

Time to renew subscriptions

This is the 11th issue of Grassroots. All those who subscribed to Grassroots between January and April last year should note that this issue of Grassroots is the last they will receive.

Subscription forms and details of new rates are on page 15 of this issue.

PEOPLE PROTEST AGAINST REPAIRS

'COUNCIL, you take our rent. You must maintain the houses'. This was the demand of more than 1500 people who had gathered in Bonteheuwel recently to protest against the poor maintenance of Council houses.

United under the banner of the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC), community organisations from all over the Cape Flats joined the Bonteheuwel Civic Association in their protest.

'We have the same problem in Hanover Park. The Council refuses to maintain our houses. We support the people of Bonteheuwel,' Auntie Zima of the Hanover Park Civic Association said.

Her words were echoed by speakers from the Kensington/Factreton Ratepayers and Tenants Association, the Bokmakierie, Bridgetown, Silvertown and Kewtown Residents' Association, Manenberg Tenants Association, Lavender Hill Committee, Steenberg Interim Committee and the committees of Avon Estate, Clarke's Estate and Eureka Estate.

Support for the campaign also came from the Electricity Petition Committee and the Western Cape Traders' Association.

As speeches were



delivered, cries of 'Dis waar, ja, dis waar' came from the people.

'We are all affected by the Council's poor maintenance of the houses and we need to stand together to force them to properly maintain the houses,' Mr Wilfred Rhodes, Chairman of CAHAC said.

Banners displayed inside the hall said 'A people united will never

be defeated' and 'An injury to one is an injury to all.' And the people WERE united as they decided to refuse to pay for repairs and to demand that the Council drop the new lease.

This lease states that all new tenants and those on the transfer list have to pay for the repairs done to their houses. Speakers at the meeting said that even

old tenants have in the past been forced to pay for repairs.

As Mr Rosenberg of Bonteheuwel Civic Association read out a resolution saying 'We must go back into our communities and organise so that our community organisations can be strong when we confront council,' the people applauded and raised their hands in

Another speaker said the people must strengthen their organisations if they wanted to overcome their problems.

'The Council is well organised. We should be better organised. We must elect our own leaders,' he said.

A banner hanging over the stage saying 'Die Council vat ons rent. HULLE moet die

to page 5.

'Tramways is heartless'

NEITHER the police nor the cold could stop the people as they went to the Nedbank Building to lodge their objections against the proposed bus increases. City Tramways has recently applied for an increase of 12 percent, while the Mitchells Plain and Atlantis Bus Service applied for a 28 percent increase.

Twenty community and worker organisations met and decided to oppose the increases as a united front. The delegation was met at the Nedbank building by the police. The manager of the building, thinking that there was going to be a demonstration, called the police. An attempt by the police to prevent one representative from lodging his objection to the Road Transportation Board was rejected by the representatives.

The organisations speaking with one voice declared: 'We as the members of the community will be badly hit by the increases as we are already spending a large proportion of our meagre wages on public transport. The prices of bread, milk and other foods have all increased beyond the means of most of our people.'

'Last year's bus boycott showed that people could not afford the massive 40 percent increase in fares. The people simply cannot afford another increase now.'

'The people resent the monopoly which City Tramways has over public transport. We believe that Tramways is making huge profits without giving us a proper service in return.'

A member of CAHAC said: 'Tramways is heartless. There was a big economic boom. The poor have been excluded from the benefits of the boom, and now Tramways comes with fare increases'.

Workers' victory

A WORKER at H Blackman and Co. was unfairly dismissed and later unconditionally accepted back at work after the entire workforce of 65 came out on strike in support of him.

The workers refused to accept management's reason for dismissing Mr Witness Mlandu, 41.

They went on strike for two days after talks with management proved fruitless. They decided to stay on strike until their fellow worker was back at work.



All about wage agreements

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Lotus River shelter campaign

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25th anniversary of historic march

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Poor housing conditions in Guguletu

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Joint worker and community action

- pages 8 & 9



Use Wonder Box and save fuel

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The Leyland workers struggle for a living wage is now entering its ninth week. For nine weeks the workers have stood firm and demonstrated the power of united action.

The workers have canvassed support and convinced the entire community of the reasonableness of their demands.

On this page, Grassroots looks at community support for the workers struggle.

Date in Elsie's

FOR many years, I have wondered what becomes of the fire of our students once they become part of the rat race. Is the flame of freedom, the burning desire for human dignity dampened?

Do they get so busy with trying to possess a car, a house and fancy clothes that they forget the bad things that are happening in our country?

Or are they just interested in living off the sufferings of others and forgetting those who died in the struggle?

Well, I got the answer. You see, on Tuesday, 30th June, I had a date in Elsie's River.

The date was to be at the Monaco bioscope. Showing was the next episode in the struggle:

The Leyland workers right to negotiate a fair

and decent wage for their services.

I expected to see the same people that I usually see at most meetings. But I was pleasantly surprised. I got the impression that I must have stepped back thirty five years into my past for I was drowned in a sea of eager young men and women.

Young people who stood up straight and tall, to be counted and to be dealt a hand in the final showdown.

I realised then that what we have been fighting for is in sight. And the years of frustration rolled off my shoulders like a mist and I saw that we are nearing the end of our mission. That our future is safe in the hands of our youth. WE SHALL BE FREE

Fred Jenneke

LEYLAND WORKERS ARE NOT ALONE

THEY knew they were not alone in their struggle when they saw the

people streaming into the Monaco Cinema in Elsie's River on that Tuesday night.

Close to 2 000 had come to show their support for the Leyland workers.

On foot, by bus and car they came, and not

a seat in the bioscope was left empty as many filled the aisles and lined the back wall.

Singing echoed through the hall as churchmen, community and worker representatives filed onto the stage.

"The struggle of the Leyland workers was part of the struggle of all oppressed people for

a better South Africa." was the message that came from the speakers.

"In unity and organisation, was the strength of the workers and it was this that the bosses did not like," some of the speakers said.

Messages of support came from the United Women's Organisation,

the Food and Canning Workers' Union, the General Workers Union, the Cape Town Municipal Workers Association, the Cape Areas

Housing Action Committee (CAHAC), the Electricity Petition Committee (EPC), the Federation of Cape Civic Associations, and speakers representing the youth and students of Cape Town.

Support from the churches came from Bishop Desmond Tutu who addressed the meeting as well as Rev C Maree of the Lutheran Church.

The message from Bishop Tutu was one of inspiration for the Leyland workers and all oppressed people.

"We are on the winning march. Nothing is going to stop us now," he said as the people shouted their agreement.

Freedom

As he asked "When do we want freedom" the people answered as one: "NOW!"

The Rev C Maree, of the Federation of Lutheran Churches, said the workers struggle at Leyland was a struggle for justice.

"Management have refused to talk to representatives from community organisations, churches and trade unions. If management refuses to talk to decent people, then the workers must be really badly treated at Leyland," he said.

Resolution

It was resolved at the meeting to call on the British Ambassador to intervene and bring an end to the dispute.

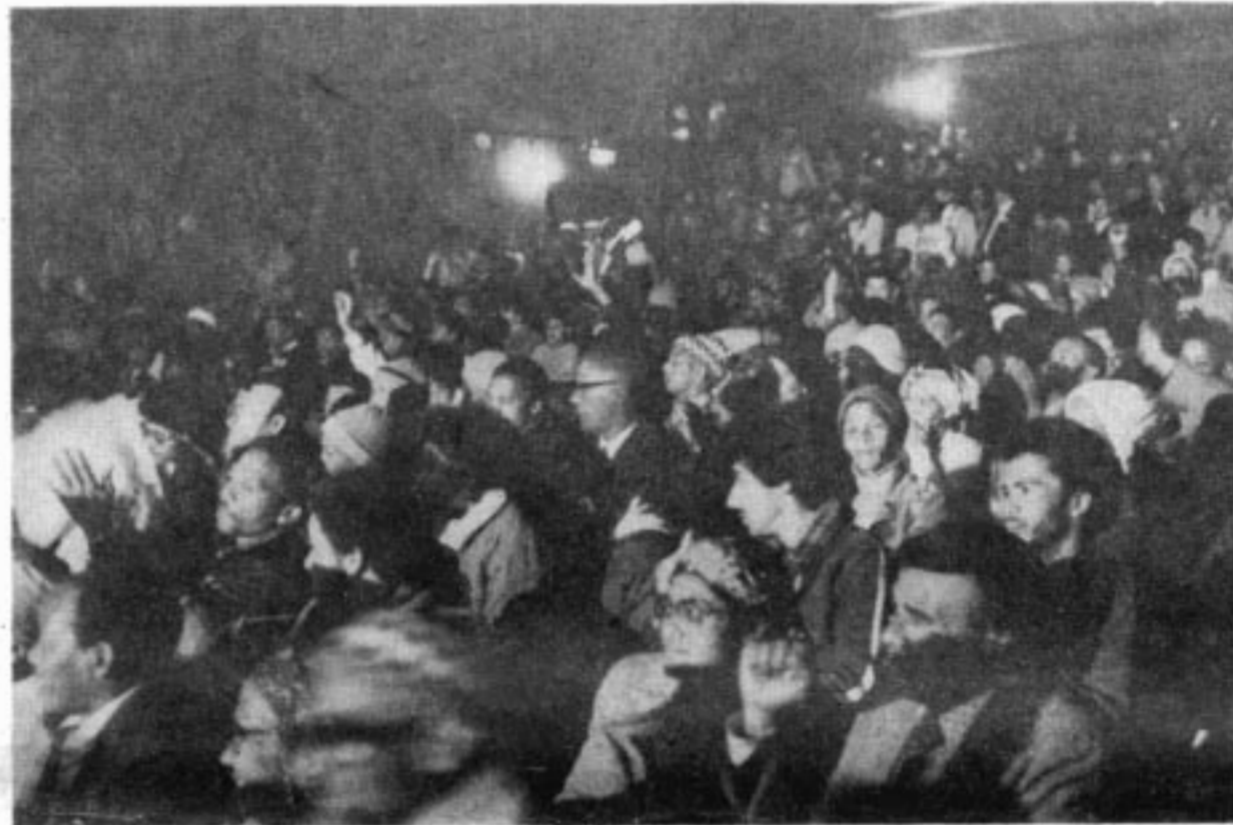
"Failing this, we, as part of the oppressed community of South Africa, have no option but to call on Leyland to withdraw from our country," the resolution read.

The resolution noted with great concern that Leyland SA was refusing to pay its workers a living wage and refusing to negotiate with their workers and their democratically elected representatives.

Thanks

In passing the vote of thanks, Leyland worker, Mr Mckenna said he was very glad to see how the community had supported our struggle.

"I have seen the suffering of the workers in the eyes of their children, but with the support of the community, I know we can only go forward.

