

# Learn and Teach

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WELCOME HOME  
COMRADES!

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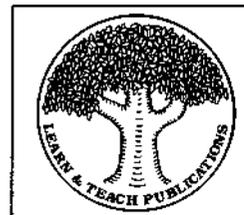
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# WELCOME HOME!



The Welcome Home rally on 29 October 1989 for the released ANC leaders was the biggest political gathering this country has ever seen. It was a day packed with excitement and emotion... a day that will forever live in the hearts of those who were fortunate to be there.

**T**HE buses began arriving as early as seven in the morning. Hundreds of buses — some from as far as Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, others all the way from Lesotho and Swaziland and Botswana — all leaving huge clouds of red dust behind them as they roared into the gravel parking lot of Soweto's new Soccer City.

Then came the taxis, private cars, more buses. People on bicycles, on foot, and some even on their mother's backs. Wave upon wave of excited comrades poured into the huge stadium to welcome home their leaders who had two weeks earlier been released from prison.

Ahmed Kathrada, Wilton Mkwayi, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi, Oscar Mpetha, Raymond Mhlaba and Walter Sisulu. Each one a giant of the struggle. Each one a hero. Each one a time-tested leader of the people.

The khaki-uniformed marshalls — some with walkie talkies — politely directed the people to their seats. By eleven o'clock the place was full. A sea of over 85 000 faces, toyi-toying, chanting revolutionary slogans, singing freedom songs and clapping to poetry from the likes of Alfred Qabula and the people's poet, Mzwakhe Mbuli.

Above the stage, the green, black and gold flag of the African National Congress proudly fluttered side by side with the red flag of the South African Communist Party (SACP). The stage itself was wrapped in a big ANC banner.

But the colours of the ANC and SACP could not only be seen on the stage. They were everywhere, throughout the stadium, carried high by the people. Proof that the majority of the South

African people fully support the historical ANC-SACP alliance.

### "THE ANC LIVES!"

Cyril Ramaphosa — general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and a member of the National Reception Committee (NRC) which organised the rally — introduced himself as co-chairperson of the rally. He said that the ANC was going to speak to the people that day.

"The ANC lives, it is amongst us and its leadership is going to speak to us," said Ramaphosa.

"All of us who are gathered here are a living proof that the government has failed to drive the ANC into darkness. The ANC has over the years gathered strength within the breast of millions of our people. They may have banned the ANC in paper, but it lives in our hearts today."

Ramaphosa then announced that the ANC leaders were ready to enter the stadium. The people went mad with happiness. For most in the stadium, it would be the first time they would see their beloved leaders in the flesh.

Before the leaders came in, a unit of "people's soldiers", entered the stadium marching the goosestep — just like soldiers from the socialist countries, such as the Soviet Union. These "soldiers" were the "roaring young lions" of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO). They were led by Thandi Modise, the first MK woman soldier to be imprisoned in South Africa. She was released last year, after eight years in jail.

Finally it was the turn of the leaders — the moment everybody had been waiting for. As they entered, the crowd



The People's leaders (from left to right) Raymond Mhlaba, Oscar Mpetha, Andrew Mlangeni, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi and Wilton Mkwayi

stood up as one. The stadium shook as the people gave them a welcome that they would never forget.

### WAVING TO THE PEOPLE

The leaders slowly walked around the field waving to the people, as they made their way to the stage. Each walked with a marshal on either side, with a third holding a red and black Cosatu umbrella to shield them from the harsh sun. The crowd was moved by the sight of the "President of the Western Cape", 81 year old Oscar Mpetha, being pushed in a wheelchair. Behind him, last in the procession, was the tall, dignified figure of Rev. Beyers Naude.

Shouts of "Viva ANC" and "Long Live!" could be heard loud and very clear by the hundreds of cops parked outside, and perhaps even by those of them

who circled in their helicopter above the stadium.

Following close behind the leaders were their partners in love and struggle: Ma-Sisulu, Ma-Motsoaledi, Ma-Mlangeni and Ma-Mhlaba. Sadly, Ma-Irene Mkayi did not live to see this happy day. She died last year.

It was also sad to see Ma-Mandela walking without her husband, who is still in prison after 27 years. One could not help thinking that her time will surely come soon.

A short while later, the crowd once got to its feet again to welcome veteran activist, Helen Joseph and Nokukhanya Luthuli, wife of the late President of the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli, as they were helped onto the stage in wheelchairs to join the leadership.

At about one o' clock, Ramaphosa invited the Cosatu Living Wage Choir to lead the people in the singing of the National Anthem. It was a moving moment, all those people, fists in the air, united by a vision of a new South Africa, singing the beautiful words of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika.

### TAMBO SPEAKS!

Ramaphosa read a message of support from the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC to the jubilant crowd. This was followed by messages of support from a number of organisations and governments around the world. The last one to be read was from Joe Slovo, Secretary General of the South African Communist Party (SACP).

It was then announced that the National Welcome Back Rally was going to be "officially" opened by the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo. His opening speech was read by Murphy Morobe, the acting-publicity secretary of the UDF. Morobe co-chaired the rally with Cyril Ramaphosa.

In his message, President Tambo welcomed the released ANC leaders. He praised the people saying that it was through their efforts that the leaders were released — and not because of any change of heart in the government.

The President also thanked the released leaders for the contribution they had made to the struggle. He saluted Nelson Mandela and the many other political prisoners who he said are an inspiration to the the South African people. He urged the people not to rest until Mandela and all other political prisoners have been released.

When the president spoke of his health and said that he was recovering from



President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo

his stroke, the crowd cheered and clapped with happiness.

After President Tambo officially opened the rally, Peter Mokaba, the President of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO), introduced the first of the released leaders who was going to speak, Raymond Mhlaba.

### "MAKE YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT!"

Mhlaba told the crowd he wanted to talk about the history of the ANC because there were people who were saying things with the aim of destroying the movement. "But for people like ourselves," he said, "we need to make a brief review of the history of this movement. And thereafter, we shall be in a position to make our own judgement."

Mhlaba's long speech covered all the stages in the history of the struggle — from the oppression of the people in

the last century, to the Boer War in 1899, and to the birth of the ANC in 1912. He spoke about the Nationalists coming to power in 1948 and how the ANC launched the Defiance Campaign to fight unjust apartheid laws in 1952.

He spoke about the birth of the Freedom Charter, the huge Treason Trial that began in 1956, and how the ANC had no choice but to launch the armed struggle in 1961.

"The formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe was not a result of the fact that the ANC is blood-thirsty, but due to oppressive laws," said Mhlaba.

The ANC leader had a special message for traditional leaders in South Africa. He urged them to join the struggle and follow the direction of other traditional leaders such as Paramount Chief Sekhukhune, Hintsa and Chief Albert Luthuli. He applauded the traditional leaders for organising themselves into the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa).

"We know that, at all times when the chiefs identify themselves with the peoples struggles, they are welcomed by the masses," he said.

### **"OUR NOBLE STRUGGLE"**

The second leader to speak was Walter Sisulu, former Secretary General of the ANC. He greeted the people on behalf of all the leaders who had just been released, as well as from Nelson Mandela and the hundreds of other comrades-in-arms who are still behind bars.

"We salute you, the people of South Africa, for the courage, determination and sacrifices you have made under the most difficult and repressive conditions to ensure that the flag of our

struggle is held high. Your efforts acted as a constant source of inspiration during our long years in prison."

Sisulu went on to salute the ANC leaders and rank and file members of the organisation who had worked so hard and earned the organisation the mantle of leader of the liberation struggle.

He also saluted the United Democratic Front and its member organisation, COSATU, as well as all those governments and organisations around the world who support the struggle. He had a special word of thanks to President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia for housing the headquarters of the ANC and thousands of South African exiles. And for President Fidel Castro and the people of Cuba "for the heroic role they have played in the fight against colonialism in this region."

Sisulu then looked at the results of the government's policies — corruption, inflation, unstable bantustans and a tri-cameral parliament that is in disgrace. He said that brutal repression under three States of Emergency have failed to break the spirit of resistance of the people. He called on the people to intensify the struggle.

"The building of disciplined and accountable organisations of our people must remain one of our principle tasks," he said.

Sisulu then turned his attention to the violence in Natal, which he called "a blot on our noble struggle for liberation." He called on Cosatu, the UDF and Inkatha to continue their search for peace.

### **"WE STAND FOR PEACE!"**

Turning to the question of negotiations, Sisulu said: "The ANC has throughout

its history been committed to the politics of peace and negotiations... We stood for peace in 1912 when we were formed, we stood for peace in our long struggle of resistance, we stand for peace today and we will stand for peace tomorrow."

Speaking from his experience as a member of the ANC, Sisulu said that in 1952 — when he was the Secretary-General of the ANC — he and the late Dr Moroka, who was then the President of the ANC, wrote to Prime Minister Malan calling on him to negotiate.

He said that the government had been invited to the Congress of the People in 1955, but they did not come. This was followed by a letter from ANC President Chief Albert Luthuli in 1958 to Prime Minister Strydom, urging him to negotiate with the movement.

In 1960 the government banned the ANC and declared a State of Emergency. Thousands of people were detained or forced into exile. The following year, Nelson Mandela — who was underground at the time — wrote to Dr Verwoerd, asking him to call a National Convention.

All these pleas for negotiation through the years had fallen on deaf ears — and it was for this reason that the ANC had no choice but to embark on armed struggle "to defend our people and to fight for our freedom."

In spite of all the bitter experiences, said Sisulu, the ANC will not allow the past to stop it from constantly searching for the shortest possible path to freedom. He said that the ANC was in agreement with the Harare Declaration which was recently adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)

and the Non-Aligned Movement. This declaration states that it is up to the South African government to create the right climate for negotiations.

"Before negotiations could take place," says Sisulu "we call on the government to meet our five basic demands. Firstly, to release all political prisoners and detainees without any conditions. Secondly, to lift all bans and restrictions on all organisations that are banned or restricted. Thirdly, to remove all troops from the townships. Fourthly, to end the State of Emergency and abolish all repressive laws. And lastly, to stop all political trials and the hanging of political prisoners."

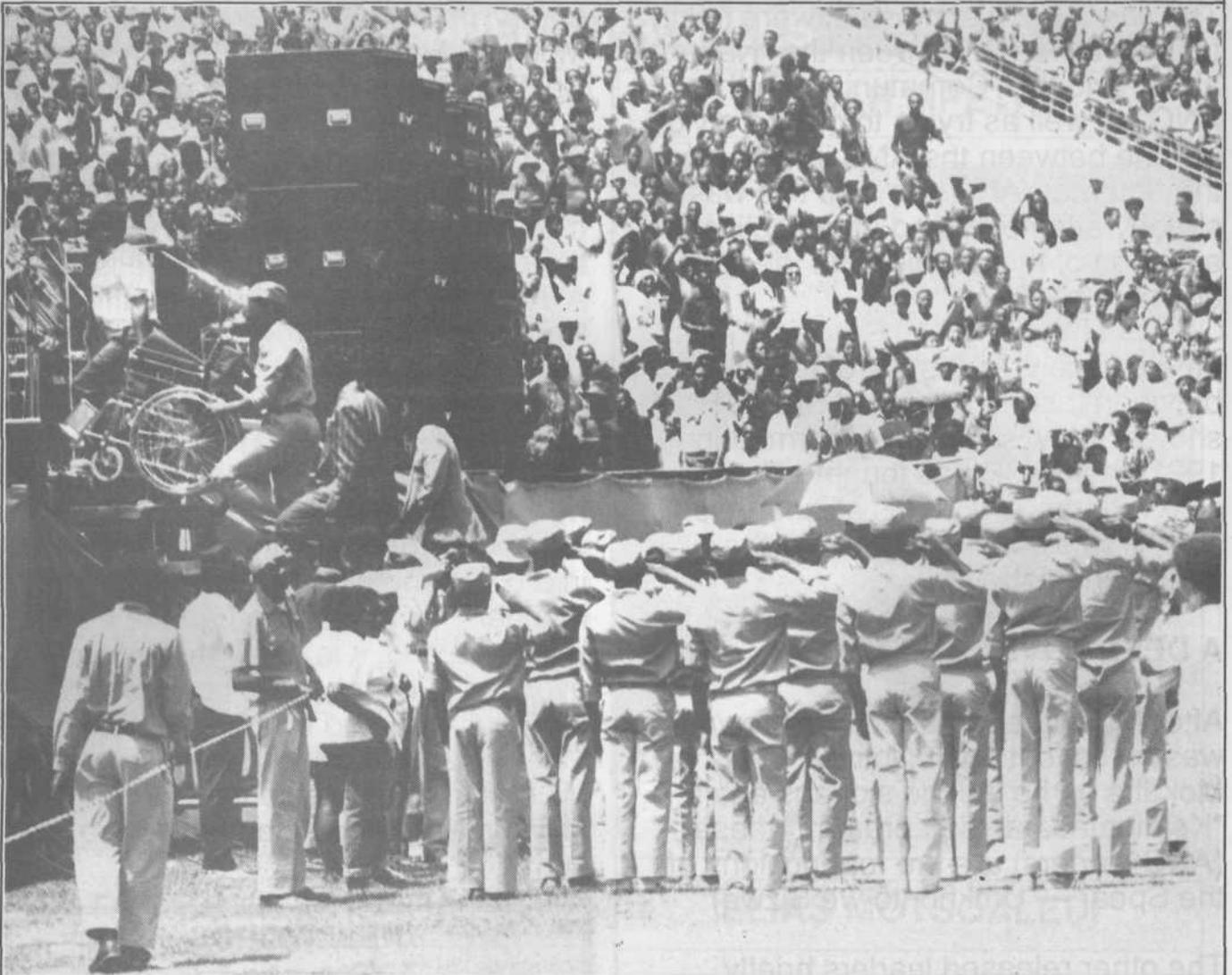
### **"DO NOT BE FOOLED!"**

After Sisulu had spoken, Mokaba jumped onto the stage again and led the people in the chanting of revolutionary slogans. Then Ramaphosa announced that Ahmed "Kathy" Kathrada was going to be the next speaker.

Kathy said he and his comrades had been released to find that racism was still being upheld by the government. The oppressed people of South Africa were still waiting for De Klerk to reject the apartheid of Malan, Verwoerd and the Broederbond.

"We are waiting for them to acknowledge their mistakes and show genuine remorse for 40 years of Nationalist misrule," he said.

He attacked the governments plan to "broaden democracy". In the 1970's the government had asked for six months to end apartheid. Now De Klerk was asking for five years and the Western world is saying that he should be given a chance.



The "roaring young lions" of SAYCO stand to attention as the last of those in the procession climb the stage to address the people

But, said Kathy, nowhere in this five year plan does the government say they will agree to the basic demand of one person, one vote. He said the world should not be fooled by the government's wish to protect "group rights". This was just playing with language and a way of ensuring white domination.

He said the government had tried to turn the ANC into a monster in the minds of white people. But the greatest enemy of white South Africans was not the ANC, the SACP, Archbishop Tutu or Dr Allan Boesak. It is the Nationalist Party, the Conservative Party and all those who cling to the idea of white control.

## THE UNBREAKABLE ALLIANCE

The people were on their feet again to welcome Sydney Mafumadi — COSATU's Assistant General Secretary — who was to read the paper written by Govan Mbeki. Mbeki is one of the Rivonia trialists who was jailed with Mandela, Sisulu and the other leaders. He was released in 1987. Shortly afterwards, he was restricted, which prevents him from addressing meetings.

Mbeki said that the Nationalist government and their friends wanted to destroy the alliance between the ANC and the SACP in their struggle against apartheid.

The same people, he said, were trying to drive a wedge between the "Nationalists" and the "Communists" in the ANC, as well as trying to draw a dividing line between the ANC in exile and the "internal" ANC. He said this was "a shabby attempt aimed at deflecting the attention of the people from the fight against apartheid."

Mbeki traced the history of the alliance between the the ANC and SACP. He showed how, since it was formed in 1921, the SACP has fought side by side with the ANC. This alliance, he said, would continue until apartheid has been destroyed.

