

# Southern Africa REPORT

Vol. 8 No. 2

November 1992

## De Klerk's Agenda: Derailing Democracy

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THE RISE OF  
STRATEGIC UNIONISM

by  
Karl von Holt



BANDA HANGS ON  
by  
Tony Woods



THE NEW POLITICS  
IN ZIMBABWE  
interview with  
Regis Mtutu

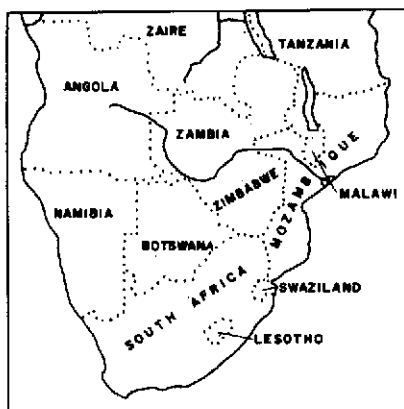
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## Southern Africa REPORT

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ANC/SACP and Nat supporters arguing prior to de Klerk visit at Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town, April 1992

## The Centre Cannot Hold

Yugoslavia. Somalia. Things really do fall apart, and the grim realities of these two experiences - so graphically etched on our television screens - will haunt us for many years to come. Not that readers

of *Southern Africa Report* need very much reminding about such things. Many of us have witnessed the devastating effects of the wars inflicted on Mozambique and Angola and the creation (in these cases to a

very considerable degree by external fiat) of broken-backed societies that now teeter on the brink of collapse.

Indeed, as one of our articles - filed from Angola in advance of the recent elections but all too prescient

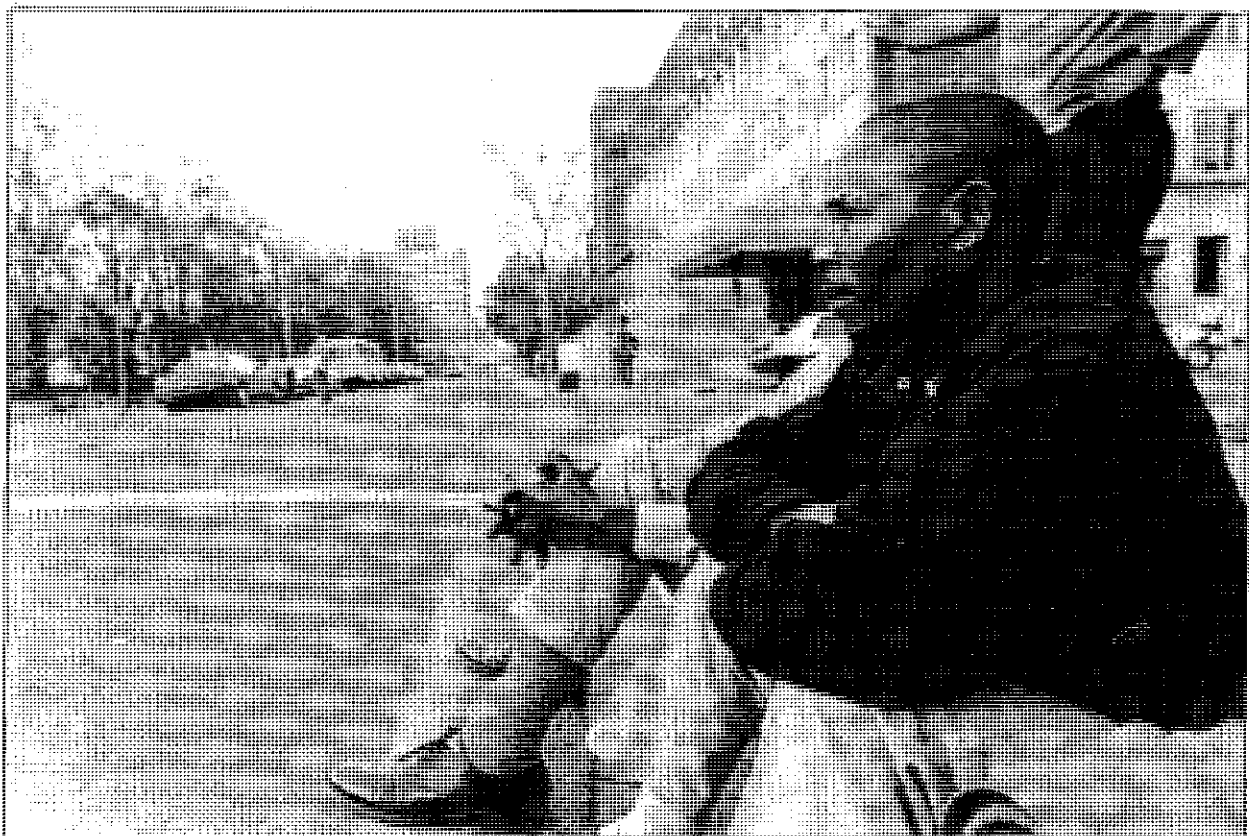
- reminds us, such is the make-up of Unita that it has been ill-prepared (by South Africa, by the United States) to play anything other than a wrecker's role in Angola. Now, denied - fairly and squarely - an electoral victory by the MPLA on the centrist terrain offered by the new Angola, Unita threatens to continue with its violent activities ("Angola elections fail to end strife: Savimbi hints at more violence," *The Globe and Mail*, 19 October, 1992). A precedent has been established; in the words of one African diplomat in Luanda, "the message here seems to be: Whoever threatens to use guns dictates the rules." In this, Unita is said (in various news reports) to have exasperated even its "former patron," the United States. But in Angola (as may also prove true in

Mozambique) it is perhaps a little too late to put the cork back in the bottle of chaos concocted by Washington and Pretoria over so many years.

The spectre of social and political breakdown also hovers over other articles in the present issue. John Saul's piece, written in the wake of his recent visit to South Africa, convincingly identifies South African president F. W. de Klerk as the principle architect of the failed transition to democracy there. Moreover, by perpetuating stalemate de Klerk does more than merely hold things constant. As Saul argues, under such circumstances, "things don't just stand still. They deteriorate." Perhaps it is true that, in South Africa, "liberal centre" and 'radical left' do increasingly agree

that only a firmly democratic political system can promise the stable context for the debate and struggle that the country's future requires." But Saul worries about the very real dangers that loom if de Klerk "still refuses to embrace any such understanding."

Unfortunately, as we go to press, news reports suggest Saul's worries to be well-founded: "de Klerk delivers hard-line speech: Permanent sharing of power demanded" reads a representative headline (*The Globe and Mail*, 13 October, 1992), fronting an article that finds de Klerk telling a special parliamentary session of his demands for, among other things, guarantees that "would effectively allow the National Party to keep its hand in government indefinitely as part of a multiparty government." And what



*Unemployed waiting, hoping to be picked up for casual labour*

Abdul Shariff - Impact Visuals

of the on-going workings of the South African government's state security apparatus, with their grim unleashing of heedless violence that is so effectively exposed in Paulus Zulu's accompanying article in this issue? Can anyone doubt that the de Klerk's government's entire approach sanctions, even encourages, such activities and that these activities, too, help forestall the democratic outcome that alone offers any hope of averting further catastrophe?

There is a chillingly parallel theme running through Tony Woods' crisp exposé, also in the present issue, of the attempts by the clique grouped around Malawian president Kamuzu Banda to side-track escalating democratic demands in that country and cling to power. Woods' article, in documenting that there are real forces for change afoot in Malawi, complements Mel Page's piece in an earlier issue of *SAR* ("Malawi: Revolution without Leadership?", *SAR*, July, 1992). But Woods also emphasizes the long-term costs of the destructive manner in which Banda and company are choosing to resist change (the attempt to divide and rule by stirring up ethnic and regional resentments, for example). "The tragedy in Banda's obstinacy is that it will inevitably lead to increased civil disorder and greater economic dislocation," writes Woods. In short, in Malawi as in South Africa, one is reminded all too forcibly of Gramsci's remark that "the crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appears"!

\* \* \*

The need to keep pressure, both international and local, on the de Klerks and the Bandas in order to convince them to yield, reasonably gracefully, to democratic demands should be self-evident, then. A second question does arise, however: if even the centre cannot easily hold,

what, we might well ask, does this mean for the left?

There are some who will argue that the blocking of the road to constitutional compromise in South Africa by the likes of de Klerk and Buthelezi is actually a boon to the cause of structural-cum-socialist reconstruction there. With the weaknesses of the negotiations option now exposed, they suggest, the need to make a "real revolution" instead is also fully apparent. One fears, however, that the alternative to finding a measure of agreement regarding the acceptance of democratic institutions – within which some form of necessary "class struggle" might then be pursued – is more likely to be chaos than any very useful kind of revolution.

If this is true, the best hope for the future in South Africa may lie with those who seek to steer a course, in John Saul's words, between "the twin dangers of, on the one hand, a romantic (and ultimately all-too-rhetorical) ultra-revolutionary approach and, on the other, collapse into a mild reformism that will do little to alter the balance of inherited class power and conservative/technocratic decision-making." Saul, in his article, calls this a strategy of "structural reform," others term it "revolutionary reform." In the present issue Karl von Holdt helps concretize such abstract concepts by discussing the notion, very much alive within the ranks of South Africa's trade union movement, of "strategic unionism." This concept epitomizes the attempt to discover a practice, at once realistic *and* radical, that will allow working class power slowly but surely to shift things to the left, even as democratic political institutions are themselves consolidated.

And what of "the left" beyond South Africa? It is a hard fact that in Mozambique and Angola the attempt to consolidate, against the pull of chaos, a more centrist (more liberal-democratic/liberal-capitalist) polit-

ical dispensation has meant the abandonment of much of the progressive promise of socialist experimentation there. And in other countries in the region – where more conservative regimes have been the order of the day (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi) – the push towards "democracy" has also seemed to go hand in hand with ever more extreme forms of "free market" policies.

Yet an achieved democratization of the political arena would be no bad thing, whether in Mozambique or in Malawi. Under southern African conditions (as Marcia Burdette argued in discussing Zambia in a recent issue [*Democracy vs. Economic Liberalization: The Zambian Dilemma*, *SAR*, July, 1992]), a sharp contradiction is, in any event, likely to surface sooner or later between the imperatives of economic liberalization on the one hand and those of political democratization on the other. And the playing out of this contradiction may merely herald a fresh round of authoritarian regimes further down the road as free-marketting politicians move to contain the protests of those who are being further impoverished by the workings of structural adjustment and related programmes.

Yet nothing is irredeemably inevitable. Much will depend on how effectively popularly-based groups now use the democratic space that is at least momentarily available to them in order to create broad constituencies deeply rooted within civil society and available for future political activism. In this respect the interview we publish here with Zimbabwean activist, Regis Mtutu, forms a useful pendant to Karl von Holdt's article on South Africa. From Mtutu's account, we also glimpse the process of forging a popular movement and a popular consciousness that can keep alive the struggle for humane outcomes – and for new forms of unity constructed around the imperatives of such a struggle. Things fall apart? It ain't necessarily so, sez us.

# Mass Action:

## South Africa's Second Referendum

BY JOHN S. SAUL

*John Saul is a long-time member of the SAR Editorial Working Group*

Ten years ago – August 17, 1982 – the noted journalist, author and activist Ruth First was struck down by the South African government, victim of a parcel bomb delivered to her office at the Centre of African Studies in Maputo, Mozambique. I was then her colleague; indeed, the explosion itself occurred only minutes before a planned reception she had organized in honour of my own imminent departure from Mozambique after a year of working there. Since her death, an annual Ruth First Memorial Lecture has been given in Maputo but this year, on the tenth anniversary of her death, it seemed appropriate to bring the event home. Accordingly, a “Ruth First Memorial Colloquium” was planned, to be held at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, and intended to explore the theme “The Possibilities of Radical Transformation in Southern Africa: Theory and Policy.” I was honoured to be invited to attend and address the colloquium workshop – and I was even able, at last, to obtain a visa and thus take part in the events.

The two days of workshops were enormously interesting; I'll say something more about them below. Nonetheless, the centre-piece was the public event set for the 17th itself (the first evening of the colloquium), a mass rally at UWC where some 4000 people gathered to hear Nelson Mandela honour Ruth, an old friend and colleague. Others were there as well – Oliver Tambo, Govan Mbeki, Pallo Jordan, Graça Machel from Mozambique, Nadine Gordimer, Ruth's husband Joe Slovo and two of her daughters (including Shawn, who authored the screenplay

of *A World Apart*, the film about Ruth First's early years in South Africa) – and several spoke. But it was Mandela himself who spoke most eloquently about Ruth First's life in the democratic movement – and who also linked her death most dramatically to the present moment. His theme: the continuing role of the South African state in meting out, either directly or by proxy, the cruellest forms of repression, including death, to those who challenge it.

The energy in the hall was astonishing, an earnest of just how eagerly black South Africans seek to embrace their freedom. But Mandela's message was also sobering, a grim reminder of how difficult the transition to a new and democratic South Africa has become. Indeed, a parallel tension – between the energy available for change and the repression that continues to thwart such change – framed my trip itself. I arrived in South Africa in the immediate aftermath of the dramatic week of mass action (early August) and left just days before the cruel events at Bisho in the Ciskei (early September), the callous shooting of ANC demonstrators by that Bantustan's military junta. The drive for democracy, the opposition to it by those in positions of power: it was difficult to escape the conclusion that, under present circumstances, any such transition threatens to remain firmly stalemated. And in a festering condition of stalemate, things don't just stand still. They deteriorate.

