

EDUCATION

NUM on co-operatives



Last month NUMSA wrote about their experiences in setting up SARMCOL Co-op in Mphophomeni, Natal. This month NUM writes about their co-operative projects. Cosatu News welcomes more contributions to the debate on unemployment and co-operatives.

In 1984, 1985 and 1986, NUM members at Foskor Mine in Phalaborwa went on strike, demanding recognition of the union. Each time they suffered casualties, and over 2000 workers lost their jobs. In 1987, dismissed shaft-stewards came together and called on the NUM to support their efforts in setting up co-ops.

They decided to set up a t-shirt printing co-op, and went to visit SAWCO for advice. The Phalaborwa Workers T-shirt Printing Co-op (PAWCO) started producing t-shirts in April last year. PAWCO has fifty members, who work half-day shifts. The first months have been difficult, as Stanley Mathebula, PAWCO secretary explains: "We knew how

to work underground but we didn't know how to control a project."

PAWCO members have needed to learn many new skills in order to control production democratically. All the tasks usually done by management in a factory are now being done by PAWCO members - such as ordering materials, chasing payments, planning ahead, controlling the finances, and keeping discipline.

PAWCO has nine different committees which share all the different tasks and responsibilities in the co-op, and in this way, the project is building real democratic control, based on a high level of participation.

Meanwhile, at the end of the mineworkers strike in 1987, over 10 000 workers were dismissed or retrenched. Most of these workers were migrants, who face a grim future with little chance of re-employment. For example, in the Transkei, unemployment is already over 50%. Because of the strategy used by the NUM during

the strike, these workers were organised into strike-committee structures in their home areas.

The NUM decided to use these strike committee structures as the basis for organising co-op projects in the areas where workers live. These projects will provide jobs, as well as allowing these workers to work near their families, and to escape the dehumanisation of migrant labour.

A strike committee chair from the Transkei explains his hopes for these projects: "Our projects will create jobs, they will spread the word about the NUM in the areas that we come from, and they will help to develop the community."

The Transkei and Lesotho have been targetted as the first regions in which projects will be set up. It will not be possible to build enough projects to accommodate all the workers, so members will be chosen on a proportional basis from the different districts. Workers who received no compensation at all from the

Each one teach one!

EDUCATION

bosses will be first in line for jobs in the projects.

It is not possible to accommodate all the workers in projects at this stage, because each project needs a lot of capital to get started. This difficulty is one reason why the problem of unemployment cannot be solved just by building co-ops. And while co-ops can help limit the suffering of some of the unemployed, they do not take away the cause of unemployment, and so unemployment continues to grow all the time.

Unemployment is a product of capitalism, because in the search for profits, the bosses replace more and more workers with machines. So we can only end unemployment by ending the system that puts profits before people, and we can only end that system through a political struggle.

But co-ops do also have a role in preparing us for the day when we win that struggle, because in the co-ops, workers are learning some of the key skills needed for democratic control of production. Many of these skills are denied to workers in the mines and factories.

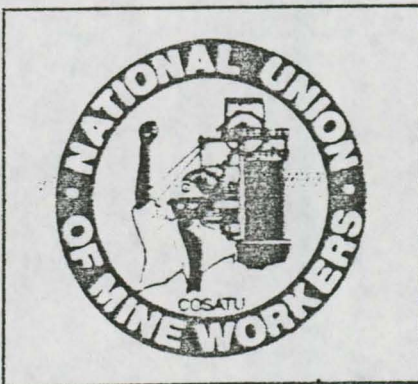
But they are crucial for building socialism in the future. And they can help broaden the base of support for socialism, by showing that it is possible for workers to control production, and for production to be based on social needs rather than private profit. In deciding on what products to produce, workers in both Lesotho and the Transkei have looked at the needs of their communities.

They decided there is a need for low-cost building materials in their communities, and so the NUM started investigating block-production products. But although cement blocks are in great demand in both these areas, the NUM came up against a problem: people who live in hous-

es made of cement blocks have many complaints. They say that the walls crack; and the houses also get very damp, which can make people sick. And when people cook inside, drops of water form on the ceiling.

But many people still build with these blocks because they are the cheapest. So, the NUM decided to try to find a way around this problem. And they found that this problem can be solved - by good building methods, by having the right mix in the blocks, and by making sure the blocks dry for the correct length of time.

So, the NUM projects plan to educate people who buy from them about ways of building to prevent damp, and plan to make blocks that are strong and dry. In this way, the NUM will make blocks that contribute to the health of the people, and improve the quality of cheap housing. At present, the NUM has sites in Umtata, Flagstaff, Maseru, Quthing, Butha-Butha and Mokhotlong, and workers for these projects are being chosen through the strike committees at present.



