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South Africa: What Next?



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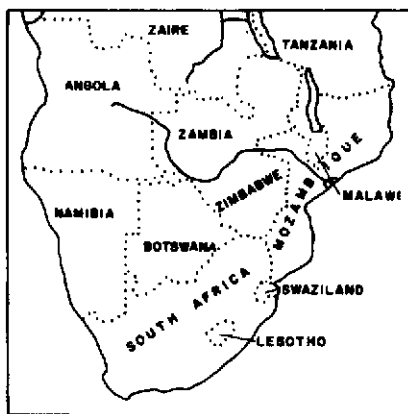


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Southern Africa REPORT

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Election Fever

South Africa; May 10, 1994; Inauguration Day and President Mandela: the old order changes, yielding place to new. And only the most deep-dyed of grinchers would question the moment, or even profess any great scepticism about

the extended period of electoral frenzy that led up to it. True - as Canadian commentator Rick Salutin has written so eloquently of conventional western practice in his *Waiting for Democracy* - there is, generally, "a difference between

politics and elections." But what has just happened in South Africa was something else: a "keeper," a liberation election if ever there was one.

This is what the lead articles in this issue seek to remind our readers.

We publish them even as the western media more generally begins to fade out on South Africa, so readily reducing the situation there to just another of those "great stories" that have come ... and, every bit as quickly, disappeared into the limbo-land of "yesterday's papers." Not so fast, says Hein Marais as his lead article takes us through the various nuances of the election. In addition, we've complemented his piece with the accounts of a number of Canadians who were also lucky enough to accompany the whole process first hand - to experience the exhilaration of the events and also, in places like the Western Cape and Natal, some of the more disturbing ambiguities that shadowed them.

And then there's "the hard part," the next round. As John Saul asks below, "What can those vast numbers [of voters] in their patient queues actually hope for, in terms of changes in the often grim reality of their own daily lives, from the liberation election that their long walk to the polls had so dramatically become?" Perhaps the mainstream media can hurry on, past that question, to other "more pressing" concerns, but it is not one that the ANC can ignore. Nor can it be ignored by whatever is left of the western South African-linked solidarity network. Nor can it be ignored by SAR.

* * *

"What next?," then. This is, in fact, the central theme of the materials assembled in the second section of the present issue of our magazine, materials we've been privileged to inherit from the notable South African journal, *Work in Progress* (WIP). The first issue of WIP appeared in September, 1977, promising, in its editorial, "to attempt a dialogue on aspects of South African society - or rather, provide a medium through which a dialogue can be carried on." This is a promise that WIP has fulfilled brilliantly ever since, through ninety-five additional issues, these produced, year in, year

out, inside the country and often under the most difficult of political circumstances. Now, for reasons WIP's editor Chris Vick discusses below in introducing our special "What next?" supplement, the magazine is no more.

Surely it is a disturbing omen that this should happen at a point when the new South Africa needs "dialogue" - needs clear thinking and tough, principled debate - as much as the country ever has. Not that "dialogue" will cease in South Africa with the demise of WIP, of course. But the passing of so trenchant and important a voice cannot help but contribute, at least for the moment, to a weakening of "civil society's" capacity to keep genuine liberation on the agenda in South Africa.

Fortunate, then, that WIP has one last sting in its tail: the materials you find collected here - materials that were originally assembled to form the core ingredients of the now phantom issue, #97. We expect readers both within and without South Africa will agree with us that these materials are much too instructive merely to have been left on the cutting-room floor. Discussions ensued between the SAR editorial working group in Toronto and Chris Vick and his Deputy Editor Hein Marais in South Africa about the possibilities of doing something about this situation. The result: we

at SAR have been honoured to work closely with the *Work in Progress* team in bringing, to South African readers and to our own, this one last lively round of WIP. Our special supplement, below, is self-contained and self-explanatory. Enjoy.

* * *

WIP: RIP. Meanwhile, strength to the arm of those who struggle to keep other progressive magazines afloat in South Africa, or to launch new ones. We know perfectly well that, in South Africa, *Southern Africa Report* can be no substitute for WIP or for other initiatives like it. Still, we invite South African readers who are so inclined to subscribe to our magazine. The inside back cover has the details (and please note that we are distinctly *not* that *Southern Africa Report*, edited in South Africa by Raymond Louw, which also started up about a decade ago with - quite by chance - the same name). We like to think we have something useful and progressive to say about South Africa, most often achieved, in any case, by giving a range of South African writers the chance to say it for us. In addition, we seek to analyze global trends that are of relevance to South Africa - whether they be the dynamics of the world-wide capitalist economy on the one hand or the evolution of the international solidarity network on the other.

And we also cover the rest of the sub-continent - even if the current issue has most to say about the end of apartheid (and beyond) in South Africa itself. Nonetheless, we conclude this issue with several pieces on the region that give a flavour of our on-going coverage in this respect: some broader considerations about southern African economic prospects from Colin Stoneman and a more detailed look at recent debates about "land reform" in Zimbabwe by Marit Stiles. So spike the hemlock, gentle WIP readers, with a dash of SAR. The struggle, as they say, continues.



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'Still No Easy Walk'

BY HEIN MARAIS

Hein Marais is a South African journalist based in Cape Town. He is deputy editor of the political magazine Work in Progress.

Finally, after decades of struggle, Nelson Mandela could announce to South Africans that they were "Free at last," and raise his glass to a society he believes can be welded into a nation "united in its diversity."

Millions of South Africans lived for this moment. Thousands died for it. As word spread that former president F. W. de Klerk had conceded defeat in SA's first democratic elections, people poured into township streets, jubilant, and the celebrations began.

The "new SA," that phrase so spuriously spoken by the administrators and business people of the old order, at last seemed authentic.

The African National Congress' (ANC) election victory was a crowning glory for an organisation founded 82 years ago to petition - and later struggle - for freedom, making it the oldest liberation movement on the African continent.

An ANC victory always seemed as certain as sunrise, but the party took little for granted. A slick, often spectacular campaign - choreographed by one of Bill Clinton's campaign strategists, Stan Greenberg - left the party a rumoured R75 million in debt but a resounding victory richer.

An Uhuru! election

Its campaign spun on a compact, forward-looking message: it promised "Jobs, Peace and Freedom" and assured voters that "the ANC has a plan" that can deliver. The rest was detail - significant insofar as the party presented policies to back up the promises, but ultimately perhaps less of a vote-winner than the sheer fact that this was an



Jonathan Kaplan - Impact Visuals

Revellers at inauguration of Mandela as President, Pretoria, May 1994

Uhuru! election, and the ANC was the party that best encapsulates the struggle for liberation.

It was a landslide victory. The 62.7% of votes won by the ANC earned it 252 of the 400 National Assembly seats, putting it well clear of the incumbent National Party (NP) with only 20.4% of the vote and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) with 10.5%. The ANC won seven of

the nine new provinces, five of them with blockbuster majorities that ran as high as 91.7% of the vote in the northern provinces.

The results handed a booming mandate to the ANC and confirmed its status as the only truly national party in the country. Even in the two provinces where the party suffered defeat, it netted one third of ballots cast.

s.a. elections

The election itself was a rickety affair despite the unexpected absence of violence. Mal-administration and often chaotic logistics almost sent the process off its tracks, although in the end, a haggard-looking Independent Electoral Commission agreed that the vote had been "substantially free and fair."

Whether that verdict can truly apply to the vote in KwaZulu/Natal is another matter. There, Mangosuthu Buthelezi's IFP entered the race at the last moment and unexpectedly triumphed with 50% to the ANC's 32%. The IFP's ethnic and regional character is now indisputable: on average it won a paltry 0.8% of votes in the other provinces.

Inkatha 'irregularities'

Also indisputable is the success with which IFP leaders applied brinkmanship tactics. Their threatened election boycott forced the ANC to entrench the Zulu monarchy, thereby giving ethnicity a menacing lease on life in South African

politics. And the implicit threat of violence appears to have dissuaded the ANC from pressing its charges that Inkatha committed massive vote fraud in the province.

Election observers say the IFP orchestrated "irregularities" on a huge scale. Canvassing by the ANC was impossible in most parts of the KwaZulu homeland (ten days before the vote, seven teenagers handing out pamphlets explaining the election were tortured and executed; days later, two ANC canvassers were shot dead in the KwaZulu capital).

In the north, voting stations were closed down and pirate stations set up and run by Inkatha members. In many instances, ANC party agents were barred from voting stations. Canadian observers watched Inkatha officials filling out ballot forms for voters, a forbidden activity. They say electoral officials simply looked the other way: "They have to live in this area when voting ends," explained one.

But the ANC's hope that the province can be traded for peace might be misplaced. After seven years of low-intensity civil war, peace is unlikely to break out - especially in impoverished areas where the political struggle between the IFP and the ANC often obscures a deeper contest for scarce resources such as land, jobs and access to services. The province seems a long way from that grim point when hostility and resentment surrenders to fatigue and sorrow.

Meanwhile, the hardline ANC leader in the Midlands region of the province, Harry Gwala, has rejected the election result there and vows to "fight on." At ground level, this province, much of it carved into fiefdoms of warlords (or "community leaders"), remains a powder keg.

Like a rainbow after a storm, a rare post-election smile has appeared on Buthelezi's face, testifying perhaps to the gamble he pulled off. While his counterparts had to watch their homelands implode

The Election Results

National Assembly

ANC	62.7%
National Party	20.4%
Inkatha Freedom Party	10.5%
Freedom Front	2.2%
Democratic Party	1.7%
Pan-Africanist Congress	1.3%
Spoiled ballots	1.0%

The balance divides among tiny parties

Seats in the National Assembly

African Christian Democratic Party	2
Pan-Africanist Congress	5
Democratic Party	7
Freedom Front	9
Inkatha Freedom Party	43
National Party	82
African National Congress	252
Total	400

Provincial Assemblies

The ANC won seven of the nine provinces, six of them outright:

- Eastern Cape ANC holds 48 of 56 provincial assembly seats

- Northern Transvaal - ANC has 38 of 40 seats

- Eastern Transvaal ANC has 25 of 30 seats

- Northwest ANC has 26 of 30 seats

- Orange Free State - ANC has 24 of 30 seats

- PWV ANC has 50 of 86 seats

- Northern Cape - ANC has 15 of 30 seats

- The National Party won the Western Cape and takes 23 (53%) of 42 seats, while the ANC won only 14 (33%)

- In KwaZulu/Natal, the IFP won 41 of 81 seats (50%), leaving the ANC with 26 seats (32%) and the NP with 9 seats (11%)

messily (like Bophutatswana) or unceremoniously sag away (like Ciskei) or simply evaporate at the stroke of a pen (like the rest), Buthelezi now rules the second most populous province in the country.

The last homeland

The homeland system officially ended on April 27. But in a real sense, KwaZulu/Natal is the last "homeland" - bigger, richer and armed with a democratic mandate - it could haunt efforts to build a nation and introduce a national development programme. Having secured his base, Buthelezi's tactics might become less reckless and ruthless, but he is by no means a "team player" yet. Often overlooked are the shrewd tactics applied by the NP in the dying days of the old order. As some analysts saw it, having "given away the shop" at the negotiations, the NP recovered earlier this year and cleverly deflected the doomsday threats of Inkatha and the white Right onto the ANC.

In so doing, it managed to wrench (by proxy) from its opponent several important concessions it had failed to achieve during multi-party negotiations: provincial powers were extended and several key constitutional principles (which cannot be violated by the final constitution) were added.

Other, less dramatic, surprises deserve noting. The first is the electoral collapse of the country's second oldest liberation organisation, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), which garnered a mere 1.3% of the vote - less than the white elitist Democratic Party's (DP) 1.7% and the white right-wing Freedom Front's (FF) 2.2%! Battered by poor organisation, a funding crisis and perennial internal feuding, the party may never recover.

None of the 13 other national parties could net even 1% of the ballots.

Surprising strength for the NP
Another surprise was the NP's

recovery to win one in five votes in a country where only one in eight voters is white (more on this later). Its victory in the coveted Western Cape province (which provided one third of its total national support) was a dramatic and far-reaching feat for a party that already has its sights set on the 1999 election.

Significantly, it was not simply white but also a majority of "coloured" votes that produced the NP's Western Cape triumph. The key to this pseudo-nonracialist feat was the party's success at tapping a distressingly deep current of (anti-african) racism shared among many whites and "coloureds." This province is now the NP's passport to the future.

* * *

The sense of a rupture with the past was tangible in the sheer joy that rose into the township skies in early May. On the streets there is a noticeable shift in mood, in looks that register the fact that liberation has arrived, at least in a subjective sense.

But immense tasks await South Africa's first democratically elected government before liberation is imprinted materially in most citizens' lives.

First, some time-bombs must be defused. The first defies any quick fix: the violence. More than 15,000 people have died in political violence since 1984, countless more have been maimed or injured. Criminal violence has reached staggering levels: at least two people are murdered every hour.

The new government will have to nurture trust in a police force and legal system that stands discredited in the eyes of most citizens. It must also perform a spring-cleaning exercise - restructuring the security system, removing those involved in covert actions aimed at destabilising the peace process - without alienating the security forces as a whole.

Security and the white Right

That same army and police will be relied on to tackle the white Right which is mobilized around its implausible demand for an "Afrikaner" homeland. It has been stunned and split by some creative manoeuvres of the ANC. Its constitutional wing, the Freedom Front (FF), scraped together 600,000 white votes on a separatist ticket (no matter that it doesn't know where its postulated "homeland" is).

The more hardline sectors, possibly numbering as many as 150,000 sympathizers and grouped around several other organisations, are in disarray. It's from their ranks that the bombers are emerging.

But predictions of the Right's demise are premature. It boasts some skilful strategists, firm footholds in white civil society, a wide though wavering constituency and concentrated support in several parts of the country. Once the Right realizes that the constitutional route to its "volksstaat" is a cul-de-sac, it can regroup very effectively at the local level around palpable issues like local government, education and land ownership.

Thus far the ANC's handling of the white Right has been skilful. By holding open the negotiations door, it has split the tendency and isolated the militants. Its half-hearted response to calls for land reform distresses many progressives, but is also aimed at calming white nerves. It guarantees civil servants' jobs in the hope of denying the Right a mobilizing opportunity in that sector. Its granting of a general amnesty is intended to still fears of "black retribution." The problem is that some of these gestures will exact a price among the ANC's own constituency. How long can the ANC perform that balancing act?

* * *

On the streets after the election, the spirit was that of "Uhuru!". But where the decisions are being made, the word is "conciliation."

s.a. elections

The distinction is crucial. It is a reminder that the decisions that shape this new SA will bear the stamp not of triumph, but of compromise, some of it momentous.

A negotiations process that started because the Pretoria regime and the opposition were locked in a stalemate has produced a settlement that seeks to transcend that stalemate – by institutionalising it. “Continuity is the goal – but not without fundamental change,” was how a headline in the corporate mouthpiece, *Business Day*, captured this paradox days after the election.

This “continuity” is reflected concretely – not the least in corporate SA’s success at warding off the by-now weary calls for some form of redistribution of wealth, and in the retention of the old regime’s finance minister. And the symbolism of having two national anthems (the supremacist “Die Stem” and the non-racial “Nkosi S’kelele”) is perhaps more ironic than intended.

One of the biggest challenges facing the ANC is how to prevent this paradox – “continuity with change” – from degenerating into an outright contradiction. The big question is what cumulative effect the compromises might have on efforts to transform SA along more just lines.

Peace at a price

Thus far the ANC’s efforts to achieve an inclusive and peaceful transition read like a catalogue of magnanimity.

- It proposed a five-year “sunset” period of power-sharing; before majority rule begins in 1999, SA is ruled by a government of national unity;
- It acceded to a moderately “federal” system in which some important powers are devolved to provincial governments;
- It abandoned plans to nationalise strategic elements of the economy or force the unbundling of corporate monopolies;

- It enshrined a “property rights” clause in the new Bill of Rights, a move critics say will cripple effective land reform;

- It established employers’ right to lock out striking workers, in the same Bill of Rights;

- It has agreed to a general amnesty for apartheid crimes;

- It agreed to negotiate a possible Afrikaner “volkstaat” or homeland with white right-wingers;

- Its Letter of Intent to the IMF in February commits the new government to a regime of “fiscal restraint” and “macro-economic stability” demanded by business and international capital;

- Its call on unions for a moratorium on strikes during the election period soothed corporate nerves (but angered unionists).

Of course, the interim constitution now in effect is to be rewritten by the new National Assembly, where the ANC commands a lively



Pre-election stockpiling of groceries in a Johannesburg northern suburb supermarket

majority. But its room to manoeuvre is hemmed in by some 30 constitutional principles agreed to in the negotiations process; it cannot violate any of them without tipping the transition into disarray.

The party is confined further by the corporatist framework in which it seeks to achieve transformation. "Programmes to achieve higher levels of productivity and profitability should be agreed upon by business and the trade union movement" is the sort of advice now commonplace in ANC circles. In this case, it was given by ANC economics expert Tito Mboweni (quoted in the SA Labour Bulletin, Sept/Oct 1993), now Minister of Labour.

The priorities and approaches that now hold sway are patently "restrained" - particularly when compared with positions trumpeted a mere five or six years ago. Clearly, a robust battle for the heart and soul of the ANC has occurred inside the party. The big surprise is how discreet and confidential this struggle has been.

Surprises in Cabinet

The outcome is mirrored in the conservative contours of the political settlement, the compliant bearing to local and international capital and in some of Mandela's cabinet appointments.

- The deputy president (and almost certainly Mandela's successor) is the suave moderate, Thabo Mbeki, who beat the former trade unionist Cyril Ramaphosa to the post.
- The crucial finance portfolio stays with the incumbent, Derek Keys, former chair of the Gencor mining house and preacher of fiscal discipline.
- His sidekick will be Trevor Manuel, a once-fierce activist who did a short stint in the social responsibility section of petroleum giant Mobil, before the ANC unexpectedly saddled him with its economics desk. Business praises him for his "pragmatic and realistic approach."

• Tito Mboweni, another moderate sold on corporatism, becomes minister of labour.

Often likened to a "broad church," the ANC has maintained an uncanny degree of unity, despite the fact that it enfolded a range of ideologies, interests and social classes. It has suffered none of the splits that have plagued, for instance, its smaller rival, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC).

Pundits are tireless in their attempts to pin down the "hardliners" and the "moderates." They might be sniffing along the right track, but their evidence remains largely anecdotal. One reason why blocks or groupings have not visibly ossified within the ANC is the party's long-standing aversion to factions - they remain outlawed - and its tradition of democratic-centralism at top levels. Another clue lies in the firm (some say "authoritarian") command of Nelson Mandela. If more obvious fissures do appear, they might be of two types. The most likely tensions will be between the ANC-in-government and some of its allies in civil society (most of whom comprise ANC members). Strains between the parliamentary ANC and an "extra-parliamentary" ANC might also emerge, but certainly not within the next year or two.

Framework of "permissible change"

Meanwhile, the ANC's formal policy-making process has become astonishingly democratic and open in the past four years. During the negotiations, power nevertheless did shift to the negotiators, who never strayed far from the reach of Mandela, who has consolidated his command of the party.

Whether driven by pragmatism or ideology, this leadership established a framework of "permissible change" that might badly complicate the kind of transformation needed.

The negotiated settlement allows for a framework of change that is flexible enough to offer tangible evidence of material improvements - to some people, in some respects. But it's also rigid enough to see the structural features of the crisis survive.

The catalogue of apartheid's legacies is long and sorrowful. Yet, when viewed from the urban First World - and its office towers wrapped in glass, cellular phones, gleaming cars, leafy suburbs and smooth tarmac - the scale of the crisis seems to shrink to manageable proportions. That perspective is dangerously deceitful.

SA remains trapped in a knee-buckling crisis. In the past 20 years, the poorest 40% of blacks have seen their incomes decline by 42%. A thousand new job seekers enter the market every day; only 7% of them find jobs. Hardest hit are the rural poor. A new study says they will number 11.5 million next year - almost a third of the population, locked out on the fringes of perception and geography. The media ignores them, the policy makers at best succeed in patronizing them. As farm bankruptcies continue and the trend to replace labour with machines proceeds, more people will seek salvation in SA's cities, where the urban crush is worsened by a shortage of 2.5 million homes. And the SA economy - slumped as it remains in structural decline - is in no state to pull off any miracles.

"We place our vision of change on the table not as conquerors but as fellow citizens," President Mandela told the 80,000 supporters who gathered in Cape Town to celebrate his election as South Africa's first black president.

