

PROGRESS



500 DEAD:
WHO SET
THE FUSE?



Socialism
after
STALIN

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It is now clear that the price of each step on the path to democracy in South Africa will be high.

In addition to the advance payment in thousands of lives and incalculable suffering in past years, more than 500 people have died in political strife this year - most of them since the legalisation of the African National Congress and other restricted organisations.

The ANC's insistence on retaining its capacity to wage an armed struggle and an active commitment to mass action has led some to lay at its door responsibility for the current explosion of political violence.

But any serious attempt to understand South Africa today and to plan for its tomorrow, must include an assessment of who benefits from the rising death-toll and associated political disruption.

Clearly the toppling of Pretoria's bantustan fiefdoms opens windows of opportunity for the ANC and its allies.

Equally clearly, conflicts within black communities and the resultant disruption of the ANC's nascent legal organisation does not.

But there are other beneficiaries. And there is a growing body of evidence to suggest their actions have been consciously undertaken to achieve a political leverage beyond that to which their constituency support entitles them.

But the awesome body-count and sometimes brutal manoeuvring for tactical advantage should not blind South Africans to the fact that their own efforts, coinciding with developments far beyond their borders, have presented them with a gift of history not often granted a nation.

South Africa's final step towards democracy is being taken at a time of almost universal ideological fluidity. The steady replacement of calcified orthodoxies is accompanied by growing international acceptance of the supremacy of the popular will.

The value of this historic gift has, however, been obscured by the immediate political crisis. In a period that should be taken up with a national debate on the country's future, opposition leaders have been forced to divert most of their energies into the task of putting out political fires.

Combined with the opposition's limited organisational capacity (a limitation it readily acknowledges) this has left the internal opposition leadership unable to capitalise on the liberation fervour unleashed by the freeing of Nelson Mandela.

The addition of a handful of individuals, whatever their stature, to the domestic leadership of the democratic movement cannot make good the organisational stunting caused by years of repression.

Much of the tactical planning for the immediate future is thus still directed from ANC structures abroad.

The broad objective of these tactical thrusts is essentially no different from those of the internal leadership's 'fire-fighting': to maintain and strengthen a broad and coherent political movement to end apartheid; and head off efforts to weaken support for democracy.

A key proposal from the ANC is the establishment of a broad front, with the ANC at its head, based on the minimum demand for the eradication of apartheid and its replacement with a political democracy.

Such fronts can never function without tension and a degree of political contest. But this is far removed from the kind of political tension which exacts lives.

Nevertheless, alliances must be approached with caution. There is a powerful popular resonance for the argument that there is little benefit from alliances with one-time oppressors whose instant conversions have more to do with self-interest than belated discovery of the moral supremacy of democracy.

There is a real danger that alliances based on short-term expediency can win weak friends at the cost of alienating committed supporters at the grass-roots.

This is most graphically demonstrated in the bantustans, where expectations and demands are integrally linked to the total destruction of the bantustan system itself.

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11.

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CONTENTS

BRIEFS

2

Sayco eyes the ANC
Moves on the LRA
DP on privatisation
War exiles look South
NUM says no to racism

CHALLENGE AND CARNAGE

6

Looking beyond the political death toll

CISKEI'S GQOZO

13

Pretoria's puppet or MDM's man?

ALLIANCE POLITICS

16

ANC paths to broadening support

DEMOCRACY TO THE FORE

18

Sachs on rights for whites

NAMIBIA LOOKS TO LIFE

20

Development prospects and problems

ZIMBABWE TEN YEARS ON

22

An election of vicious rhetoric

UNIONS UNDER 'SOCIALISM'

24

A view from inside Zimbabwe

LESSONS OF EASTERN EUROPE

27

Socialism and the democratic imperative

THE WHITE RIGHT RE-ARMS

32

Does fiery rhetoric mean war?

LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN

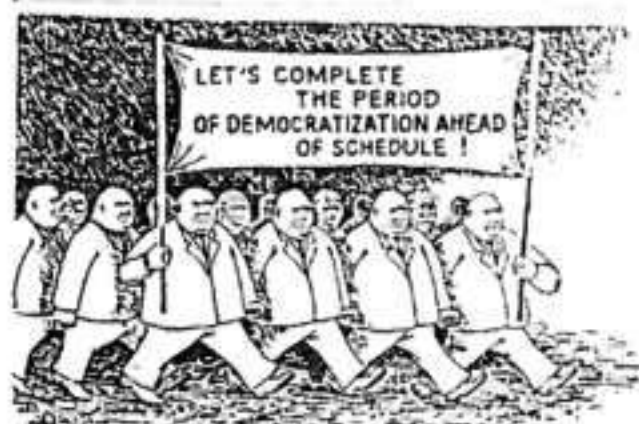
35

Numsa's fight for a single deal

LABOUR TRENDS

39

Strikes and disputes



Sayco eyes the ANC

The South African Youth Congress (Sayco) is likely to seek a merger with the youth section of the African National Congress in the wake of their first-ever open national congress on April 13-15.

The objective of the merger will be the re-establishment of the ANC Youth League - possibly before the ANC's national conference on December 16 - according to proposals to the Sayco congress, at Kabokwene near Nelspruit and at which Nelson Mandela, deputy ANC president and a former Youth League president himself, is scheduled to be the key-note speaker.

'Members are already agitating for it', says Sayco publicity secretary Simon Ntombela. 'We're being pestered all the time by members asking "When are we going to be ANC?"'

Sayco is expecting up to 40 ANC youth section representatives at its congress, as well as smaller delegations from the ANC itself, the South African Communist Party and Umkhonto weSizwe.

The small print of precisely how Sayco will be transformed into the ANC Youth League has not yet been resolved - it is a key issue given the ANC's insistence on direct, individual membership, rather than organisational affiliation. But Sayco officials are confident it will be (while acknowledging that transforming the organisation will be a massive task) given the sheer size of its membership - which Ntombela now estimates at 500 000.

The lack of an accurate membership figure is partially the result of Sayco's

past, often loose, federal structure.

But the recent formation of hundreds of local youth congresses, particularly in the Northern Transvaal and the Transkei, has added to the uncertainty.

Already Sayco's biggest regional affiliate, the Northern Transvaal Youth Congress has seen its membership almost double to an estimated 200 000 since December - the growth of organisation fed by and feeding into the wave of rural resistance, particularly in the 'homelands'.

After the congress, officials



Ntombela: Pestered over the ANC

will undertake the mammoth task of accurately documenting Sayco's membership.

At the same time, the organisation will be restructuring.

This will include adding the Transkei to Sayco's current 10 regions, and replacing Sayco's original federal network with a centralised, national organisation with a single constitution.

Launched in secret at the height of state of emergency repression in early 1987, the loose federal structure was well suited to conditions at the time, says Ntombela.

'Communication between local, regional and national structures was extremely difficult and at times impossible. So a high degree of local and regional autonomy and initiative was

essential'.

But the result has been the establishment of hundreds of independent local youth congresses and the 10 regions, each with its own constitution and priorities, and an extremely cumbersome consultative process.

In the current, more open period, says Ntombela, a more centralised and streamlined structure is both desirable and possible.

Therefore, post-congress formations such as Cayco (Cape) and Styco (Southern Transvaal) will become Sayco's Western Cape and Southern Transvaal regions. Local youth congresses will become branches - the Soweto Youth Congress becoming Sayco's Soweto branch.

The streamlining and centralisation will facilitate a merger with the ANC's youth section, adds Ntombela.

So will the introduction of an age limit of 35 on Sayco membership - in the past Sayco used the term 'youth' more to describe a state of mind than an actual age bracket. The age limit will bring Sayco into line with the youth section. It is unlikely to have any immediate effect on Sayco's leadership: president Peter Mokaba is 32 - giving him three clear years should he choose to stand for the presidency again.

And while a key debate in the congress will be on

negotiations between the democratic movement and Pretoria, attention will also focus on the issues of unemployment and socialism - which Sayco sees as interlinked.

The organisation draws much of its support from unemployed youths, for whom the idea of non-racial capitalism appears to offer as few prospects for a job and a decent life as apartheid has done.

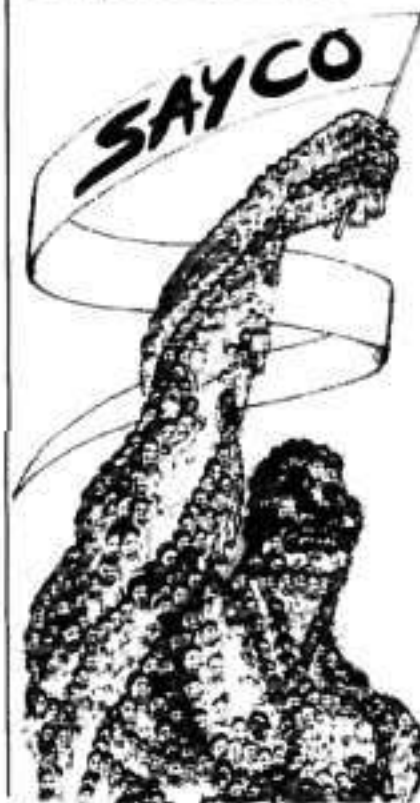
And while the congress will reassert Sayco's primary commitment to the attainment of popular political power and the realisation of the demands of the Freedom Charter, Ntombela acknowledges:

'The youth likes socialism, but we want to understand the recent developments in Eastern Europe. We want to draw lessons from it. As people who are going to inherit the future, we want to inherit it fully armed to tackle the problems.'

'We have asked (SACP general secretary) Joe Slovo to give us an input on what has brought about that phenomenon (in Eastern Europe)'.

An additional issue for the congress will be the establishment of a non-sectarian federation of South African youth - a junior version of the anti-apartheid alliance envisioned by the ANC.

'Not all South African youth share our political vision', says Ntombela, 'but we all face a common future. We are, as a matter of urgency, therefore going to be attempting to establish - with the members of the Youth Summit (an alliance established in 1988 of Sayco, Nusas, Sansco and Cosas) as the core - a national youth federation. Ultimately we would like to see all youth formations, even Azasm, Azanyu and possibly even Jeugkrug, as part of the federation'. - David Niddrie



Edging towards agreement

The process of framing labour law acceptable to unions, employers and the state has moved up several gears - but sources warn that there are hurdles still to be crossed.

In break-through talks between Cosatu, Nactu and Manpower Minister Eli Louw last month, Louw pledged that he would try to enact draft labour law changes agreed between unions and the employer body, Saccola.

In a joint statement after the four-hour meeting, the parties agreed that the draft deal should be submitted to Louw as soon as possible. He would then refer it to the national manpower committee for consideration and give priority to pushing it through parliament this session.

Louw also agreed to speak to the South African Agricultural Union and to facilitate a meeting between the unions and Dr Wim de Villiers, the minister responsible for the public sector, with a view to encouraging the widest possible employer participation in the Saccola talks.

The meeting, historic as the first encounter between a minister of state and the major labour movement, also marks a shift in the state's approach to labour law.

The controversial 1988 amendments to the LRA were promulgated in the teeth of employer and union objections and while the Saccola talks were still in progress.

Following 18 months of mass-protest action by workers and the appointment of a new manpower minister less

sensitive to right-wing pressure, there is now an official recognition that new law must involve and be acceptable to the major players in the labour field. It is also seen as a significant sign of growing union unity and flexibility that Nactu assistant general secretary Cunningham Ngcukane, a leading figure in the Pan Africanist Movement, was prepared to join the union delegation to Louw.

The draft Saccola agreement, leaked to the press in mid-March, goes a long way to meeting the unions' interim demands on the LRA.

Its key proposal is that the unfair labour practice code introduced in 1988 - which bans sympathy strikes, 'repeat' strikes on the same issue and consumer boycotts - should be scrapped and the flexible mandate of the Industrial Court to make labour law by precedent restored. The proposed definition of an unfair labour practice would, however, be expanded in line with the International Labour Organisation standards to bar dismissals without good cause.

Unlawful strikes would still

be subject to interdict, but interdicts would be limited to exceptional circumstances and unions would be given reasonable opportunity to defend themselves.

The draft simplifies Industrial Court procedures by scrapping the current right of appeal to the Appellate Division and provides for the automatic publication of court judgments except on special application.

Although the unions' interim demand for one statute including farm, domestic and state employees is not embodied in the draft changes intended for this

parliamentary session, the agreement contains 'charters' of employer and union rights, drawn from the Wiehahn Commission, recognising that all workers should be covered by labour law of some kind.

The draft has been referred to the constituencies of both Saccola and the unions for approval.

Given the significant Saccola concessions on a range of issues formerly in dispute, workers may endorse the draft. But employer sources warned that top management of

Saccola's constituent bodies - including the Chamber of Mines and the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation - were unlikely to buy the agreement in its present form.

The provisions on strike interdicts were likely to be a key stumbling-block, they said.

Employer rejection of the draft deal, particularly if workers approve it, could provide the spark for renewal of the LRA campaign, a move the labour movement has repeatedly threatened. - WIP Correspondent.

PRIVATISATION

An unexpected ally

Opponents of Pretoria's privatisation policies have found an unexpected, if temporary, ally - the Democratic Party. Previewing a new DP economic policy document, MP Harry Schwarz said the party was concerned that state monopolies would simply become privately-owned monopolies.

The DP believes the state's share of the economy is too large and sectors need to be privatised.

But it does not support blanket privatisation.

'Privatisation of such entities as Eskom should not proceed at this time,' says Schwarz, 'and except for certain sectors of Sats which, if privatised will enter a competitive market, the remainder should be held back'.

The same principle applies to the post office.

Schwarz criticised the government's use of its monopoly of political power to force through privatisation and impose other, equally-contentious, economic



objectives. If the government showed good faith by holding back, the chances of a future government using its access to political power to reverse the process would diminish. Schwarz also criticised the government's planned use of the funds generated by privatisation - one suggestion is that they be used to meet deficits in pension funds. 'Those who oppose privatisation could more readily be persuaded to change their views if the proceeds were used to establish socially desirable capital projects to help redress social inequalities'. Schwarz, in addition, believes that recent rail and air-transport tariff increases were to prepare for Sats operations to become privately-owned, taxpaying concerns. Privatising Eskom would necessitate similar electricity price increases. - *WIP Correspondent*.

The war exiles look south

Since the legalisation of the African National Congress, hundreds of young white men who left South Africa to avoid call-up for service in the South African Defence Force have begun examining their future in a new light. Members of the London-based Committee on South African War Resistance (Cosawr) met recently to discuss the role of the armed forces in a transitional society, the relationship between the military and democratic organisations and - most crucially for its members - the possibility of their return home. With a network of resisters throughout Europe, Cosawr was formed in 1978 by the

first group of war resisters to seek political asylum in Britain. This first wave left South Africa in response to the uprisings in the mid-70s, the invasion of Angola, the introduction of two-year military service and the increasing militarisation of white South Africa by PW Botha. Fed by a steady flow of subsequent resisters, Cosawr and its journal, *The Resister*, have kept resisters in contact with each other. They have also helped put military conscription and war resistance on the agenda of the international anti-apartheid movement. Cosawr has contributed to ANC thinking on conscientious objection and war resistance and, inside South Africa, its publications helped create a climate for the setting up of organisations like the End Conscription Campaign (ECC).

The legalisation of the ANC and associated developments have introduced new imperatives for Cosawr. The organisation's founder Gavin Cawthra (GC), its administrator Matthew Temple (MT), and Gerald Kraak (GK) of *The Resister's* editorial board discussed these with *Ingrid Obery* in London.

WIP: What were the central issues at Cosawr's recent conference?

GC: We looked at the future of Cosawr, whether and when war resisters should return home, and our relationship to internal organisations like the ECC. Cosawr definitely still has a role in exile - for as long as conscription exists in South Africa this will be the case. Also, we have never had a base inside the country - if we went back as an organisation at all it would be to bolster internal resistance movements. Some delegates were

prepared to return immediately, feeling that doing this before any amnesty was granted would increase pressure on Pretoria. Others felt we should continue to demand amnesty from exile. And still others felt they did not want to return until conscription had been abolished.

It was generally agreed that any returnees would strengthen the democratic movement, and would refuse to be conscripted into the SADF under any circumstances. Cosawr also endorsed the ECC's demand for the safe return of exiles, the release of imprisoned war resisters and an end to trials of war resisters.

MT: Another issue is the role of the military during the period of transition. And

we have realised that we must address the question of the future nature of the military in South Africa.

WIP: Can you expand on that - particularly following the spate of 'homeland' coups or attempted coups? GC: Cosawr has no fixed position as yet. But it is instructive to look at the Namibian experience where there were very clear guidelines for the role of the existing armed forces - be they Plan (the Swapo army), Swatf (the South African-controlled Namibian unit) or the SADF. Primarily these involved the demobilisation of Swatf and confinement of Plan and the SADF to base. At the same time the regular police force was allowed to be deployed under the supervision of



Burning his call-up papers: one of the South African men who left the country to avoid the call-up

United Nations forces to maintain law and order. In South Africa it appears there will be no external authority. This has not been raised as a possibility and De Klerk's government seems vehemently opposed to it.

So the question of monitoring and controlling security force operations becomes paramount. How does an interim government, if and when we reach that kind of stage, control the armed forces? And who will the monitors be - the SADF, Umkhonto weSizwe or a mix? The SADF and the police can hardly be regarded as neutral forces. They have waged war against popular movements.

GC: The death squad investigation is pertinent. De Klerk is trying to present himself as the cleanser of the military and police - so these forces will become suitable instruments to oversee law and order during transition. The investigation has also undermined the previously strong influence of the military.

An issue in the near future is the democratisation of the armed forces. One way of doing this is looking at structures which would represent the interests of employees in the security forces. An example is the police union set up by Gregory Rockman. These structures would have to be accountable in some way to the democratic movement. Another issue is the way the organisations of popular struggle engage with the armed forces. We should be looking at the army as a site of struggle and mobilisation. The black troops' loyalty to the government cannot be assumed. This is an area where the MDM should be working.

White troops are a different kettle of fish. Cosawr talked

to people who had served in the SADF over a spread of 14 years. All the issues they raised were similar ... pay, leave, brutality and so on. And where troops have banded together it has been over these issues in spite of the army's mechanisms of internal division.

WIP: If a new (democratic) government decides to introduce conscription what kinds of provisions and protections would be necessary?

MT: At the very least, an entrenched right to conscientious objection, or to do alternative non-military service, in areas possibly totally unrelated to the state.

GC: Conscription of the whole population would be unviable. At present conscripts are only part of the male section of the white population ... just 5% of the total. If the general population were conscripted the army would be too big. Also, who regionally is likely to threaten a newly constituted South Africa? Perhaps the only advantage of a conscripted army is that a cross section of the whole population is mixed together in its ranks. In many countries armies have often reflected popular will, refusing to carry out orders unpopular with the civilian population. A professional army has to be strictly controlled politically to rule out coup dangers.

GK: National service could well be non-military. The ECC, for instance, has put forward a proposal for voluntary national service where people would volunteer to show their support for the process of reconstruction ... both men and women.

WIP: What is the immediate future for conscripts and war resisters?

GK: De Klerk's speech

made no mention of those who had refused to serve in the SADF. And I am not sure what SADF members would feel about serving with people who may now legally be members of the ANC.

If there is a large-scale return of war resisters the question of the status of the asylum other countries have given them is raised. These countries may well start refusing asylum to newly arrived conscientious objectors on the basis of changes in South Africa. But it could be the case that while some resisters are returning home, others are leaving because they refuse to serve in the SADF. The right to asylum must be protected.

Defying racist regulations

Within a month of the launch of NUM's campaign for justice, peace and democracy - aimed at ending racial discrimination and repression on the mines - more than 20 000 mineworkers had participated in protest and strike action.

They staged underground sit-ins and defied racist regulations, such as hostel rules, segregated queues for cages and restrictions on union activities.

In addition to demanding an end to racial discrimination, the campaign calls for an end to the migrant labour system, the removal of mine security guards and recognition of workers' rights to engage freely in union and political activities.

Efforts are being made to persuade white miners to join NUM on the grounds that their long-term interests lie in alignment with black workers.

Racism and repression pervade working conditions on the mines. Hostels are surrounded by barbed wire; workers must carry identity cards at all times; union activities are severely restricted, as are the display of posters, the distribution of pamphlets and the wearing of political T-shirts.

Restrictions on the right to organise are backed up with the force of mine security. Says NUM press officer Jerry Majatladi: 'Violence is inherent in the system. It emanates from the conditions created by the migrant labour system. For us this is institutionalised violence. Our call for peace is therefore a call to dismantle the migrant labour system and remove mine security'.

The call to white miners to join NUM is seen as central to the democratic aims of the campaign. Recently, white miners refused to work at President Steyn mine in the Free State because of conflict during hoisting, when black workers defied segregated cage regulations. White workers at Kriel colliery went on strike after a white miner was dismissed for assaulting a black worker. Challenges to segregated hoisting have been a major form of protest. White miners are hoisted without delay while blacks often have to queue for hours for lifts to and from the surface. They are not paid for these hours spent waiting. Workers attempting to form non-racial queues underground have in many cases been disciplined and dismissed. This has provoked sit-in strikes underground.

In attacking the migrant labour system, workers have demanded or defiantly assumed the right to take their wives or girlfriends into the single-sex hostels. - Carol Paton

As De Klerk's government prepares to negotiate with its democratic opposition, an explosion of political violence has left 500 dead. Jo-Anne Collinge assesses the causes and effects of the convulsion

Who set the fuse?

(and who benefits?)



More than 500 people have died in political violence in South Africa this year. On average each day has seen the addition of five more victims.

The fatality rate equals - and sometimes exceeds - the monthly death tolls in the brutal run-up to the 1985 and 1986 states of emergency.

The massive escalation in political slaughter comes just as the National Party appears poised to do what it previously found unthinkable, negotiate with the African National Congress.

But reports on the killings create an impression of inexplicable brutality. They obscure the roots of violence, the initiators and, most crucially, who gains politically from these brutal battles.

In doing so they fail to acknowledge how the violence may affect negotiations between Pretoria and its opponents - when they take place, between

whom, the balance of forces between the parties to the talks, and what compromises have been forced on them in advance.

Because the African National Congress has been insistent on maintaining the armed struggle and encouraging mass resistance in the run-up to negotiations, there has been a tendency to lay responsibility for the nation-wide upsurge of violence at its door.

One such accusing voice was that of chief National Party negotiator Gerrit Viljoen. 'The risk is now, I'm afraid, beginning to show up, that unbanned organisations and released leaders may fail to see that the need for violence has fallen away and still go on to use violence and the rhetoric of the armed struggle', he told a British journalist.

Subsequently, in *Leadership* magazine, Viljoen added: 'More and more I get the feeling that the recent flare-up of violence and unrest has been influenced

by this rhetoric. The local leader is concerned with his particular situation; he's not thinking about over-all national problems. When the armed struggle is mentioned, he also applies it to his specific situation'.

