

W34



Challenge

Bw
"W34"



VOL.4 NO.2

B.S.S. - AZASO

COMMEMORATION
ISSUE

**31 MAY 23 YEARS OF A RACIST
REPUBLIC**

**12 JUNE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RIVONIA TRIAL**

**16 JUNE SOWETO
UPRISINGS**

**26 JUNE FREEDOM
DAY**

1984 WOMENS FED. ANNIVERS.

editorial

The month of June this year, marks certain important landmarks in the history of our struggle.

- * JUNE 16TH - has made an indelible impression in all the oppressed peoples' minds - that particular day and the days following it, witnessed the brutal massacre of school children at the hands of the SAP.
- * JUNE 12TH marks the 20th anniversary of the arrest of the tried and tested leaders of South Africa: Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada and others. We demand their immediate and unconditional release.
- * JUNE 26TH - This day has gone down in history as being Freedom Day in South Africa. Historically, it has been a day of mourning, a day when the freedom charter was adopted and ever since has been a day of protest, stay aways and resistance. It will be the day of our freedom.

REPUBLIC DAY

31st May 1984 is the 23rd anniversary of the racist republic. This event occurs in the context of growing popular resistance on the one hand and the governments insistence on imposing its new deal on the oppressed people. We are confident that our people will totally reject the constitution and Koornhof Bills with the contempt it deserves. We will only celebrate a peoples' democratic republic.

news flash *

BLITZ AT BARA

The Glyn Thomas Azaso Local Committee and the Soweto Teachers College Azaso Branch, conducted a joint UDF Million Signature Campaign blitz at the Baragwanath Hospital recently. Despite heavy police presence and intimidation, over two thousand people responded favourably by "making their mark against apartheid"

The International Labour Day was recently commemorated on campus by B.S.S., in conjunction with the M.S.A. and E.R.C by holding a mass meeting. Gatzby Mawai, a trade unionist, spoke on how workers internationally fight against exploitation. Prof Eddie Webster, another speaker, traced the history of May Day both internationally and here in South Africa.

Black Students on campus staged a demonstration on the 24th May in solidarity with the other campuses and the closure of schools in the Pretoria area and UNITRA. The demonstration preceded a mass meeting addressed by Dr Allan Boesak.

Release our

LEADERS!

June 12, 1964 eight men charged with the Sabotage Act received life imprisonment. Ever since, these men have been languishing in prison. These men have become the symbol of hope and inspiration for the oppressed people. They have become the peoples leaders.

N R Mandela, W M Sisulu, G Mbeki, R Mahlaba, A.M Kathrada, D Goldberg, E Motsoaledi and A Mlangeni. All of them eminent leaders of the Congress Alliance. The call for the release of political prisoners started after 1962 when Mandela was sentenced to a five year term for leaving the country illegally.

The then Release Mandela Committee was headed by Ahmed Kathrada, who himself is today serving a life term with Mandela. It was not until the middle 70's that we again saw a movement campaigning for the release of political prisoners. In the late 60's and early 70's sporadic calls were made for political prisoners to be released.

Today, 20 years after these men were sentenced, they are still in prison and if what Jimmy Kruger said is anything to go by, we should not expect them out soon.

South Africa continues to defy the call by virtually all South Africans and many others abroad for the release of political prisoners.



In our beleaguered strife-torn country the release of political prisoners will definitely be a move towards restoring peace and harmony.

The name Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela has become a household name among those who are yearning for peace. He has come to be a symbol of those who languish in South African prisons. His release and that of other political prisoners is long overdue.



