloured, white and Indian workers were in one section and African workers in another.

In 1950 legislation forced TWIU to form a separate union for its African members. TWIU then organised only coloured and Indian workers, and its African members formed the African Textile Workers Industrial Union (SA). The two unions maintained close ties and worked as a single unit.

The Suppression of Communism Act also meant constant harassment for TWIU officials. Many were banned and some fled the country. By 1953 the African Textile Workers Industrial Union had almost ceased to exist, and the TWIU had also lost many members.

Nevertheless, the union was involved in several strike actions in the 1950s. Of particular note was the week-long wage strike by 3 000 Amato workers, where police intervened and injured 40 workers.

Garment Workers Union founder and first general secretary, Solly Sachs

Leaders involved in the strike were jailed under the pass laws.

In the 1970s, when amended legislation allowed Africans to be members of registered unions, the union again opened its ranks to black workers. This strengthened TWIU and a major battle for union recognition started in Natal's textile factories.

The union remained politically independent and did not join the new federation formed in 1979 - the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu).

In 1973, a wave of strikes in Durban gave rise to a new generation of textile workers. And from it a new union emerged in September of that year - the National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW). NUTW was characterised by militant workers and leaders with fresh ideas and a different approach to organising. The union adopted a non-racial policy from the start, and thus was not eligible for registration.

It was hard work organising as an unregistered union - subs had to be collected by hand, employers refused all dealings with the union, and gaining recognition was a major battle.

The union was also a constant target for state repression - union leaders were detained, including general secretary Halton Cheadle, who was subsequently banned.

NUTW was a founding member of Fosatu (the largest union federation before the formation of Cosatu), and was one of its largest affiliates with 7 000 members.

Fosatu gave NUTW the impetus to expand beyond Natal. In 1980 the union opened a branch in the Eastern Cape; in 1981 a branch was started in the Transvaal and in 1982 a branch opened in Cape Town. From the start the union operated as a centralised national union under a national executive committee.

One of NUTW's toughest battles was the fight for recognition at the Frame group - employer of over 20 000 workers. After 53 legal cases over a two year period, which cost management millions and drained union resources, Frame eventually granted recognition. NUTW could then organise the whole of the Frame group.

In 1985 NUTW became a founding member of Cosatu. At the founding congress the union proposed a resolution calling for one union for each industry. This became a central part of Cosatu policy.

NUTW leadership always stressed that the union should take an independent path, unaligned to any political organisation. They felt members should be able to belong to different political organisations, but still feel comfortable in the union. A minority group in the union disagreed and eventually left to form a splinter union - the Textile and Allied Workers Union (Tawu). One of the NUTW's organising tools was establishing shop-stewards' rights in factories. Shop-stewards councils were formed at each branch as a process of developing a national worker leadership. By 1986 the union had 400 shop-stewards at factories in which it was recognised.

NUTW posed a serious threat to TWIU. Both organised in the same industry, and both were based largely in Natal. There was intense rivalry and bitter fights over poaching of members and union recognition for majority unions. The two unions fought court battles at great financial cost, but NUTW expanded rapidly and began to win over TWIU members.

Finally the two unions agreed to join forces, and Actwusa was born on 7 September 1987 out of a merger between NUTW, TWIU and NUGW. Combined membership stood at 70 000.

The merger raised tensions in the South African Federation of Textile Garment and Leather Workers - because the Garment Workers Union (Western Province) had been excluded.

NUTW, critical of GWU(WP)'s form of trade unionism, asked the union's leadership to clarify whether GWU was a benefit society or a trade union. John Copelyn, NUTW spokesperson said: 'The leadership operates without mandates and encourages a view that there is no divide between labour and management'.

In solidarity with GWU(WP), the Garment Workers Industrial Union (GWIU) refused to participate in the merger, but did send a message of support to the Actwusa launch. GWIU eventually merged with the Cape union to form Gawu.

The Garment Workers Union (Western Province) arose out of one of the oldest unions in the industry. Its predecessors were also largely conservative, and came up against more militant unions like Gwusa.

The Garment Workers Union of Cape Province started organising workers in the clothing and garment industry in the 1920s. But it was never really able to adequately organise and serve workers' needs. And the absence of a strong garment union coupled with the economic situation in the Cape meant huge wage differentials between the Cape and Transvaal.

Gwusa attempted to fill in the gap left by GWU(CP) and began organising Cape Town milliners. But problems emerged during wage negotiations in the late 1920s. Gwusa's Solly Sachs and Anna Scheepers demanded higher wages in an attempt to equalise wages between

Transvaal and Cape workers. Employers refused to budge knowing that Mr Roberts, general secretary of GWU(CP) would accept a much lower wage offer. He did.

After the settlement, Cape employers urged their workers to join the GWU(CP).

Sachs and Scheepers tried to unite the unions, but failed. Talks with the leadership proved unsuccessful and communication with the membership was made impossible. Employers blocked their access to factories, and police harassment further prevented them making inroads into Cape factories.

The GWU(CP), which later became the GWU Western Province, grew with employer support. Obviously its direction differed from that of Gwusa. And Cape wages and working conditions remained far worse than in the Transvaal.

Differences between Gwusa and GWU(WP) continued for many years.

However both unions were Tucsa affiliates and some unity was forged on certain issues over the past 15 years in the Garment Workers Consultative Committee.

Further merger attempts in the 1980s failed again. Gwusa went ahead and merged with the National Union of Clothing Workers. And GWU(WP), fitting comfortably within Tucsa, remained loyal until the Council's demise in 1986.

The Natal-based Garment Workers Industrial Union (GWIU), formed in August 1934 under the leadership of Jimmy Bolton, drew its membership from indentured Indian labour who made up the bulk of the workforce in the industry at the time.

Bolton, a furniture factory worker at the time, began organising workers in the garment and textile industry in the late 1920s. Since the Industrial Registrar refused to register both garment and textile workers in one union, GWIU's registration in 1934 excluded textile workers.

In the 1950s when a large number of African workers entered the industry, the union employed Amos Dube to organise African workers into GWIU. But in 1956, when the law prohibited mixed unions, GWIU excluded African workers from its ranks, and Dube had to resign. A working relationship was maintained and African shop-stewards continued attending union meetings. After Wiehahn the union once again opened its door to African workers.

GWIU avoided involvement in major strikes. Apart from a few minor stoppages at individual factories, the most significant gains made by the union were: the 1944 wage agreement which secured May-Day as a paid holiday; increased the cost of living allowance by 22,5% and increased the basic wage; and in 1946 the reduction of working hours from 48 hours to 42,5 hours for skilled workers. This was extended to unskilled workers in the 1970s.

GWIU left Tucsa in 1986 - the feeling was that the congress was strongly dominated by whites, and GWIU was not benefitting in any way from continued membership.

Embittered by its exclusion from the Actwusa merger, GWU(WP) joined ranks with GWIU in Natal in 1987. On 5-6 December of that year the two unions merged, and Gawu was launched with 102 000 members, three months after the birth of Actwusa.

Shortly after its launch, the union, employing new and radical trade unionists and with a more progressive leadership, embarked on militant shop-floor struggles. This was a direction unheard of in the history of Gawu's predecessors.

The union won major wage increases, maternity benefits, and got signed undertakings from employers on certain clauses of the Labour Relations Act. Also, Gawu was instrumental in getting the Industrial Council wage agreement reduced from a two year to an annual agreement in some areas.

Since its formation Gawu started a process of developing democratic shop-floor, local and regional structures. This grassroots build-up allowed the union to wage some of the biggest strikes in 1988 involving thousands of workers.

During 1988 Gawu established a base in the Transvaal, after the 5 000-strong South African Textile and Allied Workers Union (Satawu) joined the union.

Until late 1987, the GWU(WP) newspaper, Clothesline, was filled with beauty contests and cultural and sports events which were noticeably unprogressive. During 1988 coverage of these events took on a new perspective and many stories in Clothesline began to focus on militant union activity.

According to Desmond Sampson, Gawu's general secretary, the sudden militant leap can be attributed to the change in union leadership, education programmes and democratisation of union structures which provided members with a means to express feelings previously suppressed.

The union also developed working relationships with community organisations, particularly in the Western Cape.

Trade union unity in the garment industry has historically been fraught with problems. The Gawu/Actwusa merger process has been a particularly rocky one, not only because of their different backgrounds but because of their firm political positions which ultimately demanded compromises from both sides.

At Gawu's inaugural congress in 1987, the union resolved to seek observer status with Cosatu. A pre-condition to formal affiliation was merger with the Cosatu affiliate in the sector - Actwusa. As tensions between the two still ran high, a merger seemed out of the question at the time.

Gawu was granted observer status in some Cosatu structures and the union worked closely with Cosatu affiliates in the eastern and western Cape. The strained relationship with Actwusa did not improve.

In mid-1988 the unions accused each other of poaching members. At one Durban factory Gawu claimed majority support. Actwusa disputed this and the matter was only settled shortly before an impending court battle between the unions. Joint co-ordination and negotiations by both unions resolved the dispute.

Continuing conflict, especially in Natal, prevented formal merger talks. But late last year, after Cosatu intervened, a positive merger process started.

Following a meeting between representatives from Gawu, Actwusa and Cosatu in December 1988, a committee of four delegates from each union and Cosatu's Jay Naidoo and Sydney Mafumadi was established to examine all areas of conflict

Cape Town Gawu workers discuss the merger in March 1989. The addition of Gawu's membership to Cosatu will consolidate another sector.

and to discuss the merger.

The committee met four times, resolving several issues of tension between the unions. At the fifth meeting differences arose over political policy and structure.

Although most unions have moved beyond fights around crude 'workerist' and 'populist' positions, the different approaches of these positions were possibly the basis for initial political differences between Gawu and Actwusa.

Gawu, clearly more closely allied to the mass democratic movement, strongly supported involvement in community structures. The union also drew up a charter with demands similar to the Freedom Charter.

Actwusa on the other hand comes from a strong tradition of shop-floor-based trade unionism. Its predecessor, NUTW, was often very critical of union involvement in what it termed 'political' issues. Actwusa, although recognising the historical significance of the Freedom Charter as a document raising demands for all oppressed South Africans, has not formally adopted it. This makes it the only Cosatu affiliate to maintain this position.

Mawu, faced with a similar situation at the Numsa merger Congress in 1987, adopted the Freedom Charter as its minimum demands, averting a split among unions in the metal sector. Ccawusa on the other hand decided not to adopt the Freedom Charter, a decision which split the union into two factions.

Both Gawu and Actwusa, now firmly committed to maximum worker unity, resolved at their special April congresses that such differences should not stand in the way of merger. As a show of unity, the unions exchanged speakers at the congresses which were held on the same weekend.

Absent from the congresses was the National Union of Leatherworkers (NULW) whose conservative leadership has backtracked from the merger plans. However, NULW rank and file members have evidently defied the leadership position and indicated a willingness to join the new union.

Both congresses agreed to merger in September, giving members of both unions the opportunity to thoroughly discuss the merger at all levels.

At the Gawu congress the major political policy resolution involved a decision to hold educational programmes on Cosatu's political policy, the Freedom Charter, and the ANC's constitutional guidelines for a future South Africa.

Actwusa neither rejected nor adopted the ANC's constitutional guidelines. Rather, it focussed on the interests of organised labour in a blueprint for a future South Africa. The major resolution revolved around the adoption of a workers' charter to be included in the constitution of a non-racial democratic South Africa.

The union noted that the Freedom Charter raised many issues fundamental to all oppressed people in South Africa. But it is no substitute for clear protection of minimum worker rights. These ought to be included in any genuinely democratic constitution if it is to enjoy the respect of organised workers.