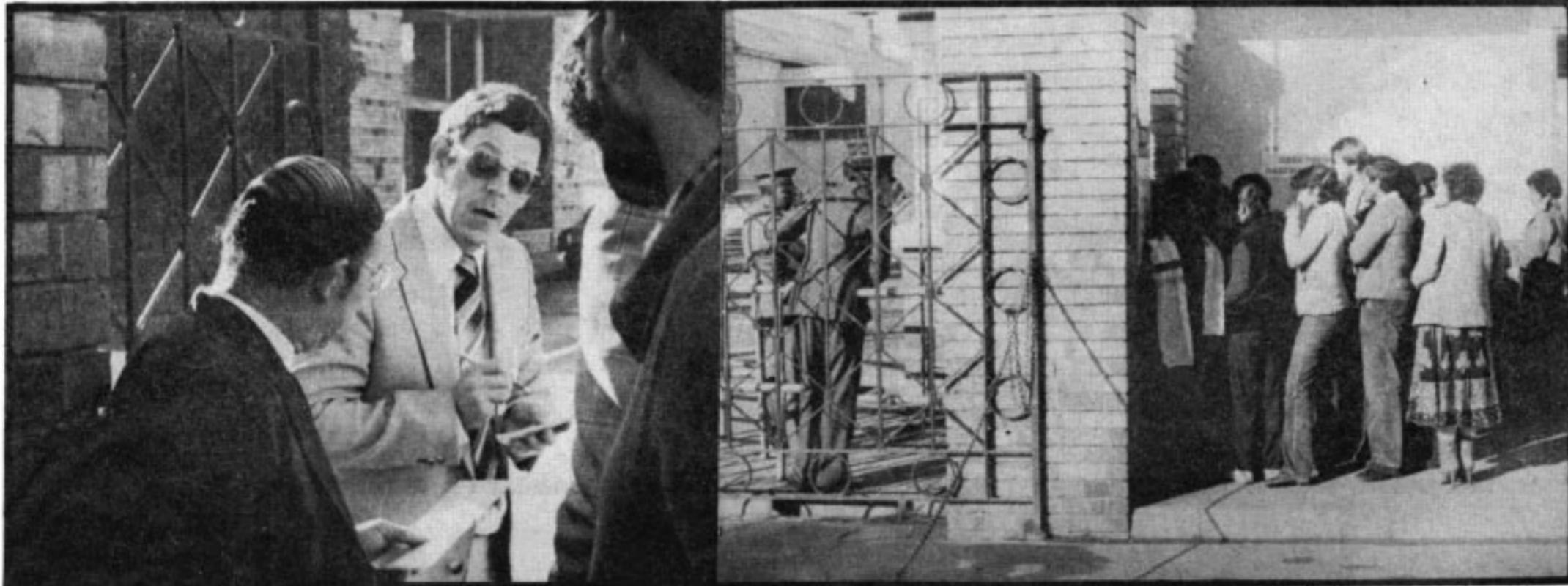


• Mass Meeting

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

• A delegation of 15 community representatives and 10 workers hand delivered a letter to Leyland management calling on them to open negotiations with the workers and their democratically elected representatives. Management refused to receive the delegation. Instead, they were met by the head of security at the plant.

The letter read "the eyes, not only of the people of South Africa, but of the whole world are being focused on your company's industrial relations policy. We respectfully ask you: as a foreign company, which side you stand for? Reinstating the workers and opening negotiations will surely be one answer to this question."



Workers sacked without notice

MANY cases of the sacking of workers without notice or notice pay are reported to the Domestic Workers Association.

These workers are often in a very difficult position. In some cases they have lost their jobs after working for the

same 'madam' for 10 to 15 years.

When this happens, they have no pension or unemployment insurance benefits.

Usually such a worker is also without a roof over her head because she was a 'sleep-in' worker.

Other workers are brought from the country areas into the city when they are very young. Because people are very poor on the

farms, the girls, some as young as 10 to 12 years, are easily persuaded to come to the city, even for shockingly low wages.

One such case was that of Barbara Billings.

Barbara's story is featured in Forward Worker, the newsletter of the DWA.

NEWSLETTER

According to Forward Worker, she was brought to Cape Town from Umtata in 1970.

She went to work

for a 'madam' of Wynberg.

Barbara was employed for the 'grand sum' of R15,00 a month. After seven years of working there, doing everything in the house including serving the 'madam' and her three sons breakfast in bed, she came to the DWA.

She complained that she had not even been paid her R15,00 'slave' wage each month.

DWA sent Barbara to a lawyer and after many months the 'madam' had to pay Barbara R1 262,50 in back pay, as well as the cost of the case.

DWA sees workers

all the time who have been sacked without pay, very often after years of service. It is common to hear the 'madams' complain to DWA that the workers have stolen crockery, bedding or jewellery.

Many members of DWA have sued their employers for pay and succeeded.

THE Food and Canning Workers Union and the African Food and Canning Workers Union have over the past six weeks negotiated agreements for higher wages in a number of industries. Workers in the vegetable freezing, fruit packing, fish processing and milling industries will receive increases of between 21 per cent and 34 percent.

The union's demand was for a minimum wage of R60,00 per week. In some industries, workers generally received more than in other industries.

Workers in the vegetable freezing and fruit packing industries got half of what they asked for, while those in the milling industry received close to what they wanted.

GRASSROOTS spoke to representatives of the FCWU about wage agreements and what their limitations are.

GRASSROOTS: Do workers participate when the union negotiates with management?

F & CWU: Yes. The most important thing about negotiations is not what the union can win, but the learning experience for the workers. This is

why the union always makes sure that there is a strong representation of workers at all negotiations.

In this way, we can make sure that an agreement is reached with the full participation of the workers.

GRASSROOTS: How important is it to have strong organisation on the factory floor to get what the workers want?

F & CWU: Very important.

Without solid worker support and organisational strength on the factory floor, the union could never force the bosses around a table in the first place.

But, there are other important factors which can limit the wage increases that the union can win in a single negotiation.

GRASSROOTS: What are the factors which can limit wage agreements?

F & CWU: There is the situation where the mass of the workers are unorganised and where the majority of the unions are disorganised.

There are millions of unorganised workers who do not belong to strong trade unions. Because of this, they will be prepared to work for

WORKERS MUST TAKE PART IN NEGOTIATIONS



wages lower than what the organised workers are asking for.

At I & J, after many drawn out meetings with the bosses, it was clear that the union could not push the bosses beyond their final offer of R42,32.

The bosses said that there are thousands of workers who are earning less right next door to them, or are unemployed who would

be too glad to work for that wage.

There are also political factors which limits the power of the unions.

There are so many laws which interfere with the relationship between the union, the workers and the bosses.

GRASSROOTS: Through negotiations, workers in some industries have received greater

increases than others. Why is this so?

F & CWU: One of the reasons is that workers are better organised in some industries than in others.

The better organised workers are in a stronger position to push for their demands.

There are also some companies that think of themselves as enlightened employers. They are bound by their own

rules to pay better wages. But, in the end, it is because of the organised strength of the workers that they got what they wanted. S.A. Milling paid its workers increases of R2 to R3 before they joined the union. The workers fought hard to get the R50,00 that they wanted.

GRASSROOTS: Why are the wages lower in the vegetable freezing industry?

F & CWU: Factories in the vegetable freezing industry (Tabletop) base their wages on what the farms are paying their workers. Two years ago all the workers except for a handful were earning R12,00 per week farm wages.

This type of work is also seasonal and many workers return to work on the farms in off-season.

In the two years that the union has been organising these workers, their wages have gone up by 100 percent.

It is still a low wage, but better than what was being paid in the area.

In the latest round of negotiations, the minimum wage was pushed up to compare with that of workers in the fruit and vegetable canning industry. (R32 per week).

The workers have had to fight hard to raise the wages from R12,00 to R32,00 per week in two years. They know exactly why ALL workers, including farm workers, must be organised.

GRASSROOTS: Are you saying that workers must be organised at the work place and participate actively in negotiations for higher wages?

F & CWU: Yes. Unions will never be able to set new wage levels for their workers until they have organised the mass of workers behind them - in the mines, on the farms, in the factories - when they themselves are united and have a political organisation at their head.

CTMWA calls for living wage

'We are dissatisfied with Council's treatment'

THE struggle of over 10 000 workers who are employed by the City Council of Cape Town for higher wages is still on. Their union, the Cape Town Municipal Workers' Association as long ago as 8 December 1980 sent in a written demand to Council.

The union asked for increases for all workers. Now more than 7 months later, the union is still fighting the City Council for what it calls "a living wage."

Liberal

"We are dissatisfied with the way Council is treating us", said one worker. "Council keeps on saying it is liberal and does not believe in discrimination. But look how they are exploiting us?"

Another worker said that Council was ignoring the plight of the Labourers. A union official said that the lower paid workers constitute the majority of Council's workers.

The cost of living has gone up so much that most Council workers cannot come out on their pay packet.

He said: "Unless Council does something quickly to relieve the plight of the workers, there is bound to be problems. Council workers are becoming increasingly restless.

Unfair

"They want to know why Council is being so unfair towards the workers when it can spend so much money on useless things such as the Republican festival."

When interviewed, the Secretary of the Cape Town Municipal Workers' Association Mr J Ernstzen expressed his own dissatisfaction. "The whole procedure we have to follow is to Council's advantage," he said.

When asked what steps the union had taken, he said that the union, after submitting its proposals in December 1980, tried to persuade Council to meet the workers' demands. But Council refused.

Instead they implemented an increase unilaterally and without the union's agreement - but the increase is totally inadequate.

At the time the demand was made,

Council paid a minimum wage of R29,44 a week. The union at that time demanded a minimum wage of R58,42 a week.

Notwithstanding this demand, Council has seen fit to implement a minimum wage of R37,26 a week.

"How how can a man with a family come out on such low wages?", asked Mr Ernstzen. "I don't know what is going to happen when bus fares go up again", he added.

The shabby treatment meted out to the workers is probably one reason for the present staff shortage.

Vacancies

According to Mr Ernstzen there are 3500 vacancies in all departments.

Within the first five months of this year alone, 1 428 employees have resigned from the Council's service.

This figure is 55% up on last year's total for the same period.

The cleansing, roads and drainage services and maintenance programmes in the City Engineer's Department is most hard-hit by this

problem and in some branches the shortage is as high as 45%.

Mr Ernstzen continued: "The situation has become so desperate that Council is for the first time employing female labourers in certain branches. While the union does not believe in discrimination - and this includes discrimination on the basis of sex - it strongly supports the principle of paying the 'rate for the job.' He also said: "There are already signs that this apparent solution could cause further discontent."

When Council refuses to meet the demands of the union, what steps can be taken to obtain redress?

In terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act, municipal workers are not allowed to go on strike.

Essential

It is illegal because Council workers are employed in essential services. According to the law, the union can apply to the Minister of Manpower Utilization to establish a Conciliation Board. This has

already been done, according to Mr Ernstzen.

Fails

"But the whole procedure laid down by law takes far too much time," he said. "If Conciliation fails, then the union can apply for the matter to be resolved by the Industrial Court."

"The union intends to do this and members have at various meetings instructed the union to go ahead."

One worker, who said that others felt the same way, indicated that he did not mind how long it took.

Members

But "Council must be taught a lesson. The union must take up the fight because all the members are behind the union, win or lose."

And so the fight goes on. The union has now been informed that the Minister has approved of the establishment of a Conciliation Board and the first hearing will take place shortly. And if this fails the union will go to court.

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ELSIES RIVER

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MORE than 2 000 people have already signed a petition calling on the Divisional Council to immediately erect shelters at the Buck Road Bus Terminus and taxi rank and at all bus stops in the Lotus River and Grassy Park area.

The Lotus River and Grassy Park Residents Association recently did a survey in the area to find out what problems people have with regard to transport.

The survey was carried out by the Transport Committee of the Association. The Association has a number of different committees. Each deals with a different aspect of civic affairs such as rents, rates, transport and education.

The survey was carried out at weekends and in the evenings by members of the committee. Residents themselves volunteered to help complete the forms among their neighbours.

The questionnaire contained about 20 questions, all to do with transport.

In the questionnaire, residents were asked whether they could afford the present busfares, whether buses were overcrowded and how long they waited for buses in the mornings and at

LOTUS RIVER ORGANISES FOR BUS SHELTERS

weekends.

Other questions were meant to find out if residents were satisfied with bus shelters, the number of taxis on the roads and the convenience of the bus and taxi routes.

Residents were also asked what they thought of the part of the bus boycotts - whether they thought they were a success or failure.

The questionnaire showed that most residents were very upset that there were so few shelters at bus stops and taxi ranks.

The major bus terminus, at Buck Road, serves thousands of workers daily in Lotus River as

well as from Strandfontein, Mitchell's Plain. Yet this terminus, which was built many years ago, has never had any shelter to protect people from the wind and rain.

The Residents Association at its monthly general meeting decided to campaign for shelters. As a start, letters were sent to Council and Tramways demanding shelters.

Then a pamphlet was drawn up and delivered to the door of each resident.

Everyone was asked to support the demand. Residents were asked to have meetings at their homes. Many willingly agreed.

At each group of flats all the

neighbours in the whole block were invited.

Notices for the meetings were printed by the Association and handed out by the residents themselves.

At these meetings residents complained bitterly that the bus fares increased every year but the service and shelters were not attended to.

Much of their pay packets were spent on medicines and doctors during the winter.

Heavy rain in winter meant late arrival at work and thus less pay at the end of the week.

Residents felt that Council and Tramways should be forced

to build shelters. That was the least they could do with the huge profits they made from the high bus fares they charged.

The idea of a petition to Council demanding shelters was discussed.

Every person travelling by bus or taxi, including relatives, had to sign. Enthusiastic and willing youth, students and association members, themselves, walked the streets over two weekends collecting signatures from every adult in the area.

All the residents approached eagerly signed the petition and many felt that we should have done something years ago.

Some residents said that we would get nothing if we did nothing for ourselves.

More than 2 000 signatures were collected. That represented about 100 per cent of the people that lived in the vicinity of Buck Road terminus.

The next step that the Association is planning is a mass meeting to be held soon to decide how and when the petition will be delivered to Council.

Read the next issue of Grassroots for news of further developments (uncensored of course) in the shelter campaign.



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SCHOOL LEAVERS WELCOME

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MOWBRAY,

Fight for lights continues

THE fight for electricity for all was started late last year in Bishop Lavis. The two neighbourhood committees, Greenlands and River-ton, started the campaign and have been joined by organisations such as Blac (Bishop

Lavis Action Committee).

Despite efforts by Citizens Housing League, the owners of the township, to force the Matroosfontein Management committee upon the people, they

(the people) are determined to continue with the struggle for electricity for all in Bishop Lavis.

In a letter written to the neighbourhood associations, the League said: "All future representations should be

made through the Matroosfontein Management Committee."

Members of the neighbourhood committees, co-ordinated by Blac, have come out strongly against the management commit-

tee. They are calling on the people of Bishop Lavis to join these organisations to fight for electricity.

Citizens Housing League has also informed the people through this letter that the plans for electricity have been shelved until 1982.

They claim that the Department of Community Development does not have the money to finance the project this year. But, the people are angry.

"What are they doing with our money? We have waited long enough," they say.

The River-ton and Greenlands committees in replying to the Citizens Housing League letter said: "We are disturbed that a certain section of the township will not be getting electricity.

"We want to convince the company that every family expects electricity and to prove this, we have done a survey in the area.

"As representatives of the community, we feel that the company is not taking the needs of the people into account."

'ELECTRICITY IS A RIGHT NOT A PRIVILEGE'

MRS Ethol Sassman, a resident of Bishop Lavis for 18 years said: Electricity is the right of the people and not a privilege".

Blac (Bishop Lavis Action Committee) talked to her about the problem of not having electricity in the community.

"For all the years that we have been living here, there has been no electricity. We cook our food on primus stoves and gas stoves.

"We cannot afford it anymore with the rising prices, and now paraffin has gone up by six cents per litre.

"My monthly fuel bill is R60,00. If we had electricity, it would cost us as little as R15,00. Why should poor housewives have to pay so much for fuel when those in Bishop's Court and Constantia pay less for electricity?"

"Fuel is also dangerous. We always hear about people being burnt and children mistaking paraffin for water. To crown it all, we have to spend a fortune every year to repair and repaint our walls and ceilings which get damaged by the smoke and soot of the candles and coal stoves.

"Every month, my curtains have to be washed. They wear thin, and once a year I have to buy new curtains. Paraffin heaters and fridges are expensive to maintain.

"This makes the task of the housewife almost impossible with rising prices.

Promises

"The Council has made so many false promises telling us that electricity will come. We will not get electricity in Bishop Lavis if we do not stand together.

"I would like to call on the residents to join their neighbourhood committees. We must be organised to fight for electricity for all."



Fuel is dangerous and expensive



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Bonteheuwel campaign

WE were a small group of people and had only a short time to effectively organise the campaign.

Because of the lack of previous grassroots level work done in Bonteheuwel, it was necessary to speak to everyone about the seriousness of the problem. For three weeks we had to work on a day to day basis. Because Bonteheuwel is one of the biggest townships, it had to be subdivided so that we could systematically approach all the people.

A three week programme was worked out to do that. We knew beforehand our activities and the number of people we needed' on a daily basis.

Five smaller meetings were held in the different parts of Bonteheuwel and all other activities were planned as preparation for these meetings.

As first contact, we

WITH only a few people and a short time, preparing for the maintenance protest meeting seemed nearly impossible for the Bonteheuwel Civic Association.

However, by draw-

ing up a day to day programme and calling in help from other areas, they were able to make their work successful.

These stories explain how the people of Bonteheuwel worked. sold Grassroots and the Bonteheuwel newsletter, Bonteheuwel News. Both newsletters had articles on the maintenance problem and people could talk about the problem.

A pamphlet was drawn up to further explain the problem and how the council spends the people's money. A cartoon was used on the pamphlet to explain the problem more clearly. This pamphlet was used to invite the people to the smaller meetings.

It was distributed two days before the meeting by members of the BCA, the Bonteheuwel Youth Move-

ment and volunteers from other areas. After the first two meetings, we used handbills so we could go to the people again and remind them of the meetings. A sub-committee was elected to run the meetings while others worked in the field, pamphleteering for coming meetings.

The attendance at the meetings was very good. Slides were used to highlight the maintenance problem. This gave rise to lots of discussion on the problem. Many people gave their names, promising to assist in the campaign.

The last of the

smaller meetings were held on the Monday before the mass meeting.

Posters were made by the group and put up all over Bonteheuwel, and handbills advertising the mass meeting were distributed throughout the area in two days.

Saturday afternoon before the mass meeting two cars went through the streets of Bonteheuwel using a megaphone to remind the people of the mass meeting.

BCA received money from traders in the area and a bus was donated to bring the older residents from the outskirts of the area to the meeting.

As the people streamed into the meeting hall on the Sunday afternoon, the civic workers could take a breath and say 'It was worth it!'

How we work together

WE were not a few that Sunday as people from many areas came to help us.

We had thousands of pamphlets to distribute to let everybody know about the meeting. We needed all the help we could find.

After a short briefing session, we were divided into groups who had to go into different areas of Bonteheuwel. Each group included people from all the different areas.

We learnt to work together and also spoke

about what we were doing in our different areas. By sharing ideas we can learn so much more.

People from other areas also came to know Bonteheuwel much better by distributing pamphlets.

After a few hours of knocking on doors and talking to people about the maintenance problem, everybody returned to the hall we used as a base.

Everybody was equally tired - and hungry.

The hunger was seen to as chicken curry was served for lunch, followed by something to drink. Everybody had a chance to talk to each other before we went out again with pamphlets.

The second session was not as long as the first and everybody returned after all the pamphlets were distributed. This time the reward was scones and tea.

As the people left for home at the end of the day, they knew they had done a good day's work - and also made many new friends.

A hard day's work

WITH a firm stroke, she moved the wooden bar along the table pressing the black ink through the silk screen.

The ink filled in printed letters, "Mass Meeting Bonteheuwel Civic Centre: Sunday 5 July 2 p.m. MAINTENANCE".

With ease, the table cover was lifted and the first completed poster set out to dry.

It was the Thursday

before the mass meeting and members of the Bonteheuwel Civic Associations together with a few people from other areas had gathered to make posters and banners for the meeting.

Some knelt beside the calico banner stretched across the Church Hall floor and carefully painted "Cape Areas Housing Action Committee" in bold red letters.

"Die Council vat ons rent. Hulle moet ons huise maintain" was painted on to another banner.

It was a hard day's work but it was all worth it.

The posters were pasted up all over Bonteheuwel while the banners brightened up the hall where more than 1500 people gathered on that Sunday afternoon

Mass meeting

from page 1

huise maintain' expressed the feelings of the people and also their demands.

A speaker from CAHAC explained just what the Council did with the people's money.

'We are asking them now: What happened to the money we have paid as part of our rent that was supposed to be used for repairs and the money they received for the sale of

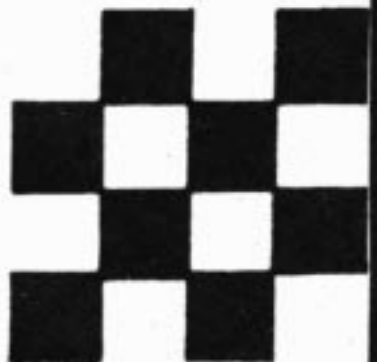
Bloemhof Flats?

