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ATASA NEWSLETTER

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ATASA'S 26TH NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

ATASA held its 26th National Eisteddfod at the Phuthaditjhaba Hall, Qwaqwa, on 23-24 June 1989. The event was hosted by the Orange Free State African Teachers' Association (OFSATA) and officially opened by Chief R H Mopeli, Qwaqwa's Minister of Education.

In his opening address Chief Mopeli extended a warm welcome to the Association on behalf of Qwaqwa and its Chief Minister Dr TK Mopeli. He said that the arts, especially music, were a vital aspect of education and that music and singing was one of the most important traditional forms of Blacks' expression of their innermost thoughts. In spite of the relentless attempts to oppress, dehumanize and weaken Blacks, their ability to sing remained ever strong. Singing had provided a source of strength and courage and the fact that Blacks gathered together year after year at such functions with the sole purpose of displaying singing artistry, was a testimonial to their inherent desire and need to sing. He praised the Association's efforts in establishing and maintaining music competitions and said that music provided another front on which the Black struggle could be waged.

Chief Mopeli emphasized the vital role of a teachers' association in influencing the affairs of the teaching fraternity and contended that it had an alienable



Kanyamazane Choir, TUATA, Winners of Adult B Mixed Vernacular Section

right to advise the Department on all matters relating to education. He affirmed the right of the Black child to share equally with any child in South Africa and, in terms of the betterment of the education of the Black child, said that the Association had a responsibility to pressure the Government to implement the De Lange Commission recommendations, especially the major recommendation of a single education for all. Teachers had the responsibility of elevating their status so that they played a critical role in shaping the direction nations should go; then they could influence policy de-

cisions that affected education, their own persons and their profession.

In conclusion, he observed that functions such as ATASA's Eisteddfod cemented bonds of friendship and provided a way for the Association to serve as an instrument for breaking racial barriers, in preparation for an open society and a just and non-racial South Africa.

During the course of the two-day Eisteddfod over 4 300 choristers from the Senior Primary through to the Adult level, who had won regional competitions, competed. 17 compositions divided into 13 different catego-

ries were rendered.

On the first day, Senior Primary Schools and Colleges of Education presented their items. The former did not achieve a notable level of performance, apart from Nxanelimfundo of the Southern Cape in the Primary A Vernacular section. In the Colleges of Education English category, TUATA's Soweto College set a high standard which could not be bettered.

On the second day choristers awoke to a chill in the air and snow on the mountains. Saturday's programme was extremely full and included Solos through

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National Eisteddfod (continued)

to the Adult Mixed Choirs. Months of hard practice resulted in some excellent performances, notably by T Madlopha, TUATA, in the Male Solo section; Mphumalanga, NATU, Duet; TUATA's Johannesburg, Male Voice Choir; TUATA's Daveyton, Adult Mixed A Choir, English; and NATU's

Ezikhawini and CISTU's Zwelitsha, which tied for first place in the Adult A Mixed Choirs Vernacular Section.

The overall spread of results indicates that no one affiliate dominated the Eisteddfod and that choirs competed on a far more even basis.

Once again, the conductors displayed great virtuosity. There

was a marked increase in the number of lady conductors and their standard of performance was praiseworthy.

Masters-of-Ceremonies, P Mehlahe, Z Senkhane and Dr Sambo orchestrated proceedings with great panache and contributed much towards making the Eisteddfod a memorable occasion.

Despite the increase in the door-fee, the hall was packed with enthusiastic music-lovers on both days. On the second day people, unfortunately, had to be turned away, which highlights the need for larger venues in the future. OFSATA, nevertheless, excelled herself in her duties as host-province.

The results of the Eisteddfod were as follows:

