

# 125 000 <sup>16.1.71</sup>

## saw yachts

By JONATHAN FEDLER

**C**APETONIANS and holiday-makers turned out in full force on Saturday to give the entrants in the Cape-to-Rio race one of the most rousing send-offs the city has ever seen.

At a conservative estimate, roughly 125 000 people crammed the seashore, Signal Hill, Ocean View Drive and High Level Road, Sea Point, Granger Bay and the breakwater for a view of the start of the race.

They watched enthusiastically from balconies, rooftops and rocky ledges, dinghies, launches and aircraft. And when it was over they caused one of the worst traffic jams ever known here.

The Prime Minister, Cabinet members, the Chief of the South African Navy, Vice-Admiral Piemann, and other dignitaries watched from the frigate SAS President Kruger, adding their prestige to the greatest sailing event in South African maritime history.

Before the beginning of the race boats of the National Sea Rescue Institute and a helicopter provided a dramatic sea-rescue demonstration.

Braving the hundreds of escort craft around the restricted start-

ing area, and watched by a squadron of light aircraft—private and chartered—the yachts edged their way towards the 1.6-km (one-mile) starting line off the South African Merchant Navy Academy, General Botha.

For the crews waiting anxiously, relief came suddenly with the loud boom of the starting cannon, fired at 4.30 p.m. by Dr. Jan Dommissie, Mayor of Cape Town. Westward, Stormkaap and City of Germiston led the procession.