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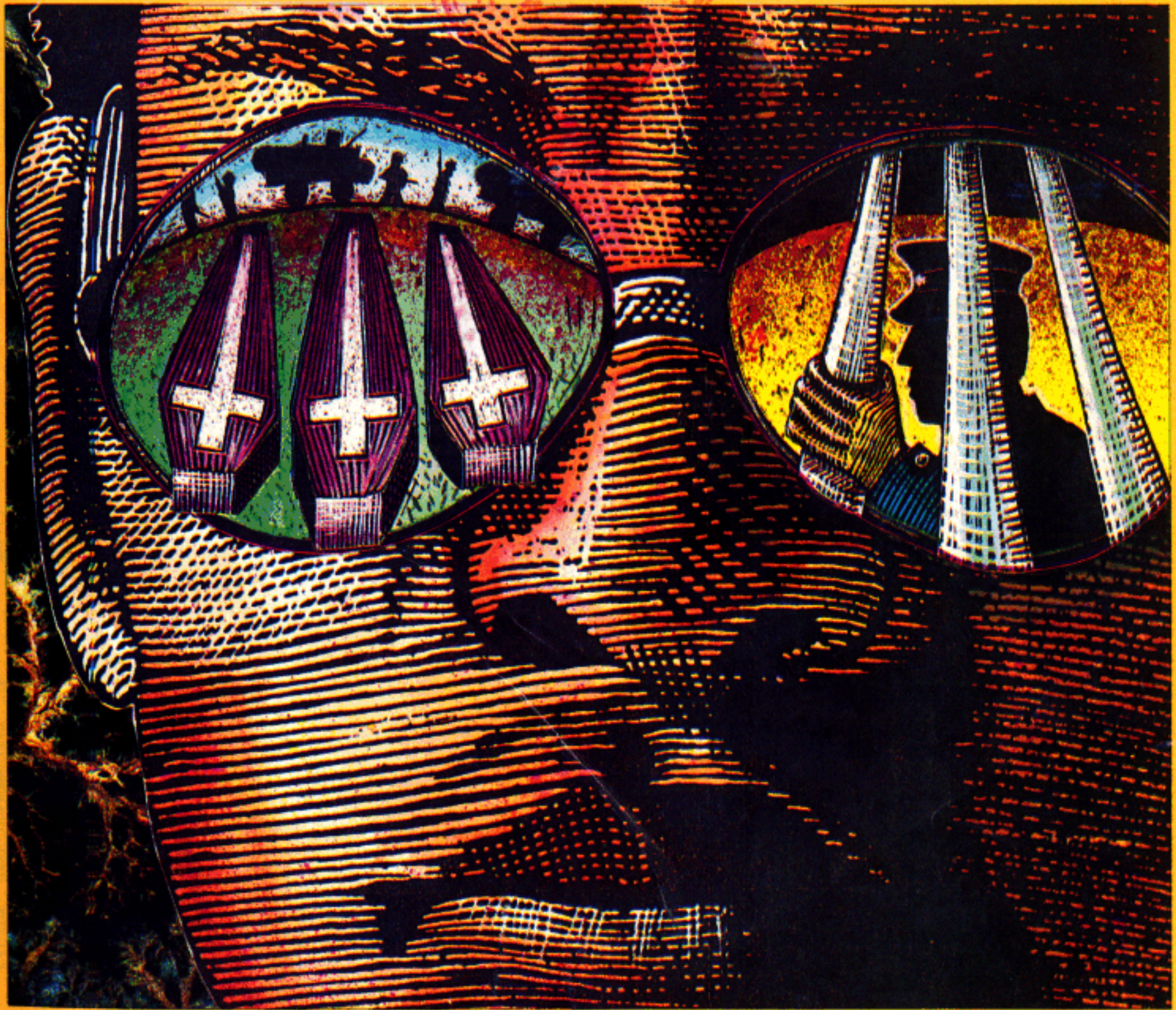
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HUGH MASEKELA speaks personally

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AND JUSTICE FOR ALL?

Inside the amnesty debate • Digging for Goldstone

Slabbert slams Cronin

Where are the women?

OCTOBER 1992 NO 85

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Editorial

THE MASSACRE IN Ciskei, like Boipatong, has raised the temperature of conflict once again. A return to multilateral negotiations in the immediate future looks bleak.

The Ciskei marchers were determined to occupy Bisho until the SA government took steps to ensure that Gqozo was removed. The peaceful march was met with the full might of Gqozo's guns. It was a response which many thought possible, but did not fully anticipate.

But the De Klerk government has laid the blame for the massacre at the ANC's door. You knew that there was going to be violence, they said, yet you chose to lead thousands of people to their death.

Now, you can believe this only if you believe that marching on Gqozo is the same as marching into a fire. But a fire does not decide to burn you. It just burns.

Gqozo, on the other hand, made a *decision* to mow down unarmed people. Is De Klerk trying to tell us that an intervention by him would have had no effect on Gqozo?

De Klerk's military leaders, as revealed by former Ciskei intelligence chief Gert Hugo, are the brains behind the tin-pot despot. Gqozo is the creation of De Klerk's government, and if he wants to, De Klerk can easily remove Gqozo from power.

Unless, of course, De Klerk is admitting that he has lost control over sections of his security forces — including those controlling Gqozo.

But despite all this, questions have to be asked about the wisdom of the ANC-alliance's strategy. To confront — unarmed — the soldiers of an unstable, brutal dictator and demand his overthrow, is highly risky.

It seems that the alliance could have built a less risky, but equally dramatic, strategy around the SA Council of Churches' suggestion that a referendum be called to decide who should lead the territory (and hence represent it at the negotiating table).

If a referendum demand had been the central focus of the Ciskei campaign, then it would have been difficult for De Klerk's government to portray it as a 'communist-inspired insurrectionary strategy'.

Instead, a new element (the bantustan referendum) would enter the national debate, and be placed as one of the conditions for the resumption of multilateral negotiations.

But whatever the shortcomings of the ANC-alliance's tactics, it should not cloud the central issue: Oupa Gqozo ordered the murder of peaceful demonstrators, and he must be brought to justice. He cannot claim to represent the people living in Ciskei. If he is not to be overthrown in a bloody insurrection, then his paymaster, the De Klerk government, must ensure that he is removed.

DEVAN PILLAY

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BIKO REVISITED

Azapo's Gomolemo Mokaie and *WIP's Devan Pillay* square off over black consciousness on the anniversary of Steve Biko's death



Linking up with Galeano

I was impressed by the article on Cuba by the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano (*WIP* 83, July - August 1992). Our people here are not quite aware about the happenings in the outside world; we get only one-sided versions. It's nice having articles "from the horse's mouth", by people from those places.

You said something about Galeano's book "Open Veins of Latin America" — do you have further info about it?

*Emmanuel Gama
Durban*

Any good bookstore should stock "Open Veins of Latin America" or Galeano's most recent publications, the "Memories of Fire" trilogy, "The Book of Embraces" and "We Say No".

We need a vibrant and autonomous civil society

To respond to Comrade Blade Nzimande's "Civil Society' does not equal democracy" (*WIP* 84):

My suggestion that the ANC's NEC make an official public announcement on the civic issue, is meant to lessen the tensions that have developed between civics and ANC branches at the local

level. I was also referring to other political organisations but the particular mention of the ANC is a result of the tensions explained above. I believe that these tensions have been increased by Comrades like yourself presenting unbalanced and biased analyses of our political situation since 2 February 1990.

It seems, Comrade Nzimande, that you are not against the civics as long as they don't push an independent position from the ANC. Your definition of autonomy implies some vassaldom or puppetdom. We are not only talking about autonomy of the civics, but their independence, too.

I stand by my view that we are yet to see independent civic formations emerging in the Natal Midlands. I didn't refer to civics and ANC branches as structures that cannot work together (as you allege). My point was that political organisations should politicise bread and butter issues. The civics should then organise around them. Parties should develop national policy positions and further encourage their constituencies to participate in those campaigns. My belief is that by so doing a healthy environment of political tolerance would prevail. Comrade Nzimande

seems to think that the ANC is the only political organisation in the country.

On Nicaragua: mass organisations in Nicaragua were Sandinista-based. They played a role in state administration and retarded the growth of independent organs of civil society.

Comrade Nzimande's choice of Nicaragua as an example to justify his arguments was questionable. Nicaragua is a unique experiment in that those comrades attempted to build a model based on socialist principles, but avoided the former Eastern European experience. However, it was on the very question of the relationships between the party, the state and the working class that the Sandinistas followed the Eastern European example.

In short, I believe that the working class needs to develop its civil society organs, and at the helm of that should be the trade unions and civic associations. I am by no means blind to the fact, as Comrade Nzimande points out, that within the civics you do have petty bourgeois elements who do not aspire to socialism, but it is the same with the trade unions. It therefore would suffice to say that civics and trade unions constitute a powerful bloc towards the building of a vibrant working class civil society.

*Mzwanele Mayekiso
Chicago, USA*

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The briefer your letter, the better your chances of winning.



WOMEN'S COALITION

Ready for action

PREPARING TO COLLECT THE DEMANDS of South African women for a Women's Charter is a painstaking task. The National Women's Coalition (NWC), says national convenor Frene Ginwala, is concentrating on four main aspects in this preparatory phase: fund raising R5-million; public awareness; reaching a diversity of women and broadening the coalition's structures.

Public awareness will concentrate on explaining the purpose of the campaign and providing background on various issues, such as the problems of working women, *lobola*, and abortion.

"Our programme of action has already gone out in four different languages — English, Afrikaans, Zulu and Sotho," said Ginwala.

"The national executive is also involved in brainstorming sessions to decide on how to approach women. But be-



Reaching out: Rural women on NWC's agenda

fore we go out, we have to find out where the women of South Africa are, what literacy is like and so on."

Ginwala made an urgent appeal for gender-sensitive people to come forward to help the campaign.

"We need volunteers,

people to be seconded to the campaign or to take sabbaticals. There are going to be lots of different working groups and we need whatever help we can get," she said.

Meanwhile, addressing a recent development conference, SACP central commit-

tee member Thenjiwe Mtintso warned of the danger of "an elite" making all decisions.

Mtintso said some women at the NWC's launch "felt that we could get a few experts to make a rough draft of demands and present it to the different organisations to amend."

"Others," she added, "motivated for hiring researchers who would simply do research on the needs of women. It took a lot to convince people that these women can speak for themselves and all it takes is to go to them."

However, Ginwala said while some women did express such views at the launch, the coalition's programme was not based on these views. Ginwala stressed that the NWC was "not conducting a market survey". Its fieldworkers would hold group discussions to discuss the changes women wanted. The media, particularly radio stations, and national organisations such as the ANC, would also help to collect demands. □

— Kerry Cullinan

SANCTIONS

Arms row erupts in Brazil

WHAT STARTED AS A MANAGEMENT crisis in a state-owned Brazilian aeronautical company is becoming a row about international arms sanctions against South Africa.

The company Embraer wants to sell 40 of its Tucano twin-seat strike aircraft to the South African Air Force (SAAF), in violation of the UN-imposed arms boycott.

But Brazil's Foreign Ministry, known locally as Itamaraty, will not approve the sale.

"I guarantee this deal isn't

going to happen. There are two reasons we can't let it go through," says Silvio Albuquerque, of Itamaraty's Africa Division. "First, it's actually illegal in Brazilian law which forbids arms sales to South Africa ... and South Africa's black opposition groups would never forgive Brazil for a military aircraft deal at this time."

The financially troubled parastatal began negotiations with the Brazilian government in May for permission to close the deal, but ran into immediate opposition. In the run-up to the high-profile earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in June, world attention was focused on Brazil, and the foreign ministry

feared a major international embarrassment. It advised President Collor of its position two months ago, says Albuquerque, and he decided to cancel the sale.

But Embraer is still pushing for permission. The company is even taking a Tucano, which it claims also has civilian use, to the upcoming "Air Africa '92" trade fair.

The EMB-312 Tucano is one of the world's best-selling light strike trainers. Efficient and cheap, the two-seater is powered by a single 750-horsepower Pratt and Whitney turboprop engine.

Ozires Silva, Embraer president and a retired airforce brigadier, argues that the esti-

mated US\$250 million sale is essential if the troubled company is to survive. Embraer laid off nearly 3,000 workers earlier in the year.

ANC president Nelson Mandela has expressed polite reservations about the impending sale to Brazil's ambassador in Pretoria, Igor Carrilho.

The foreign ministry's concern is not wholly selfless. The Brazilian navy is trying to negotiate a training agreement with Namibia and other African navies. The foreign ministry is apparently worried that these plans could be damaged by an arms scandal. □

— AIA/Colin Darch and Marcelo Bittencourt

Demands on Bisho

THE KEY AIMS OF THE 80,000-strong march that ended in the Bisho massacre on September 7 was not to seize power in Ciskei, according to a memorandum sent to the SA government by the tri-partite alliance and the SA National Civics Association.

These are excerpts from the memorandum which was issued on September 3:

- "Brigadier 'Oupa' Gqozo should be removed as 'head of state' in Ciskei ... This should be accompanied by the *de jure* downgrading of the independence status of Ciskei, as this has already occurred *de facto* through the controls and secondments SA has arranged with Ciskei. Through a proper process of consultation with all representative organisations an interim administration acceptable to all parties should be appointed in the Ciskei, which will have as its primary goal the impartial administration of Ciskei during the transition and the supervision of the process of reintegration of the territory into SA.

- "Section 43 of the Ciskei National Security Act, which prohibits the free activity of any political organisation ... should be repealed.

- "SA Military Intelligence officials must be removed from Ciskei, as these officials have been the masterminds behind the current violence and instability in the region."

As *WIP* went to press, neither the Ciskei or SA government had shown signs of relenting to the demands.

— *WIP correspondent*

Two tango, but who leads?

THINGS ARE LOOKING UP FOR THE newest political flirtation in SA. Ongoing bilateral talks between the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the government could open the way for full-blown negotiations between the two parties.

Despite the PAC's earlier insistence that it would only talk to the Pretoria administration "in a neutral venue under a neutral chairman", recent meetings were held in hotels around Johannesburg.

This time the talks were held not only to discuss modalities for a democratically elected constituent assembly, but also to "set up a high level meeting between the government and the PAC".

But the status of the talks was indicated by the high-level officials in both delegations. The PAC team included its secretary for legal and constitutional affairs, Willie Seriti, publicity secretary, Barney Desai, and foreign affairs secretary, Gora Ebrahim. The government rolled out its two key negotiators, Roelf Meyer, and his deputy, Tertius Delpont.

"The decision is not a departure from our stance of no talks with the regime but in line with the PAC demand to engage the De Klerk administration in discussing a constituent assembly which would draw up a new constitution," says Desai.

However, many observers see the decision as a departure by the PAC from its hard-line politics of outright rejection, while the government's strategy seems aimed at improving its position at the negotiation table.



Desai: "We are not trying to alienate the ANC by talking to the regime"

Desai denies that the PAC has softened its line: "We are saying to the regime that we want democracy and majority rule now."

"The very same conditions that the organisation criticised the ANC's participation in Codesa for — like the violence — are still the same, if not worse," argues Johannes Rantete, a researcher at the Centre for Policy Studies in Johannesburg. He says the breakdown of Codesa provided the PAC with the opportunity to start talking without damaging its reputation.

"One has to understand the PAC was built on a rhetoric of militancy. That is why it is not easy for the leadership to explain any move to the membership."

The PAC has had problems directing its membership. Its decision to boycott Codesa stemmed directly from protests by its members, particularly those in the PWV region.

Immediately after the second PAC-government talks in Johannesburg on August 11, a group of PASO (PAC's student wing) members called a "special conference" to discuss the government talks.

A statement condemning the mother body's participation in the talks was issued. However, PASO's national executive committee came out in full support of the talks.

Desai says the opponents of the talks are neither PAC nor PASO members.

"They are elements who are trying to use the name of the PAC for their own agendas," he insists. "As far as we are concerned, there is no dissatisfaction whatsoever within our ranks."

ANC spokesperson Carl Niehaus calls the PAC's move to talk with the government "opportunistic".

"We appeal to the PAC to reconsider their stand and withdraw from talks.

"Instead of talking to the liberation movement including the ANC and its alliance partners, they chose the government," he says.

But according to Desai, the PAC did try to get the ANC to help revive the now-defunct Patriotic Front (PF).

Says Desai: "We are not trying to alienate the ANC by talking to the regime. Unity for the oppressed is more essential than it was before. However, all our attempts of getting the ANC to the PF have proved fruitless, giving us an assumption that the ANC is no longer interested in the front."

The government's strategy, says Rantete, is to talk to a divided liberation movement.

"At this crucial time the government will need a divided black voice so that it can have things its way. Although it is unlikely that the government can strike a deal with the PAC, if it manages to bring them the negotiation table it will mark a great breakthrough for them at the table."

— *AIA/Sechaba ka Nkosi*



'Project Eagle': What does this mean for SA?

BOTSWANA

US denies base reports

CONSTRUCTION OF THE LARGEST military airbase in sub-Saharan Africa is nearing completion in Botswana (see *WIP* 83, July-August 1992).

The price tag of the high-tech 'Project Eagle' will be at least Brazilian 2 billion Pula (US \$1 billion), or 20 percent of Botswana's Gross Domestic Product.

According to press reports, the Botswana government intends to recoup most of the costs by leasing the site to the US Air Force.

And, as part of a sweetheart deal, French military companies are to supply the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) with an undetermined number of aircraft. (French company *Spie Batignolles* is one of the site's co-builders.)

Both the US and French governments are denying any links with the airbase, claiming that it is the sole initiative

of the government of Botswana.

In fact, Jim Callahan, a spokesperson at the US Embassy, faxed *WIP* a copy of a letter that David Passage, US Ambassador to Botswana, wrote on January 29 to the Botswana newspaper, *The Gazette*, refuting allegations of US involvement.

Callahan's introductory message to *WIP* says: "This is the latest we have on this bizarre story. Should I receive anything further, I will let you know but it is completely untrue."

According to reports from the Harare-based Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC), "it is ... understood that companies tendering for the project had to sign a confidentiality clause with the Botswana government".

Despite all the denials, the US and Botswana governments have been engaged in an unusual amount of military activity in the past months:

- In January, 200 US army paratroopers conducted "Operation Silver Eagle," a ten-

day series of combat and flying exercises in Botswana to "teach" Botswana troops how to defend strategic installations.

- Sources in Botswana confirm that in May, an additional 45 US paratroopers conducted a 14-day joint military exercise with the (BDF); later that month, ten senior US military officers from the US National War College visited Botswana. (Forty-five BDF officers are already receiving military training in the US.)

- This year, the US has given the BDF a grant of US \$15 million.

SARDC also reports that one of the possible reasons for US interest in Botswana may be President George Bush's concern over "the policies likely to be followed by a future black-ruled democratic South Africa". The Botswana airbase could be used for direct military intervention in South Africa, if Bush's world order deemed it necessary, SARDC warns. □

—Professor Malema and Kimberly O'Donnel

SATUCC

Job security and training needed in sub-region

THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN TRADE Union Coordination Council (SATUCC), which includes national federation trade unions in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), is tightening screws on southern African governments and international organisations which have imposed structural adjustment policies.

SATUCC was formed in 1983 to help alleviate economic and social maladies that have gripped the sub-region.

Its most recent survey focuses on productivity, investment and training in southern African states. It makes strong recommendations for worker training in the sub-region.

The report also recommends a regional forum, in which countries and trade unions could address issues such as structural adjustment policies, which have been imposed by international monetary donor agencies.

"In order to achieve these goals, there is a need for research on major topics," the report states. "The member states should democratise the labour legislations in the region by ratifying the International Labour Organisation articles."

However, according to SATUCC spokesperson John Phiri, although governments support the recommendations in principle, "since the regional social charter was submitted to the regional minister last year, we have not received a concrete answer from the governments." □

—Professor Malema

ZIMBABWE

Drought crisis grows

DESPITE GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES, the drought crisis is rapidly escalating.

As of July, 4.5 million Zimbabweans — close to half the total population — were registered for drought relief; in March the relief rolls listed only two million people.

Minister of Information David Karimanzira says the full impact of the drought on food supply will only be felt in October. By then, experts warn, it is likely that five million people will require food assistance — about two million more than the government can cater for.

In the past three months the government's monthly food procurement bill has more than doubled to ZIM \$48 million (US \$9.6 million). Officials say that probably less than half of those registered for hand-outs have received food so far because of shortages, transport bottlenecks and



Dying for food: The country is only beginning to fathom the extent of the crisis

poor administration.

Minister of Finance Bernard Chidzero introduced a special ten percent drought levy in his July 30 budget and earmarked ZIM \$2 billion (US \$400 million) for drought relief spending in 1992-93.

But Chidzero is counting on massive assistance from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local community groups and overseas donors, and is hoping the rains will return this November. However, for many it is already too late.

Despite President Mugabe's declarations that no one will starve to death, the Ministry of Health announced that as of May, more than 40 chil-

dren under the age of five had died of drought-related malnutrition.

In July, Health Minister Timothy Stamps revealed that child malnutrition in 56 of Zimbabwe's 57 districts had unacceptably high rates (above 15 percent), and that no fewer than 30 percent of Zimbabwe's three million young children urgently needed supplementary protein-enriched food.

The government has responded by launching a supplementary feeding programme, targeting 750,000 children under five years old, at a cost of ZIM \$150 million (US \$30 million). This initiative will rely heavily on the participation of NGOs and

community groups, which in many areas will provide the money, food and delivery mechanisms; the government will supervise.

The crisis is heightened by the migration of starving rural residents to mining compounds, towns and larger urban areas. It is likely that this movement has thrown thousands of children out of school and cut off their access to supplementary food supplies.

Urban primary schools — unlike their rural counterparts — levy fees which most cash-strapped migrant households cannot manage.

Coupled with the growing ranks of the urban working poor and unemployed, the swelling number of drought refugees from the rural areas means drought-induced hunger now threatens sections of all Zimbabwean communities.

Police in southern Zimbabwe, meanwhile, are reporting an upsurge in what they take to be drought-related crime. In several recent robberies thieves appeared to be interested in food alone. □

— AIA/Richard Saunders

ZIMBABWE

Youths risk lives in search of jobs in Botswana and SA

UNEMPLOYED ZIMBABWEAN youths are risking life and limb by illegally crossing into Botswana to seek work there and in South Africa.

The Botswana government appears to have adopted a shoot-to-kill policy for border jumpers, who are mainly youths escaping hunger and poverty caused by rampant

unemployment and the drought.

Groups of youths slip out of Zimbabwe daily. Parents fear that even if their children elude armed Botswana guards along the border, they face the risk of getting caught up in the political violence in South Africa.

For decades, Zimbabweans have sought work on the mines of Botswana and South Africa. Now, there are increasing reports of Zimbabweans being harassed, assaulted or killed in neighbouring countries.

The South African Police (SAP) say they deport up to 60 illegal visitors daily and have

complained to the Zimbabwe government about the 'problem'.

Botswana is said to have ordered border guards to stop illegal immigrants at all costs, especially those who resist arrest. They say Zimbabweans enter their country to steal, smuggle and peddle drugs.

Quizzed about reports that seven youths were recently shot dead at the Zimbabwe-Botswana border, a police officer in Francistown denied knowledge of the incidents, but added: "You Zimbabweans are a big problem. You come here to steal. Of course, if a person resists arrest they will be shot."

Last year, a Zimbabwean youth was killed inside Botswana for allegedly entering the country illegally. The incident soured diplomatic relations between the two countries.

But Zimbabwean youths appear to be undeterred by reports of arrests, detentions, and even deaths.

Before the introduction of the economic reform programme in 1990, the official figure for unemployment stood at nearly 1.5 million. Every year, 300,000 school leavers enter the already saturated job market. □

— AIA/Tambayi Muchukuchi

The world of Babes Mabida

THAT RUGBY MATCH WAS DISGRACEFUL!



ALL THOSE APARTHEID SYMBOLS!



JA. NO. WELL... ER... THIS IS OUR MASS ACTION!



