

SASPU

FOCUS

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I will get firsts
I will get my degree
I will drive a nice car
I will get a nice job
I will get rich



I don't
want
no BANTU
EDUCATION

**Apartheid education
in black and white**

Contents

p3

Student delegates launch Nusas into its 60th year

p4

Beyers re-elected at congress

p5

Admins accept government subsidy scheme then change admissions criteria

p6

Entering the nuclear age as Koeberg gets off the ground

p7

A million to sign against Apartheid

p8

The student press on the move

p9

Nusas president Kate Philip speaks on issues facing students in 1984

p10

SADF in focus

p12

Apartheid education in black and white

p17

Are men and women what they're meant to be?

p18

PW's new constitution under fire

p20

Sheena Duncan looks at life for S.A.'s millions

p22

The SABC's stopping the Bopping

p23

Has the storm died down now the Windies are gone?

SASPU FOCUS

Facing the challenge

Welcome to the University

Welcome to the place where learning takes on a different meaning, where we sit in lecture theatres and where we do not have to go to classes if we do not wish to. Welcome also to an environment where new ideas are welcomed, and where, we hope, people learn to think for themselves.

Universities are different - free, friendly, large, with choices to be made and interests to follow. Universities, it seems, are different from anything we have experienced before - including the discipline and authority of the army, the narrowness of the schools, and the restrictions of our parents.

This may be so. But we must remember we are still part of that world. Schools trained us for university. Our university trains us for business. And settling down to our future jobs will go hand in hand with beginning a new generation which will go through similar experiences to our own.

We are still part of something larger than what we experience at university. We are still part of society and have a responsibility to it. We are developing ideas which will benefit society, and will be trained for jobs in that same society. We are also still subject to the rules of South Africa.

And South Africa is a strange place. It is complex and filled with conflict. Every day we hear of strikes, fights and struggles. We are told that in a few months we will be governed under a new type of parliament, that there will be changes in our education system, and that Africans will no longer be allowed into the cities unless they have both a job and a house.

In our universities we will hear of student dissatisfaction with the way our courses are being run, with the lack of influence students have in the university, and not being able to determine what courses should be taught with what content.

All these questions might not appear to have any relevance to the issues at hand - how well will we do in our exams, and what courses we need to pass to become lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers or whatever.

But they do. One needs only to think of why we, as a group of particular individuals are able to study and not others. What makes us special? Certainly, there are some highly intelligent people among our ranks. All of us have passed our matric well enough to get into university.

But think of those who have not. Of the white matric writers 90 percent passed. Of the black students, only 50 percent made the grade. Of those only few got university entrances, and of those fewer will be accepted because of the raised admissions mark. For anybody who wishes to look, one will see a vast difference in the standards of black and white education. Bantu education is inferior - seven times less money is spent on each black child, inadequate classrooms and an average of sixty pupils to

each teacher.

So, in the mere fact that we, and not others, are able to attend this elite institution, we can see how South Africa operates.

It is racially divided and conflict ridden. There is gross oppression and exploitation. There is inequality in every nook and cranny, even between ourselves, our lecturers and the people who run the university. Student organisations have for many years taken up these inequalities. Nusas on the white English campuses, Azaso on the black campuses, and Cosas in the black schools have acknowledged the role students play in shaping society and the role society plays in shaping students.

Because of the inequalities, we are able to learn and develop skills. The student organisations believe we should fight to give others the same opportunities as we ourselves have. In addition, they explore ways in which the select few can utilise what they learn for the greatest benefit of the greatest number.

Inevitably these student organisations cannot do this in a vacuum. They have had to keep pace with the developments in South Africa to see what role students can play in it at any point. They have also had to engage society at large - protesting against injustices where they are found, pointing to ways in which South Africa can be built into a democracy, challenging racism and inequality, and posing new alternatives to apartheid.

This year the challenge remains. We will again be involved - whether we like it or not - in South Africa's problems. And we will have to face the challenge of the changes being imposed on us. The choice, then, is simple - will we meet that challenge, take part in our student organisations and fight the injustices, or will we sit back and pretend that we have nothing to do with what is going on?

In addition we face another challenge. Students cannot achieve change by themselves. To do this we must link up with all those democrats elsewhere struggling to achieve the same as us - a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa. In the course of this we might well face the iron fist of apartheid. Student leaders have been detained, banned and put on trial by the government. Sometimes the police have come onto campus to stop peaceful protests. But this is not something which should stop us. Instead, we should fight against repression and resist what most South Africans experience every day in different ways.

The student movement is getting stronger every year. As time goes by more people are able to see that if the government carries along its present course, we can only end up with more, not less conflict. To build a democratic South Africa more people are starting to work for it. Democracy will not just happen - it has to be built. And we can start building where we find ourselves - in the universities.

Working for change

AT DAWN on December 6, 1983, 250 singing and exhausted students emerged from the Wits Student Union Building after their longest sitting ever — a nine hour marathon.

The 61st Nusas Congress was over. After five days of gruelling discussions and debates, Nusas had thoroughly assessed the past year and planned ahead for 1984.

'It was a profoundly educative five days,' said one student.

The theme 'Students meeting the challenge of change' was adopted by the congress. The theme gives broad direction to Nusas activity on the campuses.

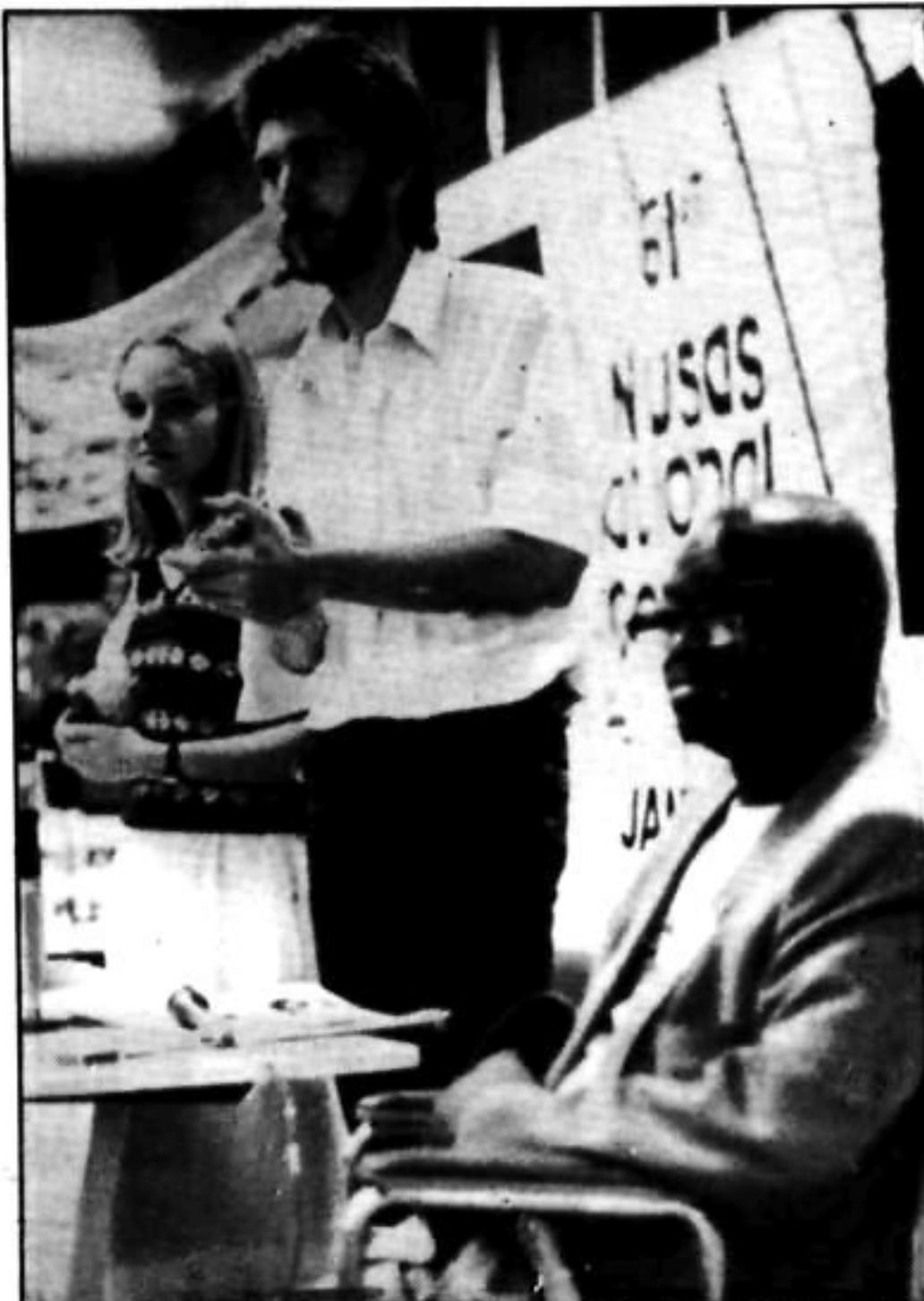
Kate Philip, unanimously elected Nusas president for the second year running said: 'In choosing the theme Nusas campuses recognised the responsibility of working for democratic change. It is only students who will, and can, bring about that change to their campuses.'

'Congress understood very clearly the role students must play in fighting for equal education in South Africa,' she said.

'Through our participation in the United Democratic Front, we also have a role to play in the broader struggle for democracy in South Africa.'

A success identified by the congress was mass student mobilisation around the government's Quota Bill. It was withdrawn in mid-year. A close look at the new government admissions and subsidy formula is planned as a follow up to the campaign.

The effective use of Faculty Councils and Student Representative Councils (SRC's) were seen as important in bringing about changes on campus.



Above: UDF president Oscar Mpetha (right) receives a standing ovation at Nusas Congress opening

IF FRIENDS, parents or Cliff Saunders and the SABC never told you, Nusas Congress is:

- held once a year.
- open to all students.
- the policy making forum for Nusas affiliated campuses.

It is the place where:

- discussion groups on all areas relevant to student life take place.
- national and international issues are debated.
- motions are workshopped, presented to the congress, and accepted or rejected.
- previous policy is scrapped and new policy formulated.
- report backs from student organisations like the South African Student Travel Service (SASTS), and campus report backs occur.

Issues on the agenda included the expansion of student benefits offered by Nusas. A vac accomodation scheme, student discounts and 'Swift Lift' are schemes offered by the national union. The South African Student Travel Service (Sasts), offering cheap travel is another major project.

Congress elects a non-stop travelling leadership to its Head Office. They co-ordinate national student activity.

Delegates vote on policy



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High praise for Beyers Naudé

AT THE 1983 Nusas Congress in December delegates unanimously elected banned cleric, Dr C F Beyers Naude, as their honorary President for the seventh time.

Beyers has never been able to accept the position because of his banning order.

Dr Naude was first detained in 1977. Just 20 years earlier he was a popular NGK dominee and a member of the Broederbond. Reflecting on this drastic change, Nusas president, Kate Philip, said:

'Beyers has moved from the heart of Afrikaner verkramptheid to a position where he has come to be recognised both in South Africa and internationally as a democrat.'