### A DEEP LOVE

After Mbeki had finished, the crowd was on its feet again, joining Peter Mokaba as he led the slogans again: "Ke dibatabata, tsa Leruma!" (these (ANC leaders) are the roaring lions of the Spear — Umkhonto we Sizwe)

The other released leaders briefly greeted the crowds. Andrew Mlangeni stood up and apologised to the crowd for not being able to speak. His voice was hoarse, he said, from all the chanting and singing. He said that the previous leaders had said it all — and all he wanted to say was that he, and his comrades, loved the people deeply.

The other leaders also had a word or two for the crowd. Oscar Mpetha is suffering from ill -health, but his voice was as strong and as clear as ever. People listened with great interest as he told them about the days he and Chief Luthuli went around the Cape organising the people.

Then it was time for the leaders to leave. When they had gone, many people stayed behind to enjoy some

poetry, music and song from Gcina Mhlope, Mzwakhe Mbuli and his band, Sakhile, Bayete and the Jazz Pioneers.

As the sun began to set over the huge stadium, people slowly began to make their way out of the stadium. Outside, the comrade traffic cops — dressed in ANC colours — directed the traffic and waved goodbye.

For many people, it would be many, many hours before they got home. But what did it matter? They had come to honour and welcome home their leaders and heroes, and they had done so in a great and dignified and disciplined manner. For those who had the privilege to attend, it is a day that will for ever live in their hearts. Long live Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Khathrada, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi, Wilton Mkwayi and Oscar Mpetha! Welcome home!

### NEW WORDS

**jubilant crowd** — full of joy

**to review** — to look back on events in the past

**rank and file members** — the ordinary members of an organisation, not the leadership

**to adopt a declaration or a resolution** — to accept a resolution

**the right climate** — the right conditions and feelings

**drive a wedge** — to cause a split

**privilege** — an honour that few people have

## LEADERS' PROFILES

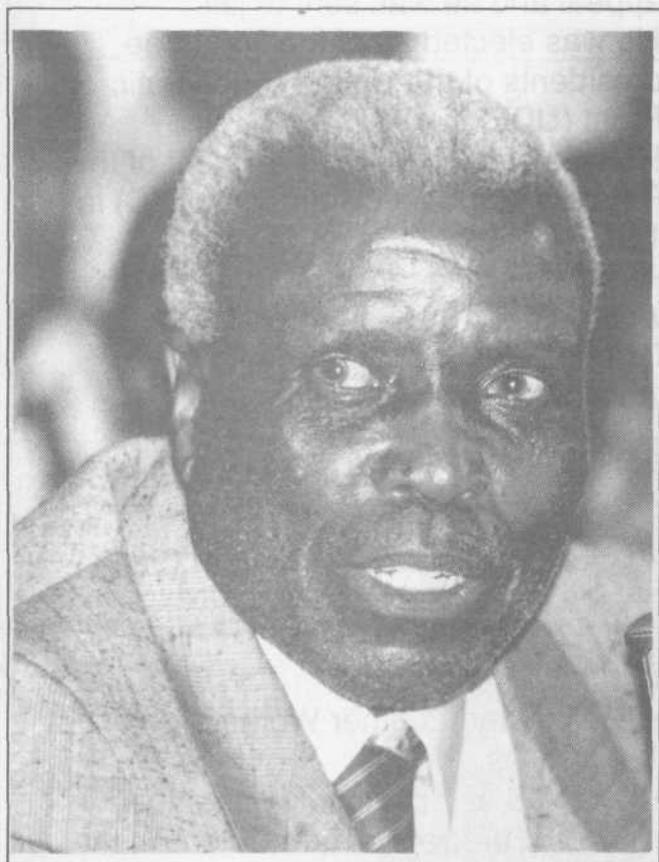
**WALTER SISULU**



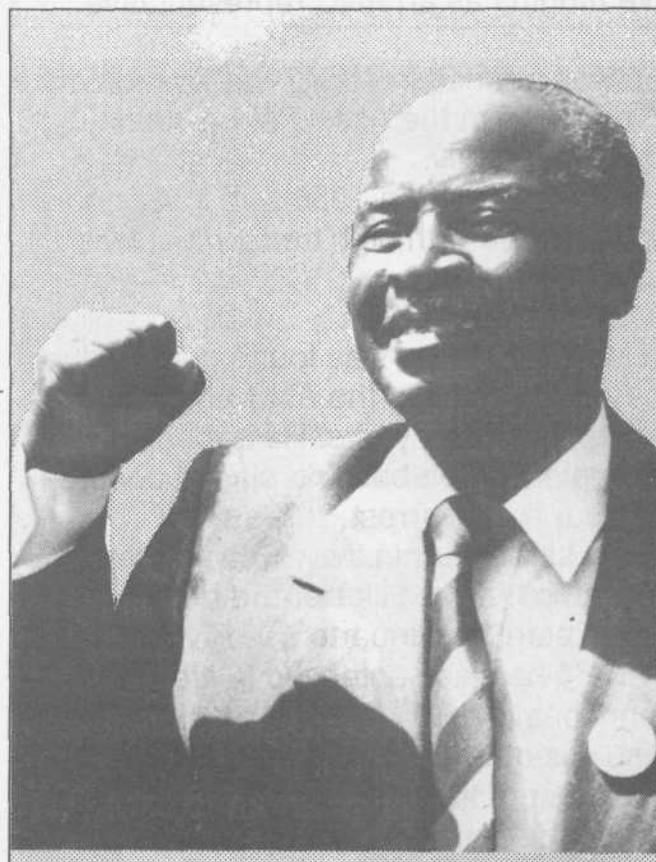
**OSCAR MPETHA**



**RAYMOND MHLABA**



**ELIAS MOTSOALEDI**



## LEADERS' PROFILES

### WALTER SISULU

Sisulu was born in December 1912 in the Engcobo district in the Transkei

#### Political involvement:

- He joined the ANC in 1940
- He became the Treasurer of the ANC Youth League in 1944
- He became the Secretary-General of the ANC in 1949
- In 1952 he organised the National Defiance Campaign and in December the same year he was tried for organising the campaign under the Suppression of Communism Act, along with Man dela and 18 others.
- In December 1952 he was re-elected the Secretary-General of the ANC and the next year he toured China, the Soviet Union, Israel, Rumania and Britain for five months as an ANC representative.
- He was banned in 1954, and was forced to resign from the ANC, but he continued to work secretly.
- He was arrested in 1956 with 156 people and charged with high treason but was acquitted in 1961.
- In March 1963 he was found guilty of furthering the aims of the ANC and was sentenced to six years. He appealed and was released on bail and placed under 24-hour house arrest.
- In the same year in July, he was arrested with others at Liliesleaf Farm, the ANC secret headquarters in Rivonia.
- In 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment.
- Sisulu is married to Albertina Sisulu, President of the UDF
- They have four children.

### OSCAR MPETHA

Mpetha was born on 5 August 1909 at Mount Fletcher in the Transkei.

#### Political involvement:

- He joined the African Food and Canning Workers' Union (now part of the Food and Allied Workers' Union) in 1947.
- He became the union's Secretary-General in 1951.
- He joined the ANC in 1948.
- He became the ANC Cape chairman in 1958.
- In 1960 he was found guilty of furthering the aims of the ANC and was sentenced to four years.
- He spent three years in jail as an awaiting trial prisoner from 1960. In July 1963 he was found guilty of terrorism and sentenced to five years in prison.
- He appealed against the sentence and was released on bail of R1.00 In 1965, the Appeal Court turned down the appeal and he was sent to jail.
- He was elected as one of the first three presidents of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983.
- He was elected as the president of the Release Mandela Campaign (RMC) in 1987.
- He was married to Rose Nomabunga who died in 1986.
- He has children, one of whom, Karl, died while Mpetha was in prison.

### ELIAS MOTSOLEDI

Motsoaledi was born on 26 July 1924 in Sekhukhuniland in Lebowa

#### Political involvement:

- He joined the Leather Workers Union in the late 40s.
- He served as an executive member of the Non-European Trade Unions in the

## LEADERS' PROFILES

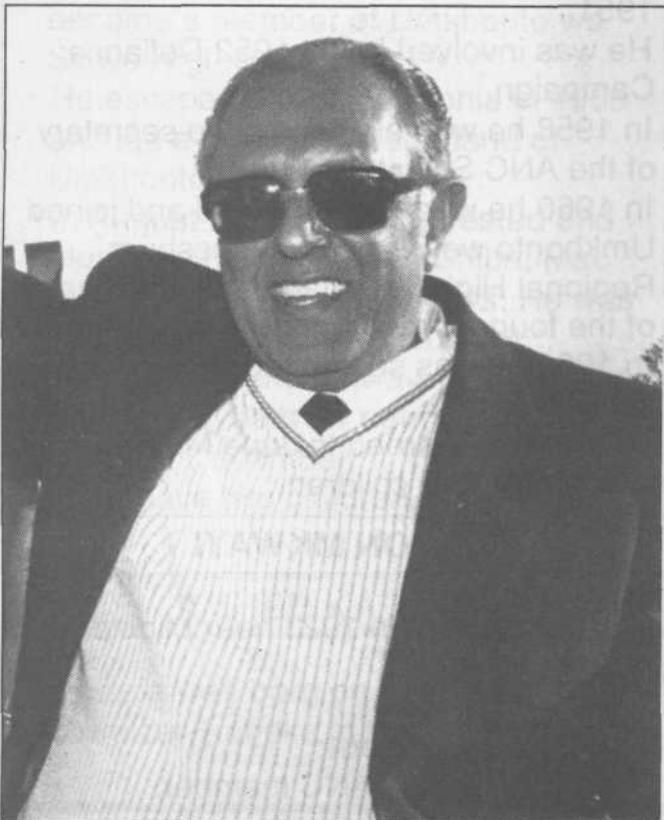
**ANDREW MLANGENI**



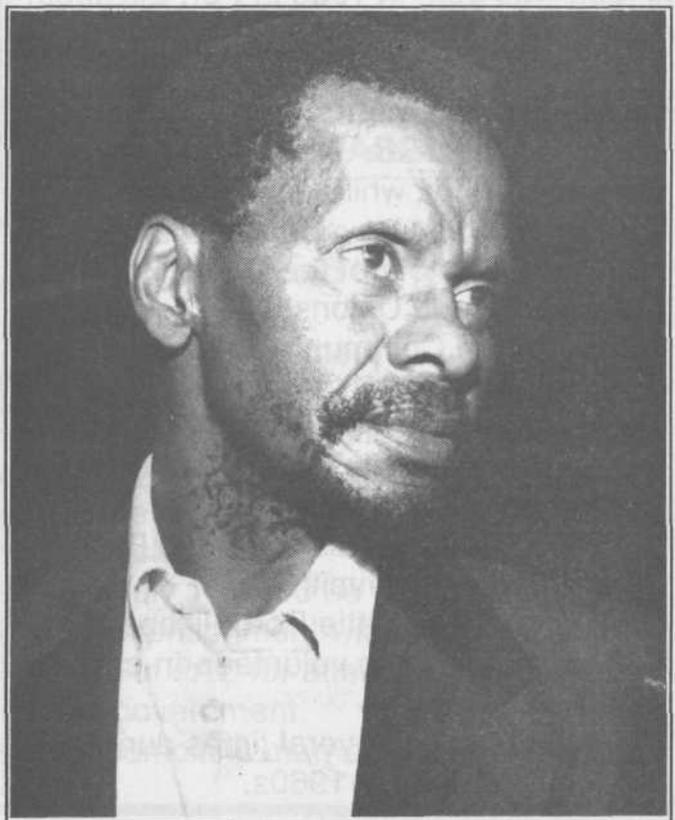
**WILTON MKWAYI**



**AHMED KATHRADA**



**JAFTA MASEMOLA**



## LEADERS' PROFILES

late 1940s.

- He joined the Communist Party of South Africa and the ANC during this period.
- He was banned in 1952 shortly after the Defiance Campaign but still remained politically active.
- He was one of the Trade Union leaders who helped form the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in 1955.
- When the state of emergency in 1960 was declared he was detained for four months.
- Shortly after his release he went underground and served on the Umkhonto we Sizwe Johannesburg Regional Command.
- In 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment.
- Motsoaledi is married to Caroline Motsoaledi.
- They have seven children, three of whom are in exile.

### RAYMOND MHLABA

Mhlaba was born in 1920 in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape

#### Political Involvement:

- He joined the trade union movement in the early 1940s, while employed as a laundry worker.
- He was a member of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions.
- He joined the Communist Party and the ANC in the mid 1940's.
- He served as the Port Elizabeth Communist Party branch secretary and ANC chairperson from 1946 to 1953.
- In 1949 he led the Eastern Cape Bus Boycott Action Committee.
- He was elected as the Port Elizabeth Defiance Campaign volunteer- in-chief in 1952.
- He was detained several times during the 1950s and early 1960s.

- He was one of the 156 Congress Movement leaders charged with treason from 1956 to 1961.
- When the ANC was banned Mhlaba went underground and became one of the Umkhonto we Sizwe High Command.
- He was arrested at Liliesleaf farm in Rivonia in 1963.
- In 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment.
- Mhlaba married Dedika Heliso in 1986.
- They have three children.

### ANDREW MLANGENI

Mlangeni was born on 3 May 1926 in Prospect Township, Johannesburg.

#### Political involvement

- After completing his Std 8 in Johannesburg he worked as a clerk, bus driver and a golf caddie to earn money to further his education.
- He later worked as a journalist with the now banned "New Age" newspaper.
- He joined the ANC Youth League in 1951.
- He was involved in the 1952 Defiance Campaign.
- In 1958 he was elected as the secretary of the ANC Soweto region.
- In 1960 he went underground and joined Umkhonto we Sizwe Johannesburg Regional High Command and was one of the founder members.
- In 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment.
- Mlangeni is married to June Mlangeni.
- They have four children.

### WILTON MKWAYI

Mkwayi was born in 1923 near Middel-drift in the Cape.

#### Political involvement:

- His father was an ANC member.

## LEADERS' PROFILES

- He left school in 1938 and worked as a stevedore, labourer, factory worker and clerk in Cape Town.
- In 1947 he joined the South African Railways and Harbours Workers Union (SARHWU).
- He played a leading role in the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) and later in SACTU organising workers in railways, textile, tin and iron and steel industries.
- In 1952 he was elected the Eastern Cape Defiance Campaign volunteer-in-chief.
- He was charged in the 1956 treason trial together with the other 156 Congress Leaders and acquitted in 1961.
- He was SACTU national treasurer from the late 1950s to 1964 when he was arrested.
- When the emergency was declared in 1960 he escaped arrest and left the country to represent SACTU at the World Federation of Trade Unions.
- He received Military training while outside the country and returned home to become a member of Umkhonto we Sizwe High command.
- He escaped arrest at Rivonia in 1963 and led a new High Command of Umkhonto we Sizwe.
- In August 1964 he was arrested and tried together with Laloo Chiba, Mac Maharaj and Johan Mathews. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.
- He married Irene Mkwazi in 1987, after waiting 20 years for permission. Irene died last December.
- They have two children.

### AMHED KATHRADA

Kathrada was born on 21 August 1929 in Schweizer-Reneke in the Transvaal.

### Political Involvement:

- He started his political career at the age of 11 by distributing pamphlets.
- He joined the Communist Party Youth League in 1941 at the age of 12.
- He became the chairperson of the Indian Youth Congress in the 1940s.
- He was elected the general-secretary of the Transvaal Indian Congress and was one of those who forged links between the Indian Congress and the ANC.
- In 1951, he went to Germany and Poland to attend Youth and Student Congresses and worked for nine months in Hungary at the headquarters of the World Federation of Democratic Youth.
- He came back to South Africa in 1952 and helped to organise the Defiance campaign that year.
- During the 1950s and 1960s he was tried, jailed and detained many times.
- In October 1962 he became the chairperson of the Free Mandela Committee.
- In 1963 he went underground and joined Umkhonto we Sizwe High Command.
- He was arrested in 1963 at Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia at the age of 34.
- In 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Rivonia Trial.

### JAFTA MASEMOLA

Masemola was born on 12 December 1928 in Bon Accord in Pretoria

### Political involvement:

- He joined the ANC Youth League and later the PAC when it was formed in 1959.
- At the time of his arrest in 1961, he was a teacher.
- On July 12 1963 he was sentenced to life imprisonment with five other members of PAC for attempting to overthrow the government.
- Masemola is married and has a son.