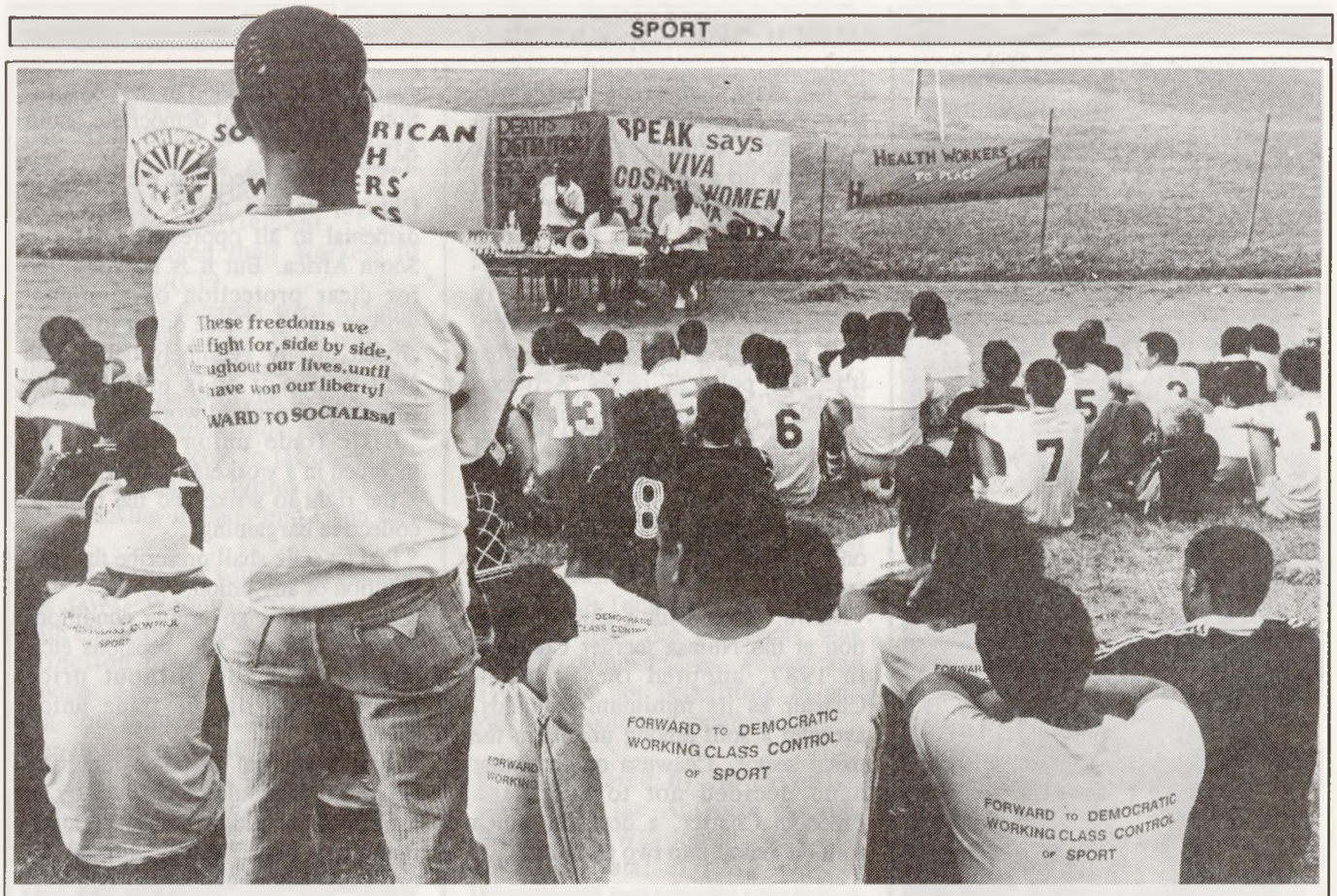
Basic trade union rights to be included in a workers' charter were:

* the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining;
* that no state shall prescribe the constitution of any union;
* that no laws governing conditions of work (income tax, pensions etc.) should be made without prior negotiation with the trade union movement;
* that industrial disputes requiring adjudication should be resolved by an arbitrator or judge whose appointment has been jointly agreed by organised labour and employers;
* that worker participation in factory management is set out in law, with worker delegates subject to recall in terms of their union's constitution.

The resolution is the first of its kind in Cosatu and will be put to the federation's congress in July, where Gawu will have observer status.

The addition of Gawu's membership to Cosatu is a significant boost for the federation. It will formally consolidate another sector, and the inclusion of over 100 000 militant coloured and Indian workers in its ranks might well prove to be a major step in Cosatu's battle to win over these sections of the working class. Racial conflict among the working class, exacerbated by scabbing, is currently a major problem in the labour movement. Also Gawu's membership is predominantly women, which may give impetus to a largely suppressed women's voice in Cosatu structures.

The new textile/garment union's political influence will not be felt at the Cosatu congress this time round. However the union will no doubt play a significant role in influencing the federation's policy in the future. Certainly, its diverse political history will make it an interesting contributor.



The challenge to non-racial sport

After 16 years as an anti-apartheid sports structure, the South African Council on Sport (Sacos) has reached a critical stage, argues CHERYL ROBERTS.

WHICH way to turn and how to respond to developments are central issues confronting Sacos. Once decided, Sacos' way forward will have a crucial bearing on sport in a post-apartheid society.

For anti-apartheid sports bodies, the past two decades have been marked by the consolidation of non-racial sport and the international isolation of establishment sport.

But as with other resistance organisations, sports bodies are now having to look closely at their role in the transformation of South African society, and take a critical look at what contribution they can make.

A little over 12 months ago Sacos could lay claim to being the legitimate national sports structure among the oppressed classes. But many people were impatient with the pace of organising non-racial sport, and another structure has emerged: the National Sports Congress (NSC), which claims to have the structures to effectively organise African people.

The NSC insists that it was not formed in opposition to Sacos. But its existence has led to competition as both compete for the same constituency.

These are only some of the challenges facing Sacos at present. But the organisation has a long history of organisation and resistance.

The turning point in terms of organising sport was 1976, when the authorities adopted an official sports policy of 'multi-racialism', or racially-defined sport.

In response, certain sections of the oppressed classes - under the direction of Sacos - began formulating a new, non-racial sports programme.

By removing all reference to race and colour, and at the same time blurring class divisions and antagonisms, Sacos attacked the foundation of the apartheid social formation.

And, by organising sport on a non-racial basis, Sacos' agenda challenged the intellectual and ideological control which the dominant classes had over society.

To distinguish between multi-racial sport and its own policy, Sacos consistently rejected state-initiated 'reforms' in sport. It also implemented a 'double standards'

resolution which prohibited Sacos members from participating in any sporting activity or using any sport facility run or organised by a racially-defined institution or club.

But although Sacos exposed the state's multi-racial sports policy and mobilised non-racial sportspeople around the slogan of 'no normal sport in an abnormal society', in effect it remained a reactive organisation. It strongly opposed the petty-bourgeois aspirations of its membership. Although Sacos had a fair level of support, the majority of black people were being accommodated within sports programmes organised by establishment codes, such as the National Soccer League (NSL), and by corporate capital.

While the dominant classes suffered from a lack of international sporting contact, capital and the state developed sport on a commercial level. Their strategy was to 'give the masses what they want'. They mounted an offensive for the 'hearts and minds' of black sports enthusiasts, and popular sports were reconstructed with a network of clubs and organisations. Part of this strategy, during the post-1976, period was the development of massive infrastructural improvements in townships to ensure the urban work force had recreational activities to keep them occupied.

Working-class peoples' leisure time and recreational activities were controlled, and alternative uses of free time were pre- empted. In effect, this prevented the birth of a working-class culture of sport.

Obviously the most challenging job for Sacos and other forces involved in the democratic sports movement is to take control of sport played by the working class, in particular, and 'the people' in general.

Wresting control of sport from capitalist influences and laying the foundations for a working-class culture of sport should be on the agenda of democratic sports organisations.

Here important questions must be addressed. Is there a determining relationship between sport and the prevailing mode of production? Can sport be understood in its own terms or must it, as a cultural formation, be located within the wider social milieu?

During the past six years Sacos has explored different debates and 'flirted' with issues: for example, the idea of an education office was suggested but nothing was done about it; people from the labour movement have delivered annual Sacos lectures. And there is no doubt the agenda's of political, community and labour organisations have influenced Sacos's ideas on the nature of non-racial sport. Within Sacos, emphasis has shifted from middle-class activism to focus on mass mobilisation and organisation and the building of democratic, grassroots structures.

Clearly Sacos gives itself a limited agenda by organising around the slogan 'no normal sport in an abnormal society'. Organising around anti-apartheid programmes and limited facilities is inadequate and inhibits the growth of Sacos into a mass-based sports structure.

In this regard Sacos must develop into a mass-based democratic organisation and give priority to democratic pressures in sports organisation and management - and be characterised by active support and involvement from all levels of membership. But can Sacos, with its constitution of do's and don'ts, emerge into a sports giant?

Caught between its standing resolutions which guided its commitment to non-racial sport and resistance to apartheid, and the recognition that its narrow and dogmatic policies must change, Sacos is battling for ideas to break out of the impasse.

Certainly, it will be able to call on the experiences and organisational practices of the community and labour organisations.

The question remains how to achieve this goal of a mass-based sports organisation. Here Sacos should take its cue from the labour movement's fierce assertion of democracy, accountability, grassroots decision-making, mandates and report-backs. Obviously democracy will not be born overnight, but will be nurtured and developed in organisational practice.

Sportspeople must become more involved in the organisation of their sport. Entrenched leadership - which has come to rely largely on bureaucratic methods of sports management - must critically evaluate their roles and contributions. The emphasis must be on transforming sports relationships so that sport does not become an ideological institution of capitalism which adjusts and further subordinates workers to the capitalist power network.

It is encouraging to note the working relationship between the Natal Council of Sport (Nacos) and the Natal region of the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) that has taken root and which will hopefully set the pace for other similar initiatives around the country. Several national affiliates of Sacos are involved in relationships of some sort or another with the labour movement. How they develop over the next two years will have a significant bearing on sport in a post-apartheid society.

Racial and class divisions are not the only challenges which face progressive sporting bodies. Gender divisions, further subordination of women and chauvinist versions of masculinity are still rife in sports organisations.

Alienated from the labour process, deprived of political and economic power, sport offers working-class men the opportunity to gain social status and recognised achievement.

Working-class women have unequal access to leisure activities and sports compared to men. This sharp distinction between men's and women's participation in sport ensures the further subordination of women (in the working class) and inhibits their full participation as class agents for revolutionary change.

Efforts to transform sport - which is currently largely male-dominated - into sport based on non-sexist principles, will not be achieved easily and will require enormous pressure at all levels. But this can only open yet another area of contest in the struggle to transform South African sports relations.

The tasks confronting Sacos are many. The organisation now has the task of conscious plotting and searching for strategies - ones that will neither run ahead nor lag behind - that will collectively organise both against multi-racial sport and also against bourgeois sport. The challenge is to find out what a progressive, working-class culture of sport in South Africa should be.

From 'constructive engagement' to 'democratic empowerment'

The only thing more difficult to predict than South African politics is American politics, argues STEVEN DAVIS, policy analyst at the Investor Responsibility Research Center in Washington. Bearing this in mind, he makes several predictions on future US policy towards South Africa - particularly on sanctions - and concludes that the US administration is likely to toughen its approach in the coming months.

SANCTIONS - yes or no - that was the focus of debate in Washington under President Ronald Reagan. However, the inauguration of George Bush marks a new acceptance of sanctions as a legitimate and necessary tool of foreign policy towards South Africa.

