



human rights day

H R C BULLETIN

4

DECEMBER 10 1975

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY IS CELEBRATED EVERY DECEMBER 10 BY THE UNITED NATIONS. ON THIS DAY HEROES OF THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION AND EQUALITY ALL OVER THE GLOBE AND THOSE WHO HAVE SACRIFICED MUCH, AS MUCH AS THEIR LIVES, IN THIS CAUSE ARE RECALLED. TODAY WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THEM.

THE TRANSKEI MYTH

As South Africa is advertised as a land of sunshine and stability, so Matanzima has a word for the Transkei: a land of viability. And not even that dreary description is true.

He wrote, emphatic but dull, in the 10th annual report of the Xhosa Development Corporation: "My vision of economic viability for my country (the Transkei) can no longer be regarded as a pipe dream."

Here is the answer, given by an economist specialising in labour and development at the University of Cape Town: "It is incredible." He also said: "I simply cannot see the Transkei reaching a position of economic viability in the foreseeable future and I am pessimistic about it ever reaching economic viability."

And here are the facts to back him up: In a policy speech in 1973 Matanzima admitted that between 1973 and 1977 anticipated employment opportunities would not match the inflow of adult males to the labour market.

The XDC that Matanzima proudly writes about has created 16 000 jobs in the Transkei in ten years. But 17 000 men come onto the labour scene every year, looking for jobs.

Not only that, but many of the much-vaunted 16 000 jobs are done by women to supplement the meagre pay of their husbands on migrant labour that allows them to spend a month a year with their families.

In a survey of two Transkei districts it was found that each family needed ten acres to be 'viable'. But half the people had less than five acres and one-fifth had none.

Chief Minister Matanzima went to the United Nations to tell the world about his 'country' and his 'independence' in October next year.

There he met demonstrators protesting about the basic issues he never discusses: the Transkei was created by Verwoerd without consultation of the people. Verwoerd himself (and John Vorster in his place) was not elected by the people but by a white minority.

Proclamation R400 gives Matanzima almost unlimited powers to imprison without trial, banish, and generally maintain what he chooses to call the rule of law.

And when he met people overseas protesting against all this he called them lunatics.

He stayed in a hotel in New York, in a suite that cost more per day than many Transkei families earn in a year. And he says he is the freely elected representative of 'the people'.

As far as we are aware he has not commented on a survey which found that eight out of ten people living in his 'country' had no idea who their 'Chief Minister' was. But then it is easy to win an election with Proclamation R400 behind you, when it was imposed by Pretoria, and when Pretoria wants you to win.

We should make some things clear about the Transkei: it has no say over defence, foreign relations, or monetary policy. Pretoria, echoed by Matanzima, says all that will change in 1976, and the Transkei will be free.

Can you imagine what would happen if links were formed with Moscow and Peking? If defence pacts were signed with them? If Chinese technicians came to build up the railway system and the roads and Russians to train the army he vaunts so proudly? If political commissars from both countries started talking to the people, and if the Transkei declared a socialist one-party state?

One would think Pretoria would be concerned about the prospects of such things happening. Yet Pretoria does not seem to be worried. For this there can be only one answer: Matanzima, having been favoured by Pretoria over the years, will continue to keep Proclamation R400 in force and will continue to play Pretoria's game.

Matanzima would certainly say he has given Pretoria no such undertakings and the public is free to make up its mind whether to believe him or not.

On the other hand, if he has not given such undertakings, it can only be because they are not necessary. He and Vorster understand each other.

He, Matanzima, says he is a friend of the people. Then Vorster, whom he understands so well, and who keeps the real leaders of the people on Robben Island, must be a friend of the people as well

When our readers have read this survey of the Transkei, we invite them to consider the other homelands and the role of other "homeland leaders" such as Buthelezi and Mangope. Are things so different? Does Buthelezi not have an emergency detention law for Msinga? Does Bophuthatwana not work with Pretoria in removing people from 'black spots' where they have lived for generations? Is the Coloured Representative Council or the South African Indian Council really working for the full freedom of all the people of South Africa right now?