REMEMBER WHEN WE GOT FIVE YEARS FOR FLYING OUR FLAG?



THEY CALLED IT "FURTHERING THE AIMS"



BUT THEY DON'T HAVE TO WORRY-



STEVE TSHWETE HAS ALREADY FORGIVEN THEM!



YOU KNOW, I THINK THEY COMPARED OUR MASS ACTION TO THEIR MASS ACTION



AND DECIDED TO CALL FOR AMNESTY.



AMNESTY?! WE CAN FORGIVE AND FORGET DIE STEM...



BUT WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THE CCB, THE HAMMER UNIT, KOEVOET, 32 BATTALION, GONINE DAVID WEBSTER, TIMOL, STEVE BIKO.



IN ANY CASE, THE CCB HAS NOT BEEN BEATEN.

BUT THE SPRINGBOKS WERE!



I SUGGEST WE GIVE THE WALLABIES HONOURARY M.K. STATUS, FOR INFLECTING A CRUSHING DEFEAT ON THE ENEMY!



BUT THEN... WILL WE HAVE TO ASK FOR INDEMNITY FOR THE WALLABIES ALSO?



NIX. I HEAR THAT THE WALLABIES HAVE ALREADY GONE BACK DOWN UNDER!



SILENCE

AND JUSTICE FOR ALL?

The debate about a general amnesty is sidestepping crucial questions, warn HEIN MARAIS and MONTY NARSOO. In this polemic, they call for a drastic rethink

THE GENERAL AMNESTY DEBATE EXPOSES the very heart of the South African struggle. Its outcome will profoundly affect the nature of the society that emerges from the transition. And yet the debate is already showing signs of giddiness.

The debate cannot be settled with the magical notion that mere knowledge of

the past — the disclosure of abuses — will safeguard the future. Nor can it be restricted to questions of moral or ethical flexibility, political compromise, or social forgiveness.

Ultimately, the debate is about reconciliation, nation-building and democracy; it has to occur within the framework of our struggle to build a democratic,

united society. The question is entangled with the efforts to achieve reconciliation in a divided society. But the manner in which it is resolved will have dramatic implications for the new society: it will either strengthen or erode its democratic foundations.

The extent and vitality of democracy depends on a society's ethical and legal

What are the prospects of a democracy whose birth depends on the suspension of the rule of law?

underpinnings, its social culture and its political institutions. It is helpful, then, to try and isolate the three dimensions in which the amnesty debate orbits, recognising that they cannot be separated completely: Ethical, political, sociological.

The arguments in favour of a general amnesty pivot primarily on the *political* and, to some extent, *religious/ethical* argument for forgiveness.

They remind us that our society has been plunged into a vortex of violence, and insist that no side is blameless. One death is as reprehensible as another, making it possible to strike a moral equivalency between the crimes of the oppressor and those of the opposition, crimes are crimes being the standard formulation. To break this cycle, we have to forgive, and shut the door on the past. To do otherwise would merely perpetuate the resentments and the desire for revenge. The cycle goes on. The past infects the future.

The argument is cogently expressed in the words of the conservative Uruguayan politician Manuel Flores Silva, defending his decision not to prosecute officials of the dictatorship: "It was a matter of making a moral decision to give priority to the possibility of a future of agreement over a past of division."

Feisty reasoning

But it is at the political level that we find the more feisty reasons for a general amnesty. The starkest come from practitioners of *realpolitik*, like Uruguay's former president Julio Maria Sanguinetti, who asked in 1986: "What is more just? To consolidate the peace of a country where human rights are protected today or to seek retroactive justice that could compromise that peace?"

It is a doomsday argument that warns of a coup by sectors in the armed forces and other institutions of the old system. Attempts to apply the rule of law will sabotage the young democracy, by alienating forces with the ability to lead us into the heart of darkness. These are the arguments that led to the secret amnesty deals struck in Uruguay's in the mid-1980s, and which persuaded Brazilian decision-makers to avoid human rights trials. In Argentina, the military pounded the point home with periodic revolts that quickly had the fledgling civilian government

backtracking on its half-fulfilled programme of exacting justice.

Coup talk is popular in SA, though the analysis that accompanies it remains flippant and loose. The danger here is not so much a coup in the classical sense, but that a sector of society, as a Latin American politician has noted, "remains defiantly outside the law — a kind of permanent *de facto* coup". SA bristles with candidates: from the disaffected ranks of irregular security force units (the *Staal Burgers* of the world) to the proud but embattled chieftains of the security establishment.

Nevertheless, the argument reminds that the rule of law is beholden to the political balance of forces — and announces that we simply do not have the strength to bring the old regime to books. Given the current stalemate in SA, where

the old order has not been comprehensively defeated, the argument packs some clout. The old regime, although it is becoming ragged at the edges, remains a coherent ruling force with a functioning bureaucracy and an intact security apparatus.

At the other extreme is the 'Soft Revenge of the Freedom Fighter' thesis, associated with Albie Sachs. It argues that a concept of justice that hinges on trials, imprisonment and punishment will perpetuate the resentments, fears and insecurities that can undermine the new society. So why not accept that the fruits of victory — a non-racial, democratic society — constitute a form of justice that better substitutes for the more mechanistic, legal one?

The Sachs argument introduces into the SA context the Chilean formulation 'Reconciliation, truth and justice'. It addresses all three dimensions of the debate: sociological, political and ethical. Justice is done but in ways that do not threaten the criminals — their punishment is to have 'lost' their struggle to maintain an unjust system. It recognises the need for social stability, by placating the fears of the perpetrators and neutralising the political threat they might pose. And, finally, it aims to facilitate national reconciliation, to "rebuild a sense of a nation that's not at war against itself, overcoming the intense divisions and the traumas of the past," as Sachs told *New Era* magazine last year. Amnesty, not

The Nuremberg trials: "As a matter of law, we simply have to say we are not going to grant clemency to the most grotesque criminals"



amnesia; forgiveness, but not forgetfulness. The past is uncovered, but it is transformed from a destructive and vengeful force into a healing and healthy one.

In the SA context, Sach's is without doubt the most considered and humane argument for an amnesty. In this 'humanist' vein, the Chilean activist Jose (Pepe) Zalaquett has framed the following ground rules for an amnesty: a) it must make it possible to repair the damage of the past, (b) it must promote a stable and democratic future, (c) the truth must be fully and publicly disclosed, (d) the policy must represent the will of the people and (e) it must not conflict with international law. In other words, a mixture of ethical, political and sociological considerations.

The hardcore, 'clean slate' position, of course, argues for an abrupt break with the past — forgive *and* forget. Supporters argue that by kindling memories we fuel resentments, deepen divisions, and poison the national psyche. Ultimately, we make reconciliation more difficult by insisting that society confronts its traumas. It is, throughout history, expressed only by those who are most threatened by

the course of justice.

In the SA debate, the major arguments against an amnesty are legal/ethical ones. They come in various models, the most uncompromising of which have a religious solemnity about them: if crimes against humanity are committed, the perpetrators must be punished.

An eye for an eye

They insist that there is nothing relative or negotiable about crimes of such magnitude. The executive director of Human Rights Watch in New York, Aryeh Neier, has made this potent summary: "As a matter of law we simply have to say we are not going to grant clemency to the most grotesque criminals. We may be forced to do so on the basis of greater force, but we should never do so as a matter of law." It is, at root, the Nuremberg argument.

Another variant argues that the rule of law must prevail in order to prevent the ethical foundations of the new society from being compromised. If, at the outset

of the new society, justice is subordinated so dramatically to the ebb and flow of politics, the very foundations of the democracy are undermined. How can a democracy be born on the basis of the sorts of arbitrary decisions that characterised the old order? In short, democracy is not simply freedom of expression or the right to vote; it is the rule of law, and without that, democracy is dead.

But, says another argument, the rule of law is not simply a metaphysic or a constant that applies unchangingly to different social, political and historical moments. Law is a part of society, and as such it must be sensitive to the social will. In essence, this is the current, *apparent* position of the ANC. It objects not to the possibility that the wrongdoers might evade the sword of justice, but to wrongdoers absolving themselves unilaterally and within a vacuum of knowledge.

In other words, the rule of law can be overridden, but only by the will of the

NEITHER AMNESIA NOR VENGEANCE

IN APPROPRIATE ANALOGIES WITH OTHER SOCIETIES TEND TO BLUR THE SA DEBATE. However, the Latin American experiences offer important insights. Unlike Eastern Europe and Africa, where the transitions from totalitarian or colonial rule to democracy were marked by the almost total collapse of the old system, the transitions in Latin American countries in the 1980s were gradual and negotiated. Much like the SA scenario, the settlements and compromises that were struck reflected shifting balances of forces.

In Argentina, the civilian government proceeded with a public search for the truth (through the *Nunca Mas* — "Never Again" — project) and applied a measure of justice, by trying leading members of the junta. Under pressure from the military, the government halted the exercise in December 1986 by applying a *punto final*, a full-stop to prosecutions. Several subsequent military revolts have been attributed to renewed fears that justice might still run its course.

In Brazil, where the repression affected a smaller part of the society, the transition from military to civilian rule occurred partially because of a tacit agreement that officials of the junta would not be prosecuted. Nevertheless, a group of activists and priests did not stand by complain-

ing; they spent five years furtively documenting every case of torture under the junta. The result was a meticulous document titled *Brasil: Nunca Mais*. A shorter version became the single best-selling book of non-fiction in Brazilian history, while the project led to Brazil's signing of the UN Convention Against Torture in 1985.

Pinochet's Chilean junta in 1978 indemnified itself against prosecution. The civilian government of Patricio Aylwin's in 1989 sought to overturn the amnesty, but changed its mind when the military balked. It eventually settled for an official investigation into human rights abuses.

In Uruguay, where the dictatorship had detained one in every 80 citizens, the first amnesty applied only to political prisoners. Some 400 citizens promptly began court proceedings against 180 torturers. As the verdicts approached, the military became restive and the two largest political parties in December 1986 decreed that the state's powers to punish certain crimes had expired — an amnesty in all but name. A survey two months earlier had found 72 percent of Uruguayans demanding punishment for human rights violators.

Citizens in 1987 formed a coalition to overturn the 'impunity' legislation. A year later, 25 percent of voters had signed a petition demanding a referendum on the amnesty, despite blatant threats from the security forces that a 'yes' vote would spark a return to the 'old days'.

The intimidation and threats eventually produced a 'no' victory in April 1989. The country had reached its *punto final*, the last stop on its journey to see justice done. ■

by Hein Marais



Eye for an Eye?: (L to R) Colonel P Goosen, head of security police in Eastern Cape circa 1977; Major H Snyman, one of Steve Biko's interrogators; Brigadier Theuns "Rooi Rus" Swanepoel, the man who gave the order to open fire on Soweto youths on June 16, 1977; Lieutenant W Wilken, said to have been in charge of Steve Biko's interrogation team

people. This position implies understanding (and perhaps even partial acceptance) of some of the pro-amnesty arguments. But it demands that the decision be made democratically or at the very least in a more democratic context (by an interim government, for example). It is perhaps not unfair to term it a browbeaten relative of the argument advanced by Jose Zalquett (see above).

But critics, like Neier, caution that any form of amnesty invites a repetition of human rights abuses. The warning is not mere kneejerk. "Who in the future will fight against subversion if he knows that at any moment he would be tried?" an Uruguyan general asked in 1988 as compatriots were seeking to rescind a partial amnesty declared in his country. That chilling phrase, the "fight against subversion", is all too familiar to South Africans and Latin Americans alike. The general understood very well that amnesty implies a quiet nod to abuses somewhere in the future, when conditions force or allow the new state to position itself as the guardian of 'order' against 'chaos'.

Held hostage

Nowhere is the stand-off between the pro- and anti-amnesty arguments clearer (and more fundamental) than in the political dimension. The 'hostage' argument pictures a rickety civilian government threatened by 'cornered beasts', the security forces. It says that an amnesty is the only way to secure a future for the new democracy, the only way to prevent it from being sabotaged or held hostage by panicky sections of the old order.

(It is worth noting, however, that some observers believe the underlying

motives of the trade-offs in South America were much less innocent. Without exception the new civilian governments began pushing through IMF-type, neo-liberal economic programmes which were certain to aggravate social tensions and lead to protest and possibly even revolts. The new governments needed the military on side to see the structural adjustment policies through. The amnesties, then, stemmed less from fear of the unknown than from the need for a reliable partner.)

The counter argument announces that the amnesty itself hobbles the new democracy, and it poses important questions. Just how secure is a democracy that can be established only by suspending the rule of law? What is the content of a new order which, at birth, signals unmistakably that future human rights abuses also might go unpunished in certain circumstances? What are the *prospects* of a democracy which comes about only by admitting that the rule of law is subject to the whims of force? Is the best guarantee against an ambitious or delinquent security establishment not to subject it to the civilian government at the outset?

Here in SA, we are yet to confront the issue in such elemental terms. In fact, it is noteworthy that our debate has not reached the phase of outright political blackmail. It either turns on ethical points, around claims of moral equivalency ("crimes of violence need to be punished", as the SA Institute for Race Relations's John Kane-Berman would have it, equating the crimes of the oppressor with those of the oppressed, irrespective of intent or scale). Or it circles the proposition that an amnesty can seal off past resentments and pave the way for reconciliation.

Soon after World War Two, the Polish

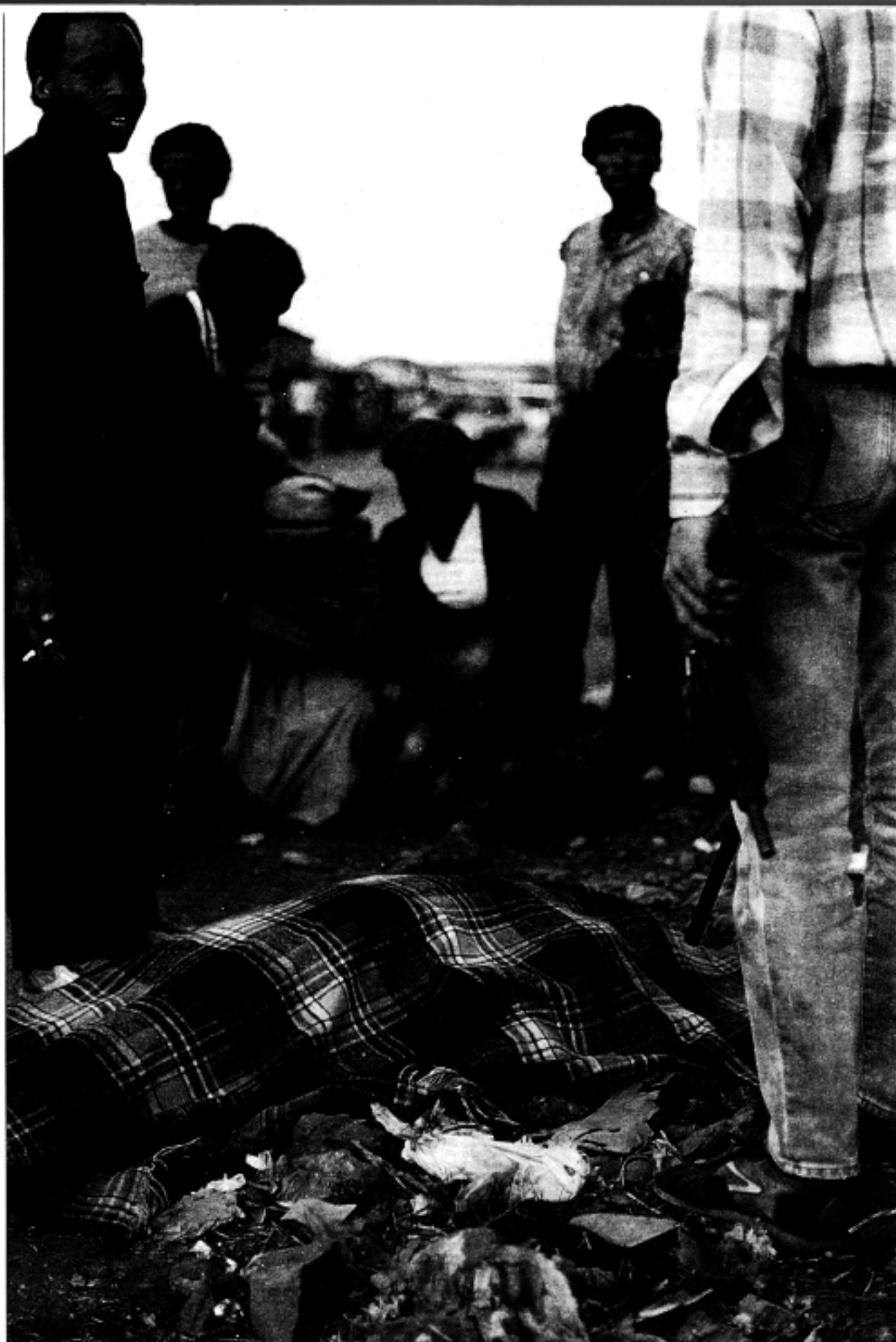
poet Zbigniew Herbert wrote a verse he called 'Mr Cogito and the Need for Precision'. It ended with words that cut in more than one direction: "Ignorance about those who have disappeared / undermines the reality of the world." Herbert's "disappeared" are both the criminals and their victims, and his warning is clear: an amnesty without full disclosure legislates a vacuum in a society's knowledge of itself. It admits there are grievous crimes to be forgotten (why else issue the amnesty?), but it forbids society from knowing the truth about them. It goes without saying that reconciliation cannot occur on the basis of ignorance and the absence of knowledge. The ANC's Kadar Asmal would add that knowledge of the past is itself not enough — there must also be acknowledgement.

Beware blind faith

This emphasis on truth-telling leads to the formula: Disclosure, repentance, forgiveness, and let's get on with things. The sequence of this process is important, as is the manner in which it is executed.

However, we should beware placing blind faith in the cleansing power of truth. When released into a society as ruptured as ours, there is no guarantee that truth will yield mere nice, warm feelings — all the more so if truth-telling and a subsequent amnesty occur by decree or strictly on the basis of political agreements.

The Uruguyan writer Eduardo Galeano asked once of Latin Americans: "And did the absolution of military and paramilitary terrorism granted by civilian governments consolidate democracy? Or did it in fact legalise arrogance, encourage violence, and identify justice with vengeance or madness?"



Divided: No guarantee that mere truth-telling will lead to reconciliation

We return to the question on which the amnesty issue pivots: Does it advance or retard the democracy we have struggled for?

Our conclusion rests on this bald bottom line: We must ensure that the abuses that characterised the past cannot be repeated.

The rule of law cannot be compromised. At the level of what *should* happen (the legal/ethical), a judicial process that clearly establishes guilt and innocence must be established. It should entail full disclosure of crimes and identification of their perpetrators. It will be the duty of legal technicians to map this process with a clear set of criteria which define the punishable crimes. These criteria, however, cannot lead simply to the condemnation of fall-guys and functionaries

whilst their chieftains go unscathed. Finally, the mandate and framework of this process must prevent a shadowplay or re-enactment of the toothless probes jittery governments so rapidly become expert at. This would be the *just* way of resolving the debate.

But the debate has to be resolved also at the level of what is *feasible* (the political). Our transition seems to be one where, in the Chilean activist Jose Zalaquett's words, "the forces that made or supported the former government have neither lost control of armed power, nor do they suffer from a lack of cohesiveness or low morale in their ranks". They are, he warns, "a formidable factor to reckon with".

The balance of forces will shape a politically negotiated settlement, based on trade-offs and concessions. Very likely,

an amnesty will be part of the deal, sweetened perhaps with a truth-telling process of sorts, and justified as a grand gesture of reconciliation. Do we just accept this?

Reconciliation cannot occur by decree. It is not a spectator event where society magically becomes forgiving while it witnesses the past being unpacked. The public, popular forces (like the press, human rights groups and affected communities) must keep the issue of justice on the agenda, must build a campaign, mobilise to empower the victims and to disempower the guilty.

Here, at the sociological level, it is active participation of the public (of, if you like, *civil society*) that heals the wounds and bridges the divisions. It requires the ongoing resurrection of the past — through monuments, documentation centres, media, commemorations, official and popular histories, political interventions and more. (Sadly, the process of forgetting has already begun in SA; the tenth anniversary of the death of trade unionist Neil Aggett passed almost unnoticed this year.) This is about more than just remembering: it is about deploying those memories to safeguard a democratic and unified future.

The popular mobilisation to repeal Uruguay's amnesty laws in 1987 remains one of the most epic examples of such a process. A progressive referendum campaign opened the floodgates of the past on a weary and demoralised society. For several months, the amnesty debate became the central focus of Uruguayan life. A fearsome barrage of threats and propaganda from the military and the main political parties eventually defeated the anti-amnesty forces. But the campaign advanced the reconciliation process in a fundamental way: for a short while, power did pass to the people and with it came the sense that destiny is something that is shaped and not merely accepted.

As one torture victim said after the defeat: "For once, *they* were the ones who had to be afraid: for the first time, even if just for a few months, we had them trembling that justice might yet come ... that was satisfying." □

Monty Narsoo is an ex-detainee who sued the SAP for torture in 1982. The police settled out of court two years later.



BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

WE ARE DISTURBED BY THE apparent agreement between the parties represented at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) that provision be made for detention without trial in states of emergency during a transitional constitutional phase.

The organised South African attorneys' profession has long spoken out against detention without trial which, it believes, is not compatible with the rule of law, a concept which it fully supports.

The agreement is contained in Codesa working group documents which, it is true, also make provision for certain procedural controls over detention without trial. However, that administrative controls are insufficient to cure the defects of a system of detention without trial is amply clear from SA's own experience . . .

We have often expressed our pleasure at the stated commitment by the government and its main negotiating partners to a Bill of Rights and, in 1991 *De Rebus* 287, we welcomed the publication by the African National Congress of its own draft bill of rights.

The agreement about detention without trial during states of emergency is puzzling in the light of that commitment. Indeed, reacting to criticism of its part in the Codesa agreement, the ANC has reiterated that it "supports the principle that no arrested person should be held for

Excerpts from "Detention Without Trial: A Case of Deja Vu", an editorial in the August 1992 issue of De Rebus, the journal of the Association of Law Societies of South Africa

longer than 48 hours without appearing in court".

In its submission to Codesa the ANC proposes certain controls to prevent abuse during a state of emergency. Among these is a guaranteed right of detainees to have their detention reviewed administratively within 30 days; a prohibition on detention for longer than 30 days unless "the reviewing administrative authority" determines otherwise; and a provision that, "if a detainee is held for a period longer than three months, the detention shall be reviewed . . . by a review board presided over by a judge of the supreme court and comprising members appointed by the relevant minister for this purpose".

The wording of the ANC's proposed controls induces a certain sense of *deja vu*; we are reminded of times when the rule of law was at its nadir in SA. Moreover, the wording does not lie well in the mouths of those who have protested volubly in favour of the rule of law and against detention without trial of many of their own number.

The danger is that the standards set during the transitional state — nobody knows

how long it may last — may become the norm in whatever final constitution is agreed. Likewise, states of emergency imposed initially for limited periods have a habit of being extended, as experience in Zimbabwe, for instance, teaches.

The ANC has also responded to criticism of its proposals by pointing out how difficult it makes the declaration of a state of emergency; be that as it may, it does not change the fact that detention without trial is wrong in itself and permits of abuse which administrative restrictions are notoriously unsuccessful in preventing.

At the time of writing the ANC has withdrawn from the Codesa negotiations in the wake of the Boipatong massacre.

Should the negotiations be restarted we would urge the ANC, and the other parties, including government, to reconsider the question of detention without trial in the light of the law commission's proposals.

Similarly, should the Codesa negotiations break down permanently, we hope that government will refrain from introducing such provi-

sions unilaterally. Unfortunately, legislation passed in the dying days of the first session of parliament in June this year makes us less than sanguine in this regard.

