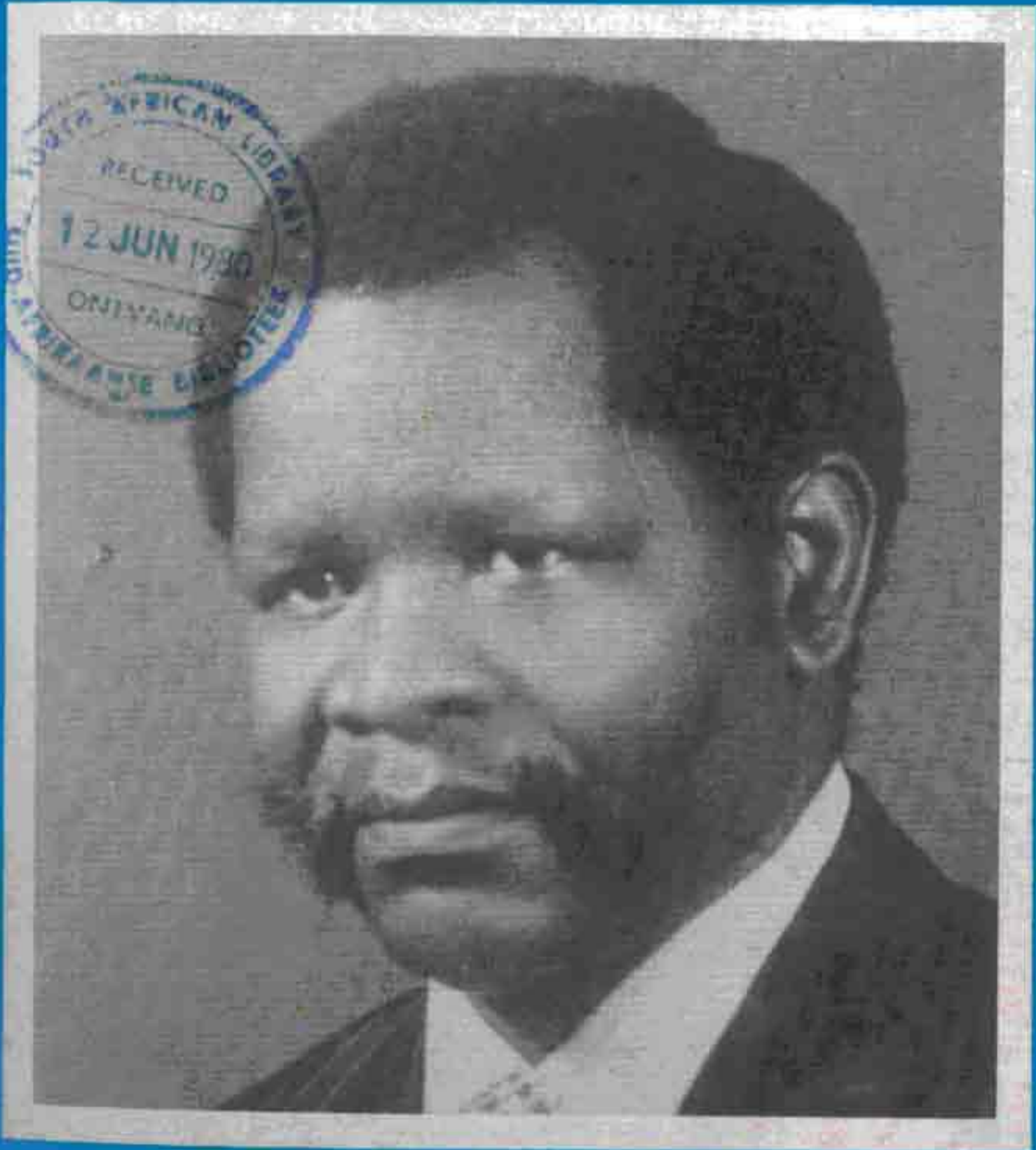


APRIL 1980



SECHABA

official organ of the african national congress south africa



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SECHABA

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SACTU SAYS:

1980 is the Year of the Worker! 25 years ago the workers formed the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). SACTU unites all workers, irrespective of race, colour, sex or religion; SACTU raises their class consciousness; SACTU fights for higher wages, better conditions of employment, a 40-hour week and for the recognition of African trade unions.

SACTU is an integral part of our movement. That is why the question of mobilisation of the workers is closely linked with the ANC declaration of 1980 as the Year of the Charter. The demands of SACTU reflect the spirit of the Freedom Charter. There is more to it. SACTU enriches the

Freedom Charter. Because the workers are the majority of our society, the diggers of wealth in the mines and producers of riches on the white farmlands — the people who own nothing but their labour power — therefore it is logical that their struggles are the struggles of the whole nation, that their demands give life to our political concepts and therefore radicalise them. That is why the ANC regards the working class as the main component of our revolution; that is why we pay more attention to the workers' struggles, that is why the ANC organises the workers and that is why we commemorate the founding of SACTU twenty-five years ago.

WHO WAS JULIUS FUCIK?

It was with pleasure and pride that we were able to announce that Sechaba was awarded the Julius Fucik Medal of Honour by the International Organisation of Journalists. The IOJ which is headquartered in Prague, is the world's most progressive journalists' federation, with affiliates in more than 100 countries. The African National Congress is linked with the IOJ through the South African Journalists' Circle, comprising journalists active in the ranks of the liberation movement. The editor of Sechaba, is an IOJ executive member.

The Julius Fucik Medal of Honour was instituted by the IOJ in memory of the great Czech writer and patriot who was murdered by the Nazis in Berlin on September 8, 1943, because of his involve-

ment in the Czech resistance during the second world war. The name of Julius Fucik is known throughout the world through his Report from the Gallows, a record of his period of imprisonment under the Nazis following his arrest in April 1942. Written on scraps of paper and smuggled out of prison with the help of a Czech warder, it is an inspiring testimony to the indestructible spirit of man, to the courage and defiance displayed by him and the Czech people in the face of the torture and repression inflicted on them under the Nazi occupation.

Julius was an intellectual who devoted all his talents to the cause of the working class, a Communist who from his student days onwards lived and died for the socialist

revolution. He won distinction as a journalist, not only as editor of the Communist daily Rude Pravo but as a contributor to other papers, and also showed great promise as literary critic, historian and creative writer. During the 1930s he paid two visits to the Soviet Union, travelling extensively in the world's first socialist state and developing a love for its people and conviction of the invincibility of its system which was to prove a source of great strength to him during his sufferings at the hands of his Nazi interrogators. After a savage beating up by his captors, he is questioned by the Gestapo chief and a Czech commissar who says to him:

"Can't you realise? It's the end, you understand, you've lost everything".

Fucik replies: "I'm the only one who's lost", because he has refused to give information and is satisfied that all he knows of the Communist underground will die with him.

"Do you still believe in a Communist victory?", asks the commissar.

"Of course".

"He still believes", asks the chief in German, and the tall commissar translates, "he still believes in Russia's victory?".

"Of course. It can't end any other way".

They tried every way to break him, with physical torture, with cigarettes and kind words, with threats and promises. Even the knowledge that he and his comrades had been betrayed by one of their number who had broken down did not undermine his strength of will. They took him on a trip through Prague to remind him of the delights of normal daily living to which he could return if he would only talk. They brought his wife to him in jail and said to her: "Persuade him to be sensible' If he won't think of himself, at least let him think of you. You have an hour to think it over. If he still remains obstinate, you will both be shot tonight".

She caressed him with her eyes and said simply: "That's no threat to me, commissar, that's my last wish. If you execute him, execute me as well".

They can take our lives, writes Fucik, but our honour and our love they can never take.

When they failed to break him, the Nazis decided to destroy him. He was taken to Berlin for trial and condemned to death by a Nazi court on August 25, 1943. Fourteen days later he was executed.

Fucik's wife heard of his death from fellow-prisoners in the Ravensbrueck concentration camp. After the defeat of Hitler Germany in May, 1945, she returned to Czechoslovakia and sought out the warder who had smuggled Fucik's pieces of paper out of jail and hidden them with various people in different places. She put together the numbered pages and presented them to the world as Report from the Gallows.

Though produced in the shadow of death, it is not a sad book, written with a quiet but firm heart in the midst of the horror raging all around him, full of warmth and compassion for his fellow-prisoners and all humanity, ever optimistic about the future, even though his own life was to end in his 41st year.

"I have loved life, and for the beauty of it I went on to the battlefield", he writes. "I have loved you, people, and I was glad when you returned my love, and I suffered when you failed to understand me. If I have hurt anyone, forgive me; if I have brought joy to anyone, forget it! May sadness never belong to my name....I have lived for joy, I am dying for joy and you would be wronging me if you were to place the angel of sorrow on my grave".

Today the whole of progressive mankind honours Julius Fucik, hero and martyr. He is our ideal of what a freedom fighter should be. We read his book again and again, drawing from it strength and courage for our own fight. Our comrades in Umkhonto we Sizwe are reprinting it in the pages of their journal Dawn. We who work on Sechaba draw inspiration from his life and work, and try in our humble way to emulate his spirit, if we can seldom match his talent. We shall try to live up to his ideals and prove ourselves worthy of the medal which has been bestowed on us in his name.

GENOCIDE IN THE CISKEI

One of the crucial problems facing our people is the land question. The Blacks who make up 80 per cent of the population are allocated 13 per cent of the land and the Whites occupy 87 per cent of the land mass. The "homelands" which dot the South African map like a cross-stitch sampler might be "consolidated" — we are told — but first they have to be "independent states" and they also have to form part of the "constellation of Southern African states".

These days there is a lot of talk in South Africa about "resettlement" — a euphemism for forced removals or eviction and relocation of the black inhabitants of South Africa. Millions of Africans — about 3 million — have been exported from so-called "white areas" and brought into rural areas where "development" is unable to cope with increase in population. Ironically this policy is called "rural development". Over the last 15 years or so we have seen growing in South Africa rural slums or rudimentary settlements in the veld like Witsieshoek, Sada or Limehill where people live in densely populated conditions with no economic base to sustain them. There is the other tendency: the emergence of full-scale "Bantu towns" like Mdantsane and Dimbaza and somewhere between the two, Glenmore near Grahamstown.

