

# grassroots

THE PAPER ABOUT YOU

Vol 4 No. 6 July '83 15c

## EXPRESSIONS.....

....is where its at! Dance to Vukani and other live sounds. Don't miss it! Sat 30 July at Wittebome Civic. (See Page 15)

# PC PROPOSALS TO BECOME LAW

THE eyes of our people and the world will focus on Parliament House on August 8th.

This is the day that Parliament will meet again for its last sitting this year. It will meet to pass the new Constitutional Bill and to write it on the law books of South Africa. A law which will never leave South Africa the same again.

This comes after years of Commissions, parliamentary reports, debates and promises by the Botha government of a 'new deal' for South Africa.

The government is determined to pass this law. A referendum is being planned for

November. The government wants to show that white South Africans support this law.

And, in September, so-called legal Africans in the cities will be called to vote for the setting up of Black Local Authorities. Another Koornhof plan.

We must not let this go by unnoticed. Throughout the country the people have responded to the challenge of the constitutional proposals and the Koornhof Bills. Many different organisations are coming together and planning how best to show their rejection.

The United Democratic Front (UDF) which was formed in

Johannesburg earlier this year, is spearheading the campaign. In Johannesburg and Durban, regional branches of the UDF have been formed. Civic organisations, women's groups, trade unions, youth and student organisations have joined the campaign. Religious organisations have also made their stand known.

The UDF is a front of all organisations committed to democracy and the creation of a non-racial, united South Africa.

In Cape Town, many workshops have been held to educate the members of organisations about what the

Bills will mean for them. They too, are making their stand known.

The Cape Areas Housing Action Committee, the United Women's Organisation, the Cape Youth Congress and the Inter-church Youth have already mandated their members to participate in united action against the proposals.

The Azanian Students Organisation, and the Congress of South African Students have pledged their support for the UDF.

All over the Western Cape and in the country the people are asking: "Can we let the passing of these laws go by unnoticed?"

## Oscar Mpetha speaks...



OSCAR has come home. After spending 3 years on trial with 17 others, he was convicted of terrorism and give a 5 year sentence. He has appealed and was released on bail of R1.

People all over the country have been waiting for his release. To them, Oscar Mpetha is a people's leader who has devoted his life to our struggle.

Now, after 3 years silence, he is able to speak. This is his message to the people.

*I read with great pleasure that the unions have at last decided to form a federation. A federation of the unions is long overdue.*

*Now, coming to the youth. It is pleasing to see that the young people are taking up the struggle. If they had done so a few years ago, surely we would already have attained our freedom.*

*But the struggle is not only for students and youth. There are parents too. They should fight for the future of their children.*

*We say the future is for the children but we must have freedom in our lifetime.*

*I have been in detention for such a long time, and I would say I am out of touch.*

*It has been pleasing for me to find out that the workers, mothers, youth and students are joining*

*hands for the freedom of our country.*

*If we look around at the world we see that the workers have been in the forefront of liberating certain countries. They have been strongly supported by the youth, students and women.*

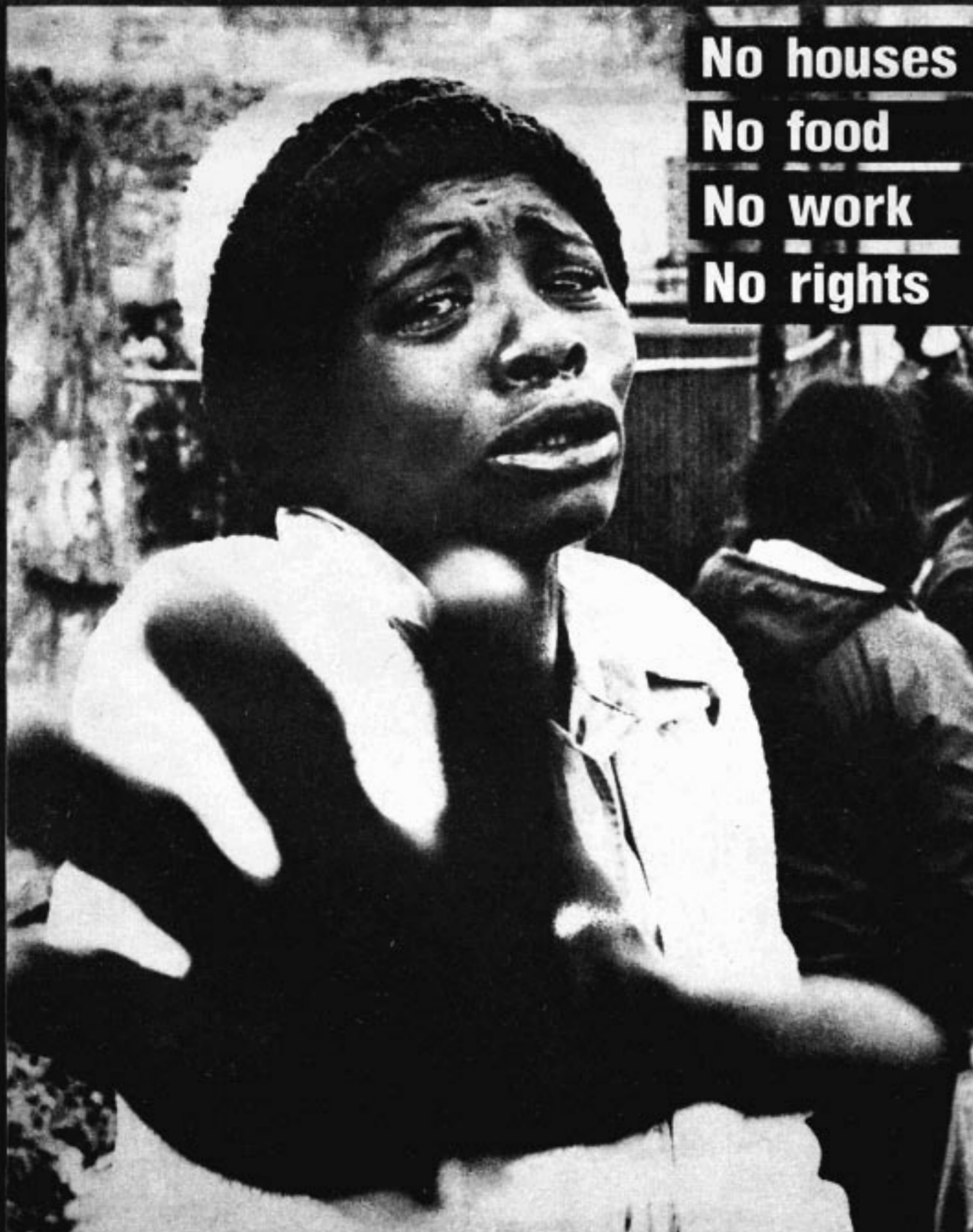
*It is my greatest desire that workers, students, the youth and the residents work hand in hand. I believe this will be the only way we will gain our freedom.*

*Let us march forward for the future.*

*The past is theirs. The future is ours.*

Aluta  
Amandla

## The PC gives us no hope



**No houses**  
**No food**  
**No work**  
**No rights**

**We demand comfort & security for all**

"IN struggle we learn by experience. In learning by experience, we grow stronger. Your presence here today proves that Cahac remains the voice of the people. It is encouraging to see just how many people are interested in the work and direction of their organisation."

These were the words of Mr Wilfred Rhodes, chairperson of The Cape Areas Housing Committee (Cahac), during his address to the second Annual General Meeting on Sunday July 17.

Mr Rhodes spoke about the past year and the year ahead, the strengths and the weaknesses of Cahac.

After his address, the more than 150 delegates and observers who attended the AGM in Ravensmead, rose as one and loudly applauded Mr Rhodes for his services to Cahac.

Mr Rhodes was later

## Spirit of unity at CAHAC AGM

elected chairperson for the third time, with Mrs Hester Benjamin elected vice-chairperson.

Mr Trevor Manuel was re-elected General Secretary. He too reflected on the mistakes Cahac had made in the last year and the challenges that lay ahead.

"For our work in the new year, the writing is on the wall. Resistance to the PC Proposals, rent increases and forced sale of houses are our important challenges," he said.

"Whether we will be able to face these challenges is no longer a

question. We know we will handle these challenges and emerge stronger. It cannot be otherwise.

"We can now approach our work with a better understanding of what is expected. We are confident that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated."

Throughout the day-long meeting, there was a great spirit of unity among the people from the different areas. By their loud applause, it was clear the people showed support and confidence in the 12-person steering committee they elected.

**Black local authorities**  
- page 5

**Fighting the bad times**  
- page 8 & 9

**Students come together**  
- page 10



THERE are many different trade unions and groups of trade unions in the country at present.

Many of these unions realise it is very important for them to work together. If all the unions stand together, it will be more difficult for the Government and the bosses to attack the unions.

In April most progressive unions came to the meeting in Cape Town to discuss unity. Many Cape Town

unions attended, like the Food and Canning Workers Union, the Municipal Workers Association, the General Workers Union and the Fosatu unions. At the meeting the unions decided to form a committee to meet regularly to work out the best way to form a federation of unions.

The unions had their own meetings to discuss the kind of federation they want to decide on policies.

Two weeks ago the

# Trade unions work towards unity

unity committee had its first meeting. All the delegates put forward the ideas of their members about the federation. All the differences and problems were discussed. At the end of the meeting all

the unions agreed that they had made a lot of progress and that the committee will meet again in October.

Of course it is not going to be quick and easy to form a new federation. The unions

are democratic organisations and it is their members that must make the decisions about union unity. After every meeting the delegates at the meeting must report back to their members.

— that is the absolute necessity for unity.

The Koornhof Bills, the Presidents Council proposals and the attempts to move tens of thousands of workers to Khayelitsha are only a few examples of the attacks the union face

All the unions realise that we cannot face up to these attacks if we are divided and competing for membership. That is why it is so important that we must unite.

WHILE the government says it is Christian, it makes policies that go against Christianity. Some people have said the church supports the government because it does not always actively challenge its policies.

Because of this, many Christian students felt they needed an organisation to help them apply their faith in a practical way to fight the government's unchristian actions.

So groups of students met to form SUCA, the Student Union for Christian Action. SUCA aims to help organise Christian students, and now has groups on almost every campus in the country.

During the first half of this year, SUCA focused on removals and resettlement.

During the university holiday in July, SUCA organised a campaign to educate people about KTC and Khayelitsha. Before starting the campaign, members of SUCA spoke to community organisations that were supporting the people of KTC in their fight for homes to get advice.

Afterwards, the campaign started. Students went to big shopping centres and used many ways to tell people about KTC and Khaye-

litsha.

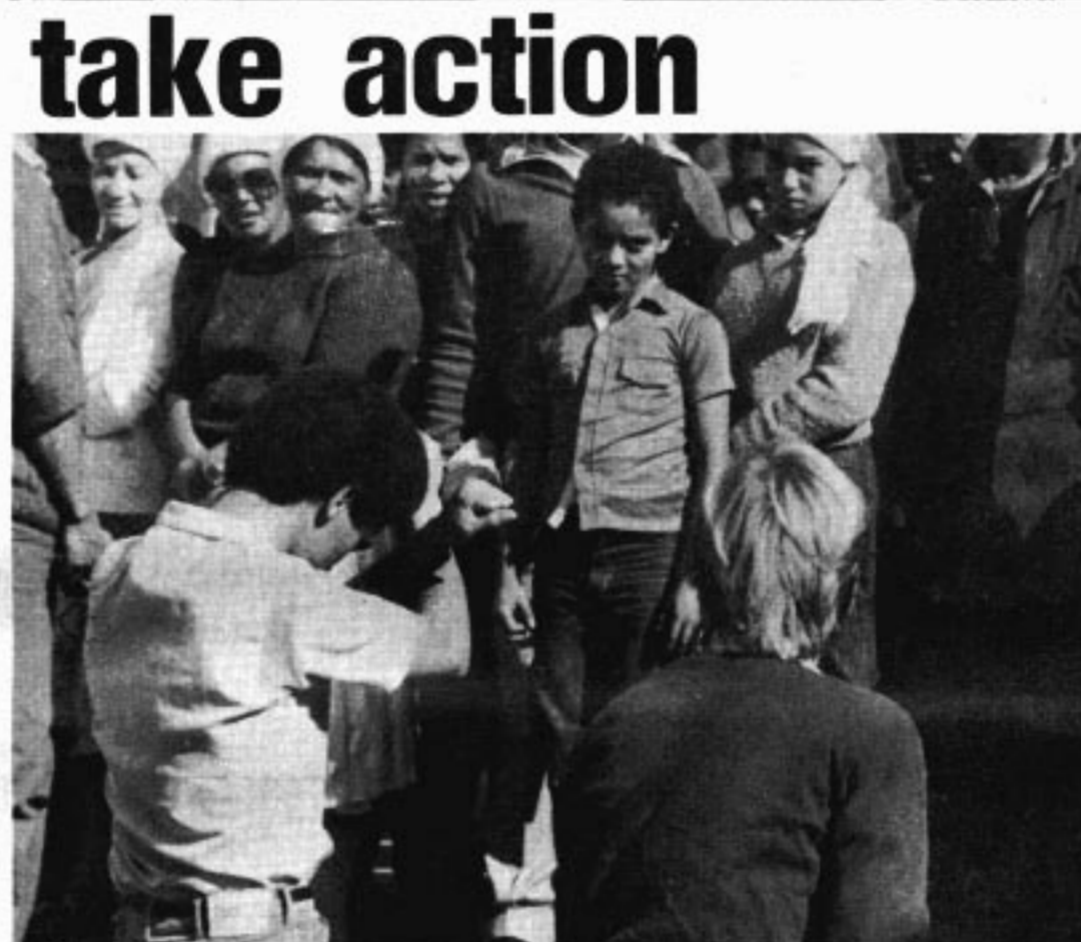
- These included:
1. Putting posters in shop windows.
  2. Handing out pamphlets
  3. Giving people bumper stickers
  4. The people giving out the stickers and pamphlets wore sandwich boards with protest slogans.
  5. A street play about a family broken up by the migrant labour system and oppressive security laws.
  6. Collecting signatures for a petition calling for an end to the migrant labour system, influx control and the Coloured Labour Preference policy.