From his position as dominee and Broederbonder, Dr Naude gradually became aware of the injustices in South Africa and of the struggles of its oppressed people.

In December 1961, he attended a gathering of churches to discuss racial conflict in South Africa, at Cottesloe. A document condemning apartheid was drawn up.

Although NGK delegates at the conference approved the document, their synod rejected it. Eventually Naude remained the only NGK delegate to support it.

In August 1963, at a meeting of about 250 clergy, the Christian Institute was formed with Beyers Naude as its director. This invoked the disapproval of the NGK church and he was removed from his position as a dominee.

The Christian Institute planned to

attempt to convince whites, especially Afrikaners, of the injustices of apartheid.

In the late 1960's, the Christian Institute began to sponsor the Spro-Cas investigation and reports into alternative ways of governing South Africa. The last Spro-Cas report advocated a democratic system of government.

Peter Randal, in a book which pays tribute to Beyers Naude, illustrates the change in his personal views:

'Towards the end, Naude was prepared to consider equal salaries for all Christian Institute staff, from the cleaners to himself.'

The government responded harshly to the Institute in the 1970's. The Schibusch Commission, which conducted investigations into a number of organisations, led to the Christian Institute being declared an 'affected organisation'. This meant that it could no longer receive funds from overseas organisations.

In 1977 both Beyers Naude and the Christian Institute were banned. He was banned for five years initially and rebanned for a further three years in 1982.

After Dr Naude's re-election as honorary president, Kate Philip said:

'Beyers is a symbol of hope for Nusas. We are trying to challenge the ideas people have got from SATV, from twelve years of Christian National Education, from the SADF. Beyers Naude is an inspiring example that people can change their ideas and can commit themselves to justice.'



Honorary Nusas president — Naudé

How the other half failed

SOUTH AFRICA'S dunce has done it again and come bottom of the class.

Bantu education — that bankrupt, understaffed, overcrowded pupil of the government — has churned out appalling results once again.

The most recent victim is the matric class of 1983. Half failed.

Black educationalists and teacher organisations have reacted angrily to the results.

The Congress of South African Students (Cosas) said in a resolution it believed the high failure rate was 'another painful reminder of the racist gutter education system under which oppressed students suffer.'

It accused the government of 'fixing the exam results so as to cut down the number of academic students at universities and schools forcing the majority of pupils into technikons to acquire skills directly needed by the so-called private sector.'

The African Teachers Association of South Africa (Atasa) blamed the government at its recent annual conference held in Port Elizabeth.

Its president, Mr R L Peteni, said the Association was 'disturbed' by the failure rate and 'the faults of the Bantu education system.'

'A great deal of money and a dynamic education policy could arrest the crisis in black education,' he said.

Atasa and other education groups have identified the problems as:

- Overcrowded classes.
- A chronic lack of teachers and a shortage of teacher training facilities.
- Unequal expenditure. For every rand spent on a black child, R13 is spent on a white child.
- Poor teaching facilities.

The president of the National Education Union of South Africa, Mr Curtis Nkondo, said the results were a reflection of the system of racial education in South Africa.

He said racial education made sure that oppressed and exploited people got inferior schooling. This was designed to create a pool of cheap labour.

'Education in South Africa was introduced to control and indoctrinate', he said.

The only solution was a unitary, non-racial and democratic education system.

Dr K Hartsehorn, a member of the government commission into education said 80 percent of black teachers had a standard 8 certificate and two years of post-matric training.

Get in control of your faculties

NUSAS HAS pledged itself to building strong and dynamic student councils in faculties on its campuses.

This emerged at its recent national congress held at Wits last year.

'Faculty Councils are the most direct form of representation available to students, and deal with the central feature of students' university life — our education,' said Nusas president, Kate Philip.

'Through Faculty Councils we can most effectively give voice to student grievances, such as bad lecturers, inappropriate course content, more time for exams and any other problems facing students,' she said.

Students representing several Faculty

Councils from each of the English speaking universities met for discussion during the congress committee session.

Common areas of concern, such as class representatives, were discussed. Class reps were seen as a crucial link between the Faculty Council and each class.

'It is only through close communication that we can find out what the problems are and plan action,' said another delegate. An information booklet on class reps is to be brought out by Nusas.

Another topic on the agenda was student representation on decision-making bodies in the university. Some

Faculty Councils have full voting rights on Faculty Boards, while others have to make do with observer status.

Faculty Councils will question the responsibility education places on students to contribute positively to society.

'Faculty Councils are concerned with education which will affect the future. Not just our individual futures but with the future of society as a whole.'

'We are being entrusted with knowledge and skills necessary for keeping society going. What we are taught has real effects on people's lives when implemented in the real world,' said Philip.

Jubilation and failure for matrics

JUBILATION GREETED the announcement of the 1983 white matriculation results. 93 percent passed.

African fellow students had little cause to celebrate. Half had failed.

Of the 73 841 African candidates only 50,4 percent passed, and a mere 7 500 received university exemption. Of these, only a handful will get into universities because of a shortage of funds and a raise in university entrance criteria.

Dr Ken Hartshorne, a member of the De Lange Commission into education said at the time: 'The chickens are coming home to roost — we are now at the bottom of the trough.'

De Lange was set up by the government in the wake of the 1980 school boycotts. It made recommendations for reforms in education.

Hartshorne said black pupils and teachers work in a system they reject, — 'it's a psychological thing.'

'The results are a rejection of a separate education system.'

The results were disastrous considering the skills shortage facing the country. 'There need to be changes made to the whole structure of education,' he said.

Since 1978, when 78,2 percent passed, the pass rate has dropped steadily to 1983's all time low.

Last year 93,6 percent of white matriculants passed. Since 1976 passes have not fallen below 92 percent.

The university exemption figure has not fallen below 41 percent in the last 8 years.



Crowded classrooms: Facing a bleak future

Backdoor quota okayed by admins

WHILE STUDENTS were gearing up for end of year exams, university authorities announced a new scheme for student admissions.

According to the new criteria, academic entrance requirements for new students will be stricter. And if students want to continue their university studies they will have to improve their pass rates.

Admissions are now tied to a new government formula for working out university subsidies. University authorities accepted the formula late last year.

Dr J.B.Z. Louw of the University Advisory Council, a government body, said 'The cleverer the students the university can attract, the bigger will be the dividends for the university.'

Before the change, government subsidies depended on the total number of students registered at a university. Now they will be closely tied to the total number of students who pass

high-prestige research and post-graduate study.

Educationalists have criticised the changes as a step backward as more people will be denied university education.

But the strongest opposition has been on the grounds that the new moves are racially discriminatory and will limit the number of black students at white universities — the aim of the Quota Act which was dropped after nationwide protests.

Mark Orkin, a Wits University Sociology researcher said his findings show that Wits would be discriminating against blacks if it increased entrance requirements.

'Because of their inferior education the proportion of black students excluded would be much higher than for whites', he said.

'Any university owes it to the pursuit of knowledge and to the tax paying public of all races to try and attract the most able students.'

'But it would be perpetuating apartheid education if, in the knowledge of the present staggering disparity it, relied exclusively on the segregated matric systems to measure ability', he said.

A statement released by the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) which represents black scholars said they saw the raising of university entrance requirements as 'oppressive and discriminatory against black students, especially at this time when black education has taken another leap down the drain as reflected by the 1983 matric exam results.'

'There is no doubt that this measure is in line with the Quota Bill system which the government attempted to introduce', the statement said.

The National Union of South African Students (Nusas) last year spearheaded a campaign to oppose the Quota Bill.

Constitution enforces apartheid education

THE MAKE-UP of apartheid education into four racially divided departments — each with their 'own' and 'general' affairs — last year received its final touches with the release of the government's White Paper on education.

With its maze of bureaucratic changes in the pipe-line, much of which is reduceable to apartheid mumbo-jumbo, the government accepted the recommendations of the De Lange commission. But only insofar as they fitted into the constitution.

It plans to create five separate

departments of education with three new racially defined departments.

Ministers for black, coloured, white and Indian education will be appointed.

Unlike other departments Bantu education will not administer its 'own' affairs. Ultimate control will rest in the hands of the minister in charge of 'general' affairs.

Overall policy will be determined by the minister in charge of 'general' matters, who will also co-ordinate and direct the whole system.

The principles of Christian National

Education, introduced soon after the government came to power, stay. The creation of a single ministry for education goes. A central recommendation of the government's commission, it was rejected for 'separate but equal education.'

Also to remain firmly entrenched is the Group Areas Act. The possibility of black or coloured pupils using derelict white schools, of which a number exist, was scotched.

The growing financial discrepancy between black and white education would not be righted 'at the expense of white education.'

Restructuring moves will consist of a number of co-ordinating committees, councils and new ministerial posts.

Including the Bantustans, there will be a world record of 19 different ministers of education in South Africa.

The left-overs of the De Lange Commission, a working group, is working on a series of plans for regional secondary councils to fill out the lower rungs of the bureaucracy — but the government has said it is waiting for introduction of the constitution before going ahead with these plans.

Koeberg — coming attraction

A look at the implications of nuclear power in South Africa

KOEBERG IS soon to become operational, taking South Africa into the nuclear age.

The South Africa government has frequently tried to justify the use of nuclear power, despite of its dangers and uncertainties.

Escom, which produces all South Africa's electricity, only supplies about 24 percent of the total population with power. A Koeberg spokesperson, Mr Murray said that once Koeberg was fully operational, no new areas would receive power. The number of people with electricity would not increase significantly. Furthermore, the cost of electricity would not decrease.

'However, you must remember that Koeberg will benefit South Africa in other ways. It will be a great benefit to the economy, and thus create many more jobs for people, as well a conserving South Africa's coal supply,' he said.