Do these institutions work for liberation or do they help carry out Pretoria's policy of divide and rule? Do they produce a solid front of all the oppressed people demanding their rights, or do they fragment it?

TRIALS

As the result of the latest clamp-down, there has been a marked increase in the number of political trials in progress this year. The charges are mainly under the Terrorism Act, a piece of legislation which prohibits every area of resistance to the present order in our country.

At the time of going to press, the following trials were in progress or scheduled to start:

- * The SASO/BPC leaders trial in the Pretoria Palace of Justice. The 9 remaining accused are Saths Cooper, Muntu Myeza, Mosioua Lekota, Aubrey Mokoape, Nkwenkwe Nkomo, Pandelani Nefolowdhodwe, Kaunda Sedibe, Strini Moodley, Zitulele Cindi.
- * Sadeccque Variava's trial, which is scheduled to start when the SASO trial ends.
- * Breyten Breytenbach. Pleaded guilty to an ammended indictment under the Terrorism Act. Prosecutor Percy Yutar said that he will not need to call all the 40 witnesses he had lined up, now that Breytenbach has pleaded guilty. Sentenced to 9 years.
- * 7 blacks including one woman appeared briefly in the Johannesburg Magistrates Court on 10 November, charged under the Terrorism Act. Their names are: Malabele Molokenq, Nkosiyakhe Amos Masondo, Phumza Patricia Dyantii, Eheki Lanqa, Kgotoduwa Andrew Molotsane, Patrick Monsela, Benjamin Mteyane. These people were mostly connected with NAYO (National Youth Organisation) and (SASM) South African Students Movement.
- * On the November 3 blacks appeared in the Johannesburg Magistrates Court charged under the Terrorism Act. They are Raymond Burgers, Weizman Hamilton and Johnny Ramrock. Bail:R500 each
- * Molefe Phetoe appeared in the Johannesburg Magistrates Court Johannesburg, charged under the Suppression of Communism Act.
- * Eric Molobi charged under the Terrorism Act in the Supreme Court Johannesburg. The trial is in progress at the time of going to press. Sentenced to 5 years - granted leave to appeal.
- * Trevor Bloem first appeared in court 29 August. To be tried in the Supreme Court Johannesburg.
- * Eighteen people are presently facing charges under the Riotous Assemblies Act in connection with the pro-Frelimo rally. After a number of postponements, the case has been set down for hearing in February 1976.

ALL INFORMATION ON TRIALS AND DETENTIONS WAS
CORRECT AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. WE
ARE NOT ABLE TO UPDATE EVENTS WHICH HAPPEN
AFTER THIS TIME.

Another little known case, in which an appeal has been lodged, is worthy of note. It concerns the trial and sentence of five years imprisonment of David Seleokane and Wezile Ngalo. There was no public knowledge of the detention of these two men. The first that was heard of them was when they were brought to trial in the Bloemfontein Supreme Court in June. They were charged under the Terrorism Act and the Suppression of Communism Act.

It was alleged that between January and March they went to Gaberones with the intention of receiving training in Zambia, and also that they tried to promote certain political aims which would have resulted in a change of the social and economic order in South Africa. They were also alleged to have taken steps with the intention of furthering the aims of the ANC.

Since the accused did not have money, a pro deo counsel was appointed to act on their behalf. David Seleokane pleaded guilty. Wezile Ngalo pleaded not guilty. After a trial lasting about 5 days, both were found guilty and sentenced to 5 years each. An appeal has been lodged against the conviction and sentence of David Seleokane on the grounds that he is under 18 years old and is legally still a minor. He is now being defended by a Johannesburg lawyer.

Eric Molobi is appearing in the Johannesburg Supreme Court. His cousin, Frank Molobi was called on by the State to give evidence against him. In refusing to give evidence Frank said:

"It is naive and foolhardy of the Security Police to expect me to testify against a man with whom I share the same political views and who is my first cousin."

He told Mr Justice Hiemstra that it was against his political principles to testify for a State that had shown no dignity or concern for the oppressed black people. (*Rand Daily Mail 18.11.75*)

Mr Molobi had been in detention since 10 April 1975. He was sentenced to 4 months imprisonment for refusing to give evidence.