'The reason why Council waste our money is because we don't have the privilege to vote them out of power.



LAW'S SUPERMARKET

The Cedar Rd., Rocklands, Mitchells Plain
Woodlands Shopping Centre, Woodlands



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comment

Communities rally around maintenance

COMMUNITY organisations showed their strength when they came together under the banner of the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (CAHAC) on July 5 to protest against poor maintenance of council houses.

Residents at the meeting saw that CAHAC is a body that will unite everybody in the fight for decent housing.

Decent housing is the right of our people — and not a privilege as the council often says.

For years, our people have paid money into the maintenance fund of the council. When the houses were still new, Council did not have any need for this money. Today when the houses are falling apart, they tell us they have no money. What have they done with all the money paid into the maintenance fund for all these years?

DISTRICT SIX

The people were moved out of District Six and forced to live in council houses on the Cape Flats. It is not fair that the people should now pay for the maintenance of houses which belong to the council.

The council must begin to maintain the houses which they have neglected over the years. They were able to neglect the houses because our people have no direct say on the council. The slogan at the Bonteheuvel meeting was: "A people united, will not be defeated."

The time has come that organisations must work together and make CAHAC into a strong body so that it can effectively represent the interests of the people.

People can't afford bus increases

CITY Tramways and Associated Bus Holdings have asked for increases at a time when the general cost of living is rising faster than the wage increases that the people have been getting.

Profits of these companies have over the years always increased. The people are forced to use their buses because there are no other bus operators.

This means that these two companies have no competition. Also our people stay far from where they work and therefore have to pay more for transport.

The people did not choose to stay far away from shopping centres and their work places but were forced to move through such laws as the Group Areas Act.

PEOPLE FORCED

This law has forced more than 600 000 people to move. Since the State is responsible for laws like these, they must pay the increases in bus fares.

Also, transport is an essential service and should not be provided by private companies for profit but provided by the State or City Council on a non-profit basis.

It is encouraging that many civic organisations and trade unions have come together and taken up the matter because the people simply cannot afford the increases asked for.



LETTERS

• WRITE TO GRASSROOTS: P.O. BOX 181, ATHLONE 7760

GRASSROOTS PROVIDES ALTERNATIVE NEWS

I STARTED reading Grassroots last year and immediately became impressed with and interested in this non-profit community newsletter.

Then and there I decided to let the others know about this paper for the people.

Soon my school-mates and unemployed friends and their parents became interested too in this popular

newsletter.

To New Brighton, Kwazakhela, Schaurder-ville, Veeplaas, Gelvendale etc., it provides an alternative to the exorbitantly priced commercial newspapers with their debased and full-of-lies-and-slander news content.

For the first time Cape Town and hopefully soon Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and the rest of South

Africa is looked at from under the lens of the people, the producers.

In the light of the above I decided to write to you to ask whether it is possible to expand Grassroots to cover, for a start, the entire Cape Province.

Commercial newspapers have a tendency to be too local.

This however, is easy to understand especially if one is acquainted

with the practical and theoretical role of the commercial press.

The people of this area have seen this and are now eager to get news about themselves.

They are prepared, at least, to help in the process, for instance, by contributing articles about their living conditions.

Tsepo Modisa
Port Elizabeth
The question of ex-

panding GRASSROOTS distribution area is being investigated by our Executive Committee. Newsgathering Committee

BAN WAS A SHOCK

I AM a regular reader of GRASSROOTS. Your, or rather our, newsletter publishes proper reports about what is happening in the community and I am very concerned about GRASSROOTS.

The May edition was banned for distribution. I was shocked when this happened.

This edition was quite similar to the previous issues.

What I found of much interest was to see the story on the City Council. The Council is R400 000 richer because it took unnecessary money from the people.

If the May edition was banned for exposing this scandal then the Council should feel ashamed.

I hope that GRASSROOTS will continue to reflect the truth.

Deacon
Pretoria

Banning won't solve problems

IT is not surprising that the May issue of GRASSROOTS was banned. The South African authorities have always tried to silence every mouthpiece of the Black people.

The government makes life difficult for the majority of this country's people.

Many people are exposed to chilly winters because of the housing shortage.

Those who are lucky enough to have a house have to pay high rents for poor service from administration boards and city councils.

HOMELANDS

The roads are poor. There are townships without electricity.

People are forced to go to the homelands because they don't have "rights" to live in urban areas. Black children

are forced to accept inferior education. Most of the teachers are not properly qualified. There is inadequate scientific equipment at school.

The state, in collaboration with factory management, wants to exploit workers perpetually. Workers are sacked almost every day and trade unions are harassed.

Their leaders are often detained. When workers protest against poor working conditions and low wages, they are fired.

All this and many other unhumane acts directed against the majority of the people must be exposed.

GRASSROOTS is precisely performing this task. To ban Grassroots will not solve any housing crisis. It will not stop people from

protesting against bad conditions. It will not solve educational problems.

And, of course, it will not discourage workers from demanding their legitimate rights at the factories.

To Grassroots I say! Go on with boldness. Highlight our struggles, expose poor living conditions — for it is your right to do so and our's to be informed.

Joe
East London

Exhibition

AN exhibition of pictures by children of Ocean View, who, I taught, is on view in the Public Library, until th 31st July.

The library is not open on Saturdays and

GRASSROOTS carries on

I heard of the banning of GRASSROOTS. Does this mean we will never get GRASSROOTS any more?

NO, of the 10 issues of

Sundays. This exhibition was arranged with children, who are now having school holidays, in mind. But adults would certainly enjoy seeing this collection of colourful pictures too.

Peter Clarke

GRASSROOTS published so far, only the MAY 1981 issue was banned. The ban was only for further distribution and not for possession.

AUG 9 IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

AUGUST 9th, is National Women's Day. On this day people remember the women, the women's organisations and the heroes of the 50's who organised the mass protests against the pass system.

On the the 25th anniversary of the anti-pass demonstration in Pretoria, the United Women's Organisation looks at the meaning of National Women's Day and the suffering of women under the pass laws today.

Strydom ... you have struck a rock

IN August 1956, 20 000 women from all over South Africa stood in silence for 30 minutes outside the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

The women sang their song. Their voices rose like thunder outside the government buildings.

The women had come to meet the Prime Minister. But Strijdom refused to meet them.

The representatives

of the women - Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa and Sophie Williams - left thousands of petitions outside Strijdom's door.

The United Women's Organisation talked to one of the mothers who took part in the August 9th demonstration.

"There were about 20 women from Cape Town. We left in a great

rush. I bought my ticket on the train.

"All the delegates from the different areas met in Orlando East in Johannesburg. We were so many that we slept on the floors, with our babies and our bags.

"The next day, we were too many for the transport, so we decided to march to Pretoria, carrying our babies.

"There were people from all areas and all groups in South Africa. There were women from Winburg who used to dig potatoes with their hands and wear potato sacks for clothing when they worked. There were many, many others.

"The main issue was the passes, but there were other messages - equal pay for equal



work; £1 a day; bad housing and bad social conditions.

"The spirits of the women were very high. We sang freedom songs and marched together from the Union Buildings.

"But, there was also disappointment that we did not meet Strijdom. The cry of the women outside the Union Build-

ings was 'Strijdom, you have tampered with the women, you have struck a rock.'

"The Pretoria demonstration, under the leadership of the Federation of South African Women (FSAW), showed once and for all that women refuse to accept the oppressive pass system under which we have suffered for hun-

dreds of years.

"It also showed that we women can do something about our oppression and suffering - we can get up and work together."

20 000 women responded to the call: "An Insult to African Women is an Insult to All Women".

This is what National Women's day means.



FSAW called for unity

THE force behind the Pretoria demonstration was the Federation of South African Women. The FSAW, an organisation open to all women who shared its aims, was launched at a National conference on 17th April 1954.

At this conference, the Women's Charter was adopted. The Charter called for the unity

of women; the right to education, medical care and proper homes.

The Charter expressed the demands of all women of South Africa for the removal of all forms of discrimination against women.

The Charter sought to work for a genuine South African democracy based on equality and friendship between

men and women and between different sections.

A year before the demonstration, the Federation launched the anti-pass campaign. They organised in the towns, villages and cities, and in all these areas, women came out to protest against the pass system and to prepare for the demonstration.

The demonstrations were not only held in Pretoria. All over the country, on that day, the united voice of South African women was heard.

In the Western Cape, thousands of women gathered at the Grand Parade to demonstrate their support in the campaign against passes.

THIS year is the 25th anniversary of the Pretoria demonstration. We remember the struggles of the mothers in the past and support the resistance of our women in the present.

The United Women's Organisation - an organisation open to all women and launched in the Western Cape on April 5 this year - looks at the suffering of African women under the pass system today.

- * Every week, hundreds of homes are broken up as women are arrested under the pass laws.
- * Children are left uncared for, and mothers are torn from their babies for failing to produce a pass.
- * African women - young and old - are insulted and humiliated every day by officials searching for passes.
- * African women are kept out of work and forced into poverty for not carrying a pass.
- * African women are torn from their families and homes and forced to live in

"homelands", where they have no homes.

* Women are divided by "group areas" and "labour preference" which force African women into the unskilled and badly paid jobs like domestic service.

The pass laws are still with us. The suffering and misery these laws bring to our wo-

men continues. We cannot sit back and do nothing.

It was the united strength of the women against the pass that gave birth to National Women's Day, 25 years ago.

It is only a united organisation of women that can help us to work for the removal of the pass today.



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JOINT STRUGGLES

Worker and Community Action

Victory at Fattis & Monis

DURING the past few years, workers have fought many battles with determination and great militancy to have their demands met.

The bosses, with the help of the state have stood firm and used many strong-arm tactics to break the unity of the workers and their trade unions.

Many lessons have been learnt by workers, trade unions, community organisations and students.

Worker struggles in the Western Cape in many cases have been

strengthened by the support of the community.

In the Fattis and Monis and the meat workers strike, the community expressed this support by boycotting the products and giving financial support to the workers.

The united action of the community and the workers was a way of forcing the bosses to agree to the demands of the workers.

In some cases there have been major gains, such as that of the Fattis and Monis workers.

There have been times that the demands of the workers have not been met.

But, more important, the united stand of the workers and the community was a major step forward for the struggle of oppressed people in this country.

This year, the community and workers have once again been inspired by the determination of the Leyland and Wilson Rowntree workers.

Again they have come forward and pledged their support in a practical way, boosting

the morale of the workers.

The community has given this support.

"We believe that the workers live among us in the community. They are our neighbours, whether they live in Maccassar, Elton River, Langa or Guguletu," said a representative from the community at the Leyland workers support meeting.

