

Southern Africa

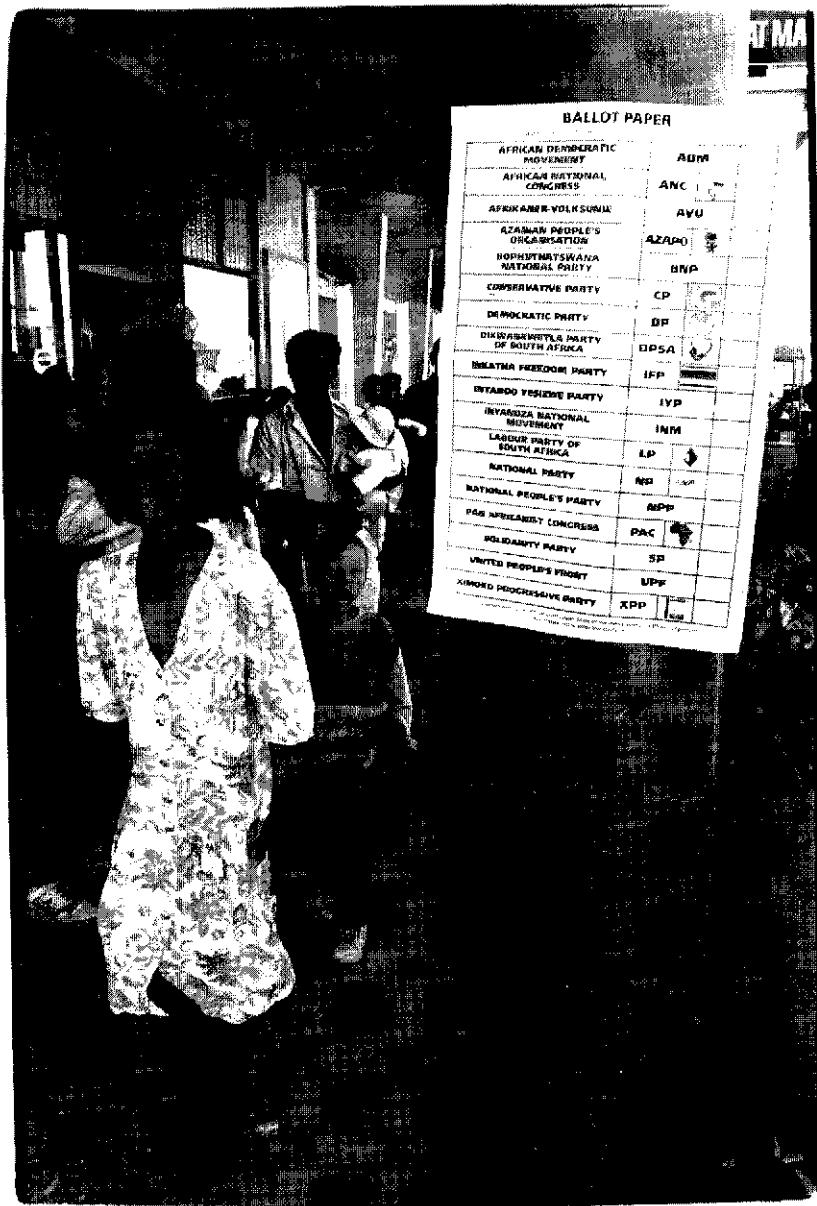
REPORT

Vol. 9 No. 2

November 1993

South Africa:

Preparing for Power



price: \$3.50

— X —
HEIN MARAIS

The ANC, the NP
and
the Elections

— X —
ALBIE SACHS

The Transition
to Power

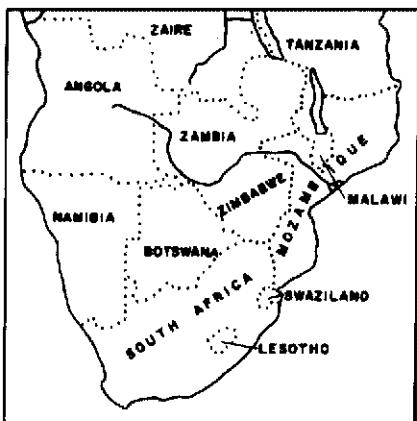
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SHEILA MEINTJES
Women Charter
their Future



Southern Africa REPORT

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Southern Africa REPORT

is produced 5 times a year by a volunteer collective of TCLSAC, the Toronto Committee for Links between Southern Africa & Canada
603-1/2 Parliament St.
Toronto, M4X 1P9
Tel. (416) 967-5562

Submissions, suggestions and help in production are welcome and invited.
ISSN 0820-5582

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Subscriptions

Annual TCLSAC membership and Southern Africa Report subscription rates are as follows:

SUBSCRIPTION:
Individual (1 year) \$18.00
Institution \$40.00

MEMBERSHIP: (includes subscription)
Regular \$35.00
Unemployed
Student \$18.00
Senior
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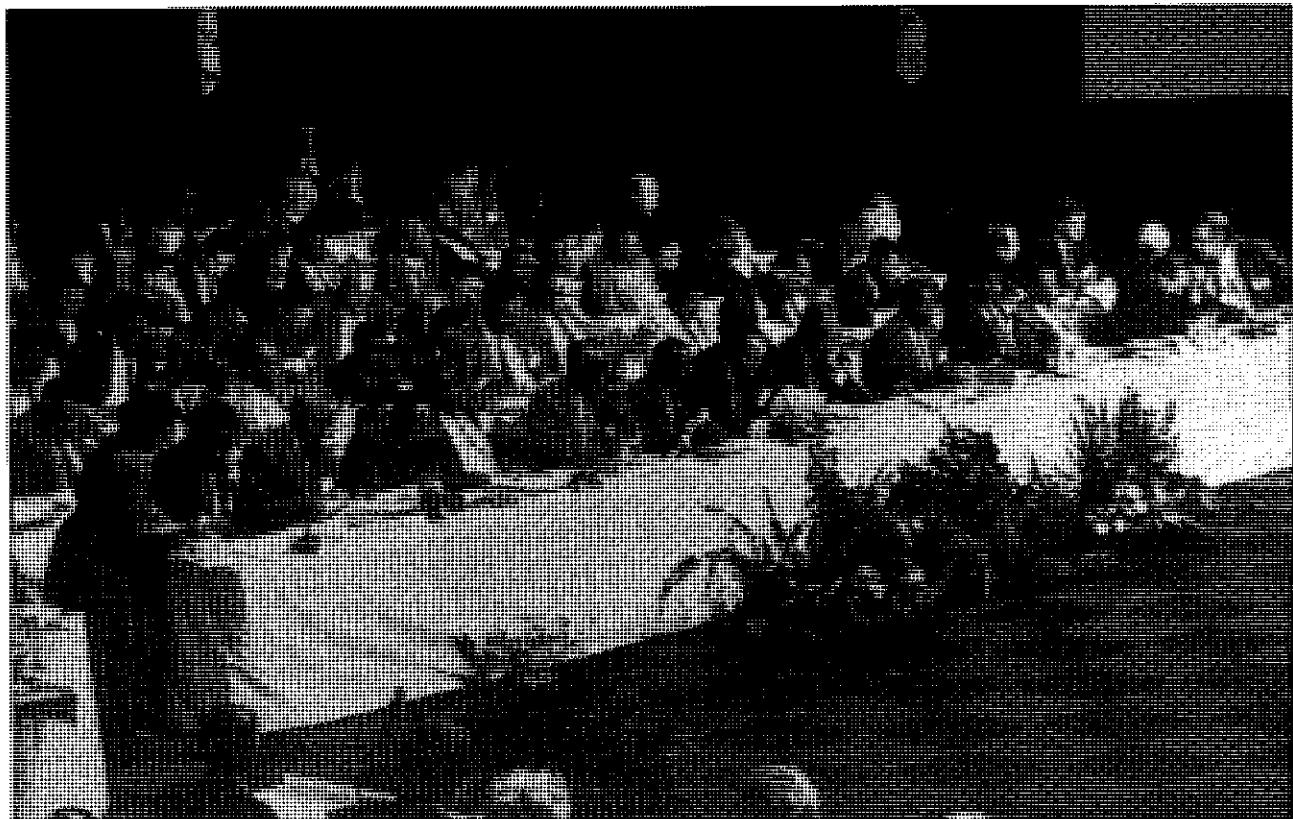
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The main participants of COINSAK, the ANC on the left, the S.A. government on the far right, May 1993

Abdul Sheriff - Impact Visuals

Of Polls and Power

As Canadians dig out from under the rubble of our own election campaign, we may be encouraged to consider a more bracing electoral prospect, the first even remotely democratic election in South Africa's troubled history. It will be held on April 27 of next year and *SAR* will seek to monitor the run-up to that event in this and forthcoming issues. We launch our coverage with a lead feature, by Hein Marais, appraising the electoral positioning of the main contenders, the ANC and the National Party.

This election is important, important that it be carried off as smoothly as possible, important, too, that the ANC, as the one major party genuinely committed to

some kind of egalitarian outcome be as successful as possible. At the same time, we must not be naive about the difficult situation that will confront an ANC government as it attempts to translate any majority it may win electorally into an effective exercise of power *vis-à-vis* the many vested (and privileged) interests that will continue to stalk the brave, new, post-electoral South Africa.

Already some of the compromises the movement has felt itself compelled to make in the current (albeit preliminary) constitutional negotiations – the commitment to a five-year “government of national unity” (discussed in this issue by Albie Sachs), for example – seem likely

to be very costly. And the new parliament, slated to act simultaneously as both legislature and final constitution-making body, will face similarly complicated conundrums on every side. Mention is made (again by Albie Sachs) of the issue of federalism, a core constitution-making concern, as a likely site of on-going struggle. But more strictly legislative matters will also spring up to challenge the new parliament on a wide range of policy fronts. We intend a series of articles in the pages of *SAR* precisely to explore some of these kinds of questions, beginning here with an analysis of an important aspect of future urban policy – one framed by his insistence that “segregation is an issue”! – from Wilmot James.

editorial

Nor need we be naive about the forces and counter-forces that play across the ANC itself and that could come to qualify its egalitarian thrust from within. The threat of cooptation of ANC leaders, whether lured by the comforts of office or by capital's siren song of the need for "realism" and "pragmatism," is vivid enough, and so is the possibility of a debatable measure of compromise on other important issues. That's why articles exploring attempts within the popular movement to sustain the flow of innovative ideas and practices are also important — as witness, in the present issue of *SAR*, the piece by Sheila Meintjes on the effort to do so around the question of gender equality.

* * *

As noted above, the recent visit to Canada by Albie Sachs — South African activist, lawyer, author — is also featured in our pages. While here, Albie helped launch a Canadian fund-raising campaign to assist voter education in South Africa and lectured in various venues on the perilous promise of the present constitution-making exercise back home, a process he has himself been actively engaged in on behalf of the ANC. *SAR* interviewed him at length about these topics and, more generally, on the various modalities of what he termed "preparing for power."

Sachs also happened to be in Toronto at a particularly interesting moment: the day Nelson Mandela urged the lifting of international sanctions against South Africa at the United Nations. Not surprisingly, he was snapped up for a round of television interviews and soon found himself pressed into the service of diplomatically echoing our Secretary of State for External Affairs' own self-congratulatory praise — same time, same station — for Canada's noble role in the South African struggle. We chided him jokingly about the false picture he had thus helped to perpetuate about

Tory policy on such matters (compare Linda Freeman's series of articles in *SAR* on the government's waffling over the years and also Don Ray's contribution, below).

Sachs responded good-humouredly in kind, then took the opportunity to reinforce the point that "preparing for power" is one thing, consolidating it in terms more substantial than those of mere electoral victory is quite another. Whatever role the Canadian government or the Canadian business community might or might not play *vis-à-vis* South Africa in the future, our task as activists is far from over, he said. Indeed, "the links that have been established in the past don't automatically dissolve like these sutures that just disappear simply because we're moving from an isolation and sanctions phase into a developmental pro-democracy phase. They are very meaningful links because they're based on endeavour and struggle and on getting to know people and understanding how decisions are taken, how things are done. And our hope is that the comradeship and interaction that's been developed over the years in that phase will continue and even broaden in the coming period."

Sachs suggested the possibility of consolidating such ties between the new South Africa and the Canadian non-governmental sector across a wide range of possible concerns. Could there not be interchange and assistance around such pressing issues as the delivery of equitable health services, as rural extension and cooperative development, as the fostering of a human rights and employment equity-driven culture, for example? Sachs even had some kind words to say about *SAR*'s own continuing contribution to the process and since his observations seemed to have some general import for those involved in southern African related work we cite them here.

For he welcomed, in particular, our form of "critical support," ...

that special eagerness to see it done right [in southern Africa] because you believe in the project, not because you want to smear, not because you want to show how superior you are, but because the whole endeavour is an important one This kind of criticism is now more important than ever to us and there's far too little serious analytical attention being paid to our process [The experience] is very very rich, so much is happening in our country [and yet] it's not being theorized, it's not being analyzed, it's not being weighed up. We need that kind of balanced critical counsel and sense of involvement and appreciation that *SAR* provides."

Kind words, yes, and also encouraging ones. But somewhat more important than that. The phrase "critical support" — seen as presumptuous or, even worse, as patronizing towards those "on the front line" — has sometimes passed for fighting words in liberation support circles. Over the years there has been considerable flak for those who have taken that motto seriously and attempted to link up with progressive forces in southern Africa as comrades engaged in common struggle rather than as mere cheerleaders: exchanging experiences, learning from each other, debating, even criticizing. Yet, in our view, the case for this kind of relationship of give and take has always seemed strong. We've also come to the conclusion — such is the premise of our involvement in the South-South-North initiative chronicled in recent issues of *SAR* — that that case is now stronger than ever. Consider, after all, the complexities of the economic and political terrain in both North America and southern Africa and the realities of power that lie beyond the polls — a forcing house for common cause, premised, not least, on our shared vulnerability to the vagaries of the world market-place and global capitalism. It was good, then, to find encouragement for "critical support" being enunciated by Albie Sachs.

Amandla Ngwethu

The ANC and the Elections

BY HEIN MARAIS AND
CHRIS VICK

Hein Marais and Chris Vick are editor and deputy editor of Work in Progress,

The birthday celebrations for liberation movements tend to be ironic affairs. After all, 50 or 75 years of struggle is an ambiguous accomplishment – a mark of maturity and distinction, yet at the same time a measure of the failure to achieve liberation.

On January 8 next year, when the ANC celebrates its eighty-second birthday, the organization will be launching its strongest ever bid for state power – with a R200-million election campaign kicking into top gear. Does Africa's oldest liberation movement have what it takes to become the continent's newest government?

The question is, in one sense, rhetorical. An ANC election victory seems as certain as tomorrow's sunrise.

But in another sense, the answer is not straightforward. From the outset, the National Party (NP) has been trying to avoid a sudden-death, winner-takes-all contest. And it has succeeded – the ANC and its arch-rival have agreed, after two years of negotiations, to form a power-sharing government after the April 27 vote. So, in theory, there will not be an ANC government, but a power-sharing one.

Although there is no agreement on the exact method that will be used to stitch together this relationship, the relative weight of the two major parties in the power-sharing government will depend on their showings in the election. If the NP can come within 15 or 20% of the ANC, the ball game changes radically.

So it's not simply a question of winning or losing, but by how far the ANC manages to beat the NP or an NP alliance.

* * *

The ANC is no doubt the single most popular political organization in the country. Polls peg its national support at between 54% and 60%. Among African voters it runs as high as 85-90% in areas like the northern Transvaal and Eastern Cape, long regarded as "ANC country," but drops towards the 50% mark in Natal.

However, as Steve Friedman, Director of the Centre for Policy Studies, stresses, "Popular support does not necessarily translate into votes."