ANC's ambitious programme

That vision is summarized in the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme - or "RP" as it is known in this acronym-prone land - a multi-billion Rand plan to:

- Rebuild and restructure the economy, create 2.5 million new jobs in 10 years, launch a massive public works campaign, design a more just tax system and establish SA as a competitive exporter;
- Extend opportunities to the majority by providing ten years of compulsory and free education for each child, launching literacy campaigns and new bursary and loan systems, restructuring the welfare and health systems, introducing affirmative action to redress racial and gender discrimination and start a land reform programme;
- Build one million new homes in the next five years, electrify 2.5 million homes, provide running water and sewage systems to a million families (especially in squatter settlements) and revamp transport systems and other services;
- Democratize the state by restructuring the civil service and transforming the security forces from private armies into public servants, and more.

It is an enormously ambitious plan that harks back to the sweeping development experiments of the 1960s. One major difference now is that the ANC intends implementing it less by decree than by extensive conciliation and compromise.

Key allies of the ANC, such as the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) and the trade union federation, Cosatu, helped nurse the plan through its seven drafts. So they are unequivocally on-side.

Despite bickering about cost and feasibility, most other players also give the RDP the nod – at least in principle. A director of the giant Anglo-American corporation, Bobby Godsell, praises the RDP's "integrated approach to the country's political, social and economic needs." Even the NP's conservative Hennis Kriel (now premier of the Western Cape province) admits "there's not that big a difference between our conception of reconstruction and development and the ANC's."

Yet this consensus camouflages the many tensions and contradictions that are imbedded and implied in the RDP. "It is drawn in such broad scale, that the twists and turns and potholes are not visible," as journalist Jenny Cargill has noted. Within government it will be former Cosatu general-secretary Jay Naidoo's job – as a "roaming minister" responsible for the RDP and probably attached to the office of the President – to coordinate and steer the RDP past these obstacles.

Some of these barriers, though not clearly visible, can be anticipated:

- The plan implies welding the voluntarism demanded by business to the commandism required by the task into a functional whole. For business the profit margin stays as the bottomline, for the RDP managers it is "delivering the goods" – that's a fine line to walk;
- Redirecting and streamlining the existing state budget will probably not pay for the plan. How does the new government finance the RDP – and stick to its commitments to maintain fiscal discipline and macro-economic stability – without drastically trimming the RDP or resorting to IMF loans?
- The extended powers granted to provinces enable Inkatha (in KwaZulu/Natal) and the NP (in Western Cape) to play politics with the RDP, which might bedevil implementation in two key provinces. Remember that both parties are

bent on converting their provincial bases into launch pads for the 1990 election;

- In large respect, implementation will depend on an army of civil servants inherited from the old order (the central apartheid state and the homeland bureaucracies). At best they will perform fitfully and unevenly; at worst some might consciously sabotage implementation;

- In perhaps unexpected ways, success will depend on how the new government relates to its allies – and critics – in civil society. Trade unionists especially are making the point that organized, mass struggle (by unions, civics organisations and community bodies) will ultimately be required to push the RDP past the many hurdles that will emerge to stymie or derail it. A powerful parliamentary ANC – strapped into a government national unity guided by the "spirit of consensus" – cannot achieve this on its own. The ANC clearly understands this, which is why it plans to muster an RDP forum, comprising civil society allies, to help propel the programme forward. Yet this doesn't resolve the tension: between an ANC-dominated government that is locked into a set of deep structural compromises, and a transformative project that requires the boat to be rocked.

Paradox revealed

It's around this latter point that the paradox that frames the South African transition – that of "continuity" with "change" – might reveal itself as a blunt contradiction between struggle and conciliation. Why? Because the professed need for stability and an "investment-friendly climate" stands at a bit of an angle to the organized struggles of workers, the landless, squatters, women, civics and others for changes they know will not be dispensed magically by the state.

Tensions between the ANC leadership and Cosatu are already patent. As matters now stand, SA

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Alexandra Township, Johannesburg - the river is nicknamed "shit river"

is one of few countries in the world where employers' right to lock out striking workers is enshrined in a Bill of Rights. Shortly before the election some ANC leaders angered union leaders when they called for a moratorium on strike action during the election period. The call was dismissed.

Days later, Mandela told supporters to "start behaving like people who want to govern the country." Mass action, he said, has to make way for peace and stability in order to encourage investment. A conclusion is premature, but the clues suggest the ANC might not indulge civil society militancy.

The vitality of progressive civil society will be drained further by the exodus of leadership and skills into state structures. Post-election celebrations became a hive of head-

hunters, as politicians sweet-talked workers from the non-governmental sectors into joining their new government departments. What government doesn't lure aboard, business will - by offering salaries far in excess of what a civic or advice office can muster.

The same pattern affects the ANC as an organisation. Much of its best talent and experience have migrated into the national and provincial parliaments. In provinces like the Western Cape, much of the resources (computers, telephones) deployed to fight the election are now being recalled, leaving the organisation threadbare in many places. The problem is compounded by the fact that SA now has a proportional representation system - politicians do not represent specific wards or geographic constituencies.

None of these trends are irreversible or inevitable. Still, much depends on how soon these and other obstacles that threaten to derail the struggle for palpable transformation are dealt with.

For now, though, the air bristles with the invigorating knowledge that, for the first time in South Africa's history, state power has been wrested from the hands of the oppressor.

Symbolically and psychologically, the threshold of a liberated South Africa is being crossed. But the struggle continues - in new and exhilarating ways - to express that liberation tangibly in citizens' lives.

Never have the hopes of the majority been closer to realization.

Seldom has the need for steadfast but critical support been greater.



Eric Miller — Impact Visuals

'Coloured' girl with NP poster at election rally in Cape Town

How the West Was Won: The Coloured Vote in the Western Cape

BY DAVID MCDONALD

David McDonald, a Canadian graduate student, is SAR's Cape Town correspondent.

Welcome to the Twilight Zone. As

the rest of South Africa forges ahead on its bumpy path to reconciliation and reconstruction, the Western Cape has found itself tied to the starting post. The National Party maintains its grip on the reins of

power in this province, and has moved politics a few notches back rather than forward. In its all out bid to preserve a power base for itself, the National Party has thrown salt on racial wounds that might

otherwise have healed, and has created a rift between "coloureds" and "Africans" that will be difficult to resolve.

By sowing the old seeds of fear, racism, and panic amongst the province's coloured majority, the Nats have convinced them that the "Bantus" will take their jobs, their homes, and even their daughters. With 60% of the Western Cape's population the coloured vote held the key to the outcome of the provincial elections and the NP knew just which buttons to push.

But who are these so-called coloureds that were central to the NP's provincial win? By no means monolithic, coloureds make up one of the most diverse of South Africa's many "racial" groupings. A product of mixed marriages and descendants of freed slaves, there is even a wide physical diversity that ranges from Khoi-San to off-white to distinctly African features. But it is the social diversity that is most interesting.

In the urban centres the majority are working class; relatively well-paid and well-skilled. There is also a significant middle to upper-middle class strata in Cape Town sprinkled throughout the southern suburbs and the Cape Flats. They are doctors, lawyers, professors, and business people.

The large rural population, on the other hand, are predominantly farm workers - largely illiterate, poorly paid, and politically and socially isolated. They do, nonetheless, share with their urban counterparts the same language (Afrikaans) and the same religious piety (Christian but with also a large Islamic presence in Cape Town).

And then there are the thousands of unemployed coloureds who live on the streets, in shacks, and in dismal Council housing. Poverty, although not as widespread as in the African townships, is a major problem. Tuberculosis and other basic health matters remain a threat.

Twenty or more people will be living in a two-room flat with one toilet. Water supply is inconsistent, sewage stagnates in pools on the streets, and refuse piles are the predominant landscape feature. Gangs are rife in townships like Manenburg and Elsie's River, and people cannot venture out at night.

Despite this diversity, forty-six years of segregation has firmly enshrined the notion of a separate "coloured culture" in the public's imagination. Reaction from coloureds themselves to this oversimplification has been mixed - ranging from outright rejection of the entire concept of "coloured," to a reaching out and embracing of some kind of an identity which can be called their own.

One of the most important attempts at the latter is the Coon Festival. Held once a year around New Year's, the carnival-like celebration stretches over several weeks and there is a flavour to the festival that is to be found nowhere else in South Africa. There is also Cape Malay cooking, koeksusters, and the unique and lyrical Afrikaans and English that only coloureds speak.

The NP campaign

The National Party campaign targeted the coloured voters in a number of devious ways. Their central theme is aptly summarized in one of their posters: "STOP THE COMRADES!" Relying on old *swart gevaar* tactics, the Nats published blatantly racist literature. The most controversial of these was a glossy comic book which stated that "Under an ANC government this could easily become a slogan: Kill a coloured ... kill a farmer." Over 75,000 of the comics were distributed before the Independent Electoral Commission finally put a ban on them.

Coloured NP party workers and candidates were reportedly going door to door telling coloured voters that "the kaffirs" were going to stream across the railway tracks the

day after the election to take their homes. Relying on fear and hatred the "new National Party" campaign spread like cancer through a body politic already weakened by years of neglect and abuse by the "old National Party."

The Nats claimed that coloureds and Afrikaners had to stand together - that they were tied by language and history. What they forgot to mention was that F. W. de Klerk's wife, Marike, was quoted by a newspaper saying that coloureds are "non-people" and "leftovers." Nor did they explain all the forced removals, arrests and beatings of coloureds. All of this was glossed over by scaremongering.

"STOP THE COMRADES!" also captures the anti-communist theme of the Nats. Pointing to the "disruption" and "chaos" caused by ANC allied unions, NP advertisements claimed that communism had failed everywhere else and it would destroy the economy here as well. Equally misleading was the linking of the ANC's alleged communism to atheism. Given the strong religious currents in the coloured areas this no doubt had a powerful impact.

These tactics were supported by, and at times perhaps even triggered by, several incidents on the Cape Flats during the campaign period. The most damaging of these was the illegal occupation of homes by (predominantly African) squatters that were built for coloureds in Mitchell's Plain. The media and the National Party jumped on the incident and milked it for all it was worth. Never mind that some of the illegal squatters were also coloureds: the Nats and the local newspapers got maximum anti-African coverage out of it all, and left it to the ANC's local branches to defuse the situation.

The ANC's campaign was based on democratically developed reconstruction plans. It appealed to hope and reason. Fear, unfortunately, proved to be a far more potent tactic.

Why the west was won

Crude racism, then, is the most obvious answer as to why coloureds voted overwhelmingly for the National Party. Cape Town is the most segregated of South Africa's major centres and the white, coloured, African divides are very acute and clearly demarcated by physical boundaries. Apartheid was very effective at keeping people from getting to know each other here, and ignorance is xenophobia's best friend.

But, like most politics, nothing is that simple. As poorly treated as coloureds have been there is still a relative privilege that they are jealously guarding. With influx and coloured preference laws, Africans were kept out of the Western Cape until recently and the lion's share of township funding went to the coloured communities.

In my own work I have interviewed coloured labourers who earn less than R800 per month (\$320) and live in a decrepit flat with two other families who tell me that "everything was okay here until the Bantus started coming in." In their eyes they see the unleashing of a world order that looks like a tidal wave. Eight hundred Rand and a concrete floor is paradise compared to the squalor that tens of thousands of desperate and jobless Africans feel forced to flood into.

Coloureds voted to protect this relative privilege. The National Party was the only party seen to be willing enough and strong enough to be the protector. Racism was more a manifestation of this fear than a cause. It is not racism of the crude, European vintage that sees itself as inherently superior but rather the reaction of people who see themselves as being caught in the middle of a tug-of-war.

By focusing on unwarranted anxieties and taking the spotlight off the real issues the NP effectively *de-politicized* the majority of coloured voters and stripped them of one of the most basic of democratic skills: inquisitiveness.

This strange combination of relative privilege and relative deprivation has some disturbing implications for political philosophy. Does one need to be at the very *bottom* of the socio-economic totem pole before being adequately politicized about one's oppression? African workers, at least in my interviews, are much more politically articulate and astute than their coloured counterparts.

Equally depressing are the reports of fairly widespread voting by coloured farm workers for Constand Viljoen's Freedom Front. But this case can surely only be explained by a complete lack of voter education combined with intimidation by white farmers. And this kind of thing seems to offer a far less daunting political challenge than the one described above.

The NP candidates

In case anyone thought that the National party really was "new" and reformed, a quick look at their candidates in the Western Cape should quickly dispel that illusion. Topping the list, as the new Premier of the province, is the ex-Law and Order Minister, HERNUS KRIEL. Seen as a hard-liner and widely believed to have been involved in, or privy to, third force activities, Kriel is a nightmare come true. The NP's advertising managers (Saatchi & Saatchi) realized this too, it seems. There was not a single poster with Kriel's face or name anywhere. He only surfaced after the election results had come in!

Other NP luminaries now in provincial parliament include Johnson Nxobongwana and Mali Hoza - two "witdoeke" vigilantes responsible for the destruction of shacks that left 30,000 Capetonians homeless. There is also Shan Jumana, wanted in Ireland for chopping up and killing his 15 year old girlfriend. And then there is Abe Williams. Despised for his almost single-handed destruction of coloured education, Williams was sent to national assembly, and is now Minister for Welfare.

In fact, it was really only F. W. that carried the day for the Nats in the Cape Flats. Coloureds voted for de Klerk, a man they felt they could trust, blind to the festering political sores that lay just beneath him. De Klerk was the only image the NP had, or dared to offer, and coloured voters took the bait.

The future

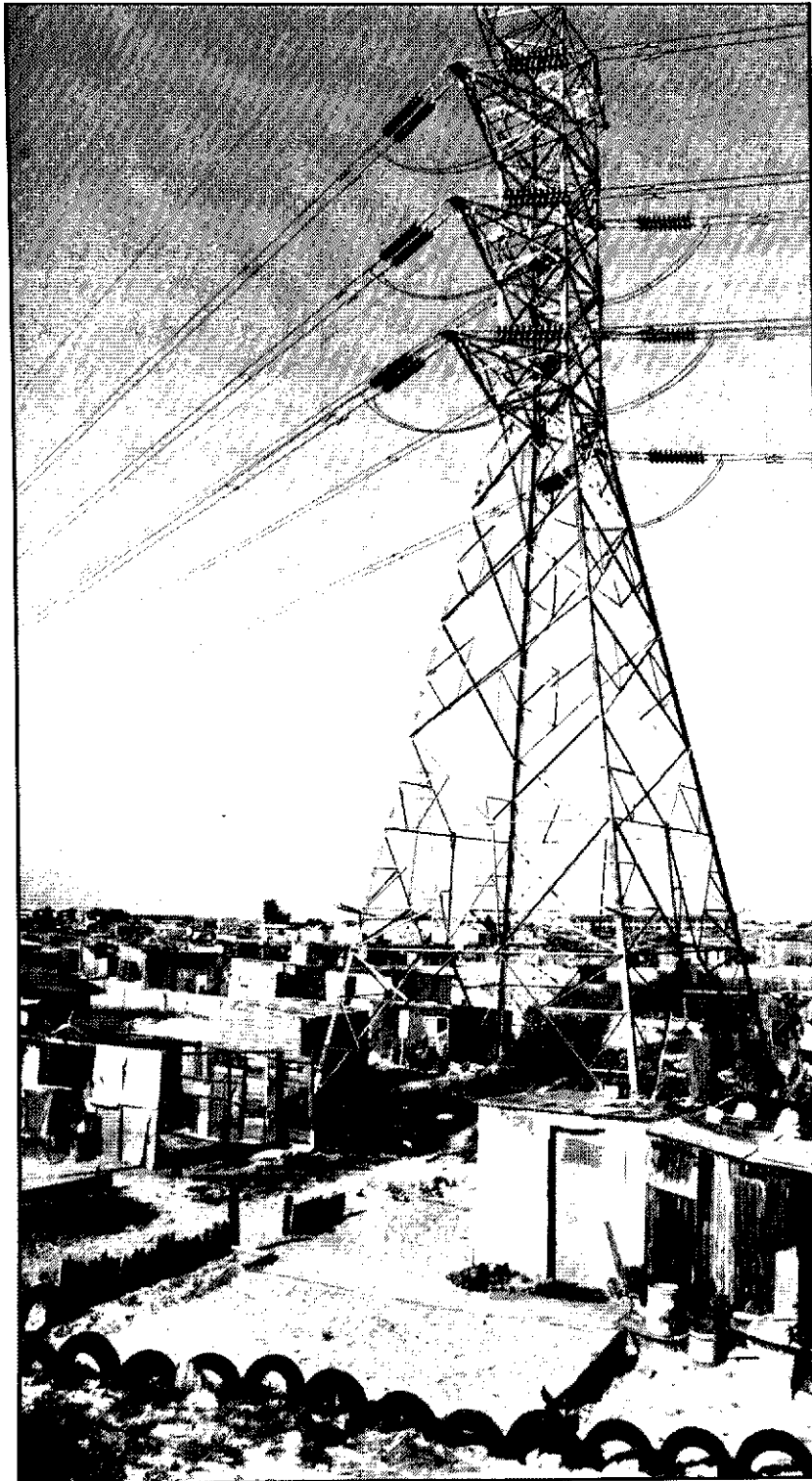
Not all the news is glum. The ANC (and to a lesser extent other liberation parties) has strength in the Western Cape. They are well organized in many places, with solid and capable support on the ground. The NP does not have anything remotely comparable.

Nor should it be forgotten that the UDF was originally a creation of the Cape Flats and that there are still tens of thousands of ANC supporters in the coloured community. They will make their voices heard and, one hopes, will be spending time in the future trying to heal the wounds that have been so bitterly thrown open by this campaign. Racially motivated gang rapes on the trains and disruptions on the factory floors became very serious in the lead up to the election. These problems must be addressed quickly and directly.

But just as there is already talk of future splits in the ANC alliance, the same could easily happen in the coloured townships, with class and religious cleavages continuing to multiply apace. The Coon Festival, for example, has already thrown up two rival factions, each claiming to be animators of the *real* Festival!

All this adds up to a potentially very fractured vote in the future. The African Muslim Party received over 30,000 votes this time around, and seems likely to grow in popularity amongst coloureds. And if there is a workers' party that splits from the ANC, this too could pull much of the coloured vote. It is therefore difficult to say with much certainty just what could happen in five years.

As for the ANC, it faces, under



Power lines pass right over Khayeletsha Township, Cape Town

these circumstances, a very considerable challenge. If it is indeed to prove a party with the skills necessary to recoup the situation, there will be no better time to show this than in the upcoming local government elections. It must, by hard, intelligent work, rebuild a broader, more united popular constituency – while also finding a way to let Kriel know that it won't be sitting idly by, watching the same old politics unfold.

Conclusions

In many ways coloureds are the most tragic of apartheid's children. Culturally they do not have the ancient roots of the English, the Zulus, the Indians, or any other of South Africa's myriad of cultural groupings. Nor do they have the clout numerically to affect political or economic change on a grand scale.

In this election, of course, they may primarily have served as cannon fodder for the Nats. Yet, as most coloureds see it, they had to act as they did in order to protect themselves from being cast into some kind of netherworld. In the past, resources went to the whites. In the future there will be massive redirection to Africans. Seen in this light, the coloured reaction may be discouraging but it is not completely unfathomable. As a coloured health worker said to me one day, explaining why he was going to vote NP: "When you turn on a coloured T.V. in South Africa, you only see black and white."

The "coloured question" is, then, a very complex and perplexing one. I have only attempted here to touch on some of the key aspects of it that surfaced around the election. One thing should be clear, however: the concerns and attitudes of South Africa's coloured communities cannot simply be wished away. Nor should they be. For there is a dynamism to these communities that remains to be tapped and has much to offer in the building of a burgeoning democracy in South Africa.

Eric Miller - Impact Visuals

Observing the Natal Election

Marlea Clarke of York University and Linda Slavin of the Kawartha World Issues Centre were in South Africa for a month as members of one of several ob-

server delegations organized by Canadian non-governmental organizations. Their delegation, mounted by OXFAM-Canada, was made up of 25 Canadians

who were sent to four different regions in kwaZulu Natal where they worked as Peace Monitors and as Election Observers. The views expressed here are their own.



Inkatha supporters march in Empangeni, May 1994

An Empangeni Journal

BY LINDA SLAVIN

On the road travelling north of Durban through sugar cane and euca-

lyptus forests, scars of poverty intrude on the serene beauty of the landscape - destitute kraals with depleted land, occasional shack set-

tlements and dilapidated worker-camps - as the highway weaves through patches of kwaZulu. Everywhere, there are Black Africans

walking, hitchhiking, mini-busing the roads to Empanjeni, the main commercial centre in the heartland of northern kwaZulu, to work, buy food, but not to live. It was here that I was placed as an observer of the first democratic elections in South African history.

In the days before the election, the Canadian observers in Empanjeni worked with the Network of Independent Monitors (NIM) as peace monitors. Supported by many nations, most notably the Swedish government, NIM is an umbrella organization for numerous locally-based peace committees. We were an oddly matched group, led by a young white South African lawyer and including a retired colonel, a former diplomat and a teacher from Sweden. Into this mix came a retired doctor/administrator from the Yukon, a Newfoundland feminist who works with sexual abuse cases, a Black human-rights/equity lawyer from Toronto, a First Nation administrator from northern Alberta and I, a grassroots global educator/learner from Peterborough.

