



## FIVE FREEDOMS FORUM

### Five Freedoms Forum

### Johannesburg Regional Report

#### Introductions

The Five Freedoms Forum (FFF) is a wide ranging movement of individuals and organisations working within the white community to help bring about an open society, free from apartheid.

We are an extra-parliamentary organisation whose activities are aimed at achieving a society in which those very specific freedoms stated in our manifesto will prevail.

Our programmes involve a broad range of people - from within the parliamentary structures to those working outside of parliament. We see as one of our important aims is to bridge the gap between those working inside and outside of parliament.

The FFF originated in Johannesburg. Since a national conference which we organised in September 1987, other groups have emerged in other parts of the country. Some, such as the Pietermaritzburg group, have structures similar to that of the Johannesburg organisation. Others in Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria, consist of forums that build alliances between groups working towards the common goal of a democratic South Africa.

#### Activities and focuses of the Johannesburg FFF

At the beginning of the year, we identified the following major issues which were likely to become prominent during the year: our relationship with the Democratic Party, the general election, the Group Areas and Separate Amenities Acts, political imprisonment and the Namibian settlement.

The different sub groups are committed to taking up these issues.

The following sub-groups exist in FFF:

##### 1. Social Action Group

This group has worked primarily with Actstop in developing joint actions and strategies against the Group Areas Act. They have been active in supporting evicted black residents from the inner city.

Recently, an "Inner City Encounter" was organised jointly by Actstop and FFF. It involved suburban white residents living with inner city residents for two nights.

##### 2 Political Forum's Group

The group's main aim is to build bridges between opinion makers in the white and black community. It is particularly concerned with establishing communication between those involved in the white parliamentary and municipal opposition and those active in



extra-parliamentary groups.

### 3. Media Group

In addition to handling the organisation's media, this group has been responsible for the production and publication of our "101 Ways to end Apartheid" booklet which was publicly launched on 26 June 1989.

### 4. Contact Group

This group is primarily responsible for the recruitment and integration of new members into the organisation. Recently it has introduced it has organised visits of its members with restricted political activists.

### 5. Education Group

The group's major focus this year has been on the desegregation of education. To this end they have arranged several public seminars as well as more informal meetings with organisations and individuals concerned about this issue. They recently facilitated a meeting between Actstop and white teacher and parent organisations concerned about the closing down of schools in the inner city.

Enclosed in the folder is a research paper by this group.

### 6. Business and Economy Forum

This forum, comprised mostly of business people, have established a forum for discussion and better contact with organised industry and commerce such as Assocom, Seifsa, etc.

The first edition of Business Vision, a joint newsletter of the FFF, CBM and Idasa has just come out.

They have also been involved in a community project which involved constructing bridges in Mshengeville.

### 7. Planning committee for this conference

The functions of this committee speak for itself.

### Conclusion

FFF activities, public profile and active membership was quite low key for the first few months of this year. However in the last month, despite the fact that a lot of energy has gone into the planning for the conference, there has been a definite increase in our visibility and activities.





## Overview of the white community in Johannesburg

This is a rather potted and impressionistic account of the political forces in the white community.

### 1. Political support

Presently out of the 51 seats in the Johannesburg City Council, 24 are held by the Nats, 20 by the DP, four by the CP and three by independents.

The DP won a recent by-election in Linden. This has been viewed as an exciting pointer as to the possibilities the DP has in attracting Afrikaner support and drawing support away from the Nationalists.

### 2. The Right Wing

The right wing in Johannesburg is not nearly as organised and vocal as in places such as Pretoria or the Northern Transvaal. It rarely organises public meetings, protests etc.

An exception is the occasional bursts of protest in places like Mayfair and Malvern against blacks moving into white areas. These have had violent overtones. It is always unclear whether the harassment against anti-apartheid organisations is the work of the right wing or the state. However, it is not on the scale and frequency of other more conservative towns. The exception of this was the assassination of David Webster.

### 3. Nationalist Party

The Nationalist Party in Johannesburg has become very divided. The tensions, which mirror national tensions in the party, erupted when the Nats in the City Council split on who to vote in as Management Committee Chair after the death of the previous chair.

It has resulted in resignations and talk of "independent NATs". A NP city councillor in the southern suburbs, Verster, recently resigned and joined the DP.

### 4. The Democratic Party

While still the PFP, the DP was reenergised and invigorated by the efforts of city councillor and leader of the DP in the city council, Tone Lean. He recently won the constituency committee contest for MP of Houghton. They have also been enthused defections to the DP and the by-election win in Linden.

The Southern Transvaal region has historically been less involved in activities such as unrest monitoring and in alliances with extra-parliamentary groups than other regions. However it has been working with ACTSTOP in the fight against the Group Areas Act and ever increasing evictions of "illegal" inner city residents. They have also committed themselves to be part of an "Open Johannesburg" alliance.





ORGANISATION FOR

ANSWER KEY FOR  
LEARNING OBJECTIVE  
NO.

DUTY

TASK NO.

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TASK NO.

DUTY

ANSWER KEY FOR  
PERFORMANCE TEST  
NO.





## Extra-parliamentary organisations to the left of the Nats

A plethora of extra-parliamentary organisations of all shapes, sizes and types exist in Johannesburg.

They can possibly be divided into those which tend to focus on supporting the MD. eg Human Rights Commission and progressive professional associations to those which try to move whites away from apartheid. This distinction is sometimes blurred and groups such as the Black Sash straddle the divide.

Among those working in the white community there is an ongoing search for more effective ways of reaching out to whites. For example, there is a constant refrain about public meetings not being the way, yet every couple of months you see a few posters on the streets announcing a public meeting. In some senses this conference is part of the new way.

The profile of extra-parliamentary organisations varies but is invariably lower than parliamentary opposition. This is partly because of their relative smallness and limited effectiveness but also a result of traditional press biases. The Weekly Mail has to some extent changed this impression.

Co-operation and to some extent joint strategising between the different groups has begun. For example: Idasa, CBM and FFF meet regularly with each other, as do Jodac and Nusas, the service organisations and those involved in the health sector.

Co-operation is also increasing between the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary groups eg FFF and the DP and between "alternative" associations such as Concerned Social Workers and more establishment groups eg Johannesburg Child Welfare.

A number of successful alliances have been initiated in Johannesburg by extra-parliamentary groups. These organisations remain predominantly English speaking and have a political style which is a mixture of English liberalism and Nusas "training".

Very few initiatives exist to organise Afrikaners although Nusas, Jodac and possibly Cosaw are beginning to address the issue. Nusas has been giving support to RAU students trying to build the embryonic Afrikaners Against Apartheid. The birth of the Vryeweekblad should provide impetus to this process as well as make it a greater imperative.

The civic associations in the white suburbs are by and large apolitical although the Kensington/Malvern Residents Association chair has come out very strongly against right wing attempts in his area to kick out black residents.

In Yeoville, an initiative to improve the self defence of left wing activists, recently resulted in the formation of a Yeoville Residents Organisation which includes a zonal structure. They also plan to take up Group Areas issues in the area. Similar initiatives are taking place in other North Eastern suburbs.