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# BLOOD FLOWS IN ALEXANDRA On Wednesday, March 5, Learn and Teach spoke to a friend

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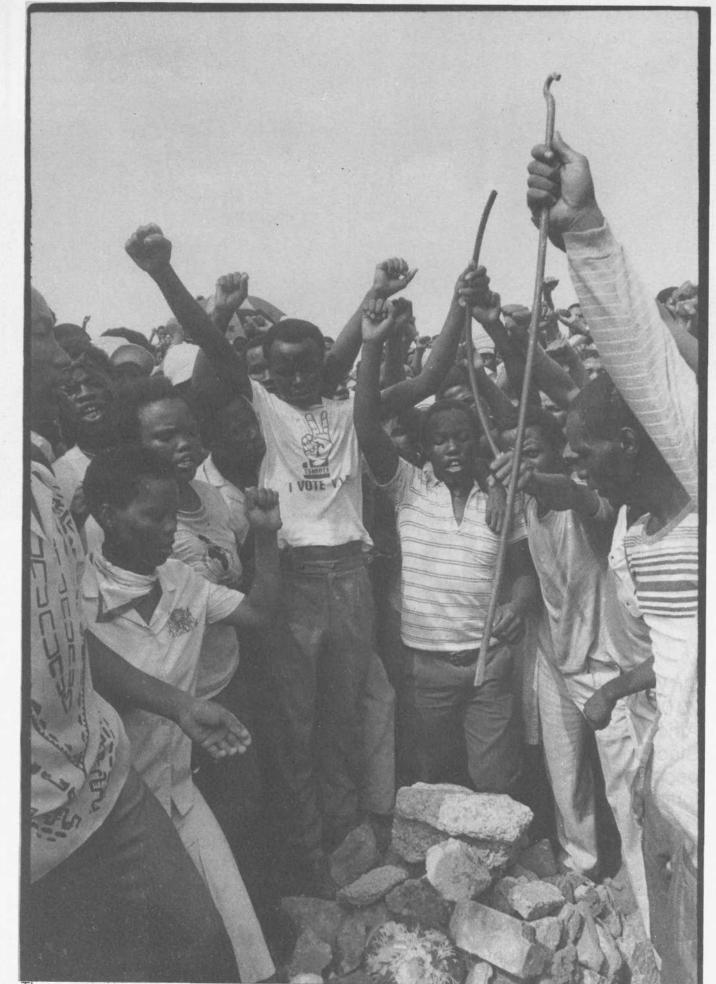
On Wednesday, March 5, 70 000 people from all over South Africa met at the Alexandra Soccer Stadium. They came to bury 17 people who were killed in a bloody, four-day street-battle.

These 17 people were only some of the people killed in Alex. Police say that 33 people died in the last two weeks of February. But the people of Alexandra say many more people died. They say more than a hundred people are missing from their homes. Learn and Teach spoke to a friend who lives in Alex. Our friend wrote this story for us.

#### **SUNDAY FEBRUARY 15**

"The shooting started after the funeral of nineteen year old Michael Dirading on February 15. A security gaurd in a shop in Wynberg shot him. 13 000 people went to Michael's funeral. I was one of them.

"We were washing our hands at his home when the police arrived.



The funeral of Michael Dirading. While mourners were washing theirhandsafter the funeral, the police fired teargas from a "hippo" — and Alex became "a place at war".

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The police fired tearsmoke at us from their 'hippo'. Everyone ran to get away from the tearsmoke. Then the police started going from yard to yard. And the young people got ready to fight the police — first with stones and bricks, later with petrol bombs.

"By 4 o'clock Alexandra was a place at war. You heard endless gun shots. Above Alex there was a heavy cloud of smoke from burning cars. A Form 1 pupil at Minerva High School, Nono Lucy Ledwaba (14), of 3rd Avenue was shot dead in front of her parents' home. Her death was just the begining.

"I was trapped in a room with about 20 other people. Suddenly we were choking on tearsmoke. A 9-nine-year-old child with us fainted. We gave the child water and lit paper to get rid of the tearsmoke.

#### ON MY WAY HOME

"Then I left. I wanted to get home. I was worried about my family. I jumped over the corrugated iron fence at the back of the house and I headed for home. As I crossed an open field, I saw a group of boys, kneeling close together.

I stopped to tell them there was trouble. But when I saw what they were doing I wished that I hadn't stopped. The boys wore doeks with handerkerchiefs over their faces. They were making petrol bombs. I left as fast as possible.

"I looked behind me. A group of

policemen were coming. Suddenly some more boys, also wearing doeks and handkerchiefs, started throwing stones at them. In the end the policemen gave up and went back to their big "khwela-khwela truck.

#### **HOME OPERATIONS**

"I kept on walking till I came around a corner. I saw two policemen with rifles coming towards me. So I went into the closest house. The house stank of tearsmoke and sweat. There were about forty youths packed into the room.

Three youths were lying on the floor, groaning in pain while another boy "operated" on them. He used a pen knife and nail clippers to cut the flesh. He was taking either buckshot or bullets, out of the boy's leg.

On 2nd, 3rd, 4th Avenues, I saw liquor running like water. Some boys broke into the bottlestore in 2nd Ave. Pensioners joined in. They forgot their troubles as they drank the free booze. But the youths didn't drink. They smashed liquor bottles for more than half an hour.

#### **MONDAY FEBRUARY 16**

On Monday the youths stopped people from going to work. I was at 14th Avenue. People were standing in their yards. They did not know what to do — stay at home or go to work. Suddenly there were some gunshots. MeisieTshabalalafell. She was bleeding from her head. Some Alexandra council policemen drove up to look. But soon they were off in their van again. Then the streets of Alexandra turned into the 'killing fields' of our times. Blood ran freely. Many people were wounded in the legs and body. First Aid teams moved about, helping where they could.

#### **TUESDAY FEBRUARY 17**

Tuesday morning started with a meeting at corner 12th Avenue and Hofmeyer Road. More than 300 youths were there. A helicopter passed above and soon police arrived in a mellow-yellow. The youths ran away.

The police followed.By 8 o'clock three youths lay dead on the ground — and more than four boys were badly hurt. Then Bishop Ananias Maredi, of the Miracle Apostolic Church of South Africa, stepped in.

Bishop Maredi organised a meeting at the local soccer stadium. Parents and children came. Bishop Tutu was also there. Bishop Tutu asked the police to leave the children in peace. And he asked the children to let their parents go to work.

Bishop Tutu said the children must stop burning so-called 'impimpi's'. He said, "One day we will be ashamed to read our history books." After the meeting, people went home and began to count the dead.

#### **BURYING THE DEAD**

On Wednesday, March 5, the people of Alex came together to bury the dead. They were joined by thousands of people from all over the country — and from all over the world.

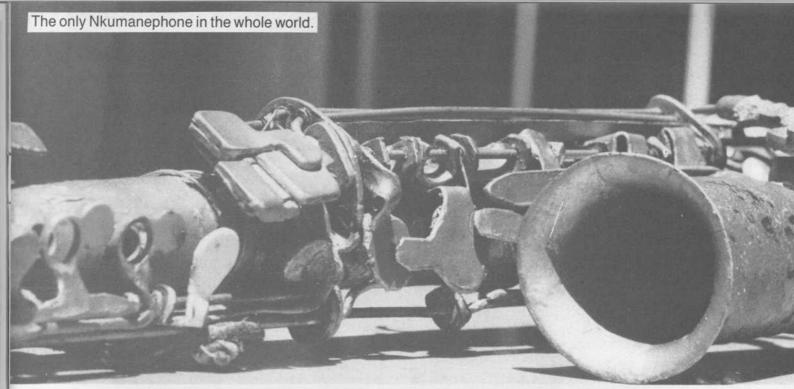
Under the cruel sun the people of Alex listened to their leaders. The 17 coffins lay on a green carpet guarded by young men in khaki uniforms. The coffins were wrapped in the colours of the African National Congress.