Our work as peace monitors depended on the use of local contacts and their knowledge. Inkatha had not yet joined the electoral process and tensions were high. Our role was to be a presence at voter education events, political rallies and meetings. We were to accompany mourners to funerals and escort buses to various political events. As peace monitors, we also helped to reassure people that they would be able to cast their ballot in a safe and secure environment. One Pan African Congress organizer explained: "We understand that our ballots will be secret. The real danger is being seen on the way to and from voting." There was palpable relief in voices and faces after Inkatha joined the process but the peace work did not stop.

Putting on "observer hats"

By the Thursday before the election, we were wearing our Independent Electoral Commission [IEC] "observer" hats. The Canadians

provided three of the five cars carrying local IEC monitors as they surveyed voting stations in a "dry run" prior to the elections. These monitors were young and very professional despite only three days of training. They had been recruited before Inkatha agreed to participate in the election and were, as supporters of the election, vulnerable in kwaZulu.

We visited twelve of fifteen sites in convoy. We drove over the top of the world - incredible countryside electrified by the tangible excitement of the inhabitants and the monitors. Directions to the stations were hazy: the field across from the Post Office in Enthumeni; the "shopping centre" (read store) in Nyone; the school without electricity or water at Mbonglowane. Due to the late entry of the IFP, there was a great deal of confusion as to the location of many stations.

At the hospital in Mbonglowane, nurses rushed to the doors, ululating and singing when we arrived. "We are like birds," explained one of them, "just set free to vote." Staff and patients were desperate for voter education and we left the few booklets we had. Their spirit was far ahead of the logistics and, at the end of the day, only one voting station of the twelve we had visited was considered "ready" for election day. It was evident that the chaos in the Empanjeni IEC office had not been helped by Inkatha's entry into the election process as the size of the election organizing in that area had now doubled.

Another dry run was organized for Sunday, but three ANC deaths on Saturday - one of them a "he-tripped-on-his-rifle" situation in an Ulundi police station with Buthelezi allegedly present - increased fears. Several young monitors recounted a story of being forcibly taken from their car in Nongoma, shaking in fear while guards of a local chief discussed whether or not they should be shot. Sunday's "dry run" was cancelled.

Outreach on Monday was not possible either. Apparently, security at all voting sites had to be rechecked after a bus returning from an ANC rally in Durban was attacked by gunfire. Five people died and nineteen were injured - a statistic with faces attached as I had witnessed some of these ANC youth carrying out voter education in Mandini and Isethebe the Friday before.

Voting day

That brought us to Tuesday, the special voting day for the old and infirm. Three Americans had joined the Canadian observers and I had the privilege of setting off with Prexy Nesbitt, a long-time anti-apartheid activist from Chicago. Our emotions were close to the surface. Nothing had prepared us for the sight of hundreds of people, old, often infirm, sitting patiently in the hot sun to vote. Most had arrived at the site at about 6:30am. "I wonder what Ruth First would have thought of this day," mused Prexy, calling on personal memories.

We criss-crossed the N2 highway which led south through Mtunzini District, finding voting stations in dilapidated schools, neglected clinics and a modern training centre. Local people had rejected the Bantu school that had been designated as a voting station, and they turned up by the hundreds at the new training facility. Many walked, some were transported in the back of panel trucks and others were carried. All showed the patience of a life-time of waiting.

Many voting stations had teachers, administrators or local officials who were serving as election monitors and presiding officers while waiting for the station to open. Few stations had enough equipment and many did not open on time. At Amatikulu Training Centre, the administrator was surprised by the people's choice to designate it as a voting station, but was helpful. A room was made available at short notice.

Some equipment arrived and potential voters moved hopefully from the shade to the sun in front of the building doors. A helpful guard of the chief, wearing a "give peace a chance" t-shirt and a large handgun, delivered pop and oranges to the crowd.

The voting station staff were helpful and efficient, and we were able to effect the removal of an Inkatha poster inside the voting perimeter. But there was no ultraviolet light to register the invisible ink sprayed on voters' hands to show they had already voted, and no official stamp. The Presiding Officer [PO] had to tell the crowd at 3:30 that they could not vote. A special line would accommodate them all in the morning. The waiting line of people turned around and, supporting each other, they began walking home. They did not question a day when they had waited a lifetime. I did not share their patience.

A free and fair process?

We set out on Wednesday with some trepidation. Tuesday night, the District Electoral Officer gave us a new list of 34 voting stations we would be responsible for in our area. Early Wednesday, we talked to the District Monitor, Mr. Bongani, who assured us: "Yes, I have the up-to-date list of the twenty-nine stations," fulfilling our worst fears. How could these new stations be staffed and monitored properly when the District Monitor did not have access to the new list? Who was making decisions?

Prexy and I decided to visit two of the new stations. By the time we arrived at Siyabonga School, several hundred people were already waiting. The chief with his guard was inside the school to observe the sealing of the ballot box. We suggested shortly afterward that it was not appropriate for them to stay in the station and the PO asked them to leave. There was no monitor, only two party officials

present to ensure fairness: one ANC and one Inkatha representative. We suggested that they observe the PO's assistance to voters to help guarantee voter independence. The PO asked us to get security assistance for the station.

Back at Manzamnyama School there were now close to one thousand voters waiting. No IEC monitors and, again, we talked with the party officials to get them involved in monitoring the situation. At this station the PO didn't seem to wait to hear instructions from several elderly voters before he marked their ballot for them. I commented obliquely on how difficult it must be to wait for their response in the light of his "assistance" duties for both the national and provincial vote. He understood my query and became quite defensive but did wait for words from voters during the rest of my short visit. I could do nothing more.

The rest of the day was similarly spent. In most of the eleven stations we visited, there were IEC monitors. At Amatikulu Training Centre, the chief's same guard, same t-shirt, was allowing people to enter one at a time. The chief's wife, the IFP party official, stood inside the door greeting all the voters directly. The chief busied himself escorting people to the booths and generally disturbing the process.

The PO was a shy man employed by the kwaZulu University. When asked to intervene, he smiled and shrugged. He had already stopped the chief from going behind the booth with voters and he obviously considered that to be the limit of his powers. Mr. Sibusiso, the very capable monitor, spoke quietly to Prexy of a threat he had received earlier: when he intervened to ensure a fair voting process, an armed guard threatened, "We're going to get you when you leave tonight."

The third and last of the voting days was less dramatic, as most

people had already voted. There were many success stories - voting stations that were ably staffed and run according to the election law. But there were also lost ballots. A contingent of police and media turned up at our hotel following reports of ballot papers there. As it happens, the IEC had filled the hotel with employees and voter education papers, including sample ballots.

Counting the ballots

Counting was to be done in the district town halls. On Saturday morning in Eshowe (just north of Empangeni), two hundred people lined up to work. Small groups were being siphoned off for training. In the rush to ensure voting access, no one had found the time to train for the next step. In Mtunzini, we found a similar situation. "There will be no counting today," we were told.

On Sunday we checked the initial stages of the counting process at several sites. One person held up each ballot and shouted out the marked party while another registered it. Party officials sat, often ten feet or more away, trying to read the results. The ballots were stacked in partisan piles. More party officials observed the recounting of these piles and their delivery - a slow process which kept IEC and party officials tied up for days. Several ballot boxes were discovered with carefully folded and stacked papers inside. The ballots all belonged to one party. In Empangeni Town Hall, over a million votes were counted - an unexpectedly high number. Did the numbers reflect a lack of census data, the white farmer-IFP alliance that saw truckloads of people dumped at voting stations across the district, or election fraud?

What prospects?

We left on May 4 with feelings of great joy mixed with a sense of trepidation. Through all the chaos and the waiting, the incredibly professional service of the voting station staff was a positive indicator

of the new South Africa. Young people, willing to risk their lives, gave physical, psychological and instructional assistance to endless lines of voters. The patience and determination of the voters also bodes well for positive change in the country.

But there are other factors which will determine how positive that change can possibly be. Will the international economic community allow Mandela and the government of national unity to begin the necessary economic equity work or will structural adjustment win out?

Will the telephones in Section J of eSikaweni township function soon or not? Will the water lines be fixed there? Will the violence decrease with any greater social and economic equity that is achieved? How long before all the legacies of apartheid are overcome?

The Natal Exception

BY MARLEA CLARKE

The South African election was a dramatic and historic event, bringing to an end a brutal system of segregation and institutionalized racism. At a national level, the election was a success: extensive voter education was carried out by numerous community-based organizations, millions of potential voters were properly registered, voting stations were identified in both urban and rural areas and South African election monitors and Presiding Officers were recruited and trained in the weeks leading up to the election. Although accurate numbers of those who voted are impossible to attain, there is wide agreement that the majority of those eligible to vote were able to cast their ballots in a safe and secure environment.

However, at a regional level the election process and the environment in which the election was carried out varied greatly. And it was in Natal that the election process experienced the greatest difficulties, by far. Of course this region has been extremely volatile and conflict-ridden ever since the late 1980s. There are, for example, only 1.5-2 million people living in the lower region of Natal, yet over 45% of the violence in the country has been concentrated here. Against this backdrop, one can sketch out three distinct moments in Natal's election process: the run-up to the election (a period when the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) was refusing to participate); the period immediately after the IFP's decision to participate; and the election days themselves.

Prior to the IFP's entry into the race, its position was to actively oppose the election through various forms of intimidation, violence and prohibition. Voter registration cards were confiscated and burned, political campaigning and voter education were made difficult if not impossible in these areas, and community members thought to be ANC members (or even sympathetic to the ANC) were targets of violence. With Buthelezi struggling to hold on to power and to manoeuvre the best deal possible for the IFP, political violence was increasing rather than decreasing during this period.

One could sense the emergence of a new level of stability almost immediately after the IFP announced its decision to participate. Violence decreased and some degree of public campaigning and voter education work

began in areas of kwaZulu Natal which had been, only days before, "no-go" areas for anyone associated with the election.

Buthelezi's decision to participate in the election and the declaration of a state of emergency in kwaZulu Natal did significantly alter the environment in which the election was carried out. Yet neither event could quite ensure that a fair voting process in this region would occur. First, while there was an almost immediate decline in political violence, anxiety remained high and attacks continued. Second, while the presence of security forces in the region had some positive impact in most communities, there were real limitations on the extent to which "state of emergency" regulations were used effectively to stop the violence (either known 'warlords' were not being arrested or the police weren't targeting the most problematic areas). Third, the organizational chaos created by the late entry of the IFP into the election created opportunities for local IFP political leaders as well as local chiefs (also IFP members) to intervene in an inappropriate way in the election process at a number of voting stations.

After all, over 500 new voting stations had to be quickly authorized (some located at previously-defined sites but others at places named by local political leaders), staff had to be recruited and trained, and most importantly, hundreds of thousands of voters in these areas had to be registered. In each of these processes, many irregularities were noted by observers like myself - some of these irregularities a result of structural problems, but others clearly evidence of deliberate attempts by the IFP to ensure a victory in the province by any means necessary.

Even more dramatic was evidence that IFP-sponsored fraud had also taken place on a far grander scale (ballot stuffing, ballot boxes disappearing, and ballot papers tampered with). However, despite clear evidence of such irregularities the election results have been accepted in Natal. In deciding not to challenge them the ANC has chosen to see the acceptance of the results as a compromise necessary to its attempt to find a political resolution to the long-standing conflict in kwaZulu Natal - with implications for the future that remain extremely unpredictable.

"Now for the Hard Part"

BY JOHN S. SAUL

John Saul is a member of the editorial working group of Southern Africa Report and the author, most recently, of Recolonization and Resistance: Southern Africa in the 1990s (1993). An abbreviated version of this article was also published in the Globe and Mail (Toronto).

"Now for the hard part." So, in more or less the same words and within a half an hour of each other, Pallo Jordan and Joe Slovo greeted me at the Carlton Centre on the day the ANC readied itself to declare victory in the recent elections and become South Africa's new government. True enough, perhaps. Yet few would begrudge the ANC the euphoria, gleeful and unbounded, that gripped the hotel's ballroom later that evening in the wake of Nelson Mandela's historic pronouncement. Certainly, in a lifetime of accompanying the ups and downs of African politics, I had never experienced anything quite like it: a gigantic surge of energy that I knew, from television monitors banked in the corners of the room, was spreading to the streets outside the hotel, and beyond – to the crowded black township of Alexandra, for example, and to the more distant rural areas of the Northwestern Transvaal, places where I had accompanied the voting only a few days before. We danced and laughed, all of us, embraced, and danced again.

My memory drifted back thirty years, to the ANC's dusty offices in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where I had first met, as exiles from their own country, many of the people now dancing in the Carlton ballroom. I knew something of the long, uneven, but ultimately heroic journey that had finally brought them here to Johannesburg and to the brink of power. But I had also been privileged to witness at

close hand, as a Canadian "electoral observer," the equally dramatic events of the preceding week: the ultimate assertion of their claim to freedom by so many of South Africa's black people as, in their vast numbers, they stood, in endless queues, patiently and with great dignity, to cast their ballots.

I participated in this great moment as a member of one of several delegations organized by Canadian non-governmental organizations (in my case, by the Toronto-based Rooftops Canada) to "observe," officially, the mounting of the elections. We were sanctioned – like many other such groups (ranging from United Nations and Commonwealth missions to innumerable "ngos" from around the world) – by the Independent Electoral Commission to accompany the voting and the counting and to help ascertain whether the whole process was "free and fair." Our five-person team thus found itself with privileged access to the event, frequenting numerous polling stations throughout the three days of the election, while also monitoring queues and, finally, some of the long drawn-out drama of the final tabulation.

"Free and fair" enough

It would be easy to highlight the numerous foul-ups in the proceedings – although one wonders how even our own finely-honed electoral apparatus would have coped with a sudden expansion of the Canadian voting population by the five or six times South African officials had to cope with! The imagination with which so many, recently mobilized to the electoral team from all walks of life, coped with the logistical difficulties involved in mounting such an exercise was impressive.

So, too, was the forbearance of virtually all parties involved in the elections, something that made it possible to interpret rules with the

degree of measured flexibility that seemed so appropriate. It was this, in turn, that helped translate a sense of the importance of the occasion into a growing acceptance that the process was, certainly, free and fair enough. Sprawling, loose-limbed, often chaotic, the drama of the event as a "liberation election" stood out above all else. A personal case in point: on one occasion we fulfilled one of our duties by monitoring, behind the screen, a presiding officer as she asked a certain aged and illiterate voter where he wanted his "x" to be placed. I expect that as long as I live my ears will harbour the echo of his fervent, almost whispered, response: "Mandela."

There were lingering anomalies, even dangers, in some of the results, of course. For example, it was difficult to feel entirely sanguine about the electoral outcome in the Western Cape, where apartheid's long-term success in setting Coloureds against Africans was stoked, successfully, by a National Party campaign that bordered on mere racism (see David McDonald's account of the Western Cape election elsewhere in this issue). And, in Natal, even the probability that a dramatic measure of voting fraud had been perpetrated by the Inkatha Freedom Party could not blunt the fact that the often brutal IFP had considerable support there.

The ANC has decided – at least for the moment – not to press its case on the fraud issue and to accept the Natal electoral outcome, warts and all. Will this ensure the continuing commitment of Chief Buthelezi and his IFP colleagues to now press their various claims willingly through the channels provided by South Africa's fledgling democratic institutions? And will the many ANC-aligned Zulu who have been victims of the IFP's cruel tactics in the past feel confident to commit their own futures to that pos-



Paula Bronstein - Impact Visuals

sibility? In Natal, perhaps, the future is anything but bright, but time alone will tell.

The hard part

Moreover, beyond these unknowns there hovers an even more fundamental question: what could those vast numbers in their patient queues actually hope for, in terms of changes in the often grim reality of their own daily lives, from the "liberation election" that their long walk to the polls had so dramatically become? South Africa remains, election or no, amongst the most unequal societies in the world, vast wealth juxtaposed to abject poverty, and with such inequalities still largely inscribed along racial lines. What can the ANC government be expected to do about the extremely *undemocratic* nature of the socio-economic structure it must now, as policy-maker, confront?

Of course, of all the parties to the election, only the ANC had run on anything like a coherent policy programme, one embodied in its "Reconstruction and Development Programme." Here, in fact, is

a programme at whose core lies acknowledgement that the black population's legitimate expectations are not to be merely dismissed as "unrealistic," that its democratic voice must continue to be heard, and that its "basic needs" must be met. Small wonder that one of the most energizing of moments on Victory Eve was when Mandela departed from his written text to underscore vigorously the ANC's once and future commitment to this very RDP.

The RDP is less clear as to the means of doing all that it promises, of course. Will the ANC, bound by prior agreement to a "government of national unity" with its former opponents and confronted with a bureaucratic apparatus until recently entirely unsympathetic to its aims, find room for imaginative manoeuvre on such fronts? And what of the forbidding global context in which it finds itself? Must the ANC merely accept the dictate of market outcomes, world-wide and local, as the bottom-line of its development aspirations?

Or can it, as many of its supporters within the trade union movement and within the other popularly-based institutions of "civil society" insisted when we spoke together, use the state to at least steer the business community in directions deemed necessary to realize more humane results? Unfortunately, the answers to such questions are not altogether promising ones - as I argue in a second article in these pages, one prepared for the *Work in Progress* symposium which has now become part of this issue of *SAR* (see below). Here, of course, the chief emphasis can safely be on celebrating, without apology, the dramatic moment of political democratization which we have just witnessed in South Africa. Still, we should also pause to remind ourselves that the economics of South African liberation remains to be defined in most of its essentials. The western solidarity network, now being rebuilt on the foundations of the old anti-apartheid movement, must find increasingly imaginative ways to link itself to South Africans' struggles to forge such a definition.

WIP Supplement

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WORK IN

PROGRESS

THE SPOILERS



WIP: R.I.P.

"There must be lots of happy faces at the IMF and the World Bank, in the financial capitals of the world, and in particular among big business and its political allies in SA. But for those of us who have struggled for the creation of a just social order, the closure of *Work In Progress (WIP)* resembles the funeral of a respected leader. WIP is irreplaceable, and to mourn its passing will never be as relieving as reading it."

Those fine words don't belong to one of the new leaders of the democratic SA, but to Khwezi Tiya, a long-time *WIP* reader in Volksrust, near the Mozambican border. A subscriber to our magazine since 1987, Mr Tiya wrote us hours after word went out that *WIP* was to close at the end of May.

Tiya read the news in *The Star*, SA's second-largest daily paper, which published its own oration: "*WIP* was admired for quality journalism and the guts with which it took the ideological bull by the horns. But it was a commercial failure – and the local media, as a whole, is the poorer. *WIP*'s death pleads for a viable financing mechanism for non-commercial publications. If the arts can afford opera, can the media not afford the likes of *WIP*?"

Somehow that editorial captured *WIP*'s bind, which some of SA's other independent publications are starting to experience: getting people to say nice things about your publication is easy. It's finding the money to publish that's tough ...

Never more so than in 1994, at the end of the first phase of SA's transition to democracy (wouldn't it be great if we could call it, as we used to, a 'revolution'), when most foreign funding goes straight into the state's kitty. Elements of civil society all over the country – in particular non-governmental organisations – are gradually finding that they've slid off the development agenda.

The local problem

But there's more to *WIP's* closure than a foreign funding drought. *The Star* fingered two other aspects, though somewhat sanctimoniously:

- Our media industry has barely shown interest in helping ensure the survival of the independent media (which helped carve out the political space the mainstream now jealously claims). It's ironic that *The Star's* holding company, the Argus Company, and its main rivals (Nasionale Pers and Times Media Limited) loudly proclaim their commitment to guarantee the survival of the independent media. Yet, collectively, they have put less than R1 million into the Independent Media Diversity Trust which was set up precisely to achieve that goal. (Times Media, by contrast, last year spent R6 million launching a local version of *Playboy*).

- SA sorely needs a state-sponsored programme to support independent, non-profit media projects through subsidisation. Such a programme – which has ensured a media diversity in countries like Sweden and the Netherlands – is the only way independent projects can survive against the monopolies, which have a stranglehold on the print media: they own SA Press

Agency; all the major newspapers; the paper industry and even the distribution networks.

A lack of critical voices

So what happens to the ideals espoused by *WIP*? Where are the critical voices? It's a question many anxious readers have already started to ask. Right now, we don't have real answers.

What we have are ideas and suggestions. One is to campaign, aggressively, for the local print media to put its money where its mouth is ... to stop writing editorials about how important the independent media is, and start putting money into those projects – including community radio and TV.

We need to lobby the ANC, to ensure the movement lives up to its promise that it will implement state subsidisation of non-profit media.

Another option is a broader campaign as part of the regrouping of the SA Left. This campaign has already started informally, with concerned *WIP* readers coming together to campaign for the kind of subsidies mentioned above.

