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Guard

opportunism

A wave of violence has touched many parts of the country in the past couple of weeks.

There are two types of violence that have characterised this period.

The one is resistance to apartheid in all its forms.

The other occurs during the celebration of a peoples' victory and can often be taken advantage of by political opportunists.

The first type of violence we witnessed a few days ago in Bophuthatswana, where people demonstrating against homeland independence were killed in cold blood by forces of a government that has never enjoyed popular support nor had any legitimacy.

Last week, referring to the revolt in the Ciskei, Foreign Minister Pik Botha alluded to the popular character of the uprising as being one of the reasons South Africa did not intervene.

Why is it then that a similarly popular uprising in Rophuthatswana is put down with such blood-letting?

Is it because South Africa agreed with the political outcome in the Ciskei but does not want to see a similar outcome in Bophuthatswana?

In an unprecedented expression of arrogance, Lucas Mangope has asserted that his homeland, a product of apartheid, will last for a hundred years.

Clearly he is not worried by the violence that could attend such a statement.

The many thousands of people in the territory - probably the majority - who do not want homeland independence, do not touch him.

We want to say to him if his government lasts a hundred days - it will be a hundred days too long for the mass of our people.

The only solution we advance around the question of homeland incorporation is to let the people in all these territories to decide democratically their future through a referendum.

There is the second type of violence that comes as an expression of victory and joy that is often so easily taken over by the criminal element and agent provocateurs as was witnessed in the Ciskei.

While we understand the relief and the joy that the people felt at ridding themselves of the likes of Sebe, it is the type of undisciplined behaviour that is unproductive.

Our victory and joy must always find expression in the building of organisations.

When political space is created we must move in, assume control and give guidance and not engage in time wasting, counter-productive behaviour.

If we are not adequately prepared to provide leadership and guidance as issues develop and unfold, the opportunists in our midst will.

It is important that we must not provide the enemies of our people with the opportunity of taking advantage of the political gains won by the people and thus reversing those gains.

We must not get into the habit of celebrating victory until it is

secured.

FEATURE

In the past few weeks, the wave of resistance in the bantustans has toppled the Sebes in the Ciskei, sent Gazankulu's Hudson Ntsanwisi into hiding and has caused the Boputhatswana security forces to clamp down on progressive organisations. Some 13 830 417 people - more than 51 percent of the country's African population of 26 974 284 people - live in South Africa's 10 bantustans. Conditions are generally appalling, with most bantustan residents living in poverty. In comparison to this poverty, many bantustan leaders live in luxury brought about by corruption when dealing with government finances. During last year alone, the South African government contributed R5 567 739 000 to the running of the 10 bantustans. In addition, the combined debt of the "independent" bantustans - Transkei, Bop, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) - is R5-billion. The other six bantustans - Gazankulu, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, kwaZulu, Lebowa and QwaQwa have a combined debt of R400-million. While Boputhatswana, Gazankulu and kwaNdebele are continuing to crush opposition to their rule, other bantustan leaders, especially Transkei's Bantu Holomisa, the Ciskei's new ruler, Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, Lebowa's Nelson Ramodike and KaNgwane's Enos Mabuza are seeking closer ties with the mass democratic movement and the ANC.

NEW NATION takes a look at the latest developments in the bantustans, which look set to crumble in the face of mass resistance.

N an orgy of violence, the Ciskei this week reaped the bitter fruits of years of repression and corruption under the rule of self-styled President-for-Life Lennox Sebe.

Its been steadily downhill ever since the flagpole broke when the new Ciskei flag was hoisted during the independence ceremony in 1981. What was to have been a solemn and momentous occasion turned to farce as Ciskei and South African troops tried three times to hoist the flag.

It later emerged that the soldier responsible had been drunk, and toppled the flagpole as he was standing on the rope he was pulling. His place in history was assured.

But then the Ciskei, unlike its neighbour, Transkei, has always had a history and an identity entirely based on apartheid. While the Transkei has been administered as a separate entity since the 1890s, the Ciskei was administered as an integral part of the Cape until the 1970s.