Senior Primary Schools, English

Ngqele	CISTU	74
Imbasa	PENATA	60
Khomisani	TUATA	60
Botjhabatsatsi	OFSATA	59

Senior Primary Schools, Vernacular

Nxanelimfundo	S Cape	80
Nkomo	TUATA	74
Imbasa	PENATA	72

Colleges of Education, English

Soweto College	TUATA	85
Ezikhawini	NATU	81
Bonamelo	OFSATA	75

Colleges of Education, Vernacular

Bonamelo	OFSATA	78
Amanzimtoti	NATU	77
Transvaal College	TUATA	76

Male Solo

T Madlopha	TUATA	88
A Hlongwana	NATU	85
X Jakatyana	CISTU	78

Female Solo

P Khuzwayo	NATU	85
(Sekhukhune East)	TUATA	80
P Jaji	PENATA	75

Duet

Mphumalanga	NATU	90
Thabong	OFSATA	77
Sekhukhune East	TUATA	75

Trio

Umlazi	NATU	76
Jabulani	TUATA	74
Zwelitsha	CISTU	70

Male Double Quartette

Zwelitsha	CISTU	85
Mphumalanga	NATU	82
Daveyton	TUATA	80

Mixed Double Quartette

Pietermaritzburg	NATU	84
Mdantsane	CISTU	80
Dithaga Tsa Lebowa	TUATA	74

Female Sextet

Lebowa-Kgomo	TUATA	78
Mphumalanga	NATU	76

Male Voice Choirs

Johannesburg	TUATA	90
Mthunzini	NATU	86
PE Teachers' Music Soc.	S Cape	83

Female Voice Choirs

PE Teachers' Music Soc.	S Cape	82
Kanyamazane	TUATA	77
Zwelitsha	CISTU	75
Mthunzini	NATU	75

Adult B Mixed Choirs, English

Mdantsane	CISTU	80
Africa Sings	NATU	80
Drakensberg	TUATA	78
Thabong	OFSATA	74

Adult B Mixed Choirs, Vernacular

Kanyamazane	TUATA	84
Mdantsane	CISTU	82
Africa Sings	NATU	78

Adult A Mixed Choirs, English

Daveyton	TUATA	88
PE Teachers' Music Soc.	S Cape	86
Esikhawini	NATU	84

Adult A Mixed Choirs, Vernacular

Ezikhawini	NATU	87
Zwelitsha	CISTU	87
Daveyton	TUATA	85
PE Teachers' Music Soc.	S Cape	83



QUALITY AND EQUALITY ARE THE ISSUES

Department of Education and Training Minister, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, speaking during the Budget Debate in Parliament, drew attention to the increase in the DET budget from 1.45 billion to 1.55 billion — an increase of 6.32%. Several points need to be made on this score.

Firstly, such an increase will make little impression on the huge backlogs in Black Education, let alone keep pace with the population growth and demand for places in schools, for teachers and for facilities. The Government's pre-occupation with defence and the maintenance of expensive apartheid-based structures dissipates much of the country's wealth and important aspects are neglected. The development of human resource potential, especially in the context of education, is an obvious example. It is no good to say that economic sanctions have made it necessary to curtail Government expenditure. Who was responsible for the sanctions being imposed in the first place? And sanctions or not, Government needs to recognize that education is a fundamental priority in the development of a nation and its economy. Priorities need to be reassessed and money re-allocated, so that it is utilized in the best interests of the country.

Secondly, the Black community is not interested so much in how much money is spent on education, as in how the money is spent in improving the quality of Black education. To date there appears little improvement in this regard. The vital statistics concern the number of Black students that reach matriculation level and the number

that gain matriculation exemption. Any small improvement in these statistics is negated by the fact that Black students in general are nowhere near well enough equipped to compete with their White counterparts, either at university or in the job-market.

ATASA firmly believes that Blacks as a whole will never achieve equality with Whites in the educational sphere so long as the present political system remains intact and groups are forced to operate and develop in own affairs structures, which benefit the Whites and place the other groups at a disadvantage. Time and again one hears of White educational institutions being closed down due to lack of numbers. The latest case concerns the Johannesburg Girls' High School. A meeting of parents and teachers from the school voted that the school should be opened to all races in order to find the required numbers — even students at the school were in favour. Yet the Government has refused to accept this proposal, bound as it is by its apartheid policies.

More and more private schools of non-racial composition are opening up country-wide, giving a few Black students the opportunity to grow up and learn with their peers of all races. The vast majority of Black students, however, are denied this basic right. Besides the justice of opening all educational institutions to all races, such a step would provide a starting point on the road to the solution of the severe skilled manpower problems the country's economy is presently experiencing. This step also implies the total eradication of apartheid, which day by day increasing numbers of the population of this country are recognizing as the only logical step. The sooner the authorities admit the inevitable drift of the current of change in South Africa towards an equal democratic society, and abandon their die-hard apartheid stance, the sooner society and the country as a whole will benefit.

tion and distribution of ATASA publications. Owing to time elapsed since the last publication and the occurrence of several important events in this period about which our members should be informed, this newsletter does not follow the regular format.

TEACHER UNITY : NATIONAL AND PROGRESSIVE TEACHER BODIES FORGE STRONGER LINKS

Teacher unity in South Africa gathered new momentum in April 1988 when national and progressive teacher bodies met in Harare to plan a common strategy. The seminar resulted in an agreement to forge unity on the basis of a set of common principles, known as the Harare Declaration. Since that milestone, three further meetings have been convened by COSATU in Johannesburg in August, 1988, in Cape Town in November 1988, and in Durban in March 1989.

