

SHELTERED

EMPLOYMENT

16 April 1975 —

16 October 1980

283

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140

Cripples *Natal Mercury* go on strike

1/10/75

Mercury Reporter

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

Mr. B. Darvill, who is responsible for the running of Jabulani, 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 Jabulani, or Mrs. Ian Scott Barnes, wife of the chairman of the Natal Cripple Care Association, on whose farm Jabulani is situated.

Mr. Robert Mthethwa, who has been at the centre for the last 10 years and is the induna in charge of the work shops, said yesterday that the workers were dissatisfied with deteriorating conditions.

He said that their meals were served late and some of the workers had been fined and they wanted to know who was fining 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 claims.

have you found staff and tutors. Comment

Blind workers threaten staff

Cape Times
10/12/75

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — About 150 blind Africans at the Natal Bantu Blind Society's workshops in Umlazi 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 Umlazi, 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.

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PS 23.9.1975

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 R30 000 and R50 000.

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Hansard vol 718 31/3/76

Assistance to physically handicapped persons

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:

Pretoria, Johannesburg, Germiston, Benoni, Krugersdorp, Klerksdorp, Vereeniging, Bloemfontein, Welkom, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, East London, Port Elizabeth, George, Cape Town and Kimberley.

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Hansard 10

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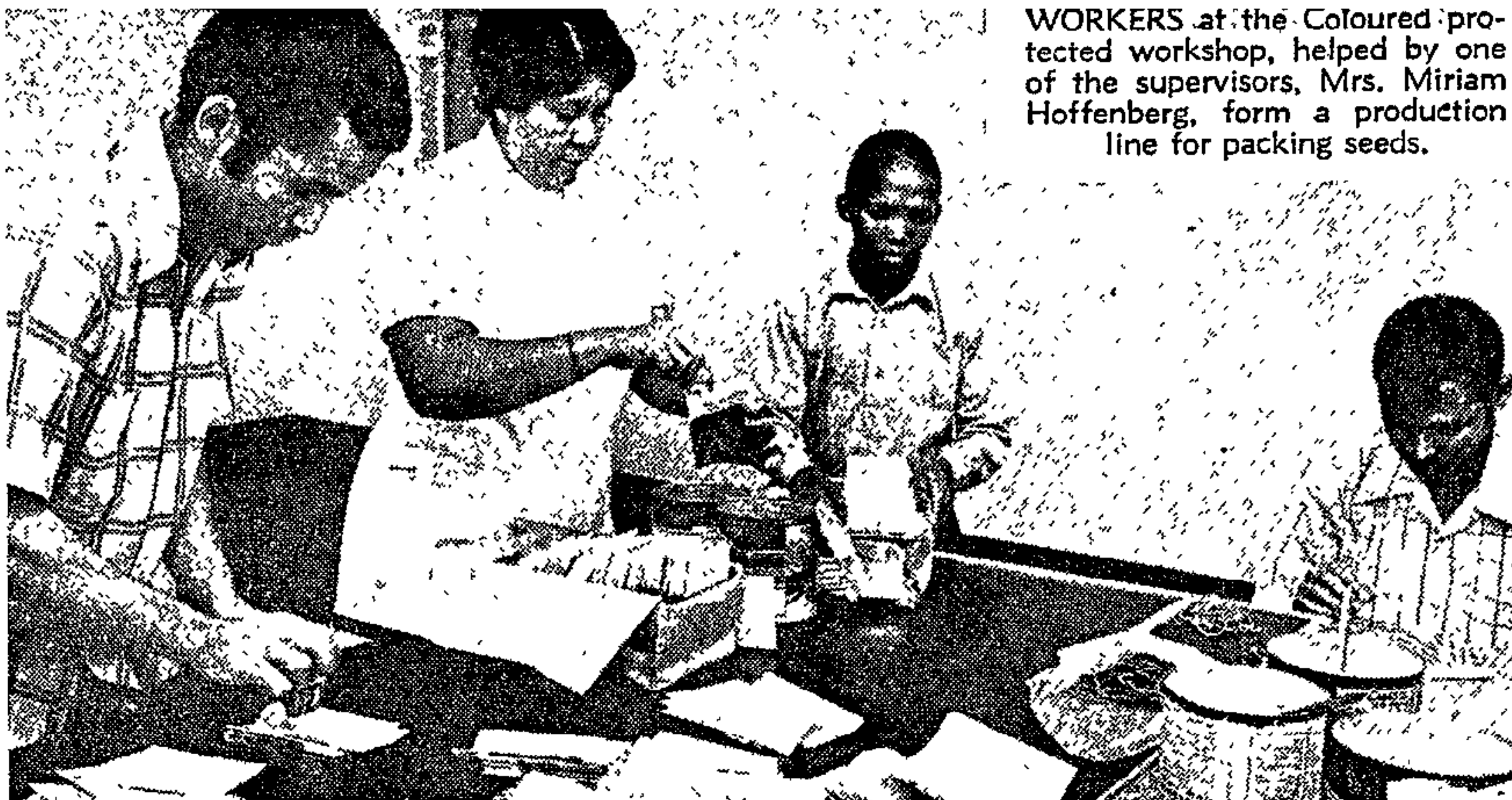
☒ Sheltered employment

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 is 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.



WORKERS at the Coloured protected workshop, helped by one of the supervisors, Mrs. Miriam Hoffenberg, form a production line for packing seeds.

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Natal leads the way...

Natal means 12/11/75

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

By CAROLYN HOWIE

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. Gina 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

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

"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.

help support the centre and the workers could eventually supplement their R29,50 a month pension.

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.

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 R900 000 target, the amount needed to meet commitments to its 31 member societies.

... IT WOULD
BE TERRIBLE
IF WE HAD

"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.

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."

She has written to 25 firms who, she felt, might offer packing or sorting work. "I'm afraid

"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 the two supervisors, Mrs. Miriam Hoffenberg and Mrs. Cynthia Kinsey, 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

"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 suffers from some emotional disturbance.

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

RELIEF

For those unfortunate enough to have a mentally retarded relative, the schools and workshops relieve their anxiety and enable them to give their total attention to their work, thus improving their productivity.

More than 15 000 people have received treatment at the various psychiatric outpatient clinics in Durban in the past 10 years.

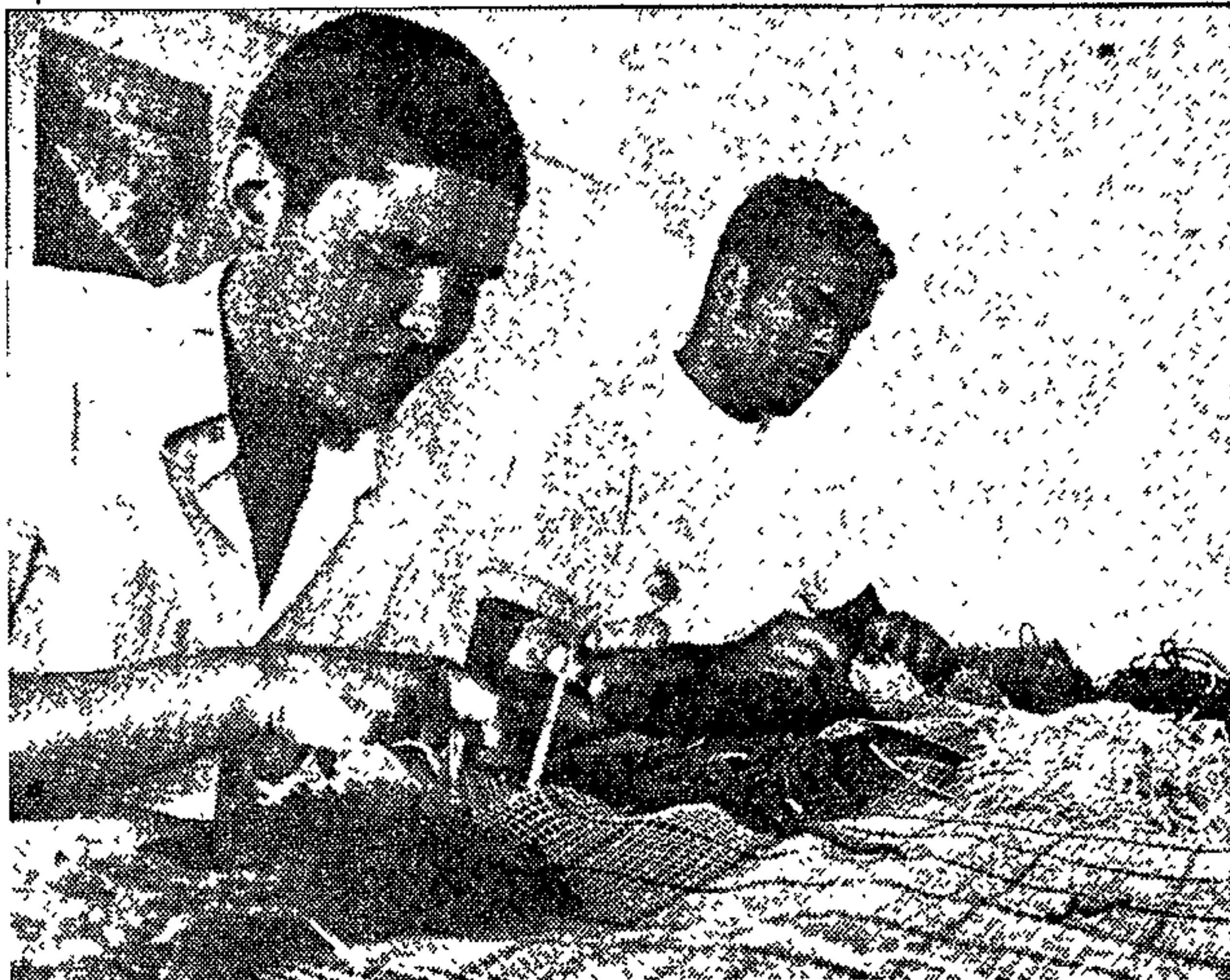
"If, for example, each of these missed 10 working days due to their illness, it means a loss of 150 000 working days which industry cannot afford," says Dr. Jonker.

JOBLESS

"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 R86 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, I know they would give generously," she adds.



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

NATAL
Mercury
12/11/75
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HANSARD 10

Question Columns 717 & 718
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16/4/75

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Sheltered employment schemes

235 Dr G F JACOBS asked the Minister
of Labour

How many (a) White, (b) Coloured, (c)
Asiatic and (d) Bantu persons were work-
ing in departmentally established or sub-
sidized 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

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HANSARD 11

Q 786

23 April 1975.

**Training centres/workshops for disabled
Bantu** ✓

209. Mr G N OLDFIELD 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

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Question.....
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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 oppor-

tunities 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 80 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. R. 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.

5-TAR 22/5/75

Handicapped can help

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Own Correspondent
WITSIESHOEK—Sheltered employment and the selective placing of handicapped persons on the open labour market had to be based on the principle that the handicapped were not a social burden. The person with his own needs, interests and aptitudes 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 R700 000 welfare centre at Witsieshoek, in the Basotho Qwaqwa Homeland.

Mrs Vorster said that the fact that a handicapped person was able to work and earn a living promoted 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 are able, and willing, to earn their own living.

Mrs Vorster paid tribute to the willingness of the Qwaqwa authorities to care for their less privileged, despite the fact that their homeland 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 designed to cater for the aged and chronically ill and offer work to the handicapped.

HANSAAD 19

Q. 1169-70

17 June 1975

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Epileptics

*10 Mr. G N OLDFIELD asked the Minister of Labour.

(1) (a) How many persons suffering from epilepsy registered for employ-

ment 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

Dispatch 11/9/75

(1) 172
(2) 315
(3) 283

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 disablements," 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.

"The finding of suitable employment virtually completes our rehabilitation programme and though we have made appeals to businessmen 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 made some openings for disabled people."

"There's no sheltered employment for disabled Coloured or African people in East London and many beggars 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.

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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 B. J. Barrange, medical superintendent of the centre, emphasised the importance of community involvement and awareness.

She 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 'landladies' who can take these people into their homes and give them a chance to play a useful role in society, she said.

Landladies 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 Barrange.

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, where the patients learnt volkspele, proved popular.

Dr Barrange also appealed to industries.

OPEN WEEK

At the moment there are 140 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 13 to 17, during which people who are recognised authorities on mental retardation will speak.

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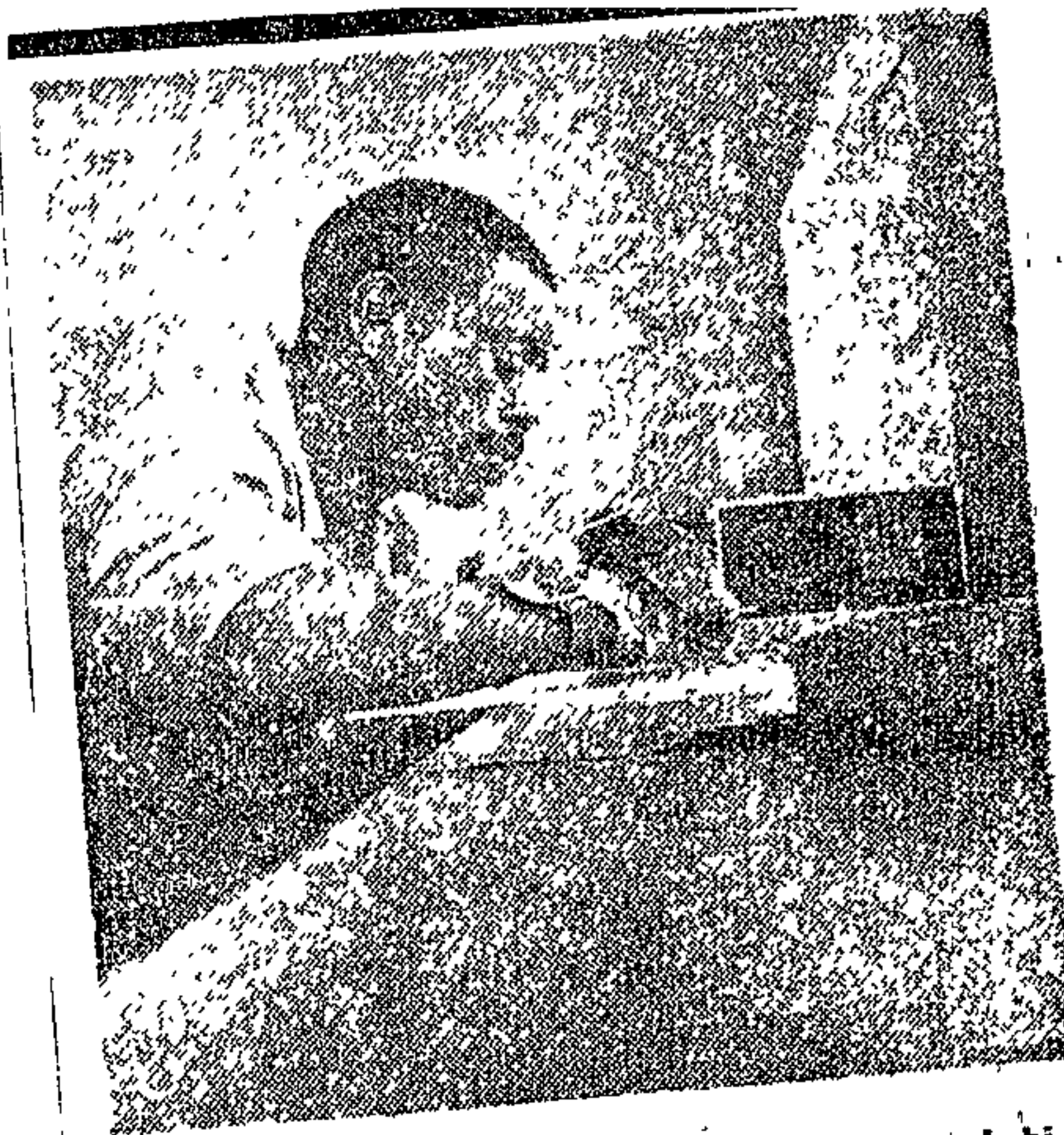
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CONCESSIONS
FACULTY OF ARTS



A quadriplegic resident of Ithuseng paraplegic rehabilitation centre at work on sign writing with a special wrist device.

Ithuseng's men on the move

STAR 28/3/79

November, 1978

By Iain Macdonald

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

Igniting the pounding frenzy of the spectators, the teams in green and orange hissed and spun their ways from goal to goal, their straining biceps and glistening faces alive as they turned, stopped and faced 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 paraplegically-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 grins, and shouts of joy

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 Scruton 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 fulfilment 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, sport and recreation facilities in abundance, and set on 10 ha of mellowing grassland bordered by groves of firs.

Built at a projected cost of R2-million, the centre can reintroduce a crippled mine-worker into the dubious joys of once again becoming a self-sufficient tax-payer. It is also able to perform a comprehensive paraplegic rehabilitation service for the entire

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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 grins, waves 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 fulfilment 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 defeatists 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 Scruton, 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 at a projected completed cost of R2-million, the centre can re-introduce a crippled mine-worker into the dubious joys of once again becoming a self-sufficient 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.

"Look around. The faces here are all joyful, and that's what the doctor ordered," he said as the Xhosa choir burst into a full-blooded paean 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, shot-putting and basketball.



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

(296)

27/4/79 DD INDABA

Woman wants beggars banned

By Vatiswa Ntshanga

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 NU 1. 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 arty," she said. "They have become so addicted to begging that they have stopped developing constructive thinking.

"They have to debase themselves to draw sym-

pathy," 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 put together.

"At home they are always pitied 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 Miss Lokwe at Cathcart and when married went to stay in Grahamstown. She did a teacher's course at Emgwali and taught for three years before she went to Lovedale to do matric.

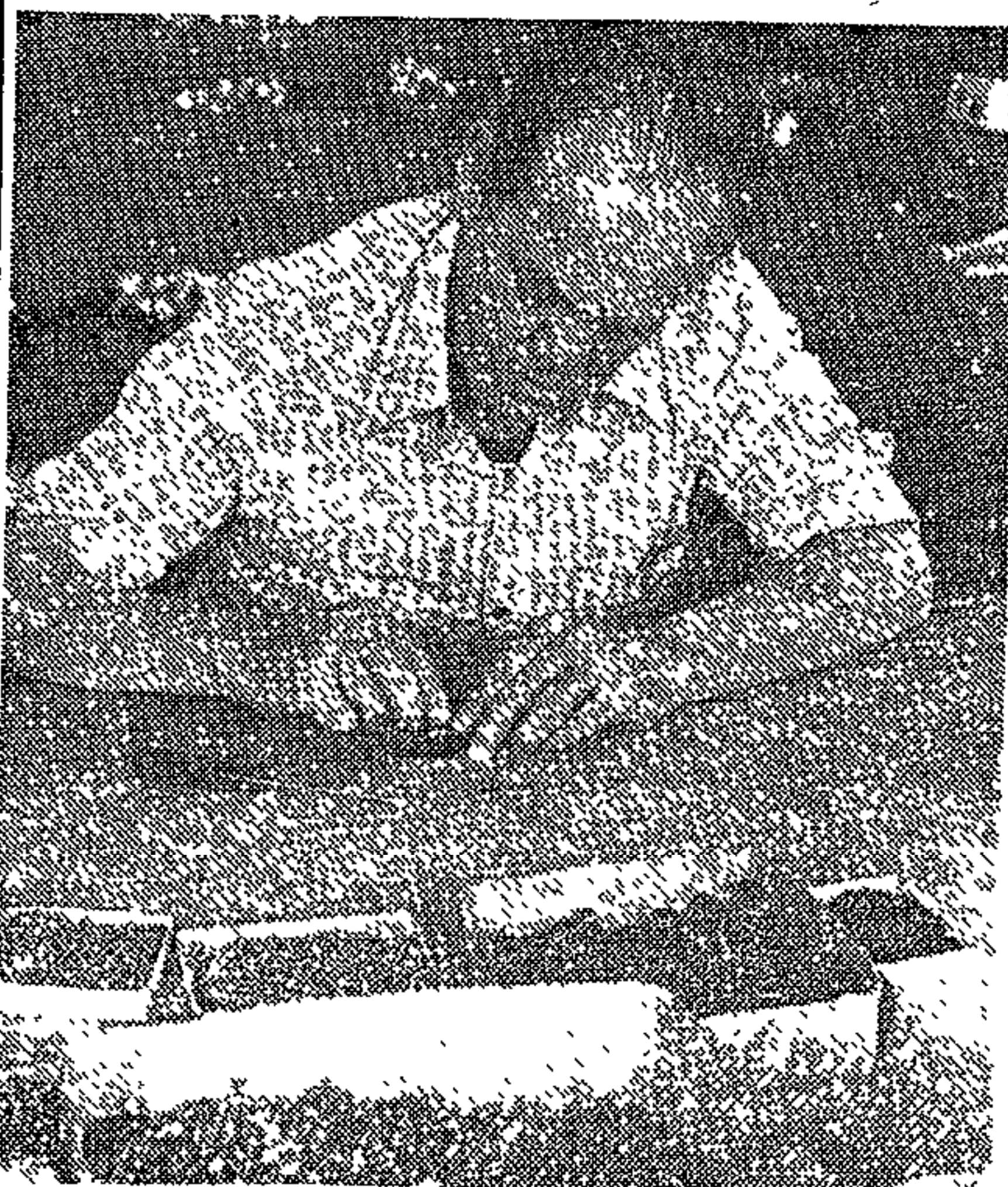
Indaba is registered as a newspaper with the GPO and is printed by East London Daily Dispatch (Pty) Ltd, 33 Caxton Street, East London.



Crayons of all shapes and sizes are gathered and packed in boxes by hand, a job that is essential but without the normal pressures of an "open" work situation.



One of the carpenters works at varnishing skipping rope handles in the carpentry workshop at Goodwill.



A study in concentration, this man chooses from the array of electrical parts in front of him to make a kettle plug and cord.

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 foundered 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 rents 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 game 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 R Barlow, 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 race groups, according to Mr Barlow.

"We rely quite heavily on donations and the State subsidy 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 Barlow added.

Silence prevails and

Factory for 'unemployable'

CAROLYN DEMPSTER visits Goodwill Industries

there is an atmosphere of dedication and concentration as the workers bend over their desks. Attention is unusually high and social worker Mrs Joan Martiny says she has heard some workers complaining about a long weekend because they could not

come to work. "Most resent the month-long holiday in December; they get bored," she said.

Many of the workers live in Hillbrow Lodge, the halfway rehabilitation house for patients from Sterkfontein. Others are referred to the factory

by the Department of Health or private institutions and homes.

"Our ideal is to build a factory especially designed for the handicapped," said Mr Barlow. "We have already made plans to approach the Department of Welfare with in the next month to

get approval."

"Also on the cards is our plan to go national with factories in Durban, Cape Town, and all the major centres," he added. "Depending on our resources and the organisation involved we should get things under way within the next six months."

A problem which all the staff at Goodwill have come to accept is that there is a hard core of workers who will never be able to leave the factory, even to go to sheltered employment.

"But as long as there is goodwill in our community, our factory and industry can continue to operate and expand," Mr Barlow said.



Toy companies give sub-contracts to the factory to package dolls, toys and games and here one of the women carefully slips a Noddy cut-out into its pack.

TUESDAY, 3 JUNE 1980

†Indicates translated version.

For written reply.

Hans. 16 Ques. Col. 826 3/6/80
Sheltered employment institutions (296)

644. Mr. H. H. SCHWARZ asked the Minister of Manpower Utilization:

827

TUESDAY, 3 JUNE 1980

828

(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

The MINISTER OF MANPOWER UTILIZATION.

(1) 13

(2)

	Whites	Coloureds and Asians	Blacks
Minimum wages			
Male	R24.00 pw	R20.00 pw	R17.00 pw
Female	R21.50 pw	—	—
Maximum wages			
Male	R42.00 pw	R34.00 pw	R25.00 pw
Female	R36.50 pw	—	—

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 grants and allowances, which are subject to a means test applied by that Department, may 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

6/2/80
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) mini-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. — DDR

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

296

SCHWARZ

290

aghaat at
RDM 4/6/80
sheltered

salaries'

Political Staff

CAPE TOWN. — Mr Harry Schwarz (PFP Yeoville) yesterday attacked the Government for the low wages paid to people working in sheltered employment institutions.

He also attacked racial and sexual discrimination in these salaries.

Mr Schwarz, PFP spokesman on finance, said the wages were "quite inadequate".

He said he hoped the review of the salaries paid to people in sheltered employment institutions would "result both in substantial increases and the removal of discrimination based on both race and sex".

Mr Schwarz was reacting to the reply given him in the Assembly yesterday by the Minister of Manpower Utilisation.

Mr Botha said the minimum wages for white males were R24 a week and the maximum R42 a week, while the minimum for coloureds and Asians was R20 a week and the maximum R34 a week.

The minimum for black males was R17 a week and the maximum R25 a week. The minimum for white females was R21,50 a week and the maximum R36,50 a week.

The Minister said there were no coloured, Asian or black females in the sheltered employment institutions, and the black males were ex-servicemen admitted before the sheltered employment scheme was transferred to the Department.

No new black applicants were admitted as the Department of Co-operation and Development dealt with black disabled people. The wages of sheltered employees were being reviewed.

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D - PARAMETERS

UCT

SOME OF THESE BLIND WORKERS HAVE TO BEG FOR

By Rob Meintjes

The wail of a mouth-organ drifted through the Saturday-night crowds as they streamed into the early show at a Pretoria cinema

The blind beggar paused in mid-time as another coin clinked into his slotted tin.

Itireleng? Yes he worked there, as a basket-maker. But wages were bad, he said shaking his head. Blind workers at Itireleng face expulsion if caught begging — a risk the basket-maker was prepared to run. His takings that night before the early show would probably exceed his weekly wage at the workshop.

Several workers have already been expelled for begging, (all of them have since been reinstated), but every weekend the basket-maker and many of his fellow workers take to the streets of Pretoria and Johannesburg to beg.

Blind workers told The Star that their wages did not cover the cost of living.

Not long ago the blind workers were earning fixed wages ranging from R6.50 to R18 a week. Some of the workers claim the introduction of "piece rates" at Itireleng has made it difficult for older workers — many of whom have school-going children to support — to earn as much as they did in the past. Management at the factory says very few workers are earning less on piece-rate work than they did in the past.

Some of the workers have been with the workshop for 30 to 40 years. But at the level Itireleng workers are being paid, they do not qualify for disability pensions, unlike their counterparts at workshops for blind whites.

Wages at Itireleng range from R6.50 to R37 a week, but the average wage is about R11 a week.

Behind their plight lies a dilemma: Itireleng is tottering on the brink of bankruptcy, with a current overdraft of R70 000.



The Itireleng factory for blind workers in Ga-Rankuwa — the biggest of its kind in the world — is tottering on the brink of bankruptcy.

"We live from hand to mouth," said M. G. R. Hilton Barber, manager of the factory. He said Itireleng owed its existence largely due to the support of the Government.

Unlike similar protected workshops staffed by blind workers in the cities, Itireleng does not get much in the way of donations from outside quarters. The workshop was cut off from easy access to this source of revenue when Mr. M. C. Botha, then Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, decreed

that the "black spot" should move to Ga-Rankuwa from Bloemfontein.

"The recent productivity had to play a far greater role at Itireleng than at other workshops in the cities.

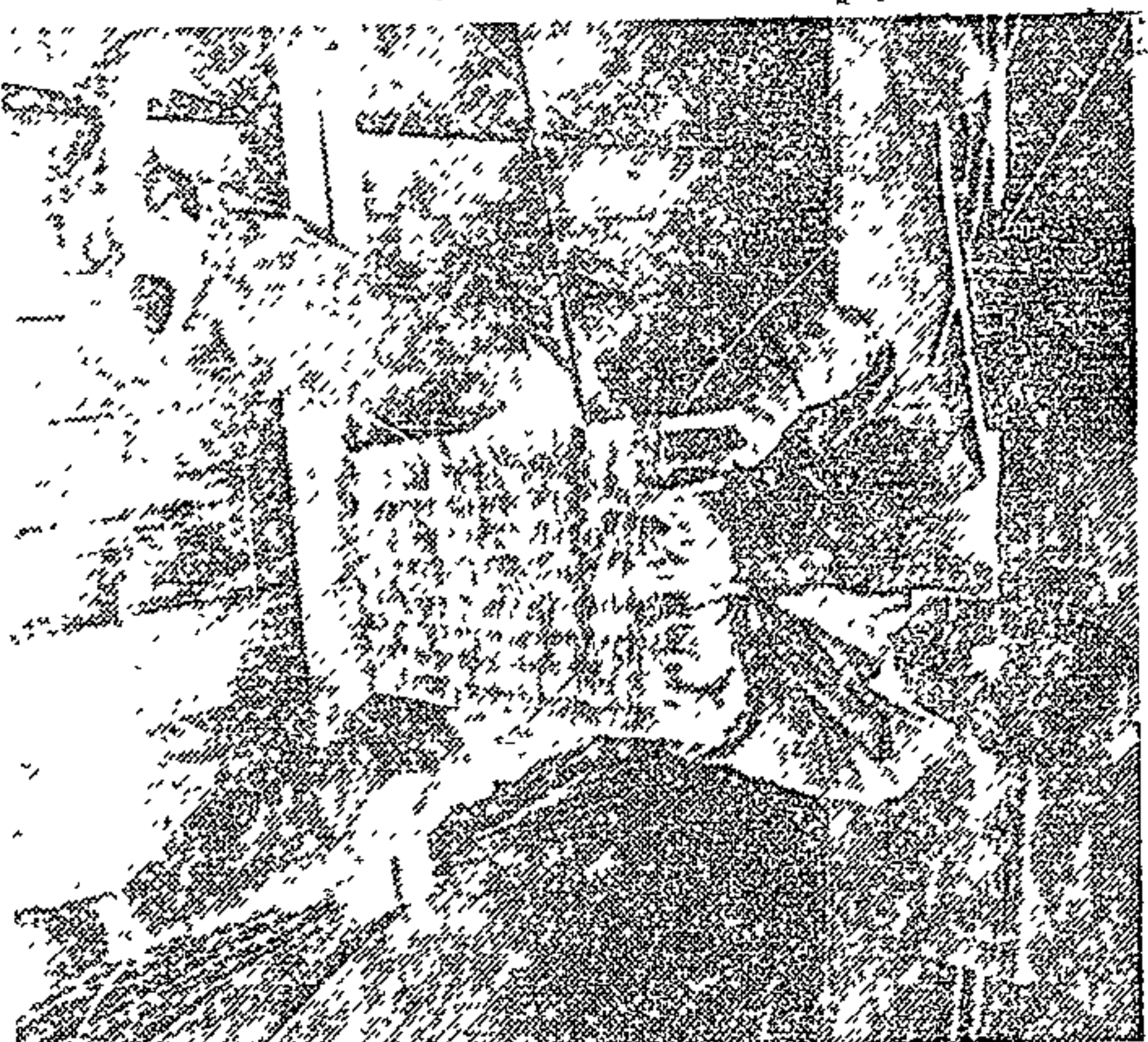
With a monthly wage bill of R23 000 it would take a short time for us to go bankrupt," said Mr. Barber. "But it is difficult to explain this concept of financial survival to our workers, who feel they cannot support themselves on the wages they earn."

A yearly R500 000 is needed to run Itireleng.

Forty percent of R200 000 of this comes from the Bophuthatwana Government in the form of a subsidy. The balance has to come from fund-raising and sales of basketwork, brushes and mattresses.

Mr. Barber introduced piece-rate work to make it possible for the more industrious workers to earn more money and to force more production out of the "lazier" workers, some of whom were producing as little as one basket a week.

He said very few workers were earning less than they did in the past.



Wages at the Itireleng factory in Bophuthatwana range from R6.50 to R37 a week. The average wage is R11 a week.

Mr. Barber conceded, however, that today's high cost of living made it difficult for any of the workers to come out on their wages. But it was physically impossible to pay better wages, he said.

"We have handicapped people, mental cases, blind, deaf and dumb workers. I am afraid we also have a few chronically lazy and simple-minded workers who virtually refuse to work. We have never discriminated against them but because of the financial situation we will be forced to classify workers into "A," "B,"

and "C" scales which will limit the pay of unproductive workers.

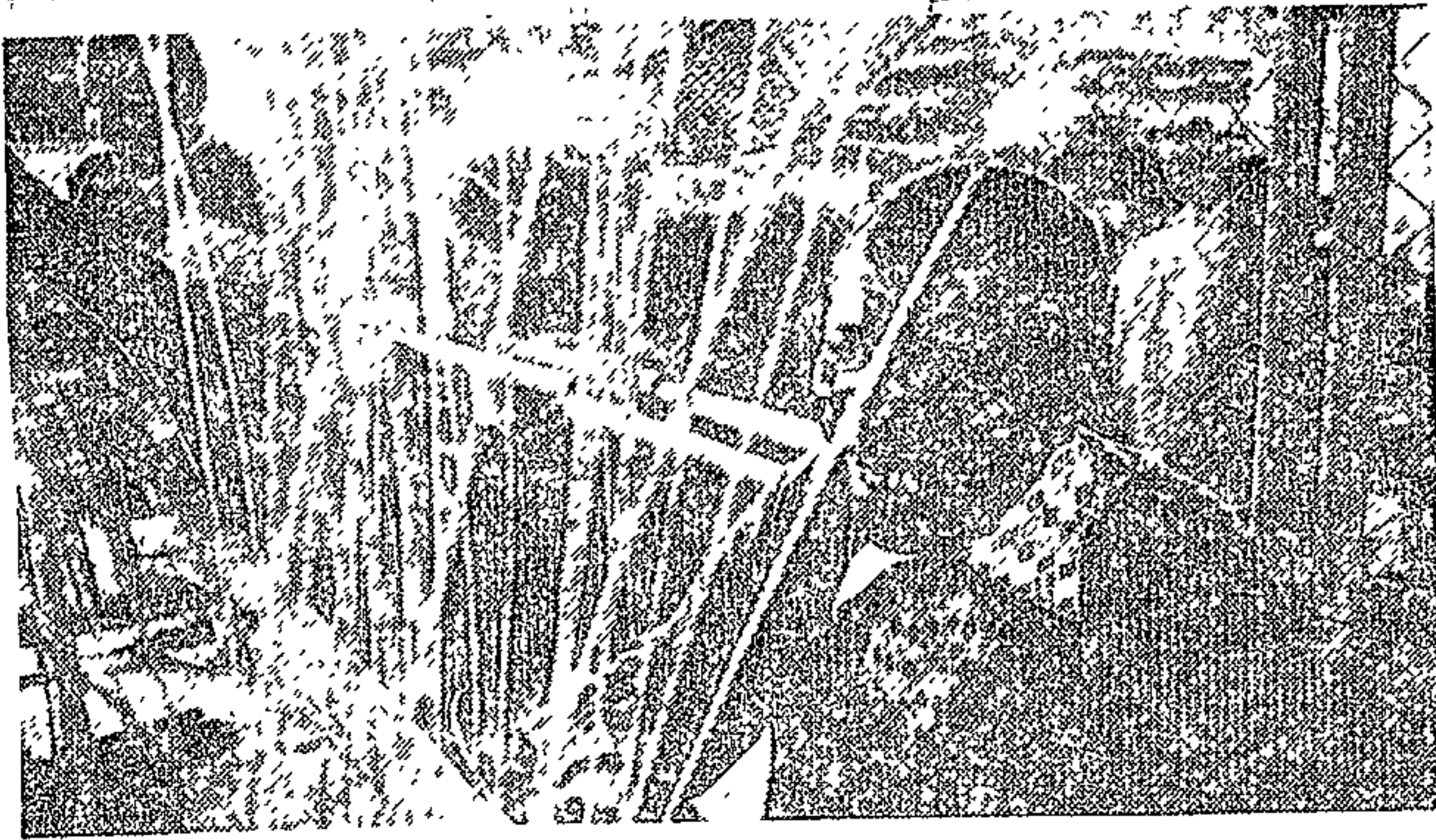
"This is not a new concept in blind workshops. We are facing a survival situation and have to look at the greater good for the greatest number."

He said it might also become necessary to ask unproductive workers older than 60 to retire, although there were exceptions such as the 74-year-old workers who were still earning about R23 a week on piece-rate work, an asset to Itireleng, irrespective of his age.

Weaving
a tale
of woe

STAR 12/10/80

MAKE ENDS MEET



Radcliffe Dladla was found as a baby in a Natal hospital by the founder of Itireleng. Now the workshop is his home.

300 blind
sacked

JOHANNESBURG — About 300 blind workers at the Itereleng Institute in Hammanskraal near Pretoria have been sacked after complaining about poor wages, the Post (Transvaal) reported yesterday.

It said 180 workers at the institution's hostel were ordered to leave immediately, while an undisclosed number of workers in married quarters in neighbouring Ga-Rankuwa were told to vacate their houses to make way for other workers.

The manager of the Itereleng Institute, Mr Geoffrey Hilton-Barber, 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. Gorshel, 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^{STAR} workshop^{26/6/80} ~~workshop~~²⁹⁶ 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 Geoff Hilton-Barber, said on Monday, June 16 about 70 workers entered his office in GaRankuwa, 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.

STAR 27/6/80 (152) (296)

Troublesome blind workers barred

About 40 "troublemakers" among the 350 blind workers at the Itireleng 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 R6,50 to R36. The average weekly wage was R11.

About two weeks ago

Mr Barber informed workers of increases ranging from 40 cents to R1,30 a week. He apologised for not being able to grant higher increases.

Itireleng 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 16. 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.

TRIBUNE highlighted their plight last week, now these exploited workers will get more

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

By Daryl Balfour

THE "white slaves" of the Department of Manpower Utilisation — whose plight was highlighted by the Sunday Tribune last week — are to receive substantially increased salaries and travel allowances.

Pay rise for white slaves

(296) (185) S. Tribune 24/8/80

FLASHBACK . . .

This was confirmed by a chairman of the management committee at the department's Service Products factory, Daniel Liebenberg. He said it had been decided that all workers at Service Products would be re-

viewed. "It's being treated as a matter of urgency, but it's quite a long-winded thing so it could still take some time."

"But I'm sure the workers will get a very substantial increase, probably back-dated to April 1 like the rest of the civil servants," Mr Liebenberg said.

Service Products factories are sheltered employment undertakings for disabled and slightly retarded people.

A Sunday Tribune investigation last week showed that workers were being exploited because of their "unemployable" status. They are earning salaries as low as R23 a week, even though some are qualified artisans and matriculants.

This week friends, relatives and parents of workers employed by Service Products telephoned the Tribune to praise the report highlighting their plight. Mr Liebenberg slammed the report, saying the department was "only trying to help these people and keep them off the streets."

Last week the Tribune reported that workers at Service Products were earning wages below the Minimum Living Level as determined by the Bureau for Market Research at the University of South Africa.

● They are not allowed to join the Civil Servants Association.

● They are allowed only 21 days leave a year.

● They get only 21 days sick leave on full pay.

even though they are supposedly disabled people.

They work on public holidays but have to find their own transport to the factory at Jacobs even though public transport does not run according to regular schedules.

While the men are paid starvation wages — one man has worked there for 29 years and earns only R30 a week — there is no subsidised canteen and workers have to either bring their own lunch or buy from a nearby cafe.

The men have to buy their own tools.

They are not provided with overalls and either have to buy their own — which they cannot afford — or work in civilian clothes.

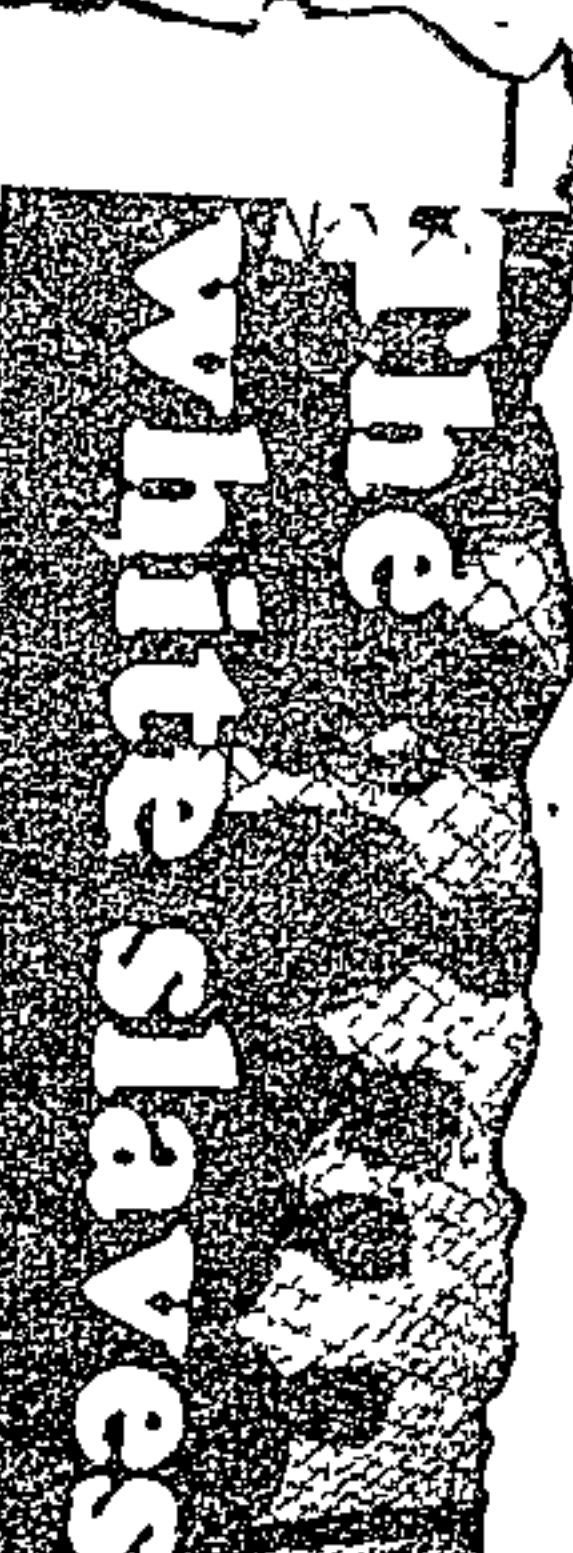
They are not provided with pay slips indicating deductions, tax or anything else.