### De Klerk: architect of stalemate

What needs underscoring here is that the principle architect of the current stalemate has been President F. W. de Klerk himself. De Klerk quite simply does not want to see any meaningful institution-

alization of democratic structures – with the significant empowerment of blacks that would inevitably accompany it – in South Africa. This is the one thing most South Africans I talked to were agreed upon. Contrary to the misleading expectations raised by much western press coverage, de Klerk used the breathing space his referendum victory earned him within the white polity merely to stall, in CODESA and elsewhere, on majority demands. This, and the on-going pattern of state-sponsored terrorism (e.g., Boipatong), were what had brought negotiations to a shuddering halt by the middle of the year.

Such stalling need come as no surprise, of course. After all, one of the National Party's principle slogans during the referendum campaign was “If you're afraid of majority rule, vote yes.” Yet some foreign observers have been tempted to see de Klerk's emphasis on “white vetoes” and extreme decentralization of power as reflecting a judicious, even laudable, effort to curb the excesses of simple majoritarianism (editorials in Toronto's *Globe and Mail* – of December 21, 1991, and March 19, 1992 – have been previously identified by *SAR* as prime examples of this tendency). South Africans know better. They realize that the ANC is itself open to discussion of various kinds of reasonable constitutional compromise – although not of the sort that would simply cripple the ability of any post-apartheid government to redress apartheid's grim socio-economic legacy. And they sense, equally clearly, that de Klerk's principle interest is not in “good government” but, even at this late date, in white government.

This is the context in which other recent developments must be understood. Yet how difficult it



Abdul Shariff - Impact Visuals

Outside Rand Supreme Court, campaign for an interim government

seems to be for overseas journalists to concede the obvious. Take the recent article by the usually far more reliable *Globe and Mail* foreign affairs analyst Linda Hossie on the implications of the Bisho massacre, an article which greeted me almost immediately upon my return to Toronto from South Africa ("Tied together in a tug of war," *Globe and Mail*, September 14). By her account, the ANC had created, more or less out of whole cloth, the drive towards "mass action" that so panicked the Ciskei leadership. How easy to forget that it was the mass actions of the 1970s and 1980s that themselves pitch-forked the ANC back into prominence and helped free Mandela. In fact, by June, the situation had become one in which the ANC had to run in order to keep pace with its followers! For the fact is that, two and a half years after Mandela's release, people

in the Ciskei homeland still suffer under a cruel military dictatorship, one sustained, quite visibly, by the Pretoria regime and without a shred of legitimacy of its own. Indeed, virtually all the black South Africans I spoke with during my recent trip felt themselves to be further away from a democratic resolution of their situation than they were in February, 1990. Why is it so difficult for outsiders to take this fact seriously, they asked me. Is it because we are black?

#### The logic of mass action

Small wonder that direct action to accelerate the process of change broke out on so many fronts in South Africa in recent months: the Ciskei demonstration was merely one example of a general escalation of confrontational politics on the part of the ANC and its allies (notably the trade union movement). This found

its fullest expression to date not in the Ciskei but in August's successful week of nation-wide mass action, highlighted by a two-day general strike that saw as many as four million workers stay at home. The press in Canada did not greet this event with anything like the fanfare that accompanied de Klerk's referendum triumph some months earlier. Yet I found South Africans themselves quick to suggest that the results of this "second referendum" were, in many ways, more significant than de Klerk's own victory. It underscored the fact that the vast majority of blacks in South Africa are, quite simply, staunch in their democratic demands - and that the ANC stands as the chief political vehicle of such demands.

Ms. Hossie, in the article referred to above, will have none of this. Instead, she chooses to see

the ANC as "working against itself, with two strategies in collision – one favouring mass action and another attempting to maintain negotiations." And she imagines hardliners and moderates within the movement to be deeply split over this issue. Yet the ANC leaders (of very diverse ideological stripe) I spoke with felt the two strategies to be fundamentally complementary, arguing convincingly that mass action was the only card they had left to play in order to pressure de Klerk to move forward. International sanctions have, regrettably, all but withered away, while the ANC has, unilaterally, demobilized any capacity it may once have had to wage effective guerilla struggle. What other way has there been to focus the white government's attention on the demands of the vast majority of the South African population? The ANC's critics, including Ms. Hossie, have no answer to this question.

True, there are some differences of opinion within the democratic movement as to just what mix of "mass action" and "negotiations" might prove to be most effective. Some leaders probably are tempted by the allure of "elite-pacting" – a "done-deal" behind closed doors – as the principal way forward in South Africa and may be inclined to see mass action as a secondary tactic, a kind of "tap" to be turned on and off if, as and when occasion dictates. At the other extreme, a certain romanticism has sometimes marked the approach of those who are much more firmly committed to the centrality of the mass action approach. Thus, despite the fresh revelations every day of the cruelest kind of state-sanctioned repression in South Africa I still heard a great deal of talk amongst activists about the possible relevance of the "Leipzig way" for South Africa. After all, mass action in pursuit of democratic demands worked in Eastern Europe, didn't it? Why not in South Africa?†

But, clearly, conditions are not the same. For the most part,

when push came to shove in Eastern Europe the erstwhile communist regimes had neither the will nor the capacity to slash back against broad, democratically-inspired coalitions. The ANC finds in de Klerk, his security establishment and its vicious allies – including homeland heavies like Gatscha Buthelezi and the Ciskei's Oupa Gqozo – much more ruthless and intransigent defenders of the *status quo*. Note, then, that de Klerk's intransigence is a roadblock that confronts all those who make up the democratic movement and one that continues to bind them together. To magnify what are really quite modest tactical differences into major contradictions within that movement (as Hossie does) is, once again, to lose sight of where the main responsibility for lack of democratic progress in South Africa lies.

#### Negotiations: the real issues

Clarity on this issue becomes all the more important as (early October) de Klerk and Mandela begin to grope their way back towards negotiations. For those committed to a democratic future in South Africa it would be nice to think that de Klerk has been chastened by mass action and the results of the "second referendum" and that he will return to the table ready to accept more of "the inevitable" than has been the case heretofore. Understandably, it is only on the assumption that he has that the ANC might itself be once again ready to participate – and not primarily, as Ms. Hossie and other media pundits would have it, because it has been "shocked [by the Ciskeian events] ... into recognizing that they must start

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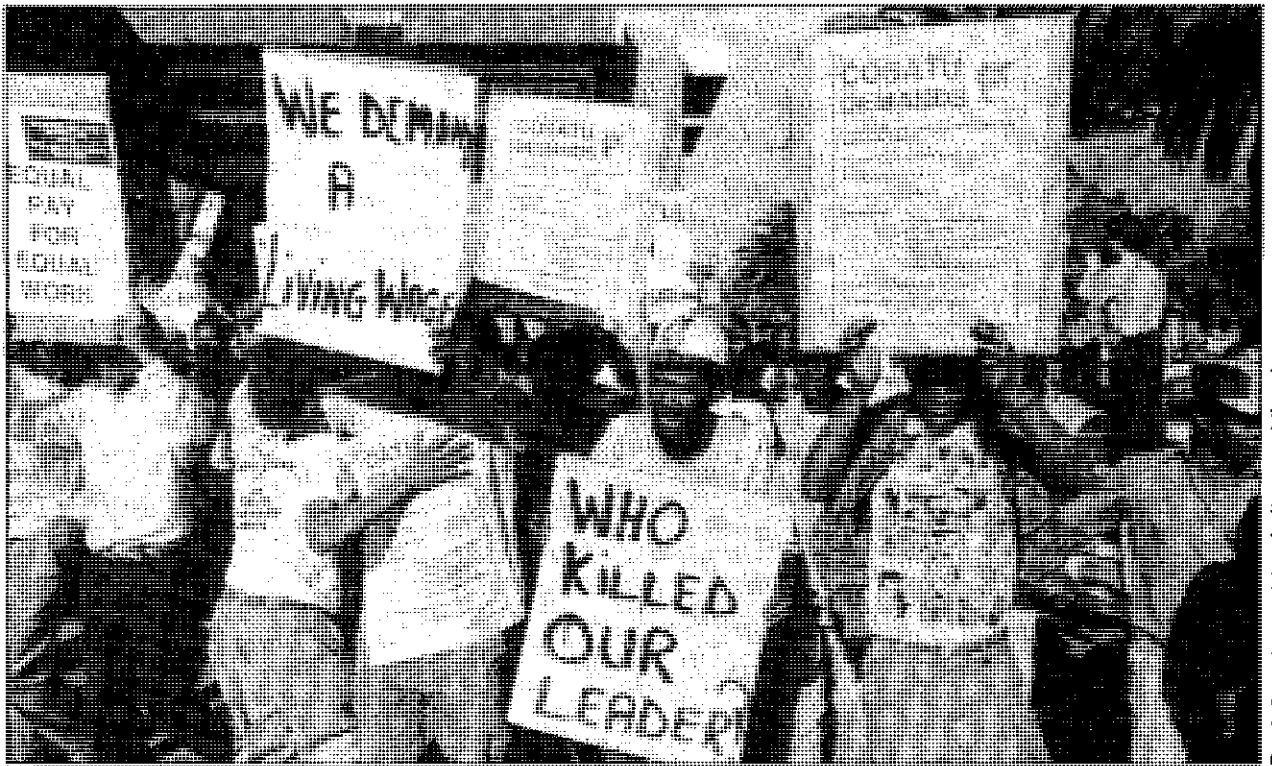
† A presentation at the Ruth First Memorial Colloquium by ANC/SACP activist Jeremy Cronin entitled, precisely, *"The Boat, the Tap and the Leipzig Way: A Critique of Some Strategic Assumptions in our Ranks"* was particularly illuminating regarding the debate within the democratic movement over such tactical questions.

talking again"! Talking about what? To encourage readers to imagine some kind of retreat from the threshold of reasonable and meaningful democratic demands on the part of the ANC would be seriously to mislead them.

Fortunately, there are also others, notably in some corners of the business community (both within South Africa and abroad), who have also begun to recognize that de Klerk's constitutional sleights-of-hand, so unacceptable to the majority, merely produce political grid-lock. Such grid-lock, in turn, spells chaos and from conditions of chaos few can expect to profit. Some of these players realize that only by having a relatively strong ANC preside over the present transition can any new dispensation be legitimated in the eyes of most black South Africans. Moreover, they are increasingly confident that the economic clout of capital and the discipline of the global market-place can be expected to cow the ANC into adopting moderate socio-economic policies, whatever the nature of the new constitution.

Of course, they may be unduly confident in this regard. As I found during my trip, there remain many – both within the ANC and within the powerful labour movement (see the article by Karl von Holdt, elsewhere in this issue, surveying labour's thinking on such matters) – who are sceptical as to whether solutions that are primarily market-led can produce either growth or equity under present South African conditions. Certainly, this was the thrust of much of the discussion at the Ruth First colloquium itself in which the gathering of activists and academics both from South Africa and abroad sought to give renewed content to socialist aspirations in a new South Africa – sought, in short, to speak to South Africa's future problems in a voice that Ruth First herself ("committed revolutionary, journalist and academic") would have recognized.





Paul Grendon - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

**Debating transformation**

My own contribution to the colloquium was an attempt to make sense of actual socio-economic struggles now being engaged in in South Africa as representing a promising project of "structural reform." I noted the extent to which those engaged in such struggles both sought, self-consciously, to keep alive a sense of long-term transformation even when engaged in relatively modest reforms and also saw a contribution to the cumulative empowerment of the popular classes as a necessary ingredient of any reform worth the effort. Along some such lines, I argued, South African radicals are developing a practice that could avoid "the twin dangers of, on the one hand, a romantic (and ultimately all-too-rhetorical) ultra-revolutionary approach and, on the other, collapse into a mild reformism that will do little to alter the balance of inherited class power and conservative/technocratic decision-making." And I was gratified to find

that my own emphases found resonance in the presentations of others who also discerned the seeds of a practice of "radical" or "revolutionary reform" emerging in present day South Africa.

Of course, the pull on the ANC leadership towards "moderation" in a post-apartheid South Africa is strong. This led several of the most vocal participants in the colloquium (both veteran revolutionary and long-time ANC critic Neville Alexander and left-leaning ANC economic advisor Lawrence Harris) to disparage the likelihood that the ANC will ever push its egalitarian demands beyond the purely political realm and seek in any very dramatic way to democratize the economy along socialist lines.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps so! Nonetheless, it was interesting to hear the debate about the trans-

<sup>1</sup> See the useful account of the colloquium proceedings by journalist Gaye Davis in *The Weekly Mail*, August 21-27, 1992, entitled "Can socialism survive the new SA?"

formation of South Africa joined at such a high level as was the case at the First colloquium.

Moreover, one sensed that differences - both within the popular movement and between that movement and the representatives of other interests in society - over just such crucial socio-economic issues are likely to define much of the content of the democratic politics of a new South Africa. But what "new South Africa"? It was difficult, this summer, for me to escape the sense that South Africans are still an uncomfortably long way from entering the post-apartheid moment. Perhaps "liberal centre" and "radical left" do increasingly agree that only a firmly democratic political system can promise the stable context for the debate and struggle that the country's future requires - an important advance, if true. But how unfortunate - and how fraught with danger - that F. W. de Klerk still refuses to embrace any such understanding.

# Political Violence and the "Third Force"

BY PAULUS ZULU

*Paulus Zulu is a Senior Research Fellow and head of the Maurice Webb Unit for Race Relations at the Centre for Social and Development Studies at the University of Natal, Durban. He lives in Umlazi township outside Durban.*

Although South Africa's inquiry into public violence last April denied there was evidence of a "third force" operating in the country, it did not, as the South African government first claimed, clear the country's security forces of complicity in the violence.

The Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, popularly known as the Goldstone Commission, did report that it had been unable to uncover evidence of a third force "existing as a sinister and secret organization orchestrating political violence on a wide front." The government chose to interpret this as exonerating the state's security forces from either causing the violence or being complicit in it. However, in doing so, the government was ignoring what the report did, in fact, say - that the police force and army which for many decades "have been instruments of oppression by successive white governments in maintaining a society predicated upon racial discrimination," were actually one of the chief causes of violence.

Indeed, the government sought to shape opinion to its own purposes by not releasing, for a whole month, the actual report to the other parties in the convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA, then the country's principle negotiating forum) or to the general public. By underplaying the role of the security forces in the violence, the government sought instead to present the political rivalry between the African

National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) as being the chief cause of what has simplistically become known as "black on black" violence.

For its part, the IFP readily accepted the government's official communique. It was left to the ANC to repudiate the report (at least as it was presented in the government communiqué) as providing a misleading explanation of the causes of the violence which had afflicted the country for almost eight years. The controversy surrounding the government's release of the report was only settled by the intervention of Justice Goldstone who publicly stated the Commission's findings and thus demonstrated that the government had not provided the full contents of the report.

For the report did in fact reveal "a history over some years of state complicity in undercover activities which include criminal conduct." "Those activities," the report continued, "have enabled critics of the government and others, fairly or unfairly, to place the blame for much of the violence at the door of the security forces. That and the well-documented criminal conduct by individual members of the South African police and the KwaZulu police exacerbate the perceptions of the many South Africans that the government or its agencies are active parties responsible for the violence!"

This approach helped take the discussion of any "third force" outside the framework of a discussion cast in legalistic and organizational/conspiratorial terms and placed it in a more broadly sociological and political context where the real determinants of violence in South Africa - not least the state's own active role in sustaining it - can be identified.

## Alternative explanations

There are two main explanations of the present violence in South Africa. The first - it is, as noted, that of the de Klerk government - is that the violence is a manifestation of the struggle for hegemony between the IFP and the ANC. Moreover, exponents of this view allege that historically-based ethnic animosities, in this case between Xhosas and Zulus, exacerbate the conflict. The assumptions by this camp are that the ANC is predominantly Xhosa in character while the IFP is a Zulu nationalist organization. This interpretation removes the state from the centre of the violence and makes the latter an ethnic or tribal "black on black" confrontation. Hence, whereas the Goldstone Commission cited the political conflict between the ANC and the IFP as one cause of the ongoing violence, the government singled this out as the main cause in its official communique, cited above.

There is, of course, no denying that the present conflict is political in nature, and that behind the violence lies the struggle for power and control. But to understand this in the government's terms would be a mistake. In the first instance, the IFP in its historical and present structural position does not have an organic existence outside of the state apparatus. Secondly, the ethnic allegation cannot explain the nature and dynamics of the violence. Empirically, for example, there is no evidence of ethnic conflict among settled residents in the townships on the Reef where the violence has been concentrated over the past two years. Rather the violence has been between Inkatha-aligned hostel dwellers and the township communities or residents in informal



Abdul Shariff - Impact Visuals

*A victim of police fire in Ikageng, September 1990*

settlements. Moreover, in Natal, where the violence has its longest history, the African population is ethnically homogeneous (i.e. almost exclusively Zulu). The violence thus follows clear lines of political, not ethnic, cleavage - and it in this context that allegations of involvement of the security forces on the side of Inkatha have their place.

For the second explanation of South Africa's violence is that neither the ANC nor the IFP has the capacity to sustain violence on a scale that has been witnessed in the past three years. In other words, proponents of this view argue, there must be other forces at work, forces engaged in a process of destabilization designed to scuttle the negotiations that are underway and working to

maintain the status quo of white domination. The argument here is that in the majority of the cases where large-scale violence has occurred, evidence has indicated collusion, either through commission or omission, between the security forces and the IFP. In a number of instances, they claim, only the IFP has played the role of a visible aggressor; moreover, quite visibly, it is the security forces or elements from within them that instigate and manage the process.

A number of incidents over the past two years are cited, including the Boipatong massacre in June. Reports by the Lawyers for Human Rights, the International Commission of Jurists and Amnesty International emphasize the role of the security forces in the violence. Further periodic reports by groups

monitoring the violence in South Africa have constantly revealed episodes where the state's security forces have either directly attacked communities or aided Inkatha in the attack on opponents of the state. Most of these reports are drawn from statements by eye-witnesses or from affidavits provided by the victims of the attacks.

The response to these allegations from both the government and the IFP has often been that such claims have not been tested before the law courts. However, the much publicized Trust Feed Case (discussed below) has not only vindicated the monitors and the various commissions, but has given fresh impetus to the development of a more sophisticated socio-political understanding of the nature and

composition of the so-called "third force."

### Security forces and local politicians cooperate

The foundations of the "third force" lie in the policy of "total strategy" as enunciated and put into effect by the former state president P.W. Botha. This total strategy demanded a 'total defence,' both physical and psychological. To coordinate this strategy, direct links between the army, the security police, business and local government structures were formed. The Joint Management Councils, corresponding to nine Defence Commando areas, became the instruments of defence against "communism" as well as for winning the hearts and minds of the local communities. Joint Management Councils were accountable, through structural links, to the State Security council, thereby allowing the state, through its security apparatus, to penetrate civil society.

This penetration by the state created structural networks and personal allegiances that have proved difficult to untangle in the process of transition. And given that Inkatha supported participation in local government - to the point that some of its members ended up on the Joint Management Councils - and that the extra-parliamentary opposition hycotted the state-sponsored structures, it was inevitable that ideological and personal links between state security personnel and Inkatha councillors were cemented in this union. And as the community/town council system and the tribal authorities, both so closely tied into the structures of the apartheid state, became objects of attack by the disenfranchised in the early 1980's, the state security apparatus became even more entangled in the task of baldly effecting control through local political structures.

### For the record

Numerous court cases provide interesting evidence of the links thus

forged between the security forces and Inkatha. For example, in the trial of Samuel Bhekizizwe Jamile, this Kwazulu government minister and member of the Inkatha Central Committee was eventually found guilty of murdering five political opponents. He was charged in 1990 with five counts of murder, seven counts of attempted murder and three counts of incitement to murder but only after a great deal of evidence of police and security force collusion and attempted suppression of evidence.

The Trust Feed trial arose out of the 1988 murder of eleven people and attempted murders of eight oth-

ers in a house at Trust Feed, a "black spot" in the New Hanover District in Natal marked for removal. There, to counter the formation of an Anti-Removal Crisis Committee the security establishment, led by Captain Mitchell, chairman of the local Joint Management Committee, decided to promote Inkatha as an alternative organization in the area. The murders in question could be shown to be traceable to the Inkatha committee then formed. But here again the trial also revealed extensive collusion in mounting later atrocities. Indeed, when clear evidence to this effect was introduced, Justice Wilson, the presiding judge, expressed



*Boipatong: grieving family following massacre*



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Dripatong: weapons confiscated by police in search of Mandela Hostel, a day later

distress because it had become clear that "the evidence of senior police officers could not be accepted and that official records produced from the files were also subject to suspicion or shown to be completely inaccurate." Moreover, it is evident that the Trust Feed events were not an exception but part of an overall plan whereby the police used their legal powers to facilitate Inkatha's takeover of territories deemed to be in hostile hands or to reinstate Inkatha in territories they had "lost" to the opposition.

Nor has the Goldstone Commission been the only inquiry that has revealed state involvement in political violence, the Harms Commission having previously found that the Civil Co-operation Bureau, a special unit of the security forces, had been created specifically to eliminate government opponents. Beyond this, the South African press has been carrying numerous reports uncovering evidence of collusion by the security forces in violence against anti-apartheid activists. Thus, in a *Weekly Mail* interview, a for-

mer member of the Inkatha Central Committee publicly revealed that he had left the organization because "I felt I was no more than an SADF agent"!

This former official stated that military intelligence and Inkatha collaborated closely in violent acts, including Inkatha's bloody push into the Reef townships in 1990 and the gruesome attack on an ANC funeral in Wesselton in the Eastern Transvaal. Meanwhile, on other fronts, the *New Nation*, in May, 1992, produced written proof that a senior official in the Eastern Cape Military Intelligence of the SADF ordered that four prominent UDF activists be "permanently removed from society as a matter of urgency." The official admitted he had signed the order on instructions from the Head of Military Intelligence in the region.

Unfortunately, such evidence could be produced almost endlessly, presentation of anything like a full litany of relevant instances being beyond the scope of the article. All

too typical, however, is *City Press* (a Transvaal weekly) article from last year which noted that Natal's Attorney General was investigating allegations of official assistance by members of the SADF, the KwaZulu police and Inkatha to Amasinyora, a gang of thugs who had through murder, arson and looting, terrorized residents in a section of KwaMashu for over four years. And in July, 1991 the *New Nation* newspaper alleged that after the State Security Council had disbanded, a network of individuals in both the police and the army had developed to carry out destabilization projects that often involved killings. One such grouping, Recce, was sponsored by the security forces and was involved in the training of foreigners to carry out the killings on trains bound for Soweto in September 1990. This is backed up by witnesses; some of the train commuters had reported that the attackers spoke a foreign language. A few arrests were made but the suspects were released because the police claimed to have failed to muster "sufficient evidence."



*Ennerdale, Johannesburg - Peaceful protest turned violent after police attack on protestors, August 1990*

### **The third force in perspective**

In sum, the existence of a "third force" as we have come to conceive it here - the existence of an unholy alliance between state security apparatus and local African politicians - has a logical explanation within the context of developments in South African politics. The state has historically been engaged in a systematic process of destabilization of its opponents inside and outside of the country and this entailed manipulation of both its own apparatuses as well as the manipulation of social and political forces within the nation more generally.

At an institutional level, once organizations like the CCB were brought into existence and created their own networks, it would have required considerable effort to bring them back under control. At the same time, structurally, apartheid's own creations - the hostels and the councils in particular - established sufficient sociological space for the generation and promotion of conflict and violence. The government

dithers on the issue of abolishing hostels, knowing that Inkatha supports them and itself claiming - despite its reputation for unilateral action - the need for consultation. The government has also demonstrated gross inconsistency on the issue of carrying arms in public, where Inkatha is the main offender under cover of its right to carry "traditional weapons." These are some of the examples of what total strategy has degenerated into at the level of community-security force interface, providing the context for the Inkathagate affair and for an all too typical statement by one Major Botha, Chief of the Security Police in Pretoria: "This aspect holds tremendous advantages for Inkatha during any negotiations. It is of cardinal importance that enough people be at Kings Park to support and show everyone that he does have a strong base"!

In the light of this record, the will of the state's security forces to investigate acts of violence must be doubted. This does not necessarily

imply official sanction from the government for each and every abuse of power, but rather a combination of factors that may well include the activities of dissident elements in the security forces, as well as recalcitrant officials not convinced of the need to change. Moreover, it is also the case that sociological conditions and psychological factors, particularly in the hostels and shack settlements, have provided ample ground for manipulation of maleducated and economically vulnerable marginal elements.

Nonetheless, whatever the complex of ingredients that feed into third force-like activity, one is still left with the apparent unwillingness by the state, at an institutional level, to effect an efficient investigative process by the police or to attempt to clarify, say, the jurisdiction of the South African police and that of the homelands' police forces. Instead, a whole range of exposés has called into question the state's role as honest-broker with regard to the question of violence.



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# The Rise of Strategic Unionism

BY KARL VON HOLDT

*In this article, the first of two related pieces to appear in consecutive issues of SAR, Karl von Holdt, editor of South Africa's highly regarded South African Labour Bulletin, seeks to introduce our readers to a crucially important debate that is currently taking place within the South African labour movement. How can the trade unions operate realistically on the difficult terrain available to them in contemporary South Africa, while keeping alive the*

*struggle for a radical transformation of South Africa's grossly inequitable socio-economic system? Here von Holdt traces the emergence of a promising approach to this question - dubbed "strategic unionism" - that is currently being much discussed in trade union circles.*

The militant labour movement, so central an actor in recent South African history, is at a turning point. It was forged in resistance to authoritarian management and to

apartheid. However, the very success of its resistance has forced the trade union movement to put forward and campaign for new labour laws, to seek to reform existing institutions such as the government-sponsored National Manpower Commission/NMC and to work towards the creation of novel institutions such as the National Economic Forum/NEF (the full implications of which will be defined below). Did this kind of activity represent a retreat into mere reformism?

### The anti-LRA campaign

This question first arose with the campaign against the government's 1988 set of draconian amendments to the Labour Relations Act (LRA). The campaign started with the aim of preventing the amendments. Once the amendments had been promulgated, however, COSATU and NACTU (the two leading South African trade union centrals) were faced with a dilemma: should they simply fight to restore the old LRA, which they were in any case strongly critical of, or should they put forward proposals for new amendments that would extend workers' rights? The latter course represented a completely new possibility. There were many doubts. Surely this was reformism, since it meant negotiating for new rights within a capitalist framework? Surely it would give legitimacy to the apartheid regime, to negotiate new laws with it?

In the event, neither employers nor the regime showed themselves willing to enter serious negotiations. A new campaign of protracted resistance against the LRA amendments developed on the shopfloor and nationally. Meanwhile, the unions started to develop a short term package of demands for immediate changes to the law, as well as a longer term perspective on the question of workers' rights, best exemplified in the campaign for a Workers' Charter. Thus the programme of resistance was becoming a campaign in support of specific proposals for new labour legislation.