So how is the ANC shaping up electorally? "They're fighting this election as if they might lose it," was analyst Tom Lodge's verdict at a recent gathering. Alert to the importance of converting support into votes – of getting the vote out – the organization has devised a breathtakingly ambitious plan to visit every black home not once or twice but three times in the next seven months.

It's the business-end of a massive four-phase election campaign:

- Phase One: Setting up systems and infrastructure, training election workers, devising strategies, motivating voters with the message that every vote counts, popularizing the basic campaign message, talking to every one of 22.5 million voters at least once;

- Phase Two: "We Are Ready to Govern." Talking to voters a second time and focusing on undecided and supportive voters, consolidating systems, starting to challenge the

opposition. Included here is the development of an election list and, at a symbolic conference on December 16, formalizing the ANC's election platform, including its manifesto;

- Phase Three: "Mobilising for Victory." A third visit to voters, popularizing the election platform and candidates, a big mobilization drive and media blitz, and preparing election day logistics.

- Phase Four: "Election Week, Victory Week." Ensuring everyone knows where and how to vote, arranging monitoring, transport, security, logistics, delivering supporters to polls.

It's early days still, and the ANC does seem to have a head-start on the ruling party, which is still getting the hang of crying "Viva NP! Viva!" in public and slipping Afrikaans translations of the African anthem Nkosi Sikelel i'Afrika into some of its proceedings.

But the hurdles that separate the ANC from a decisive election victory are formidable. Visiting each home three times would be a daunting goal anywhere. Accomplishing it in a landscape carved into no-go zones, rocked by violence, and clouded by suspicion and fear seems like a stupefyingly tall order.

* * *

Despite its commitment to non-racism, the ANC remains a largely African organization. White support is a speck in the desert, despite slick efforts to amplify a drift towards the ANC by some prominent whites into a trend. Polls show no more than one in four coloureds and Indians are likely to put their crosses next to the ANC logo next April. (The hostility of whites is easy to grasp. The

south africa

reticence and wariness of coloured and Indian voters, however, requires an article in its own right.)

The coloured vote is particularly important in the Western Cape, which the NP is eyeing as its regional stronghold in the new order. Coloured communities constitute 68% of the region's voters, and the ANC is making a serious pitch for their support.

ANC organizers believe they can take the Western Cape if the liberal Democratic Party (DP) manages to split nascent NP support among coloured voters. But ANC structures in the region are still on the flimsy side: in Cape Town, for example, areas that were strongholds of the United Democratic Front have not managed to nurture functioning ANC branches.

It's a different story in the city's African squatter camps (home to some 60% of Cape Town's African population), most of which boast robust ANC branches. The problem, though, is that they are often extensions of authoritarian, sometimes ruthless, regimes maintained by squatter lords. "These guys support the ANC," confides a local ANC organizer, "but that's not necessarily an advantage for us." The organization's reluctance to challenge the tendencies of local pro-ANC strongmen to run settlements like fiefdoms has led many residents to retreat from active, organized support.

* * *

By far the bulk of South Africa's voters are distributed in the two regions hardest hit by political violence: Natal and the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) area around Johannesburg.

Together, they account for almost half the votes at stake. The random and endemic nature of the violence has hit the ANC hard, and in multiple ways. It has locked local and regional structures into crisis mode, and hampered the ability to systematically mount initiatives. It

has also implicated the ANC in the fighting and strengthened the hand of 'stand-and-deliver' militants.

A classic example of this is the Natal Midlands - bastion of 'bitter-enders' like Harry Gwala - where seven years of low-intensity war has militarized the ANC dramatically. There the rule of thumb seems to be that one is either 'with us or against us.' The effect has been to encamp the converted and alienate the rest.

Peace monitors in some of the townships that encircle central Durban say the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) is better geared for an election than the ANC. "There's no electoral machine, no campaigning, no strategy there," says one observer of the ANC presence. There are also reports that head office attempts to bolster regional election preparations have not been received as warmly as anticipated.

Opinion polls in these areas find an abnormally high rate of voters who say they don't know or won't tell which way they intend to vote. In one poll late last year, 60% of African women in Durban townships refused to commit themselves. This could be because the high levels of violence might deter people from admitting their allegiance to anyone, especially a strange pollster.

But it could also signal another huge hurdle for the ANC: displeasure at its failure to change the day-to-day realities of township life - whether countering the chronic insecurity, or improving services and amenities.

* * *

The fact that the violence ploughs on amid "breakthroughs" in national political negotiations has definitely hardened scepticism towards party politics. Says Jan Hofmeyr, Director of the polling firm Research Surveys: "There has been a growth of cynicism towards politicians and politics in black communities."

In Durban's Umlazi township,

for instance, conciliation was achieved despite - not because of - injunctions from regional leadership of both the ANC and Inkatha, when youths agreed to forge a truce on the soccer field. A tense, tentative match soon led to a tournament and other joint activities. The message - that politicians are not necessarily the creators of stability and peace - presumably hits a chord.

Another debilitating effect of the violence is the danger that the election - and even the act of voting - might come to be viewed as a life-threatening affair. The view that black townships are out-of-bounds to the campaigns of 'white' parties is fiercely advanced, not only by firebrands of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) but also by civic leaders like Sanco's Dan Mofokeng. Already, efforts by the DP to hold meetings in black areas have been sabotaged by attack, and the election campaign has hardly started.

The slicing of townships and squatter settlements (or parts of them) into 'zones of control' means the map is dotted with hundreds of no-go areas. ANC activists will enter some on pain of death; likewise for IFP activists or new-born NP campaigners in others. In many cases this posture is maintained with at least a nod from local-level leadership. In others it is enforced with the help of bantustan police, like the KwaZulu Police that holds Inkatha fiefdoms to order in Natal.

The effect, again, is to estrange the centre, those residents who are not steadfastly aligned to a party but who might share basic principles and ideals with it.

Even the best intentions and most diligent efforts - on all sides - will not make this election campaign a peaceable one: the roots of the violence are too many and, by now, too firmly embedded in social and political life. Hopes for comparative calm are staked on enterprises like the envisaged



Guy Tillim - South Light

Voter registration in Cape Town, October 1993

Peace Keeping Force (a multiparty, make-shift community policing force already given the cold-shoulder by Inkatha), on a sturdy and vocal international monitoring presence, or on the South African Police becoming more of a public service and less of a private army.

Whatever its sources, the violence will hit the liberation organizations – particularly the ANC – hardest. For every ten voters who stay away from the polls, liberation movements lose nine votes, seven of which were probably destined for the ANC.

* * *

In South Africa's rural areas, and particularly on white-owned farms, a sort of pre-1990 reality

still reigns. The lines that separate 'us' and 'them' still span rural SA like trenches. The ambiguities of conciliation and compromise, however sleek and wily, tend not to complicate these quasi-feudal zones – zones that escape the scrutiny of city-based journalists and monitors. We've calculated that if the turnout of black voters in rural SA is 15% below a national turnout of 70%, the ANC and PAC will lose 800,000 votes (most of them ANC). That's almost 4% of all votes.

Piet Gous, president of the Free State Agricultural Union of white farmers, says openly on national TV that his members will "not allow any political campaigning" on their farms. Experience in the field,

so to speak, confirms that their counterparts in other provinces are of a similar mind.

"It's a big problem," says an ANC organizer in the rural Cape. "Even liberal farmers are reluctant to let us onto farms." In some mining compounds on the remote West Coast – literally company towns – ANC regional officials are unable to meet with bona fide ANC branches formed at the mine.

There have been some creative attempts to overcome this. ANC members hitch rides onto farms with delivery vans and surreptitiously hand out literature and speak to workers. More effective, though, is the tactic of holding meetings on the last Saturday morning of the month in town, when workers are visiting shopping areas.

That hundreds of thousands of farmworkers can be ruled out-of-bounds for political campaigners by farmers' decrees is bad enough. Equally worrying is the fact that these potential voters are likely to be deprived of proper voter education.

Workshops in the Transvaal have already found that farmworkers are hampered by ignorance and fear. Focus groups find people confused when instructed to indicate with a cross the political party they approve of – even those with rudimentary education recall that a cross signifies a mistake or a dislike. Lack of access for voter education programmes will leave these voters sitting ducks for farmers' disinformation – your vote will not be secret, if you vote for X you'll lose your job, *et cetera*.

* * *

Propelling the ANC forward is a proud history of struggle, the trust the majority of South Africans vest in it, the commitment of its activists, and a painstakingly planned campaign.

It has secured the services of Stan Greenberg, the US election strategist who helped plot President

Bill Clinton's path into the White House. In addition, it is serviced regularly – and exclusively – with some of the most revelatory polling data available.

It has also managed to cramp the state's hand somewhat by winning agreement for a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) and other legislative measures that will 'level the playing field' in the election run-up, such as an independent electoral commission and a broadcasting commission.

But elections are a new ball game for the ANC. As chief elections coordinator Popo Molefe says, in a reference to the mass democratic movement's highly-successful activities in the mid-80s: "We have fought elections only to the extent that we organized boycotts against them."

The requisite skills and talents exist, but they have been honed in different styles of organizing. In the PWV region especially the activists are bent by multiple workloads (humoured here as 'wearing different hats') and run the risk of burn out in the crucial, final phases of the campaign.

Systems, infrastructure and organized resources are, in several regions, still in ramshackle shape. The reaction thus far has been to 'Send in Madiba' – Nelson Mandela goes on the stump in relatively slick and spectacular blitzes. Typically, he leaves in his wake a swirl of elevated spirits and determination. Whether this distils into improved organiza-

tional capacities remains to be seen.

A campaign that, in many respects, centres on Mandela's persona will be extremely taxing. Privately, ANC officials worry that the 75-year-old president might, close to election day, be floored by the pace of the campaign.

Campaigns run on blood, sweat and cash. ANC officials are tight-lipped about progress in raising the estimated R200-million the organization says it needs for the election. Recently, there have been reports of hiccups in turning pledges made in the US, Taiwan and India into hard cash.

The NP, though, will likely be spared such headaches. No matter the public protestations, corporate SA views the NP as a more trustworthy defender of its interests and will financially assist its election bid. The party has more than 200 MPs flush with state-paid salaries, staff, offices and other infrastructure. It has already begun doling out perks like food coupons and title deeds to targeted constituencies like pensioners, coloured and Indian tenants and more. And there are the sympathetic newspapers and a somewhat less than combative network of 22 radio and four TV channels, run by a SA Broadcasting Corporation that is now topped by a new, independent board and governed by new guidelines (but still staffed, in the main, by its old guard government appointees).

The ANC, quite simply, lacks sympathetic mass media. And, as the 1992 whites-only referendum showed, the mass media are likely to get more hysterical and hostile to the prospect of an ANC government as the election date approaches.

In an attempt to counter this, an ANC (in all but name) daily is scheduled to hit the streets next January, but insiders say it's unlikely to meet that deadline. In the meantime, the movement tries to counter the steadily massing propaganda themes of its opponents with a two-pronged drive: first world-style, glitzy newspaper ads that seem tailored more for yuppies and buppies than for the throngs of wavering voters, and third world-style face-to-face chin wagging sessions.

It's early days yet. For many South Africans, the election date is still a distant abstraction. The scramble for votes, the propaganda onslaughts, the dirty tricks have hardly started. Likewise, many elements of the ANC's election campaign are still to come on stream.

The electric sense that a liberated SA is at hand has still to register.

Victory, conclusive or not, lies tantalizingly close. But at this stage, the only certainty is that nothing is certain. As liberation movements much younger than the ANC have learned, there is no easy road to freedom.

Voters' Rolls

South Africans over 18 years of age will elect 400 representatives to a constituent assembly, which will function as parliament and draft a new constitution. There will be a national list (200 seats) and a regional list (200 seats) of candidates – which is meant to avoid sidelining parties that are strong in a few regions, but weak nationally.

There are conflicting estimates of the number of voters in the country. The ANC says 22.5 million, the Depart-

ment of Home Affairs says 22.2 million, some independent statisticians say 21.6 million. A Research Surveys statistician now claims there are as many as three to four million more voters than previously calculated on the basis of what he terms 'a deeply flawed' 1991 government census. Most of these 'undetected' voters are black. There will be about 7,400 voting stations, and voting is likely to last one day only. This means each voting station will have to handle more than 3,000 voters or three voters per minute.

An independently constituted Electoral Commission will supervise the planning and preparation for the election, as well as the vote itself.



Crowd supports de Klerk during electioneering visit to 'coloured' township, Mitchells Plain, Cape Town April 1992

Eric Miller - Impact Visuals

History: The National Party's Albatross

BY HEIN MARAIS

Hein Marais is editor of Work in Progress.

You can comb every pub and crevice in the land, but you won't find a National Party official predicting an election victory for the party. Maybe in the 1999 vote. Just maybe. But not this one.

None of which makes this any less crucial an election for a party that now calls itself non-racial. A party that last month opened its 79th Transvaal congress with a prayer in Sotho, and has incorporated Viva! and Long Live de Klerk! into its repertoire of exhortations. A party that seeks to contrast itself - publicly, and without collapsing under the weight of absurdity - with an ANC that

"still thinks in racist terms."

Wielding that allegation at the Transvaal congress was President F. W. de Klerk, now in his fifth year at the helm of the party that brought the world apartheid and then, it claims, took it away again.

Obviously, history is the albatross the NP will inevitably be hauling into the election campaign. And it understands that the trick will be not to quibble about history, but to render it irrelevant to the matters at hand. On the one hand, 'bygones are bygones'; on the other, voters are to be assured that an incumbent devil is what it takes to check an incoming demon.

To invest the post-election power-sharing arrangement with substance, the NP has to narrow the

margin between it and the ANC in this election. The closer it gets, the stronger its hand. Organizers have pencilled in 25% of the vote as a bottom line target. Pundits seem to think the goal is reachable.

The motifs of the NP campaign are already evident. Like all melodrama, its election propaganda is following basic binary principles: there's good and bad, comfort and disruption, peace and violence, progress and degeneration. The fact that the racist subtexts lurk close to the surface adds impact to messages that draw on decades of propaganda stereotypes - 'basket case' Africa, black national frenzies, sly and greedy communists, a march of relentless incompetence.

Thus far the in-your-face themes are Peace and Security, with the

South Africa

ANC implied (though not named, not while negotiations proceed) as the wreckers, hot-blooded, unable to rein in its wild 'lost generation' of youth. Indeed, ANC focus groups earlier in the year identified 'security' as the number one concern of black township residents. The NP will court them by posing as the party of peace.

Being primed in the background is another theme - justice - that will be directed at white, as well as coloured and Indian voters. The core message will be covert but inescapable: the NP will defend you and what you've worked so hard for against the 'vengeful' majority.

The ambiguities that inevitably cloud a party of reborn autocrats are not necessarily drawbacks in the chase for coloured and Indian votes. Forty-five years of apartheid have wrought an equivocal relationship between these minorities and the African majority; a kinship of oppression punctured by distrust and trepidation.

But there's one tangle the NP cannot dodge. Even if it manages to blot out history and exonerate itself from the ongoing slaughter, it has to promise black voters something dramatically different from the present - while convincing white voters that things will stay more or less the same.

According to one NP organizer, the party is looking for at least three million black votes (out of 14 million - a 20% share). Right now, polls show it with 3-5% of black votes. Branches have been set up in some townships, but at this stage these are tentative, 'pioneering' forays, not inroads. The NP might describe itself as non-racial these days, but the phrase is appropriated, not earned.

Whether it can perform this electoral feat will depend on people like David Chuenyane, a former Pan African Congress (PAC) member. He has established an NP branch in Soweto and was one of the

delegates chanting Viva NP! at last month's congress. "His years in Black Africa had shown him the economic policies of the PAC and ANC would not work," reported one newspaper profile afterwards. So he checked out the NP and decided, in his words, "They had the expertise, the experience."