In particular, we have in mind the detention without trial provisions contained in s 23 of the Criminal Law Second Amendment Bill of 1992. We are gratified that some of the harsher provisions in the initial Bill — such as indefinite detention, the denial of access to legal representatives and the ouster of the courts' jurisdiction — were dropped after the debate in the Joint Standing Committee of Justice.

However the remaining provisions, which permit the detention for up to 30 days for interrogation of those suspected of withholding information about their unlawful possession of weapons, are unacceptable. For, although a warrant from a magistrate ordering such detention is required, it remains detention without trial for an unacceptably long period and also transgresses the basic right to remain silent . . .

Introducing the legislation, the Minister of Justice reiterated government's commitment to a bill of rights but said it could not be implemented during such violent times. We counter that it is especially during such times that trust in and respect for the law must be nurtured. □

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justice



GOLDSTONE RISES TO THE CHALLENGE

New proposals to beef up the Goldstone Commission are a good start to repairing the probe's dented credibility, reports **LENA SLACHMUIJLDER**

TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY of the National Peace Accord (NPA), Judge Richard Goldstone requested that his Commission be empowered to form an independent investigative task force, comprising hand-picked police members and attorneys. They would be accountable directly to the Commission, with United Nations observers monitoring their activities. The move has been approved.

The proposals came just as the Commission's credibility was on the verge of collapsing. The Commission had become a last resort for many victims of violence,

who have found that the normal channels of justice bring them no relief. Since January this year, the Commission has held ten inquiries into various massacres, assassination plots and covert actions. Yet, the probes have not led to a single conviction.

In order to conduct independent investigations and to ensure that its findings are implemented, the Commission needed to be trusted in all quarters. Structural weaknesses left it reliant on a discredited SA Police (SAP) and vulnerable to the Nationalist Party government (the latter has twice this year attempted to

gain political mileage with "misinterpretations" of press statements or interim reports issued by the Commission).

"If the Commission operates within the structure of the SA government, which is under fire for having a hand in the violence, then the people won't trust it," says Aubrey Lekwana of Lawyers for Human Rights.

In January, the Commission's first sitting in Mooi River led to several recommendations aimed at preventing a repeat of the Bruntville massacre in which 19 people had died. The proposals were ignored, however. "The feeling among

members of the Bruntville community towards the Commission is one of disillusionment and disappointment," comments Howard Varney, legal counsel for the Bruntville Peace Committee.

Varney warns that such sentiments could lead to more violence: "The people will say: the police don't work for us, the courts don't work for us, now the Commission doesn't work, so we'll go back to our *qwashas* and sort out the problem."

The new proposals reveal that Goldstone is aware that his limited powers were fuelling a dangerous cycle of perceptions and threatened the Commission with a loss of credibility. They also suggest that he now recognises that the Commission can only be effective if it is delinked from the SAP.

In his July report Goldstone called on the state to explain why hostel upgrading had not begun, and why recommendations concerning policing at Mooi River and the deployment of 32 Battalion were ignored. He also reprimanded the police for taking an "unacceptably long time" to investigate the alleged involvement of policemen in Schweizer-Reneke in an assassination plot against an ANC leader.

Goldstone went on to warn: "To ignore recommendations can only be calculated to diminish if not destroy the credibility and effectiveness of not only the Commission but also of the Government."

The current spate of calls for a general amnesty underlines the state's fears about what the Commission might unearth if it were able to conduct its work more effectively, believes Krish Govender, publicity secretary of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (Nadel). "That's why they're raising the amnesty issue now — before the inquiries into Boipatong and (Matthew) Goniwe blow the lid off," Govender says.

Govender says he suspects that the Commission may have been persuaded to withhold damaging findings at some points. "The Commission is frightened to trample on powerful political players," he charges.

The new set of proposals has raised hopes that the Commission can live up to



PIC: THE STAR

Revived: Will Goldstone now dig at the roots of the violence?

expectations. But other criticisms and shortcomings remain to be addressed.

There are many complaints that the Commission, in an effort to be a peace broker, has avoided pointing the finger of blame. At the first Mooi River sitting following the December 1991 massacre, Goldstone appeared to prioritise appeasement over investigation. The result was that he initiated a local dispute resolution committee which met only once and then fell apart. And his findings did not lead to any convictions.

"The Commission seemed only interested in generating peace settlements, and seemed not to want to offend people," says Kwazulu government urban representative Philip Powell, who acted on behalf of the Inkatha-supporting hostel dwellers and residents in Bruntville.

But Varney adds: "It is not the task of the Commission to appease all parties ... it is to investigate the violence, and if this means pointing fingers, stepping on toes and upsetting some of the parties — then the Commission should do so boldly and fearlessly. If the Commission is not going to do it, then nobody else is."

The Commission's reluctance to delve into the past and uncover structural roots and individual perpetrators of violence has also been criticised.

After the preliminary hearings last May into violence in Empangeni, Imbali,

and parts of Umlazi (each lasting only a half day), the Commission decided not to hold further inquiries there. Explaining this, it stated: "Inquiries into past violence would also exacerbate tensions and anger in the areas in question and would therefore in no way serve to curb violence and intimidation."

But, if this was the feeling of the violence-torn communities, why had they instructed lawyers to present their case?

Witnesses will only continue to come forward if they believe the Commission will produce recommendations that can cure their problems, believes Fink Haysom of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at Wits University. "It's a cost-benefit approach, measured in terms of life and death."

The Commission has also drawn flak for making broad recommendations of reform, with critics accusing it of exceeding its mandate.

"The actual transformation of the police and prison services and the justice department is not the business of the Goldstone Commission," says Nadel's



PIC: DUFF DU TOIT (STAR)





On the road: A familiar scene of white 'experts' breezing through gutted townships

Krish Govender. "The Commission has no right to usurp the functions that belong to an interim government."

Not all agree. Haysom sees a need to identify specific structural causes of the violence so that they can be addressed in the short term. Citing the inquiry into train massacres, he says: "It was better to look at certain factors that enabled the violence to continue, and then to make specific recommendations, such as improving train security."

Powell adds that, although the Mooi River inquiry needed to look further into the "root causes", it also should have made specific recommendations, such as improving the security of the hostel.

But the Commission still faces an elementary hurdle. Though it has the support of the main political players, there is a risk that this support could be withdrawn once culpability and blame is uncovered.

Interviewed before Goldstone announced his new proposals, the attorney-general for the Witwatersrand, advocate Klaus von Liers und Wilkau, stressed the danger that politicians might try to discredit the system in order to achieve hidden agendas. "The opinion-formers play a key role in either destroying or advancing the course of law," he said. "When the ANC issues statements to the press telling people not to come forward with evidence, then obviously the law cannot carry out its task."

"We need to elevate the law to its rightful position in society as an ordering mechanism," Von Liers und Wilkau added. "To tell the community not to cooperate with the law is a way of destroy-

ing the fabric of society, and ensuring a climate for an easy takeover." He insists that the distrust in the police is an "intangible perception" that is "coupled to police ability in political cases only".

Underlying the structural criticisms of the Commission is a more human element. A few examples: the disregard of the commissioner for a Zulu translator's needs at the Bruntville hearings, the processions of luxury BMW cars awkwardly weaving amidst the gutted homes and filthy hostel in Bruntville township.

The scenes are all too familiar — white men breezing in and making major decisions on behalf of the majority. An investigative task force of senior, respected police officers and legal professionals is unlikely to dramatically change



that profile. While the newcomers may have demonstrated their political neutrality and commitment to the truth, their judgement is likely to remain coloured by their life experiences as an isolated and elite group in a divided country.

The planned task force will give an investigative boost to the entire NPA, but the continuous delays in setting up other key structures could still impede its effectiveness.

In fact, many NPA structures — particularly those dealing with police accountability and speedy conflict resolution — are still not in place. They include:

- the special criminal courts, designed to quicken the prosecution and sentencing process;
- police reporting officers, meant to be a specific channel for addressing claims of police misconduct and bias;
- local justices of the peace.

The recent session of Parliament passed a law providing for the appointment of these local justices. They will attempt to resolve problems of local unrest through negotiation and, failing that, by issuing an order forbidding specific conduct. They will have full investigative powers, but will only be able to issue fines, leaving stronger punishment measures to the court system.

If such structures and the planned investigative task force are promptly and effectively set up, the NPA has a good chance delivering on the hopes it raised. These structures will complement the Commission and lighten its enormous workload.

On the eve of the NPA's first birthday, it is clear that the Goldstone Commission is on the brink of a critical test of its credibility. If it sticks to its attempts to push reform through state structures without buttressing those with a monitoring ability, its legitimacy as a fair and independent body might suffer badly.

If, as its latest proposals suggest, it takes steps to ensure its independence from the state and accountability to its own findings, it could emerge stronger for the challenges ahead.

The resources are available. The skills are there to be tapped. The need for an end to the violence is overwhelming. What is missing is the will to steer a bold course that can guarantee justice. □



TWO LANDS, ONE SKY

Strongmen, big hats, eccentric traffic cops ... ever wondered what, aside from half their names, the Ciskei and Transkei have in common?

QUESTION	TRANSKEI	CISKEI
NATIONAL ANTHEM	Nkosi Sikelel' IAfrika	Nkosi Sikelel' IAfrika
RULED BY	Military government	Military government
DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL	Yes. Transkei Public Safety Act (1977). 5 people detained in 1992, none currently. Total 7 in 1991	Yes. National Security Act (1982). 32 people detained in 1992, none currently. Total 702 in 1991
DEATH PENALTY	Yes. Under review. Moratorium since 1989	No. Abolished during "Bisho Spring" shortly after Gqozo took power
MOST RECENT DEATH IN DETENTION	25/9/90. Enock Tsoene. Found dead in cell	12/9/91. Thandile Mtya. Reportedly hanged himself. Evidence of torture
POLITICAL PRISONERS	Forty accused in current trial	Fifty-five accused in current trial
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS	SA only	SA and Taiwan
LARGEST FOREIGN INVESTOR	Germany	Taiwan
LAST TIME ARMY USED AGAINST WORKERS WAS ...	20/12/91, to uphold court interdict ordering striking workers to stay clear of an Umtata store	19/9/92, against striking clothing workers in Fort Jackson near Mdantsane
MILITARY TRAINING BY	Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, India	Won't say
ANNUAL GRANTS FROM SA	R1,904,500,000 or R550 for each person	R950,650,000 or R1,120 for each person
AT CODESA DELEGATION HANGS OUT WITH ...	ANC, SACP, NIC, TIC, Venda, Lebowa, KwaNdebele, Kangwane	NP, IFP, Bophutswana, Labour party SA, Solidarity
NEAREST SA MILITARY BASE	Komga, 17 km from border	Stutterheim, 37 km from border
DURING THE MASS ACTION CAMPAIGN, THE ARMY ...	"Assisted with monitoring it." Holomisa thanked organisers of mass action in Transkei and security forces for cooperating	Took to the streets, heavily armed, broke up rallies and stopped march
CIVILIAN GOVT WHEN ...	Gets rid of state corruption in Transkei	Satisfied with constitutional principles of democratic SA
ACCESS TO LEADER IS ...	Easy. Appointments not needed. Holomisa has listed phone number, call day or night	Tough. Appointments required, and often refused. No contact by telephone
NUMBER OF ANC BRANCHES	177	165
LEADER SUPPORTS UNDIVIDED SA?	Yes	No, will not enter unitary state
NP ALLY IN ELECTION?	No	Yes
LIKELY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADER	Leader in future SA army or politician. Says he does not want to be a politician, but has mass support in Transkei	Leader of the African Democratic Movement. Says he will be "angry" if not elected when civilian government arrives
LAST TIME CALLED IN SA SECURITY "ASSISTANCE"	Not yet	8 September 1992, after Bisho massacre
LEADER'S VEHICLE	Mercedes Benz (official) BMW(personal)	Jaguar and Mercedes Benz (official) Bulletproof Range Rover and Mercedes Benz (personal)
LEADER LIVES IN ...	Suburban house, Fort Gale	Fortified mansion with armed guards, on Bisho outskirts
AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME OF CITIZEN	R128	R83



RED TAPE TRIPS UP RIGHT TO STRIKE

*Court interdicts threaten to replace negotiations as a means of settling strikes, warns **KERRY CULLINAN** in the wake of the recent judgement against the National Union of Metalworkers of SA*

THE RECENT COURT INTERDICT outlawing the strike by some 90,000 National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members on the basis of ballot irregularities has simply put a lid on a still boiling dispute.

Numsa's national organising secretary, Bernie Fanaroff, says metalworkers are "still very militant and there was a very strong feeling that the interdict should be defied".

"If it had been the interdict alone, workers would have defied. But the problem was the 200 ultimatums we had received from companies threatening dismissals.

"Already 71 companies have dismissed about 3,000 workers. It is extremely difficult to campaign against many different companies. The industrial court is also slow and unpredictable as a grasshopper, so it is difficult to use it to win reinstatements."

When Numsa members decided to return to work, they made it clear that this did not mean they accepted the 8,6 percent increase offered by the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA (Seifsa). Numsa is still demanding a 16 percent increase and a moratorium on retrenchments. At the time of going to press,

talks between Numsa and Seifsa were restarting.

The strike started as a triumph for Numsa. It was the first time that workers in all sectors organised by Numsa struck simultaneously, with tyre, rubber and auto workers joining metal and engineering workers for the first ten days of the four-week strike.

But the strike was ended by a judgement that casts doubt on the union's organisational capacity. Particular weaknesses identified by Seifsa and the court were that the union does not have a proper list of members and that some factories were not properly balloted.

Seifsa director Brian Angus says employers resorted to the courts after Numsa had "failed to address the various balloting irregularities brought to its attention by Seifsa and also refused to provide Seifsa with details of the outcome of the strike ballot".

Ironically, Seifsa's first interdict attempt — mere days after the strike began on August 3 — was dismissed on technical grounds that threaten to undermine the principle of centralised bargaining. Judge Joffe found in the Rand Supreme Court that Seifsa could not bring a court action because the federation was not a

direct employer.

On August 25, Seifsa won its appeal and the strike was declared illegal. The court found that Numsa was "unable to show how many members it had in the industry or that the majority of its members supported strike action", says Angus.

Fanaroff admits that there were weaknesses in the way the strike was run, but says that these did not warrant calling off the strike. Seifsa, he says, used technicalities to frustrate a democratic decision.

"You cannot expect shop stewards to run faultless ballots at hundreds of factories," Fanaroff explains. "We have held numerous workshops about balloting with our shop stewards, and we believe the mistakes were minimal."

The court also found that the balloting was not always secret. Fanaroff counters that government surveys have shown about 70 percent of the workforce to be illiterate, so "it is understandable that people should ask for help".

He adds that it is "not remotely possible" to provide locked steel ballot boxes at thousands of factories around the country to replace the sealed cardboard boxes which the court objected to.

Accurate membership figures remain a problem in the union movement, though Cosatu has initiated a project to overcome this weakness.

Numsa, admits Fanaroff, has been unable to get accurate figures from its locals "and this is a weakness". But, he says, locals have been confused by companies who pay stop orders through their head office one month, and pay them individually the next month.

Seifsa accused Numsa of decreasing its membership figures to show that a majority supported a strike. According

to Fanaroff, the union's figure of 233,000 paid-up members was calculated by the international auditing company, Arthur Andersen.

Some Numsa officials have accused Seifsa of seeing the strike as an opportunity to crush Numsa and restructure the industry through mass dismissals, as the chamber of mines did during the 1987 mineworkers' strike. Anglo-American subsidiaries seemed to take a particularly hard line on the strike. In Fanaroff's opinion "there is no question that Anglo drove Seifsa's strategy, trying to smash the strike with mass dismissals".

Anglo's Boart Hard Metals was the first to dismiss workers. Anglo's Scaw Metals then threatened dismissals even before the court ruling, saying that the strike was "non-functional to centralised bargaining". When Numsa asked Seifsa what the term meant, it could not explain, says Fanaroff. A few days later

Seifsa sent a letter to its members urging them to take whatever action they saw fit to end the strike.

Employers were more united during this strike than in the 1988 metal strike. Seifsa's Angus explains that this unity was influenced by two things: the recession and a recent court ruling. "The fact that only a few companies reached their own agreements was partly influenced by the economic climate, as many companies cannot afford to improve on the national position," he says.

"The recent Ergo judgement also had an impact. The court ruled that Ergo had no right to bypass the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and make workers a direct offer. As a result, many metal employers were cautious about making separate offers to their workers."

Angus adds that dismissals were to be expected from the strike, as the industry was

already suffering from the recession and the strike had had a massive effect on production. Lost production is estimated to have cost the industry R750 million.

Numsa's leadership has also been accused of tailoring its strike action to coincide with the ANC-SACP-Cosatu general strike. Both actions started on August 3, but Fanaroff says this was not Numsa's initial plan.

"There was pressure from our members to ballot and declare a strike as soon as possible," he explains. But a task that should have taken two weeks was held up by violence. Nine Numsa shop stewards were killed in the PWV during balloting.

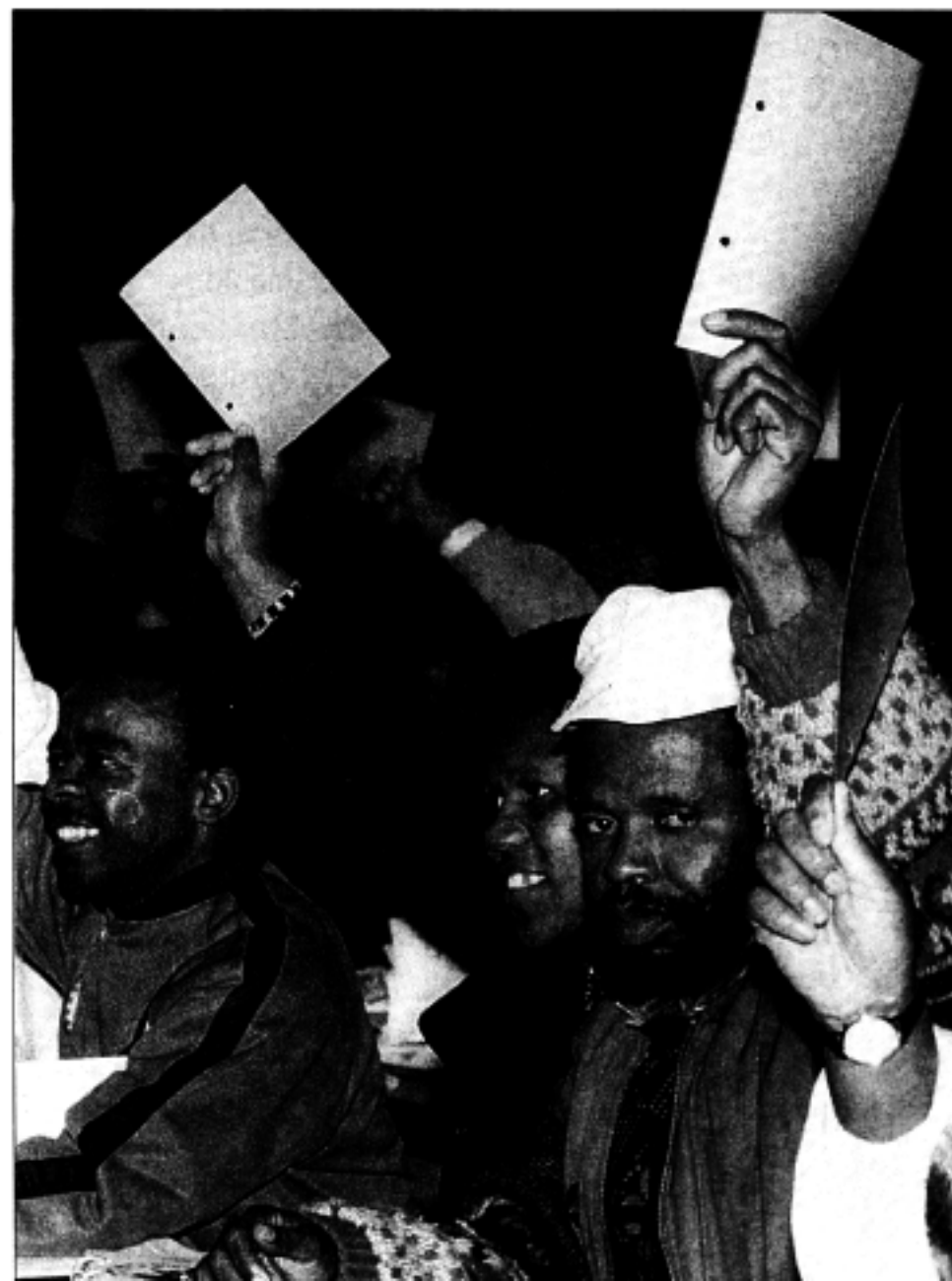
Eventually balloting ended on July 28. The union's strike committee initially wanted to call the strike before mass action, but then decided that, to avoid confusion, the strike would coincide with the national strike.

Fanaroff believes that the court's decision to declare Numsa's strike illegal is a severe blow against the right to strike. As the recession squeezes more companies, there could be a flood of applications for interdicts to stop strikes. The courts could then become the battleground for labour disputes, instead of allowing disputes to be won or lost on the factory floor.

But employers might want to recall the period after the Labour Relations Act was amended to favour them. Unions claimed then that the new laws prevented them from representing their members properly, and wildcat strikes swept across the country.

Proper strike rules are vital, but as a means to regulate labour disputes — not to frustrate workers' basic right to strike. □

Numsa rules, OK?: But the courts blocked one of the largest strikes in SA history





LESSER EVILS?

Few observers expect Angola's elections to be free and fair. But, reports **CAROLE BOUCHER**, even fewer are willing to predict the outcome of the vote



On the line: Can José Eduardo dos Santos' MPLA show its mettle on election day?

INDPENDENT OBSERVERS ARE SCEPTICAL about the prospects for genuinely free and fair elections when Angolans go to the polls September 29 - 30.

More than a year after the historic peace accord was signed between Angola's MPLA government and Unita rebels, violence and chaos prevails. The situation is made worse by Angola's lack of resources to run the election process properly and the fact that long-promised international aid has hardly materialised.

Well-financed and with strong infrastructures, the ruling MPLA party and Unita are the only forces capable of really contesting the election. But, the MPLA is vulnerable because of its bad track record in power. The disastrous economic situation, corruption in the public service, and a general atmosphere of gloom within the MPLA might not recommend it to wavering voters.

Jonas Savimbi's wait-and-see approach seems to have paid off. He has survived the accusations of human rights violations made by Unita dissidents and some international human rights groups.

These have hurt him but mostly outside Angola. Inside the country, sympathies still seem to run along regional and ethnic lines. Savimbi is popular among the Ovimbundus, and Unita dissidents have given up trying to dent that support base.

Concerned that Unita might not accept an election defeat, the MPLA shortly before the vote committed itself to forming a coalition government with Savimbi's rebels.

Despite the obvious differences, the two main contenders have similar plans for the economy: withdrawal of the state from the economy, privatisation of state enterprises, reduction of the public service, luring foreign investments.

And both sides are directing their efforts towards winning a vague silent majority that is fed up with both forces, but which, in the end, will have to opt for the lesser of two evils ...

A year ago, independent organisations were vibrant and hopeful. The Alliance that took shape around the Associao Civica Angolana (ACA) brought together various brands of MPLA dissidents who had challenged the MPLA one-party state in the mid-1970s. After much rambling, however, ACA failed to give birth to a coherent political force.

That failure was caused by the absence of a coherent and legitimate leadership and the weakness of civil society. Community groups, trade unions and popular associations had been destroyed whenever they attempted to break free from the MPLA or Unita.

Lean on me: Will Jonas Savimbi's Unita accept the election results?

The anything-but-Savimbi option will probably turn a layer of voters towards the MPLA, especially in the urban areas. The middle classes are afraid of Savimbi because of traditional inconsistencies in Unita's policies. Unita can count on support in the rural south where it seems strongly entrenched, thanks to established structures and a relatively good network of services it provided outside the government-controlled zones.