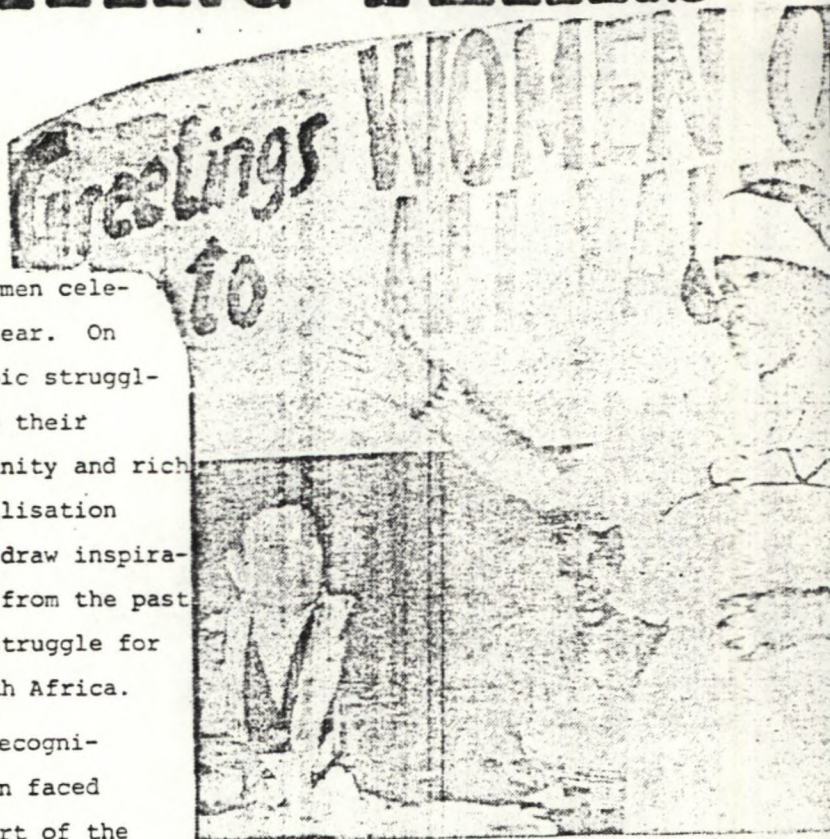
WOMEN'S FEDERATION

30 FIGHTING YEARS

The Federation of South African Women celebrates its 30th Anniversary this year. On this occasion we remember the heroic struggles of our women and pay tribute to their strength and sacrifice, to their unity and rich tradition of organization and mobilisation of women. We do this not only to draw inspiration from them, but also to learn from the past in order to march forward in our struggle for a free, non-racial democratic South Africa.

The FedSAW was formed out of the recognition of the specific problems women faced under apartheid as women and as part of the OPPRESSED and EXPLOITED masses of this country. Out of this realisation the FSAW, was launched on the 17 April 1954 - to provide a forum for women to organize. Nearly 150 delegates attended the inaugural meeting and were drawn mostly from the ranks of the Congress Alliance. The "First National Conference of Women" which represented 230 500 women, adopted the WOMEN'S CHARTER. The Charter called on women to release themselves and fight against the laws, systems and conventions which discriminate against them. They believed that their place is not in the home but in the world outside.

The aims of the FSAW were twofold. Firstly, it sought to create a broad based, non-racial organization that would unite women on the grounds of their sex and strive for their full liberation. Secondly, the FSAW was committed to working within the political framework established by the Congress Alliance.