On 27 August 1988 representatives of all the Progressive organisations and national bodies ATASA, TASA and UTASA met in Johannesburg in a planning committee. The committee recommended, most importantly, that: parallel unity talks be discontinued in favour of the initiative launched in Harare; the White English teachers' associations, namely TTA, NTS and SATA, be sent the Harare Declaration, and, if in agreement, they be asked to attend the next meeting in November.

At the Cape Town meeting held on 6 November 1988, representatives of the same organisations met once again. It was reported that the Harare Declaration had been sent to the White English teachers' associations and their representatives were then invited into the meeting. They stated that in principle they agreed with the Harare Declaration, although they required clarification of certain clauses. Explanation was offered and these associations were then excused from the meeting. The meeting agreed that the White teachers' associations should not be permitted to be party to the talks until such time as they had resigned from the Whites-only Teachers' Federal Council.

In a similar context, TASA was condemned, in accordance with the Harare Declaration, for her participation in Government structures, more specifically the Indian own-affairs Department of Education and Culture.

Participants were unanimous in agreeing that one non-racial teachers' association in the country was necessary, in confor-

mity with the demands of the people for one education system. The meeting was not agreed on whether this new body should have a unitary or a federal constitution and there was a clear division on this issue; the younger associations opting for a unitary body and the older which saw it as an ideal for the distant future.

Education of the members at grassroots level was recognised as a pressing need. ATASA was asked to persuade affiliates to send representatives to regional meetings, which had already commenced throughout the country.

On the matter of representation, it was agreed that each ATASA affiliate and each affiliate region should be represented at future unity meetings.

The most recent unity talks took place in Durban on 17-18 March 1989 and the same bodies were once again represented. Only NATU and CATU of ATASA's affiliates were present as a result of communication breakdown. This forum, representing some 120 000 teachers, expressed its commitment to the establishment of a non-racist, non-sexist and unitary education system in South Africa.

A significant development at this meeting was TASA's announcement that, following the condemnation of her participation in Government structures at the previous meeting, she had withdrawn all representation from such structures.

Concerning other Government matters, the meeting rejected the proposed bill on Teachers' Registration, condemned the restrictions of DETU and WECTU and expressed solidarity with these organizations. It also pledged solidarity with more than 500 teachers in Natal, presently involved in a struggle to advance their democratic demands and to resolve their grievances.

No real progress was made in discussion concerning the constitution of the new united national teacher body. The Progressive organizations expressed their wish to establish a unitary

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Due to circumstances beyond our control, ATASA was not able to produce any publications during the period August 1988 to July 1989. We regret the inconvenience and frustration that this may have caused any of our members. We are pleased to announce in this Newsletter the recommencement of the produc-

ATASA'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1989

The African Teachers' Association of South Africa held its 67th Annual Conference at the Airport Sun Hotel, Johannesburg, on 3-5 January 1989. The Conference was hosted by the Transvaal United African Teachers Association (TUATA) and the theme was "Education for Justice and Fairness". Each of the five affiliates of ATASA was represented by a delegation.

In his Welcome address, President of TUATA and Vice-President of ATASA, Mr L M Taunyane, appealed to delegates to devote themselves to the task of ensuring "a sound, lasting and meaningful educational future for our children — the adults of tomorrow". Educators in South Africa, he said, should aim at preparing children to take on responsible positions in the community life of their people and their education should be concerned with the achievement of the realities of human potentialities.

The highlight of the opening day was the official opening address by the Chief Minister of KaNgwane, the Honourable Mr E J Mabuza, who addressed the teachers of ATASA on "The Politics of Education in South Africa". He said that education was one of the keys to Blacks attaining their rightful place in a future just dispensation of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. The liberation struggle had to be waged on many fronts and ATASA had a critical role to play in the struggle for justice and freedom, which could not be denied or avoided. He said that ATASA teachers should constantly affirm to those in power that education systems were most effective when they had the acceptance of student, teacher, parent and community, and involved them in a shared vision and the decision-making

process. Teachers had to accept their political role in challenging the legitimacy of the authority behind the present education system, and then, once apartheid had been dismantled, in building a new educational dispensation which responded to broad socio-economic and political aspirations.

In his Presidential Address entitled "Open Doors of Learning and Participation", ATASA President, Mr F M Tonjeni said that without an education many doors remained closed, but in South Africa even a university degree did not make a Black person eligible to exercise certain basic rights, such as the right to vote. He sketched the "relentless whittling away of liberties and full degrading and dehumanisation of the Black man, and the establishment of Afrikanerdom, Whitedom and Baasskap domination" in South African history to the present. South Africa, he said, needed an intellectual Great Trek, which left racism behind and sought out harmony at home and in the Southern region generally. He appealed to affiliates to concentrate on matters of national importance and to continue their protests as a national body against the assault on human rights. ATASA was faced with many and varied educational and social challenges in the new year and her teachers should remain motivated to achieve their goals.

