

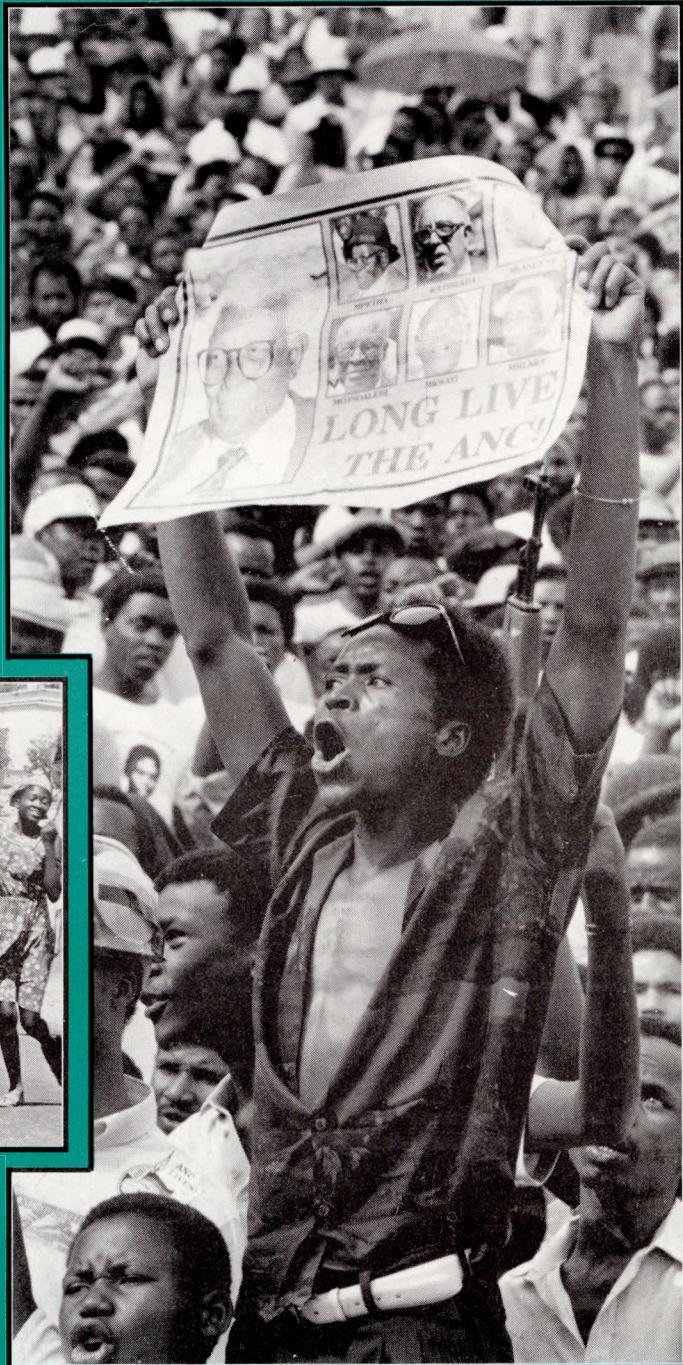
# WORK IN PROGRESS

DOUBLE EDITION

62/63

## PATHS TO POWER

South Africa & Namibia  
face the future



INSIDE:

- SISULU & KATHRADA SPEAK
- GROUP AREAS
- THE WORKERS' CHARTER
- BEHIND THE BERLIN WALL

The political map of Southern Africa is being radically redrawn. The most vivid examples of this are the pre-independence elections in Namibia, giving the Namibian people their first opportunity to exercise control over their destiny, and in South Africa the release of the seven jailed ANC leaders by a president whose predecessor swore to let them rot in jail. Even in Angola major shifts are taking place below the surface while the war drags on. Savimbi's fighters still receive weaponry from their traditional allies, but their Western support is no longer a certainty. Establishment American voices have, for the first time, been raised against his brutal tactics.

The East-West, capitalist-communist rivalries that have fostered the 14-year Angolan war are everywhere crumbling. This has been graphically symbolised by the breaching of the Berlin Wall. And as the bricks fall at the Brandenburg Gate, they take with them decades of conventional wisdoms on both sides of the Wall. In Eastern Europe, the idea that socialist economics are an adequate alternative to political democracy has been destroyed, probably permanently. For socialists, the challenge now is to demonstrate that democracy is not, as their foes maintain, the exclusive preserve of capitalist economics.

The massive changes in Eastern Europe have not left the West unaffected. And they have for the first time wrought a convergence of United States and Soviet opinion on South Africa that has impacted powerfully on Pretoria.

Under FW de Klerk the National Party is now hard at work attempting to restructure both the material conditions under which the process of change takes place and the economics of the society its successors will inherit.

Facing a reviving and increasingly confident opposition, the National Party is now led by politicians who recognise that no minority has ever successfully held on to power without facing a revolution.

Its attempts at social engineering continue both in the bantustans and in the urban

areas, where concessions on group areas serve to reinforce rather than eradicate the physical separation of communities of different races - strengthening De Klerk's own thrust for a post-apartheid society rooted in 'groups' and racial separation. Economically, too, reinforcement of the existing order is underway. Deregulation and privatisation are designed not so much to 'free' the economy, but to weaken the trade union movement in the short term and, in the long term, to entrench capitalist interests so deeply that whoever inherits political power is capable of no more real a transformation than changing the colour of parliament.

Nor has De Klerk abandoned his government's traditional policy of divide and rule.

Today he is seeking to force a division between between the military formations of the ANC and what he hopes will become a 'political' ANC, ideally coalesced around the released seven and Nelson Mandela.

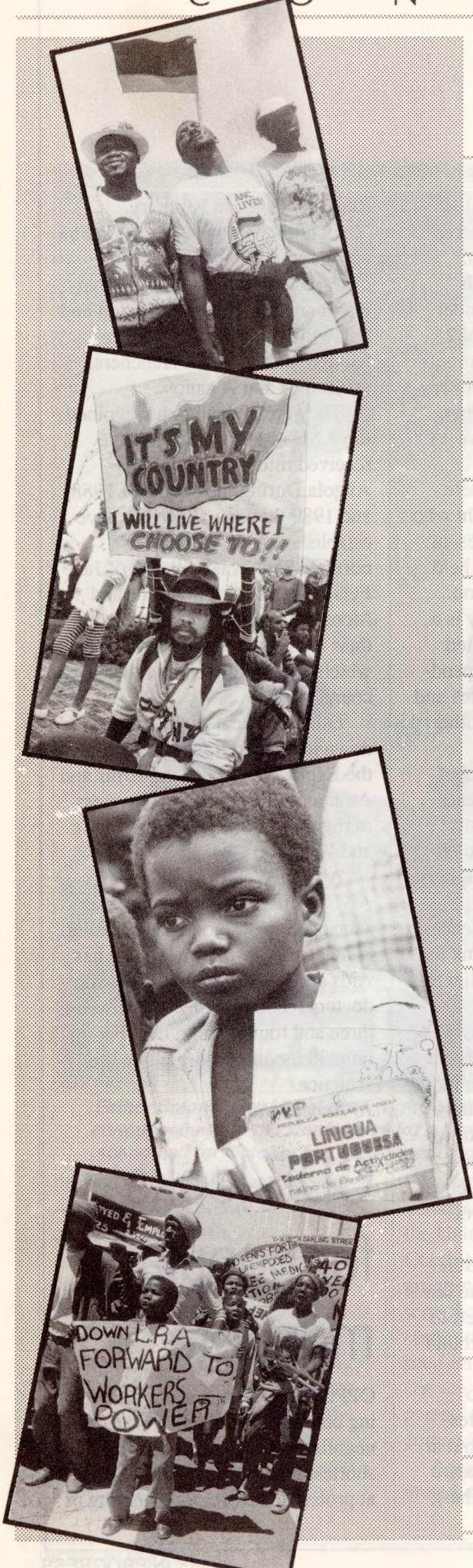
Within the opposition, however, a significant momentum is developing towards greater rather than lesser unity - both between the ANC and its internal allies and more generally, among the majority of anti-apartheid and democratic forces.

Despite this, the democratic movement would be foolhardy to ignore the lessons of Namibia. The first of these is that the simple assertion by the popular movements of their representivity is not in itself a guarantee of overwhelming support. Secondly - and this is a message De Klerk's strategists will have received and understood - that, through the DTA, Pretoria has for the first time succeeded in creating an organisation capable of winning sufficient legitimacy to gain the votes of almost one in three Namibians.

\* A steady increase in inflation has forced us, reluctantly, to increase the price of WIP - an increase so far limited to subscriptions. Full details are published on the inside back cover of this edition.

For this new annual rate, however, subscribers will be getting eight editions rather than the current six - a first step, we hope, to WIP becoming a monthly journal.

# CONTENTS



<b>BRIEFS</b>	2
<i>The Conference for a Democratic Future. Post-office unions in unity talks. Hard-line tactics in ANC trials.</i>	
<b>NAMIBIA - what now?</b>	6
<i>Who will Swapo be working with around the new constitution - and what are the possibilities?</i>	
<b>COMRADES IN ARMS</b>	9
<b>Sisulu and Kathrada</b>	
<i>28 years after the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe, two stalwarts discuss the early days.</i>	
<b>BREACHING THE WALL</b>	14
<i>The Berlin Wall comes down - but what does it mean for other socialist countries?</i>	
<b>FIGHTING INCORPORATION</b>	17
<i>The national campaign against incorporation could mean another major blow for the bantustans.</i>	
<b>HOME-MADE HOUSES</b>	22
<i>For R500, a plot in South Africa's newest squatter settlement is yours.</i>	
<b>GROUP AREAS</b>	25
<i>The new free settlement areas could increase segregation rather than promoting non-racialism.</i>	
<b>ANGOLA</b>	29
<i>Jonas Savimbi reneges on another peace plan, ensuring further suffering in the country.</i>	
<b>ISCOR GOES PRIVATE</b>	32
<i>Trade unions debate different responses to privatisation and share ownership.</i>	
<b>Deregulation</b>	36
<i>Unions need to make rapid economic interventions, or risk inheriting a ruined economy.</i>	
<b>FOREIGN DEBT</b>	39
<i>Pretoria's foreign debt has been rolled over - but it's far from playing dead.</i>	
<b>THE WORKERS' CHARTER</b>	41
<i>The SACP and Sactu drafts, currently being discussed by South African trade unions.</i>	
<b>TRANSKEI UNIONS FLOURISH</b>	46
<i>Meet the homeland president who doesn't believe in union-bashing - or does he?</i>	
<b>LRA CAMPAIGNS</b>	50
<i>An assessment of campaigns against the new Labour Relations Act.</i>	
<b>Labour trends</b>	52
<i>Strikes and disputes /Repression monitor.</i>	

## BRIEFS

# Harsh sentences in lower courts

FOUR DAYS after a Pretoria magistrate sentenced the three African National Congress guerillas in the Broederstroom trial to a total of 63 years imprisonment, a Potchefstroom magistrate imposed 12-year terms on each of three youths who had left the country for military training.

Teenagers Putswe Litlhakan-yane and Thumele Seleko of the Vaal, and 23-year-old Thembisele Batyi of Port Elizabeth, were not found guilty of any acts of violence. But they were convicted of terrorism, because they had a mission on behalf of the ANC which has a policy of violence. Therefore, magistrate J le Grange argued, loss of life could be foreseen.

Le Grange imposed sentences ranging from ten years to a wholly suspended three-year term on four other trialists.

Former church worker Saul Tsotetsi, for instance, was alleged to have assisted in procuring funds and arranging for ANC recruits to leave the country; escorting such recruits to the Botswana border; and taking three trained ANC men to Botswana.

Noting that he had a previous conviction for similar actions and that he had 'failed to learn his lesson', Le Grange imposed a ten-year sentence on Tsotetsi. His first sentence was six years.

In the Broederstroom trial all three accused pleaded guilty to multiple charges of terrorism. Magistrate WJ van den Bergh sentenced ANC unit commander Damian de Lange to a total of 25 years; the unit's political commissar, Ian Robertson, to 20 years in all; and communications officer Susan Westcott to an effective 18 years.

While he accepted that there were those to the left and right who were dissatisfied with the present government, Van den Bergh held that 'to say that blacks have no political rights in this country is a misnomer. They have unlimited democratic rights in the independent, self-governing black states and limited democratic rights in other black areas'.

Attorneys in both the Potchefstroom and Broederstroom cases were emphatic that their clients would be appealing. In the Potch case the appeal will be both against conviction and sentence.

The severity of these sentences has caused observers to rethink the optimism they expressed earlier this year when the Mayekiso trial (centering on people's courts) was successfully defended in the Rand Supreme Court, and when the judge in the second Delmas trial ruled that membership of Umkhonto we Sizwe could, in certain circumstances, be regarded as an extenuating factor in the commission of murder.

There is a general perception that magistrates administer the law conservatively and that it is left to higher courts to break new ground in the interpretation of law.

Is there a growing trend to direct ANC trials to magistrates courts? It is too early to say, but at least one major trial is to be heard by a magistrate in the Middelburg

Regional Court in February.

Hendrik Maloma, Frans Madiba and Jerome Maake have been charged with terrorism, participating in an unlawful organisation and unlawfully possessing firearms, handgrenades, rocket launchers, projectiles and A canon.

They are alleged to have joined the ANC in 1985/6 and to have received military training in Angola. During the course of 1988 and 1989 they are alleged to have established ANC cells in the northern Transvaal villages of Jane Furse, Vleisboom, Mamone and Monsterlus, and to have trained their recruits in the use of weapons, which they smuggled into the country.

Other political trials, trimmed down to alleged transgressions of the Explosives Act or the Arms and Ammunitions act, are in progress in regional courts in Johannesburg and Welkom.

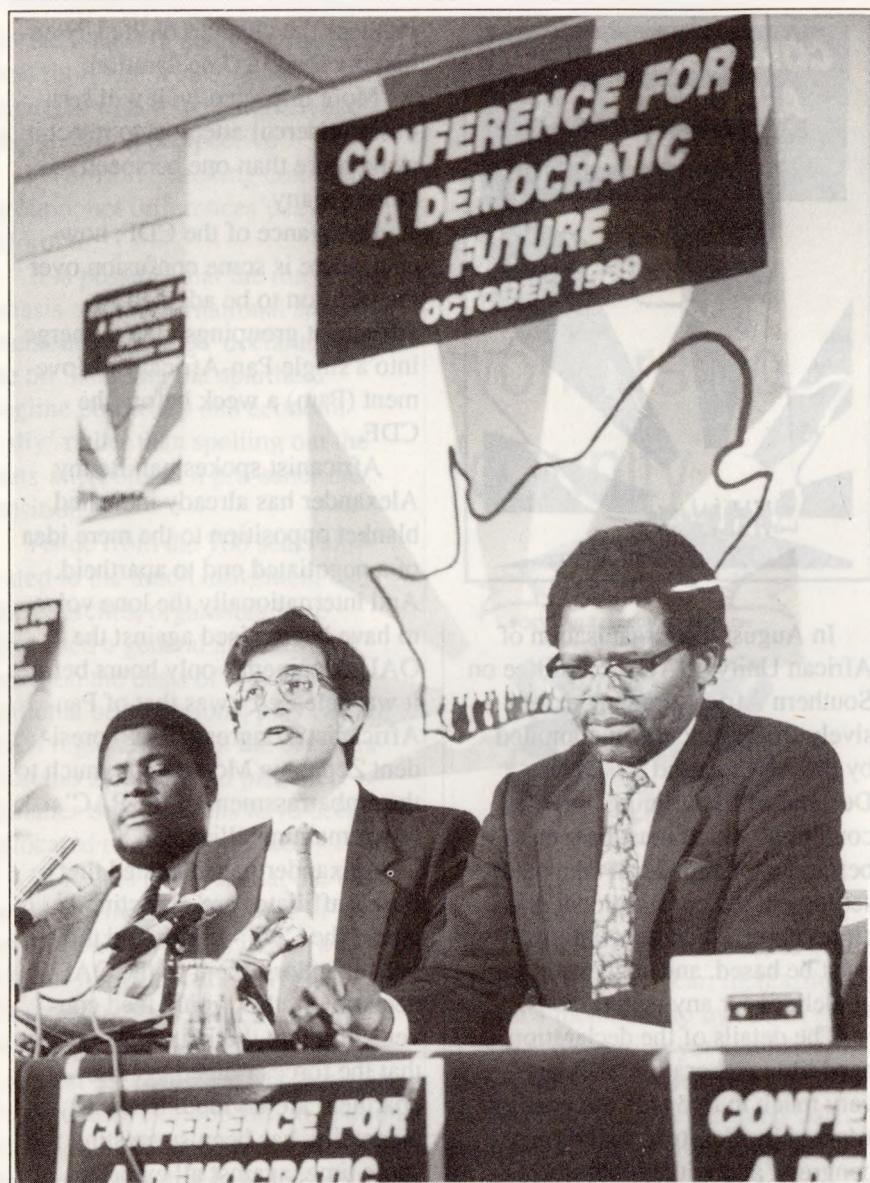
Also in Welkom recently an ANC member, Oben Dibate, was sentenced to 30 months after being convicted of terrorism. Dibate has Aids and, according to his lawyer, doctors reckon that he has between three and four years to live. For him, 30 months is virtually a life sentence.

*Jo-Anne Collinge*

## CDF looks for popular mandate

OPPOSITION formations are seeking consensus on the key issues of negotiations, sanctions and 'the shortest possible route to freedom' at probably the biggest gathering of

## BRIEFS



*Father Smangaliso Mkhatchwa (right) and Mohammed Valli at the announcement of the Conference for a Democratic Future, initially scheduled for October but subsequently postponed to December*

its kind ever to take place in South Africa, the Conference for a Democratic Future (CDF).

Planned for Witwatersrand University on December 9, the conference is expected to draw between 2 500 and 3 000 delegates - with the trade unions taking a 500-seat block and the churches 200 places.

All major democratic and anti-apartheid formations - with the possible exception of Inkatha - are expected to participate, with the

Freedom Charter-aligned mass democratic movement (centred on the United Democratic Front and Cosatu), black consciousness groupings and the churches represented on the 12-person convening committee. Invitations are being issued on the basis of support for the convening committee's 'unifying perspectives', crystallised in seven demands:

\* one person one vote in a united democratic South Africa;

- \* the lifting of the emergency;
- \* unconditional release of all political prisoners;
- \* unbanning of all political organisations;
- \* freedom of association and expression;
- \* press freedom; and
- \* a living wage for all.

The conference's major objective is to draw together single, united opposition perspectives on two key agenda items:

- \* negotiations with Pretoria, and the conditions necessary for these to take place; and
- \* the role of the international community in ending apartheid - with particular emphasis on the isolation of president FW de Klerk's government and on sanctions.

The third key agenda item is that of a joint programme of action. UDF publicity secretary and CDF convening committee member Murphy Morobe describes this as being potentially 'much more ambitious than past programmes because of the breadth of representation at the CDF, the number of organisations involved in drafting, and thus participating in it. It will certainly set the tone for 1990, if not longer'.

A united opposition position - stretching from the Five Freedoms Forum and the Black Sash, through the churches, through the mass democratic movement to the trade unions - on negotiations may, however, prove equally significant.

While providing the basis for joint action, it would also massively boost the position that it is coalescing in opposition to De Klerk's definition of negotiations - that they take place between racial formations with untested strength and with retention of racial 'group rights' as a non-negotiable end

*Cedric Nunn, Afrapix*

# BRIEFS

objective.

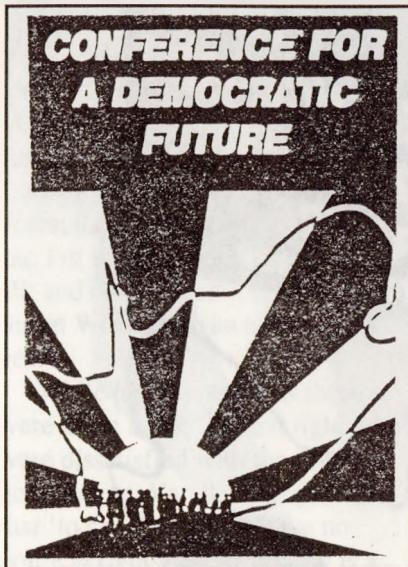
Arguably the most highly internationalised struggle in history, South Africa's struggle to end apartheid has been restricted by the ability of domestic and foreign interests - particularly Western - to argue, as Margaret Thatcher's British government does most consistently and vocally, that any demands put are merely those of one opposition grouping among many. The most vivid example of this is the role played for years by Inkatha in opposition to local and foreign sanctions and disinvestment drives.

The emergence of the UDF and Cosatu as the uncontested legal voices of opposition opinion has weakened the 'one-among-many' arguments. But Thatcher's performance at the Commonwealth conference in Kuala Lumpur in October, and the perspectives offered by her ambassador in Pretoria, Robin Renwick, demonstrate that the arguments are still alive and well.

Swapo's failure to achieve a two-thirds majority in the Namibian constituent assembly elections is already being used to bolster the argument, although with 57% of the popular poll Sam Nujoma can claim to be substantially more representative of his country's opinion than Thatcher is of hers.

Thatcher and other Western leaders and, to a lesser extent, Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, have all offered their own blue-prints or suggestions on negotiations - and their eagerness to see them implemented with little or no reference to popular South African opinion.

At the same time, however, significant international groupings have begun pushing for a markedly different international perspective on the issue of negotiations.



In August the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) committee on Southern Africa, drawing extensively from a document compiled by the ANC, issued its 'Harare Declaration' - outlining pre-conditions which must be met before negotiations can take place, setting out the constitutional principles upon which negotiations must be based, and suggesting guidelines for any negotiations.

The details of the declaration need little elaboration: they are very much in line with the position adopted by Cosatu at its July congress, and with perspectives common within the democratic movement generally.

A month later the document was endorsed by the Non-Aligned Movement (Nam) at its meeting in Budapest. And the United Nations general assembly is set to discuss - and possibly endorse - it in mid-December, days after the CDF.

If the CDF succeeds in uniting the 500 organisations attending behind a single perspective on negotiations, and particularly on the pre-conditions which must be met by Pretoria before they can take place, this will substantially

increase the chances of the UN endorsing the OAU declaration.

More importantly, it will seriously undercut attempts to reject it as no more than one perspective among many.

In advance of the CDF, however, there is some confusion over the position to be adopted by Africanist groupings, due to merge into a single Pan-Africanist Movement (PAM) a week before the CDF.

Africanist spokesman Benny Alexander has already indicated blanket opposition to the mere idea of a negotiated end to apartheid. And internationally the lone voice to have been raised against the OAU document - only hours before it was released - was that of Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) president Zephania Mothopeng, much to the embarrassment of the PAC's few remaining allies.

Alexander has indicated that PAM's affiliates are expecting to attend the CDF - but should they balk at endorsement of the OAU declaration, this would feed conveniently into the British argument that the forces ranged against apartheid are divided. Renwick, incidentally, has been suggesting for some time, against all evidence, that there is a steady growth in popular support for Africanism.

CDF organisers are, by contrast, understandably reluctant to see the conference divide along the traditional faultlines of the South African opposition.

They will be pushing strongly for a consensus position at the conference, but recognise that many organisations will not be able to endorse all suggestions.

'Sanctions is an example of this,' says Morobe. 'We know many of the organisations coming have not taken formal resolutions

on the issue.' In addition, the CDF will represent a wide range of interests within the parameters of the 'unifying perspective'.

'We will be seeking common ground, not differences', says Morobe.

It is possible that the major emphasis of the international support element of the CDF declaration will be on 'isolating the apartheid regime politically and economically' rather than spelling out the nuts-and-bolts of a pro-sanctions position.

Aside from the 700 seats allocated to the union movement and the churches, organisers have proposed a general allocation of seats on the basis of two for national organisations, plus two for each region in which the organisation has an organised presence. Smaller organisations have been allocated two seats a piece.

'It is thus possible that the UDF will have the same number of seats as the health workers in Sahwco (South African Health Workers' Congress)', says Morobe. This is less important, he believes, than the fact that the conference is generally representative of opposition opinion in its various flavours, and that between them they can draft a common programme and a set of perspectives.

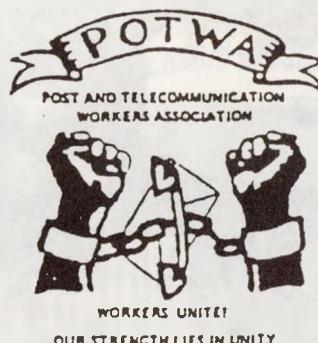
The organisers also believe that, unlike last year's attempt at an anti-apartheid conference, the state will not act against the CDF.

'They cannot afford to', they say. 'The CDF already has a high international profile - 100 foreign observers are expected, international organisations like the OAU, Nam and the Commonwealth have expressed their support, and (US president George) Bush and Thatcher have been personally briefed on it.'

'Acting against the conference would undo everything De Klerk has attempted to achieve since he took power'.

*WIP Correspondent*

## Postal workers go for unity



A SINGLE union for postal and telecommunications workers is imminent in the new year, increasing Cosatu's membership by about 6 600 and securing yet another sector within the federation.

The merger involves three staff associations - the Postal Employees Association of South Africa (Peasa), with a membership of 5 309 coloured workers; the SA Post and Telecommunication Employees Association (Saptea) with 1 262 Indian members; and the Cosatu affiliate, the Postal and Telecommunication Workers Association (Potwa) with 17 278 black members.

Both Peasa and Saptea have conservative backgrounds and existed until recently as traditional staff organisations.

Peasa was formed in 1957 to organise coloured workers in the sector. Saptea, formed in 1972,

organised Indian workers.

Although the constitutions of both staff associations were amended a few years ago to allow for non-racial membership, neither association managed to draw in workers of other races - apart from a handful of white members in Saptea.

Unity talks called by Saptea in July 1987 were not taken further, partly because Peasa's leadership backtracked after the first meeting. But talks resumed in March this year after the three staff associations had visited SA Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu) and ANC leaders in Lusaka.

Since then the three associations have committed themselves to unity and affiliation to Cosatu.

Regional and national co-ordinating structures have been set up to facilitate the process. Working committees are also being set up at major regional depots.

Discussions have also been held on the political policy and structure of the new union.

Peasa co-ordinating member Godfrey Wright said unity in the sector was long overdue. 'Potwa was alone in the major postal workers and telecommunications strike in 1988. Had we been involved then, workers would have stood a better chance and the workers would have been so much stronger', he said.

Wright said the bulk of Peasa members were not active in the association, which detracted from its militancy.

The new union, likely to be launched in January 1990, faces many challenges. Pertinent issues are the restructuring and privatisation programmes currently in process; racially segregated facilities and racial quotas in staff recruitment; and the LRA campaign.

# We know who, but we don't know how

The Namibian elections are over but for Namibia's first constituent assembly an even more important time lies ahead. **SUSAN BROWN** and **DAVID NIDDRIE** look at the major areas of debate.

If the election results announced on November 14 defined who will exercise power in Namibia, the weeks ahead will define the nature of that power.