SUTTNER: why I acted

There has been much to move a person in the spate of trials that has started in the country.

Raymond Suttner pleaded guilty in the Durban Supreme Court to two counts under the Suppression of Communism Act. On 13 November he was sentenced by Mr Justice James to 7½ years imprisonment. In a statement from the dock Suttner said:

"I have furthered the aims of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. This was carefully considered. I want to tell the court why I acted in this way and still consider it correct.

"From my earliest encounters with black people I have been aware of the contrast between my own living circumstances and theirs. I felt, from the beginning, that it could not be right that some people merely because they were black, should have to live with less than they needed.

"... Nothing that I learnt as I grew older seemed to justify the situation where the rights that people have, the disabilities that they endure, the place where they live, where they can work, who they can love, should all be determined by the colour of their skin.

"... I came to feel I could contribute most by aiding the ANC and its allies. I came to believe that the course they followed was the only way to achieve freedom in our country. It is true that this means supporting a policy including the use of violence. The law under which I am charged does not ask the court to enquire what precipitated the violence. The court cannot dismiss these charges because the ANC and its allies were forced to take up arms. It cannot rule that ANC violence is a response to the violence of the apartheid regime.

"... I am not the last to break the law for moral reasons. I realise that the court may feel I should have shown more respect for legality. Normally I would show this respect. I would consider it wrong to break laws which serve the community.

"But I have acted against laws that do not serve the majority of South Africans, laws that inculcate hostility between our people and preclude the tolerance and co-operation that is necessary to a contented and peaceful community."

hrc aims

The Human Rights Committee was formed in September 1974 by a group of people who want freedom from oppression in South Africa. The committee stands for an internationally recognised set of values which do not, generally, exist in South Africa - principles which are embodied in the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights, from which we draw our name.

Our aim is to protest the lack of freedoms in the society; to protest the violation of human rights by the Government which is not even prepared to sign the UN Declaration; to promote consciousness among the people of S.A. and overseas of the injustices of the present regime; and to join the increasingly popular movement to bring about full rights for all the people of this country.

- * We stand for majority rule and the radical changes this will involve in all sections of South African society.
- * We stand for a society free from discrimination on any grounds - colour, class, belief or sex.
- * We stand for the unconditional release of political prisoners.
- * We stand for the abolition of detention without trial, the freeing of detainees, the lifting of house-arrest and all other restrictions.
- * We believe that South Africa's exiles, if permitted to return, could make a full contribution to the construction of a free society.

We have received encouraging support from the people. This is vital if our role is to have real meaning in the struggle. We are all oppressed in South Africa, and we must all struggle together for freedom and equality!



ON OCTOBER 11, THE UN'S DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS, HRC HELD A POSTER DEMO ON JAN SMUTS AVENUE, JHR, DETENTIONS AND TRIALS "BELIE THE PROTESTATIONS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME THAT IT SEEKS PEACE AND INTENDS TO MOVE AWAY FROM RACIAL DISCRIMINATION", WROTE VLADIMIR MARTYNEKO, ACTING CHAIRMAN, SPECIAL UN COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID TO HRC,

DETAINEES

The active opposition in South Africa is presently struggling to survive an unprecedented onslaught by Vorster and his forces of oppression.

The present sweep - reminiscent of the great clamp-downs of the sixties - highlights once again the flagrant disregard for basic human rights by the Nationalist regime in its desperate bid to cling to power.

History will prove the futility of the Nationalists' struggle. In the meantime, the Human Rights Committee sympathises with those currently experiencing the brunt of the inhuman methods adopted by the nationalists. Let us not forget those still detained under legislation designed to intimidate and stifle the people in their legitimate struggle for freedom and justice in this country; nor let us forget those being brought to trial under legislation designed to entrench the ailing Nationalist regime by making the struggle for justice and freedom illegal.

At least people are known to be in detention in South Africa. Below follows a list of people detained under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. Where available the date of detention follows the name. These names were correct at the time of going to press.

The HRC calls for the unconditional and immediate release of these people.