Then the coffins were lifted shoulder high and carried to the cemetry. The dead were put to rest.

Then we slowly made our way home. Our hearts were heavy. We had just buried our children — and we knew there would be more.

But in our sadness we felt strong too. We knew that our struggle does not stop here. It goes on. That is what our dead children would have wanted. We must make sure that they did not die for nothing.





# **SAXOPHONE IN CHAINS**

The time is twenty years ago. The place is Robben Island. There is a man walking alone, along the sand next to the sea. This man is prisoner 282/63.

The prisoner stops, walks, stops again, bends, picks up something and walks some more. He is looking through all the bamboo, plastic, sticks and other things that the sea brings in.

Prisoner 282/63 is a member of the PAC (Pan African Congress). He is serving a twelve year sentence for sabotage. He is 21 years old and he has only been on the Island for three months. His name is Vusi Nkumane.

Vusi looks like he is trying to escape but he is not. Vusi is making a saxophone. And he is looking for things that he can use on the beach.

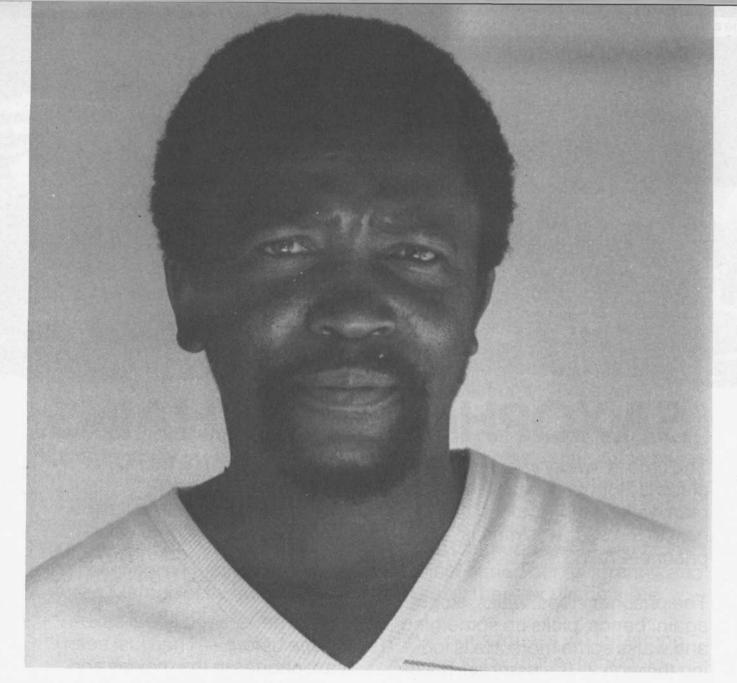
#### THREE MONTHS HARD LABOUR

"It took me 3 months to finish." says Vusi. "It was hard work. I worked everyday during my lunch hour. Sometimes I didn't even eat."

"I had never seen a real saxophone before — I had just seen saxophones in the movies and magazines. So I had to build it out of my head. Lucky for me I knew a little about the pennywhistle..."

"But," we said to Vusi,' 'even if you know about pennywhistles, making a saxophone is a very big thing to try. What gave you the idea?"

"On the island we had many great musicians." Vusi said, "Shumi Ntutu and Hector Ntsanyane were two of the best. I had been on the Island for three months. It was Christmas and Hector wanted a band.



Prisoner 28263 Vusi Nkumane now free to play his sax.

ALL OR NOTHING FOR HECTOR "Prisoners had nothing in those days. So someone said Hector must make a reed flute. Others could use buckets for drums and the rest of us could use our voices to make the sounds of the different instruments.

"But this was not good enough for Hector. He wanted a real band. So I said to him, "O.K. let's make real instruments. And that is where the idea began." Shumi Ntutu became the band leader of the "Island Band". He tells us what other prisoners thought of Vusi's idea. "The prisoners thought he was mad" says Shumi with one tooth sticking out of his smiling face.

#### **OF PAP AND PAPER**

Shumi carries on talking, "Vusi went about collecting bits and pieces of everything. He collected old newspapers and plastics. Once he even took pap and mixed it with newspaper. Then he tried to get THE ONLY NKUMANEPHONE IN THE WHOLE WORLD.

the newspaper to stick in the shape of a sax. He let it dry. But it fell apart. Later he tried using bamboo and plastic pipes. But I think he had trouble getting the right size."

When the prison warders found out what Vusi was doing, they left him alone. But they also thought that Vusi was mad. They used to say to him, "Jygaanditnieregkry nie." Vusi didn't listen to these people. He just carried on trying this and trying that. In the end he found something that he thought he could use. He tells us about it:

#### **BLOWING ON BAMBOO**

"I don't know where bamboo grows but every year lots of bamboo was washed up by the sea. The prison warders made us pick it up. They used bamboo for manure. But when the bamboo is left on the sand to dry, it becomes very hard.

"When my pap and paper sax failed, I took a piece of dry bamboo and cut it. Then I looked for some old copper piping. When I found some, I shaped it like a pennywhistle mouthpiece.

"Then I made holes in the bamboo. I made sure my fingers reached all the holes. I used my school science. When I finished, I tested my "sax". It made a powerful sound. But the sound was not right — it sounded like an alto sax, not a tenor sax.

#### **NO ALTO FOR VUSI**

Vusi did not know what to do. So he got books on music and science from the prison library. He also talked to the island musicians. They helped him to sort out his problems.

Vusi said, "I had to get the sound right. So I tried to make another sax. This time I took a piece of wood and I shaped it to look like a bamboo. Then I took it to the prison

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carpenter — I think that it was Lombard Mbatha.

"Lombard made the wood smooth. I added some plastic. Then I made the holes. The holes had different sizes for the different sounds. I even used my blanket. I cut it into small pieces to make note pads. All along I used very old tools.

"I tested the new sax in my cell and it sounded better than the first. The sax had a loud, rich sound. Now I could play lots of music.

"The other prisoners called my sax an 'Nkumanephone'. They said it was like the first saxophone. It was named after the Frenchman, Adolphe Sax. So my 'sax' must be called after me."

#### **CONCERT ON THE ISLAND**

Shumi, the band leader tells us about the band's first concert. "I think we had the first concert when they gave prizes for sports. The prisoners were happy and proud — even the life prisoners. The life prisoners were not allowed to watch but they peeped through their windows.

"We tested Vusi's sax when the band played — we tested ourselves as well. Some of us had not played for a long time. The band didn't sound bad.

"Our band had no name. But we played many favourites — like Zakes Nkosi's numbers. But people liked "Tamatie sous" the best.

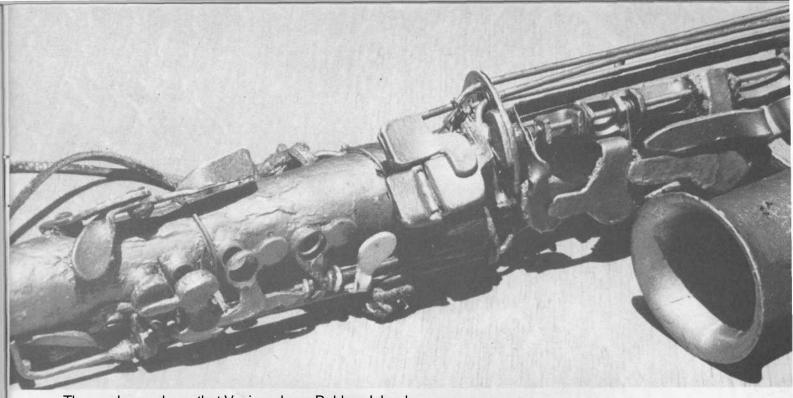


Shumi - the band leader socks it to us

It is a very old number — I grew up with it but people still loved it.