A paper on the Ciskei crisis by the Grahamstown Rural Committee (GRC) notes: "Structures that were created, from chiefdoms to the Ciskei legislative assembly, were impositions by the apartheid government of South Africa that bore little reference to the history of the original settlements."

Sebe himself, the GRC says, had no claim to anything other than headmanship, certainly none to being a chief.

The Ciskei, carved in apartheid ideology, lacked even a coherent geography, with roads and other infrastructure paying no attention to the "national" borders.

One of the first projects of independence was the building of a road to enable Sebe and his officials to drive from his old capital, Zwelitsha, to the new capital, Bisho, without suffering the indignity of having to pass through the "foreign" city of King William's Town.

At the same time, the Ciskei was

much more urbanised than other homelands, with almost half the population living in East London's sprawling township of Mdantsane.

The government's decentralisation policy encouraged the establishment of some industry at sites like Fort Jackson and Dimbaza, but most were sweatshops relying on poverty wages and the suppression of unionism that the homeland had guaranteed.

In this week's violence, it is small wonder that these factories were targeted. It was almost impossible to obtain a trading licence if you were not a supporter of the regime: as a result, shops, too, were torched and looted.

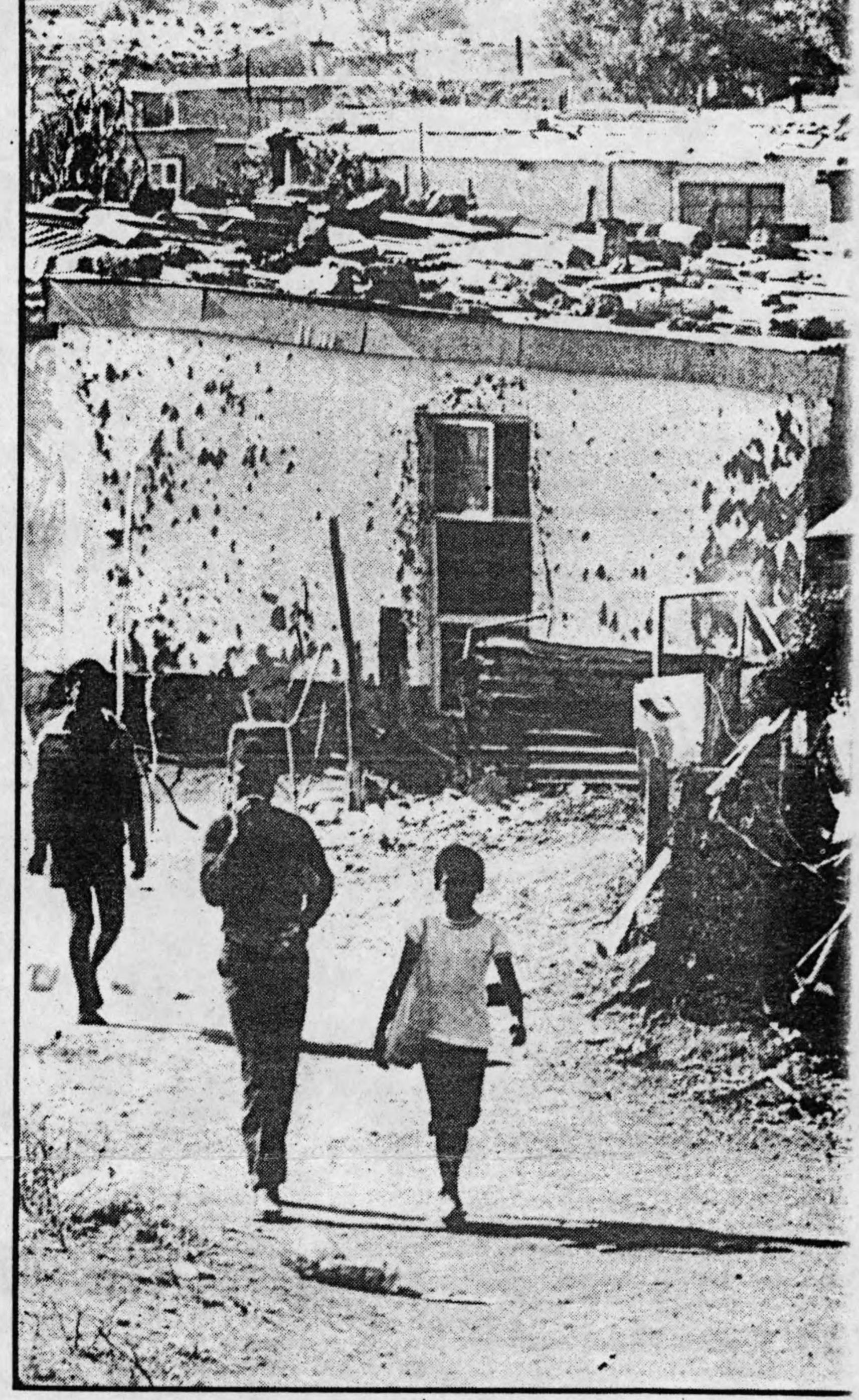
Sebe tried hard to create a "Ciskei" identity, but ultimately his rule could only survive through corrupt patronage, repression and violence. The completely useless "international" airport at Bulembu stands as only one monument to the colossal amounts of money spent in the search for prestige.