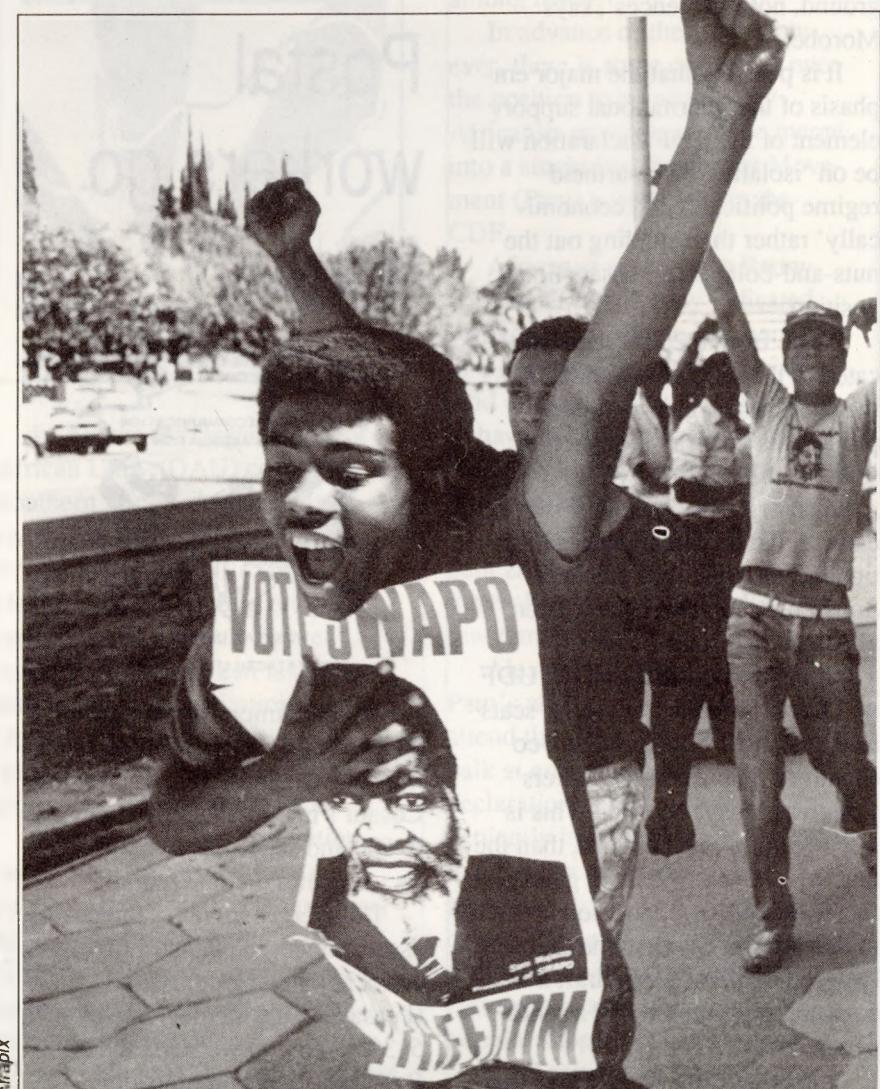
Conditions set out by the major Western powers in 1982 as a postscript to Resolution 435 (and agreed to by Swapo and South Africa) sketch in broad outline the shape of an independent Namibian society: it will be a multi-party democracy operating in terms of a constitution which includes a bill of rights, and with an independent judiciary empowered to defend the constitution against the passage of any laws which contradict it.

Guarantees of 'just compensation' for any nationalisation ensures that it will, at most, have an economic mix of state and private enterprises.

In the first Namibian constituent assembly, in which Swapo has 41 of the 72 seats - a straight majority but seven seats short of the two-thirds which must approve any decisions - the major areas of debate will be over the nature of limits placed on government power.

The seven parties represented in the assembly may well be genuine in their desire for reconciliation. But in the wake of a bloody, 20-year guerrilla war which claimed the lives of just over 1% of the population, caution is understandable. The smaller parties in particular are keen to avoid being subjected to unlimited government power.

One of the key issues for debate



*A Swapo supporter celebrates the outcome of Namibia's elections*

will therefore be how a government is formed - whether Namibia holds to the proportional representation under which the constituent assembly elections were held, or moves towards a first-past-the-post constituency system such as exists in (white parliamentary) South Africa and in Britain. Under the latter, Swapo would almost certainly massively increase its representation. The minority parties will thus fight to retain proportional representation. The

choice is less vital for Swapo, which retains its majority whichever way the electoral cake is sliced.

A precise definition of the circumstances in which a government is dissolved and the country elects a new one is, for the minority parties, an even more crucial issue: they cannot afford to approve a constitution which allows a powerful executive to continue running the country if and when the ruling party's control of parliament is suc-

John Liebenberg



*Queueing to vote: Namibians stood for hours to vote in the UN-monitored elections*

cessfully challenged.

The independence of the courts - through the process of appointing judges - and the courts' power to reject legislation running counter to the constitution is a further vital element for the smaller parties and for many within Swapo.

Another key debate is the make-up and accountability of the police and armed forces.

Pretoria also recognises the central importance of this. Thus administrator-general Louis Pienaar, while establishing a liaison committee as a channel between his bureaucracy and Swapo, is simultaneously preparing to recruit 2 000 new policemen for the Namibian police force - Swapol.

For precisely the same motives, Swapo's Sam Nujoma is seeking a commission to examine the suitability of currently-serving Swapol members for a post-independence national army and police force. He has already indicated his preference for an army and police force based almost exclusively on veterans of Swapo's People's Liberation Army of Namibia (Plan).

Most opposition parties are understandably cautious about this - particularly the United Democratic Front (UDF), with its strong contingent of former Swapo members detained by the liberation movement's security services in a series of purges over the



*Guy Tillim, Afrapix*

past decade.

The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) also has a vested interest in the issue: majority of Swapo members and former soldiers of the SWATF army are DTA supporters.

These are, however, largely political considerations: jockeying to ensure maximum influence in Namibia's forces. But there are also entirely pragmatic arguments for including these people in independent Namibia's police and military. Excluded, these highly-trained men whose only real skill is to wage war and to kill will be ideal recruitment material for any external interests intent on creating a Namibian equivalent to Unita. Inside Namibia's nation forces, and with regular salaries paid by the new government, their loyalty to Namibia can be wooed and possibly won.

All the parties are agreed on the need for a mixed economy, for a food self-sufficiency programme, for diversification from the present reliance on the primary sector, and for major financial, marketing and training support for the communal rural areas.

Nationalisation of farming land and of some multinational companies have

in the past been the main issues of economic debate. Swapo's most recent authoritative statement comes from economic affairs secretary Ben Amathila, who said only unused freehold land would be the target for resettlement.

The line is thus: justice is the guiding principle, but food and jobs are what we need right now.

**N**ationalisation of multinational mining investment was also out, Amathila said; a Swapo government would pressure such companies to put financial, technological and skills resources into the country, but would steer clear of conventional nationalisation which would scare off the foreign investment Namibia urgently needs.

A second point of agreement is the need to move cautiously towards less dependence on South Africa.

Similarly, as part of the Rand Monetary Area, Namibia's finances are entirely entwined with South Africa's. The R200-million generated in Namibia every three months from pensions, insurance and mining income as potential investment capital does not sit in Namibia waiting to be used. It

goes to where the capital markets - and thus greater profits - are, in Johannesburg.

With no central bank and no currency of its own, there is nothing Namibia can do to stop this. Nor, the parties agree, will it be wise to do so as soon as they have the power to. Closing the door would do no more than trap ever-increasing quantities of idle capital in Namibia, feeding inflation.

In these terms, there is a priority in finding somewhere for that capital to put itself to work - the establishment of productive industry.

Import substitution, however, is not the ideal strategy: a country with just 1.5-million people cannot produce in the kind of quantity to make it competitive with South African products.

The key to all this, however, is clearly Swapo. The movement's hardliners - 'Stalinists' to their critics - have dominated structures in exile for the past decade. But their influence has steadily weakened since the return of the exiles, which critically diminished the massive power exercised by the movement's security police - thus limiting their ability to silence critics and limit debate.

It is hard to give those gaining ground in the party a label: 'pragmatists' doesn't really describe it. But they are increasingly in touch with reality, both domestic and international.

Those of them in the returned leadership, for example, quickly learned to abandon the autocratic modes of exile in favour of listening to and working with Swapo's internal structures.

A crucial indicator of the fortunes of democracy and accountability inside Swapo will be whether a party congress is held to elect a leadership and define policy - the last was held in 1973.

If the choice is against such a congress - and the hardliners oppose it - Swapo seats in the constituent assembly and later in parliament will, by default, become the site where policies are formulated and leadership is exercised in practice.

If this is the case the hardliners - markedly under-represented among Swapo's 41 representatives - will battle to retain their influence.

## Namibia's minority parties

\* **ACN (Action Christian National):** Its core is the National Party which ran Namibia before 1978. Support comes mainly from white Afrikaans- and German-speakers - rightwing farmers, bureaucrats, small traders and artisans. 3 seats;

\* **DTA (Democratic Turnhalle Alliance):** Represents most of Namibia's 100 000 white citizens, as well as traditional leaders and their constituents in several areas, plus a number of upwardly mobile black Namibians, both urban and rural. Outside Ovamboland, its support levels are only fractionally lower than Swapo's. The party was started with South African backing. 21 seats;

\* **FCN (Federal Convention of Namibia):** An erratic grouping whose main policy aim is the establishment of a 'land bridge' between the Rehoboth homeland near Windhoek and the South African-run port of Walvis Bay. The party has several times threatened 'UDI' by Rehoboths. 1 seat;

\* **NNF (Namibian National Front):** Social democratic party centred on a faction of Swatu, oldest of the Namibian nationalist groupings and at different times a real rival and an ally of Swapo. 1 seat;

**NPF (Namibian Patriotic Front):** Centrist, also Swatu faction-based. 1 seat;

**UDF (United Democratic Front):** No relation to the South African movement of the same name, the front is an alliance of small factions which had few prospects until it was joined in August by the Patriotic Unity Movement (PUM), formed by Swapo ex-detainees. It holds similar political positions to Swapo, although PUM repudiates Swapo's 'autocratic and tyrannical leadership'. 4 seats.



Under an ANC flag, Ahmed Kathrada and Walter Sisulu address supporters after their release

Afrapix

# Comrades in arms

The place was Addis Ababa. The date, January 1962. The occasion, the conference of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa.

Before the conference was the African National Congress's Nelson Mandela, telling how, with the rest of South Africa, he 'had woken to read press reports of widespread sabotage involving the cutting of telephone wires and blowing up of power pylons' in October 1961.

He spoke of the first sabotage at-

Walter Sisulu and Ahmed Kathrada spent 27 years in prison for their involvement in the ANC's first wave of armed attacks in 1961. They explain to **JO-ANNE COLLINGE** the thinking behind the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and the decision to engage in armed struggle.

tacks Umkhonto we Sizwe carried out simultaneously in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban on 16 December

1961.

'It was now clear that this was a political demonstration of a formidable kind. It was still a small beginning because a government as strong and as aggressive as that of South Africa can never be induced to part with political power by bomb explosions in one night and in three cities only.'

'But in a country where freedom fighters frequently pay with their very lives ... planned acts of sabotage against government installations introduced a new phase in the political situation and

are a demonstration of the people's unshakable determination to win freedom whatever the cost may be'.

Nearly 29 years later, in the Orlando West home that has flashed across television screens worldwide, Walter Sisulu and his comrade and cell companion of many years, Ahmed Kathrada, reflect on the events that Mandela spoke of - almost distantly - back in Addis Ababa.

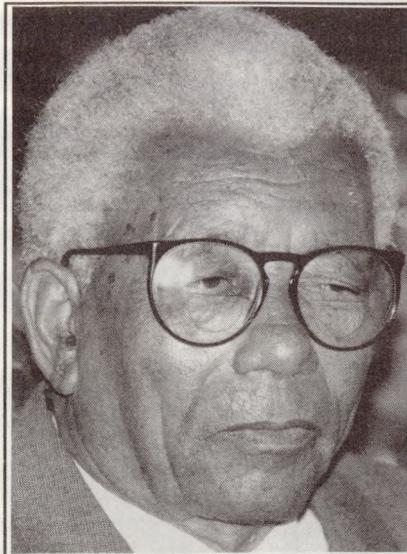
**I**t is day 12 of their return to society after 26 years in jail. The severed emotion of their first days back in the world is tempered. The crowds are gone and instead there is an intermittent flow of diplomats to greet the leaders. This morning the French and Portuguese ambassadors come to call. The ANC flag fluttering over the house already looks a little worn.

'It was a decision to start with sabotage, and at the time we were arrested (July 1963) Umkhonto was still engaged more in the question of sabotage. They were at that stage also training in guerilla warfare - but training for an *eventual* conflict', recalled Sisulu. This was what they had said during the Rivonia trial and it was true - not just a convenient defence, he said.

'We were aware that the effect of the pressure was not so strong as to get a regime like the South African regime to change. But at least it was going to educate the white public that danger was coming. This is what we wanted to highlight: that danger is coming, and unless something is done, an ultimate conflict - actually a shooting war - will take place.'

'We started with sabotage as a way of educating propaganda. But at the same time, we were not so naive as to think that they would change - so we had to make proper preparations. That is what Nelson had gone out for - to get money, to arrange facilities for training'.

Kathrada, noting that he was not part of Umkhonto we Sizwe at the time of his arrest (although he had earlier been a member), added: 'I think I'm correct in recalling that the move toward guerilla warfare was going to be, firstly, a political decision by the political organisations. It was not going to be an



**Walter Sisulu: MK was at all times guided by the political machinery**

Umkhonto decision as such. And we (the political organisations) had not reached that decision yet'.

Sisulu elaborated: 'You see, the ANC and the South African Communist Party had given the go-ahead that the military wing - we didn't call it a military wing then - be formed. In other words, those of us who thought this could be done were immediately given the green light that we would be guided at all stages by the political organs.

'In Nelson's case, he was head of Umkhonto, and he was also really a political leader. When I was arrested, my own position was merely a political commissar, to guide them on political matters. There was regular contact between the ANC, Umkhonto and the Party'.

There was also ongoing debate about guerilla warfare, Sisulu remembered. 'Was it going to be urban, or was it going to be classical guerilla warfare? Up until the time we were arrested there was no clear idea as to what it would be. We were aware that logistically we were in a very difficult position and the country did not seem quite suitable for classical guerilla warfare.'

'On the other hand, we knew the difficulties of urban guerilla warfare. At the time we were arrested that was the situation'.

Kathrada agreed that it was probably correct to term the early phase of armed struggle as 'armed propaganda'. Certainly, the idea was to avoid loss of

life. Furthermore, 'it was more symbolic really. There was no mass sabotage. There were few units operating - as you have gathered from reports.'

'I suppose the idea at that stage was really to rally people towards the movement, and in the process to recruit people'.

The question of the early relationship between Umkhonto and the ANC was complex. Certainly, there was a great overlap of leadership and membership - although there were different eligibility criteria for the political and military structures. While the structures were to remain separate, Umkhonto was to take direction from the ANC executive. It proved to be a distinction that could not hold up under the pressures: on the one hand the need to propagate the cause, and on the other, the need to find resources for training and funding.

Said Sisulu: 'The idea was that Umkhonto should be directed by the executive of the ANC, but should appear as an independent machinery. At the time the ANC was not yet open to all groups. Umkhonto was immediately open to all (race) groups and it was the desire that it should remain so.'

'But when Nelson went abroad our chaps would not listen to that (separation). They thought it was all nonsense and they wanted to link Umkhonto directly with the ANC. There wasn't much propaganda and they needed that'.

**U**nlike Mandela, who gave his famous address from the dock, Sisulu actually took the witness stand during the Rivonia trial and was subjected to cross-examination under oath. He made clear at the outset there were certain questions he would not answer - questions that implicated people not before the court. And he stuck to his position.

The one unanswered question that bothered the press at the time was whether Nobel Peace Prize winner and ANC president Albert Luthuli had been party to the decision to form Umkhonto.

As Kathrada and Sisulu discussed the question of dissension in the ranks of the political organisations on the decision to employ violence, Luthuli's position became clearer.



**Ahmed Kathrada is hoisted high by comrades in Lenasia on the day of his release**

Eric Miller, Afrapix

'Rolley Arenstein and a certain group of people - a few in the executive - were opposed to the formation of Umkhonto, on the grounds that the time had not come', Sisulu said, laughing reminiscently at the 'big books of Lenin' that Arenstein used to carry with him.

But a distinction could be made, Kathrada added, between those who were totally opposed and those who felt more serious consideration should be given as to whether the bounds of political work had been reached.

'Kathy is making an important point. There were people who were in fact - not on the same grounds as Rolley - arguing this point, that you are rushing for something, and it is an escapist way, when in fact you could still do political work.'

'It was a very powerful group that argued this point. Chief Luthuli belonged to that group. They did not appear to be completely opposed (to the formation of Umkhonto), but they were unhappy.'

'But, on the other hand, there was a strong group that believed we needed this (resort to armed struggle), and that view prevailed. Without voting, the matter was being discussed. It was

examined objectively and it was clear that the majority felt that this method was accepted'.

Sisulu was apparently one of the majority whose view prevailed. 'Nelson and I were together underground during the strike (the three-day general strike at the time of the establishment of the Republic of South Africa in 1961). We were living together at that time. We were both convinced that the need for the military, for violence, was imperative.'

'But Nelson, having had a report (incorrect, as it turned out) of the failure of the strike, was quick to make a statement to say this chapter is now closed. That agitated many minds, you see, because it was before discussion had taken place. The frustration was that a minor state of emergency was declared during that period - the army had been brought in, with Saracens (armoured cars)'.

Journalists described the military mobilisation in preparation for the strike as the biggest since the war. Something like 10 000 black people were arrested a week before the protest and kept in jail until it was over. Armoured vehicles patrolled the townships and meetings were banned. These were the

conditions that weighed against the organisation of peaceful mass action.

Kathrada said he had not opposed the formation of Umkhonto 'when it came to that', but had held the view that there was still scope for political work: 'It would take time. It would have been totally underground work, with small numbers. But the scope was there.'

'Other countries have gone through much worse periods and continued with political work. But as Walter has pointed out, consultation had become virtually impossible because of the bannings, because people had left the country'.

**K**athrada himself, having left the Umkhonto structures, was living disguised as a Portuguese man in a cottage in the northern Johannesburg suburb of Mountainview at the time of his arrest. He was working for the Indian Congress, for the SACP of which he was a member, and for the ANC, although technically he was not a member of the organisation at that stage.

'The work entailed mostly contact, meetings and propaganda work. We were setting up Radio Freedom and Walter had already made his first broadcast. I was supposed to make the sec-

ond one. We had just started this sort of underground work, just started making contact and held a few meetings - and we got caught'.

Sisulu's broadcast was made on 26 June 1963 - just a fortnight before the raid on Lilliesleaf Farm.

His address was a short rallying call - using the form of address made so familiar in the years of his absence by Albertina Sisulu, 'sons and daughters of Africa'.

He referred briefly over Radio Freedom to the sabotage campaign. 'In the face of violence, men struggling for freedom have had to meet violence with violence. How can it be otherwise in South Africa? Changes must come. Changes for the better, but not without sacrifice. My sacrifice. Your sacrifice'.

**T**he words, as it turned out were prophetic. The raid on Lilliesleaf Farm took place on 11 July and the six people meeting there - including Kathrada and Sisulu - were detained. A mass of documents - including the military plan, Operation Mayibuye - was found. Eventually, nine went on trial for sabotage and eight were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Kathrada, with his passion for accuracy, honed by years of studying history in jail, points out that Lilliesleaf was not MK headquarters as the press insist. It was a place bought to accommodate political activists who had been forced underground. It was temporar-

ily used to accommodate some Umkhonto men who had been for training - but it was considered a security risk to mix them with political leaders and they were moved on to a second farm, Trevallyn.

Soon after the arrests, the ANC issued a pamphlet which appealed to the people: 'Let us show the world we are not terrorised, not passive, not indifferent, not idle. Let us raise a cry that will echo round the world - FREE THESE LEADERS!'

The document concluded: 'White man - you are on trial before the eyes of the world. What is there left for you to plead?'

Kathrada recalls the militancy at the time of their trial in 1964 - the thousands who stood outside the court building on the day of sentencing. Then he recalls the 'lull' when the earlier urgings of the ANC seemed to have been swept away in the storm.

The impact of repression struck him forcibly when he returned to a Pretoria court room from Robben Island, along with two other Rivonia trialists, some years after sentencing. They were there to give evidence for Pan-Africanist Congress leader Zeph Mothopeng, who was suing the government for torture.

'The press had publicised that the Rivonia people were coming to give evidence. But I remember when I was giving evidence I looked at the gallery, there were just six people present. And those were my family members. Such

was the intimidation and fear. I think this symbolises the position as it existed throughout the country'.

Gradually, though, the pressures outside increased and a sense of this filtered through the prison walls: the Durban strikes; the Soweto uprising; the founding of the United Democratic Front; the resistance of the mid-80s; and the consolidation of the labour movement. The significance of these events could not be barred from prison.

From inside, they watched the planting of seeds for the international campaigns that would contribute to their own release. 'The Release Mandela Campaign, started around Nelson but had a significance which must not be ignored. It was taken up by the ANC and made an international affair.

'Incidentally Kathy really started the campaign, back in the 1950s', commented Sisulu.

Kathrada explained that he was 'closely connected' with Mandela throughout his underground existence, '(I was) part of a committee that was looking after his movements and arrangements. So it was just a natural thing that when he got arrested we formed this release committee.

'In '56 I wasn't arrested with the first lot of treason trialists. And when the first lot were arrested we started a Free Our Leaders campaign. The next week I was inside. Every time we started a release campaign, I joined those inside. (To Sisulu) I hope you aren't planning your next arrest!'

Sisulu responds: 'Once I was arrested with him (Kathrada) and the police said, Sisulu, you are now old. Don't move with this man!'

In the event, they 'moved' together in the close proximity of a shared prison cell for many years. That they became as family to each other shows in every passing remark. 'Have you given up your diet?' - as one or the other takes sugar in his tea. 'Are you managing to exercise?'

Sisulu and Kathrada know each other's aches and pains, quirks and strengths. They have seen each other through the dark years and the recent times of disturbing hope. It is a comradeship born of struggle - and one which has grown far beyond it.



*Back with the people: Andrew Mlangeni with local youths at his home in Soweto*

Gill de Vlieg, Afrapix

# A new dynamic - and some new rules

The government's actions since releasing Walter Sisulu and other African National Congress leaders seems to suggest that while these veterans will be permitted to project ANC ideas and policy, this liberty will not be readily accorded to others.

At the mass welcome rally near Johannesburg, Sisulu and his comrades could address a packed stadium from a platform dominated by a giant ANC emblem and South African Communist Party banner - without drawing government sanction.

Sisulu could safely end his address with the words: 'The stage we have reached in the struggle is irreversible. Hence the need for unity, consolidation and discipline in order to intensify the struggle for liberation.

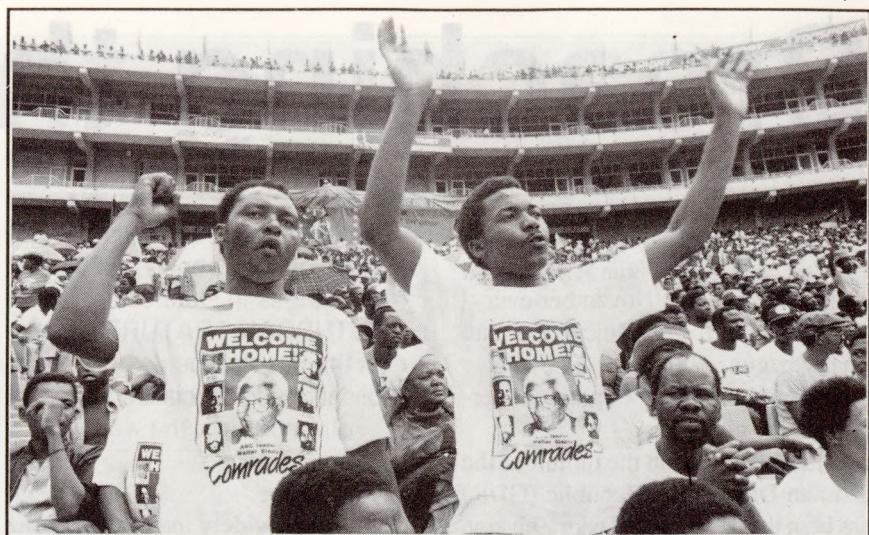
'Forward to peace and democracy! Long live the ANC! Long live our alliance with the South African Communist Party! Long live the working-class movement!'

But New Nation, the newspaper edited by his son, Zwelakhe Sisulu, has been threatened with suspension by the Minister of Home Affairs - mainly because it is judged to have published articles promoting the image of the ANC.

Certain marches have been permitted only on the express condition that no flags be displayed. And at least two people have already been charged for displaying ANC stickers distributed after the welcome rally.

Not only have trials of alleged ANC members continued since release day, 10 October, but new trials are about to begin.

This schizophrenic response to the ANC on the part of the state has fuelled speculation that state president FW de Klerk would like to create a manage-



*The 'welcome home' rally near Johannesburg: ANC and SACP flags without government sanction*

able, domesticised 'internal' wing of the ANC.

His chief negotiator, constitutional development minister Gerrit Viljoen has contributed to the notion that the government is still unable to contemplate talks with the ANC except on its own terms.

Clinging to the position that the ANC cannot be unbanned while it is committed to violence, Viljoen has hinted that the government might begin 'negotiations' without the ANC.

'We have now given everyone a chance to participate. But it has not been used generally by all, so we have to move on now with those who want to move'.

The released leaders have made it clear that they are not about to jettison their organisation to take part in talks with the government.

'There is only one ANC. Its headquarters are in Lusaka and we have every reason to believe it exists within South Africa', Ahmed Kathrada has stated. 'Our leadership is absolutely united and we owe our allegiance to one ANC'.

A message from Lusaka, welcoming the men back into the 'collective leadership of the ANC', reinforced this position.

While there are clear pitfalls to holding a privileged position in relation to the state, there are also potential gains. And no doubt the former Rivonia trialists will exploit this position - with the backing of the Mass Democratic

Movement.

For the first time since the late 1950s, internal liberation forces have a body of senior leaders who cannot be silenced, jailed and driven into hiding.

The Rivonia men are special. Their immunity is in no small measure due to the fact that their releases were compelled by a complex set of political factors. The pressures which produced this result will also not tolerate their rearrest, detention or restriction. The fact that they have been granted passports despite the openly ANC-tone of the rally testifies to that.

In recent years only top level clerics such as Archbishop Tutu and Dr Allan Boesak have had anything like an immunity from detention, restriction and political prosecution. While they may be popular in their own right, they are rooted in church structures rather than political organisations.

The released ANC leaders, while likely to set up their own office and retain their symbolic importance as a distinct ANC presence, will work very closely with formations in the MDM. Furthermore, they will have ongoing contact with Lusaka and be free, it seems, to act openly as part of the ANC.

Whatever else the state does to comply with international demands for change - and the move on the Separate Amenities Act suggests it will give away nothing more than it has to - already the releases have contributed a vital new element to resistance politics.

# Breaching the Wall

**F**or years they had been saying the Cold War was over - but when sections of the Berlin Wall crashed in the first week of November everyone knew a fresh political era had finally begun.

Throughout Europe, political certainties are changing.

Hardly noticed in the tumult of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) has been the downfall of Todor Zhivkov, Bulgaria's party leader and president, and the legalisation of some opposition groups.

In Poland a non-communist party rules, and the former governing party is trying to come to terms with its failure; Hungary's Communist Party has dissolved itself to become a self-declared social-democratic party.

All this has left many people wondering: What happened to the Iron Curtain?

'Burial parties' were quickly formed by Western pundits and politicians, who foresaw the death of the GDR's policy of 'real existierende socialismus'.

But they were also anxious: could this mean a reunified Germany with a population of 70-million dominating the rest of Europe? Yesterday's burning issues concerning a common European currency in a more integrated West European market looked irrelevant.

The larger strategic map of Europe, of Nato and the Warsaw Pact, of the superpowers behind them, is also shifting. And elsewhere in the world political stand-offs given shape by the Cold War - including Southern Africa and the region - are taking place in the context of an altered balance of forces.

The single most important catalyst for change in the GDR was not, as some sections of the Western media have put it, a yearning for capitalist lifestyles. Rather, it was the desire for freedom of movement. This was evidenced by the fact that fully a sixth of the population had applied for travel visas within days of the Berlin Wall

Eastern Europe's map is being redrawn almost weekly, with major changes in state control.

**SOUTHSCAN FEATURES** looks at the developments and the implications for socialist parties in other parts of the world.

coming down.

This was widely interpreted in the West as a desire to move permanently - but it has already become clear that this is not the case. A survey by the country's Institute for Sociology and Social Policy, for example, found that 87% of the population had no intention of leaving permanently.

Since the '60s the youth of Western Europe have travelled more widely than ever before - it has become a part of culture, both a rite of passage to adulthood, and part of a generational rebellion. These are issues well beyond the immediacies of consumerism which have been denied to the GDR's people.

An ossified leadership - widely criticised as isolated from the people and drawing privileges which contradicted their espoused values - refused to realise this (or genuinely believed the security interests of the state would not allow it).