During 1990 the success of the COSATU-NACTU campaign - together with the broader political reforms - compelled employers and government to reach agreement with the unions. In a September "Labouria Minute," the three parties agreed that

•the worst of the 1988 amendments would be repealed

•basic union rights would be extended to workers in public sector, on farms and in domestic service

•in future no laws would be presented to parliament without being considered by employers and unions

•Union representatives would sit on the National Manpower Commission and the NMC would be restructured.

#### A turning point?

This agreement was a turning point. Suddenly the trade unions found themselves on a new terrain. Resistance was the terrain they knew best. And now the biggest and most protracted campaign of resistance yet - consisting of demonstrations, overtime bans, massive stay-aways, a thousand creative disruptions on the shopfloor, international support - had produced a highly significant series of legal reforms and opened up new institutional space within the state apparatus.

We are still astride this turning point. The shift in terrain has been far more dramatic and sudden than envisaged when COSATU and NACTU launched the anti-LRA campaign and the Workers Charter campaign. The de Klerk reforms opened up the negotiated transition to democracy - and this has compressed the immediate demands and the longer term vision into one process. Thus the "Labouria Minute" led not only to immediate changes to labour law, but also to ambitious proposals from COSATU for transforming the NMC from a toothless advisory body of government appointees into a tripartite negotiating forum with powers to place legislation before parliament. Such a body would lay the basis for negotiated active labour market policy in a democratic South Africa.

The government has since tried to delay and frustrate these changes, of course. Thus there have been endless obstructions to extending ba-

sic union rights to farm and domestic workers, and to restructuring the NMC. At the same time, it proceeded with its own unilateral programme of economic restructuring. The most visible manifestation of this was the imposition of a Value-Added Tax (VAT). COSATU responded by spearheading a broad anti-VAT coalition. The campaign gathered so much momentum that COSATU pulled out of the NMC in protest against government delays, and put forward the demand for a national economic negotiating forum.

By the middle of 1992 business and government had agreed to the formation of just such an NEF, and COSATU was preparing to re-enter the NMC. Once again the success of resistance had culminated in a new institutional breakthrough. The NEF - despite current government obstruction - threatens to give COSATU and NACTU (now joined by Fedsal, the moderate and mostly white Federation of Salaried Employees) unprecedented access to decision-making on macro-economic policy and restructuring.

#### The National Economic Forum

Union aims in campaigning for the NEF were two-fold. The first aim has been to block unilateral economic restructuring. As COSATU General Secretary Jay Naidoo puts it, "We need to block government policies that are going to entrench things and make it impossible for a democratic government to meet the needs of the people and address the inequalities of apartheid." Second was the need, in Naidoo's words, "to identify the framework within which we are going to try to resolve economic problems in this country ... [and where] we will be able to bring about a fundamental transformation of our country at an economic level."

Two things are crucial here. First, Naidoo apparently sees the NEF as a forum for "resolving economic problems." COSATU, by its participation, assumes that



it has an interest and a role in resolving such problems. Note, once again, that this introduces a completely new development into a trade union movement forged in opposition and resistance. Second, Naidoo argues that through such forums the labour movement will be able to drive a fundamental economic transformation. This is a new concept of how radical social change can take place: in the period of apartheid and resistance there was a deep rooted belief among labour activists that fundamental transformation could only take place through revolution and seizure of power. Now participation in the NMC and the campaign for the NEF have reflected - and evoked - a new strategic perspective: a combination of mass struggle and organization with wide-ranging negotiations and participation in both tripartite forums and state institutions. Does this changing strategy reflect a new and more sophisticated perspective on how to transform society? Or is it a sign that COSATU has changed its objectives and that it is now ready for a merely marginally reformist accommodation with capital and the state?

It would be dishonest to say there is any clarity within COSATU on these issues. Events have moved so fast that the federation has been unable to develop a coherent view on the implications of the NEF. There are hot debates and deeply conflicting views within the federation. Many fear that it is the first step towards a 'social contract' and the very accommodation with the regime of capital mentioned above. Others see it as the only way to build working class power and influence, and "establish building blocks for socialism."

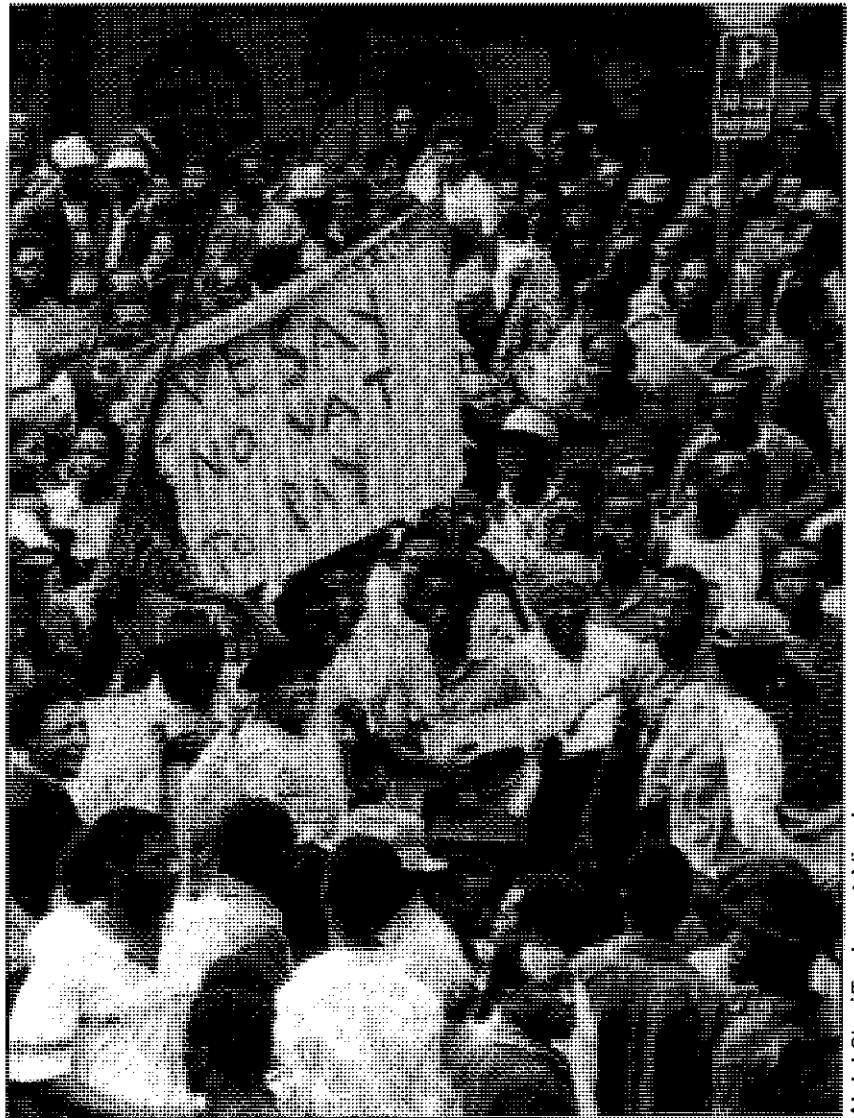
Some of this confusion and uncertainty was reflected in the recent tripartite alliance campaign of mass action against violence and the negotiations deadlock. The rhetoric of COSATU leadership - along with

that of the militant wing of the ANC - suggested a new revolutionary surge which would "sweep de Klerk from power." However, as the date of the two day stayaway loomed closer, COSATU and SACCOLA (the employers organization created to deal with labour matters) engaged in marathon negotiations around recasting the stayaway as a one-day joint shut-down and adopting a "Charter for Peace and Democracy." Had these negotiations succeeded they would have produced a major political breakthrough. In-

stead, their failure produced anger and confusion among militants on the ground, who felt mass action was being compromised. Moreover, some lack of clarity on the part of the leadership over strategy and tactics - including, from time to time, an apparent contradiction between their rhetoric and their actual activities - merely exacerbated the confusion.

### Sectoral developments

The emergence of a new kind of unionism in response to new chal-



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enges is not confined to developments at the level of the NMC and NEF. In many sectors trade unions are facing an increasing number of retrenchments and factory closures as a stagnation of manufacturing increases. They are also finding it increasingly difficult to win wage increases equal to or above the rate of inflation. As unions put the demand for moratoria on retrenchments on the negotiating table, employers responded with demands for productivity increases. Trade unions argued that productivity was linked to the broader issue of industrial restructuring and growth and proposed that these issues should be negotiated in joint forums.

Thus the mining summit was established in 1991 to negotiate the down scaling of the crisis-ridden gold mining industry. Industry growth forums were also established in the auto and metal sectors. None of these has been very fruitful. A more successful set of industry restructuring negotiations did take place in the clothing and textile industry. Here the COSATU-affiliated SA Clothing and Textile Workers Union (SACTWU) reached agreement with employers on a structure of tariffs and subsidies for the cotton, textiles, clothing pipe line which was aimed to boost the industry and increase competitiveness. However, this plan foundered when the government said there was no cash available for the subsidies.

Pioneering agreements on production schedules and production bonuses were also reached last year in the auto and gold mining industries. However, both these agreements have been dogged by conflicting interpretations over how they were to be implemented, and this year National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) refused to renew the agreement.

#### Shifting union attitudes

Despite the lack of progress and break down of most of these in-

dustry restructuring/growth forums and productivity negotiations, they do mark a shift in union attitudes as profound as those accompanying participation in the NMC or the NEF. They are also highly controversial, even within the unions involved in such forums and negotiations. Again many militant activists fear that the unions are being co-opted into "managing capitalism better." Yet the pro-engagement attitude is part of a much more far-ranging vision of transformation.

NUM assistant General Secretary Marcel Golding has put this view most forcefully. "Any industry has to undergo transformation and change," he says. "There are two ways we can respond. We can either stand by while the process takes place or we can become centrally involved in the management of the transition. Our union wants to be a central player and will fight to be a central player in the management of transition, so that we can improve the conditions of employment, extend the life of the mines, and improve social conditions generally. ... For us the struggle for greater control over the production process is starting with participation. ... We are now talking about one of the most critical areas itself, the workplace, and participation in decisions made at the workplace. We are firing the first shots in beginning to challenge managerial prerogative in the production process. We've already challenged managerial prerogative on dismissals and other abuses. But I think through this we are beginning to challenge management's prerogative in decision-making over what they believed was their exclusive right - setting targets, setting the production plan."

The developments outlined above are signs of a new kind of trade unionism in South Africa. COSATU and NACTU were born out of resistance. This was not because they simply refused to participate. In fact the apartheid state and South African employers offered no

scope for participation. Union entry into institutions such as the Industrial Council, or their involvement in the Industrial Courts, were used to expand organization and workers' capacity to oppose employers, to struggle for higher wages, and the like.

#### Strategic unionism

Now, faced with the combination of political reform and the reconstitution of South African society on the one hand, and economic stagnation on the other, trade unions are beginning to develop far reaching policies for new labour legislation, constitutional rights, economic growth, job creation, industrial restructuring, industrial training, and reorganization of the workplace. These are nothing less than proposals for a completely new industrial relations system. It is an industrial relations system not divorced from economic decision-making, but intimately linked to it. The leadership of the trade unions realizes that the economy - and manufacturing industry especially - have to be restructured if they are to become internationally competitive. This will involve new technology, increased productivity, higher quality products and increased levels of skill. As Marcel Golding says, the labour movement can either oppose this change, or be at its centre. This amounts to a new union manifesto to drive the process of change, to shape it and to empower the labour movement through it.

This emerging vision of a new kind of trade unionism can be called strategic unionism. It involves a strategic vision of a labour-driven process of social change and it is, potentially, of crucial importance to the project of the long run transformation of South Africa's blighted social and economic system. I will elaborate on some of the debate occasioned by the emergence of this approach within the South African labour movement in the next issue of *Southern Africa Report*.

# The High Costs of Obstinacy: Banda Hangs On

BY TONY WOODS

*Tony Woods, Assistant Professor in General Studies at the Scott Park Campus, The University of Toledo, Ohio, spent last year as Fulbright Lecturer at Chancellor College in Malawi.*

After John Tembo, Malawi's Minister of State and Life President Banda's presumed successor, had an interview with the BBC on February 7, an anonymous "Open Letter to J.Z.U. Tembo" was faxed to all government ministries, agencies and news organizations. This letter frankly stated that "you, Sir, are well known for a very long time to have been struggling and scheming for power." After reminding people of Tembo's position as chairperson of eleven private and government organizations, the letter suggested that Tembo "go to Lesotho and enjoy your booty" since "your day of departure is coming - and soon!"

The letter to Tembo was only one element in a growing discontent which affected Malawi in 1992. On February 19, department heads at Chancellor College received an anonymous letter concerning the upcoming martyr's day on March 3. It bluntly asserted that "the present regime is making new martyrs every day." And like the other letters circulating, this one linked many of the problems in the country "to the rising power of Cecilia Kadzamira and John Tembo."

The virulent condemnations of Tembo and Kadzamira were hardly surprising of course. For years, these two have been almost universally despised in Malawi. Tembo has ruthlessly eliminated his enemies, including the popular Dick Mtenje,



Camerapix/Africa Report

in his rise to power. He has also acquired an immense private fortune and filled key positions with family members and sycophants. Moreover, he lacks the charismatic authority which has long bound many Malawians to Banda despite the Life President's autocratic ways. As a result Tembo is far less popular than the "father of Malawi."