From now on, the debate seems more likely to be: sanctions - when, how many, and under what conditions.

The reasons for this important shift can be traced back to debates which took place in 1986, when the US Congress adopted the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA), despite a veto by Reagan.

The legislation, which remains among the toughest adopted by Western countries, imposed a variety of economic penalties on South Africa. It also outlined in detail the conditions that would have to arise to permit the US to lift sanctions.

The politics and process by which the CAAA became law, give some idea of the intense debates which still continue.

In 1986, South Africa was torn by township uprisings. In response, the debate in Washington over American policy towards South Africa quickly turned into what was in effect a 'congressional uprising'.

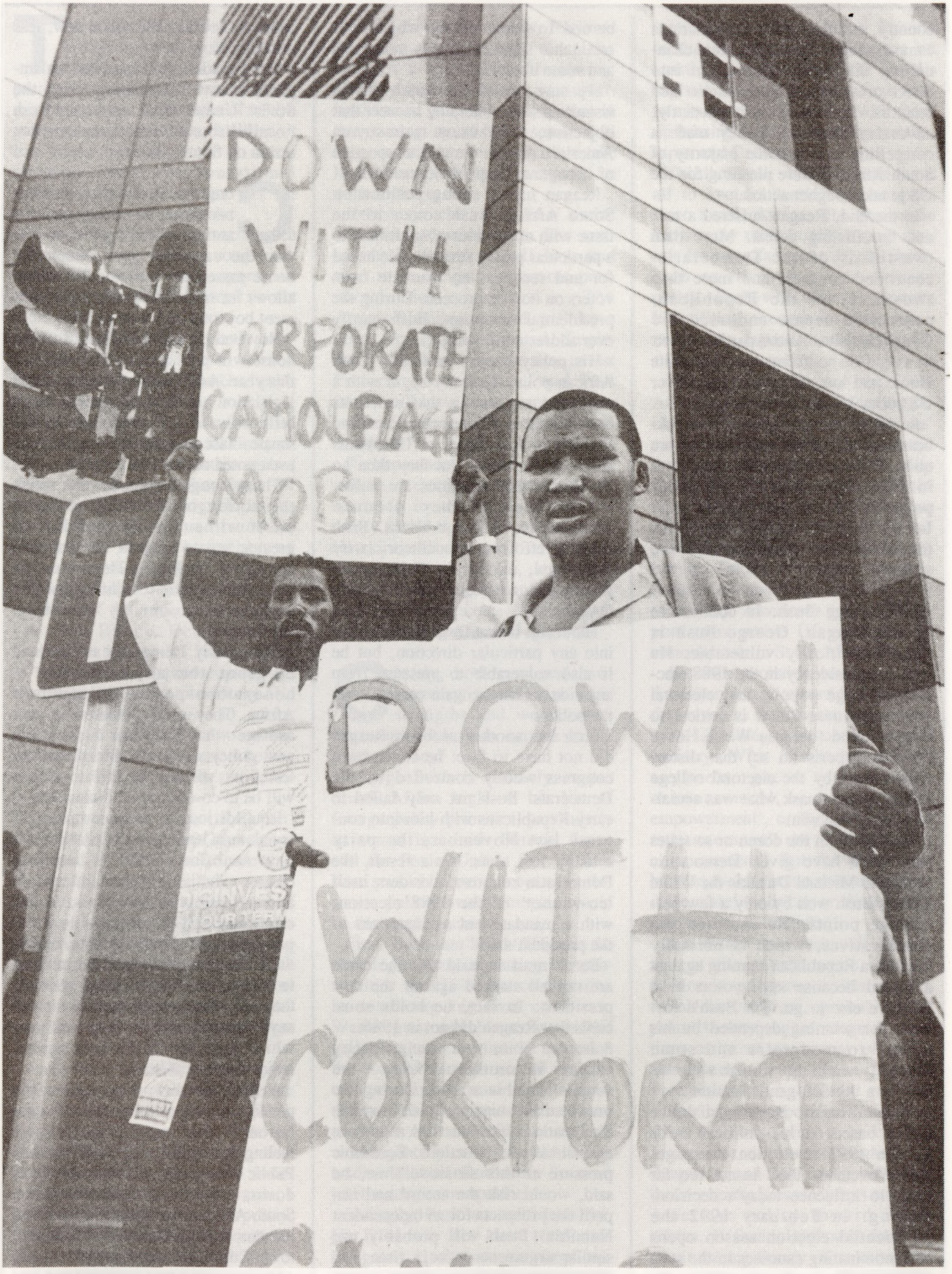
Congress does not often take on a president in the field of foreign policy. From time to time it engages in a sort of hit-and-run attack on a specific foreign policy budget item. Only rarely does it mount a wholesale assault on a basic element of the administration's international relations agenda. It did so over Reagan's stand on South Africa.

In 1986, Reagan was aware of growing public pressure to toughen his 'constructive engagement' approach. He knew he faced the possibility of a politically damaging congressional uprising. But he decided to do battle with congress rather than compromise:

* there was a policy motive. The president sincerely disagreed with those who wished to employ sanctions against Pretoria. He argued that sanctions would drive whites to the right and cost black people jobs;
* there was a domestic political motive. The White House felt that standing firm on 'constructive engagement' would earn the administration credit among US conservatives. Some top administration aids felt a high-profile defence of Reagan's South Africa policy would attract new conservative support; and
* there was a power motive. Reagan felt he would win a showdown with congress - he had just been re-elected by a landslide and enjoyed massive popular support.

However, legislators favouring a new policy on South Africa had assets of their own. US public awareness of South Africa's internal troubles was rising to a peak in 1986, mainly because of extensive media coverage of township revolt.

Calls for tougher US action against



Members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union protest the US multi-national Mobil's intended disinvestment from South Africa. Workers objected to the fact that Mobil had not informed the workers of their intention to disinvest, and had failed to negotiate the terms of the disinvestment with their union.

country, and grassroots organisations campaigning for sanctions were channelling this public frustration into direct pressure on congressmen and senators. Perhaps most importantly, advocates of a new policy made a compelling case that the majority of South Africans were pleading for the US to take tougher action.

In the end, Reagan suffered a rare and humiliating defeat. More than two-thirds of the Democratic-controlled congress and more than two-thirds of the Republican-controlled senate endorsed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. In a head-on confrontation, the White House had lost effective control over US policy toward South Africa.

In 1989, the strengths and weaknesses of the three major actors are quite different from what they were in 1986. What then are US policy prospects for the next year or two? Let us examine each of them: the president, the congress and the senate.

George Bush: In contrast to Reagan, George Bush is politically vulnerable. He won the presidency in the 1988 election by large popular and electoral vote majorities. But it is critical to bear in mind (because White House political experts do so) that distortions caused by the electoral college voting system mask what was actually a very close win.

The fact is, in the dozen or so states that could have given Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis the White House, Bush won by only a few percentage points. He captured the conservatives, which is normally easy for a Republican running against a liberal because such voters have nowhere else to go. But Bush's formula for winning depended on his appeal to moderates and some liberals, whom he wooed with his call for a 'kinder, gentler nation'.

Unlike Reagan, Bush must define policy based on his political needs for the 1992 re-election campaign. And November 1992 is not too far away to influence today's decision-making. In February 1992 the presidential election season opens with nominating caucuses in the state of Iowa. The real campaign to influence voters begins a year before that, in less than 22 months. And the Bush White House will be very concerned to make policy which will retain his support among moderates and some liberals.

He may regard the South Africa issue as a way of helping to meet that objective, since many main-stream American voters remain supportive of stronger anti-apartheid measures.

Reagan had a strong position on South Africa. Bush comes to the issue with no obvious commitment to a particular policy formula. He asked for and received no mandate from voters on how to proceed. During the presidential campaign, Bush hardly ever addressed the subject.

His policy papers on future South African policy typically begin with a statement suggesting that sanctions have been a positive factor - sending Pretoria a clear signal of US abhorrence of apartheid. But they then go on to say that sanctions are unfortunate because they produce economic hardship for blacks. Bush made no effort to reconcile or clarify this view, except to indicate he would not advocate repeal of the CAAA.

The result is that Bush is not locked into any particular direction, but he is also vulnerable to pressure from any side seeking to gain control over the policy.

Bush has another problem Reagan did not have to face: he confronts a congress wholly controlled by the Democrats. Bush not only failed to carry Republicans with him into congress last November, the party actually lost seats. As a result, the Democratic congress considers itself 'co-winner' of the 1988 election, with a mandate just as important as the president's.

But it must be said that the cards are not all stacked against the new president. In fact, he holds some cards that Reagan did not in 1986:

* he can point to a foreign policy success in southern Africa - the Angola/Namibia accord. During the presidential campaign, Bush used this diplomatic achievement as a defence against calls for sanctions. Economic pressure at this sensitive time, he said, would risk the accord and imperil the prospects for an independent Namibia. Bush will probably use similar arguments - for a time - to counter pressure for sanctions:
* concern about South Africa has diminished considerably since 1986. This leaves Bush with more political room to develop and sell a new, less drastic policy; and
* the president has inherited an important new relationship with the Soviet Union. This opens up fresh possibilities of joint superpower action on South Africa.

Congress: In the past, this has been the launching pad for anti-apartheid legislation - as was the case last year, when the house passed the Dellums Bill which allows for near-total trade and investment boycotts of South Africa.

However, it seems unlikely that the house will pass another Dellums bill this year. Advocates of anti-apartheid legislation are tired of passing tough bills only to see them fail in the senate - last year the full senate never even voted on the Dellums bill.

These congressmen do not relish the notion of spending time and effort without being confident of greater senate support for an anti-apartheid package. They want to focus attention on rebuilding a senate coalition favouring sanctions legislation.

Also, many Democrats are inclined to grant the administration a honeymoon period on southern Africa. They seem prepared to wait and see what Bush has in mind for new policy on South Africa, and to test how willing the White House will be to co-operate with congress.

In addition, a large number of legislators lean towards a delay on new sanctions until it becomes clearer whether Pretoria intends to allow Namibia to hold free and fair elections, and to declare its independence. If South Africa balks, these congressmen would be inclined to take action. But if things go well, they may back a tacit moratorium on new sanctions for at least this year while they see if Pretoria makes major changes at home.

A final factor working against the passage of major anti-apartheid legislation is that representatives are feeling less political pressure to act. Public awareness on South Africa is down, and the conservative Free South Africa Movement is rebuilding grassroots organisations with an eye toward the 1990 election year.

Congressmen will probably not feel much political heat, nor perceive significant political gain from a sanctions bill, until next year.

The senate: The US senate has always been less inclined to intrude on administration prerogatives when it comes to South African policy. Regardless of which party has controlled the chamber, it has been more attracted to compromise than confrontational measures. The reasons for this are both structural and political.

First, most senators represent much larger and more diverse constituencies than their counterparts in congress, and therefore tend to act more cautiously.

Secondly, senate has no body comparable to the House Africa Sub-committee, which launched most of the anti-apartheid bills.

Consequently, all Africa-oriented legislation must compete for time, attention, and staff resources against every other foreign policy issue for action in the full Foreign Relations committee. This is a structural bottleneck for proponents of aggressive law-making.

Thirdly, since January 1987, the chairman of the Africa subcommittee has been Illinois Democrat Paul Simon. Yet for most of 1987 and half of 1988 Simon was preoccupied with his campaign for the presidency. He was also relatively new to Africa policy and needed time to gather knowledge and experience before playing a leading role in anti-apartheid debates.

