FOCUS ON THE EDUCATION CRISIS ...

half-hour meeting with National Education Minister Gene Louw this week

The meeting, rescheduled after Louw cancelled an earlier meeting when the National Teachers' Unity Forum refused to abort a teachers' march in Cape Town, went some way towards defusing rising tensions between the government and those who form the backbone of the country's education system.

ple to a number of issues which have been fuelling the fires of discontent among teachers' ranks, and further meetings between him and the NTUF are on the cards.

Made up of established teacher organisations and newly emergent groups, the non-racial NTUF hopes to launch itself as a unitary teachers' body as early as September and is . Naicker described the meeting as it would help in effecting further Consensus was also reached that 150 000.

Back to school in Brits as strike is suspended

By VUSI GUNENE

THE two-week-old strike by teachers and students in Brits was conditionally suspended yesterday, pending the outcome of talks between a community delegation and the Department of Education and Training to reinstate 13 suspended teachers.

Teachers and students resolved to return to class today after a delegation comprising Pretoria Teachers' Union officials, the United Democratic Front and community representatives held talks to resolve the strike, which was sparked off by the suspension of teachers from Letlhabile and Oukasie.

A series of meetings almost led to mass action after Northern Transvaal Chief Director Job Schoeman refused to meet a delegation which included parents — he insisted on meeting the affected teachers only.

Workers from Letlhabile and Oukasie had threatened a work stoppage, should the teachers not be reinstated.

Yesterday, as a result of undertakings and agreements made by the delegation and Schoeman, the community agreed that teachers and students must return to class, pending had presented to the regional director, another meeting next week between the two parties.

Meanwhile, the DET will send a team of school inspectors to the affected schools to assess school attendance today and on Monday.

the support of 150 000 teachers countrywide emerged from a seven-and-awith agreement reached on several key issues. The meeting, rescheduled after and an accord is reached

committed to the realisation of a nonracial, non-sexist, single education system in a unitary South Africa.

NTUF delegation leader Poobie Naicker told the Weekly Mail the body would soon be approaching Louw with an application for its for-Louw committed himself in princi- mal recognition as a negotiating

While Louw did not go so far as committing himself to the formal recognition of the NTUF, any applicaminister's agreement, during the points of agreement. meeting, that teachers had the right to freely associate and negotiate on matters concerning them.

A meeting with a cabinet minister has cast a glimmer of hope on the education problem. GAYE DAVIS reports from Cape Town

"historic", saying it was the first time a teachers' delegation had met for ty would be given to closing the gap cation minister. The meeting started at 9am and ended after 3pm.

because there was no disagreement critical shortage of qualified educaon practically every issue raised and tors, be addressed urgently.

meetings," Naicker said.

During the meeting, Louw agreed there should be a basic living wage for teachers and the NTUF is now to submit to him a memorandum detailing its proposals in this regard.

He also indicated that a high priorisuch a lengthy meeting with any edu- between male and female teachers' salaries "as soon as possible".

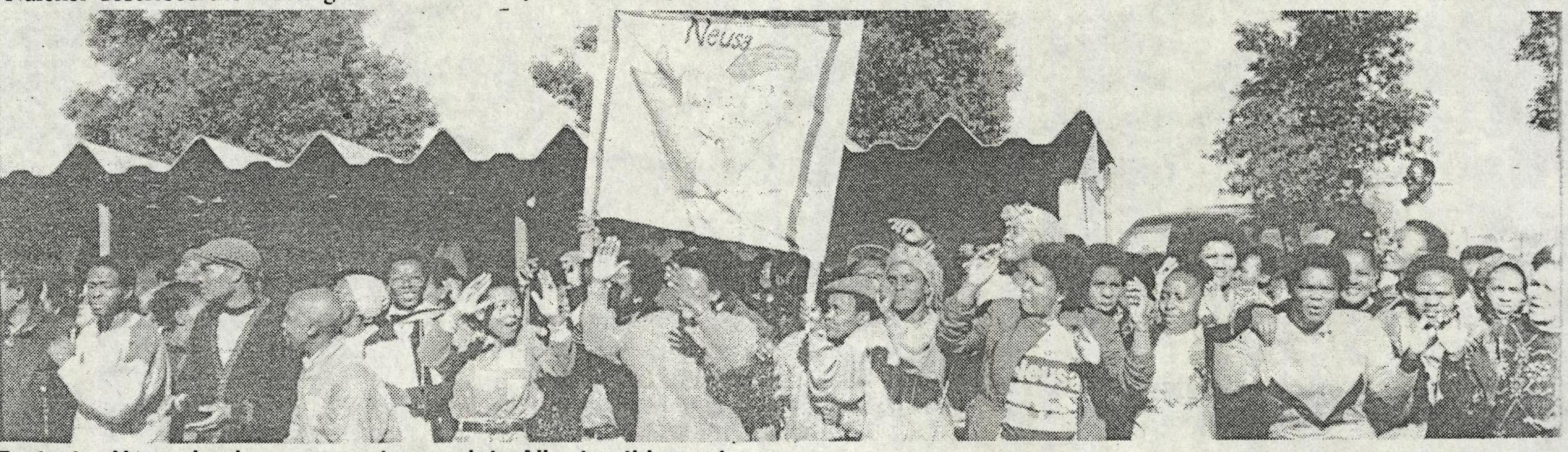
He accepted the principle of job se-A joint statement issued after Tues- curity for qualified teachers and contion it makes will be in the light of the day's talks spelled out the various sensus was reached that the problem of temporary appointments, cast "We decided on a joint statement against a backdrop of the country's

eradicating apartheid and discriminatory practices from education be effected "on an ongoing basis through proper negotiation".