Education Update

COSATU's Education Department will be co-ordinating the following seminars in March/April:

- Women issues and organisation
- Economic trends
- Housing and trade union policy
- Trade union administration
- Cosatu campaigns
- Co-ops (in August)

Other Co-op Initiatives

NUWCC

The organisation is still discussing how to set up co-ops. There is some educational activity around co-ops.

POTWA

After the 1987 strike - when 2,800 workers were dismissed - the union established a building/construction co-op in Port Elizabeth. 12 workers are involved. POTWA is busy establishing a dry cleaning co-op in the Wits region involving 26 workers.

NUMSA

Besides SAWCO (see article in February *Cosatu News*), NUMSA has started co-operative projects in Port Elizabeth from a fund that dismissed GM workers had contributed to. There is a bulk buying fund for food and clothes and a building project which leases offices to Cosatu and its affiliates in the region. There are plans for a building/construction co-op for house extensions and renovations as well as a consumer co-op and a funeral and transport co-op.

ACTWUSA

A co-op has been established for the retrenched workers at Frame in Durban. 800 workers will be in the co-op by June. The co-op will be run like a factory with a production and financial manager. Discipline will be started by management but actual decisions will be taken by shop stewards. Surplus will be used to start co-ops in East London and Ladysmith. The 3 projects will create jobs for 3,000 workers. The union will be able to hire and fire management.

Education for liberation!

INTERNATIONAL

Namibian workers speak

The workers struggle in Namibia has grown powerfully in the last few years with the building of national industrial unions under the umbrella of the National Union of Namibian Worker (NUNW). Last year Namibian workers and students built the biggest ever general strike in the history of Namibia. Mass struggles like these have been a major factor, together with the defeat of South African forces at Cuito Cuanavale, in forcing the Botha government to agree to independence for Namibia this year under UN Resolution 435. In the first of a series of interviews from the NUNW's paper Namibian Worker, Namibian shop stewards talk about their need to build a strong federation in Namibia.

Q: How will the federation help weaker trade unions?

Comrade Groenwald: The federation is the eye that must see national issues and set national goals. If a weak union has no recognition agreements, the federation must push that union so that national goals are reached.

The eye must monitor whether organisation is up to certain standards - a standard which comes from the wishes and demands of workers. Sometimes during national action workers are dismissed. When contact with management breaks down, workers can do nothing. The federation must then step in. They must assist the workers in approaching management and give guidance on how to take the matter up.

Kamoto: The federation must take over national co-ordination of union education.

Groenwald: That is true. But it is also necessary for each affiliate to do their own education. In

this way the education programme will address the special problems in each sector.

Kapere: The federation is in the best position to make contact at national level with other structures e.g. national student and teacher organisations. In this way workers will have more say over education of their children. The



federation can tackle issues which are not directly connected to the workplace.

Q: Many people feel the federation will solve the problems of the affiliates. Is this not hoping for too much? We have so few people with skills and experience.

Matsi: My feeling is that the

federation cannot solve all the problems. But with a federation we have a better chance than without one.

Ndellenga: Through a federation more people are involved in exercising control. If people in one union are acting undemocratically, then other unions will be able to challenge them.

Q: In the light of the small number of factories and the massive unemployment in Namibia, how can the federation overcome these problems and win better conditions for workers?

Tinta: It will be a huge problem, especially with the present system. The federation must unite and organise the unemployed and start projects where workers can learn new skills.

Esau: Because of the small factories with few workers, worker action is doomed to failure. Workers are simply sacked. Others are taken on and the production carries on. The aim of a federation is to get many factories to take united action.

Tinta: We must also remember that solidarity action is illegal. The working class has no say in the formation of these laws. But the unlawfulness of striking is a joke, because a legal strike does not give any protection to striking workers. Legal or illegal, workers can still be dismissed. Only with strike action throughout the industry can we counter this situation.

Groenwald: At the moment workers are not controlling the economy. But when a government comes to power that we can negotiate with, we can begin to have an influence.

Workers of the world unite!

INTERNATIONAL

Q: How can the federation fight for a Living Wage?

Tinta: The federation should have a research department to gather and study information. This will help us know what we mean by a living wage. It will also help to struggle for a living wage by using the structures of the federation. Our demands must be made nationally. For example an 8 hour day and a 5 day week. If this is refused the federation can declare a dispute. This is impossible without a federation where the industrial unions meet to plan and strategise. All our key points of struggle, all our demands, must be tabled nationally.

Matsi: The federation can make the people aware of what a living wage is. What are the rights that we must have. If we understand, we will all take part in this struggle. Say there are workers which have reached the national minimum already. They will have to strike together with us out of solidarity.