The struggle for a living wage, decent working conditions and the right to join a union of the worker's choice,

is not separate from the struggle of the community for better housing, lower bus fares and so on.

It is the struggle of oppressed people for democratic control over their lives.

We have learnt from our experience that the workers need the support of the community.

In turn, the community needs the support of the workers.

During the bus boycott last year, the community needed the support of the workers and

their trade unions to make the bus boycott a success.

The students also in their struggles last year gained greater strength

from the support of the workers and their parents in the community.

It is only when the people are organised at work and in the communities

where they live, and when these organisations come together that the greatest gains were obtained.

This united action

is only in this way, that the slogan, "An Injury to one, is an injury to all", can really mean something.

Workers aid communities

WE have seen how the community has supported the workers. Trade unions are only beginning to give the much needed support to community organisations in having their demands met.

At a mass community meeting, a trade unionist said: "our union stands for the treatment of all working people with dignity - that dignity extends from the workplace to the community."

During the bus boycott last year, workers and the community stood firm in their action against City Transways, in protest against increased bus fares.

For these weeks the people walked in wind, rain and sunshine, calling on everybody to "let the buses go empty".

"Although, we did not win against Transways, we showed we could be united".

The campaign spearheaded by the Electricity Petition Committee to have the electricity due date changed to a more convenient date was a victory for all people.

During this campaign, the EPC gained the support of the community and trade unions. These unions came out in support to have the due date changed because it would benefit workers.

One union went so far as to write a letter to the City Council stating the reasonableness of the people's demand.

It is in this way that worker organisations can assist community organisations.

"The trade unions are fighting for better conditions for workers, but they know that the worker on the factory floor also suffers the same problems in the community," said a union organiser.

GRASSROOTS spoke to a trade unionist who said: "Many workers are active on the factory floor, but do not work in their associations in the community."

"Often, workers bring problems to the union offices, or to their workers committees or shop stewards about rents, housing, rising prices and so on, but are they ever encouraged to join their

residents' associations?"

"It is in this way that trade unions can play an important role".

To achieve this, strong people's organisations are needed. A speaker at the

Leyland Workers Support meeting said: "We need to organise ourselves at our places of work, and where we live. Every street must be organised."

"Our young people should join the youth

movements, at school we should join the SRC, we must organise where ever we are.

"It is only when we are organised in this way, that victory will be ours."



Let the buses go empty

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Meat strike lessons

IN MAY 1980, 800 meat worker members of the Western Province General Workers Union in Cape Town (almost the whole meat industry) went on a one-day strike.

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A support committee was set up, with representatives from the community, other unions and also from the Western Province General Workers Union.

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A total of R109 000 was collected by the community. (2) boycotting red meat products.

In spite of the hardships of boycotting a staple food like red meat, butchers and people in the community kept up this boycott - for 2 months in some areas. (3) anti-scabbing campaign.

In some areas this campaign to discourage people from taking the strikers' jobs was successful.

But how to stop scabbing completely successfully, is still a problem which needs to be struggled through.

Workers had spent a lot of time going to community meetings to discuss their problems and their struggle with the people at these meetings.

Later the union realised that this should have been taken even further - people from the communities should have also been asked to come to meetings of the workers to discuss the community struggle with all the workers.

IN FEBRUARY 1981 500 workers at Wilson Rowntree in East London went on strike in support of those workers who had been unfairly dismissed.

The bosses refused to negotiate with the South African Allied Workers Union, the union of the majority of the workers.

The workers of Wilson Rowntree, appealed to the people of South

Africa to support them in their struggle.

In Cape Town some trade unions, youth groups, civic associations and community organisations have formed a support committee to coordinate support activities.

The main activity is a boycott of Wilson Rowntree products.

Money is also being collected for a relief fund for the strikers.

Pamphlets have been distributed informing people of what the struggle at Wilson Rowntree is all about.

These activities are also being organised in other towns in South Africa.

The boycott has been difficult to carry out.

Its organisers have been detained by the police.

Because of these problems it has been difficult to keep the community informed.

The Wilson Rowntree strike has not ended yet, and so we do not know the outcome. But already it has drawn together many worker and community organisations in Cape Town in support.

Bitter sweet dispute

GOVERNMENT'S DESPERATE PLAN TO DIVIDE US

THE government's new Labour Relations Bill is trying to stop joint worker and community action. The government has seen how important the building of bridges between workers and community struggles has been.

It has realised that without the R109 000 collected from the community and the students the meat workers would not have been able to hold out for as long as

they did.

The government has seen this new spirit of working together. It has also seen that workers are not prepared to accept their bad working conditions any more.

The government and the bosses have realised that more and more strikes are going to happen in the coming months and years.

So now they want to control the struggles of the workers.

There are many things in this new Bill that the government

wants to use to control the progressive trade unions of the workers.

One of the most important parts in this new Bill concerns the right of trade unions and community organisations to work together in their struggles.

It has always been an offence for trade unions to join a political party.

But now this new Bill if it is passed will make it illegal for a trade union to have anything to do with what the government calls a "political organisation".

The bosses are also scared of workers striking to demand better conditions in the factories. So they also want to stop strikers from helping strikers with money and advice.

But it is not only the trade unions helping the workers that the Bill wants to stop. It also wants to stop the people in the community, other workers and students, traders and teachers, from helping striking workers with

money of food.

So if government and the bosses hope that workers will not be able to rise when the bosses rise to listen to the grievances. They want to really starve if workers into accepting conditions in the factories.

There's Bill is a direct attack on the strength the workers and the community have shown in these past few years. But the

Bill has not been passed yet. There are many objections to it.

Most of the progressive trade unions have told the government that they refuse to accept this attempt to divide the workers from the community that they live in.

They have said they will carry on calling on the people in the community for support when the workers need help.

They have said they will continue to support the residents and the students in their struggle for better conditions in the places where they live and where they learn.

The workers and their trade unions say, "we have gained much, and we have learnt much by struggling together. We cannot go backwards now. We must carry on going forwards."

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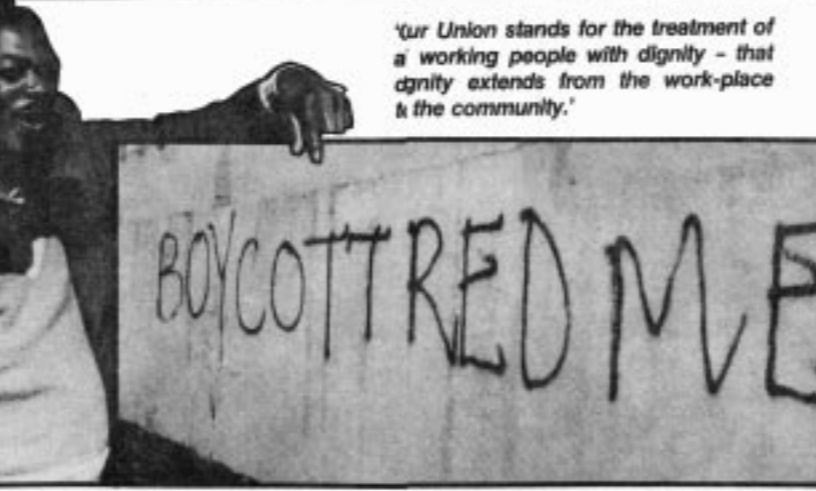
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Later the union realised that this should have been taken even further - people from the communities should have also been asked to come to meetings of the workers to discuss the community struggle with all the workers.

At a meeting of 61 community, worker and church organisations, a Leyland Workers Support work was launched. The organisers undertook to paraphrase and to take the message of the workers into every home in the Western Cape.

Food and money were collected as the people were determined "not to let the workers starve" and be forced

back to work.

A mass protest meeting attended by 2 000 people in Elites River displayed the true meaning of solidarity for the workers struggle. A motion of support was passed and the people resolved:

- not to let the workers starve;
- not to break the strike by applying for jobs at the Leyland plants.

This is one of the most important ways in which the community can assist the workers.

A resident said at one of the workers support meetings: "we must let the people know that we, the community support them".

The lesson to be learnt from the struggle of the Leyland workers is the need for workers to be organised in strong trade unions and for the community to be organised.

In this way, the bosses will not be able to rely on the unemployed and underpaid workers to break the struggle of the workers by scabbing.

The workers have expressed their thanks to the community for its support and as one worker said: "when this battle is over, we will sit on our hands - the struggle will continue."

GOVERNMENT'S DESPERATE PLAN TO DIVIDE US

THE government's new Labour Relations Bill is trying to stop joint worker and community action. The government has seen how important the building of bridges between workers and community struggles has been.

It has realised that without the R109 000 collected from the community and the students the meat workers would not have been able to hold out for as long as

they did. The government has seen this new spirit of working together. It has also seen that workers are not prepared to accept their bad working conditions any more.

The government and the bosses have realised that more and more strikes are going to happen in the coming months and years.

So now they want to try and put a stop to

this. They want to weaken the spirit of joint struggle that has grown up between workers in the factories and other people in the community.

That is one of the most important reasons why there is this new Bill which they want to make law. They want to control the struggles of the workers.

There are many things in this new Bill that the government

wants to use to control the progressive trade unions of the workers.

One of the most important parts in this new Bill concerns the right of trade unions and community organisations to work together in their struggles.

It has always been an offence for trade unions to join a political party. But now this new

Bill if it is passed will make it illegal for a trade union to have anything to do with what the government calls a "political organisation". And the Bill includes steepest and community organisations in what it calls a "political organisation".

The government wants to stop the workers and their trade unions from joining in support committees with other community

organisations. It wants to stop this happening because it has seen that the workers and the community know their real strength lies in being united.

The bosses are also scared of workers striking to demand better conditions in the factories. So they also want to stop strikes by making it impossible for striking workers to get help once they have

gone on strike. In this new Bill the government wants to stop the workers' trade unions from helping the workers with money and advice.

But it is not only the trade unions helping the workers that the Bill wants to stop. It also wants to stop the people in the community, other workers and students, traders and teachers, from helping striking workers with

money or food. So if government and the bosses hope that workers will not be able to rise when the bosses rise to listen to the grievances. They want to easily starve if workers into acceptance conditions in the factories.

This new Bill is a direct attack on the strength the workers and the community have shown in these past few years. But the

Bill has not been passed yet. There are many objections to it. Most of the progressive trade unions have told the government that they refuse to accept this attempt to divide the workers from the community that they live in.

They have said they will carry on calling on the people in the community for support when the workers need help.

They have said they will continue to support the residents and the students in their struggle for better conditions in the places where they live and where they learn.

The workers and their trade unions say, "we have gained much, and we have learnt much by struggling together. We cannot go backwards now. We must carry on going forwards."