The men fear victimisation if they query anything or complain about their treatment.

Their pay is docked or they are suspended and sent home if they arrive late for work, even on public holidays when public transport is erratic.

But this week, at a meeting called by the local manager of Service Products, John du Plessis, the workers were told they would be getting increases backdated to April and their travel allowances would be reviewed.

Mr du Plessis denied the Sunday Tribune report had had any effect on improving conditions.



Our story last week highlighting the plight of the exploited Service Products workers.

Dissatisfied Service Products workers, who asked not to be identified, stand at the fence of the Jacobs factory during their half-hour lunch break. DARYL BALFOUR reports.

By ALINAH DUBE
 AFTER working for more than ten years, 41 Hereleng blind workers in Ga-Rankuwa received back pay varying between R21,37 and R28,12, when they were fired recently.

According to the blind people interviewed by POST they were not given any breakdown of the money paid them, and do not know if it was leave pay, notice pay or pension money.

They were given the money in envelopes when fired by the centre, they claimed.

Investigations by POST revealed that 41 of more than 300 blind workers left jobless after the institute was closed down in July this year, were dismissed and told not to be seen anywhere near the factory.

Some were re-instated while negotiations between the Transvaal Society for the Blind and the Bophuthatswana Gov-

Back pay for blind 'not enough'

ernment were still on. Sources said this was to arrange the homeland to take over the institute.

Mrs Angeline Maboa (36), who worked at the society for more than 16 years, told POST that they were not contacted about their dismissal. "We were only treated like dogs," she said.

"The manager sent us letters informing us about the termination of our duty. No reasons were given and when we went to his office to collect salaries he said the money was all the society owed."

Soft-spoken Mrs Maboa, who had been a switchboard instructor, said she got the "shock of her life" when she realised that the yellow envelope given to her after working there only had R26 in it. She said each time they enquired about their salary, authorities referred them to the Government of Bophuthatswana.

Mrs Elizabeth Maubane (48) joined the institute 27 years ago and all she got was R28,12.

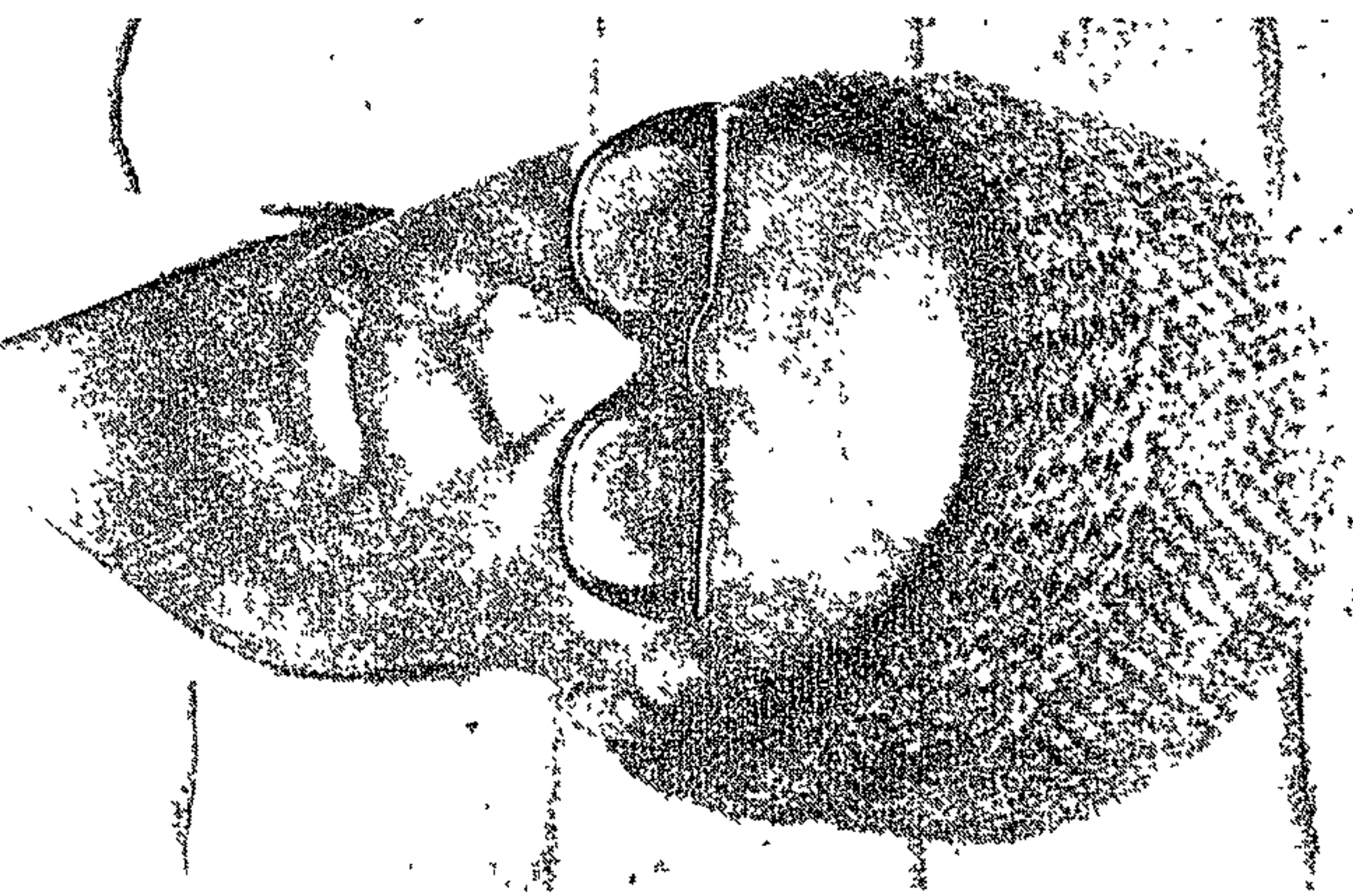
Mr Lambert Makgoale (41), whose family depends on his begging in

the streets, said life would never be the same after losing his job. His wife has a three-day old baby, two children are at school and he has to pay a monthly rent of R5,89.

"One cannot live on begging for at times you go empty-handed," Mr Makgoale said.

The chairman of the Transvaal Society for the Blind, Mr Alec Goshel, refused to talk to POST and said all questions should be referred to the Bophuthatswana Government.

Mrs Elizabeth Maubane . . . has worked 27 years and received R28,12.



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Ikhwezi Lokusa is a shining example ⁽²⁹⁶⁾

Report and pictures by
JUDY PARFITT

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 30 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, woodworking, 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 Transkeian 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 Transkeian 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 full-

ly 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.



Khayaletu Sidondi, 21, one of the pottery's most promising employees.

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 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.

Masimla Peter, 24, and Khayaltu Sidondi, 21, are TB spine victims and also share an interest in music. Sister Mary Paul said Masimla, 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 28 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 65, 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.

Sheltered Employment — ~~#48~~

1982 — 1986

New workshop for retarded children

296
1/2/82
Sowetan
297

By SELLO
RABOTHATA

THE MENTAL Health Society of the Witwatersrand hopes to have it completed by the end of next year, Mrs C M Sithole,

R250 000 protective workshop in Soweto and

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 Phumelela Training Centre in Senaoane, 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 find 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 Koornhof, and we were eventually granted it last August."

Mrs Sithole said the Health Society then approached architects at the University of the 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 Phumelela Training centre in Senaoane 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.

(296) E Post 8/2/82

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 Sceales, 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 Sceales 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 Sceales 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 recently, Mr Harry Schwarz (PFP, Yeoville) is 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 'one specific incident where it was unfortunately so that control over the keys and armouries was entrusted to one person and he made those keys available to (the Witkommando) ...

Undermanned

'One cannot control occurrences of this nature. I must acknowledge that the stores personnel in that particular unit were not sufficiently trained, and that there were not enough stores personnel.

'To a large extent the headquarters was too undermanned to carry out these controls.

'It is also 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 Minister of Defence already had ordered him to tighten up control measures at the unit in question.

Earlier, 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 Schwarz, who had asked

Ban lifted on Battiss book

Mercury Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG—The publications appeal board yesterday lifted the ban on a manuscript by Professor Walter Battiss, *Fook Book*, which was confiscated by customs officials at the Jan Smuts airport 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 hailed the appeal board's ruling and said that he regarded the *Fook Book*'s as works of art and not as publications. He said he had only produced 'three or four other *Fook Books*'.

He had compiled the *Fook Book* in question in London. It consisted of drawings he had found in an old book in London which he had altered with a 'cookie pen'.

In between the altered drawings he had inserted quotations of famous people like Oscar Wilde, as

Blind, ^{Mercury} 11/2/82 workers fired ~~182~~ after 296 wage ~~122~~ dispute

Mercury Reporter

ABOUT 59 blind workers from Enduduzweni factory in Umlazi were dismissed yesterday after a dispute over wage deductions.

The workers who make cane baskets, cane furniture and weave work, downed tools at the end of last week when, on receiving their weekly pensions, they found the management had increased the deductions for food and lodging.

They said management had warned them of the increased deductions to pay for food before they went on leave last year.

Management had said the increase was necessary because of a shortage of funds. This was rejected by the workers and they thought the increase had been shelved.

Dismiss

Negotiations were held between the workers, officials of the Blind Allied Workers' Union and management, but after a meeting of the executive committee of the Natal African Blind Society — which runs the factory — yesterday morning, it was decided to dismiss the workers.

Workers said because of their low wages they could not afford to pay the increased deductions.

A statement released by the Natal African Blind Society said an increase in board deductions was necessary because the hostel was being run at a loss.

The dissident blind workers have been told that they can re-apply for admission on the existing terms and the selection committee will deal with all applications as they are received, according to the statement.

Meeting

The national organiser for the South African Allied Workers' Union, which the Blind Workers' Union is affiliated to, Mr Herbert Barnabas, said the blind workers had been told they could stay in the hostel for the night but

lied Workers' Union, which the Blind Workers' Union is affiliated to, Mr Herbert Barnabas said the blind workers had been told they could stay in the hostel for the night but they would be taken home today.

He said he was hoping to arrange a meeting with the management for today to attempt to get them to change their mind.

Meanwhile, at the Port Durnford Mondl Timber Mill the 131 workers who downed tools last Friday have continued to go to the mill and sit on the premises during their normal working hours, according to union sources.

They downed tools when the management refused to review its policy of compulsory membership to the Anglo American pension scheme.

wasn't a good day for the beach yesterday ... far too much wind ... but that didn't stop 20-year-old Karen White taking her daily dose of fresh air and sunshine at lunch-time.

1977 1978 296

Fired blind workers threatened with arrest

Mercury 13/2/82

Mercury Reporter

THE 59 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 institute'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

Allied 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 Fosatu-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 Umlazi were yesterday charged with trespassing after they refused to leave the hostel at the factory.

John Randles, director of the society, confirmed yesterday he had charged the workers with trespassing and pointed out it was up to the Umlazi police to decide whether to move 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 Enduduzweni 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 10am 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 cane products and weave 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.



John Randles ... called the police

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

By SHAMI HARICHUNDER

them realise we are opposed to different rates. "All we want is a uniform deduction which we all will be able to meet. After all, we are not earning fat salaries."

According to the Blind Allied Workers' Union, wages at the factory ranges 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 Reddy 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 Johnstone, president of the society, refused to comment on the police involvement and other developments saying he would first have to talk to Mr Randles.

The society — a non-profit welfare organisation — justified the increase by saying the hostel was running at a "tremendous loss."

Mr Sangweni said the workers are unhappy with the new deductions, not because of the increase, but because each were being charged different rates for food and lodging and also because their request to cook their own food — which would cut costs — had been refused by management.

"In the middle of the dispute management gave us the option of finding our own accommodation but continuing to work for them. This was unacceptable because it is almost impossible to find housing in Umlazi."

He claimed the society went ahead and increased deductions, even though it had asked workers for suggestions.

"It came as a surprise to us when the rates were suddenly upped."

FREQUENCY OF BEHAVIOUR FOR

Don't try to give "right" answers. Only one who needs to see this, and little value if you don't answer acc

DIRECTIONS: Check yourself honestly on the following. OBJECTIVE: To assess your listening habits.

EXERCISE: 12.2 ACTIVE LISTENING

(296) (472)
(331)
Trespass charges for blind workers 15/2/62

African Affairs Reporter
CHARGES of trespassing were laid against 59 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 10 a m 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 Ntsele, 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

Own Correspondent

DURBAN - Charges of trespassing were laid against 59 blind workers on Saturday when they refused to vacate their hostel at the Natal African Blind Society's premises in Umlazi.

They are expected to 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

10 am after a dispute over increased deductions from their salaries for food. The society said the increased deductions were necessary because the hostel was running at a loss.

The workers are employed in a factory making baskets and cane furniture.

The factory manager, Mr John Randles, called the police and a charge of trespassing was laid against the workers.

Mr D Ntsole, 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.

Food

However, the officials succeeded in persuading him to give the workers food. Food had been withdrawn since Thursday when the workers objected to the increased deductions for food.

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.

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capk Tink 16/2/82
296 182

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.

UCT

December 11/2/82
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 Randles, director of the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi.

Mr Randles 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. They had been told to leave the hostel 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 fares but the workers had refused to leave the premises, he said.

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

Mr E J Sibeko appeared for the State.

UIC-7

52 blind workers charged

Argus 16/2/82
296

Argus Correspondent

DURBAN — Fifty-two blind workers of the Natal African Blind Society who were dismissed last week have been charged with trespassing.

They were dismissed after striking in protest against food deductions and increased boarding fees at a factory hostel in Umlazi.

Mrs Lovell Greene, secretary of the society, said it had been necessary to increase the fees because the hostel was running at a 'tremendous' loss.

The workers had been told to find accommodation elsewhere if they wanted but that they could keep their jobs.

On February 4 they had decided not to re-

turn to work until the money deducted had been refunded.

They were fired after a week long strike and given until 10 am on Friday to leave the hostel.

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.

UMLAZI

Blind

Umlazi

workers

guilty

of trespass

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 R30 (or 30 days) 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 trespass following their refusal to vacate the premises after their services had been terminated by Mr John Randles, director of the Natal African Blind Society at Indukucent in Umlazi.

The blind workers downed tools in protest at certain deductions from their wages which the management said were for board and lodging expenses. They were ordered to leave the premises by 10 a.m. last Saturday, but did not.

Under cross examination by Mr C J Albertyn, for the defence, Mr Randles said he had not read the conditions of employment to the employees. He had expected the welfare officer to perform that duty. He also said that the workers were paid meagre salaries.

Satisfied

Mr Albertyn submitted that the workers believed they had a right to remain on the premises of the society. He said that the terms of the workers' contracts had been varied 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 Sibeko appeared for the State.

to court after their sacking

Court Reporter

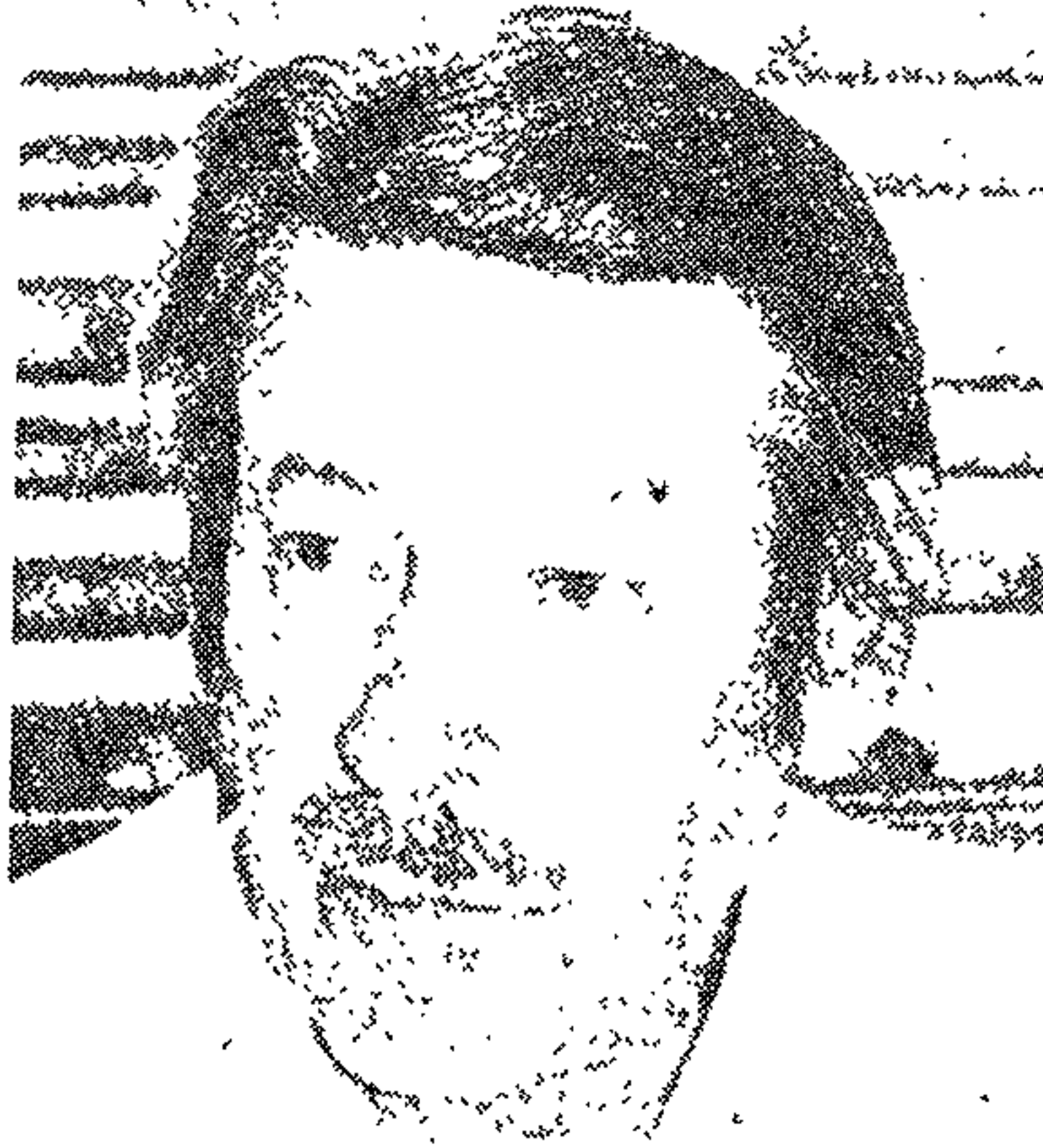
FIFTY-SIX blind workers, sacked by the Natal African Blind Society last week, were still in their hostel last night

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 55 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 met twice monthly with Mr Randles



MR John Randles

During the early part of 1981, the blind workers grew dissatisfied with the wages 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 in-

crease 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 deduction.

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 4 the deductions were effected already, although they had not consented to them. They stopped work and the stoppage continued until February 9

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 from 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 awoken at 4.30 a.m. and taken to the Umlazi Magistrate's Court where they were charged and convicted for trespassing. They instructed their attorney to note 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 Chennels and Co, appeared for the applicants.

Blind workers

296

19/2/82

Mercury

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Still in their hostel

Bubble cap tray
Cat-cracker

4.1.5 The following definitions
Analyse them to determine
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physical structure, technic
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a) A legume is a fruit form
splitting along the dorsp.
and usually containing aof-
inner side of the ventra

b) Fern. Vascular crytogali-
with feathery fronds.

c) Joist. One of parallel
from wall to wall for cei
to be nailed to

d) Circuit n. Path of current; apparatus through
which current passes.

Cape Times, 19/2/22, 2:96

Blind 'trespassers' lodge appeal for rights

DURBAN. — The 51 blind workers from the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi who were convicted in the Umlazi 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

UCT

296 Talks
over
blind
workers

Mercury
6/3/62
Mercury Reporter

NEGOTIATIONS between the attorneys acting for the 56 blind workers at the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi 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.

296

Mercury 10/3/82

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 R116 546 from the Durban and District Community Chest annually.

Altogether the society has 16 separate units, serving all race groups. These include four social agencies, 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 articles they make are sold, and they receive 75 percent of the profits (In terms of the State disability grants they receive, they cannot earn more than R40 a month).

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 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



A PROUD Heather Mitchel displays some of the toys she has made at the Senior Training Unit for the mentally handicapped at Sherwood.

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 very clear cut views 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.'



A NEW skill being taught at the Senior Training Unit for the mentally handicapped at Sherwood is how to operate knitting machines — an activity which promises to be both useful and profitable.

Blind workers reinstated in end to dispute

African Affairs Reporter

THE dispute between the blind workers in Umlazi 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 J Albertyn, a Durban attorney who has been acting on behalf of the workers since the dispute started.

Mr Dumisani Zikalala and Mr Ephraim Jiyane, 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.

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 Enduduzweni hostel in Umlazi.

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.

Handicapped look for market

246

BY SINNAH KUNENE SoweTAN

A SELF-HELP project for four paraplegics at the Ipelegeng Community Centre in White City Jabavu has come to a standstill because "there is no market" for their produce.

The four, Messrs Ben Byane, Matthews Mxhosa, Thomas Mashike and Samuel Senne, embarked on the self-help scheme in January this year. Little did they know that their handicrafts would not sell easily in the township.

They make doll furniture with wood, pegs, glue and varnishing paint. These consist of bedroom suites worth R35, dining-room suites at R25 and doll houses at R50.

According to the community worker who heads the project, Mr Moloto Bizzah, the self-help project is non-funded. The four men contributed money from their meagre bi-monthly disability grant towards the project.

A brainchild of one of the members, Mr Mashike, the project lacks exposure. Their articles are only marketed in the local township, which is known as the most poverty-stricken area in Soweto.

There are other barriers in marketing the goods. The paraplegics cannot freely travel to the city or industrial areas because of transport problems.

In the meantime, the paraplegics have individual problems. Mr Mashike (25) from Rockville has complained about his rattling wheelchair. Eight months ago, a social worker for the local Cripple Care Association took his wheelchair for repairs. Efforts to get

13/4/82

it back have proved fruitless. He has since borrowed a friend's, which is also in bad shape, for daily use.

Mr Mashike has made an appeal to the social worker to return his wheelchair, which was bought by his parents. He says they paid about R500 for the wheelchair.

Mr Ben Byane is sole breadwinner and father of one. He shares a two-roomed house in White City Jabavu with his crippled wife. He depends on the R80 bi-monthly grant which he regards as too little to support the family. He only got exemption (temporary) from paying rent a month ago, when councillor I P Mashike (Thomas' father) presented his case to the local superintendent. He was asked not to pay rent pending an application for exemption.

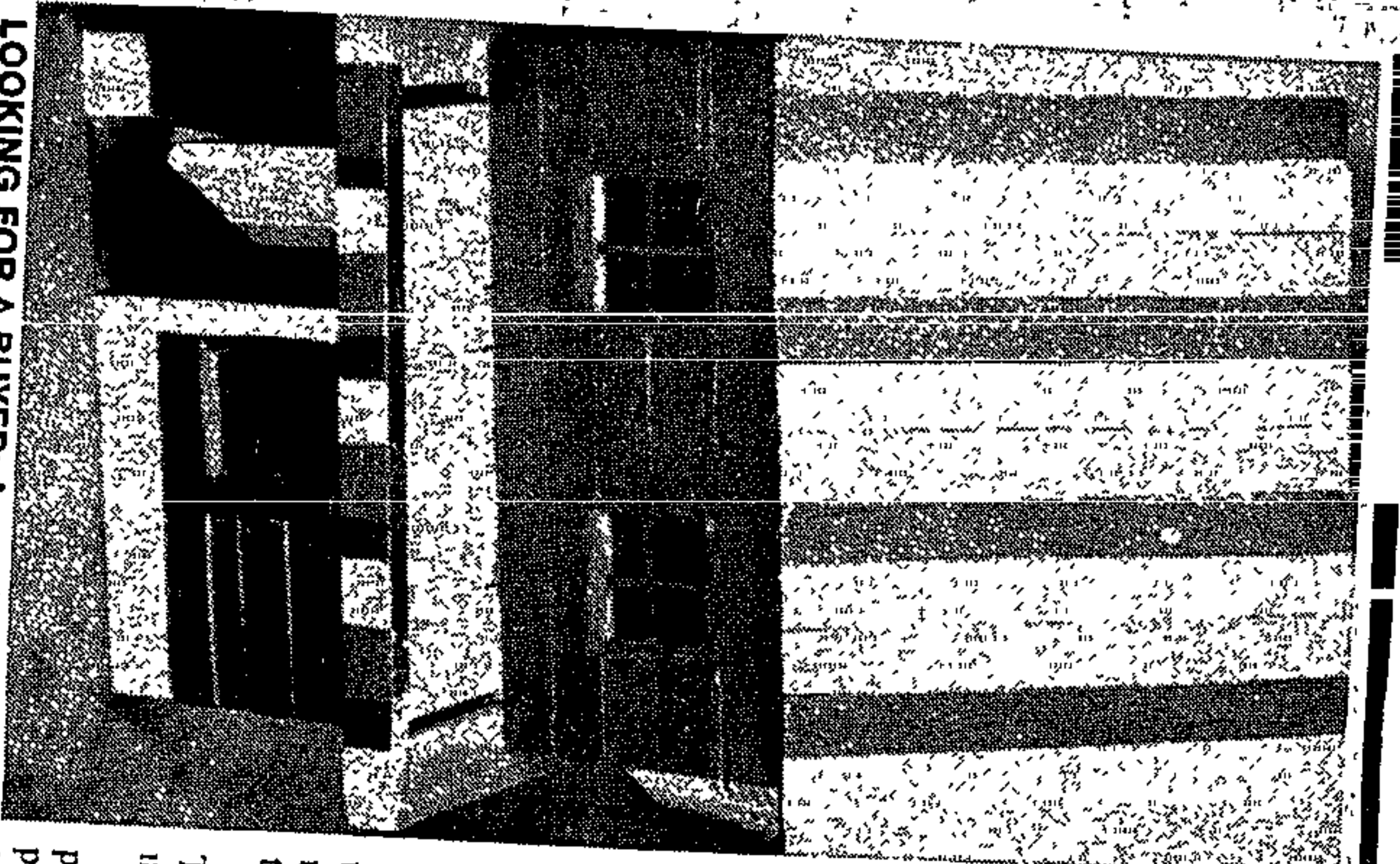
Matthews Mxhosa (31) is a homeless polo-paras who depends on Good Samaritans for survival. At the moment he has temporary accommodation from relatives of the community worker.

His wheelchair also needs repairs. He states that he cannot afford to buy a new one which costs at least R400.

The fourth member of the group, Mr Senne, also from White City Jabavu, was in hospital at the time of the interviews.

Mr Bizzah told The SOWETAN that the project is still very new, but they could not continue with production as there was no demand for the goods. It could possibly be a matter of having no convenient place to market the goods, Mr Bizzah felt.

LOOKING FOR A BUYER: A wooden dollhouse at R50.



17

Blind people battling to find jobs

By CATHY SCHNELL

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 Worker's Association Mr G Pitt, said

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

Surava 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

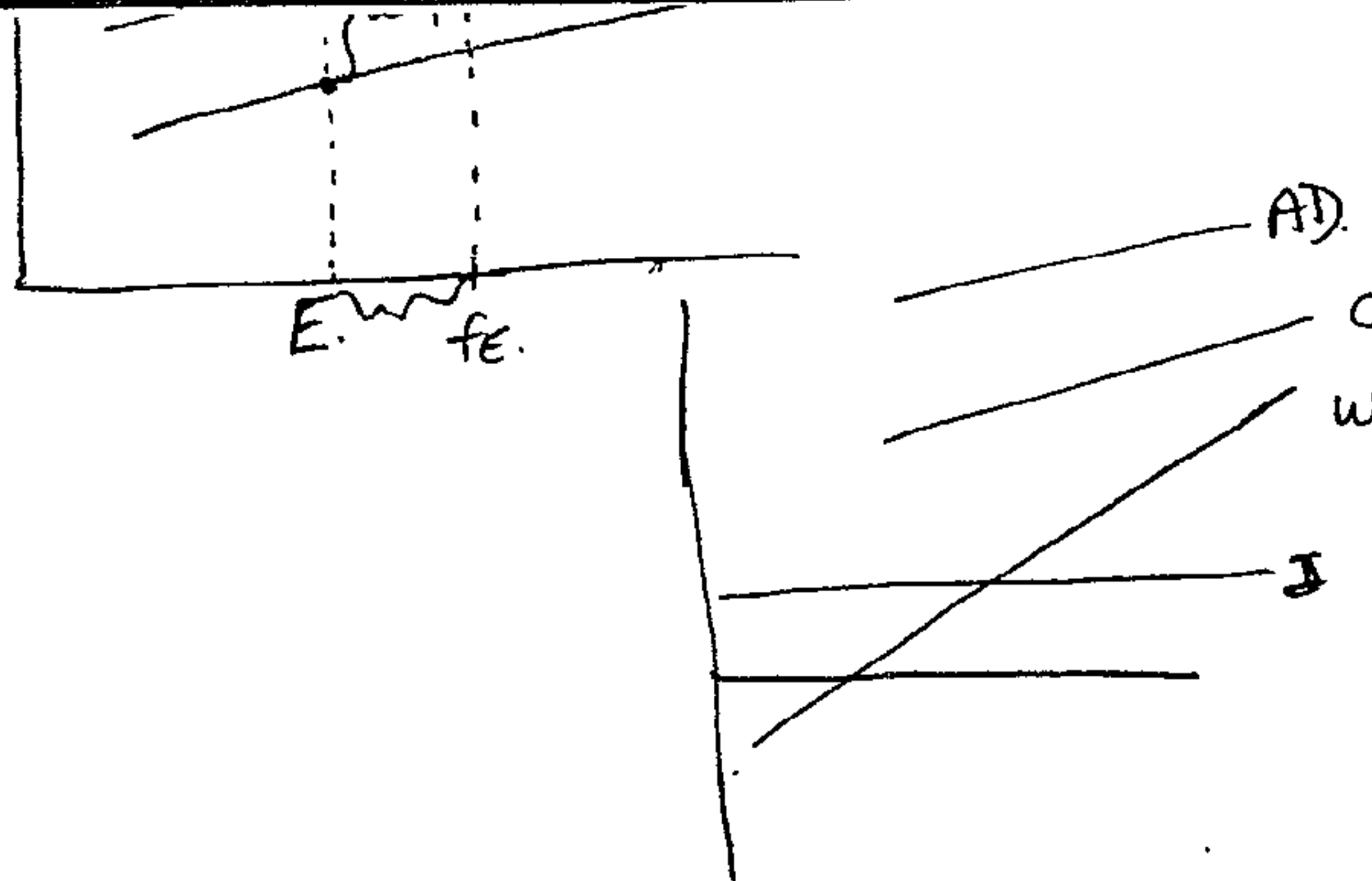
Surava said she felt useless and unfulfilled, staying at home doing the housework when she wanted to be earning money to help support her five brother and sisters, the youngest of whom is also blind

"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 Pizer said he felt sad knowing that many of his 195 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 receive a slap in the face after all their studies when no one wants to employ them," he said

Mr Pizer said the standard of education for the blind was the same as for the sighted — except that the pupils have to try much harder



accelerator =

CAPE TIMES
16/6/82

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 co-operation 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 Schotschekloof.

Depending on the Cape Town Welfare Coordinating 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'

296 E. Post 30/6/82

By SHELAGH 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 is made in a letter from the president of the Society for Social Workers of South Africa, Miss Shelagh Hurford, to members of the society.

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

The society is 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 Munnik, last August.

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

From there it went to the Commission for State 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 more social workers are resigning; practising social workers are under greater pressure; private welfare organisations 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 92 of a total of 438 posts in Health and Welfare.

The chairman of the society's local branch, Mr Gerrie Niemand, said there was confusion after Dr Munnik'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 Munnik, 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 more than 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, coordinator 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.

Cape Times 6/8/82

~~84~~ ~~230~~ 296

State 'prejudiced' against epileptics

Staff Reporter

EPILEPSY sufferers who were permanently employed in the civil service were blatantly discriminated against Dr John Sonnenberg, M.P.C. 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 Kuils River.

"A person suffering from epilepsy who is permanently em-

ployed 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 dia-

betes, 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 perma-

nent 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.

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UK	120	100
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fare situation in South Africa

Fire kills man, leaves

400 jobless

Star 23/9/82
Own Correspondent

More than 400 employees of the Ga-Rankuwa Itireng Institute for the Blind have been laid off work because of a fire yesterday.

The fire which started when 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 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 crass, 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 concerned 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, aiming to equip both interviewer and interviewee to deal more effectively with the situation.

The film has been produced by Enable, a society formed during the 1981 Year of

A training film which alerts personnel consultants to the problems involved when interviewing the disabled, will have major benefits for both, reports BARRY RONGE.

the Disabled Professor Johann Coetzee is the director of the society, and he believes that in the job interview situation the potential employer is more disabled by ignorance than the work-seeker.

Most interviewers believe that disability prevents people from doing anything but sheltered employment, or at best, mechanical, repetitive jobs.

They also fail to see how they could justify the appointment of a disabled person when the prime goal of any business is efficiency, productivity and profit. A disabled person, they believe, could only hinder that.

As a result most interviews with the disabled are actually "exit interviews" where the interviewer looks only for reasons not to employ the person.

The training film dramatises this by filming two interviews, one bad and the other exemplary, 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



DOUBLE DISABILITY—The negative self-image many disabled people have of themselves and prejudice against them in the job market excludes many able, skilled workers from productive careers.

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 it is 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, and not on the substance of what they are and can do. The film aims to make them realise that they can go out and compete equally in the job market without any special pleading."

Professor Coetzee points out that the disabled 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 them in the employment field also ensures that once they are given a job that is 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 using 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 go to Professor Johann Coetzee (01612) 6589 and Lynn Chicara 609-4781.

Any dishonesty will render the candidate liable to disqualification and to possible exclusion from the University

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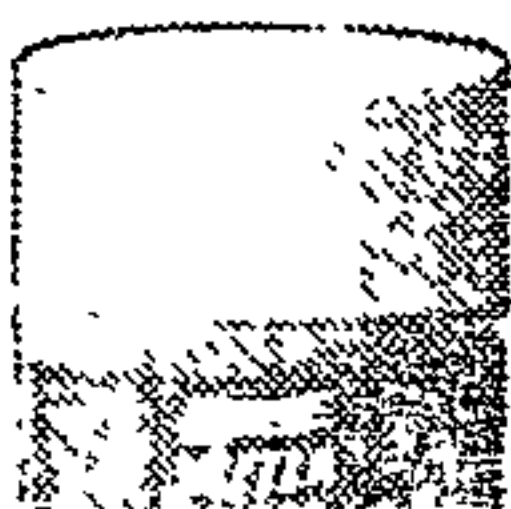


R1,09

R1,22

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39c



Fire leaves blind workers jobless

A fire which partly destroyed the Itireleng Workshop for the Blind in Garankuwa on September 22 caused damage of about R2 million.

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

Mr Dewald Pretorius, general manager of Itireleng, said an electric fault apparently caused the fire.

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

Itireleng was founded in 1967 by the then Transvaal Bantu Blind Society. It grew into a factory with a

hostel for workers, a creche, a clinic and a concert hall.

The factory had 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 — employment or money — from the public and businessmen in the Witwatersrand area."

Itireleng 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 switch-board.

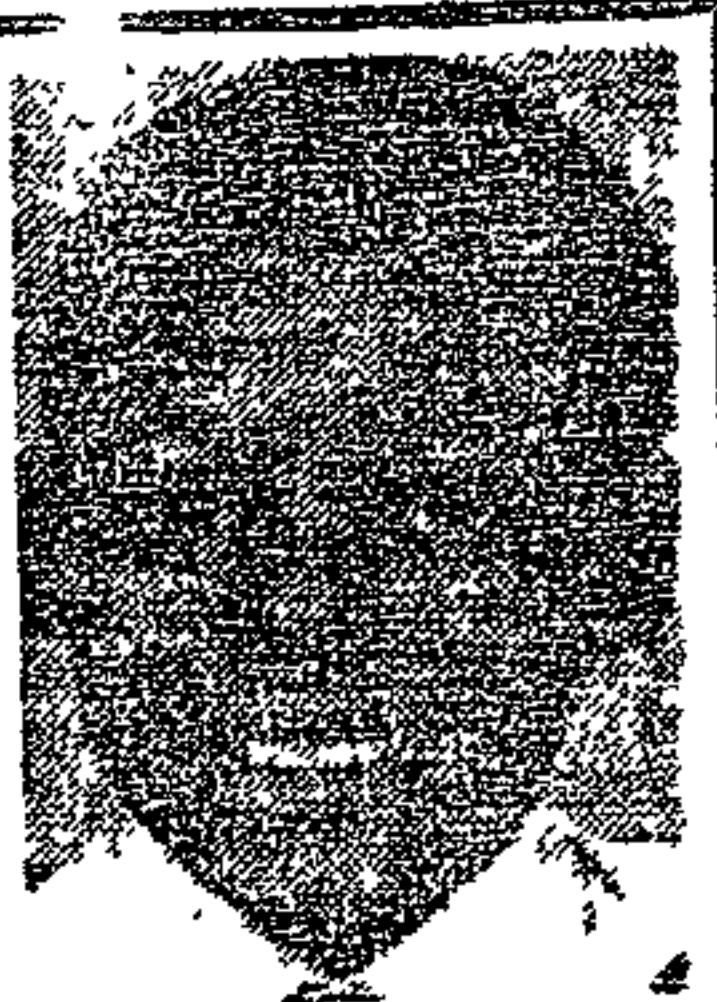
Police on the record

The South African Police will compile a book on the force's history to commemorate its 75th anniversary in 1988.

The public's help is needed with 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 42-5757 after hours.



HASSEN MAYET
missing since Sep
tember 28

Schoolboy missing for 10 days

A 14-year-old Eldorado Park schoolboy has been missing since he left for school on Tuesday last week.

Hassen Mayet, a pupil of Ernest Hobbs Primary School, was wearing long grey pants, a white shirt, a black tie and a blue jersey.

"I have looked all over for him since last week," said his worried father, Mr Dulley Mayet.

Hassen, who has brown eyes and black hair, is short and stout.

Anyone with information on his whereabouts can contact his father at home at 945-3510 or the Kiptown police station at 945 1600.

18 1/2

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 Port Elizabeth Society for the Blind, Mr D W Glendinning, 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 Glendinning and employees.

The series of incidents began last week when a worker and Mr Glendinning 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 Glendinning and workers.

On Monday morning six workers were given termination wages. 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 Glendinning or Prof Pauw could be contacted for comment today.

Blind row probe⁵⁹⁶ not yet under way

E. Pauw 12/10/82
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.

NEWS

JCC backs blind workers' fund

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 Mast-Ingle.

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 bet-

S-A Industrial Week 19/10/82

ween 300 and 350 blind workers, who were making baskets, cushions, processed electric cables, brooms and numerous other items.

The organisation aims to provide meaningful

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 be contributed to Itireleng.