Michael Moletsane (1.10.75); Irvin Mehlaphe (1.10.75); ? Lengane (1.10.75); Nathaniel Mosala (28.9.75); Clive Mandla Seloane (27.8.75); Mphakama Mbete (27.9.75); Themba Kubheka (17.9.75); Thamasanga Zani (16.10.75); Boyce Ntshona (16.10.75); Ben Louw (redetained 16.10.75); Winston Nkondo (16.10.75); Kingdom Khutswane (19.10.75); Mike Jordan (19.10.75); Mokie Cekesani (16.10.75); Theo Moatshe (25.10.75); Lwandle Charles Mthombeni (24.10.75); Martin Dukhi (?); Chris Goddard (Weimers) (14.2.75); Patrick MacGluwa (15.2.75); Monamado Radebe (4.2.75); Hector Mbau (February 1975); Kgangelo Kgosana (?); 7 persons detained in the Kimberley/Kuruman area - names unknown.

There are also 18 people detained in Namibia, among them a 15 year girl.

Aarom Mashimba, Axel Johannes, Ruben Hawwanga, Sam Shivute, Skinny Hilandwa, Mrs Elizabeth Namjembo, Merita Matias (15 yr old girl), Pastor Pitus Ngula, Pastor Sebulon Ekandjo, Bulanduleni Litopi, Immanuel Hatutale, Pastor H. Nampala, Pastor Junias Kapaanda, Rev. H. Uanivi, Mr P. Khamo, and three persons detained in the 18 October 1975 who have not been named.

In November of this year former Attorney General Dr Griswold of the United States was reported to have seen about 30 detainees in Namibia.

Besides those presently detained and charged, there are dozens of people who suffered during the recent clamp-down. Many were detained, released and then detained again. Others have been detained, charged and then had the charges withdrawn. Others still have suffered detention, only to be banned when they were released.

Those detained then banned include Lindelwa and Brigette Mabandla, both of whom were banished to Tsolo in the Transkei and are now reported to have fled to Botswana; Pumzile Majeke who is restricted to the small Transkei town of Qumbu; Revebalam Cooper and Steve Carolus.

Three people have had Terrorism Act charges against them withdrawn. They are Rubin Hare who was detained for 107 days; Sulayman Ismail, detained for 3 days; and Sivalingham Moodley, detained one day. Below is a list of those detained and then released, together with the number of days they spent in detention.

Lindelwe Mabandla (174)**, Brigette Mabandla (171)**, Fanini Paul Tsotetsi (160), Menziwe Mbeo (149), Pumzile Majeke (164)**, Mazimkhulu Gwentshe (133), Mapetla Mohapi (173)**, Nyamako Pityana (166), Johnny Issel (146), Revebalam Cooper (188)**, Steve Carolus (154)**, Jonas Ledwaba (+245), Vino Cooper (45), Ahmed Bawa (377), Harry Singh (375), Haroon Aziz (373), Yugen Naidoo (377), Rev Mayatula (377), Ben Langa (361), Jerry Modisane, Danile Landinawe, Mahlamola Skosana (365), Cyril Ramaphosa (377), Drake Koka (167), Aubrey Mokoena (167), Thomas Manthata (167 + 3)*, Harold Dixon (334), Benjamin Louw*, Kevin Martin (28), Belinda Martin (* 42), Megan Reilly (14), Raymond Pilane (1), Gaby van Rensburg, Mr Kagaka & Mrs Kgaka (3 days), Solly ? (2)

James Polley (109), Gerry Maré (109), Karel Tip (109), Glen Moss (109) Clara Rohm (101), Lawrence Dworkin ((85), Horst Kleinschmidt (73); Gordon Young (73), Patrick Martins (76), Norman Lewis (76), Jeanette Curtis (65).

Thembani Phanzi, Vuyo Jack & Sotomela Ndukwana (detained mid-October. Karel Tip, Glen Moss, Clara Rohm, Lawrence Dworking & Norman Lewis gave evidence in the Trial against Breyten Breytenbach.

** subsequently banned * subsequently re-detained

In Namibia 7 people were released on 7 October. No charges were laid against them. They are:

Othniel Kaakunga, Elijas Munjaro, Naruseb, Pastor Keema, Albertus Kangueshi, Festus Naholo, Lazarus Guiteh.

