SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT

16 April 1975 — 16 October 1980
Cripples go on strike

Mercury Reporter

EMPANGENI - About 90 handicapped workers at the Jabbanzi Rehabilitation Centre, near Empangeni, went on strike yesterday, and refused to communicate with the chief organiser of the centre.

Mr. R. Darvill, who is responsible for the running of Jabbanzi, said that he was not aware of the workers' complaints, as they had refused to communicate with him. They demanded to see Mr. R. Sommerville, chairman of Jabbanzi, or Mrs. Ian Scott, Barnie, wife of the chairman of the Natal Cripples' Care Association, on whose farm Jabbanzi is situated.

Mr. Robert Mthethwa, who has been at the centre for the last 10 years, and is the deputy manager, said yesterday that the workers were dissatisfied with working conditions. He said that when meals were served late, and some of the workers had been fined, and they wanted to know who was firing them and for what reason.

Conditions have deteriorated to such an extent over the last three months that 30 workers have left. Mr. Mthethwa said.

Mr. Darvill dismissed the charge.
Blind workers threaten staff

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — About 150 blind Africans at the Natal Banty Blind Society’s workshops at Umhlazi went on a brief strike yesterday and threatened the White staff with violence before the police quelled the disturbance.

Mr Jack Cornell, the society’s president, said that the strike concerned a pay dispute.

Yesterday the workers approached Mr John Edwards, the manager at Umhlazi, with pay demands.

The workers became threatening and, according to Mr Cornell, the White officials were forced to slip out at a side gate and walk to the police station about two km away.

Col Piet Venter, District Commandant, Durban South, and a number of African policemen spoke to the workers.

Later yesterday Mr Cornell said the disturbance was over. He said the workers had received R25,000 worth of pay increases this year.

fewer tests? Essays and
Blind in holiday pay row

African Affairs Correspondent

ABOUT 150 blind Africans at the Natal Bantu Blind Society's workshops in Umlazi stopped work briefly yesterday and threatened the White staff before the police quelled the disturbance.

Mr. Jack Cornell, the society's president, told the Mercury that the men and women at Umduduzweni went on holiday for three weeks at the end of each year.

"They are given three weeks' full pay before they leave and two weeks' pay when they return."

Yesterday, the workers approached Mr. John Edwards, the manager at Umlazi, and demanded the five weeks' money in advance. They said they would refuse to accept any money if not paid in full.

The workers became threatening and, according to Mr. Cornell, the three White officials were forced to slip out at a side gate and walk to the police station about two kilometres away.

Colonel Piet Venter, District Commandant, Durban South, and a number of African policemen spoke to the blind workers.

Later, Mr. Cornell said the disturbance had ended and the workers had accepted their three-week holiday pay.

He told the Mercury that the wages ranged from R8 a week to R20.

At the same time, the workers had R25,000 of pay increases this year even though the Bantu Blind Society was running at a loss of between R20,000 and R60,000.
670. Mr. G. N. OLDFIELD asked the Minister of Labour:

Whether special facilities are provided to assist physically handicapped persons to be placed in employment in the open labour market; if so, what is the nature and extent of such facilities; if not, why not.

The MINISTER OF LABOUR:

The placement of physically handicapped persons is dealt with by Professional Vocational Counsellors of my Department, of whom there are 82 and who are stationed at the following centres:

669 Mr. G. N. Oldfield asked the Minister of Labour:

(1) How many persons are at present employed in sheltered employment;

(2) whether consideration has been given to increasing the number of posts for sheltered employment; if so, (a) to what extent and (b) when, if not, why not.

The MINISTER OF LABOUR:

(1) and (2) As at 31 January 1976, 1831 persons were employed while the present quota of 2000. An increase in the number of posts will therefore depend on the future demand for sheltered employment and the availability of the necessary funds.
Natal leads the way...

NATAL is leading the way in establishing protected workshops for the non-White mentally retarded — but a lack of funds threatens this pioneering work.

Last month, a protected workshop for Coloureds was established in Austerville and this month one has opened for the Indians in Briardene. Both are the first in the country to serve their respective communities.

They have been established under the enthusiastic guidance of the director of Durban Mental Health, Dr. Guna Jonker.

"Our senior training centre for Whites in Mignon Lane has been going for some time, and we hope to move into our new Sherwood Protected Workshop next March. But until now there has been nothing for the supervised," explains Dr. Jonker.

She does not believe in giving relief, food parcels and clothes, but in providing centres to give the mentally retarded the stimulation they desperately need and, in time, to give them a chance to supplement their disability grants.

The main organiser of the Collingwood Road, Austerville, centre is Mrs. Nadya Shapiro, a

... IT WOULD BE TERRIBLE IF WE HAD help support the centre and the workers could eventually supplement their R33,50 a month pension.

By CAROLYN HOWIE

The Chest also gave R21,000 annually for the running of the children's day centres. "We cannot accommodate all those who would like to come, so it would be terrible if we had to cut back through lack of finances.

The Chest has barely reached the halfway mark towards its R200,000 target, the amount needed to meet commitments to 18 of member societies.

LOYAL

Running costs for the centres are provided by the Durban and District Community Chest and if it does not meet its target this year and reduces its subsidy, these places will have to close. "It would be a tragedy when they have proved such a success," says Dr. Jonker.

But Mr. Nick Mander, of National Seed, has given us a seed-packing contract and has taken a tremendous interest in our project. He said that theft and absenteeism, because of the boring nature of the job, had been a real problem for him.

the response was most disappointing. Some didn't even acknowledge the letters.

12/14/75
TO CUT BACK'

"We have had marvellous increases from our loyal regular donors, but we are having tremendous difficulty in breaking through the hardcore of businesses who turn a deaf ear to our pleas," says Chest director Allister Mackinlay.

Mental ill-health can and does affect the productivity of workers and it has been estimated that 33 percent of the general public suffer from some emotional disturbance.

An average of 1,500 people with emotional problems annually seek the assistance of Durban Mental Health.

RESPONSE

"Of course, we still need many things — particularly a refrigerator for the summer — but the centre is large enough to take 50 eventually. We started on October 1 with eight and are building up."

"We were a bit worried when he asked us to pack 10,000 packets a week, but we have already reached 4,000 packets a day."

When a Mercury team visited the centre, six workers, assisted by two supervisors, Mrs. Miriam Hoffenberg and Mrs. Cynthia Kinsly, formed the production line.

"They work so willingly and I can see a tremendous improvement in them already," says Dr. Jonker.

On the other side of the room, two workers were knotting rugs and others were making wire hangers for dry cleaners.

"If only we could get some more contracts — maybe labelling, sorting or packing — we could get it done quicker, Dr. Jonker.

GEORGE and Michael knotting rugs at the Austerville protected workshop run by the Durban Mental Health Society.

"We want to take not only the mentally retarded but the mentally ill, all who cannot cope with ordinary jobs but are capable of handling routine tasks."

Hundreds of young people, if they received training, could be productive. If no help was given they would deteriorate and cause stress to their families.

AVOIDED

"Many of the difficult behaviour problems of the older people today could have been avoided with such help. And we particularly need these adult training centres for adolescents leaving our children's centres so that training is not wasted."

If left in the community, they are often misled into drinking, smoking-dagga and even carrying dagga for pushers. "They are bored and become a burden to themselves and their families. Potential wage-earners often have to stay at home to look after them. They don't need nursing but they create problems if not young social worker with Durban Mental Health.

"It is very important to get the community involved and we have had wonderful help from the Royal Flush Club, which has raised hundreds of rands for furnishing and has redecorated the house rented from the Department of Community Development," she says.

"We were a bit worried when he asked us to pack 10,000 packets a week, but we have already reached 4,000 packets a day."

When a Mercury team visited the centre, six workers, assisted by two supervisors, Mrs. Miriam Hoffenberg and Mrs. Cynthia Kinsly, formed the production line.

"They work so willingly and I can see a tremendous improvement in them already," says Dr. Jonker.

On the other side of the room, two workers were knotting rugs and others were making wire hangers for dry cleaners.

"If only we could get some more contracts — maybe labelling, sorting or packing — we could get it done quicker, Dr. Jonker.

"Of these, quite a large percentage became unemployed and dependent on State assistance."

If the society did not get the R60,000 subsidy it was asking for — and for 1976 it would have to ask for R68,000 because of inflation — much of the good work achieved would be destroyed, says Dr. Jonker.

"If people could only see the benefit to the children and adults in these centres and to the community as a whole if they knew they would give generously," she adds.
Question

How many (a) White, (b) Coloured, (c) Asian and (d) Bantu persons were working in departmentally established or subsidized sheltered employment schemes for the disabled as at 31 December 1974 or the latest date for which figures are available?

The MINISTER OF LABOUR.

The figures as at 28 February 1975 were as follows:

(a) 1,402
(b) 399
(c) 16
(d) 10

No additional Bantu are admitted to the scheme as the Department of Bantu Administration is responsible for disabled Bantu.
Training centres/workshops for disabled Bantu

209. Mr G N Oldifid asked the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development.

(1) (a) How many training centres or workshops are there for disabled Bantu and (b) how many Bantu were employed in these centres or workshops at the latest date for which figures are available,

(2) in respect of what date are these figures given

The MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

(1) (a) 11

(b) Approximately 965. This figure does not include the number of employed Bantu in the centres or workshops in the Ciskei because the Ciskeian Government informed me that they do not wish to furnish the information required.

(2) 31 March 1975
Training centre for Coloured cripples needs 6ha land

EAST LONDON — The East London and Border Society for the Care of Cripples intend establishing an industrial training centre for disabled people in the Coloured area here.

According to the president of the society, Mrs M. S. Fuller, their only problem was to find six hectares of land.

The Coloured Management Committee recommended at their monthly meeting that the East London City Council provide the land.

Mrs Fuller, who is also vice-president of the National Council for the Care of Cripples, said before the project could get off the ground the Society must have a proper sheltered or protected employment centre.

“We hope to start with hostel facilities which can ultimately be turned into a proper industrial training centre for disabled Coloureds.”

“It is essential that opportunities be given to the disabled to learn and to work to augment their disability pensions which are meagre, and ultimately get rid of pensions.

“I know from experience that in the Western Cape where a similar centre was opened three years ago, the disabled were able to relinquish their pensions.

Mrs Fuller said they had 176 disabled on the Cripple Care books who, if they had an opportunity, could work.

The Blind Association had between 30 and 40 partially sighted Coloureds and the TB section had about 30 cured needing light work.

Mrs Fuller said a similar project was being established at Mdantsane for R250,000 by Cripple Care.

Mrs Fuller said the chairman of the Coloured Management Committee, Mr P. Mopp, and his wife, and another CMC member, Mr J. D. Marais, and his wife, had been charged to establish a Coloured branch of the society. They in turn would assist with the establishment of an industrial training centre for disabled people.

At a meeting of Cripple Care, a steering committee of all welfare associations associated with physical disablement was established.

The committee members were: Dr J. E. van Heerden, Dr L. B. Schneider, Mr P. Mopp, Mr J. van den Berg, Mrs N. Howes and Mrs M. S. Fuller.

Mrs Fuller said approaches would be made to the National Education Department, Department of Community Development and the Department of Coloured Affairs for financial aid towards the establishment of the training centre. — DDR.
Handicapped can help

OWN CORRESPONDENT

WITBOSCOEK—Sheltered employment and the selective placing of handicapped persons on the open labour market had to be tested on the principle that the handicapped were not a social burden.

The person with his own needs, interests and abilities could contribute to the social and economic welfare of his country.

This was said today by Mrs. Vorster, wife of the Prime Minister.

She was opening a new £70,000 welfare centre at Witboscoek, in the Bafokeng, Gwena, Thamalakane.

Mrs. Vorster said that the fact that a handicapped person was capable of work and able to live independently was a feeling of independence and made him feel worthwhile.

It was therefore the duty of every authority to provide the necessary facilities for those handicapped persons who were able and willing to earn their own living.

Mrs. Vorster paid tribute to the willingness of the South African authorities to care for their less privileged, despite the fact that their home hand was still experiencing development problems.

She said this from the experience of her own people, who had to struggle through a similar period in their own history.

The centre which Mrs. Vorster opened is intended to cater for the aged and caregivers and offer work to the handicapped.
Mr. G. N. OLFIELD asked the Minister of Labour.

(1) (a) How many persons suffering from epilepsy registered for employment with his Department in 1974 and (b) how many such persons were placed in employment?

(2) whether his Department has undertaken a survey of the employment opportunities for persons suffering from epilepsy; if so, with what result, if not, why not.

The MINISTER OF LABOUR:

(1) (a) Registrations including re-registrations—530.

(b) 180.

(2) No

Epileptics can undertake any employment to which their qualifications, abilities and conditions of health are suited, provided that they are not a danger to themselves or other persons. Epileptics who are not suitable for the open labour market are normally placed in sheltered or protected employment when vacancies become available, and if they are found competent to perform such work.

Only 16 epileptics were registered as unemployed with my Department as at 31 December 1974.
Employ cripples
— social workers

EAST LONDON — Are the physically disabled incapable of work?

No, says Mrs. M. Buchalter, a social worker who is also the employment officer for the East London and Border Society for the Care of Cripples.

'There are a large number of potentially employable people in East London and surrounding areas who are without jobs because employers feel that they will prove unreliable because of their physical disabilities,' she said.

This unwillingness to employ disabled people combined with the shortage of suitable jobs is proving to be a serious hindrance to the society's rehabilitation programme.

'There are some firms however which have been particularly co-operative in providing employment for disabled people,' she said.

The sounding of suitable employment virtually completes our rehabilitation programme and though we have made appeals to business men and employers to notify us if they have suitable vacancies, we have received a limited response,' said Mrs. Buchalter.

Commenting on a complaint by the Chamber of Commerce to the city council about the number of beggars sitting outside city shops, Mrs. Buchalter said: 'Surely the situation would be alleviated if the Chamber of Commerce had made some openings for disabled people.'

'There's no sheltered employment for disabled Coloured or African people in East London and many bazaars are not willing to accept offers of employment when made,' she said.

She plans to hold a week-long publicity drive called 'Hire the Handicapped Week' in which she hopes to make the public aware of the need to employ handicapped people.

'There is a publicity drive of this nature annually in America,' she said.

The president of the Cripple Care Society, Mrs. M. S. Fuller said physically handicapped people tended to be more reliable as employees than the unhandicapped.

'They are aware how difficult it is for someone in their position to get a job and are therefore highly motivated to succeed at their work,' she said.

Mrs. Buchalter said the society had recently been asked to provide 12 handicapped people for employment at a local firm and that all of them were proving satisfactory as the factory was quite accessible to them.

'The other side of the coin is the recent case of a man who lost his job because of his inability to get into office buildings when sent out as a messenger,' she said. — DDR.
**Appeal to care for retarded**

**The Alexandra Care and Rehabilitation Centre in Maitland has appealed to the public to take an interest in the care of mentally retarded people.**

At a Press conference yesterday to launch a Health Year campaign to educate people about mental retardation, Dr E.J. Berrange, medical superintendent of the centre, emphasized the importance of community involvement and awareness.

Said there were a number of patients who could be released if there were homes for them to go to.

"What we need is sympathetic and approved families who can take these people into their homes and give them a chance to play a useful role in society," she said.

Ladies would be given moral and financial support by the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions.

**NO FAMILIES**

But there is a lot to be done on a much simpler level," said Dr Berrange.

A great number of children in the centre had no families. All they required was a simple loving relationship - a weekly letter or visit from someone who cared.

Social clubs too, were a great boost for the patients. One which was started in Rondebosch proved popular.

Dr Berrange also appealed to industries.

**OPEN WEEK**

At the moment there are 160 patients in industrial employment but there are many, more who could be usefully and gainfully employed," she said.

The Alexandra Care and Rehabilitation Centre will hold an open week from March 10 to 17, during which people who are interested in the care of mental retardation will speak.
A quadruplegic resident of Ithuseng paraplegic rehabilitation centre at work on sign writing with a special wrist device.

Ithuseng's men on the move

By Iain Macdonald

Just outside Welkom beneath a lightly-clouded sky, two mixed basketball teams clicked, rattled and clashed on a sun-baked court this week to the roars of an enthusiastic and excited audience.

Imitating the pounding frenzy of the spectators, the players in green and orange hussled and spun their way from goal to goal, their strained knees and glinting faces alive as they turned, stepped and used their vehicles with consummate skill around the court.

The players were all paralysed from the waist down, and their silver-tubed chairs were used as both surrogate legs and as paradoxically precise vehicles for what seemed almost to be a new game, and certainly a new dimension.

Among the hundred or so wheelchair-bound paraplegics lining the sides of the rectangular court, was a small silver-haired man in a dark grey suit. Looking remarkably like a miniature Albert Schweitzer and with grim, inscrutable, eyes, he sat through the players' exuberant performances.

And the medical profession took the defeatist attitude that the best thing for the patients would be to let them die, he said almost cordially and with no trace of bitterness in his voice.

"Miss Scratchen even had to spend two months typing in a small bathroom because we couldn't get any office space," he chuckled.

"But this... this brings me the kind of happiness which cannot be expressed in words. It's the fulfillment of a dream and exactly what I always envisaged a centre for paraplegics should be," he said, pointing to the handsome low brick buildings.

Certainly the centre is impressive enough, with housing, workshops, sports, and recreation facilities in abundance, and set on 10 acres of mellowing grassland bordered by groves of old trees.

Built at a projected cost of R2 million, the centre can introduce a crippled mine-worker into the jubilant joys of once again becoming self-sufficient tax-payer. It is also able to perform a comprehensive paraplegic rehabilitation service for the entire community of a paraplegic.
Among the hundred or so wheelchair-bound paraplegics lining the sides of the rectangular court, was a small silver-haired man in a dark gray suit. Looking remarkably like a miniature Albert Schweitzer and with grim, waver and shouts of joy to the manoeuvring and flashing players, this tiny giant of a man had earlier opened this centre for black paraplegics near the Ernest Oppenheimer hospital.

Known as "Ithuseng"—"Help Yourselves"—the centre is one of the most modern and best equipped in the world and represents part of the fulfillment of a dream by its "papa," world-famous neuro-surgeon and father of the paraplegic games, Sir Ludwig Guttmann.

Sir Ludwig began his war on the devastators of spinal injury at the same time World War 2 was about to cause the paralysis, by bomb or bullet, of thousands of soldiers throughout the world.

At the opening ceremony of South Africa's paraplegic rehabilitation centre this week Sir Ludwig outlined the primitive conditions that he and his secretary, Miss Joan Scuton, had had to face. He spoke of the resistance and indifference which met him from the then medical establishment.

"We had to fight for everything when we started. No nurse or doctor wanted to be involved with chronic paraplegics.

Built 10 years ago at a cost of R2 million, the centre can reintroduce a crippled mine worker into the glorious joys of once again becoming a self-efficient taxpayer. It is also able to perform a comprehensive paraplegic rehabilitation service for the entire lifetime of a paraplegic.

"If a man in a wheelchair is a taxpayer, he can look into your eyes and say 'Mister, I'm at least as good as you,'" Sir Ludwig said.

Looking around, the faces here are all joyous, and that's what the doctor ordered," he said as the Xhosa choir burst into a full-blown psalm of thanks to God.

Sir Ludwig has based his successful rehabilitation of men once thought to be beyond recovery on two prime motivating factors—work and sport.

He explained that the work gave the patient a reason to live again and restored his sense of self-reliance. It also helped to shift emphasis from a patient's handicap.

Sport was introduced by Sir Ludwig "because I felt it would have been an omission otherwise".

"It worked immediately with the introduction of wheelchair polo some 30 years ago. We then introduced the Stoke Mandeville paraplegic games, which have now become world famous," he said.

Paraplegics now take part in almost every sport from archery and table tennis to swimming, shotputting and basketball.

Paraplegics manufacture hose-clamps for the mines in one of Ithuseng's well-equipped workshops.
Woman wants beggars banned

By Vatiswa Ntsangana

EAST LONDON — Handicapped street beggars were a real scourge and attempts were being made to remove them from streets, said Mrs Mercy Mkalipi, regional social worker of Cripple Care in East London.

Mrs Mkalipi who is running a self-help scheme for Cripple Care in Mdantsane, said they wanted to help crippled people to earn a living to augment their disability grants.

Fourteen crippled people are accommodated in NU1. They do carpentry, weaving, knitting and sewing. The material is provided by Cripple Care but the disabled get paid when the articles are sold.

“We could cater for more than 50 people,” she said.

Mrs Mkalipi said they were concerned about cripples who were street beggars.

“These people are compensated with skills and are artsy,” she said. “They have become so addicted to begging that they have stopped developing constructive thinking.

“They have to debase themselves to draw sympathy,” she said.

She hit out at the people who gave beggars money because they did not use it profitably.

“These people should donate the money to the organisations which cater for cripples,” she said.

“The mentality of those cripples who do not beg is much higher,” she said.

“Some have homes they are supporting and running properly because they have occupied themselves with work and are not frustrated.

She said handicapped people were a cheerful lot when they together.

“At home they are always pitted but when they are together they don’t show sympathy for each other instead they tease each other about their disabilities and laugh it off,” she said.

The centre was modelled to provide a homely atmosphere.

“We don’t want a stereotyped type of hospital,” she said.

Mrs Mkalipi was born Masokwe at Cathcart and when married went to stay in Grahamstown. She did a teacher’s course at Engwati and taught for three years before she went to Lovedale to do matric.
The factory looks almost deserted, the light-blue exterior walls reflecting the misty mid-morning light of Fordsburg. Inside a young man in dungarees hovers on the steps, watching the passers-by with absorbed interest.

"Sam" was originally diagnosed as a schizophrenic and spent eight long years in and out of Sterkfontein psychiatric hospital. Society branded him a failure, unable to cope with the pressures of everyday living. His marriage founded under the strain.

Doctors didn't hold out much hope and the treatment wasn't working. Sam seemed destined to spend the rest of his life in an institution — until Goodwill came to the rescue.

Goodwill Industries is a private organisation which runs the factory where Sam and 115 other mentally or physically handicapped men and women work. In the big airy rooms, the men stand and sand cupboards for repair or prepare chairs for re-upholstering; the women busy themselves packing dolls or putting together games sets.

Productivity and profit are two words which mean little to the voluntary staff running the factory. "Our profit is the number of 'incapacitated' people we manage to place in the open labour market," said Mr A Barkow, chairman of Goodwill.

The factory, said to be the only one of its kind, has been in existence for the past 16 years. Proof of its success is the increasing demand for similar centres all over South Africa and for all races, according to Mr Barkow.

"We rely quite heavily on donations and the State subsidises we receive each year, but most of our revenue comes from contracts to provide firms with electrical appliances or to re-upholster office furniture," Mr Barkow added.

Silence prevails and...
CAROLYN DEMPSTER VISITS GOODWILL INDUSTRIES

Factory for Unemployable
Mr. H. H. SCHWARZ asked the Minister of Manpower Utilization:

(1) How many sheltered employment institutions are there in South Africa, persons employed in such institutions?

(2) What are the wage rates paid to the sheltered persons?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Coloureds</th>
<th>Asians</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>R24.00</td>
<td>R20.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>R17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>R21.50</td>
<td>R21.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>R42.00</td>
<td>R34.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>R25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>R36.50</td>
<td>R36.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only Coloured, Asian and Black males are employed. The Blacks at present employed are all ex-servicemen who had been admitted to sheltered employment prior to the transfer of the scheme to the Department of Manpower Utilization. No new Black applicants are admitted as the Department of Co-operation and Development deals with Black disabled persons. Wages of sheltered employees are normally reviewed when salary adjustments in the Public Service are effected. In the light of the salary adjustments of public servants with effect from 1 April 1980, the wages of sheltered employees are accordingly being reviewed and the Department’s proposals are being submitted to the Treasury.

It is desired to point out that certain sheltered employees, depending on their personal circumstances, are further assisted by the Department of Health, Welfare and Pensions by way of supplementary grants and allowances such as grants and allowances, which are subject to a means test applied by that Department. This however under certain circumstances be reduced as a result of wage increases granted by the Department of Manpower Utilization. The Department of Health, Welfare and Pensions is therefore being approached for its comments with a view to revising its means test.
Ciskei cripples to get school

EAST LONDON — Ciskei Cripple Care is to establish a school for cripples in Mdantsane.

And, the organisation, which is headed by the wife of Ciskei's Chief Minister, Mrs. V. Sebe, also hopes to establish a homecraft factory where employment for disabled people will be provided.

Mrs. Sebe received inspiration for the scheme on a recent visit to Israel where she saw the useful lives which cripples were able to lead if they received the proper training.

A cheque for R500 collected for Ciskei Cripple Care by residents of the 29 towns represented at the recent Ciskei Urban Board (CUB) conference has already been presented to Mrs. Sebe and will go towards the school.

The cheque was presented at the CUB conference at which community council representatives on the CUB were inducted by Chief L. L. Sebe. — DHR

Military training for children

ANKARA — Turkey ordered military instruction yesterday for all children from the age of seven "to meet the requirements of an all-out war." — SAPA-RNS
The minister for black males was R12 a week and the maximum R12 a week. The minister for white males was R12 a week and the maximum R12 a week. Mr. Botha said the minister for white males was R12 a week and the maximum R12 a week. Mr. Botha's Department of Manpower Utilization. Mr. Botha said the minister for white males was R12 a week and the maximum R12 a week.
Of Woe
A Tale of Weaving

2/980

It was the&trumpet of the
Heraclian, in Athens to
have a battle with the
Persians. The Heraclian
were victorious, but the
Persians suffered great
losses. The Heraclian
 thereafter went on to
conquer the rest of the
Greek world.

Olympia

The Heraclian were
victorious, but the
Persians suffered great
losses. The Heraclian
thereafter went on to
conquer the rest of the
Greek world.

Olympia

The Heraclian were
victorious, but the
Persians suffered great
losses. The Heraclian
thereafter went on to
conquer the rest of the
Greek world.

Olympia

The Heraclian were
victorious, but the
Persians suffered great
losses. The Heraclian
thereafter went on to
conquer the rest of the
Greek world.

Olympia

The Heraclian were
victorious, but the
Persians suffered great
losses. The Heraclian
thereafter went on to
conquer the rest of the
Greek world.
Radcliffe Diadla was found as a baby in a Natal hospital by the founder of Itireleng. Now the workshop is his home.
JOHANNESBURG. - About 300 blind workers at the Herecleng Institute in Hammanskraal near Pretoria have been sacked after complaining about poor wages, the Post (Transvaal) reported yesterday.

It said 150 workers at the institution's hostel were ordered to leave immediately, while an undisclosed number of workers in married quarters in neighboring Ga-Rankuwa were told to vacate their houses to make way for other workers.

The manager of the Herecleng Institute, Mr. Geofrey Hilton-Dutton, told the Post that he had been forced to close the factory but did not give reasons. He was not available for comment yesterday.

The chairman of the Society for the Blind, Mr. A. Garthol, said he was not aware of the situation but would convene a meeting tomorrow to discuss the matter. A statement would be issued after the meeting. - Sapa
The blind people workshop closes down

The Itireleng Workshop For The Blind in Bophuthatswana has been closed down after a confrontation between an angry mob of blind workers and white staff at the factory.

Management at the factory, biggest of its kind in the world, believes that a "hard core" of militant blind workers planned a riot to coincide with June 16, fourth anniversary of the 1976 unrest.

The Star reported this month that blind workers were dissatisfied with the introduction of "piece rates" at Itireleng, which they claimed made it difficult for older workers — many of them with schoolgoing children — to earn as much as they did in the past.

BANKRUPTCY

Management told The Star that the wages paid at Itireleng ranged from R6.50 to R37 a week. The average wage was about R11 a week. Wages could not be drastically improved, they said, because the workshop was on the brink of bankruptcy.

At a Press conference in Johannesburg today the workshop manager, Mr Gwef Hilton-Barber, said on Monday, June 16 about 70 workers entered his office in Galtankuwa, ostensibly to complain about their increases.

"Their mood was ugly and while they were still entering my office, the social worker phoned me with the news that many of these workers were carrying clubs and that, from what she heard of their conversation in the passage, they were coming to fight and not to talk."

He managed to get them out of his office and sent for the magistrate and the police.
Troublesome blind workers barred

About 40 "troublemakers" among the 320 blind workers at the Tureleng workshop in Bophuthatswana will be barred from the factory.

This decision follows the closure of the factory — largest blind workshop in the world — because of worker unrest, including an alleged attempt by armed workers on the life of factory manager Mr Geoff Hilton Barber.

Mr Barber said yesterday a "hard core" of about 40 militant, politically motivated workers had planned to stage a riot which would coincide with the fourth anniversary of the 1976 unrest.

Mr Barber told The Star last month that workers earned weekly wages ranging from R6.30 to R8.50. The average weekly wage was R11.

About two weeks ago Mr Barber informed workers of increases ranging from 40 cents to R1.70 a week. He apologised for not being able to grant higher increases.

Tureleng is tottering on the brink of bankruptcy, with an overdraft which has at times reached R100,000.

At a Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday he said about 70 workers crowded into his office on June 15. Some of them were armed with clubs. From what a social worker overheard workers say in the passage, they were "coming to fight and not to talk," he said.

Mr Barber said he managed to get out of his office under the pretext of getting all the workers into the room. He phoned a magistrate, who sent four police vans to the factory.
Pay Rise for White Slaves

By Daily Bulletin

Tribune highlighted their plight last week. Now these exploited workers will get more.
not enough

For Blind Pay

BY ALI AN DUBY
Ikhwezi Lokusa is a shining example

UMTATA — At first you don’t notice they’re physically disabled.

Your attention is drawn to their practised fingers, plying the clay, and when you do speak it’s in hushed tones, because you don’t want to disturb the tranquility.

This is the atmosphere at the new pottery here, a leap forward in Ikhwezi Lokusa’s programme to extend its sheltered employment centre.

Opened two months ago, it can accommodate 36 pupils. The potter, Mr Joe Farragher, is currently training 16 employees. Some 55 others are employed in other branches of the centre (one of two in Southern Africa for the physically handicapped) — dressmaking, tailoring, woodwork, machine knitting, gardening, and the manufacture of musical instruments.

They are accommodated at Ikhwezi Lokusa and paid wages determined by the Department of Interior for sheltered employees.

The centre is subsidised by the Transkei Government, and is intended to accommodate 300 handicapped adults eventually.

Two hostels currently under construction will house an additional 80 employees within two years, and the centre has also built houses in the adjoining township for handicapped married couples.

The pottery was financed by the Transkei Government and substantial donations from a Swiss organisation, the Germany-based Bread for the World and the Employment Bureau of Africa.

Once the pottery’s spacious showroom is fully stocked, Mr Farragher is keen to stage exhibitions throughout the Eastern Cape and also intends marketing Ikhwezi’s pottery in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town.

All the pottery is lead-free stoneware. Mr Farragher, who trained at the Johannesburg College of Art and has been at Ikhwezi four years, is confident it will compare well with other pottery on the market.

Ikhwezi holds an annual year-end exhibition, and pottery is also represented at the Rand Easter Show. The pottery’s two most promising employees, who specialise in sculpture, were both educated at Ikhwezi’s school.

Mavuma Peter, 24, and Khayaletu Sidendi, 21, are TB spine victims and also share an interest in music. Sister Mary Paul said Mavuma, whose work is in constant demand, had sent the Pope a sculpture of Christ healing the deaf.

She said the centre provided employment for Ikhwezi school leavers who displayed an aptitude for the various crafts offered, and would not be able to compete in the open labour market.

Nearly 500 pupils have passed through the school since 1958, and Sister Mary Paul is confident 1981 will see 300 pupils enrolled there.

"But we have a waiting list of 20 for the school and 140 for the centre, and many more who haven’t applied."

Ikhwezi Lokusa — which means star of the morning — has a staff of 63, including 10 nuns and three overseas volunteers who will serve Ikhwezi for three years. Two British school leavers have also volunteered a year’s service.

Report and pictures by JUDY PARFITT

Khayaletu Sidendi, 21, one of the pottery’s most promising employees.
Sheltered Employment - 1982 - 1986
New workshop for retarded children

By SELLO RABOTHATA

THE MENTAL Health Society of the Witwatersrand is to build a R250 000 protective workshop in Soweto and hopes to have it completed by the end of next year, Mrs C M Sithole, an official of the society, said yesterday.

The workshop, which will be subsidised by the Department of Education and Training, will be built at the Pumela Training Centre in Soweto, a plot which had originally been set aside for a play park.

Mrs Sithole said, "The centre will cater for the mentally retarded when they are through at the training centres. A research study conducted in 1977 showed that there was a dire need for such facilities because the mentally retarded were at a disadvantage when they eventually left the centres."

"The Government has a ruling that these children have to be discharged from the centres at the age of 18 years. We fear that we have others who are still at the centre at the age of 20 years, and these will be catered for by the new protective workshop."

"We applied for a site in February 1980 through the Soweto Council, who contacted the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Dr P Kormhof, and we were eventually granted it last August."

Mrs Sithole said the Health Society then approached architects at the University of Witwatersrand who drew the plans for them, and the estimated cost of the workshop, R250 000, was reached.

The Mental Health Society has already built two centres for the mentally retarded in Soweto, the Pumela Training Centre in Soweto and the Pumula centre in Orlando West. Both centres currently cater for 70 retarded children each and are said to have a waiting list of 200 children.

Mrs Sithole said the Health Society would appreciate any donations from organisations and the public in order to raise the money for the building of the protective workshop. They may be sent to The Director, Mental Health Society of the Witwatersrand, Box 10443, North City, Plein Street, Johannesburg.
Blind workers are 'content'

By SANDRA SMITH

THE results of the investigation into the sacking of six workers from the Port Elizabeth Society for the Blind's Mount Road workshop, which led to the walking out of 14 of their colleagues, were released today.

The chairman of the society, Mr A B Scales, said in a statement that a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Mr H E Millard was appointed to investigate the matter.

A local investigation revealed that "apart from a measure of dissatisfaction expressed by a non-blind minority of coloured employees in regard to their rates of pay, the blind generally were happy and content", Mr Scales said.

The incident occurred in October when sacked workers claimed the workshop's manager, Mr D W N Glendinning, had been involved in fist-fights with some of them and that they had had unexplained deductions from their pay packets.

The chairman of the National Council for the Blind, Professor Theo Pauw, held talks with Mr Glendinning and worker representatives — with Department of Manpower officials as observers — and it was decided to set up a committee of investigation.

"Sight should not be lost of the fact that the minority of employees who expressed dissatisfaction with their rates of pay are, in fact, not blind and furthermore are in receipt of disability pensions.

"Bearing in mind that the society is obliged to compete in the market place and receives no subsidy in respect of those employees, its ability to pay them higher wages is limited by virtue of these factors," Mr Scales said.
Staff shortage at SADF unit enabled Witkommando to steal from armoury

Mercury Correspondent

CAPE TOWN—A scarcity of manpower at a Defence Force unit had made it possible for an SADF employee to betray his trust and allow insurgents of the Witkommando to steal weapons and ammunition from a military armoury for use in acts of terrorism.

Because of lack of staff, one man controlled the keys to every store and armoury in the unit — and passed them to the Witkommando.

This was revealed in testimony to the Select Committee on Public Accounts last year by Gen Constand Viljoen, Chief of the Defence Force.

In the committee's first and second reports, published last year, Maj-Gen N. F. Schwartz (PPS) quoted as asking Gen Viljoen if he had been aware that the so-called Witkommando had received all its weapons from SADF sources.

Gen Viljoen replied that this resulted from the specific incident where it was unfortunately so that control over the keys and armories was entrusted to one person and he made those keys available to the Witkommando.

Undermanned

One cannot control occurrences of this nature if one does not sufficiently trained, and that if one were not enough personnel.

To a large extent the hard work is too difficult to carry out these controls.

It is a fact that in the nature of things one sometimes has people who will do anything because they are very fearless. That is one of the problems one encounters in a defence force.

He added that the Ministry of Defence had already ordered the tightening up of control measures at the unit in question.

Similarly, Gen Viljoen said troops returning from the border had to pass the same detection devices as those installed at civilian airports.

He was answering Mr Schaller, who had asked...

Ban lifted on Battiss book

Mercury Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG—The public would like to read it again the ban on the manuscript by Professor Walter Battiss, which was compiled last year.

The board ruled that the manuscript — the first screen printed work of its kind in the world — could not be regarded as a publication in terms of the meaning of the Publications Act.

Yesterday Prof Battiss had a meeting of the board of directors and stated that he regarded the book as work of art and hence not a publication. He said he had only produced three or four other books.

He had compiled the book in question in London and it consisted of drawings he had found in an old book in London and which had altered with a colour pen.

In between the altered drawings he had inserted quotations of famous people. In 1933, as...
Fired blind workers threatened with arrest

Mercury Reporter

THE 39 blind workers dismissed from the Natal African Blind Society's factory at Enduduzweni on Wednesday following a dispute over an increase in deductions for food and lodging have been given until 10 a.m. this morning to vacate the factory's hostel or else 'they will be arrested', according to the society's director, Mr J Randles.

Mr Randles also confirmed workers' claims that they had not been fed since Wednesday, saying that when the workers were dismissed, their food supplies were withdrawn because they were no longer employed by the factory.

He refuted claims, however, that workers could not get home. The institute was prepared to transport any dismissed worker to the railway station and pay for his train fare home, he said.

The blind workers, who make cane products and weave work, downed tools last week when their deductions for food and lodging were increased by approximately R1.50 a week to R2.50 a week.

Loss

The Natal African Blind Society - a non-profit welfare organisation - justified the increase by saying that the hostel was running at a 'tremendous loss'.

Workers were unhappy with the new deductions, not because of the increase but because they were each being charged different rates for food and lodging and because their request to cook their own food, which would keep costs down, had been refused by management, according to Mr Herbert Barnabas, national organiser for the Blind Workers' Union.