Historical Background

The 1903-05 Lagdon Commission recommended territorial and political segregation which resulted in the 1913 Native Land Act. Before 1913, Africans were legally entitled to purchase land in any part of the country but the 1913 Land Act banned Africans from hiring, purchasing or leasing from Whites any land

outside the designated "Native Reserves" which covered seven per cent of the land surface of South Africa. Squatting and tenancy on white farms was abolished. The removal of Blacks from white farms except as labourers was closely related to the question of eradication of black-owned land surrounded by white farms.

Then came the 1923 Bantu Urban Areas Act which extended the 1913 legislation to urban areas. This Act contained the notorious Section 10 which gives Africans the right to seek work in an urban area and to reside there while their families are forced to live in the reserves. Absence from an urban area for a period exceeding 30 days means automatic forfeit of Section 10 rights — one is forced to become a migrant worker.

In 1936 the Native Trust and Land Act created jobless, redundant labour seekers and there was no provision for how these people would live. Though this Act increased the potential size of the reserves by another six per cent to thirteen per cent i.e. 18 million morgen, leaving 87 per cent of the country in the hands of the Whites, the shortage of land resulted in the emergence of squatters or labour tenants on Crown land or white farms; thousands of Africans streamed to towns and the 1913 Act could not be implemented because the reserves could not accommodate the Africans and in any case the factories needed "cheap" African labour.

Together with the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1937, which provides for the determination of the labour needs of an area, limits the "influx" of Africans to that area, and provides for the removal of "surplus" Africans to the "homelands" this provided a blue print for "influx control" and "resettlement" policy as we know it today.



More than 3 million people have been "resettled" a euphemism for eviction

Wiehahn Commission

The 1945 Bantu Urban Areas Consolidation Act and its amendments make provision for the removal of Africans (but not Whites) from towns for "vagrancy", idleness and failure to pay rent. No African may remain for more than 72 hours in an urban area unless he qualifies under this Act's Section 10, by having either worked for the same employer for ten years or lived there continuously for 15 years, or by having been granted permission by a labour officer to stay and work.

These "superfluous" (to the Whites) Africans are herded back to their "homelands" or places of ethnic origins to form villages consisting of old people and children.

This situation was further consolidated by the 1951 Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act which gave authorities the power to remove squatters and send them elsewhere

at their discretion and its amendment in 1976 made several changes: the Department of Community Development now took the place of the Department of Justice in dealing with squatting and the Bantu Affairs Administration Boards (established under the Bantu Affairs Administration Act no.45 of 1971) could now establish "emergency camps", acquire, develop or dispose of land for African occupation and refuse loans for the purpose. They are responsible for housing, labour allocation and the removal of people not qualified to remain in the area for longer than 72 hours under pass laws; penalties for offences were increased and a person could be fined R500 or sentenced to a year in jail or both. Control was thus centralised and consolidated into larger areas, such as the East Cape Administration Board. These Boards have the power to evict anyone and the authorities do not have to provide or allocate land for evicted people.

There is a host of other laws such as the Prohibition of Interdicts Act, no.64 of 1956 which extended the powers of "influx control officers" or The Bantu Laws Amendment Act, no.76 of 1963 — an extension of the 1945 Urban Areas Act — which stipulated that even people with Section 10 rights face threats of eviction as Labour Bureau permission is needed to enter or remain in employment: they can be refused if this was deemed "not to be in the public interest"!

What about the Bantu Labour Act, no.67 of 1964 which made people to lose their Section 10 rights because they no longer got a 14 day work seeker's permit but have to report daily to labour bureaux or the Community Development Amendment Act, no.56 of 1965 which broadened the functions of the Department of Community Development to include the provision of housing, slum clearance and urban "renewal" or the Physical Planning and Resources Act of 1968 which provided for the future "zoning" of industrial land and specified the functions of "resettlement"?

The Government Gazette of June 14, 1968 summarised the whole situation when it stated that persons unemployed for over a month without producing documentary proof of illness would lose their Section 10 rights and housing permits may be cancelled at 30 days' notice.

It was with the specific aim of sorting out this mess that the Wiehahn Commission was appointed in July 1977 to examine 12 pieces of labour legislation dating from 1939 to 1966. This Commission confirmed that migrant workers are specifically excluded from the category of "employees" and therefore unable to become legitimate members of registered trade unions; no agreement between an unregistered union and an employer is enforceable by law; it also confirmed that no registered union may have anything to do with a person who is not an "employee". These recommendations of the Wiehahn Commission fall squarely within the programme and policy of "resettlement".

We deal with this historical background to show that these problems have a national character; they are not confined to the Eastern Cape but the Eastern Cape,

especially the Ciskei, is one of the most hard hit areas of our country. The Ciskei is one example of a devastating and graphic way in which the injustices that result from unequal distribution of land in South Africa manifest themselves. These problems are far from being unique to the Ciskei, but serve as an illustration of a situation which is causing immense suffering all over South Africa; the details vary from one area to another but the general predicament remains the same.

Ciskei Politics

Ciskei is part of the Cape Province lying between the Western Cape and the Transkei. It is difficult to state the exact population figures for the simple reason that "official" literature (including the Survey of Race Relations in South Africa) tends to use ethnic criteria in their statistics and South Africa being a melting pot it is, one is confronted with serious problems in making statistical estimations. What makes the problem more confusing is the fact that the Transkei is "not part of South Africa" (and therefore statistics are given separately) while Ciskei is still part of South Africa and of course the Western Cape which is designated as "Coloured Labour Preference Area".

There are many problems in the Ciskei: e.g. the development of Ntabethemba, Sada; the purchase of farms in the Kidds's Beach area, problems surrounding Oxton Manor, Silver City and Peddie South; purchase of properties in Whittlesea as well as problems regarding Ndevana, Potsdam, Keiskama hoek, Frankfort, Thornhill, Madakeni near Dimbaza and Mooiplaas: what about the problem of incorporation of East London and King Williams Town into the Ciskei i.e. "from the Fish River to the Kei and from the Indian Ocean to the Stormberg?"

There is virtually no opposition in the Ciskei — it is a "one party state" — and the defection of Chief D.N. Mavuso, an ex-officio member from Victoria East meant that the last of the three appointed chiefs who sat on the opposition benches in the Ciskei Legislative Assembly changed his allegiance: Chiefs J.T. Mabandla and S.M. Burns-Ncamashe both from Victoria East joined the ruling Ciskei National

Independence Party under Chief L.L. Sebe at the beginning of November 1979.

The last elections for the third Ciskeian Legislative Assembly were held from 19 to 23 June 1978, — the “assembly” comprises 33 chiefs who are ex-officio members and 22 elected.

Chief Sebe has been holding regular meetings with the Ciskei Commissioner — General J.J. Engelbrecht. Not only that. In the Ciskei which has “full self-governing” status with “legislative assemblies” meetings of the opposition were banned and its members detained in terms of the emergency regulations (Proclamation R252); some went into hiding and others left the Ciskei.

Chauvinism and Demagogy

On the slopes of Ntabakandoda in the Amatola mountains Sebe has been holding numerous meetings: various rituals were carried out and the mountain, where Chief Maqoma had fought the colonial invaders was declared a “national shrine”; negotiations with the racist South African government led to the transfer of Chief Maqoma’s bones from Robben Island to the Ciskei where they were ceremoniously buried on Ntabakandoda. These are Sebe’s attempts to whip up “Ciskei nationalism” but there are some problems involved even in this. In October 1979 it was announced that “the Ciskei Government intended banning the Ntsikana and Fingo commemorative celebrations on the grounds that they divided the Ciskei on ethnic lines.” Clannism and ethnic problems are emerging very sharply in the Ciskei as well as in the Transkei.

Ciskei “independence”

Ciskei, like other homelands which have opted for the South African styled “independence”, is politically dependent on an “imported” bureaucratic system of government and will remain dependent on South Africa forever and this is something which is in the interests of the emergent bureaucratic class in the reserves — a class which is not only weak but also neurotic!

Ciskei has no control and little influence

over its political and economic dependence. Because it gets 79 per cent of its annual expenditure from South Africa it is therefore vulnerable to pressure.

Under Section 30 of the Bantu Homelands Act of 1971, the military, foreign relations, transport, immigration, banking and currency, customs and excise are reserved from legislation by the assemblies of the “homelands” — these powers are bestowed on provincial councils within the Republic, contrary to the policy of self determination!

The lack of any coherence in the economy or any infrastructure has resulted in an externally oriented economy dependent on the bordering “white” industrial area of East London. The Industrial Development Corporation has invested R81 million in the Ciskei with little noticeable effect.

It is impossible for the Ciskei to have an effective government, partly due to the increasing migrant labour situation: 44 per cent of the de jure population of the “homeland” reside in “White South Africa”. How can Sebe’s government then claim to be legitimate when half of the population associated its political values with urban areas outside the Ciskei?

Ciskei is said to be the next Bantustan to be “independent”.

Migrant Labourers

These migrant labourers are recruited mostly to the mines. Even “health care” is geared towards this goal. In the Albany District drug control of T.B. increased the number of workers recruited from 410 in 1974 to 3441 in 1977. In 1978, 13,500 were recruited from the Ciskei and 98,000 from the Transkei.

Migratory labour has the detrimental effect of breaking up families and the financial “benefits” are minimal; pass laws are a means for deporting the unemployed to the reserves; the unemployed may not leave the Ciskei to look for work unless this is done illegally and if they find a job they cannot be registered!

These men who are forced to leave their families to look for work have no job security — they are often dismissed by



Limehill "resettlement camp"

employers for trivial reasons because there is practically unlimited supply of labour on the doorstep and people are so desperate for work that they will accept pathetically low wages.