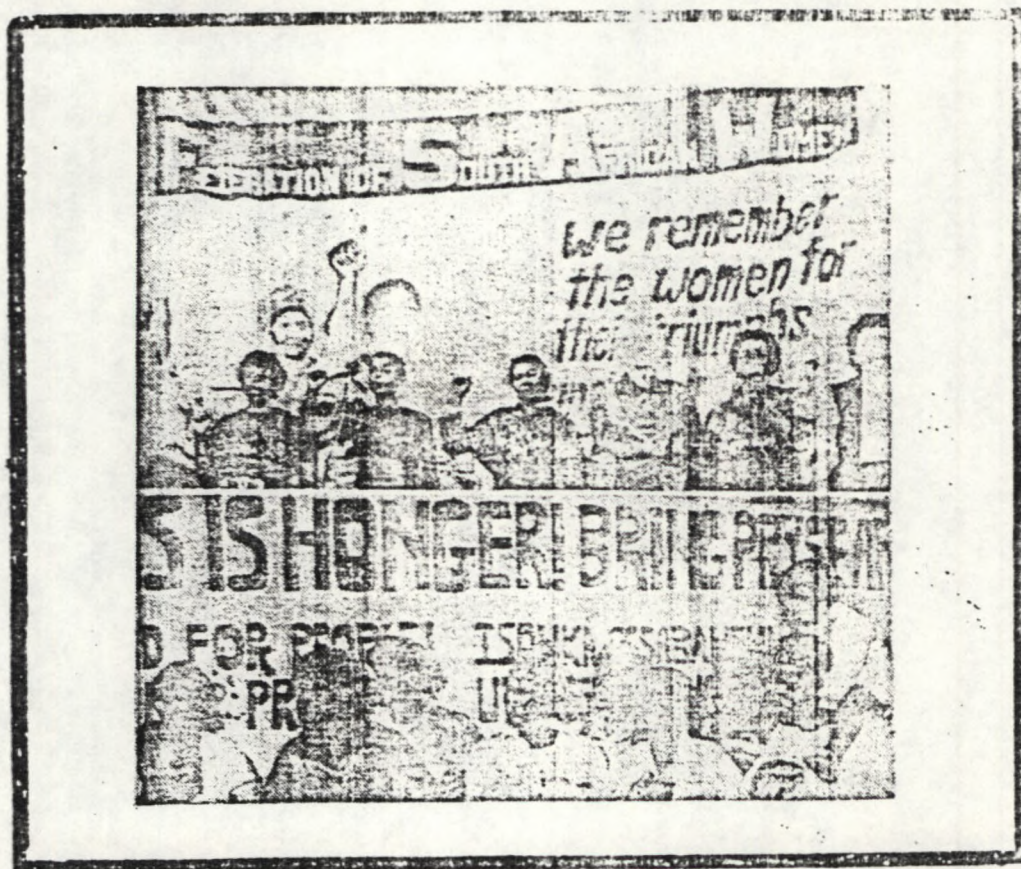
The Federation brought together women's organizations from a broad spectrum across the length and breadth of the country. The Federation organised women in all localities around day-to-day issues. Local struggles and demands of women were linked to national struggles. They were actively involved in struggles opposing Bantu Education, rent increases, food prices and other struggles.

During the 1950's, the FSAW launched the Anti-Pass Campaign in response to the government's decision to extend the pass laws to women. This campaign culminated in the historic march of 9th August 1956, where over 20 000 women from all over South Africa converged at the Union Buildings - to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of justice and democracy. This great moment in the history of the struggle by the oppressed was honoured by the Congress Alliance as National Women's Day.

THE FIGHT CONTINUES...

While the 30th Anniversary should be an occasion to celebrate the dedication and commitment of women who have fought for our liberation in the past, it is also an occasion for rededicating ourselves to the practical tasks of intensifying the organization of women within the liberation struggle.

Our people today are facing increasing burdens. We are faced with an attack on their living standards - increasing food prices, rents are increasing, GST has been increased to a ridiculous 10% and removals becoming an everyday phenomenon.



This comes at a time when the government is introducing the farcical new constitution and Koornhof Bills. The new constitution is a clear attempt to co-opt Coloureds and Indians into participating in the apartheid system and will force them to defend this unjust system on the borders. This "New Deal" is aimed at dividing all our people - women from men, rural from urban, and African people from Coloureds and Indians. The Koornhof Bills plus harsher application of pass laws and will rob African people of their birthright while incarcerating women and children in the barren Bantustans.

In the light of these present conditions women cannot be spectators in the struggle. The call for unity and organizational involvement of women needs to be translated into practical reality. The 30th Anniversary should provide the impetus for the rejuvenation of women's organizations in our communities, on the campuses, on the factory floors in our women's groups. Our demands must be articulated to the National demands made by all the people of South Africa. It is our task that the voice of women is heard in all our organizations, especially the United Democratic Front.

You and the NEW CONSTITUTION

WHY THE NEW CONSTITUTION?

It is part of the response to the deep-rooted crisis that this government faces.

This crisis has manifested itself economically, in the high rate of inflation, the balance of payments problems, skilled labour shortages etc.; ideologically, as evidenced in the pressure exerted by the international community to force South Africa to change its racial politics, and also politically. The new constitution is a facit acceptance by the government that apartheid has always been rejected by our people. It is a recognition of our long history of struggle against all forms of oppression and exploitation.