Part of the aim is to build a financial base for a new publication – a new magazine, for new times – which can take forward the political ideals of a magazine which, in the words of Khwezi Tiya, "was a vital element in the chain that makes up the Left."

If we can extract from *WIP's* demise the lessons that can assist and hone these new initiatives, then its death will not have been in vain.

Chris Vick

What's Next? The RDP and After

The celebrations have lost their fizz, and the novelties of these momentous past weeks are fast becoming commonplace. What we're left with is what we inherited: a social, economic and even cultural crisis that must be turned around.

It's said that South Africa has an acronym for every problem. The RDP, short for The Reconstruction and Development Programme, has emerged both as the ANC's substantive electoral programme and, now, as a much cited framework for the new government's policies. It is the most ambitious attempt ever to set out how the many backlogs of apartheid can and should be dealt with.

If only its success depended solely on will power and good intentions. Unfortunately, as the contributors to this section show, the RDP's guideline for South Africa's transformation are hemmed in by all the structural realities and political compromises that have come to define the basis of the new South Africa.

And yet a narrowing and domesticating of the RDP's

implications for the possible transformation of South Africa is not yet a *fait accompli*. As previous writers in *WIP* have argued, the Programme is, itself, a "terrain of struggle."

And this is also the central, sobering point of virtually all the contributions gathered in the pages which follow: the South African struggle for liberation, for a process of change that will affect positively the lives of those who most need it, must continue – both inside and outside Parliament.

Moreover, for this struggle to proceed effectively we need to pause and take stock, thoroughly and lucidly, of the many challenges – both the dangers and the opportunities – that mark this new phase. The articles presented in the following pages, first prepared for the abortive issue #97 of *WIP* and now gathered together as a special *WIP* supplement to *Southern Africa Report*, represent one small contribution to this necessary process.

Hein Marais

Cosatu Approaches a Crossroads

BY ENOCH GODONGWANA

The new SA demands bold new strategies from a labour movement that is in danger of losing track of the "basics," warns Numsa's Enoch Godongwana.

Enoch Godongwana is general secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA, Numsa.

There is no doubt that the democratic movement will not be hostile to the labour movement – at least not to the extent that successive apartheid regimes were.

The labour movement will have access to state resources and there is every reason to expect that there will be genuine consultation with it on major issues.

But the labour movement will have to participate vigilantly in this consultation or else it may lead to a co-option that reduces the labour movement to a mere transmission belt for state policy.

These dangers raise key questions about the relationship between Cosatu and the ANC, a matter that will be discussed at the next Cosatu congress.

Different affiliates hold different positions on the matter. There is the much publicised National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) resolution which proposed that once the ANC became part of the government, the alliance should cease in its current form.

A week after that Numsa congress last year, the SACP's Jeremy Cronin implied in a *Weekly Mail* article that the 700 delegates had been unwitting victims of a National Intelligence Service plot to foment disunity within movement ranks, and that their doubts about the alliance stemmed from disillusionment with the pace of the multiparty negotiations.

It was a dirty argument that avoided inspecting the merits and motivations of the Numsa resolution. And its assumptions were also incorrect: there is no doubt in my mind that the resolution would have passed irrespective of the pace of negotiations because the issues and concerns that underlie it go much deeper.

The key question is how to maintain and jealously guard our independence as a labour movement and how to avoid becoming a transmission belt if we are in alliance with a liberation movement that forms part of the government of the day. The Numsa resolution was a contribution to that debate.

As part of that alliance, Cosatu has to ensure that we defend the democratic gains, deepen the democratisation process and, above all, ensure that the basic needs of our people are met through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This requires that we continue our relationship with the ANC government in some form.

Exodus without a map

Obviously, the next Cosatu congress will have to debate these political developments. It also will need to tackle the exodus of key personnel from the federation to parliament.

The most striking feature of that development was the bankruptcy of strategic planning in the process that led up to the exodus. Some people were released by Cosatu and some left by their own accord. A few lone voices had argued that it was critically important first to have a strategic discussion on what we want to achieve in this transition – and *then* to put forward the names. In that way the exercise would have occurred as part of a broad strategic vision.

Constitution Blues

As it reads, the interim constitution holds some unwelcome implications for the labour movement.

The right to strike is entrenched in the constitution but its scope is limited. We will have to fight to push this right beyond the boundaries set for it.

More disturbing is the lockout clause. As Ebrahim Patel correctly argues (see *Work in Progress 95*), it is incorrect to "balance" the right to strike with employers' "right" to lockout striking workers. By virtue of their economic property, bosses have more economic clout than the workers. The right to strike merely starts to "level the playing field." The lockout clause must go.

Other clauses raise less obvious difficulties. As currently defined in the constitution, the right to freedom of association will create several problems for unions. There is a likelihood that the extension of Industrial

Council agreements to non-parties and even the closed shop agreement will be contested in the constitutional court on the basis of this clause. We need to fight to ensure that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of freedom of association applies, in so far as it affects industrial relations.

The clause that relates to freedom of economic activity poses additional problems. At this stage there is no telling what its implications might be if this clause is linked with the freedom of association clause. What does it imply for the right to information in relation to the bargaining process? How could it affect the right of union officials to gain access to company property for bona fide union work?

These clauses cannot be allowed to remain as they are in the final constitution.

Unfortunately, it did not work out this way. The names themselves dominated, rather than the strategy. One consequence is that there is now no clarity as to how these former trade union figures are going to push a labour agenda when they are no longer accountable to the labour movement.

The union federation is not only losing leaders who have entered parliament, it's also losing people who will become part of state institutions. So we are faced with a huge skills drain.

In the absence of structured accountability, the best we can hope is that these comrades, driven by sheer instinct, will somehow still push a labour agenda from their vantage points.

New pressures

Other, broader problems complicate the way forward. SA's economy is on the verge of becoming fully integrated into the world economy.

Ours is an economy which has relied on a high wall of protectionism, cheap labour and a segmented labour market. This process of integration into the world economy (and the demand for great competitiveness) will intensify pressure on the manufacturing and service industries to lower domestic prices and reduce the measures that protect them against foreign competition.

The changes introduced during the latest GATT round make it even less likely that our industries will be competitive. The need to stimulate exports and avoid Balance of Payment problems will lead to heavy pressure for restructuring at the company and industry levels.

At the broader political level there will be enormous pressure on workers not to make "excessive" wage claims and to limit strikes - so as not to scare investors.

Numsa's view is that we should be talking about a high-wage, high-skilled scenario, where huge amounts are invested in human resource development. The employers are already indicating (especially in the engineering sector) that in the long-term most unskilled workers will be displaced; there will be higher demands for their semi-skilled and skilled counterparts. This means that more resources must be put into training and skills development, rather than simply arguing for wage cuts.

Thus far the federation's response has been unfocused, while the responses of affiliates at the industry level have been uneven. At the federation level we set ourselves three objectives:

- Stop unilateral restructuring
- Unlock resources to benefit the oppressed
- Develop a democratic alternative

In pursuit of these objectives, the labour movement has become involved in a whole range of forums, from drought relief to the National Economic Forum (NEF).

These engagements, though, are characterised by

many complications. Every forum, for instance, produces volumes of thick documents. Unionists' capacity to thoroughly understand these documents is limited; often we don't even have the time to read them.

One of the ways in which we tried to overcome our shortage of "capacity" was by commissioning research and getting experts to assist us. But this led to a process driven by a few individuals and experts. I stress that it's not the fault of these individuals - like all of us, they are victims of a whole process we set in motion, a process of engagement without focus. It's a process that is reflected also within individual unions.

Switch gears

If we are going to position ourselves effectively for the battles ahead, we need seriously to rethink our strategies. In doing that, it will be appropriate to assess the status and capacities of the labour movement.

The complexity of the issues being negotiated - and the lack of focus - has led to a wide gap between leadership and membership. Our policy objectives have always been "worker control." That control is exercised through a leadership that is accountable to membership; throughout the negotiations process, for example, mandates and report-backs have to be stuck to. If workers are to exercise their democratic rights effectively, they must be fully informed. If that aspect is not fulfilled, we run the risk of seeing our democratic tradition disappear - and becoming as unpopular as the old Trade Union Council of SA (Tuca).



Roger Bosch - Afrapix/Impact Visuals



Andrew Lichtenstein - Impact Visuals

Let's take a specific example. Over the years we have developed an uncompromising policy on centralised bargaining. Yet there is nothing absolute about centralised bargaining. It's not a panacea and it can even create a situation in which a few skilled officials come to bargain within a process that is far removed from the workers, who tend, in turn, to become alienated from the bargaining process.

Take for instance the National Industrial Council for Iron and Steel Industries (Nicisemi), which covers thousands of employers. Some employ a few workers, others thousands. In the same way, the profitability of these companies varies enormously. I don't think we can set up acceptable standards and challenge the profitable companies without taking a serious look at the levels at which we bargain with these employers.

This means that Cosatu's success in SA's transition will also depend on strong organisation at the shop floor level where we are strategically located. Achieving this demands that we go back to basics. Some people might think it ridiculous, but we may have to take up a specific campaign with a slogan like "Back to the Membership."

This shouldn't be construed as a retreat from broader struggles. Not at all. It means we have to develop

focused campaigns, that could include some of these issues:

- Workers' rights; right to strike and picket; simplified strike procedures; right to information; restructuring the industrial court.
- Right to a living wage, the right to employment security and the right to basic education and training.
- Centralised bargaining.

New solutions

Already there is an emerging broader consensus among the major trade union federations in SA to develop common approaches to our common challenges.

This might even go as far as looking at a possible merger between the major trade union federations. Given the sorts of pressures we are likely to face, it is critically important that this process is taken forward to ensure that labour's voice remains strong during the transition. Such a merger obviously could have critical implications for the tripartite alliance.

The undeniable fact is that we have entered a new era. And if the labour movement is to stay effective, then we must take stock and devise approaches and answers that are appropriate to the challenges.

Can the RDP Survive the IMF?

BY VISHNU PADAYACHEE

Defending South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme against the orthodoxies of the IMF will require creative strategies and a clear-headed resolve. VISHNU PADAYACHEE has some ideas for outwitting the Fund.

Vishnu Padayachee is associate research professor at the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Durban-Westville.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) must be defended.

Its underlying principles ("an integrated programme, based on the people, that provides peace and security for all and builds the nation, links reconstruction and development and deepens democracy") are laudable. The consultative and democratic spirit by which it was debated within and beyond the liberation movement deserves praise.

Likewise praiseworthy is its basic content – meeting essential needs, developing human resources, and building an integrated and dynamic economy. And its emphasis on developing partnerships with business, NGOs and other sectors in the development, financing and implementation of the programme is admirable.

So strong are the expectations of South Africans, however, that failure to deliver on the RDP may threaten the very survival of Africa's newest democracy.

And one of the key factors affecting success or failure will be the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Wanted: a coherent strategy

The ANC has not engaged the IMF with a coherent strategy. Four broad approaches to the IMF's role in the economic reconstruction of SA are discernible. Depending on the spokesperson or the audience one finds support for all four of these positions within the ANC alliance:

- The first accepts the IMF view of growth and development. It is based on a kind of "global consensus" that follows the allegedly proven suitability of market-oriented economic reform and liberal, pluralist political solutions. In this view, the typically anti-statist IMF (and World Bank) loans, adjustment programmes and technical assistance are welcomed as boons for growth.

- The second sees the IMF and World Bank as agents of imperialist powers whose conscious agenda it is to destroy nationalist and socialist development programmes in developing countries. They aim to open these countries to Western trade and investment, with the overall goal of bolstering capitalist economies in the

industrialized West. This approach urges developing countries to pursue an inward-looking strategy of development.

- The third approach believes the IMF and World Bank can easily be brought around to accepting SA's nationally determined strategy of development, even where elements of it may be anathema to these institutions. This stance assumes that they either have changed their philosophy of development (and now accommodate more interventionist strategies) and/or they are prepared for both economic and political reasons to make special concessions in SA's case. Here, IMF policy "advice" is not seen as a threat.

- The final approach proposes that the IMF and World Bank are not as monolithic as they seem. And, in fact, they may indeed have changed some aspects of their approach to development since the late 1980s. But their views still do not sit neatly beside those of governments that are committed to more interventionist strategies of development, such as the RDP. Despite SA's many bargaining strengths, a relatively favourable agreement with the IMF will require a continuous struggle based on a coherent and defined strategy.

I have critiqued these views and their problems more fully elsewhere (see *SA Labour Bulletin*, Jan/Feb 1994). The first two approaches, I argued, threaten the integrity and success of the RDP, though for very different reasons. The third approach seems based largely on hope and its failure will leave us disarmed, immobilized and vulnerable to IMF intervention.

Now, it is possible that these very mixed signals coming from the ANC alliance were part of a deliberate political strategy during the election campaign. The problem is that no substantive consensus exists below the surface discourse.

Instead, I would argue that significant policy (dare one say ideological!) differences exist within the alliance. This was evident to people involved in the debate over the Macro-Economic Research Group's *Making Democracy Work: A Framework for Macroeconomic Policy in SA*, one of the important inputs into the RDP.

Although the RDP appears to represent a reasonable, temporary compromise, we may see different factions within the alliance stress different aspects of the programme. Much will depend on the way Cosatu (and the trade union movement in general), as well as civics and progressive NGOs position themselves in relation to an ANC-led government. Because popular, mass-based support for the RDP is crucial to its success.

The story so far

The IMF has not been sitting on its hands. Its report, "Economic Policies for a New South Africa," focused on the growth and redistribution policies needed in the new South Africa and looked at issues such as the poverty profile of the country, sources of saving, the composition of government expenditure, the implications of increases in real wages, and the scope for a more liberal trade and payments system within the context of an outward-looking strategy.

The report was welcomed by sections of business and by the Reserve Bank, which commented that it "says all the right things."

The IMF sees economic growth trickling down to the poor through employment growth and increased government revenue which permits greater social spending. This approach does not change income patterns and combat systemic inequalities.

The IMF Report appears to recognize the magnitude of SA's economic problems, but its policy conclusions are predictable and pessimistic.

It also takes the dogmatic view that external trade and financial relations should be liberalized to eliminate balance of payments deficits, despite the fact that there is little international evidence for this.

Increased exports, foreign investment and credits (held out by the IMF as the outcome of liberalization) either do not materialize (as Sudan has learned), or are very narrowly focused (as in Venezuela, where in the early 1990s, foreign capital inflows were limited to the buy-out of privatized companies and to stock market and exchange rate speculation), or tend to be based on other economic and political considerations.

Finally, the Report calls for improving the skills and training of blacks, but rules out the required increases in government expenditure on education, training and

That IMF Letter of Intent

The latest sign of IMF policy advice to SA is the Letter of Intent (Statement of Policies), signed by the IMF and the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) shortly before the election as the precursor to a \$850m loan.

Few South Africans have seen the final version of this Letter. Hence, I'm relying on my reading of the narrowly circulated first draft and the *Business Day* summary of the final draft.

Although formally drawn up by the borrowing government, these Letters of Intent invariably are first drawn up by the IMF's technical experts. The document represents a statement of the kind of economic policies and "financial discipline" the government will try to follow. Typically, the borrowing government is left with minimal space to negotiate minor modifications.

The IMF claimed that it "simply wants an undertaking, by a legitimate body, that the economy would be responsibly managed," as a precondition for the loan. But this usually means wage restraint, limits on government social spending, and rapid trade and industrial liberalization, among other policies.

The Letter was at pains to point to the dangers of increases in real wages in the private and public sector. It stressed the need to control inflation, promised monetary targeting, trade and industrial liberalization, and repeatedly espoused the virtues of "market forces" over "regulatory interventions." (The similarities with the former regime's controversial Normative Economic Model are striking.)

Specifically, the Letter committed the new government to these policies:

- Reduce within a few years the government budget deficit to 6% of GDP;
- Contain spending rather than increase taxes, and limit the civil service wage bill;

- Continue the tight monetary policies of the past 4-5 years;
- Pursue policies to "couple wage restraint and training to foster investment and promote employment";
- Maintain the financial rand mechanism without introducing new exchange control mechanisms;
- Simplify and rationalize the tariff system, and phase out non-tariff barriers.

At least one set of amendments to the first draft Letter was presented to the ANC, on request of its Department of Economic Policy. It now appears that important proposed amendments, which related to monetary and fiscal policy, were not incorporated into the final text.

We don't know whether or not these amendments were actually carried to the discussions with the IMF, and hence whether it was the IMF team that rejected them. (Some amendments were, however, made to the Fund's numerous references to "wage restraint," training and external trade and financial liberalization.)

In all these cases amendments were proposed with a view to giving a new government greater room to manoeuvre when devising (interventionist) policies to address employment and meet basic social and infrastructural needs. By no stretch of the imagination could such amendments be construed as opening the door to "macroeconomic populism."

Equally troubling is the fact that the ANC negotiated the terms of the loan in such secrecy. Nothing stopped the ANC from broadening the debate over the Letter. The signing will affect us all. Through people's organized formations (unions, civics etc.), we should have been party to the process.

Vishu Padayachee

complementary infrastructure (for instance in housing and health).

David and Goliath

How does this IMF policy "advice" affect the RDP? The IMF is bent on macroeconomic balance – hence the focus on the budget deficit, inflation rate and balance of payments deficit. Is this concern at odds with the objectives of the RDP?

Even when the IMF is correct in insisting on macroeconomic stability and financial discipline, its "advice" comes as a package deal: the measures must be applied within the context of the usual IMF formula, not within a different developmental strategy like the RDP.

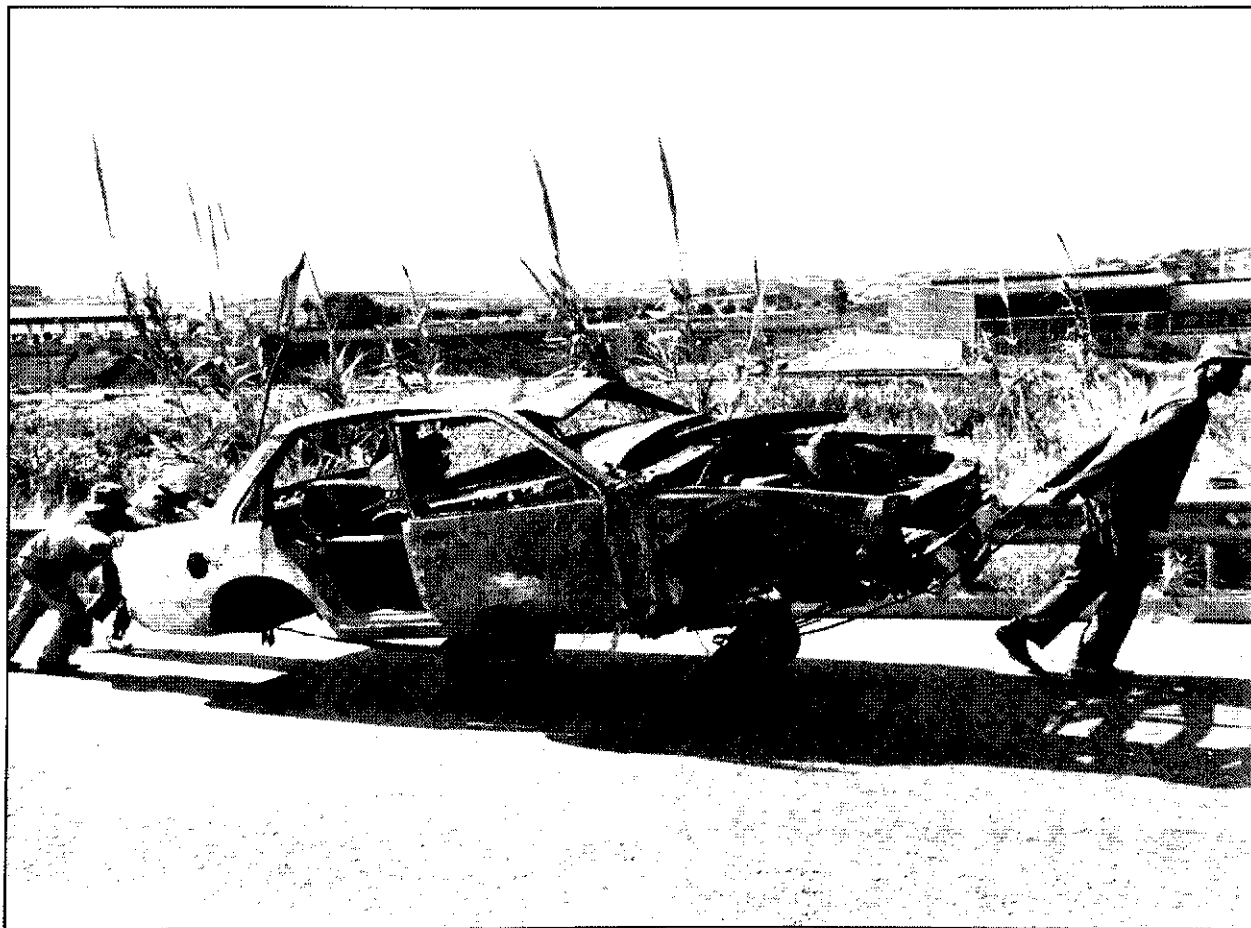
The IMF prefers the "growth first and redistribution later route." The RDP wants to integrate "growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution into a unified programme."