They described the Berlin Wall as a 'wall of peace' - and while it stabilised relations between the states in central Europe and between the superpowers at a time of acute tension, it was also needed to prevent the draining of the economy by its powerful Western neighbour.

But for the GDR youth, it was an unbearable imposition - watching the West on its television, in the distance, over the wall. Consumer goods achieved an allure, even though the consumer culture was still despised.

The presence of the Wall also humiliated people: one poster carried on the marches read, 'We have come of age'; they were fed up with being treated like children, needing to be

penned in and unable to take decisions.

The need for economic reform has been acknowledged in the GDR for some time (it was political pluralism that was never accepted). Before the tumultuous events of the past weeks, it was widely reckoned that ageing Socialist Unity Party (SED) leader Erich Honecker would be ousted at the party congress scheduled for May 1990, and that some market measures would be brought in to improve the consumer goods situation. The pace has been massively forced since then and the congress has been brought forward to December.

Controlled market forces would give more flexibility to the supply of consumer goods; technological development would serve partly to deal with the chronic labour shortage. The economists are now discussing greater use of economic instruments such as prices and banking.

They have levelled criticisms at the giant combines which have integrated supply and production in one giant concern, and are blamed for reducing flexibility of response to demand.

**G**DR economists believe they have been complacent by far: the hundreds of thousands who have come out on the streets will not be content with a reform managed from the top, until they are satisfied they can trust the managers. Politics comes first. The economic reformers have in front of them a situation of unprecedented complexity - an open border with the most powerful capitalist state in Europe, speaking their own language, and welcoming their citizens with open arms.

Their currency will be forced onto a market rate on West Germany's streets. But many things have changed since 1961 when the Wall was built: the GDR has had 28 years to develop a firm economic base of its own, and it has a population which has grown up in a particular ethos, not just of secret



*Juggling with Germany: East Berlin border guards watch as street performers toss lit batons to entertain the crowd in front of the Brandenburg Gate.*

police and paternalistic tyrants, but with extensive social services and collectivism at local workplace and community level. This, by all accounts it does not want thrown over - as yet.

As the opposition casts round for appropriate political parties to crystallise out the social forces within it, some are talking about reviving the old Social Democratic Party which existed before the Second World War.

The ruling SED was formed after the war from the remains of the SDP and the Communist Party, and had the task of purging the state of fascists, and of building up a new society in the Soviet zone.

It mobilised a demoralised and defeated people to rebuild, literally using the rubble of its cities. It was a gigantic task, of which the GDR people - the masses who are today demonstrating

against their government - remain proud.

For the Communists, the present mass movement does not signify defeat - yet. The socialist project has always involved moving from the level of 'real existing socialism' to the next level, and then on. 'Real existierende socialismus' carried within it the notion of a toehold on the wall of world capitalism, not a utopia on the plateau above.

Commentators in the West have looked in vain for elements of a new Solidarnosc among the millions of demonstrators walking the streets of the GDR's cities, walking its government out of office. They found individuals, intellectuals, gradually coalescing blocs of interest - but also party members among the demonstrators.

In party demonstrations they found reform banners. As one party official

said in the week before the crash of the Berlin Wall: 'Hundreds of thousands of party members have worked for this'.

Already it is possible to detect voices of interest in the West which, together with forces in the GDR, might begin to chart a direction for an advanced industrial society which challenges the ideological sway of capitalism - and might even become a renewed focus for the West European Left, at present lacking aim or definition.

It is the political awareness of the GDR's people that will make or break it as a state. After all, the GDR is a socialist state or nothing - what determined its existence from day one was its socialist political orientation. As one GDR politician said, there cannot be two capitalist Germanys in Europe.

Although many of the youth have

regarded party membership as a sign of moral bankruptcy - mere career advancement - the moral pull of the party has stayed strong.

The party in the East has remained the bearer, through its anti-fascist history, of the credentials which enabled Germans to come to terms with their past.

So many still joined the SED for the best of reasons and - unlike in other East European states - many thousands of members in the 2-million-strong organisation were seeking over years to loosen the hands on the wheel and to begin reform.

However, inner party control was too weak to correct its leadership, while outside there was also too little democratic control on the government.

Unlike in the Soviet Union, with its single party, four smaller parties were allowed, representing certain social

forces; they could raise issues and qualify legislation, but could also be ignored. The SED's leading role was built on the constitution. Now, with the announcement of free elections, that will have to change.

Some voices in the reformist New Forum - built around a core of the intelligentsia - are speaking of a 'third way' between socialism and capitalism. Inside the Party many are repeating that reform was always on the agenda, and only held back by the ossified structures, allowed a longer life by the threat from the West and the Cold War.

The advent of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in recent times has been widely welcomed in the party ranks in the GDR, where it was felt that he could unlock the country's frozen energies. From these quarters what is

happening now represents a repeat of 1968, the 'Prague Spring' - but in new and favourable circumstances, and more intelligently done.

'Reform' therefore has not been the discovery of the West. All of it has been known by European socialists. Writing in the late '60s, the British marxist economist Maurice Dobb said: 'It is hardly likely that the new technological and higher living standards can be contained within the old administrative mould inherited from Stalin's day. Economic problems sometimes acquire a compelling logic of their own.

'One may well see some rapidly changing alignment and landmarks in the socialist world in the decade that lies ahead'.

The 'burial parties' of the West may have to turn back, their task again unfulfilled.

## Putting internationalism into practice

**A**mong progressive forces, particularly in the third world, another kind of anxiety about events in Europe is growing: will the new developments affect the anti-imperialist foreign policy of the GDR?

'Internationalism' has been part of the GDR's makeup and, as in Cuba, was built into the political education of its people. It has provided large-scale support to struggles in many countries. It has given refuge and training - military and civilian - for many political exiles from South Africa. It has helped the wounded of Swapo, Angola and Mozambique.

After the fascist coup in Chile, hundreds of political exiles were brought in to live and work in the GDR; during the Vietnam war shops and department stores kept collection boxes next to the tills and the citizens gave freely. Vietnamese have been brought in, for training initially, but are increasingly being used to fill the labour gaps.

Will this foreign policy also go under in the demand for democracy and pluralism? Inside the GDR there has been unpublicised dissent as the

hard pressed and extensive social services came under more pressure from foreigners, and as the housing question proved itself more intractable than forecast. At the same time East Germans are aware of liberation struggles in the way that Westerners are not.

What gave its foreign policy weight was the GDR's economic strength - a fact hardly noticed in the present clamour of criticism. GDR citizens have had the highest standard of living in eastern Europe, and it ranks tenth on the league of industrial powers (with West Germany fourth).

But the economy is not moving, with structural problems exacerbated by the recent exodus of substantial numbers of its workforce.

The social services and many factories are now grossly understaffed and troops have had to be called in. The 'gastarbeiter' (workers from other countries) already there will become indispensable.

Many of these workers are Mozambicans. After the Portuguese revolution in 1975, the GDR took responsibility for training the new security police.

GDR cadres were also sent to help in Mozambique's bandit-ridden coal mining areas, where they stay and work as trainers for months at a time in barbed wire compounds.

In 1979 the Mozambican government signed the first protocol to send 2 000 workers to the GDR for training in coal mining, textile manufacture, and other industries, with GDR finance and technical assistance for similar new projects in Mozambique.

The scheme was of practical value and an example of non-exploitative relations between states.

But the security situation in Mozambique changed and the projects were hit by the Mozambican National Resistance rebels. Only one textile plant is operating today.

A 'gastarbeiter' system was agreed on instead. It still has value for Mozambique, with more than 18 000 of its citizens operating as a migrant labour supply to sectors in the GDR economy such as light industry, fishing, chemicals and electronic assembly - earning millions of rands in valuable foreign currency.

Stan Goodenough, Afrapix

The national campaign against incorporation is not only about the communities' return to South Africa. It is about the eradication of the bantustans and the founding of a non-racial, democratic South Africa. **JO-ANNE COLLINGE** reports.

**F**orced removals and incorporation into the bantustans have usually been treated as human rights issues - as questions of the right to hold land and to retain the nationality of one's country of birth.

Increasingly, though, struggles against incorporation in the bantustans are being waged with a clear awareness of their bearing on a central goal of liberation forces: an undivided South Africa.

This new focus is reflected in the national campaign against incorporation mounted by eight communities in the Transvaal, Eastern Cape and Free State.

Not only are residents of these areas mobilising and petitioning for an end to incorporations and their own return to South Africa, but for termination of the bantustan system and the founding of a 'unitary, non-racial and democratic South Africa'.

These are the demands which they hope to put face-to-face to state president FW de Klerk.

Similar demands were made by the 50 000 people who marched at Botshabelo several weeks ago in a bid to ward off their inclusion into QwaQwa.

'These people fighting incorporation are in the forefront of the anti-bantustan struggle,' insists Bahle Sibisi, a fieldworker with the National Committee Against Removals (NCAR). 'They are fighting this system in quite a concrete way'.

The most sustained form of struggle in many communities is one of refusing to co-operate with bantustan authorities. In Peelton, for instance, people refused to pay Ciskei taxes. In Braklaagte and Leeuwfontein they are rejecting Bophuthatswana pensions and demanding re-instatement of their South African pensions (as most residents of those areas had regained their South African



*'The people fighting incorporation are in the forefront of the anti-bantustan struggle'*

## Waging war on the bantustans

citizenship prior to incorporation).

In Moutse, teachers have, for more than two years, refused to be transferred to KwaNdebele employment, businessmen have failed to apply for renewal of licences, pupils refused to accept a KwaNdebele school syllabus.

In Moutse, the Transvaal Rural Action Committee (Trac) notes, 'this passive resistance went as far as vehicle owners refusing to license their cars because they were compelled to take out KwaNdebele registration plates'.

Trac notes that the response of bantustan authorities has been heavy. 'They have tended to act like an army of occupation and have tried to force

people to accept the order they do not recognise. In Moutse, for example, businesses were closed down and even bulldozed to the ground when their owners would not co-operate with KwaNdebele rule'.

Mass arrests and torture have become part of the post-incorporation pattern. Often violence becomes endemic and the resistant community hits back at bantustan armed forces and at collaborators in the community.

Sibisi believes that broader democratic forces are aware of the significance of direct resistance to bantustan authorities, but notes that 'when it comes to translating this action, such struggles are not a priority' for broader political

organisations. It has been left largely to service organisations, lawyers and church groups to support rural resistance.

A number of factors have contributed to the heightened political content in removals and incorporation struggles.

\*Firstly, as fieldworkers have pointed out, since the Mogopa removal was carried out — illegally and with considerable force in 1984 — Pretoria has tended to avoid physical removal and the blaze of publicity it calls forth. Instead it has resorted to incorporation, redrawing the boundaries of bantustans so that 'black spots' fall within them. Whole communities of black South Africans then become exiles without moving an inch.

Trac has sketched some of the consequences of this changed strategy. 'Forced removal is a highly physical process,' it points out. 'It requires that people be counted, that property be valued, that transport arrangements be made. Accordingly, each step of this process is one that affected communities can respond to in a similarly physical way so that resistance can be offered to counter each stage in the removal process'.

In contrast, for forced incorporation to occur, all that is needed 'is for the decision to be taken and for boundaries to be redrawn on maps in the government printer's office after agreement has been reached in private with the homeland government. For the affected communities it is an invisible and intangible process whose effects are only felt when it is too late and incorporation is a "fait accompli".

Not only does incorporation make resistance more difficult - but it redirects it so that the bantustan authorities are as much in the line of fire as Pretoria is. In physical removals, attention tends to focus on the drama of demolition and destruction. In incorporation these don't occur and instead the spotlight falls on the actions of the acquisitive bantustan government.

\* Sibisi also points out that incorporation is often accompanied by the bantustan authority deposing the chosen leader of the newly acquired territory and installing a man who satisfies

the new government's needs.

The lesson people draw from this experience, he reflects, is that bantustan rule is not compatible with self-determination. Their fight against the bantustans inevitably becomes a fight for democratic choice.

At the same time they are aware that it was Pretoria which high-handedly 'gave them away' in the first place. 'Residents are often quite clear that going back to South Africa is only part of the solution to their problems'.

\* The responses of both the bantustan governments and the central government to opposition to incorporation have also tended to throw the political issues into sharp relief.

Sibisi points out that the National Party government has been unable to accept victories that people have won through the courts - victories which saw the 120 000 people of Moutse released from the clutches of KwaNdebele and as many as 500 000 in Botshabelo extricated from QwaQwa.

**I**t has prepared new legislation - the Alteration of Boundaries of Self-Governing Territories Bill - which will make it virtually impossible for residents to challenge incorporation through the courts and has the particular capacity to reverse the Moutse and Botshabelo victories. With the legal avenue closed, mobilisation and organisation become the only recourse of resistant bantustan residents.

Trac's Joanne Yawitch argues that bantustan leaders have responded to the angry newcomers 'as if they constitute a major challenge to the state and in doing so have actually elevated the political stakes in the struggle'.

This over-reaction, the heavy repression that accompanies it and the fact that incorporation is a fairly high-profile issue, turns communities opposing incorporation into 'symbols of resistance' widely admired by other residents.

The fight of the Moutse people against KwaNdebele rule, which began in earnest after incorporation on New Year's Day 1986, was one such example, she agrees. It was certainly more than a simple forerunner to the virtual civil war that engulfed KwaN-

debele from mid-1986, as residents rose up against the tyranny of the Skosana regime with its Imbokodo vigilante army and against the notion of KwaNdebele independence.

In Ciskei, residents are debating how best to support the people of Peleton and there is talk of a boycott of shops of businessmen with direct government links.

The significance of this type of mobilisation is underscored by the suggestion by Transkei's military ruler Bantu Holomisa that a referendum might be held in the territory to determine the people's attitude on re-uniting with South Africa.

The stony silence from the presidents of Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei indicated that they were less than enthusiastic about Holomisa's initiative.

And legal experts have pointed out that rejoining South Africa requires something like a willingness by the central government to allow its dis-owned people back.

Unisa law professor Dawid van Wyk summed up the legal position: 'This cannot be done unilaterally. They (bantustan and central government leaders) will have to enter into some form of agreement to reunite'.

All of this suggests that unscrambling the grand apartheid scheme will be a complex and uphill process, contingent on negotiations between the government and the liberation forces.

Few in the democratic movement believe that Holomisa is about to go knocking on De Klerk's door in the current context to ask to occupy a different place in apartheid South Africa. If he makes his promised move, it is likely to be once negotiations to end apartheid have seriously begun.

Many people confidently predict that immediate and tangible prospects of liberation in South Africa would generate such pressure from disaffected residents of the bantustans that these 'independent states' would tumble like houses built of cards.

Only time will tell how true this assessment is and the significance of the tradition of struggle by newly incorporated communities to the unfolding of grassroots pressure.

# Dumped - and no say, either

Peelton's residents are not only fighting to remain resident in South Africa. Their struggles are also attempts to challenge the deprivation of the homelands, writes **MIKE KENYON**.

**O**n October 16 this year, the Ciskei government declared a state of emergency in three villages in east Peelton and in a fourth village next to the Ciskeian capital Bisho.

Under the emergency, the Ciskei police and army removed part of the community of Nkqonkweni village, first dumping them across the border in South Africa, then dispersing them in the Ciskei when South Africa objected. Up to half of the homes in Nkqonkweni were destroyed and at least 96 residents, including children, were detained. About 55 residents were so badly assaulted that they required medical attention and had to be hospitalised.

The rest of the village, some 2 000 people, abandoned their homes, possessions and livestock and fled into South Africa. About 1 000 residents fled into King William's Town where they were sheltered in churches. The others, especially working residents, took refuge in townships in nearby urban areas.

South African ambassador to the Ciskei Christo van Aardt admitted that Ciskei's president, Chief Lennox Sebe, had told him two weeks previously of his intention to demolish homes in Nkqonkweni.

Van Aardt blamed the trouble in east Peelton on 'outsiders' whom he refused to identify. South Africa refused to intervene in the situation, stating it did not intervene in the affairs of foreign countries.

But after considerable media publicity, local and foreign pressure, and the threat of mass action throughout the Border region, South Africa conceded that only some of the residents of east Peelton were 'dual citizens', and that it would therefore try to re-



*Sheltering from the Ciskeian authorities: women and children sought refuge in one of the churches*

solve the situation.

Questions have been raised about Van Aardt's role in the events at Nkqonkweni in the light of his comment to the press that he had advised Sebe to send in the army to maintain order 'as this strategy had worked successfully elsewhere'.

Van Aardt also told journalists that only flimsy shelters had been destroyed at Nkqonkweni, but this statement was contradicted by aerial photographs which showed that 30 brick houses had been demolished.

On November 8, church leaders were summoned to Pretoria to meet Home Affairs minister Eugene Louw and deputy minister of Foreign Affairs, Leon Wessels.

Following this meeting, Van Aardt announced he had been instructed to resolve the situation, but pointed out that South Africa could not offer land to east Peelton residents.

Recent events in Peelton are rooted in the granting of independence to the Ciskei in 1981. Peelton itself is divided into east and west by a railway line, and it was the western villages which were incorporated into the Ciskei at independence. The villages to the

east of the railway line were scheduled for relocation into the Ciskei at a later date.

Although east Peelton remained under the jurisdiction of the South African courts, confusion arose at senior government levels about the status of the villages. Many residents of east Peelton lost their South African citizenship at independence. But in 1986, when South Africa passed the Restoration of South Africa Citizenship Act, many residents applied to regain their South Africa citizenship.

Thus, when east Peelton was incorporated into the Ciskei on August 12 1988, the vast majority of residents were once again South African citizens who had not been consulted on the issue by the South African government.

East Peelton residents first heard about the proposed incorporation in May 1988 when they were alerted to the proposal by a local Progressive Federal Party member.

In parliament, PFP MP Peter Gastrow denounced the proposal, stating: 'It is a forced removal by legislation. They are being forcibly removed from South Africa. There has been no con-

sultation with the people of Peelton'.

East Peelton residents petitioned the then minister of Development Aid, Gerrit Viljoen, and demanded that instead of incorporating east Peelton into the Ciskei, west Peelton should be re-incorporated into South Africa.

In any event, the villagers of Nkqonkweni, the largest of east Peelton's three villages, refused to have anything to do with the Ciskei administration. They did not recognise the tribal authority and its headman and refused to pay taxes which they had not formerly paid in South Africa.

Despite retaining their South African citizenship, residents stood to lose their South African pensions, which were double the amount received in the Ciskei, together with access to unemployment insurance. They would also become liable for 'voluntary' but arbitrary taxes, levies, and other forms of tribute in the Ciskei which they had never had to pay in South Africa.

Barely two weeks after the 1988 incorporation, police conducted a raid on Nkqonkweni residents at night, demanding to see Ciskei tax receipts for taxes paid when the area was still under South Africa's control.

About 60 people were arrested and shunted through the courts the next morning, signalling the start of harassment and intimidation by Ciskeian authorities.

In the first 12 months under Ciskei rule, some 200 Nkqonkweni residents were charged with various offences. Only one has been convicted so far - for unlawfully allocating a building site.

Elderly villagers have been detained or assaulted. On one occasion in June this year, police opened fire on a house where a party was taking place. In August police broke up a church service when they attacked the church with rubber bullets and teargas.

Residents were denied access to stock-dipping facilities and were barred from attending the clinic. South Africa also stopped pension payments to South African citizens in east Peelton.

In response to the harassment, the community sought protection from the Ciskei Supreme Court - so far it has



*All alone: Peelton residents insist they are South Africans*

won three interdicts restraining the police from further unlawful action.

The community has also sent several appeals to Van Aardt and to Foreign Affairs minister Pik Botha.

Since then, the struggle has spread to west Peelton where residents are also discontented with Ciskeian rule. Youths have been boycotting Peelton's only high school, demanding the release from detention of their Nkqonkweni colleagues.

The demands of the vast majority of east Peelton residents are unequivocal - east Peelton must be returned to South Africa, and residents must be fully compensated for damage and loss suffered.

Although the community is unable to stay in churches indefinitely, it is determined to return to east Peelton where most people have lived all their lives. Some people there had freehold title while the majority had other forms of legal land tenure which they had held for decades. The majority of residents also had some livestock and access to agricultural land.

Now they are refusing to return while the area is under the Ciskei. They fear continual harassment by Ciskeian authorities.

The struggles of the people of Peelton are thus not simply motivated by a desire to remain resident in South Africa. They are struggles that attempt to challenge the relatively greater deprivation and poverty of places such as Bophuthatswana and the Ciskei.

# Tracing the roots of resistance

**SAMUEL MOTLOHI**, a high school pupil and youth activist in Botshabelo, traces the roots of resistance in one of South Africa's largest dumping grounds.

**A**t the foot of the mountains some 50 km from Bloemfontein, is one of South Africa's largest settlements: Botshabelo.

The people of Botshabelo - who number as many as 500 000 - were handed over to QwaQwa in late 1987. But this measure was reversed in 1988 as a result of a Supreme Court judgement. The people responded to this decision by dancing in the streets.

But the central government is reluctant to give up on its plan to rid itself of Botshabelo. Not only is it appealing against the Supreme Court judgement, but it is also preparing a law - the Alteration of Boundaries of Self-Governing Territories Bill - which will make the incorporation inevitable.

Residents are not passively awaiting their fate. Their determination to remain outside of bantustan structures was demonstrated just over a month ago when an estimated 50 000 marched on the magistrate's offices. They demanded that they be allowed to remain part of South Africa and that the administration of social services, which has been in the hands of QwaQwa since 1987, revert immediately to Pretoria.

The demonstration took outsiders by surprise; few were there to witness it and the press was caught napping.

This is what Motlohi and his partners in the Trio for Truth and Justice

have to say:

### On the origins of an anti-apartheid consciousness

The social background of residents should be considered. Some came from Kromdraai, a squatter camp near the railway station at Thaba Nchu, the most southerly piece of Bophuthatswana, where (as non-Tswanas) they were oppressed and ill-treated by the Mangope government. Many lost parents and loved ones in violence there.

Others came from rural areas, especially white Free State farms, where many had been exposed to long working hours, starvation wages and other dehumanising treatment.

A third group came from townships around Bloemfontein, Bethlehem and other Free State towns where they were victims of high rents, petty apartheid laws and capitalism.

There were also those who were forced to move from Transkei and Ciskei and who had established their own squatter camp near Ntumediseng High School.

People's origins have contributed to the present situation of resistance. They had experienced and witnessed the brutalities of the Verwoerd system. In Thaba Nchu only those holding Bophuthatswana citizenship could register their children at schools and be helped at clinics and the hospital.

People had experienced labour exploitation and the bloodsucking apartheid laws. They also knew about the other aspects of the bantustans - corruption, bribery, oppression and high death rates.

### On how QwaQwa president TK Mopeli gained a foothold

The present political climate in Botshabelo is partly due to the infiltration of QwaQwa's affairs into the area.

Early residents were told that it was Mopeli who had saved them from Kromdraai and had given them land at Botshabelo. When tents and food supplies were handed out, it was said that these were from their 'leader in QwaQwa'.

People were made to apply for QwaQwa citizenship cards — known as 'kikis' because of the photos re-

quired for them — and those who hesitated were told that they would be expelled from Botshabelo.

Taking advantage of the housing shortage, officials told those who wanted to buy houses to fill out certain forms. It emerged later that, by signing, they had stated that they were prepared to accept QwaQwa as their authority.

In 1980, when residents were told to pay R10 each to build a university and a college at Botshabelo, only members of the ruling QwaQwa party, Dikwankwetla, paid. The residents' general refusal to pay this amount might be the reason why school fees were increased to R15 a year and renamed 'development fund' contributions.

All this suggests that Mopeli's 'support' is based on falsehood. Only some of the old people really accept him as their leader.

(According to deputy minister of Constitutional Development Roelf Meyer, there were 64 000 Botshabelo residents registered as QwaQwa citizens in the last elections).

### On growing resistance among the youth

The youths' resistance began in 1986 with boycotts at several schools. The grievances of pupils at high schools included sexual harassment of students; unfair disciplinary measures; and the refusal to allow democratic SRCs with constitutions adopted by the students.

To support these demands students all over Botshabelo embarked on a class boycott. Students were injured in clashes with police who were called to restore 'order'. A peaceful protest march drew more violence and Botshabelo became like the Gaza Strip and West Bank, with teargas everywhere and Hippos patrolling empty streets as people fled for fear of being beaten.

This was followed by the detention of many activists. They were released after 14 days following the intervention of parents, teachers and priests acting as the Botshabelo Crisis Committee.

Although the grievances of the students were not directly political, for the first time the government saw Botshabelo as a threat to 'law and order'. This might have contributed to

the decision to incorporate the Free State's largest township into QwaQwa.

### On incorporation and its impact on education

(The threatened incorporation of Botshabelo into QwaQwa only served to intensify resistance during 1987. Students from three schools were allegedly sjambokked while marching against incorporation and some of them were detained for long periods. Many activists fled the area. When incorporation became a reality at the end of 1987, one of the first things the bantustan authority took control of was the schools.)

The 'stealing' of Botshabelo's education could be regarded as the turning point in the struggle against QwaQwa, causing the students to unite more strongly than before. Among strategies used by the Department of Education and Culture was the removal of some students to newly established schools in an apparent attempt to divide the 'radicals' from the 'students'. This was met with unexpectedly strong opposition, especially at Ntumediseng and Kgorathuto High Schools.

At Ntumediseng, police were called in to implement the education department's forced removals and students were removed to a former primary school, Thato. Students were escorted there by six Hippos. Those who remained at Ntumediseng were made to lie on the ground and some were sjambokked.

At Kgorathuto police broke up a sit-in of students in the second week of the protest. Students were warned that their sit-in would not be tolerated: they were either to enter classes or leave the school premises.

Since the incorporation into QwaQwa, conditions at schools have deteriorated. Although school fees went up from R10 to R15, schools are badly equipped.

Motlohi concludes that the resolution of Botshabelo's problems is partly dependent on 'the death of apartheid' and his group urges that 'residents of Bots should not isolate their struggle against QwaQwa from the broad one against Pretoria'.

# Making the best of a home-made home

Anna Ziemienski, Afrapix

Nothing beats the satisfaction of owning your own home, argues Orange Farm resident

**ZOLILE MTSHELWANE**

(pictured right, in his recently-erected home) in this article on the phenomenal growth of South Africa's newest squatter settlement.

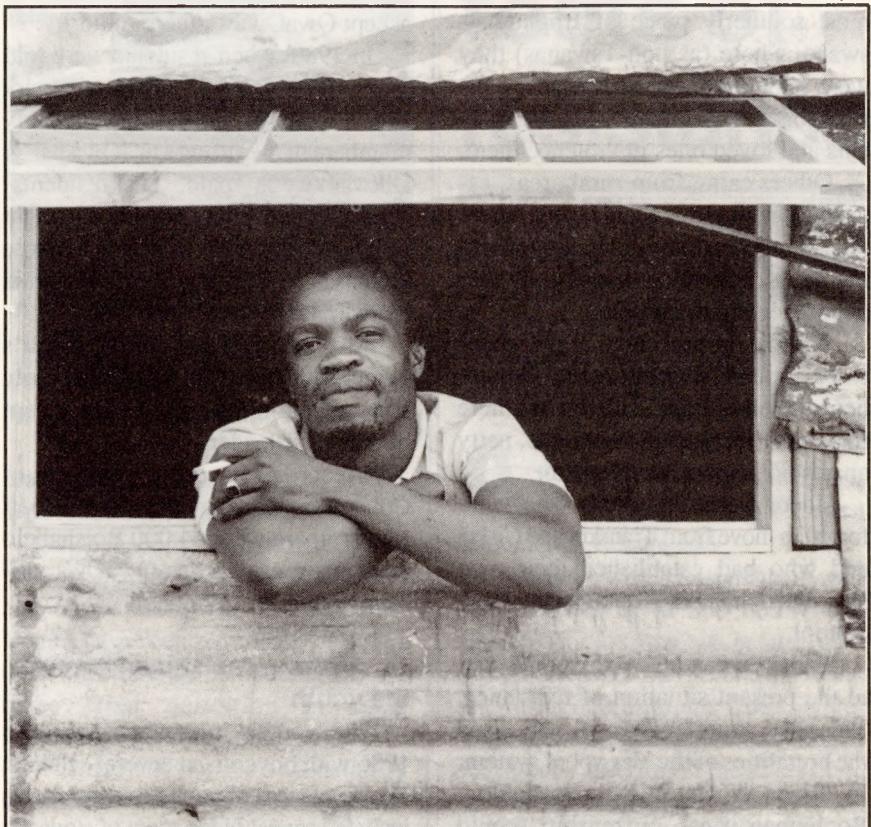
In the sprawling shackland of Orange Farm, a squatter settlement about 65 km south of Johannesburg, 30 families share a tap, and have no sewage service at all.