# WALTER SISULU SPEAKS

*Walter Sisulu welcomed us into his home in Orlando West with a big hug for each of us. He then led us into a bedroom and found us each a seat. Then the interview began. Throughout the interview, Sisulu answered our questions with freshness, humility and warmth.*

*When the interview ended, we left quietly. We drove back to the office in silence, each one of us so touched and moved by the meeting*

*that we did not feel like talking. Meeting Walter Sisulu was an honour and a privilege that no words could really describe.*

*When we finally did speak, it was to talk of the great dignity of the man. Having spent twenty-six years of his life in prison, the former Secretary General of the ANC shows no trace of bitterness. In its place there is only love — and the desire to carry on the struggle in a true fighting spirit. We salute you, Walter Sisulu, a noble man who, together with his comrades, has dedicated his life to a noble struggle.*

*Below we give you the interview that Learn and Teach conducted with Walter Sisulu.*

**You spent 26 years in prison. What did the experience do to you? Are you the same man you were all those years ago?**

I don't know. I think I am the same man. Perhaps I have learned to be more tolerant in living with people in jail. A man and wife may quarrel sometimes. So you can imagine what it's like when you live with a number of people for so many years. You irritate each other with little things... But there is also great friendship. I think one of the greatest experiences is the way you come closer to each other. So, I feel I am the same person, with the only difference being additional qualities of tolerance.



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**What kind of things did you miss most during all those years in prison?**

People. Communication is the most important thing in prison. You want to communicate with people. And you tend to relive your life, think of the past, your childhood, and your dreams. You miss children. You just want to touch a child. That is what I think one misses — communication, talking to people, touching people.

**It is quite clear that both you and the other leaders have come out after all these years in very good shape, both mentally and physically. How do you explain this. Has it to do with discipline perhaps? Or early nights, no alcohol, no parties?**

No parties, no alcohol, no anything. (laughs) But you've got a balanced diet, although it's detestable. Also, discussions. Political discussions. That also keeps us quite alive. And there were many, of course, who were also studying. And also exercises, physical exercises. Even if you were alone in a room you did exercises. For instance I was using an exercise bicycle given to us by the Red Cross. I was the man who used to really use that bicycle. Later, Nelson also (Mandela) used to use it. And then there was jogging in the yard. Everyday, everyday.

You also live the life of a person who is disciplined. But more than that, you are inspired by the people outside. The little contact you have, the few newspapers you have — these help you to keep in touch with the world.

Prisoners will always find a way to get newspapers. If there's anything that prisoners will steal it's newspapers — stealing a newspaper was a profession. The warders actually used to joke: "You can put thousands of rands, leave them there, they will never touch a thing, but if you leave a paper, it will go!"

**Could you please tell us how you heard that you were going to be released?**

We had just finished our exchanges with Nelson in which he had indicated that they were going to release us. But he didn't know the date. But that same day, Ramaphosa, Saloojee, my wife and others visited Nelson. When we had finished talking with Nelson, the authorities did not want us to meet the others on their way in, so they hid us in the Victor Verster men's mess until they had finished with Nelson. As we were waiting in the men's mess the announcement was made by de Klerk, I think. So we heard it on the TV.

**How did you feel at that moment?**

I wasn't excited at all. You see, I had been already separated from the others for eight months. I was sent to the cell where Nelson was before. There, I was in touch with Nelson more regularly than I was when I was with the others. He himself told me they were going to release me. But it seemed that the more powerful forces were opposed to this, especially before the elections, so they decided that I wasn't going to be released until after the elections.

**Could you please describe the process of being released, from hearing that you were to be released to being driven home to Soweto?**

Well, we were taken to Jan Smuts Airport by plane and then to Diepkloof Jail. There, they told us that we would be told when we would be released. And then on the 14th (of October), the Commanding officer came to inform us that we would be released on the 15th. He couldn't tell us the exact time, but it would be on the 15th. Now we were ready to go home. We were woken up at half-past two to get our things, and then we were given our "Certificates of Liberation" and our clothes were loaded and each was driven home separately.

I was brought here by Major Potgieter, a Security Branch man. We spoke a lot on the way and he knew a great deal about the movement, particularly about (Harry) Gwala. He was quite polite and quite a nice man.

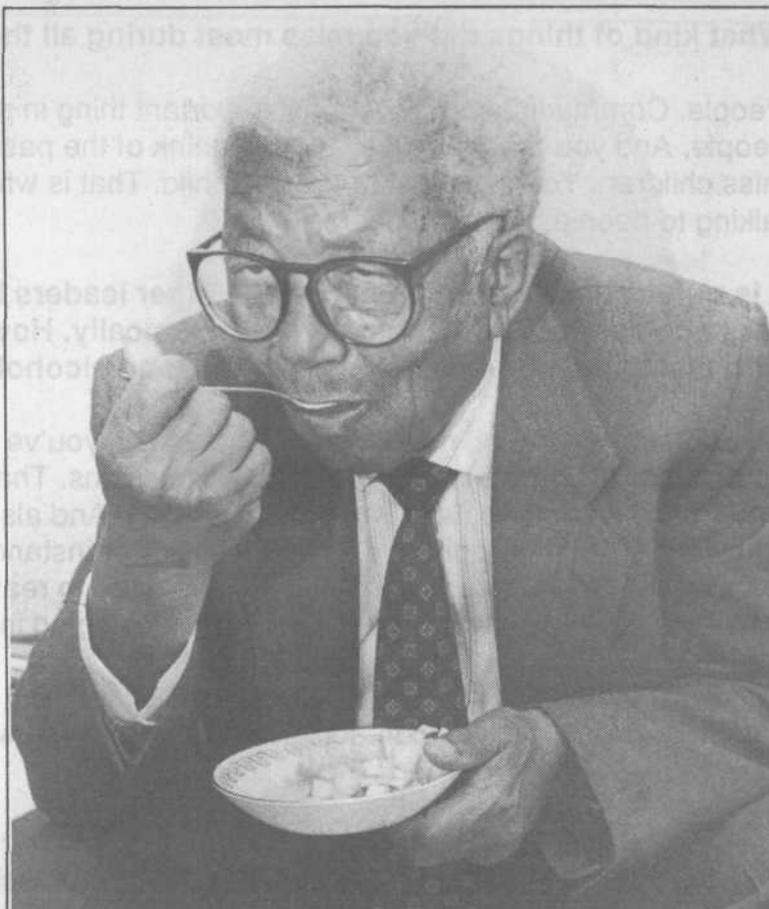
**Can you describe your thoughts and feelings as you drove from Sun City to your home in Soweto?**

I was thinking about one thing: that the people will be waiting.

**From the moment you and the other comrades were released, you've been surrounded by well-wishers and supporters, TV people, newspapers and so on. Do you find it difficult?**

No, I find it exciting!

**What do you think de Klerk hopes to achieve by releasing you and the others?**



Walter Sisulu enjoys a meal at home — after 26 years of prison food!

The way the question is put gives the impression of them releasing us on their own free will. It is not so. They are releasing us because there is pressure internationally and at home. But they could have delayed it. The question of timing has something to do with what they want to achieve. What they wanted to achieve is some sort of lessening of tension with the international forces. That was what was in their minds.

**Do you think that de Klerk is different from his predecessor, PW Botha. Is he committed to real change?**

No, he's not different in the sense of real change. But he's a different man from Botha. He's more sophisticated and more of a diplomat compared to Botha. Botha was completely crude in his methods and he believed very much in force. He was a man of the army and his language was that of a man of the army. Botha was in fact annoying his own colleagues. De Klerk has shown his ability by unifying the cabinet against Botha himself.

As for the question of commitment to change, it's not a question of de Klerk himself — it's the policy of the Nationalist party. They had already committed themselves to some form of reform but de Klerk also wants recognition internationally, and would move more smoothly and perhaps faster in some directions than Botha.

**Will they go all the way to a transfer of power?**

No! They've got a problem with the transfer of power. Usually it's not an easy thing for a government in power to surrender power. They will surrender a certain amount of power because of pressure. But they still want to retain power — whatever language they use. They

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say there will be no domination of one group by another, there will be no counting of heads — as is the case with democracy — but instead there will be a counting of 'groups'. This really means that they want to retain power for the 'white group'.

And to the common white man it does make some sense. They fear one man one vote will be really surrendering to what they call "black" domination. Now we are not talking about black domination, we are talking of non-racial democracy. We are not counting faces, saying this is dark, this is darker, this is light. We are counting the merits of each person.

**There is talk of the government trying to divide the so-called internal ANC from the external ANC. Do you believe this is the case?**

Yes. I believe this is so. It was their idea from the start. They want a sort of internal ANC and external ANC with the hope that it will bring about a complete clash between the two. It hasn't happened in the past and it's not going to happen. We reject that type of thing out of hand.

**There are also claims that the government is trying to cause a split between the so-called nationalists and communists within the ANC?**

That has always been their intention. The Nationalist party has for many years used the method of "swart gevaar" and "rooi gevaar". Sometimes "swart gevaar" becomes a hot issue and sometimes "rooi gevaar". And they have made the question of communism a big issue because in this way they appear to be allies with countries which do not agree with communism.

**What is the position with armed struggle? Does it continue, as usual?**

It continues. It will continue like the entire struggle will continue in all its different forms and will even be intensified in some ways because there is no reason not to do so until negotiations bring about a new situation.

**At the moment Mandela is meeting with Masemola. This meeting has been dubbed "unity talks" between the ANC and the PAC. Do you hold out any real hope for such unity?**

I have been in contact with with Mandela and there is no question that the meeting was initiated by Masemola, not by Mandela. Nelson did not even know what he was going to be talking about. Now, if Masemola does raise the question of unity, Mandela has indicated that he will refer him to the external mission. They will be the right people to deal with the matter. There is a lot of nonsense in the papers, issued largely by the the propagandists of the PAC like Alexander. They are making a big issue of it in the press, even after they'd interviewed me and know that this is not the case.

But as you perhaps know, Mandela did bring about the release of Masemola, who was not one of the Rivonia trialists. The authorities were usually very hostile to Masemola, and it was through Nelson that finally he was released.

**Does the ANC have any stated conditions for unity with the PAC?**

Well, I can't answer this question because I am not informed. I would only be able to answer it if I were to visit the ANC in the external mission. The ANC did say at the conference about two years ago that we do want unity. But the clashes which have taken place within the two groups may complicate things.



Walter Sisulu and the other released leaders greet the people outside Sisulu's home in Orlando West, Soweto

**Turning to the Welcome Home rally in Soweto last week, can you say what it meant to you to be given such an heroic welcome by so many thousands of people?**

Well, it meant a great deal. It meant one thing: that there can be no going back. It meant that the people are tired of oppression and that they are looking forward to a new order. There has been no rally of such magnitude in the history of South Africa. I was amazed with the standard of discipline of the 100 000 people. There wasn't a single incident — not even a bottle thrown.

General Victor saw me a few days before and he said: "Man, I'm worried. What worries me is not so much the rally itself but when the people go home they'll get excited." There wasn't even that. The people went home quietly, to every part of the country. To me that was absolutely outstanding and amazing.

(Ken) Owen, (the editor of Business Day newspaper), and his like, will say that the rally showed that the ANC has no support. This is a very disgusting approach. It is a low standard of journalism when you say something which you know very well is not true. The truth is, that rally was very important.

**In your speech at the rally, you spoke of the ANC as being "the leader in the liberation struggle". Could you explain what you meant by that?**

The African National Congress has been accepted as the leading national liberation movement by the African people since it was established in 1912. At first the ANC was an organisation of only African people. Today there is no one who would doubt that the ANC is the leading organisation, except sometimes perhaps Buthelezi. The people know it, it is so. It has an international reputation and is recognised throughout the world as well as by the people of South Africa.

**In your speech you had a special word of praise for the "young lions" of SAYCO. Why is that? Do they perhaps make you think back to when people like yourself, Mandela and Anton Lembede formed the ANC Youth League and changed the ANC from a "gentlemen's club" into a militant mass-based organisation?**

Precisely. I know that the youth will be vigorous in their approach, and that they can even be reckless sometimes — as sometimes we were — but they are the people to sustain the struggle.

**In your speech, you also saluted the workers in this country. What is the role of the working class in the struggle?**

It is a very important role, especially in a country which is semi-colonial, because the majority of the oppressed people are workers. In South Africa you don't even have a peasant class, but rather worker-peasants, so really the oppressed people are the working people and they are the most important. For the working class to have grown so strong gives even greater hope to the liberation of this country.

**Will you comment on the contribution of COSATU?**

COSATU is another amazing mark that I have noted since I have been in jail. In a short space of time, we have seen the working class united under COSATU. I think COSATU alone has over a million members now.

**Do you think the position of women has changed since you were imprisoned? Are they now more active in the struggle than they were before. What is your message to them?**

I salute them and I say that there is no liberation without women. But, I don't know if I can say they are better organised today. You must remember that in the 50s women organised over 20 000 people to march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to demonstrate against passes. They were organised! But I don't think women today are less organised. But it has been very difficult to have a unified women's organisation. They are still working on it and there are still problems of getting it moving, but I think the women are militant. The women are the backbone of the movement.

**How did you feel when Ma-Sisulu was elected President of the UDF?**

Well, I did not expect it. I was a bit surprised. I knew she was very active, but I didn't expect that. I knew she was a person of determination and that she would make much of what was given to her. I was only sorry that I had given her less inspiration, or rather less help when I was still free. And I thought I should have done much more. But she has done even better than I could have done.

**Are you still very much in love?**

Oh! Too much!

**In your speech, you express your concern about the violence in Natal, calling it "a blot on our noble struggle for liberation". Is peace attainable in Natal and what is the best way to achieve such a peace?**

Well I think the steps that have been taken — such as the formation of the Peace Committee, consisting of Cosatu, the UDF and Inkatha — is in fact the best way. And if all parties were co-operating, we would come close to achieving peace.

I think that peace is attainable. But, you see, we are dealing not only with the situation in Natal. The ruling class is largely behind the situation. They are using every possible way to manipulate the situation. Vlok (Minister of Law and Order) continuously said in Parliament that the UDF and COSATU, were responsible for the situation in Natal — not Inkatha — even though people produced documents to show what was really happening. He just did not care. Next thing, he was meeting with Buthelezi!

**Can you comment on what is happening in Namibia and what a SWAPO victory will mean for South Africa and the ANC?**

This is an unprecedented election.

The enthusiasm of the people is so great and this great enthusiasm really means a victory for SWAPO. They are more organised and they are the people who are regarded as the leaders.

The elections are a great inspiration to the ANC and to the people of SA. And we look forward to SWAPO winning. After all they've been our allies. We've worked together under difficult conditions, they've been with us in prison, we've been working together in the external mission. Many of their plans were made together with us and many of the SWAPO people come from the ANC. They're almost just different names, SWAPO and the ANC.

**Finally, do you think you will see liberation in your lifetime?**

Well, I'm hoping that liberation will be in my lifetime. But that doesn't depend on my wishes — it depends on the concrete situation, the realities that exist. The people are driving forward to freedom. I am quite confident that liberation will come!



"Too much in love!" — Walter and Albertina Sisulu, together at last

#### NEW WORDS

**humility** — if a person has humility, they do not think they are better or more important than other people

**tolerance** — having patience and not expecting others to behave like you want them to

**merits** — the strong points and qualities of a person

**an incident** — an event, especially where there is violence

**manipulate a situation** — make a situation go the way you want it to



Mourners pay their last respects to Carlos Ndlalane — a courageous man who risked his life to save others

## DEATH ON THE BORDER

***Carlos Ndlalane, a Mozambican refugee, was shot dead by SADF soldiers as he crossed the border into Ka-Ngwane...***

**T**WO months ago, Carlos Ndlalane and his family were just like many other Mozambican families — they

were poor and they lived in fear of their lives. Their home was a small village called Mglavula in the south of Mozambique, where Carlos kept cattle.

Renamo bandits often attacked their village. Many of their friends and neighbours were killed in these attacks.

Renamo destroyed the crops, burnt houses, stole cattle and kidnapped people to help them carry the things they stole.

Carlos and his family decided to move to a larger town also in the south near the border — Moamba. He thought they would be safer there, because there were more government soldiers. Carlos was wrong. Moamba was often attacked too.