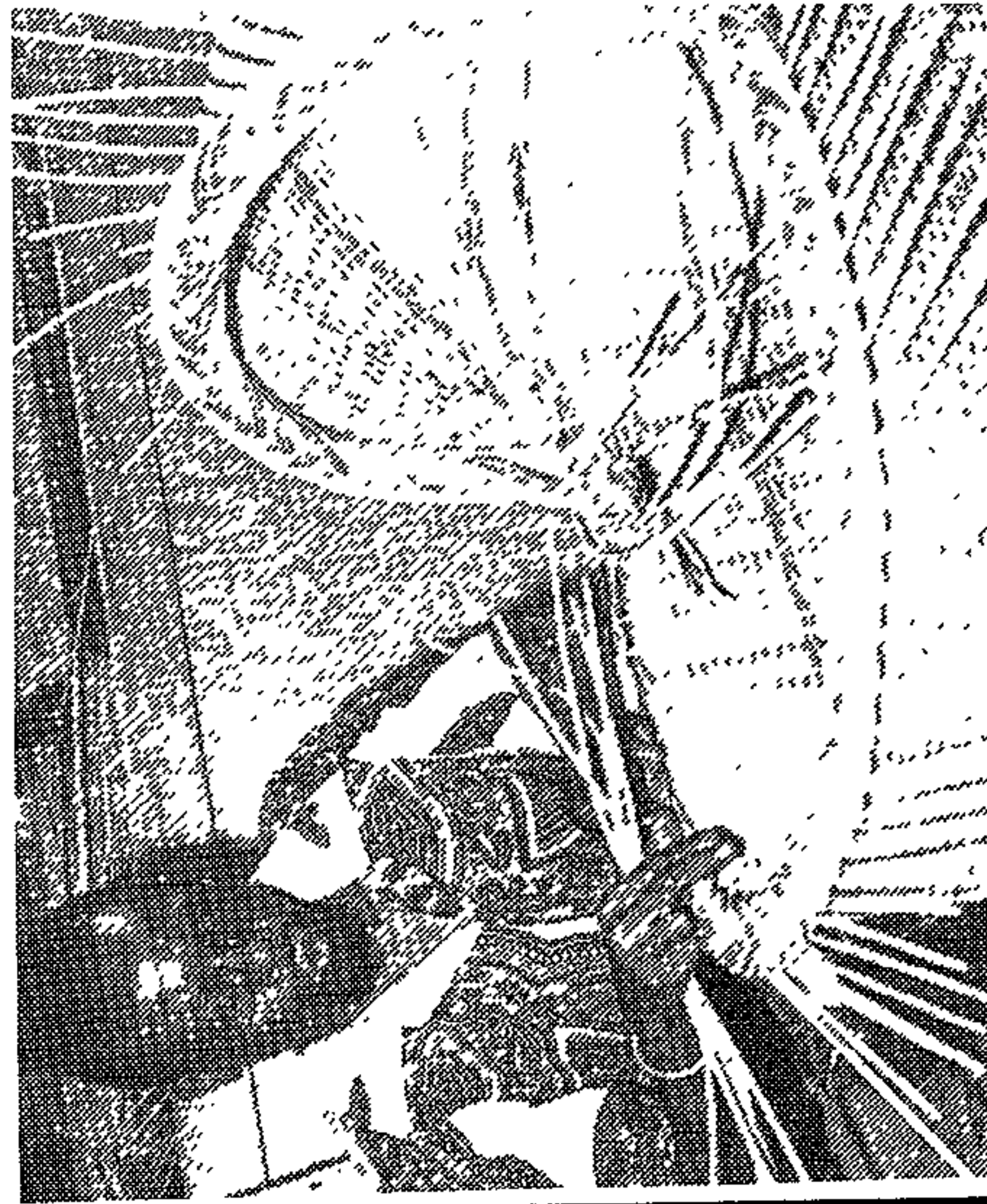
SUB-CONTRACTING: Dewald nesburg 2000. Contact

Pretorius, general manager, Itireleng workshop for the Blind:

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

CHEQUES TO:

The Accountant Itireleng Fund, Box 8303, Johannesburg 2000.



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

SUES 201108296

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

Watchmaking school

opens way to jobs

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 1979, 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

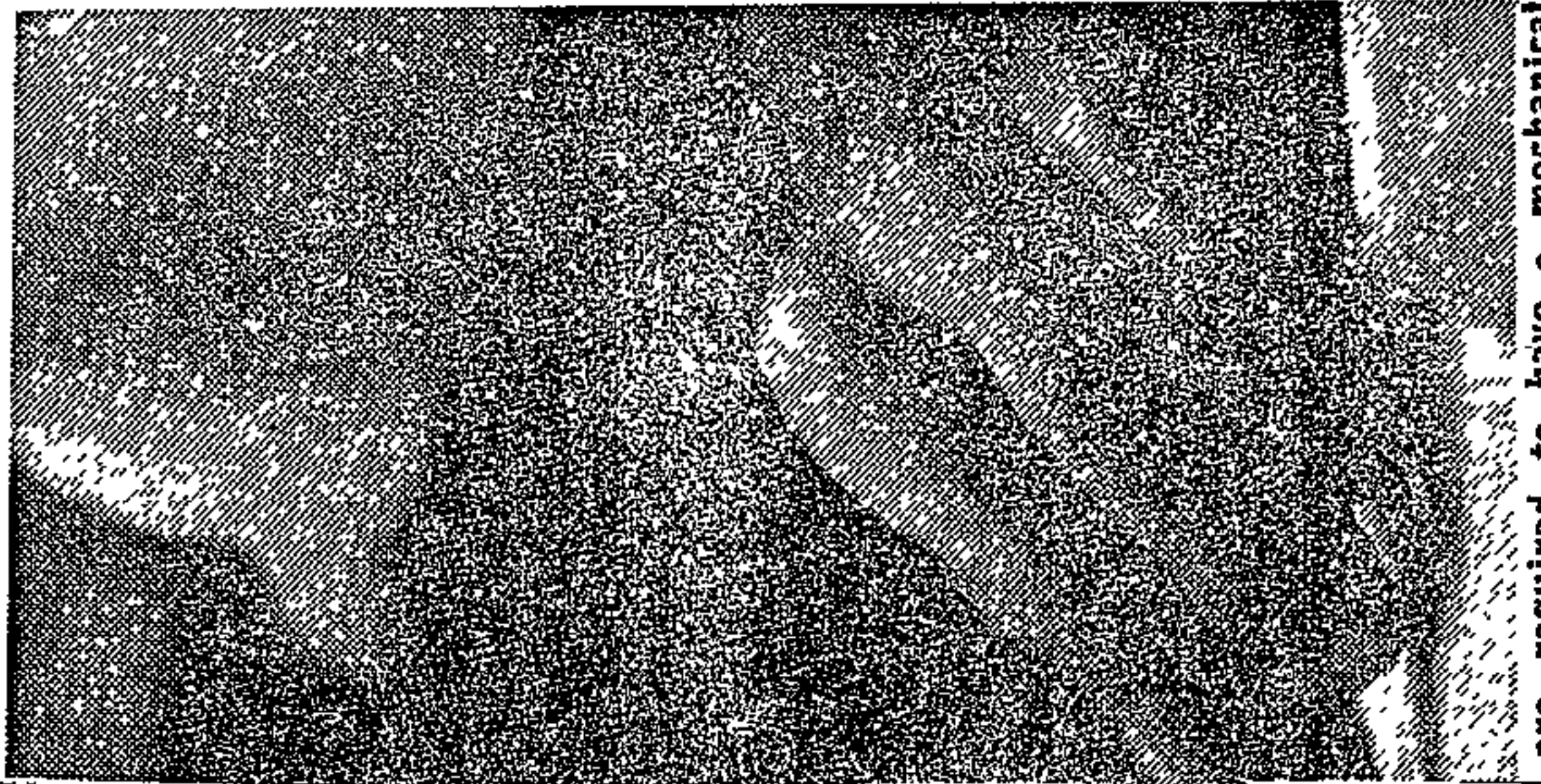
completed the training course and are employed in the watchmaking industry. Another nine from the Self-Help Association of Paraplegics (Soweto) began the course this year.

"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."

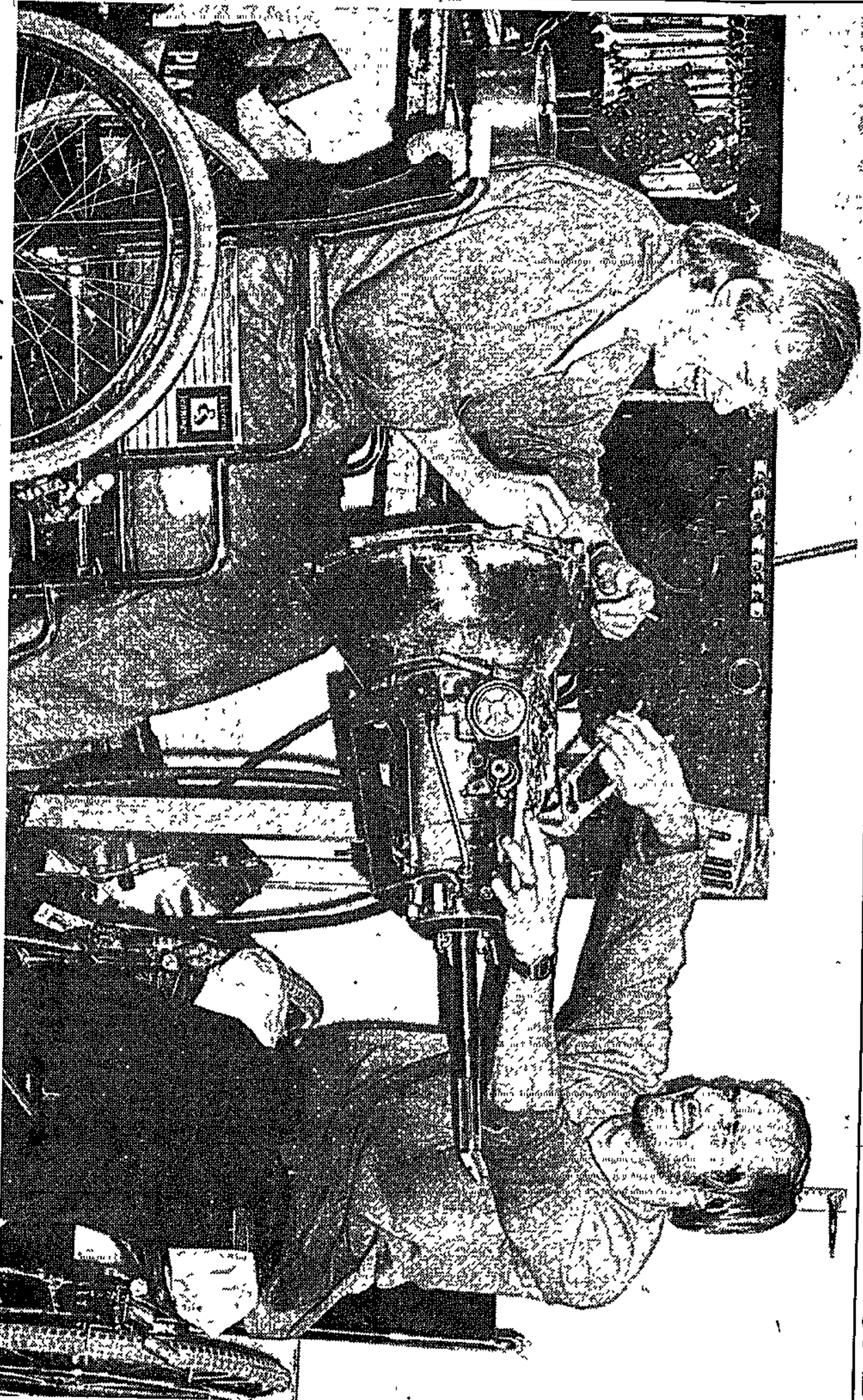


Mr John Carmichael, the instructor of the Avalon Watchmaking School. He qualified as a master watchmaker at a New York watchmaking school in 1978.



are required to have a mechanicalness to learn.

EXPRESS CLOSE-UP ON MEN WHO HAVE A SPECIAL BOSS



Wheelchair mechanics finding ⁽²⁹⁶⁾ their feet

ROAD accident victims Eric Mytstegge, 23, (left) and Johan Heever, 27, are meeting their handicaps head on.

They have become apprentice mechanics in a gearbox repair shop in Jeppe, Johannesburg.

Eric was injured in a motorcycle accident and Johan in a car collision several years ago.

A year ago their boss, Mr Keith Jenzen, needed mechanics to rebuild various makes of automatic gearboxes. He has a disabled relative and wanted to give handicapped people the opportunity to work.

As a result Eric, Johan and a third disabled person, Kobus Erasmus, 22, who was injured in an accident on border duty, now work for him.

All three are paralysed from the waist down.

Mr Jenzen taught them their trade and built special gearbox stands and workbenches for them so they could work in their wheelchairs.

Picture by Chief Photographer DOUG LEE

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Sacking probe 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 Sceales, 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 those employees, its ability to pay them higher wages is limited by virtue of these factors," Mr Sceales said. — Sapa.

parts of argument
missing here

296

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 javellin, 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 Molapo 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.

Soweto
1/3/83

Disabled seek change

Care Times 26/1/85 Staff Reporter 296

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

31/3/84

Reply on wages of sheltered workers

S. Post 296

SIR — I would like to comment on the letter from Mr Chris Beer under the heading "Pay rise needed for disabled workers" (Week-end Post, February 25)

An investigation has revealed that your correspondent was admitted as a sheltered employee to Service Products (N'Dabeni) in Cape Town, on November 3, 1980, where he was employed until he resigned voluntarily on January 12, 1982.

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 sight 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 rands — 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 per-

spective.

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

We're doing a good job, say disabled

'Starvation wages' paid to disabled factory workers

S. Tribune
8/4/84
296

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 by 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 R66. 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 R23 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 R66 and my wife R56 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 per cent 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 the various factories operated as independent concerns which were subsidised by his department.

"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 of sheltered employees due to lack of funds.

"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.

CAPE TIMES 22/5/64
**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.

(iii) White, Coloured and Indian
R7 470×312-8 406×414-10 890×
570-12 600 + 12% pensionable
allowance.

Black
R6 846×312-8 406×414-10 890-
11 460 + 12% pensionable al-
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(iv) White, Coloured and Indian
R10 890×570-16 020 + 12%
pensionable allowance.

Black
R10 062×414-10 890×570-14 880
+ 12% pensionable allowance

(v) White, Coloured, Indian and
Black
R16 020-16 590×849-19 137 +
12% pensionable allowance.

(vi) White
R24 231-25 080-26 115 + 12%
pensionable allowance.

(2) (a) R56,7 million

(b) The implementation of a further
phase of the programme to elim-
inate the salary gap will be con-
sidered in the light of available
funds when occupational specific
market related investigations are
undertaken according to needs
and/or general salary adjust-
ments can be effected

(3) whether any South African individ-
uals or companies acted as agents in
any of these transactions; if so, what
are their names;

(4) whether milk-powder is being export-
ed at present; if so, at what price,

(5) whether any South African individ-
uals or companies are acting as
agents in such transactions at present;
if so, what are their names;

(6) whether this milk-powder is being ex-
ported as a loss; if so, (a) what is the
nature of the loss and (b) how will
this loss be recouped?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

(1) (a) 34 352 ton

(b) 28 984 ton

for the period 1 March 1984 un-
til 28 February 1985

(2) No lawful imports occurred

(3) Fall away

(4) Yes, at approximately 615 Dollar
(USA) per ton.

(5) No

(6) Yes

(a) Approximately R2,30 per kg.

(b) The loss is recouped from the
Stabilisation Fund of the Dairy
Board

Milk-powder

516. Mr D J N MALCOMESS asked the
Minister of Agricultural Economics:

(1) Whether milk-powder is being ex-
ported at a profit, if not,

(2) whether a levy is charged on fresh

milk in order to recover the loss; if
so, (a) what amount (i) had been re-
covered and (ii) remained to be re-
covered as at the latest specified date
for which figures are available and
(b) when is it anticipated that this
levy will be discontinued?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

(1) No

(2) Yes

(a) 2 cents per litre on fresh milk
and industrial milk.

(i) R36 million was recovered
and spent on the disposal of
surpluses until 28 February
1985

(ii) R60 million remains to be
recovered during the period
1 March 1985 until approxi-
mately 28 February 1987 to
dispose of present surpluses
and to repay a land Bank
loan of R32 million which
was utilized during the year
ending 29 February 1984 for
the disposal of surpluses.

(b) It is anticipated that the levy will
be discontinued after approxi-
mately two years if no further
surpluses are produced

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ter of Manpower:

(a) How many Black apprenticeship
contracts were in operation in 1984 and
(b) how many were registered in respect
of each trade?

THE MINISTER OF MANPOWER:

(a) Statistics concerning the contracts in
operation are not kept on a popu-
lation group basis and those in re-
spect of members of the Black Popu-

lation Groups are therefore not kept
separately.

(b) Falls away.

Veterinarians

540. Mr E K MOORCROFT asked the
Minister of Agricultural Economics:

(a) How many (i) White, (ii) Black, (iii)
Coloured and (iv) Asian veterinarians are
registered in the Republic at present and
(b) in respect of what date is this informa-
tion furnished?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

(a) There are 1 354 registered veterinar-
ians in the Republic of South Africa.
The records of the South African
Veterinary Council do not distinguish
between (i) White, (ii) Black, (iii)
Coloured and (iv) Asian veterinar-
ians.

(b) The information is furnished as on 1
February 1985

(296) *Henderson Q. 601. 702*
Sheltered employment 18/3/85
554 Dr A L BORRAINE asked the Minis-
ter of Manpower

(1) (a) How many facilities for sheltered
employment are there under the con-
trol of his Department and (b) where
are they situated in each case,

(2) how many persons were employed in
each such facility as at the latest
specified date for which figures are
available;

(3) whether persons employed in shel-
tered employment facilities qualify
for benefits available to Government
employees; if so, for which benefits;
if not, why not,

(4) (a) what is the maximum hourly wage
paid to such persons and (b) what (i)
annual and (ii) sick leave are these
persons allowed,

Henderson Q. 601. 702
Milk-powder 18/3/85
508. Mr D J N MALCOMESS asked the
Minister of Agricultural Economics.

(1) How many milk-powder was (a) pro-
duced and (b) sold in the Republic in
1984;

(2) whether milk-powder was imported
in this year, if so, (a) by whom, (b)
from what country or countries and
(c) at what price in each case,

- (5) whether any (a) pension and (b) medical aid fund has been established for these persons, if not, why not; if so, what is the nature of these funds;
- (6) whether these persons are permanent employees; if not (a) why not and (b) what are the terms of their employment;
- (7) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

The MINISTER OF MANPOWER:

- (1) (a) Pretoria (1); Johannesburg (3); Potchefstroom (1); Bloemfontein (1); Kimberley (1); Cape Town (2); Port Elizabeth (1); East London (1); Durban (1); Pietermaritzburg (1);
- (2) Pretoria 200
Johannesburg 256
Crown Mines 92
Rand, Industria 192
Potchefstroom 40
Bloemfontein 45
Kimberley 141
N'Dabeni, Mariland 321
Epping 169
Port Elizabeth 158
East London 46
Durban 134
Pietermaritzburg 51
TOTAL 1 845

Note. The figures are as at 31 January 1985.

(3) No, for the reasons set out in paragraph 6(a) below.

- (4) (a) R1,92 per hour.
- (b) (i) 15 working days vacation leave
- (ii) 15 working days on full pay and 15 working days on half pay in respect of each 12 months employment. A further 15 working days on

- (5) (a) No.
- (b) half pay may be granted in addition in special cases if vacation and sick leave credits have been exhausted

- (6) (a) No.
- (b) They are entitled to free medical treatment by the District Surgeon and medicine is supplied free of charge. In the event of their retrenchment they receive disability pensions.

- (a) These workers cannot be classified as "permanent employees" owing to the fact that the only persons eligible for admission to sheltered employment institutions are those who suffer from a clearly defined physical or mental disability and who can, as a result of their disabilities not undertake or retain work under competitive conditions in the open labour market.

- (b) (i) 40 hours of work per week or 8 hours per day
- (ii) Approved rates of pay as well as vacation bonuses are payable.

- (iii) Advanced rates of pay in recognition of outstanding skills, qualifications and previous experience are payable

- (iv) Vacation and sick leave as set out in 4(b).

- (v) The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1983 and the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1941, apply to sheltered employment workers.

(7) No.

Soil Conservation Act

561. Mr R W HARDINGHAM asked the Minister of Agricultural Economics:

What is the estimated number of farms in (a) each province of the Republic and/or (b) each ecological region that remain to be planned in terms of the Soil Conservation Act, No 76 of 1969?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

- (a) Not available. See (b) below.

Farms	
(b) Highveld Region	16 242
Karoo Region	1 137
Natal Region	1 961
Eastern Cape Region	1 091
Free State Region	5 650
Transvaal Region	35 147
Winter Rainfall Region	5 543

The Soil Conservation Act, 1969 (Act 76 of 1969) has been replaced by the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act 43 of 1983).

Soil Conservation Act

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What estimated number of farms in each ecological region of the Republic had been planned in terms of the Soil Conservation Act, No 76 of 1969, as at the latest specified date for which figures are available?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

Farms	
Highveld Region	17 770
Karoo Region	7 992
Natal Region	6 631
Eastern Cape Region	8 004
Free State Region	11 219
Transvaal Region	14 853
Winter Rainfall Region	8 016

The information is furnished as on 31 December 1984.

The Soil Conservation Act, 1969 (Act 76 of 1969) has been replaced by the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act 43 of 1983).

Veterinarians

583. Mr E K MOORCROFT asked the Minister of Agricultural Economics:

Whether there are any vacancies for State veterinarians in his Department; if so, how many?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

No.
Sheep scab

593 Mr E K MOORCROFT asked the Minister of Agricultural Economics:

- (1) How many outbreaks of sheep scab were reported in the Republic in 1984;

- (2) how many farmers were prosecuted in that year for offences under the relevant provisions of the Animal Diseases and Parasites Act, No 13 of 1956?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

- (1) 129.

- (2) 26 persons. The information is furnished for the period 1 January 1984 until 31 December 1984.

Handwritten: 18/3/85
Unemployment Insurance Fund

595. Dr A L BORLAINE asked the Minister of Manpower:

- (1) What was the balance of the Unemployment Insurance Fund at the end of 1984;

- (2) (a) what was the total amount (i)

(iii) White, Coloured and Indian
R7 470×312-8 406×414-10 890×
570-12 600 + 12% pensionable
allowance.

Black
R6 846×312-8 406×414-10 890-
11 460 + 12% pensionable al-
lowance.

(iv) White, Coloured and Indian
R10 890×570-16 020 + 12%
pensionable allowance.

Black
R10 062×414-10 890×570-14 880
+ 12% pensionable allowance.

(v) White, Coloured, Indian and
Black
R16 020-16 590×849-19 137 +
12% pensionable allowance

(vi) White
R24 231-25 080-26 115 + 12%
pensionable allowance.

(2) (a) R56,7 million.

(b) The implementation of a further
phase of the programme to elim-
inate the salary gap will be con-
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funds when occupational specific
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from what country or countries and
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uals or companies acted as agents in
any of these transactions; if so, what
are their names;

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ed at present; if so, at what price;

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uals or companies are acting as
agents in such transactions at present;
if so, what are their names;

(6) whether this milk-powder is being ex-
ported as a loss; if so, (a) what is the
nature of the loss and (b) how will
this loss be recouped?

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(1) (a) 34 352 ton.

(b) 28 984 ton.

for the period 1 March 1984 un-
til 28 February 1985.

(2) No lawful imports occurred.

(3) Fall away.

(4) Yes, at approximately 615 Dollar
(USA) per ton.

(5) No.

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The MINISTER OF MANPOWER:

(1) (a) Pretoria (1); Johannesburg (3); Potchefstroom (1); Bloemfontein (1); Kimberley (1); Cape Town (2); Port Elizabeth (1); East London (1); Durban (1); Pietermaritzburg (1)	(6) No.	(a) These workers cannot be classified as "permanent employees" owing to the fact that the only persons eligible for admission to sheltered employment institutions are those who suffer from a clearly defined physical or mental disability and who can, as a result of their disabilities not undertake or retain work under competitive conditions in the open labour market.
(2) Pretoria		(b) (i) 40 hours of work per week or 8 hours per day.
Johannesburg	200	(ii) Approved rates of pay as well as vacation bonuses are payable.
Crown Mines	256	
Rand, Industria	92	
Potchefstroom	192	
Bloemfontein	40	
Kimberley	45	
N'Dabeni, Maitland	141	
Epping	321	
Port Elizabeth	169	
East London	158	
Durban	46	
Pietermaritzburg	134	
	51	
TOTAL	1 845	

Note: The figures are as at 31 January 1985.

- (3) No, for the reasons set out in paragraph 6(a) below.
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- (b) (i) 15 working days vacation leave.
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- (7) No.

HQA

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Veterinarians

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Whether there are any vacancies for State veterinarians in his Department; if so, how many?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS:

No

Sheep scab

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(1) How many outbreaks of sheep scab were reported in the Republic in 1984,

(2) how many farmers were prosecuted in that year for offences under the relevant provisions of the Animal Diseases and Parasites Act, No 13 of 1956?

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Unemployment Insurance Fund 18/3/85

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(1) What was the balance of the Unemployment Insurance Fund at the end of 1984;

(2) (a) what was the total amount (i)

HQA

New Cape building a milestone in employment of handicapped

CMT
TMS
29/4/85
296

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 Basset and architects John Boyd and Ron Palmer, was completed in February last year.

The workshop admits white men and women over 16, 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 yarns.

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 fetes, 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 Sumnard 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 porker, "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 Blyda Challoner, the vice-principal "We have a plot of land in Lansdowne for a new centre and planned to merge with Sunnyday 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 organizations 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 95 children. She has two other children at Peninsula schools

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 50s 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 crèche 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, Kensington, 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 chivvies her workers, harries the factories

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 people. It operates 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 Fridays

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

The official programme lists aim at "gross 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 Solomons, 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 a place to call their own, with a playground, 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 is Oasis night with wine and snacks after the show. Bookings. ☎ 612 419 between 8:30am and 3:30pm

Just a donation, not a total commitment.

2019

WEDNESDAY, 19 JUNE 1985

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(1) Yes. Due to the fact that, in accord with the act of the University on 1979, the University of Fort Hare is not in a position to supply any information on the University's internal control.

(3) Yes.

(a) 4.

(b) 1

(c) 2.

(4) No. The matter falls in terms of section 8 of the University of Fort Hare Act, 1969 (Act 40 of 1969) within the ambit of the control and government of the Council of the University of Fort Hare.

(5) No

University of Fort Hare

1033. Mr K M ANDREW asked the Minister of Co-operation, Development and Education:

(1) Whether the rector of the University of Fort Hare held any discussions with the Students' Representative Council of that university regarding the attendance of a graduation ceremony scheduled for May 1985 by a certain person; if so, (a) on what date, (b) who was the person concerned and (c) what was the outcome of the discussions;

(2) whether the rector subsequently received a letter from the Students' Representative Council in connection with these discussions; if so, (a) when and (b) what were the contents of the letter.

(3) whether the (a) existence and (b) contents of the letter were disclosed to any Ciskeian authority, if so, (i) why, (ii) by whom and (iii) (aa) what is the name of the Ciskeian authority and (bb) what was his position at the time;

(4) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

(1), (2) and (3) The matters raised in this question fall within the ambit of the control, management and executive power of the Council of the University of Fort Hare as regulated by Section 8 of the University of Fort Hare Act, No 40 of 1969. It would therefore be contrary to the principle of university autonomy to give a reply to the details in this question. I trust that the honourable member will share my confidence in the university authorities and the Council to be capable of handling its affairs in a proper and responsible manner.

(4) No

Service Products, Orbi Camp, Pietermaritzburg

1034. Mr M A TARR asked the Minister of Manpower:

(1) Whether his Department (a) subsidizes and/or (b) pays any salaries of physically disabled workers employed by Service Products, Orbi Camp, Pietermaritzburg, if so, (i) what was the per capita amount expended by his Department in respect of (aa) subsidies/grants and/or (bb) salaries for each race group, and (ii) in respect of how many employees in each race group were these subsidies/grants and/or salaries paid, in the latest specified financial year for which figures are available;

(2) whether his Department has any other connections with the above-mentioned firm; if so, what is the nature of these connections?

The MINISTER OF MANPOWER:

(1) (a) Yes. The Department of Manpower subsidizes the trading loss only on the total running costs of the Service Products (Pieter-

2021

WEDNESDAY, 19 JUNE 1985

2022

maritzburg) factory, which amounted to R215 000 for the 1984-85 financial year

(b) No

(1) (aa) Falls away

(bb) Falls away.

(ii) Falls away.

(2) Yes. Service Products (Pietermaritzburg) is run and controlled by the Department of Manpower in terms of the Memorandum on the Administration of the Sheltered Employment Schemes, which was approved by the Treasury and which contains provisions relating to the establishment of sheltered employment factories, financial and administrative control of these projects, and the conditions of employment of sheltered employment employees and factory staff members. The wages paid to sheltered employment employees by sheltered employment factories are determined in consultation with the Treasury

Meeting with certain prisoner

1035. Dr A L BORRINE asked the State President:

(1) Whether he has met with a certain prisoner, whose name has been furnished to the Office of the State President for the purpose of his reply, during the latest specified period of four months; if not, why not, if so, (a) on what date or dates, (b) where, (c) why and (d) what is the name of this prisoner;

(2) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

The STATE PRESIDENT.

(1) No

(2) Falls away.

Durban: Off-loading of cargo from certain ship

1996. The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION asked the Minister of Defence:

(1) Whether any members of the South African Defence Force or Armscor off-loaded any cargo from a certain ship, the name of which has been furnished to the Defence Force for the purposes of the Minister's reply, in Durban Harbour on or about 10 May 1979, if so, (a) on what dates, (b) why, (c) what was the nature of the cargo off-loaded, (d) what was done with this cargo once it had been off-loaded, (e) on whose instructions was the cargo off-loaded and (f) what is the (i) name and (ii) nationality of the ship in question.

(2) whether permission was obtained from the (a) owners of the cargo, (b) charterers of the ship and/or (c) captain of the ship to off-load the cargo; if not, why not in each case; if so, (i) when, and (ii) in what manner, in each case,

(3) whether the cargo was subsequently reloaded on to (a) the ship in question or (b) any other specified ship; if so, (i) when and (ii) what was the (aa) name and (bb) nationality of the ship on to which the cargo was reloaded, if not, (aaa) why not and (bbb) what was done with the cargo;

(4) whether he or any member of the Defence Force or Armscor has received any representations regarding this cargo; if so, (a) from whom, (b) when and (c) what was the (i) nature of the representations and (ii) response thereto;

(5) whether any money has been paid by the Defence Force or Armscor to (a) the owners of the cargo, (b) the charterers of the ship and/or (c) any other specified person or body in connection with this cargo, if so (i) to whom, (ii) why, (iii) what total amount and (iv) when was it paid.

(6) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

Disabled man fights for means to work

Staff Reporter 296

A DISABLED worker yesterday hopped 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 73-9051.

State pay rise 'crucial'

9/12/85 BUS DAY
153 296
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.

The economist 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

Business Day Reporter
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 20%, 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.



FRIDAY MAVUSO "I'm too busy to be bitter"
● Picture RUPHIN COUDYZER

Simple lasagne a good standby for parties

Here's a good, simple recipe for lasagne for eight people — just the thing for a hungry family but quite good enough for a casual dinner party

- LASAGNE**
- 8 rashers bacon
 - 1 kg beef mince
 - 2 large carrots, grated
 - 2 large onions, finely chopped
 - a little oil
 - 15-30 ml tomato paste
 - 200 ml red wine
 - 2 cloves garlic, crushed
 - 5-10 ml dried thyme or mixed herbs
 - salt and pepper to taste
 - a little chicken or beef stock or water
 - 250 g lasagne
- FOR THE WHITE SAUCE:**
- 60 ml butter
 - 60 ml flour
 - 1 litre plus an extra 200 ml milk
 - 1 bay leaf
 - salt, pepper and nutmeg to taste
- Put bacon in large pot over medium heat and allow to sizzle on both sides. Remove and set aside. Combine mince with carrot and onion. Add any necessary oil to the bacon fat in pot



and brown the meat mixture. Stir in tomato paste. Add wine and allow to bubble fast for a minute. Reduce heat and add garlic and herbs with a little salt and pepper. Add enough stock or water to bring liquid level just above that of the meat, cover with lid and put in oven at 160 deg C for 1 1/2 hours. Keep checking and add liquid as necessary. When done, taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. Stir in the bacon cut in pieces

Friday 10.30

By Kate McKinnell

The only crippling influence in Mr Friday Mavuso's life has been the world around him and he hasn't let that compound the problems of paralysis.

In 12 years this Soweto man has not only created a more dignified life for himself and 80 others, but has sparked hope for every paraplegic person in South Africa.

Mr Mavuso, chairman of the Self Help Association for Paraplegics (Shap), seems nonchalant about his paralysis. But the harsh realities of being a paraplegic in Soweto have provoked his fighting spirit.

He sits with spectacles perched on his forehead, staring into the distance, and expressively describes the years which have seen the birth of Shap.

In 1974, while a noted soccer player, he intervened in a street scuffle and was shot in the back by police.

In a subsequent court case he was found innocent of any offence — little comfort to a man who had been told he would spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair.

"It didn't take me long to get used to my new life in hospital. I became so involved with my plans that there wasn't time to be bitter. What really shocked me was the attitudes of the other patients in the spinal ward.

"Most of the guys had been in

hospital for years and actually avoided leaving," he says.

Anxious to get out of hospital to support his wife who was expecting their second child, he was disturbed to hear the patients' pessimistic descriptions of life for paraplegic Sowetoans.

"They said we would be burdens on our families, we would be hungry and uncared for. And they said even people with university degrees had been unable to find work after becoming paralysed."

Adding strength to their gloomy forecasts, patients who had been discharged often returned within a few weeks, hungry, dirty and with raw bedsores.

So great was the fear of being forced to leave the hospital that some people cut open healed bedsores to prolong their stay.

And Mr Mavuso found they had not exaggerated many of the problems.

"To begin with, the State grant to disabled people was R33 (today it has risen to R130 every second month).

"Transport is non-existent and if a person's wheelchair is damaged, he has to stay in bed until it is repaired, which can take up to six months or more.

"Even worse, very few families can afford to stay at home and care for the bed-ridden person.

"Just going to the toilet has its problems. The hospital training isn't much use when the doorway is too narrow to get your wheelchair in," says Mr Mavuso.

Although he became aware of these difficulties soon after his injury, he refused to accept that he would have to stay in hospital to survive.

He began doing shoe repairs while still a patient and at this early stage encountered the kind of barriers often faced by disabled people.

"I was told I was not allowed to do the repairs in the ward and I asked to see the superintendent to discuss the issue. But I was reminded that I was a 'pa-

Hope for the disabled

296 STM 10/2/86

— they should behave like one — they forget you are a person."

He was discharged after four years and began vending fruit and vegetables.

But he was determined to develop a project that could benefit all paraplegic people in Soweto.

With the aid of social worker Mrs Harriet Mlako (The Star's Unsung Heroine for 1985), he gathered a group of disabled people in a tiny room to knit jerseys on donated machines.

The project did not succeed. But 1981 marked a change of fortune for Mr Mavuso and his fellows when, after a seven-year court battle, he was awarded R74 000 damages against the Minister of Police for the injury inflicted on him in 1974.

With the money he was able to buy a car and could take a more active part in the development of a self-help organisation.

In that year, appropriately named the Year of the Disabled, Mr Mavuso and a group of friends established Shap. Within two years they had raised R450 000 to build a centre in Soweto.

This modern complex was opened in 1983 and work contracts were obtained from several large companies to provide employment for paraplegics. At that stage 30 people were involved, but that number has now grown to about 80 employees.

Any profits made are used to help the disabled enter the wider job market, says Mr Mavuso.

He is humble about his achievements.

"I like most to work alongside my fellows in the workshop and I would hate to be seen as a remote 'boss' directing from a distant office."

Of great importance to him is to help other disabled people develop their own self-help projects similar to Shap.

"It is important that we succeed, so that others will be encouraged to try the same," he says.



TEAMWORK: Shap employees spill out of the organisation's workshop as they manufacture mine light cables.

Paraplegics can now find work in Soweto

By Kate McKinnell

A few years ago, being paraplegic in Soweto meant a miserable dependence on families and welfare workers, or even a struggle to remain in hospital, their only source of care.

But the Self Help Association for Paraplegics (Shap) has brought hope for a dignified life to Soweto's disabled people, enabling them to engineer their own survival.

At the roomy Shap centre in Soweto, opened in 1983, paraplegic people do contract work for major South African companies — in many cases the first employment they have been able to find.

Cables, protection gear and light fittings are manufactured for the mines, while cameras and calculators are repaired in other rooms — Shap handles all the repairs of a large camera company.

Mr Mike du Toit, who joined in 1981 as co-ordinator, explains the organisation's philosophy: "We don't believe that this is the appropriate place for paraplegic people to be working — they should be part of the wider job market."

"Shap is a means to an end. The profits we hope to make will be used to transport people to work in town. And the experience people acquire here should also equip them for other work," says Mr du Toit.

He says the organisation is beginning to break even, despite the problems of township unrest and the unfavourable economic situation in the country.

Most urgent is the need for Shap to expand — over 400 people have applied to work at Shap, which at present employs only 80.

"And the 400 are probably only a fraction of paraplegic people in Soweto alone. To grow we need more work from businesses and industry," says Mr du Toit.

Hi and Lois by Mort Walker and Dik Browne



28/8/88

SMR

Work is available for the (296) 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 75 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 Asmall 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 policy-makers involved with them.

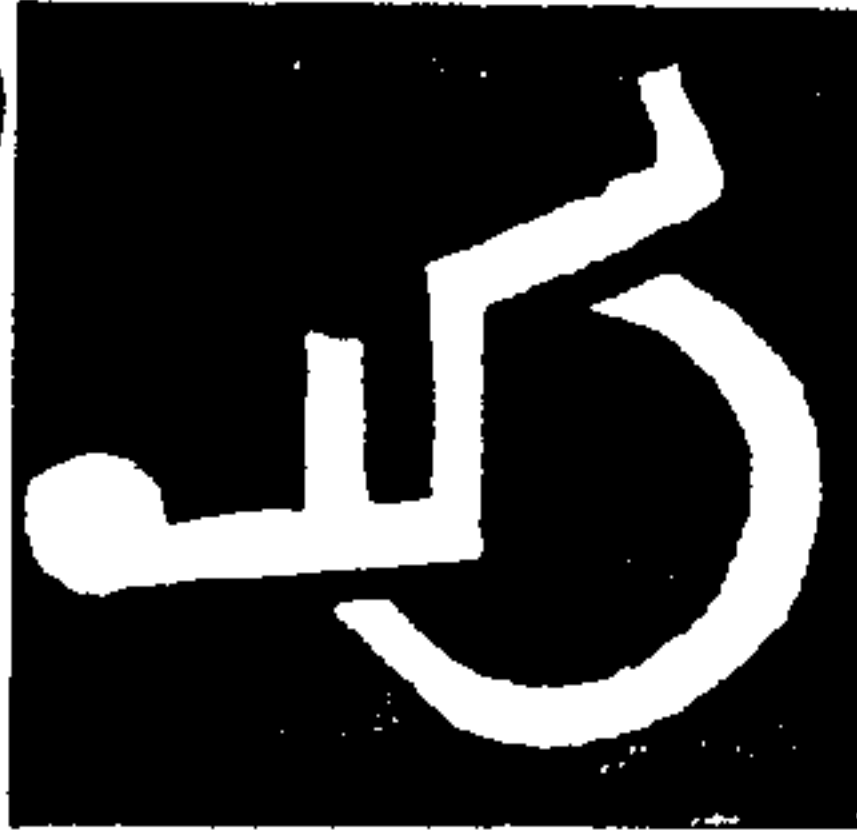
OWN FEELINGS

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

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

Miss Asmall, 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 unlikely to rise.

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



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 disassociate himself from the gathering should arguing 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 arduous barrier to equal access for the disabled and others to South African society.

Miss Jagoe gave the example of black spinal

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 disa-

abled 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 Ettienne 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.

Disabled need jobs and Bill of Rights, says Rowland

SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT

1990-1993

Workshop aims to start new venture

By ESANN van 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 businessman 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 (0226) 72801/2.

1347

TUESDAY, 15 MAY 1990

1348

(b) Permanent Force

(i)

(ii)

(aa)

(bb)

Overdose

Drank poison

Slashed wrists

Hanged

Shot

Gassed

Ate metal

Ate polish

Jumped out of vehicle

Drank brasso

Ate metal

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(c) Citizen Force/Commandos

(i)

(ii)

(aa)

(bb)

Overdose

Slashed wrists

Hanged

Shot

Gassed

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Jumped out of vehicle

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Citizen Force/Commando members: deferment

377. Lt-Gen R H D ROGERS asked the Minister of Defence:

(1) What percentage of Citizen Force and Commando members called up to attend camps (a) applied for deferment, (b) failed to report for service and (c) requested exemption from rendering service in townships in 1989;

(2) what total number of persons called up for military service in 1989 requested exemption on (a) religious and (b) other specified grounds?

Hansard 15/5/90

B905E

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE:

(1) (a) 37,65%

(b) 8,88%

(c) 0,0113%

(2) (a) 192

(b) Essential Services

Service in other

Forces

Occupational

Circumstances : 59

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

1349

TUESDAY, 15 MAY 1990

1350

Sheltered employment

400. Mrs C H CHARLEWOOD asked the Minister of Manpower:

(1) What is the status of persons in sheltered employment regarding (a) minimum wages, (b) pension fund membership, (c) permanent status and (d) housing subsidies;

(2) whether such persons are members of the Public Servants' Association of South Africa; if not, what are the relevant details?

Hansard 15/5/90

B947E

THE MINISTER OF MANPOWER:

(1) (a) Wages of sheltered employees are linked to the salary scale of the post class: Factorium in the Public Service.

(b) Sheltered employees are not members of a pension fund. Their disabilities are normally of such a nature that they can in terms of section 3 of the Social Pensions Act, 1973, be eligible for disability grants.

(c) Their employment is permanent while they are—

(i) not capable to compete in the open labour market; and

(ii) nevertheless able to be productively employed by the work centres.

(d) Sheltered employees do not qualify for housing subsidies

(2) Yes, they may join the Public Servants' Association of South Africa voluntarily.

SADF: non-White volunteers

414. Lt-Gen R H D ROGERS asked the Minister of Defence: Hansard 15/5/90

(1) How many (a) White, (b) Coloured, (c) Indian and (d) Black persons volunteered for national service in the South African Defence Force in 1989,

(2) how many of these volunteers in each category could be accommodated?

