

# Southern Africa REPORT

Vol. 5 No. 5

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May 1990

## South Africa Now

### DE KLERK:

On the Defensive?

### THE MOVEMENT REGROUPS

### NEGOTIATIONS:

Dress Rehearsal in the Townships

### TRANSKEI:

Battling the Bantustans

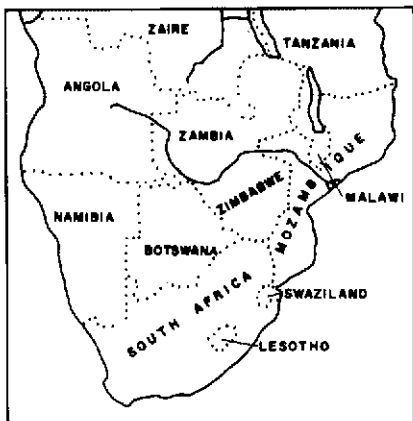


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## Southern Africa REPORT

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## New Terrain

Things have changed in South Africa. Not as dramatically as a Margaret Thatcher would have us believe, but there is change nonetheless. In our lead article we explain why such change has occurred, placing central, although not exclusive, emphasis on the rejuvenation, in the very teeth of the state-imposed Emergency, of mass political resistance inside South Africa itself. There is cause for celebration in this victory of the South African people even if the struggle for a liberated and democratized South Africa is still far from being over.

Far from being over? Unfortunately, De Klerk and his colleagues are no mere passive participants in the drama now unfolding. More than P. W. Botha found it possible to do, they have sensed the stalemate (see *SAR*, May, 1988) created by the National Party's repressive

checkmating of the near-insurrection of 1984-86 to be unviable - fragile politically, formidably expensive, and, ultimately, unconvincing to potential investors and other concerned parties abroad. In consequence, they have moved to open up the political process to new possibilities - unbanning the popular movements, releasing Nelson Mandela, shaking up the kaleidoscope of white politics - even as they seek to control and guide that process in ways close to their hearts' desires.

As our article also shows, his recent initiatives represent, to some extent, a leap in the dark for De Klerk. Indeed, he seems uncertain as to just what mix of racial privilege and capitalist economic structure he can and will defend, as he seeks both to keep politically one jump ahead of the white right-wing on the one hand and to contain and to qual-

ify the revolutionary potential implicit in an untrammelled expression of black opinion on the other. Yet if the rules of this game are new and somewhat unclear, it remains a game De Klerk intends to win. He may have moved rather boldly to subordinate the security arm of the state more firmly to his own purposes, but he is very far from yielding up the most primitive instruments of his control over the political process (the State of Emergency regulations themselves, for example). More subtly, De Klerk hopes to adapt the divide and rule tactics that have always been a part of apartheid's grand design to the end of weakening the bargaining clout of the democratic political movement - the better to shape not only the institutional framework within which any future "negotiations" may take place, but also the substantive out-

come of those negotiations.

This is somewhat novel terrain for the popular democratic movement, to be sure. Yet, as our second article in this issue suggests, there is something all too familiar in the fact that the onus of history once again falls upon this movement: it must continue to mount sufficient pressure to force the pace of change and it must seize from the South African government as much as possible of the initiative in setting the terms of such change. There is certainly new room for manoeuvre and open mobilization, not merely in the townships and the factories, but also in the bantustans whose populations now find their futures open in new kinds of ways. The challenge facing the ANC and those organizations linked to it most directly under the umbrella of the "Mass Democratic Movement" (the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the United Democratic Front, the South African Youth Congress and the like) is to take full advantage of such new terrain. They must ground themselves, through organization and through exemplary actions, ever more firmly at the base of South African society – even as they pursue, simultaneously, the "high politics" of top-level negotiations.

Not surprisingly, the ANC also sees the creation and maintenance of as broad a front of unity as possible amongst those forces that seek an end to the apartheid system as key to sustaining the struggle effectively in this next round. This will be no easy task. True, *qua* liberation movement the ANC/MDM is well ahead; the consummate opportunism of its sometime rival, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), is well-known, for example, and that movement (and its internal clone, the Pan-Africanist Movement) seems unlikely to provide any too salient an alternative in the near future. More problematic is Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement, whose brutal offensive to protect his turf against the surging

popular movement in Natal explains so much of the so-called "black-on-black" violence that now captures headlines coming out of South Africa. Can the ANC really hope to neutralize Buthelezi? How big would be the price tag – in terms, for example, of conceding the recycling of the bantustans within some new kind of quasi-federal system (a possibility also raised by Jan Theron regarding the case of the Transkei's General Holomisa elsewhere in these pages) – on any attempt to co-opt him? Tough questions, paralleling questions as to what sorts of compromises (federalism? "minority/property rights"? "group rights"?) might come to seem "reasonable" in order further to co-opt white liberals to the ANC cause.

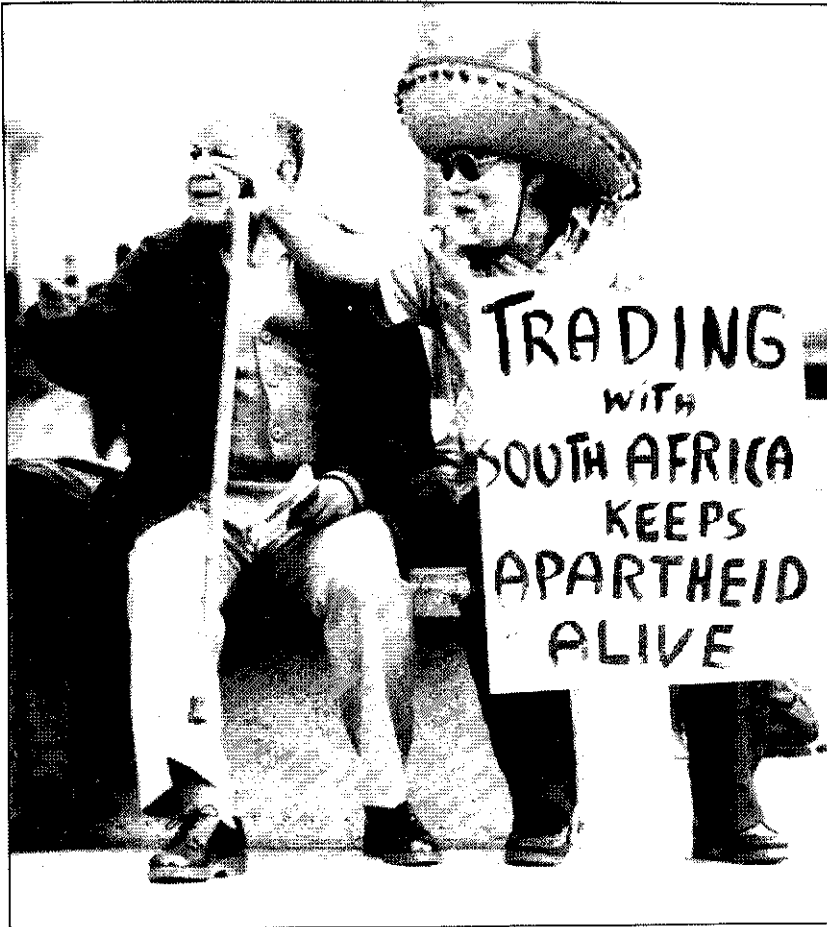
Such costly compromises are unlikely, perhaps, but their mere mention underscores how challenging it will be for the ANC to pursue substantial political unity without allowing its project to collapse towards some lowest common denominator that permits a major qualification of its key premise: "one person, one vote in a united South Africa." There are other challenges, some cast in terms of tactical dilemmas, some in terms of more deep-seated concerns. Thus, tactically speaking, so little of the substance of a new, post-apartheid society is as yet on offer from the De Klerk government that the ANC must not disarm itself prematurely, throwing away instruments of struggle that it may yet need (including the possibility of renewed armed resistance). Yet there will be considerable pressure, particularly internationally – and in all probability, from both East and West – for it to do so.

Then, too, there are those who worry that even if the struggle to create the formal institutions of a non-racial and non-patriarchal democracy is effectively sustained, it may increasingly be advanced at the expense of the struggle to transform (in effect, democratize) South Africa's underlying socio-economic

structure. For South Africa's capitalist system is one characterized by the grossest of inequalities, inequalities that make themselves felt in racial, gender and class terms. Yet the politics of holding together a broad coalition, of neutralizing substantial portions of the white community, of smoothing the international community, is especially likely to encourage a relative downplaying of any substantial effort to confront such realities, is likely to encourage the kind of "pragmatic" postponement of a radical thrust that all too often elsewhere has led to a permanent side-tracking of it altogether. Elements within (and without) the ANC coalition – organizations of women, of workers, of the rural dispossessed – who push to keep the agenda of transformation as broadly defined as possible, will deserve the special support of the world-wide anti-apartheid movement.

Critical support of the ANC/MDM must be the latter's watchword, then: explaining the complexities of the current moment, as seen from the angle of vision of the broad democratic movement in South Africa, to a wider public in our own countries even as we join with that movement to debate the substance of its liberation project. Here in Canada we will certainly have other work to do as well; not least, work that will link us, in our various groups and organizations, both directly to the ANC and also, ever more effectively, to the whole wide range of popular initiatives, large and small, that are being mounted in diverse sectors inside South Africa, initiatives that are part and parcel of that society's effort to rebuild itself from the ground up.

Finally, there will also be work to be done *vis-à-vis* the Canadian government. To be sure, that government has so far moved quite positively with the flow of events in South Africa, refusing the temptation to lift sanctions (at least until



Hartman

Protest outside U.K embassy, Toronto, Canada, March 1990

such a time – not yet reached – as De Klerk’s changes can be deemed to have made the process of democratization “irreversible,” in Joe Clark’s phrase). With the grim contrast of Margaret Thatcher’s own unqualified embrace of De Klerk so quick to mind, only the most churlish seem inclined to remind Clark that the ANC is actually calling for increased sanctions to further force De Klerk’s hand or, in even worse taste, to note that the sanctions Canada ostensibly does already have in place are grossly flawed in their current implementation.

Clark has disarmed us further by his own approach to the ANC. True, initial press reports from his visit to Lusaka, where he met Mandela,

had him, quite gratuitously, calling upon the ANC to “renounce violence.” Subsequent clarification suggested that his intervention on this subject was more a well-intentioned homily than any willing of unilateral disarmament upon the ANC. Indeed, on his return to Canada, Clark actually went on record as urging Canadians in their private capacities to give financial assistance to the ANC, the better to equip it to meet the difficult challenges which now confront that movement – while indicating that the government itself could not “take sides” by doing so itself.