Q: We want trade union unity. What should we do about unions outside NUNW?

Matsi: There must be a coming together between us and workers outside NUNW. We must try

and win these people over. We must explain how we work. We must meet to get closer to each other. To convince each other that we are all workers in this land.

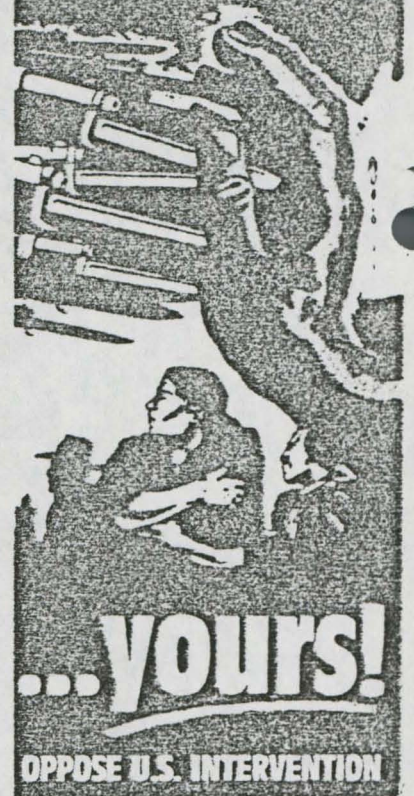
Kapere: We can't throw those workers away. We can never say: forget about those workers, we don't need them.

Mohewa: We must let the public know the strong points and victories of our federation. Then other workers will come to us. Maybe we should recruit them on an industrial basis. We must talk to them, tell them why we think our federation is a good thing.

Tinta: This is a controversial issue. We must look at the reasons why we need unity. Because we are oppressed and exploited. We need unity to fight back. We have one common goal: to smash oppression and exploitation. We can hold seminars and invite members of other unions. We must have the courage to invite workers to seminars where we can explain our position and they can explain theirs.



The people
of Central
America
need a
hand...



International Briefs

• A big campaign has been launched in Britain to demand the release of Oscar Mpetha. The 79 year old unionist was sent to jail for 5 years.

The campaign is supported by the ANC and SACTU as well as 38 British trade unions. Cde Mpetha was a founder member of SACTU and worked for the African Food & Canning Workers Union which is now part of FAWU. COSATU has a CEC resolution demanding his release.

• 4 Phillipino trade unions were assassinated in January. Two of them (a local chairperson and an organiser) were shot dead by Phillipino armed forces who came to the plantation looking for the organiser. Another local office chairperson was shot by right wing death squads outside the Nestle factory canteen. The fourth comrade was murdered at a furniture factory. He was last seen with the company's security guards.

• The British government is sharpening its knives for a new attack on workers. The Employ-

ment Bill was published in November last year. It attacks:

- The right to make industrial court claims. Workers will have to pay 150 pounds deposit before a case is taken up.
- Time off for trade union work: Stewards will get "lime off" to work on issues "covered in the agreement." This is a clear attack on the right to hold joint shop steward meetings.
- Workers in small firms. Where a company has less than 20 workers, the workers have no right to get information on disciplinary procedures.

Build international worker solidarity!

CULTURE

You make the union strong

It's you comrades in the struggle
That make the unions strong,
And meetings and gatherings is where you belong.

Some come and do the share,
While others just sit and stare.
On meeting days the halls are empty.
That day everyone had to do plenty.

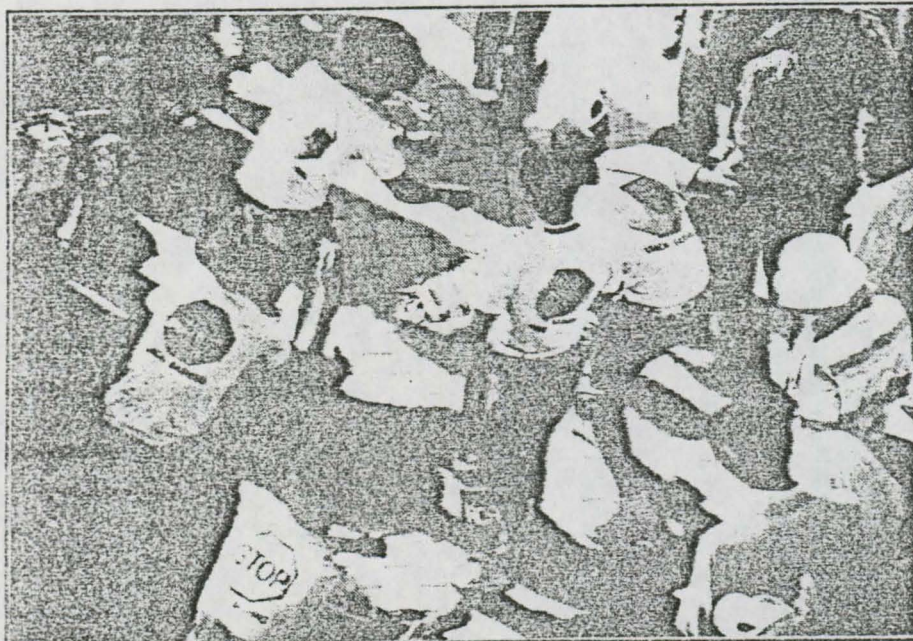
On pavements they sit, on corners and in shops,
Forgetting the fact that when in trouble,
It's the shop stewards who do the saving job.