Today, in terms of Section 6 (a) of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1951, Orange Farm is an area designated for controlled squatting. The Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) Community Development Services has made available approximately 4 300 sites for families who have been squatting on white-owned land in and around Walkerville.

Two thousand of these sites have been set aside for families from Weiler's Farm and the surrounding areas - Sweetwaters, Vlakfontein and Doornkuil. People from Mshenguville in Soweto and some squatters from Alexandra township have also settled here.

Most families from the Weiler's Farm area were moved, together with their dismantled shacks, on free TPA transport. The first move was in October 1988 and by the end of September 1989, there were approximately 600 families settled at Orange Farm.

There is no sewage system in the area and every household has to dig and build its own toilet. For the most part residents have dug holes in their yards according to specifications issued by the authorities - but these are seen as temporary measures for residents who cling to the hope generated by rumours that a sewage system is to



*Home sweet home: Zolile Mtshelwane in his new home, built on the property he bought for R500*

be installed.

Families originally from Weiler's Farm who have moved further out now face increased transport costs. The major means of transport for people at Orange Farm is the train. Most people walk to and from the station, which is about 2 km away from the squatter area but there are also taxis and a bus feeder system between the settlement and the station.

There have been rumours and public pronouncements that the TPA will provide various services for the Orange Farm community. There have also been promises that the dusty roads will be graded from time to time, but so far only the main road leading into the area has been graded about once a week. No work has been done on the 'streets' inside the settlement so that when it rains they are full of puddles,

and dusty when it is dry.

The one clinic which serves the whole area is open five days a week, offering different health services on a daily rotational basis. Most schoolchildren still attend schools in the areas they came from. This is mainly due to the fact that the school at Orange Farm only goes up to Standard Four. The 'school' is representative of the whole area - it is like a gigantic shack built out of corrugated iron. At this stage it is not clear whether any more schools will be built.

The community has been promised that if they buy the sites they are living on they can legally own them. The price for a 20 square metre site is R500. Those who can't afford to buy must pay a monthly rental of R47. Everyone has to pay service charges of R37 a month, but people who rent have

**From one farm to another: the Mkhize family move from Weller's Farm (top) to their new home at Orange Farm**

to pay an additional R10 monthly levy.

One interesting aspect about people who have moved to Orange Farm from places like Soweto, Sebokeng and Pretoria, is that these people were not forcibly removed from their former places of residence, but willingly chose to settle at Orange Farm. The overwhelming majority of this group were tenants in the backrooms of other people's houses, and have been on housing lists for as long as they can remember. There are also a few from Soweto who moved out of houses they were paying off in bank or building society instalments. One in every three of these people expressed similar opinions: there is nothing that beats a place of your own.

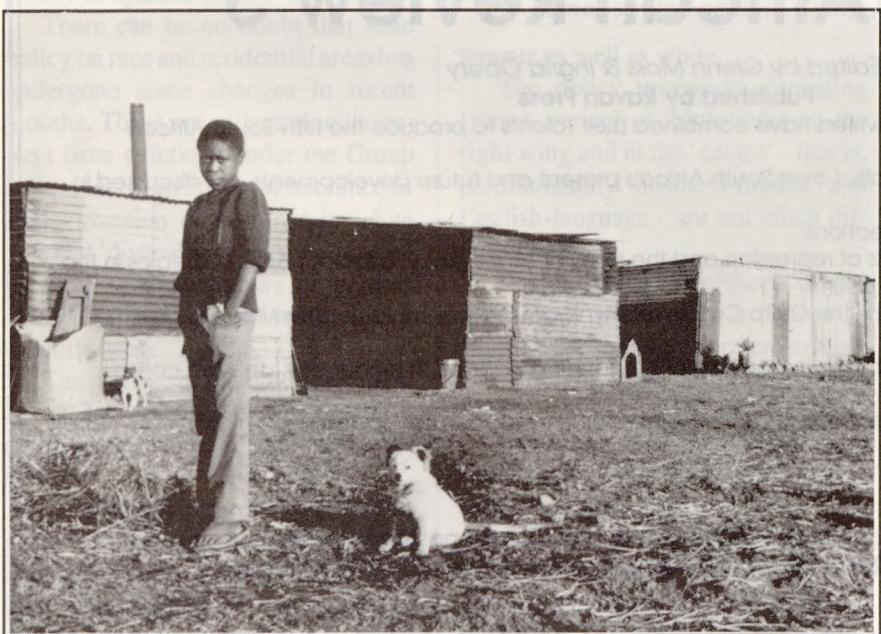
When asked why she left her three-bedroomed house in Soweto's Selection Park, Sarah Ndlovu said: 'The unending burden of a bond repayment was too tough for me and my husband. Initially we were paying R260 per month, but when the bond repayment increased to R400 it became apparent that we were going to die of hunger.'

'We decided to look for someone who could take over the house and the repayment of the bond. At the same time we heard of Orange Farm and started making enquiries about a site there. We were lucky to find a younger couple who were prepared to take over the house, which had become like a yoke on our necks.'

'Then we managed to acquire a site at Orange Farm. As it is now, we no longer have to worry about what we are going to eat, or drink or about clothes, because the burden we were carrying has now been removed from our shoulders'.

John Nkambule, an Orange farm resident, summed up the feeling of former backroom tenants when he said: 'It is so uncomfortable to be at someone's mercy all the time. When you live in a backroom, it is the landlord's prerogative to raise your rent if and when he so wishes.'

'Should you not agree to pay the



Anna Zieminski, Afrapix



**Making a fire: Orange Farm children carry sticks home to make a fire**

increased rent, the only option is to move on. The effect of this continuous moving is detrimental to family life and the happiness of children who never come to know exactly which or where is their home'.

Most residents agree on one thing: what you have at Orange Farm belongs, or can belong to you.

Orange Farm may not be a great place to be because of the lack of proper infrastructure and the erratic transport system, but being an owner of your own shack seems to be the overriding advantage for the people there.

What this means is that once you are settled there, it is up to you what you do about your piece of land, whether you build a palace or a shack - one person even built a double-storey shack - or whether you construct a proper structure at your own financial pace.

The biggest challenge now for the people of Orange Farm and the TPA is whether the government will upgrade the area, and when that upgrading will start. As it is, the government's lack of commitment to providing black people with affordable and adequate housing in urban areas has been the cause of the mushrooming of squatter settlements

anyway.

For residents, the challenge is whether they will be prepared to wait for the government to effect its upgrading, or whether they will pressure the government to act quickly and in consultation with the residents.

The toughest of the challenges is the power relationship between the government and the residents. The question is who will seize the initiative first in laying the ground rules.

It also remains to be seen whether residents will wait for the government to set up its own collaborationist structures or whether residents will come up with their own organisational formations.

At the moment there is an eight-man committee which meets regularly with TPA officials to 'discuss' the development of the area. The majority of the committee members are formerly from the Weiler's Farm area.

It is well-known that structures of this nature receive no mandates from the communities they profess to be representing. And since the establishment of Orange Farm, there is no record of this committee having called any meetings with residents.

Since the area is still 'new', only time will tell which way the power relations will go.

## SPECIAL OFFER TO WIP READERS

# South African Review 5

Edited by Glenn Moss & Ingrid Oberly

Published by Ravan Press

More than 40 leading South African writers have combined their talents to produce the fifth *South African Review*.

The most important trends in the conflict over South Africa's present and future developments are discussed in this deeply thoughtful presentation.

Contributions are presented in four sections:

- **State & Politics:** Including an analysis of repression and the state of emergency, a look at ANC strategies in the 80s, and an examination of people's courts.
- **Regional Policy:** Including articles on 'the Cuito Cuanavale syndrome', Mozambique after Machel, and the Namibian independence process.
- **Labour:** This section traces developments in trade unions, changing patterns in labour law, and the consequences of disinvestment.
- **Rural politics:** Including a look at the KwaNdebele struggle against independence, Inkatha's march from Natal to Pretoria, and forced removals.

Regular price: R34,95 (plus GST)

Special offer (in South Africa only): R27,65 (including GST) plus 60c for postage and packaging.

Send cheques or postal orders to Ravan Press, PO Box 31134, Braamfontein 2017, with a copy of this advert.

# Out of the grey and into the black...

What are the implications of the government's decision to establish free settlement zones in some 'grey' areas? Will this lead to new, non-racial suburbs - or merely create other forms of segregation? **ALAN MABIN** looks at some possible scenarios.

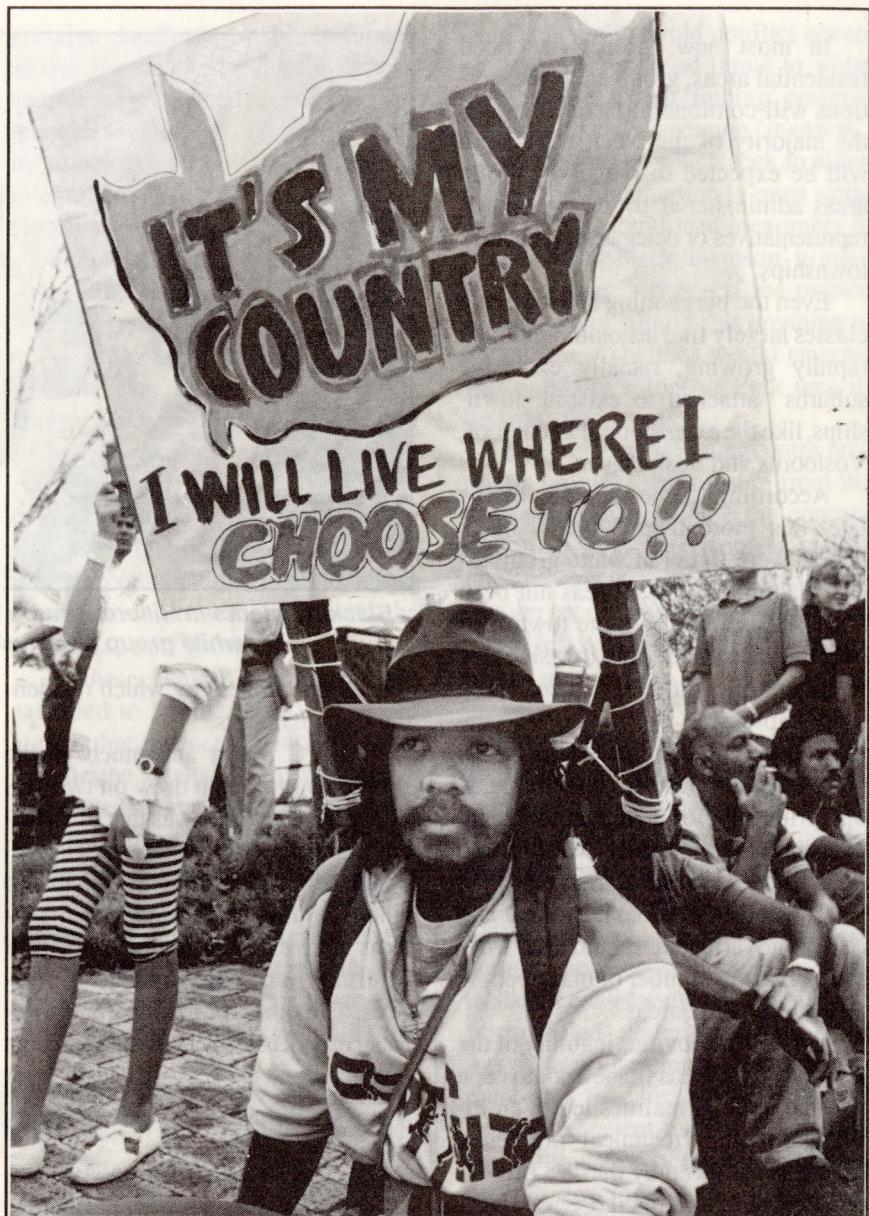
**T**hose who believe that 'free settlement areas' are a step away from apartheid should think again: the policy will create new patterns of segregation rather than establish communities for non-racial living.

And the ghettos which free settlement policy seems certain to spawn will be no easier to eradicate than the impoverished townships that are the legacy of apartheid.

There can be no doubt that state policy on race and residential areas has undergone some changes in recent months. These are reflected in the retreat from evictions under the Group Areas Act, in an apparent tolerance of some invasion of dominantly white areas by 'disqualified persons', and an increase in the numbers of permits granted to black people wanting to live in white areas.

The passage of the Free Settlement Areas Act early in 1989 was also a measure of change in the state's approach.

Despite this, current government policies remain pro-property, pro-white, anti-tenant and extremely discriminatory. They ignore the aspirations of poorer residents of the cities - black



*Towards an open city: one of 2 000 Cape Town marchers who demonstrated against Group Areas legislation earlier this year*

tenants as well as white.

The policy proposals emanating from a variety of think-tanks on the right wing and in the 'centre' - that is, predominantly business-funded and English-language - are not much different.

Despite some differences in nuance, there seems to be a consensus from National Party reformers to business lobby groups on the following points:

- \* summary abolition of the Group Areas Act without other policy measures is not desirable;

- \* a management process is needed to ensure that white and/or property-owning interests are not too severely threatened by rapid change in residential

patterns. This is often referred to in terms of 'maintenance of standards';

- \* market processes can be relied on to a greater or lesser extent to manage the transition.

The NP reformers' present policy is to maintain the legal practices of the Group Areas Act in most urban neighbourhoods, while allowing or encouraging some districts to become 'free settlement areas' for people of all race groups.

As yet, residents in free settlement areas are only entitled to elect 'management committees' with minimal powers - which partly explains the aversion of more liberal municipalities to applying for free settlement area status.

Paul Weinberg, Afrapix

In most new, properly-serviced residential areas, group areas declarations will continue to have force and the majority of the black population will be expected to remain in group areas administered by the houses of representatives or delegates, or in black townships.

Even the burgeoning black middle classes largely find accommodation in rapidly growing, racially exclusive suburbs attached to existing townships, like the extensions of Diepkloof, Vosloorus and Soshanguve.

According to one estimate, by the late '80s more than 200 000 black people were living in white group areas. Had middle-class areas not been added fairly rapidly to the townships over the past decade, the 'invasions' of white space would have been even more impressive.

The Free Settlement Areas Act is not intended to lead to 'mixed' areas, but primarily to facilitate the legal conversion of formerly white group areas to de facto black areas.

The debate is about how local and central government should deal with the increasing number of black people moving to white areas.

In 1983 the obvious inability of the existing group areas framework to cope with new social realities led to an investigation into 'technical' problems. This was followed by the 1987 report of a President's Council (PC) committee and the introduction of free settlement areas.

While the government did not accept the recommendations of the PC report on how residential change should be managed, it did adopt some of its principles: that there should be areas in which the Group Areas Act would not be applied strictly (thus the report served to legitimate state inaction in 'greying' areas); that there should be some local involvement in determining which areas would be open to racial residential change; and that the property market, together with some managing devices, should direct the process of residential change.

The Free Settlement Areas Act provides for the state simultaneously to legalise the dropping of racial restrictions in given areas, and to restrict



**Black residents in Hillbrow: more than 200 000 black people now live in white group areas, according to one estimate**

the market process by which residential change occurs.

The PC report and much of the subsequent research drew on two sets of experiences. One was that of southern African cities such as Harare, Windhoek and Mafikeng-Mmabatho where highly segregated urban patterns were exposed to the removal of legal and other discriminatory practices. The other, probably more influential experience, lay in the large amount of literature on experiences in the United States.

**R**ecent South African policy documents explain residential change in North America as primarily a free market process. But this interpretation is open to contest.

From the president's council report to the work of the Rand Afrikaans University department of development studies and the reports of the Centre for Policy Studies at Wits, the same overarching image is created: white residents eventually flee when faced with significant numbers of black people 'invading' their neighbourhoods through free property markets.

This process leads to 'succession' in which the previously white neighbourhood soon becomes predominantly black.

An obvious problem in generalising from this literature is that the proportion of 'white flight' that actually occurs varies widely. Despite this,

South African writers create the impression that group behaviour - expressed through a free market - would have more or less similar results anywhere, and especially in this country.

South African literature also tends to ignore certain important aspects of the United States experience. Among other things, these factors cast suspicion on the assumption that free markets compel estate agents to act in a non-discriminatory way.

Active discrimination has taken place in United States cities through 'red-lining', whereby institutions refuse to lend money on property in particular neighbourhoods. Even when the intention has been quite colour blind, 'red-lining' has had important racial effects. In South African literature 'red-lining' is excused as an understandable reaction of building societies to poor risks.

Another common practice is 'block-busting' - using the (usually false) threat of falling property values and sometimes criminal means to drive residents out in order to alter the character of the neighbourhood.

The United States studies also look at a phenomenon called 'tipping' or 'invasion and succession' which eventually occurs, mainly as a result of manipulation of the market.

They argue that estate agents stop taking white home buyers to neighbourhoods once their black populations reach 12% or 20% of the total,

but show black house seekers property only in such neighbourhoods - which again increases the black population.

**S**egregation is not unrelated to white residents' own racism and fears about social and economic security, but it is not a consequence of such 'communal' factors alone. Yet it is 'communal' or 'group' factors which have dominated recent literature from a variety of right and centre groups in South Africa.

Most importantly, South African writers tend to downplay what North American studies show about the crucial role of local authorities in creating ghettos or racially mixed areas.

A recent study of three suburban municipalities near Chicago - areas which could perhaps be compared to Randburg, Bellville or Amanzimtoti - showed that:

- \* determined attempts to keep one neighbourhood exclusively white succeeded, despite anti-discrimination legislation;

- \* local authority inaction and market manipulation by private parties 'tipped' one area from white to black; but

- \* careful use of subsidies to pro-

gressive landlords, publicly-funded advice bureaus and public insurance against scare-induced property investment losses allowed one local authority to achieve and retain a pattern of integration which reflected reasonably closely the United States population.

Two lessons emerge from the North American experience.

First, real estate markets are no more 'free' from manipulation and discrimination than other markets: they may actually be extremely prone to such practices.

Secondly, in potentially racist white communities, rapid change in the direction of integration tends to lead, through combinations of market and manipulation, to white flight and the creation of new ghettos.

If these central conclusions are extended to South Africa, it can be argued that free settlement areas provide for the legalisation of 'tipping' in a restricted number of neighbourhoods.

The centrist policy proposals are predicated on the same model, except that they seek non-racialism by calling for abolition of the Group Areas Act and visualise most poorer people gaining easier access to poorly serviced and largely peripheral residential sites.

They aim to avoid conflict generated by the supposed threat to white communities which 'tipping' presents by limiting and dispersing 'invasion'.

All proposals which seek to allow only limited integration in most white group areas would lead inexorably to concentrating black 'invasion' in just a few localities, where - if the twisted experience of 'tipping' is anything to go by - new ghettos would emerge. Johannesburg's Joubert Park area illustrates this.

None of the right and centre proposals provides ways (aside from the townships) to overcome the concentration of black residents in mainly inner city ghettos. If alternative strategies are not developed and implemented by the left, this is the future which lies before us.

In expensive areas, for economic reasons, little change in the racial pattern of occupancy can be expected in the medium term, despite free settlement or permit provisions.

In some lower-priced inner city neighbourhoods, the extension of the permit and free settlement systems facilitates quasi-legal invasion by people 'disqualified' under the Group Areas Act. The declaration of a free settlement area together with a battery of city management measures - such as the manipulation of the town planning scheme, new investment in infrastructure or failure to improve infrastructure - might push change in one of two directions: 'gentrification', or 'ghettoisation'.

\* Gentrification features substantial private investment by new owners and speculators in residential property, accompanied by rapidly rising prices, economic expulsion of former tenants and considerable physical 'improvement'. It is a process now common in almost every city in the world, but in South Africa it gains particular significance because it may be a mechanism to keep the neighbourhood predominantly in white hands (as in Melville, Johannesburg) or to induce a rapid alteration in its complexion (as in Mayfair, Johannesburg).

In some neighbourhoods manipulation of the market - through selective



Anna Zieminski/Afrapix

Right-wing demonstrators: vehemently opposed to the 'greying' of residential areas

approval of bonds or of first-time home buyers' subsidies - and of town planning, might keep the cultural character predominantly white but shift the class character 'upwards'. In other areas the same class succession might be accompanied by a shift to a different ethnic character.

In the latter case, the Free Settlement Areas Act effectively provides for legalising the creation of new middle-class group areas under another name. The Mayfair experience shows that this type of gentrification can occur without the new law and could be repeated under the regime envisaged by the centrists.

Gentrification typically is encouraged and facilitated by public investment in selected areas and media hype about their private investment potential.

\* The opposite dynamic of ghettoisation is marked by the deterioration of the physical fabric of areas deprived of maintenance and starved of new investment, by a decline in property prices and by a social transition in which new occupants are of a class with fewer social resources than the previous occupants.

In South Africa, that would almost inevitably mean a transition from white to black, accomplished legally by declaring free settlement areas or repealing the Group Areas Act.

In either gentrification or ghettoisation, 'free settlement' facilitates a rolling over from one class to another and usually from one dominant racial char-

acter to another. It does not create integrated neighbourhoods reflecting the overall population mix.

In a few areas, mainly those inner city neighbourhoods of high-density rental accommodation, a combination of continued investment (which reduces the chances of classic ghettoisation), the presence of stable ethnic minority communities and the rapid turnover of other tenants might allow really mixed areas to develop.

To some extent this has happened in the northern parts of Hillbrow and Berea in Johannesburg. Some inner areas of Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth are candidates for such a process. But these 'mixed' areas would hardly represent more than a small fraction of their metropolitan areas.

**T**he Free Settlement Areas Act is not predicated on extending such mixed areas to suburbia or to the townships. Nor are centrist ideas of limiting and dispersing black settlement.

The policies of the right and the centre provide simply for more of the same kinds of change which our cities are already experiencing.

In a sense, the centrists differ only in so far as they believe that such change does not need either the Group Areas Act or free settlement areas - but that to avoid conflict, white propertied interests must be safeguarded by managing the dispersal of black residents and slowing the process of change.

If such policies run their course the product is likely to be extensive and perhaps irrevocable ghettoisation.

How might the cities move instead in the direction of an integration which reflects the ethnic make-up of the population more closely?

There is the growing prospect that the future of the cities, like that of the country as a whole, will be subject to negotiation. This presents opportunities to counter and defeat policies which condemn the cities to the polarised processes of gentrification and ghettoisation.

Both right and centre proposals are likely to revolve around the need to cater for (white) economic, social and psychological security by retaining of predominantly white residential communities.

It will take a long time to achieve mixed neighbourhoods but that prospect could be hastened by strategies such as providing public investment rewards for integrating neighbourhoods; protecting tenants against eviction and extortionate rents; taking action against discriminatory manipulations of markets - for instance treating red-lining and blockbusting as criminal offences.

Some of these strategies are already emerging in the actions of organisations like Actstop. Their further development requires that they be connected to ideas and debates on other aspects of the urban future.

What kinds of densities do people want to live in? What kinds of transport will serve the future population? Is the suburban model of individual home ownership at low densities, and with extreme privacy, what people want?

Also, does this model inevitably deprive people of participation in a vibrant urban environment, as it has done for most whites in South Africa and many suburbanites in other countries?

Placing the cities on the road to a more liveable future will need a great deal of creative thought and debate.

And the left will have to intervene much more powerfully if it is to counter the forces now being unleashed and avoid the implementation of policies with practically irreversible consequences.



*Actstop - already taking up some of the crucial issues*

# Angola: Still waiting for peace

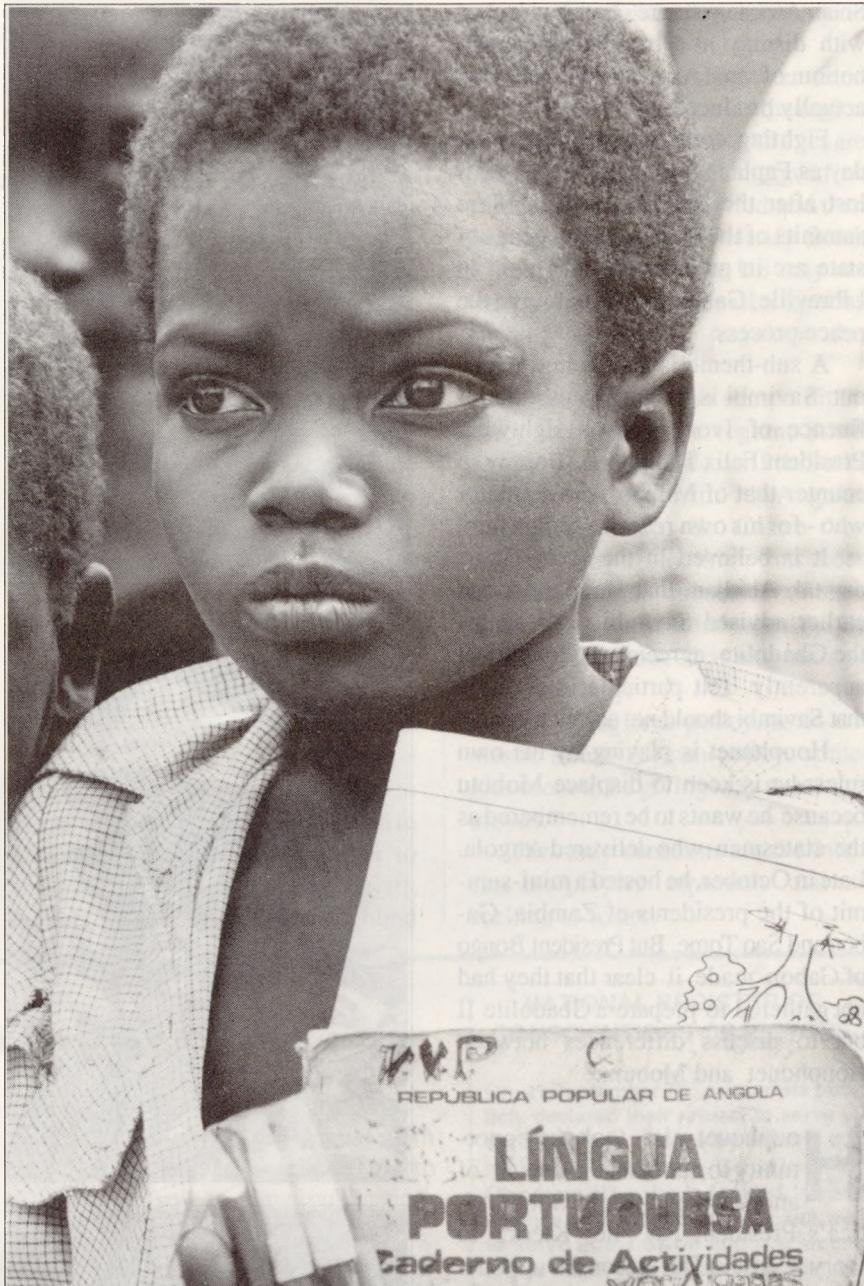
Four months ago Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko announced an agreement which he said would bring peace to war-torn Angola. Today, the fighting continues. DAVID COETZEE of SouthScan Features examines why.

**I**t was too much to hope that the Gbadolite agreement between the frontline states and the Angolan rebel group Unita - mediated by Zaire - would hold.

Its terms might have spelt the end of United States ambitions for Unita. And for Washington to give up its game plan so easily - here or in any other region of the world - is too much to ask.

But since that 'historic handshake' in June between Angola's President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Unita leader Jonas Savimbi, a lot of diplomatic traffic has passed through African and world capitals, and a new regional array of forces is beginning to take shape, all of which are making the continuation of the Angolan war problematic.

All the parties to the Gbadolite deal of June 22 - except it seems Savimbi - believed it included the temporary retirement of Savimbi from the scene.



The Star

Unita, in particular its armed forces, would be integrated into the structures of Angola's ruling MPLA.