Kadzamira, who is Tembo's niece, also elicits almost universal distaste in Malawi. She is the country's official hostess and has amassed enormous political power in her own right, especially because of her position as chairperson of *Chitukuko Cha Amayi m'Malawi* (CCAM). This group, whose name translates as "development of women in Malawi," ostensibly serves the admirable task of helping women become involved in the development of Malawi. But CCAM has become increasingly unpopular because of Kadzamira's high handed management and the organization's rampant corruption.

#### Civil authority dissolves

What was remarkable is that in many respects the letters symbolize the gradual dissolution of civil authority throughout Malawi. Even though Lilongwe's oppressive policies have long antagonized the general population and alienated important Malawians, Banda has always stifled dissent and crushed opposition with exceptional facility. However, foreign pressure and the Life President's ill health gradually eroded the state's power throughout 1991, and by the end of the year it had become clear that not only was a change in leadership inevitable, but that Tembo and Kadzamira would also retain their authority unless others acted quickly. The possibility of this succession catalyzed unprecedented protests, and the long pent up frustrations of Malawi's people quickly exploded. Although the revolution which has ensued still remains ill defined, the defection of important social institutions and the alienation of crucial groups have made it apparent that the Life Pres-

ident and his lieutenants have few days left. But the ruling elite's obstinate refusal to cede authority has imperiled the country's future, and Malawi clearly faces serious trials in the near future.

The government was clearly aware that its position was tenuous at the beginning of 1992. Banda began the new year by reorganizing his cabinet, using the occasion to create a new cabinet level



*John Tembo, Minister of State and presumed successor to Banda*

department of women's affairs. This development was in keeping with the state's attempts to use the empowerment of women as a means of drumming up support for itself among Malawi's female population. Cecilia Kadzamira reinforced this policy by insisting that Malawian women under Banda were "fully involved in many areas which are still primarily the domain of men in other countries."

Politicians also elicited support by stressing that the government had "delivered the goods" to the Malawian people. Officials warned villagers to be wary of "confusionists and troublemakers" who sought to

undo the good done by Banda. And the Life President himself stressed that Malawi was an island of "peace, political stability and prosperity" in a very troubled continent. But the state's unwillingness to face the consequences of the drought, coupled with the continued corruption which Tembo used to win important allies in the civil service and the army, made the rhetoric increasingly hollow.

#### Climate of protest

The climate of distrust and uncertainty became one of protest March 8 when Malawi's Catholic Bishops, who control the country's largest church, read to their congregations a letter expressing concern that "bribery and nepotism are growing in political, economic, and social life." Although the bishops stated that they wished "to record how greatly we esteem and applaud the efforts made by the government," their missive was undoubtedly the most critical condemnation of Banda's government ever publicly issued in Malawi.

The results were electrifying. For the first time in decades, Malawians began to talk openly about the repression under which they had suffered and the potential for meaningful reforms. What was even more remarkable was the government's indecision. Lilongwe initially ignored the letter, obviously hoping that the public would reject it. When it became apparent that this policy would not work, the Malawi Congress Party convened a meeting at which it was decided that the pastoral letter was seditious. Few people accepted that clergy from so preeminent a church would act irresponsibly, and the population became increasingly restive about the government's unwillingness to address reforms in education, health care and human rights. There was also considerable consternation about reports that Tembo had threatened to kill the bishops, a threat which clearly contradicted

Banda's often stated policy of religious tolerance in Malawi.

The activities of exiled Malawian activists in Zambia also created problems for Banda during this period. Although exiled leaders like Kanyama Chiume have long railed against Banda, 1991 had been a pivotal year for activists outside Malawi. In July, the United Front for Multiparty Democracy had formed in Zambia, and by December the group published a public appeal in *Southern Africa Economic and Political Monthly*, a regional news magazine. Dissident action in Zambia reached new levels immediately after the pastoral letter when Chifukwa Chihana, secretary-general of the Southern Africa Trade Union Co-ordination Council, denounced the Banda government and formed the Interim Committee for a Democratic Malawi in Lusaka.

The impact of these activities soon became apparent in Malawi. On March 15, students from Chancellor College, the University of Malawi's liberal arts school and the crown jewel of the country's educational system, marched to the Zomba Cathedral in support of the bishops. After a brief confrontation with police, student unrest exploded on March 16 with demonstrations for more educational and political freedom. Many students wore crosses, explaining that "we are all Catholics now," and chanted "multiparty." Graffiti supporting the United Front also appeared.

The equivocal response of government authorities was as important as the protests of Malawi's educated elite. Reliable witnesses insisted that junior army officers from nearby Cobbe Barracks encouraged the students and promised that they would protect them from police retaliation. The Zomba police, whether for this reason or not, certainly showed remarkable restraint, and although at least one police land rover was stoned, the police did not use any force to break up the demonstrations, allow-

ing the students to close the campus peacefully. Interestingly enough, protests at the Polytechnic in Blantyre staged a day later received an entirely different response; police there stormed the student hostels, fired into the air, indiscriminately lobbed tear gas around and arbitrarily arrested some seventy people. It appeared that the government neither had a consistent response nor was in control of its own forces, and many were undoubtedly emboldened

But the increases were weighted towards helping higher officials more than lower level employees. There was considerable discontent, and clerical-technical employees at Chancellor College went on strike, a virtually unprecedented action in Malawi. Students again joined the demonstrations even though they had been forced to sign an "Nkomati accord," a declaration promising they would "not engage ... in any student disturbances," before



Tony Woods

Students leaving Chancellor College, April 1992

by the government's curious passivity and indecision.

#### A deteriorating situation

The situation continued to deteriorate during April. Chihana and several of his colleagues were arrested on April 6 when he returned to Malawi, precipitating an almost comic confrontation between police and diplomats which sparked more foreign criticism of Malawi. The *kwacha*, Malawi's currency, was also devalued fifteen percent, creating further uncertainty about the country's economic future. The Banda government tried to forestall some of the consequent anxiety by granting high pay raises.

they returned to school. This incident showed that not only were new alliances forming, in this case between students and workers, but also showed that economic grievances were becoming inextricably linked with political questions. It also demonstrated that the state, whose response had been restrained and uncertain, was uncertain about how to handle the increasing dissent.

The government's continued indecisiveness had fatal consequences a little over a week later in Blantyre and Limbe. Here a strike by workers at the David Whitehead fabric factory led to more general disturbances on Wednesday May 6. By mid-afternoon vandalism had begun in Blantyre's city centre. Reliable

sources claim that the army again showed its ambivalence towards the government when soldiers who were rehearsing for Kamuzu Day celebrations refused to intercede in early protests. The police tried to gain control of the situation and fired into the crowds. But the situation continued to get worse, and by Thursday rioting had spread to Limbe where looters smashed storefronts in the city's business centre.

Order was restored on Friday May 8, but the damage had been enormous. The death toll was at least twenty and probably more. There had been considerable physical damage, and the looting of virtually every PTC Kwiksave, a chain owned by the Life President, again demonstrated the intertwining of political and economic grievances.

The obvious political implications of the disturbances severely shook the government. On Thursday May 7, the *Daily Times*, the country's one daily newspaper, openly asked "what is happening?" in a page one headline. On Thursday evening, Banda went on the radio to urge calm and to assure people that "all genuine grievances should be looked into expeditiously and corrective measures should be taken with speed." By May 9, the *Malawi News*, the country's weekend paper, admitted that "the events of the past few days have shocked and surprised many."

Government leaders were further alarmed on May 14 when virtually no one attended the Kamuzu Day ceremonies in Blantyre. Congress party officials normally ensure that the stadium's stands are packed with people for this annual celebration of Banda's leadership, but neither coercion or inducement could get people into the stadium. Certainly the lack of attendance was a damning vote of no confidence in the state.

#### Banda fights back

But the government showed that it had little interest in implementing

genuine reforms which could restore some public confidence. Within a few weeks, Lilongwe claimed that "foreigners ... paying certain people to encourage violence and lawlessness" and "disgruntled dissidents without much support in the country" had instigated the most serious incidents in early May. Even more serious was Banda's spirited defense of Tembo and Kadzamira on May 16. Claiming that the two officials had always been "loyal servants of the President, the Government and the country," Banda insisted that neither Kadzamira nor Tembo had ever "aspired to political power." Banda also reminded his listeners that "I am the real, genuine and effective ruler of this country - nobody else."

The tone of these remarks took much of the lustre off the government's few reform efforts. Banda's declaration that people should no longer be forced to buy party cards to ride on busses or enter markets, long standard practices in Malawi, had a hollow ring after his staunch endorsement of Tembo and Kadzamira. Similarly, Banda's attempt to mend fences with the Catholic Church by attending a new bishop's consecration had little impact after his pointed reminder of his authority.

Other government activities demonstrated Lilongwe's disdain for reform. Police continued to detain suspects without trial, and the government actually found itself in contempt of court when the police failed to produce Chihana for a scheduled court appearance. Even Lilongwe's attempt to show its respect for democracy by having an election showed considerable cynicism. Candidates were circumscribed, and few people bothered to participate in the meaningless exercise. In this setting, few people were convinced that Banda's government was serious about change, and many felt that protest would only lead to imprisonment or death. A correspondent to the *Malawi Financial Post*,

a popular independent newspaper upon which many Malawians depend for real news, expressed the populace's sentiments best by asking "who has the courage to go through 'proper channels'?"

Even more importantly, the continued obduracy of the government eventually led to the alienation of another important religious body, the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP). In June, leaders of this church, in conjunction with World Alliance of Reformed Churches and Church of Scotland officials, on June 2 sent a letter to the Life President entitled "The Nation of Malawi in Crisis." This strongly worded missive expressed concern about the "the inability of the present political system to effectively channel demands for change" and suggested that the only solution to the country's problems was the appointment of "a broadly based Commission which will enjoy the confidence of the people of Malawi." While this commission investigated ways to create a more just and equitable Malawi, the clerics urged the government to end detention without trial and to allow freedom of expression.

Although the absence of the Nkhoma synod leaders, who represented churches in Malawi's Central Region where Banda is strongest, lessened the letter's impact, the protest by these clerics was extremely important. The CCAP was Malawi's second largest church, meaning that the leaders of the country's two largest churches had now protested. Even more important, the churches, especially the Catholics, provided a means by which protest could be expressed in Malawi's more conservative and cautious rural areas. In essence, the continued religious protests provided a rural counterbalance to the protests of more urban based workers and students.

#### The politics of division

Banda and his cohorts tried to defuse the mounting criticism by

using the politics of division, in this case regionalism. They claimed that CCAP leaders and Catholic clerics from northern Malawi had been behind the pastoral letters. University officials also claimed that students from the north had been behind the campus demonstrations. These accusations were part of a government campaign to instill fear among central and southern inhabitants that the northerners would seize control of any future state in order to build up northern Malawi at the expense of the rest of the country.

This type of rhetoric has long been a Banda staple. Several years ago all northern teachers in the central and southern regions were sent home because the government said they were teaching their fellow Malawians poorly in order to give an unfair advantage to their fellow northerners. And although the government faces much more cynicism than in the past, these accusations have found fertile ground in the central and southern regions. Many mistrust change because they fear their regions will not benefit from it.

But Banda had less success with donor countries. As the situation in the country deteriorated and western governments became increasingly fearful that Banda's intransigence might merely be sowing the seeds of chaos in Malawi, they increased the pressure in order to force him to make more reforms. In mid-May, the so-called Paris Club, composed of representatives from developing and creditor countries, decided to withhold aid until the Malawian government completed serious improvements in its human rights policies.

Cutting off aid to Malawi was especially crucial during this period. The drought had sapped the economy's vitality, and shortages of both manufactured and agricultural goods initiated serious inflation. The state needed foreign currency in order to make up for export shortfalls and to ease the upward

pressure on prices. Therefore, continued foreign assistance was vital for maintaining economic stability, especially since continued devaluation had meant that exports would bring in less hard currency.

The Paris decision quickly precipitated an economic crisis. By mid-June, Lilongwe devalued the *kwacha* over twenty percent, and the country's banks simply ran out of



*Chifukwa Chihana with legal counsel arriving in court in Zomba*

foreign exchange. Business leaders found that they could not obtain any kind of hard currency with which to buy imported goods. The government tried to allay fears by describing the situation as a "temporary hiccup," but it was clear that the situation was serious. Fortunately for Banda, western donors relented and granted a temporary bridge loan. The money from this grant should last the Malawi Reserve Bank until November, but lenders have warned Lilongwe that no more funds will be forthcoming without appreciable changes in the political arena.