In one important respect anti-apartheid legislation advocates have a new key asset in 1989: a rare leadership change has occurred in the senate. Democrat George Mitchell, one of the very few unabashed liberals who still exist in the senate, recently won election as the chamber's new majority leader. He can have enormous influence over the Democrats' agenda, and over what measures get through to the floor for votes.

Apart from Mitchell, the anti-apartheid movement's assets in the senate are few - at least at present. These days senators hear very little on South Africa from their constituents. Partly as a result, the senate is inclined to extend the administration a honeymoon period on Africa policy. It wants to wait and see what policies Bush will propose on South Africa.

It will watch carefully how the Angola/Namibia accord works out. Like some congressmen, the senate may put tough new sanctions on hold while seeing if the new National Party leadership will meet the congress's bottom-line demand for all-party negotiations on a post-apartheid future. It is most likely that in the coming months the senate will keep sanctions simmering, but take little firm action. Next year could be quite different.

George Mitchell will have settled into his leadership post. The anti-apartheid movement will have had time to re-energise grassroots pressure on senators. The Angola/Namibia accord will have been largely implemented. Legislators will have had some time to test Pretoria's new leaders, and Paul Simon will have gained experience as leader of the senate's anti-apartheid advocates.

Perhaps most importantly, 1990 will be an election year. Unless Bush succeeds in selling an alternative policy to the American public, or unless dramatically positive changes occur in South Africa, legislators may return to election platforms to find their constituents continuing to support sanctions against apartheid.

Clearly, both pro- and anti-sanctions forces have their strengths and weaknesses. But what is likely to happen in US foreign policy?

George Bush is unlikely to put South Africa high on his list of foreign policy priorities, particularly in comparison with Europe, Japan and the Soviet Union. But he does have several important objectives that a new policy toward Pretoria would be designed to achieve.

First, Bush sees South Africa as the next logical step in testing the possibilities for US-Soviet co-operation in resolving regional conflicts. Washington and Moscow worked together closely behind the scenes on the Angola/Namibia accord and the two governments now seem to share many of the same goals with respect to South Africa. Bush may explore working tacitly or openly with Soviet leader Mikhael Gorbachev to craft joint strategies on apartheid.

Secondly, Bush is a multi-lateralist. He is clearly not keen to sustain Reagan's 'lonesome cowboy' approach, and appears eager for the US to co-operate with its allies, in particular the UK. Perhaps he recognises that one of the great problems with international policy toward Pretoria is the cacophony of messages on apartheid emerging from the world's capitals. So he will try to find ways to synchronise US policy with those of Britain, the European Community, Japan and Canada.

Thirdly, Bush wants perhaps above all to avoid a battle with congress over South Africa. He knows he faces many other conflicts over matters he cares far more deeply about, such as the budget, or defence policy. Bush will want to conserve his political strength for these issues rather than expend them fighting for a South Africa policy.

Finally, Bush may see the South African issue as a way of demonstrating his 'kinder, gentler nation' credentials to liberals and the American black community. His choice for Republican Party chairman, Lee Atwater, has stated that one of his top objectives will be to expand Republican support among blacks. Taking a tougher line than Reagan on apartheid could do that since black Americans generally support more active US opposition to minority rule in South Africa.

All this probably means a new American policy toward South Africa that involves the Soviets, co-operates with US allies, and meets congress halfway. What it will be called is anyone's guess: 'democratic enhancement', or 'black empowerment', or it could be 'black enhancement' or 'democratic empowerment'. But the policy will have to include some carrots, be they diplomatic, political or financial in nature, and some sticks.

It is likely that Bush will have to accept the use of some kind of economic pressure, or else face a revolt in congress, probably next year. He may suggest targeted sanctions early on, or he may pledge to adopt certain sanctions later if Pretoria makes insufficient progress in meeting some specified conditions.

But for Bush policy to be credible in congress, it must be tougher than Reagan's, and that means admitting that economic pressure plays a role in American policy toward South Africa. If Bush's approach does not admit the legitimacy of sanctions, or shows little chance of achieving significant results, congress is likely to reclaim control over South Africa policy in 1990.

Preserving the planet

Popular movements around the world are turning their attention to environmental issues such as acid rain and deforestation. But what are the issues in South Africa, and how important are they? THOMAS AUF DER HEYDE and HENRI LAURIE report.

In Madrid, Spain, a member of the Green's protests against nuclear weapons. In South Africa there has been little action around Koeberg, the nuclear power station in Cape Town. Yet it presents a serious potential hazard.

IN the Soviet Union the era of glasnost has given rise to another popular term - 'ekologia'. Industrial and other projects are being re-evaluated in the light of their environmental impact, and already some polluters have been fined.

This reflects a world-wide, growing concern about the environment - and society's effect on it. The issue is increasingly in the headlines. And more and more people are participating in environmental politics - eco-politics or 'green' politics - not only in North America, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand, but also in Eastern Europe and in many developing countries in Asia and South America.

In Western Europe, ecology parties - often calling themselves 'The Greens' - have been elected to regional governments, state and federal legislatures, and to the European parliament. They receive considerable support from the labour movement in most of these countries, often entering alliances with left-wing parties.

The appearance of 'green' politics is not limited to capitalist industrialised countries. In Brazil the 'greens' are represented both in regional government, and in state and federal legislatures. Grassroots movements both there and in other developing countries, such as the Philippines, are vigorously taking up environmental issues ranging from deforestation to nuclear power.

However, environmental politics has yet to take off in socialist countries. There are a number of informal groups, and demonstrations have taken place in Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. But only Hungary has an official ecology party.

The increasing public profile of 'green' politics and the issues they take up have begun to influence political processes and decisions. This influence looks set to grow as global environmental destruction increases. In 1980, for example, the Social Democratic government in Sweden fell after 44 years in power - because it would not scrap its nuclear programme. In April this year the centre-right coalition government of Rud Lubbers in the Netherlands fell apart over a disagreement on how to distribute the cost of stringent pollution control measures. Clearly the environment is beginning to assume a pivotal role, at least in continental Europe.

'Green' issues have been taken up

across the political spectrum - even Margaret Thatcher now considers herself 'green'. And it would be naive to simply put this (apparently) new-found ecological awareness down to middle-class anxieties about 'the quality of life', or to ascribe it to the mass media catering for popular tastes.

Instead, progressive South Africans should come to understand the issues which gave rise to this trend: this country faces environmental disasters on a par with those of most other developing or newly-industrialised countries. Because of this, environmental considerations will have to play a major role in future decision making - and in future politics.

This article outlines the history of environmental issues over the last 25 years, and describes five of the major ecological problems in the world today. Of course there is much more to say, for example, on the economic and political aspects of these issues, on the approach that would suit South Africa's needs best, and on the differences between bourgeois and working-class approaches. A look at the major problems may, however, sow the seeds of debate.

The first major analysis of an environmental disaster since World War Two was probably Rachel Carson's book *The Silent Spring*, published in the early 1960s. She reported the devastating effects of DDT - at that time the most popular pesticide in the US - on marine and bird life. The book made DDT the number one environmental issue of the decade. Massive public opposition resulted, and eventually DDT was banned in many countries.

Popular protest around environmental issues did not end there, but was organised largely on an ad hoc and emotive basis, with little concrete socio-political analysis. There were no organised parties, no clear policies or long-running struggles around environmental issues.

Governmental responses were also largely ad hoc. But by the late 1960s several environmental ministries were formed.

The earliest co-ordinated attempt to analyse society's interaction with the environment was published by the Club of Rome - an informal organisation of industrialists, civil servants and academics, formed in April 1968. The Club of Rome - called an 'invisible college' - commissioned a report as part of a 'Project on the Predicament of Mankind'.

This study examined the limits to growth in global population, agriculture, resource-use, industry and pollution. Although the report has been criticised on many levels, its basic analysis - that there are definite physical limits to growth, and that humankind will soon approach these limits - has since proved correct.

Moreover, some points it made are now part of 'green' party political programmes. For example, the study asserted the need for a different kind of industrial production, one which can produce more goods but consume less resources. Energy conservation, less wastage and longer durability of manufactured goods now form an important component of 'greens' campaigns.

The report also suggested that improving the lot of developing countries, both in absolute and in relative terms, was essential in order to avoid a global catastrophe. This recognition underlies the 'green' parties' push for much larger contributions to development aid.

Perhaps most important was the realisation that the problems facing earth at present are historically unique. They require radical new analyses as more importantly, fundamental changes of values and goals at individual, national and global levels.

The oil embargo of 1973/4 gave people some idea of what living with dwindling resources would be like. And in different regions around the world massive oil spillages, large scale death of forests and rapid growth of deserts accompanied by famine have given people an idea of the consequences of environmental destruction.

These experiences influenced the rise of 'green' parties in the industrialised countries and stimulated numerous studies of environmental and developmental problems.

In an attempt to draw together these thoughts, in 1983, the United Nations established the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) under the chair of Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.

The WCED was commissioned to formulate 'a global agenda for change'. Its report, published in 1987, examines the relationship between development (agricultural, human and industrial) and the environment. It lists major problems, and makes proposals for legal and institutional changes to ensure environmental protection and sustainable development.

'Sustainable development' is the key concept which became the central principle of 'green' politics from the late 1970s onwards. It implies meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

This implies a new era of economic growth in developing countries. But most importantly there is also an assurance that those countries will not be starved of resources essential to sustain that growth. This in turn means industrialised countries will have to make major changes in the way they use resources from the third world. These changes, the report stresses, will depend on the outcome of profound political struggles.

Development issues are environmental issues and vice versa. As the WCED report put it: 'the environment is where we all live; and development is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode. The two are inseparable'.

It is this combination of 'developmental' and 'environmental' issues that gives birth to eco-politics.

A good example is the Chipko movement - a grassroots campaign opposing government deforestation (logging) in the Himalayan foothills of India. The campaign arose out of a clear recognition by local peasant women, that forests are a fundamental resource, ensuring the viability of both human life and wildlife.

On the other hand, in Europe a large part of the impetus for the campaigns around acid rain - which results from industrial development and is a major cause of large scale deaths of forests - came from the visual impact. Europeans found themselves looking at stark and barren areas which used to be covered with forest.

In both cases development affected the environment. Both Chipko

people and Europeans reacted to the deaths of their forests. People responded, at least initially, for different reasons; and took different action. Europeans marched in the cities, while Chipko activists occupied the forests in a campaign of passive resistance.

The list of issues in 'green' politics would be impossibly long. But some of the issues are of immediate concern for Southern Africa.

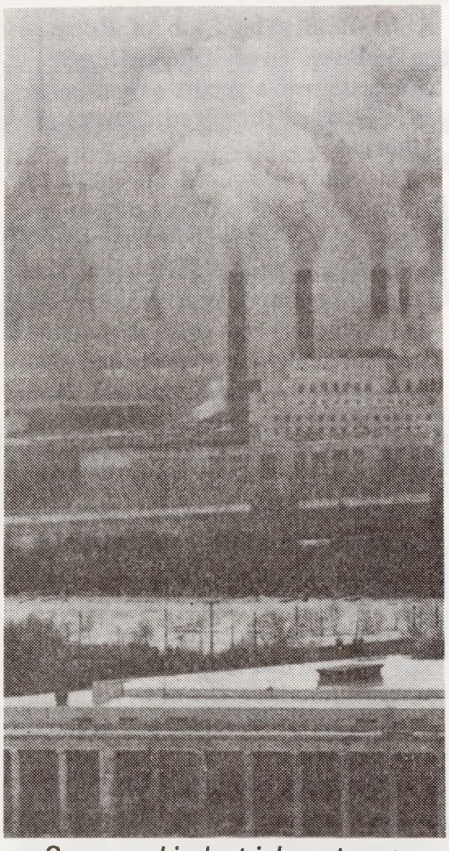
* Acid rain - this is acid coming from the atmosphere, and it can be either in solid form (associated with dust) or liquid (as part of rain drops). The acid is formed by sulphur and nitrogen emissions from the burning of fossil fuels - such as coal in power plants, or petrol and diesel in motor vehicles - and from various industrial processes such as metal smelting, and the plastics and oil-from-coal industries.