The mother of a four-month-old baby, Mrs Nomsisi Khuzwayo, has been charged together with Sadeque Variawa (Proceeding)

Winnie's first speech

Mrs Winnie Mandela, wife of the jailed African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, received a standing ovation in Noordgesig in October this year, when she made a dramatic and moving speech denouncing the Vorster Regime.

It was Mrs Mandela's first opportunity to speak for many years - her banning and house-arrest orders which kept her muzzled for more than 13 years had just been lifted. The occasion was a CORD

meeting to call for the release of detainees.

Mrs Mandela gave a vivid description of the plight of detainees and developed her speech into a history of the erosion of human rights in South Africa.

The HRC has decided to print the speech in full so that, people who, because of circumstances and distance were unable to attend the meeting, can read what Mrs Mandela had to say.

I feel more than honoured to speak to you on this historic occasion after more than 13 years of mute resistance in our mass struggle for our honour, our self respect and our Human dignity. The subject on which I'm asked to address you has become a familiar one in the South African scene, and such a subject could only be familiar in a country such as ours which is unique in every way. I'm here to join you in protesting against the brutal and inhuman detention of our fathers and mothers, our sons and our daughters ... men and women whose only crime perhaps is that they dared to think, to talk, and to worry about the destiny of their country, men and women who were not prepared to be part of the ruthless society, a violent society in which the very meaning of life has eluded those who accept this brutality as a way of life.

Who are these men and women? According to the Rand Daily Mail of the 4 October, there are now 77 held under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. From actual experience the truth is, the exact number or who they are, will never be known until all are charged or released. The Act under which they are held is one of the most vicious pieces of legislation to be put on the statute book of a country. It is legislation meant to destroy completely every form of opposition to this totalitarian state, a method of traumatization so as to destroy all personal autonomy, a savage and psychological process of dehumanising men who dare to identify themselves with this struggle against the injustices perpetrated by man against man, whose only crime is the shading of the colour of their skin. This struggle has been inherited from generations before us, almost four hundred years ago, but the last 25 years have been of particular importance to the Black cause.

It was when the Nationalist Party came to power on the platform of Apartheid that there was a turning point in the struggle for liberation. There was an immediate onslaught on the rights of the oppressed people. Leading members of the organisations which were legal were banned; pass laws were extended to women, influx control laws were enforced, the black people were declared sojourners in the urban areas in the country of their birth; and countless other forms of repressive laws. In the 1950's the various organisations, the African National Congress, the Transvaal Indian Congress, the African People's Organisation, etc, decided to unite and fight the common enemy.

The late 50's were characterised by a united mass struggle on an unprecedented scale. It was during this period that the historical document, THE FREEDOM CHARTER was adopted. It was not long before the government clamped down on all forms of opposition. The people's mouthpiece was outlawed, and banning orders were imposed on the entire leadership.

It became clear that the government was not prepared to tolerate any form of legal protest. Was this not a deliberate act of driving the people to act illegally in terms of the government laws so as to find justification for holding them incommunicado? The government then started its witch-hunt which has climaxed in these detentions that are now the order of the day.

Out of my own personal experience of 17 months in solitary confinement, I find it hard to believe that any man with any manhood can lead a normal life in such an abnormal society. Subjecting these young men and women to this brutal experience will result in painful consequences for this country. Perhaps some of you have also accepted what they are presently going through as a way of life. Perhaps we should briefly remind ourselves, because we too, by virtue of our consciences are ready-made prospective detainees.

the midnight knock on the door

Detention means that midnight knock when all about you is quiet. It means those blinding torches shone simultaneously through every window of your house before the door is kicked open. It means the exclusive right the Security Branch have to read each and every letter in the house, no matter how personal it might be. It means paging through each and every book on your shelves, lifting carpets, looking under beds, lifting sleeping children from mattresses and looking under the sheets. It means tasting your sugar, your mealie-meal and every spice you have on your kitchen shelf. Unpacking all your clothing on your shelves and in your suitcases, and going through each pocket. It means you no longer have a right to answer your telephone should a call come through, no right to speak to anyone who might come to find out if you need help. It means interrogating your employer to find out why are you employed, questioning fellow workers to find out what you discuss privately, planting informers at work, around your neighbourhood, amongst your friends, in church, in school, etc.

