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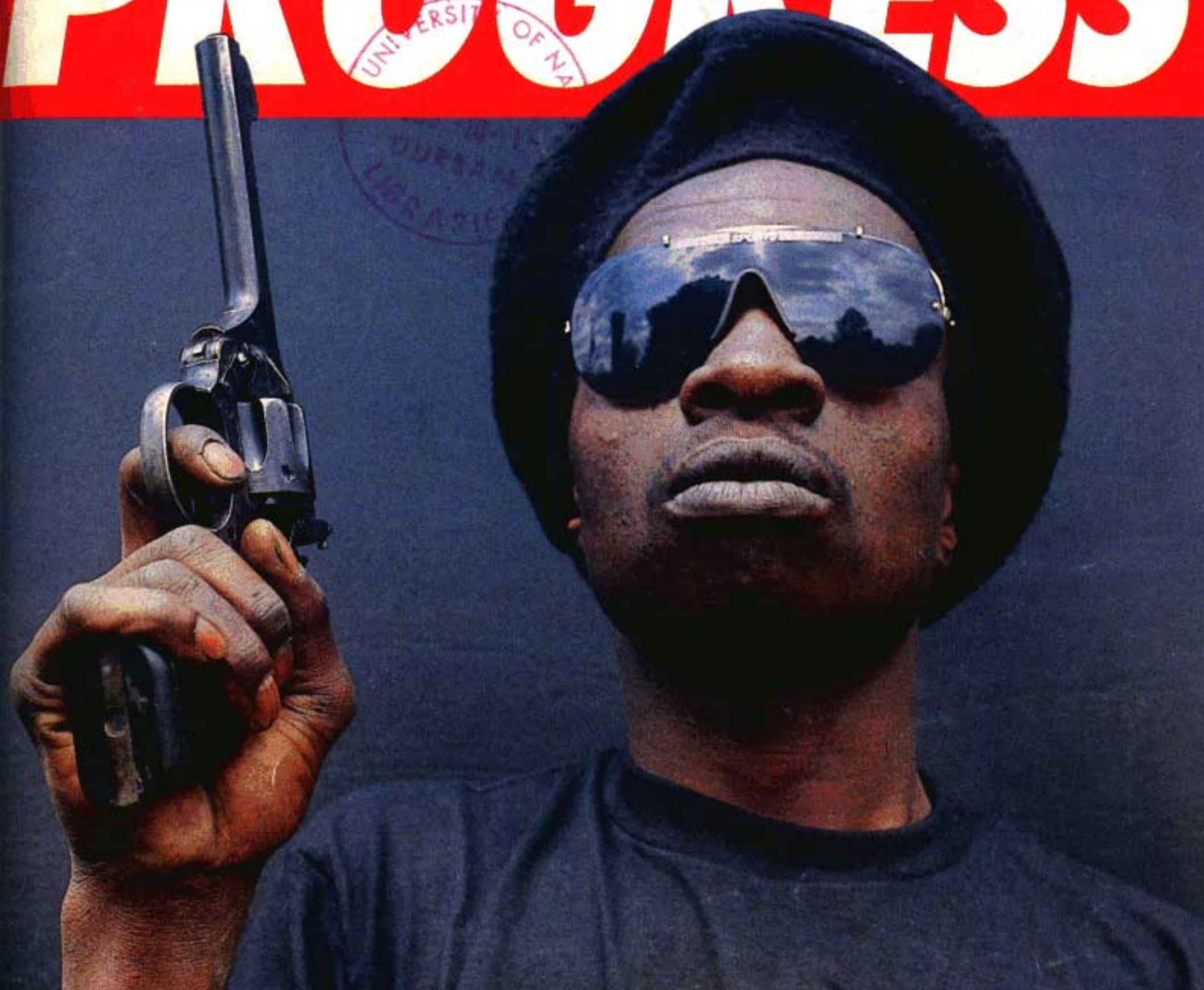
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WORK IN

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WIP 92 • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1993

PROGRESS



INSIDE THE PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS

Running with the PAC

TWO HATS, TWO SEATS: Cosatu leaders head for parliament • **MY FIRST LIMPET MINE:** Nain Grosskopf speaks personally
THE PEACE ACCORD: Why peace is such a dirty word • **GLOBE OF GIES LOGG:** The UN's real 'mission' in Somalia

Editorial comment

Eyes on the prize

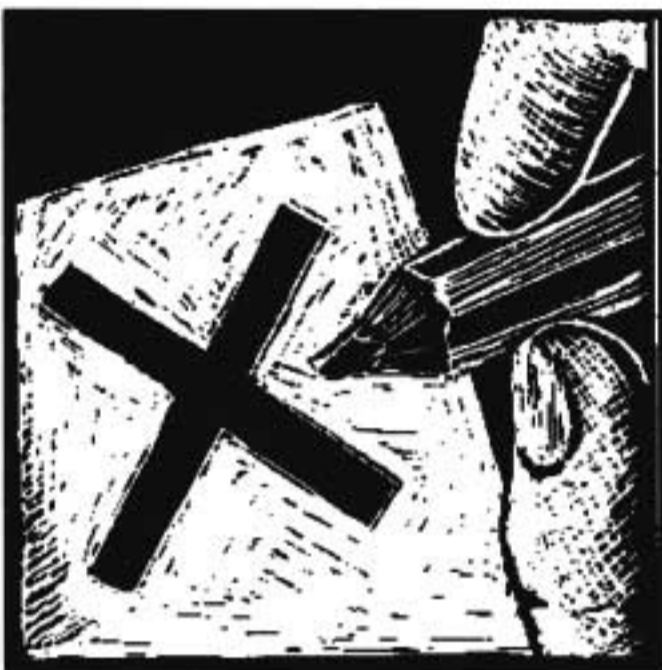
All eyes are on the election in this edition of *Work In Progress*.

● We assess the prospects of the PAC, one of the key players in the run-up to the election — and, by most accounts, a likely contender for third place. Journalist John Battersby and academic Evangelos Mantzaris examine the PAC's approach to elections, its policies and its chances, while researcher Bob Mattes looks at its likely support base. They cover plenty of new ground, and provide an insight into one of the country's political 'dark horses' (no pun intended).

● We also look at the impact elections will have on the labour movement, where Cosatu could lose at least 20 of its key leaders to an ANC government. The SACP's Jeremy Cronin, a regular writer for *WIP*, warns of the dangers of dispatching too many key unionists to parliament — but also stresses that the selection process used by the ANC-alliance in drawing up its electoral list must be driven from below, not imposed from above.

● In addition, we look at growing calls for ways to harness leftwing support, particularly in the run-up to the election. Two different approaches are suggested: Sanco's Mzwanele Mayekiso's idea is to bolster the SACP, while SACP member Fareed Abdullah argues for a broad conference of socialist forces to map out a way forward.

● And then there's the question of violence. It's



become the big stick for both FW de Klerk and Gatsha Buthelezi — their excuse for postponing an election they are obviously going to lose. Hein Marais tries to unpack some of their arguments and, along with peace worker Laura Pollecott, looks at what it will take to stop the violence.

All in all, we have a wide range of views in this edition of *Work In Progress*. Activists, journalists, academics and researchers are all stretching their minds, debating some of the vital issues facing us in

the next seven months and beyond.

Having said this, it seems as if one of the many spin-offs of the election has been the revival of discussion and debate. There's a distinct increase in the circulation of discussion papers and strategy documents ... a general revolution of ideas.

Work In Progress is keen to play a part in that revolution. We would like all our readers to consider themselves prospective contributors to *WIP*. We appreciate responses, comments and interventions from our readers. We thrive on debate and relish discussion.

If it's a short, sharp point, write us a letter (we now offer payment to letter-writers). If you have a lengthy response, write an article (we will generally pay for those, too).

As the election gets closer, the need for a free flow of ideas increases. *Work In Progress* is ready to play a role in that process. — Chris Vick

Work In Progress incorporating *New Era*

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MY VERY FIRST LIMPET MINE

Still in exile, former MK guerilla Hein Grosskopf will probably be the last man in. Read what he has to say about the underground and the aftermath

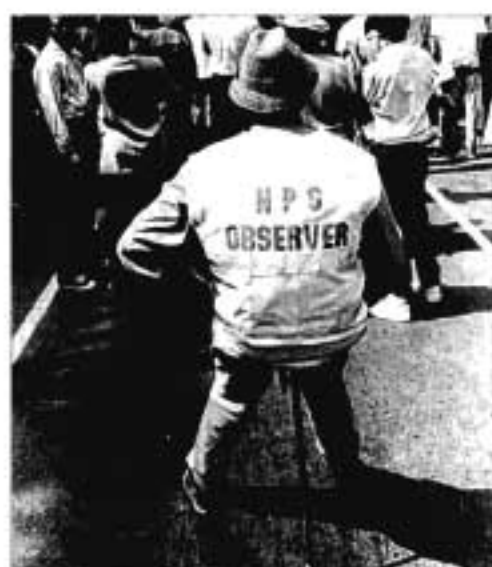
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RUNNING WITH THE PAC

Inside the PAC: A look at its strengths, weaknesses and prospects in the first non-racial elections.

— *Page 12*



WHY PEACE IS A DIRTY WORD

Peace activist Laura Pollecutt looks back in anger at two years of the National Peace Accord

— *Page 21*

FROM TWO HATS TO TWO SEATS

Worker leaders prepare to take their seats in parliament. Zolile Mtshelwane and Jeremy Cronin look at the implications

— *Page 29*

GLOBOCOP GOES LOCO

Disarm those UN 'peacekeepers' before they kill us all, says renowned journalist John Pilger

— *Page 42*



POPCRU

Policing the policemen's union

THE NEED TO POLICE THE POLICE FORCE is obvious. But who's going to police the policemen's union?

It may be necessary, given allegations of "financial indiscretion" which have been made against Peter Nkuna, general secretary of the Police & Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru).

Nkuna has been suspended from union duty after being unable to explain the whereabouts of over R50 000 missing from the union's funds since early

this year.

Nkuna, a snappy dresser, joined Popcru while a prison warder at Sun City (Diepkloof Prison). He rose to become head of the union, replacing Lieutenant Gregory Rockman and winning widespread support among the rank and file.

Nkuna could not be contacted for comment — he was recently suspended from his union duties after a special executive meeting confronted him about the missing funds. It is not known if he is back at Sun City or, if so, in what capacity. ■

— WIP Correspondent



■ **MUDDY WATERS:** Provision to rural areas is not a priority

Dry black season

WHITE FARMERS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE the bulk of government drought aid, despite attempts to channel more funding into impoverished rural communities.

The most recent example of this is the Manpower Department's R52-million allocation for water supply — 72% of which is earmarked for programmes which service the commercial farming sector.

An additional R131-million is earmarked by the department for "live-stock farmers in RSA", and R20-million in assistance to the sugar industry.

Only R10-million is earmarked for joint services boards in Natal/KwaZulu — the area hardest hit by the drought — and R3-million for the Water Supply Task Force (WSTF).

It will be the WSTF and the joint services boards which have to deal with the crippling effects of the worst drought since 1921. Their funding will primarily be used for emergency drilling and borehole provision for rural communities. In some areas, the WSTF is the sole water provider for isolated villages.

There is insufficient funding for any large-scale intervention in water provision to rural areas; WSTF staff say the small, piecemeal allocations made it impossible to undertake the sort of long term water supply initiatives necessary for the rural areas.

A ray of hope for small farmers, however, is the opening up of allocations by the Department of Agriculture: R25-million has been set aside for "beginning farmers". ■

— WIP Correspondent

WORK IN

PROGRESS

JUNIOR REPORTER

Work in Progress is looking for a motivated, hardworking person to join its staff as a junior reporter. The successful applicant should have:

- Some experience of journalism.
- An excellent grasp of English.
- A strong interest in developmental and civic issues.

Preference will be given to people who have extensive experience in community organisations. The post is for six months, with the possibility of renewal. Some on-the-job training will be given. People should send their applications, together with copies of stories they have written and the names of three contactable referees, to: The Editor, Work in Progress, PO Box 32716, Braamfontein 2017

Deadline: 1 October

Applications which do not meet the requirements will not be considered



■ FINGERED: Andrew Masondo



PHOTOS: PHUMLA RADU (ANC PHOTO UNIT)

■ FINGERED: Mzwai Piliso

The two who got away

TWO NAMES ARE NOTABLY ABSENT FROM the list of “wrongdoers” drawn up by the Motsuenyane inquiry into human rights abuses in the ANC’s Angolan camps.

The Motsuenyane Commission — the ANC’s third attempt to investigate its own wrong-doings — makes no findings on:

- Andrew Masondo, who was removed from the ANC national executive and the SACP central committee after an investigation into abuses in the camps.

- Mzwai Piliso, head of ANC security from the late ‘70s to the mid-80s and supervisor of Quadro camp, scene of most of the atrocities.

Both men have managed to survive repeated allegations of involvement in torture and other human rights abuses.

Masondo, for example, was recently appointed political commissar of Umkhonto we Sizwe — despite being named on several occasions in the past as one of the chief abusers of detainees.

Piliso — now assisting the ANC in Transkei — was the brain behind the construction of the ANC’s eight camps

in Angola, including Quadro, during the late 1970s. He personally supervised the construction of Quadro at an old banana-ripening site. The camp was seen as a lock-up facility for “rehabilitation” of dissidents and became the ANC’s chief detention camp.

Piliso gave evidence before the Motsuenyane commission earlier this year, admitting that he had beaten and “strenuously interrogated” detainees, and had tied inmates to trees during questioning.

Yet the commission made no findings on his actions, nor was he listed among those against whom the ANC should take action.

No testimony

Masondo did not even testify before the commission, nor is he named in any significant way by any of the detainees who were abused. This is despite numerous accusations in the past by former ANC detainees that he and Piliso ordered the detention, beating and torture of suspected enemy agents.

According to the *Weekly Mail*, Masondo is also “widely held to be responsible for the conditions in the Angolan camps which led to the mutiny by MK cadres in 1984”.

It’s not clear how Piliso and Masondo managed to escape censure by the commission — particularly Pil-

iso, who was directly responsible for most of what happened at Quadro and admitted some of his deeds. Instead, his underlings (some of whom still work at ANC HQ in Johannesburg) were found guilty of assault and other charges, and his superiors (including MK commander Joe Modise and NEC member Jacob Zuma) were held responsible for the detention of suspected dissidents.

No action

It is unclear whether any direct action will be taken at this stage against those who *were* found guilty of misconduct. The ANC NEC’s call for a Truth Commission to investigate all human rights abuses — which came just a week after *Work In Progress*’ publication of widespread support for such a probe — means the movement’s third investigation into its own human rights abuses will have about as much impact as the first two on those individuals who overstepped the mark.

- Postscript: In an interview last year on the abuses in ANC camps, Chris Hani told *WIP*: “Within the ANC, there are certain people — in my own view — who I would oppose as part of a new security force ... There must be clear guidelines to avoid the sort of thing that happened.”

— Chris Vick



RUSSIA

To Russia, with love

REMEMBER ALL THE TALK DURING THE Cold War about the skilled propagandists of the Soviet Union? Now, apparently, Russian leaders need the help of Americans to peddle their propaganda — and the US is even paying for the exercise.

Last September, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded the Sawyer Miller Group a \$6.2-million contract to assist the Russian Committee for the Management of State Property — Moscow's ministry of

privatisation.

Sawyer Miller, a consulting firm, plots public relations strategy for political candidates and besmirched corporations. In Russia its mission is to help the ministry sell its privatisation programme to a sceptical public.

Many Russians have grumbled about corruption in the privatisation campaign and consider the government's voucher scheme — under which Russian citizens were given certificates to use to invest in companies — a joke.

Sawyer and Miller have linked up with ad agency Young & Rubicam and plotted an advertising blitz which includes spots extolling the virtues of

privatisation. The firm also sent advance teams to towns and cities across Russia to organise "privatisation days", celebrations that included rallies and music shows. The American experts helped plan a "rock concert for privatisation" in Red Square.

Flushed with free enterprise, Sawyer Miller has now asked USAID to hike the fee of one of its bigwigs working on the Russian contract to \$1 150 per day. It is not known what the response was from USAID, which doles out around \$6-billion in foreign aid annually.

— *The Nation*

RUSSIA

Yeltsin soaks up union anger

BORIS YELTSIN'S RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT has been hit by the biggest — and most varied — wave of strikes since the coal industry struggles of 1989-1991.

Once again, coal miners are at the forefront of the labour actions. But also mobilised are timber, defence industry, television and radio, public transport and health workers — even weather forecasters.

A crucial development is the shift by Russia's mass trade union federation towards direct, active opposition to the government. Abortive efforts at cooperation with the Yeltsin government saw leaders of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) recently develop a "plan of collective action".

This marked the demise of an unrewarding honeymoon within a corporatist framework. The focus now is the defence of workers' rights.

The strikes follow the crippling effects of Yeltsin's "shock therapy" economic reforms. An August poll showed only 26% of Russians approved of his policies.

Following actions by defence workers, Rostov coalminers in August shut down 38 pits for 24 hours. Other workers halted shipments in sympathy. Farmworkers protested in several Russian cities for increased credits and lower taxes. Usually passive sectors soon followed suit, with timberworkers threatening to strike if promised subsidies were not received and healthworkers issuing an ultimatum to the government.

Unions have now set up regional and sectoral strike committees which have a key role in the FNPR's plan of action, which includes building an all-Russian conference of strike commit-

tees. In addition, unions intend launching a supreme court suit against top officials for failing to implement wage agreements and for other breaches of labour legislation.

If the government chooses intransigence, the union movement might by mid-October be able to unleash a more concerted campaign of strikes.

"If the government continues to ignore our demand that it negotiate, we will push for the resignation of the present cabinet," vows FNPR deputy chairperson Vasily Romanov.

— *Renfrey Clarke*

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Another child-killer

AIDS COULD SOON BE THE LEADING KILLER of infants and children under five years in southern Africa, according to World Health Organisation (WHO) projections.

In Tanzania, where one out of every 10 children dies before his or her first birthday, the *World Bank News* estimates that nearly 35 000 children had been infected with the HIV virus by

1992 — the majority through mother-to-infant transmission. In Namibia, the number of HIV cases among children last year shot up by 140%.

WHO estimates that children born with the virus have an 80% chance of dying before reaching the age of five.

Because of the difficulties diagnosing infants with HIV, information on children with the disease is scarce. WHO estimates that half of all HIV infections in sub-saharan Africa by



LATIN AMERICA

Striking a Latin American rock

WOMEN DELEGATES TO THE FOURTH gathering of the Sao Paulo Forum have slammed organisers and delegates for leaving women's issues on the sidelines.

The forum, a veritable who's who of the Latin American Left, was started in Sao Paulo four years ago to develop dialogue between leftwing parties and movements. This year's meeting was held in Havana.

One of the highlights of the four-day talkshop was the indignant rebuke from women delegates on the final day. Hardly any women were to be seen amid the broad range of leftwing political parties, social movements and guerilla groups attending. In fact, of the 233 delegates from over 100 parties, only 25 (10%) were women.

The Nicaraguan and Cuban delegations, for example (like most delegations) were all-male.

A statement circulated by women delegates said: "From the island of Cuba, small giant, symbol and example of anti-imperialist resistance, land of Mariana Grajales and Ana Betancourt, the women present in this gathering want to point out the obvious: 'This has been a masculine forum.'"

Women have been at the forefront



■ **LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR: Women workers in the Dominican Republic — like most Latin American women, they are the first to lose their jobs when economies go sour**

of struggles throughout Latin America, from mass mobilisations, political parties, social struggles in communities to armed struggle in the cities and mountains.

"But when it comes time for leadership and decision-making, we are left on the sidelines," the delegates declared. "And this forum is one example."

They pointed out that government retreats from social programmes always hit women hardest: "We are the first to be expelled from the productive sector

of the labour market to the informal sector (housework, childcare, street vending). When we do get hired, we have to deal with the double shift — one in poorly-paid occupations, the other unpaid at home."

Sharply addressing parties that stand a good chance of winning their next election, the women were adamant that equality means more than the number of women on voting lists. "We want to share in the decision-making," they demanded.

They pointed out that lengthy debates about the content of democracy, for example, failed to pay even lip service to women's realities. Democratising gender relations in daily life (at home and at work), and democratising party structures were not central issues for the male delegates.

"Either we consider this a problem of biological inferiority, or it expresses a problem of oppressive social, historic and cultural relations which we should confront once and for all," the women said in their statement, which ended with a list of actions to set the ball rolling.

— Karen Wald/WIP

1990 were women, which would mean an increase in child mortality of 20-43%.

Risky business

So should HIV-positive women risk pregnancy? In countries where women's worth is judged by their ability to bear children, it is difficult for women who are HIV-positive to avoid pregnancy. In southern Zambia, for example, about one in every three HIV-

positive women have told counsellors that it is impossible to refuse their husbands' and families' demands that they become pregnant again.

In Zimbabwe, Aids is classified as a disease considered harmful to an unborn baby, and abortion is therefore permitted. But abortion is generally ruled out by the fact that social pressure sees to it that women have very little choice whether to bear children. ■

— SARDC

personally



Holed up in Britain, still waiting for indemnity, former MK cadre **HEIN GROSSKOPF** talks about the underground, exile and his craving for South African wine

Any confessions you'd like to make?

I'm an ordinary man, awaiting his 30th birthday with trepidation. I suffer from early-morning breath and have neither horns nor halo.

Are you one of those lefties who listen to Vivaldi on Sunday mornings?

No, I'm one of those lefties who listens to Vivaldi, Bach and Dvorak (played very softly) once our daughter is asleep. If I play any music during the day, she insists on having her own nursery rhyme tape played instead.

Do you sing in the bath?

Yes. Dylan, Joan Baez, Beatles, Leonard Cohen, occasionally Laurika Rauch. But I'm *not* musically gifted. During military training, where we had to sing whenever we marched, I was under orders not to sing. One young man in my section suggested I had been infiltrated into the ANC so that I could sing and demoralise everyone. Therefore, I sing softly.

Do you feel safe where you are?

Yes, as safe as I can feel anywhere.

What's your greatest fear?

That it will all seem to have been in vain; all the sacrifice, all the pain, all the hopes, all the wasted humanity, and that SA will descend into a bottomless pit of self-immolating violence.

And your greatest hope?

To sit on the beach with my family and friends in five years' time, and then turn on the radio, secure in the knowledge

that the worst news I could hear would be a Western Province defeat.

Your new book, *Artistic Graves*: How would you describe it?

A political thriller/adventure story with a leftwing slant ... I would like to have it described as simply "a cracking good tale".

How much of it is true?

To quote from the introduction to *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*: Every word in this book is true, even though none of it ever happened.

I've tried to stick very closely to both the political and practical considerations that governed the underground and much — but by no means all — of the commentary ascribed to Ben (Benadie, the main character and narrator), Mongane and Julia are or were my own feelings.

In spite of my choice of narrator (first person) and main character (a presumably Afrikaans-speaking young white male), I do not identify myself in any major way with Benadie. I prefer writing in the first person as I like the tone it gives a book, especially a thriller, and chose a white heterosexual male because I am not yet a good enough writer to write from a black homosexual female perspective.

How many people have you killed? And how do you feel about it?

I cannot at this stage be drawn into any definite statements. Any answer would endanger me/other people.

How do I feel about death? The main reason this book is called *Artistic Graves* is the fact that Keorapetse

MANDELA'S SERMON
False gods killed the poet
in me
Now I dig graves
with artistic precision
— Keorapetse Kgositsile

'That poem crystallises the sheer, utter waste of war. War — and killing — may be just, it may be necessary or even inevitable, but it is always a tragic loss and waste.' — Hein Grosskopf, England, August 1993

Hein Grosskopf

Kgositsile's poem crystallised something I'd been thinking for some time — the sheer, utter waste of war. War — and killing — may be just, it may be necessary or even inevitable, but it is always a tragic loss and waste. Any death, even if it saves the lives of others, is a loss, and cannot be cause for celebration.

When and where did you detonate

your first limpet mine?

During training, in a trench "somewhere in Angola".

During your time in the underground here, how close do you think you came to being captured?

More frequently than I deserved, partly because of my skin — at least twice, I believe, because the SAP hesitated to

admit they were looking for a paleface. I never thought I'd have reason to be grateful for apartheid, but there you have it.

The state spent a lot of time moulding you into public enemy number one. How has that affected you?

It has affected my life beyond recognition. But, as my great-grandmother is reputed to have said: If you go to sit underneath the chickens, don't complain when they shit on your head.

If you were given 30 seconds, unedited, on SABC-TV, what would you say?

Let's never, ever forget the past. In fact, let's lance the boil, let all the pus from past spill out — but then let us forgive and get on with our lives.

Do you have a specific message for white South Africans?

You are South Africans — Africans — before you are white. There is finally a real chance that we, all of us, can build a decent, viable and just life in South Africa. For everyone's sake — your own as much as anyone else's — do not do anything that could endanger this fragile growth. South Africa is your home. Don't leave. Stay, and let's face the future together.

When do you hope to return home? Will you feel safe when you get here?

I intend to return a month after receiving indemnity — as long as it will take me to work my notice. My hope is that this will be in the very near future.

I will be under threat at home, but probably no more so than anybody living in or near a hostel in Thokoza or a dozen other townships.

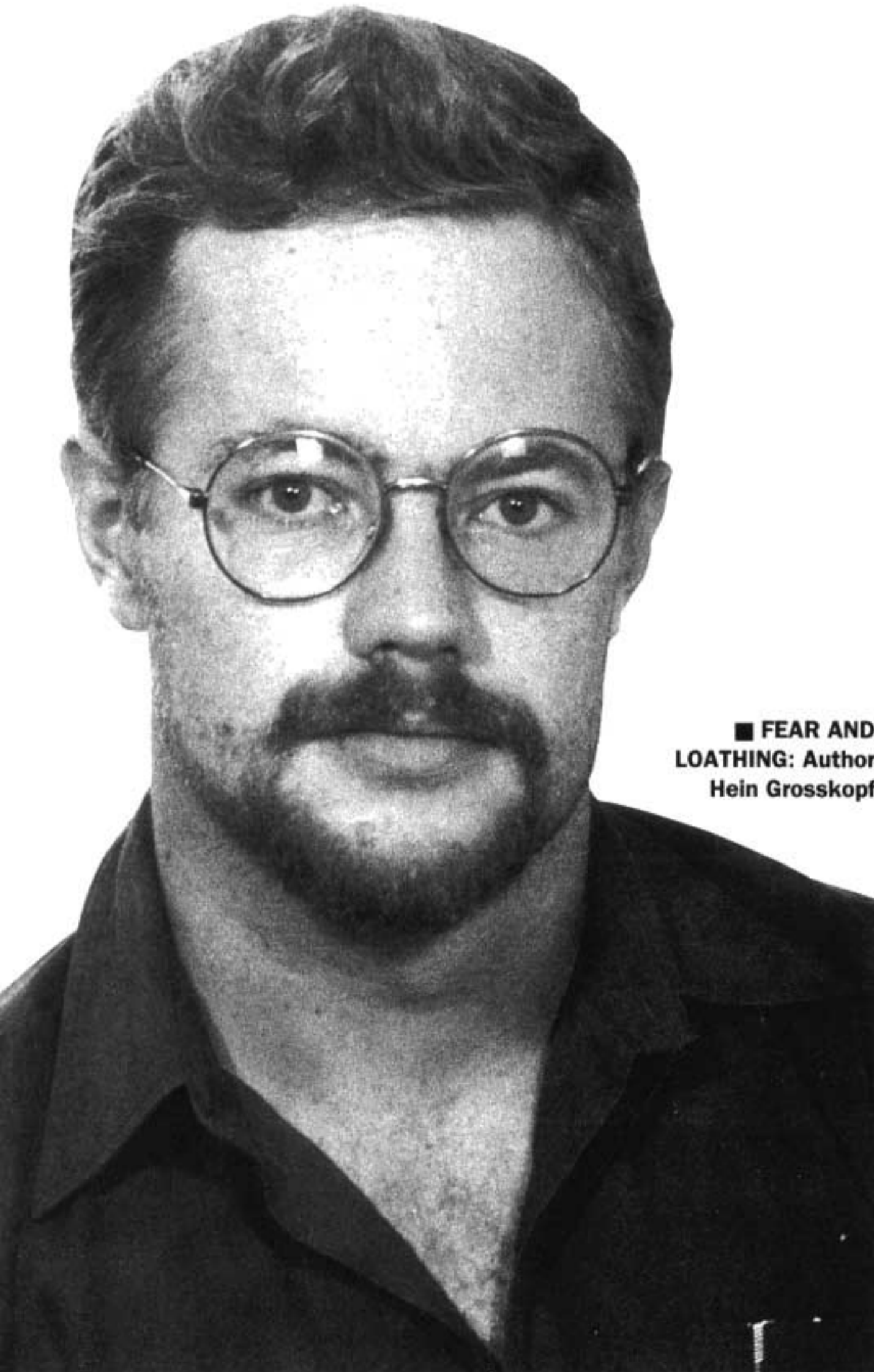
What do you miss most about South Africa?

The warmth, noisiness, humour and sheer bloodymindedness of our people. And real Afrikaans, Tassenberg and boontjebredie.

And what do you miss least?

The sheer bloodymindedness of our people — oh, and SABC News. ■

— Interview by Chris Vick



■ FEAR AND LOATHING: Author Hein Grosskopf



Killing time

Violence has become the big stick for those who want to beat off an election date. **HEIN MARAIS** looks at who's using the big stick, and what they're hoping to achieve

WE'VE SAVOURED THE RUSH OF setting *that* date — April 27, 1994. Now the second thoughts are kicking in.

● *Unless [the high levels of violence and political intolerance] are resolved ... it will be difficult to see how free and fair elections can be held.* — United Nations Observer Mission chief Angela King, August.

● *There are two issues that could effect the date. We are looking at how to effectively combat the levels of violence, and on how to get the necessary structures including the independent electoral commission, in place on time.* — ANC elections campaign leader Terror Lekota, August.