It is anybody's guess how many more David Chuenyane's are out there, willing to risk their lives for the NP. What seems more certain is that the party will be hard-pressed to scrape together a flock of black candidates of even modest stature and legitimacy.

That's just the tip of the challenge, confesses the party organizer: "What we lack is an emotive cause. We need to try and capture voters' imaginations; we need a martyr."

The most apparent 'strategy' at the moment is to smother these and other complications with a multi-million Rand blockbuster campaign. Election planners seem quietly confident an anything-but-the-ANC blitz will swell white support from the current sub-50% to above 70%, a feat it achieved in last year's whites-only referendum.

Certainly, the infrastructure and resources exist to mount a dazzling bid for the white vote. In the 1989 whites-only election, the party spent about R30 per vote. The figure, though, is robbed of meaning by an NP government's ability to also dish out perks. A food coupon scam in some coloured areas in the Cape has already been uncovered, while the ANC accuses it of using housing transfers as a vote catcher. A mainstay of NP tactics in its whites-only days was to shower favours on elderly voters and bus them to polling booths. Indian and coloured senior citizens will be targeted with such 'largesse'.

Masked by the glitz and glibness, though, are two central problems. With 25% of the vote, only 100 NP candidates will make it into the national and regional assemblies.

The NP's non-racial image requires padding the election list with newcomers - at the expense of its old, white guard. Morale among such borderline MPs is reportedly low, with several of them scampering towards Mangosutho Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), in search of career security. The vaunted election machinery might not be as well tended as anticipated.

A similar drift is evident among white voters who are to form the backbone of the NP election bid. Polls this year show a steady rise in white support for the IFP, especially in Natal. A Markinor pollster has noted that the IFP is rapidly becoming a 'white' party: "The IFP has a lot more support among urban whites than among urban blacks."

Research Surveys' Jan Hofmeyr diagnoses the trend bluntly: "Whites want blacks in power that they think they can trust. They think Buthelezi and the IFP fit that bill."

Ironically, it is Inkatha, yesterday's trusty, that most befuddles the NP's election strategy. Not only has the souring of that relationship virtually scuttled the election alliance coveted by the NP, but it has accelerated a leakage of white support to the IFP, and it has deepened tensions within the party caucus.

ANC negotiators bear out the view of analysts like Centre for Policy Studies director, Steve Friedman, who stresses that, even in negotiations, the NP lacks a coherent strategy. "They chop and they change," says top negotiator Mohammed Valli Moosa. The same rudderless approach is dogging the NP's election campaign.

Which, by all accounts, leaves the NP steering a leaky vessel towards that fateful day next April. Yet complacency ranks among the most dangerous of impulses in the SA transition - especially as it flounders in a phase so distressingly unhinged and indeterminate.



National launch of the ANC Women's League, Currie's Fountain, Durban, December 1990

Rafs Mayet - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

Chartering Women's Future

BY SHEILA MEINTJES.

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But for the occasional genuflection in its direction, the issue of gender discrimination is largely missing from the debates about the redressing of discrimination, the redistribution of resources to 'disadvantaged communities' and the allocation of political space to those previously excluded from the formal political process in South Africa. As is so often argued, for gender discrimination to become and remain a central focus of political deliberations, for women's issues to be articulated on an ongoing basis, there must be a strong, independent women's movement within civil society. This argument was made time and again, reinforced particularly by foreign del-

egates, at a major international conference hosted by the Women's National Coalition in May this year to discuss and compare constitutional and governmental mechanisms for promoting women's civil equality with men. It is clear that the recommended strong women's movement is not in place in South Africa. But the Women's National Coalition is a significant initiative to consider in this light.

The motivation for forming a national coalition of women's organizations in South Africa came out of a broad understanding of the need for women to organise around their specific issues and concerns. In August 1991 the ANC Women's League called a meeting of political parties and women's organizations to discuss how women's particular needs could be put on the agenda in the forthcoming negotiations. It was proposed to establish regional coalitions of women's organizations and

to link these, along with the national women's organizations, into a broad national coalition. This body was to engage in a process of consulting with women throughout the country, across differences of politics, culture, class and ethnicity and to draw up a document - a Women's Charter - that would reflect their needs and demands. This document would be fed somehow into the new South African constitution. A small, but energetic interim steering committee met weekly to organise a national workshop to get the coalition off the ground.

Launching the Coalition

The launch of the Women's National Coalition (WNC) in April 1992 was a remarkable event. Delegates from about 70 major women's organizations attended. They represented a wide spectrum of political views and a wide range of organizations: women's caucuses of political parties, consumer groups, advocacy

groups which for years had been pressing for women's issues to be addressed in the public political arena, human rights organizations, occupational and professional associations which represent a more elite stratum of women, urban-based community organizations, rural-based women's organizations as politically divergent as the Rural Women's Movement and the South African Vroue Landbou, and NGO service and special interest organizations. Because 70% of all women in South Africa belong to some religious grouping, many of them to independent African Churches like the Zionists, the WNC deliberately canvassed women's religious organizations to become members. (COSATU sent delegates to the workshop and was initially seen as part of the Coalition. It later withdrew membership when a technical impediment to affiliation was put forward. Only in recent months has COSATU once again become a formal member of the Coalition.)

At the time of the launching, there were three functioning regional coalitions. Today thirteen regions are organised into alliances or coalitions, their size and strength varying, but all representing a mix of women in terms of age, class and ethnic group.

The dominant motivating force for the Coalition has been the Steering Committee, comprising women elected in their personal, rather than organisational capacities. At the helm is the Convenor, Frene Ginwala, head of the ANC's Research Department and Deputy of its Emancipation Commission. Ginwala is a woman of formidable intellect, with enormous vision and drive. She played a central role in forming the Coalition and in conceptualising the Charter Campaign. Elected as Co-convenor was Ann Letsebe, from the Black Social Workers' Organization, a university lecturer, with a 'hands-on' approach to women through her work. Thoko Msane from the Young Women's Christian Association is the Secretary Gen-

eral. The Co-Treasurers, Miriam Stein of the Union of Jewish Women and Jennifer Kinghorn from Soroptimist International had both been part of the interim steering committee. This small group forms the 'working committee', and it has set up a number of other working groups to spearhead the various facets of the Coalitions' work: media, education, research, and a legal group.

A spirit of cooperation and enthusiasm permeated debate at the April workshop, expressed, perhaps, in the unanimous agreement and acclaim in the choice of Frene Ginwala as Convenor. Ginwala's commitment to the cause of equality for all women, regardless of their politics, was an important reason for her popularity. Moreover, Ginwala's pragmatic insistence on acknowledging the differences between women was an important reminder that South Africa cannot escape the legacy of its past. She emphasised the need to comprehend differences in the way we go forward as women and as South Africans. It was not necessarily through unanimity that women should seek engagement with the constitutional process. It was rather through a recognition of their diverse needs and diverse demands that the WNC has a role to play.

Coalescing of diverse politics?

The diversity of ideological and political interests within the Coalition revealed itself from the outset in discussions about what form the WNC should take, and the nature of its campaign. Although the objective of a coalition was clearly to exert political influence, many of the organizations represented were unwilling to be involved in a 'political' organization. So, for instance, the Afrikaner organization Kontak which brokers communication between different cultural and racial groups, was concerned that the WNC objectives and *modus operandi* remain 'unpolitical'. Political parties had a similar set of concerns about the status of the WNC. They feared their constituencies would object to belonging to a 'political' movement over which they had no control. And how could the WNC be accountable to constituencies which were so divergent in their interests? In discussions about the establishment of a working structure for the Coalition, the political parties (particularly the South African Communist Party) voiced their fear that the Coalition might attempt to impinge on the autonomy of its member organizations.

Other tensions revealed themselves at the launching workshop. Questions were raised about the allocation of delegates from the different organizations, and a long and hot debate ensued. Many of the smaller organizations were worried about being swamped by the interests of the larger and more political organizations, such as the ANC Women's League. Not all of the concerns were raised in the open discussion forum; some were broached in tea-break conversations.

It was only after the workshop had clearly defined the brief of the Women's National Coalition that these fears were allayed and some organizations felt able to join. For that brief is very specifically limited to the organization of a national campaign to elicit women's views on their issues, and the drawing up of a Charter. Consequently, the WNC foresees its role as politically and temporally circumscribed, its life as not extending into the 'new South Africa'.

In other words, the Coalition, as presently constituted, is not perceived as a continuing alliance or the basis for a 'women's movement' that might maintain pressure on negotiators and the future government. While there are certainly some groups in the Coalition that would like to see the development of an effective women's movement, few would believe this is possible within the Coalition given the widely divergent politics of its member organizations. Indeed, to organizations such as the ANC Women's League, itself



Protest by South African Clothing & Textile Workers Union, Johannesburg, October 1990

mobilising for mass support, such an idea is anathema.

A diluted political voice

The WNC has not been able to develop a high media profile in South Africa's present context; the violence and the negotiations have eclipsed a great deal of media interest. This has given women's organizations a sense of how difficult it is going to be for women's issues to be taken seriously by any future government and has in some ways served to heighten the need and support for the WNC. At the same time, the WNC has been unable to take up a strong political stance on various issues because of the sensitivity of some of its member organizations about associating with positions at odds with their own constituencies or political affiliations. So the WNC has in fact been a bit of a bystander at some crucial moments of women's political struggle in this transitional period. For example, although almost all the women in the Gender Advisory Committee at CODESA

were WNC members, the Coalition was not itself involved in this fight to ensure the representation of women and gender issues in the constitutional talks. There remains a certain ambiguity about the role of the WNC *vis-à-vis* the current negotiations. While not formally intervening, one of the Coalition's projects is to monitor the content and process of the talks and to provide the women negotiators with information on the gender implications of key constitutional decisions.

The WNC's hosting of the May conference on gender equality and the constitution also suggested the assumption of a more politically engaged role on the part of the Coalition. But the limits of the WNC's political voice and its fragility as an organization were only too starkly demonstrated on this occasion. For the WNC was unable to come up with a shared and coherent response to the three controversial bills on gender discrimination that were

being circulated for comment by the National Party Government at this time. The Bills were seen by many of the conference delegates as part of a somewhat cynical move by government to win women's votes. But there were members of the Coalition with ties to the National Party, or to organizations which endorsed and supported the Bills, and no consensual position could be reached.

Campaign as conscientization

If the prospects are unlikely for developing the WNC into an effective national women's political voice, the work that it has taken on in relation to the Charter Campaign promises to lay down some important groundwork for building a more coherent and mobilised women's constituency. A significant discussion that took place at the May Gender Equality conference was around the development of a human rights culture in South Africa that would integrate a notion of women's rights. The Coalition's national campaign aims to build on this understanding,

giving voice to what women conceive their particular needs to be and giving some content to what the impediments are to women achieving their rights. The idea is that women will feel part of the new constitutional dispensation and through their involvement in the campaign, feel able to seize their human rights in the future. Another objective of the campaign is to raise the level of gender sensitivity amongst men and women in South Africa.

The national campaign is operating at two interdependent levels: one involves educating and mobilising women through their organisations and media campaigns, and the other an ambitious multi-pronged participatory research process. This latter project is seen as the heart of the consultative process, enabling women 'to articulate their needs, concerns and demands for constitutional change'.

A methodology workshop held early this year debated at length different research approaches which would best capture a representative sample of views of South African women. There was general agreement that this process of involving women in identifying and prioritising their needs and demands and suggesting ways of solving their problems, was as important as the product of the research. In this view, it was argued that the WNC would have to be careful about claims to being 'scientific', although it was important that results should be reliable and rigorous.

Preparations for both education and research aspects of the campaign have gone neither quickly nor smoothly. A talented organiser from a trade union background, Pregs Govender, was appointed as project manager, and Debbie Budlender, an experienced and respected researcher was appointed to oversee the research aspects of the campaign. They, in consultation with the WNC's working group, undertook the enormous task of getting this unique and complex campaign

off the ground. The Coalition's structure is unwieldy, the stress on accountability paradoxically making the organisation somewhat hierarchical in its functioning. The scale of the project coupled with organisational constraints produced considerable stresses and tensions. A serious crisis occurred with the resignation of Budlender, prompting a reassessment of the overall scale of the research process.

In some ways this disruption had a salutary effect on the participation of the Research Supervisory Group of the Coalition (RSG), comprised of senior researchers from the NGO education sector, the Human Sciences Research Council, and universities. The RSG was then forced to take on a much more active role and to develop a revised plan for the research. Regional and national organizations have also been drawn into the campaign process in a much more participatory and responsible manner than had been the case. One of the campaign strategies that has been taken up by the regions in their own particular way is a focus, each month, on a particular issue - such as, women's legal status, women and land, women and violence, women and health, women and work.

The research project includes a number of different research strategies: focus groups, strategic in-depth interviews and questionnaires for experts and those on the ground with particular experiences to recount; media surveys; a chain letter asking women to identify three issues of concern to them; a community report card as well as public hearings and tribunals. Which groups to be accessed through these processes is being determined by a detailed demographic profile drawn up for this purpose.

Despite all the difficulties, the campaign has got off the ground in the regions. Women have signed petitions, answered questionnaires, held successful meetings, rallies, workshops, and cultural events. Little formal analysis of this material

elicited in these different ways has yet occurred, but concerns appear to be focused on the general discrimination women suffer in a male-dominated society. Complaints vary between women from different backgrounds. Issues include the power of patriarchs in polygynous households, and in particular the irresponsible approach of husbands towards supporting their families. The issue of women's lack of rights under a customary law regime, particularly in terms of access to land is a concern voiced by women in rural areas. The battering and abuse of women affect all classes. Women's access to educational opportunities and thus to employment are issues raised by groups across the class and race spectrum.

The campaign is still finding new and creative ways of engaging women quite apart from the proposals tabled by the national office. And if the research programme manages to sustain itself in the next few months, then South African women will have engaged in the widest consultative process they have ever known.

The question of the Charter's status in relation to the national constitution is still a matter of debate within the Coalition. One view is that the Charter should be a justiciable document; another is that it should simply be an aspirational document, which can be used as a point of reference in the Constitutional Court, for instance. This question is expected to be as much a focus of discussion as the Charter's contents themselves, at the regional women's coalition conferences to be held early next year. It will no doubt be a central item for consideration by the National Convention to be held in February 1994 when the Charter will be presented. At that point, if the WNC is able to orchestrate the media and organisational involvement, the voices of women should resonate throughout the country, and, hopefully, in the corridors of power as never before.

“Preparing Ourselves for Power”

Albie Sachs in Toronto

Albie Sachs: who can forget the grisly picture, flashed across the world, of his maimed body blown into a Maputo street in 1988, target of a car bomb planted by agents of the South African state? Victim of apartheid ... yet anything but a victim, then or now. Lawyer, author and longtime ANC activist, Sachs was wearing a new hat – as a key member of the ANC’s own Constitutional Committee – when he visited Toronto last month and spoke with members of *SAR*’s editorial working group (many of whom were old friends of Albie’s from his days of Mozambican exile). And he was filled with his accustomed enthusiasm and conviction even as he spoke soberly of the complexities of “preparing ourselves for power” in the “very interesting and confusing and exciting time” that defines the present moment in South Africa.

The elections

As Sachs emphasized, the process of preparing for power involved more than merely fighting the upcoming elections. Nonetheless, he did speak animatedly about the opportunities provided by the elections themselves, noting that, at the ANC’s National Executive Committee meetings, quite a lot of time is spent on planning the campaign. “Our whole campaign,” he said, “is a mixture of grassroots, old-style national liberation-type politics and modern, I wouldn’t say hi-tech but medium-tech, electioneering. I must say we enjoy that.” For the holding of these elections must be reckoned “a huge victory.” “It’s particularly important for sectors of society that have been abandoned not only in economic and social terms but also politically. Suddenly each person counts, no one can be taken for granted. So from that

point of view this is our equivalent of independence ... when everybody votes on the basis of equality and people know it, the whites know it, the blacks know it. It would be awful if we said that these are just parliamentary elections and merely formal representative democracy, which isn’t the same as real democracy and merely gives people the illusion of having power when they don’t have power.” That would be giving away too much, Sachs says. Instead the elections should be a signal for celebrations, “a moment of satisfaction for a job well done,” a moment that “gives you the courage to move into the next phase with the same kind of determination and conviction.”

