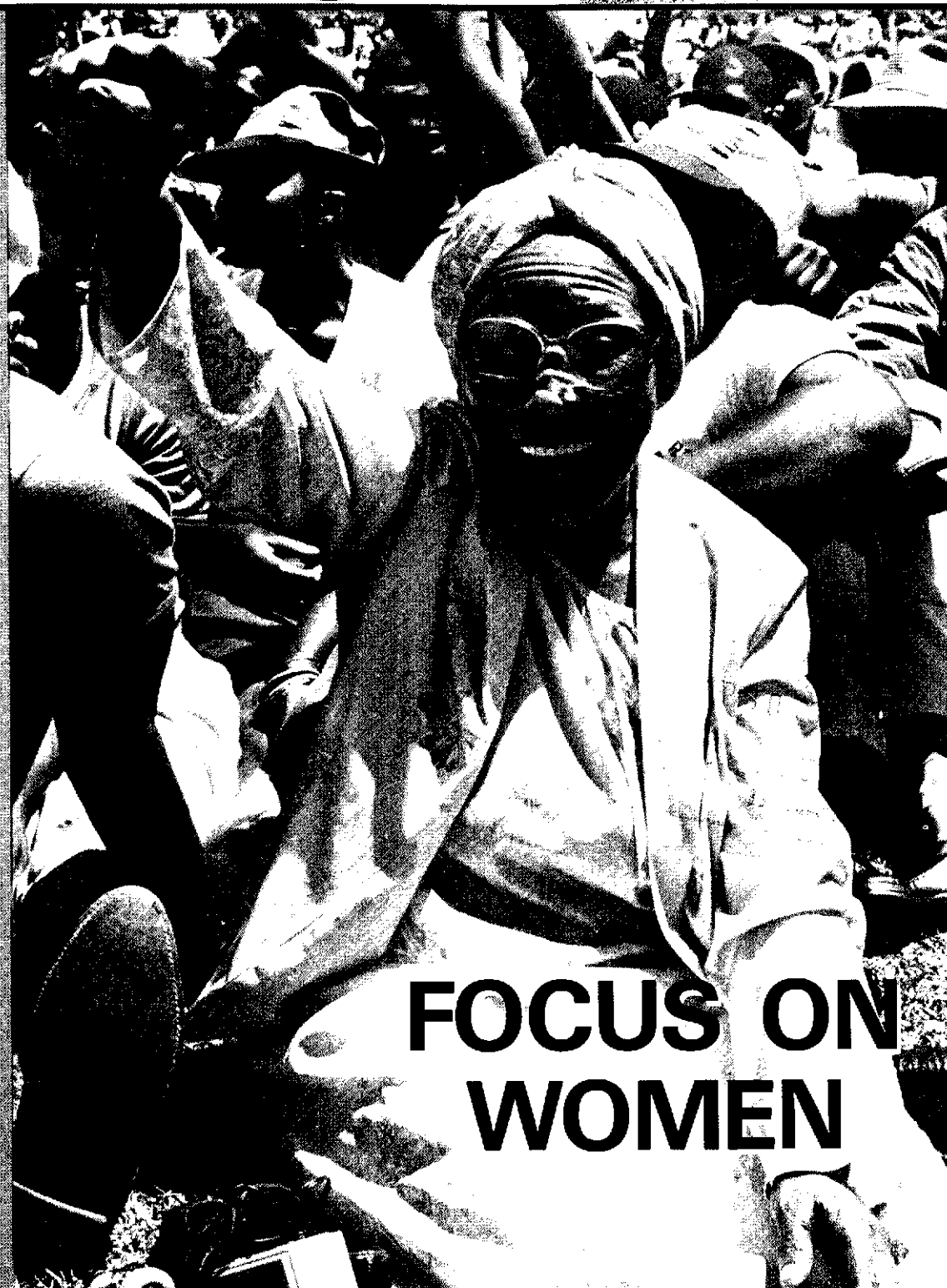


Southern Africa  
**REPORT**

Vol. 1 No. 4

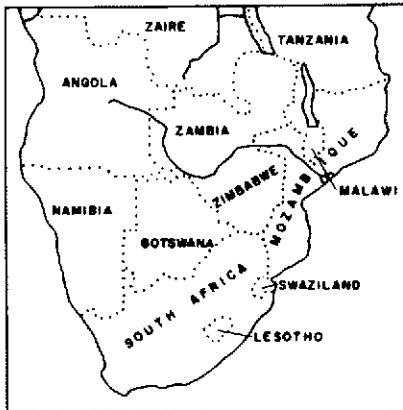
February 1986



**FOCUS ON  
WOMEN**

# Southern Africa REPORT

Vol. 1 No. 4  
February 1986



## Southern Africa REPORT

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Cover photo by Margie Bruun-Meyer

## Women and the South African Liberation Struggle

The lead article in this, our International Women's Day issue of *Southern Africa REPORT*, describes the involvement of women in the liberation movement in South Africa. Tracing the impressive legacy of women's activism, the article gives particular attention to the forms and content of women's struggles today. It draws on recent writing (some of it reviewed in *Southern Africa REPORT* Vol. 1, No. 2) which gives a clear sense of the issues women in South Africa confront, how they organize, how they struggle, and the gender specific oppressions they bear under apartheid. The article is a long one because women have a long and many-stranded history in the politics of freedom in South Africa.

Implicit in the lead article on "women organizing" and in some of the other pieces on women under apartheid - working for Bata in Kwazulu, creating a play in Crossroads, being Winnie Mandela - are the themes of a lively debate about WHEN in the evolving liberation movement is the right moment to raise issues specific to the experience of women. At the Nairobi Women's Conference, a representative from the South African liberation movement said: "Our enemy is the system and we cannot exhaust our energies on women's issues." That the presentation of such a position is not confined to international conferences is clear from the words of Amanda Kwadi of the Federation of South African Women:

*We're in the middle of a liberation struggle, but women's liberation is not necessary at this stage. We are far more concerned about total liberation; and automatically our own will follow.*

Yet many other women, in the trade union movement for example, and elsewhere, have a different view of when women's issues should be pushed:



Margie Bruhn-Meyer

*Now. For we don't want to wake up in years to come and find that women have been left behind in the struggle.*

There is less controversy regarding the parallel debate about whether or not to have separate women's organizations: very few women dissent from the idea of "fighting side by side with our men", but at the same time there is general acceptance of the need for separate organizations "to take up the problems which only we as women face".

The terms and timing of questions related to women's unity with men and the best process of action

by women will continue to be debated in South Africa, of course, and future issues of *Southern Africa REPORT* will seek to keep in touch with that debate. What the present article does make crystal clear is the fact that the iron cage of apartheid twists the lives of women in specific ways which do give them special needs and special insights in the struggle to overthrow it. Moreover, whatever the outcome of ongoing debates about women's action, such action - and this is the article's most important point - is already happening: women are organizing and raising their voices and their issues in the struggle.

# South African Women Organizing

"Now is the time for women to say: We will hold hands together and change the country," declared Albertina Sisulu at a recent South African Women's Day rally in Johannesburg. There has been a revival, since the early 1980s, of women's organization within the broadly defined liberation movement in South Africa. The Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW), dormant for some twenty years, has been resurrected and is active in the Transvaal. The United Women's Organization (UWO) was formed in Cape Town in 1981. The launching of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 prompted the formation of other women's organizations, as affiliates, in other centres. Black Women Unite is an affiliate of the black-exclusive National Forum.

1984 marked a highpoint of activity for the women's organizations. The 30th anniversary of FEDSAW was widely commemorated and, in the main cities, "focus weeks" on "women in the anti-apartheid struggle" were held, to culminate in mass rallies on Women's Day, August 9th. The ANC Women's Section, reflecting the revival, held its first women's conference in Angola in 1981, and 1984 was declared the Year of Women. The ANC Women's Section called for a national women's conference to launch a united, democratic women's front, parallel to the UDF and the then proposed trade union congress. While there is coordination between the women's organization affiliated with the UDF, there is as yet no national women's federation. Since the period of intense repression that began toward the end of 1984, many leaders of the women's organizations, particularly those in the UDF, have been detained, or in the case of Victoria Mxenge, executive member of NOW, the Natal Organization of



Gill de Vlieg/South African Women on the Move

*"Now is the time for women to say: We will hold hands together and change the country."*

*Albertina Sisulu*

Women, shot and hacked to death.

The recent revival of women's organizations and renewed activism in the liberation struggle is clearly an aspect of the general upsurge of anti-apartheid resistance. But is that all it is? The political involvement of women tends to be presented - by the liberation movement and its supporters - in terms of numbers ("mobilizing the other half of the population") or as "drawing women into the struggle", implying that the struggle has a fixed content. Even those who don't take the class content of the liberation movement for granted, somehow overlook its gender content. And so we get the question of women in the liberation movement discussed in the add-on' terms so familiar to women elsewhere who are treated more or less as an afterthought.

A closer look at the struggles and organization of South African women reveals that they are very clearly structured by the context of the broad resistance movement. At the same time, however, women's struggles have helped to shape that movement. Women's resistance has raised new issues for the liberation movement, or has raised old issues in different ways, ways that reflect the perspective of women and their specific oppression under apartheid.

## **"You Have Struck a Rock": Women's Struggles in the 1950s**

Women's organizations today owe much to the legacy of the previous period of massive political activity by women of all classes and races. Women who were active in the Federation of South African Women during the 1950s have been centrally involved in forming the current organizations. Many of the present leaders are in fact veterans of that proud era. The distinctive green and black uniforms of today's organizations date from the 1950s and the Women's Charter, the manifesto of FEDSAW, is today being discussed by women who regard it as being as relevant today as it was thirty years ago.

By the 1950s, all the major organizations of the resistance movement (including the trade unions) had active female members who participated in the numerous demonstrations, strikes and campaigns that marked the post-war years. It was these women who came together to form FEDSAW in 1954, to mobilize around the specific problems of women under the apartheid regime and to fight against the gender attitudes and relations that were "putting brakes to progress", preventing women from taking their part in the struggle. FEDSAW was to note in a report that

*Many men who are politically active and progressive in outlook still*



Gill de Vlieg/South African Women on the Move

follow the tradition that women should not take part in politics and a great resentment exists toward women who seek independent activities or even express independent opinions.

The Women's Charter was adopted at FEDSAW's founding conference. It begins much like any liberal, reformist feminist manifesto: "We the Women of South Africa ... hereby

declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that discriminate against us as women ... ". It goes on, however, to situate the struggle by women against their subordination very firmly within the overall struggle against class and racial oppression, while insisting that freedom for all people could not be won "as long as women are kept in bondage".

The issue around which FEDSAW mobilised massive support from amongst African and other women was the extension of passes and, by implication, pass laws, to women. This was effected in 1952 by the euphemistically titled Native (Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents) Act, which abolished passes in name only, replacing them with the more efficient "reference books". A woman from the rural Transvaal best summed up the meaning of this Act.

*... they call this thing the Abolition of Passes! It is the Abolition of People! We do not think our men want us to be abolished. They are too much abolished themselves.*

African women perceived the pass laws as an attack on their families. The possibility of arrest meant the possibility that their children would remain uncared for. Not known at that time was the extent to which passes would be used to relegate women to the bantustans. At this point, most threatened by the pass requirement were the considerable number of recently migrated single women who would not qualify for urban residence. That thousands of women demonstrated during these years, even those who were relatively less or not at all affected by the pass laws, attests to the remarkable unity and solidarity that the issue of passes and the organization of women, generated. In the first seven months of 1956, approximately 50,000 women took part in 38 demonstrations across the country, and on August 9th, 1956, (ever since, Women's Day), 20,000 women gathered in Pretoria to protest passes. The regime had "touched the women, had struck a rock".