Comrades, how long will you sit in the sun and wonder?
The bosses can see it, that is why their voices sound like thunder.
We need you comrades to mobilise and organise,
So that the bosses can see the unions still rise.

We plea to you comrades, to stand up and say your say,
To win the fight, to live another day,
Join hands and stand together,
You will be defeated never.

It's meetings that make the unions stringer,
The road in the struggle is getting longer.
It's the masses and support that is needed,
That way we will never be defeated.

By Comrade John (FAWU - Western Cape)



Culture Briefs

Wits and Natal Regions of COSATU have been the most active in culture. These are some of the events that COSATU Culture has been involved in:

- COSATU Wits Cultural Rally - 4/12/88.
- Education and cultural meeting in Kokstad with COSATU and FAWU - 11/12/88.
- CCAWUSA Educational Cultural Day featuring COSATU poets, Jazz Pioneers, Clermont Harmonious Singers and the Kwamashu Youth League Cultural Group - 14 /1/89.
- Kwamashu Youth Theatre Workshop - 20/1/89
- COSAW Poetry Workshop - 20/1/89.
- NACOS Sports Conference in Durban - 28/1/89
- COSATU Cultural Unit and Nacos will mark May Day this year with a joint sports meeting on 29 April. The venue will be Curries Fountain. Sixteen teams from the 2 COSATU regions in Natal will take part.
- A culture and labour seminar will take place in Harare in May. The seminar is organised by NED-COM. Regions with active cultural structures will send 6 delegates each.
- Highveld Region held a 3-day cultural seminar on 16 March. matters on the agenda were: role of culture; non-racial sports struggle; COSATU education; election of a regional co-ordinating committee; and media.
- A 2-week long Arts Festival organised by COSATU's Cultural, Media and Education Departments is planned for most Regional centres before the Third COSATU National Congress in July.

Forward with worker culture!



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Hunger strikers are victorious

The success of the hunger strike in obtaining the release of some detainees has been a significant victory for democratic action, not to mention the courage of the hunger striking detainees themselves.

But with many detainees still in prison and those released under severe restrictions, the problem is far from over. Progressive organisations are determined not to let the matter rest until all detainees are unconditionally released.

The widespread sympathy actions generated by the hunger strike have indicated to the government that South Africans are sickened by the iniquitous system of detention without trial - and by implication, the entire State of Emergency as well.

The action of the hunger strike was a desperate, last-ditch attempt by detainees, some of whom have been incarcerated for almost three years, to bring their plight to the attention of the world. But it has also succeeded in re-mobilising the progressive movement.

There is no doubt that with so many of its members in detention, the progressive movement has been weakened by the government's systematic and brutal stifling of peaceful opposition to apartheid. But the hunger strike



Black Sash picket in Cape Town - the nation-wide protest goes on

campaign, with its broad, grass-roots appeal across the socio-economic spectrum, has given the progressive movement the opportunity to regroup and once more mobilise people against the many evils of apartheid.

At the same time, it must be borne in mind that a hunger strike is not a means to be used lightly. Some of the original hunger strikers from Johannesburg Prison came close to permanently damaging their health, and had the government not backed down, there is a real possibility that someone might have died.

Minister of "Law and Order" Adriaan Vlok was aware that the

death of one of the hunger strikers would bring down the wrath of both South Africa's majority and the world on his government.

This is partly because of the sheer emotional response which would be engendered by someone starving themselves to death in protest - but it is also because the system of detention without trial is itself so impossible to justify.

The hunger strike succeeded in bringing enormous pressure to bear on the Nationalist government, both locally and internationally. Within South Africa, people from all walks of life, in

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The year ahead for the
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**Who dunnit?
Attacks on anti-apartheid
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**Cultural action:
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meets the Soweto CF.**

**Struggle in Court:
Apartheid's opponents
on trial.**

**Rita Ndzanga -
Detained - but the
struggle is still her life.**

Editorial

Hunger strike - action goes on

The past three and a half years of the State of Emergency has posed many challenges for the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (Jodac).