B961E

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE:

(a) (b) (c) (d)

(1) 938 6 985 724 3

(2) 274 2 913 182 0

Citizen Force/Commandos: percentage of volunteers

415. Lt-Gen R H D ROGERS asked the Minister of Defence: Hansard 15/5/90

What percentage of the persons who rendered voluntary service in the (a) Citizen Force and (b) Commandos as at 31 December 1989 was (i) White, (ii) Coloured, (iii) Indian and (iv) Black?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

B962E

(a)

(b)

(i) 76,8%

(ii) 23,2%

(iii) 0%

(iv) 0%

(i) 81,34%

(ii) 11,24%

(iii) 2,08%

(iv) 5,34%

THE MINISTER OF MANPOWER:

B908E

Trade unions: applications for registration

380. Mr P H P GASTROW asked the Minister of Manpower: Hansard 15/5/90

How many trade unions applied in 1989 for registration in respect of (a) Black employees only, (b) White employees only, (c) Coloured employees only and (d) employees of more than one population group?

(a) 3

(b) 0

(c) 0

(d) 7

Note: These figures are for the period 1 November 1988 until 31 October 1989

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

NATAL YOUTHS FLEE TO ANC

C/press 22/4/93

(296)

Violence forces

youngsters to seek refuge in Lusaka

ESCALATING violence in Natal has forced about 150 youths into exile in Zambia, where they have taken refuge at ANC headquarters in Lusaka.

ANC spokesman Tom Sebina told a news conference in Lusaka — where the 150 were paraded — the number of South African refugees fleeing from Natal to Swaziland had increased during the past few weeks, and many were finding their way to Lusaka.

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 Lindwe, 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 Malindza refugee reception centre near Manzini. Others were at prison remand centres around the country.

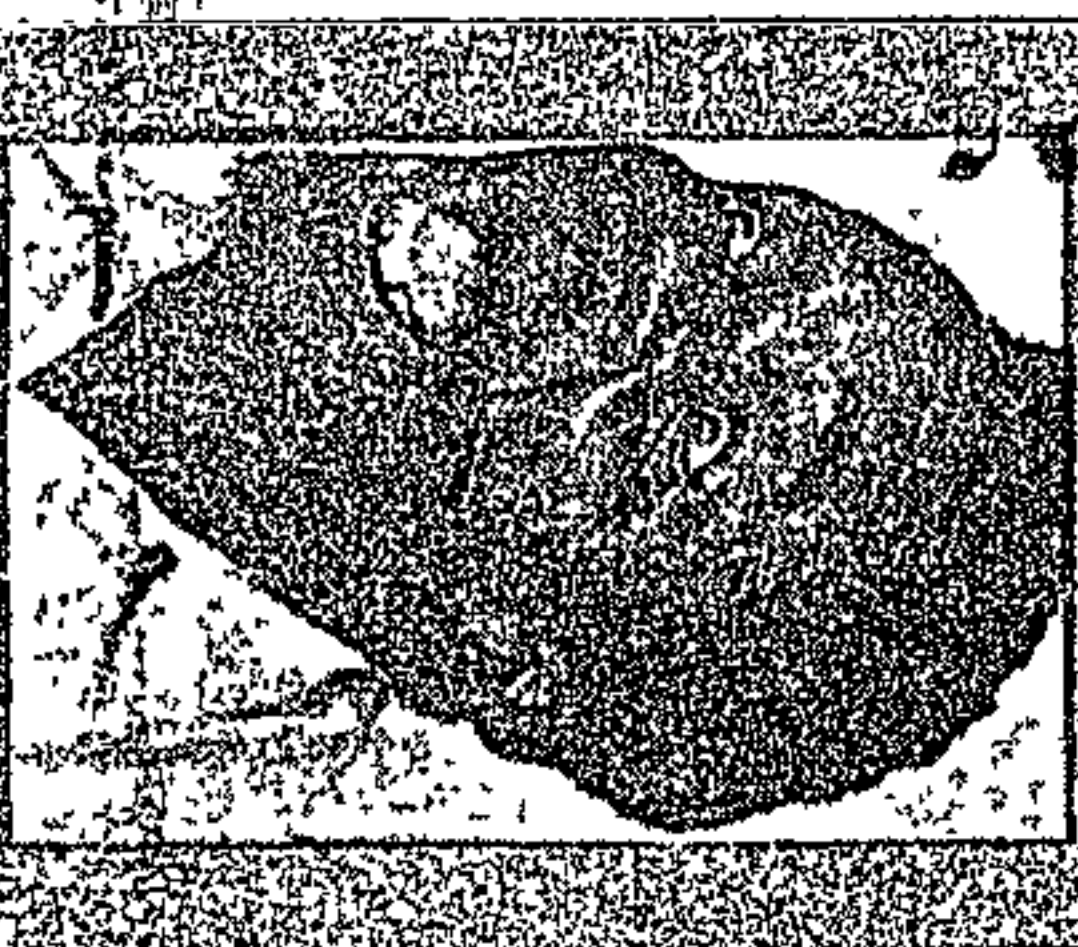
The first group of 17 arrived in Swaziland at the beginning of March.

One youth told reporters "The violence is being



PRISONS

MP accused of
being a warlord
(page 1)



CHIEF OF POLICE
IN SUGAR

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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 Adriaan) Vlok.

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

Refugee Sibusiso Mdabe, 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.

'Prop



Mirriam Mogotlhane...
sus, I have been persecute

SA socc

By VIVIAN REDDIAR

GET on with the job and unite!

That, in effect, is what representatives of three of South Africa's four controlling soccer bodies were litely but firmly at a meeting with African and other officials at a meeting in Gaborone, Botswana yesterday.

Twelve local soccer officials, some of the most influential in southern African sport, voiced concern at the continuing disunity of African soccer and say local administrators had an urgent responsibility to achieve unity as soon as possible.

Ismail Bhamjee, a Botswana executive member of the African Football Confederation (CAF) said:

TV's plan for Group Areas

AP 7/11/90 20/4/90

By ANTHONY JOHNSON
Political Correspondent

Group Areas Act would be substituted by next year — with other "generalisable", non-discriminatory measures, President F W de Klerk announced.

Mr. de Klerk said the "new measures" would have to be approved by all three Houses of Parliament, and that this would be possible only if they did not contain any form of racial discrimination. The Labour Party's PRQ, Mr. Peter Hennessy said, the government could expect to replace it but must be scrapped in its total.

Nats ready for common voters' roll if

Political Staff 20/4/90

The National Party was prepared to accept a common voters' roll in a new South Africa, provided it was operated within a constitutional dispensation based on the principle of non-domination, President F W de Klerk said yesterday.

Mr De Klerk was responding in Parliament to Democratic Party leader Dr Zach de Beer, who said in the debate on the president's vote

that the Minister of Constitutional Development, Dr Gertrij Viljoen, had said he was against a common voters' roll.

The president said that a correct reading of what Dr Viljoen had said was that he envisaged there would be more than one voters' roll in a new South Africa.

The NP, he said, was in favour of universal adult franchise within a constitutional dispensation based on the principle of non-domination.

Mechanisms which he believed should be built into such a system were:

- Decentralisation of power.
- Devolution of authority.
- Constitutional checks and balances.
- Decision-taking by consensus.
- An independent judiciary.
- A common voters' roll applied in a "winner-takes-all" approach was not acceptable to the NP, Mr De Klerk said.

However, changes to the Land Acts would have to be part of the constitutional negotiating process.

Any amendments to the Population Registration Act — the main cornerstone of apartheid — would only take place once a new constitution had been agreed. "It really cannot be done in any other way."

The Separate Amenities Act would definitely be repealed during the current session of Parliament. All races could have a referendum to test their support bases on any new constitutional proposals that emerged from negotiations. (However, these would be racially based — a position vehemently rejected by the ANC and other parties.)

The government envisaged a system of various "differentiated" voters' rolls under a new dispensation, which did not exclude a common voters' roll. However, a common roll based on a "winner-takes-all" approach was not acceptable to the NP as this did not offer adequate protection of (racial) minorities or for cultural, religious and language differences.

The NP would actively promote and participate in Group Areas must be repealed — Page 5

To page 2

Kwa-NoThemba profits soar

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Business Staff

296
w/le AGUS 21/10/89
THE Kwa-NoThemba Workshop for the Disabled in Gugulethu showed a 377 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 259 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 500. 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 the Rev Almero Cloete said yesterday that the move had come after 13 years as part of a rationalization and "refocusing" programme which would take full advantage of available local professional services.

"We were applying our limited resources over too wide a spectrum. I personally believe that the battle for the future of South Africa will be fought in the cities and that we should establish ourselves where the heat is and apply resources there."

In Khayelitsha a Mfesane creche providing for 80 children daily with a fully-trained pre-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 R22 a month.

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



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

Pictures: CHRIS BATEMAN



TAKING CARE . . . A cushion for her grandchildren gets the finishing touches from Mrs Harriet Mbimba, of Khayelitsha, at Mfesane's Zenzele activity centre.

applications".

In Site B just over a kilometre away, a prefabricated building houses the Zenzele Centre (zenzele 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.

Other upcoming

Mfesane projects are the building of the Noluthando School for 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 D F Malan Airport to accommodate 60 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 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.

Council 'too slow to take on disabled'

Capl. T. v. b. 27/5/88

Municipal Reporter

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



MAUREEN PITHEY

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 Conradie 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 diseases 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 communi-

ty, 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.

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TODAY'S
WOMAN

P. T. O.

Jeffrey, for instance, who lost an arm when he fell from a moving train, can wield a spade or handle a lawnmower with a deft 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 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 (685-4153), Annette van Rensburg (52-4680) or Marion Krige (58-5011) 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

From Argus Correspondent SUE SEGAR in Maritzburg

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.

"Where are my children? Why are we being estranged for something I did so innocently? When will this end?" the blind man asks.

This is just one out of hundreds of similar stories being told in the strife-torn Maritzburg townships. The aging blind man is one of thousands who shake their heads in bewilderment at what is going on around them.

Nearly every person has a story to tell — either based on personal experiences or those of neighbours, relatives or friends. Tragedies are becoming a daily reality.

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 countrywide were seething with violence. And it seems that the innocent, unpoliticised 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 windows 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 Ixopo. 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."

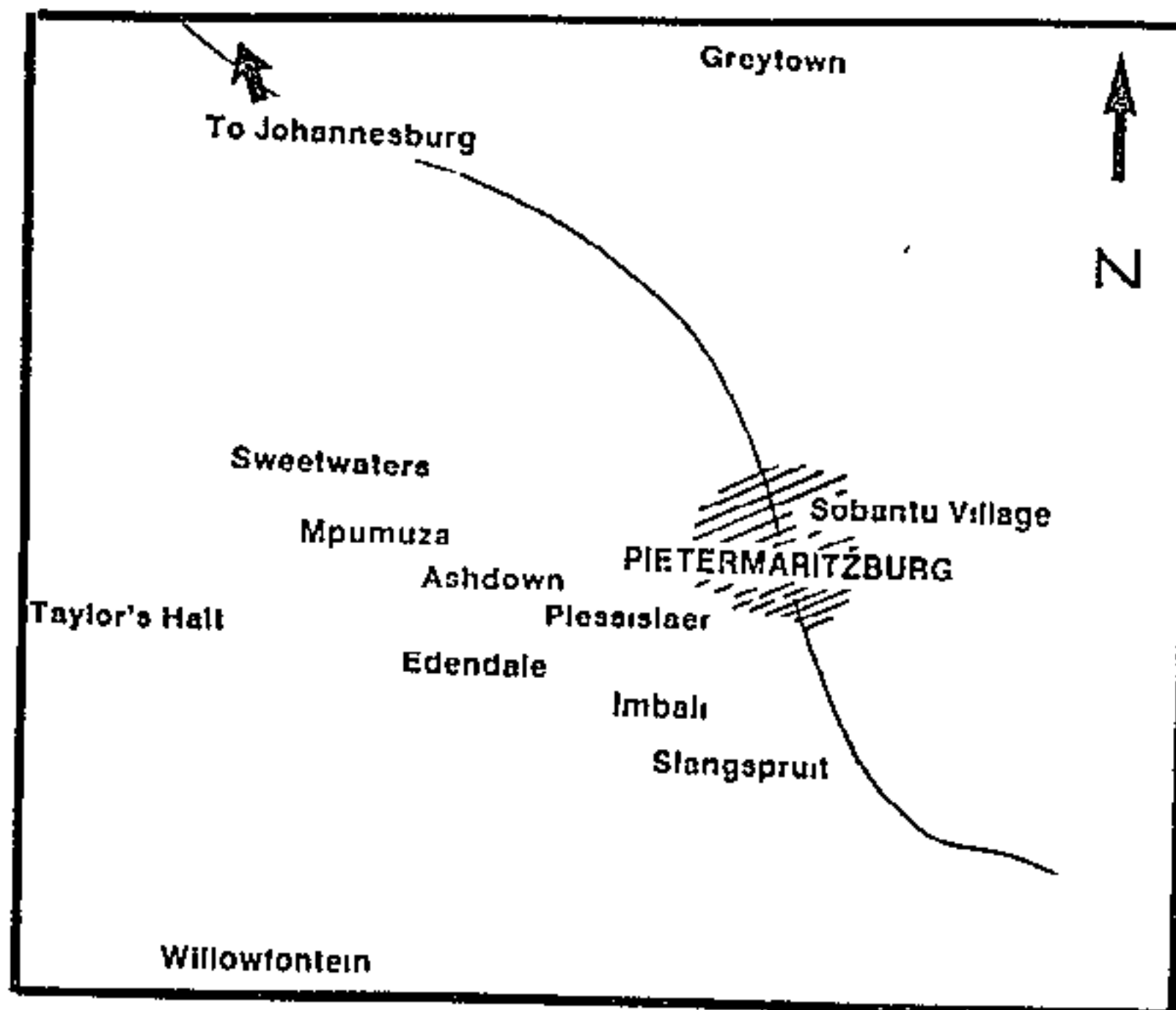
"Sometimes they do that. I don't know who it

was. If I say it's UDF I could be wrong and if I say it's Inkatha I could also be wrong. They both cause trouble with the people."

A Sweetwaters teacher tells a friend of the brutal killing of the 13-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 180 died in political violence in Natal.

In October, 49 were killed, in November 50 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 within 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 Kerchhoff, 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 R363 000 Kwa-Nothemba Centre will be similar to the successful Kwa-Nothemba 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-Nothemba 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-Nothemba.

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.

"We will be able to add buildings and create open spaces that the community at large will be able to benefit from," says Mr Noel Hendricks, the Guguletu workshop manager.

"Kwa-Nothemba 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, so 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-Nothemba management committee has launched a major fund raising campaign to reach the R363 000 "as soon as possible" as they want to 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 R95 000 for labour and materials for a basic structure," Mr Hendricks said.



THE MOCCASIN MAKERS: In the Kwa-Nothemba shoe department workers stitch and interlace moccasin uppers in a sub-contract with a national shoe business..

who sprays table tops and is best worker at Kwa-Nothemba 1986.

SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT —

-- 1994 - 1996

Action for the disabled

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MRG 10/6/94

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

The Disabled Children's Action Group (Dicag) provides a vital source of information and support to disabled children, their parents and the community as a whole. LENORE OLIVER spoke to national advocacy manager Shanaaz Majiet about the group's origins and its goals.

"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 economical issue."

These words don't come from one with just a passing interest in helping people affected by disabilities: Ms Majiet, now 24, injured her spine at the age of 17 and has been in a wheelchair ever since.

A year ago she got married to "the most wonderful man".

"I have learned to live with my disability. I am very independent and I am coping."

She says she is lucky because many people did not have the access to education and the full support system she's always had.

"All of this has just enhanced my commitment to others with disabilities," she said.

She was injured just before her matric year — but she went on to complete matric and obtained a BA degree at the University of Cape Town.

At Dicag she is responsible for directing the organisation and implementing a national plan of action and to attend to all advocacy issues.

"I have a very real contribution to make because I have a direct interest in disabilities as a result of my learning experience," she said.

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. (296)

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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 43 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 sample 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.'

For disabled it's an unfriendly city

ARL 11/6/94

(492) (291)

■ If you're able-bodied, take time out for a second thought before you drive into the parking bay for disabled people, or use the specially designed toilet, because you could be making life difficult for someone who really needs the facilities.

DI CAELERS

Weekend Argus Reporter

CAPE Town is definitely not a friendly city when it comes to its disabled residents — they battle with transport, lifts, ramps and toilets, and where facilities do exist, their able-bodied counterparts abuse them.

That's the unhappy picture painted by Fadla Lagadien of Disabled People South Africa (DPSA), who says that with billions set to be sunk into the Peninsula to prepare for the Olympic 2004 bid, it is imperative the disabled didn't slip "lower and lower down on the list of priorities".

"If they start developing undeveloped areas like Khayelitsha and Philippi without taking into account people with disabilities there, once again we will not be part of the community."

"With the Olympics alone, we're talking about plenty of disabled spectators, but if the para-Olympics follow we've got absolutely no hope of meeting the demands," she said.

Kathy Jagoe, head of the University of Cape Town's disability unit, forecast that it would take between 20 and 30 years to ensure the city ca-

"In reality we probably won't ever get the job finished," she said, but added that in the interim things would get progressively better.

Dr Jagoe has for the past six years worked towards making the UCT campus accessible for people with disabilities, and said that two or three decades would be necessary if the city applied the same principles she had used for reorganising the university. These included:

■ All new buildings must be accessible (all buildings built after 1986 are legally required to provide for the disabled).

■ All old buildings being renovated for any purpose must be checked for changes that could improve accessibility at the same time.

■ Individuals must pressure the authorities and continually examine existing buildings to see where things could be changed.

■ Buildings with the largest flow of disabled people must be identified and upgraded.

"The same philosophy can easily be applied within the city council but the bottom line is that they need to employ a full-time consultant in barrier-free design. It must not be a clerk or an able-bodied professional, but rather a disabled



Picture ANDREW INGRAM, Weekend Argus.

□ **OUT OF REACH:** Disabled People South Africa's Fadla Lagadien demonstrates the inaccessibility of city facilities for people with disabilities. In an emergency, she wouldn't be able to phone home from this telephone booth in St George's Mall.

Dr Jagoe said a massive education programme was necessary — planners, architects and students should be put into wheelchairs to become familiar with the problems of the disabled and commit themselves to improving access.

"Details are as important as the structure being erected, like the height of door handles and the joins of ramps with other surfaces. And

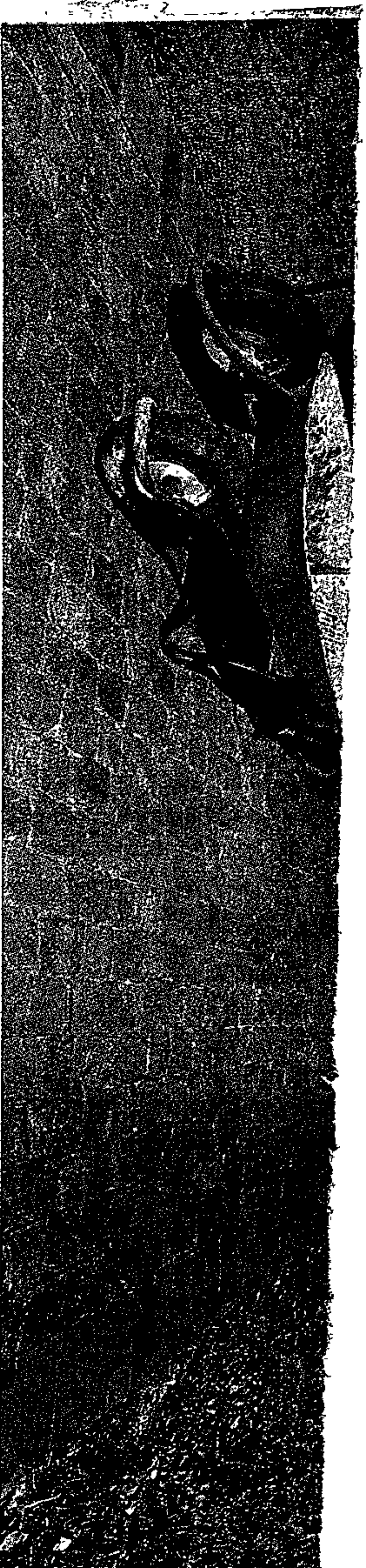
aren't necessarily going to turn out the way they are on the plan

"Details for disabled people need to be measured by the centimetre, and that's the bottom line."

Ms Lagadien said inadequate facilities and planning enforced the perception that people with disabilities were "different". Instead, planning should cater for

"We have a wonderful opportunity in this country to benefit from all the development that will take place and since the whole country is crying freedom, then let us, people with disability, also be free," she said.

City council spokesman Ted Doman told Weekend Argus that anyone submitting plans for a new building, had to in-



A PLACE IN THE SUN ... Elmarie Pienaar and Mark Pegler get down to work on the farm

Picture: AMBROSE PETERS

'A bit of paradise' for mentally handicapped

SITING [Cinema]

12/16/194

(296)

MOST people can only dream of a country life — but an English couple have carved out "a bit of paradise" near Stellenbosch for mentally handicapped adults.

Janet and Martin Pegler recently opened their doors at the farm New Zorgvliet after a year of fighting bureaucracy and hostile opposition from neighbours. Their son, Mark Pegler, will be one of 12 people who will live on the kibbutz-type establishment in the beautiful Banhoek Valley fulfilling a desperate need for facilities for mentally handicapped adults.

Mr Pegler said they had been very impressed with schools for the mentally handicapped in South Africa, but once the pupils left school there was very

BY DIANA STREAK

little for them to go on to "Part of our philosophy is to integrate with the community as far as possible," Mr Pegler said.

The Peglers hope students or other Stellenbosch residents will become involved in the venture.

The impressive modern Cape Dutch-style house was built to cater for the residents to live together as a family, but the property had to be rezoned for "institutional" use.

"The house was to be a normal large family home and certainly not an institution," Mrs Pegler said.

"The aim is that people who live there should lead as normal a life as possible within

their limitations and everyone will be involved in running the farm and household," she said.

"They have got to contribute somehow

"Mark is very limited but, like everyone else he has to do something, even if it's just collecting the chickens' eggs

"We intend to be as self-sufficient as possible and hope to generate income from selling excess garden produce," Mrs Pegler said.

Other possible projects include pottery, recycling and woodwork.

The Peglers sold a group of old-age nursing homes they ran in England and have invested everything in New Zorgvliet.

They had battled to find a place for Mark to live in England but any-

thing suitable had up to a 20-year waiting list

"So we decided we had to do it ourselves," Mrs Pegler said.

"This is Mark's future, we are not looking to make money, just hoping to eventually break even," she said.

The 15-bedroom house is airy and light and although it is beautifully decorated, it was all done on a shoestring budget, including magnificent paintings done by schoolchildren.

"We feel handicapped people have a right to beautiful things and surroundings," said Mrs Pegler.

"The 12 people have to be the right mix of age groups and abilities because they might be here for life, assuming they're happy," she said. People who are not

happy are some local residents who were alarmed by the "institution" zoning and circulated a petition to try to prevent the project going ahead.

"We had permission from the Western Cape Regional Services Council, but because of the ob-

jections we had to appeal at director level

"We won, but we have had to get people to warm to us," Mrs Pegler said.

New Zorgvliet will also offer a holiday facility for families, with a handicapped member in self-catering cottages.

IMPRES LIONS



Disabled Agnes leads by example

Sowetan 24/6/94

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■ **SELF HELP** *There are still scores of people sitting in the backyards:*

By Sizakele Kooma

AGNES 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 18 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

'I suffered the pain of being ostracised by people I worked with and those I lived with'

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 then Bophuthatswana Government gave them a house in Zone 1 Garankuwa. Soon after that they won a packaging contract from a factory in Rosslyn. 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 Mmanku. 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.

Education

"Rehabilitation is a difficult process. Most of these people came here raw, some had no formal education. The improvement has been gradual but significant.

"We have a big task ahead of us. There are still scores of disabled people sitting in the backyards. We have a long list of people who are seeking admission. We have had to turn them down because we do not have transport to ferry them from their homes," she added.

A week before Sowetan's visit, Moumakwe was allocated a site to build a bigger and permanent centre after an exhausting three years of fighting. She hopes that building will start in a year's time. Plans for the new premises include extended tuition and a mini factory.

Sightless and helpless? No ways!

When the

blind take the lead!

CIPress 31/7/94

(296)

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 under-achieving.

Ask Friday Mavuso, paralysed from the waist down, Colbert Sobopha 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."

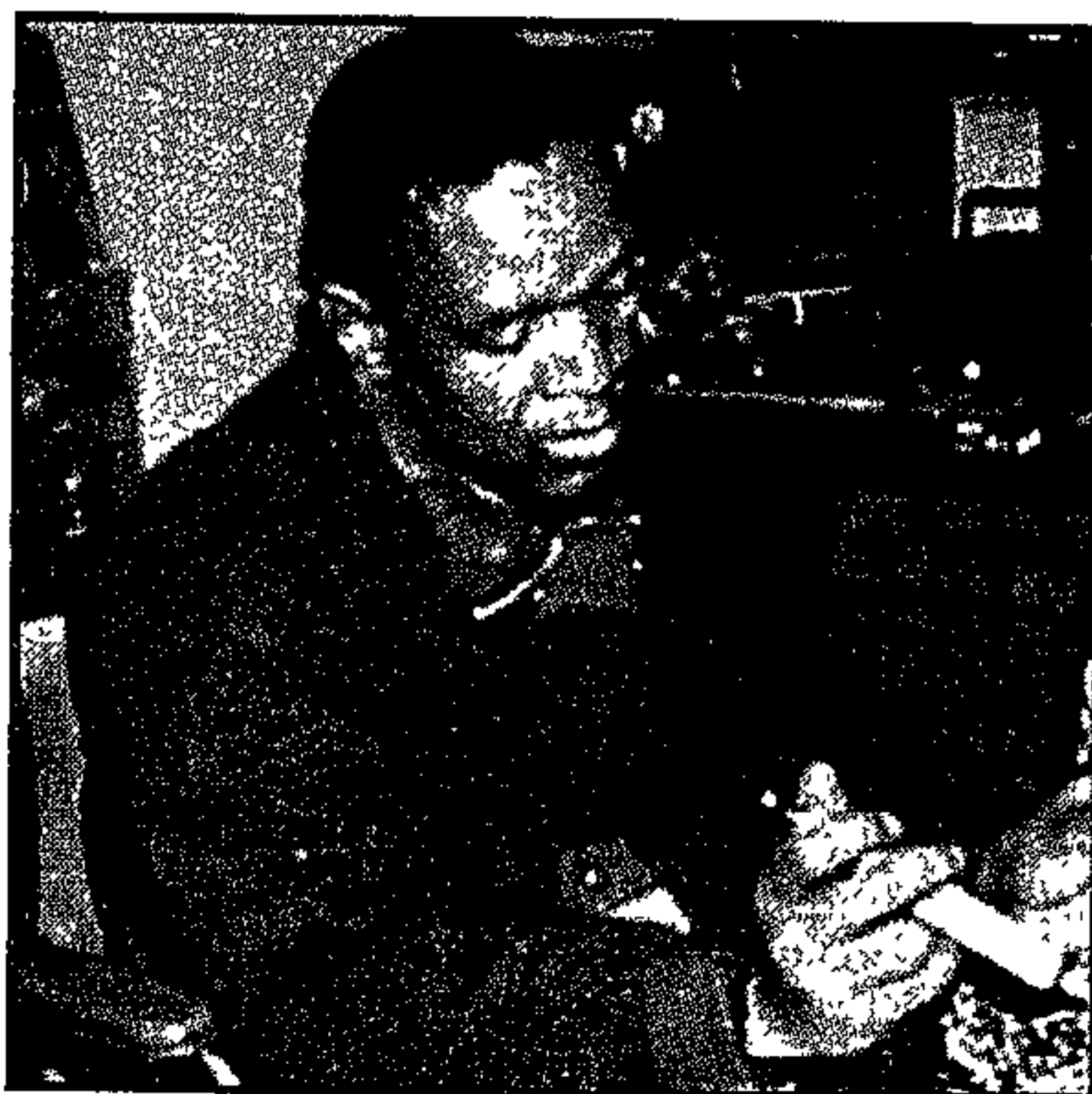
At the Blind Brickmakers' Factory life goes on as if there is no tomorrow. No one is pushed to work - but all know the purpose of their being there.

To produce, period.

Brickmaker Sobopha 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 them-



NIMBLE FINGERS You want the radio of your dreams? Siphso Makhubela (top) will make it! And if your appliance breaks, Julius Seganye (bottom) will fix it. **jj ■ PICS: TLADI KHUELE**

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 Siphso 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 mine safety clothing and equipment is made.

The closure of Durban Deep, which was a customer, has come as a blow to them too, Makhubela said.

As Mavuso says about what the disabled can produce: seeing is believing.

selves."

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 ma-

chine 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

SOUTHERN SUBURBS REVIEW

Minister sets out to help disabled

AN INTER-DENOMINATIONAL ministry has been set up in Kewtown, Athlone, 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 Pepper, 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 Pepper said.

"We will also call on the new government to deliver their election promises to the disabled."

Mr Pepper 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 Pepper on (021) 637-4797 (office hours).

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COUNTING GAME: Teacher Zoliswa Flekisa, who is also deaf, teaches counting and number concepts to a group of pre-schoolers at Noluthando.

Thabo's just another miracle of Noluthando School for the Deaf

LIBBY PEACOCK
Staff Reporter

WHEN Thabo first arrived at the Noluthando 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.

Noluthando, a project of the Mfeso 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.

Noluthando is a non-governmental organisation, but gets a yearly state subsidy and also is dependent on donations from overseas companies and other institutions.



Pictures: BRENTON GEACH, The Argus

WOOD WORKERS: Deaf teenagers at the Noluthando School in Khayelitsha work at perfecting their craft as teacher Cyril Baadjies lends a hand.

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 deft-

ly operating keyboards and solving mathematical problems, while confident three-year-old toddlers in the pre-school section showed off their counting skills.

Ideally, children are taken in at the age of three, but many township 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 carpentering, building, sewing and cooking and eventually on job creation.

The school is also waiting to be accredited by the Building Industry Federation.



BLIND AMBITION . . . Mr André Vosloo, switchboard operator of Sea Point police station, with SAPS personnel head Brigadier David Ackerman when he congratulated his wife, Vivian, on becoming the first blind person in the Western Cape to qualify as a public relations officer.

Picture ANNE LAING

Blind operator qualifies to be PR officer

(296) Staff Reporter

THE switchboard operator at the city's detective branch is the first blind person to qualify as a public relations officer in the Western Cape.

A cheerful and elated Mrs Vivian Vosloo, 47, says she is one step closer to her dream of becoming a fully-fledged public relations officer.

Mrs Vosloo, who lost her eyesight when she was three years old, said she refused to cut corners on the "very hectic" six-months course because of her disability and completed it with the help of a talking Braille computer.

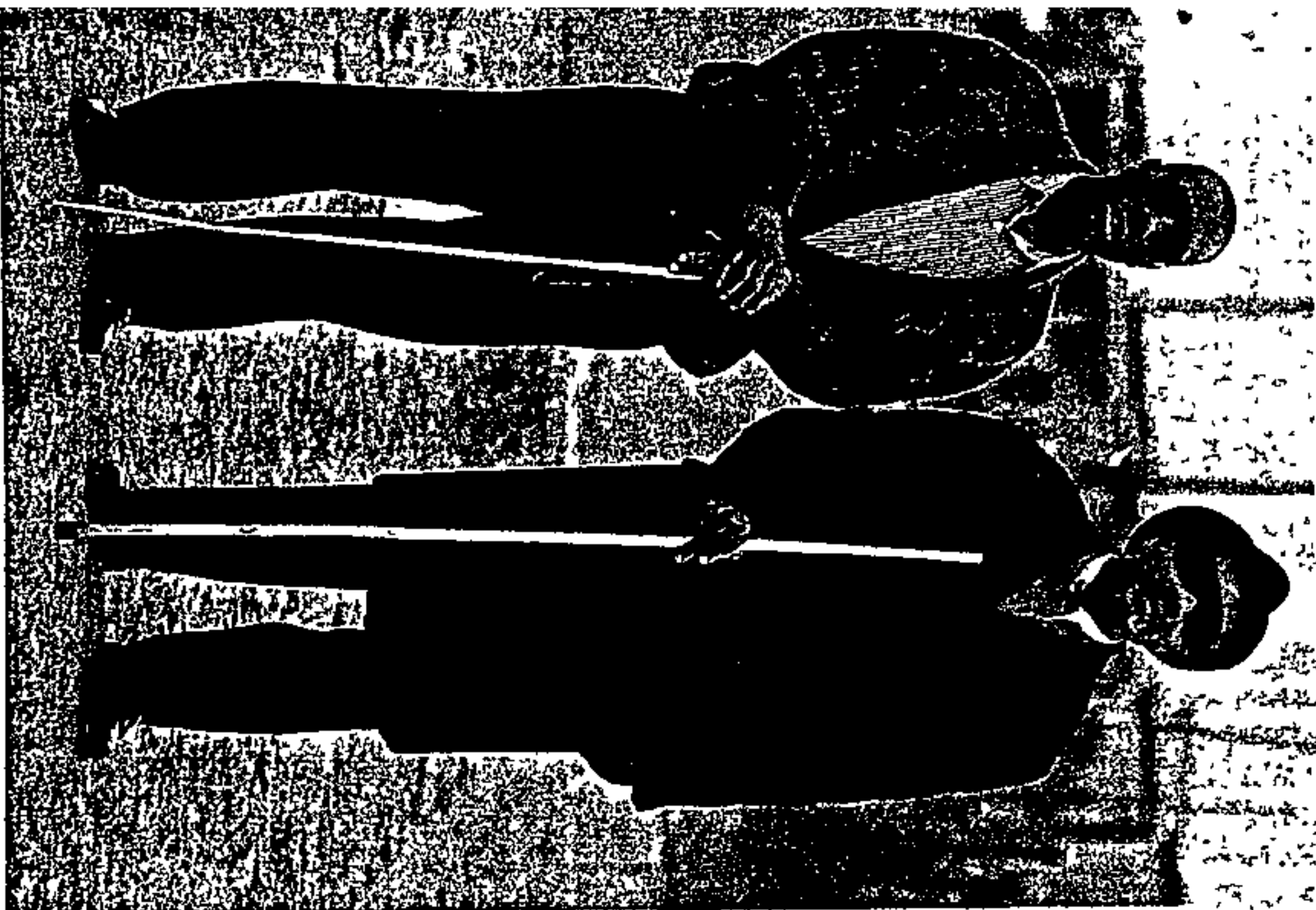
Head of the SAPS personnel department Brigadier David Ackerman congratulated Mrs Vosloo and said she might be in line for a new job as a personnel manager.

"We are looking at the possibility of a post for her in which she can assist other disabled people working for the police and utilise her new qualification at the same time," he said.

At least six blind and partially-sighted people work for the SAPS in the Western Cape.

Mrs Vosloo's blind husband André, 37, — a switchboard operator at Sea Point police station — is equally ambitious and has plans to become a computer programmer.

Eternal dark in the misery hole



Pictures: BRENTON GEACH, Weekend Argus.

DARK WORLD: Thomas Mathumba, a volunteer at Langa's Lakagunya organisation for the blind, left, and Amos Mahlasela, chairman of Khayelitsha's blind association, Sinehemba... both fighting for a new deal for the blind of the Western Cape's black townships after years of deprivation under the apartheid which left them as forgotten people

DI CAELERS
Weekend Argus Reporter

LIFE is a "black hole" for the hundreds of blind people, many of them young and defenceless children, who live in Western Cape townships.

And during the recent floods their dark existence turned into a nightmare of helplessness.

With no special education for the young nor sheltered employment opportunities for the adults, they eke out an existence in tumbledown shacks with no hope of independence.

It is an environment unacceptable for those who can see, let alone those who live in a world of perpetual darkness.

And while no amount of mobility training could prepare the township blind for the shackland conditions they'd encounter once they stepped out of their front doors, activists working for a new dispensation for the blind say that's simply no excuse for the lack of attention.

Instead of nurturing the blind and encouraging them to realise their full potential, the state has seen fit to sweep the problem under the proverbial carpet creating a dangerous ignorance around the subject.

"Now they must start from scratch and build a whole network of facilities. We need education for children and adults, we need to be at the top of the list for houses, and we need affirmative action for the blind," the chairman of Khayelitsha's blind association Sinehemba, Amos Mahlasela, told Weekend Argus.

Pointing to the streets with no pavements, criss-crossed by rivers of water after the winter

■ Like other disadvantaged people, the township blind want houses, education and employment — but they believe their place should be at the top of the government's list of priorities.

trains. Mr Mahlasela points out the impossibility of independence for blind people in the townships.

"You can never be prepared for what might trip you up here. The result is that we always need to have someone with us and in my case, that means my wife must stay home to care for me and we have to live on my R370-a-month grant."

But that doesn't mean that mobility training isn't vital. The Western Cape Blind Association, a group of cash-strapped people funding the association from their meagre pensions, has taken up the challenge and is financing the training of a local instructor to work in the townships.

Association organiser Evelyn Siwa explained, "Existing mobility instructors don't want to work in the townships so they'll only train people if they come to town. But we don't only need to know how to get around alone in town. We live in the townships and that's where we need the training."

Education for children and adults, is top of the list of priorities for Thomas Mathumba, a volunteer at Langa's blind association Lakagunya, which operates under the auspices of the League of Friends for the Blind.

"There is no education for blind children in the townships. If they want to go to the existing schools they must travel long distances and often they can't get in anyway because of waiting lists.

"The result is that they're left locked away with little hope of improving their status in life."

Adults were equally important, he said, appealing for "at least one" blind workshop in the townships which would offer employment opportunities.

"But I believe there should be affirmative action in the formal sector too. For every 100 people that are employed anywhere, employers should be obliged to take on a certain number of blind people."

It was only the "lucky" ones, he said, that got to learn to read braille.

The blind activists introduced Weekend Argus to Khayelitsha resident Ethel Magadla, who they said was an example of the result of lack of attention paid to the blind.

Ms Magadla is blind and homeless, with no hope of getting a job. She and her six children were taken in by a friend who now shares her one-room shack with the entire family.

"We must be at the top of the list for housing," Sinehemba's Mlungisi Tsoni said.

"Shacks are simply no place for any disabled people to be living. In the case of violence they're the most vulnerable. If the shack burns or floods they're left helpless — blind people just aren't in a position to help themselves."

Anyone who can assist with resources, skills or funds should contact 461-8270 or 461-8277 for more information.



□ **HOMELESS:** Homeless and with no prospect of employment blind Ethel Magadla and her six children share a one-room shack with a benevolent friend, Cecilia Mpuu Ethel, left, and Cecilia, back right, are seen here with four of Ethel's children, from left, Victoria, 17, Lucas, 7 (Cecilia's son), Vathiswa and Sonwabile, both 12 and Nasiphi, 3. She supports the entire family on her R370-a-month government grant.

Centre for deaf takes shape

□ Repairs to Newlands building to cost R200 000

ARG 18/1/94 (296)

Staff Reporter

SOUTH Africa's first one-stop, multi-discipline job creation 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 major 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 70 percent of the 363 308 hearing-impaired people in this region are unemployed.

The service also reported there were 4 028 464 deaf or hard of hearing people in South Africa.

While the Bastion will focus on communication problems for people with these disabilities, it will also provide a range of facilities and services to make people materially independent.

The centre is expected to be fully operational next June.

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 traumas, overnight accommodation for crisis victims, life-skills training, work placement, 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 34-roomed building, the restoration of which will cost R200 000.

National Council for the Deaf regional director Kobus Pienaar said all decisions regarding the use and restoration 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.

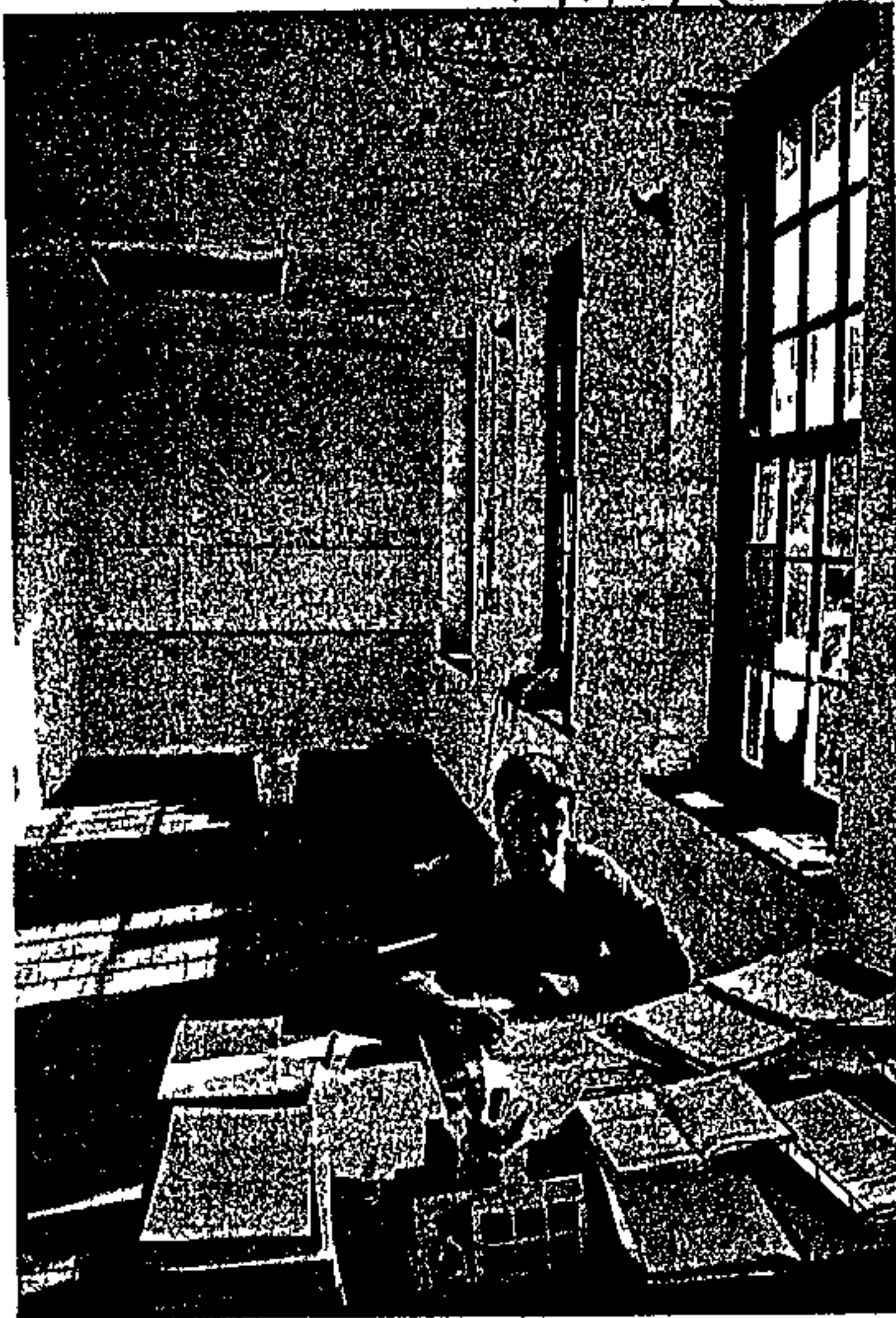
The council's public relations officer, Carol Cory, said vagrants had lived in the building for months and had stripped all the electrical wiring, components, bulbs, internal doors, and had removed parts of the ceiling.