But in a surprising role-reversal, key members of the security establishment, like Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok and police information chief Herman Stadler, have stressed that the roots of the violence are complex and that socio-economic factors play a significant role in fostering grievances.

What Stadler and Vlok will not admit, of course, is the extent to which the injury and death are caused by members of their own forces. Sometimes this occurs in genuinely riotous conditions.

But sometimes - as an increasing body of evidence shows - deadly force is used without provocation and even without warning.

The role of the police, once uni-



formly repressive, is now unpredictable.

One day men in SAP uniform may be seen coolly monitoring masses marching through the streets of Cape Town, Atteridgeville, Johannesburg or kwaThema. The next they have turned their guns against marchers in Khutsong or Sebokeng.

Apart from the armed forces of the central state, violence is also being perpetrated by the forces of bantustan leaders and by municipal police responsible to unpopular township councils. There was no violent provocation from the crowd outside the Ga-Rankuwa magistrate's court on 7 March when Bophuthatswana forces shot dead seven people and injured hundreds more, says National Medical and Dental Association vice-president Nkaki Matlala.

Elsewhere in Ga-Rankuwa-Mabopane-Winterveld area on 7 March, there had undoubtedly been a wild surge of arson, stoning and destruction of

government property. It appears there were isolated episodes - several kilometres from the court building - before the shooting, and that attacks spread like wildfire only afterwards.

In Venda and Gazankulu there are also reports of mere protest drawing a lethal police response.

Additionally, civilian pro-bantustan groups have been locked in bitter battle with the United Democratic Front, members of the Congress of South African Trade Unions and ANC supporters.

Pre-eminent among these is Inkatha, whose struggle to keep its old grip on Natal in the face of an expanding MDM has led to a virtual regional war, escalating sharply in recent weeks.

The impact of the Natal conflict on the negotiating process has been less ambiguous than that of other violence.

The sheer number of bodies lowered into Natal soil as a result of political strife compels ANC and MDM leaders

to politically engage Inkatha chief Gatsha Buthelezi and acknowledge his right to a place at the negotiating table.

The fact that, in the quest for peace in Natal, deputy ANC President Nelson Mandela was prepared to meet Buthelezi virtually on home turf also speaks volumes. Buthelezi may or may not have a direct influence on the violence; but he has undoubtedly become its main political beneficiary.

Buthelezi has attempted to dictate the terms of any meeting with Mandela, in a bid to obscure the unequal support they command and to create the impression that they meet as political equals.

It is ironic that he should attempt this when Inkatha's hegemonic control of Natal has demonstrably been broken. The massive crowd drawn to King's Park in Durban to welcome Mandela put paid to any notions that Natal is not ANC territory.

The impact of widespread violence

Who set the fuse?

on De Klerk's approach to negotiations is more ambiguous.

Much as his armed forces are involved in violent action and indeed provoke conflict on occasion, they are also confronted with popular violence and enraged, dangerous crowds.

Earlier this year United Democratic Front national secretary Popo Molefe warned that actual conditions of life were deteriorating so rapidly that the government faced a repeat of the largely spontaneous resistance of 1984 to 1986. With one difference: the scale this time would be infinitely greater. It would make the earlier wave look like 'a children's Sunday school picnic'.

Indications are that the government has read the signs - that its decision to negotiate with representative leaders (albeit among other 'leaders') is mainly due to its recognition of the danger of pressure from below becoming uncontrollable.

Any perceived unwillingness by the government to proceed with negotiations will simply increase that pressure.

On the other hand it is difficult to see how, in the current volatile atmosphere, the government will meet the widely supported demand for a lifting of the state of emergency before negotiations commence. The ANC and MDM are likely to be implacable on this.

For the resistance organisations, too, the current political strife has had mixed political returns.

ANC leaders like Mandela and Walter Sisulu and UDF publicity secretary Terror Lekota have made it abundantly clear that they believe certain forms of violence on the part of their organisations are counter-productive.

Mandela's 'throw your weapons into the sea' call to 'comrades' in Natal was perhaps the most eye-catching line on this. Lekota, speaking at an ANC rally in Lenasia, stated unequivocally that looting, arson and similar attacks 'do not promote our cause'.

The achievement of maximum unity for the ANC position was a consideration to which other strategies - including the violent options - should be subordinated.

Reacting to mass resistance in

Nelson Mandela strode out of jail just nine days after President FW de Klerk had lifted the ban on the African National Congress and other outlawed political organisations.

He could not help but absorb from the pressing, emotional crowds their overwhelming support for the ANC - and recognise that this was not built in nine days.

If the unbanning of the ANC and other organisations on 2 February called forth only passing celebration, perhaps this was because the people had already effectively unbanned them.

The defiance campaign, with its mammoth marches dominated by the symbols and colours of the ANC, had left to De Klerk the task of rubber-stamping a popular decision.

When it came to Mandela, of course, there could be no dress rehearsal for the release. When he crossed the threshold, unprecedented political euphoria swept the country.

Most importantly, Nelson Mandela ignited a fervour for liberation in towns that had been missed by the sweep of the democratic organisations.

A development worker from the Northern Transvaal compared the release to a chemical reaction. The idea of a free Mandela had been like a catalyst in the villages of Venda

Bophuthatswana, Lekota observed: 'Puppets like Mangope ... cannot halt the drive towards democracy. Our people sense now that power is slipping out of their unwanted rulers' hands and - as that notion grows daily stronger - Mangope and his types will be swept aside by the sheer force of its impact'.

And he added: 'We call upon our people to desist from violence, vandalism and all behaviour which disguises the direction of struggle. Destruction of property and the killing of people increases suffering. They are not part of the tactics of our liberation movement because it rejects anarchy'.

On the ground, however, in the heavily repressed bantustans where the first flexing of mass muscle is having astounding effects, there are those who ask: Is there a possibility of unity with our former oppressors? Is it really in our interests to have them join us, if instead

The M factor



and Gazankulu, he said, bringing to boiling point people's sense of grievance about education, maladministration by chiefs and alleged witch-craft killings.

And it has given them the confidence to act.

In already-organised communities, where activists and ordinary residents alike had suffered the penalties of struggle, the unquestionable victory that Mandela's release represented allowed them to savour the joy of struggle.

For several days office workers in clock-watching, competitive Johannesburg were diverted from their work by toyi-toying, jubilant bands of people.

Much has been made of the

we can thoroughly defeat them?

The internal ANC leadership's answer appears to be yes. In his weekend of rallies in kaNgwane and at Turfloop last month, Mandela appealed to bantustan leaders to forsake apartheid and to join the ANC.

But propaganda, apparently from the ANC underground, calls for the masses to intensify their resistance for the overthrow of bantustan leaders. And the spate of sabotage attacks in the Bophuthatswana areas of Temba and Itsoseng shortly after the Ga-Rankuwa shootings appears to underline this approach.

There is greater consensus that the cause of liberation has nothing to gain from violence which is purely intra-communal, pitting hostel dwellers, for instance, against residents or ANC supporters against those of Azapo.

There is widespread belief within the ANC, UDF and Cosatu and in church

political violence that has been a feature of this period. Justifiably.

Much more could be made of the torrent of mass resistance - by far the greater part of it peaceful - against which the bloodshed must be offset.

* In approximately 10 weeks, newspapers have recorded at least 50 public marches, usually aimed at conveying local grievances to the relevant authority. In more than a dozen of these marches participants were to be counted in tens of thousands, rather than thousands.

* The ground-swell against segregated education has seldom been stronger. For the first time black teachers are at one with their pupils in demonstrating their outrage at the inferior education system in which they are condemned to work.

In the Johannesburg region some 6 000 teachers went on a sustained strike and their action was supported by thousands of disciplined youths and children who marched some 10km to the local office of the Department of Education and Training. In rural Nebo teachers and students marched against the *Lebowa government*, which was unable even to provide books.

In the Potchefstroom township of Ikageng, teachers took to the streets under the red flag, to dump their

'daily record' files in a pile at the gates to the township.

At Thabong in the Free State marching teachers were confronted by a group of armed right-wingers, who refused to allow the legal demonstration against bantu education to proceed.

* Gradual mobilisation against the bantustans - evidenced in resistance of communities to incorporation into bantustans, the refusal to take out membership of the ruling party, the revival of progressive MDM-aligned structures - burst into outright revolt.

Many of the direct grievances cited in strikes, stayaways, marches and other protests were socio-economic. Residents tied them unerringly to the bantustan system. The golden thread which ran through popular protest from Venda to Ciskei was the eradication of bantustans from the face of post-apartheid South Africa.

* On the labour front strikes were numerous, increasingly protracted, and in some instances violent. Workers became noticeably more militant in opposing racism in the work place.

Among the most significant developments was the revolt by a relatively small, but growing, number of policemen and prison guards against the racism that governs their

working lives. This found expression in sit-ins, strikes and demonstrations in various parts of the country.

Equally important was the mass disaffection of civil servants in the bantustans of the Transvaal, many of whom went on strike.

* Defiance has also characterised popular solutions to the problem of homelessness and over-crowding. Gone are the days of cautious family-by-family occupation of vacant land.

In its place are organised land invasions, conducted by popular organisations who take responsibility for a degree of planning, allocation of sites and negotiation with authorities after the event.

'White' Bloemfontein, for instance, now has Tambo Square - an orderly shack settlement - on its doorstep.

Even the most dependent and marginal have been moved to fight for their rights. In late February Guguletu state pensioners held a mass protest meeting against the racial welfare system.

And in the centre of Cape Town - on the same day - eight Kalahari shepherds marched on parliament to protest against legislation threatening the grazing rights of some 8 000 herders in the remote Mier region.

The shepherds won. The legislation was shelved.

and rural organisations that there is presently a systematic deployment of agents provocateur aimed at destroying the cohesiveness of the MDM as a negotiating force.

Finally there is the question: what are the political effects on the MDM of state violence? The issue is particularly pertinent in rural areas - both in the bantustans and 'white' South Africa.

Tebogo Mekgalamele and Sekhopi Malebo are civic leaders who have been involved in organising in the Odi-Moretele area of Bophuthatswana and in the Free State respectively. Both speak of a striking readiness on the part of the people to respond to organisation and not to be deterred by the first blast of repression.

Throughout the country, from Venda southwards, the release of Mandela led to spontaneous celebrations, even in towns where no political structures existed.

'This shows that the people were politically aware, even if they were not organised. Their readiness tells us everyone was waiting for the ANC leadership', reckons Malebo.

Makgalamele thinks similarly. Recalling the immediate response to the organisation of three protest marches in the Temba area, he adds: 'They were a spontaneous, grassroots reaction to the political climate that now exists in South Africa'. This climate had made it imperative for semi-clandestine civic structures to come out openly and make themselves available to the people.

Sjamboks, teargas and bullets have been met with further resistance: stay-aways and consumer boycotts. It has even resulted in the resignation of puppet councillors and declarations by others, after their first encounter with the ANC, that they would be first in their community to sign up with the ANC.



Lekota: Puppets swept aside

Try as it will, the Mass Democratic Movement is unable to slay the dragon of 'black-on-black' violence.

It is often unclear precisely how - and through what agents - differences between liberation forces and other community groupings become inflamed to the point of murder.

But in several cases it has afterwards been possible to establish what precise act of provocation set people at each other's throats.

And, recent experience shows, the reality of the Inkatha/MDM war in Natal has become a powerful weapon in the hands of provocateurs elsewhere in the country.

In militant Transvaal townships - where councillors are outcasts, residents refuse to pay rent and MDM organisations have coherent structures - the 'Zulus' (often equated with hostel dwellers) have become the bogey with which to instill panic, or spark pre-emptive action, among the people.

Sometimes the 'Zulu' hostel dwellers have actually attacked their neighbours; in other cases the threat alone has caused chaos.

Because intra-community violence often relies so strongly on suggestion and prejudice, it may defy outside comprehension. Unless the agent provocateur and the interests he represents can be identified

Katlehong's taxi war

Taxi operators, who resorted to settling their commercial rivalries by the law of the gun, suddenly and apparently inexplicably diverted from their course and began butchering children and teachers in their schools.

It was the start of a sequence of violence which left more than 40 people dead in the East Rand township of Katlehong.

By the weekend of 3/4 March at least seven people, mostly taxi passengers, had been killed in the crossfire of a war between drivers of the Germiston and District Taxi Association (GDTA) and the Katlehong Taxi Organisation (KTO).

That weekend about 10 000 residents attended a meeting organised by the Katlehong Civic and Crisis Committee and resolved to boycott the taxis until it was safe to use them.

Part of the crowd marched on the offices of GDTA to demand an end to the taxi war and, according to press reports, were accosted by armed taxi

'ZULUS'

Real and imagined

drivers.

Two days later taxi operators attacked schools and murdered five people - school pupils and teachers. Many more were injured. The township was in uproar.

The burning of a house belonging to an official of GDTA was cited as a reason for the attack on nearby Katlehong High School. But this was not the only school attacked by taxi operators.

Retribution followed. A day later, police put the number of taxis set alight at 25.

On 7 March an estimated 85 000 residents took to the streets of Katlehong to march on the council offices and demand housing and improved services. Police fired on the crowd, injuring 28.

They justified their action by saying there had been conflict in the crowd and shots had been fired at them.

By 8 March the death toll was said to be 15, as GDTA-aligned vigilantes went from house to house, seeking out youthful targets. Youths fled to the hospital which was promptly attacked by the vigilantes.

Hostel inmates joined battle with organised youth bands.

After a week of mayhem, community leaders expressed the fear that as many as 45 might have died. The killings were gruesome - one victim was tied to the railway tracks and run over by a train.

Eventually, through the ongoing efforts of the UDF, ANC and South African Black Taxi Association peace was restored.

Some of those closely involved with the peace-process isolate as the critical factor in Katlehong an alleged statement from the township council that the mass march was in fact going to be

directed against taxi drivers and not against the council.

The alignment of hostel dwellers with the GDTA drivers is understood to have occurred late in the conflict, after a taxi-load of migrants from Natal, headed for the hostel, was mistakenly attacked by some youths.

But these explanations overlook how deep a division of interests the boycott itself created. If the taxi operators were prepared to kill each other because of inroads on their trade, what would restrain them from murdering those who removed their custom completely - as the boycotters did?

The aftermath of Katlehong

Peace had not yet been concluded in Katlehong when 1 000 hostel-dwellers in nearby Vosloorus went rampaging through the township. This was followed by mass hysteria in another East Rand township, Tembisa, as rumours spread that 'the Zulus' were about to invade.

When similar rumours reached them days later, the Vaal townships mobilised with an astonishing array of weapons.

As women, children and the aged took shelter at police stations and the hospital, youths took to the access roads, manning roadblocks. Incensed by Natal licence plates and by anyone who tried to run their roadblocks, they killed a white motorist and attacked several others.

In the Vaal, as in Tembisa, 'the Zulus' failed to materialise.

'In our assessment of the situation in Katlehong, Tokoza, Vosloorus and Tembisa, we found a common factor. The violence has been preceded by an obvious call from communities to local black authorities to relinquish their positions. Thereafter, there have been rumours from certain quarters setting communities at each other's throats', reflects Gideon Makhanya, organising secretary of the Witwatersrand Council of Churches.

Against a background of the Inkatha-MDM war in Natal, he says, people of Zulu origin are obvious material to be moulded into a (real or imaginary) tool to drive a wedge into the community.

In Ikageng near Potchefstroom the actions of the police in escorting a heavily-armed mass of hostel dwellers through the township has laid them open to charges of abetting vigilante action.

A member of the Ikageng People's Delegation recalled: 'These hostel dwellers - about 500 of them - came into the township heavily armed with pangas



SEBOKENG: In the aftermath of the police shooting, youths rescue wounded marchers.

and kieres and even spears. Two vans of police escorted them.

'This intimidation provoked the people. Rumours were that they were from outside Ikageng and it came into residents' minds that the Zulus have come to kill us. People were feeling threatened, so they decided to attack these hostel people'.

The delegation member said after shooting teargas at the residents the police withdrew 'and it was war for the whole night'.

Many were injured in the dark. Next day the battle continued and hostel dwellers killed a child, Velaphi Mandu.

'Then residents went right into the hostel and drove the inhabitants out and started burning it'.

Community leaders approached the police to set up tri-partite talks - attended by the People's Delegation, a hostel committee and the police. Peace was restored.

But popular organisations have still to ponder: Who set the fuse to this explosion?

The answer appears to lie in developments a week before the hostel war, when a 'tsotsi element' ran riot after a comrade's funeral, looting and attacking hostel inmates among others.

Community leaders are still trying to establish the identity of these provocateurs who set the scene not only for the hostel war but for police action in which five people lost their lives, including a baby shot while lying in a shack.

Nipping it in the bud

The abduction and murder of a youth congress leader in the Eastern Transvaal

settlement of Driefontein last month could yet detonate an attack on a small Inkatha-supporting section of the community.

Driefontein leaders, lawyers and development workers are focusing their efforts on securing legal redress for the murder of Themba Dlamini.

If they fail, they fear, the youth might take things into their own hands and attack the well-guarded pro-Inkatha clique.

Success, too, holds its dangers. Since lawyers managed to ensure that murder charges were brought against Gilbert Mjwago and Gweje Yende, residents have noted an influx of Inkatha supporters into Driefontein. The newcomers appear to be hunting a key witness to the murder.

The guilt of Mjwago and Yende cannot be presumed - although it is common knowledge that Dlamini was found by his father inside Yende's garage shortly before dying there, still bound at the wrists by a rope tied to the rafters.

'The rope was long so he was lying on the floor writhing in agony. He had only his underpants on. His thighs and buttocks were full of wounds. They were swollen up and full of blood. He saw me but he couldn't speak', the victim's father, Meshack Dlamini, declared in a statement to lawyers.

But the fact that the two Inkatha supporters have been charged lends credence to the possibility that the 'Zulu' factor features aggressively in conflict well beyond Natal.

And it supports the possibility of an identity of interests between elements of the police and Inkatha supporters in

such matters.

Both Yende and Mjwago are established police informers. Mjwago was identified as such during evidence given in the trial of the policeman who shot Driefontein leader Saul Mkhize in 1983. And Yende is identified as 'assisting the South African Police with information', in a letter dated April 1984 and signed by a Sergeant GC de Bruyn of the Dirki-estorp police station.

It is perhaps not insignificant that:

- * Despite the fact that Dlamini's body was found in Yende's house and despite declarations given to the police, they took no immediate action against Yende. Instead they appear to have protected him against possible attack by residents;
- * Lawyers had to secure the intervention of police in Pretoria to ensure that local police would lay the charge of murder;
- * The two accused were immediately released on bail;
- * Police have viewed popular Driefontein leaders, who were solidly supported by the people in their protracted fight against removals, as radical and dangerous. Police documents produced in court described the assassinated Mkhize as 'an outspoken Leftist, instigating residents against removal'.

Finally, the fact that Driefontein was of interest to the police Askari squad completes the perspective on Dlamini's murder. Recent evidence to the Harms Commission of inquiry into the death squads was that Mkhize's son, Bongani Paris Mkhize, was assaulted and interrogated by the Askaris several years ago. Police counsel challenged the details of the alleged Askari assault on Mkhize, but not its actual occurrence.

POLICE

Back in the forefront

Front page pictures of people scrambling out of the range of a hail of pellets told the world what people of many townships already knew: De Klerk's determination to negotiate has not silenced the guns of his policemen.

The shootings that drove this home occurred in the Vaal township of Sebokeng on 26 March. Witnesses say police opened fire without warning on the front rows of a crowd of some 50 000 whose leaders had just agreed to curtail their march into the 'white' town of Vereeniging.

A representative of the Vaal Civic Association, Bavumile Vilakazi, had just handed a memorandum to local police chief Major Othniel Mazibuko, for forwarding to the National Party in Vereeniging.

Vilakazi says he was explaining the agreement reached with Mazibuko to a newly arrived contingent of marchers when the shots were fired.

'It was sudden. There was no audible order to fire, no notification and no request to disperse'.

He rejects the suggestion that people threatened the police. 'There were off-duty police marching with us. Mazibuko was mingling with the people'.

The absence of warning is confirmed by resident and journalist Themba Molefe. Running for cover he turned to see an old man, who had been sitting on the curb, shot between the eyes. 'As he collapsed face down, another shot hit him on the right hip. He was dead'.

Photographer Herbert Mabuza, who kept his camera clicking as he lay flat on his stomach, insists: 'There was absolutely no reason why it happened. There was certainly no warning.'

'And afterwards, they laughed - the guys from the special branch laughed'.

Three died instantly. Within 24 hours the death toll had risen to 11 - some from injuries from the original shooting, others as violence swept the Vaal townships. But all these deaths can be traced to that single, short burst of fire.

The Sebokeng shootings call forth echoes from obscure places across the platteland. Among them are Zastron and Jagersfontein, east of Bloemfontein, where Bloemfontein activists have intervened to restore calm.

One such activist is Mangaung Civic Association secretary Sekhopi Malebo.

In Zastron, he says, Mandela's release led to days of street celebrations in the township. 'Normal education didn't take place for about three days. Eventually police came into the township and ordered the youth to disperse. While

they were trying to do so shots were fired. It was about 5pm and people coming from work were injured. One of them, a worker for the provincial administration, was fatally injured'.

A four-day work stayaway and boycott of white shops resulted. 'The police action brought our people together - African and coloured residents united, including the councillors and the mayor', said Malebo.

He added, though, that a second clash had been perilously close on the second day of the boycott.

'When we arrived we realised the situation was very volatile - the people were marching to town. White residents were armed. The police and the army were out'.

Regional MDM leaders managed to persuade people to hold a mass meeting in place of the march.

'We told them our armed struggle is always in defence', said Malebo, 'and we went with the councillors (who were part of the people's boycott) to meet the military, the police and representatives of the white community'. A mutual agreement to refrain from violence was reached, but residents refused to cut short their stayaway and boycott.

The police version of the events at Zastron was that widespread rioting had occurred in the township and that police action had left 30 injured. They said a house had been set alight and vehicles stoned.

Malebo concedes he wasn't there at the time but says the police account runs contrary to statements by residents.

'All of a sudden its an ANC area', said Malebo. 'Everyone is saying, "we are directed and led by the ANC".'

In Ratanda, near Heidelberg, 12-year-old Oupa John Quineba was allegedly shot dead by police on 19 March after youths had commandeered vehicles

from a construction company to grade sites for a shack settlement established, under the coordination of the Ratanda Civic Association, on vacant land scheduled for private township development. Several young people were injured.

According to Ratanda Civic Association vice-president John Parkey the settlement started that day grew with incredible rapidity - to more than 2 000 units within two weeks.

The mass invasion of land was a response to a housing shortage that has been growing since the last public housing was supplied 20 years ago.

Earlier in the year about 10 000 residents had marched peacefully to the police station to hand over a memorandum addressed to the provincial authorities. RCA secretary Daniel Nkosi said there had been no response to the memo, so residents took matters into their own hands.