Moreover, the election could prove to be an opportunity of a particular kind for the ANC, “our biggest form of mass action,” in Sachs’ phrase. This is true both of the current process of determining, with significant bottom-up participation, the electoral lists at both national and regional levels and of organizing for the elections themselves. “It’s enormously mobilizing, something where real door-to-door activity can take place. It’s helping to revitalize the branches. Election committees have been set up all over the place and voter education is catching on in a big way It’s to our credit that we staked everything on elections some time ago, establishing as a kind of constitutional fact that there would be elections – long before there was agreement on how elections were to be conducted – just to establish the claim of elections as an alternative to violence and to all the fighting over turf. It’s been quite important for the internal psychology in our own movement.”

Indeed, “some of the young comrades who I remember hearing a

few years ago talking very earnestly about the difference between armed propaganda and people’s war are now discussing the difference between proportional representation and single-member constituencies!” But was there also a danger here of the movement taking the elections *too seriously*, as an end in themselves? As Sachs himself was quick to emphasize, it’s not enough in the South African situation for the ANC merely to play the electoral game and to rely solely on the credit it has earned as a resistance organization – demanding, in effect, a blank check and assuming that “history, as it were, gives you an axiomatic rightness in what you do and so you don’t research, you don’t consult, you don’t debate, you don’t argue because you’re right.”

The broader struggle

What, then, of preparing for power in the broader sense. As Sachs admitted, the transition to a democratic South Africa is proving to be “a very different process from what many of us used to dream about and imagine. Preparing for power was seen as capturing the instruments of state power from the outside and destroying them and replacing them with new instruments that would serve the interests of the people” But things have proven to be much less straightforward than that and, as a result, “we’re confronted with a whole variety of issues and dilemmas that we haven’t been well prepared for, not least regarding the nature of our movement and our organization.” How, for example, is the spark of radical challenge to the South African status quo to be kept alive within the ANC? Part of the de Klerk government’s own strategy over the past year or

south africa

so has been precisely to brake the momentum of the ANC, to delay on elections so as both to "use their dirty tricks both to mess us up" and to encourage people to "forget that they were the oppressors and we were the freedom fighters so that they would be seen as just another political party and we would be seen as just another political party. That's what last year was about." Moreover, in Sachs' view, even those enemies of the ANC who have been less inclined to delay the electoral process, see the movement's entry into parliament as, in and of itself, likely to be deradicalizing – as the ANC converts itself from liberation movement to political party. "What they envisage is a tame organization that's totally caught up in electoral-type politics, and that is therefore easy to manipulate."

It's because of this, Sachs stated, that "some of our people are resisting any transformation of the ANC into a body capable of conducting an effective election campaign, winning elections, and

functioning in the parliamentary, democracy-type context." But this is no more acceptable a position than is any mere succumbing to "parliamentary cretinism." The ANC "has accepted, in the spirit of the Freedom Charter ... the modalities and the legality and the supervision and accountability that's implicit in electoral politics," that is a given. Having done so, the ANC also has to be very good at parliamentary politics. Indeed, Sachs was bold to say that this is what "people's power" is felt to mean to the mass of South Africans. Moreover, the skills the ANC has already demonstrated – in the activities of Mandela, Ramaphosa, Mbeki and others in the negotiations forum, for example – has been very important not only "in overcoming the arrogance of the present holders of power and of the international diplomatic community (which is very patronizing towards us) but also in overcoming what Samora Machel used to call the psychology of underdevelopment in

our own people."

But what of the dangers of the ANC leadership itself yielding to the corrupting influence of holding power? Here Sachs emphasized the importance of the fact that the ANC is now beginning to discuss within its ranks the drafting of a code of conduct to be based, in all probability, on the principle of maximum disclosure (of gifts, for example): "We feel it's important to have it in place now in order to establish the norms of the organization and to highlight the dangers that we see might be facing us." Many ANC cadres are going to move from being very poor to occupying "positions of authority, decision-making, in touch with vast resources, with many people looking to us for all sorts of things. It's important that we try to develop the internal culture and the clearly delineated restraints that will at least minimize corruption, nepotism, favouritism of different kinds and also, through the very discussion of the draft

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	MESHOMI MRS	No	
	HOLDING	No	
	BTRDUN	No	
	CG SMITH	No	
	CONAFEX	No	
	CULINAN	No	
	CURFIN	No	
	EUREKA	No	
	FARMAG	FAG	
	FS GROUP	FSG	
	DO PRE ADR OF FSGL	SD	
	FSI	FSI	
	DO PRE ADR OF FSIL	SD	
	GRINCOR	GNR	
	HUNTCOR	HNC	
	IML	IML	
	IMPNOLD	IMI	
	KLIPTON	KLN	

"'Pragmatism', 'hard realism', and 'macro-economic discipline'": the Johannesburg Stock Exchange

clauses, encourage people actually to concentrate on the importance of the movement's morality and the culture of internal accountability and responsibility."

Sachs' *SAR* interviewers were surprised to find him nonetheless recycling some old saws – all too familiar from previous African decolonization processes – that seemed to qualify a bit too easily the point he was making. He expressed anger at "sneering" press references to ANC leaders' buying expensive suburban houses, suggesting that "the people" actually "want our leaders to live reasonably well, it's a dignity and they feel if we're going to take over this country, that's part and parcel of that whole process." He was also quick to label as merely "populist" those who might raise too many questions about such practices.

Keeping the ANC honest

However, Sachs did acknowledge the danger of leaders being "bought off by capital" and/or "using their state positions to advance their own interests or those of their cronies." Indeed, in Sachs' view South Africa may be particularly vulnerable in this regard since such practices can all too easily be rationalized in merely racist terms, in the name of (otherwise legitimate) black advancement. In consequence, Sachs also spoke of forces outside the ANC that might help to keep the movement itself honest, emphasizing the role in this regard of "civil society." In Sachs' view, the concept positively encapsulates the chief strengths of the UDF's earlier non-vanguardist, community-based approach to politics. And, in the current situation, "a strong civil society with lots of NGOs, with the trade unions, civics and religious bodies, [can be] out there watching us and demanding that the state serve the interests of the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed sectors of society. These things go together. If you have a strong civil society and a strong internal culture then you

get the sort of balance that might be appropriate."

One other major front on which the ANC is ill-prepared for power, Sachs emphasized, is with regard to socio-economic policy-making: "We don't have a program except in the most generalized sort of way." In consequence, "what we're planning now is a conference on reconstruction and development for December and this [broad-based] conference will enable and compel us ... to work out concrete programs for dealing with the lives of people." Sachs also sees the role of "civil society" as being crucial to the designing of programmes that can meet what he presented as a major ANC goal: the reduction of inequalities. He envisages COSATU as likely to play a particularly creative role in framing policies for economic reconstruction, and other groups – farm-workers and the rural and urban poor, for example – also contributing very concretely to policy-making in the spheres most relevant to them (land reform, housing, health, education), both in the projected conference and in the post-election period.

Democratizing the process of socio-economic decision-making in this way makes sense. However, some of Sachs' interlocutors during his Toronto visit were more uneasy with the tone he adopted when advocating, in very strong terms, the need for "pragmatism" and "hard realism" in dealing with broadly structural economic issues ("We have to learn to live in the modern world," he stated). For he seemed to be contrasting the virtues of such emphases a bit too comfortably to the "metaphysics," "populist demagogic" and "abstract and overly schematic ideas and formulations" that now apparently define for him more classic, left-wing approaches.

True, Sachs admitted (somewhat paradoxically) that any gains from the ANC's new "realism" has been purchased at the expense of the

movement's having "no analytical framework at all" and being reduced to "merely improvising." But where did this leave some of his own emphases: on the centrality to "progressive" economic change of advancing the interests of a new cadre of black entrepreneurs, of vigorously encouraging foreign investment, of welcoming the role of the World Bank (as advocate of training and as possible stimulus to business efficiency)? He did not introduce such emphases into our interview uncritically, of course. Still, Sachs' presentation – of the need to embrace "macro-economic discipline" the better to secure "competitiveness" in the world economy, for example – was not always convincing. We worried that the ANC's embracing of elements of a neo-liberal agenda has begun to contradict the movement's simultaneous "social democratic" emphasis on egalitarianism and "popularly based and popularly driven economic policies."

The constitution

Is the ANC's narrowing economic agenda, as evoked by Albie Sachs, "realistic"? Is it wise? These questions remained in the air. But in any case Sachs' main brief, at home, is not economics but the constitution. In consequence, the main interest of his Toronto visit – which included an eloquent address at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School – centred more directly on his views regarding the current constitutional negotiations in which he is an active participant. The *SAR* editorial working group quizzed him on such matters as well.

As Sachs put it, "for us there were two absolutely crucial matters of principle that were really non-negotiable ... first, one person one vote as the foundation of the whole political order in South Africa at all levels [and] second, the inclusion of the [the four so-called independent homelands] in that process, the reintegration of South Africa. This is all embodied

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Serious Abuses: Establishing a Culture of Truth

In discussing the importance of developing a new political culture in South Africa (see accompanying article), Albie Sachs discussed at some length recent public revelations of ill-treatment, even abuse, of captives held by the ANC, mainly in the early 1980s (see Tom Lodge's article, "Spectres from the Camps," *SAR*, January–February, 1993). Here was an issue that, if dealt with effectively, Sachs saw as constituting an important learning experience for South Africans. It has come as a very real jolt for many in the ANC, however. "The one thing that our movement has had is its morality and its claim to be different from the enemy, and the approach has been that so many lies have been told about us (which people know are actual lies) that the allegations made about ill-treatment in the camps were seen as just another set of lies – from the commercial press, South African military disinformation, and so on. So it was a shock to discover that in fact there were serious abuses." Sachs added that "each one of us came to this information at different stages; in my case I was informed by Oliver Tambo in about 1984 when he and I were discussing a possible code of conduct for the movement."

"Tambo said we needed to draft a code of conduct for treatment of prisoners and I said that one thing was very easy, there should be no torture or cruel or inhuman punishment. And he said that we use torture and he just looked at me and left it like that, without comment. It was one of the hardest moments I've had in my decades of being in the ANC. He didn't just say, 'We use torture, so what?' On the contrary [he said it] with almost an agonized expression. Really what he was saying is: What is our movement's position going to be on issues like this ... I assume he said that just after the Stuart Commission would have reported so it wasn't just a question of allegations and counter-allegations and denials. [The Stuart Commission] was an ANC commission set up at the time and the commission reported very forcefully and in strong language, denouncing what had been happening. The movement had then to decide, 'Are we one of those movements where you feel you're dealing with a ruthless counter-revolution and you're entitled to use the maximum means available to you to destroy it, or do we have certain standards and a certain kind of a morality within the culture of resistance and revolution that prevents these things from happening?'"

Of course, Sachs reminded us, the ANC was literally at war and agents were being sent in massive numbers by General Coetzee to infiltrate, even to kill the leadership and some in the ANC did favour the use of any means to get information from suspect and/or known agents. Nonetheless, with Tambo's encouragement, a whole day was given over to a discussion of the ANC's own statutes regarding such matters during the ANC's 1985 Kabwe Consultative Conference. And, ultimately, the delegates* insisted that this was not be a discretionary matter but should be a question of "a kind of rule of law within the ANC.

"That's when we established a code of conduct. I think it's unique in liberation politics ... that we actually had an embryo legal system ... It's quite clear that introducing these procedures and developing systems of internal accountability, coupled with replacing the leadership of security and developing some kind of inspection profoundly improved the situation. And I'm sure it was very important for the survival and for the basic unity of the ANC to have these internal directives. More damage could have been done to the organization by abuses and authoritarianism than even by enemy action."

In other words, Sachs emphasized, the two recent Commissions of Inquiry (undertaken, it bears noting, with the ANC's own blessing) are not something new. Nor have they been mounted simply in response to external pressure. Rather, they are "a continuation of a process that we took on our own initiative for purposes of consolidating our own internal morality and philosophy a long long time ago." These commissions have been quite painful experiences, nonetheless, reinforcing the picture of real abuses of power – "a shameful episode," in Sachs' phrase. (Some of the victims were undoubtedly "honest comrades"; moreover, Sachs emphasizes, "you don't torture even villains.")

The fall-out from this process of self-exposure has been

* "It was the young people," Sachs added, "who spoke the most forcefully at the Conference on the issue and who were the most insistent on preventing Security from having a free hand and from ill-treating people. It was most impressive to see one after another going up to the microphone and insisting that we are different from the enemy, that we fight for certain values, and that this kind of conduct was to be rejected."

largely positive, Sachs feels. It was, in the first place, important for the ANC to have these investigations "because we knew that the government was going to push very hard in the election campaigns to focus all attention on these questions and not on their record and not on the poverty and the misery of life of people. Their line is very strongly that in the end we're all sinners and that they might have made mistakes and done wrong things in the past but the ANC hasn't been any different." We had to undermine that argument, Sachs said. He also suggested that there are many people who have actually been won over to the ANC out of respect for its candour and honesty on this matter. Even more important for Sachs, though, is the likely impact of the exercise on the ANC itself: "It is important that when we assume office we don't walk in carrying lies in our baggage. This theme of truth and facing up to realities and being honest with people is going to be essential in the coming phase."

But, more immediately, what kind of follow up is there going to be to the commissions' findings? This has been much debated by the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC), with varied reactions. Thus, "one very strong feeling that emerged was that here we are being asked to pay compensation to victims of our ill-treatment and being asked to take punitive action against our security people when the people (who did much worse) as a matter of organized state policy and on a massive scale over a long period of time . . . are getting off not only scot free but with fat pensions. The feeling was that it's unjust to single out those of our security officials (who, in any case, have been named and humiliated), some of whom at that stage were 18, 19, 20, 21, doing what they thought were their revolutionary duty." It was "felt that this would be unjust in itself, an example of the ANC going in for a kind of self-flagellation in circumstances where the masses, the people would feel, are you people crazy?" In short, any settling of accounts within the ANC would have to be part of a broader initiative designed to deal simultaneously with the even more heinous offenses committed by the state in its decades of defence of the apartheid system.

To be sure, Sachs did seem a little uneasy with the fact that some of those named in the commissions' reports have not been removed immediately from ANC security positions.[†] Nonetheless, he supported vigor-

ously the general position, ultimately adopted by the NEC, to guide the long-run handling of the issue: that merely ignoring the issue is not good enough and that "what's really needed is a Commission of Truth that would eventually open up all the abuses in the country on an across-the-board basis and we wouldn't exclude investigation of abuses by ANC people . . . It was a kind of merging or blending of what to do with the actual disclosures in relation to ANC personnel and what we're proposing in relation to the government people . . . All cases would have to be investigated and the appropriate forms of compensation and who should be moved from jobs and so on should be done on an across-the-board basis."

Amnesty, as a principle in the ANC's dealing with the old regime, would stay in place: "the basic approach that we've adopted is that we're not opting for Nuremberg trials." But we do want disclosure, he said. "We feel that that is the most fundamental aspect. Forgiveness and reconciliation depend on full disclosure. Even the right to be magnanimous and the right to forgive, which is a very important right for people to have, is dependent on acknowledgement of errors, or wrong-doings on the part of those who've been responsible. And the approach has been that to the extent that people disclose their wrong-doing so they will be indemnified against any form of penalty and penalization. There should be compensation for victims, and people in positions of authority and capable of repeating such wrong-doing should be moved to other positions where they can't further the abuse. This is important for the future so that history does not repeat itself and that norms are established that will be binding on any future security services."