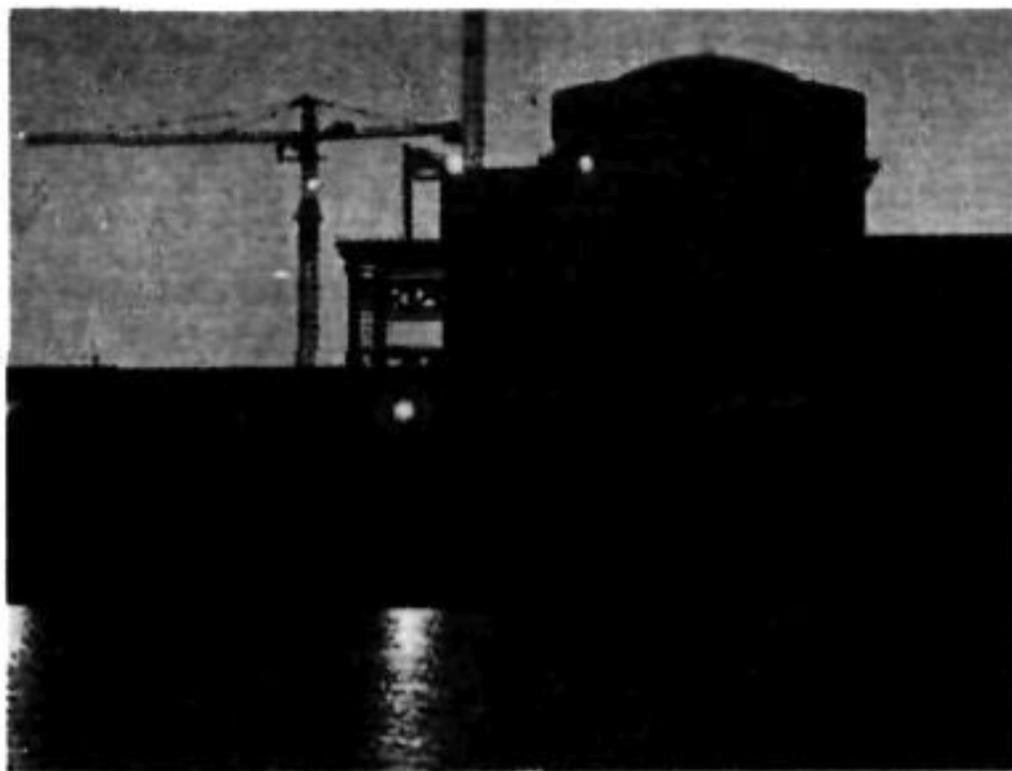
Koeberg has already cost South Africa a staggering 2.4 billion rand.

This, and the fact that South Africa still has extensive coal supplies, has raised questions amongst experts about the need for the project. Most South Africans stand to gain little from nuclear power, but will live under the constant threat of a nuclear accident.

A 16 kilometer radius emergency zone surrounds Koeberg. The Cape Town Medical Officer of Health, Dr Coogan, said 15 percent of the time wind capable of carrying radioactive particles blow in the direction of Cape Town. This makes the zone relatively meaningless in the case of a serious accident in the power center of the plant.

It has been estimated that in the event of a 'meltdown' all those living within the 16 km radius would be killed, including the residents of Melkbosstrand, Blouberg, Atlantis and Escom township.

When asked to comment, Mr Andre



Koeberg power station

van Heerden, as Escom spokesperson, said: 'The chances of dangerous waste reaching Cape Town are very remote, and would only occur in slow wind conditions as fast blowing winds tend to disperse the radioactive particles.'

Cape Town residents would receive a relatively low dose of radiation, which some believe would be enough to cause cancer.

In October last year, nuclear fuel was loaded into one of the Koeberg reactors. The final stage of the operation is due to begin in July. Fuel will be activated causing a nuclear reaction which produces energy.

Once this stage is reached, the toxic radioactive waste products produced will be sent to France for 'reprocessing' and 'permanent disposal'. A particle of waste plutonium about the size of a grain of sand can be fatal if inhaled. Plutonium is also used to make nuclear weapons.

'Low-level' radiation waste will be disposed of at Vaalputs, a farm in Namaqualand.

In 1968, the South African government shocked the world by refusing to sign the nuclear non-proliferation-treaty. According to this agreement all countries without nuclear weapons must submit to regular international inspections of nuclear plants.

South Africa's Nuclear Information Act restricts access to information concerning nuclear technology. So long as this veil of secrecy continues, observers will ask the frightening question: 'What are South Africa's motives for buying nuclear power?'

Ex Nusas president claims torture



Van Heerden: R113 000 lawsuit

FORMER NUSAS president, Aurret van Heerden, is suing ten security policemen for a total of R113 000.

The case is due to start on February 20 in the Pretoria Supreme Court.

Van Heerden was held in solitary confinement for a period of 288 days. He alleges that he was:

- subjected to unreasonably severe and prolonged cross-questioning and was compelled to remain standing for lengthy periods of time.
- threatened with assault, torture and death.
- not allowed reading material or adequate exercise.

- strangled with a wet towel.
- subjected to electric shocks.
- forced to remain standing for periods of up to 12 hours with his wrist handcuffed to his ankle.
- assaulted by being pulled around by his hair, punched and hit with an open hand and whipped on the soles of his feet with a sjambok.

He also alleges that a tight-fitting bag was placed over his head and water poured over the bag to cause suffocation. Van Heerden alleges that the nature and intensity of these actions varied during his detention.

Allegations against the ten security policemen are that they were involved in the actual interrogations and assaults or were responsible for not preventing him from being maltreated.

Van Heerden's detention in September 1981, was one in a spate of detentions.

Amongst those detained during this period were Dr Neil Aggett and Ernest Dipale. Both later died in solitary confinement.

Only five of the more than 60 people detained during this period were charged. One, Barbara Hogan, was convicted.

The security police have never been convicted or held responsible for the torture or death of a detainee, in a South African court. There have, however, been a number of out of court settlements between the Minister of Law and Order and the families of people who have died in detention.

In September 1982 the Detainees Parents Support Committee collected 70 statements from detainees and ex-detainees alleging 'systematic and widespread torture'.

In December 1982 van Heerden was one of a number of ex-detainees who gave evidence in Dr Neil Aggett's inquest. The magistrate exonerated the security police entirely from responsibility for Aggett's death.

Van Heerden said he would not accept an out of court settlement unless the individuals concerned admitted to the allegations made against them.

He said it was important for people to be informed about what happens in detention and this was one of the reasons for the action. He said the disadvantage of out of court settlements was that the public was not informed.

Van Heerden said he was still suffering the psychological effects of his detention, but it had deepened his commitment to working for democratic change.

The experience gave him an understanding of the level of violence with which the government was prepared to defend its policies, he said.

Cosas opposes repression

OVER 300 delegates from black schools, country-wide, met recently in Durban for the third annual conference of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas).

The national student organisation resolved to continue to oppose the lack of qualified teachers, the lack of student representation, corporal punishment, poor facilities, overcrowding, and the enforcement of an age-limit on school students.

The conference was opened by Archie Gumede, president of the United Democratic Front (UDF), who emphasised the important role that students play in the Front.



Past Cosas president, Shepard Mati



Lulu Johnson, present Cosas president

Sidney Mufamadi, from the General and Allied Workers Union, spoke on the importance of maintaining the alliance between students and workers. Thandi Gqubule from the Matabane Youth League, spoke on the need to organise women. Joe Phaala, the ex-Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso) president, spoke on the need to organise students around education.

Delegates resolved that the 1984 theme would be 'United Action for Democratic Education'. Other resolutions called for the increased involvement of women in Cosas, resistance to SADF involvement in schools, and active opposition to the extension of military call-up.

The fact that Cosas was effectively banned in KwaZulu was discussed, as well as the Education Charter campaign. A national committee was set up to co-ordinate this.

A people's education

THE AZANIAN Students Organisation (Azaso) decided, at a recent meeting of its General Student council, that their 1984 theme would be 'Organising for a People's Education'.



UDF leaders at national launch last year.

A million to sign

THE UNITED Democratic Front (UDF), South Africa's largest anti-apartheid grouping, is to launch its second year with a mammoth 'one million signature campaign', designed to show majority opposition to the new constitution and the Koornhof Bills.

The idea for the campaign was conceived at the UDF conference in Port Elizabeth in December.

Pretoria, bastion of apartheid rule, has been chosen for the January launching of the campaign.

At least a million people are expected to sign a declaration rejecting racism, exploitation, the government's new constitution and

Koornhof's deal.

The declaration also calls for a non-racial democratic South Africa.

According to UDF national secretary, Popo Molefe, the campaign aims:

- To show South Africa and the world that the UDF is the legitimate representative of the people.
- To consolidate progressive organisations and maintain the momentum of the successful anti-Community Councils campaign.
- To get organisations to participate more fully in the UDF and unite people across a wide range of groups.

'They made their decision without consulting the people and against the wishes of our people,' said Molefe

about the Labour Party's decision at Eshowe to accept the government's new constitution.

'The UDF campaign is seen as a declaration that Labour leader Hendrickse, Reform Party chief Rajbansi and Soweto 'mayor' Tshabalala do not speak for the masses.'

Against a backdrop of increasing poverty, repression and unemployment, Molefe insists, 'Our opposition to the government's initiatives assumes increasing importance each day. The times demand we take an active political stand. All of us, worker, student, religious person and sports person.'

Azaso, a national student organisation of representatives from all black campuses and most technikons, reaffirmed in the theme its commitment to oppose the existing education system. It called for a unitary, democratic, relevant and compulsory education.

The Azaso Council also decided to launch a major campaign to expose the conditions on campuses in the Bantustans.

This decision follows the death of six students and the injury of hundreds more at the University of Zululand, in clashes with Inkatha.

Students resolved to launch a petition calling for the resignation of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, president of Inkatha, from his post as chancellor of the University of Zululand.

The decision also follows recent attempts by Ciskei authorities to take over the running of Fort Hare University.

Azaso also decided to mobilise students nationally to oppose conscription. Students saw this as important because of statements by members of

the National Party, that under the new constitution, 'coloureds' and Indians will be required to do military service.

Delegates will 'resist conscription in all its forms' as they could not 'participate in machinery that oppresses our own people'.

Charter for change

THE AZANIAN Students Organisation (Azaso) has announced that a campaign to draw up an Education Charter will get into full swing as soon as students are back on campus.

This decision was made at their General Students Council in Pietermaritzburg in December last year. Over 100 black student leaders from all South Africa's university campuses met to set a theme and goals for 1984.

Azaso president, Tiego Moseneke, said the campaign entailed a drive to get the views of thousands of or-

inary South Africans and was in line with their theme for this year — 'Organising for a People's Education'.

He added that for the Charter to be widely accepted, it had to draw in other progressive education organisations and have roots in the broader community.

'To help reach the community we will approach trade unions and community organisations for assistance,' he said.

The first stage of the campaign involves an education survey in the community.

This will climax in education festivals around the country near June 16, anniversary of the 1976 student protests.

The second stage will be the drawing up of draft charters for discussions in organisations.

'The idea behind the Charter is to formulate common educational demands that would become a yardstick by which we measure all government education reform,' said Moseneke.

SASPU — in touch with reality

FOCUS asks newly elected SASPU President Guilletta Fafak about the student press union

FOCUS: Why do you think students need their own newspapers?

A: Things are happening on the campuses all the time — from film festivals, to sport, to debates, to faculty council campaigns on student rights, to mass meetings.

Student newspapers cover these, keeping students in touch with what is going on.

At the same time the student press tries to keep students informed about the reality of the conflict ridden South Africa that we live in.

FOCUS: How does the student press differ from the daily newspapers?

A: The English liberal press tends to get very excited by things like Lady Di's new hairstyle and how to do it. They cover a lot of this kind of sensationalist news — it boosts sales and is unlikely to attract the wrath of government censors.

As a result they don't adequately cover issues important to the majority of South Africans — the harsh reality of the effects of apartheid on people's lives.