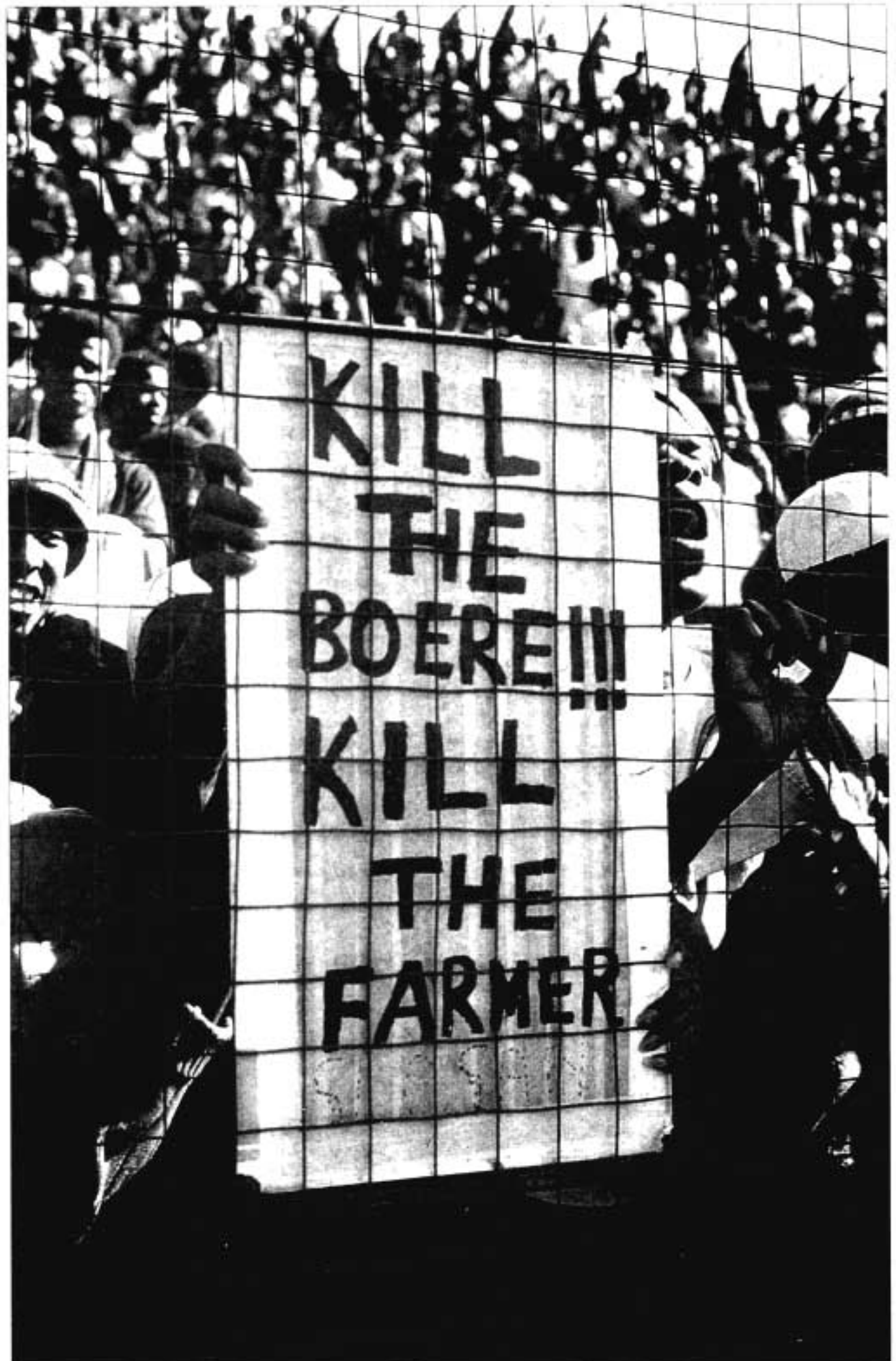
● *The levels of violence and intimidation will have to be drastically reduced before any general election takes place* — FW de Klerk, August.

We live in an incredibly violent society, and we've got the figures to prove it. July's death toll of 581 was the highest for any month since August 1990. So far this year, more than 2 000 people have died in political violence. By end-December, at least 26 000 murders will have been committed. This year again, there will be more violent assaults and rapes per capita than any other country on earth is likely to experience.

As political foes go on the stump, blitzing "enemy territory", venturing into no-man's land, turning up the heat with accusations, pledges, half-truths and lies, millions of hearts are going to be beating way faster. Blood will boil.

But does all this mean the election has to be postponed?

There are real ways of dealing with the violence, and the areas or lev-



■ **BRING THE NOISE:** Fanning the fire, whether in Orlando or Ulundi

els where counter-measures would seem most effective are:

● **Institutional.** The shady operations and provocations commanded by security force middle-rankers and covert teams. The combined effects of habit, institutional culture, negligence and professional incompetence which render the security forces at least culpable in the violence. A crisis of legitimacy that has 64% of black adults "feeling negative" towards the SAP, according to one poll. The reinforcement of the community/police schism by, for example, the 140+ "hits" by gunmen on police patrolling townships this year. The Peacekeeping Force (PKF) marks a bold attempt to start repair work on this disaster. But it will take at least four months to train and ready the first intake of peacekeepers. And squads staffed by such distinct political groups might be awkward peacemakers in a riot situation in, say, Katlehong or Thokoza.

● **Socio-economic conditions and developmental.** Though poverty certainly generates a steady level of violence, it is not the inevitable parent of intense conflict. The latter seems more closely linked to the battle over resources; and the higher the stakes, the more heated the battle. "Development," reminds political scientist Jeremy Seekings, "is a fundamentally divisive process. You start pumping resources into an environment like Brown's Farm (a violence-racked squatter settlement in Cape Town), you'd expect an increase in conflict. There are still, by default, winners and losers."

● **Ideological.** "Political violence seems to have been legitimised — no action is taken against perpetrators, despite the fact that they are known in a particular township," says the Centre for Policy Studies' Khehla Shubane. The perception that you can get away, literally, with murder cannot be divorced from the (in)activity of an often inept, hostile and distrusted law enforcement system. Nor can it be removed from the context of desperation and the patent absence of jus-

tice. The blame-the-victim twist folks like John Kane-Berman apply to the political violence (tracking its "origins" to anti-apartheid resistance) is of little help — though presumably it does make for lively chat at northern suburbs dinners.

Then there are the exhortations, the threats, the quiet condoning. Every editorial writer has by now had a go at the "kill the boer" slogan, and with reason. Perhaps soon similar outrage will be directed at Ulundi's torrent of "civil war" threats.

● **Political.** Politics underpins much of this violence in two ways. First, and more specifically, there is political rivalry, primarily between the ANC and IFP. As the election campaigns heats up, this will broaden to include the National Party and Democratic Party. The ANC-IFP rivalry seems to have little to do with elections, believes Seekings — in so far as the election result, whether next April or the year after, will not in itself douse the passions or heal the rift.

Second, there is the political conjuncture. We flip-flop in a limbo, trapped between the demise of the old and the emergence of the new. Which implies that a "decisive point" in addressing the violence, Mike Morris and Doug Hindson have noted, "is the new set of political rules and the new political and constitutional system". The Transitional Executive Council (TEC) is a sort of "dry run" for such a surge into "the new".

The election clears the ground for further changes, and in itself will probably not drive the violence index down. But the sooner that milestone is passed, the speedier that new set of rules, the new institutional and political framework can be assembled.

At the same time, reminds Shubane, "political violence has provided an umbrella under which a range of violence can occur". The distinction between "political" and, say, "criminal" violence can become slippery and elusive. As political violence rises, says Seek-

It'll get worse before it gets better

Findings of the Goldstone Commission, and research by the Human Rights Commission, HSRC and other social scientists, reveal that the "political" violence is:

- To a very large extent confined to black townships.
- Becoming more intense — more people are being killed or injured per incident due to the increased use of automatic weapons.
- Largely occurring in three areas — the PWV, southern Natal and Natal Midlands — which have the highest concentrations of voters.
- Virtually endemic in Natal where the rhythm of attack/counter-attack produces a much "steadier" rate of bloodletting than in the PWV (see graph).
- In very few cases attributable to "tribalism" or ethnic conflict.
- In some cases linked to "third forces" that operate outside the ambit of the declared polices of the state, ANC or Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).
- Closely linked to political rivalries between the ANC and the IFP.
- In the PWV area closely linked to hostels, specifically, according to HSRC research (see graphs on page 10), to hostels with a high rate of Inkatha supporters and members.
- In the PWV area not consistently intense, with many townships achieving relative calm for long periods.
- Likely to increase in the run-up to elections.

**Why
peace
is a
dirty
word
— page 20**

ings, "it becomes easier to mask crime as political violence."

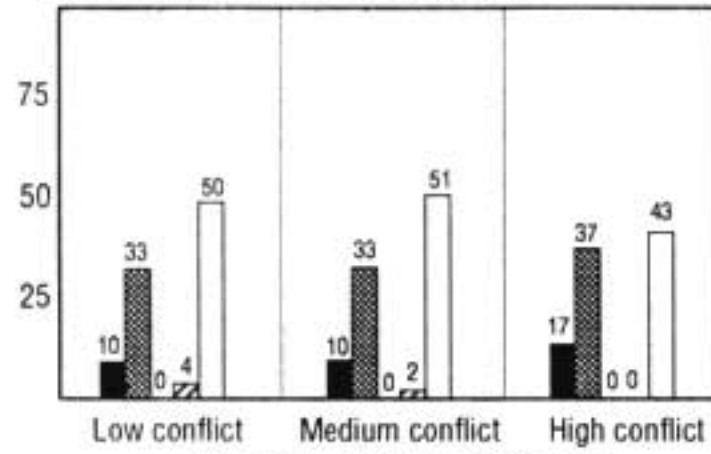
Entangled roots

The roots of political violence are diffuse and entangled. The counter-measures require, certainly, the sort of ingenuity, variety, sincerity and commitment that transcends the instinct to "send in the troops" when things turn sticky. Clearly, emergency rule (as threatened by De Klerk in August) or even a series of "iron fist" forays will tip the election, and the transition, down a deep hole.

Effective law enforcement remains a central part of the solution, however. "Ultimately, when we talk about solutions, I'm not sure how helpful it is to separate political violence from other types of violence," says Seekings. In the long-term, he sees it as largely a development problem. In the short-term, it poses a law and order challenge — which means "establishing structures with a degree of legitimacy and authority". That legitimacy depends on

PARTY SUPPORT: TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENT

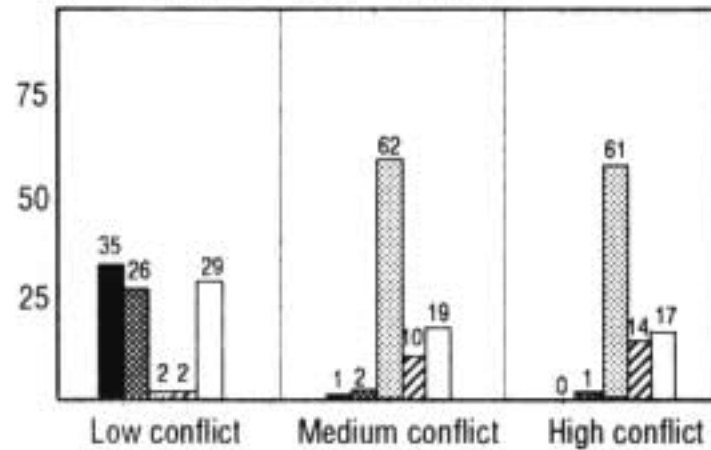
■ ANC member ▨ IFP member □ No party
 ▩ ANC supporter ▤ IFP supporter



Graphs do not show membership or support for PAC

PARTY SUPPORT: HOSTELS

■ ANC member ▨ IFP member □ No party
 ▩ ANC supporter ▤ IFP supporter



Graphs do not show membership or support for PAC

how well they do the job of serving the public, which implies a drastic overhaul of law enforcement. And it depends on

the context within which this force is exercised — is the state seen as legitimate and accountable?

But, as Shubane points out, the legitimate application of state force can occur only after an inclusive political settlement has been reached: "Law and order outside that framework won't work". A mutually acceptable political resolution therefore is "the most critical variable" in checking the violence, he believes. "Once you have political processes and agreements in place that can allow conflict resolution and other measures to

take root, then we can start lessening the violence."

"Eight months is enough," predicts Shubane. "It's possible to maintain the same date and do all these things. There will be violence but it needs to be lessened."

Acceptable levels

Of course this begs the question: What are "acceptable" levels of violence for an election? Democratic Party rhetoric seems to demand a kind of Shangri-La atmosphere. They imply, says Seekings, that "if it weren't for these insane outbursts of violence, you'd be able to have a basically 'peaceful' setting in which to campaign". That's unrealistic, he says.

The director-general of Angola's electoral commission, Onofre dos Santos, puts it bluntly: "If you say elections should be postponed or made

dependent on a dramatic reduction in the levels of violence, you'll never have elections in SA."

A *Business Day* editorial recently added creative spin to this debate by arguing that "the election is more threatened by violent intolerance than by violence per se". It fingered political intimidation as the main danger: "If there is no free campaigning, and intimidation frustrates any chance of a fair result, there can be no suggestion of democracy."

Squelching democracy

One might reply that political violence is per se intimidatory, in so far as it creates a mood of terror and insecurity that squelches democratic political activity. But, as election campaigns spread out over the land, pretexts and occasions for violent intimidation will multiply.

Political parties, Mike Morris insists, cannot dodge their duty to counter that impulse. "It's not good enough to send in the police — political parties must stick to the rules." They have to unequivocally support freedom of association and the right of political parties to campaign in any area.

The ANC might fear that clamping down will cost it the support of rad-

■ FORKED TONGUE? The IFP's Themba Khoza signs a peace pledge



PHOTO: THE STAR

Lost and found: Five million extra voters

You thought there were 22-million voters? Not any more, according to new evidence — there could as many as 27-million potential voters in SA!

Quibbling over the estimated number of eligible voters might seem a bit juvenile. But election planners will be basing crucial logistical decisions on these estimates.

The Home Affairs Department says there are 22,274-million eligible voters, including those in the TBVC states. The department arrived at the figure by applying a mathematical formula to the latest census count — but because the minimum voting age (18 years) fell within the census's 15-19 years age bracket, there was no actual "head count" of eligible voters. Broken down by magisterial district, that figure yields the estimated number of voters in particular areas.

But there's a hitch. As we reported (*WIP* 88), some bean counters say the census was fraught with inaccuracies — some of them substantial. Which casts doubt on the precision of figures gleaned from the census.

Now Research Surveys director Neil Higgs has produced something of a shocker: After burying his nose in census and other data for months, he says there are several million more voters than previously estimated — as many as 27-million.

"I could be out by a million or so," he says, "but I'm sure there are a lot more voters than people think."

How did he arrive at these numbers? "We ran several exercises. We took the 1991 census figures and, for whites, coloureds and Indians, applied growth factors to arrive at the number of voters. For black voters we used census data and then 'embellished' it with a variety of other sources of information, particularly for squatters and backyard shack-dwellers."

Especially valuable was data collected by non-governmental organisations which have done shack and head counts. In cases where more than one reliable source contradicted the census count, Higgs revised the latter accordingly.

And here's what he discovered:

- There are as many 27-million voters in SA.
- Most of these "extra" or previously "invisible" voters are black (it is in townships and informal settlements that the census count has proved most inaccurate).
- In Kagiso, south of Krugersdorp for instance, census figures indicate 63 000 residents at the moment — but Higgs says once other data is incorporated you find there are 150 000. Assuming that in metro areas roughly 70% of black residents are 18 years or older, this suggests Kagiso has not 44 000 voters, but 105 000!).
- Similar discrepancies are evident in Soweto where the census says about 1,1-million people live. Higgs says other data pushes a true figure closer to 2-million.
- There are fewer voters in rural areas than previously thought.

Recipe for chaos

If voting occurs on one day only, as the Goldstone Commission now proposes, misjudging the number of potential voters in an area can create major problems:

- Too few ballot papers at a polling station will cause delays and summon suspicions about the integrity of the vote.
- The same holds if there are too few election officials and other accessories such as ultra-violet lamps.
- A significant increase in the number of voters descending on a polling station might find security precautions inadequate.
- And, if polling stations are unable to process an anxious crowd of voters quickly enough — or if many voters have not cast their ballots by closing time — all the ingredients for violence will be present.

Says Higgs: "There are a couple of areas where the census figures and my research agree quite closely. But in a lot of cases they're radically different. Somewhere along the line a lot of people went missing in the census count."

Even if Higgs' numbers are only roughly on target, they need to be figured into election planning and preparations. They also call for a revision of election result predictions — because with several million more black voters than previously estimated, the ANC and PAC shares of the vote should rise. And the DP, NP and IFP's shares would drop. — *Hein Marais*

ical supporters. But, as reported in *WIP* 89 ("Will the ANC win?"), violent intimidation will hit the ANC with a double whammy. First, it loses votes: out of every three black voters who stay away or are kept away from the polls, the ANC loses two votes. Second, it enables opponents to plausibly blame the ANC for election violence — a campaign tactic that can be used very effectively to pilfer votes from the centre. In both respects, says Morris, "it's like handing the NP votes on a plate".

The ANC and IFP also need to take Peace Accord more seriously on the ground. "Part of the problem," says Morris, "is that we see peace being made in local areas, often *in spite of* not because of interventions of major political leaders — some regional leaderships particularly seem to be hurdles."

But ultimately the question remains: Is seven months enough? "It's not a question whether there's enough time to create peace," says Morris, "If we don't hold these elections on time, we play right into the hands of those fomenting violence and who don't want elections."

"If you don't have the vote on time you'll have war."

We'll win

And yet, if we do have the vote on time, there's no guarantee we won't have war.

Buried among the findings of a recent HSRC poll in black squatter and rural settlements was an unnerving finding: Respondents who had announced their intention to vote for a particular party were then asked whether they expected that party to win the election. Of the "self-confessed" ANC voters, 90% said their party would triumph. PAC voters exhibited commonsense not often attributed to them: only 40% expect it to win. But 80% of IFP voters polled said the election will be won by Inkatha — a party with about 7-8% national support!

Stir into such sentiments Gatsha Buthelezi's Savimibi-esque wartalk and the big, crunching question appears to be not whether elections can be held before violence subsides, but how we can prevent those elections from triggering a war. ■





By John Battersby

Four years after the Pan-Africanist Congress rejected negotiations as the solution to ending white rule, the organisation has become a mainstream component of multi-party talks and has established itself as a significant political force.

It appears to stand a reasonable chance of winning the 5% of votes necessary to be included in the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) — and could emerge as the third largest party with more than 10% of the vote.

For an organisation that was almost forgotten inside the country before its unbanning in February 1990, the PAC has staged a remarkable political comeback.

Running with the PAC

The PAC's revival becomes all the more surprising if one considers the organisation's record of inept strategic decision-making and its weak political structures and organisational ability.

Since the resignation of deputy president Dikgang Moseneke in December 1992, it has also been suffering from a leadership vacuum (see box) and divisions and infighting between its pro-negotiation and anti-negotiation wings.

It is true, the PAC has also had a lot of luck.

It has benefitted from the painstaking preparatory work of the ANC which led to its unbanning in 1990. The release of political prisoners and automatic indemnity for its exile leadership was something the PAC could not claim much credit for.

Since the pass law campaign in 1960, through the student uprising in 1976 and grassroots disillusionment with ANC leaders over negotiations at present, the PAC leadership has repeatedly failed to translate popular sentiment into political support — let alone card-carrying members.

But the PAC could succeed in boosting its appeal by exploiting the emotive subject of land, which is likely to move onto the centre of the political stage shortly after the TGNU is established.

The three million victims of forced removals form a formidable pool of potential PAC voters if an ANC-led TGNU fails to deliver, symbolically, by returning land to deprived communities and, materially, by making more land available to the majority.

But there is another area where the PAC is challenging the ANC and winning — and that is in the rise of vengeance.

The sight of Paso members chanting "one settler, one bullet" outside the courtroom where the alleged killers of an American exchange student were making their first court appearance, sent a chill down the spine of many of those committed to non-racialism.

The PAC definitely has a fundamen-

Apla and elections

Apla — increasingly a law unto itself — is actively opposed to taking part in elections, and is doing everything possible to undermine them. It will be even more opposed to the PAC taking part in a Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU).



■ **EMPTY-HANDED: PAC supporters give their palm-up salute**

talist appeal for radical youth who still hanker after the ANC rhetoric of the 1980's: render the townships ungovernable and seize power.

When 42 people were massacred in Boipatong in June last year after the breakdown of Codesa, PAC T-shirts and slogans were already familiar in the Vaal townships and grassroots sentiment was moving closer to the Africanist position.

Then followed the attacks by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (Apla) which represented a new level of armed activity and a willingness to strike at white victims whilst the ANC has suspended its armed struggle.

The PAC observation — that it took white deaths to make the government take political violence seriously — struck a chord with township dwellers which spread far wider than the traditional support base of the PAC.

And it was a difficult point to argue.

The Apla attacks inspired many township youth disillusioned by the slow pace of negotiations despite a stream of concessions from ANC negotiators (see graph).

PAC leaders dealt with the white backlash by first distancing themselves from Apla's actions

and gradually embracing it as the PAC liberation army, under full political control, as they realised how popular its actions were.

While there is no doubt that PAC leaders are now taking responsibility for Apla's actions, it is debatable to what extent they control them.

The assassination of SACP general secretary Chris Hani on April 10 marked another turning-point for the PAC. Members of the ANC Youth League in the PWV townships began to adopt the slogans and sentiments of the PAC.

But the PAC's greatest breakthrough came following the May 25 crackdown in which 73 of its leaders were arrested. It provoked widespread sympathy for the PAC among most of the 26 parties at the negotiating forum — and the strongest solidarity ever from the ANC.

At a Soweto rally to commemorate Hani, Clarence Makwethu appeared to draw a louder reception than Nelson Mandela. And when Mandela read out a message from the National Party, he was jeered by the youthful crowd.

Transfer of power

By agreeing first to multi-party talks to finalise the transition to democracy and to a transitional authority to oversee the run-up to elections for a constituent assembly, the PAC has modified significantly its decolonisation model for a transfer of power.



PHOTO: KADIRMAN LOHUIZEN (SOUTHLIGHT)

Nemadzivhenani steps into the leadership vacuum

● The rising star in the PAC is national organiser **MAXWELL NEMADZIVHENANI**, who served as the organisation's representative in Australia for nearly 10 years — and is expected to be elected second deputy

president at the next

PAC congress in 1994. Nemadzi-

vhenani could breathe new life into the organisation. But he'll need

to take a few basic lessons in diplomacy first.



PHOTO: NIGEL DENNIS (ANC DIP)

● The PAC has still not recovered from the resignation of deputy president **DIKGANG MOSENEKE** earlier this year —

and many members now openly admit their disaffection with the leadership.

Moseneke played a crucial role in bringing the PAC round to negotiations in a strategically coherent way, and one that offered to strengthen the organisation. He formed a unique and solid bridge between the PAC and the ANC, through his personal relationship with Nelson Mandela (they were fellow-prisoners on Robben Island) and through his brother **Tiego** (an official in the ANC's PWV region).

● First deputy president **JOHNSON MLAMBO**, who was formerly commander-in-chief of Apla, is in a strong position to succeed ageing president **CLARENCE MAKWETHU**, who — while commanding wide respect — is fairly ineffectual as the public face of the organisation.

● A combination of **Mlambo** and **Nemadzivhenani** is probably about the most dynamic ticket the PAC could produce at present. And they would make a particularly effective team to lead the PAC into the crucial second election.

— John Battersby

If, as some major unions like **Numsa** are already suggesting, unions break with the alliance after a new constitution is drawn up and a socialist workers' party is formed, this could well upstage efforts by the PAC to benefit from the realignment.

But it is not only voices from within the ANC that are cautioning against this route. SACP strategists like **Jeremy Cronin** argue that it would be strategically unwise to form a workers' party to the left of the ANC.

If this counsel is followed — and the alliance holds firm — the PAC could become the core of a leftist party attracting some radical elements of the ANC, the SA National Civic Organisation (**Sanco**) and **Cosatu**.

But the future success of the PAC will depend in a larger measure on the success of the **TGNU** to at least make an impact on the massive socio-economic and development needs of the country.

Unless five years of **TGNU** can reverse the vicious cycle of deprivation and deterioration in the urban townships, the parties who form part of the **TGNU** stand to lose much in the second election.

Renewal

But the PAC will need to undergo some internal renewal if it is going to be in a position to mount a serious challenge at the second election.

There are already some indicators as to how this renewal might occur.

Since the death of **Chris Hani** and the subsequent occupation of the World Trade Centre by the **AWB**, there has been a grassroots reproachment in some townships — like **Tembisa** and others — between the ANC Youth League and the PAC in establishing self-defence structures.

These new structures at community level could revive the ailing **Patriotic Front** from the bottom upwards to the leadership level.

But the PAC's central dilemma — about whether to be insiders or outsiders — will remain after the election unless it is able to build up more organisational muscle to make more impact on the transition than it has on the negotiating phase. ■

But the PAC leadership stood firm in refusing to take part in talks aimed at removing the obstacles to negotiations and still sticks to its two basic tenets — the return of the land to Africans and one person, one vote elections for a constituent assembly.

The PAC is a relatively young organisation if compared to the ANC, which was formed 81 years ago. Only three decades old, it cannot tap into the ANC's formidable "loyalty factor".

Five generations of Congress supporters in a family carries a momentum of its own.

If one looks at the PAC's performance since it was legalised three and-half-years ago, there are ample grounds to be cynical about its chances of succeeding in the future.

Can it capitalise successfully in the future on the possible break-up of the tripartite alliance after an election and the likely waning of support for the ANC once the **TGNU** fails to meet the unrealistic expectations voters set?

Much will depend on development within the PAC leadership (see box), whether the organisation is able to draw any foreign funding, can beef up its organisation and can project viable alternatives to meet the demand for land which is unlikely to be met by the **TGNU**.

But the most crucial factor determining the future fortunes of the PAC is likely to be the way the political realignment impacts on the ANC liberation alliance.

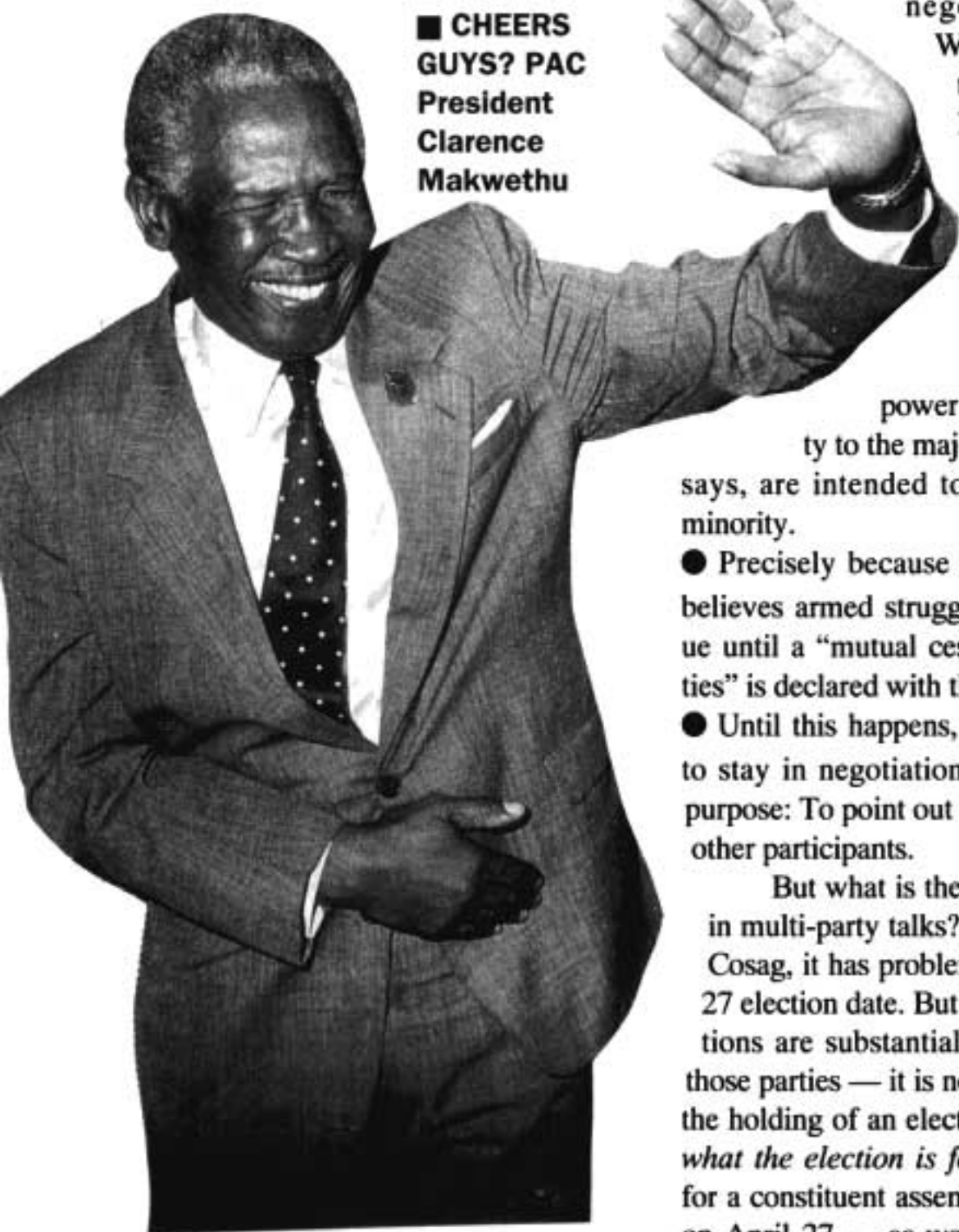


Trying to keep out of being too far in

As the 'Year of the Great Storm' draws to a close, the PAC is still waging war on two fronts: It has an army fighting it out in the townships, and a negotiating team fighting it out at the World Trade Centre.

EVANGELOS MANTZARIS
tours the battlefield

■ **CHEERS GUYS? PAC**
President
Clarence
Makwethu



THE PAC IS, TO MANY, STILL SOMETHING of a closed book — an Africanist movement of a special type which simultaneously talks of armed struggle and participates in negotiations.

To the outsider, it adopts seemingly conservative ideas (calling, for example, for the dismissal of striking teachers) and utters revolutionary slogans ("one settler, one bullet").

But are there contradictions between waging armed struggle while debating constitutional negotiations at the

World Trade Centre? Not to the PAC, which argues that:

- The present negotiations will not automatically lead to the transfer of power from the minority to the majority. The talks, it says, are intended to entrench white minority.

- Precisely because of this, the PAC believes armed struggle should continue until a "mutual cessation of hostilities" is declared with the government.

- Until this happens, the PAC intends to stay in negotiations with one main purpose: To point out the dangers to the other participants.

But what is the PAC demanding in multi-party talks? Like the IFP and Cosag, it has problems with the April 27 election date. But the PAC's objections are substantially different from those parties — it is not arguing against the holding of an election, but is asking *what the election is for*. Its demand is for a constituent assembly to be elected on April 27 — as was agreed upon in

the resolutions adopted by the Patriotic Front Conference in Durban in 1991. Anything less than that, the PAC says, and it will not participate in the election.

But if there is a constituent assembly election, the PAC is adamant that it will fight it on the ideological/political parameters of an "African socialist democracy".