Sachs doubts this will happen before the elections. There are dangers, of course, that the present government will merely use the intervening period to destroy documents and cover its tracks. But the fact is, Sachs says, that for any such Commission of Truth to work it must be broad-based, neither an exclusively ANC initiative nor one taken by the present government: "It should emerge out of the government of national unity concept and should be seen as part and parcel of achieving true national reconciliation on the basis of full acknowledgement of what happened in the past . . . We really want our country to move forward . . . so the idea [of the Commission] is to induce a sense of morality in public life, establish norms and values, and it fits in with the idea of a government of national unity and reconciliation based on truth and encouraging the truth of things in South Africa."

[†] At the same time, he defended the reputations of the two most senior ANC leaders, Jacob Zuma and Joe Modise, implicated, however tangentially, in the findings .

continued from page 15

in a concept of nonracial elections for the body that's going to draft the constitution. We've achieved that, not without difficulty; we had to fight every inch of the way on that whole thing." In order to achieve that, Sachs noted, the ANC had to agree to a two-thirds majority for constitutional agreement. But "that's not a problem. We want a constitution to embody a broad national will, and to bind everybody it must have that broad input."

However, other real difficulties did arise in other areas, one centring on the government's insistence on embedding what they call "power-sharing" in the whole constitutional format; they sought, in fact, to grant veto power to minority parties through a whole range of complicated mechanisms. It was over this question that negotiations broke down in 1992 and "it was only the fall-out from the Boipatong massacre, Bisho, the mass actions, [that] enabled us to be able to reestablish that the fundamental ideas of democracy, which really means majority rule, had to be accepted." Of course, Sachs said, "the concession we made in that respect was to agree to a government of national unity for a maximum of five years" – most notably to a coalition Cabinet comprised of representation proportional to each parties' seats in the parliament/constitutional assembly – with all the complexities that this will involve.

Indeed, how such a "voluntarily enforced coalition" can actually be expected to work in practice is a point of on-going discussion, Sachs admitted: "We're saying, on the one hand, that there can't be a minority veto and they're saying, on the other hand, that what's the point of a government of national unity if fifty plus one means you just take decisions." For example, "we want the president to be able to select all the members of the cabinet. But then there's a huge debate about the difference between 'in consultation

with' and 'after consultation with'. 'After consultation with' means you've got to listen and you've got to give weight to what you're hearing, but you're not bound by it. 'In consultation with' means it's a joint decision. I can't tell you the amount of time spent on the formulation and reformulation of that phrase."

This kind of struggle continues, of course, but whatever the difficulties ahead Sachs does feel it will be possible to avoid the worst excesses of the other side's demands (epitomized by Sachs as a system of "checks and balances" that would be "all checks and no balances" and would produce "a form of governmental paralysis that would have suited them all too well because paralysis means the status quo with no transformation"). Sachs also emphasized that, in any case, such formulae are only one aspect of things. Much will depend on the underlying balance of political forces that informs inter-party negotiations in the post-electoral period: "If there's a high degree of consciousness in society, if the civil society is well organized, if the ANC is working well, if we're democratic in our ranks, if we've got clear policies to offer people, then a relatively open constitutional arrangement can be very beneficial to us."

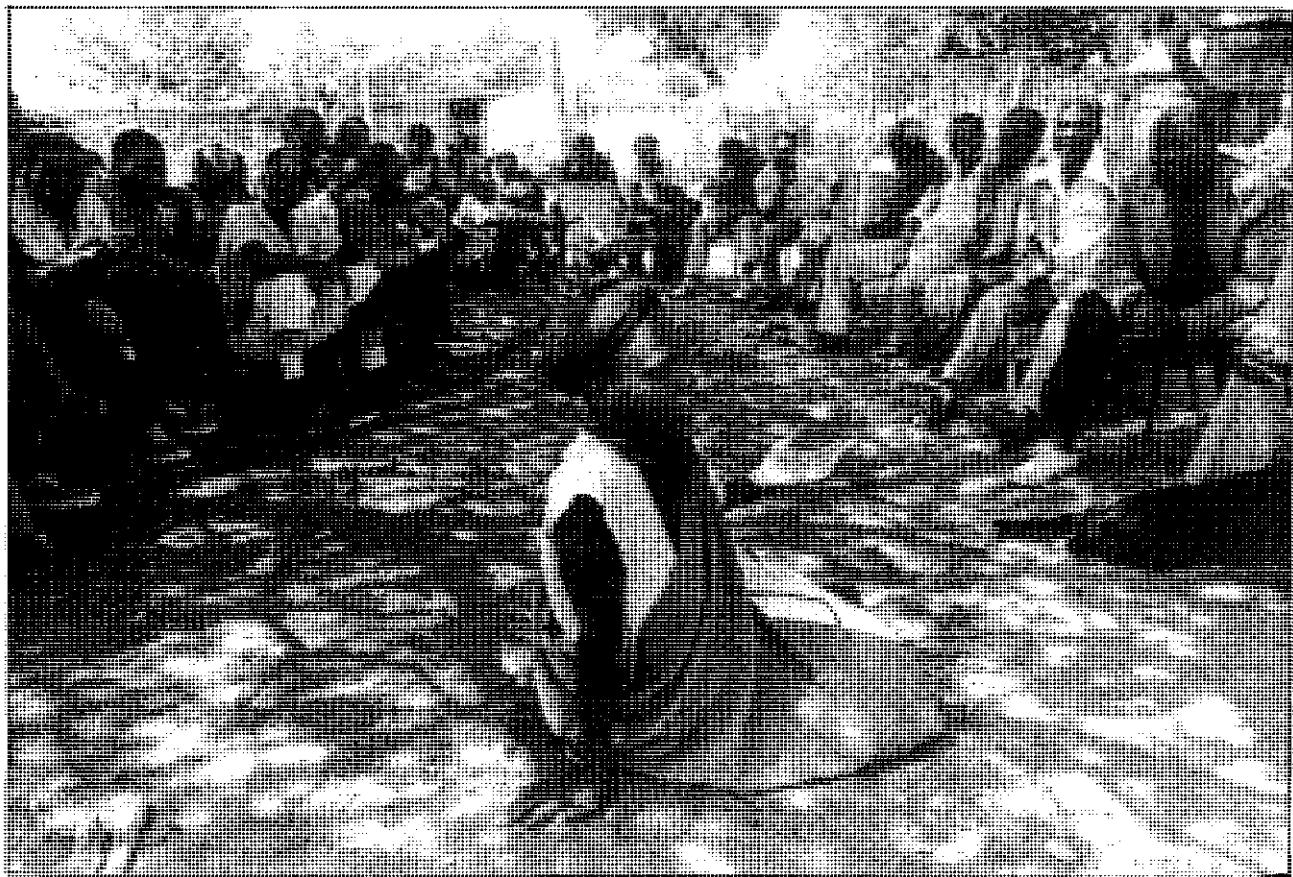
There are other challenges. After all, the newly elected parliament will be both a parliament for government and a parliament for constitution-making and it's not always clear, Sachs suggested, how that dual role can be expected to play itself out. His own hunch is that, acting constituent assembly, this parliament will not be cabinet-directed but instead will have to "develop its own methodologies, styles of working, and develop its own dynamic." But there are other tough questions as well; for example, "the crucial issues of the time frame for finalizing the document and the deadlock breaking mechanism [are] still being debated." For example, "we want a limited term,

a situation in which the minds of the constitution-making body are concentrated on coming up with a consensus that's going to work. And the other side wants to spin out the thing indefinitely. So the deadlock breaking mechanism becomes important."

Federalism

In addition – "it is perhaps the area where we've been pushed the hardest" – a particularly key issue has been in relation to the tiers of government. For its part the ANC has embraced the idea of strong regional governments: "the regional factor is important in South Africa as it is anywhere in the world and, again, that's something we've got to learn not just to live with and accommodate, but accept that it's part and parcel of who we are, the nature of our country" The ANC's federal formula – influenced by study of the German and other experiences – has therefore become (in Sachs' formulation) one of "strong national government for national tasks, strong regional government for regional tasks, strong local government for local tasks."

Unfortunately, however, the "federalogues" – those identified by Sachs as advocating various extreme versions of decentralized government – want a great deal more than that. Take, for example, "the Buthelezi, who don't want democracy at all, who really want a confederal type of situation, who don't even want to be grounded by a bill of rights It's not even a question of an autonomous democratic state because they're going to lose elections even in Natal. Instead, they want to maintain authoritarian systems of rule [in their own local fiefdoms]. I think that's at the heart of their thinking." Others – the National Party and the Democratic Party – "use classical pro-federal arguments (because) many of them are very worried about major social transformation and they see federalism as a brake on that." So here, too, struggle and debate – over what might



Evicted tenant farmers & labourers, Weenan Emergency Camp, Natal, 1988

Cedric Nunn - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

be exclusive powers, what concurrent powers, and the like – continues. Sachs does feel that a reasonable line is likely to be held, although he also expresses concern about the current attempt by “federalogues” to freeze the divisions of powers defined by the present interim constitutional arrangements into place.

There are dangers, then, but Sachs also emphasized that “the good thing about all this debate is that it’s forcing the ANC to take the regions very seriously and to run for office in every region and that means not only mobilizing, but it means speaking to people and putting resources there and establishing structures and attending to the demands and interests of people everywhere in the country.” Of course, this may raise, in and of itself, other kinds

of constitutional issues – relating to the question of constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms – that Sachs stressed in concluding his interview. In the rural areas, for example, “traditional leaders are making a heavy push at this stage” and many of them are not particularly enlightened on issues like the application of draft bill of rights provisions to the demand for gender equality. Here “we’re trying to avoid a head-on collision where people are seen as being forced to make an absolute choice between culture and equality, partly because we lose if there’s that head-on collision.”

On the other hand, Sachs continued, “you can’t allow culture to be used as a means of negating fundamental principles of the bill of rights. All our cultures have

patriarchy built into them. Again, this is an area where there are strong women’s organizations and a strong public consciousness about the importance of the fight against sexism will probably be more important than the actual terms of the constitution.” To be sure, Sachs does find aspects of the constitutionalization of such matters rather worrying because the present interim bill of rights (with reference to the issue of gender equality but to other issues as well) does “lack clear internal logic” and is “so full of themes and counter themes [that] it doesn’t stand up very well.” Is it, nonetheless, a good dry run for a proper charter of rights in the future? We were left with the distinct impression that it will be so long as Albie Sachs has anything to say about it!

Malawi After the Referendum

BY GERARD L. KAMANGA

Gerard Kamanga lives in Toronto where he is vice-chair of the Malawi ACTION Committee (for Human Rights) and editor of its Newsletter.

Several months have passed since, on June 14, Malawians "cut the black cockerel's throat" (as one of them put it). The cockerel is the symbol of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) of President Hastings Kamuzu Banda - the nonagenarian who has, for 30 years, ruled Malawi with an iron fist. And in the June referendum some sixty three per cent of Malawian voters rejected Banda's one party-rule, voting instead for the institution of multi-party elections.

The defeat dealt a devastating blow to Banda's personal pride and underscored his party's waning popularity. During the twenty-nine referendum rallies that he addressed throughout the country, Banda personalized the campaign by calling on the people to vote for "Your Kamuzu." Yet the crowds that once attended Banda's rallies, "in their tens of thousands" (a usual Radio Malawi superlative) had dwindled to a few thousand during the campaign. And the referendum itself became a litmus test whose results could prove politically fatal to both Banda's personality cult and the myths surrounding it.

Yet, despite this, the fact is that nothing, so far, seems fundamentally to have changed in Malawi. For one thing, President Banda himself remains intransigent. Drawing his main support from the police and Young Pioneers (who have been clearly implicated in the abuse of human rights, torture and assassination that have scarred the country under his rule), Banda still cannot conceive of a Malawi

that is not ruled by him alone. Indeed, a day after the results were announced, Banda proclaimed, in a Radio Malawi broadcast, that while he had accepted the results of the June 14 referendum, "the suggestion that the government or I should resign to be replaced by an interim government... is out of the question and totally unacceptable."

But if the country now finds itself in a state of political paralysis, the fault (as will be argued below) lies equally with the waning enthusiasm of the opposition leaders to press their advantage. As a result, and despite the setting of a date for the general election in May of next year, a sense of frustration has gripped the citizenry which manifests itself in the form of intermittent strikes in both the private and public sectors.

Banda's recalcitrance

SAR readers will recall that Dr. Banda was forced into holding the referendum in the first place both by domestic pressure and by international financial sanctions (see the articles on Malawi by Melvin Page and Tony Woods in the July and November 1992 issues of *SAR*, respectively). Thus, the president's paralysing grip began to loosen in March, 1992, when the country's Catholic bishops issued a "cautious" but blunt pastoral letter chastising the government for poor governance and abuse of human rights. In the weeks that followed, students protested in support of the bishops.

Then in April, Chakufwa Chihana, a leading trade unionist who had been in neighbouring Zambia attending a seminar on democratization of Malawi, was arrested at Malawi's international airport in Malawi's capital city of Lilongwe as he was trying to address those who had come to meet him there. (Af-

ter months of harassment by the regime Chihana was eventually sentenced to two-and-a-half-years imprisonment on trumped up charges on December 14, 1992. He was released on June 12, just before the referendum.) And in May, at least 38 people were killed by police when a workers' pay dispute escalated into a day of rioting. At that point, too, foreign donors moved to suspend all but humanitarian aid until "tangible and irreversible evidence of progress toward good governance and respect for human rights were restored in Malawi."

Much was expected from a referendum won under such conditions. Hence the current frustration of the populace at the nature of its aftermath. Particularly surprising was the fact that, in an apparent attempt to stem any fresh tide of civil disobedience, the Malawi opposition soon agreed to join with the Banda government to constitute a parallel caretaker government in the form of a new "executive council." Moreover, a 14-strong committee, seven from the government and seven from the opposition, has now been appointed to work out the technical responsibilities of the National Executive Council (NEC), and a national consultative council has also been formed to advise this NEC.

So far, however, President Banda has refused to put in place the two councils that were supposed to oversee the necessary constitutional and legislative changes for a multi-party form of government and to put in place the mechanisms for the upcoming elections. In spite of the fact that both the Public Affairs Committee (PAC) (the alliance of opposition organizations) and the Presidential Committee on Dialogue (PCD) agreed to the formation of these councils shortly after the

referendum vote, the PCD has merely cancelled meetings scheduled with the PAC in which the stalemate over these councils was to be discussed.