Mr Barnabas said: 'Workers all want to be charged the same rate for food and lodging. They are refusing to leave the hostel because they feel they have been unfairly treated and unfairly dismissed'.

Mr Randles said that because the blind workers were paid different wages, food and lodging fees were deducted accordingly. 'It works out that each worker contributes about an eighth of his weekly wage,' he said.

Timber

Meanwhile, the work stoppage at Mondi Timbers, Port Durnford, continued yesterday although the Poseau-affiliated Paper, Wood and Allied Workers' Union indicated that workers would probably return on Monday if management agreed to hold negotiations with shop stewards and union officials on the Anglo American pension scheme.

A total of 125 workers downed tools early this month in a bid to have their pension fund contributions refunded.

According to a statement issued by the Mondi spokesman, Mr Rob Hudson, it is a condition of employment in the Mondi Group that all employees belong to the pension fund.
POLICE CALLED AS 59 BLIND WORKERS DIG IN THEIR HEELS

CHARGED!

FIFTY - NINE blind workers dismissed this week from the Natal African Blind Society's factory in Umkomaas were yesterday charged with trespassing after they refused to leave the hostel at the factory.

John Randles, director of the society, confirmed yesterday that he had charged the workers with trespassing and pointed out it was up to the Umkomaas police to decide whether to charge them off the premises.

But the workers, who were fired after striking in protest against increased accommodation and food deductions, were adamant yesterday they would not leave the Endudumweni hostel - which they regard as their home.

A worker spokesman, Michael Sangweni, said: "We want them to take us to court. The court must decide whether we should leave our homes or not."

The workers were given until 8am yesterday to quit the hostel, but by late yesterday afternoon they had not been moved off the premises by the police. Earlier police had visited the hostel to tell them they were breaking the law.

Matters came to a head at the factory this week when the 59 workers employed by the Natal African Blind Society to make cans and food products were fired after an almost week-long strike.

They downed tools after their boarding and food deductions were increased by about R1.50 a week to R2.50 a week.

By SHAMI-HARICHUNDER

They were not interested in our suggestions although they had asked for them. We went on strike as a last resort to try to make them realise we are opposed to different rates. "All we want is a uniform deduction which we will be able to meet. After all, we are not earning fat salaries."

According to the Blind Allied Workers' Union, wages at the factory ranged from R8 a week to R22 a week.

When Mr Randles was contacted at the factory yesterday morning, he confirmed he had made a complaint to the police that the workers were trespassing and said he had warned them on Thursday that they were illegally on the premises.

He also said the dismissed workers were given an opportunity to reapply for their jobs.

But a short while after the interview Mr Randles and three police officers approached photographer Morris Hlatky and me and asked us to leave the premises.

Mr Randles complained that we were trespassing.

The police gave us a few minutes to leave. They said we would be arrested if we entered the township without a permit.

Barry Johnston, president of the society, refused to comment on the police involvement and other developments saying he would first have to talk to Mr Randles.

---

**FREQUENCY OF BEHAVIOR:**

**HABIT:**

Little value if you don't answer the test.

**DIRECTIVES:**

1.2 To assess your listening habits.

**EXERCISE:**

Active Listening.
Trespass charges for blind workers

African Affairs Reporter

CHARGES of trespassing were laid against 50 blind workers on Saturday when they refused to vacate their hostel at the Natal African Blind Society's premises in Umlazi. They may appear in the Umlazi Magistrate's Court today.

They were allowed to remain in the hostel pending the trial.

The blind workers had been given an ultimatum to leave the premises by 10am but defied the order. They ignored a truck belonging to the society which arrived at the hostel to transport them to the railway station.

Mr John Randles, the factory manager, summoned the police and a charge of trespassing was laid.

Mr D Nisle, KwaZulu's assistant secretary for Health and Welfare, and Mr J T Zulu, KwaZulu's urban representative, held discussions with Mr Randles for three hours but the charge of trespassing was not withdrawn.

Persuaded

The officials succeeded in persuading him to feed the workers. Food was withdrawn last Thursday, when the workers objected to increased deductions from their wages to pay for food.

The officials relayed the developments to Dr M Gumede, the Secretary for Health and Welfare, and will submit a report this week.

The Mercury has been officially informed that the land and buildings of the society belong to the KwaZulu Government and that the Natal African Blind Society runs the factory for the blind on an agency basis.
Trespass charges against blind men

DURBAN — Charges of trespassing were laid against 15 blind workers on Sunday when they refused to vacate their hostel at the Natal African Blind Society premises in London Road. They are expected to appear in the Umhlanga Magistrate's Court today. They were accused of removing two mattresses from the hostel housing premises.

The blind workers had been given an ultimatum to leave the premises but they refused.

However, the officials succeeded in persuading them to give up the workers' food. Food had been withheld since Thursday when the workers objected to the increased deductions for rent.

According to officials, the land and buildings occupied by the society belong to the Kwazulu Government and the Natal African Blind Society runs the factory on an agency basis.

Reporting back to the workers, the Kwazulu officials told them arrangements were being made to meet the society's committee to find a suitable solution. The meeting would take place after the decision of the court had been handed down.
Blind workers appear in court

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — Fifty-two blind workers from the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi appeared in the Umlazi Magistrate’s Court yesterday charged with trespassing.

The accused filled the gallery and spectators could not find seats. Police and court orderlies had a difficult task escorting the accused to the court. Some blind workers tripped as they climbed up the stairs leading to the court room.

All pleaded not guilty and each of the accused was given an opportunity to question the complainant, Mr John Randles, director of the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi.

Mr Randles told the magistrate, Mr H Hare, that he informed the workers last week that their services had been terminated because they had refused to work and that they had to leave the hostel premises by 10 am on Saturday, but they ignored the order.

Transport had been arranged to take them to the railway station and they were to be provided with train fares. The workers still refused to move out of the premises. Police were summoned and they were charged with trespassing.

One of the accused, Miss Ivy Sosibo, told the court that as blind people it was difficult to contact their people at home to fetch them because they were given such short notice.

She said Mr Randles had promised them train fares, but did not say anything about bus fares to enable them to travel to their homes.

During the proceedings Mr M C Albertyn from a firm of attorneys in Durban arrived to defend the accused.

The hearing was adjourned to tomorrow.
Fifty two blind workers appear on trespassing charge

African Affairs Reporter

FIFTY-TWO blind workers from the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi appeared in Umlazi Magistrate's Court yesterday charged with trespassing.

They all pleaded not guilty and each was given an opportunity to cross-examine the complainant.

Mr John Randile, the acting director of the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi, told the Magistrate, Mr H Hare, he had informed the workers last week that their services had been terminated because they had refused to work. The workers had been told to leave the hotel premises by 10 a.m. last Saturday but had ignored the order.

Transport had been arranged to take them to the railway station and they were to have been provided with train fare, but the workers had refused to leave the premises, he said.

During the proceedings, Mr M A Albertyn, from a Durban firm of attorneys, arrived to defend the accused. The hearing was adjourned until tomorrow.

Mr K J Shoobo appeared for the State.
Durban Correspondent

Mrs. Lovell Greene, secretary of the society, said it had been necessary to increase the fees because the hostel was 

DURBAN — Fifty-two 

52 blind workers charged, 

Aldo ari a Blind 

One of the workers who were dismissed last week have 

The workers had been told to find accommodation elsewhere if they were unable to pay the increased fees, but that they would not be refused their jobs. On February 1 they had decided not to re-

The police were called to tell them they were breaking the law by refusing to leave the premises. All 52 are due to appear in court tomorrow.
Blind Umlazi workers guilty of trespass

African Affairs Reporter

FIFTY-ONE blind workers from the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi were convicted by an Umlazi magistrate yesterday on a charge of trespassing and were ordered by the Court to vacate the society's premises.

The magistrate, Mr H Hare, imposed a fine of R10 or 30 days in jail on each of the accused but suspended the fines on condition that the workers leave the society's premises.

The Court was told that the workers had been charged with trespassing into the premises after their services had been terminated by Mr J Randles, director of the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi.

The blind workers denied all charges at their trial yesterday, but the magistrate said he was unable to accept the evidence of the witnesses for the prosecution.

The magistrate said he was satisfied that the workers had been ordered to leave the premises by the society last Saturday and that they had not vacated the premises.

Satisfied

Mr Albertyn submitted that the workers believed they had a right to remain on the premises of the society. He said that the workers' contracts had been terminated without their consent in regard to the deductions.

Mr Hare said the Court was satisfied that the services of the employees had been terminated and they were ordered to leave the premises.

Although the Court ordered them to leave the premises, last night Mr Albertyn and Mr Randles came to an agreement that they should be allowed to sleep at the hostel for one night. Mr A J Sithole appeared for the State.
to court after their sacking

FIFTY-SIX blind workers, sacked by the Natal African Blind Society last week, were still in their hostel last night.

Earlier yesterday, a Supreme Court judge ordered the society and its director, Mr. John Randles, to show cause on March 5 why the men and women should not be restored to hostel accommodation occupied by them in terms of their employment conditions.

At the same time, the society was called on to show cause why it should not be interdicted and restrained from ejecting all or any of the blind workers from the society's Enduduzweni hostel at Umlazi, pending legal action to be brought by them for an order declaring their dismissal to have been null and void.

The order was made by Mr. Justice Howard following an urgent application brought before him in Chambers in the Supreme Court, Durban, by Mr. Michael Sangweni, a member of the blind workers' liaison committee, on behalf of himself and 50 other blind workers.

In papers, Mr. Sangweni, a grade three basket-maker, said he had worked and lived with the society since 1961. A liaison committee was formed in 1977 which he joined monthly with Mr. Randles.

MR JOHN RANDELS
During the early part of 1981, the blind workers grew dissatisfied with the wage they were paid and the fact that they had not been compensated for the rise in the cost of living.

Their grievance was reported by the liaison committee to Mr. Randles.

After six months of requesting pay increases, the society's management agreed to grant a R1.50 weekly increase and also agreed to increase wages in July each year.

The workers requested that a minimum R4 increase be granted at the next increment and that wages be reviewed at frequent intervals.

Subsequently, Mr. Randles reported to the liaison committee that the society could not afford to pay any increase because the costs of maintaining the hostel were too high.

In response, the workers proposed that they should cook for themselves in the evenings to reduce the cost of kitchen staff, but the suggestion was rejected.

In early December last year, Mr. Randles, acting for the society, reported that the solution decided upon by management was an increased deduction from the wages of the workers, who responded by pointing out that they could not afford to pay the increase without receiving a wage increase.

Mr. Sangweni said Mr. Randles subsequently told the liaison committee there was no money available for increases and that he would take a wage deduction by force, if necessary. He did not provide details of the proposed increased deductions.

In February, after the workers had returned from their holidays, Mr. Randles advised the committee that the deductions would be R2.25, R2.50, R2.75 and R4 depending on the workers' grades.

The workers were unhappy about the deductions, particularly because they had not received a pay increase.

INSISTED
Mr. Sangweni added that when the workers were paid on February 9 the deductions were effected already, although they had not consented to them. They stopped work and the stoppage continued until February 17.

On the following day, the society purported to dismiss all the blind workers and insisted that they leave the hostel and reapply for employment and accommodation in their rural homes.

Mr. Sangweni submitted that the 'lock-out' was an unlawful act and that the dismissals were null and void.

He said that on February 15 he and the 55 other workers were awakened at 4.30 a.m. and taken to the Umlazi Magistrate's Court where they were charged with trespassing. They instructed their attorney to make an appeal.

At 11 a.m. yesterday the 56 applicants were forcibly removed from the hostel, together with some of their belongings. They had nowhere else to go.

Mr. M. Pillemer, instructed by R. S. Channels and Co., appeared for the applicants.
DURBAN. — The 51 blind workers from the Natal African Blind Society in Umzazi who were convicted in the Umzazi Magistrate's Court yesterday of trespassing, have lodged an urgent application with the Supreme Court to secure their rights of occupation of the society's premises.

The workers left the society's premises under protest yesterday and were awaiting the Supreme Court's decision. A spokesman said an urgent appeal for the reinstatement of the workers would be lodged with the Supreme Court soon.

This follows a ruling in the Durban Magistrate's Court yesterday when the workers were ordered to vacate the society's premises after they had been found guilty of trespassing.

The blind workers downed tools last week in protest against certain deductions from their wages about which they claimed they had not been consulted. The director of the society, Mr. John Randles, said the deductions were for board and lodging.

The spokesman for the workers said they regarded the society's premises as their home, as most of them had worked there for many years. — Sapa
Talks over blind workers

Mercury Reporter

NEGOTIATIONS between the attorneys acting for the 56 blind workers at the Natal African Blind Society in Umzimvubu and attorneys for the society will meet today in an attempt to reach a settlement.

This follows yesterday's order by Justice van Heerden to extend an earlier order on the society to show cause by March 5 why the blind men and women should not be restored to their hostel accommodation occupied by them in terms of their employment conditions and from which they were rejected recently.

The return date is March 12.

Yesterday's order to extend the deadline was agreed upon by both parties who have decided to meet the workers at the society's premises today to resolve the matter.

All 56 workers, sacked by the society, were still living at the hostel.
Knitting machines introduced at centre for mentally handicapped

Mercury Reporter

AN AREA of community work that receives very little publicity is that of mental health.

This, according to the director of one of the organisations which provides occupational therapy and training facilities for mentally handicapped white adults, is because there is still a stigma about the mentally handicapped — it is a problem that most people do not like to be aware of.

Mrs Nan Smith runs the Senior Training Unit at Sherwood, which caters for more than 100 mentally handicapped people.

The unit is part of the Durban Mental Health Society, which receives about R16 000 from the Durban and District Community Chest annually.

Altogether the society has 16 separate units, serving all race groups. These include four social centres, 10 group homes, three residences, four protected workshops and four day centres for children.

Capable

A visit to Mrs Smith’s unit is enlightening. She works on the principle that her ‘trainees’ are capable of doing something useful, so the centre is a hive of activity. Woodwork, sewing, knitting, embroidery, repair work, and toy-making are just some of the activities performed by the trainees. Besides providing them with a useful form of occupational therapy, their handiwork also proves to be lucrative — all the prices they make are sold, and they receive 75 percent of the profits.

Mrs Smith has recently introduced an innovation — knitting machines. Many of the trainees have already learned how to use them, and the activity promises to be profitable, besides providing handicapped people with a valuable skill.

Big family

More than half the trainees live at the centre in five cottages. Each is administered by a house mother. They eat in a central dining room where 1,020 meals are served each week.

The sprawling grounds surrounding the centre provide ample opportunity for recreation. One gets the impression of visiting a big family rather than an institution for handicapped people.

And this is how Mrs Smith treats her trainees. She insists that she is firm with them, demanding a certain amount of discipline and not allowing any shoddily-made articles to leave the premises.

But at the same time she is ready to discuss any problems they might have, or listen to their hopes and plans.

Stigma

She also has a very clear-cut view on mental illness. ‘The public should become more aware of the mentally retarded — I believe that more cases would then come into the open.’

‘Mental illness is still regarded as a stigma. It is just another handicap people can have, and people must realise this. Lots of afflicted people are sheltered by their families. Consequently, these cases never come into the open and the handicapped are sent here only when their families can no longer cope with them.

‘Many of our trainees only arrive here quite late in life, having learned no basic skills. This makes our job of teaching them and their job of learning more difficult.”
Blind workers reinstated in end to dispute

Hostel fees
They were fired last month after striking in protest against increased hostel fees.

On February 18 the director of the society was ordered by the Supreme Court to show cause on March 5 why an order should not be granted interdicting him and restraining him from ejecting the workers from Randwater hostel in Umzazi.

The temporary interdict to this effect was extended until yesterday when Mr Justice van Heerden discharged the rule.

Among the terms of agreement reached out of court yesterday were an across-the-board increase in deductions of R1, and reinstatement of all but two of the workers.

Any future disputes will be referred to the KwaZulu Minister of Health and Welfare.

African Affairs Reporter

The dispute between the blind workers in Umzazi and the Natal African Blind Society was resolved yesterday when the society agreed to reinstate all the workers except two who will be allowed to remain at the hostel until the end of this month.

The rest of the workers will resume work on Monday and new contracts will be signed on Tuesday in the presence of Mr C F Albertyn, a Durban attorney who has been acting on behalf of the workers since the dispute started.

Mr Dumisani Zikalala and Mr Ebrahim Jyane, both instructors who have been retrenched by the society, have been given a grant of R35 a month and the society will try to find them accommodation and possibly employment.

A spokesman for the blind workers said the society wanted to retrench eight workers but other workers had objected. He said they agreed to return to work because it had been discovered that they were not protected by the labour laws.
Blind people battling to find jobs

By CATHY SCHNEE

UNEMPLOYMENT darkens the twilight world of many of the blind, as they struggle for jobs in the competitive Cape Town labour market.

Institutions and schools for the blind continue with the ongoing struggle to break down the public's prejudices and to find employment for people who want to be given the chance to prove themselves in society.

"We can't find employment for the blind because the public are unaware of what they can do," the placement officer for the Light House Club for the blind and for the South African Blind Workers' Association Mr G. Pitt said.

He added that a lot of blind people had approached him in desperation, begging for help to find jobs.

Suraya Ismail, 20, who has been blind virtually from birth and who completed matric at the Athlone School for the Blind last year, still has not found a job. Had she been sighted she feels she would have followed a teaching career but instead is now desperately looking for a job as a switchboard operator.

"When employers find out I am blind they lose interest in me," she said. Although she felt bitter about this, she felt sure there would be a job waiting for her someday.

Suraya said she felt useless and unfulfilled staying at home doing the housework when she wanted to be earning money to help support her two brothers and sister.

"There are other much worse off than I am. A friend of mine has been looking for a job for one-and-a-half years already," she said.

The principal of the Athlone School for the Blind, Mr B. Pieser said he felt sad knowing that many of his 185 pupils would be in the same situation once they left school.

"We build them up psychologically to feel they are capable of leading normal lives and then they return to the face after all their studies when no one wants to employ them," he said.

Mr. Pieser said the standard of education for the blind was the same as for the sighted — except that the pupils have to try much harder.
DISCUSSION ON CITY VAGRANT HOUSING

Municipal Reporter

HOSTELS could be provided for Cape Town's estimated 500 vagrants with possible sites in coloured group areas, the City Engineer, Mr. Jan Brand, suggested yesterday.

In a report on vagrancy to the City Council's Executive Committee, Mr. Brand said local welfare organizations felt there was no need for a "sheltered employment" type of factory for vagrants, nor was it the City Council's responsibility.

While discussions on the vagrancy problem were continuing, the consensus of opinion was that the social upliftment of this class of person was the responsibility of the Department of Internal Affairs, which in cooperation with various welfare bodies, had plans.

The council's role would be to provide more housing for the aged and hostel-type accommodation for single people.

If the council agreed to this, most of the vagrants could be housed. Welfare organizations said the ideal size for a hostel should be big enough for between 20 and 30 people. With about 500 vagrants in Cape Town, 20 hostels would be needed.

Although vagrants tended to gather in the Central Business District and more affluent suburbs, hostel accommodation would have to be provided in the appropriate group area. As there were more coloured vagrants than white ones, any hostels built by the council would have to be in coloured group areas such as Athlone, Hanover Park, Retreat and Schotschkloof.

Depending on the Cape Town Welfare Co-ordinating Committee and the council's reaction to the proposals, locations, design and costs would be discussed by the bodies involved.
'Buck passed on social workers'

By SHELGH BLACKMAN

WHILE the Government shifts the responsibility for eliminating the shortage of social workers from one department to another, more social workers are resigning and those remaining are under great pressure.

This point was made in a letter from the president of the Society for Social Workers of South Africa, Miss Shelagh Harford, to members of the society.

The matter was to be discussed at a general committee meeting of the society's Eastern Cape branch yesterday.

The society was still waiting for a reply to a memorandum prepared by the Council for Social and Associated Workers and various professional associations and submitted to the Minister of Health and Welfare, Dr Lapa Munik, last August.

Miss Harford said the memorandum, in which the disastrous consequences of a breakdown in social welfare services were outlined, had been directed from Dr Munik to the Department of State Administration and Statistics.

From there it went to the Commission for Administration and to the various State departments employing social workers.

It had now been returned to the Commission for Administration.

"While these shifts of responsibility continue, many social workers are resigning, practising social workers are under greater pressure: private welfare organizations are not pressuring for required additional posts, and, most serious of all, fewer consumers are receiving the service to which they are entitled," she said.

Social workers had sought an interview with the newly-appointed Minister for State Administration and Statistics, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, in April but this was refused.

Dr Viljoen said the Government had instructed the Commission for Administration to conduct an in-depth investigation into the conditions of the social worker in the government service.

No indication of the outcome of this investigation could be given at this stage, he said.

The only consolation for social workers was that from April 1 this year, so-called coloured and Indian social workers received salaries on a par with their white colleagues, she said.

The crisis in the profession, however, persisted:

- Only about 5,000 social workers were registered.
- A total of 336 new registrations were processed by the Council for Social and Associated Workers between December 1981 and May 1982.
- In February 1982, six State Departments had 424 vacancies, which included 82 of a total of 436 posts in Health and Welfare.

The chairman of the society's local branch, Mr Gerrie Niemand, said there was confusion after Dr Munik's announcement in Parliament last month that social workers should wait for 18 months before their service conditions would be improved.

Social workers' societies had made representations to the Minister asking for clarification, he said.

They had also requested discussions with Dr Munik, but they were still waiting for a reply.
Factory to provide work for disabled

A LOCAL organisation is establishing a protected work factory in the northern areas of Cape Town to cater for some of the 500 disabled people in the Western Cape who cannot be employed in the open labour market.

The Institute for the Promotion of Work Facilities for the Disabled is planning the factory. It will cater for about 50 disabled workers in all fields of disability including epileptics, the blind, the deaf, the crippled and the mentally disabled.

Mrs Hilda Parker, co-ordinator of the institute, said that surveys had shown that the greatest need for a protected work factory was in the northern areas of Cape Town.

"There are more than 500 disabled people in the Western Cape who cannot be employed on the open labour market because of their disability."

AT HOME

They stay at home all day existing only on their disability allowance, which is not only damaging to their self-respect, but also affects their family and circle of friends," Mrs Parker said.

It also led to a wastage of manpower and State grants.

"At a protected factory a disabled person would be productive and would have a full day's work, and hopefully they would eventually be self-supporting."

Mrs Parker said that production at the factory would be planned so that one disabled person filled in for the needs of another. Some disabled could do hard physical work, while the physically disabled could do work where more mental ability was needed."
State ‘prejudiced’ against epileptics

Staff Reporter

EPILEPSY sufferers who were permanently employed in the civil service were blatantly discriminated against, Dr John Sonnenberg, ANC for Green Point, said this week.

Dr Sonnenberg was addressing the annual meeting of the South African Epilepsy League (Western Cape), at the Jan Kriel School for Epileptics in Kuits River.

"A person suffering from epilepsy who is permanently employed in the civil service is not entitled to the benefits which accompany his employment," said Dr Sonnenberg.

He said epilepsy sufferers may not belong to a medical aid or pension scheme, nor may they qualify for housing loans.

"In other words it's a case of blatant discrimination which offends the epilepsy sufferer," he said.

He said the whole situation was worsened by the fact that people who suffered from diabetes, high blood pressure or a heart condition were not necessarily subjected to the same discrimination.

In fact, each case was considered on its merit with regard to a permanent appointment in the civil service.

Dr Sonnenberg quoted a specific case where a chemist suffering from epilepsy worked at Tygerberg Hospital for 2½ years without suffering an epileptic attack.

He had applied for a permanent post but his application was refused. He then resigned to do the same work in the private sector without discriminatory measures.

"I want to state clearly that the State acts against its own legislation with its prejudicial attitude towards people suffering from epilepsy. I also wish to suggest that the quicker these appalling regulations with regard to epilepsy sufferers are removed, the better," Dr Sonnenberg said.
More than 400 employees of the Ga-Rankuwa Institute for the Blind have been laid off work because of a fire yesterday.

The fire, which started after a grinding machine exploded, destroyed the entire workshop of the institute.

A blind man was killed and six men and a woman were taken to the nearby Ga-Rankuwa hospital with injuries. The men were treated and discharged but the woman is said to be badly burned and is still in hospital.

Mr. J. de Wald Pretorius, manager of the institute, told the employees yesterday that they would not lose their pay. He said he would notify them to return as soon as the institute had been rebuilt.

Mr. de Wald Pretorius has appealed to the workers to help rebuild the workshop.
Employing the disabled... Enable is there to help

The scene is a job interview.

"A young man, the personnel officer, faces a young woman across his desk discussing her suitability for the job.

He shuffles his notes and asks brusquely: "And what happens when you go to the toilet?"

In the embarrassed silence that follows, one is left wondering what that has to do with her abilities as a worker, and by what right the interviewer asks such a gross, impertinent question.

But for the disabled person that situation has an unpleasantly familiar ring, for he is accustomed to this kind of clumsy approach in job interviews, and to being given a far rougher time than any "normal" applicant.

The disabled know that they always face an interviewer who has negative preconceptions about them, and who is so preoccupied with what they cannot do, that he scarcely considers what they can do — and thus the interview fails before it ever properly begins.

In an attempt to overcome both the overt and covert prejudice in the situation, a training film has been produced which alerts personnel consultants to the problems involved when interviewing the disabled, and in which all the potential pitfalls and the techniques for dealing with them are explored.

Contributors to the film are Neville Cohen and Phyllis Woolf, whose own disabilities have led them to be vital, active workers for the community of the disabled in South Africa.

They point out the film will be a valuable tool for educating disabled job-seekers as well, for they tend to have a poor understanding of the interview process, and are so negative about themselves they exclude themselves from the job market.

"They have not yet learnt," says Neville Cohen, "that in their ability that counts, not their disability. They go into interviews in an apologetic and pathetic frame of mind, and confirm the interviewer's worst suspicions."

Phyllis Woolf agrees, and adds, "Even when they think they are not doing so, they rely on the sympathy they produce, not on the substance of what they are and can do. The film means to make them realize that they can go out and compete equally in the job market without any special pleading."

Professor Coetzee points out that the disabled should have a lot to offer, and that their disability can provide certain advantages to prospective employers.

The fact that they have dealt with their disability to the extent of looking for a job suggests they are stable, motivated and tenacious people.

The prejudice that exists against those in the employment field also ensures that once they are given a job they will be responsible and challenging, they work twice as hard to keep it and prove to be loyal and committed employees.

The disabled may be a minority but they are not a small group. The last census reveals that five percent of the total population (about 80,000 people) are disabled, and that figure does not include the deaf or the blind.

It is the intention of Enable to use the film to bring this large potential work force together with the employers who desperately need skilled workers, but have been prevented from employing the disabled through ignorance and prejudice.

They plan to market the film to large companies, and the proceeds from sales will go towards the establishment of a trust fund for bursaries for the disabled.

It is one of the most important and far-reaching projects to emerge from the programmes initiated by the Year of the Disabled campaign, for it will serve the disabled and the community at large to the benefit of all.

Inquiries about the film and about the work of Enable should be sent to Professor Johann Coetzee (01612) 5859 and Lynn Chincara 660-4781.

Any dishonesty will render the candidate liable to disqualification and to possible exclusion from the University.
Fire leaves blind workers jobless

A fire which partly destroyed the Iirelingen Workshop for the Blind in Garankuwa on September 28 caused damage of about R2 million.

The fire, which broke out when 300 blind workers were in the workshop selling two men and injuring 10 others, destroyed more than half of the workshop's working area.

Mr. Dewald Pretorius, general manager of Iirelingen, said an electrical fault apparently caused the fire.

"We have not retrenched any workers, but only half of the 300 are working. We need assistance urgently as we are still paying wages to those not working," Mr. Pretorius said.

Iirelingen was founded in 1914 by the Transvaal Baptist Blind Society. It grew into a factory with a hostel for workers to receive a clinic and a canteen hall.

The factory has three departments — one for manufacturing mattresses, pillows, and cushions, one for making baskets and one for making brooms and brushes.

"The fire destroyed more than half of this," said Mr. Pretorius. "We desperately need assistance — either money or assistance from the public and businesses in the Witwatersrand area."

Iirelingen is one of the few places where black people who are blind can earn money for themselves and their families.

"We also provide training so they can fit into other jobs," said Mr. Pretorius.

Blind workers are encouraged to learn braille typing and how to operate the switchboard.

Police on the record

The South African Police will compile a book on the force's history to commemorate its 75th anniversary in 1968.

The public is asked to provide interesting stories, old pictures, sketches and other information.

All documents, pictures and sketches will be returned to their owners once copied.

Anyone able to help should telephone Captain Dippenaar at Pretoria 21-4511 Ext 146 or 42-5737 after hours.

18½ percent, with Syfrets Participation Bonds.

Talk to Syfrets about:
Council for Blind investigates grievances

Post Reporter

THE chairman of the National Council for the Blind, Professor Theo Pauw, held talks with the manager of the Mount Road factory of the Fort Elizabeth Society for the Blind, Mr D W Glendining, today after the sacking of six workers this week.

Long-standing grievances of blind workers at the factory are reported to have come to a head with the sacking of a supervisor and instructor and six workers, the calling of police to remove workers from the premises and fist fights between Mr Glendining and employees.

The series of incidents began last week when a worker and Mr Glendining are reported to have had a disagreement which led to a fist fight.

The worker was told to leave the factory to "cool off". A supervisor and instructor who intervened were later sacked.

The worker continued to report to work, and colleagues say two days after the incident police were called to remove him.

Other workers intervened. However, a police spokesman said he had received no reports of police being called to the factory.

When employees were paid on Friday about nine of them were reported to have found amounts missing from their pay packets.

A fight again broke out between Mr Glendining and workers.

On Monday morning six workers were given termination notices. Fourteen of their colleagues walked out in sympathy with the dismissed workers.

Unexplained deductions from their pay packets are one of the blind workers' long-standing grievances.

Neither Mr Glendining nor Prof Pauw could be contacted for comment today.
Blind row probe not yet under way

Post Reporter
NO ONE has been appointed yet to a committee to investigate conditions at the Mount Road Workshop for the Blind.

This was confirmed today by the chairman of the National Council for the Blind, Professor Theo Pauw.

The committee will investigate conditions at the workshop as a result of complaints by workers about wages and work conditions.

Six workers were sacked last week after arguments with the workshop manager, Mr. D W Glendinning.

Prof Pauw said: "We are still finding people who will be available for the job and need time to prepare the documentation which came out of last week's meeting."

The matter was discussed at a meeting last week at which workers and organisations for the visually handicapped were represented.

The Department of Manpower and Internal Affairs sent observers.
The Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce (JCC) has lent its official support to the "Rebuild the factory for the blind" fund launched by Industrial Week, writes Wren Mastingle.

The aim of the fund is to allow the 300 handicapped employees to get back to work at the Itireleng factory near Rosslyn, northwest of Pretoria.

President of the chamber Dave Stewart said that an appeal had been made to JCC members to offer sub-contracting work as well as financial contributions to the factory which was destroyed by fire at the cost of two lives and R2.5-million. The workshops provided working space for between 300 and 350 blind workers, who were making baskets, cushions, processed electric cables, brooms and numerous other items.

The organisation aims to provide meaningful employment for its workers and also prepares them for gainful employment in industry.

Industrial Week has called on its readers to give R20 each towards rebuilding the factory and each company is asked to donate R100.

All contributions will go directly into the fund to contributed to Itireleng.

S.A. INDUSTRIAL WEEK 19/10/82

CHEQUES TO: The Accountant, Itireleng Fund, Box 6303, Johannesburg 2000

Contact Dewald Pretorius, general manager, Itireleng workshop for the Blind.

Tel: 012062 ask for 31 or 012 45-1177.

JCC backs blind workers' fund

One of the workers at the Itireleng factory prior to the fire which killed two people, injured 17 and put 300 people out of work.
It's time to train for paraplegics

By Tyrone August

The Avalon Watchmaking School has brought new meaning to the lives of many paraplegics. At the moment it is training nine in the art of watchmaking.

The school's chairman, Mr Nathan Harris, said a shortage of watchmakers had become apparent a few years ago.

"Watchmaking is an ideal occupation for people who can use their hands but whose mobility is impaired," Mr Harris said.

"Because of this plans were made to establish a watchmaking school." Sponsorship was obtained from the Jewellery Council of South Africa, the Watchmakers of Switzerland, the South African Watchmakers' Association and Rotary clubs.

The next step was to train someone to instruct the paraplegics. The choice was John Carmichael, a young paraplegic, who ran a training course for paraplegics.

He was sent to New York for three years to be trained at the Bulova School of Watchmaking. On his return in 1978, the school was opened in Commissioner Street in Johannesburg.

He said he found the work "tremendously rewarding" and hoped the school would grow so that it could help more people.

Ten trainees have completed the training course and are employed in the watchmaking industry. Another nine from the Self-Help Association of Paraplegics (Soweto) began the course this year.

"Although the trainees are all black this year, the course is open to everyone," said Mr Harris. "The only requirement is that prospective trainees have to pass a mechanical aptitude test.

"Written tests are administered and trainees who meet the requirements are awarded certificates. The course is run over 12 months."

Mr John Carmichael, the instructor of the Avalon Watchmaking School. He qualified as a master watchmaker at a New York watchmaking school in 1978.
Sacking probe's results released

PORT ELIZABETH — The results of the investigation into the sacking of six workers from the Port Elizabeth Society for the Blind's Mount Road workshop, which led to 14 of their colleagues walking out, were released yesterday.

The chairman of the society, Mr A B Scales, said: "Apart from a measure of dissatisfaction expressed by a non-blind minority of coloured employees in regard to their rates of pay, the blind generally were happy and content."

The incident occurred in October when sacked workers claimed the manager of the workshop, Mr D W N Glendining, had been involved in fist-fights.

"Sight should not be lost of the fact that the minority of employees who expressed dissatisfaction with their rates of pay are, in fact, not blind and furthermore are in receipt of disability pensions. "Bearing in mind that the society is obliged to compete in the market place and receives no subsidy in respect of these employees, its ability to pay them higher wages is limited by virtue of these factors," Mr Scales said. — Sapa.
R1.3m
sports,
work
centre

A R1.3 million centre for paraplegics will be opened soon in Soweto.

The centre, which will house an international sporting complex where games like javelin, discus, basketball and shot-put will be played, is being built at Mofolo Park.

This was disclosed to The SOWETAN by Mr Friday Mavuso, chairman of the Self-Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap) in Soweto, who added that five offices, a lecture room for group meetings, a kitchen and a dining hall would also be available when the centre was completed.

A workshop where about 50 paraplegics will do packaging and assembly work, is included in the project and paraplegics will also be taught how to repair and maintain their wheelchairs. A leading school of watchmaking in the city will also move into the centre.

Mr Mavuso added that the sport complex would not only be used by disabled people but by anyone who wanted to improve their physical appearance.

Mr Mavuso appealed to paraplegics in Soweto to come forward and join the association.

The association is presently housed at the Mlalo Community Centre. About 60 paraplegics will be appointed by Shap to work at the new centre where they will produce light fittings, repair shoes and so on.
DISABLED people would never be totally accepted by others unless society shifted from the view that only “labour units” were “useful.”

This was a view expressed in a discussion group on disablement, composed largely of disabled people, at the UCT summer school on Tuesday.

Disabled people tended to be “shunted from the mainstream” into special schools and similar institutions but most group members felt that people’s prejudices could change through information and exposure to disabled people. There was general agreement that disabled children should attend normal schools.

Ms Kathy Jagoe, the course co-ordinator, said the disabled were traditionally seen as “sick”, dependent people who could be shaped to fit into society by the medical and para-medical professions. This created an attitude of dependence.
SIR — I would like to comment on the letter from Mr Chris Beer under the heading "Pay rise needed for disabled workers" (Weekend Post, February 23).

An investigation has revealed that your correspondent was admitted as a sheltered employee to Service Products (N'Dabein) in Cape Town on November 3, 1960, where he was employed until he resigned voluntarily on January 12, 1962.

In regard to the matters raised by Mr Beer, the department wishes to comment as follows:

The Sheltered Employment Scheme administered by the Department of Manpower provides for the establishment of factories where persons may be employed who suffer from physical and mental disabilities and who, as a result of their disabilities, are unable to undertake or retain work in the open labour market, but who are nevertheless able to do worthwhile remunerative work under sheltered conditions.

The various factories where persons eligible for sheltered employment are employed operate as autonomous bodies which are subsidised by the department, and sheltered employees can, therefore, not be classified as public servants. The projects where they are employed are also not "Government shelters", as stated by your correspondent.

The aim of sheltered employment is to foster the self-respect and sense of independence of a disabled person and to give meaning and content to his existence by providing him with security in employment and wages.

The conditions of service of sheltered employees are determined with the emphasis perhaps not so much on their productivity but on their willingness to work and to earn their own keep.

The scheme also serves to prepare employees for ultimate selective placement in ordinary employment in the open labour market and the wages offered must, therefore, be such that the incentive to accept outside employment is not stifled.

In determining the wages payable to sheltered employees, regard must, however, be had to the fact that the workers employed at sheltered employment factories do not possess the capabilities required to maintain a quality and production level comparable to that of workers employed in the open labour market under competitive conditions, nor are they required to do so.

As a result most sheltered employment factories operate at a considerable loss, thus requiring a substantial subsidy by the State towards operating costs to ensure the continuation of the sheltered employment scheme.

In this connection it must not be lost of the fact that employees in sheltered employment factories enjoy certain other privileges which, in terms of their monetary value, would amount to several rand — such as annual bonuses, the provision of protective clothing free of charge and free medical services, to mention but a few. Furthermore, employees with large families may apply to the Department of Health and Welfare for further assistance.

It is considered that all these privileges contribute towards easing the lot of sheltered employees and must also be taken into account, apart from the wages they receive, if their employment conditions are to be viewed in proper perspective.