Grahamstown

Situated on a desolate 1000 acre farm 40km from Grahamstown is the Glenmore Resettlement Camp. More than 500 families i.e. about 3000 residents live here since April 1979 — less than 50 have been able to find full-time employment.

Land is arid and unable to provide sufficient water and food — the camp has no rail links and the dirt road leading to it is potholed and corrugated; men are forced to leave their homes and become migrant workers in the cities. Glenmore was meant to be a R26 million "model township"

for incorporation in the Ciskei, housing 5000 families removed from "white areas" in the Eastern Cape. People live in rows of temporary tomato box shacks stretching down to the Great Fish River.

The people are at the mercy of administrators who are busy removing a problem from the cities only to create new problems — but these new problems are out of sight of White South Africa!

Many families in Glenmore have no cash income at all; the average income of some families has fallen from R62 to R27 a month as a result of the move. Livestock dies in this area because of the presence of obnoxious weeds — the deadly tulip plant common in barren areas; there is no dipping for cattle.

An indication of the plight of the Glenmore people is the fact that the Government was spending R8000 a month on

rations — rations which soon dried up. Now the destitute in this “new town” which took the Government 8 years to build are left alone; they cannot even go to Grahamstown — a return bus trip to Grahamstown costs about R2.

There is also Committee’s Drift, a patch of veld opposite the present Glenmore township chosen to hold displaced people.

Glenmore is a tip of an iceberg: at a conservative estimate, 20,000 people have been resettled in the Ciskei in the last ten years. This includes the “internal resettlement”, that is movement of people from Herschel and Glen Grey areas to Thornhill through land hunger or to escape Transkeian “independence” — about 60 per cent of the people in the Ciskei are landless; they have no agricultural or grazing grounds.

People were removed forcefully from Silvertown in Grahamstown; from Canonville near Port Elizabeth, Keiskamahok, Humansdorp, Fort Beaufort, Kenton-on-Sea, Klipfontein, Thornhill, Alexandria, Colchester and of course Grahamstown.

Consequences

This policy which is aimed at ridding the Eastern Cape (which is supposed to be “white”) of “economically inactive” Africans has been worked out by the East Cape Administration Board (ECAB) and the Ciskei Government.

These forced removals have been accompanied by intimidation, violence and damage of property. Mr. Shorty Mxolozeli was sentenced under Bantu Trust and Land Act to R90 or 100 days imprisonment suspended for three years for living on a farm “illegally” and was ordered to leave Klipfontein for Glenmore at a month’s notice. Mr. Mxolozeli has lived in Klipfontein for 30 years.

“We don’t have anything to eat, we live like dogs. We search for food like pigs”, said James Mate a 69 year old inhabitant of Glenmore.

This ghost town with no access to a telephone is said to be a temporary arrangement — Glenmore might be removed to Peddie where there are already 4,000 unemployed but the implications of the

word “temporary” become clear when one considers that the gaps between the asbestos rooves and the tops of the walls let in the cold in winter. One should also remember that Glenmore is on the edge of the Great Fish River, a menace when in flood. These two-roomed structures with wooden walls, no ceiling and a compacted earth floor or plain zinc on bare ground become furnaces in summer and deep freezers in winter. People have no blankets.

Deaths, Deaths, Deaths

Torrential rains and winds hit Grahamstown in July, uprooting 40 foot trees and damaging houses and roads, wind comes under the door and water seeps through making everybody, especially the children sick.

Children in Glenmore have swollen feet and stomachs; drinking water is saline and makes people ill; diarrhoea, vomiting, blood stools and postules on children are common. Gastro-enteritis, kidney inflammation, kwashiorkor and bronchial pneumonia are some of the daily complaints.

In 1978 one out of every four black babies born in Grahamstown died before the age of 12 months; the 1977 infant mortality rate was even higher, with more than a third of all black babies dying in their first year. This is four times higher than the average for the entire country and nine times as high as the Johannesburg rate. The infant mortality rate in Grahamstown is more than double, and sometimes more than triple, that of other Eastern Cape centres: 28 per cent of all registered black babies died in Grahamstown in 1979; in East London it was 11 per cent; in King Williams Town it was 9 per cent and in Port Elizabeth it was 8 per cent.

This is rivalled only by the most underdeveloped parts of the Ciskei and Transkei or comparable to situations in parts of the world where no health services exist at all. What is even more terrifying and shocking is that Grahamstown has shown a consistently high rate of black infant deaths over the last ten years and from 1975 this has increased considerably. The causes of deaths are starvation and malnutrition but it is also said that deaths attributed



to measles and pneumonia are also "probably due to malnutrition".

What about housing? The waiting list for houses in Grahamstown — which is calculated according to the number of families on the waiting list and a growing number of people don't even bother to sign up — is calculated at 4,000 houses. More and more families are despairing of ever gaining a house of their own. The total black population of Grahamstown is 35,477 and there are only 5,643 houses — 3,099 (54%) of which are classified as "pondokkie" (shacks). People pay R5 to R20 a month and domestic servants earn R22 a month — some are paid as little as R15.

Education

Education and entering a good profession are almost out of question in this part of the world. "We are not like Whites who get their books for free" is the usual response and reaction to questions connected with the education of the children.

All this is taking place in a city which is supposed to be a "cultural centre" for Whites with the "prestigious" Rhodes University known for its "liberalism"

and other "renowned" places of learning and culture.

Sebe "thunders"

There have been various reactions to the people's plight both from South African government authorities (the real rulers of the Ciskei) and their puppets. The indifference of the authorities comes out clearly in D. Hidge's outbursts — the Chief Commissioner for the Department of Plural Relations in Queenstown:

"Where people work is not my business.. In the rural areas there are no jobs either — the people are migrant workers. The provision of jobs has nothing to do with me." (Sunday Tribune, 8.10.78).

Recently Sebe has been making some territorial claims. He wants Stockenstroom Victoria East and Peddie (all parts of "white" South Africa). He "thundered":

"We demand our fathers' land and no peace can ever reign until such land has been restored to its original owners".

It is clear "our fathers' land" in this connection does not refer to the whole of South Africa but even in Sebe's context this demand is hollow because Sebe's manifesto supports "seperate development" and a quarter of the funds of Sebe's Legisla-

tive Committee is spent on "resettlement" whose plan is to keep South Africa exclusively white; to absorb "reserve labour" during periods of economic expansion when employment opportunities increase and to force down wages through competition between workers for jobs that don't exist.

Even more cynical is the stand and attitude of the Transkeian "Foreign Minister", Digby Koyana, who refused to accept 3,000 Crossroads families on the grounds that they had "originally" come from places like Dordrecht and Burgersdorp which are white farming areas:

"We do not accept the view that people are citizens here because they speak Xhosa. There are Xhosa-speaking people all over the sub-continent, including Lesotho, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and other areas".

In other words Transkei's citizens are people who were born there or had direct links with the Transkei. Where are these Crossroads people to go? They are expelled from Crossroads, they cannot go back to their "original homes" because these are "white areas", the Bantustan "leaders" in the Transkei and Ciskei don't want them!

The real solution to the agrarian problem in our country will come about through the implementation of the Freedom Charter which states:

"Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished."

This presupposes a situation in which our people have seized power. But before we reach that stage we shall be faced with the formidable task of organising these rural people who are moved from one area forcibly to another; these rootless people who are on the verge of despair



Brutal conditions of mere existence

these millions of masses who have taken to the bush but from the bush in South Africa it is a short distance to the ANC; from that position of despair it is easier to instil courage; those hands which have been toughened by brutal conditions of mere existence will have a firm grip on our AKs and Scorpions!

PORT ELIZABETH AFLAME!

South Africa's efforts to promote an image of "reform" and "adjustment" of the apartheid system have nowhere been more effectively smashed than in Port Elizabeth. The ongoing surge of militant struggle demonstrates once again that our people will never be cowed in the face of intensified repression. For the proponents of Wiehahn and Rieckert, for the transnational corporations and their political masters in the West, and above all for the Pretoria fascists themselves, this has indeed been a defeat!

The actions of black workers at Ford and General Tyre plants have caused growing unease in the boardrooms of white South Africa. Reflecting this, the Financial Mail was forced to assess that the struggle in Port Elizabeth "marked a turning point in South Africa's labour relations". In fact the battle there is living proof of the continuity and advance of working class militancy - of a struggle that raged nationwide throughout the decade of the seventies. The events in Port Elizabeth merit detailed study by all those fighting for the complete isolation and defeat of the racist regime.

Down Tools!

At a mass meeting of 2,000 motor industry workers in Gelvandale, Port Elizabeth in July 1979, the call was made to down tools. This came after the managements of General Motors, Ford and Volkswagen had refused to meet demands for better wages and job security. A spokesman from the floor summed up the mood of the workers when he said: "We have been patient for too long. Why do we have to back down on demands every time and meekly accept what the bosses want to give us?"

This spirit of resistance was not confined within the factory gates. The rich tradition of struggle in the region was to be advanced by the formation of the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO). Its aims, defined at its inaugural meeting on October 30th last year are:

- † to fight for equal rights for all people in Port Elizabeth;
- † to oppose all discriminatory legislation enacted by the Government and local authorities;
- † to seek participation in decision making on all matters affecting South Africans.

Victimisation

PEBCO's emergence was greeted with popular support by the working masses. The racists' response was predictable. The beginning of November saw the walk-out of the entire black work force of 738 at Ford's Straundale plant. The action was in protest against the victimisation of Thozamile Botha, Chairman of PEBCO and a trainee draughtsman at the plant. Ford management made its position clear - Botha had to choose between his job or PEBCO.

Thozamile Botha's forced resignation met with stiff resistance from his fellow workers who sat in the hundreds outside the Ford plant singing "Nkosi Sikelel'i Afrika" and demanding that he be allowed to put his case before them. This united protest forced the management to unconditionally reinstate Botha the next day.