So the family decided to leave their country and go to South Africa. Carlos sold some cattle, and paid for a guide to take them to the border. They decided that Carlos' wife and the old women in the family should go first. Carlos went with them.

### **SAFETY — FOR SOME**

Carlos and the women walked to the South African border. They climbed over the barbed wire fence and came to the next fence — the electric fence.

The electric fence that separates Mozambique from South Africa holds many dangers for the Mozambican refugees. The electric current is powerful — 3500 volts. People die, or suffer terrible injuries, if they touch it. The guides know plenty of tricks to get under it or over it.

But getting over the electric fence does not mean safety. There is still the danger of the South African army waiting on the other side and ready to send the refugees back across the border if they catch them.

Carlos and the women managed to crawl under the fence and cross to safety. At the Mangweni transit camp for refugees, about ten kilometres from the border, and run by the Catholic Church,

they found Ma Rachel Msimbini. Ma Rachel looks after the refugees when they arrive.

They were given blankets, clothes, and mealie-meal. David Msimbine, the chairman of the Refugees' Committee in the camp, found them a piece of land where they could put up a tent and start to build their own kraal.

Carlos was pleased with this good start to a new life. The women had somewhere to sleep. They had food, and they were warm. There were clinics, with doctors and nurses. They had a permit to stay in Ka-Ngwane, and the South African soldiers could not take them back to Mozambique. Better still, they were safe from Renamo.

But Carlos was not happy yet. Other members of the family were still in danger. After two days he started on the long walk back to Moamba, knowing that each time he crossed the border his life was in danger.

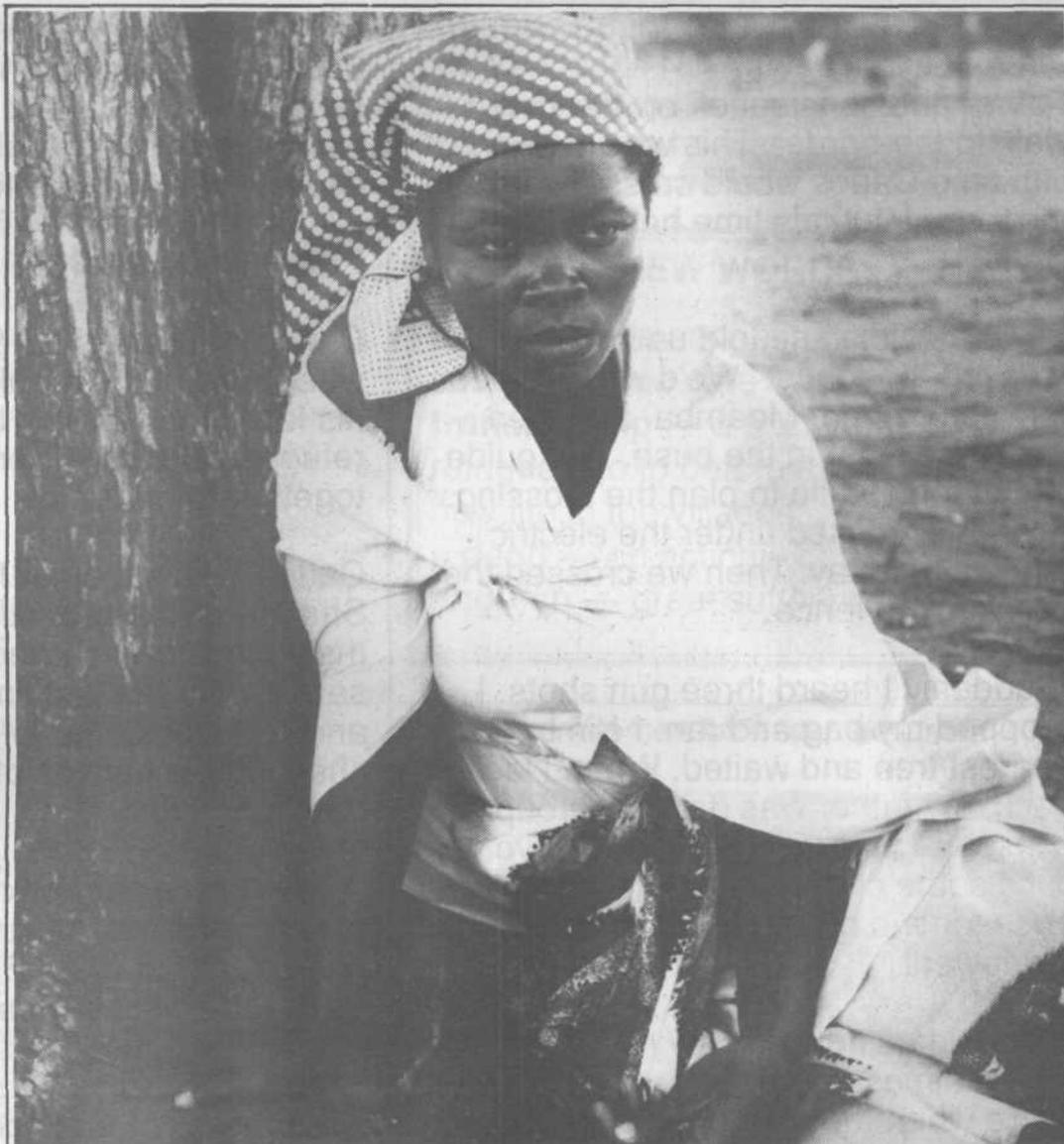
### **RENAMO ATTACKS AGAIN**

While Carlos was in South Africa, Renamo attacked Moamba again. They were looking for a special kind of house — houses where the 'majonjone' (Mozambican miners in South Africa) store the things they buy in South Africa. Carlos' daughter, Angelica Ndlalane, was looking after one of these houses.

"When the Renamo bandits came, they shot my husband in the arm," Angelica told Learn and Teach. "They caught me, and made me carry the things that were in the house. I walked for three days to the Renamo base. In those three days they raped me many times — especially the leader of the group."

"Near the base there was a Fre-limo patrol. When the shooting started I escaped. I spent the whole night looking for a village. In the end, a car took me back to Moamba."

Soon after this, Carlos arrived back home. He listened to Angelica's story, and decided to take her immediately to South Africa. He sold more cattle, and took Angelica and her baby across the fence to South Africa. Angelica's husband stayed behind in a hospital in Maputo.



Ma-Ndlalane weeps silent tears for her husband Carlos, who was shot by the SADF as he crossed the Mozambican border into South Africa

## THE LAST JOURNEY

Carlos took Angelica and her child to the camp in Ka-Ngwane. Again he was pleased with his work, but he knew that he could not waste any time — his sons and stepson were still in Mozambique. At the transit camp he asked for another tent. David Msimbine remembers this day well.

"I told him that we had a tent, but that there was no transport to bring it back," says David. "Carlos said he didn't mind — he would carry the tent himself. He put the heavy tent on his back and walked ten kilometres to his family."

That same evening, Carlos left for Mozambique. This time there was another tragedy waiting for him: one of his sons had been killed when Renamo attacked a train near Ressano Garcia.

Silvestre Ndlalane and Julio Senguane, Carlos' son and stepson, were happy to see their father arrive back safely. "We were anxious to leave," Julio told Learn and Teach, "especially after the death of our brother. We were looking forward to going to South Africa. But we had to wait for a week until my father found the R600 to pay for a guide for the three of us."

## FENCE OF DEATH

Father and sons set off on the long walk to the border. This was to be the fifth time Carlos would cross the electric fence. But this time he met the SADF.

Silvestre Ndlalane told us how they crossed the fence: "We'd walked the day before from Moamba, and then spent the night in the bush. The guide left us for a while to plan the crossing. Six of us crossed under the electric fence at midday. Then we crossed the barbed wire fence.

"Suddenly I heard three gun shots. I dropped my bag and ran. I climbed the nearest tree and waited. When I looked back, my father was dead. A group of soldiers appeared. I saw them give Julio some chocolates. I stayed in the bush for two days, and then came to Mangweni."

Julio told us how he saw his father die: "I was almost over the last barbed wire fence when they fired. The first shot hit my father in the neck. The second shot was aimed at me. I fell to the ground and lay completely still, so I don't know where the third shot went. When the soldiers came, they thought I was dead."

The soldiers called the police to take away the body, thinking perhaps that this would be just another forgotten victim of the border.

But the policemen who came were Ka-Ngwane police. The first thing they did was to take the name of the SADF soldier who fired the shot which killed Carlos. Then they took the number of his gun. Now a murder docket has been opened.

Human rights lawyers say that the SADF has gone against international law, because they did not shout a warning or fire a warning shot before Carlos Ndlalane was killed.

## FUNERAL AGAINST APARTHEID

Carlos Ndlalane's funeral was held a week later at the kraal where most of his family now lives. Hundreds of refugees and local people came together to mourn his death.

Carlos' wife sat apart from the others. She sat on the ground, next to the tent that Carlos had carried the day she saw him for the last time. When friends and relatives came to give her comfort, she held the canvas of the tent in her hand and cried.

"We express our horror at this completely mindless and unnecessary deed," said Dr Mark Berry, head of the Shongwe Mission Hospital, when he spoke to the mourners. "We will do what we can to make sure that the deed is punished in the courts of law, such as they are in South Africa."

The burial service was led by the Reverend Ndlangamandla, of the Lowveld Council of Churches. At the end of the service, Carlos' belongings were placed on the grave: a pair of boots, a pair of sandals, a washbasin and a tube of toothpaste.

## WHEN WILL IT END?

Dr Berry offered a ray of hope to the hundreds of refugees at the funeral. "It is difficult not to appreciate the anguish that you experience here every day," he said. "But we want you to know that you are our brothers and sisters, and that you are welcome here in Ka-Ngwane."

Another ray of hope came from the South African Council of Churches and the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference, who organised a protest meeting at the electric fence last month. "There are many voiceless refugees who are seeking peace, safety and shelter," they said. "We look upon them as brothers and sisters in need. We earnestly request that the electric fence be switched off permanently, and that the shootings should stop."

Perhaps one day this will happen. Perhaps the fence will be switched off. Perhaps the SADF will stop shooting

unarmed refugees. But it will be too late for Carlos Ndlalane, who worked so hard to give his family a new home, and died when he was only seconds away from a new life.

### NEW WORDS

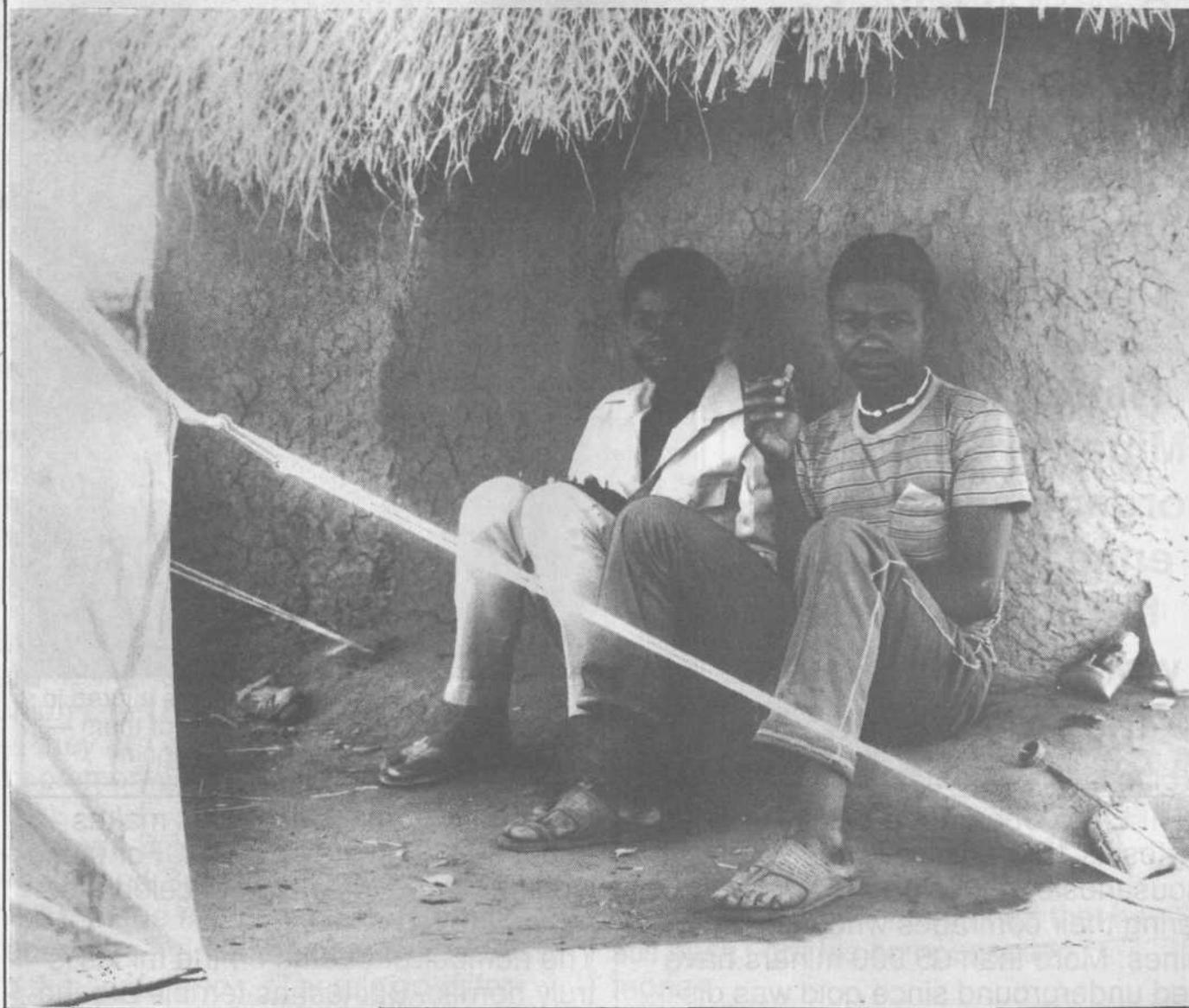
**mourn** — the sadness you feel when somebody you care for dies

**transit camp** — a place that refugees go to before they make a new life in the villages

**a deed** — an action

**anguish** — great suffering or pain

Silvestre Ndlalane and Julio Senguane next to the tent that their father carried for ten kilometres on his back

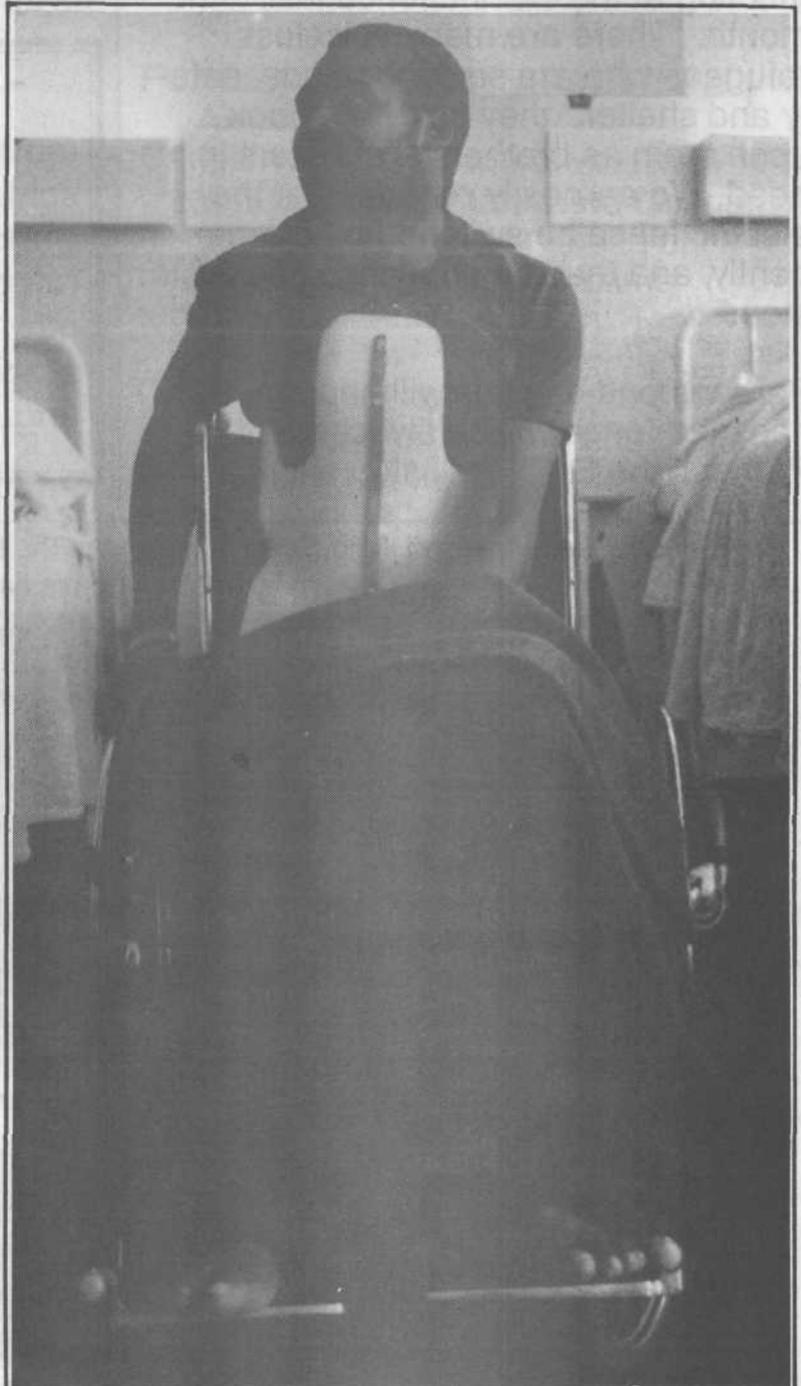


# THE FORGOTTEN WORKERS

Once they were strong and healthy mineworkers, working in the belly of the earth. Today, many are in wheelchairs, the result of accidents on the mines.