On the last Saturday of the campaign, 10 SUCA members who were putting on the play in Adderley Street were arrested. They were charged with demonstrating in a prohibited area and released on R100 bail.

This was SUCA's first campaign here, and we know we have a lot to learn.

Now SUCA wants your criticisms of the campaign, and your advice. If you have anything to say, please write to us at P.O. Box 5, Athlone 7764.

## Christian students take action



Students go on to the street to protest against injustices.

## Workers victory

THE shop stewards of the General Workers Union at Consani Engineering last week signed a new agreement for the next year.

All workers will get increases of 15c per hour or more and the lowest wage is now R1,75 per hour.

This wage agreement was very unusual in the Engineering industry. Consani is the only engineering factory in Cape Town where the shop stewards negotiate their wages in the factory.

In other factories, the wages are negotiated at a meeting of the Industrial Council in Johannesburg. This meeting agreed to a minimum increase of only 10c per hour.

The Consani workers won a higher wage because they are well organised. Almost all the workers belong to the General Workers Union.

At first, it was not easy to organise at Consani. Workers were scared to join the union. But many workers joined when they saw the union was getting strong and won higher wages for them.

Today the union is very strong at Consani. The workers demanded that the bosses must recognise the union and speak to their committee.

One of the shop stewards told Grassroots: "We are the workers and we know best our difficulties and needs. We want to talk for ourselves and negotiate our own wages and working conditions."

## UWO health day

"OUR people have a right to good health," said a UWO member of Athlone branch. "We know that there are not enough health services for us.

Our houses are not maintained. Our houses are damp. Our wages are low. These things make us sick. Then there are not enough doctors and clinics.

We planned a Health Day with nurses and doctors from the area, with Health Care Trust, with SANCA, and with a nutritionalist. Together we decided to focus on childcare, women and old age.

We have handouts on all these different ideas on good health. We made a video about our old people. And we have a slide show of our Health Day. All these we can now share with others.

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# Give us lights

MORE THAN 120 Lotus River and Grassy Park residents marched to the Divco office on Saturday morning July 2. The residents all carried placards demanding electricity for their homes. They were also protesting against the refusal of the council to listen to the people's complaints about electricity. They were angry.

The people had made many complaints at the housing office, and had also posted many letters of complaint to the Council. But the Council ignored everything.

Most of the marchers belong to the Lotus River and Grassy Park Residents Association (LOGRA). They all said that they were tired of only getting little formal notes from the Council, saying that Council had received the letters. That day they were determined that Council would listen to and attend to their problems.

The residents listed their complaints: lack of electricity in many houses, lack of ceilings, the latest rent increases and the fact that housing officials were unable to do their jobs properly.

Logra is a member of the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (Cahac).

Cahac is made up of more than twenty organisations from the Western Cape and as far afield as Worcester.

At Cahac, residents from different areas work together. On the electricity problem, Logra is working with some areas, like Bellville-South and Hout Bay, which have the same problem.

For seven months now, Logra has been working on a campaign to get electricity for all the houses in their area.

"We all want electricity," the residents say. "Electricity is a right, not a privilege."

A spokesperson for the Residents Association said: "We wrote a letter to the council asking for electricity. Their reply was to say that rent would have to be increased if we all got electricity. Our members rejected this. They said that the rent went up every year but no improvements were made to the houses."

One resident, Mrs Z Ismail, said that she thought the council's argument that they could not afford electricity was ridiculous.

"We spend a fortune on candles, paraffin and gas. During the winter we have to spend even more because more fuel is needed."

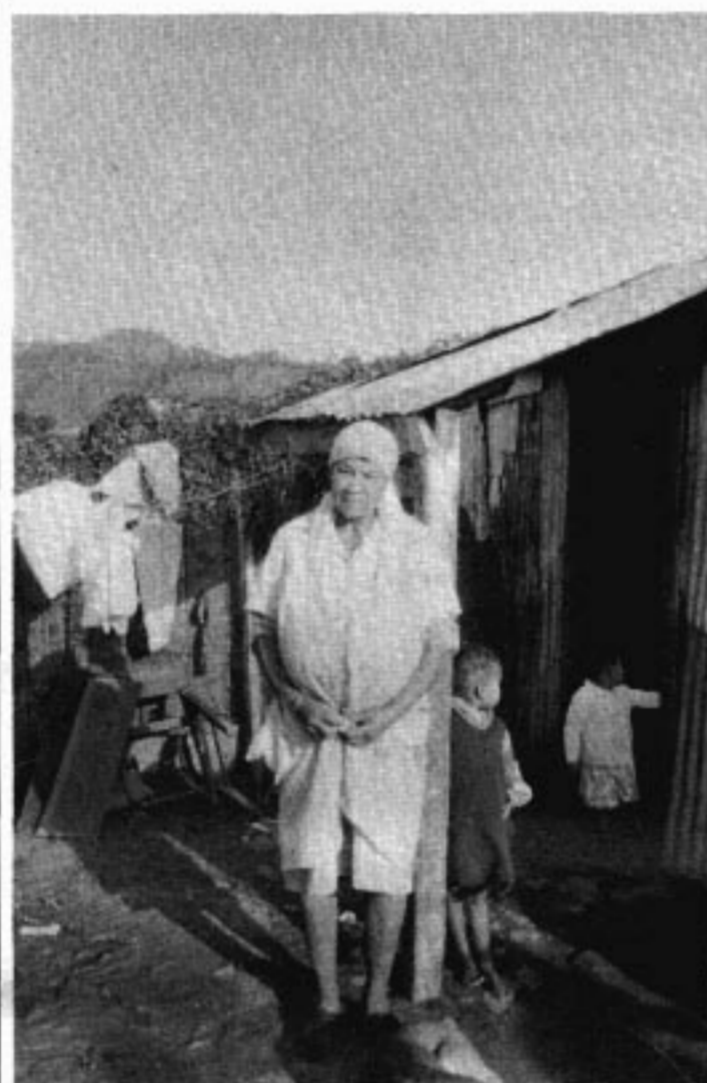
The residents said that they hoped that their demonstration march would make the council take notice of the people's problems.

"Promises will not be enough, the council must do something quickly to relieve our hardships," a resident said.



Angry Lotus River residents on their way to protest at the rent office of the Divisional Council.

# "Our children have no future here"



Auntie Minnie Williams stands outside the shack which has been her home for 25 years.

THE STRAND is known for its beautiful coast and sunny beach. But less than 3 km from the beach, completely hidden from the main roads, lies Blikkiesdorp, where more than 2 000 people live in poverty and suffering. The 300 zinc houses stand close to each other on a large plot of land owned by the Strand Municipality.

An elderly resident, Mr Ralph Moerat, summed up the feeling of most of Blikkiesdorp's people. With sadness and anger in his eyes, he said; "There is nothing here in Blikkiesdorp. A child who is born and grows up here, has no future."

Mr Moerat, has lived in The Strand all his life. He set up home in Blikkiesdorp almost ten years ago because he had nowhere else to live.

## Conditions

He and other residents have to pay a monthly rental of R10 for the ground.

Mr Moerat is a very friendly man, but when he speaks about Blikkiesdorp, his pleasant smile disappears.

He sat up straight on the sofa in his tiny front room and raised his voice; "One cannot live like this. An animal lives under better conditions. These houses are like pig-sties."

He points to the bedroom where his daughter's three-week-old baby is sleeping, and said; "You see that little baby there. Just look at all the the water

MORE than 50 km from Cape Town lies The Strand - a large town with a large community.

Many of The Strand's people work at factories in and around the area. A large number of people are employed at a nearby explosives factory.

In 1981, workers from The Strand were involved in the massive Leyland strike.

People who pass through The Strand always speak about its beautiful coastline. But what they never see, is Blikkiesdorp and Rusthof.

Here people are struggling to survive, and live in the hope of building a better future for their children.

Grassroots visited The Strand and spoke to the people of Blikkiesdorp and Rusthof.

under the bed."

When it rains in Blikkiesdorp, the water runs into most of the houses. The walls are wet, the floors are wet and the furniture is wet. This causes the people to become very ill.

Many of the people have stayed in Blikkiesdorp for a long time. Auntie Minnie Williams, a 62-year-old pensioner has waited for a house for twenty-five years.

She and the other residents regularly go to the offices of the Strand Municipality to see if they can get a house. Each time they are told to wait a while longer.

Blikkiesdorp is surrounded by Rusthof where there are more than 800 council dwellings.

Mr van Wyk of Rusthof often visits some friends in Blikkiesdorp. He is very angry about the conditions under which the Blikkiesdorp residents have to live.

But Rusthof itself has many problems of its own. The rents are

high, houses are falling apart and the people struggle to survive.

Many people in Blikkiesdorp and Rusthof say they have had enough. They feel strongly that the people need to unite, that they needed an organisation.

Residents said they would be prepared to work in the organisation. Mr Moerat said; "I would want to serve on it with all my heart."

There is an organisation in the Strand - the local management committee - which is supposed to see to the needs of the people. They take decisions for the people even though the people did not elect them.

Some people spoke out strongly against the management committee.

"They only want to fill their pockets. They only do things for themselves and nothing for the people."

So, many of the people of The Strand feel it is time that they united and took action. They want a better life for themselves and a decent future for their children



People of Bellville South came through the rain to attend the mass meeting.

ON June 22, people of Tupperware and Sementdam in Bellville went to the offices of the municipality. They wanted to know when the municipality was going to install electricity and ceilings and do something about the leaking roofs of their homes.

The people also wanted to know whether the houses in Bellville were going to be sold or not.

Ten people from Sementdam and Tupperware and members of the Bellville-South Housing Action Committee confronted the city engineer at the office.

They demanded answers. And they got answers.

The Engineer said that houses would not be sold in their present condition. He said that there was no money available for electricity and ceilings.

Although the people of Sementdam and Tupperware still don't have electricity and

# We won't buy these broken houses

ceilings, those who went to the offices, learnt valuable lessons.

Through the experience, the people learnt that only if they stand together, can they get things done.

Auntie Sarah Rodericks said; "When I saw how nervous the Engineer was, I learnt there was no need to be afraid of him."

On Sunday July 10, the Bellville-South Housing Action Committee called a meeting where the people who went to the municipality reported back to the other residents.

About 150 residents attended the meeting. Cahac chairperson, Mr Wilfie Rhodes, was one of the speakers. He spoke of the importance of unity. In a residents association, he said, there is place for everyone.

The people decided they would not buy the houses in their present condition. They would only consider it if the houses were properly repaired.

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# "Feeling the pain of our struggle together"

"THE DPSC has been very important for us. It has helped with things like transport to Pollsmoor. These visits are allowed us to get food and clothes to our children. These visits meant a lot to us. While you can't speak too much during a visit, at least we knew that they were united and strong."

transport, because it is very far to travel to Pollsmoor, and we could not afford it.

The DPSC has also brought us together with other parents and families who have children on trial, in detention or in prison. Talking about our problems together has made things easier and has given us hope for the future. We have been able to share feelings and help each other.

There are still other people who should be drawn into DPSC: people in a similar situation to ourselves.

We feel that DPSC is the organisation that can show us the way forward. It is important

that we unite and feel the pain of struggle together.

## DPSC GIVES US HOPE

THOUSANDS of South Africans are affected by detention and imprisonment - relatives and friends of the prisoners, people in organisations.

The Detainees Parents Support Committee (DPSC) was started in 1981 to bring together the families of detainees and political prisoners.

On this page, members of DPSC talk of their experience. They tell us of their pain and of how DPSC has given them strength.