We should also challenge the IMF's attempt to monopolize the definition of financial discipline and

macroeconomic stability. Its monetarist view on macroeconomic stability is often crudely contrasted with "macroeconomic populism," as if these are the only options. Various Latin American examples are trotted out to demonstrate the disastrous effects of the latter.

I would argue that macroeconomic balances should be assessed, maintained or restored over a period (for instance, a 10-year reconstruction cycle). This allows for the positive results of particular policies to work their way into improved growth rates, rather than being artificially maintained at each point within the cycle.

Whether or not the economy is growing should also affect the decision. Within a sustained growth environment certain macroeconomic (im)balances can temporarily be stretched beyond typical IMF norms – if, for example, the benefits in employment or other productivity-enhancing indicators are substantial. (The RDP advances a clear commitment to macroeconomic balance, albeit not in the precise formulation of the IMF).



Men pushing a junked car 5 km along a highway to sell for scrap

Ansell Horn - Impact Visuals

Short-circuits

The real problem with IMF policy like that in the recent "Letter of Intent" negotiated with the ANC [see accompanying box] is that it may close off a whole range of the RDP's more direct interventionist policy options that target the poor and disadvantaged.

Thus one may ask:

- Will the RDP's commitment to social spending in areas such as housing, education, health be achieved within the limits of the 6% budget-deficit-to-GDP ratio required by the IMF?
- Will the (possible) easing of monetary policy aimed at stimulating investment, growth and employment threaten the monetary growth targets proposed by the IMF?
- Will the implementation of the RDP not quickly bump up against a balance of payments constraint (as a result of soaring import bills)?

What happens if this kind of IMF policy advice is not adhered to, even in the medium term? The parties that sign the Letter of Intent ought to be bound by it, at least in spirit.

The IMF might not be able to do much immediately to compel a sovereign government to enforce the agreement. But if that government is forced to seek another loan from the IMF (after, say, a balance of trade crisis or failure to service external debt), then the conditions for the new loan will undoubtedly tighten, and the full panoply of IMF (and World Bank) structural adjustment programme can follow.

Ways forward

So it is critical that a democratic government put in place a set of economic policies which will promote fairly rapid social and economic development and ensure a steady growth in foreign exchange earnings.

Financing the RDP largely through domestic financing, coupled with a well-structured strategy for borrowing in global capital markets and from the World Bank (for carefully planned projects which could earn foreign exchange) is an important part of a strategy to defend the RDP against IMF adjustment and conditionality. In these and related economic policy areas, the RDP appears to have struck just the right balance.

A lot of international attention is focused on SA. Now is the time to seek out support from European, American and other sympathetic governments for our RDP.

Recall how, in 1976, the Jamaican government skilfully used sympathetic contacts with the governments of Canada, the UK and the US (where the Carter administration initially showed some sympathy to Third World problems), to tone down the usual IMF conditions.

The ANC should elicit the support of the Clinton administration, especially, and request it to pressure the IMF (at the Executive Board level) to accept the RDP.

The support of anti-apartheid movements in the US and Europe, many of whom are now seeking to establish a development role in relation to a democratic South Africa, could also be useful.

Democratizing the domestic debate over IMF conditionality and winning wider international support are two crucial elements of a broader strategy for negotiating with the IMF. If we fail now, when international political and moral support for the new government seems so strong, when will we succeed?

There are other factors that can serve to defend the RDP in the medium to long-term. First, the integrity of the RDP as a comprehensive package must be defended at all costs by the alliance (both against the IMF and locally). Its proposals must be implemented until a critical mass of reconstruction and development is delivered.

Second, the success of the RDP also depends crucially on whether the institutional capacities and national will exist to make it work. We must find innovative ways to galvanize existing structures (and perhaps set up some new ones) to achieve the RDP. We don't want to meet certain IMF targets by default because we could not deliver on major social spending items.

Third, the ANC needs to inform its constituency fully about changes to the RDP and its implementation, including its negotiations with the IMF and World Bank. Thorough public accountability must be maintained – even, perhaps especially, if policies which may involve short term hardships are being debated.

Some kind of agreement with the IMF (and World Bank) does seem necessary. Access to IMF balance of payments assistance and World Bank loans and other resources may become crucial to the eventual success of our development strategy.

But we should learn from the experience of other countries. And we need a well-planned and coherent approach to negotiating with these institutions, based on a lucid alternative development strategy which recognizes the importance of maintaining sound macroeconomic balance, and which has the support of the majority of our people.

I believe the RDP is such a programme. However, the modern, highly interdependent global economy acts to create a constant set of pressures to adjust and readjust national economic policies, if only to mitigate and reduce the amplitude of cyclical movements.

Unless the RDP is adequately defended it may be abandoned when the amplitude of the cycle bursts as a result of some major global or national crisis. And that will spell disaster for SA.

South Africa: Another Ghana?

BY ADEBAYO OLUKOSHI

It will take more than good intentions to make the RDP work, warns Adebayo Olukoshi, as he recalls the fate of Ghana's 1981 development experiment.

Prof. Adebayo Olukoshi is the acting director of research and studies at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in Lagos.

As the proposed framework for the main policies of the ANC-led transition government of national unity, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) qualifies both as a manifesto and a development plan.

In conception, content and orientation there can be no doubt that the document is a product of popular consultation aimed, as far as intentions go, at satisfying the aspirations of the popular masses of SA.

Certainly, the RDP tries to encompass every sphere of life. From the economy and the state system to the civil society, sports and culture, environmental protection and social welfare, it identifies problem areas and proposes solutions that can benefit the majority of South Africans.

As a blueprint for overturning the accumulated racial and class injustices in SA, it is therefore no surprise that the RDP has attracted wide attention – inside and outside the country.

Within SA there has been contestation within the ANC itself over the content and policy implications of the programme. More broadly there is the range of social groupings that have profited from the edifice of racial and class injustices of apartheid and which now spare no effort in seeking to discredit the RDP – as “utopian,” “unrealistic,” “statist” and so on.

They see little or no merit in the solutions proffered by the RDP and deride its central principles, namely to achieve “an integrated programme, based on the people, that builds the nation by linking reconstruction and development, with deepening democracy...” These are principles which, in the view of some of the beneficiaries of the apartheid system, are akin to the hollow slogans adopted in post-independence Africa, slogans that soon saw the majority of those countries become “basket cases.”

But criticism is not restricted to those social groupings that are threatened by an RDP which challenges the conditions and practices from which they profit. Other disagreements stem from a scepticism about the RDP's potential for promoting macroeconomic policies which are considered “rational” and “desirable.”

Positioned primarily on the ideological Right, these voices are intensely suspicious of the RDP's perceived populism and leftism. They fear it will strengthen the hand of an interventionist state, do too little to promote the private sector and obstruct or even prevent what they consider to be the necessary structural adjustment of the SA economy.

To be sure, the RDP goes to great lengths pointing out areas and sectors of the SA economy that require restructuring, and it identifies strategies for achieving this. But this, of course, is not the kind of restructuring critics from the ideological Right consider appropriate. They want to see a market-driven programme akin to what the IMF and World Bank have been promoting in the rest of Africa.

Who's that knocking?

In my view, this line of critique demands the most vigilance. Aside from the constituency inside SA there exists a very strong transnational alliance, dominated by Western donor states and lending agencies which support this view. And we dare not forget that they have spent the past 15 years imposing orthodox structural adjustment programmes in Africa – against the wishes of the people.

The predictable failure of these orthodox structural adjustment programmes to achieve their results has not slowed the push for market reforms in Africa; that process continues through a variety of conditionality clauses and donor cross-conditionalities that are aimed at strengthening the leverage of the IMF and World Bank.

The demise of the apartheid system has seen donor interest in SA soar. Meanwhile, the IMF and particularly the World Bank have made explicit efforts to influence economic policy thinking within the ANC through a series of dialogues and “consultations.” There is no doubt that further attempts will be made to dilute the integrity of the RDP and to nudge the transitional government towards more orthodox market policies during this period of national reconstruction.

It is important to recognise that the reconstruction of SA is not simply a South African affair; its importance transcends the country's national boundaries. Hence, donor intervention will be key in determining the extent to which the RDP achieves its objectives.

Indeed, the entire economic management process (and the extent to which it remains open, popular and democratic) will be severely tested by donor intervention.

Africa offers many examples of how well-designed, well-intended and popular programmes of socio-economic and political reconstruction were either neutralised or hijacked by donor forces in alliance with local forces within and outside the state bureaucracy.

Flights of fancy

Perhaps the most celebrated recent experience was in Ghana, after the return to power of Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings – who had led the June 1979 “Revolution” that overthrew the military government of General Fred Akufu.

The December 1981 coup overthrew Ghana’s Third Republic at a time when this West African country was at an historic low politically, socially and economically. Its developmental problems seemed to defy all solutions.

Rawlings returned to power promising nothing less than a “revolution” to Ghanaians. He would oversee the restructuring of social power relations in order to transform the economy and society in favour of the toiling masses. This “revolution” excited many, both inside and outside Ghana.

Ghana faced intense and worsening economic problems, manifested in terms of hyper-inflationary pressures, shortages, an unprecedented and massive brain drain, collapsing industrial facilities and infrastructure, widespread poverty and economic misery, huge budgetary deficits and persistent Balance of Payment problems that were compounded by a growing debt burden.

The various left groups that had helped propel Rawlings to power in 1981 were convinced that nothing short of a thorough destruction of the inherited neo-colonial economic structure was needed. It had to be replaced with some kind of “socialist” economic order that would halt the country’s decline and restore the welfare of the majority of the people.

To achieve this they hammered out a programme of national economic reconstruction which, like SA’s RDP, was a product of widespread consultation among various popular forces, including the labour movement. It was the Rawlings government’s initial manifesto for the radical transformation of Ghana.

The successful launch of the programme depended as much on the mobilisation of the majority Ghanaians as it did on the fraternal support of Ghana’s friends – much as the RDP’s success will depend both on the vigilant participation of the majority of oppressed South Africans and on the availability of the finances for its realisation, finances which might have to be sourced from international external (donor) sources.

The radical programme for the transformation of Ghana came to grief less than a year after Rawlings’ return to power, hammered by the deepening economic crisis and the absence of a significant inflow of resources.

The doctor calls

The government surrendered to an option – which sections within the government had been pushing and pursuing – that would enable the IMF and World Bank to move into “revolutionary” Ghana in a big way. They were to take effective control of economic management, administer a shock treatment programme and transform the country into a model African “pupil” of orthodox structural adjustment.

The original programme for radical economic transformation was set aside as donor funds suddenly flowed in under the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) designed by the IMF and World Bank.

Sections of the Ghanaian Left refused to accept this turn of events. They worked within the government to get the ERP deal rejected, but soon found themselves being accused by Rawlings of attempting to destabilise the country and overthrow his regime. They were either jailed or managed to escape into exile.

Of course, SA is not Ghana. No matter how deep SA’s many current economic and social problems run, all macroeconomic and macrosocial indices show that it is not in as desperate a situation as Ghana was back in 1981.

Still, SA cannot expect to be left to its own devices as it pursues the RDP; it is too important for that. It will see donor “interest” in its reconstruction programme expressed in efforts to dilute and even neutralise *some* aspects of the RDP, and prop up other aspects.

The general performance of the SA economy in the short- to medium-term will be key in determining the manoeuvring space available to the IMF, World Bank and their local supporters as they seek to intervene in the programme.

Beyond this, the ANC-led government constantly will be challenged by its leading donors to balance its concern with reconstruction and social welfare, as spelt out in the RDP, with “responsible” economic management premised on “rational” principles. In IMF/World Bank language, “rationality” in economic policy is synonymous with the unleashing of market forces which, in the SA economy, can only mean the preservation of the economic structures that characterised the old order.

There can be no doubt that the RDP will have to be defended by its advocates and potential beneficiaries if it is to survive as the main developmental blueprint of the ANC-led government. The question which arises now is what kind of strategy is available to the popular forces for the defence of the RDP?

The new battle for the heart and soul of SA has begun in earnest. Will SA go the way of much of Africa and succumb to donor conditionality?

Unfortunately, there is no shining example on the continent from which SA can draw inspiration. But it can learn a lot from the mistakes committed there.

Tasks the Government Can't Duck

Patience is said to be a virtue. But some changes are so long overdue that they demand rapid and resolute action by the new government. Here MAVIVI MANZINI, SUE WIXLEY

and BRENDAN PEARCE, and DAVID FIG, pencil in the agenda for three crucial sectors.



Anna Zieminski - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

Women

COMPILED BY MAVIVI MANZINI

One of the ANC's leading feminists, Mavivi Manzini has been elected into the new South African parliament.

Women do not constitute a homogenous category. Among us there are working women, professionals, students, rural women, women living in squatter camps, and so on. Some of our needs and priorities coincide, some of them differ.

This is my own list of tasks that the new government has to tackle immediately:

1. Implement the chapter on fundamental rights in the interim constitution, particularly the *equality clause*. This will improve the legal status of women within marriage, the community and at work. It also will enable us to tackle effectively racial and gender discrimination

in taxation, subsidies, pensions, housing, land allocation and ownership, and access to loans and other resources.

2. Establish a cabinet committee on women, and a women's department (within the office of the President or the minister that convenes that cabinet committee).

3. Parliament should quickly set up a gender commission.

4. The Constitutional Assembly should adopt the Charter for Women's Rights as a working document.

5. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) must be implemented in ways that ensure economic empowerment of women - especially when it comes to matters of water, energy and infrastructure in rural and squatter areas.

6. Marriages under customary law must be recognised.

7. Access to pensions must be improved.

8. Committees that are struck by the new parliament have to include women's concerns prominently within their terms of reference.

* * *

Then I also consulted women from various backgrounds and regions, some of whom have been elected to parliament.

Women from Cosatu listed the following:

1. Parental rights must be updated. Provision of child care and recreational facilities is a priority. Maternity leave should be obligatory (up to 12 months, paid for 3-6 months), and paid paternity leave must be introduced.
2. In the workplace, women must move to the top of the queue when promotions come up.
3. Training inside and outside work must be extended.
4. There should be equal pay for work of equal value.
5. Women's legal right to independently lease property and start a business must be assured.
6. The Workman's (sic) Compensation Act must be changed without delay.
7. Customary law has to be changed.
8. Women must have the right to own land, and inherit as the wife or partner of the deceased, especially in rural areas.
9. Women should qualify for bank loans, government and company subsidies, irrespective of whether they are married, divorced or single.

Finally, women from the Northern Transvaal, one of the poorest regions in the country, presented this list of tasks that defy delay:

1. The new government must address education and unemployment immediately and simultaneously.

2. A job creation programme which will enable people to learn basic skills must be implemented.

3. Housing, water and electricity needs must be serviced immediately.

4. Agricultural land must be made available to women.

5. Health facilities that are accessible and cheap – or, where possible, free – must be set up.

6. Customary laws and attitudes that belittle women must be challenged and changed.

7. Measures and programmes are required to restore the confidence and self-reliance of women.

8. Measures to fight sexual harassment are needed, especially at the workplace.

9. Women must get equal pay for equal work.

10. Paid maternity and paternity leave must be guaranteed.

11. Higher portfolios must be made accessible for qualified women.

What is striking about these lists is the obvious need, across-the-board, for changes in the legal status of women. Customary laws and other discriminatory legislation must be dealt with immediately.

Under the Black Administrative Act of 1927, women are still, for example, regarded as minors requiring the guidance of the husband, father, uncle or brother. Consequently, they cannot own property, represent themselves in court or enter into any contract.

Also common is the call for measures that will empower women through education, skills training and access to economic opportunities – an area from which women have been shut out.

These are great challenges. But we have never been in a better position to tackle them than we are now.

Land

BY SUE WIXLEY AND BRENDAN PEARCE

Sue Wixley and Brendan Pearce work for the National Land Committee.

There is no escaping the high expectations held by rural communities that the new government will meet their land needs.

The government will need to tackle the issue immediately and head-on – before landless communities' frustrations grow so high that they take land redistribution into their own hands through land re-occupations, and before present landowners and white farmers increase evictions in the hope of preempting land reform measures.

The Department of Land Affairs, and other related departments, will face pressures from many sectors – rural communities, non-governmental organisations, organised agriculture, big business and powerful institutions like the World Bank.

Because governments tend to listen to those that lobby the loudest and demonstrate the most visible support, it will be up to the rural sector – which has traditionally been silent – to pressure the new government into addressing their needs.

Land reform cannot go onto the back burner; if it is ignored things will reach boiling point.

The National Land Committee has drawn up this checklist of tasks that defy delay:

work in progress

1. Set up a land claims court: The government must set up a Land Claims Court to hear the claims of victims of forced removals. This Court must have the power (and the budget) to award the claimants the land from which they were removed, or to grant alternative land or compensation.

This means parliament must pass the enabling legislation, a judge and commissioners must be appointed, and infrastructure must be set up. The Court must be well-publicised so that claims can be researched and submitted within the proposed time span of around five years. The Court will need a healthy budget so that it can provide legal assistance for claimants to research and make submissions.

2. Draw up a just policy: We need a detailed redistribution policy to deal with widespread land hunger. This programme should work alongside a Land

Claims Court process and deal with cases which fall outside its Court's narrow brief.

This means first asking: "Who should benefit from a land redistribution programme?" And the answer should come from consultations with all the stakeholders involved, including rural communities and NGOs.

Land redistribution should reach a range of beneficiaries – from aspirant black farmers to labour tenants, rural women and farm workers to homeland residents and people living in small towns. But it must meet the needs of those that are worst off.

3. Acquire enough land for redistribution: An inventory is needed of all available state land, including the vast tracts owned by the SA Defence Force. However, since there won't be enough state land to meet the huge demand (and much of it is not suitable for agriculture), the government should devise other plans to find land. It



Andrew Lichtenstein – Impact Visuals

can investigate using land that is mortgaged to the state by indebted farmers and buying other land on a "willing buyer, willing seller" basis.

4. Make rural development an RDP priority: The rural areas suffer extreme poverty and a lack of services. This is worsened by the concentration of government structures and budgets in urban areas. It is crucial that development be focused on the rural areas. A specific budget for rural areas should, for example, be allocated within the RDP.

5. Put women at the top of the queue: The needs of women in land redistribution and development programmes must get special priority. They make up at least 60% of the rural population and bear the brunt of the lack of services.

6. Apply farm labour laws : Labour Department inspectors should monitor the implementation of the new laws designed to protect farm workers. The two Acts – the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and the Unemployment Insurance Act – provide for annual leave, the right to organise and the right to claim unemployment insurance. The problem is that most farm workers don't know these laws exist. The government must also look to extending the Wage Act (which sets out a minimum wage) to include farm workers. The welfare system must be reviewed to allow farm workers easier access to supplementary incomes.

7. Halt evictions of labour tenants: A moratorium must be drafted to end evictions of labour tenants by farmers, a worsening problem because many farmers are

afraid that the tenants will benefit from a land reform programme.

Labour tenancy as a system was made illegal in the 1960s but is still practised in parts of Natal and the Transvaal where threats of evictions could erupt into violence.

8. Ensure community participation: The government must consult with community structures and involve them in local government. These communities will be part of the implementation of land reform programmes – by helping with land allocation, deciding on land use and advising on structuring development services.

9. Restructure ministries: The ministries which deal with rural communities must be made more accessible. This can be done by:

- Arranging ongoing consultation with community structures;
- Appointing representative and accountable people in the ministries; and
- Establishing formal links between communities and the departments by sending extension officers into the field.

The range of departments dealing with the rural areas (including health, education, housing and land affairs) should adopt a more coordinated approach to rural development.

10. Change credit institutions: Loans from institutions like the Land Bank and Agricultural Credit Board must become available to rural people so that they can buy land, as part of a land reform programme.

Environment

COMPILED BY DAVID FIG

David Fig is research director for the Group for Environmental Monitoring, GEM.

1. Beef up environmental management: Environment is not just about protecting birds and bees. It's about improving people's surroundings – their living and working conditions. We need to ensure that the use of natural resources is sustainable so that future generations will have a fair share. SA has a poor record of environmental management. We urgently need to *build capacity in all communities* to develop expertise in environmental management. And that includes our new public service.

2. Appoint a champion: The government should *appoint an environmental champion in a key position* – either in the new Ministry of Environment or in the office of the ombud. Previous governments underplayed the importance of the environment, leaving its formal protection in weak hands. Without a powerful, top-level

voice arguing for sustainable development, we will fall behind international standards.