The Exposition of the Theme "Education for Justice and Fairness" was prepared by Prof A J Thembela and groups were asked to look at justice in the context of education in terms of access, provision, finance, procedures and goals.

The National Council's Annual Report highlighted numerous developments and issues: Disappointing for affiliates was the last-minute cancellation of the trip for South African school children to Reunion, arranged by ATASA in conjunction with the French teachers of SNIPEGC. (However, as is reported elsewhere in this newsletter, the trip subsequently took place in March 1989).

A report on the ongoing unity talks was presented (see elsewhere in this newsletter for further details) and Conference expressed its approval of the con-



tinuation of these talks.

It was reported that ATASA's Curriculum Development Project had moved into the provinces in the course of 1988 and many workshops had been held throughout the country.

The Organizational Development Programme had continued its operations in 1988 despite various problems. The implementation of the Programme had resulted in increased membership and the strengthening of ATASA at all levels, notably in her struggle against apartheid. Further plans for 1989 were announced with especial emphasis on training activities in the

the form of the Soweto Teachers' Choir.

ATASA's annual financial statements were not approved by Conference and the recommendation was made that the statements be finalized in the near future for presentation at an enlarged meeting of the National Council. (ATASA, at this moment, is pleased to report that considerable progress has been made in resolving problems relating to these statements — a significant step was the formation of a special Finance Committee to handle such issues — and that it should be able to convene the next Conference



provinces. Early Childhood Education and Communications seminars were also announced for this period.

New developments concerning teachers' conditions of service were detailed, in particular new across-the-board leave regulations; accouchement leave for single women teachers, however, was not granted.

On the second day of Conference, TUATA treated delegates to an outing at Gold Reef City. And a further treat was in store that evening when TUATA generously staged a banquet for all those attending Conference, and provided entertainment in

with a clear slate).

Conference was unable to complete its business and several items were held over, including Resolutions, Provincial Reports and Group Reports on the sub-themes. Conference concluded with the issuing of two press-statements: one concerning the continuation of unity talks and the other a condemnation of the banning of three Progressive bodies in the Cape.



The Honourable Mr. E.J. Mabuza.

ATASA NEWS



Sixteen Affiliate School Children visit Reunion

On 26 March 1989, 16 school children from the provinces left South Africa for a two-week visit to the Island of Reunion. The trip was arranged by ATASA in conjunction with the French Teachers' Association, SNIP-EGC, who also sponsored the trip. The departure of the children followed months of planning and often frustration. Circumstances on several occasions caused arrangements to be changed and the trip to be postponed. And so it was with much trepidation that parents, children and chaperones, Mrs F M Ramasodi and Mrs G Ludada, arrived at Jan Smuts Airport on the morning of 26 March. The embarkation of the children was greeted with ululations and, as one parent put it, "ATASA was seen to be an organization which is making children happy".

On arrival at the Reunion Airport, the children were greeted by a crowd of officials, parents and children congregated under a SNIPEGC banner. The media was also present. The South African children were formally introduced and thereafter each child was given over to the care of a local family. A full programme for each day of the visit had been organized and the South African party met at the Teachers' Centre every day before proceeding with the day's activities. Their excursions took them all over the island and provided them with the opportunity of meeting many of the local population, in particular children.

Reunion is an island of great

beauty and the children had the chance of seeing it from the air in a helicopter. They marvelled at the sea — which many of them had never seen before — the beautiful waterfalls and the volcanic mountains, one of which was still smoking, having last erupted in 1986. They had the thrill of nearly experiencing a cyclone and on one particular day had to remain indoors for fear that the cyclone would hit the island.

Pupils from different schools visited the Teachers' Centre to meet, mingle and travel with their South African counterparts. Lectures and films were arranged and different schools were visited with the aim of exposing the children to the Reunion education system. Children and teachers showed a keen mutual interest in each other.

Wherever they went the South African party were overwhelmed with hospitality; they were entertained lavishly and received many gifts. Television, radio and press were always on hand and provided extensive coverage of activities.

Despite communication problems, the children established many friendships, which they hope to maintain through correspondence. And it was with great sadness that they had to bid their new friends farewell at the conclusion of the visit.

Firm links, however, have been established between ATASA and SNIPEGC through this venture and both associations are determined that a reciprocal visit by Reunion children to South Africa will take place in the future.