Events at the Ford plant unfolded to reveal the real forces pitted against each other at this stage in the struggle against apartheid colonialism. The white labour force, its interests defended and

protected by the fascist state, responded to the mood of militancy in characteristic fashion. On November 10th, more than 200 white workers from all four of Ford's Port Elizabeth plants threatened "strike" action against the company's so-called racial-integration programme (put into effect as part of the Sullivan code of conduct for US firms operating in SA). Their anger was inspired by the fact that black workers had been paid for their time on strike.

The white workers presented management with demands which included:

† extra pay or leave for the time they worked during the strike.

They also raised protests about feeling "unsafe" among a "black anti-government element". Three days later the black workers responded to these attacks.

Spirit of Resistance

Out again, the 700 black workers at the Straundale plant complained about the racist arrogance of Whites who had accused Blacks of abusing integrated toilet and canteen facilities. The strike was called in protest against some sections of the workforce doing short time while others were doing over-time. They demanded equal hours for all workers after the management had ordered that some workers had to do overtime because of an "imbalance in production" caused by the previous strike. Among the workers demands was a call for "equal pay for equal work". A return to production was only agreed when management agreed to hold parallel talks with black and white worker representatives.



Black workers elected a committee to put forward their case.

Although back at their jobs, they decided to boycott canteen facilities until white workers retracted their racist statements. On the same day the action spread — 300 workers at Fords engine plant next door met to discuss their grievances and agreed to join the Straundale plant in their canteen boycott. Both plants threatened to walk out if their demands were not met by November 21st. A spirit of solidarity and resistance permeated the plants — each day the workers poured through the factory gates “giving the clenched fist salute and carrying sandwiches and bottles of soft drink”.

Riot Police

With no response from management or white workers, the walk-out took place on the 21st. Ford announced that anyone who ceased work or refused to work “reasonable overtime” would be regarded as having resigned. Squads of riot police were called in before the assembled workforce were told to work or “get out”. After the final ultimatum, black workers “stood up en masse and surged through the gates chanting ‘We’re sacked’ and raising their hands in the clenched fist salute”. In face of these terror tactics, the strikers immediately decided to form a PEBCO-affiliated committee to negotiate with the company for their reinstatement.

Struggle Spreads

Despite fascist intimidation, the struggle spread. On November 19th, the entire black workforce of over 600 at General Tyre and Rubber Company (owned by General Motors USA) walked out. The action came after they had elected a committee of five to represent them and had handed management a list of 24 grievances which included:

- † the demand for union recognition;
- † discriminatory pay and employment practices;
- † inferior segregated facilities.

The strikers accused the company of “consistently hampering the development of union representation among its black workers”. On November 22, all black workers were sacked and a management statement said that white workers would be used to keep production going.

Reaction was swift — that evening saw a mass meeting of over 1,000 of the sacked Ford and General Motors workers. The meeting was called to discuss and organise the collection of severance pay and to plan future strategy. Chaired by Thozamile Botha, the meeting decided that the workers of both companies would go back to work only if they were all reinstated in their former positions and were paid bonuses owing to them.

Detention

The bosses responded with a weapon from the state’s arsenal — more than 20 striking workers were detained by the security police. On December 20, a total of 24 sacked Ford workers appeared in court charged under the notorious “Riotous Assemblies Act” with “intimidating their fellow-workers”. The first action taken by security police in their dawn raid was to demand PEBCO membership cards from those they arrested.

On January 10, Ford backed down in face of the organised strength of the workers and agreed to full reinstatement. But the real strategy of the racists was exposed the next day with the arrest of Thozamile Botha and three other PEBCO leaders. They were arrested in Walmer Township while preparing to hold a PEBCO meeting to discuss action against the impending removal of the township. Police used teargas to disperse the crowds that gathered in protest. At a rally after the arrests, 3,000 PEBCO members in Zwide announced that their planned stay-at-home against the Walmer removals would go ahead until Botha was released.

International Impact

There is no doubt that the impact of the

struggles in Port Elizabeth will be felt world-wide. The issues raised by the heroic workers have a vital bearing on the question of disinvestment from Apartheid and expose in no uncertain terms the nature of the Sullivan principles subscribed to by Ford and General Motors and other US transnationals.

These principles, like their counterparts in the EEC Code of Conduct, were created precisely to dampen the growing campaign for an end to investment in South Africa. Their role was amply revealed by former Minister for Information, Connie Mulder, when he said: "In expressing a desire to contribute to the well-being of the black worker in South Africa, these American companies are to be commended. In fact, the authorities welcome their declared intent to give further impetus to existing extensive development programs in South Africa".

Attempts made by the black workers at Ford to put pressure on the US parent company should be complemented by international solidarity action. The involvement of US diplomats in trying to heal

the damage caused by this exposure of their sordid role in South Africa, shows how far the imperialists are prepared to go in working out strategies together with their racist allies for the defence of their common interests.

Year of the Worker

The working people of South Africa are on the march! Their organised power has always struck fear into the hearts of the racists. We salute our people in Port Elizabeth who have displayed such unity in attacking the hated apartheid system on every front. We salute the working masses nation-wide — those engaged in struggle in Ceres and Saldanah Bay in the Western Cape and in many other places. In this Year of the Worker, 25th anniversary of the birth of the South African Congress of Trade Unions, we call on all our supporters to respond to the challenge thrown out by the black workers of Port Elizabeth. Let us fight together to ensure an end to all forms of collaboration with Apartheid!



Anti-Apartheid demonstration in solidarity with black workers

WEENEN

In this issue of Sechaba we publish a report on the Ciskei. It deals mainly with problems of urban dwellers where much attention is focussed on the problems of squatters, the unemployed and the exploited. People's houses are being demolished and dismantled; rooms are pulled down while tenants are at work. This stripping of tin-houses, accompanied by forced uprooting and relocation of black families is supposed to be a means to avoid "racial clashes": according to the government, South Africa consists of different ethnic "nations" and that the black people may exercise their "political rights" only as "seperate nations" in their homelands — those rutted rolling hills of Bantustans — because when people of different "races" and "tribes" live too close to each other "frictions" and racial hostility are inevitable.

The experience of Weenen is slightly different.

Weenen

This is a village about 30km north-east of Estcourt and although there are a large number of white-owned farms in the district, many belong to absentee landlords who use these farms chiefly as labour reserves for commercial farms in the Natal Midlands. The vast majority of the population — estimated at 15,000 — is African. Many of them can point to their father's, grandfather's and even great-grandfather's graves near their homes as proof of their families' deep roots in the area. Despite their historical and emotional ties to the area, today these people have no security of residence, no legal claim to the land on which they live.

The case of Skolweni Khanyile is just one

example out of many. He has lived in the Weenen district all his life and on the Townlands Service before the Second World War. He is about 93 years old and can remember the Anglo-Boer War and the Bambata Rebellion. Behind his house is a huge tract of land that has been converted into a Game Reserve. He comments bitterly on the fact that he is now forced to move to the "resettlement" camp at Nondweni.

Labour Tenancy

Before 1969, the labour tenant system of farm labour — long established in the district — offered a certain degree of residential security: under this system a family paid for its right to live on the land by working for their white landlord for six months of the year, at a nominal wage. Very often this would mean spending half the year away from home on another farm belonging to the landlord! The family's labour obligation was a form of rent. Once the rent was met, the family was free for the remaining six months of the year, to return home to Weenen and pick up the threads of their subsistence farming again.

In many cases the men would migrate to the cities for several months, to earn some cash income to see the family through the rest of the year. Standard wages for the men were R2 per month and children very often earned nothing at all. At least the family did have land for their cattle and their crops, and the system did allow for a degree of social "stability".

Labour Tenancy Abolished

Since the early 1950's there has been a drive against the system of labour tenancy: in 1969 the system was outlawed in Weenen.

Henceforth a white farmer was "entitled" to a maximum of five African families on his farm, all of whom had to be in full time employment with him. All others living on his land had to be "resettled" at so-called "closer settlements" where they had no land for either cattle or crops and where people have no work.

The extent to which labour tenancy was entrenched in South African agriculture can be gauged from the fact that the Natal Agricultural Union estimated that if labour tenancy was to be abolished outright, about 1 million Africans would have to be moved off white farms and settled elsewhere. Already 20,000 people were "resettled" from Weenen farms alone at enormous cost in human suffering; many of the problems such as "faction fighting" in such areas as Msings and Tugela Ferry are caused by the severe shortage of land resulting from the abolition of the labour tenancy system. People who used to be labour tenants have crowded into these areas and deprived of cattle, land and any possibility of employment and have been reduced to desperate poverty.

Labour Tenancy Today

Despite the formal ending of labour tenancy

in Weenen in 1969, the system of labour tenancy has not been eradicated. White farmers have clung to it tenaciously and it continues to operate under different guises, and so there are perhaps seven or eight thousand people living on white farms in Weenen today. Many are under the threat of eviction and removal to government "resettlement" camps.

Struggling to bring permanence and stability into their lives, they depend entirely on the "benevolence" of the white farmer. If the white farmer chooses to evict them, they have no means of contesting this — after all their presence on the farm is "illegal"! Many tenants have been able to stave off threatened eviction in the past by paying their white farmer a "fine" in the form of a cow or a goat. Evicted from one farm, they approach the neighbouring white farmer for permission to settle on his land only to be forced to move on again at some later date — constant removals.

The response of tenants when asked what they want is always the same: the right to live on the land of their forefathers and in the communities that they know; the right to keep their cattle and their fields without interference and the right to build for themselves a secure future.

GUERRILLA ATTACK

On Friday 4th January, three freedom fighters launched a swift raid on a police station in Soekmekaar, Northern Transvaal. The attack, in which AK-47 automatic rifles and hand-grenades were used, took place at 7.00 pm. Two armed black policemen on duty had to scramble for cover when the fire power of the AK-47 burst and hand-grenades launched, exploded. During the scramble for cover, one of the policemen sustained a shoulder injury. The three patriots then disappeared in a van later identified by the owner, a white teacher, where it was abandoned. No serious damage occurred to the building. The Station Commander, through whose office two

bullets went — one right in line with his chair and the other striking the wall right above the door — was unfortunately not in his office at the time. He was reported to have been tight-lipped about the attack.