Sceptics might note that this latter qualification marks insufficient change in the government’s long-

standing and highly sceptical approach towards the ANC; others would concede that there is indeed some modification of Clark’s approach but argue that it represents part of a broader western offensive to wean the ANC away from radicalism and any residual tie to (what is left of) Eastern Europe and towards a more “reasonable” and “pragmatic” bargaining posture. Perhaps we in the anti-apartheid movement can ourselves take some credit for having created a climate in Canada that permits/forces a policy on the part of the Mulroney government much better than it might otherwise have been. But the points we make here suggest that we also keep our powder dry and our wits about us in dealing with the Canadian government.

For, as the process of negotiations becomes messier and more complex in the months ahead, we may wonder whether that government will continue unequivocally to back the demand for a political dispensation in South Africa that does not qualify in any substantive way the premise of genuine majority rule? Needless to say, we must have even graver doubts as to whether Mulroney and company will view with sympathy any attempt by a new, democratic South African government-in-the-making to give effective socio-economic substance (read: socialism) to their democratic project. Indeed, such may be the allure of “reasonableness” and “compromise” on both these fronts that we could begin, ourselves, to experience greater difficulty in holding our own anti-apartheid constituency together than we have had in the past (when the juxtapositions of black and white in South Africa have been rather sharper and when the complex and contested questions relating to constitutional specificities and socio-economic options did not so insistently intrude). Still, if recent developments in South Africa make anti-apartheid work more complicated, so be it. They certainly do not make it any less important.

# De Klerk: On the Defensive?

How are we to interpret the recent initiatives taken by F. W. De Klerk? Certainly the apartheid regime has found itself under continuing siege; we can thus find many good reasons to think of De Klerk and his colleagues as acting merely defensively. At the same time, it would be a mistake to conceive the South African state as being, in any very straightforward way, "on the run." While obviously not in complete control of the situation, the De Klerk team is seeking, in fact, to take the offensive, seeking to shape the political terrain in ways favourable to its own purposes.

Not that these purposes are themselves entirely clear, even, perhaps, to De Klerk himself, and this introduces yet another note of complexity into any calculation about the future course events are likely to take. Of one thing we can be certain, however: the De Klerk agenda is very far from being the democratic one that the popular movement inside South Africa – and the anti-apartheid movement abroad – has in mind. Still less is it an agenda that would allow democratic demands in the political sphere to spill over into an effective challenge to the socio-economic inequalities that South Africa's "racial capitalism" has come to epitomize.

## On the defensive?

Before returning to these latter points, however, we must consider the developments that have brought De Klerk even as far as he has come. Most crucial has been the revival of the popular resistance movement – the "Mass Democratic Movement" (MDM), as it has come to be termed – in the very teeth of the repressive governmental "Emergency," in place, nation-wide, since 1986. By 1988, the United Democratic Front (UDF), a key component of the MDM, was in considerable disarray and the central trade union move-

ment, COSATU, was also off balance. Had repression continued to work to stifle opposition the state might have bought the apartheid system a great deal of time, time to rebuild international investor confidence and even to strike some kind of bargain – based on the most minimal of concessions – with compliant blacks.

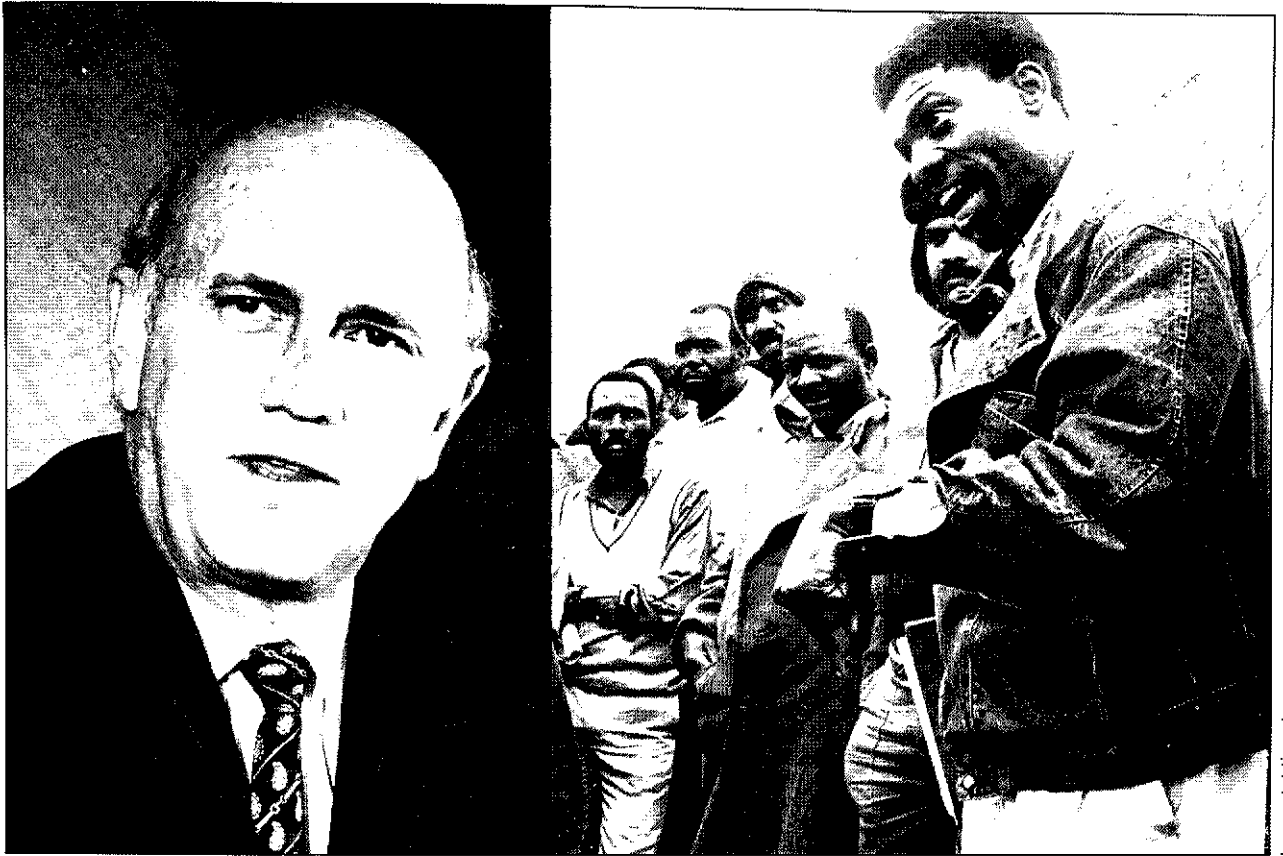
But the revival of mass resistance in 1989 put paid to any such dreams. An important signal that the Emergency's success had been only partial was the dramatic wave of hunger strikes, early in the year, by detainees and political prisoners. And this was followed by a rising tide of political defiance, notably in the health sphere where hundreds of blacks marched on segregated medical facilities demanding service. Defiance, too, marked the actions of many political activists and organizations who brazenly ignored their bans and restrictions and continued to speak out and to act.

The unions, too, fought back hard against the draconian Labour Relations Act; several dramatic strikes were waged successfully (e.g. the SATS strike) while, against the edict of the state, large-scale stay-aways and other political actions were sponsored. Resistance stirred in the homelands too, and even in the townships – which had borne the main brunt of the state crackdown – civic associations and youth organizations regrouped and pressed forward (see, for example, the article on the "Soweto People's Delegation" elsewhere in this issue). Nor did it prove possible to stifle altogether the reality of armed resistance by the ANC, even if the latter remained largely limited to acts of sabotage rather than representing any more sweeping kind of armed challenge to state power; indeed, widely-publicized debates within the ANC as to the relative merits of ze-

roing in on "soft" as distinct from "hard" targets, though resolved in favour of the latter approach, did serve to remind thoughtful white South Africans of the extent of the personal threat that an unresolved situation of crisis might yet hold for them.

Equally importantly, the fact that the resistance movement refused to disappear played back into the international arena in ways detrimental to the cause of South Africa's powers-that-be. Besides giving renewed life to the global sanctions lobby, a visibly unsettled South Africa continued to give pause to international investors on whom that economically troubled country remains vitally dependent for credit and technology. Numerous statements by South African officials attest to the fact that the combination of overt sanctions and international capitalists' own caution had hurt deeply. Meanwhile, the Bush White House, itself under great pressure from Congress to take further sanctions initiatives, began more assertively to press Pretoria to signal new flexibility in its policies. Soon even so close a friend to South Africa as Margaret Thatcher was counselling the need for a different kind of political approach than mere repression in order to "normalize" things in South Africa in some more readily defensible way.

Some such more subtly political approach also recommended itself at a time when those who favoured the hardest of lines in South Africa were themselves on the defensive in political circles. Not only was repression not quite the success that had been promised inside South Africa. In addition, such "securocrats" had suffered a serious military reversal in Angola (at Cuito Cuanavale) and had even tried to mislead civilian politicians at a crucial moment during the transition process in Nami-



Impact Visuals

F. W. DeKlerk / Paper mill workers, Durban, Natal, South Africa, May 1989

bia. Meanwhile, beyond the southern Africa region events also had tilted in a manner that weakened the apartheid regime's old way of playing the international game. On the one hand, South Africa's claim to be a buffer against some kind of global "red menace" could no longer be even half-way credibly invoked in the face of the collapse of the Communist bloc. On the other hand, the international expectation of some kind of democratic outcome in South Africa became even greater in light of changes elsewhere in the world.

### The meaning of democracy

This was new terrain indeed for the De Klerk government, which has now come to adopt policies (the legalization of the ANC and the South African Communist Party, the release of Nelson Mandela) not easily

predicted a few short months ago. A government in retreat? Well ... yes and no. As hinted earlier, these initiatives can also be understood as being far more calculated than that: modest changes made now the better to preempt the possibility of more dramatic ones later on. Much less clear, however, is just what it is that the government feels it is trying to defend.