Ultimately it means your seizure at dawn, dragged away from little children screaming and clinging to your skirt, exploring the white man dragging mummy to leave her alone. It means leaving the comfort of your home with the bare essentials of life that hardly make life bearable in your cell. It means the haunting memories of those screams of the loved ones, the beginning of that horror story told many a time and that has become common knowledge, yet the actual experience remains petrifying.

To review but the minimum bare facts.: it means, as it was for me, being held in a single cell with the light burning twenty-four hours so that I lost track of time and was unable to tell whether it was day or night. Every single moment of your life is strictly regulated and supervised. Complete isolation from the outside world, no privacy, no visitor, lawyer or minister. It means no-one to talk to each 24 hours, no knowledge of how long you will be imprisoned and why you are imprisoned, getting medical attention from the doctor only when you are seriously ill. It means a visit from one magistrate and a retinue of the prison officials against whom you may wish to lodge a complaint and at whose mercy you are held.. The very manner in which you are asked for complaints in fact means "How dare you complain".

The frightful emptiness of those hours of solitude is unbearable. Your company is your solitude, your blanket, your mat, your sanitary bucket, your mug and yourself. You have no choice of what you are given to eat even though you have not been charged. You have only one hour exercise per day depending on whether there is enough staff to spare. To you, your very existence in prison seems to be a privilege. All this is in preparation for the inevitable HPLL - interrogation. It is meant to crush your individuality completely, to change you into a docile being from whom no resistance can arise, to terrorise you, to intimidate you into silence. After you have suffered the first initial shock of imprisonment for those who are inexperienced, this initial shock followed by the detainee's adaptation to prison has an effect of changing the detainee's personality and outlook in life.

In some cases it means severe moods from fervent hope to deep despair, each day of nothingness is a struggle to survive. What sustains you is the spontaneous defence mechanism, that granite desire to defend and protect at all cost disintegration of personality. You ask yourself questions without answers day after day, week after week, month after month, and then you keep telling yourself - I am sane and I will remain sane.

You're subjected to countless stripping of all your clothes. You must be quite naked for the white prison wardress to search your body thoroughly, to run fingers through your hair, to look in your mouth and under your tongue. There have been alleged suicides in detention; you keep asking yourself whether you will leave the cell alive for you do not know what drove those who died to their deaths. Sometimes it is a serious effort to remember what happened, the mind becomes completely blank. Then suddenly when you have gone through all this you are whisked away from your cell to the interrogation room.

Here now you have to enter into a debate within yourself. There are only two divisions, you decide whether you will emerge a collaborator with the system or continue your identification with whatever your cause is. A prisoner writing from experience in one concentration camp states:

"By destroying man's ability to act on his own or to predict the outcome of his action, they destroyed the feeling that his actions had any purpose, so many prisoners stopped acting. But when they stopped acting, they soon stopped living. What seemed to make the critical difference was whether or not the environment - extreme as it was - permitted some minimal choices, some leeway, some positive rewards insignificant as they may seem now, when viewed objectively against the tremendous deprivation."

"Prisoners who came to believe the repeated statements of the guards - that there was no hope for them, who came to feel that their environment was one over which they could exercise no influence whatsoever, these prisoners were in a literal sense, walking corpses."

Supposing these men and women were engaged in so-called illegal action according to those who determine our fate. Even illegal action has its ethics. C.S. Oosthuizen writes:

"Only those religious principles and moral standards, which are not incompatible with the 'dignity of man' and with his 'universal rights', should take precedence over allegiance to the body politic illegal action is justified where a body of law is not merely indifferent to the rights of men and women, but inimical to their worth and dignity. That men ought to enjoy freedom of conscience, that is to say, the right to accept or reject moral and religious beliefs which to them seem just and true, or invalid or false, does not entitle them to act in ways which would prostitute the rights of others, or impose on fellow-citizens some deplorable and unbearable indignity."