They were unimpressed by the offer of mayor Mickey Mokonane who, apparently learning of their plans, promised to provide land for the homeless in October.

In their daily 'unrest reports' police made no mention of the death of Oupa Quineba.

The list of allegations of unprovoked police violence is lengthy. To the above examples could be added:

- * the breaking up of Sharpeville Massacre commemorations at places as far removed as Hartebeesfontein in the Western Transvaal and Piet Retief in the east;

- * the dispersal of 10 000 Tembisa marchers, some of whom subsequently burnt the property of mayor Solomon More. More blamed the police. 'Whether the march was illegal or not, police had no right to act because it was peaceful'.

- * the fatal shooting of Witbank baby Angelina Mathebula while strapped to the back of her mother, Betty Mathebula - who was quite evidently retreating from the police, not confronting them. The Mathebulas and the police differ - predictably - on whether there was violence among the people when the police opened fire.

Just a month after his dramatic opening of parliament President FW de Klerk said the police would have a 'lower but not weaker' profile in times to come. 'We have now passed to a new phase in which we must manage the problems of the country by political and economic steps and no longer with security forces at the forefront'.

Were the police not told of this? Or did they refuse to hear?

The coup which ousted Lennox Sebe has left the soul of the Ciskei homeland government up for grabs.
**Peter auf der Heyde and
 Ashwin Desai report**



When Oupa Gqozo addressed his first public meeting just hours after ousting Ciskei president-for-life Lennox Sebe, he stood ramrod stiff, as a soldier should.

His fist stayed rigidly at his side in response to the salutes of the 20 000-strong crowd at the Independence Stadium in Bisho, and he ignored their 'amandlas' to deliver his message in formal military fashion.

Three hours later at his second public meeting, and under the fluttering banners of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party, his fist was raised as high as any among the tens of thousands in Mdantsane's Sisa Dukashe Stadium. He dropped any reference to 'Ciskeians' - a term which earned him boos in Bisho - and he delivered the message the people wanted to hear: that the homeland would reclaim its rightful place as part of South Africa.

A newcomer to popular politics, 36-year-old Brigadier Oupa Josh Gqozo is nevertheless a fast learner.

Born in Kroonstad, his first job was with the South African prisons department. He joined the SA Defence Force in 1975 and six years later, when Sebe accepted 'independence', he was trans-

GQOZO

Pretoria's puppet or MDM's man?

ferred into the homeland defence force.

At the time of the coup, Gqozo had been head of Ciskei military intelligence for just two months - an appointment that followed a lengthy period as the homeland's military attache in Pretoria.

As military attache, he would have been in constant contact with South African military and civilian authorities.

This would have made him a logical focus for any strategy by South African to rid themselves of the increasingly unpopular Sebe at a time when president FW de Klerk's reformism urgently needed credible black allies.

This possibility has been strengthened by strong speculation that Pretoria actually encouraged Sebe to leave the homeland at a time when rumours of a coup-plot were rife.

Certainly the coup has conveniently rid De Klerk of a potentially embarrass-

ing ally. But its benefit for the mass democratic movement is potentially even greater.

When Sebe boarded a Hong Kong-bound plane at East London airport days before the coup, he left behind him a bantustan rife with resistance - not only in the many rural villages where the latest wave of opposition had its roots, but in the urban centres of Mdantsane, Zwelitsha and Dimbaza.

In response Sebe had imposed two states of emergency: the first late last year in the rural districts of Peelton and Balasi; the second, far harsher, early this year in Mdantsane and Zwelitsha.

Sporadic and isolated rural resistance occurred throughout the 1980s. Taking many forms, it included refusal by villagers to pay taxes demanded from them by rural chiefs.

Also widespread was the demand by communities for reincorporation into South Africa. In 1987 the people of Potsdam packed their belongings and simply left the Ciskei - preferring the uncertain future of life in makeshift shelters on the South African side of the road leading to East London to life under Sebe.

Sebe responded harshly to signs of rural opposition.

In some cases his security forces simply uprooted whole communities at gunpoint and dumped them across the border in South Africa.

In others, Sebe sent in his troops to sort it out. After police action in the village of Tyolomnqa, Ciskei police spokesperson Brigadier Avery Ngaki said, 'It has been noted that they (the villagers) don't like their chief. The police will make them love their chief'.

Ngaki described vigilantes who were involved in a number of attacks on Sebe's opponents as members of the community who support the police.

Interestingly, Ngaki retained his post after the coup and now issues statements about the detention of policemen for their misuse of power during the reign of Sebe.

Sebe's repressive measures, including the detention of more than 700 people in the last four months of his rule, failed to stem the tide. The rural revolt not only spread but, late last year, found a new focus.

The main thrust of this, according to the Grahamstown Rural Committee, was the widespread collection and return to tribal authorities of Ciskei National Independence Party (CNIP) membership cards. In some cases the cards were collected and defiantly burned.

Rejecting CNIP membership represented a great sacrifice.

Researchers Pippa Green and Alan Hirsch noted in 1982: 'For the mass of people living in resettlement camps or the rural areas, membership of CNIP, loyalty to the local chief or headman and dutiful payment of party dues are ways to secure houses, pensions, land, local jobs, unemployment insurance fund payments and sometimes labour contracts'.

As rural rebellion quickened, urban areas - especially the sprawling township of Mdantsane - began to show signs of dissent. The Mdantsane Residents' Association (MRA) called on people to hand back CNIP cards, hospital workers went on strike and the home of a police officer was attacked with handgrenades.

Matters came to a head with the release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February, when police opened fire on celebrating Mdantsane residents, killing 10.

According to minutes of a meeting between Sebe and senior police officers afterwards, the president-for-life congratulated the police for their actions.

The brutality with which Sebe crushed any form of opposition began to erode



There has been speculation that Sebe and his son had planned a coup of their own

his internal power base. High-ranking police officers in Mdantsane met and, according to one, decided not to enforce the state of emergency.

Similarly many magistrates decided not to jail people prosecuted under repressive legislation - imposing suspended sentences instead.

Even the traditionally conservative Ciskei Teachers' Union - at the time scorned as an appendage of the Sebe regime - complained when a high school principal was detained. They demanded action against Sebe and, for the first time, sided with students in their struggle against the regime.

By this stage urban and rural resistance were showing unmistakable signs of jelling into a combined assault on Sebe's rule.

Sebe, who had staved off a militant challenge by the South African Allied Workers' Union in the early 80s, a subsequent plot to unseat him by his brother Charles, and a Transkei-sponsored coup led by former Selous Scouts, now faced the most formidable challenge to his rule.

When he realised his traditional following was turning against him, Sebe started calling in past favours. He sharply reminded police officers that many of them owned businesses which could be affected by their refusal to comply with his orders.

But opposition continued and the death-toll mounted amid a series of demonstrations and rallies focussing on the return of CNIP cards.

Suddenly, at the height of these tensions and with his grip on the territory loosening daily, Sebe flew off on an official visit to Hong Kong.

Exactly why he did so is unclear. South Africa may have encouraged him to do so, intending to replace him with a less unpopular alternative.

A second possible explanation is that Sebe himself - recognising that his time was limited - had contrived a way to

ensure that the Sebe dynasty continued. There has been widespread speculation that Sebe and his son Kwane, head of Ciskei's hated Elite Unit, had planned a coup of their own, which would simply replace one Sebe with another.

This theory is strengthened by the fact that South African officials called Sebe off his Hong Kong-bound plane in Johannesburg and warned him of a pending coup. Sebe shrugged off the warning, apparently believing they were referring to his son's plans.

When the coup did take place, he was thus thousands of kilometres away. All he could do was make a pathetic plea to Pretoria in a hand-written message from Hong Kong. Stating that 'a few members of the army have caused some disruption', he requested South Africa's 'speedy intervention'.

The 'disruption' occurred late on the night of Saturday, 3 March. Ironically, it was not Ciskei's increasingly rebellious people who delivered the coup de grace, but Sebe's own men - Ciskei defence force officers who until a few weeks earlier had been a central element of his repressive machinery.

Indeed, a full 12 hours after the coup had been announced, people in Mdantsane and the rural villages went about their business unaware Sebe had been deposed. Only later did the masses take to the streets and proclaim the downfall of Sebe as their victory.

The plotters' first action, late on Saturday night, was to cut telephone lines to Sebe's top aides, including policemen and MPs.

At first nobody knew why. When youths approached a police spokesperson at 5am on Sunday and told him there had been a military coup, his comment was, 'It is just some young boys who want too much power'.

By then Gqozo's men had taken control of all government buildings, the radio station and other strategic points. They had detained Kwane Sebe and the heads of the defence force and placed 18 cabinet ministers under house arrest.

Some hours later, with word spreading that Sebe had been ousted, crowds began to gather in the streets of Zwelitsha, across the highway from the capital, Bisho.

About 2 000 youths began toying towards the capital, gathering others along the way. As they danced and sang their way through the street of Bisho, they were joined by soldiers of the Ciskeian defence force, transformed

overnight in the popular view into an army of liberation.

At a press conference that afternoon, Brigadier Gqozo announced that the military had taken control of Ciskei. A four-person executive committee - himself (as chairman), Colonel OM Guzana, Commandant SS Pita and Major PP Hauser - had been elected, he said.

Gqozo and Hauser then rushed to Bisho's Independence Stadium to deliver their first address to the people. They received a tumultuous welcome from a 20 000-strong crowd chanting 'Viva ANC!' and 'Amandla!'

Gqozo announced that the Ciskei military had taken control of the country because Ciskeians had suffered long enough under Sebe. The armed forces and business community had lost confidence in Sebe's government.

'The final straw was the action of the previous president who despite the grave situation in Ciskei saw fit to leave the country when it most needed strong, fair and democratic leadership'.

The crowd booed Gqozo several times - when he addressed them as Ciskeians or spoke about Ciskei. But he drew a large cheer when he announced the immediate release of all political prisoners held under section 26 of the Ciskei Internal Security Act and the appointment of a judge to ensure the safety and well-being of all other detainees.

Gqozo then rushed to Mdantsane where tens of thousands of people had taken to the streets to celebrate. At a meeting hastily organised in the Sisa Dukashe Stadium he shared a platform with ANC and MDM activists.

Speaking under the flags of the ANC and SACP, he said the ultimate goal of his government was reincorporation of Ciskei into South Africa - although not immediately, but 'in its time'.

Shortly after the military rulers left Mdantsane thousands of people went on the rampage. Using a list issued earlier by the MRA in its call for a boycott of shops belonging to people close to Sebe, the crowds started burning those shops.

Soon, however, the attacks became indiscriminate and the crowds looted the businesses before setting them alight.

By Monday most of the shops and petrol stations in the township were burnt to the ground.

Many factories in the small industrial area of Fort Jackson were also burnt shells. An estimated 18 000 people were left jobless, damage ran to more than R100-million and more than 26 people had been killed in Mdantsane alone.

Gqozo solved his dilemma by ask-

ing both the South African Defence Force and the MDM for help. Both rallied to support him.

MDM leader and UDF Border president Mluleki George shared a platform with Gqozo in Bisho on Tuesday and called for an end to violence. And United Democratic Front general secretary Popo Molefe led a high-powered delegation to the Ciskei to intervene.

South African police and more than 200 SADF troops moved in to protect government buildings, factories and shops.

The situation gradually returned to normal and Gqozo and his colleagues turned to the more mundane tasks of running a 'country'.

One of his first acts was to hire two members of Lawyers for Human Rights to draft a new constitution and revise legislation.

Days later the pair was fired. Headman Somtunzi, who survived the coup as chief government spokesperson, pointedly denied their dismissal had been

It is too early to pass final judgment on Gqozo. But the UDF has already handed in its interim opinion: Gqozo is up for grabs

prompted by South African pressure.

The military council expanded with the inclusion of an army chaplain and six non-military members - all but one former government officials were sacked by Gqozo.

Gqozo disbanded the presidential guard and Kwane Sebe's Elite Unit and posted their members to other areas.

The new government has embarked on a major campaign to investigate corruption. It has also confiscated several cars allocated to civil servants. While most of those described by the Grahamstown Rural Committee as hangers-on of Sebe have retained their positions, there have been several transfers.

Gqozo's views on reincorporation also stand in sharp contrast to that of Sebe which was outlined in a confidential paper presented to De Klerk earlier this year (See WIP 64). The document argues for rapid establishment - either before or during De Klerk's negotiations with the ANC - of a five-member federation, South Africa and the four TBVC 'homelands', with entrenched

clauses to prevent a new government unilaterally scrapping the bantustans.

Thus Gqozo's position on a unitary South Africa and his apparent enthusiasm for sharing platforms and ideas with the MDM represent a dramatic departure for the democratic movement.

It is too early to pass final judgment on Gqozo. But the UDF has already handed in its interim opinion: Gqozo is up for grabs.

The UDF plans to win him over, but simultaneously to create conditions in the Ciskei making it impossible for Gqozo to reverse himself and restore pre-coup levels of political control.

Thus a UDF press statement on March 7 hailed 'the change in government in the region of Ciskei as a victory of the toiling masses in the region and indeed for the forces of progress, peace and justice'.

UDF support extended beyond the press statement. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Gqozo at a rally in Bisho, the UDF's George, said the coup was a 'step towards freedom'. He called on the masses to work with the military council.

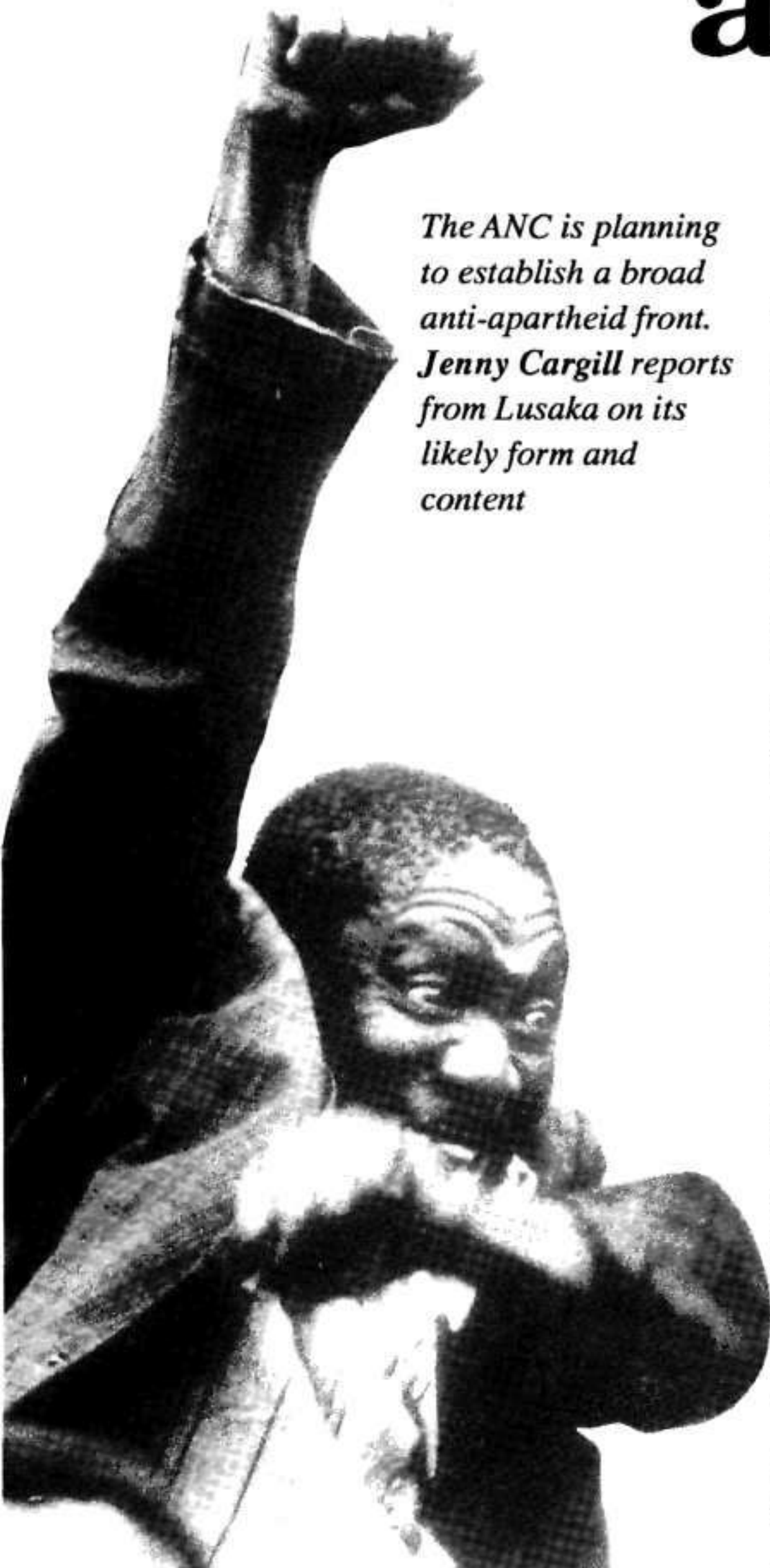
Significantly, though, the UDF press statement urged people to 'take advantage of the political space created by the new administration to rebuild our street committees, block and area committees, our youth, women's, residents' and trade union organisations'.

These structures, the UDF said, would allow people in the region to 'contribute meaningfully to the process of building a single non-racial democratic South Africa envisioned in the Freedom Charter'.

UDF activists have responded to the call and have begun the process of developing progressive structures. In Mdantsane, street committees with a representative from every household, have begun to flourish. The street committees feed into area committees and then into unit committees. Activists plan to launch a Mdantsane Congress that has its roots in the street and area committees. The South African government has, by contrast, lost an unpleasant but guaranteed ally, and is now forced to share access to his replacement with the democratic movement.

With Bantu Holomisa still firmly entrenched in the Transkei, and recent protests demonstrating that no homeland head is invulnerable, Gqozo's coup is a further indication that De Klerk's insistence that bantustan leaders be guaranteed a seat at the negotiating table was a not a wise move.

Anti-apartheid alliance



The ANC is planning to establish a broad anti-apartheid front. Jenny Cargill reports from Lusaka on its likely form and content

The African National Congress is treading new political ground as it prepares to formally lead, for the first time in its history, a broad anti-apartheid front.

Alliances with political groupings closely sharing the ANC's objectives and ideals is nothing new. But coming together with a wide range of organisations sharing only the broadest strategic objective - the transfer of power for a non-racial democratic South Africa - is a new challenge and throws up many questions.

How does the ANC ensure its revolutionary character is not seriously diluted by such a front? Who are acceptable participants? What conditions must they meet? What is the future of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and other political organisations sharing the ANC's objectives?

The changing political climate has also thrown up for review the ANC's existing alliances - principally with the South African Communist Party (SACP). New alliances are also in the making, some potentially sensitive and complex.

So far the ANC has not openly addressed these issues in detail. Its officials say the current political fluidity make it impossible for the organisation to come up with a blueprint on the precise machinations of a front.

Added to that is the practical problem that the ANC is not yet organisationally established, although there is little doubt that the liberation movement already has the political legitimacy to be the undisputed head of a new anti-apartheid front.

So far the character the ANC has suggested for a new front is one that is broadly anti-apartheid and pro-democracy, with no extra conditional clauses such as support for the Freedom Charter.

Said National Executive Committee (NEC) member Steve Tshwete in an interview with WIP: 'It is impossible for the ANC to wage the struggle by itself. We have to be broadening the anti-apartheid base. We can't be content with what we have got. And so the front concept is a very powerful one in the present era'.

A broad coalition also constitutes for the ANC a means for starting to build tomorrow's non-racial South Africa today.

The successful creation of such a front would ensure a de facto two-sided negotiating table which, in the ANC's view, would weigh heavily in favour of anti-apartheid forces.

But, says an ANC functionary, such a front also needed to facilitate mass action. 'If we are to build the

right kind of front, this must be done in conjunction with mass struggle.

'A new front', he adds, 'should inject discipline into mass action without a loss of militancy. The negotiators must feel the pressure of the masses'.

The front, says another official, needs to be guided by three key principles:

- * the need for all organisations within the front to retain their independence;
- * the need to ensure that organisations joining the front bring an element of additional power into it; and
- * the need to avoid building a front at the expense of the ANC's own organisational attempts at strengthening itself.

The principles appear straightforward. But treading the tactical terrain will require some deft political footwork, as the new political conditions change, in part, the character of the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM).

So far the ANC has moved cautiously on the question of changes to the MDM's face. Some in the ANC favour caution while the anti-apartheid forces get a more precise reading of the political climate. But, adds an official, the ANC's lack of an organised political base at the moment demands that others do not hastily disband already-existing structures and so leave an organisational vacuum.

Nonetheless, says the official, shifts in the MDM's character would probably take place soon - if not within a matter of weeks. As a new front takes form, the logic of maintaining the UDF in its old form as an affiliate of a new front falls away. Why contain one national front within another?

The official also anticipates the incorporation of the UDF's political affiliates - such as the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee and the Transvaal Indian Congress - into the ANC.

Besides the political rationale for such changes, the ANC is faced with a pressing practical demand: the need for experienced MDM political organisers to join it to help build its own structures.

Officials emphasise, however, that consultations between the ANC and the MDM will determine the final outcome.

'We cannot be prescriptive,' says Tshwete.

Whatever the outcome, officials point out that the ANC will not drop the right of individuals to hold ANC membership jointly with that of other front affiliates. The ANC, they argue, has not transformed its status as a liberation movement - or as some term it, 'the parlia-



Tshwete: 'It is impossible for the ANC to wage the struggle by itself'.



Pahad: 'A front cannot just be a get-together of all tendencies where there are no ideological battles taking place'.

ment of the people' - into that of a political party.

Nonetheless in the new political climate, the ANC also faces a change in character, as does its alliance with the SACP and Sactu. In the past, with its illegal status, the liberation movement largely attracted into its ranks the most militant elements of both black and white South Africans.

Now, as the ANC broadens its base, it is likely to find a section of its membership - including for instance black businessmen - not sharing its revolutionary perspective. This, argues the SACP, necessarily means a sharpening of the ideological contest in the months ahead, with the SACP still asserting - perhaps even more than in the past - its independence.

For the first time in almost 30 years, an internal party membership will soon move above board and some party cadres (though not all) will become visible as they build legal SACP structures.

But both the ANC and SACP remain committed in their liberation alliance, with the core group changing to include the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). Sactu is to be incorporated into Cosatu structures.

Alongside this alliance, the ANC is looking at bringing together into a new front quite a disparate group of anti-apartheid forces - although the bulk will be the familiar MDM organisations.

For instance, the white liberal Democratic Party is one group 'the ANC must encourage into the front', an official insists.

It is important for whites, he says, to see non-racialism in practice - and so rid themselves of the fears that bind them to notions of 'group' protection.

The possible participation of groupings like Inkatha and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) is more contentious.