"We played jazz, kwela, mbaqanga, everything. Since I was the band leader we played my own songs too. My own best was

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The reed saxophone that Vusi made on Robben Island.

"umuntunombonawake" — which means a person with his maize."

#### THE NKUMANEPHONE LIVES ON

When Vusi finished his sax, he did not stop. His dream was to make a full band. In between breaking stones and working in the fields with the "landbou span", he built more instruments. He made a double bass, and vibes. And when he was freed in 1975, he worked on a wind organ.

Vusi was lucky. When he left the island, they let him take his sax with him. Since then, many people have asked Vusi to sell them his sax, but Vusi just laughs.

"The biggest offer came from a man overseas. He said he would pay R10 000.1 refused. I told him that now I am out of prison I will make him a better one. He refused. All he wanted was my sweat." Then Vusi showed us his 'Nkumanephone'. He holds his sax gently and he rubs it like a favourite pet. We see that Vusi has a great love for his 'sax'.

#### **MY LAST WISH**

"What I really want is for us, the Robben Island band, to come together and play for the people" says Vusi. "We will play our songs from the Island — choir songs, jazz, and freedom songs.

"We musicians on the Island were from different organisations some people were PAC, others were ANC. But we all played together. I look forward to the time that we will all play together again."

And we at Learn and Teach cannot wait for the day that concert happens.

Unemployed workers unite in Witbank.

Everywhere you look in Witbank there are black mountains of coal and lots of men on street corners and at the pass office. The black mountains are the coal mines, the men are the unemployed.

The men are in town to look for work. At lunchtime, they begin going back home. They have to tell their wives and children that tonight is just another bad night there is no money for food.

But the men are not just waiting for work. In February this year, all the people in Witbank without work came together. They formed the Unemployed People's Congress, or UPCO for short.

Learn and Teach drove all the way

# THE WAKING OF WITBANK

to Witbank. We wanted to find out about UPCO. We went to the passoffice to look for members of UPCO. At first people did not trust us. But when we showed them the magazine, everyone wanted to talk they want the world to know how they suffer in Witbank.

### A MEETING OF THE UNEMPLOYED

"We are the people who called the meeting," the men told us. "We thought all unemployed people must talk about their problems together. So we went to the pass office.

The unemployed people at the pass office chose people to go to the firms and mines

around Witbank. We wanted to tell the bosses that they must employ people from Witbank — and not only people from bantustans."

### UPCO TALKS TO THE BOSSES

"When we went to the companies, the big bosses said we cannot talk to anyone during working hours. So we asked the personnel officers — the people who employ people — to come to a meeting on 9th February.

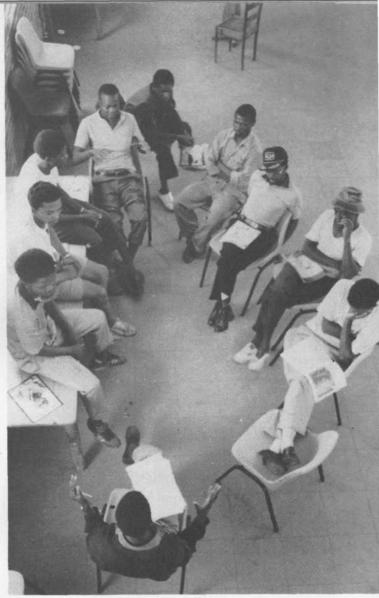
"The personnel officers came. We told them that we wanted them to employ people from Witbank. We said to them," If you want 20 people, then take 10 people from Witbank and 10 people from the bantustans.

"The personnel officers said they must talk to their bosses. We agreed to have a meeting the next week to hear what the bosses said."

#### THE POLICE ARRIVE

"We held the meeting on Saturday in the stadium —1200 people came. The meeting started off very well. But just as the personnel officers started talking, the cops arrived. The cops said we were all under arrest. They said our meeting was against the law.

"We tried to tell the police why the meeting was so important. We said the personnel officers were going to tell us what their bosses said. But the police did not want to listen. They tried to arrest everyone



Learn and Teach talks to the members of UPCO — the Unemployed Peoples' Congress.

in the stadium — even some young boys who were busy playing near the stadium."

#### WITBANK STAYS AWAY

"People in Witbank were very angry when we were arrested. So they stayed away from work. They said they would only go back to work when everyone was free again. No one knows who called the stayaway. But very few people went to work.

"On Monday we were all taken to court. There were so many of us that we had to go to different courts. The magistrates had to work overtime.

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"We had no money for bail. Some people had to pay R10, others had to pay as much as R50. But people helped us, all sorts of people, workers on the mines, businessmen, Descom in Jo'burg.

"When we got home, the police and soldiers were there — searching house-to-house. The policemen who came to my house said they wanted to arrest us again. They wanted to see if we had money for more bail."

#### THE STAY AWAY GOES ON

"Even after we came out of prison, people did not go back to work. They said they wanted the troops out of the township. We also wanted the cops out of the township many UPCO members were still hiding.

"We spoke to the unions. The unions were worried about people's jobs. In the end we all agreed that the stay-away must last for seven days. The unions gave out a pamhlet and after a week everyone was back at work."

#### **UPCO AT WORK**

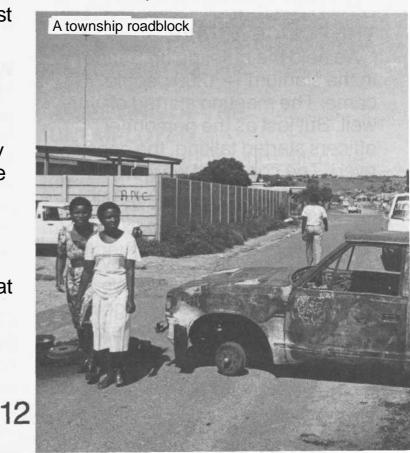
Right now UPCO is also very busy at work — with the problems of the unemployed people. One of the men tells us what those problems are:

"The people at the pass office treat us like fools. They give you any dirty job in their offices. I had to work in their garden. My friend cleaned the offices — all for R4. "They say that the R4 comes from the government — to help people with no work. But tell me, mfo, what can you do with four rand with a wife and child to feed? I know in Benoni unemployed people are being trained to weld and lay bricks. That is better".

#### HELP FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

"There are many other things we want to do. We want to tell the 'mayor' that people who cannot work — old people and crippled people — must never pay rent. And while people are out of work they must not pay rent either. We also want to get bursaries for the children of the unemployed.

"We do not know if we can do these things, but we will try. One thing we do know is this. As long as children cry from hunger, and as long as their parents are arrested for trying to help themselves, there will be no peace in South Africa.



LEARN AND TEACH



Solly & Sarah at home

# A kennel a day keeps the hunger away Hi, here I am again. The last time shaking. He looked at me like he

Hi, here I am again. The last time you heard from me, I went to visit a man who trains dogs. Now I have just spoken to people who build houses for dogs — or kennels, as some people will say.

Maybe you are wondering how I met the kennel builder. You see, just last week I woke up to find that it was raining. My 15-year-old dog was feeling very cold and he was shaking. He looked at me like he wanted to say: "Look here. I am 15 years old but you still forget that I am alive. Go and buy me a kennel".

My friend, Sharks, told me about some people who make kennels in Diepkloof, Soweto. He told me I won't find a better kennel anywhere. I went to the small corner house in Diepkloof. I found a man eating in a hurry. "Hi, I am Solly Sibanyoni," the man said.

"This is my wife, Sarah. I make kennels for dogs and Sarah makes dresses. But now I must go back to work,"

I went outside with Solly. There was wood and metal all over the yard. Solly fetched his hammer and drill and he started working. I asked him when he started to do such work.

"My father was a very nice man," said Solly. "He once said to me: 'My son, if you do not use hands, you will starve and die. Your hands are your everything. You just use your brain and your hands will build your plans.' Since that time I have always worked with my hands."