Management Seminar for Affiliate Regional Executive Officials

ATASA, in conjunction with MAST SA, staged a management seminar for affiliate regional executive officials at the Alpha Training Centre, Broederstroom on 29 June - 2 July 1989.

Two delegates from each affiliate — apart from OFSATA who sent one — and five ATASA staff members attended. Mr B Mabandla, Secretary General, and Mrs N Skejane, Women's Consultant, of the Transkei Teachers' Association also attended. MAST SA supplied the facilitators.

The purpose of the seminar was to train leaders in a course based on the "One Minute Manager" module, in order to update and improve their management skills. The seminar had the following specific objectives:

- to identify elements of management;
- to clarify roles of management;
- to identify the needs and expectations of ATASA
- and to improve management skills.

Participants set out in the first place to identify the Values of ATASA. These were identified as:

- respect for the individual;
- the upholding of democratic principles;
- support of its members;
- effective management;
- encouragement of self-development;
- the upholding of the moral values of the community in which it serves.

Amongst the most important expectations of the Association, participants identified the need for: the provision of a democratic equal forum for freedom of expression in the teaching profession and Association; the promotion of unity in the teaching profession; the promotion of public confidence in the teaching profession by stimulating responsibility within the teaching body; the promotion of the trade union function and service facets through collective bargaining; the provision of effective leadership for the teaching profession; and finally, financial development.

Specific areas of concern within the Association were also identified, namely:

- Consistency in the im-

plementation of decisions.

— Discrimination against women within the Association.

— Ignorance amongst members about ATASA and its values. Work is required at the grassroots level to counter this tendency.

— Lack of regular communication with members through the media, publications, etc.

Developing such communication will increase the awareness within the membership of current movements, trends and goals of the Association.

— Presentation and communication skills.

These skills are generally lacking and need to be promoted and reinforced in the membership.

— ATASA's structure and administration. These elements should be further developed, with particular attention paid to the need for more staff.

Participants were informed on the "Elements of Management", including Planning, Leadership, Organization and Control, and then instructed in detail in the application of management "tools", in order that they should learn how to function effectively and most productively at their own particular levels of leadership. Leadership characteristics, time management, procrastination, common management problems, priorities and planning, meetings, and many other aspects within the context of management were examined, concluding with a list of points for action.

Participants were encouraged and motivated to apply this training in their areas for the benefit of regions, affiliates and the Association as a whole.

Regional Organizers' Seminar Produces Leadership Training Manual

A Regional Organizers' Seminar for ATASA's affiliates was held in Manzini, Swaziland, from 25 March - 1 April 1989. The purpose of the seminar was to produce a leadership training manual for the Association's Regional Organizers.

Three delegates were expected from each province, but only OFSATA sent its full complement. CATU and NATU sent two each and TUATA and CISTU one each. Five staff members from ATASA attended, as well as two Resource

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Persons from WCOTP, Mr M Geir and Mr N Mats.

The following topics were discussed and prepared in draft form for the manual:

1. Why do teachers form an organization?
2. Collective Bargaining.
3. Trade Unionism.
4. Programme planning and implementation.
5. ATASA.
6. Functions of Regional Organizers.
7. Status of teachers.
8. Status of teachers in Black South Africa today.
9. Communications.
10. Decision-making.
11. Problem-solving.
12. Leadership.
13. Group dynamics.
14. Status of women teachers.
15. Rural Education.
16. Recruitment campaign.
17. Needs assessment.
18. Teacher-student relationship.
19. The teacher and the community.
20. Professional Development.

21. Unity Talks.

22. The Four Internationals.

23. Administration, planning, budgeting, assessment and reporting.

Each province was requested to hold at least four leadership training seminars before 16 September 1989 to assess the manual. The final draft of the manual will be drawn at a seminar to be held in Manzini on 16-22 September 1989.

To date, in preparation for the September seminar, CATU, CISTU and OFSATA have held one seminar each, and NATU and TUATA three each.

Early Childhood Education Seminar

ATASA staged an Early Childhood Education Seminar, sponsored by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), at Broederstroom from 1-7 April 1989. Affiliate ECE Co-ordinators were invited to participate with the aims of promoting the interests of ECE, providing basic information on ECE Programmes, improving the standards of edu-

cation, care and training of children at an early age, and encouraging liaison between parents, teachers and organizations.