Inkatha's involvement in a front, say ANC officials, cannot be decided now. Says Tshwete: 'Inkatha has to earn its place in an alliance through its struggle against apartheid. At the moment there is not the slightest indication that it can join a coalition'.

ANC officials believe the PAC is likely to exclude itself from a new front. 'If they (the PAC) want to, we'll talk to them, for we are open to all organisations engaged in the struggle to end apartheid,' says Tshwete. 'But we're not going to drag them into an alliance or front'.

There are signs that the PAC will try to build a support base through the kind of militant rhetoric and behaviour that will be absent in a broad front. And so, say some observers, the PAC can only be expected to enter the mainstream settlement initiatives when it sees itself becoming totally marginalised by staying out.

As yet, the ANC has not formulated a structure for the proposed front. But one official argues persuasively in favour of one with strong regional and local components. That, he says, is necessary 'to bring as many people into action as possible. For the most contentious issues for mobilising are found at regional and local level'.

Tshwete says the ANC is also looking at creating sectional fronts or coalitions. The ANC's youth and women's Leagues will soon be rooted internally, he says. As a result, some already-

established organisations may become incorporated into the ANC.

But Tshwete pointed out that there are hundreds of these groups, many without a political bias, that will remain independent. As a result 'the (ANC) Youth League may establish a youth movement to work against apartheid. But it would have to first consolidate itself to bring leadership' to such a coalition.

'Similarly with the women. After forming the Women's League, are we going to say this is the end of the story?' asks Tshwete. The same thinking could be applied to civic organisations.

But he believes it is too early to say whether these organisations would come under the umbrella of a national front through their membership of sectional fronts or as individual affiliates.

'We build from our day-to-day experience. The objective reality must shape the front'.

Besides seeking front partners, and retaining a structured liberation alliance, the ANC anticipates building a number of loose alliances with other groupings and individuals. Perhaps the most important among these will be the ANC's relationship with sympathetic bantustan leaders and the business community.

Says an ANC official: 'There are two doors through which people come to the negotiating table - President FW de Klerk's and ours. We want to ensure that as many bantustan leaders as possible come through our door'.

Sympathetic bantustan leaders also offer the liberation alliance the possibility of strengthening its structures on the ground. Commanding government machineries and resources, these once-puppet administrations have the potential of providing effective liberated zones - but only as long as their power is premised on popular support, rather than the coups which gave at least some of them their positions of authority.

If the more progressive homeland leaders can consolidate themselves in this way, says an ANC official, they will be able to assist the ANC from a more secure position.

As such, the ANC is not demanding the immediate reincorporation of Transkei and Ciskei into South Africa. 'Reincorporation on liberation' is the slogan for them, an official argues. But for the pro-Pretoria homelands, the ANC advocates their destruction.

While the ANC already has close contact with individual bantustan leaders, it hopes to strengthen its hold in the

homelands in part through a series of meetings. The movement hopes to see this process kick off with a meeting of homeland leaders, called by the more progressive among them.

As regards the business community, the ANC is not 'looking for a formal relationship', according to its officials. While there would probably be some formal link indirectly through the DP, the ANC is rather seeking 'a minimum consensus' with business - for example, on the need to restructure the South African economy to break the current crisis.

ANC officials admit that inherent in broad fronts is the risk of a struggle's revolutionary content being diluted, and of getting side-tracked into petty internal differences. The proposed new ANC-led front will be no exception. Last year's Conference for a Democratic Future (CDF) already highlighted some of the difficulties in moulding a broad but effective democratic force.

On this issue NEC member Aziz Pahad argues: 'A front cannot just be a get-together of all tendencies where there are no ideological battles taking place. The very nature of a front is that you fight for positions'.

In Pahad's view, the guarantor of a progressive thrust to a new broad front will be the liberation alliance. 'That must be the core of the front. With that strong grouping ... we are able to ensure that our perspectives are the ones that become the determining influence.'

'We are not saying that we have to lower our positions to the minimum common denominator. We have got to take them to the higher level and that will be the essence of the battle'.

Nonetheless, Pahad points out that the presence of the ANC/SACP/Cosatu core is not an automatic guarantee of a revolutionary perspective. 'We need to ensure that our activities are in the ascendancy'.

And this perhaps is the greatest challenge facing the ANC at the moment. It has to find both the resources and the personnel to adequately address its dual political thrust: tackling De Klerk at the negotiations table and building an organised political base, capable of providing leadership, discipline and militancy to mass actions.

But the effectiveness of the former hinges on the latter, with the proposed front offering the possibility of strengthening both these elements in the ANC approach.

Fighting to be the same - and different

South Africa perhaps ranks as unique in the world for its constitutional contortions called upon to guarantee domination under the guise of democracy.

The guilty party here, of course, is the government.

It has thrown into the constitutional debate so much jargon and constitutional gerrymandering as to nullify the debate itself and create a mystique that scares off all but the most determined citizen.

That was perhaps - at least in part - the intention. But fortunately, the other side of the political spectrum has in the last two years engaged with the government on this level of political struggle.

In what at first appeared to be a rather rarified exercise when measured against the first fires of township resistance, the African National Congress (ANC) entered the constitutional debate. In so doing, it sought to spell out not just what people were fighting against, but what they were fighting for.

By drawing up a set of constitutional guidelines, it hoped to involve not only the experts, but the street fighter, guerilla, union member, political activist, youth and woman in the making of a new legal and political framework for South Africa.

Not to bring the people in close touch with the making of a new constitution would - in the ANC's view - be to abandon this terrain of struggle to the ruling group. For, as majority rule has increasingly struck white South Africans as inevitable, they have become



**Jenny Cargill reports on
ANC constitutional expert
Albie Sachs' contribution
to the group rights debate**

particularly interested in a constitution being the vehicle for guaranteeing security and privilege.

As a result it has also become important to engage white South Africans on just this issue. And ANC lawyer Albie Sachs has attempted to do that in a paper entitled *The constitutional position of white South Africans in a democratic South Africa*.

With intellectual rigour - premised on strong moral convictions and a sympathetic understanding of white fears of majority rule - Sachs argues that the future of whites is best secured by a constitution that makes no special guarantees for whites as a group.

Sachs, injured in a car bomb attack in Maputo in 1988, argues that it is not the quality of being white that needs protection 'but the quality of human being, of being a citizen'.

The best way to allay white fears, says Sachs, 'is to ensure that democracy and its institutions are firmly planted in South Africa; the worst way is to undermine democracy from the start and subvert it with a complicated and unworkable set of institutions based on notions designed to keep racially defined groups locked in endless battle'.

South Africa's history is littered with constitutional proposals, all premised on white fears of a changed society and the desire for continued white hegemony.

The federal, confederal and consociational constitutional models all have a South Africa version with these premises - some, like the tricameral parlia-

ment, being highly distorted ones.

But almost everywhere else in the world, federalism and confederalism have grown out of situations where there already exists regions with some degree of autonomy.

South Africa, says Sachs, does not fit the mould. It is a 'common society', where 'the army, the police, the prison services are organised on a nation-wide basis; so are transport and telecommunications; there is one stock exchange for the country, one basic electricity grid' and so on. The trade unions are nationally organised, and the ANC was formed in 1912 'precisely to overcome tribal and regional divisions'.

So, argues Sachs, drawing boundaries to meet a federal constitutional model would 'be a highly artificial process'.

Checks and balances can far better be guaranteed by a Bill of Rights.

Sachs throws out separate voters' rolls as perpetuating the divisions in South African society which have caused so much harm and discord.

'What South Africans need above all is to acquire the habits and practices of living together, and doing so as equals. A common voters roll is the most fundamental indication of a shared citizenship and shared loyalty'.

As the country gears itself for entering what could be a long process of negotiations, ANC leaders - and Nelson Mandela in particular - have been noticeably sensitive to white fears.

Sachs says: 'From a purely moral point of view, it is not easy to accept that the fears of the white minority ... should merit special attention.

'Nevertheless, if we are to build a new nation on the ruins of apartheid, we have to address ourselves seriously to all the preoccupations of all the people'.



The prospect of majority rule throws up two particular ogres in white - and particularly Afrikaner - minds: a challenge to identity and property.

Sachs addresses both these and offers a teaser to those so appalled by the ANC's policy of nationalisation.

What if a future government introduced anti-trust legislation along the United States lines to curb monopolisation? With economic power in South Africa concentrated in the hands of just a few giant corporations, such legislation 'could in fact have more dramatic implications than a drive towards nationalisation', says Sachs.

The UK-based lawyer is clearly dubious of attempts to write a constitution along ideological lines, as South African business is currently keen on. The socialist countries, says Sachs, have long been criticised for 'putting ideologically-motivated programmes into their constitutions, and thereby removing the issues from public debate'. The critics 'are now themselves planning to do just that, though from the opposite point of view'.

For Sachs, the central issue is not whether South Africa has a market or planned economy, but 'what to do about apartheid-induced inequality'.

The question of identity - so sensitive to the Afrikaner - has become problematic because the right of political equality is confused with the right of cultural differences.

Says Sachs: 'We are struggling in South Africa for the right to be the same. We are also fighting for the right to be different'.

'Identity', argues Sachs, 'relates to personality, culture, tastes, beliefs and ways of seeing and doing things. Here we struggle for the right to be different'.

'Sameness refers to one's status as a citizen, voter, scholar, patient or employee'.

The implication of Sachs' argument is: understand this difference and fear nothing.

But, in fact, argues Sachs, fear nothing as long as South Africa has a constitution that defends the liberty of all, with a Bill of Rights being central. 'This is really the guarantee of guarantees for whites, as for everyone else, namely that their deepest interests coincide with the deepest interests of their fellow citizens. What all South Africans should be trying to do is to strengthen the institutions of non-racial democracy, so that they become deeply implanted in the country and part of its general culture'.

The independence celebration party is over. Now Namibia faces a future with few economic options and the looming shadow of its giant neighbour to the south. Susan Brown reports from Windhoek



Life in the shadow of the big banana

The shouting is dying down, the captains and kings depart.

So too do the heads of state, the foreign ministers, top Untag officials like Martti Ahtisaari, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, and General Dewan Prem Chand, commander of the UN's military forces.

Namibia's independence celebrations were in many ways typical of the way things are happening here: the public events were in most cases amiably low-key, with the emphasis on national symbols rather than party ones. Half of the festivities was paid for by South Africa - as is traditional - but the Namibian costs were partly carried by public and corporate donations.

As always, a time of focus on Namibia was occasion for other nations to get on with their agendas. There was a great deal of background summiteering between visiting dignitaries, including both FW de Klerk's delegation and Nelson Mandela's. Whether an Angola peace accord will be one of the products of such meetings remains to be seen, but it appears that the US position may be shifting to something less irrationally destructive.

The jigsaw of Southern African interrelations is being redefined and reas-

sembled. Its new shape and pattern will, as ever, have a crucial effect on Namibia's future.

Just as the diplomatic breakthroughs which began the independence process here last year had more to do with US, Soviet and South African manoeuvres, so external factors will continue to have a disproportionate impact on Namibia.

Given that the country's aid, investment and trade opportunities will, like those of the rest of the Third World, be heavily affected by the changing face of eastern Europe, the biggest and most important piece of the jigsaw for the countries in the region remains South Africa.

On the map, Namibia looks nearly as big as South Africa. This is a misleading image if ever there was one. Namibia has a population of about 1.5-million and a gross domestic product (GDP) of about R3.5-billion.

South Africa's are respectively about 34-million and R237-billion.

The second largest national economy in Southern Africa, Zimbabwe's, has a GDP of less than R8 billion.

South Africa's industries, its finance, its technicians and technocrats - though, one hopes, no longer its military and securocrats - have exerted, and will



continue to exert, a massive gravitational pull.

Like the US in the Americas, though on a smaller scale, if South Africa sneezes, Namibia gets pneumonia. And that will continue to be the case, however long majority rule takes to come down south.

Many of the potential investors who have visited Namibia in the past year have recoiled at the size of the country's domestic market, which makes it almost impossible to develop economies-of-scale planning on exporting from the word go. Several who planned to be in place to access the South African market have decided in view of developments to await a settlement there, and invest in the Big Banana rather than on the periphery.

The Swapo government's policies on a number of key issues are not spelled out, and in some cases are still being formulated. But the slogans of exile notwithstanding, there are not a great many economic options. And it is the shrewdness of manoeuvre in this arena, and especially the number of jobs created, that will ultimately determine whether the Swapo government gets itself re-elected after its first five years - or whether it dares to hold elections at all.

And if it does not, that will put investors off still further. The present rate of unemployment is 50% and upward - and half the population is under 18 years old. The new Namibia has not that many economic choices.

South Africa buys between 70 and 80% of what Namibia produces, and sells about 80% of what it consumes. Certainly this country will work to diversify its markets through the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), through the larger African Preferential Trade Area (PTA), through the Lome Convention. But it cannot undertake import substitution programmes that will push inflation through the roof - another sure recipe for political disaster.

So President Sam Nujoma talks cordially to De Klerk, praising his statesmanship.

The government is courting investors, and is looking hopefully toward its fishing industry and the prospect of processing and selling fish to the many east and west European nations that were busily depleting the Namibian deep-sea resources during the nation's years in limbo. The ink is not yet dry on a contract allowing Lonrho to develop sugar plantations in the Caprivi.



De Klerk: Nujoma praises his statesmanship

Relations are courtly between Nujoma and Minister of Mines Toivo ja Toivo on the one hand, and the major mining investors - Rossing, Consolidated Diamond Mines and Gold Fields' Tsumeb copper mines. Gencor is said to be interested in investing in base metal development.

There are mutters of 'sell-out', which will no doubt grow louder. The unions and the churches, so prominent in campaigning for the nationalist movement within the country before the exiles' return, are being ushered off the politi-

cal platform. For each, it can be seen as an opportunity to strengthen the structures of their bases, which in time will give them another kind of political leverage. But that doesn't mean they have to like exiting from the limelight.

There are other dilemmas: the land question, on which there is no policy clarity so far. Again, the government does not want to scare off investors by expropriating land. Nor does it want to decrease export revenues by increasing the amount of subsistence farming at the expense of commercial production - or lose the tax revenues from the latter. But it does need to be seen to feed at least some of the land hunger of the dispossessed.

Most aid committed to Namibia by major donor nations is designated for services like health and education. But, as more and more of the Swapo central committee are coming to see, there is little political future in having a highly educated younger generation hungry for non-existent jobs - and angry at the government whose job, they think, it is to make sure there are jobs.

The tribulations of the Zimbabwean government in the present elections are an object lesson which at least some of those now in power in Namibia are watching carefully.



Smiling at Slovo: But mining minister Toivo ja Toivo is saving his big grin for the major mining investors.

The choice facing voters in Zimbabwe's crucial second general election on March 28 was bleak.

On the one hand the ruling party Zanu (PF) is controlled by a group who do not have democracy at the forefront of their minds.

On the other is Edgar Tekere's Zimbabwe Unity Movement (Zum), even further right and party to a grubby alliance with former Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith's all-white Conservative Alliance.

Senior law lecturer Kempton Makamura, who was detained briefly last year, believes election week and its immediate aftermath is destined to be the most critical period in Zimbabwe's post-independence history.

'If both parties accept the results, democracy will have been entrenched. If either does not acknowledge the will of the people, we will be in deep trouble and will lose the small gains we have made and it will spell the end of the beginning of our struggle for a democratic Zimbabwe'.

He was speaking to WIP a week before polling day, a week of anxiety among those intellectuals, trade unionists and human rights activists who have made a substantial contribution to po-

Zimbabwe's second election came after a vicious election campaign characterised by warlike rhetoric - despite the absence of any real threat to Mugabe's ruling Zanu (PF). A WIP correspondent reports

litical debate.

The anxiety was well placed:

'If you don't vote for Zanu (PF) it means you want to go back to war', said a candidate in the rural constituency.

President Robert Mugabe was equally forthright: 'People must not listen to small, petty little ants which we can crush'.

Tekere's message was also loaded with violent innuendo. 'He (Mugabe) can go back to State House and form a government. But come 12 months and they will be out. The choice is theirs: to get out freely or get out the painful way'.

Seeking votes from the army, Tekere promised to withdraw Zimbabwe's troops from Mozambique if voted into power.

Mugabe then accused Tekere of planning to assassinate Zanu (PF) leaders and stage a coup if Zanu (PF) was returned to government.

Whites who voted for Zum were going to have their heads 'chopped off'. Zum supporters would be 'moved' from their houses after the ruling party victory and Mugabe threatened to sack civil servants who voted for Tekere.

While the cut and thrust of pre-poll



A party in panic

electioneering was initially quite invigorating - if lop-sided in the state media where Zum struggles for reportage - its degeneration into slogans of war haunted those who remembered the violence of the 1985 elections.

Then Zanu (PF) supporters, mainly its youth and the harridans in the Malawiclonic women's league, destroyed hundreds of homes belonging to opposition Zanu members. One Zanu candidate was killed and scores of rank-and-file Zanu cardholders severely beaten. In the fortnight before this year's election Zum supporters have been the target of a lesser wave of violence. And the aggression has not been one-sided.

'A call to arms among a sophisticated constituency in a five-star hotel is a far cry from electioneering using the same slogans among Zimbabwe's voters in the rural areas, who are veterans of a bush war', said one analyst. Like many others, he declined to be named, for fear of ruling party reprisals.

An hourly-paid worker in Harare with war-time combat experience said, in response to the politicking of the week earlier: 'We killed before, we can do it again. Zum is confusing the people'.

Democrats were at a loss for a rational explanation for Zanu (PF)'s pre-election panic.

Zum was never a serious threat. Its support came from a variety of small, mainly urban groups, many of whom were prepared to support Tekere as a protest against a possible future one-party state.

Others voted for Zum because they have seen war-time leaders accumulating wealth while calling for land redistribution. Many urban unemployed voted for hope - of a job, which Zum would have been even less equipped to provide than Zanu (PF).

In the rural areas memories have lasted longer and for voters there, who bore the brunt of the Rhodesian war, life has improved.

There is peace in rural Zimbabwe, and broadly, there are thousands more schools, clinics, electrified growth points, agricultural extensions and credit facilities for farmers. And it is out in the rural areas where 70% of Zimbabwe's population still lives.

Zanu (PF) panic was probably more responsible for Mugabe's stayaway from Namibian independence celebrations than his consistent refusal to meet South Africa's President FW de Klerk.

In provinces of traditional Zanu (PF) support, Mugabe was still able to draw

crowds.

But at rallies where he was not present to prop up candidates the turn-out was sparse, a reflection of the apathy which pervaded the political climate.

The voter stayaways are broadly divided into two camps.

The first were registering a protest no-vote. For them the choice was too bleak.

The second group no longer see politics as a panacea to their deteriorating economic circumstances. For them the prospect of owning or renting a modest modern house has receded into distant memory. For them politicians' promises can no longer be believed. This group also noted, in spontaneous interviews with WIP in the poll run-up, that their MPs have not reported back to them, have not made themselves accountable, preferring to remain in the relative comfort of Harare.

A cynical commentator wrote in a local magazine: 'Government should close all national parks until after the general election and use the game warden and guide to show MPs where their constituencies are and, if necessary, take them there'.

There was a moment before the inter-party slanging match got underway when some of the old political fervour returned.

Zanu (PF) decided in the face of vote no-shows at five by-elections last year to expand the democratic process and introduce primaries. Party candidates would be chosen by their constituencies and no longer be imposed by provincial hierarchies.

Some of the results were deeply shocking to established Zanu (PF) politicians. In several constituencies the popular vote rejected MPs who had enjoyed Mugabe's patronage for 10 years.

But the Zanu (PF) central committee and politburo retained the authority to



Tekere: promised to withdraw Zimbabwe's troops from Mozambique

vet primary results. In several constituencies, they over-rode the vote, or simply transferred unpopular candidates favoured by the party to other constituencies. The process was described as 'guided democracy', and the flame of local political passion was extinguished wherever it was used.

Optimists hope these first, flawed primaries mark the beginning of something which could mature into future grassroots democracy within Zanu (PF). Others, looking back at Zanu PF's dictatorial style, are less sanguine.

The run-up to the general election highlighted how far Zimbabwe still has to go to separate the government from the party.

Election broadcasts on the state-run television were conducted by the ministry of political affairs, which has been commanded by the Zanu (PF) central committee to give the party its full support. That the ministry is funded by the taxpayer is ignored.

Mugabe's threat to fire civil servants suspected of voting for Zum was an even cruder example of Zanu (PF)'s failure to accept that government and party are separate institutions.

It is not clear yet whether the state or Zanu (PF) paid Air Zimbabwe's charter costs when, for three days in a row, Mugabe took an aircraft off its regular flights to get to party rallies in Matabeleland. That hundreds of local and international passengers were stranded to make way for Zanu (PF) was not a consideration to a party in panic.

Uppermost in the minds of many is that a vote for Zanu (PF) is endorsement for an eventual legal one-party state.

Before the end of the constraints of the British-designed Lancaster House Constitution in April, Zimbabwe had a house of assembly and a Senate. In preparation for the end of Lancaster, the Senate was abolished and the 100-seat parliament extended to include 120 elected MPs and a further 30 appointed by the president - made up of appointed provincial governors, chiefs and representatives of special interest groups.

In the old parliament, Zanu (PF) held 98 out of those 100 seats. Zum had one and Zanu, led by self-exiled Ndadabingi Sithole's representative in the eastern border, another.

Tekere stood against Mugabe for the executive presidency and, predictably, lost by a landslide. Tekere had prepared for this probability - he had been counting on the single Zum MP winning his old seat, then standing down and make

way for Tekere to be elected to parliament. It is unlikely that Zum would win more than a couple of seats at best.

The constitution can now be changed with a simple two-thirds majority.

Robert Mugabe has never adequately explained why he wants a one-party state. In 1984 his uncertain reply to a question on the issue was that Zimbabwe did not want to emulate 'chaotic' western democracies which had spawned organisations like the Red Brigades.

A one-party state is seen in some quarters as the logical result of unity between the former opposition Zapu and the ruling party.

In December 1989 when that unity was formalised into a merger, Mugabe insisted the constitution of the united Zanu (PF) would include a mandate for the party to 'seek a one-party state guided by Marxist-Leninist principles'.

Three days later the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceasceau and his equally dreadful wife Elena were executed.

The unattractive pair had been the first foreigners to be given the freedom of Harare. Mugabe reportedly went off his food for a couple of days. He was shocked to the core.

He immediately distanced Zimbabwe's rhetorical commitment to socialism, saying it would be achieved taking into account historical and cultural realities.

Politicians, notably from the country's small left wing, have been courageous in their public rejection of any legal one-party state.

And the party faithful have been at pains to tell voters that support for Zanu (PF) at the election was not a mandate for a one-party state.

Zanu (PF) political commissar Moven Mahachi says the party would hold a referendum and seek an 'acclamation' vote for a legal one-party state, if and when a decision on the issue was made.