There were even unsubstantiated reports from the Angolan capital, Luanda, that key provinces such as Huambo, for a short time Unita's seat of power during the mid-70s, would be handed to Unita ministers for control.

In response, the Angolan defence force, Fapla, dropped its guard.

And, when the ceasefire failed to happen, with more outbreaks of fighting in different parts of the country, Luanda and its supporters were at first gracious.

Unita, they suggested, had not yet

succeeded in getting the peace message to its units which were spread widely throughout the country. Then there was speculation that there were differences in the fighting forces, with some willing to come over to the leadership's position, but others fighting on.

Finally, it dawned that Savimbi had no intention of going along with the deal. In a letter in mid-September to his key Lisbon supporters, he said that President Sese Seko 'was deceptive in that he promised things to the MPLA that he didn't say to us'.

The official Angolan line now is that Savimbi backed off under US and

South African pressure - both had looked with dismay at what their favoured notion of an 'African solution' had actually produced.

Fighting continues in Angola today as Fapla makes up the headway it lost after the deal was struck. More summits of the eight regional heads of state are in preparation - the next in Libreville, Gabon - to try to revive the peace process.

A sub-theme is also being played out: Savimbi is seeking to use the influence of Ivory Coast's rightwing President Felix Houphouet-Boigny to counter that of Mobutu, the mediator who - for his own reasons - failed him.

It is believed in the Ivory Coast capital, Abidjan, that Houphouet had earlier advised Savimbi to break off the Gbadolite agreement. Houphouet apparently felt particularly strongly that Savimbi should not accept try exile.

Houphouet is playing by his own rules; he is keen to displace Mobutu because he wants to be remembered as the statesman who delivered Angola. Late in October, he hosted a mini-summit of the presidents of Zambia, Gabon and Sao Tome. But President Bongo of Gabon made it clear that they had not gathered to prepare a Gbadolite II but to discuss differences between Houphouet and Mobutu.

Houphouet also took the opportunity to announce the visit of another key player, South Africa's President FW de Klerk, to Ivory Coast in December. Houphouet has long sought to have his generally cold-shouldered policy of dialogue with Pretoria accepted in Africa, and the Angolan issue seems an excellent means to do it.

In September, Savimbi again enunciated his set of goals, unchanged by Gbadolite. In a private letter to key supporters in Portugal he said: 'Everything must start with the formation of a transitional government of national unity which will end with elections'. He ruled out any possibility of going into exile or of his forces being integrated with Fapla.

But he indicated that the new battles for power in Angola were likely to be more diplomatic than military and that

his own forces had not yet fully understood this. Washington's support has stayed constant, but he noted a favourable change in Lisbon's attitude to his organisation - as evidenced by the visit to a Unita congress later in September of a delegation from the Portuguese ruling party together with the son of President Mario Soares.

President Soares met him face to face in France a month later - ostensibly to receive news of his son who was injured in a plane crash at Jamba.

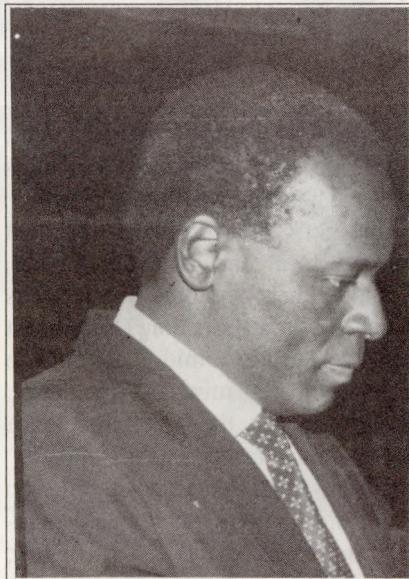
More significant than the Ivorian regional diversion is the battle in Washington to keep Savimbi in the show.

In September, both Savimbi and Mobutu were brought to Washington to iron out their differences under US State Department aegis. They did so publicly, but this has not recouped what was lost. Already Savimbi had foregone much valued credibility in the US as the pro-West, democratic African fighting against an inauthentic Marxist regime.

Reneging on Gbadolite dealt a blow to his 'African authenticity' in the US. After all, here was a group of African leaders, some notably pro-US, with not a Cuban or Soviet in sight, who agreed with him on the peace process (though none would have voted in their own countries for the multi-party election Washington seems to favour for Angola).

Already there have been some signs that US media perception is changing. Articles have appeared in the American press detailing massacres carried out by Savimbi's troops.

A major network television news programme in the US last month ran material sharply critical of continuing US support, now that, from the Washington angle, all previous conditions had been fulfilled. They noted that the Cubans were on the way out, independently verified by the US; the Soviets had indicated that they wanted nothing to do with regional bush fires anymore; the Namibian independence process had moved towards a solution; and most important, the Luanda government had started economic restructuring and turned away from its former centralised policies.



Talking peace : Savimbi (top),  
Mobutu and Dos Santos

But Washington has now had time to think through its next moves. It is likely the administration will simply allow the two sides to battle it out, with Unita continuing to receive US arms, perhaps at an increased pace, and the Fapla forces lacking Cuban support - half of Cuba's 50 000 troops have already moved out, ahead of schedule.

Then, when the positions of the players on the board have been shaken up, a new round of negotiations can begin.

Despite any offence it may give in the region, the US has been markedly hardline about its support for Unita. Africa envoy Herman Cohen, visiting Dakar last month, told a press conference that there were now 'two governments' in Angola. Unita would not be abandoned, he said, because you don't abandon your friends 'just when they are about to get down to real negotiations'. If the issue is mainly military, arms supplies are crucial. And here South Africa still has a role. Reports from northern Namibia have for some time indicated that despite the pres-

ence of Untag monitors - or because of their scarcity on the ground - convoys of trucks and other military vehicles are still moving across the border.

Journalists visiting Jamba reveal that it is still amply provisioned from the south. However, a new border monitoring group was set up last month - announced during the Johannesburg meeting of the tripartite verification commission by South Africa's foreign ministry director general Neil van Heerden - to monitor and solve problems on the spot.

It consists of representatives of Angola, Cuba and South Africa, and Untag, US and Soviet observers. If it is allowed to operate fully, it will at least limit the convoys of supplies heading for Jamba.

Some US senators were suggesting last month that Zaire had cut off the flow of US aid to the Unita forces. There has been no evidence that this is so, and whatever the real situation in the air and on the road from Kamina in Zaire (through which US arms to Unita have been routed in the past), Luanda is choosing to turn a blind

eye. On the surface its relations with Zaire have never been better.

Nowadays there are fewer fixed points to guide diplomats in the region and many more variables. All eyes are on Namibia: the way it emerges first into the post-election period and then into independence will clarify South Africa's intentions. The US may not want to upset a balance of a kind by pushing too hard in Angola at this time.

In the slow motion shuttle diplomacy throughout the region, South African foreign minister Pik Botha has been talking with his Angolan counterpart Pedro de Castro Van Dunem 'Loy'. Nothing has been revealed of the substance of their talks. The scheduled visit by De Klerk to Houphouet may also indicate their next play.

But in regional policy, as in domestic South African policy, strategies seem to be giving way to tactical moves.

The only constants are the interests the players represent and are seeking to foster.

## 1990 Community Calendar



January 1990

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

If I can take this strip  
and tear like a feather falling from a flying bird  
and reach the distance of this sky  
Service

**EDA**  
Environmental and Development Agency

EDA is a non-government rural development agency. We support village-based projects in a few rural communities of South Africa, working through community associations, co-operatives, training people to develop organisations around activities such as food production, health care, water supply and sanitation.

Through networking with other organisations involved in similar work we aim to build wider support for the struggles of rural people. Publications and resources are produced and distributed among the public and among the public at large, as well as through information for rural people and organisations working with them.

EDA has an office in Johannesburg which serves as a resource centre for the public and for other organisations. There is a resource centre which collects information about rural development to share with interested people. The Johannesburg office also houses EDA publications.

You can find out more about EDA by writing to our P.O. Box 62054, Marshalltown, 2100, South Africa. Telephone (011) 434-1905. You can also subscribe to our publications, *Community News*, a quarterly update on rural development issues.

EDA has joined forces with eleven other organisations to bring you a unique publication.

The 1990 Calendar has twelve big pages, each one carrying a black and white picture of rural people taken by Paul Weinberg. In addition there is space to write in those important dates you need to remember and each page carries information about the activities and services offered by one of the participating organisations. Plus 20% more holidays than any other calendar. All this for only R3.00

Send orders enclosing payment to:  
EDA, P.O. Box 62054,  
Marshalltown, 2100.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

On 21 September 771 conscripts publicly declared their refusal to serve in the SA Defence Force by signing the National Register for Conscientious Objectors. If you have decided, in conscience and of your own free will, not to serve in the SADF and you would like to make your objection public, fill in the application form below. On receipt a registration form for the Register will be sent to you.

NAME: .....

ADDRESS (own or contact) .....

.....

REASONS WHY YOU WANT TO JOIN

THE REGISTER: .....

.....

POST TO: The Custodian  
PO Box 591  
Kengray 2100

# The Iscor share offer: Supping with the devil

Iscor's privatisation and its share offer to workers present a new challenge to unions. A more concerted strategy is needed to give content to union resolutions on the issues, argues CAROLE COOPER.

**H**e who sups with the devil needs a long spoon.'

This saying crystallises the dilemma facing the trade union movement over the privatisation of Iscor.

The privatisation has drawn attention to union strategies on two inter-linked issues: privatisation itself, and employee share ownership programmes (esops).

The reasons for the state's decision to privatise are not hard to find. After dragging its heels on the issue for years - much to the impatience of a private sector keen to find new avenues of expansion - the government embarked on the privatisation of Iscor with surprising speed.

Its most compelling reason was its need to get more money to reduce its public debt, which stood at about R67-billion in 1988. Reducing this debt would also have the spin-off effect of reducing the costs of servicing the debt. At the same time money would be released for the funding of infrastructural projects which form part of its reform programme.

Other reasons for the privatisation thrust are the state's need to reduce public expenditure (running at 30% of gross domestic product - a measure of the value of the country's total production and services - last year) and its perception that privatisation would improve the efficiency of state-controlled corporations and services.

But the reasons are not only economic. Pretoria's efforts to depoliticise issues such as housing, education, transport and labour is an important



*Iscor goes private - meaning shares can now be bought through the Johannesburg Stock Exchange*

factor in its decision to privatise - as is its concern to prevent these services and strategic corporations from falling into the hands of a post-liberation government.

A variety of strategies are open to the government in privatising its privatisable assets - estimated by the Free Market Foundation at R300-billion. Briefly stated the government can:

- \* sell all its shares in a corporation;
- \* sell only some, thus retaining a controlling interest while benefitting from the expertise of the private sector;
- \* retain some to be sold at a later date; or

\* place certain of the functions out on tender while still retaining full control of the company.

It can also choose to sell the company off as a single unit, as in the case of Iscor, or divide it into smaller sections - as it intends to do with the Post Office and the South African Transport Services (Sats).

This latter strategy has a strong following among proponents of privatisation who see the sale of companies in separate sections as encouraging

competition and thus efficiency.

But while benefitting capital and the state, privatisation means added hardship for workers.

It is usually accompanied by rationalisation, leading to job losses and increased unemployment.

And if the British experience is anything to go by, it also means an increase in the cost of services.

And the selling off of companies in separate divisions undermines national bargaining, thus weakening unions.

**I**t was not by chance that the state chose Iscor for its first major privatisation initiative since the sale of Sasol in 1979. It is the most successful of the 'big four' due to be privatised - the others are Eskom, the Post Office and Sats.

In the 1988/89 financial year, Iscor's income before financing charges and taxation amounted to R1 196-million on turnover of R5 952-million - an increase of 51% and 23% respectively over previous year's figures of R794-million and R4 820-million. Profit attributable to shareholders (the government and the Industrial Development

Corporation) rose from R593-million in 1987/88 to R812-million in 1988/89, an increase of almost 37%.

Iscor claims to be the 16th largest steel-making company in the world, and produces 73% of steel for the internal market. But preparing Iscor for privatisation has also meant a rationalisation of production, leading to job cuts.

The company's workforce stands at 58 000, compared to 79 000 in 1985.

As a prelude to privatisation, rationalisation has also occurred at the other three companies, no doubt with the intention of making them more productive and attractive to investors.

From the outset, Iscor stressed that it wanted to avert a takeover by the major corporations. A wide share ownership was envisaged that would give the general public, as well as Iscor employees, a chance to take advantage of the offer. The share offer to employees comprised 185-million shares, 10% of the 1,85-billion share offer. Those allocated to the general public amounted to 150-million (8,11%).

Institutions, by contrast, were allocated 1 215-million (65,68%) and the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) 300-million (16,22%).

The Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) has strongly opposed the strategy of privatisation. At its July congress it adopted a resolution which noted that 'privatisation is the selling of people's property to the private sector which this government has no right to do'. It resolved that: 'A call be made to people to unite, resist and fight privatisation; that Cosatu and the entire democratic movement initiate a campaign to educate the people about the effects of privatisation; and that the Mass Democratic Movement initiate a campaign to stop foreign capital from buying people's assets from the racist government.' The sale of Iscor has been strongly criticised by the unions, especially the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), which represents 9 500 of Iscor's 58 000 workers, and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) which has 2 000 members at three

Iscor mines. Both are Cosatu affiliates.

One of their key complaints is that Iscor is 'selling off the nation's wealth cheaply to major business interests'. According to Numsa, 'this sale of the wealth of our nation, created through the taxes of the people and the efforts of the workers, will give the people's wealth to private individuals and will end up very soon as yet one more area of domination by the small number of monopoly corporations which already control South Africa's economy'.

'If the share price is R2, the asset value of the company will be undervalued by some R1,5-billion. In addition, steel companies at present quoted in the steel industry sector of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange are selling at a premium of between 150% and 800% over asset value'.

Purchasers, the union argued, would

obtain an immediate windfall. The union has also attacked the assumption that privatisation automatically means greater efficiency. Its stand is borne out by a recent survey on privatisation in Margaret Thatcher's Britain.

The authors of *'Does Privatisation Work? Lessons from the UK'* find that privatised firms, judged on several measures - including their total factor productivity - have not done noticeably better than those enterprises still owned by the state. For example, between 1983 and 1988 British Steel's productivity grew fastest (by 12,4% a year), while that of British Telecom, flagship of privatisation, managed just 2,5%.

The authors argue that the performance of both privatised and state-owned firms is so similar because they have undergone the same changes in management culture, and now have clear

## How Iscor offered shares to its workers

Under the Iscor share offer, unskilled and semi-skilled (blue collar) employees were offered a three-pronged package:

- \* 200 free shares each.
- \* 1 000 shares each at 20% discount.
- \* 1 500 preferential shares at the offer price of R2 a share.

Workers could defer taking up the discount offer and the shares would become available again in 1991 - but at the market price, not the offer price.

A deferred payment plan was also available to workers taking up the discount offer. Iscor would lend workers the money, which would be paid off in equal monthly instalments, interest free. No dividends would be received and the shares could not be sold until they were fully paid off.

Numsa questioned the way shares were divided between different grades of employees.

The company has refused to say what proportion will go to different grades, and the union speculates that 'using reasonable assumptions based on wage differentials, black employees will be allocated about 1% of the shares, white production workers about 2% and management about 7,5%.'

Numsa in fact claims that management was banking on black workers not having any money to take up the preferential and discount offers. Iscor's privatisations unit denied Numsa's claim that shares were weighted in favour of white-collar workers, saying that white-collar workers had taken up 7-million free and discount shares compared to 47-million by blue-collar workers.

But far fewer blue-collar workers had taken up the discount offer - only 57% as against 95% in the white-collar category - indicating the merit of union claims that black workers cannot afford the discount shares. Iscor would not release the figures on the total allocation nor on the preferential applications.

market principles.

Market principles are seen as underlying Iscor's remarkable success. According to Iscor MD Willem van Wyk: 'There is no reason for the state to continue to retain control of Iscor ... it has been run and managed successfully as a private company'. And according to company chairman Marius de Waal, three separate investigations into the privatisation of Iscor - one at the request of the Minister for Administration and Privatisation; a second by the Iscor's merchant bank, Senbank; and a third by Finansbank, in its capacity as merchant bank to the state for Iscor's listing - all highlighted Iscor's private sector orientation; its financial soundness and profitability; its ability to generate funds for capital replacement, redevelopment and to pay dividends; and the advantage of retaining Iscor as one entity.

If the company is being run so efficiently, why the need to privatise? asks Numsa.

**T**he point is, of course, that efficiency is not the main reason for the state's privatisation thrust - revenue is. When talking of efficiency, it is worth asking 'efficient for whom?' Who will the profits of efficiency and competition go to?

Not to the financing of housing, health care and services for the mass of the population. Instead, it is likely that services for these people will be rationalised and become even more expensive.

The concept of employee share

ownership is increasingly becoming a favoured strategy of management. Esops are seen as an important way of winning workers over to capitalism. Giving workers a stake in the ownership of companies - an argument pushed strongly by Anglo American - will convince workers of the virtue of capitalism, make them query socialism, and show them that apartheid and capitalism do not necessarily go hand in hand.

By giving workers a stake in the company and paying them dividends, capital hopes to persuade them to work harder and strike less.

Numsa's Adrienne Bird has also argued that one of the main thrusts behind esops is that 'they form a sophisticated component of a wider strategy to weaken collective bargaining for a living wage'.

In other words, management hopes to influence worker shareowners to curb wage demands in the interests of future investments.

No doubt this influenced Iscor in offering shares to workers. Equally important is the state's desire to allay employees' fears about privatisation and win support for further privatisation - to make people feel part of the process.

Esops have also received strong opposition from the unions. Says Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo: 'We are essentially opposed to the idea. Fundamental issues must be redressed first. We're struggling for a living wage, let alone considering buying shares, which are seen as perpetuating inequality.'

'Equity participation does not redress the fundamental inequalities in South African society and certainly won't resolve the country's unemployment crisis. This will require a restructuring of the economy.'

The shortcomings of esops for workers are apparent from the Iscor offer.

The stake in the company offered to black workers is so small that it would not give them a real say in company policy, nor would it lead to a significant redistribution of wealth in their hands. Workers are entitled to only 10% of the share offer as compared with 65,68% for institutions. Despite the restriction on a single investor or group of investors from holding more than 20% of the shares, Numsa argues that wealth will be concentrated in the hands of a few companies.

And the percentage of smaller investors will diminish through staggering - a process whereby large companies buy up the shares of smaller shareholders.

The limitations of esops are also highlighted by Iscor's lack of consultation with workers and their unions over the share offer. Iscor management strongly defended its right not to consult unions, arguing that privatisation was not a management matter - it was the decision of the government, the major shareholder.

**A** privatisation unit spokesman argued that any share offer was made unilaterally. It was up to the potential buyer, in this case each employee, to decide whether to accept it.

But despite an understanding of the limitations of participation in share ownership schemes, Numsa chose to urge its members to take advantage of the Iscor share offer.

Why?

Numsa's experiences with esops have been problematic. The pitfalls of participation were shown in the Samcor case, where workers demanded that dividends from shares, placed in a trust on their behalf, be paid directly to them rather than used for community projects.

The dangers of a hands-off approach,



Anna Zieminski, Afrapix

**Numsa members at Iscor: Mandated the union to apply for shares**

says the union, were highlighted by the Anglo offer. Here the union urged workers not to take up the offer - largely unsuccessfully. Numsa stresses that workers can turn against the union when they compare their position with other workers who have accepted shares and who in the longer term will benefit monetarily.

Initially the union decided to oppose the Iscor offer, and discussions with workers revealed that they were reluctant to participate.

The union changed its mind after it was approached by Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) which offered Numsa members loans for the purpose of taking up the discount and preferential shares at interest of the prime overdraft rate plus 1%. RMB would charge a flat underwriting fee of 2.5% on the loan amount to cover brokerage, administration costs and costs of hedging against market risk.

This would amount to R2,085 a share as opposed to the offer price of R2. The underwriting of the loan meant that the workers would not lose money in the event of a drop in the share price. Numsa convinced workers to accept the loan offer.

Workers signed a mandate giving Numsa the right to apply for the shares, using the loan offered by RMB, and to sell them on their behalf.

The union was not required to sell the shares to RMB, and was in the process of negotiating a deal with the Metal Industries Pension Fund. The mandate also authorised Numsa to receive any surplus in excess of the bridging finance and underwriting charges and to invest this in a trust fund for the benefit of Iscor members.

Workers agreed that they had no claim on the surplus, trust or any earnings in the trust unless they left Iscor or the trust was liquidated.

In that case, the trustees, who would be union members at Iscor, would have absolute discretion to reimburse Iscor workers a share of the trust.

The use of money in the trust would be decided by workers collectively. According to the union, it would be used for collective action, such as a strike fund.



*Iscor workers: Offered a shares 'package' when the company was privatised*

Although the RMB offer was initially designed to cover both the preferential and discount shares, it proved administratively too difficult to organise the funding of the discount offer. The union had only one week in which to get the workers to sign the forms.

On the free shares, workers agreed to take up the offer and then give instructions for their immediate sale. The income from this, the union said, was money which the workers regarded as their own.

A total of 4 800 workers, about half of Numsa's members at Iscor, signed the preferential share offer. No details were available as WIP went to print on how many Numsa members took up the free and discount share offers.

But according to the privatisation unit, more than 86% of Iscor employees took up the free share offer, and 58% of the 58 000 workforce had applied

for 50-million of the 70-million shares available on the discount offer.

Numsa says its decision was not ideal - but that the best thing it could do was to take a principled stand and use the opportunity to educate workers about share ownership. It expected to avoid the problems of the Samcor scheme as workers would sell their shares immediately and the trust would hold money and not shares on behalf of the workers.

Another consideration, it argued, was that the Inkatha-linked United Workers' Union of South Africa (Uwusa) organises in many of the same factories and has no scruples about share ownership. There was a real fear that Numsa members, if encouraged to adopt a hands-off approach, would feel disgruntled and that this would undermine the union's strength.

NUM, on the other hand, refused to accept the share offer.

According to NUM's Jerry Majatladi, the union expects workers to abide by a congress resolution rejecting esops, and that they would not participate in any aspect of the scheme.

'It is a matter of principle. We believe it is impossible to negotiate for decent wages and working conditions while also being shareholders in a company', he says.

Unions have recognised that there is little benefit in privatisation for most workers.

The picture becomes more complicated where privatisation is accompanied by esops, as in the case of Iscor. Numsa and NUM have adopted different strategies towards the Iscor offer.

NUM's principled hands-off approach seems the more logical given union recognition that esops distract from more fundamental issues rather than leading to any real worker control. But it should be recalled that NUM members took advantage of the Anglo share offer.

Numsa, in participating in the Iscor share offer, does so both in the face of its own reservations about such schemes and the Cosatu resolution. While acknowledging that its stand on the share offer is not ideal, it hopes that the immediate sale of the shares will avert the problems which arose at Samcor.

# The case for urgent economic intervention

A crucial task of trade unions is to fight privatisation and deregulation, including the onslaught on national collective bargaining structures, argues **DAVID LEWIS** of the Transport and General Workers' Union. To ignore these issues may be to help create an economy so hostile to working-class interests that even majority rule cannot remedy it.

**E**conomic policy, like many other major issues in the South African struggle, tends to be subordinated to the struggle for political power.

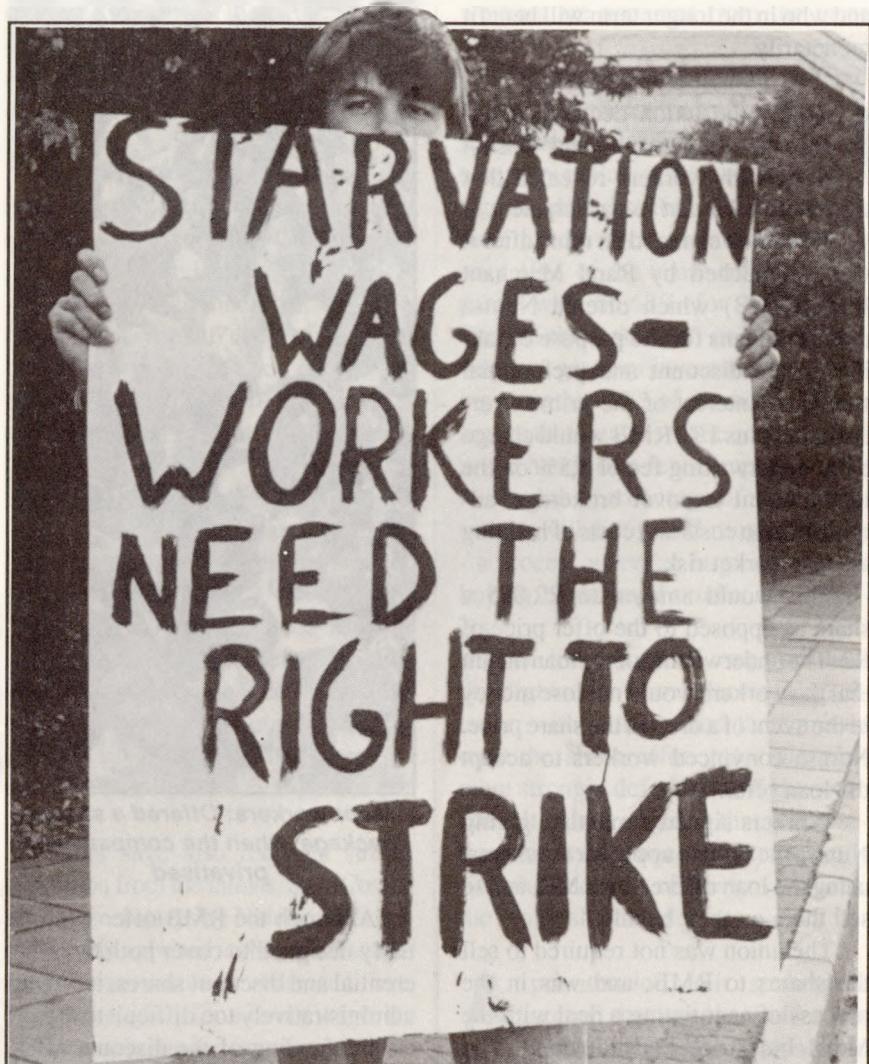
Progressive discussion of the economy, be it in university seminar rooms or union shop-steward meetings, tends at best to be located in future time when political power will provide us with the ability to determine economic policy.

Despite the Congress of South African Trade Unions' recent commissioning of the Economic Trends Group and attempts to mobilise against such state policies as privatisation, the terrain of economic policy is relatively uncontested and remains all but the exclusive preserve of the state and capital.

To allow the continuation of this situation is a serious error for at least two reasons.

Firstly, current economic policy has the clear potential to postpone liberation day. Certainly, insofar as economic policy weakens and divides (either directly or indirectly) the union movement and the popular movement, the liberation struggle itself is weakened.

Secondly, economic policy is not immediately reversible. If economic structures and practices are set in place now it will be extremely difficult, indeed impossible, to simply disband the



*The current conflict over collective bargaining is important ...*

structures and reverse the policies on liberation day.

There are no better examples of this than in the reaction to two current pillars of state economic policy: privatisation and deregulation.

Both are accurately perceived as a severe attack on the union movement and the working class generally.

Both clearly set in place structures and institutions that will be very difficult to displace even with the reins of political power in the hands of the majority.

Both manifestly weaken the power and ability of the post-liberation state

to control and direct the economy and are directly and self-consciously antithetical to a planned, ordered and socialist economy.

Yet, for all their manifest dangers, it is difficult to know how to force back the tide of privatisation and deregulation.

It may be possible for well organised public sector unions to prevent local authorities in which they are organised from privatising their activities. But how do we prevent the denationalisation of public assets? How do we prevent the sales of the Iscos, Eskoms and Sats?

The marked lack of success of union and progressive political organisations in Europe in preventing similar sales is not encouraging.

One recently advanced suggestion warrants closer attention. The liberation movement, in its capacity as a future government, may consider announcing that all shares bought in assets that are currently publicly owned will, in future, be reclaimed without compensation. While this may leave open the vexed question of the nationalisation of assets that are currently privately owned, it would certainly help to discourage selling off assets currently owned by the state.