### No serious reform

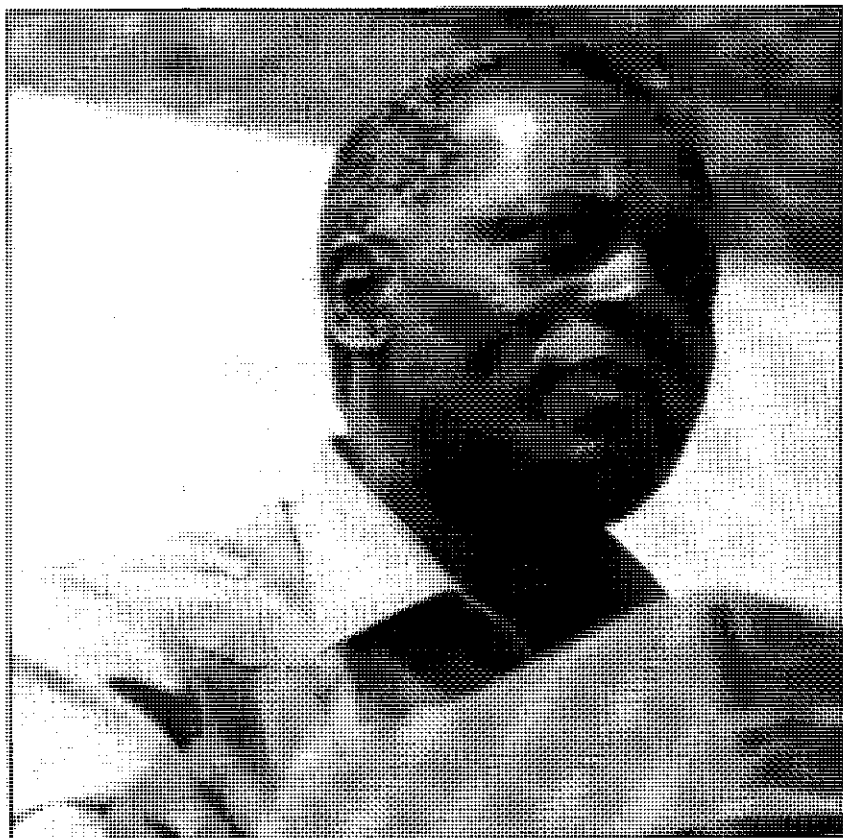
But it remains doubtful that these changes will occur. The MCP filled Kamuzu Stadium for Independence Day celebrations on July 5, and the *Daily Times* consequently trumpeted that the "throng at [the] stadium puts dissidents to shame." Chihana was released on bond but quickly rearrested shortly thereafter. Indigenous CCAP leaders from the north have apparently been arrested, and expatriate CCAP clergy have been deported. In light of these actions, it is hard to believe that serious reform is coming despite the recent release of long time political detainees like Aleke Banda.

However, the protests which occur demonstrate that Banda is clearly fighting the inevitable. Protests continue throughout the country. In June, some sixty expatriate and Malawian faculty petitioned the University of Malawi "to readmit all students without exception" when school resumed. Church activists, both Catholic and protestant, continue to work for reform. Foreign based organizations like the UFMD and the Interim Committee have carried on with activities like the publication a newspaper called *The Malawi Democrat*, an anti-government publication widely distributed in Malawi. And both foreign donors and internal security forces, especially the army, view the government with increasing distaste and suspicion.

The tragedy in Banda's obstinacy is that it will inevitably lead to increased civil disorder and greater economic dislocation. Inflation has become especially severe, and prices of essential foodstuffs keep rising dramatically. Moreover, important social institutions like the university and the CCAP are tearing themselves apart over the issue of what they should do, and social tensions are increasing. Unless change occurs quickly, it is hard to see how Malawi can avoid an even more serious crisis than it faces at present.

# "Thieves or Murderers"

## Background to the Angolan Elections



*Eduardo dos Santos campaigning in Huambo*

### BY SAR'S ANGOLAN CORRESPONDENT

*This story was filed by our Luanda-based correspondent prior to the election. The comments that follow are meant to help situate some of the strengths and weaknesses of MPLA and Unita. Our regular Angolan correspondent, Victoria Brittain will provide analysis of the results in a subsequent issue of SAR.*

When an Angolan delegation visited Algeria not long after independence,

they were a little surprised to be told by the President: "Like us, you have the misfortune to be an oil producing country." Since oil played a vital part in sustaining the arms imports from the then USSR to prevent the combined South African and Unita forces from winning the war against the MPLA government, they did not readily understand the message. Some years later, at least one former member of that delegation appreciated the point. The oil had generated a grandiose approach to certain issues, a neglect of problems facing ordinary people in their daily lives, an invitation to

waste money on "prestige" projects, and corruption.

Perhaps the most notorious prestige project was the mausoleum for the late President Neto, which remains unfinished and looks like a space rocket. It has given rise to innumerable jokes. Pope Paul's visit to Luanda, when he addressed a crowd while standing next to it, has led to one of its many names being "The *Pausoleum*." This popular response to an obvious error in wasting money on an over-ambitious and uncompleted project seems to have had no impact on government and party practices.

Clearly the biggest problem that the MPLA faces in terms of retaining its legitimacy has been its inability to deal with corruption and its effects on the daily lives of Angolan citizens, especially in Luanda which now has a population of two million, about a fifth of the total for the country. With many aspects of life formerly controlled by the army (FAPLA), the police have little experience of dealing with crime, and in the situation since the 1991 Estoril peace settlement, crime has become a serious problem. Organised crime syndicates now operate in Luanda and elsewhere, with occasional fighting at night with AK47s which have been sold by unpaid soldiers. The latter have not been demobilised, but are in assembly camps (*acantonamentos*), where they and their families have received insufficient food and shelter. Some of them have left their camps and either roam around living on their wits or have joined the diamond rush which resulted from deregulation of diamond mining operations. The latter has had various effects, including stimulating further crime in Luanda.



**The two main election contenders**

Despite all these problems, the MPLA retains a surprising degree of political support. This is partly because most of the population of Luanda has had to flee there since independence to escape the war. If they had forgotten what Unita was like, they may have been reminded by the criticisms of Unita members who have left to form their own parties with vocal criticisms of atrocities and a dictatorial approach by Unita leadership.

The rivalry between the MPLA and Unita has remained the focus in the campaign leading up to Angola's September 29-30 election, the first since Angolan independence in 1975. A diplomat has privately described the two main election contenders as "a bunch of thieves against a bunch of murderers." Such a judgement is harsh to the MPLA, although there are widespread rumours as to who might be corrupt in the senior leadership. However, the willingness to resort to force is evidently only just below the surface in the case of Unita, and has increasingly broken the surface in the last few weeks.

**Unita's credibility unravelled**

The central role of force becomes apparent with the sobering experience of attending a Unita rally. One is searched on entry. There are a lot of heavily armed soldiers who are the personal guard that Savimbi has managed to retain. They carry machine guns and grenade launchers, one in each hand, and have 16 grenades in their vests. They are transported in big new US financed GMC cross country vehicles, since the funds allocated in 1991 by Congress are still being spent. The crowd at the rally which I attended in Luanda was bussed in, displaying a formidable logistical capacity for a country which has hardly any transport facilities.

It was thus an exclusively pro-Unita crowd, something that is not to be had in the Luandan

population. Savimbi's support has always come mostly from some provinces in the fertile central plateau. The crowd was extremely well rehearsed, with cheer leaders to remind them of when to chant which

Unita only has about a dozen US and Portuguese Ph.D.s to lead any administration, and lacks the crucial middle management that the MPLA education system has created since independence.



*Jonas Savimbi campaigning in Uige*

slogan. Savimbi's rhetorical style was (deliberately?) reminiscent of that of Samora Machel, but the content was anti-Cuban and crudely nationalistic, with strong chauvinist overtones. There was not the slightest evidence of a political programme to address the serious problems facing the country.

However, there was an attempt to reassure existing state employees that their jobs were safe, since continuity was needed. This was little more than common sense, since Unita has no capacity to run a civilian administration in the absence of US financial support. As with Renamo in Mozambique,

What did Unita think it was doing holding such meetings? These were one way among many that Unita was bending the election rules. Officially, election meetings were not to be held until the registration process had been completed. This was circumvented by calling them "commissios," as if they were public meetings to discuss and resolve policy issues. There can be no doubt that their intent was electoral, but preaching to your own converted hardly wins new supporters, and the non-Unita press was not giving such meetings much coverage. Presumably the hope was that press announcements that

such meetings were being held would boost public awareness of Unita, but if so it was an underestimation of the sophistication of the Angolan population. Well informed sources estimated that the turnout for the election would be around 90%, and doubted whether Unita would win.

It may be that Unita also doubts it will win. In one of the more widely publicised breaches of the cease fire, in Malange during July, it was plain that Unita had not handed in all its weapons. Those on display at the Unita *acantonamento* in Malange were too old to have been used in serious fighting and did not match up to the weapons being used by Unita elsewhere. A series of incidents instigated by Unita has been reported in the international press, most notably by Victoria Brittain in the British paper *The Guardian*.

In addition, Unita has been reported as publicly stating that if it loses the election it will not accept it. This readiness to resort to violence may not just be trigger happy troops, especially since there has been some evidence to support the claims that weapons supplies have been hidden. This contradicts its agreement with the MPLA to enter into a post-election coalition whichever party wins, to ensure the peace is kept.

### External interference

Such inconsistency may be the result of US or South African pressure on Unita. Certainly at times Unita behaviour has not made it popular with the US officials attached to the unofficial embassy, who nevertheless continue to support it. The US is mainly concerned with the oil issue; the Republican Party for the first time sent an observer to an African election. For that reason, if no other, Unita, like most parties, opposes the secession of the geographically separate oil rich Cabinda province, where almost the only effective FAPLA troops are currently fighting various secessionist groups.

For its part, South African support for Unita is probably part of the three phase plan to secure the most favourable regional outcome possible. This started with the Namibian elections, where various dirty tricks were tested, with an outcome close to that considered most desirable. The second phase, as was revealed in the South African press in July, is the Angolan election, while the third phase is to retain power in South Africa itself.

The South African air force arrived at the request of the Angolan government, which for some reason did not wish to use its own aircraft to register voters for the election. The UN is officially lending logistical support, unlike in Namibia where it had full responsibility for running the election, but the South Africans turned up with "UN Angola" stickers on their planes, which would have given them a great deal of freedom of manoeuvre in Angola. They were instructed to remove them immediately, and did so. They then asked to be posted to Cuando Cubango, Savimbi's stronghold, to help with the electoral registration process in an area where the number of Unita supporters has been hotly contested. They were sent to Malange instead, to cover the north where Unita has much less support.

Nothing daunted, at least one member of their central logistical team at Luanda airport was promptly caught spying, taking photographs of the military aircraft of the new integrated Angolan armed forces, the FAA. Presumably this was either in case of post election fighting so they could support Unita, or to support the apparent plans of the US to establish military hegemony in southern Africa after a settlement in South Africa itself.

### Electoral support

Where does Unita's continued reliance on armed force and exter-

nal support leave the MPLA? The MPLA does face significant obstacles in its own right. It is not what it was, in that many of its most intelligent and dedicated leaders have already left government. Its difficulty in tackling theft in the port of Luanda is widely believed to be due to corruption at a high level. Even if this is not the case, the other parties may benefit from this belief at election time. The issue is how much support this belief will cost the MPLA. It has appeared, at least before the election campaign, to be incapable of addressing serious issues facing it, such as the pay and supply of its own troops in the *acantonamentos*, and the political claims of small Cabinda independence parties, who deny unconvincingly that they are supported by The Congo and Zaire. Attempts to get such parties to the conference table failed, and they also threatened to kill any electoral registration teams who left the city of Cabinda. Hence the continued fighting there.

It is extremely difficult to estimate support for the various parties for the reason that it has not been easy to determine just how many people are actually in Angola. Many people are refugees, others are fleeing the drought, while others still seem to be returning at Unita's instigation. This population movement has made it harder to track supporters of either main party. Nor has it been easy to even register voters.

Despite the population movement, it is probably the case that the MPLA has a good idea of where its supporters are and has been able to mobilise them for the election. That Unita may recognize this reality may explain the recent violence. In fact, the cease fire that had held quite well up until July has looked increasingly fragile. The best hope for peace is that the main parties will respect the electoral outcome. In the aftermath of an MPLA victory, however honestly earned, this modest hope may yet prove to be bleak.

# Building Popular Alliances: The New Politics in Zimbabwe

New forms of solidarity in the 1990s seem increasingly to be about building strategic alliances. This means coalitions between the progressive forces in our own countries and connections between labour and social movements north and south. The newly created South South North Network on Participatory Democracy and Sustainable Development which links grassroots groups in Canadian and southern African is one effort in this direction.

PEC (Popular Education Collective) is one of the Zimbabwean groups in the Network. Regis Mtutu, from PEC's training department, spent three weeks in Canada and the US recently at the invitation of the Steelworkers Humanity Fund. His first stop was the 1992 International NGO Forum on World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Lending in Washington. On arrival in Canada, he met with Toronto labour and community organizations working with laid-off workers, a key issue in PEC's current work, and sat in on an Ontario Social Justice Coalition meeting. He then attended the Partnership Africa Canada AGM where participants were challenged to imagine replacing NGO "partnerships" based on material resource transfers from Canada to Africa with strategic north-south alliances based on shared information and action on global issues. Last stop in Canada was a Steelworkers Convention in Sudbury where local activists spoke of the devastation the neo-liberal agenda has brought to Canadian workplaces and communities.

Mtutu's panorama of contemporary politics in Zimbabwe very much echoed the assessment of another SAR contributor, Richard Saunders. Saunders writes of the emergence of



*Regis Mtutu in a vise on the cover of Read On*

a new national political culture distinct from the goals and alliances of the liberation war.

*Four years ago it began as a trickle. Since then it has grown slowly but steadily, gradually accumulating in pools of criticism and resistance, pressing against the great edifice of strength which once protected the inner sanctum of Zimbabwean political power. Now, in these days of drought, recession and skyrocketing unemployment, a swell of pluralist activism is threatening to engulf the old order and clear the way for a new dispensation. (Africa South, no. 24, August 1992.)*

If the most visible institutional actors in this new dispensation are the 400,000 strong Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, student groups and the independent press, there is no doubt that the indigenous NGOs involved in community work like the Popular Education Collective are also important components of civil society. "Civil society" is used by the popular movement in Zimbabwe to mean a broad range of popularly based organizations ranging from the newly autonomous trade union and cooperative movement to churches, development, human rights, environment, youth and women's groups.