Just then Sarah came out of the house. She also had something to tell me. She said:

"Solly started working for himself after leaving a furniture shop where he worked as a carpet fitter. He started his own business fitting carpets for other people. Just when everything was going fine, Solly had a stroke. He went to hospital and when he came home he could not speak. He could not even remember who I was.

"It was a terrible time for both of us," said Solly. "I was sick for three years. I could do nothing. Sarah was very good me. She nursed me and cared for me."

" I went to look for work," said Sarah. "I got a job at a hospital for old people but I did not stay there for very long. The pay was so low. I got another job at a big glass company working in the kitchen.

"One day in 1979, Solly decided to make a coal box because he had nothing else to do. He took some planks and some metal and started to put them together. One of our friends from next door saw the coal-box and she liked it. She asked Solly to make one for her."

Soon more and more people came to order coal-boxes. But they did not only come for coal-boxes. Some wanted post boxes. And some wanted kennels for their dogs. Solly began to make kennels.

Solly worked hard in his backyard while he slowly got his health back. But then once again Solly and Sarah had bad luck. Sarah lost her job last year. The company retrenched her and many other workers last year.

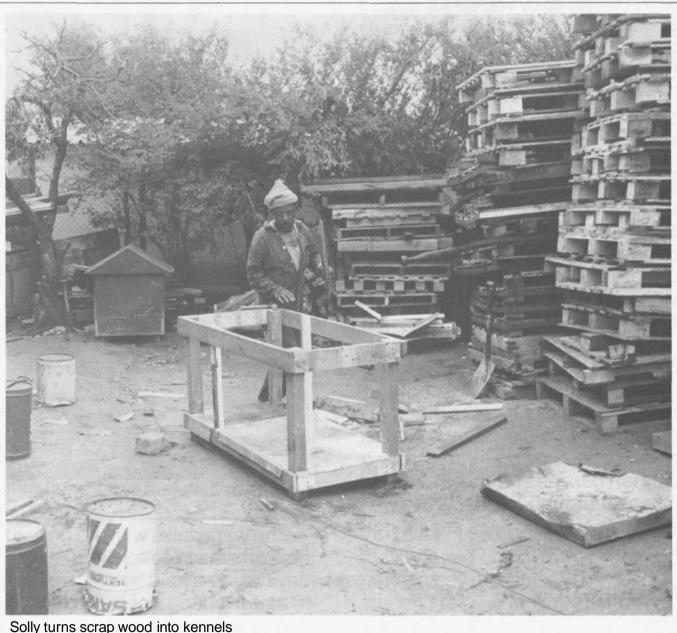
But like Solly, Sarah fought back. She began to make "Seshoeshoe" dresses at home. While Solly works outside, Sarah sews inside. They start work at about six in the morning and they finish at about half past five in the evening.

Solly and Sarah work hard — and they make just enough to pay the rent and to buy food.

Anyway, my dog soon had a first class kennel from Solly. My mother did not understand. She asked me why I bought a Zozo for myself and why I was leaving home. Before I could answer, my fat, lazy old dog jumped up suddenly. He made

funny noises like he was saying, "This is my Zozo and nobody elses."

Now you will always find my old friend fast asleep in his new kennel. And you will always find Solly and Sarah hard at work in their small hosue in Diepkloof. They are fine people doing a fine iob.



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# SITINFOR YOUR RIGHTS

On Tuesday, 11th March 1200 miners at Blyvooruitzicht mine went underground for the morning shift.In the afternoon, none of the miners came up. They just stayed underground.

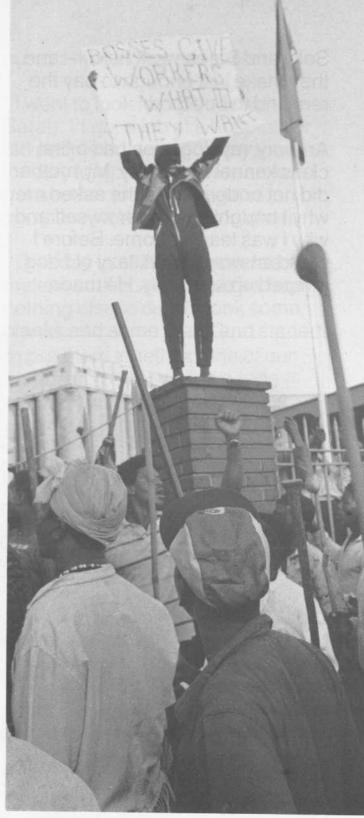
The mine bosses waited at the top of the mine. They waited for two days. By Thursday they were tired — and worried. They were worried because no one was working. They were also worried about what the miners were doing inside the mine.

The miners were angry. The miners wanted the bosses to listen to them. They did not like the new bonuses. That is why they stayed underground. But after 36 hours with no food, they were too hungry to stay down any longer.

More and more workers are staying at work when they are angry. In the last couple of months there have been sit-ins at many factories, at Kelloggs, Bosch, Printpak, the Durban bakeries, Renown, ASEA, Cheeseborough-Ponds. While we write this story, workers are sitting in at Haggie-Rand.

### NO QUESTIONS AT PONDS

Meshack Ravuku of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union told us about the sit-in at the Cheeseborough-Ponds factory in January.



Striking bread workers inside the factory yard.

"At the wage talks with the bosses, the workers asked for R3,50 a day, May Day as a paid holiday and a 40 hour working week. But most of all they wanted the personnel manager to go."

"The bosses said no, so the



Family and friends give food and blankets to workers who are "sitting in" at the Haggie Rand factory.

workers started to work very slowly. The go-slow lasted for one and a half months — but still the bosses did not agree.

"The workers started to talk about a strike. 'Will the police come? Will they be fired? Will the bosses try to get more people?' Then one worker said, 'If we sleep in the factory, we need not ask these questions.' And that was what the workers did.

"The workers made posters to say what they wanted. The posters said that the bosses must listen to the workers. They also said that overseas companies make money out of South African workers. Cheeseborough-Ponds is a Canadian company. "Then the workers tried to sit in the general manager's office but the general manager locked himself inside. So the workers sat outside and sang songs.

#### **BOSSES WAKE UP!**

The workers were in the factory for two nights. Meshacksaid, "The workers said if they stayed awake, then the bosses must stay awake too.

"So every fifteen minutes or so, they phoned one of the bosses and made a hell of a noise. The bosses couldn't unplug their phones. They wanted to hear from the security guards what the workers were doing in the factory. They were worried about their machines.



Striking bread workers ;n Durban refuse to go home.

"In the end, said Meshack, "the workers told the bosses there was going to be more trouble. They said that they were going to fetch their families, dogs, cats, everything.

"About ten minutes later, the bosses made another offer — R3,25 an hour, May Day as a paid holiday and a 44 hour working week. The workers said yes."

#### FOOD AND BLANKETS ARRIVE

At the Bosch factory in Brits the workers went on strike. They wanted a R1 an hour increase for all

workers. The bosses fired all the workers after they had been on strike for two days.

The bosses wanted to teach the workers a lesson. But the workers had a lesson for the bosses. They refused to leave the factory, even at tjaile time. The workers didn't want the bosses to get other workers. They said, 'No-one will touch our machines' and they made sure that no-one got a chance.

The bosses of Bosch did not take the workers seriously — not until the workers'families started to arrive at about 6.30 in the evening. When the bosses saw food and blankets coming in,they said to the workers, 'Let's talk.'

#### THE LONGEST SIT-IN

The longest sit-in was at Printpak in Jo'burg. The workers at Printpak were angry when Cyril Rulashe was fired. They said it was unfair.

Hamilton Ntanda laughs when he remembers the sit-in. He says, "We stayed in the factory for two and a half weeks. The bosses took turns to stay in the factory with us. They worried that we would break the machines. We were pleased to see the bosses working shifts. Now they know how heavy shift work really is."