The PAC has also stated that it will not accept a transitional executive council (TEC) because, it says, such a body will only have an advisory capacity. So there will be no meaningful transfer of power.

The PAC has also demanded a transitional authority in the run-up to constituent assembly elections. It sees this authority as being made up of representatives from the liberation movements and the existing government, with some international participation.

This body will take over control of the budget, electoral processes, state media and security forces during the transitional period.

Current policy

The national executive and various intellectuals in the movement have articulated concrete policies which have been circulated and debated among branches and regions. Due to space limitations, only a few will be examined here.

Policies are propagated and discussed in workshops (both open and closed) and scrutinised by the movement's members before they take the form of "official policy".

- Land: The land redistribution policy is one of the movement's cornerstones (see box). In essence, the PAC believes that the imbalance in the allocation of resources can only be rectified through



PHOTO: THE ARIEL

The PAC and land

The PAC says its land policy is based on 'socialisation' rather than nationalisation. Its objective is an equitable redistribution of resources.

- People will be given access to land under a universally-applicable leasehold system.
- A substantial amount of white-owned land has been targeted for redistribution, and the first step in this direction will be its expropriation. State land which lies idle will be redistributed to African peasants, and land expropriated under the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 will be equally redistributed.
- A limit to the size of the reallocated land is envisaged; most of it will be in the vicinity of 300 hectares. The priority group benefiting from such a scheme will be the landless, poor and dispossessed peasants — especially those living in the bantustans.
- No compensation will be given to white farmers as their land was obtained through 'colonial settlerism' and its ownership has no legitimacy. The PAC is prepared, however, to pay compensation for development work (dams, houses, fencing, etc). The financial compensation for such deeds will be the sole responsibility of the post-apartheid state.
- Owners of residential properties will be compensated along similar lines. The PAC would issue 'certificates of ownership' to home-owners, instead of title deeds.
- State-owned houses will be provided to those in need in three forms:
 - Houses will be put on sale under a subsidised bond system.
 - Long-term leases will be provided which, in time, could be converted into certificates of full ownership.
 - Houses can be rented under a subsidised rent system.
- Because a considerable number of poor households are headed by women, land would have to be allocated on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Communal land would be allocated by local chiefs in accordance with the law of the land. All communal holdings would be converted into units held under a leasehold system.

■ REVOLUTIONARY WATCHDOGS: The PAC stands firm in its call for constituent assembly elections – and nothing less

redistribution. People will be given access to land under a universally applicable leasehold system.

● **Education:** the PAC has decried mindless activism and disruption of schooling by student and teacher bodies. It is a strong advocate of the "back to school" campaign, and sees disruptions of the educational programme as detrimental to the potential of African students.

For the future, the PAC envisages a single education department, free and compulsory secondary education as well as subsidised tertiary education. PAC educationists have developed new curricula in which they have tried to relate educational developments to human resource needs.

● **Health:** Policy is focussed on exploring ways of developing an equitable health system which takes into account the country's social, economic and other realities. The long-term aim is a socialised and free health system, with special emphasis on rural clinics and health care centres throughout the country.

Such clinics have already been introduced by the PAC's health department in several rural and urban areas with considerable success.

Recent opinion polls have indicated that the PAC's support base has

increased in the last year or so. From 0-1% support two years ago, the movement now enjoys from 3-10% support.

Narrow base

Such pollsters point out, however, that its social base is likely to remain narrow, "since a non-racial position has more support among blacks" (reported in Election Watch, WIP 89).

Such an assertion is debatable for several reasons:

● Will the material conditions (political, economic, social and other factors) change significantly in the period leading up to the elections? It's quite unlikely; on the contrary, it is obvious that conditions can only worsen for the African majority.

There are no simple explanations for the increase in PAC support. On the contrary, it has to do with a combination of factors — the most important being the decline in material conditions in the townships (poverty, unemployment, escalating violence, youth disillusionment and the like) and their "electoral" repercussions.

● The compromises being made at the World Trade Centre are bound to affect an already-volatile electorate. People are likely to switch allegiance towards a movement that seems uncompromising and militant, rather than towards organi-

The armed struggle

● **Military commander Sabelo Phama and PAC leaders have repeatedly stated that even though Apla is the PAC's armed wing, it has its own organisational autonomy.**

● **Apla attacks have claimed the lives of over 100 police personnel in 1993, plus an unknown number of farmers.**

● **Phama says Apla's main motivation is that 'we cannot get to the year 2000 as an oppressed nation'.**

fers from weak leadership.

But this is generally based on perceptions: it is true, for example, that president Clarence Makwethu does not come across as a charismatic leader on *Agenda* — but does this make him a “weak leader?”

It is common knowledge that the PAC leadership is made up of people with different social and economic backgrounds. There are lawyers sitting next to farmers and university lecturers next to Apla commanders. However, what keeps this leadership together is a belief in the Africanist ideals and collective decision-making.

The utilisation of serious young academics at certain layers of the movement's leadership (including the multi-party talks) indicates that new faces and ideas are filtering through the organisation. Young leaders such as Jackie Seroke (secretary for political affairs), Maxwell Nemadzivhenani (national organiser) and Siphoshe Shabalala (secretary for economic affairs) are just as competent as veterans Johnson Mlambo, Barney Desai and Clarence Makwethu.

Although there are different approaches to the future of the party and the country in general, there is general agreement on the non-negotiable principles of the organisation. The differences in tactics and strate-

gies are basically “ironed out” in the movement's conferences and NEC sessions.

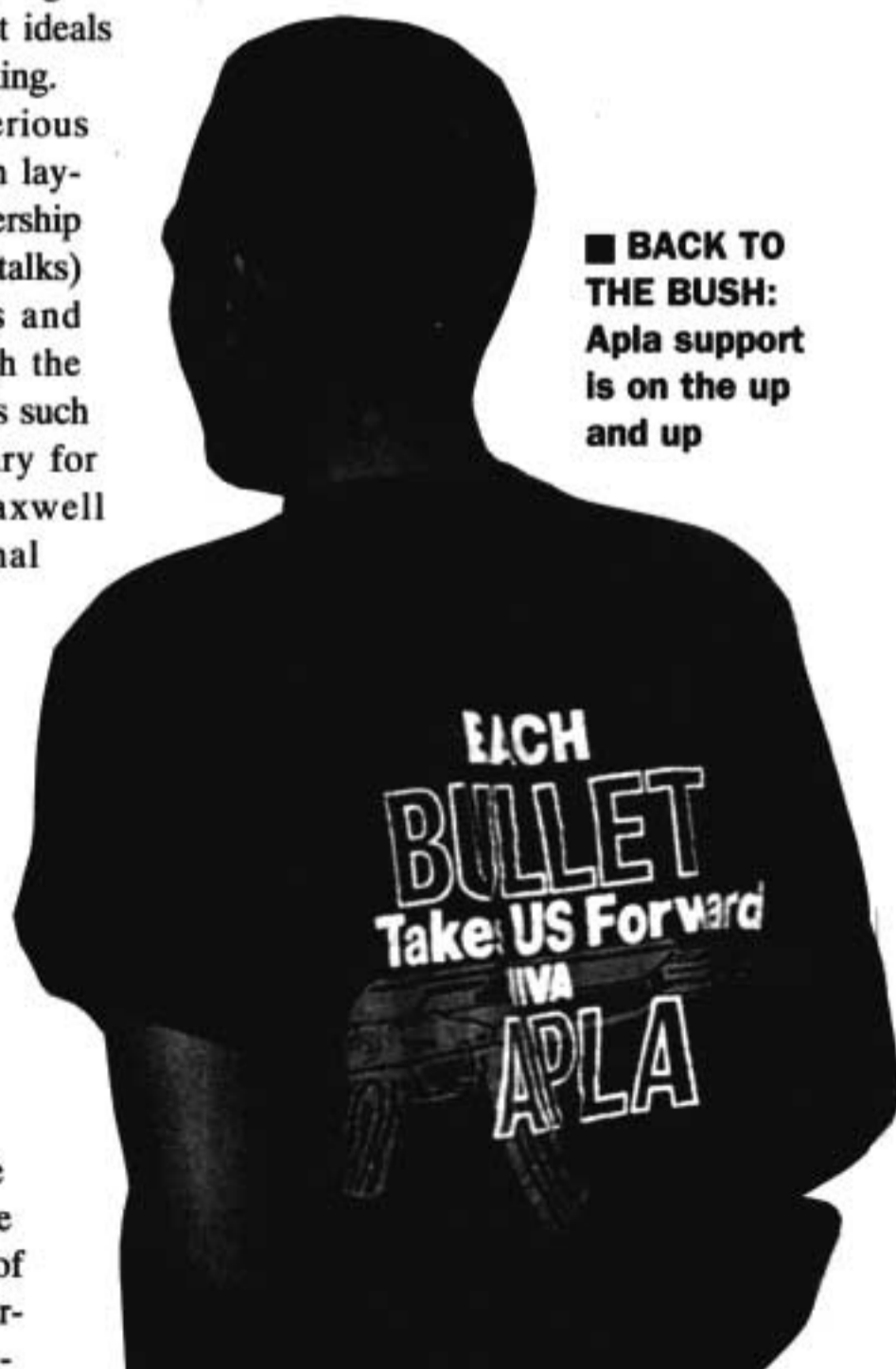
As “the year of the great storm” unfolds, so do deliberations at the World Trade Centre. And too many of the debates taking place there say almost nothing to the majority of people, even to those who read the newspapers as seriously as they read the bible.

Some people believe the PAC leadership has no choice but to follow the dictates of the two major players. If it doesn't, they say, the PAC will be marginalised. (Bear in mind that it was the same people who prophesied that the PAC would be marginalised if it did not join Codesa 1.)

Will the PAC follow the stream into a compromised “sufficient consensus” when it knows well that this will be suicidal for its future in terms of electoral support? It is quite unlikely — although the wise men and women who fill the PAC's seats at the World Trade Centre might have different ideas. ■

● *Dr Evangelos Mantzaris is senior research officer in the Sociology Department at the University of Durban-Westville. He has written several papers on the PAC.*

■ **BACK TO THE BUSH: Apla support is on the up and up**



sations which are forever making compromises.

Strengths and weaknesses

The PAC (like any other organisation) has strengths and weaknesses.

Among its strengths: the movement's leaders (and its adversaries) cite a militant/radical discourse; the recent Apla activities (which have won it support among youth, in particular) and its strong relationship with its women's, student, worker and peasant movements.

Its weaknesses are several (and, some people claim, glaring): they include organisational disfunctions, which hamper internal consolidation of structures on the ground, and the now well publicised dwindling of the movement's funds.

Such weaknesses are bound to have serious repercussions in a pre-election period, and Benny Alexander's prediction last year that the PAC will win the first free poll hands-down amounts to nothing more than wishful thinking.

It would be dangerous to try and estimate PAC membership figures. In early 1992, a figure of 410 branches nationwide was published.

Lately, PAC leaders have claimed the movement has some 850 branches. A membership figure of 700 000 was stated recently.

The PAC's support comes from different sections of South Africa's black population. It has a very strong peasant support base in Transkei, the Western Cape and Ciskei.

Another vital constituency of the PAC is the youth — organised in structures like the Pan-Africanist Student Organisation (Paso) and the Azanian Youth Organisation (Azanyo) — and women, through the African Women's Organisation (AWO).

The PAC's support base also includes workers and sections of the African middle-class (professionals, shopkeepers, etc.) around the country.

In essence, however, the PAC can be seen as a “peasant movement” because of the strong and traditional emphasis it places on the redistribution of the land.

Is there a leadership problem?

There is a perception that the PAC suf-



Where did it go?

As frustrations rise and negotiations grow more distant, common sense anticipates a surge of popular support for the PAC. The polls, though, don't detect it — and **BOB MATTES** tries to find out why

OUR POLITICAL ANTENNAE SENSE what seem to be clear signals of increasing support for the PAC. The enthusiastic reaction at Chris Hani's memorial service when PAC president Clarence Makwethu's arrived (in the middle of Nelson Mandela's address), and the PAC's ability to draw bigger crowds than the ANC at recent rallies in Cape Town townships, are two of several indicators of growing PAC support.

Common sense and political intuition also suggest that the PAC should be gaining support as disillusionment increases with the ANC and its involvement in protracted negotiations. To many, the ANC's negotiations with the government seem only to yield concession after concession (for example, power-sharing until at least 1999, constitutional principles set by the Multi-party Forum which will bind the Constituent Assembly, and a federal system). Such signs lead one to expect that, electorally, the PAC should be nipping at the ANC's heels. Yet recent public opinion surveys show the PAC enjoys extremely low levels of support. For example, since the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) began its Omnibus surveys in February 1991, it has not found more than 2% support for the PAC nationally, and never more than 4% among blacks. Polls by Markinor, Research Surveys and the Institute for Black Research have not found more than 5% support for the PAC or a PAC leader among black South Africans.

And of real concern to the PAC is the fact that these levels have stayed fairly consistent, even while black frustrations grew substantially in the past year. Between May 1992 and May

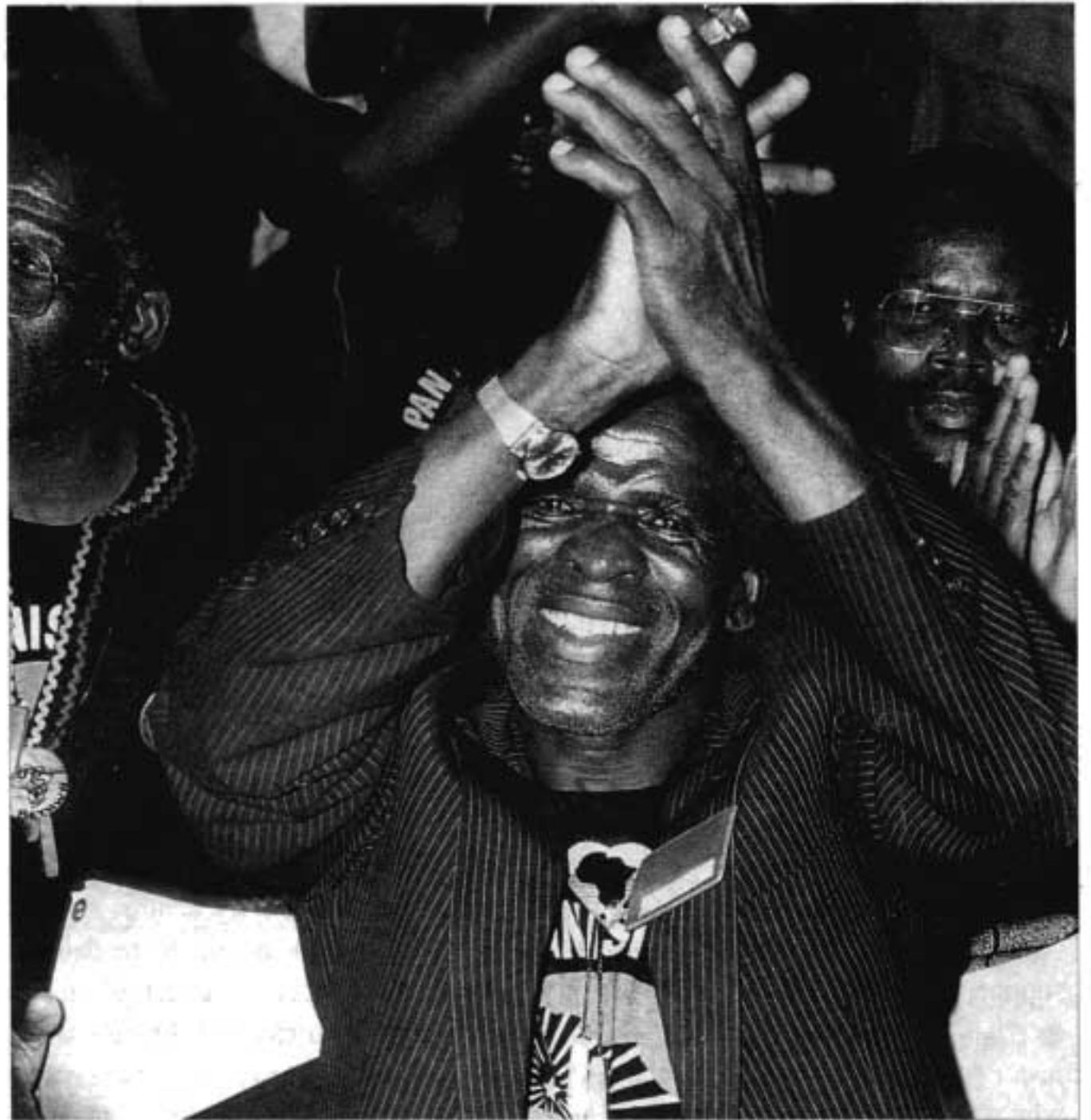


PHOTO: ROGER BOSCH (SOUTHLIGHT)

■ CLAP HANDS: Where are all these new PAC supporters?

1993, for example, Markinor found among urban blacks:

- The percentage who felt racial relations were poor or very poor increased from 26% to 49%.
- Those who said racial relations were getting worse increased from 26% to 49%.
- Those who were not very, or not at all confident of a happy future for all races rose from 26% to 48%.

And, in the two years between May 1991 and May 1993, the proportion of urban blacks who felt their eco-

nomie fortunes would improve in the next five years fell from 42% to 24%.

Despite this apparent wave of rising frustration, the PAC (the assumed political beneficiary of such disappointments) has failed to register any marked increase in popular support. From May 1992 to May 1993, for example, Markinor found PAC support levels among urban blacks holding steady at 4% to 5%.

The PAC's failure to make substantial ground in the opinion polls is puzzling from another perspective. Citi-

zens often use polls in the same way as voters use by-elections: to vent steam without doing any real "damage". For example, recent polls suggesting a resurgence of Conservative Party support among whites need to be taken with a pinch of salt; white voters might be disenchanted with the government at the moment, but would they really cast their votes to the right when push came to shove in an election? (Remember, they failed to do so in the 1992 referendum.) So one would expect at least some people who are disillusioned with the ANC, but who still plan on voting for it, to register their protest by telling a pollster they support the PAC.

Is the PAC's apparent failure to make headway actually an invention of, or an obfuscation by, the polls? One possible flaw may lie in the nature of the samples selected for most surveys. For instance, most of the polls showing PAC support under 5% tend to concentrate on black South Africans in urban or metropolitan townships. They may fail to uncover PAC support "hidden" in the rural areas. Yet, in a massive March-May 1993 survey among 8 300 blacks *outside* the metropolitan township areas normally covered by pollsters:

- Nineteen percent said they were registered members of the ANC, while only one half of one percent made the same claim for the PAC
- An additional 38% said they supported or sympathised with the ANC, while just under 1% claimed to support or sympathise with the PAC
- Clarence Makwethu was chosen by just 1% to lead SA, as against the 63% who selected Nelson Mandela.

Might another problem with the polls be intimidation? Is it possible that natural PAC supporters remain silent when asked about their voting intentions? Well, a recent HSRC survey on violence and intimidation did find that fears about ballot secrecy and intimidation is a national phenomenon, but PAC supporters were not any more likely to be affected by these factors than ANC supporters (it was black supporters of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Democratic Party and National Party who seemed most likely to be affected by such concerns).

Secondly, polls which use secret ballot techniques, such as Markinor,

appear to get virtually the same results as those in which questions are posed orally.

Other polls measuring "social distance" have revealed that substantially more people "feel close" to the PAC than admit they would vote for it. For example, HSRC's Omnibus surveys show that anywhere between 15% and 20% of blacks say they "feel close", or "very close" to the party. Yet this finding is probably limited by the fact that the PAC appears to share its support base with the ANC. For example, a cross-tabulation of a 1990 survey by Market Research Associates, just after the PAC and ANC's unbanning, found that 80% of those who felt very close to the PAC also felt very close to the ANC. However, the opposite trend was not visible — only 11% of those who felt very close to the ANC felt very close to the PAC.

Strictly limited

What this suggests is that, while the ANC may be able to woo large shares of the potential PAC "market", the portion of natural ANC voters available to be lured to the PAC appears strictly limited in absolute terms. Thus, the PAC may be forced to look to the extremes of the political spectrum if it wants to find substantially more voters, rather than hoping to peel off disenchanted layers from the centre.

This highlights one of the dangers of the extensive measurement and reporting (in articles like the one you're reading now) of support levels. Widespread perceptions that the PAC has very low levels of support may keep the PAC out of the negotiations process, and drive it to more extremist measures. This is what constitutional analyst Donald Horowitz called in 1991 a "classical coincidence of interest and behaviour".

He wrote: "The extra-parliamentary organisation with the most support [ANC] chooses a strategy of negotiation. The organisations that find themselves weak [PAC/Azapo] oppose negotiation... What each organisation wants is consistent with its competitive position. As Jeremy Bentham said, 'Interest smooths the road to faith.'" ■

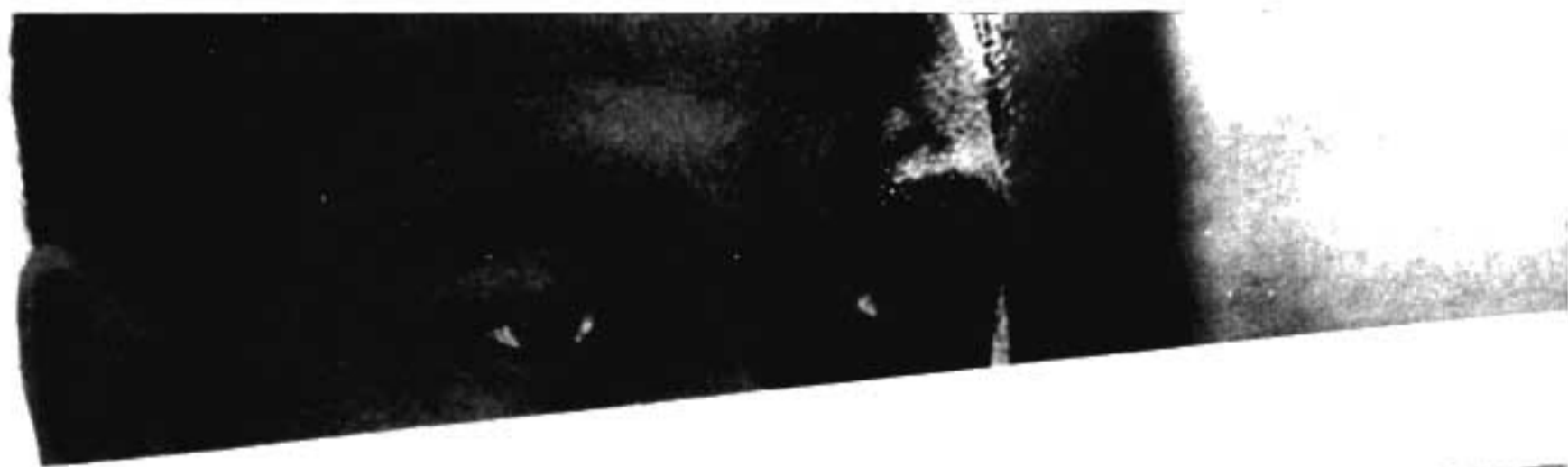
According to some polls, the PAC appears to be much more popular if prospective voters' second choices are solicited. For instance, while Markinor found that the PAC was the first choice of only 4-5% between May 1992 and May 1993, the combined number of people selecting the PAC as either their first or second choice was 22%.

And while Clarence Makwethu was only the first choice of 4-5%, between 14% and 18% listed him either first or second.

In its recent survey on elections, political violence and intimidation, the HSRC found that 21% said they would vote for the PAC if their favoured party did not run a candidate (the highest of any party).

However, on this score the PAC faces two problems. First, it now has to contend with the SACP in the "second choice" sweepstakes. From May 1992 to May 1993, Markinor found the SACP and Joe Slovo received under 2% respectively for first choice. Yet when first and second choices were combined, the SACP shot from 11% in May 92 to 22% one year later (and Slovo went from 15% to 27% over the same period). Compared to those increases, the combined first and second choice PAC vote had actually slipped from 26% in May 1991 to 22% two years later. Secondly, it is highly unlikely that any form of preferential or transferable voting systems will be introduced in SA — so voters' first choices will be their only choices in the polling booth.





STOP KILLING PEOPLE

■ **WAR OF WORDS:** Trying to sell peace in the townships is no easy task

Why peace is a dirty word

Two years after the signing of the National Peace Accord, peace activist **LAURA POLLECUTT** feels it's time we asked: Why isn't it working?

PEACE. FREEDOM FROM CIVIL strife. An agreement to end war. Freedom from public disturbance. Law and order.

Whatever way you define it, peace is a dirty word in South Africa.

For those engulfed in the violence, where fear is a fact of life, peace is usually perceived as something others want to inflict on you — a concept dreamt up by people who don't have to face the disruption and chaos the violence brings.

Peace, as in National Peace Accord, is frequently seen by people on the ground as a lofty deal made by those

in political and financial power without much consultation with ordinary people. Consequently, many reject it and question the structures of the peace committees.

Why, they ask, do local peace committees have to consist of political parties and businesspeople who are generally divorced from the action, safe in their suburban homes?

Although there might be a need for an honest broker, experience has taught me that people feel the odds are stacked against them when a peace committee includes representatives from the DP, NP, SAP, and business. What do these

groups understand of the lives and struggles of ordinary people?

Cynicism

Peace agreements have been a fact of life in this country for nearly ten years. Because of this, cynicism and distrust, whether on the level of the National Peace Accord or at a more local level, are not surprising.

But has the peace accord actually achieved anything? Should we be looking at investing more money in it at this stage?

On the up-side I would go along with Antonie Geldenhuys, chair of the

National Peace Secretariat, in saying:

- Yes, it has kept channels of communication open.

- Yes, without peace monitors (along with international and independent monitors), many rallies and mass gatherings could have been turned into scenes of ghastly violence.

But we need to be just a little more critical and look at the real problems inherent in the agreement.

On a local level, there are two specific problems:

- Peace committees are starting to *give people a platform to further their political careers* — something which definitely affects their commitment to the process, and makes peace something of a secondary issue.

- In addition, there is a tendency to *hold back from criticising* other committee members one has to work with who may be involved in the violence. This prevents real analysis of what is going on.

But on a national level, there are much broader and more fundamental problems:

- The most basic one relates to the fact that the peace accord is essentially an agreement *between political parties* (apart from business and the churches) and is *based on good faith*. This makes it difficult at times to focus attention on other unidentified players in the violence — such as the state's security forces.

For example, there is evidence in much of the violence, of sophisticated techniques such as those used in low-intensity conflict — something military personnel in South Africa know a good deal about. But because peace structures get bogged down in trying to allocate blame to either the IFP or the ANC, no-one steps back, or is encouraged to step back, to look at the violence from another per-

Who do peace consultants really work for?

Controversy surrounds three consultants appointed by the National Peace Committee to handle reconstruction work.

The consultants work for Serd — the socio-economic reconstruction and development component of the peace accord — and are connected to the Delta Consulting Service.

One of Delta's directors is former NIS operative Theo de Jager, who still does consultancy work for the state's intelligence section.

Serd executive director Warwick Barnes has stated that he does not believe De Jager's links with NIS are a problem. But both Inkatha and the ANC have started to question Serd's agenda, and National Peace Committee chair John Hall has undertaken a full investigation of the consultancy.



■ **STOOL-PIGEON:** Government and big business have spent millions trying

spective.

So if an objective of the violence is to polarise South African society, the orchestrators have certainly succeeded. And the peace accord — with its

emphasis on political party-orientated solutions — has assisted with that polarisation.

- Another problem is the *imbalance of power*. Although all parties to the accord are expected to carry the responsibility for its failure, not all of them have the resources or the power which is located in government and its structures.

- A third problem is the police code of conduct, and the accord's inability to deal with contraventions of this. Putting all the accusations of police partiality aside, the mere make-up of the police and their inherent racial

bias, in structure and in operation, makes it almost impossible for them to abide by the code of conduct.

Granted, in certain areas the peace accord has been instrumental in establishing good relations between the police and the community. In general, however, the police continue to be mistrusted. Their attitude to the community, as well as their failure to bring perpetrators of the violence to justice, indicates that the police will be unable to fulfil their role as protectors of the community.

Some of their senior officers are already starting to admit this: Colonel Dave Bruce, for example, has conceded that the police are unable to conduct proper investigations into some township killings because of community hostility.

Public image

- A fourth problem is the public image of the Peace Secretariat. Far removed from the pain and suffering of the community, the secretariat seems to be particularly good at one thing — spending money *marketing* peace. Its logo (predictably, white dove) seems to be everywhere. Granted, certain media have donated time and space to the



PHOTO: THE STAR

the 'bird of peace' to fly

peace movement, but too often the messages from the peace accord are inaccessible and misdirected. More thought should go into how to reach affected communities and what they want or need to know.

So if the political parties, the police and the Peace Secretariat are problems within the peace accord, what of business? John Hall (chair of the National Peace Committee and of the National Peace Accord Trust) has to be acknowledged for the crucial role he has played.

But the business community has not been known for its desire to get involved in real issues. Was it expedient for business to get involved in the peace accord? It certainly has brought some very dubious players into the arena and even into some powerful positions. White, previously uncommitted, and often insensitive businessmen (and I emphasise the word "men") are viewed with great suspicion by members of the black community and there is discontent because black people have not been considered for prominent positions in peace structures. Their fears concerning the motives of those whites involved have been confirmed by recent revelations

of the questionable backgrounds of various consultants involved in socio-economic reconstruction and development projects (see box).

The only real organ of civil society in the peace accord is the church. It is also the one group which has produced a constructive critique of the agreement.

In a recent report, the SA Council of Churches drew attention to many of the issues brought up in this article. Hopefully, unlike many other really worthwhile suggestions emanating from civil society (ie. the establishment of a national witness protection programme, and the installation of a peacekeeping force), the information in that document will be acted upon.

The church has also taken the initiative in organising peace rallies involving thousands of people. But at the same time, it's going to take more than prayer to mobilise believers, and perhaps one should look towards the American civil rights movement for some ideas on how to do this.

Award-winning journalist Maggie O'Kane recently spoke in Johannesburg about the struggle in Bosnia. She referred to the ethnic divisions created by men whose only desire is to have power. The plight of Muslim people stuck in the middle of the fight between the Croats and the Serbs is, she believes, generally being glossed over. Peace mediators are keen for the Muslims to accept *any* settlement regardless of how unjust it may be. Naturally the Muslims reject this — but, unlike their compatriots, they are prevented from taking up arms.

There are similarities in South Africa: Acceptance of oppression for the sake of a peace settlement is unacceptable in Bosnia — and I am sure it is just as unacceptable here.

But where does this leave us and the peace accord? Perhaps the time has come to re-examine the agreement and to consider how a transitional executive council can begin to tackle the obstacles to the establishment of a just and non-violent society.