We draw hope from the people of Mozambique who after more than 500 years of colonial oppression are once again free to determine their own destiny in the land of their fathers. Samora Machel in one of his speeches on the question of efforts by the Portuguese to persuade the people not to join the struggle prior to independence says:

"They do this and they will continue to do it because it is the only weapon they have - dividing the people in order to dominate them ... they cannot change their political line because they cannot stop being colonialists. They cannot stop making people do forced labour because they depend on forced labour They give some economic privileges to a few Mozambicans, those who have had some education and who are considered potentially active political leaders, to induce them to defend the colonial system in order to retain these privileges.

"They announce 'important changes' like the new 'State' of Mozambique, to try to create the illusion - mainly among people in other countries - that the Portuguese are taking steps towards the independence of our country."

This is similar to our so-called detente.

"They also try to discredit the liberation movement by attempting to make people believe that we are terrorists ... these tactics do not cause any problems for us. The people are politically aware and conscious, they have lived under Portuguese colonialism since they were born. They have experienced the oppression, exploitation and humiliation in their own flesh. They cannot be cheated. Manoeuvres will never succeed."

I find it difficult to appeal to the powers that be to change: to charge or release the detainees. I cannot call for the trial of men and women who have already been tried and found guilty by the very act of their detention. As we have seen, detention alone is a trial in itself.

This is the fourth newsletter of the Human Rights Committee. Please pass it on to your friends, because it is vital that it reaches the greatest number of people possible.

We would welcome letters and comment.

Write to Secretary, Sheila Weinberg,
P.O. Box 79051, Senderwood, 2145.

**WATCH OUT FOR FURTHER ISSUES AND TELL YOUR
FRIENDS TO DO THE SAME!**

In terms of a further Government notice, the third issue of the HRC Bulletin dated August 9 has, like the second, been declared to be undesirable. This means that it is considered prejudicial to the safety of the State, the general welfare or peace and good order. As a result of this it is now unlawful to distribute the August 9 Bulletin.

NEWCASTLE:

the people walked

Everybody knows about the Newcastle bus boycott that is passing into history as another milestone in the people's resistance to exploitation and their fight for rights.

While the facts are known, the lesson is worth emphasising.

In short, the people won.

At the end of September the fares were increased for the trips to Madadeni and Osizweni locations, with return trips of 24 and 60 km, and the people walked rather than pay.

With that sort of determination there was no need of the agitators that the Government Press said were organising the boycott. 180 buses of Trans Tugela Transport (TTT) stood idle while 40.000 walked to work and back each day.

An official delegation from TTT met representatives of the boycotters who refused to negotiate with the people. The Officials were told - if you want to persuade the people to take the buses, you must ask them.

The TTT said they could not afford to drop fares and might have to apply for a further increase. Punt Janson, Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration, said he would not allow them to drop fares - the government has money in TTT.

The boycott continued relentlessly. Armed police pulled vehicles taking people to work off the roads.

Driessen, Secretary for the Department of Transport was quoted as saying he would break the boycott, which he denied. Employers driving workers were not acting in the public interest, he said.

The TTT, having threatened a further increase, then offered to decrease fares but the boycotters ignored this.

Finally, agreement was reached between KwaZulu and the Bantu Investment Corporation on going 50-50 on a takeover of the TTT, but this was only after Punt Janson was forced by the boycott to go to Nongoma to negotiate this. It was announced that fares would be lowered.

What would have happened if the KwaZulu Government had not intervened? Are they peacemakers or boycott-breakers?

25 years of Suppression

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Suppression of Communism Act - better described perhaps as the "suppress the opposition" law.

The Communism referred to in the Act has little to do with the Marxist-Leninist variety. Communism, as defined in the Act, is statutory communism - or in other words, what the South African Government deems to be communism or communist activity.

And as everybody knows, the government tends to label any opposition as communistic - even the Progs.

The Suppression of Communism Act was framed by a Nationalist Government which felt besieged by what was then legal opposition. Communists held seats in Parliament, black political movements were flourishing, trade unionists were making strides in gaining a better deal for their brother workers and the churches were voicing their opposition to the apartheid regime.