Bitter sweet dispute

IN FEBRUARY 1981 500 workers at Wilson Rowntree in East London went on strike in support of those workers who had been unfairly dismissed.

The bosses refused to negotiate with the South African Allied Workers Union, the union of the majority of the workers.

The workers of Wilson Rowntree, appealed to the people of South

Africa to support them in their struggle. In Cape Town some trade unions, youth groups, civic associations and community organisations have formed a support committee to co-ordinate support activities.

The main activity is a boycott of Wilson Rowntree products. Money is also being collected for a relief fund for the strikers.

Paraphrases have been distributed informing people of what the struggle at Wilson Rowntree is all about. These activities are also being organised in other towns in South Africa.

The boycott has been difficult to carry out. The union is far away in East London, and has also been having other difficulties - 3 of

its organisers have been detained by the police. Because of these problems it has been difficult to keep the community informed.

The Wilson Rowntree strike has not ended yet, and so we do not know the outcome. But already it has drawn together many worker and community organisations in Cape Town in support.

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THE PAPER FOR THE CHILDREN GROWS

MOLO has grown and grown. The response from the children has been tremendous. Many children are now writing in on a regular basis. Molo also receives letters, stories, poems, drawings and even complaints if they do not get Molo.

One of their young readers phoned to find out when it is Molo's birthday so that he could send Molo a present. Many children write in to Molo for pen-pals which shows that they need someone to share experiences with.

Games

For every edition of Molo, staff members go out to a different area to let the children know about Molo.

"They talk to us about their home town. We play games, take photographs and at the end of it all they sit down and write letters. It is sad to see that there are so few activities for children when they come from school, over week-ends and during holidays," said a Molo worker.

Teaching

As a children's magazine, Molo is being used in many different ways. There are some clubs and Sunday schools where Molo is used to encourage group activities by writing a letter or doing a group drawing. Molo is also used by teachers and teacher's training colleges as a teaching tool.

The educational page is used to assist teachers with their lessons. Teachers have also expressed much interest in the letters and stories from children as well as the "voices page", which informs them about things that they know very little of. After reading other children's letters, they are encouraged to write to Molo and tell their own stories.

The children are very thrilled when they see their own stories.

"Once, we went to a school and as soon as the children saw Molo arriving they crowded the teacher's table. With excited faces they pointed their 10-cent pieces at her. In 5 minutes all the Molos (200) were sold.

"The class was sitting quietly, each one engrossed in their Molo", said one of the Molo workers.

Spread

Molo has spread to other parts of the country, like the Transkei, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg, Natal as well as other countries. They have many new subscribers, but can do with many more.

Molo is planning a meeting with interested teachers soon, to discuss more ideas for the magazine. If anyone is interested they can telephone Molo at 222224 between 9 a.m. and 4

p.m. to find out where and when this meeting will be held. With more ideas from teachers and any other interested persons, Molo can grow and assist our children with a better understanding of the world they find themselves in.

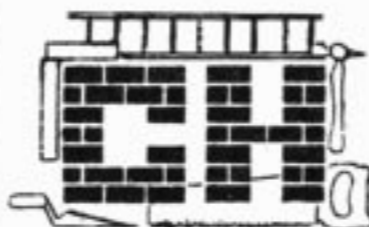
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• The little children of the creche in Mbekweni came outside to play games while the bigger ones were inside writing their stories.

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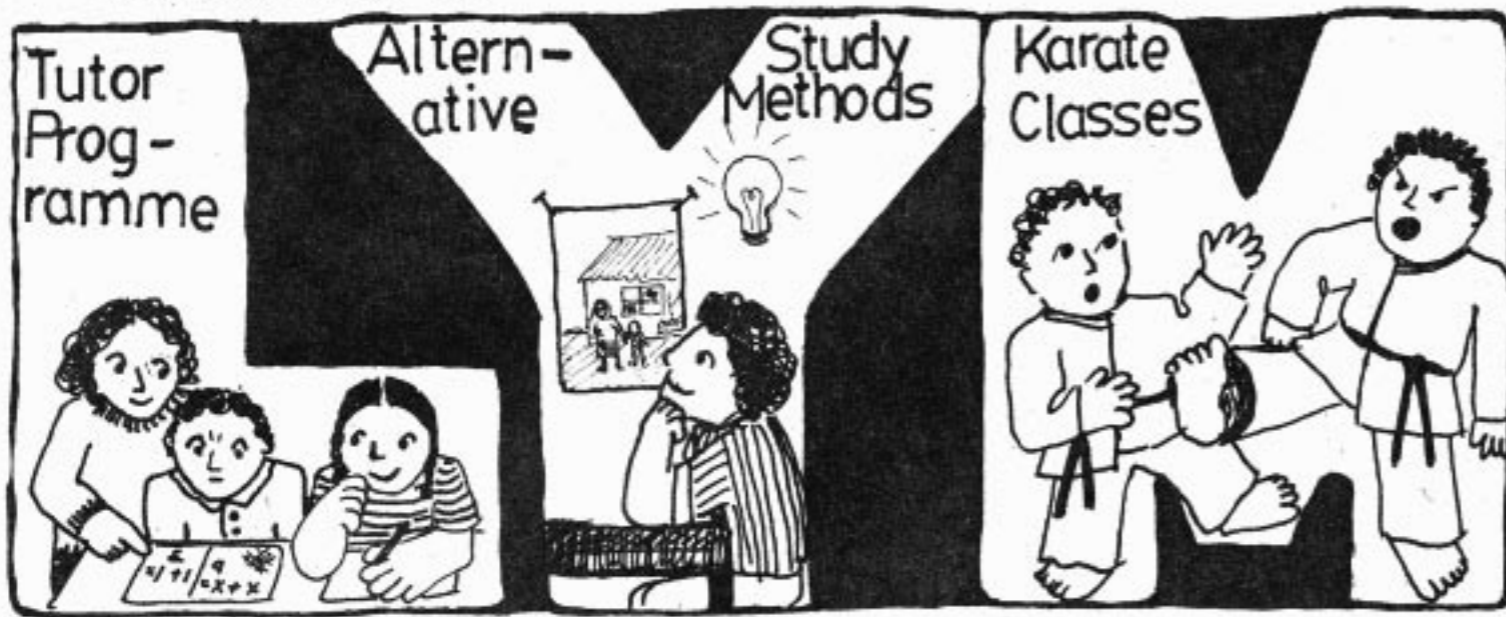
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THE youth in the Lansdowne area through their youth movement have started a number of projects. One of the members of the Lansdowne Youth Move-

ment (LYM) said enthusiastically: "The energy which has gone into starting projects in Lansdowne has to be seen to be believed."

The youth move-

ment runs a tutor programme, to assist the students in the area. The mathematics classes are the most popular. About 100 students from the three

high schools in the area attend. The classes are offered to students from standards 6 to 10.

They are also experimenting with alternative methods of study. This includes the use of provocative photographs of real living conditions in our communities. Questions are posed of what is seen in the pictures.

In this way discussion is encouraged. Report back sessions are also held. "Instead

of taking facts from text books, people are encouraged to arrive at their own conclusions through what we call, self analysis."

The students also discuss these methods and compare it with that used in the classrooms at school. The members of the youth will be following this up in the June holidays with a programme of how to apply this alternative method to a specific subject, such as biology.

Another project of the youth movement is the karate classes for the juniors. On Friday afternoons at 5 Cavell Rd., Groenvlei, the sound of AIEEYAN - one will heal - can be heard by our 10 to 12 year old karate enthusiasts. At these classes, the instructor talks to the group about discipline and gets everybody to participate equally. Soon a karate demonstration will be organised. The youth are asking us to keep

our eyes open for this demonstration.

New faces are welcome. The junior youth also sells Molo Songolo, a children's magazine.

The Lym is working closely with the students from the high schools in the area as well as the junior youth.

A lot of new ideas have emerged from this new contact and "this is leading to increased participation in community activities," they said.

Belthorn Youth: help build Moby

DURING the March school holidays, the youth in Belthorn felt the need to form a group for all to join. This would attract them from street corners and playing pin-ball.

"Somehow we had to stimulate them as boredom was driving them to idle activity," a spokesperson for the Movement of Belthorn Youth (MOBY) said.

Fifteen people attended the first meeting. This levelled off at 10 - 15 regular members.

Meetings are held every Tuesday evening.

The spokesperson said: "Our main problem at first was finding a suitable venue. There is a perfect hall in our area, but the cost of hiring it - R10 - is too much for our kitty."

PARENTS

"We decided on ventures to raise funds and at the same time parents in the area were asked about the idea of a youth group. We found there was a reluctance to send their children along.

To attract more members we had a film

show. It was only partially successful as there were only about 10 people who didn't already belong to Moby. We also had a 'scene' which was a financial success.

However, despite us having made announcements about Moby and receiving hearty responses, there were no new faces the following Tuesday.

"We attempted having a weekend camp, but instead decided on one day excursions.

"At the moment we are trying to work out an interesting programme and are looking for speakers.

Moby practices democracy and has no leaders. There is a rotating chairman and a temporary steering committee chosen for three months.

"The selling of GRASSROOTS is also used to gain support for Moby. We cover a large area door-to-door and usually tell people about Moby while we are selling.

"We hope to start an educational programme soon."

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ADVICE BUREAU

USE WONDER BOX AND SAVE MONEY

THANKS to the people of Mitchell's Plain there is some "electrical relief" for all of us (the due date has been changed). But there is no getting away from the fact that electricity accounts eat a big chunk out of each household budget.

GRASSROOTS spoke to a few Hanover Park residents who found a way of cutting their electricity and fuel accounts by cooking meals in a box.

"It sounds far-fetched but it really works. My account has come down since I'm using the box", Mrs Beyers said and explained how the box works.

"The idea is to bring your food to the boil on the stove, then you wrap the pot in newspaper and put it into the prepared box which keeps the heat inside. The food cooks slowly until it is done and cannot burn or go dry."

Mrs Melano and Mrs Aitchesson also use the box and are keen to share their know-how with others.