For example, in early January 120 people were being resettled from the northern Transvaal. 12 kms away a bush fire broke out destroying a farm. The commercial press only covered the bush fire.

The student press tries in some way to fill this gap — covering important issues which are underplayed or ignored by the commercial press.

Another example is the detailed coverage we gave to the newly constituted United Democratic Front (UDF) — the most significant extra-parliamentary opposition force in South Africa — and how students can get involved in its campaigns.

FOCUS: How important is a national press union for the student press?

A: Saspu unites over 30 publications on the English-language campuses.

These range from fortnightly official student newspapers to monthly faculty council magazines to publications produced by women's movements, student societies, SRC's, religious groups and political organisations.

We provide media skills training and help them sophisticate their media techniques.

National co-ordination and sharing ideas within the press union helps build and strengthen all the publica-



SASPU President Fafak

tions concerned.

FOCUS: How have South Africa's broad censorship laws affected the student press?

A: Exposing apartheid and promoting democracy and progressive ideas has always put the student press at odds with the Nationalist Party government.

Over the last decade numerous student publications have been banned — some for all future editions. This is an additional form of control over and above the 4 000 statutory clauses which already restrict information and press freedom in South Africa.

More recently the student press has also had to face attacks from the university administrations. At Rhodes the senate attempted to set up an 'advisory' committee to screen Rhodeo, the students' official paper before it went to print — effectively acting as a censor board.

These acts of doing the government's dirty work for it, have been worrying. But students on campus came out in support of their newspapers and attempts to curb the freedom of the student press were successfully resisted.

FOCUS: What is Saspu planning for the new year?

A: During the Orientation Weeks we will be encouraging students to join our affiliates. Working on a student newspaper is a very valuable and exciting experience!

For the rest we hope to encourage the establishment of new publications on campuses where there are only few. Our work in training people in the ABC of producing a newspaper will continue. So too will the building of the press union — through national gatherings and educational seminars.

Our first project of the year has been the production of this publication by students from around the country.



Delegates gather at SASPU congress

SASPU strengthens student newspapers

THE SOUTH African Students Press Union aims to strengthen unity among its 36 affiliate newspapers on a national and local level in 1984.

This was the feeling of more than 100 delegates from five English universities at the Saspu congress held at Wits university last year.

The congress stressed that student newspapers had a crucial role in developing democratic student organisation, passing on media skills and promoting progressive ideas.

Two forms of censorship were discussed by the congress. Two SRC newspapers, Rhodeo and Varsity were silenced by their university authorities while Saspu National, Wits Student and Dome were harassed by the state. Wits Student and Saspu National were banned for distribution and security police confiscated pages from Dome while at the printers.

Motions condemning the actions of

the administrations, the government and the failure of the commercial press to cover the demands and interests of the majority of South Africans were passed.

Clampdowns and acts of censorship were seen as one aspect of the attack on progressive organisations in general.

The new South African Media Council was attacked as a further restriction on the freedom of the press. The congress resolved to resist press control 'whether it be statutory or through a voluntary media council.'

Guilletta Fafak, former Varsity editor and Nusas media officer was unanimously elected Saspu president for 1984. The vice-president is Em Beale (Wits), and Charles Kent (UCT), Elaine Reinertson (Durban), Stefanie Sycholt (Maritzburg) and Rae Hartley (Grahamstown) are the executive members.

NUSAS INTERVIEW

Focus on Kate

Focus interviews Nusas president Kate Philip

Q: Kate, what in your view are the most significant events in your 1983 presidency?

A: Well, the introduction of the new constitution on the one hand, and the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) on the other, are clearly events which have changed the face of South African politics and will have implications for years to come. As regards apartheid in universities, the massive opposition to the Quota Act was a significant indication because the base line for most students is the question of racism, and the entrenchment of racism in the universities is considered totally unacceptable.

For Nusas as an organisation, 1983 was a year in which we took a few knocks but pulled some punches of our own. Early in '83 we faced a massive distribution of over 10 000, very slick smear pamphlets.

We swapped Pietermaritzburg and Rhodes campuses, as 'Maritzburg' reaffiliated to Nusas within a week of Rhodes' disaffiliation. We also saw the introduction of an annual Faculty Council conference as part of our initiative to strengthen student government on campus.

Q: Now that the Quota Bill has been shelved, what are the implications of the state's new subsidy formula and the university's new admissions criteria?

A: The state's new subsidy formula has been dubbed 'the invisible quota' since its effects discriminate on racial grounds. The subsidy the university gets from the state will be determined proportionally to the number of people who pass, not by the overall number of students admitted. It will also be heavily weighted in favour of post-graduates and research. This has made the administration eager to increase their admissions criteria.

This is discrimination against black students whose marks are usually lower than white students' because of the low standard of education they receive.

During the Anti-Quota campaign, admin argued that academic excellence alone, not race, should be the criteria for university entrance.

Nusas argued that where education is divided and unequal, academic excellence alone would simply reinforce racial discrimination in a more subtle way.

For this reason the Nusas congress decided to follow the '83 anti-Quota campaign with one against the raised admissions criteria. This challenges admin for accepting this system without complaint or consultation with the students.

Q: Now that the Constitutional Proposals have become law, what role do you see for parliamentary and extra parliamentary opposition?

A: Parliamentary opposition parties have their say without a remote possibility of achieving anything unless the Nats agree with it.

Real opposition to the government lies outside parliament. Even before the new constitution, it was clear that the government feels the most pressure from the black majority. The PFP don't even claim that the Nat's 'reform' initiative arose from their pressure in parliament. It is generally ac-

cepted that the 'reform' initiative is partly a response to the increasing unity, militancy and demand for political rights by the black majority. It is an attempt to co-opt Indians and Coloureds, dividing them from the Africans by giving them a stake in the system.

The parliamentary opposition simply doesn't have the clout to change the system. The real power and the real challenge that requires, lies outside parliament with those organisations representing the black majority, and their allies. This is the significance of the formation of the UDF, which provides a non-racial extra-parliamentary alternative on the SA scene.

Q: The 1983 Nusas congress was opened by Oscar Mpepha, one of the three presidents of the UDF. Could you comment on how Nusas sees the significance of the UDF?

A: The UDF is a front of over 600 organisations, and shows the depth of opposition to apartheid in whatever form.

This is also a particular challenge to the government because it is non-racial. This shows that the conflict in SA is not between whites and blacks, rather between those who believe in democracy and those who don't; those willing to share the wealth and resources of the country amongst its people, and those who want to monopolise it for themselves. Separate racial policies, like the new constitution are just another form of control, a way of monopolising power.

Q: How would you see the 1984 Nusas theme 'Students meeting the challenge of change' being implemented on campus?

A: The questions already discussed relate directly to the theme. The new style 'reformed' apartheid poses new challenges for students in defining our role in contributing to change in SA. The UDF also provides a new challenge for Nusas, enabling us to consolidate our alliance with democratic organisations based in the oppressed communities.

As students part of our challenge is to look at the role of the university in society, and see our responsibility in challenging such issues as the new admissions policy.

The content of our education is often not geared to finding solutions for SA's social and political problems. This we must assess and challenge as a necessary part of the overall process of change in SA.

Nusas will provide the forums for these questions to be addressed in 1984.

Q: In the 1983 SRC elections, the english campuses elected strong Nusas majorities. What does this mean for Nusas this year?

A: The presidents who form the Nusas national executive all topped the poll. This means that the Nusas executive is particularly strong with its bona fide and national student support being un-



Nusas president Kate Philip

challengeable.

Q: In your capacity as chair of the Sasts board, what benefits can students expect to see from Sasts this year?

A: More than ever before! Starting in orientation week, first year students at Nusas affiliated campuses will receive a free booklet of the Nusas/Sasts national student discount scheme. This gives access to a broad range of newly negotiated discounts in all centres on production of a reg card. Sasts' main benefit is still the exclusive cheap rates we offer student and youth travellers.

The sword that shields PW's new constitution

Focus looks at the role of the SADF in Southern Africa in the light of the call to end conscription

THE RAPID expansion of the SADF, the increasing conflict in Southern Africa and the impending extension of conscription to coloured and Indian people have led a number of South Africans to question the role the SADF is playing in maintaining apartheid.

In 1964 the SADF's budget was R46 million and white males were called up for nine months. By 1982 the budget was R 1 400 million. All white males have to serve an initial two year period, followed by 720 days of camps of up to three months a year. All men are liable for occasional service in the Citizen Force.

Every year 3000 of those called up leave the country. Thirteen conscientious objectors have served jail sentences of up to two years for refusing to serve.

The Defence Amendment Act passed last year will increase the maximum sentence to six years for all objectors who are not religious pacifists.

In March last year the Black Sash passed a resolution demanding that the government abolish all military conscription. The call has also been made by many religious organisations and affiliates to the United Democratic Front.

Nusas will be running an information campaign on the demand. The Conscientious Objectors Support Groups (Cosg's) will also endorse the call and will help set up anti-conscription committees nationally.

The government argues that the SADF provides a 'shield' behind which peaceful change can take place. Each conscriptee receives a brochure on the SADF in which General R F Holtzhausen outlines the government's arguments: 'The total onslaught against the Republic of South Africa is a continuing onslaught which the enemies of South Africa are waging with every means at their disposal.'

Those rejecting this argument say the conflict in South Africa is an internal, civil war and that the SADF is being used by the government to lessen the conflict without addressing the real problems. These are the denial of the right to vote; unequal education, inadequate housing and health care, wages which cannot support a family and the denial of the right to live with one's family.

MILITARY



"We're trying to get this thing of military preparedness into their thinking" — SADF Officer

The SADF runs campaigns to win the 'hearts and minds' of the South African people. It has argued that 'to win the war', it needs the support of both its soldiers and most of the population. The Civic Action Programme (CAP) was established to promote the SADF as 'the protector and friend of the people.'

The activities of CAP include:

- Holiday programmes. Bright banners, loud music, film shows and free sweets drew as many as 10 000 children in the Cape Peninsula last year.
- Week-long youth camps for black youth.
- *Veld schools* for white scholars where preliminary forms of army training are provided.
- Co-operation with education departments in cadet programmes at schools.
- The distribution of publications such as 'Contact' in the Cape and the 'Warrior' in the Transvaal to black children. They promote the SADF and run critical articles on, amongst others, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela and community newspapers such as Grassroots.

'We are trying to get the whole thing of military preparedness into their thinking,' said a SADF officer of the attempt.

The 'hearts and minds' campaign has been large-

ly unsuccessful. In most areas people have resented their children being taken away on camps, often without parents being asked for permission.

On the other hand, the SADF has increased its 'civil defence' programme. Units have been established to quickly quell any form of resistance to apartheid. The 1977 Defence White Paper stated this role as 'to be ready, on a countrywide basis, to quickly mobilise trained forces to render assistance to the South African Police'.

This type of system is described by critics as co-optation and repression. They say the SADF seeks to convince South Africans of its legitimacy while at the same time being quite prepared to suppress anyone who tries to oppose the system.