Some of our members have been detained, often for long periods. Although detention has not changed the convictions of these people, Jodac has had to find new ways of operating.

This has taken much time and effort. So often it is the people in leadership positions who are detained, deliberately of course.

The challenge is to encourage all members of Jodac to take an active, leading role in the organisation, precisely to prevent these kind of gaps occurring.

The restrictions the Emergency has brought with it have also played their part in disrupting Jodac's work. The regulations are often so vague as to make it almost impossible to be sure whether what the organisation is doing is contravening the law or not.

It has taken time for Jodac to come to terms with the fact that despite these regulations it is still possible, and necessary, to play an effective role in bringing the message of the democratic movement to the white community.

In a time when government has placed enormous restrictions on the flow of information, new and dynamic ways of continuing our work have had to be found.

Thus Jodac's first event of 1989 is a conference about the transformation and reconstruction of South African society.

Participation in the discussions by the broadest range of concerned people will determine our effectiveness for the future.

communities across the nation, rose up to express their abhorrence at detentions and their support for the hunger strikers.

Lawyers, journalists, women, workers, students and communities staged protests and embarked on solidarity fasts, while the hunger strike spread rapidly through prisons around the country.

International labour and anti-apartheid organisations added their weight to the campaign, pushing their governments to protest and to move further towards imposing significant economic sanctions against the intransigent South African regime.

The force of the campaign has shaken the Nationalist government, already rudderless and lost in the quagmire of its leader-

ship crisis.

The government has done its best to defuse the crisis by releasing some detainees, particularly the more high-profile ones, while keeping the majority in prison.

But those released have been heavily restricted. More people are still being detained. And there are still detainees who have been in prison for lengthy periods of time, without ever being found guilty in a court of law of any offence.

There are still detainees who are demanding their right to freedom through the last means open to them - a hunger strike, if necessary to the death.

It is up to us in the democratic movement, and to all those who love peace and justice, to support the detainees' desperate action.

Broederstroom 3 remain defiant in court

The "Broederstroom Three" made their first court appearance on January 25th this year. They entered the dock with their fists raised, shouting "Amandla!"

Damian de Lange, Susan Westcott and Iain Robertson were arrested in May 1988 at Broederstroom, and were held under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act for over eight months.

They face 26 charges, including terrorism and illegal possession of arms. Many of the charges brought against them relate to the Benoni bomb blast in which a South African Air Force bus was blown up in March 1988.

According to the charge sheet, members of the Broederstroom cell were operating in the PWV area as early as June 1986, and at least two of them were allegedly in South Africa for over ten months before their arrest.

If the state allegations are correct, this is the first time in over 20 years that an all-white MK cell has been exposed.

The three accused are ordinary South Africans who are caught in the dilemmas of apartheid and white minority rule.

The three are currently remanded in custody. They will next appear in the Pretoria Regional court when their trial proper begins on 12 June.

Rainbow trial changes colour

In the so-called Rainbow Trial in Cape Town, of Tony Yengeni and 13 others, matters have recently taken a strange turn. Shortly before the trial was finally due to start in the Supreme Court, the prosecution withdrew the charges of treason against all of the accused.

Three of the accused, Yengeni, Schreiner and Nyamza (accused numbers one, two and three) will instead be charged under the old Terrorism Act.

The three are accused of undergoing military training outside South Africa before 1982, when the Terrorism Act was replaced by the Internal Security Act.

The new charge sheet was not available at the time of writing, and the implications of the new charges are not yet clear. One of the results might be a further postponement of the trial.

Three of the accused are currently out on bail, but the others have now been in detention for up to 18 months.

With the sudden shift in attack from the prosecution, the case is in a state of

flux and it remains to be seen how the accused will plead and how the defence, led by Dawie de Villiers SC, will be conducted.

The trial is remarkable in that it is one of the few trials in South African history that crosses barriers of race, class, age and gender.

The morale of the trialists is high, and their spirit of defiance and commitment strong, as they have demonstrated with their singing, toyi-toyiing entrances to court.

One policeman at the Supreme Court was recently heard to remark that of all the political trials he has attended, this group could sing the best!

The accused are: Tony Yengeni (34), Jenny Schreiner (32), Lumka Nyamza (25), Michael Lumbambo (35), Mbutu Nduku (26), Wellington Nkwandla (31), Mtheteleli Titana (26), Gary Kruser (27), Christopher Giffard (27), Charles Mahlale (37), Alpheus Ndude (45), Gertrude Fester (36), Zuruyah Abass (35) and Colleen Lombard (37).