Mrs Cory said the council wanted to bring professional services and facilities for 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 "Future needs may include formal tertiary education and hive industries with deaf entrepreneurs."

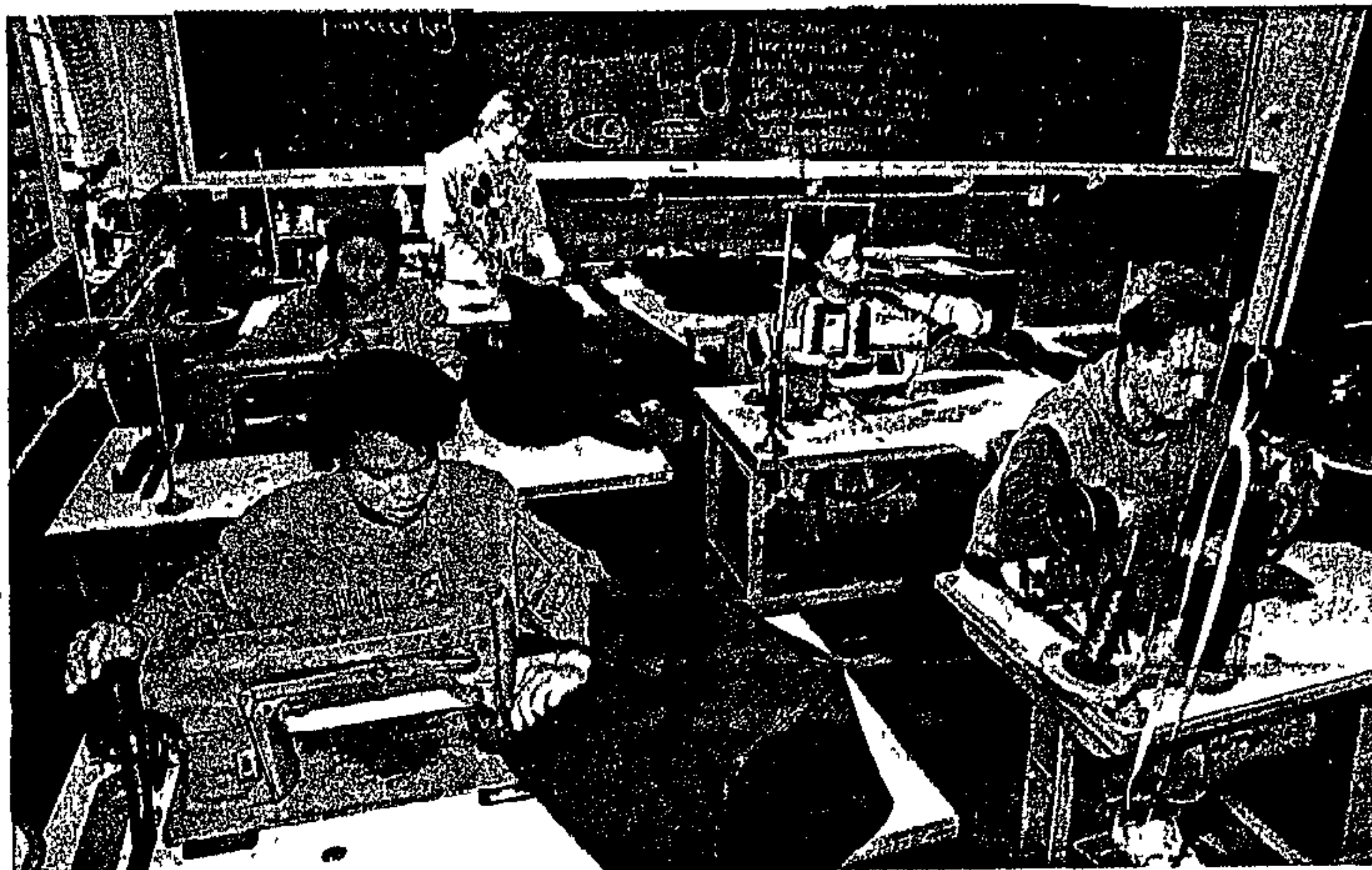
"I receive calls all the time from people calling on behalf of the deaf wanting work."



Pictures: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

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 everytime he wants to answer the telephone. The broken ceiling in the roof is part of repairs that will cost an estimated R200 000.

CREATIVE MINDS: Craftwork Instructor Lazell 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.



SEWING WORKSHOP: These students at the Bastion design and create items such as hunting clothes and high-quality leather items. In front are Nombuzwe Bout, left, and Paul Muller. Behind them are, from left, Elizabeth Mafethe, instructor Lazell Fourie and Theresa van Wyk.

Blind get little pay

By Xoliswa Mfana

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. 10/8/94

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. (296)

dismissed for 'knowing too much'

Disabled man's anger at firing

By Khathu Mamaila

PARTIALLY sighted Mr Michael Mulomoni Muthaphuli of Muledane 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.

Muthaphuli 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 Tshilidzini special school in Shayandima between 1985 and early 1992. He was employed at the workshop on March 23 1992. His starting wage was R130 a month and after three 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," says Muthaphuli at his home in Muledane. "I never for a moment thought it would lead to my expulsion from the workshop."

"I am not saying the money I was earning was enough but it helped me to be somewhat independent. I did not want to live my entire life as a beggar and I realised that I could do something despite my physical dis-

ability. "It is hard to imagine that the only post that I can occupy is now occupied by somebody who can go and work elsewhere."

"I cannot just walk into any factory and look for a job, but those who have replaced me can easily find jobs because they are normal," says Muthaphuli.

He feels the government should intervene on behalf of the disabled to make sure that only the disabled are employed at the workshop.

"I think a disabled person should sit on the board which decides on policy in the workshop because it seems these other people do not 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 Phuthaditshaba 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

■ ANOTHER AGENDA *Workshop*

'replacing disabled people with the able'

By Khathu Mamaila

AN 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 Diiteleni association Miss Agnes Rasiluma 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 Rasiluma.

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 Nevondo (34, mentally handicapped) was allegedly fired because he refused to cut a tree at the home of a manager in Sibasa.

- Partially blind Ms Fulufhelo Phalanndwa of Miluwani was allegedly dismissed after she went on maternity leave.

- Michael Muthaphuli, who is partially blind, was allegedly expelled because he knew "too much and asked a lot of questions".

- Mr Tshilidzi Mawelele of Itsani, 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

(296)
reception as his hands could not handle wood.

Among the dismissed disabled are Mr Gideon Ramulifho, Ms Azwimbavhi Nemukula, Ms Stephinah Tshamavu, Mr Piet Malau, Mr Aifheli Mathidi, Ms Nyawedzani Nethononda, Mr Rudzani Tshikudo, and Mr Alfred Raungedzani.

Rasiluma 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 Mulaudzi 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 Mulaudzi.

However, he said only one of the disabled had not been reinstated.

Commenting about alleged racism, Mulaudzi 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.

RISING ABOVE A

(Suppl. to South)

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.

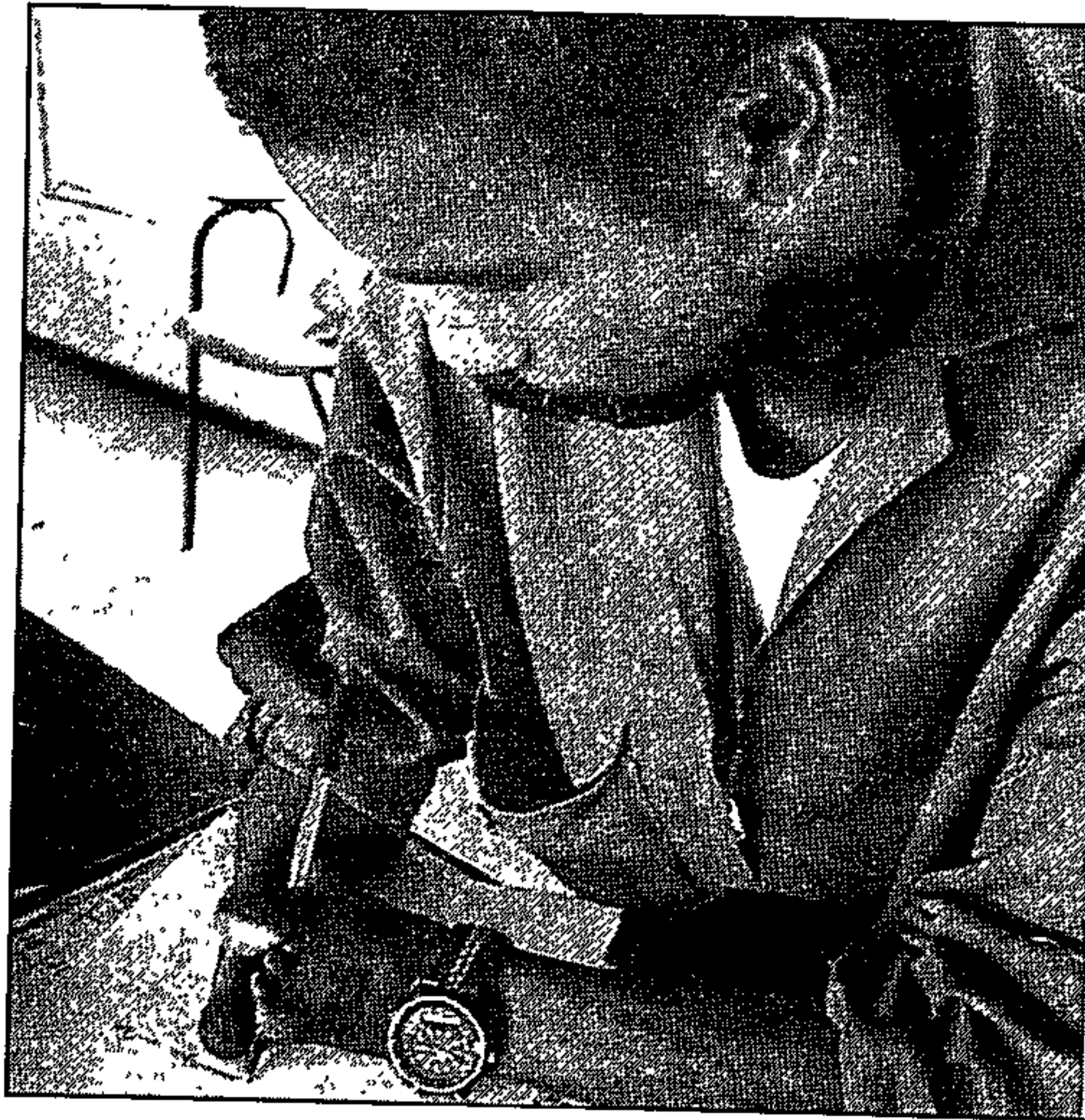
Mr Mohammed joined the vocational centre last year as a trainee in woodwork and typing.

He is now an instructor and responsible for training disabled people in woodwork.

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



GETTING DOWN TO WORK: Mr Nolan Mohammed at the vocational centre
Photo: Roger Sedres

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.

Disabled 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.

HANDICAP

SOUTHEASTER 7

Star April 1994 'Forgotten' fight on

Recession may turn dream to nightmare

BY ZINGISA MKHUMA

One morning 20 years ago the first group of disabled workers reported for work at the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics (Shap) workshop in Soweto.

For Shap founder and chairman, Friday Mavuso, it was a dream come true.

By opening its doors to disabled people — Shap "restored their dignity".

This also proved that, given a chance, disabled people can work just as hard as anybody else, says Mavuso.

Mavuso, who became a paraplegic at the age of 25, fought tirelessly for the rights of disabled people before he received donations to start the project.

When the centre opened, Mavuso realised that this was the beginning of great things for him and other disabled "breadwinners".

However, years later and after scores of accolades and awards, Mavuso is an unhappy man. He is beginning to see his dream turn into a nightmare.

Shap used to employ 150 people but now the numbers have dropped to a mere 50.

"In two months we could close down, and we need a miracle to save us. This is

despite the fact that the disabled population has almost doubled because of violence.

"Workshops that used to house 10 people each are running empty. Most of the people are waiting at home. At the height of sanctions we lost five big customers including Kodak. But we survived.

"Two years ago recession hit us and we almost closed down. It has hit us again, and this time I am worried," he says.

Mavuso and other disabled people "get no joy from begging", he says. "What makes me and them happy is a cheque that comes after 30 days for a job well done.

"We started this project because we wanted something that could address our basic needs, including health and education.

"We have been self-reliant," he says.

"Teach me how to fish and give me a fishing rod and you have fed my family for life.

"All we are asking for is to be given a chance to prove ourselves. We are struggling to keep the factory going, means so much to us," he says.

FRIDAY Mavuso talks to Zingisa Mkhuma about the problems facing disabled people in the townships

When the Government, the media and the public talk about the new South Africa, they invariably refer to April 27, when we, disabled people, cast our vote.

"What this says to me and 5 million others is that our vote counted for nothing. Maybe our votes were not even counted at all."

These words come from Friday Mavuso, a paraplegic who has contributed enormously to the economic and social upliftment of disabled people in South Africa for more than 20 years.

Despite his anger at the status quo, Mavuso, chairman and the founder of the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics (Shap) in Soweto, displays pictures of President Mandela on his wall.

One picture shows him sitting next to Mandela, in another they are shaking hands. He hero-worships Mandela, yet this does not blind him to the fact that the Government is not doing enough for the handicapped.

To stress his point, Mavuso shows The Star a copy of a letter sent to acting deputy director-general in the Presi-



Friday Mavuso . . . at work at his desk.

dent's office, protesting against the fact that a recent RDP summit took place without representation from the disabled community.

Says Mavuso "I am concerned about the direction that the new government has taken concerning us.

"Prior to the elections we were excited and happy to vote for the government of our choice.

"The Disabled People of South Africa (DPSA), an umbrella body for many organisations, had invited all political parties to come and talk to us and to find out what they would do for us once in power. But only two came —

the National Party and the Democratic Party

"DPSA responded by declaring that it would register its own party because we believe that self-representation is important. We are the people who know what is right for us."

However, he says, the ANC approached DPSA and suggested that it nominate two candidates for the party's national list.

Subsequently one candidate resigned and the other never made it to Parliament because the ANC did not get a two-thirds majority. Meanwhile, the plight of the

disabled people worsens every day as the number of political and criminal violence survivors stream back into a society where existing facilities are not enough to meet their needs. There is almost no prospect of getting a job.

Mavuso says the only school for disabled black people is Philadelphiya, a high school in Soshanguve, Pretoria, with a waiting list of up to four years.

In South Africa there is a lack of Government-sponsored mobility schemes, and grants that would enable a quadriplegic, for instance, to employ as full-time help someone who could feed, dress and put him or her into bed.

"There are no resources, no facilities. A lot of paraplegics have committed suicide. During the four years I spent in hospital after I was injured, 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 by their families. Men lost their wives, their houses and jobs. I was lucky because I only lost a fridge. But my wife was expecting a child and I had no job. At some stage I thought of killing myself, too," he says.

Mavuso says although Shap played a role in helping handicapped people it could not cater for the growing needs of the disabled. And even it faces closure because funds have dried up.



Picture: LEON MULLER, The Argus.

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 VIAL
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 is 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".

About his art he says: "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 is an international organisation with a branch at the Mary Harding Centre in Athlone.

Arts for disabled people, which included 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.

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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 patients returning time and again to psychiatric wards because they cannot deal with the stressful outside world.

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: Gordon, Threshold, and Walberton Manor.

They accommodate 170 people between them and are 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 Dobbie, director of the 15-year-old Threshold centre, says: "We try to bring some sort of normality into their lives, to improve produc-

tivity 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."

"So acute 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 woodwork, sewing and basic handicrafts, in a bid to make them more "marketable".

These centres are aimed at reintegrating consumers into society, so they may assume "normal" lives.

WED 10 JAN 1995

Disabled people need access to jobs, entertainment — mayoress

ARLT 24/1/95 (296)

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.

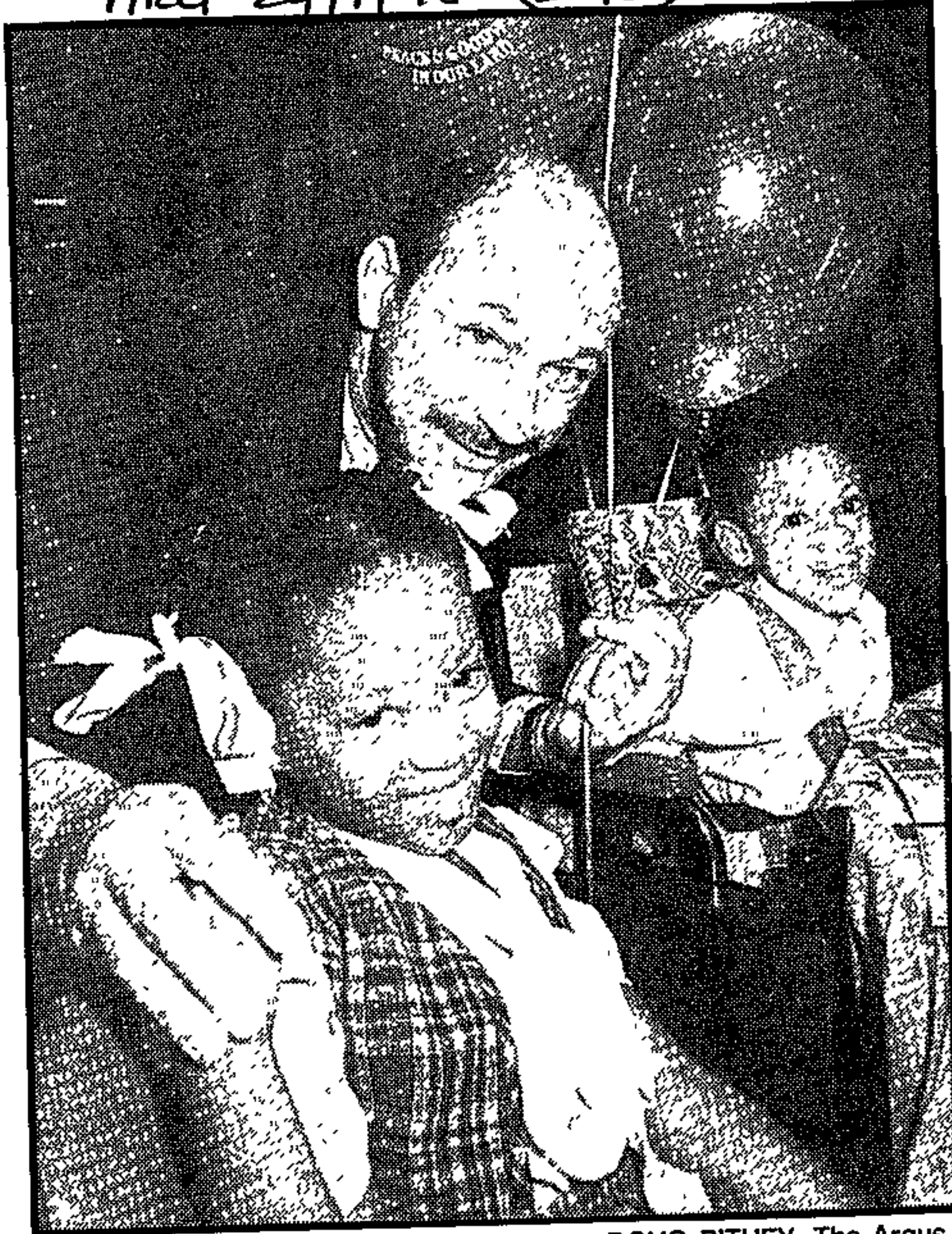
"They must be given the opportunity of jobs... and access to places of entertainment."

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 those 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



Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

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.

R4.

Buyers can win prizes from between R10 to R1 000 in the scratch-card competition.

The school that sells the most Easter Stamps will win

R5 500. 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



Pictures: BRENTON GEACH, The Argus.

MANAGEMENT TEAM: Mbulelo Dodo, the centre's manager, with one of the supervisors at the centre. The management team is responsible for teaching trainees cane work and management skills.

HARD AT WORK: Cane work is an integral part of training at the Phambili Centre for the Blind in Khayelitsha. In the middle is Douglas Mgxashe, who was blinded six years ago. It is hoped the trainees will be able to help other blind people in the future.

THABO MABASO
Staff Reporter

THERE was a time when blind people were not only

downtrodden in the townships, but also heavily dependent on their families for financial and other assistance.

Being blind meant having to

endure constant embarrassment and humiliation. This was exacerbated by facilities not being designed with the blind in mind.

Those times are about to change with the formation of Phambili Centre for the Blind in Khayelitsha, which will train blind people to be self-sufficient.

The Cape Town Society for the Blind was the driving force behind the formation of Phambili Centre, and Community Chest and the Department of Labour have helped finance it.

The training centre, the only institution of its kind in the townships, will train 40 people in cane work who

should eventually be able to support themselves and create job opportunities. The number to be trained is however tiny when compared to the total number of blind people in the townships.

Nwabisa Mpendu, a social worker with the Cape Town Society for the Blind, estimates there are more than

1 000 blind people in the townships.

One of those involved, Douglas Mgxashe, was blinded in an attack in 1989. He is partially sighted and has to feed his wife and three children with a meagre pension of R390 a month.

"I am very happy about the

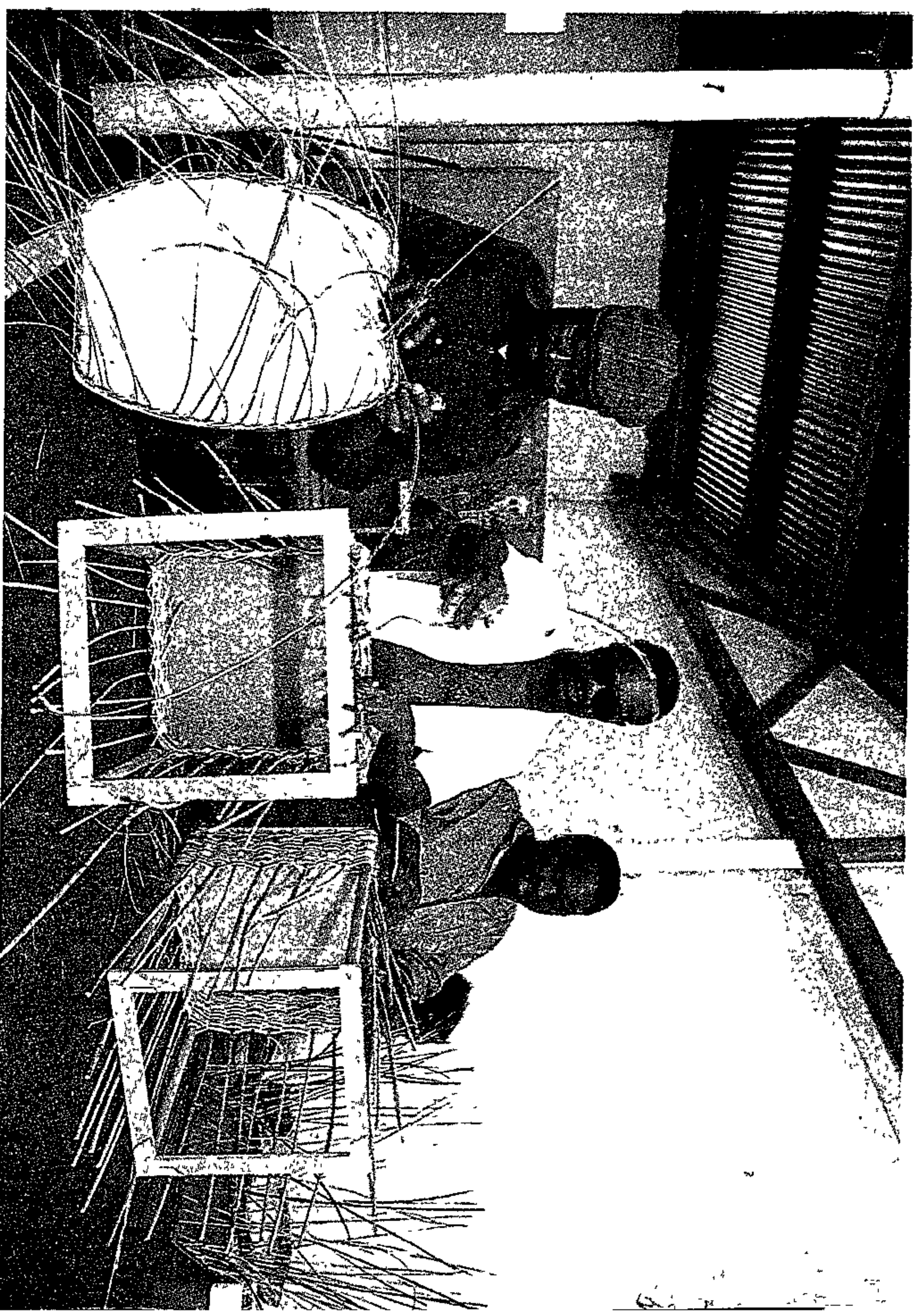
opening of this centre. For a long time I have been doing nothing."

Another person who regards the opening of the centre as a dream come true is Mbongeni Kula. Mr Kula has been unemployed since 1986 when he was diagnosed with an eye disease. He is married with

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Jurie Groenewald, Cape Town Society for the Blind's general manager, said: "Our aim is twofold — to train people and to create jobs."

It was hoped the centre would generate revenue through its products in the



NEWS FEATURE *Association of the Physically Disabled needs more staff and funds*

Disabled and discontent

■ **BAD BEDS** *When they think about hospitals, they think about death:*

By Glenn McKenzie

PARALYSED 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 Edenvale 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 Damelin, superintendent of Edenvale Hospital, admits it was a "distinct possibility" that Gwebu had been refused admission to the hospital.

Damelin, who realises his hospital has inadequate physical therapy facilities, says Edenvale had already spent R100 000 treating Gwebu's ailments.

Therapy ward

Meanwhile, the hospital cannot afford wheelchairs for its physical therapy ward. "Cost should not be the bottom line but it is a contributing factor," says Damelin.

"We have a limited capacity to serve people. We need to offer our services to more deserving people who we feel we can assist."

Damelin 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, Damelin 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. PIC: JOE MOLEFE

The fact that these problems have come up twice in one year tells me he is neglecting himself," says Damelin.

But Gwebu is not convinced. He feels staff at Edenvale 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 added.

"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 physically disabled are suffering," says Legasa.

Damelin 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 Damelin.

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

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■ **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 hand-

outs of money, food and blankets. Most nights he was sheltered by only an up-turned 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.

Man lived 20 years under a fire escape

Sowetan 31/1/95 (296)

■ **ELIM HAVENS** *Now I only miss my occasional umqomboti*?

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 "Lifetime 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 Masine.

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 Wilna 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 Grasmere.

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 *umqomboti* (traditional beer)."

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

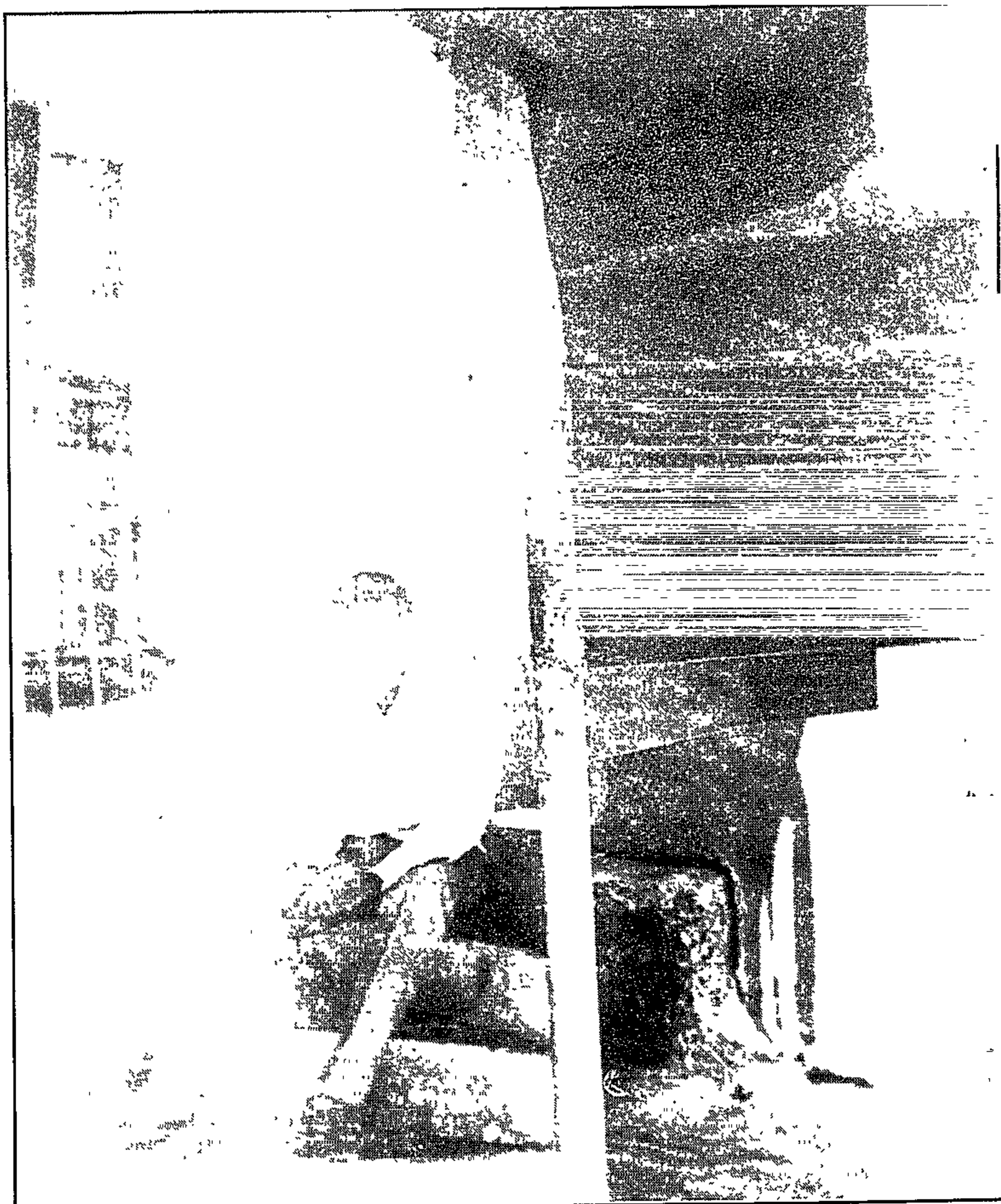
The house where Qasane now lives (near Grasmere, Johannesburg) is also home to 35 homeless and abandoned children. More than 20 adults, many of whom are old and disabled also stay there.

The home is the brainchild of husband and wife the Reverend Hans and Albertha Goagoseb.

The Goagoseb "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 Goagosebs should phone 885-2435, or alternatively 396-1490.



SLIPPING THROUGH THE CRACKS ... 51-year-old Raymond Qasane lived for years in the white neighbourhood of Kempton Park — under a fire escape. **PIC: LEN KUMALO**

Disabled marching proudly, ²⁹⁶ ²⁹⁶ ²⁹⁶ defiantly

■ **BEING IGNORED** They are angry
and ready to show who they really are:

By Glenn McKenzie

SITTING in his wheelchair, Friday Mavuso dreams about marching.

He thinks about hundreds of legs, some wobbling on crutches, others strapped to a wheelchair. All "marching" proudly, defiantly.

Mavuso has "marched" many times before. The first was in 1990. Disabled people rallied in the streets of Soweto to protest against apartheid government discrimination. Since then Mavuso has been in other protest marches, some with the ANC.

But he believes the most important march may be yet to come.

"Disabled people are being ignored. We are angry and ready to show people who we really are," he says.

Decided to sue

Protest has always come naturally to Mavuso. After a police bullet rendered his legs useless in 1974, Mavuso decided to sue the South African Police.

He won. Soon afterwards, Mavuso started the Self Help Association for the Physically Disabled (SHAP) in Mofolo Park, Soweto.

With over 100 members, SHAP builds, repairs, sews, and creates consumer goods for dozens of local com-

Disabled people
are being ignored.
We are angry
and ready to
show people who
we really are

panies.

This is purely business, says Mavuso, not charity. Disabled people work for their wages and products are sold at competitive prices.

But business aside, disabled people still suffer from lack of proper education and health care. And sometimes it seems like no one cares.

"Where is the ANC now that they are in government? I am sure they (members of parliament) have a difficult job, but we are starting to wonder if they have forgotten us," says Mavuso.

The wheelchair-bound activist says he has sent many letters to government officials asking to meet and discuss issues affecting disabled people. But he has never received a response.

"We are not asking Mandela to wave a magic stick and make everything better. But we desperately want



Wheelchair bound but ready for mass action ... Friday Mavuso is angry about the Government of National Unity's treatment of disabled people. PIC: ROBERT MAGWAZA

the government to do something."

Twenty-nine year old Tsietso Louw, a SHAP employee, echoes those sentiments.

"For disabled people there is no new South Africa. Even though we led the country when we voted on April 26 (most people began voting on the 27th), we still have not seen anything change," said Louw.

Disabilities programme

Recently, the Government's Reconstruction and Development Programme formed a "Disabilities Programme" to make recommendations to all relevant ministries.

Spokesperson Ms Maria Rambo, who is disabled and uses a wheelchair, said she hoped that the RDP's new White Paper (expected in June) will include proposals affecting disabled people.

Still, specific programmes are not expected to be in place until late 1995, Rambo said.

"What has to be made clear is that we are only just starting a process of reversing problems that are very old," said Rambo.

Rambo insists the government has made housing, transportation, medical treatment and access to public facilities for disabled people a "priority".

Minister of Health Dr Nkosazana Zuma is also sympathetic to the plight of the disabled but says her hands are tied.

"It is up to the provinces to decide on health care delivery, so whatever I say won't really matter," she says.

Back in Mofolo, Mavuso worries that the ANC-led government has not consulted "people on the ground" since last year's elections. "Is this a government of tokenism? Or is it truly a new government?"

"Those are the questions people are asking now," says Mavuso.

Mavuso says he and other disabled people survive by doing low salary jobs, collecting inadequate pensions, and most of all by helping themselves. "We are not sick. We are not useless. We have a place in society and we will show this through mass action, if no one

listens to us," says Mavuso.

Disabled people don't want hand-outs. They want equal opportunities to work, says Mavuso.

Since 1980, SHAP has bid for and received contracts in the industrial, chemical, textile and other sectors.

Decade of people

In one wing of the Association's headquarters, dozens of people sew reflective uniforms for traffic police, ambulance staff and firefighters.

Down the hall, others mix tanks of chemicals to create soap, mosquito repellent and other household goods.

Still, the organisation constantly struggles to find contracts because of the current economy, and because companies are sometimes reluctant to put their faith in disabled people.

Says Dr Kim Lagli, a chemist who is donating her time to SHAP: "Donations ease people's consciences. But giving work to disabled people takes a bit more effort."

Rights of mentally ill

OF ALL THE urgent human rights issues the Constitutional Assembly will tackle during the next five years, one stands out from the others.

It is not a visible issue. Some say it is not an issue at all.

It involves people who don't have a voice. Not in the courts and not in the Press.

Not even now, since elections, can these people speak out.

They number more than 20 000 people but you will never see them.

That is because they have been declared insane or mentally ill.

The Citizen's Commission on Human Rights believes the interim constitution does not adequately protect the rights of mental patients in South Africa.

Whether human rights abuses take place in the country's private and public mental hospitals is not clear.

Some organisations such as the CCHR have always argued that patients have been mistreated, forced to work as labourers and even physically and psychologically abused in mental hospitals.

But there is no way to know, since monitoring organisations and the media are not allowed complete access to these facilities.

Under an amendment to the Mental Health Act of 1976, no person "without the authority in writing of the Director-General" (of the province concerned) may take photographs of any institution or patient in that institution.

The amendment also restricts the media by warning that anyone who publishes any "false information concerning the detention, treatment, behaviour or experience in an institution of any patient ... or concerning the administration of any institution" shall be liable to a fine of R1 000 or one year's imprisonment.

Ironically the onus is on the media institution to prove all allegations, even though the media do not have access to hospital premises or records.

This week CCHR submitted a proposal to the Constitutional Assembly to change the laws which govern mental patients and the institutions they live in.

Under the proposal, mental patients and their next of kin would have the following rights enjoyed by other people:

- To see one's own medical records,
- To receive telephone calls and get visitors,
- Medical treatment for ordinary physical illness;
- To make complaints officially to an independent board without reprisal; and
- To accept or refuse treatment: sterilisation, electric shock treatment, insulin shock, narcosynthesis, lobotomy, aversion therapy and

Sowetan 22/1/95
While SA prepares for a new democratic constitution, one body is fighting for the protection of the rights of mental patients, *Sowetan* reporter **Glen McKenzie** writes:



A patient at Millsite 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 Sondergaard 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 Sondergaard.

No one is suggesting that mummified bodies are hidden under hospitals like Millsite 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 Sondergaard.

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 Ewart 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 patient. 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, her sister Barbara tried to question staff members and see her sister's medical records. Administrators allegedly refused the request.

"No one even told me that they were sorry that my sister had disappeared," said Kinghorn.

Another tragedy is that administrators and staffers in mental hospitals often work under extremely stressful conditions.

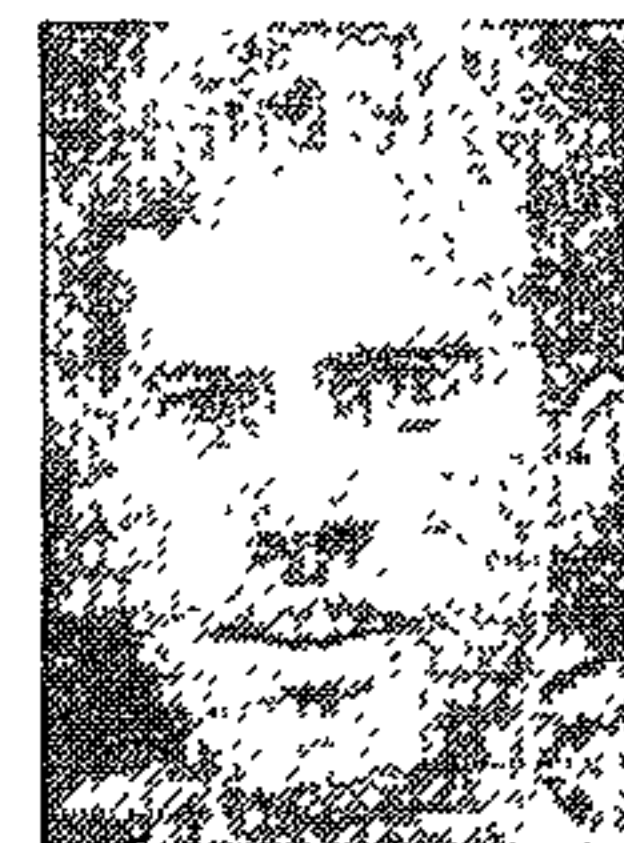
They have to deal with difficult and sometimes dangerous personalities on a daily basis.

One Millsite 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.

Sondergaard 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 Sondergaard.



Standing assembly ovation for disabled MP

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A STANDING ovation and ululation greeted Maria Rantho, deputy chair of Disabled People South Africa, as she was wheeled into the national assembly to be sworn in as an ANC MP.

More than 100 disabled — including hearing and sight impaired people and wheelchair-bound paraplegics and quadriplegics — had come to parliament to witness the event from the public galleries. Those who could stand — as

did MPs on the floor of the assembly — when Ms Rantho was wheeled in by two ANC MPs to take the oath before Deputy Speaker Bhadra Ranchod at the start of yesterday afternoon's proceedings.

After she had taken the oath, a parliamentary official brought the register to her to sign and Dr Ranchod descended from the Speaker's chair to shake her hand.

As she was wheeled out of an exit to be brought back through

a more convenient one to take her place in the ANC back benches, Dr Ranchod said to laughter: "Please don't wheel the member out of the house. She's now a fully-fledged member."