Whatever we decide, we cannot afford to invest R42-million to strengthen the peace accord, unless all the people of South Africa have a share in it. ■

● *Laura Pollecutt is a member of Peace Action*

Propagating peace is a risky business

Trying to talk peace in a community torn apart by violence is no laughing matter, as I discovered recently during a visit to Dobsonville.

I came across a group of really angry people who had been forced out of their homes by hostel-dwellers. Understandably, they scoffed at the idea of peace and made no bones about the fact that they would not accept peace on the terms being offered.

Too much had been lost (and continues to be lost), they said, to ever get them to accept peace without at least a return to what they had before their areas were invaded and their lives disrupted.

This desire to retrieve what had been lost was reiterated again at a community meeting in the same area some months later. The anger of the residents whose homes had been attacked, and their subsequent loss of family, possessions, and those homes, was passionately articulated. Once again at this meeting, as independent monitors we had to explain in great detail that we rejected a repressive peace, and understood their anger.

It was this empathy which led to two of us volunteering to march on the offices of the local council with members of the community to demand that councillors fulfil their duties to the community by assisting them in reclaiming their homes and ensuring their safety once they had returned.

Needless to say even a sit-in in the office of the ineffective mayor did not achieve anything.

— *Laura Pollecutt*



PHOTO: THE STAR



Facts and figures

- Public money spent on official portrait showing Ciskei autocrat Brigadier Oupa Gqozo in civilian garb: R102 000
 - Average cost of four passport photographs: R13
- Estimated number of families leaving SA every month: 200 - 250
 - Estimated number of former Rhodesians living in SA: 100 000
 - "Illegal aliens" expelled from SA during 1992: 82 575
- Percentage of black South Africans who have never been on holiday or weekend trip: 25%
 - Average distance a black South African worker travels every day: 37km
 - Number of foreign tourists who said they "feel safe" in SA during 1992: 23%
 - Percentage of South Africans who say they feel safe walking in their own neighbourhoods at night: 15,2%
 - Assaults in SA daily: 775
- South Africans killed daily in "interpersonal" violence that is not politically-related: 51
 - Percentage of killers prosecuted in 1992: 46,6%
 - Percentage of urban blacks who favour the death penalty: 24%
 - Percentage of Democratic Party supporters who favour the death penalty: 74%
 - Cost per day to care for each of the 292 prisoners on death row: R43
 - Cost per night to stay in central Johannesburg hotel: R119
 - Value of bill run up in this hotel by Zimbabwean businessman for which Winnie Mandela has signed surety after the cheque bounced: R40 684
 - Number of days the average PWV resident will have to work to earn R40 684: 1 017
 - Salaries paid to Anglo American's 29 directors in 1992: R20-million
 - Number of top 98 SA companies who have "recruited blacks to positions with actual management responsibilities": 14
 - Increase in company liquidations over 1991: 69%
 - Increase in fraud over past seven years: 77%
 - Predicted percentage of SA labour force unemployed in year 2000: 44%
 - Number of people who survive by "scavenging" rubbish dumps: 163 700
 - Daily waste produced by average South African: 2kg
 - Number of South Africans who are alcoholics: 1-million
 - Violent assaults in Cape that are alcohol-related: 3 out of every 5
 - Percentage of women who are beaten by their husbands: 60%
 - Percentage of wife-beaters who also assault their children: 49%
 - Percentage of Cape Peninsula schoolchildren who say they have attempted suicide: 8%
 - Extra hours per week alcohol may now be sold in SA: 14
 - Number of AK-47 assault rifles handed in to police after 60-day amnesty ended (July 1993): 15
 - Number of bulletproof vests ordered by SA Police (July 1993): 18 000
 - Percentage of metropolitan blacks who believe race relations have deteriorated in the past year: 49%
 - Estimated increase in sales of security systems after murder of Chris Hani: 20-30%
 - Number of people killed in township violence in month following confirmation of April 27 election date: 530
 - Percentage of black voters who say they will not vote for fear of losing their lives: 14%
 - Percentage of IFP supporters who expect their party to win the election: 80%
 - IFP support among metropolitan blacks: 5%

– Compiled by Hein Marais

Sources: Sunday Times, Moving Network International, Home Affairs Dept, SA Tourism Board, World Bank, UN Inter-regional Crime Research Institute, Dept Law and Order, Markinor, Business Day, McGregor's Online, Attorney-General Witwatersrand, Development Bank of SA, CSDS, Central Statistical Services, Keep SA Beautiful Association, Sanca, Medical Research Council, Centre for Health Policy (Wits), SAP, Human Rights Commission, HSRC.



Sisters are doing it to themselves

Resistance and compliance in women's lives

Why do so many women do things which demonstrably reinforce their oppression, like clamouring to enter competitions such as Miss Bikini Open or Penthouse Pet of the Year — events other women see as degrading and demeaning to women as people? **CHERYL DE LA REY** and **LOUISE MINA** scout for the answers

MORE AND MORE SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN ARE TAKING up public positions that seem to challenge the tradition of male dominance. Women participate in the multi-party negotiations, the Anglican Church is ordaining women priests, the chairperson of the SABC board is a woman, and media reports indicate that more women are entering senior levels of the business sector.

Yet at the same time, beauty pageants have become more popular among women, the slimming and cosmetic industries are growing, and some women doggedly defend

their right to become a centrefold girl. Feminists find it difficult to account for these apparent contradictions.

Early feminist writings tended to view women as passive victims of male-defined social structures. They argued that women are obviously born into a largely "pre-constructed" world which demands that they think and act in particular ways. As this is a male-dominated world, women are often expected to act in ways which do not serve their best interests (for example, the socialisation of girls to be "lady-like" renders them vulnerable to male violence).

The scars of oppression

There is no doubt that women are victims (as testified by the horrifying rates of rape, battery and sexual abuse). But there have been some shifts in our understanding of women's oppression. We now know that external, social

forms of oppression leave their mark on the oppressed. Often, this dramatically affects the way the oppressed view themselves. This perception of self, in turn, affects women's ability to struggle against male-dominance.

At least to *some* extent, women are able to choose to resist or comply in their oppression. The position each woman occupies as an individual in society in terms of class, race, gender, religion etcetera may limit her choices or even her perception of whether or not there is a choice. But compliance must also be seen as a choice; otherwise women are left as helpless victims with no possibility of controlling their lives.

That women resist is obvious from the gains which have seen some women take up roles previously denied to them. But at the same time, compliance is evident in the large numbers of women who adopt traditional roles which help maintain the subordination of women in general.

In exploring the broad question of women's participation in our own oppression, this article focuses on two issues: the contradictions of resistance and compliance; and the complex ways in which external limitations on women become perceived as internal limits. We have been surprised to discover how many women we see as being valuable and creative talk about their own feelings of low self-worth and their perception of themselves as having no skills or talent. Obviously these internal feelings about ourselves affect our choices to resist or comply with oppressive forms.

This is further complicated by the fact that it is not always a simple choice between resisting or complying — women may find themselves in a position where they are doing both simultaneously.

Resistance versus compliance

The tensions between resisting and complying at the same time may be seen in the case of women who have made it to the top in arenas that were previously all-male. Women who are taking up positions that were previously male-dominated enter an arena which is



■ BEAUTY IS A FEMINIST ISSUE: Fem between challenge and compliance

not free and open for women. Women often find it is heavily populated by men, dominated by male networks and controlled by rules which have been developed by and for men.

Men decide who can enter this space; they act as the gatekeepers. They often will not let anyone in who will make them uncomfortable or challenge the system of operation too much. To even enter this space can be seen as an act of resistance on the part of women. In order to survive in this space, women may have to negotiate a balance between challenging and complying with a male-defined world.

Contradictory behaviours are often assumed by women in the name of strategising to achieve gains. An example of this is women keeping silent on some issues like sexist jokes or inappropriate touching in order not to alienate men who control access to

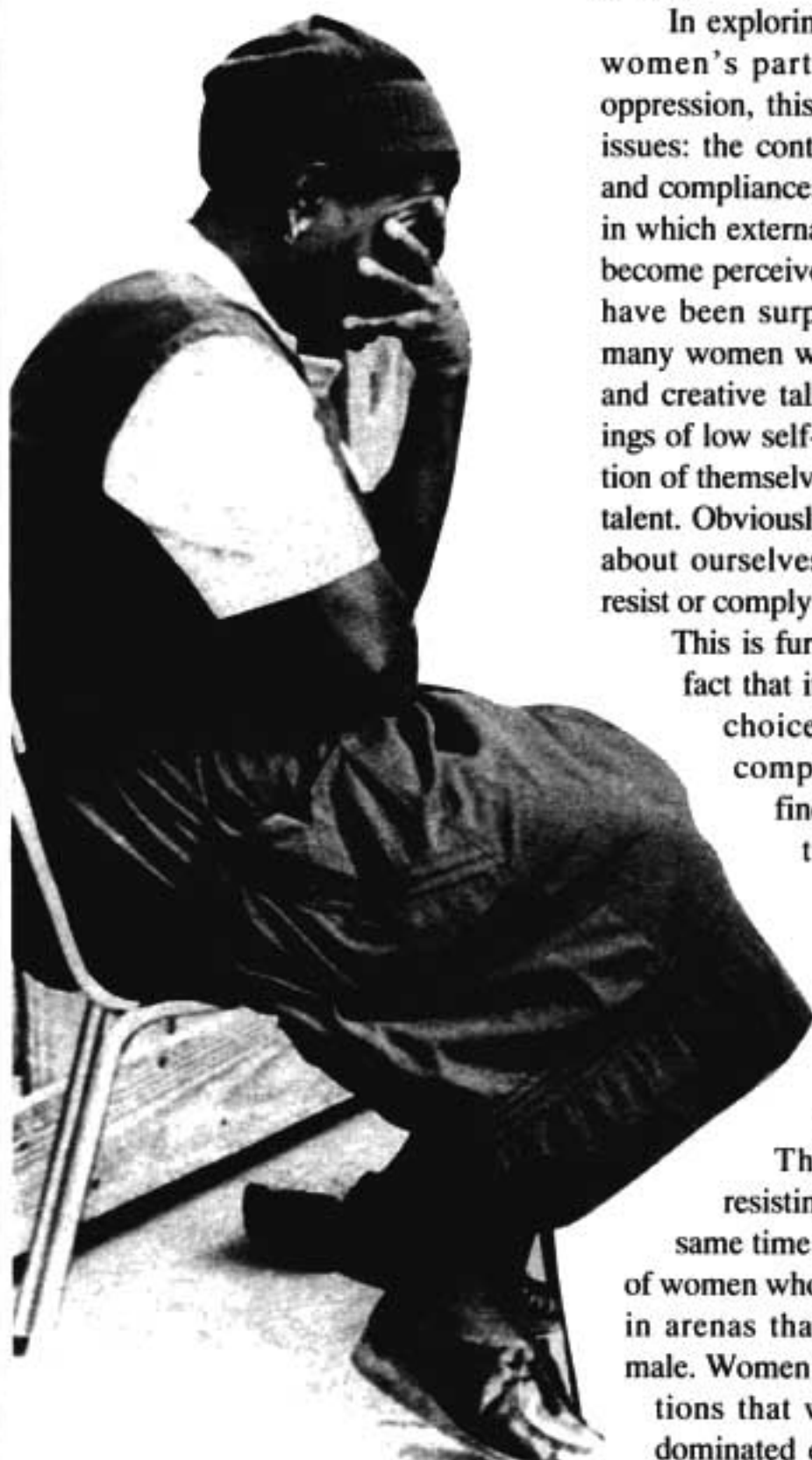




PHOTO: R. BOTHA

...e battled to explain contradictions

power. While women resist at some levels and succeed in breaking down barriers around gender roles (by becoming lawyers, managers, leaders), fundamental relations between men and women remain unchanged.

We often overlook the extent to which relations between women and men hinge on sexual intimacy. This intimacy distinguishes gender struggle from any other form of struggle, with the sexual dynamic binding women to men in complicated and contradictory ways. It is very difficult for women to confront their oppression when it means challenging the persons they

sleep with. The impact of sexual relations extends also to women and men who are not sexually involved. It permeates all relations between men and women and often constrains women's ability to resist.

Women can use flirting to gain men's interest and win their support for a bid on a particular position or for access to more power, and so on. But this involves a cost: women continue to be seen mainly as sexual objects.

The flipside of this (sexual intimacy) coin is the generalised abuse of women through, for example, sexual harassment and the constant threat of rape. The sexual dynamic also provides men with the opportunity to play women off against one another, dividing them. So one often sees women spending their energies competing against each other instead of challenging their subordinate positions.

Women are socialised to believe that self-fulfilment is to be sought in heterosexual relationships. These are touted as virtual "cure-alls" that provide emotional satisfaction, material security and the possibility of improving one's social status.

The self-worth of men is framed in relation to *themselves* and to their own activities; but a woman's self-worth is located in relation to whether she has a man, who that man is, what he does, and how he values her. Because women rely so much more on this relationship for their sense of meaning and esteem, they become more vulnerable to abuse from their partners. And abuse in the private

domain can also erode their sense of self-worth in the public domain.

Raise your voice

At a recent seminar discussing women's participation in the political process, the chairperson asked the women present to indicate who would be willing to stand as a candidate for parliamentary or local government elections. About two of the 50 women raised their hands.

Traditional roles

Developing self-worth is an enormously difficult task for women. Traditional feminine roles and character traits are not valued in society, but women who take up non-traditional stances find themselves being criticised.

The few women who are taking up non-traditional, powerful public positions find them-

selves caught between the pressure men place on them to operate within certain boundaries, and the demands from other women that they perform well and represent all their needs. No wonder women sometimes seem reluctant to fill such positions.

Women who take up positions in the public domain are forced to struggle on two fronts: the public and the private. In order to participate in a public role (whether as a political leader, or a waged worker), they have to redefine their priorities "at the expense" of family life. Men find it easier to maintain these priorities because women traditionally shoulder the responsibility of maintaining relationships, keeping family life going and preserving a functioning household. There is no denying that women take on these responsibilities because most men are not committed to them.

Men need to take on more responsibility for domestic labour. But sim-



PHOTO: GAIL DE VRIES

ply shifting the burden is not enough. Employers, political and community organisations need to recognise and make space for family and domestic responsibilities as *real work* which somebody has to do. Otherwise both women and men can only enter the public arena at the expense of the individual who supports them by slogging away in the domestic sphere.

Businesses, organisations and the state have to recognise domestic labour as real labour which underlies all public life; they have to make the structural changes which render and treat this labour as visible. Only then will more women be freed to enter the public realm. Such external changes can assist women in their struggle with the internal limits, the internal barriers that deter them from taking on new positions because they feel inadequate or unprepared.

For many a woman, her identity is linked to forming and maintaining relationships. This is not only emotional nursing, but also physical caretaking such as preparing meals, organising domestic life, etcetera. But many women are prevented from struggling fully with this by the fact that they find it difficult to relinquish those responsibilities. It is their traditional arena of control — a well-developed area of competence for women, a source of recognition, and a way to fulfil a socially prescribed role which carries its own rewards and credit.

Because this arena is historically assigned to women, other women police it fiercely by criticising any woman who tries to leave or transform it.

Change is threatening

Change can be as threatening to traditional women as it is to men. Women who make the decision to redefine their priorities have to struggle, both externally and internally (within and among themselves), with their own guilt, to accept the decision. Some women who are in relationships with men who share domestic tasks still hold themselves ultimately responsible by spending time prodding men and supervising their efforts at domestic responsibility. Just as many men are not firmly convinced that women are competent enough for the public realm, many women do not trust that men are capable to perform

child care and domestic tasks.

The construction of women's self-worth in relation to men often means that women in organisational settings are severely hampered when they take up issues and try to put them on the agenda. When women's efforts do not meet with positive response, they tend to be far more self-critical, using self-blame to explain the "failure". Men tend to blame failure on external factors like the system or other men; women personalise it by blaming themselves.

Women are also held ransom by

tions placed on them as *internal* limitations. They experience these as feelings of low self-worth, lack of talent and skills.

Within themselves, they reproduce the handicaps that a male-controlled society imposes on them. The contradictions between resisting and complying with oppression persist.

Because the public realm is not accommodating to women, we need to build our own internal resources so we can enter that realm more effectively.

We believe this can best be



■ CHEEKY: Women are held ransom by negative stereotypes

negative stereotypes — for example by being labelled aggressive, hysterical, emotional or irrational. In this way their abilities to assert themselves are limited by men's own sense of comfort and discomfort. In a male-dominated public sphere, men define the rewards and bestow the recognition. They are more likely to bestow praise on women who fulfil traditional feminine roles by being accommodating, caring, seductive and emotionally receptive to men's needs.

In complex ways, then, women come to perceive the external restric-

achieved by women working together to challenge both their inner limitations and the external male-controlled world.

This might take many forms — such as collective political struggle, supporting ourselves and other women to challenge traditional beliefs and practices, and allowing ourselves the space to believe in possibilities beyond our existing constraints. ■

● Cheryl de la Rey lectures in social psychology at the University of Durban-Westville. Louise Mina is a feminist psychotherapist in private practice.



First it was two hats — now it's two seats

*Are trade unions going to cope with
the rush to parliament?*

Senior Cosatu leaders are preparing to take their seats in parliament. But how will the trade union movement cope with the loss of key officials? And have they given enough thought to the future of their alliance with the ANC?

ZOLILE MTSHELWANE investigates

ELECTING AN ANC-LED GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO BE THE TOP priority for most of the Cosatu affiliates. Some of the questions which have already come up include:

- How will Cosatu ensure victory for the ANC?
- How can Cosatu guarantee that an ANC government will attend to the advancement of workers' rights, and can fulfil workers' expectations?
- What should be the nature of Cosatu's alliance with an ANC government?

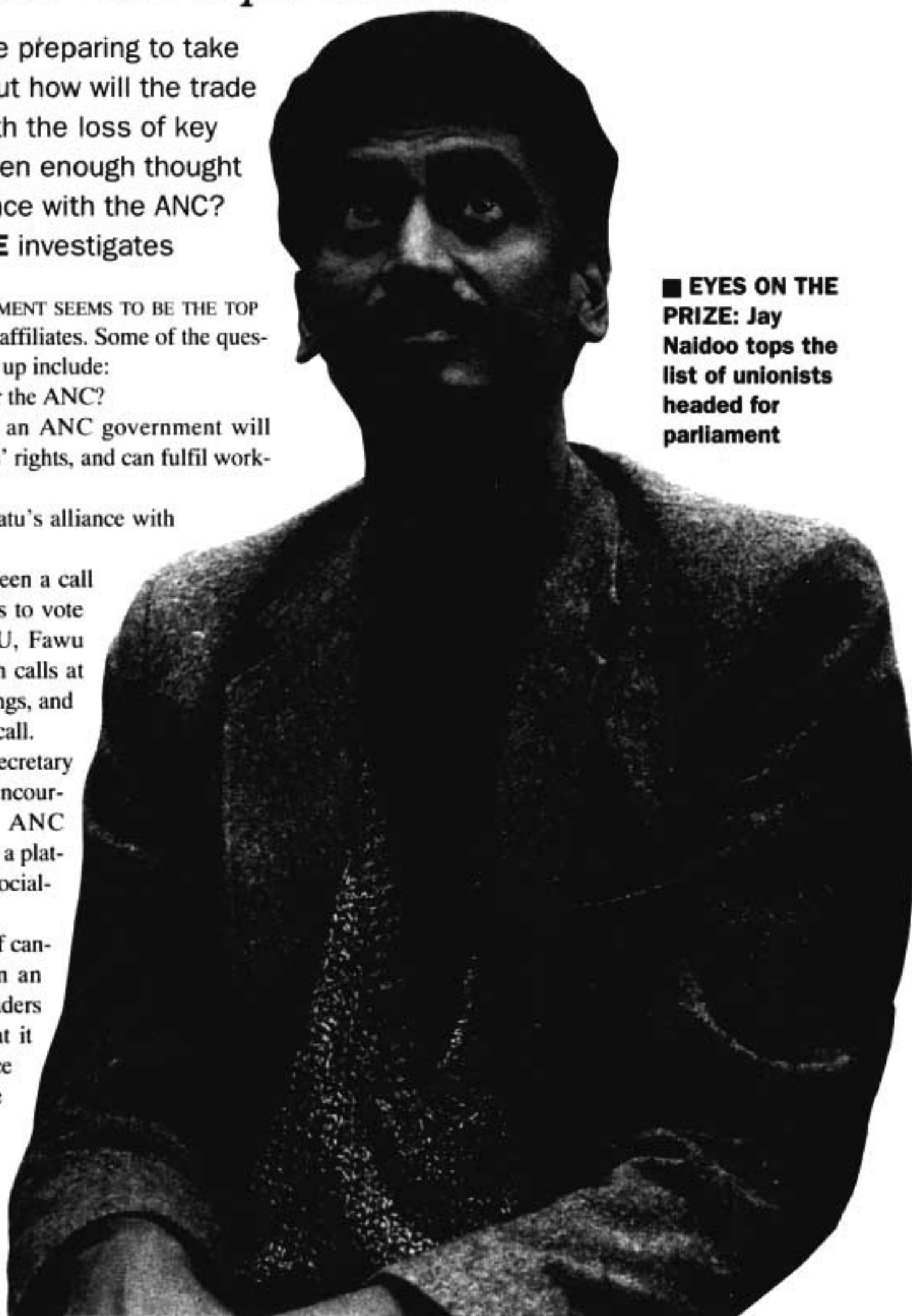
So far, the main response has been a call by most affiliates for union members to vote for the ANC. Numsa, NUM, CWIU, Fawu and TGWU have recently made such calls at their congresses and executive meetings, and other affiliates are likely to echo this call.

Randal Howard, new general secretary of the TGWU, said his union had encouraged members to vote for the ANC "because we believe this will provide a platform to influence the ANC to build socialism".

Cosatu is also compiling a list of candidates to contest the elections on an ANC ticket. High-ranking union leaders dominate the list — so much so that it appears the federation's very existence is dependent on the outcome of the elections.

They include Cosatu president John Gomomo, first vice-president Chris Dlamini and the two general secretaries, Jay Naidoo and Sam Shilowa.

But how are unions going to



■ **EYES ON THE PRIZE:** Jay Naidoo tops the list of unionists headed for parliament

cope with absence of key officials? Numsa has stated that officials' positions will be filled as soon as they start campaigning. "However, there will always be a place for them in the union if they do not get elected to the constituent assembly," says NEC member Charles Bezuidenhout.

"They might not necessarily be returned to their original positions, but the union will fit them in somewhere else in the organisation."

CWIU has adopted a different approach. Assistant general secretary Muzi Buthelezi says it will not put any of its members or officials on the list. "Once someone from our union or Cosatu agrees to be on the election list they must resign from the union," he says.

As part of its voter education drive, Cosatu has also proposed a one-off "voter education levy" that its affiliates will contribute to. There is a principled agreement within the federation that affiliates will contribute towards the fund.

Cosatu affiliates have also agreed to second at least one person each to work on voter education programme. These activists will work in the different regions, in conjunction with affiliates' shopstewards.

Buthelezi says employers in the chemical industry have no problem with giving assistance to shopstewards participating in voter education.

"In addition to the full-time person we have seconded for this programme, we will also utilise our full-time shopstewards in voter education activities," he says. Buthelezi says unions will still pay the salaries of these officials, while the full-time shopstewards will do this as part of their union work (and will still be paid by their employers).

How the alliance sees it

A recent ANC-SACP-Cosatu discussion paper warns that the break-up of the alliance carried serious risks for each component:

- 'An ANC cut loose from independent working class formations ... would become even more susceptible to the pressures of governmental office and to the influence of non-popular strata.'
- 'A trade union movement that confines itself to meeting the ANC only as "the government across the negotiating table" risks falling into narrow, economic unionism ... It would confine itself to defending the narrow interests of organised, skilled and semi-skilled workers — in short, of a minority of the working class at the expense of the majority.'
- 'An SACP going it alone risks becoming a grievance party, a marginalised force. The historic strength of the SACP has been its ability to retain its autonomy within a broad national liberation movement.'



■ WHAT ABOUT THE WORKING CLASS: Will unionists be able to influence

What about the alliance?

The big question now is: What happens to the alliance after the election?

Buthelezi believes this debate will only start in earnest once the elections are over.

Howard, however, says TGWU has already stated that the alliance should remain: "The need for defending workers' rights under a new government will be even greater," he says. "We should not tamper with the alliance, although it should be reviewed on a continuous basis."

"Our political gains have to be defended at all costs. It is important to keep our alliance with the ANC stronger even

after a new government is in place."

The NUM also subscribes to the continuation of the alliance after the elections. General secretary Kgalema Motlanthe was recently quoted as saying: "Once apartheid is gone, this will lay bare the differences and lead to a realignment of forces."

Numsa, on the other hand, believes the alliance "should be terminated as soon as the ANC is in power," according to Bezuidenhout. "We shouldn't be in alliance with the government of the day. We should interact with the government through institutions like the National Economic Forum, the Housing Forum, etc. We believe we should work outside of government, as our aim is to build socialism."

High expectations

Cosatu and its affiliates are determined to make an ANC-led government deliver on workers' expectations. Topping the list of these expectations, according to TGWU's Nathi Nhleko, is the provision of decent housing and the upgrading of hostels. Nhleko says since the nature of a new government will be that of national unity, some parties that might want to frustrate these expecta-



PHOTO: SAMSON SELEPE

government thinking once they're 'within'

tions. "For example, the IFP has always interpreted the demand for upgrading of hostels as a ploy to disorganise its structures," he says.

The Reconstruction and Development Accord initiated by Cosatu is one way in which unions hope to commit the ANC to implementing real changes. The accord has five basic pillars:

- Restructuring and democratisation of the state and its institutions.
- Elimination of poverty.
- Job creation.
- Human resources development and training.
- Industry restructuring.

There is general agreement within Cosatu and its affiliates that an ANC-led government must strive towards implementing this accord, as it reflects the demands and aspirations of workers.

Nhleko says restructuring and democratising the state and its institutions entails:

- Granting the right to vote to all adults.
- Allowing workers a say in the running of the economy.
- The halting of all unilateral decision-making by state departments.

Key aspects in this regard are:

- Poverty: "An ANC-dominated gov-

ernment needs to commit itself to the elimination of poverty," says Nhleko.

● **Nationalisation:** There appears to be general agreement within unions that industry restructuring should entail the nationalisation of strategic operations. Numsa believes the building industry is one such operation. "If a new government hopes to provide decent housing for those in need, then the building industry must be nationalised," he says. "The provision of housing for the population cannot be left in the hands of the private sector, as this allows for exploitation of the poor by unscrupulous businessmen."

Although the accord is still being discussed within the alliance, unionists believe there are no fundamental differences about its provisions. "The differences so far are over emphasis rather than substance," says Nhleko.

● **Workers' rights:** An ANC-led government will also be expected to endorse and implement the rights embodied in the Workers' Charter.

Honeymoon or divorce?

The critical moment is definitely in the offing if and when the ANC becomes the majority party in government. Its capacity to satisfy the aspirations of the Cosatu members who vote it into power will determine the future well-being of the current marriage.

Will the ANC overrule other parties in government who might try to frustrate its willingness to deliver to its constituency, or will it tread carefully to try and appease them — at the risk of losing the support of those who voted it into power? What effect will former Cosatu activists have in pressing on with the programme to meet workers' aspirations?

Those unionists who will still be organising workers are grappling with these and other issues in the run-up to the elections. For now, the debate is still pleasant and non-hostile. Things will, however, come to a head as soon as the new government takes its place.

One thing is definite, though: Cosatu members will not take kindly to attempts to delay fundamental change in South Africa. They have waited a long time for the removal of a racist government — and a democratic government *must* be seen to be doing something about their conditions, both as workers and citizens. ■

We don't need a labour Broederbond

One of the unions which is most outspoken in its criticism of the alliance is the SA Clothing & Textile workers' Union (Sactwu). At its 1993 congress, the union's political report outlined its position as follows:

1. Unions should not descend to being the labour wing of government: Alliance politics will condemn the union movement to being the labour wing of the political parties involved. This will mean explaining government policy to workers. Far from assisting workers in expressing discontent with such policies, we will detract from such efforts.

2. Democratic practices should be transparent, not lobbyist: The union movement should not bind itself to exclusive meetings with the government to iron out differences, and then expect government to implement laws consistent with the caucused position. This would turn the union into a Broederbond, secretly controlling government.

It is an open invitation for interest groups to adopt a similar approach. It is a recipe for government by secret deals.

3. Trade union unity is essential: We have several union federations, and one of the major differences between them is the issue of which political party to "ally" themselves with. What we need is a single trade union federation at least between Cosatu, Nactu and FedSal.

The only way this can be achieved is to put worker unity ahead of political differences.

A permanent tie undermines labour's influence on a party since its support is taken for granted. Worse, it drives other parties to anti-labour positions in their campaigning. When they win an election, they do so on anti-labour tickets — and then dismantle all the institutions through which organised labour secures influence and power.



Supply & demand: The election list dilemma

THE STORY GOES THAT ON 19 JULY 1979, when the Somoza regime in Nicaragua collapsed in the face of a popular insurrection, the Sandinista leadership suddenly found itself occupying an empty national assembly. One senior leader turned to another wondering: "And now what?"

For better or for worse the transformation process here in South Africa is going to be less dramatic. But, certainly, a very significant moment will be our first ever one-person one-vote elections.

April 27 1994 looks to be the date. "And now what?"

Now that we seem finally to have won our demand for elections, some new sobering facts are beginning to rear their heads.

The first is called arithmetic.

We are going to have to nominate hundreds of people to stand for elections. The ANC-led alliance will be placing 400 people on the list for the Constituent Assembly. Two hundred will be on a national list, and the remaining 200 will come from nine, or so, still to be negotiated regions.

That's not the end of the story. Simultaneously with the Constituent Assembly election on April 27, we will also be electing regional legislatures. That means a few hundred more candidates. Out of these regionally elected bodies, 10 per region will be forwarded on to a national senate, and those going on to the senate will have to be replaced in their respective regions — so that's another 90 or so.

Within perhaps 12 to 18 months there will also be local government

As the election draws closer, one of the key questions is:

Who's going to be on the ANC's list. If you're one of those asking the question, here's some advice from

JEREMY CRONIN

elections. The arithmetic of these bodies is still to be decided, but it will surely run into hundreds, if not thousands more candidates.

Of course, not all those on ANC lists will make it into the various elected structures. Nevertheless, several hundred ANC-aligned cadres are going to hold new political jobs next year.

At the same time, we intend to transform the civil service at national, regional and local level, and this will require, among other things, an influx of effective comrades. We also hope to reassemble some 17 000 MK soldiers in training camps in the coming months. There's the police, the SABC ... the list goes on.

That's a lot of people!

Have we got what it takes? I am sure we do. We might not be experienced, but we can hardly do worse than the present bunch with their corruption, incompetence, lack of concern and general ignorance about the majority of the governed.