Panic mounts in white community

Within minutes of the attack, heavily armed members of the Zoutpansburg Commando unit swarmed through the town. At their homes, wives had taken precautions by locking up and putting out the lights and were also arming themselves with handguns. The shattering sound of gun-fire and handgrenades had civilian members of the commando scrambling for their weapons and heading for the centre of the small town. Farmers were warned by the civil defence organisation to be on the lookout for the three patriots. Most of them are armed, but had not taken special measures to ward off the threat. Some are reported to have said they believed that the three might have been farm labourers who had hidden their weapons and returned to work. The owner of the Soekmekaar garage A. Joubert is reported to have been suspicious that the three patriots "might be a little closer to home. They may have dumped their weapons and come back to Soekmekaar. They could even be in here", he said with his eyes focused on the group of Blacks working around the garage.

Army and Police in disarray

Police and Army units in the North-eastern Transvaal mounted an extensive search in the area between Pietersburg and Louis Trichardt. During those days Soekmekaar and the surrounding area had incessant rain and mist. Besides, the area is a patchwork of flat-topped thorn trees. It was impossible to spot anyone or anything because the stunted chunks of horticulture were in full bloom — it was a sea of green umbrellas that spread across the land.

Duivlelskloof, where the police had said the three could have gone towards, is less densely populated than Soekmekaar, but is hilly and fairly heavily populated by

shacks and huts — a nice jungle to disappear into. The police Directorate of Public Relations, said the police had managed to track them to Duivlelskloof by the weekend but the rain had obliterated their tracks. This made it difficult for their dogs to follow the tracks. Out of frustration, they then extended their fruitless search to the so-called Gazankulu homeland. In addition armed guards were also seen patrolling at several police stations in the area.

The significance of this attack on the police station is that this happened in a period when the Batlokwa people around that area had been putting up massive resistance against the enemy mass removals schemes. The attempts of the enemy to further its genocidal policies will always be resisted by our people — using all means at their disposal. The racists must be reminded that the people's patience is not endless and that the time to fight at all levels, using all methods has come and that this process is irreversible.



THE PRESS IN S.A.

To many people who once thought the South African press had anything to offer in the way of information, education and opposition, regarding the struggle now being fought in our country, the awful realisation is now dawning that great organs of "freedom" such as the Rand Daily Mail, Post and the Daily Dispatch are little more than subtle tools of non-information and collusion.

When Solomon Mahlangu was hanged, the following Sunday Post report boosted the newspaper's circulation to its highest ever. The Newspaper was able to quote Solomon's last words to his mother and while the journalists involved may have been well motivated, the report found its way into the paper only because its owners and editorial executives realised the vast concern Solomon's case had generated.

News about the liberation movement sells and that means money for the bosses and while no one would deny the people inside the country the kind of information that is sometimes printed, it is as well to be wary, for the "free and courageous" press in South Africa will more often than not lie to them. The most often quoted source on the liberation movement just happens to be the South African Police.

The English press, including those newspapers aimed at the black reader, maintain a loud but comfortable opposition to apartheid - but then so does the rest of the western world

Opposition to the State is something quite different. "Pay workers more money," they cry with gay abandon - but never a word of actually talking about real power, about control of their destiny. Acute alienation on the mines, often violent, becomes "tribal conflicts", which is not surprising since the mining houses control all but two daily and weekend newspapers

in the country - the Daily Dispatch in East London and the Natal Witness in Pietermaritzburg.

The South African Press perceives evil only in party policies, not in structures. The newspapers South Africans rely on for information are the mouthpieces of big capital and it would be naive to expect them to bite the hand that owns and feeds them. All this is obvious; what is not always clear are the ways in which the Press actively promotes the present racial status quo within the country. Behind this lies a blend of personalities, fear, and blatant racism.

Last year a South African policeman called Kallie Knoetze fought for the world heavyweight boxing crown, in Pretoria, against a black American, Ralph Tate. White South Africa was beside itself at the prospect of one of its sons winning the coveted award, especially from a black man. Also, in victory lay the possibility of global approval for the minority. Before the fight, the Pretoria News sports department wrote a front page story headlined "Its Kallie" to win. Someone realised this might not go down too well in its "township" edition and wrote another story headlined "Its Tate".

In the event Tate, who should have known better than to grace South Africa with his presence, flattened the said "Kallie" a result not greeted with much enthusiasm by the wonderful Rand Daily Mail the next day. The sports editor of the Rand Daily Mail, Mr Brian Ross Adams, is no common or garden racist. He is also a part time officer in military intelligence.

Inside the walls of the freedom-loving Rand Daily Mail, some progress has been made towards desegregating toilets in recent years. Journalists of both colours can now urinate together but in the printing floors some "problems" still remain. Up

until a year ago, black journalists on the marvellous "Mail" had other problems. Most were not given jobs and only paid for what they produced. Since South Africa's bastion of free speech thought it not worthwhile to train its black freelancers to write for newspapers, a day's work and a good story often ended up a tiny "filler" because it was not well written. But the journalist was paid only for the amount of words that appeared in the newspaper.

The magnificent "Mail" would go out of business if it were not for the kind of news its black reporters write and recognising this, its courageous editor, Allistair Sparks, decided, after some pressure from black journalists, to put some of them on full staff pay. The others were told to leave.

"Full staff pay" for untrained journalists is a pittance anyway but not one black is on the newspaper's current training course. It says candidates are chosen on "merit" -- good merit being a university degree, English as home language, a good (i.e. wealthy) background and a white face.

It was not so long ago that the disgusting "Mail" was sending its black journalists into the firing line in Soweto to be shot at, stoned and detained. Through their brave efforts the newspaper's coverage of the 1976 rebellion won international acclaim. Then a copy of the Guardian newspaper of London appeared in the newsroom and one of the black freelancers noticed one of his reports in the paper. According to the Guardian, the story had been written by its correspondent in South Africa, Patrick Laurence. Laurence actually works for the despicable "Mail" and it turned out he had been using the copies of the Soweto stories and sending them to the Guardian as his own -- and being paid more for his trouble than his own newspaper paid the black reporters.

Laurence may still be using other, poorer people's reports and sending them to the Guardian but this is done, in a way, by all the foreign correspondents in South Africa. The news published in newspapers outside the country, at least in the West, is all culled from the local newspapers with the result that the international media is as guilty of omission and distortion as newspapers like the Rand Daily Mail.

It is a sobering thought that when the day comes that the Pretoria "government" decides that the words "African National Congress" are not to be mentioned (and as the movement grows more and more effective militarily that day cannot be far off), the courageous guardians of truth in South Africa -- all the newspapers, not only the Rand Daily Mail, will comply without a whimper. They have perceived where their interests lie. Newspapers overseas will be starved of their presently easy sources of "news".

Perhaps that will be a good thing. Much of the world knows us only through newspapers, which because of the way they get their news of South Africa distort and simplify not only news but also history.

Soon now, the distortions, fed first by the South African "free" press, will become too ridiculous to bear and at that point it will be required of the national liberation movement to assume a greater and more concentrated role in the global dissemination of news about South Africa.

It could be argued that the time to start has already passed. Every year the Financial Mail, a sister publication to the putrid "Mail", chooses a Man of the Year, an accolade for being a wise and wonderful person. For 1979, the Financial Mail, with the grinning approval of the rest of the press, pointed to new and dark paths by naming the so-called "prime-minister", Pieter Botha, as the most wonderful man in South Africa in 1979.

In short it can be said for the commercial press in South Africa black suffering is another source for an "expose"; for news value (often event oriented) and it is not the social issues that matter. Sensational coverage loses the perpetuity of the issue to the fleeting publicity. At times there are attempts at factual coverage but less explanation; no debate over issues; no through analysis but "cautious" reportage. This is the real information scandal!

ARMY AND POLITICS

part 1

This is the first in a series of articles on this subject.

Ever since the first armed conquests by European settlers in the 17th century, the people of South Africa have been the victims of racist economic exploitation and legislative repression enforced by military and paramilitary violence. The violence implemented by the fascist regime has taken a variety of forms over the years. At the beginning of this century, for instance, a paramilitary police force comprising "demilitarised" Boer and British units held sway. During the 1920s the Union Defence Force was mobilised on numerous occasions for the brutal elimination of popular resistance. The following four decades saw the rise of the South African Police (SAP) in its present form; a force directed towards the thorough implementation of apartheid legislation and always ready, as at Sharpeville in 1960, to carry out military operations. Throughout these years an almost completely part-time "defence force" was kept in readiness to back up police operations when necessary.

It is during the last two decades, however, that the South African Defence Force (SADF) has been built up as the backbone of fascist oppression. These last two decades have also produced a clear rationalisation of the forces of racist rule, illustrated in 1976 when it was impossible to distinguish between police and military operations in the cold-blooded massacres that confronted the heroic uprising of the youth.

While the role of armed force throughout the history of white minority rule is clear, the last decade has seen a fundamental change in the basis of the apartheid regime's power structure. The rise to power of PW Botha is symbolic of this. Ever-increasing military spending and manpower levels

are concrete indications of it. But the essence of the modern militarised white laager is to be found in the transformation of military and paramilitary forces from being tools of oppression to becoming the central decision-making force within all facets of the government of the apartheid state. This is the crux of the transformation of the regime from a police to a military state.

The unfolding struggle in Southern Africa needs to be seen in terms of a continuous interaction between the actions and reactions of the forces of revolution and counter-revolution. From the formation of the ANC in 1912 until its banning in 1960, the non-violent struggle of the people was countered, relatively speaking, by a small armed force, the SAP. Even within this perspective, however, the popular militancy of the 1950s resulted in the doubling of SAP strength between 1948 and 1960. Throughout the period between 1912 and 1960 every advance in the non-violent mobilisation of the people's struggle was met by increased violence and brutal racist repression.

