



CHILDREN NEED JUSTICE

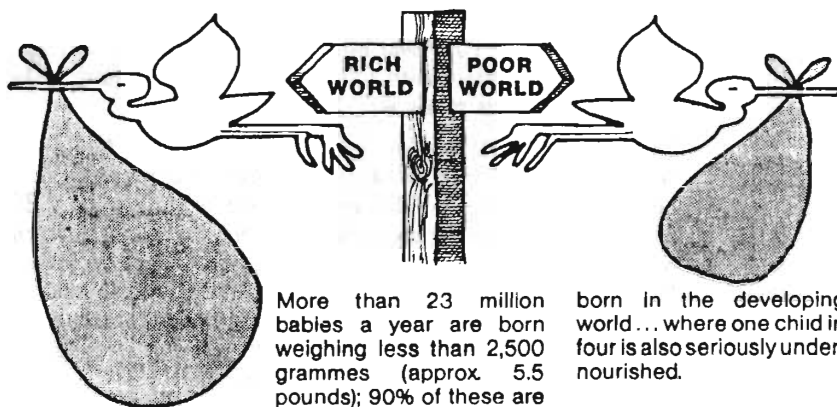
PACSA FACTSHEET

NO 23

DISCRIMINATE DEATH

Discrimination by wealth begins even before birth. Poor, undernourished mothers are more likely to give birth to undernourished babies - and small, weak babies are more susceptible to illness and death.

Low birthweight babies are 4 - 6 times more susceptible to physical and mental handicap, and 8 - 10 times more likely to die in the first year of life.²



South Africa (1975 - 1980)

Infant deaths per 1,000 live births¹



12 white babies



300 'Homelands' black babies

NEW INTERNATIONALIST
October 1986.

CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA

Many black children in South Africa are no longer prepared to accept their lot. The injustice of apartheid touches them in every possible way - health, family life, home, education, sport - and many of them are now fighting back with whatever 'weapons' (whether boycotts or stones) they can find. As a result, we have the following statistics:

Of approximately 22 000 people detained since June 12, 1986, 42% are children under the age of 18. (Detainees' Parents Support Committee)

THE WAR AGAINST CHILDREN

A report in the *SUNDAY TRIBUNE*, November 2, 1986, on the alleged 'war' against children, was denied by Brigadier Mellet of the Bureau of Information. However, the report is based on a publication by a U.S.A. human rights lawyer, Helena Cooke, and compiled from affidavits, court records, newspaper reports and statements collected in South Africa.

"The report quotes a psychiatrist who has been involved in treating detainees on their release, as estimating that as many as 70% develop post-traumatic stress disorders. The psychiatrist believes children are particularly susceptible to anxiety disorders, depression, adjustment and behaviour disorders and psychotic episodes. Children frequently exhibit acute feelings of guilt, fear, isolation and depression on their release."

THE BRUTALISATION OF CHILDREN

"The young blacks of today are the third generation to grow up under apartheid. They refuse to accept it... Not all the threats and detentions and teargas cannisters and shotgun blasts in the world are going to make those kids accept the system. All that massive over use of force can do is to brutalise them, turn them into a Khmer Rouge."

Allister Sparks. NATAL WITNESS 18.9.1986.

CHILDREN AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM

"Their PARENTS AND THEY themselves suffer arrest for petty offences and even children receive heavy sentences. Under such circumstances black children regard the legal system as barbaric, and when formal structures - government or social workers - give no real help, they turn to People's Courts..."

PROBLEMS OF TOWNSHIP CHILDREN AND YOUTH
Cape Western Black Sash.

CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT WORLDS

The following are two brief 'autobiographies' written by schoolboys aged 17 years. Pseudonyms are used in both cases.

"My name is John. I was born on 13.9.1969 in Cape Town and moved to Pietermaritzburg 6 years ago. I am at school at Maritzburg College and am starting Std. 10 in 1987. I am very interested in music and I play the organ and piano. I intend to study music when I have completed school.

I joined a local campaign about a year ago and have participated in their programmes. Realising the need for justice and peace in South Africa, I became involved, and this has made clearer the injustice in South Africa. I live a peaceful, comfortable life and I object to a policy which prevents others from enjoying a life similar to mine."

"My name is Themba. I was born in 1969. At the beginning of 1986 I was in Std. 9, and I was vice president of the S R C. My home is in X Township but I am now in hiding. My ambition is to negotiate with other political organisations. My favourite things are music and the struggle. (sic)

I was born in Pietermaritzburg in Edendale Hospital. My father works in town. I started schooling when I was 5 years old. I failed only Form 3. I became involved in politics in 1984 when I joined a youth organisation. I left my home in April when Inkatha members attacked my home. I am on hiding from that day. Also I was held in detention for 16 weeks. I have not been able to complete school this year. I think the best solution among black students is to get a peoples education, and every problem will be solved like that."

CHILDREN NEED PEACE & JUSTICE



NOT WAR & DETENTION



(Drawings by PACSA children)

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

CAMPAIGN to free our children from detention without trial and long terms of imprisonment.

PRAY God bless Africa, guard her children, guide her leaders and give her peace. For Christ's sake. Amen.

READ ALSO: CHILDREN IN CRISIS/PACSA Factsheet No. 22
CHILDREN IN CRISIS/Natal Midlands Black Sash Factsheet
MEMORANDUM ON THE SUFFERING OF CHILDREN (Black Sash)
SOUTH AFRICA: IMPRISONMENT AND ILLTREATMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. (Amnesty International Report, February 1986).
PROBLEMS OF TOWNSHIP CHILDREN & YOUTH: A Seminar Report.
(Black Sash - Cape Western).

(available from PACSA office).

December 1986.