International duplicity

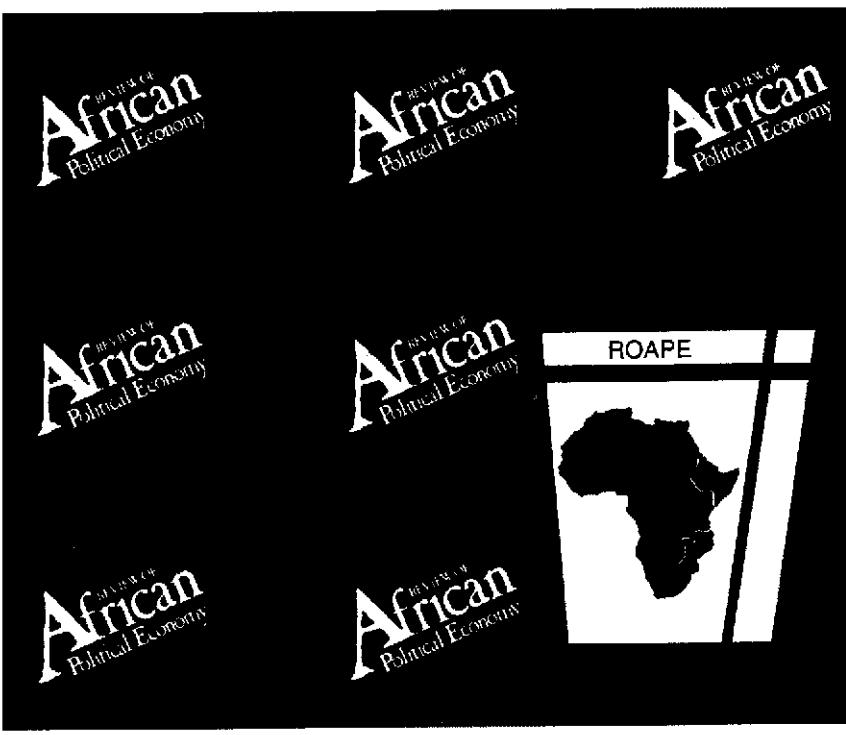
Opposition sources say that one main reason it is becoming more and more difficult to talk to the government is that the British government - for reasons we can only guess at - is resuming its aid to Malawi! The Churches Commission on Mission of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland (CCBI) has lodged a strong protest with that government against the decision to do so. "We are perturbed to learn that Her Majesty's Government has agreed to restore the balance of payments aid in September." It reminds the British government of the Paris Club decision of last year, to which the British government was party, that aid should resume "only after safeguards are in place which will ensure irreversible change."

In this context, the Churches' Commission notes that "progress is being jeopardized by what appears to be deliberate stalling on the part of the Malawi government ... The holding of the referendum itself and the two legislative changes proposed by the Malawi government immediately following it were encouraging developments," the Churches say, "yet little else has been achieved in the two months following the vote." Hence the concern within the country that with Britain resuming aid to Malawi, those who have been working for changes would "lose this vital leverage with the government and progress may cease altogether."

Ironically, the British decision came immediately after the issuing of a European Community press release noting that "the Malawi authorities have failed to reach acceptable standards of democratic campaigning, thus calling into question their commitment to increased respect for human rights." Yet soon

the EC was itself announcing that it, too, was considering reactivating its aid programme to Malawi by the end of the year. In light of such developments, the CCBI argues that "there remains a serious question as to whether the Government will, in fact, take the necessary measures to ensure irreversible change."

Fortunately, Malawians seem less likely to be satisfied with the current stalemate than are such external funders: "It is clear that ... the population out there ... is going to be reacting (angrily) to the continuation of a system which they have rejected," comments Mordecai Msisha of the PAC. As noted, there



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are reports of numerous strikes – the most significant ones have been those by the Electricity Supply Commission (ESCOM) and the Blantyre City Council – taking place throughout the country as a result of lack of confidence in the pace of the democratization process. Recently too, there were strikes by civil servants throughout the country.

"The Life President is still in charge, but I don't think he knows completely what is going on," suggested Aleke Banda. (Banda, no relation to the president, is the former General Secretary of the MCP and now, after some 12 years in prison for falling foul of Dr. Banda, United Democratic Front (UDF) campaign chairman.) But detention laws are still in place that give police the power to arrest individuals for an indefinite period of time without court order, as are laws restricting the freedom of the press. The Malawi Young Pioneers are still linked to the police and have their own powers to arrest.

Moreover, it was Dr. Banda himself who publicly dismissed the whole idea of an interim government as suggested by the PAC in the wake of the referendum and Banda, too, who has since made mock of other apparent advances towards democracy. Speaking a week before the referendum, in an interview over Voice of America, a spokesperson for Banda's government, Health Minister and Publicity Secretary of the Malawi Congress Party, Dr. Hetherwick Ntaba, told me: "A vote for multi-party rule would mean some 'token' changes to the constitution and to the largely powerless parliament but would have no bearing on the powers of the President." Can it be that he was right?

A disunited opposition?

As noted, the PAC – made up of the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Malawi Council

of Churches, the Law Association of Malawi and representatives of the business and Muslim communities – is the key alliance of opposition organizations in Malawi. Yet we have seen that many Malawians have begun to feel the PAC has betrayed them. Certainly, the momentum of open defiance that characterized most, if not all, rallies mounted by the opposition groups prior to the referendum has since declined and there is, instead, a sense of uncertainty, frustration, anxiety and anger among the voter-population. In addition, most voters contacted in Malawi feel that by agreeing to join forces with a government rejected by the people of Malawi, the opposition groups "have sold out on the results of the referendum." "These guys (leaders of opposition groups), just because they led the opposition to Banda's rule during the referendum campaign now think that we gave them the mandate to usurp the government. No. We haven't given anyone the mandate to rule us yet. Let them call for a general election," demanded one citizen who voted for the multi-party option in the referendum.

Of course, up to a point, the opposition has made just such a demand. Thus, the United Democratic Front was pressing for the elections to be conducted in December this year. However, indications now are that such elections may not be scheduled for before the middle of next year, Banda's PDC emphasizing the practical problem of the rains which fall around the end of the year. However, there is a general feeling in the multi-party circles that the government is merely playing for time. Playing for time? Recent events seem to suggest that there could be considerable truth in this contention. Thus, long before polling day, some senior government and MCP officials, aware they were not going to win, began to put in place a post-referendum

strategy whose main tactic was to create a Kenya-style scenario – so cunningly used by the latter country's president, Daniel Moi – of "divide and rule." The MCP knows that if the two main pro-multi-party groups, the Alliance for Democracy, AFORD, and the United Democratic Front, UDF, were to fight a general election as separate political parties they could split the opposition vote, which in the referendum was less than twice the vote for the MCP.

Not that the government needs to work very hard to split the alliance between these two groups: they are already doing that job themselves. Rumours doing the rounds in Malawi indicate that AFORD and UDF not only aggressively rival each others but are both also threatened with possible internal divisions within their own ranks. It is believed, for example, that certain members of the UDF are deeply unhappy with the failure to obtain a government of national unity and are considering forming a new political party. And while AFORD is trying to create a national presence by overcoming its current image of being predominantly composed of members of the Tumbuka ethnic group from the north of the country, these efforts are said to be threatened by some of its more ambitious members who openly show their contempt for the majority Chewa ethnic group and are also engaged in sling mud at the leaders of the UDF.

The electoral system

If the current signs of disunity amongst opposition ranks become concrete divisions then multi-party supporters could emerge as winners of a referendum battle but losers of the electoral war, leaving the way open, as suggested, for a Kenya-style victory by the government. Of course, as some constitutional experts have argued, much could also turn on the nature of the electoral constitution ultimately agreed upon for the multi-party system. Such

experts say that if Malawi opts for a Westminster single member constituency system the MCP might gain from a two or three-way split in the opposition vote. "The outcome could be the MCP being the largest party in parliament, even with a fewer than one-third of the votes - simply because its organization on the ground is better," says one analyst. On the other hand, if Malawi were to opt for the most common European electoral system with party lists, "perhaps with separate lists for each of the three regions, then each of the three parties would probably gain about one-third of the seats in parliament." The government could then be a UDF-MCP or UDF-AFORD coalition.

Commenting on the referendum results, Jude Coyle, a Catholic priest of the Missionaries of Africa who went to Malawi together with Warren Bailie (the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario) as members of the United Nations Joint International Observer Group for the Referendum and also (representing the Inter-Church Coalition on Africa) of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches' delegation, says: "The referendum results reflect the fact that the Chewa, the most populous tribe in the Central Region of Malawi, support the Malawi Congress Party. All other tribal groups, including the non-Chewa tribes of Central Region voted for the multi-party option."

If this is true, the question arises as to why voter participation fell along such ethnic lines. A first reason is that the Malawi Congress Party has become synonymous with the dominant Banda/Tembo/Kadzamira triumvirate and these three - Banda, his heir apparent John Z. Tembo, uncle to Banda's live-in-companion Cecilia Kadzamira - all come from the Central region.

Secondly, the triumvirate, through the Press Group of Companies, is the second largest employer

in the country. Most of the Group's activities, such as Press Farming, General Farming, and the like, are based in the Central Region and the rural population in districts of Mchinji, Lilongwe, Kasungu and part of Dedza depend on these establishments for their livelihood, and live as tenants or squatters on the land belonging to the three men. They had no alternative but to vote for the one-party system and they remain mere economic captives whose lives depend entirely on Banda's dispensation of patronage.

A "collective effort"?

The majority of support for AFORD comes from the Northern Region while support for the UDF is strongest in the Southern Region. Jude Coyle observes that "the leadership of the UDF seems to consist in large measure of former members and ministers of the Malawi Congress Party who had been dismissed from Government and imprisoned. One also gets the impression that 'big business' (Malawian style) supports the UDF," he says.

Indeed, many Malawians describe the UDF leaders as "old wine in new bottles," meaning that the party is, in many important respects, merely the MCP all over again. In contrast, the AFORD leadership is, in the words of one member of the UN observer team to Malawi, drawn "from modest backgrounds and seems to reflect more closely the interests of the ordinary citizenry." Yet AFORD leader

Chakufwa Chihana, in addressing students of the University of Malawi on July 7 in the aftermath of the referendum, sounded both guarded about the country's prospects, and also reconciliatory.

Referring, obviously, to the UDF leadership, some of whom were responsible for a number of atrocities while in the Banda government, Mr. Chihana said: "We know some of these people who are now parading, like converts to a new church, as committed democrats spouting forth about the need for human rights. We should ask ourselves, 'Can we trust them?'" Yet, he added, "this does not mean that we should seek retribution ... What it means is that we must draw lessons from our experience in order to avoid committing the same political mistakes on the road to the new Malawi."

"Governance," he concluded, "is a collective effort, it depends on teamwork." Yet the question remains open as to what kind of "collective effort" Malawian politicians are actually capable of. In the run-up to the referendum the opposition groups did offer a remarkable example of how those with differing traditions and interests can co-operate for a common end. Now, says a recent statement from the Church of Scotland, "we call on the leaders of all political groups to continue what has been begun for the common good of all." In particular, the statement urges "those currently in power to put first the good of all Malawi's people" and to cease "their obstructive practices and offer their willing co-operation to those whom hitherto they have sought to frustrate, so that the country may move swiftly to a general election, and the peaceful choice of a new government." A slender hope? Yet with the spectre of social and political disintegration looming so large in Africa these days, most thoughtful Malawians realize that a great deal depends on its being realized.

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Staying Alive: Angola on the Ropes

BY DAVID POTTIE

David Pottie is a member of the editorial working group of Southern Africa Report and is currently researching democratization in Angola.

A recent workshop at Kingston's Queen's University brought together a group of Canadian researchers and academics for a much needed discussion of the bitter renewal of violence in Angola since the September 1992 elections. The workshop, held under the auspices of the Canadian Research Consortium on Southern Africa (CRC SA), illustrated not only the massive scale of war and suffering in Angola but also prompted some frank and open re-thinking of the nature of the MPLA and its project.

Most significant, however, was the recognition that Angola is not talked about often enough. The scale of suffering from the war in Angola should in itself underscore the importance of furthering an awareness and an understanding of Angolan politics. The country now faces its worst fighting in years (as many as 1,000 casualties daily) in the aftermath of the MPLA's electoral victory. There are many complexities to consider in seeking an explanation, from internal dynamics to international factors (ranging from South African regional politics to the Cold War and to Cuban military support for the MPLA government). Even the following admittedly cursory report may help suggest just how imperative it is not only that we pay more attention to Angola but that we press for more substantial political action, in Canada and elsewhere, around the Angolan issue.

The need to strengthen our own analyses becomes all the more imperative in light of the current lack of international political and media attention towards Angola. By

the UN's own admission Angola is currently the bloodiest war in the world, and yet we still hear barely a word on it from the western governments or the media. As *SAR*'s John Saul noted, we must condemn the reluctance of both the US (a major architect of the Frankenstein Unita has now become) and the UN to move forcefully on the issue of Angola. While it is true that the U.S. has at last recognized the Angolan government and that some sanctions have finally been promised against Unita for its flouting of the electoral outcome in Angola (see, on this subject, Victoria Brittain's article in *SAR*, July, 1993), there is not much likelihood that Zaire, as the main supply corridor to Unita, will really be touched. Moreover, the US apparently still wants to see Savimbi delivered for power sharing, despite his flouting of process and his manifest desire for a monopoly on power. The MPLA is thus faced with the paradox that even though it has capitulated to the international agenda on a wide range of fronts many of Savimbi's backers remain steadfast.

In addition to the war and international silence, difficulties of access to archives, to documents, and to people also poses a constant challenge to research on Angola. Until a thaw in the climate occurs and some degree of normalcy returns to the country the research agenda will very much remain driven by such problems of accessibility. Despite all these constraints, the discussion threw some light on a number of important themes.

Just as the war has set the tone of political life in Angola, so too did it frame our day of discussion. Drawing on his recent archival and interview work in Cuba, Angola and the USSR, Ed Dosman, a professor at York University, provided a comprehensive ac-

count of Cuba's military intervention in Angola. For Dosman, Angola remains Cuba's most formidable foreign policy initiative and, contrary to much western writing on the subject, also stands as a genuine achievement of international solidarity - with Cuba, alone of the world's nations, standing up to confront South Africa. Cuba's commitment of 55,000 troops, itself a remarkable measure of the size and strength of this accomplishment, was crucial for the defense of Angola's territorial integrity. Angola thus stands as one of the last conflicts of a particular era of anti-imperialist struggles.

But the meaning of Cuba's international activism also went well beyond soldiers and weapons, imprinting itself ideologically and culturally upon both countries - as well as on the southern African region as whole. Thus, while the Cuba-FAPLA victory over the SADF at Cuito Cuanavale was a central battle in strategic terms, it also destroyed the myth of SADF invulnerability throughout the region, not least in South Africa itself. As for Cuba, from his interviews with virtually all of the top Cuban officers who served in Angola Dosman remarked on their feeling of great accomplishment in Angola. Feats were achieved there that were not attained even in Cuba, and in many fields: less attention is usually given to the 65,000 Cuban civilians who have worked in the sectors of health, education, construction and agriculture than is given to the military side, for example. Unlike most intervening powers, Cuba has not left behind any military bases or properties, or made claims to Angola's resources. But the experience of this contact has left a lasting bond between the Angolan and Cuban peoples.

Another dominant theme considered at the workshop was how the conflict has been conditioned by the



John Liebenberg - Impact Visuals

MPLA's own brand of politics. This, in turn, involved a rethinking of what has become of the MPLA since independence. To answer this question, Daniel dos Santos, an Angolan activist and academic now teaching at the University of Ottawa argued, we need to examine how social classes produce movements because 'who made the MPLA' and 'what is the MPLA' are two necessarily interrelated questions. For dos Santos, both the MPLA and Unita share a common ground – a shared proclivity for political opportunism, perhaps – because both are movements driven, originally, by a social class of *asimilados*.

To be sure, the MPLA has been dramatically changed as a movement by its attainment of state power. Whereas the MPLA reflected the dominance of the petty bourgeoisie prior to independence, the post-independence era has generated a new social class attached to the state apparatus. In particular, under the prevailing war conditions the attainment of state power has increasingly produced the dominance of military personnel within the MPLA. We can thus attribute Angola's ability to sustain the war for so long not just to FAPLA's reserve of military skill and strength but to an enforced specialization in war brought about by the scale

and pervasiveness of military engagement. But much the same can be said of Unita. The exigencies of the war effort thus provide a second common ground for Unita and the MPLA, insofar as they have both come to feed off the war in order to reproduce themselves and to perpetuate their leadership cadres.

However, this provocative comparison of MPLA and Unita had also to be tempered, in dos Santos' view, by consideration of other aspects of the path taken by each movement. As he remarked, one crucial difference between the MPLA and Unita is that MPLA, despite a rich history of personal machinations for power (e.g. Chipenda's 'Eastern Revolt,' or Neto's centralization of power) has also been a popular movement of a particular type, whereas Unita may be not altogether misleadingly characterized as the product of one man's ambitions for power. Having said this – that Savimbi has been, and continues to be, a crucially important "variable" in his own right (not unlike South Africa's Buthelezi, who also shares Savimbi's knack for manipulating ethnic consciousness) – we must also remember to situate these personal politics historically and structurally. And so we are continually drawn back to the war and the role of the military as central facts of Angolan political life.