WHY WE REJECT THE NEW CONSTITUTION?

- It does not meet any of the minimum demands as layed down in the FREEDOM CHARTER.
- It was not drawn up by all the people of South Africa. It has been imposed on our people without the consultation with our leaders, by the ruling white minority government.
- It is drawn up within the framework of Apartheid and Seperate Development. Not only will the White, Coloured and Indian Houses of representation be segregated, but fellow Africans will be excluded from political representation. Moreover the Group Areas Act, Homeland system and Influx-Control still remain entrenched in the New Deal
- It is an attempt to destroy the unity of the people that was forged in struggle itself. The unity as shown in the Congress Alliance has continued to this day in the form of the United Democratic Front (UDF).
- It is an attempt to co-opt Indians and Coloureds into becoming junior partners in the oppression of the majority of our people.



- The power to make decisions on major issues resides in the President and Executive Committee comprising of members from the white ruling group. Moreover the proportionate representation of 4 whites: 2 Coloureds: 1 Indian will ensure that white supremacy is entrenched.
- The new constitution is part of the very same strategy that tried to restrict our right to education in the form of the Quota Bill.

WHAT ARE OUR DEMANDS?

- We demand ALL our rights. Our demand is not only to decide our own affairs, but on all affairs that effect the day to day lives of all our people. We demand to participate in shaping the future of our

land with all our people including the jailed, the exiled and the banned.

We demand all our right HERE in a single unitary and undivided South Africa where our land will not be divided into Bantustans.

We demand all our rights here and NOW. The new constitution is not a gradual step in the right direction. For over 130 years we have lived in the shackles of oppression and exploitation. We have had enough. We don't need to gradually move towards freedom and justice now.

WE DEMAND ALL OUR RIGHTS HERE AND NOW.

WHAT CAN WE USE?

- We, the students, as part of the privileged, must use all the resources at our disposal (technical and academic) to

educate our people of the evils of the Apartheid system.

- The UDF has organised a Million Signature Campaign to show the oppressors that we reject the reform initiatives in toto. We need to sign these forms and assist the UDF in collecting many signatures.
- The Transvaal Indian Congress and the Transvaal Anti-P.C Committee are presently campaigning against the coming elections. Wherever we are we need to help them in organising rallies, house-meetings, mass meetings, pamphlets, posters etc. to ensure a successful boycott of these elections.

Despite being a small sector of our communities, students have played an important role in the struggle for liberation. Our actions date back to the 1953 Anti-Bantu Education Campaign, the activities of SASO through the 70's, June 1976, 1980 schools boycott, Anti-Republic Day etc. We need to continue this proud tradition and take our rightful place in the national liberation struggle alongside the workers, women and our oppressed communities.

Welcome to the UDF MILLION SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN.

By collecting signatures you :