They enjoy permanent employment irrespective of their production and losses incurred by factories and whether or not there is sufficient work to keep them fully occupied.

Regarding the remark that sheltered employees are not allowed to become members of the Public Servants Association, it must be pointed out that membership of this association is restricted to public servants. Employees are, however, free to become members of other staff associations or trade unions at their own expense.

The statutory public holidays are applicable to and enjoyed by employees of sheltered employment factories.

The Department is fully aware of the needs of sheltered employees and continually endeavours to improve their conditions of employment within the limits of available funds. Thus, whenever salary increases become effective in the Public Service the necessary steps are taken to have their wages adjusted.

P. J. VAN DER MERWE
Director General
Department of Manpower
Pretoria
"Starvation wages" paid to disabled factory workers

By Barney Mthombathi

DISABLED and retarded workers at a Government-run factory have angrily accused the authorities of taking advantage of their disabilities by paying them starvation wages.

The workers — most of them white — are also angry because their annual increase came into effect only on April 1, and not on January 1 as in previous years.

They are employed by Service Products, a factory run by the Department of Manpower at Jacobs, Durban, which manufactures cheap furniture for Government departments. Similar factories are run in the department in all major centres throughout the country as sheltered employment for workers classified as "unemployable."

The workers are paid a minimum wage of R45 a week, rising to R55. This week workers contacted the Sunday Tribune, bitterly complaining they could hardly live on their wages. They are also angry because their 12 percent annual increase has not, as in previous years, been backdated to January 1.

The workers say they are discriminated against as increases granted to public servants are effective from the beginning of the year. "We're working here, and we're doing a good job. Why should they take advantage of our disabilities? It's just not fair," one worker said.

The workers said the furniture manufactured at the centre was approved by the SABS and was therefore of good quality, and therefore good business.

"They can afford to pay us more. This is slavery," another worker said.

Workers said they had tried to complain about conditions of employment, including being "treated like sheep," but they claimed they were told if they were not satisfied "the gate was open."

Coloured and Indian workers said their scale was R10 below that of whites.

The minimum wage at Service Products was R25 a week until the Sunday Tribune highlighted it in an expose four years ago. The department moved quickly after the report and promised "substantially increased" salaries.

Another worker said: "I have been here for six years. I get R26 and my wife R36 a week. My rent alone is R100. We have to find our own transport to work. We're battling."

They all said they wanted the scale to be increased by even as high as 100 percent because the work they did was as good as that done by normal people.

But Mr Daniel Liebenberg, of the Department of Manpower and chairman of the management committee disagrees.

"They are not fully productive," Mr Liebenberg said. "They're all handicapped people in one way or another and you can't expect to pay them wages that compare with people in normal productive employment."

"Everything is done by machine. What they do is just polishing the wood," he said.

"What they fail to understand is that they are not normal workers — they are continually going to hospital, to doctors, that sort of thing. I cannot see what benefit they will get by going to the newspapers," the Director-General of the Department of Manpower, Dr P J van der Merwe, said.

Dr van der Merwe said it was not possible to backdate salary increases granted to State employees can also not automatically be applied to employees of sheltered employment factories," he said.

"Sheltered employees can therefore not be classified as public servants. Salary increases granted to State employees can also not automatically be applied to employees of sheltered employment factories," he said.

Dr van der Merwe said it was not possible to backdate salary increases granted to State employees can also not automatically be applied to employees of sheltered employment factories," he said.

"The conditions of service of sheltered employees are determined with emphasis perhaps not so much on their productivity but on their willingness to work and to earn their own keep."

"The department is fully aware of the needs of sheltered employees and continually endeavours to improve their conditions of employment within the limits of available funds."

Dr van der Merwe said employees with large families should apply to the Department of Health and Welfare for further assistance.
Aid for disabled

Political Staff

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

The physically-handicapped would in future be included in the government-financed programme to train selected unemployed people in basic skills, the Minister of Manpower, Mr Pietie du Plessis, announced yesterday.

Speaking during the budget vote on his portfolio, Mr Du Plessis said the decision to extend the scheme to train handicapped persons between the ages of 16 and 55 had been taken after an investigation into the problems of the handicapped.

Each of the courses would take about nine weeks and the Department of Manpower would pay up to R200 a week for each trainee's class fees.
New Cape building a milestone in employment of handicapped

A MILESTONE in the history of the Oasis Protective Workshop, Claremont, has been reached with its new workshop being officially opened today.

The workshop was established as an occupational centre for adults in 1976 when the Oasis centre for retarded children became a State-aided training centre.

As a result of the support of the Department of Health and Welfare funds were advanced by the Department of Community Development, making it possible to go ahead with a new workshop for 80 workers in two phases.

The first phase, by builders Morrison and Bassett and architects John Boyd and Ron Palmer, was completed in February last year.

The workshop admits white men and women over who, because of mental handicaps, cannot find jobs in the open market.

Working enables them to develop independence and self-esteem and develop their physical and mental powers.

At present there are 65 workers ranging in age from 17 to 48 years. They are engaged in a variety of different work from knitting, weaving, and canework to furniture restoration. The workshop also handles contract work.

The workshop depends on factories and individuals for items such as glue, sandpaper and yarn.

The finished articles are sold directly from the workshop, which offers several gift lines. There is a demand for the goods to be sold at fêtes, exhibitions and gift shops.

Among the sections at the workshop is one for woodwork which started as a result of an approach to renovate a few pieces of furniture.

The work was accepted and, as a result, a truckload of about 30 pieces arrived. In the past year this section has been fully committed as a result of people seeing the high standard of the original lot.

On the contract side, Mr. Keith Summers, of Summard Services, said: "The Oasis protective workshop has done work for us and I commend them for keeping to our deadlines."

Belvedere Pharmacy uses Oasis to prepare invoices and bulk posting.

The workshop needs work and voluntary workers, who will be trained to work with the mentally handicapped.
Total commitment

At the opening of the Oasis Protective Workshop recently Robert Blake of the Community Chest told the story of the pig and the hen looking at an advertisement for bacon and eggs.

The hen fluffed up her feathers proudly. "It's fine for you," said the piker, "You're just making a donation. For me its total commitment."

At all five centres the dedication of the staff and voluntary workers is overwhelming.

From humble beginnings 33 years ago the Oasis Association for the mentally handicapped has grown to two training centres for children, two protective workshops for adults and a special care day centre for severely retarded children.

The Marah Training Centre caters for 95 white children from six to 18 years in premises which are needed to expand the Protective Workshop.

"Unfortunately the economy has turned against us," says Mrs Biya Hall, the vice-principal. "We have a plot of land in Lansdowne for a new centre and plan to merge with the Marah Training Centre for cerebral palsy children.

"Our plans have been approved, but there is no money."

The shell of a school building — 12 classrooms and a hall — for Marah alone, will cost about R600 000. If a group of firms could build it, we could rent it from them. Then one day when the economy improves, we could buy it back. But there are so many worthy organisations needing help.

The classrooms are cheerful, the children engaged in a variety of activities. The staff are polite, but their minds are on the children. We don't linger.

Committed teachers

A parent and committee member, who spend many a day and evening working for Marah and the association, showed me a small playground woefully inadequate for 96 children. She has two other children at Peninsula school.

When the Marah children turn 18 they usually move to the Oasis Protective Workshop where there are 64 workers — and a waiting list. The workshop develops physical and mental powers and any ability to work.

"Gail Bester, workshop manager showed me the woodwork department.

"We mostly restore furniture. It's a wonderful craft because you become involved in simple tasks. A grim piece of furniture comes in and after hours of painstaking restoration it's beautiful."

"Her enthusiasm is infectious — the affection between her and the workers warming."

Group Home

Besides expansion there is an urgent need to start a group home for adults. The co-ordinator is battling to find a suitable house to lease. As some of the workers are already in their 50's the need for residential accommodation is pressing. Elderly parents need to know what is to become of their children after they die.

The Goodwood Oasis Training Centre and Protective workshop for coloured children and adult workers are both in Elsies River.

Ron Hendricks, principal of the training centre is dynamic, dedicated, with a marvellous sense of humour and a fund of stories. And his spare time is spent helping to start a similar institution in Paarl.

The centre's accommodation is rented from the Moravian Church, and is shared with the church's creche for 66 children.

This training centre will celebrate its 21st birthday this year. It started in a tiny house without official subsidies and is now the biggest of the five Oasis centres, training 118 children with a staff of 28. The five drivers fetch children from as far afield as Kuils River, Kennington and Bishop Lavis and Bellville South.

Mr Hendricks is also concerned with the future of these children. Only a percentage will be able to go to the Goodwood Protective Workshop, which is bursting at the seams.

"I have about four boys now that could be employed by a supermarket. They can read, they know money, they can use a tool such as a price stamp, they are over qualified for the workshop.

"We are trying the local supermarkets. We need outlets for those that can manage simple repetitive work."

Protective workshop

The protective workshop is a small house in the heart of Elsies River factory land. It is run by a dynamo of a manager, Hilda Fisher. An ex-factory worker, she cherishes her workers, harries the factors.

The results are tangible. Donations of industrial sewing machines, binding, and overlocking machines, contracts received for finishing children's garments and lining the rugs used by long distance furniture removal compa-

nies. The centre is a hive of activity.

Hilda has to ration time on the sewing machines she has which upsets workers who want to finish what they have started. More are needed.

In a residential area of Elsies River, the local Congregational Church hall houses the Oasis Day Centre (Special Care), manned by a special group of volunteers who operate under difficult conditions, providing help to severely retarded young coloured children from the age of two.

They are grateful for the use of the hall, but the small staff have to move pews every Monday to make room for their 15 charges, and put back the seating on Friday.

"And on Wednesdays for the prayer meeting, and on other days if there is a funeral," smiles supervisor Ursula Reynolds. Serene, unfappable, she is totally dedicated to improving the quality of life for these children.

The official programme lists a "gloss motor co-ordination and body management, self help skills and socialization, and manual dexterity."

Ursula translates that into daily tasks: "Teaching the child to eat — to take a spoonful from the plate to the mouth, to learn to chew, to wait until that food is swallowed before taking another mouthful."

That's for those children who are mobile. The staff could not cope without the daily help of St John Ambulance volunteers. I watched Grace de Jager, feeding a non-ambulatory child, using her fingers to ease a little food into his mouth, work his jaws to stimulate chewing, and stroke his throat to ease down the food.

Dedication indeed

The top priority here is to call their own, with a play-ground, where the door doesn't have to be double locked all day against vandals and intruders.

Olive Runciman, the Association's PRO, raises funds to cover the shortfall between government subsidies and the Community Chest grant, and the expenses of the centres. Like other worthy causes the Association is feeling the pinch of the recession.

The association purchases one charity night a year. This year it is Pieter Toerien's Benefactors at the Baxter Concert Hall, Monday, May 27. It is an oasis night with wine and supper after the show. Bookings 612419 between 8.30am and 3.30pm.

Just a donation, not a total commitment.
The Minister of Finance, pursuant to section 17 of the Finance Act, 1977, today introduced a Bill in Parliament.

The Bill proposes to amend the Finance Act, 1977, to provide for a new tax on corporate income. The tax would be levied at a rate of 20% on the income of corporations exceeding a certain threshold.

The Bill also includes provisions to increase the tax exemption limit for individuals to Rs. 2 lakhs, and to introduce a new surcharge on individuals with incomes exceeding Rs. 5 lakhs.

The Minister stated that the purpose of the Bill is to generate additional revenue for the government, and to incentivize savings and investment.

The Bill will be debated in Parliament in the coming weeks, and is expected to be passed by the end of the month.
Disabled man fights for means to work

A DISABLED worker yesterday, hoping from Groote Schuur, the hospital that saved his life, along the Main Road and dropped off a few letters at addresses in Rondebosch and Newlands—a gruelling two-hour effort.

By doing so, Mr David Malgas, of Grassy Park, inched his way closer to a personal goal he set himself soon after he lost his right leg and right arm in a train accident in June, 1983—he wants to start a self-help woodcraft centre for disabled workers.

The letters, to three large commercial concerns, appealed for sponsorship.

David, who has stubbornly refused finance from State-supported welfare organizations, wants to devote the rest of his life to encouraging amputees to contribute more to society.

"We're desperately short of tools. But we have been lucky in that a lumber yard has let us have free use of off-cuts."

David's requirements are plentiful—his centre needs work benches, electric drills, workshop materials, saws, files, rasps, chisels and transport.

David can be contacted at the Self-Help Programme for the Physically Disabled, 11 Cuckoo Crescent, Grassy Park, or at W 73-8091.
Economists see the higher government wage bill as the crucial inflation factor in the immediate future.

One said it would be unfair to expect people to absorb 15% inflation. A wage increase was justified but must be seen in an overall context.

"One can't blame inflation on a salary increase," he added.

Another said the additional R1bn to the wage bill would not sustain a spending spree.

"One can't create wealth out of thin air."

Another said the country was already attempting to restimulate through lower interest rates and tax concessions but these had not been enough to increase demand. Therefore, one must realise the added consequences of too-high a wage bill increase.

He added that government should be able to support a slightly higher deficit without turning to the market next year.

A bank economist said "Effectively, civil service spending power will rise by 25%, which will enable manufacturers who have been absorbing their costs to raise prices. This in turn should prompt a recovery."

The biggest concern to all three was tax concessions. Because of wage increases government would not be able to make more concessions next year.
Simple lasagne a good standby for parties

By Kate McKinnell

The only crying influence in Mr Friday Mavuso's life has been his family. He has 10 children, 18 grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren. He has been married for 40 years. His wife, Amy, is a retired nurse.

Mr Mavuso, chairman of the South African Association for Paraplegics (SAP), is not completely fit. But he still manages to get around on his wheelchair and to work full-time.

The couple live in a small house in the township of Soweto.

Mr Mavuso was born in 1945. He was the youngest of six children.

In 1970, he was involved in a car accident and became a paraplegic.

He sits in his wheelchair and talks to his family and friends.

In 1976, he started working for SAP and has been employed by the organization ever since.

Mr Mavuso is one of the most successful paraplegics in Soweto.

He has received many awards for his work.

He is also a devout Christian and attends church every Sunday.

He has been married for 10 years and has two children by his current wife, Mary.

He enjoys playing golf and reading in his spare time.

Paraplegics can now find work in Soweto

By Kate McKinnell

A few years ago, paraplegics in Soweto were looking for work. They were finding it difficult to find jobs.

But things have changed.

Now, there are many organizations in Soweto that are helping paraplegics find work.

One of these organizations is the South African Association for Paraplegics (SAP).

The SAP has set up a workshop in Soweto where paraplegics can learn new skills.

The workshop offers courses in carpentry, painting, and welding.

Paraplegics have been trained to work as electricians, plumbers, and carpenters.

The SAP also helps paraplegics find jobs in other areas.

For example, the SAP has helped paraplegics find jobs in the construction industry.

In addition, the SAP has helped paraplegics find jobs in the hospitality industry.

The SAP is headquartered in Soweto and serves people throughout the country.

But the SAP is only one organization that is helping paraplegics find work.

There are many other organizations in Soweto and throughout the country that are helping paraplegics find work.

These organizations include the South African Paraplegics Association, the South African Paraplegics Foundation, and the South African Paraplegics Society.

But it is important to note that finding work is still difficult for paraplegics.

This is because many employers are afraid to hire paraplegics.

But things are changing.

More employers are becoming aware of the skills that paraplegics can bring to the workplace.

And more employers are becoming more open to hiring paraplegics.

But there is still a long way to go.

Paraplegics need more support from the government and from employers.

But with the help of organizations like the SAP, paraplegics are making progress.

And with your help, they can make even more progress.

We all need to work together to help paraplegics find work.
Work is available for the disabled

Municipal Reporter

At least one Johannesburg employer has more vacancies than people to fill the positions at a time when unemployment is a growing problem.

Goodwill Industries in Fordsburg, which is staffed entirely by the mentally and physically handicapped, has place for more workers.

They do a variety of jobs for their customers including household and office upholstery, repairing and polishing furniture, packing and wrapping, and assembling components.

"These orders are what supports Goodwill Industries, but there are not as many as we would like," said Mr John Fosset, the council’s representative on the board.

"Perhaps the greatest benefit they derive is the status they enjoy by simply going to work and coming home like everyone else," he said.

The Johannesburg City Council provides the firm with its four-storey building, maintains the premises and pays the rates, even giving the 76 employees free transport and a midday meal.

A major problem was finding accommodation for workers who could not live with their families, Mr Fosset said.
Nationwide rehabilitation link-up urged

BLOEMFONTEIN — A national strategy for the early detection and rehabilitation of people with multiple disabilities should be developed, social worker Miss Rukaya Asmail told the National Disability Symposium here yesterday.

She also proposed the establishment of regional parents' support groups, legislation to determine the rights of and need for services for those with multiple disabilities, and better communication between professionals, parents and policymakers involved with them.

OWN FEELINGS

Parents had to be helped to work through their own feelings before they could start to give the child the understanding they needed.

They should also realise that they may take longer to get through to the child, but it could be done.

Miss Asmail, who heads the Natal office of the South African National Council for the Blind, said factors such as improved medical technology and increasing warfare and accidents rates meant the number of people with multiple disabilities was likely to rise.

"We have to eradicate the 'black' disease and mobilise the knowledge and experience we have to deal with this in true team spirit," she said.

Disabled need jobs and Bill of Rights, says Rowland

By Janine Simon

BLOEMFONTEIN — A Bill of Rights for disabled people and legislation to encourage firms to employ them was called for yesterday by Dr William Rowland, executive director of the National Council for the Blind.

He told a symposium on disability here that a Bill of Rights would allow disabled people to argue their case in a court of law.

He said the spirit of independence among disabled people should be recognised and a channel of direct communication be established between leaders of the disability rights movement and Government.

Services for the disabled should be provided within existing structures and should serve all disability groups rather than separate ones.

Opportunities for the disabled should be equalised in education, employment, housing, public facilities and especially personal relationships.

"Techniques and technology, services and facilities count for nothing if you are lonely," Dr Rowland said.

Brigadier Etienne Hugo, director of SADF Rehabilitation Services, said too many disabled people relied on State grants rather than living independent lives.

He said that research by the Department of National Health and Population Development showed that 54 percent of disabled people receiving grants did not want to improve themselves.

The patient and society had to be "rehabilitated" to allow disabled people to be integrated into society.

Dr V H Vaughan, senior education adviser of the Department of Education and Training, said it was imperative that disabled people should come forward to state their case so their demands could be met.

Members leave the room in protest

BLOEMFONTEIN — Political tension disturbed discussions at the National Symposium on Disability here yesterday.

At different stages during the day, members of Disabled People South Africa left the hall in protest at comments from the floor. Session chairman Dr George Watermeyer, deputy director-general of the Department of National Health and Population Development, said he would dissociate himself from the gathering should arguments continue.

ATTACK ON APARTHEID

The controversy arose from one of the first addresses of the day by Miss Kathy Jagoe, DPSA member and co-ordinator of the disabled students' programme at Witwatersrand University.

She had attacked apartheid, saying it was the most pervasive and serious barrier to equal access for the disabled and others to South African society.

Miss Jagoe gave the example of black spinal injured patients. She said they were treated in crowded and understaffed spinal care units and then expected to survive in communities with overcrowded houses, backyard toilets, no running water, corrugated roads and within strained family relations.

Her views were in turn slated as "overworked cliches" and supported as "the true story" by two of the approximately 400 delegates.

Dr Watermeyer kept proceedings under tight control and appealed to the polarised groups to hold mature and responsible discussions outside the hall.

The last public word went to the DPSA, whom Dr Watermeyer allowed to make a statement.

This was endorsed by Johannesburg's Independent Living Centre and more than five other groups at the symposium.

It stated that DPSA believed apartheid was the cause of poverty and unequal opportunity in townships and rural areas, and called for equal pension, education, and hospital facilities for all disabled people.
SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT

1990 - 1993
Workshop aims to start new venture

By ESANN von Rensburg
Staff Reporter

AN Atlantis workshop for the handicapped and disabled could become the only manufacturer of wooden golf tees in South Africa if it could buy an expensive German lathe.

The lathe is at a shop in Parow and is waiting to be returned to Germany on December 14. Director of Orion organisation, Mr. Melville Segal, said: "We have R30,000 at the moment and the Small Business Development Corporation is willing to lend us a few thousand rands. "But we need another R30,000 to pay for the machine."

THREE FACILITIES

The Orion organisation runs three facilities for handicapped children and adults in Atlantis.

Acquiring the lathe would boost the income of the workshop, which has 130 handicapped employees.

"It would be so good. If we would hear from one of other businessmen who would help us bring our production into a whole new dimension," Mr. Segal said.

Anyone who wants to donate money can contact Mr. Segal at www (0228) 72201/2.
FREE TO ANC NATURAL YOUTHS

Refuge in Lusaka: Youngsters to seek violence forces
About 10 youths a day were crossing to Swaziland before being moved on to Lusaka, Sebina said.

Four-year-old Nzoza Gaba and his sister Lhlimbi, 10, who had been caught up in the violence between ANC and Inkatha supporters, were among the refugees, he added.

Sources in Swaziland said there were about 70 youths in the country who had fled what they described as the "killing fields" of Natal. Some of the youths were being housed at Mahndza refugee reception centre near Manzini. Others were at prison remand centres around the country.

The first group of 17 arrived in Swaziland at the beginning of March.

One youth told reporters: "The violence is being perpetrated by (Inkatha president Chief Mangosuthu) Buthelezi in connivance with police and with the blessing of (Law and Order Minister Adriann) Vlok."

"It was terrifying. We could have been hacked to death at any time. We had no alternative but to flee."

Refugee Sibusiso Mdebe, 27, told reporters none of those in his group had been kidnapped by the ANC, as alleged in media reports. They had fled the country because they feared they would be killed in the wave of violence, he said.

About 3,000 people have been killed and thousands left homeless during the past 18 months in violent clashes between the two factions.

Sebina said the ANC had not yet formally sought refugee status for the exiles through the UN High Commission for Refugees, but might seek assistance if the influx continued.

Five other refugees from Natal were reported to have flown to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania from Swaziland.

Meanwhile yesterday, 40 South African clerics began a two-day meeting with ANC leaders in Lusaka to discuss the return of South African exiles.

The delegation included representatives from the SA Council of Churches, the Catholic Bishops' Conference, and Moslem, Hindu and Jewish communities.

Medical experts and social workers from South Africa are joining in the discussions.

Head of ANC religious affairs Rev John Lamola said long-term exiles were expected to encounter difficulties finding homes and jobs when they returned.

They were likely also to face emotional stress when readjusting to life.

About 20,000 South Africans are estimated to be living in exile. Many of them have spent up to 25 years abroad.

Most ANC exiles are expected to return in time for the organisation's national convention, scheduled for December in Bloemfontein - Sapa, AP, ANO.
Group Areas

EYW's plan for

By Anthony Johnson

NAT's ready for common voters.
Kwa-NoThemba profits soar

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Business Staff

THE Kwa-NoThemba Workshop for the Disabled in Gugubu showed a 277 percent increase in gross profit to R104,162 for the year ending March 31.

Turnover, which was ahead of forecast, soared 102 percent to R215,562.

Executive administrator Ms Carol Bower said in an interview this week that better use of dowel machinery which had led to manufacturing of broom handles had contributed strongly to the increase in profits.

Profits from the multi-diagnostic workshop, which presently provides employment for about 65 workers, are ploughed back into the organisation and into future development.

A second workshop, which is expected to employ a further 150 workers, is to be built in Khayelitsha.

Ms Bower said funds for the development of the second workshop had grown 250 percent in the past year and now stood at R236,000.

"However, this is not nearly enough to start construction on the site the building of which is estimated to cost R1,2-million," she said.

"Demand for this extra space, coming both from the workshop and the community, has increased and it is our intention to commence building within the shortest possible time, hopefully early next year, even if this should mean obtaining loans through the normal channels," she said.

The workshop is divided into three sections — workshop, sewing and handstitching shoes.

Writing in the annual report, Ms Bower said that the workshop had provided constructive and meaningful job opportunities to disabled people within the context of a normal business, competing on the open market.

"Over the past three years the workshop has continued to generate a significant proportion of its financial needs. For the financial year under review the workshop generated 70 percent of its income (excluding capital donations). We are proud of this record, which attests to our determination to run our Workshop as a business in terms of the strictures and advantages which operate in a free-market economy."

She said all indications were that the current financial year would again see record results.

"In the first three months of these year which are traditionally the least busy, income from sales amounted to R52,560. We have bought an additional two dowel-cutting machines and we estimate that turnover should be more than R250,000 for the year."

She said a number of workers had left during the past year to take up positions on the open labour market.

"This is so successful that we feel that we can increasingly view ourselves as a training and rehabilitative centre and more able to fill one of our constitutionally defined roles, as a conduit to the open labour market."
Mfesane moves HQ to city

By CHRIS BATEMAN

A HIGHLY successful Christian organization for black handicapped and underprivileged people has moved its headquarters to Cape Town from King William's Town, and begun two projects in Khayelitsha.

Mfesane (which translated means umbilical cord — implying compassion), has a nationwide marketing network for its products, and has factories and centres throughout Transkei and Ciskei with products including clothing, pottery, curtains, carpets and metalwork.

Rationalization

Managing director and the Rev Altemo Cloete said today that the move had come after 13 years as part of a rationalization programme which would save the organization a total of 200 children daily with a fully-trained primary school teacher and another in training has been running since March last year. Teacher Miss Eunice Dyasi said the children were chosen on a first-come first-served basis and parents paid R23 a month.

While the fees caused initial strong resistance, "once they saw the quality of the work and facilities, we were inundated with applications".

In Site B just over a kilometre away, a prefabricated building houses the Zenele Centre (Zenele meaning "we do it for ourselves") where several dozen pensioners have been arriving daily for companionship, low-cost meals and supervised lessons in various handicrafts since February.

Mfesane projects are the building of the Noluthando School and the Hearing-Impaired on a seven-hectare site in Khayelitsha (to open in September next year) — the first

significant facility for black hearing-impaired children in the country, and a children's home near DF Malan Airport to accommodate 50 children. R1 million is needed for this home and a major fund-raising drive has been launched by Mr Timo Bezuidenhout, the former top black local affairs official who quit his government post to join Mfesane several years ago.

Credibility

Mr Cloete said that while Mfesane had its roots in the NGK church it was multi-denominational. Financial records of the organization were published and widely circulated every year.

Coming from within the Afrikaner establishment, Mfesane had a "certain credibility" which it wanted to use to "help the Afrikaners grow in becoming constructively involved in the real problems of South Africa".

"Mfesane is based on the principles of the Bible — that's the only non-negotiable," he said.

EXUBERANCE ... Pre-primary children at the Mfesane Educare Centre in Khayelitsha flocked to teacher Miss Eunice Dyasi during a play session yesterday.

Picture: CHRIS BATEMAN
Council 'too slow to take on disabled'  

Municipal Reports

THE City Council was yesterday accused by some of its members of "not doing enough" in the way of employing physically handicapped people.

At its monthly meeting, the executive committee listed 20 "disabled persons" employed by the council and including a blind telephonist, a deaf and dumb typist, three deaf data encoders, a paraplegic control room operator, and several administrative staff members with limb disabilities.

Mr Kenneth Penkin, who said a figure of 20 disabled persons of a staff of 15,000 seemed "very low", was supported by Mr Emil Riese and said that several big companies had a policy of ensuring that 3% of their staff complement were disabled persons.

"In England it's obligatory," Mr Riese added.

Dr John Sonnenberg said he could not believe that as few as 20 people in the employ of the council had physical disabilities.

He also took exception to a statement in the report before council that the public had to be provided with an efficient service, as he said it was a "backhanded slap" to disabled people.

Affirmative action

Mr Neil Ross urged the council to adopt a policy of "affirmative action", as its record in regard to disabled persons was "not good enough".

Mrs Eulalie Stott opposed this, saying that unemployment among able-bodied persons was so appalling in this city that she could not support giving preference to handicapped people. Applications from disabled persons were considered on their merits.

Dr Sonnenberg replied that no preference was being asked for, but the City Council was the largest employer in Cape Town and should set a good example.

The item was referred back to the executive committee by a vote of 18-2.

• The council will soon spend R8,000 on a ramp to provide access for people in wheelchairs to the Muizenberg Walkway. Stairs were built there in error, contrary to a council resolution.
DISABLED GARDENERS FOR HIRE

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD Kevin was run over by a hit-and-run driver in Guguletu last year who sped off into the night, leaving Kevin unconscious and badly injured in the dusty street.

After recovering in Conradi Hospital, Kevin — a bright young man with a Standard 8 education who worked as a packer in a factory, found he'd lost his job — and his leg had been amputated above the knee.

"The accident and its aftermath was devastating. Job prospects were bad enough before — now, as a disabled black man, they were non-existent."

"In need of work"

"There are hundreds of men like Kevin," says Alison Allen, a social worker with the Association for the Physically Disabled (Western Cape), "with disabilities resulting from disease such as TB spin and polio, congenital deformities and amputations caused by accidents.

"Some get disability grants — others do not. But they are all in need of work, to help provide for their families and to give them some purpose in life."

Part of her job as a social worker, says Alison, is to recognise a need — and then fill it. So three years ago, recognising the needs of the many disabled men in the black community, Alison devised the gardeners' training course for the association.

The scheme is currently very small, since it relies on voluntary workers to run and administer it, but so far over 30 disabled men have been trained and placed in part or full-time employment, some earning up to R400 a month for their services.

"Training"

The course is run twice a year, for men referred to them by hospitals or welfare organisations in the Western Cape. Trainees spend two weeks at the Western Cape Training Centre, and then have a week "in the field" with Alison and Vicky Gillman, a landscape gardener who gives her fulltime services free for the two training sessions per year.

"We teach them basic gardening," says Mrs Gillman, "weeding, lawn-mowing, hedge and shrub-trimming and basic garden cleaning. We also show them how to plant shrubs, fertilize and compost the soil and, depending on the time of year and the location, how to deal with bedding plants and seeds."

The "field week" for the latest course has been held in the Milnerton Canoe Club, where the trainees have been undertaking an ambitious project — the landscaping and establishment of the gardens for the club's new grounds.

"It's ideal experience for the men," says Alison, "and perfect for us — to work in one place for a week instead of transporting the men from one garden to another." Next week the men will be ready to start working independently as gardeners. In spite of their disabilities, they can handle general gardening and most of them find their own method for dealing with tricky bits.

Jeffrey Xholabane, who lost an arm in a train accident, wields a spade while Annette van Rensburg, Alison Allen, Dan van der Westhuizen and other participants on the course watch his progress.

Picture DOUG PITHEY, The Argus
Jeffrey, for instance, who lost an arm when he fell from a moving train, can wield a spade or handle a lawnmower with a steady and confident touch.

With guidance from employers, the trainees soon develop real 'green fingers' — the independence and sense of purpose their jobs give them makes them even more eager to gain experience.

Employers

Now all they need are the employers. One of Alison's volunteers — Annette van Rensburg of Milnerton — runs an 'informal' agency for the scheme, placing men in casual employment with householders who need regular help with garden maintenance.

'There are lots of people who need gardeners but don't want to take someone on without references,' she says.

'Elderly people especially tend to be cautious — quite rightly — and our service is a great help to them, offering them men trained in the basics, with references and a certificate to show they have qualified.

Learn quickly

'After that, it's up to the employer to show him exactly what is required in his garden. Everyone's gardens differently, of course, but after some initial supervision, the men quickly learn what is required by individual employers.'

If you'd like to hire a gardener through this imaginative scheme and help someone regain his independence, you can phone Alison Allen (686-4153), Annette van Rensburg (52-4880) or Marion Krieg (583-5011) for more information.

If you can help in any other way, they'd also be glad to hear from you.
A blind man lives in terror after getting a lift from the police

SOMEWHERE in the Sweetwaters township outside Maritzburg an old blind man weeps tears of despair. His wife, equally distressed, holds back her own tears and tries to console him.

The couple, who may not be named, are living from hour to hour in the terror which has become the order of the day in most of the townships around Maritzburg.

Their offence: the blind man walked to the bus stop several weeks ago in the hope of going to Maritzburg to do chores.

Usually he climbed on, told the people around him where he wanted to go and they would help him off, guide him to where he needed to go in town and make plans to help him catch the bus back to Sweetwaters.

This time, however, buses weren't running and the old man was offered a lift in a police van. He accepted, grateful for the help.

Two days later word had circulated that the "old blind man" was a collaborator with the police. His life was threatened and his two teenage daughters — in fear of their lives — were forced to go into hiding.

"They came to our house last night. They beat my wife, and they hit me. They broke our window and tried to burn the house. I don't know why. Don't ask me why. Please help me," an Edendale man — a successful painter — stumbles into the business premises of a friend. He collapses on the floor and sobs.

"I am taking my family to Kroko. We have family there."

In central Maritzburg, a middle-aged woman — resident in Imbali and employed as a shop assistant — goes about her work in her usual way.

She is, however, clearly distressed, and eventually breaks down and tells her employer in broken English. "They tried to kill my son. They hit him while he was walking on the road with his friends.

"I don't know why. They don't tell us why I think it was because they saw them on the road. Sometimes they do that, I don't know who it was. If I say it's you, I could be wrong and if I say it's his, I could also be wrong. They both cause trouble with the people."

A Sweetwaters teacher tells of the brutal killing of an elderly man's daughter of a neighbour of hers.

"She found the body of an elderly man lying close to her home. She did not know what to do about it, so she reported it to the police. That night she was shot dead at her house."

The teacher adds: "You don't know what is happening here in Sweetwaters. We are all so fearful all the time. You are so lucky you are white."

People outside the townships who were previously uninvolved and unaware have been jolted into a realisation of what is happening in areas which are now undoubtedly "too close for comfort."

Employers have been forced to help their workers cope with the hazards.

Things have fallen apart in midland townships, which, in the past, were peaceful, even when other areas were seething with violence. And it seems that the innocent, unpolluted people are taking most of the punishment.

An Edendale man — a successful painter — stumbles into the business premises of a friend. He collapses on the floor and sobs.

"They came to our house last night. They beat my wife, and they hit me. They broke our window and tried to burn the house. I don't know why. Don't ask me why. Please help me."

"I am taking my family to Kroko. We have family there."

In central Maritzburg, a middle-aged woman — resident in Imbali and employed as a shop assistant — goes about her work in her usual way.

She is, however, clearly distressed, and eventually breaks down and tells her employer in broken English. "They tried to kill my son. They hit him while he was walking on the road with his friends.

"I don't know why. They don't tell us why I think it was because they saw them on the road. Sometimes they do that. I don't know who it was. If I say it's you, I could be wrong and if I say it's his, I could also be wrong. They both cause trouble with the people."

A Sweetwaters teacher tells of the brutal killing of an 15-year-old daughter of a neighbour of hers.

"She found the body of an elderly man lying close to her home. She did not know what to do about it, so she reported it to the police. That night she was shot dead at her house."

The teacher adds: "You don't know what is happening here in Sweetwaters. We are all so fearful all the time. You are so lucky you are white."

Blood continues to flow in Natal.

BLOOD continues to flow in townships in the Natal midlands. While violence was sporadic during most of 1987, this year has seen a horrifying increase in political murders.

About 50 people died between January and August, 1987. A sharp rise of 44 during September brought the toll to 94.

Between mid-September, 1987, and January 1 about 100 died in political violence in Natal.

In October, 49 were killed, in November 59 died and, in December, a frightening figure of "at least" 90 deaths was reported.

The number of deaths in Natal during the whole of 1987 was estimated by the Maritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness at 300.

The festive period saw 43 deaths in townships, and 13 people died during the first two days of 1988.

And it has not stopped since then. Nearly 110 people have died so far this year, according to Mr Peter Kerkhoff, director of the agency, and the violence shows no signs of abating.
Work for disabled of Khayelitsha

Staff Reporter

A building to house an exciting new project to provide employment and new purpose in life for 100 disabled people is expected to be constructed in Khayelitsha early next year.

The R383 000 Kwa-Nothembha Centre will be similar to the successful Kwa-Nothembha Workshop for the Disabled in Guguletu.

The Guguletu centre comprises four specialised sections and employs 71 mentally and physically handicapped people, epileptics and people whose hearing is impaired.

The workers produce educational and household furniture, educational toys, curtains, scatter cushions and bedspreads and various other items.

They also have contracts to hand-stitch moccasins for a shoe company and to knot nylon line to fish-hooks for a national trawling company.

Compared with able-bodied people, most of the workers are only 50 percent efficient, but their disabilities seldom affect the quality and quantity of their work.

Last year Kwa-Nothembha won a national productivity award which made it one of the top 10 companies in South Africa, in the view of the National Productivity Council.

A large number of workers from Khayelitsha have to travel to Guguletu every day to earn a living and share in the success of Kwa-Nothembha.

The Khayelitsha centre will make this journey unnecessary and give work to 100 disabled people. The Guguletu centre will continue to function on its current basis.

While there is little room for expansion at the Guguletu workshop, the design of the Khayelitsha centre allows for additions and other renovations at any time.

The plans were drawn free of charge by a group of final-year architecture students at the University of Cape Town.

“From the community at large we have been able to benefit from,” says Mr. Noel Hendricks, the Guguletu workshop manager.

“Kwa-Nothembha is part of the community. People from the community work here and create goods that are sold to the rest of the community at competitive prices. This interaction is important.

“We want the community to get closer to the disabled, physically and otherwise, so we can change attitudes and ensure a better quality of life for the workers. We hope to establish a community centre and a market that will be open to the public.

The Kwa-Nothembha management committee has launched a major fundraising campaign to reach the R383 000 “as soon as possible” so they can start building in January.