Overnight, life has become a struggle to survive with their disabilities and on their meagre compensation money.

Last month, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) organised a conference in Johannesburg for disabled workers to discuss their problems...



Every year, more than 10 000 workers are injured in accidents on South African mines. Many of them — like this worker — will never walk again

WHILE the Chamber of Mines celebrates its 100th birthday this year, thousands of mineworkers are remembering their comrades who died on the mines. More than 65 000 miners have died underground since gold was dis-

covered in South Africa. This makes about 800 deaths every year. For these workers, there is nothing to celebrate.

The number of deaths on the mines is truly horrific. But just as terrible are the

numbers of workers injured in accidents on the mines. Every year over 10 000 mineworkers are injured — at least 2 000 of them seriously. And of these, over 100 spend the rest of their days in wheelchairs. For these workers also, there is nothing much to celebrate.

What happens to these men after they are injured? How do they earn a living? How do they support their families? What are their problems? What hopes can they have for the future? Does anybody spare a thought for them after their accidents?

The National Union of Mineworkers (the NUM) does care. To try and solve the many difficulties that disabled workers face, the union organised a conference on 30 September this year at a hotel in Johannesburg. The gathering was called the Disabled and Paraplegic Mineworkers' Conference. It was the first ever conference for disabled workers and its aim was for them to speak out about their problems.

The workers travelled to Johannesburg from all parts of the country. As they listened to the speakers or told their own stories, their faces showed the anger they felt deep inside. The anger that comes from being used and then thrown away when the bosses have no more use for them.

But for the NUM, the disabled workers are neither useless nor forgotten. The union sees all its workers as the same — they are all workers and they are all union members.

Comrade Siphon Mgijima, the national Health and Safety chairperson of the NUM, made this very clear. "Comrades!" he said in the opening address to the conference. "There's no differ-

ence between you and the other comrades who are working now. And our union is very concerned about the problems you are facing. These problems have been created by the employers. They liked you when you were working for them, but now you are disabled they don't care about you."

"Some people are waiting for the employers to solve our problems. They won't. But with unity among us, we can solve them. So, we will be very pleased to hear each and every thing that comrades want to say about their problems. Then we can analyse them and find solutions."

The comrades didn't need a second invitation to speak out. One after the other, they spoke about their problems. First on the agenda was the problem of compensation money.

## MONEY PROBLEMS

"Since my accident I am getting less compensation money than I was getting when I was earning a wage," said one comrade. "How am I supposed to support my family on this money?"

Another comrade pushed his fist into the air and shouted "Amandla" and the others answered with one voice, "Awethu!" "I would like to add to what the last speaker said. When you are in a wheelchair, expenses rocket. You can't walk to work. You need special accommodation. You need more money. How can employers cut the wages of disabled workers? We should be getting **more** money because it is **more** expensive for us to live."

Another comrade complained that he still hasn't got his compensation money.

"I asked the manager of my mine when I was going to get my compensation money and how much I would get. He refused to explain. He said the law doesn't allow him to tell me. I told him to take me to the place where the compensation comes from so that I could speak to those responsible. He laughed at me."

All the comrades agreed that one of the biggest problems facing disabled workers is money. When a worker is injured in an accident at work, a law called the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1941 says that the worker must be paid compensation money.

Before 1977, disabled workers got a lump sum only. When that money ran out — and with inflation it quickly did — there was no more to come. Since 1977, workers get a pension if the injury is very serious. The pension is always less than the wage the worker was getting before the injury, and it

does not go up as much as the cost of living.

So each year, as prices go up, the disabled worker actually gets less and less money. And to make matters even worse, black workers get less compensation money than other workers because compensation is based on the wage a worker was earning before — and black workers usually earn lower wages than other workers.

### LIKE SLAVES

Another big problem that disabled workers face is finding a job after their accident. Some disabled workers are given jobs on the mines where they worked before, but these are usually the worst jobs.

"After my injury I was given a job and told that I must do it," said one worker with great bitterness. "I am not yet totally healed. My waist was broken in

Disabled mineworkers meet to discuss their problems at the Disabled and Paraplegic Mineworkers Conference organised by the NUM this year



three places and it is not mended. I am frustrated so much by these injuries that I even wish I had died in that accident."

"I don't know about the other mines," said another worker, "but at the mine where we are working, we are treated like slaves. We can be dismissed at any time. And we have not been given any special training since our injury."

And another comrade had this to say: "I am working at Kloof gold mine where we are treated very badly. Whenever we have a complaint, management threatens us with dismissal. We once asked management for better toilet facilities and better housing. Their response — a threat of dismissal!"

Another comrade pointed out that disabled workers get less money for doing the same job as an able person. "You are doing the very same kind of work as another group but they tell you that you are still under medical attention — you are not part of that group, you are just 'assisting' that group."

After all this, one comrade stood up and summed up what all the others were saying: "Minebosses and the Chamber (of Mines) don't want disabled workers at all. The managers don't want to see the work that disabled people are doing on the mines. We are given hard work and still we get low wages. Do black workers not have the same needs as white workers?"

"We live in poverty now and so do our families — and what happens when the time comes for us to leave the mine? We should unite and fight for our rights now, but also for the rights of those who are going to be injured after us — our children."

All of these comrades are suffering, but at least they have a job. Workers from neighbouring countries and the homelands sometimes lose their jobs when they are "repatriated" — a fancy word the bosses use for dismissed.

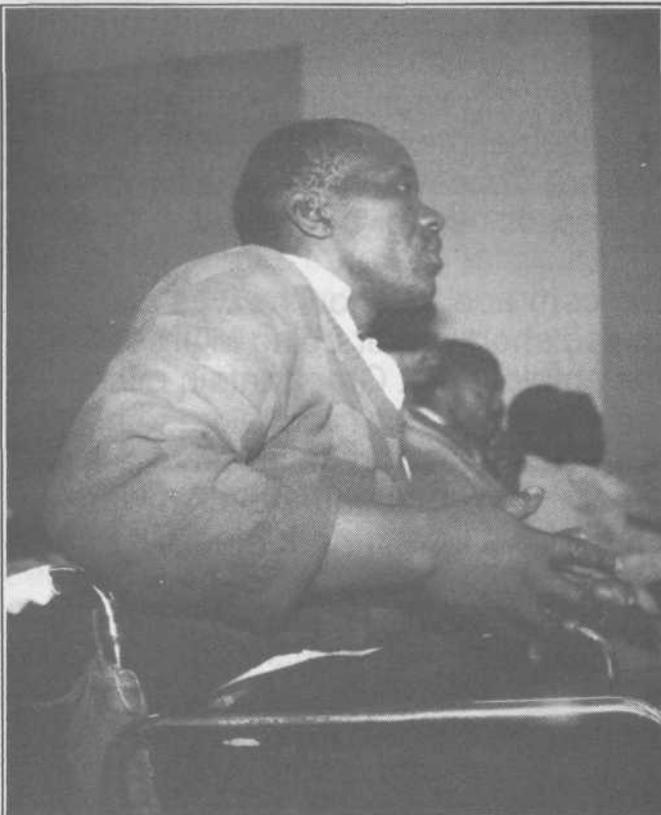
One comrade told how he was dismissed shortly after being injured. "I was employed at Grootfontein mine. I was injured on duty and taken to hospital. Later, I asked to go home to see my family. When I came back, I was told that I've been retrenched. The doctor who was treating me told me that there was nothing I could do. I am still unemployed now."

## FAMILIES ALSO SUFFER

Cde Hazy Sibanyoni, a NUM Health and Safety officer, led the next discussion session on the problems that disabled workers face at home and in the community. First the people from the rural areas spoke out. Their problems were the worst of all.

"In the rural areas, we live under chiefs who don't care about the problems we are experiencing. Transport is a big problem. TEBA (The Employment Bureau of Africa) is supposed to transport us to and from the Reef. But they don't do this. We have to fork out ourselves."

"Another big problem is collecting water and firewood. Still another is collecting our money. When we leave the mine after our injury we are told that we can collect our money at the Labour Recruitment Centres. But when we go to the LRC at Butha-Buthe, we have to hire a car costing R30. That means more money. I could use that money for my children. I'm so angry I can't carry on talking about it."



A disabled worker shares his suffering with other comrades

"I have a similar problem," said another worker. "To get to the clinic, I have to take a taxi. I have to pay for the taxi and the clinic. This is discrimination. If I was still working on the mine, I could be earning a wage and going the mine hospital for free. Right now I am being threatened with eviction because I can't afford to pay rent."

"Our wives have a really hard time. They are not trained to deal with disabled people. This places a very big burden on them. And then our women have to go out to find work because our compensation is not enough for us to live on. And what work can they find in the rural areas?"

But it is not only comrades in the rural areas who have problems. Comrades in the township face problems too.

One comrade spoke of how taxi drivers discriminate against disabled people. The drivers say it takes too

much time to stop for a disabled person. "If there are three able people and one disabled person, the taxi driver will take the three and leave the disabled person saying it is a waste of time," he said angrily. "And when you try to speak to community councillors to tell them that you can't afford to pay rent and service charges, they won't listen."

Cde Hazy summed up the problems that disabled workers face at home. "Our injury causes us suffering and our wives and families also suffer. Most of us are from the rural areas. We cannot move around in the rural areas in a wheelchair. The streets are not tarred. You can't live in a shack in a wheelchair — the shack is too small. Another problem is that you always need someone to go with you wherever you go. Being unemployed and in the rural areas is far worse than being on the mines."

### THREE TIMES OPPRESSED

At this stage, the conference broke for lunch. It gave us time to think about what the disabled comrades had told us. We could now understand why they were so angry. It is bad enough to be a black worker in South Africa. But to be a **black disabled worker** is even worse. You are three times oppressed — as a black, as a worker and as a disabled person.

After lunch the conference tried to find ways to fight this oppression. Cde May Hermanus, NUM Health and Safety coordinator, opened the discussion. She explained that the NUM has structures on three different levels — branch, regional and national. She said that the problems of disabled workers must be raised in these structures.

"We need to start at branch level.

Have you been able to work in the branch committees at the mine? The branch committees can take these issues to management."

Comrades explained that it was not easy for them to work in the branch committees. Firstly, management was telling disabled workers that they did not have the right to belong to the union. At some mines, management was even stopping workers' stop-order subscription payments to the union without first asking the workers.

But not all the problems come from management. Workers who are not disabled also cause problems for disabled workers. They do not understand the difficulties that disabled workers face. They do not help them to get to the union meetings and they do not listen to the problems of disabled workers.

The conference recommended that all workers must be made aware of the problems disabled workers face. They must push these issues in the safety committees at branch level.

Safety stewards must help disabled comrades to get to union meetings and they must discuss their problems with them. Problems of compensation money, job grades, delays in getting money and training can all be addressed at branch level if all the comrades stand together with the disabled workers. Cde May said that NUM will put these problems in its newspaper to get discussion going throughout the whole union.

## **NEGOTIATE FOR CHANGE**

The union can also put the issue on the table at negotiations with the Chamber and De Beers.

These negotiations take place each year.

"Many of the problems we have discussed here today can be made into demands for negotiations," said Cde May. "We can demand that workers get the same wage they were getting before the accident. We can demand that mine management must pay all medical bills and for the things you need, like wheelchairs, transport, alterations to your houses, etc.

"We can demand that you get proper retraining so that you can do a proper job. We can demand that you get training to work from home if you don't want to stay on the mines. We can demand that comrades who were injured before 1977 get the same compensation as those injured after 1977. And we can demand an end to the retrenchment of disabled workers," Cde May said.

"But comrades, if we want our demands to be successful, we need the support of all the workers. If it comes to the push, all workers must be prepared to go on strike in support of our demands. We need to take up all the issues we have discussed today in union structures, but you will have to do the pushing from below."

The union can also help disabled workers with the problems they face at home and in the community. Cde May explained that the NUM has a voice in the communities.

"The NUM has a voice in the townships through COSATU locals. In Transkei and Lesotho we have NUM districts. Maybe we can use the locals and the districts to discuss some of the issues which you raised here this morning, like the problem of taxis and the problem of rents."

And for those disabled comrades who have already lost their jobs, the union is making plans to retrain them so that they can do work from home and live normal, independent lives.

The conference came to an end with shouts of 'Amandla!' and the singing of freedom songs. Disabled workers had spoken out loud and clear, and together with the union they had worked out a way forward.

But this is only the beginning of the disabled workers' struggle. It is a struggle to force the bosses to give them the

fair and just treatment they deserve. It is a struggle that can only be won with the support of each and every worker. Workers should all remember that they they are only an accident away from being in the same situation as these comrades are in today.

Unless workers make the struggle of the disabled their struggle, their future and the futures of their families and children can be as cruel and difficult as the lives of the disabled workers are today. Viva the disabled workers' struggle! Viva NUM! Viva COSATU!

### NEW WORDS

**disability** — a physical injury that is permanent

**meagre** — a meagre wage means very little money

**paraplegic** — a person who has lost the use of their legs and cannot walk

**concerned** — interested and worried

**Cde** — the short way of writing the word comrade

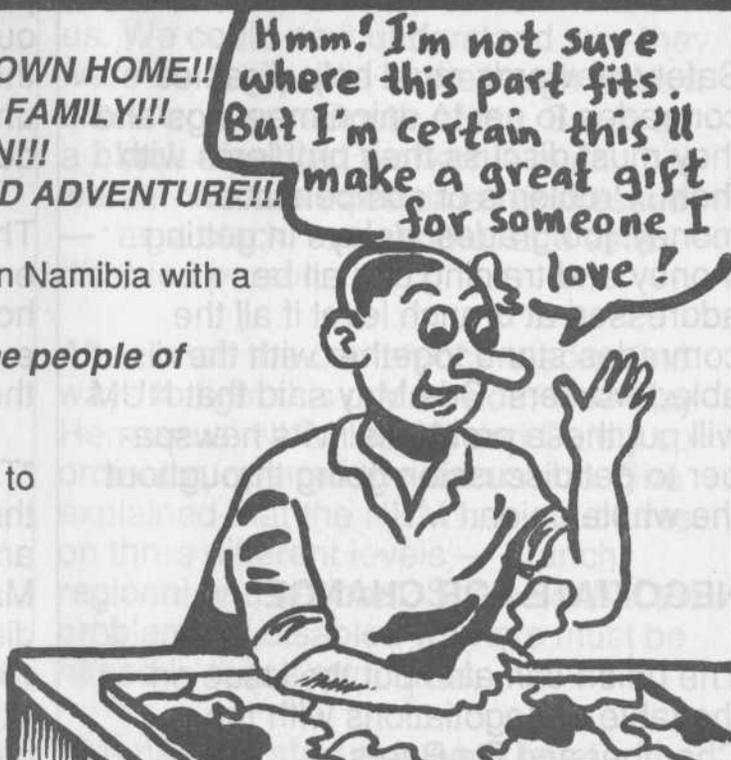
**assist** — help

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From the start of the Defiance Campaign in August, thousands of people marched throughout the country to demand an end to apartheid laws

# WINDS OF DEFIANCE

*End Separate Facilities!  
The People Shall Swim!  
Away with Bantustans!  
End Apartheid on the Buses!  
Away with Racist Elections!  
Away with the LRA!  
All Schools for all People!*

THE winds of defiance are sweeping through the country like never before. They are blowing through every city, town and village carrying with them a

very simple message. Defy apartheid laws! Unban the people's organisations!