The Government uses detention to weaken us. We must stand together so that we can be strong, and take forward the fight of those in prison.



Relatives of detainees meet at DPSC

## This is our story

GRASSROOTS spoke to the relatives of people on trial with Oscar Mpetha. This is their story.

### A mother speaks

I was very sad when my child was picked up in 1980 because when he was arrested he had no work and was trying to find work. There was no money in the house when he was arrested. I walked up and down looking for him. I did not know where he was.

In that time I got a job which paid me R10 a week. I depended on that R10. My daughter had to leave school to work to bring in some money because my son wasn't there any more.

There were younger children in the house, and besides the rent, these children also had to be supported on this R10 and what my daughter earned.

In this way I stayed until this year when by luck my son was freed. This is my story, but the pain is still the same for the others who are still inside.

When I look at my son, I can see the pain is still in him also. At home he sits still and talks to himself. I ask him: "What's wrong?" He answers: "No, mother I think of those still inside."

I tell him to go round to his other friends. He answers: "I don't know what to say to them, for my friends are still inside", and the pain and anger remains.

### A sister speaks

"I am speaking on behalf of my family because they asked me to come. At the time of Lulu's arrest,

we were working together in my father's shop.

The first time I saw him again was six months later at Pollsmoor. I visited him and asked him why he was there. He replied that he was at the meeting (1976 Commemoration Day, 1980). That's how he got involved.

My mother went to see him, when he appeared at the Supreme Court, but on the way there, she got a heart attack.

Monday morning, my father got a call from the hospital saying my mother had died. We felt doubly sad for not only were we worried about the trial, but now it was made worse by the death of my mother.

Lulu, as a student had never given us any trouble. We also feel sad because he was the only one with education and it was felt that, when released from jail, it would be his duty to see to the smaller children as they were now without a mother's care.

However, the judge passed a sentence of 15 years - a great shock, as Lulu is still a very young man and a first offender.

The other thing that made things worse was that we were promised that Lulu would be allowed to attend his mother's funeral, but he was not allowed to attend. My father told him the news at Pollsmoor and he took it like a man.

I sent him a photo of the grave. We all felt bad about it and Lulu as well, because my mother was on her way to see him when she died.

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**National Women's Day**  
 9th Aug.

WOMEN of South Africa, National Women's Day is a day of unity. It is a day when we call the people of South Africa to salute the women who have gone before us.

On 9 August, we call for women's organisations to unite - church women, domestic workers, women students, women workers, women in the community and in the home, women of all races.

On 9 August, 10 000 women from Cape Town, Eastern Cape, Durban and Transvaal, from all over South Africa, marched to the Union Buildings to tell Strydom: 'You have touched the women, you have struck a rock!'

But on National Women's Day,

we must not only think of the women who went to Pretoria. Before and after that time, women have shown their strength in many struggles.

In KTC, Crossroads and Nyanga Bush, the women have faced teargas, bulldozers and police dogs in their fight for a place to live.

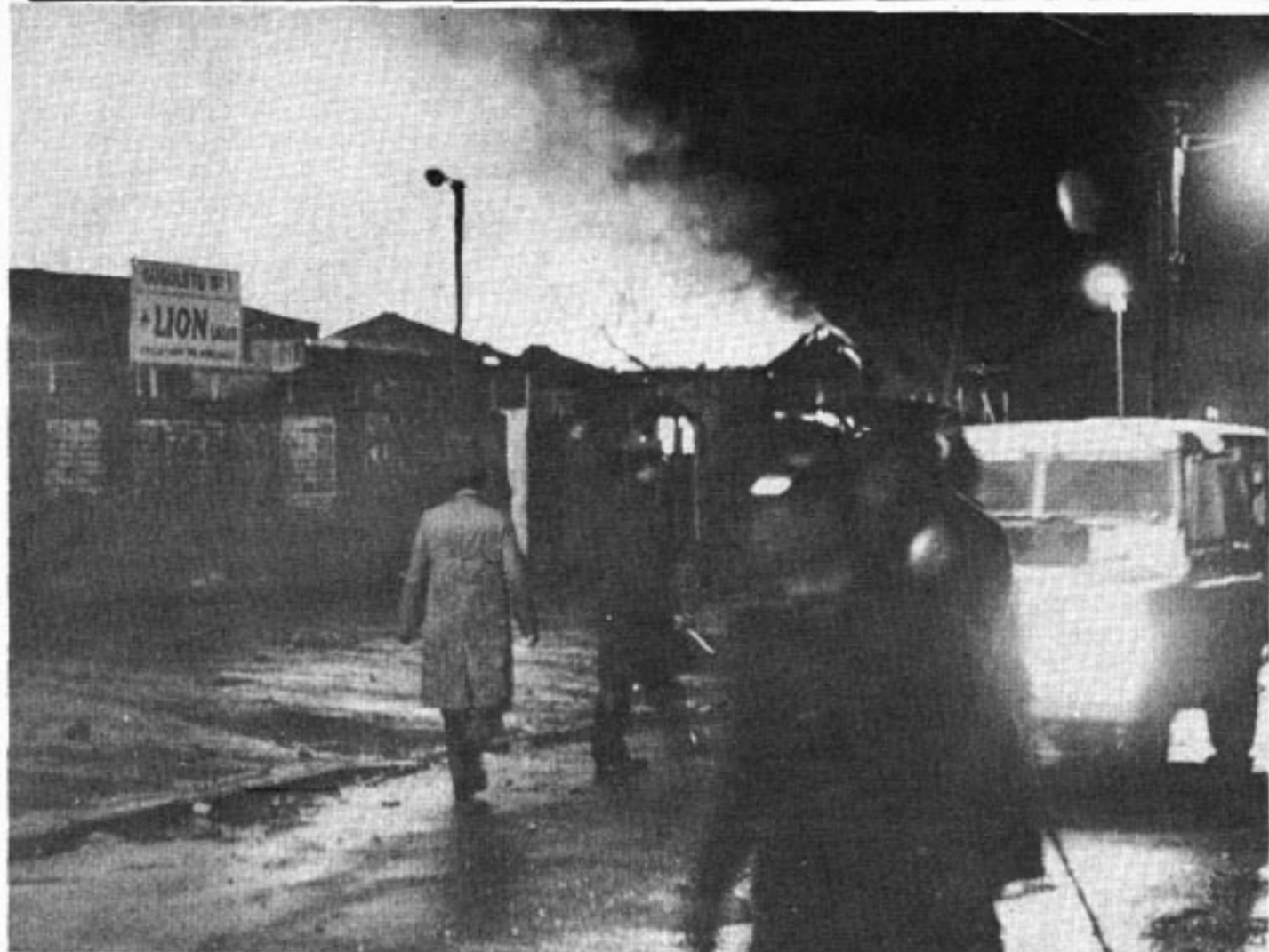
In the civic struggles we have seen women marching to Council to state their demands.

That is why UWO is calling all women to celebrate this day with us. We invite all women and men to come to a meeting at St. Marks Church Hall, Church St., Crawford, on Sunday 14 August at 2 p.m.

Let us unite and strengthen our women's organisations!



# Community council election set for November



1976 - burning beer halls in Guguletu tell of the people's anger against Baab.

## No to toothless bodies

PEOPLE laugh at them, ignore them. At times they have boycotted them and refused to vote in their elections.

We have paged through newspapers all over the country. We have talked to the people in Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga. All over the story is the same. It tells of the people's rejection from Natalspruit to Lamontville, Soweto and Cape Town.

The people call them "puppet bodies" of the government. They say they are toothless and useless. "They have done nothing for the people and have only brought hardship and suffering", said a resident.

The life of a Community Councillor is not an easy one. A

report in a Durban newspaper reads like this: "Natalspruit - the Katlehong Community Council is tired of being laughed at. So, it has ordered its officials to throw rent debtors out of the township houses".

"We have decided to use the evictions regulation because people just laugh at the Council and the officials who deliver rent notices", said a Councillor.

In Lamontville, the house of the Chairman of the Community Council was petrol bombed earlier this year. He later pleaded guilty to a charge of murdering local community leader, Harrison Dube. The trial is continuing.

In Cape Town, in 1982, the Community

Council election had to be called off because of a boycott called by the Western Cape Civic Association. Even a Community Councillor admitted:

"People protested against the Community Council. They want direct representation in Parliament."

All over the country, organisations have come together to oppose the Community Council elections later this year. In Soweto, anti-community council elections committees have been formed.

In Cape Town, the Western Cape Civic Association has called meetings in Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu to talk about what the new township Khayelitsha, will mean for

them.

They will also be talking about the elections. The United Women's Organisation has also taken a strong stand against the coming elections.

The Western Cape Civic Association has this to say about the Community Councils and the elections:

"The government is trying to show that the Community Councils have support from the people. It is true that a handful support them. Many people do not know what they are about and believe their promises.

Others believe in them out of greed for power. But, the majority of the people in the townships have rejected these bodies".

# SELLING US THE SAME OLD STORY

B.A.A.B. officials. The men who do pass raids, demolish shelters and collect rents. The men who bring fear and hatred into the hearts of most South Africans.

These are the people who run the townships. Who enforce the government's oppressive laws.

So in 1976, when the people were protesting against these laws, they attacked the B.A.A.B. offices. All over the country, the offices were burnt and stoned.

The government realised it was losing control of the townships. To try to get back control, it created the community councils, which were to be elected. The Government wanted to make the people believe that their "own leaders" were carrying out its laws.

But only very few people could vote for the council members, and the councils were given very few powers.

So the people were not interested in the community councils. They knew that the C.C.'s were just the little brothers of the B.A.A.B.'s and the government.

The B.A.A.B.'s had two jobs:

1. To run the townships, providing houses and services such as sewerage. The money for these services came from the people. The board collected rents and service charges. They also made money

EVERY time the government has offered our people a 'new deal', they have called it a new name.

A 'new deal' which is supposed to offer the people more say. But nothing changes, it means more elections, new names to learn and more confusion.

Our people have always demanded a full say in government. Whether it be in our townships or in the running of our country.

Today, the government's 'new deal' comes in the form of the Koornhof Bills and the President's Council proposals.

There is now a new law, the Black Local Authorities Act. Under this law Community Councils are going to be responsible for controlling the townships.

In November, the people will once again be asked to vote for the Community Councils. But, what have they done for the people? Will it change now that they are supposed to have more power?

On this page, Grassroots looks at why our people have always rejected the community councils.

from selling beer in the beerhalls.

2. To enforce the influx control laws

After '76 the community councils were set up. But only permanent residents could vote for them. A community council was set up in Cape Town in 1979. Very few people voted for it.

The Cape Community Council has 15 members. There are five from Nyanga, five from Langa and five from Guguletu.

For their services, the councillors get a monthly allowance of R100 - R150.

The community council's jobs are:

1. To allocate family housing. If a family

wants a house, it must put its name down on the community council waiting list. The council then decides who will get a home first.

2. To stop squatting.
3. To control community services.
4. To control the townships' money.

But the townships are still run by the administration boards. The C.C.'s do not have the power to change government policy - they cannot decide to allow more people to move into the townships or to let people living in overcrowded houses build shelters and squat on open ground.

The C.C. has not improved conditions in the townships.

## BLA - so what's new?

FIRST we had the Community Councils. Now they are giving us the Black Local Authorities (BLA).

The government says that this is 'reform', that they are giving us a new deal. But how will the BLA's change our lives?

This new deal will mean that the 'legal' urban residents will have the right to vote for their local authorities.

But 'illegal residents' - most of the people living in the cities - will not be able to vote. And when the other Koornhof Bills become law, even more residents will be made "illegal".

But let us look at this "right" to vote for the BLA's. What power will the BLA's have? They will have the power to:

- provide and allocate housing
- control squatting
- provide community services like sports fields, and libraries
- to control essential services like water, electricity and sewerage.

The BLA's will have to pay for all the housing and services from the money of the residents. The money will be raised from rents, service charges and profits from beerhalls.

So the government is forcing us to pay for our own houses and facilities. But how can we afford this with our low wages? Already there are so few houses for us. How can we pay for more out

of our own pockets?

The Government hopes that now we will get angry with the BLA's. They hope that we will blame them for the shortage of houses and facilities.

But it is the Government's duty to give us proper housing and facilities. The Government has made all the laws. The Government decides how many of us can live in the cities and where we must live.

The BLA's are just puppets to carry out the laws. They are controlled by the Minister of Co-operation and Development. He can take away their 'power' if he doesn't agree with what they are doing.

The government thinks that by giving us these 'rights' we will be happy with these laws. They think that if some of us have these rights, they will be able to send the rest to the homelands, force us into areas like Khayelitsha, make us "foreigners" in the land of our birth.

So what is new with the BLA's? Only that most of us will face more suffering and hardship. That we will have to pay higher rents, and still have too few houses. That there will be more, and harder laws controlling our lives.

No, Mr Government. The right for some of us to vote for a powerless body does not begin to satisfy our demands for equal rights in our land.