The historic formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe and the launching of the armed struggle in South Africa in 1961 added a new dimension to the apartheid regime's strategy for survival. The early 1960's were crucial years not only for the ANC but for the revolutionary forces of Southern Africa as a whole. The armed struggle was launched in Angola (1961), Mozambique (1964), Namibia and Zimbabwe (1966). During this period the powers of reaction and repression in Southern Africa, in close collaboration with their imperialist allies, were forced to draw up revised blueprints for their survival and the Verwoerd regime launched a programme of drastic militarisation which has continued to escalate ever

since.

Between 1960 and 1970 the regime's annual military budget increased sixfold and the SAP manpower strength again doubled. The SADF regular force increased fivefold and the part-time force doubled. During the same period the imperialist powers provided tanks, armoured cars, artillery, fighter and transport aircraft and helicopters. The regime also established its own military-industrial-complex which, by 1969, rendered the SADF self-sufficient in rifles, mortars, ammunition, grenades, bombs (including napalm) and mines. In 1967 this rapidly expanding industry manufactured its first jet aircraft, the Impala 1, under Italian licence. In the late 1960s a group of the regime's scientists travelled to France with the blueprints and financial backing for the manufacture of the Crotale/Cactus surface-to-air missile — a weapon system now in service in a number of imperialist countries and their client states.

The regime's militarisation became truly operational with the launching of the counter-insurgency operations in Namibia in 1966 and in Zimbabwe, in conjunction with racist Rhodesian forces, in 1967. South Africa itself was still surrounded by a buffer of similarly fascist states which were able to frustrate the rapid advance of people's war. The defeat of Portuguese colonialism in 1974 and the heroic victories of the MPLA in Angola and FRELIMO in Mozambique however, gave a major boost to the momentum of liberation. The apartheid regime was faced with a major threat on its own borders. The revolutionary forces of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa were able to drastically increase their levels of operations.

One clear indication of the apartheid regime's forced response to this situation is to be found in tracing the developments in the SADF's conscription programme which relates directly to the regimes's own operational requirements. Compulsory military service for white males was introduced in 1967. Conscripts had to serve a period of nine months' national service followed by part-time service in the Citizen Force (CF). In 1972 the period of national service was increased to 12 months.

At the end of 1975, in order to man its abortive invasion of Angola, the SADF began to call up CF units for three-month periods of operational duty, a system which has continued ever since. In 1977 the period of national service was doubled and by 1979 a growing number of CF units were being forced to serve two three-month periods of active duty each year.

Between 1974 and 1979 annual military spending trippled and the total strength of the SADF increased by 200,000 to about 450,000. The regime's arms industry, continually backed by imperialist money, technology and back-door weapons shipments, developed into the largest military-industrial complex in the southern hemisphere. Since 1975 over R4,000 million has been spent on weapons procurement and capital investments. The SADF's present annual budget is at least double the total amount that the regime has spent on black education since the beginning of this century.

The basis of apartheid military strategy is clear. As spelt out in Botha's 1977 White Paper on Defence, "the principle of the right of self-determination of the White nation must not be regarded as being negotiable." Within this context Botha had, in 1975, stated that "all countries need to muster all their activities, including political, economic and diplomatic, for their defence." This philosophy has been rationalised in the face of the growing successes of the forces of liberation by the integration, since 1977, of military planning, controlled by the SADF, into all sectors of government. The SADF has thus been transformed from being a tool of government to becoming the central force within government. The military controls the administration of the apartheid state through two channels: the office of the Prime Minister and the State Security Council.

Before his rise to power, PW Botha spent 12 years as Minister of Defence in intimate collaboration with apartheid's arch-facists, the generals of the SADF. It is no secret that it is the generals, and in particular the present grand-master, General Malan, who have coached Botha into his present position.

APARTHEID MILITARISM 1960-1979

	1960	1974	1979
Annual military spending	R44m	R707m	R2,189m
Total SAP strength	26,000	59,000	72,000
Total SADF strength	60,000	250,000	450,000

It was not surprising that on becoming Prime Minister he held onto the Ministry of Defence, and to make it quite clear he even extended his title to include a new portfolio of "National Security". Botha's unswerving loyalty to his generals is unquestionable; he rode to power on their backs and can only remain there with their approval.

The State Security Council (SSC) was established in 1972 as an advisory body to the Cabinet. In the post-1974 strategic rethink its status was increased to assist in the "interdepartmental co-ordination" of national security policy. Since Botha's rise to power, however, it has become the key decision-making body of the apartheid state. It is controlled by the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and of National Security Deputy Minister of Defence, Chief of the SADF, Secretary for Security Intelligence, Minister of Police, Commissioner of the SAP, Minister of Justice and Minister of Foreign Affairs. The all-embracing role of the SSC is clearly spelt out in the 1979 White Paper on Defence:

"Preparation for modern warfare, whether conventional or unconventional, necessitates highly co-ordinated action. This is particularly true of a total onslaught such as is being waged against South Africa. Thorough planning at all levels is therefore required in order to obtain such co-ordination.

"At national level the Cabinet is assisted by the State Security Council (SSC) and its executive agencies to fulfil duties concerning the national security of the RSA. The Department of the Prime Minister

is responsible for management at this level by issuing guidelines, total national strategy directives, and total national strategies concerning national security. The national strategic planning process is conducted by the SSC with its Work Committee and Secretariat and fifteen interdepartmental committees of the SSC, while co-ordination of the executive function is carried out by a National Joint Planning Centre.

"At interdepartmental level national security is co-ordinated by the fifteen interdepartmental committees, the chairmen of which are responsible for the management of the individual committees. These committees process the total national strategy directives of the SSC into interdepartmental strategies which are co-ordinated at the level of the Work Committee and approved by the SSC.

"The national strategic planning process is a continuous planning activity demanding a great deal of integration and co-ordination. Although responsibility for this process is vested in the Department of the Prime Minister and in the chairmen of the fifteen interdepartmental committees the heads of government departments are continually involved in this process....".

The present structure of the SSC needs to be seen as a step towards an even more centralised and closely controlled form of military government. Under the Vorster/van den Bergh regime Botha and his generals were kept at arms length from the innermost core of Afrikaner power. The internal struggle within the ranks of fascists has, for the moment been resolved. An insight

CHANGE ??...



SURE THERES BEEN CHANGE.....



into the future plans of the apartheid state was provided by Malan's right-hand man, Lt Gen Dutton (Chief of Staff Operations, SADF) in a speech during 1978. He argued that "the requirements for the application of total strategy would appear to favour a system of unified command,

joint central planning... Conventional organisation in democratic systems do not as a rule lend themselves to these procedures. Therefore organisational changes would appear to be imperative." These "organisational changes" are at present in the process of being implemented. The political implications are clear.

BOSS BECAME DONS....



AND NOW WE'RE CHANGING IT TO NITS

Richard Sweet



HOW WE ESCAPED

The following article was written by Tim Jenkin, one of the three ANC militants who escaped from Pretoria Maximum Security Prison in December 1979.

The South African racists have always attempted to portray themselves as an invincible force and their system as being immutable. Through their propaganda they have assiduously nurtured this amongst other myths. Many have fallen prey to their constant bragging, not least themselves. But never for a moment have militants of our liberation movement been cowed by their seagging. The racists once claimed they had the most powerful army in Africa yet in Angola they were forced to turn tail and run like a pack of scared dogs. More recently "brave" members of the SAP cowered behind counters and hid under beds as our Umkhonto soldiers tore apart the Moroka, Orlando and other police stations. In other encounters, such as at Rustenburg in August 1978, in the face of overwhelming odds our fighters have broken out of encirclement and inflicted heavy wounds on the enemy. The racists are scared to admit these defeats they have suffered for they all serve to crack and undermine the monolithic image they have attempted to create for themselves.

On 11 December, 1979 another of the racists' myths was trampled underfoot when the three of us, Alexander Moumbaris, Tim Jenkin and Stephen Lee walked to freedom out of the front door of the maximum-security Pretoria Prison for political prisoners and proved that the fascists' so-called escape-proof prison was not impervious to our determined efforts to reach through the walls to freedom.