Meanwhile, the fundamental issues of reconstruction are not being addressed. None of the contenders has produced a detailed programme to rebuild a country virtually destroyed by war. Hyper-inflation (175 percent in 1991), swelling state deficits and debts, and the decline of all productive sectors combine to produce a wasteland. The country could easily fall apart, especially if the secessionist forces in Cabinda succeed in liberating that oil-rich province which provides Angola with just about the only hard currency revenues it is getting nowadays.

The new government will inherit a disastrous situation and will face an even more complicated task when it negotiates with Angolas creditors. The IMF and World Bank insist that Luanda step up its programme of structural adjustment (started in 1989) and return the country to the prosperity of the old times. When white settlers were rich and happy, transnational corporations were increasing their profits, and blacks were working in semi-slave conditions. Back then, everything was in order ... □

Carole Boucher is a researcher with CIDMAA in Montreal.





THE LONG MARCH

With the grizzly exception of Peru, revolutionary movements are in crisis everywhere. But beware despair and nostalgia, argues ROGER BURBACH, as he traces the outlines of a new revolutionary project

THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS of the Third World are in crisis. It began as the Communist system started to unravel in the second world. But it cannot simply be ascribed to the fall of the Soviet patron or the drying up of Soviet assistance.

The fundamental problem of the national liberation movements was that they, like the communist parties, had become inherently undemocratic. The three major tenets that drove them were:

- a vanguard party or democratic centralist organisation was to lead the liberation struggle;
- armed struggle was virtually the only road to power;
- once in power, the way to change society and run the economy was by using 'the commanding heights' of the state apparatus.

The Central American experience in

the 1980s aptly demonstrates the shortcomings and exhaustion of the 'actually existing' national liberation movements. In 1981 it appeared that revolutionary movements were ascendent in the region. The Sandinista movement had taken power in Nicaragua, the popular struggle was growing in intensity in El Salvador, the guerrillas in Guatemala were stronger than they had been in a decade and a half, and, in Honduras, guerrilla movements were making their first real impact on the national political scene.

Left moribund

A decade later (depending on which country one looks at) the national liberation movements are moribund, in a state of disarray, or at best on the defensive. In Honduras the guerrilla movement has been wiped out. In Nicaragua, the Sandinista Front was voted out of power. In

Guatemala, the guerrillas have been reduced to rural-based groups with little impact on national politics. And in El Salvador, the FMLN, although it has not been dealt any strategic blows, is hardly on the brink of taking power as it lays down its arms and incorporates itself into the country's civilian political life. None of these setbacks or defeats can be blamed on the curtailment of Soviet bloc assistance. The Sandinista Front relied on external assistance for its survival, but the electoral debacle occurred when aid from the Communist countries was as high as ever.

The problems of the national liberation movements in Central America are rooted in the fact that they have lost touch with the popular classes on behalf of which they are supposedly making the revolution. The vanguard organisations in all of these countries in effect became highly centralised politico-military organisations whose primary functions were to conduct armed struggle against US imperialism and its allies in the region. By focussing on armed conflict and violence, they in effect became voluntaristic, that is, they came to swallow their own rhetoric that the masses would support a long drawn-out struggle for 'national liberation'. But they were wrong. The bulk of the population — particularly in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua — grew tired of war and violence. They wanted peace and they turned away from the national liberation movements as the decade wore on.

Confronting imperialism

One can argue that this crisis is mainly the doing of imperialist intervention. That is partly true, but one has to recognise that from its inception, the theory and practice of national liberation wars was rooted in the very idea of a confrontation with imperialism.

In Central America the national liberation movements became rigid and locked into old political formulas. Along with a commitment to armed struggle, they, for example, also continued to view the worker-peasant alliance as central to the liberation struggle. That formula may

have been effective in earlier decades, but it no longer worked in the 1980s. Society had become far more complex, even in the most undeveloped Third World societies. Professional associations, religious sects and groups, community organisations, women's movements, cultural and ethnic groups — these and many others were part of the blossoming of civil society that have occurred in recent years.

Imperialism managed to adjust to these new realities because it operates in a more decentralised manner, allowing a variety of groups and organisations to work under its banner without being formally tied to it. Fundamentalist missionaries, non-governmental organisations, private business associations, non-profit foundations and others have all facilitated the development of pro-capitalist societies without being directly under the control of imperialist governments. The vanguard parties, on the other hand, with their politico-military orientation and their top-down structures, were simply incapable of incorporating or responding to the new developments in civil society. They tried to adjust by setting up new fronts or popular organisations, but it proved impossible to use this approach when a bewildering array of new organisations and movements with highly diverse goals and interests was emerging at the grassroots level.

But the wreckage of the communist and national liberation movements offers us new principles or premises for building a new socialist movement in the first, second and third worlds.

Democratic project

First — and most obvious — is the need for the left to commit itself to a fundamentally democratic project. A vanguard, or democratic centralist organisation, cannot lead us there. New types of political formations must be created. A multi-current party, like the Workers Party of Brazil (PT) for example, has the capacity to move in a democratic direction because it contains an array of progressive currents that debate and discuss a variety of issues in an open and democratic manner.

Secondly, socialists have to respond to civil society and the new social movements. Socialism cannot be built by sim-



Managua, 1979: Yesterday's triumphant hopes are yielding to a radical rethink

ply targeting the working class, as Marx and Engels argued generations ago. Nor is it sufficient to argue for a 'worker-peasant alliance', as in Latin America. Society has changed dramatically. The peasantry is shrinking globally, and the manufacturing or industrial working class now constitutes a minority of the employed population in most countries. Even if one defines the working class broadly to include all 'working people', one has to recognise that people today are often not mobilisable around strictly workplace issues, but around broader social issues. Sexism and racism — two of the principal forms of exploitation that people confront today — have to be fought against on a broad societal level, not simply within the workplace. The same is true of environmental issues.

Whether or not some of the vanguard parties can adjust to these changes is an open question. The Sandinista Front is allowing the mass organisations to play a more autonomous role, but at the same time the leadership of the national directorate remains entrenched, viewing as its main objective the retaking of formal political power. The FMLN in El Salvador may be one of the national liberation movements with the greatest potential to change. It is intent on competing with the

other political forces in an open democratic system. But its biggest challenge will be whether it can move beyond mere political activity, to become a force fomenting the process of change in the social and cultural spheres as well. People in El Salvador and other Third World countries are tired of politics as usual. They will, however, respond to movements that deal with broader societal issues and that relate to interests and needs in their daily lives.

Setting priorities

A third principle is that the command economy has to be buried once and for all as an historic failure. Marx himself never argued for a command economy. He did talk rather vaguely of a socialist economy comprised of "associate producers". That is the key to a new economic order. It may be possible to build an economy comprising cooperatives, state enterprises, municipally controlled companies, worker-run factories, and private enterprises. The state simply cannot run and control everything, although it can set priorities based on the interests and needs of society at large. Individual initiative, especially at the level of small scale enterprises, will have to be permitted as long as it does not move in directions that violate the com-

mon good.

With the definitive end of the old East-West world order, many now argue that the primary conflict is North-South. But this is an oversimplification. There is now a growing interplay of social and economic forces between the first, second and third worlds which is breaking down the North-South framework. Capitalism has penetrated every major area of the world, creating a truly global system.

Capital's ability to move on a global scale, seeking out the cheapest resources, explains in part why the US today is developing some of the characteristics of a Third World society. Growing homelessness, the deterioration of the medical and educational systems, the growth of poverty, the decline of basic industry, and the absolute decline in workers' wages — these are all signs of decapitalisation and decomposition as capital seeks out better opportunities in other parts of the globe.

Interlinked world

With the collapse of communism, it is now difficult to contest the thesis that there is a 'one world system'. The world is increasingly interlinked socially as well as economically. The social movements, which revolutionised politics in much of the Western world in the late 1960s and

early 1970s, have also taken root in much of the Third World and are now spreading into the Second World as civil society begins to develop with the collapse of the authoritarian systems that repressed or controlled most grassroots movements.

Capitalism, with its global expansion, has by no means succeeded in stabilising the world. Wherever one looks, one sees swelling discontent and social conflict. Where the system is most vulnerable and weak the masses explode. This explains the upheavals rocking large parts of Africa. It also explains the food riots in Latin American countries like Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

By internationalising economies, societies, and communications, capitalism has unintentionally generated a growing international popular awareness in which people are conscious of their common rights, needs and interests. One sees squatter movements in Western Europe as well as in Latin America. Blacks around the world in diverse societies have mobilised in recent decades to end discrimination. Women are fighting against the particular forms of sexism they encounter in their societies.

Capital, through its internationalisation, may be effectively digging its own grave, although in a manner substantially

different from that envisioned by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. This time democracy and democratic movements, rather than vanguard political formations or elitist political parties, may be able to build an entirely new world. For the immediate future this struggle will be carried out on a horizontal level, not by trying to grab state power. Changes in values and beliefs are occurring at the grassroots level even though progressive forces do not exercise formal political control. The capitalist world order is gradually, but steadily, being undermined from below.

For now, it is best to let the capitalists and their political allies dominate the commanding heights of the economy and the state. They, like the old communists, are becoming gridlocked at the top and find themselves increasingly entrapped by growing social and economic problems as new social forces mobilise from below. □

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War of Position:
*Encircling the state
with interlinking social
movements*



REMEMBERING FIRST

Whether as writer, journalist or activist, Ruth First displayed legendary courage and honesty. Ten years ago, on August 17, she was killed by a South African parcel bomb in Maputo. PALLO JORDAN, who was injured in that blast, pays tribute to First and the qualities she embodied

WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT, THE murder of Comrade Ruth First can now be seen as among the first shots in the dirty war Pretoria is waging to maintain the bastions of white power in this country.

There had been earlier indications that this was the direction in which our country was moving.

In 1973, there had been the parcel bombs that killed Abraham Tiro and John Dube in Botswana and Zambia, respectively. There had then been the assassination of Dr Richard Turner in Natal.

The employment of murder as an instrument of state policy is nothing new in the annals of humanity. Dictatorships and authoritarian regimes have used it since time immemorial. However, there can be no denying that it became institutionalised in this country during the days of the 'Total Strategy'. It is obvious, too, that despite the image that De Klerk has been able to project, the racist state still wields this weapon against its opponents.

The thousands of lives that have been lost since De Klerk succeeded P W Botha are the grisly results of a highly refined counter-insurgency project that combines structural reforms



and repression delegated to junior partners and surrogates.

It is at moments like these that our movement feels the full weight of the blow struck against us in the assassination of Ruth First. Her incisive, analytical mind would be of immense value in uncovering and understanding the basis of the crisis our country faces. Cde Ruth First was outstanding because she had taken to heart Karl Marx's eleventh Theses of Feuerbach:

"Philosophers have described the world in different ways, the point however is to change it!"

As a militant democrat and as a communist, Ruth First from an early age threw herself body and soul into the national liberation struggle. She became one of the foremost campaigners for the independence of Namibia both here at home and during her years in exile. As an internationalist, she was also deeply involved in the struggle for liberation in other African countries, especially former Portuguese colonies such as Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau. These were the qualities that made her so formidable an opponent of the regime.

It has become a favourite past-time of small-minded, grey

Memories: Ruth First with Yusuf Cachalia, Walter and Albertina Sisulu on Human Rights Day, 1952



souls — including those from the offices of our leading newspapers — to mock and jeer at the sort of revolutionary commitment Cde Ruth First possessed in great abundance.

Despite the terrible reverses, disappointments and broken promises that have been associated with the name of socialism during this century, she never wavered in her commitment to socialism as an honourable cause and as a realisable goal. To her credit, hers was a commitment not rooted in a complacent and blind acceptance of everything that came from Moscow as gospel; that pretended that all was truth and light in East Berlin; or that everything that came from Beijing was immersed in incense.

Hers was a truly revolutionary commitment, in that her solidarity with the socialist countries was always critical. Like Marx, from whom she drew her inspiration, she firmly stuck to his favourite adage: "Doubt and question everything."

In a world where people were inevitably compelled to take sides, that was an extremely difficult posture to assume. It required immense courage to give support to the countries of the socialist world while recognising that theirs was a socialism which was deeply flawed. It was a rare toughness of mind and integrity that enabled her to keep faith with the aspirations, hopes and dreams embodied in socialism while contending with the reality that 'actually existing socialism' had ceased to inspire anyone.

On either side of that great geo-political divide, the Cold War years did not permit such subtle distinctions. Critical Marxists, like Ruth First, often had to suffer the scorn of both sides. They refused to conceal and lie about the crimes and horrors of Stalinism, but they adamantly refused to embrace the even more bloody system of late monopoly capitalism, and its derivative, imperialism. She opposed the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia with the same vigour with which she denounced the US war on the people of Vietnam. While she could never be an apologist for the absurd policies pursued by Gomulka and Gierak in Poland, she lent her solidarity to the British labour movement facing the onslaught of Thatcherism.

There are those who choose to stand above the fray, keeping their hands unsoiled by the muck and mire of real struggle, who then pronounce loftily on our partisanship for socialism. Ruth First was often at the receiving end of such barbs as well. Perhaps there is no way one could possibly satisfy such critics except to recall the response of that great German dramatist and playwright, Bertolt Brecht, when challenged about his decision to return to what was then the German Democratic Republic of Walter Ulbricht:



PIC: MAYIBUYE CENTRE

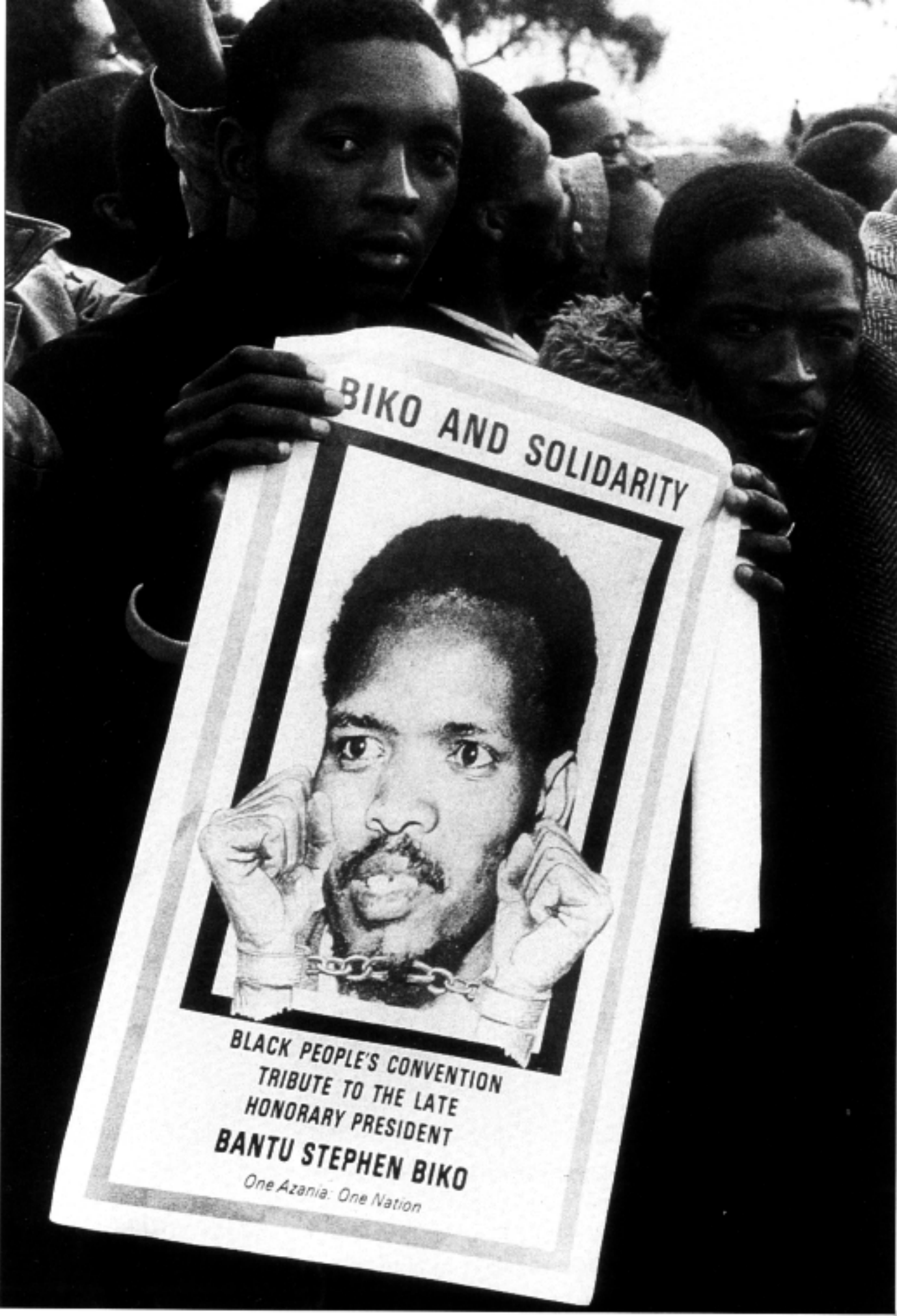
Fearless: Like Karl Marx, First firmly stuck to the adage "Doubt and question everything"

"Morally there might not be much to choose between the old, decrepit whore of western capitalism, and the young whore of deformed socialism, except that with the latter there is at least the possibility of conception."

I cannot say that this was the view held by Ruth First, but I do know that she would have been the first to acknowledge and proclaim the indispensable role that the material, moral and military assistance from the former socialist countries played in the liberation struggles on our continent, not least in South Africa itself. The victories of the liberation movements in southern Africa owe little to London, Bonn or Washington. They do, however, owe a great debt to Moscow, Havana and Beijing.

The life and work of this remarkable woman, I am certain, will continue to be an inspiration to revolutionaries on our sub-continent for decades to come. In my personal view, she personified all the qualities that make for a dedicated, revolutionary socialist. □

Excerpted from a tribute to Ruth First presented at a special colloquium held in her honour at the University of Western Cape. The opinions expressed here represent the personal views of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the ANC.



debate



BACK TO BASICS

Some blacks do the talking in non-racial structures, but you can tell whites are still doing the thinking, writes Azapo's GOMOLEMO MOKAE. He argues that Black Consciousness remains an essential key to liberation

THE FREUDIAN SLIP THE ANC'S JOE Slovo committed on a Radio 702 talk show some months back should have convinced all doubting Thomases that Black Consciousness (BC) is as relevant as ever.

Speaking about the "apocalyptic" vision of blacks attacking their white oppressors on a massive scale, Slovo conceded that it could be expected since whites are the "embodiment" of oppression. However, he reassured listeners, the fact that this has not happened, "is indicative of the ANC's grip on the masses" with its policy of "non-racialism".

It is a grip that is obviously tight enough to prevent blacks from attacking whites, but too loose to prevent them from destroying one another in the ghastly internecine violence which has claimed more than 11,000 black lives since 1984!

Much has been written about blacks' so-called unlimited capacity to forgive, which commentators often mistake for *botho/ubuntu* — humanism. But how does one explain this black 'civility' (which often degenerates into servility) towards whites, when some blacks have been known to visit wanton murder and mayhem upon fellow blacks?

The only logical explanation, we think, is a lack of Black Consciousness in a black who resorts to such barbarism against other blacks, but who has a million reasons why that anger is not directed against whites. We have heard countless arguments about not hitting "soft targets" among whites from blacks who condone black SA's ghastly contribution to human civilisation, the necklace.

No wonder Bishop Stanley Mogoba, then out-going president of the South African Institute of Race Relations, called for a "return to BC" in a speech in 1991: "I can vouch for positive nationalism and BC because I have seen it work. I have seen individuals and whole communities undergoing a metamorphosis because they have subscribed to, and practised BC.

"It is difficult for people who have been thus changed to be manipulated by others for selfish ends, or to resort to the primitive practice of violence ... People must be taught to think for themselves and not be steam-rolled by mass thinking and mass hysteria."

The violence is a gory argument for BC. But at an intellectual level, too, the

This debate about the relevance of Black Consciousness commemorates the 15th anniversary of the murder of Steve Biko

need for BC is obvious.

One of the ANC's heavyweight white thinkers, Albie Sachs, has been sincere enough to own up to this white liberal 'baby-sitting' of the black liberation struggle. He conceded that white members of the ANC, given their miniscule number within the movement, indeed did command inordinate intellectual power.

At about the same time as Slovo's Freudian slip, a former BC exponent who has developed a love for white liberals, Themba Sono, tried to disparage BC in the *Sunday Star*. Exploiting his former status as one of the presidents of the South African Students' Organisation, Sono conveniently avoided to mention that he had been kicked from the presidency of a BC formation (before Curtis Nkondo, even) for developing a partiality to white tutelage of the black struggle.

Nonetheless, he shot himself in the foot by arguing that BC was an effete force, and revealed that white liberals have clawed their way to positions of clout within the ANC, and are now subtly calling the shots.

That was precisely why Steve Bantu Biko, Mthuli Ka-Shezi, Muntu Ka-Myeza, Onkgopotse Ramothibi Tiro and others, left the white liberal-dominated National Union of South African Students to be on their own, and why they inspired the BC battle-cry of "Black man, you are on your own!".

And yet today, white liberals within the Charterist movement are still content with doing the "tink-tink" while blacks do the *toyitoyi!* In the movement, black is brawn, white is brains ...

To wit: Virtually all former white members of the ANC's armed wing, like Carl Niehaus, Marion Sparg and Barbara Hogan are holding important positions within the movement as spokespersons and intellectuals. But, given that these were a minority within the membership of MK, does this not amount to "giving a black body a white head" — the position which BC's founding father, Steve Biko, spoke against? How many black former members of MK are now unemployed, destitute, and in political oblivion?

"Powerlessness breeds a race of beggars who smile at the enemy and swear at him in the sanctity of their toilets; who shout *Baas* willingly during the day and call the white man a dog in their buses as

they go home," wrote Steve Bantu Biko.

Nowadays, of course, some deem themselves 'non-racialists' and no longer shout *Baas* to the white man, but call him 'comrade'. These same people often show marked intolerance towards blacks from rival ideological schools.

Others have for a long time frowned upon armed struggle against the *boers* and declared themselves 'non-violent'. But these days they do not find it odd to take up arms, traditional or otherwise, against other blacks.

These two groups of blacks are among the most vocal critics of BC, claiming that the philosophy is no longer relevant. Some argue against BC and its insistence on black exclusivity, by pointing out a few whites who are 'stalwarts' of the liberation struggle.

THOUGH WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT A FEW NON-conformists from white society did rebel against their society and 'threw in their lot with the oppressed', the struggle is not based on minute exceptions to the rule. Nor is it based on the loyalties of said whites to the black struggle. It is based on the material conditions of the black, oppressed majority.

This is all the more important now, on the 15th anniversary of the killing in detention of BC's founding father, Steve Biko, on 12 September 1977.

It is vital that we review his views on these 'white non-conformists', and see how much the situation has changed since then, if at all.

"The role of the white liberal in the black man's history in SA is a curious one. Very few black organisations were not under white direction. True to their image, the white liberals always knew

what was good for blacks and told them so. The wonder of it all is that the black people have believed them for so long ..." wrote Biko in his essay, 'Black Souls in White Skins?'.
□

On multi-racialism he had this to say: "Nowhere is the arrogance of the liberal ideology demonstrated so well as in their insistence that the problems of the country can only be solved by a bilateral approach involving both black and white. This has, by and large, come to be taken in all seriousness as the *modus operandi* in SA by all who claim they would like to change the *status quo*. Hence the multi-racial political organisations and parties, and the 'non-racial' student organisations, all of which insist on integration not only as an end but also as a means.

"The integration they talk about is first of all artificial in that it is a response to conscious manoeuvre, rather than to the dictates of the inner soul. In other words, people forming the integrated complex have been extracted from various segregated societies with their in-built complexes of superiority and inferiority, and these continue to manifest themselves in the 'non-racial' set-up of the integrated complex. As a result the integration so achieved is a one-way course, with the white doing all the talking and the blacks the listening."

Nowadays, some blacks within these multi-racial integrated organisations do the talking. But when they do talk, you can tell a white person did the thinking.