One of the most dramatic rebellions came in 1983, when residents of Mdantsane embarked on a bus boycott that was to last some 18 months. Sebe's government sent in vigilantes who turned the township's Sisa Dukashe stadium into a torture chamber.

Commuters were assaulted in an attempt to force them onto the buses, and there were shootings at railway stations in which there were numerous deaths. But in the end, the bus company had to give in to the community's demands.

In the last few years, many battles have been waged by communities either trying to escape Ciskei rule, or resisting having it imposed on them. The people of Kuni were dumped across the South African border for opposing Sebe, while the community of Potsdam fled repeatedly until South Africa finally allowed them to stay.

In rural areas, access to services like health, education and housing has been closely linked to support



Above: 'Homelands'. Below: Ciskeia

for Sebe. A Ciskei National Independence Party (CNIP) card was essential when dealing with chiefs. Last year, the people of east Peelton won a significant victory against incorporation into the Ciskei when South Africa promised to give them land in the King William's Town area.

The victory provided encouragement for communities all over the Ciskei to join the rebellion. According to the GRC, at least 70 villages have rebelled since the beginning of the year, even in Sebe's own tribal authority area of Khambashe.

In most areas, resistance has taken the form of people destroying or handing back the CNIP cards. The authorities have responded in the only way they know, detaining and assaulting people in their hundreds.

The growing rebellion has come amid rising expectations generated by changes in South Africa. But Sebe demonstrated his inability to see that times were changing, referring to Nelson Mandela publicly as a "thug" and a "scoundrel", and there were several deaths as police acted against people celebrating Mandela's release in Mdantsane.

Campaigning again

DEVELOPING community organisations in the bantustans is a slow process, especially in the face of the excessive repression. And bringing together communities from different bantustans to discuss common strategies to fight the system takes even longer.

But eight communities threatened with incorporation into various Bantustans set the precedent late last year when they united to form a committee under the banner of the Anti-Incorporation Campaign (AIC).

The communities – Peelton, Thornhill, Botshabelo, Braklaagte, Leeuwfontein, Hartebeesfontein, Matjkanag and Moutse – decided to launch a united campaign to fight for their right to remain in South Africa.