But Didymus Mutasa, Speaker of the old parliament, said during the campaign that countries in Africa with a legal one-party state had political stability and named Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia as examples. He listed Nigeria and Ghana as two which had opted for a multi-party democracy after independence and had suffered political misfortune.

Mused law lecturer Makamura: 'This has been the first real test - in 1985 the (20) protected white seats were still there, and the war was going on in Matabeleland. We have no tradition of democracy, and clearly will still have a long way to go'.

Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union's secretary-general Morgan Tsvangirayi reviews the union federation's first 10 years under a formally socialist government



Carving a place for the unions

WIP: You were detained in October 1989. Why?

Tsvangirayi: The ZCTU became a symbol and target of the general disenchantment in the country, arising out of the Willowgate scandal and the tarnishing of the image of the party and the leadership. Because the students and the ZCTU had taken a stand, we became the targets.

WIP: What is your own trade union history?

Tsvangirayi: I was elected as chairman of the Mineworkers' branch after independence, as well as chairman of the workers' committee in Bindura. In 1983, I was elected on to the national executive of the Mineworkers' Union. In 1985 I was elected national Vice-President of the Mineworkers' union so I had to move away from the mine in Bindura. In 1988, following the ZCTU's extraordinary congress, I was elected secretary-general.

WIP: How did the ZCTU itself come into being?

Tsvangirayi: At independence there were five national labour centres: each one with a different party affiliation. But when Zanu came into power, it issued a policy of 'one union, one industry'. But the unions had already had several meetings to form a national federation. The government realised that if it allowed the unions to join by themselves, the Zanu component would not dominate. So Zanu said, 'Look, we are following this interim strategy: everybody join in on it, and then you can go

and form your national labour centre'. The government did not want a national federation in the interests of the labour movement; they wanted a federation which was loyal to the party.

WIP: In the late 1980s, there have been growing tensions, sometimes open conflict, between the ZCTU and Zanu. What caused these problems?

Tsvangirayi: The first ZCTU administration was subservient, it did not want to be seen in conflict with the party, especially a party which has espoused a socialist position.

WIP: At independence there was a lot of union-government hostility and several strikes were smashed by the new Zanu administration.

Tsvangirayi: The unions were totally powerless to control those initial outbursts. They were organisationally very weak.

WIP: What was the extent of worker participation in the liberation struggle?

Tsvangirayi: The workers were certainly not central to the nationalist movement's struggle. Both nationalist parties had the support of the peasants, but they did not have a strategy of mobilising the workers to complement the liberation struggle. So the blame falls on both: on the nationalists and the labour movement.

WIP: One of the obvious attacks on the labour movement took place in 1985 when some union organisers were detained and later deported.

Tsvangirayi: Because Zimbabwe had cultivated an image of being a socialist

state, it attracted a lot of sympathisers. When this group of British teachers came, it started agitating for a real Marxist mobilisation. Apparently they didn't understand the real situation ... that Zimbabwe is actually a capitalist state. **WIP: Would it be fair to say that the ZCTU was rather weak in the mid-1980s?**

Tsvangiyari: There were several reasons for this. One is the division (of trade-unionists) into different labour federations affiliated to different political parties. That helped to divide the working class here.

Secondly, the financial viability of the unions themselves: they were not allowed to mobilise properly and ended up depending on international donor funding.

The rivalry between the Ndebeles and Shonas, and Zapu and Zanu also affected the unions.

Then there was the corruption and in-fighting within the ZCTU, and some in the government have struggled to use this against the ZCTU. This did a lot of damage to the image of the ZCTU in the 1980s.

WIP: The ZCTU has increasingly taken the lead in different 'popular' campaigns - against the \$100-million civic centre in Harare, against price increases and wage freezes. It has also criticised recent budgets and government policies, like the new 'investment code'. The ZCTU seems to have targeted specific areas of government activity like urban councils, as part of these 'campaigns'. Does this reflect a new strategy on the part of the ZCTU? How successful has it been?

Tsvangiyari: It is a new strategy, but I don't know if we've been totally successful. Our strategy has been twofold: it was meant to draw attention from the negative aspect of the ZCTU. We also wanted the labour movement to realise that it had a role to play in articulating and fighting those grievances.

WIP: What is the growth potential of the ZCTU in this regard? Are you planning to link up with other popular organisations such as the Organisation of Collective Co-operatives in Zimbabwe (OCCZIM) and sympathetic groups like students and intellectuals?

Tsvangiyari: The OCCZIM is an affiliate of the ZCTU. But we would like to see that link reinforced through day-to-day work and campaigns. The co-operatives have largely been marginalised and it is our responsibility to make sure that the government gives some atten-

tion to the way in which the laws of the co-operative movement have been promulgated. We also want to research how co-operatives have been organised and see whether we can make them more collective in operation and more effective for marketing produce.

Students are a force that is marginalised in society. Thus, they are natural allies of workers.

But when it comes to other institutions and organisations, we have to identify which ones are progressive. And we do have contact with individual progressive intellectuals, who help us in policy matters and keep us informed of economic and political analyses.

We are having an important congress this year and for the first time, we are addressing ourselves to the structural problems of the organisation. We will discuss the issue of affiliate membership from progressive organisations and want to see the ZCTU break the logjam between it and various grassroots organisations in this country. We want to see grassroots groups and workers organised more closely in the regions and district committees. When issues like corruption and price increases come up publicly, the ZCTU does not have the national organisational ability to mobilise people fully around that. The most we can usually do to reach out across the country is to release a position statement, but without supporting grassroots structures, it just becomes a statement of a position.

WIP: Since 1988 there seems to have developed some ambiguity and tension in relations between the government and trade unions. The government has introduced an economic programme and legislation which has at times been hostile to workers: the investment code, the unwinding of the price freeze and the Labour Relations Act have undermined the position of unionists. But at the same time, President Mugabe has called on workers to 'flex their muscle' and defend their rights and for more power for unions, though he did say he did not want organised workers to become part of an opposition party. How do you explain and work within this ambiguous relationship?

Tsvangiyari: We have gained some strength from this government position. But there is difficulty with the government's concept of trade unions. On the one hand, the government does not want to establish a firm role for the trade unions, both in social and economic policy making, and in the decision-

making process. On the other hand, mainly on the rhetorical aspect, where statements for public consumption on the question of socialism and so forth, they talk quite differently! In actual fact, the government is not interested in allowing us any significant input into debates and discussion on socialism, and the role of workers in the Zimbabwean socialist society. That's especially the situation when it comes to legislation relating to workers: legislation that helps to control organised labour, but not in the interests of workers.

In terms of controlling labour, we are the most controlled labour unions, I would say in the whole world! At the moment it's practically impossible to institute a strike action. I find their position very hypocritical, because although what they say is not exactly threatening, it's what they do after they've said it which really affects and hurts us. **WIP: Zanu(PF) is a party led by the petty-bourgeoisie, with a membership consisting mainly of the peasantry, armed with a Marxist-Leninist 'proletarian' ideology. Where do the interests of trade unionists fit in, at the heart of this heterogenous political configuration?**

Tsvangiyari: The workers will always have a role, since they are the producers. They should not advocate workerism because 80 percent of our population are peasants. What they should do is to try and link up workers and peasants into strong structures to advance their interests. That's the only way we can draw the ruling party away from the right wing and convert it to our own purpose.

WIP: Is there room for a worker-peasant party outside of Zanu?

Tsvangiyari: It would be premature and reckless to do this and it would only further divide socialists in Zimbabwe. It would be better to work within the unity framework.

WIP: What have been the achievements of Zimbabwean socialism in the first 10 years? Where will the country go in the next 10 years?

Tsvangiyari: One is perhaps assuming too much in asking about the achievements of socialism in Zimbabwe's first 10 years: one should rather ask whether there has been any serious attempt at undertaking a transformation to socialism in Zimbabwe.

There has not been any sincere attempt at socialist transition. Zimbabwe's main achievement since 1980 has in fact been the attainment of national independence and majority rule.

There have been gains during the past decade, mainly in education and health. More generally, there has been an improvement in black social development, with more funds being put into the mass sections of society than has previously been the case.

And with regard to the failure of 'socialism'? Basically, these relate to economic policy. We are now seeing a serious deterioration in the economic climate and the standard of living of the masses in Zimbabwe. We see it in the rising cost of living and the shortage of housing. People are getting desperate because they realise that the government's initial promises that education, health and other services would be free or nearly free can no longer be believed.

One of the biggest economic failures involves unemployment and the government's inability to absorb the spiralling numbers of school-leavers who are coming on the job market. This is partly due to seriously declining investment levels in the domestic economy. Economically, after 10 years of independence we have a society which is more thoroughly capitalist than in 1980, with more deference given to private companies by the government.

WIP: A major issue now seems to be the growing unemployment crisis. What should the government do about this?

Tsvangiyari: Again, it's a matter of

inspiring and directing local investment, and exercising more, not less, control over private investment in the economy. To do this is a long process. This country has said that for the next ten years what we are going to do is whatever we retain for ourselves is going to be directed into replacement of old machinery, into factories, investment in manufacturing so that a wider economic basis is created for employment, so that more people can enjoy the fruit of public investment. That is, instead of investing in services.

WIP: Is the ZCTU satisfied with the existing Labour Relations Act?

Tsvangiyari: No. It has never been amended, after all of our complaints and attempts at negotiating changes to it. Quite plainly, they are holding back because of the investment code. (Zimbabwe Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development) Chidzero wants to remove all of the controls which are important for us, such as the right to hire and fire. What has already happened is that the government instituted emergency power regulations, which abrogated the Labour Relations Act -- that was last year. Managers now have more power than before. If they fall under an 'essential service' category, they can easily suspend the Labour Relations Act and push unions around.

WIP: Is it desirable that the ZCTU be represented within Zanu, or even in

parliament?

Tsvangiyari: It is essential for all people to participate democratically in policy-making. But whether it is in the best interests of the working class to be part of the party, experience everywhere shows that the results would be negative.

Workers have to fight in parliament to advance their interests effectively. But whether we are going to be in (parliament) is a different matter!

WIP: Finally, recent developments in South Africa have been followed closely by Zimbabweans. If a political settlement is reached in South Africa in the near future, how will this affect Zimbabwe and the different political forces in this country?

Tsvangiyari: What happens in South Africa will be crucial for us. It is already clear that the ANC will not opt for the one-party state, and this, is an excellent example for us. We also need open participation by the masses in government. A new South Africa should be held up as an indicator. If there are significant changes in South Africa, there will be serious repercussions for us here.

Zimbabwe has built its considerable security apparatus, and has maintained a 25-year-old state of emergency on the basis of 'the South African threat. This has cost us huge amounts of money, and has enabled the stifling of civil rights from time to time, in the name of national security.

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A key lesson from Eastern Europe is that socialism must win majority support in a free clash of ideas - or not win at all. Daryl Glaser discusses the implications

Putting democracy back into democratic socialism



All democrats should welcome the collapse of the so-called communist regimes of Eastern Europe - regimes which were an affront to any conception of democracy, 'bourgeois' or socialist.

The revolutions of 1989 have brought basic democratic rights within reach of millions who have never enjoyed them, or enjoyed them only briefly.

Socialists, and indeed liberals, may not like all that they see in the emerging Eastern Europe: the revival of ethnic hatreds, the surge of religious and social conservatism, naive faith in the 'free market'. But these are prejudices which Stalinism merely bottled up, manipulated or encouraged inadvertently.

The vanquishing of Stalinism now opens a space for socialists around the world to reconstruct socialist ideas and practices and begin to restore socialism's popular prestige on a radically democratic and anti-Stalinist basis.

The lessons of Eastern Europe will be at the centre of socialist debates for a long time to come. Their impact will surely be felt in the South African Left, the more so because of the unstinting support which Stalinist regimes received over the years from their 'allies' in the South African liberation movement.

Already the shifting international climate has forced the ANC and SACP to rethink basic positions - hence the former's constitutional guidelines prom-

ising multi-party democracy and the latter's proposed Worker's Charter recognising, among other things, the right of workers to strike in a post-apartheid South Africa.

These shifts are welcome but it remains to be seen whether enough has been done to extirpate the legacy of Stalinism from the language and methods of Congress politics.

For their part the far Left, while sure to claim the Eastern European revolutions as vindication of their past anti-Stalinist postures, fail to recognise Stalinist elements in their own theory and practice - for instance, in their vanguardism and undifferentiated hostility to 'liberalism'. They too have still to absorb the many lessons of Eastern Europe.

The first of these lessons is surely that socialists should never again be found apologising for anti-popular, anti-democratic regimes.

Most Western Marxists and socialists have been critical of the Stalinist experience for several decades, albeit with varying vehemence. But a significant minority, a lot of them in South Africa, have been willing to excuse or defend these regimes through one outrage after another - Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, Poland 1981. Such repression as they would admit existed under Stalinist rule was ascribed to the imperatives of defending socialism in

the midst of imperialist encirclement and internal scarcity.

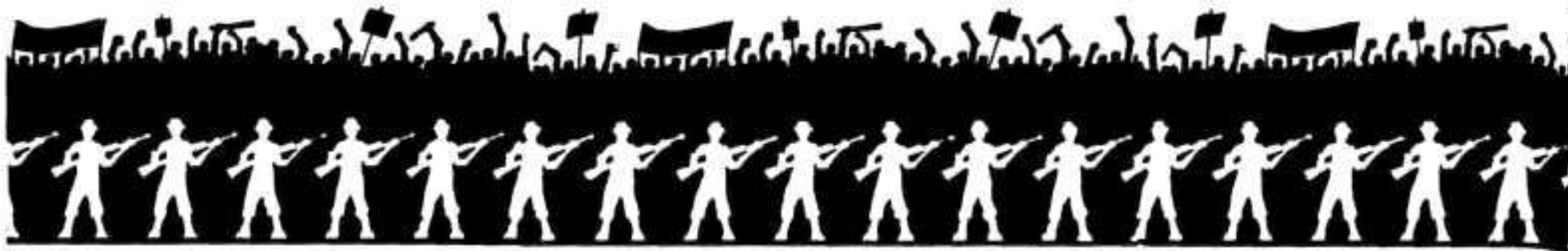
It is not now a question of apologising for having endorsed totalitarian and often murderous regimes. It is necessary to ask how that endorsement could have been given in the first place. What misguided faith in the wisdom of those in power, what kind of deep distrust of the masses, what theoretical and moral lacunae, conspired to make it possible?

Many ex-Stalinists now accept the popular verdict on the communist regimes of Eastern Europe. But how many are ready to accept the full implications of their collapse? How many would join the demand for multi-party democracy in the Soviet Union and for the break-up of the old Czarist empire into independent republics?

How many accept that the implantation of Soviet-derived institutional models drained the democratic vitality of a succession of Third World liberation struggles - and the implication of this admission: that multi-party democracy must come also to Cuba and Vietnam, Mozambique and Angola?

The far Left, too, has got away far too easily with glib critiques of 'degenerate workers states' or 'state capitalism' in the East Bloc.

These approaches systematically subordinated the issue of institutional forms and guarantees (political pluralism, civil liberties and democratic real-



ity) to the question of the class character of the state. The dangers in this are obvious: it was on the basis of a similar ranking that Stalinists justified their own prioritisation of 'substantive' over 'formal' rights and their own violation of socialist legality in pursuit of 'class enemies'. The far Left may disavow such practices, but many in their own ranks remain deeply suspicious of any extension of democracy and pluralism beyond the socialist camp.

Its vision of democracy has often not gone beyond a plurality of factions within the dominant 'vanguard' party. Is it now ready to accept the popular demand for genuine freedom of expression and association, even where these give rise to anti-socialist parties?

A second message from Eastern Europe is that from now on socialism will either win out in a free clash of ideas - or not win at all.

Socialism is not some over-ridingly inevitable and desirable 'end' whose pursuit justifies trampling underfoot anyone who gets in its historical path. It is one particular conception of the Good Life and cannot be imposed on a people who hold a different conception. It can only compete for their support.

Socialists can govern democratically where they persuade a majority or plurality to accept (and preferably participate in implementing) their vision.

Where they do not enjoy popular consent they can only govern with a semblance of democracy as long as their reserves of charisma, the hyperactivity of their supporters, the passivity of their opponents and their capacity to deliver the goods lasts. As soon as these ebb, yesterday's revolutionary regime is likely to look like a beached whale, increasingly isolated on its post-revolutionary shores.

Such a regime will be able to hold on only through repression and the bureaucratic pacification of civil society - by means such as denying its subjects the right to travel and access to information.

Nor is there any justification for temporary suppression of political pluralism on the grounds that it makes possible higher forms of democracy in the future.

Such reasoning assumes, firstly, that

the desired 'end' can be known in advance to be both feasible and desirable enough to justify almost any cost.

Secondly, it depends on 'optimistic' assumptions that citizens of the revolutionary society can actually be transformed into what the ruling vanguard deems 'socialist men', capable of governing themselves. If the metamorphosis fails (as is probable), the state is likely to find itself isolated from, and contemptuous of, its stubbornly 'unwise' and 'reactionary' subjects.

The suspension of democracy on the grounds of some external threat is even more hazardous.

In the Third World especially, societies building socialism are likely to remain lastingly vulnerable to economic and military encirclement, offering political elites convenient pretexts for extending indefinitely 'temporary' dictatorships.

In addition, habits of government acquired and vested interests generated during periods of dictatorship have a tendency to entrench themselves.

In short, democratic rights cannot then be suspended until some future generation emerges, judged by the vanguard to be worthy of them. Democratic entitlement can only ever belong to actual, existing populations. Paths to a genuinely democratic socialist future must always pass through the consent of identifiable majorities or pluralities.

It is true that in reactionary orders, lacking basic democratic rights, people buried in traditionalism or ignorance are not ideally placed to make informed choices about which historical path to follow.

Faced with popular hostility or scepticism, revolutionary oppositions in such societies may be tempted to opt for forcible seizure of power, backed perhaps by a small urban working class or intelligentsia.

Even in democratic capitalist societies, substantive freedom of choice is limited by the capacity of the capitalist class to control the means of ideological production, influence elections, buy politicians and veto the economic policy choices of elected governments. Here, too, the temptation exists to seize power as a vanguard, backed by a minority of 'advanced' workers and intellectuals - and only then to win over the population as a whole by removing capitalist ideo-

logical cloak to reveal the 'advantages' of socialism.

In both situations the temptation to take power and begin to implement socialism without popular support must be resisted.

In the former, populations may remain available to reactionary mobilisation, compelling modernising elites to rule by the indefinite use of military force and bureaucratic diktat, as in Afghanistan.

In the latter case, the forcible seizure of power by a minority could lead not merely to it having to preside repressively over its post-revolutionary order, but to the extinction of such limited but genuine democratic rights as existed in the previous order. This is what happened in Czechoslovakia.

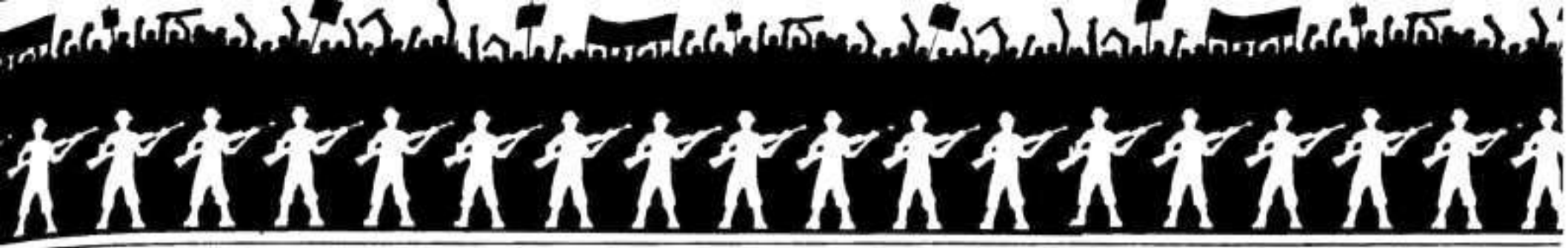
Where there is evidence of substantial support for a democratic revolution and at the same time an absence of constitutional means of expression, there can be no path to democracy other than through seizure of power or coercive assault upon it.

But revolutionaries who seize power in these circumstances are not entitled to impose a particular programme or ideology on their newly emancipated subjects. Within some reasonable space of time they must - like the Sandinistas in Nicaragua - convene free elections to determine and legitimate the post-revolutionary choice of social system.

By contrast, in bourgeois democracies it is difficult to see how revolutionaries could ever justify forcibly seizing power if they are not *also* able to win a majority in formally free elections.

Extra-parliamentary mobilisation is crucial in prefiguring direct democracy and an active civil society, but the activism of an 'advanced' minority of the population cannot substitute for the consent of an electoral majority. Of course, having won electoral support, a socialist party may be prevented from occupying government or giving effect to its democratic mandate. In such circumstances it would be justified in mobilising its mass of supporters to secure in reality the power that should accompany its winning the election.

A decision to go down a socialist path is not made once-and-for-all. Socialists in power must provide mecha-



nisms whereby a socialist course may be democratically reversed. This entails, at least, mechanisms of multi-party competition through regular free elections.

The preconditions of truly free elections include universal franchise, secret ballot, direct election from base to centre, some degree of proportionality-of-representation - and of course a context of constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of the press, assembly and association.

Of course constructing socialist democracy involves more than developing institutions of representative democracy. It must also involve the elaboration of instruments of local democracy and mass participation. It must encourage an active voluntary civil society between the state and the individual. It must extend on the principles of political democracy to the workplace and the economy generally.

But institutionally guaranteed liberties and pluralism are as crucial to 'direct democracy' or to the activation of civil society as they are to representative democracy itself.

At all levels of democratic life - local, central, societal - the right to organise politically, to compete for popular support and to stand in elections must be conferred on the widest range of forces, cutting across both class and ideological boundaries.

In such a democracy anti-socialist forces could come to power and commence a 'counter-revolutionary' restoration of capitalism. They must be permitted to do so.

The post-revolutionary rules of the game may legitimately require that the majority favouring a restoration of capitalism should be substantial and durable. And they should encode the right of pro-socialist sectors peacefully to protest against the reversion to capitalism.

But at the end of the day capitalist restoration must be possible. To rule it out completely would require ideological policing of political life - especially dangerous in a world where boundaries between rival social systems have become blurred, and where definitions of class loyalty and ideological purity are contested.

To legally exclude pro-capitalist politics is to put a weapon in the hands

of those incumbents of power who would use physical force against all whom they choose to label as enemies of socialism and the working class. Such labelling is likely to become increasingly arbitrary and abusive over time.

Let us not forget that Stalinists have been known to label as anti-socialist, even fascist, doctrines as diverse as Trotskyism and social democracy; and that some Trotskyites view as anti-socialist anyone who advocates popular fronts, peaceful roads or two-stage theories of revolution.