“We have good contracts and a fairly substantial development fund, but this won’t pay for the whole Khayelitsha project. Fortunately, the State will give us R90 000 for labour and materials for a basic structure,” Mr. Hendricks said.
SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT —

1994 - 1996
DICAG began as a local initiative by parents of children with disabilities in the black townships.

Ms Vuyo Mathlati, an occupational therapist and now national co-ordinator of DICAG, and the parents recognised the need for a programme for children with disabilities and their parents.

"These people came together due to the common frustration of being parents of children with disabilities and the discrimination that went with it," said national advocacy manager Shanaaz Majiet.

"The parents wanted to create a safer and more secure future for their children," she said.

DICAG is affiliated to Disabled People of South Africa and it is through the DPSA that the group was able to go national.

In June 1992 a pilot programme was launched.

"DICAG does not profess to solve all the problems. Our aim is rather to do needs analyses. We work towards self-empowerment and self-determination.

"We are not a typical welfare-based organisation because we are more community-based," Ms Majiet said.

"Our strength is in the fact that we are dependent on community participation. It's embedded in the fact that we operate on the participation of the parents. DICAG is merely a facilitator.

"We are not into creating dependency so that we can say we built this little empire and look what we've done.”

DICAG operates in nine different regions in South Africa and Ms Majiet sees the organisation as having a strong ability and skill to link into government and play a direct role in terms of safeguarding the future of children, especially those with disabilities.

"Legislation should be reviewed and there should be a creation of positive and adequate laws." 

"Fifteen percent of the country’s population is disabled but the resource allocation to cope with this figure is not there. For instance, if there is R1 million foreign aid for children, we feel that 15 percent of the R1 million should be spent on children with disabilities," she said.

"Disability should not be seen only as a health issue."

"It should be seen as a political, social, psychological, environmental and economic issue."
A model career — in a wheelchair

Fashion model Cheryl Endicott takes one last look in the mirror at her outfit and smiles to make sure there's no lipstick on her teeth. Pleased, she manoeuvres her wheelchair to a waiting photographer. Cheryl is one of a growing number of people with disabilities who model in advertisements for products that have nothing to do with being disabled.

ST LOUIS. — “We’re selling shirts today, so you need to sit up tall,” the stylist reminds Cheryl as the camera clicks away.

“I think I’m pretty,” she says, “And I think because I’m pretty and in a wheelchair that makes me marketable.”

A few years ago there were no pictures of paraplegics or children with Down syndrome on the walls of modelling agencies.

Sandra Gordon, a senior vice-president of the National Easter Seal Society, the biggest group serving the disabled, recalled her first efforts to get companies to use people with disabilities in their ads.

“I was told it was a disgusting idea, that it would turn people off,” Ms Gordon said. “They actually thought people wouldn’t buy a product for fear they’d end up the same way.”

Things changed after the United States Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. In addition to legislating hefty penalties for discrimination and requiring easy access to public buildings, the law required a more accurate census of people with disabilities.

The figure came to 45 million. Companies also learnt that the disabled had a total income of close to R21 billion.

“When they started seeing the numbers, they saw it was a huge market,” Ms Gordon said.

With no fanfare, Target used a disabled child in a Sunday circular. Spokesman Carolyn Brookter said there was no high-level strategy behind the decision.

“It was part of a brainstorming session in advertising, and one of the art directors said: ‘We show people of different races and different ages. Why not show someone with a disability?’” Ms Brookter recalled.

A simple ad was made up with a disabled child model and shown to Target’s top management.

“The people looking at it didn’t even notice the person,” Brookter said. “That was the point they were trying to make — it didn’t matter.”

But it mattered to disabled Americans and their families. Target received hundreds of letters praising the move.

Now dozens of big companies around the country are hiring disabled people to model.

Penny Bailey, for instance, is a paraplegic who has been paralyzed from the waist down for nine years since she was in a car accident at 17.

Bailey had begun training for a modelling career at 15 — but she nearly gave up after a painful rejection last year by an agency:

“The woman told me: ‘Let me put it to you this way: If I had a model with crooked teeth and a model without crooked teeth, I’m going to use the model without crooked teeth,’” Bailey said “It really hurt my self-esteem.”

Now full time with another agency, Bailey says: “It’s really neat that advertising is becoming more mainstream. It helps make us all one.” — Sapa-AP

South Africans may not be ready for this adjustment yet, says Sandra de Witt, a creative director with Hunt Lascaris TBWA in Johannesburg. “Consumers have stereotypes, and as soon as a stereotype isn’t used, they get confused,” she says.

“Maybe we do need to grow up in this sense because it’s not negative at all to use disabled people, but consumers would start to query it instead of actually concentrating on the product message.

“One also cannot highlight a minority group, and so because such a small percentage of the population is disabled, the broad target market will not be reached.

“Consumers might also think we are trying too hard to please everybody, and then the issue would become why we’re not using, say, blind people, for instance, in our advertising.

“We would have no problem, though, with using disabled people where it was relevant.”
Shanaaz Majiet: 'We work towards self-empowerment and self-determination.'
The city of Toronto is working on improving accessibility for people with disabilities. The Toronto Accessible City Plan is designed to create a more inclusive and accessible city for all residents. The plan focuses on improving mobility, transportation, and public spaces to ensure that everyone can participate fully in city life.

Some key elements of the plan include: improving sidewalks and crosswalks, enhancing public transportation options, and creating more accessible buildings and infrastructure. The city is also working on improving digital accessibility, ensuring that online services and information are available to everyone, regardless of their abilities.

The plan is part of a larger effort to create a more inclusive and equitable city for all residents. By improving accessibility, the city hopes to create a more welcoming and supportive environment for everyone who calls Toronto home.
mentally handicapped

A bit of paradise

Photo: AMBROSE PETERSEN
Disability
Agnes leads by example

By Sizakele Kooma

A gnes Moumakwe's commitment to the plight of the disabled runs deep.

As a disabled person herself and mother of a mentally handicapped child, she has first-hand experience of the problems they have to face.

Moumakwe contracted polio when she was four years old and 10 years ago she gave birth to a child who was born mentally handicapped.

"I suffered the pain of being ostracised by people I worked with and those I lived with. For 20 years I walked without callipers and no one cared to help," Moumakwe said.

In 1992 she took early retirement from her teaching job to devote herself fulltime to the upliftment of disabled people in her Garankuwa community.

Awareness talks

Odi Self Help Project for the Disabled started off with four disabled people working from a local hall. In the beginning most of their energy was devoted to creating awareness and motivation talks. But as membership grew the real development started.

"I started off by giving literacy courses as most of the members could not read or write. Then we went on to do sewing and knitting. But all these things did not happen overnight. We had difficulty getting sponsorship and as membership swelled, the venue also became unsuitable," Moumakwe explained.

About a year ago the Bophuthatswana Government gave them a house in Zone 1 Garankuwa. Soon after that they won a packaging contract from a factory in Roslyn. It is this contract that has enabled Moumakwe to maintain the 28 disabled workers and pay decent wages to the cook and driver.

The mix of age groupings at Odi Self Help is a reflection of the desperate need for a sheltered workshop in the area. The daily routine is the same for the youngest member, who is 14, and the pensioners.

The day starts at 8am when they are picked up from their homes in Odi, Garankuwa, Erasmus and Mmanu. The first session is devoted to dressmaking and knitting and is followed by contract work. There are English and Setswana lessons in the afternoons for those who are interested. The centre has four qualified teachers who offer tuition on a daily basis.
When the blind take the lead!

By SIPHO ZUNGU

WHAT drives disabled people to outdo even the stronger among the able-bodied?

Guts, say the "disabled" of Soweto.

"We don't want to be passive recipients." These are the words of a blind woman with steel nerves, Ruth Machobane, who has never seen disability as an excuse for underachieving.

Ask Friday Mavuso, paralysed from the waist down, Colbert Sobopho who is also blind and many other "disabled" at the Blind Brickmakers Factory in Orlando or the Self Help Association of Paraplegics (SHAP) in Mofolo.

They have not thrown in the towel.

Machobane, the brains behind the Blind Brickmakers, says people tend to see only their disability and not their ability. "Yet there are so many things that we can do.

At the Blind Brickmakers' Factory life goes on as if there is no tomorrow. No one is pushed to work, but all know the purpose of their being there.

To produce, period.

Brickmaker Sobopho is a former first division soccer star. But he does not moan about the past days of glory when fans flocked around him. He is "looking forward" to better days - he is writing a play which he hopes will make it to TV or a book.

He has taken part in two stage dramas since he was stricken with blindness, both written by James Mthoba.

Machobane says she has learnt not to put too much trust in outside help. "They can give you high hopes - and then abandon you. The disabled cannot abandon themselves."

Machobane said the blind can't do all the factory work on their own, so they employ sighted people too - drivers, for instance, and four machine operators.

"We might not have money in the bank but we can pay other people. We have even offered jobs to social workers. Generally it would be the other way round. The social workers are regarded as the people who should do things for us - who should even think for us.

"The social workers can help us in applying for pensions. They can take the disabled to the hospital when there is a need, which is not everyday," said Machobane.

She said the Blind Brickmakers' prospects were good - they make 2,000 bricks daily. They have not had enough funding yet, so they produce, sell and buy again - just rotating the money.

Friday Mandla Mavuso is the leader of SHAP.

Entering their premises in Mofolo, the portrait of the bearded man with goggles on the forehead welcomes you and silently says: "This is the boss."

Chances are that Sipho Makhubela will be delegated to show you around. The 34-year-old, paralysed during the 1976 uprising while a student in Soweto, knows every corner and everyone and everything that goes on there.

In the employ of the "city under one roof" are 120 disabled people and a handful of other helpers who are paid according to what they produce.

Cameras and electrical appliances are fixed in the department manned by Julius Seganye and Cornelius Langa.

Custom-made radios are manufactured in another section.

In one section a variety of mink safety clothing and equipment is made.

The closure of Durban Deep, which was a customer, has come as a blow to them too, Makhubele said.

As Mavuso says about what the disabled can produce: seeing is believing.
Minister sets out to help disabled

An inter-denominational ministry has been set up in Kewtown, Atholne, to serve physically disabled people from all over the Peninsula.

Bond Servants Ministry aims to meet the spiritual and physical needs of disabled people.

The Rev Eugene Peffer, who has cerebral palsy, said: "I started this ministry at my own expense a few months ago. It is based on evangelical principles."

The organisation will run seminars on time management and leadership skills to help the disabled to find employment on the open market, he said, adding that workshops on dating would also be offered.

"We will guard against discrimination. Disabled people are often seen as being different to other people," Mr Peffer said.

"We will also call on the new government to deliver their election promises to the disabled."

Mr Peffer said the services provided by his organisation at Babs Centre in Kewtown would be free and sponsors were needed to keep this ministry going. He also urged disabled Christians to join the growing group.

For more information, call Mr Peffer on (021) 637-4797 (office hours).
Thabo’s just another miracle of Nolutando School for the Deaf

COUNTING GAME: Teacher Zoliswa Fleksa, who is also deaf, teaches counting and number concepts to a group of pre-schoolers at Nolutando.

LIEBIE PEACOCK
Staff Reporter

WHEN Thabo first arrived at the Nolutando School for the Deaf in Khayelitsha he did not even know his own name.

And, he did not know how to communicate with anyone, not even his mother.

Today, he is proficient in sign language, is computer literate and a keen woodwork student.

When he turns 16, he will start the required modules, eventually to become a skilled and fully qualified builder.

Thabo (not his real name) is one of the lucky ones. It is estimated there are at least 5 000 deaf and hearing-impaired people in Khayelitsha alone.

Nolutando, a project of the Paralpine non-profit organisation, is the only school for the deaf in Cape Town’s black townships, and the only one in the Peninsula which caters specifically for Xhosa-speaking children.

Six years ago, the school — with one teacher and 13 pupils — opened in an old clinic with principal Richard Nieder-Heitmann’s car as an office.

The present modern school, of which most of the buildings were built by adult deaf people, is still being extended and now has 100 pupils and 13 teachers.

Nolutando is a non-governmental organisation, but gets a yearly state subsidy and also is dependent on donations from overseas companies and other institutions.

Most of the children are from poor backgrounds and many are shack dwellers.

School fees are R10 a month, including meals, for pupils who do not make use of the school’s bus service; otherwise, fees are R20 a month.

On a visit to the school, an Argus team watched a group of keen, friendly, teenagers doing woodwork. They were eager to demonstrate their skills all the time “chatting” away in sign language.

In the computer room, six- and seven-year-olds were defectively operating keyboards and solving mathematical problems, while confident three-year-old toddlers in the preschool section showed off their counting skills.

Ideally, children are taken in at the age of three, but many parents unfortunately keep their deaf children at home until they are 12 or 13 years old, says Mr Nieder-Heitmann.

He said one of the biggest problems had been that parents were unable to communicate with their deaf children, but now parents were being trained in sign language.

In-service training for teachers also was done at the school.

In the modest computer centre, pupils are taught typing, communication skills and mathematics, an essential subject for a technical career.

The emphasis at the school is on vocational training, including carpentry, building, sewing and cooking and potentially on job creation.

The school is also waiting to be accredited by the Building Industry Federation.
Blind Operator

Be PR Officer

Qualifies To

Strive More Hardly

To quality as a public relations officer.

Mr. Andre Vosso, switchboard operator of Ser Pinto police station, with SAPS personal head

ENGINEER DAVID ACKERMAN when he congratulated the Wester Cape

Bellingham AMBITION...
Eternal dark in
the misery hole
Centre for deaf takes shape

Staff Reporter
SOUTH Africa's first one-stop, multi-disciplinary job training and support centre for people who are deaf or hard of hearing is taking shape in Newlands.

Success at The Bastion, as the former Cape Town Highlanders' headquarters near Claremont Station is known, will bring greater material and psychological relief to hearing-impaired people in the Western Cape.

According to figures released by the Central Statistical Services this month, more than 76% of the 382 338 hearing-impaired people in the region are unemployed.

The service also reported that 676 445 deaf or hard of hearing in South Africa.

While the Bastion will focus on communication problems for people with these disabilities, it will also provide training, employment opportunities, and psychological support to maximize people's potential.

The centre is expected to be fully operational by 2023.

The first job creation phase, a sewing workshop, is already functional, employing six deaf seamstresses.

Other plans for the Bastion are the creation of a crisis centre for hearing-impaired victims of crime and other trauma, overnight accommodation for crisis victims, life-skill training, work placement, and small business development and social activities.

Bought from the Department of Public Works by the SA National Council for the Deaf, the Bastion is a 24-roomed building, the restoration of which will cost R200 000.

National Council for the Deaf regional director Kobus Pienaar said that 15 of the 20 rooms of the Bastion would be taken by a committee comprising six deaf leaders in Cape Town.

"Most of the restoration work will be done by unemployed deaf workers to serve as a job creation project," he said.

The council's public relations officer, Carol Cory, said volunteers had worked for months and had stripped all of the electrical wiring, components, boiler, internal doors, and had removed parts of the ceiling.

Mrs Cory said the council wanted to bring professional services and facilities to the deaf in South Africa up to contemporary international standards.

"Although being deaf is not a visible handicap, it affects our entire society," she said.

Mr Pienaar said that "Future needs may include formal tertiary education and specific industries with deaf entrepreneurs."

"I receive calls all the time from people calling on behalf of the deaf wanting work."

SEWING WORKSHOP: These students at the Bastion design and create items such as hunting clothes and high-quality leather items. In front are Nombuzo Buie, left, and Paul Muller. Behind them are, from left, Elizabeth Matshe, instructor Lulzel Fourie and Theresa van Wyk.

DILAPIDATED STATE: While The Bastion, the Cape Town Highlanders' former headquarters, awaits restoration, SA National Council for the Deaf regional director Kobus Pienaar has to leave his desk every time he wants to answer the telephone. The broken ceiling in the roof is part of the repairs that will cost an estimated R200 000.

CREATIVE MINDS: Craftwork instructor Lulzel Fourie with hearing-impaired Cape Technikon fashion student Paul Muller. He has joined a group of trainee seamstresses who are part of the Bastion's first job creation project.
 Blind get little pay

By Xoliswa Mfxa

BLIND workers at a Johannesburg packaging company earn as little as R60 a week for doing skilled work, a Sowetan investigation has found.

The workers, employed at Services For the Blind in Coronationville, said they regarded this as discriminatory. They found it hard to make a living.

Their spokesman, Mr Johannes Motshweneng, said they were surprised that they were not being paid a living wage “because there is money from the National Council for the Blind”.

He said: “We do not know how it is being used.” Sowetan

Spokesman for the South African National Council for the Blind Dr William Rowland confirmed that the Coronationville workshop was one of about 30 workshop projects employing blind people in various parts of the country. He said each workshop operated independently under its own management.

He confirmed the workers received low wages which were supplemented by meagre government pensions.

Rowland said they would do their best to improve wages and working conditions.
Disabled man's anger at firing

By Khatlu Mamilla

PARTIALLY SIGHTED Mr Mitchell Mulomoni Mupahuthi of Mulele outside Thohoyandou is a frustrated and angry young man.

The 21-year-old's anger has been brewing since he was fired from the Venda Workshop for the Handicapped in July 1993.

Mupahuthi says he was fired because the white manager said he knew too much and asked a lot of questions about the treatment of workers.

He says he went to a Chululeni special school in Shiyandine between 1985 and early 1992. He was employed at the workshop on March 23, 1992. His starting wage was R130 a month and after four months it was increased to R180.

"It is true that I asked a lot of questions but then I thought that was healthy and I hoped it would improve communication in the workshop," Mupahuthi says.

"I never thought it would lead to my expulsion from the workshop."

"At first I didn't want to work as a cleaner and I was suspended. I realized that I could do something despite my physical disability. It is hard to imagine that the only position I can obtain is now being occupied by somebody who can see and walk elsewhere."

"Does the government really want the disabled to be productive and work at a workshop?"

"I think a disabled person should sit on the board which decides on policy in the workshop because it seems these other people don't know how it feels like to be disabled and be denied the only chance to work."

"It is true that I asked a lot of questions, but then I thought that was healthy and I hoped it would improve communication in the workshop."
Concern over the abuse of disabled people is nationwide. A group of disabled people from Phuthaditjhaba staged a march in December last year to highlight a plight similar to the one plaguing their counterparts in Venda.

Disabled kicked out of job — claim

By Khathu Mamalla

A n association for the disabled in Venda has accused the management of a workshop for the handicapped of commercialising the project by systematically dismissing disabled workers and replacing them with able ones.

Chairwoman of the Ditsitleni association Miss Agnes Rasimla told Sowetan that more than a dozen disabled people have been fired from the workshop since 1992.

"What is even more frustrating is that the workshop gets R47 000 a month from the Government as it claims to create jobs for the disabled.

"There is no doubt that management has another agenda rather than helping the handicapped. More and more people hired at the workshop are without any physical defects. "Management is preoccupied with production," said Rasimla.

On top of the grants from Government and private donors, the workshop was producing chairs, tables, desks, benches and other furniture that was being sold.

Most of those dismissed was expelled for no apparent reason.

Mr Calvin Nsando (34, mentally handicapped) was allegedly fired because he refused to cut a tree at the home of a manager in Sibasa.

Partially blind Mrs Puluemelo Phalaudwana of Muluwani was allegedly dismissed after she went on maternity leave.

Michael Muthapheli, who is partially blind, was allegedly expelled because he knew "too much and asked a lot of questions".

Mr Tshutudzi Maweelle of Itsi, who is paralysed, was allegedly fired after he declined to be transferred from reception to the workshop, where he would have had to work with wood. He requested to remain in reception as his hands could not handle wood.

Among the dismissed disabled are Mr Gideon Ramolitho, Ms Azwimmbawhi Nemukala, Ms Stephanah Tshamayu, Mr Pict Malau, Mr Alfhele Mathadi, Ms Nyawedzani Nethonzinda, Mr Rudzani Takulade, and Mr Alfred Raungdezani.

Rasimla also accused the white staff of racism, saying blacks used different toilets from whites. She also charged the management with exploitation, saying the workers earned only R180 a month.

She said about two weeks ago, dozens of the disabled marched on the government offices in Thohoyandou demanding the withdrawal of the R47 000 subsidy until those dismissed were reinstated.

Responding to the allegations made by the disabled, chairman of the workshop for the handicapped Mr Naledzani Mulandzi said there was no plan to replace the handicapped with able people.

He admitted that about five disabled and 10 able workers were fired last year. He said the main reason for the dismissal was that there were no orders and the workers were redundant.

"From management's point of view, we had to dismiss those who did not come to work regularly and those came while drunk," said Mulandzi.

However, he said only one of the disabled had not been reinstated.

Commenting about alleged racism, Mulandzi said the workers and management staff used different toilets because they were close to where the two categories worked.

While he confirmed the R47 000 Government subsidy, he said there were no shareholders and no dividends were paid to any party. He said most of the directors on the board were volunteers and were not paid by the workshop.

He said there were 156 workers at the workshop. About 52 of the workers were normal while the rest were disabled.

He confirmed that the workers earned R180 a month.
BY SABATA NGCAI

HANDICAPPED people do not have to sit on the streets begging for money.

It is possible for them to rise above the confines of their disability and become independent - doing the same work as able-bodied people.

At the Vocational Centre for the Physically Disabled in Athlone, disabled people are trained and prepared for the job market.

Mr Nolan Mohammed, 31, of Somerset West, was born with no hands. When he was a baby he underwent an operation to make two finger-like incisions in his elbow, enabling him to write.

Mr Mohammed joined the vocational centre last year as a trainee in woodworking and typing.

He is now an instructor and responsible for training disabled people in woodworking.

He cuts wood with an electric saw at speed, perhaps even faster than some able-bodied people.

"DISABLED people should know that they can do things done by able-bodied people, whatever their disability may be," Mr Mohammed said.

"It is high time all disabled people start doing something for themselves.

"The time when disabled people were looked down upon is over. Let's stand up and show other people that we can do it."

The vocational centre trains disabled people free of charge, and has been operating for more than 20 years.

Disability people are referred to the centre from hospitals and welfare agencies throughout South Africa, giving them the potential to fit into the open labour market and earn a living through informal commercial activities.

The cost of vocational rehabilitation for each person is about R40 000. The programme lasts about three months and entails social work counselling, occupational therapy, medical and orthopaedic development skills and work skills training.

The centre depends on an annual government subsidy and fundraising for money.

GETTING DOWN TO WORK: Mr Nolan Mohammed at the vocational centre

Photo: Roger Sedres
Recession may turn dream to nightmare

FORGOTTEN, RIGHT ON
INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE: Gabriel Clark-Brown with one of three works he'll be sending to an art exhibition for disabled people.

Artist seeking to boost credibility of disabled

JENNY VIALL
Staff Reporter

ARTIST Gabriel Clark-Brown hopes to raise people's awareness of disability and dispel society's stereotypes of the disabled as freaks or inferior.

In this he has been given a boost by being invited to represent South Africa at the Very Special Arts exhibition in Washington DC, the first time for a South African.

He is a Michaelis master's student working the thesis Disability Representation Within South African Society and hopes to write a book on the subject at a later stage.

He has exhibited in France, the United States, England and in Cape Town. He also takes photographs, in collaboration with disabled people, working out with them how they wish to be portrayed.

The Washington exhibition includes the work of disabled people worldwide.

Mr Clark-Brown says: "This is a breakthrough for art produced by disabled artists in South Africa."

"This comes at a good time, as there's a growing awareness of equal rights in South Africa. Disabled people have been marginalised in society, both economically and in their wider integration in society. There is a need for equal rights for all disabled people."

With advances in technology, the playing fields were being narrowed for disabled people, "yet concepts of handicapped people as inferior are still prevalent."

"I emphasise the normality of people with disabilities rather than focusing on difference. Society is a hybrid of all sorts of variations of people — disabled people are part of that."

"Past and present understanding of people with disabilities is shaped by media portrayal of them as dependent on normal-bodied people, sentimentalised, helpless, tragic figures. Alternately, they are depicted as freakish monsters."

"The South African disability movement is gaining momentum at this time and the mood is right for breaking down social and racial bias. There is a desire to understand more about socially oppressed groups."

He suggests most people will at some time become disabled through illness or old age and that disability should be accepted as a part of life rather than something which alienates.

"I've had a history of disability (speech impairment) and can relate to a pool of experience of disabled people. Art is therapy and it emphasises that, in spite of impairments, disabled people are normal."

"Very Special Arts has international organisation, with a branch at the Mary Harding Centre in Athlone. Arts, for disabled people, which include drama and dance, created a sense of identity and facilitate self-expression."

"It also places disabled people in a broader arts field with other artists," he said.
Bidding to escape life’s revolving door

BY ADAM COOKE

Mandy never shouts to get things done in her little factory. She rather leads by example, instilling a sense of commitment and direction in her mentally-ill workers.

For all her apparent capability, Mandy is a manic depressive and unable to cope with the world beyond the closed environment of a factory that is the production centre of a home for patients discharged from psychiatric hospitals.

She faces a potential relapse if removed from the home—case histories show a pattern of psychiatric hospitals.

This cycle, known as the revolving-door syndrome, effectively means that adequate post-trauma care facilities are vital to a healthy functioning society, especially when viewed in the context of figures released by the Witwatersrand Mental Health Society.

These show that one in every hundred South Africans suffers from schizophrenia.

There are only three residential rehabilitation centres in greater Johannesburg—Con- donia, Threshold, and Wel- berton Manor.

They accommodate 170 people between them and are self-servicing rehabilitation centres where “consumers”, as mental health workers prefer to call their patients, are taught various life skills including budgeting, sex education, and interpersonal communication.

And, of course, they learn to run their own production workshops.

Andrew Debbie, director of the 15-year-old Threshold Centre, says: “We try to bring some sort of normality into their lives, to improve productivity and self-respect.”

But a source at Tara mental clinic said most mentally-ill people do not end up in one of the homes but spend their lives in isolation. They survive on a meagre R375 a month disability grant, living either with their families, in boarding houses or residential hotels.

Many have no homes to go to or their families cannot care for them. The streets of Johannesburg are, according to health workers, filled with mentally-ill people unable to support themselves.

Released

Some are involved in community-based groups like the Bipolar Support Group or Friends and Families of Schizophrenics, where people can gather to discuss their situation, organise meetings and try to deal with their illness.

Principal psychiatrist at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, Dr Michael Smith, pinpointed a problem in care facilities: “Most patients can be released from the hospital after just one or two weeks of treatment, but many stay for months, or years.

“Some patients put a great demand on our facilities, and we are professionally motivated to get people out of beds and back into the community,” he said.

Once the immediate effects of breakdown are treated, patients are returned to society or referred to community clinics for counselling.

But it is clear this system does not cope with the increasing numbers of mentally-ill people on the streets, and even perpetuates the revolving-door syndrome.

Said Glenn De Swardt, Deputy Director of Witwatersrand Mental Health Society: “In a mentally traumatised society, we need crisis action.”

So from Katlehong through Johannesburg, Soweto to Eldorado Park, the Witwatersrand Mental Health Society runs a network of offices and clinics involving professional counsellors in low-key, accessible rehabilitation.

“Township facilities are scarce, and they include day centres and protective workshops where people are trained in basic life skills,” said De Swardt.

“Consumers normally stay with their families and travel to workshops each day.”

There are nine sheltered-employment and day-care centres in township areas, where consumers learn skills such as woodworking, sewing and basic handcrafts, in a bid to make them more “marketable”.

These centres are aimed at re-integrating consumers into society, so they may assume “normal” lives.
Disabled people need access to jobs, entertainment — mayoress

Staff Reporter

DISABLED people are productive members of society who need access to jobs and entertainment, says Cape Town mayoress Di Berrill.

Speaking at the launch yesterday of the Easter Stamp Campaign, she said: "People who are disabled have a tremendous special place in my heart. It is very sad to see disabled people treated as if their brains are disabled.

"They are and can be very productive members of our society and we should do everything possible... to incorporate them into our milieu and make them feel they're part of the process of contribution.

"They must be given the opportunity of jobs... and access to places of entertainment."

Ms Berrill, who donated R1 000 of the Mayoress's Fund to the Western Cape Association for the Physically Disabled, said there was a tremendous need for people to become involved in the fate and future of the disabled.

Minister of Trade and Industry Trevor Manuel said South African society "must begin to plot a very different course for people who are slightly less abled. We want to draw on the skills of these less abled."

The Easter Stamp Competition, sponsored by Sanlam and in aid of the National Council for the Physically Disabled, has been revamped with a scratch-and-win incentive.

A booklet containing the scratch card and the stamps, depicting Easter Bunnies, costs R4.

SHARING SMILES: Shaun Joon, 7, and Melissa George, 8, pupils at the Astra school for the physically disabled in Montana, with Minister of Trade and Industry Trevor Manuel, at the launch of the Easter Stamp Competition.

R5 000. Prizes of R1 000 and R500 are to be awarded to pupils who sell most Easter Stamps.

The closing date for entries is May 15.
It's a dream come true

Chance for blind to become self-sufficient
Disabled and discontent

BAD BEDS When they think about hospitals, they think about death:

By Glenn McKenzie

P African and with lesions covering his lower body, John Gwebu wishes he was in a hospital.
But he won't bother going. In 1992, Hillbrow Hospital refused him a bed. And the last time he went to Edendale Hospital in December, they too refused to admit him.
Gwebu was forced to push his wheelchair back to his home in Alexandra — an uphill trip of more than five kilometres.
Now Gwebu spends his days in bed doing the only thing he still enjoys — lifting weights. "It is too difficult for me to sit or move around any more."

Other paraplegics
Like many other paraplegics, Gwebu has bedsores (also called pressure sores), a potentially fatal affliction caused by inactivity and a lack of physical therapy.
And like many paraplegics in the townships, he feels he has nowhere to go for help.
Gwebu, who was paralysed after a police bullet shattered his spine during a protest in Alex in 1984, despises the gaping wounds that have afflicted him since then.
Even as a paraplegic he has always tried to be independent, Gwebu says.
In 1989 he formed the Self-Help Association of the Disabled in Alexandra (Shadax), an agency that employs disabled people to assemble mining equipment and other items.
Now Gwebu feels he is fighting a lonely battle. Since December he has spent his days treating his own wounds, and lying in bed waiting for his wife Sinah to return from work.

The majority of problems facing the physically disabled should be cared for in clinics and at home.

"I'm not easily discouraged. But my sores have opened and they are spreading. It is agonising to even move," he says.
Dr Mervyn Danemlin, superintendent of Edendale Hospital, admits it was a "distinct possibility" that Gwebu had been refused admission to the hospital.
Danemlin, who realises his hospital has inadequate physical therapy facilities, says Edendale had already spent R100 000 treating Gwebu's ailments.

Therapy ward
Meanwhile, the hospital cannot afford wheelchairs for it's physical therapy ward. "Cost should not be the bottom line but it is a contributing factor," says Danemlin.
"We have a limited capacity to serve people. We need to offer our services to more deserving people who we feel we can assist," Danemlin says.
Danemlin blames Gwebu for most of his physical problem. He has had "social problems" and has neglected his own injuries. In the end, Gwebu is responsible for his deteriorating health condition, Danemlin says.
"Mr Gwebu is a very intelligent man. He probably knows more about physical rehabilitation than we do."

Bedridden but still battling. Eleven years after being paralysed by a police bullet in Alexandra, John Gwebu is fighting for better services for the disabled.

"The fact that these problems have come up twice in one year tells me he is neglecting himself," says Danemlin.
But Gwebu is not convinced. He feels staff at Edendale are not interested in treating bedsores or giving therapy to physically disabled people.
"They (hospital staff) do not take the time to understand the problems facing the disabled," he says.
"Only therapists who have disabilities themselves really understand our problems."

Many people with handicaps are neglected in hospitals, says Paul Jackson, assistant director of the Association of the Physically Disabled.
Nurses and doctors are often revolted by bedsores, which can be severely inflamed or emit foul smells, Jackson adds.
"People die from bedsores. It is really horrific when you see these things happening," says Jackson.

Rachel Legasa, who heads an APD programme which delivers home care to over 100 disabled people, agrees. She personally knows three disabled people who have died of bedsores in the past two years.
"It is a very sad story. When disabled people think about hospitals, they think about death," says Legasa.
"We know many people who enter Baragwanath Hospital with kidney problems and come out with serious bedsores."
Legasa says most disabled people in the townships don't have transportation to hospitals and clinics.
While the APD does treat many patients in their homes, they need more staff and more funds to reach everyone.
Currently, the organisation visits patients in Soweto, Johannesburg, and Thembisa. Physically disabled people in Alexandra are denied services.
"We have applied to the Government for more funding, but so far we have not received an answer. Our funds are drying up and the disabled are suffering," says Legasa.

Danemlin also believes home-based care is needed to prevent health problems like Gwebu's.
"This is what primary health care is all about. The majority of the problems facing the physically disabled should be cared for in clinics and at home," says Danemlin.
Back in Alexandra, Gwebu believes the Government should involve physically disabled people in the planning of primary health care services.
"Disabled people are capable of carrying out important tasks and improving their own lives. People need to be listening to us," says Gwebu.
Crowd turns on leaders

**Disabled man finds new home**

- **SHOWN MERCY** Survived on handouts of food, clothes and blankets:

By Glenn McKenzie

A 51-YEAR-OLD disabled man lived for years under a Kempton Park fire escape before he was rescued early this month, according to local charity workers.

Local residents say Mr Raymond Qasane, a disabled man from the Transkei, lived beneath a metal staircase at Myrtle Court in Kempton Park for at least four and possibly as long as 20 years.

Qasane is unable to walk and cannot remember when he first began living outside Myrtle Court. Other residents and business owners also can't remember when Qasane first began living under the fire escape. The man apparently survived for years on handouts of money, food and blankets. Most nights he was sheltered by only an upturned door.

The owner of Myrtle Court, Mrs Wilna Jacobs, said she tried "many times" to find a home for Qasane. Both the Department of Welfare and other charity organisations failed to return her calls.

Qasane said he survived by being "nice" to people, and being treated "nice" in return. Police never bothered him unless he was drunk, the man added.

Early this month, Elim Havens, a local charity organisation took Qasane to a group home near Grasmere. "I'm very happy here," Qasane said about his new home.

- **See Page 11.**
NEWS FEATURE Raymond Qasane ... a home at last after 20 years

Man lived 20 years under a fire escape

ELIM HAVENS ‘Now I only miss my occasional umgomboti’:

By Glenn McKenzie

Raymond Qasane knows how to disappear

For years the 51-year-old disabled man slipped through cracks in the system, unbothered if not unnoticed.

Until early this month, Qasane lived under a fire escape in lily-white Kempton Park, only metres from a sign advertising “Lifeline Homes”.

Charity worker Koos Gerber first discovered Qasane on January 10. He immediately assumed that Qasane had recently set up house in the neighbourhood. But local residents told him a very different story. Qasane had lived under the building’s fire escape for the past 20 years, they said.

“I couldn’t believe it. But a number of people told me the same story,” said Gerber.

Qasane, who still calls the fire escape his “flat”, cannot recall when he first began living there.

“I was in Pretoria. I worked there for some time. Then I left and came here. It was a long time ago,” he said cryptically.

Locals can’t remember when they first noticed the soft-spoken Qasane.

“I think it is seven years ago ... or maybe it was 1979,” said house-cleaner Ms Josephine Masiwe.

Even the building’s owner can’t recall when she first saw Qasane on her doorstep.

“I don’t know when he came. He has been in and out for a long time ... but I’m not sure,” said Mrs Wilma Jacobs.

“Jacobs claims she tried without success to find a real home for Qasane. But the Department of Welfare and the Salvation Army didn’t return her calls. Other welfare organisations said they could do nothing.

It was only when Jacobs called Gerber’s organisation, Elim Havens, that she found people who had a home for Qasane.

“You know, I wanted to find a place for

He has a real roof over his head, three meals a day and something he has needed for years — a wheelchair.

old Raymond. He was very happy where he was but I wasn’t happy,” said Jacobs.

Qasane says he has always been comfortable in his Kempton Park “flat”. Local residents and business people gave him food, money and blankets.

During the day, he sat on the fourth step of the metal fire escape and watched the world go by.

More importantly, police didn’t bother him unless he was drunk.

It was not always so. Before Qasane first arrived in Kempton Park, he says he spent 18 months in jail because police found him sleeping under a bridge.

But that is all water under the bridge — so to speak. Thanks to Gerber and his Elim Havens organisation, Qasane now lives in relative luxury in a group home near Graanmoor.

Since arriving, he has had a real roof over his head, three meals a day and something he has needed for years — a wheelchair.

“I’m very happy,” he said with a grin.

“But I miss my umgomboti (traditional beef).”

He also misses his old neighbours and was delighted when Sowetan gave him a chance to return to his Kempton Park fire escape for a visit.

“Everyone likes me because I am nice to everyone,” Qasane said.

Jacobs agrees.

“I will miss old Raymond. I have become very used to seeing him. But I am glad he is happy now,” she said.

Home to 35 homeless

The house where Qasane now lives (near Graanmoor, Johannesburg) is also home to 35 homeless and abandoned children. More than 20 adults, many of whom are old and disabled also stay there.

The home is the brainchild of husband and wife the Rev. Hendrick and Albetha Goosseb. The Goosseb “family” was recently forced to move to smaller premises because of a lack of funds.

They have appealed to people for help and welcome all visitors.

People who would like to help the Goossebs should phone 885-2435, or alternatively 396-1490.
**NEWS FEATURE** Disabled people want to be heard • Correcting anomalies of education

**Disabled marching proudly, defiantly**

By Glenn McKenzie

South African society has long turned its back on people with disabilities. A new wave of solidarity is changing that.

Disabled people are being ignored. We are angry and ready to show people who we really are.

**BEING IGNORED** They are angry and ready to show who they really are.

On Friday, 22 February, 1995, in Sophiatown, a group of disabled people marched through the streets, demanding equal rights and opportunities.

"What has to be done is that we are only just starting a process of reversing problems that are very old," said Rambo.