#### TRADE UNIONS ON SIT-INS

We spoke to some trade unionists about sit-ins. "A sit-in is the strongest weapon workers have at this time,"says Meshack Ravuku of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union.

"A sit-in keeps other workers out of the factory. Bosses worry about the money they lose when no work is done. They also worry about their machines. So they try to end sit-ins quickly. It is also hard for bosses to pick and choose which workers to take back. Everyone is there at the factory — so they have to take everyone back.

"Bosses are afraid of sit-ins. But workers must be careful about when they sit-in. Bosses sometimes go to the courts. Then the court tells the workers to leave. If they don't leave, the bosses can call the police to arrest them."

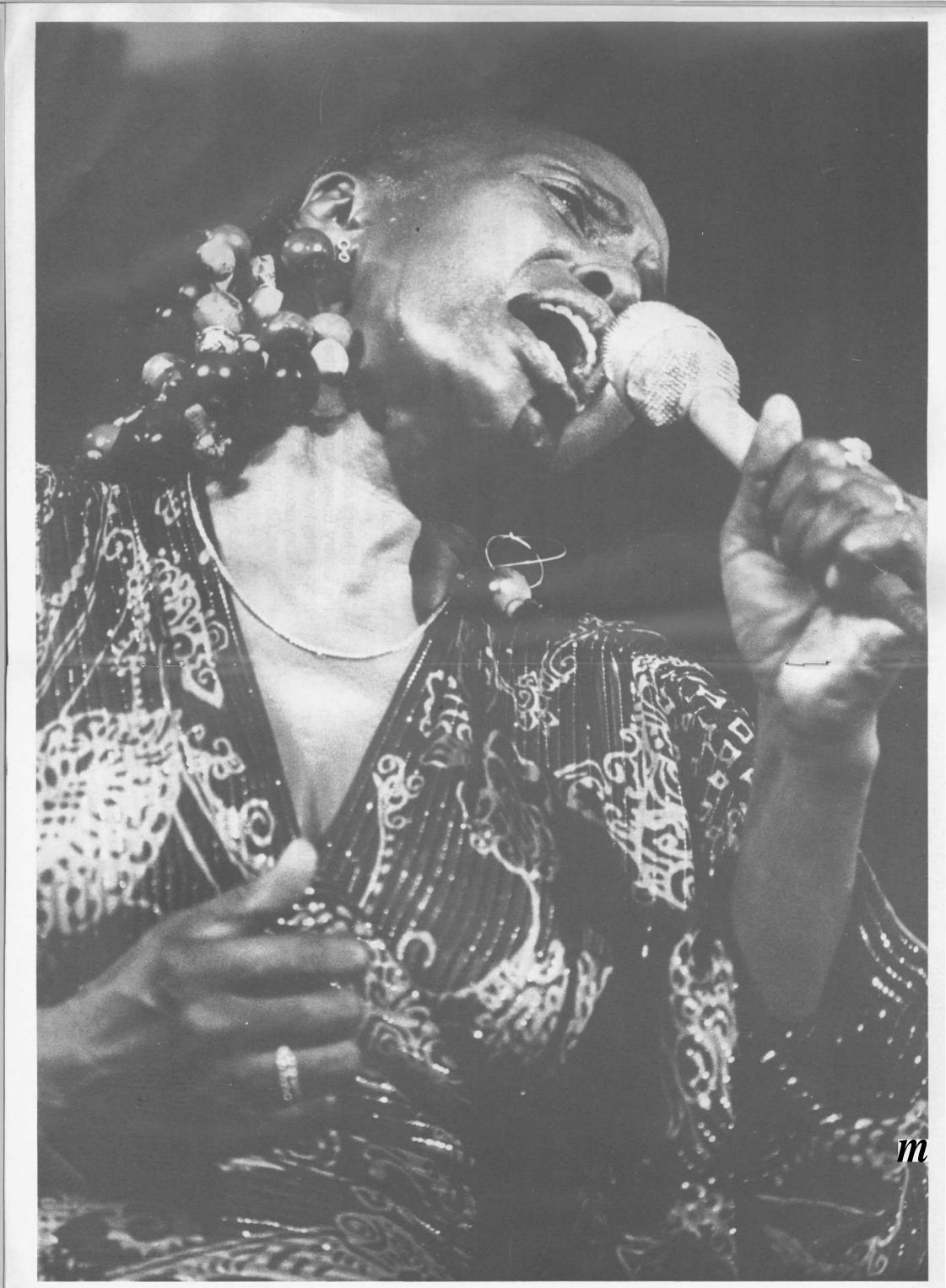
### SHARING PROBLEMS

Mayekiso of the Metal and allied Workers Union said "Sit-ins bring people together. Workers in the factory need people outside the factories to bring food and blankets. So people outside get to know more about workers problems.

Sipho Khubeka of the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union said, "Sit-ins give workers more power than a strike does. But it needs more organisation otherwise people get bored. It is also good for workers to be together for a long time. It makes people feel strong."

People are changing their protests all the time. First people used to say, "Stand up for your rights." Then they said, "Fight for your rights. And now the workers are saying, "Sit-in for your rights." Who knows what people will come up with next. ?





# Miriam Makeba

LEARN AND TEACH



# Take-away tea with Miss Ray

Learn and Teach went on a long trip. We went all the way to Zambia to talk to Ray Alexander, or Miss Ray, as many old workers in South Africa remember her.

Our heads were spinning when we left Miss Ray's house. We had talked and talked, all afternoon. Miss Ray told us about her life in South Africa. She told us how she and others started the Food and Canning Workers Union. She told us how the Federation of Women started. Would we remember everything Miss Ray told us, and — more important — could we tell her story as well as she told it to us?

As we opened the gates to leave, Miss Ray came hurrying out. She was very worried. We talked so much that she forgot to offer us anything to drink. She gave us a bottle of homemade lemonade to take with us. It was very good!

### **ON THE DOCKS**

Miss Ray's story starts in 1929. She

had just arrived in Cape Town. She stood on the docks, a young girl with yellow hair. She had come by boat from Latvia, near Russia, to join her family.

Miss Ray was not happy. She was missing her friends and work back home. For a week all she wanted was to go home. But then she went to the shops.

She saw many workers sitting outside in the sun, during their lunch hour. She asked them if they had a union. They said no and Miss Ray felt better. There was lots of work to do here — the same kind of work that she did in Latvia.

#### **MISS RAY STARTS WORK**

Miss Ray started that very Sunday. There was a big meeting at the bottom of Adderley Street. She met a man called Johnny Gomas there — and she helped him to collect money for the striking textile workers in America.

From that time Miss Ray was never at home at week ends. On Sunday mornings Miss Ray went to the docks to help Johnny Gomas with union work.

But Miss Ray also had to earn money. She soon got a job sewing for a tailor. And she started to learn English — it was some time before she spoke English. When she gave her first speech in English at the docks, her knees were knocking from nerves. The older people in the union soon saw that Miss Ray knew how to work. They asked her to work with them full-time, and not just at week-ends. Miss Ray was soon very busy, organising the tin workers, the oatmeal workers, chemical workers,sweet workers, everyone.

### TEA IN BLOEM STREET

Miss Ray helped the sweet and food workers a lot. They believed that they needed a special union. So, in 1941, on the 6th of February, about 50 people met in a house in Bloem Street.

One person brought milk, one person brought tea, another person brought biscuits, another brought cake. By the time they finished their tea, the Food and Canning Workers Union was born.

There was lots of work to do. Everyone sat down and wrote letters to friends and relatives at the big canning factories in Paarl. They wrote to tell them about the union. Then they waited for answers to their letters.

### **BY THE LIGHTS OF A ROLLS**

Months later a letter arrived from some Paarl workers. They asked the union to send people to them at Daljosophat. Ray went with two workers from Crosse and Blackwell in Cape Town.