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# Front to fight PC

FOR many, many years, decisions affecting the lives of millions of South Africans are made in Parliament House in Cape Town. And, as Parliament sits, for many of the people of Cape Town, life just goes on.

But, over the years, the most hated laws, such as the Group Areas Act, the Racial Classification Act, the Pass Laws and many other repressive laws, have passed through each sitting of Parliament. It is a Parliament in which the majority of our people have no say.

And, this year, as Parliament meets again in August, another law will be passed. Some say, when this law is passed, South Africa will never be the same again. The Proposals of the Presidents Council, now known as the Constitutional Proposals, will become law.

The government is determined because they know that the old ways of ruling no longer work. While the Treurnicht's are fighting for 'old-style Apartheid', the Bothas are fighting for 'new-style Apartheid'. A new style of Apartheid which will give 'Coloureds' and Indians a say in government which will divide and control our people.

Some will be called into the White laager. The Hendrickses and the Curry's have already accepted their home. It will be a government where an executive president will hold the reigns for seven long years. He will have all the say in the world about how we will live our lives. Apartheid will stay, because the Group Areas Act will stay. The pass laws will stay and even the Immorality Act will stay.

We also hear that the Black Local Authorities Bills is here to stay. And, that African people living legally in cities will be voting for new Community Councillors in November. We also hear that the government is going ahead with an all-White referendum in November, to show that White South Africans support their 'new deal.'

All this comes at a time when the government is facing great opposition from the people and their organisations. We have rejected these proposals because we believe that the people themselves must govern. Because we believe in democratic South Africa. A South Africa which is united, which is non-racial and where there will be equal citizenship for all.

This new law must not pass by unnoticed. In some parts of the country, people's organisations have come together to form a United Front to fight the proposals. A front of students, youth, trade unions, civics, religious, sporting and women's organisations.

We need to organise ourselves in our areas and join hands across the country to make our voices heard when this Bill is laid down as a law in South Africa.

## What are you?

Are you an active member  
The kind that would be missed?

Or are you just contented  
Your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings  
and mingle with the flock?

Or do you stay at home  
then criticise and knock?

Do you take an active part  
to help the work along?

Or are you satisfied to be  
the kind who just belong?

Do you push the work along  
and make things really tick?

Or leave the work to others  
and talk about the "Clique"?

Think this over member,  
you know the right from wrong

Are you an active member  
or do you just belong?

Bonteheuwel Youth Movement

WE almost did not have time to write this article because we have had so many meetings this week.

Some people complain at having to sit through long meetings. Others say, "No, it is important for every one to get together so we can all make decisions."

Last night we had a very successful meeting. It was the weekly committee meeting of the Hanover Bay Residents Association.

We are just starting to find our feet. Mr. Ongeduld felt strongly that it was time for us to go out into the area and reach the people.

Mrs Eager agreed. "Our Association is made up of the people and is for the people. We must go out to them and find out what they feel."

### DEAR GRASSROOTS

I feel I must write about Khayelitsha, the new township on our doorstep. I was very disgusted after reading a letter from a Mitchells Plain resident complaining about the new township. Have we forgotten how we were evicted from our homes in District Six and countless other areas? The same thing is now happening to the people from Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu.

What the people from these areas need is our support. It is true

# Having meetings about meetings?

IN this issue we again look at the question of democracy. We will focus on meetings.

While meetings are important so that we can make decisions and plan together, it sometimes leaves us with very little time to do anything else.

How do we strike a balance between meetings and our daily practical work? Do you have the answer?

Mr Kn owall and Mr Thinkalot agreed. So did everyone else.

"Right", said Mr Neutral, The Chairperson; "now let us decide on a date when we can meet to plan the house visits."

There was silence for a while. "We've got a meeting with the

Church Ministers tomorrow", said Mr Up-to-Date, paging through his diary.

"On Wednesday and Thursday night we must all attend the workshop of the Congress of South African Residents (Cosar). On Friday night it will be difficult as most of us



must do family shopping."

Mrs Rely Able intervened. "I think Wednesday night will be our best bet", she said.

But many people were involved in sub-committee meetings on that night too.

Finally they agreed on a date - a month

later. Mr Ongeduld, however, was unhappy. "I know these meetings are important. But our Association is for the people. And now we can only start talking to them in a months time."

It was getting late. They decided to postpone the meeting. The people at the meeting could not reach agreement. Some felt there were too many meetings and others felt these meetings were important.

Closing the meeting, Mr Neutral summed up. It is vital for us to have democracy at all levels. I believe we need to strike a balance. The big problem, however, is HOW?"

"Maybe we should organise an afternoon assessment meeting where we can discuss the issue thoroughly."

## We must unite and fight

that the trains will now be more over-crowded, and many inconveniences might take place. I feel that instead of fighting one another, we must unite and fight for better services and facilities.

After all, these basic things such as transport

are a necessity and not a privilege.

The people of Mitchells Plain have shown in the E.P.C. Campaign (against the electricity due date) what can be done if we stand together.

Unite Mitchells Plain



## Homes for forgotten souls

### DEAR GRASSROOTS,

OUR neighbours, Uncle Tom and Auntie Joanie had no place to stay. So they went to an old age home.

They were married for fifty years and lived through many happy and sad times. Now, Auntie Joanie has died and Uncle Tom is lonely in his cold and empty room in an old age home on the Cape Flats.

My family and I went to say good-bye to him because he is go-

ing to to stay with his daughter in Durban.

But, Uncle Tom is so sad. He is sad that they had to spend their last days together in the old age home. The food is bad. Very sick people who are dying come to the old age home.

Uncle Tom is a healthy, energetic old man. But he had to share a room with a man who is dying. There is no company - no one to talk to. There are no activities,

its just an old age home. A place where the old and forgotten souls in our community must live out their last days.

He seemed so unhappy. Gone was the joking, smiling old man who greeted all and had a kind word for us children in our neighbourhood.

I think that we need to look after our old people in the community.

Jo-Anne Wynberg

## We need a people's channel on TV

### DEAR GRASSROOTS

I AM writing this letter in the hope that other people will share the same feeling with me. During 1975, South Africa introduced it's very first proopaganda machine and it is called TELEVISION. The majority of us, including myself, were very amused to see how the SABC has developed. But little did we know what a slap in the face

it would be.

As a regular T.V. fanatic for the past eight years, I draw now conclusions how wicked our T.V. station has been towards the masses of our people. I ask myself what good is T.V. for the working masses and my answer would be: insulting us daily, robbing us of our culture and creating a world of make-believe. I can go on by pointing out how embarrass-

ing the situation is. For example, my little brother saw this fantastic motor-track racing game on T.V. He then asked me to buy it for

him and I told him that my salary is very little. And also the games they advertise on T.V. are for the very rich children whose parents can afford to buy them.

SABC with the help of the government can select certain program-

mes which they think are good for the people and spend thousands of rands to implement their imperialist ideas on to the masses.

On the other hand, we all have to pay a license fee of R42 to keep their machine running.

Television is there to educate us but at the moment it caters only for the white minority and not for the major-

ity. What we need is a People's Channel which serves the interests of the people and which can relate to daily things.

All these years we have been blind viewers and I hope that in the future when we switch on our T.V. we will think twice about watching a propaganda display.

Yours in the struggle  
SQUARE EYES



WRITE TO GRASSROOTS, AND SHARE YOUR IDEAS WITH ALL OUR READERS!

To: grassroots  
P.O. box 181  
Athlone  
7760

## Can this be justice?

### DEAR GRASSROOTS

I am a member of the Bonteheuwel Civic Association. A while back I was involved in a car accident. I was standing at the stop street when another car went into my car. Damage was done.

I then approached a lawyer to fight my case. Because the lawyer's assistance did not help very much, I was ordered to pay R5 monthly. After every payment I received receipts.

I got home one night to find that the Messenger of Court had taken things from my home without my consent or signature. Later in the week the Messenger delivered a letter at my house. The letter stated that I had to see the lawyers at 2 o'clock the next day and also bring R50 along. Then I phoned to explain that I had already paid. Their answer was that I had to pay the Court Messenger for delivering the letter.

I refused to see them because I had never missed one payment. The following month I sent the money again. At 3 o'clock one morning the police fetched me out of bed and took me straight to Pollsmoor.

I showed the police all my receipts when they came to arrest me. But they refused to listen to me. On the Friday afternoon, the police came to me and said I could go home. No charge was brought against me.

Because of their injustice, I am taking this matter further. I have now approached the legal aid for assistance.

Yours in the struggle  
Mr G Ismael



# UNITING AGAINST THE PC

THROUGHOUT the country the people have responded to the challenge of the government's Constitutional Proposals and the Koornhof Bills.

Earlier this year, at a congress of the Transvaal Anti-South African Indian Council Committee (TASC), more than 400 delegates adopted a resolution to reject and resist the proposals.

It was at this congress that the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed. The UDF is a front of all organisations committed to democracy, and the creation of a non-racial, united South Africa with equal citizenship for all.

So far, the Natal Indian Congress, the Release Mandela Committee, the Democratic Lawyers Association, the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) have affiliated to the UDF.

In Durban and Johannesburg organisations have come together to form regional branches of the UDF. They have stressed the need for unity of organisations at a local and national level.

### Johannesburg

Last month, 31 organisations formed the Transvaal General Council of the United Democratic Front.

The General council will elect a secretariat and regional committees. A programme of action will be drawn up to mobilise the people and organisations against the proposals and the Koornhof Bills.

### Durban

A few weeks ago over 40 organisations launched the UDF in the Natal region at a meeting held in Durban.

A speaker said "the constitutional proposals and the Koornhof Bills seek to divide our people. They are a threat to the unity that we strive for among the oppressed."

### Cape Town

In Cape Town organisations have been hard at work to educate members about what the proposals and the Koornhof Bills mean for us. Many workshops have been held and newsletters have been distributed.

Two conferences consisting of many organisations - youth, students, trade unions, women, civics and religious organisations - have met to discuss the formation of a united front against the proposals in Cape Town. Another conference will be held on 24th July.



February - people show their anger at a labour party meeting

"The people say no the PC; Labour Sell Out, Koornhof Bills - divide and control us."

These are some of the stories that we have been reading in Grassroots over the past few months.

This story has not ended. It must go on. It goes on because our people are determined to fight on.

The government is in a corner, its giving with one hand and taking with the other. Why are they doing this?

# Fighting for our future

MANY older people remember the 50's. It was a time of great pain and confusion. Everyday, there were new race laws.

Families were torn apart as some registered as "coloured" and others "tried for white"; the beaches we used to go to were forbidden to us; we were sent to the top of the buses and the back of the trains. There seemed to be no end to the insults.

But it was also a time of great activity: the campaigns, meetings on the Parade; the people's newspapers like New Age.

Many believed that the freedom we so desperately wanted was just around the corner - one more campaign and the government would topple down.

Then Sharpeville came, and Langa, and the deaths and detentions. Everyday the government cracked down more heavily and finally we became silent out of fear and hopelessness.

Throughout the 60's our silence grew and the rulers seemed to feed and grow fat on this silence. Their factories grew daily, feeding on our labour.

The Oppenheimers grew richer as the gold price soared. The army became more and more powerful. The government boasted here and overseas about how it was the strongest and richest country in Africa.

But our lives were still hard. For one thing, the pass laws were tightened and many were endorsed out to the Bantustans. There was the 'Group' too. Greedily, it tore us from our old homes in Claremont, Newlands and District Six.

### GROUP AREAS



In the new areas we found ourselves living with complete strangers. There were often no roads, just sand. Our houses were damp and unhealthy. Transport was expensive now that we were so far from town. And the skollies and the crime started.

We were too afraid even to talk about our problems to the strangers who lived around us. So we became even more silent. We worked harder, hoping for promotion so that at least our children might have a better life.

We prayed harder for God to deliver us from this evil. Some of us drank more Sw Sweet Virginia to forget about our troubles. Each one had their own individual solution.

