

the Lebowa Legislative Assembly (members and the LTC. After this meeting, on August 29, Dr Phatudi ordered Lebowa police to stop harassing motorists who were giving lifts to boycotters and to remove road blocks.

Tension existed, and probably still does, within the Seshego community between Azapo and the Taxi Association over the latter's refusal to lower fares for the duration of the bus boycott.

Buses were removed from Seshego depot on August 29 and parked at the local SA Airforce base, presumably to protect them from stone throwers.

On Saturday, August 30, it was announced that the fare increases had been suspended for two weeks. Fortunately the community was not as optimistic as the Sunday Post with its 'bus boycott victory' headline, but decided to continue the boycott, asking for a reduction of fares and improvement in the service offered (for example, that there should be no charge for luggage, and that the LTC should not drop passengers at Polokwane Centre). These decisions were taken at a meeting of residents.

Rev Melatji said that the suspension was an attempt to 'lure them back to the buses in order to destroy their unity'.

On the night of Tuesday, September 2, two buses to Moletsi were stoned as they passed through Seshego. A further meeting between Lebowa authorities, the SVC, Seshego township council, Pietersburg town council and the LTC ended in deadlock. Jack Botes of the town council said that fares would have to go up more if workers were not dropped at the outskirts of the town.

Botes said that town council labourers earned R70 per month and the Administration

Board workers earned between R70 and R80.

The mass meeting on Sunday, September 7, said that the LDC-owned LTC must go. The meeting was addressed by Hamabolo Ropheau and KH Moleosi, local Azapo leaders, Rev Malatji of the SVC and Lebowa Legislative Assembly members. Freedom songs were sung and poetry read by the Turfloop students.

The LLA members present said that they would not negotiate with the Lebowa government until it allowed the Namba Buya Bus Service to operate in Lebowa, and would boycott the opening of a road to the Lebowa kgomo industrial area (where most industries are LDC-owned).

On 'political' reasons for the boycott one speaker said: 'What is politics? Politics is your four-room matchbox, it is your five grown-up children sharing a room with others sleeping in the kitchen, it is increasing bus fares while workers are paid R35 per month'. This was loudly acclaimed.

A pamphlet distributed at the meeting called for the formation of a trade union to negotiate a minimum wage for the area.

On Wednesday, September 8, Phatudi and his cabinet, Dr J Adendorf, chairman of the LTC board of directors and chief of the CED, and bus company officials met.

The Pietersburg Sakekame said that only 'the most unskilled workers' (probably the vast majority) were earning less than R100 per month.

Large companies had started making their own transport arrangements for their workers.

During the week starting Monday, September 15, the boycott spread rapidly, caused by the end of the suspension and the reintroduction of increases on all LTC routes

except for those in Seshego. At Lenyeny township (near Tzaneen) a bus was hijacked by students from the Seboya High School - some were arrested. At Sekaba High School students refused to board buses.

At Gafhohoboya (also near Tzaneen) a bus was damaged when commuters stoned it. Workers walked from Rolepo and Rokokane townships to Pietersburg. Lt-Colonel P Moloto of the Lebowa police said that buses had to be escorted by police.

The boycotts continue.

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