For there are some in South African ruling circles who come close to arguing that the entire formal structure of legalized racial domination can safely be jettisoned - making it easier (among other things) to defend against any more radical social transformation. Thus Zac de Beer, senior Anglo-American executive and now Democratic Party politico, has been quoted before in *SAR* to the effect that "we dare

not allow the baby of free enterprise to be thrown out with the bath-water of apartheid." A similar sentiment has been echoed by other far-seeing businessmen (like Tony Bloom) and politicians, inside and out of South Africa (Eminent Persons' Group member and former Australian Conservative P.M. Malcolm Fraser is a frank and outspoken case in point). Do away with the anomaly of institutionalized apartheid (they seem to be saying), even up to the point of establishing a legally "colour-blind" liberal democracy. This would put a highly dependent South Africa back on speaking terms with the world economy. And it could also help preempt the possibility of an increasingly frustrated and radicalized popular movement placing some kind of socialism ever more firmly on the South African agenda!

One might also suspect that there are forces within the National Party camp who are able to field sympathetically this kind of argument. After all, the NP is no longer what it was in the 1940s, a party of Afrikaners on the make. Many of the latter have now "made it" and these entrepreneurial and professional strata are tempted to think - like Zac de Beer - more self-consciously in terms of class interests than exclusively in terms of communal and racial interests. Perhaps they now feel that the cause of fully institutionalized racism can be left to the marginalized white farmers of the northern Transvaal and the remnants of the white working-class who cannot so easily rely on their elevated class positions to defend their "white-skin privilege" in future and who therefore make up the main support base for the Conservative Party and the even more fascist political organizations further along the political spectrum.

One must be cautious here. The fact is that all but the most supremely confident of liberal-capitalist voices in South Africa have proven themselves to be nervous, when push comes to shove, about the prospect of actually implementing successfully a pre-emptive "democratization" of South Africa (however elegant such a solution might seem to be in theory). How much more is this likely to be true of the likes of F. W. De Klerk, heretofore best known as a figure solidly of the centre-right within the National Party firmament? If not deaf to the voices of liberal capital (witness, for example, the apparently prominent role in his brains trust of his *verligte* brother, Wimpie, now returned to the Nat fold after a flirtation with the Democratic Party) he is likely to be no less cautious than they. Moreover he is much more self-conscious about the racial dimensions of what is currently at stake in South Africa, much more reluctant to leave the defense of "white-skin privilege" to the "free" workings of the market and the bourgeois-democratic process.

In short, defense of the formal and legal structures that lock into place a racial hierarchy is still a large part of what De Klerk is on about. Interviewed by Ted Koppel of ABC-TV's *Nightline* a few days after the Mandela release, for example, De Klerk still mouthed the old National Party line that seeks to present South Africa as a "multinational" amalgam (with all those tribes whose interests must be accommodated). And there is still a great deal of talk of "group rights" and "minority rights" that seems crafted to premise, ultimately, complex constitutional proposals inimicable to genuine majority rule. Of course, even the most liberal of capitalist might see in constitutional "checks and balances" some further guarantee that political majorities (largely black and underprivileged) could be blocked from legislating programmes to redress the deep-seated socio-economic inequalities of South African society. But De Klerk, speaking out of an even more overtly racist political tradition, shows even less sign of embracing the cause of one-person, one-vote in a unified South Africa.

### One front, many struggles

This certainly means that there are considerable grounds for continuing struggle between the South African state and the popular movement, the gap between the minimal demand of the latter movement (precisely, "one-person, one-vote in a unified South Africa") and the maximal concession contemplated by the De Klerk government being so wide. But it also seems that a considerable struggle is also now on tap within the white polity itself. Nor is this true merely in the obvious sense of a far right backlash, one hostile to any form of change and one that could also spill over, dangerously, into the security forces. More important may well be the fact that even among those who see some kind of change as inevitable there is considerable room for difference of opinion as to what any change is designed to accom-

plish. De Klerk and his colleagues enter the next round not quite certain of what they want and even less certain of what they can get away with.

One thing is perfectly obvious from this, of course. The De Klerk team is very far from being an honest broker for genuinely democratic change in South Africa - on the off-chance that anyone should be tempted to characterize it as such. The fact that the South African state remains fundamentally illegitimate bears emphasizing at every turn. However, we must also take measure of the fact that De Klerk has broken the mould of white South African politics in important ways. Aware that the situation of stalemate between the white state and the "Mass Democratic Movement" could not persist, that, in fact, things were continuing to deteriorate both politically and economically, De Klerk has acted with surprising swiftness to redefine the terrain of struggle in South Africa. In doing so, he hopes not only to keep his right-wing white critics at bay but also to find fresh room for creative manoeuvre *vis-à-vis* the popular forces. He now seeks, in short, to take the offensive in guaranteeing for himself and his colleagues the largest say in what a future South Africa will look like!

It is a bold gamble, one that seeks, in the first instance, to translate the negatives of the current situation into pluses for the Nat cause. Didn't regional military defeat translate into a kind of military victory: a transition to independence in Namibia that seems likely to produce no very great threat to South African interests there, for instance? Is this not, then, a positive rather than a negative precedent for South Africa itself? And doesn't the decline of the communist bloc weaken, in significant ways, the ANC while also undermining the case of the South African right, within the military/police establishment and without, which seeks to



impede such changes of strategy as De Klerk and company deem necessary?

Even more important, however, is De Klerk's intention that the political participation of the popular movement - now, for the first time, to be deemed "legitimate" - be carefully hedged in and domesticated. Most obviously, in this regard, the state continues to define virtually all of South African society's ground rules, ranging from such egregious legislation as the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act through to the continuance of the Emergency dispensation itself. There is also every indication that the state is seeking to use its still considerable power to define itself as being, in significant ways, the crucial arbiter of the change process: the legitimate arbiter to whom supplicants - including the ANC - will come with proposals for due consideration, rather than merely one unprivileged voice in an open-ended negotiation process yet to be specified. How far the ANC will be able to push beyond this threshold in talks about negotiations that are said to be forthcoming between it and the government remains to be seen, but it bears emphasizing how little is known of what the Nats have in mind in this regard.

### De Klerk gambles

There are other calculations behind the risk De Klerk is taking in unbanning the democratic political opposition. Without doubt, he is gambling that the popular movement cannot present itself in a sufficiently unified manner to maximize its bargaining clout in any future set of negotiations. To this end, too, he seems likely to look benignly on the

claims of a Chief Buthelezi to a prominent role in the politicking of the future; forced to yield gracefully to the eclipse (by coup) of markedly pro-apartheid forces in the Transkei in recent months, he has moved to back forcefully more readily defensible wards in Venda or Bophutatswana. Moreover, De Klerk

they come confidently to see defense of the underlying logic of South Africa's socio-economic structure (capitalist and substantially racist in its "spontaneous" tendencies) as less than dependent on formal-legal guarantees, they may have more success. Then, vigorous defense of "group rights" may modulate into the proposing of less dramatic (but still limiting) constitutional codicils respecting "individual/property rights" and/or the presumed integrity of "communities/neighbourhoods." Then the threat implied in the centrality of large-scale capital and "white skills" to South Africa's economic viability may be looked upon as virtually guaranteeing the choice of a moderate course by any new government, however "black" it may be.

Unfortunately, as we have seen, it is difficult enough to know for certain the bottom-line of the strategy currently envisaged by De Klerk and his circle, let alone to guess the thrust of policies that the white polity, now so profoundly shaken up by De Klerk, is capable of generating in future. The process of defining that "thrust" is an on-going one in any case - it is the very stuff of white politics, now and for the foreseeable future - and one we must

attempt to monitor closely in the months ahead. Of course, this process cannot be considered in a vacuum. Now more than ever such "white politics" is framed by other overarching processes, the pressure that the world at large chooses to exert upon South Africa and, even more crucially, the pressure that the popular democratic movement (largely, though not exclusively, black) finds the strength to mount inside South Africa itself.

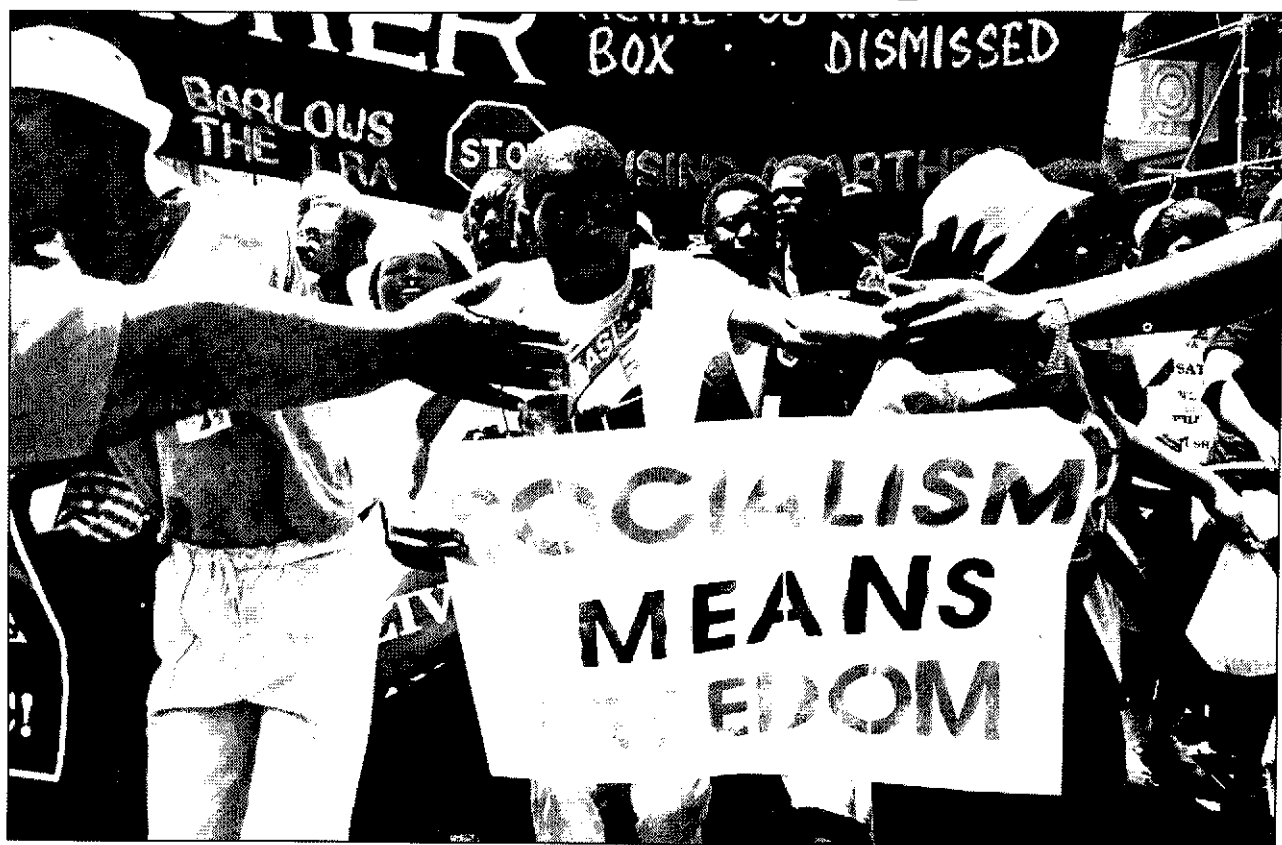


may also hope that the ANC itself can be sufficiently split and/or won to a course of "pragmatic" moderation as to yield up real compromises on basic principles.