Full contingents of five representatives each from NATU, OFSATA and TUATA attended; CISTU and CATU were only able to send one and two representatives respectively. The Canadian Resource Persons were unable to obtain visas in time for the seminar and local talent was used instead and proved very effective. Resource Persons were National Co-ordinator, Mrs P Twala, NATU Co-ordinator, Mrs M Mkhulisi, and NATU Vice-President, Mr T Shandu; they were assisted by Mrs D Memela, Mrs T Thwala, Mrs E Ngwenya, and Mr S Gcingca. Mr E Biyela, NATU General Secretary, was the Programme Co-ordinator.

The Programme itself was varied, included sessions specifically requested by participants, and took place at different levels from the grassroots up. Some of the issues examined were: the philosophy of

Childhood Education Programmes; the role of teachers and the child's goals; management of an ECE establishment; how to organize equipment and materials in a class; and the special child (gifted, autistic and disabled).

Participants provided evaluations of the programme and revealed a grasp of new ideas and a better understanding of ECE. They were motivated anew by the seminar and expressed the intention of sharing their experiences by organizing seminars in their respective areas and sharing their ideas with staff at pre-schools. The ECE National Co-ordinator reports that she has already received numerous letters requesting further advice and direction.

In conclusion, there was consensus that the male participants at this seminar made extremely useful contributions and that in the future more male support should be enlisted in this supposedly exclusively women-controlled section of education.

WORLD CHALLENGES FOR TEACHERS

Extracts from the Presidential Address delivered by Dr J O Itotoh to the XXXII Assembly of Delegates of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP), Melbourne, Australia, 3 August 1988.

While we believe that substantial progress is being made in the operation of our Confederation, we are nevertheless being faced continually by a number of challenges which may be categorized into internal, professional and syndical, as well as external and others. Some of these are:

- The effective flow of vital and useful information between WCOTP and its member organizations.
- Making the voice of teachers evident in the affairs of nations, so that they play critical roles in shaping the direction nations must go.
- Countering the threat of the asphyxiation of education, as seen in the growing trend to cut education budgets and deliberately underfund education, the retrenchment and unemployment of qualified teachers, and the reduction of facilities and in-



crease in class sizes.

- Standing up for the rights of teachers in the face of the suppression of teachers and teachers' organizations rights to organize, bargain and to act within the ambit of international labour laws.

- Raising the status of teachers, so that they receive due recognition at every level of their function.

- Seeking solutions to the plight of the peoples in less developed countries, who suffer as a result of instability caused by wars, by natural and man-made disasters, and by abuse at the hands of industrialized and buoyant economies.

We must not forget that we

have taken a definite position against the evil living among men called apartheid. The situation in the South African enclave is getting worse by the hour. Apartheid still has its stranglehold on the oppressed and victimized Black populations and other persons of conscience in South Africa. Inequalities in education and other socio-political and economic sectors persist. The banning of a number of vocal teachers' organizations, trade unions, political groups, and local and international press makes South Africa a black box shielded from the watchful concerned eyes of the world. The growing acts of genocide, mindless killing of innocent citizens — men, women and children alike — the arrest, detention, torture and imprisonment of innocent siblings, the unprovoked and heartless burning of the shanty abode of the already deprived and exploited Blacks are daily occurrences. These atrocities go on with the support of the industrialized nations of the world, who see South Africa as their gold-mine from which they can obtain blood money. Be it known to them that, sooner or later, history will record the role their hands, soaked in the blood of innocent anti-apartheid fighters, have played in this crime against humanity.

WCOTP has been working hard to bring about the unity of the teachers' organizations in South Africa. Indeed, a major milestone was reached on April 2-10 in Harare, where, under the auspices of the major trade unions in South Africa, the organized freedom fighters in exile, and AATO and WCOTP, all the teachers' organizations in the country, except those who are die-hard apartheid agents, came together to talk unity. The outcome gives me joy, as it generates and stimulates my hope for a free South Africa at no distant date. Consequently, we are able to have in our midst at this Assembly representatives of ATASA, TASA and UTASA from South Africa. I want to welcome them in our midst and urge them to carry on the battle until the victory is won.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to plead with our co-operating member organizations not to relent in their contributions towards the anti-apartheid struggle in which they have already done much. I am sure that many other organizations will join in this crusade to restore the dignity of man and create a non-racial society in South Africa.

The world is an ever-changing world in social, political,

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WCOTP 32nd BIENNIAL ASSEMBLY

The 1988 WCOTP 32nd Biennial Assembly took place on 3-9 August 1988 in Melbourne, Australia, and the theme was "Values in Public Education". The Assembly was hosted by the Pacific Region and 91 member countries, representing some 11 million teachers worldwide, attended. Delegates and observers numbered in excess of 800.