I am, however, concerned about the draining effect that elections and the need to transform the civil service will have on our existing extra-parliamentary formations. It is essential that we retain a strong extra-parliamentary

ANC, SACP, Cosatu and many more sectoral formations. True, elected MPs should not be entirely lost, as organisers and spokespersons, to their extra-parliamentary formations. But they will have considerably less time for this work.

In short, there will be major strains and dislocations in our existing extra-parliamentary formations.

The process

But the problems are not just in the arithmetic. There is also the nominations process.

Once we have an ANC list and the election battle is in full flow, I am sure we will see an impressive and unifying campaign. But first we have to get over the hurdle of the nominations process.

Who gets onto lists? More sensitively, who doesn't? I am not going to be mealie-mouthed about this: there will be jockeying, there will be caucusing, and prima donnas galore. There will be ambitions rewarded and ambitions dashed, there will be agendas of all kinds.

How do we limit the dangers of a political free-for-all in our own ranks?

In the first place, the nominations process needs to be as democratic, as bottom-up as possible. The fact that we are using a proportional representation (PR) system for this election makes the need for a bottom-up process particularly important.

If these elections were constituency elections with one, or perhaps more than one MP per constituency (this happens in some countries), then the answerability of candidates would be more firmly anchored in particular com-

munities. The grave danger in a PR system is that it will degenerate, as it has in Italy, into trade-offs between political elites ... "You can get onto our list if you supply us with favours — the bigger the favour the higher up on the list you'll be." Once this kind of electoral trade develops, individuals might be highly valued in their places of residence or work, but if the party bosses don't like them, that's it, finito.

We need to counter this danger by ensuring a transparent and democratic nominations process within the ANC alliance. The ANC elections commission has, indeed, come up with an impressive nominations process. It begins at the local level with ANC branches, tripartite local structures and, where appropriate, Patriotic Front partners. Consultation with mass democratic formations is called for and the nomination forms will have to provide fairly detailed motivations for each individual nominee.

Local nominations are then taken to regional nominations conferences. (Incidentally, the electoral regions will not coincide with existing ANC, SACP or COSATU regional demarcations — another headache facing us.) These regional conferences have to nominate 200 names for the national list and a proportion of the regional list based roughly on the percentage of the electorate in that region.

From regional conferences a special committee of the ANC will then submit a synthesised draft list, plus all regional nominations (so names provisionally omitted are not forgotten) to a special national nominations conference that will be as representative as possible. The conference will produce its list and will submit it for final endorsement to the ANC NEC or NWC. The NEC/NWC will, presumably, not easily tamper with the product, although there might be some temptations.

That, basically, is what has to happen before the end of the year.

Negative nominations

A bottom-up and transparent process will help, but it will not completely remove the dangers of a divisive free-for-all. As a contribution to countering such dangers the SACP, for its part, has also taken a decisive first step with some "negative nominations". Beginning at the political bureau and central

committee level, we have already collectively designated a number of comrades who will NOT be standing. Their tasks will be to remain consolidating an extra-parliamentary SACP. We hope soon to replicate this negative nomination process down to regions and districts.

Cosatu, on the other hand, is in the process of designating some 20 comrades whom they wish to place on an ANC national list. Does this not run the danger of setting a tradition of head-office trade-offs?

grassroots structures will want to ensure a significant Cosatu presence in any case, and will take seriously the proposals made by the unions). Taking the 20 names down in this way will also help to profile the individuals.

Indeed all of us, without undermining the bottom-up democratic nomination process, need as organised formations to be thinking, like Cosatu, about who can be released, who must be groomed, who must be trained.

Opposition parties in functioning multi-party democracies, after all, have



■ VAT JOU GOED EN TREK: Will we have enough trained cadres to fill the vacuum in government?

My own personal view is that we need to find an intelligent way between internal organisational arrangements and the bottom-up nomination process.

I can appreciate the Cosatu move — after all, the federation and its affiliates need to plan to find replacements, and generally to adjust to the departure of key leaders. On the other hand, I believe that the 20 or so Cosatu names should go down to branch, zone and regional level. Let us test their support in the process. (I am quite sure our

shadow cabinets. Individuals are able to develop an area of competence. While there are many individuals whose portfolios mark them out as potential ministers, the ANC and tripartite alliance at present have no developed shadow cabinet.

Isn't it rather late, I hear you ask, to be thinking about these things?

Well, at least making a start in September 1993 is better than waking up on April 28 next year with the Sandinistan question: "And now what?" ■

PHOTO: ARGUIS



The military meltdown

Restructuring the arms industry

The South African arms industry: moral cesspool, national investment or national asset? Close it down, expand it or maintain it? **ABBA OMAR** of the Military Research Group reports on a recent workshop on the arms industry and spells out a few options

IN THE RUSH TO RECONSTRUCT SOUTH Africa, a crucial element is in danger of being overlooked — this country's multi-billion rand arms industry.

At stake are more than G5 cannons and other heavy pieces of artillery equipment: thousands of people are employed in the industry, and millions of rands have been spent on technology and equipment which could be converted for civilian use.

Some debate on the industry has already taken place — most of it at a recent workshop outside Pretoria which brought together representatives of the local arms industry, the ANC, major military formations in SA and the front-line states, several NGOs, and international experts.

Three questions dominated the discussions:

- How can the arms industry be converted towards civilian purposes?
- What export and import policy should govern the industry?
- How can transparency and accountability be ensured within the industry?

While no binding decisions were taken, participants arrived at some points of

consensus. It was left to participants to take the process further.

Conversion

Conversion of the arms industry is one way of ensuring the restructuring of the defence industry without losing the skills and technology in that sector.

Ideally, the industry should be reorganised as part of an overall defence policy, which will determine the future size and orientation of the armed forces. The reorganisation should also be in line with future foreign policy and the National Industrial Policy proposed by Cosatu to the National Economic Forum.

A democratically drawn-up *technology policy* should lie at the heart of this conversion strategy. Such a policy should take into account national needs (eg. housing), identify key areas of technology which need to be supported, and target key industries to meet these needs.

In ensuring that SA can generally benefit from the skills and technology of the arms industry, participants also agreed to promote scientific/technological education at all lev-

els.

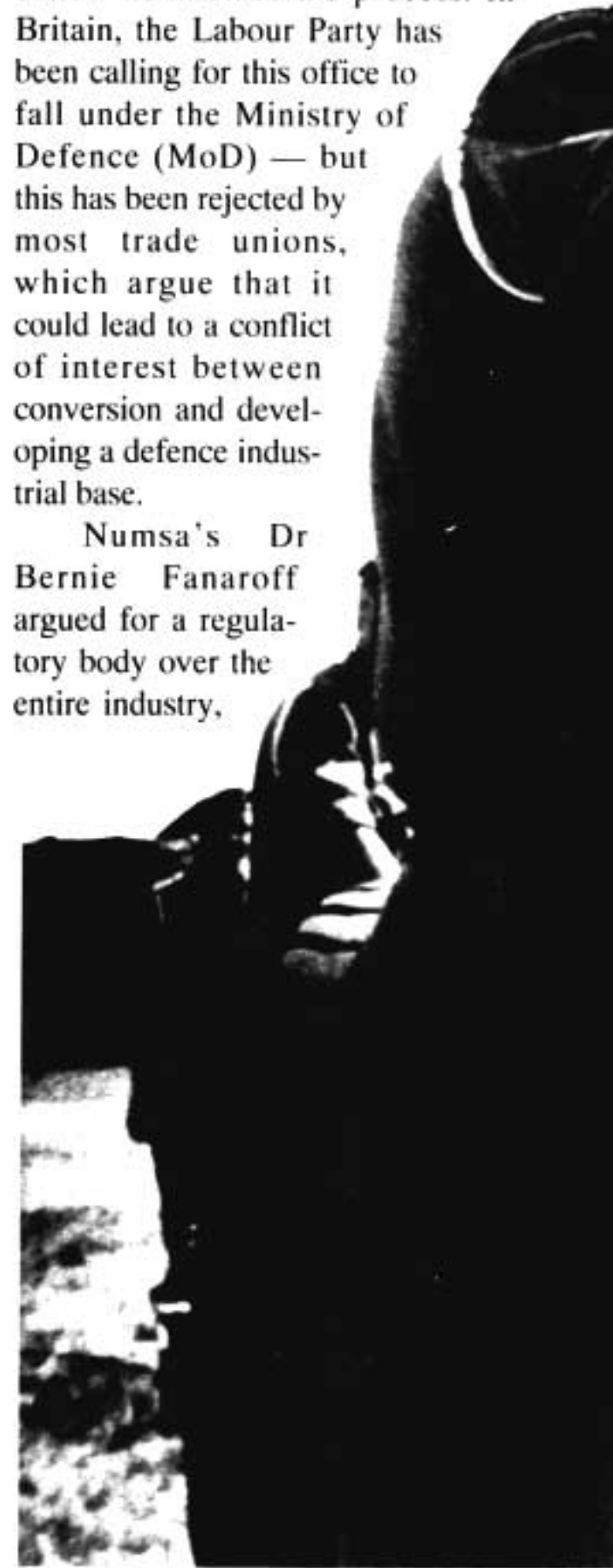
There was some debate on the notion of a "national conversion office" to oversee the process. In Britain, the Labour Party has been calling for this office to fall under the Ministry of Defence (MoD) — but this has been rejected by most trade unions, which argue that it could lead to a conflict of interest between conversion and developing a defence industrial base.

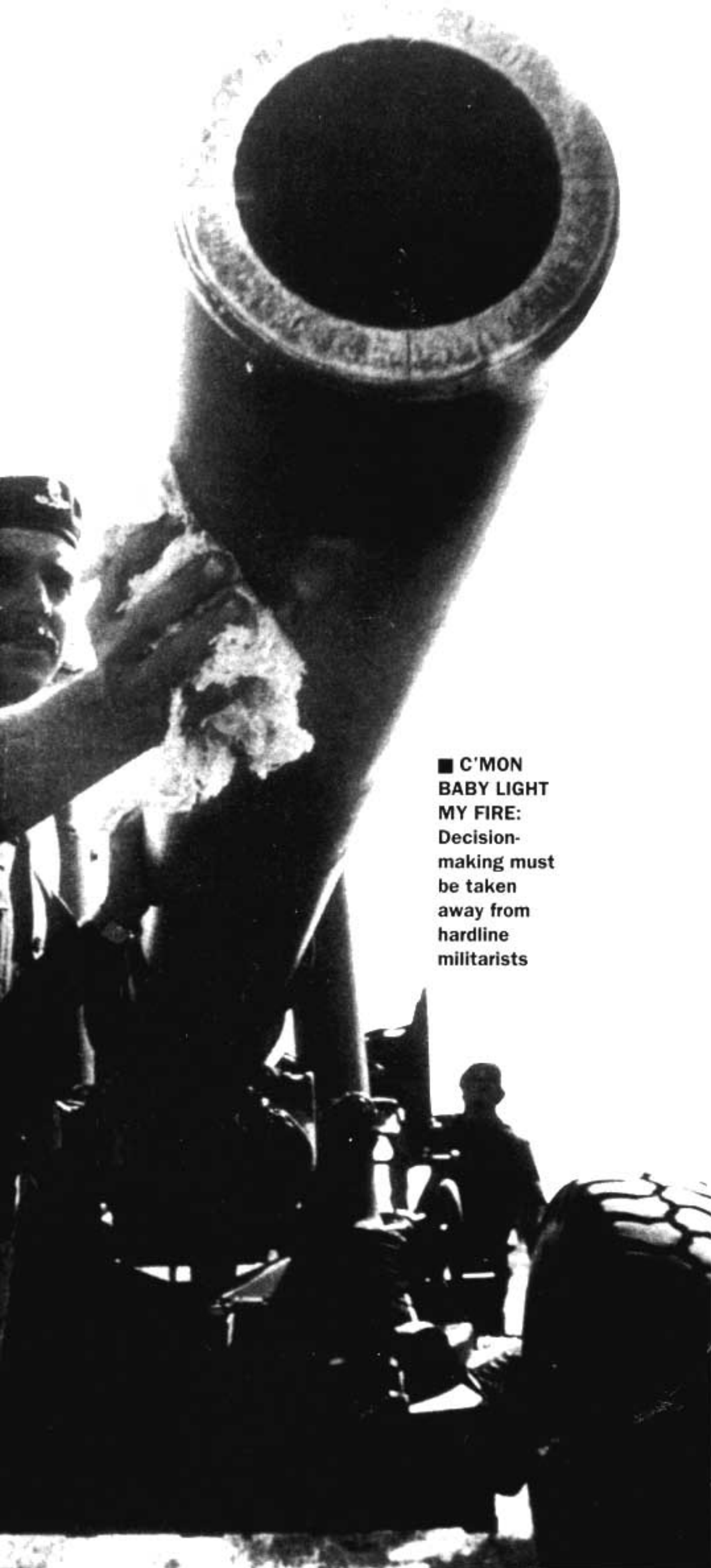
Numsa's Dr Bernie Fanaroff argued for a regulatory body over the entire industry,

What do we do with the arms industry?

Opinions at the recent arms industry conference varied sharply.

- **Prof Jackie Cock (MRG and the Group for Environmental Monitoring):** 'The industry is a moral cesspool characterised by a total absence of morality ... by smuggling, secrecy and shady dealings.'
- **Dr Bernie Fanaroff (National Union of Metalworkers):** 'It represents a large investment of capital and human resources. In the struggle to restructure SA's industries, we cannot afford to throw this away.' He called for the conversion of the arms industry under a Conversion or Diversification Council.
- **Dr Andre Buys (head of Armscor's planning division):** 'We should develop a diversified arms industry, capable of producing both military and civilian goods.'





■ **C'MON
BABY LIGHT
MY FIRE:**
Decision-
making must
be taken
away from
hardline
militarists

with statutory powers. It was also recommended that a national conversion office be located within the CSIR or the future Department of Trade and Industry.

Participants pointed out that it was easier for civilian technology to be converted to defence use than vice versa.

"Community economic adjustment" was a useful addition to the South African arms industry dictionary. Expounded at the workshop by Robert Rauner, who served in the Bush administration, it is based on the axiom that "since all politics is local, all conversion is local".

Communities which are hit directly by the conversion process (for example the closure of a shipyard) are drawn in at an early stage to work out alternatives for their livelihood. Such a process requires an active non-governmental sector such as civics, environmentalists and worker locals.

There was also agreement that the arms embargo should be lifted only after a government of national unity is in place. This was differentiated from a voluntary embargo on arms exports which should be lifted once a transitional executive council is in place.

Arms trade

There was substantial discussion on future import/export policies, and general agreement that SA should participate fully in the various international arms trade control regimes.

In addition, it should establish its own indigenous policies of restraint, such as the recent legislation on the control of missile technology:

A further suggestion was the establishment of *principles of trade*, and mechanisms to ensure these principles are adhered to. As a democratic SA comes into being, this will be a major area of concern for many democrats.

In the Netherlands, this has been dealt with by ensuring that the government of the day is committed to ensuring that a country receiving arms:

- Subscribes to general international treaties.
- Maintains human rights acceptable to SA.
- Has no part in an armed conflict.
- Works to sustain the peace, security and stability of the region.

- Poses no threat to the national security of other countries.

- Meets accepted codes of conduct regarding terrorism, international co-operation and the acceptance of international law.

Restructuring the industry

A combination of approaches can be adopted in restructuring the arms industry.

The first is best explained by Idasa's Dr Alex Boraine, who argues that political decisions which are being made now could well become conventions — and would be very difficult to change in the future.

"If any attempt were to be made to establish core values, that attempt should be made now," he wrote recently. "It should be done by mobilising those democrats who are already working to uphold these values in a range of political organisations and in the structures of civil society."

The implication of this is that like-minded democrats could develop a set of core values related to the arms industry, and promote these values.

Another approach has been advocated by Fanaroff, who recently wrote an article for the *SA Defence Review*. In it, he pointed out: "Armcor and Denel are parastatal corporations. As such, their control should be far more representative of the population than is now the case.

"In Eskom, another parastatal which is equally strategic, discussions on the role of trade unions in decision-making are at an advanced stage. Denel should also allow and facilitate unionisation, after years of refusing it in terms of the statutes. This would require rapid changes to the statutes.

"Obviously, however, policy control of Denel and Armcor would need to be restructured to be more widely representative than the inclusion of representative trade unions."

If representivity is the issue, who are the players who need to be given more say in the arms industry?

● The establishment of forums

The creation of the National Housing and Economic Forum (and the imminent launch of the Education Forum) is another approach to institutional restructuring. Each of these forums came into being in a different way.

What the UN has to say

The United Nations maintains a Register of Conventional Arms, which includes data on international arms transfers as well as information provided by member states on their military capacity.

The UN resolution on the issue said a register was necessary "... because excessive and destabilising arms build-ups pose a threat to national, regional and international peace, by aggravating tensions and conflict situations".

The resolution emphasised that "recent agreements in the field of arms limitation and disarmament make it a propitious time to work towards easing tensions and a just resolution of conflict situations, as well as more openness and transparency in military matters."

The economic and education forums have a high degree of direct action (by labour, and by students and teachers) while the National Housing Forum was originally hosted by the Development Bank of Southern Africa.

● The SABC experience

The SABC experience is of more direct relevance. The recent appointment of a new board was the culmination of a process which began in January last year at a conference hosted by the Campaign for Open Media.

The campaign had certain key advantages over discourse about the arms industry:

- There was greater openness about the SABC's operations.

- There was broad agreement on the critique of the SABC.

- The democratic movement has a sizable cadreship with expertise in various areas of broadcasting.

Among the campaign's key weaknesses was the lack of a programme of follow-through. The new board immediately fell into the old habit of closed doors and lack of transparency.

It did, however, set some important precedents — most importantly the process of public hearings — which may see South Africans shaping involvement in public office as sharply as the US has.

There can be no doubt that as far as the arms industry is concerned the twin principals of transparency and accountability must be rigidly

promoted and adhered to.

The motivation for this is clear:

- In the absence of informed criticism, a small group of decision-makers could be making bad decisions — but since no "outsiders" would know, no one could point out deficiencies or errors.

- Alternatives are not investigated.

- Lack of informed public debate.

A combination of these factors also encourages the small group of decision-makers to "carry on doing the same".

How can we prevent this happening? There are a range of mechanisms, including:

- The various international and regional treaties SA will be a subscriber to. Of particular importance is the UN Register of Conventional Arms (see box).

- Ensuring that the arms industry is governed by a working group on arms procurement and production, with inputs from a multi-party committee, the arms industry, trade unions, security specialists in the NGO sector, and the departments of foreign affairs and trade.

- There is also a range of parliamentary mechanisms which could prove useful, including detailed breakdowns of defence spending, parliamentary hearings (akin to US congressional hearings) and a multi-party committee to determine what, if anything, may be kept secret. ■





Reinventing the hammer and sickle

Sure, the working class needs a party that can push forward its interests with a clear and independent programme. But, argues **MZWANELE MAYEKISO**, the SACP is best positioned to become such a party.

IS A WORKERS' PARTY THE SOLUTION to the Left's problems? Given the several socialist organisations on the South African stage already, how do we interpret the stirring commitment of Numsa members to building an independent working class party?

These questions mark a refreshing departure from the controversies about the nature of *civil society*. Such debates often become minefields. Blade Nzimande and Mpume Sikhosana, for example, have argued that promoting civil society is merely "liberal." Now we see the idea of a working class political party being labelled as "ultra-left" and as coinciding with state divide-and-rule strategies.

I want to argue three points:

- We should not spend too much energy debating whether a new working class political party should be formed, when we already have a popular and open-minded party — the SA Communist Party — which fits the bill.
- The real question is how the SACP can take up a clear, independent programme that coincides with the programmes and campaigns of organs of civil society.
- The struggle for a vibrant working class civil society is still underway, and is probably the crucial struggle of our time.

What, then, did the Numsa delegates mean when, at their July congress, they called for "new forms of organisation that will unify the working class organisations and parties that will take forward a programme to imple-

ment socialism"?

The Numsa resolution was vague and open to misinterpretation. That much is evident from Jeremy Cronin's overly defensive argument (in *WIP* 91) that we have already tackled such "populist-workerist" debates.

"Workerists" marvelled at that resolution, and claimed that it was a vindication of their early 1980s position. Wosa's Neville Alexander cited both the pro-workers' party stance of the former general secretary of Fosatu, and pointed out how the backlash immediately decries workers' party advocates "as 'Utopian' and 'Trotskyite,'" and "even as 'fascists'".

Underlying objective

Given such interpretations, Numsa should have been clearer about what "new forms of organisation" its workers had in mind, and why such forms "could" include a working class party. The underlying objective, Numsa argued, is to unite the Left, namely people and forces who endorse: the control of the means of production by the working class for the benefit of society as a whole; democracy; internationalism; anti-imperialism; and non-racialism. (Gender relations, unfortunately, were not addressed.)

That refers to an all-encompassing socialist project. But there are deep differences between, on the one hand, the various socialist parties and, on the other, between those parties and independent socialists. The formation of a workers' party implies collapsing the

SACP, Wosa (which has endured splits), and other groups.

From where will a working class party draw its coherence, given our fragmented background and the disagreements that exist within the socialist movement? Why don't we instead put that effort into reinvigorating the SACP, with its tens of thousands of members?

One answer is that the Numsa resolution reflects the disillusionment of workers with the SACP, because of its failure to produce an independent programme that unifies all sectors of the working class.

In his initial response (*Weekly Mail*, July 23), Cronin did progressive debate a disservice by trying to link the workers' party idea to a National Intelligence Service document which advised the government to "prolong the negotiations" and split the ANC. This misrepresents the Numsa resolution, which was a call for a safeguard against the failure of the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) meeting popular aspirations.

Numsa workers may have jumped the gun, but their call cannot be ignored — as neo-colonial lessons from elsewhere make clear. Cronin agrees these lessons are important, but wants our energies to go into "the most important strategic challenge of our time: the battle for the life and soul of the ANC".

The ANC is indeed a multi-class formation in which influence has to be contested. The fight for working class *ascendancy* should take place within

and not outside. Socialists of different persuasion should fight for an ANC biased in favour of the working class. This should satisfy any comrades' concern that the Numsa resolution can only isolate the ANC from its mass base. But other energies must be harnessed to build the SACP and working class civil society.

The working class is under more pressure than at any time in recent memory. So many challenges confront us: unifying the labour movement, strengthening civic structures, linking these and other organisations of the working class, and ridding our civil society of sexism, ethnicity, and other social ills.

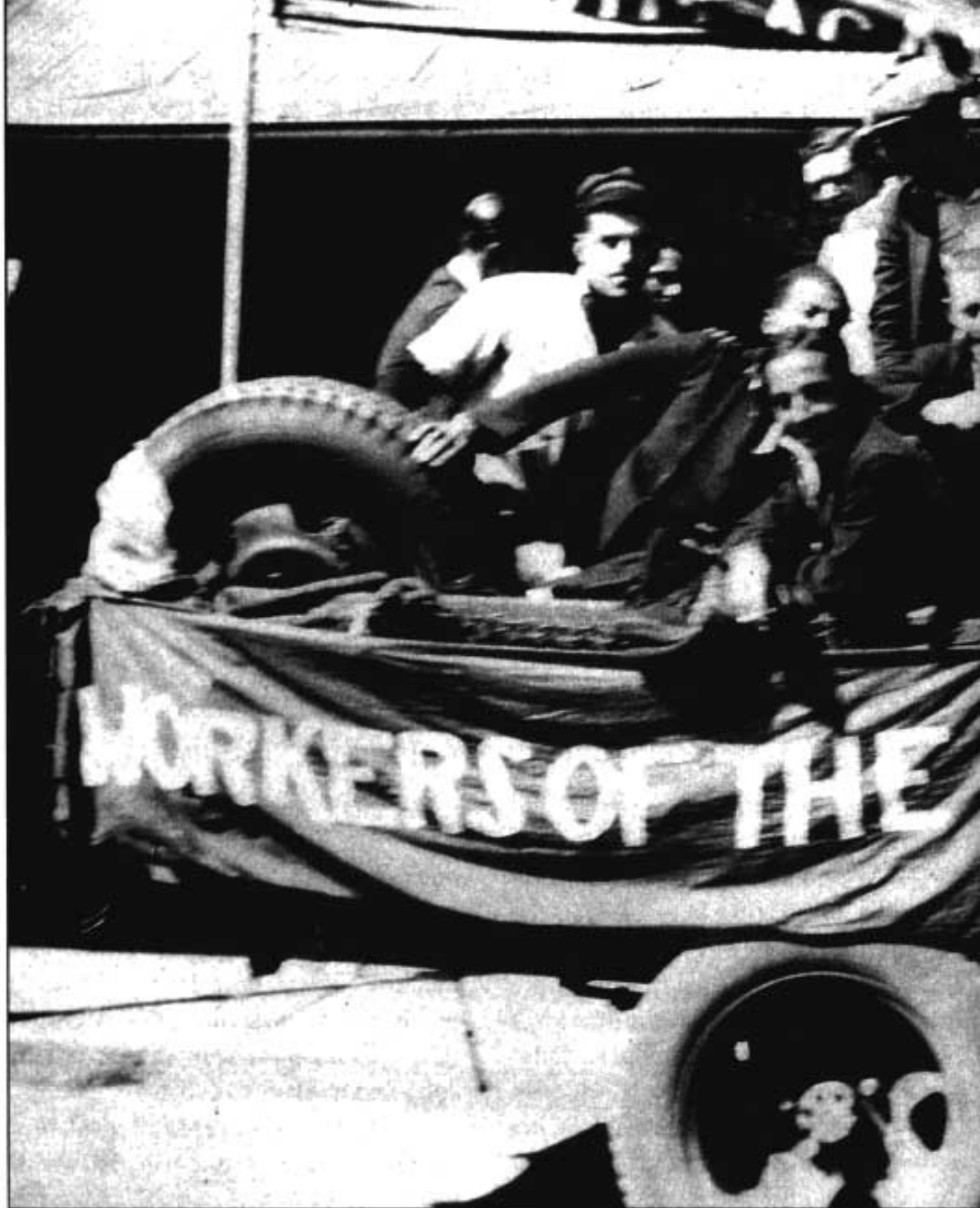
The time, effort and expense of developing a brand new party for a unified Left is too costly under such conditions. I would even suggest that such Left unity borders on the impossible, given the different ways in which these parties interpret our epoch. Indeed, such pluralism is very healthy; no-one can guide a monolithic socialist project with any degree of confidence.

Therefore I welcome the development of a Socialist Platform of some sort — a conference, networking relationships — where socialists can come together, debate, discuss and develop a diverse range of strategies and tactics to generate a broader socialist movement. The Sao Paulo Forum in Latin America may be such a model, and could extend our work into the African continent and beyond.

In SA, a workers' party is not the place for a broad socialist platform, notwithstanding many international experiences based on this approach. "In most countries where a strong socialist and Marxist tradition exists," Alexander argues, "workers tend to support specifically workers' parties, as opposed to parties that are committed to upholding the bourgeois-capitalist status quo."

One oft-cited country is Brazil where, according to the book *Without fear of being happy* (London: Verso, 1991), the strength of the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) was based on the "privilege of lateness". As a result, "the PT grew from a relatively 'blank slate'," according to authors Erwin Sader and Ken Silverstein.

Although the PT is led by a charismatic socialist metalworker (Lula), the lack of a strong Brazilian communist



■ THE RIGHT VEHICLE FOR SOCIALISM? The SACP should be transformed

tradition meant that the PT was really a diverse popular movement — including even some wealthy churches — and not just a workers' party. Sadly, since its narrow 1989 national electoral defeat, both the PT's radical municipal programme and its socialist, anti-imperialist content have been deteriorating.

The PT's pluralistic social movement membership more closely resembles our 1980s UDF. And this prompts a central question: how can what is left of the PT's socialist ideology be sustained? As Cronin correctly says (*WIP 91*), "We can certainly learn from the PT, but it would be misguided to mimic it." Moreover, other workers' parties in the advanced capitalist countries have an even poorer record of maintaining socialist objectives.

The right vehicle?

Is the SACP a more appropriate vehicle for a socialist politics in SA? Alexander believes not: "As the left wing of a multi-class, essentially middle class, alliance, the SACP was in both theory and practice putting a limit on the

developmental and explosive potential of the workers' movement." Many independent socialists believe the SACP is beyond salvation.

I do not agree, but there is no question that the SACP, as a working class political party, must do much more to advance a working class programme which will distinguish it from the ANC. Since its unbanning, the SACP has gained many new members — and it continues to evolve into a mass party. But a concerted effort is also required to produce more quality cadres who can articulate the socialist vision.

This requires a broad view of the working class. In *WIP 91*, Colin Bundy says the SACP's political problem is "how to link the struggles of unionised, semi-skilled industrial workers with those of unskilled, rural and informal sector workers and the unemployed".

The SACP recognises the danger of the insider-outsider "30-70 solution" in its May 1993 Central Committee Discussion Paper, "The Role of the SACP in the Transition to Democracy



working class political party

and Socialism" (*African Communist* 132). In addition, the SACP seems to take seriously warnings by Bundy and others of the corporatism that now seems to be emerging in the various state-business-civil society negotiating forums: "social democratic-style pacts hold out very little hope for any enduring resolution of our enormous social and economic crises — apart from their sheer injustice."

Finally, the SACP seems to be willing to support our notion of working class civil society, by endorsing "the development of a vast network of democratic organs of popular participation in both the economy and the political system and the leadership of the working class". My view is that in light of the SACP's openness, socialists should join and help transform the SACP

into a mass working class political party — instead of throwing up our hands and forming something new and fragile.

Strengthening civil society

So how do we strengthen working class civil society? The Numsa resolution is very important because it takes up the issue of workers' material interests — even if this is couched mainly in terms of a political party.

The SACP must do more to advance a working class programme which will distinguish it from the ANC

But there remains the broader problem of fragmentation within the trade union movement and working class as a whole. To illustrate, there are several unions with metalworker membership, as well as unorganised workers. Given the political implications of the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance, it is difficult for Nactu and inde-

pendent unionists to come together in a unified labour movement.

Numsa resolved that "once an Interim Government of National Unity is established, and the ANC is part of it, we should not have a formal alliance with the ANC". Some pundits interpret this as anti-ANC, but in reality it is a gesture towards labour movement unity. Such unity could help the ANC in the IGNU, because a progressive ANC requires an independent labour force behind it to win its battles. This should strengthen the ANC.

An organ of civil society such as the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) is well-positioned to make the links between organised workers and the masses that Bundy suggests. True, Sanco's structures at head office, regional and local levels — especially administration, campaigns, communications, and organising — are still very weak. It is being denied resources, in part by NGOs and in part by those suspicious of the civics. Kagiso Trust, for example, has failed in its historic responsibility to empower communities by supporting the civics.