On a broader level, they say, the new constitution is an attempt to co-opt a larger support base for government policies while the SADF and the police force ensure that no-one objects too loudly. The constitution ensures that even though the coloured and Indian sectors of the population have some 'representation' in the tri-cameral parliament, their ability to change apartheid from the 'inside' will be extremely limited.

In spite of an army of over 200 000 soldiers and

an extensive police and security branch network the government has been unable to contain growing resistance to their policies.

The SADF has also been widely accused of actions which serve to undermine and destabilize the newly independent states in Southern Africa — Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

Recent strikes deep into Angola and Mozambique were billed by the SADF as 'search and destroy missions aimed at ANC and Swapo terrorists'.

The Church of the Province of South Africa amongst others, disagrees:

'Far from being considered terrorists, our overwhelming impressions that Swapo is of the people and its forces were referred to as 'our sons', 'our brothers' and 'our fathers'.

A political correspondent on the Cape Times has said of the conflict 'The truth is that we are sliding into a civil war, albeit one of low intensity. The enemy is not some faceless communist from behind the Iron Curtain. The enemy are our own people who fled from South Africa after the unrest of 1976 in their thousands and were recruited into the African National Congress.'

International commentators have claimed that the SADF's aims in Angola and Mozambique are to dominate these countries militarily by supporting the rebel forces Unita in Angola and the MNR in Mozambique.

Their main targets have been strategic installations, the destruction of which has caused economic crises and widespread starvation.

They say the success of these campaigns have been illustrated by the recent talks between Maputo and Pretoria. The Mozambicans having been forced to co-operate with the apartheid government, one which they have long rejected as an anti-democratic force in Southern Africa.

For these reasons the Black Sash issued the following statement:

'The Black Sash demands that the South African government abolish all conscription for military service.

We maintain that there is no total onslaught against the people of South Africa, and the total strategy (we need to adopt) is not the military defence of a minority government, but the total, all out effort of South Africa's people to bring about democratic government and the relief of the poverty and deprivation suffered by the majority.'

Free but not for long

TWENTY-FOUR hours before he was to be court martialled, UCT student Brett Myrdal was informed that all charges against him and other conscientious objectors were being withdrawn.

Along with other CO's Brett had refused to obey his call up in July last year. He faced a maximum sentence of two years in prison. The reasons given were the objectors could now make use of the more 'lenient legislation' which comes into effect this year, following the passing of the Defence Amendment Act in 1983. The act in fact has increased the maximum sentence for objecting to six years.

Asked why he was prepared to face two years in a civilian prison rather than serve in the SADF, Brett replied: 'Quite simply, as someone commit-

ted to working alongside the majority of South Africans for a just and democratic South Africa, it has become impossible for me to participate in the defense of the apartheid system. It is a system which divides and oppresses the majority of our people and denies them their democratic aspirations.

'The guerillas fighting the SADF are fellow South Africans, the youth of 1976 who fled across the border to take up arms after they had found that their peaceful protests were continually being met by police bullets.'

He said his experience of the increasing militarisation of South Africa had led him to believe that it was important for people to understand the real role of the SADF in maintaining apartheid.



Brett Myrdal — 'I cannot defend apartheid'

A lesson in absurdity



Today, class, we will learn how the unequal can be equal, how too little is too much, how what is good for a black school, is not good enough for a white school

YEARS of work and planning have gone into making up education as we know it today — racially divided, unequal, wasteful and ineffectual.

● Fifteen Ministers control education through separate, different education departments, which we defend racially.

● Education is compulsory for some and not others.

● Curricula vary from one department to the next.

● Teacher training is different for each department.

● Government expenditure differs up to 200 percent between departments. Administratively the education system is inefficient. Bureaucrats have proved the present system discriminates against certain groups and hinders those disadvantaged by it.

This, they say, widens the already colossal racial gap in South Africa. Racial Education they see as a source of bitterness and anger because it plays a key role in maintaining the apartheid system.

Three major student organisations — the Congress of South African Students (Cosas), the National Union of South African Students (Nusas) and the African Students Organisation (Asos) — have rejected apartheid education and called for an equal system based on democratic principles.

These calls have fallen on deaf ears. The government has only made minor changes which have not affected the overall structure of education.

Black pupils face a chronic shortage of schools, teachers and facilities and a low standard of education. By comparison white Christian National Education offers high standards backed by superb facilities. Yearly government spending is R186 per black pupil and R1 221 per white pupil.

Education today still holds to Verwoerd's plan for white supremacy and the idea that South Africa's role in society is as a cheap workforce to keep mines and industries running.



'Slaves in their own country' — thanks to Bantu Education

When Bantu Education was introduced in 1953, Minister of Native Affairs H F Verwoerd made the motives clear:

'Natives will be taught from early childhood that equality with Europeans is not for them.... What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics which it cannot use in practice?.... There is no place for him above the level of certain forms of labour.'

Throughout South Africa's history, education has been the privilege of a few. Out of every hundred pupils who started school in 1963 the following numbers matriculated twelve years later:

- White pupils: 60
- Indian pupils: 22
- Coloured pupils: 4
- African pupils: 2

Prominent educationist and president of the National Education Union of South Africa (Neusa), Mr Curtis Nkondo, says, 'unequal education serves an unequal society, preparing students for unequal roles.'

'Christian National Education has trained students for jobs in the higher ranks of the economy, while pupils at Bantu Education schools have received the barest minimum of education equipping them, by and large, to be cheap labour at the bottom end of the economy.'

Separate and unequal education has never satisfied the aspirations of the majority of South Africans. Since its inception it has been rejected.

The introduction of Bantu Education to produce cheap labourers brought with it intense resistance. People rejected the idea of living merely to produce wealth which they would not share. They

rejected the restrictions which would be placed on their lives by receiving inadequate and unequal education.

From 1953 when Bantu Education was introduced scholars and parents have fought against it. In 1954, 17 000 students in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape alone boycotted schools.

Parents and students came together to establish independent schools to give an education that 'didn't conform to Verwoerd's degrading criteria.'

Apartheid education was unequivocally rejected. The Congress Alliance, consisting of organisations committed to a non-racial and democratic South Africa, called on 'teachers and students to preach of the light that comes with learning and the many ways in which we are kept in darkness; to speak of the great services we can render and the narrow ways that are open to us, to speak of laws and governments and rights, and to speak of freedom.'

In 1959 the Extension of University Education Act introduced racial segregation to the universities. Under the leadership of the National Union of South African Students (Nusas), students and staff launched a nationwide campaign protesting the Bill.

The government ignored these protests and the Bill became law. It said black students could not register at white universities without special permission from the Minister.—

Universities instituted annual Academic Freedom lectures to mark their protest against the infringement of this right.

They claimed it was 'the right of the university to determine who shall teach, and who shall be taught, what shall be taught and how it shall be taught without regard to any criteria except

academic merit.'

Resistance to unequal education continued throughout the sixties, culminating in the 1976 student uprising.

The 1976 protests were sparked off by the introduction of Afrikaans as a language of instruction. The Minister of Education said half of all subjects should be taught in Afrikaans.

Delegations of parents, teachers and principals went to argue that to expect black students to write final exams in two second languages was unreasonable. Policy was not changed.

A committee of students was set up consisting of two delegates from each school in Soweto. This body became known as the Soweto Students' Representative Council (SSRC).

It organised a peaceful protest march in which all schools participated. Students demanded an equal education for all. 'Away with inferior and gutter education' became the rallying call.

Press reports at the time quoted students as saying:

- 'Apartheid lives in our schools — our schoolbooks tell us we are inferior.'
- 'Our schools are overcrowded, we lack facilities and teachers are not adequately trained.'
- 'Reaching matric is almost impossible — we live under poor conditions at home which make it impossible to study. We are expected to pay for our own books but our parents receive poverty wages.'

The protest march took place on June 16. 20 000 students converged on Orlando stadium. Police opened fire on pupils. At least 1 000 people died in the struggle that followed.



Natal University march against the government's Quota Bill last year

In 1980 Western Cape students again set out their grievances centering around conditions at school. These included the lack of textbooks, unqualified teachers, poor facilities and the use of corporal punishment.

Pupils met with parents to formulate a set of demands calling on the government to rectify the situation. There was no response to this and pupils resolved to boycott.

Students met at schools every day to devise their own, alternative education programmes. Although students called for equal education, it was stated that this was not a call for the same education as white pupils receive.

'White education is just as racist, undemocratic and authoritarian. We are calling for a different type of education all together — one which is based on democratic principles.'

While calling for changes to be made immediately to the standard of education, the provision of facilities and the training of teachers, the boycotting students demanded larger changes.

They called for an equal education system which would not be based on providing cheap labour for South Africa's industries. Instead, education should build equality and break down the division between rich and poor.

This, they argued, could only be achieved outside of apartheid, because the system is based on oppression and exploitation. 'Building an education system based on democratic principles can only be achieved by building a just and democratic South Africa. The two go hand in hand.'

Even in the face of this resistance the government has continually refused to make any fundamental changes. Because it cannot

Education in South Africa is geared towards providing workers with only enough education for them to be efficient and productive in the workplace. It also promotes apartheid ideology — for example, that South Africa belongs to whites, coloureds and Indians, and Africans have their own 'countries'.

If the government were to heed the demands of the many organisations representing the wishes of students and parents and make fundamental changes this system of control would break down. It cannot have people refusing to fill the factories at low wages, challenging the homeland system, and the right of a minority to rule the country. Education must teach people to accept this, or at least not to challenge it.

Even the changes that have come with the new constitution takes this into account. Since P W Botha started introducing 'reforms', the education changes have not met the demands made over the past 30 years.

Last year the government introduced an amendment to the legislation which racially segregates university education.

The Quota Bill aimed to replace the permit system which forces black students wanting to study at white universities to apply individually to the Minister of Education.

The new system proposed a maximum number of black students be allowed to attend a white university.

The quota, to be determined by the Minister of Education in consultation with the universities, would vary from campus to campus.

The English language universities unequivocally rejected the Bill as 'repugnant' because it 'retains race classification as a criteria for the admission of

students'.

Students, under the banner of Nusas and Azaso launched a national campaign in opposition to the Bill. The Quota was rejected for its 'racism and entrenchment of unequal education.'

The university administrations argued that the Bill infringed on their right to academic freedom and that it denied university autonomy.

Students supported the universities' stand against the Quota, but pointed out that 'while race is completely unacceptable as a criterion by which to admit students, 'academic merit', in the South African context, is not an objective criterion either.'

'The unequal education system and unequal access to wealth and resources in our society enormously limits the number of black students who will have access to university education. There is no such thing as freedom of opportunity in South Africa.'

Furthermore, universities depend on the government and big business for approximately 75 per cent of their funds. This funding has strings attached and curricula are designed to serve the needs and interests of these groupings.

Activities of democratic students and academic working for changes as regards course content have come under attack. Student leaders have been detained and banned.