The South African delegation included ATASA representatives Mr F M Tonjeni, President, Mr H H Dlamlenze (and his wife), Secretary General, Mr P Mehlahe, Assistant Secretary General, Mr N Khoapa, OFSATA; UTASA representatives Mr F Sonn, President, and Mr A Thompson; and TASA representative Mr P Samuels, President. An All-Africa Teachers' Organization (AATO) delegation led by President Mr A Adongo (Kenya) and Secretary General, Mr T Bediako, was also present.

WCOTP President, Dr J Itoth, conducted the opening ceremony before presenting his Presidential Address. The theme of his address was "World Challenges for Teachers" (and extracts from this address can be found elsewhere in this news letter). The Assembly was officially opened by Mr J Dawkins, Australia's Minister for Employment, Education and Training, and delegates were treated to theatrical performances organized by the Australian Teachers' Federation.

During the Women's Caucus women were given the opportunity of discussing discriminatory practices against them in their own countries. Problems were, by and large, the same and were closely related to traditional stereotyping. It was observed that in recent years however, more and more women had risen to their rightful positions, though this varied from one country to another. On the question of teachers' organizations making provision in their constitutions for women to occupy a certain percentage of offices, it was agreed that such a provision was a subtle form of discrimination. The criteria for office should always concern ability and capacity, rather than sex. The Women's Caucus concluded with the unanimous adoption of



a resolution against the Abuse of Women.

The WCOTP General Secretary's Report was delivered by the outgoing Secretary General, Mr N Goble. He stated that economic changes had brought hardship to millions of people in both the industrialized and non-industrialized countries of the world; that these changes had increased the pressure on schools to find ways of making life bearable for the system's inevitable losers; that the debt burden of the Third-World nations had worsened the already desperate situation of their peoples; and that authoritarian and unilateralist approaches were widespread in both industrialized and developing countries. In anticipation of the Theme Resolution, Mr Goble reaffirmed the teacher's right to attempt to distinguish between wisdom and folly, to recall the unquestionable truth that throughout all history the build-up of armed power had been the cause and not the effect of international tension, and to question public policy. Unfortunately, he concluded, this basic right in many countries was increasingly called into question.

The presentation of the Draft Theme "Values in Public Education" emphasized the importance of the Declaration of Human Rights and tackled the difficult question of differences in values, by asserting the primacy of the learner and the necessity for teaching today to reflect the diversity of groups in the community and the individual's right to dissent.

The proposed WCOTP Programme and Budget 1989/90 was introduced by the incoming Secretary General, Mr R Harris. He expressed concern at the propagation of fundamentally anti-education policies in response to economic pressures and the desire to provide education at lower unit costs. He said that an underlying theme of the Draft Programme was the determination of the teaching profession to confront the above-named trends. Basic principles included: the defense of teachers' conditions of service and trade union rights; the achievement of quality education for all; building strong organizations; and promoting human rights and understanding. He emphasized the attempt to be

made in the 1989/90 programme to integrate international and regional work, as part of a coherent strategy embodying three main ideas: continuity, mobilization and effectiveness.

During the session set aside for Regional Meetings, continents had the opportunity of meeting as regions to discuss matters of regional or local nature. Unity of all teachers on a non-racial basis in South Africa topped Africa's agenda. An account of the progress made thus far was given by the ATASA President and his report met with the satisfaction of AATO members.

The 32nd WCOTP Assembly adjourned on 9 August and the next Assembly will take place in Costa Rica in 1990.

Teachers Forge Stronger Links (continued)

body by September 1989. This proposal was unacceptable to ATASA, especially since she was not fully represented at affiliate level in the meeting. Nevertheless, it was agreed that each association should submit a time-table for the development process.

It was announced that there would be a regional meeting convened by COSATU in the Transvaal in August and regional representatives from each association were asked to attend. In addition, Progressive teachers in the Transvaal were looking at sport as a further means of forging unity.

World Challenges for Teachers (continued)

economic and human dimensions. We, the teachers, are the ones to teach these changes to the young, teach them how to grapple with these evolutions, assist them in enlightened behavioural modifications to bring them to the mood and realities of our times. The future of the world, of the children, of humanity, is part of our future. We must recognize our role in it and let us take up the challenges inherent in such a role.

Open Forum

Dear Sir,

I happened to come across a magazine, The South African Teacher Vol VII No 1 of July 1987, and a newsletter, Vol II No 4 of August 1987. I was surprised to learn that we have such beautiful things in the Organization. Our branch died many years ago and we have no contract with the world. So I kindly request that I be sent each and every issue and am prepared to pay for them.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs R T Zungu, Hlabisa.

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for the letter I have received. I also thank (you for) the bursary I am awarded. I understand that you are giving me (a bursary to) the value of R950. This is very much appreciated. I will do all that is required of me.