3. Regulate environment effectively: A *national environmental commission* should be set up and located in the Office of the President. It will act as national watchdog on environmental questions, and have powers to act where individual ministries are constrained. It could also harmonise environmental policy at the national level. In addition, citizens will have the right to appeal to the ombud if environmental laws are violated.

4. Draw in civil society: The existing Council for the Environment consists of about 20 part-time environmental experts who advise the government. These are mostly white males from academia and the private sector. We need to broaden this body to include more diverse representation, including women, rural and urban communities, trade unions and the environmental movement. The old Council for the Environment should be *scrapped and replaced* with a national forum on the

work in progress

environment which includes, but is not dominated by, the private sector.

5. Clean up South Africa: Parts of our country are amongst the most polluted areas in the world. The new government must take action immediately to redress this. *Anti-pollution laws must be applied more strictly to decisively discourage polluters.* Incentives are needed to encourage current polluters to clean up their acts; for instance, there could be tax breaks for entrepreneurs who introduce cleaner technologies. The dirty records of Eskom and Iscor must be examined. Industry must be discouraged from producing so much toxic waste. Local government needs to ensure *proper waste disposal facilities* are in place. Up to now, black communities have borne most of the health burden of polluting industries – this environmental racism must be stopped.

6. Integrate pollution control: As the law now stands, the Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry controls water pollution, Health and Population Development controls air pollution, Agriculture controls soil pollution, Environment Affairs controls marine pollution, and so on. Environment Affairs tries to co-ordinate these functions, but it doesn't have the power to regulate.

We need an *integrated pollution inspectorate* housed in the new Ministry of the Environment. Inspectors will be multi-disciplined and will operate at provincial level. Polluters will no longer be able to play off one government department against the other. Pollution control will become more effective.

7. Involve rural people: Forty percent of South Africans live on the land or are crowded into former homeland regions. *Land reform* is key if we are going to get them back to work. But this should not occur at the expense of the environment or future production. Reformed, small-scale agriculture must be based on low-inputs rather than the disastrous high-inputs of fertilisers and pesticides that have seriously weakened our commercial agricultural sector.

People also need skills and training. We need *rural-based training centres* to upgrade people's skills, not only in agriculture but in new growth areas like ecotourism. If tourism booms, let it be trained rural people rather than mega-corporations that enjoy the benefits. Communities bordering on game reserves must be brought into a forum to discuss and solve common problems around entitlement to resources. The crises of small fishing communities, whose livelihoods have been eradicated by large companies, must be addressed.

8. Watch the big donors: The dismal environmental reputations of the World Bank and IMF are a matter of historical record. The World Bank has begun to payroll important local academics and consultants in the field, and plans to offer resources for land reform, nature conservation, water and sanitation, and urban restructuring. The new government *must ensure that*

SA does not become imprisoned in the provisions of future loans, especially in policies which cannot ensure environmental protection.

9. Green the RDP: The RDP has to be implemented in environmentally friendly ways, so that we don't end up with more examples of degraded townships, bad transport, shoddy housing and high energy bills. We need to *design environmental provisions into the RDP.*

We also need to integrate housing and energy planning. Everyone must have access to electricity, but not at high cost. One way of cutting down on high bills is by redesigning housing in ways that conserve heat energy. Our planners need to tackle these problems.

10. Rethink city planning: The city of Curitiba in Brazil is a remarkable example of urban planning. The secret is *integration of waste management, urban transport, job creation, environmental education and food production.* Residents from informal settlements collect waste in bags and sell it to the city. They are paid in bus tickets or in bags of fruit and vegetables grown by the children in primary schools as part of an education process. The recyclable waste is sorted in warehouses by disabled people who would otherwise find it difficult to find jobs. This example could easily be adapted to our conditions.

11. Share the wildlife: We have a wonderful system of national and provincial parks, plus other wildlife areas in local or private hands. Different parks authorities tend to behave as rivals for resources, which creates uncertainties in the system. We need a *rational system of allocating resources to wildlife management.*

Part of the problem has been the narrow composition of National Parks Boards of Trustees. Let's change that law and set up a more representative board. And improve training options to give more people a stake in wildlife management.

Communities on the borders of parks have been excluded from any of the benefits of ecotourism. We need policies to ensure that neighbours become partners in the parks.

12. Settle St. Lucia: The biggest environmental controversy in SA is whether a Genmin-RTZ consortium should be allowed to mine the sand dunes along a stretch of coastline which forms part of the proposed Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park. The mining company was opposed by the Natal Parks Board which argued that mining would be incompatible with ecotourism in the area. A petition with 40,000 signatures backed that position. After an extensive impact assessment process, the Review Panel decided against mining and in favour of conservation.

The new government should *act rapidly to endorse the Review Panel decision or reopen the impact assessment process* in order to more effectively take community opinion into account.

The RDP: Two Reviews

*The Reconstruction and Development Programme:
A Policy Framework, African National Congress,
Johannesburg, Umanyano, 1994*

Half Full? . . .

BY BILL FREUND

*Bill Freund teaches in the Department of Economic History
at the University of Natal.*

The ANC Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) aspires to be the most significant statement on SA society since the Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955.

Extensively workshopped and critiqued, it bears the stamp of the SA Communist Party, Cosatu, Sanco and the NECC, as well as the ANC as contributors. This published version is the sixth draft and can be taken as the final statement of ANC policy thinking on the eve of the 1994 democratic general election.

It is an extensive document and any review of this length must be limited to a few aspects only. My reading begins with two general points.

First, I want to underline that the general public has been given the incorrect impression that the RDP centres entirely on the economy. In fact, only one of six chapters deals directly with the economy. Thus much of this review is devoted to other sections.

Second, the quality of the document varies, with some parts more effective than others. I'll focus here on the weaker parts, rather than heap praise on the best aspects.

But let me start with the latter. Most impressive is the introductory chapter with its powerful statement of general principles and its vision – economic development flowing from social reconstruction, tied in to the political democratisation of SA. This statement “based on a few simple and powerful ideas” can stay an inspiring point of reference for a long time ahead.

Also impressive is the key chapter on the economy which, I suspect, has been the section most affected by the writing of multiple drafts, some under the overly penetrating glare of our business sector.

Coverage here is broad, thorough and insightful. Analysis flows from an integrated sense of a SA developmental crisis – a “growth path” that has lost way – and out of an awareness that a new road will depend on the achievement of social and economic goals. There is a realistic balance between private opportunity and

state regulation as the means through which change can and must occur. It is in line with international trends and does not place unrealistic hopes on an all-benevolent state. Corporatism is an important element in this strategy; the current negotiating fora linking state, capital and labour are to remain key policy instruments.

Ambitious goals

According to the RDP, “a few percent growth rate and the creation of 300,000 to 500,000 non-agricultural jobs per annum can be achieved within five years.” This ambitious goal is *identified* (along with many others) as a target if all goes well. However, policy objectives are suggestive, not prescriptive. The document avoids promises which cannot be kept and suggests (but leaves to the political process) the final decisions on priority.

There are a few weak patches in this section. The section on the “living wage” too carefully avoids defining this loaded concept and leaves the reader wondering what is intended. Another, on tourism, suffers from a bout of politically correct prescription unsuited to this potentially important sector; perhaps it was not taken very seriously in the writing. But these are cavils in an excellent policy contribution.

The chapter that deals with the state and democratisation contains two especially noteworthy points: the call to demilitarise SA society and the commitment to override customary law on fundamental individual rights issues. These are important commitments.

A few bothersome points attract attention, as well. This chapter deals briefly and somewhat grudgingly with the new regional framework. The existence of nine provinces is acknowledged and the need for equity amongst them signalled – but that is about it. No interest in dynamic or distinctive regional policies is even hinted at. What will the ANC make of the new and expensive regional structures?

And, given Sanco's role as co-author, it is surprising to note the absence of civics, people's courts and other resistance structures that became so prominent in the 1980s – beyond a vague commitment to create an “enabling environment for social movements.” Does this mean the ANC gives unequivocal pride of place to newly legitimate formal governmental structures?

In order to achieve equity in the civil service, the RDP asks for "a defined quota of all new employees" based on race and gender. Does this mean that the "non-racist, non-sexist state" will continue to keep tabs on our racial and sexual identity and evaluate us accordingly? How do we harmonise affirmative action with non-racialism? This extremely thorny issue is never addressed.

While the quality of these sections ranges from good to excellent, I have to register my disquiet with the chapters on "human needs" and "basic resources." It is not that they lack in serious consideration; they highlight numerous social problems and reflect consultation with experts to a point where much of the data is instructive and thought-provoking. But the solutions lack realism and perspective.

Whilst no priorities are set for policy development, innumerable claims are put forward about what ought to be achieved simultaneously within a short space of time. Land reform is a striking example. The redistribution of 30% of "agricultural land" is called for but the mechanisms for achieving this are left in vague and unconvincing form. Public works are to be instituted, but who will qualify for these jobs and at what pay rate?

Lack of realism

One could query the desirability of some of the objectives proposed in these two chapters. But far more disturbing is the lack of realism about what a state can and should deliver – given that little if any nationalisation is intended to occur, not to mention the pious comments on "affordability" that are tossed in.

To sit on the back of the private sector as arbiter and regulator of 1001 matters, as is suggested, is in fact far *more* demanding a task than nationalisation. Those who lack unflinching faith in a "Mandela boom" in the economy are keenly aware of costs and the availability of human resources. Where are the armies of highly-skilled and devoted planners and regulators to come from?

There is more than a grain of truth in the liberal stereotype of apartheid as a system of intense social engineering and regimentation. Will South Africans want or even tolerate a new set of social engineers

(even men and women with the best intentions) to put all the fears into reverse? I am extremely sceptical. These chapters at times seem governed by a vision of a politically correct version of Calvin's Geneva. In fact, it would take the level of social discipline, of accord between state and citizens that we associate with Scandinavia or Singapore, to make such a vision come to life.

On the specifics in health, energy, telecommunications, culture, youth development and many other areas, the experts (and non-experts) must continue the debates about what can and should be done. These debates are not resolved in the RDP, despite many interesting suggestions and worthwhile goals.

The vague and toothless little section on higher education, for example, displeases me personally. It receives barely half the attention devoted to sport and recreation! In practice, universities and the tertiary education sector in general are vitally important in educating and training those who would plan and critique reconstruction. It is a sector that needs restructuring itself, moreover. How seriously do the authors of the RDP expect academics to take the programme if so little attention is devoted to this fundamental set of institutions?

Finally, as an historic document, the RDP evokes a few analytical observations:

- It is almost devoid of any reference to the reality of class in SA society;
- It refers frequently and simplistically to "the community";
- The strong emphasis on women's rights is noteworthy, given the late appearance of this issue on the SA agenda, and marks a big shift in political discourse.

I've emphasised problems and weaknesses in the RDP rather than focus on its considerable strengths. But that is what Nelson Mandela invites us to do in the preface.

In fact, it is an impressive catalogue of dilemmas and ideas for solving them. Even where the blueprint may be flawed, we will continue to refer back to the RDP as a reference and signpost for a long time to come.

. . . Or Half Empty?

BY JOHN S. SAUL

There are a lot of good things about the RDP - its heritage of consultation, its intention to uplift, its vow to empower South Africans. If only, warns JOHN S. SAUL, the plan's central assumptions were a bit less rickety . . .

John S. Saul is a member, in Toronto, of the Southern Africa Report editorial collective.

It's easy to be labelled an "ultra-leftist" in South Africa these days.

Increasingly, all you have to do is mention the "S" word – socialism – and you're quickly laughed off the stage as an "unrealistic," hopelessly old-fashioned, dreamer. Capitalism is, quite literally, the way of the world and with a little finesse and good management all South Africans can share its fruits.

Increasingly, this seems to be the conventional wisdom. And rare indeed is the leader in "the new South Africa" (past statements to the contrary notwithstanding) who will publicly demur from that premise.

Is this also the anchoring premise of the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)?

It's certainly one very plausible reading of the document, especially if we take what it *doesn't* say as seriously as what it does say. For, in the end, the RDP's picture of the South African development effort is relatively contradiction-free; everyone, capitalist and shanty-town dweller alike, has more or less the same interests and can be served by more or less the same policies!

I don't want to give the wrong impression. Up to a point, the RDP must be deemed a "good thing." It's a considerable achievement for those who nurtured it from its origins as an "accord" designed to safeguard union priorities within the ANC alliance all the way to its current status: as a broadly progressive programme defined, in so many ways, from below, yet also embraced forcefully by Nelson Mandela and the rest of the ANC leadership.

Substantively, too, the RDP's strengths are real. Its dramatic first section locks into place a clear statement about the centrality of meeting "basic needs," a goal that becomes the chief performance standard against which the success of the new SA can be measured; and all sectors, including the business community, can be held accountable to it.

That's a powerful platform from which to challenge any tendency to accept the slide into a Brazilian-style "fifty-percent solution" (or worse) as being "good enough" for SA. Strong, too, is the later section which pivots the transformation of SA on democratic empowerment.

The latter emphasis also squares well with one of Nelson Mandela's more intriguing recent remarks, when he advised workers at last year's Cosatu annual congress to be "vigilant." "How many times," he asked, "has a labour movement supported a liberation movement, only to find itself betrayed on the day of liberation? There are many examples of this in Africa. If the ANC does not deliver the goods you must do to it what you did to the apartheid regime."

Empowerment, then . . . and yet the question remains: empowerment for what? And - dare one also ask? - over and against whom?

We come, by this route, to the RDP's central section on the economy. Here, it's true, we find some formulations upon which a fairly radical approach to economic reconstruction might be built. "The fundamental principles of our economic policy are

democracy, participation and development," the section begins.

"We are convinced" it continues, "that neither a commandist central planning system nor an unfettered free market system can provide adequate solutions to the problems confronting us. Reconstruction and development will be achieved through the leading role of the state, a thriving private sector, and active involvement by all sectors of civil society which in combination will lead to sustainable growth."

Less clear, however, is how readily the authors of the RDP expect the production decisions of "the private sector" to yield a product mix that will actually service the basic needs of the vast mass of South Africans. And, if this does not happen spontaneously - if socially-defined and politically-driven demand must substitute in significant measure for market-driven imperatives in shaping SA's production structure - what kind of limitations may have to be imposed on the free writ of capital? Unfortunately, such questions are finessed, rather than met head-on, by the RDP.

For the real question is: What if capitalism doesn't really work? I don't mean merely that it might not "work" in moral terms - although it is striking how quickly any qualms have vanished about centring a new SA on what we used, quaintly, to call "exploitation." (Leave that aside. After all, President Mandela has rushed to declare, in his first post-election interview (with the *Sunday Times* editor Ken Owen), the irrelevance of any Marxist frame of reference: "In our economic policies . . . there is not a single reference to things like nationalization, and this is not accidental. There is not a single slogan that will connect us with any Marxist ideology"!)

What if, quite simply, acceptance of some relatively unalloyed capitalist option won't work even in the limited sense of providing sustainable solutions to SA's economic problems? Unfortunately, there are strong indications that this might well be the case. (Compare, for example, the difficulties elsewhere in Africa and in Latin America of producing either equity or growth by capitalist means.) Indeed, exposing the country to the competitive imperatives of the global market-place - as the IMF and the foreign investors in whom Mandela and others seem to put such stock might counsel - could prove disastrous.*

Of course, it might be considered adequate to answer simply that "socialism" won't work either. There is, after all, the chill formulation of the Polish-American social theorist Adam Przeworski regarding the alternatives that

*See, in this regard, Manfred Bienefeld's useful essay, "Structural Adjustment and the Prospects for Democracy in Southern Africa" in David Moore and Gerald Schmitz (eds.) *Crisis and Renewal in Development Discourse*.

work in progress

present themselves to countries like SA in today's global context: "Capitalism is irrational; socialism is unfeasible; in the real world people starve – the conclusions we have reached are not encouraging."

Perhaps the more responsible ANC leaders feel that under such circumstances there is no alternative to an accommodation with capitalism. Let's just accept, they seem to be saying, Przeworski's premise that we're damned if we do and damned if we don't. And – socialism being "unfeasible," after all – let's opt for trying to put a more positive, progressive, humane spin on capitalism in SA (however difficult this may have been to achieve elsewhere).

True, there are sceptics who argue that this kind of accommodation with capital has a lot to do with the realities of class formation in contemporary SA. What we're witnessing, they say, is the logical end-product of the "elite-pacting" model of political change which has formed the basis of SA's transition to democracy: the co-optation (the salaries, the houses, the power!) of a significant portion of the ANC leadership into a comfortably middle-class way of viewing the world ... "realistically."

Assume for the moment that this view is too cynical. Assume that the ANC leadership's extremely pragmatic approach towards capital marks a carefully considered response to SA's vulnerable economic situation: to the prospect, among other things, that capital, if pushed too hard, will simply take flight. Yet, even then, might we not expect them – and the authors of the RDP itself

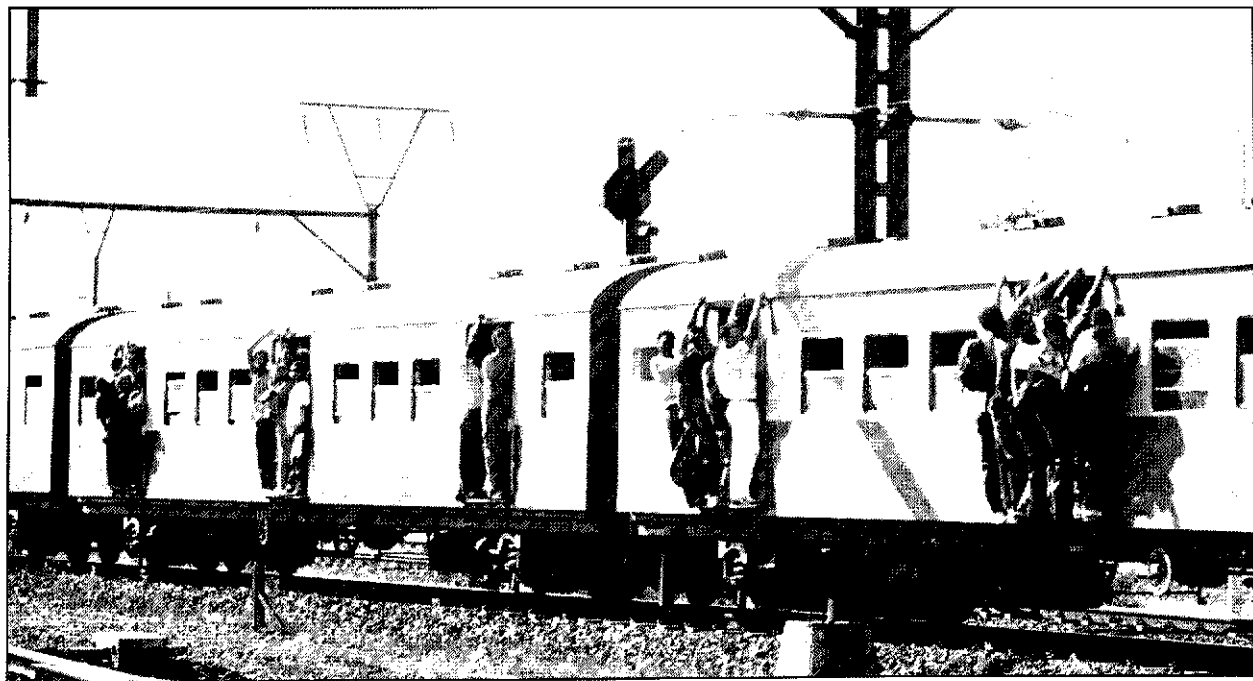
– to do more to inform their followers that capitalism is indeed irrational (however difficult the realization of "socialism" may be)?

It's true, of course, that some sections of the popular movement seem more enthusiastic and/or resigned than others to the prospect of a capitalist route forward.

The Cosatu-linked Industrial Strategy Project, for instance, seems to have made the presumed imperatives of "global competitiveness" and an open, export-oriented economy more of a guiding premise than the Macro-Economic Research Group (MERG) report. The latter at least harks back to the notion of "redistribution through growth" and provides grounds for some more active disciplining of capital by the state. And the RDP itself? The reader may feel that it reflects, first and foremost, a rather uneasy and unresolved blend of both of these two emphases.

Not that one need advocate some kind of ultra-left adventurism as the necessary antidote to the vaguely reformist neo-liberalism that seems to tempt many within the ANC. Elsewhere (in my *Recolonization and Resistance: Southern Africa in the 1990s*) I've argued that the notion of "structural reform" – a circumspect but nonetheless revolutionary project of closing in on the prerogatives of capital and gradually shifting the balance of power over the production process towards the popular classes – epitomizes what some of the best South African progressives still believe is possible.

Take, for instance, the recent statements by important South African socialists like Enoch Godongwana



Kuninori Takahashi – Impact Visuals

and Pallo Jordan in a debate on "social democracy or democratic socialism" in the *South African Labour Bulletin* (Nov-Dec, 1993).