All this time the government and the bosses, the first class citizens, grew fatter and richer. There seemed to be no limit

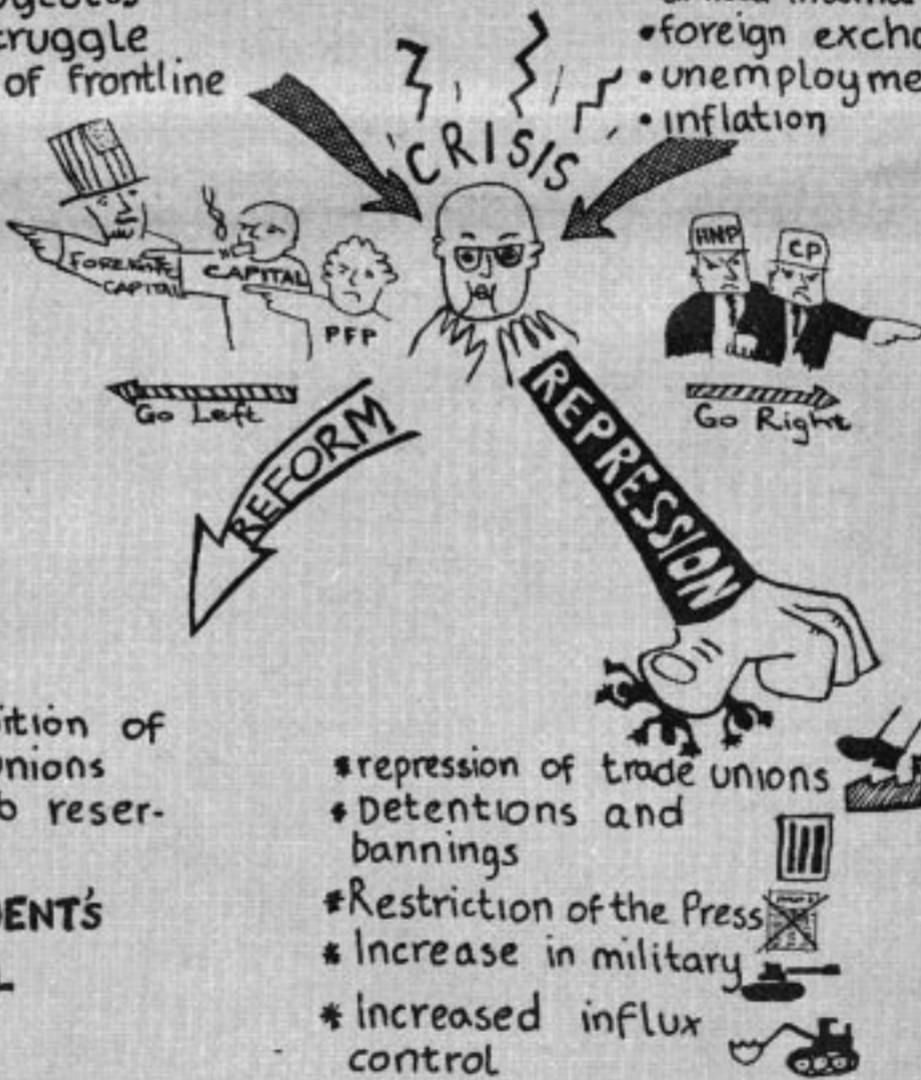
### POPULAR PRESSURE

- strikes
- community organisation
- school boycotts
- armed struggle
- liberation of frontline states



### STRUCTURAL PRESSURE

- shortage of skilled labour
- limited internal market
- foreign exchange
- unemployment
- inflation



- \* Recognition of trade unions
- \* Less job reservation
- \* PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

- \* repression of trade unions
- \* Detentions and bannings
- \* Restriction of the Press
- \* Increase in military
- \* Increased influx control

to their success and power. All through the country, they held us in silence and submission.

Now it is 1983 and we can see just how different things are.

For one thing, we are not silent anymore. First it was 1976 and the deaths of so many of our children that screamed and tore through this silence.

Then the Fattis & Monis boycott, the 1980 boycotts, the Release Mandela Campaign. Out of these, a few began to build organisations that could take forward our fight.

Wherever we were oppressed and exploited, we built organisations - unions, civics, student, youth and women's organisations. Many of these are still small and weak, but slowly they are changing our lives.

Now when we have problems, we no longer say "So gaan die lewe". Instead we are beginning to say "Môre aand moet ons na die Association gaan". We have started

to make these organisations part of our lives and our struggles.

But perhaps most importantly, through our organisations we are starting to talk of the kind of future we want for our children. A future that belongs to all who live in South Africa, black and white. A future in which the people will govern.

A future that will put an end to poverty, to hunger and to homelessness. At times, such a future seems so far away - a dream, a vision. Yet through our organisations we are slowly gaining the courage to try actively to build such a future.

It is this future that we see that scares our rulers more than anything else. It is the future and our future and our struggles, no matter how small, that stand against their bulldozers, their brutality, their bullets.

They have other problems too. Throughout the 60's, they built more factories and bought more machines, believing there was no end to their good fortune. Suddenly, they realised that there were not enough

skilled workers to run their fine and fancy machines.

Then too, our low wages meant that we could not afford to buy their wonderful new products - and this meant less profits for them.

As their problems get worse, the bosses try their old trick of shifting the burden onto us. Rather than lose profits, they retrench us, they push up the prices of the things we have to buy, like food.

Yet their tricks and schemes have not solved their problems. Unemployment and high prices haven't stopped us. Guns and detentions haven't stopped us.



Independence of the Bantustans has not stopped our demand for political rights in South Africa. The old ways of ruling no longer seem to work.

It is this fact that has confused and divided them. It is this fact that has caused the information scandal, the Nationalist party split, the fights in the Broederbond.

Yet still the rulers have not given up. Some of them have realised that they need an overall plan to end the chaos. They have realised that like boxers they must train and prepare.

They must learn how to feint, and dodge and tire their enemies. Only then can they succeed in dealing the final knock-out blow to our resistance.

This is why we, who they called the "bastard race" of the 50's, are suddenly meant to be the brothers of the Afrikaners. This is why some of us, who they called "uncivilised kaffirs" in the past, are suddenly meant to believe that their system will be good for us. They hope to fool us with fancy sounding words like "consociational democracy" "reform", and so on.

If they can win many of us over to their side, they will be stronger and more united. It will be easier for them to deal that final knock-out blow.

But even those who they manage to win over will still remain Coloureds, Indians, Africans. They will still live in Group areas. They will still have to carry a dompas. It will still be apartheid.

As someone once said, apartheid is not an onion, it is a tiger. You can peel an onion layer by layer, even though it makes you cry. But you cannot skin a tiger stripe by stripe.





# Organising around the food shortage

"TODAY we fight for food, tomorrow for the vote, and then for freedom for all," was the slogan of the Women's Food Committee in the 1940's.

The Women's Food Committee was formed at a time when there were serious food shortages in South Africa because of the war. Many organisations at that time organised around the shortage of food. "Organisations helped the people in this way and tried to build their organisations at the same time," Dora Tamana recalled.

This article describes some of the ways organisations struggled against low wages and food shortages in the 1940s.

In 1943 the government introduced mobile food vans and food depots in all the working class areas. These vans carried basic foods at controlled prices.

By 1946 there were 66 vans serving 2,000 customers a day.

Food vans provided a much needed

meets women into an organisation. As one woman said: "At first it was difficult due to the fact that most of us had so little experience of organisation other than running a house..."

But they learned fast and the struggles around food shortages soon made people aware of other issues like housing and low wages.

The Women's Food Committee wanted to set up food buying clubs in all the working class areas to see that members got food at the lowest possible prices.

One woman would go to the market each week to buy everybody's vegetables with the money that members had given. This meant that food club members had to have money to pay for vegetables before they got them. But it also meant that they got vegetables at half price.

The Guardian Christmas Club was another organisation which helped its members. Members paid a monthly

# Let's fight for work and food — but also rights

ALL OVER the Cape Flats and the rest of the country, the people are saying — there is no work, there is no food. They sigh with despair, as sick and hungry babies cry.

The times are bad, but some say that they are changing. Why are so many people unemployed? Why are so many unable to afford basic foods to feed their families? Why are so many people evicted from their homes because there is no money for rent?

Some say why worry, we have always suffered. Others say — no, we are suffering more today.

Yes, this is true. Senator Horwood says there is a recession, and that business is bad. The whole country is affected by it. We may not know his words, but we know what it is to get poorer and poorer by the day. Senator Horwood says times will get better later this year and next year. Business will boom. There will be more jobs and there will be more food again.

Yes, it will be a little better then, but we will still suffer.

The bosses will get richer and we will get poorer.

All this has come when the government has made great promises to our people. Some will get the vote in a "Coloured" and "Indian" parliament.

Africans must go on starving in the townships. We did not ask for this.

Their 'new draft' will not get us more work, lower food prices, and free, compulsory education for all our children.

No, they cannot give this to us. We must fight for it ourselves. While we have no say in our country, and while the bosses and Horwoods work hand-in-hand, nothing will change. While we have an economic system where there are lean years and fat years, while the bosses get richer and we get poorer, nothing will change.

The organisation of our people — our youth, civic, women's organisations and trade unions — know this. It is a lean time for our organisations. The bosses and the government are on the attack.

Thousands of workers have been laid off work and lost their jobs. These are the men and women who sit in the cold with no work and no food. What can they do? Must they go on sitting? Will that change things?

No. We must join our organisations in the communities. We must find ways and means to solve our problems together. It is not our fault that there is no work and no food. We must not blame ourselves. We must blame the bosses and the government. It is their fault.

So, if you have no work and no food, join your local organisation in the community. Suggest to them what can be done. Many heads are better than one. We should not suffer alone, there are thousands who share our burdens.

No work... no food  
can you see the eyes  
of my children?  
they look at me...

No work... no food  
my children's eyes tell me  
that they don't understand  
our land is rich...

No work... no food  
I tell my children  
that the rich are greedy  
Taking what belongs  
to all of us

No work... no food  
The time is ripe  
Come my children,  
my wife and neighbours,  
comrades  
Let's stand together  
as brothers and sisters  
Deep in the south of Africa  
Let's fight  
not only for work and food  
but for our rights. 488



Work wanted — part of the three million unemployed in this country.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE

Grassroots share some ideas on how we can work together to help ourselves and our organisations fight the bad times.

### Buying clubs

IN RAVENSHEAD, Mitchell's Plain, Bellville South and Genadendal, people have come together to start food buying clubs. It's much cheaper to buy food in big quantities.

So people from the same civic or in the same neighbourhood decide to buy food together from the vegetable markets and the hypermarkets. They then share it out.

In this way they are fighting high prices together. They are also learning that to fight high prices is not enough. They need to fight for higher wages as well.



### Credit unions

IF YOU'VE ever tried to borrow small amounts of money, you'll know why we've started our own bank," said Mrs Prinsloo from a local credit union.

In Bridgetown and in Langa there are people who have turned credit unions. People who trust one another have come together.

They save a certain amount of

money every week or month. These savings make a pool of money from which the members can get loans.

Loans are given to members according to their needs and depending on how they can repay the loan. "In this way we save ourselves from the hire purchase sharks," said Mrs Malcalada.

"We also learn how to organise."

### Child care



WOMEN need to go out to work. Food prices are high and wages are low. But children can't be left alone in the streets all day. These organisations have started to help their members.

They have started creches to look after the children while mothers go to work.

In one organisation a Mrs. plan is being worked out. All the mothers in a neighbourhood will go out to work. One mother will stay at home and look after the children.

The mothers who go out to work will share their wages with the mother who cares for their children.

The men will help the women by building an extra room to give more space when the children play and learn.

### Sewing clubs

WE ARE here. We are together and we are fighting for what is ours. We want jobs. There are not enough jobs for the people. So together we are struggling to make our own jobs," said Mrs Bester.

Mrs Bester and others have joined together in different groups to make things. There are sewing, knitting, carpentry and gardening groups.

"It's nice to work together," said Mrs Bester. "We make things together and then sell them. We can take bigger orders with many of us in the group. We can also share equipment."

"We recently made skirts for school kids. We do have problems but we are struggling together."



### Advice centres

DO YOU have a problem with unemployment money? Are the hire purchase people chasing you? Are you being threatened with eviction from your home? The question is, do you know your rights?

Community Advice Offices have been started in many areas — Worcester, Roseville Park, Heidelberg, Bonteheuwel, Steynberg and Letten River.

If you do not know your rights, these are members of your community who may be able to help. They offer an important service to your community.

## 'Food today...freedom tomorrow' was the call

service but there were problems. The richer areas got a better service. The vans there had more and better supplies.

People had to queue from early in the morning. Old age pensioners were not able to queue for such a long time. Working mothers had problems getting to the queues during the day. Some people used to behave badly in the queues.

Within this situation, women formed themselves into committees. Each queue elected its own committee which had weekly meetings.

Representatives from the Food Committees formed a Women's Food Committee. They in turn set up an Action Committee to take action around these problems.

By 1947 there were 59 food queues represented on the Women's Food Committee.

The Women's Food Committee and the food queues brought many grass-

subscription so that at the end of the year they could get a Christmas hamper at wholesale price. This system was used to raise funds for the Guardian newspaper. Members saved a little money each month so that at Christmas they could afford a Christmas hamper. They also received a copy of the Guardian newspaper every week.

At that time of no work and shortage of food, women had to try and find jobs. In Cape Town three organisations set up queues to help the women. Dora Tamana told of how she ran a creche in Bonteheuwel.

"It was to help all women, not just members of our organisation", she said. She believes that because organisations were helping ordinary people with their everyday problems, people listened to the organisation.

"Because of this work, when organisations called for everyone to defy unjust laws in 1952, everyone did so," she said.