Nevertheless Sanco represents, potentially, great numbers of township and rural community residents, including insiders and outsiders. The challenge for Sanco structures is to organise and represent its constituencies more effectively.

Churches must also be an integral part of working class civil society.

There are youth and women's movements, in all their diverse forms, which must be strengthened. Gender issues have passed us by in our traditional structures, and this must change immediately. Sanco depends heavily on grassroots inputs from women, but few are present in the executives of locals, zones, and regions — and just one woman is on the national executive.

In sum, with so much to do to strengthen our forces in civil society, the call for a working class political party appears to be a distraction. If the SACP — still the party of choice among grassroots socialists — can take up a stronger programme, and if campaigns called by major civil society formations are supported by the SACP and other Left parties, then working class hegemony can be achieved. ■



PHOTO: THE STAR

■ **RAISE THE FLAG:** The SACP calls for unity on the Left, but shows little commitment to it

Let a conference of the Left decide

THERE IS WIDESPREAD DISSATISFACTION on the Left with the negotiations process and with the “deals” being made at the World Trade Centre. At the recent Numsa Congress (ironically also held at the World Trade Centre), workers expressed their dissatisfaction with the “power-sharing” plan developed by the ANC and the National Party.

But the resolution that grabbed the headlines related to the future of socialism. Workers called for a conference on socialism, and also urged Cosatu to “look at new forms of organisation that will unify working class organisations and parties to take forward a programme to implement socialism”. This could take the form of a “working class party”, they noted.

by **Fareed Abdullah**

Whether one gives the idea the thumbs up or not, it has stirred an important debate on the future of the Left.

Members of the SA Communist Party should not feel threatened by the boldness of the Numsa resolution; they must read into it its true meaning. That resolution is neither an ultra-left intervention, nor is it a plot by the Nats.

It expresses, firstly, the frustration felt by advanced sections of the organised working class with the absence of a political voice for socialists. And secondly, it represents the alienation and distrust leading activists feel towards transition process in which we are not agents in any “real”, dynamic way.

The resolution concerns itself with

taking forward the organisation and unification of Left and socialist forces in our country. No organisation disputes the need for unity of the Left. The manifesto of the SACP calls for such unity; as do other Left formations. Unfortunately, nothing we have done in the past three years reflects a real commitment to those calls.

Conference on socialism

Now Numsa has called for a Conference on Socialism. The union passed a similar resolution at its 1991 congress, but at that time it was unable to stimulate any substantive debate, and the resolution was not even tabled at that year’s Cosatu congress.

The impressive response this time around is a sign that the need to debate

The Numsa congress

the future of socialism is more acute and is felt by a wide layer of activists within the trade union movement and Left formations (including the SACP).

The SACP leadership has been unable to develop a meaningful approach to the Numsa resolution. Jeremy Cronin's initial response (in the *Weekly Mail*) was to charge it with playing into the hands of an NIS conspiracy — a type of attack that leaves much to be desired (indeed, Cronin made a more noble contribution in *WIP* 91).

Inappropriate for SA

Basically, the SACP leadership's critique now runs along these lines: Cronin joins general secretary Charles Ngqakula in arguing that the advocates of a Workers' Party model base it on the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT). They hold that such a party is inappropriate for SA, and present some useful arguments in support of that view.

I agree that a Workers' Party *a la* Brazil is not an appropriate model for us. I agree also that a trade union-based party can only represent a small section of the working class and may fail to win over large sections of the working and middle classes into its fold.

Sections of Cosatu might find that conception appealing, but it is not the one contained in the Numsa resolution. There, one sees evidence of a much broader conception of a Workers' Party, which is to emerge from the unification of Left political organisations (particularly the SACP) and working class formations such as Cosatu, Nactu and Sanco. Numsa envisages the SACP and Cosatu playing major roles in building the "new forms of socialist organisation" it called for in July.

This is the challenge issued to the SACP: Build the socialist project together with other Left and working class formations. If we do not rise to this challenge, the SACP faces the fate of most communist parties in the world.

And it will be patient debate — not

The National Union of Metalworkers congress in July adopted a series of documents and resolutions which have touched off lively debates on strategic perspectives inside the liberation movement.

Some of the ideas adopted at the congress include:

● **A sharp criticism of the power-sharing deal (Interim Government of National Unity) between the tripartite alliance and the National Party government**

● **A call for selective nationalisation**

● **A desire to terminate the alliance once the ANC becomes the majority party in a new democratically-elected government**

● **The possibility of forming a working-class party.**

vicious attacks — that will see our arguments hold sway among the working class. We have little to fear from the trade union movement; of all socialist organisations, the SACP commands the widest support in Cosatu.

In reality, the biggest criticism of the Workers' Party resolution, is that it is too prescriptive; the call for a working class party is actually for the conference on socialism to debate.

Strategically, the moment has arrived for a conference of the Left. The call is feasible and realistic, and it will receive wide support on the Left. The SACP and Cosatu should play an important role making it a reality.

In a world where socialists are losing the ideological battle, it becomes imperative that we build the widest unity of socialist forces. We must bury our outdated, "fundamental" historical differences and unite to build a centre of socialist thought, organisation and action. And this is what the Numsa resolution was really about — to enable us to chart a

coherent path through the current transition and the challenges ahead.

One of the crucial challenges thrown up by this process is the need to develop an approach to the national question — and to the ANC and a democratically elected government.

Cronin hits the nail on the head when he warns that socialists will fail the challenge of our time if we walk away from the ANC. It will amount to handing the life and soul of the national liberation movement to the liberal project.

At the same time the socialist movement does not have to "lose" itself within the ANC or the new government in order to defend our gains or the progressive aspects of a government's reconstruction programme.

The working class can, and must, act within the ANC and shape its programme, but it will never be able to do so effectively without a political centre, a rallying centre and a vehicle which organises it as a class.

Without such an axis of socialist thought and action, the working class can only act in piecemeal, dispersed, defensive and even reformist ways. And that will lead not only to the demise of the socialist project, but it will destroy our hopes of deepening the national democratic transformation.

Undermining the SACP

A final, crucial observation. When Cronin disputes the need for a specifically working class party, and reaffirms the need for a broad front under the banner of the ANC, he unwittingly undermines the specific role of the SACP as an organiser of the working class. To argue that we should build a socialist project within the ANC, is to limit the SACP to a token role.

The commitment to socialism and independent socialist organisation among our members and worker leaders is too great to allow for an undefined drift towards a "socialist future". We need a coalition of Left forces to build a common programme to make socialism a real option in SA. If the Party, Cosatu and other Left formations do not rise to that challenge, there is no doubt that workers and militants will surge forward without us. ■

● *Fareed Abdullah is an executive committee member of the SACP's Cape Town branch*

If we do not rise to the challenge, the SACP faces the fate of communist parties elsewhere in the world



■ **RESTORING HOPE:** Wearing protective gloves, UN troops hood and bind Somalians as part of their 'famine relief' programme

Dungeons and dragons

The global policeman's gone haywire

Bombs for Somalians — is that the new kind of aid you can expect from the United Nations?

JOHN PILGER issues a plea for sanity

THE TERM "GUNSHIP" HAS BECOME part of news shorthand that is seldom explained. US troops are using "gunships" in Somalia, one of which is the AC-47 — known as "Spooky" and "Puff the Magic Dragon" after the children's song. Like a dragon, it can devastate all before it with one mighty roar of high-calibre guns that

discharge 18 000 rounds a minute.

Puff's "kill ratio" is challenged only by another "gunship" that sprays myriad needles designed to lodge in the human body and make their way through the organs, slowly torturing their victims to death.

In 1991, these gunships killed and maimed tens of thousands of helpless

Iraqi conscripts, many of them in retreat or trying to surrender. They killed and maimed civilians in the US invasion of Panama, and in the US-directed terror in El Salvador and in Indochina.

Like the gunboats of an earlier imperial age, Puff can stand off and "bomb the niggers" (to quote Lloyd George) with minimal danger to the

bombers, while a new class of imperial domestics, (such as the Pakistani soldiers in the UN's Somalian "peacekeeping force") draw the ire of the mob on the ground.

Warlords and peacekeepers

It is an efficient arrangement, especially as Globocop's public relations system ensures that culpability is minimised by "news" of anarchic, ungrateful natives, by the repetitive juxtaposition of terms and related images, such as "warlords" and "peacekeepers", and by the suppression of the truth of recent history.

The latter is aided by the summoning-up of a demon. The media love a demon. Manuel Noriega in Panama was a fine media demon. Old Pineapple Face fitted perfectly the front pages of the tabloids; he was an international drug dealer, whom the US Marines were "bringing to justice". We were not told that, when George Bush ran the CIA, Noriega was their man; and that drugs had long been a CIA currency. Neither were we told that the real aim of "Operation Just Cause" was to place Panama and its US base under direct American sovereignty, run by less-uppity Noriegas who, unlike the original, dared not make peace with US enemies.

Also, George Bush's political virility was "on the line". For this, at least 2 000 Panamanians died.

The next demon off the rank was Saddam Hussein. He was "Hitler revisited" according to Bush, who made no mention of the west's previous massive, secret and illegal support for Adolf No 2. Neither were we told that a number of overtures by Hussein, including a peace plan drafted by Moscow and accepted by Iraq, were brushed aside by Globocop and the public relations system. Iraq was to be disciplined; Iran was to be favoured.

The latest demon is General Mohammed Farah Aidid, a Somali "warlord". "Aman may smile and be a villain," offered the *Observer*, in a profile of Aidid. "Soft-spo-

Inside Somali politics

● **Somali politics are not individual but clan.**

● **General Mohammed Farah Aidid is a member of the Saad/Habr Gidir/Hawiye. US/UN policy is being seen as anti-Hawiye.**

● **New administrative structures have to relate to clan balance.**

● **Political solutions must take into account clan strength.**

● **Elders are the key element in clan reconciliation, not 'warlords' or the UN. Only elders can solve disputes over blood debts, property or grazing rights, for example.**

● **Intellectuals and poets retain considerable influence.**

● **Islam is a potent force in Somali society. Human rights abuses and indiscriminate killing reinforce the impact of strident radio propaganda, such as the appeals broadcast recently for 'Jihad against the infidels'.**

— *Africa Confidential*

ken, courteous, balding, with greying hair and a pot belly, Aidid looks and sounds more like a successful businessman than the man the UN accuses of crimes against humanity." (Who does that bring to mind? Alas, Henry Kissinger still has his hair). According to the *Observer*, this demon "is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, through murder or as a result of the famine he helped to create".



■ **SYSTEM ENEMY:**
Saddam Hussein

War crimes?

The wonderful thing about accredited demons is that you can say virtually anything about them and it is unlikely you will hear from their lawyers. Inexplicably, Aidid's unique "war crimes" were not mentioned last March when, in Addis Ababa, he signed a UN-sponsored plan for peace and the reconstruc-

tion of Somalia. He was then merely "one of the leaders of Somalia's 15 factions". Why is he now being singled out for disarmament and trial before the world? And what is to become of the other "warlords?" Will they also be pursued by "gunships" firing missiles at hospitals?

Almost certainly not. Demonology is made for one. And spreading the blame can only make difficult the task of the public relations system. Facts may emerge that those "hundreds of thousands of people" died for reasons other than the crimes of Aidid. For example, the US and other western governments allowed its client regime in Somalia, the murderous dictatorship of Siad Barre, to steal American-donated food and divert it from the starving to the army and to profiteers.

Visas for killers

Moreover, the US ran a "ratline" to North America for Siad Barre's leading killers, who were given Canadian tourist visas. Among them were Somali officers trained in the US, including one who allegedly ordered the execution of 120 villagers.

Such facts do not diminish Aidid's odium, merely identify the sources of the real stink and of the real "crimes against humanity" in Somalia. Last year, the Bush administration actively discouraged donors from helping Somalia, regardless of reports that 2 000 Somalis were dying every day.

Bush withheld American food aid for two straight months until the Republican convention when he pledged to the TV cameras that he would do anything to "overcome the obstacles" to alleviate the "major human tragedy" in Somalia.

Out of this came "Operation Restore Hope", a public relations stunt designed to save the defeated Bush's face and, more importantly, to fill the strategic vacuum in the Horn of Africa. At the same time, the UN special envoy to Somalia, Mohammed Sahnoun (whose diplomatic efforts among the factions had met with extraordinary success) was sacked. He had made the mistake of criticising the UN. This was not news. Neither was American support for a notably vicious warlord, General Mohammed Siad Hersi Morgan, the son-in-law of Siad Barre,

Dying for help

A new report accuses United Nations troops of committing human rights abuses in Somalia and becoming 'an army of occupation'

"There is no doubt that members of many military contingents serving with Unosom (UN Operation in Somalia) have engaged in abuses of human rights, including killing of civilians, physical abuse, theft and irresponsible disposal of ordnance."

That's the verdict of a new report issued by African Rights, the London-based human rights organisation headed by Rakiya Omar, former director of Africa Watch.

Omar, a Somali, was fired from her Africa Watch post after opposing the United States-led military intervention in her home country last year.

The new report, based on eyewitness testimony from African Rights members, Somali civilians and other human rights groups, details several abuses by US, Italian, French and Belgian troops. If these abuses continue, the authors warn, "Unosom will find itself at war with a large segment of the Somali population, in all parts of the country".

The study evolved from a visit to Somalia that was intended to investigate problems of civil reconstruction facing Somalis — not to document human rights violations. However, "the abusive behaviour of the troops was so blatant, and impinged on the mission's planned activities so much, that the issue was impossible to ignore".

UN forces in Mogadishu have engaged in offensive military action on a scale unprecedented in the last 30 years of UN peacekeeping operations. This includes several bombing raids on General Aidid's house and headquarters, the first of which was on 12 June.

● The next day, UN soldiers fired on protesters, killing dozens of Somalis.

● On June 17, UN forces launched an artillery and missile attack against Digfer Hospital where they claimed snipers were hiding.

● On July 12, US helicopters fired 16 missiles into a Somali residential area, killing at least 54 people, according to the Red Cross.

Africa Confidential newsletter quoted some UN officials admitting privately that the July 12 US airstrike was intended "to kill as many as possible". There is evidence that at least 30 of the victims were religious and intellectual community leaders attending a meeting.

"These are the elders whom it is UN policy to support in its bid to defeat the warlords," comments the newsletter. (The targeted building, it now appears, was not a "command and control centre", as claimed by the UN, but a conference centre.)

The UN special representative in Somalia, US admiral Jonathan Howe, described the attack as "a clean, surgical attack" and "a very successful operation with no collateral damage".

According to the African Rights report, "Unosom forces are operating with near total impunity". It warns that "official UN accounts of events are often highly inaccurate."

The UN Secretary-general has said that "many" of the charges "were false or based on hearsay". He has vowed, though, to "take action if the allegations of UN human rights abuses prove true". To date the UN has not investigated a single case of abuse by UN soldiers in Somalia. The US Marine Corps has disciplined one of its troops — for shooting two Somali teenagers, one of whom had tried to steal his sunglasses. He was fined a month's salary and demoted.

The African Rights report states that "in Mogadishu and its immediate vicinity, Somalis and humanitarian agencies are unanimous in their verdict that the security situation has never been worse".

UN planning is also criticised for applying short-term, reactive solutions that have worsened, not improved, the situation. The over emphasis on food relief has led to the neglect both of the serious health problem of epidemic disease and of the need to rehabilitate the agrarian economy.

Unosom is accountable neither to the surviving organs of Somali political society nor to effective international political authority, says the report. It has become "an army of occupation". — *Amsterdam News/WIP*



■ **SYSTEM ENEMY:**
General Aidid

Washington's man.

Recently a British aid worker in Somalia, Susan Quick, described how the American-dominated UN has pushed aside voluntary workers in "blatant violation of all the principles of relief assistance". She wrote: "The UN has distributed food in only a handful of sites in a manner likely to increase tension".

She also disclosed that most Somalis being disarmed by the UN were those guarding aid agencies and food supplies.

Paying the price

Rakiya Omar, a Somali who is co-director of African Rights, has described UN power in her country as a "licence over people, rather than a means to influence politics. A degree of political thoughtlessness unimaginable in Bosnia is regarded as justifiable in Somalia ... Somali civilians are paying the price for the impotence of the west in Bosnia."

The immediate issue for opponents of imperialism is to identify its contemporary forms and not to be distracted by media demons and Orwellian euphemisms such as "international community", "world economy", "liberal intervention" and so on. Unless self-deception is terminal, current events in Somalia alone ought to persuade wavering "liberal interventionists" that Lloyd George's utterance is as heartfelt among the rulers of the world today as it was when "bombing niggers" was politically correct to say.

The principal agent of imperialism is the UN, now little more than a colonial office of the US. This situation will persist while the anachronism, the Security Council, is allowed to determine the life and death of nations declared expendable by Washington.

While Puff the Magic Dragon does its work in Somalia, the UN looks the other way as Israel terrorises the Middle East, Indonesia consumes East Timor and Pol Pot once again menaces Cambodia; the list is long.

The UN should be changed radically or scrapped; too many have suffered in its name. ■

● Reprinted courtesy of *New Statesman* magazine



The long and winding road

The Long Journey: South Africa's quest for a negotiated settlement,

edited by Steven Friedman.

Ravan Press, Johannesburg.

R39,95, 1993

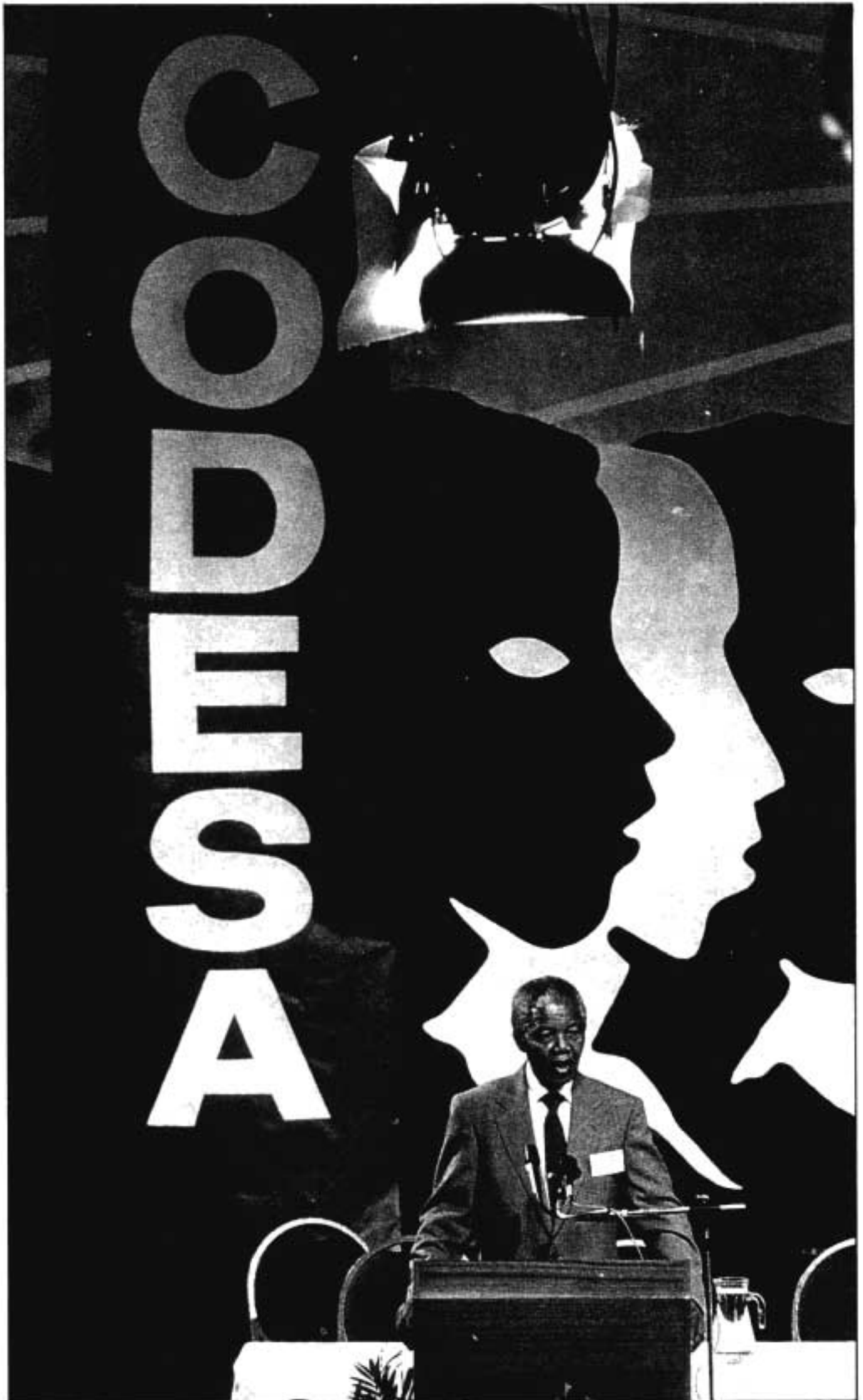
Reviewed by **KRISH NAIDOO**

THE LONG JOURNEY, RESEARCHED by the Centre for Policy Studies, offers a clear, incisive and comprehensive interpretation of negotiations in South Africa. It not only provides lucid descriptions of the salient issues discussed at Codesa but also how and why we got to the point of negotiations — and what the future could hold for this country.

The first part of the book ("The road to Codesa") deals with the central strands of the adversarial build-up over the past two decades, and the events and individuals that ushered in the present talks. The disparate positions of the main players, the decade of uprising and repression between 1976 and 1986, the degree of convergence and the attendant difficulties, the Groote Schuur and Pretoria Talks and the National Peace Convention are set out — all providing the seeds for compromise, and a setting for Codesa.

Part 2, which constitutes the main focus of the book, documents the events within the working groups and subgroups of Codesa, and deals with the gender issue. With apt subtitles such as "slow dance in a beleaguered ballroom", "big issues small results", "a gulf too far", and "rescrambling the egg", one is left with a clear impression that progress is being made, but no-one is able to measure it.

This part of the book successfully drives home the fact that the euphoria of negotiations has to be tempered with



■ **DWARFED BY THE MOMENT?** Throughout the multi-party talks, the dividing line between 'breakthrough' and 'breakdown' has often been a very thin one

Choosing between negotiations and militance

Negotiated revolution, by Heribert Adam & Kogila Moodley. Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg. R39,95, 1993

the difficulties of relinquishing power, the degree of mistrust and the importance of personalities — the dividing line between “break-through” and “breakdown”.

A historical perspective and treatment of the gender issue would have enhanced the value of this section of the book. But, as editor Steven Friedman points out in the preface, time was limited. One hopes that in the sequel, the gender issue will command both space and analysis.

On the streets

In part 3, after the breakdown of Codesa 2, we are taken outside the negotiating chamber and into the streets, and shown the power of popular action — the rolling mass action campaign, the Boipatong and Bisho massacres, the intervention of Cosatu and the slow and painful return to negotiations.

The concluding chapter offers a deep and thought-provoking assessment of the entire process, as well as some important pointers to the future. The parameters are set between elation and despair, with a final assessment left to the reader. Democracy and stability are stated as goals, with the real test being the continuity of the process itself.

Written in simple language, and well-endowed with pictures, *The Long Journey* has a flow which captures the attention of the reader. We are literally taken inside the corridors of power. We are exposed to character analyses of the main players, the interplay between formal talks and developments outside Codesa, interviews with the main actors, an outline of the role of the international community, and the detailed discussions in the various groups. It's all blended together as an unbiased, factual and realistic insight into South Africa's political dynamics.

The Long Journey offers not only a fairly detailed documentary of the past three years, but also rich political analysis which may serve as a useful guide to international observers, interested parties and politicians themselves. ■

The South African situation is extremely complex, encompassing all the classic dilemmas of Third World countries and more. Rarely is one able to document these varying and complicated issues in a single book. Adam and Moodley (both South African academics who were forced into exile in the 1970's) attempt this daunting task in *The Negotiated Revolution* — and succeed.

Every conceivable aspect of our struggle is taken on board — the communal conflict, clientelism, the impact of sanctions, the psychology of liberation, Africanism, political violence, tribalism, secessionism, the rightwing, the third force, and local and international developments. And it's all packaged in a logical and analytical manner.

The opening chapters provide a theoretical analysis of the concepts of colonialism, communalism and democracy, and the authors revisit the great divide between confrontation and negotiations. An entire chapter is devoted to the dilemmas and contradictions within the ANC alliance. The value of the ANC-SACP alliance is questioned, the unworkability of the Leipzig option is exposed, and the difficult choice between “negotiations and blind militance” is succinctly set out.

Inkatha, contextually placed with tribalism and political violence, also earns a chapter of its own. So does the rightwing. In dealing with regional relations, the authors make a strong and sensible appeal for accommodation. The concluding chapter rhetorically posits our choice between democracy and an elite cartel. According to the authors, “the chances of a future South African democracy ... depend mainly on the promise of greater material equality in a common economy”. But as some analysts would say, focus, perspective and conclusions are a function of emphasis and approach.

Drawing heavily on Third World academics and commentators, local politicians and analysts, surveys and research, and newspaper articles, the authors provide a candid, critical and comprehensive analysis of society and politics in South Africa.

Dynamics

However, there are two observations that warrant mentioning. The first is that the dynamics of the South African situation may have dated some of the earlier quotations. Many of the protagonists and key individuals have significantly altered their positions. Since about 1992, rationalism, public posturing and reductionism have become pervasive features of practically all the parties' programmes — if it means winning votes, winning territory and influence, and winning elections. Just as “negotiations and blind militancy” presents a seemingly intractable dilemma at the one level, so does posturing and power at another.

Secondly, Third World experiences serve as an important guide and referent object. But it may well be that local dynamics could give South and Southern Africa a logic of its own.

Although the authors sound a note of caution, the book on the whole is imbued with realism. By providing an insightful and critical analysis of what we are doing and what we are about, it forthrightly tells us where we could be heading. The solutions provided and issues raised merit serious and further consideration by other academics and politicians.

— Krish Naidoo

THANKS
GOD
FOR MASS
ACTION



PHOTO: WILLIAM MATJALA



Fighting the drought from within

Francine Joss is right in saying (*WIP* 90) that the "water crisis in South Africa has more to do with mismanagement, corruption and structural deprivation" (although the "corruption" still has to be pinpointed and proved). But what superficial and somewhat outdated wisdom this is!

We know that homeland governments suffer from lack of capacity, legitimacy etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. But we cannot wish them away or ignore the fact that they have access to resources. The attitude of the Drought Forum, of which the Water Supply Task Force is a part, has been to engage central and homeland governments in an attempt to influence the manner in which these resources are spent; we have achieved at the very least a change of attitude in that it is now agreed that the drought contributes to poverty but cannot cause it. This is the new and orthodox wisdom heard as readily in the corridors of government offices as it is in that of NGOs.

What has resulted directly from this engagement is a change in the government criteria under which homeland authorities are granted drought relief aid. Two fundamental principles now guide the utilisation of such funds:

- Emergency water supply must give preference to human consumption needs over that of agriculture or stock farming.
- Community participation in projects funded under drought relief programmes is an absolute requirement.

As rudimentary and flawed as this beginning may be, it is a beginning. We are aware that reducing the vulnerability of rural people in particular, even to those elements of poverty

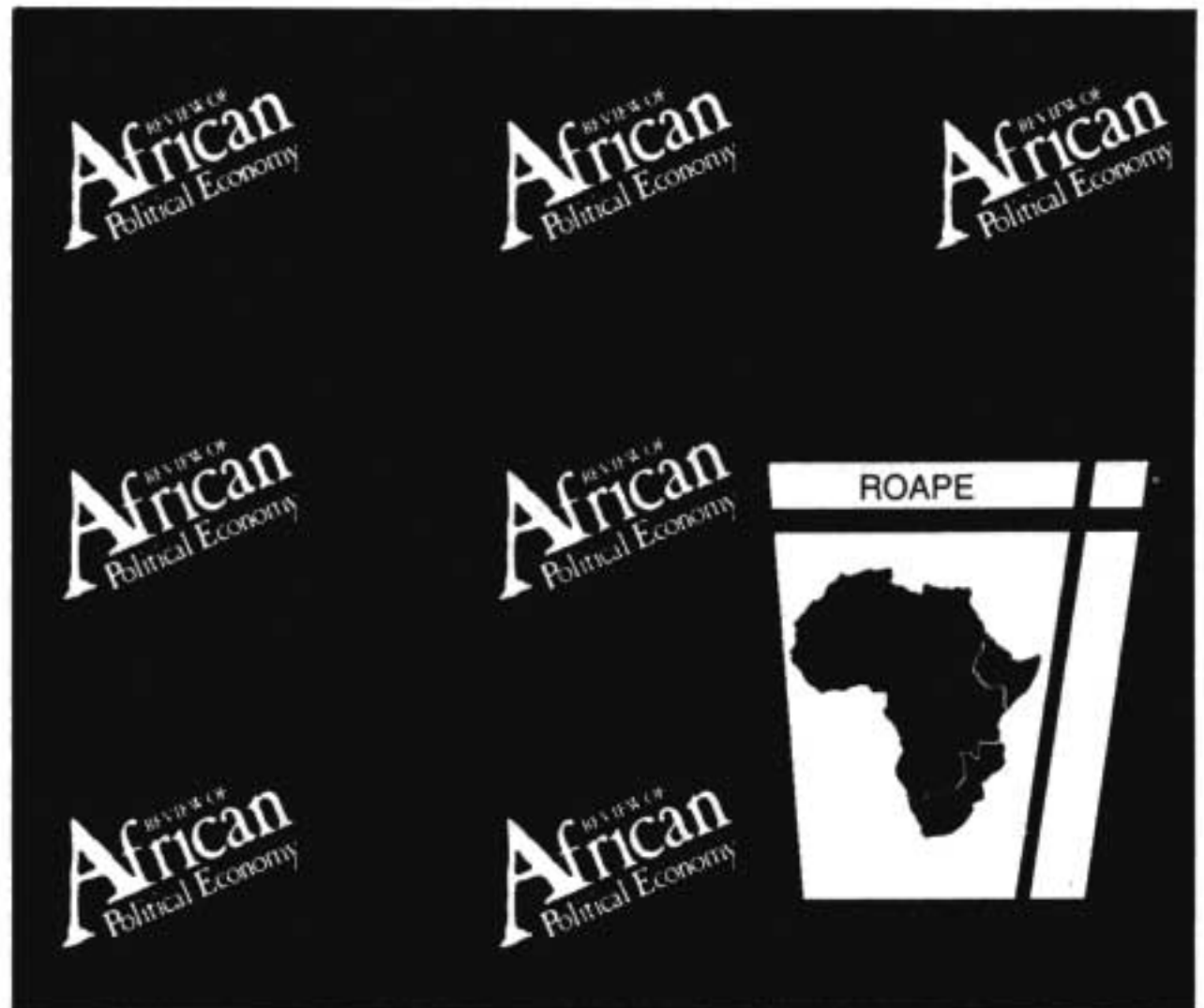
induced by drought, demands that the many decades of under-development be addressed. However, responding to the present drought crisis, which continues, cannot wait for a perfect political solution, (if such a thing is possible).