Godongwana acknowledges that "if we want a socialist alternative in the absence of an insurrection, that poses a challenge for us," then goes on to suggest that "we argue a socialist alternative, but within the constraints of saying we cannot simply storm and seize power tomorrow." Therefore, he says, "we should be creative - how do we make sure that, in the process of struggling for socialism, we assert ourselves as a class with the objective of having a class rule ... We must begin, while we assert a leading role in various areas of society, to build certain alternatives within the capitalist framework that will tend to undermine the capitalist logic." (emphasis added)

Consider, too, Jordan's similar interest in a kind of strategy "which doesn't necessarily imply grabbing hold of the state or nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy, but in a sense establishing a number of strategic bridgeheads which enable you to empower the working class and the oppressed, and from these bridgeheads you begin then to subordinate the capitalist classes to the interests of society in general."[†]

Of course, as it stands, Much of this kind of presentation remains at the level of the metaphor. Spelling out what it would have to look like in practice requires real imagination, with respect both to the mechanisms of state action (the use of tariffs, taxes, procurement policies, and the like) and to any action that might spring from civil society (via collective bargaining structures, for example, or through the full range of existing socio-economic forums).

Nonetheless, the language one uses to frame the challenge confronting South Africans does make a difference. Perhaps, up to a point, capital can be encouraged to service socially-defined priorities by invoking a sense of shared national purpose. It would also be unwise to refuse to use profit-defined "incentives," where possible, to achieve the same end. But the fact remains: neither of these mechanisms is likely to be entirely adequate as a substitute for bringing

[†]Note, too, the statement (in the *Financial Times*, February 15, 1994) by Mandela himself, where he says that he does "not believe South African businessmen could be trusted to develop a post-apartheid economy without state intervention": "We are convinced that left to their own devices, the South African business community will not rise to the challenges facing us ... While the democratic state will maintain and develop the market, we envisage occasions when it will be necessary for it to intervene where growth and development require such intervention." But this is by no means the invariable tenor of Mandela's comments on the role of the business community, foreign investors or international financial institutions.

real, countervailing social power - the power of mobilized popular classes - to bear.

It is true that, in this respect, the very vagueness of the RDP's handling of the "production question" may actually have its virtues. There is certainly space within the document for a "Left-rendering" of the project it begins to sketch, one that would emphasize the needs for "democratic pressure" to impose an "economics of basic needs" on capital.

But this means also that the document is *less what it is than what it might become* - if and when the Left regroupes sufficiently in SA to keep socialist preoccupations on the agenda.

Of course we must avoid restricting considerations of policy and empowerment to questions of "production." And perhaps my own formulations do run the risk of being cast too exclusively in "leftist"/"workerist" terms. Beyond the silences on how best to deal with capital, there's a lot in the RDP for "progressive forces" - women, environmentalists, land reformers, urban, education and health activists - to chew on as they plot empowering initiatives in their respective spheres. Both within and beyond the ANC, the rebuilding of a movement to press for on-going and deep-cutting transformation must occur across a very broad front of issues and initiatives.

Still, I can't help thinking that the question of how best to deal with the "production problem" remains crucial to determining whether the notion of a full-blown and genuine transformation of the bad old SA is to become truly hegemonic.

For if the ANC can't find a way to spring the economy forward (something that even the half-way uncritical acceptance of neo-liberalism and globalist economics simply cannot promise), advance on other fronts will be severely compromised. Could the outcome be an ANC government that is forced to use more and more authoritarian methods to control a populace whose quite legitimate expectations are not met by some variant of business-as-usual? In an untransformed SA, could the playing-down of class struggle merely mean that ever-rising levels of criminality and of ethnic, regional and racially-driven conflict become the essential stuff of society and politics?

I wonder, then, whether the main problem with the RDP isn't the fact that it avoids clearly identifying class contradictions and evades even the most subdued evocation of the need for class struggle.

Instead it inserts the notion of a relatively unproblematic national purpose as the core of the reconstruction and development effort. In doing so, the RDP - despite its undoubted strengths - may merely make it that much more difficult for the ANC's own mass constituency to develop the kind of self-consciousness necessary to ensure its full and most meaningful liberation.

The Renegade Slovo?

BY IGHSAAN SCHROEDER

The world is toasting the advent of a liberated South Africa. But, asks Ighsaan Schroeder, in a transition built on such formidable compromises, what scope is there for genuine change in the lives of most South Africans?

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When Joe Slovo first mooted the idea of power-sharing, his motivation was that it would do enough to placate the white right-wing without blocking the transition towards democracy and socialism.

This argument guided the ANC in negotiations at the World Trade Centre - in particular through the drafting of the Interim Constitution, which guarantees power-sharing for the next five years and contains a number of concessions to the right-wing (including self-determination and job security for the civil service).

In his interview in *Work In Progress* 95 (Feb/March '94), Slovo reaffirms his view that the constitution does not block the advance to democracy, arguing: "We've reached an effective instrument for governing the country, one that does not constitute an obstacle to the process of completely transforming the country into a democratic state." Is Slovo off the mark here? I think so ...

After all, the most striking feature of the new deal is the transformation of SA into a constitutional state. This immediately removes sovereignty from the people as expressed through parliament, and vests it in the constitution itself. Parliament is obliged to pass laws in keeping with the constitution. And the final judge of the validity of any law - including changes to the constitution itself - is the Constitutional Court.

To all intents and purposes, the new government will have to share power with the judiciary (the same judiciary that staffed the legal institutions of the apartheid era - and a sector whose background and orientation guarantee a ruling class perspective and prejudice within all the new state's legal institutions).

The judiciary's political power fragments the power of the central state. What's worse, it insulates this power by de-politicising aspects of social life. From affirmative action to land claims, it will be the individual contesting claims - fought out in the quiet of the courts, rather than through mass mobilisation and mass action.

Social life effectively becomes "privatised" - the most graphic example being the entrenchment in the constitution of the right to private property.

Expanded control

What South Africa needs is democratic transformation of the kind that constantly expands the areas of direct involvement and control of the masses themselves. To that extent, it seeks to politicise all aspects of social life.

The Interim Constitution does exactly the opposite; it reduces the masses' involvement to a minimum.

The move towards a constitutional state, together with the rising influence of independent bodies such as the Reserve Bank, represents the complete re-organisation of bourgeois class rule; the real organs of power are being fragmented and relocated far from the struggles of the masses.

This becomes even clearer when we look at some of the key provisions in the constitution.

- Power-sharing: The constitution entrenches a system of power-sharing based on consensus rule at all levels of government. This creates the illusion of a commonality of interests between political parties representing widely divergent class interests, undermining and retarding a class-struggle perspective. No wonder Lenin regarded coalition governments as the favoured trick of the bourgeoisie "to fool, divide and weaken the workers."

- Federalism: The constitution entrenches a federal system, which serves to further erode the powers of the central state. Special majorities and the consent of affected regions make it extremely difficult for the state to intervene in regions.

In his *WIP* interview, Slovo initially hides behind the excuse that the ANC did not have a policy on regions - and then justifies federalism on the grounds that the people "want to have a real feeling that they are actively engaged."

No socialist can have an abstract opposition to federalism. However, socialists have historically supported federalist states where these have acted to unite separate entities into a nation, and have therefore been progressive.

In SA, we have a working class that has built a national, non-racial unity and consciousness (despite apartheid capitalism's attempts to fragment it along ethnic lines). In this context, the federalist deal takes us backwards - attempting to balkanise the country instead of unifying it. It replicates the national parliament at a regional level in a way that does not allow for the active engagement of the people.

Federalism is an important plank in the broader neo-

liberal agenda of fragmenting state power so as to remove and isolate it from mass pressure. And that's exactly what it achieves in our case.

- **Blocking economic reform:** The property clause in the Bill of Rights entrenches the right to private property and how it is used – something you're unlikely to find in even the most advanced capitalist countries. This makes it extraordinarily difficult for the state to nationalise property. This right (and the detailed procedures for nationalisation written into the Bill of Rights) cast a giant question mark over the new state's ability to address the historical legacies of apartheid.

It is clear that the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) cannot be implemented without beginning to encroach on property – in particular, property owned by the monopolies. By agreeing to entrench property rights, the ANC has made its own job of implementing the RDP that much more difficult.

The clause on free economic activity, like the private property clause, entrenches existing exploitative capitalist property relations. For example, it will limit the state's ability to curb the monopolies with anti-trust legislation, and will undoubtedly be a popular weapon of bosses against industrial council agreements and wage determinations.

Perhaps the starkest example of the ANC leadership's capitulation to neo-liberalism is its decision to allow the independence of the Reserve Bank. The bank's function is far from a technical or neutral one: its policies and strategies impact directly on interest rates, the balance of payments, the international value of the rand and inflation – all of which are decisive ingredients of any broader economic strategy.

If the bank disagrees with this broader strategy, it can act in a way that restricts or derails it.

- **Agrarian reform:** A thorough-going programme of land reform is at the core of any democratic revolution – yet the ANC has agreed to constitutional clauses that will make land redistribution virtually impossible. Here again we see an ANC adaptation to the programme of the capitalist class – except in this case it panders to its most backward section, the farmers.

- **Constitutional principles:** The last line of defence of all those who have defended the World Trade Centre deal has often been: "Don't worry, we'll change all of that when we get to parliament." Slovo expressed this same sentiment in the *WIP* interview. Part of this attitude is presumably based on the sovereignty of parliament and part on the expectation that the ANC would win a two-thirds majority, which would have entitled it to change the Interim Constitution and to write the new one independently of other parties.



Chief government negotiator, Roelf Meyer and Joe Slovo at opening of the Transitional Executive Council, 1993

Of course the ANC has not won a two-thirds majority – but this question is really irrelevant. The powers of the regions, the ethnic right to self-determination and the independence of the Reserve Bank are all contained in the Constitutional Principles. Bear in mind that these principles were drawn up by 26 parties – the majority of whom were so unrepresentative that they were obliterated in the elections. Yet these principles are now the guidelines for drafting the new constitution over the next two years. And parliament cannot change these principles, irrespective of the size of the majority party.

So the new constitution, too, will entrench all these obstacles to transformation.

Lastly, the Constitutional Principles also make provision for a panel of “experts” to help draft the new constitution. At this level, it looks like we’re in for a repeat performance; and those looking for “transparency” in the process of drafting the document are bound to be disappointed.

What does the Interim Constitution represent? The key to the ruling class agenda has been to transform the ANC into an organisation which gives legitimacy to that agenda without threatening it.

So when you look at the Interim Constitution, you can’t help agreeing with de Klerk’s assessment that the ruling class has won for itself a most decisive victory.

The ANC has always struggled for a transfer of power to the people, and for majority rule in a unitary South Africa. By accepting constitutionalism, federalism, the independence of the Reserve Bank and

so on, the movement’s leadership is demonstrating the transformation of the ANC into the party of monopoly capitalism.

Challenges for the mass movement

If we are to have a constitution that restores sovereignty to the people through Parliament, we will need to wage a determined struggle against the Constitutional Principles. The focal point of such a struggle should be to submit the principles to a popular referendum.

The working class has a real interest in a constitution that reflects its needs and aspirations. Our experience of the drafting of the Interim Constitution shows that the masses cannot be excluded from how the new one will be drafted. Instead of experts and technical committees, sectoral organisations representing the working class should draft clear demands on the basis of democratic discussion.

While the codification of these demands can be left to Parliament, final approval of the constitution should be subject to a referendum.

It is necessary to struggle to make ANC members of Parliament accountable to the masses, to struggle against the increasing pervasiveness of neo-liberal ideology within the mass movement, which is at once also a struggle to keep socialism on the agenda. For real, meaningful democratic transformation to occur, the most profound political, social and economic changes are necessary. This is nothing less than the socialist revolution.

If this phase in our history proves nothing else, it has proven that the struggle for democracy is inseparable from the struggle for socialism.



South Africa: Beyond the Vote

April’s historic elections in South Africa mark a new moment in that country’s development and in the Southern African region as a whole. People’s hopes and expectations are high, but there is a long road ahead.

More than ever, strong, democratic and skilled community organizations, working in cooperation with the new government, will be key to successful social development for the majority of South Africans.

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Post-apartheid Southern Africa: How Rosy a Dawn?

BY COLIN STONEMAN

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Almost all the economic problems in Southern Africa can be related to the extreme and growing levels of unemployment and the extent of regional inequality. Of course, estimates of unemployment in developing countries are notoriously unreliable. In South Africa, the problems are compounded by some of the consequences of apartheid, but few estimates fall outside the 30-50 per cent range. In Zimbabwe, even official estimates of unemployment range up to 50 per cent. The situation is a little better in Botswana, but much worse in most other Southern African countries. It is also deteriorating fast. In the 1980s, it is estimated that only seven per cent of school leavers found formal sector jobs in South Africa, 10 per cent in Zimbabwe (although rising to 20 per cent at the end of the decade), while Botswana was again best with the ratio approaching 40 per cent.

Most countries of the region have therefore seen nearly two decades in which the proportion of the population in employment has been declining. This experience contradicted the earlier optimism based on orthodox prescriptions, that industrialization would rapidly provide jobs for people previously employed (or underemployed) in the primary sectors. Instead, capital intensity has been rising, with the average industrial job now costing about US\$40,000, so that industry is providing relatively fewer jobs even in those countries (such as Zimbabwe) where employment has continued to rise slowly.

The unemployment problem is thus a problem for the region as a whole. South Africa can no longer provide jobs to migrants from the region, for it cannot provide jobs for its own people. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that the policies it will follow with majority rule will make a significant difference.

Regional imbalances

The other serious problem facing the region stems from its common history, with most investment having targeted mineral resources in the PWV (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging) area. Colonial policies and destabilization during the death throes of apartheid destroyed the economies of Angola and Mozambique and seriously harmed others. As a result, South Africa has a per capita income of about US\$2,000, while Mozambique's per capita annual income falls below US\$100. The existing low income levels reflect inadequate infrastructure and investment in human resources and therefore signal the unattractiveness of several economies to investors, whether local or foreign. The total GDP of the ten Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries comes to barely a third of South Africa's GDP. Both South Africa and Zimbabwe have significant and viable manufacturing sectors, accounting for around 25 per cent of GDP in both cases, although both are still heavily dependent on primary commodity exports (particularly South Africa). Of the other countries, Botswana has proved the most successful because of its diamonds. But this has hardly fed through into viable industry. There is significant potential in both Namibia and Angola with their rich resources - primarily fish in the former, but much more diversified in the latter - awaiting only peace.

For the other countries, Swaziland and Lesotho are effectively integrated with the South African economy and share its problems, but Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania have at present no clear way forward. They share deep poverty, poor export prospects for their primary commodities and the legacy of failed industrialization experiments in the latter two cases.

But South Africa's pre-eminence should not be exaggerated. Although its higher per capita income in principle gives some room for manoeuvring (thus redistribution is a theoretical option, even though most thinking seems to be going into how to avoid it), it is far below that of the newly industrialized countries (NICs) and barely a tenth that of developed industrial economies. Furthermore, its internal inequalities are amongst the worst in the world, so that it is not clear that the average figure has any significance because few people receive it. Rather there is a minority, predominantly white, of course, but in principle increasingly multiracial, who earn about US\$10,000 annually, and a majority who have income levels more typical of the rest of the region. Even to talk of South Africa geographically can be misleading, because over 70 per cent of its GDP is produced in the PWV region. Rather than referring to 'South Africa and the rest of the region', it makes as much sense economically to talk about the PWV region and the rest of South Africa, with the Western Cape or Natal being entities of rather similar population, wealth, size and problems to those of Zimbabwe.

The causes

The current standard metaphors, employed both by prospective and

existing donors to the Southern African region and, in establishment circles, in South Africa itself, refers to the latter as the 'power-house' or 'engine of development' in the region. Alarm bells should ring loudly when we hear such expressions, for the implications of this focus on South Africa are being neglected, and can expect to benefit mainly through 'trickle down' from South Africa. Yet, historically, the subordination of the subregion to the requirements of capital in South Africa and London goes a long way towards explaining its present poverty. Relative success has occurred almost entirely in countries in the region which were able to de-link themselves to some extent from the 'power-house', just as South Africa's relative economic success owes much to its own partial de-linking from Britain.

Partial success: South Africa and Zimbabwe

The manufacturing industries in both South Africa and Zimbabwe have quite serious problems in the 1990s. But these problems have easily identifiable causes which do not follow inevitably from the industrialization strategies that gave rise to the substantial sectors we find in these two countries, in contrast to most of the rest of Africa. Both strategies, like those in the NICs and in many other now industrialized countries, depended on a (relatively) clear-sighted state that saw that allowing world markets to set internal prices would perpetuate continuing dependence on imported primary commodities. Protection of domestic industry, state investment in key sectors and export promotion, were the invariable key ingredients (although the latter came later in most cases) to creating a substantial domestic manufacturing sector.

South African industry has been performing poorly for almost two decades, just the period when - following its initial success - it should, according to orthodox theory, have

been leading a Rostowian 'drive to maturity'. Starved of investment, much of industry has low productivity despite high wage costs and is generally uncompetitive on world markets.

Despite its much smaller size, Zimbabwean industry has in many ways been more successful and more internationally competitive than South African industry. In 1990, Zimbabwean industry accounted for over 25 per cent of the country's GDP and at least 20 per cent of its exports. Manufacturing's share of exports is about 40 per cent. In the 1980s, in sharp contrast to what happened in South Africa, the fastest rising export category was non-traditional manufactured goods, including clothing, footwear and electrical products, while the sector as a whole expanded by 38 per cent.

The problems in Zimbabwe have come mainly in the 1990s following trade liberalization and the structural adjustment programme. Manufacturing industry contracted by over 20 per cent in 1992-1993. It is too early yet to say that this is a full-scale process of deindustrialization, such as that which followed liberalization in Chile and some other countries.

Failure: Namibia (and Zambia)

If the future is uncertain for the major industrial sectors in the region, they are bleak or non-existent for most of the other countries. Namibia's experience epitomizes the problems for the region. Since the First World War, Namibia has been treated as an integral part of the South African economy, although it was denied the regional industrial development programme support that went to the bantustans and border areas beginning in the 1970s. This integration effectively prevented the economy from industrializing, so that now the manufacturing sector still contributes under five per cent to the GDP and even lacks significant clothing or textiles manufacturing capability as

well as sections of food processing (such as butter and cheese production, canning and bottling). The Namibian production that has occurred (and there were many different initiatives over the years) almost invariably fell afoul of a combination of dumping by larger established South African-based companies (the most recent cases have occurred after independence) and South African control of retail and wholesale outlets, which refuse to stock Namibian-made goods.

A direct comparison with Zimbabwe is instructive: both countries have large retail stores owned by the South African chains, Edgars and Truworths. In Namibia, they stock only goods made in South Africa (incipient local producers have to depend on intermittent government contracts, small boutiques and the export market), while in Zimbabwe they stock goods produced almost entirely in Zimbabwe. This happened because Zimbabwe's import-substitution policy refused entry to products that could be produced locally, so Edgars and Truworths were obliged to open their own factories in the country and to register locally. They were then able to raise capital by selling shares on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange and they are now committed to the economy and are significant exporters. Zambia, by contrast, represents an attempt to escape from the Namibian syndrome, but it has been a failure in its attempt to match Zimbabwe's partial success. Parallels can be drawn with South Africa, in that Zambia's manufacturing industry, although substantial in size, has never achieved autonomy from the dominant copper industry, and after the collapse of the world copper price in the mid-1970s, the manufacturing industry went down with it.

For the smaller countries of the region, the Zambian and Zimbabwean approaches are being closed off by a combination of World Bank pressure to open up to the world market, and regionally, to pressures to allow the future South Africa to

he the 'power-house'. 'Namibianization' is therefore the most likely prospect, although for most countries without the compensation of having diamonds and fish. For South Africa itself, 'Namibianization' in relation to the EEC and the USA is also a distinct threat, for the only significant parts of its industry that have real prospects of international competitiveness are capital intensive and closely linked to the mining industry. As these have taken the lion's share of investment for a long period, few other parts of industry are in a position to compete.

Present policy is to compound past mistakes by continuing to concentrate investment in these areas, following static comparative advantage instead of seeking out dynamic comparative advantage in non-traditional manufacturing industry.

The future

Clearly an economy of the size of Zimbabwe's (to say nothing of Namibia's), has no plausible independent solution to the problems besetting it in the present world environment. In consequence, most such countries seem to feel that have no option but to trust to 'expert' advice and submit to being a guinea pig in the experiments that the World Bank and IMF insist on conducting on them. Although some 30 African countries are now involved in structural adjustment programmes, we have yet to see a single clear success story. Even South Africa itself, despite producing half the world's gold and much of its platinum, manganese, chromium and uranium, has an economy barely the size of Portugal's. Consequently, it has few opportunities for resisting the marginal role that the world market wants to assign to it through forcing a 'realistic' compromise on the ANC. It can be demonstrated that such a role will prevent the realization of the aspirations of more than a small minority of South Africans, and it can therefore be ventured that such a compromise will, in the fairly short-term, prove politically unrealistic.