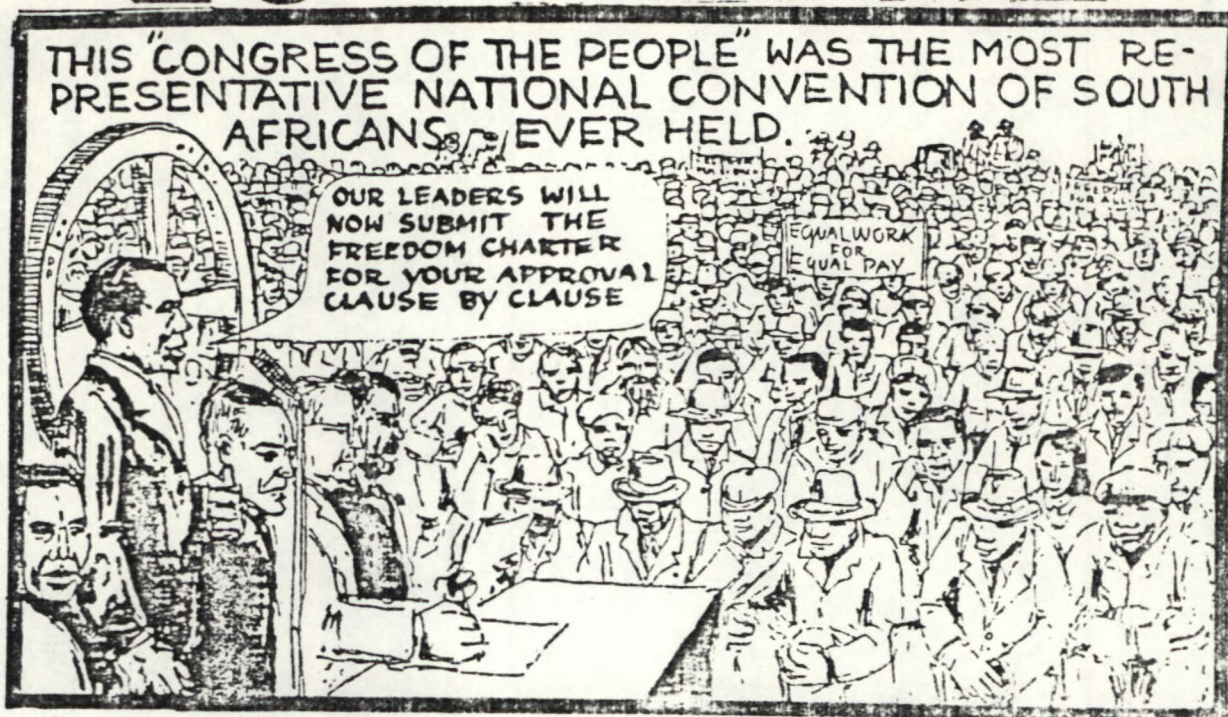
- (1) are helping to prove to the world that we reject apartheid and are determined to be free.
- (2) are helping to prove that the UDF has more followers than P.W. Botha, Mantzias, Rajbansi, Mchale and Tshabalala.
- (3) are helping to educate millions of our people about the evils of apartheid.
- (4) are taking an active part in this great struggle for freedom. In short, your dedication and hard work is helping to make history.

SIGNED: *Albertina Sisulu*

Albertina Sisulu

26th

JUNE



26 June has come to be known as FREEDOM DAY in South Africa. The day has been closely associated with the mass struggles led by the Congress Alliance (ANC, SAIC, CPC, and SACTU) in the 1950's. This day has meant blood, tears and happiness for the liberation struggle. For us today, it is a day that we must rededicate ourselves to the intensifying of freedom struggle. Tomorrow it will be the day of FREEDOM.

MAY DAY - 26th JUNE

On the 1 May 1950, organizations such as the ANC, NIC and TIC, all undertook co-operation for the first time. They called for demonstration and a general stay-away. Hundreds of meetings were held throughout the country in an effort to protest against the Suppression of Communism Bill. The Campaign developed into mass resistance in the Rand, Cape Town and Durban. The final death toll was 18 and thirty seriously injured. As a result of the blood spilt on 1st May, 26 June was called for a day of mourning. This is how June 26 came into our calendar

DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN

The Defiance Campaign launched jointly by the ANC and SAIC in 1952 was formally launched on the 26th June.

As a build up to the 26th June launch, the President of the ANC at the time, Dr Moroka warned the Prime Minister D.F. Malan that if the government refused to abolish oppressive and unjust laws, a campaign in defiance of these laws would begin. Malan had refused.

On the 26th June, the mass campaign started according to plan. There were 103 arrests on the Witwatersrand, 30 in Port Elizabeth and 3 in Durban. The law breakers had defied curfew regulations and had entered townships without permits.

This was the beginning of the Defiance Campaign. The Campaign lasted until the massacre at Sharpeville. During the course of Campaign, thousands of people were arrested for defying unjust laws while many more thousands participated in the

FREEDOM DAY

bus boycotts, school boycotts, women struggles and resistance to removals during the "DECADE OF DEFIANCE".

CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE - 1955

The Congress Alliance decided to call a "Congress of the People" which would adopt a "Freedom Charter".

Extensive preparations were made for the COP as Congress activists approached thousands of people - with the aim of establishing what the mass of people visualise as a free and democratic society.