Francine Joss' article does little but rehash old complaints, and does so in a very unhelpful manner. There is nothing remarkably profound about stating "the need for a comprehensive restructuring of the state's response to drought", but continuously quoting "visiting engineers" makes the task of

negotiating that restructuring — which is what we are doing without fanfare — so much more difficult.

May I also offer a gentle criticism to the likes of engineer Ian Johnson: your experience in countries such as Somalia should have taught you that long term solutions to human-made disasters require a patient search for answers by local people themselves; this often demands making painful accommodations with each other. Our political problems are as endemic as the drought; we will be grappling with them long after you have gone.

— Achmat Dangor, *Head of Secretariat, Consultative Forum on Drought and Rural Development, Johannesburg*



*THE POLITICS OF RECONSTRUCTION:
SOUTH AFRICA, MOZAMBIQUE AND THE HORN
No 57 - July 1993*

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FORE!

A subtle lot, these American journalists. On his recent visit to the US to receive half the Liberty Peace Award, FW de Klerk held a media briefing. Here's *Mayibuye's* account of what followed:

After answering questions with his recent waning confidence, the media persons, in keeping with an American tradition, presented De Klerk with a gift. It was a book on golf. The significance in giving a high-profile official a book on golf is that he is on his way out and needs to perfect his golf because he is going to have a lot of time on his hands.

De Klerk was pictured beaming vast smiles after the briefing, the coded farewell clearly lost on him.

LOOSE CANNONS

Once we got past the cheesecake pic on page 3, the first thing we noticed about the new *Sunday Nation* was this opinion column of theirs, "Stray Bullet". Tough title. What's the sub-text, we wondered?

Is the section reserved for ideas that demonstrably miss their target, but blow someone's else's mind ... away? Is this the place of deadly ideas blasted forth along uncertain trajectories, the kind that causes collateral damage? So why not go all the way to, say, Loose Cannon? Unguided Missile? Primed Grenade? Or Ideas That Will Land You In Hospital?

We thought of other, less violent names that would still suggest a certain recklessness, an independence of thought, controversy ... Crank's Corner (too disparaging), Oddballs on Sunday (ditto), Square Pegs (warmer but too obscure). Frankly, we wuz stumped.

Until a friend peeked over our shoulders at the "Stray Bullet" where Harry Gwala was again summoning the masses to the trenches — and spoke the name we now generously propose: Jurassic Park.

MIND GAMES

Efforts to substitute non-sexist language for silly words like "actress" or exclusive ones like "chairman" are important.

Ridiculed as it is, even the bold replacement of "history" with "herstory" sometimes drives home a valid point.

Some folk, though, have this tendency to seize hold of a good idea and plaster it all over the place. Like the Ms Free-person we ran across recently, who had decided to rid herself of the suffix "man" and replace it with a neutral "person". Which sets you thinking about the possibilities out there...

- Nelson Mandela becomes *Nelchild Persondela*
- Boy Geldenhuys is quickly renamed *Youngster Geldenhuys*
- Moolman Mentz goes one step further with *Moolperson Peopletz*.

The mind boggles.

SPACE CADET

The nicest thing about bourgeois democracies is that, eventually, you find out what huge bozos you had elected into office.

Verbatim I, a recent record of former French president Francois Mitterand's reign by his personal assistant, Jacques Attali, has a few gems which confirm our worst fears.

At one point Attali describes how, at the Big Seven summit of 1981, Ronald Reagan explained to the gathered Western big knobs that the solution to the crises of the Third World lay in the example of a friend of his. While holidaying in Mexico, this buddy had discovered that his hosts had a desperate need for water. So he sent them his old water pipes. Problem? What problem?

Later, Attali paints this picture of the assembled Big Seven leaders while Reagan regaled them at yet another summit: "Suzuki sleeps with an open mouth, Thatcher powders her nose, Mitterand signs postcards, Spadolini gossips with his *sherpa* ... Schmidt searches through his files and Trudeau checks carefully whether his red carnation fits well into the buttonhole..."

"It is difficult not to perceive the emptiness of his conversation," is Attali's generous summary of the former US president's intellectual capacity. ■

talk talk

by ZAPIRO



Reconstruct

A Work in Progress supplement

Issue no.13

SEPTEMBER 1993

Making homes affordable

HOUSING IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S most desperate shortages. South Africa has a shortage of 2,6 million units, according to a Planact study. This is double the official figure, given in the state's De Loor report.

A new, democratic government will have to pay urgent attention to addressing people's housing needs.

Since the early eighties, the National Party government has done its best to shift responsibility for housing finance to the private sector. In Johan-

nesburg, for example, no low income council houses have been built for the past three years — although 22 000 families are on the waiting list for homes and millions live in shacks.

There are significant funds in the private sector that could be harnessed for housing. Planact estimates that some R278-billion tied up in banks and pension or life funds could be made available for housing loans.

However, the state will also have to play an important role in providing housing finance.

Planact, backed by a number of development agencies, argues for three main forms of state finance:

- once-off capital grants for serviced sites;
- once-off grants for deposits on housing loans;
- ongoing payments to cover the non-affordable balance of monthly loan installments.

Some economists believe

that, by reorganising the tax system and imposing a wealth tax, the state could raise an extra R12,5 billion a year. This could then go towards housing.

A few months ago, the state allocated a further R268 million to low income housing. But this is to be distributed via 200 local authorities, which smacks of electioneering, rather than sound housing policy.

Basic human right

The ANC recognises housing as a basic human right, but says this will "not be easy to fulfil in the short term".

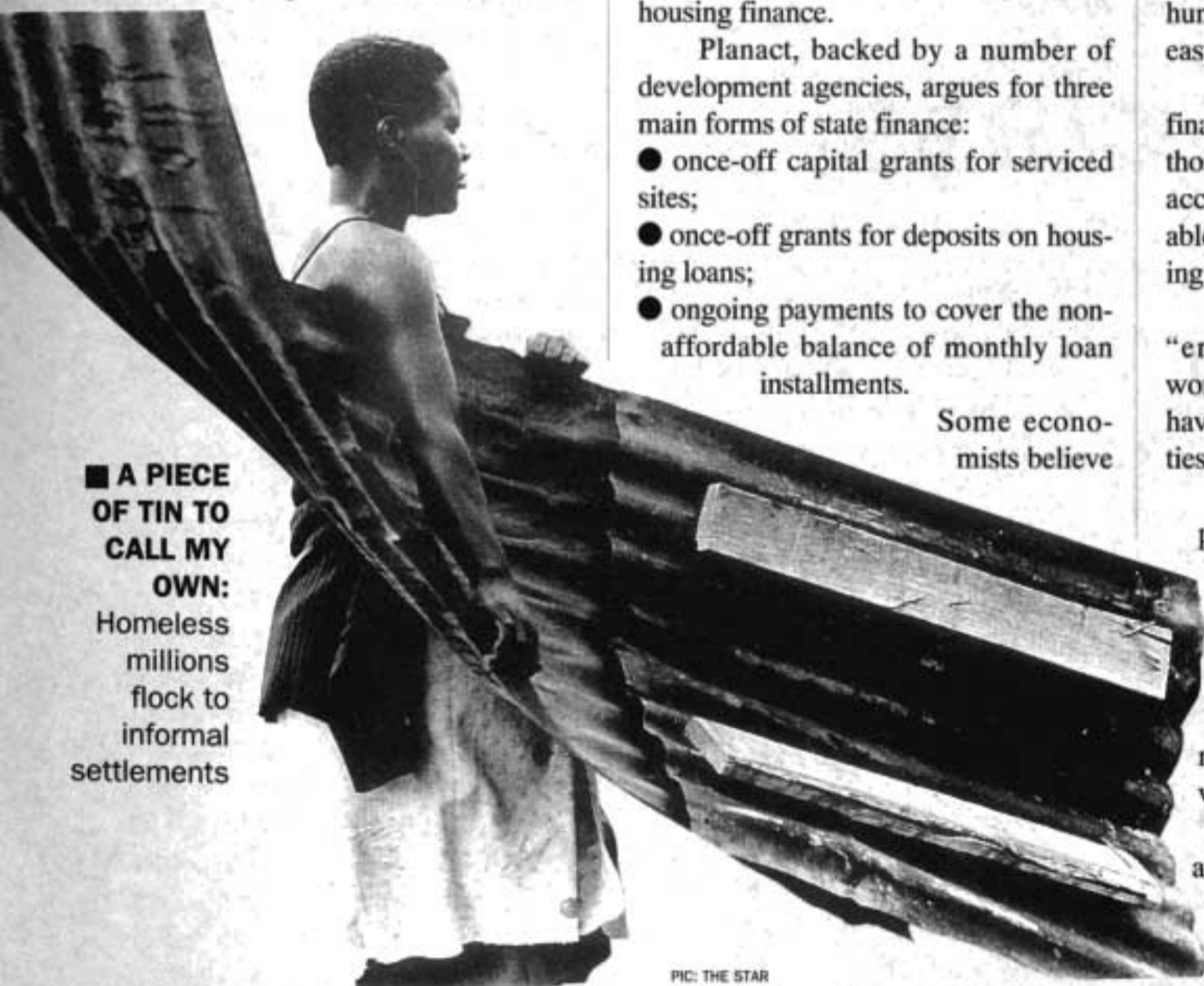
It advocates restructuring housing finance and subsidies systems to "target those in most need of assistance", as it accepts that the market alone will be able to deal with South Africans' housing needs.

The ANC also commits itself to "ensuring that the poor, men and women, in both urban and rural areas, have favourable access to credit facilities".

The National Housing Forum is presently working on a national housing policy, which will facilitate delivery of houses.

But progress has been slow. In the meantime, informal settlements are mushrooming. These settlements are vulnerable to disease and violent attacks.

If South Africa is to be peaceful and healthy, housing provision must be a priority, as part of an integrated developmental framework aimed at improving all social services. ■



■ A PIECE OF TIN TO CALL MY OWN: Homeless millions flock to informal settlements

FIG: THE STAR

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Reconstruct was initiated by the Urban Sector Network to raise issues related to urban development. Contributions should be sent to:
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Braamfontein 2017



■ **SMALL CHANGE:** Residents of Piesang's River, Inanda, set up a savings club after being disappointed by banks

Housing credit aimed at middle class

Introduction

Access to and provision of housing finance in South Africa is fractured along the fault-lines of household income, employment status of the main breadwinner, residential location, race and gender.

Although credit provision is not formally governed by racial or gender discrimination, the combination of widespread poverty, irregular employment and insecure tenure means that credit is not widely available in black residential areas. Government subsidies, which are supposed to plug the gaps left by the market, target middle-income groups or are distorted by discriminatory allocation, political patronage, income cheating and administrative corruption.

Increasingly restricted access to housing finance in the context of rapid urbanisation has resulted in unserviced informal settlements springing up on urban peripheries, tenants being forced to pay high rents for overcrowded backyard shacks and inner city tenements, and inaccessible and economically

CONRAD VAN GASS of the Built Environment Support Group takes us on a guided tour of the limited credit options open to low income South African households

unsustainable dense settlements clustered along bantustan borders, or wherever apartheid's officials deemed them suitable.

In short, there is a housing crisis that needs to be countered by substantially higher, appropriately targeted subsidies and the breakdown of barriers which restrict access to credit to those living outside wealthier suburbs.

1. Mortgages

Conventional mortgages are the main form of housing credit. They are designed to protect the banks from the risk of default. Minimum loans (about R40 000) and deposit requirements (usually 20%) limit access to households earning at least R3 000 a month. Borrowers generally have to have sta-

ble employment to make repayments for 20 to 30 years. In addition, mortgages are secured against the private ownership of a site and serviced dwelling which can be repossessed by the bank and resold.

Even if a black household is eligible for mortgage finance, there is a good chance that the bank will "red-line" or refuse to invest in areas where the prospects of resale are low.

These include areas where infrastructure or community facilities are deteriorating or lacking, access to employment and social facilities is poor, private ownership is not the norm or violence is endemic. This effectively means the townships and homelands where black people have been relegated to by apartheid, or those "invasions of white space" in the form of informal settlements and inner-city ghettos, like Hillbrow.

Thus, while black earnings and savings are deposited with the banks, reinvestment is inhibited in areas where most black people are forced to live.

During the past four or five years, a number of attempts have been made to encourage lenders to move down-market. One innovation is the Loan Guarantee Fund, which effectively insures banks against the risks of reducing the deposit requirement to 5% and allowing smaller loans (R20 000), which households earning above R1 500 per month can access.

As most potential borrowers live in black residential areas, most banks have not taken up the opportunity and are demanding further insurance for compensation for risk against default



PH: BESEG

■ **SUPERSAVERS:** Women are the backbone of stokvels

due to rising unemployment, bond boycotts and against the inability to resell the property. Unless the state provides such insurance, borrowers are expected to cover these costs with their premiums.

Other innovations have been introduced recently by some non-profit development corporations (such as KwaZulu Finance Corporation) which are trying to adapt to changing political circumstances. These include provision for loss of income by the borrower due to unemployment. This involves converting bond repayments into a lower monthly rental until such time as the household earns enough to make full repayments.

Another variation on the mortgage theme is the incremental release bond where portions of the total loan amount are released to correspond with different stages in the construction of a house. This allows occupants the flexibility to build homes as and when they can afford to do so.

Such guarantees and design innovations are needed to ensure that mortgage finance is to be made more widely accessible to stable or cyclically employed workers earning R1 000 per month and above.

2. Personal loans

The mortgage credit market does not cater for poor households earning less than R1 000 a month. Mortgage finance is not suitable for this income category for a number of reasons.

First, banks require the construction or purchase of a house that meets certain standards to enable its resale.

Poor households cannot afford the minimum loan amount.

Second, most breadwinners in this category are probably casually or informally employed. Earnings are irregular and unpredictable. Hence, long repayment periods or maturities are unsuitable and households do not have the leeway to accommodate sudden increases in the interest rate.

Non-mortgage credit thus needs to be characterized by small loans (R1 000 - R10 000), short maturities (1 - 5 years) and fixed interest rates set at higher than market levels to compensate for higher administrative costs and the lack of security. In essence, these are personal loans which, if used for housing, would be used to construct a dwelling incrementally over time.

3. Group loans

As the very poor and irregularly employed have few means with which to secure their loans, an alternative approach is to lend to credit groups of between 10 and 20 people.

Group members either divide the loan between them or a smaller loan is rotated between members. Either way, each member is dependent on the others to repay their share. The idea is that group pressure to repay the loan is sufficient to secure the lender against default.

Credit groups are usually indigenous grassroots initiatives among poor people all over the world. In South Africa, they take the form of stokvels or credit unions. They start out as savings clubs with the aim of disciplining savings and expenditure amongst interested

members who have no access to the formal banking system.

But poor people simply do not have the means to generate sufficient savings and loans to make a significant developmental impact, such as being able to build houses or start up new enterprises.

Bottom-up initiatives addressing this problem have taken the form of stokvel associations or federations which aim to borrow extra funds from financial institutions. In response to this demand, the Independent Development Trust Finance Corporation (IDTFC) makes credit available to stokvel federations (such as the National Association of South African Stokvels) and to group credit companies.

The experience of the Group Credit Company (which operates in the Western and Eastern Cape) has not been according to expectation. Depending on ones interpretation, credit groups broke up because some members could not or did not want to meet repayments on larger amounts, or because well established practices within groups were interfered with, leading to resentment and the use of group pressure to default on rather than repay loans.

Clearly, much depends on the nature of the relationship and the degree of trust established between external funder and credit group. There are cases of successful credit groups and unions that have evolved to meet the challenges of external funding.

Furthermore, group credit or relationship-based lending can offer various developmental advantages. Credit groups can form the basis of truly representative community structures, particularly with respect to the involvement of women.

They can also serve as vehicles for organizational development, training and mutual help. This gives this form of credit a unique advantage over the predominant, privatised lending practices of the formal financial institutions.

While appropriately designed credit instruments for the poor, backed by government guarantees, is crucial to improving access to credit the problem of affordability remains. A credit package without subsidies still means that one gets what one can afford.

● *On the following page, the author offers some solutions*



The case for capital subsidies

If government housing subsidies were redesigned, they could go much further to meeting needs, argues **CONRAD VAN GASS**

DURING THE 1990s, THE SOUTH African government has only spent between 1,5% and 2% of the state budget on housing. This is less than the norm of between 3% and 5% for semi-industrialised “developing countries”.

Access to subsidies does not come close to matching the demand. The budgetary allocation to housing subsidies could be significantly increased,

especially if administrative costs could be streamlined and subsidies targeted at those who really need them.

There are also good macro-economic reasons why the housing budget should be increased.

Not only does housing meet a basic need, but construction generates relatively more employment than other sec-

tors. It also stimulates a number of other local industries, especially building materials, furniture and fittings.

Nevertheless, there are distinct limits on how much subsidy allocations can be increased. There is little point in increasing the demand for housing beyond the construction and building materials industry's capacity to supply. This will only lead to inflation.

In addition, portions of the state housing budget may have to be devoted to restructuring the institutions that provide subsidies and credit and which manage and administer housing projects.

Existing commitments to the first time homebuyer's subsidy, “sales and rental” programmes (discussed below) and to improving infrastructure and facilities in black areas (to encourage private sector investment) may further limit the money available for housing subsidies for the poor.

Less for more?

Budgetary constraints raised the issue of width versus depth. Should the amount available be spread as widely as possible? This means that more people get less more quickly.

There are clear advantages and

disadvantages. On the one hand, small subsidies per household improve access and are likely to be directly redistributive.

On the other hand, the subsidy amount may not be sufficient to meet minimum demands for an adequate housing product.

Since 1983, the trend in housing policy has been towards greater width. Before that, local authorities provided and administered affordable rented accommodation in the form of township and hostel stock.

Further provision of rented houses has been significantly restricted and occupants of existing stock have been encouraged to purchase. Serviced sites and material loans schemes were introduced.

Sales and rental formula

Loan repayments were equated with rents and the amounts of both determined by the “Sales and Rental Formula”. This specifies an income-graded proportion of household income to be spent on repayments/rentals.

The difference between the cost of the house and an affordable monthly payment represents the individual subsidy amount (or sales and rental supple-

Access to subsidies does not come close to matching the demand



PHOTO: KERRY CULLINAN

■ Young, poor, unemployed... and in desperate need of a once-off housing subsidy

ment), except in the case of long-standing tenants. Similar income-graded schemes have been applied in the trust lands and bantustans.

Subsidising prices or rents is a long-term commitment for the state. The administration of income-graded subsidy schemes is also complex and requires annual income surveys.

There are few guarantees against income-cheating and, if surveys are not undertaken regularly, there is a great chance of distortion as poor peoples' employment status changes frequently. The fairness of such a system can be questioned, especially in South Africa where allocations have been racially biased and motivated by vote-buying.

First time subsidy

Racially biased allocations and selection criteria also affects the "first-time homebuyer's subsidy". This subsidy requires that banks be paid a third of the first five years' interest on a mortgage bond by the government. Only first-time homebuyers with dependents can

apply for this subsidy.

While this subsidy makes a mortgage more affordable initially, recipients must be assured of stable, rising incomes.

By targeting mortgage holders, this type of interest subsidy benefits middle-income households, rather than the poor.

Capital subsidies

The IDT's capital subsidy programme — of R7 500 per eligible household earning less than R1 000 per month — is a more recent introduction.

The IDT subsidy is once-off and paid to the developer upon transfer of title deeds to the first-time buyer. Its use is largely restricted to the provision of serviced sites to individuals. Given higher land costs in well-located areas, these sites are usually on the urban periphery.

Credit is required if title-holders want to erect a formal structure. However, this has not been forthcoming from the private sector banks.

The main advantage of capital subsidies is their flexibility.

Unlike sales and rental supplements and interest subsidies, the capital subsidy is paid up once. The budgetary allocation to capital subsidies can change every year according to economic conditions — unlike other subsidies that require monthly payouts for a generation or more, the total amount of which is not easily measurable or predictable.

There are also many design variations on the capital subsidy. The amount could be increased so that a wet core, shell unit, semi-complete house or apartment is affordable to the poorest recipients.

It can be income-graded (according to a formula) or flat (as with the IDT programme).

It can be paid to occupants or community-based agents such as development trusts, housing associations or cooperatives.

It can be used to purchase a site, dwelling or both, to guarantee a loan for a larger amount, to reduce the principal or pay off the interest on a loan or be put into a savings account.

Save perhaps for applying an income-graded scheme, administration is fairly simple and inexpensive.

While the IDT programme had its limitations, the capital subsidy can be redesigned to target according to need. It can be adapted to different site and delivery conditions, applies to all tenure forms including rental and collective ownership

and does not need to be restricted in its use. It can also be used to empower individuals and community-based structures rather than private sector developers and local authorities as has been the practice until recently.

● Van Gass is a consultant to the National Housing Forum

Capital subsidy can be redesigned to target according to need

Campaign to educate homeowners

EACH DAY PEOPLE COME TO THE offices of the Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) in Johannesburg, asking the organisation to help them to recover their money in housing deals that have gone wrong.

In most cases, says LHR Housing Rights Unit director Brian Leveson, there is little that they can do to help. Over the past two years, the unit has seen some 5 000 clients. About 60% of these have lost their deposits, amounting to over R10-million in the Johan-

nesburg area alone.

Leveson's desk is piled high with files of people who have been ripped off by developers promising them homes. He also has a "blacklist book" filled with the names of hundreds of developers guilty of ripping people off.

Often the developer has simply disappeared, or people have unwittingly signed an acknowledgement of debt form and have to continue with payments — even though their homes may be falling apart. Leveson estimates that

only one in ten low income township residents who try to get a home, actually do end up with one.

"On a micro-level, it is very depressing. But nationally, at least we have managed to bring about some changes," says Leveson.

Last year, LHR managed to persuade the Estate Agents' Board to pay out R300 000 to 110 clients. The board has a special fund to smooth over the wrongs of estate agents in order to safeguard the profession's name.

LHR is also trying to pre-empt the problem by educating people about their housing rights before they commit themselves to any contract.

"We have trained a wide range of people from civic members to shop stewards, employers and Independent Development Trust (IDT) development consolidation officers, and have run many seminars and workshops in an attempt to pre-empt the problem," says Leveson.

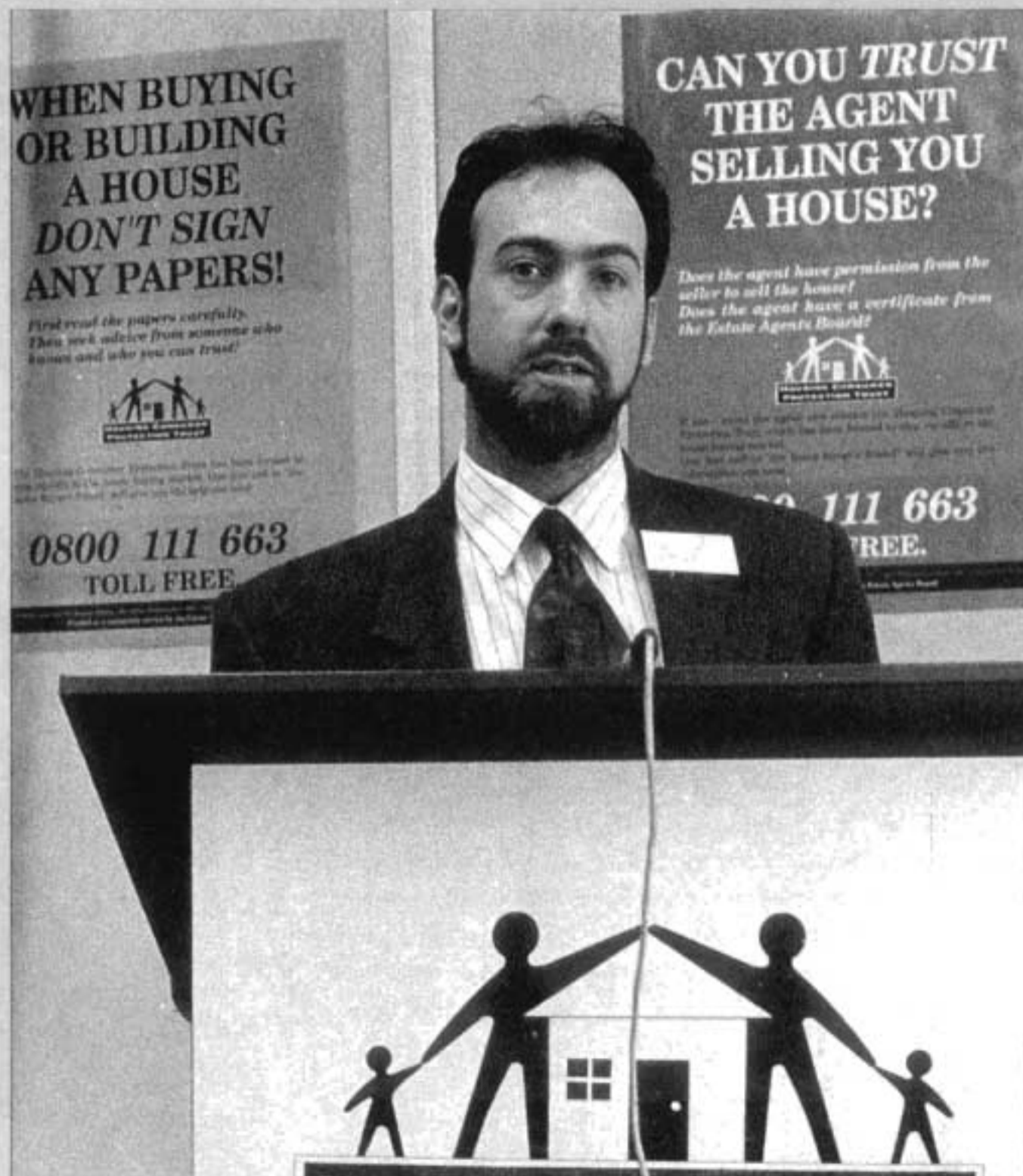
LHR's efforts are now being backed up by the newly launched Housing Consumer Protection Trust (HCPT).

One of the main thrusts of the HCPT is to educate people about their rights as home buyers. From this month, the trust's head office in Johannesburg is up and running. It is staffed by an attorney, a paralegal and a receptionist who fields all enquiries on a toll-free line.

By November, four other advice offices — to be based in Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Pietersburg — will be set up to complete the national network.

The trust will make use of radio advertisements, posters and street theatre to educate people about their rights when buying a house.

The trust is also looking into the feasibility of getting independent housing inspectors to evaluate homes for buyers, as well as establishing an ombudsman for the housing industry. ■



■ PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE: LHR's Brian Leveson

The Housing Consumer Protection Trust is based at 4th floor Zambezi House, Cnr Commissioner and Von Wielligh streets, Johannesburg. Call them toll-free on 0800-111-663.

PHOTO: KERRY CULLINAN



HOUSING CONSUMER PROTECTION TRUST

Predatory contractors feed off homeless

By Kerry Cullinan

POOOR TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS WHO are desperate for homes or home improvements have become easy meat for predatory contractors.

It is common practice for contractors and home improvement companies to send sales representatives into townships to solicit business. These sales representatives often persuade gullible residents to commit themselves to contracts that they cannot afford and do not fully understand.

A common problem is that sales representatives often 'fail' to tell people that, if they pay off their homes or improvements in instalments, they will have to pay interest.

Such contractors' customers usually earn very little, so are considered to be a high risk by banks. As a result, interest rates are usually very high.

In many cases, contractors arrange loans on behalf of their customers, so the customer is not even aware that there is another body involved.

Bifco, which is part of Rand Merchant Bank, is one of the companies lending money to low income people through contractors.

Bifco's accounts manager, Peet Buitendach, says the contractors usually get the job and present his company with a loan application form. Most loans are for home improvements, rather than bonds.

"Most of our contractors have been on our books for five years," says Buitendach. "Before we appoint a contractor, they have to give us their balance sheets etc."

While Bifco does not send out building inspectors to check on the quality of the work, Buitendach says the company tries to phone the customer to check whether they are satisfied before paying the contractor.

"We can't get hold of all the black customers, but we have to pay the contractor as they usually have a form signed by the customer to show they have completed the job," says Buitendach.

Deal turns sour

But sometimes these deals go horribly wrong. Take the case of Mr Nkosi* from Soweto. He was approached by a sales representative who persuaded him that he needed new walls for his home.

The cost of the walls was R3 350, a fortune for Nkosi, who only earned R553 a month. However, he was told that he would not have to pay back much each month, so he agreed to the contract and signed an acknowledgment of debt form before the work had even begun.

What he did not realise was that the company had arranged finance for him through Bifco at a 31% interest rate. This meant that, once finance charges and interest had been paid,

Nkosi would end up paying R5 880 for the walls at R122 a month.

Nkosi was also told he had to take out life insurance — making Bifco his beneficiary — so that the amount he owed would be covered in the event of his death.

To add insult to injury, the walls were shoddily constructed. At this point, Nkosi contacted Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) to see whether he could withhold payment.

But, said LHR's Housing Rights Unit director Brian Leveson, "we could not do anything as our client had signed the acknowledgment of debt form".

Nkosi's case is typical of a number of cases LHR has had to address involving Bifco. In many cases, people reported that they had not been told that they would have to pay interest. Most people knew nothing of Bifco, as they had dealt with the construction company directly. However, when they refused to pay their monthly instalments after being unhappy with the work, it was Bifco — rather than the contractor — that stepped in with threats of legal action. In most cases, LHR could do little to help their clients because they had all signed the acknowledgement of debt forms before a single brick had been laid.

Education needed

For Leveson, these cases simply demonstrate the urgent need for South Africans to be better educated on their housing rights.

In addition, he points out, there is a desperate need for reputable institutions that will lend money to low income families at a reasonable rate of interest.

"No institutions are really financing low income households, as they are all waiting for a political settlement," says Leveson.

In addition, the SA National Civic Organisation's (Sanco) calls for bond boycotts have also made borrowing much harder for township residents.

The recent amendment to the Usury Act has also complicated matters. The amendment has made amounts up to R6 000 exempt from set interest rates. This means anyone can lend amounts up to R6 000 and charge whatever interest they want to. ■

* Not his real name.

More money for housing – in a way that suits civics

IT IS COMMON CAUSE THAT WE NEED much more money pumped into housing. Specialists ranging from our own experts to housing ministers and financiers, agree that there are plenty of resources in our country's financial markets, and that we must expand government subsidies dramatically to unlock these resources.