What were the implications and lessons of women's involvement in the liberation struggle during the 1950s? Firstly, it was very clearly shown that African women, because of their specific gender, race and class oppressions, were very differently "touched" by the structures

of apartheid. The forms of their resistance were different too. For example, they utilised pre-existing support networks for very rapid and efficient information dissemination. Once mobilised, they exhibited a rambunctious determination, not easily impeded. Albert Luthuli, then President of the ANC (African National Congress) acknowledged what women had brought to the resistance movement:

*... the weight of resistance has been greatly increased by the emergence of our women. It may even be true that, had the women hung back, resistance would still have been faltering and uncertain ... Furthermore, women of all races have had far less hesitation than men in making common cause about things basic to them.*

Secondly, the question of gender roles within the movement for liberation was tabled – in word in the Women's Charter, and in deed in the impressive participation of women. How far a questioning of gender roles permeated the movement is difficult to assess, but at the level of leadership of FEDSAW and

the ANC, the issue was discussed. In the ANC National Executive Report of 1955, Oliver Tambo wrote:

*... the women need special attention and training to assist them to become leaders of the people. We must ... make it possible for women to play their part in the liberation movement by regarding them as equals, and helping to emancipate them in the home, even relieving them in their many family and household burdens so that women may be given an opportunity of being politically active.*

Finally, the relationship between FEDSAW and the national liberation movement, most particularly the ANC, its leading member, represented a major attempt of a (relatively) independently structured organization to retain a specific focus of interest, while working within the framework of a broader movement. There was certainly less attention given by FEDSAW in those hectic years to combatting oppression by men, and more given to combatting the specific oppression the regime was meting out to women. There

were tensions and conflicts – that took the form of the women's organization feeling that the men were either tailing or blocking their initiatives. Lilian Ngoyi, President of the ANC Women's League, felt compelled to address the tensions:

*The struggle of women is merely part of the general struggle of the African people. The impression seems to be gaining ground that the women are courageous and militant whilst the men are frightened and timid. This idea is harmful to the ... harmony [which] now should exist.*

In other words, women were being asked to withhold their criticism of men in the interests of unity.

Pass laws were not a gender-specific issue. But there is no doubt that women led the struggle against passes. In struggling against the pass laws, however, women were attacking the lynchpin of the system of labour control, the fundament of apartheid. The leadership of FEDSAW saw this clearly.

*In this vast, unmeasured and as yet inadequately organised potential of the resistance of women to passes lies one of the strongest weapons against the present government, against apartheid itself.*

### Resetting the Stage: Women and the 1960s

A decade of mass resistance ended violently and abruptly with the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and subsequent banning of the ANC and PAC (Pan Africanist Congress). FEDSAW was never officially banned, but most of its leadership were banned, jailed or forced into exile. By the early sixties, FEDSAW was no longer active.

During the decade of political quiescence that ensued, changes were taking place within the apartheid capitalist society which were setting the stage for the next phase of mass struggle, a phase which would come to include the reappearance of women's organizations in a leading role. The basic structures



*Florence Matomela, vice-president of FEDSAW, addressing the founding meeting in 1954.*

of apartheid - the migrant labour system and the bantustans - were refined and reinforced. Now that African women were forced to carry passes, the regime was able to enforce control over their movement. Ever tighter restrictions on the migration of women from the bantustans to the urban areas were put in effect. The execution of forced population removals began in the 1960s. Thirteen years later 3 million people had been forcibly relocated and 1.7 million slated for the same fate. Women suffered the cruelest impact, being torn away from homes, land, and community support networks and dumped in desolate rural settlements. While men went off in search of contract work in a market characterised by rising structural unemployment, women struggled to survive and watched their children die. Not surprisingly, despite the restrictions, women continued to leave the desperate conditions in the bantustans and migrate to the urban areas, there to risk raids and arrest, to search for informal or illegal work, to join partners and re-build communities in the swelling peri-urban squatter slums.

The percentage of black women in the labour force rose steadily during the 1960s and more steeply during the 1970s, from 7% in 1970, to over 22% in 1981. Black women remain employed predominantly as domestic workers and as farm workers, particularly as casual labour under conditions of horrific exploitation. However, the number of black women working in factories has risen significantly, now constituting approximately 13% of the black labour force. The 1970s saw the growth of an independent (mainly black) trade union movement in which women became increasingly involved. The 1973 Durban strikes, out of which this movement grew, marked the first real shock to the regime since the 1950s.

The period of political tranquility was thoroughly shattered in 1976 by the Soweto students'

uprising which spread throughout the country, ushering in the new phase of persistent opposition to apartheid on all fronts. As the regime has, in desperation, proffered "reforms" to the trade unions and to the urban black communities, their organizations have consolidated and strengthened. It was in this context of extensive, organised mass resistance, and in the context of increased focus on women's issues globally, that women's organizations re-emerged with particular prominence at the beginning of the 1980s. These organizations can be seen to reflect the tradition of women's struggle inherited from the 1950s and to embody the experience of women struggling in trade unions, squatter camps and community organizations.

### **"Our Group Spirit Is So Strong": Women's Self-help**

The first prominent stirrings of women's renewed political organization came with the formation of the Black Women's Federation (BWF) in 1975. Some of the delegates who came together in Durban late that year to found the BWF had been

active in FEDSAW, but many were from a younger generation of black women who had grown up under the apartheid government and Bantu Education system, and who had become politically active throughout the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). The ideology of Black Consciousness held that the psychological liberation of blacks was a priority if they were to develop a positive black world view and liberate themselves from "the white man". It developed in South Africa in the late 60s amongst mainly black students, but during the early 70s, the BCM explicitly turned toward "the ordinary black people", adopting a strategy of forging links between black intellectuals and black urban and rural communities. The Black Women's Federation reflected the general orientation of the BCM, its position of black-exclusivity, and emphasis on black solidarity and self-help. Fatima Meer, the first president of the BWF said that the purpose of the organization was:

*... to galvanise black women, to bring them together and consolidate grievances and create opportunities*



Omar Badsha/South African Women on the Move



Gill de Villeg/South African Women on the Move

*Sewing dresses in a backyard in Tembisa.*

for them to do something to help themselves and to help the general South African situation to move toward change.

The Soweto students' uprising broke out only 6 months later and many of the leaders of the BCM and the BWF were soon in detention, banned or jailed. In October 1977, the BWF was banned along with the other major Black Consciousness organizations. But during its brief history, the organization began literacy, health and nutrition classes for women in urban and rural areas, compiled a booklet on the legal disabilities of African women and started to organise women in rural development projects and cottage industries.

The idea of community- and women's self-help organization was not initiated by the BCM. It has its roots in fact in the *stokfela*, mutual savings clubs, in burial societies and women's prayer groups. But it was certainly developed, ideologically and practically, during the 1970s, remaining a central concept in women's organising today. In the mid-70s, a women's self-help

movement emerged in the major townships, particularly in Soweto, where the Zamani Soweto Sisters Council, an umbrella co-ordinating body for women's self-help groups, was formed. Many of the groups have remained politically conservative, concentrating on developing skills in sewing and knitting and learning the tricks of petty enterprise. On the other hand, there is potential for more political organization in the fact of women coming together, collectively resolving immediate daily problems, developing organizational skills and confidence and, in short, empowering themselves. A woman from a vegetable-growing cooperative remarked that ... *it is not for the sake of the gardens that we are doing this. Our group spirit is so strong that we will not stop if things do not work the first time. As a group we must be equal ... it is a struggle to be equal, to get everyone to share in the discussions and the work.*

Women's organizations are making connections with women's small self-help groups to develop that potential.

**"We Need to Act Now": Women in Trade Unions.**

In the later seventies, black women workers led some prominent strikes (Heinemanns, Sea Harvest and Frametex) in which they demonstrated an enthusiasm and militancy that won them both the respect and attention of the male dominated union movement and the active support of the community (e.g. the Fattis and Monis boycott). Older, more conservative unions have long been entrenched in the garment and textile industries where women workers constitute the vast majority of the labour force, but great strides have been made, in recent years, in unionizing women in other industries where they are concentrated - food, shoes and services.

Great strides that is, considering the immense problems of organising black women workers in South Africa (and here not even dealing with domestic and farm workers who are not covered by basic labour legislation). The very high rate of unemployment for women (which in 1983 even the notoriously underestimating official figures put at 14% as compared to 5.8% for men) militates against women in any sector organising or striking, for they can be, and are, too easily dismissed and replaced from the long lines of the unemployed. Industrialists facing worker organization can take the option, which the government is promoting, of relocation their factories to the bantustans where no wage legislation is in effect, where unions tend to be violently suppressed by local security forces, and where thousands of women, desperate for income, form a bottomless pool of dirt-cheap labour (see the article on Bata in this issue). Besides these broader deterrents, there is the double shift - women's responsibility for the maintenance of the home - and suspicious (and often violent) husbands to hinder union participation. Even if a union can be formed, there is little solid protective legislation for women to hinge



demands around. Only since 1981 has minimum wage discrimination on the basis of sex been made illegal. Of course employers easily get around the law; women's jobs are differently categorised and unequal pay for equal work persists.

Although the numbers of women in the trade union movement are very small, their involvement has powerful strategic importance for placing the issue of gender subordination squarely on the agenda of the working class struggle in South Africa, and indeed, on that of the liberation movement generally. For many trade union leaders, both male and female, are active in the community organizations, and women trade unionists today, as in the 1950s, have been dynamic participants and leaders in the women's organizations. In the democratic labour movement, unity, equality and democracy are the prevailing organizational ideologies. The issue of gender oppression – at the hand of bosses and fellow workers – is consequently very directly posed.

In recent years women trade unionists have started grumbling out loud about the subordinate tasks to which they are relegated within the unions and the various ways in which their participation in the unions is discouraged. Add the difficulties of arranging to come home late after union meetings and, says one woman organiser,

*This makes [the woman worker] retreat. She doesn't want to lose her family for the union, even if she's committed to it. So the organization becomes weakened. The people who weaken it are those who say they are committed, but don't see the need to assist in the liberation of women.*

Some of the women who have become union officials report that they do not experience particular difficulties as women, organising men. They refer to a saying that women can explain things better to workers than men can. Others feel that women are barred from becoming



Margie Bruun-Meyer

Rally at the founding of COSATU.

shop stewards or chairpersons, despite their loyalty and capabilities. These frustrations, a contradictory sense of being afraid to talk and not being heard, and the feeling that the specific problems of women workers are not being addressed, have prompted calls for caucusing among women officials and separate meetings of women union members. In 1983 the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) Women's Committee was formed to deal precisely with these issues.

Such initiatives of women unionists have produced results. Women's demands – favourable maternity agreements, equal pay for equal work – have begun appearing in negotiations, and sexual harassment cases have been taken up. A set of women's clauses was included in the manifesto of the recently formed national Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

A way remains to go, however, especially on the important gender-specific issues of child care and reproductive health. The separate organization of women promises that these issues will appear more and more on the bargaining tables:

*We need to act now for we don't want to wake up in years to come and find that women have been left behind in the struggle. We need to break down every division between men and women, by taking on the problems face to face. One thing is for sure, if we don't address the problems the bosses will play the women off against the men.*

The issue of the double shift remains an intractable one. A union workshop discussion on the issue revealed some resistance to the idea of transforming women's domestic role. Yet that double shift might be seen to have a double edge. Women workers, with one foot in the "productive sphere", the other in the "reproductive realm" of household, cost of living, education and community, are best placed to understand the implications of broadening the reach of working class struggle beyond the factory floor to take up issues that affect working class life more generally. Women are thus likely to be the ones promoting the collaboration of the trade unions and community organizations which has proved so powerful a weapon of anti-apartheid struggle, particularly in recent months. At the same time, women workers carry with them to the community and domestic organizations the tools of discipline, unity and democratic organization, forged and tempered in trade union struggle.



Bee Berman/South African Women on the Move

After a raid at Crossroads.

**“We Thought We Must Stay Together”: The Women of Crossroads**

The internationally publicised struggle of the women of the Crossroads squatter camp against the forced removal of their community has also had both strategic and symbolic importance for the women’s organizations and the liberation movement in general. For the Crossroads women were refusing, physically, and with courageous

determination, to comply with the regime’s favourite and often effective tactic of sowing division among the oppressed (a divide and rule tactic, most recently evidenced in the Riekert legislation which offers some small taste of security to those with legal urban status while defining everyone else as permanently migrant). The Crossroads women were also refusing the appellation of “surplus people” who could be dumped in the bantustans, out of sight and out of mind.