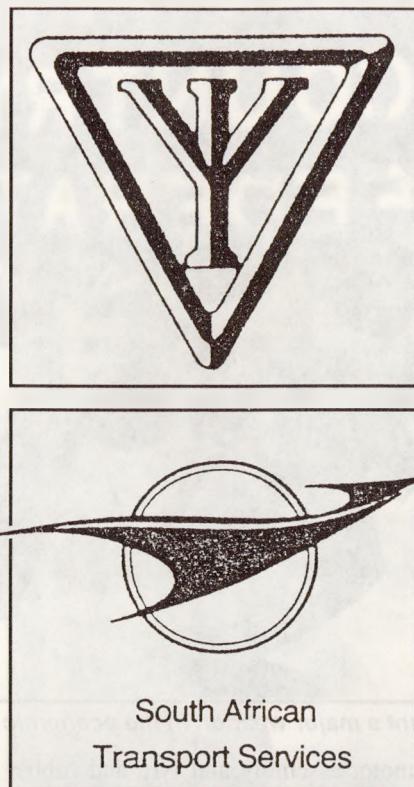
Deregulation - or 'liberalisation' as it is often referred to - may be slightly easier, and no less important, to prevent than privatisation. But there should be no doubt as to the deep commitment of both the state and capital to deregulation.

Quite clearly the nub of the deregulation drive is not, as the media would often have us believe, the lifting of racially discriminatory licensing provisions that inhibit black-owned business. Instead, it is aimed at eliminating those statutory provisions that protect working-class interests - safety regulations, minimum wage regulations and aspects of social welfare provision to which capital contributes.

Here there is a substantial capacity for union defensive action, although there is the real danger of effective union complicity in establishing a dual labour force, with the organised segment protected by private pension schemes, medical aid schemes and the like, while other workers' labour in deregulated 'small business', often producing components for big capital or services ancillary to it.

Clearly union opposition to deregulation has to extend beyond protecting its members from its immediate ravages.

It must aim instead at defending and extending statutory protection of basic working-class interests. The campaign around the Labour Relations Act is an instructive example of the unions' capacity to cripple and force



*Iscor (top) has been sold off already - now how do unions stop the same happening to Sats?*

changes to anti-working-class legislation.

Quite clearly, however, unions are best able to defend working-class interests - and to contribute to building a future socialist society - in areas that impinge directly upon their day-to-day activities and where they are able to exercise maximum pressure.

The structure of collective bargaining is the most important of these areas. It is therefore necessary that the unions identify a collective bargaining system that expresses the national economic objectives of the working class.

What is required is a collective bargaining structure that enables unions to pitch their demands and settlements at the 'ability to pay' of the most successful enterprises in the economy.

There are a number of macro-economic arguments that support such a high wage policy - that extend beyond the narrow corporatist interests of union members. The impact of a higher national wage level on effective demand is one such argument.

In addition, there is the impact of a national high wage policy on produc-

tivity. A policy that sets wages at the capability of the most successful enterprises will drastically squeeze profit levels in less successful enterprises, either compelling them to raise productivity or forcing them out of business altogether.

Either way, productivity levels would be raised, providing the basis for a steady increase in wages and investment.

This is, of course, in marked contrast to the current policy of capital and the state. Their approach aims specifically at underpinning unproductive employers by exempting them from collective bargaining agreements.

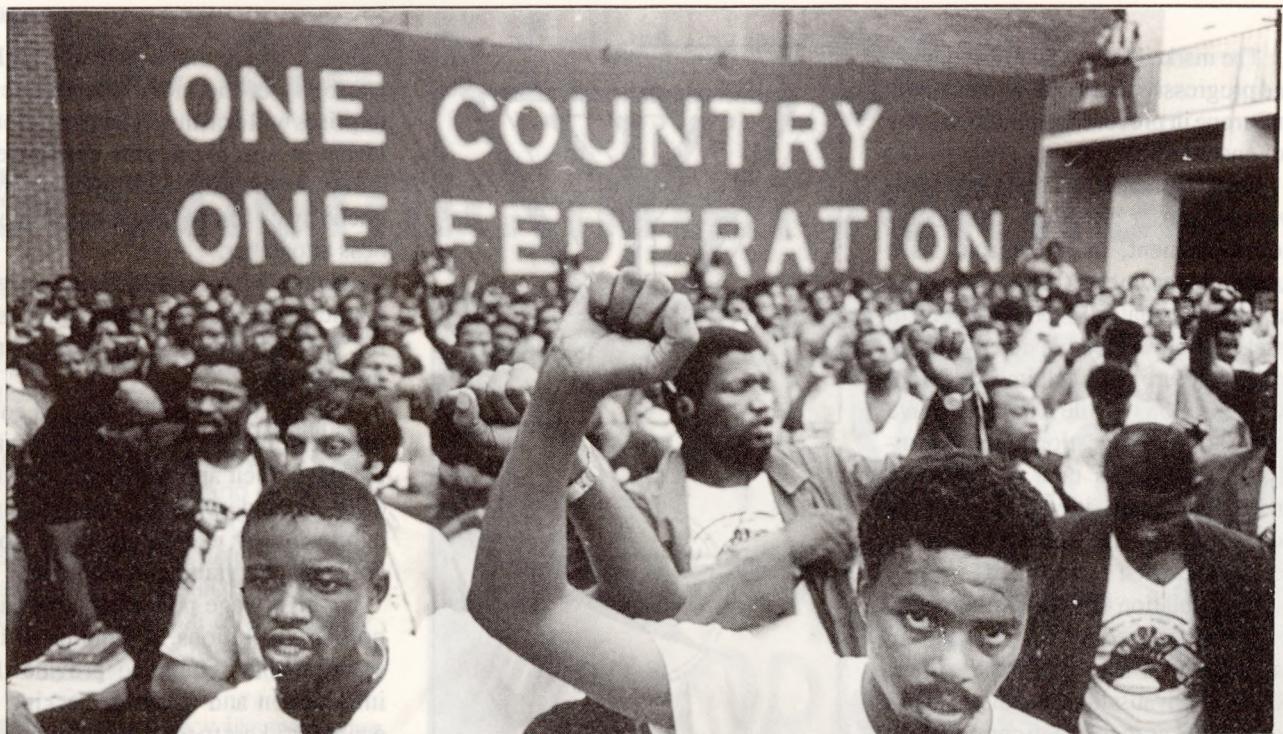
A high wage policy requires supporting institutions. It requires an institution that is able to provide the information and financial backing to enable workers to relocate from unproductive enterprises that are forced out of business to those that are capable of paying the agreed wage. It requires institutions that retrain workers to enable them to take up new employment in high productivity enterprises.

Above all though, this policy requires highly centralised collective bargaining structures. It requires an institutional arrangement that is capable of imposing its decisions on all enterprises in a given industry.

**M**oreover the notion of a wage rate determined by the concept of a living wage and by the ability to pay of the most successful enterprises presupposes that the collective bargaining institution will not only be able to set the wage, but will also be able to bargain directly over the rate of profit of the enterprises in the industry. Quite clearly the 'ability to pay' can only be determined in the context of an agreed rate of return.

Pie in the sky? Maybe. But there is a growing acknowledgement that the most important instance of deregulation is the current drive, led by capital and supported by the state, to decentralise the structures of collective bargaining.

Defending existing centralised collective bargaining structures and extending into new areas is therefore a prerequisite for building a society where



Paul Weinberg, Afrapix

*'It is within Cosatu's capacity to blunt a major weapon in the economic armoury of the state and capital ...'*

the national wage level meets the reasonable requirements of the working class and where its determination conforms to rational macro-economic requirements.

That is why the current conflict over collective bargaining structures is vitally important. Without considering all its underlying motivations and consequences, it is important to note the following points.

Firstly, capital has posted several victories in this area. Many of these victories have been relatively unheralded but are nevertheless important - as when a single company refuses to bargain nationally and forces a national union into a regionally based plant-level bargaining structure.

Other attacks have been more dramatic and public, as manifested in the wilful destruction of employer organisations and industrial councils.

Secondly, capital has by no means had it all its own way. Certain union victories, like those of capital, have been low-key but important. There is a general impression that in company-based conflicts unions have held the line against employers intent upon decentralised company-level bargaining.

In addition there have been some landmark union victories - none less so that the recent Numsa victories in the

motor-assembly and tyre and rubber sectors where major employers have been forced into centralised national collective wage-bargaining structures.

Moreover, there is real evidence of a growing intention within Cosatu to fight back on this front. It seems this will, in part, take the form of a concerted campaign against Barlow Rand, the corporation most strongly associated with the decentralisation thrust. Powerful union organisation in Barlow plants in the engineering, mining, food and paper sectors provides Cosatu with an exceptionally strong base for waging this campaign.

**B**ut for such a campaign to succeed the crucial importance of the issue must be recognised. Mostly, the facets that have been stressed to date have been the narrow organisational and industrial relations gains to be made by pursuing centralised rather than decentralised bargaining.

These are important and probably are sufficiently persuasive to win support for centralised bargaining. But they are not enough.

The struggle for centralised bargaining is not 'merely' about workers placing themselves in the structure most conducive to winning a bigger increase. It is about the organisation and the structure of the national economy.

The Labour Relations Act and the state of emergency are, in their different ways, perceived by Cosatu and the Mass Democratic Movement as major political attacks upon the working class and the oppressed and exploited masses. Accordingly, they have generated a campaign of defiance and opposition that has effectively blunted - or sometimes nullified - these attacks.

Deregulation and privatisation need to be cast in the same mould and need to be confronted with the same vigour if we are not to inherit an economy impervious to the requirements and interventions of a post-liberation government.

These may not seem like pressing and urgent issues. They are. Privatisation and deregulation are proceeding apace and are already relatively well advanced.

The issues may seem abstract and difficult to mobilise around. This assumption, too, is incorrect. The struggle for centralised bargaining is crucially important in the battle against deregulation and for a rationally planned economy. The significance of the issue is easily appreciated by organised union members.

It is quite clearly within Cosatu's capacity to blunt a major weapon in the economic armoury of the state and capital.

# Foreign debt: Rolled over, but not playing dead

Anti-apartheid sanctioneers should not view the latest debt rescheduling agreement secured by Pretoria as a 'tragedy', argues economist **ALAN HIRSCH**. The credit-starved South African economy remains vulnerable to pressure - especially as repayment of long-term debts outside the rescheduling net looms.

**W**hen the South African government announced that it had secured a new debt rescheduling agreement with foreign banks, British Anti-Apartheid Movement president Trevor Huddleston's response was: 'This is tragic news'.

Coming on the eve of the Conference of Commonwealth Heads of Government in Kuala Lumpur in October, the announcement that Pretoria's repayment of short-term credit had been extended to the end of 1993 undoubtedly took some pressure off the South African economy.

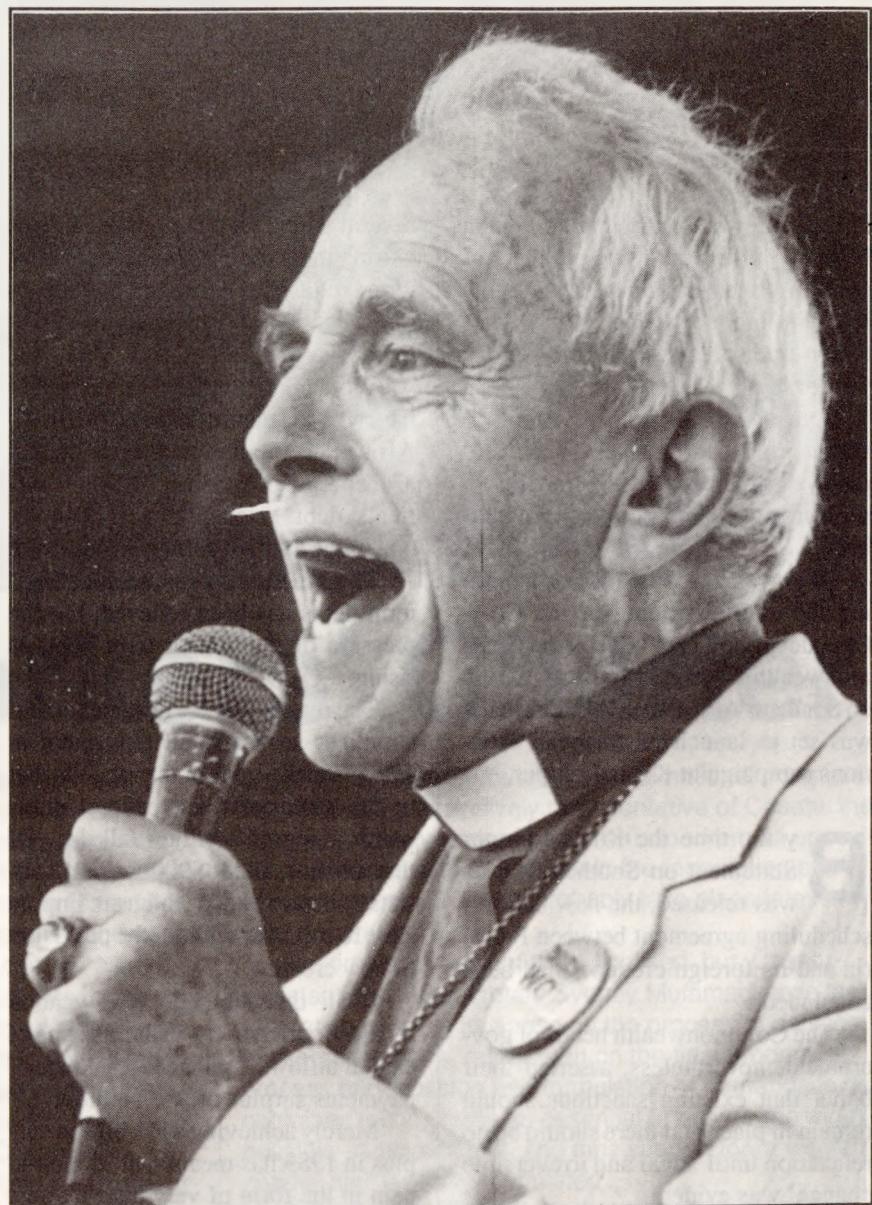
But Huddleston's response may have signified too much initial optimism in the potential of rescheduling - and too much pessimism at its failure.

An African National Congress-led international campaign had aimed to block rescheduling until there were clear indications that South Africa was 'well on the way to democracy'.

The Commonwealth itself had been preparing to launch a financial sanctions campaign at Kuala Lumpur.

But Huddleston and many like him, who believed that the banks might be stopped from rescheduling until apartheid was no more, optimistically underestimated the power of the banks and overestimated their sensitivity.

True, banks had driven South Africa to the brink of insolvency. But they had done so for commercial reasons, not political ones. They were unlikely to put their South African assets in danger for what they saw as a



*Archbishop Trevor Huddleston: Underestimated the power of banks in their handling of Pretoria's foreign debt*

political whim.

Yet it was pessimistic to see the new rescheduling agreement as a tragedy. South Africa is still under a tremendous amount of pressure in foreign capital markets and its vulnerability adds force to initiatives for change.

The power of the financial sanctions weapon was testified to by the fact and the timing of the partial easing of security measures by the South

African government and by the release of eight very senior political prisoners.

Furthermore, the thrust of many financial sanctioneers was not to block the rescheduling of short-term credit but to cut off new credits - a strategy that may have as much potential now as it had before the Commonwealth Conference.

South Africa remains extremely vulnerable to interference in its supply

of capital from abroad, as it has been since its debt crisis came to a head in October 1985.

The financial sanctions strategy used since then by activists at home and abroad in the struggle against apartheid has been more successful than many similar campaigns because of the immediate and dramatic effects of balance of payments problems on the South African economy.

Over the next two or three years, South Africa will experience a particularly severe foreign exchange crunch because of the coming to maturity of several longer term loans outside the rescheduling 'net', which only applies to non-trade credits for periods of one year or less.

Anti-apartheid groups and multi-lateral organisations such as the Commonwealth aim to exert maximum pressure during this period of vulnerability.

After years of preparation, including the commissioning of the Cole-Ovenden report (WIP 61) by the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Group on Southern Africa, the Commonwealth was set to launch its financial sanctions campaign at Kuala Lumpur.

**B**y the time the Kuala Lumpur Statement on Southern Africa was released, the new debt rescheduling agreement between Pretoria and its foreign creditors had been concluded.

The Commonwealth heads of government, nevertheless, asserted their belief that existing sanctions should remain in place and there should be no relaxation until 'clear and irreversible change' was evident.

With the exception of Britain, they agreed to maintain and tighten existing sanctions and to develop new forms of financial sanctions.

Further, the Commonwealth foreign ministers' committee on Southern Africa was called upon to meet again in April 1990 to exert further pressure on the South African government.

The third rescheduling agreement looks generous to South Africa, but in the context of a continuing capital drain - in which R25,3-billion has left the

country since 1985 - repayment remains a heavy burden for the local economy.

As in the first two rescheduling agreements, only the repayment of short-term credits (excluding trade credits) is delayed. In 1986 that meant \$14-billion out of \$24-billion; in 1987 about \$13-billion out of about \$22-billion; and in 1990 it will mean \$8-billion out of \$20-billion.

A total of \$12-million would have been due for rescheduling in 1990 but several banks took the option of converting their short-term loans to long-term credit, thus removing them from the scope of the rescheduling agreement.

While reducing the figure might have made matters easier for South African negotiators, it does mean that a declining proportion of South Africa's debt is open to rescheduling options as they are currently conceived.

The pressure from overdue short-term debts has been relieved, but the pressure of due longer term debts is rising.

The reason that the new agreement stipulates such a small repayment in 1990 - a mere 1,5% of the total - is that in the same year longer-term debts worth at least \$2-billion fall due. Of that amount, about \$900-million consists of bearer bonds which are impossible to roll over without the provision of new credit.

If all the debt due next year is repaid, South Africa - in the absence of capital inflows - will need a balance of payments surplus of R6,7-billion.

Merely achieving a R4-billion surplus in 1989 has meant real economic pain in the form of very high interest rates. Even more punishing measures will be needed next year.

In the years after 1990 similar burdens will weigh on the South African economy, although not quite as heavily.

Finance Minister Barend du Plessis presented the worst case scenario - one which involved the refusal of new trade credits to South Africa. He said South Africa would have to repay \$8-billion over the next four years (about R20,8-billion at present exchange rates), including \$1,5-billion inside the net and

\$6,5-billion outside it.

This is slightly more than the \$7-billion required to repay foreign debts in the four years since 1985. If common measures of the severity of debt burdens are used - the ratio between debt, on the one hand, and the gross domestic product or the value of exports, on the other - then South Africa's load is now a little lighter.

If South Africa manages to roll over some of the longer-term debts, or to obtain new trade credits, the burden will be still lighter.

But, in the absence of significant new capital inflows, the only way South Africa will pay the debt is through constraining domestic consumption and growth - which would put the apartheid regime in severe political danger.

**T**he finance ministry is certainly far from complacent. It has opened three new offices abroad. The most recent of these was opened in Hong Kong in August this year.

Since then, the finance department has confirmed that it has hired prominent liberal journalist, *Daily News* political correspondent Bruce Cameron, 'to inform people of the situation in South Africa, dealing mainly with the financial media in Europe'.

The search for finance enters new markets in the Far East and the propaganda war enters a new plane.

As long as South Africa faces the worst case scenario sketched by finance minister Du Plessis, economic life in the country will be uncomfortable and the economic sector will be a source of pressure for change.

But the South African government can avoid the worst case scenario by retaining access to foreign trade credits, through gold swaps with Swiss banks and through obtaining the odd medium- and long-term loan.

Anti-apartheid activists can curtail the supply of new credit to South Africa.

But the campaign seems more likely to succeed if grassroots organisations abroad focus on obtaining governmental measures at national and local level to stop loans and trade credits rather than trying to directly influence the actions of individual banks.



Paul Velasco, Afrapix

# The Workers' Charter

A proposed workers' charter endorsed by all major elements of the South African opposition could be in place by the end of next year in terms of a programme agreed on by an education workshop of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) held in November.

This follows a decision by Cosatu's annual congress in July to pursue the idea of a workers' charter 'as a matter of urgency'. The congress resolution is in line with a recommendation in the constitutional guidelines initiated by the African National Congress (ANC) that a workers' charter drafted by the organised working class be incorporated into a post-apartheid constitution.

In terms of the workshop decision, Cosatu will - during the next five months - begin drafting and distributing a questionnaire to establish what demands workers wish to see in a workers' charter.

At the same time, Cosatu will initiate a meeting with 'other formations in the Mass Democratic Movement' (MDM) and the National Confederation of Trade Unions (Nactu), which it hopes will result in a joint workers' charter campaign. This meeting will probably take place in mid-1990, says Cosatu national education officer Khetsi Lehoko.

Cosatu is also planning to consult the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu), he says.

Thereafter, Cosatu will draw the contributions into a

single draft charter to put to a special national congress. Rather than be exclusively representative of Cosatu, the congress is likely to draw representation from all opposition formations with an interest in the formulation of a workers' charter. This will probably take place late next year or early in 1991.

The timetable has yet to be finalised, but Cosatu assistant general secretary Sydney Mufamadi says the federation is laying its stress on the process of defining workers' demands, rather than on the final product. 'A process of discussion and formulation of demands to be contained in the charter is essential to ensure the widest possible participation in, and thus support for, a workers' charter as it is finally formulated'.

Sactu and the SACP have already put forward their suggestions on the matter, in the form of their own draft charters. The SACP offering represents something of an about-face for the party. In 1985 the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (now merged into Numsa) was strongly attacked by sectors of the SACP who charged that Mawu's proposal concerning the compilation of a workers' charter was 'workerist'.

Two years ago, however, the ANC's publication of its constitutional guidelines showed a marked change in thinking on the issue within the outlawed movements. The guidelines argue for a workers' charter as part of a post-apartheid constitution.

\* In the interests of debate, WIP is publishing the full texts of the two draft charters put forward to date

# The SACP draft charter

We, the working people of South Africa, the main producers of our country's wealth, declare:

\* That, as workers, we are daily robbed of a rightful share of the fruits of our labour.

\* That, as black workers, we are subjected to even more intense exploitation by a system of capitalism which uses national domination to keep the wages low and profits high.

\* That, as part of the black oppressed whose forebears were conquered by force of arms, we continue to suffer all the social, political, economic and cultural deprivations of a colonised people.

\* That the most urgent task facing us as workers, as black workers, and as part of the black oppressed, is to use our organised strength both at the point of production and among our communities, to put an end to the racial tyranny and to help bring about a united, non-racial, non-sexist democratic South Africa based on one person, one vote, as broadly defined in the Freedom Charter.

\* That we see the winning of such a non-racial democracy as part of a continuous process of creating conditions for the building of a socialist society which will be in the interests of all our people; a society free of exploitation of person by person which alone can complete the liberation objectives in all spheres of life.

\* That we are the most vital social constituent of the broad liberation movement in which we play a part both as individuals and through our trade unions and political organisations. We stand ready to work together



Paul Grendon, Afrapix

*\* There shall be no restrictions on the right of workers to organise themselves into political parties or trade unions'*

with all other classes and groups genuinely committed to non-racial democracy, at the same time safeguarding our class independence and our right to propagate and mobilise for a socialist future.

\* That we extend a hand of friendship to our white class brothers and sisters whose long-term interests lie in the unity of all labour - black and white.

In order to ensure:

\* That victory in the national liberation movement is not hijacked by a new exploiting class of whatever colour;

\* that the immediate interests of the working people are fully safeguarded in the post-apartheid state; and

\* that we are not prevented from asserting our democratic right to win the majority of the people for a socialist future.

We the working people, adopt this charter (as an elaboration of the Freedom Charter) and pledge ourselves to strive together, using our organised strength, to guarantee its implementation.

## Ownership and control of the economy

The commanding heights of the economy shall be placed under the owner-

ship and overall control of the state acting on behalf of the people. Such control shall not be exercised in an over-centralised or commandist way and must ensure active participation in the planning and running of the enterprises by workers at the point of production and through their trade unions.

Economic policy shall aim to generate the resources needed to correct the economic imbalances imposed by race domination, and bring about wealth redistribution for the benefit for the people as a whole. More particularly, steps shall be taken to do away with the white monopoly of ownership and managerial control.

Participation in the state sector by domestic or foreign private capital, where judged necessary, shall not give such capital a controlling share, and all enterprises, whether state-owned or private, shall be compelled to safeguard the interests of workers and the nation as a whole. The continued operation of market forces in the functioning of economy shall not prevent state intervention in areas relating to the people's basic needs.

In the period after the defeat of the race tyranny, the fundamental perspective of working-class political and trade union organisations shall be to work

for the creation of economic and social conditions making possible a steady advance towards a democratic socialist society.

#### **The right and duty to work and to a living wage**

Every adult person has a right and duty to work and to receive remuneration according to his or her contribution. The new state shall, as a matter of priority, work to create economic conditions in which jobs are available to all. Until this is achieved the state shall ensure that social support is provided for the unemployed and members of their families.

All managerial and administrative posts and other jobs shall be open to every qualified citizen irrespective of race, colour, sex or religion. The equal right of access to jobs, managerial and administrative posts shall be subject to positive measures necessary to correct the imbalances inherited from the era of race discrimination. Public and private institutions shall have a duty to provide facilities for training and opportunities to apply the acquired skills.

The state, in consultation with the trade unions, shall adopt and enforce a national minimum wage.

Child labour and all forms of forced and semi-forced labour shall be prohibited. Special attention shall be paid to redressing the oppressive situation involved in farm-work, domestic service and those trapped in the so-called homelands.

#### **The right to organisation and struggle**

There shall be no restrictions on the right of workers to organise themselves into political parties or trade unions. Trade union organisation shall be based on the principles of "one industry - one union" and "one country - one federation".

Trade unions and their federation shall be completely independent and answerable only to the decisions of their members or affiliates, democratically arrived at. No political party, state organ or enterprise, whether public, private or mixed, shall directly or indirectly interfere with such independence.

The state shall ensure that the trade unions, as the key mass social organisation of the organised working class, are given the opportunity to participate at all levels of economic planning and implementation.

All workers, in every sector of the economy, shall have the right, through their trade unions, to engage freely in collective bargaining and to use the strike weapon.

All legislation dealing with procedures for collective bargaining, including any limitations on the right to strike in exceptional cases, shall require the consent of a majority in the trade union movement.

In the case of all other labour legislation there shall be prior consultation with the trade union movement whose views on such proposed legislation should be timeously tabled in parliament.

#### **The right to media access**

Steps shall be taken to break the existing media monopoly by big business and the state and to ensure effective workers' access to all sections of the media.

#### **The right to family life and social facilities**

All legislation and labour practices which prevent or interfere with the right of families to live together shall be outlawed. Migrant labour shall be phased out or, in cases where it is unavoidable, provision shall be made for family accommodation during any period of service exceeding three months.

The state shall aim to make adequate accommodation and children's schools available to all workers and their families close to their places of work. All enterprises shall help to create local or regional recreational facilities for the work-force as well as creches and primary health care facilities.

No parent, male or female, shall be disadvantaged or disabled from any form of employment by virtue of his or her duty to help rear children and, where necessary, this shall be ensured by the creation of special facilities

including provision for paid maternity and paternity leave.

#### **The right to health and safety**

Conditions of work shall not threaten the health, safety and wellbeing of the workforce or of the community at large, or create serious ecological risks.

All workers shall have the right to paid annual leave and paid sick leave.

Those injured at work shall receive proper compensation for themselves and their families. Provision shall be made for the rehabilitation of all disabled workers including, where necessary, the provision of alternative employment.

#### **The right to security in old age**

All workers shall be entitled to an adequate pension on retirement, provided either by the state or the relevant enterprise.

#### **The right of women workers**

The state shall aim to integrate all women workers as full and equal participants in the economy. Any form of discrimination against women workers in regard to job allocation, wages, working conditions, training, benefits, etc. shall be prohibited.

Positive steps shall be taken to help correct the discrimination suffered by women both in the workplace and the home. Opportunities shall be created to enable women to acquire skills for employment outside the home.

It shall be the duty of the state, trade unions, workers, political parties and all other mass and social organisations to ensure effective women's participation at leadership, management and other levels to take measures, including educational campaigns to combat all forms of male chauvinism both in the home and outside.