The university authorities themselves have limited the say students have in running campus, and deciding on course content, even though students are an integral part of the university.

Access to books for study purpose, is restricted by severe censorship legislation.

Courses and research have been structured to meet the needs of those who currently enjoy political and economic power.

● Law students pay much attention to commercial law but almost ignore the area that most affects the lives of the majority — pass laws and labour law.

● Architecture students are taught how to design high rise office buildings, rather than catering to the needs of the severe housing shortage.

● Medical students study diseases of affluence and largely overlook the fact that the primary health problem in South Africa is malnutrition.

The role has been challenged by students. 'We need to explore ways of using our education to contribute to change, instead of seeing our degrees simply as a means to our own personal wealth, security and intellectual fulfilment.'

Cosas, Azaso and Nusas have encouraged students to actively challenge their education through student faculty councils at universities and SRC's at schools.

'Rejecting our present education is not a negative choice. It is a choice which acknowledges the inevitability of change and rejects how the skills we are taught are presently put to use.

'Challenging our present education presents us with the challenge of developing constructive alternatives which meet the needs of all the people in South Africa.

'While it is important to make what gains we can within the universities and in relation to our education,' says Nusas, 'we will not be able to fundamentally change the education system or the role of the university until we have a more democratic society.'

The big three

THE THREE major student organisations working for change in South Africa are the Congress of South African Students (Cosas), the Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso), and the National Union of South African Students (Nusas).

Cosas

Cosas was formed in 1979 to organise black high school students.

In spite of harassment and detentions, Cosas has grown and now has 44 branches nationwide.

Under the slogan of 'Each one teach one' Cosas has held seminars, workshops and film shows, and produced a number of publications. These have helped strengthen and build its branches.

Cosas has won the fight at some schools for students to elect SRC's but at most schools this basic right is still denied.

While working in black schools Cosas members are committed to non-racialism and uphold democracy as a working practice, their model for the future South Africa.

For most black students in South Africa the struggle is for the right to equal education. Many students are forced to leave school at an early age to help support their families.

For those who remain at school the threat of victimisation has scared many students away from student organisations. There have been widespread reports of Cosas organisers failing their exams unexpectedly.

But 1983 president, recently elected National Organiser, Shepard Mati, is determined that Cosas will continue to grow, and holds out much hope for the future:

'Only under democratic, non-racial government will the harsh laws finally be abolished from the face of our country. Then there'll be no tension, mistrust and hatred among people but peace, better education and freedom.'

Azaso

Formed at a conference in Pietermaritzburg in 1979, the Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso) organises black students at universities, technikons and colleges.

Because students face different problems on black campuses it was felt a separate black students organisation was necessary.

'Azaso finds itself fighting for basic facilities, food and SRC's which are taken for granted on Nusas campuses,' says Tiego Moseneke, Azaso president.

Azaso has experienced severe state repression, especially at the 'bush' colleges where police have often appeared.

The administrations have also attacked Azaso. Last year the principal of the University of Durban-Westville suddenly decided to ban Azaso for being a political organisation. This was after it had already been functioning there for a year.

In Zululand Azaso suffered another attack when Gatsha Buthelezi came to address them. Inkatha impis invaded the campus — killing five students and wounding hundreds.

Azaso students at Fort Hare, Turfloop and Medunsa also faced state action last year.

Azaso — has as its theme for 1984 'Students organising for a peoples's education.'

Nusas

Nusas has come a long way since it was formed sixty years ago in Bloemfontein.

It was formed to close the gap between English and Afrikaans campuses and increase student representation in the university.

Today, while still working at challenging the undemocratic structures in education institutions, Nusas has also committed itself to working towards a completely non-racial and democratic society.

Last year Nusas faced a number of challenges. Right-wing students hampered Nusas activity and a

publication attempting to discredit its opposition to apartheid was distributed on all white campuses.

The formation of the UDF and Nusas's support of the Front prompted students to involve themselves in the campaign to oppose the new constitution and the Koornhof Bills.

Over 14 500 students signed a Nusas petition rejecting the constitution, even though the campaign ran only days before final examinations.

The Nusas theme for 1984 is 'Students meeting the challenge of change'.

As the conditions on white campuses are very different to those on black campuses, Azaso and Nusas have decided to remain separate. They do share very similar views about the need for relevant, unitary education in South Africa and are both challenging the anti-democratic structures in South African universities.

Cosas, as an organisation for school students, has remained separate from the university organisations. They too have called for a single democratic system which does not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex or social class.

The organisations believe the education system in South Africa can not be changed without changing apartheid. This is why they are united in their support of the Freedom Charter and in the call for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

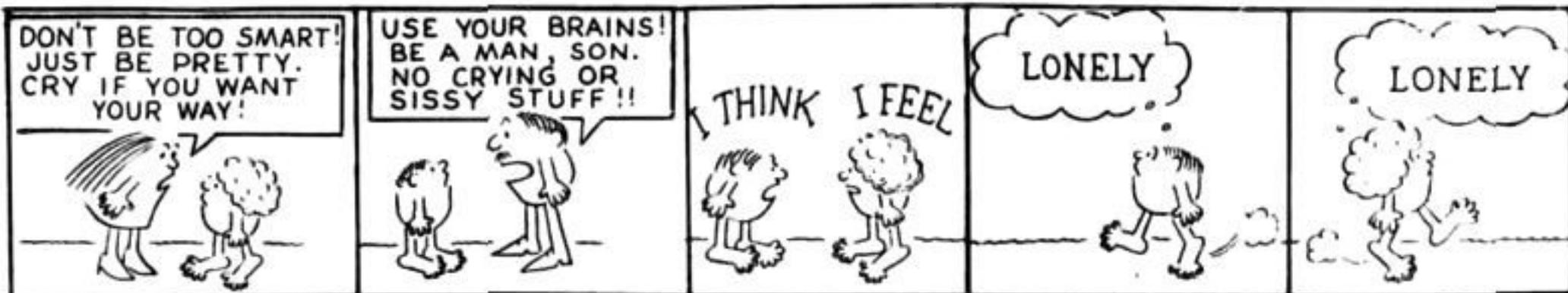
The members of the organisations have increasingly worked together. All support the United Democratic Front — formed to bring together organisations opposed to the Koornhof Bills and the new constitution.

It was a historical moment for the student movement when delegates of Cosas, Azaso and Nusas sat together at the UDF's national launch in August last year.



1984 Azaso president
Tiego Moseneke

WOMEN



Fighting the sugar and spice recipe

The things men and women are made of

ADVERTISEMENTs which show women as beautiful, devoted mothers and wives and good-as-gold babies...

Photomagazines with happily-ever-after endings...

The world teaches women to judge themselves and other women as if a man is rating them from one to ten. And many may spend their whole lives going to great lengths trying to get full marks.

Nusas president Kate Philip says 'I think there are many women among us who resent the plastic and the act, but a lot of women feel trapped and impotent to break out of it'.

Baby battering has been shown to be the result of built up frustration not being able to 'break out'.

From the moment they are born boys and girls are treated differently. Throughout school life they're taught different skills and learn to adopt different characteristics and roles.

Girls learn to want to become mothers, wives, nurses, teachers, typists, models, air hostesses, receptionists, secretaries. And boys soon get the message that they should become business executives, doctors, lawyers, pilots, surgeons, gynaecologists, scientists or engineers — there are 1786 men and only 66 women registered for engineering at Wits in 1984.

But it goes further than occupations. Men are seen to be and are taught to become strong, self-confident and aggressive. They are supposed to make decisions, initiate sexual relationships and hide certain emotions — boys and certainly men don't cry.

And some feminine characteristics would be passivity, irrationality, submissiveness, dependency and serving others.

Fitting in with these roles can be useful in that people may feel more secure when they know what to expect in a situation.

But there are endless cases where traditional roles — the male and female stereotypes — can be at best limiting and at worst destructive to people.

The pressures on women to become slick, blond and beautiful dolls has been shown to be one cause of tendencies to anorexia nervosa. Surveys show this is particularly common in high school where

girls literally starve themselves to death, so they can become thin and in their eyes, more attractive.

Lots of men just don't feel comfortable having to live up to the 'ideal' of a muscle bound, six foot, successful businessman with a beautiful wife, car, house, kids and holiday cottage.

Universities don't escape the attitudes and pressures that mould people and get them to accept that things should be as they are.

There is little discussion of what is taught, how it should be taught and by whom. A history course will, for example, ignore the role played by women in shaping the world as it is today.

A Political Studies I student at UCT said 'When the issue of women was raised in the section on gender, race and class, students jeered the lecturer.'

Then there are the cases where both men and women students are subtly pressurised into granting sexual favours to their lecturers in exchange for extensions on essays or mark increases.

Student Representative Councils on most of the English university campuses have set up Women's portfolios to assist students with such issues.

Many practices that have been labelled sexist and are based on the idea that women need protection and are less entitled to make social and sexual choices.

Students live in segregated residences where different rules apply from campus to campus.

But in all women's residences the dates and times women may go out are restricted whereas men can come and go as they please.

Many students have over the past ten years increasingly started to question the roles they feel have been imposed on them and have tried to find alternatives.

This has often meant keeping some values and dropping others.

Women on campus have confronted their problems but have realised that for most women off campus the problems are even greater.

The majority of South Africa's women are doing the lowest paid, most unskilled work and many support families. They work a double day as they must do housework when they return from their jobs.

For these women their fight is for the right to choose where they live and work, to be paid a living wage and to have access to education and health services.

The Women's Charter adopted at the first National Conference of Women, held in Johannesburg in 1954 called for 'solidarity against Apartheid', which they saw as part and parcel of their oppression as women.

Their feelings then remain popular even today — that all men and women need to involve themselves in decision making to ensure the abolition of oppression and discrimination in all areas of society: at home, at work, at school, at university, in making laws and in the running of the country.

SRC Women's Portfolios

SRC's around the country have established portfolios dealing with women's issues.

Focus interviewed those holding the portfolios:

Q: Why do you see a women's portfolio as important?

A: 'On Durban campus sexism is still prevalent: within lecture theatres where women have been discriminated against by lecturers. And on campus as a whole, women are often verbally and physically harassed.'

The women's co-ordinator tries to educate people around these issues and supports those affected by discrimination.

Q: What has the women's portfolio done on Wits so far?

A: 'Our main project last year was a campaign to set up a child-care centre at Wits. The centre will take effect from 1985.'

We also tried to establish contact with the residences to gain some insight into the issues facing women at Wits.



Sue Albertyn,
Wits SRC



Jenni Irish,
Durban SRC



Christine Berger,
UCT SRC



Joanne Zisman,
UCT SRC

Q: What will the women's portfolio be doing at UCT this year?

A: 'We hope to continue seminars started in the residences last year on contraception, rape and other issues of importance to women.'

One of our most exciting projects is an Advice Bureau, where women can be helped on a variety of issues. We'd like to work closely with the Women's Movement in combatting discrimination on campus. One way of doing this is to make both men and women aware of how sexism affects them.