On the labour front, when the black working class within so-called non-racial trade unions where white 'workers' are a drop in an ocean, 'talks' through its toiling muscles, it is yet again 'whitey' who does the thinking.

Perhaps, in conclusion, the only constructive criticism that can be made of BC is that it has molly-coddled the indian component of the black community. For, in all honesty, the argument about giving a black body a white head applies, to some extent, to indians too. Given that this component has yet to show, across the ideological spectrum of the liberation movements, much passion and willingness to engage in the struggle at grass-roots level, is it not incongruous that they command such considerable power within all sections of the liberation movement?
□



FIGHTING APARTHEID WITH APARTHEID

— *a response to Mokae*

The deep inequalities of race, class and gender will not be solved by blinkered racial thinking, argues
DEVAN PILLAY

GOMOLEMO MOKAE RAISES SOME pertinent issues which cannot be brushed under the carpet. However, in doing so he oversimplifies, and thus distorts, the actual relations that underpin the surface reality. This takes him down the slippery slope to blinkered racial thinking.

Moreover, by questioning the place of those classified 'indian' amongst the leadership of black organisations, Mokae departs from the BC of Steve Biko, who stressed the unity of all the oppressed, and seems to be slipping into an africanist-separatist ideological straight-jacket.

Mokae's argument runs essentially along these lines:

- The most oppressed group in SA is the majority african people. They are also, as a group, most likely to engage in mass struggle against white domination. That struggle should therefore be led by african people.
- Those classified white are part of the problem, and therefore cannot be part of

the solution. Individuals from this group therefore cannot belong to the liberation movement.

● Those classified indian, while also oppressed, have not engaged in mass struggle at a grassroots level. Therefore individuals from this group cannot assume leadership positions in liberation organisations.

In a nutshell: Mokae, in an effort to fight apartheid, returns to the essence of apartheid ideology. He condemns individuals to an apartheid-defined ghetto, no matter what their political ideology or level of commitment to fighting injustice.

According to this reasoning, Jay Naidoo, because he is classified 'indian', must bear responsibility for the relative apathy of indians as a whole, even though he has shaken off the yoke of apartheid

socialisation, and dedicated his life to the cause of workers (of whatever shade).

Why is Jay Naidoo (or Barney Desai or Strini Moodley) responsible for the actions of people he has never met, does not know, and has had no dealings with? Is it merely because they share similar physical features (and maybe similar cultural origins)?

This logic is the flip-side to the apartheid coin that says that your opportunities in life are determined by the 'race' that you 'belong' to. Individual freedom, in both senses, is stripped away, and replaced by the dictates of the group. You are what your ethnic/cultural group says you are.

Mokae recognises that there are a few people who manage to rise above their socialisation, and identify with those outside 'their' group. Then again, so did



Togetherness: Should individuals stick with 'their' group, or should they break down racial barriers?

apartheid, which recognised 'westernised blacks', for example. But like apartheid ideologues, Mokae throws them back into 'their' group.

IT IS SELF-EVIDENT THAT WHITE PEOPLE, AND to a lesser extent indian and coloured people, have as apartheid-designated groups lived better than their african counterparts. In particular, their education systems were better. It is therefore true that individuals coming from these groups will on average be better educated and more skilled than their african counterparts. Their involvement in organisations will therefore naturally propel them forward as leaders, especially since the political discourse is conducted predominantly in English.

Now, there are at least two approaches to this problem.

One is a return to the logic of apartheid — individuals from each population group should belong to organisations of his/her group only. The danger of a disproportionate number of individuals from a minority group dominating the organisations of the majority, therefore, will be eliminated. In addition, the (less skilled) majority will be able to rely on its own resources, and not be dependent on the (more skilled) minority.

Amongst other things, this perspective does not take into account that, by separating those with skills and expertise from those who have little or none in particular fields, the latter will be deprived of the opportunity of learning

from the former.

The alternative is to refuse to succumb to apartheid ideology, and judge individuals by their own worth, while acknowledging the need to redress the imbalances caused by apartheid.

Affirmative action is one method of doing this, but it must be based on proper education and training, and not tokenism. Thus, affirmative action ought to apply only when deciding amongst individuals of roughly equal qualifications. Race alone cannot be a criterion for assessing the suitability of a candidate for a position.

Affirmative action (which should also empower women and the disabled) is necessary, but it must be used with great care and sensitivity. If not applied properly, it can undermine attempts to forge a unified national identity, by deepening communal or racial consciousnesses, as happened in Malaysia (see *WIP* 80).

THE RACIAL CONCENTRATION OF SKILLS IS A socially imposed deformity, and can be corrected over time. It has nothing to do with biology — race and skills happen to converge at this point in our history.

If the race factor were eliminated, organisations would still face the underlying problem of skilled middle class people (mainly men) dominating unskilled working class people (many of whom are women). In the current context this problem is not resolved by the fiction that 'all blacks are workers'. This obscures the real relations of domination and disempowerment that exists in or-

ganisations, and in society at large.

Take the recent history of Cosatu. Mokae laments the fact that 'whitey' does all the thinking in the "so-called non-racial trade unions". What is *really* happening is that (usually university-educated) intellectuals, because of their technical expertise, dominate certain activities of the unions.

This also happens in Nactu unions, where all the officials are black, but with important differences. Black intellectuals may speak the same language as union members, and thus have a better rapport with them; this does not necessarily mean that black leaders are more accountable to the union members they represent.

In fact, it is a massive irony that those very Cosatu unions which have or had a mainly-white intellectual presence, have also gone much further than their Nactu counterparts in developing a worker leadership. Evidence suggests that in many Cosatu unions, workers are able to represent their fellow-workers in negotiations, whereas most Nactu unions are noted for their complete reliance on officials.

It just so happens that since the 1970s, for a variety of reasons (such as their bottom-up socialist ideology), mainly-white intellectuals played a major part, as union leaders, in entrenching the principles of leadership accountability and worker education in the unions that are now part of Cosatu.

It underlines the fact that race in itself does not explain everything. By over-emphasising race as a causal factor, Mokae loses sight of the complexity of the problems he identifies. Simply replacing white (and indian) faces with african ones will not necessarily overcome the imbalances that exist. In fact, in certain instances such knee-jerk responses could deepen the problems.

Finally, it may not be an accident that Mokae's analysis is completely devoid of a class or gender perspective. A simplistic racial analysis has always been the device used by one set of (male) elites fighting to replace another set of (male) elites in seats of power and privilege.

As the post-colonial history of the third world graphically illustrates, where the deeper dimensions of inequality and deprivation are not addressed, the colour of the new regime makes no difference to the poor and dispossessed. In fact, in many instances their lot has worsened.

□



PIC: MAYIBUYE CENTRE

Cut short: Was a tradition of BC buried along with Steve Biko in 1977?

personally



HUGH MASEKELA

Bra' Hugh tunes into the highs and lows of the new South Africa, booze, jazz and childhood



TWO MONTHS AFTER THE SHARPEVILLE massacre of 1960, Hugh Masekela packed his trumpet and left South Africa in pursuit of an overseas education. Little did he know that this hiatus would stretch to 30 years of exile and a career as a world famous jazz musician.

Since his return to South Africa in 1990, Masekela has been as busy as ever: a US tour earlier this year; a show-stopper marking the debut of Sof town, Johannesburg's newest jazz club; and his latest album, "Beating Around the Bush", due for release in October. Masekela also codirects the Centre for Jazz and Popular Music at the University of Natal.

Professor Malema cornered him in Johannesburg ...

Your first thought this morning ?

I was wondering if you were going to show up on time (laughs).

Who cooks and cleans in your home ?

Basically I do my own cooking. I already had my oatmeal. Jungle Oats every morning! My sisters live nearby and they are fantastic cooks. So I go and bum meals there whenever I can.

I have an auntie who comes here a few times a week. I have got a place for her upstairs, she looks after me and cleans and washes my clothes; I live a very simple life.

Any addictions ?

No, I don't drink and I don't smoke. I used to drink when I was young, but I found that the level of competition here at home is very high in as far as drinking is concerned. Drinking is almost like culture in Africa, especially in southern Africa. And it has been one thing that has really done in

our people. All the musicians I learned from in this country are dead from booze.

But I think I am addicted to work more than anything else.

What or whom would you die for ?

My utmost belief is that the African people of this country have been treated very, very badly over the last 300 years, and that they deserve to be introduced to a life that they can live as human beings because they have been treated like dogs. And I would do anything if it comes to defending their rights to live as decent people.

What do you no longer believe in ?

I don't believe that the majority of white people of this country want us to live like human beings. At one time, two years ago, I thought they did.

Your favourite city and why ?

It's a big competition between Durban, Cape Town and the old New York. You know, when I originally left Johannesburg, New York was a great city, but it is no longer. It is a cultural desert and one of the roughest places in the world. If Cape Town wasn't so far, I would live there. It is supposed to be the most liberal city in South Africa, but that is another myth because I don't think that the african people are treated more unfairly anywhere in the country than they are in Cape Town.

If it weren't for the political violence that surrounds Durban, it would be the ideal city. The weather is so fantastic as compared to here. And the people have a great traditional sense. To a certain extent, they are as hospitable and as well-mannered as people in

Botswana, except that the reputation is spoiled by some political organisations that exist down there.

Your favourite musical artist ?

There are too many. The people I admire very greatly are the late Miles Davis and Clifford Brown. Miles Davis especially because he was fearless in life. Besides music, he was an innovator and he did not take any gaff from white people in the US. He was one of the greatest militants. I am also a great admirer of non-musicians, like Nelson Mandela.

One song that gives you goose-flesh ?

Of course, *Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika, Morena boloka sechaba sa heso, Makubenjalo*. Those are my three favourite songs.

What do you think about the term 'New South Africa' ?

It is just an idea because life hasn't changed too much. If anything, it has gotten worse. I'm hoping that some kind of compromise can be reached between the so-called principles and they can reflect what the people are going through. If you look at the people who are involved in the negotiations, their families are not really affected. Across the board, most of the leadership live in safe, urban areas with body guards and they are probably not as affected by the economic slump as their followers.

In consideration for the innocent people who are killed in the trains and all the squatters, they should think more about the country than their personal agendas, sign some agreements and start ushering in some kind of peace.

It was nice when the 'New

South Africa' was declared but that was two years ago. And everybody was excited. But it's not exciting anymore. It's heartbreaking now.

Do you trust De Klerk ?

I don't trust people who are in power to give up power just like that. I don't think it's ever happened in the history of man. If it was up to De Klerk alone, he'd probably be able to change things, but he is part of a powerful team that includes the financial sector, civil service and security and police forces, all of which have always been the home for Afrikaners. You're talking about millions of people who don't want to change.

And why should De Klerk change overnight? Just because he made an announcement doesn't mean he's changed. Of course I don't trust him.

What do you miss about your childhood ?

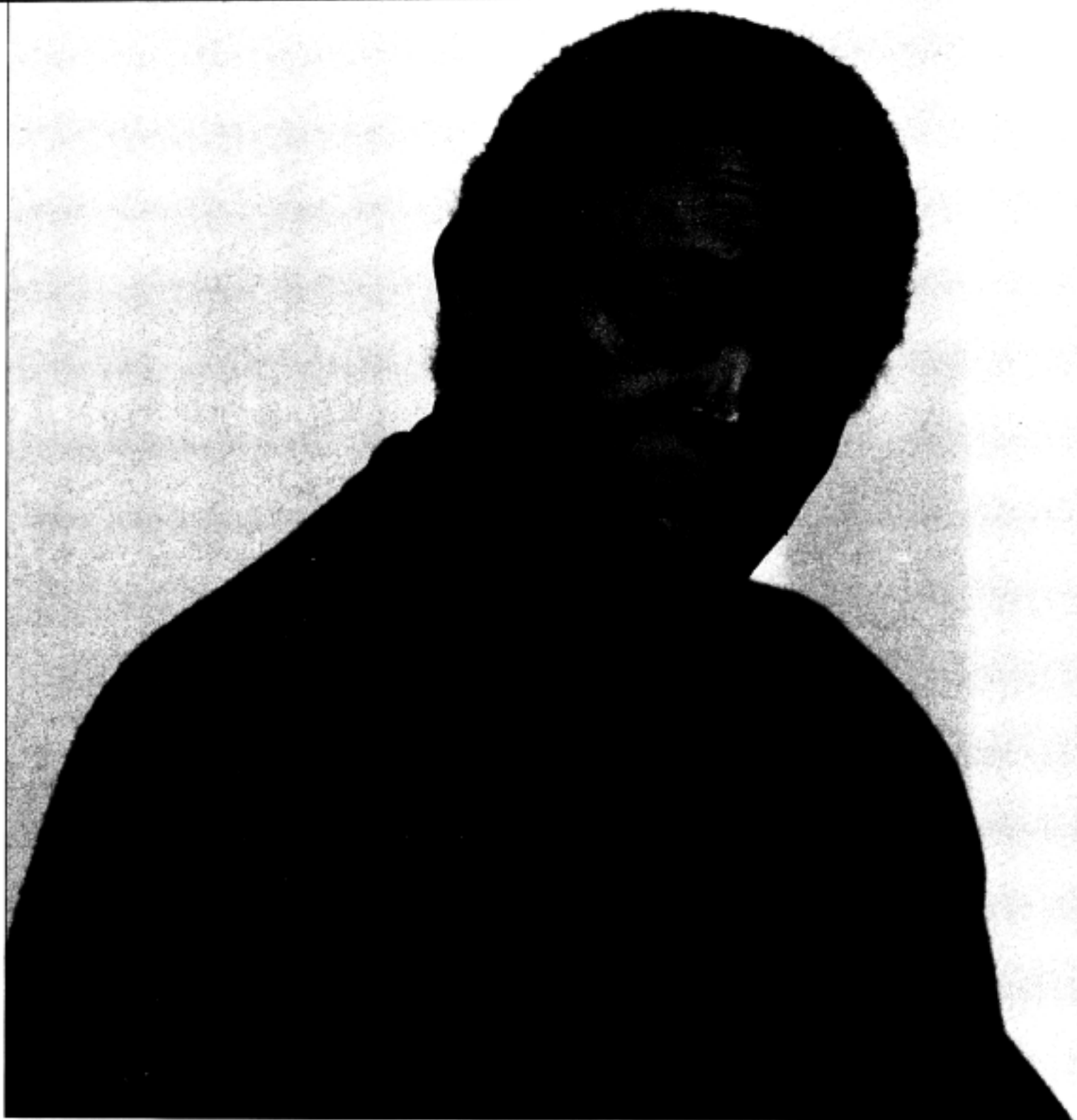
My mother, only because she nurtured us and she was a fantastic cook. She was a very kind, generous and hospitable person. Myself and my sisters were not able to come to bury her in 1978, when she died. And she always wished the best for us, you know, she gave us a wonderful childhood.

What makes you secure ?

The resilience of the people of my country, the strength they have and the sense of humour they can keep in spite of all the odds. That has always kept me going. Every morning when I wake up, I know that I am part of these 32 million people.

Your biggest fear ?

That probably the good life that we aspire for in this country, that we have all fought for, will be fucked up by some



Hugh Masekela: *"Probably the good life we have all fought for will be fucked up by some stupid person who doesn't want us to have it. There's a lot of people who are potentially great candidates for that position in this country"*

stupid person who doesn't want us to have it. There's a lot of people who are potentially great candidates for that position in this country. The intransigence of the super-right wing in this country confirms and feeds my fears that we will never be able to enjoy not only the beauties and the riches of this country but the attributes of the people.

Your thoughts on detention without trial ?

I think it is abominable. Anywhere in the world it is abominable.

Your favourite idiom or expression ?

"Do unto others as they do unto you." You know, you can't beat that one. And that is the one thing that I would like to pass on to De Klerk and all

the right-wing people.

The worst job ?

I don't think there is a worse job than cheap labour, especially in a country like this, when you know that you are generating the wealth for the people who are oppressing you. It must be heart breaking to be a miner or a road worker in this country. Or even to be a domestic worker and raise other people's children who do not appreciate you, and you can't raise your own children.

What animal best characterises you and why ?

It would be presumptuous for me to compare myself with any other animal because they are far more righteous than human beings. Animals are so much purer than people. They don't think of war, they don't

think of attacking other people. They do not colonise.

Your favourite place in Africa ?

South Africa. I also have a very special place in my heart for Botswana because I have spent very fulfilling times there.

What are your most vivid memories in exile ?

Longing for home (laughs).

Supposing you were not a musician, what do you think you would be ?

I wonder because I've been a musician since I was six years old. I think I would be involved in sports. I am too old for sports now, but I think I would be a member of the football situation. And I wouldn't be in jail for stealing

money (laughs). That is the only other interest I had. I was a great football player. My name was "Slow Poison" (*Stadig My Kind*). And I grew up in Alexandra, the capital of soccer in this country.

What makes you feel guilty ?

People who don't have the opportunities and privileges I have. Starving children, children who are homeless and the neglected old-age people. Those are the two elements of humanity that really break my heart.

Who are the young promising jazz artists in this country ?

There are so many. I think this country, next to the United States, is the most gifted country in instrumental and vocal music. I think because we have been isolated we have had nothing to measure ourselves against. And my obsession is to bring attention to the world the great talent that we have in this country.

Is jazz African music?

Well it is, because it originated from the great-great grandchildren of African slaves. I think that America is more known through its music and through its African-American music, which is what attracted me to America more than anything that had to do with Eisenhower, Abraham Lincoln or any of those things. The only thing that is not common between us and African-Americans is that time has made them forget their own languages and their traditions. Jazz, rhythm and blues, gospel music and road music in the States is very definitely tied to traditional African music. I mean, those people didn't come from Sweden, they came from here. □



BURIED IN THE BLAME

Media reports of township violence are becoming little more than a replay of official allegations and denials, warn **JENNIFER GRIFFIN** and **HEIN MARAIS**



FIG: ROGER BOSCH (SOUTH LIGHT)

THE COVERAGE THAT FOLLOWED THE recent death of an Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) leader in Heidelberg's Ratanda township offers a glimpse at a distressing trend in news reporting. Increasingly, reporters are recycling a torrent of charges and denials instead of probing the background to events.

The IFP blamed the police for the death of Welcome Khanyile, who was blown up in a limpet mine explosion on July 31. Khanyile had been detained by three white police officers; the SA Police (SAP) said that they were questioning Khanyile about arms smuggling. But they insist that Khanyile was released the day before the explosion — implying that his death was either the work of himself or of unknown persons.

The causes and context of township deaths such as Khanyile's are often buried under ill-found, but predictable allegations and denials from political parties and the police. The media become party to this cycle of blame by allowing accusations to stand in for facts, and by skimping on investigation and hands-on research.

The Citizen and *The Star* reported the story on August 10 and 11 — eleven days after Khanyile's body was found. (*The Sowetan* did not report it). Neither newspaper appears to have sent reporters to the township; *The Citizen's* lengthy front-page reports relied exclusively on allegations and comments traded by officials of Inkatha and the police. *The Star* reported in its lead paragraphs that the

IFP "called for a full investigation into the death" because "peculiar events leading up to Mr Khanyile's death made the IFP believe he was murdered". The story ended with police comment, and the context remained unexplored.

No mention was made of Khanyile's sullied reputation which stemmed from his involvement in a tense local strike that began on July 22. Khanyile, an Uwusa organiser, had brought Inkatha supporters from Thokoza to work in two factories where the Cosatu-affiliated Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) had staged the strike.

The strike triggered a battle in the hostel among workers who had all been recruited by factory managers from the same area in Natal. The workers generally were aligned with Inkatha, but when the strike began, they split between supporters of Uwusa and Fawu. Two days later, Uwusa supporters burst into the hostel block, wielding axes and spears and singing "The spear is red with blood", says Mthenjwa Gama, an eight-year hostel dweller who was evicted for joining Fawu.

On July 26, Khanyile fired an R1 rifle into the yard of Cosatu strike organiser David Nkosi. The fighting then spilled into the rest of the township, particularly towards Mandela Park, a neighbouring squatter community, which faces the three-storey hostel.

The ongoing war between Fawu and Uwusa-supporting hostel dwellers served as a crucial backdrop to the death

of Khanyile, who had made many enemies in the township. However, there is a growing tendency to report the tail-end of events without probing the underlying tensions and wider context that play themselves out before and after a 'newsworthy' incident.

When the causes are not apparent (as in the death of Khanyile), the event is reduced to an exchange of accusations and denials — in the apparent hope that the "truth" will crystallise somewhere in the dialogue.

Nowadays, outbursts of township violence are accompanied by a barrage of press releases. By simply saying "the police did it", or "Inkatha impis from the hostel did it", or "ANC youths did it", political players are offering pat responses that often infuse the ranks with renewed vigour and anger. A kind of tunnel vision is applied by news reports that barely stray beyond press statements and seldom betray an effort to explore the context of an attack or death. It becomes a matter of "who did what?" rather than "why was it done?". The violence itself remains "mysterious", seemingly defying understanding.

No doubt there are several reasons — some "innocent" and some less excusable — why this trend has taken hold in coverage of township violence. But the message is clear: the media are shirking a fundamental duty to the public if they obscure rather than explore this devastating feature of SA. Right now, the light they cast is lamentably dim. □

HEAR NO EVIL

The SABC TV1's coverage of the Hammer Unit controversy suggests that the state may once again be meddling in news broadcasts.
BRONWYN KEENE-YOUNG
reports

"MODEL BIAS"

■ After Eastern Cape police denied that a 'Hammer Unit' exists, SABC newsreaders began referring to "the so-called Hammer Unit"; the earlier reference was simply "the Hammer Unit".

■ TV1 news relied on police footage of the De Villiers murder scene with voice-overs done in Johannesburg. It was only when two MK members were arrested that it despatched a journalist to report 'on-the-spot'.

■ On Tuesday 18 August the newsreader stated that police "had taken note of the allegations made by the ANC". TV1 news did not report what the allegations were until the following evening when the police statement (that the motive for the murder was robbery) and Calitz's monologue were broadcast.

THE SABC'S DEFENSIVE RESPONSE TO NEW allegations of covert state activities raises suspicions that we may be returning to the puppeteering of the 1980s, when the state had direct control of the SABC's news coverage.

The most glaring example is TV1's coverage of the murder of Andre de Villiers, a self-confessed member of a shadowy SADF unit he named as "Hammer".

TV1's first report of the De Villiers' murder on 18 August was based on the police version. ANC member Valence Watson's statements about the murder were categorised as "ANC allegations", whilst Watson's friendship with De Villiers was not mentioned. This practice reflects an intention to depersonalise the ANC by referring only to anonymous representatives.

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LIBERAL DOSES

JEREMY CRONIN surveys the views of the liberal commentators on mass action and unearths elite fears and "feudal sentiments"

JUST BEFORE THE AUGUST GENERAL strike, liberal political commentators were out in unprecedented numbers, chattering furiously in the columns of English-language newspapers.

Almost all of them predicted that the week of mass action was headed for a dismal failure. Dennis Beckett and RW Johnson were particularly outspoken. "As the crucial moment nears", wrote Johnson in *The Star* on July 27, "it looks very much as if the ANC's revolutionary dragon has turned into a pussycat."

Editorial writers were adopting a similar view. "The last round of mass action did not come near to having the huge support predicted. It could be that such campaigns have a diminishing return value..." mused the *Sunday Tribune* on July 12.

The Sunday Star a week later seized on UN Security Council Resolution 765 to assert: "There is growing belief that the third — and most economically crippling and politically taxing — phase of the ANC's mass action campaign will [now] be shelved."

"STRUGGLE FATIGUE" was the headline capping the *Business Day* editorial of July 30, with its claim that "enthusiasm for the stayaway in ANC/Cosatu ranks is less than uniformly high".

Mass action is a scandal for these liberal commentators. Their first instinct is to wish it away; failing that, they have to explain it away.

"In as much as the Nationalists could not be sure of their mandate before the March referendum, so the ANC had to renew its legitimacy... In the absence of the franchise the ANC is left with the street to gauge support," wrote Heribert



Show time: Some commentators want elite brokers centre stage

Adam in *The Star* on July 29.