They had no transport so Ray asked a friend to take them. When he arrived to pick them up, he was driving the biggest, smartest car in the whole world — a Rolls Royce.

The Rolls Royce was very useful. When they got to Daljosophat, the workers were angry. No one would give them a hall to meet. So they went down to the Berg River for their meeting. Many people were signed up that night, by the lights of the Rolls Royce.

Once people from the Paarl canning factories joined the union, the union spread like a big fire. Soon workers from Wellington, Worcester, Groot Drakenstein, Ashton, Roberston, Somerset West wanted to join the union.

### PORT NOLLOTH

One day Miss Ray got a letter from

some workers in Port Nolloth, far away in the northern Cape. Today it takes three days to get there by train.

The police at Port Nolloth do not like strangers because of the many diamonds there. They think that every stranger wants to buy their diamonds "under the counter". Miss Ray had to carry a letter saying that she was there on union business — and not for any other reason.

When Miss Ray got to Port Nolloth she was shocked. The workers lived in terrible houses, the factories were dangerous, and most of the workers had TB. Many were alcoholics.



A young "Miss" Ray (middle) with comrades from the Food and Canning Workers Union. Can you spot the young Oscar Mpetha?





"Miss" Ray and comrades in the early days.

The boss of the canning factory, Mr White, was very angry. He did not want anyone to 'interfere' with his workers. He tried to get Miss Ray out of Port Nolloth in every way he even told the hotel owner not to let Miss Ray stay there. But in the end, the boss had to talk to the union.

#### MISS RAY LEAVES THE UNION

Miss Ray worked for the Food and Canning Workers Union for twelve years. During this time she travelled up and down the country, from the big cities to all the tiny little towns, in trains and buses.

Miss Ray slept in hotels, in workers' homes, in beds and on floors. The name of Miss Ray was loved by the workers everywhere. Even some of the bosses came to respect Miss Ray.

But in 1953 the government banned Miss Ray. The government banned Miss Ray because she belonged to the Communist Party. The government said that she must not work in the union anymore.

Workers were very angry — there were strikes at many canning factories, from Paarl to Port Elizabeth.

#### PARLIAMENT AND THE WOMEN

Just before Miss Ray was banned, she went to a meeting in Port Elizabeth. The women got together. They spoke about starting a special organisation for women. Everyone agreed at the meeting to speak to other women.

After Miss Ray's banning order, she decided to stand for parliament. In those days, four people went to parliament to talk for the 'natives'.

Miss Ray travelled around the country, from Durban, to East London, to Cape Town — in a boat. She spoke to people and she told people to vote for her. At the same time she spoke to women about the new women's organisation.

#### MISS RAY DOES NOT ARRIVE

Miss Ray was chosen to go to parliament. But when she went, the police would not let her in the doors. The government had quickly changed the laws — noone who was a member of the Communist Party was allowed into parliament.

The new law also stopped Miss Ray from travelling. She could not go to Johannesburg for the first big meeting of the women's organisation — the Federation of South African Women.

But the policeman who stopped Miss Ray at parliament made a big mistake. He grabbed her arm to stop her. So Miss Ray took him to court for hurting her. The police had to pay Miss Ray lots of money — enough to pay for all her travels when she was telling people to vote for her.

#### MISS RAY LEAVES

In 1965 Miss Ray and her husband, Jack left South Africa. Both of them were banned. Both of them were cut off from their work. Today they live far away in Lusaka.

But they have not forgotten South Africa and South Africa has not forgotten them. In the Food and Canning Workers Union any of the older workers will tell you about Miss Ray. One worker told us: "If Miss Ray could see us today, she would be so proud."

When Miss Ray left the union, the union went on to make history. Many people from the Food and Canning Workers Union became leaders in other organisations like the ANC,the Women's Federation and Sactu.

The union itself was one of the strongest unions in Sactu. It is the only union that is still around from that time.

Even today, the Food and Canning Workers Union is part of Cosatu, the big new trade union federation. The Food and Caning Workers Union will soon join together with the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers Union. They will have 50 000 members — a lot more than the 50 workers who met with Miss Ray in Bloem Street back in 1949. Yes, Miss Ray surely has reason to feel very proud.

Learners from ALP at the end-of-the-year party.

# Phambile Nolwazi

Crossroads is a big shantytown in Cape Town. In the evenings, when it is warm, you will see many people going to Noxolo school. You will ask yourself, what do these grown up people want at Noxolo in the evening.

These people are going to classes. They are going to learn — some people are learning to read and write in Xhosa and others are learning English. The Adult Learning Project, or ALP as everyone calls it, runs these classes.

#### GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES

ALP started in Crossroads some years ago. ALP has seen good times and bad times in Crossroads. Sometimes people did not come especially in winter when there was too much rain and mud. On some nights there were 5 teachers and only two learners, sitting together round the hissing gas lamp.

Today things are very different. ALP teaches people all over Cape Town. They teach people from Langa, Gugulethu, Nyanga, Hout Bay, even Macassar. They teach people from trade unions and other organisations.

#### LEARNERS TEACH THE TEACHERS

ALP is different from other schools. The learners don't just learn. They help to run the school too. There is a committee for the learners. The committee meets often to talk about the school.



The learners' committee of ALP meet to talk about the school.



Mr Makhenke Mahlombi, with ALP from the start.

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If learners have problems, they tell the people on the committee. Then the committee tells the teachers. So the learners can teach the teachers. Every year there is a big meeting where the learners choose a new committee.

#### "I KNOW MY MANNERS"

This year Mr Makhenke Mahlombi spoke at the big meeting. Mr Mahlombi has been with ALP longer than anyone. "When I first joined ALP I did not know which way to hold a paper, said Mr Mahlombi, "But ALP helped me.

"I am not a child, I am an adult. My father has already taught me manners. So, I want my school to treat me like an adult. I like ALP because the teachers listen. When I said I want to learn about South Africa and not just read and write, they listened. Now I can tell other people about South Africa.

### A SCHOOL FOR POOR PEOPLE

"In this school the learners say what they want. We tell the teachers what we want to learn. If learners see a teacher making a mistake, they must tell him or her.

"Our school is a school for poor people, not rich people. We must know of the problems of the school. We must fight to keep our school alive.

"ALP taught me how to read and write. They also taught me about my country. ALP also taught me to listen to people below me, even children. I learnt about unions and how unions help. I want to thank ALP for all I learnt."

#### NUMBER ONE

Other people who learn with ALP agree. Mr Lucas Magazi lives in a hostel in Gugulethu. He said this about ALP:

"This school is number one. We really learn well. Sometimes I speak to other workers in the hostel who go to the government night school. I look at their books. I ask them, tell me about this and that. Then they can't tell me, they don't know. Really ALP is number one."

### **TEACHERS MUST BE STRONG**

Another learner, Khupiso, says this, "I want to tell the teachers to be strong and patient. It is difficult to teach grown people.

"Sometimes you have problems at home so you do not listen at school. Maybe you get a letter from your wife and she tells you that she has no money. The letter works on your brain. But you go to school.

"At school you don't listen because you are thinking of your family at home. The teacher asks you why you don't know anything. Then the teacher must understand that you have problems at home.

"Some people do not care for school, other people are too tired to come to school after work. We must fight all these things so that people can come and help themselves."

" I am very happy with the teachers of ALP. Today I can write my name and read and count."

### **ALP'S PROBLEM**

Mr Twoboy Lupuwana talks about ALP's big problem, "Wemightthink that we are many. But there are only forty or fifty learners in ALP. Outside there are thousands. But they do not come to our school. We must try to bring more people to our school. ALP must be strong."

### ALPISLIKEUMGQUSHU

Annie Mentor also learns with ALP. She said, "The school is like umgqushu ,all mixed up, the beans and the samp together. We are like that, Africans, and coloureds and whites, all together."