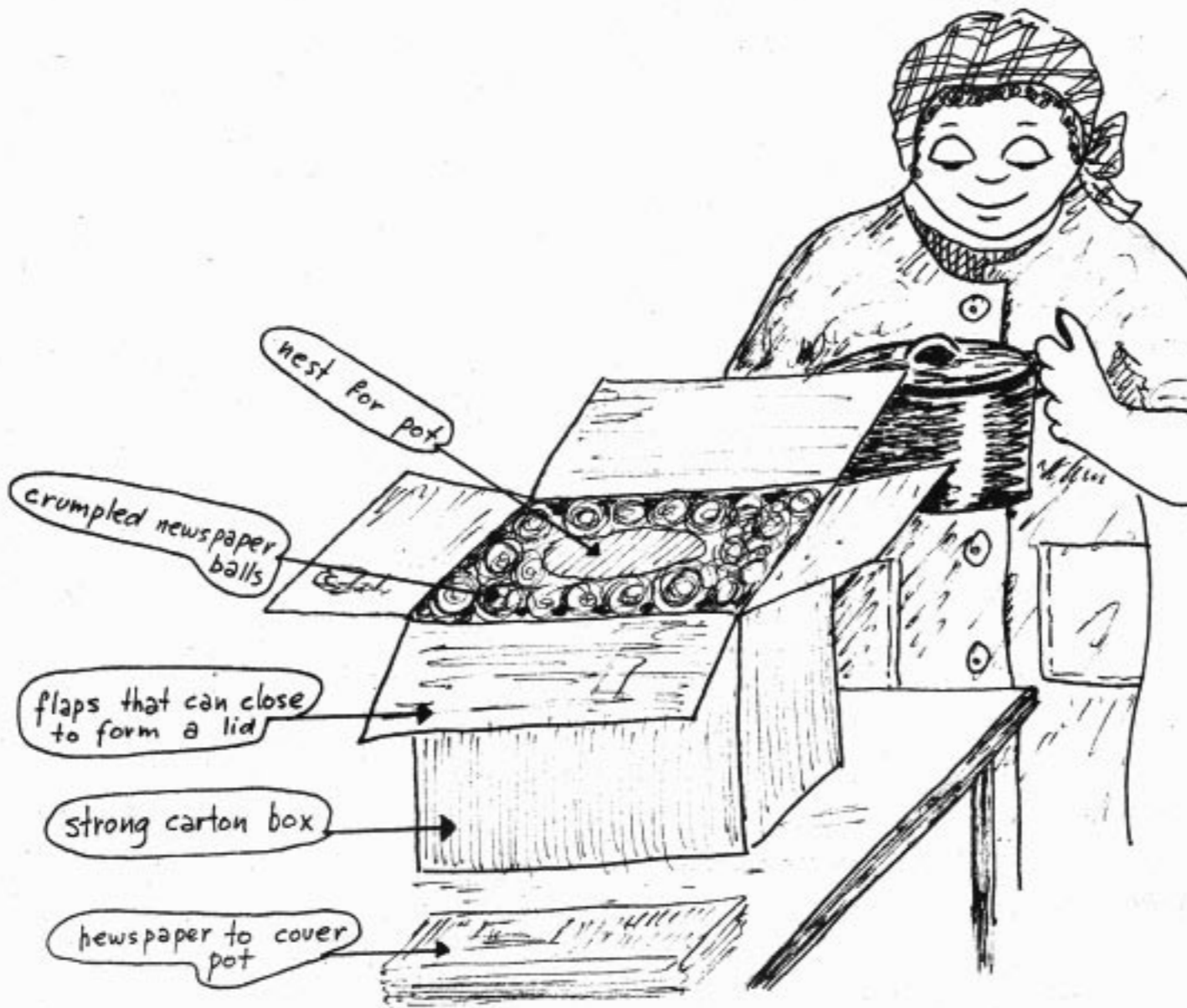
They have done a special course in nutrition and are willing to give free demonstrations in peoples' homes.

What are the advantages of cooking in a box?

- * You will save on your fuel account
- * You will save time. The box cooks your food while you are at work or out. The pot will not need constant checking.
- * The working mother can leave food in the box and children can help themselves to a warm meal when they come home from school.
- * Because it is a "fireless" cooker it cannot cause fires.
- * Tougher cuts of meat, sump and beans which normally need a longer cooking time can be cooked in the box.

How to make a box

Insulating heat by making use of a box, is not a new idea. Our grandmothers used a wooden box filled with hay. Today there are several types of ready-made boxes on the market. The Hanover



Belinda Court organises

IN BELINDA COURT, Manenberg, the residents are organising around the wonder-box idea.

Shortly after the court committee started out making boxes

Park women teach people to make their own cooking boxes from scrap materials. This is how to do it:-

- * Find a strong cardboard box with a lid or strong flaps - an apple box is ideal.
- * Line the inside of the box - bottom and sides - with a few layers of newspaper. Fill up the remaining space with tightly crumpled newspaper balls. Instead of this, paper strips or woodwool used for packing material can also be used.
- * Make a "nest" to receive the pot. The pot should have a well-fitting lid.

and showing the other local residents how to do so, all 48 families in the court received notices from the council offering to sell them wonder-boxes for R10 each.

* Finally the pot should be covered by a few layers of folded newspaper, followed by the lid of the box or an old cushion on the top.

Cooking times for different foods.

- * Dried beans and peas: Soak overnight. Boil for 20 - 30 minutes and place in the box for at least 4 hours.
- * Lentils: Boil for 15 minutes and place in the box for at least 2 hours.
- * Rice: Bring to the boil and place in the box for 45 minutes.
- * Sump: Soak overnight. Boil for 30 minutes and place in

"That sounds like downright robbery to me," commented a member of the court committee, "we can make them ourselves."

the box for at least 8 hours.

- * Different kinds of porridge: Bring to the boil and leave it in the box overnight. The next morning it will be ready and still warm.
- * Stewing meat: Cook for 15 - 30 minutes. Place in the box for 4 hours or more.
- * Vegetables cook quickly on a stove and should not be cooked in a box.

Precautions

Food should never be placed in a cooking box unless it is at boiling point.

Never leave food in a box for longer than 12 hours. Once food is removed from the box it

which is affiliated to the Manenberg Tenants Association, intends contacting other street and court committees in the area to spread the wonder-box idea.

should be eaten or put away in a refrigerator.

This is for safety reasons.

Readers are invited to write to GRASSROOTS for more information on home demonstrations and recipes for the fire-less cooking box.

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ADVICE BUREAU

ASBESTOS IS A DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE

ASBESTOS is one of the most dangerous substances people can work with.

If one breathes in asbestos, it scars the lungs, causing a disease called asbestosis.

People can also get lung cancer from breathing in the dust. This can happen even if they only work with it for a very short time. That is why asbestos is so dangerous - it can kill.

Who works with asbestos?

There are some large factories in Cape Town which make asbestos products only - pro-

ducts like asbestos cement and building materials and textiles. Many other factories use asbestos in some of their products.

For example an Eastern Cape factory uses asbestos powder in vinyl floor tiles.

DANGEROUS

Many brake-linings are made of this material. Workers who make these breathe lots of dust while cutting and grinding the brake-pads.

Building workers are also in danger from asbestos.

Many building mat-

erials like roofing sheets and hot water insulation have asbestos in them.

When building workers cut or drill holes in these materials, they are exposed to a dangerous amount of dust.

Raw asbestos is transported from the mines to the factories and also to the harbours for export.

It is packed in plastic bags which often break during handling.

EXPOSES

This exposes workers on the railways, in ware-



houses and at the docks to the dust.

All workers who breathe in asbestos are in danger of serious disease.

People living near the factories may also be affected.

Workers can also carry the dust home with them and this can harm their families.

Most workers are not sufficiently protected against the dust. It is very fine and can get through most masks provided.

If you want to know more about the problem write to the Advice Bureau of Grassroots for a free booklet. Write to: Box 181, Athlone 7760.

Can witnesses be detained

CAN a witness be detained to give evidence?

In certain circumstances a witness can be held in custody to give evidence.

In the past the state used the 90-day detention laws, to detain a witness for giving evidence in certain political cases. This was

later extended to 180 days.

To-day the position is slightly different, and witnesses can be detained to give evidence in certain criminal cases which are either of a serious nature or of a political nature.

SERIOUS

In the case of a serious crime such as murder or arson, the Attorney-General can apply to a judge for a witness to be detained to give evidence in such a case.

The judge will grant such an order if he is satisfied that it is in the interest of either the witness or the state.

The Attorney-General can authorise the detention of a witness without an order from a judge.

The Attorney-General must also be satisfied that such detention is in the interest of either the witness or

the state.

It will be in the interest of the witness or the state if it is feared that

- (a) his life will be in danger
- (b) he will not be in Court to give evidence
- (c) he will be influenced or interfered with

VISITED

A person who is detained as a witness cannot be visited by his family or lawyer. He can only be seen by the police. In legal terms he is held "incommunicado".

A witness so held must be visited by a magistrate once a week. The purpose is to see that the witness is in "good shape" and to hear any complaints he might have.

But there is nothing in the act which says how the magistrate should handle or solve

the complaints.

COURT

The order for the detention of a witness cannot be challenged in a Court of Law. It depends solely on the discretion of the Attorney-General.

The witness can be held in custody for up to six months. He must be released soon after the case in which he must give evidence is completed provided it does not exceed a period of six months.

WITNESSES

The witness can be released earlier at the discretion of the Attorney-General.

The detention of a witness is a very drastic measure as it affects the liberty and freedom of an individual.

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ALREADY, HOUSES HAVE BURNT DOWN ... AND WALLS HAVE COLLAPSED.

FIRST, COUNCIL WANTED TO MAKE ALL TENANTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN MAINTENANCE

A BBSK SURVEY SHOWED THAT TENANTS COULD CLEARLY NOT AFFORD TO PAY FOR MAINTENANCE THEMSELVES!

ALTHOUGH COUNCIL BACKED DOWN ON THIS, THE MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS OF TENANTS WERE BY NO MEANS OVER...



THEN- COUNCIL ISSUED A NEW LEASE MAKING NEW TENANTS & TENANTS ON TRANSFER RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN MAINTENANCE



COUNCIL CLAIMS THEY HAVE NO FUNDS FOR MAINTENANCE...



"WE WILL ONLY DO ESSENTIAL REPAIRS..." BUT WHEN TENANTS GO TO THE RENT OFFICE WITH COMPLAINTS-



AS A RESULT- MANY TENANTS DO NOT BOTHER TO REPORT REPAIRS ANY MORE!



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ALREADY COUNCIL HAS RESPONDED. THIS IS ONLY A FIRST STEP...



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Thornhill on the march

IN the last issue Grassroots reported on developments in the Thornhill area.

At a public meeting held at the Habibia Orphanage on 27 May 1981 more than six hundred people decided to convert last year's Parents/Students' Association into the Thornhill Residents' Association.

People felt that a permanent organization was needed in the area to take up community issues and community demands both on a short term and a long term basis.

BASIC POLICY

The basic policy of the organization adopted at mass meetings during the school boycott last year and again this year lays down the following principles:-
(a) The TRA does not recognise the divis-

ion of human beings into separate "races", "national groups" or ethnic groups and it shall fight against all forms of discrimination based on colour, religion or sex.

(b) It shall discourage participation in apartheid political machinery such as CRC, SAIC, Management Committees and similar bodies.

(c) It shall at all times ally itself with movements and organizations striving for the establishment of a democratic order in South Africa.