Thanks for the good wishes I am receiving from you. I wish to get a copy of one of the publications but unfortunately the slip to be completed was not enclosed in the last letter.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully,

Regina F Sishi, Indumiso College of Education, Pietermaritzburg.

Dear Sir,

Through you I kindly ask for information (as to) how to get the ATASA Newsletter and "The South African Teacher" Magazine. I am a teacher by profession and I usually visit the ATASA office at Funda Centre. I am the information officer at my branch of Frankfort. I appreciate reading both the Newsletter and the Magazine and I feel the information is vital to the teachers. Our executive is composed of 13 members and our branch has 112 teachers. We are not getting these materials, but as I read about the housing scheme I feel if we subscribe to get them quarterly, our branch will be up to date with the information.

I am not overlooking OFSATA, but I am making this request of my own accord and I hope it will be faster if I contact you (ATASA). We are missing a lot by not getting the materials. I hope you will give (me) the information concerning this, and I'm prepared to subscribe on my own if I know the channels. We are aware that DET is trying to weaken our organization by controlling sports (and) music, but we would like to keep abreast with information. If only the executive of 13 members can get the ATASA publications, we shall be grateful. Thank you in advance.

Your sincerely,

Mr A M Tshabalala,
Frankfort.

Promat

*Whither are they gone?
Children are left alone,
Mothers, fathers, sons and
daughters,
All on the way to look for
Knowledge.
To Promat they've gone.*

*Hail! You Promat
For the good you taught,
Robertson being your force,
Page being your working-tool.*

*Say not of his working abilities,
All working to their tops
For the wellbeing of others.
You shall be blessed through
your fruits.*

*That's the Great Cow —
Promat.*

*Mothers! Fathers! Sons and
Daughters!
Haste while is still milkable!
Come, get the sweetness of it
And hail Promat
The Redeemer of Famine.*

*You Promat,
Say like the wise of old
"Veni, Vidi, Vici!"
Lose no courage
For Labor Omnia Vincit.
And carry Knowledge on your
foreheads
To impart it unto the Black seeds
of Africa.*

Sekonyela Philip Mokoena,
OFSATA.

The Role of Women in our Teachers' Organization

Background Information

Whereas women form the bulk (some 75%) of the teaching fraternity, it is a fact that they were least active and never heard in all the issues concerning both education and decision-making in the teachers' organization.

The reason for non-participation could be based on a number of factors:

- there was the heavy cultural backlog which kept women out of decision-making and participation in the organization;

- the women themselves caused and consolidated structures which excluded them from effective participation;

- lack of confidence in conferences, meetings and seminars. They could be as many as their male counterparts, but they automatically remained at observer-status, which was not imposed by anybody on them;

- professional and petty jealousies hampered active participation, thus furthering an impoverished picture of their total image in the teachers' organization.

Towards Action

1975 heralded a new era. Women's Consultants were appointed in all ATASA provincial affiliates. This was ATASA's effort to cause women to establish their presence in all matters concerning teaching, education and activity in our teachers' organization.

In 1980 WCOTP and ATASA conducted a seminar which lasted for two weeks. Some of the core objectives of this move were geared towards the following:

- assisting women to know the organization better;

- skills and strategies of leadership in the organization;

- eliminating stereotype tendencies in the organization;

- accountability and decision-making in the Union;

- sensitization programme to detect leadership role;

- developing teacher activity in all aspects of the organization.

1982 saw the WCOTP Southern Region (Conference) addressing itself to rural development in education. ATASA sent a delegation to gain skills and share ideas with the other sister organizations.

Progress in the Natal Africa Teachers' Union

The provincial conferences are attended by more than 50% of the women-folk in the profession, after the ATASA/WCOTP exposure.

Active participation is visible in the following aspects of the Union:

- decision-making and policy affairs at provincial offices are well-articulated;

- out of the 78 branches of NATU, five branches employ the services of women leaders. There is room for improvement here.

Rural Women

There is need to attend to the following:

- leadership seminars;
- provincial follow-up on rural branches.

There is participation in all NATU activities which is visible and remarkable, but it remains minimal and needs attention.

F X Gasa,
NATU.

Poetry and Prose

We are sure that there are some aspiring writers amongst the ranks of our teachers. Here is an opportunity for you to submit a piece of prose or poetry for possible publication in our newsletter or magazine. Prose pieces should not be longer than 1 000 words.

Open Forum

We would like to invite readers of our newsletter and magazine to write in on any issue relating to education, particularly in the South African context. A selection of these letters will be published in each issue of the newsletter and magazine.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

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