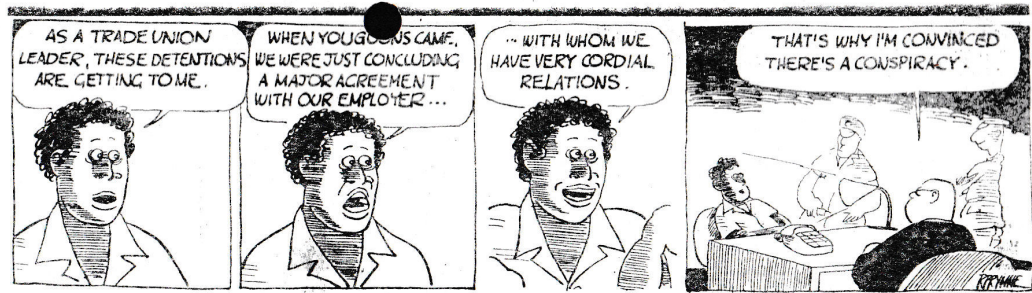
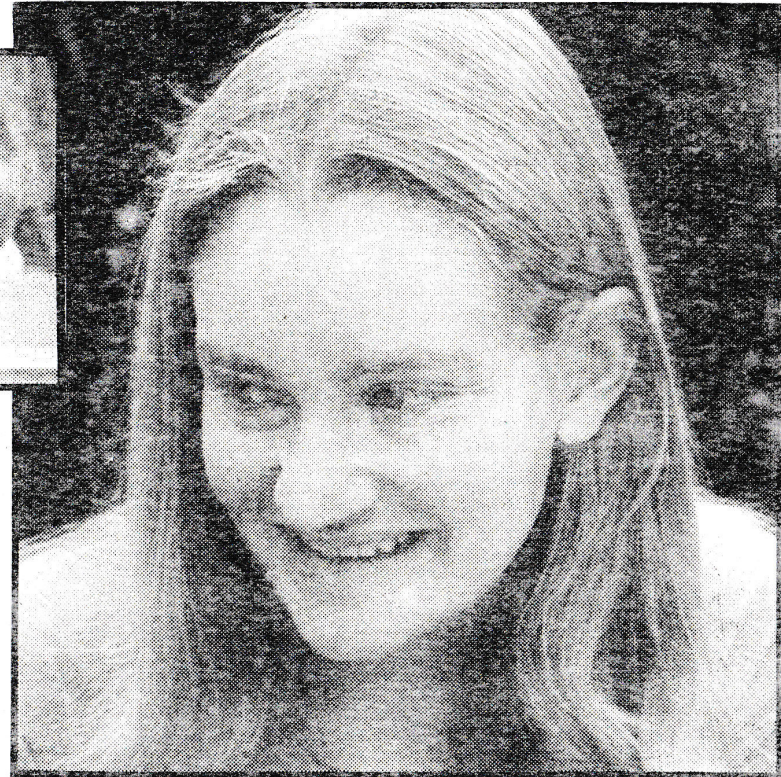




□ Law and Order Minister Le Grange ... iron fist behind detentions



□ ABOVE: UDF leader Archie Gumede ... freed by the Supreme Court; but sheltering in Durban's British Consulate



□ RIGHT: Student leader Kate Philip ... held without trial; released without charge

'Detention without trial is unacceptable in the international community, but here it has become the norm. The public is becoming numbed to this whole idea ... and it hardly arouses comment anymore'

On the eve of International Human Rights Day, a look at the grim situation in South Africa

# 1093 The score for people held without trial during 1984

AND THAT'S THE YARDSTICK BY WHICH OUR HUMAN RIGHTS ARE MEASURED

By Carolyn

McGibbon

ONE of the clearest indications of South Africa's disregard for human rights is its widescale use of detention without trial.

So far this year, security police have picked up about 1 093 people in South Africa (including the homelands) — more than double the number held under security legislation last year.

Of these, 330 have been released without charge; a further 213 are still in cells, according to the latest figures released by the Detainees' Parents Support Committee.

Only 12 detainees this year have been charged and found guilty.

The State's widespread use of its draconian security legislation effectively silenced the leadership of a significant number of organisations which were expressing grievances and dissent over Government policies.

Hardest hit have been student and youth groups — more than 530 young people have been detained.

The largest single swoop was on students in Transkei, where security police pulled in 247 people, only to drop charges against them later.

The Congress of South African Students saw 15 of its office bearers detained, and the former president of the National Union of South African Students, Kate Philip, was held — again, no charges were pressed.

Political activists also felt the bite of security legislation. The United Democratic Front, formed to oppose the tricameral system, was dealt a heavy blow, losing to detention 14 people in leadership positions.

The Natal president of the UDF, Archie Gumede, and five others who opposed the elections, contested their detention orders in the courts, and after a judge ordered that they be released, the iron-fisted man behind the detentions, Minister of Law and Order, Louis le Grange, issued fresh detention orders.

This led to the British consulate affair, which helped throw this country's draconian detention laws into the international spotlight.

While the ageing Mr

Gumede and two other men are still sheltering in the consulate (with police on duty outside), the three who left the building, Natal Indian Congress leaders Mewa Ramgobin, George Sewpershad, and M J Naidoo, are being held.

A feature of the clamp-down on opposition to the elections was the wide use of the clause which allows for preventive detention — Section 28. It grants the Minister of Law and Order the power to detain a person for up to six months, merely on suspicion that the person may commit an offence.

This section was used during the Soweto riots in 1976, the school boycotts in 1980 and the anti-Republic Day celebrations in 1981.

Two other events which led to a spate of detentions this year were the rent

protests in rural townships and a two-day stayaway in November.

Despite a strongly worded call by big business (which, by and large, backed the Government in the referendum), many trade union leaders were not released.

However a police spokesman confirmed yesterday that 11 detainees were set free on Friday.

They include Chris Dlamini, president of the powerful Federation of South African Trade Unions and the general secretary of the Council of Unions of South Africa, Piroshaw Camay.

Five other detainees picked up after the stay-away are facing charges of subversion.

A spokesman for the Detainees' Parents Support Committee in Johannesburg said the high number of detentions was a "reflection of the appalling

lack of human rights in South Africa".

Detention without trial involved a wide deprivation of basic rights, he said. Among the rights of which a person was deprived were freedom and contact with the outside world, and legal rights (access to lawyers as in the case of Section 29 detainees).

The spokesman said: "Detention without trial is unacceptable in the international community, but here it has become the norm. The public is becoming numb to this whole idea of detention. It hardly arouses comment anymore."

Detentions aside, another alarming indication of the Government's disregard for human rights is its use of "banishment".

The president of the UDF's Border branch, Steve Tshwete, has been effectively banished to the

Ciskei and declared an alien in the land of his birth.

Born in Springs, he is now not allowed to cross into South Africa from Ciskei without a visa.

This has also befallen another "banished" UDF leader — Charles Ngakula. He was born in Cradock and has been stripped of his citizenship by being banished to a Government-created independent homeland.

## Jailed for dagga con

Sunday Times Reporter

A NATAL CID man set a trap for Thomas Mohlokoane, who claimed to be selling dagga.

The detective paid R30 for a parcel, but the consignment turned out to be harmless muti herbs.

The Martizburg Supreme Court quashed a sentence for dealing in dagga, but Mohlokoane was jailed for 10 months for fraud.