Botha enticing white voters into the laager

Thumbs down for new deal

Focus look at why the new constitution is being rejected left, right and centre.

members of parliament and are therefore responsible only to the president.

The president's council is also responsible only to the president. Out of 60 members, 25 are appointed by the state president, 20 chosen by the white house of parliament, 10 by the coloured house and 5 by the Indian house. If the separate racial houses of parliament cannot agree on a new law it will be given to the president's council to decide.

The president also appoints the three racially separate councils of ministers, who need not be members of parliament. These councils will be in charge of departments whose work affects one race group only. So the coloured council will be in charge of coloured education, the Indian in charge of Indian education and so on.

Critics of the new constitution have said that it fails on several points:

- Blacks are excluded. The constitution excludes blacks, because, says the government, 'blacks already have their own governments.'

- Clause 93 of the constitution gives control of Black Affairs to the president. This has been condemned because 'the task of restructuring South African society in order to create a just and democratic order is not one which can be accomplished

by groups of 'experts'. Maximum participation by all the people in South Africa is fundamental to any democratic process.'

The Black Sash warns that exclusion of the black majority makes 'violent conflict inevitable. A constitution that excludes them is nonsense.'

- The idea that participation in the 'new deal' offers equal opportunities for the coloured and Indian communities has been rejected.

Dr Jassat, chairperson of the Anti-Saic Committee, said: 'The new constitution is designed to maintain white control while attempting to draw some of the privileged elements of the oppressed people into the white laager.'

- The new constitution entrenches the single party dominance which has existed since 1948. The role of the opposition parties is limited by the power of the president, who is effectively elected by the white ruling party. All debate in parliament will have to be initiated by a cabinet minister

- 'General' affairs are decided on by a joint sitting of parliament, while all laws dealing with 'own' affairs remain subject to the general laws of the country. (eg. Group Areas Act, Mixed Marriages Act).

The Natal Indian Congress has pointed out that 'houses of parliament

will hardly be sovereign even in dealing with 'own' affairs since the president will decide on what matters may be deemed as 'own' affairs and further he will be able to veto any amendments introduced in those houses. His decision is final.

- The president is virtually all-powerful:

Under this constitution the president will:

- control black affairs
- decide when parliament will meet
- can dissolve parliament
- can declare war
- will appoint the cabinet, the ministers councils and 25 members of the Presidents Council
- will decide whether any matter is an 'own' or 'general' affair
- cannot be challenged in court
- He is not elected by the voters or controlled by parliament.

Opponents to the constitution say nothing fundamental has changed:

- The Group Areas Act and Bantustans remain.
- Forced removals will continue.
- Pass laws remain.
- Unequal education remains.
- Low wages, poor working conditions and attacks on trade unions will continue.
- No Bill of Rights is included.
- Detentions will continue.

Opposition has come from community organisations, religious groups, trade unions, sports, youth and women's organisations. This culminated in the national launch of the United Democratic Front where Frank Chikane said as he opened the meeting:

'Our common stand is that we reject the constitutional proposals and the Koornhof Bills in a national and representative voice of the majority of South Africans.'

THE NEW constitution received a majority 'yes' vote from the white electorate on November 2 last year despite widespread opposition from the rest of the population.

The constitution was heralded as Prime Minister P W Botha's 'new deal' for the coloured and Indian communities.

Said the Department of Information: 'For the first time in the history of the RSA, directly elected white, coloured and Indian members of parliament are to serve in three chambers in a single parliament, all with the same status, the same task, the same rights and the same duties.'

Opposition forces to the new constitution say that it is not reform, but 'a calculated and cynical manoeuvre to entrench apartheid, co-opt opportunistic sections of black communities and create confusion and division among our people.'

The Black Sash said, 'the change will be in the words and the trimmings, while the policy of apartheid remains very much as it always has been and if anything becomes more entrenched.'

The constitution will introduce a parliament with three racially separated chambers in a ratio of 4 whites to 2 coloureds to one Indian. Each chamber will vote on 'own' affairs which relate to that one race group only, while all three chambers vote on 'general' affairs.

The ruling parties in each chamber then appoint people to an Electoral College on the 4:2:1 ratio. This college with its white majority elects the executive state president.

The state president appoints the cabinet which is responsible for the day-to-day running of finance, defence, housing and others. The cabinet ministers do not need to be

UDF unites opposition to apartheid

Under the UDF banner, over 500 organisations call for a non-racial, democratic South Africa

LAST YEAR 400 organisations formed the United Democratic Front (UDF) to oppose the new constitution which they believe is racist, undemocratic and authoritarian.

These organisations included trade unions, civics, womens and students organisations.

They reject the constitution and Koornhof Bills because:

- The proposals were drawn up by a small group of people without consulting the majority of South Africans.

- It maintains race as the criterion for political rights, the majority still having no vote

The front was set up in response to a call made by Rev Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, for united opposition to the constitutional proposals.

He said: 'There is no reason why churches, civic associations, trade unions, students and other organisations should not unite on this issue.'

People and organisations throughout the country responded enthusiastically to the idea.

After consultation with a broad range of organisations and individuals, the UDF was formed.

15 000 people representing 400 organisations country-wide gathered in Cape Town last August to launch the front. They pledged to fight the constitution and work for a non-racial, democratic and unified South Africa.

Three prominent South African democrats were elected presidents of the UDF. They are Albertina Sisulu, president of the Federation of South African Women, Oscar Mpetha, community leader and former president of the African Food and Canning Workers Union, and Archie Gumede, who headed the Natal Release Mandela Committee.

Patrons elected include Beyers Naude, Nusas honorary president and ex-director of the banned Christian Institute. Former Nusas president, Andrew Borraine, was elected to the National Executive.



UDF youth rally, UCT.

The UDF has regional branches in the Transvaal, Natal, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and the Border region.

Interested people can actively participate in the UDF by joining their local area committee or organisations such as the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee.

The UDF has continued to be a powerful front despite harassment. Various meetings have been banned and false pamphlets were distributed before the national launch — aimed at disrupting and confusing people about the UDF.

Despite this, the UDF has grown steadily and now has over 500 member organisations. It has also received widespread international support.

The UDF continues to have an ongoing programme of action. A commission has been set up to look into



Allan Boesak calls for united front.

the planned conscription of coloureds and Indians. A signature campaign has been launched to show that the majority of South Africans are opposed to the new constitution.

The UDF sees the signature campaign and the fight against conscription as part of a long term campaign against the constitution.

The UDF has made a firm commitment to continually challenge the government's policies.

The UDF also has the support of thousands of white students. Kate Philip, Nusas president said: 'It is important for students to participate in campaigns of the UDF and so link up with other organisations committed to peaceful change and democracy in South Africa.' Last year 14 500 students on Nusas campuses signed a petition rejecting the new constitution.

UDF activities have included educational workshops for volunteers in areas throughout the country, door to door campaigns, mass meetings, all-night vigils and publication of a national newsletter

During the white referendum a 'Peoples Weekend' was held. All over the country people in opposition to the constitution came together. During the weekend, meetings, concerts, fetes and church services were held.

The National General Council (NGC) is comprised of affiliated organisations in each region and is the policy-making body of the UDF.

The National Executive Committee (NEC) has three presidents and an executive chair appointed by the NEC. Two vice-presidents are appointed by each region. It also has two secretaries, two executive members elected by each region and two national treasurers



Life on the other side of the fence

Sheena Duncan, Black Sash president, discusses the laws which fence in the lives of many South Africans

FOCUS: It is clear that the movement of African people in South Africa today is highly controlled. How did this situation develop?

DUNCAN: The 1913 Land Act was a landmark in the residential separation of African people. Of course, control over the movements of blacks started before this. But the Act, together with the pass laws, ensured the control over Africans on farms remained where they were, and prevented them from moving to the cities to look for work.

Today, however, a smaller number is needed on the farms because of mechanisation. So the government can now go on with its removal programme. They have replaced the resident farm labourers with migrant labour, which is cheaper as their families don't need to be supported by the farmer. In effect they will only be paid pocket money.

For a long time the homelands remained reservoirs of labour — which could be recruited without any restraints on the employers. After 1968, government regulations tightened up the procedures for the recruitment of migrant labour. A one year contract system was introduced, designed to prevent more people getting urban rights. To get urban rights, workers had to be continuously employed in one job for 10 years, but the one year contract broke that continuous employment.

The most recent legislation will stop black urbanisation altogether. The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill will mean a man who has got his permit cannot bring his family to the urban areas unless he has a job and a house of his own. And it's got to be a whole house, not just a hired room in somebody else's house.

So originally the controls were to force black people onto the new mines. Now the aim is to force people out of the urban areas and back to the homelands, which serve as dumping grounds for the surplus population.

FOCUS: What are the effects of the migrant labour system on the families left behind?

DUNCAN: The effects have been terrible, and they've just got worse. There are abandoned families, children growing up without fathers, and as poverty increases, women move away leaving only the old peo-



Resettlement camps — dumping ground of the surplus population

ple and children behind. In times of recession young men hang around with nothing to do. There is also a total breakdown of community and custom...oh, I could go on for two hours.

FOCUS: What is the situation in the rural areas?

DUNCAN: For people in the rural areas, their lives are an unimaginable experience of oppression. Ciskei, for example, is not only corrupt, uncaring and inefficient. It is downright dangerous to have an argument with an official about anything — even your pensions.

When you get a situation where every detail of your life is controlled — that's real oppression. The Sebe regime has imposed a constant stream of levies and taxes which have to be paid. It is a system of extortion. The more corrupt it is, the more people suffer, but in the end they all suffer.

FOCUS: What of losing citizenship?

DUNCAN: South African laws have many categories which deny citizenship when a homeland is given its independence. If for example, you just speak the language of any portion of the population who live there, or are 'culturally' or in any other way associated with any person living there — you lose your citizenship. There were 8 million people denationalised between 1976 and 1981. That's quite an achievement.

FOCUS: There was only a 10 percent poll in the recent Town Council elections. What do you think of these Councils?

DUNCAN: The Town Councils are simply an attempt to create black scapegoats for unpopular government measures, for example rent increases. Their total lack of funds leaves them powerless as their only source of finance is through rents, rates and taxes.

The new townships have very high rents. Only a small, prosperous, urban community will survive them, and many poorer people will not survive in the townships. This will aid influx control and force people into rural areas.

If you look at where the government is building new townships, it's very peculiar. They are not in 'white' South Africa, and so will eventually be incorporated into the homelands. The people living there will immediately lose

DUNCAN INTERVIEWED



Passes — Instruments of control



UCT students and Cape Town residents picket the pass laws.

their urban rights on the day of independence. Why move people 120 km from Johannesburg unless you have sinister desires?

FOCUS: One of the three pieces of legislation known as the Koornhof Bills is the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill. It was not legislated with the other two and has now gone into committee. Could you explain the contents of the bill as it now stands?