The scandal of mass action is explained, then, by identifying it with 'normal' politics (the referendum). Explaining mass action like this is a delayed form of wishing it away. After all, this flexing of ANC muscles is supposed to be entirely temporary, "a final fling before the inevitable return to negotiations", according to *Business Day* on July 30.

Our liberals feel scandalised by mass action because it rocks the boat of "normal" politics; it is the eruption of the unmentionable (the people) onto the political stage. Things simply aren't meant to be done this way. How on earth will South Africa reach a new dispensation, asked Stanley Uys in *The Star* in mid-August, "unless elites on either side arrange it, as they usually do in history?"

The longing for elite bargaining is pronounced, judging by the headlines: "NEEDED: A COUNCIL OF THE WISE" (Lawrence Schlemmer, *The Star*, July 28); "WHERE ARE OUR STATESMEN?" (Van Zyl Slabbert, *The Star*, July 31); "WHAT WE NEED IS THREE WISE MEN" (Alex Boraine, *The Star*, Aug. 7); "KING RULES, OR BARONS, OR THE UPSTARTS TAKE OVER" (Ken Owen, *Sunday Times*, July 26). Scratch the surface of our liberals and you find feudal sentiments!

Owen argues: "The breakdown of Codesa has claimed two important victims: President De Klerk and Mr Mandela. Both have been diminished in stature, in their political authority, and in their control of their own followers". The parallel between De Klerk and Mandela is absolutely wrong. The popularity of the ANC leadership (certainly dented in the last two years) is now immensely strengthened. By contrast, De Klerk's personal image has taken a severe beating.

But our liberals avoid such obvious facts. They desperately want Mandela and De Klerk to be mirror images of each other, and to be liberals like themselves. Stanley Uys (*The Star*, Aug. 13) projected his own fears of the people onto Mandela: "There must have been a moment during the mass action campaign when Nelson Mandela ... said to himself 'I don't know what you do to the enemy, but, by God, you frighten me'."

The huge wave of mass action that rolled through July and into August achieved many victories. Among them was this unintended confession: "What mass action has done ... has been to democratise ANC involvement in negotiations," wrote Stanley Uys. At last, one is tempted to exclaim, a liberal writer who understands! But, Uys continued in this July 30 piece in *The Star*, more democratic ANC participation "made agreements so much more difficult to reach ... The longer the ANC engages in mass action, the more the country can kiss goodbye to fruitful negotiations."

There you have it. And you thought fruitful negotiations were about democratisation! All their wishings away, their explainings, all their dread of mass action and nostalgia for elite bargaining come down to one thing. It is the spectre of democracy that haunts our liberals. □



Framed: Mirror mirror on the wall, who can tell the truth at all?

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TV1 news also ignored the De Villiers' family's testimony that he had feared for his life after revealing information about the Hammer Unit.

Police reports accounted for 63,6 percent of SABC's coverage until arrests were made, whilst interviews with Major-general Koos Calitz of the Eastern Cape police accounted for 27,4 percent of the total time. Calitz spent much of his air time castigating the ANC and pronouncing judgment on members of its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

The SABC also reported the denial by Tertius Delport, deputy constitutional affairs minister, that De Villiers had spoken to him about the Hammer Unit, ignoring claims to the contrary by Valence Watson, Democratic Party MP Eddie Trent and De Villiers' family.

The SABC's coverage of the murder of an Inkatha headman, Fana Nzimande and his family in the Natal Midlands on 24 August provides a sharp contrast to its coverage of De Villiers' murder.

TV1 news presented these killings within the framework of Inkatha claims that the ANC had carried out the killings. No police reports or incriminating evidence featured in the report.

The item began with Inkatha national chair Frank Mdlalose's claim that, in many Natal incidents, ANC members had dressed in defence force uniforms and attacked Inkatha members. Mdlalose did not substantiate this.

The claim was followed by a description of the killings, after which TV1 flashed to a local Inkatha leader, who said the ANC was responsible for the killings.

On 30 August, the SABC covered Inkatha president Gatsha Buthelezi's claim at the Nzimande funeral that the ANC was involved in the murders. The attention paid to Inkatha representatives contrasts with SABC's generalised references to the ANC. SABC's only defence for not reporting on Hammer Unit allegations could be that they are unsubstantiated. But it would be compelled to admit that it used different standards for different organisations, according to a political agenda.

How else can it explain the attention paid to unsubstantiated Inkatha claims against the ANC, while ignoring the ANC's claims of state involvement in the De Villiers and Goniwe murders? The fact that some of the ANC's allegations are now open to question does not exonerate SABC for failing to cover those allegations.

The SABC and its state mentors seem to understand that paying detailed attention to De Villiers' murder, regardless of the culprit, will open a can of worms. TV news will be forced to report on allegations about state involvement in other political murders.

De Villiers' revelations could be more damaging to the state than the arrest of MK members in connection with De Villiers' murder would be for the ANC. In addition, the SABC would have to investigate former SADF colonel Gert Hugo's claims that the Hammer Unit existed and that a third force is still at large.

The embargo the SABC seems to have placed on claims of government complicity in covert hit-squad operations is a sinister indication of a threatening reversion to state control over the news. ■



INVESTING IN GOLD

In Barcelona, athletes from the richest countries again walked off with the spoils. Does this mean money buys gold at the Olympics? Yes and no, writes HEIN MARAIS

WHEN THE OLYMPIC FLAME was snuffed out in August, Third World athletes were, again, much too well-represented among the losers. In fact, the teams from 108 Third World countries (that's almost two thirds of the 172 participating nations) boarded their planes without so much as a bronze medal.

Now of course this could be a coincidence ... if only the pattern hasn't been repeating itself since 1962, the first Games at which the Third World fielded more than a handful of hopefuls. This year, athletes from the G-7 or GATT countries (shorthand for "the seven richest nations on earth") again hogged the awards ceremonies, carting off 36.6 percent of the medals. No wonder the Third World gripes.

In a sneaky way, money has featured strongly in the Olympics since it was revived by the French educator Baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1896. It hinged on the dictate that only amateur athletes were eligible to compete.

The concept of amateur sports dates back to mid-nineteenth century England, and it was hardly innocent. As *Newsweek* noted recently, "the British Amateur strictures were conceived foremost to keep the working scum out, inasmuch as only the well-to-do



Victory March: Cuba bagged its 31 medals in Spain by deliberately directing resources towards sport

could afford the time to practise sport on the cuff".

For a long while the Olympic Games went considerably further than to keep the "working scum" out: until the 1950s, participants were almost exclusively white males from colonialist countries. At the opening ceremony of the Montreal Games in 1976, for the first time, women athletes made up 25 percent of the parade, though this year Iran

again did its bit for sexism by fielding an all-male team. The Olympic Games has never quite cut it as a *democratic* spectacle of sporting excellence.

For years common wisdom insisted on a one-step link between national wealth and Olympic medals, the richer the country, the more medals it takes home. Well, since the 1970s the performances of eastern bloc countries (with

their, uhm, *modest* gross domestic products or GDPs) punched a few holes in an argument that was a little flimsy to start with.

If money is all it takes to be "swifter, higher and stronger" (the Olympic motto coined in 1895), how come both North Korea and Romania this year nabbed more gold medals than Japan? And why did the penniless remnants of the socialist bloc all finish in the Top Twenty of the medal ranks, with the Commonwealth of Independent States (the former Soviet Union) taking top spot? Cuba zipped into fifth place overall with 31 medals, 14 of them gold — a dramatic hint that the link between money and medals is suspect. Indeed, for comedians and sportswriters, the moral in the medal tables was clear: no matter if the country is politically punchdrunk, bankrupt economically and otherwise, and teetering on the verge of civil war or general collapse — it can still win medals. Hell, even South Africa landed two of them.

"Serious sports," George Orwell noticed back in 1950, "is war minus the shooting". And, sure enough, during the Cold War, the Olympics were transformed into geopolitical headbutting contests. Beyond the grace and exaltation of the



Ready, Steady: On your marks, dollars and pounds

athletes haunched sweaty foes, each daring the other to "Make my day".

The 1980 Moscow and 1984 Los Angeles Games stood in for diplomatic tantrums that stood in for the unthinkable. The West boycotted Moscow over the Afghanistan war; the "socialist bloc" and many Third World countries responded by staying home in 1984. So much for de Coubertin's idea of "foster(ing) better international understanding".

A lot of money and resources have been employed to ensure victory in the Games. In the West, talent was detected, developed and perfected through a glittering system of incentives (government grants, scholarships, sponsorships) that was already entangled in the more general accumulation process. A crackerjack athlete represented an asset which, if handled well, could yield handsome dividends as a star player in a corporately-owned or -sponsored team, or as a role model endorsing a breakfast cereal or running shoe.

In the "socialist bloc", sports infrastructures and development programmes were assembled at great cost. The same process of cultivation and compulsion occurred, of course with decrees, plans and perks — instead of market

forces — propelling athletes to the top.

The Olympics became a sort of exposition for socialist achievements, a public relations spectacle. And this year, they were still the perfect site for a small, defiant nation like Cuba to stare down the bully on the block. What Cuba put on display in Barcelona was not simply a national team, but a collective "Up-Yours, Uncle Sam". Its remarkable performance (and those of its former allies) was a testament to those development programmes — though whether they will survive the next four years until the Atlanta Games is another matter.

The bottom line is that money remains the one constant in the Olympic equation. But it's not merely a question of how much a country has — that's where the complaints of the Third World go off-key. What matters is how much money it is *willing* to invest in well-planned sport development programmes that will produce, among other things, Olympic winners. A relatively poor country like Cuba long ago decided (of course with a variety of motives) to direct resources towards sport development. The other day Namibia decided to buy a jet for its president. It's a matter of priorities and choices.

Here's a little tale from the 1960s. Development workers in an east African country were at their wits' end trying to get villagers involved in setting up a health clinic. Then it dawned on them to ask the villagers what the village needed most. "A soccer field," was the response. The villagers understood what the development texts ignored: that, far from being a luxury, sport could help heal a demoralised and divided community. After the soccer field was cleared, the village threw its weight behind the health project.

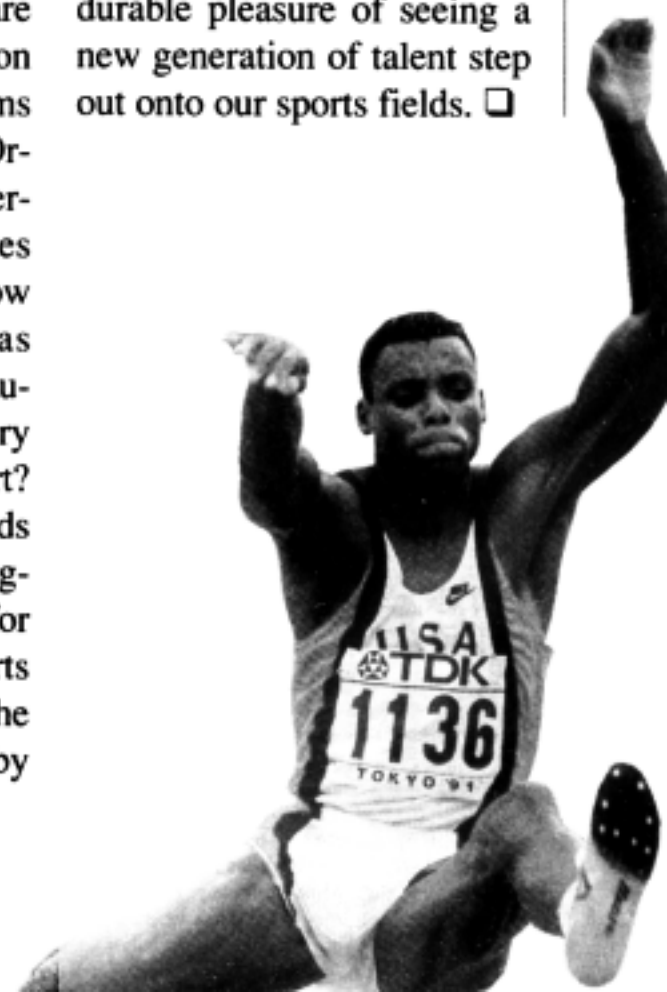
Whatever unsightly features sport develops when it crosses the path of chauvinism, it can — and it does — function as a bonding and motivating factor in society. The logic that pits sports development against health care or education in a competition for financial resources seems alienated and distracted. "Ordinary" folk tend to understand this. And sometimes leaders do, too; remember how Burkina Faso's Thomas Sankara used to order bureaucrats out of their offices every Thursday to play some sport?

Not that the debate ends once state and corporate budgets have hefty line items for sport. Market-guided sports development tends to go the trickle-down route whereby

you invest in a first-class sports elite that can hold its own internationally and inspire youngsters to try and emulate those achievements. Then you harvest the newcomers and repeat the process. It's the old "You can make it if you try hard enough" line. Executives love it because it buys market exposure, corporate prestige, improved sales figures. Bureaucrats love it because it's glitzy and gets them on TV.

The trickle-up argument says sport is an organic part of society. So you focus resources at the community level and promote sports for the majority. The best will naturally trickle up and they are then honed into worldbeaters (if need be, with their footwear T-shirts, and brewery caps and hyperstore smiles). Proponents say the triumphs of the chosen few cannot substitute for the pleasures missed by the rest of the community. Olympic medals are the cherries on top of this cake.

SA has finally reached that point where it gets to rearrange the furniture — perhaps definitively. The choices we make now will determine whether the SA team carts back a few more Olympic medals from Atlanta in 1996, or whether we have the more durable pleasure of seeing a new generation of talent step out onto our sports fields. □



REVIEWS

AIDS IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE MYTH AND THE REALITY,
By Mary Crewe, Penguin Forum Series, Johannesburg,
1992 (R17.95, 87 pages)

AIDS HAS BEEN killing South Africans for more than a decade, and it continues to slay without a cure. It retains its status as a mysterious nightmare that no one wants to suffer. Fear breeds ignorance. And the myths still circulate: it's a 'gay' disease; it's a conspiracy against black people; you can get it from mosquitoes or by kissing or even touching ...

SA is listed among the 57 countries now at 'high risk' from this disease. *AIDS in South Africa*, a pocket-sized book published by Penguin Forum Series, is a timely attempt to counter the myths with accurate information on AIDS.

In less than 100 pages, Mary Crewe provides a thorough introduction to AIDS, with charts, statistics and methods of prevention. Discussion runs from the medical and scientific to the political and the personal.

Although the subject of experimental drugs and advances in medical research was overlooked, the book's purpose is not diminished. It is an introduction to a disease with which we must all become familiar, and this book is a more than adequate tool.

And remember: as Crewe will repeatedly remind you, condoms are the route to safer sex.

Reviewed by Kimberly O'Donnel

**NO TURNING BACK: FIGHTING FOR GENDER EQUALITY
IN THE UNIONS,** Edited by Lesley Lawson, Lacom
(Sached)/ Speak/ Cosatu Wits Women's Forum,
Johannesburg (R14, 98 pages)

"WOMEN HAVE TO spearhead the struggle for gender equality. Leaving it to men would be like leaving the struggle against apartheid to whites," say the women of Cosatu, who, with *Speak* magazine and Lacom, have chronicled their struggles within the unions in *No Turning Back*.

Women do not have equal access to leadership positions in the unions, they say. Despite their 36% presence within Cosatu, only 10% of the decision-making offices are held by women.

So they interviewed 44 union members between 1991 and 1992, and documented their accounts of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, juggling family, job and union activities, and fighting for affirmative action, among countless other issues.

No Turning Back is a tribute to the ongoing commitment of the women of Cosatu and an eye-opener to the realities and issues they constantly face. The book is written in simple English, enabling second-language readers to appreciate the work of these women. And it comes loaded with photographs, serving as a visual document for those outside the world of trade unions who may have never understood exactly what all the fighting is about. Now they can. It's a noble effort.

Reviewed by Kimberly O'Donnel

reviews



FOLLOW THE LEADER?

In the last issue of WIP, reviewer Jeremy Cronin slammed FREDERIK VAN ZYL SLABBERT for displaying "elite cynicism" and "dismissing" broader forms of democracy. Here, Slabbert hits back

BEING CHALLENGED IS PART OF THE PLEASURE OF POLITICAL writing. So I really do not mind when others point out contradictions, faulty assumptions and, particularly, factual errors in what I write.

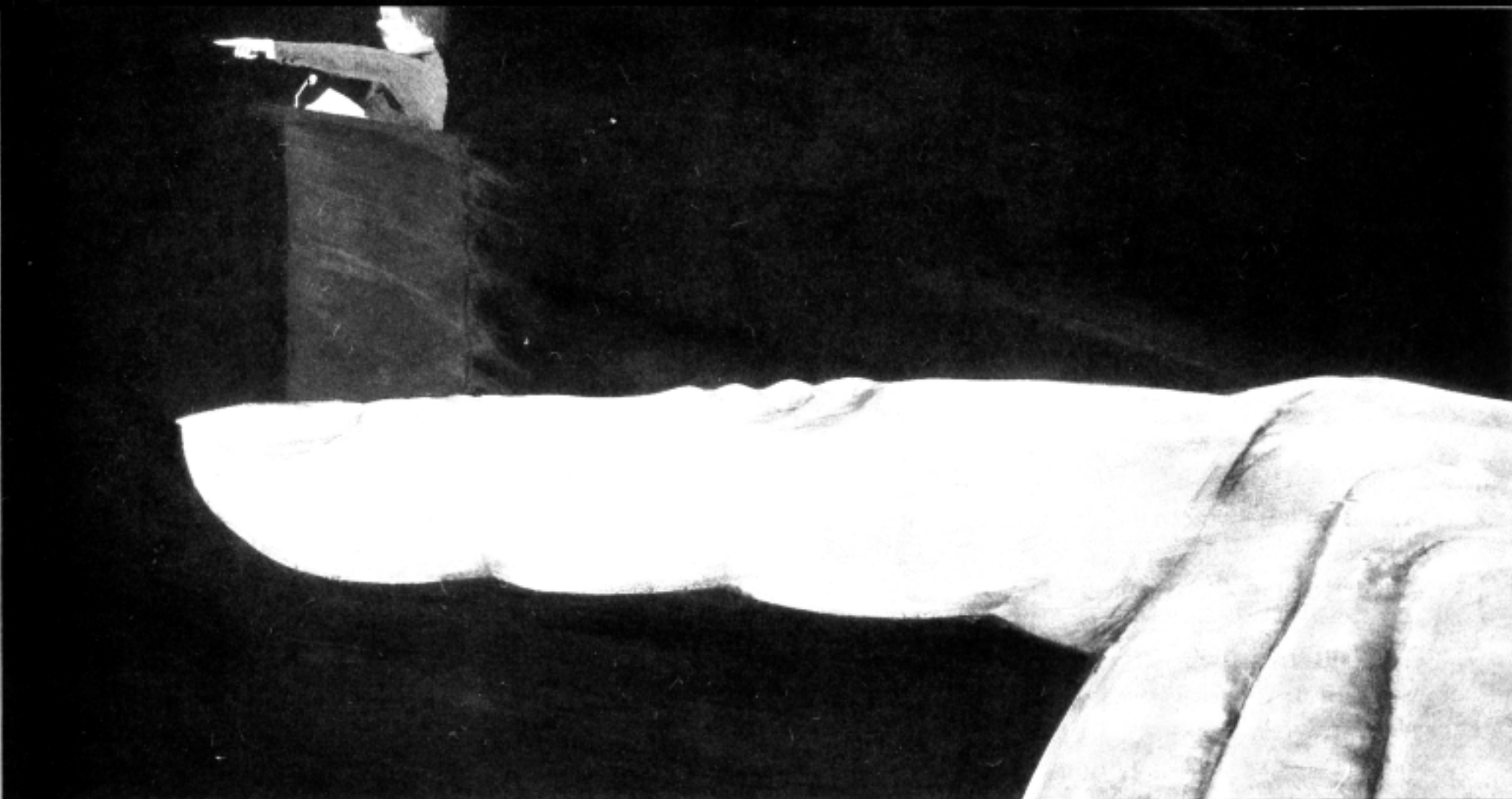
In the foreword to my book *The Quest for Democracy* (reviewed by Jeremy Cronin in *WIP* 84, September 1992), I pointed out that I expected this to be the case, given the circumstances in which the book was written.

However, what I do mind, and mind very much, is to be accused of things I did not write or even imply. Insult is added to injury when a reviewer insists that the central thrust of my analysis is something I did not write or imply. Jeremy Cronin seems to have honed this polemical technique to a fine art in his review of my book.

Why does Cronin do this? He is an astute and perceptive analyst, so it cannot be a case of simply not understanding what I wrote. He even admits that my analysis is a "generally correct and sober assessment of the actual balance of forces in our country". But then he goes on: "(A)s one proceeds through this book, Slabbert slides from effective sarcasm into elite cynicism." To substantiate this, he claims that:

- I am "dismissive of any broader ambitions of democracy", for instance "of self-empowerment by ordinary people in an ever wider sphere of their daily lives";
- I say "the greatest threat to democracy are the people themselves, they must be kept at arms length from it";
- "the entire thrust of (my) argument is to call for the demobilisation of our one (sic) major strength, mass support and to vest a great deal of naive trust in De Klerk";
- "Slabbert is telling us: De Klerk is a democrat...and I am warning you, you had better believe it because he is not about to meekly hand over power or collapse." (I have never written or uttered this sentence. In any case, it is a contradiction: a good democrat is supposed to hand over power, or is your slip showing, Jeremy?)

All this is of course pure unadulterated balls! Time and



Pointing fingers: "A trifle quaint that Cronin paints me as an elitist given where he and his party come from"

space does not permit me to rewrite *The Quest for Democracy* in *WIP* to prove this; it is a short booklet. I can only appeal to readers to make up their own minds. (Enough sales talk). So I ask again, why does Cronin accuse me in this manner?

Is it because he feels a political urge to trash me? To present me as a "dangerous diluter of the struggle", a "class enemy", a "useful idiot" for De Klerk? Is it because he wishes to use me to settle internal battles in the Alliance — to get at "the negotiators", those who say "don't rock the boat"? For example, Zuma is temporarily shafted, now for Thabo! (The revealing photo of Thabo Mbeki and Tertius Delport with the caption "Elite Convergence" did not go unnoticed. Is the editor in on the deal? In any case, what the hell has the photo got to do with my book?) Or does Cronin wish to promote SACP propaganda about "mass mobilization in relation to negotiation". He is perfectly entitled to do all three in his quest for the perfect "revolutionary strategy", but not at the expense of the integrity of what I have written. I cannot mobilize the "revolutionary anger of the masses" at this intellectual deceit. I can only register my objection to be thus mauled by a party hack.

Talking of elites, elitism, leaders and personality cults; cults and elitism are not to be confused with elites and leaders. I have no problem substituting elites with leaders or representatives in a given context, (and I went to some length to explain the context in my book). The *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* defines "elite" as "The pick of the best troops or class"; "leader" is a "person followed by others"; and "representative" is a "person representing a constituency".

Cronin is very much part of the elite of the SACP and ANC, which is why I am interested to know what he thinks "the masses" or "the people" think. I sense, however, that if I disagree with what he thinks the "masses" or "people" think, I automatically become part of some bad, competing "anti-masses" elite. Claptrap! This is a rather arrogant logical error and lies at the very core of the "vanguardism" and "elitism" of communist parties in the former Eastern Europe and USSR. (A comprehensive account of this elitism and its devastating consequences for the social and economic life of "the masses" and "the people" is to be found in Janos Korvai's *The Socialist*

system: the Political Economy of Communism.)

Alex Callinicos, a British Marxist of the "militant, abstentionist-hang-'em-and-burn-'em" variety published a series of interviews with South African marxists and/or communists under the title *Between Apartheid and Capitalism*.