ALP's saying is "Phambili Nolwazi". If everyone loves ALP as much as these learners, then we know that they will meet their goal — people in Cape Town will go forward with knowledge.



# Thomas visits the CHISANYAMA

The other day I was walking around town. Suddenly I felt so hungry I just had to eat. But where could I find food. I walked a bit further. Then I heard the sound of music and I smelt meat cooking.

The place did not look great but I was so hungry I went inside. The shop was small and dark. The smell of burning meat was everywhere. The only people in the shop were the people behind the counter.

The tables were full of empty packets of "Johannesburg beer". I could not think because the gumba-gumba was so loud. But they sold food and I was hungry. So I decided to stay at the 'chisanyama'.

Before I could think what I wanted to eat, the young white man behind the counter said: "Wena Io funa Io nyama". "I beg your pardon,?" I said. He said again, "Wena Io funa Io nyama." I did not understand what he was saying. I was getting angry with this rude man. In the end another man asked me what I wanted — but in proper Zulu this time — not fanakalo.

I told him that I wanted pap and vleis. He gave me a plate and he asked me for R1,80.1 paid,then I saw that the meat was not cooked. What kind of a shop is this, I asked myself. They give you uncooked meat and ask for R1-80 for it.

I wanted to complain. But then the man told me to go to the back room. I was so hungry I never asked why.I just went.

The back room was small — smaller than the room in the front. But there were more than 20 people in the room. Everyone was standing around a big tin with afire in it. Everyone had a piece of wire in the fire with their meat on it. So I also put my meat in the fire.

Everyone talked liked old friends whiletheywaitedfortheirmeat. I was the only one who never had a friend. So I listened to the people around me. Most of the people talked about jobs — or the lack of jobs. Many of them wanted work.

So I opened my newspaper to see what horses were running at the weekend. A few minutes later I looked at the braai. But I did not see my meat. I looked all over (and please do not tell anyone, I even looked in my shoes) but my meat was gone.

I went and bought another piece of meat. I put it on the braai. This time I never read my newspaper. I just watched my meat. The more I looked at that meat, the hungrier I got.

Suddenly my hand became very itchy. I looked at my hand and scratched it. When I looked at the

braai again, my piece of meat was gone — again. This was like magic.

Just then one man came up to me. He asked me what my problem was. I told him the story of my missing meat. I also told him that I did not have money to buy more meat. This man bought me some meat — and he braaied it for me. Angels are not only in heaven but also on the earth, I told myself.

Now I also had a friend to talk to. I asked him why he came to the chisanyama." Well, there are two reasons." he said. "The first reason is that I live in a hostel and my wife is back home in Natal. I have no-one to cook for me, so I cometochisanyama to buy myself food.

'The other reason is that I meet most of my friends right here. We do not see each other often because we work in different places and we live in different hostels. So the only place we meet is here at chisanyama."

My new friend told me about his many problems — about his boss and some people who want him. They are fighting with his family in Natal and now they are looking for him in Johannesburg. "That is the other reason that I eat here. The chisanyama is hidden. These people will never find me here."

He is right. The chisanyama is a hidden place, not even the cops can find you there. When you are in the chisanyama, you can even forget that you do not have a dompas. Then I looked at my watch — I was late for work. I thanked my friend and I ran. But there are some things I want to say to the owners of chisanyama shops.

Treat your customers well, do not shout at us. Speak proper Zulu or Sotho, but not fanakalo. Otherwise speak in English — most people understand English. Remember, without us you cannot make any money. Also clean your shops up they are a bit dirty for places that sell food. And, lastly, if your prices were not so high, even more people would come to your shops.

Heyta daar. See you next time.

If you want other people to know about anything, please write to me at our address.

Do you have extra money?

If so, we are looking for donor subscriptions. We ask companies and people with extra money to take out donor subscriptions. This money will help us to become independent. A donor subscription is R25 for 8 issues.

Thanks a lot Heyta daar!!



# Learn and Teach Publications

Please send me the next 8 copies of the magazine in the post. I enclose a postal order for R5.oo. (People who live in Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Mozambique must please pay R6.00.)

NAME

ADDRESS

Send this form to= LEARN and TEACH PUBLICATIONS P.O. BOX 11074 JOHANNESBURG 2000.



### LETTERS Dear Learn and Teach

You never write about domestic workers. Have you ever thought about the problems of domestic workers —like their low wages, R50 to R80 a month. They still have to buy groceries and clothes for their children. And they have to pay busfare too. Domestic workers get increases as low as R5 after a year. They work on public holidays and week ends but they never get overtime pay. Domestic workers sometimes work until half past eight or nine o'clock at night. They cannot even go to church on their off-days. While you are tidying up, your madam makes a mess. Then she blames you because the place is not tidy. The worst thing for domestic workers is that they cannot even go home at Christmas time to see their children and parents. The employers keep them in — even if they have visitors, the employers controls them. They must stand outside the gate, even if it is raining. Domestic workers are people. And a person is a person by the people.

Crying person, Phindile NEWTOWN

#### **Dear Phindile**

Thank you for your letter. We were sorry to read your story. But everything you say is true. It is a long time since we did a story on a domestic worker. We hope to do a domestic worker story in the next magazine. We know a domestic worker who has a black belt in Karate. She doesn't take nonsense from anyone. We took your letter to SADWA — the South African Domestic Workers Association. They say that casual workers must get R18,10 a day, plus transport money. They must also get food and if they work overtime, they must get R2,50 an hour. Bosses mustn't call their workers 'girl'. If you want to know more, write to:

SADWA, Tudor Mansions, 78 Troye Street, Johannesburg 2001

You can phome them at 23-0667. Good luck. —editor

#### Dear Learn and Teach

I read your magazine for the first time. A friend asked me to read it. There is one thing I want you to help me with. Please write this message in your magazine. I want to tell Mr. P.W. Botha this. He must let Mr Nelson Mandela go free before it is lights out for him. Botha must step aside if the seat is too hot for him. It is no disgrace to leave the seat when you are in a panick. Thank you,

Peter Skosana GUGULETU

Dear Peter Thank you for your letter. We are pleased that

#### you like the magazine. We have put in your message to Mr. Botha but we don't think that Mr. Botha reads our magazine.

-editor

Dear Learn and Teach Please print my letter. Praise of Liquor Liquor is my shepherd I will never have money or become rich It makes me sleep in ditches full of dirty water It pulls me towards evil places It is destroying my life It always leads me to evil places because of hang-overs But I will never stay withour liquor though I am staggering in the river of sorrow For you are always with me You make me an empty dish for supper You always put a heavy load on top of my head and shoulders My cup of evil deeds is flowing Truly I will always have bad luck I will always find myself in a big hole But because I promise never to say good bye I will stick to my friend, liquor.

Sipho Samuael Manana DAVEYTON

#### **Dear Sipho**

Thanks for your poem. We hope that the readers like reading it. Don't drink too much otherwise 'babalas' will kill you.

-editor.

#### Dear learn and Teach

I have a problem. I work for Fidelity Guards Security. I worked as a policeman for five years and as a security gaurd for two years. I work from six in the morning till six in the evening. I never have a week-end, or holiday, or even Christmas. For all this, I get R340 a month. I never get a bonus, sick leave or a paid holiday. My wages have stayed the same since I started here. I only get 4 days off a month and I get leave after 14 months. Please tell me what I can do? KaizerMundondo GERMISTON

#### **Dear Kaizer**

Thank you for your letter. Your job sounds very heavy indeed. The big problem is that the law says that security gaurds can work longer than other workers. The best thing you can do is to join a union. There are two unions that work with security workers. They are:

Transport and General Workers Union, Harrester House, 65 Harrison Street, Johannesburg 2001

or

Vukani, 7th floor, Lekton house, Wanderers Street, Johannesburg

-editor

#### Dear Learn and Teach

Thank yea for your magazine. It has helped me a lot. I have learned more about life. Please help me. I work for Lewis Furnishers as an outdoor salesman. I get no basic salary, only 10% commission. Then they still take 25% for tax. With this money I must pay the rent, and look after my mother, my sister, my girlfriend and my baby. When I do not sell anything, I get no money. I filled in an IRP 2 form but I haven't got any money back from the taxman.