When the police began raiding the Crossroads camp and demolishing nearby squatting areas outside Cape Town in 1975, the women of Crossroads decided to form a committee. It was mainly women who were “illegal”, who faced arrest and deportation. The Committee played a watchdog function, keeping track of raids and arrests, visiting lawyers and officials. The state, with tear gas and whips, persisted in its persecution and its plans to erase urban squatting settlements, and hundreds of women were arrested and sent to the Transkei, only to return on the next train. When bulldozers came, women sat down in front of them.

The Crossroads women attribute their remarkable tenacity to two things: the degree of their suffering and their unity. “We are really struggling hard, and so we thought we must stay together.”

That unity was realised and reinforced in the way that the women organised – holding frequently open meetings, electing representatives, reporting back immediately after each new development. The women again – as in numerous instances in the history of South African women’s struggle – showed an amazing disregard and disrespect for red tape, trampling over channels and protocol in their dealings with government, in situations where men, long subordinated to bureaucratic discipline, would supplicate and compromise. And that is what the women saw the men to be doing when a group of men unilaterally decided to take over the leadership of the community soon after the Minister of “Cooperation and Development” had conceded to the Crossroads community the right to stay in the Cape area, but to be moved to another site.

*It was funny really, because it was the women who started the struggle – but for a time it was decided that we should have only one committee and that it should be men. But now things are all right again because they want the women’s group again*

- they say things doesn't go right like they did when we was doing it.

The quote glosses generously over the considerable frustration felt by the women, now wearied by years of defiance, when they experienced the men as basically messing things up, creating divisions and mistrust in the community.

For all their personal and political tension with men, the women of Crossroads did not see their organization as being in opposition to men. But they did see themselves as that much more competent, brave and obstinate than men, better versed in the ways of the community. No doubt this reflected the extremely disproportionate amount of work of black women that has gone into building and maintaining 'community' in South Africa. The record of such women, as organisers of community life, under the most adverse conditions, has been truly outstanding. For this reason and because of the very vulnerable situation that apartheid had thrust upon them, an interest in maintaining solidarity and unity has been especially close to the hearts of the women.

The lessons of Crossroads women's struggle for the liberation movement? There are many: the power and significance of the struggles of those sections of the oppressed population which have been marginalized by apartheid's design; the reaffirmation of the strength of democratic, grassroots organization' the propitious deployment of publicity and international solidarity; and above all, the importance and potential of women's strategic location within black communities. The ANC has begun appealing to this potential, calling upon women to surreptitiously undertake township surveillance, to hide militants and arms. The centrality of women to the community is being acknowledged and reinforced in the close collaboration of women's organizations, community organizations, youth organizations and trade unions in the recent effective township resistance campaigns.



A meeting of community members at Crossroads.

See Berman/South African Women

### The Issues Affecting People: Women and Community Organizations

The development of the community organizations and the women's organizations has been closely interwoven. The broad-based community organizations have mobilized in the urban townships around national political issues - such as the commemoration of special days, the Free Mandela Campaign and the campaign against elections to the tri-cameral parliament - and around local or grassroots issues - such as resistance to the puppet "local authorities", rent increases and rising food prices. They have also supported local strikes in organising boycotts. Significantly much of the work of the community organizations today is done in collaboration with the other local organizations, most importantly those of the women and of the youth.

The breadth of support that the community organizations have achieved stems both from this collaboration and from the link created between "grassroots" issues and more broadly political issues. The formation of the UDF to which many of the community organizations have affiliated has strengthened them as a national force, but some feel to the detriment of locally relevant campaigns. One wonders to what extent the promotion and sup-

port for the "political" campaigns as opposed to the "grassroots" campaigns is divided along gender lines. Certainly two reasons given for the formation of separate women's organizations were that issues of relevance to women were not being addressed and that community organizations were not sufficiently democratic to give the sometimes more reticent women a vote.

Furthermore, women in the community organizations "were not given the chance to develop". As one woman argued:

*If political issues are the focus, and not the issues affecting the people, women will show less interest. If people are not given the chance to participate, women are discouraged and eventually stay away.*

### Because of the Special Problems We Face: Women's Organizations Today

Responding to this sentiment, women's organizations have taken on the task of reaching out to women of all classes and backgrounds who would otherwise be wary of political organization, focussing on issues of immediate relevance, like child care and health. Through their federal structure they try to incorporate a range of local women's groups - squatters, self-help and church groups, in urban and to a lesser extent in rural areas.



*Kona Mokhoera, Federation of Transvaal Women*



*Frances Baard, veteran organizer in FEDSAW, ANC SACTU.*

Bee Berman/South African Women on the Move

The particular challenge they face is that of forging a basis for unity among these diverse groups. At the same time, women's organizations provide a context for the politicisation of women, allowing them to see the relationship between their immediate problems and the system of apartheid, and allowing women to see themselves as political actors. *We need women's organizations because of the special problems that we face as women. In our separate women's groups we can talk about all these things. Because women are not taught to be in competition with each other, we can talk easily to each other. We can look at how women see themselves, why we think we are weak, and we can learn to have confidence in ourselves and our abilities.*

The recuperation and commemoration of the history of South African women's struggle has been an important focus of the activity of the women's organizations, imparting a sense of political tradition and power. The integration of "women's issues" and "political issues" characterizes their campaigns. Thus the United Women's Organization's themes for 1983 were child care, the Koornhof Bills and the

Constitution. The slogans of the organizations make the same connections: *"GST (General Sales Tax) is buying guns to kill our children!"* Current and pending political developments are discussed in women's meetings, to assess their particular impact on women. Almost two years ago, a woman leader anticipated the regime's proposal to "reform" pass laws (announced by President Botha last month) thus: *"If they are going to sophisticate the pass laws, you can be sure that women are going to be hardest hit."*

The transformation of relations within the home is an issue that has proven controversial and telling in all liberation struggles and in the post-revolutionary phases. Women who have fought side-by-side with their men in the struggle, have not found their men working side-by-side with them in the kitchen, before or after the revolution. Where the prevailing line on women in the liberation movement in South Africa is that they "must play their equal part in the struggle", the question of a more equitable domestic division of labour cannot logically be ignored. Some women, particularly in the trade unions, are pointing out this contradiction to their brothers.

While many working women may feel bitter about the double burden they carry, they resignedly pass it off as "tradition" or as "man's nature". In the women's organizations, the double shift is named as one of women's specific oppressions and as reason for women to become politically active, rather than as something to be struggled over immediately.

The number of women actively involved in the women's organizations is relatively small; in the broader resistance organizations generally, a little larger. But the significance of women's independent organizations within the liberation movement is great. Yes, the liberation movement is gaining in numbers as women are drawn into the struggle. But of far more consequence in the longer term, is the promise that women's involvement holds for the broadening and deepening of the meaning of struggle and of liberation. Women's organizations are the means to realising that promise. As was said at a Women's Day meeting two years ago: *"We must be committed to laying the foundations for the new society we want."*



"People of Crossroads", lino-cut

Mphahlele Gocini

## Let Us Build Each Other Up

BY BEVERLEY COUSE

Artists in Canada Against Apartheid

*Imfuduso* is the title of an evocative, comic and gutsy play written, performed and produced by twelve Xhosa speaking women of the Crossroads community. Its purpose is to send a strong, clear message:

"We want to stand together with the blacks ... we are standing for them ... to give them assurance. We decided to make a play to show our people and then to show the world how it is."

The Crossroads Women's committee, a powerful and influential body, has played an important part in organizing and defending

the community against state designs with all tactics available to them. The play *Imfuduso* remains an important part of their resistance campaign. All the parts in *Imfuduso* are played by the twelve members of the women's committee: the Cape Town and Transkei police; the Cape Town magistrate; the government minister, P. Koornhof; other state officials; the Transkeian women; and the women of Crossroads. The structure of the play is episodic, loosely linked by the story of one defiant woman. This provides the focal point for the stories of several other women. Mrs. Luke, a Crossroads resident, is arrested for being in a white area illegally. The court identifies her as a habitual offender

and she is banished to the "homelands". In this sequence, the women dramatize the poverty and isolation of life in the Transkei. Mrs. Luke is then dumped in a barren area of the Ciskei, with no work, water or housing. Undaunted, she hitchhikes back to Crossroads only to find that the dwellings are being demolished for a second time in a state effort to get rid of the black residents. Still undaunted, she urges residents to rebuild their shacks yet again, in defiance of state policies, and joins them in triumphantly singing: "We shall not move".

*Imfuduso* does indeed accomplish what Robert Kavanagh says the best of popular theatre should:

it communicates on a level "deeper than words" and can "fuse an audience of individuals into an experience of intense cultural identity". The play is hardly a dry treatise, however. It is a wonderful mixture of movement, song, realistic and representational tableaux. Exaggeration, buffoonery and punning spice even the harshest sequences. The white policeman in charge of removals, for instance, is played by a very large Crossroads woman in a too tight uniform and moth-eaten red wig. The intended comic effect is always gained. Thus, both structurally, and in intent, *Imfuduso* is a mix of serious and popular elements.

The play itself is not the total experience, however:

*"The play will be like a scripture to the whole life of the blacks, to the whole world and South Africa. That's why we have a play like Imfuduso."*

It is meant to be a catalyst to action, and so the women have taken the play to other settlements, such as Glenmore, where they encouraged their audience with these words:

*"We come here to give you people a tip. If you want to tell the government something, you must stand together. The only thing that will help you is you must stand together in one spirit."*

*Imfuduso* doesn't intend to deal with race relations, but concentrates

on the social suffering shown to be caused by political factors. Its content is not so much militant, as it is a mirroring of a specific situation and an offering of advice on how to deal with it. Why have only the women of Crossroads dared to make this statement?

*"It's because the men haven't got spirit as we do. They're not strong like we. And if they do things, they know the law is going to catch them quickly... but we as women... we think less that the law will catch us."*

*Imfuduso* is not just a vibrant example of popular theatre at its best, but it is also a sound challenge to all politically conscious artists and individuals to use their talents to stand for the truth.

As *Imfuduso*, seen in context, demonstrates, the art of black South African women cannot be interpreted by the guidelines of white, western feminism, which still basically looks for the self-actualization of the individual, or for the enhancement of a unique art form. Women's organizations in the townships, for instance, are not usually for, by or about women exclusively: in fact, too exclusive a preoccupation with gender specific issues may be viewed with suspicion. Although it is mainly women who hold the important job of spreading and maintaining culture through mothering and teaching roles, it would be diffi-

cult to find women's cultural groups which exist solely for the purpose of their own advancement. Here the strength of *Masakhane* ('let us build each other up') must be understood. When women, at a community level, join together, the purpose is to lend support, economic, social and spiritual, and to build together. The goal is self-sufficiency within a community. Thus, when women's singing/dancing groups do popular, township or traditional pieces, the statements made come directly from their own life experiences. Moreover, the presence of men is always assumed, in the attitude and content of the presentations, and these are always done in a communal context.

Black female artists in South Africa face several dangers, however. Aside from the weight of political oppression, constant censorship and surveillance, they do not have the freedom of movement the creative spirit craves, or that is needed, to simply organize, rehearse and produce. Thus, "gifted" performing artists find their careers being shaped by the largely white-dominated entertainment industry and exile too often has been the painful choice that has enabled many South African artists to continue using their talents in full expression. But stories of courageous, creative artistic statements - like *Imfuduso* - abound.

## Women in the Bata-istan

BY SUSAN BAZILLI

Susan Bazilli, a Canadian Lawyer recently in South Africa, visited the Bata plant in Kwazulu, talked to workers, and filed this report.