Each community forwarded two

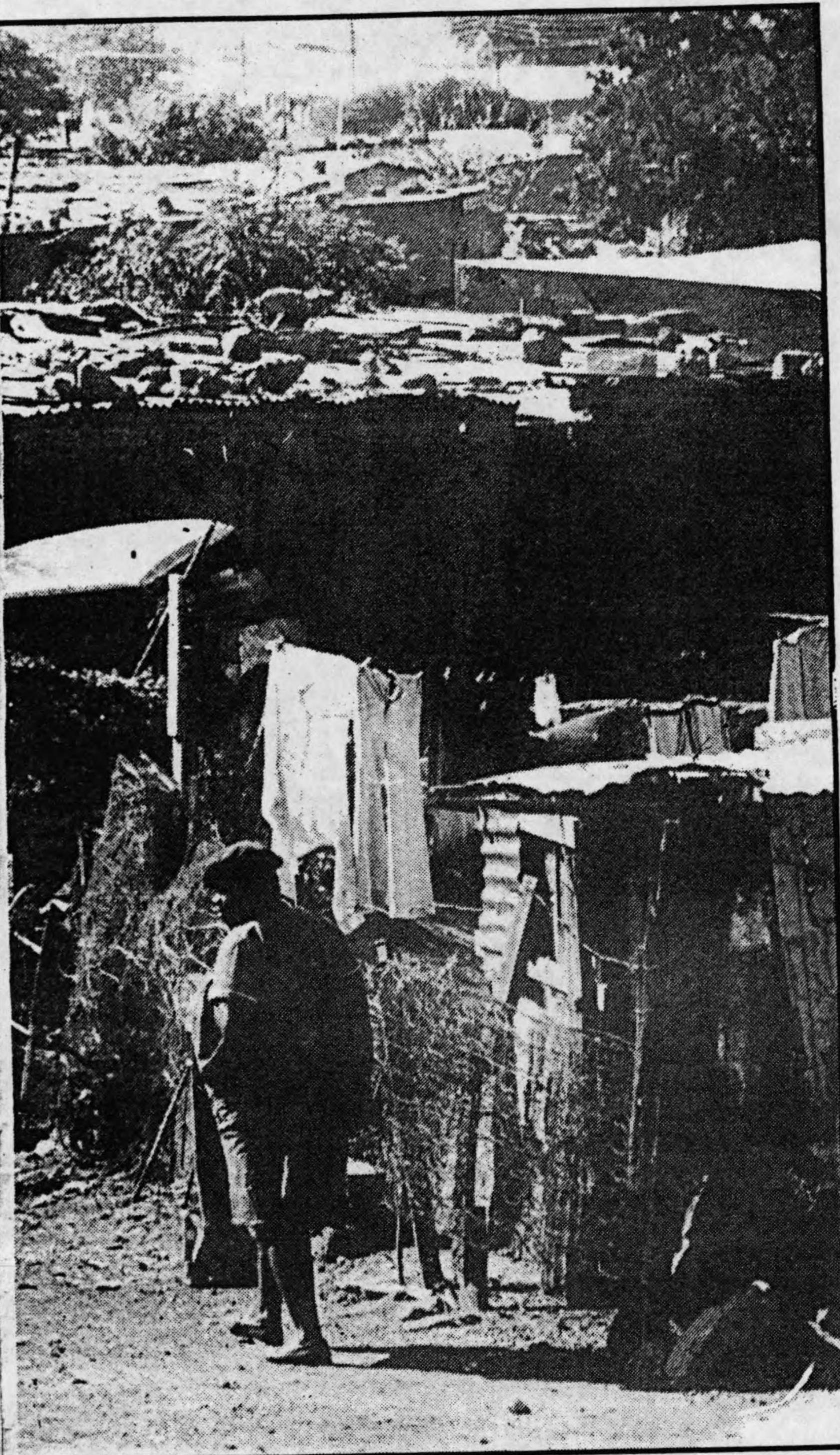
delegates to the AIC, and the committee decided that their first step would be to collect signatures for a petition protesting against the South African government's attempts to incorporate them into various bantustans.

In the space of a month and a half between September and November, the various communities collected 45 000 signatures from people in the areas objecting to their planned incorporation. This was despite the harassment of people collecting signatures, particularly in Peelton from the Ciskei authorities and in Braklaagte and Leeuwfontein from the Boputhatswana authorities.