The Congress met on the 25 and 26th June with 6 000 people attending - of which

3 000 were delegates making it the most representative gathering in South Africa's history.

26 JUNE - FREEDOM DAY

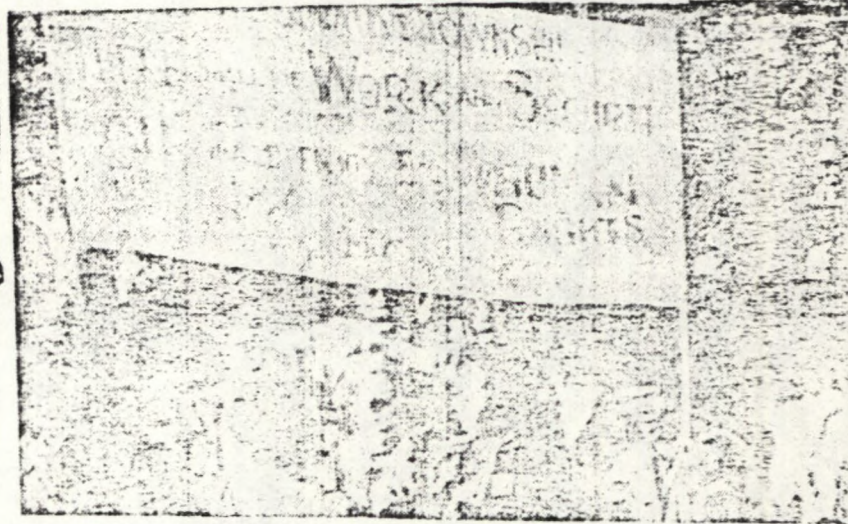
The 26 June, the day on which COP had met had thus become a day to celebrate annually, as Freedom Day.

Thus on 26 June 1957, the Congress Alliance called for a one-day stoppage of work as a protest against apartheid and the pass laws and in favour of a minimum wage of a pound-a-day.

26th June will always be cherished as a day when all the oppressed people celebrate their independence and the demands in the Freedom Charter have been met.

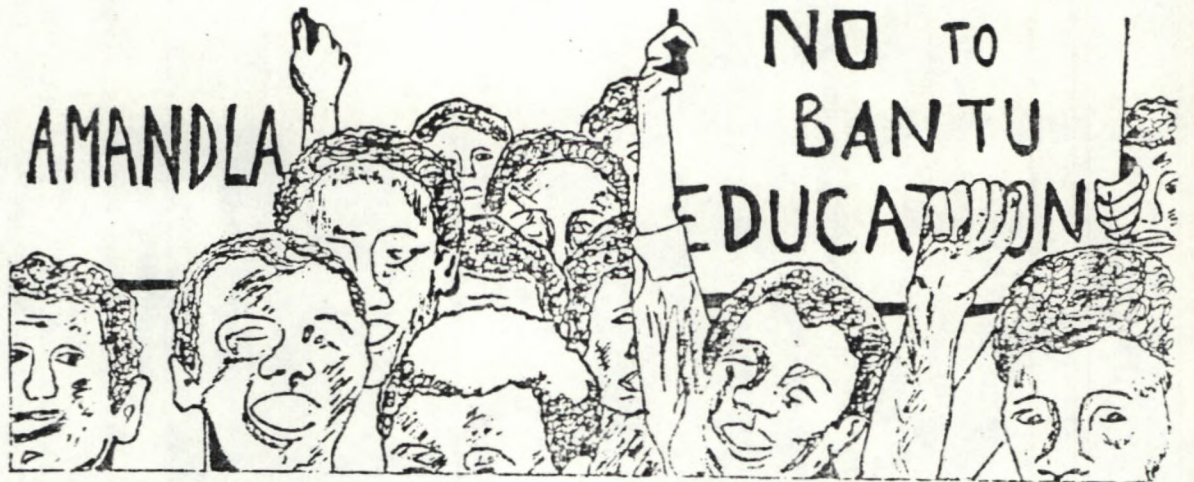
THE voice of protest and opposition to the undemocratic nature of our society is therefore victorious. The drawing up of the FREEDOM CHARTER in 1955 encapsulated the basic demands of democratic people in South Africa.