### Education

A teacher from Bellville South said, "The number of kids dropping out of school is rising. This is because more and more parents are unemployed." A teacher from Gapsala said, "This year students found it much more difficult to pass their examination fees. If you don't have the money, you can't attend school."

### Health

A housing officer in Woodfield has said that with growing unemployment P.R. is on the increase. This is due to poor housing, low wages and poor nutrition.

### Eviction

IN 1980 the Divisional Council met out 100,000 eviction notices. Today, many more people are being evicted.

In Atlantis, around 4 families are evicted every week. They cannot afford to pay their rents. There are no jobs in Atlantis and 53% of the people work in Cape Town, said Mr Noel Ndlovu from the Atlantis Housing Action Committee. Bachelors have gone up 4 times in the last two years.

## STRENGTHEN OUR UNIONS

THREE million workers in the country are unemployed. Some have been laid off and others face the insecurity of being retrenched.

The democratic trade unions are facing a difficult time. The bosses are clearly on the attack. This is the time when bosses lose large profits. To stop this, they lay off workers. Those who remain, must push up production.

How has this affected the trade unions? And, what are the tasks facing them?

A trade unionist said: "This is the time unions must fight to keep their

strength on the factory floor. It is a time to build and strengthen the trade unions."

"The bosses want to cut costs and save money. It is not easy to win victories. The workers feel that the unions cannot do anything for them."

But I think that we do not only join unions to get higher wages. We also join unions to fight for our rights in our country.

"This is a time when bosses victimise union members. When they lay

off workers and pick on union people. But we cannot accept this."

Unions all over the country say no to this. "Last in first out in their workers. But the GMU members said demand. Those who have worked for years have a right to stay if workers are to be laid off. In this way, the bosses cannot pick on union members."

The bosses have tried to sow divisions between the workers. Between skilled and unskilled, between Coloured and African workers, and between contract workers and those who have Section 10 rights to be in the cities.

Workers in the General Workers Union (GWU) fought against this. The bosses wanted to lay off contract workers. But the GMU members said no. Those who have rights in the city, they will be laid off. The workers know that the suffering of the contract workers will be greater.

This is the spirit of workers in very bad times. The message from three is — build and strengthen our contract workers and those democratic unions. Do not lose heart. When we come out of the bad times together, we will be stronger than ever.



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## Workers students youth, let us unite

WORKERS, students, women and youth must unite in the struggle against racism and inequality. The workers in the factories, mines and farms have a special role in the struggle. They are in the majority and they are the most exploited.

The workers must therefore lead our struggle. They must lead our civics, our trade unions, our youth organisations. It is only then that we can have true liberation from all forms of oppression. It is only then that we will make sure that we do not replace a white oppressor with a black oppressor.

This was the clear message from Zac Yacob, who addressed a packed meeting during the Azaso third National Congress at the Samaj Hall in Gatesville.

Zac Yacob is an executive member of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC).

NIC was part of the Congress alliance which adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955.

"Our goal is to create a society as seen by the voice of the Freedom Charter. It is a living document that was born out of the daily struggles and suffering of our people."

"After 30 years, it still forms a basis for unity. Unity amongst all those who want the vote for all, better houses for all, higher wages for all, good education for all, free health care facilities for all and peace, harmony and respect for each other."

STUDENTS gave life to Cape Town during the first week of July. The Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) held its third annual congress. Busloads of students travelled from universities all over the country.

They came to attend the congress, to share ideas and to debate the burning questions of the day. They also came together to commit themselves to playing their part in the struggle for a free and democratic South Africa.

Hanover Park Civic Centre was the scene of the opening night when 700 students and members of the community listened to the opening address. The voices of the students could be heard as they sang songs in praise of their organisation - AZASO, in praise of Mandela and the Freedom Charter.

They listened to Joe Phaahla, the outgoing president, to Curtis Nkondo, who was unbanned recently. They also listened to Trevor Manuel of Cahac as he spoke about the Constitutional Proposals and the Koornhof Bills.

### United front

The students adopted a resolution to support and participate in the activities of the United Democratic Front. The UDF was formed in Johannesburg earlier this year to lead the campaign against the PC and the Koornhof Bills.

The congress took place over five days. The students discussed the future of their organisation. And, how they could build it into a strong organisation at universities and colleges

# Taking lessons of the past into the future - AZASO



Throughout the congress, there were speakers' programmes to educate our students about our struggle. One of the highlights was a panel discussion by student leaders of the 1970's. Students listened to them till well after midnight one evening. They talked about student organisation in the past - of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) which was banned in 1977 and the Black Consciousness Movement.

Their message to students was that we must learn the lessons from the past. "We need new direction in our struggle today. We must go a step further. Our struggle is not against white people. It is against oppression and exploitation", they said.

throughout the country.

High up on the agenda was the drawing up of the Education Charter. AZASO, and Congress of South African Students (COSAS) - which organises pupils

- will work together. The Education Charter will be drawn up by parents and students. It will state the demands of our people for free, compulsory and equal education for all.

## COSAS - "We need to reach new students"

HIGH school students from all over the country gathered at Roodepoort last month where the fifth National Council of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) was held.

About 100 delegates representing 30 branches from Western Cape, Natal, Bloemfontein and Transvaal attended the three day council. The council is held four times a year.

The representatives met to discuss the progress made by branches and the many problems they face at schools.

The council started

Tuesday evening, June 22, with registration. On Wednesday morning, the president welcomed the branches. He expressed concern at the absence of the Eastern Cape Region.

The branches then gave reports of their progress. They had developed well since the last council. But many people felt the need to build stronger branches. They said Cosas also needed to reach many other students.

Many branches suggested that libraries be set up in various areas which students can easily use. Another suggestion was that Cosas

branches organise more extra-tuition classes.

A number of papers were delivered and talks given. These included talks on the role of students, student-worker solidarity and the education struggle.

The President's Council Proposals and the Koornhof bills were also discussed. Delegates decided that the different branches should hold workshops to educate students about these Bills. This would help to get more students involved in the campaign against the government's 'new deal'.

## "United by our common goals"

THE National Union of South African students (NUSAS) held its July Festival recently.

The theme of the conference was 'Beyond reform - the challenge of change'. About 200 students came from all over the country to discuss the task of building a non-racial and truly democratic South Africa.

On the first day the students looked at the crisis the South African government finds itself in. The Constitutional proposals are there to co-opt 'Coloureds' and Indians, to make the rulers stronger. But, on the other hand, repression and control of the people is being tightened up.

"The aim of the government is to gain

greater control of the African working class. The constitution is a tactic. The strategy is to control the working class," said Popo Molef, from the Soweto Civic Association. He also spoke about the United Democratic front and its task in fighting these proposals.

Dan Motsitsi and Murphy Morobe, president and vice-president of the Soweto Students Representative Council (banned in 1977), spoke about Soweto 1976 and the role of students. Murphey spoke about how Christian National Education for whites, and 'gutter' Bantu education for blacks, strengthens inequalities among the people. The solution, he said, "is to work for



Curtis Nkondo opens Nusas conference.

a new kind of education which will benefit all South Africans - black or white."

Dan spoke about events and the lessons of '76. He said we must be clear about what the cause of the problem is in South Africa, so that we can take the struggle forward. "We used to think the problem is colour, but this is a misguided view."

"Today, students are politically superior and better organised. They have learned from ex-

perience and mistakes." Joe Phaahla, Azaso president, and Kate Philip, Nusas president, spoke about the student movement today.

"Although we organise separately because our situations are different, we are united by our common goals and objectives; By our belief in a non-racial, democratic South Africa," said Joe Phaahla.

The next two days looked at how the people of South Africa are organising for change.

They looked at the importance of drawing people into organisations and how they can begin to take control over their own lives. CAHAC spoke about community organisation, UWO about organising women. Grassroots and Saspu spoke about the alternative press.

Students learnt a lot at the conference but as one student said, "we must take these ideas back to the campuses and mobilise, organise and educate students."



# Important dates for school leavers

IF YOU are leaving school this year and want to study further next year, you need to take action now.

- Here are some important dates to remember:
- Teacher training - closing dates for applications.
- Internal Affairs - July 31.
- Department of National Education - July 31.
- Department of Education and Training - November 30.
- Medical School - Applications must be in by October.
- Bursaries - Start applying now.
- For further information, contact C.R.I.C. at 7 Roscommon Road, Claremont 7700. Phone 61-1058/9.

# Youth congress - 'already growing'

AFTER their successful launching congress recently, the Cape Youth Congress (CAYCO) is now hard at work on their two major tasks - building stronger local youth organisations and taking up issues affecting youth.

"SO far all our work has been just pulling the organisation together. With an organisation like CAYCO there is bound to be lots of administrative work, said the central executive committee (CEC).

"But we are all looking forward to our first general council meeting where the work will really start." CAYCO's first gen-

eral council was held on Sunday July 17 in Hanover Park. Grassroots spoke to the CEC before the general council (GC) meeting.

GC is very important for us because that is where decisions are taken by reps of all the branches.

"Our organisation is already growing. We had 35 branches at our inaugural congress.

Since then two more branches have joined and it appears there are more on the way."

At the General Council, members were elected for the different committees of CAYCO.

These committees are the organising, media, finance and education and training committees. They would be expected to do most of the work of CAYCO.

"The different committees will also ensure that more members of our branches will be involved in the activities of CAYCO," the executive said.



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- 5 Thread the other end of the string through the other hole and tie a knot.  

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# ADVICE

## Divorce and the law

WHEN a marriage has broken down completely, there are grounds for divorce under South African law.

This would be when the relationship between the husband and wife has become so bad, that there is no chance that the marriage can ever work again.

As long as you can prove to a court that you and your husband or wife cannot ever live together in happiness, you can get a divorce.

In deciding on granting a divorce, the courts accept the following reasons as being sufficient;

- The married couple cannot get along. They argue often.
- The husband hits, swears at and threatens the wife. Or if the wife does this to the husband.
- One person in the marriage drinks too much.
- The husband does not support the

- wife and children.
- The couple has not lived together as man and wife for at least a year.
- The one person has had or is having an affair with someone else.
- The one person is an habitual criminal.
- The one person is mentally ill or has been continually unconscious.

The list goes on. Anything that shows there is no chance of a normal happy married life, will be sufficient grounds for a divorce.

*How do you get a divorce?*

If you want a divorce, it is best to go and see a lawyer. Most divorce cases are heard in the Supreme Court. Divorce cases involving African couples take place in the Commissioner's Court.

A divorce is very expensive and can

cost from R400 upwards. The cost of a divorce will depend on how much work a lawyer has to do.

If for example, the husband and wife cannot decide who is going to get custody of the children, the divorce can take a long time and legal costs will be high.

Once you have seen a lawyer, he instructs an advocate on your behalf to take your case. Only advocates can appear in the Supreme Court.

The advocate and lawyer then work together on your case.

Your lawyer sends a summons to your husband/wife telling him/her that you want a divorce, why you want a divorce and what you are claiming.

If your husband/wife is happy about the terms of the divorce, he/she does

nothing about the summons and after ten days you can go to the Supreme Court with your advocate and get a divorce.

At court you will give evidence before a judge that your marriage has broken down completely and you will get a divorce.

If your husband/wife is not happy about the terms of the divorce in the summons, he/she must find a lawyer.

This lawyer then gives your lawyer notice of your husband/wife's intention to defend the divorce within ten days. The two lawyers then consult with each other on behalf of their clients until everything is settled.

The courts do not favour defended divorces. They prefer all differences to be settled before the case comes to court.

A divorce is a serious and expensive step. You should not go into a divorce unless you are completely certain of it.

## Contract workers getting your rights

IN THE last two issues of Grassroots, there were articles on the case of contract worker Mr Tom Rikhoto. Mr Rikhoto fought a court case to win permanent residence in town.

In this article, we explain how other contract workers like Mr Rikhoto can apply for permanent residence.

### WHO CAN APPLY:

Contract workers who have worked legally for one employer for 10 years, and contract workers who have lived legally in one area for 15 years while working for a number of employers.

### HOW TO APPLY:

If you are applying for your rights because you have worked for one employer for 10 years, you must get a letter from your employer stating:

1. That you have been employed for 10 years and are still employed.
2. That you have taken only normal annual leave and sick leave during this period
3. That your employer has used the call-in card system to renew your contract, or just that your contract was renewed each year.

Take this letter with your pass or reference

book to your local administration board office - in Cape Town this will be the Western Cape Administration Board office in Langa.

At the office you can apply for permanent residence in terms of Section 10 (1)(b) of the Urban Areas Act of 1945.

If you are applying on the grounds that you have lived in the area for 15 years, you must get letters from each of the employers you worked for during the 15 years, saying how long you worked there.

You must also have lodgers' or visitors' permits to show that your accommodation was legal.