Rita Ndzanga, trade unionist and dressmaker to many notable ladies in the struggle, is in a coma in hospital.

With her warm personality and great heart, Rita has been a women's leader for four decades, though always the workhorse rather than a leadership figure.

Rita and her husband Lawrence have both been trade unionists and activists who have been part of the struggle for a democratic, non-racial South Africa from the early 1950's.

In Lawrence's case it was a struggle to the death, for he died in detention on January 9th, 1977.

Rita was secretary of the Toy Worker's Union in the 1950's, and was also active in Sactu. She worked at Sactu Head Office during the 1960 emergency, and in 1964 she was banned from trade union activities.

In 1969, Rita and Lawrence, together with 19 others, were charged under the Suppression of Communism Act. Rita was kept in solitary confinement, and detained for a period of 17 months.

Rita's in a coma - but her spirit will always be free

After two acquittals, being re-charged each time, Rita and the others were finally released. In 1976, Rita and Lawrence were again held, this time under the Terrorism Act. Lawrence died in detention on January 9th. Rita was released on bail on January 10th.

In recent times, Rita has been involved in the General and Allied Workers Union.

This stalwart woman of the struggle wrote, of the boycott of the regime's Republic Day celebrations in 1981:

"We the oppressed people have no cause to celebrate when the basic demands of the Freedom Charter have not been given to the people... What we want is a democratic South Africa, where all have a say in making the laws."

In Memoriam

One-time principal aide to Nelson Mandela, Johnstone (Johnny) Makatini, died on December 3rd last year, aged 56. Makatini was head of the ANC's International Affairs Department and the organisation's chief representative to the United Nations from 1977 to 1985.

He was also a well-known figure in the Organisation of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Makatini was widely credited with formulating the ANC's policy of winning support from both the eastern and western blocs against apartheid.

Within the ANC he opposed the efforts of the South African Communist Party to dominate the movement, arguing that it must remain as broad-based as possible.

He had been a member of the ANC national executive since 1974.

Born in Durban, he trained as a teacher, but quickly became an ANC activist. As a student organiser during the 1960 and 1961 protests, he was arrested on numerous occasions.

In 1962 he was instructed to work for the ANC abroad, and he had lived in exile ever since.

The Forsyth Saga

The "Forsyth Saga", the exotic exploits of police spy Olivia Forsyth and her accomplice Joy Harnden, received star treatment from the Argus Group newspapers and the SABC.

It is regrettable that the Argus company lent the power of free publicity to this blatant piece of propaganda, without the usual journalistic practice of giving the right of reply to Nusas, Jodac, ECC and other groups smeared in this security police publicity stunt.

The progressive organisations pointed out the fabricated nature of Forsyth's account at a press conference shortly after the "expose". The following is a summary of the other side of the story, which we gave to the press.

Forsyth's whole tale hinges on her account of "Operation Olivetti". The basis of this is that she chose to make a carefully planned false confession in order to infiltrate the ANC successfully.

On the one hand she claims she had "very strong radical credentials" which she acquired over a period of four or

"How could a self-confessed spy have better access to the ANC than an 'iron clad radical'?"

five years. But her actual three-and-a-half years of spying in progressive organisations left her "credentials" a lot more shaky than she admits.

Nevertheless, after painstakingly building up this cover she then blows it with a "planned" confession that she is a spy.

How, we ask, could a self-confessed spy possibly have better access to the ANC than an "iron-clad radical"?

Almost equally astounding is her claim that her detention at the ANC's Quatro Camp was pre-planned and welcomed by her handlers.

Forsyth claims one of her briefs was to obtain information about the highest levels of the ANC. But a detention

camp is surely not the place to find this information, especially when the ANC's headquarters are in Lusaka.

The policewoman also refuses to divulge details of her confession to the ANC. But if she has already given these details to the ANC, why should she refuse to let the South African public know them?

If, as Forsyth claims, 70% of her story to the ANC was disinformation it

"A detention camp is surely not the place to find information"

would seem rather counterproductive for her to tell them this now, when such "disinformation" would still be having its destructive effects.

According to Forsyth, the transparency of her cover for travel in Africa, "John Fitzgerald and Associates", was pre-planned. But she made determined efforts to get jobs in progressive projects only a month before her departure for Harare.

Only when she failed to get these jobs (the co-ordinators had been tipped off that she might be a spy), did she take the Fitzgerald job - a move which raised the suspicions of even her closest friends.

The spy also tries to smear organisations like Nusas by claiming her membership of them was "an ideal stepping stone" for infiltrating the ANC.