Furthermore, it remains a fundamental principle of the democratic forces that housing is a human right and that people should pay no more than what they can afford for it. To this end, the state financed housing stock should remain affordable for all time, and hence be protected from speculation. And more community-based development finance agencies — community banks, credit unions, loan funds — must be created and nurtured in the process.

We are a long way from these goals. Instead, we are faced with the prospect of highly divisive, ineffectual housing finance options and principles, none of which can single-handedly tackle the challenge of blending public monies and the resources of banks, insurance companies and pension funds.

Whether this is because of interest-group politicking, stingy free market principles or simply a failure of imagination, the result could be an uncoordinated expansion of all sorts of programmes. Already, the efforts of the existing regime and the private sector litter our communities either as outright failures or as projects that only benefit the upper echelons of the population.

Private sector divides

The banks provide us with a good example (with the exception of the Perm, which is sincerely committed to solving problems we point out). The broken negotiations with the banks' Association of Mortgage Lenders (AML) taught us not only that the private sector often views its short-term interests — especially foreclosing on

A new government must provide sufficient resources to make housing for all a reality, argues Sanco's **MOSES MAYEKISO**

our constituents — over longer term interests, such as opening the townships to renewed lending.

Our efforts with the AML also taught us that the private sector has a way of dividing our ranks by breaking us into individual families in a free market system, some getting site-and-service subsidies, some first time homebuyers subsidies, some normal bonds and most nothing at all.

Even on its own terms, this is a failure. The essential problem with the banks' housing finance system is that it was unilaterally imposed upon more than 150 000 households in black townships in a completely inappropriate way. Most of the R7-billion township bonds were granted when civics were repressed by the state.

As a result, we were not there to demand a safety net when interest rates of 12,5% soared to 20,75%. The banks were not interested in negotiating for a housing guarantee fund for people who lost their jobs. The land on which township housing was developed was overvalued, of poor quality and far from jobs and commerce.

In addition, houses were poorly constructed. Unless faced with bond boycotts, banks did nothing to help homebuyers get recourse from for-profit developers. The banks really only made home loans of over R35 000, effectively leaving 90% of households unserved.

These are all problems we sincerely tried to address with the AML. But the banks' immediate response to the housing finance crisis was "redlining" — geographical lending discrimination.

That accentuated another problem, negative equity, by which homeowners could not sell their homes (because buyers could not get finance) and, as a

result, borrowers owe more on their houses than they are worth.

These are all the outcome of reliance on a market approach to housing, which divides borrowers by income, which subsidised first time buyers — unless you were a black buyer of a second hand house or member of a cooperative — and relied on a meagre R7 500 capital subsidy for toilet towns in many parts of the country.

Democracy gains momentum

But the democratic forces are gaining momentum. Within the National Housing Forum (NHF), for example, the progressive caucus won a major victory in raising the subsidy level, so that a small R17 500 house with full services is a real possibility.

But more challenges lie ahead:

- We must try to make housing financing as simple and universal as possible and ensure that people get access to funds for a decent housing unit for which they are not forced to pay more than a quarter of their income each month (and a smaller percentage for the very poor).

- We must consider ways to prevent speculation, possibly by providing incentives for limited equity housing cooperatives (like the Seven Buildings in Johannesburg) or land trusts. We are arguing that housing and land purchasing cooperatives must be given subsidies and that alternative forms of tenure, eg renting, be provided so that communities have maximum options for housing design and planning.

- Other financing issues must be considered, as we attempt to maximise our national financing capacity. These could range from applying prescribed asset requirements to financial institutions, to taxing capital gains on resale of homes (which is a progressive means of redistributing wealth from rich to poor).

- We must pay special attention to the



■ Sanco's Sandy Magidlana and Moses Mayekiso announce the breakdown of negotiations with the AML

needs of women, who often face discrimination by banks and in relation to property laws and who, in many communities, are the main organisers of mutual aid financing systems.

- We must ensure that financing schemes allow workers' cooperatives, community enterprises and small business to buy building materials on fairer terms. Sanco is developing a concrete strategy in this area at present, which we will soon take forward to communities and small business federations.

- We must address land financing — perhaps through government-funded land banking — for if this is not pursued seriously, land invasions are likely.

- Most importantly, we must ensure that subsidies will be sufficient now and in future to make housing a reality.

Housing minister Louis Shill argues that R7,8 billion — R5 billion to be provided by government — is needed a year to build the 200-300 000 houses needed to solve the crisis within 10 years.

This is a reasonable figure, which would not break the budget of the new government.

We must quickly sort out the money currently being allocated to ineffectual housing finance agencies, such as apartheid parliamentary bodies, provincial administrations and parastatals. The DBSA is only able to spend

half the amount it has available, largely because its interest rates are too high and it still works with BLAs and homelands. The SA Housing Trust charges 19% interest for its home loans, as a result of its projects' high failure rate.

The IDT remains a target for restructuring or abandonment, partly because of its commitment to the discredited site-and-service policy and partly because its housing finance subsidy has delivered a small fraction of what was projected (and at interest rates of over 30%).

Private sector loan guarantees are either failing or end up subsidising bankers rather than borrowers.

We conclude that most failures in housing finance are the result of:

- neglecting to build community participation in to the policy and programme design and to consult properly at project level, and

- downplaying the need to insure affordable houses, even for the very poor.

Up for negotiation

This implies that all these sources of finance for housing and infrastructure should be rationalised. Existing tax breaks should be more transparent and not double-funded. We need a more systematic way of combining public subsidies and private, market-related

finance, especially workers' pension funds.

Whether this is done through a new national housing bank or more directly through regional, municipal or community-based structures is up for negotiation. So too is whether interest or capital subsidies are more appropriate for such financing. We are still investigating the best ways of preventing speculation in the housing market through ensuring that taxpayer financed subsidies are not taken advantage of.

All this will be made easier if the constitutional negotiators guarantee all citizens a right to a place to live in peace and dignity, either in the constitution or bill of rights. This would prevent racist landlords, bankers or bureaucrats from engaging in discrimination or groundless evictions.

At present, Sanco is consulting internationally on the precise form an anti-discrimination statute should take. We are enthusiastic about the US community reinvestment act, which gives communities more power to challenge banks' unfair practices.

As we talk to political parties about housing finance in the run-up to elections, we are stressing that all discrimination must be eliminated by law, and sufficient resources provided, in a community-driven form, to make this historical demand for housing a living reality. ■

CIVICS' HISTORICAL CAMPAIGNS have been for the removal of puppet local authorities and rent boycotts in support of demands for decent housing and services. But today liberation movements are operating legally and negotiations with the apartheid apparatus for a new political system are at an advanced stage.

What role should the civics play now and once a new system is in place? What role can the civics play that such parties cannot?

Civic campaigns were based on the largely similar needs of working class township residents. But will this continue to be the case? The class homogeneity of apartheid SA is being steadily eroded. Each community now reflects a much greater variety of interests, such as home owners, squatters and hostel residents.

The great divide is now between those employed in the formal economy and those in the informal sector. This divide will widen as urbanisation speeds up further and the formal sector fails to expand its workforce.

Is it possible for any civic to represent a unified community? Will accommodating all residents' demands dilute working class demands? The representivity of the civics is central to determining a meaningful role.

What are the mechanisms of reportbacks and mandating, especially at present when many civics are involved in important local government negotiations.

Options

There seem to be three main options for civics:

- To consolidate on a non-partisan basis, but with a clear programme for development and democracy. They would remain outside local government, acting as a watchdog over working class interests. They would be part of policy making, then monitor government's implementation of such policies.
- To enter into an alliance with the political grouping that is closest to the positions and demands of civics, but remaining outside local government as a watchdog.
- To remain unaffiliated to any political party, but to put up candidates for local government elections who are accountable to the civic.

Civics at the crossroads

Civics must solve their identity crisis and decide on a clear path forward, argues **ALLAN HORWITZ**

Different traditions

Civics have dealt mainly with local issues. National cooperation has been loose, with individual civics enjoying much autonomy. Civic campaigns were based on issues that directly affected residents, and the civics' tradition of direct action often gained concrete results.

In contrast, the liberation movements were driven underground. They operated clandestinely, generally in a vanguardist way as a result of the difficulties of getting open mandates.

For the liberation movements, lobbying the international community was important. For trade unions and civics, it was the everyday concerns of the oppressed and exploited.

In addition, many unions and civics were built by people who were not members of either the ANC or PAC.

Since the unbanning of liberation movements in 1990, civics have also changed their focus and strategy. The formation of Sanco has also given impetus to this change.

Negotiations for the transformation of local government and the supply of decent services have replaced mass protests aimed at making the system ungovernable.

The priority has become developing negotiating positions. Issues have moved from the local to metropolitan, regional and national levels. This can be seen in the national forums that have been set up, as well as negotiations with banks etc.

With this focus on "development through negotiation", as opposed to mass struggle or self-help, organisational strength has been considerably weakened.

Civics are often represented in negotiating forums by specialists. The "struggle" has passed largely out of the hands of the civics into the hands of

these experts — middle-class professionals who live outside the immediate reality of civic members and are not directly accountable to civic structures.

In addition, reportbacks to local civics from their regional and national structures has been limited. Even when reports are made available, they are often difficult to understand.

The distance between residents and these forums has meant that the suspension of boycotts, new service rates and future development have become divisive.

Civics and the ANC

In some regions like Natal Midlands, ANC branches have tried to minimise the role of civics, supporting them only where there were local government negotiations which the ANC could not take over. The view is that the ANC must deal with "bread and butter" issues to reflect working-class interests.

In most other regions, civics have kept their independence. But in many townships, serious tensions between the ANC and civics have developed.

The key tests will be the forthcoming appointed local government structures and the national constituent assembly and regional elections, when there will be pressure on all organisations to actively support political parties.

Will civics put forward activists to sit on the appointed "Local Unity" structures? Will civics openly support particular political parties in the national elections?

But are not ANC and civic supporters largely the same working-class people? If this is the case, why should two separate organisations exist, unless they have very different tasks and areas of concern?

The picture is further complicated by the ANC's commitment to power-



■ **STRATEGIC SHIFT?** Negotiations have replaced mass protests

sharing with the National Party. Such power-sharing will continue for at least five years after a constituent assembly is elected. Will power sharing be duplicated at local level?

In this context, civics can continue to play a critical role in:

- pressurising the ANC-Nationalist power-sharing structures to implement policies that improve the lives of the poor;
- acting as catalysts for campaigns that use existing local resources to deal with immediate problems.

This would seem to mean that civics must remain independent of all political parties and stand outside of local government structures.

A weak ANC

However, a counter-argument is that a weak ANC will have even less bargaining power with the conservative bloc and will consequently be less able to deliver to the broad working-class.

According to this argument, civics and Cosatu must ensure that the ANC wins overwhelming popular support. In

this way, the ANC will be able to pressurise the Nationalists to accept a programme of real change.

It is also argued that popular civic activists should stand as ANC candidates to enable the ANC to win the majority in municipalities. This will also put those who know the most about local government issues into key positions. Keeping such comrades out of local government will be self-defeating as it could mean that incompetent councillors will again be elected.

If this argument is correct, it will mean that civics no longer have a real role to play and civic activists should direct all their energies into building an ANC which takes forward working-class demands despite the limitations of power-sharing.

But if Sanco enters into a formal alliance with the ANC, it could become an organ of the ANC, eventually becoming completely absorbed. This follows the Stalinist conception of the subservience of civil society to the political authority.

Civic contests elections

The third option, that of civics participating directly in local elections, will take civics into direct opposition to the ANC and other parties. But at this point in our history, splitting the anti-conservative vote may not be wise.

Once the right wing has been decisively defeated, we will be able to reconsider this option. It will also depend on the performance of the liberation movements in power-sharing structures.

The recent call for a Workers Party may have profound significance. Will the civics and trade unions not want to support such an organisation?

A civic list will also mean that the "watchdog" role will fall away should the civic gain a majority and effectively exercise power. Is this feasible, and would it be a Sanco list or a local civic list?

Conclusion

How do we evaluate these arguments? Of key importance is our understanding of the ANC. What programme is the ANC following? Do we have confidence in its level of organisation, respect for democracy and the honesty of its leadership?

It has been proven that political structures must be balanced by well-organised, motivated, resourced working class organisations in civil society. These formations are the key guarantors of democracy and accountable government.

In our society, with its massive inequalities, it is vital for an independent civic movement to effectively put forward demands and solutions for meeting basic needs.

Civics must resolve this "identity" crisis to fulfil a real social need. To do the same work as the ANC is unnecessary and unjustifiable: civics will have to clarify their own unique role. If they fail to do so, civics will become marginalised and eventually disappear.

Then who will defend the renters, the shack-dwellers, the rural dispossessed and the millions in the "informal sector", the millions of unemployed? ■

● *Horwitz, a former trade unionist, runs a Sached education programme for civics.*

■ **POVERTY INCREASES:**

Ordinary
Zambians bear
the brunt of the
structural
adjustment



PHOTO: KERRY CULLINAN

New life for Southern African NGO network

By Kerry Cullinan

WHEN 40 DELEGATES FROM Southern African non-governmental organisations (NGOs) met at Siavonga in Zambia recently, their mission was simple: to breathe life into the ailing Southern African Non-governmental Development Organisations Network (Sandon).

Although Sandon was launched in 1986 — initially as a platform for organisations getting funds from the Dutch donor, Novib — progress in building a strong, effective network with political clout has been slow.

However, after the four-day general assembly things look more positive. Delegates worked out strong vision and mission statements, committing Sandon to:

- providing solidarity and a common identity within the Southern African NGO sectors;
- facilitating networking amongst Southern African NGOs;
- lobbying and otherwise attempting to influence governments, funders, multinational agencies and other centres of power;
- exchanging ideas and information on a south-south basis;



PHOTO: KERRY CULLINAN

■ **DEBATING POLICY:** Delegates Alexander Phiri, Chilufya Kasutu and Ana Paula Antonio

- working towards an enabling environment for member NGOs to engage in development work.”

This means that, despite the wide range of NGOs within Sandon's ranks — with concerns ranging from organic farming to media training — at least an ideological basis for unity has been established.

Delegates also evaluated Sandon's progress since its last general assembly some two years ago, and planned how these programmes could be strengthened.

Sandon has concentrated on five main areas: gender and disability

awareness, environment, human rights and democratisation, NGO research and north-south relations.

The gender awareness programme has probably been most successful, with a number of workshops and exchanges having taken place. It was later expanded to include disability awareness.

Little has happened as far as the environment is concerned, other than one exchange meeting between two Sandon members in the field. Delegates felt that this programme should be broadened out to look at land issues as well. So far, South Africa is the only country in the region that has a range of

NGOs — in the National Land Committee — that look specifically at land.

In the human rights field, Sandon has drawn up a charter on human rights and democratisation. This has been presented at two overseas conferences.

NGO research, Sandon's most active area, has been coordinated by a Novib consultant, Yash Tandon. It has consisted largely of encouraging NGOs and community organisations to draw on their own and their communities' strengths and knowledge to conduct their own research and share their experiences.

Tandon explains that the research is based on "realist NGO theory", which accepts that Africa is in crisis and states cannot deliver. But instead of saying NGOs should provide new political leadership and developmental models — "as in the case of 'idealist' NGO theory" — it advocates that NGOs should support the efforts of ordinary people.

Development

"Development is a product of struggle by grassroots organisations, not delivery by NGOs," says Tandon.

A fair amount of progress has been made in relation to north-south relations. Sandon has drawn up and adopted the Chitepo Charter, which deals with relations between NGOs and donors. The Chitepo charter is the first of its kind in Africa, and an important attempt to place limits on donors and to regulate their behaviour.

In addition, Sandon has also resolved to conduct an evaluation of Novib — in the same way that Novib expects evaluations from organisations it gives money to. This is an attempt by Sandon to establish a more equal partnership with the donor agency. Groundwork for the evaluation has already been laid, and it will take place within the next three months.

Sandon has also played an important role in getting NGOs to work together, particularly in Mozambique.

A strong steering committee, comprising of one representative each from South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia and Tanzania plus Naseegh Jaffer as chairperson, was elected. ■

● For further information, contact Sandon's South African representative, Pal Martins, at (011) 403-3578/9.

Growing impoverishment

The picture of Southern Africa emerging from reports given to the Sandon general assembly was one of a region torn apart by structural adjustment programmes (SAP).

Zambia

Since Frederick Chiluba came to power at the end of 1991, the World Bank and IMF have increased funds to Zambia. But the condition for the funds was that Zambia had to introduce an SAP. This has seen the removal of food subsidies and free medical care and caused unemployment and increased impoverishment. Rural areas are particularly neglected, resulting in increasing urbanisation.

Over 50% of the media is state controlled, and government opponents are still detained.

NGOs are trying to oppose the privatisation of state property, and setting up socio-economic programmes to help people survive. They are also investigating the sale of large chunks of land to white South Africans, who are reducing peasant farmers to being farm labourers on their traditional land.

Namibia

Namibia has not yet introduced an SAP. Since democratic elections, human rights abuses have slowed down and reconciliation is being promoted. However, tribalism is hampering reconciliation.

Whites still own most of the land, and there has been no land reform policy. The lack of housing is a serious problem.

From this month, Namibia has its own currency, the Namibian dollar, as opposed to the rand.

Tanzania

There has been one party rule for 30 years. Since 1992, other parties have been allowed to operate, but the ruling party always undermines its opponents by pre-empting their programmes.

The country has had an SAP for eight years. This has resulted in a sharp drop in government involvement in social services. As direct consequence, literacy has been reduced from 90% to 60%. NGOs are debating whether they should try to provide basic services, although this is the role of the government.

Foreigners — mainly white and Indian — are the only people able to afford to buy state assets, which are being privatised. This has led to increased racial tensions. Economic uncertainty has also brought about a rise in Islamic fundamentalism.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's SAP — called ESAP or Economic SAP — has meant increases in school fees, food and health care. Large numbers of unemployed youth are turning to crime and drugs.

Polygamy is about to become institutionalised by law, and some NGOs were opposing this move.

The Land Acquisition Act, giving the government the power to expropriate land and decide on what compensation should be paid, had caused much debate. All NGOs agree on the need for land reform, but some feel the act is open to government abuse and can be used to settle old scores.

Most NGOs see their role as being to support the government, playing a supplementary role.

Mozambique

The key issue facing the country is how to rebuild the war torn society. Part of this reconstruction involves the demobilisation of some 67 000 soldiers, the return to their homes of 4,5 million people who have been living in camps for safety and the return of 1,5 million refugees from neighbouring countries.

The NGO movement started formally in 1991, following the promulgation of a law allowing free organisation in civil society. Since then, about 50 NGOs have sprung up and are discussing how best to work together. They are involved in the fields of development, human rights, professions and labour. ■



■ **SUBSIDY DEMAND:** Seven Buildings leader Pressage Nkosi puts tenants requests to the National Housing Forum's Matthew Nel

Negotiated urban development – another view

AT LAST, THE ELUSIVE ISSUES OF community, representativity, and inclusion or exclusion are out in the open. Development practitioners must take up the debate. It is necessary to spell out what progressive development means in practical terms, to add to Friedman's more academic approach.

Friedman's report deals with whether 'communities' are indeed beginning to participate in shaping their own development. To do this, he looks at a few development processes in which civic associations are the negotiating partner. He sets up 'inclusivity' and 'representativeness' as tests to measure the extent of community involvement in current development projects.

For him, inclusivity means the extent to which processes include all interests; representativeness tests the extent to which beneficiaries of development are represented or merely spoken for in processes.

Steven Friedman's recent article, "The Elusive 'Community' – The Dynamics of Negotiated Urban Development" (1), got tongues wagging. **ODETTE GELDENHUYS** and a development attorney take up the debate

This article focuses on three areas raised by Friedman: a general view of development, the issue of representativity and inclusiveness and the question of subsidies and replicability.

Community-based development projects, such as those described below, involve processes which generally overcome the problems raised by Friedman. They also provide a way forward in development, as opposed to Friedman's inevitable conclusion: opt out and wait until all elements have fallen into place.

View of development

Friedman's paper posits a somewhat idealised view of development, which holds that real development is possible only after democratic elections, and then only once inclusiveness has been achieved.

To quote Friedman: "... no development is possible until elections are held and perhaps not even then since they would indicate only political preferences, not the strength of the various interests".

Friedman concludes with a compromise that proposes cooperation between all the major actors as well as humility. He insinuates that such cooperation and humility are not yet present.

Conflict is an inevitable part of development in South Africa at present, as people compete over scarce resources. Rather than waiting for an absence of conflict and an abundance of resources, development must happen now – thereby starting to meet at least some of people's needs.

Representativity and inclusiveness

Friedman's paper focuses on claims of representativity made by community members, particularly civic associations, and the acceptance by developers of such claims. In the main, he is critical of civics as representative structures and offers negotiating forums as a tentative alternative.

However, another way around this thorny issue is to work directly with the beneficiaries of particular development projects. This is the case with the Seven Buildings Project. Impetus for the development came from tenants, and beneficiaries are driving the project, which will directly benefit over 2 000 people.

A number of tenant structures have been set up to enhance their participation in the project at all levels. For example, there are floor and building committees in each building, an overarching committee for all seven buildings and a residents' association with various sub-committees.

Through these structures, tenants have entered into relationships with technical advisers which are governed by agreements and make provision for meetings and information exchange.

It is also important to respect that

a person may choose not to be actively involved. Many tenants are from female-headed families with children, while others work long hours in the 'informal sector'. Leisure time is extremely precious. We need to acknowledge this before we romanticise the concept of 'community participation'.

Subsidies and replicability

Friedman raises the crucial debate of whether the consequence of development is the inclusion or exclusion of divergent interests. To illustrate this, he examines the Seven Buildings Project, and concludes that the project's request for, and possible allocation of a blanket subsidy, establishes the principle "that

Yes, some communities are better organised than others, but they should not be handicapped until such time, if ever, as all communities are properly capacitated. There is always going to be a queue, and some people will be later in the queue than others. Surely, the use of public funds should not be determined by where you are in the queue, but by whether you qualify for public funding.

'Solidarity' vs 'variety' development

Friedman also uses the Seven Buildings Project to introduce the 'solidarity' versus 'variety' approaches. The solidarity argument tends to favour a uniform approach to all beneficiaries, while variety insists that entitlements should vary according to criteria such as income level.

Friedman writes off the 'solidarity' approach by stating that it "is easier to clothe in militant rhetoric". But he fails to recognise the benefits of the solidarity approach:

- That a uniform subsidy enables a community of mixed income to live together, thereby avoiding either rigid separation of income groups or slumification.
- That cross-subsidisation within projects can be achieved, as a subsidy can be given to an institution rather than an individual, thereby providing ongoing subsidised accommodation to generations of low income earners.

Civics in development

By promoting direct beneficiary participation in development processes, we are not making an adverse comment about civic-led development.

In the innovative Golden Highway Project ("Goldev"), initiated on empty land south of Johannesburg, the development was first managed by the Civic Associations of Johannesburg (CAJ) in partnership with other stakeholders such as the Johannesburg City Council and in a development forum.

A development corporation called the Goldev Corporation was then set up to identify beneficiaries of the project. Once beneficiaries have been identified, the project planning and implementation of particular developments will be undertaken with such beneficiaries. The role of the civic association

will diminish accordingly.

This demonstrates that civic-led development is often important in the initial stages of a development project to create the framework that will lead to beneficiaries being identified. Civics play an important role in planning and during the period when developers, local authorities and mainstream development agencies align themselves to make key decisions about communities.

Civics can ensure that project decisions are postponed until beneficiaries have been identified and proper legal structures that ensure ongoing involvement have been created.

Conclusion

The main thrust of our position is that development projects in communities with few resources and acute housing shortages are not likely to fit into any pure model.

Development in this sector is a dirty game. There is immense conflict over resources, and no magical way of ever knowing that any group is more deserving than the next. The best that can be achieved is that private developers and local authorities move away from imposing development on people on their terms.

Civics play an important role in trying to level the playing field for communities by insisting that they be involved in planning, their needs are taken seriously and that development no longer involves decision making by small groups of privileged white men on behalf of large black communities.

The real key to achieving community-led development is found at the next stage, when the end-users of a particular project are identified and workable legal structures are created to express their needs and allow for meaningful participation.

Not all beneficiaries will want to be involved. If a project results in meaningful dialogue with a few key beneficiaries and empowers such people to lead the development on behalf of a group of beneficiaries, the project will have achieved a great deal. Perhaps we all need to set our sights more realistically and get on with putting shelter on the ground. ■

1. *Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) Research Report No 28, February 1993.*

Development in this sector is a dirty game. There is immense conflict over resources. The best that can be achieved is that private developers and local authorities move away from imposing development on people on their terms.

people who live in a particular area at a particular time, and have organised themselves before others... are entitled to public subsidisation".

Friedman concludes that this principle could be exclusionary as:

- if resources are allocated to the organised on a "first-come-first served" basis, there may eventually be little left over for those who organise later;
- capacities to organise are distributed unevenly, and often have little or nothing to do with people's innate capacities or inclinations.

Firstly, the idea that those in the front of the queue will deprive those that come later of public funds, is an indictment not on the first recipients, but on the public authorities. Instead of placing the burden of allocation on the allocator to ensure an equitable distribution, Friedman blames the recipients for being the first in line.

Secondly, his argument implies that groups that take the initiative, are well-organised and have technical assistance should be penalised.

Housing: a regional responsibility?

Canadians' recent struggle to ensure national and regional government bear joint responsibility for housing carries some lessons for South Africa. **BARRY PINSKY** reports

DURING 1991-92, CANADIANS went through the most recent in a long series of constitutional debates. The government's call for decentralisation of social policy to provinces had a lot of emotional appeal, especially for groups wanting distinct regional identities, as opposed to a national identity.

But more critical observers saw this as a way for the centre-right 'Tory' government to reduce social spending and pass the burden on to provinces largely governed by other parties.

While a solution to this debate was not found, many things were learnt in the process. Housing activists were particularly engaged in defending shared national and provincial roles in housing.

The Canadian situation and the position of housing groups have relevance for current debates in South Africa, revolving around the exact powers and functions of regional government.

At a very general level, there are similarities of scale. Canada's population is nearly 30 million and the country is divided into 12 provinces and territories. These have elected legislatures and are the regional governments. There is a single national constitution which defines a delicate balance between national and provincial jurisdiction. While formally a confederation, the set-up includes federal and unitary features.

As has been proposed for South Africa, most areas of social policy including health, housing and education are under provincial jurisdiction. But the constitution has been flexible enough to make these shared areas of responsibility.

National government has played an important role in steering housing policy, particularly since the second world war and the population boom that followed. While housing policy has largely been oriented to private ownership, new social housing policies in the

1970s were responses to continuing urban poverty.

Since then, an impressive array of national programmes have helped cooperatives, municipalities and other non-profit actors to produce low income housing. Some programmes used national funds alone, but many are cost-shared with regional government. Some provincial and local governments also have their own 'stand alone' housing programmes.

The non-profit and cooperative housing movements in Canada put forward a detailed position for housing responsibilities to be shared by national and provincial government, based on the following arguments:

- Housing is a complex process which involves all levels of government. National fiscal policy and economic powers exert such a strong influence on housing markets that national government must be an active partner.
- Exclusive provincial powers take away the possibility of future national participation without adding anything to the nation's ability to house people well. Without redistributive mechanisms, regional disparities may increase. Marked differences in regional housing programmes will affect the flow of other investments.
- If the national social policy role is limited to tax collection and redistribution, people will not feel that they live in one country and support for equalisation goals will be limited.

● Concurrent jurisdiction works well. It permits regional variation and innovations, while providing for coordinated, harmonised and equal policies.

● Successful innovations in housing finance mechanisms and housing loan guarantee programmes require national markets. Not all regions have the necessary population base or economic diversity to support these. Smaller provinces are also not able to provide the administrative, technical and

research support to diverse urban and rural housing programmes.

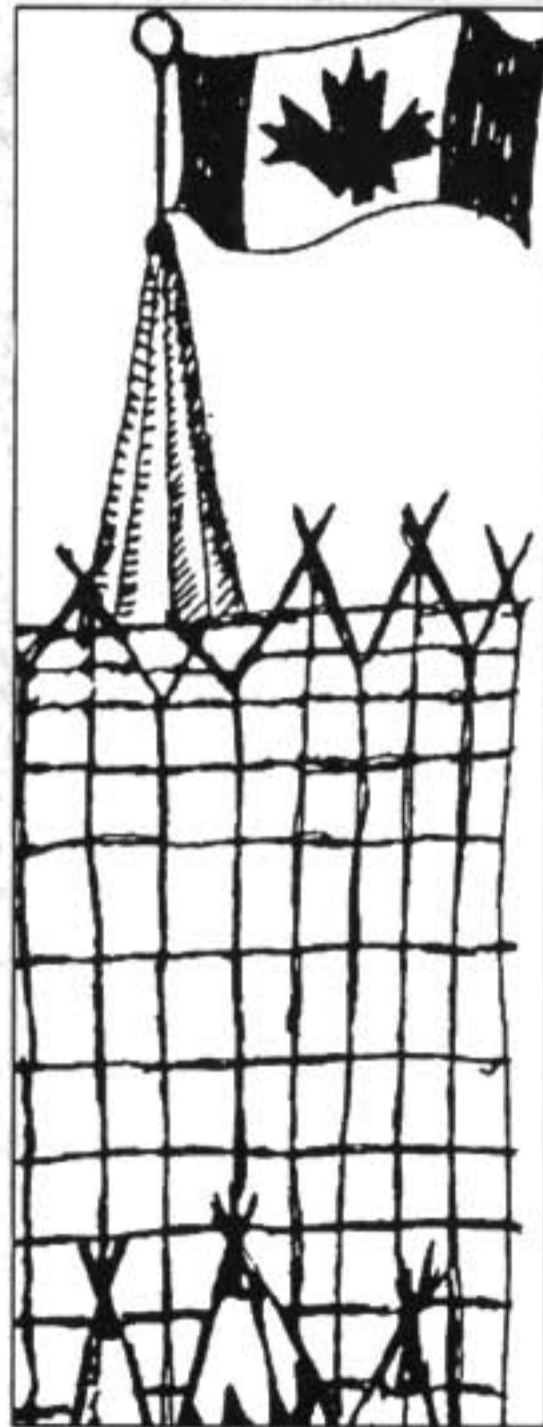
Canadians involved in community based cooperative housing also noted that real decentralisation occurs at community level.

Housing programmes that support community empowerment and give people a stake in building their communities can be supported by any level of government. And in Canada, the national government, rather than provinces, has taken the initiative in housing policy.

If a new South African constitution is to provide for basic rights and values common to all South Africans, including the

right to housing, then effective housing programmes should be available on an equitable basis in all regions.

As in Canada, it may be worth advocating constitutional arrangements that permit productive, flexible and overlapping interaction between different levels of government in the area of housing. ■



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