

POST—the voice of South Africa WANTED: A NEW HEART

THOUSANDS of South Africans are calling for a judicial inquiry into detainee deaths.

They include religious and community leaders, major newspapers, politicians and ordinary men and women.

Many of them are also calling for an end of the Terrorism Act.

POST sees their point of view.

But POST wants more than a judicial inquiry.

POST would like to see the Act scrapped — sub-section, section and statute.

But POST wants far more than that.

To ask for a judicial inquiry is like prescribing a new diet for a man suffering from incurable heart disease.

To call for an end of the Terrorism Act is to prescribe medicine for that disease.

What is needed is a new heart.

Judicial inquiries can achieve some things.

An inquiry may find fault with the Security Police. It may not. And those left to correct the fault will be the self-same Security Police

with the self-same powers.

Remove the Terrorism Act and it will be replaced by new Acts. Have we forgotten so soon that 90-day detention was replaced by 180-day detention? Both proved to mean the same detentions without trial.

That is not what we want.

We all believe that South Africa is a fine, strong body, its every muscle tuned and ready for great feats.

To achieve them we need a new constitution and new laws. That will make everyone South Africans.

To end the fear of terrorism we must go to the root causes.

Let us direct our energies to that single achievement — a constitution based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A constitution under which courts could refer not to the laws of changing governments but to the very basis of law and justice:

“ . . . The inalienable right of every human being to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.