Since the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) made a call to defy apartheid laws early in August this year, there have been acts of defiance somewhere in South Africa nearly every single day.

At the start of the campaign, the MDM — which represents the United Democratic Front (UDF), COSATU and progressive churches — made a statement spelling out the aims of the campaign.

"This is to be a peaceful programme of non-violent mass action, directed against apartheid laws and addressing

the immediate needs and demands of our people," the statement said.

"We are saying that we can no longer jail ourselves, nor accept segregation and racial division, nor stand silent in the face of the crushing economic problems of the mass of our people."

With this message — and 27 years after the ANC's Defiance Campaign of 1952 — the Defiance Campaign of 1989 was launched.

## THE FIRST ACTS

The first acts of defiance started with the hospitals. The aim was to destroy segregation in health care. Sick people turned up at 'white' hospitals in Johannesburg, Krugersdorp, Vereeniging, Durban and Pretoria demanding treatment. Doctors in 'black' hospitals sent their patients to 'white' hospitals for treatment. The campaign for apartheid-free health services had begun.

Ntate Levi Molefe Makinta, who is 62 years old and who also took part in the first Defiance Campaign in 1952, was one of the first patients to go to a white hospital in Pretoria for treatment.

He told Learn and Teach that at first the hospital staff at the H. F. Verwoerd Hospital tried to send the black patients to Kalafong Hospital, several kilometres away. Later the superintendent said that the hospital was open for all and from that day on, all people would be welcome at the hospital.

Meanwhile in Johannesburg, Border and Cape Town, the "All Schools for all People" campaign was getting off the ground. A few weeks later, protesters in Pretoria joined the campaign for open facilities. Their target was the buses. The campaign in Pretoria was

called by the Standing for The Truth Campaign (STTC), and was organised by the Pretoria Council of Churches.

Rev. Gideon Makhanya, chairperson of the STTC, explained why buses were chosen as the main target. "We are still fighting for basic rights here in the capital city," he said. "So we targeted basic facilities like the buses. We negotiated with the Pretoria City Council and they said that if blacks had valid tickets, they should be allowed on the buses. So we decided to buy tickets."

But tickets did not stop the police from arresting the defiers. Rev. Makhanya was arrested — ticket in hand — along with Sandy Lebesse, the Assistant Organising Secretary of the Pretoria Council of Churches (PCC). Also arrested were students from the universities of Vista, Medunsa and UNISA.

## A DAY AT THE BEACH

While some people were driving apartheid out of Pretoria, others were drowning it on the beaches. Durban was one example. On 3 September, thousands of protesters gathered to enjoy a day at the 'whites only' Addington Beach. Their slogan was "The People Shall Swim!". Farouk Chothia, a journalist, was among the protesters. He told Learn and Teach what happened.

"When we arrived at the Marine Parade on the beach front that morning we saw many police armed with guns. On the beach, I saw a number of clashes between white racists and protesters, as well as clashes with police.

"The racists — about 30 of them — seemed to be heading for a fight with

the protesters. They were shouting abuses and chanting: 'Kom kaffirs... kom coolie... julle was nie.' (Come kaffirs... come coolie... you people do not wash). I saw another one who was carrying a sjambok frighten a little child who was dipping his feet in the children's pool.

"Another racist told journalists in a heavy Portuguese accent that whites had the right to have their own beach. He said: 'I am a Nazi. I see the whites giving in. They should stand together'.

"The police took no action against them. But they arrested the protesters. All in all, 58 protesters were detained, 10 for holding up the ANC banner and 48 for 'unlawful gatherings'."

### "THE PURPLE SHALL GOVERN"

Arrests of peaceful protesters were taking place in other parts of the country. In Cape Town, on 2 September, about 500 people were arrested as they gathered to march to Parliament under the banner "The People Shall Govern".

Stacey, who is a cultural worker, told Learn and Teach about the march. "We were in Burg Street when suddenly I saw this huge truck coming towards us. I got a hell of a fright. Then I realised it was a water cannon. As we looked up, a huge wave of purple water was coming at us. People shouted: 'Sit! Sit!'.

"Then a young white man jumped onto the top of the water cannon and redirected the spray onto the police. The crowd just went mad with joy. It was a wonderful moment, quite heroic.

"Just as that was happening the police charged with sjamboks and everybody started to run. I felt something hit me



One of the many protesters outside the General Hospital in Johannesburg calling for the opening of hospitals to all

on my head and I fell, hitting my face on the pavement. People were tripping and falling on top of me. I was suffocating from the people on top of me and the teargas. My face was bleeding.

"Later came the humour — graffiti went up the next day saying: "The Purple Shall Govern". And the people felt very united afterwards so in the end it was a victory for us."

### THE CRACKDOWN

As defiance spread like wild fire, the government began its crackdown. Mohammed Valli Moosa, acting General-Secretary of the UDF was detained on 18 August. Four days later, Graeme Bloch, a lecturer at the University of

the Western Cape and an MDM activist, was picked up. A week later two more leaders, Trevor Manuel and Titus Molefe, were detained.

But the detentions did not stop the defiance. Banned organisations unbanned themselves. On 20 August, the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) unbanned itself. Ephraim Nkwe of SAYCO declared: "From this day, the sixth anniversary of the UDF, all restricted organisations will consider themselves to be free to operate and organise within their constituencies."

The Congress of South African Students (COSAS) also unbanned itself. The UDF unbanned itself. So did the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) and the Soweto Civic Association (SCA), to name but a few.

Restricted people also defied their restrictions. In Johannesburg, a group of more than a 100 people travelled to Soweto to visit people who were defying their restriction orders. The restricted people were taking a courageous stand, for it was not long before the police began to pick them up.

All in all, since the start of the campaign, over 2 000 people have been arrested. More than 240 activists have been detained without trial. As we write, many are still in jail.

### **THOSE WHO DIED**

But some were to suffer a fate worse than jail. They were to pay with their lives. Twenty-three year old Siphwe Satin May was attending a meeting on 20 August in Adelaide in the Eastern Cape in support of the Defiance Campaign when he was shot dead by a municipal policeman.

A few days later, a youth was killed by

police in De Aar while protesting. Many more people, including children, would lose their lives in the following weeks.

The police have not been the only ones to act violently against peaceful protesters. Right-wing groups and death squads have also done their share. Many activists have received threats and some have been fired at. Some have been assassinated.

Eric Gumede, a Kwa-Mashu Youth League (KYL) activist, was killed outside his home, four days after he was released from detention. The body of East Rand trade unionist, Bafana Sigasa, was found floating in a dam. And in the Karoo town of Cookhouse, youth activist Samson Godola was gunned down by two men, one dressed as a woman.

One of the most tragic deaths was the killing of National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) member, Jeffrey Njuza, in Rustenburg on 2 September. An NUM official described how it happened.

"Comrade Jeffrey was shot dead by a supervisor where he worked at Rustenburg Refineries. He had been very active in the Defiance Campaign. Before his murder, he had been charged for using a chair reserved for whites in the canteen. It is believed that his supervisor killed him for using a 'whites-only' tea cup. The supervisor later killed himself."

### **ELECTION NIGHT**

Four days after Jeffrey Njuza was killed, the government held its parliamentary elections. The day was marked by the biggest stayaway in South African history — more than three million people stayed away from work.

In the weeks before the elections,

In the weeks before the elections, tension had been high, but it was on the night of the elections that it finally came to a head. In Mannenberg, a "coloured" township just outside Cape Town, the tension exploded.

Paul Joemat, a community worker in Mannenberg, described how the whole of Manenberg Avenue (a long street running right through the township) was barricaded with tyres and pieces of wood.

"The idea was to stop people from getting into the polling stations," he explained.

"People were protesting against apartheid and the apartheid elections.

"The police were driving around in vans, Casspirs and trucks. There was a lot of teargas — the police were just shooting at random, it seemed. Children were chased up the stairs of the flats and sjambokked almost at their front doors.

"This made people very angry. They stopped running and started confronting the police, throwing bricks and stones. At one stage the police marched down the avenue with their guns, kicking the barricades aside and trying to take control of the Avenue.

"People were shouting at the police and swearing at them, saying: 'What are you doing in our area? Why are

you shooting teargas?' Even the dogs went for the police, to the delight of the crowd. The whole community — even the old people — was up in arms against the brutality of the police.

"Injured people were taken through to hospitals. It was at Groote Schuur Hospital that we found out injured people were coming in from Mitchells Plain, Grassy Park, Lavender Hill and other places, and we

were told people had been killed in Khayelitsha. We learnt later that 26 innocent people were killed that night."

## MARCHING ON

The following week, a "Week of Mourning" was called to remember those people who died in the Cape. About 40 000 people marched peacefully from St George's Cathedral to the Cape Town City Hall. Some of their placards read: "Peace in our city: Stop the Killings."

Other peaceful marches followed. In Johannesburg 25 000 people marched. In East London, 45 000 people marched, in Actonville 2 000,



An angry youth sets up a burning barricade in Cape Town's Athlone township to protest against apartheid elections



Rev Allan Boesak leads a funeral procession of about 2000 people for 13 year old Leonard Rass who was killed by police on election day in Eerste River in the Western Cape

10 000 in Oudtshoorn, 7 500 in Kimberley and 20 000 in King William's Town. In the Ciskei, students protested against the homeland system and in Venda, 500 students marched to the police station to demand the release of detained students.

On 14 October, tens of thousands of workers and anti-apartheid activists throughout the country marched to protest against the Labour Relations Amendment Act (LRA) and to celebrate the news that the jailed leaders were to be released.

These are just a few of the acts of defiance in a campaign that is sweeping across the whole country and showing the white minority government that not even a four-year of a state of emergency can stop the people from saying and doing what is right.

Even though the government has tried to crush organisations and people by banning and detaining them, it has not

silenced the voice of protest. Nor destroyed the vision of a free democratic non-racial South Africa.

As Archbishop Desmond Tutu, addressing the Cape Town march said: "We say, hey Mr de Klerk, you have already lost... Our march to freedom is unstoppable. It is the march of all of us South Africans, black and white."

\*Much of the information in this article is taken from a booklet published by the Human Rights Commission called "Days of Defiance: A Special Report on Repression."

#### NEW WORDS

**facilities** — buildings or services for people to use

**segregation** — keeping people apart from other races, sexes or religious groups

**suffocating** — when you cannot breathe

**constituencies** — areas

**assassinated** — when a political activist is murdered

**confronting** — meeting someone or a group of people face to face and having it out with them



The friendly faces of the band Peto — friends of each other and friends of the people

## FROM CAPE TOWN WITH LOVE

**C**OSATU's Third National Congress in July was a good congress. Workers came out of the meeting united as never before.

But it was hard work. It had been a long week of serious discussions, debates, resolutions... and more resolutions.

On the Sunday — the last day of the Congress — it was a group of very tired comrades who sat in the hall waiting to relax and enjoy a festival of culture.

Suddenly, seven young musicians jumped onto the stage, bursting with energy.

They picked up their instruments and started tuning up. The guitarists were adjusting their strings ... the keyboard players' fingers were doing little tap-dances over the black and white keys ... the heavy drums were beginning to shake the hall... the soulful sounds of the saxophone were echoing through the great hall...

A tall thin young man was walking around the stage, a microphone in his hand. "One, two — one, two — check!" he was saying to the people checking the sound. Then he lifted his hand, and dead silence fell in the hall. He looked at the tired, sleepy audience, raised his fist and shouted: "Forward with the

people's culture!" The audience woke up. "Forward!" they shouted back, fists up in the air.

Then the tall musician broke into song. Within seconds, his powerful voice was joined by the other instruments. Was it Sakhile, Bayete or the Malopoets? No — the sounds and the rhythms belonged to Peto, a band from Cape Town.

Soon everyone was on their feet, dancing and clicking their fingers. No one could stop their feet from moving as the sound of Peto's music filled the hall. The band played until their fingers were tired and their voices were cracking. Long after they had finished, the audience was still clapping loudly and shouting for more.

### **A NEW DAY DAWNS ...**

The tall thin young man was Ringo Mandlingozi, the lead singer of the group. Ringo told Learn and Teach how Peto came to be. "Before Peto was formed, we belonged to a band called Ikhwezi. The name, Ikhwezi, was taken from the Xhosa word for 'the morning star'.

"Ikhwezi did not last long. The band had too many problems — especially money. We also did not have enough instruments. So we split in 1985."

After Ikhwezi broke up, two of its members, Herbie Tsoaedi and Mxolisi Mayekana, looked for other ways of playing the music they loved. They decided to take up music lessons through the Jazz Workshop in Cape Town. Herbie trained as a base guitarist, and Mxolisi as a lead guitarist. And this is how the two met keyboard player Alan Cameron, one of the founding members of the group.

"Alan listened to our style. Our fingers did their magic on the strings. He invited us to his cottage and we talked about forming a new band. We told him about our friends and asked him to invite them too," says Ringo.

"When we agreed to form a band, it was as if the morning star had faded away and a new and brighter day was beginning. We decided to call ourselves 'Peto', which is Cape Town slang for 'a friend'. We saw ourselves as each other's friends and also as friends of the people."

Why Cape Town slang? "Well," says the light-fingered Cyril Ngcukana, Peto's other keyboard player, "we wanted to take our band's name from the language spoken by the oppressed people to show that our music would speak their language.

"We believe that our music must come from the conditions the people are living in. This means that our music must always show the hardships our people are going through. And it should not end there — it must also offer them some ideas about how to overcome their problems."

Chris Tokalon, Peto's saxophonist, adds to what Cyril was saying. "We believe that music is the great healer. Our music will heal the situation we have to live with. It is the language of love and peace."

### **HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS**

Most of the time, Peto's many friends go wild for the band's music. But there have been one or two times when Peto discovered that the audience were no friends of theirs. Like the time Peto was invited to play in Pretoria ....

Ringo laughs and begins to tell the story. "Some time ago we went to Pretoria to play. But when we started singing our song 'Khaya' — the Xhosa word for home — all hell broke loose.

"This song says home is where the heart is. We try to understand the feelings of those people who are forced into exile for the sake of our freedom. Well, as we were singing this song, a group of men in the audience organised themselves into two groups. They started singing troopie songs, praising the SADF.

"When we saw what was happening, I told the audience that we were going to take a ten minute break. One of the guys who was singing his army love songs shouted at us that we should take a break forever. And we did — we left and never went back."

But worse still than unfriendly audiences are some of the record companies. "They tell us — and other groups like us — that our music 'won't sell'," says Chris. "This 'won't sell' thinking forces musicians to make songs that do not have meaning. What the record companies want is a lot of noise and two meaningless lines to sing. Only those musicians who love money more than real music make these kinds of records."

### THE ROAD TO FAME

Peto can be proud that they have not given in to the record companies. And prouder still that they have managed to reach success. In 1986, they took part in the "Shell Road to Fame" competition which they won with their song "Goloza", composed by group member Mxolisi Mayekana.

Peto in action at Jameson's in Johannesburg



Last year, Peto won the "Autumn Harvest Award" as the best up-and-coming group in the music industry. And they also released their first album called "Khaya".

The group has also played in an international music festival held in Swaziland, sharing the stage with such giants as Eric Clapton and Joan Armatrading.

Herbie Tsoaedi, the group's base guitarist, remembers the concert with a smile. "It was an honour for us to share the stage with such great musicians," he says. "It was also important because people from all over the world now know about Peto."