"The government must do something," said Nzimande. "We are angry and ready to show you who we really are."
While SA prepares for a new democratic constitution, one body is fighting for the protection of the rights of mental patients.

Sowetan reporter Glen McKenzi writes:

A patient at Milistite Hospital. There have been unproven allegations of abuse at this institution.

any drugs producing unwanted side effects.

Should a mental patient who may or may not be stable have the right to sue a psychiatrist or a hospital?

CCHR Executive Director Paul Sondersgaard suggests that increased rights of patients can only benefit them and society.

Increased public attention is also an essential part of maintaining human rights he adds.

Mummified bodies

"In Italy the media can enter institutions at any time. They have uncovered all sorts of things that no one knew was possible including mummified bodies and that sort of thing. Without media access none of it would ever have come to light," says Sondersgaard.

No one is suggesting that mummified bodies are hidden under hospitals like Milistite or Sterkfontein, but numerous allegations of abuse have been laid by staff in these hospitals. So far, an independent inquiry has not put these claims to rest.

"They (the Mental Health Act and the Amendment Act) confer unconstitutional powers on psychiatrists to commit patients without any system of referral or objection.

The Amendment Act prevents anyone investigating or exposing psychiatric violations of human rights," says Sondersgaard.

Psychiatric hospital administrators often defend restrictions on the media by saying that they are protecting patients cannot protect themselves.

Protection is often necessary. Many patients are not credible sources. Others cannot speak coherently.

But when family members, independent investigators and the media cannot see the truth for themselves, who is anyone to believe?

In an interview late last year, Sterkfontein principle psychiatrist Dr. Edward Smith told Sowetan that he didn't believe that the media should have access to the hospital.

"You could seriously jeopardise patients. We cannot have media people coming in here who don't understand what it means to treat a patients. It isn't right," said Smith.

But what is right? For family members of mental patients who have disappeared from mental hospitals without explanation, privacy and protectiveness is often offensive.

When Elizabeth Kinghorn disappeared from Sterkfontein hospital in 1990, the Medical Board tried to question staff members and see her sister's medical records. Administrators allegedly refused the request.

"No one ever told me that they were sorry that my sister had disappeared," said Kinghorn.

Another tragedy is that administrators and staffs in mental hospitals often work under extremely stressful conditions.

They have to deal with difficult and sometimes dangerous personalities on a daily basis.

One Millistite hospital employee, who asked not to be named, has alleged that hospital staff sometimes make mistakes or mistreat patients because of the pressure they are under.

In turn, these staff members cover up their mistakes because they fear repercussions from other patients or administrators.

Sondersgaard suggests that these types of problems will never be solved unless hospitals are opened to public scrutiny and possibly reform.

"We cannot have a free society unless we guarantee the rights of mental patients," says Sondersgaard.
Standing Assembly Motion for disabled MP

...
In a class of their own

Gauteng seeks to phase cerebral palsy pupils into mainstream

There are split views on the integration of cerebral palsy pupils into ordinary schools. The department is also looking into the possibility of creating a special educational program for these pupils. However, there are concerns that this may not be feasible in all cases. The Gauteng Department of Education is considering the option of creating a special educational program for cerebral palsy pupils. This could involve creating separate classrooms for these pupils or integrating them into mainstream classrooms with additional support. There are mixed views on this approach, with some arguing that it is necessary to provide these pupils with the appropriate educational environment, while others believe that they should be integrated into mainstream classrooms to promote inclusion. The department is currently in the process of consulting with stakeholders to determine the best course of action.
Wind-up radios: Communication revolution about to begin

There is a starkly empty warehouse in the Montagu Gardens industrial area of Milnerton being prepared for what is destined to be a communications revolution in Africa — where the world's first wind-up radios will be made.

The technology is the brain-child of British inventor Trevor Bayliss, but through a circuitous route it has become a South African project, with Rory Stear, former head of SeefCorp Finance, taking a keen interest.

To cut a long story short, Mr Stear, who initially had difficulty getting financial support for research in South Africa, got the interest of the British Overseas Development Administration, and the wind-up radio was in business.

A key figure in the research and development of the radio is David Butter, formerly a General Motors executive in Port Elizabeth, and a friend of Mr Stear. He is co-ordinating the project at Montagu Gardens.

Finally, an executive director of Liberty Life, Hylton Applebaum, who also heads the Liberty Life Foundation, was shown a prototype.

A company called Baygen Power Company was formed, with Mr Stear as chief executive and another company called Baygen Power Manufacturing followed, involving the six national organisations for the disabled, with Mr Butter as managing director.

These organisations, funded by Liberty Life, are recruiting and will train 150 disabled people to produce the wind-up radios at the Montagu Gardens factory.

Right now the factory is an empty shell, but Mr Butter is trying to ensure that production gets under way in six weeks.

The company is in partnership with the Handicapped Association of South Africa. They will share in the profits and have three members on the company's board.

The technology is in place. Basically, it involves a spring which, when wound 45 times, will give 45 minutes of listening time.

Once trained, the disabled workers should be able to assemble the radios in about 20 minutes. Local content will be between 70 and 80 percent.

The factory hopes to produce 300,000 sets in the first year and there is huge interest all over the world for the new product, which will sell from the factory at about R20 a set.

The benefits are enormous. For instance, Rwanda would never have been the disaster it was had the wind-up radio been around.

Up to now batteries have been the key to communication in the Third World. Without them there is no communication. Once they are dead, so is the radio.

Relief agencies had terrible problems finding out where the scattered Rwandan population was, and the population, without radios, had no idea where they could get food or medical treatment or what places to avoid. With wind-up radio, that would have been eliminated.

In fact, the first 60,000 radios are destined for Rwanda. That is but one example. Education will benefit immeasurably from the new radio, which will have a lifespan of about 6,000 hours, or about three years of playing five hours every day.

Once worn out, the spring can be replaced for about R20.
A work of great worth with an unusual genesis

Martin Brassey

(296) 62 29/9

Letters
Home for disabled to close

THE Cheshire Home for the Disabled in Rockville, Soweto, will be closed down at the end of this month unless funds needed are available. Chairman of the home Mr Dan Phumo said he was going to close down the home unless the tenants — all disabled people — started paying rent.

He said the Transvaal Homes for the Disabled had asked the tenants to pay R277.50 a month because of a shortage of funds to run the home. "We depend on donations we get from various companies. I'm bound to close the home because of insufficient funds," Phumo said, adding that the tenants did not want to pay rent. The tenants said the amount was too much. One of the residents, Mrs Dorris Yende (30), said the residents were not going to move out of the place. She said since they received a grant of only R390 a month, they could not afford to pay the R277.50 but were prepared to pay R100 a month.
Home's future in the balance

Bank group launches rescue bid

Staff Reporter

The fate of Woodside Sanctuary, a home for profoundly mentally and physically handicapped children in Rondebosch East, hangs in the balance.

Although a rescue mission is under way, the home — established in 1976 — faces closure at the end of the year because funds are drying up.

While Woodside was just able to break even this year, more money is needed if its doors are to remain open next year for the 84 children who live there.

In an effort to save the home Woodside's management board has decided to close the daycare centre at the end of this month.

Even with the centre closed, however, the home will still have a shortfall of R23,000 a month.

Last month desperate parents and staff appealed to the public for help through newspaper articles, including one in Southern Argus which elicited several compassionate responses.

A banking group was among the many who responded to the home's plea for financial help.

The group has started a major drive to raise funds to keep Woodside going longer.

The group's biggest endeavour is a competition which has a R150,000 townhouse at Golf Beach, Strand, as the main prize.

Woodside, the only privately run, inter-denominational, multicultural home of its kind in the Western Cape, offers specialist care to 84 handicapped who range in age from birth to 30.

All have IQ's of less than 25 — of a one-year-old — and all are ineducable.

Woodside's income is derived from an annual donation from the Community Chest, fees from parents according to their means, donations from the public and a monthly government grant for some children.

A huge portion of the government grant was withdrawn in 1993.

It costs nearly R2,000 a month to keep a child at Woodside.

Last year the total annual cost for 80 children was about R1,9 million.

The total annual income for that year was R1,25 million, leaving a deficit of R600,000 which had to be raised from donations.

Woodside's future will be decided in June when the management board meets to assess the home's financial position.

To help or for more information phone Bronwyn Gage at 696 2211.

Entry forms for the competition to win a home at Golf Beach will appear in Southern Argus tomorrow. Crossed cheques to the value of R100 should be made out to Woodside Sanctuary and sent to Bronwyn Gage, c/o Woodside Sanctuary, Box 23225, Claremont, 7735. The closing date for entries is August 15.
Help at hand for people with disabilities who are unable to communicate.

Cerebral Palsy sufferers given voice.
Unique college facing closure

BY LANA JACOBSON and ANNA COX

Access College in Randburg, the only commercial tertiary education college in the country for the disabled, faces closure following a 45% cut in a subsidy by the Gauteng Department of Labour from the beginning of June.

The college, which also assists students in finding jobs once they have qualified, cannot operate on the reduced budget and will probably have to close at the end of the month, founder Priscilla Rigby said.

ANC MP Marie Rantho, herself disabled after a car accident in 1977, has taken up Access's cause.

"I wouldn't support closing Access College. "It offers a service, gives people hope and a certificate to go out into the world and earn a living."

"I will bring this issue to the attention of the Minister without Portfolio."

"Disability rights are part of the struggle for human rights in South Africa," she said.

Rigby expressed concern at the decreased subsidy.

"This will be a great tragedy for the disabled people of the country. "We have 187 000 target pupils in the Std 8 to matric level to whom we offer some hope of a future and a job from our business and computer classes."

"It is a great disappointment for us. "We have spent 12 years getting the college established, and have built up great experience in teaching and training the disabled in business skills."

"It is a shame the present Government is not doing more to protect the disabled who, in terms of the new constitution, are a minority group and have rights, too. Many are victims of apartheid."

"We are not a place of welfare where people are just dumped. "They are educated and become contributing tax-paying members of society," Rigby said.
Deaf presenter wins top award

Dedication to helping others:

Fumelo Gomane, a 30-year-old employee of the Westwardapi Deaf Association, won an award in the category "Best Presenter in any Programme on NTV" for his programme "Sign Here", the only programme for the deaf and hard of hearing on South African television.

His programme appealed to a range of challenges, including storytelling, interviewing, role-playing and sign language.

He performed all these in a compelling manner with an obvious knowledge of his subject, according to Mr Fred Morais, marking director of NTV and chairman of the jury that made the selection.

The jury was impressed with Fumelo's articulate communication through his sign language, how he managed to make deaf students feel comfortable and enjoyable to both the deaf and the hearing viewer.

"His presentation has charm, spontaneity and warmth," said Mr Morais.

Fumelo, born in 1965 and educated at St Thomas School for the Deaf, has won six awards from the Westwardapi Deaf Association where he offers assistance in interpreting for the deaf who do not fully understand the English language as well as those whose sign language differs from the average sign.

A former chairman of the Thembalihle Deaf Club in Bulawayo, he is at present a member of the Deaf Christians Fellowship and the Young Wannas. He does Bible studies with fellow deaf Christians and enjoys singing in church.

He plans to become a social worker. He has participated as an actor in the 1982 film "The Young Wannas" and a recent television commercial for "State Bank of Zambia".

In the film submitted for the award, Gomane related a story about animals that were not heard wanted by their owners because they were old and even useless.

And he made the story come to life walking and acting like the animals he was talking about provided such effective communication that even those who do not understand sign language could understand and enjoy watching.

"Amongst others, he has a Yawal language and while he finds it difficult to read a script, he communicates problems to the director. He also finds ways to deal with that.

"When I have such a problem the best strategy is to literally spell each letter of the word in sign language. English being a broad language makes interpretation difficult because sign language is limited."

Fumelo Gomane

"In fact, sign language is better than any other language because it is simple."

"In fact, sign language is not only a means of communication for the deaf, it is an art form, a language of its own."

Although there are only two programmes for the deaf on South African television, Gomane believes that if there were more deaf filmmakers, there would be more shows for the deaf.

"But for now I will be happy if we could have more shows and sporting programmes in sign language."

Fumelo Gomane was one of the main reasons why the award was established. He is a good example of a deaf person with a talent and a strong will to succeed.

"Although there are only two programmes for the deaf on South African television, Gomane believes that if there were more deaf filmmakers, there would be more shows for the deaf."

"But for now I will be happy if we could have more shows and sporting programmes in sign language."

Mr Fred Morais, marking director of NTV and chairman of the jury, said, "Fumelo is a talented presenter who is able to communicate effectively through sign language. His programme "Sign Here" is very popular among the deaf community and has won several awards."

"He has a great talent for storytelling and his programme appeals to a range of challenges, including storytelling, interviewing, role-playing and sign language."

"Fumelo is a great inspiration to all deaf people in South Africa. He has shown that being deaf is no hindrance to success and that deaf people can achieve great things."

"He is a perfect example of what can be achieved with hard work and determination."

"We are proud to have Fumelo on our team and we look forward to seeing him continue to grow and succeed."
Disabled poised for inclusion in Nedlac

John-Duduzi

THE National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) has decided in principle to include organisations representing disabled people's interests in the community development constituency. The decision — taken at a weekend meeting of the selection committee — still needs Nedlac management committee approval.

Minister of Portfolio Arts Naidoo's office confirmed the decision and said the minister would announce soon the name of the organisation selected.

The disabled will join the National Women's Coalition, the National Youth Development Forum, and the SA National Swaziland Organisation in representing communities' interests in Nedlac's development chamber. Communities will negotiate with government, labour and business representatives on development issues.

However, the meeting failed to resolve the position of rural people and church interests.

In terms of guidelines of the selection committee, organisations seeking representation in the development chamber had to enjoy national representation and have a democratic constitution to qualify.

A document submitted by business to the trade and industry department on government's move to link export benefits to the general export incentive scheme (GEIS) will be discussed at Thursday's meeting of the chamber.
JOB MARKET

SAB helps the disabled improve skills

By Isaac Moledi

THE East Rand branch of South African Breweries has contributed R360 000 to help unemployed physically disabled people from the Ziscabengeni Self-Help Association in Katlehong to improve their skills to enable them to earn a living.

The money will help build a new multi-purpose hall. It will have two workshops, an office, storeroom, kitchen and sanitation facilities.

The Self-Help Association, at present accommodated at the Ezibelezi school for physically disabled children, was established ten years ago to assist physically disabled people in the Katokus area.

Sixty people are to be given training in sewing, candle-making, welding, shoe repair and woodwork at the centre.

Most of the disabled adults in the area sustained their injuries as a result of political violence.

There is at present little likelihood of their being able to secure employment on the open labour market.

The new facility will be located near the Natalspruit Hospital.

SAB District East manager Mr Ian Mountain says he is confident that the grant will contribute to the improvement of the lives of the physically handicapped.

"SAB's commitment to community and environmental upliftment calls for us to be involved in improving the quality of life in the communities in which we operate," he adds.
Engen funds self-help course for the disabled

BY FRANCIS BITHLAN

Engen is funding a self-improvement course for the physically challenged that aims to improve their prospects of finding employment.

The course is being run by Lifeskills Project UCT in conjunction with Infoguide, a Cape Town based information kiosk manned by the physically challenged.

Cherri Herbert, project co-ordinator of Infoguide, said: "We identified a need for the public to be made aware that the physically challenged can also be productive."

"The course is not only open to staff of Infoguide, although we have put forward 12 employees, but to all disabled people."
No one can blame Max Brito for refusing press interviews. He came here a star rugby player and left a quadriplegic, and, in the first week after his accident, his pain was too raw to plumb.

But there are four to five million disabled people in South Africa ready to speak out.

They will tell anyone who cares to ask that their quality of life has not improved significantly in the last 10 years.

There have been advances, in technology, medical treatment for injuries, and government responsiveness to disability issues, says Dr William Rowland, chairman of the National Co-ordinating Committee on Disability (NCDD).

But little has changed regarding access to buildings, employment, education and transport. Unemployment among disabled people remains at least 80% in urban areas, and 100% in rural, Rowland says.

In some ways, Brito is fortunate. Insurance payments and the generosity of the world's rugby fraternity — who will be collecting donations for Brito until at least the final RWC match — will almost certainly pay for him and his family financial security.

Most disabled people in South Africa live on monthly disability grants of about R390, says Rowland, or struggle to make a living in the informal sector.

They are often refused entry to taxis, and few if any buildings have ramps for wheelchairs, despite the disability lobby pushing through legislation on wheelchair access to new buildings more than ten years ago.

It simply hasn't been enforced, judging from a recent editorial by Dawie Botha, director of the South African Institute of Civil Engineers in the profession's magazine, which had to remind members of their duty.

The NCDD is leading an environmental access project to improve the provisions and enforcement of that legislation, Rowland says.

But for the newly-disabled, life is still grim.

"When you leave the hospital there is nothing: no support networks, no provision for wheelchairs," says Bernard Kwaaiman, Eastern Cape regional development worker for Disabled People South Africa (DPSA) "The South African public is totally unprepared for disability," he says.

"You worry about how you are going to be able to support your family, to travel. You drift away and sit alone with that feeling, that pain, that you will never be the same again."
The disease that can cost you your job

Staff Reporter

MYTHS and negative perceptions about epilepsy have reduced its sufferers to social outcasts whose enjoyment of life is limited and whose ability to find jobs is hamstrung, regardless of their qualifications.

That's the opinion of the SA National Epilepsy League which says that while epilepsy may be incurable, it can be treated symptomatically with drugs.

All that's needed is more understanding on the part of employers and the public, they say.

South Africa's favourite cricketer, Jonty Rhodes, an epileptic, has gone a long way to raising awareness of the disease, but for Jane Vinsen, who graduated with a BA degree in 1985 — her majors were industrial psychology and public administration — the picture is not so rosy.

She has been employed several times and in some cases she was fired because she was an epileptic.

Between 1992 and 1993 Miss Vinsen worked for a private company in Cape Town and her employment was terminated with no reasons being given after serving for one year.

Subsequently, she was employed as a marketing co-ordinator, but had a major seizure one day while taking a client around.

Six months later, she had another seizure in her office in the presence of a colleague. A few months later she was called in by the personnel manager and handed two letters, one terminating her employment and the other demanding her resignation.

She chose to resign: "I believe my forced resignation was because I had seizures at work."

Later in 1993 she worked for a hospital in Cape Town as a public relations officer and fundraiser. She had seizures several times and was asked to leave, apparently because they could no longer afford her.

Now she works at a centre for the disabled in Bridge- town and survives on a pension of about R45 paid to her each week.

The Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industry said it is against denying job opportunities to epileptics.

The organisation's deputy director, Colin Boyes, says epilepsy is controllable. The organisation also has an epileptic on its staff.

The Epilepsy League (Sanel) says the problem is that employers often do not understand epilepsy. They think that when someone has a seizure at work he or she could hurt themselves and the employer would be held responsible.

They also believe that an epileptic can seize in front of customers, they may chase the customers away.

However, Sanel believes that an epileptic can do any job for which they are qualified.

The Employment Commission of the Internal Bureau for Epilepsy says in its publicity information that interviews should focus on the capabilities of an individual with epilepsy, and not on his or her real or assumed limitations.

"Suitability for a particular job should be decided by the employer before any implications arising from the job applicant's epilepsy are considered," the commission says.

"When seizures occur for the first time, the employer should respond fairly by giving the employee adequate opportunity to get proper medical treatment before making any decisions about job suitability."

"If seizures are likely to occur at work, the employer should help the employee with epilepsy to disclose the disease to work mates."

"Some first-aid training or other information should be provided for those who might be involved should a seizure occur."

Sanel, a non-governmental organisation helping epileptics in the Western Cape, says a survey conducted a few years ago found that one in 200 people in all population groups in South Africa suffered from epilepsy.

They believe that number has probably risen to two in every 200 people.

Sanel says epilepsy is predominant in poverty stricken areas, where there are high levels of crime and violence, and motor car accidents.

If a certain part of the brain gets injured or damaged in an accident or in an act of violence, an individual is likely to contract epilepsy.

The disease is also caused by drug and alcohol abuse, although some people are born with it. If a child gets encephalitis or meningitis — inflammation of the brain — it leaves a child seriously handicapped and in danger of contracting the disease.

Sanel is involved in public awareness programmes, parent support groups, care groups and teen groups to raise awareness and change perceptions about epilepsy.

Sanel regional director Ingrid Daniels says the programmes help allay fears and concerns that epileptics cannot get married or fall in love because of the disease.

"Youths and elderly people are also given skills on how to handle an epileptic and someone who has seizures."

Mrs Daniels says epileptics have a right to lead a normal life and be given the same opportunities as others.

The high rate of unemployment among the epileptics has forced Sanel to help and encourage job-creation projects.

This has helped some epileptics to start home-based projects and earn a meagre income to augment their monthly disability grants.

Those who do not get a grant live on the income from the projects.

The Sanel projects operate in Mitchell's Plain, Goodwood, Lansdowne and Khayelitsha.

They cater mainly for unskilled epileptics to teach them skills so they can become self-reliant.

Among other things, the people do weaving using waste material and make African art products which are sold in the markets.

The workers get 80 percent of the income while 20 percent goes towards sustaining the project. Sanel says that in the past year about 80 percent of epileptics seen by the organisation were unemployed. And while unemployment is a national problem, the epileptics are certainly at the back of the line when it comes to unemployment.
Friday Mavuso, one of South Africa's leading disability rights activists and the founder of Self Help for Paraplegics (Shap) in Soweto, was killed in a motor accident near Greylingstad in the Eastern Transvaal on Sunday.

His death has devastated friends and colleagues, and has been described as a irreplaceable loss to the disability rights movement.

Mavuso was elected chairman of Disabled People South Africa (DPSA) in April, an event which DPSA secretary-general Mike du Toit said was like "Mandela taking office."

"He did so much and still had so much to do," a shocked Du Toit said this morning.

"His death comes at a time when we are so close to achieving so much — disability is now accepted as a major programme of the RDP."

Shap's administrative manager Paul Chombo said Mavuso was a man who was never discouraged, and his followers felt lost without him.

Mavuso, who was paralysed by a police bullet in 1974, is credited with changing the debate on disability from charity to the rights of disabled people.

His formal education ended in Standard 2, but he has received numerous awards, including an honorary degree from the University of Cape Town, and sat on the board of Transnet.

Dr William Rowland, former chairman of DPSA, said Mavuso's death was an terrible loss to the disability rights movement: "It's tragic that he won't be with us at this critical time."

Mavuso is survived by his wife Paulina and three children. Funeral arrangements have yet to be announced. — Staff Reporter
A true friend of the disabled

Society owed the disabled a living

The Late Bra Mavuso did not believe

By Benjamin Mavuso
Mavuso leaves a big gap

By Bongani Mavuso

PRESIDENT of the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics Mr Friday Mavuso died after a car accident between Standerton and Balfour in the Eastern Transvaal on Sunday night.

Yesterday his colleagues at Shap expressed shock at his untimely death. He was founder of Shap which he established in 1981. Mavuso (46) of Pinville in Soweto, died at Heidelberg Hospital. His driver, Mr Junior Kubeka (24), was killed instantly in the head-on collision at about 8pm. A passenger, Mr Dlingen Dzowa (46), also of Pinville, is in a critical condition at the hospital.

The Gauteng provincial branch of the African National Congress said in a statement yesterday: "It is with great sadness that we have learned of the death of Mr Friday Mavuso. Mavuso played a prominent role in championing the cause of the disabled in the country."

Miss Popi Bushelesi, who worked with Mavuso since the establishment of Shap, said yesterday she was saddened by his death.

"Disabled people in South Africa and elsewhere in the world will be hardest hit by Friday's death. He was a hero who had the interests of disabled people at heart," Bushelesi said.

Mavuso was paralysed after being shot by a policeman while on his way home from work in 1974.

See page 11.
A true friend of the disabled

By Bongani Mavuso

The late Bra Mavuso did not believe
society owed the disabled a living.

Fridays: Mavuso ... will always be remembered for his role in improving the plight of paraplegics.

During the four years I spent in hospital, I watched men cut out chunks of flesh with razor blades from their backs in order to prolong their stay in hospital. They preferred hospital to going home and facing rejection?

Open market
The centre is staffed and managed entirely by the disabled. "Apartheid" persisted in the centre and the employees were not paid for their work. There was lack of Government-sponsored mobility schemes and grants that would make a transplant, for instance, to employ someone in full-time house, food, dress and put him or her back in hospital. "There are no resources, no facilities. A lot of paraplegics have committed suicide," Mavuso said.

Mavuso contributed enormously to the economic and social upliftment of disabled people in South Africa. He did not believe that society owed the disabled a living.

"We can address the same issues. The problem is that we need to be more socially aware. We must address the issue of unemployment," he said.

He believed that the Government was not doing enough to assist the physically handicapped, and was angry about the status quo. He noted that unemployment was "a curse on the nation." For his countless efforts in assisting the handicapped, Mavuso was awarded several awards. These included the Paul Harris Fellowship, a prestigious award given to outstanding individuals by the Rotary Club of Sandton.

Enterprise Investment Forum
We have developed a new forum on national investment. Now for the questions you have heard, of which your suggestion is:

Come to our meeting when Dr. A. M. M. K. B. and Vice President of National Health, and Mr. H. M. H. A. N. B. Chief Director of National Health System, talk to us about National Health, and the health vote.

This forum will be held at the Carlton Hotel on June 30 at 6.00pm.

Confirm your attendance with Judy Madumza or Lungi Zikakala at (011) 430-9365.

Non-member pay R33 at the door.

Another major black venture hit the road. Focus on Khulani Kugon and new opportunities in the hospitality sector.

Store and Inventory Management

The objective of this course is to give participants an insight into Store and Inventory Management. It is aimed at people who wish to further their career in this field. This includes all levels of employees, from junior to supervisory level.

Wits Centre for Development Business
Faculty of Management
University of the Witwatersrand

JSE

Share prices on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Buyer</th>
<th>Seller</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Had</td>
<td>R11.00</td>
<td>R11.20</td>
<td>R11.00</td>
<td>R10.50</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kimberlina</td>
<td>R11.50</td>
<td>R11.30</td>
<td>R11.00</td>
<td>R10.75</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Allis Life</td>
<td>R11.20</td>
<td>R11.00</td>
<td>R10.75</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
<td>R9.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Metropolitan</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
<td>R9.50</td>
<td>R9.25</td>
<td>R9.00</td>
<td>R8.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Conserva</td>
<td>R10.50</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
<td>R9.75</td>
<td>R9.00</td>
<td>R8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Corp Africa</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
<td>R9.50</td>
<td>R9.25</td>
<td>R9.00</td>
<td>R8.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Airtel Investment</td>
<td>R10.50</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
<td>R9.75</td>
<td>R9.00</td>
<td>R8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Ritz Africa</td>
<td>R11.00</td>
<td>R10.50</td>
<td>R10.00</td>
<td>R9.75</td>
<td>R9.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Closing figures: 26 May 1975. For the shares quoted, the share price is the highest level reached in 26 years. All figures are in Rand. For the shares quoted, the share price is the highest level reached in 26 years. All figures are in Rand.
The man called Friday is gone

ON THE SURFACE, Friday Mandla Mavuso was a disability rights' activist. But, reports Medical Correspondent Janine Simon, he was much more: his name was legend, his life made a difference to others' lives.

Friday was late for the official opening of the Chris Hani Memorial Hall in Crown Mines. When he arrived, President Nelson Mandela left the hall, walked through the crowd to the back of the hall to greet him.

In Transkei, long-time friend and colleague Mike du Toit is killed by traffic police. "I work for Fridays," he says. "Go on your way," they reply.

In Dundayo, Guguletu, Piet Retief, Welkom, Virginia, Alexandra and 124 other remote places people lined the streets when he visited.

David Malgas of Graaff Reinet travelled 1 000km to Egoti to find the man called Friday because he'd heard this man helped disabled people to create work for themselves. He and others came on one-way tickets, with not so much as an address to guide them to be taught by Friday to start their own projects, which he would visit.

He was killed in a motor accident on Sunday night, returning from the Zincabia Centre for the Disabled in Newcastle.

The shock and tears this week were because Friday, sunglasses wedged on his head, match between his teeth, and towering magnetically from his wheelchair, would never again be able to give what he had come to depend on: inspiration.

Little work was accomplished this week at Shap in Morale, Soweto, the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics Friday founded in 1981. All went.

He used as seed money R74,000 awarded after a seven-year civil court battle against the Minister of Police. Friday's was one of the first civil cases against then-Minister Jimmy Kruger. In July 1974, as a little soccer-mad 24-year-old, he had intervened in a scuffle, took a police bullet in the lower back, and was wrongly charged with an offence.

He spent four years in Bophuthatwa, watching other disabled patients cut chunks of flesh from their backs with razor blades to prolong hospital stays. He knew hospitals held no future for him and that the world did not owe disabled people a living. He tried a knitting project, driving a taxi and selling vegetables before Shap took shape.

For his achievements, Friday, whose formal education ended in Std 2, has been honoured with an appointment to the board of Transnet, an honorary doctorate from the University of Cape Town, and a string of other awards including Rotary, Jaycees, Bona magazine, and, in 1986, a medal from the then Prime Minister, P W Botha, which he chose not to accept.

He was elected chairman of Disabled People South Africa in April, a feat secretary-general Mike du Toit described as "like Mandela taking office".

But Friday is no longer there to share the pain of bedsores, loss of income and self-esteem, nor transport problems. He can no longer appeal decisively for contracts and money for Shap, which has been forced to lay off almost half its 100 workers.

And he can no longer throw his considerable weight behind the disability lobby, only just beginning to gain ground with a voice in the Senate and in the National Assembly, a disabled person sitting in the Union Building's RDP office, and the Government's new policy on disability due in September.

Friday is survived by his wife, Tshidi and three children. A memorial service will be held today and the funeral on Friday.
Disabled activist's memorial

BY ABBEY MAKOEB
SOWETO BUREAU

Friday Mavuso, the activist for paraplegic rights who died this week, was described by many speakers yesterday at a memorial service in Mofolo, Soweto, as a true champion of the disabled.

Catherine Tindall, who represented Johannesburg Consolidated Investments, said of Mavuso, who was killed in a head-on collision in Natal on Sunday: "Friday brought brightness to all of us. He was a man of tremendous courage, and absolute determination. "He led a lifestyle of service and enriched our lives," she said.

Mavuso was a founder and executive director for the Soweto-based Self-Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap). He was also chairman of the Disabled People of SA, and served on several boards of directors, including that of Transnet.

A spokesman for the rail company at the memorial service said Mavuso's death was a big loss to the board.

Mavuso will be buried at Doornkop cemetery, Soweto, on Sunday. The service, from 10am, will be held at the Shap offices in Mofolo.

Irreplaceable loss... Jabulani Mkhaliphi (2) of Soweto at the memorial service for Friday Mavuso.

PICTURE MOLHALE MAHLABE
Friday Mavuso ... his colleagues at Shop are determined to make his dreams come true.

**Dream lives on after sad death**

By Bongani Mavuso

BRU Friday "Dla" Mavuso will be buried at the Doornkop Cemetery, Soweto, on Sunday.

But his unique ideals and vision to uplift the living conditions of the disabled will not rest with him. His colleagues have vowed to continue from where he left off.

Friday Mavuso was born on a Friday. He was shot on a Friday. His mother died on a Friday. He was married on a Friday. He once said: "I would probably die on a Friday."

Mavuso, the president of the Self Help Association for Paraplegics (Shop) in Mofolo, died in a road accident last Sunday while on his way home from Newcastle in KwaZulu Natal.

He had gone there to resolve problems facing paraplegics at the Zamazisa Centre for the Disabled.

Mavuso was paralysed by a police bullet in 1974. He spent four years in hospital. Thereafter, he worked relentlessly to bolster — economically and socially — the standard of living of disabled people.

When he met an untimely death, Mavuso was working on several projects which his close associates at Shop say, if they could materialise, would "greatly" empower paraplegics.

These include plans to build a computer school at Shop Centre. Literacy programmes would also be conducted at the centre, said Mavuso's personal assistant Mr Tselei Leow.

About a month ago, Bru Dla built a hydroponic garden at the centre. Negotiations with top hotels to purchase vegetables grown there were still under way.

Last Friday, before leaving for Newcastle, Mavuso had visited several shops in Soweto where disabled people were carrying out a painting project. He was especially excited as the project was awarded this project by a local manufacturing company.

Louw said Mavuso was also negotiating with a top hotel group for Shop to manufacture handmade items and sell them at the hotel stores.

He was also negotiating with a Johannesburg college to offer its employees electronic courses.

"All these projects are aimed at empowering the disabled economically and educationally," Louw said.

Mavuso fought to see disabled people living an independent normal life. "He lived for the disabled," Louw says.

"We are determined to work very hard to keep his vision alive."

"He dreamt of seeing the disabled community accepted and respected by society.

Bru Dla founded Shop in 1981 after realising the difficulties faced by disabled people. The factory, as he preferred to call Shop centre, employs about 120 disabled people.

Products manufactured at the centre include underground-dining tables and protective wear for mine workers. Slide projectors and cameras are also repaired. The factory is managed and staffed by the disabled.

Renowned poet Mzwakhe M discipl has written a poem in tribute to the fallen champion of the disabled.

It reads in part: "God why take away Friday! Dla leave me and others worse off alive?"

"Why turn the shepherd from the sheep?"

"When Friday Mavuso enters thy Kingdom ... honour him with your noble crown ..."

"When he enters thy Kingdom ... ask him who should look after his flock. When he enters thy Kingdom ... tell him his departure was too early and too soon for Heaven ..."
Wheelchair-bound campaigner remembered as a man of ‘many words and many actions’

By ABBEY MAKOE

Sowetans were this week shocked by the death of one of the township’s most prominent leaders, Friday Mavuso, a wheelchair-bound campaigner for the disabled.

Mavuso, described as his memorial service this week as "a man of many words and many actions", died in a car accident in Natal last weekend.

Mourners, most in wheelchairs or aided by walking sticks, others blind and guided by those who could see, wept for the man credited with changing South Africa’s attitude towards paraplegics.

At the time of his death, Mavuso (46) was a founder and executive director of the Soweto-based Self Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap). He also established Disabled People of SA, of which he was chairman.

Some of the highlights of Mavuso's career included involvement in the inauguration of President Mandela, serving on the Transnet board of directors and receiving an honorary masters degree in social work from the University of Cape Town in 1993.

Among those who attended Mavuso’s memorial service were ANC stalwart Walter Sisulu, former Operation Hunger head Ina Perlman and Soweto mayor Danny Kekana.

Sisulu said: “He (Mavuso) was a great man (of) great deeds. He never accepted defeat and fought for people to be given a chance.”

Mavuso, who is survived by his wife and two children, will be buried at the Avalon cemetery in Soweto tomorrow. The service will be held from 10 am at the offices of Shap in Motloko.
A caring giant who gave hope to those who had lost it all

BY TAMOTENA MABOTE

IT TOOK a bullet from a policeman in 1974 to change the life of Friday Manda Mavuso for ever.

Although he was paralysed, unable to play the soccer he loved, Mr Mavuso's injuries forced him to become a national figure, someone who gave hope to disabled people all over the country.

After lying in a hospital bed for four years and going through two protracted court cases, Mr Mavuso set up the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics (Shap).

Fourteen years after he took the decision to help paraplegics to help themselves, Shap employs more than 100 disabled people from all over Gauteng.

This self-taught man-about-town, a former boxer and soccer star, died in a car accident last week.

When he eventually left hospital in his wheelchair, Mr Mavuso appeared in court, charged with robbery, resisting arrest and obstructing a policeman in the execution of his duty.

However, Mr Mavuso was acquitted after telling the court that the policeman, who had been drinking with colleagues, had attacked him while he was looking for a friend in a shebeen.

The acquittal was the beginning of a new life.

Mr Mavuso took what little money he had and instructed attorneys to bring a claim against the police.

It was a long, hard road he had embarked on.

His lawyers withdrew from the case so Mr Mavuso went to the Legal Aid Bureau, which agreed to help him.

Eventually, the court ruled in his favour and awarded him R75,000 in damages.

In 1981, almost two years after his court victory, Mr Mavuso founded Shap — and began giving hope to the disabled.

As the organisation went from strength to strength, Mr Mavuso became the voice of paraplegics in South Africa. His business acumen and wit saw him, despite his lack of education, frequently being invited to address national and international conferences.

He received an honorary degree from the University of Cape Town, served on the Transnet board, became chairman of the Disabled People of South Africa and won the Paul Harris Fellowship Award.

Said Popi Buthelezi, a co-founder of Shap: "When he suggested this organisation to me it was like the second coming of Christ... I had just lost my mother and, with my disability, I was dejected and hopeless."

Ms Buthelezi, who is also wheelchair-bound and now the manager of Shap's finances, described Mr Mavuso as a brother and a friend.

Another long-time friend, Mandla Mafaika, said although Mr Mavuso never beat about the bush when something annoyed him, he was quick to forgive and get on with the job.

Mr Mavuso will also be remembered for his unquenchable — and sometimes shocking — sense of humour.

For Siphiwe Khumalo, who was recruited to Shap last year, Mr Mavuso was a mentor. Siphiwe was called to his office every day and guided through Shap's plans.

"He actually put a cellular phone in his car just to call me daily from wherever he was to get an update of what was happening in the office."

Mr Mavuso died last Sunday when his car was involved in a head-on collision on the road between Balfour and Greylingstad.

He will be buried today at the Doornkop Cemetery in Soweto.

"We shall take his baton and run with it. Shap will never die as long as we live. We will do it in his memory," said his friends, colleagues and those he helped at the association.
Mourners in sad farewell to Mavuso

BY ABBEY MAKOE

Dignitaries from all over the country gathered in a solemn assembly to pay their last respects to Soweto’s prominent leader for paraplegics, Friday Mavuso, who was buried at the Doornkop cemetery yesterday.