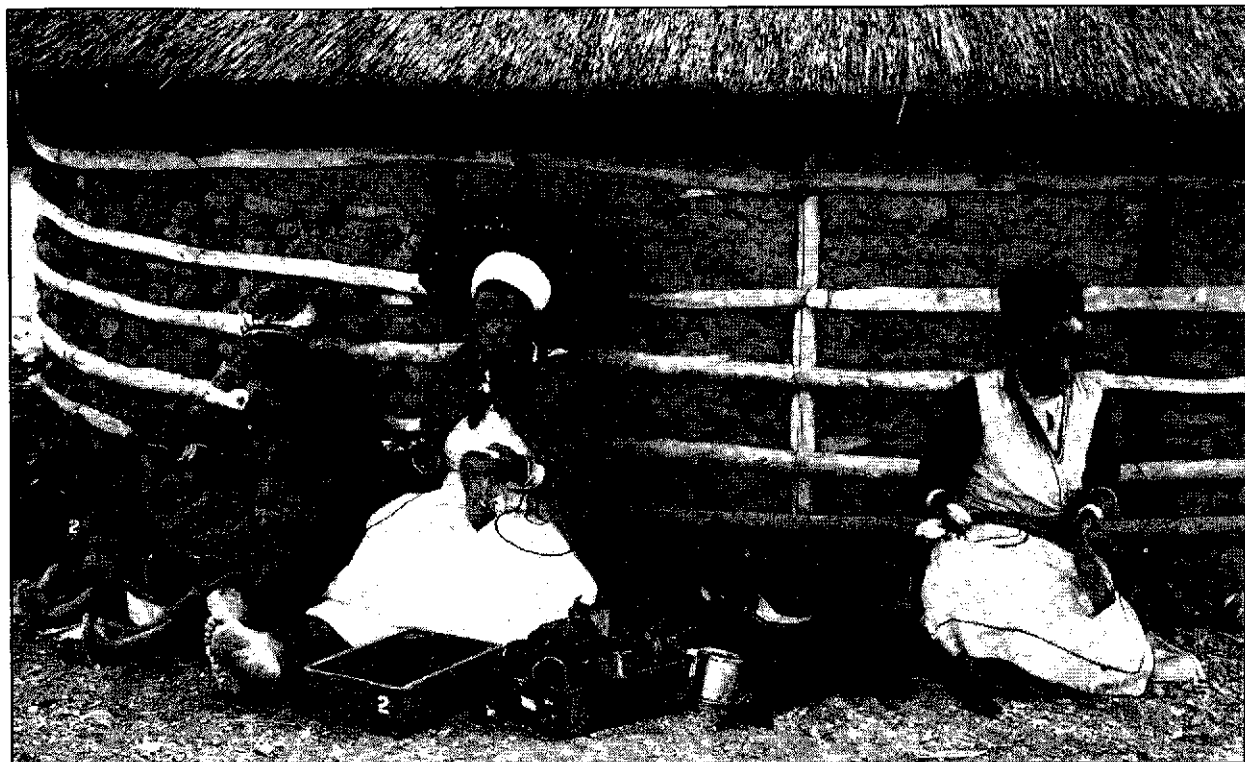
A Bata factory is located in Keate's Drift, in the middle of barren and rural Kwazulu. Of a workforce of 700, 90% are women. Most of the women work inside the factory,

but an increasing number of women work at home, doing piece work.

Bata employs the *out-workers* on a temporary basis and pays them at a rate of about R3 to R4 for ten pairs of shoes. The company decides how many pairs of shoes, if any, are given to each worker, and the women take their quota home to sew the uppers onto the soles by hand.

*"Every morning at seven I go to the factory to fetch my lot. There could be 20 or 30 pairs. I fetch whatever is there and try to finish it off in a day. I take it back the next morning when I pick up the next lot. If there are shoes to be sewn, I make between R30 and R40 a week, depending on the number I am given to take home."*

*"I may have to work until midnight"*



Susan Bazilli

*Bata out-workers in Keate's Drift, Kwazulu, sew uppers on shoes.*

or 1 or 2 in the morning to get the work done. We have to work by candlelight when it is dark. But the work has to be taken back in the morning."

The workers asked to work inside where they would get a standard wage. Workers were told that there was no room at the factory. Bata does not have to pay them a standard wage. The home-sewers wages vary with the number of shoes that they are given. If they are given no shoes in the morning, they are paid nothing.

"We were told we had no alternative, no choice. We didn't want to work outside. We were told they did not have the space inside the factory. The inside workers get an annual bonus, benefits and wage increases. We have no benefits, except at the end of the year we get some chickens and cakes."

Many of the women in Keate's Drift are the sole source of support

for their families. The women who work at home are temporary employees and have not security of employment.

"I am the main support for my family: my 8 children, my sister-in-law, my mother, and myself. My mother works inside the factory. She puts shoelaces in shoes and is paid R30 a week. It is very hard work. We share the money and try to get by. Sometimes, because there is so much work, we have to get help with the sewing and share the wages."

Child care is done at home, while the women sew.

"The children are very young. Either I get up very early and prepare their meals for the day or I pay someone to take care of them."

Bata has stated that there are company health clinics with a doctor and nurses for the employees at all their plants in South Africa. They also claim that they provide

sick pay, maternity benefits, insurance plans and disability benefits.

"The inside workers can use the company medical clinic, but not the outside workers. We can only use the clinic to get injections and tablets for contraceptives. We cannot go to the clinic for any other reason. We can't bring our families to the clinic - even if we work inside the factory."

The majority of workers at the Kwazulu Bata plant have joined the National Union of Textile Workers (a COSATU affiliate). Bata has refused to recognize the union, but its presence makes a difference.

"There is no pay for maternity leave. Before the union, we used to get 7 days after confinement. If women took more time they were fired. After the union, we get 2 weeks before, and 2 weeks after the birth."

There was no doctor in the clinic

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# Divestment at York University

## The Student – Trade Union Alliance

BY GENE DESFOR

*Gene Desfor is Associate Professor at York University and Co-chairperson of the York University Divestment Committee.*

York University is moving toward divesting all its holdings in corporations that invest in South Africa. The divestment process at York has proceeded surprisingly fast and has been free of the bitter and destructive battles that have often plagued other North American universities. Perhaps it is still too soon to conclude that the university will divest, for the agreements have not been finalized. However, the process is moving quickly in that direction and there is no evidence of significant organized opposition. The situation at York is interesting not only because it has moved so quickly but also because of the divestment strategy used.

The York Student Movement Against Apartheid (YSMAA), an active student group on campus for a number of years (the campaign to remove Sonja Bata from York's Board of Governors was one of their more prominent successes), initiated the drive to have the university adopt a divestment policy. YSMAA realized that broadening its base of support in the divestment battle would be critical. Rather than the conventional route of seeking support through the councils of the various faculties or through the Senate, they chose to enlist the backing of the unions on campus. The full-time faculty is represented by YUFA (York University Faculty Association), the support staff by YUSA (York University Staff Association) and the part-time teaching faculty by CUEW (Canadian Union of Educational Employees. While there are other unions representing the security staff and physical plant employ-



*David Himbara, York U. Divestment Committee*

ees, these three are, numerically, the major ones on campus.

YSMAA requested that these unions appoint representatives to a new group that would be organized specifically to address the question of divestment. The union response was encouraging with all three appointing representatives without delay. These representatives met to form the York University Divestment Committee (YUDC). It should be noted that one of the first decisions of the YUDC was to write to President Harry Arthur requesting that he join with YUDC in developing a policy on divestment.

In retrospect it is apparent that the YSMAA's move to approach the unions was particularly important for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the financial position of the university. York is a relatively young university, just twenty-five years old. As a result, the endowment funds of the university are

not large. However, the Pension Fund at York is substantial with about \$180 million. In December, 1984, this fund had about \$18 million worth of investments in corporations participating in the South African economy.

The Pension Fund membership at York includes the full-time employees at the university. Any significant change in policy regarding investment of the Pension Fund could only be achieved with the support of those enrolled in the plan. What better way is there to obtain this support than through the unions representing the employees?

The Pension Fund is managed by the Board of Trustees, who have the authority to invest the Fund at their discretion, subject to the restrictions and limitations in all the relevant legislation. The Board of Trustees is composed of representatives from the employee unions, the administration and the Board of Governors

After the York University Divestment Committee was formed and divestment began to have an audible profile, the YUFA representative on the Pension Fund Board of Trustees asked the Board to consider the question of investments in South African linked corporations. The Board decided to seek the advice of the All University Pension Committee. This committee was established under YUFA's collective agreement to consider issues relevant to the operation of the pension plan, but has no formal links to the Board of Trustees.

Seizing the moment, YUDC decided to introduce a motion to the All University Pension Committee meeting calling for total divestment. YUDC first requested the YUFA Executive Committee to endorse the motion, which it did. Then

Roberta Di Maio/Excalibur



the YUSA Executive also agreed to the motion. Moreover, President Harry Arthurs provided his personal support for the motion and asked the Administration representatives to vote for the YUDC motion.

On January 25, 1986, the All University Pension Committee met and, not surprisingly, passed the motion instructing the Board of Trustees to divest the Pension Fund of all holdings of corporations with investments in South Africa. The Board has not yet scheduled its next meeting.

It is interesting to speculate on why the unions and President Arthurs would support divestment. There can be no doubt that the moral question is important; people do not want their money used to support a criminal regime based on institutionalized racism and brutal repression of the black majority. President Arthurs and York University have demonstrated leadership in recognizing the efforts of those who fight racism, for example by the granting of an honorary degree to Walter Sisulu in June, 1985.

That is where divestment currently stands at York. One might ask, why have things gone so well? There are two factors that should be considered. First, the conditions in South Africa make investment there highly risky; even conservative financial analysts are recommending avoiding South African linked corporations. Equally important is the strategy of the YSMAA to seek and obtain the support of the unions and then YUDC's getting President Harry Arthurs backing.

Finally, there is reason for optimism from the York experience (if divestment becomes a reality, as the evidence indicates it will). First because another major Canadian university will have removed a substantial amount of money from supporting apartheid. Also, because a strategy that involved a central role for unions in divesting a large institution will have demonstrated its validity.

## Dalhousie Divests

BY PAUL KEEN

On January 14, 1986, the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University voted unanimously to divest of all holdings with companies financially involved in South Africa. In doing so, Dalhousie became only the second Canadian university to commit itself to a policy of divestment.

The Board's decision was undoubtedly influenced by the success of similar motions previously passed by the Student Union, the Faculty Association, and the Senate. Board members were also reacting to the presence of an organized and active student coalition. The group, only formed earlier that month, was more the product of concerned individuals who had discovered that they shared a common goal than the result of careful long term planning.

Significantly, the motion which passed had been introduced by Steven Ellis, one of the three students sitting on the Board of Governors. A petition which had been circulated less than a week before by the student coalition, bore the names of over fifteen hundred students and was submitted at the meeting. A standing-room-only crowd attended the Board meeting, the vast majority of them students. It marked the first time that the student body *en masse* had exercised its recently won right to observe Board meetings. Quite obviously, the purpose of this presence was not lost on the Board members.

Students in attendance maintained a respectful silence throughout the meeting, a tactic which had been agreed upon the previous week. It was felt that a more vocal demonstration might ultimately have been counter-productive, given the relatively conservative nature of the Board. Had the motion not passed, a stronger form of demonstration could have been organized for a subsequent meeting. It had

also been decided that no substantial compromise would be condoned by the coalition. It turned out that there was no need to worry about either a second meeting or a compromise. The bill was passed in its entirety. The only amendment allowed for the creation of a joint Board-Senate-student committee to oversee the process and to decide which companies in Dalhousie's portfolio are deemed to "have interests in South Africa".

The unanimous decision tacitly accepts the need to apply economic pressures against South Africa, and the impossibility of maintaining an apolitical stance in the matter. The decision signifies a growing recognition of the fact that the case of South Africa leaves no room for neutrality; that even for those groups foresworn against political stances, a non-decision amounts to an acceptance of one's continued support for the country's economy. And finally, the decision reflects the growing irrationality of maintaining investments in South Africa.

But if the decision was economically expedient, then the Board's reaction also demonstrates a sensitivity on their part to the problem of double standards. In his arguments on behalf of the bill, Ellis pointed to Dalhousie's traditionally international character, suggesting that the meeting itself could never have taken place in South Africa: many of the students in attendance were black.

And so the responsibility shifts to the joint divestment committee which must attend to the more concrete details of the process. But in accepting the principle of divestment, Dalhousie has demonstrated itself to be accountable to its own stated values, and to the victims of apartheid. It is hoped that the decision will lend weight to

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# The University of Toronto and South Africa

BY PETER ROSENTHAL

*The prominence of the "Babb affair" at the University of Toronto warrants our attention and we are grateful to Peter Rosenthal for preparing a succinct and informative account of it from his point of view. This is not a point of view which a number of members of the Southern Africa REPORT editorial collective are in agreement with, however, and one which, in any case, warrants further discussion. We invite comments for our next issue.*

The major political topic on the University of Toronto campus this academic year has been the University's relationship to South Africa. The question of divestment created a lot of interest; the invitation to the South African "ambassador" to speak on campus created a furor.