### A BAND OF THE PEOPLE

But through all these honours, Peto has not forgotten the people. "To show that we are part of the community," says Herbie, "we take part in cultural festivals. We play for free in these festivals because we believe that before we are musicians, we are part of our communities. But at the same time, we organise to play in gigs and night clubs around town to raise funds."

Ringo told us why they took part in the COSATU Cultural Festival. "We see ourselves as cultural workers and our band belongs to the people. So whatever the workers' movement is doing, we will follow. Both cultural workers and industrial workers are faced with the same enemies — apartheid and the companies that exploit workers."

Peto has also played for free in many other festivals organised by democratic organisations. They played in the Johannesburg Youth Congress (JOYCO) Cultural Festival in June this year.

The festival was organised to celebrate the 34th birthday of the Freedom Charter. "We wanted to celebrate this day because we share the demands of the Freedom Charter that the doors of learning and culture be opened to all," says the talented Percy Kunene, Peto's drummer.

The group has also shared the stage with the poet Mzwakhe Mbuli and the play "Inyanga" in a festival organised by the Federation of Transvaal Women (Fedtraw) to mark "Women's Day" — the day in 1956 when more than 20 000 women marched to Pretoria in protest against the pass laws.

Ringo gave their reasons for playing in these festivals organised by people's organisations. "We believe that Peto has to be part of the freedom struggle. And that is why we have joined the Cape Town regional organisation for musicians called the Musicians' Alliance for People's Power (MAPP). This organisation falls under the national body, the South African Musicians' Alliance (SAMA)."

Learn and Teach asked the members of Peto if they had a special message for our readers. They looked at each other, smiled and said: "Sure! The best is still to come from your people's band. Our music, with its language of peace and justice, will keep on trying to heal the situation we live in. Peto loves you all!"

### NEW WORDS

**resolution** — a decision taken by voting at a meeting

**gigs** — a performance by musicians

**meaningless** — without meaning or sense

# Letters from our readers

Dear Learn and Teach,  
Please help me with my problem. Some white guys made me very angry on the 1st of July. I was busy working out which horses to play when two white youths in a Toyota mocked me. I have tried by all means to forget their bad behaviour as I am a guy of peace. But every time I think of their saliva landing on my favourite jacket, I get very angry. I want these guys to hear my worries and anger. I think my soul will be comforted if we shake hands but I think that is impossible. I ask the staff of Learn and Teach to advise me on how I should forgive and forget.

William  
KABETE

**William, it is difficult to tell someone how to forgive and forget — especially when they are so hurt and angry. But we at Learn and Teach feel that by wanting to make peace with these people, you are already more than halfway on your way to forgiving them.**

Dear Learn and Teach,  
The one thing that slows down our struggle is ignorance. Your magazine is very good, but it is expensive. Won't you please reduce the price.  
M. M. Motshekga  
GA-KGAPANE

**Thank you for your letter. We try to keep the price of the magazine as low as we can. But even when we sell the magazine at R1 we are still not covering what it costs us to print it. And then we still have to pay the writers and the rent. So we really struggle to make ends meet.**

Dear Learn and Teach,  
I am living on a farm. I am in Standard 8. I would like other students to also reach Standard 8 at school. There are a lot of children on the farm who do not attend school because the school is nine kilometres from the farm.

The farm workers want a school on the farm but the farmer refuses to allow it. Please help us with this problem.

E.M.  
MIDDLEBURG

**Thank you for your letter. Starting a farm school is not easy, but this is how you do it. The parents in the area must get together and make a list of all the children who need to go to school. For each child, they must say how far he or she has to travel to school. If there are two hundred or more children, then you must find a farmer who will give you land on his farm for a school. Afterwards, you must write to the regional director for the Department of Education and Training in your area. If you have two hundred children and the land, the DET will give you money towards the school. The DET will pay 75% of the building costs, the full teachers' salaries and the running costs of the school. Here is the address to write to at the DET:**

**Department of Education and Training  
P/Bag X3903,  
NORTH END  
6000**

**Good Luck! And remember to keep a copy for yourselves of the names of the children and the letter you send, just in case.**

Dear Learn and Teach,  
I am whispering to all Learn and Teach readers with a sweet, hollow voice, asking how they foresee the situation in South Africa. Firstly, I want to encourage South Africans. We must muster up courage. We must never surrender. We must keep on fighting for our beliefs that:-

- ♥ One day the children of former slave owners and the children of former slaves will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.
- ♥ Blacks will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skins but by the content of their character.

♥ One day the President will stand in front of the crowd and say: "Liberation is yours. Black boys and black girls must join hands with white boys and white girls and walk together as brothers and sisters."

♥ South Africa's 'One Step Ahead' (Mr Nelson Mandela) must be released.

♥ People must not be impatient. We have given the South African government a long rope. Let them pull it in slowly — let them meet our demands.

♥ Let our motto be: Whether we are defeated or not, forward we will go without fear of failure.

F. M.

HUHUDI

Dear Learn and Teach,

I want to share the pain which is deep down in my heart about what is happening in South Africa. The government does not think that black people are human beings. Our brothers and sisters spend many years of their lives in jail without committing any crime. The government is one-sided. How many policemen have killed our fellow brothers and sisters. How many policemen are in jail for the innocent lives they have ended? Where is Steve Biko? Where is Stanza Bopape? Let's come together. We are dying because of apartheid. Here in Cape Town there are whites-only beaches. If you go there, they sjambok you. They say that a dog is better than a black person.

A. S.

STELLENBOSCH

Dear Learn and Teach,

I am not happy to write to you. My problem is Afrikaans. What use is Afrikaans for the black nation? When people talk, they do not talk Afrikaans. On our radio and even when we pray we use English as a second language. I think it is better for black people and English people to do away with Afrikaans. It is useless for us.

Mugula Mutshaina

VHULAUDZI

**Thank you for your letter, Mugula. Many people see Afrikaans as the language of the oppressors. But there are many Afrikaans speaking people who support the struggle.**

**There are also many oppressed people who speak Afrikaans. In fact, a group of teachers in Cape Town translate parts of Learn and Teach into Afrikaans so Afrikaans speakers can enjoy the magazine too.**

Dear Learn and Teach,

I am a married man of 32. I started working at Morula Sun on 18 May 1987 and was dismissed on 31 May 1989. When I asked why I was dismissed they told me that I had filled in my application form dishonestly. But I do not understand this. I have worked for the company for two years with no problems. I just want to know what I am going to do with my suffering family. I have 8 children and lots of accounts to pay. The hotel has banned me from their premises. What can I do?

Reuben Letlape

MABOPANE

**Thank you for your letter, Reuben. We are sorry to hear about your troubles. It sounds like the Morula Sun has dismissed you unfairly. If you wish to take the Morula Sun to court about this, you can get legal advice from:**

**Legal Resources Centre,**

**2nd Floor Standard House,**

**334 Main Street,**

**PRETORIA,**

**0002**

**Tel: (012) 56-4905**

**If you need help for you and your family, go and see the people at the South African Council of Churches. Their address is:-**

**S.A.C.C.,**

**Central House Building,**

**Central Street,**

**PRETORIA,**

**0002**

**Tel: (012) 323-5187**

**We are sure that these people will help you.**

Dear Learn and Teach,

I am a reader of your magazine. I need your advice. I was shot last year here in Dimbaza by a security guard. The case was heard at the regional court at Zwelitsha. My problem is this. I had four witnesses but they were not called for

the case. So the man who shot me was found not guilty. I want to take the case further because I nearly died. I had to have 20 operations in hospital to get all the bullets out of my body. What can I do?

M.P. Mlahleni  
DIMBAZA

Thank you for your letter. If you want to take your case further, you must go and speak to the Legal Resource Centre. Their closest office to you is in Grahamstown. Their address is:-

116 High St.,  
GRAHAMSTOWN 6140  
Tel: (0461) 29230 or 29251

Dear Learn and Teach,  
I am a person who likes politics. But I don't have any political T-shirts. Please tell me where I can buy some.

J.B. Molwantwa  
ZEERUST

Thank you for your letter. You can write to the following places as they print political T-shirts.

Community Arts Project,  
Community House,  
41/43 Salt River Road,  
SALT RIVER 7925

Cosatu Media,  
P.O. Box 1019,  
JOHANNESBURG 2000

Dear Learn and Teach,  
Please publish my poem, written for a friend who was killed in a car accident in July 1988.

**Who is this death we all fear?  
With his mysterious and Mystique qualities  
Is he someone with complete power  
Or is he an inanimate object always lurking  
above us  
Waiting to steal us away?**

**Does he hide in his cigarette box  
Or in the knife that I use for my bread?**

**Does he dodge between the flames before me  
Or does he swim aimlessly through the  
oceans  
Like a shark hunting for food?**

**Why does he play this game of hide and seek  
With all the creatures on this earth?  
He hangs back when you want him near  
And in your pride he reaches out  
And envelopes you in his dark, fiery hand.**  
Zoleka Fokwana  
QUEENSTOWN

♥ *A note to Learn and Teach readers:  
We often get requests to publish our readers' poems. We are happy to publish the poems on our Letters page, but we do not publish books of poetry. Here are the names and addresses of publishers who may be able to publish your poems:*

Ravan Press,  
P.O. Box 31134,  
BRAAMFONTEIN 2017  
(Ravan also publishes Staffrider magazine.  
Staffrider is a creative writing magazine  
which publishes a lot of poetry)

Skotaville Publishers  
P.O. Box 32483  
BRAAMFONTEIN  
2017

Cosaw  
P.O. Box 421007  
FORDSBURG  
2033

**DEAR READERS,**

Do you have a problem that you would like us to help you with? A story or a joke you would like to share with other readers? Then write to us. Our address is:

**Learn and Teach Publications  
P.O. Box 556  
Johannesburg  
2000**

# "IMPORTANT DATES COMPETITION"

In Issue No.3 1989, Learn and Teach had a competition. It was called the "Important Dates Competition" and we invited readers to write about an important political day in their life up to 1960.

We received many entries — all of them telling a different story and all of them good. So it was no easy thing to choose the winners. But in the end, we had to make a decision. The names of the lucky winners are:

- ✦ I. Mokoka, Sebokeng
- ✦ M. Zoran, Guyani
- ✦ S. Mazibuko, Malelane
- ✦ E. Curele, Kloof
- ✦ E. Masoba, Tlhabane
- ✦ J. Madisha, Gompies
- ✦ J. Setloboko, Johannesburg
- ✦ N. Ndhlovu, Soweto
- ✦ P. Motaung, Alexandra
- ✦ E. Molobi, Hillbrow

***Congratulations! You will soon be receiving your gift!***

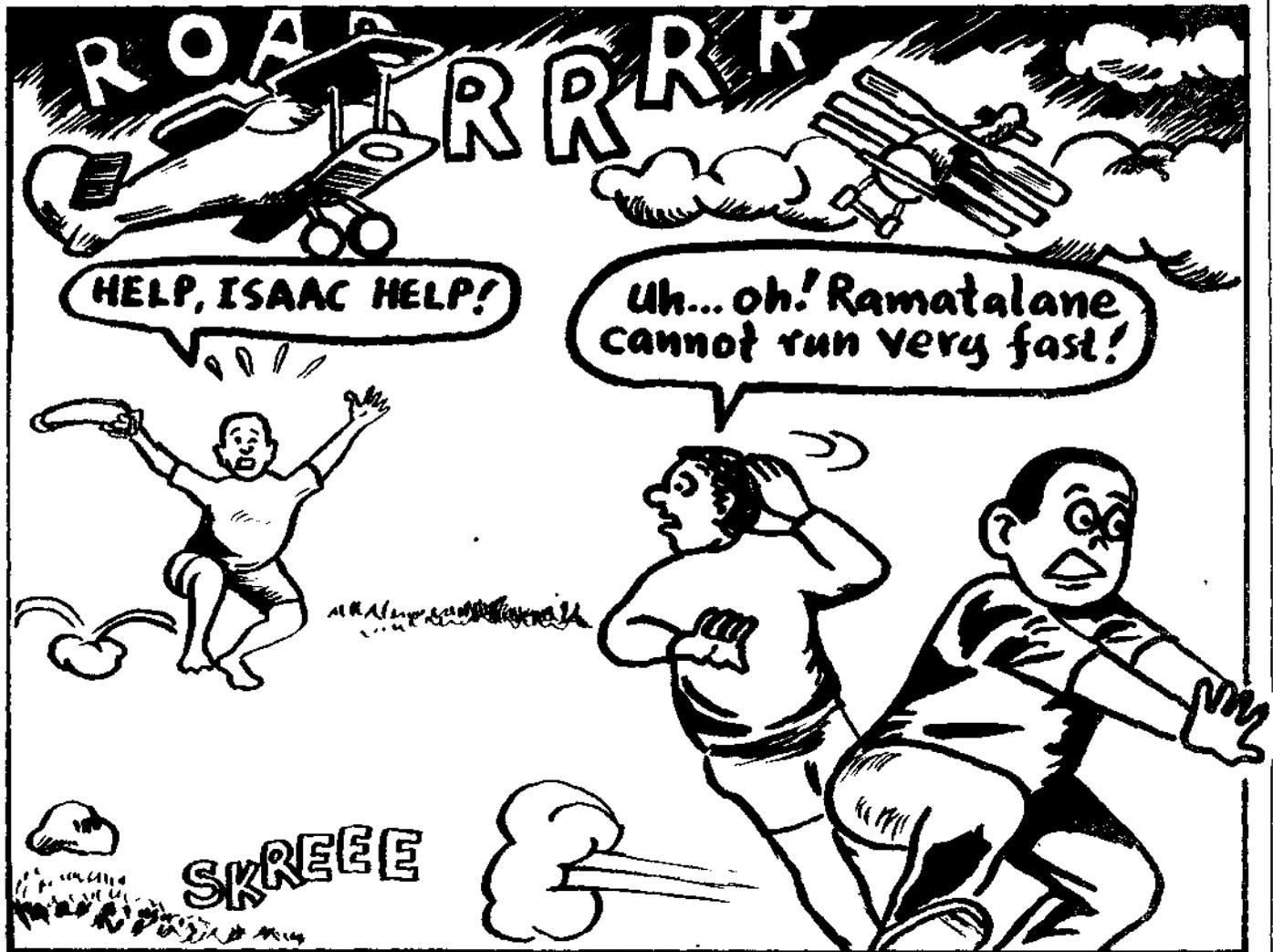
Below, we have published one of the winning entries, sent in by Isaac Mokoka.

**I**N March 21 1960, when the 69 Sharpeville people were shot dead by Pretoria, the Evaton people gathered at the "White Residencia Police Station" to defy Verwoerd's Pass Laws. Residencia was a place occupied by whites at that time, and there were small farms in the southern zone of Evaton where we were staying. The people were told to stand on one side of the open veld between the Police Station and De-Deur. PAC leaders, including the likes of the exiled Mr Gabie Seandamela, refused.

I was told this information by my parents who were amongst the protesters as I was only a child of nine then. They said they refused to move from "White Residencia". Because they were mixed with whites, the soldiers and police were unable to shoot them.

Meanwhile, me and my five friends, (one a cripple), were in the veld between Residencia and the small farms, stoning birds with our "skiet rekkers" (slings). We defied our parents' orders to stay indoors the whole day.

