

U P S C O

Upington Support Committee

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The success of this campaign is dependent on a UNITED call stretching across all tendencies of religion, ideology, and community organisations and we appeal to you to inform this office of all your activities and publicity campaigns so that we can present a united front.

PABALLELO-UPINGTON

Gruesome events are taking place in the Northern Cape town of Upington. On May 26, 14 residents of Paballelo township were sentenced to hang for the murder of a municipal policeman, Lucas Sethwala, in 1985. The only woman to be condemned is 60 year-old Evelina de Bruin, a mother of ten children. Also among the 14 is her 63 year old husband Gideon Madlongolwane, a former mayor of Paballelo. The 14 were condemned through the "common purpose" doctrine a vicious legal ploy by means of which a whole crowd could be sentenced to death (by association) for a death which occurs in their midst.

POLICEMAN

This agonising trial, which started in October 1986, has called a 153 witnesses, and its the first time so many people have been sentenced to death in a single South African trial. And yet when an Oudtshoorn riot policeman was found guilty of the murder of Sandkraal resident Andile Koba in a police station early this year, he was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment! Such is South African justice. In what has been termed an "act of mercy", Mr Justice Basson gave six of the original 26 Paballelo accused suspended sentences with 1200 hours of community service for the next 40 months. Two others were sentenced to eight years



and four to six years in jail. But when the six freed trialists attempted to come to Cape Town to address a public meeting as part of the campaign to free their fellow prisoners, they were stopped by police from leaving the township. And today the schools in Paballelo - where students are united in their conviction that the charges should be dropped - are under siege.

EXPELLED

On May 22 the whole

standard 8 class at Paballelo High was expelled by the DET (Department of Education and Training), and given 14 days to sign conditions to be readmitted. On June 6, the situation got worse, when the whole school, except matriculants, got letters to say they must leave. Last Friday, five matric students were expelled, and a few students were readmitted. "The boycott is on the side of the DET," said one of the students.

SJAMBOKS.

" Police are harrasing us and beating people with sjamboks here in Paballelo. And nine students have been charged with malicious damage to property. They have laid a charge of assault against the police,"he said. Such educational problems are not new to Paballelo. This year, all the matric students who were doing Physics and Geography had to repeat the year. The DET had lost their exam papers!

But the students did not sit back and mope in the face of all these obstacles. " We formed an organisation called Mayibuye, with former students and young workers," said our comrade. " We are closely alligned to SOYA (Students of Young Azania), where we learnt our politics."

Many SOYA and Mayibuye members have been detained, harrassed and tortured in Paballelo, after a community marh and students boycott when the trial reopened.

RESTRICTIONS.

" Edward Prusent and his brother Elliot were given very harsh restrictions when they were released from detention - not being allowed to leave home except to report to the police station twice a day, not being allowed to participate in SOYA activities, or to speak to more than three people at a time. " Daniel Toms another SOYA comrade, was banished from Paballelo and Upington because the police accused him of being the main organiser of the march, even though he was not in Upington at the time."

'STATE TERRORISM' IN CAPE TOWN.

This was the view of some people who witnessed the violence meted out to demonstrators protesting against the elections. Hundreds of people were injured and at least over twenty killed. Among those injured were over thirty children between the ages of 3-13 years who had birdshot and buckshot wounds. A three year old had nine pieces of birdshot in her skull. Here we print eye-witness accounts by relatives, friends and bystanders of the horror surrounding the killings.

1. *Mrs Cornelia Otto of Kalksteefontein*, said her teenage daughter who was five months pregnant had gone to visit her friend. " When she came out of the house, she didn't see the police. One of the policeman walked up to her and shot her dead. The bullet went through her chest, opening up a hole in her back"

2. *Schoolboy Pedro Page (18) of Fairmont Senior Secondary School, Grassy Park*, was visiting relations on Wednesday night with a friend. His friend Farouk Viljoen, said he saw a Casspir in the street discharging teargas and rubber bullets. "I looked at the Casspir to see if they were still firing when a yellow bakkie stopped. A guy jumped out and fired into the

crowd where there were small children and mothers with babies. When I turned around I saw people on the ground. I saw Pedro lying on the ground. I later learnt that he died. He had been shot in the head."

3. *Nomthunzi Moshabelele (5)* was killed in Khayelitsha after a gunman in a car was seen firing indiscriminately by eye witness Iris Jantjies. Mrs Jantjies said she picked up bullets in the road , but these were confiscated by the police."You can't hear the bullets in town, so I wanted to keep the bullets as my witness. There were children lying on the floor like flies."

4. *Leonard Rass (13)*, a mentally retarded boy from Eros school, was killed by a

shotgun. Pastor Isaac Pitt of Kleinvlei said he saw a crowd of people at the polling booth. " I saw police fire at random. The crowd turned and fled in all directions. One person was lying on the ground. He had been shot in the back. A number of people were injured."

5. *Woodlands resident Desiree Anders* said " Several men were standing in the road and wildly firing shotguns at a crowd of people running in the direction of our house. My boyfriend screamed at them to stop shooting because my daughter was standing in the doorway ... my child went down and they continued to shoot."