The AIC also met UDF and Cosatu affiliates, and they promised to support the campaign.

The issue of incorporation was

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soldiers celebrate after the coup.



st incorporation

also raised at the December Conference for a Democratic Future (CDF) and communities were promised support from the organisations present.

FW de Klerk's office in mid-February, the incorporation into the Ciskei of three communities has been suspended.

The AIC now plans to meet in April to assess the situation and decide how to proceed.

Before the national meeting, regional meetings will be held in an attempt to include more communities into the campaign.

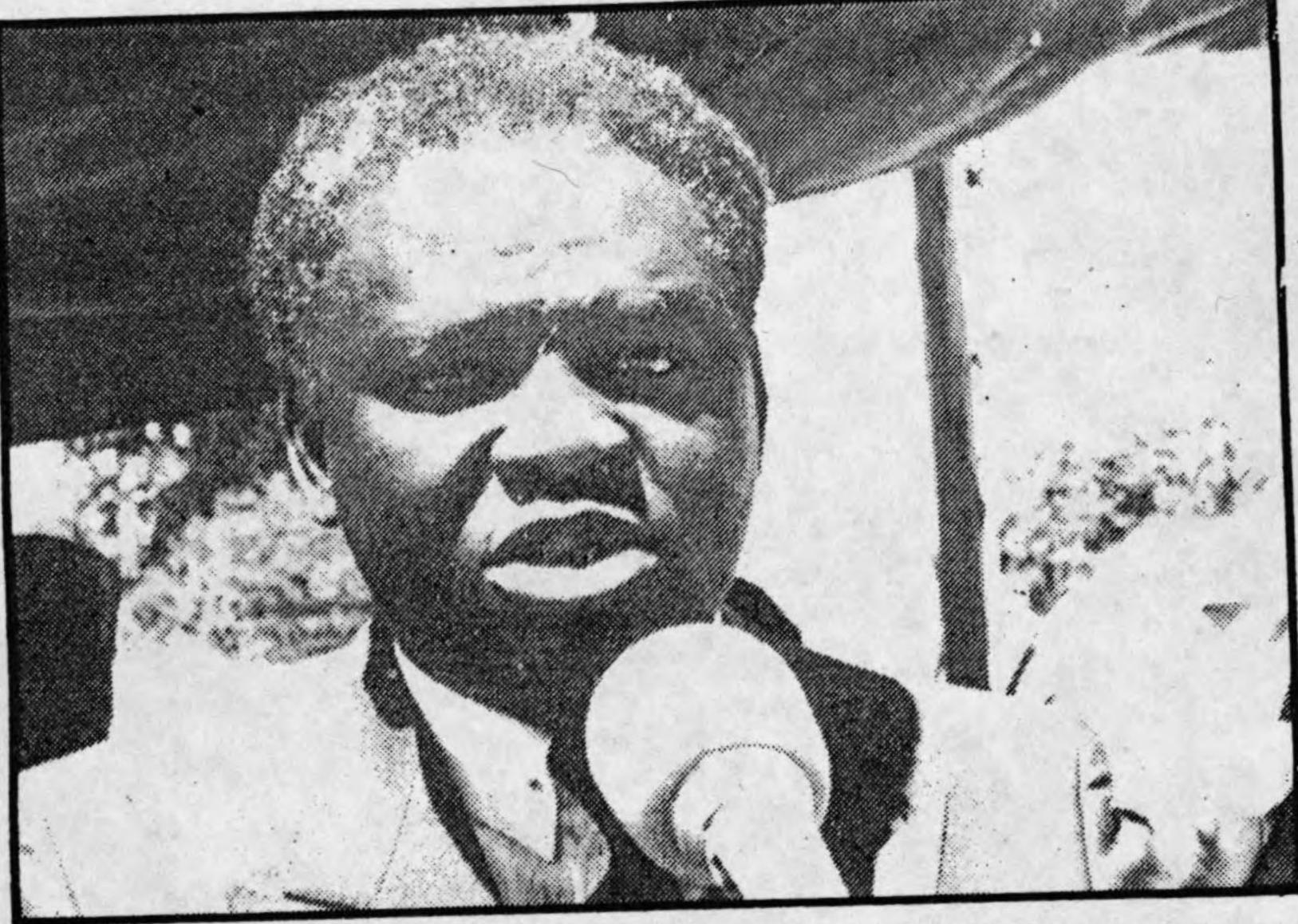
"With the emergence of popular resistance in the bantustans, there is a need to extend the committee and bring in all those communities that want to get out of the bantu-