PEC itself is a small collective with thirteen members. It services the popular movement through training activities and publication of a magazine, *Read On*. The training, using a popular education approach, has been mainly with cooperatives, both housing and agricultural. PEC's role as a voice in civil society is based mainly on its 34 page magazine, published five times a year. Each issue has a 15,000 print run. PEC now has to control the numbers allocated to street corner vendors in Harare and Bulawayo in order to supply rural readers.

*Read On* is one of the few publications tackling major questions using simple language combined with critical analysis. Each issue marks a strategic intervention towards build-



**Following the structural adjustment path has led to disaster in many countries.**

ing up civil society. Recent issues have dealt with race, prostitution, structural adjustment, land and retrenchments. PEC also operates a small resource library.

In November 1991, at the time of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Harare, *Read On* focused on land.

*We were aware that "squatters" and the question of the landless were going to be hidden from the Queen during her visit. We also wanted a way to raise hard questions with the British who had colonized Zimbabwe and had been the main foreign player in the redistribution of land.*

*We decided to focus on what the homeless themselves saw as the way forward on the land issue, whether they accepted the government's position that there was not enough money to buy and redistribute land. PEC also wanted to focus on action at the popular level. The "squatter" camp highlighted a*

*form of civil protest, where people actually stayed on a piece of land without government approval.*

PEC tries to have people tell their stories in their own voices. Circulation is not a question of revenue so much as a strategy for more horizontal communications linking groups and building a stronger popular movement. Groups need to inform each other of their activities and draw strength and ideas for action from each other's interventions.

#### NGOs in Zimbabwe

Mtutu estimated that today there are more than 500 NGOs active in Zimbabwe, ranging from small organizations employing one or two people to organizations employing as many as 100. The developmental NGOs work with cooperatives, local communities or directly with women while social service NGOs work with the physically handicapped or the mentally ill. Most organizations only do relief in times of drought or natural disaster.

Many NGOs date from pre-independence days when they catered to neglected parts of society. New NGOs have come in as Zimbabwe opened up after independence. These tend to be at least partially foreign-funded, and include such organizations as CUSO, Oxfam America, Oxfam Canada, Save the Children (UK) and Red Haarna (Norway).

Most interesting of all, however, are the purely indigenous NGOs that have emerged within the last ten years. These include groups like PEC, the Women's Action Group (WAG) and environmental groups, all addressing the new type of society Zimbabwe has been trying to build since independence. They work to equip cooperators, trade unionists, civic organizations and women to carry out critical reflections and make their voices heard on issues of the day.

The most recent NGOs to emerge are the Forum for Demo-

cratic Reform Trust and Zimrights, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association. The Forum is made up of church leaders, professionals and business leaders of all races with Enoch Dumbutshena, a widely respected former Chief Justice as its patron. Its short-term aim is to educate about democracy, sponsoring debates about a wide range of social issues. In the longer term, it anticipates becoming a formal political party.

ZCTU General Secretary Morgan Tsvangirai sees the Forum helping to broaden the space for democratic activity, but identifies it essentially as a product of white liberals with their black middle-class allies.

*That's fair enough: everyone in this country should be able to claim their right to form political groupings. The Forum's key issues so far have to do with the concerns of the urban upper and middle classes - things like the protection of property, clean government, constitu-*

*tionalism. They talk very little of the problems of hunger, inadequate shelter, poor access to education, unemployment and land distribution, which really interest the masses.*

Zimrights is another recent addition dedicated to upholding human rights. Its members include jurists, liberal politicians, church leaders, industrialists, community workers, professionals, students and many others. Its emergence points again to a broad coalition of democratic interests finding spaces to become social actors in the much-expanded "civil society."

### NGO-government relations

The interaction of the NGOs and popular organizations with the government differs widely throughout the country and between rural and urban areas. The rural NGOs tend to interact with village and district development committees and ZANU-PF committees. In practice these rural civic groups are often

## SOUTH SOUTH NORTH NETWORK AT MEETINGS ON IMF-WORLD BANK

Five SSN Network groups from Zimbabwe, Canada and Brazil participated in the 1992 International NGO Forum on World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Lending in Washington during the third week of September. The gathering brought together activists from popular organizations in 44 countries in the north and south to work out a common strategy for tackling the the IMF/World Bank imposition of a global economic policy. It was organized by Development GAP, Third World Foreign and Friends of the Earth.

The Forum met for three days of debate and work in smaller groups to work out strategies in such areas as information, research, popular participation and alternatives. These three days were followed by another three days of public presentations, smaller workshops and lobbying visits to IMF and World Bank Group officials.

Most empowering was the sense of common cause. Delegate after delegate spoke of increased disparity between rich and power and environmental degradation as a result of relentless production for export. SAPs were seen as step one, to be followed by trade agreements locking the adjustment measures in place. Many warned of the dangers of NGOs being orchestrated to pick up the slack, serving as the agencies to deliver "Social Dimensions of Adjustment" programmes cater-

ing for the most vulnerable, now that the World Bank of the nineties has rediscovered poverty.

There was a strong critique made about who was actually around the table. Despite complaints to organizers after the last such forum and during the organizing stages of this one, the north was represented almost entirely by development agencies whose main work is servicing the south. Southerners were adamant in their demand to learn about the impact of global economic policies on working people in the north, so much so that northerners were hastily added to the panels to speak to the impact of free trade and economic trading blocs on women, jobs and communities in Canada, the US and Europe. A highlight of the Forum was the host country panel which featured a black woman from Southerners for Economic Justice, a chicana woman from the Southwest Organizing Project and a white male from the National Toxics Campaign all using compelling images to portray the underclass in the USA created by the current economic policies.

The frustration at the lack of facilitation to guide us through a strategic planning exercise was compensated for by the rich opportunities for networking and strategic alliances. All of it underscored the importance of the newly created South-South-North Network as a new and potentially effective mechanism for sharing information and strategies north-south.

overly dependent, having to get access from extension personnel of different government departments or rely on NGO personnel who tend to push their own ideas. Where rural people do not feel that their wishes are being heard, however, they simply stop participating.

In the urban centres popular participation takes many different forms. WAG takes on political parties and government on specific issues, and does so vigorously. Squatters have become a vocal force, raising land issues with new prominence. Students are active as well as environmental groups.

The ZCTU and its affiliates are key social actors. They continue to address social security, living wages and housing. But ZCTU is increasingly becoming a social union, moving from the immediate shop floor issues of its members to building alliances with community groups around broad social issues like land and ESAP, the IMF/World Bank imposed economic and social adjustment programme.

### Impact of ESAP

In Mtutu's opinion, the imposition of ESAP programmes has helped the popular movement grow.

*The impact of global economic policies has been to sharpen the social contradictions within our own society. Every three months there is another increase in food prices. People are making the connection between the local economic conditions and a global corporate agenda.*

There is another very immediate impact of structural adjustment on NGOs. Zimbabwe had an organization known as Voice which served as an umbrella body for NGOs and community enterprises. It is now known as NANGO, National Association of NGOs. Some NGOs belong to it; others do not. Under ESAP, NANGO is supposed to be the channel for the SDA (Social Dimensions of Adjustment) funds designated for the absolutely poor. Thus the



NGOs are being instrumentalized as a key arm of World Bank policy implementation at the micro level.

### Democratization of information

Mtutu felt that most parts of "civil society" have tended to impose some form of self-censorship, not encouraging their members to be too critical of government or of ZANU-PF, the ruling party. With the move towards opening up of democracy people now feel freer to criticize. Mtutu indicated that the changing situation in South Africa has done a lot to help. Formerly if people criticized party or government they could easily be written off as South African agents.

Now it is easier for people to differ from party or government, to be more self-critical, to be more critical of other organizations in society, and to create a more vibrant grassroots democracy.

The other major impediment to the growth of "civil society," according to Mtutu, is the limited sources of information. News about what is really going on in the country has tended to come only from government sources. Government does not formally control the media, but in effect, it does.

Information tends to flow from one source, and is very urban oriented. The recent country-wide march organized by ZCTU against

Read On

ESAPs is a case in point. Reporting focused only on what happened in Harare and Bulawayo with reports suggesting poor organization and poor attendance in smaller centres. Yet unofficial information from large plantations of sugar cane at Chiredzi, owned by Anglo American, indicated a very high turnout.

NGOs like PEC have worked with their constituencies to provide alternative materials. These serve to help people identify the major forces at play, to know something about the current state of the economy and broader political issues.

*Lack of information from the grass-roots is the kind of thing which impedes civil society. People are not aware of what is happening in other parts of the country. They cannot learn from each other. If people are aware of what is happening, they can go forward. They know it is possible to organize themselves, to criticize government, and nothing happens to them.*

#### Alliance building

Mtutu saw the over-attention to sectoral interests as the greatest impediment to the growth of strong coalitions.

*The way I see it women, the labour movement, and, to a large extent,*

*professionals and intellectuals are the only ones to advance their own interests. I think it would be more viable, healthier to see more alliance building. It is only recently that we have been able to bring together some different parts of society. For the first time last year, the Secretary General of ZCTU actually addressed the annual AGM of OCCZIM, an organization which unites most cooperatives in Zimbabwe. This is the way to go forward.*

According to Mtutu, there is not enough alliance building between the major players. Students demonstrated when they got only a 23% increase in their grants instead of the 40% increase they had demanded. Workers tended to think the students were being unreasonable, since most workers got only between 10 and 15 percent increases.

#### South-South-North Network: a useful tool

Mtutu saw the SSN Network as having a lot of potential, involving its members in links which can be effective. He viewed it as a mechanism for groups within Zimbabwe to bring together their efforts, link up with progressive forces and identify common interests. They can

then build working links with groups in Tanzania, Namibia, Canada and Brazil who share these interests, finding effective ways to attack the forces promoting structural adjustment. "ESAP is really recolonization coming back in a different form, in the guise of free trade, in the guise of liberalizing the economy. It will be a major achievement if we make a dent."

Mtutu emphasized that northern organizations needed to find effective ways to convey the impact of free trade policies and the emergence of enclaves and underclasses in the US, Canada and Europe. Trade and structural adjustment have to be seen as two parts of the same global corporate agenda.

He indicated that the thing he would cherish from the trip to the US and Canada was the contact with other people telling the same story over and over again.

*I met people of a similar nature who are also concerned and are also organizing against global economic policies. This gives me the hope that it is possible to organize effectively. The isolation you feel in one country ends when you talk to people from all over the globe who are tackling the same questions. I think the way forward for me is strong alliances.*

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## Dishonourable Degree

BY JOHN DANIEL

*John Daniel is Acting Director of the International Studies Unit, Rhodes University, South Africa.*

In 1992, Rhodes University, one of South Africa's reputedly liberal English-language universities, awarded an honorary degree in international law to Dr. Chester Crocker, former Secretary of State for Africa in the Reagan administration. Unsurprisingly, the decision was a controversial one both on campus and amongst the wider pub-

lic. It certainly had its supporters, most notably in the editorial and correspondence columns of the eastern Cape's largest (and arguably the country's most reactionary) English-language daily, the Eastern Province Herald.

Nonetheless, it would not be an exaggeration to suggest that most South Africans were opposed, if not appalled by, the award. Why so?

First there was the question of the individual himself. In the minds of most South Africans the Reagan

administration was a dishonourable, racist and corrupt one with only a selective commitment to the principles of international law; in the context of Southern Africa, it was seen as an ally of apartheid opposed to the interests of the black majority. As Reagan's Secretary of State for Africa, Crocker was viewed as the personification of this regime.

Then there was the factor of timing. Was it appropriate, many queried, fully two years into the transition era to honour someone

who through his identification with the policy of "linkage," was intimately associated with the darkest days of the apartheid past, a period of death and destruction on a vast scale across the entire region?

Finally, adding fuel to the controversy was the knowledge that in electing to honour Crocker, the governing authorities of the University had apparently rejected the nomination of Govan Mbeki, the veteran nationalist politician, distinguished scholar and author, and eastern Cape resident to boot.

country are having in coming to terms with changing political circumstances. For thirty years these institutions basked in the reputation of being opponents of apartheid, affirming each year their adherence to the principles of academic freedom and university autonomy. And indeed throughout these years students on these campuses did protest the excesses of apartheid, often with great courage. But what this largely masked was the fact that the academic brain drain of the 1960s, coupled with the isolat-

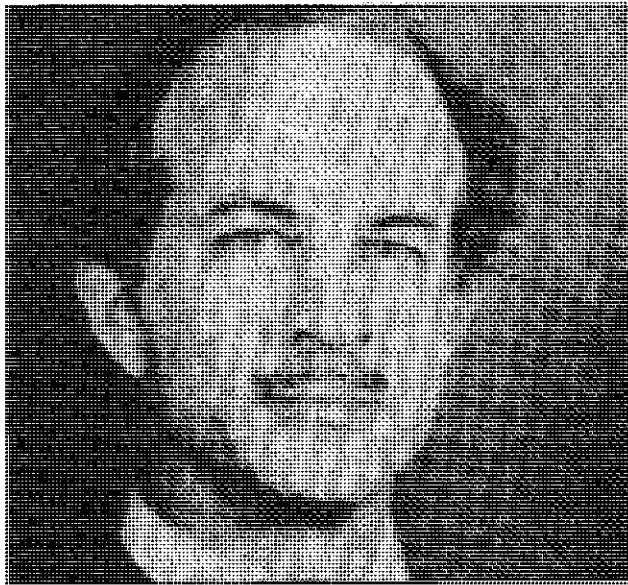
did the response of the Rhodes authorities to the local and national protests at the award.