If, by these means, South African decision-makers see themselves winning substantial qualification of the mass movement's demand for universal suffrage and a unified South Africa, they are more than likely to be disappointed. If, however,

attempt to monitor closely in the months ahead. Of course, this process cannot be considered in a vacuum. Now more than ever such "white politics" is framed by other overarching processes, the pressure that the world at large chooses to exert upon South Africa and, even more crucially, the pressure that the popular democratic movement (largely, though not exclusively, black) finds the strength to mount inside South Africa itself.

# The Movement Regroups



March protesting Labour Registration Act, Johannesburg, November 1989

Impact Visuals

Dynamics internal to the white polity will be important in deciding what comes next in South Africa; so too, will be the play of outside forces upon the country. But the pressure that can and will be mounted by the popular movement inside South Africa itself is the most crucial variable of all. Here certain vital questions suggest themselves, however. Just how united is this movement? What is the essential thrust of its own policy demands? How capable is it of generating the kind of political clout that might serve to realize such demands? The fact that so much has already been accomplished does not imply that the outcome of the next round of struggle can be taken for granted. Fortunately there is little sign that "the movement" – and, more specifically, the African

National Congress, the organization that stands at the very heart of the broad popular-democratic initiative – is likely to be so complacent.

At the same time, it must be admitted that the ANC itself has been taken by surprise by the pace at which history has accelerated in South Africa. Of course, the liberation movement did react with considerable aplomb, not least because Nelson Mandela, upon his release, did so as well. In his first speeches, and to the chagrin of some, he refused the mantle of supra-historical myth and/or saviour and instead embraced the role of activist – and ANC militant. In fact, realism allowed for no other course. No one knew better than he that he could not deliver, per-

sonally, the substance of a transition to genuine democracy from a South African government reluctant to go anywhere near so far (see the article "De Klerk: On the Defensive?" above). It would be necessary to organize ever more effectively on the ground in order to give weight to the continuing demand for such a transition. To this end, a coherent mass movement, not a single voice (however much ennobled by historical circumstance and personal sacrifice), was required.

## Sustaining the struggle

It was for this reason, too, that Mandela – like the ANC itself – has insisted that international sanctions on Pretoria be maintained and that the right of the movement to retain the weapon of armed struggle

as a legitimate part of its arsenal be acknowledged. It is part of the ANC's effort – an entirely reasonable one, as it happens – to have itself, and not the apartheid government, set the terms in which the future of South Africa will be negotiated. For the goal of negotiations does remain at the heart of the ANC's project. However, the terms in which the prospect of such negotiations are cast are, in fact, quite uncompromising. They develop along lines first sketched by Mandela's own paper on the subject of early 1989, then elaborated upon by the ANC in Lusaka and finally given added resonance by virtue of the OAU's adoption of the ANC's formula as the Harare Declaration of August, 1989.

The ANC's position thus insists upon the realization of such essential prerequisites to negotiations as the dropping of the State of Emergency while showing no sign of compromise on the demand for an unequivocally democratic agenda for such negotiations. This despite the efforts by such (disingenuous) critics of the ANC as the Pan-Africanist Congress (and its freshly-minted domestic surrogate, the Pan-Africanist Movement) to present such a position as being, by definition, a sell-out. Of course, the PAC has little recourse, in light of its woeful record as an entirely marginal and largely self-destructive non-starter during the long years of exile, but to attempt, in this way, to package itself as being "more militant than thou." Its own modest efforts magnified by the exertions of a cadre of black media-workers attracted by PAC's "cultural-nationalist" posturings and drawing, it has been argued, on various shadowy sources of overseas finance, PAC will seek to gain fresh resonance in the townships for its ultra-nationalist message should the ANC stumble.

PAC's own limited credibility as critic aside, however, it must be admitted that the ANC's attempt to drive towards ending political apartheid via negotiations does conjure

up complexities – and very real dangers. The government's agenda, as we have seen, will be very much narrower and the hold on the seat of power from which it deals still considerable. Moreover, the ANC will find itself under a certain pressure – from the international community, both West and East, in particular and from liberal whites who urge the wisdom, persuasive up to a point, of not alienating prospective white allies – to be "reasonable" in its practice of negotiations and in its substantive demands. There are countervailing pressures, of course. The fact that the ANC's own black constituency is unlikely to sit still for any major compromise on issues like the acceptance of the notion of "group-rights" or of complex constitutional formulae designed to blunt the will of a democratic majority will be one crucial force keeping the ANC on course in this respect. Besides, there is the fact of the Congress' own considerable integrity to be reckoned with; not surprisingly, there are few, if any, signs internal to the ANC's ranks that a give-away on these issues is on the cards.

Mounting the requisite pressure inside South Africa to force the De Klerk government to accept its uncompromised agenda and thus move any prospective negotiations away from mere deadlock, is quite another matter, however. There is, to be sure, considerable popular mobilization within the black communities inside South Africa. As we have seen, this was one of the most crucial realities triggering De Klerk's current attempt to break out of the stagnant confines of political stalemate and to gamble on his being able himself to direct subsequent developments. Moreover, the expectations aroused by De Klerk's initial moves in this regard (notably the unbannings and the release of Mandela) have intensified such mobilization. The ANC will now increasingly relocate itself inside South Africa and seek the keys

to sustaining, effectively, the momentum of the popular-democratic movement in the next phase.

### What tactics?

In doing so, it will build on the township networks that the United Democratic Front and the South African Youth Organization (SAYCO) – always closely aligned with the ANC (although not quite co-terminous with it) – have already had in place. Unfortunately, such networks have been badly damaged by the Emergency and, in any case, were rather loosely structured on the ground and uneven in the level of their development from township to township even at the best of times. How the ANC and the UDF, in particular, will mesh their operations, how effectively the kind of national organization that now emerges can give focus and clout to the energy and political creativity displayed in the townships (while itself being transformed from within by the very energy that is visibly surging up from below), such crucial questions remain to be answered.

So does the question of how those working class energies that have found their most dramatic organizational expression in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) will be refocussed for the next phase of struggle. COSATU has been an integral part of the "Mass Democratic Movement," certainly. It will continue to yield pride of place in the political arena to the ANC; but it will not yield gracefully to any attempt to have it subordinate itself uncritically to the liberation movement's hegemony. Indeed, the most recent news (March 25, 1990) is that the ANC's own trade union affiliate-in-exile, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), has begun to yield gracefully to this reality by disbanding itself and merging into COSATU. But even if matters of organizational boundaries and personal sensitivities can be reconciled, in the trade union and other spheres, as internal and external leaderships blend and

the MDM becomes more formally structured around the overt centrality of the ANC, the question of what the ANC/MDM can and should be doing politically inside the country to force the pace of change will remain.

Much will depend on the extent to which the credibility the ANC has already obtained can be translated into gains in the negotiations (or pre-negotiations) phase that is already launched. Beyond that, the precise mix of exemplary rallies, nation-wide demonstrations and stay-aways, and local level mobilizations, negotiations and confrontations (up to and including armed confrontations if government recalcitrance warrants it) that can and should be pursued, remains to be worked out in practice, the guidelines for strategic choice in this regard not now being very much clearer than they were before De Klerk's recent initiatives. Unfortunately, the ANC's credibility will also now be partly defined by its ability to "control" spontaneous outbursts of black popular outrage - even though the responsibility for any such outbursts should rightly fall upon De Klerk, given how incendiary is the combination of the expectations he has raised and the continuing refusal of his government to meet such expectations fully. And the movement's credibility will be defined, too, by its success in fire-fighting divisions within the ranks of the black population, not least in Natal where the internecine struggle between Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha organization and the MDM has reached epidemic proportions.

Small solace that the chief culprit here is the brutal Buthelezi himself, attempting to scotch the threat to his tribally-defined fiefdom that a mass movement effectively transcending tribal identifications has come to represent. His continuing prominence continues to service the divide and rule tactics that the government seeks to carry over from the "bad old days" into the nego-

tiation phase - while also blurring abroad the image of the rightfulness of the on-going democratic struggle. The ANC has no illusions that it can unify behind its project all black South Africans (let alone all South Africans!). But the manner of neutralizing a Buthelezi will pose a delicate challenge for the ANC for some time to come, as will, in different ways, the neutralizing of the even cruder hold on certain real levers of power of other Bantustan leaders (such as Mangope in Bophutatswana).

### Socialism?

If it can be affirmed that the struggle for political democracy and against institutionalized racism continues unabated in South Africa, what can be said about the struggle to deepen that democratic thrust in such a way as to undermine the extraordinary socio-economic inequalities that have been as much a part of the developing apartheid system as has legal disenfranchisement. Here, as noted in the preceding article, denizens of South Africa's ruling circles may hope to find it easier to counter the push of the popular movement. Certainly, the ANC has always argued that, at best, South Africa's is a "two-stage" revolution, political democracy first, socialism second ("if the people so decide"). Moreover, some observers have managed to read between the lines of this distinction (and in the modest socio-economic formulations of the Freedom Charter) an endemic reluctance within the ANC really to contemplate the ultimate taking of that second step. Witness the succinct summary of several years ago adduced by Simon Fraser University's Heribert Adam: "Since the ANC ... to all intents and purposes represents an aspiring but hitherto excluded middle class ... a historic compromise between big capital, small traders and bureaucrats would not founder on class antagonisms!"