stans," said a spokesperson for the Land Action Network (formerly the National Committee Against Removals), which has been facilitating contact between the various communities.

"The aim now is to bring together all communitities, that are antiincorporation into the bantustans and those that want to be reunited with South Africa," he added.

"To build an anti-bantustan campaign, we also need to move broader than the affected areas and bring in political organisations like the UDF, Cosatu and the ANC.

"We have seen struggles on the ground mushrooming against the bantustans, and the campaign will therefore be growing out of the feelings of people on the ground, not abstract ideas."



Northern Transvaal UDF president Louis Mnguni.

Northern Transvaal UDF president Louis Mnguni and ANC National Executive member Aziz Pahad take a look at recent events in the Ciskei and on how progressive organisations can direct the people's actions to the maximum benefit of all.

THE spirit of resistance sweeping the bantustans will only be sustained if progressive organisations manage to direct the people's spontaneous actions.

This is the view of Northern Transvaal UDF president Louis Mnguni, whose constituency covers Venda, Lebowa and Gazankulu.

"The most difficult task facing our organisations is how to capture and harness the present mood for the maximum benefit for the mass democratic struggle," said Mnguni.

"At this stage, we have definitely succeeded in mobilising the masses but there is also an urgent need to sensitise the masses of the people and bring them into our organisations."

ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) member Aziz Pahad agrees with Mnguni.

In welcoming the overthrow of the Sebe regime in the Ciskei, Pahad argues that if people's resistance can be pulled together into grassroots organisation, the possibility exists that the whole of the Eastern Cape could be transformed into "an area of liberation".

"The Ciskei provides a good opportunity for the ANC to show it can give leadership," said Pahad.

"If the ANC is able to ensure discipline and establish structures there without delay, we will have made a remarkable psychological and political breakthrough."

He said the pace of developments in the country demanded the establishment of ANC structures inside the country without delay. He added that the ANC had already decided to divide the country into 14 regions and that offices were to be set up in each main centre as soon as possible.

"We have reached a new phase which needs new strategies and tactics. The release of our leaders and the unbanning of our organisations does not mean the struggle is

"The MDM is faced with a number of daunting challenges such as the formation of progressive structures where they are non-existent and the revival of those structures crippled by the state of emergency.

"Furthermore, recognising that the ANC is the vanguard of the national democratic revolution, it is our duty to popularise and participate in the consolidation of our liberation movement.

"The masses are determined to fight for the total eradication of the bantustans. It is important that we, as people in the leadership, assist and give direction to the people in this.

"We must form structures. We

cannot afford to fight a general war without any structures. In order for the mood existing now to be sustained, we have to strengthen and build organisations."

According to Mnguni, people have for some time been angry about conditions in the bantustans.

"Our people were never consulted when the homeland system was introduced, more especially when a handful of collaborators opted for so-called independence.

"People see bantustan leaders as perpetrating the apartheid system and bringing misery to their lives.

"All the bantustans are also characterised by maladministration, corruption, nepotism, excessive repression and a serious erosion of human rights."

The education crisis had also contributed to tension in the bantustans, said Mnguni. He cited the example of Lebowa, where students were told they would only get books in May or June because the authorities had "squandered" the money that should have been for books.

Parents, teachers and students had become mobilised as a result of the education crisis; he said.