Later, during the debate on the Adjustments Appropriation Bill, Dr Ranchod said he wished to welcome all the disabled people to the gallery.

"You can be assured access to parliament is being attended to."

A number of structural changes were being made to the building, he added to applause. *ARL 1/3/95*

Proceedings were translated into sign language for a group of hearing disabled onlookers.

Ms Rantho replaces Lindwe Mabuza, who has gone to Germany as ambassador and is the second wheelchair-bound parliamentarian. ANC senator Stefanus Grové is the other. — Sapa.

Gauteng seeks to phase cerebral palsy pupils into mainstream

In a class of their own

SAF 18/3/95

(296)

LATER this month Leon du Toit will wave goodbye to a busload of pupils leaving for an important athletics meeting in Port Elizabeth.

"They will be just like any bunch of kids going on an outing, singing as they set off on the bus," he says. "But someone will have to load the wheelchairs on to the bus. And a nurse will have to go along to help the kids bath and get dressed."

Du Toit is the principal of the Frances Vorwerk School in Suideroort, Johannesburg, which educates some 300 kids with cerebral palsy, and offers classes from pre-school to Standard 8. At first the school seems like any other.

But parked outside each classroom are wheelchairs and specially geared tricycles, and the passages are extra wide to make room for all the two and three-wheeled traffic.

The buses have special hoists to load up the chairs.

These details, Du Toit says, are often underestimated by people who don't have daily dealings with children with specialised education needs (SEN). That daily experience, Du Toit says, has made educationists in the field worried about emerging government policy in this area. Du Toit is on the executive of the Association for Learners with Special Education Needs.

The second White Paper issued by the national Department of Education provided for "the early appointment of a national commission on special needs in education and training" and established that education for children with SEN is a provincial department matter.

The Gauteng government has issued a discussion document on the subject, which has caused rumbles of concern. The document accepts

THERE are split views on the integration of cerebral palsy students into ordinary schools. But both sides agree it will cost more, writes Chief Reporter JOHN PERLMAN.

the need for separate specialised education in the short to medium term, but aims over time to accommodate most students with SEN in mainstream schools. That should be possible, the government says, for all but 2 to 3% of such children.

"They believe kids should steadily be mainstreamed," says Du Toit. "We think this should be on a selective basis."

Du Toit points out his school alone employs 120 staffers, including speech, occupational and physical therapists. "You can't duplicate those services at every school," he says. The proposal that such experts move from school to school will present problems, he says, and

cites a document drawn up by educationists working with disabilities ranging from blindness to dyslexia. "Specialised schools already are suffering from reduced numbers of therapists," the document says. "If the remaining therapists also act as 'consultants' to mainstream schools, services would be reduced even more in specialised schools."

The document expresses concern that "learning-disabled kids and less severely physically disabled children will be placed into mainstream classes but the necessary therapy will in fact not materialise. Without effective specialised help, their school years can be a dismal, debilitating experience."

Edcent Williams, who is the Gauteng government's adviser on specialised education policy and author of the discussion paper, says the process of mainstreaming children with SEN could take five or six years or more.

"There will always be a place for special schools but those whose needs are not so severe will be accommodated in a special class in a regular school," Williams says.

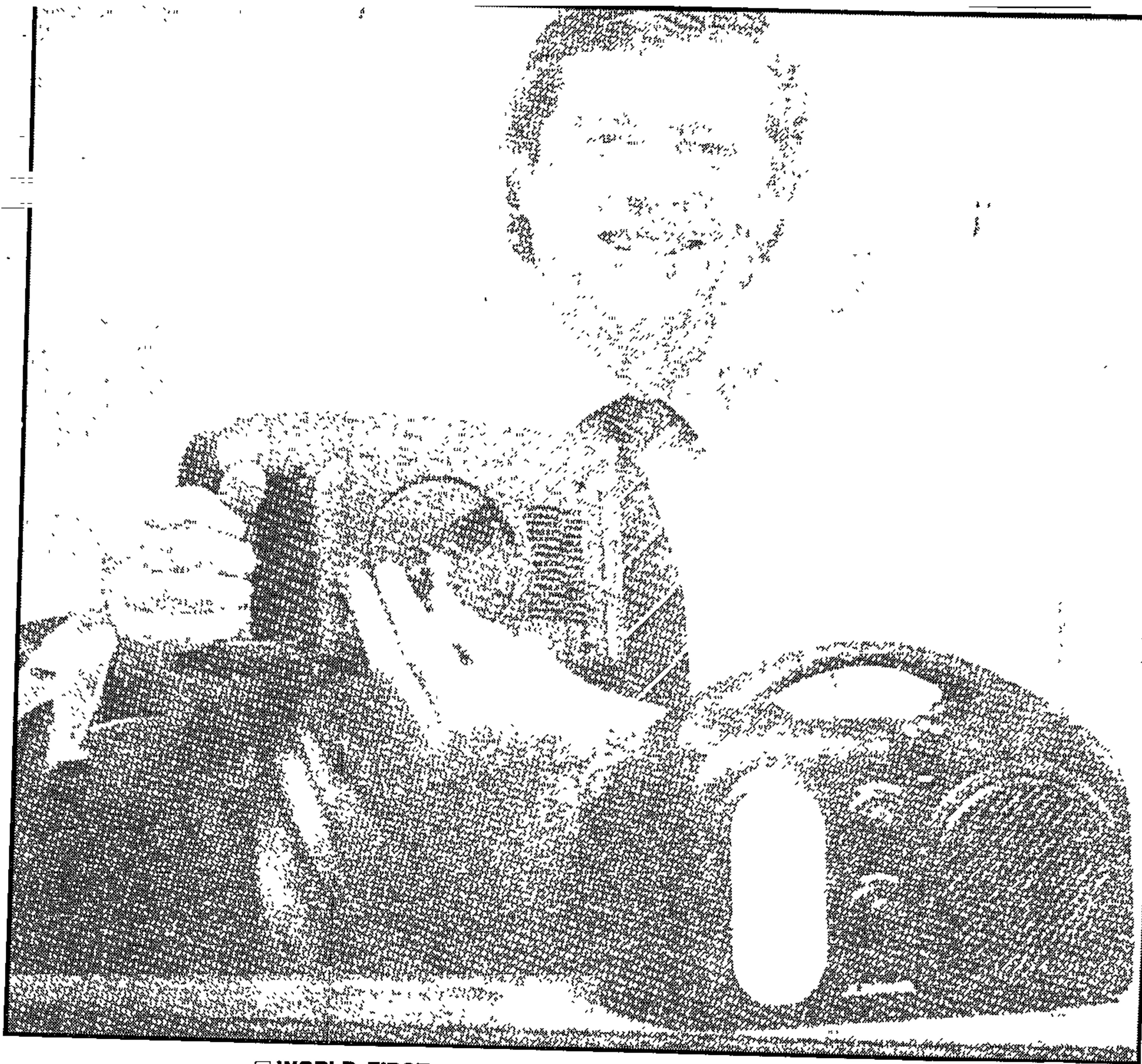
That process, he says, will give children "who can meet the academic demands a greater choice of subjects and courses". It will also have long-term benefits. "There's a lot of good work done in special schools but the integration of these people afterwards is very difficult."

"What people need to understand is that we are not looking at mainstreaming at all costs," Williams says. "There is a continuum of needs, and there needs to be a

continuum of service." Williams says the mainstream is not yet ready to help out. "There will be very selective inclusion at first, and only with parental choice."

Williams says the primary motivation for the policy is "sound educational principles" but Du Toit believes the main aim is to reduce costs. Ironically both say that providing specialised education in mainstream schools will cost more. But Williams believes that this route will help integrate children with SEN into society, thus reducing the "cost involved in maintaining them as adults."

Costs will come into sharp focus with the Gauteng budget due for tabling next week. After that, the focus should shift to the proposed commission of inquiry. "We should be on that commission and it should get off the ground as soon as possible," says Du Toit.



□ **WORLD FIRST:** Rory Stear with the first wind-up radios.

IRVING STEYN

Weekend Argus Reporter

THERE is a starkly empty warehouse in the Montagu Gardens industrial area of Milnerton being prepared for what is destined to be monument to 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 Seeff Corporate 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 Butlion, 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 di-

Wind-up radios: Communication revolution about to begin

rector 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 Butlion 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 Butlion 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 inter-

est all over the world for the new product, which will sell from the factory at about R90 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. *ARG 25/3/95*

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.

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A work of great worth with an unusual genesis

(296)

ED 29/3/95

WHEN the queen visited the Self-help Association of Paraplegics (Shap) on her visit to Soweto last week, Friday Mavuso must have been a very proud man. He had everything to be. He is the founder, chairman, guiding spirit and driving force of this organisation in Soweto, and through it he has achieved much that is truly marvellous. Today it has a turnover of well over R1m a year and provides work, food, wages and recreation for more than 100 disabled people.

The seed money for this project came from manoeuvres of the sort that only the legal mind can have the wit to devise. Some would say they were legitimate, others that they were based on a lie that produced a palpable miscarriage of justice.

Twenty years ago Mavuso was very bit the man about township — a good boxer and rising soccer star who, with his easygoing manner and quick wit, was well-known and well-liked in the circles he moved in. A policeman's bullet put paid to this. For two long decades he has been in a wheelchair, a paraplegic who has lost the use of his lower limbs.

In the ensuing criminal trial, Mavuso was in the dock and the policeman was his accuser. The charges were robbery, resisting arrest, obstructing a policeman in the execu-

tion of his duty and a few more besides. According to the policeman, Mavuso was a mugger shot in the course of arresting him. Mavuso's version was that, while looking for a man in a shebeen, he had been attacked by policemen who were drinking there. One of the policemen shot him in the back. Unable to decide who was telling the truth, the magistrate gave Mavuso the benefit of the doubt and he was acquitted.

Mustering what little money he had, Mavuso briefed lawyers to bring a claim against the police. Four years later, as the trial date approached, the lawyers withdrew. They said the action was bound to be abortive. No claim lay against the state since the shot was fired as part of a private brawl and not in the execution of the policeman's duty. Against the policeman there were good prospects of success, but since he was without means, the judgment would be barren.

Undaunted, Mavuso wheeled himself over to the offices of the Legal Aid Bureau (a charitable organisation run by the indefatigable Pauline Lipson). Fresh lawyers were instructed. They concluded that the previous lawyers were right — on Mavuso's version, the claim was doomed or futile. But what of the policeman's ver-

MARTIN BRASSEY

sion? There, they thought, lay a glimmer of hope. Since it portrayed the man as acting in the course of his duties, it opened the door to a claim against the state. The lawyers would have to show, though, that in firing the shot the man had used excessive force and so acted unlawfully.

Assigned to the case was André Botha, who was showing himself to be one of our brightest and best judges.

For the purposes of the litigation, Mavuso was willing to admit that he was committing a mugging on the night in question. He also admitted that the policeman had fired the shot in the course of trying to arrest him. So only one issue was left — whether the force used was excessive in the circumstances. On this question, the burden of proof was on the state, so it had to present evidence first.

In his evidence, the policeman stuck to his version. Mavuso's counsel began an egg-dance of a cross-examination. One slip and the case would be lost. It was torment.

For the policeman, though, the torment was far worse. Trying to sustain a baseless story under cross-ex-



□ MAVUSO

amination is a special kind of torture, and his story was all of that.

In his judgment, the judge said he had to put himself in the policeman's position. The man had been faced with a difficult choice. Mugging was a serious crime, so it was important to make the arrest, yet he was confronted by very unfavourable circumstances. The street was dimly lit, Mavuso had been running fast, and there were many bolt-holes

down which to escape. On the other hand, the policeman admitted he had shouted no warning, fired no warning shot and made no attempt to shoot at the legs.

In his view, the shooting was premature. Had the policeman first tried lesser means, it might have been wholly unnecessary. The state could not show that the force used was reasonable, and Mavuso was entitled to R75 000 in damages.

As the final words of the judgment were pronounced, Mavuso began to cry. His sobs were just audible over the judge's words and his shoulders rising and falling with emotion. His lawyers found it difficult to fight back their own tears. Even the judge was moved.

With the proceeds of the claim, Mavuso started Shap. He had promised his lawyers he would use the money for this, but they, ever cynical, refused to believe him. It took a visit from the Queen of England to show them just how wrong they were.

On the evidence, the judgment was almost certainly right. On the facts, it was no less certainly wrong. Was it just? Who knows, and now, more than 10 years later, who cares? What we retain from the case is an institution that is good, just, and right. A good man made it so.

□ Brassey is a Wits law professor.

LETTERS

Home for disabled to close

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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.

Sametaw 12/4/95

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

ARG 24/4/95 (296) (298)
☐ *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 elic-

ited 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, multiracial home of its kind in the Western Cape, offers specialist care to 84 handicapped who range in age from birth to 30.

All have IQs of less than 25 — that 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 2811.

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.

Cerebral palsy sufferers given voice

Help at hand for people with disabilities who are unable to communicate

Health Reporter

PAUL MARSHALL was born with severe cerebral palsy, which left him both physically disabled and unable to speak.

Up to the age of 12 he could only communicate through gestures and guttural sounds.

But then he got the opportunity to use Blissymbolics, a system whereby users point at symbols to communicate. And from there he's gone on to traditional reading and is also completely computer literate.

Today Mr Marshall, from Ontario, Canada, uses an alphabet board for one-on-one communication and a variety of voice production devices for group communication.

He is also an international advocate for the rights of non-verbal people and travels throughout the world to contribute to the growth of Alternative and Augmentative Communication.

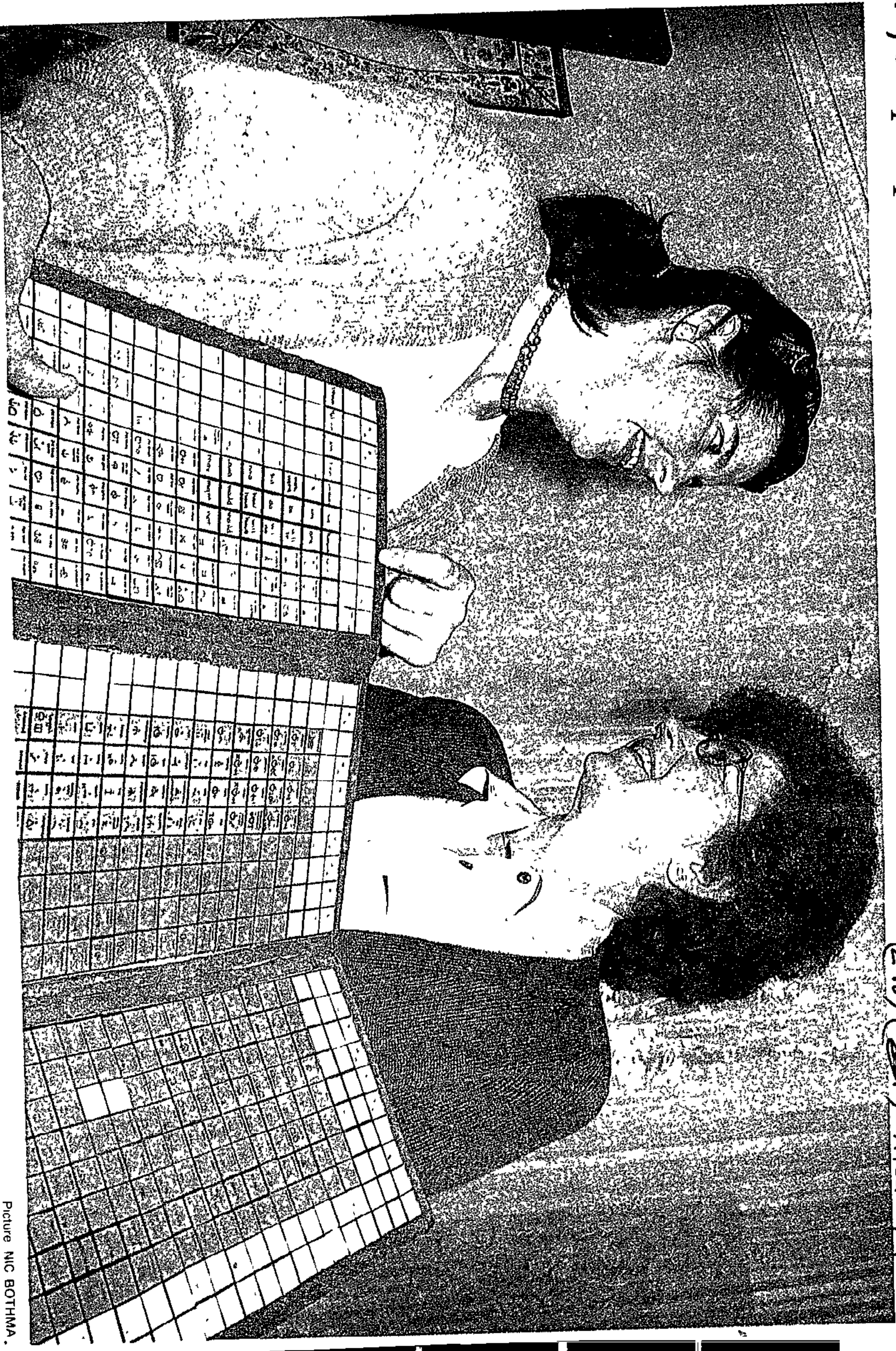
Annalu Waller, who is originally from South Africa but now lives and works in Scotland, also has cerebral palsy.

The condition has not affected her as badly as it did Mr Marshall, but her speech was affected.

Dr Waller has a B Sc in Computer Science from the University of Cape Town and did her Masters in Biomedics at the UCT Medical School.

She is now a research fellow in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of Dundee.

Both Mr Marshall and Dr Waller are in Cape Town to share their experiences and



Picture NIC BOTHMA.

ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION: Annalu Waller, who has cerebral palsy, and Suzanne Clancy, Canadian life skills coach for people with disabilities, particularly people who cannot speak, with a Blissymbolics board. Blissymbolics is a language that involves pointing at symbols to denote meaning.

The conference, on Friday, who were disabled "in boxes" disabilities, they never stop press himself, she added. Yet disabled people were of learning. We need to create op- ● For more information or the confer-

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 46% 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 Maria 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.

NEWS SABC presenter wins award and proves that being deaf is no limitation



Mr Fred Swarts at Usizo Technical College in Katlehong. There are no universities for deaf pupils in South Africa, only technikons which provide technical education.

Deaf presenter wins top award

■ ACHIEVER

Dedication to helping others:

FOR THE FIRST time at an SABC Arts Award ceremony a deaf presenter has walked away with an award for Best Presenter.

He is Pumelele Gernane, a 30-year-old employee of the Witwatersrand Deaf Association.

He won his award in the category "Best Presenter of any Programme on NNTV" for a montage of inserts in the NNTV programme *Sign Here*, the only programme for the deaf and hard of hearing on South African television.

His portfolio covered a range of challenges, including storytelling, interviewing and role-playing.

He performed all these in a controlled but professional manner with an obvious knowledge of his subject," according to Mr Red Merwich, marketing director of NNTV and chairman of the jury that made the selection.

The jury was most impressed with Pumelele's articulate communication through his own language in a manner that is pleasing and enjoyable to both the deaf and the hearing viewer.

His presentation has charm, spontaneity and warmth.

Gernane was born in 1965 and educated at St Thomas School for the Deaf. For the past 18 months he has worked at the Witwatersrand Deaf Association where he offers assistance in interpreting for the deaf who do not fully understand the English language as well as



Deaf people are not stupid, says Gernane. Here disabled Lilletille of Orlando West in Soweto and her mother, Mrs Shabalala, communicate in sign language.

those whose sign language differs from the average sign.

A former chairman of the Thembaletshi Deaf Club in East London, he is at present a member of the Deaf Christian Fellowship and the Young Warriors. He does Bible studies with fellow deaf Christians and enjoys singing in church.

He plans to become a social auxiliary worker. He has participated in rugby, soccer, table tennis, karate and cricket.

Being named the Best Presenter in the Arts Awards is confirmation that Gernane has overcome huge odds. The *Sign Here* programme which he

presents is on Sunday morning on NNTV. In the programme he interviewed pupils from a deaf boarding school in Namibia. The pupils were surprised and delighted to find a deaf person doing a job done mostly by hearing people.

Unwanted animals

In the film submitted for the award Gernane related a story about animals that were no longer wanted by their owners because they were old and seen as 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 would understand and enjoy watching.

Sign language is, says Gernane, a valid language. And while he finds it easy to read a script, his communication problems start when there is no equivalent of a word in sign language. But he has found 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."



Pumelele Gernane

"In fact, sign language is better than any other language because it is simple," he says. Also problematic for Gernane is that sign language on its own has many dialects — 11 in South Africa.

"Many people think that sign language is universal when it is not. It differs from one language to the other because it was not recognised before. As a result most of us developed our own signs in our different areas. So not all signs are the same," Gernane says.

Although there are only two programmes for the deaf on South African television, Gernane 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 news and sports programmes broadcast in sign language. There must also be a lot of children's shows that could have sign language added."

● Watch NNTV tonight for more on this subject.

Disabled poised for inclusion in Nedlac

John Dladla

(296)

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 without Portfolio Jay 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 Civics 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

298
SAB 6/6/95

By Isaac Moledi

THE East Rand branch of South African Breweries has contributed R360 000 to help unemployed physically disabled people from the Zicabengeleni Self-Help Association in Kaitleng 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 Ezibeleni school for physically disabled children, was

established ten years ago to assist physically disabled people in the Katorus area.

Sixty people are to be given training in sewing, candlemaking, 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 Natspruit 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

18 (296) CT(BR) 9/6/95
BY FRANCOISE BOTHA

STAFF WRITER

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.

Cherrél Herbert, project coordinator 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."

The project aims at developing assertiveness and independence, emphasising positive qualities that help participants to find employment.

"Our objective is to train all employable physically challenged people and place them in employment. A number of companies have already approached us," said Herbert.

The course which is run over 10 weeks focuses on communication skills, conflict management, countering racism, sexism and prejudice, developing democracy and stress management.

Infoguide is set to establish a database of physically challenged people looking for work and to act as an employment agency.

Life for disabled is grim

SFAW 15/6/95 (296)

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 (NCCD).

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

DISABLED South Africans exist on small allowances, Janine Simon, Medical Correspondent, writes

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 give 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 NCCD 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 Kwaiman, 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."

Epilepsy: The disease that can cost you your job.

(296)

ARG 26/6/95

SABATA NGCAI

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 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 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 Bridgetown and survives on a meagre R45 paid to her each week.

The Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industry says 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 epileptics. They think that when someone has a seizure at work he or she



SOCIAL OUTCAST.. Jane Vinsen.

could hurt themselves and the employer would be held responsible.

The employers also think if an epileptic has a seizure in front of customers, they may chase the customers away.

They also believe an epileptic would affect their production.

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 had 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, Guguletu, 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.

OBITUARY

Fighter for the disabled

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 irreparable 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 Chonco 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.

OBITUARY **FEATURE**

A true friend of the disabled

By Bongani Mavuso

THE ZULU IDIOM "Isosha *lufela ensebenzeni walo*", loosely translated, means that a soldier dies in the line of duty.

Versatile, courageous and energetic champion of the disabled Mr Friday Mandla Mavuso also lost his life while on duty.

Mavuso (46) died on Sunday on his way home from a plenary meeting at the Zamazisa Centre for the Disabled in Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal.

Bra Mandla, as he was fondly called by those close to him, was paralysed after being shot by a drunk policeman in 1974 as he was on his way home from work. He spent four years in hospital.

Protracted civil action

In 1981 Mavuso founded the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics after a protracted civil action against the authorities.

The courts decided in his favour and he used the settlement money to rebuild his own life and turn his dream into reality by giving other disabled people the opportunity to earn a living.

After establishing Shap, he spent most of his time working for the disabled. He dedicated his life to the upliftment and wellbeing of paraplegics.

The Shap centre in Mofolo, Soweto, gives employment to more

The late Bra Mavuso did not believe society owed the disabled a living



Friday Mavuso ... will always be remembered for the role he played 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 pre-



(296) (297) Sowetan 27/6/95

Mavuso leaves a big gap

Sowetan 27/6/85

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 the founder of Shap which he established in 1981. Mavuso (46) of Pimville in Soweto, died at Heidelberg Hospital. His driver, Mr

Junior Kubheka (24), was killed instantly in the head-on collision at about 8pm. A passenger, Mr Dilinga Dzuwa (46), also of Pimville, 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 Buthelezi, 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," Buthelezi said.

Mavuso was paralysed after being shot by a policeman while on his way home from work in 1974.

● See page 11.

Ladies Suits

A true friend of the disabled

By Bongani Mavuso

THE ZULU IDIOM "Isotsha lifela emsebenzini walo", loosely translated, means that a soldier dies in the line of duty.

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The courts decided in his favour and he used the settlement money to rebuild his own life and turn his dream into reality by giving other disabled people the opportunity to earn a living.

After establishing Shap, he spent most of his time working for the disabled. He dedicated his life to the upliftment and wellbeing of paraplegics.

The Shap centre in Mofolo, Soweto, gives employment to more than 100 workers, whose skills range from camera and slide projector repair to the manufacture of canvas bags for banks. Unskilled work such as packaging is also undertaken at the centre.

Last year, through Mavuso's unceasing efforts, Shap won a huge mining contract to produce underground lighting cables.

Open market

The centre is staffed and managed entirely by the disabled. Shap's products are sold in the open market, competing on an equal footing with business.

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 best address the issue ourselves. The attitude is that we need to be looked after. All we are asking is to be given a chance to prove ourselves," he once said.

He believed that the Government was not doing enough to assist the physically handicapped, and was angry about the *status quo*. He noted

The late Bra Mavuso did not believe society owed the disabled a living



Friday Mavuso ... will always be remembered for the role he played 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?

there was a lack of Government-sponsored mobility schemes and grants that would enable a quadriplegic, for instance, to employ someone as fulltime help to feed, dress and put him or her into bed.

"There are no resources, no facilities. A lot of paraplegics have committed suicide," Mavuso said.

"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 by their families."

Bra Mandla was sensitive and soft-hearted, his long time colleague Ms Popi Buthelezi remembers.

"When addressing our staff meetings, Friday would weep openly when some of the workers told him about problems they were facing in society and in their homes," Buthelezi said.

"The disabled people in South Africa and elsewhere will be hardest hit by his death. He was like a father to all

of us at the centre."

For his countless efforts in assisting the handicapped, Mavuso received several awards.

These include the Paul Harris Fellowship award which was presented to Mavuso by the Rotary Club of Sandown.

He received the award for his "determination and indomitable" spirit in establishing the Shap centre.

In presenting the award, club president Mr Bevil Dustan said, "The club wishes that you be recognised specifically for your concern for others less fortunate than yourself."

"To have acquired, through force of circumstances, the determination, dedication and a continuing desire to assist your fellow disabled indeed makes you a fortunate man."

Mavuso will be sadly remembered by the rich and famous, poor, disabled and able-bodied people of this country for his contribution to the upliftment of the handicapped.

Lala ngoxolo donga lika Mavuso



Big heart ... his close friends remember Friday Mavuso as sensitive and determined

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Friday Mavuso formed the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics in 1981 to assist the disabled.

JSE
Johannesburg Stock Exchange

Share prices on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange

These were prices at the close of the market. N.B. The JSE does not operate on public holidays. Prices courtesy of Frankel, Pollak, Vinderline Inc.

Name	Buyer	Seller	Last	H	L
1. Nail	R1,20	R1,30	R1,30	R2,00	R1,30
2. Kilimanjaro	—	—	R2,70	R3,50	R3,00
3. African Life	—	R6,50	R6,50	R7,35	R4,60
4. Metropolitan	R36,00	R36,50	R36,50	R37,00	R25,75
5. Corp Africa	95c	R1,00	R1,00	R1,00	R1,10
6. Corp Africa Pref	—	R1,10	R1,00	R1,25	R1,10
7. Real Africa Investment	—	—	R2,00	R2,70	R2,10

Glossary: Buyer: Price at which the share was bought. Seller: Price at which the share was sold. Last: Last traded price on the share. H: Highest level share reached this year. L: Lowest level the share reached this year.

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29/6/95 (296)

Man of the people ...
Friday Mavuso

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 podium, walked through the crowd to the back of the hall to greet him.

In Transkei, long-time friend and colleague Mike du Toit is stopped by traffic police. "I work for Friday," he says. "Go on your way," they reply.

In Dundonald, 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 Egoli 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 Zimazisa 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 charismatically from his wheelchair, would never again be able to give what they had come to depend on: inspiration.

Little work was accomplished this week at Shap in Mofolo, Soweto, the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics Friday founded in 1981. All wept.

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 lithe 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 Baragwanath, 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.

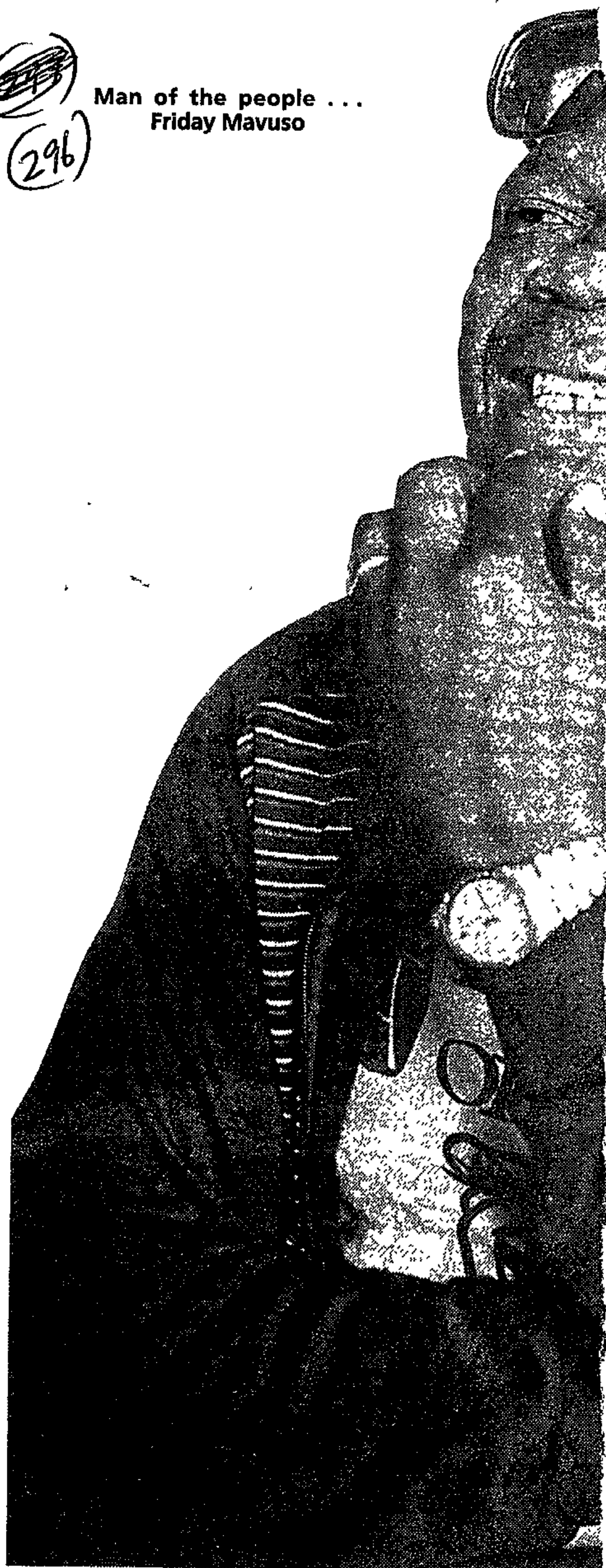
For his achievements, Friday, whose formal education ended in Std 2, has been honoured with an appointment to the board of Transnet, an honorary doctorate from the University of Cape Town, and a string of other awards including Rotary, Jaycees, Bona magazine, and, in 1986, a medal from the then Prime 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 150 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.





Irreplaceable loss . . . Jabulani Mkhali (2) of Soweto at the memorial service for Friday Mavuso.

PICTURE MOTLHALEFI MAHLABE

Slaw 30/6/95
**Disabled
 activist's
 memorial**
 (296) (297)

■ BY ABBEY MAKOE
 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.



Friday Mavuso ... his colleagues at Shap are determined to make his dreams come true.

Dream lives on after sad death

By Bongani Mavuso

BRA 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 he would probably die on a Friday.

Mavuso, the president of the Self-Help Association for Paraplegics (Shap) 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 his untimely death, Mavuso was working on several projects which his close associates at Shap say, if they could materialise, would "greatly" empower paraplegics.

These include plans to build a computer school at Shap Centre. Literacy programmes would also be conducted at the school, said Mavuso's personal assistant Mr Tsietsi Louw.

About a month ago, Bra 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. Mavuso was awarded this project by a chocolate manufacturing company. It got off the ground last week.

Louw said Mavuso was also negotiating with a top hotel group for Shap to manufacture hand lotions, insect repellents and conditioning shampoos for the group.

He was also negotiating with a Johannesburg college to offer his employees electronic courses.

"All these projects are aimed at empowering the disabled economically and educationally. Daily 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 and ideals alive. He dreamt of seeing the disabled community accepted and respected by society."

Bra Dla founded Shap in 1981 after realising the difficulties faced by disabled people. The factory, as he preferred to call Shap centre, employs about 120 disabled people.

Products manufactured at the centre include underground mining cables and protective wear for mine workers. Slide projectors and cameras are also repaired. The factory is managed and staffed by the disabled.

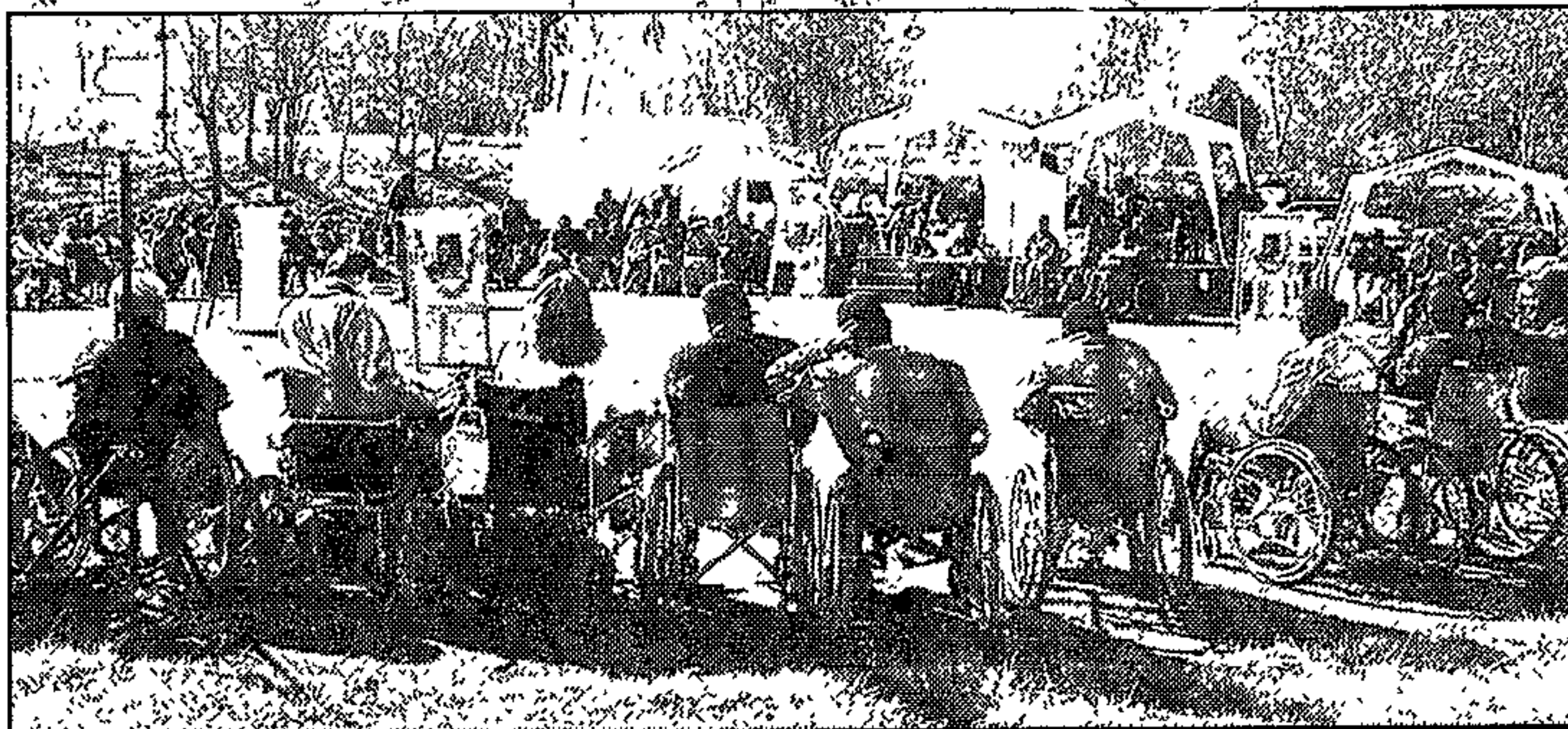
Renowned poet Mzwakhe Mbuli has written a poem in tribute to the fallen champion of the disabled.

It reads in part: "God, why take away Friday? ... leave me and others who are selfish alive?"

"Why remove 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..."



WHEELCHAIRS AND WALKING STICKS: Mourners wept for Friday Mavuso, campaigner for the disabled, who died in an accident last weekend PHOTOGRAPH MOTHALEFI MAHLABE

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 at 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 Mofolo.

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Star 1/7/95

A caring giant who gave hope to those who had lost it all

ST 21/7/95
By RAMOTENA MABOTE

IT TOOK a bullet from a policeman in 1974 to change the life of Friday Mandla Mavuso for ever.

Although he was paralysed, unable to play the soccer he loved, Mr Mavuso's injuries would force 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 Mafika, 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 Siphwe Khumalo, who was recruited to Shap last year, Mr Mavuso was a mentor. Siphwe was called to his office every day

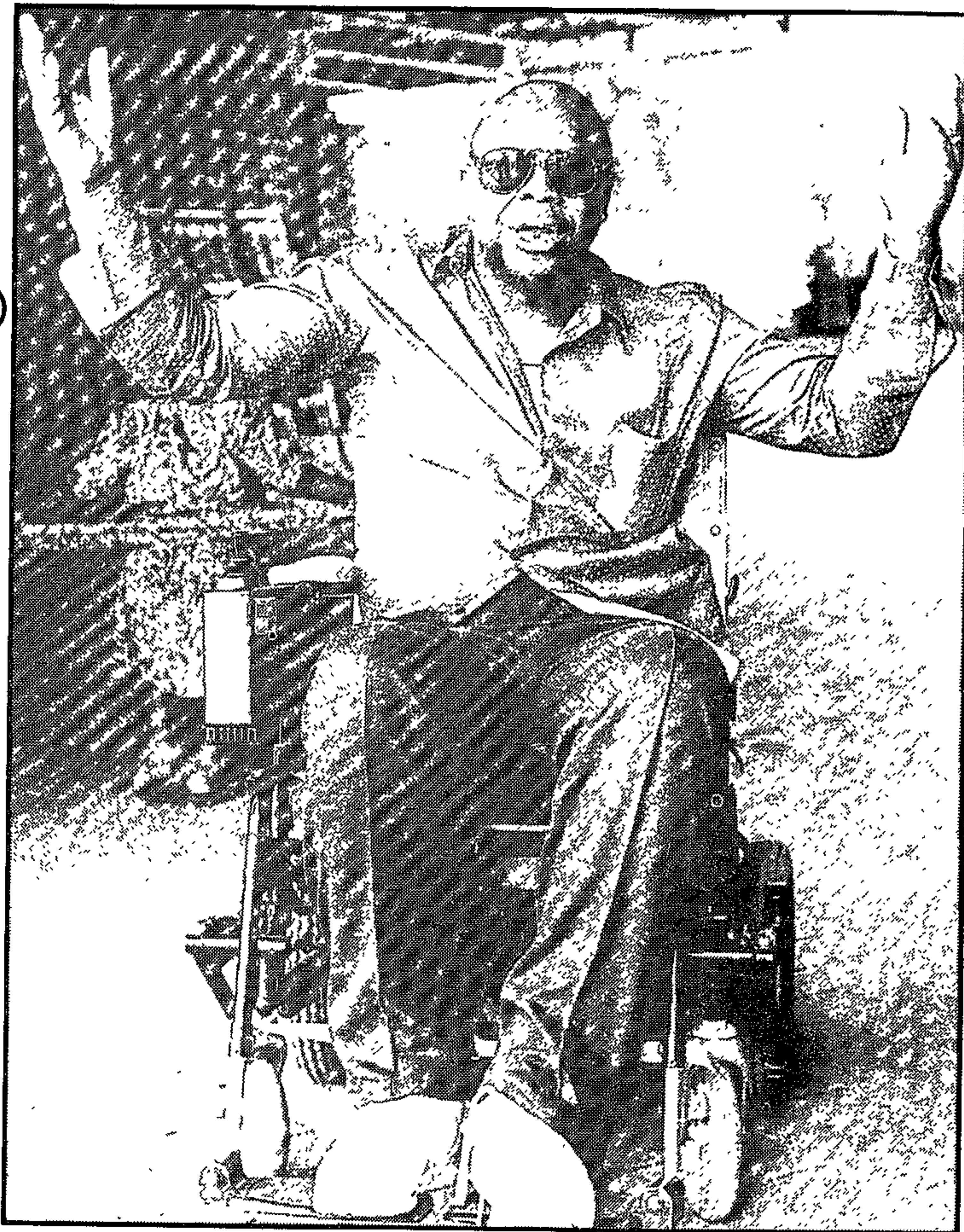
and guided through Shap's plans.