Acid rain has been a major cause of the large-scale deaths of forests in Europe: 67% of Britain's pine trees, for example, show slight to severe damage; while the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and the Federal Republic of Germany have between 39% and 60% damage. Acid rain has also raised the acid levels in many lakes in parts of the northern hemisphere. Between 5% and 40% of Scandinavian lakes no longer have any fish. All the fish have also died in some lakes in the north-eastern US and in Canada.

Damage to metals, building exteriors and painted surfaces alone cost the US Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) some $20-billion (about R45-billion) a year.

Stop-gap measures - such as spreading lime on affected areas - only delay its effects: in the long term massive reductions in sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions are the only solution.

Of all African countries, South Africa - with its Sasol plants and huge Escom power stations in the eastern Highveld - is nearest to an acid rain disaster. Indeed, recent studies have shown that Highveld air contains amongst the highest concentrations of sulphur dioxide in the world. And forests in the north-



Smog and industrial waste are problems the world over. Here - smog over Moskow.

eastern Transvaal are already being severely damaged by acid rain.

Acid rain does not only affect forests. The region's maize crops may also suffer, and its ground water - already very scarce - could be contaminated by toxic heavy metals which dissolve in the acid rain.

* The greenhouse effect - refers to the gradual warming of the earth's surface because of the buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere. Increased burning of fossil fuels has led to increased amounts of carbon dioxide in the air. Usually forests absorb the gas, but increasing forest destruction has reducing the earth's ability to absorb it. At present there is 30% more carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere than there was at the beginning of the industrial revolution.

Other gases which also contribute to the greenhouse effect are the CFC (chloroflourocarbon) gases and methane. CFC gases are used as propellants in spray cans; in the production of expanded plastics such as polystyrene; and as coolants in refrigeration systems. Methane is a by-product of sewage decomposition and is also produced in large amounts by bacteria in paddy fields.

It is hard to predict the exact changes in climate as a result of global warming. Certainly it will mean a higher sea level, partly as a result of the polar ice caps beginning to melt, and partly as a result of the water expanding. During this century levels have already risen by 15 centimetres, and at the present rate of warming the sea will rise 30 centimetres in the next 40 years.

Low-lying coastal areas - which often include major agricultural producers and harbours - will be affected directly. And changing weather patterns, involving more frequent and more severe storms, could seriously affect other agriculturally important areas. Southern Africa will be affected directly by all these developments. It is not clear whether South Africa can expect more rain or more drought, but one or the other of these is almost inevitable.

* The ozone layer - this gas lies in the stratosphere 20-25 km above the earth's surface. It filters out harmful ultra-violet radiation which causes skin cancers and cataracts. Since the 1960s reductions of up to 40% have been measured in ozone levels above parts of Antarctica. There has been considerable debate over what causes this reduction. It is now generally thought that the presence of CFCs and methane slowly destroys the ozone layer.

The 'Montreal' agreement of 1989 binds its members to a drastic reduction in the production of certain CFCs. However, the Soviet Union - the world's biggest CFC producer - has refused to ratify the agreement on the basis of insufficient scientific evidence of the role of CFCs. In South Africa, major producers such as AECI have indicated that they will reduce their production of CFCs.

* Large dams - until recently seen as the harbingers of progressive development, they have come under much scrutiny. Their promises of cheap power and of a controllable source of irrigation water have often been accompanied by detrimental side effects.

Millions of people have had to move to make way for the reservoirs of large dams: the Aswan dam in Egypt displaced 120 000 people, the Damodar in India 93 000, while

China's massive Three Gorges plan will involve the resettlement of 3,3-million people. The land lost in creating dams is often the most fertile in the area, since it is the land lying along rivers. By 1981 an area the size of Italy had been flooded by big dam projects around the world.

Dam reservoirs are a major source of water-borne diseases. As a result of the Aswan dam some villages near Lake Nasser have 100% bilharzia infection rates. The rate in Ghana jumped from 2% to 80% after the construction of the Volta dam. Dams trap silt, which would otherwise be carried downstream. Trapping the silt deprives downstream ecosystems of vital nutrients, damaging fisheries and agriculture.

The ecological and social costs of large dams have led to considerable political pressure being placed on development agencies such as the World Bank. Despite this, the World Bank is a major backer of the collosal R3-billion Lesotho Highlands water project. This project already seems to have had an unusual social consequence: it has been suggested that the overthrow of Leabua Jonathan's regime in 1986 was related to his reluctance to enter into agreements with South Africa over certain aspects of the project.

✻Deforestation - in the industrialised countries this is mainly due to the problem of acid rain. In developing countries, however, it is (largely) a problem of developmental zeal. Here people cut down forests to make way for large-scale timber operations, cash crops or cattle projects. In other cases forests are flooded by damming rivers. International development agencies often blame deforestation on subsistence farming and fuel-wood gathering, but these account for only about one fifth of the deforestation in tropical areas.

Trees are essential to the ecological well-being of the earth. They clean the air of dust and carbon dioxide, conserve and bind the soil, maintain its fertility, store water, provide a habitat for wildlife and play a vital role in regulating the climate.

In tropical areas, the effects of deforestation are disastrous. Without its forest cover the land rapidly becomes eroded. In turn, rivers become silted up or blocked and the land looses fertility. If the land is not reforested, it becomes a desert - and then remains that way.

Few South Africans are aware of the dangers to the country's trees and forests by dangerous substances emitted from factory chimneys

The present rate of deforestation in Africa means that Nigeria and the Cote d'Ivoire will loose all their forests within ten years. Most other tropical countries will have lost from 10% to 80% of their rainforest.

Expressed differently, 11 million hectares of forest are being lost around the world every year. Over the next 30 years an area roughly the size of India will be stripped of forest. Figures for Southern Africa are not available.

There are numerous other environmental/developmental problems facing humankind, and Southern Africa in particular. An example is the question about the large-scale, over-enthusiastic use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers to maximise short-term agricultural production - and profit - without due consideration being given to the long-term stability of the land.

The Natal sugar industry has been accused of extremely short-sighted use of highly toxic herbicides which are banned in most other countries. The government is apparently reluctant to intervene.

Desertification and soil erosion are crucial issues in South Africa. The Karoo desert is growing steadily, and there is large-scale erosion countrywide - both inside and outside the bantustans.

Very few South Africans are aware of the dangers posed by the release of toxic chemicals to the environment, and the dumping of dangerous chemical wastes. This country has already imported wastes which industrialised countries could not get rid of safely - for political and environmental reasons.

All these 'environmental' problems are at the same time 'developmental' problems. If they are ignored in development planning, there is great risk to the environment. Since all these problems are linked at various levels, it would be futile to improve one, if at the same time another is made worse. Most of the issues are closely connected to forms of industrial and agricultural development which - until now - were considered to be 'advanced'.

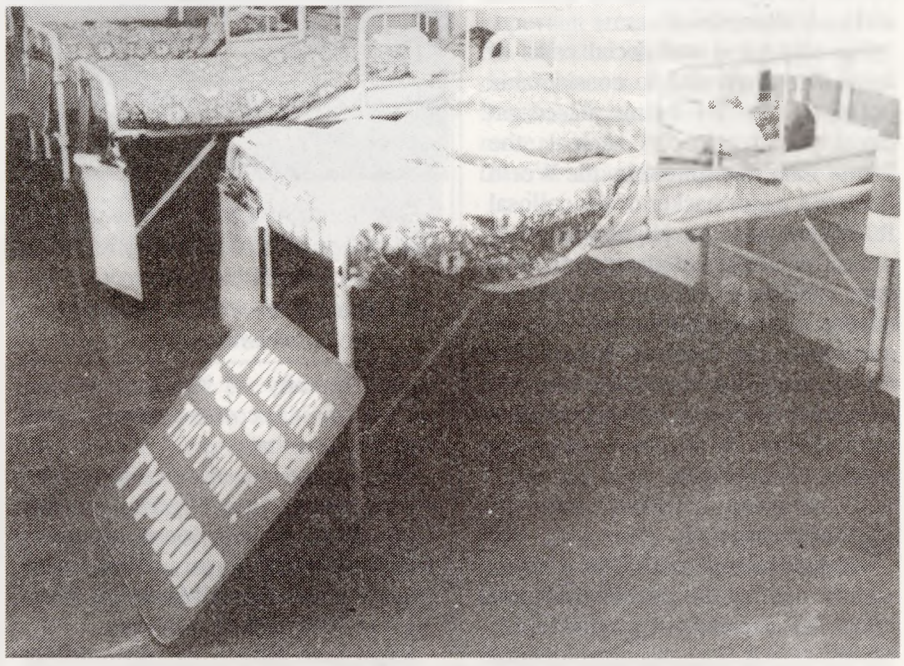
For as long as these patterns of growth are used as role-models, the environmental problems listed above cannot be addressed. People have missed the central point if they argue that these issues can be attended to once national (and economic) liberation has been achieved.

Liberation politics aims not only to govern, but also to control the means of production so as to meet the needs of all people in society - at present and in the future. To meet present and future needs, planning must be informed by the principle of ecological sustainability. But in the long term, isolated action will not be enough. Since so many of these environmental problems are global, action has to be international.

As a political movement eco-politics or 'green' politics is relatively new. But the issues which gave it birth are of lasting consequence to all people. It is therefore unlikely that 'green' politics are just a flash in the pan. Green politics may in fact be the beginning of a new political dynamic, where the definitions and discourse of the old one are more of a hindrance than a help in coming to terms with the imperative for global change.

A stepping stone to national health

In WIP 58, Cedric de Beer and Eric Buch described how progressive analysis of the present health care system could lead to strategies for future health care systems. In this article, JONATHAN BROOMBERG, MAX PRICE and CEDRIC DE BEER, from the Centre for the Study of Health Policy at Wits University Medical School, take the debate a step further and examine the possibilities for progressive intervention in the existing private health sector.



Union-administered health centres would give much attention to preventive medicine, and situations like the one above could be avoided.

MOST progressives seem to have assumed that privatisation is a concept that should simply be opposed since it cannot serve the long-term interests of the working class. However, for reasons described below, it has become necessary to examine ways in which intervention in the private health sector could be used.

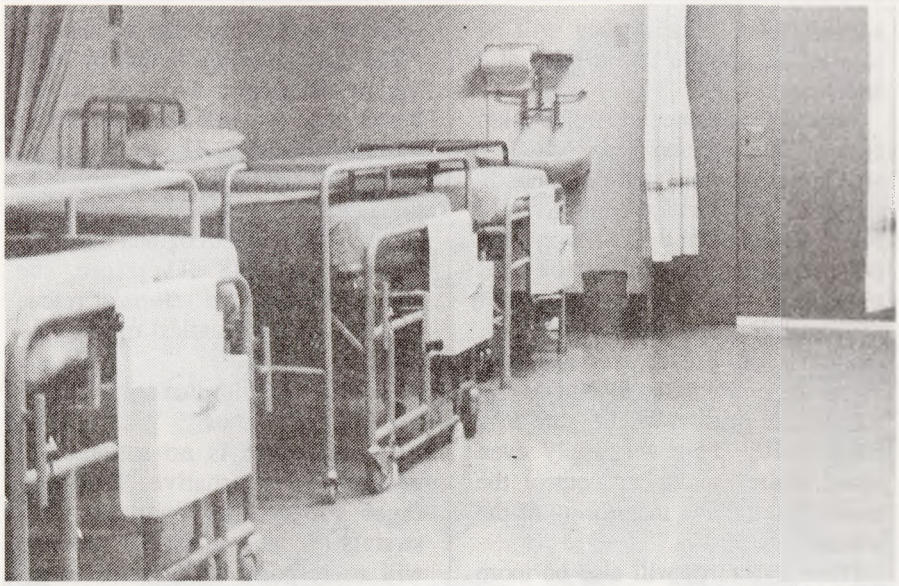
Many health workers believe a national health service (NHS) is the only way to overcome the injustices of our fragmented health care system. But the apartheid state remains committed to segregated public health care, while pursuing an aggressive policy of privatisation. This policy means public services are deteriorating and are increasingly expensive.