THE was the result of a massive campaign by the Congress Alliance to collect the demands of the people of South Africa and therefore reflects their idea of a future democratic South Africa.



THE FREEDOM CHARTER

- *The people shall govern
- *All national groups shall have equal rights
- *The people shall share in the country's wealth
- *The land shall be shared among those who work it
- *All shall be equal before the law
- *All shall enjoy equal human rights
- *There shall be work and security
- *The doors of learning and culture shall be opened
- *There shall be houses, security and comfort
- *There shall be peace and friendship



What sparked off the student conflict was the announcement by the Minister of Bantu Education that in future half of the school curriculum would be taught in Afrikaans.

On 13 June, 1976 the South African Students Movement (SASM) which had been formed as a national organisation for black secondary school students in 1972, held a meeting demonstrating against the imposition of Afrikaans. Two delegates from each school in Soweto formed an Action Com-

mittee, which was later to be known as the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC).

On 16 June, 200 000 students converged on Orlando Stadium for a peaceful demonstration. The police opened fire on the demonstrators. Thirteen year old Hector Peterson became the first of the 1 000 victims of the uprising. What had begun as a peaceful demonstration, was now turned into a massacre by the actions of the police.

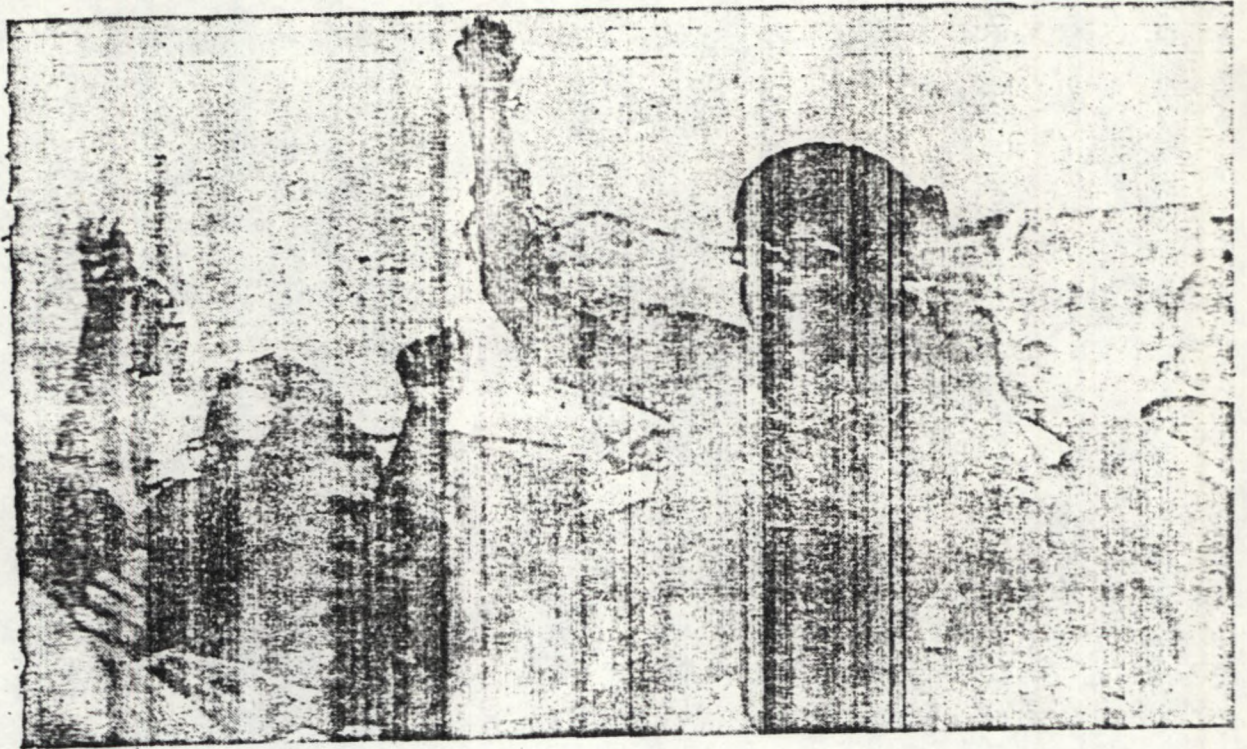
Nationwide conflict between students and the state continued almost uninterrupted for the next year and a half. Within two months, the uprising had spread beyond the student environment. From August to November 1976, 4 national worker stay-aways were called, 3 of which were extremely successful. The following year, the uprising spread to the arena of rent struggles and civic action, with student action halting proposed rent increases of 84 per cent in Soweto.