The similarity in ideological thrust, phraseology and rhetoric between Callinicos' interviews and Korvai's analyses is more than striking. Cronin is one of those interviewed. He declares a clear preference for a "socialist workers democracy" as opposed to a "democracy depending on parliamentary institutions and a passive, atomised electorate" (p 82). He does not see "multi-partyism as the be-all and end-all of democracy" (p 83), and on being asked whether he is not afraid that, when the SACP piggybacks into power on the ANC, the ANC will dump them, he feels fairly confident. "All our leading party cadres were full-time ANC people, many of them at very strategic places inside the ANC, like Slovo," he says on p 85, and in any case "if we do our work properly as a left force, the unions as well as the party, we can assure that the kind of ANC that is built is not one that easily turns and breaks us" (p 90). All of this, no doubt, with the complete and constant approval of all "the masses" who support the SACP, the ANC and Cosatu.

It would be facile to present Cronin's views as an unreflective extension of those of the defunct communist parties in the political graveyards of what was Eastern Europe and the USSR. Both he and Slovo concede the errors of our own SACP's Stalinist past (though the troops down south are not happy with "Has Socialism Failed", Joe!), although Cronin waters it down to "mild Stalinism" (like a little bit pregnant?). For Stalinism, read pure elitism and personality cult.

Therefore, I find it a trifle quaint, if not impertinent, that Cronin wishes to paint me as an elitist, given where he and his party come from. Elitism refers to unchallenged claims to leadership by an individual or group. I have not claimed or experienced this on behalf of anybody.

It is nice to know that Jeremy does not wish this to happen on behalf of "the masses" or "the people" — but please, spare and forgive me, just a tiny bit of cynicism. □



Left Behind

A BELL IS A CUP

Left Behind is convinced that no other place on this planet manages to be so surreal, and yet make it all look so *normal*. Take the report that appeared in the *Business Day* on July 31 this year:

“The 5 000-strong police and SADF force that searched 14 Reef townships for criminals yesterday made only 25 arrests, a police statement said.

“Police made no arrests at all in nine of the 14 targeted townships.

“Police spokesman Peter Brandt said he was not concerned by the low number of arrests, as the object had been to improve community relations ...”

If you don't think that's surreal ... you're sort of proving the point, no?

HOMES AND GARDENS

The story so far ... In the July-August issue of *WIP*, Left Behind reported confidently that the luxury Sandton abode of Oliver and Adelaide Tambo was paid for by Tiny Rowland's Lonrho corporation, via a company called 'Henderson's Transvaal Estates Ltd'.

Well, these days, when it comes to The House, lips at ANC head office are sealed. Off-the-record, though, the Lonrho Factor is still being denied. Left Behind thought the following snippets might help jog some memories ...

- Correspondence, dated 26 August 1991, confirming that the property had been transferred to Henderson's Transvaal Estates twelve days earlier:

PICTURE THIS ...

The May-June issue of *WIP*, you will recall, featured some groundbreaking interviews and coverage on abuses committed in ANC camps in exile. To illustrate the articles, *WIP* requested photographs of MK training camps from the ANC's Department of Information and Publicity (DIP). A few days later, DIP provided us with this photo, which we published:



TRANSFER [REDACTED] TO HENDERSON'S TRANSCVAAL ESTATES LIMITED / PORTION 4 (A PTN OF PTN 1) OF ERF 25 SANDHURST

We confirm the abovementioned transfer was duly registered in the Pretoria Deeds Registry on 14 August 1991. Attached is our reconciliation account for your records.

- Fax, dated 9 July 1991, from Lonrho Management Services confirming the purchase of furniture (valued at R118,100) for the house. Again, ownership of the furniture passed to Henderson's Transvaal Estate.

LONRHO MANAGEMENT SERVICES (PTY) LIMITED		
Date	09.07.91	Ref No
		4157
If you experience problems with this transmission, please telephone and ask for		

Subject CONTENTS : 21A KILMARNEY ROAD, SANDHURST

We confirm the intention to purchase the items of furniture valued at R118 100,00 as listed on your organisation's letterhead and examined at the premises on 8 July 1991.

Benefit and risk in respect of the listed items will pass to Henderson's Transvaal Estates Limited on occupation of the premises on which date payment will be made to the seller by means of a company cheque (or direct deposit to a nominated account if so desired).

But someone, somewhere has gone to great lengths to keep the transaction confidential. A search through the Deeds Registry in Pretoria for details on Henderson's Transvaal Estates reveals that the “company has either been dissolved or deregistered on 30 July 1987”. The plot thickens.

Well, the issue spawned not only front-page newspaper stories across the country, but also the following fax from the 'RENAMO Information Office, SA':

RENAMO RSA INFO BUREAU JHB 07/01/92 14:37
RENAMO Information Office
South Africa

1/7/92

Sirs,

re: WIP May-June 1992 No.82 : ANC Camps

Whilst we have no issue with the South African People's Struggle for Freedom we must register our strongest objection to your use of Renamo publicity photographs to illustrate your ANC Death Camp article (and the cover) published in the above issue of WIP.

We particularly object to the photograph published as it implies that President Afonso Dhlakama is a member of the ANC's MK. The President (for the benefit of the ignorant) is the man with dark glasses standing between the platoon and the row of officers on the right.

Unless an apology is printed in your next issue of WIP we shall take action against you.

A LUTA CONTINUA.

Reconstruct

A Work In Progress/New Era supplement

issue no. 6

OCTOBER 1992



Where are the women?

THE CIVICS, more than any other strand of the progressive movement, are completely dominated by men.

The newly elected executive of the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) has 13 men and one woman, Dr Trudy Thomas. Sanco has set up 14 departments, but none deal with gender. Thomas heads the health and environment department.

Few regions or locals have women on their executives. Only one of Sanco's 14 regions, the Transkei, has a woman president.

Aside from the lack of women in the civic leadership, most civic projects are aimed at 'the community' broadly. Few civic development projects address the needs of women specifically, let alone the social relations and conditions that have led to the oppression of women.

Yet women are often most directly

affected by civic issues like poor services, as they traditionally do most of the housework and childcare. They are also the most economically vulnerable.

Some civic associations have begun to address the problem of the lack of women leaders by setting up women's forums. But these have been given little direction or support from the civic as a whole or service organisations.

Some progressive Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are also beginning to ensure that their policies and programmes are gender sensitive.

Among these are some Urban Sector Network members, the Women's College in Cape Town, Sached in Johannesburg and Wildfire, also in Cape Town.

Wildfire is one of the few organisations set up specifically to tackle gender awareness in organisations. According to one of its founders, Mikki van Zyl, the

organisation operates on three levels:

- it takes up its own "finite projects" related to gender;
- it networks with other organisations concerned with gender and development;
- it acts as consultants for organisations, ensuring that their operations, training methods etc is gender sensitive.

Wildfire has been going for a year, and it has been "very hard", says Van Zyl. But she believes that more organisations are becoming gender sensitive and things are likely to improve slowly.

The World University Service (WUS), which provides "resources and opportunities for education, training and development for marginalised groups" focuses particularly on women.

But these NGOs are a drop in the ocean. Big business and the state rarely train women, who are forced to take the worst jobs in the economy. ■

Gender Focus

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Do 'free zones' enslave women?

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Delving into De Loor

INSIDE

Women and development

The World University Service recently held a conference to look at how women's rights can be entrenched in the developmental and the political processes. **KERRY CULLINAN** reports

THE WORLD UNIVERSITY Service (WUS) conference, attended by over 150 delegates from a range of organisations, was aimed at discussing how women's rights can be entrenched in the new South Africa.

Mavivi Manzini, from the ANC Women's League and National Women's Coalition, opened the conference with a detailed paper looking at women and their relationship to power.

"It is much easier," said Manzini, "to think of power as a feature of race, caste and class relations than of relations between women and men, particularly those from the same family or race or nation.

"Yet growing research and our own experiences of violence against women ... suggest that not only is power a widespread feature of gender relations but that it often takes a very coercive form."

Manzini hit out at development planners for tending to deal only with women's practical needs. Women's strategic needs (those that address the social relations between men and women) which will "threaten men's power and privileges", such as women's empowerment and the conscientisation of men were not prioritised, she said.

Development planners for a new SA were looking at race and class, but very little attention was being paid to gender, she added.

"Gender biases are more difficult to recognise, identify and acknowledge because they are hidden in deep-rooted ideologies about what is 'natural' and 'given'."

She called for :

- special gender training to determine what is biological and what is socially and culturally constructed.
 - a critical examination of the gender division of labour, which considers how tasks should be valued.
 - women's empowerment.
- "The absence of women at Codesa

tells us that, as women, we have a bleak future," said Manzini.

Politics internationally remains a male domain. Only 11% of the world's



Mavivi Manzini : Development planners do not address women's deeper needs.

parliamentarians are women. In SA, only eight of 108 parliamentarians are women. The situation in national liberation movements and progressive organisations is



Thenjiwe Mtintso : Women do not share universal problems.

not that much better, she added.

Manzini identified six major challenges facing those concerned with women's rights:

- mobilising, organising and united women;
- raising gender issues within the struggle;
- creating space for women;
- ensuring that the statements from political leadership were translated into practice;
- dealing with factors that lead to the exclusion of women from politics;
- challenging traditional images of motherhood and fighting decadent traditional practices, institutions and attitudes.

Dangers

Thenjiwe Mtintso from the SACP warned of the dangers of seeing women as a single category. "While there can be common problems amongst women of different classes and races, they do not necessarily share universal problems."

Likewise, the push for women's empowerment outside of political struggles was problematic, as it did not define what kind of society women were being empowered for, she said.

Mtintso said dealing with national oppression was the most urgent struggle, as the very structure of the family had been defined by apartheid.

However, she said this did not mean that doing away with national oppression or even capitalism would do away with gender oppression. She called for a balance between struggles around race, class and gender and clear meaning to be given to a non-sexist society. Rural black women should be given priority when gender issues were being addressed.

The problem with development programmes in Africa is that "the donor determines what development is and who should be developed and how", said

Housing Forum launched

THE NATIONAL HOUSING Forum was launched on 31 August to look at ways of solving the housing crisis. Sixteen organisations including the ANC, PAC, Cosatu, Inkatha the IDT and the DBSA are part of the forum. The state pulled out of the forum last year as it said all problems should be discussed at Codesa. Eric Molobi and Kehla Shubane are chairperson and vice-chair of the forum.

Mayekiso harassed

SA NATIONAL CIVIC Organisation (Sanco) president Moses Mayekiso has come under repeated attack over the past few weeks. At least two assassination attempts have been made on his life in the past six weeks. He was arrested for possessing a gun in an unrest area. Last month, the media alleged that it was hypocritical of Mayekiso to call for a bond boycott when he was getting over R2,000 a month from the ICFTU to pay for his accommodations. Mayekiso disputed the claims, saying the money was for his own security. He was also recently issued with an eviction notice for not paying rent.

Banks stand firm

THE COUNCIL OF SA Banks (Cosab) has refused to stop lending money to the government, as requested by Sanco. Sanco threatened banks with mass action, including the bond boycott and bank blockades, unless banks halted government loans by the second week of September. Government loans should only be resumed once the process of democracy is irreversible, said Sanco. Cosab, which holds about R13-billion in government loans, said withholding the loans would result in anarchy and open banks up to future political pressure.

Mtintso.

"Intervention and advocacy should be based on the direct experiences and needs of whoever it is intended for, not on the needs of the donor or sponsor."

Education and training

Debbie Budlender from the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) dealt with women's access to education and training, and the impact this had on their economic position.

She said race "has primary importance at the school level", while gender discrimination "come into full force at the post-school level, both formal and non-formal".

"One of the problems in discussing the economic position of women is that their economic activity is often hidden or ignored by the economists and policy-makers," said Budlender.

"Official statistics do not include housework, subsistence farming or the informal sector among the employed. Many statistics also do not include part-time, casual or seasonal work. All these are areas where women predominate."

The work men did was usually "productive", while women's work was "reproductive", she said.

"Women ... work with people and support and reproduce the conditions in which others can live and work. Men ... produce goods rather than people." In reality, this meant that 40% of working women did menial jobs in comparison to 5% of men.

Women tended to work in community and personal services. Most domestic workers and over half of all subsistence farmers were women, she said. About a quarter of manufacturing jobs were held by women. Men were found in mining, construction and electricity.

Racial inequalities were also evident:

- white women account for half of all women in professions or trades;

- 35% of women in production were coloured,

- 82% of women in service were african.

Indian women accounted for the smallest percentage of working women, but were most visible in manufacturing.

Training was generally geared towards men. Just over 30% of women are semi-skilled, in comparison to over 50% of men. Only 30 companies throughout the country employed women apprentices in 1988. In 1989, only 1% of apprentices were women, mostly in the hairdressing trade.

Gender prejudices

In post-secondary school learning institutions, gender patterns were clearly visible. Men tended to be in 'productive', scientific and technical areas, while women are in the social and people-oriented disciplines", said Budlender. Men outnumbered women by 27 to one in engineering at universities and 14 to one in mathematics, for example.

Budlender said while tradition "played a large part in fashioning these patterns", women also found it more difficult to finance their education and many were unable to study full-time.

Budlender said women were calling for "Equal pay for work of equal value". For this to be effective, women had to have a say in determining the value of work, because wherever women were employed in large numbers, the value and pay of that job drops. ■



Durban women struggle to get access to housing

ALISON TODES and NORAH WALKER look at african women's access to public, private and informal housing in Durban

THIS ARTICLE RAISES issues for discussion in developing a gender sensitive housing policy. The areas we looked at are Chesterville, Umlazi Section Z and Piesang's River, Inanda.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the state embarked on a massive public housing programme, while removing many existing informal settlements and townships. The policies were partly intended to help the state to control the influx of african people to the cities. Control over african women's movement and therefore over their access to housing was seen as critical.

Rules governing housing allocation ensured that women's access to housing was almost entirely through men — through fathers and husbands. Women were also restricted by their low earning power and by the Natal Code, which defined women as minors.

In 1979, the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions tried to create a restricted urban african working and middle class. The promotion of nuclear family life was part of this vision. Rules governing women's access to housing were also liberalised. Any person with urban rights who had dependents could get access to public housing if it was available.

Privatisation

In the 1980s, housing policy shifted to privatisation. Privatisation affected housing allocation in a number of ways. The most obvious is the sale of public housing, as occurred in Chesterville, and the promotion of private housing delivery, such as the development of Umlazi Section Z in 1988/9.

Private housing was supposed to remove the legal constraints on ownership by african women. But until 1988, women married in community of property were subject to their husband's marital power, and could not own property. The law changed in 1988, but it is not retrospective.

Legal biases against women have been partially removed, but other regulatory biases and the failure of the state and the private sector to develop affordable houses has ensured that the majority of Durban's african people — especially women — have had to find shelter in informal settlements. Piesang's River is one such settlement.

State housing has had a contradictory and uneven effect on women. While policies have made it easier for women to



A domestic worker at home in Piesang's River.

gain access to housing than in the past, only small groups of women with sufficient income or historical access to housing have benefitted.

Women's access to housing in the 1980s

Despite the biases against women in the allocation of housing, the person-plus-dependent ruling has helped women. In Lamontville, some 26% of houses were rented by women, while in Chesterville women rented 39% of houses.

A surprisingly high proportion of sales of public housing are to women. An analysis of 454 sales of public houses in Natal between 1987 and 1990 shows 41% were sold to women, mainly widows.

Possibly because women have been so vulnerable in the past, they have been keen to buy houses. Women's interest in home ownership can also be seen as an extension of their desire to gain access to housing on their own terms. Some 81% of women interviewed in Chesterville felt that renting or owning a house in their own name gave a woman greater independence and control over their lives.

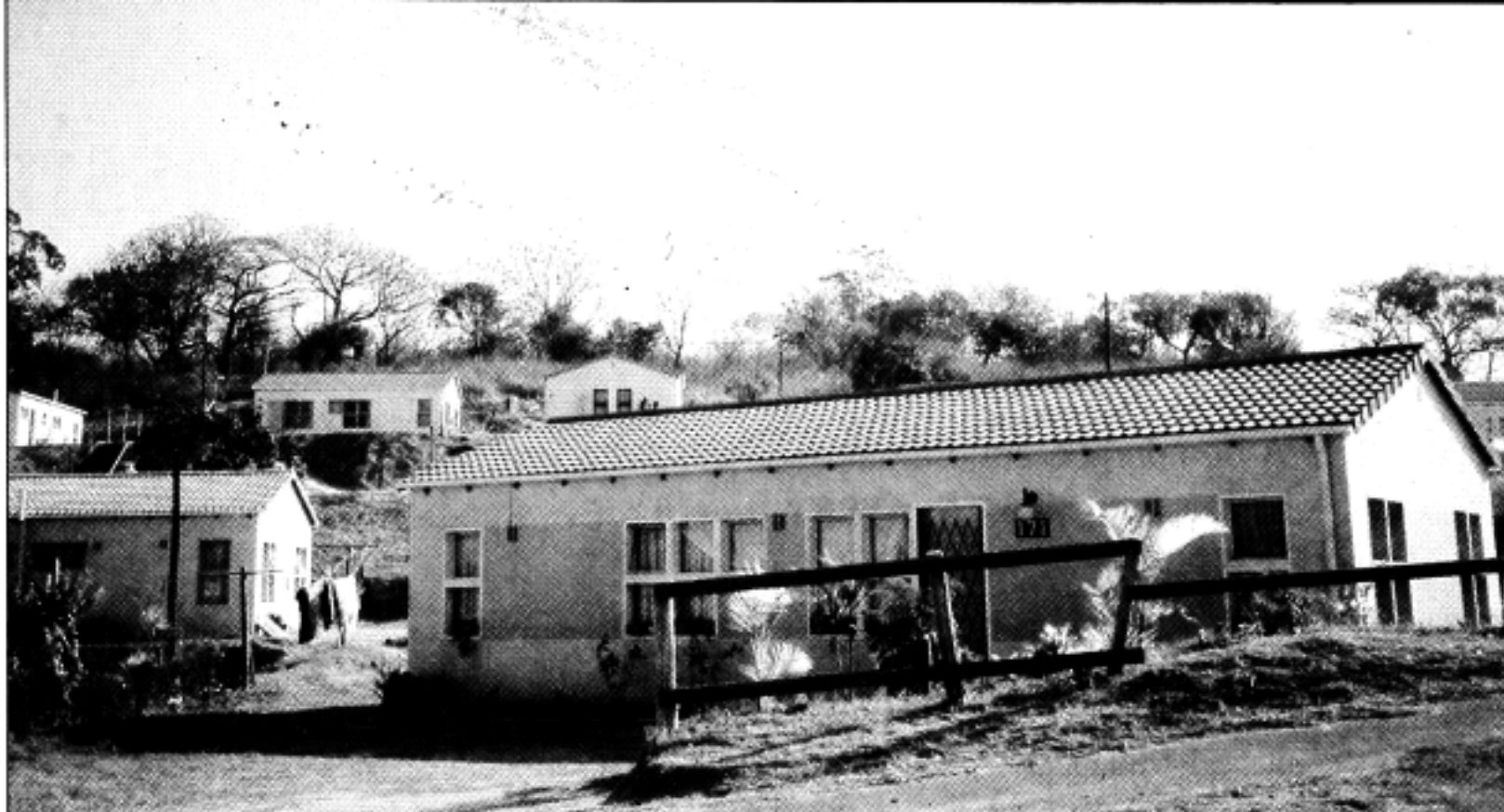
One woman said: "Usually men do not contribute — many of them spend all their money drinking. Sometimes men bring girlfriends home, until women are forced to move out. Unless they rent or own houses they will be hassled by men".

But only a limited group of women have been able to gain access to housing in this way. Most women owners or renters are old (50% are pensioners) and have 'inherited' their houses from fathers and husbands.

If ownership is seen as important in women's independence, then it might be expected that women would form a large proportion of those buying developer-built housing. But this is not the case. Analysis of 1 050 records of developer-built houses in Durban shows that only 15% of houses are owned by women. Only a small group of women with professional jobs, such as teachers and nurses, and single women with housing subsidies from work have been able to afford such houses.

The cost of housing built by developers (R50 000 - R90 000) imposes various burdens on women within marriages.

The houses built by private developers are far too expensive for the majority.



In Umlazi Section Z Phase 8, most houses had been bought on the basis of joint husband and wife incomes. In some cases, men have deserted, leaving the women to cover the entire cost on their own.

Most women and women-headed households have been forced to live in informal settlements. Some 60% of Durban's population lives in informal settlements.

In Piesang's River, 40% of houses are owned by women, while 33% of respondents said their house was owned by husband and wife.

It is probably the cheapest form of access to housing. Most households paid less than R100 for the land and houses are made from cheap materials. But it imposes enormous social costs, which are particularly felt by women.

Housework and childcare is far more burdensome where services are not available and considerable time is spent on tasks like fetching water. The cost of water and energy per unit is higher than in areas where services are supplied. Most informal settlements are on the urban periphery so transport costs are high. Lack of safety when going to pit latrines at night was also raised in discussion.

Although no biases against women were experienced in Piesang's River, this is not universally the case in informal settlements as research on other parts of Inanda shows.

Policy questions

None of the three housing systems are without problems for women, and all need to be adapted if they are to benefit women. Community-based systems are an alternative, but the gender aspects need specific consideration.

In considering gender issues in housing, some of the points which merit discussion are:

- What kind of services or improvements in housing are most important from a women's perspective?
- How are decisions made about priorities for services and housing improvements? How can women's voices be heard in this process?
- How should families and households be defined, as this affects the way subsidy and allocation systems (amongst other issues) operate and whether they help or hinder women.

- Should houses and sites be put in women's names, as many international experts suggest? Even within community based approaches, this is an issue.
- How can women's voices be heard in various forums where decisions over housing are made and in institutions controlling access to land and housing? The form and terms of credit, especially for women, must also be addressed. Women's community loan schemes need to be developed.
- How can service organisations, civics and community organisations be made more sensitive to gender issues? ■



The houses in Chesterville are old but solid.

—Todes and Walker are part of the Built Environment Support Group in Durban. This article summarises their findings from a longer article entitled "Women and Housing policy in SA: A discussion of Durban case studies".

Caribbean 'Export Processing Zones' provide important lessons

A democratic state must think carefully before introducing EPZs, argues
LAURINE PLATSKY from the Development Action Group

WORLDWIDE THE JOBS created in Export Processing Zones (EPZ) or Free Trade Zones (FTZ) are low skilled, badly paid and unprotected by labour and health laws. The vast majority of these low status jobs are filled by women, because of their poor bargaining position in society. This simple fact — that EPZ work is women's work — needs further consideration.

The woman's experience of organising in the factories of Caribbean EPZs should be taken seriously by all those concerned with both labour and gender relations and with strategies for economic growth such as export orientated industrialisation.

Since the mid-1980s, a constant lobby has attempted to introduce EPZs into South Africa in a bid to promote

export manufacturing and encourage multi-national investment.

At present, the department of trade and industry is canvassing opinion on the possible introduction of EPZs for some coastal cities, and possibly even an area near Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg.

While EPZs have been debated in the business pages of the commercial press, little discussion of the development impact has been published.

What are EPZs/FTZs?

Many variations of EPZs exist in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Most commonly, they are areas close to ports or airports set aside for export processing and investment incentives.

According to Leith Dunn, who has done extensive research on these 'Free Zones' in the Caribbean: "EPZ/FTZ incentives generally include exemption from customs and other duties, unrestricted repatriation of profits, good communication systems, subsidised infrastructure, cheap credit, cheap labour and an anti-union climate. A government's commitment to export investments and the country's political stability are also important factors."⁽¹⁾

Even if the current negotiations between the state, capital and labour manage to prevent such deregulated enclaves in the future South Africa, the experience of Caribbean women workers is useful for challenging women's working conditions in our own Industrial Decentralisation Points (IDP). Many of the same advantages and disadvantages of the IDPs hold for EPZs.

The advantages of EPZs include job creation, foreign investment, and foreign exchange earnings through exports and companies purchasing local goods and services. Technology is transferred and some spin-offs to the local

areas are generated.

Most important for development, however, is the impact on women. Many poorly skilled women earn an independent income, however meagre, for the first time in their lives. Many of these women are single parents with extended families to support.