In the present political context a NHS is extremely unlikely to emerge. Are we then restricted to exposing the injustices of the present system, and calling for its replacement by a NHS? Or are there possible practical interventions which could act as building blocks of a future NHS.

We believe there is a strategy. It involves intervening and trying to influence current developments in the private health sector. A modified private health sector could make quality health care available to hundreds of thousands of South Africans. These people would otherwise depend on deteriorating and often inaccessible provincial services, or on the fee-for-service private health sector that costs more than they can afford.

This process may well lay the foundation stones for a future NHS. And it will give health workers substantial insights into the possibilities and potential problems of a future NHS.

The strategy is not an alternative to demands that the state increase its responsibility for health care, or to campaigns to desegregate provincial hospitals and other health care facilities. Instead, it is a crucial additional strategy in the struggle for health care for all.



Top: White Johannesburg Hospital has many empty wards.
Bottom: People queue at the Alexandra Clinic.

In the last ten years increasing numbers of organised workers have demanded access to private health care. Costs at public hospitals have spiralled and the standard of care has deteriorated. This has led to a large increase in the number of Africans covered by medical aid schemes. This number will expand further as some of the larger trade unions consider negotiating medical aid benefits for their members.

But private sector health care has also become increasingly expensive. Our calculations show an average increase of 23% per year for the last ten years.

This means that within two to three years, most black workers will not be able to afford decent medical aid schemes. Affordable schemes will only pay for a completely inadequate range of health services.

Why have costs escalated so rapidly? Private doctors and private hospitals are paid a fee for each service they provide. This encourages the providers (the doctors and hospitals) to increase the supply of services - beyond what is strictly necessary. The more services they provide, the more money they earn. This has been described as the 'perverse incentive' of the fee-for-service system.

This situation is made worse by the fact that neither patients nor providers, but rather a third party, the medical aid schemes, are responsible for payment. Since patients do not pay directly for most services, there is no incentive to limit the amount of services they use. Doctors are also aware that their patients will not themselves pay for additional services.

These trends create a major difficulty for the labour movement. Large numbers of workers joining medical aid schemes help the growth of private fee-for-service care and fuel increasing costs. If the private sector expands there will be increased opposition to any future transition towards an NHS. If regular medical aid becomes unaffordable for almost everyone, workers will have no available alternative health care.

Medical aid schemes are not the solution at this time.

Against this background we suggest an alternative to meet the needs of union members and their families at a cost they can afford.

This alternative is 'managed care', a form of private sector care fundamentally different from the present medical aid system. In the present system, employers and employees pay money each month to the medical aid scheme. The medical aid scheme then pays the bills of individual doctors and hospitals.

In a managed-care system, the scheme collects money in the same way. However, that money is used to employ doctors to work for the scheme, to buy the medicines, and to buy space in hospitals for the scheme's own doctors to treat patients.

Once it is fully developed, the scheme would run health centres in areas where large numbers of members live. The doctors, specialists and other professionals employed by the scheme will work in these health centres, and members will be able to obtain a comprehensive range of preventive and primary curative services. The scheme will also contract with government or private hospitals for favourable rates for its members. At a later stage, it may rent bed space in such hospitals.

Members would pay a regular monthly contribution. They and their families would then have access to all services free of charge. If dependents live out of reach of the facilities (for example in the bantustans), the scheme would provide normal

medical aid coverage. There are several advantages to this scheme:

✻ Control and accountability

Where unions initiate such schemes, or are well prepared when management proposes such schemes, they will be able to oversee and control them to a large degree. This could include being involved in selecting staff for the health centres, monitoring services and helping to determine policies governing treatment, the use of medicine, referrals to specialists and hospital and the cost of the scheme.

In this way workers, as the users of the scheme, would have a greater say in its running than is possible in either the state sector or the present fee-for-service private sector.

✻ Keeping costs low

The health workers would all be employed by the scheme. This means they would have no incentive to provide more services than necessary. Also there would be many ways to control costs. One is to make sure the cheapest appropriate medicines are prescribed. Another is to use doctors' skills most appropriately, and to do tests only when necessary. In this way it will be possible to give good standards of care, but at a lower cost. And this means members would pay much lower contributions than to medical aid.

✻ Organisational advantages

Such schemes allow for better planning and co-ordination of health care. The health centre approach also means the full range of health services are available in a single place. This saves patients travelling around for different kinds of health care.

Such a scheme would probably also focus more on the prevention of illness and the promotion of good health. It is often cheaper to prevent illness than to treat it. And it is likely that the members, through their unions, would also demand better preventive care.

✻ Building blocks for a NHS

Schemes of this kind will function as building blocks for a future NHS, both in terms of the principles they embody, and because they will be easy to incorporate into a NHS at a later stage.

Even in the absence of strong union control, the scheme described here will throw up structures that embody many of the principles of a future NHS, including the aspects of cost-effectiveness, co-ordination and planning, decentralisation and accountability and control. And the emphasis on preventive care will allow these structures to function as models for primary health care in a future NHS. This will apply even more where the unions control the policy making and monitoring of the scheme.

These structures will also be more easily incorporated into a NHS than will be the case with the elements of the fee-for-service private health sector as currently organised. The nature of control is the crucial issue here: independent doctors and hospital owners are more likely to resist incorporation than doctors employed in health centres which are partly under union control.

Of course the scheme is not free of problems:

✻ Restriction of choice

Members of a medical aid scheme may use any doctor or hospital they choose. At a health centre there is likely to be little or no choice. This is a problem.

However, medical aid schemes will soon be too expensive to use. Also worker control over the scheme means members should be able to ensure good quality care. It seems the real choice is between health care workers can afford, and a system that is simply too costly.

✻ Fragmentation

If many different unions set up their own schemes, several health centres could be set up within the same geographical areas. This would be wasteful, and would reproduce the problems of current apartheid health services. Avoiding this will require a co-ordinated strategy: one which is debated and guided at federation, rather than at individual union level.

The broader political implications of this strategy are best understood by looking at two broad objections that may be raised.

The first objection is that by helping to develop a form of private health care, we will be undermining the call for a NHS. The current crisis in private health care, and the threatened collapse of the medical aid system, can only strengthen the argument for a NHS. Therefore, the above proposal is a reformist rescue act, rather than a radical transformation.

We disagree with this argument for a number of reasons:

Firstly, there is no satisfactory progressive alternative. The state faces substantial financial constraints. It also lacks the political will to respond to demands to increase its responsibility for public health care. For this and other reasons, the state is not about to set up a decent NHS.

Unions must therefore be responsive to the health care needs of their workers.

The only alternative to our proposal, at present, is that large numbers of workers will join medical aid schemes, which they will soon not be able to afford.

Far more serious, is that such a development would greatly enlarge the private fee-for-service sector. It will also lock the most organised section of the progressive movement into this highly elitist and individualised form of care. This could pose a far more substantial threat to the ultimate emergence of a NHS.

Secondly, there is no reason why worker-controlled 'managed care' systems are incompatible with the call for a national health service. For example: trade unions negotiate wages and working conditions with management without abandoning the goal of worker control over factories; and students, parents and teachers demand improved allocation of resources to DET schools without abandoning their demand for a relevant, integrated and democratic system of 'peoples' education'.

Why then should attempts to restructure private sector health care for a cheaper, more rational service be incompatible with a political demand for a good, cheap, state-run public health care system for all?

In fact, the 'managed-care' system would create the basis for an interim demand that the state subsidise, in part or in full, worker contributions

Above: The Sawco health screening centre in Mpophomeni. Worker health centres could eventually offer some services free to the whole community. Useful services would be preventive and screening tests for infectious diseases, and some emergency care.

to such a system, as the first step in the construction of an NHS.

Finally, such 'managed-care' health centres would be very close to a NHS in terms of administrative structures, health care and management practices. As such, they would be embryonic structures that could be easily absorbed into a NHS in the long run. In the short term they would teach us, and particularly the health workers within such structures, a great deal about the detailed workings of a 'managed care' system.

The development of 'managed care' therefore, should go hand in hand with the call for a NHS. It would give additional content to such a call, and supply us with appropriate short-term demands which would form part of this campaign.

The second objection is that managed care systems would create political divisions between organised workers and other sections of the community.

That is, health centres would provide health care to members (ie workers) apparently free of charge, while the unemployed and other marginal groups would be excluded. It is argued that the effect of turning people away from the doors of a 'workers' health centre' would be so divisive as to undermine any possible co-operation between workers and the unemployed on a political level.

Our response is that the short-term alternative to 'managed care' is not a NHS that will avoid privileged access to health care, but rather private medical aids, which will entrench and reflect an even greater level of stratification.

A 'workers' health centre' would, of course, be a highly visible reminder of the differences between organised workers and the rest of the community. Whether or not this is a fundamental obstacle is a political question for debate between unions and their members and the democratic movement as a whole.

This problem could be partly reduced. The scheme or health centre's facilities could be open to non-members who would pay a fee for services they receive (user charges). This may, however, still exclude large numbers of the unemployed and others who will not be able to afford the fees charged.

Another solution would be for the scheme to offer some services free to the whole community in which health centres are located. Possibilities are preventive and screening services, infectious disease and some emergency care, and contraceptive services subsidised by the state.

If the health centres exist, they could act as the focal point for campaigns for state subsidies for fees. In this way health centre services would become available to local residents who want to use the services, but could not afford to pay the fee. Rather than sowing division, the centres might come to act as 'bridges' between different elements of the working class.

We believe the evidence and arguments set out here present a good case for progressive groupings to attempt to influence, and gain control over, developments in the private health sector. It is definitely a good idea to prevent expansion of the fee-for- service private health sector. And some form of 'managed-care' structures are likely to emerge in any event. These alone are grounds for intervention. But the scheme suggested here will have numerous advantages, not only for its members in the short term, but also strategically in the struggle for an NHS. This will be even more the case with strong union influence and control.

Labour trends: March - May

WHILE many companies are making use of the provisions of the Labour Relations Amendment Act, unions are refusing to negotiate around wildcat strikes in case bosses sue them for lost earnings. Unions want bosses to contract out of the LRA. The question is how many employers will decide that this is the smoothest path to relatively trouble-free industrial relations.

While union officials might exercise some caution on illegal strikes, the large number of wildcat strikes in the period March to May indicates that workers on the factory floor seem to be ignoring the implications of the new Act.

During the March to May period, the SARS strike monitor recorded:

* Total number of strikes - 33
* Total workers involved - 26 573
* Number of illegal strikes - 20
* Number involved - 20 300
* Number of legal strikes - 13
* Number of workers involved - 6 273

This reflects a slightly higher level of industrial action since the last period monitored (October 1988 to February 1989). Interestingly, there were far more illegal strikes over dismissals, retrenchments and disciplinary action, than legal strikes, which most often were over wage disputes. It appears that workers in the public sector have been quiet this time round.