"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.



NO LIMITS . . . Friday Mandla Mavuso fought for years to help disabled South Africans

Mourners in sad farewell to Mavuso

BY ABBEY MAKOE
SOWETO BUREAU

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 and 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 Sexwale, SA Football Association general secretary Stix Morewa, editor of the Sowetan 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 1962. As the coffin was lowered, paraplegics overcome with emotion wept openly.

Mzwakhe Mbuli, 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

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ET 3/7/95

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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 Sexwale, SA Football Association's general-secretary Mr Stix Morewa, Sowetan editor Mr Aggrey Klaaste, 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 wept 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 Strydom.

It was a sad farewell for Mr Mavuso, whose campaign for respect for the disabled saw Sowetans gradually stop referring to paraplegics as "cripples".

Tearful (296) ~~farewell~~ to Friday

Sowetan 3/7/95
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.

Distraught 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 especially target people in that sector who are disabled, a two-day workshop for small, medium and micro 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 Disabled People South Africa, and has identified the dis-

abled as a target group for support this year.

Petronella Linders of Disabled People South Africa said at the workshop people who have one or other disability have more difficulty than others in getting financing from banks because they are considered high risk.

Also, training programmes offered by NGOs (non-government organisations) 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 apply for a bank loan. But none of the courses offered are adapted for people who are blind or deaf. The material 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 programmes to suit the blind or deaf.

■ HOUT BAY

Disabled children to get skills training

~~297~~ (296) ARLT 17/7/95
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 classes.

"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 ☎ 790 1464 (leave message) ☎ 658 5038 (o/h) or 790-2861 (a/h).

BRIEFS

Donation to jobs for disabled (296)

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.

CI 25/7/95

JOB MARKET

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 Vaal 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 rands. 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 Nyawose on (011) 482-3667 for more details.

SAB helps the sick and disabled

The grants will help pupils get training and ensure care for the sick

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 Matsheiso 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

We intend running two courses a year in basic care skills, to enable people to help terminally ill patients who remain untended in their homes

weeks.

"We intend running two courses a year in basic care skills, to enable people to help terminally ill patients who remain untended in their homes," says trainer 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 for ailing relatives.

SAB North district manager Mr Hloni 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.

that they could sell vegetables to the local community.

In another development on the East Rand, SAB's District North donated R58 000 to Help Hospice in the area to train residents in the care of cancer and Aids patients. The project will run for 16



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

Pilot flies on global mission

ET 26/7/95

LYNETTE JOHNS

STAFF REPORTER

(296) ~~(296)~~
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 aviator medical boards around the globe who do not allow disabled pilots to fly."

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 Ipopeng 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 scores 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 times on the streets of the location near Welkom.

However, Mr Louis 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."

Centre addresses work and education needs of young, black disabled adults



ESKOM

Schoonraad said the Ipopeng Development Centre addresses one of the nation's direst 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 Washeila Sait, national project director.

"The Ipopeng 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 creche for the younger children.

Disabled man 'able to work' if someone gives him chance

(296)

Star 14/8/95

BY PATRICK WADULA

By holding a pen in his mouth in order to write, a cheerful, but disgruntled disabled Pontso Ndlovu said he was able to work, provided he was given a chance.

Ndlovu 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, Ndlovu 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.

Ndlovu 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 from people when I am capable of working, despite my condition," he said.

Ndlovu 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 Suzman on (011) 646-8331 and the contact person in Soweto is Bertha Mafuku on (011) 984-4200.



Able disabled ... Pontso Ndlovu enters The Star building determined to prove that he is able to cope in a work situation.

PICTURE: ETIENNE ROTHBART

Nkeli defies all odds to realise dream

By Musa Zondi

THERE are many things that are not conventional about Jerry Nkeli. He speaks fast, he is loud. And he is also a paraplegic.

However, for Nkeli, this is not unconventional at all. In fact, he has worked hard to reverse a state for which most people would want to pity him.

But he does not want pity. Two weeks ago he was admitted as an attorney in the Rand Supreme Court.

When he stood in front of the judge as he proclaimed him fit to be an attorney, he says. "All the memories of the struggle that I had to go through came flooding back. Here I was joining a prestigious club and most people would have not given me even a slight chance."

He boasts, not in an arrogant manner, that he is the first black paraplegic attorney. For him, it means that other disabled people can also work hard instead of taking a "the world owes me" attitude.

"Pessimists make me really angry and I think we have to be positive about life, no matter what the circumstances," he says.

In isiZulu there is a saying: *Umlungisi uzithela isisila*. Roughly translated, it means: He who tries to

be helpful always ends up with a raw deal.

This is exactly what happened to Nkeli. In the late seventies while at high school, he was stabbed while trying to get his friend out of a possible fight with a pickpocket.

That is when his troubles began. "It was quite traumatic. Suddenly my life changed."

"But I was strong because of the support my parents gave me. A lot of my friends were quite supportive as well; they came to the hospital, and stayed with me all the time."

The number of friends who visited caused such a commotion that they moved him to a separate room. Later he went back to school and says he enjoyed the times when they would sit and philosophise about Black Consciousness.

When Nkeli finished high school, he went to the University of Zululand in 1981. But it was a nightmare for him: "I had to be carried up and down the steps every day. The whole university was inaccessible and there was no way I could have continued like that."

The following year he went to Turfloop University "partly because most of my friends were there and also because I could not take another year at Ongoye".

During the 1985 uprisings, he

was admitted to hospital following kidney problems — what he calls one of the biggest blows of his life.

There were times at Turfloop when it was almost unbearable, like when police would come and beat them up. It was not very easy to get away in his wheelchair.

It was also quite difficult to get a lift from friends sometimes — because they had girlfriends in their cars, there was not always space for him.

At university, he says, it was also tough because some lecturers and fellow students were nasty. "But I learnt to survive from such incidents."

In 1987, after finishing at Turfloop, he started to look for a firm to do his articles but was not very successful.

"Attorneys looked at me as if I was mad. Here was a disabled black guy wanting to do his articles. It just didn't work."

In 1987 Nkeli started a legal advice centre. On the side, he was busy running a self-help project for disabled people.

He was "stolen" by the late Friday Mavuso to come and work with him in Soweto, and became national development officer of Disabled People South Africa.

This involved going around the

country, helping the disabled set up structures, teaching them how to run an organisation and how to keep books, and also educating them on their rights.

Working at DPSA was a great experience, but he felt it was time for him to look at his own future. It was then that he decided again to look for a firm in which to do his articles.

He dealt mostly with personal injuries and would go out to the townships to look for people. Having worked with Mavuso came in handy.

This year Nkeli passed his board exams at the third attempt — and is now an attorney.

He is loath to call himself a role model

but says that disabled people should stand up and have a positive approach to life. For him it paid dividends to be optimistic, and there is no reason why it would not be the same for others.

But how was it possible for him to do all these things? "I've got a big heart. While being disabled hampered progress, a number of people were quite supportive. That way, I got the strength to carry on," he says.

He also credits his wife Mpho for the inspiration to work hard and be where he is today. They have two boys, whom he says are a joy.

All the people around him, plus his will, to succeed, have put him right on top.

(296) (304) *South African* 15/8/95

SUNDAY

radio!

Live from SA: Clockwork

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS

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 49 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 Man-

dela, 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

(296) (296)



RADIO REVOLUTION
... David Butlion with the revolutionary new wind-up radio

ST(M) 20/8/95

(296) ~~SECRET~~
Govt aims to
help disabled

CT 25/8/95

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

ARG 24/8/95

□ 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 incident to the police. But he said he felt they did not treat the case seriously.

Abraham Fortuin said when he was mugged, two men took his train ticket and R1,40.

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 no reason at all.

"I moved into a corner 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 on the station and his pants were 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.



Picture: ROY WIGLEY, The Argus
SAFETY WHISTLES: Director of League of Friends of the Blind Philip Bam helps Lena Swartz using the new safety whistle. The whistles were introduced as a safety measure for the blind who have recently become victims of muggings.



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

(296) (297)

■ 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 nego-

tiating 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 Alexan resource centre is 011006380005



WHY US? Igsaan Hendricks and his team at Conradie Hospital.

Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

ARG 20/9/95

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, was a competitive swimmer 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 be-

cause 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
Staff Reporter

(296)

needs and interests.

ARG 4/10/95

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, Mzolisi 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,

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

AR 21/10/95 (298) (296)

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 intake 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 labour.

"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 refusals 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 won'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

(296) Star 10/11/95



Hard at it ... Gavin Brackman (left) and Rui Silva, workers at The Hamlet, packing special kiddies' hampers for the Christmas Hamper Fund.



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

CT 4/12/95

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.

"The disabled should have an equal opportunity to participate fully in society with equal obligations and responsibility towards society," he said.

Previous governments had treated disability as a welfare matter. This had ensured that it remained a taxpayers' burden.

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

(296) ~~296~~

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.

Shuaib 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 ex-

pect 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 made 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

(296) ~~296~~
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 Jay 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.

"The disabled should have an equal opportunity to participate fully in society, with equal obligations and responsibility towards society," Naidoo said.

Sowetan 4/12/95

Disabled catered for

THE new South Africa should be accessible and open to everyone, including the disabled, President Nelson Mandela said at the opening of the first annual South African Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp in Johannesburg yesterday.

"The youngsters who are taking part in this sports camp are making history. What you are doing is helping to change the future of our entire nation," Mandela said.

(296) 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.

Sawetan 5/12/95

Johannesburg CBD by no means wheelchair-friendly

(296) (200)

The city's public roads are geared for non-handicapped pedestrians and motorists, but individuals do lend a hand

Star 20/12/95

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 en-

trance 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 the

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 unobserving 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 as it exited the machine.

A detour around the cobble-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.

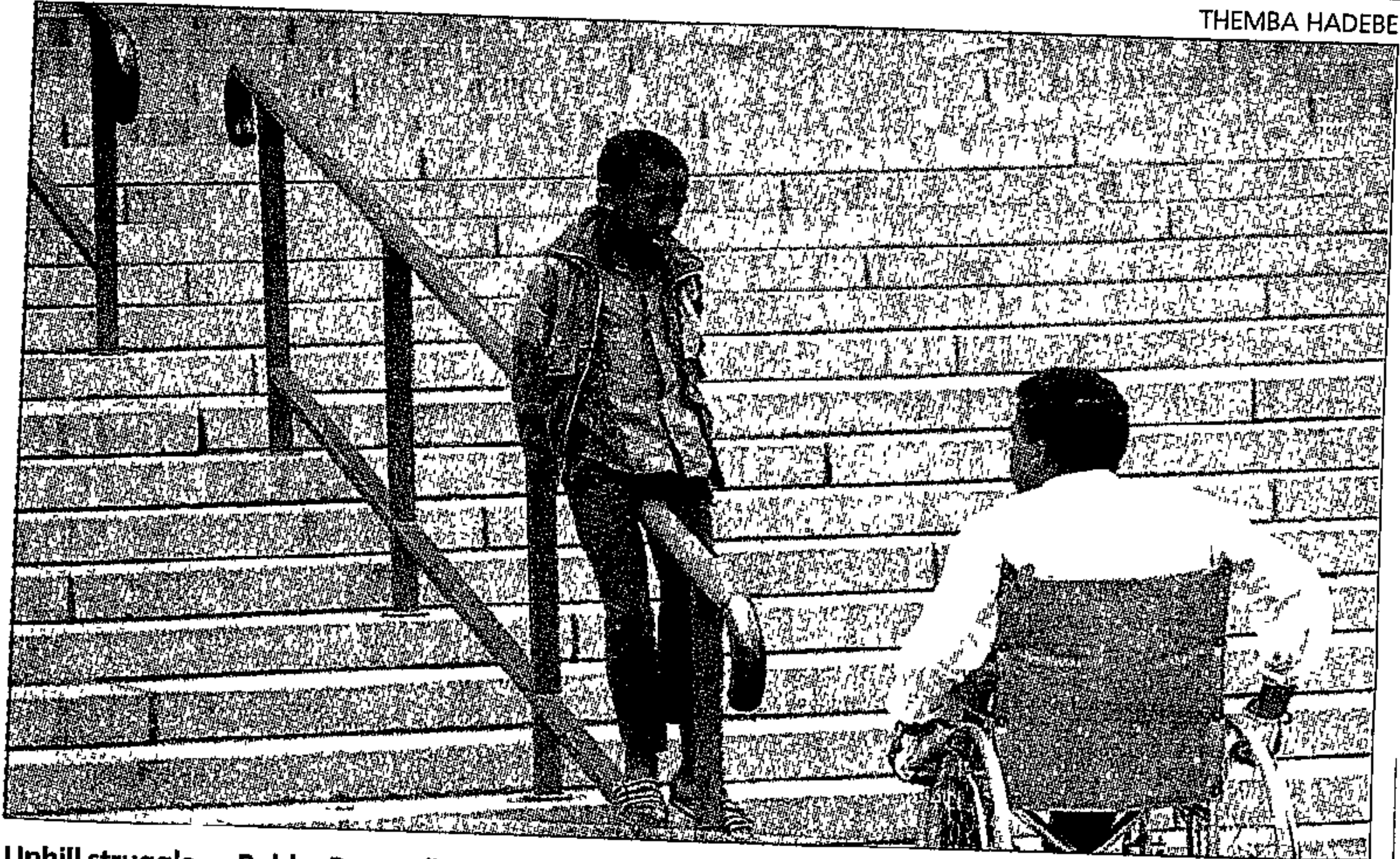
The manager at the Wimpy said he had at least one regular customer who was wheelchair-bound and did not find it too difficult to get up and down the step at the entrance. Without lending a hand, he advised me how to get down the step again.

But the most harrowing experience was finding a place to relieve one-

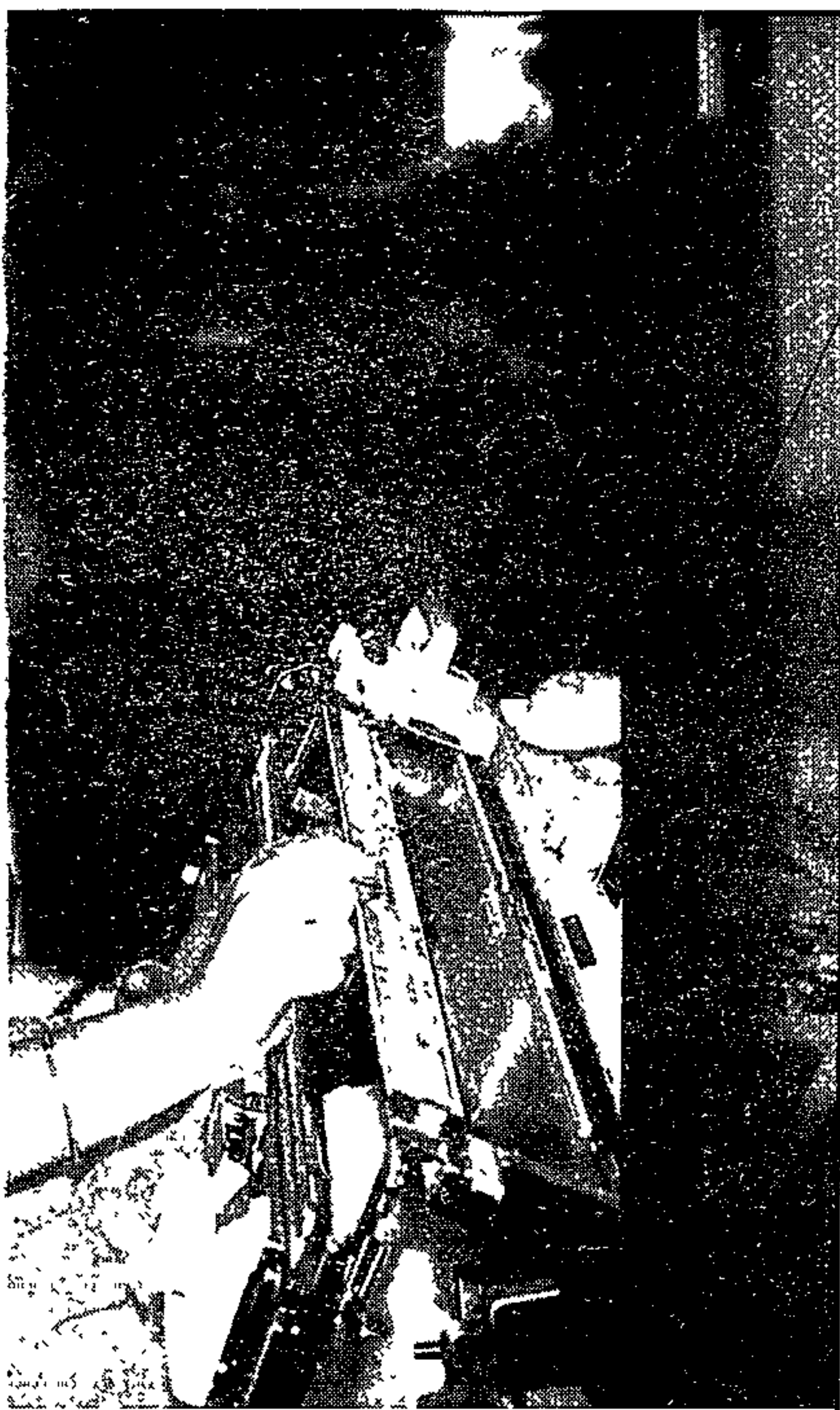
self in the city. The public toilets at the Gauteng Legislature in Market Street have steep stairs with no alternative access and nobody to assist or show another toilet. Getting into the legislature's public entrance was easy as the parking entrance doubles as a wheelchair entrance.

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.

THEMBA HADEBE



Uphill struggle ... Bobby Brown (in wheelchair) finds out just how difficult it is for the physically disabled to negotiate the streets of Johannesburg.



mes help mentally handicapped people to be self-

Irene Homes give hope to handicapped

296 (277)
Sowetan 30/11/96

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 secure and 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 Mima 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 Fransie Spies, the home's weaving manager, says although his department is the slowest in the home, it is also 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.

lay February 1, 1996

Group hopes to smooth the way for the disabled

(296) (25)

BY BOBBY BROWN

Star 1/2/96

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 Mandeville 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 (36), a paraplegic lawyer specialising in personal damage claims, is one of the Neap activists who helped to 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 24 months, but that it needed more to get projects going and find permanent premises.

'Rising costs threaten salary-replacement plans'

BY LLEWELLYN 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 assurers 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 assurer."

Tomsett said an essential part of the scheme was the role of the employer. In consultation with Sage Life, the employer shares in an agreed manner in the claims experience of the scheme and, in the first two years after disability, participates in an agreed excess on disability claims.

"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.

CT(BA) 7/2/96 (296) (297)

Club appeals for financial aid

By Muzi Mkhwanazi

IN THREE short years, the Vukuzenzele Community Club - which operates in a small shack in Naledi Extension 2 squatter camp in Soweto has successfully battled many problems.

It caters for 220 pensioners and disabled people. It also includes a day-care centre and a number of self-help schemes for unemployed people.

Vukuzenzele coordinator Anna Khumalo says the number of people who come to them for help is increasing. It is incredible. After only a few years, the number has risen dramatically.

She says this has led to problems in their attempts to serve the public and achieve self-sufficiency because the money it receives from the day-care centre was not enough and some parents do not pay at times.

"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 facilities, we cannot help them at our club. What we need is space and donations 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 attended. We help them at home but transport is a major problem, said Khumalo.

Some of these people cannot do anything for themselves and they are left alone when their children are at work. Their plight is depressing, we cannot fail them, she adds.

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.

Dressmaking and baking activities were also delayed because they do not have any material or teachers to help them, Ngwenya says.

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 Mthibidi (71) says "I live alone all my children are married. Although I do receive pension money, it does not cover my expenses so I come to Vukuzenzele for food parcels, which we get now and then.

"We have been told of projects that we were going to undertake, but they have not yet started because we do not have a sponsor to help us. We flock to this place every day because we need help, and we are hoping that our plans can be realised so that we can supplement our income."

Another club member, Ellen Zakhali (39), says the club helped her to get a disability grant. "In 1993 I stayed for three months without receiving a cent from pensions but this club helped me. I was ecstatic after I got my money, although it does not cover my expenses."

"I have two kids to support. People with money should come forward and



Fun in the sun ... the club's day-care centre is battling to make ends meet because some parents are unable to pay any fees.

help us to start our projects so we can become self-sufficient."

"We are in dire need of a centre where our people can work. If we can be offered a place, our projects can be realised. There are people who are locked inside their houses who need us. We need help to run this worthy cause," Khumalo said.

There are people who are locked inside their houses who need our assistance.



Self-help ... the Vukuzenzele Community Club helps pensioners, disabled and unemployed people, and also runs a day-care centre in a Soweto squatter camp.

PICS CLEMENT LEKANYANE

Fair deal sought by WW2 pensioners of

■ 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.

MXOLISI 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 A Biden, founding member

of the Disabled Soldiers Association, a loose body of disabled ex-servicemen, said now that apartheid no longer existed it was about time "this injustice" was also redressed.

In an interview Mr Biden, who said he was speaking on behalf of almost 7 000 "victims of this 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 those who 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, including those in standard six and lower, were grouped "C" and got the lowest benefits.

"When we volunteered for active service on the declara-

tion of war many of us had left school during the depression after passing standard 8 or 9, no questions were asked about our level of education. Those days a soldier was a soldier," said Mr Biden.

All disabled veterans are apparently paid the same basic allowances. The differences come in with the academic grading which give the "Bs" a 25 percent advantage over the "Cs" and the "As" a 66 percent difference over the "Cs" under dogs to which most black veterans belong.

Mr Biden said this arrangement left differences in the pension scheme between the "A" and "C" groups ranging between R231 to R1 155 a month for soldiers who lost both feet.

He cited the case of disabled veteran Lucas Majali, who had not gone above Standard 6 at school and served in the war, as a stretch bearer.

"This man, who died last year at the age of 75 or so, had

saved many lives in that war, including mine. Lucas was wounded while carrying a 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 this 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 Biden.

Meanwhile, another World War 2 veteran, Morris Archibald Dingswayo, 79, 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 is on the old-age pension he could not get the war veterans' benefit.

But Mr Dingswayo 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 had asked the army to keep my letter of discharge in my file when I was discharged in 1945,

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 Engineering Corps. They were satisfied and gave me the certificate of service, but not my pension benefits," said Mr Dingswayo.

Mr Dingswayo has 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-servicemen from Commonwealth countries were meeting in Cape Town to address, among other things, the problems of non payments of pensions and other benefits to war veterans.



Picture: LEON MULLER, Staff Photographer
VETERAN: World War 2 Navy veteran Archibald Dingswayo is one of the ex-servicemen who feel they have been robbed of their pension benefits by the Defence Force.

Naidoo takes up cudgels for SA's disabled people

~~PRETORIA~~ (296) ARG 16/3/96
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 0,26 percent of the dis-

abled 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.

Employees with disabilities are often forced to retire or dismissed on the grounds of "continued ill health", even if they can perform their duties, the document notes.

The document criticises the regulations on social security grants as "very strict", so that disabled people find it hard to get them.

For example, a means test is applied which excludes anyone who earns more than R333 a month. The application procedure is uneven, as different medical practitioners seem to make different decisions about whether a person is sufficiently disabled to be entitled to a grant.

On physical access to buildings, the document proposes that a realistic budget be granted to allow upgrading of public buildings. It proposes the introduction of tax incentives to owners of private sector buildings that require upgrading and the application of a "no-access-no-funding" policy.

The document says legislation which deals specifically with disabled people's circumstances is needed.

Local govt to get greater financial say

Mduduzi ka 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 author-

ities 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 1 000 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.

1 Member approximately 7 years
2 Members approximately 8 years
1 Member approximately 9 years
1 Member approximately 10 years

(c) No member was discharged in terms of section 17B of the Police Act, 1958 (Act 7 of 1958) for failure to perform his or her duties.

Thirty-eight (38) members were discharged for deviation in terms of section 17(1) of the Police Act, 1958 (Act 7 of 1958) as they failed to report for duty and being absent for more than one calendar month without any reasons

Comments:

A further 294 assistant constables who were still undergoing training and who were not yet appointed as permanent members of the Service were dismissed for taking part in an illegal strike.

Awaiting-trial prisoners in custody

118. Sen M G E WILEY asked the Minister of Correctional Services:

What was the number of awaiting-trial prisoners in custody on the last day of each month in 1995 in each of the provinces?

S192E

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES:

The number of awaiting-trial prisoners in custody on the last day of each month during 1995 in each of the provinces

Province	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Free State	1 467	1 448	1 351	1 341	1 293	1 300	1 352	1 537	1 610	1 604	1 686	1 823
Mpumalanga	1 333	1 147	1 184	1 250	1 194	1 215	1 235	1 302	1 295	1 486	1 400	1 702
KwaZulu Natal	4 945	4 875	4 802	4 834	4 246	4 065	4 251	4 259	4 724	4 813	4 754	5 067
Eastern Cape	2 961	2 878	2 765	2 413	2 613	2 536	2 484	2 430	2 521	2 732	2 905	2 985
Western Cape	2 700	2 735	2 845	2 874	2 630	2 489	2 529	2 617	2 665	2 732	2 782	2 796
North West	1 882	1 803	1 669	1 785	1 549	1 509	1 426	1 598	1 714	1 247	1 662	1 928
Northern Cape	414	400	394	376	378	367	386	393	510	497	546	605
Northern Province	937	894	933	1 085	891	828	801	855	939	1 039	1 063	1 277
Gauteng	7 449	7 412	7 372	7 346	7 419	7 081	7 663	7 219	7 981	8 199	8 762	9 035
Total	24 088	22 592	23 315	23 304	22 213	21 390	22 127	22 210	23 959	24 349	25 560	27 218

Prison visits by judges/magistrates

119. Sen M G E WILEY asked the Minister of Correctional Services:

(1) (a) On how many occasions in 1995 was each province in each of the provinces visited by a judge of the Supreme Court and (ii) magistrate and (b) on what dates did each of these visits take place at each such prison.

(2) Whether any action was taken as a direct result of reports submitted to his Department pursuant to such visits, if so, what action on each occasion?

S193E

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES:

(Reply bound in Annexures of House—See Annexure No M189.)

Assault/battery charges by women against husbands

121. Sen Dr G W KOORNHOF asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

(1) (a) How many women laid complaints against their husbands for assault and battery during the latest specified 12-month period for which information is available, (b) how many of these complaints have been investigated, (c) how many of the men involved have been (i)

charged, (ii) brought to court, (iii) sentenced and (iv) imprisoned for assault and battery and (d) in respect of what date is this information furnished?

(2) whether any of these charges have been withdrawn; if so, how many? S195E

The MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

The information required is not readily available.

To obtain the required information, faxes will have to be sent to all police stations country-wide, thereby placing an extra burden on limited manpower and financial resources. Members will have to be withdrawn from other duties and specially allocated to peruse dockets and registers.

Financial assistance by State for disabled persons

122. Sen C R REDCLIFFE asked the Minister for Health:

(a) How many persons were (i) physically disabled and (ii) suffering from serious disabilities in each of the provinces as at 31 December 1995 or the latest specified date for which information is available and (b) what financial assistance is rendered by the State in respect of persons who (i) are physically disabled and (ii) suffer serious disabilities? S196E

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH:

(a)(i) and (ii)

Statistics concerning persons with physical disabilities and other serious disabilities in South Africa are unreliable as the latest figures available are extracted from the 1985 census.

The Department of Health is presently compiling valid statistics on the health status of the population which will include information concerning persons with disabilities.

The WHO estimates that 10% of the world's population is disabled. This includes physically, sensory mental and other disabilities. In South Africa it is estimated that 12,8% of the population is disabled.

It must be noted, that persons with disabilities are not in favour of including questions concerning disabilities in general census as it is regarded as a discriminatory practice.

(b)(i) and (ii)

The functional responsibility to provide financial assistance to persons with physical disabilities and persons with serious disabilities rests with the Department of Welfare and therefore the question should be referred to the Minister of Welfare.

The role of the Department of Health is to deal with the prevention of disabilities and the medical management and rehabilitation of conditions that lead to disabilities

However, the effective coordination of the various State Departments' addressing the needs of persons with disabilities, is critical

Legally licensed firearms/applications for firearms licences

125. Sen J SELFE asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

How many (a) legally licensed firearms are currently owned by private citizens in the Republic and (b) applications for firearm licenses were received in (i) 1990, (ii) 1993 and (iii) 1995? S199E

The MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

(a) 3 190 626

(b) (i) No statistics are available due to the fact that all firearm applications up to 31 March 1993 were dealt with at the Department of Internal Affairs.

(ii) 275 514

(iii) 183 877

Police: recruits/resignations/retirements

127. Sen J SELFE asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

How many (a) recruits joined the Police, and (b) Police members of each specified rank (i) resigned and (ii) retired on pension, in (aa) 1993, (bb) 1994 and (cc) 1995? S201E

The MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

(a) 1993 — 8 937
1994 — 17 266
1995 — 5 266

SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT
1996-1999

Building a life for paraplegics

By VUSI NDLOVU

THE SELF Help Association for Paraplegics (SHAP) – the organisation founded by the late Friday Mavuso in Mofolo, Soweto, is alive and kicking, says the new executive chairman of the organisation, Desmond Tsietse Louw.

Speaking at a recent function commemorating the death of Mavuso, Louw said the organisation had secured contracts with Siemens and Eskom.

A new computer school for adult education was on line.

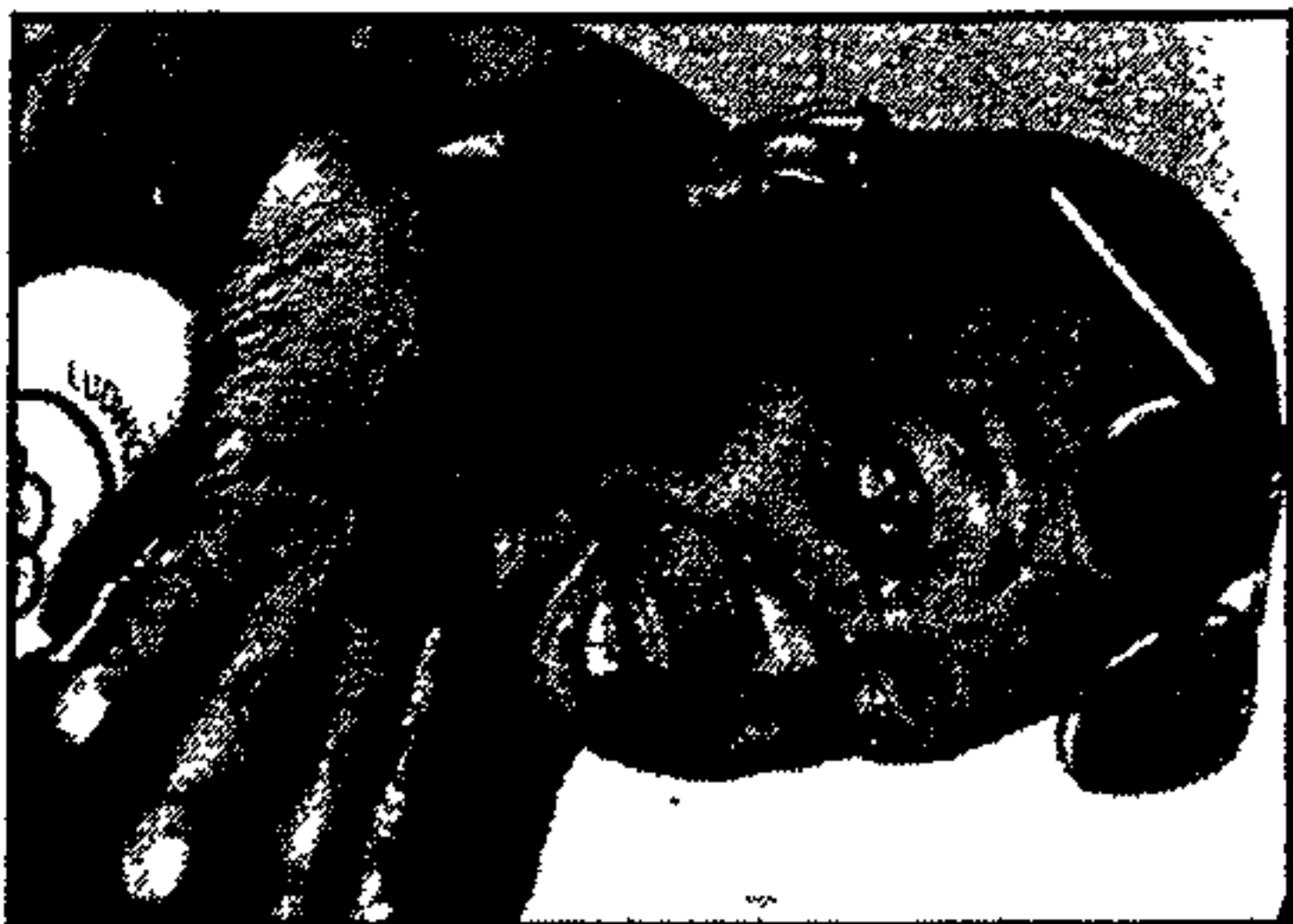
Disabled by polio at the age of four, Louw worked with Mavuso from 1986 until the latter's death in a motor accident in June 1995.

He was responsible for raising funds for the disabled from primary school level.

A University of Cape Town diplomate in psychology, he also has a degree in social science, personnel management and economics. He is determined to build on the ideals of the late Mavuso. Started in 1981, the organisation has created job opportunities for 150 people, with 200 on a waiting list.

"We are expanding all the time," says Louw.

The organisation produces reflective bibs, arm guards for mine workers, identity pouches, first-aid



DOWN BUT NOT OUT ... The SHAP choir (right) sings at the unveiling of a plaque in honour of the late founder of the organisation, Friday Mavuso (left).



pouches, cables, fabric detergents, and floor polish, and also carries out electronic repairs.

SHAP has contracts with several companies, including Clicks, Southern Sun, Siemens, Eskom, Transnet, Promat, and Pack Force.

Members enjoy first class sports facilities and constantly take part in competitions.

Linda Sithole, a mother of a four-year-old from Zone 10, Meadowlands, suffered a spinal injury when she was stabbed four

times in the back. Through the organisation she is able to take care of her child from her wheelchair.

Cecilia Chakadi (30) of Tladi was invalided in a car accident at the age of six. She has been in a wheelchair ever since.

She met the late Mavuso while undergoing treatment at Baragwanath Hospital and came to SHAP in 1983.

Kroonstad-born Masibana Kgabale (41), a polio victim, is a switchboard operator.

"I saw Mavuso on television and

decided to come to Johannesburg to seek his help," she says.

"I had to wait for some time to join SHAP, and I took the opportunity to qualify as a secretary with a Randburg college," she says.

Steven Mokgoko (27) from Emdeni South became a paraplegic after being shot. He operates a machine at SHAP and enjoys his independence.

His one gripe is that taxis are not equipped to accommodate passengers in wheelchairs.

Legislation to give disabled a chance to work

ESAMM DE KOCK
BUSINESS REPORTER

Talk is cheap – especially when it's about the manner and extent of business involvement in the employment of disabled people.

But with legislation on the cards to promote company employment of the disabled and to protect them from unfair discrimination, people might soon be forced to put their money where their mouths are.

Carene Malan, co-ordinator of the Institute for the Promotion of Disabled Manpower, says pending legislation in the form of a green paper on employment and occupational equity, is focusing the attention of business, government and organisations on the employment of disabled people.

The breakthrough, she believes, will be to get the government to give incentives to businesses to employ disabled people.

At the same time there has to be a system to educate the public and business on who to employ in an open market situation.

"Giving incentives to companies to employ the disabled should not be the total option.

"One has to keep in mind that, in certain instances, protected employment in a workshop situation will be more beneficial to a disabled person," says Ms Malan.

Plunging a mentally disabled individual into an open market situation where his or her colleagues and the public have not been properly educated on the needs and circumstances of that person, could have a negative instead of a positive effect, she says.

Another alternative which is getting attention via organisations such as the Cape Mental Health Society, is to educate business and the public while gradually integrating a disabled individual into the open market.

In fact, she believes education will go a long way towards improving the employment scenario of disabled people.

Ms Malan says this is a job which the government should take upon itself.

An example of ignorance is that companies are often under the impression that they can get away with cheaper production costs if they make use of disabled labour.

"This is not necessarily true. While we have to guard against exploitation of the disabled, we also tell businesses that the above-average supervision in a workshop and less shrinkage on their materials will save them money," Ms Malan says.

"Making use of the labour of disabled people in a workshop situation has the added advantage of fewer labour problems.

"For small businesses, it can mean huge savings on their capital outlays on machinery such as heat sealers, shrink-wrapping and welding machines and sewing machines."

Ms Malan says the problem at the moment is that too few companies are involved in employing the disabled and one often finds the same companies making use of protected workshop labour.

Other companies have been known to ride on the label of giving employment opportunities to the disabled to

give their own ventures more credibility.

Ms Malan says there are currently no government incentives for businesses to employ the disabled – either in the open market or in a workshop situation.

Pleading for balanced legislation, she warns that calling for companies to employ a certain percentage of disabled people could result in a situation where disabled individuals enter a company where they are not really wanted and where their colleagues and the public, due to a lack of education, don't know how to handle their presence.

Estimates suggest five to 12 percent of the South African population are moderately to severely disabled.

At the moment, only one in five disabled people is economically active, and only one in a hundred severely disabled people has a job on the open labour market.

The vast majority of the disabled must depend on social pensions and family support, rather than earned income.

UCT students open door for Graham

ESANN DE KOCK
STAFF REPORTER

(296) ARG 5/9/96

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.

CAPE ARGUS, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 1996

L I F E



DOUG PITHEY

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

Kathryn Strachan

IN EERSTEHOEK, a village in the mountainous eastern part of Mpumalanga, a group of people is erecting a traditional Swazi grass hut.

Half the builders are people in wheelchairs from the local rehabilitation home; the rest are from the community. The hut, from which crafts made by the disabled will be sold to passing tourists, is a tribute to the community co-operation that has come out of the remote impoverished village.

The Cheshire rehabilitation centre, part of an international network of Cheshire homes, has involved the community in all its activities. The centre takes in physically and mentally handicapped people who are destitute.

"When we started here it was difficult, because people saw us as separate. We had to find a way to get accepted by the community and to socialise. This is especially difficult in rural areas. Facilities here are such that a disabled person doesn't even know what a school looks like."

So when literacy lessons and wood and stone carving classes were started, people from the community were invited to join.

Disabled people started raising and selling chickens and opened a tuck shop so that they could get used to interacting with other people. "It has been a success. We have bonded with people in the community and we now visit each other," says Nkosi.

While the trend is to care for people in their homes, the centre is for disabled people with nowhere else to go.

There are many others in the community with disabilities. The centre is trying to raise funds to reach out to

them through a community rehabilitation service. A creche for disabled children based at the centre closed because of transport difficulties. Now two pre-schools, which cater for disabled and able children, have opened in nearby settlements with great success, Nkosi says. "It is amazing how much the disabled children have progressed in a year after being with other children. It is crucial to integrate them young."

The centre is struggling financially. It relies on the disability grants of its

residents and is battling with delays in transferring grants from the old KwaZulu-Natal government to the new.

Nkosi approves of the work of the new welfare department. While under the old government there was a set welfare subsidy for each person, the new department pays according to the severity of each case. Considering the great difference in the care required, this makes sense, she says.

However, Nkosi is the only nurse at the centre and there is one physiother-

apist. They used to get help from social workers at the local hospital, but this has become rare.

"The new welfare system is a blessing to us. Under the new system, categories of disability have opened up, which makes it easier to take people in," she says. "What motivates us to take people in is the situation, the environment in which we find them."

"Our main challenge is to move away from dependence on welfare and to learn to do things for ourselves."



Villagers work alongside the disabled in Eerstephoek to build a shop from which to sell their crafts.

Picture: KATHRYN STRACHAN

Employers urged to redeploy disabled

By Abdul Milazi
Labour Reporter

EMPLOYERS should find ways of redeploying disabled workers instead of dismissing them to cut down on the current high costs of disability claims payout.

This is the view of Southern Life deputy general manager Don Brown.

Brown, who heads the risk management consultancy of the employee benefits division, says employers need to adopt a new mind-set of service retention rather than termination on disability.

The new Labour Relations Act also poses a major challenge to employers on the issue by placing the onus on them to investigate and consider various alternatives before dismissing workers on the grounds of disability.

"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.

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 embracement 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.

Sowetan 17/9/96

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 Bouwer, 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.

(296) (296) Star 4/12/96

Disabled workers may finally get their place in

the sun

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 in-

dividual 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

Employees with disabilities are about to acquire a new set of workplace rights, reports JD Verster

(296) (277)

80 28/1/97

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.

An application form should restrict its questions to:

☐ Whether or not an applicant would be able to perform the essential functions of the position, and

☐ Whether the applicant has the necessary educational, technical or professional qualifications to perform the essential functions outlined in the job description.

Discrimination is permissible only if it can be justified with reference to the job's inherent requirements. It would be permissible for an employer to specify the essential job functions and directly ask applicants if they can perform these functions. It would be inappropriate for an employer to ask, at this early stage in the procedure, whether an applicant has any liability which would be limiting in terms of the job functions.

☐ Verster is a labour lawyer with Webber Wentzel Bowens.