* The youth section and adult members have been working actively in support of workers on strike at Wilson-Rowntree and Leyland.

* Members went from door to door discussing the issue and

handing out newsletters and pamphlets. They arranged many activities ranging from raffles to film shows and a big public meeting on 24 June. Community response to these efforts has been very positive.

* In rallying community support on these issues we have been very successful in a very short time.

* Our work is on a long term basis and will require time. We will have a plan and work hard. We will plant the seeds to ensure that over a period of time we will produce political tradition which will counter all reactionary influences. For the achievement of these aims we must submerge petty differences and work together.

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VRYGROND SPEAKS OUT



• Mrs Annie Marcus says: "It will never be like it was."

THE mass demolition of "squatter camps" in 1977 left thousands of people homeless. Despite the government's attempts to limit squatter areas, there are still a number of camps in the Peninsula.

The government's failure to provide housing for the people has resulted in people being forced to live in poor housing conditions.

There are about 3 000 people living in shacks in Vrygrond, an area near Lavender Hill. Many people are waiting patiently for the day when they will get a Council house.

Others, will feel sad to leave the area where they have lived for many years.

The shacks are built with corrugated iron, the floors are covered with cardboard and in winter these shacks are cold and not strong enough to resist strong winds.

RESIDENTS

GRASSROOTS talked to the residents of Vrygrond about their housing problems and the insecurity about their future.

Mrs Elizabeth Maggot lived in Vrygrond for nine years with her husband and six children.

"We came to live here because we did not have a house", she explained.

"My children were living with people and they were not well cared for. So we came to Vrygrond where we could all be together."

She said that she would not mind continuing to live in Vrygrond, but the problem was the children.

"Most of my children are girls and you can't rear girls in a place like this".

The Vrygrond resi-

dents have to pay R6,50 a month to the City Council as a service charge.

"They call it service charges. But what services are there? We call it rent", she said.

Mrs Maggot told GRASSROOTS about the rent boycott which the community organised a few years ago. The people simply refused to pay the R6,50 service charge, but after some time the Council started to demolish their homes and then many people started to pay again.

MATERIALS

The residents are angry about losing their materials when the Council demolishes their homes. This happens when they do not pay the service charge.

The materials are taken to a depot 10km away. If the amount owing to the Council is paid, they can collect their materials. The problem is that it is not usually their own materials and what they get back is often of inferior quality. The people have to spend more money to hire transport to fetch their materials.

Mrs Solomons, 53, is living with her daughter-in-law and four grandchildren. She was forced to move to Vrygrond after the people she was staying with in Manenberg were evicted.

She has been living in Vrygrond for more than 10 years. Recently, they were unable to pay their rent and the Council came and demolished everything.

"We got help and paid the rent, but we did not get all our iron back. We have only one room now," she said.

Mrs Solomons suffers from asthma and her

grand-children have bronchitis.

"On top of all this, we had to sleep in the open when they pulled down our shack", she said.

Mrs Annie Marcus, 42, came to Vrygrond from Paarl in 1975. She came to be with her husband who works in Cape Town. They could find accommodation nowhere else.

Grassroots spoke to her as she sat among the ruins of her home.

"When I came home from work nearly two weeks ago I found my four-roomed house demolished.

"I got such a shock I burst into tears. I haven't been able to go to work since it happened. I have to sit here and look after our belong-

ings.

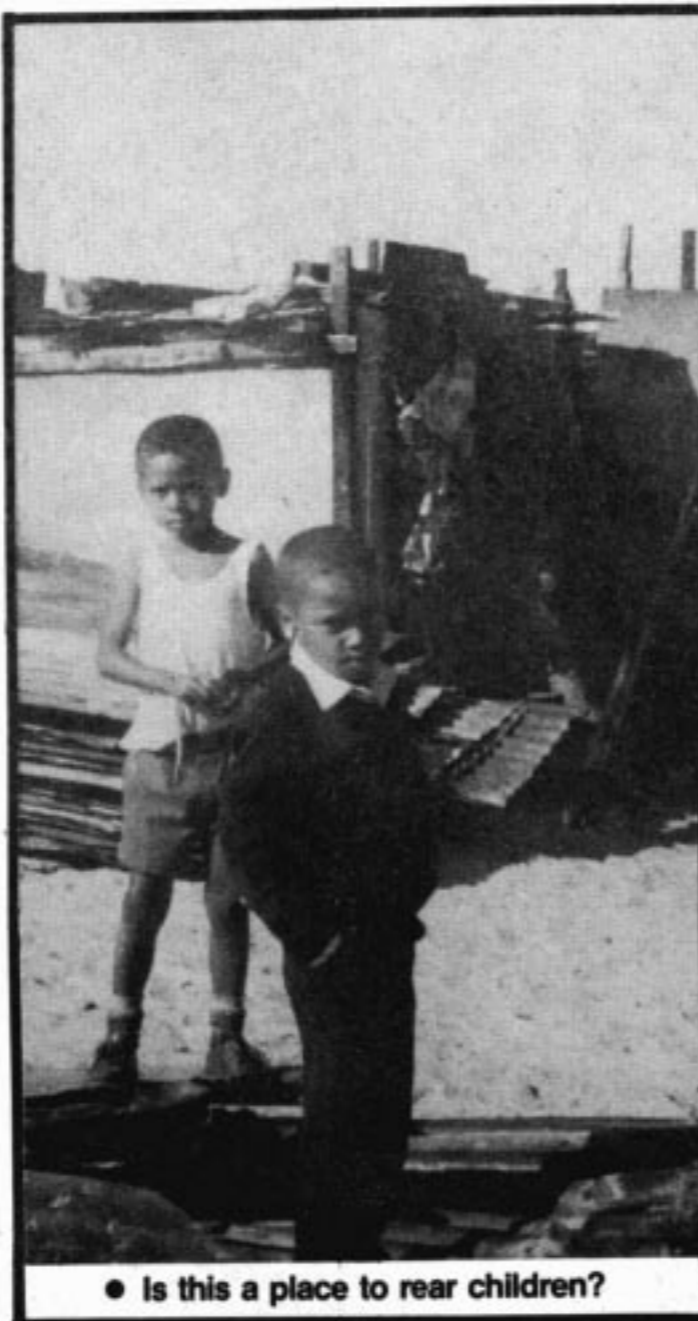
"We've just got our iron back after paying what the Council says we owe. Tonight when my husband comes home we will start rebuilding.

"But it will never be like it was because we didn't get all our iron back."

Organisation in the area is weak because of the continual threat of demolition and because people are being steadily rehoused in Valhalla Park.

There is, however, strong resistance to moving to Valhalla Park because of the high violence rate there.

"Many who have gone wish they were back here where they felt much safer," said a resident.



• Is this a place to rear children?

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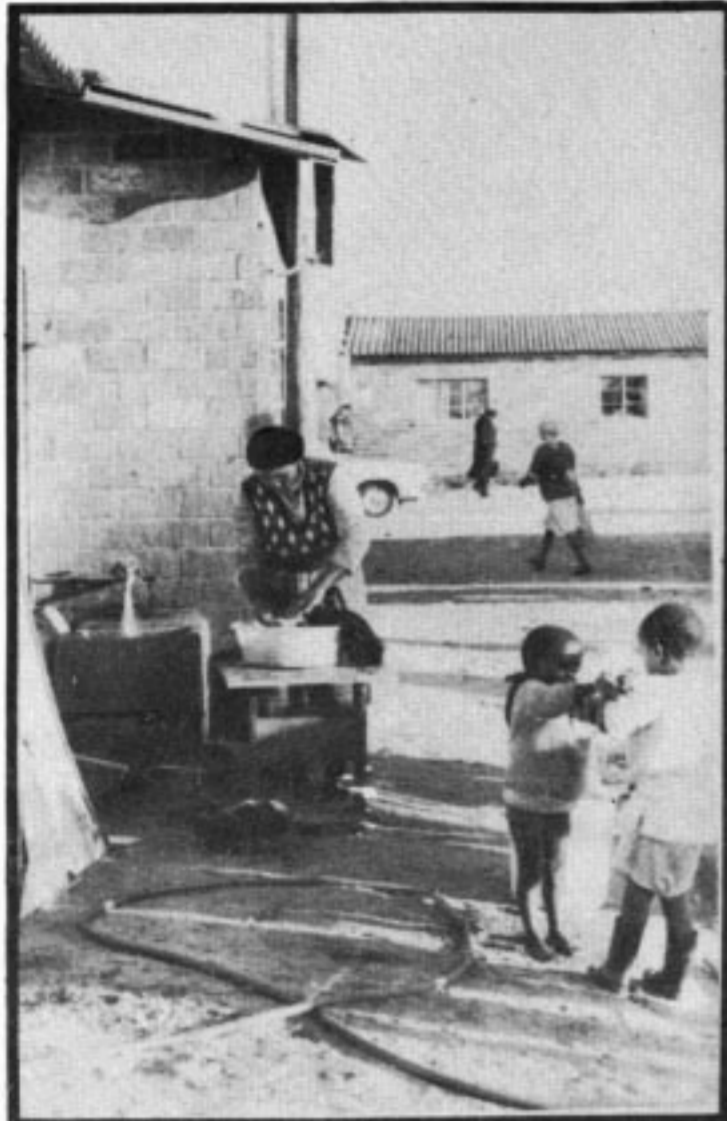
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Poor housing conditions in Guguletu



• She has to do her washing in bitterly cold weather because there is hardly any space inside her tiny home. "We only have one tap. We have no electricity to heat the water," this woman said. "The house is too small - 15 of us live here. I just cannot do my washing inside the house," she said.



• "Drains are blocked. The water stands outside my house. My windows are broken. But the authorities refuse to do anything about it. I have complained to them but nothing gets done," a pensioner told Grassroots. "They simply are not interested in us," he said. "The standing water is smelly and brings insects. If nothing is done, we will soon become sick. Water also leaks through the roof damaging our furniture."

GUGULETU residents in Cape Town are forced to live under very poor conditions. Not only are there thousands of people without homes, but also those who are housed live in very poorly maintained houses.

Children have to grow up in an area where there are no proper parks or adequate nursery schools.

In the past, residents have complained to the authorities but nothing has been done to improve their situation.

The Bantu Administration Board can ignore the complaints because the people have no say on the board. They are without a voice.

For their demands to be heard, they need to come together and build a strong community organisation which will truly speak for them. Bodies such as the community council cannot speak for the people because the members are put there by the board.

Guguletu residents must unite in their residents association to be strong again. Grassroots spoke to some residents about the poor conditions in the area.



• Dirt is not regularly collected in Guguletu. Dirt bins often have to be shared by more than one family. Papers collect in standing water and residents fear for their children who play near these dirt pools. These conditions are very unhealthy. The people just cannot live like this any more.

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