The first round began in November, 1984 when the U. of T. Divestment Committee initiated a motion to the Governing Council that the University of Toronto divest its holdings in companies with investments in South Africa.

The President of the University appointed an "advisory board" to consider the question. It was not surprising that this board recommended against divestment. The board was not at all representative of campus opinion; incredibly, one of the members of the board was a director of a large corporation that invests in South Africa!

University President George Connell enthusiastically endorsed the report in June 1985.

The motion on divestment was to be voted on by the Governing Council on September 19, 1985. Over the summer, each day's televised news emphasized the brutality of South African rule (until the

South African government banned reporters from areas where the most severe repression was taking place).

All constituencies of the University came out strongly in favour of divestment, including the traditionally conservative University of Toronto Faculty Association.

The Governing Council of the University of Toronto is dominated by executives of large corporations, many of which have investments in South Africa. Many other members of the Council are faithful followers of the Administration. The few independent voices on the Governing Council have no realistic hope of passing any motions. In fact, there has never been any substantial resolution passed over the opposition of the President.

Nonetheless, the fate of the divestment motion was not clear. Given the strong revulsion against the South African regime, Governing Council members might have felt that they could not vote against the motion. (In fact, a leading Administration supporter on the Governing Council told me "How could we vote against it? It would look like we support apartheid.")

To insure that the University of Toronto would not divest, President Connell came up with a clever (though, in my view, really hypocritical) ploy: he offered an amendment to the motion, stating that the University would divest only from those companies that did not obey the Canadian Government guidelines concerning such investments.

Since those battling apartheid are convinced that all investments in South Africa help to prolong the agony of black South Africans, and since the Canadian guidelines are

virtually meaningless anyway, this "amendment" was in direct contradiction to the motion for divestment. The mover of the divestment motion objected that Governing Council rules prohibit amendments that are contrary to the motion. The Chairman of the Governing Council ruled against the objection, the amendment passed, the amended motion passed, and President Connell had defeated divestment (for the time being). Many members of the university community were disgusted.

The official representative to Canada of the South African regime is named Glenn Babb. In spite of the fact that 72% of the people of South Africa are denied (solely because of their colour) any say in the government that appointed him, Babb has the nerve to call himself "ambassador". Soon after he arrived here in August, 1985, it became clear that Babb's main function is public relations. There are reports that he was personally chosen by "President" Botha to try to cut into the divestment movement in Canada.

Babb was invited to be "Honorary Visitor" at a debate at the University of Toronto's Hart House on November 14, 1985. To forestall opposition the event was announced only a few days before November 14. The student debaters argued the question "Resolved that the West should not divest its holdings in South Africa" (double negatives are the least one can do to accommodate South African "ambassadors"), and then they allowed speakers from the floor.

Lennox Farrell, a prominent member of the Black community,

gave an impassioned speech about the evils of apartheid and the gall of the "ambassador" attending a meeting where a black person like Lennox could speak. In frustration over the bantering nature of the debate, Lennox picked up a ceremonial mace and hurled it in the direction of the South African "ambassador". Babb was not injured in any way, but Lennox was charged with assault. (Lennox' trial is presently set for March 25, 1986; contributions to his defence fund can be sent c/o Roach-Smith, 688 St. Clair Ave. W., Toronto.)

After Lennox was taken away by police, several other people spoke from the floor. Then it was time for the "Honourary Visitor". As Babb rose, so did a chant from the crowd: "Freedom yes, apartheid no". Babb stood stony-faced; the chanting continued. After several minutes the speaker declared the debate over.

President Connell told the Governing Council that Babb would be reinvited, and that the University would "use its full authority", including "taking disciplinary action", against those who interfered with Babb's "right to free speech".

President Connell, and those who jumped on his bandwagon, never dealt with the arguments against allowing Babb to speak on campus. They talked as if they thought that "free speech" should be absolute; it is hard to see how such a position could be defended in a serious debate. If free speech is to be absolute much of the Canadian Criminal Code will have to be revised (it is against the law to counsel or conspire with anyone to commit an offence, to cause a disturbance by shouting, to give obscene performances, to incite racial hatred, and so on).

Repeated U.N. resolutions have declared apartheid to be "a crime against humanity". The U.N. *Convention of the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid* states that international criminal responsibility shall apply to represen-



Margie Bruun-Meyer

*Demonstration outside U. of T. law building.*

tatives of the State of South Africa, and to anyone who abets or cooperates in the crime of apartheid. There is no doubt that Babb is an international criminal. It might also be argued that those who give Babb a podium are thereby accomplices in the crime of apartheid.

There are other considerations in addition to the criminality of Babb's speaking on campus. The South African government is almost universally treated as an outlaw regime. Its delegates are not allowed to participate in any international events.

The racists that conduct such extraordinary repression of black people need reassurance that they are "respectable" in some quarters. For the University of Toronto to host their "ambassador" gives such reassurance. Any such appearance of Babb would be followed by prominent articles in the South African press indicating that at the University of Toronto the South African regime's policies are regarded as "debatable" rather than "criminal".

Another important consideration is the effect on black residents of Toronto. The city's most prestigious institution offered a podium to a person who represents the outrageous notion that black people are

too inferior to participate in government. Perhaps some people can understand how upsetting this can be by imagining how they would react to Hitler's ambassador being an "Honourary Visitor" at Hart House. Showing such respect to an official representative of apartheid is an attack on all black people.

As Keegstra discovered, it is a criminal offence to communicate statements that promote hatred against an identifiable group. Babb should not be allowed to violate the laws against promoting racial hatred, and the University of Toronto should not aid him in his attempts to perpetuate the subjugation of black people.

Early in the new year, it was announced that a group of law students had invited Babb to speak at the U. of T. on January 17, 1986. Many members of the University community objected to this invitation. Four professors (George Bancroft, Frederick Case, Keith Ellis, and me) made an application for an injunction against Babb being allowed to speak,

The day before the injunction was to be heard, the law students courageously withdrew their invitation, stating that they had come



Steve Behal/U of T Bulletin

Symbolically gagged students sit outside debate between Babb and U. of T. professor William Graham.

to realize that even debating Babb would give apartheid more credibility than it deserved, and that an official representative of the South African regime would not be able to make a worthwhile contribution to a debate. We did not abandon our application for an injunction since there was still Connell's outstanding invitation. The Judge ruled, however, that he could consider an interim injunction when we knew a specific date for the invitation.

Several law students formed another student group, with the express purpose of reinviting Babb. President Connell reaffirmed the outstanding invitation, but still did not mention a date.

On January 28, there was a press conference to announce that Babb would be speaking on campus in the afternoon of January 31. The short time interval between the announcement and the event was calculated to make it difficult for those opposed to Babb's speaking.

On January 29, Charles Roach, the lawyer for "the four professors", managed to get a court hearing. He presented the argument that Babb's

speaking would violate international and Canadian law. He also argued that his speech would violate the professors' (three of whom are black) rights to equality under the Charter of Rights, and would constitute racial harassment in the workplace. In addition, Roach maintained that the professors' worldwide reputations would be damaged by being associated with a university that was seen to be collaborating with apartheid. The lawyer hired by the University Administration countered some of these arguments, but he did not deny that Babb was a criminal under international and Canadian law and that his speaking would be a criminal act.

The judge reserved his decision to the next morning, at which time he refused to grant the injunction. He did not question our allegations that Babb's speaking would be a criminal act, but he found that the professors "had no standing" to bring such an action. He also ruled against us on several other grounds, the most surprising of which was his holding that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms does not

apply to the University of Toronto, and that even if it did apply he would still find that Babb's right to speak would take preference over the right of professors to equality before the law.

I had not expected the injunction to be granted, but I had hoped that our applying for it would help to increase people's understanding of the criminal nature of apartheid and help to build the divestment movement, in addition to providing visible opposition to Babb's appearance. In my view, the application did make such contributions and was therefore worthwhile.

There was very heavy security on the afternoon of January 31. The "debate" was to be held in a small, fully-enclosed room called the "moot court". Tickets were given out to the law students group which invited Babb and to the Hart House debates committee (which co-sponsored the event); the few remaining tickets were given to law students.

A spirited demonstration of three to four hundred people gathered outside the law school. Shortly after the "debate" began, the demonstrators moved to the police barricades closest to the moot court, and began shouting things like "Free Mandela, Jail Babb".

Suddenly several mounted policemen appeared. A minute later two of the mounted policemen rode into the startled crowd. They moved slowly and nobody was injured, but those large horses are very frightening. Many people found it shocking that a university president who had talked so much about free speech for an international criminal would interfere with the rights of peacefully demonstrating students and faculty by allowing mounted police on campus. (There were never any mounted police on the U. of T. campus before, even during the much larger and much more militant demonstrations of the sixties and seventies.)

(continued on page 28)

# The U.S. Scene:

## Shell Pickets & Savimbi Visit

BY JAMES CASON AND  
MICHAEL FLESHMAN

One year after they began, the daily demonstrations at the South African embassy in Washington ended last November with an emotional rally and a "Day of Recommitment". Demonstrations at the embassy and other sites around the country, which played a major role last year in transforming the debate on South Africa in this country, will continue at irregular intervals, but the daily protests have ended and the movement is moving on to devote its energy to other tactics.

The first major new campaign was launched January 9 when the Free South Africa Movement's (FSAM's) Randall Robinson joined United Mine Worker President Richard Trumka in announcing a national campaign against Royal Dutch Shell's investments in South Africa. The initial press conference was also attended by UAW head Owen Bieber, who spoke for the AFL-CIO, AFSCME President Gerald McEntree and a string of other prominent labour leaders. According to the organizers, the campaign will include pickets at local Shell gas stations, calls for consumers to return credit cards and demands for divestment of Shell stock. For the first time in U.S. history, it appears that major American unions have pledged substantial resources to an anti-apartheid campaign, including full-time organizers and resources to create local boycott committees in key cities.

But aside from a sit-in at Shell's downtown Washington offices, as of early February local boycott committees were still being put together and a longer term assessment of this new effort will have to wait until the next issue of *Southern African REPORT*.

For the first part of 1986, in fact, much of the anti-apartheid movement was focused on UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi's ten day tour of the east coast. Boosted by a well-connected Washington lobbying firm, on a \$600,000 a year retainer from UNITA, Savimbi has positioned himself to become the linchpin of a major right-wing counterattack against the anti-apartheid movement. Hailed as a conservative "freedom fighter" by some and mentioned as possible U.S. presidential candidate by others, Savimbi has become the early favorite for right wing point man on foreign policy issues in 1986.

In his well-publicized visit to the U.S. in early February, the UNITA leader buttressed this position by meeting with Secretary of State

George Shultz, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and a string of other high level government officials from the National Security Council, the CIA and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And after a half-hour White House meeting with President Reagan, Savimbi declared himself "satisfied" with U.S. support and the President told reporters "We want to be very helpful [to Savimbi's cause]."

Throughout the visit to the U.S. Savimbi was accorded treatment usually reserved for visiting heads of state: at the State Department he was first greeted at the diplomatic entrance by the chief of protocol, then whisked up to Secretary Shultz's seventh floor office and finally invited to address an audience of State Department employees.



Savimbi & Pik Botha in South Africa, Sept. 1984.

Resister

Other stops on the tour included appearances at the Heritage Foundation and American Enterprise Institute and meetings with influential members of Congress. The South African backed rebel leader also made appearances on Nightline and the McNeil-Lehrer newshour and was interviewed by just about every major east coast newspaper. One particularly troubling interview for the anti-apartheid movement, was a two hour stint with the publishers of *Jet* and *Ebony*, two mass market black magazines with circulation totaling almost two million.

But not everyone welcomed the rebel leader. AFL-CIO leader Lane Kirkland was forced to cancel a dinner with Savimbi after heavy protest from labour activists, and the Congressional Black Caucus flat out refused to meet with him. Demonstrators in Washington, New York and Boston protested the visit and even in his press appearances Savimbi was badgered with questions about his South Africa support and his intentions to harm Americans by blowing up Chevron/Gulf's oil facilities at Cabinda in northern Angola.