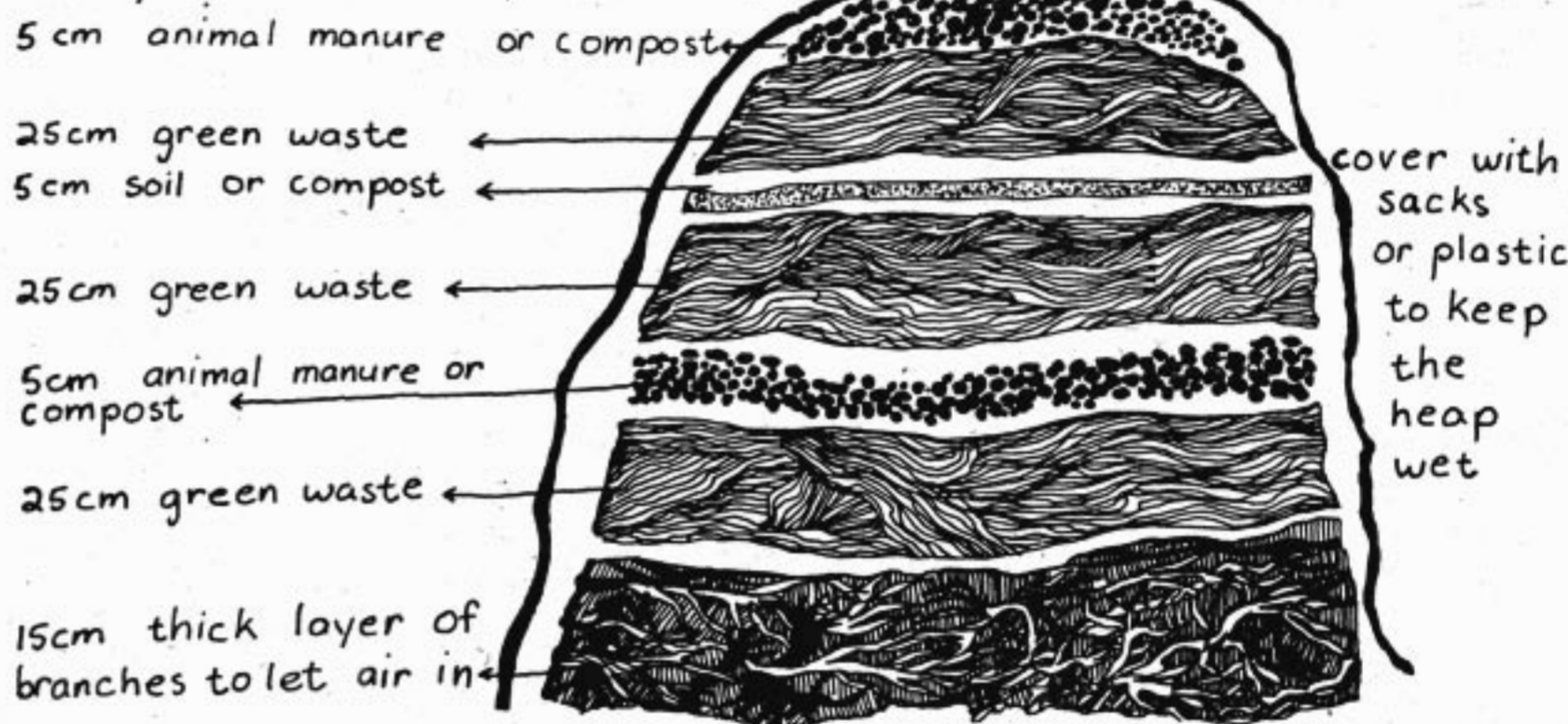
Take these papers to the administration board office, with your pass, and apply for your rights.

If you think you might qualify for permanent residence, but need help with your papers, there are many organisations that can help you.

One of them is the Athlone Advice Office, at 5 Long Street, Mowbray, which is already helping many workers.

It is open from Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and the telephone number is 65-3513.

### layers in a compost heap



## Growing food in sandy soil

SOME people may say - I can't do it...

"It's too complicated..." "My garden is too small..." "I haven't got enough water..." "Seeds are too expensive..."

But read on and you'll see it's very easy, and it will cost you almost nothing. At first it's hard work but once it gets going, it's fun to see your own vegetables growing.

### Small garden

You don't need much space. All you need is a patch of ground as big as a door i.e. 1 M x 2 M.

This is a good size

because you never need to walk over the garden (which is bad for the plants).

Most people on the Cape Flats have sandy soil. Don't worry. You can grow your own vegetables with a bit of effort.

Sandy soil needs to be improved with "organic material". That means old rotted matter, that makes the soil rich, provides food for the vegetables, and helps keep air and moisture in the soil.

Anything that once lived, is organic material. The list is long: teabags, eggshells, vegetable and fruit peelings,

old food, hair, feathers, weeds, grass bones, leaves. Keep a special bucket in your kitchen for these things.

Manure from horses, cows, goats, rabbits, chickens, and even human urine, are very



good for the soil. Don't feed your dustbin, feed your soil!

What do I do with "Organic Material"?

There are two things you can do.

The quickest is to

bury it in the soil i.e. the "Trench Bed".

After that you can gather up material to build a compost heap.

Don't use plastic, glass, tins or paper.

1. The Trench Bed

- a) Mark off the bed with a few sticks.
- b) Dig a trench across the bed until it is knee-deep. The top soil must go in one pile to be used again. The bottom soil goes in a separate pile.

c) All the valuable material you have collected is put into the hole, so that it is more than half full. Put big bones and lumpy things

at the bottom.

Try to have some green material eg. fresh grass, weeds, cabbage leaves, and some brown material eg. leaves.

To speed it up add manure (if you can get it) or if not, human urine. Water well and mix thoroughly.

d) Replace the soil. First use a little of the bottom soil and all the top soil. The soil left over can be used to build up the pathway between the beds.

The trench bed will last 5 years. You will need to leave for one month, before planting, so it has time to rot properly.

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**ADVICE**

# Fighting back at Rape

## Community action

**Rape is just one of the many violent acts we suffer everyday. But there are ways to fight rape and help its victims. Grassroots looks at the problem.**

ABOUT 500 women are raped in South Africa every day.

People try to protect their families against rape but this does not stop rape. It is a problem that affects all of us and we can only fight it if we understand the causes.

Rape is not just a man who wants to have sex with a woman. It is part of the general violence in our country. Instead of using a knife to attack someone a man uses sex as a weapon when he rapes. Women are usually the victims because they are weaker than men and can't always defend themselves.

People don't talk easily about rape — because of this few people know the true facts about rape. Rape is seen as a scandal and the woman often feels ashamed and guilty that it happened to her.

Instead of trying to make her feel better people blame her for being attacked.

### Who gets raped?

Rape can happen to women of all ages, shapes and sizes. It doesn't matter what you do, where you live or what you wear. "Nice girls" also get raped. Nobody asks for it or wants it.

### Who are rapists?

Rapists are not

crazy, sex-starved men hiding in dark streets. They are ordinary men leading ordinary lives.

The rapist is often known to the woman and could even be a friend of the family, a neighbour, a boss, a teacher, boyfriend or a member of her own family. These are the cases we seldom hear about.

### Why do they rape?

Rapists don't choose their victims for their sexiness. They may rape to prove their manliness, to humiliate their victim or out of anger. Rape is not an act of lust but an act of aggression.

### Where does rape happen?

Rape can happen anywhere at any time. It happens more often in people's homes than in dark alleys.

### How the victims suffer

Rape survivors are often scared to talk about what happened to them because they don't get the sympathy and support they need. Many of them never tell anyone.

They keep it to themselves for the rest of their lives without knowing that many other women have suffered in the same way.



MANY people see rape and other attacks as a problem of the victim, but it can happen to anyone. Violence affects us all — we live in fear and fear stops us from doing a lot of things.

When you read and hear about all the rapes, attacks and gangs it is easy to panic and think there is nothing you can do to stop the violence against each other, but in the meantime, we can organise against it. Here are some suggestions of community action:

If your area has dangerous spots like overgrown fields or badly lit streets, you can try to start a

campaign to improve it.

It is the council's duty to cut down Port Jackson trees on public ground.

Lots of violence happens inside the home. People must realise that they cannot do what they like in their families.

You can organise with people in your neighbourhood that if anyone screams or calls for help everyone will go and help them.

Try to organise self-defence classes for women in your area. Rape Crisis will give classes and talks about rape to any group of women who are interested.

If you want to start a group to help rape survivors and to try to stop rape in your area Rape Crisis will run a training course for you and help you to set up.

Work with civic, youth and women's groups to fight for better conditions.

Educate people around you and in your organisations about violence against women.

People are ashamed to speak about rape and this helps to keep it hidden. Rape happens because of the way men see women.

We have to try and change that so that all men can see women as equal human beings and treat them with respect.

IF someone you know is raped, this is how you can help her:

1. Let her tell you what happened and listen carefully to what she says.
2. Believe her — don't judge or criticise her.
3. Give her time to calm down but don't give her any strong drink or drugs.
4. Let her decide if she wants to report the rape to the police — don't rush her off immediately without her deciding for herself.

It is very important for someone who has survived a rape to take control of her own life and make her own decisions.

The decision to report the rape or not may depend on who

## Helping the rape victim

the rapist was, how she feels about it and if there is a chance of her falling pregnant and needing a legal abortion later.

If she wants to report to the police:

1. She should go as soon as possible and must not change her clothes or bath beforehand. She can take her clothes in a bag if they are torn.
2. Go with her to the police and give her support.
3. She does not have to tell the whole story to the policemen at the desk — she must ask for

a detective. The detective will take a statement from her and she must tell him everything that happened.

4. If you were the first person to see her after the rape you must also make a statement about how she looked and what she said when you found her.

5. She must be taken from the police to the district surgeon (police doctor) to be examined — insist that she sees her immediately. This is her right no matter what time of the day or night.

6. She must see a doctor

because the district surgeon does not give her any treatment. The doctor at the day-hospital should give her something to calm her and help her sleep and treat any injuries.

7. She should have a test for VD (at the day-hospital or VD clinic) 3 weeks after the rape, and a pregnancy test 4 — 6 weeks after the rape.

A lot of people don't want to go to the police. Even if you do go to the police, it does not mean the woman is going to be safe. There are ways of making her feel safer, less scared and not so powerless:

If the rapist lives in the area, warn other women about him and tell people what he did. He should be made to

feel ashamed for what he did, not her. Make sure he knows that people know about him.

If the rape happens at work talk to other workers about it — bosses or supervisors who use their positions to force women to have sex with them will usually do it to more than one woman.

It is difficult for one woman to make a case but if you all write down what he has said and done, you can take action. Report him to the union or to management.

If you need advice about helping someone who has been raped or if she wants to talk to somebody, you can phone Rape Crisis at 21-5420.



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Further details can be obtained from the Director, Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch, 7700. (Telephones (021) 69-2805 or 69-2904). The closing date for applications is 30 September 1983.

FSU 73

## ATHLONE CAPE TOWN SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

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The Divisional Council Workers Committee.



Dustmen - "we're not treated like human beings."

# Please join us

I'm working for the Divisional Council of the Cape at Klipfontein Disposal Works, which is a cleansing department.

There are three main working groups at Klipfontein Disposal Works - the bucket boys, the "tanks and lorries boys" and the dustmen, which is my group.

Because of our wrong mental attitude as human beings, which is also encouraged by capitalism, people are measured by things like wealth, education, sex, beauty and even by colour, like in my country, South Africa. So we find ourselves treated like shit or like rubbish at Klipfontein Disposal Works and not like human beings at all.

We workers are not on pension and our wages are too low for us to buy healthy food, so we can't build up strong bodies to stand against diseases which we can catch from the dirty work we do.

Many times, I've seen workers eating from the dustbins because they don't have the money to buy themselves food, although they work every day.

### Bad conditions

So because of these bad conditions workers get sick very often, especially from TB, and become unfit for work.

When they are discharged from hospital, they are not accepted back at work. A white man at work once said - "This is difficult work so I can't take a man who has been sick."

So they get new workers and the men who worked for years at CDC are out of work because they got sick from the CDC's dirty work.

Because of these bad conditions, and others which I did not mention, it was very easy for us to join the General Workers Union.

A man came to CDC about four years ago, who knew about GWU. He said we could fight our bad conditions if we joined the GWU.

Most of us joined, except one foreman who had better privileges than the other foremen.

The man from GWU told us to elect people from amongst ourselves and not from the foremen, because they are on the bosses' side and have more privileges than us workers.

After we elected about four men, onto our committee, GWU sent a letter to the CDC informing them of the workers who had joined GWU and of the recommendations of our committee.

The CDC said that they would have nothing to do with an unregistered union, like the GWU. They said that they would get us a better union, and that there was already one for the coloured workers (The Cape Divisional Council Workers Association).

But this union was for the middle

class, it had nothing to do with coloured workers. The coloured workers had the same problems as the African workers, but the CDC wanted to divide us workers.