Markets and South Africa

Market theory at a certain level is intellectually coherent, persuasive and unchallengeable. Who would wish to substitute planning for the market in determining, for a given population, the proportions of carrots and potatoes to be produced? As Samora Machel stated over ten years ago 'The state does not sell matches'. Recognition that there is no such thing as a free market, that markets are always interfered with, usually in the interests of the status quo, and that they take income distribution for granted, are facts that are rarely given due weight when the horse-trading begins. It seems that the World Bank has largely won the 'market realism' argument with the ANC, and South Africa's supposed priority for competitiveness in world markets will take precedence over any internal development needs.

This means, as I have argued elsewhere, that a predominantly capital-intensive strategy will be followed so as to maximize the profitability of private firms whose interests in a market situation require the minimization of their costs of production, in which labour costs are an important component. The outcome will be a '50 per cent solution' at best, because even with optimistic assumptions about the growth rate and the multiplier effect on other sectors of the economy, the chances of raising the investment ratio to 30-35 per cent, thereby employing half the school leavers each year, are negligible.

It is quite unrealistic to expect South Africa to succeed against Thailand, Malaysia, India and China by competing with even lower wage rates, so it will have to compete in higher quality 'niche markets' by mechanizing and economizing on the number of jobs. There can be little point in arguing against this as part of a strategy. The problem is to determine and coordinate it with the rest of economic policy so

as to meet the basic needs that have been largely denied to a majority of the population for decades, in particular the need for many more jobs at low investment cost. The assumption that the market will produce these jobs, much as it produces the desired volume of carrots, is fatuous, both theoretically and empirically.

Much of the problem ultimately boils down to one of accountability: if individual firms in a market are obliged to treat labour as a cost of production, it does not follow that a government should behave as the sum of these firms. At the very minimum, a modern government has the duty to prevent its people from starving and jobless people and their families are therefore a cost either because they remain unemployed or because an 'internationally inefficient' job is found for them. A responsible government should employ a creative accountant who eliminates poverty-datum-line or minimum-wage levels from wage costs. Neither the World Bank nor the GATT will like this and will wheel out accusations of dumping if the resulting goods are traded, but the key needs to be met by such production are internal, especially in the provision of housing.

In a situation where unemployment in South Africa is around 50 per cent, it makes no sense at all to expect a market solution. The market simply has no mechanism analogous to that which operates for potatoes and carrots that would enable it to respond to a need for jobs, because those without jobs are outside the job market. Does anyone believe that if the unemployment rate in Venda is 60 per cent when it is only 50 per cent in Ciskei, or even only 20 per cent in the PWV region, the market will direct more job-creating investment differentially to Venda? Even if all other things were equal, firms would not have any market information signalling the higher unemployment in Venda, nor any incentive to respond to it if they did have the information.

Markets and the region

If concentration of investment poses problems of such magnitude that it threatens a likely '50 per cent solution' inside the 'power-house' of South Africa itself, the situation would be much worse in the Southern African periphery dependent on crumbs from the South African table.

Lower wage rates or higher unemployment in, say, Malawi would be an entirely negligible incentive to South African capital already faced with as much cheap labour as it wants nearer to home. For the average person in Southern Africa, market 'solutions' will, therefore, further narrow the slender job opportunities for the foreseeable future.

The SADC alternative?

This is not to say that a South-

ern African region is altogether a bad idea; it is rather to emphasize that there are serious market-driven disadvantages, while the potential advantages have to be policy-driven. Many current outside proposals related to the 'South Africa as power-house' approach would accept these market outcomes. The alternative, in the words of a recent Macro-Economic Research Group (MERG) report, would be for South Africa "to become a full and active partner in a regional programme ... combining cooperation, coordination and integration rather than being a simplistic polarized choice ... [while] ... recognizing that any such programme would, in the Southern African context, necessarily have to include significant counter-polarization measures of various sorts, have a strong developmental focus and seek to involve in the process of formulation and ex-

ecution a range of key constituencies."

Before this can come about, all aspects of national economic policy, in all the countries of the region, will have to be placed in a regional perspective. Although this process cannot simply be equated with South Africa joining SADC, the latter is the organization with the most experience in confronting the range of problems thrown up by regional coordination. Much of this experience is negative, with its industrial programme in particular having delivered little success. But it provides a base from which institutional reform and development, following the accession of South Africa, offers the brightest hope for the eventual development of a dynamic region that could resist its probable marginalization in the world economy, with the increased destitution that this implies.



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Zimbabwe Land Reform: What's Goin' On?

BY MARIT STILES

Marit Stiles is member of the SAR Editorial Committee and a graduate student in Political Science at York University. She has worked and travelled in southern Africa, and has been researching gender issues and land reform in Zimbabwe.

When in the summer of 1993, Charles Bassett, Canada's High Commissioner to Zimbabwe, cancelled a tour of Canada by Zimbabwean business people because the current climate in Zimbabwe was considered a potential deterrent to investment, he could not readily have predicted the effect his action would have. To be sure, the move was characteristic of Bassett's term in Zimbabwe. He had made a personal effort to find "hard" evidence of government corruption (in the form of payouts to ministers for contracts awarded to international companies) but, in the end, had found nothing substantive. Now, in cancelling the business trip, Bassett was reacting to what he again perceived as widespread government corruption and abuse of power, reflected this time in recent land acquisitions by the Zimbabwean Government.

However Bassett perceived his role in Zimbabwe, the response to his announcement was dramatic. Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe labelled him a racist and made him the focus of months of speeches against Imperialist western powers who wished to undermine the legitimate attempts of Zimbabweans to gain back what was rightfully their's. Thus, during a speech in the Murombedzi rural area, Mugabe used some "distinctly undiplomatic language to embarrass Canada," according to the *Globe and Mail's* front-page article, which quoted him

as saying: "How can those countries who have stolen land from the red Indians, the aborigines and the Eskimos dare to tell us what to do with our land?"

Putting aside the *Globe and Mail's* obvious distaste for Mugabe's association of Canada with the "hated colonial masters of Zimbabwe's past," its conclusion that Bassett was being used as a scapegoat is at least partially true. He certainly was not alone in his criticisms of Zimbabwe's recent land acquisitions. Following Bassett's statement, several other Western diplomats rushed to back him, stating that Zimbabwe would have to face up to the contradictions they claimed to see between the country's "respectable" turn towards economic liberalization on the one hand and this anachronistic policy, with vaguely socialist undertones, on the other. What was the fuss about, on both sides? This is what the present article seeks to examine.

Re-visiting land reform

By cancelling the business tour, Bassett and others were responding to a recent designation of land for acquisition by the Zimbabwean government and ear-marked for redistribution. Following the expiry in 1990 of the 10 year Lancaster House Agreement [LHA], the government had asked Parliament to remove all restrictions imposed by Section 16 ("protection from deprivation of property"), and to require the government merely to pay "fair compensation" within a reasonable time after the acquisition of land.

But this was the same year that Minister Bernard Chidzero announced a "major shift" in economic policy, centered on the embrace of a World Bank endorsed,

if nationally developed, Economic Structural Adjustment Programme [ESAP]. As Lionel Cliffe pointed out in *SAR* at the time (March 1991), answering the question of whether Zimbabwe was pushed or whether it jumped towards structural adjustment was further complicated by the new land reform policy, which appeared somewhat more radical, and therefore out of sync with the ESAP.

Then, in 1992, the Zimbabwean Parliament moved to approve an amended Land Acquisition Act [LAA], which if fully implemented would allow the government to acquire five million hectares of farmland currently owned by large-scale (predominantly white) commercial farmers ostensibly for the settlement of about 110,000 black families from the crowded Communal Areas. The LAA would enable the government to acquire this land through an administrative procedure of land selection and pricing. The land policy as it stands today sanctions the use of legislative force to acquire land at set prices and to distribute it to "capable" small and large farmers.

Just after the Act was approved, the government designated and acquired (what has since been called an "emergency expropriation") sixteen farms in order to resettle over 900 peasant households displaced by the state-developed Osborne Dam. In April 1993, the Government designated "Churu Farm," owned by the leader of the opposition ZANU (Ndonga) party, Reverend Ndabingigni Sithole, recently returned from exile. Sithole had previously converted his farm into a peri-urban settlement, inviting landless families to rent plots of land for building and farming, at a rela-



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tively affordable Z\$30.00 per month. The farm, it was explained, was designated for acquisition because of the illegal conversion of farmland into an unsanctioned housing tenancy, alleged to be a public health risk. Then in May 1993, the government began its land acquisition programme in earnest, designating 74 additional large scale commercial farms [LSCFs] (including several which had been ear-marked for urban expansion).

The debate

As noted earlier, Bassett's statement spurred an intensive debate both outside and inside Zimbabwe. But, within Zimbabwe, there was already a well-defined opposition to these

acquisitions which has come from three main groups. In the first case, white commercial farmers, white business interests, and some middle class blacks who are dependent on white business have formed an anti-land reform lobby, claiming the unfairness of the process of designating land for acquisition and the impact such reforms will have on the Zimbabwean economy. Secondly, opposition parties such as the Zimbabwean Unity Movement [ZUM], ZANU (Ndonga) and the Forum Party have also voiced opposition. Finally, international capital (most vocally LONRHO) and some donors have continued to comment on the "apparent contradictions," referred to above,

which are said to exist between the liberalization of the Zimbabwean economy on the one hand and the prospect of further land reform on the other.

Support for the government's programme has been equally diverse. Interestingly, even some former left-wing critics of the government's record on land reform have come out in support of the acquisitions, citing them as examples of a government commitment to redress inequality in land distribution. Several donor agencies have likewise noted their approval while, significantly, many black commercial farmers have been supportive of the government's actions

What bears emphasizing, however, is one common thread which seems to bind together all sides of the public debate in Zimbabwe: this is the shared assumption that the government is using the LAA to break with its existing policy of "economic liberalization" in favour of a distinctly populist agenda – and to return, by this route, to some of the fundamental principles of the liberation movement.

Such a view has been given further credence by Mugabe's speeches and statements in which he claims that the land reform legislation seeks to right the wrongs of the colonial era. The government's recent designations are therefore seen by many on either side of the debate as a genuine attempt to address inequality after years of inaction, reflecting the government's intention to give land back to the black population and to meet, in this way, the promises of emancipation and equality made during the war of liberation.

Central to this understanding of the LAA is the assumption that land is the major concern for most Zimbabweans and that land reform is the foremost method of redressing historic inequalities imposed by colonialism. With the exception of some white farmers, this point is never seriously contested by any of the critics of the LAA. What has happened, however, is that even many former critics of the government's lack of action on land reform have become so caught in defending "the right of the Zimbabwean people to regain their land" against opponents of current government policies that they have lost track of just who stands to gain, in class terms, from these policies.

ESAP & the LAA: rhetoric or reality

A closer look at the LAA shows that the Government's real reasons for the acquisitions it has made tend to contradict the messages of emancipation and anti-imperialism that lace Mugabe's recent rhetoric.

And this, in turn, raises the suspicion that Mugabe's "populist" approach to selling his land reform programme is designed primarily to refurbish ZANU's appeal to the masses and, in particular, to appease the rural population as a multi-party election approaches.

There is, I would suggest, no real contradiction between ESAP and the LAA. But this need come as no surprise: the whole history of land reform in Zimbabwe shows that any attempt to see the LAA as representing a case of a populist government fighting liberalization quickly falls apart.

Certainly, the Zimbabwean government's entire record on land reform since Independence leaves a very great deal to be desired. While there is no denying that the Government has carried out some resettlement along vaguely progressive lines (for example, the Model "B" co-operative farming schemes), it is equally clear that since the Liberation War, the leadership has failed to match its rhetoric with significant action in the area of land reform.

Indeed, the one consistent feature of the speeches and writings of the leadership since the rise of nationalist parties is, precisely, their apparent inconsistency on the issue of land reform. Land reform was always – both before and after Independence – presented by ZANU and ZAPU leadership as a priority. Yet, their positions on land reform have never produced any real attempt at a dramatic transformation of the structures left behind by colonialism.

Small wonder, then, that – for all the fuss they have occasioned – the recent initiatives on the land acquisition front do not really contradict the government's adoption of a quite conservative, market-oriented, IMF/World Bank endorsed, economic restructuring program. Indeed, the two policies are inextricably linked, with ESAP defining the essential parameters within which the ruling party in Zimbabwe will

be instituting any land reform programme that it continues to aspire to.

For example, the present land reform policy – contrary to arguments made by the anti-land reform lobby inside and outside Zimbabwe – does not really threaten the LSCFs. To date, implementation of the LAA has affected only land which qualifies as "under-utilized" (with the emergency expropriation of farms for the Osborne Dam resettlement being the only exception). A recent study by Sam Moyo of the Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies shows that land which has been designated was not being utilized for commercial farming purposes and will not, therefore, affect production in the LSCF sector. Moreover, in cases where designation is considered to be "unfair," there is a process by which owners can contest the designation of their land. Half a dozen owners have so far been successful in such contestations.

While the legislation of 1990 did strengthen the ability of the state to intervene directly in land markets, it also included the firm promise to reorient land distribution in such a way as to meet world market needs. And Mugabe himself has repeatedly assured international and national capitalist interests that social criteria for settler selection would be replaced, with the approval of the Commercial Farmers Union, by economic criteria following the "Malaysian Model." This is often referred to as "farmers with proven farming ability" and closely parallels the colonial "Master-Farmer" scheme whereby only those farmers with "demonstrated ability" would be given new land – in other words, those who have already benefitted from colonial and post-colonial land policies.

Ironically, then, this policy represents not a turning back towards the correcting of the injustices of the colonial era, but a turning away from even the minimal commitment to resettlement of the poor,

the displaced, and those living in congested, marginal and degraded land, which characterized land reform rhetoric in the very first years after Independence.

As well, such other redistribution of land as is occurring is very much on the margins of the rural economy. As Sam Moyo has noted in recent correspondence, "Since crucial political constituencies which face extreme land hunger will settle for marginal land, the government can deliver such land without going first for prime lands and with little short-term losses in LSCF output." Moyo goes on to note that, "distributing marginal lands to the poor peasants also placates the critics of government who protest that black capitalists will be the main beneficiaries [of the LAA] ... although some of those critics have slowly seen through this political strategy."

We can now see more clearly that the key to "selling" this land policy is (in Sam Moyo's phrase) the "political balancing act" that is being performed by the government. For whether or not ZANU(PF) actually will face a serious electoral challenge in 1995, the fact remains that since the late eighties there has been a strong undercurrent of disillusionment and discontent from both rural and urban areas. And the government knows this. Moreover, its approach to land reform is one policy area that has been under particularly close scrutiny. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions [ZCTU], for example, has publicly challenged the government to stop "senseless political designations"* and to give some real substance to its policies. Small wonder that

* The allusion here is to the government's designations of Sithole's Churu Farm (mentioned earlier) and of a farm belonging to James Chikerema of the Forum Party, which were widely felt to be merely politically motivated and thus raised serious questions inside Zimbabwe about the real principles lying behind the land reform issue.

Mugabe has felt tempted to blur the very limited nature of his proposed reforms by falling back on racially-charged populist rhetoric that make his project appear far more radical than it really is.

Racial arguments, gendered silences

It is this context, then, that helps explain why the debate around the new land policy and the question of individual designations in Zimbabwe has become characterized by a focus on rather simplistic dichotomies. Certainly, the transition to socialism is no longer the over-arching framework for the discussion of inequality and its remedies. Rather, there is a tendency on both sides to see the issue in, quite literally, black and white terms.

Of course, following a century of white oppression of the black majority, it is not surprising that there is still a tendency for race to override class identity and possible class alliances. But we must look carefully at whose interests in the black community are really served by such a way of presenting the issue.

Moreover, the continuing hostility of the white community and the Western media towards Zimbabwe's land policy can also be explained, in good measure, in terms of the saliency of race. The outraged response to Mugabe's populist rhetoric - imbued as that rhetoric is with anti-white sentiment - has helped divert attention away from the reality of the situation as we have described it above: the fact that Mugabe's policies do not fundamentally contradict his government's commitment to the logic of economic liberalization.

There is another point that needs making as well: if class has been largely absent from the Zimbabwean debate, so too has gender - the question of women's rights to land, in particular. Thus most participants in the debate seem to assume that women and men have exactly the same concerns regarding

land and that redistribution will carry equally positive (or negative) repercussions for both sexes.

In consequence, and despite the efforts of several women's organizations and feminist scholars to bring forward a gendered analysis of the land question, this does not appear to be on the agenda in this round of acquisitions and redistribution; it has become lost in the swirl of rhetoric around the issue of racial inequality.

And yet the implications of the new land policy for rural women may prove to be especially brutal. Because the main criteria for redistribution will be "demonstrated ability," it is inevitable that women will be disproportionately discriminated against. Married women, in particular, will be at a disadvantage because they are not eligible to be counted as heads of household, even in their husband's absence. Given the lack of action on the part of the government in addressing women's land rights and the question of their inclusion in resettlement schemes, the picture for women seems bleak.

* * *

There is no real contradiction, then, between the broad economic reforms (ESAP) which ZANU(PF) has undertaken and the land reform programme which is currently underway. Arguably, the LAA represents an attempt to appease the peasantry while safeguarding the fundamental interests of commercial farmers and the international community and, at the same time, building up a class of large scale black commercial farmers drawn primarily from those surrounding the ruling party. Perhaps Mugabe is walking a fine line, seeking to balance his nationalist/populist diatribes - designed, apparently, to appeal to the voters - against the appeals he must also make to those, internationally, who dole out the dollars. Still, to truly understand the LAA, students of Zimbabwe would do well to look beyond the recent outrage over "violated" property rights.

The editorial working group of Southern Africa Report joins with many others in mourning the death of our dear collaborator, Otto Roesch. Readers of SAR will recall his numerous articles in our pages over the years and,

perhaps too, the active role he played – together with his wife, Heather Speers – in developing and sustaining the newsletter, TCLSAC Reports, out of which SAR evolved. We mark his passing by adapting for use here an obituary

first published in the Guardian (UK) and written by Otto's friend and long-time colleague in both TCLSAC and SAR, John Saul. But there is so much more that could be said.

Otto Roesch 1951-1994

Otto Roesch, a leading Canadian authority on issues of rural development in southern Africa, died on June 7, 1994, in a road accident near XaiXai, Mozambique, while on a field-trip to that country. He was 42.

A professor of anthropology at Trent University in Canada, Otto had earned a growing international reputation through his scientific work on rural society in Mozambique. Since the completion of his 1986 doctoral dissertation on "Socialism and Rural Development in Mozambique," a case study of a communal village in Gaza province, Otto had produced a series of important essays, articles and conference papers examining the dynamics of Mozambican peasant life – including cogent analyses of the scope and impact of the agricultural policies of Frelimo, Mozambique's governing party.

Such was his concern regarding contemporary political developments that he also devoted considerable attention, in recent years, to researching the nature of the war that has wracked Mozambique internally since the early 1980s. Observers of southern African affairs in the UK will recall his forceful presentation of a well-researched position on this subject to the seminal Oxford conference on Mozambique held in 1991. In that paper, as well as in a number of related publications, he insisted persuasively that South



African destabilization, via its cat's-paw, the Renamo movement, was absolutely central to any explanation of the Mozambican tragedy. Yet he also explored with great care the precise nature of Renamo's own interaction with the Mozambican peasantry.

Otto might well have preferred to spend more of his time researching other subjects. For example, he was vitally interested in the broad historical process by which, in this century, the Gaza peasantry has taken shape and this was, indeed, one of several topics he

was working on when he died. But the fact that he also felt compelled to devote his scholarly talents to examining more immediately urgent political questions was no accident. His was a continuing effort, all too rare among scholars, to complement scrupulous professionalism with a concern that his work make a positive difference in the lives of those he studied and lived amongst.

It was in this spirit that Otto also became active in the southern African solidarity movement in Canada, both as a member, for many years, of TCLSAC and as an editor of Southern Africa Report. Equally importantly, he was one of the moving forces behind COCAMO (Cooperation Canada-Mozambique), an initiative of Canadian non-governmental organizations that has helped service Mozambican grass-roots organizations in their efforts to develop effective rural cooperatives in Mozambique's Nampula province.

Otto Roesch was a man of boundless energy and zest for life, the passion and engagement that drove his scholarly and political activities – equally evident in the manner in which he sailed, played basketball, savoured his coffee, and enjoyed his friends and family. He leaves those many friends, his wife, Heather Speers, their two sons, Ben and Alexander, and his mother, Marisa Graziosi.

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Rob Turrell
Editor, Southern African
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