On the campus, two faculty members, the Professor of Political Science, Roger Southall, and myself, criticised the decision in an in-house university journal and 57 academics signed an open letter disassociating themselves from the action of their University Council; students collected approximately 1000 signatures to a petition demanding the withdrawal of the award while the issue was taken up by the national students' association whose President flew to Grahamstown to join Rhodes' students on a protest march. In a passionate speech, he denounced Crocker as "the mother of all criminals." Particularly moving were the two phone calls of support Roger Southall received from fathers whose (white) sons had died fighting inside Angola.

In the face of this outcry, the Rhodes authorities mounted something of a defence. However, the fact that they described Crocker as an individual who had brought peace to Southern Africa whereas most Southern Africans regarded him as a warmonger only emphasized their divorce from political reality.

Crocker received his honorary degree, arrogantly dismissing his critics as people who couldn't stand other people's success. However, he must now know that he will not be a welcome guest in the South Africa of the near future.

The question which now interests many on this campus is whether the authorities will have learned anything from the Crocker debacle. Within weeks, the names of the 1992 graduands will be announced. Will they be bold and honour one or more of the many courageous figures who contributed to the destruction of the apartheid order? Will they redress the slight to Govan Mbeki? Or will they play safe and reaffirm their continuing affection for the old days?



Chester Crocker

Africa News

Placed side by side the two decisions smacked of racism. No doubt there was an element of such; likewise, it also certainly reflected the deep-seated anti-communist phobia which still grips so many white South Africans. To many of Rhodes' decision makers, including some of its more prominent liberals, what mattered above all, and disqualified him as a suitable honorary graduand, was Mbeki's membership in the South African Communist Party.

More than the above, however, the honouring of Crocker exposed the real difficulties which the English-language Universities in this

ing effects of the academic boycott, gradually produced faculties and administrations on these campuses cut off not only from the world but from the wider South African society.

Today these universities are run by fundamentally conservative white males who, to put it crudely, haven't got a clue what black South Africans think and feel politically, who are bewildered by the pace of events and who show every sign of being incapable of changing with the times. The Crocker decision at Rhodes epitomised this vast political and intellectual gulf between white and black South Africa. So too





## Readers' Forum....

### Down with "Bleak Despair"

4 August 1992

Yes, the situation in Mozambique is very depressing for all those of us rooted in Frelimo's original ideals of an egalitarian, socialist society. However, that does not seem to me any reason for the bleak despair expressed by Brad Lester in your July issue.

He takes the all too common approach that "they're all the same" - Renamo, the army, the militia, the Napramas (independent peasant militias). They all commit atrocities, and nobody knows who is responsible for what.

[Yet] there exist mechanisms whereby soldiers, policemen, and militia members can be brought to justice if they commit crimes. There are military courts, and they do function - erratically, like most of the state apparatus, but that's no reason for writing them off.

Thus last month a soldier was tried in Zambezia and sentenced to 22 years in jail for ordering the execution by firing squad of six civilians picked up in a Renamo-held area (and thus presumed to be Renamo supporters).

It is "impossible" to verify who is responsible for which raids, writes Lester. No, there have been cases investigated in Nampula which established responsibilities very clearly. In early 1991, a gang of common criminals passed themselves off as members of Renamo, and terrorised the suburb of Marrere for several months. They had purchased their AK-47s from a soldier stationed in Marrere, who was later detained. The case was published in the Mozambican media, as were accusations by Nampula civilian officials that the military command was obstructing investigations.

Despite incidents like these, there is little doubt that most of the raids on the city's outskirts and on nearby towns are the work of Renamo (e.g., the attacks on Namaita on 27 January, on Marrere on 14 April, and on Momola on 22 May).

As for the Napramas - Lester describes them as "an ally of Renamo." Presumably he wrote that before Nampula provincial governor, Alfredo Gamito, on 26 May, publicly praised the Napramas, and compared their performance

favourably to that of the army. It is true that, after the death of their founder last December, the Napramas have begun to lose their cohesion, and some groups appear to have collaborated with Renamo. But this does not seem to be the case with the movement as a whole.

None of the above is meant to imply that the situation is not extremely serious, and that the survival of progressive politics in Mozambique is not in severe doubt. But matters certainly won't be improved by cooperantes sneering at the efforts of the Mozambican judicial system to impose the rule of law, and claiming that what happens in the country cannot be known or comprehended.

In the previous issue of *SAR*, I was surprised to find Otto Roesch attributing peasant support for Renamo in the late 1970s in Manica and Sofala provinces to villagization. The simple fact is there was no mass villagization in these two provinces then: according to figures from the now-defunct National Commission on Communal Villages, as of late 1980 there were just 41 communal

villages in Sofala, housing no more than eight per cent of the total rural population of the province.

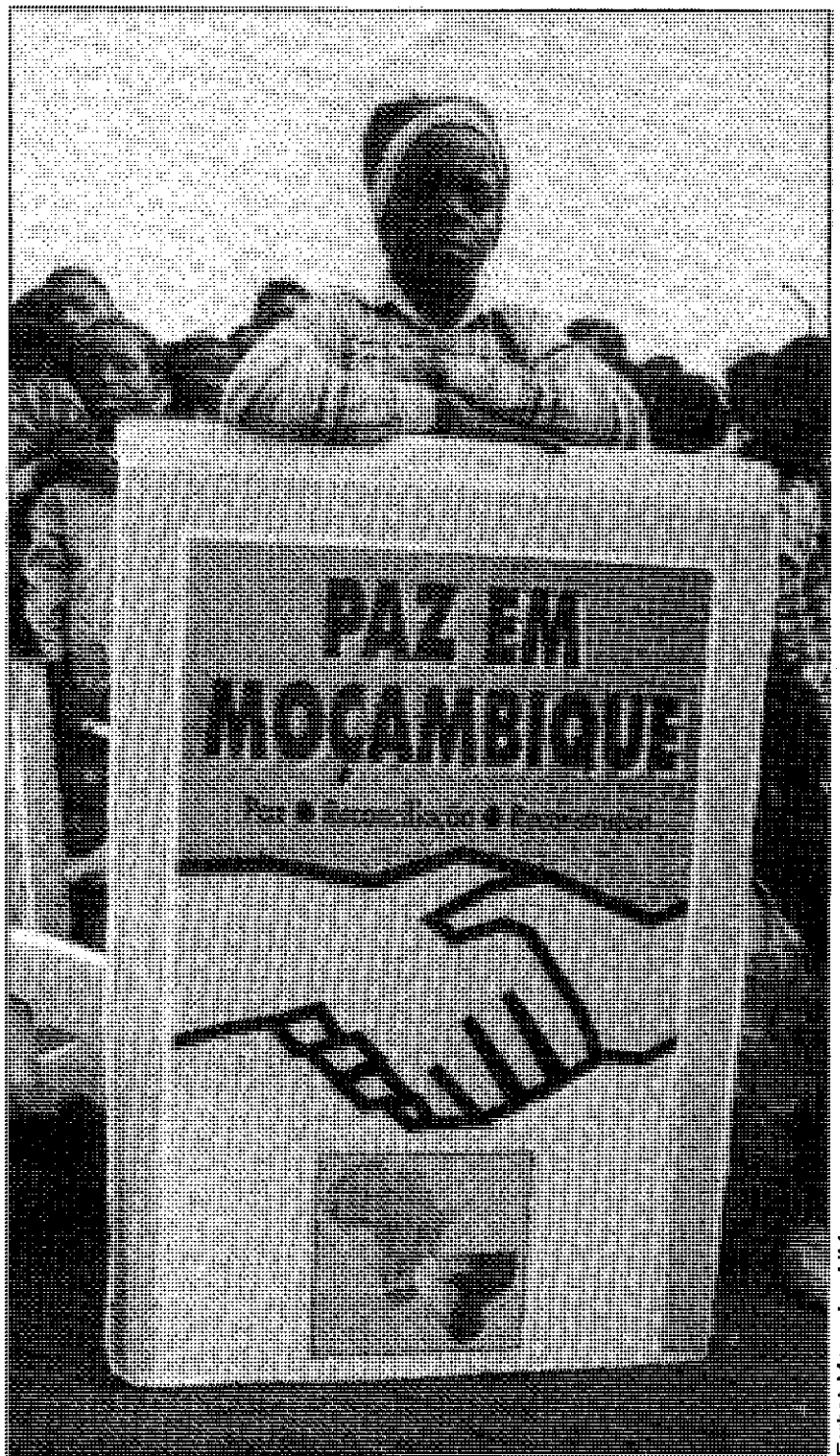
Even more revealing are the figures for collective production in the two provinces. Again, as of late 1980, no more than 1.2 per cent of the active rural population of Sofala, and the tiny figure of 0.1 per cent in Manica were involved in any form of cooperative agriculture.

No doubt some villages were badly sited, and were unpopular. But they cannot seriously be considered as a reason for the spread of Renamo activity in central Mozambique in the late 1970s: Renamo's military advance does, however, correlate rather well with the escalation in Rhodesian aggression against Mozambique.

Large-scale forced villagization, notably in Manica, is a phenomenon of the 1980s, adopted quite unashamedly by the then provincial governor, Manuel Antonio, as a counter-insurgency measure. No doubt this alienated many peasants from the government, but a measure adopted out of mistaken ideas about military necessity cannot logically be interpreted as a reason for the war in the first place.

Yours Fraternally,  
Paul Fauvet  
Maputo

*Ed. note: Otto Roesch responds: "Paul Fauvet would benefit from a more careful re-reading of my article. Nowhere in the article do I suggest that villagization or government policy errors are the 'reason for the war in the first place'. Clearly Rhodesian (and subsequently South African) aggression is the reason for the war. Without external aggression there would never have been a war. But would Fauvet have us believe that destabilization did not find internal contradictions to exploit and that the war did not rapidly come to take on an internal dynamic of its own? Like it or not, peasant disenchantment with Frelimo's policies and with the post-*



Maputo, July 1992 - Demonstration for Peace between Frelimo & Renamo

Ferhat Momad - AIM

independence collapse of the national economy were indeed factors that contributed to the spread of Renamo activities in central Mozambique. Manuel Antonio adopted large-scale forced villagization in the 1980s precisely because most peasants did not want to move into communal villages of their own accord and because a certain number of traditional authorities were actively organizing their followers in support of Renamo. Furthermore, forced villagization started along the Mozambique-Rhodesian border in 1979, if not before."

Brad Lester, writing his response directly from Nampula itself, is concerned to locate his comments. His original letter "was not scientific, (or even journalistic). It was written very personally after many conversations and discussions with farmers, colleagues and associates in Nampula at the turn of year from 1991 to 1992." He sought, he says, merely to give a feel for

the uncertainty in the country at the time he wrote. "By then it was probably a year and half into peace talks which are only coming to fruition this month, almost a year later. This uncertainty was compounded by an evolving economic transformation, inside an emergency, that was and still is overwhelming the common person, especially the peasant farmer in many parts of Nampula."

"People in the bairros or the periphery of Nampula were lost at that time. Who could tell them, after years of war, who actually was creating the havoc they were experiencing on virtually a daily basis? The shifting nature of the Naparamas after the death of their leader (alluded to in Paul's letter) only reinforces my original comment. This was especially confusing at the time because at different intervals in 1991 the Naparamas had come into town and many farmers were supportive of

this particular response to the war. I would also like to say that I did not 'sneer' at the Mozambican judiciary. When I was told the story about the transport manager's family, my personal reaction was that he should report the case to a lawyer, if not the police. His response - not mine - was that it wasn't worth it!"

Lester concludes by lauding Fauvet's own reporting, there being "few people," in his opinion, "as experienced and committed as he is that are able to transmit the current transformations as we enter the climax of the search for peace and reconciliation and finally elections within the year 1993." The SAR editorial working group is inclined to be a little less charitable towards Fauvet, wishing for a more fine-grained analysis and a less defensive posture regarding both the positive and the negative sides of developments in Mozambique than he often manifests in his analyses - and his letters to the editor.

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## Your Vision or Mine?

25 June 1992

I am writing to respond to the article "Angola: The Final Act" in your May issue.

The article states that U.N. food aid was channelled through World Vision, among other agencies listed, and "directly handed to Unita." This is simply not true.

World Vision has a high standard of monitoring emergency aid delivery, and that standard was certainly upheld in Angola. First of all, the relief response World Vision undertook in Cuanda Cubango was based, not on politics, but on a careful assessment of need. Our staff determined that 42 per cent of children under five in that region were malnourished. We were also working in an area where no other non-governmental agency was responding to the need.

Food delivered by World Vision in Cuanda Cubango was obtained and imported by World Vision, not the U.N. Furthermore, it was held in title by World Vision, received in the port by World Vision, and owned by World Vision until it was delivered to the beneficiaries in need whose signatures or thumbprints were secured for our records.

These are rather significant details which were overlooked by Ms. Brittain. I appreciate this opportunity to set the record straight.

Sincerely,  
Don Scott, President  
World Vision Canada

*Ed. note: Victoria Brittain's point was that food aid to Cuanda Cubango cannot be divorced from Unita's attempts to secure increased political weight throughout Angola.*

Brittain argues among other things that Unita's population figures for the region are not verified by any other organization, and that according to some U.N. officials the U.N. relief operation has become "driven by the Americans."

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## ...from Jamaica

1 October 1992

This is just to let you know how much I rate your *Report*. For me it is a source of solid information and careful analysis which I welcome and make time to read thoroughly whenever an issue arrives.

Keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,  
Horace Levy  
Social Action Centre  
Kingston, Jamaica

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