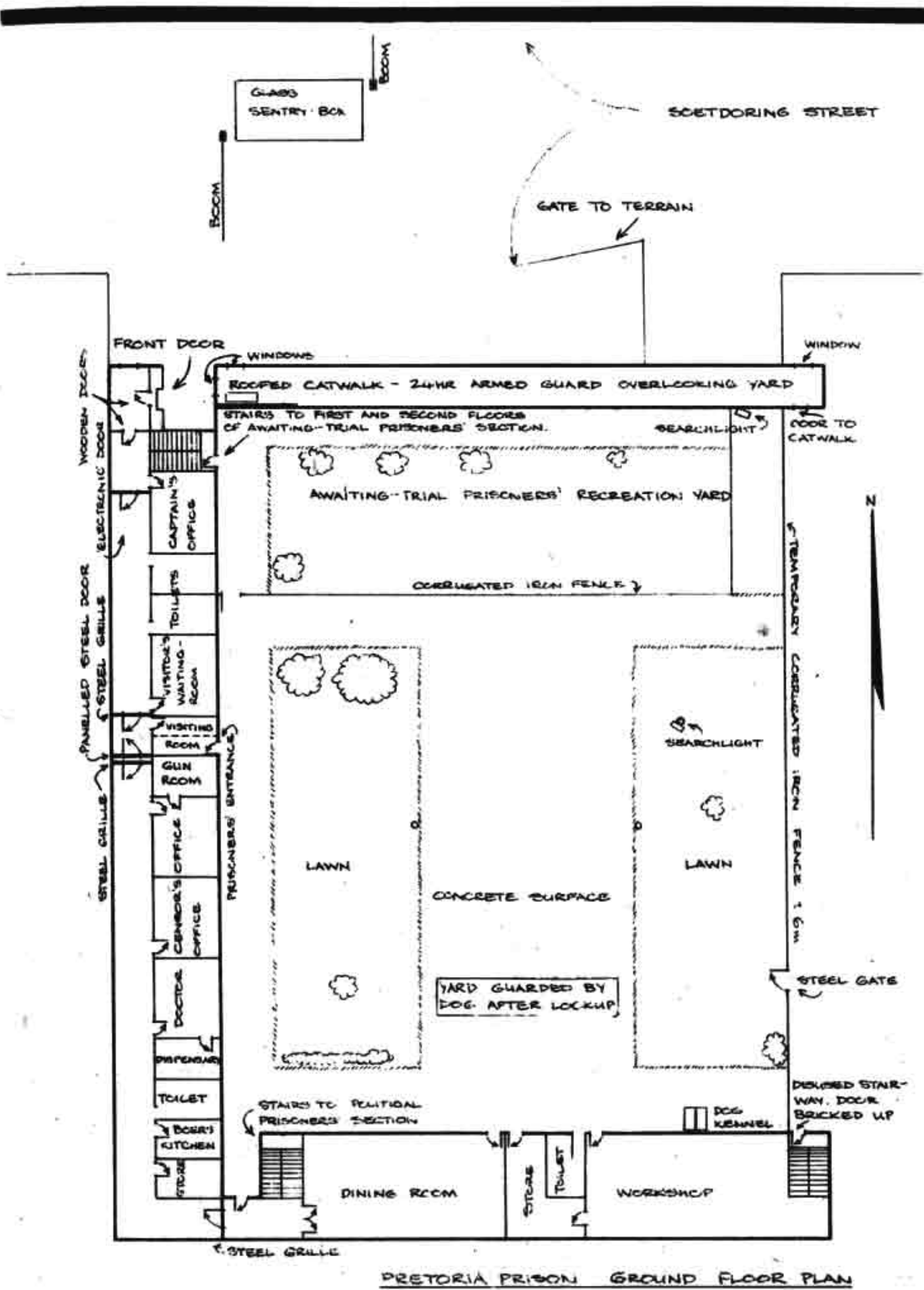
The racists have further claimed that their borders were as secure as their prison

walls, that no-one could cross them without being detected. This myth also crumbled to the ground when we spirited ourselves across the border under the noses of a heavily intensified police guard. That we were able to achieve this proves how easy it is for our Umkhonto comrades to infiltrate into the country in the opposite direction.

In a desperate attempt to cover up their embarrassment and to minimise the victory that the escape meant for the ANC, the prison authorities and security police immediately started spreading lies and misleading speculations through the press. Ashamed to admit that we exited by the front door the authorities claimed merely that we had to pass through several doors to reach the perimeter of an outer wall. In truth, we had to pass through ten doors: the two steel doors sealing us in our cells for the night, through six more locked steel doors — one of them electronically operated — and through a further two wooden doors to the street outside the prison. In addition to these barriers we had to pass undetected the night warder who was equipped with a walkie-talkie, and an armed guard who had a clear view of the front door from which we emerged and of the street along which we moved.

It was claimed that we had "jogged" to freedom dressed in T-shirts, running shorts and running shoes. The authorities had to assume this because it would have been too embarrassing to admit anything else. However, this only served to mislead the public and the police who were on the lookout for people dressed in this way.

To belittle the impact of the escape and to make it seem that its success was due to their weaknesses rather than our strength it was claimed by the prison



Ground floor plan of the prison drawn by the three escapees

authorities that we had bribed warders to help us make our way out. The authorities know that this is not true yet to fulfil their need for a scapegoat they arrested the warder on duty at the time, Sgt. F. Vermeulen. The Deputy Commissioner of Prisons, Major-General Jannie Roux said in an interview that "we can never entirely exclude human weakness no matter how carefully we screen our staff — and I assure you that only a tried and trusted warder with years of experience would be put in charge of a section like maximum security." Sgt. Vermeulen is one of these tried and trusted warders, eleven years on the beat and now in his final year before retirement. It is not our desire to protect apartheid jailers but it seems to us that it would be very stupid for anyone to jeopardize his impending retirement in this way. Besides, where would we have got the money to bribe warders?

The tenth and final door, the front door, unfortunately did not yield to the magic password and so we were forced to use a little physical exertion before we could pass from captivity to freedom. This further proves that we had no help from our captors, for if we had, why then did they not provide us with the key to this final shackle?

The complete success of our escape would not have been possible if it were not for the assistance we received from the underground machinery of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Being captives of their own racist mentality the racist press could not accept that the ANC could engineer and ensure the success of such an operation and therefore raised speculations that the KGB — an all-White organisation! — was responsible.

No matter what devices the oppressor uses to conceal from the people the significance of the victories our movement has scored in recent times, the acts themselves are sufficient to give lie to their hollow boasting. The increasing number of actions against the enemy shows that they cannot stop nor contain the impending onslaught.

Imprisonment is a bitter experience, but more bitter is the thought that



hundreds of our comrades remain in captivity brave fighters who have sacrificed their lives in the struggle against a criminal regime that is condemned by all mankind. Our jailers could see with their own eyes that we were not the ruthless terrorists criminals we were made out to be, they know that we are supported in our actions by the majority of the people of South Africa and by progressive mankind everywhere. It is these criminal fascists who should be behind bars for it is they who have been condemned for their crimes against humanity and for the threat they pose to peace — and we shall not rest until they are.

The three of us have committed ourselves with heightened enthusiasm to continue to contribute to the struggle to liberate South Africa from all forms of oppression. Our immediate concern will be to add our voices to the outcry against the intended murder by the fascists of our comrade James Mange. Further, we shall campaign ceaselessly until all South African political prisoners are released and raise high the demand for the treatment of captured freedom fighters as prisoners of war. Beyond that we place ourselves at the disposal of our movement for whatever tasks they place before us.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Until recently, of seven medical schools in South Africa, there were only three catering for Black students, and of these, only one for African students. This was the University of Natal Medical School, which was established in 1951 after about 30 years of deputation, discussion and delay, with the government who eventually agreed with the proviso that no white students be enrolled.

Prior to 1951 Black students, including African students, were only trained at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. At no stage were African students ever admitted to the Medical school of the University of Cape Town.

Between 1946 and 1978 inclusive, the Medical Schools of Natal and Wits produced 413 African medical graduates. Of these 104 were trained at Wits up to 1966, after which date Black students had to apply for special Ministerial permission to attend the so-called "White" universities. African students were particularly discriminated against. For example in 1978, 82,9% of Coloured students who applied at the "White" universities were granted permission, whereas only 29,1% of Africans who applied were given consent.

Between 1957 and the end of 1978, therefore, the rest (ie 309) graduated from Natal University.

In fact, from 1968 to 1977 Africans, who comprise 70,4% of the population, produced only 3% of the doctors, whilst whites, (17,3% of the population) produced 85,4% of the new doctors. In 1975 there was an all-time low of only 9 African medical graduates! This meant that the ratio of new doctors in 1975 per population was 1:2,2-million.

Over the last decade, the output of White doctors increased from 92 to 142 per million Whites, while that of all Blacks combined remained virtually unchanged; ie 4 per million

in 1967 and 4,8 per million in 1975.

Whichever way it is examined, the figure reveals that South Africa today faces an ever-growing shortage of Black doctors as indicated by the following figures:

Ratio of doctors: population:

Whites 1:400

Asian 1:900

Africans 1:40,000

In spite of this the government has been trying, since 1957, to phase out African students from the University of Natal Medical School, the aim being to convert this school into a White institution. Coloured and Asian students would be accommodated until alternative medical schools were established for them. The Asian students would be moved to the University of Durban-Westville as the Prime Minister indicated in an address to the South African Indian Council in Durban in November 1974. Steps have already been taken to implement this policy. A Dental School for Coloureds has already been established at Bellville College in the Cape.

So far the University authorities have proved to be "ineffective" in "persuading" the government to change its policy of phasing out Black students from Natal University. The students have in fact accused the University Authorities of collaborating with the Government. In September 1977 the students boycotted lectures for 5 weeks to effect reversal of this move. As a result of this action students who were studying on government bursaries were informed by letter from the Secretary of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development that their bursaries would be withdrawn on the grounds of "misconduct", unless reasons "acceptable to the Department" were given. The students were required to inform the Department not later than November 15, 1977, on how they "intended to meet their



obligations towards the Department ... in terms of the bursary agreement”.

Following discussion between the then Minister of Education, Dr Piet Koornhof, and a delegation from the University held in Pretoria on October 19, 1977, the principal of the University of Natal, N D Clarence, announced that detailed discussion between the Minister and the University over the long term future of the Medical School would start in the “near future”, adding that he was “confident that these would lead to a lasting arrangement which would be acceptable to everyone concerned”.

The University Authorities in the mean-

time, in an attempt to disguise their true intentions, stated as one of their reasons for wishing to admit White students to the Medical School, was an “attempt to pursue its multi-racial policy”.

The students, naturally, rejected this explanation as hypocritical. After all, why not start integration in other “White” universities? A statement by the students to this effect stated that it was not only misleading but folly to believe that the University of Natal alone could pioneer the move towards non-racialism in South Africa.

“The University of Natal is no autonomous. It serves to a great extent as an instrument of re-inforcement of the Apartheid

blueprint", and they strongly advised the University to abandon this move and instead start negotiating for the opening of all educational institutions in South Africa. They rejected the move to open the University to White undergraduates at "this stage in our historical development".

Some of the next moves adopted by the government to phase out Black students were:

1) The amendment of the Universities Act of 1957 (as gazetted on 16.3.79) that State bursaries and interest free loans can be offered to all students in South African universities except to medical students applying to the University of Natal. The University Authorities pretended to be unaware of this move until the student representatives referred to it in a liaison committee meeting. Professor Clarence, the Principal of the University, in fact stated in a Press report that he did not "believe there was any intention" to change their bursary policy.

2) The University Authorities are, on the other hand, redirecting new applicants and students who have failed at UNB to Medunsa and these students are now, miraculously, having brilliant academic careers at Medunsa!