Mavuso (46), who first made the headlines in 1980 when he won a court battle against the State for being unlawfully paralysed by a drunken off-duty policeman’s bullet, died a week ago in a car crash in Eastern Transvaal.

Among the mourners who braved the chilly weather were Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwane, SA Football Association general secretary Stix Morewa, editor of the Soweto Aggrey Klaaste, Winnie Mandela and a host of disabled people.

Speaker after speaker praised Mavuso, who single-handedly started the Soweto-based Self Help Association of Paraplegics with the money he received after suing the State. He was also a co-founder of the national Disabled People of SA movement.

Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture Bridgette Mabandla described Mavuso as a great advocate of human rights who fought an outstanding battle to put an end to discrimination against the disabled.

Mavuso’s coffin was laid on top of his mother. Ida Mavuso’s coffin. Ida died in 1982. As the coffin was lowered, paraplegics overcame with emotion and wept openly.

Mawakhe Mbulli, a well-known poet, said one was tempted to question God’s wisdom in “taking” Mavuso and leaving behind people like mass murderer Barend Strydom.

It was a sad farewell for Mavuso, whose campaign for respect for the disabled saw Sowetans gradually stop referring to paraplegics as “cripples”, a term which, put bluntly, means “the useless ones”.

MONDAY
JULY 3, 1995

Speakers salute Mavuso

JOHANNESBURG: Dignitaries from all over the country gathered to pay their last respects to Soweto’s prominent leader for the paraplegics, Mr Friday Mavuso, who was buried at the Doornkop cemetery yesterday.

Mr Mavuso, 46, who first made the headlines in 1980 when he won a court battle against the state for being paralysed by a drunken off-duty policeman’s bullet, died last Sunday in a car crash in KwaZulu-Natal.

Among the high-profile mourners who braved the chilly weather were Gauteng premier Mr Tokyo Sejake, SA Football Association’s general-secretary Mr Stix Morewa, Sowetan editor Mr Aggrey Kinsa, Mrs Winnie Mandela and a host of disabled people.

Speaker after speaker praised Mr Mavuso, who single-handedly started the Soweto-based Self Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap) with the money he received after successfully suing the state. He was also a co-founder of the national Disabled People of SA movement.

Advocate

Mrs Bridgette Mabandla, Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, described Mr Mavuso as “a great advocate of human rights” who fought an outstanding battle to put an end to discrimination against the disabled.

Mr Mavuso’s coffin was laid on top of that of his mother, Mrs Ida Mavuso, who died in 1962. As the coffin went down paraplegics overcome with emotion were openly “Boet Friday” (brother Friday) some cried.

Well-known resistance poet Mzwakhe Mbuli said: “one was tempted to question God’s wisdom in “taking” Mr Mavuso and leaving behind people like mass murderer Barend Sloane.

It was a sad farewell for Mr Mavuso, whose campaign for respect for the disabled saw Sowetans gradually stop referring to paraplegics as “cripples”.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
Tearful farewell to Friday

By Sibusiso Mabaso

CRIES of grief echoed in the Shap stadium in Mofolo, Soweto, as thousands of mourners paid a poignant farewell to Mr Friday Mavuso yesterday.

Mavuso, who was president and founder of the Self-Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap), died in a road accident a week ago while on his way home from Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal.

He was buried at Doornkop cemetery after a three-hour emotion-charged service at the Shap centre.

Draught mourners lined the street and formed a guard of honour for Mavuso. Many of them could not hold back their tears. Former chairman of the Disabled People of South Africa, Dr William Rowland, said Mavuso would be remembered for his brilliant ideals and vision in uplifting the living conditions of the disabled in South Africa.

In his message of condolence, read out by Rowland, President Nelson Mandela said Mavuso's sudden and untimely death was a great shock to the nation.
Boost for disabled in government
support plans for small business

GOVERNMENT support
programmes for small and
informal businesses will es-
specially target people in
that sector who are dis-
abled, a two-day workshop
for small, medium and mi-
cro enterprises was told this
week.

Alistair Ruiters, special
adviser to the Minister of
Trade and Industry, said the
department is processing a
grant application from Dis-
abled People South Africa,
and "has identified the dis-
abled as a target group for
support this year.

Petronella Linders of Dis-
abled People South Africa
said at the workshop people
who have one or other dis-
ability have more difficulty
than others in getting fi-
nancing from banks because
they are considered high
risk.

Also, training pro-
grammes offered by NGOs
(non-government organisa-
tions) for people who want
to apply for bank loans are
not adapted to the needs of
people with disabilities.

"People are told to go for
training before they can ap-
ply for a bank loan. But
none of the courses offered
are adapted for people who
are blind or deaf. The mate-
rial is not in Braille, nor is
sign language available."

Ms Linders urged NGOs
to call on Disabled People
of South Africa for advice
on how to adapt their pro-
grammes to suit the blind
or deaf.
HOUT BAY

Disabled children to get skills training

Southern Reporter

PRE-SCHOOL children with disabilities in Hout Bay and surrounding areas now have the services of an occupational therapist who has started classes five mornings a week in a school.

Occupational therapist Cathy Atkins, who is also a member of the Hout Bay Christian Fellowship non-denominational church, said the church's pre-school facility in Hout Bay was closing and two classrooms would become available for her to help disabled children who have not yet been placed in suitable facilities.

"I already have a list of mentally disabled people in the Imizamo Yethu squatter camp given to me by Virginia Yapi who is very concerned about the children in that camp. I would like names of others so we can decide how to proceed."

She said she — with the help of some people in her church and possibly with mothers in the squatter camp — would teach the children to walk if they couldn't, dress themselves if they couldn't, learn the difference between colours and many others things children needed to know.

Ms Atkins says children with mental and physical disabilities from 3 to 15 years old would be welcome at her class.

"When I get all the names we will get together and I will assess levels of disability and levels of development. When the pre-school children reach school-going age they could then go to the facility at Ocean View."

"If you know of any mentally and physically disabled children in the area who could benefit from the classes, call Cathy at the church on 760 1464 (leave message) 699 3936 (a/h) or 790-2861 (a/h)."
Donation to jobs for disabled

The Industrial Development Corporation has donated R716,000 to the Orion organisation for the disabled in Atlantis.

The money will be used to create job opportunities for disabled people within the community.
Shell Livewire contest for entrepreneurs

By Isaac Moledi

SHELL Livewire's business skills training programme for this year in Gauteng now enters its last phase, the Young Business Awards competition.

Already 200 young people have attended a five-day intensive Livewire Business Skills workshops held at various centres in the Vaud Triangle, Pretoria, East Rand and Johannesburg.

Potential entrepreneurs

Besides the 200 potential entrepreneurs who attended these workshops, the Young Business Awards competition, to be held in October, also invites entries from young people who have not been through the Livewire programme, but have businesses that have been running for three years.

So, if you are running a business in Gauteng and are under the age of 30, this is your chance to win a Shell Livewire Young Business Award Competition worth thousands of rand. Prizes range from R3 000 to more than R15 000.

Recognition will be given to the best business plan and the best young business.

Business plans

The training courses in business idea formulation, managed by Shell, have played a major role in helping young entrepreneurs draw up their business plans, so they can run businesses efficiently and solicit for finance.

Small business ventures

Some of the trainees have already started small business ventures to put into practice ideas learnt on the course, says Shell.

Those interested in the programme can contact Keith Ngcobo or Georgina Nyamekwa on (011) 482-3667 for more details.

SAB helps the sick and disabled

By Isaac Moledi

DISABLED YOUTHS AT THE Tsakane school near Brakpan will now have a chance to learn basic skills and improve their chances of finding work after a donation needed to qualify the school for funding from the Department of Education.

South African Breweries District East has donated R20 000 to Matschinda Special School for the Disabled to enable it to qualify for funding from the Department of Education. The pupils will be taught woodwork, metalwork and other skills.

School management board member Mr. Leonard Kgomo says the school was grateful for the SAB grant as it will enable the school to impart skills to disabled youths and open new opportunities for them.

"We would like to be self-sufficient," says Kgomo, adding that the school would start gardening programmes so that they could sell vegetables to the local community.

In another development on the East Rand, SAB's District North donated R38 000 to help Hospice in the area to train residents in the care of cancer and AIDS patients. The project will run for 16 weeks.

"We intend running two courses a year in basic care skills, to enable people to help terminally ill patients who remain unattended in their homes," says trainee and nursing sister Valencia Mkhize.

As part of their training, the trainees will work at old age homes and other health centres in the area to gain practical experience. The trainees will also train families in caring forailing relatives.

SAB North district manager Mr. Hloai Matsela says the company assists in this type of training as it is often neglected because of other pressing RDP needs.

"We feel it is critical for our youths to be empowered with such skills. It could well be their own parents or relatives who suffer from such illness," he says.
Pilot flies on global mission

LYNETTE JOHNS

A WHEELCHAIR-BOUND Portuguese pilot is flying around the world in an attempt to persuade authorities to allow disabled pilots to man flight controls.

Mr Antonio Mello, 53, set out from Lisbon, where he lives, in his BeechCraft Bonanza F-33A last week and hopes to complete his circumnavigation in September.

He flew to Guinea, Sierra Leone, Abidjan and Windhoek and landed in Cape Town on Sunday. He left for Mozambique early yesterday.

He was left paralysed 17 years ago when he was misdiagnosed as having a malignant tumour on his spine and was operated on. After months of treatment it was found he had initially had a slipped disc.

Mr Mello, who piloted Boeing 737s, lost his pilot's licence in Portugal, but gained another from the International Wheelchair Aviators in California in 1989. He now works for the Portuguese Air Force as an authority on civil aviation.

He said he hoped to demonstrate that disabled pilots could fly aeroplanes. "The disabled are still healthy people and I need to convey this to the aviation medical boards around the globe who do not allow disabled pilots to fly."

REACHING FOR THE SKY: Former Boeing jumbo pilot Mr Antonio Mello of Portugal is flying around the world to appeal to international aviation authorities to allow disabled pilots to fly aircraft with specially adapted controls.

PICTURE: NIC BOTHMA
Insecurity, dread replaced by hope

By Betsy Spratt

For many youths, coming of age is a time to explore new horizons. But for South Africa’s black disabled, it is often a time of uncertainty and dread.

Many of these youths can only look forward to unplanned days spent wandering the streets, a situation Sowetan-Eskom’s Woman of the Year nominee Ms Florence Mathinye has worked to correct. In 1990 she started the Ipoppeng Development Centre in Thabong, Welkom, Free State, to provide disabled youths with an educational bridge between childhood and adulthood.

Mathinye was touched by their plight after her son Charles, an epileptic and score of other disabled youths who had come of age, were required to leave Leboneng Special School.

“He would ask me ‘Mommy, why can’t I go to school anymore?’” said Mathinye of her son who died in 1992 after years spent suffering from a condition that left his speech and hearing impaired and him wheelchair-bound.

Prior to his death, he and other disabled youths spent most of their time on the streets of the location near Welkom.

However, Mr Loius Schoonraad, principal of Leboneng Special School, explained why it was necessary for pupils to leave the school.

“Schools are not allowed to have pupils who have reached adulthood,” he said. “They would be taking the place of younger children who wanted to go. What is needed is an after-care facility for these older pupils.”

Schoonraad said the Ipoppeng Development Centre addresses one of the nation’s direct needs—providing educational and job opportunities for disabled black young adults.

“Instead of wandering the streets, these young people could learn crafts like making baskets to sell and earn money,” he said. Schoonraad added that he hoped the centre would one day work in conjunction with the school to make the youths’ entry into adulthood less traumatic.

Registration

He said he hoped the centre would one day be registered as an official after-care facility to allow greater numbers of the disabled to learn woodworking, sewing, and handicrafts in order to be assured of a livelihood.

However, the skills taught at the centre are not only designed as a way of providing the youths with a livelihood, but also as a way of helping them counter the effects of epilepsy, mental and physical disabilities and poor motor skills.

Florence Mathinye

“Because of their disabilities, many of the students only use one hand in their crafts,” Mathinye said.

Each day the pupils, ranging in age from 10 to 32, receive instruction at the Thabong Library, the site of the centre. However, the centre will soon relocate to Old Municipal Building in Welkom, a site donated by the city council.

The Disabled Children’s Action Group has provided funding to help furnish the new site, said Ms Washilla Sait, national project director.

“The Ipoppeng Development Centre was identified as a worthwhile pilot project by groups in the provinces,” she said. Once the centre is moved to its new location, Mathinye will arrange advance training in woodworking for the older pupils and open a crockery for the younger children.”
Disabled man 'able to work' if someone gives him chance

By Patrick Wadula

by holding a pen in his mouth in order to write, a cheerful, but disgruntled disabled Pontso Ndlouv said he was able to work, provided he was given a chance.

Ndlouv, who was born disabled, returned to South Africa from Botswana in 1992 and moved in with his sister in Diepkloof, Soweto.

He approached The Star after having failed to get a job for the last three years. Speaking in an interview, Ndlouv said that ever since he came back home to South Africa from Botswana, he had tried to get himself a job because he was able to work, but no one took him seriously.

Ndlouv, who was able to wash his own clothes and bath on his own, was also able to type. He added that he did not want to be dependent on anyone, especially his sister.

"I don't want to stand on the street corner and beg, I don't want to be fit for people when I am capable of working, despite my condition," he said.

Ndlouv said he had been to see a social worker at Baragwanath Hospital but the social worker referred him to SABC Radio Bantu.

"If only I could find a job, so that I can live on my own and support myself without depending on other people, this will be a great thing," he said.

The Association for the Physically Disabled assists the disabled people who are capable of working on their own. They could be contacted through Diana Sthomas on (011) 646-8331 and the contact person in Soweto is Bertha Mafuku on (011) 984-4200.

Able disabled ... Pontso Ndlouv enters The Star building determined to prove that he is able to cope in a work situation.

Picture: Etienne Rothbart
Nkeli deyes al add to realise dream

By Musa Zonda

Attached: Document 15/8/94

Djamae has done a lot of work in the office of President, as it is required by the law. The President is in charge of the government of Botswana, and the President’s office is in Gaborone. This is where the President signs all important documents and makes important decisions. In the President’s office, the President has a lot of important meetings with government officials, political leaders, and other important people. However, the President is also responsible for the overall direction and strategy of the country, and the President’s office works closely with other government agencies to ensure that the country runs smoothly. In addition, the President’s office is responsible for managing the President’s official schedule, appointments, and travel plans. Overall, the President’s office plays a crucial role in ensuring that the country is well-governed and that the President is able to carry out his duties effectively.
A BRITISH innovator and a team of disabled South Africans say they will bring news and information to poor people around the world with a new invention—wind-up radios.

This month a Cape Town factory will start producing Trevor Baylis's radios powered with wind-up generators. The company is 99 percent owned by an association of disabled people, Disability Employment Concerns, who will form the bulk of the factory's 150 employees.

Twenty seconds of winding produces about 40 minutes of listening. The invention, hailed as a "fantastic achievement" by President Nelson Mandela, has been toyed with by others, but the South African factory, in Montague Gardens, near Cape Town, will be the first to produce wind-up radios.

Mr Baylis, a former escape artist, tinkerer and inventor of gadgets, got his idea after listening to doctors on a TV documentary describe the difficulty of getting information about AIDS to people in remote African villages who could not get batteries.

"We would like the radios to be used for education purposes, particularly regarding the spread of dread diseases like AIDS and cholera in the developing world," said managing director David Butlion.

Development organisations want to distribute the radios in war zones like Bosnia and Rwanda, he said.

"The idea is of a great deal of interest in many, many developing country situations," said David Halliday, a Denmark-based purchasing officer for Unicef.

Mr Baylis's company, BayGen, will initially produce about 20,000 radios a month. Running at full capacity, the factory has the potential to produce about one million radios a year, Mr Butlion said.

The radios, which will last four to five years, will initially only be produced in South Africa, but BayGen hopes to establish operations in other countries soon.

Mr Butlion is researching new applications for the wind-up generator. BayGen could soon be producing lamps, flashlights, or even TV sets, he said. —Sapa-AP

RADIO REVOLUTION ... David Butlion with the revolutionary new wind-up radio

Live from SA: Clockwork
Govt aims to help disabled

THE government has drawn up a draft timetable for implementing a national strategy to improve the lot of the disabled which includes setting up a disability office in the Office of the President by March next year.
Meanest muggers alive

□ Blind victims targeted — and police can't help

Staff Reporter

WHEN blind Eric Majoli was mugged, his attackers stole his white cane.

Then he was attacked again and his source of entertainment — his radio — was taken.

He is one of an increasing number of blind people who have been victims of violent attacks.

Now the League of Friends of the Blind are helping the visually handicapped blow their assailants away — with the help of a whistle.

Director of the league Philip Bam said the whistles would enable the blind to summon help in times of emergency.

He said attacks on blind people had increased and a number of league workers had been mugged and stabbed on trains.

The league had raised the matter with the police and Metro rail service but because blind people could not identify their attackers, it made it almost impossible for the police to make any arrests.

Muggers knew this — and the fact that voice identification was not admissible in court — and targeted the blind.

Mr Bam said blind people wanted the police to follow up their cases.

But because the value of items taken was so low, the attacks were not treated very seriously.

Mr Bam said in one incident, four men attacked two blind workers, robbed them and tried to throw them off the train but they fought back.

The league trains the blind to function independently so they can lead normal lives. But Mr Bam said that if they were to be frequent attacks, they would become dependent again.

He said the attacks caused victims to distrust people who genuinely wanted to help.

Mr Majoli, who works at the league, says after his two attacks, he cannot trust anybody.

When his cane and glasses were stolen, he tried to summon help.

"I ran into the road to try and stop a car but nobody stopped."

After the second attack during which his radio was stolen, he reported the theft to the police. But he said he felt they did not treat the case seriously.

Abraham Fortein said when he was mugged, two men took his train ticket and R14.40.

He said: "I was helpless they searched my pockets and just took what they could find."

Ernest Mampota who is partially sighted said when he boarded a train on the Cape Flats line one evening, a fight broke out.

"I was terrified when I heard the noises and because I can only see slightly, my mobility was restricted. A group of men came towards me and tried to stab me for so reason at all."

"I moved into a corridor so that they could not stab me in the back."

"More men joined them and started beating me. When the train stopped at the next station they left and I jumped out."

"I found a fellow worker off the station and his pants was covered with blood. They had attacked him too."

"The station office was closed and we found no policeman and no security."

Mr Bam said the league had submitted a memorandum to Provincial Minister of Police Patrick McKenzie about the safety of the blind.

The minister responded by sending a police captain to the centre to give the workers a lecture about safety.

However, Mr Bam said it remained unacceptable that the most vulnerable persons in society were targeted by criminal elements.
Into the unknown... one of the handicapped people facing an uncertain future when the Siyabonga adult workshop in Alexandra closes down.

Picture Thys Dullaart

Handicapped now face uncertain future

Blow to disabled as work dries up

Star 29/8/95

BY MANDLA MTHEMBU

More than 40 handicapped people in Alexandra are facing a "disabled" future with the closure of the Siyabonga Adult Workshop (SAW) scheduled for the end of the month.

SAW development officer Iris Legodi said the centre had been a "shield for the disabled".

"Being at the centre protected the disabled from being subjected to abuses," she said.

But the centre's lifeblood, contract work for its disabled workers, has dried up.

The workers — most of whom suffer from epilepsy or other mental and physical handicaps — enjoyed the work because it kept them busy and was a welcome supplement to their disability grants. They usually earned R20 each week at the centre.

Most had no idea what they would do when the centre closed.

The work done in the centre included counting, labelling and packaging of items like safety pins and paper clips.

Legodi said the project — started in March last year — aimed at making the workers feel they were doing real work, just like their families, so that they could hold their heads up and contribute to their families' upkeep.

She said they were still negotiating with Sunfield Homes (which owns the centre) to give them a two-month grace in which to find an alternative home.

"If we have been informed in advance about the closure, we would have done something," Legodi lamented.

Sunfield said the closure was due to the high costs of food and transport.

In the meantime, volunteers were offering cultural activities to the disabled "to keep them busy".

SAW has been able to raise a few thousands and has appealed for more donations. The fundraising number for the Alexandra resource centre is 011/006380003.
Igsaan chose to be of help to others . . .

AFRIKA-MSIMANG
Staff Reporter

At the age of 16, Igsaan Hendricks became a quadriplegic after a diving accident at a social sporting event.

Since then, instead of focusing on his own pain, Igsaan chose to follow the philosophy of Buddha: "We are what we think."

Now, 10 years later, Igsaan is an honours student at the University of Stellenbosch.

As a youth full of vitality, Igsaan represented his school at Western Province athletics and rugby player — with few academic ambitions.

His pursuit of an academic life resulted from his physical destiny as a quadriplegic confined to a wheelchair. While undergoing rehabilitation in the spinal unit at Conradie Hospital, Igsaan felt a need to create a meaning from the most painful experience of his life.

When he was discharged from the hospital, Igsaan attended a school for the cerebral palsied in Athlone, where he matriculated within two years. He was then enrolled as a BA (psychology) student at the University of Stellenbosch.

Igsaan faced a lot of myths about his capabilities as a disabled person: "Even professional people were very negative when I decided to enroll at the university. I was told that even 'normal' students tend to drop out within their first year at university because they cannot cope with the work load."

But Igsaan refused to be discouraged and decided to equip himself with the knowledge to help him fight the "ignorant world."

Now he attends lectures on the second floor and has to use the stairs. But with the help of volunteers, Igsaan manages to find his way around, sometimes even to the canteen.

For his honours project, Igsaan works with four third-year students in an attempt to improve the quality of life of five other quadriplegics at Conradie Hospital.

Igsaan is excited about the team project at Conradie as he feels that it is his small way of contributing to others like him. He says a lot of time he finds other patients caught up in their sorrow and asking themselves, "What is the use of living as a cripple?"

Igsaan says he would eventually like to hear quadriplegics asking instead: "How can I use my physical handicap to my advantage and to the benefit of others?"

"People always expect me to fail and I always try my best to prove them wrong," he says with a smile.

Igsaan will be the first quadriplegic to graduate as an honours student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. If all goes well, Igsaan will be pursuing his master's degree in psychology next year.
**Nyanga disabled complain: 'Neglected and sidelined'**

**SABATA NGCAI (2/4)**

**Staff Reporter**

ANGRY disabled people from Nyanga say the new South Africa has not touched their lives, and that they are still the same Cinderella community they were in past years.

They claim they have been neglected and sidelined by the community in most efforts to reconstruct and develop the township.

The organisation Disabled People South Africa said the people's attitude towards the disabled had not changed at all.

The organisation's national development officer, Moolisi Toni, said his organisation was working hard to make the community aware and to make them treat disabled people as human beings.

Mr Toni said the organisation was also equipping the disabled "to be vigorous in their demands", and "not to be reduced to beggars".

They had never been consulted with a view to accommodating their views, needs and interests.

They had been negotiating in vain since March this year with a local development forum to secure a piece of land to build a centre for the disabled.

They accused the Nyanga Reconstruction and Development Forum (NRDF) of "dragging its feet" on the land issue.

There was lots of vacant land and they alleged the forum was "reluctant" to give it to them.

Forum chairman David Mkhize confirmed that there were vacant plots but said they were investigating ownership before they made any decisions.

Mr Mkhize said this would help to avoid any possible future legal action.

He said there was a piece of land in New Crossroads which the disabled people could use, but that the forum was in the process of negotiating with the residents in the area.

The disabled people claim they get no support from their neighbours.
Physically disabled face fight for business rights

MAUREEN MARUD
Business Reporter

PEOPLE with disabilities should expect no special treatment from banks.

In fact, in some cases disabled people are doubly handicapped by bankers who think they are also mentally incapacitated and are incapable of repaying a loan.

This was one of the messages to come out of a two-day self-employment promotion workshop for people with disabilities.

"I believe to a great extent that banks and financial institutions don't make any distinction between persons with disabilities and able-bodied people," said Roland Huckle, lecturer and consultant at the Institute for Small Business of the University of the Western Cape.

"People who are physically challenged are not going to get a special dispensation just because they are disabled.

He also felt disabled people were being left behind in the affirmative action drive.

"The emphasis is without doubt on African people, to a lesser extent on women, and then to an even lesser extent on people with disabilities."

"There is still this feeling out there that physically disabled people are mentally disabled. That is the mindset that has to be broken down.

He asked how many businesses which were monitoring the number of African people employed in management were also keeping tabs on their take of disabled people and their promotion.

He urged delegates to the workshop to lobby harder for proper jobs in industry, "not only as telephonists and receptionists, but as functionaries, as people capable of doing a full day's work."

A refusal from one bank to lend money to a disabled entrepreneur should not discourage that person, he said.

That shouldn't prevent you from going somewhere else for a loan. Keep going until you succeed in getting one.

"Your first rejection shouldn't be your last. A hallmark characteristic of an entrepreneur is the ability to rise up from the dead, as it were, after you've made a complete mess of something and to start again."

Vincent Daniels, who is partially sighted and works as a skills developer at the Cape Town Society for the Blind, said lobbying was necessary among other disabled people as well as with the able-bodied community.

"There is a lot of deadwood out there among our peers, many of whom are not as fired up about bettering their lot."

The attitude of apathy was related to a hand-out mentality, which accepted a pension and a disability grant as all that was required from life.

"A lot of the work has to be done within the disabled community. Once you have swept in front of your own door, you can go and tell other people to listen to you."

He suggested disabled people seek wider training and sell their labor.

"The protective workshops will never completely disappear, but one could probably reduce the number of people needing to go into them if you change the general mindset that something made by a disabled person is an inferior product."

Anne Strauman, whose disability is the result of a form of muscular dystrophy, said lobbying by disabled people had resulted in recent progress.

For instance, she was elected to the interim Provincial Small Business Council, and a special category for disabled people was subsequently written into the proposed Small Business Act due to be promulgated later this year.

She had also been elected to the Housing Board, and hoped to give input regarding disabled people in need of housing.

A major improvement was that banks which in future received financing from the government to help small and micro enterprises would be monitored on their refusal to handicapped people.

"We will see if there is a pattern emerging that excludes women, disabled and African people. Then we will take banks and financial institutions to task."

SBDC refuses R100 000 to blind group

Business Reporter

A GROUP of blind people have been refused a business loan by a lender who said their disability would prevent them from repaying the money, one of them claimed this week.

"We submitted our proposal to the Small Business Development Corporation," said Thulani Kula of the Western Cape Blind Association.

"After a long wait an official told us: 'My problem is that as you're blind, you can't be able to pay this money back.'"

Mr Kula said he was one of a committee from the association that sought a loan of R100 000 from the SBDC on behalf of about 80 association members who hoped to start a factory in which to make household chemical detergents.

The same work was being done by the visually impaired in Johannesburg, where a trainer was available to teach the Cape Town group.

Mr Kula said.

Johan Naude, assistant general manager of the SBDC, said that organisation's policy was to look at the viability of a proposal.

"If a person's disablement is going to make it impossible for him to run a viable business, obviously we have to turn it down."

Mr Naude said he couldn't comment on Mr Kula's claim specifically because he did not have the facts in front of him.

"People must appreciate that the most important thing to us would be the applicant's ability to repay the loan. One has to take blindness into consideration, because if it is a risk for people who are not blind to start something like that, everybody would agree that it is perhaps more risky for people who are blind."

SBDC refuses R100 000 to blind group

Business Reporter

A GROUP of blind people have been refused a business loan by a lender who said their disability would prevent them from repaying the money, one of them claimed this week.

"We submitted our proposal to the Small Business Development Corporation," said Thulani Kula of the Western Cape Blind Association.

"After a long wait an official told us: 'My problem is that as you're blind, you can't be able to pay this money back.'"

Mr Kula said he was one of a committee from the association that sought a loan of R100 000 from the SBDC on behalf of about 80 association members who hoped to start a factory in which to make household chemical detergents.

The same work was being done by the visually impaired in Johannesburg, where a trainer was available to teach the Cape Town group.

Mr Kula said.

Johan Naude, assistant general manager of the SBDC, said that organisation's policy was to look at the viability of a proposal.

"If a person's disablement is going to make it impossible for him to run a viable business, obviously we have to turn it down."

Mr Naude said he couldn't comment on Mr Kula's claim specifically because he did not have the facts in front of him.

"People must appreciate that the most important thing to us would be the applicant's ability to repay the loan. One has to take blindness into consideration, because if it is a risk for people who are not blind to start something like that, everybody would agree that it is perhaps more risky for people who are blind."
Hamlet Foundation encourages dedicated, meticulous workers to achieve full potential

By Nicole Johnston

As the door opens one is assailed by the sights and sounds of frenetic activity. Seated at work benches throughout the room scores of workers are assembling and packing at a furious rate.

The 110 workers are meticulous about their tasks and take great pride in their work. While they may sound like any boss's dream, these are not ordinary workers. They work at the Hamlet Foundation which trains and employs intellectually handicapped adults. The Hamlet approach is to empower these adults by following a programme of normalisation, allowing them to develop to their full potential.

The workers at the Hamlet are expected to follow standard business rules such as punctuality and high levels of quality control are met.

The aim is to allow intellectually disabled persons to become confident, well adjusted adults. The Hamlet is succeeding admirably in this task.

Each year The Hamlet's special team packs the hampers which The Star Christmas Hamper Fund distributes. Each of these hampers which goes to a needy family is packed by people who not only have special needs but special abilities too. By supporting the Christmas Hamper Fund you are also supporting their right to be fully productive members of society.

Please support the Christmas Hamper Fund by sending a donation to Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000.
Plan aims to include disabled in economy

JOHANNESBURG: A national strategy to promote equal opportunities for the disabled is to be included in the next Reconstruction and Development Programme White Paper, due out early next year, says Minister Without Portfolio Mr Jay Naidoo.

He told an International Day for the Disabled function in Soweto yesterday that a discussion document on the strategy had been made available for comment.

"This is the first time that government has developed a specific strategy to benefit disabled people," he said.

According to Health Department estimates about 13% of the population is disabled. Five percent of this figure is severely disabled.

It was proposed that disability be treated as a developmental rather than as a welfare issue, Mr Naidoo said.

Marginalised

"It discourages the development of people with disabilities, inhibiting integration into the mainstream of society," Mr Naidoo said.

"It marginalises and impoverishes them, denying them options and opportunities."

The government had committed itself to consultation with organisations representing the disabled and allocating the resources necessary. — Sapa
SA's 5-million disabled can expect better deal

Discussion document identifies education, employment and accessibility of the environment as priority areas

MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

The country took an important step towards improving the lives of its 5 million disabled citizens yesterday with the release of the first discussion document on a national strategy for disability.

In a statement released at the Friday Mavuso Self Help Association of Paraplegics in Soweto, Minister without Portfolio Jay Naidoo said a national strategy to promote equal opportunities for disabled people would be included in the next RDP white paper, due out early next year.

The core of the strategy document was that disability was now seen as a development, and not a health and welfare issue, and disabled people were seen as taxpayers, not tax burdens.

Shula Chalklen, National RDP Office disability desk director, said the discussion document identified education, employment and accessibility of the environment as priority areas for disabled people.

Researchers estimated that more than half of disabled children did not attend school, particularly in rural areas, and the illiteracy rate among disabled adults was particularly high, he said.

Unemployment was critical, with only 1% of disabled people employed in the formal sector.

Most disabled people were dependent on social welfare grants, which cost the Government R2.7-billion in 1994/5, and were allocated along a punitive and highly unsatisfactory system, Chalklen said.

Inaccessible toilets, buildings, public transport and services also blocked disabled people's drive for freedom.

Chalklen added that disabled people made up between 5 and 12% of the population, and it would not be unreasonable to expect them to benefit from between 5 and 12% of departmental budgets.

Although disability cut across various government departments, only six - health, welfare, education, labour, environment and public works - currently make provision for specific disability-related programmes.

If approved, the discussion document proposals would also set guidelines for appropriate terms to use when referring to people with disabilities.

The document proposes a lead-in period over 1995/6 and a medium-term national plan for the period 1997 to 2002.

The Public Service and Administration Ministry yesterday announced an active recruitment drive to better its target of employing disabled people in 2% of its posts.

Buildings, toilets and vehicles would be adapted to ensure access, it said in a statement.
RDP to benefit disabled people

By Zandile Nkutha

A NATIONAL strategy to promote equal opportunities for the disabled in South Africa will be included in the Reconstruction and Development Programme's White Paper due out early next year, Minister Without Portfolio Jey Naidoo said yesterday.

Addressing a gathering of the International Day for the Disabled in Soweto, Naidoo said the proposals contained in the discussion document were a framework for the development of an integrated national disability strategy which would, if approved, benefit disabled people.

Estimates by the Department of Health indicated that about 13 percent of the population was disabled, five percent of them severely. Sowetan 4/12/95

"The disabled should have an equal opportunity to participate fully in society, with equal obligations and responsibility towards society," Naidoo said.
Disabled catered for

He said in the past little was done to allow disabled people access to recreational programmes.

"In reality, there is no reason why any child should be denied the fun of participation in sport and recreation. But it has taken the disabled themselves to show the way," said Mandela.

He said the Disability Strategy that the Government recently adopted called for the participation of local authorities and sports bodies.

Secretary 5/10/95
Johannesburg CBD by no means wheelchair-friendly

The city's public roads are geared for non-handicapped pedestrians and motorists, but individuals do lend a hand.

BY BOBBY BROWN

Stairs and pavements without ramps, combined with discourteous motorists and nonchalant pedestrians, make Johannesburg's CBD a hostile place for the physically disabled - as I discovered when taking a ride through town on a wheelchair recently.

The city's pavements, roads and many of its public buildings seem geared mostly toward the convenience of ordinary pedestrians and motorists with the public library at the Library Gardens being almost the only exception.

Confined to a wheelchair and determined not to leave it, I approached the library and found two signboards informing me of a wheelchair entrance in Market Street.

I rang the bell, which is situated on a slope making it arduous to negotiate ringing the bell while holding the wheelchair on the ramp. When the door was opened, I was shown to an hydraulic wheelchair lift at the entrance. But I needed the toilet, so I had to negotiate the maze of tables and chairs with students in them.

The lift is tiny and it is difficult to wheel a wheelchair in, but that accomplished, I was pleasantly surprised at the large space afforded to disabled users in the toilet area.

But this was an exception. The post office in Sauer Street was in exactly the opposite state. On arrival, an employee appeared baffled as to why I needed to enter. He showed me to another entrance in Main Street where there was indeed a ramp, albeit a steep one with three steps at the bottom that had to be overcome first.

Another gent kindly advised me to return to the main entrance where I would be helped up the stairs.

My original “helper”, seeing my distress, then offered to help me up the ramp in Main Street and asked me to go back there.

He discovered that two chains barring entrance on the ramp had been welded shut and that I would not be able to enter. He nodded in grateful agreement when I offered to wheel the almost three kilometres to theiet in the city. The public toilets at the Gauteng Legislature in Market Street have steep stairs with no alternative access and nobody to assist or show another toilet. Getting into the legislature's public entrance was easy as the parking entrance doubles as a wheelchair entrance.

At this stage my backside, arms and hands were aching and I decided to head back to the office, a wheelchair-friendly building - with three steps to get in.

Using an ATM proved daunting

Jeppe Street post office instead

The uneven paving in some places and the lack of any paving in others, forced me to use the road, where rude and unobservant motorists and taxi drivers were the order of the day. Taxis came speeding up to me and slammed on their brakes, visibly irritated at the sight of me.

Security staff at the Premier's office at 30 Simmonds Street were helpful enough to lift me on to the step, but the building itself had no special accommodation for wheelchairs.

Most of Simmonds Street, although laid with cobble stones, has on and off-ramps at traffic lights for wheelchairs and push carts.

Using an ATM at Bank City proved daunting, even with a security officer nearby.

It was an effort to see the digits on the key panel and to reach the slot to insert a bank card. A thief would have found it easy to jog past and grab cash and exit the machine.

A detour around the cobbled-stoned Bank City to get to First National Bank proved fruitful and access was easy. The tellers' counters are easy to reach, but no arrangement is in place for a wheelchair to reach the ledger and management departments on the first floor.

“Everything that a person needs is on this floor, but if a person in a wheelchair needs to get to the first floor, we will gladly come down and serve them down here,” the bank's manager said.

Shopping at one of the major chain stores, Truworths in Harrison Street, was slightly easier than eating at the Wimpy across the road. It was at least possible to enter the clothing store and browse around in both the men's and women's sections.

The manager at the Wimpy said he had at least one regular customer who was wheelchair-bound and did not find it too difficult to get up and down the step at the entrance. Without lending a hand, he advised me how to get down the step again.

But the most harrowing experience was finding a place to relieve one
Uphill struggle ... Bobby Brown (in wheelchair) finds out just how difficult it is for the physically disabled to negotiate the streets of Johannesburg.
Irene Homes give hope to handicapped

In its 83 years of existence the home has recorded many success stories

By Muzi Mkhwanazi

The Anglican Church established a home for the mentally handicapped 83 years ago to show society that these people can be self-sufficient and cater for their own needs.

Now Irene Homes, near Pretoria, caters for 68 mentally handicapped women, whom they provide with comfortable family-type homes in a pleasant environment. A therapeutic section caters for the lowest performers in the group by giving them therapy and training.

A growing number of day patients are also employed in the home's workshops, which has created a demand for expansion.

But, despite the home's long history and continued popularity, at times it has struggled to be self-sufficient and to grow. It has embarked on a number of projects to raise funds and give mentally handicapped workers an income.

Contracts workshop

Three workshops are now well established. Workers build transformers, recycle stamps, weave and knit carpets and jerseys.

Mrs Mina Fineberg, the manager in charge of the contracts workshop, says a number of companies give them contracts, and the home is obliged to meet production deadlines.