We declare that the above immediate and long-term objectives are in the best interests of all the working people and of society as a whole, as individuals and as part of the organised working class, we pledge to struggle, side by side, for their full implementation.

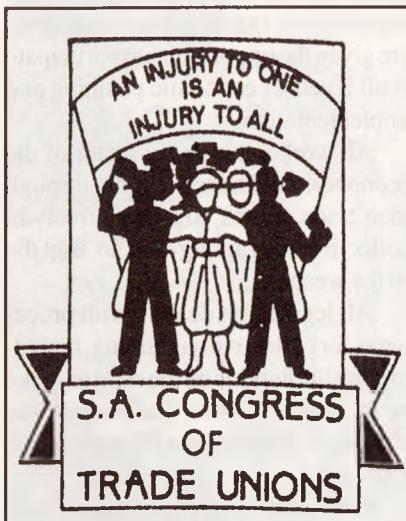
# The Sactu draft charter

We, the workers of South Africa, declare that the future of the people of South Africa lies in the hands of the workers. It is only the working class, in alliance with other progressive-minded sections of our community, who can build a happy life for all South Africans, a life free from unemployment, insecurity and poverty, free from racial hatred and oppression, a life of vast opportunity for all our people.

The working class can only succeed in this great and noble endeavour if it itself is united and strong, if it is conscious of its inspiring responsibility. The workers of South Africa need a united trade union federation in which all sections of the working class can play their part unhindered by prejudice or racial discrimination. Only such a truly united federation can serve effectively the interests of the workers, both our immediate interests of higher wages and better working conditions, and our ultimate objective of complete emancipation from national oppression and economic exploitation.

There can be no peace in our country or in the world until all forms of racial discrimination, oppression and exploitation are completely abolished. We, the workers of South Africa, resolve to protect the interests of all workers with our guiding motto:

An injury to one is an injury to all.



## All workers shall have the right to work

The most fundamental right of every worker is the right to work.

In a free and united democratic non-racial South Africa, every worker shall be guaranteed the right to work.

## All workers shall have the right to:

- a - Form and join trade unions of their choice.
- b - Organise trade unions on the basis of one industry, one union.
- c - Organise all unorganised workers.
- d - Work towards unification of all democratic trade unions into one national federation.
- e - Oppose victimisation, harassment,

bannings, banishment and imprisonment of trade unionists and workers.  
f - Reject all forms of representation which are not in conformity with the principles of democracy.

## All workers shall have the right to freedom of movement, assembly and speech.

Passes shall be abolished and all pass laws shall be repealed. All workers shall receive equal treatment at the workplace and before any court of law.

## All workers shall have the right to live with their families in decent housing near their place of work

The state shall provide workers with accommodation, recreational facilities, creches, nursery schools and playgrounds for our children.

All racist legislation restricting the right of our people to live where they choose - like influx control and Group Areas - shall be abolished.

## There shall be equal opportunities for all workers

Workers shall not be discriminated against on the basis of race, class, colour, sex or religion. All forms of education and training shall be free and compulsory for all.

# The 1913 charter: A minimum wage

The workers' charter currently being prepared is the third such document to have been drafted in South Africa.

The first, drawn up in 1913, was the product of a period of militancy centred on white mineworkers on the Witwatersrand.

Drafted jointly by white Transvaal-based unions, the charter focused on workplace issues and job protection.

Its immediate demands included an eight-hour work day and a minimum wage for skilled workers. It also covered overtime, apprenticeships, notice periods and a range of issues

specifically related to conditions on the mines.

Very much a product of its time, the charter demanded a minimum wage for white unskilled workers.

The first charter's broader demands included the right to strike, to meet and to enjoy freedom of speech.

Along with its insistence on the enforcement of an eight-hour work day throughout the country, it demanded limited overtime or Sunday work, healthy working conditions and a greater government role - through the establishment of wage boards, the consolidation of benefit societies under state

control and the drafting of a national Workmen's Compensation Act.

The second workers' charter was drafted in 1943 and '44 by the South African Trades and Labour Council (SATLC) in response to a suggestion from prime minister Jan Smuts that the labour movement draw up a code for submission to his government.

SATLC was the first major initiative towards non-racial trade unionism in South Africa, although African workers never made up more than a tiny minority of its members.

Passed in November 1944, the SATLC charter was a far broader docu-

6. Workers shall have the unconditional right to strike in support of their demands.

There are irreconcilable contradictions between capital and labour, therefore workers shall have the right to withdraw their labour to win their demands.

#### **Workers shall be paid a wage which enables him/her to satisfy the minimum needs of the family**

a - Discrimination in wages on the basis of colour and sex shall be abolished.  
 b - All workers shall be paid a living wage.  
 c - A national minimum wage (NMW) enforced by law shall be established, linked to the rate of inflation.  
 d - The national minimum wage shall take into account the need to cover rent, electricity and water, upkeep of the home, food and clothing, transport and entertainment.

#### **Workers shall have the right to:**

a - Free medical care.  
 b - Three weeks sick leave per annum on full pay.  
 c - Four weeks annual leave on full pay.  
 d - Women workers shall be guaranteed the right to return to their jobs at the same rate of pay after maternity leave.

#### **There shall be a maximum eight-hour working day**

a - In order to ensure full employment, a maximum of eight hours per day shall be worked, i.e. a basic 40 hours per week.  
 b - Overtime must be banned and the working day shortened.  
 c - Shift work shall be shortened/abolished.  
 d - Where workers are involved in strenuous work, a six-hour day shall be worked, i.e. 30 hours a week.

This will ensure adequate time for rest and leisure, giving workers the opportunity to develop their talents and skills unrelated to their specific jobs. This will encourage all-round development of the worker.

#### **Unemployed workers shall be the responsibility of the state**

a - Unemployed workers shall be entitled to unemployment benefits, which will take into account all the basic needs of the worker and his/her family.  
 b - Unemployed workers will shall be the responsibility of the state and will be fully supported.

#### **All workers shall be eligible for retirement with full pension**

Pensioners shall be the responsibility of the state.

Male workers shall be eligible for pension at the age of 60. Those doing

strenuous work shall be eligible for pension at 55.

Female workers shall be eligible for pension at 55.

#### **Health and safety shall be guaranteed**

a - A 'health and safety at work' charter should be evolved to guarantee the wellbeing and safety of workers.  
 b - Families of those injured at work and the injured workers themselves shall be fully compensated.

#### **Women workers shall have the right to participate in all sectors of the economy without discrimination**

a - Women workers shall enjoy full rights as equal participants in the economy of our country.  
 b - Women workers shall be guaranteed their jobs back after maternity leave at the same rate or higher rates of pay.  
 c - Childcare shall be available for the children of working parents.  
 d - Women shall have the right to train for any job they wish to.

#### **All racist labour legislation shall be outlawed, including the racist Labour Relations Amendment Act**

All restrictive racist labour legislation shall be abolished - such as influx control and the Group Areas Act.

#### **All workers shall have full political rights**

All workers shall have the right to vote without any qualification and to stand as candidates for all institutions which make laws that govern the people in a united people's state.

Workers shall have greater control over and share in the wealth they produce.

All workers and people shall have a universal franchise in South Africa.

The working class, the peasantry, revolutionary intelligentsia, progressive youth and women shall fight side by side until South Africa is free from national oppression and economic exploitation.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

## **for white workers**

ment than its 1913 predecessor, seeking not merely to protect workers from the excesses of their employers, but the ultimate eradication of capitalism.

Its preamble asserted: 'Organised workers ... know ... the only solution to our problem lies in South Africa adopting socialism as our form of government.'

Against this background, the SATLC charter dealt extensively with agricultural policy and agricultural workers, education, health, housing and labour laws.

It also included a bill of rights which envisaged:

- \* the right to full employment and to security from loss of income;
- \* the right to decent housing, clothing, food and medical services;
- \* the right to recreation and leisure;
- \* the right to free education; and
- \* the right to freedom of association, speech, assembly, movement and worship.

The charter also demanded legal entrenchment of a 40-hour working week; the right to join trade unions and to strike; a minimum wage; an industrial court; equal opportunity and pay for women workers; paid maternity leave and creche facilities.

# TUTOR NDAMASE

## The homeland leader who doesn't believe in union-bashing - or does he?

Transkeian workers are surprised and more than a little suspicious of the official blessing that trade unions have been accorded.

LOUISE FLANAGAN looks at the issues.

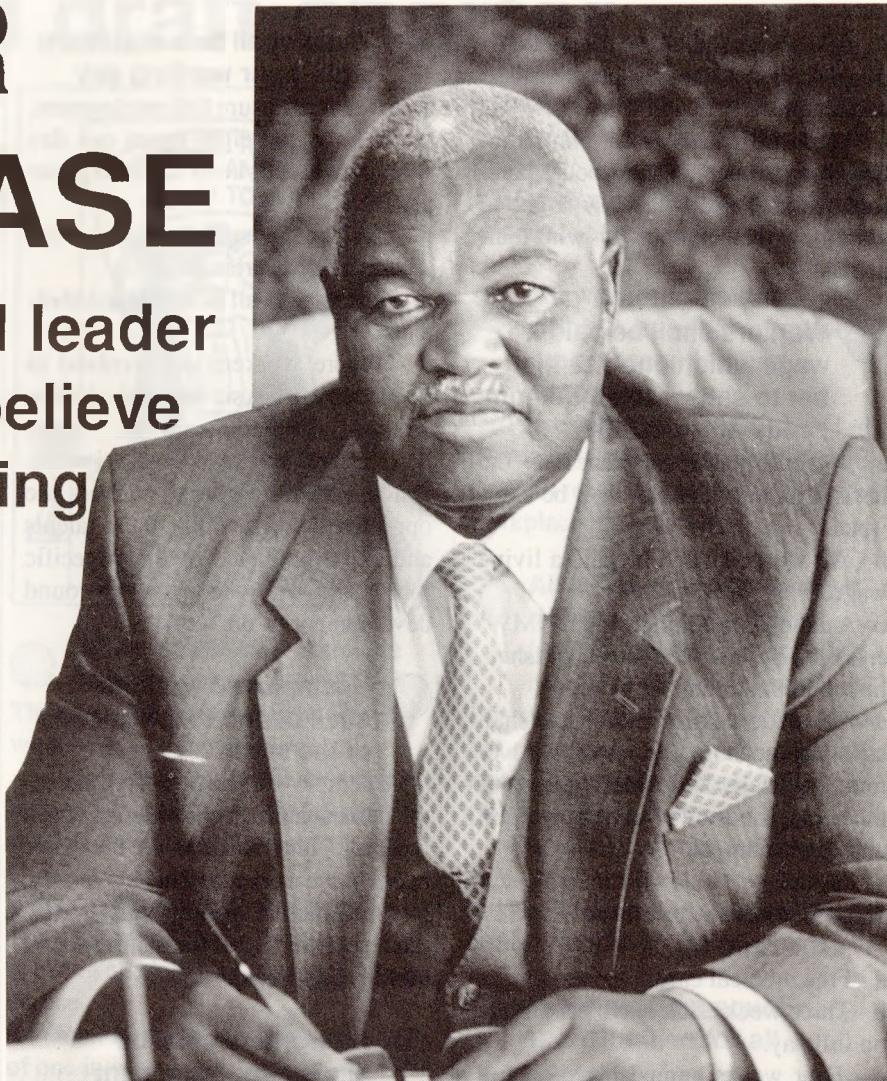
The Transkei Workers' Co-ordinating Committee (WCC), the homeland's largest labour organisation, has described recently-announced changes to labour law as a 'very small loophole, but one that must be turned to the workers' advantage'.

The question is just how fledgling organisations - for more than a decade denied the right to organise - can grasp the new opportunity outlined by homeland president Tutor Ndamase at the 'independence' day celebrations last month.

The announcement by Ndamase essentially endorsed the right of Transkeian workers to organise - a right that had never been formally removed by statute but which had become impossible to exercise in the context of sweeping repression of the Matanzima era.

Ndamase's stance on labour and other promises of liberalisation constituted a move unheard of for a bantustan.

Already the WCC, formed some months ago as an interim structure to pave the way for a general union, and the Transkei Post Office Workers'



**President Tutor Ndamase: His stance on labour issues is unheard of in a bantustan**

Association (Trapowa) are operating more openly.

While they are questioning the motives of Major General Bantu Holomisa's military government in making the move, they are aware it represents a dramatic advance from the Matanzima era when attempts to organise any section of the population were frowned on heavily and legal mass-based organisations were outlawed.

Like the other 'independent' bantustans, Transkei has been strongly anti-union and attracted foreign and South African investment through the offer of a non-unionised and badly underpaid workforce.

It promulgated its own labour laws a year or so after 'independence' in 1976 with provisions similar to old-style South African labour laws. Its key components are the Labour Rela-

tions Act - a mere six pages long - and the Wage Act.

The Labour Relations Act makes provision for liaison committees to be set up, with workers and management nominating an equal number of members. It sets out limited procedures for disputes and even defines strictly limited conditions in which strikes are legal.

The Wage Act provides for a Wage Board, intended to make wage determinations for each industry, lay down working conditions and minimum wages.

The Acts seem to have been little protection for workers. Both exclude domestic workers and public servants although farm labourers are included.

The Wage Board has done little at all. It is believed that the first wage determinations were gazetted only in

April last year.

In addition, these inadequate legal provisions have been rendered almost meaningless by the anti-union stance among Transkeian rulers and employers.

With the advent of military rule at the end of 1987, things started to change - largely because of protests by workers when the improvements they expected under the military (with its anti-corruption and pro-Transkeian campaign) did not materialise.

**A** few months after the coup, a wave of strikes occurred in Transkei.

Workers demanded better wages and improved working conditions.

Before the new rulers had been in office for a year, there had been strikes at Jet Stores, at the Holiday Inn (involving 300 workers), at Magwa Tea plantation (involving 2 000 workers) and among bus drivers, post office and hospital workers.

In most cases the military council sent a representative to meet the strikers and promised that their grievances would be addressed.

But little was done about workers' grievances despite this appearance of sympathy and in recent months workers' demands have become more vociferous, with an increased feeling that Holomisa is siding with employers and foreign investors.

In two landmark actions, Transkeian workers at Langeni Sawmills organised the first known legal strike in the territory in July and last month thousands of workers marched on the military council to present their demands.

The state's response to the increasing worker militancy has been confusing. The reaction of the military rulers has been strongly contradicted by actions of the police - the result, it seems, of long-standing conflict between the two.

These differences have become so marked that one worker commented: 'The government in Transkei is divided into two parts: there is a military government and there is a police government'.

Holomisa initially referred to the strikes as a problem inherited from the



**Bantu Holomisa: Strikes were 'a problem inherited from Matanzima'**

Matanzima administration. He stated that the workers' wage grievances were 'genuine' and promised that the military council would respond.

Later he seemed more impatient. 'I wonder why there is so much pressure when we have only been in power for eight months,' he said in August last year.

Apparently constrained in its response to workers, the military nevertheless seems sympathetic towards the strikers and many workers express some kind of belief in the military.

The actions of the police - regarded widely as faithful followers of the deposed Matanzimas - have been very different.

The Transkei police have long had a reputation for brutally repressing all opposition and have been repeatedly linked to notorious death squads.

Shortly after the military came to power, several prominent policemen and well-known Matanzima supporters lost their positions in what was clearly a cleanup of the police force. Subsequently Holomisa strongly condemned illegal South African Police operations in Transkei and Transkei Police complicity in these.

For the first months after the coup the police appeared to 'behave' themselves and kept a low profile. But by August they were beginning to reassert themselves to smash worker protests. Frequently their actions

appeared as attempts to 'sabotage' liberal actions by the military government.

Police action on striking hospital workers and boycotting students at Butterworth as well as police minister Rev Benjamin Dlamini's blanket ban on strikes and the banning of the Prisoners' Welfare Programme - which had been assisting strikers and students - was met with a huge silence from the military council. This led to accusations that Holomisa had no sympathy for the workers.

The dismissal of Dlamini a few months later, in another measure to clean up police ranks, did not help the military to regain the workers' faith.

More strikes started, including the legal strike at Langeni Sawmills, culminating in a week during October when factories in the main industrial area of Butterworth and others in Umtata ground to a halt.

Once again the military met workers to listen to their demands and finally 10 000 workers marched on the military council's office with a list of basic grievances.

**B**ut, while the military met the workers and accepted their list of demands, the police moved in yet again.

After marchers had dispersed and were on their way back to the Ngangelizwe township, conflict with police erupted. Police later claimed they were attacked, but organisers said police were provoking people and that marchers were not involved. Throughout the rest of that week gunfire was heard in Umtata every night and observers attributed this to police action.

The workers' demands were:

- \* legalisation of trade unions;
- \* designation of structures, like conciliation boards and industrial councils, for resolution of disputes;
- \* a dramatic change in labour legislation;
- \* an end to harassment of workers involved in trade unions;
- \* scrapping of the Public Security Act, which allows for detentions and in terms of which many political prisoners are charged;
- \* listing of Transkei's state of

emergency;

\* unbanning of organisations.

The 'independence' day celebrations came just a week after the march and saw the official announcement that workers should form unions, that new labour legislation was on the cards and that even the African National Congress might be unbanned.

During the announcement, Ndamase explained what was envisaged.

'My government has decided that workers should elect their own worker representatives from each firm. One member should be a representative in an ad hoc worker representative body on a central (union) level. They shall be responsible for reporting their disputes to the magistrate or the district commissioner or labour inspector'.

Ndamase also said that an industrial court was on the cards 'with powers to adjudicate, arbitrate and grant interim relief'. These, he said, were interim measures while new legislation was drawn up. A Wage Board would also start functioning in November.

**N**damase told all workers to organise themselves into unions, which would be required to register with the Department of Manpower Planning and Utilisation by the end of November - barely a month after the announcement. He said a 'labour law consultant' would be appointed to draft new legislation and invited 'legal representatives, organised groups, workers and others' to contribute to establishing unions and drafting 'sound legislation'.

Stating that the legislation should be promulgated early next year, Ndamase said: 'The government is advanced in its preparation of such legislation which exercise is futile without the participation of all the parties concerned'.

He added that people were free to form voluntary associations and organisations.

The announcements have been treated with a great deal of suspicion by Transkei workers.

Members of the WCC are among those who doubt the reform moves. 'There is that "but" - you can't do it

freely', one commented. 'For example, Ndamase says he's not against unions in Transkei, but you must not operate as in South Africa'.

It seems clear that the military has been forced into making some concessions to workers in a bid to end the strikes, restore 'order' and, more importantly, give investors more confidence.

'It's (due to) pressure from the workers,' said a WCC member. 'But they are trying to hijack us on the way.'

There is also a feeling in Trapowa and the WCC that the moves are influenced by FW de Klerk's promises of reform in South Africa. Some argue that Holomisa - who has always said he wants to be part of negotiations with South Africa - is moving in line with De Klerk. South Africa appears to approve of Transkei's moves. Certainly there has been no public reaction from Pretoria even to tentative statements that the ANC may be allowed an office in Umtata.

On the face of it, the announced labour reforms addressed most of the workers' demands, but a closer look reveals them as platitudes without substance.

'He was vague enough to look as if he was addressing the problems of the workers whilst he wasn't making any sense,' said WCC organiser Oupa Khumalo. 'They've been pretending to identify with progressive structures, but we know the government's policy of inviting imperialists to invest in Transkei at the expense of the workers'.

Since union organisation has never been illegal in Transkei but almost always been practically impossible, an optimistic reading of Ndamase's speech would be that workers will no longer be victimised for demanding their legal rights.

But the committee system he mentioned seems to get workers no nearer their objective of collective bargaining: it seems structured solely to report grievances.

And the Wage Board is nothing new - it has been there for years and just doesn't function.

Adding to the uncertainty provoked by the vagueness of the an-

nouncements were the actions of the police on the same day. Although the announcements were made by Ndamase, they were very obviously supported by - or quite likely even drawn up by - the military rulers who watched over Ndamase as he spoke.

Even as this occurred, what appeared to be yet another attempt by police to undermine any possible success by the military was underway. Police moved in on the same afternoon on a meeting of youths organising a new youth structure and detained about 200.

'They say they are not against these structures, but at the same time they are trying to detain people who are building these structures', commented a member of the WCC.

The WCC pointed to contradictions within the government's stance. 'While the government is calling upon the workers to form trade unions, it is at the same time prescribing how this must be done', it commented.

'The committee calls upon all workers to continue rejecting the undemocratic structures created by the state in collaboration with the bosses.'

The WCC has rejected the idea of immediate registration, saying it doesn't know what the consequences of this might be. To register before the laws were drafted would be to put the cart before the horse, Khumalo suggested.

'Trade union structures can't just go and register when they don't even know the legal structure. We're not opposed to registration in principle. But we're opposed when it's not known what the implications of it are'.

**H**e added that workers were strongly opposed to being confined to structures that operated only in the bantustan.

Participation in drafting legislation also evokes unease.

A Trapowa spokesman said: 'If labour law is being drafted, it will affect all the workers, so we'd like to be involved in it but we don't know how. We envisage a situation where they ask for ideas but we are not part of the actual drafting. We should be part of drafting that law'.



Benny Gool/Alapix

***The new mood among workers in Transkei: ANC and SACP flags at the recent reburial in the homeland of Chief Sabata Dalindyebo, who died in exile***

Some WCC members were more suspicious. 'The government wants to swallow us. They want to be the head of the structures. They are inviting us so they can operate at the head. We don't want to be directed to operate by the government', said a WCC member.

But most organised workers believe that there is now some leeway for structures to operate more openly and they are determined to take the gap. The lifting of the state of emergency and unbanning of 15 organisations in early November tends to confirm this perception.

The bottom line for all those interviewed was that they wanted unions, better labour laws, freedom to organise and to join the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

The fledgling unions have support - one estimate put it as high as 50% of Transkei workers - but experience of mass organisation is lacking. The effects of Transkei's isolation from the rest of South Africa and the impact of years of bantustan repression are evident.

Khumalo stressed the effects of repression. 'It used to be that participating in trade unions was the same thing as participating in the ANC.

Workers didn't want to be seen participating because of the conditions. They are not really acquainted with trade unionism'.

He added: 'The employers are not used to bargaining collectively with workers,' speculating that laws could 'help them get educated'.

**T**here is little contact between existing Transkei structures.

Trapowa was the first worker organisation to emerge, taking off during the postal strike earlier this year (WIP 61). But it has emphasised that it is an association rather than a union. Trapowa officials said this was because government workers were not allowed to form unions.

Both Trapowa and the WCC said their lack of contact was not because they had fundamental disagreements but rather because they organised in different sectors. Trapowa also said that bail conditions imposed on workers jailed during the strike limited their contacts.

There is also little contact with groups based outside Transkei, although the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has had an office in Transkei since the beginning of the year and the WCC operates from the same build-

ing.

The WCC plans to become a general union, a factor which could complicate its achieving affiliation to Cosatu. Yet workers believe that Cosatu could play a central role in ensuring workers voices are heeded in the drafting of legislation.

'If Cosatu can officially be part of drafting the laws, we will support it. We won't be part of that meeting if Cosatu isn't there', one insisted.

Trapowa workers suggested that the Workers' Charter currently being discussed in South Africa could be used as a basis for new legislation.

All of this points to the need for an extended time scale for the preparation of new laws and for unions to debate how (and whether) to use the offer of participation.

Holomisa's promises of a referendum to determine whether people wish to reunite with South Africa is being considered in the light of mobilisation (even though such a referendum is unlikely to result in Transkei's immediate reintegration).

'Transkei is a bantustan. We see ourselves down here as part of South Africa, but on the other hand there's this so-called "independence". There's also talk of a referendum, of taking "independence" back to Pretoria and we don't know the implications of that', said Khumalo.

'If "independence" is taken back to Pretoria, this mobilising space in Transkei may be closed. Maybe that space should be widened to make space for the liberation movements, rather than closed. De Klerk may be embarrassed to exert control over an "independent" state'.

He concluded with the dilemma: 'We don't want a situation where we are separated from Cosatu. But we don't want to adopt South African legislation'.

Trapowa representatives were cautiously hopeful. One put it this way: 'We must not lose sight of the fact that Transkei is part of the Pretoria regime. It's dependent on Pretoria. What Pretoria says goes'.

'But we believe that what it is doing now must be frustrating Pretoria a little bit'.

# LRA

## Backfire on bosses?

Since the LRA was promulgated on September 1 1988, trade unions have demonstrated a resilience which has flown in the face of bosses' expectations. The legislation, intended to curtail industrial action, has had the opposite effect: strikes and work stoppages have more than doubled since last year, particularly in the last quarter of 1989 (see Trends).

However, the anti-LRA campaign - although aggressively, if unevenly waged - has failed to prevent the state from implementing the Act.

Last year the government introduced the Act despite a massive three-day stayaway from June 6.

The stayaway campaign prompted a two-pronged response from employers. The South African Co-ordinating Council on Labour Affairs (Saccola), the biggest employer federation, showed a willingness to pursue discussions on the Act with trade unions.

When large-scale dismissals and disciplinary action followed the stayaway, Cosatu and the National Congress of Trade Unions (Nactu) threatened further action. But support for the dismissed workers was not forthcoming and workers often found themselves alone in drawn-out fights for reinstatement. Many workers lost their jobs permanently.

Initial anti-LRA action ceased, leaving a relatively calm industrial relations climate in which talks with Saccola continued. But with bosses playing a wait-and-see game and little visible shop-floor pressure, Saccola began to backtrack. By September 1,



*The anti-LRA campaign bolstered union confidence and militancy*

there was little to prevent the promulgation of the LRA, leaving unions to face the challenge of devising new strategies and responses to the legislation.

Cosatu general-secretary Jay Naidoo, speaking at Cosatu's third national congress, pointed to weaknesses in the labour movement's responses to the Act. One such weakness had been a dependence on negotiations to deliver the goods. Another was the failure to sustain the pressure imposed by the stayaway.

Developments in the period prior to the promulgation of the Act were also significant for the long-term growth of the union movement. Cosatu, Nactu and 43 independent unions overcame ideological differences and joined ranks to oppose the LRA. The Workers' Summit in March 1988 highlighted the potential for working-class unity.

Soon after the promulgation of the Act, employers began testing the terrain with contentious clauses. Section 79, the clause which gives bosses the right to sue for damages resulting from strikes, became the one most feared by unions. Although no union has yet paid any damages, and the bigger corporations have not yet re-

sorted to Section 79, it remains a threat for unions.

Unions, in particular the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), have been devising their own strategies to counter the use of this clause. Numsa has, in more than 40 cases, refused to take responsibility for strikes or to negotiate with bosses unless they had waived the right to sue. This has meant that bosses would have had to sue workers in their individual capacity - a pointless exercise as workers are unable to pay.

A Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) official noted that 'bosses would much rather negotiate with unions than with masses of workers under no structured forum, resulting in chaos and stronger conflict. This is one of the reasons why they have refrained from using Section 79 which could theoretically completely destroy the unions'.

In recent talks between the unions and Saccola, Saccola agreed to have the clause scrapped because of its impracticality. Recommendations regarding the clause have now been made to the Manpower Commission. Other sections of the Act which severely restrict the unions' power are Sections 27 and 35 which involve time

limits and technicalities around declaring disputes.

These sections have also complicated existing procedures, thus placing great strain on unions. The procedure for appeal against industrial court decisions has changed so industrial court rulings can now go on appeal to the special labour court without interim relief being granted - a process which can drag on for years while workers go without wages. The LRA also allows bosses to ignore the principle of last in, first out, enabling bosses to selectively retrench workers and thus erode union leadership on the shop-floor. With unfair labour practices defined in the Act - rather than by the industrial court - sympathy strikes are now illegal.

Unions are also facing the increased use of interdicts, lockouts and dismissals. Since the LRA, bosses have been flooding the courts seeking interdicts and interim relief - and have had them easily granted.

Backed by the LRA, bosses have become more aggressive and confident. Against this background Cosatu, Nactu and the independent unions met again at the second Workers' Summit in August 1989. Hampered by a government restriction order and police presence, 'political' discussions were almost impossible. One note of discord was over the proposed dates for an anti-LRA stayaway, with elements in Nactu arguing that it should be divided into two, with one day coinciding with the anniversary of the death of Steve Biko.