To deny the possibility of capitalist restoration is also to disenfranchise those sections of society who stubbornly refuse socialism. They may include not only the bourgeoisie but wide elements of the peasantry, petit bourgeoisie and even the working class.

Denied democratic rights, the disenfranchised will be eager to challenge the legitimacy of the regime and will provide ready recruits for armed counter-revolution or external invasion.

Democratically speaking, there is no choice but to untether a democratic citizenry from the bandwagon of 'inevitable' socialist victory.

Socialists who are genuinely democratic might *never* win majorities in 'reactionary' populations.

In that case they are fated to permanent opposition. This is not without its own rewards and opportunities nor incompatible with winning local or short-term victories. Socialists can, from their position as fighting opposition, do much to advance democratic and social progress.

Alternatively, socialists who come to power with popular support may subsequently lose it. People are fickle. From enjoying the challenges and advantages of power, socialists may suddenly find themselves thrust into opposition and their noble schemes reversed. So be it.

As the opposition, socialists can then again, from a morally secure position, propogate their own alternatives.

Societies once socialist can become capitalist, just as societies once capitalist can become socialist. Seen in this way, 'counter-revolution' loses at least some of its menace and fending it off ceases to justify revolutionary militarism and bureaucratic domination.

Retaining state power is not an over-

riding human priority. Not only *can* it be surrendered, there are times when it must be let go, no matter how appalling the alternative. The mission of socialism is to project possibilities before the human race, not to save human beings from themselves.

Moreover, Eastern Europe cautions socialists that even when they govern with popular consent they are not entitled to use state power (and in particular central state power) to regulate and control all aspects of civil and economic life.

They may have a mandate to determine a society's overall collective project; to make macroscopic decisions about economic planning and redistribution; and to manage political and economic relationships with other societies.

But majority rule must be kept within bounds to ensure its compatibility with multiple centres of political power, with voluntary activity and individual initiative and with the right to privacy.

This means, in the first instance, a separation of powers at the centre itself: an independent judiciary; strong powers of legislative scrutiny over the executive; freedom of access to bureaucratic information; the scaling down and democratic political control of the state's coercive arms; and fair electoral rules.

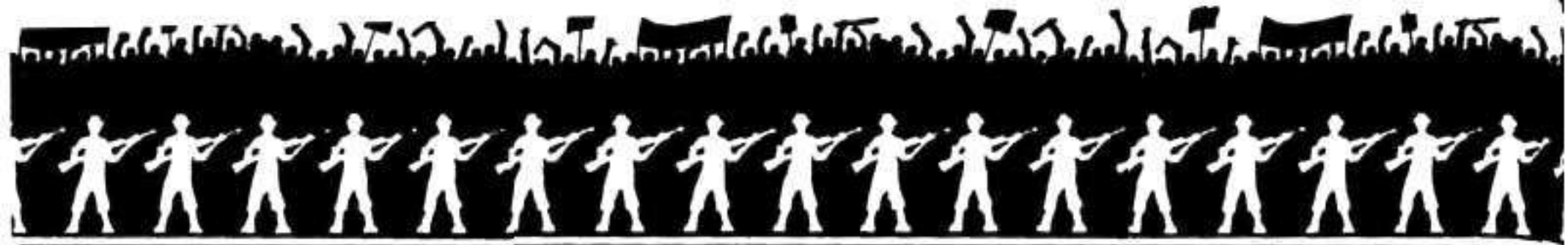
In the second instance it means the decentralisation of state structures, the extension of workers' self-management and the democratisation of public institutions at local level.

Finally, it entails answering the demand insistently made by the Eastern European opposition for an autonomous civil society.

By this East European opposition groups mean, broadly speaking, a social realm in which individuals and groups can engage in voluntary forms of association, self-organisation and exchange, constrained by law but beyond the control of the state.

This notion is not unproblematic.

Firstly, the extra-state character of civil society does not guarantee its freedom from internal pressures for conformity and discipline. In fact, the disciplinary role of the patriarchal family, the church and the capitalist enterprise is central to the New Right's vision of 'free' civil society.



Secondly, civil society can be a domain of glaring and self-reproducing inequalities in the distribution of power and wealth. The absence of state monopolies offers no guarantees against private monopolies, like party machines, bureaucratic trade unions, clientelist networks and capitalist corporations. These can prove just as effective in alienating and disempowering individual citizens.

For many East European reformers, an autonomous civil society clearly embraces the idea of a self-regulating free market economy - a naive definition that democratic socialists justifiably reject. Unregulated markets quickly fall under the sway of minorities able to exercise disproportionate market power and to reproduce their power across generations.

They also leave productive enterprises under the despotic authority of small groups of owners and managers. The capitalist economy is a realm in which small numbers exercise massive social power - just as in the state. But, unlike in the democratic state, those wielding capitalist economic power are insulated from any semblance of popular political accountability.

Many socialists correctly argue for extending the rules of the democratic political game to the economy, both to democratise the economy and to generate a distribution of social power compatible with equal political citizenship.

All the same there are areas, perhaps including parts of the economy, that should be kept off-limit to the direct control of even a democratic state. These are areas in which freedom of expression and association should be encouraged, along with dense networks of voluntary activity, encompassing all layers of the population.

This positive vision of civil society goes beyond the call for individual freedoms, since it urges active use of otherwise formal 'rights' to establish the richest possible array of voluntary activity, perhaps supported by the state.

It is also distinct from the (also important) demand for 'direct democracy', since it does not render individuals and voluntary organisations accountable to local majorities or spontaneous crowds.

Freed of its naive free market connotations, the idea of an autonomous civil society is a crucial counter-weight to the ambitions of any state.

The foregoing has focused on the preconditions and the limits of socialist power - on the cautionary message from Eastern Europe. The question remains to be asked whether Eastern Europe's revolutions offer any encouragement for egalitarian social radicalism? Or for forms of democracy that extend beyond those containable within capitalist liberal democracy?

Many of East Europe's new revolutionaries are seeking their fortunes in Western-style market capitalism. Socialism, even with a 'human face', increasingly appears an anachronistic goal in Eastern Europe, out of touch with the popular mood or the evidence of recent history.

The very discussion of socialism seems, in the current circumstances of Eastern Europe, impossible - a foreclosure that threatens the democratic achievement of the new revolutionaries.

Across the world a complacent, pro-capitalist consensus threatens to engulf debate about our possible human futures.

The complacency of the capitalist world is not justified. Many of its deepest problems remain unresolved. In the United States and Britain, poverty, inequality and homelessness have grown throughout a decade of unprecedented prosperity.

Latin America and Africa remain buried in debt and stagnation despite repeated monetarist experiments and austerity programmes imposed by international aid agencies. The economic success of attempts to introduce capitalism in Eastern Europe is itself far from guaranteed, while the social costs are sure to be enormous.

In much of the Third World, notably Latin America and East Asia, fragile democratic experiments remain vulnerable to the continued influence of authoritarian oligarchs and impatient militarists. From most of sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East even the basic rudiments of democracy are absent. Capitalist development continues to inflict uncontrolled damage on the global environment.

The capitalist world has, of course, been remarkably adept at managing these

problems and contradictions. But the transformation of Eastern Europe and now, possibly, the USSR, alters the premise of its complacency in three ways.

Firstly, it eliminates Cold War excuses for the nurturing of military industrial complexes, the build-up of Western military arsenals and the United States's continued domination of its Latin American 'sphere of influence'.

Secondly, the supposed ideological triumph of the West and the abolition of the threat from an 'enemy' whose manifestly worse record on economic, social and environmental issues allowed advanced capitalism to bask in comparative glory could mark, not the 'end of history', but a new readiness of the part of Western citizens to re-examine the quality of their *own* lives and the deficiencies of their *own* democratic institutions.

And thirdly, the dramatic overturning of the Eastern European order offers a reminder that, even in advanced industrial countries, popular aspirations for democracy, environmental conservation and a better quality of life can result in massive popular explosions.

The revolts of 1968 hit the West at a time of economic prosperity but growing hostility to consumerist materialism, the permanent arms economy and Western domination in the Third World. The same factors could emerge today as growing numbers of young people (in particular) question the need for vast military spending at a time of disarmament, and poverty in the midst of newfound prosperity.

Even the Third World might prove difficult to ignore as its economic crisis drives it to export to the West everything from cocaine and carbon dioxide to human immigrants - and in unprecedented quantities.

The experience of Eastern Europe - its planning system, its social and environmental policies, for instance - may appear to cancel socialism's capacity to offer humanity viable or attractive models. But it is not at all clear that this is the case.

To be sure socialists cannot divest themselves of all moral and intellectual responsibility for the Stalinist experience or refuse now to re-examine their most basic theoretical and philosophi-



cal premises in the light of it.

But the model of socialism pursued in the USSR and Eastern Europe was in fact a very distinctive one, drawing on one socialist tradition among others and the result of quite particular political choices. It does not constitute the only path that socialism, even radical socialism to the left of social democracy, might follow.

The distinctive features of socialism in Eastern Europe - the establishment of a single leading party, the fusion of that party with the state and the attempt to absorb all autonomous social activity into this party-state - were not unavoidable historical accompaniments to the building of socialism. Nonetheless, they appeared to implicate many legitimate socialist themes in their disastrous failure: themes such as economic planning, social equality, the erection of a social welfare state, political intervention in economic life - and so on.

These important areas of socialist concern and debate must now be rescued from the totalitarian discourses and practices within which Stalinism embedded them.

The lesson of Eastern Europe is not that it is 'Stalinist' to envisage a role for planning or for political direction of parts of the economy, or for greater social equality and individual economic security than can be guaranteed under capitalism. These are legitimate socio-economic and philosophical goals entitled to compete for popular support.

What is not legitimate is the pursuit of these goals in a paternalistic and disempowering manner. Subject to the strictures of public debate, vigorous pluralism and electoral competition, predicated on popular support and genuine participation, and premised on the enablement rather than pacification of society, social equality, economic security and, within limits, political regulation of economic life continue to be perfectly defensible human aspirations.

The conflation of democracy and capitalism, the assumption that going for democracy means abandoning social radicalism or transformative visions, is as wrong now as it ever was. Its acceptance even by reforming elites in the USSR and Eastern Europe threatens to demoralise those searching for demo-

cratic socialist solutions at precisely the time when the break-up of the Stalinist log-jam should be opening up new socialist possibilities.

So does socialism - a genuinely democratic one, willing to subject itself to popular arbitration - have persuasive vision to offer to the future?

A viable socialist democracy will, of course, have to offer some degree of economic efficiency, especially in delivering essential consumer goods. It will have to be environmentally sustainable. It will have to advance social and distributive justice.

In addition - and this is the core of its promise - it will have to deliver higher levels of democracy, including all the benefits of existing forms of democratic government, but much deeper and much wider in its reach.

Right now it is not certain that socialism can deliver these things.

What is clear is that any future socialism will have to be radically and fundamentally different to the models provided by the USSR and Eastern Europe, or indeed China, Cuba or Yugoslavia.

A great deal of debate and experimentation, learning and relearning - subject always to democratic control - will be necessary in the years ahead to discover what forms such socialism may take.

Socialists will have to explore fresh juxtapositions of planning and market; hybrid forms of ownership; novel ways of measuring and constraining growth; and many things beside.

At a time when the Western capitalist imagination is being deadened by complacency, the socialist imagination must be unleashed.

We are moving into a world where the fetish of economic growth and of consumerism will have to give way, in West and East alike, to new qualitative concerns, like ecology; and to a consideration of how to bring the benefits of development to the Third World and Eastern Europe, without destroying the global environment or the human fabric in the process.

All this will demand new kinds of international co-ordination and planning, as well as a global redistribution of economic resources. Socialist values and ideas - concerned with need above profit or growth, and committed to political

and redistributive interventions in the workings of the market - still have a place in this kind of world.

Nowhere can the case for socialism be made more persuasively than in the area where it has thus far arguably been weakest: that of democracy.

If Eastern Europe's revolutions have underlined the indispensability of political pluralism and civil liberties to any conception of democracy, it remains true that in most of the capitalist democracies, really effective access to its levers of power remains limited to a small number of citizens.

Workers and poor people do not enjoy equal access to the education, the time, the money and the self-confidence needed for effective political participation. Such power or influence as they do achieve, through their parties or trade unions, is no match for that of an increasingly global, hyper-mobile capitalist class.

The capitalist class remains capable of undermining not only the countervailing power of organised labour, but the sovereignty of whole governments. At the same time power within its 'own' domain - the private sphere of production - remains, if not unchallenged, at least preponderant and secure.

All of these inequalities are inherent in capitalism. Though they can be ameliorated by strong labour movements, they systematically limit the democratic potential of capitalist societies.

If there is an argument today for socialism, it is above all this: that only socialism can complete the democratic revolution which the bourgeois societies underwent over the last three centuries and which is convulsing Eastern Europe today.

Only socialism can confer on its subjects the genuine *equality* of political citizenship - of political power and political capacity - needed to bring the democratic idea to its fullest flowering.

Moreover, socialism has a much richer tradition of thinking about popular participation, as well as industrial and economic democracy, than its pro-capitalist rivals.

Socialism might therefore have a future - not in spite of, but because of, the upsurge of popular agitation for democracy now sweeping the world.

The white Right re-arms

Ons kies om te konfronteer!



The solution is *weerstand, weerstand* (resistance); *stryd, stryd, stryd* (struggle). We say to De Klerk: You are playing with fire! We shall fight you with every possible means!

As one, the crowd responds ... cheering, clapping, stomping, waving hands in the air. Some roar: '*Skiet hom! Skiet hom!*'

And when, after two full minutes, the window-shaking applause dies down, the speaker calls up yet another crescendo with the cry: 'Ons kies om te konfronteer! (We choose to confront)'.

The speaker is the Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP) leader Jaap Marais. The crowd, Boksburg Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB). On the platform, AWB chief Eugene TerreBlanche, with a contingent of jackbooted Aquila guards.

After the unbanning of liberation organisations on 2 February, battle cries like those raised by Marais became commonplace. Even in parliament Conservative Party (CP) member Caspar Uys warned that Nationalists would be compelled to subjugate their own people by means of violence.

'I have given these words careful consideration', he said, 'and I mean every word I am saying. We in the CP will not surrender. We shall mobilise the Afrikaner on every level of their existence'.

Right-wing reactions like these were relayed with spectral fascination by progressive media. And, concerned to prove their conversion from Verwoerd's cause, pro-government Nasionale Pers newspapers reacted sharply against veiled threats of violence emanating from CP leadership and highlighted the hooli-

ganism that had become a predictable component of meetings of the white Right.

How serious are the warnings and rhetoric of armed uprising? Is this merely another round of sabre-rattling? Or is the Right in the process of forging long-term battle plans?

In the aftermath of initial right-wing anger, two distinct responses have evolved.

The CP, having warned initially of a violent response from Afrikanerdom, declared that it would negotiate for a Volkstaat and, by all accounts, seemed set to forge alliances with mid-Right 'trek again' organisations such as Carel Boshoff's Afrikaner Volkswag and a breakaway AWB group, the Boerevryheidsbeweging, led by Alkmaar Swart.

CP and allied leaders continue to warn of potential violence, but this seems to be intended to add clout to the Volkstaat cause. 'The tiger in the Afrikaner is friendly', warned CP leader Andries Treurnicht in Parow. 'But do not try to tangle with this tiger'.

In contrast, the 20-odd organisations on the far Right seem increasingly committed to planning long-term low-intensity conflict. Four key factors support this contention.

Firstly, the core ultra-Right coalition - the AWB, HNP, Boerestaat Party (BSP) and the Transvaal Separatiste (TS) - failed to achieve a deal with the CP, which might have afforded them access to the politics of negotiation.

The coalition, which commanded strong support at meetings, offered to pay the salaries of all CP MPs and town councillors for several months if they would resign in order to force by-elections. The strategy was evidently intended not only to tie the fortunes of the far Right to those of the CP but to force

Does fiery right-wing rhetoric translate into a careful strategy for low-intensity conflict? Could resistant conservatives derail political change? Lesley Fordred weighs the odds

the NP to confront a loss of voter support.

When it failed to materialise, it came as little surprise to hear Eugene TerreBlanche tell an AWB gathering in Goodwood in the Cape that the time for 'the politics of little crosses is over. It is now the time for the politics of the bullet'.

Former security policeman and senior AWB executive member Piet Rudolph shared TerreBlanche's platform in Goodwood. Rudolph, also deputy leader of the BSP, announced that the AWB and his party had planned a loan scheme to provide arms to one million whites in the next five years.

Citing unspecified atrocities of the war in Angola, he told his audience that African National Congress (ANC) leaders would approve the same deeds against whites in South Africa. 'From now on', he said, 'a white man in Africa without a gun is a dead man'.

Questioned later about the apparent increase in AWB militancy, Rudolph admitted there had been a hardening of strategy in AWB/BSP circles during February.

There are many who appear to believe this far-right 'logic' - at least in part. In the week before the Sharpeville anniversary, arms sales in parts of the Reef jumped by as much as 50%.

Secondly, the far-Right - more accurately, the Boerestaat Right - makes demands which are not achievable by normal processes of negotiation.

Demanding the return of the Boer Republics (comprising Transvaal, the



Treurnicht: 'The tiger in the Afrikaner is friendly. But do not try to tangle with this tiger'.

Free State and northern Natal, minus enlarged bantustans) to the control of Boere on historical grounds, Boerestaat organisations have repeatedly declared that warfare is their only option should reform proceed.

'(Violence) is not a likelihood, it's a definite certainty if De Klerk goes ahead and changes the constitution before he calls another election', says BSP leader Robert van Tonder. Since it is unlikely that there will be another whites-only election, Van Tonder's words are ominous indeed.

At a meeting in Bethal in February, with TerreBlanche at his side, Van Tonder spelt out exactly what he meant. 'The BSP is prepared to fight', he was quoted as saying. 'The Boere will fight back for their freedom and in every town a field cornet will be named, in every region a commandant and in every main area a

general, to prepare for the military struggle.

'In the coming struggle we will be able to count on the support of the majority of our compatriots (volksgenote) in the SAP and the SADF. De Klerk is leading this country into a civil war'.

Van Tonder's words are unlikely to be mere bravado. The BSP is the political wing of the AWB, which is essentially a cultural organisation. The structures of the AWB military machine are public knowledge: Aquila, the bodyguard; the brandwagte, which are outposts at most large towns outside of the Cape Province; and the Stormvalke, the elite paramilitary wing.

Van Tonder's words are also consistent with statements by TerreBlanche. Speaking in Boksburg, TerreBlanche said the day that Mandela 'and his braves' sat at the negotiating table would be the day that the revolution would begin.

'What is the answer?' he asked a spellbound audience. 'The answer lies in Boere and white people being prepared to die for their country'.

At an impromptu press conference afterwards, TerreBlanche told a persistent foreign journalist: 'Yes, I am going to take up guns. We are preparing for the revolution which Mandela will start. Every nation has the right to defend itself against people who will rape, maim, kill and destroy them. This means war, lady'.

Sources close to the movement suggest that the far Right has been investigating obtaining arms abroad. This scenario gains a small measure of credence from attempts to gain international support for the Boer nationalist cause. Having petitioned United Nations secretary-general Javier Perez de Cuellar, the BSP aims to meet British premier Margaret Thatcher.

In an interview in which he denied the existence of AWB training camps, Van Tonder said: 'We have already started contact lists overseas to get help from overseas governments to help the Boer Freedom Movement'.

A third factor adding to the possibility of protracted conflict instigated by the ultra-Right, is the existence of several splinter groups which are determined to outdo the AWB and undercut its hold on the ultra-Right.

Eddie von Maltitz is a good example. As leader of the Nuwe AWB, which has adopted the AWB's extensive symbolism - including a reworked triple seven logo, Von Maltitz claims to be more militant than the AWB.



The 20-odd organisations on the far Right seem increasingly committed to planning long-term low-intensity conflict

At a Boksburg meeting he called for people to commit themselves to the Nuwe AWB. 'Like Gideon (an Old Testament warrior) we will show this nation what we can do with a handful of committed men', he declared.

'I say, give me just 300 men who are willing to lay down their lives, who are willing to stand up to say to radical blacks, "I hate you because you are destroying my country," and we will change things here'.

Disturbingly quiet is the recently unbanned Blanke Bevrydingsbeweging (BBB), whose leader, Professor Johan Schabot, announced shortly before the BBB's restriction in 1988 that they planned to set up 60 commandos in 19 regions across South Africa.

Negotiation with these fringe groups would be extremely difficult. Their small support bases would deny them a seat at the negotiating table. And it is not in the interests of the larger right-wing groups to restrain the excesses of the new formations, much less to call for such strategies as avoidance of soft targets. Even in the ultra-Right there is a battle for the moral high ground.

The fourth reason for concern is that Boere ideology makes so heavy a claim to divine inspiration that it assumes many of the dimensions of a holy war. Blood, God, soil and sacrifice feature prominently in speeches of the mid- and far-Right.

During the mass CP march in Pretoria on February 15, Ferdi Hartzenberg opened proceedings with phrases like, 'we bow only before God, the Almighty - we shall lay everything we have on the altar'. And Treurnicht told his Parow audience: 'We would die rather than submit to domination. Nobody can force their will on the Almighty'.

The emotionalism engendered in this way is a powerful spur to would-be folk heroes. The adulation of 'son of the nation' Barend Strydom and his new wife, Karin Rautenbach, is sobering proof of this - as was Strydom's testimony in court that God had led him to kill black people.

Instances of white-on-black violence complete the tale. Attacks on blacks, journalists and drunks at a number of right-wing marches have been highlighted. Other white-on-black violence is less well covered. In Krugersdorp alone, a 30-year-old black man was shot in the foot after four whites asked him if he was a member of the ANC; four white teenagers beat to death a 30-year-old black man; and a group of whites as-



'The answer lies in Boere and white people being prepared to die for their country'.

saulted black pedestrians.

It is difficult to assess the mobilising potential of the ultra-Right, especially in the absence of an election. Certainly the AWB has shown itself consistently capable of drawing crowds of several thousand even in small places like Klerksdorp, where 3 000 were reported to have taken to the streets in mid-March.

Have supporters of the Right secured enough private sector power and have they infiltrated the public sector and the security establishment sufficiently to derail the process of change in South Africa?

Amid the blazing rhetoric it is important to remember that the Right remains a fractional minority of South Africans. So a coup from the far Right is - in the short-term - unlikely.

To increase their strength substantially, the far Right would have to net those CP supporters who are more committed to their class position than to ethnicity - people who are not willing to trek again because of the financial risk.

The middle classes are notoriously committed to the politics of expediency. Appeals to ethnicity and sacrifice, as well as calls to arms, are unlikely to

mobilise business executives. They are more likely to choose strategies like corporate lobbying to secure their long-term interests in South Africa.

Failing that, their best option might be emigration - perhaps to a Volkstaat or (more likely) to a country willing to host conservative South African emigres.