Suddenly, we heard the loud sound of airplanes. There were six of them. They flew just about five metres above our heads, with an up-and-down and to-and-fro movement. When we realised that we were their targets, we fled in terror. We were so shocked that these planes were after us. Our legs could not carry us



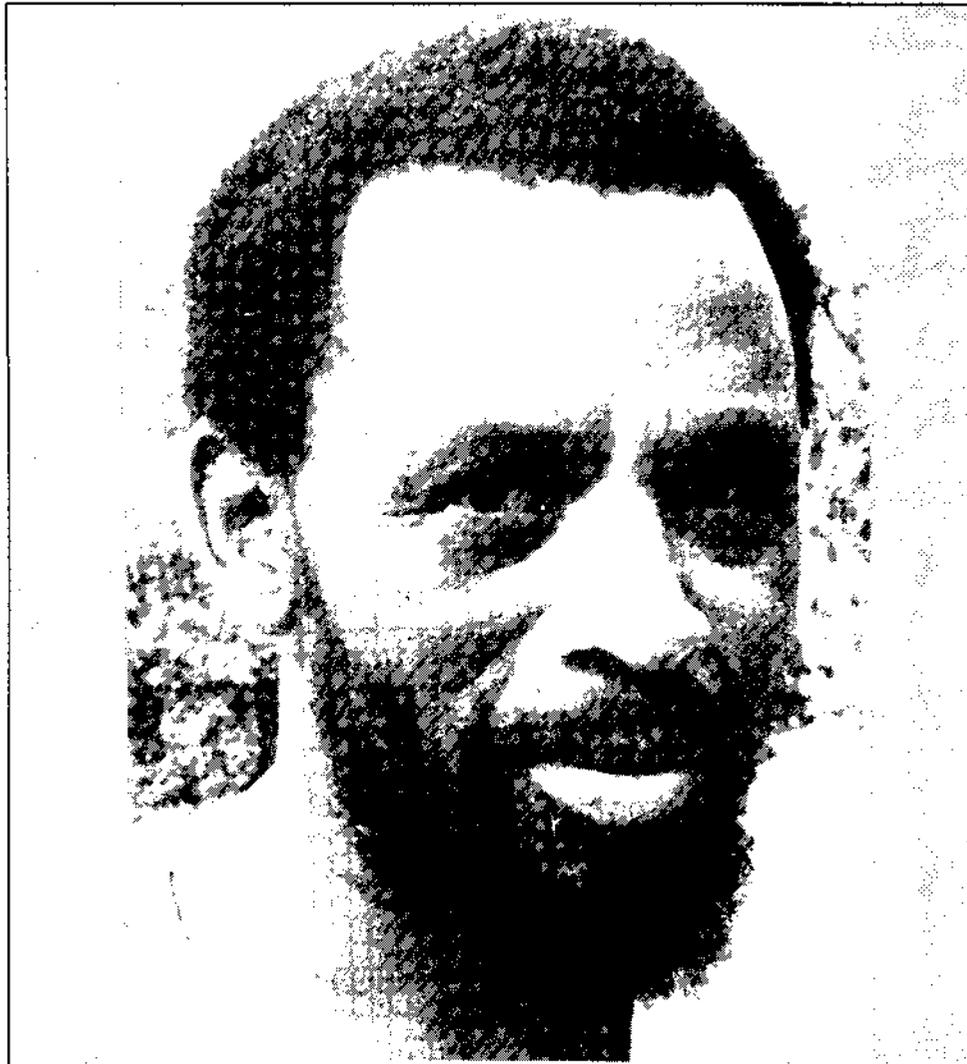
faster as we were trembling with shock.

Our crippled friend, Ramatalane, who could not run, cried out: "Help me! help me! Isaac, do not leave me behind." I came back for him with these boers after us. I tried to carry him on my back but, oh! in vain as he was so heavy. We struggled like that until we reached his home. The action of the planes carried on and even after we locked ourselves in the house with our brothers and sisters, we prayed non-stop.

Our mud houses, with big rocks on top of the roofs, shook because of the huge sounds of those terrible planes just above our homes. Suddenly, they were gone. As we went outside, we saw many people chanting slogans with our parents and singing "Away with Passes." Some said: "Verwoerd, leave the women alone." Others said: "Mayibuye, i'Afrika."

The event is important for me, for at least I also took part in the struggle, young as I was. I understood everything as I grew up, and my parents explained everything to me.

# A WORKING LIFE,



Alfred Temba Qabula, cultural worker and poet

## CRUEL BEYOND BELIEF

"THIS book is dedicated to the working people of South Africa, especially the migrant workers." So begins the book "A Working Life, Cruel Beyond Belief", written by COSATU cultural worker Alfred Qabula. It is the story of Alfred's own life as a South African worker, union member, oral poet, cultural activist, husband and father.

It was as a father that Alfred first started to write his book. He wanted to

leave something behind for his children so that if he died on one of his many migrant journeys, he would not remain a stranger to them. His children would be able to read the story of their father's life and learn who he was and what he believed in.

Later, a friend suggested that Alfred write this book for other people as well, for everybody. And this is what he has done.

## THE GREEN DAYS

Alfred Temba Qabula's story begins in the small town of Flagstaff in Pondoland where he was born on 12 December 1942. Alfred grew up in the green hills, the valleys and the thick forest in the area.

His childhood was a happy one, even though the family was poor and he never really knew his father. Like most of the men in the area, he had left long before to seek work as a migrant labourer on the mines in Egoli. He died of poisoned drink when Alfred was just a boy of seven.

When his father died, Alfred's mother, Nonkululeko, sold one of their cows and the family started again from scratch. Nonkululeko worked hard so that her family never really felt their poverty.

After his mother died, Alfred wrote this poem of love for her:

---

**When I am away, out on the road  
Hungry, thirsty and full of tears  
I think about you Mother  
and I regain my strength  
My hunger, thirst and exhaustion  
disappear  
The road's sorrows and worries  
disappear as I reach out  
For you  
My mother**

---

Soon after Nonkululeko's death, Alfred was taken in by a kind family by the surname of O'Reilly. Mr Tommy O'Reilly had been Alfred's father's best friend. The O'Reilly's sent Alfred to train as a plumber after the boy completed his Standard Six. Today, Alfred praises this family. He says that it is only because of

the little education they gave him, that he is able to write this book.

## COMING OF AGE

It was while Alfred was still living happily with his adopted family, that he began to realise how hard and cruel it was to be an adult. 1960 was the year of the Pondoland rebellion when the apartheid government of South Africa wanted to make Transkei a Bantustan.

The people resisted — and Alfred was among them. He describes how the people deserted their homes and slept in the forest and the veld. The soldiers hunted them down with guns and helicopters. The people fought back with sticks and stones. Houses were burnt down and cattle was stolen or killed. Some of the women reported that they had been raped.

Chiefs and headmen who resisted the government were killed or forced into exile. The chief of the Mpondos, who refused to sell out, was given a slow killing poison. The government declared a State of Emergency in Pondoland and banned "the people's movement, the ANC."

It was some years before the bitter people could return to their fields. Of this time Alfred writes: "I became an adult in these years of hardship, my soul awakening to a world cruel beyond belief."

## "MOOI KLEIN BOESMAN"

It was now time to set out for the wide world and look for a job. On 3 February 1964, the young Alfred took the train to Carletonville where he had been promised a job as a plumber.

On his first day at work, the foreman



Performers in the Dunlop Workers' play, which tells the story of life at this giant factory

gave him a new name. "You!", said the foreman. "You look like a Boesman. Are you a Boesman? Anyway, I'm giving you a new name: Mooi Klein Boesman. Do you hear?"

Working conditions at the job were terrible. Sweat poured off people's bodies as they worked in the hot sun. Men fainted and had to be brought round by pouring water over their bodies. At night, in the compound, things were not much better. It was not long before Alfred decided to leave Carletonville and seek employment in Durban. He was not sorry to leave "that place of suffering, with its compounds, its violence, its homosexuality, a place crawling with the spirits of ... dead miners and workers."

He wrote this poem about the hostels:

---

**Tall brown walls crowned  
with barbed wire fences**

**Walls that hide what lives inside  
from all outsiders.  
And inside them, the inmates never  
see  
the world outside  
they hear sounds  
Rumours of lives  
they hear stories.**

---

### A DREAM OF LOVE

In Durban, Alfred suffered his first bitter disappointment in love. The girl he was to marry left him with his child. The young man felt that he would never, ever fall in love again.

But one night he had a dream. It was Good Friday of 1969 when Alfred saw the woman he was going to marry in his dream. She was Nellie Nqunqa, a young woman he had known as a child. But he had never taken much notice of Nellie because, at the time, he was in love with Nellie's sister!

It was not long before Alfred was packing his bags and getting ready to go home to Flagstaff and find Nellie. When he arrived, the first thing he did was to ask people: "Is Nellie still not married?" When he heard that she wasn't married, he slept well.

Six months later, Alfred decided that Nellie was the one and only woman for him. He asked her to marry him. Even though Nellie loved Alfred too, she refused to marry him, saying that she did not want to leave her sick mother.

But in the end, love won out! Nellie and Alfred were married in church on 2 January 1972. Their marriage has been blessed with three lovely children.

### **CROSSING INTO HELL**

Two years later, Alfred left his job as a plumber and joined Dunlop. He said he was tired of feeling cheated, exploited and angry. Little did Alfred know that at Dunlop he was crossing the gates into what he calls "hell".

Alfred's job was to work on the fork lift, driving from the stores to the mill and back. The job was boring and slow, and so to pass the time, Alfred would remember the games he played as a boy in the forest near his home. He would also remember the resistance of the people against the government.

Alfred writes that when MAWU got entry at Dunlop, Alfred writes, he knew that the march through the forests had started again. He knew that from then on, the Dunlop officials would have to respect the workers, that they would have to pay a decent wage and that the voice of the workers would not be silenced. The fork-lift truck drivers were the first to join the union and soon they were

organising other workers to join. Alfred was elected a shop-steward.

At the same time, Alfred started composing poems — izibongo — in his head, long poems about the hard and cruel life of the workers. He took part in the play that the workers performed telling of their experiences at Dunlop.

"We performed this play to make our wives aware of the conditions of the workplace and the disrespectful way in which we were treated," writes Alfred. "The play also helped to show other workers the pain and misery we faced at Dunlop."

### **THE BIG TEST**

All the while, the workers were organising on the factory floor. They were preparing for the big test — a strike for better working conditions and pay. The test finally came in 1984. The workers were demanding an increase of 31 cents, but management was only offering six cents. A dispute was declared and management fired 1 500 workers.

The striking workers held out for seven weeks, demanding that the company meet their demands. Finally, the workers won. Victorious, they marched through the streets of Durban, toying and singing.

Trouble did not end there. The next year there were more stoppages and in 1986, another strike that was successful. Alfred asked the workers not to elect him as shop-steward, because he was very busy reciting poems and encouraging other workers to write about their lives.

Soon after, Alfred resigned from Dunlop. He has this to say about the workers at this factory: "I am proud of Dunlop workers. They are an example

to the militant workers of South Africa."

And he is not short of words of admiration for COSATU either: "I still praise COSATU today and I will praise it until my bones are in the ground because it is an organisation and a half. It educated the workers from both sides, about the community and the work place."

Today, Alfred is a cultural organiser. Together with other imbongi (oral poets) like Nise Malange and Mi Hlatshwayo, he has worked to launch a cultural movement all over Natal. For Alfred, the future is bright:

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**".. the wheel is turning  
darkness — ending  
daytime — beginning  
the light has come  
Come freedom  
truth is unchanging  
its colours are stark  
the end of your nights of lying  
is here  
Surely you can see for yourselves...  
Return  
what is not yours  
the rightful owners are demanding it  
back."**

---

### **TRULY BEAUTIFUL**

"A Working Life, Cruel Beyond Belief" is a truly beautiful book. Alfred writes with a gentleness and lightness. He tells his story in a simple and humble way.

There is only one thing we were sorry about — there is only one photograph in the book. It would have been nice to see a photograph of Flagstaff where he grew up, of the forests where he played and first became politically aware. We would have liked a photograph of

his wife Nellie and their three children, of the play that the Dunlop workers performed, and of the victorious march of the striking workers back to the factory gates.

But this is only a small thing. "A Working Life, Cruel beyond Belief" is a great book. Like many other great books that tell the story of our people, it has been restricted — only libraries can keep it. The publishers, the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) are busy appealing against the restriction. In the meantime, if you live near a library, try to get hold of it.

But the last word must surely be left to the poem that closes the story of the life of one South African worker. It is from Alfred's poem called "Africa's Black Buffalo" and it says:

---

**Be prepared black buffalo  
the weight of suffering is  
teetering upon your  
shoulders.  
to end  
a cruel life beyond belief.**

---

### **NEW WORDS**

**start from scratch** — to begin your life again with nothing

**adopted family** — not your real family, but a family you think of as your own

**inmates** — people in prison are called inmates

**disrespectful** — without respect

# ENGLISH LESSON

Alfred Temba Qabula is known to workers all over Natal as a cultural worker. He performs his poems at mass meetings and at trade union and community gatherings.

In this lesson, we are going to look at one his poems called "At the Dumping Ground". The poem is very long, so we are not able to print the whole poem. What you are about to read is only the first part of the poem. You can read the rest -- and many other poems -- in Qabula's book "A Working Life, Cruel beyond Belief", published by NUMSA.

## AT THE DUMPING GROUND

1     *Wherever*  
2         *he has placed his creatures*  
3         *on the day of his calling*  
4         *they shall respond*

5     *Even at the dumping ground*  
6         *where filth is piled-up high*  
7         *alongside\*humanity's rejects and rubbish --*  
8         *they shall respond*

9     *No-one can muffle such a response*  
10         *by insisting that*  
11         *he was not calling*  
12     *No-one can silence the caller*  
13         *even if he was to be gagged*  
14         *if his eyes were shut*  
15         *his ears were blocked and his mouth*  
16         *stitched*  
17         *even if he was gaoled*  
18         *in a tightly sealed boxhouse --*  
19         *so he heard nothing, saw nothing*  
20         *knew of nothing --*  
21         *still,*  
22         *on the day marked by the call*  
23         *his voice would sound through the lungs of this world*  
24         *and the world would respond.*



*Alfred Temba Qabula  
— COSATU cultural  
worker and author of  
the book "A Working  
Life, Cruel Beyond  
Belief".*

## CHECK YOUR VOCABULARY

Now that you have read the poem, you will know that there are some difficult words in it.

This exercise will help you to understand these words. Fill in the answer on the line below. You can find the answers at the end of this exercise.

**Example:**

What's a dumping ground?

---

1. What does **respond** mean?

a) answer

b) sing

c) listen

1. a) answer
2. Filth (if you say someone is filthy, you mean they are very dirty)
3. Silence and gag. To gag someone means to put a cloth around the person's mouth so that they cannot speak.
4. There is no difference in meaning between gaol and jail. Both words mean prison. They are pronounced the same way. Most English speaking countries use jail, but gaol is more common in Britain.
5. A prison cell
6. Lines 12 -20. Deaf is when you cannot hear, dumb is when you cannot speak, and blind is when you cannot see.

## ANSWERS

- 
6. Which lines in the poem describe someone who has been made deaf, dumb and blind?

---

  5. What do you think a tightly-sealed boxhouse is?

---

  4. The words jail and gaol are said in the same way. What is the difference between them?

---

  3. To muffle someone's voice means to cover it so that it cannot be heard clearly. Can you find two other words in the poem that mean to keep someone quiet?

---

  2. Can you find another word for dirt?

# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

In this exercise there are no answers. You might like to compare your answers with a friend.

1. At the beginning of the poem, the poet, Qabula, says:

*"Wherever*

*he has placed his creatures"*

But the poet does not say who **"he"** is. Who do you think **"he"** is?

2. In lines 13 - 15, Qabula writes:

*"even if he was to be gagged*

*if his eyes were shut*

*his ears were blocked and his mouth*

*stitched"*

Qabula does not say who is gagging him, or shutting his eyes or blocking his ears or stitching his mouth. Who do you think is doing these things?

3. The poem talks about someone calling other people. And in line 22, we read:

*"on the day marked by the call".*

Qabula does not tell us what **the call** is for. What do you think it is for?

# SUMMING UP!

Below, you will read three summaries of the poem. Which one do you think is better? Or can you write an even better one?

**Summary 1** It will not help to try and silence the call, because the day will come when the people will listen and answer it.

**Summary 2** Even if they try to silence the call, it will find a way of being heard and when the people hear it, they will answer it loud and strong.

**Summary 3** The people at the dumping ground will listen to the call.

## ANSWER

We think that *Summary 2* is the best one.

## MORE POEMS. . . . .

You can find more of Alfred Qabula's poems in a book called "**Black Mamba Rising**". This book also has poems by **Mi S'Dumo Hlatshwayo** and **Nise Malange**, two other worker poets from Natal. You can get the book in Zulu (R3.50) or English (R5.00).

### Write to:

Culture and Working Life Project  
Sociology Department  
Natal University  
King George Avenue  
Durban 4000



# SLOPPY

Story: Learn & Teach  
Art: Mogaosi Motshumi