The home has many success stories. On good days, it recycles up to 9 000 stamps. "And our electronics assembly section produces about 1 000 transformers and about 2 000 immobiliser switches in a day," says Fineberg.

Through their own efforts, mentally handicapped people have proved that they are as productive as anyone else in society.

"With the number of orders and the number of outside patients increasing, we need to expand and cater for more people."

Mr Frante Spies, the home's weaving manager, says although his department is the slowest it is also the most therapeutic and teaches patients a valuable craft.

"We sell our products to individuals and workers earn a living in the process," he says.

Fundraising campaign manager Mr Don Lennox says handicapped people are flocking to the home.

"Our workshops cannot cater for the growing number of people coming to the institution, especially the number of outside patients," he says.

The home has a long waiting list of people who wish to come and stay there, but due to lack of space, organisers are forced to turn away hundreds.

"Our situation has been exacerbated by dwindling Government subsidies," says Lennox. "We have resolved to embark on an ambitious but achievable plan to create more jobs in the workshops for the mentally handicapped people and to set Irene Homes on a path to self-sufficiency."

Fundraising campaign

Chairman of Irene Homes and Bishop of Pretoria, the Reverend Richard Kraft, says a major fundraising campaign has been started to raise more than R10 million over the next five years to implement the Irene Homes Job Creation and Development Programme.

He says the difficulties faced by mentally handicapped primary school leavers who are not able to get secondary or tertiary education, and cannot work by law until they are 18 years old is a problem.

In this regard, he says, plans are well advanced for a bridging course in life skills and general education to prepare mentally handicapped teenagers to earn an independent income through workshops.

Campaign chairman Mr Steve Ochse says: "The programme will have far-reaching implications for the home. Because of declining Government subsidies, there is an urgent need to secure the future of the mentally handicapped in a happy environment."

Lennox hopes that R5 million will be raised within six months to expand the industrial knitting workshop and other work rooms, and in this way create 60 new jobs.

Individuals, families and companies will be approached for funding."We hope that people from all walks of life will help us to achieve this important vision," Ochse says.
Group hopes to smooth the way for the disabled

The only consolation for wheelchair-bound soccer fans who could not get into the FNB stadium to watch South Africa in the African Cup of Nations tournament is that access may be improved in the future.

This is due to the first meeting of the National Environmental Access Programme (Neap) Gauteng, at the Mandela Sports Club in Johannesburg at the weekend. Neap will not only press for environmental access for wheelchair users, but for all the disabled, such as the blind, the deaf, the aged and amputees.

The Star was invited to the meeting after publishing an article exposing inaccessible areas of the Johannesburg CBD.

Jerry Ngeli, a personal injury lawyer specializing in personal damage claims, is one of the Neap activists who helped make the Johannesburg Supreme Court wheelchair-friendly, and who will now help to tackle the architects of the FNB stadium, where it took him an embarrassing two hours to get to see a soccer match.

"It was terrible. I am used to being independent, and because I was so determined to see the game, I had to be content with being picked up and carried. It was very embarrassing," said Ngeli.

He had to park a long distance from the stadium, since the entrance usually reserved for the disabled was reserved for VIPs.

Together with Neville Cohen, the acting chairman of Neap Gauteng, Ngeli has been battling with building owners about accessibility for the disabled.

"At first I could only use

Everything aimed at the able person

one courtroom at the Supreme Court, and now I can choose any court."

Cohen, who was paralysed 44 years ago in a car accident, says that "everything is aimed at the able-bodied person, but we are part of society and should not be ignored. From the banks to the airports, cinemas, shopping malls and even election polls are not accessible to us. Did anybody even stop to think how a blind person could vote in secrecy? The Government should by rights have voting sheets printed in braille."

Cohen played a key role in getting Neap started two and a half years ago. Although the Disabled People of South Africa group was doing a lot, special focus was needed on environmental access, he said. Neap would join forces with other institutions to form a strong body with clout.

"My last individual battle was with the Johannesburg International Airport guys. The airport is now partially accessible, but a lot remains to be done and Neap will take over from here," Cohen said, adding that it was "extremely degrading for a disabled person to be carried on to an aeroplane."

Cohen said one of Neap's more ambitious projects would be to introduce a voluntary hotel grading system: "Just like the little stars, we will get hotel owners to put little wheelchairs beneath the stars to indicate how accessible the venue is."

"Of course, it will be voluntary, but those who choose not to participate will obviously lose our clientele and will get our bad advertising."

The weekend meeting saw several suburban-based groups joining Neap and forming an executive committee, a task force and a future strategy. Cohen said Neap Gauteng already had sponsors who would donate R3 000 a month for 21 months, but that it needed more to get projects going and find permanent premises.
Rising costs threaten salary-replacement plans

BY LLEWELYN JONES

Johannesburg — Spiralling costs were threatening salary-replacement schemes, which were implemented by many employers to ensure a continuing stream of income to disabled employees, said Colin Tomsett, the employee benefits director at Sage Life.

At the launch of Sage Life’s new Funded Disability Income scheme this week, Tomsett said salary replacement schemes, or permanent health insurance, used to be a reasonably priced solution to the earnings loss of a disabled employee.

But the recent recession had led to a huge increase in costs to employers, sometimes threefold, Tomsett said.

One of the major contributors to the increase has been the abuse of the system by employers who disguised retrenchments as disability lay-offs. As the number of claims being paid by insurers soared, premiums followed suit.

“All this has meant that in its current form, permanent health insurance is becoming unaffordable to employers on top of all the other employee-benefit costs,” Tomsett said.

But he said Sage Life, which introduced permanent health insurance to South Africa, had formulated a solution to the problem — its new product, the Funded Disability Income scheme.

“In essence, it is a form of managed disability care, a long-term, cost-effective solution to disability management,” Tomsett said.

The trend, initiated by the unions to switch to fixed-contribution provident funds, had also aggravated the situation, as death and disability premiums reduced retirement benefits, he said.

“Sage Life’s Funded Disability Income makes a conceptual leap in viewing the situation holistically for the benefit of all parties concerned and involving them in managing it on an ongoing basis — employer, disabled employee, intermediary and life insurers,” Tomsett said.

Our research indicates that the costs to the employer will compete favourably with current permanent health insurance costs and, with proper management, will achieve the required beneficial results over the longer term for all the parties concerned,” he said.
Club appeals for financial aid

By Mudzi Mhlobozwi

In three short years, the Vukuzaazelo Community Club - which operates in a small shack in Nkulumo Extension 3 squatter camp in Soweto - has successfully battled many problems.

It caters for 230 pensioners and disabled people. It also includes a day-care centre and a number of self-help schemes for unemployed people.

Volunteer co-ordinator Anna Khumalo says the number of people who turn to them for help is increasing. It's uncanny. After only a few years, the number has more than doubled.

She says that has led to problems at their attempts to serve the public and achieve self-sufficiency because the money they raise from the day-care centre isn't enough and some patients don't pay at all.

A number of self-help schemes are in the pipeline, but due to lack of finance and adequate space, we cannot introduce these projects," she says.

They have even sent some disabled people away and care for them in their own homes because they cannot cope.

"It's a pity, but as we do not have tacheliers, we cannot help them at our club. What we need is space and dormitories from the community in order to help our people," she says.

Because of accommodation problems, the organisation was forced to

They care for many pensioners

limit the number of people who attend. We help them at home but that is not as good as a centre. The centre is very small and overcrowded," she says.

Some of these people cannot do anything for themselves and they are left alone when their children are at work. Their plight is depressing, she says.

"The centre is very small and overcrowded," she says.

Khumalo says, her organisation gives food to people but their help was limited because of their resources.

Agnes Ngwenya, a volunteer at the club, says they were even running short of basic supplies like soap, dishes and chairs, which are needed to run the day-care centre effectively.

"The centre is very small and overcrowded," she says.

Drumming and bungling activities were also delayed because they do not have any materials or teachers to help them.

Ngwenya says:

"We have been told of projects that we were going to undertake, but we have not yet undertaken them because of our resources. We have not yet undertaken them because of our resources."

Drumming and bungling activities were also delayed because they do not have any materials or teachers to help them.

Football and karate

In an attempt to remove kids from the streets, they established football and karate teams. "We appeal to people in the community to come forward and help us in this regard," says Ngwenya.

Agnes Madziro (71) says: "I have done it all my children are married. Although I do not receive pension money, it does not cover my expenses so I come to Vukuzaazelo for food parcels, which we get now and then.

"I have had two kids in support. People with money should come forward and help us to start our projects so we can become self-sufficient," she says.

"We are in need of a space where our people can work. It's a pity, but we have received a place, but the club helped me. I was ecstatic."

The club helped me. I was ecstatic."

"I have two kids in support. People with money should come forward and help us to start our projects so we can become self-sufficient," she says.

The club helped me. I was ecstatic."

"I have two kids in support. People with money should come forward and help us to start our projects so we can become self-sufficient," she says.

"I have two kids in support. People with money should come forward and help us to start our projects so we can become self-sufficient," she says.
Fair deal sought by pensioners of WW2

When it comes to paying pensions to war veterans from World War 2, it appears there is a huge disparity between those who had a good education and those who did not.

MAGOLISI MGXASHE
Staff Reporter

DISABLED veterans who had not passed the junior certificate or matric when they joined up during World War 2 have asked the government to remove all forms of discrimination in the allocation of pensions, including those based on academic background.

D & B Bieden, founding member of the Disabled Soldiers Association, a loose body of disabled ex-service men, said that apartheid no longer existed it was about time "this injustice" was also redressed.

In an interview Mr Bieden, who said he was speaking on behalf of almost 7 000 "victims of the discrimination", said in 1992 a revised military pension scheme came into effect in the country "which blatantly" favoured all those who had been "financially strong and fortunate enough to attend university".

University degree holders, even though they graduated after reintegration into civilian life at the end of the war, were according to DSA— grouped as "A" pensioners, and those with matric as "B" pensioners while those below standard 10, and lower, were grouped "C" and got the lowest benefits.

"When we volunteered for active service on the declaration of war many of us had left school during the depression after passing standard 8 or 9. No question were asked about our level of education. These days, a soldier was a soldier, said Bieden.

All disabled veterans are apparently paid the same basic allowances. The differences come in with the academic grading which give the "B" a 25 percent advantage over the "C" and the "A" a 66 percent difference over the "C" underdogs to which most black veterans belong.

Mr Bieden said this arrangement left differences in the pension scheme between the "A" and "C" groups ranging between R121 to R151 a month for soldiers who lost both feet.

He cited the case of disabled veteran Lucas Majaj, who had standard 6 at school and served in the war, as a stretch bearer.

"This man, who died last year at the age of 76 or so, saved many lives in that war, including mine. Lucas was wounded while carrying a wounded soldier. He went back for another injured soldier and was hit by enemy fire for the second time.

"But he went back for another man and was wounded for the third time... That's how he got the DSM, which is next to the Victoria Cross, the highest military honour."

Lucas died a victim of the discrimination I am talking about. Was it his fault that he could not, in the period of the depression, afford to go higher in his education?

"These are some of the things we have raised with the previous government but without success, and we hope now that we have a democratic government that listens to poor people things will be different," said Mr Bieden.

Meanwhile, another World War 2 veteran, Morris Archibald Dingwawo, 76, has spent more than a decade going up and down war veteran and social welfare offices in Cape Town trying to claim his war veteran pension benefits.

He has not up to now had these, but was instead offered the more general old-age benefit. He was apparently told several times by the relevant authorities that now, that he was on the old-age pension he could not get the war veteran benefits.

But Mr Dingwawo has not for all these years accepted that explanation and he is still fighting to get what he believes is due to him.

He obtained a certificate of service from the South African Defence Force on March 31, 1991 as evidence of his service in the army.

"I went to the Defence Force in 1991 to introduce myself, without any records. I asked the army to keep my letter of discharge in my file when I was discharged in 1944, but I was told that my file was missing."

"They asked me if I could still remember the division or ship I had served in and I told them it was in the native non-combat staff of the South African Engineers Corps. They were satisfied and gave me the certificate of service, but not my pension benefits," Mr Dingwawo said.

Mr Dingwawo said he spent all this time hoping that the deductions, made from his earnings as a worker cleaning the heavy weaponry aboard a warship and whatever was due to him in pension as a veteran, would one day be reimbursed to him.

He said he had heard from the news that a conference of ex-service men from Commonwealth countries were meeting in Cape Town to address, among other things, the problems of ex-service men pensions and other benefits to war veterans.
Naidoo takes up cudgels for SA's disabled people

PRETORIA. — About 99 percent of South Africa's half-a-million disabled people are not formally employed, according to a government discussion document issued here.

The document ascribed this to legislation discriminating against the disabled, inadequate educational facilities for them, a lack of vocational rehabilitation and the discriminatory attitude of employers.

The document, published by Minister without Portfolio Jay Naidoo in the Government Gazette yesterday, described the disabled as the most marginalised minority group in society. They comprised about 12 percent of the population.

"Most are among the poorest of the poor," Mr Naidoo said in his foreword.

Research in 1990 showed only 0.28 percent of the disabled were employed in the open labour market.

"This means that approximately 99 percent of disabled people are not employed in the formal sector," the paper said.

"Existing legislation not only fails to protect their rights as citizens but actively discriminates against them in a number of important areas."

Such statutes included the Blind Persons Act, the Mental Health Act and the Public Service Act.

The Public Service Act, for example, prescribed health requirements which could be used to refuse employment to any individual with a disability.

"While the application of these regulations remains a central component of the employment policy in the public service, discrimination of disabled people will continue to exist," the document said.

Other constraints facing the disabled included the lack of accessibility to transport, buildings and other public services.

The paper proposed a disability strategy be funded by the RDP. Other sources of finance in the public and private sector should also be sought.

Money would have to be found to set up sign language and interpreter services for deaf people.

Other recommendations were the immediate adoption of a policy to make schools accessible to the disabled. Strategies for the transport and employment of people with disabilities also had to be devised.

Public comment on the document, to reach Mr Naidoo's office before the end of May, would form the basis of a White Paper on an integrated national disability strategy. — Sapa.
Look at laws to help disabled

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — Government is considering new legislation to assist disabled people, including changes to labour and social welfare laws and changes to building regulations, a government discussion paper states.

The paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy is a first step towards a white paper on the disabled and sets in motion mechanisms for developing an overall strategy.

The document criticises existing labour legislation for not taking into account sufficiently the special circumstances of disabled people. Industrial legislation was silent on the subject of dismissal of disabled people and only the common law, as interpreted by the courts, prevailed.

The courts in the past have held that if employees can no longer perform the basic functions of their jobs, employers have to provide alternative jobs where available. But in reality few alternative jobs are available and few employees have access to courts.

Local govt to get greater financial say

Mdu duzu la Harvey

THE Transition to Local Democracy Bill aimed to give local authorities a greater say on financing and budgeting, deputy Constitutional Development minister Valli Moosa said.

The legislation, which will replace the Local Government Transition Act, is expected to be enacted during the current parliamentary session. It is designed to ensure that local government has the security of an equitable share of revenue and will not be dictated to by provinces or central government.

Moosa said yesterday that in contrast with current practice, where councils could budget only on an annual basis, the Bill would facilitate longer-term financial planning. It would also empower local government to make recommendations on taxation and limitations on the raising of taxes.

The legislation would give authorities loan-raising capacity by enabling them to enter into financial markets.

In line with government plans to establish local government as a distinct tier of rule, Moosa said, the new constitution would give local authorities representation in the proposed Council of Provinces. They would have a say on legislation regarding local government at central government level.

On the Masakhane campaign, aimed at creating a culture of payment for services, he said the figures indicated between 70% and 80% of income due to authorities was being received.

The problem of inexperienced new councillors was being addressed as a priority. More than 1000 councillors had already been trained.

An intergovernmental task team had been formed to look into aspects of rural government, which suffered from a lack of administrative infrastructure and inadequate revenue, Moosa said.
SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT
1996 - 1999
Building a Life for Paralleleds
Legislation to give disabled a chance to work.

In the past, the government sought to give employment opportunities to disabled persons, but today, the emphasis is on providing education to prepare them for the workplace. The government has set up several programs and resources to support disabled individuals in gaining employment. The focus is on providing training and skills development to help disabled persons become productive members of society.

The government has also introduced legislation to ensure equal employment opportunities for disabled individuals. These laws mandate that employers must make reasonable accommodations to ensure that disabled persons can perform their jobs. This includes providing accessibility features, such as ramps and elevators, and offering flexible work schedules.

In addition to these measures, the government has also established a fund to support the employment of disabled persons. This fund provides funding to employers who hire disabled individuals, and it also provides training and support to disabled persons who are seeking employment.

These initiatives have been successful in increasing employment opportunities for disabled persons. According to a recent study, the employment rate for disabled persons has increased by 25% over the past decade. This is a significant improvement, and it is expected to continue as more employers become aware of the benefits of having a diverse workforce.
The ability to open and close a door is so much second nature to most of us that we hardly give it a thought.

But for disabled scientist Graham Clarke this new-found skill means independence and control over his own privacy.

Graham, who was paralysed when he had a stroke while on a scientific expedition to Marion Island more than 11 years ago, can now open and close his door at the Eric Miles Cheshire Home in Milnerton, thanks to a team of mechanical engineering students at the University of Cape Town.

Paralysed from the neck down and unable to speak, Graham drives his wheelchair by pressing control apparatus with his chin, and communicates with the help of an infra-red beam.

He uses his head to point the beam at a computer built into his wheelchair so that it makes contact with an array of sensors on a special console. The computer relays speech to a built-in speaker.

To this system the UCT students, Dougan McKellar, Julian Felix and Graeme Welton, attached a remote controller Graham can activate with his chin to open and close his door.

They were approached by their professor, Gerald Nurick, after Graham wrote a letter to UCT explaining what a huge drawback it was to be unable to open and close his door.

Graham thought the problem might make an interesting project for students, and said: “I would so like to open and close my door myself. Our home’s subsidy has been cut, which has resulted in fewer staff.

“So opening a door becomes a problem, and more so when one doesn’t have limbs to perform such a day-to-day task.”

The project was taken up with enthusiasm and, with a donation from Coroma Electronics of Parow, the students recently installed Graham’s special remote-controlled door.

Dougan McKellar said it was a “good feeling to see Graham so happy”.

The students did not earn any extra marks for the project.

So what’s next for Graham? He jokes that he would like a lock on his door “to lock pretty females inside”.

Seriously, he says, he has written to people in the United States from whom he would like to buy a gadget that works remote controls “so that I can change TV channels and radio stations”.

He would also then be able to work his computer without the wire attachment, or his “umbilical cord” as he calls it.

“Then I will be in control of everything, except my care, and I will be extremely happy.”

Graham doesn’t know how much such a remote-control system would cost, but expects it would be a couple of thousand rands.
Dream door: Graham Clarke with students Graeme Welton, Julian Felix, Dougan McKellar and Arnold Warburton, from the University of Cape Town engineering department.
Home for disabled heals a community
Employers urged to redploy disabled

By Abdul Millai
Labour Reporter

Employers do not as yet pay enough attention in seeking ways to accommodate disabled employees.

"The onus of responsibility of the employer is even greater where the disability has arisen out of a work place incident."

Since the beginning of the 1990s insurers have suffered losses amounting to more than R500 million due to massive disability claims.

High premiums

He says this has resulted in employers having to pay high premiums for their group insurance schemes to cover their employees.

This could have been avoided had employers not opted to dismiss workers.

"The embrace of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) principles, coupled with active disability management strategies, can manage long-term costs of disability (currently estimated at two percent of the payroll) down to one percent."

Brown says active disability management means that people are kept active at work.

"This undoubtedly leads to questioning the increased costs that could result from having to comply with the Act, as well as failure to comply.

Initially costs will be incurred in the process of investigating," says Brown.
Focus on health care services for the disabled

Twenty years after the disability rights movement began in South Africa, the twin weights of prejudice and unemployment remain the major problems facing the disabled, people in the field say.

For the International Day of Disabled Persons, celebrated yesterday, the Department of Health focused on increasing accessibility to health care services.

To encourage improvement of services, facilities will be rated after a year, and awarded gold, silver or bronze certificates, the department said.

The department is also launching a survey to establish the extent of disability in SA. The study will look at needs of both service providers and consumers, and give an audit of available resources.

"It's obviously useful to know the extent of the problem so that you can plan programmes," said Vanessa Boutijy, deputy director of the South African National Council for the Blind. "But what was really needed was successful outreach programmes and community-based rehabilitation. -- Medical Correspondent."
Disabled workers may finally get their place in

Employees with disabilities are about to acquire a new set of workplace rights, reports JD Verster

NOT only does the new Labour Relations Act prevent employers from discriminating against the disabled, but future legislation is likely to extend these rights by ensuring that employers provide for disabled people in the workplace.

Although at present there is no legislation dealing with equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, Labour Minister Tito Mboweni recently published a green paper on national policy options in relation to employment equity, specifically foreshadowing the introduction of legislation for the protection and expansion of rights for the disabled.

It can be predicted with reasonable certainty that future employment equity legislation will impose a duty on employers to "reasonably accommodate" a disabled worker. This means employers will have to make allowances or provide special services or facilities to enable the disabled individual to perform satisfactorily.

The case law on what is known as "reasonable accommodation" has not yet been developed in SA. However, guidance may be found in the Australian and US anti-discrimination law for people with disabilities. Here "reasonable accommodation" refers to employers' civic duty to implement measures to adapt workplaces and work premises, and to provide auxiliary aid and equipment to workers reasonably requiring such accommodation.

Steps that employers might be expected to take would involve alterations or adjustments to policies and practices.

The employer might thus accommodate a disabled worker by allocating some of the disabled person's duties to another person, by altering the disabled person's working hours or by assigning the disabled person to a different place of work.

Where disability prevents a newly disabled employee from continuing to perform existing job functions, a reasonable adjustment might involve transferring the disabled person to fill an existing vacancy. When used in tandem with the provision of unfair dismissal law, this might provide newly disabled workers (or workers with a deteriorating disability) with a measure of tenure or employment security that would not otherwise be available in case of ill health and incapacity.

The "reasonable employer" might be expected to allow the disabled person to be absent during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment. A reasonable adjustment might call for giving (or arranging to give) more special training for the disabled.

By far the most usual forms of accommodation many employers already practice — and often costing little or nothing — involve acquiring or modifying equipment, modifying instructions or reference manuals, modifying procedures for testing or assessment, providing a reader or interpreter, or providing more supervision, as in the case of a worker with mental or learning disabilities.

Employers are clearly permitted to engage in a cost-benefit analysis when judging the reasonableness of an adjustment.

One of the objectives of the act is to give effect to the public international law obligations of SA relating to labour relations. In this context it seems likely that any future employment equity legislation regulating disability matters will be drawn up with reference to the United Nations standard rules.

In terms of the new Labour Relations Act, employers will have to avoid practices that may directly or indirectly discriminate against applicants with disabilities.

Employers will be prevented from screening out any particular group of applicants. Thus advertisements including statements such as, "the position requires a physically fit and agile individual", should be avoided. A job application form and any responses to initial inquiries should not require applicants to disclose health, medical or disability information, since this question is likely to be interpreted as indicating an intention to discriminate on the ground of disability.
Break your chains, lively Lisa tells disabled folk

**BY NTSHABING RAMPOENGE**

South African society with its "ugly slum" attitude and insensitivity towards the physically disabled, is crippling the chances paraplegics have of living comparatively normal lives.

So says American-born paraplegic 'bicycle and aerobics instructor Lisa Ericsson-Siff (39), who adds that the disabled in South Africa have not yet realized their right of expression - that they can go out and march and speak for themselves.

"People have asked me why they don't see people out and about on wheelchairs. I say they don't go anywhere... they are under house arrest because they can't move without being pushed or carried," says Ericsson-Siff.

For someone as independent as her, the four hindrances of struggling out of bed, brushing her teeth, taking a shower and getting dressed, would be wasted if she were to be cooped up at home.

But this enormous effort sometimes seems wasted as she wheels herself out of her house and drives to a supermarket, only to find that there is no parking reserved for the disabled. Inside the supermarket, the shelves are often too high and products out of reach. In some instances, she cannot even get through the doorways.

They see us as sick. Paralysis is not a disease... something is just broken. We are not terminal.

In the United States, I used my energy on my life, my family and my job. I did not waste it thinking about whether there would be a toilet where I was going, or whether I would be able to get inside," says Ericsson-Siff.

Walking again is low on her list of priorities. The new objective is to help paraplegics be independent and lead more productive lives.

However, she says that in the four years she has been in South Africa, she has not seen significant change - either in the form of legislation or initiatives from paraplegics themselves.

"There is no energy," says the most visible paraplegic in the country.

"To initiate legislation, we have to get out there and do something extraordinary - something so monumental that affects the lawmakers' wallets. Until then, nothing will be done.

"We need to be aggressive, to use our efforts in the newspaper and on television. But we need to do it in a kind and informative way.

"I want to help and I've been pushed into this activism thing because those who have been there before have totally missed the point," says the enchanting Ericsson-Siff.

"The law is independent accountability. If you are used to being helped and pushed around, they are inaccessible. Those on wheelchairs should be allowed - if they can - to get around on their own wherever and whenever they want, like normal people.

"The former ice-skater says disability can afflict anyone. Doctors could not establish when she sustained a blow to her spinal cord, leading to her disability at the age of 27.

"I woke up one day and could not feel my stomach muscles. The doctors left the clot there and a few weeks later I could not walk," says Ericsson-Siff.

For the past 12 years, she has lived a happy and normal life. She still enjoys snow skiing and has made a career of aerobics.

Her finely built upper body and the vigour with which she carries herself, disguise the fact that she is a paraplegic.

Ericsson-Siff moved to South Africa in 1982 after marrying Wits University sports and biomechanics expert Dr Mel Siff, whom she met in her home town, Denver, Colorado.

With the support of her husband and co-worker Ellen van der Net, she has set up a wheelchair sports camp to help spread awareness of physical disability and to help bring independence to paraplegics, especially the young.

But she sees no use in training the young in embarking independence whenever society and government contribute nothing to enhance these efforts.

You hear government officials talk about the future and the children first and how they are 30 years old, yet 90% of paraplegic children in this country die in the first two years of their disability. Those children on wheelchairs are also the future, but they are pushed aside.

"There is no children's wheelchair manufacturer in South Africa. Children are forced to use adult wheelchairs, which is why many end up in hospital, and worse off."

According to Ericsson-Siff, South Africans view all four groups of disability: mental retardation, deafness, blindness and physical - as similar.

"They see us all as being either sick. Paralysis is not a disease... something is just broken, we are not terminal," she says. "People will respect parking spaces reserved for VHPs, but will not think twice about taking space reserved for us."

Minutes of waiting for someone to switch on the reserved toilet or parking bay could cost her dearly in terms of time and stress, because like most paraplegics, she is impatient.

She explains that if she is unable to contain her bodily functions, it will be their own benefit.

Ericsson-Siff says it requires little effort and expense to make existing structures more accessible. For instance, doors need only open outward; toilet cubicles need to be wider to accommodate wheelchairs. A few minor adjustments need to be made to pavements ramps.

Ericsson-Siff offers her advice freely to anyone interested in improving the lot of the disabled.
City lawyer wants to ensure the disabled feel better about themselves and get a better deal.
83 sacked after heavy losses hit society workshop closes doors
Blind face job crisis as

NEWS
Policy to give disabled their rightful place

THE DISABLED are handicapped more by society's attitudes than by their physical disabilities, says Shamsa Challden — but he has devised a revolutionary strategy to change this, reports ANDRE KOBPMAN, Parliamentary Bureau.

A MOST every day, a paraplegic working at Parliament drives to the parking bay reserved for the disabled, only to find it occupied by a car driven by a person who can walk. It takes him ages to get to his office — only a few minutes away for anyone not in a wheelchair.

Eventually a cleaner in the garage makes it his duty to tell the guilty passerby and others that the bay belongs to Mr Shamsa Challden, director of the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons in the Deputy President's Office.

He was shot during a protest in 1976 and has been in a wheelchair since.

His wife, Ms Shamsa Majer, was shot and paralysed during a school protest in 1976. She works in the Department of Land Affairs. The couple is in hospital and it was "too late last night", Challden says, as a documentary produced by acclaimed American photographer Andrew Joses, however, Challden is reluctant to talk about his personal life.

Challden was in the wheelchair in his home in St George's Mall through the course just, but can't negotiate the steps in his wheelchair:

"The stairs disable us, not the wheelchair," he says.

The disabled people are handicapped not so much by their physical limitations as by the attitudes of others.

Challden was the accorded about his parking bay and his right to equal treatment. He says he has detailed the matter in a white paper on the disabled.

The paper adopted unanimously by the chamber last week, is intended to de檲ister the disabled and, instead, encourage them to create opportunities in mainstream society.

Because labelling disabled people in what is called the well-to-do approach has failed, the white paper says we should adopt a paradigm that respects the rights of disabled people," Challden says.

The most significant component of the document is the fact that it recognises the disempowerment and inequalities disabled face. It says that to a large extent the disempowerment is due to the way disabled people are viewed.

"We label disabled people and we look at them as tragic victims. We give them some disability grant and send them home, never to be a member of society again," Challden says.

The Integrated National Disability Strategy is a policy framework. The specific policy and legislation need to be developed, Challden says.

The paper says that the model to be effective in delivering services to the disabled, of which there are about five million opportunities need to be created in education, employment, transport, and housing. In recommending how government departments can achieve these, it suggests that two percent of their jobs be reserved for the disabled. It also recommends that provisions be made in labour law for disability.

Challden says among the measures which the paper is a landmark document is that it was produced in "wide and thorough consultation with disabled people, including blind, deaf, mentally disabled and all others. We own this document."

One of the main engines driving the formulation and adoption of the policy has been Disabled People SA, an organisation founded in 1983 by "incredibly angry" disabled people. Challden says ninety-eight percent of its members are at the townships and rural areas.

The document spells out that, to effect change, the disabled must be consulted at the planning stage.

"In town planning, for example, the disabled must be firmly on the agenda from the beginning." Emphasising the importance of education, Challden says: "Disabled children are dumped into special schools and forever marginalised."

"Ways should be found to accommodate them in mainstream schools. There is no shame, however brilliant you may be, of getting into university if you are marginalised. The nation is losing potential."

The National Commission for Special Needs in Education and Training is to submit its recommendations to the Ministry of Education. Mr Shamsa Bengu, at the end of this month about how disabled children and adults should be accommodated in education frameworks.

The new policy and legislation will go a long way in helping the disabled, but it is vital that employers' attitudes and physical working environments change, Challden says.

"Things like toilets that are too small and stairs in front of buildings are keeping people out of jobs," Challden says. "People with disabilities should be able to interact with the ability of people and their capacity to perform."

Legislation cannot transform attitudes, Challden says.

"People need to feel comfortable in parks and sports — that is essential! We need to have respect for their rights and dignity. This translates into things like respecting parking facilities and accessibility to parks." The disabled are also working towards "micro-entrepreneurship" support for disabled entrepreneurs from the departments of trade and industry, labour and education.

South Africa is one of the few countries in the world to enshrine the rights of the disabled in Constitution.

In the course of the Integrated National Disability Strategy, the government is adhering to the Bill of Rights that enshrine discrimination against disabled people.

Challden is "immensely pleased" that there has been no resistance to the policy from the cabinet. This demonstration that the government is committed to the cause of the disabled.

"I am convinced that the government has set up an office to develop and coordinate legislation and policies. It is a measure of how seriously the government views the needs of the disabled that the office devoted to them is based in one of the highest in the land."

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki is also patron of the disabled.
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE DISABLED

Model for societal transformation is basis of white paper

A SUMMARY of the white paper on integrated national disability strategy released by the office of the Deputy President.

There is a serious lack of reliable information about the nature and prevalence of disability in South Africa. A 1993 estimate puts disabling impairments or conditions at 5% of the population.

People with disabilities are excluded from the mainstream of society and experience difficulties in accessing fundamental rights.

There is, furthermore, a strong relationship between disability and poverty. Poverty makes people more vulnerable to disability and disability reinforces and deepens poverty.

Particularly vulnerable are the traditionally disadvantaged groups in SA, including people with severe mental disabilities, those disabled by violence and war and those with AIDS.

Disability tends to be excluded within a medical and welfare framework, identifying people with disabilities as ill and in need of care because the emphasis is on the medical needs rather than the corresponding neglect of their wider social needs. This has resulted in severe isolation for people with disabilities and their families.

Over the past decade, disabled people's organisations all over the world have worked to reposition disability as a human rights issue.

The result is a social model based on the premises that society cannot care for people with disabilities as ill and in need of care because the emphasis is on the medical needs rather than the corresponding neglect of their wider social needs. This has resulted in severe isolation for people with disabilities and their families.

The changing ethos has taken place within an international context which finally gave rise, in 1993, to the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. A key principle of disabled people's movements throughout the world, and indeed of the social model itself, is the involvement of such people in the process of transformation.

The vision of the integrated National Disability Strategy proposed by the white paper is a society for all.

The white paper has developed policy objectives, strategies and mechanisms for each of these areas. Recommendations highlight specific areas for action.

The rights of people with disabilities are protected by the Constitution. Government departments and state bodies have a responsibility to ensure that, in each line function, concrete steps are taken to ensure that people with disabilities are able to access the same fundamental rights and responsibilities as any other South African.

To co-ordinate this activity, the Office of the Status of Disabled Persons has been established in the Office of the Deputy President. The Office on the Status of Disabled Persons will work together with, and parallel to, the various state bodies and departments to further the development of a disability-friendly environment.

It will maintain close working links with the NGO sector.

The legislative framework is crucial. There is a need to examine the need for new legislation. Existing legislation must be scrutinised and amended where necessary. Ultimately, legislation should comply with and give substance to constitutional requirements.

Finally, to ensure that legislation is effective and policy implemented, research and monitoring are essential.

Transformation must involve practical change at every level of our society.
Message from Deputy President Thabo Mbeki

Among the yardsticks by which to measure a society's respect for human rights, to evaluate the level of its maturity and its generosity of spirit, is to look at the stance it accords to those members of society who are most vulnerable — disabled people, the senior citizens and its children.

Social morality is strengthened and deepened when we recognize that disabled people enjoy the same rights as we do and that we have a responsibility towards the promotion of their quality of life.

We must begin to see disabled people not as objects of pity but as capable individuals who can contribute immensely to the development of society. We must play an active role in assisting them to find joy and happiness and the fulfillment of their aspirations.

Throughout the establishment of the Office on the Basis of Disabled Persons, in my office, we wish to express our government's unwavering commitment to the upliftment and improvement of the conditions of those members of our society who are disabled.

Research estimates that between 5% and 12% of South Africans are moderately to severely disabled. Despite this large percentage of disabled people, few services and opportunities exist for people with disabilities to participate equally in society.

Throughout the world disabled people are estrogenizing themselves to engage society on the question of their fundamental rights. The United Nations has issued two documents dealing with the concerns of people with disabilities, the UN Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons.

Both documents emphasize the rights of people with disabilities and call for extensive changes in the environment to accommodate their diverse needs in society. The emphasis is on a fundamental shift in how we view disabled people, away from the individual medical perspective, to the human rights and development of disabled people as a government we engage these individuals.

This white paper represents the government's thinking about what it can contribute to the development of disabled people and to the promotion and protection of their rights.

Finally, we believe that this white paper reflects the aspirations of many disabled people in our country and that it is not the end of the process. The Integrated National Disability Strategy will kick-start a further process involving disabled people in the development of specific policies. The government has committed itself to the recommendations contained in the white paper.

We believe that this paper will be invaluable to the process of translating the recommendations into real progress for our nation.

Thabo Mbeki
Programme for a special day
TODAY is the International Day of Disabled, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, patron of the disabled, has released the white paper on the Integrated National Disability Strategy.

The Cape Times, in conjunction with the deputy president's office, presents a breakdown of the white paper as well as messages of support for the occasion.

This is the programme:
Date: December 3, 1997
Venue: Pietermaritzburg
MC: Mado Rambo MP

9.30 - 10.20: Opening: Moment of silence
10.20 - 10.25: Remarks: Zimba Special School
10.30 - 10.45: Guest speaker: Dr. William Fawer
10.50 - 10.55: Remarks: Mamelodi Thembelwane Association for the Blind
11.00 - 11.10: Overview: Progressus Nazar School
11.15 - 11.30: Remarks: Sibonxe Special School
11.45 - 12.05: Remarks: Thembelwane Special School
12.10 - 12.15: Remarks: Sibonxe Special School, New Hope School
12.30 - 12.35: Remarks: Sibonxe Special School, New Hope School
12.45 - 12.50: Vote of thanks: Mr. Poet Makuwane, Mr. Sheule Mfumu.

'Ve must begin to see disabled people as capable individuals who can contribute immensely.'
disability people

Programme for a special day

TODAY is the International Day of the Disabled, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, patron of the disabled, has released the white paper on the Integrated National Disability Strategy.

The Cape Times, in conjunction with the deputy president's office, presents a breakdown of the white paper as well as messages of support for the occasion.

This is the programme:
- 10:30: Opening remarks by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki.
- 10:45: Presentation of the white paper.
- 11:00: Discussion and Q&A.
- 11:30: Release of balloons.
- 12:00: Official launch of the strategy.

This white paper represents the government's thinking about what it can contribute to the development of disabled people and to the promotion and protection of their rights. We believe in a partnership with disabled people and that the furtherance of our joint objectives can only be met by the involvement of people with disabilities themselves.

This document is therefore the product of an intensive and thorough process of consultation with all the relevant organizations of and for disabled people.

We believe that this white paper reflects the aspirations of many disabled people in our country. But this is not the end of the process.

The Integrated National Disability Strategy will kick-start a further process involving disabled people in the development of specific policies and legislation aimed at giving effect to the recommendations contained in the white paper.

Finally, we take this opportunity to thank the many individuals and organizations who have contributed to the development of this white paper.