Numsa's strategy to protect the union from being sued for companies lost earnings during strikes has worked so far. In over 40 strikes since the beginning of 1989 - Haggie Rand, STC and Lascon Lighting to name but three - the union refused to take responsibility or intervene in wildcat strikes until the companies concerned waived their right to sue for loss of production and damages resulting from these strikes.

This tactic meant bosses were forced to negotiate with shop-stewards and not union officials. Any lawsuit or claims then have to be aimed directly at the workers responsible for the action. Understandably, no company has yet jeopardised its internal industrial relations climate to try this. It would be a useless exercise in any event, as the workers involved would never be able to pay. At the three companies named, even shop-stewards refused to negotiate with management. They declined to keep their positions as shop-stewards during the strikes. Bosses were thus forced to negotiate with worker delegations from the factory floor.

The strategy, which clearly demonstrates Numsa's opposition to negotiations under the new LRA, could become popular among other unions.

Mass dismissals, lockouts and court interdicts are still favoured management tactics when dealing with labour disputes. Unions report that due to the relative ease in which court interdicts are granted against strikes and other industrial action, employers are reluctant to opt for arbitration. Instead, they choose to use the Industrial Court.

Management lockouts were recorded at, among others, Consul Corrugated, Renown, Nampak and Plascon. Court interdicts against the union were granted to, inter alia, Ullman Bros, Lascon Lighting, Boston Dry Cleaners and SAB among others.

NUM reported that some mine bosses were attempting to bribe miners with share offers worth very little, and with no consultation with the union. The union also learned that mine recruitment offices ask workers to accept shares as a condition of employment or renewal of their contracts.

The fires of the disinvestment question were fanned again with Mobil Oil SA and the Chemical Workers Industrial Union locked in a major dispute. Mobil, after many years of protests that it did not intend to disinvest, failed to negotiate the terms of its impending disinvestment from South Africa. Furthermore, Mobil's South African assets are being sold to Gencor, a company well known for union bashing. In 1987, CWIU made comprehensive proposals on conditions for disinvestment to all multi-national companies in the petroleum industry. These conditions were the minimum chemical workers would accept in the event of a company disinvesting.

Negotiations between Mobil and CWIU continued, while over 800 workers at Mobil depots nationally were on strike to pressurise the negotiations.

After Mobil leaves, Shell South Africa and Caltex will be the only remaining US-owned oil companies in South Africa. The outcome of disinvestment negotiations with Mobil may well set a precedent for these companies in the event of pulling out of the country.

Metal and mine wage-talk time has come round again. And again this year, Cosatu's two biggest unions - NUM and Numsa - are each going it alone in their respective sectors. While their combined strength would put huge pressure on both industries to heed union demands, the unions have not formulated any joint plans of action.

Numsa's wage demands were not radically higher than the 1988 demands. After a few rounds of negotiations Numsa reduced its demand from 26,5% for labourers and 17% for artisans to 20% at the bottom grades or 60c across the board - whichever is higher. Seifsa made what it claimed to be its final offer - increases ranging from 15,9% for labourers to 13% for artisans. This amounts to a 48cents-an-hour increase - raising the minimum wage to R3,50 an hour. While Seifsa gave an in-principle agreement to convert the pension fund to a provident fund, the exact details were still matters of strong disagreement.

Mine wage negotiations opened with the Chamber of Mines' offer of an 11% increase. NUM however, was not prepared to negotiate wages in percentage terms. The union demanded a standard minimum wage of R543 a month for surface workers and a standard minimum of R600 for underground workers. They posed the same demands for both the gold and coal mines. Will they be able to hold this joint demand together? Coal miners have always earned far less than gold miners. Current minimum wages on the gold mines are R278 for surface workers and R306 for underground workers.

At the time of going to press, mine wage negotiations had only completed the second round of talks - and had not yet reached a crucial stage. Negotiations in the metal industry, on the other hand, appeared to be heading for deadlock.

Some facts and figures.

* 5 strikes over retrenchments (3 970 workers involved);
* 2 698 workers retrenched;
* 9 strikes over dismissals (6 532 workers involved);
* 2 strikes over union recognition (900 workers involved);
* 682 workers dismissed;
* 3 strikes over disciplinary action;
* 14 strikes over wages.

Strikes and Disputes: 24 February to 19 May 1989

Strikes and Disputes: TRANSVAAL

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Boston Dry Cleaners Johannesburg	TGWU	300	21.03.89	Boston Dry Cleaners dismissed 300 striking workers and obtained a Supreme Court interdict ordering the workers to vacate company premises. The strike was sparked off by management's refusal to recognise TGWU. Workers proceeded to discuss strategy to deal with the situation.
Champagne Lighting	Numsa	76	May 1989	Seventy-six workers went on strike after management retrenched ten fellow workers. They returned to work the next day after discussing the issue with union organisers.
Cinqplast	Numsa	80	03.05.89	Cinqplast management dismissed 80 day-shift workers on strike over the dismissal of a colleague. The strike was also in protest against a management warning to workers who stayed away on May Day. Numsa was meeting with management to try and resolve the dispute.
Consul Corrugated Benoni	Ppwawu	200	February 1998	More than 200 Ppwawu members were locked out by Consul Corrugated following a strike over wages and alleged unfair dismissals. Workers demanded an increase of R40 a week against managements final offer of R26. Management did not budge and workers were forced to accept the final wage offer and return to work.
Dorbyl	Numsa		March 1989	After five years of pressure from Numsa, workers at five divisions of Dorbyl scored a significant victory by forcing a major shift in the company's industrial relations policy. Five of the nine Dorbyl companies agreed to use arbitration instead of the Industrial Court to settle disputes.
Edworks Group	Ccawusa	600	18.04.89	Ccawusa organiser, Jackie Masuku and five Edworks workers went on a hunger strike after management obtained a Supreme Court order evicting them from company premises, thus ending the sleep-in strike at a Johannesburg store. This is the first time organised labour has resorted to hunger strike as a collective bargaining tactic. The strike started over a month ago when 600 workers at Edworks stores nation wide went on a legal strike over wages, resulting in the closure of four stores in Johannesburg and Pietersburg. Ccawusa demanded a minimum wage of R530 a month and an across-the-board increase of R125. Management's final offer was a minimum of R520 and a R100 increase. The company rejected demands for 1 May to be a paid holiday and for the union to be recognised at stores in Bophuthatswana. The strikers picketed at most of the company's 80 stores. Management improved its final offer by R5. Workers refused the offer and the hunger strikers said they were prepared to die for the R20 difference. The strike was in its sixth week.
Group Five Johannesburg	Cawu	100	02.05.89	Police fired teargas and broke up a demonstration by Cawu members in Johannesburg city centre. The previous day police broke up a sit-in by strikers at a Group Five site in Pritchard Street. The workers - involved in a pay dispute with Group Five - refused to leave the site after receiving their wages. Cawu was discussing the issue with its members.
Haggie Rand Jupiter	Numsa	1 200	12-20.04.89	A four day strike by Numsa members at Haggie's Jupiter plant was settled a day before an Industrial Court hearing. Numsa refrained from accepting responsibility for the strike because the company refused to waive its right to sue the union for loss of production during the strike. Workers were protesting against management's suspension of a shop steward who allegedly held a meeting with workers at the plant without following procedures. According to the agreement reached between management and 22 shop stewards, procedures for holding Numsa meetings at the company will be made easier. However, disciplinary proceedings against the suspended shop steward were to continue.
JD Group	Ccawusa	469	March 1989	Ccawusa and the JD Group were locked in battle over the retrenchment of 459 workers at 10 Score and World Furnishers stores. The company decided to shut down stores because of declining sales and staff productivity. Apparently the World township operation had become too expensive. Ccawusa rejected the company's retrenchment package of between R1 000 and R7 500 per worker depending on length of service. The union said the situation at the World division did not warrant closure and workers were going to resist the retrenchments in whatever form they deemed it necessary. Over 100 workers were involved in a sleep-in at seven Score and World Furnishers stores on the Witwatersrand. The stores facing closure are based in Johannesburg, Pietersburg, Pretoria, Rustenburg and Vereeniging.
Lascon Lighting Industria	Numsa	500	24.04-08.05.89	About 500 striking Numsa members demanded that two members of management be barred from taking part in disciplinary decision-making. They resumed work after being issued with a Supreme Court interdict against their strike. Numsa refused to intervene in wildcat strikes at Lascon, an Altron subsidiary, unless the company gave an undertaking that it waived its right to sue for lost earnings.
Lion Match Limited Rosslyn	Ppwawu	300	April 1989	More than 300 workers at Lion Match in Rosslyn went on strike for higher wages. Workers were demanding an increase of R1 an hour across the board, improved bonus, 16 June and 1 May as paid holidays, a 40-hour week and a 12% shift allowance. Workers

				returned to work after accepting an improved wage package.
Multi-Office Furniture Germiston	Ppwawu	100	February 1989	About 100 workers downed tools to protest against management's dismissal of 12 colleagues. Ppwawu was negotiating with management over the dismissals.
OK Bazaars	Ccawusa	9 000	17.04.89	OK Bazaars and Ccawusa declared disputes against each other after failing to reach agreement over wages. Ccawusa declared a dispute after seven weeks of negotiations. The dispute involved a number of demands, including an across-the-board increase of R205 a month against the company's offer of R75 a month. OK's minimum wage since last year's wage settlement stood at R500 a month. OK Bazaars declared a dispute with the union after mediation failed to break the deadlock.
Perskor	Mwasa	212	27.02.89	The Industrial Court ordered the re-instatement of 212 Perskor employees dismissed after a five-day strike in June last year. The court found the wage strike by Mwasa, after exhausting negotiations, as 'functional to collective bargaining'. Perskor's review application against the Industrial Court Order was dismissed with costs in the Pretoria Supreme Court.
Pick and Pay	Ccawusa	15 000	01.03-25.04.89	Ccawusa and Pick and Pay reached a wage settlement after six days of mediation and conciliation board proceedings. Once again the wage settlement was the highest in the industry, setting the trend and putting pressure on other retail companies. At the time of deadlock the unions demand was for an across-the- board increase of R160 a month against management's offer of R142,50. In terms of the agreement, workers will receive a 19% increase amounting to R146,87 a month bringing the minimum wage to R750 a month, 21 March on a no-work, no-pay, no-penalty basis, improved bonuses and funeral benefits, and a commitment from management to negotiate contracting out of the LRA.
Renown City Deep	Fawu	320	April 1989	Imperial Cold Storage's Renown City Deep Plant locked out 320 workers after a conciliation board failed to resolve a wage dispute. Wage negotiations at Renown in Cape Town also appeared to be heading for deadlock. The company offered to increase the wage rate from R2,71 an hour to R3,21 an hour. ICS wages are among the lowest in the meat industry.
Seifsa	Numsa		May 1985	Annual wage negotiations between Seifsa and Numsa was postponed to 30 May after the two parties reached deadlock. SEE TRENDS
Siemens Witwatersrand	Numsa	900	10-13.04.89	Over 900 workers at six Siemens plants on the Witwatersrand were on strike for three days over massive retrenchments at the company. Siemens said the retrenchment of 120 workers was necessary because of a 35% cut, from R435m last year to R286m this year, in the Post and Telecommunications Departments digital equipment budget. Following mediation Numsa and the company agreed on a retrenchment package for the 120. The company also agreed to re-negotiate the existing retrenchment procedure.
SA Breweries Alrode	Fawu	600	May 1989	SA Breweries in Alrode cancelled its recognition agreement with Fawu, sparking off a strike by 600 workers. The change in working conditions which resulted led to the dismissal of four workers. According to shopstewards, management's decision to cancel the agreement was part of the company's campaign to introduce changes to the national recognition agreement. The strike was in its fourth week. Management refused to re- instate the agreement and referred the case of the four dismissed workers to the Industrial Court.
SA Wine and Spirit Industry Employers Association	Nuwsaw	1 500	14.03.89	The National Union of Wine, Spirit and Allied Workers declared a wage dispute with the SA Wine and Spirit Industry Employers Association. The union demanded a R45 across-the-board increase for 1 500 employees at five liquor establishments. The association's offer ranged from R28,50 to R32,50.
Soweto City Council	Samwu	1 500	March 1989	The Soweto City Council and Samwu reached an agreement on the re-instatement of 1 500 workers sacked by the Council during a strike in September last year. In terms of the agreement - reached at Industrial Council level - 80 employees who have housing loans were to be re-employed immediately and the remaining employees to be re-employed when positions became available.
Standard Telephones and Cables (STC) Boksburg	Numsa/ EAWTU	1 000	27.04-10.05.89	More than 1 000 Numsa and EAWTU members at Standard telephones and Cables (STC) -an Altron subsidiary - returned to work after a two-week strike over the retrenchment of 200 workers. STC said the layoffs were due to the Department of Post and Telecommunications cutback in spending on telecommunications equipment. The strike was resolved after an improved retrenchment package was agreed upon.
Thorn Lighting	Numsa	290	May 1988	Workers rejected management's offer to selectively re-employ 290 workers dismissed during a strike. Numsa was meeting with management to try and resolve the problem.
Ullman Brothers	TGWU	250	March 1989	The Industrial Court dismissed an application by the Transport and General Workers Union for the re-instatement of 250 workers dismissed by Ullman Brothers during an illegal strike last year. This was one of the cases in which labour relations consultant Phillip van Welbergen threatened to sue the union for losses sustained during the strike.