This is almost certainly too cynical a formulation. Such has been the meshing, historically, of the twin structures of racial oppression and capitalist exploitation in South Africa that large numbers within the popular movement have come to elide the two realities - and their overthrow - rather more aggressively than the two-stage formulation might immediately suggest. This is true in the townships today, and amongst the youth in particular. But it has also been true within the ANC itself over time. Thus it is difficult not to see Mandela's post-release insistence on the centrality of "nationalizations" to the ANC project as paying homage to this strand of the movement's historical self-identification. Perhaps the formula itself might be criticized as providing all too crude a short-hand for the kind of deft socio-economic policies that would be necessary in a post-apartheid South Africa in order to keep alive an egalitarian thrust and to effectively service the needs of the vast army of the dispossessed in that country. But it seems some earnest of the fact that that thrust remains eminently alive. True, some activists in the trade union movement and elsewhere have worried that the advocacy of a left line within the ANC lies all too exclusively in the hands of the South African Communist Party (SACP), this latter member of the Congress Alliance being seen as too Stalinist (and too opportunist) at the best of times. Perhaps such critics of the SACP - noting the prominence of party members within the military wing of the ANC and noting as well its rising popularity in the townships - can be encouraged by the fact that the SACP is in the throes of considerable and quite positive self-criticism. Witness the recent pamphlet by Party Secretary General Joe Slovo, entitled "Has Socialism Failed?". Slovo's answer is "no" to this question, but in the course of giving the answer he attacks, in promising ways, the notion of the one party state and other such



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March demanding release of political prisoners on hunger strike, Cape Town, March 1990

crude expressions of unregenerate vanguardism. And he emphasises the autonomous self-organization of workers and women, in particular, as being necessary to the advancing of their interests!

How deeply this kind of sensibility penetrates the rest of the party is not certain, of course, and in any case the party itself now faces the considerable dilemma of deciding how far, on the new and relatively open political terrain available to it, it will advance an identity and programme quite separate from that of the ANC. Indeed, there are those who argue that part of De

Klerk's intention in unbanning the SACP and the ANC simultaneously was precisely to encourage a division between "pragmatists" and "socialists" within the liberation movement, the better to incorporate the former into a more "reasonable" kind of negotiations posture.

Yet, while such a formulation almost certainly overestimates the ease with which such a division might be fomented, it would also seem to underestimate another, and perhaps more important, source of "leftism" within the broad coalition that the MDM has come to represent - the left wing of the trade union

movement. For, as hinted above, there is within COSATU a significant element (the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) provides a case in point) that is prepared to accept ANC leadership of the democratic movement only on the condition that the union movement does, in fact, keep a distinctive element of autonomy - while it also pushes, relatively autonomously, for a distinctly socialist programme now and in the future.

**The democratic promise**

This is promising on two related fronts, flagging, in the first instance, the existence of strong pressures

from below for full-scale democratic ventilation of whatever political process may now be in the making. Nor is this true only with reference to the trade union movement. It may also be the logic of that wide-spread popular activism that has been witnessed in the townships and the bantustans over the last decade or so. This has produced, in South Africa, a more vibrant and assertive base than most African nationalisms have had as they have advanced to power. A history of real and tangible struggles around issues of leadership accountability and democratic practice, a context in which, for example, issues related to gender oppression and the need for the empowerment of women have become increasingly prominent: these and other developments should prove to be some kind of vaccination against the authoritarian denouement that has so often elsewhere on the continent been the aftermath of "liberation," a check even upon the ANC should that movement begin to lose sight of its own high principles as it re-establishes itself ever more firmly inside the country. For there are dangers in "negotiations" if they degenerate into inter-elite horse-trading and dangers, too, in "ballot-box democracy" if the polls come merely to register cynicism and the lack of

real and active participation at the grass-roots.

Nor is this merely a procedural question. Elsewhere in Africa mass demobilization has also meant a leadership freed from any necessity to respond to the substantive interests of those at the bottom of the social pyramid. Does the high level of popular mobilization of the dispossessed that exists in South Africa also guarantee, in contrast to this continental pattern, a genuinely socialist future? This is not something that, as we stagger out of the 1980s, anyone can afford to be glib about and, in fact, even the most militant of NUMSA cadres, referred to above, are not prepared to define absolutely categorically what this kind of emphasis might ultimately mean for South Africa. Most historically available models of "socialism" now lie in tatters, while such is the stranglehold of the global capitalist economy on South Africa that commonsense dictates caution even to those most committed to attempting to temper its logic in the interest of more egalitarian outcomes. That strong voices – both within the ANC/MDM camp and without (in some sections of the Black Consciousness Movement, for example) – will continue unequivocally to express the need to seek such out-

comes, via policies crafted carefully but militantly to the realities of the South African situation, is of great importance, however.

Perhaps this is merely to affirm that the class content of the popular movement's project is now to be even more strenuously contested than its "democratic" content (insofar as this is narrowly and procedurally defined). No doubt, to the extent that formal/legal democratization is offered up to the leadership of the popular movement, there will be some within that leadership who will want to let "commonsense" in the socio-economic sphere dictate a caution and a "pragmatism" of a particularly unprincipled kind. And there will be articulate spokespersons of capitalism – if not De Klerk himself – who will be the first to urge the logic of compromise and "reasonableness" in this sphere. Indeed, they are already hard at work doing so. All the more reason why those concerned about the future of South Africa must monitor carefully this struggle within a struggle in that country. At stake is the well-being of those millions of black South Africans who stand little chance of seeing their life-situations bettered under an unalloyed and unqualified capitalist system, even one of a post-apartheid variety.



*Aftermath of an attack on the home of a UDF activist in Natal, January 1987*

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# Negotiations

## Dress Rehearsal in the Townships

BY A SOUTH AFRICAN  
CORRESPONDENT

With the recent unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC), Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the release of Nelson Mandela, the focus of South African politics has turned to the imminent negotiations between the government and the popular movement. But what role should negotiations play in the political strategy of the opposition? Some observers have contraposed negotiations to popular mobilization. Others see the two as at least potentially mutually reinforcing.

This current interest in national negotiations should not obscure some strategically crucial developments that have been taking place at a local level in the recent period. The general climate – in which a negotiated settlement is seen to be a realistic option – has, in important ways, been facilitated by significant advances made by anti-apartheid forces, especially in 1989. These advances, linked to the re-emergence of civic organizations in the townships, allow us to glimpse the outlines of a broader strategy in which negotiations are one important dimension.

### From stalemate to advance

By the end of 1988, it had become clear to the state that the effects of the State of Emergency had been more limited than expected. To be sure, tens of thousands of detentions, and the full frontal attack on the United Democratic Front (UDF), had served to dampen resistance in the townships. However, the state had not been able to take full advantage of this period of "law

and order" to implement a strategy which addressed any of the underlying causes of resistance.

On the side of the democratic opposition, the intense level of state repression had constrained the ability of community and, to a lesser extent, trade union organizations to do much more than to fight for survival. Some observers characterized this period as a protracted stalemate, in which both sides held onto, but were not able to substantially alter or advance, their organizational capacities.

This deadlock was broken by a crucial strategic shift on the part of civic organizations. This happened, most dramatically, in the case of Soweto. The township had organized a widespread boycott of payments for rents and service charges in 1986. This action was strengthened when the national State of Emergency, imposed in June 1986, made other forms of protest more difficult to mount. The primary motivation for the rent boycott stemmed from material conditions in the township, such as the poor level and high cost of services. These conditions were inextricably linked to the illegitimacy of the local government structures, imposed by the state.

But the political demands linked to the boycott were articulated in terms of national issues – such as the unbanning of the ANC, the release of Mandela and so on. There was, in other words, a significant disjuncture between the nature of the protest and the demands made for its resolution. This politicization can be largely explained by the general insurrectionary climate in the country at the time, and the

extremely repressive actions of the state forces.

The incongruity between the material and political demands and the ongoing stalemate demanded a new approach. In the latter half of 1988, when the Emergency (and the rent boycott) were both entering their third years, one began to emerge. Representative community leaders were mandated to begin a process of negotiations. The first part of these negotiations involved meeting with the discredited Soweto City Council.

There may have been initial concern that, by so doing, the community leaders were in danger of conferring some legitimacy on state-imposed structures that previously had been vilified, ignored and attacked. The reality was somewhat different. As the community leaders were all too aware, the Soweto Council was in no position to accede to any of the demands made upon them. The real extent of their impotence and ultimate irrelevance was most clearly demonstrated by their inability to actually decide or deliver anything of substance. The Council came to the negotiating table with nothing to offer. The power of the community leaders, on the other hand, was vested in their legitimacy and mass support – as underwritten by the strength of the continuing rent boycott.

Through a long process of subsequent meetings, the logical consequence of this initiative began to fall into place. The real paymasters of the Soweto Council, the Transvaal provincial authorities, were finally compelled to meet Soweto's community leaders – people the state had previously detained, banned, labelled as revolutionaries, commu-



*Protest against detention without trial, Cape Town, March 1989*

nists and radicals. In doing so, these state bodies were implicitly recognizing the fact that the Soweto Council, long promoted by the state as comprising "elected leaders" in the township, had neither the authority nor the ability to effect any solutions. The Council was rendered politically irrelevant; the important actors were the community leaders and the provincial authorities. As far as we understand, these negotiations continue, and have involved other state bodies.

#### New civic strategies

The account of this relatively unheralded negotiation process in Soweto shows how urban and municipal struggles are assuming a new significance in the current period in South Africa. The substantial re-emergence of civic organizations over the past year has taken place not only in Soweto but also elsewhere in Transvaal and in the Eastern Cape. At a superficial level, the "civics" address the same issues which fueled the mass-mobilization that began around 1983-84. These include the high township rents and service charges, and the poor standard (or non-provision) of basic services like water, electricity and garbage collection. In addition, they reject the authority of the local government structures ostensibly running the townships. The difference in the recent approach of the popular organizations lies, however, in the content and process of the solutions to these issues that are now being proposed.

Increasingly, the civic



organizations are challenging or bypassing the township councils in articulating their demands. While it may be argued that the popular organizations are now engaging with "the system," it is important to note that they are consciously choosing to do so from outside the state structures. Rather than being aimed at taking over and reforming existing structures, this strategy is designed to lead to their discrediting and ultimate collapse.

The second feature of the civic organizations' approach lies in the content of their demands. The demands now being posited have as their ultimate intention the structural transformation of the apartheid city. They are designed to be consistent with, and formative in the creation of a post-apartheid future. But they are also strategically conceived in a way that can permit partial victories. (Some observers refer to this dimension of their strategy as "urban trade unionism"). In the case of Soweto, for example, the current demand is for a single tax-base to be created with Johannesburg. In Cape Town, the demand is for an open city in which apartheid regulations would no longer be enforced. Both demands point towards non-racial, democratic municipalities.