Your contributions will prove to be invaluable to the process of translating the recommendations into real progress for our nation.

TM Mbeki

Rules show way to full integration


At the same time December 3 was declared the International Day of Disabled Persons.

For decades disabled people have suffered through society's lack of provision for their wider social needs. Emphasis on labelling and meeting their minimum welfare needs at the expense of their dignity and self-respect.

The UN Standard Rules provide governments with guidelines to redress the discrimination disabled people encounter — in accommodation, medical care, rehabilitation, accessibility, education, employment, social security, culture and recreation and sport.

The objective is to ensure that disabled people are fully integrated into the mainstream of society and have equal opportunities for full participation and fulfillment.

December 3 is also a day of national reflection on the situation of disabled people in society.

Non-disabled people will come to realize:

- It is the steps that lead into a building that handicap a disabled person and not the wheelchair.
- More consultative methods of planning will result in a more humane society.
- Fundamental human rights are universal and should apply not only between government and citizens but among citizens as well.
- The fundamental human rights of disabled people are boundless.
- Disabled people would rather work than be passive recipients of charity and welfare and would be proud to pay taxes.
- Respect for our rich diversity and consequent equalization of opportunities would enrich our country socially, economically, and politically.

However, much has been achieved since the government began consulting disabled people.

The most significant achievement has been the adoption of the white paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy by the cabinet on November 19 this year.

The adoption of the white paper gives disabled people reason to celebrate because it signifies the recognition by government of their most basic social needs.

Let us also as a nation use this day to broaden our vision of the rainbow nation to include all disabled people and let all of us unite together the victims gained thus far.
State aims to empower the disabled

Johannesburg — The government could reduce the R3 billion it spends annually on disability grants if capacity programmes proposed in the White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy, launched this week, were implemented.

About 500,000 people receive disability grants, and the department of welfare has proposed programmes that were aimed at creating economic self-sufficiency among the disabled.

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, the minister of welfare and population development, said the plan was in line with government's focus on job creation through small, medium and micro enterprises, which would empower disabled people and help them to get into the mainstream of the economy.

"It is a priority within this department to develop the capacity of disabled people to enhance their optimal independence at all levels," she said.

The department said it would release a community-based rehabilitation guidance document next year on mechanisms for the economic empowerment of people with disabilities. It said the United Nations had set 22 standard rules to enhance equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Fraser-Moleketi said that she "endorses the white paper and calls on all employers not to discriminate against people with disabilities".
Deaf attendants man the pumps at unique Durban petrol station

OWN CORRESPONDENT

A petrol station with a difference was opened in Durban’s Lorne Street yesterday.

The petrol attendant comes up to the car with a friendly smile on her face, but instead of asking the customers what they want, she hands them a piece of paper which states “Hello, I am deaf. My name is Ntombifuthi. How can I help you?”

Without having to say a word, the customer fills in what petrol he wants, how much he wants, the amount he is going to pay and whether he needs the oil, water, battery or tyre pressure checked.

“The Fuel Stop – believed to be the first petrol station in the world to be run by deaf petrol attendants – was opened by the KwaZulu Natal Premier Dr Ben Ngubane yesterday.

The station, owned by the Natal Blind and Deaf Society, has three pumps run by six deaf petrol attendants, one partially sighted supervisor and a manager.

A number of guests and dignitaries, including Miss South Africa, Kerishnie Naicker, witnessed Ngubane unveiling the plaque at the service station yesterday.

Ngubane praised the Natal Blind and Deaf Society for its initiative, saying it illustrated the importance of motivation and commitment. He said the service station gave empowerment to the disabled community.

Natal Blind and Deaf Society president Arvind Kisson Singh said the petrol station was owned by all deaf and blind people, and any profits made from the station would be used for empowerment and other programmes for them.

Ngubane said the society’s activities were a lesson in governance. “We are not going to achieve our goals in government until we can break the challenges down into activities with which communities, the private sector and the people who have to benefit can all become involved in focused activity.”
Job opportunity for 20 paraplegics

By Sowetan Business Reporter

ABOUT 20 job opportunities will be created for paraplegics as a result of a contract between gaming supplier Viva Bingo and Soweto's Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap).

In terms of a contract signed between the two parties last week, Shap will supply and service several areas of the bingo manufacturing business and Viva Bingo will offer full training and facilitate the necessary support to disabled workers as part of an empowerment drive.

The deal, according to both parties, comes after several weeks of fruitful negotiation. It also marks the beginning of an exciting empowerment partnership.

Viva Bingo's Ray Hipkin said: "We will proactively identify, support and contract small entrepreneurs and community empowerment groups as part of our strategy to extend business opportunities to all persons disadvantaged by unfair distribution."

"Our deal with Shap is a demonstration of our company's commitment to creating jobs and empowerment," Hipkin said.

The venture will initially contract Shap to operate cleaning services for Viva Bingo premises in Gauteng. This will be followed by the process being extended throughout the country.

Quality goods

Shap's factory manager Mandla Mafika said: "We are excited about this new project and will do anything in our power to ensure that it satisfies all sides. We are confident that we will be in a position to provide quality goods as well as a high standard of service."

Shap is an organisation based in Mofolo, Soweto, with programmes aimed at creating employment opportunities for disabled people. The organisation's self-help factory provides employment to about 100 disabled people.
Shap’s Bingo contract to benefit disabled

FRIDAY Mavuso will be smiling in his grave at the news that the Soweto’s Self Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap) have signed a contract with Viva Bingo Limited to supply and service several areas of the bingo manufacturing business.

Mavuso, the former chairman of Shap, died three years ago and was at the forefront of negotiating deals for the Shap centre in Mofolo, Soweto.

The Viva Bingo deal marks the end of several weeks of fruitful negotiations between Shap and Viva Bingo, a new player in South Africa’s gaming industry. It is also viewed by both sides as the beginning of an exciting empowerment partnership.

Under the agreement, initially, Shap will supply cleaning materials to the bingo halls in Gauteng province. Ultimately Shap will supply all Viva Bingo halls across South Africa. It is the intention that the assembling of bingo tickets into book form and the production of ink markers will be contracted to Shap. The supply of these products will create more than 100 new jobs for disabled persons, boosting the capacity of Shap’s self help factory. Currently Shap employs about 120 disabled people, and factory manager Mandla Mafika could not hide his excitement about the possibilities of this new project.

Viva Bingo chairman Ray Hipkin described the deal as a demonstration of their commitment to empowering self help groups.
Creating jobs for blind

By Russel Molafe

"There are more than 250,000 visually impaired people in South Africa who, almost all of them, "are not just unemployed but also unemployable because they are going blind," said Mr. Michael Eden of Retinal Preservation Foundation.

Eden was announcing the completion of the visually impaired people's training centre that will be officially opened on May 4 in Tshwane, Soweto.

"The creation of this centre is in direct response to requests from the community. Its purpose is to increase job creation programmes for the visually handicapped," he said.

"The programmes at the centre will teach them various skills so that they can earn a living in the informal sector."

He said there were about 200 eye diseases in the country which were mainly inherited and were caused by genes not producing enough proteins.

The foundation also provides funds for research at the University of Cape Town to find a cure for eye disorders.

Meanwhile, the Gauteng department of Health is to hold an "open day" today to give inner-city communities an opportunity to see services provided by the Hillbrow Community Health Centre.

"The rumour that Hillbrow Hospital has closed is not true. It is still alive and kicking as a 'super' community health centre with more facilities than, most clinics in the province," the department said.

\[Author\] 28/4/98
Disabled in
Alexa get new
workplace

By Anna Cox
April 15 1998

Alexandra’s disabled workers have a property of their own. After months of uncertainty after they were given notice to vacate their premises in Bramley View, the Gauteng department of public works came up with a R555 000 grant.

A property was purchased in Kew from which the various income-generating projects under the Alexandra Disability Movement (ADM) will be run.

The ADM currently runs two projects: a co-operative workshop which manufactures cano baskets and Shade, and a project which manufactures assemblies and packages goods for private companies.

The premises will also become the venue for a pilot project called Alexandra Wheelchairs and Accessories under the auspices of the CF Beyers Naude Development Foundation which involves making wheelchairs and other devices by the disabled.

It is estimated that in South Africa there is an immediate need for 80 000 wheelchairs.

If similar assembly lines could be established, there could be a thriving export industry involving disabled people as shareholders, said director of Wheelchairs out of Africa for Africa, Hans Franz.

He said there were plans for another 16 assembly lines.

“Project aims at providing durable assisting devices, creating job and export opportunities for the African economy. There are 300 townships in South Africa needing assistance for the disabled.

“We have designed an assembly line where equal ownership and shareholding will be legally transferred to each of the disabled staff working in each company,” he said.

Opening the new premises last Friday, former public works minister Paul Mashatile said the province had spent R45 million on similar community-based projects throughout the country since 1994.
See me for what I am, says blind Kerry

"I love children— my dream has always been to work with them. They are so honest and always fun. They will ask ‘How do you get dressed?’ or ‘How do you watch TV?’"

"Once some kids brought me some pictures they had drawn to show me. I laughed."

"Another dream I have is to meet President Mandela—I really admire him and what he has achieved in his life."

"Am I angry? Not at all. Why should I be? My only anger is about job discrimination. People do not want to employ handicapped people. They are too scared of what they perceive as a risk."

"That angers me. I could have got another job long ago were it not for the fact that I cannot see. I would love to work with computers."

"Kerry has worked as a telephonist at Groote Schuur Hospital for the past seven years."

"People do not realise that we live normal everyday lives like them—except for the fact that we cannot see."

She says us soft serves and we slurp them end spill ice cream. Later, we listen to music, Mozart, Bach partitas and Brahms’s uplifting second piano concerto. It is evening when I take Kerry home.

"This is a Toyota, isn’t it?"

"How did you know?"

She laughs. "It’s the finish of the seats and the doors. All Toyotas are the same. I can tell an Uno the minute I get into one."

As we drive on the N1 in the fading light of dusk, I tell Kerry about the full moon creeping up behind the Tygerberg Hills and try to describe its beauty.

"Yes, I do sometimes wish I could see the moon and the stars," she says wistfully.

It is evening and her small studio flat is pitch dark. I hesitate. "Kerry, do you mind if I turn on the lights? It’s a bit dark in here..."

She laughs and I laugh with her.
Just like you: Kerry Witter, blind since birth, says she lives a normal life and wants people to treat her like a normal person.
Lack of workshops ‘hinder the disabled’

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

WELFARE funds are being used for hand-outs rather than developmental programmes because of a lack of workshops to assist the more than five million people with disabilities.

Medical Organisation for Disabled Entrepreneurs (MODE) managing director Ms Vivienne Zwennis said out of the country’s estimated 5 238 042 people with disabilities, only 8 415 were served with workshops.

The scarcity of workshop positions, combined with apartheid-influenced policies, hindered developmental programmes, she said.

MODE is attached to the Medical University of South Africa and offers vocational empowerment for people with disabilities through start-up business loans and skills development.

With the Employment Equity Bill having passed into law, MODE was set to expand through providing business opportunities for 160 small businesses for the disabled next year, Zwennis said.

“Society takes little or no account of people who have impairments and thus excludes them from mainstream activities,”

“Structural barriers prevent the social integration of people with disabilities, robbing them of their constitutional rights to dignity and self-esteem,” Zwennis said.

The organisation is committed to changing the scenario and ensuring that the dreams of prospective disabled entrepreneurs become a workable reality.

However, banks were reluctant to give them loans to start a small business, Zwennis said.

She said a campaign to canvass for funds would be launched at a gala event next month. The event will also mark the official launch of MODE’s new premises in Braamfontein.

Businesses and civic leaders are invited to support the launch by booking tables.
Wheels for disabled workers

Fanie Gouws wants to improve access to public transport, writes Nomavenda Mathiane

For many people, catching a bus or a taxi is second nature. But the average South African does not realize how difficult it is for disabled people to access public transport.

Fanie Gouws, the policy development and administration manager for the Johannesburg Metropolitan Transportation Cluster, is one of those who know what it is like to struggle from place to place in a wheelchair.

It was not always like this. As a healthy, educated young man with a master's degree in Development Studies from the Rand Afrikaans University, Gouws had a bright future ahead of him. He had a good job and a steady girlfriend.

Then in 1993, fate intervened. In June of that year, Gouws became the victim of a mugging in which he lost his business and his life.

In spite of what happened to him, Gouws shows no self-pity. In fact, he has turned his personal tragedy into a career opportunity by using his talents and education to make the lives of others with similar disabilities more tolerable and mobile.

He is the driving force behind the Accessible Transport Pilot Project for the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council.

The project transports disabled workers from Soweto and Johannesburg to work and back, and helps them with other necessities.

Gouws wheels in and out of his office and into his colleagues' offices with such ease that one might be tempted to ask for a lift.

Called Mymi (grandchild) by his colleagues, his day starts at 7am when he receives reservations for the service. At 8am, he meets with the drivers to discuss the reservations and the routes.

"Because of lack of resources, our minibuses do not have radios to the vehicles, hence we have to meet in my office," he said.

The rest of the day is spent attending meetings on issues such as drawing up a business plan for the implementation of an integrated accessible transport strategy for the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Area.

"I've experienced first hand what happens when a disabled person tries to get onto a bus or a taxi," he said.

"I also know what it's like not to be handshocked," he said.

The pilot project, which was launched in 1997, receives a R1mn subsidy from government and works with five vehicles rented from the Association for the Physically Disabled.

Drivers have been hired on a part-time basis because the project is still being tested.

"Our drivers are people who are patient and who understand that they have to assist their passengers into the taxi and out of it, and that they have to carry the wheelchairs, into the taxi," said Gouws.

"There is a clinic, which receives passengers' requests if they need to go to the clinic or to pick up their disability grants."

He is also chairman of the Independent Living Centre, an information and resource centre for people with disabilities.

The manager, Doreen Louchman, who works closely with Gouws and a number of projects, described him as a principled, dependable person who is very good at understanding.

"He is very amiable, disciplined and also disabled, and very mature for his age," she said.

"The Johannesburg Accessible Transport Pilot Project is one of three projects set up by government to assist people with disabilities. Other projects are based in Cape Town and Durban."

"We are in constant communication with the two cities to exchange information and to see if we can get an national policy in place," Gouws said.

"If people with disabilities are not able to access transport, there is no way that companies will be able to satisfy the provisions of the Employment Equity Bill," he said.

For now, Gouws is putting everything into making this pilot project a success. "What we need in commitment and political will from government if we are to succeed," he said.

As far as his personal circumstances are concerned, he harbours no bitterness for those who crippled him.

"I am not bitter. I am well rehabilitated," he said.

The biographer who sat him on a wheelchair and later released him. They never appeared in court again and are still at large.
Cash crisis hits disabled

By Charity Bhengu

The Soweto-based Self-Help Association of Paraplegics (Shap), which employs 65 disabled people, is being threatened with closure because of financial problems.

Shap has been running at a loss for months and has had to rely on a bank overdraft to pay staff. Executive chairman Mr Tsetsu Louw said yesterday that they had exhausted their overdraft facility and would not be able to pay about R100 000 in wages for October.

He said all attempts to get financial aid from the Gauteng department of social services and population development had been unsuccessful.

Shap has assisted about 400 disabled people to participate in the mainstream economy since 1981. They include four who hold positions in Parliament, others in the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons, one in the Human Rights Commission and 10 who work for Telkom.

Shap's self-help projects include a chemical workshop which manufactures and supplies household and industrial cleaning detergents. It offers services for the assembly of underground lighting cables for mines in the JCI group. It also provides repair services for cameras, prints T-shirts and cuts dishcloths for Transnet.

Historically Shap has been reluctant to accept funding to run its business ventures, which seldom generated profits in the past.

Shap requires access to more skilled business support, assistance in preparing viability studies and access to loan finance.
Black deaf people ‘ignored and treated as stupid’

HELEN BANFORD
Staff Reporter

The Deaf Federation of South Africa has invited black deaf people in the Western Cape to an open forum to discuss grievances after allegations of racism within the deaf community.

Desmond Velemane, who claims to represent 280 deaf people in Philippi as well as a number in Khayelitsha, Langa and Nyanga, said there was discrimination between blacks, whites and coloureds within the deaf community.

Repeated attempts to address the concerns of black deaf people had got him nowhere.

“We should be one family yet only whites and coloureds are getting opportunities for upliftment and blacks are being ignored and treated as though we are stupid,” he said.

Mr Velemane claimed black deaf people got no feedback about what was happening in Parliament and said Wilma Newboudt-Druchen, the first deaf MP, had promised to help in the past but now appeared to have forgotten about them.

But Ms Druchen denied having forgotten about the deaf. “How could I when I am deaf myself?”

She said that being new to Parliament, she still had a lot to learn.

The black deaf community, like all other black communities, had been affected and discriminated against by the apartheid government.

“I would rather focus on the needs of the deaf like the need for better education, sign language as the official language and job opportunities,” said Ms Druchen.

“We also need assistive devices to provide us with full access to information since we are going into the global age, subtitles or captioning on television and equal access to housing.”

Mr Velemane claimed that deaf people, unlike those who were physically and mentally ill, were not given grants by the Government.

But Diffsa national director Kobus Kellerman said deaf people did receive disability grants and the organisation had a deaf development worker who helped people apply for grants. However, he said he was disturbed by the Government’s new tendency to terminate grants, especially in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Mr Kellerman said black deaf people were not being denied opportunities for upliftment.

Funds from international sponsors had been used to provide leadership training for the deaf and the majority of those taking part had been black.

“All deaf people, whatever their race, are often treated by society as if they are illiterate or stupid and this should be attributed to ignorance within society. People need to be educated.”

Mr Velemane said a huge problem was that many black deaf people were unemployed and those with jobs were badly paid. “Some earn R50 a month as labourers; others do voluntary work and don’t even get paid.”

Mr Kellerman said the fact that many black deaf people were unemployed was a cause for concern but Diffsa job placement officers were addressing the problem.

“With the advent of the Employment Equity Act, discussions have been held on the involvement of deaf people in the workshops of disabled people to develop a code of practice to ensure the equity of deaf people in the workplace.”
ALBINISM MONTH STARTS

Break myths, boost pride

ALBINOS face derogatory prejudices in black communities. This month is Albinism Month and the hope is that views will change. ERIC NTABAZALILA reports.

ELTON HOOGBAARD’S mother, though supportive of her son, thought he would sit back and expect to be supported by his siblings. But now, of her five children, he is the only one who has a job.

Hoogboaard is an albin.

“I think my mother, though she didn’t say it, underestimated my abilities because I am an albin. I suffered a lot of humiliation in my community and at school. They used to call me a “wit kaffir”, “ice” or “whitey”, but now I can hold my head high when I walk through the dusty streets of Helderberg, because I’m successful,” he said.

Hoogboaard is a switchboard instructor and administrator at the Athlone School for the Blind in Bellville.

A positive attitude of doing things for yourself is what he hopes to instil in people with albinism in the Western Cape.

He attended a course on counselling skills at the Albinism Society of South Africa in Johannesburg.

He hopes to open a branch office of the society in Cape Town to counsel albinos who have been humiliated and to teach other people about albinism.

“I’m going to focus on pregnant women and women’s groups. The reason for this is that mothers (with albinos children) are the ones who would take care of their children for the rest of their lives. So if they gain confidence about their children’s abilities, they can instil that confidence in their children.”

Nomasonto Mazibuko, president of the Albinism Society of South Africa, said Albinism Month was important as it provided an opportunity to tell those with the disease that it was a manageable condition.

“People should stop feeling ashamed of themselves. Parents should stop feeling ashamed of their children. They should take their children out of special schools and place them in normal schools where they can enjoy themselves like other children,” Mazibuko said.

One of the myths prevalent in black communities is that albinos don’t die, they just disappear. They are sometimes called “Monkeys” or “Genkies”.

“We are human beings and like all human beings we die and get buried. Yes, albinos’ funerals are rare as albinos are a minority in our society. But it’s not true that they disappear,” she said.

She said people with this genetic disorder are still fighting for recognition and inclusion in the “rainbow nation” and are still suffering from discrimination.

She said her organisation’s aim was to open offices in all nine provinces to teach people about albinism.

Albinism results from a genetic defect which Mazibuko claims is more prevalent among certain Southern African ethnic groups such as Twanas and Sothos, as they marry within their families.

In South Africa, albinism is five times more common with black people than in America, where it affects whites and blacks equally, according to the America-based National Organisation for Albinism and Hypopigmentation.

Another organisation, Albinism World Alliance, is a network of albinism support groups in more than 12 countries, including South Africa. The support groups serve to promote awareness about albinism. One of the most successful albinos is musician Salif Keita, who has been promoting awareness about the disease internationally.
Blind basket-weavers and their dogs get an earful

Workers can barely hear each other above roar of power tools

TASLIMA VILJOEN

Tucked away in a huge industrial warehouse in Blackheath, 12 blind people try to make a living at the only trade they know: weaving baskets.

But it is so noisy in the building that they can barely hear each other — an awful state of affairs for people who depend on their hearing.

When the Cape Civilian Blind in Salt River closed two years ago, they found themselves unemployed.

Against all odds one of them, Frank Sam, 68, set up a basket-weaving business, which is providing work for 12 people.

But Mr Sam needs to find another building to house the operation as the premises are not suitable for blind people. Several other businesses in the building use high-powered tools, which generate a lot of noise.

Because blind people depend on their hearing, they find it difficult to work under these circumstances. The environment is also not suitable for their guide dogs.

Mr Sam said he started Blackheath Disabled Caneworks in his home in Elsies River two years ago, but because of the gang violence in the area he was forced to find other premises.

Mr Sam said he was one of 68 people who lost their jobs when Cape Civilian Blind closed.

He had already reached retirement age, but he was concerned about his younger colleagues who had families to support.

He decided to concentrate on basket weaving because of the demand. Space constraints also prevented him from making larger items like cane furniture.

Mr Sam said, although the Constitution enshrined and protected people's rights, disabled people were still being discriminated against.

The Employment Equity Act stated that companies should employ disabled people, however, very few businesses did. About 20,000 disabled people in the Western Cape were battling to find jobs, he said.

He was able to employ only 12 people because of the shortage of space.

"I constantly have to turn away people coming to look for work. It is really sad because they have no alternative," Mr Sam said.

Mr Sam said his basket-weaving business was flourishing and he had secured several lucrative contracts. But he needed bigger premises so he could set up a centre where blind people could be trained in various fields. He said they were not looking for charity, but wanted an opportunity to become a part of the mainstream job market and to contribute to the economy.

Mr Sam said he had written to President Thabo Mbeki to ask what had happened to resolutions made at last year's job summit. The government and the business sector had made a commitment to accommodate the disabled by means of a quota system.

He said it was necessary to formulate a national strategy to address the needs of the disabled.
Centre to offer skills to disabled

HUNDREDS of disabled villagers living in Mpumalanga’s impoverished tribal trust lands near Malelane are set to acquire skills training with the completion of a new R180 000 training centre.

The still unnamed centre is the first of its kind in the region and is being built by the Sizimele Self-Help Group with a Mankhane Programme grant.

Sizimele’s wheelchair-bound co-ordinator, Mr Steven Magagula, said yesterday the centre would revolutionise the lives of rural people with disabilities in the area. “Disabled people have been useless until now. This centre will give (disabled) people a chance to contribute something towards their lives,” said Magagula. – Sapa
'Like the fox guarding the chickens'

Ivor Powell and
Evidence wa ka Ngebeni

B ureaucratic smoke and legislative mirrors have allowed an old guard to remain in control over the multi-billion rand private security industry, despite the government’s attempts to rejuvenate it.

That is the charge being levelled by small employers and operators inside the industry as a major showdown looms between control of some of the industry’s leading operators, the Security Cluster Board (SCB), and the SCB — powers that were formally vested in the board as a whole.

The setting up of the independent board — the industry’s current regulatory body — came in keeping with the government’s attempts to rejuvenate the industry. Despite the government’s promises, however, many of the independent board’s members have been kept in the dark about board business as well as about the board’s powers and duties.

The independent board’s powers now include the regulation of security companies and operators, the granting or withdrawal of registration for security companies, as well as the inspection and prosecution of operators against the regulations governing the security industry. All of which, some say, has been done by the board’s board members and by small operators without any consultation with the industry.

Currently, all the amendment notices have been passed — others are being prepared — by the board, which is still working to set up the independent board. The new board has also been refused access to documents.

Meanwhile, the SCB has been meetings with the independent board in an effort to resolve the issue. The board has been refused access to the documents.

Meanwhile, Steve Sales, president of the South Africa Black Security Employees’ Association, claims that in May, he was approached by the board and a group of people representing the board were refused access to the documents.

In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they are being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector’s regulatory authority.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARIE MUTTON

with access to rival tender applications, he submitted a tender over the same tender.

The board has not been able to confirm whether the tender was in fact awarded to the company.

Security operator Andre van der Bijl of EuroSecurity in Durban told the board that he had approached Public Protector Sibongile Mazibuko for relief in what he describes as a loss of the "fox looking after the chickens".

One of the most highly qualified firearms examiners in South Africa, chairman of the South African Institute of Law Enforcement Firearms Inspectors and an accredited grader with the American Rifle Association, Van der Bijl had his licence to serve as a firearms instructor withdrawn under mysterious circumstances earlier this year.

After the proposals had been approved and given the thumbs up as early as 1997, a letter dated February 1, 1999 confirmed him that he failed to meet regulations, though he could appeal the matter (with accompanying documentation) before February 5 — the day on which the notice came into effect.

Van der Bijl notes that two of the officers who are charged with supplying firearms inspectors on behalf of the board actually carry credentials issued by the National Police Services.

Van der Bijl also charges that another of his company, EuroSecurity in Durban, has been given a chance to supply inspection services.

The board has also been refused access to the documents.

The board's powers now include the regulation of security companies and operators, the granting or withdrawal of registration for security companies, as well as the inspection and prosecution of operators against the regulations governing the security industry. All of which, some say, has been done by the board's board members and by small operators without any consultation with the industry.

Currently, all the amendment notices have been passed — others are being prepared — by the board, which is still working to set up the independent board. The new board has also been refused access to documents.

Meanwhile, Steve Sales, president of the South Africa Black Security Employees’ Association, claims that in May, he was approached by the board and a group of people representing the board were refused access to the documents.

In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they are being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector’s regulatory authority.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARIE MUTTON

First they said they would have to consult then, on July 22, after finally getting the chairman of the board to agree to release the documents, my driver was told the documents couldn’t be released after all.

"When I followed up after a long meeting, the deputy chair told me I would have to provide reasons for wanting to see the documents. Board deputy chair Professor Hans Vanman confirmed he had received reasons, saying the board would only release documents if it had been consulted.

He was not however able to give a reason why as a member of the independent board, in Harp, who would need to have access to the documents.

Two other independent board members have also been refused access to the documents.

Meanwhile, Steve Sales, president of the South Africa Black Security Employees’ Association, claims that in May, he was approached by the board and a group of people representing the board were refused access to the documents.

In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they are being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector’s regulatory authority.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARIE MUTTON

First they said they would have to consult then, on July 22, after finally getting the chairman of the board to agree to release the documents, my driver was told the documents couldn’t be released after all.

"When I followed up after a long meeting, the deputy chair told me I would have to provide reasons for wanting to see the documents. Board deputy chair Professor Hans Vanman confirmed he had received reasons, saying the board would only release documents if it had been consulted.

He was not however able to give a reason why as a member of the independent board, in Harp, who would need to have access to the documents.

Two other independent board members have also been refused access to the documents.

Meanwhile, Steve Sales, president of the South Africa Black Security Employees’ Association, claims that in May, he was approached by the board and a group of people representing the board were refused access to the documents.

In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they are being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector’s regulatory authority.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARIE MUTTON

First they said they would have to consult then, on July 22, after finally getting the chairman of the board to agree to release the documents, my driver was told the documents couldn’t be released after all.

"When I followed up after a long meeting, the deputy chair told me I would have to provide reasons for wanting to see the documents. Board deputy chair Professor Hans Vanman confirmed he had received reasons, saying the board would only release documents if it had been consulted.

He was not however able to give a reason why as a member of the independent board, in Harp, who would need to have access to the documents.

Two other independent board members have also been refused access to the documents.

Meanwhile, Steve Sales, president of the South Africa Black Security Employees’ Association, claims that in May, he was approached by the board and a group of people representing the board were refused access to the documents.

In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they are being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector’s regulatory authority.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARIE MUTTON

First they said they would have to consult then, on July 22, after finally getting the chairman of the board to agree to release the documents, my driver was told the documents couldn’t be released after all.

"When I followed up after a long meeting, the deputy chair told me I would have to provide reasons for wanting to see the documents. Board deputy chair Professor Hans Vanman confirmed he had received reasons, saying the board would only release documents if it had been consulted.

He was not however able to give a reason why as a member of the independent board, in Harp, who would need to have access to the documents.

Two other independent board members have also been refused access to the documents.

Meanwhile, Steve Sales, president of the South Africa Black Security Employees’ Association, claims that in May, he was approached by the board and a group of people representing the board were refused access to the documents.

In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they are being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector’s regulatory authority.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARIE MUTTON
Moss wheels in to attack

PARAPLEGIC African National Congress MP Maxwell Moss showed yesterday that physical disability need not stand in the way of a good political scrap.

He used his National Assembly maiden speech—which in parliamentary tradition is usually non-contentious—for a no-holds-barred attack on the Democratic/New National Party coalition in the Western Cape.

He delivered the speech from his motorised wheelchair, in the space in front of the speaker’s podium, and used a lapel microphone while a helper held up and turned the pages of his speech.

At first he was met with respectful silence from the opposition benches, but when he claimed that the ANC had won the "majority" of votes in the Western Cape, that it had been excluded from the coalition, and that the DP and NNP were polarising racial groups in the province, opposition interjections grew louder.

"They stole the people's mandate," he said. "They returned to their egocentric world and forgot the people out there."

As the heckling intensified, one of Moss' ANC colleagues rose to ask Speaker Frere Gwina whether it was in order for DP leader Tony Leon to interrupt a member making a maiden speech.

Gwina explained that an MP claiming protection in a maiden speech was not expected to be provocative.

This did not dampen Moss' vigour.

"We warn the NNP and DP that even in the Western Cape the people have spoken. We will not tolerate suffering of the people again: Together we will stand and together we will fight for a better life for all."

He also called on provincial Premier Gerald Morkel to create a section in his office to watch over the interests of the disabled and the youth.

He was warmly applauded by his party colleagues as he staggered himself back to his seat. — Sapa

ON THE ATTACK: Maxwell Moss in Parliament yesterday, after his maiden speech.
FedSure helps restore dignity to the disabled

CT 19/7/99

The greatest indignity one can do to a person is to take away his ability to work and to take care of himself. It is for this reason that FedSure Group Benefits has been at the leading edge of designing products with a strong rehabilitative element.

This includes employing occupational therapists for disabled members and equipping them with new skills to re-enter the workplace as contributing members of society.

FedSure’s managed disability scheme has become the established alternative to regular income replacement schemes.

All disability products provide compensation through income benefits when employees are unable to work owing to illness or injury.

Managed disability takes this process a step further by instituting rehabilitation programmes when necessary.

Andrew McGinn, the general manager of FedSure’s Group Benefits, says: “While FedSure assesses a potential claim, our in-house occupational therapist assesses the employee’s condition. If there is an opportunity for the claimant’s condition to improve, a rehabilitation programme is recommended. The programme is presented to the employer and the claimant to encourage their commitment and participation.

“This is an attempt to improve the employee’s condition to the extent that he or she is able to return to some form of employment. FedSure bears the cost of these programmes within limits. Provided the programme is followed correctly” says McGinn.
Disabled but able: Zwiilikile Zonziele, who is hearing impaired, is just one of Altitude Workforce Solutions’ recruits who have been absorbed into the workforce in spite of his disability.

Disabled have ability to reach the top at work

More than 64 000 people in the Western Cape are disabled.

Although many can, and do, perform valuable tasks, and many have good jobs, many others are confined to their homes or institutions and do not get the chance to earn their living.

Altitude Workforce Solutions aims to change that by equipping the disabled with the necessary skills to make a valuable contribution to all sectors of the business world. The organisation was established by cerebral palsy sufferer Rustim Arieffien and former manager of Bassil International Alastair Roberts.

In a bid to combine resources, Altitude Workforce Solutions has now joined forces with the Starfish 2 000 internship programme which aims to secure internships for 2 000 applicants who have no work experience.

With Starfish equipping the disabled with basic skills training, Altitude Workforce recruits the candidates and places them in appropriate positions.

Social worker Cathy van Wyk, who is responsible for recruitment of disabled staff, says that although many have the ability and necessary skills to tackle a variety of jobs, many able-bodied employees are prejudiced against their disabled colleagues.

“They are accepted into the workplace, but sometimes there are bad vibes from the side of the able-bodied. Because of the attitudes of other employees, companies feel they must bring in disabled staff at a slower rate,” says Ms van Wyk.

But Altitude Workforce remain determined to prove that the disabled are able.

She said they were committed to “establishing disabled manpower as an economic force within the commerce and industry”.

However, they needed skilled, competent disabled people to forward their particulars to her.

The agency has major companies like Consol Glass, SA Breweries and Woolworths among its clients.

And as for the name, Ms van Wyk says: “The ‘AI’ in Altitude Workforce Solutions is part of Alastair (Roberts’s) name, but it also refers to height.

“It says that we can reach as high as we want. There’s nothing to stop us reaching the top.”
New Act to protect workers with disabilities

By Isaac Moledi

PEOPLE with disabilities can expect far better treatment from employers after the introduction of the recently promulgated Employment Equity Act.

The Act will also have a significant effect on the way disability benefits are provided to employees, says Peter Dean, Old Mutual Employee Benefits senior consultant.

Employers have already had to adapt to the Labour Relations Act (LRA), which introduced a "Code of Good Practice" for employees with disabilities.

Employers must now try to accommodate disabled employees by changing the work environment or providing other suitable work in the company. Only if these options have been exhausted, can the employer dismiss the employee. The Act protects disabled employees by giving them preference in the workplace along with blacks and females in order to address historic under-representation. This "will increase the importance" of retaining employees with disabilities in order to meet Employment Equity targets.

The Act also assist those employees who cannot be accommodated within the existing workplace and who need to seek alternative employment by providing that disabled job seekers may not be discriminated against, even if the work environment has to be modified or the job adjusted to accommodate the applicant.

Legislation has also created the need to reassess the standard disability benefits provided by employers. This includes eligibility criteria, the type of benefits and the circumstance when benefits become payable which must support sound human resource practices.

The increased responsibility of employers has resulted in many taking advantage of managed disability insurance products. These policies combine an income benefit payable to the disabled employee with a disability management service which focuses on keeping disabled employees healthy and at work.

Methods used include additional benefits to assist in costs of adapting to disablement, teaching new skills, restructuring jobs, and the partial payment of benefits.

Smaller employers in particular benefit from access to the resources and expertise of the insurer in recruitment, selection and placement of ill or injured employees.

This partnership often results in the cost of the disability management service being offset by the reduced amount of disability income paid to staff.

The withdrawal of tax advantages for benefit funds on 1 January 2000 has added to the increasing use of managed disability insurance products by larger employers.

Disabled workers can contribute in the workplace as" well as in wider society, and employers are waking up to the fact that this makes good business sense too.
Joint venture heralds new era for disabled employees to work at Ikusasa Technologies while ISS will provide staff to Ikusasa, which will specialise in remanufacturing and refurbishing electro-mechanical components and assemblies used in the information technology service industry, Zwennis says.

The joint venture comes hard on the heels of the Employment Equity Act which aims at ensuring that employers have the same proportion of black, female and disabled employees.

The Act imposes severe sanctions such as loss of Government contracts and fines of up to R900 000 for employers who do not comply with the Act's requirements.

People with disabilities, according to reliable research, account for 12.7 percent of South Africa's total population.

But of the country's estimated 5 238 042 people with disabilities, only 8 000 are served by protective workshops.
Disabled allegedly paid R1 a month

By Mandla Zulu

ABOUT 500 mentally and physically-disabled people were coerced into hard labour and paid R1 a month by Health Challenge Workshop in Merebank, south of Durban.

The workers alleged management told them to keep quiet and not complain.

Health Challenge Workshop (HCW) is a therapeutic environmental self-help organisation which has been tasked by the provincial department of social welfare to train the disabled.

Workers said for the past five years, they had been subjected to low wages.

"We are told not to say anything because we are mentally ill and cannot do anything on our own," said one of the workers.

KwaZulu-Natal Mental Health Society said it would investigate the allegations. Last week handicapped workers stormed into HCW's offices to demand more pay.

HCW usually gets contracts from Toyota, Albany and Shell to wrap various products that are distributed to factories at Prosperion in Isipingo, south of Durban.

HCW manageress Angie Govender refused to comment saying the issue was being dealt with at the departmental level.

"Please, don't talk me, talk to my manager. I am not prepared to talk to the media about this," she said.

However, most of the companies which had out-sourced their work to HCW expressed shock on hearing that workers were getting meagre payments of R1 a month.

Spokesman for Toyota Mr Richard Winfield said the company had ended its working relationship with the workshop last year.

"We are not using them anymore and at the time it was quite convenient for us to drop all our stationery and other documents for stapling. As far as payment is concerned, I cannot divulge how much we paid the centre. That is a confidential matter," Winfield said.

Health Society manager Mrs Gitia Harie expressed shock at the allegations.

"I am shocked to hear that disabled people are exploited at the Merebank institution and I am going to institute an investigation into the matter," Harie said.

Almost 500 workers have complained against the company.

Spokesman for the disabled Mr Sifiso Magwaza said they tried to talk to Govender about their salaries but his complaints fell on deaf ears.

Investigations were scheduled to start yesterday and Harie said the matter would be finalised soon.