Break your chains, lively Lisa tells disabled folk

By NTHABISENG RAMPONENG

South African society, with its "ag shame" attitude and insensitivity towards the physically disabled, is crippling the chances paraplegics have of living comparatively normal lives.

So says American-born paraplegic lobbyist and aerobics instructor Lisa Ericson-Siff (39), who adds that the disabled in South Africa have not yet realised 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 Ericson-Siff.

They see us as being sick. Paralysis is not a disease ... something is just broken. We are not terminal

For someone as independent as her, the four hours spent 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 doorway.

"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 Ericson-Siff.

Walking again is low on her list of priorities. Her main 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 it affects the lawmakers' wallets. Until then, nothing will be done."

"We need to be aggressive; to get 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 exuberant Ericson-Siff.

"The key is 'independent accessibility'. If you are used to being babied and pushed around, there is access. Those on wheelchairs should be allowed — if they can — to get around



BEATING THE ODDS. Although she has the use of only her upper body, Lisa Ericson-Siff is indomitable and her mission in life is to pass this fighting spirit on to all disabled people

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN HOGG

on their own wherever and whenever they want, like normal people."

The former ice-skater says disability can afflict anyone. Doctors could not establish what caused a clot in 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 Ericson-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 firmly built upper body and the vigour with which she carries herself, disguise the fact that she has the use of only her upper body. Ericson-Siff moved to South Africa

in 1992 after marrying Wits University sports and biomechanics expert Doctor 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 embracing independence when society and government contribute nothing to enhance these efforts.

"You hear government officials talking about putting children first and how they are the future, 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 on to adult wheelchairs, which is why many end up back in hospital, and worse off."

According to Ericson-Siff, South Africans view all four groups of disability — mental retardation, deafness, blindness and physical — as similar.

"They see us all as being alike — sick. Paralysis is not a disease ... something's just broken, we are not terminal," she says. "People will respect parking bays reserved for VIPs, but will not think twice about taking space reserved for us."

Three minutes of waiting for someone to vacate a reserved toilet or parking bay could cost her dearly in terms of time and stress, because like most paraplegics, she is incontinent. She explains that if she is unable to contain her bodily functions, it will

There is no energy. To initiate legislation, we have to get out and do something to affect lawmakers' wallets

She believes parents need to be educated as they tend to hold children back. Also, paraplegics face a life of constant obstacles in a country where access to facilities are limited. Even when a building, for example, is said to be accessible, this can often be achieved only with aid.

Although, building codes passed in 1976 stipulate that all buildings should have facilities for the disabled, these laws are not enforced. Many a builder has ignored the codes to

their own benefit. Ericson-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 and a few minor adjustments need to be made to pavement ramps.

Ericson-Siff offers her advice free to anyone interested in improving the lot of the disabled

(296) (297) Straw 22/2/97

Gritty lawyer wants to ensure the disabled feel better about themselves and get a better deal

By NTHABISENG RAMPONENG

It took a book on positive thinking to bring him to terms with his condition, to accept that he would no longer walk, and to inspire him to return to school to complete his matric.

Today, as a qualified lawyer and recently employed human rights commissioner, Jerry Nkeli is responsible for educating and promoting the culture of human rights to all marginalised groups, primarily the disabled.

Lack of access has been a major problem facing the disabled in this country, but Nkeli pointed out that for many blacks it was beyond being able to enter a building – it concerned access to basic needs. According to Nkeli, only a small percentage of the physically disabled have access to education, and most live below the poverty line because they have no skills and no means of support.

He said: "I am not at present worried about accessibility at the airport when our township toilets, mostly far from the main house, are not accessible. The priority is educating our people, getting them jobs and houses.

"If disability was defined in broader terms, as part of the socio-economic and development issue, people would have opened up ordinary schools for the disabled instead of special schools which do not gear them for life outside the institution."

Nkeli said only severely disabled people who could not survive in open schools should attend special schools. He described the atmosphere at special schools as patronising, one that bred an inferiority complex and entrenched the idea that you were sick. "Special schools do not teach learning skills. I stand to be correct-



OUTSPOKEN: Special schools merely entrench one's feelings of inferiority, contends Jerry Nkeli

PHOTOGRAPH JOHN HOGG

ed, but very few of their products are in leadership positions," said Nkeli, a father of two.

Nkeli believes "society is unfair for expecting us to survive but not giving us support. Instead we get thrust in a hostile environment where transport, is not accessible, and health facilities are not geared to handle our needs." Circumstances were more difficult for those treated at provincial hospitals, where conditions were appalling.

As part of his work, Nkeli monitors violations of human rights in all state organisations to ensure they are in accordance with the constitution.

Problems – in hospitals or of access generally – he said, arose

because there was no consultation with the disabled on issues concerning disability, from committees to high levels of decision-making.

The few available rehabilitation centres, which were not designed with input from the disabled, left much to be desired. What professionals there taught you, Nkeli said, was different from your reality.

"I hated it when they forced me to do the macramé (weaving) or drawing. I was not interested and did not see the relevance. I was not intending to be an artist," he said.

At that stage, people were still traumatised and more concerned with their wellbeing than in what they

would do after their release. They should choose what they wanted to do or would rebel, even if the intention was good.

As national development officer of the Disabled People of South Africa, which has made inroads in "sensitising" policymakers' views, Nkeli believes they are well on their way.

Together with the office of the vice-president, the DPSA was among disabled people's organisations that helped draw up a white paper known as the National Disability Strategies, soon to be tabled in Parliament.

The paper embraces clauses from a UN document titled "World Action Programme Concerning Disability", which emphasises equalisation of opportunities with concepts addressing issues such as accessibility of public transport, education, creation of employment opportunities, and de-institutionalising disability.

"We have to restore the dignity of the disabled people, and get it across to people that disability rights are also human rights," said Nkeli.

But, he added, it was a dual process. The disabled needed a voice of their own through consumer and pressure groups wholly run by themselves. The most pressing change was for the disabled to change their self-perception as objects of pity who needed perpetual care, to forming action groups to enforce their rights.

Nkeli's current focus is on discriminatory legislation, such as the Multilateral Motor Vehicle Fund, which, like many insurance companies, regards the disabled as a risk investment, and medical aid disability allowances.

A lot of "sensitising" work lies ahead for Nkeli, but it is important to know there is life after disability.

Star 8/3/97

(296)

Blind face job crisis as Workshop closes doors 83 sacked after heavy losses hit society

SHARKEY ISMAACS
STAFF REPORTER

Cape Town's visually impaired workers are facing a major crisis after losing their formal sheltered employment in a cost-saving restructuring step by the Society for the Blind.

The closure of the society's Salt River workshop last Friday abruptly terminated the services of 83 sightless and partially sighted employees.

This sparked an industrial row because it was done before a date had been finalised for a hearing by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). The society's acting general-manager, Maretha Smit, said the immediate notice had been necessary to avoid a total draining of the society's coffers.

But industrial specialist Ganief Hen-

dricks countered by saying: "The bottom line is that the workers were retrenched in unilateral action taken before the professionals were allowed to examine the facts and arbitrate."

Ms Smit said the society had been forced to let the staff leave by the end of May after continuous losses during the past five to eight years had culminated in a huge loss of more than R600 000 in the past financial year.

"Accounts showed the society was losing an average of R50 000 a month, and according to projected estimates we would be out of funds by the end of December if we continued production."

Although the society had applied in April to the arbitration commission for a hearing, all the parties had not been able to agree on a suitable date. "By the end of May the society had lost a further R100 000, but we are still willing to appear before the

commission."

Mr Hendricks said there was little point in going to the commission after terminating the staff's service, and he alleged there had been "some sort of cover-up".

Society chairperson Rita Kellerman announced early in May the society had decided to address its deteriorating financial situation and was changing its profile from a sheltered workshop to a service provider for the visually impaired.

Dr Kellerman said the society would in future act as a facilitator of income generation, rather than being a formal employer.

Ms Smit explained that, under the new system, the society would supply former employees with raw material cheaply and would buy their finished articles. The society would also continue with its cane and basketry training programme for the visually impaired to enable them to earn an extra income from home or elsewhere.

CABINET APPROVES LANDMARK WHITE PAPER

Policy to give disabled their rightful place

2/12/97

FILE

(296)

THE DISABLED are handicapped more by society's attitudes than by their physical difficulties, says Shuaib Chalklen — but he has devised a revolutionary strategy to change this, reports **ANDRE KOOPMAN**, Parliamentary Bureau.

ALMOST 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 gully party and others that the bay is used by Mr Shuaib Chalklen, 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 Shanaaz Majiet, was shot and paralysed during a schools protest in the 80s. She works in the Department of Land Affairs. The couple met in hospital and it was "love at first sight". Chalklen says in a documentary produced by acclaimed American videographer Andrew Jones. However, Chalklen is reluctant to talk about his personal life.

Chalklen tries to enter Newspaper House in St George's Mall through the front entrance, but can't negotiate the steps in his wheelchair.

"The steps disable us, not the wheelchair," he says.

Disabled people are handicapped not so much by their physical limitations as by the attitudes of others.

Chalklen uses the anecdotes about his parking bay and Newspaper House to explain the import of a revolutionary policy that he has detailed in a white paper on the disabled.

The paper adopted unanimously by the cabinet last week, is intended to de-victimise the disabled and, instead of marginalising them, create opportunities in mainstream society.

"Because labelling disabled people in what is called the welfare/medical approach has failed, the white paper says we should adopt a paradigm that respects the rights of disabled people," Chalklen says.

"The most significant component of the document is that it recognises

children are dumped into special schools and forever marginalised. "Ways should be found to accommodate them in mainstream schools. There is no chance, however brilliant you are, 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 Minister of Education, Dr Sibusiso Bengu, at the end of this month about how disabled children and adults should be accommodated in education framework.

The new policy and impending legislation will go a long way in helping the disabled, but it is vital that employers' attitudes and physical working environments change, Chalklen says.

"Things like toilets that are too small and steps in front of a building are keeping people out of jobs."

Society's attitudes have to change from the situation where the slightest disability counts against you when you apply for a job. We should look rather at the ability of people and their capacity to perform.

Legislation cannot transform attitudes, Chalklen says.

"People need to view disabled people differently — that is essential. We need to have respect for their rights and dignity and this translates into things like respecting parking facilities and accessibility to jobs."

The disabled are also working towards "micro-entrepreneur support for disabled entrepreneurs from the departments of trade and industry, labour and education".

South Africa is one of the few countries to enshrine the rights of the disabled in its Constitution.

In approving the Integrated National Disability Strategy, the government is adhering to the Bill of Rights that outlaws discrimination against disabled people.

Chalklen is "immensely pleased" that there has been no resistance to the policy from the cabinet. This demonstrates that the government is committed to creating a caring society. Chalklen believes the govern-



BREAKTHROUGH: Shuaib Chalklen, director of the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons, and Shelly Bamy, Disabled People SA's parliamentary policy co-ordinator, are delighted with the white paper. **PICTURE: BENNY GOOL**

ment is intent on making this policy work. 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.

Model for societal transformation is basis of white paper

(296) ~~CT 3/12/1997~~

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 1995 estimate puts disability prevalence in our society at 1.5% of the population. People with disabilities are excluded from the mainstream of society and experience difficulty 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 couched 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 there is a 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 if society cannot cater for people with disabilities, it is society that must change.

This model requires substantial changes to the physical environment. The goal must be the right of people with disabilities to

play a full, participatory role in society.

This changing ethos has taken place within an international context which finally gave rise, in 1993, to the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation 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 soci-

ety for all.

This means that there must be an integration of disability issues in all government development strategies. There must be an integrated and co-ordinated management system for planning, implementation and monitoring at all levels of government.

And, to complement the process, there must be capacity-building and wide public education.

Key policy areas have been identified. These include prevention, health care, rehabilitation,

public education, barrier-free access, transport, communications, data collection and research, education, employment, human resource development, social welfare and community development, social security, housing and sport and recreation.

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 on 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 environ-

ment. 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.



A BETTER FUTURE: In this file picture, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki meets Ayanda, a pupil at the upgraded Wuku Zenzela special school in Bizana in the Eastern Cape, as provincial MEC for Education Nosimo Balindlele looks on.

'We must help disabled people in fulfilling their aspirations'

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 status 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 recognise 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 fulfilment of their aspirations.

Through the establishment of the Office on the Status 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 moderate 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 organising 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 Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the World

Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons.

Both documents emphasise 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 endorse these principles.

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 organisations 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, may we take this opportunity to thank the many individuals and organisations 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

'We must begin to see disabled people as capable individuals who can contribute immensely.'

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:

Date: December 3, 1997

Venue: Pilditch Stadium

MC: Maria Rantho MP

9am: People taking seats. Background music.

9.15 — 9.30: Drum majorettes: Tlamoko Primary School escorting the MC.

9.30 — 10: Opening: Moment of silence. National anthems, Benny Palime, All Saints Blind Choir. MC remarks. Release of balloons.

10 — 10.10: Introduction of guests.

10.10 — 10.25: Item: Zodwa Special School.

10.30 — 10.45: Guest speaker: Dr William Rowland.

10.50 — 11.05: Item: Mamelodi Thusanang Association for the Blind.

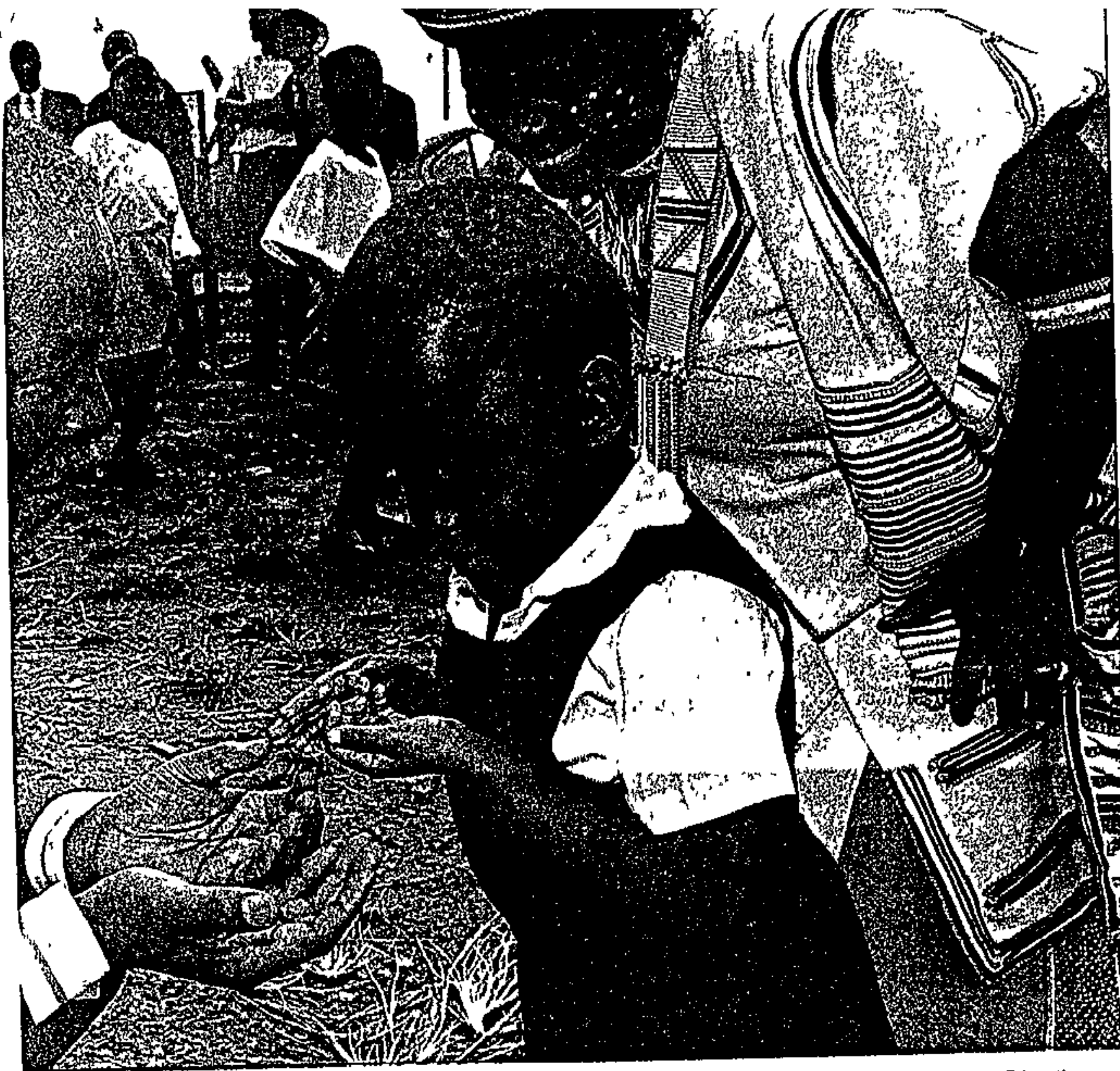
11.10 — 11.25: Overview: Prospectus Novus School.

11.30 — 11.45: Item: St Dominican Special School.

11.50 — 12.05pm: Item: Filadelfia School, New Hope School.

12.10 — 12.40: Deputy President Thabo Mbeki. Speech launching of white paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy.

12.45 — 12.55: Vote of thanks: Ms Pearl Maku-toane, Mr Shualb Chalkden.



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disabled people their aspirations?

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Standard Rules show way to full integration

THE United Nations General Assembly, in 1993 at its 48th session, adopted the UN Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Disabled Persons CT 3/12/97

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 was placed 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 awareness-raising, 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 fulfilment.

December 3 is also a day of national reflection on the situation of disabled people in society.

Non-disabled people will come to realise:

- 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 flouted daily

- 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 equalisation of opportunities would enrich our country morally, 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 celebrate together the victories gained thus far.

'Milestone' on way to full recognition

Statement from the South African Federal Council on Disability:

THE launch of the white paper on the Integrated National Disability Strategy provides disabled people in South Africa with the most significant milestone on the long road to equity, opportunity and empowerment.

This commitment from our new democratic government is the final affirmation that our new society is prepared to address the process of meaningfully integrating disabled people into all spheres of South African life.

This white paper will provide disabled people with a firm mandate to take up the opportunities offered by government, which will ultimately bring functional equity and dignity to their lives.

Disabled people in our country have waited for over three decades for the level of commitment inherent in the white paper.

Tribute must be paid to the many individual disabled persons and organisations of disabled people who have committed substantial time and resources to reach this significant turning point.

Recognition must also be afforded to our

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new democratic government, which identified the importance of addressing the needs and aspirations of this significant sector of our society.

The personal commitment made by the Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki, is deeply respected by the disability sector and we would like to record our sincere appreciation to the Honourable Deputy President.

While the inclusion of disabled people in various tiers of government has provided the primary foundation for the development of the Integrated National Disability Strategy, the role of disabled people in the spectrum of government still requires development.

The recommendations and commitments made in the white paper will, however, entail a paradigm shift from the previous welfare-based provision, to an equity-based independence.

This should ultimately relieve our society of the costs of the disempowering, charity mentality, which has left disabled people with a legacy of low self-esteem and poor quality of life.

The formal recognition of the South

African Federal Council on Disability as the

representative structure of the disability sector provides it with both a mandate and substantial responsibility to meet the aspirations and day-to-day needs of the individual South African disabled person.

The white paper recognises the dynamic relationship between government and civil society.

This is fundamental to the implementation of the recommendations in the white paper.

We look forward to nurturing this relationship to achieve our ultimate goal — the development of an enabling environment which provides a meaningful improvement to the lives of the individual disabled person.

We call on all disabled people to unite and celebrate the International Day of the Disabled today, in support of the implementation of the white paper and urge them to take up the challenge of maximising their potential and quality of life.

Philip Thompson
Chairperson

Progress, but much still to be done

A message from Disabled People SA:

SA has a proud history of struggle against injustice and human rights abuse. An important component of the liberation struggle in SA has always been the struggle of people with disabilities to be recognised as equal citizens, irrespective of race, gender, abilities, class or language.

Our new democratic government has achieved unprecedented progress in redressing the inequities faced by people with disabilities in the past. A highlight of this progress is the launch of the white paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy today, a day recognised as the International Day of Disabled Persons.

The Integrated National Disability Strategy is a means of breaking down the socio-economic, political and attitudinal barriers which people with disabilities face. The government has hereby committed itself to providing a better life for people with disabilities. And this is but an extension of a commitment which was already clearly established in the run-up to the 1994 elections. Disabled People SA, the national umbrella body of disability organisations, hereby salutes the government for the advance it has made for people with disabilities, evident in:

- The promotion of the rights of disabled people in the Constitution.
- The inclusion of DPSA-nominated candidates in the ANC election list in the 1994 election.
- The appointment of disabled candidates, as a result of

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ANC support, to the Youth, Gender and Human Rights Commission, as well as structures such as the boards of the SABC, Satoru, NTSIKA etc, as well as the National Training Board.

• The establishment of the Office on the Status of Disabled People in the Office of the Deputy President and pending provincial disability desks, the first of which is operating in Mpumalanga.

• The acceptance of the status of Patron of DPSA by Deputy President Mr Thabo Mbeki

However, we have to acknowledge that radical transformation is a gradual process and that the impact of policies have to make themselves felt in the lives of people with disabilities at all levels of our society. Let us use this day to celebrate the long-sought recognition of human rights which has formed the basis of the disability movement in our country. Let us continue to nurture a culture of respect for all and celebrate diversity in our country. And finally, to the Deputy President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, patron of Disabled People SA, on behalf of our organisation, I salute you for your continuing support and belief in the empowerment of people with disabilities. The struggle for the full emancipation of people with disabilities has just begun.

Maria Rantifo
Chairperson

State aims to empower the disabled

ET(MR) 5/12/97
MPHO MANTJUI

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 (296)

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. (297)

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

Star 10/2/98 (296)

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 Kissoon 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

Sowetan 31/3/98
(296)

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.

MARCH 15, 1998 ★★★★★

CIT

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 cre-



REAL EMPOWERMENT... Shap's factory manager, Mandla Mafika, pictured right, chats with Julian Cotterell of Viva Bingo.

ate 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 Molefe

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 Tshiawelo, 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 programme 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

Sowetan 28/4/98

Disabled in Alex get new workplace

(296)

By ANNA COX

Star 15/5/98
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 R565 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 cane baskets and Shadex, and a project which manufactures, assembles 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 18 assembly lines.

"The project aims at providing durable assisting devices, creating job and export opportunities for the African economy. There are 360 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 Masahle said the province had spent R45-million on similar community-based projects throughout the country since 1994.

See me for what em, says blind Kerry citars' bias angers telephonist

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steps. One, two, three ... just a few more steps and now we are on the quayside, let's walk a bit further to where there aren't any other people and sit in the sun."

On Kerry was born on November 11 1971, three months premature. She weighed two pounds at birth.

"She is not going to live," the doctors warned her mother.

Granny But, she did.

Tod The small child was placed in an incubator where she was given oxygen. So much oxygen that it caused a condition known as retrolental fibroplasia, which causes the retina of the eye to separate from the rest of the eye.

Thi Until she turned 20 all she could see were dim streetlights, torch lights and four fire embers, all shrouded in a deep fog. Now, there is total darkness.

It fo "I don't know what I am missing so I am not frustrated. Sometimes when I watch something falls on the ground or I'm watching a movie on TV and I know I have missed something, I wish I could see what was going on."

Pumpk "From what I've been told, I know that I am living in a scenic city. I know the mountain is beautiful, but it doesn't affect me because I have never seen it. To me, it is just words. I know it's a lot of rocks and stony crevices and cliffs. I know that through books and what people have told me

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Bak "There are blind people who enjoy climbing and hiking, but I get scared because I don't know what is coming next. It's the unknown that scares me. That's the reason I wouldn't do apparatus work in PT at school.

piggery I can sense people's characters quickly and I'm often right.

Tyr I also know when someone is comfortable with me.

"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. So we use our other senses more than they do. And it may take a little longer, but I can still do what you can.

"I wish people wouldn't think of one as totally helpless. They are too scared to employ you, no matter how good your qualifications. So often they lose employees who could do quality work and who would be loyal and committed to a company which employed them.

"Sometimes I want to say to them: 'Just try me and see what happens - I won't let you down.' I need that company that will give me a chance.

"Otherwise I am not angry ... sometimes though I wish I could read my own mail. I enjoy my music and have sung in choirs since I was eight."

I comment on the lovely purple jersey Kerry is wearing.

She laughs. "Occasionally I wear colours that clash. My mother has chosen my clothes so that most of the colours are pretty neutral.

"I love to watch movies on TV, especially thrillers and adventure movies, and to read books.

"As as you have seen, I live alone, cook a proper meal for myself every evening, do my own shopping (the supermarket assistant helps after I

have typed out a shopping list) and manage perfectly well. I hope to get a guide dog in the future."

Kerry and I spend the rest of the unseasonably warm June afternoon walking along the seaside and chatting away.

She buys us softserves and we slurp them and spill ice cream.

Later, we listen to music. Mozart, Bach partitas and Brahms' 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

ANDREW INGRAM

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.

Medunsa 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 consti-

tutional 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 became 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.

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Sowetan 14/10/98

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 realise 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 hijack which left him with a bullet in his spine.

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.

At work with...



The project transports disabled workers from Soweto and Johannesburg to work and back, and helps them with other necessary trips.

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 Mzukulu (grandchild) by his colleagues, his day starts at 7am when he receives reservations for the service.

At 10am, he meets with the drivers to discuss the reservations and the routes.

"Because of lack of resources our minibuses do not have radios in 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. I also know what it's like not to be handicapped," said Gouws.

The pilot project, which was launched in 1997, received a R2m 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 at times they have to carry the wheelchair into the taxi," said Gouws.

There is a call centre which receives passengers' requests if they need to go to the clinic, for shopping 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 Letchman, who works closely with Gouws on a number of projects, described him as a principled, dependable person who fights for the underdog.

"He is very innovative, disciplined and also flexible, 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 discussions with the two cities to exchange information and to see if we can get a national policy in place," Gouws said.

If people with disabilities are not able to access transport, there is no way



Fanie Gouws, who is committed to making the journey of disabled people lighter, chats heartily about his task. Picture: MARTIN RHODES

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 is 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 hijackers who shot him were arrested and later released on bail. They never appeared in court again and are still at large.

Cash crisis hits disabled

(296) Sowetan 12/11/99

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 Tsietsi 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 reliant on donor 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 BAMFORD

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 Phillipina 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 Newhouth-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 Deafsa 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 dis-

turbed 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 Deafsa 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 working environment."

"Deafsa Western Cape has also embarked on a programme of training for deaf employees and their employers about their needs and rights in the work place."

ARG 21/9/99 (296)

ALBINISM MONTH STARTS

Break myths, boost pride

ET 8/9/99 296

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.

Hoogbaard is an albino.

"I think my mother, though she didn't say it, underestimated my abilities because I am an albino. 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 Heidelberg, because I'm successful," he said.

Hoogbaard 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 albino 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 "Pienkies".

"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 Tswanas 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 Elsie's 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 83 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 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

(296) AR 4/9/99

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 (179) : *Sowetan 24/8/99*

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 Masakhane Programme grant. (296)

Sizimele's wheelchair-bound coordinator, 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'

(296) m+G b-12/8/99

Ivor Powell and
Evidence wa ka Ngobeni

Bureaucratic smoke and legalistic mirrors have allowed an old-guard clique to maintain control over the multibillion-rand private security industry — despite the government's appointment of an interim regulatory board to clean up the troublesome and highly militarised sector.

That is the charge being levelled by small employers and operators inside the industry as a major showdown looms between controlling interests within the industry's regulatory authority, the Security Officers Board (SOB), on one side and, on the other, disgruntled employer associations and company owners who claim they are being driven out of business.

The sleight of hand, the malcontents claim, was effected via amendments to existing regulations made public in a South African Police Service notice published in the *Government Gazette* of September 26 1997, giving extraordinary powers to the office of the SOB registrar to act on behalf of the SOB — powers that were formerly vested in the board as a whole.

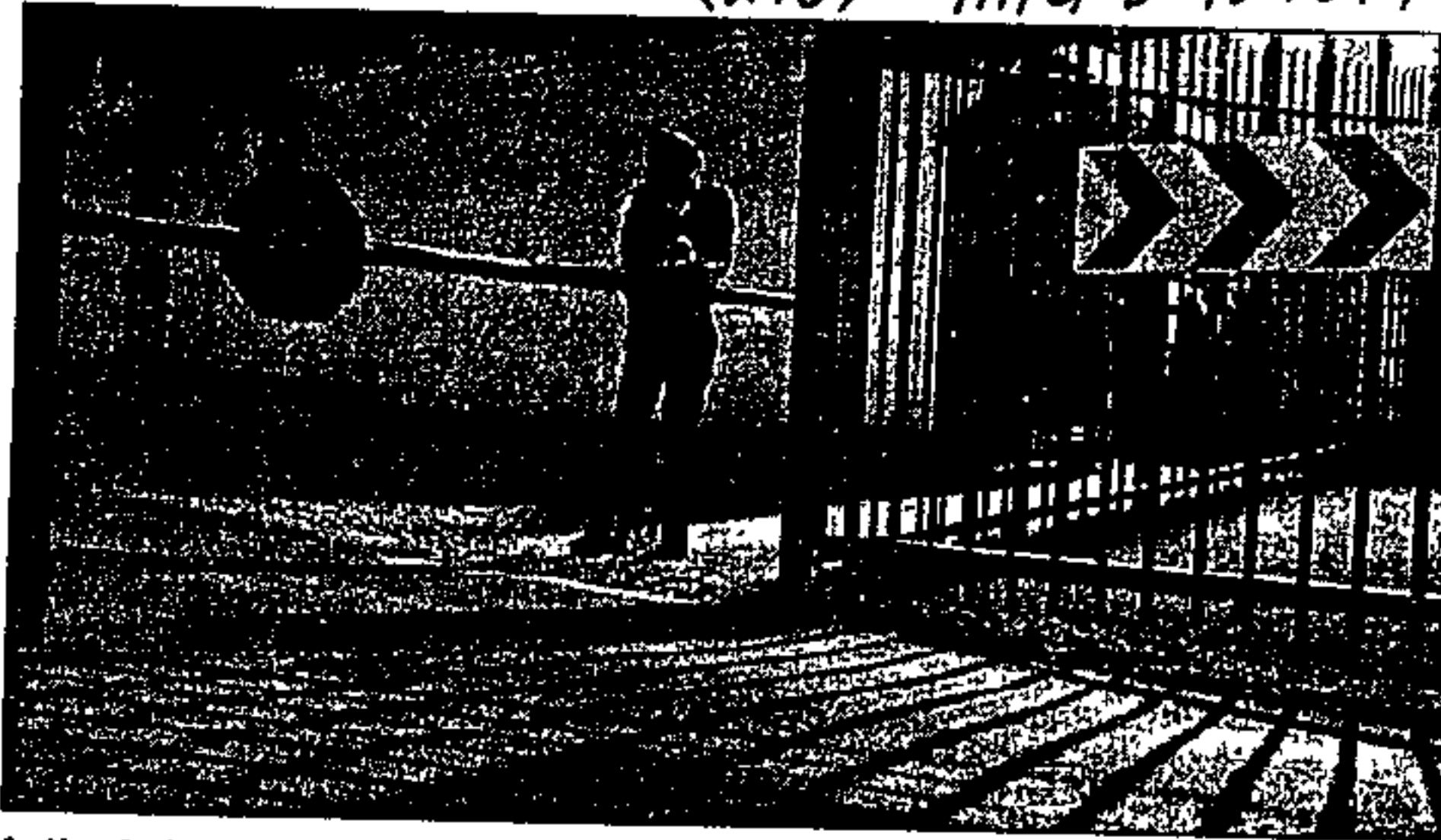
Members of the interim board — the industry's current regulatory body — claim they are being kept in the dark about board business as a web of secrecy grows around the registrar's office.

The registrar's powers now include the registration of security companies and instructors, the granting or withdrawal of registration for security companies as well as the inspection and prosecution of offenders against the regulations governing the security industry. All of these, disgruntled operators claim, have been used by the office of SOB registrar Patrick Ronan to systematically sideline them from the industry.

Curiously the 1997 amendment was passed — after representations by the then serving SOB — while the government was interviewing candidates for an interim board which would be charged with overseeing the transformation of the private security industry while new legislation was being drafted.

But interim board member Cedric de la Harpe claims he has not even been allowed access to board documentation that would allow him to assess the current state of affairs.

"I've been requesting this material since the first meeting of the interim board on April 21 this year — material that I need to do the job.



In the dark: Disgruntled employer associations and company owners in the private security industry claim they're being driven out of business by controlling forces in the sector's regulatory authority. PHOTOGRAPH: NADINE HUTTON

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 them."

Board deputy chair Professor Hans Visser confirmed he had required reasons, saying De la Harpe, as president of the South African Small Employers' Association, had litigated against the board in the past.

He was not however able to give a reason why, as a member of the interim board, De la Harpe would still have to provide reasons.

Two other interim board members have complained they have also been refused access to documentation.

Meanwhile after raising the issue at an SOB meeting on July 28, De la Harpe became the subject of an extraordinary press statement emanating from the national secretariat of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) — the only worker union on the interim SOB, although there are eight unions representing workers in the industry.

The union calls for De la Harpe's immediate dismissal from the board, blaming him for playing "a destructive and negative role in de-

railing the board from its mandate"

But there could be other motives. The *Mail & Guardian* can reveal that Mzwandile Simon, one of the TGWU worker representatives on the board, is also an employer, being the sole director of ISS Security, formerly Inguquko Security Services and before that Atbury Consultants.

The business address given in company registration forms for ISS Security is identical to that of Ronan Smithard and Associates, as well as Ronan and his partner Peter Birch's various other companies. 14 Bedford View Office Park in Bedfordview. Moreover, ISS Security gives a postal address which belongs to Birch.

Simon refused to comment, referring the *M&G* to TGWU secretary Randall Howard — who said he was aware of the allegations, but would defend union members in the absence of hard evidence.

Ronan denied any knowledge either of ISS Security operating from his premises or of Simon's alleged ownership of a security company.

Meanwhile Steve Dube, president of the South African Black Security Employers' Association, claims that in May Simon, accompanied by Birch and representing themselves as SOB officials, performed a site inspection on a tender at the Pretoria Technikon. Then,

with access to rival tender applications, he submitted a tender of his own. The *M&G* has not been able to ascertain whether the tender was in fact awarded to Simon's company.

Security operator Andre van der Bijl of Excalibur Security in Durban told the *M&G* he has approached Public Protector Selby Baqwa for relief in what he describes as a case of the "fox looking after the chickens".

One of the most highly qualified firearms instructors in South Africa, chair of the South African Institute of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors and an accredited instructor 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 his premises had been inspected and given the thumbs up as early as 1994, a letter dated February 1 1999 informed him he failed to meet requirements, though he could appeal the matter (with accompanying argumentation and documentation) before February 5 — the day on which he received the notification.

Van der Bijl notes that two of the officers who are charged with accrediting firearms instructors on behalf of the SOB actually carry credentials issued by his Sentinel Firearms Bureau.

Van der Bijl also charges that another of his guard companies, Excalibur Executive Security Protection Services, was given similarly short shrift. After being given a clean bill in an inspection on January 5 1999, Van der Bijl was later that month charged with 92 counts of contravening the Security Officers Act — some of them dating back to the company's inception in 1994.

When charged, Van der Bijl was tendering for the massive contract to supply protection for the African National Congress leadership in KwaZulu-Natal in the run up to the June election — a contract he won despite the obstacles in his path.

Van der Bijl was also — controversially — providing security to Inkatha Freedom Party defector Dumisane Khuzwayo.

A security source said action was taken by the SOB against Van der Bijl after the interception of a document in which Van der Bijl outlined a strategy for bringing Umkhonto weSizwe veterans into the security industry after new legislation was passed.

Ronan denied any knowledge of the documents. He added that there were concerns over Van der Bijl's taxi guard business, but provided no further details.

Moss wheels in to attack

CT 29/6/99

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

(29/6)

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 Frene Ginwala whether it was in order for DP leader Tony Leon to interrupt a member making a maiden speech.

Ginwala explained that an MP claiming protection in a maiden speech was not expected to be provocative.

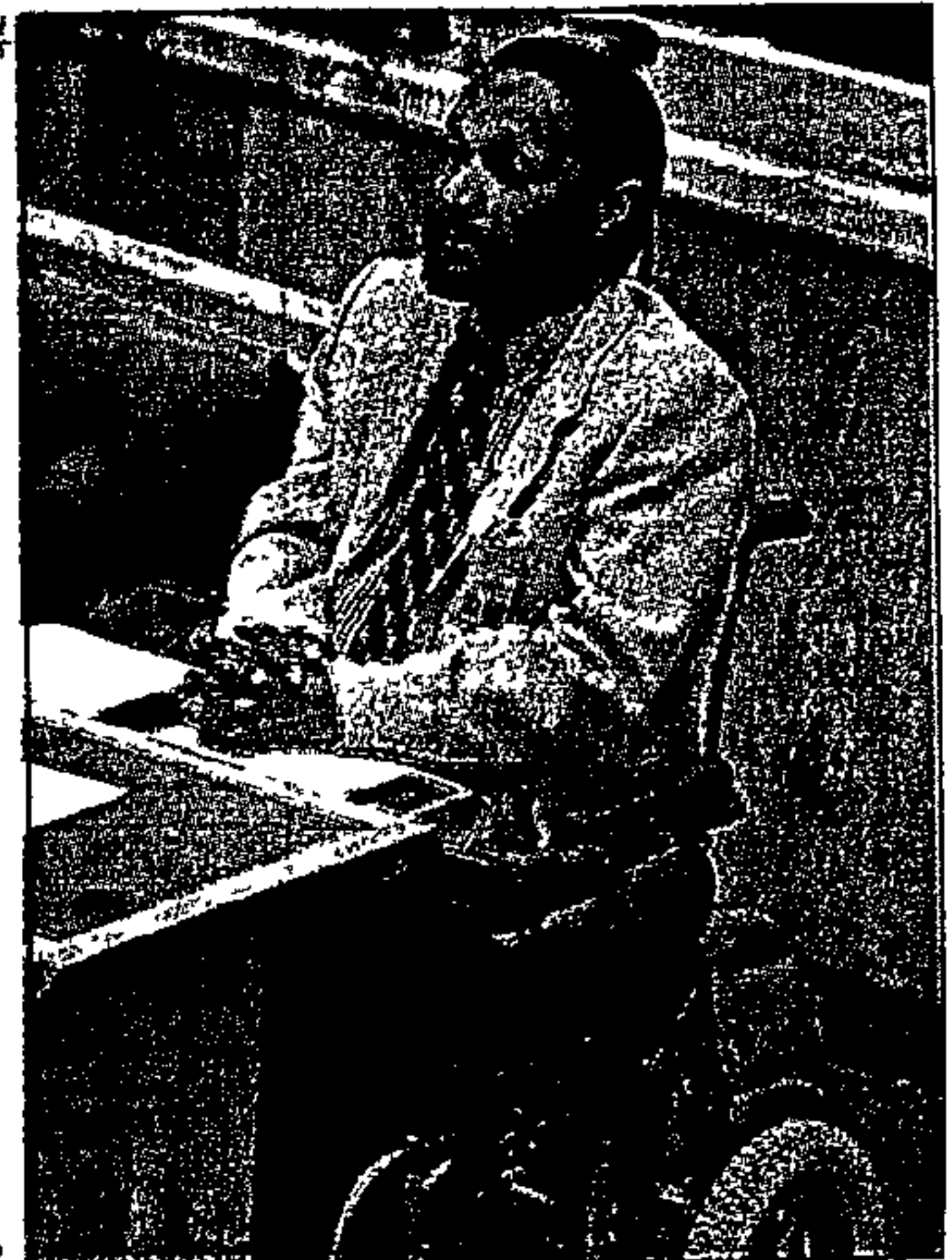
This did not dampen Moss' vigour.

"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 steered himself back to his seat. — Sapa

(304A)



ON THE ATTACK: Maxwell Moss in Parliament yesterday, after his maiden speech.

Fedsure helps restore dignity to the disabled

CT (MR) 19/7/99

(296)

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.



WAYNE CONRADIE

Disabled but able: Zwiliqile Zenzile, 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

CHANTEL ERFORT
STAFF REPORTER

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 Ariefdien and former manager of Bossi International Alistair 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 'Al' in Altitude Workforce Solutions is part of Alistair (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."

ARG 12/5/99

(296) (297)

New Act to ⁽²⁹⁶⁾ protect workers with disabilities

By Isaac Moledi

1/6/99

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

(296)
Sowetan 19/4/99
Sowetan Business Staff

THE launch of Ikusasa Technologies tomorrow will herald a new era in the process of empowering disabled people in South Africa

Ikusasa is a joint initiative launched by the Medunsa Organisation for Disabled Entrepreneurs (Mode) and Integral Support Services (ISS), a subsidiary of Infiniti Holdings and a majority black-owned JSE-listed company in the information technology sector.

Mode managing director Vivienne Zwennis said the organisation did not see disabled people as welfare cases but as "potential clients to be trained and given sufficient skills to ensure that they achieve equal levels of participation in the workforce"

Mode has for the past seven years been researching, developing and implementing socio-economic solutions for people with disabilities.

It will recruit and appoint disabled

employees to work at Ikusasa Technologies while ISS will provide staff to Ikusasa, which will specialise in re-manufacturing 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

(296)
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Sowetan 8/3/99

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 Prospecton in Isipingo, south of Durban.

HWC 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 managers. 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 Gitai 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.