In the last few months, in fact, several strong statements against a U.S.-UNITA alliance have come from church leaders, academics, civil rights activists and anti-apartheid forces. One hundred one members of Congress signed a letter last November opposing aid and more recently over five hundred academics came out against administration plans to back the rebel movement.

On the other side of the issue, however, one hundred nine members of Congress have already lined up in support of aid to Savimbi and they appear to have gained ground in recent weeks. Just before Savimbi landed in Washington, conservatives forced a reluctant State Department to publically declare that the Chevron Oil Company's presence in Angola was not helping U.S. negotiators and that the company "should be thinking



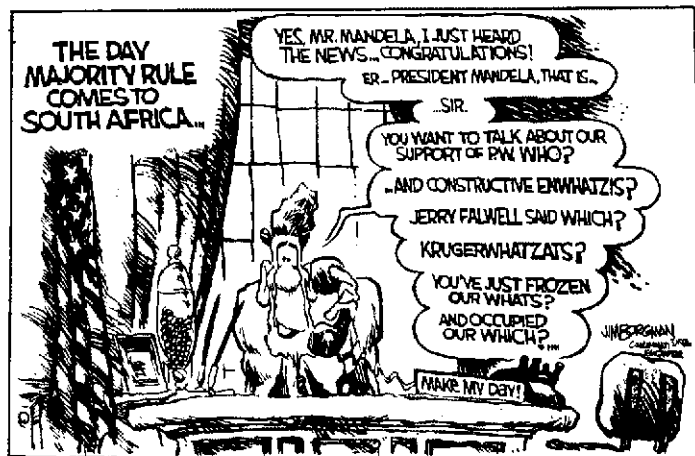
about U.S. national interests as well as their own corporate interests as they make their decisions about" whether to continue their \$2 billion a year oil business in Angola. State's surprising late January turnaround appears largely a reaction to a right wing campaign against Chevron/Gulf's "traitorous" operations in Angola.

More ominously, according to most reports Savimbi left Washington in early February with assurances that at least one new shipment of \$15 million worth of lethal aid would be speeding to him within two weeks.

Unlike South Africa, where U.S. progressives have seized the political initiative with campaigns such as the Free South Africa Movement and divestment, aid to Savimbi has

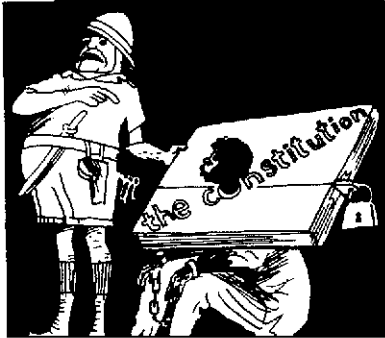
failed to ignite broad opposition. This is partly a function of history - in the early 1970s substantial sectors of the U.S. left supported Savimbi - and partly because Congressional and other liberals fear charges that they are "soft on communism".

Much of the success for last year's massive public mobilization against apartheid belongs to the FSAM's skillfull use of the media. And the key to ending U.S. aggression against Angola will undoubtedly be the anti-apartheid movement's ability to link Savimbi to his sponsors in Pretoria. So far, however, progressives have demonstrated neither the unity, nor the clarity that effort requires. In the public relations battle for American hearts and minds, Savimbi and the right are clearly ahead.



JIM BORGMAN/CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

# South African Notebook



Asia & Africa Today

## Talks?

A recent communication to *Southern Africa REPORT* from Yusef Saloojee, official representative in Canada of the African National Congress of South Africa, makes the following point: "There have already been insinuations and suggestions of 'talks' between the ANC and the Botha government. The ANC position on this matter has been made crystal clear: the ANC does not reject the principle of negotiations; however, any negotiations must be about the mechanics of the transfer of power to the people as a whole and on the basis of the Freedom Charter. Negotiations would have to be preceded by 'talks'. The preconditions of any such 'talks' have been clearly spelled out by the ANC:

- the release of Nelson Mandela and his colleagues as well as all political prisoners and detainees;
- the removal of the police and the army from the black townships;
- the lifting of the State of Emergency;
- the unbanning of the ANC.

In any event, neither 'talks' nor negotiations would be held in secret nor without the consultation and approval of the democratic forces within the country." In the meantime, Saloojee affirms, "a heightened and sustained mass political and armed confrontation ... is on

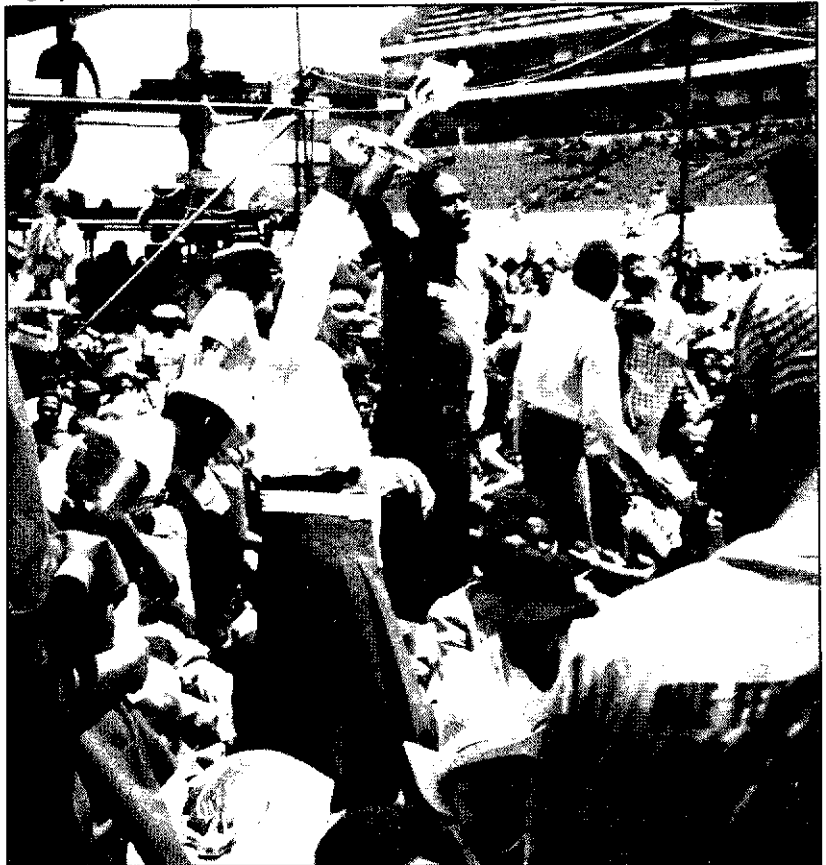
the agenda of the democratic forces in South Africa for 1986. It will be, in the words of ANC President Oliver Tambo, a year of 'attack, advance, give the enemy no quarter'."

## COSATU Speaks Out

The formation of the new Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), bringing together in one trade union central 33 pre-existing unions and over 500,000 workers, is a development of major importance. A chief priority will be strengthening the trade union movement for industrial action. Union activity, particularly in a period of retrenchment, is still highly vulnerable, as the National

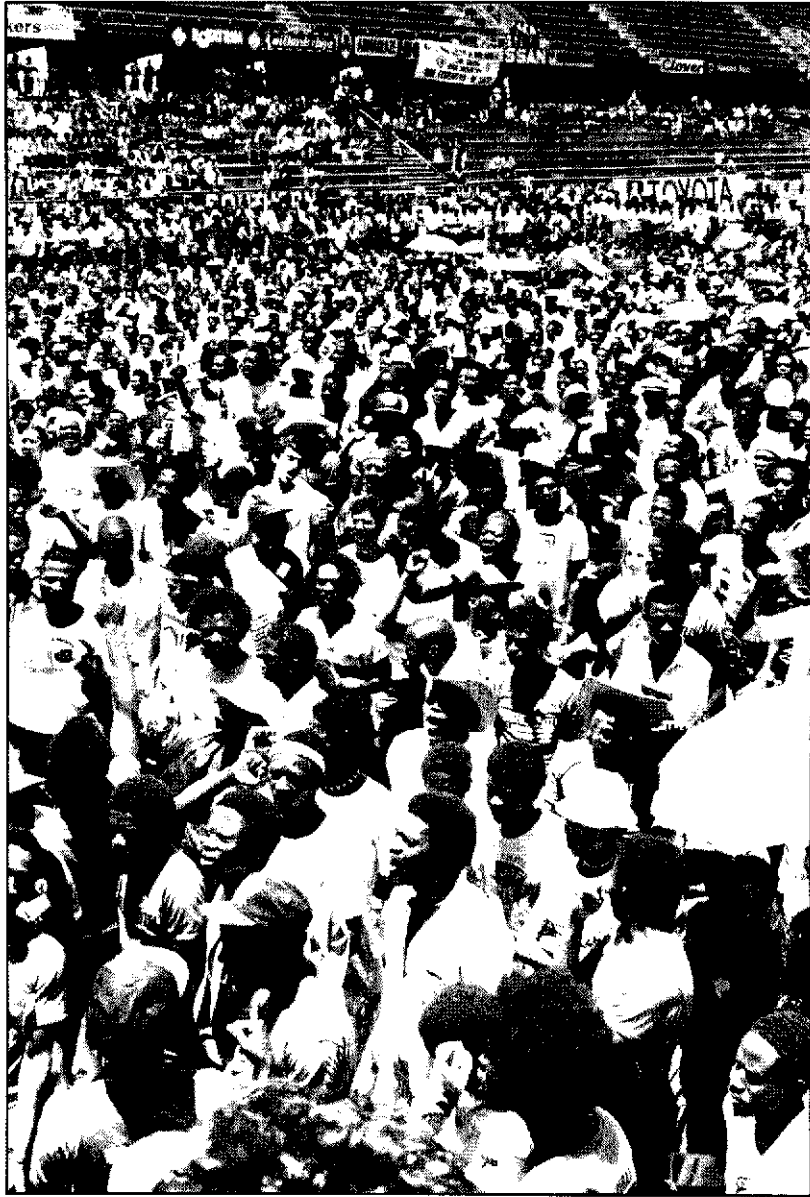
Union of Mineworkers, in particular, has found out; there are also vast numbers of non-unionized workers to organize and links with the unemployed to be forged. More immediately, a primary task of the new union is to restructure itself internally better to do battle with capital on a day-to-day basis. For example, "general unions" which have joined are now reorganizing along industrial lines.

The trade union movement has also become more overtly politicized in recent years, participating actively in stay-aways, consumer boycotts and the like; the first indications of what COSATU's political role is likely to be suggest a further positive development of



Cosatu founding rally - December 1985

Margie Bruun-Meyer



Margie Bruun-Meyer

Cosatu founding rally - December 1985

that tendency. Thus Chris Dlamini, COSATU's first vice-president, led off the unions inaugural rally at King's Park Stadium in Natal on December 1 (see photo) by announcing that "time has run out for employers and their collaborators". Indeed, he added, "the unity gained through the formation of COSATU has foiled the rulers' divide-and-rule strategy". Then it was the turn

of Elijah Barayi, new president of COSATU, to speak and he immediately called for the resignation of P. W. Botha and all homeland leaders. Barayi also delivered a quite specific ultimatum to Botha: abolish influx controls within six months or COSATU would take (unspecified) action. There were other pronouncements: support for disinvestment now and for nationalization of

the mines and other large industries in the future; for equal pay for equal work, especially for black women; for immediate lifting of the state of emergency and the withdrawal of the troops from the townships.

It remained to be seen how these and other demands would be followed up, but it was hard to avoid the impression that another important step had here been taken towards the consolidation of a distinctive "working-class politics" in South Africa. This impression was given even greater force a few days later when Jay Naidoo, COSATU's new general secretary, met with the African National Congress in Zimbabwe. In that meeting, he later reported,

*"I told the ANC and SACTU delegation we did not want superficial changes, or black bosses to replace white bosses, while the repressive machinery of State and capital remained intact. I expressed very clearly to them our commitment to see a society which was free of apartheid, but also free of the exploitative, degrading and brutalizing system under which black workers suffered. This meant a restructuring of society so that the wealth of the country would be shared among the people."*

In short, "COSATU was looking at alternatives which would ensure that any society that emerged would accurately reflect the interests of the working-class". Of course, there is no reason to think that Naidoo spoke to deaf ears when he made these kinds of points during his Harare meeting with the liberation movement. But his comment does suggest one kind of answer to the important letter from Chris Leo published elsewhere in this issue: it is not radicals outside South Africa who are front and centre raising the question of a possible socialist future for South Africa, but those engaged directly in the struggle inside the country itself. It behooves us to take their preoccupations seriously.