They frame Savimbi's prominence as well as the parameters of his international support (not least from the South African military itself!).

Whatever the merits of these kinds of comparisons of the MPLA and Unita, one was also left wondering about the significance of the popular characterization (echoed in passing by dos Santos) of Unita as "murderers" and the MPLA merely as "thieves." This is, at best, faint praise of the MPLA (although the distinction is a real one) and, in fact, criticism of the MPLA is not to be dismissed lightly. Yet we should recall that the MPLA has been, quite literally, risking death at the hands of Unita by seeking legitimization through the recent election. Many MPLA leaders would probably have perished had Savimbi actually won, for example (the Unita members who have taken their seats have themselves done so under Savimbi's threat of death). Moreover, the government also weakened itself considerably – hence its initial military setbacks after Savimbi's rejection of the election results and relaunching of hostilities – by complying with the UN rules regarding the pre-election dispersion of both the armies in a way that Savimbi refused to do.

In the end, then, dos Santos – while remaining profoundly sceptical about many of the MPLA's claims for itself – emphasized that MPLA and Unita are not quite the same, that the differences between them do matter, and that, even if the MPLA is very much less than "good," Unita, with its grim agenda, is very bad indeed. Hence the dim prospects for an internally generated solution to the conflict. Is there a glimmer of optimism to be found, externally, in recent statements by the ANC's Thabo Mbeki that a changing South African government will soon produce a changing posture on the part of South Africa's military towards Angola. Perhaps. In the meantime the polarization of the country deepens and the killing continues.



Homeless in Johannesburg over the warmer air from a grating - or might it be Chicago?

Segregation IS an Issue

BY WILMOT G JAMES

Wilmot James is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Cape Town.

South Africa repealed its segregation laws during 1991, including the Group Areas and Land Acts, as part of the process leading up to a negotiated settlement with the black majority. It is widely recognised that this is just a first step in a much longer struggle to reduce the inequality between white and black, as the ending of discriminatory laws obviously will not house the homeless or spread resources around more equitably. One leg of this struggle will centre around housing. As a very large section of the black population are either unhoused or found in the teeming squatter camps around Durban, the Johannesburg area, Cape Town and elsewhere, housing provision is a critical area of concern.

As a result, the private sector, local government, NGOs, po-

litical organizations, trade unions and global actors like the World Bank are already heavily involved in shaping the character of low-income housing financing and provision. Also, much of South Africa's violence must be seen against the background of poor housing conditions, differences in accommodation between migrant workers and permanent urban dwellers and dreadfully inadequate services, conditions that are undoubtedly exploited by those seeking to promote disorder and civil war. This makes the urban housing question one of the highest priorities for a new democratic government.

The desegregation of neighbourhoods is the other leg of the urban question. This has not received much attention in the discourse of change, probably because it is regarded as a middle-class concern, and because of the sense that segregated housing is better than no housing at all. While few will quar-

rel with the point, I don't think that the need for mass housing provision should be separated from neighbourhood desegregation. Part of the reason why there is a shortage of housing for blacks is that some whites don't want people of colour to move into their neighbourhoods. Desegregation could also spread opportunities and resources around more equitably, by drawing black people into the mainstream of economic and social life.

Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton devoted their book *American Apartheid* (Harvard, 1993) to the critical role residential segregation played in maintaining inequality between white and black in America. Some of the points they make are simply good common sense. For example, African-Americans living in bad neighbourhoods are far away from where the jobs are, where the good schools are located, where health services are concentrated, and so on. If it wasn't for white

south africa

resistance to desegregation, some of the better housing stock could be available to black people. By excluding blacks from the mainstream, urban segregation traps them in poverty-stricken ghettos and makes it very difficult for them to become more mobile, attain a decent education and take advantage of the superior social services and amenities concentrated in the wealthier white middle-class suburbs. Spatial segregation thus tends to uphold inequality and to concentrate poverty.

If this is the case for America, then in some ways the problem is even more critical in South Africa. A history of apartheid has resulted in high levels of segregation between white and black. Black neighbourhoods – the townships – are, with few exceptions, to be found far away from the cities and towns. Soweto, for example, is 30 kilometres from Johannesburg; Khayelitsha is 20 kilometres from Cape Town. Black people have to spend considerable time and resources travelling back and forth, using dangerous, inefficient and badly-run public transport, to get to jobs which are all concentrated outside of the townships. The unemployed, currently estimated at about 40-45 per cent of the adult black population, are trapped in the townships and squatter camps, because it is expensive to find work, in an economy that has not produced a single new job for a considerable period of time. Ordinary black kids have to go to their inferior and highly politicized schools, for the better schools are in white areas, accessible only to black kids from the middle and privileged classes. Townships lack good hospitals and health-care services because these are located in the white areas. In sum, a history of segregation has placed black people at a considerable disadvantage, by locating them spatially away from where the jobs, good schools and health services are. In short, the opportunities of South Africa tend to be concentrated.



... on the streets of Durban - 1992

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How likely is it that South Africa's neighbourhoods will desegregate? Given the present forces at work, not very, I am afraid to say. For one thing, the current constitutional negotiations entrench existing property rights inherited from the apartheid era. This means that new local and state governments can only use land held in public trust for low-income housing developments within cities. The present white government has been selling such land to private developers on the quiet. The progressive urban planning fraternity believes that new housing developments on available land within cities will have to be sensitive to the interests of local communities, which, given the racial configuration of things, will not welcome poor black people in the cities.

Moreover, to the extent that there has been some desegregation, it has resulted in resegregation, with all the consequences of job and wealth flight into the suburbs. For example, parts of the inner city of Johannesburg experienced rapid immigration of blacks in the 1980s, but by the time they settled down whites left with the jobs and resources, driving down the revenue base of the areas, resulting in the red-lining of

districts by lending institutions. We recognise here the classic American black ghetto emerging.

Then there are the constraints of class. Few blacks earn incomes high enough to purchase homes or rent in the private housing market. The home-ownership market in any event is tied to the availability of state or corporate subsidies, which come in the form of additional income paid to lending institutions to service mortgages. Blacks have a poor presence in jobs having the subsidy benefit. With the change in government after the first national elections in April 1994, many more blacks will enter public office and the civil service, making the subsidy more widely available. But an elite will benefit, and in any event there is talk about phasing the housing subsidy out given the prospect of having many more beneficiaries.

Finally, whites are resistant to black in-migration. Survey results show a reluctance among English-speaking whites and an outright hostility among Afrikaans-speaking whites to residential integration. In a survey I conducted in May 1993, whites mentioned the classic fears associated with black in-migration:

anxieties about falling property values, rising crime, overcrowding and declining social services. The most vulnerable groups of whites – the Afrikaans lower middle-classes who own houses more blacks can afford – have put up all sorts of barriers to black in-migration, and occasionally use racial violence to make the point. As a result, to the extent that there is some integration taking place, it involves middle class blacks moving into middle class English areas, which they can afford least.

It is important that the issue of desegregation be added to the discourse of change and the political agenda for the future. A great deal of attention has been paid to the mechanics of redistribution and the equalization of public spending across all neighbourhoods. Even if this proceeds, and I am not confident that it will, the segregation between white and black in their respective neighbourhoods and areas will be maintained, not subverted. The persistent inequality between white and black and the concentration of poverty in black areas – the story Massey and Denton tell about America – could well be repeated in South Africa.

The Sanctions End Game

BY DON RAY

Don Ray teaches political science at the University of Calgary and is an active member of Calgary's Committee Against Racism (CAR)

Now that, in the wake of Nelson Mandela's well-publicized appearance before the United Nations, sanctions against South Africa are fast disappearing, it's interesting to take a look at just how eagerly, in the final days of those sanctions, Canada's Conservative government viewed the prospect of ending them. The Tories would no doubt argue that they deserve unalloyed praise

for having implemented sanctions in the first place. Yet those who have followed the issue closely will know that the Tory government, all along, did much to minimize their effectiveness. The manner of their playing out the sanctions' endgame provides a further revealing footnote to that contradictory record.

Thus, by the end of June 1993, Canadian business was aquiver at the prospect of ending all barriers against Canadian investment and trade with the apartheid regime. After all, President F. W. de Klerk had agreed to an election date (April

27, 1994) to choose a constituent assembly and thereby satisfied one of two major Commonwealth criteria (established at that body's October 1991 meeting) for the ending of sanctions.

The next step, and the second of the criteria, was to be the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to supervise the white government until the elections had taken place. And, as the ANC firmly stated (not least its Canadian chief representative Victor Motsepe), so long as the TEC was not in place to supervise the elections and effectively remove de Klerk's ability to

manipulate their outcome through his control of government structures, there was no way it could be said that the second criterion had been met.

Enter the Canadian government. Despite the fact that this was a period when negotiations between de Klerk's government and the ANC to set up a TEC were still fraught with tension, strong rumours began leaking out of Ottawa that External Affairs Minister Perrin Beatty was about to announce the end of sanctions.

Not surprisingly, Canadian solidarity groups (including Calgary's Committee Against Racism/CAR) – committed to the premise that Canada should respect the Commonwealth criteria – became anxious that the government not jump the gun. For CAR, an invitation at the end of June to appear on CBC television phone-in show to discuss whether or not sanctions were a "good thing" prompted us to devise our own strategy. We believed that sanctions should be dismantled gradually in exchange for concessions from the apartheid regime and we didn't believe that the election call was enough of a step. We said as much on the air. In contrast, an apartheid diplomat, also guesting on the show, merely appealed to Canadians to come to South Africa and invest. But he did so without much apparent success; by the end of the programme, most callers were arguing vigorously for continuing sanctions. There were also other kinds of efforts to mobilize anti-apartheid sentiment, locally and nationally, on this issue – with phone calls and faxed messages to Beatty and other government officials in Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal.

At this time, Canada's remaining sanctions referred to trade and investment, financial loans, and arms sales. External Affairs responded to our pressure by pointing out that the UN mandatory arms embargo on exports to South Africa would

remain in place until revoked by the UN and "a post-apartheid South African government is firmly established, with full democratic control and accountability" (External Affairs, News Release No. 139, July 2, 1993). And it repeated its (somewhat misleading) claims as to how much it had done on other fronts, notably trade and investment – while also telling CAR that even its entirely voluntary ban on private investment and bank credit to South Africa had worked, since the banks had closely adhered to this ban for fear of having to answer questions from their shareholders. (Here was an unsolicited testimonial to the work of solidarity organizations like CAR, the Task Force on the Church and Corporate Responsibility, TCLSAC, ICCAF and a host of others who had fought hard to make sure the banks heard from their shareholders!)

Yet by late July the direction in which the Canadian government was moving on the issue of sanctions was an open secret. In an important article (July 20, 1993), the *Globe and Mail's* Foreign Affairs Reporter, Linda Hossie, underscored the difference between the ANC's position ("sanctions to be lifted only after a transitional executive is in place and working to prepare for elections") and "Canada's position [which] is to lift sanctions as soon as there is agreement on the formation of the council." She also cited one veteran Canadian academic observer who reinforced the point that "waiting until the [TEC] is up and running will make the progress

towards democracy irreversible ... To settle for anything less is to risk a political reversal at the last moment."

As it happens, the government's push during the summer months to lift sanctions (encouraged by the Canadian Exporters Association) did show itself to be unseemly. In July, South Africa exploded in the violence that produced a death toll that was the highest since August 1990 (another moment, ironically, when it had looked as though negotiations would bring peace). This turmoil sidelined any announcement of a TEC and, together with the resistance here at home, stalled Canada's end-the-sanctions plan – although External Affairs again "specified agreement as the trigger point [that would prompt it to end sanctions], not the establishment of an interim government."

Of course, only a few weeks were to pass before the ANC itself called for an end to sanctions. And it did so at a point when, in fact, only agreement on the TEC, rather than its full establishment, had been reached. Had the threatened erosion of the position of countries like Canada been one of the factors that forced the ANC's hand in this respect? We may have a clearer answer to this in time. What might be claimed now is that the Canadian solidarity movement had played at least some role – and not for the first time – in forcing our government to live up a little more firmly to its rhetorical commitments than might otherwise have been the case.

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Brothers Born of Warrior Blood: Ethnicity & Politics in South Africa

BY MARIT STILES

Marit Stiles is a member of the SAR editorial collective.

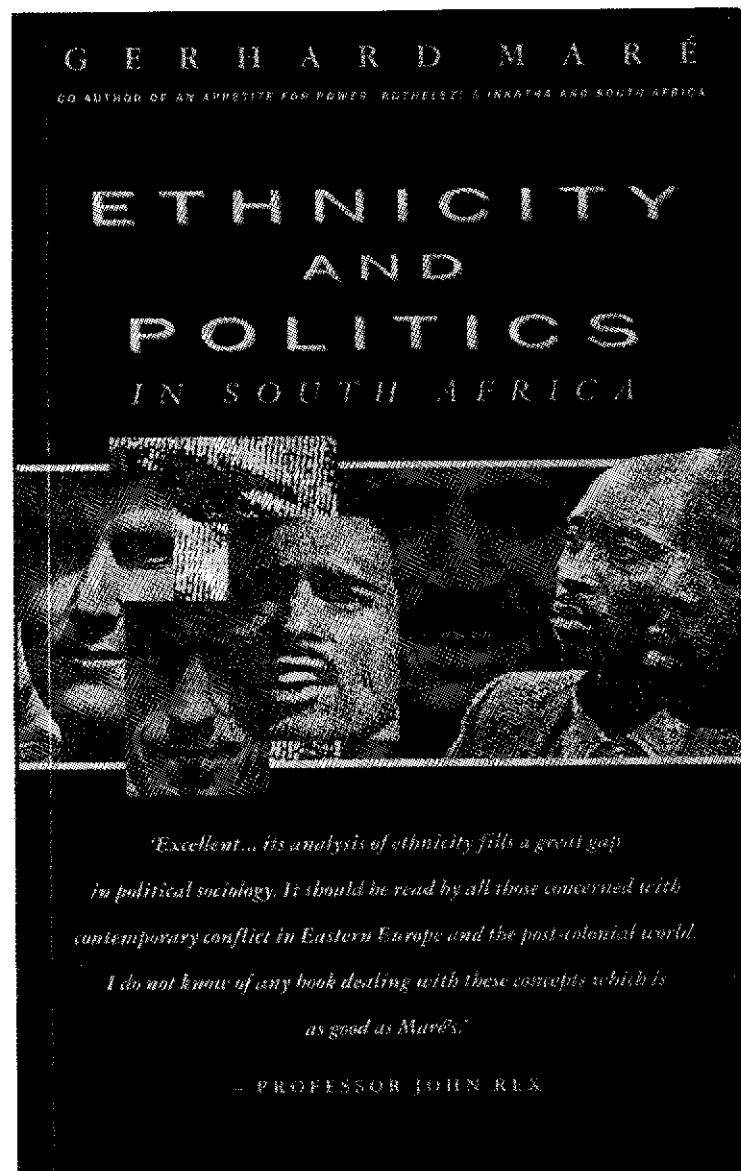
Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa by Gerhard Maré, Zed Books, New Jersey 1993. 121 pages.

With democratic elections approaching, South Africans are faced with a number of challenges. Violence permeates communities across the country and the ANC, supported by the majority of South Africans and highly favoured to win the election, finds its supporters on the battleground yet again, involved in a number of so-called "ethnic conflicts."