This is no side issue - in many ways, a central feature of apartheid has been the emphasis given to the division and control of the towns and cities. For many decades, apartheid policy attempted to fine tune the methods of racial and spatial segregation through a combination of restrictive labour policy, the pass laws, the Group Areas Act and the control of housing and services. The success of apartheid policy, and the functioning of the bantustans, relied on absolute control of the urban areas of the country.

This policy failed because the poverty of the bantustans lead to inexorable demographic pressures on the cities, and the urban areas themselves became the sites of varied and

protracted struggles. Most noticeably, this was signified in the struggles of the squatters around Cape Town in the early eighties, in places like Crossroads, KTC and Nyanga Bush. In some measure, the lifting of the pass laws in July 1986 was a partial concession by the state, inasmuch as it conceded the right to be in or near the cities, albeit in terms of an "orderly urbanization" policy.

The urban struggles that are currently being fought have taken those demands, and the victories, much further. In the recent period, through a variety of strategies and processes, the cities have become both the site and the object of the struggle. This is hardly surprising, of course, since the most visible and obvious material manifestations of apartheid and its legacy are found in the urban areas of South Africa. The configurations of racial segregation, highly unequal wealth distribution, and the differential provision of infrastructure and services are now being subjected to increasing attack.

On the one hand, the nominally white cities are being subjected to demands from the townships which include the redistribution of resources and the creation of non-racial and democratic forms of local government. On the other hand, the cities are being changed from within. In the high-rise areas and some parts of Johannesburg, for example, substantial numbers of blacks now reside in open defiance of the Group Areas Act.

### State structures under pressure

There are increasing signs that the strains are beginning to show within the state structures. In a number of townships, and most noticeably in the Transvaal, the existing system of local government is in danger of collapse. The state may intervene to remove the councils before this happens - in the case of Soweto and Lekoa town councils, the provincial authorities have threatened dire consequences if the local

councils do not quickly resolve the rent boycotts. (Thus far, the provincial authorities have had to foot the bill, running into hundreds of millions of dollars).

The councils are also under pressure from within the townships, and this increases as the civic organizations re-establish their bases after years of repression. Two days after the announcement of the unbanning of the ANC, fifty thousand supporters of the Alexandra Civic Organization (previously known as the Alexandra Action Committee, whose leaders had been acquitted after a disastrous treason trial) called on the township council to resign and to join the ANC. Significantly, the council agreed to at least "consider" the demand.

It is apparent that the civic organizations, having survived the State of Emergency, now represent an extremely important source of democratic struggle and process in South Africa. The advances made in the local-level negotiations, even at this early stage, have given the civic organizations an important confirmation of their tactics and their abilities. Considering the centrality of local government - both now and in a post-apartheid system - this is particularly significant. For, although the rural areas and the land question will be crucial in the reconstruction of South Africa, it is nonetheless clear that the new South Africa will be forged and determined in the cities.

The unbanning of the African National Congress, and the prospect of national negotiations, present a number of intriguing possibilities, as well as a number of inherent dangers. The local-level experiences of the past year have demonstrated some of the possibilities of an approach which combines mass-mobilization with negotiation. The challenge is how to integrate the two levels of negotiation in a complementary and mutually-reinforcing fashion.



An "imbizo", a meeting of village leaders at Manzimahle in Transkei

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# Transkei: Battling the Bantustans

BY JAN THERON

The role of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's brutal Inkatha legions in defending their bantustan turf in Natal against the growing popular democratic movement suggests something of the heavy price South Africans continue to pay for apartheid's cruel and indefensible policy of "separate development." Resistance to apartheid has grown in the bantustans despite Pretoria's best efforts (as witness the South African De-

fense Force's recent interventions in Bophutatswana and the Ciskei) to shore up their creaking leaderships. Moreover, these leaderships are themselves an extremely mixed bag — ranging from the venal Lucas Mangope of Bophutatswana to the far more progressive Enos Mabuza of Kangwane. And then there is the case of the Transkei — first of these homelands to receive "independence." It now provides a particularly interesting case in point, as it seeks to reverse its independence

and, under a new military leader, to come to fresh terms with the shifting situation in South Africa as a whole. As the following report from South African trade union activist Jan Theron, who lived for a recent period in the Transkei, makes clear, developments in the Transkei reveal new kinds of promise and new kinds of danger — while hinting at some of the political complexities that are likely to characterize the politics of the next round of struggle in South Africa.

The African National Congress held two mass rallies in the months before it was unbanned in February. The first was in Johannesburg to welcome the ANC leaders just released from prison. But the second was in some ways the more surprising. It was in Independence Stadium in Umtata, the "capital" of South Africa's first "independent" homeland, the Transkei. On the platform with the ANC was the head of Transkei's military government, Major-General Holomisa.

The symbolism of the occasion was lost on no one. The ANC demands democracy in a united South Africa. That is, a South Africa that includes the bantustans. Here was the head of government of the first "independent" bantustan sharing a platform with the ANC, which at that point was still a banned organization even within the Transkei. Coming after Holomisa's proposal a few weeks before to hold a referendum to decide whether the Transkei should remain "independent," the meeting was really a statement that Transkei was no longer an "independent" homeland, and that the entire system of homelands was coming to an end.

But as though to prove that this change was not to be taken for granted, that there are still die-hard elements committed to independence, the night before the rally was held, the Transkei police fired teargas into a meeting with the ANC leaders.

How is one to interpret this turn of events? What are the implications for South Africa as a whole, and for the prospect of negotiations toward a political settlement? To begin to answer these questions, it is necessary first of all to understand how the Transkei fitted into the grand scheme of apartheid, and how things have changed under the military government.

### The Transkei in the scheme of grand apartheid

The idea of setting up "independent"

states for the different African ethnic groups was the Verwoerd government's answer to African nationalism. Rather than concede political rights to Africans, the idea was to sell them the idea they could have their own separate freedom in their own separate homelands.

Not only was the Transkei the first of four homelands to become "independent," it is also the biggest and arguably the most important. From the time it was still part of the British Cape Colony, the Transkei has been regarded as a separate political entity. Government policies ensured that there were always more people on the land than peasant farming could support. Transkei became the most important source of labour for the mines, farms and industry within the borders of South Africa.

Political control depended on incorporating what was, in effect, the traditional ruling class, the chiefs. Thus, the chiefs received a salary and were vested with certain powers by the central government. Where a particular chief would not co-operate, the central government could appoint another.

The role of the chiefs in Transkei politics is well-illustrated by the decision of the Transkei Legislative Assembly to take "independence." Despite opposition to independence by the majority political party, the set-up in the Legislative Assembly was such that chiefs nominated by the government - in this case, the minority party under Kaizer Matanzima - held the balance of power. Matanzima supported independence and Transkei became independent.

**What independence has meant**  
Given the standing of South Africa in the world, there was never any possibility of "independent" Transkei being recognized internationally or of it being economically independent. The income of the Transkei has always come from what migrant workers earn in South Africa, and subsidies from the central government.

Independence has not benefited the migrant workers, the peasant farmers, or those employed in the Transkei, who are lucky to earn in a month what their counterparts in South Africa earn in a week. Why then have ordinary people not expressed their dissatisfaction with the way things are? The nature of the fraud of "independence" is that ordinary people are led to believe they now have greater power over their lives when, of course, they do not. But for those who were to make up the homeland's ruling class, "independence" was real enough.

Overnight Matanzima and his cronies took over trading stores, farms and hotels, for a fraction of what it had cost the central government to buy out their white owners. There were also jobs for those with the right connections, which but for "independence" would never have existed - the army and the police force, in a hugely expanded bureaucracy.

### The military's rise to power

How was it then that the Transkei under a military government should be moving toward reversing independence? The Transkei Defence Force (TDF), after all, would seem to have a vested interest in there being an "independent" homeland. To be a defence force at all, there has to be a country to defend.

When the military under Holomisa took power in 1987, corruption was rampant, and his stated aim was to eliminate corruption. It was a credible aim. Holomisa was seen to have disciplined the TDF; the defence forces presented a marked contrast to the inefficient and corrupt bureaucracy and police force. Holomisa also set about it in a credible way. Commissions were appointed to investigate allegations of corruption. George Matanzima and others were brought to trial, and Holomisa even threatened to extradite Sol Kerzner, the darling of the South African business community, for his celebrated R1 million bribe to Matanzima.

Many thought that Pretoria was behind the coup. Corruption was a political embarrassment and a financial drain for the central government. Moreover, the brothers Matanzima had prevented big busi-

ness coming into the Transkei. (The exception was Kerzner's exclusive casino rights.) There are also close ties between the TDF and SADF, who carry out joint manoeuvres, and TDF officers train with the SADF. One way of understanding the political line taken by the TDF is in terms of the strategy of their SADF mentors, who when they anticipate potential threats to security, take pre-emptive action. Certainly corruption threatened political stability in the homeland. It created disunity amongst the ruling class and fomented dissatisfaction below.

However, to act against corruption also necessitated treading on the toes of Kaizer Matanzima, retired but still powerful. This in turn gave others the chance to challenge Kaizer's traditional base,

and a powerful opponent of independence. The Verwoerd government had dealt with him by the simple expedient of splitting the Tembu paramountcy in two, and elevating Kaizer Matanzima, then a



*Women road construction workers carry rocks to repair a dirt road in the Transkei*

as the highest-ranking chief, the Paramount Chief of the Tembu.

### The issue of the Tembu Paramountcy

Just as much as Matanzima's power had a traditional base, so too the military government had to secure its own traditional base. It did so by taking sides in the issue of the Tembu paramountcy, a strategy that also moved it closer to an accommodation with the ANC.

Sabata Dalindyebo had been the Paramount Chief of the Tembus

minor Tembu chief, to the status of Paramount Chief as well. After "independence," Kaizer hounded Sabata into exile, where he died. When his body was returned to the Transkei for burial, Kaizer saw to it that he was not buried according to his chiefly status.

Under the military government, although Kaizer's nephew was appointed as Paramount, there were attempts to undo the wrong done to Sabata by making his son, Buyelekhaya Paramount. But logically, that might have led to the re-

unification of the Tembu under one Paramount, deposing Kaizer. Re-establishing Buyelekhaya also meant undoing a process that had been instrumental in Transkei accepting "independence." The Tembu with the Pondo are the two most important Xhosa speaking groups in the Transkei and an alliance between their traditional leaders had been crucial to maintain political control. That political control was threatened by Buyelekhaya. Sabata's line was identified with the ANC, with whom Buyelekhaya was in exile. Nelson Mandela was part of the broader family and showed an active interest in Transkei politics about this time by meeting in prison with Tembu leaders and a member of the Pondo royal family.