If neither of these options finds acceptable realisation, it may well be that substantial numbers of middle-class Afrikaners will resort to strategised conflict to forcibly reclaim what is 'theirs'. Centring round a group which claims a patent on guerilla warfare and whose per capita ownership of weapons is among the highest in the world, this scenario cannot simply be wished away.

The success or failure of the far-Right's strategies depends largely on the level of support it commands in the security forces and the civil service.

For decades whites in the public sector have enjoyed privileged employment under the National Party, implementing the ideals of Afrikaner nationalism. Most of them - and particularly the securocrats - have been schooled in the 'communist demoniac' mythology that the NP has since abandoned. It seems improbable that they will, uniformly and without a murmur, turn their backs on this system (for which some have been prepared to die).

The vast numbers of police who resigned from the force early this year cannot be motivated only by pay grievances, as Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok has claimed.

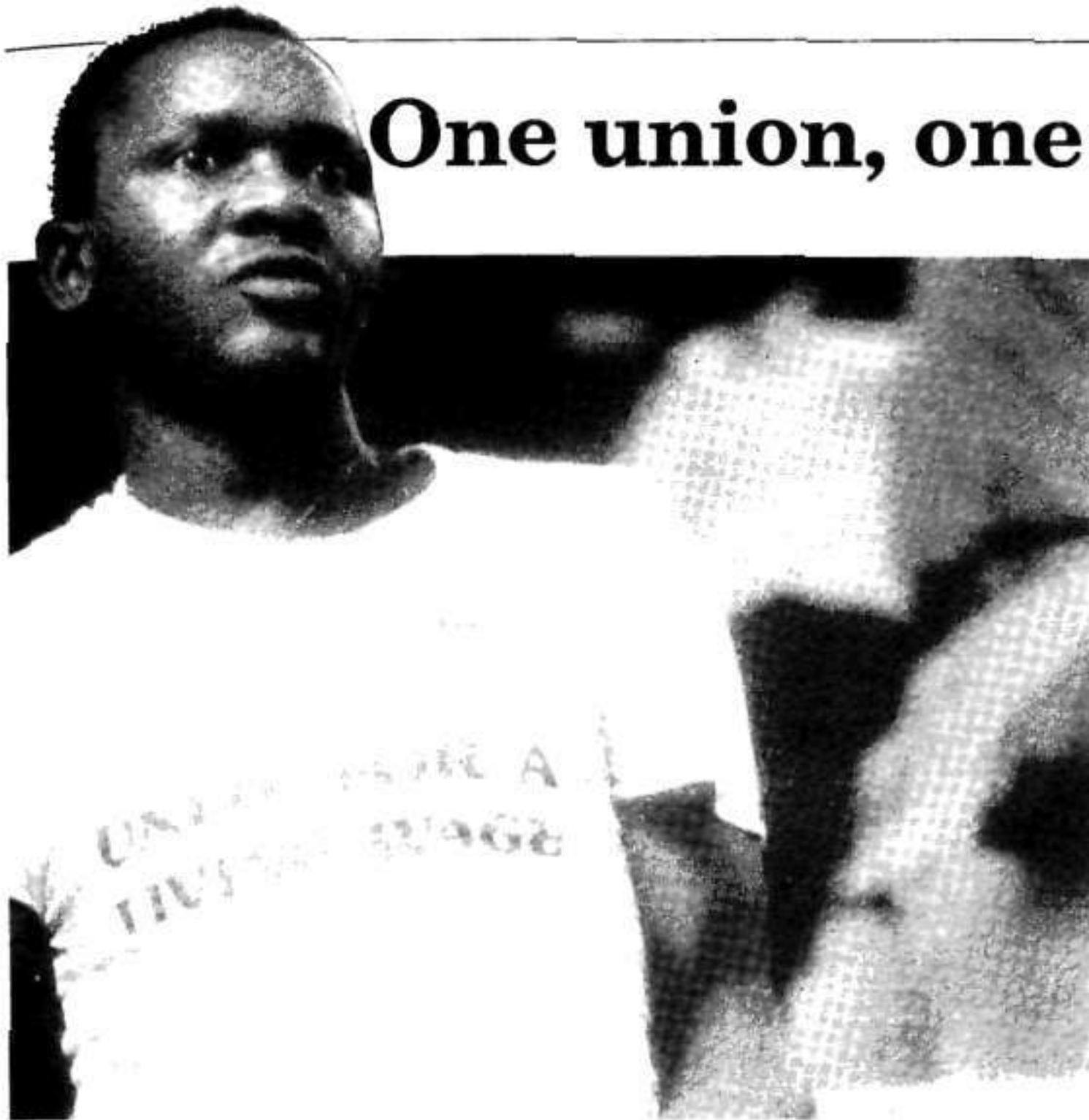
In recent years, a secret right-wing alternative to the Broederbond has been set up. Known as Toekomsgesprek (Dialogue on the Future), it has the express task of infiltrating civic, religious and public bodies. Predictably, office bearers in right-wing organisations are tight-lipped about the activities and leadership of Tokomsgesprek.

But it is suggested that there is a large feedback loop from national security forces to the right-wing organisations.

How else would a leader of a small right-wing organisation have been able to relay to a journalist the contents of a private telephone call that journalist had made to an opposition Johannesburg paper some days earlier?

And how, without help from inside, could three 'dangerous' AWB prisoners - about to be tried for illegal possession of arms and explosives - 'remove a panel' from the police van in which they were being transported and escape?

One union, one industry



As part of its living wage campaign, Numsa is attempting to set - and win - the same wage and working-condition demands in the four industrial sectors in which its members operate and negotiate. Union national organiser Alistair Smith spoke to **Robyn Rafel** about the campaign and the practical difficulties of formulating uniform demands

One demand

For Cosatu's National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), winning equal conditions of employment for all its members is not a simple task.

The union operates in a number of different sectors and collective bargaining for each takes place in different forums.

National bargaining for the engineering sector takes place through the metal industrial council; for its motor sector members through the national industrial council for the components industry; in the auto-assembly sector through the Eastern Province auto council; in the tyre and rubber sector through the Eastern Province tyre and rubber council; and in the case of workers not covered by the two Eastern Province councils - with the exception of Dunlop workers - there is provision for the regional agreements to be extended to cover workers nationally.

To ensure common demands for all its members and to iron out difficulties its cross-sector membership creates, the

union held the first of what will in future be bi-annual National Bargaining Conferences (NBCs).

WIP: Please outline the historical background to the LWC.

Smith: The LWC is one of the union's major campaigns and part of Cosatu's overall LWC.

At our founding congress in 1987 national demands were adopted as key issues for the LWC: a minimum wage of R4,50 in the industry; national industry bargaining; maternity and paternity leave; equal technical and vocational training for women and youth; and job security, the emphasis being on protection from retrenchment, and where that was unavoidable severance pay of one month's wages per year of service.

At that stage there were three traditions in the union, largely a reflection of the way the three major unions involved in the merger that created Numsa operated. These were Naawu (auto assembly and tyre and rubber sectors), Mawu (engineering sector), both former Fosatu

affiliates with a strong tradition of militancy, and Micwu (motor components, garage, panelbeating and repair shop sector). Micwu had split from Tucsa in the early 1980s, and did not have a militant tradition.

The other major problem was that conditions and terms of employment in these sectors varied enormously. Auto assembly workers are fairly skilled and therefore have greater collective bargaining power. At that stage they were earning in the region of R4/R4,50 an hour. In the engineering sector workers were getting something like R3 an hour.

The intention was that the National Campaign Co-ordinating Committee (NCC), established in 1988 to co-ordinate the union's national campaigns, would co-ordinate the LWC. But other national campaigns absorbed our time that year - the 'Free Mayekiso' campaign and the anti-LRA (Labour Relations Act) drive.

WIP: And last year?

Smith: The NCC had more experience. But again we struck the problem of dif-

fering conceptions within the different sectors.

In auto assembly, for instance, workers take strike action for wages. In the engineering sector the strategy is to settle the negotiations. There were two reasons for this. The first comes out of lessons of our selective strike in 1988. Overall, the union views the strike as a success although the employers in Seifsa did not raise their wage offer. But they did move in other areas, conceding June 16 as a paid holiday and an attendance bonus amounting to an increase of between 2 cents to 4 cents an hour. Seifsa also agreed to a procedure to address racial discrimination in the industry.

But in the ballots which preceded the strike, the overwhelming majority of our members voted against strike action. The strike therefore had to be selective.

Secondly, the campaign against the LRA amendments had gained momentum and became the focus of the Worker Summit. The analysis in the engineering sector was that the LRA threat took precedence over the LWC and a conscious decision was made to throw all our weight behind the anti-LRA campaign instead.

Workers in the auto-assembly sector saw things differently. In the strikes which occurred in virtually all the factories last year, they combined the two issues. The strikes ended with the employers making concessions, but not on changing the LRA. This was what the engineering sector had tried to avoid.

In the motor sector the workers were not tightly organised. There has never been strike action and they are not used to the militant union tradition. The union was too weak to even consider striking.

All of this showed that we needed to break out of these sectoral divisions.

Last year, once the bargaining season was over, we established a National Organising and Campaign Committee (NOCC). Numsa's four sectors will no longer undertake collective bargaining separately. There is now one department responsible for all wage negotiations - the Organising and Collective Bargaining Department headed by Bernie Fanaroff.

The NOCC has representatives from each of the regions in each sector. Each sector has a National Industry Council (NIC) and elects a bargaining committee to conduct negotiations and implement national strategies and decisions. Four representatives of each bargaining committee sit on the NOCC. The NICs

come together twice a year and these meetings constitute our National Bargaining Conference (NBC), which formulates demands for the whole union.

There are two components to the NBC: a plenary session where the national demands and guidelines are formulated and national LWC and collective bargaining priorities established; then sectors meet separately to formulate demands specific to themselves.

WIP: Have there been any changes in Numsa's structures to accommodate the LWC?

Smith: This year being our first really serious effort to co-ordinate the LWC, we plan to hold three NBCs. In future they will take place twice a year - once at the beginning of the year to set national demands and again around June to co-ordinate our national response and strategy. In between it is the Regional Shop Stewards Councils (RSSCs) which

liaise with the NOCC.

WIP: How many workers are covered by the agreements for the sectors in which Numsa operates?

Smith: The metal council covers between 350 000 and 380 000 workers under the Main Agreement or the house agreements negotiated under the council, with Iscor, Highland Steel, Middelburg Steel, and others. We don't have an estimate for the number of workers in this sector not covered by those agreements.

A significant majority of workers in both the auto assembly and the tyre and rubber sectors are covered by national centralised bargaining. The same applies to the motor sector. But we want homeland workers covered as well.

WIP: Numsa claims that neither the metal nor the motor components councils function democratically.

Smith: In both these councils Numsa

Numsa's LWC

WAGES

R2-an-hour across-the-board increase for all Numsa members.

JOB SECURITY

Negotiations on all aspects of retrenchment, redundancy, factory closures, relocations and sales of factories.

- Severance pay: minimum one-month's wages for every year of service; LIFO (last-in, first-out) the only criterion for retrenchment or redundancy.

All workers hired on a permanent basis; no probationary periods.

LABOUR RELATIONS ACT

No employer to use the LRA; Numsa will continue to support anti-LRA campaign until all demands are met by Saccola and the state.

JOB CREATION

All workers must have the right to work. The industry must undertake to create jobs.

Normal hours of work - 40 hours a week.

Maximum five hours overtime a week for emergencies - overtime rates during the week double normal pay and triple at weekends. Employers must hire more workers instead of pushing for overtime.

Employers to notify shop stewards of vacancies and consult the shop stewards when employing.

NATIONAL BARGAINING

Industrial councils must operate democratically. Representation to be proportional to union membership. Shop stewards must be informed when council sends agents on factory inspections and must receive copies of inspection reports.

No national wage exemptions from industrial council wage agreements.

All workers, scheduled or not, covered by industrial council agreements.

TRAINING, EDUCATION AND SKILLS UPGRADING

Immediate steps should be taken to end discrimination and segregation in training. These must include:

has more members than all the other unions put together, yet because we have only one seat we are often outvoted on important issues. Seifsa recognised us as the majority union on the metal council after the 1988 strike, but has since then dragged its feet in restructuring the council.

In the motor components council it is even worse. Last year the agreement was gazetted although Numsa disputed the agreement. Wage increases in the sector, especially in the rural areas, were very low.

We demand proportional representation on the council.

WIP: Barlow Rand appears to have become the unions' public enemy number one. Why?

Smith: Last year when Paper, Print, Wood and Allied Workers' Union attempted to win representation on printing industrial council, Barlow Rand

pulled out of the employer's association, precipitating its collapse. We believe Barlows has a similar strategy for the metal industrial council even though they deny it. Over the past few years Barlows has pulled out of employer associations within Seifsa and has left Seifsa itself.

Our experience with Barlow Manufacturing in Kew has also made us wary. Numsa has a recognition agreement at the plant. In 1988, just prior to our legal national wage strike, Barlow Manufacturing obtained an urgent Industrial Court order interdicting our members there from striking on the grounds that a strike over national negotiations on wages - which are determined at the metal council - would be illegal.

On the return date Numsa got the interdict dismissed using the argument that all the issues not covered by the plant agreement were covered by the

council's Main Agreement and that the negotiations therefore did have a bearing on the workers at Barlow Manufacturing. Numsa also argued that since the Main Agreement only provides for minimum wages, and that wages negotiated at plant level are usually higher than that, the Barlows Manufacturing workers had a decided interest in the outcome of those negotiations.

Barlows, scared about the implications of the judgment - that we could strike in its factories if there is a national strike - took the matter to the Supreme Court. In December the court ruled that the strike would have been illegal because the union had failed to prove that there was reasonable prospect of success in getting the company to improve its offer.

As Supreme Court rulings automatically become law this had important implications for us. The judgment had the potential to render every strike illegal. Even some management lawyers have been horrified by it. We are appealing. Barlows has indicated that it will oppose. All this has coloured our attitude.

WIP: The Manpower Department has for several years been paying stricter attention to employer and union representativeness on industrial councils before agreeing to gazette agreements and extending to them to non-parties. It has also indicated that it would like see small businesses exempt from their provisions. The unions in the engineering sector have become increasingly representative of the workforce, while Seifsa appears to be becoming less representative of the employers. What implications does this have?

Smith: The Barlows strategy exacerbates this. But the problem is exaggerated. We are convinced - and Seifsa agrees - that the council's figures regarding the number of employers within Seifsa are inaccurate.

But even if Seifsa represents less than 50% of the employers in the industry we don't think it will be a problem because those employers employ over 60% of the employees in the industry. The companies that are not part of Seifsa are likely to be smaller concerns. Barring Barlow Rand all the major players are represented.

WIP: What about small businesses?
Smith: Last year Seifsa and the Minister of Manpower tried to force us to exclude all small businesses from the metal council's Main Agreement. This would have meant that more than 90 000 workers had no minimum wage.

demands for 1990

* Development of guidelines for non-discriminatory recruitment, selection, training and testing.

* Pressure on the state and training institutions to end all racist and sexist entry requirements. Where companies have seats on the governing bodies or give assistance to segregated training institutions, they should withdraw by year-end if such institutions do not open their doors to all. Guidelines to be adopted by the industry and endorsed by individual companies.

Shop stewards to be entitled to 15 days paid leave for union-organised training events.

Black workers to get training to upgrade their skills.

PROVIDENT FUND

Conversion of industry pension funds into provident funds to be finalised by June 1990. Company funds merged with industry funds.

LEAVE

Six months' paid maternity leave; 20 days childcare leave for men and women; free, compulsory pap test once a year at the factory; no qualifying periods for maternity leave and no limits on the number of pregnancies.

14 days' paid paternity leave a year.

Five days' compassionate leave per occurrence (death or illness in the family).

14 days' paid sick leave a year. Certificate from doctor or traditional healer to be provided.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

May 1, June 16, March 21 as unconditional paid holidays.

Political detainees

Full pay and jobs guaranteed for all political detainees and prisoners.

To achieve Numsa's objective of uniform pay-scales in all sectors in which the union is represented, workers in the tyre and rubber and auto sectors will not be asking for an increase in their minimum wage this year: they are holding back to enable other sectors to catch up.



'We are fighting for worker control. That is the only guarantee that workers will have a say in how the economy is run'.

Seifsa's motive was twofold: the bosses argue that deregulation of small businesses will be stimulatory and create more employment; the second leg touches on Seifsa's alleged lack of representivity. Seifsa argues that if smaller companies are excluded it will become more representative and theoretically have more power to influence the Minister to gazette the agreement.

We were not prepared to countenance this. Seifsa members employ the majority of the industry's workers so we don't think their argument holds water. And secondly, we don't think the Minister should have anything to do with extending the agreement. That is something that should be settled by the parties themselves.

The fact that Seifsa in 1988 recognised that we are the majority union at the council meant that we were able to block the attempt. The employers now know that they cannot have an agreement for the industry if there is no agreement with Numsa. In that sense the balance of power has shifted.

But if employers again insist that small businesses are excluded, there would probably be a dispute on the issue. It is also possible that even if the employers back down, the Manpower Department may decide to block publication of the agreement.

There is a third possibility: the government may, on its own, decree that employers with less than a certain number of workers should be excluded.

Numsa is not prepared to have deregulation in the industry and won't entertain proposals that exclude work-

ers from minimum protections.

WIP: At the NBC it was said that Numsa members must not see their collective bargaining demands in narrow economic terms but as contributing to the process of establishing socialism. Can you please expand on this?

Smith: The union has adopted the slogan 'Our Industry, Our Country, Forward to Workers' Control' for this year. We are not just fighting for narrow economic demands but for something broader, for worker control. The struggle for worker control in a future South African economy is taking place now.

Through our collective bargaining we are raising demands for the restructuring of industry. That is why at the metal council we have placed a priority on completely eradicating racial discrimination in the industry.

We are demanding to have more control in terms of job security and job creation. We also believe we should have a say in corporate investment policies and have raised demands for the employers to establish job creation projects with us.

Over 100 000 jobs were lost in the industry during the 1980s. We reject deregulation as a way of creating jobs. In the metal industry only a handful of jobs have been created this way.

WIP: What do you mean by worker control?

Smith: We don't think workers taking control is some kind of magical process, or that socialism can come overnight. There is a serious problem as far as skills and education are concerned. Workers'

control will have to address that. It will also have to address the problem of unemployment. And there are other socio-economic problems that have to be tackled - health and housing. These are the immediate priorities.

Looking even further, we also recognise that the economy is not an island, that it is affected by events in the world economy. Worker control will have to address this imperialism, neo-imperialism, or whatever you want to call it.

WIP: All this suggests that there is concern in Numsa that workers' interests could be subsumed to the national liberation struggle now that the ANC, SACP, PAC and other organisations have been unbanned. Is this correct?

Smith: We are concerned that things could go astray. We have seen problems in Namibia recently with Swapo and the National Union of Namibian Workers. We have also learnt from Zimbabwe's experience.

Our position is that the only real safeguard for workers is if we in fact fight for certain guarantees now. That is why we are gearing our national campaigns - and the LWC in particular - towards a more overtly political arena. We are fighting for worker control. That is the only guarantee that workers will have a say in how the economy is run and how wealth is distributed. The Workers' Charter is also very important in this respect.

WIP: In his speech to the NBC Fana-roff said that if Numsa is honest it must admit that its structures are weaker than ever.

Smith: Numsa is now very big and our factory structures have become weak because organisationally we are overwhelmed with work. This probably means that the union will have to do some restructuring. I think Bernie was also making a very important political statement - that we are not taking up day-to-day struggles in the factories very seriously. The two problems are, however, inter-related.

WIP: In the light of this, is a coordinated strike in all four of Numsa's sectors a real possibility this year?

Smith: It is a huge challenge but not impossible. There was a fighting mood in the NBC. There is also a greater sense of unity and resolve coming from workers. The possibility of a coordinated strike cannot be ruled out. But it will depend on the feeling of members at the time and what happens with the Cosatu/Nactu discussions with Saccola.

High levels of political mobilisation and conflict - along with increased expectations - made an impact in the labour arena where unusual levels of strike and protest action often culminated in violent confrontation. Unprecedented militant action emanated from previously unmobilised sectors, notably the public service and bantustan workers. Labour militancy also manifested in widespread action on the shopfloor: stoppages, protests, marching and singing.

Another significant factor has been action on the mines, inspired by the NUM campaign against racial discrimination and repression (see Briefs). In the six weeks under review, WIP monitored 114 strikes. Conservatively-calculated these involved 71 155 workers, of which 23 814 were mineworkers. The two main strike triggers remained wages (36%) and disciplinary procedures/dismissals (20%).

Racism in the workplace - assaults, discriminatory application of disciplinary codes, racist supervisors, segregated facilities and discriminatory pay - was a major factor in strikes and stoppages. It is likely to trigger further action as the NUM campaign gets under way and public sector militancy grows.

Most industrial action occurred in the metal sector, followed by the chemical and paper/wood sectors. The only nationally coordinated strike action occurred in the paper/wood sector when PPWAWU took on Mondi and Sappi in legal wage strikes involving workers at 15 plants. The strikes at four Mondi Board mills and at Richards Bay were settled while strikes at Mondi Waste, Mondi

Bruply, Mondiply, Sappi and Sappi Novoboard were still to be resolved.

Despite a well-coordinated national strike and high losses in production, in both settlements management refused to improve its pre-strike wage offer. The hardline by employers was also reflected in Sappi management at Springs using police and company security to break up a legal picket, killing one worker; and the attempt by Sappi Novoboard to obtain an interdict against the Nelspruit strike, using the LRA.

Unusually high strike action - 23 strikes - took place in Port Elizabeth. The generally high militancy in the area was probably influential plus the fact that many of the strikers were at newly organised plants and were acting in support of plant-level wage demands. Port Elizabeth featured several long and highly conflictual strikes at:

Aberdare Cables (1 month); Chemserve Cholloids (5 weeks); EH Walton (4 months); Repco (2 months); and Welfit (5 weeks). Management resorted to lock-outs, interdicts and mass dismissals. In one case police were called and a large number of arrests made in relation to alleged intimidation and damage to property.

Many wage disputes in this period centred on management's refusal to negotiate plant-level increases in addition to industrial council agreements.

Wage increases have also been lower since the start of the year and it is likely that this trend will continue given the poor performance of the economy and the 1990 budget priorities. Finance minister Barend du Plessis described the budget as ushering in 'nothing less than a new way of life as

far as our economic activities are concerned'. For workers, prospects as suggested in the budget do not look that positive. Wage increases are likely to be low, unemployment is set to rise and retrenchment will increase as the state proceeds with privatisation and deregulation in an attempt to achieve a more market-oriented economy with a smaller, more efficient public sector. Underlying the budget is the view that 'work and wealth creation comes first and foremost by way of investment in the private sector'. The budget aims to stimulate the private sector's capacity to create wealth through tax cuts of R4-billion and through lifting capital gains tax on shares held for longer than 10 years.