Margie Bruun-Meyer

*National Union of Textile Workers arrive at COSATU rally - December 1985.*

### **Buthelezi: The Immoderate "Moderate"**

No doubt we will soon have another visit to Canada by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, headman of the Kwazulu bantustan. It will be funded by the South Africa Foundation or some other such worthy body, all in the aid of presenting Buthelezi as a "moderate" black who opposes economic sanctions against South Africa. Of course, "moderate" is a word designed to magnify Buthelezi's appeal in North America and since words have meanings, or at least resonances, in people's minds we should scan this one closely. It is not the way Buthelezi is viewed at home, certainly. How could it apply to the lone reasonably visible black political figure who opposes any talk of sanctions against South Africa; his is an immoderate, wildly conservative position surely. (Incidentally, the fact that Buthelezi forms a minority of one on the sanctions question didn't stop the *Toronto Star* from headlining their reprint of one of his diatribes on the subject: "South African blacks (*sic*) reject disinvestment as a strategy"!)

But there is much more to Buthelezi's immoderation than that. There is also the singularly brutal role he plays in Natal politics itself. It is an open secret that Buthelezi has built his power base in Kwazulu at least as much by force and intimidation as by charisma and tribalist rhetoric. This is especially true in the most rural areas of Kwazulu where the combination of isolation and of chiefly power structures have hung heavily over local communities. But the menace of the strategy of intimidation implemented by Inkatha (Buthelezi's political movement) has always spread more widely than that. Amongst the ugliest of numerous relevant incidents was the 1983 assault on the Ngoye campus of the University of Zululand where Inkatha thugs killed, beat and raped dozens of students for the "disrespect" they had shown towards Buthelezi. But like so many other frightening facts about Buthelezi this event was little publicized abroad.

It is true that Buthelezi is just ambitious and independent enough to be an occasional embarrassment

to the South African government which employs him. Yet that government has found that, given a long leash, Buthelezi serves their basic game plan of divide and rule very well indeed. He is an outspoken foe of both the ANC and the UDF and recent months have found his *impis* (squads of bully boys) and youth corps - working with tacit police support - acting as a physical hammer against the UDF and against community activists in Natal (while also exacerbating tensions between Africans and Indians there). The details are truly horrific and many of them can be found in a useful information dossier compiled by the Community Resource and Information Centre (Freeway House, 9 De Korte Street, Braamfontein 2017, South Africa) and entitled *Inkatha: Black Liberation or National Reaction?* Also illuminating was a picture story which appeared last year in Durban's *City Press* under the accurate title: "Here's the proof: Top Inkatha men are leading the notorious *impis* in their terror campaigns in Durban"; their long-range cameras caught some of Buthelezi's trusted lieutenants in the act of or-

ganizing "impis" about to go on the rampage against UDF members.

Never quite the "spokesman for the six million Zulu" that many newspapers in Canada and elsewhere have sometimes claimed him to be, Buthelezi's recent excesses in attempting to savage the growing mass resistance movement have reduced his popularity even further. As the CRIC dossier mentioned above concludes:

*"An opinion survey conducted by the Institute of Black Research showed that most Africans blamed Inkatha for the recent unrest in Durban. It was found that Inkatha and the police were seen as starting the trouble and being the most active in it thereafter. The survey reflected a considerable loss of support for Chief Buthelezi - a finding that was supported in other recent surveys ..."* The survey figures were also presented in the *Weekly Mail* (October, 1985) under the headline "Buthelezi hasn't got majority urban Zulu support, shows poll". Thus even among Zulu in urban Kwazulu-Natal the non-tribalist tandem of ANC-UDF-Bishop Tutu outpointed Buthelezi and he had an even smaller minority of Zulus supporting him elsewhere in the country. Strange that North American newspaper editors seem far more enamoured with "tribal politics" than South African Africans appear to be.

### Creating Disorder

Newspaper coverage falls short on other fronts as well. Witness Michael Valpy in a recent issue of Toronto's *Globe and Mail* playing into the hands of apartheid propagandists by caricaturing the energy and anger that is being expressed in South Africa townships as, more or less, anarchical mob action. In fact, the most impressive thing about the township opposition has been the degree of self-organization and political creativity manifested by Africans. As a re-

cent pamphlet from the Catholic Institute for International relations (*South Africa in the 1980s: Update No. 3*, available from CIIR, 22 Coleman Fields, London N1 7AF, England) correctly insists, the so-called "disorder" in South Africa is, in reality, "a mass movement". To the CIIR much of the so-called "black-on-black" violence of which we read so much in the press makes perfect sense as well:

*"South African blacks are proving that they cannot be governed as a people colonized from the white enclave, either by black collaborators, or by the naked violence of security forces and riot police. They reject the garrison state ... Most significantly, they have identified the new black local authorities, the community councillors, as the key to the state's attempt to control the townships and co-opt blacks. Community councillors have been dealt with mercilessly, killed and their houses burnt. Almost 200 have resigned; only 3 of 34 councils set up in 1983 still function. Black resistance has thus struck hard at the lynch-pin of state strategy towards urban blacks."*

Equally important, it must be emphasized that it has been precisely the South African government which has set itself the task of creating among the forces of opposition as much as possible of that very "anarchy" that they falsely claim pre-existed their intervention. Egging on the Buthelezis is, as noted above, one method, but even more prevalent has been the tactic of physically eliminating - by arrest or murder - as many as possible of the leaders who do emerge to give focus to the energy and anger of the townships. That this has not been more successful is, in itself, testimony to the strength and maturity of the forces ranged against the government. But the effort continues. Thus, as Trevor Manuel of the UDF's National Executive noted at one point last year (1985), "two years and one month after its inception, the UDF finds itself bearing

the full brunt of the government's onslaught. Two thirds of our national and regional executive members are out of action through death, detention or trial. At least 2000 rank and file members of the UDF are in detention."

Moreover, this grisly national pattern could be concretized with examples drawn from virtually every South African black community - though perhaps the small town of Cradock in the Eastern Cape can be mentioned as providing a particularly graphic instance. There, Mathew Goniwe - "the dead man who haunts all our futures", in the words of Anton Harber in the *Weekly Mail* - helped lead the Cradock Resident's Association (CRADORA) to mount an impressive, broad-gauged programme of political mobilization. For example, "where else in the Eastern Cape has a Community Council resigned en bloc and found such immediate re-acceptance into the normal life of the township? For it was Mathew Goniwe, the peacemaker, who gave the lead to those around him. Under his guidance, the Youth Group (CRADOYA) accompanied the councillors to their homes where, in full view of the residents, they assisted them in removing the strong mesh window-guards and the high barbed wire fencing which has become standard equipment in black areas for the properties of community and town councillors!"

The result? One night in June, the car driving Goniwe and three of his closest associates was "intercepted" on the road by unknown assailants; "over the next four days, the mutilated and charred bodies of the four men were discovered in isolated spots on the outskirts of the city". Not surprisingly, the UDF, in an official statement at the time regarding Goniwe's murder, felt "forced to conclude that the defenders of apartheid (were) bent on a murderous path to eliminate all popular leaders".

# The Rewriting of South African History

BY MIKE MASON

Before the 1960's Africans were the outcasts of African history. The history of Africa was the narrative of European triumphs - Portuguese discovery, English exploration, French conquest, Christian conversion, colonial administration, capitalist development. Even in the early 60s schoolboys and girls in Nigeria, which had become independent, could tell you about the selflessness of David Livingstone and Albert Schweitzer, the intrepidity of Mungo Park and Heinrich Barth and the ruthlessness of Cecil Rhodes and Herbert Kitchner.

The story of the Africans themselves was normally left to anthropologists whose main interest lay in how African societies functioned. This they learned from personal observation. Thus the societies about which they wrote were seen to exist in a particular moment: if the anthropologist wrote in 1935, then it was the society as it existed in 1935 that he understood. Little account was taken of the fact that in 1935 virtually all African societies were ruled by colonial governments and were to some extent or other affected by the Depression. Most societies were thought of as being "traditional", that is, not really having histories. This conception of Africans (in common with other peoples in the non-European world) as not having history, had become widespread in the nineteenth century.

The history of Africa came to be written only from the late 1950s as Europe's former colonies became independent countries. These countries, or at least the literate mi-

norities in them, needed historical pedigrees in order to repudiate the colonialist claim that it was Europe which put Africa on the historical map. So African historians wrote up a new kind of history, one emphasizing African initiative and the African voice. Since colonialism was terminated in the northern half of Africa first, it was in countries like Nigeria and Ghana in West Africa and Uganda and Tanzania in East Africa that the new histories were written.

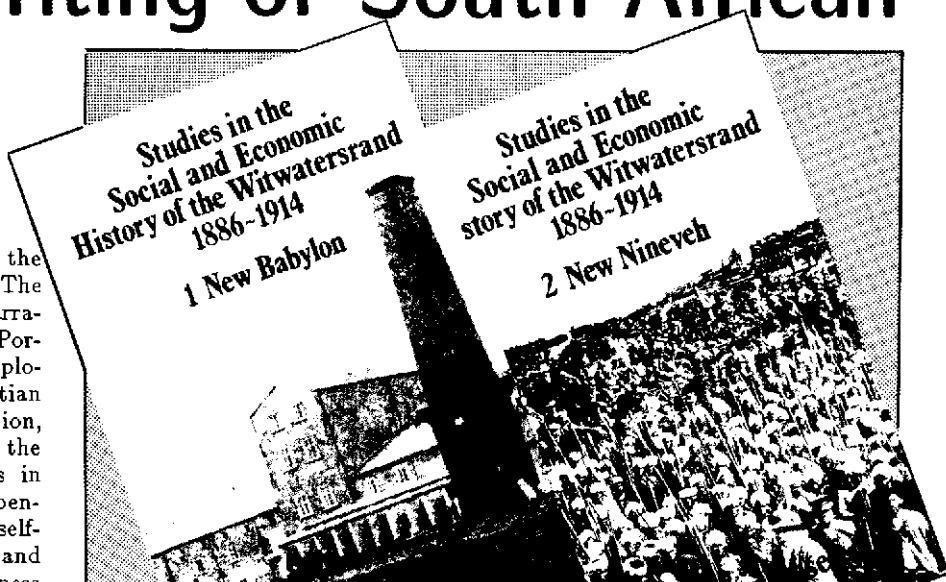
As late as 1972 the relative backwardness of South African history could still be pointed to. For, there, it was white initiative and the white voice which was still of supreme importance. If we characterized the main themes of South African history as being raids, Rhodes and Randlords we would be exaggerating only a little. But all this was to change.

From the late 1960s a trickle of South African students had migrated to England to study. While a couple of these were political exiles, most were not. Virtually all were young, white, anglophone males. They had been attracted to England

not merely because of linguistic and sentimental ties but because historical studies there had been profoundly transformed by the radical currents of the 1960s. Most visibly, English historical thought had become infused with new ideas "from below". Besides these historical ideas, students of South African history were influenced by ideas from anthropology, political economy and sociology.

At first the output of migrants was limited to essays, generally read only by other experts in the field of South African studies. Then in the mid 1970s, the first major books appeared, and these drew attention both from students writing about other parts of Africa as well as writers interested in subjects like slavery in the Americas.

Probably the most important thing these studies showed was the uniqueness of capitalist development in South Africa in general and of apartheid in particular. Racist society in South Africa was not, as the earlier liberal historians had tended to assert, either a stage to be passed through, nor an unintentional side effect. In its mod-





Studies in the Social & Economic History

Hatherley Distillery Ltd., 1892 - from *Randlords & Rotgut*.

ern form, it was the planned consequence of the strategies of mining and financial entrepreneurs who, from the late nineteenth century, when diamonds and gold were discovered, sought to exploit African labour for the greatest possible profit. Thus everything which characterizes apartheid today was tailor-made in relatively recent times in order to drive labour costs down and keep profits up. And to this end practically everything else was subordinated - from agricultural policy to moral legislation.