The military government threw its weight behind the supporters of Buyelekhaya, who clearly had the overwhelming support of the Tembu people. First it forced a mass meeting on the issue. Next it approved the re-burial of Sabata. It is in the political culture of South Africa that funerals are political occasions. So the occasion of Sabata's funeral was the re-emergence of the ANC as an open political organization in the Transkei. It was also the occasion Holomisa chose to propose a referendum on Transkei's independence.

In the weeks following the funeral, the military government took this a stage further: it unbanned 15 organizations including the UDF. It said it was considering unbanning the ANC, and reviewing security legislation. Trade unions which under the Matanzima government were illegal, would be recognized. This last proposal was particularly far-reaching, given that low wages are the principal reason for any company to set up in the Transkei.

#### What next?

Will the military government go ahead with a referendum? If it does, what is the likely outcome? Certainly amongst the beneficiaries of "independence" - the businessmen, the bureaucracy, TDF and police -

there are those committed to "independence." The renegade action of the police on the eve of the ANC rally shows this.

But surely all but the die-hards amongst them will be persuaded by the same political calculation that the military government made some time ago. That is, first of all, that the present South African government is not going to intervene. Second, that a future majority-rule government in South Africa would have no cause to continue to sponsor a fictitious independence. Still less would it want to prop up a regional ruling class opposed to it. Far better then, to accommodate yourself now to a movement that will likely form the new government.

That is not to say that support for the ANC and opposition to "independence" is not genuine. The whole of the Eastern Cape up to and including the Transkei has long been a strong base of the ANC. But it does explain why many who earlier supported "independence," even those who sat in the Matanzima government, are now singing a different tune.

A decision to reverse the "independence" of the Transkei, would spell the end to any pretensions of "independence" of Venda, Bophutatswana and Ciskei. It would remove an obstacle toward the establishment of democracy. It would confirm the failure of Grand Apartheid.

But to the F. W. De Klerk government, it would not much matter. The idea of "independence" that the ideology of Grand Apartheid conceived is no longer important. It has long since ceased to matter, in practical terms, whether a homeland is "independent" or self-governing. What is important, is that an African regional ruling class stays in power, and contains any threat from below.

#### The Homelands in negotiations

It is likely that the reintegration of the Transkei into South Africa would

only take place as part of an overall political settlement. For one thing, the military government is on record as saying that it will not accept reintegration while apartheid is in place. There are also reasons why it might suit both the ANC and the central government for the Transkei to remain "independent" until a settlement is reached. It allows the ANC to strengthen ties with a potentially important ally, the TDF. It allows the government, to argue that if the Transkei is to be included in a political settlement, other homelands must be included on an equal basis.

If there are negotiations between the ANC and the government, the inclusion of the homelands introduces a wild card. Negotiations with a multiplicity of equal parties around the table favours the government and weakens the standing of the ANC. For that reason, the ANC clearly favours negotiations across the table, between the ANC and its allies on one hand and the government on the other. The question as to whether the Transkei, Buthelezi of KwaZulu and Sebe of Ciskei are really allies will make their inclusion enormously controversial within the democratic movement. For apart from anything else, the homeland leaders will be wanting to keep what power they can hold onto.

How much power they are left with affects the structure of a future democratic South Africa - whether it will be a unitary state, as it was before the introduction of the homelands system, or whether there will be some kind of federal solution. Government strategists have long been talking about a federation comprised of different regions, of which the existing homelands form an important component. In a South Africa where everyone had the vote, that seems less threatening to the vested interests they represent. The homelands are, in short, a crucial bargaining counter in the process of defining a new South African constitution.

# Renamo's Home Address

An intensive investigation by the *Weekly Mail*, a major South African newspaper, reveals that support from South Africa for destabilization within Mozambique continues. Local South African businessmen and members of the South African security forces are supplying arms to Renamo bandits to step up their attacks on the southern provinces of Mozambique. Armed insurgents, weapons and supplies are being pumped regularly to Renamo at points along the L-shaped border linking the two countries, including points along the 66 kilometres of coiled barbed wire fencing in the area south of Komatipoort.

The *Weekly Mail* investigation included interviews with national servicemen, priests, businessmen, social workers, medical doctors, refugees and a Renamo deserter.

The scale of activity along the 500 kilometer border that these sources report, suggests the continued existence of a clandestine military unit, deploying secret funds and recruiting private businessmen. This unit may operate along the lines of the Civil Cooperation Bureau, the death squad run at arms length from the security forces which has come under recent public scrutiny for its actions against South African opponents of the regime. This is a low-intensity warfare game plan all too familiar in the post contra-gate era.

Informants in the Komatipoort area identified two Portuguese men, one a farmer and the other a cafe owner, who are rounding up Mozambican refugees making their way to South Africa in search of jobs and respite from Mozambique's disastrous economic situation. The Mozambicans are trained to use weapons and ferried back across the border for operations in Mozambique. The farmer is a former Mozambican who, according to lo-



cal sources, lost a large farm after Frelimo took power in 1975. He now makes regular clandestine trips across the border into Mozambique, supplying Renamo bands with clothing and food produced on his farm. His son is a South African police reservist in Komatipoort.

Several informants referred to a gate in the barbed-wire fence 20 km. south of Komatipoort. The Renamo deserter told the *Weekly Mail* that he had crossed into South

Africa at this point with another rebel in early 1989 after Renamo had attacked the border town of Ressano Garcia. Residents living near the gate had reported sightings of Renamo members in the area to the KaNgwane "homeland" administration last year. Last month an officer in the Mozambican army said he had evidence that a large group of armed men crossed into Mozambique from South African soil to carry out the massacre at Moveni in which a train was blown up and more than 60 people killed.

The *Weekly Mail* was told that black members of the SADF (South African Defence Force) stationed along the fence often cross the border for "discussions" with members of Renamo. Renamo members frequently come to the fence with South African currency in amounts as large as 2000 Rands asking South African soldiers to buy goods for them in KaNgwane shops.

The gate south of Komatipoort is not the only point where Renamo support is visible. In the Phalaborwa area, black township residents refer to a township known as "Skietog" housing Portuguese and Shona-speaking black soldiers. A local church worker says "Skietog" residents seldom mix with township residents but are sometimes visited by local women. The *Weekly Mail* has established that "Skietog" is a reconnaissance base and is guarded by SADF soldiers.

Kosi Bay in northern Natal, site where murdered human rights activist, David Webster, did his anthropological field work, is another area of Renamo support. The *Weekly Mail* learned from Webster before his death that he had been told by an agricultural officer working for kwaZulu that he had seen three Renamo bases in the area more than two years ago. Current informants speak of an insurgents' base at Lake Sibaya, south of Kosi Bay.

A local doctor told the *Weekly Mail* more than a year ago of a Renamo camp in the Ndumu Game Reserve straddling the border with Mozambique, a fact confirmed by Mozambican security forces.

Phafuri, located in the far northern corner of Kruger National Park, is another point of Renamo activity. There is evidence that a Renamo band located here crosses regularly to sabotage the pylons from the Cahora Bassa hydro-electric scheme in northern Mozambique. Zimbabwe conservation officials says rebels are poaching elephant and rhino on a game reserve just north of Phafuri and believe the poachers come in from Kruger National Park.

According to the *Weekly Mail*, the picture that emerges from the recent investigation after cross-checking from a variety of sources, is one of private businessmen and farmers carrying out extensive logistics support for Renamo with strong back-up from elements in the military. It is likely that such an army unit is run along the same lines as the recently exposed Civil Cooperation Bureau. The *Weekly Mail* report ends with a quotation from a recently released report from the Southern Africa Quaker Peace Initiative. From its intensive investigations inside Mozambique last year, it says:

*There is overwhelming evidence that certain elements in South Africa (especially in the defence force - and a number of generals have been named) continue to recruit Mozambicans to support MNR [Renamo] and give material and logistical support to the bandits.*

The *Weekly Mail* report on support for Renamo from South Africa comes hard on the heels of a popular initiative for peace organized by Mozambican artists, writers, journalists and intellectuals. Seventy-four prominent Mozambicans launched their independent peace initiative with an open letter

addressed to South African President Frederick De Klerk and an appeal to the anti-apartheid movement inside South Africa. The documents appeared in the Johannesburg *Sunday Star* and the Maputo weekly, *Domingo*, on January 14. Signatories included painter Malangatana Ngwenya, poet Jose Craveirinha and Secretary General of the Mozambique Writers' Association, Albino Magaia.

The letter to President De Klerk challenged him to make good on his promise to contribute to peace in Mozambique by bringing an end to the support Renamo receives from that territory. It calls for the neutralization of "all the forces in South Africa that still use armed violence to achieve political change in Mozambique."

The appeal to the anti-apartheid movement starts out in this vein:

*The events that have taken place in your country over the last few months renew our belief in your unshakable determination not to succumb to repression. The history of resistance by the South African people is the best guarantee that South Africa will be a united, democratic and anti-racist country where people of all ethnic groups, races and religions can live together in peace and harmony.*

It goes on to request anti-apartheid forces to add a further demand to the conditions for negotiations being put forward to the South African government, namely an end to all acts of destabilization launched from South African territory against Mozambique and the rest of southern Africa.

The request drew an immediate response from within South Africa. Six South African organizations of journalists, writers, film and library workers published a statement in early February which underscored the important roles the people and governments of the frontline states have played in the South African liberation struggle and the extremely

high price paid for this support: "...as a result of this selfless support you became the targets of an aggressive military and economic destabilization campaign by South Africa. This has ruined much of the economies of the region and caused incalculable human suffering." Singling out Mozambique, the organizations refer to the terrible suffering resulting from "banditry of the South African-supported Renamo. It is our belief that at least certain elements within South Africa continue to provide aid to Renamo."

In addition to restating their solidarity with the people of Mozambique, the organizations made three commitments. These include "campaigning for the cessation of all aid to the forces responsible for the destruction and genocide in Mozambique, exploring ways and means of assisting our comrades in Mozambique and encouraging contact between ourselves and the people of Mozambique so that there will be meaningful exchanges of information."

The *Weekly Mail* story by Eddie Koch detailing continued support from within South Africa for Renamo makes an important contribution to the campaign to expose support in South Africa for Renamo. Meanwhile a group of South African activists has formed an organization called "Mosaic" to give continuity to these actions, as well as expanding direct links with Mozambican counterparts and continuing the exchanges of information.