DUNCAN: The bill deals with who may stay in an urban area. Its primary aim is to extend urban rights to a small proportion of the African population, while tightening control over the so-called 'illegals'. The bill aims to prevent Africans from leaving rural areas by depriving them of the possibility of coming to town.

FOCUS: Do you think that the bill will be legislated, and what do you think its effects will be?

DUNCAN: Yes, I think it will be implemented by May. From the government's point of view, they would want to get all controversial legislation dealt with before the first parliament meets under the new constitution. They want to tidy the whole thing up so that they can present the new constitution as reform.

The implications of this are that the rights of those living in the urban areas will be considerably reduced, and it stops black urbanisation. It is very simple and straight forward: It is super-efficient and easy to administer, but very difficult to comply with — which is exactly what the government wants.

Previously, similar bills came



through in separate amendments with little significant resistance to them. The Orderly Movement Bill on the other hand is entirely new so that the black community has really got organised. It is significant that the UDF took up these bills and the new constitution — it's as though the government gave us a gift.

FOCUS: What do you see as the role of students wanting to get involved in this area?

DUNCAN: It needs some sensitivity, you can't just bump along to a black organisation and say, 'I've come to assist you'. I mean it is simply not on. I would say that a student's first step is to take a look at what organisations there are on campus, like Projects Comm, Wages Comm, Conscientious Objector Support Groups, Student newspapers, or whatever they are interested in.

Another major task that could be

done is sitting in the pass courts, as we've noticed that white faces in the courts slow down the whole process. As the process depends on its speed, it does more than just sitting there to expose it, it actually does intervene.

I think most new students know very little about the real issues confronting South Africa — they've got to learn first, and the process of joining student organisations is very important. That's where you find out.

FOCUS: There is a lot of opposition to society as it presently exists. How would you envisage an ideal society in which the majority of people are satisfied?

DUNCAN: In my ideal society, all people should be free to live their lives as they choose as far as is consistent with their neighbours. That would include all the basic human rights, and the state must ensure things like just

wages, food and shelter. I also believe that the powers of the state have to be severely limited.

There should be maximum decentralisation of power, because that is the way people get control over their own environment. There should be restraints on monopoly capitalism. I'm afraid that one might have to put up with an unacceptable amassing of wealth in the hands of a few individuals.

You actually want a society with as few legal constraints as possible, and it goes without saying that there should be absolute protection of the individual against arbitrary action by the state, so that you can't be whipped off and shoved into detention. Once you concede the principle that there might be circumstances in which the government is justified — it is the beginning of the end.

A rebel without a cause

BOP TV, born under the wing of the SABC and the Nationalist government, is proving to be a most troublesome child indeed.

It was launched from Mmabatho in newly 'independent' Bophuthatswana on New Year's Day, 1984.

And since then government plans to create an obedient tribal television service promoting apartheid ideology have begun to backfire.

The government and its propaganda arm, the SABC, thought it had BopTV neatly sewn up through a series of hard hitting agreements with Lucas Mangope.

The agreements stipulated that neither service would 'slander' or threaten the 'national interest' of either government.

The big stick on this occasion has two surfaces. The government supplies the money needed to keep BopTV going and it controls the repeater transmission stations which send out the BopTV signal.

The signal travels on a thin stream from station to station until it reaches a target area. Strategically placed stations slant the signal towards the area.

Target areas are to consist of 'Tswana speaking people who live in South Africa,' according to Mr Riaan Eksteen, head of the SABC.

Tswana speaking people were to be pinpointed in Soweto, Kagiso and a range of black spots in South Africa.

The ingredients were there, but ideology and technology intervened.

Technically, the SABC miscalculated - the transmitter stations 'leaked' signals into the white areas around targets and transmitter stations. Many areas around Johannesburg and Pretoria received the 'freak' signal.

The SABC was caught off balance. Thinly veiled threats emerged from its hierarchy warning that the 'spillage' could not be 'guaranteed'. There has been much heavy breathing offstage by officials who quietly tell the press that whites should not waste their money.

The press replied that to find a solution would cost hundreds of thousands of rands. The second best solution - to turn down the signal - would blank out screens of a large number of those 'Tswana speaking people who live in South Africa.'

The debate has gone round and



round with the central issue being why whites - armed with their R150 aerials - should be prevented from watching BopTV.

Also a threat to the government are the statements from BopTV representatives that the station will have its 'own' approach to politics, entertainment and ethics.

BopTV may be so daring that it might quote Winnie Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned leader of the African National Congress.

There has been little relevant news so far on BopTV to write home about, but where BopTV really made a dent is in the field of entertainment.

Bop has gone into expensive and lavish American and British programmes about boardroom intrigue, spy and cop thrillers and

dollops of world sport. This is why the white rush for aerials took place.

It is also a national secret that the SABC is utterly boring, and lifeless in its approach to the medium. BopTV has included such programmes as 'Kojak' and Mitcheners 'Centennial'.

SABC runs three racially divided services: TV1, for whites, TV2 for 'Xhosas' and 'Zulus' and TV3 for 'Tswanas' and 'Sothos' and it works very hard to win their 'hearts and minds'.

To win hearts and minds over to apartheid ideology imposes strict limits on the ability of the SABC to cover the South African reality.

Entertainment has to be wrapped in the straight-jacket of nationalist morality, and politics has to be

geared to nationalist newspeak. This has led to widespread dissatisfaction with its services. It does not do this through choice. The role of the SABC is to cover up the effect of apartheid and an exploitative economic system on the mass of people in South Africa.

While people in the Ciskei are shot down by Sebe's soldiers for refusing to board busses, the SABC screened a documentary on the lucrative development potential for businesses in the Ciskei.

It remains to be seen how the experiment of bantustan TV develops - but one thing is certain: the SABC cannot afford to allow the powerful medium of television to be used against apartheid, for merely the slightest scratch on the service reveals an awful and damning reality.

Botha's elitist paper puppets

SOUTH AFRICA's battered press has come under a new form of control.

Thanks to the South African Media Council (SAMC), the commercial press is now censoring itself, and the student and community press awaits a new onslaught.

The SAMC is a body set up, under government pressure, by the Newspaper Press Union (NPU), the owners of the commercial newspapers. The SAMC constitution describes the council as 'a self-disciplining body to ensure compliance with its code (of conduct).'

This means the SAMC can impose a fine of up to R10 000 on any NPU member found to have infringed the code.

Newspapers like the student and community papers are not members of the NPU, and are not bound by the SAMC powers. But they do still feel the weight of the council's activities. The SAMC constitution empowers the council to 'consider and enquire into reports in the media which are not member publications.'

This can be on the council's own initiative or 'in consequence of a complaint from the public.'

According to the South African Society of Journalists, the government could use a critical media council report to justify the banning of the newspaper and the journalists involved.

The SAMC grew out of the 1980 Steyn Commission report into the mass media. Steyn recommended the registration of all journalists. This would have forced them to tow a

continued on page 23



On the scrapheap of history

Windies storm abates

THE WEST Indies have gone, and South African cricket returns to isolation in the face of the world sports boycott.

The South African Cricket Union claims the tour was a success with the West Indian cricketers providing strong opposition to the official South African side.

But the SACU made heavy losses. No one knows exactly what the West Indians were paid, but it was definitely higher than SACU earned.

Despite the advertising announcing the West Indians as an unofficial but strong side, many matches were played to near empty stands.

The international cricket boycott began after 1970 when the world felt South African sport reflected the country's apartheid policies. The

SACU feels the boycott is used by radical groupings to disrupt South African social life, and has denied any links between politics and sport.

However the government was forced to apologise to West Indian, Colin Croft, after he had been thrown out of a 'whites only' train compartment by the conductor.

The SACU was established claiming to be a non-racial cricket union. Its opposition, the non-racial Transvaal Cricket Board (TCB) has said, 'While apartheid exists, sport cannot be truly non-racial', and has called the rebels 'cricket mercenaries'. It feels the SACU uses money to get players to break the sports boycott.

The TCB says the SACU 'has only been interested in promoting professional top class cricketers' and

'amateur and community cricket' has been neglected. 'Black players do not have equal opportunities to learn and practise their skills' under SACU.

The West Indian tour faced community opposition. They were to have played a team from Elsie's River, but the Elsie's River Cricket Club condemned the tour. At a mass meeting of 600 residents it was decided to picket the match.

The West Indians cancelled the match 'due to adverse publicity'.

The United Democratic Front (UDF) represented at the Elsie's River mass meeting, told FOCUS, 'The UDF has, and still does, add its voice of condemnation of this tour to that of other progressive organisations fighting for non-racial sport in our country.'



Cricket picket

continued from page 22

government line or face de-registration — and lose their jobs.

The managing director of SAAN, Mr Clive Kinsley, criticised Steyn's plan saying that the newspaper industry had always believed in their 'self-discipline'.

Meetings between the NPU and the Minister of Internal Affairs, Chris Heunis, followed. The result was a toned-down bill calling for the registration of newspapers only, coupled with the establishment of the SAMC.

The media would discipline itself, rather than accepting government-imposed restrictions.

The Department of Foreign Affairs then assured its overseas readers: 'Journalistically, the South African press constitutes one of the few collective mass media on the continent that deserves the description of 'free'

The NPU has apparently begun to believe in the myth it helped to create. On the celebration of its hundredth anniversary in 1982, the NPU called it 'the first one-hundred years of the press as a free institution.'

The SAMC is required to have both

Self-censorship vs state control



media and public representatives on the council, who are supposed to come 'from all sectors of the population'. However, The Star, in a report last October stated that 'several editors expressed concern over the lack of broad representativeness on the body. Most felt the choice was over-balanced in favour of the conservative section of society.'

Yet this 'self-control' is seen by the commercial press as preferable to government imposed control. The

Argus, in an editorial last year, said 'The council (SAMC) is an expression of the belief of the South African press that voluntary self-discipline is vital for the preservation of the freedom of expression'.

Giulietta Fafak, president of the South African Students Press Union commented: 'The decision that the NPU will have to make, when again faced with the choice of gagging itself, or being gagged by the government is clear. The time has come for the commercial press to refuse to do the government's dirty work.'

In the meantime, the SAMC still claims to 'uphold and maintain the freedom of the media in South Africa.'

The SAMC has 14 representatives of the media, and another 14 represent the public

Of the 14 media representatives, 6 are appointed by the National Press

Union (NPU), the owners of the commercial newspapers. Another 6 members are appointed by the Conference of Editors.

Both the South African Society of Journalists (SASJ) and the Media Workers Association (Mwasa) have a single seat.

A spokesperson for Mwasa said they had rejected the invitation to participate

If these organisations fail to nominate members to the SAMC, the Conference of Editors will nominate other people in their place.

The Council is thus dominated by appointments 'from the top', and is likely to be seen by the average journalist as 'a body reflecting the views of editors and managers only,' said the SASJ in a report last September.

There are only 2 black people on the council. There are no representatives from the progressive press, trade unions, churches or community organisations.

According to The Journalist, official journal of the SASJ, the public representatives seem to come from 'big business and white dominated organisations'.

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