How can we explain the late blooming of this new, "revisionist" school of African history? That is, why did it happen when it did and not before, or after, and why did it take up certain questions and not others? It is almost impossible to come up with a simple, definitive answer to this question but some things are obvious. For some South African liberals and progressives the massacre at Sharpeville (1960) and the subsequent repression of any visible form of opposition to the apartheid regime may have served as conclusive proof that Progress and systematized racial oppression were quite compatible. (By contrast, the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century is usually considered a proof that it was incompatible with modern capital-

ism.) The question was thus raised as to the historical relationship between the two. Then there was the difficult question of the future of a white regime in a continent swept by the winds of anti-colonialism and increasingly ruled by black governments, most of which were hostile to white majority rule. Finally, there was the rebirth of black working class and student protest in the 1970s, capped by the Soweto insurgency of 1977. Thus, from the sixties to the eighties, we can see several generations of South African historians, each being influenced by and responding to different circumstances both within South Africa and without.

History makes men and women as much as they make history. In the 1970s, despite the militancy of the black working class and the rise of popular protest, the South African state was not really in danger. So historians, as well as writers in adjacent fields like political science, tended to stress how social and political control functioned. They were less interested in its weaknesses, or in the subterranean survival of resistance. But now, with the South Africa state seeming quite vulnerable, historians are looking at how forms of resistance have been sustained and how the objects of history have become its makers.

Three books from the early 1980s may be recommended as representing the achievements of the revisionist school up to the eve of the present insurgency: Charles van Onselen's two volume *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914* (1982), and the single volume edited by Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone, *Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, Culture and Consciousness, 1870-1930* (1982). Van Onselen's volumes contain some of the most remarkable essays in social history published anywhere in the last decade. I have found three particularly fascinating: "Randlords and Rotgut" about the production of alcohol and its use as a means of social control over African miners, "Prostitutes and Proletarians, 1886-1914", which deals with the complicated positions of white women within the leisure economy and "The Regiment of the Hills" about bandits.

*Industrialization and Social Change* which has contributions by a couple of dozen authors provides an excellent sampler of the new history. The first part of the book deals especially with labour migration and sharecropping while the second, which I found most interesting, deals with cultural questions. Three essays in particular fascinated me: Tim Couzens' on "moralizing leisure time", Debbie Gaitskell's on "mothers, daughters and purity" and Philip Bonner's on the "black petty bourgeoisie of the Rand".

Since excellent reviews of these books have already been published, no more needs to be said about them. Interested readers might like to have a look at John Iliffe's comments on all three in the *Journal of African History*, 25, 1984, pp. 115-117, Leroy Vail on Marks and Rathbone in the *Journal of South African Studies*, 10, 2, April, 1984, pp. 290-295, and Rob Turrell's more abrasive remarks on van Onselen in *Africa*, 54, 1984, pp. 87-89.

# Part of My Soul

Winnie Mandela's dignity, commitment and courage are legend. Banned, harassed and imprisoned throughout her adult life she thwarts apartheid's brutal attempts to silence her. Defiant, confrontational, above all angry – this is Winnie Mandela. Compassionate, loving, tender, humourous – this too is Winnie Mandela. Taped interviews with Winnie, her friends and comrades, and letters between Winnie and Nelson have been edited by Anne Benjamin in *Part of My Soul* to afford readers a unique glimpse into some of the most intimate of Winnie's – and Nelson's – life.

How does she do it? As surely as do the love of her people and her commitment to the struggle sustain her, so too does her anger. Forcibly separated from her husband months after their marriage, imprisoned when expecting their first child, banned to the meanest backwater of Afrikanerdom, Winnie still triumphs. Her anger is born of her sense of justice, justice violated and mocked by the apartheid state; anger as passionate today against police attempts to arrest her for violation of her banning order as over twenty years ago when she kicked a member of the Security Branch harassing her the day Nelson was sentenced to life imprisonment.

How can she keep going? From the first moving tribute by Bishop Manas Buthelezi other voices join to provide us understanding.

*She is a window through which even the most uninitiated eye is introduced to the obscure twilight existence of the banned and detained. Through her the invisible were made visible.*

At times the recollections, the excerpts from letters between Winnie and Nelson are almost deceptive, so understated, so accepted somehow are their courage and resolve.



Winnie Mandela

International Mobilisation

To read *Part of My Soul* is to read South Africa itself. The historical moments are all here, told simply by many of the figures who made them. Especially powerful are the descriptions by and of Nelson Mandela seen as husband, father and leader of his people in his most intimate moments as well as when meeting the State head on. Winnie's recounting of her life of banishment in Brandfort and the details of visiting Nelson first on Robben Island and then in Pollsmoor Prison are among the book's highlights. Especially important at the present time is her "The Chapter of Dia-

logue is Finally Closed", where she discusses the current situation in South Africa, eloquently addressing the poverty of Botha's "reforms" and the role of multinationals in the oppression of the black population.

This is a book for those familiar, to some degree, with South African history. While the historical events are here, the focus is on the small, human moments of those who made the history. Readers looking for a feminist analysis of Winnie's development from a traditional young woman to the powerful woman she is today will be disappointed. She provides few details although the women to whom she attributes her development read like a litany of South Africa's heroic women – Helen Joseph, Hilda Bernstein, Ruth First, Albertina Sisulu, Florence Matomela, Frances Baard, Kate Molale, Ruth Mompati, Lilian Ngoyi – Winnie's mentors, comrades, sisters in struggle.

Beyond the individual insights *Part of My Soul* contributes to our understanding and appreciation of the struggle of all South Africa's black people. Apartheid's devastation of the family, its indecent rending of human relationships – it's all here, but especially here is the triumph of the individual, the wife and husband, the children, the people against apartheid.

The final irony *Part of My Soul* makes so clear is that the very restrictions apartheid imposed to silence Winnie Mandela give voice to the reality of her existence; the power of her resistance shouts through the forced silence not just for her but for all people.

*I have ceased a long time ago to exist as an individual. The ideals, the political goals that I stand for, those are the ideals and goals of the people in this country. . . . When they send me into exile, it's not me as an individual they are sending. They think that with me they can also ban the political ideas. But that is a historical impossibility.*

# Women in the Bata-stan

(continued from page 13)

until the union came. The workers had to pay for the medical expenses and the transportation to the doctor. The nurse who worked in the clinic described the use of *depo-provera* and the *Pill*:

*"Women are not forced, it's voluntary. But they (the company) can't afford to have women getting pregnant. Women usually hide their pregnancies as long as possible. They report late when they are about to deliver, because they want to keep on working."*

Because the factory is within Kwazulu, the Bata workers are not covered by South African legisla-

tion which enables unions to force employer recognition where there is majority membership. Several union members have been dismissed for their activities.

*"The company continues to avoid the union at all costs. We were dismissed after a meeting with management. We told them why we joined the union. We were told that our jobs had become redundant. The company announced that they were retrenching. The company has warned employees not to talk about the union."*

Bata is closing some of its plants in urban areas, retrenching the workers, and moving to 'decentralized areas' in the bantustans.

They are paid generous incentives to move, under the guise of providing desperately needed jobs for the people in Kwazulu. Another advantage for the multinationals is the anti-union legislation allowing them to refuse to recognize the union.

*"We are praying that the struggle for union recognition is a success. We are putting our hope in our union and the Canadian unions and all people interested in our struggle. We could lose our jobs tomorrow if the company finds out that we have talked to you. We are worried about losing our jobs. Bata is planning to take the jobs to another bantustan factory. The wages are bad there too. There is no union."*



## Dalhousie

(continued from page 15)

similar efforts being made in universities across the country. The joint committee will also examine ways to encourage educational activities about apartheid and for its victims. Both it and the student coalition draw support from on-going anti-apartheid groups on-campus (African Students' Association) and off-campus (Metro Anti-Apartheid Coalition).

## U of T and South Africa

(continued from page 18)

The presence of the horses angered the crowd. They marched to the other side of the building. There were no police barricades on this side, and many protestors got right up against the walls of the moot court. Their chanting was very audible inside.

The "debate" was predictable. Babb said that a lot of what we've heard is "communist propaganda", that his government is reforming and that progress will best be made "without outside interference".

The law students had been warned that they would be expelled if they disrupted Babb. Nonetheless, half a dozen found an effective way of protesting: They dressed in hoods and sheets like Ku Klux Klan members, and stood applauding Babb each time he paused. Some sixty others sat silently in the halls so that those attending the "debate" had to step over them.

Babb is off the U. of T. campus, hopefully for good. Many people feel that it is important

to press the Canadian government to break diplomatic relations with South Africa and throw Babb out of Canada. If they are not willing to do that, the government could at least require Babb to stay in Ottawa and refrain from public speaking - other non-residents (who are not international outlaws) are similarly restricted.

The struggle over Babb's appearance has resurrected the question of divestment, and many people are trying to force the Governing Council to reopen it.

I find it very sad that a number of people at the University of Toronto feel that the "right" that an international criminal has to "free speech" should prevail over the right of black people on campus and in the community to be free of racial harassment. The debate about this will continue, heightened by a "policy against racism" that independent members of the Governing Council are expected to propose in March, 1986.

**Our Readers Write**

In the letter which follows, Chris Leo raises a fundamental issue, one which touches not only on the work of Southern Africa REPORT but that of other anti-apartheid activists as well. Leo may caricature Southern Africa REPORT's position just a bit, but we're not inclined to agree with his position in any case. Worth debating, however, and we would welcome the thoughts of readers on this and other matters linked to our mutual endeavors.

... I don't think I agree with the way you [at Southern Africa REPORT] are deploying your resources. In my view, the immediate priority vis à vis South Africa is to get rid of the regime. The main reasons for the regime's present difficulties, as I see it, are a combination of international pressure against apartheid and the extraordinary tenacity and courage of black resistance within

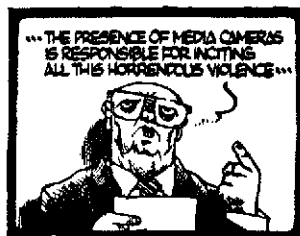
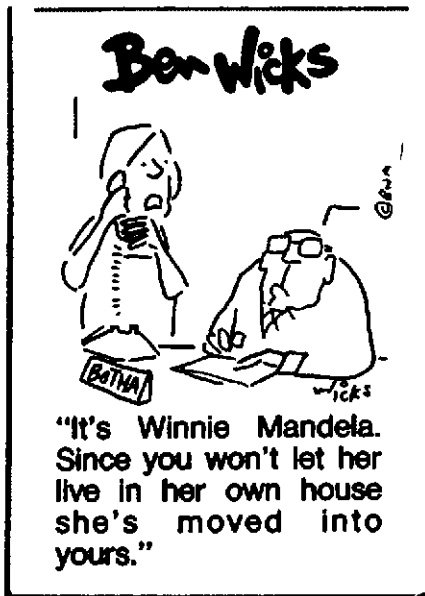
South Africa. The international side of the equation grows out of an attack on apartheid based on liberal ideology. That works because it appeals to the vast majority of people in capitalist countries and because the South African system is transparently vulnerable to it. The attack has been very effective and has, in only a couple of years, substantially changed the climate of opinion - in Canada at least - about South Africa.

What's needed now, in my view, is to intensify that kind of attack and to put on pressure for more and more effective boycotting and economic sanctions. That's what's going to bring the regime down if anything does. There is, of course, also a radical critique to be made of South African society, and of all other capitalist and so-called socialist societies - and I'm committed to carrying that critique forward - but

I don't think this is the time to be putting energy into it where Southern Africa is concerned. There, the priority has to be an end to the obnoxiousness of apartheid, which is an offense to anyone with a bit of humanity left, whether they be believers in capitalism or socialists. If a radical critique of South Africa has any effect at all in Canada today, it will be to undermine the liberal assault on apartheid by lending credence to the propaganda about alleged soviet domination of the ANC and other black political groups.

That's my opinion anyway. Whether we can agree or not, I think there's always something to be learned by discussing these issues.

Christopher Leo  
Department of Political Science  
University of Winnipeg  
12 December 1985



# South African Women on the Move

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