SiphoThela ERMELO

#### DearSipho

Thank you for your letter. We think you must talk to Lewis Furnishers. Ask them to give you some basic money. About your tax — last year the governemnt made a new law. They said if you do part-time work, you must pay 25% tax. So Lewis Furnishers are right. But if you think that you have paid too much tax, you must get an IRP 5. The you fill in tax returns forms and send them to the Receiver of Revenue, together with your IRP 5. It sounds to me that the taxman must pay you some money, so see that you do all these things. Now is the right time.

-editor

Dear Learn and Teach

Please put my jokes in your magazine. Question: What happens if you eat yeast and polish?

Answer: You rise and shine.

Question: What did the mayonnaise say to the refrigerator?

Answer: Please shut the door. I'm dressing. Question: Which day comes before the day that is followed by Monday? Answer: Monday.

H. Rose Matjeke CHIAWELO

Dear Rose Thank you for your jokes. We hope that the readers enjoy them.

-editor

#### Dear Learn and Teach

I am a deaf South African refugee in Belgium. I like your magazine and I want you to help me. I see that you help other people in our country.

I have many problems. First, I want to find my family. On my way to Europe, I lost all my papers and my address book. Now I need my birth certificate and other documents. I think my uncle will have them. My uncle's name is James Sithole. He used to be a teacher at Qumbu Village Senior Secondary School, at the Graaff Reinett Secondary School and other schools. I also want to find my brothers. Their names are Jan Nywenwa and Thomas Mathlare. I heard that they were in detention. I want my uncle to tell me about my mother who disappeared and my father who is dead. I also want to know how I became deaf when I was ten years old. I am not even sure of my name. I have a card that says my name is Joseph Sipho Grootboom. But I remember that my pass book said my name was Grootboom Joseph Sipho and that my place of birth was Mabazimbi in the northern Transvaal.

Lastly, here in Belguim we get very little news of South Africa. I really want to know what is happening at home. I hope that you can help me.

Grootboom Joseph Sipho Solidarity Social, Rue de Parme 26,1060 Brussels, BELGUIM.

#### **Dear Grootboom**

We have put your letter in the magazine. We hope that some of our readers can help you. If people know any of the people that Grootboom talks about, please write to him and tell him. Thank you very much.

-editor

#### Dear Learn and Teach

I know that you help people in your magazine. I hope that you can help me too. I work at Star Diamonds. We used to work 8 hours a day. Then they fired some workers because of the 'management situation'. Now we are working twelve hours a day. After the first month of twelvehour shifts, we got our pay. We were very surprised to see that there was no overtime on our payslips. When we asked the bosses, they said there is no overtime. They said we are taking the place of the workers that they fired. Again this month we have not got any overtime. What can we do?

Churchill Malandela THEUNISSEN

#### **Dear Churchill**

Thank you for your letter. It sounds like you are working very hard. The law says that workers cannot work too much overtime. It also says that if you do work overtime, then you must be paid. You should talk to a trade union. The National Union of Mineworkers has an office in Welkom. Go and see them. They will tell you what you can do.

-editor





# English lesson "WE CAME TO TOWN"

"We came to town" is a book written by people who are learning English. In the book people write about themselves, their families, money, coming to town, jobs. They even write about Christmas. All the stories are in easy English so that anyone can understand them.

Here are just a few of the stories in "We came to town." Jane Hloko talks about herself:

"I am a woman. I come from the Free State. I am the mother of my daughter. I am the father of my daughter.. I am the grandmother of my grandchild.I am the grandfather of my grandchild. Now I want a place of my own, at home or any other place."

Patricia Nxumalo had to move in 1968.

"We moved to a place called Limehill. There were no houses. We were dumped into tents — dads, mums, children and furniture, each family in one tent. The place itself was a desert. People died like flies."

A day in Richman Sonie's life:

"Today I slept all day. I was happy because it rained the whole day. I am sad because I got a letter saying they have no money at home."

Joel Baloyi writes about living in the country:

"Country people live better than town people because they can stay with their families in the same house. Nobody can ask them about 'trek-passes'."

Anne Mjikaliso's job:

"I have to support myself and my twelve year old son on R35 per month. I work as a domestic worker. But I have to live away from my son. However I do not pay rent. My boyfriend helps me with busfares."

Evelyn Masuku did not have enough money to take his girlfriend out. "I felt shy. I went to my girlfriend and said, "My love, I can't go with you to the cinema." She asked why. I said, "Because life is so difficult for me." She cried. I cried too. A few weeks later, she wrote me a letter. She said she doesn't love me anymore."

Clara Ramasodi tells us what she does at Christmas time.

"We buy new things for the children and all kinds of lovely things. We clean our houses and paint them. We like to plant Christmas flowers. We like Christmas even if we spend a lot of money. At Christmas we go to church."

If you like these stories, you can buy "We came to town" for R3 from : USWE 118 9th St Orange Grove 2192

# UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

TEST YOURSELF

- 1. Why does Jane Hloko say: I am the father of my daughter."
- 2. Where did Patricia Nxumalo move to?
- 3. Why was Richard Sonie sad?
- 4. Why does Joel Baloyi think life in the country is better?
- 5. Why did Evelyn's girlfriend leave him?

### Answers are on the next page

#### ANSWERS

- 5. Evelyn did not have any money.
- 4. You don't need a "trek-pass" in the country.
- 3. Richard was sad because his family had no money.
  - 2. Limehill.
  - 1. The father of Jane's daughter is not around.

## LEARNING ENGLISH

SAYING NO IN ENGLISH.

### READ THIS.

- 1. I rent a room so  $\overline{1 \text{ don't}}$  want my own place. $(\overline{do + \text{ not}} = \text{ don't})$
- 2. Joel lives well but Johnson doesn't live well, (does not = doesn't)
- 3. In town you need a pass but at home you don't need a pass.
- 4. Her family is rich but my family don't have any money.

#### TESTYOURSELF

Choose the right word. We have done the first one for you.

- 1. I  $(don't/^De^t)$  live with my family
- 2. You (don't/doesn't) know Johannesburg.
- 3. Jabu (don't/doesn't) have a pass.
- 4. Many people (don't/doesn't)know English.
- 5. Anne (don't/doesn't) live with her son.

### ANSWERS

Can you make a sentence from these words? 1. to came town.We

2. moved a place to Umehill. We colled

# Find the words

Look at the letters. Words are hidden in the letters. Try to find the words. Draw a line under each word. Look for 16 words. We have done the first one.

A	Β	5	T	R		E	T	B	L	С	
D	0		N	S	L	1	G	Η		1	
F	Α	0	B	A	5	Κ	E	T	Α	F	B
R	Ε	W	Ρ	J	Β	Т	F	0	0	D	С
B	R		A		F	Α	B	E	E	R	
N	L	0	0	K	0		Ά		F	S	X
F	R		W		L	Κ		Μ	Ν	Ρ	0
B	U	V	A	S		Ρ	R	U	Ν	Ζ	U
W	U	Ó	S	r	Α	T		0	Ν	B	A
Ζ	Μ					R		1		<u> </u>	E
X	E	р	0		0	U	S	E	D	5	K
L	A	IS!	D					H		Ρ	F

### Here are the answers

MORK'BNX BNN aivuoN'wiitt' MHILE'HONZE'F WD' 2HOG ZLBEEL' DOC'FICHL' BYZKEL' LOOD' BKEYD'BEEK'FOOK'EYL