But no-one from those organisations was ever linked to the ANC during all of her seven-year spying career.

Moreover, she justifies her spying in progressive organisations by mentioning people convicted of ANC activities, like Karl Niehaus and Marian Sparg - but none of those she lists were ever members of these organisations.

Another fallacious claim is that Forsyth rose to the position of "Chairman" of the End Conscription Campaign. But she never was an ECC chairperson, nor did she manage to reach "the highest levels" of Nusas and other organisations, as she also claims.

This failure was precisely because of the mounting suspicion which sur-

rounded her organisational activities, which first arose shortly after her arrival in Grahamstown in 1982.

Forsyth failed repeatedly to obtain any significant position in Nusas, the Grahamstown SRC, or UDF structures. In fact, by mid-1985 she was blocked from any progress in Nusas and UDF circles, and was isolated from the leadership.

More lies come to light when Forsyth speaks of her relationship with fellow-spy Joy Harnden. Forsyth claims she made "appropriate recommendations" to Jodac about Harnden in 1984 - despite the fact that Forsyth had no contact with Jodac at that time.

In September 1985, after learning about the spy allegations surrounding Harnden, Forsyth said she had never before met her colleague.

Forsyth's "surprise" that Harnden was elected to the Jodac executive after "only four months" is also misleading. Harnden had been a Jodac member for over eight months before she was elected as Jodac's minutes secretary.

It must be borne in mind too that Jodac is an open organisation, and any member may stand for election.

But soon after Harnden's election, suspicions about her emerged. She was

"Soon after Harnden's election, suspicions about her emerged."

withdrawn from the job of alternate representative to the Johannesburg area committee of the UDF after only three months, mainly because of her "rascist manner".

She was also withdrawn from her job at the Black Sash's Transvaal Rural Action Committee that year because of complaints that she acted "like a white madam" when dealing with black people.

Suspicions about Harnden were also aroused by her attempts to distribute ANC literature, as well as her tendency to adopt the most radical positions on issues despite her short time on Jodac and her conservative background.

In June 1985 a full investigation into

Hamden was initiated, which then revealed security police connections and a concealed conservative outlook.

Hamden was then blocked in her attempts to reach the leadership levels of the ECC and Jodac.

However, it was only 18 months later, when the executives of both Jodac and the ECC were convinced enough information had been collected to justify it, that she was removed from these organisations.

Hamden's expulsion from the progressive movement took place before Forsyth exposed her to the ANC.

Forsyth claims she told the ANC about Hamden as part of a pre-arranged plan to increase her own credibility. Presumably this is also the explanation she would provide for giving information which led to the capture of two black spies.

"...a series of fabrications, designed to cover-up a botched spy operation."

But the strange fact of one spy exposing three others in order to appear genuine to her captors, is far more convincingly explained by the fact that Forsyth wanted to be released - and her betrayal of her colleagues arose from this hope.

What clearly emerges from this analysis is that Forsyth's much-published story is a series of fabrications, designed to cover up a botched spy operation.

The saga is a propaganda ploy filled with the repetition of tired old SABC shibboleths - that the ANC leadership is divided, that they don't want Mandela released, that their training is poor, that they are inflicted with Aids and alcoholism and that they blow up supermarkets as a matter of policy.

"an insidious attack on non-racialism."

Forsyth's inventive tale is also an insidious attack on non-racialism. She continually implies that divisions exist between white and black in both the ANC and in democratic organisations - and that as a result of this, together with the fact of her own infiltration, she implies that whites in these structures cannot be trusted by their black colleagues.

The mass democratic movement (MDM) faces an enormous challenge this year. The conditions are favourable for advance - but the question is whether the MDM will be able to develop a political programme to take advantage of these conditions and break out of the strategic stalemate.

Political conditions favour the MDM for the following reasons:

* The state is facing an all-embracing crisis which it will never be able to solve. It lacks a clear political programme, and so has to fall back on repression to survive.

There is a crisis of leadership within the National Party, an economic crisis, a crisis of international legitimacy, and so on.

* The masses of our country continue to demonstrate their will to oppose the regime and sacrifice for freedom. We only need to look at the determination of the hunger strikers, of the people of Mogopa and other rural areas who continue to resist forced removals, at the rent boycotters and at the hundreds of thousands of workers and students who respond to stayaway calls.

The October elections were a last-ditch attempt by the regime to gain control. They hoped to hide the reality of police and army control through constitutional schemes.

The elections were a dismal failure for the regime. From now on they have no option but repression.

* Despite the weaknesses of the MDM, it has won centrality in the anti-apartheid struggle. Its moral and political influence extends far beyond its ranks.