Strikes and Disputes: NATAL

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Corobrick - Redhill	Bcawu	120	April 1989	Corobrick shut down its Redhill factory, resulting in 120 job losses. The company said it had to close due to the drop in demand for bricks. Workers were to receive a retrenchment package of two weeks pay for every year of service.
Federated Blaikie Mobeni	Ppwawu	223	May 1989	Workers returned to work after a two-week wage strike. They accepted management's improved wage-increase offer of 50c an hour across the board.
Mobil Refinery Durban	CWIU	450	March 1989	A major strike at Mobil was averted at the last minute when management agreed to meet some of the union's demands. Workers voted in favour of strike action after Mobil refused to participate in joint negotiations with all the other petroleum companies and the union. The dispute was exacerbated by a deadlock in wage negotiations. CWIU demanded an 18% increase or R180 a month. Workers accepted a 15% increase or R150 a month across the board, whichever was greater.
Mondi Paper Mills Merebank	Ppwawu	1 000	02-23.05.89	Management's refusal to backdate a wage agreement between Ppwawu and the company resulted in a three-week strike by over 1 000 workers. Workers returned to work but dispute continued.
Nettex/Romatex Jacobs	Actwusa	800	March 1989	Romatex bosses settled a wage dispute a day before workers planned to go on a legal strike. The company brought its wage offer up from under 6% to 17% and granted 16 June as a paid holiday. But the wage settlement only applied to one factory and Actwusa was still involved in negotiations at six other factories. The company, owned by Barlow Rand, has resisted national bargaining for many years. The union is forced to negotiate separately at each plant. Actwusa planned to intensify its struggle for national bargaining at the company after completing wage negotiations.
Sapref Refinery Durban	CWIU	650	01-07.03.89	South Africa's biggest oil refinery, Sapref, owned jointly by Shell and BP, was hit by a week-long strike involving over 650 workers. Workers demanded an 18% wage increase or R180 a month across the board as well as educational assistance for workers' children, donations to community projects, a 40-hour working week and improved shift allowances. Workers returned to work when management improved its wage offer from 12% to 15% or R160 a month across the board, whichever was greater. The other issues remained unresolved - leaving workers feeling bitter and disappointed. CWIU vowed the fight would continue until other demands are met.
Veetech Oil Durban	CWIU	30	13.03-06.04.89	CWIU and Veetech Oil, a Shell subsidiary, reached agreement on wages and working conditions, ending a 4-week go-slow by 30 workers at the company. The union demanded an across-the-board increase of R150 a month, but settled on the company's improved offer of R123 a month, back-dated to 1 January. The company also granted 16 June as a paid holiday, improved bonuses and an agreement to negotiate with the union on the implementation of a worker housing scheme.

Strikes and Disputes: CAPE

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Aberdare Cables Port Elizabeth	Numsa	1 200	May 1989	Workers were on strike over a shop steward's dismissal. Management obtained an order to evict workers from company premises. Numsa was preparing a response.
Corobrick Grahamstown & Port Elizabeth	Bcawu	129	04.05.89	Corobrick retrenched 129 workers at two plants due to a stockpile of ten million bricks. Management said soaring interest rates had led to a 30% drop in the demand for bricks and the company was left with no other option but to reduce staff. In Grahamstown, 105 from a staff complement of 257 were retrenched and in Port Elizabeth 14 of 125 workers were retrenched. The company also changed from a double to a single shift operation in Grahamstown. Retrenched workers were to receive normal benefits together with a retrenchment package of two weeks pay for every year of service.
Nampak Port Elizabeth	Ppwawu		March 1989	Striking Ppwawu members at Nampak were locked out by management and informed that they would not be allowed on company premises until they accepted the final wage offer. Meanwhile a smaller number of workers belonging to the SA Typographical Union were given bonuses by management for scabbing during the strike.
SAB Port Elizabeth	Fawu	160	02.03.89	Strikers at SA Breweries in Port Elizabeth were ordered by the Cape Supreme Court to return to work and comply with their recognition agreement. The strike had been in protest at the method of payment of night-shift workers on public holidays.
Sappi Fine Papers Port Elizabeth	Ppwawu		27.03.89	Workers at Sappi Fine Papers went on strike over wages and working conditions.

Strikes and Disputes: MINES

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Ergo	NUM		16.05.89	In its first judgement the Labour Appeal Court overturned an unfair labour practice finding against Ergo. The finding was made by the Industrial Court in a case brought by NUM in November last year. The judgement found Ergo was justified in offering to backdate wages to all employees in an attempt to dissuade them from striking. The appeal arising out of NUM's 1987 wage strike was upheld with cost.

Grootvlei/Gencor Springs	NUM	1 700	21.03.89	Gencor announced a planned retrenchment of about 1 700 workers. The company said its decision to cut the workforce by 30% was necessary because of the dropping gold price and declining ore reserves. NUM said the motivation for the retrenchments was inadequate and added that the union had made proposals for alternatives: among others, shorter working hours and extended homestay between contracts.
Rustenburg Refinery Rustenburg	NUM	700	02.03-19.05.89	In the longest running strike in the South African mining industry, about 700 workers at Rustenburg Refinery downed tools in support of wage demands. The union demanded a 22% increase to bring the minimum wage up to R689 a month. Management refused to budge from its 14,5% offer. After three months on strike, and exhausting all channels to try and break the deadlock, workers were forced to accept the 14,5% increase back-dated to January together with 16 June as a paid holiday and four months maternity leave. The increase was lower than last year's 16,5%. During the strike NUM complained that management was trying all sorts of strike-breaking tactics: not allowing the community to bring food for the strikers; not allowing strikers access to telephones; NUM officials had to get management's permission before talking to strikers; and non-strikers were offered a bonus of R35 to R50. Other union demands - a provident fund, no overtime and proper housing for workers and their families - were not met.
Witbank Mines	NUM	10 000	22.05.89	Workers picketed at eight Witbank mines to pressurise managements in annual wage talks between NUM and the Chamber of Mines.

Repression and attacks: March - May 1989

MARCH

03.03.89 - The Nelspruit office of the National Union of Mineworkers, as well as other union offices in the same building, were raided by security police.

10.03.89 - Security police raided NUM and Cosatu-affiliate offices in Nelspruit. Documents were photocopied and an advice office worker operating from the same building was detained under emergency regulations.

20.03.89 - Late at night on 20 March, seven security policemen picked up Cosatu regional secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi from his home and took him to the Cosatu Regional Office in Vereeniging. He was taken back home after police searched the office for Sharpeville Day pamphlets.

28.03.89 - A group of security policemen arrived at Cosatu Regional office in Vereeniging with a search warrant. Using their own key they opened the regional secretary's office and searched through documents and files.

28.03.89 - NUM's Carletonville office was raided by police and all documents relating to the consumer boycott were confiscated.

APRIL

03.04.89 - Cosatu Regional Secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, was again picked up from his home by security police and taken to the security branch office in Vereeniging. He was questioned about the consumer boycott and his activities. Seven hours later he was released.

19.04.89 - Police raided the Western Cape Cosatu office in Community House.

26.04.89 - A teargas cannister was thrown through a window of Numsa's Benoni office. Shop stewards were meeting at the time. Armed uniformed police were standing outside when workers rushed out of the building.

27.04.89 - Two security policemen were on company premises during a strike by Numsa members at STC, a company in the Altron Group.

27.04.89 - Security police visited Numsa's Benoni office and searched for the March edition of Cosatu News.

27.04.89 - Three boxes of Cosatu News were seized by security police from the NUM Regional Office in OFS.

27.04.89 - A May-Day rally planned to take place in Potchefstroom was banned.

28.04.89 - Security police visited the following offices and seized the March edition of Cosatu News: In Vereeniging - TGWU, Cawu, Sadwu, Ccawusa, Numsa and Cosatu; In Klerksdorp - NUM; In Pretoria - Fawu and Numsa. Altogether over 50 000 copies of Cosatu News were seized from different union offices throughout the country. On another day in April security police seized copies of the newspaper from Cosatu's Pietermaritzburg office.

29.04.89 - Security policemen visited the Community Arts Project where Cosatu was preparing to silk screen May-Day T-shirts.

30.04.89 - A group of uniformed police marched onto a sportsfield where Cosatu was having a union soccer tournament as part of a May-Day Programme. The policemen also objected to Cosatu banners at the stadium.

April - A Fawu organiser, two Fawu members and a Numsa organiser were arrested in the early hours of one morning. They were questioned and released after four hours.

MAY

May 1989 - The Bcawu vice president and two organisers were detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act. They are still in detention. All three were taken from their homes at night.

01.05.89 - There was a strong police presence at May-Day celebrations in Mamelodi and Soshanguve. After the Soshanguve rally, police ordered workers to stop singing. In Brits there was a roadblock at the entrance to the township.

01.05.89 - Police were also much in evidence at a May-Day rally in Sharpeville. Police turned away buses waiting in Sebokeng to take passengers to the rally.

01.05.89 - Western Cape - There were several road-blocks and police stopped buses on the way to a May-Day rally in Athlone. Workers were searched individually. Police also told people waiting for buses in the townships to go home as the rally was cancelled.

There was a strong police presence at the Athlone Stadium and a police helicopter circled the area during celebrations attended by about 6 000 people. After the rally, police threatened to disperse a crowd of people waiting for buses.

Two shop stewards belonging to TGWU and Ppwawu were arrested in the roadblocks. They were released after spending the night in jail.

01.05.89 - NUM's Witbank Regional Administrator was taken in for questioning and released after a few hours.

01.05.89 - Seven buses carrying NUM members to a May-Day rally in Klerksdorp were stopped by police. Workers were searched thoroughly and their names and addresses were taken down.

09.05.89 - Police searched the NUM regional office in Rustenburg.

10.05.89 - Police searched the Numsa office in Pretoria.

11.05.89 - The TGWU and Ppwawu offices in Pretoria were raided by security police.

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