So then there was a fight between CDC and its workers. The workers were fighting for the union of their choice and the recommendations of their committee.

The fight took us three years. We could not beat the CDC. It is a very big organisation, and many workers did not join GWU - although there were a lot of us who did.

The yoke was very heavy for our necks. We could not go on strike because of these problems. We remembered what happened on 16th and 17th June 1980 when most of the workers did not go to work.



Moses Mbothwe tells us of his struggle to organise his fellow workers in their fight for better conditions.

Moses Mbothwe

The CDC got coloured workers from the other sites to do our work, therefore we could really do nothing successfully without the support of fellow coloured workers, who are the majority of the CDC.

A few days later I attended a GWU Cape Town Branch controlling committee meeting where I was elected as an executive committee member.

At this time we had a coloured organiser who played an important role in organising the coloured workers into the GWU. But he also failed with the CDC coloured workers. Many coloured workers are very difficult to organise as it seems they have more hope that things in South Africa will still change.

Because of these problems, the workers at Klipfontein Disposal Works decided to accept the Works Council in the hope of taking forward their grievances. At the same time we were trying hard to organise the unorganised workers into the GWU.

The workers decided to re-elect their former committee members into the works council and I was the first one to be elected.

I wanted to refuse because I didn't have any hope for this thing, but people at that time were not prepared to change their decision.

I was tempted to leave KDW to get a better paid job, because to me joining the Works Council was like playing marbles.

But then I thought about what the former committee members had done by leaving the workers at such a bad time, and of the trust the workers had in me. So I decided to stay and follow their request.

On the 22nd September last year, we held our first Works Council meeting. The Council's representatives in the Works believe that they were also representing workers.

The workers representatives rejected the Council's constitution. We had also written a constitution contrary to the Divisional Council's one.

Although we were in the Works Council, but truly speaking, we are just like babies with dummies in our mouths because the final decisions are made without the workers representatives.

Being members of GWU has helped us to fight a good fight.

At KDW things have changed a little bit. We've already won cases where the workers were unjustly sacked and many who got sick at work are getting their jobs back.

Now we are issued with two overalls and one overall every four months instead of one overall every six months.

We are also issued for the first time with one litre of soap and one cake of soap every month, although the workers still feel that it is not enough.

### More respect

The foremen treat us with more respect. Our wages went up last November by R6 per week.

But our wages are still very low. It is as if nothing happened at all. The starting wage is R47 per week. I have been working there since 1971, and I am still only getting R54,00 per week.

Many workers who have been there a long time are still getting R47,00 per week because they took more than their two weeks leave, even though they are fast workers.

But what can you do with two weeks leave? Especially if your family lives in the Transkei or somewhere far away.

So the fight is still on. We are looking forward to the day when conditions will be improved and a day when we can have the committee of our choice.

On behalf of our committee, I appeal to all Cape Divisional Council workers to join us. Especially the 'coloured' worker, please join us and please join our union, GWU.  
Yours in the struggle for a better day.





# Wall story!

Books, newspapers, television. Most of us are used to getting information and knowledge from these things.

But not all of us can afford these. And not all of us can read.

So, in Mozambique, they use other ways of passing on information: Painting huge pictures on the walls which tell a story – which everyone can see and understand.

◀ A bitter history of struggle. Part of a 90 metre long painting which shows the fight of the Mozambican people against colonialism.

Hope for the future. Painting shows the new health services – part of the new life for the people since liberation in 1975.



## Expressions



SATURDAY 30 July at 7.30 p.m. – this is it!

The night that the Wynberg Civic Centre explodes with the sounds of our music – the music of Basil 'Manenberg' Coetzee, Trevor Parker and Isibani.

Remember Expressions last year?

Remember how we jumped and vibrated to the sounds of 'Manenberg'?

Remember how we just couldn't get off that dance floor?

Well, it's happening again . . .

Expressions '83!

Here's the chance to see and hear our musicians playing our

music, singing our songs. Our people expressing our feelings in poetry and art. And when a chance like this comes by – grab it! And from 10.30 p.m. onwards, there's a GUMBA!

Remember:

Wynberg Civic Centre  
Saturday 30 July at 7.30

Tickets at Grassroots office.

What good is sitting alone in your room

Come hear the music play . . .

Of course, you can't enjoy all of this on an empty stomach – there'll also be a COFFEE BAR with snacks and cooldrinks!

**Poet's Corner**

## Tunnel of life

As we pass through the tunnel of misery,  
We are drowning in a sea of poverty,  
With the tide rising with every stroke  
Of a pen on the statute books.  
A constant air of repression  
Results from the false confessions;  
Blatantly aimed at increasing  
The intensity of our suffering.  
We are finding it much harder  
To survive on this unhealthy fodder,  
Which we have been forced to eat  
Because the wages eliminate a delicacy like meat.  
We work our hearts out  
And yet we know without a doubt  
That all our physical exertions  
Only add to our own oppression.  
I wonder if we'll be subject  
To the same oppression and neglect,  
When we finally close the door  
And face what is in store.

A. JOSHUA  
Heathfield

WHAT I want to tell you, companeras, is that we women were born with all our rights. In 1948, all the countries of the world came together in the United Nations. There, laws were made about human rights, and one gave women the right to join in clubs, in unions, in political parties.

We have the same rights to education as a man does, and the right to receive equal wages with men. We are all covered by these laws.

But since 1948 what government has really bothered about educating, training and encouraging women to participate? None.

A woman is like a piece of cloth, used to clean a dirty table and then hidden away in a corner until next time.

This is how they use us, and it is we ourselves who are to blame.

## Domitila speaks

We allow ourselves to be used. We criticize ourselves.

What we must do is decide exactly what we are looking for, because women all over the world are fighting for their liberation in different ways and for different reasons.

At the International Women's Conference in Mexico in 1975, I could see two types of liberation.

One kind involves those who think women will only be free when they equal men in all their evils. This is called feminism. It means that women must fight against men for the right to smoke and drink as they do.

But companeras, do we really want to go out drinking and living

it up like our husbands? I don't think so.

If a man has ten mistresses, must I do the same? What would we be doing? We would be degrading people, nothing more.

This fight is typical of the rich, women who have everything.

But for us, from our class position, what type of liberation do we want? The liberation which rich women want?

Or the other type, where we want to be respected as people who can solve problems and take part in everything – culture, art, literature, politics, trade unionism – a liberation that means our opinion is respected at home and outside the home! Sometimes even as

### PART 2



mothers we are not allowed to give our opinion because the father comes along and beats us and takes away our authority.

In the end, the children lose all respect for us and they tell us to shut up and treat us like idiots. Isn't that true?

My comrades say that women should organize themselves in unions, but sometimes they are very enthusiastic at first and then lose

courage later.

There are times when our husbands are helping in the struggle. Then when the repression comes the woman starts saying to her husband, 'Well, now you must choose between me and your children, or the union and your party.'

This is why they sometimes blame us women, saying that instead of being a help, we are a nuisance.

It is good if we women are interested in why our husbands organize themselves. We must encourage them and work together with them.

Because, what also happens is that when women begin to join the struggle, the men become jealous. They think their wives are going to take over. We could solve this problem by working together.

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# Why must we pay for this?

Grassroots Community Newsletter is published by Grassroots Publication of Atlantic House, Corporation Street, Cape Town  
 This Newsletter is printed by Esquire Press (Pty.) Ltd., Vanguard Drive, Athlone Industria, from artwork supplied by Grassroots.

**EARLIER** this year the government announced that it was going to sell off most of its Council housing to tenants.

The big sell has started in July this year and will be aimed at all tenants earning over R150 per month. This is a move which will affect a large number of council tenants and already meetings have been held in some areas to discuss the problem.

This month the government announced more details of its selling campaign. These details show more clearly what the problems will be.

## HOW MUCH WILL THE HOUSES COST?

This is how they plan to work it out. They take the amount of the house, land and services cost when the house was built. On this they add what it would cost *now* to build the same house again.

This is called the 'replacement cost'. Once they have added these two amounts together, the total is divided by 2 to get the new selling price.

## FOR EXAMPLE

A. A 4 roomed semi in Grassy Park, built in 1974 at a cost of R2 904

Initial cost in 1974	R2 904
Replacement cost in 1982	8 134 +
	<u>R11 038</u>
	<u>R11 038</u>
÷ 2 =	5 579

R5 579 is the new selling price of the house.

## REDUCTIONS IN THE SELLING PRICE.

Under certain conditions the selling price will be reduced:

- If you buy the house during the first year of the sales campaign ie. July 1983 - 1984, 5% will be taken off the selling price.  
*This is to try to force people to buy as quickly as possible.*
- If you have been a tenant in a Council house for longer than five years another 5% will come off the selling price.  
*This is not enough. Many people have been in their Council house for so long that they have paid off the entire cost of the house.*
- If the selling price of the house is over R2 500 and you pay cash, then another 25% will be taken off the selling price.  
*This means that poorer people who cannot pay cash will end up paying more for their houses.*
- If the selling price of the house is under R2 500, then the buyer has to pay cash, and will get a 30% reduction on the selling price.  
*This still means that a buyer will have to find around R1 750 cash.*

## WHO GETS A LOAN TO BUY THE HOUSE?

The houses will be offered to all tenants earning R150 per month. However the government will only give cheaper loans to people earning between R150 and R450 per month. If you earn over R450 per month you will have to find your own loan from a building society or from your employer.

If you earn under R450 per month the government will give loans at the following interest rates:

Income	Annual interest rate on loan	Building Society
up to R300	3%	
301 - 350	5%	14,5%
351 - 450	7%	
450 +	11,25%	

## WILL THERE BE EXTRA COSTS WHICH HAVE TO BE PAID?

YES. Details of these have not yet been published, but we can guess what they will be.

1. **DEPOSIT.** In Mitchells Plain and Atlantis this has been between R100 and R300. A building society usually demands 20% of the total price to be put down as deposit.

2. **TRANSFER AND BOND REGISTRATION COSTS.** In Mitchells Plain and Atlantis where people were given government loans, transfer costs had to be paid after 10% of the loan had been paid back. This usually meant after about 7 years. On a R4 900 house in Ocean View, transfer costs were R265, to be paid after about seven years.

If you take a loan from a building society you will have to pay transfer costs and bond registration costs immediately. Bond registration costs can be almost as much again as transfer costs.

3. **INSURANCE.** One percent of the value of the house has to be paid each year for insurance. For example, on a house worth R6 000 you will pay R60 each year.

4. **HOUSE ALLOCATION FEE.** This is usually about R10 and has to be paid to the Council for administering the sale of the house.

5. **SUBDIVISION FEE.** Where houses are semis, or row houses, they will have to be legally separated. The cost of this separation can be several hundred rands and will be added to the total cost of the house.

6. **WATER AND ELECTRICITY.** These charges will have to be paid separately. It may also mean that each house has to pay for its own water meter and electricity meter to be installed.

7. **RATES.** Apart from repaying the loan on the house you will also have to pay rates each year to the Council. On a house worth R5 000 in Ocean View rates have been R166 per year, or R13,83 per month.

8. **ADMINISTRATION FEE.** If you take out a loan from the government you will be charged a separate fee each month by the Council for administering your monthly repayments. This may be between R3 and R5 each month.

## WILL THE HOUSES BE FIXED BEFORE BEING SOLD?

Almost certainly NOT. In the form which the buyer has to sign the buyer has to agree to take the house "voetstoots", which means "as is".

## CAN THE BUYER SELL THE HOUSE AGAIN?

For the first 5 years the buyer cannot sell the house on the market. He/she has to offer the house back to the Department of Community Development, or they can sell it to someone else at a cost approved by Community Development.

## WHO WILL GET THE PROFITS FROM

## SELLING THE HOUSES?

The cost of many of the houses has already been paid off by the tenants. So much of the money which comes from selling the houses will be profit to the government. It has been decided that this profit will be split 50 - 50 between the Department of Community Development and the Council. This is what the Council says it will do with its share of the profits:

- 10% administration
- 10% maintenance of rented houses
- 20% for community facilities
- 60% for services in new townships.

This has been done to force people to pay for the new houses government will have to build.

## THE SALES CAMPAIGN

Community Development has suggested that Councils may want to employ professional advertising agents or estate agents to sell the houses. The cost of employing these agents can then be added to the cost of the houses!

## WHAT IF A TENANT DOES NOT WANT TO BUY THEIR HOUSE?

Rents are going to be so high that many people will have to buy. Already rents are being increased by a large amount this July. Community Development has said that next July rents will be increased by an even larger amount. Also from next July, rents will be worked out on the basis of the income of the whole family, not just the breadwinner, and this will push up rents even more.

## GRASSROOTS VACANCY

WE need a new co-ordinator for Grassroots to start work 1st Oct., 1983. The person must have organisational experience. Media experience will be a recommendation.

Apply in writing to Grassroots Publications, P.O. Box 181, Athlone. 7760 or tel. 45-2352 for further information.

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