The student uprising of 1976 stands out as a landmark in the battle against Apartheid. On the one hand, the students were successful in having Afrikaans removed from being a medium of instruction. More important however was the impact of the uprising on the political consciousness of South Africans.



DON'T GIVE UP!

— MaNyembe's message to Women's Fed



Dorothy Nyembe is a veteran in the struggle for liberation in South Africa. She was recently released after spending 18 years in Apartheid' jails.

She was born in 1930 and joined the ANC in her early twenties. Dorothy became vice-chairperson of the ANC Women's League for Durban and a leader of the FSAW. She played a prominent role in the 1956 demonstrations against passes at the Union Buildings. She again displayed her outstanding qualities as a fighter led the contingent of women in the 1961 Cato Manor Riots and the campaign against municipal beer halls. In 1956, Dorothy was one of the 19 women arrested for treason but charges against her were dropped in December 1957.

During the 1960 State of Emergency she was arrested and detained for 5 months. In 1962, undeterred, she represented the FSAW at a conference on labour problems called by SACTU and the Natal Rural Area's Committee. In 1963 she was arrested again, charged with furthering the aims of the ANC, and sentenced

to 3 years imprisonment. On her release in 1966 she was banned for 5 years but she courageously continued her political activity. In 1968 Dorothy was detained with eleven others and in February 1969 - she was charged in Pietermaritzburg under the Terrorism Act and the Suppression of Communism Act. Accused of harbouring "terrorists" of Umkhonto we Sizwe and assisting two co-defendants. She was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment; originally in the Barbeton Women's Prison, she was later transferred to the Kroonstad Prison. Ma-Nyembe was released this year on the 24 March. After 18 years of prison life she still displays courage and commitment to the struggle of our people. For her courageous contribution Dorothy was awarded international tributes from the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organisation and National Front of the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia. We pay tribute to this gallant woman, who should be the source of inspiration to the young women of today.

MALIBONGWE IGAMA LIKA DOROTHY.

attend

AZASO CONGRESS



SPEAKERS

- DR ALLAN BOESAK
- OSCAR MPETHA

4~8 July
GLYN THOMAS
HOUSE,
SOWETO

The Annual Congress, the supreme policy making organ of AZASO will again be meeting this year. This will be the 4th Annual Congress of AZASO since its formation in Pietermaritzburg in December 1979.

This Annual Congress has always been the most important event in AZASO's history. It is in this gathering that comradeship is sealed, important decisions are made on the nature of the role of students in the liberation struggle. As students we remember that it is only through our united commitment with other progressive organisations that sham reforms can be turned under, racist gutter education ended, and all the practices of exploitation and racism be abolished.

This Congress comes at a critical time in the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa. Continued deaths in detention, uprootment of people in their places of origin, mass harassment, exploitation of workers at the factories, high rents, education crisis,

all these things are sufferings people live with in South Africa. They are just part of injustices the people have to contend with. We believe this Congress will mark the greatest qualitative change in the history of AZASO as part of progressive movement in the country. We, the students, are members of the community before we are students, whatever happens in our society directly affects us. AZASO's growth nationally, from four branches in 1981 Annual Congress to more than 17 now, is indeed an affirmation of the importance of AZASO as a student organisation at the tertiary level of education.

Be part of the commissions, discussions, decisions, and elections (of executive) that take place in AZASO's Annual Congress.

Be among students nationally in the history making contribution of students in our society

The brightness of our future is its glorious end.

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