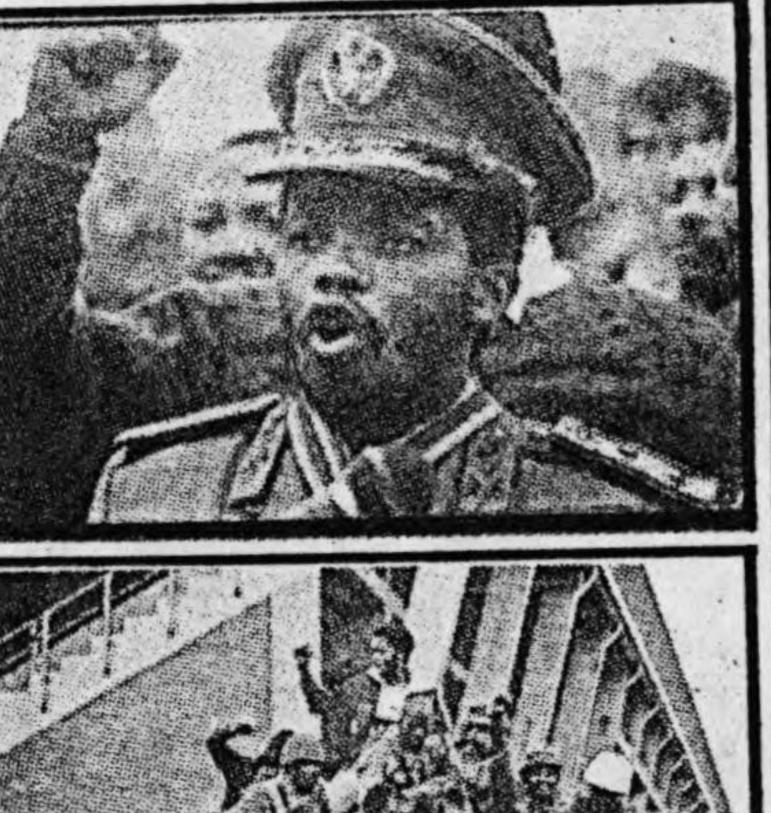
"The current problems in the bantustans should be viewed in the light of the overall political situation in the country," added Mnguni

"Immediately after the ANC was unbanned, we saw many people looking for more democracy. This was facilitated by the coming together of new structures. We have seen the development of many structures since the unbannings. For example, teachers' structures and youth congresses being formed at an unprecedented pace.

"The release of our leaders, .. especially Comrade Nelson Mandela, ignited a spirit of fighting unrelentlessly for the total eradication of bantustans. Our people cannot see any reason why they should continue to be led by these puppets when the authentic leaders are available to offer correct leadership and direction."

"People are now sensing that change is inevitable," said Pahad.

"And when that happens you get







A few moments after the coup, earlier this week in Ciskei. Thousands of people celebrated the events in the region. Top: Military leader Gqoza stands tall after his succesful coup on the so called independent Ciskei. Bottom: Soldiers and people join to share the victory.

millions of people moving into action even when they are not organised into any political structures. In this situation, they have a general commitment to change and they will take action because they feel the system is collapsing and they feel confident."

The people in the bantustans, says Mnguni, are making the same demands as those in the rest of the country:

"They want to live in a unitary, democratic, non-racial South Africa.

"They are demanding that the bantustans should be reincorporated into South Africa.

"The people in the bantustans never for one moment regarded themselves as engaging in a separate struggle from the whole national liberation struggle under the banner of the ANC.

"Bantustans divide people into different ethnic groups which negates the idea of a unitary country. FW de Klerk will have to address the issue of reincorporation as a matter of urgency especially as the prospect of negotiations are looming. He has no option but to dismantle the bantustans."

Mnguni feels that the working class will have to play a pivotal role in determining the outcome of the struggle for democracy.

"The bantustans severely curtail trade unions. The bantustan system frustrates their struggle against super-exploitation and their struggle for a living wage.

"This is why workers are also involved in the struggle for the immediate dismantling of these structures."