In practice, especially in the Caribbean, EPZ-created jobs are for very young women, usually below the age of 25. Employment is unstable as it fluctuates according to market demands in North America, which has experienced long periods of recession.

Jobs are repetitive with few prospects for career development, and "accuracy and speed determine earning levels". The jobs are low skilled yet specialised, so skills are not easily transferred from one industry to another.

Furthermore, research has shown that working conditions in some export assembly industries are hazardous to workers' health, and the work environment is competitive and conflict-ridden rather than cooperative.

Gender needs

Dunn engaged in participatory research with women in EPZs in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. She examined both 'practical' and 'strategic' gender needs. These she defines as relating firstly to "women's ability to survive and fulfil their reproductive, productive and community-managing work" and secondly to "women's empowerment, their participation in decision-making and the establishment of a society that facilitates more equitable relationships between men and women".

In summarising her findings, Dunn suggests:

"Free Trade Zones are far more likely to enable women to meet practical gender needs and are important because





Material blues: Clothing and textile plants flourish in the EPZs, paying workers a pittance.

increasingly, many women are the primary breadwinners for their families. Jobs in the free zones also enable many of the workers to achieve some level of economic independence.

“The constraints of assembly production and the economic conditions imposed by structural adjustment, however, limit their ability to use these jobs for personal development and meeting strategic gender needs. Their time to organise in pursuit of these goals is extremely limited and this is further undermined by the strong anti-union climate in these zones. The culture of traditional male-dominated trade unions also present limitations.

“The case studies argue the need for a new type of organisation which reflects and responds to women’s multiple roles and needs. They also address women’s cross-class alliances as an important aspect of organising”.

The vast majority of plants represented in the EPZs were multi-national or transnational companies, mainly US-owned. Significant numbers were also owned by newly industrialised countries in Asia, such as Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Few investors obtained raw materials or services locally, let alone were interested in investing in the rest of the economy.

Some 95% of Jamaican EPZ plants manufactured clothing and textiles, the sector which generally seeks out the lowest paid workers internationally. Wages in the Dominican Republic’s EPZs were “87% lower than the amount paid in the USA, for only a slightly lower rate of productivity”.

But, as has happened in South Africa, struggles over time have changed conditions. These Caribbean countries can no longer offer unconditional low wage, union-free, politically stable labour forces. By the mid-1980s when EPZs had been in operation for some time, workers had started to organise for union recognition and higher wages.

Anti-union

Some foreign executives interviewed by Dunn expressed precisely the same views as some of those present in bantustan IDPs: “That they would prefer to relocate their factories and machines to another country than allow unions to operate”.

In fact, labour laws in the Dominican Republic’s EPZs exist on paper to enable exports to be sold in the USA, but companies in the Free Zone have always managed to ignore these laws. Until workers organise themselves, their rights will remain ignored.

In conclusion, Dunn found that despite enormous odds, women had made an effort to organise and had created the political space to do so.

“Their strong actions for survival are helping them to use the structure, patterns and rhythm of the FTZ work environment to organise. They use their limited time to build networks and form alliances in their struggle to pursue their own development”.

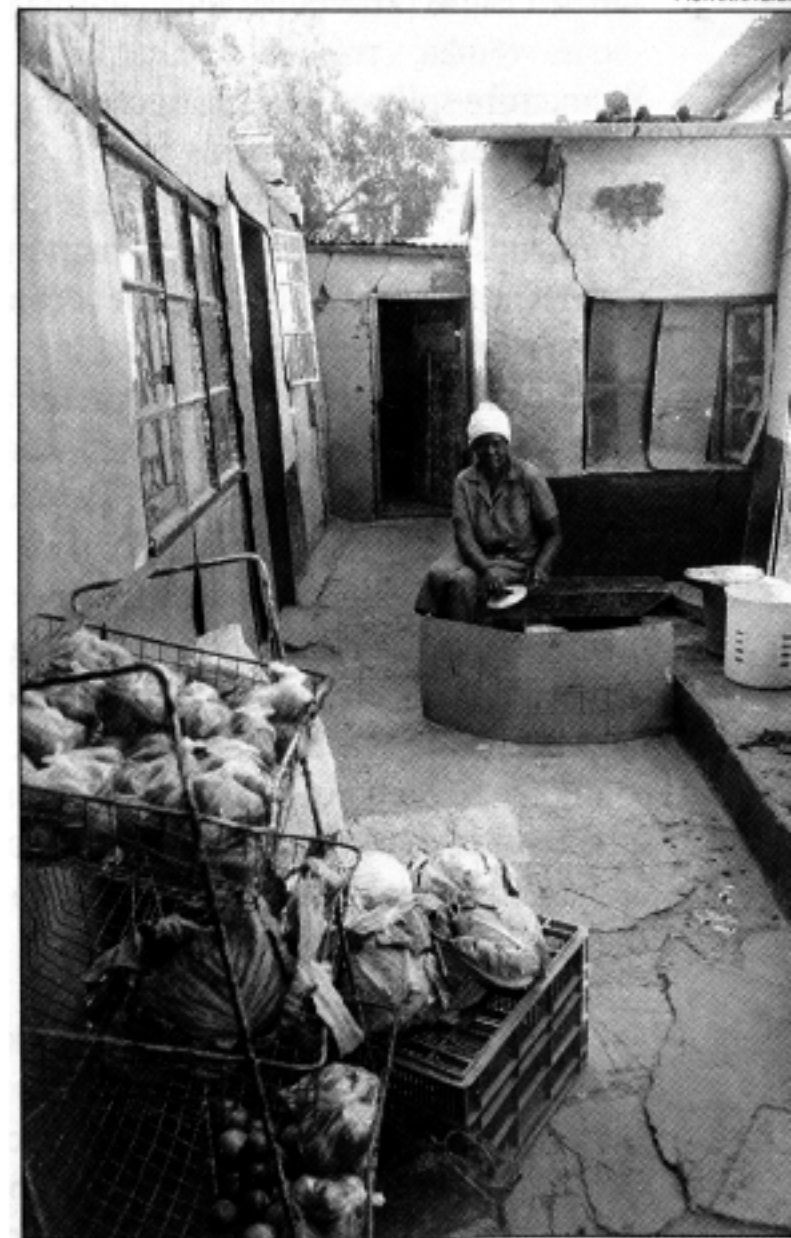
Clearly women can organise to improve both their material and political lives. But a progressive state should think very carefully before adopting an EPZ

strategy which might promote economic growth through exports, but has limited impact on development.

Macro-economic strategies for growth should be carefully and explicitly assessed for their development impact: exactly who will gain where, at whose expense. ■

(1) Dunn, Leith 1991 *Women organising for change in Caribbean Free Zones: Strategies and Methods, Working paper on Women, History and Development No. 14, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague.*

PIC: ANNA ZIEGLER



EPZs may bring more women into the formal economy.

Putting gender on the council's agenda

NOLULAMO GWAGWA from the Built Environment Support Group reports on attempts by Durban women to make local government more gender sensitive

THERE IS MUCH debate in the country about how local government should be restructured. Both the state and the ANC, have put forward their perspectives. Their visions differ fundamentally, but coincide in their silence on how such restructuring will address gender issues.

Because of the specific roles to which women are constrained, they have a particular relationship to local government. In their reproductive role, women as mothers and wives are important consumers of local government services since they are responsible for managing the household. Therefore, local government priorities – clean water or a new freeway, for example — have far-reaching implications for women.

How service provision is organised is equally important. As major consumers of local government services, women have an interest in improved service delivery. Therefore it is important that they are afforded a chance to influence policy and determine procedures and practices for implementation.

A woman's role as wage earner is seldom recognised. Women are still perceived as secondary earners, despite the importance of their incomes both in nuclear and women-headed households. As an employer, local government should be a trendsetter in increasing its proportion of women employees at all levels. This should be accompanied by supporting services like childcare facilities.

Local government has great potential to influence city-wide employment policies towards women through measures such as planning permission, grants and subsidies. It can also create conditions for independent income-generating activities through grants, credit schemes, access to land and premises and accommodative zoning legislation.

But it is not enough for women to complain about how their needs are not represented in local government. The solution also does not lie simply in having women councillors, as it cannot be assumed that women councillors will take up gender issues. It is important for women themselves to suggest how local government should be restructured to address their needs and interests.

As a step in this direction and after discussions amongst a wide range of women and women's organisations, the Durban Forum on Women's Issues was formed in November 1991. The first workshop was initiated by councillors Peter Mansfield and Yvonne Hart. A nine-person steering committee, two of whom are appointed by the council and the rest by



Water or roads: Women need to have a say in determining local government priorities.

the forum, was set up.

The forum is open to all individuals and organisations who are 'in pursuit of promoting the interests of women in every endeavour and all walks of life'. Participants are all women. The terms of reference of the forum are to:

- Identify the concerns of a wide range of women and women's organisations in relation to local government.
- Promote awareness of these concerns in the forum, the city council and the public.
- Educate women about local government functions, structures, procedures and debates.
- Influence council decisions on gender issues.
- Review and monitor the policies and decisions of the city council, particularly how they relate to their own women employees.
- Network with other groups and organisations that are involved in promoting the interests of women and democratising local government.
- Facilitate the development of policies and practices based on non-racialism and non-sexism.

The forum's success rests largely on its ability to build common ground amongst women from different political, racial, class and cultural backgrounds. There are bound to be conflicts and the forum will have to work out ways of resolving such conflicts.

The second major challenge is to influence council decisions, by ensuring that gender issues are on the council's agenda and are implemented in a gender sensitive way.

At this stage, the forum also has to concentrate on becoming more inclusive. For it to be a real force, it has to include women from Thokoza hostel, 'squatters' from Cato Manor and township women from Chesterville.

So far, the forum has resolved that participating organisations must take responsibility for drawing in women from different communities. However, the forum itself must also accept this challenge and campaign for women's inclusion in local government decision making. ■

Building a non-sexist civic

Women are scarce in the leadership of the civic movement. **NKELE NTINGANE**, the assistant secretary of the Alexandra Civic Association (ACO) is one of the rare women leaders. She spoke to **KERRY CULLINAN** about her experiences.

How did you first become involved in the civic movement?

I think my involvement happened naturally. I was born in Alexandra, and have been in ACO since its inception. I have always been aware of the discrepancies between life in the townships and the suburbs. So it was natural that I became involved in fighting for a better life in my township.

I was elected the assistant general secretary of ACO at its launch in 1989, then re-elected at our December conference.

Have you experienced any problems as a woman in the ACO leadership?

No, there haven't been any problems. ACO has always been non-sexist. There are five women on the executive of 17. This is small, but better than in 1989 when there were only two. There are many active women in ACO's structures. If I am questioned about a particular issue, ACO members will be looking at the content not that I am a woman.

What is the participation of women like in ACO?

It is very good. I think we have balanced participation. At least half our members are women. Women are represented on the yard, block and area committees. There are many women at the central committee, which is made up of the executive plus area representatives.

But many women experience family problems. They have to look after their children after work, so many cannot attend meetings. Not all our menfolk are ready to share household responsibilities.

Another thing I have noticed is that while women are not afraid to talk in



Ntingane: Family problems stop women from participating fully.

ACO meetings, if they are sent as delegates to other organisations, they find it very hard to speak

What is ACO doing to ensure that women participate more fully in its structures?

Until recently we had done nothing. But in December, we formed the Women's Development Desk to encourage the development of women.

We have a number of women being trained as community mediators at the Justice Centre, which is a project of ACO. In fact, more women than men have been trained there, so you can see that women are not just involved in the usual sewing projects.

The Desk has not done much yet. We want to develop women in ACO, but we don't want to lose our women members to a separate structure. So it is difficult to define the exact role of the desk,

except that it must empower women with skills so that they can take part in all ACO activities.

The Desk should also educate our menfolk to share the work in households.

What are some of the general problems facing women in Alexandra?

The violence is the most serious problem. Many families have been displaced. They have had to leave their homes, and are living in halls. Women fear for their children and their husbands in this violence.

The living conditions are also not ideal in Alexandra. There is much overcrowding and there are not enough services, especially for people living in the shacks. ACO has negotiated for services for shack-dwellers through the Joint Ne-

gotiating Forum, and there has been an improvement.

Are women involved in development projects in the township, such as the IDT project on the East Bank?

In ACO just about everybody, including women, have attended workshops on the IDT project. We have discussed the size of the stands, the subsidy etc. People are all aware of what is happening.

Sanco and its regional structures have very few women. What can be done about this?

I think we must use the existing structures, like the Civic Associations of Johannesburg (CAJ), the Civic Associations of the Southern Transvaal (CAST) right up to Sanco to raise women's issues and pressurise the leadership to take them seriously. ■

Latin America women build their own homes

By MONTY NARSOO, COPE



THE INVOLVEMENT OF women in development processes is seen as part of an affirmative action programme. The argument goes that in patriarchal societies, women have been excluded from acquiring skills that bring them into mainstream economic activity, so they are confined to marginal activities such as sewing groups.

A number of development projects in Latin America and Jamaica implicitly take a different approach. The projects are pointedly involved in housing. The skills that women have developed, even

the informal settlement is done by women, old men and children. The executive of the regional civic organisation, which provides the organisational and infrastructural backup, is all women.

In Sao Francisco, outside of Sao Paulo, there is a mutual aid project, where families assist in building their own homes. The office is staffed entirely by women, who act as the project managers. Their job is to liaise with professional consultants, keep time, manage the money and the use of materials.

The head of the project, however, admitted that although most of the work is done by women, when it comes to political positions men are invariably elected.

In Buenos Aires one of the leaders of the housing resistance movement, the Argentinian equivalent of Actstop, said that women usually started the resistance to evictions and played vital part in building the organisations but men usually appropriated the organisation when it became high profile.

In the greenfields development project in Cordoba, the women control the materials and tools depots and the shop steward for workers on the site is a woman. The chief technical advisor to the project said that women played a major role.

Women tended to manage the depots better and also had better communication skills, which is vital to cooperative projects. A large percentage of women were single parents and also unemployment hit women hardest, so they had more time to work on the project.

In Argentina and Brazil, the projects we visited had significant contributions by women but, by and large, men domi-

nated the political structures.

In Chile and Jamaica, a concerted attempt was made to setting up women's programmes and projects.

In Santiago there is the 'Women and Local Development' project, consisting of young women, who are involved in urban upgrading, job skills training, and income generation activities.

The women there are involved in the actual construction of their own community centre. This will provide a creche, training, laundry and other facilities for young women.

In Chile, it is estimated that over 20% of households are headed by women. There are also high numbers of women single parents in Jamaica.

To cope with itinerant men in Kingston, a group called the St Peter Claver Women's Housing Co-operative was formed. Membership is only open to women and in any of the housing developments, women are given title. The experience in Jamaica is that when couples separate, men usually retain the house.

The two issues that arise from this brief overview of the Latin American and Jamaican experience is that women's skills and contributions are generally underestimated in the development process and that special programmes need to be put into place for women. These programmes have to target women's specific needs in male-dominated societies.

A simple affirmative action approach is likely to miss some of these nuances. ■



Homes built by the mutual aid project in Sao Francisco.

in very macho societies, have been primarily around managing homes.

In development projects, issues of budgeting, record-keeping, waste, health and child-care management are vital to sustain projects. In most of the projects we visited, women played a crucial role in management.

This approach, however, does not detract from the huge obstacles women face in these developing societies where men have easier access to scarce resources, such as education and training, and where traditional values reinforce the second class status of women.

In Sao Joao de Meriti suburb in Rio de Janeiro, the major upgrading work in

Women are 'the foundation'

KERRY CULLINAN speaks to **LINDA LEAKS**, an organiser for a self-help organisation, WISH, based in Washington DC, USA, who spent a month in the country recently.

What have you been doing in South Africa?

I have been primarily involved in the Seven Buildings project. Tenants are trying to buy seven blocks of flats in inner Johannesburg and turn them into a cooperative housing project. I have been giving tenants a picture of what cooperative ownership is. The Seven Buildings project is very exciting. It is the first time that african people will have an opportunity to purchase property and turn it into a cooperative. The project will set a precedent for low income cooperatives, which we have found to be one answer to the housing crisis.

How do women participate in the Seven Buildings project?

Women are the real foundation of the project, but they are not in the leadership. So the work that they do is not reflected in the leadership. In the sixties and seventies there was exactly the same scenario in the States.

How have you encouraged them to overcome this?

I have suggested that they form a women's union. This would help them to support one another, raise the questions they are confronted with and build leadership skills. Men have culture and tradition behind their behaviour towards women. Women only have each other.

But I haven't been able to lobby the women as much as I would have liked. Women are usually in the kitchen preparing refreshments or haven't been able to come to some of the meetings.

Have you been able to speak to men in Actstop (the civic involved in the project) about ensuring that women participate properly in the project?

There are some men who express support for women having a forum. I have had some real serious debates with some of the male leadership about their attitude towards women. I don't see how it is possible to advocate one thing for african people and not see that the way women are treated contradicts this.

I raise one example of how my cooperative deals with violence against women in the home. There was at least one

family in the building where the woman and children were being beaten, so we stated in our house rules that such behaviour is a violation of the cooperative.

We have also taken a conscious decision to make it uncomfortable to have these acts in our building. We have the police in once a month to discuss what they are doing to make our neighbourhood safe. People also come from battered women's shelters to talk about violence against women and children and we distribute literature.

How does your cooperative work?

I live in a low income cooperative that consists of 27 units. The landlord tried to force us out of the building. Eventually we were able to win the building and turn it into a cooperative where tenants became the owners.

We elect a board of directors to run the cooperative. The board monitors a professional management company which takes care of the day-to-day business of the building.

Then we have committees. The financial committee, with the management committee, prepares the annual budget which the membership

has to vote on. The membership committee interviews prospective owners. Then there is security and maintenance. To keep costs down, members have to be involved in doing a lot of the work.

Money is raised by WISH's development consultant from places like banks, insurance companies, and government subsidies for low income people.

There is also a linkage project in the city that requires office developers in the downtown area to provide a certain amount of money for low income housing development or improvement, if that developer receives extra density rights. My building received a grant from a linkage project.

How do your experiences here compare to the USA?

The experiences are very similar. The people are the same. They don't have a lot of income or formal education, but they are very intelligent and determined to do better for themselves. Although there are more men involved here, the foundation is women. ■



FIG: ABDUL SHARIFF

Linda Leaks: Women only have each other.

De Loor from a developmental perspective

By PLANACT's Housing Policy team

THE DE LOOR housing report grew out of township conditions a decade ago. During the 1980s, the government left the provision and financing of housing to market forces.

But problems such as affordability, corrupt local administrations, conservative lending practices and social conflict blocked capital investment in low cost housing. Overcrowding grew worse and services deteriorated.

Negotiations over housing between representative community groups and authorities emerged in the context of rapidly disintegrating urban policy. After the start of constitutional negotiations in 1990, local negotiations proliferated.

In 1990, the state appointed the De Loor task force to review the housing dispensation and advise on a new strategy. The task force suggests a new policy context which focuses on financial mechanisms to drive the housing market into areas where it has been excluded.

The report shows advances in at least two aspects. First, it identifies a 'synergistic relationship' between the state and the housing market, with the state's role being to steer the market towards socially desirable goals. This is a shift from the 1980s, where the state divested itself of responsibility for facilitating formal shelter for the poor.

Second, it creates a negotiation mechanism for identifying land and establishing townships. Until now, land use planning and township establishment decisions were unilaterally taken by central government.

But there are serious gaps in all the main areas of the report, namely those dealing with land use planning, housing delivery, local authority powers and subsidies.

Financing and subsidies

The report estimates the current urban backlog at 1,3 million units — considerably less than estimates of two to three million for the entire country. Thus the estimated R34-billion needed to redress the backlog represents an urban bias and ignores the up to R41-b needed to meet rural housing needs.

The report concludes that the economy suffers from capital shortages, so the ideal (a finished formal unit for all) has to be scaled down and finance borrowed on the international capital market. Its macro-financing proposals are weak as they do not consider the potential dangers of deregulated housing finance and dependency on foreign capital.

The substance of the report resides in its four subsidies, aimed at addressing the market's failure to deliver low cost housing finance. It is difficult to evaluate these mechanisms because their sourcing and conduiting are not specified and the capital involved appears not to have been calculated. A cursory examination reveals the following limitations:

- subsidies do not take into account differential land costs;
- densification and other planning mechanisms are not targeted;
- it assumes that people below the breadline can afford deposits, service housing loans and services;
- subsidies do not target consolidating informal housing.

The report has no method for determining the strategic location of land for residential purposes, and makes no provision for subsidising land costs. Its underlying assumption is that a compact city should be the basis for identifying much needed residential land. But densification could lead to ghettos and the breakdown of services.

The report thus fails to deal convincingly with the built form of the city and its relation to peri-urban and more peripheral areas. The absence of a definite approach to transportation and land allocation are glaring omissions.

Housing delivery

The role of private developers in housing delivery is stressed. There is no definition of how housing units should be provided: the task force does not seem to grasp that a particular form of provision, through a specific type of delivery enterprise is technically and socially appropriate for particular housing products.

Private developers' experiences have been confined to middle and higher income brackets. Some developers are notorious for delivering badly constructed houses. Communities have also found that private developer delivery provides no room for their participation. The report thus indicates a limited understanding of real community participation.

There is no provision for consolidating the serviced site into a finished, serviced unit. The role of local authorities in delivering rented accommodation is downplayed. Local authorities' powers are not specified. Given the negative developmental impact of black local authorities, the report needs to be more specific about powers in relation to servicing, financing and development.

No new local institutional mechanisms are suggested to facilitate the emergence of housing associations, non-profit enterprises and co-operatives.

The report carries strong traces of top-down, technocratic remedies and its failure to grasp development as an integrated process.

While it contains interesting ideas which could be incorporated into a progressive developmental strategy, if applied in its current form, it is likely to lead to sprawling squatter settlements on the fringes of major cities. ■

GLOSSARY

abominable (p. 32): horrifying
advocacy (p. 2): promotion
alienated (p. 37): aloof
annals (p. 24): records, archives
apathy (p. 28): indifference
astute (p. 38): clever
at wits' end (p. 37): frustrated
autonomous (p. 22): the power or right to be independent

bastions (24): strongholds
buttressing (p. 16): supporting

castigating (p. 35): scolding
coercive (p. 2): forceful
complicity (p. 35): guilt by association

decrepit (p. 25): worn out
defunct (p. 39): dead
delve (p. 15): dig
destitute (p. 27): poor
devoid (p. 28): lacking
disillusionment (p. 15): loss of faith in
dissidents (p.20): people who disagree with the establishment

effete (p. 27): unproductive
entangled (p. 37): mixed in
exacerbate (p. 15): worsen
exonerate (p. 35): free from blame

flak (p. 15): strong criticism
fluctuates (R6): alternates
fomenting (p. 22): feeding

gaff (p. 31): nonsense
gauge (p. 34): estimate
glitzy (p. 37): flashy
gory (p. 26): gruesome
gridlocked (p. 23): at a standstill
gripes (p. 36): complains

hinged (p. 36): depended on
hogged (p. 36): being greedy
honed(p. 37): carefully prepared

incongruous (p 27): out of place

WIP strives to communicate with as diverse a range of readers as possible. To this end, we give the meaning of some of the more difficult words found in this issue.

interdict (p. 18): ban
internecine (p. 26): causing deaths on both sides
intransigence (p. 32): refusal to agree

lambasted (p. 27): severely criticized
luring (p. 20): attracting

moratorium (p. 18): pause
moribund (p.21): dying
muck and mire (p. 25): harsh reality

nadir (p. 13): lowest point
nostalgia (p. 35): thoughts of the past

nuclear family (R4): mother, father and children

obscures (p.28): conceals

peri-urban (p. 12): on the outskirts of the city

perpetrators (p.15): those committing an act

piggybacks (p. 39): making alliances for selfish reasons

polemical (p. 38): controversial
presumptuous (p. 32): arrogant

rambling (p.20): wandering thoughts

repatriation of profits (p. 6): moving corporate profits from one country to another

retrospective (p. 4): operating back in time

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