Investment advisors reckon this will free between R8 - billion and R18-billion for new investment. The state's role in the economy is limited to improving conditions for investment - and privatisation and deregulation are a necessary part of the strategy.

Du Plessis also called on employers to keep wage increases down. He said the average 1989 increase of 18% was inflationary since it was not supported by gains in productivity. He expressed the hope that the low 10% increase granted public servants would be a moderating influence.

In 1990 workers are unlikely to secure wage increases much above the inflation rate, as figures to date confirm. The budget projected a growth rate of just 1% and budgetary measures are an attempt to 'soften' the impact of the down-turn on business. The low growth rate can be expected to cause increased unemployment. According to the LRS, the economy

needs to grow at 2,3% a year just to maintain present levels of unemployment. The unprecedented action in recent weeks by public service workers can be attributed both to the political climate and to poor conditions of service and extremely low wages. The government has consistently failed to address the grievances of these workers. Sectors mobilised into strike action included: teachers, prison warders, police, municipal workers, homeland civil servants, parks board workers and staff in the health sector. Racial discrimination played a part in most of these sectors. In the lowest-paid sectors workers earned less than half the average industrial wage. Cleaners in Cape hospitals, for instance, earned on average R300 to R400 a month. Municipal workers earned an average of R330 a month.

According to SAMWU, the lowest grades in some councils earned R160 a month. Municipal strikes were recorded at Rini, Ibayi, Kroonstad, Butterworth and Umtata. Responses to strikes varied from sector to sector. Where legislation clearly prohibits strikes - as in the police and prisons service - workers were dismissed. Teachers and hospital workers won their demands for meetings with government ministers only after strikes had substantially disrupted services.

The Public Servants League, SAMWU, Potwa, nurses, police and civil servants across the board have rejected the 10% increase announced by the government.

The government has promised in the budget to investigate the situation of policemen, nurses and the lowest-paid workers and make differential increases.

STRIKES AND DISPUTES

Transvaal

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Event
ABI Reef	Fawu	600	22.02.90	A one-day strike over recognition ended in the signing of an agreement.
Achromat Isando	Sacwu	250	12.03.90-	The company locked out the workforce after all procedures in a wage dispute were exhausted. Workers initially demanded a 20% across-the-board increase which they subsequently dropped to 19%. Management offered 16%. The minimum wage at the company was R935.
AECI Modderfontein	Sacwu	5 000	21.02-07.03.90	Workers downed tools and demanded the dismissal of a white worker (in accordance with previous disciplinary cases) after he had allegedly assaulted a black worker. The assault was the latest of many at the plant, where white workers allegedly openly identified with the AWB. Settlement was reached through a compromise - the fitter remained employed and five union members (dismissed for assault over the last two years) were re-employed. Workers were given warnings for striking and pay was suspended.
Allied Chemicals Alrode	Sacwu	70	15.03.90-	Workers involved in a legal wage strike were locked out.
Astas Benoni	Numsa	213	23.11.89-	Workers went on strike in protest against racism when management failed to use its disciplinary code after a white worker assaulted a black worker. Workers were dismissed and interdicted to keep away from plant gates. After negotiations failed to resolve the strike the matter was referred to the industrial court for final determination.
Caltex	CWIU		February	Caltex conceded to national bargaining after a dispute on the issue was declared. The union bargained centrally for all depots in the past but demanded the the Cape Town refinery be included in central bargaining.
Caltex Alrode	CWIU	60	16-02 - 03.90	After negotiations a legal strike to demand a transport allowance or an adequate redundancy package following the relocation of company premises ended in a compromise between workers and management.
Consol Plastics Germiston	CWIU	250	28.02-01.03.90	Workers stopped work to protest pending retrenchments due to the sale of the company. The sale of the company subsequently fell through but retrenchments will still take place.
Craneware Potteries Meyerton	Cawu	138	01-02.03.90	Workers took strike action to demand that management pay out due wages. Wages were paid out after the union threatened legal action.
DET Soweto, Alexandra		6 000		In the biggest demonstration of teacher strength and unity to date, teachers went out on strike demanding an immediate response from the DET to the education crisis and the dismantling of apartheid education. Teachers decided to remain on strike until the DET addressed their demands which in the short term included: improved conditions of service including salary demands, the provision of more classrooms and teachers to address overcrowding and an end to arbitrary transfers and retrenchment without prior consultation with teachers.
Department of Post and Telecommunications	Potwa	18 000		Potwa rejected the government's offer of a 10% wage increase to public servants. In October last year Potwa demanded the doubling of the minimum wage to R1 100 and a R400 across-the-board increase. Potwa also demanded racial wage parity, the scrapping of apartheid in the postal sector and the scrapping of post office privatisation. The Post Office introduced full racial parity in salaries and service conditions. This was announced by the Minister of Public Enterprises in parliament on 15 February. Potwa indicated that strike action is a possibility.
Eclipse Foundries Benoni	Numsa	300	13.02.90-	Workers were dismissed and scabs employed after an illegal strike which made demands on working conditions and health and safety. The company refused to negotiate further and the union intended taking the matter to the industrial court.
Elida Ponds Weddeville	CWIU	240	01.02.90-	Management employed scabs and interdicted workers for intimidation in a prolonged legal wage strike. Workers and management failed to reach agreement in negotiations. Management argued that the shift system be negotiated first while workers agreed to

				negotiate shifts in principle but demanded that wages be settled first. The union also demanded the back-dating of the settlement to January. The strike caused sporadic production shutdowns due to conflict between workers and scabs.
Fattis and Monis Kempton Park	Fawu	300	06-08.03.90	A strike relating to the dismissal of union members last year ended when the parties agreed to go to arbitration.
Furman Glass	Saccawu	80	12-15.03.90	Workers went on a legal wage strike to demand an increase in the minimum wage from R105 per week to R170 and an across-the-board increase of R40. In the settlement, workers won a minimum wage of R165 and an increase of R35 across the board.
Johnson and Johnson	CWIU	130	16-19.02.90	A spontaneous strike over wages ended when a formal dispute was declared and workers returned to work. Workers were locked out after industrial action was taken in support of annual wage bargaining which had deadlocked. Workers demanded a R120 increase. The strike was settled when management increased its offer from R31 to R38.
Metalbox Vanderbijlpark	Numsa	50	29.01-09.03.90	A strike over retrenchments ended when it was agreed that further negotiations would take place between the company and the union on the issue. It was also agreed that dismissals that had taken place during the strike would be discussed. Police were called in during the strike following conflict between strikers and white workers at the plant.
Mondi Board Mills Springs, Felixton, Piet Retief, Belville				The seven-week strike at Mondi board mills ended after workers accepted the final offer of a 16,8% increase. This offer was the same as the company's pre-strike offer. Mondi conceded the back-dating of the agreement to 1 January and that the national agreement will replace all regional agreements. Workers also won increased bonus payments. Production worth 10 million and wages in R1,3 million were lost during the strike.
Mondi waste Airode and Tulisa Park	PPWAWU	150	19.02.90-	Negotiations in the wage dispute deadlocked. No further meetings between the union and the company had been scheduled. At a third waste-paper depot in Pretoria, management pre-empted a wage strike when 32 workers were dismissed during solidarity action with workers at Mondi's board mills. The conditions of re-employment included acceptance of the current wage offer being made at waste-paper depots.
Mondiply Boksburg	PPWAWU	150	19.02.90-	Negotiations in the four-week-old wage strike were continuing.
National Parks Board Kruger Park			06-08.03.90	Black staff at Skukuza went on strike over wages. The strike ended through negotiations and an increase in the minimum wage was granted.
Nigel Bottling	Fawu	250	14-17.02.90	A strike protesting the attitude of a manager to grievances was resolved when workers returned to work and the union and the company agreed on a set of rules to deal with the issue.
NCD Boksburg	Fawu	500	16.02.90-	Workers demanded that management take disciplinary action against a supervisor who assaulted a worker. The demand led to stoppages after which workers were locked out and interdicted to return to work. The parties could not agree on arbitration and talks were under way between legal representatives.
OTK East Rand	Fawu	178	02.11.89 -	Workers who went on strike over unequal increments and lack of recognition were dismissed and locked out. Forty workers were subsequently reinstated and the union was negotiating for the rest.
Overvaal Resort	Saccawu	60	01-03.02.90	A strike at the whites-only Overvaal Resort over the dismissal of two workers ended after negotiations between management and the union. One of the workers was reinstated and the second case was referred to arbitration.
PMP Johannesburg	Nehawu	66	09-14.03.90	A solidarity stoppage with suspended workers was resolved through negotiations. The agreement included 'no-work-no-pay' and no disciplinary action to be taken against those involved in the stoppage.
Pritchard Eastgate	TGWU	69	18-19.02.90	Cleaners and guards went on strike in protest against ill-treatment by the supervisor and issues related to working conditions. The management agreed to investigate the grievances of workers.
Pritchard Sandton	TGWU	80	10.03.90	Guards and cleaners went on strike to demand the speeding up of wage negotiations which were delayed due to changes in dispute-settling procedures. Management agreed to meet with shop stewards.
Pulco Wynberg	Zatawu, TGWU	500	23.02.90-	The demand for the dismissal of a manager led to a strike and the voluntary resignation of the manager. After the resignation workers continued striking and demanded back-pay for the period on strike. Management then dismissed the workforce. Solidarity action from the Alexandra Civic Organisation was planned.

Rand Water Board	MSHAWU	2 000	02.03.90	The Rand Water Board interdicted workers to pre-empt a strike over the demand that workers dismissed last year in a strike are reinstated.
Rennies Express	TGWU	350	22.02-02.03.90	Workers went on a legal wage strike demanding a R35 across-the-board increase and three weeks' bonus pay. The union won a R32 increase backdated from 1 January.
Rolifos	CWIU	550	26.02.90-	Daily two-hour stoppages in a legal dispute resulted in the dismissal of the bulk of the workforce after three days. The stoppages took place to demand that the company join the union-initiated chemical industry provident fund.
Ruto Milling Pretoria	Fawu	1 000	05-08.3.90	A three-day strike ended after it was agreed that a dispute on retrenchment would go to arbitration.
SA Prisons' Service	Popcru		13.03.90-	Full-time warders at Diepkloof Prison (on strike over conditions of work) were suspended and six probationary warders dismissed. Among the grievances of strikers was racial discrimination in the Prisons' Service and poor conditions such as accommodation in prison cells. The protest action among prison staff and policemen gained momentum in spite of the harsh response and prisons and police stations in many towns across the country experienced sit-in protests. The Prisons' Service said that employees had the opportunity to address grievances through the procedures provided for in the Prison's Act.
SA Stone	Cawu	26	15.01.90-	A dispute over the payment of overtime was referred to the industrial court for final determination.
Sappi Mills Springs, Port Elizabeth, Ngodwana Mill	PPWAWU	3 000+	07.02.90-	Strike action in the paper, pulp and wood sector spread and workers downed tools in legal wage strikes. Workers at Ngodwana refused an average 16% increase for all grades. Management's final offer was 17,4% which would bring the minimum rate to R4,72 an hour. If the offer is not accepted management will issue ultimatums. At Springs management offered a restructured wage offer which reduced higher grades and raised lower grades. The offer was rejected. Workers were restricted from interfering with scabs and attempts at mediation failed. The strike in Port Elizabeth was settled.
Sappi Novoboard Nelspruit	PPWAWU	146	08.03.90-	An attempt to interdict a wage strike using the controversial LRA failed when the industrial court gave judgement in favour of the union. The union and management have agreed on wages but were still negotiating the back-dating of the increase.
Scaw Metals Germiston	Numsa	3 000	01-05.02.90	Workers downed tools after a security guard, who allegedly assaulted a worker, was cleared at a disciplinary hearing. They returned to work after management agreed the case would go on appeal.
Shoredits Construction PWV	Cawu	700	05.03.90	A one-day strike over recognition ended when management agreed to meet the union to discuss recognition.
TPA H F Verwoerd Hospital		700	01.02.90 -02.02.90	Administrative, cleaning and kitchen staff went on strike to demand the payment of annual bonuses. They returned to work after assurances were given that their demands would be addressed.
Tilley Macmill Wadeville	Numsa	200		The threat of dismissal against workers who had embarked on a defiance campaign against segregation led to a strike in which 200 workers were dismissed. The matter was referred to arbitration.
Unitrans Nelspruit	TGWU		28.02.90	Workers were interdicted and returned to work after a one-day strike over wages.
Xerotech Johannesburg	Numsa	100	06.03.90-	Workers went on a legal wage strike after mediation failed. Workers demanded a 21,5% increase across the board. Management offered merit increases between 13% and 15%. The current minimum wage is R850.

Cape

Aberdare Cables Port Elizabeth 2 plants	Numsa	700	15.01-14.02.90	A legal wage strike was settled when management improved its wage offer from a 13c-to 22c-increase on the hourly rate. This was over and above the industrial council increase. The increase was backdated to July and workers also won improved trade union rights. Workers were locked out during the strike and seven workers were arrested and charged under the Criminal Procedures Act for alleged violence and intimidation.
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Babcock's Mossel Bay	Numsa	107	22.02.90	Workers held a brief stoppage after they were informed that they would be given a week's pay and retrenched. Other grievances included discriminatory pay between local and foreign labour. Discussions were due to take place between the workers and management.
Bell Essex PE	Numsa	14-15.03.90		Workers held stoppages to demand centralised bargaining with the company group.
Berg Head	Numsa	50	13.02.90	The workforce was dismissed during a four-day total strike in Uitenhage to call for an end to violence in the area.
Cape Foundries	Mewusa	150	12.03.90-	Workers downed tools after management refused to negotiate plant-level increases. Workers were demanding a minimum rate of R10 an hour which is double the industrial council rate. Other demands in the strike were for a reduction in working hours to a 40-hour week and adequate health and safety provisions.
Cape Provincial Administration 25 hospitals	HWU	6 000	05.03.90-	The ongoing strike of non-medical personnel caused chaos at 25 provincial hospitals and related institutions when the government consistently refused to meet the demand for a meeting with the minister of health. The workers were demanding a living wage of R1500 a month, six months paid maternity leave, a 40 hour-week, permanent status and recognition of the HWU. The grievances of workers included low wages - an average monthly of between R300 and R400, no job security due to temporary status and the failure of the authorities to address worker grievances which were raised on previous occasions.
Chemserve PE	CWU	200	23.01-02.03.90	A strike to demand the reinstatement of three dismissed colleagues ended when management agreed to reinstatement. The period of the strike was regarded as suspension without pay and workers returned to work.
Donkin PE	Numsa	200	March	Workers were involved in a strike over wages. Negotiations to settle the dispute have been set up.
Dunlop Pillo PE	Numsa		13-15.02.90	Workers staged a three-day solidarity strike with workers who were dismissed due to charges of intimidation during a work stoppage earlier in the week.
E H Walton PE	PPWAWU	56	November-	Workers were locked out after industrial action was taken to demand the reinstatement of workers on maternity leave who were dismissed. The company's offer to pay off workers was refused. The dispute was referred to the industrial court.
Firestone PE	Numsa		08-22.02.90	Strikers were interdicted to return to work on the grounds that the strike breached the national agreement made in the industrial council. Workers had demanded a 50c increase but agreed to return to work on the basis that the increase would be negotiated in the industrial council. A number of stoppages at Firestone on a variety of issues has resulted in the loss of two working weeks since the beginning of the year.
Formex Engineering PE	Numsa	250	09-12.02.90	Workers on strike over a pay dispute were interdicted to return to work.
Frere Hospital East London	Nehawu	800	February	A three-day strike won workers the right to a workers' committee with powers to negotiate and settle disputes. Since December last year, management stalled on agreeing to the workers' committee and argued for a liaison committee. Workers intended to start negotiations on wages and conditions of work soon.
Fry's Metals Port Elizabeth	Numsa	37	26.02.90-	The company refused to negotiate wages with workers on strike and the workforce was dismissed.
Gestro Wheels PE	Numsa	500	March	Workers were involved in a series of grasshopper strikes over a wage demand. The company refused to negotiate wages with the union on the basis that wage negotiations must take place in the industrial council.
Mondi Bruply Stellenbosch Elgin	PPWAWU	470	08.02.90-	Workers went on a legal wage strike. Management offered 48c increase against the union's demand for 90c. The union has dropped all other demands in the wage package other than the wage increase. Negotiations were continuing. Strikers at Stellenbosch were interdicted by management and ordered to keep off company premises.
Multi Mech Epping	Numsa	114	05.02.90-	Workers were dismissed during an illegal wage strike in support of a 50% increase.

Onvise Engineering	Numsa	40	March	Workers stopped work for two days in solidarity with two dismissed workers.
PE Plating PE	Numsa	40	March	A work stoppage was held to protest company discrimination in wages.
PE Technikon	TGWU	187	March	A strike to demand the reinstatement of a worker who was unprocedurally dismissed ended after one day when demands were met.
Repco PE	Numsa, EAWUSA	300	25.01.90-	Workers on strike in support of wage demands were locked out and interdicted to return to work or face dismissal. Workers were demanding a R3 increase on the Seifsa increase. Management offered 25c and 25c on the end of the year bonus.
SA Stevedores	TGWU	208	05-08.02.90	A misunderstanding over the implementation of the wage increase precipitated a strike of permanent and casual workers. The workers also demanded a guarantee of one day's pay for casual workers. The strike ended when workers were interdicted.
Sentech Industries	Numsa	80	February	A three-day wage strike was settled when management offered a R1,00 across-the-board increase in response to the union's demand for R1,50.
Steers Afrovan	TGWU	140	16-19.02.90	Arbitration has been proposed in a lengthy dispute over wages which led to a strike and the dismissal of the workforce. The minister refused a conciliation board hearing in the case. Workers were subsequently reinstated.
Spruitdrift Winery	Fawu		01.03.90	Contract workers went on strike over wages and victimisation of shop stewards. Management called police and immediately dismissed workers who were loaded onto buses and sent back to the Transkei.
LPE	TGWU	300	March	Workers held a one-day stoppage over an unprocedural suspension. The university agreed to a proper hearing.
Welfit Oddy Motor Body Engineering Perseverance	Numsa	600	09.01-14.02.90	The workforce was locked out and fired after workers downed tools to demand the payment of the full-attendance bonus for workers who participated in the September stayaway. Management informed dismissed workers that they must attend disciplinary hearings if they wish to be reinstated. A proposal by Numsa for independent mediation was rejected by the company on the grounds that mediation could not proceed until violence against non-strikers ended. So far 34 workers have been arrested for alleged violence and intimidation and released on high bail.

Natal

Ammdale	Sectwu	200	March	A one-day stoppage was held to demand the reinstatement of a dismissed worker. Workers returned to work when management agreed to an inquiry.
Fashiontex	CWIU	120	February	The restructuring of wage grades was the major issue in a three-day legal wage strike. In the settlement, wage increases were given differentially and higher paid workers received bigger increases.
GVL Isithebe	Numsa	104	05-07.03.90	A worker was dismissed when he was found reading a Numsa publication during the lunch hour. Numsa does not have recognition at the plant. The dismissal led to a work stoppage and a lock-out. After two days workers were reinstated.
Mondi	PPWAWU	400	15.01-15.03.90	Mediation resulted in a settlement of the nine-week strike. Workers received increases of between 66c (management's pre-strike offer) and R1,09.
Ninian and Lester	Sectwu	250	12.03.90	A one-day stoppage was held in protest against the suspension of a worker accused of stealing. Workers returned to work when it was agreed an inquiry would be held.
Rapidol Pinetown	CWIU	50	February	A three-week legal wage strike ended without major gains by the union. Management did not change its original offer and workers received a 50c increase in January and 50c in July. The increase brought the current hourly minimum to R3,10.

Ciskei

Cecelia Makiwane Hospital Mdantsane	Nehawu	600	February	A nine-day sit in strike by administrative and cleaning staff was met with intransigence and authorities used Ciskei Police to work in the hospital. Workers at the hospital were demanding wage parity with their colleagues in the Republic. Doctors and nurses refused to co-operate with the police and would not accept files prepared by them or eat food the police cooked. Active members of the workers' committee were transferred to other hospitals and workers returned to work with no demands met. However in the wake of the coup in Ciskei, the Military Council has undertaken to investigate the grievances of workers.
Cementile Products Mdantsane	Cawu	200	12.02.90-	Management's refusal to negotiate wages with the newly elected liaison committee led to a strike after which workers were locked out and dismissed. Management offered conditional re-employment which included compulsory overtime work and disciplinary procedures to be initiated against strikers. Workers said they were willing to return to work but not to be re-employed as new staff. Following the coup in the Ciskei, there is uncertainty as to how labour disputes will be solved - whether trade union rights will be granted as the Military Council has promised and what official channels will replace the previous discredited ones.

Transkei

Wild Coast	Saceawu	2 000	18.02.90-	Workers went on strike due to wage and other grievances.
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Bophuthatswana

Justice Department GaRankuwa		50	13.03.90-	Clerks, magistrates, cleaners and prosecutors at the GaRankuwa magistrates court went on strike in support of demands for better pay. The strikers ignored an ultimatum to return to work and were dismissed.
Unibo Mmabatho			March	The university was closed after non-academic staff went on strike sparked off by 12% increases given to academic staff. Academic staff expressed their support for the strike and two members of Uduisa were detained under the Internal Security Act.

Mines

Kriel Colliery Witbank	NUM			A dispute was declared over grievances related to the food system and most workers were boycotting food supplied by management. The current card system was rejected by workers on the basis that if workers do not eat then their food subsidy is withdrawn.
Marievale Gold Mine	NUM	400	27.02.90-	Workers are demanding a coupon system which will allow workers to eat at their own discretion. In defiance of a court order workers went on strike demanding higher severance pay for retrenched workers. In a milestone judgement the industrial court ruled that workers be restrained from striking because the strike could force the closure of the mine. The strike comes after seven months of negotiations between the company and the union on the retrenchment package.
Rustenburg Platinum Mines	NUM	3 000	05.03.90-	Workers downed tools to demand an end to high Bophuthatswana taxes and the recognition of the NUM in the homeland.
SA Coal Estates Witbank		1 500	12.03.90	Workers who went on a wildcat strike returned to work after an undertaking from management to investigate their grievances.
Silicon Smelters Pietersburg	NUM		March	A three-day stoppage took place when management deducted pay for late arrival at work. The late arrival of workers was due to a strike by drivers at Lebowa Transport Services. After negotiation management agreed not to deduct pay and workers were paid for one of the strike days.
Unisel Welkom	NUM		14.02.90	Workers who staged a sit-in at the hostels in protest against retrenchment were teargassed and assaulted by mine security using truncheons and rubber bullets.
Vaal Reefs Orkney	NUM	4 300	12-14.03.90	In response to two recent deaths on the No 4 shaft, workers went on strike and made demands for improved health and safety and the reinstatement of dismissed workers.