In other words, the government was under pressure from the legitimate forces of change -- and decided that these forces had to be stamped out.

The government has 'netted' a number of genuine Communists with this particularly nasty piece of legislation. But for the most part the sweeping provisions of the Act permitted the Nats to act against non-communist opposition as well. The irony of the whole situation is that avowed anti-communists have suffered as much under this legislation as legitimate communists.

Besides giving the government power to jail those it designated as communists, the Act also provides sweeping powers to restrict people without trial by using the device of banning orders. Over the years since it became law in June 1950, these restriction orders have been placed on approximately 2 000 people, black and white.

Conditions of the orders vary in individual cases, but often include the following restrictions:

- * Prohibition from attending gatherings - which in terms of the law means a meeting of two people or more.
- * It imposes total silence on a banned person, who may not be quoted or have writings reproduced.
- * The banned person is usually restricted to one magisterial area and may not leave it for holidays, visits, business or any other purpose.
- * These restrictions have also prevented people from following their usual employment since banning orders forbid them from trade unions, employers' organisations, printing and publishing firms and any organisation which in any way discusses the administration of the State.

The Human Rights Committee needs financial support from the people and their friends who support its actions.

All amounts, however small, will be welcomed by the Committee.

Please send donations to
HRC Secretary, Sheila Weinberg
P.O. Box 79051, Senderwood, 2145

Another unpleasant ramification of the Act is what is referred to a "listing". Between 400 and 500 people have been listed in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act. Listing is permanent and means a person cannot be quoted, must report change of employment or residence to the police, and cannot be an office bearer or worker in the same categories as outlined in the banning order. Listing only applies to members of the Communist Party and the Congress of Democrats. (The ANC and PAC were suppressed under the Unlawful Organisations Act.)

The background to the passing of the Act is an interesting example of how the Nationalist regime starts low-key in its attempts to crush opposition.

It all started in 1948 when the Nats set up a Departmental Committee to investigate Communism in the trade unions. In 1949 the Minister of Justice told Parliament that there was a "national danger" and that communists were undermining the national way of life. Shortly before it was announced that there would be anti-communist legislation put before Parliament, the Press expressed reservations that the attacks would go beyond communists. Meanwhile, the United Party pledged to oppose communism in South Africa.

Finally the Suppression of Communism Bill came before Parliament - and went on to the statute book as law, after only 30 hours of discussion. The powers it gave the Government were enormous and so wide that they could include any opposition.

The immediate effect was the expulsion of communists from legislative bodies, a purge of trade union movements, the banning of "leftist" publications. The banning and listings soon followed. Some were banned only once, but many had their five year order extended over and over again.

SPORT

Remember when Papwa had to receive his Natal Open golfing trophy in the rain outside the Durban Country Club? There is much sophisticated arguing-away of the facts of racism in sport these days, so in that spirit we should like to say, perhaps the Country Club was not being racist at all; they might have been protecting him from an eighteen-handicap drunk taking him for a waiter and asking for another double gin-and-tonic ...

And who will forget the great "Qash" who had never fought for the black version of the middleweight title, fighting the holder of the white version, David Rose, in a fight so fair that he knocked out Rose twice to get the verdict?

Sport in South Africa is, of course, fair, for it is played by sportsmen.

Any golfer good enough can play in the multi-national, international, obviously non-racial SA Open. He can't become a member of the club where it is played if he is black. If he lives in Soweto he probably plays at Mofolo course, where the fairway is like the rough at Houghton, and there are sand greens. If he is one of the lucky ones he may be allowed to play fairly regularly at one of the white courses round Johannesburg, but he would never get equal familiarity with white golfers on real greens as opposed to sand greens.

Still, as the Minister of Sport would tell us and the world, he competes in the Open on a basis of absolute equality.

The problem with black soccer teams, as everyone has said, is not lack of talent, but lack of the skill of playing together as a team and not as eleven talented individuals.

The black teams are barred from playing in the top white leagues where overseas professionals have passed on these skills. Apart from once a year at most, the black teams are prohibited by law and white sporting attitudes from playing teams which have developed these skills. And the law forces teams to be divided on strictly racial lines.