Today the demands of the MDM for the release of political prisoners, unbanning the ANC etc. are the demands of the entire range of anti-apartheid forces.

* The imminent independence of Namibia can only create more favourable conditions for the struggle in South Africa.

* Mandela is going to be released. The only questions are when and how.

But it is not good enough for us

in the MDM just to take advantage of these favourable conditions. We need to turn them into an offensive, to regain the political initiative and push forward for victory.

The key prerequisite to regain the offensive is the rebuilding and re-organising of the structures of the MDM. This is of necessity a slow process, but it has begun in places all over the country.

The process requires in some instances a break with previous ways and creative thinking to adjust to changed conditions.

Any process of rebuilding must reflect our commitment to democracy, non-racialism and the participation of all sectors.

As the Nats become increasingly politically bankrupt, it is more and more incumbent on the MDM to harness the increasing numbers of anti-apartheid forces into an initiative opposed to the regime.

1988 saw the Anti-Apartheid Conference initiative. We need to look at what initiatives at local, national and sectoral levels can further harness the mounting efforts to isolate the Nats.

The independence of Namibia, release of political prisoners, future of the Group Areas Act and other segregationist legislation are all potential crisis points for the Nats.

Whether or not they become crisis points depends on how the MDM responds to these issues.

We need to follow the example of the hunger strikers and take up these issues in ways which will intensify the crisis for the regime and make gains for us.

The time ahead will not be easy for us. If the banning of the Rainbow Concert and the occupation of Wits Great Hall by the police are anything to go by, the state is going to make every effort this year to reduce our legal space even further.

The slogan "Victory is in our hands" is very applicable at the moment. It is only going to be through the efforts of everyone of us that we will be able to take advantage of the conditions that face us.

Advance and develop

The lawless society

Right-wing terrorism and the criminals who are never caught

Every year, numerous attacks are carried out on anti-apartheid organisations and individuals. No-one has ever been arrested or prosecuted for any of these attacks, or for that matter for the murders of anti-apartheid and civil-rights campaigners, which have also become common occurrences.

Who perpetrates these crimes? Right-wing thugs or vigilantes operating randomly? Burglars, vandals or common criminals? Or some other party? Here is a very shortened list of some of the attacks carried out since 1986. Judge for yourself.

1986

March - The Johannesburg offices of the Release Mandela Campaign (RMC) are bombed, causing an estimated R20 000 damage.

June - An arson attack at the Braamfontein offices of the Community Resources and Information Centre (Cric), destroying equipment and causing extensive damage.

August - The home of Durban civil rights lawyer Kwenza Mlaba is petrol bombed.

September - Equipment and files are stolen from the Port Elizabeth News Agency (PEN).

- The Wits University office of Dr Tom Lodge, an academic who writes about anti-apartheid organisations, including the ANC, is destroyed by fire.

November - The Port Elizabeth branch of lawyers Krish Naidoo and Associates is broken into. All documents relating to detention cases in the area are stolen, along with telephones and office equipment.

1987

February - The home of Albertina Sisulu is attacked by arsonists.

March - Thieves break into the Johannesburg offices of Ravan Press. Money is stolen

and slogans are painted on the walls.

- The RC church in Vryburg, which houses offices of the UDF, Detainees' Support Committee (Descom), and various unions, is burnt down.

May - The offices of the Eastern Cape Council of Churches in PE are broken into three days after they moved there. All files belonging to the Dependants Conference - containing information about political prisoners and detainees - are stolen, along with four office telephones.

- Cosatu House is bombed, causing serious structural damage. The building is declared unsafe.

- The offices of the South African Railways and Harbours Workers Union (SARWU) are vandalised and have to close down.

- Tudor Mansions, Johannesburg, housing the Transvaal Students' Congress (TRANSCO), the National Student Co-ordinating Committee (NASCOC) and several Cosatu affiliates is firebombed and extensively damaged. The organisations are ordered to vacate the offices as a result.

- The Krugersdorp offices of MAWU are vandalised.

- The Nelspruit offices of Cosatu are destroyed by fire.

- The Durban print unit offices of Cosatu are broken into and burgled.

July - A bomb explodes at the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre in Roodepoort, damaging offices and equipment.

- MAWU offices in Krugersdorp are burnt out.

August - The Kimberly offices of the National Union of Mineworkers are gutted by fire.

- Cape Town's Community House, which accommodates 25 progressive organisations, Cosatu's western Cape offices and its affiliates, is bombed.

September - The Vereeniging offices of Cosatu are broken into and important documents stolen. The second time that month the offices were broken into.

- A fire occurs at the Johannesburg of-

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