3) The University of Blacks Amendment Bill allows for the "controlled" entry of White students to Black universities. The Nationalist Party interpretation of this is that it will cater for children of White families serving Black universities. As the students pointed out, this is just another round about way of permitting entry of White undergraduates to UNB. Other Black universities have such poor facilities that most Whites would not want to apply for admission.

4) The government subsidy to UNB has been decreased by R900,000, the added financial burden having to be borne by the students as increased fees for tuition (200%) and residence (500%). The students will therefore be compelled to go to Medunsa for which they will receive government bursaries

Medunsa is the Medical University of South Africa, and will be under the direct control of the Minister of Bantu Education. So, having tried to obtain Ministerial control

of the Black Medical School in 1957 and failed, the government has achieved their objective 20 years later.

All appointments, promotions and discharges by the University Council shall be subject to the Minister's approval. Furthermore, a religious test may be supplied to students and staff making appointments. The language of instruction is to be Afrikaans — the same issue which was a factor in the Soweto uprisings. Medunsa aims to achieve an output of 200 doctors a year. Taking into consideration the whole structure of so-called Bantu Education, it is difficult to see how this is to be achieved except by a lowering of standards.

Furthermore, the doctors are supposed to provide medical care in the Bantustans, which effectively mean they will not be making a significant contribution to the number of Black doctors in South Africa.

The students have called upon the International support groups and student bodies to organise campaigns to support them in their struggle against the closure of the Medical School of Natal and also to protest against all the inequities in the educational structures in South Africa.

In this they have the support of the African National Congress, whose policy on education is clear. The Freedom Charter adopted at the Congress of the People on June 26th, 1955, states that:

"Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children. Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of State allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit. The colour bar in ... education shall be abolished".

In this regard the African National Congress with other progressive and support groups all over the world are conducting a campaign to publicise the struggle of the students in South Africa. We urge you to lend your support and efforts in this campaign.

Aziza

AN INTERESTING BOOK

Magubane, Bernard Makhosezwe, The Political Economy of Race and class in South Africa, New York and London, 1979.

In this book Ben Magubane — as we call him — has surveyed the evolution of racism in our country, its economic base and interaction with social, ethnic and other factors in our society. He does not stop at that. He analyses the development of the forces of protest and change from the formation of the ANC — to be precise even before that — and the relationship between the ANC and other organisations (ICU, CP, SACTU etc) up to "Soweto and After".

The book itself has been inspired by "Professors H.J. and Ray Simons, with whom I taught at the University of Zambia between 1967 and 1970...Then there are the members of the African National Congress and its allies, with whom I have had a long and close relationship. Among these were the first cadres of Umkhonto we Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation"), who crossed the Zambezi in the fateful July of 1967 and whose courage was a source of tremendous inspiration for me in undertaking this study. The acting president-general (now president — F.M.) of the ANC, O.R. Tambo, gave me invaluable suggestions and encouragement", (p.xiii)

Though this history has been dealt with in many books before, Magubane has interesting things to say. Writing about the 1967 armed operations he says their initiation "meant that white capitalist rule would sink into history as it was born, in blood and violence." (p.263)

This book which is both partisan and objective, factual and theoretical is, in the opinion of this reviewer, not without flaws and errors of judgment. He writes for example about the 1930's that "powerlessness had reduced Africans to a nations of beggars (p.290) and about the 1946 African Mineworkers' strike:

"The strike ended in disaster, doomed to failure because it was not based on a political will strong enough to carry it through. It was a desperate revolt, produced by desperate conditions, but it was not guided by long range planning". (p.294)

Surely the objective conditions were more responsible for this "failure" than "a political will strong enough to carry it through".

These harsh assessments could have been avoided had the author made more use of the assessment of these events by our movement. "More use of the assessment" does not mean that the author has not consulted our sources. On the contrary there seems to be so many quotations in the book that these tend to disrupt the flow of the narrative — and many of them are from sources even hostile to us.

Ben makes quite a number of interesting theoretical points but when he says that the problem during the Sharpeville crisis was that "there was no core revolutionary body such as the Bolshevik Party in Russia, to lead an armed uprising and create a civil war situation with the aim of taking over state power" (p.315) we tend to differ. The ANC "Strategy and Tactics" document sees the matter somewhat differently from Ben, that is the reasons were both objective and subjective.

The use of terms like "non-white" (p.283) could have been easily avoided.

We point out these questions so as to open a discussion on these vital issues of our revolution. Indeed Ben Magubane's book lays a basis for such a discussion which Sechaba welcomes. But to be able to participate in that discussion we recommend this book.

F.M.

HOT AS ANXIETY



Mange and his comrades salute from their captivity after the end of the trial

During the campaign to stop the racist murder of ANC combatant James Mange, hundreds of letters have been sent from all over the world expressing solidarity with Mange's wife and son. The impact of these letters received by Pauline Mange, is expressed in a letter written by her to an Anti-Apartheid member in Britain. In the letter Pauline writes: "may God bless you....Live long for me Mama, and keep it up to everyone who is like me".

At the end of her letter which reflects the vital importance of solidarity actions of this type, Pauline Mange writes: "Mama I want to give you my poem, maybe you will understand how I am or about my future". The poem she wrote is printed overleaf:

Dedicated to my sisters:

Sweet my sisters

The two years difference strengthened
our Love. Hot as anxiety our Love
remained. My sterile joy you
couldn't share. You shared my
fruitful sorrow. Poverty frankly
and brazenly grinned us.

Our home was pervaded with its
breath. It mantled the walls and
polished the furniture.

We slept with it and supped it.
In time it gnawed deeply into
our brains and hearts.

Poverty made us cautious and prudent
It stunted our ambitions and ground
down our hopes. It fizzled out
our family life. We live it like a
chronic disease. It drove our Mother
out to drudgery. Nine pence was
to be her pay. She was driven
to grave by poverty. A diensneg
she died kneeling. Buried six feet
into the floor she scrubbed.

All radiance of colour faded away from us
She was Love and devotion to us
Joy, you knew no happiness alone
Solitude, sorrow and suffering mothered you
The knowledge of it poured forth a golden light
Sweet my Love, hot as anxiety
My sweet sisters reunion will come
Day of greater happiness awaits us.

Pauline Mange

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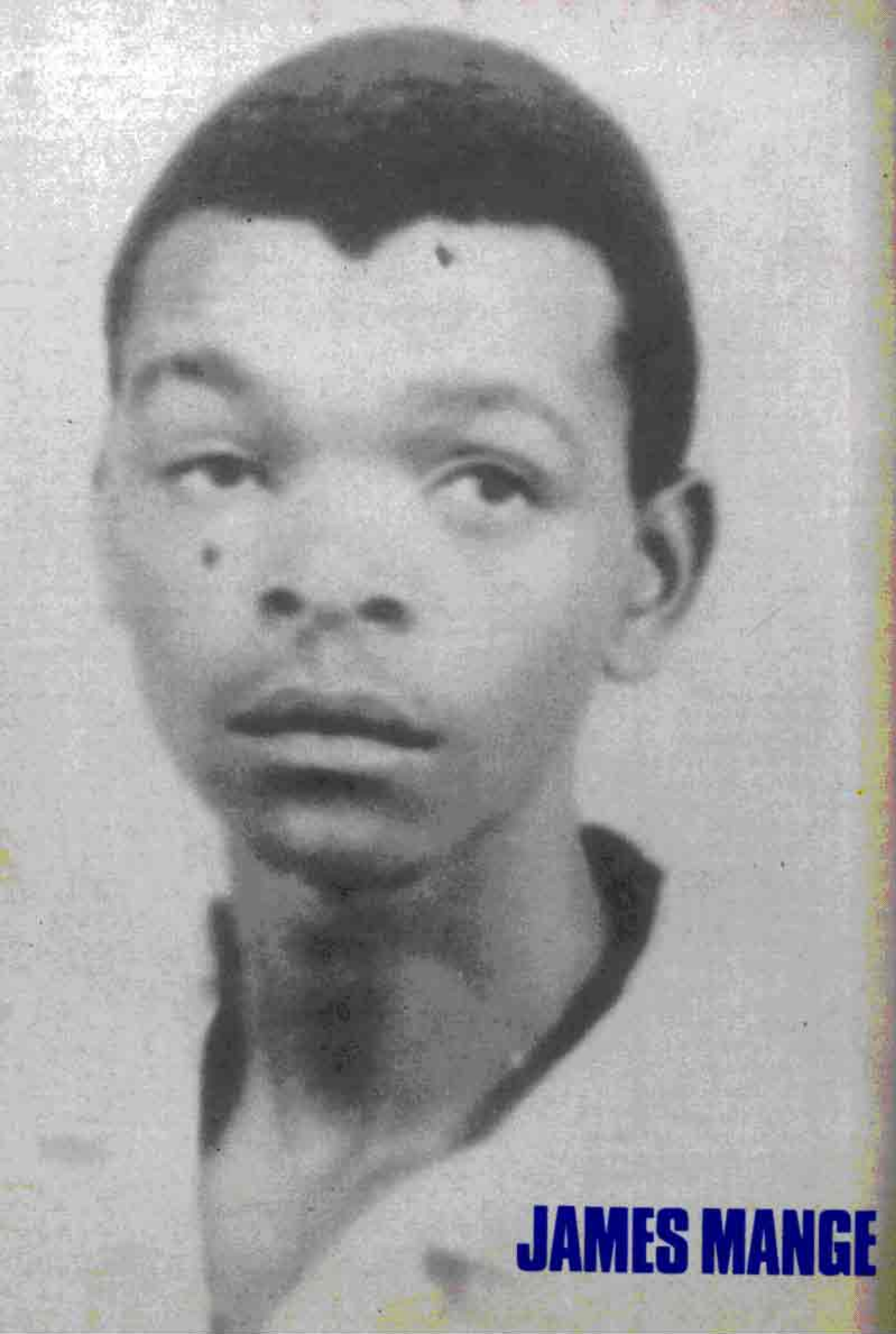
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