Louw declared his "unconditional opposition" to any victimisation of

The Union of Teachers' Associations in South Africa (Utasa), which represents most organised teachers in "coloured" schools countrywide, together with the 70 000-strong African Teachers' Association (Atasa) and the Teachers' Association of South Africa (Tasa), which has 10 000 members in Indian schools, have been involved in unity talks since the idea was first mooted at the suggestion of the African National Congress two years ago.

The established organisations, which enjoy official recognition by the various education departments, make up the bulk of the Teacher Unity Forum's stated membership of



Protest ... Neusa leaders prepare to march to Alberton this week

the Department of Education and Training to meet their demands.

They are calling for a single nonracial education department, the building of more schools, more teachers, sufficient stationery, textbooks and furniture, and facilities such as laboratories and libraries.

Black schools have taken action which includes class boycotts, demonstrations and petitions to the DET.

Teachers are joining pupils because "our demands are the same".

Members of the Soweto Congress of South African Students on Monday requested principals to pressurise the DET to meet demands which they Peet Struwig, in April.

Close co-operation already exists between pupils and the Soweto teachers' branch of the National Education Union of South Africa.

TEACHERS and pupils nationwide are uniting in an attempt to persuade Nationwide action in the fight for better conditions

Teachers and pupils are joining to harangue the Department of Education and Training into meeting their demands. By PHIL MOLEFE

teachers and students from Thokoza, In his "detailed response" in March

Neusa and Katlehong Education Cri- matter which will in all probability be sis Committee members, gave Theron open to negotiation as part of the pro-

In an interview with the Weekly for South Africa," he said. Mail minutes before he received the But pupils and teachers are adamant memorandum, Theron said the condi- for an immediate resolution. In the East Rand, about 15 000 tions in schools were good.

In Bloemfontein's Mangaung township, where there has been little or no schooling since the beginning of the year, teachers, students and community organisations met on Wednesday to formulate strategies to get the DET to meet their demands.

Vosloorus and Katlehong on Tuesday to more than 90 demands by teachmarched for 10km to Alberton where ers, the Minister of Education and they presented a joint memorandum Training, Stoffel van der Merwe, to DET assistant director DJ Theron. said the creation of a single, non-The delegation, made up of Cosas, racial education department was, "a 10 days to respond to their demands. cess of structuring a new constitution

While the DET says overcrowding

in black schools has been reduced. from the classroom-pupil ratio of 1:55 in-1981 to 1:43 in 1988, the Weekly Mail found some high schools in the Vaal and Soweto with 72 pupils in a class. In the rural areas the figure is even higher.

Picture: SEELAN NAIDOO

A University of the Witwatersrand Education Policy Unit report showed that in 1989 certain high schools in Mapulaneng, Eastern Transvaal had as many as 107 students in a class. with some lessons taking place under trees due to the classroom shortage.

A high school in Sebokeng, with 960 students, has no classrooms.

In Lethlabile, the suspension of 13 teachers, who are members of Neusa, has sparked a three-week-old "chalks down" strike, leaving all schools in the area deserted.

The nationwide crisis is deepening and pupils and teachers say they will keep "knocking at the DET's door" until their demands are met.

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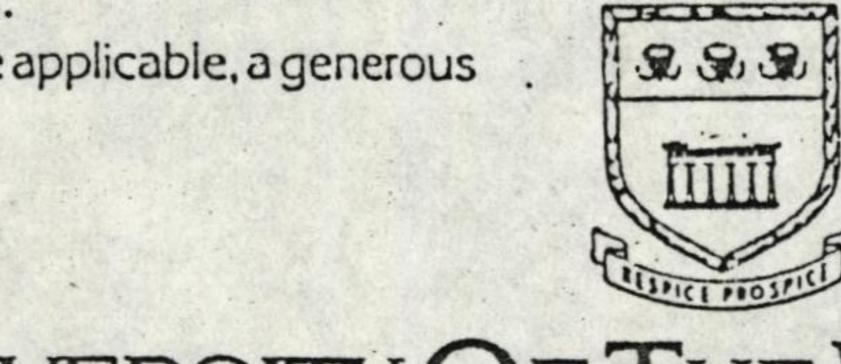
• group life assurance scheme

sports and recreational facilities.

For application forms, please telephone (021) 959-2990 or Prof Nico Steytler at (021) 959-2953. Alternatively, send a detailed CV (including the names and addresses of 3 contactable referees) in assured confidence to the Personnel Department, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Bellville, 7530.

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THE GIFTED CHILD PROGRAMME requires the services of a

RESOURCE CO-ORDINATOR

The Gifted Child Programme is a nonprofit Christian educational programme which aims to enrich high achieving pupils from Soweto and Alexandra. Pupils attendenrichment classes on Saturday mornings, remaining in their normal schools during the week. The programme aims to enrich the pupils in English, Maths and Science as well as life-styles.

The Co-ordinator will be expected to develop resources and teaching programmes for Std 3-5 and Std 6-8 pupils, work as part of a team, be an experienced teacher with a creative approach to education, be available on occasion on Saturday mornings as well as during the week, attend holiday camps. Experience in black education and other upgrade education/second language teaching will be an advantage. So will an active participation in Christian activities.

Salary in line with a teachers salary and experience.

All applications, in writing with two cons tactable references, and a Curriculant Vitae, should be addressed to: Jine Manager, Gifted Child Programme, PO Box 16198, Doornfontein, 2028.

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