In *Ethnicity and Politics in South Africa*, Gerhard Maré, himself a self-described former "uncritical participant in ethnic group consciousness," compares Afrikanerdom, and other ethnic identities involved in conflict, with the manipulation of the Zulu ethnic identity. Maré examines the concept of ethnicity and its relevance to South Africa, today and in the future. Throughout, he usefully differentiates between on the one hand, the need to express cultural diversity and, on the other, the manipulation and politicization of ethnicity.

Maré begins his investigation by examining the very notion of "ethnicity," comparing it to a "story." According to Maré, what matters is not the historical validity of a people's claim to an ethnic identity but rather the significance they assign to the identity. Indeed, rather than relegating ethnic identity to the status of false consciousness, he recognizes that a group's ethnicity exists before an individual member's birth and socialization and is, in fact, an integral element of that individual's identity. In other words, the key question concerning ethnicity in politics is not whether such a story is based in historical fact, or whether it is myth, but that it is accepted by a group or groups as adequate.

Having established his stance on the identification of ethnicity, Maré takes his analysis a step further by correctly pointing out that ethnicity is as necessary and real as it is dangerous in its malleability and power to mobilize. To fully understand the reasons



for this innate danger, Maré notes that we need to understand not only the spark that leads to violent conflicts, but also the context that allows it to flare up.

Demystifying the Zulu identity

Social mobilization along ethnic lines has been revived in many parts of the world as groups and individuals compete for material resources and power. In order to preserve cultural diversity

and identity, while at the same time seeking to resolve conflict, Maré calls for the testing of myths of origin; critically examining "tradition" (as southern African feminists have been doing in relation to patriarchal interpretations of "tradition") and cultural "distinctiveness"; and probing for flexibility in supposedly rigid ethnic boundaries.

Maré begins this project of demystification in the book's second section: an analysis of the political manipulation and mobilization of Zulu ethnicity by Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Here Maré illustrates the fine line between the role of ethnicity in meeting the needs of a people who long for security and the ease with which such identities can be used to fuel antagonism, fear and aggression.

Beginning with a useful periodization of Buthelezi's activities in KwaZulu and as leader of Inkatha, Maré illustrates the development of a parallel and, at times, intersecting path with the National Party's vision of African politics. He shows the proximity between Buthelezi's political manipulation of the Zulu "story" and apartheid's ideological manipulation of the past.

Through an examination of the context within which Inkatha developed, Maré concludes that Inkatha is first and foremost based on the politicization of ethnicity. The symbols of the "Buthelezi-Zulu identity" can be seen to define the Zulu ethnic identity on the basis of rejection – the enemy becomes the "other," against which the "Zulu" identity is defined.

Maré's detailed account of Buthelezi's manipulation of history for political gain succeeds in illustrating how Buthelezi has shaped, through his role as historical interpreter, Inkatha's historical myths, and the impact this has had on the overall politicization of Zulu ethnic identity. Maré also effectively illustrates that these stories are successful not because of any inherent truth, but because of the existence

of other conditions that allow some Zulu people to be mobilized.

Maré weaves Buthelezi's role in ethnic manipulation into a discussion of the regional history of conquest and colonialism. Maré argues that it is the historical specificity, or cultural distinctiveness of a people combined with the deplorable socio-economic context within which this story is told, that enables ethnic mobilization. The introduction of apartheid with its ethnic politics and ethnic enclaves, and the consequent social and economic disruption within the region, provided openings for Buthelezi and others to manipulate regional identity. According to Maré class plays a central role here, in the manipulation of "Zuluism" to meet the needs of a new, predominantly male, petty-bourgeoisie and political elite.

Lessons for a new South Africa

Maré's greatest contribution is his discussion of the possible resolution of ethnic conflicts in the new South Africa. As he notes earlier in the text, what we learn from the critical examination of a group's ethnic identity is that groups can and do change, evolve and dissolve. In the final section of his book, Maré effectively applies his observations of the past to the present negotiations.

While maintaining that ethnic identity is essentially "real" and important, Maré argues that in the context of present-day South Africa politicized ethnicity is also the greatest threat to stability. The solution, then, is not to discredit ethnic identity per se, but rather to depoliticize and sever it from its relation to specific class and gender interests. With this in mind, he presents a four-pronged approach to the problem of ethnic conflicts in South Africa.

First, in order to remove ethnicity as a resource for political mobilization and manipulation, ethnic groups must not be "constitutionally rewarded for their group identity" [p. 107]. The rights of the individual

must be protected in a Bill of Rights and the rights of particular groups must not be given special dispensation. Maré observes that, in the case of Inkatha, such group recognition can encourage politicians to use ethnicity as a means of suppressing other social divisions.

Second, Maré addresses the conditions from which politicized ethnicity arises: frustrated political and economic goals. The next step in depoliticizing ethnicity is to change economic relations such that the material foundation providing the "spark" for ethnic mobilization no longer exists.

Third, Maré argues that the denial of political reward for ethnicity must be accompanied by the empowerment of other group identities, such as trade unions, women's organizations, and local-level democratic structures. Such strengthening is important in order to lessen the obvious presence of ethnicity at the level of social representation.

Finally, and I believe this is where Maré's argument is of most value, he argues that the depoliticization of ethnic identity should not undermine its importance. Particularly with regard to cultural resources such as language and education, ethnic identity must be taken seriously.

Rather, what must be strived for is "variety." Instead of calls for unity, Maré seeks sensitivity to the diversity of cultures, languages, and histories. To ensure that ethnic diversity is maintained in a productive manner it must be accommodated in policy formation at the "non-political" level: education, language, cultural institutions, and so forth.

The greatest short-comings of this book, perhaps, are the questions which fall beyond the parameters of Maré's focus. While it is certainly an insightful glimpse into the making of myth and conflict, it is limited in that its focus excludes an examination of the myriad

interpretations individual members of a society may have of the same myth. Societies are diverse, people are diverse, and one is left without a sense of the power of individuals and groups of individuals within a society to play a role in the shaping and re-shaping of that myth.

For example, when he speaks of the place of women in the Buthelezi-Zulu myth (as the nurturer and bearer of the male "warrior"), we are left with the impression that all Zulu women accept this interpretation. Are there no Zulu fem-

inists? Because of the nature of the questions Maré addresses, we do not get any sense of the diverse reasons women adopt such an identity, nor do we gain understanding of the possible counter interpretations of Zulu womanhood. This certainly falls beyond Maré's mandate but merits further study and investigation. Within his mandate, on the other hand, he can also be criticized for failing to present as clear an understanding of the context within which Zulu women may have identified with the myth, as he has pro-

vided for our understanding of the male adoption of their warrior identity.

Nevertheless, this book is a valuable and very accessible account of ethnic conflict. Most importantly, it offers a foundation upon which ethnic conflict can be dealt with in the new South Africa and throughout the North and South. It is both an astute analysis of the past ... and a prediction of a dire tomorrow if policy-makers and negotiators do not today take into account the lessons of this past.

War and Gender

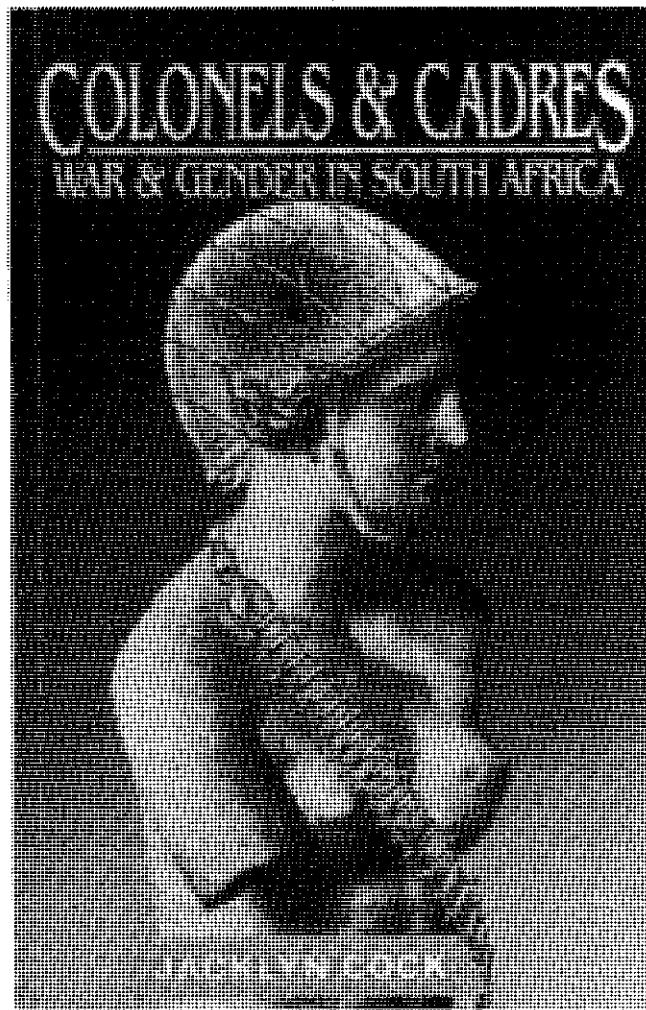
BY THOM WORKMAN

Thom Workman is Associate Director of York University's Centre for International and Strategic Studies.

Colonels & Cadres: War & Gender in South Africa by Jacklyn Cock, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1991. 253 pages

Jacklyn Cock's *Colonels and Cadres: War and Gender in South Africa* offers a sobering assessment of the future of South African politics. *Colonels and Cadres* laments the violent trajectory of South African society, and expresses the fear that the ordeals of war will force South Africans into a "survival mentality" involving "an emotional anaesthesia, a disengagement from others, a retreat from social involvement into a private defensive core."

One of the primary challenges thus facing



South Africans, according to Cock, involves the collective extrication from the belief that violence is a "legitimate solution to conflict." But Cock concludes that the prospects for such a solution are bleak – unless accompanied by the radical alteration of gender relations in South African society. Thus, while Cock's concern with the "normalization" of violence has a prosaic ring in societies despoiled by the protracted wars of the twentieth century, she submits a distinct assessment of the violent turn that calls attention to South Africa's politics of gender.

Colonels and Cadres is theoretically driven by a rapidly expanding body of research that contemplates warfare from the perspective of the power relations between men and women, relations largely resting upon traditional notions of masculinity and fem-

infinity. War itself is understood to be bound up intimately with conventional notions that men and women have about themselves; genuine peace therefore requires the extensive alteration of traditional views of maleness and femaleness. "The construction of the male sense of self," Cock writes, "have conventionally required a militancy; militancy is the culturally endorsed way to be manly." Peace, in short, necessarily embodies the dismantling of oppressive relations of power between men and women within any society.

Cock cuts into the South African experience by similarly contending that the suspension of violence, especially the violence practised by the SADF, can only proceed if undergirded by the transformation of power relations between males and females. That is, she argues that the development of South Africa's "war culture" is bound up with conventional notions of masculinity in the South African context. Through the compilation of extensive interview research she persuasively argues that the militarization of South African society has mobilized traditional ideas of men as the protector and women as the protected. The masculinity of the protectors is equated with extreme aggression, bordering on savagery, and is carefully distanced from the soldier's understanding of women (the thing to be protected) and the enemy (the emblem of evil and disorder). When unleashed upon the civilian population, the policing forces of the apartheid state have proven capable of hideous acts of violence including the execution of prisoners, assassinations and disappearances, police killings, detention without trial, torture, arson, armed attacks and rape.

Women have also been drawn into the South African war machine, Cock shows, but in a manner consistent with the immuring social codes for women. In a society that defines women in terms of their nurturing roles, for example, women are thus

called upon to be supportive wives and mothers to the men at the front. Similarly, in a society with discriminatory employment practices that relegate women to a narrow array of job options, women were consequently incorporated into the SADF in clerical, administrative and service capacities. Thus the growing involvement of women in the strategy of total war drew upon, but did not challenge, the traditional understandings of femininity in South African society. "It is significant that the increasing incorporation of women as a minority of the armed forces," stresses Cock, "has not seriously breached the ideology of gender roles or the sexual division of labour."

Cock also argues, however, that the practices of the SADF were unique only by dint of their scope and relationship to the South African state. The socialization (largely of men) into violence proceeds in all quarters of South African society, and invariably draws upon traditional notions of manliness and masculinity. The necklacing of suspected informants, for example, is imbued with the same "militarist masculinity" that characterizes SADF soldiers. Both the "war" and the "resistance" are widely viewed as avenues to manhood - avenues that transcend racial and class boundaries.

Cock carefully notes the reluctance of the ANC to accept the necessity of the violent struggle against the apartheid state, especially in the wake of the brutality of the SADF. She also draws attention to the fact that once the ANC accepted the role of violent struggle, there still was a greater tendency of the MK to include women into non-traditional roles. Nonetheless, Cock observes that the MK tends to exclude women from direct combat and from exercising any power and authority of men. Both the state and the liberation armies, she stresses, draw upon and contribute to the perpetuation of gendered stereotypes.

The socialization into violence/masculinity also registers among black and white school boys. Young black boys, for example, improvise toys and games such as "playing chicken" around used tear gas canisters or parading with wooden models of AK47s. Many young white boys, similarly, are actively involved in the playing of war games - played with pellet guns - in Johannesburg. These number among many childhood activities that effectively prepare boys for adult life in a violence-torn society.

Although Cock's argument proceeds on a number of levels, in the end it presses the bald contention that the increasing violence characteristic of South African society over the last two decades relies upon traditional constructions of masculinity. This thesis demands an equally blunt solution: The cultural notion that violence and aggression are acceptable forms of behaviour for men must be eradicated, a process that necessarily entails the recasting of gender relations throughout South African society. Residual traces of prevailing notions of masculinity will necessarily work to undermine the attainment of a viable and just peace.

In many respects Cock's study is intellectually derivative, selectively drawing as it does upon path-breaking examinations of gender relations in the context of WWI, WWII, the Vietnam War and the Nicaraguan revolution. The conclusion arising from the South African context, however, has profound implications for the construction of a more inclusive South African polity. Cock's conclusions conjure up well-elaborated critiques of reformist and nominalist political agendas. They help guard against the scholarly complacency characteristic of post-1989 social and political commentary. A partial solution to social oppression in South Africa is woefully inconsistent with a movement towards a meaningful and lasting peace.

•1912 African National Congress is founded

•1955 Congress of the People adopts the Freedom Charter

•1957 Canadian NGOs get active

•1960 Sharpeville: ANC and PAC banned

•1960 South Africa expelled from Commonwealth

•1976 Soweto Uprising

•1983 United Democratic Front established

•1985 Congress of South African Trade Unions formed

•1987 Commonwealth Heads issue Okanagan Programme of Action on South Africa

•1988 Canada announces a new round of limited sanctions

•1990 The ANC, PAC and other organizations are unbanned, Nelson Mandela is released

•1992 Convention for a democratic South Africa (CODESA) established

•1993 Date for first non-racial election set for April 27, 1994

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The Suffering Intense

The International Support unrelenting

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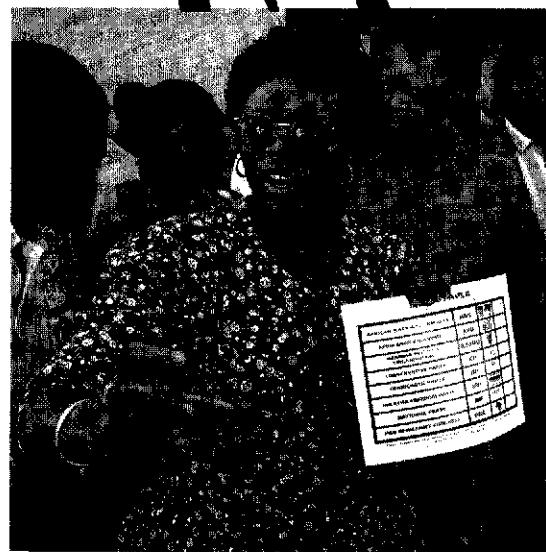
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