Unlike the 1988 response, the second Workers' Summit attempted to ensure an ongoing campaign including an overtime ban, a consumer boycott, work stoppages and demonstrations.

The September 6 stayaway, coinciding with the white elections and a national protest action called by the MDM and other organisations, received massive support nationally. On September 5, the stayaway was partial, due to confusion stemming from the Workers' Summit. And on Biko Day a negligible stayaway was reported.

As a runner-up to the September 5 and 6 stayaway, the summit decision on factory level action was implemented

in the form of one- to two-hour work stoppages or lunch-time demonstrations. However, the action was only partially supported and had little impact on its own. A two-week consumer boycott, which began on a high note on September 26 in the Eastern and Western Cape, had much less support in other regions. Shops in Johannesburg's city centre were not significantly boycotted and the level of support elsewhere declined after a few days. In all, the boycott was largely ineffectual.

The ban on overtime, implemented shortly after the consumer boycott, is still continuing in varying degrees in different sectors. A Labour Monitoring Group survey of unionised companies on the PWV employing more than 100 workers, showed that there was an average 36% support for the ban in the first four weeks, though level of support varied in different sectors.

Most employers reacted by threatening to restructure their labour force and changing the shift system to obviate overtime work. Others began interdicting unions.

The overtime ban entered its eighth week unmonitored, but union organisers in the different regions report that support has dwindled. Bosses have clamped down on workers and there was also poor co-ordination in regional structures.

In the midst of mass marches and protest action throughout the country, Cosatu also called on workers to march against the LRA in the country's major cities. In Johannesburg, unions hoped for 100 000 workers. Only 15 000, among them students and political activists, participated. In Cape Town, the march drew stronger support.

With national strategies seemingly exhausted at least for now, individual unions are pursuing their own strategies at plant or company level. A popular strategy is one whereby unions have negotiated that employers voluntarily disregard the LRA. While there are few formal contracting-out agreements, in some cases management have indicated that they will not use the more contentious LRA clauses.

Within unions, there has been some debate as to whether contracting out has not detracted from the anti-LRA campaign. Unions using the strategy - the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) already has about 25 000 workers covered by contracting-out agreements - say the battle against the LRA is being pursued at all levels and that their members, whether contracted out or not, continue to support the campaign.

While some gains have been achieved since the implementation of the campaign, it is evident at this stage that it has not met its original objectives. Unions have admitted that regional and local campaign co-ordinating structures have not functioned efficiently and in some cases links between union leadership and workers on the shop-floor have been weak.

Despite these setbacks, the LRA campaign has had an impact on management and employers, who more recently have backed down in the face of some union demands. At the Saccola talks on October 18 and 19, Saccola agreed:

- \* to scrap the technicalities and time limits for bringing disputes;
- \* that appeals to the special labour court be quick and that the court should be staffed by experts;
- \* to revert to the pre-September 1988 position in regard to damage claims;
- \* that industrial court judgements be published unless the courts decide otherwise;
- \* that International Labour Organisation (ILO) guidelines apply on dismissals for incapacity, misconduct and retrenchment; and
- \* that the clause defining an unfair labour practice be restructured.

The commitment to change or to scrap these clauses does not mean the struggle against the LRA is over. But the campaign will be judged by the extent to which it has added dynamism to the trade union movement - much as the Living Wage Campaign did in 1987. Combined with other factors, it has indirectly bolstered union confidence and militancy and led to a substantial increase in industrial action after the huge lull of 1988.

## Labour Trends: 9 September to 3 November

The last quarter of 1989 has been marked by large scale strikes, disputes, stayaways, a consumer boycott and overtime bans. Employer actions included lockouts, dismissals, and interdicts.

In the 8-week period under review, Sars monitored 52 strikes involving over 71 500 workers. Major unions involved in these strikes were Numsa, Fawu, CWIU and Ccawusa. Not included in this figure are the 20 000 Sarhu railway workers who went out on strike in the first week of November. Of the original 20 000 workers, 6 000 were dismissed on 15 November.

Wages and working conditions were the major strike issues of the period though disciplinary action and worker dismissals also featured. A number of the 52 strikes were legal with unions following generally agreed procedures. However illegal strikes still dominated the period, reflecting a general trend this year.

Strikes over this period have tended to be longer than usual - ranging from between one and three weeks. Examples are Premier Food Industries 19 days; Stocks and Stocks 21 days; Shell 28 days; Transvaal Metal Box 18 days; Black Mountain Mine 15 days and Sasol Mines 13 days.

Currently in the spotlight, the South African Breweries strike entered its fourth week with no sign of a settlement being reached. (See strike table)

After a fairly quiet period, mineworkers have again been on strike at De Beers, Impala Platinum Holdings and Messina Copper Mine. Railway workers too have made a comeback in the current Sarhu strike where worker action seems to be similar to that of the 1987 strike. Once again trains have been burned and

damaged and there have been clashes between police and strikers.

In keeping with recent trends, bosses confidently used lockouts and interdicts against striking workers. Over 7 600 workers were locked out in eight cases. The number of indicted workers, which is much higher, is difficult to monitor as the weapon is used frequently in many strikes. Police intervention in industrial action has also continued, particularly in enforcing lockouts and interdicts. Workers accused Barlow Rand bosses in Kew of hobnobbing with the police after about 100 policemen baton-charged workers who attempted a sleep-in at the factory.

Increasing numbers of workers and shop stewards have been arrested and charged with intimidation during strikes. As a result unions have had to pay out large sums in bail money. Cosatu and Nactu have stressed the necessity for discipline during strikes, but bosses are quick to employ scabs, provoking confrontations between them and strikers. Strike-related violence continues - particularly in the present SAB strike and six Afcol workers go to court on murder and assault charges.

The last quarter of this year was also marked by continued action around the Labour Relations Act campaign, and the question of trade union unity.

It is almost two years since Cosatu, Nactu and the independent unions launched their anti-LRA campaign where worker action has been powerful, but sporadic. Recent talks with the employer federation, Saccola, have been encouraging with Saccola moving on a number of clauses outlined by the unions.

After more than two years of bitter fighting between the two rival Ccawusa factions, and Harwu's battle with

one of these factions this year, the three groupings have come together to form the South African Commercial and Catering Workers Union (Saccawu), which was launched on 12 November with a membership of 90 000. Forming the new union out of a merger between the two Ccawusa's and Harwu has meant that firm compromises have been demanded from all parties who recognise that the aim of the union must be to unite and organise workers in the commercial and catering sectors. Political clashes which marked most of the fighting previously will have to take a back seat.

Cosatu's aim of achieving one union per industry continues with the incorporation of smaller unions into Cosatu's affiliates. Recent unity talks between Potwa, Saptea and Peasa have paved the way for a merger in the near future. In another development, the Durban Integrated Municipal Employees Association, with 5 600 Indian members, indicated two months ago that it was considering the possibility of a merger with Cosatu's Transport and General Workers Union. Both these moves are important breakthroughs for Cosatu: the Potwa merger will bring a number of coloured workers into the federation and the TGWU/Dime talks may bring in a large number of Indian workers.

The birth of Sactwu - from a merger between Actwusa and Gau - has achieved one union for the industry. This giant industrial union now has a membership of 185 000, and almost 100% unionisation.

With the annual shut-down of many factories in sight, industrial action will probably decrease. Wage settlements with major retail stores have already been signed - ruling out large-scale wage strikes in this sector. Strikes over retrenchments, such as the one at Ellerines, could however, run on into December.

### Strikes and Disputes

#### Strikes and Disputes: TRANSVAAL

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events
Acro Engineering Vanderbijlpark	Numsa	177	03.11.89	Management dismissed 177 workers and employed scabs to replace employees on strike over an alleged unfair dismissal. The union was planning a response.
Amalgamated Beverage Industries	Fawu	1 000	28.09-02.10.89	More than a 1 000 Coke employees at three plants went on strike. They demanded firstly, that management recognise the overtime ban called by Cosatu and Nactu and secondly, that management cancel disciplinary hearings against union members. The strike was sparked off by an ABI management decision to discipline drivers who allegedly were not working in accordance with their terms of employment. The workers' demands were not met, and they returned to work four days later.

Autoflug Chamdor	Numsa	300	Sept 89	Numsa members went on strike, claiming Autoflug management used its disciplinary procedures inconsistently. The action related to the disciplinary clause which states that a worker found drunk during working hours will be dismissed. Workers demanded that management use this procedure against a non-union member found drunk on duty. They argued that on previous occasions, Numsa members had been disciplined in this way. After two days management suspended the worker concerned and the strike ended.
Barlow Rand Kew	Numsa	500	28.09.89	A potentially major showdown between Cosatu affiliates and Barlow management was sparked by the dismissal of 500 Numsa members at Barlow Appliances in Kew. The workers were dismissed after a sit-in to back demands for desegregated facilities and for the reinstatement of two workers fired for allegedly assaulting a personnel manager. Shortly after the sit-in, management gave workers a five minute ultimatum: return to work or be fired. Later the supreme court granted Barlow's an interdict ordering workers to leave company premises. Numsa said 100 policemen baton-charged workers who attempted a sleep-in at the factory. Recently, Cosatu affiliates in the mining, metal, textiles, food, paper and construction sectors have clashed with Barlow management at Romatex, Metal Box, Rand Mines and Nampak. Another development in the battle between Barlows and the unions was when the SA Printing and Allied Industries Federation - in which Nampak has a major influence - decided to withdraw from the sector's Industrial Council. This happened immediately after Ppwawu applied for membership. And not long ago, Metal Box dismissed its entire East London workforce after a dispute. A recent Cosatu CEC singled out Barlow Rand as one of the country's most sophisticated union-bashers, and the federation planned a campaign to defend its affiliates.
Blackchain Centre Diepkloof	Fedcraw	100	26.09.89	After 100 workers allegedly refused to meet a deadline for submitting renewed job applications, they were locked out by Blackchain Centre management. Fedcraw and management began negotiations to resolve the dispute.
BP SA Transvaal and Cape	CWIU	350	08-13.09.89	CWIU members at BP plants in the Transvaal and the Cape went on strike after a conciliation board hearing failed to break a wage deadlock. After five days, settlement was reached on increases of 15% or R160 a month, whichever was higher. Provision was also made for maternity, paternity and compassionate leave for employees.
Cargo Carriers	TGWU	1 257	04.10-07.11.89	The giant transport company was brought to a virtual standstill when workers staged a national strike at 24 depots. The illegal strike was in sympathy with 280 workers from the Vanderbijlpark branch who were dismissed for 'illegal striking' when they ignored a return to work ultimatum. The dispute was settled at mediation. All workers were reinstated - except for three Vanderbijlpark shop stewards.
Ellerines	Ccawusa	6 000	27.10.89	Workers threatened a strike at Ellerines after Ccawusa declared a dispute with the company over retrenchments. According to the union, the company intended to retrench workers but had not informed the union of the number involved.
Fedics	Ccawusa	1 500	14.08.89	A deadlock in wage negotiations between Fedics and Ccawusa resulted in a strike by about 1 500 workers at a several Fedics outlets in Johannesburg. Ccawusa demanded a minimum wage of R850 a month against management's offer of R600. The union also demanded centralised bargaining for all Fedics subsidiaries. Management refused this on the grounds that the group's operations were too complex to allow such a structure. Ccawusa claimed management was trying to make things difficult by insisting on individual plant-level bargaining. In some cases, for example Fedics Food Services, the union has to negotiate separately with over 500 outlets.
Fidelity Guards Transvaal	TGWU	1 600	25.09.89	Fidelity Guards workers at four branches in Transvaal went on a one-day wild-cat strike demanding the dismissal of a supervisor for allegedly taking on jobs for money. Management and the union were discussing the issue.
Ga-Rankuwa Hospital		270	25.09.89	Hospital authorities dismissed 200 of the 270 striking student nurses after they failed to heed a management ultimatum to return to work. The nurses were protesting against poor food at their hostel.
GEC Machines Benoni	Numsa	500	30.10.89	Barlow subsidiary, GEC Machines, locked out 500 workers who were striking for higher wages and a centralised bargaining forum. Management offered workers a 20% wage increase while Numsa demanded 30%.
Gold Reef City Crown Mines	Ccawusa	93	October 89	A wage deadlock between Ccawusa and Gold Reef City management sparked off a strike by 93 workers at the entertainment centre. The union demanded an across-the-board wage increase of R115, and a minimum monthly wage of R440. Management offered a R70 across-the-board increase and a R290-a-month minimum.
Jacaranda Transport Company (OFS)	TGWU	500	02.10.89	The entire Jacaranda workforce was dismissed during a strike over a disciplinary issue and over suspicion of corruption in the company's pension scheme. Mediation failed to resolve the dispute and the union was discussing other strategies.
Lebowa Transport (Pty) Ltd Seshego	Tawu	500	18-24.10.89	Commuters in Pietersburg and Tzaneen were stranded following a one-week strike by workers at the Lebowa Transport Company. Workers claimed management unfairly suspended two workers and dismissed four others. They had asked the dispatch manager not to send buses to a particular village until a colleague who was killed there was buried. After negotiations with the union, management cancelled the suspension and reinstated the dismissed workers.
Lowveld Buses Ellisrus	Tawu	80	Sept 89	Workers downed tools and demanded union recognition. They resumed work five hours later, when management agreed to negotiate with Tawu. A recognition agreement between Tawu and the company was subsequently signed.

Main Paper Johannesburg	Ccawusa		Sept 89	Ccawusa members at Main Paper plants in Johannesburg and Pretoria went on strike following a deadlock in wage negotiations. The union demanded a minimum wage of R180 a week, while management offered R130. The union said police stopped a worker demonstration at the Johannesburg plant.
Murray and Roberts Foundries	Numsa	250	21.09.89	A temporary Rand Supreme Court order forced 250 dismissed strikers at Murray and Roberts Foundries to vacate company premises. The workers were dismissed after striking illegally after a shop steward was dismissed.
Perskor Pietersburg	Mwasa	20	17.10.89	Mwasa members at Perskor went on a seven-hour work stoppage, affecting distribution of the <i>Citizen</i> and <i>Beeld</i> newspapers. Workers were protesting against the alleged assault of a worker by the company's regional manager. Talks between Mwasa and Perskor management resolved the dispute.
Premier Food Industries	Fawu	5 700	05-18.10.89	A two-week wage strike at Premier's edible oils, milling and animal feeds division ended after workers accepted management's revised wage offer. Fawu demanded a minimum increase of R33 a week. Premier offered different increases in the three divisions which ranged from R23 to R28 a week. The two parties finally settled on an average across-the-board increase of R30 or 16% on the minimum weekly wage of R184. Under the agreement, Epol workers would get a R27,50 or 15% increase on the weekly minimum of R182 and an additional 50c from January. Lower grade Epic Oils workers would get a R27,50 increase and higher grade workers a 15% increase with an additional 50c from January.
Rand Water Board	OVGWU	400	21.09.89	About 400 Rand Water Board employees were dismissed after they failed to meet management's ultimatum to halt their work stoppage and return to work. The workers were protesting against the arrest of a union member at the board's Suikerbos plant. They also demanded the dismissal of a white manager who was the cause of various worker grievances. The dispute was pending arbitration.
Ransauer Boland	TGWU	55	10-11.10.89	Management at this goods transport company locked out 26 workers when they went on strike demanding union recognition. Other workers at the company joined the strike after the lockout. Workers returned to work after management agreed to negotiate recognition with TGWU.
Redelinghuys Transport	TGWU	50	11-16.10.89	Management told workers they would not be paid for the 10 October public holiday, so they went on strike. The strikers were dismissed, but were reinstated a few days later, and management agreed to discuss the issue with worker representatives.
SAB	Fawu	6 000	11.10.89-	South Africa faced a beer drought as a strike by about 6 000 workers at South African Breweries entered its fifth week with no prospect of a settlement in sight. Supporters of the strikers have instituted a national beer boycott. The strike at seven breweries and transport depots started after two conciliation board hearings failed to resolve a wage dispute between Fawu and the company. SAB's final offer was a 16% wage increase: this meant R5,45 an hour and a monthly minimum wage of R1 063. Fawu demanded a R6,50 minimum, which is a 38% increase on the current hourly rate of R4,50. The union also made other demands for maternity leave and various bonuses. Management said this raised Fawu's demand to what amounted to a 150% increase. SAB obtained court interdicts evicting workers from plants in the Transvaal, Free State, Northern and Western Cape. The strike has been linked to sporadic incidents of violence: scabs have had their car tyres slashed; two workers were killed; a casual worker was reported stabbed; a SAB supervisor's house in Seshego was petrol bombed; trucks in Soweto were stoned. Fawu emphatically denied any involvement in these incidents, saying the union does not encourage acts of violence. Meanwhile, the National Taverners Association, which controls hundreds of township shebeens and is a major SAB client, pledged support for the strikers and held talks with Fawu. Ukhamba Liquor Association - the umbrella body for 1 500 black Southern African bottle store owners - and other liquor associations also held talks with Fawu. The strike continued amidst escalating incidents of violence.
Sasol Secunda	CWIU	1 700	04-13.09.89	A 10-day legal wage strike by workers at four Sasol plants in Secunda ended after CWIU accepted management's revised wage offer. When the parties deadlocked, the union was demanding an across-the-board increase of R150, and management had refused to budge from its offer of R120 for the bottom grade, R110 for the middle grades and 13% for the higher grades. Settlement was reached when management improved the offer for the middle grades by R10.
South African Transport Services	Sarhwu	17 000	07.11.89-	Transvaal and Natal railway workers went on strike in protest against plans to privatise SATS. They also demanded that the minimum starting wage be increased from R600 to R1 500 a month and that SATS recognise Sarhwu. Incidents of violence, and the burning and damaging of trains have been linked to the strike.
Steel Engineering Company Roodepoort	Numsa	700	11-15.09.89	Over 700 Numsa members went on strike at Steel Engineering after management refused to negotiate over the union's proposal on retrenchments. At least 300 workers faced retrenchment in the planned rationalisation and restructuring programme. After workers marched on the company's Sandton head office, management agreed to re-open negotiations.

Vetsak	Numsa	200	October 89	The Industrial Court ruled that 200 Vetsak workers, dismissed two days after last year's metal strike, were not entitled to any relief. Numsa criticised the judgement, and was considering an appeal against the decision.
--------	-------	-----	------------	---

#### Strikes and Disputes: CAPE

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events
Atlantis Diesel Engines Cape Town	Numsa	850	21.09.89	Atlantis Diesel Engines locked out 850 workers on a wage strike. Two weeks later workers accepted management's final wage offer and returned to work.
Corobrick Stellenbosch	Cawu	300	Sept 89	Corobrick and Cawu were locked in dispute over retrenchments. The company's Stellenbosch plant was closing, costing about 620 full-time and casual workers their jobs.
Da Gama Textiles East London	Actwusa	1 200	October 89	More than 1 200 Actwusa members at Da Gama's East London branch voted for a strike when the company refused to recognise their union. Management disputed the validity of the ballot, claiming it unfair as it had not been a secret ballot. The struggle for recognition at three Eastern Cape Da Gama factories goes back many years. Management tactics to block the recognition process have included the excuse that one of the factories is in the Ciskei and therefore does not fall under South African labour law. Bosses have also demanded proof of representation at the other factories. The location of the factory has been hotly disputed, as there are no clearly demarcated borders in the region. Actwusa said the company refused to give workers balloting facilities and ballots had to be conducted outside factory gates.
First National Bank Cape Town	Sasbo		Sept 89	Sasbo declared a dispute with First National Bank, following disciplinary action taken against four employees who started a petition seeking support for a 20% pay increase. The society accused management of being 'heavy handed' as its members' actions were not against industrial relations legislation.
Goodyear Uitenhage	Numsa	2 600	14.09.89	About 2 600 Goodyear employees were to receive cash of between R4 500 to R5 000 each. The company also agreed to write-off employee housing loans worth about R3 000 to R5 000 over five years. This was part of an agreement reached between Numsa and Goodyear after an 11-week strike over disinvestment: Goodyear, an American company, pulled out of the country, selling off its local interests to Consol.
Harvestime Port Elizabeth	Fawu		04-09.09.89	Harvestime, a frozen vegetable processing factory, was hit by a strike after management introduced a two-shift system. This change was due to a reduced intake of products. Workers returned to work while management and union officials discussed the changes to production schedules.
Industrial Council for the Cotton Industry	Sactwu	4 000	October 89	Cotton bosses declared a dispute with Sactwu involving 4 000 workers at over 12 factories in the Cape. This action followed a deadlock in annual wage negotiations. For the first time in the industry, bosses declared a dispute against a union. Sactwu initially demanded an across-the-board increase of R40 on the current minimum of R150 a week (last year the union demanded a R50 increase). At the time of deadlock Sactwu had lowered their demand to R33. Employers offered 65c an hour, which amounted to R29,20 a week.
National Panasonic Parow	EAWTU	190	August 89	The wage strike at this Japanese company entered its 12th week with no signs of agreement between the parties. The union planned to meet Japanese consular officials to seek support.
Shell Port Elizabeth	CWIU	70	29.09-30.10.89	A month-long strike by Shell workers meant several Eastern Cape Shell depots ran dry. The strike ended when management compromised on a disciplinary issue. The strike was sparked off after management issued a final warning to a senior shop-steward for allegedly abusing the company's sick leave scheme to attend a union meeting. Nine days into the strike management obtained an urgent interdict ordering workers to stop interfering with the running of the company and ordering sleep-in strikers to vacate company premises. Workers returned to work after management withdrew the court interdict, and agreed to reduce the validity period of the warning from 12 to six months, effective from 8th June.
Uitenhage Provincial Hospital	Nehawu	250	06.10.89 & 28.10.89	Domestic workers and general assistants at the provincial hospital in Uitenhage stopped work in protest against alleged repression and discrimination. The workers also demanded a living wage. After a few hours the strike was suspended when management agreed to negotiate with the workers committee. However, workers stopped work again three weeks later, on 28 October.
Volkswagen Uitenhage	Numsa	5 000	22-28.09.89	Volkswagen's Uitenhage plant shut down for almost a week after the entire workforce went on strike over disciplinary action taken against a shop-steward for alleged misconduct. Numsa and Volkswagen management eventually reached agreement on the issue. Management agreed to lift the supreme court interdict obtained against the union and its members.

### Strikes and Disputes: NATAL

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events
Game Discount World Durban	Ccawusa	180	12.10.89	Game Discount World in Durban locked out 180 workers who had been dismissed while striking after a conciliation board failed to resolve their wage dispute. Management's final offer was a R125 monthly increase. Workers demanded an across-the-board monthly increase of R160 and a minimum wage of R680 a month. Other issues in dispute were the annual bonus and staff discounts.
Mistry's Supermarket Durban	Ccawusa		28.10.89	The Durban Supreme Court ordered striking Ccawusa members to refrain from assaulting and intimidating other employees, customers and suppliers at four Mistry Supermarkets. The workers were on an illegal strike against the employment of part-time and casual workers.
Stocks and Stocks	Bawu	600	Sept-Oct 89	A three-week strike, by more than 600 workers at Stocks and Stocks in Natal, ended after the company and Bawu signed a recognition agreement. They settled on an hourly increase of 50c across-the-board. Workers had stopped work after talks over union recognition and wage increases reached deadlock.

### Strikes and Disputes: MINES

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events
Black Mountain Mine Namaqualand	NUM	1 000	05-20.09.89	Over 1 000 workers at Black Mountain Mine, jointly owned by Gold Fields SA and Phelps Dodge, went on a legal strike. They demanded a 25% increase, raising the minimum monthly wage to R296 a month. Management offered a R273 minimum wage - which was in line with Goldfields' policy of a 13,5% across-the-board increase. After a two-week strike workers were forced to accept the final offer when it became clear that management was not prepared to budge and that they were likely to be dismissed. According to NUM the company's current minimum wage of R237 is the lowest in the industry, despite a massive increase in the mine's turnover last year. NUM alleged that during the strike, its members were intimidated by mine security who prevented workers from going to buy food in town. Workers were told to go to Springbok, a town about 110 km away from the mine. The union also said workers rations were cut during the strike, and they were fed soup and porridge. Goldfields was investigating the allegations.
Consolidated Murchison	Numsa	1 400	October 89	Workers went on a legal strike after failing to reach agreement over wages in annual wage negotiations.
De Beers	NUM	8 000	15-24.10.89	About 8 000 miners at five De Beers diamond mines, and its geology division, went on strike for six days to support their demand for wage increases ranging from 19% to 38%. Management offered only between 16% and 17%. The strike was two-phased - workers suspended the strike after three days pending mediation proceedings, and downed tools for a further three days after mediation failed to resolve the dispute. Settlement was reached on an increase of between 15% and 16,5%, backdated to 1 May. De Beers also improved its offer by agreeing to an extra two months back pay to employees at its Namaqualand and Premier mines where the normal incremental date was 1 July. The company also granted 16 June as a paid holiday.
Impala Platinum Holdings	NUM	350	04-07.09.89	A strike, to protest the white elections, by 350 Impala workers ended after three days. Impala, the world's second biggest platinum producer, said the company suffered no production losses during the strike.
Sasol Secunda	CWIU	8 000	04-16.10.89	A 13-day strike by 8 000 mineworkers at Sasol collieries in Secunda ended after Sasol and CWIU reached agreement. Sasol agreed to offer workers a food allowance of R40 from 1 January next year and an additional R20 payment on 1 January 1991. Management also agreed to drop the cost of re-issuing company badges from R60 to R20. This amount is refundable if the lost badge is found.

### Repression Monitor - September/October 1989

September - CWIU reported heavy SAP presence at Sasol throughout a wage strike by their members. The union said police sabotaged a union demonstration which was to take place at Sasol's Rosebank office. Police apparently stopped buses transporting workers to Rosebank. During the strike, three Sasol workers were arrested and charged with intimidation. They were released on bail of R1 000 each and were	due to appear in court on 26 November. Five others were arrested and released without being charged.	September - two workers were arrested and charged for intimidation following a strike at Seco. Both were given bail of R150.	September - Abe Mbangeni, an Orange Vaal General Workers Union organiser, and David Maruma, a Nactu official in Vereeniging, were arrested at their of-	fices and detained under state of emergency regulations. After six weeks both were released.	September/October - On 19 September, Richard Ramaqabe, a shop steward at Rand Water Board in Suikerbos, was detained under state of emergency regulations. He was released after 23 days in detention. Four other Rand Water Board employees were arrested during a strike for intimidation. They were	released on bail of R300 each and were due to appear in court on 29 November.
					October - A Numsa organiser in Krugersdorp, Abissai Nkwe, was beaten up by unknown assailants outside his home in Kagiso. He spent a few days in hospital. When he returned home he received a death threat.	

# SUBSCRIPTION RATES- 1990

Rates are for EIGHT issues of Work In Progress

## South Africa

*Individuals, trade unions and community organisations* ..... R33  
*Companies, libraries and institutions* ..... R90  
*Donor subscriptions* ..... R90  
There are special rates for group and bulk distribution. Contact SARS for details.

## Southern Africa

*Individuals, trade unions and community organisations* ..... R43  
*Companies, libraries and institutions* ..... R100  
*Donor subscriptions* ..... R100

## USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia

(air mail rate only)

*Individuals, trade unions and community organisations* ..... \$50  
*Companies, libraries and institutions* ..... \$100  
*Donor subscriptions* ..... \$100

## United Kingdom and Western Europe

*Individuals, trade unions and community organisations* ..... £20  
*Companies, libraries and institutions* ..... £40  
*Donor subscriptions* ..... £40

Please return subscriptions for United Kingdom and Western Europe to: Central Books, Att: Bill Norris, 14 The Leathermarket, London SE1 3ER

Please return subscriptions for South Africa, Southern Africa, USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia to:

Southern African Research Service,  
PO Box 32716, Braamfontein, 2017

Cheques should be crossed and made payable to Southern African Research Service.

Enclose payment with order. Subscriptions begin with current issue unless otherwise specified

Enclosed find payment of ..... for eight issues of Work In Progress.

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....  
.....

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

*Work In Progress*, a publication of the Southern African Research Service, is published by an editorial collective, 40 de Korte Street, Braamfontein, PO Box 32716 Braamfontein. Tel: (011) 403-1912/1586