Canadian activists might well take up this tactic. It would seem appropriate for us now to mount a campaign for our own government to include demands related to apartheid's second front as a precondition for lifting sanctions. Before sanctions are lifted, Pretoria should not only end the state of emergency and release all political prisoners, it should also take steps to end definitively the continuing support for Renamo from sources within South Africa.



Reiman/Impact Visuals

*Anti-apartheid demonstration, New York, February 1990*

## Uneven Gains: The U.S. Movement Enters the 90s

BY BILL MARTIN AND JIM CASON

*Bill Martin is Co-Chair of the Research Committee of the Association of Concerned African Scholars. Jim Cason is Associate Director of the American Committee on Africa. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not represent either organization.*

When Nelson Mandela walked out of prison last February, only days after the government unbanned the African National Congress, the terrain of struggle inside South Africa was dramatically altered. But this and other developments over the last few months are also significant for the questions they pose for the international solidarity movement.

Mandela's clarity in appealing for stronger sanctions and for political and financial support for the ANC, helps to define the immedi-

ate agenda of the international solidarity movement. But many more questions remain, particularly as the ANC and the white-led government try to salvage the talks that were to begin in early April.

Writing in *SAR* last December, Pierre François trenchantly raised a series of questions for Canadian anti-apartheid activists that may be relevant in the U.S.: Is the anti-apartheid movement in a lull, suffering from defeat on the debt issue and unable to enact new sanctions? And, if so, is this the result of a lack of organizational and strategic integrity? Is the cure to be found by defining some common objectives upon which to build a broader movement?

The recent history of the anti-apartheid movement in the U. S., however, suggests not only different

conclusions but also different questions.

### 1980 vs. 1990

As the 1970s came to a close in the U.S., a small, anti-apartheid and largely anti-imperialist movement was active on two fronts: seeking to prevent the recognition of the Muzorewa government in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, and launching divestment and financial sanction campaigns against South Africa. At the same time, Ronald Reagan was campaigning for the Presidency where he would inaugurate "constructive engagement."

Looking forward into the 1990s, we face dramatically different conditions. Some 200 U.S. corporations have ended direct investment in South Africa. U.S. banks have refused new loans and the U.S. government has imposed some of the



strongest sanctions of any western nation. The vicious mask of "constructive engagement" has been stripped away, reluctantly abandoned by even its most vociferous supporters.

This change has largely been fueled by the growth of resistance inside South Africa. But something is also different in the United States. The composition and scope of the anti-apartheid movement in the United States has changed from small groups of student activists and public figures issuing anti-colonial statements, to a broad-based movement encompassing much of the U.S. mainstream. If a small-scale and overtly anti-imperialist tone set the stage for entering the 1980s, we enter the 1990s with a movement embraced by Bill Cosby, both Republican and Democratic politicians and much of the U.S. mainstream.

### The 1980s

How did this transformation take place? And at what cost and with what limitations? Clearly Presidential and Congressional initiatives played little part (although Ronald Reagan's intransigence may have). Not only did Reagan's views remain unchanged, but the Republicans took control of the Senate during his second term.

In the face of Reagan and Rambo, the U.S. southern Africa solidarity movement scored its victories by having clear targets and by mobilizing an ever larger political constituency. The mix of images during the early 1980s showed the way: simmering discontent in the U.S. African-American community, the dramatic demonstration of TransAfrica's Free South Africa Movement that captured the public's imagination, Bishop Tutu's Nobel Prize. Most important, of course, was the unfolding rebellion in the townships that was brought into living rooms across the country on the evening news. A public consensus against apartheid began to build.

But none of this would have

translated into economic pressure had it not been for the hard, slogging work targeting sanctions and divestment at the local level. At the university level, years of careful work were transformed into weeks of "united action" and escalating actions on the divestment front.

Similar work by coalitions at the state and municipal level pushed forward city and state divestment actions. As early as 1979 the American Committee on Africa hosted its first national conference, bringing state and local legislators together with local activists and community groups.

By 1984, campuses were exploding. State and local governments had passed more than 50 binding measures requiring public monies be pulled out of corporations doing business in South Africa. Public opinion had shifted from an ambivalence on the issue of far-distant apartheid to an active dislike of minority rule. The solidarity movement's critical success was beginning to link a stand against apartheid with a stand against U.S. corporate involvement and for sanctions and divestment.

As repression and resistance escalated in South Africa, the heat on U.S. politicians at the national level intensified. By 1986, policies of "constructive engagement" were not only abandoned, but a two-thirds majority in the Senate - including then-Senator Dan Quayle - overrode Reagan's veto and passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act.

Sanctions, divestment, and recognition of the central role of the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement are today supported by Democrats and liberal Republicans alike. Even the Bush administration, while clinging to a faith in the minority regime, acknowledges that sanctions have worked and that some form of majority rule must be accepted.

### Victories and defeats

If moral outrage and local activ-

ity translated into concrete actions against apartheid, they did not lead to support for the frontline states. Senators who voted for sanctions had no qualms in simultaneously voting for military aid to UNITA. The Reagan administration defended South Africa's military occupation of southern Angola and vetoed criticisms at the United Nations. Destabilization elsewhere in the region was rarely condemned. What little U.S. aid was given to the front line states was structured in ways that discouraged self-sufficiency and independence.

Anti-apartheid groups were ineffective in either countering low-intensity conflict strategies or building support for states and movements with socialist agendas.

To be sure, support for Mozambique has recently been more forthcoming, Namibia has finally gained independence, and even Angola's MPLA may soon win greater recognition. But in these instances public acceptance and state action has been consistently couched by politicians and policymakers in terms of the abandonment of Marxism and socialism, the privatization of the economy, and the withdrawal of Cuban and East-bloc military aid.

Why were victories in some areas balanced by defeats on other fronts? Would broader mobilization, greater educational work and stronger networking - as has been suggested by François and many others - resolve these problems? Or is there something unique to the (U.S.) movement's organization, tactics, and targets that was destined to limit its success?

Many failures flowed from actions by supranational forces, forces that national solidarity groups could not expect to counter. Declining commodity prices, rising interest rates and debt, and the actions of the IMF and World Bank (among others) have severely sapped the economic strength and political independence of the frontline states.

Certainly the U.S. solidarity movement is quite distinctive from, say, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement. In the U.S. the movement is composed of a bare handful of national organizations and hundreds of independent, unaffiliated, local groups; in the U.K. there is one national, policy-making organization with local chapters across the country. Although U.S. groups may agree on general policy, and even work on common national campaigns, their assessments of pressing issues and appropriate strategies and actions often vary widely.

This diversity however, gives the solidarity movement in the U.S. its power at the local level - allowing the movement to draw upon quite different communities, forge divergent local coalitions, and tailor actions to different local situations. The cost is obvious in a lack of a national agenda and cohesive national action. Yet if this is so, it remains the case that the U.S. still possesses the strongest sanctions of the major Western powers, and that this is largely due to the swelling strength of local activity.

Indeed, the scope and success of local initiatives may have been important for reasons quite beyond simply organizational ones. By organizing at the local level, grassroots initiatives may well have uncovered or at least expressed, new political tendencies that emerged in the mid- and late 1980s.

The greed, viciousness and havoc wreaked upon the poorer sections of the U.S. population during the Reagan years generated a vigorous response - and one whose sensibilities the solidarity movement tapped at the ground level and solidified by sustaining relationships with activists and groups beyond those engaged in anti-imperialist or southern Africa solidarity work. No better example of this exists than in the active engagement of the African-American community and the fusion of resistance against racial oppression at home and abroad.

While the Reagan years have generated ever greater inequality, they have been unsuccessful in our view in winning any broad-based commitment to his right-wing world view. The dilemmas of Reagan's last years and the Bush administration's need to register at least rhetorical commitments to civil rights, educa-

level (e.g., the isolation of minority rule) where basic ideological positions are in its favor. It has been defeated (e.g., support for socialist but one-party states) where the right-wing has been able to exploit the symbols of anti-communism and authoritarian rule as levers in popular debate.



New York Subway

Reiman/Impact Visuals

tion and social programs attest well to this. Despite the influence of the right wing in recent years, many Americans continue to accept the justice of civil rights struggles, an acceptance that has fueled support for the anti-apartheid movement. The collapse of the cold war as a mobilizing ideology has further undercut right-wing initiatives.

It is in this contradictory tension between popular support for the ideal of democracy and equality on the one hand, and more politically-sophisticated support for the solidarity movement on the other, that one can begin to see the explanation of the strength and weaknesses of the U.S. movement in the last decade. The movement has won broader support at the grassroots level as people have experienced Reaganism everyday. It has been able to advance at the national

### Entering the 1990s

If these admittedly initial assessments hold water, the 1990s offer unprecedented opportunities. With the changes in Eastern Europe, neither anti-communism nor the issue of authoritarian rule can continue to underpin right-wing strategies as they have in the past. In southern Africa, this also reflects, of course, our failure to win widespread support for national self-determination on the part of frontline states, as noted above. The independent states and movements of southern Africa have been forced to concede much in this area.

None of these transformations guarantees the movement's advance in the coming decade. In many ways the solidarity movement is the victim of success. While campaigns for sanctions put pressure on the minority regime, they also raised complex

new questions. Although the campaigns were surprisingly successful in forcing divestment by such giants as IBM, General Motors, and Mobil, no one was prepared for the corporate camouflage and labour repression that followed.

In these as in other instances, the solidarity movement will need to draw upon the advances made in linking with organizations in southern Africa. In South Africa some groups have already begun to establish these links. American health professionals have started a Committee for Health in South Africa (CHISA) to support the non-racial National Medical and Dental Association of South Africa. The Labor Committees Against Apartheid have forged closer links with South African trade unions. U.S. academics have more recently begun to establish contacts with the South African Union of Democratic University Staff Associations.

On another front, the creation of the Mozambique Support Network (MSN) in 1987 led to one of the strongest local networks of activists in the U.S. On the difficult front of mobilizing support for a front-line state, the MSN has been remarkably successful, linking local groups together and local groups to groups in Mozambique. The very success of MSN in isolating the anti-government Renamo and winning U.S. government support for Mozambique, reveals quite well the contradictions of solidarity work in the 1980s: broader U.S. support has been won concurrently with and to some extent as a result of Mozambique's movement away from a socialist agenda.

Such cases highlight a potential tension among various forms of support, ranging from primarily humanitarian aid, to solidarity work, to the more politically sensitive support for socialist and democratic initiatives and movements. SAR has already had long discussions on these issues, most notably in relation to the health and educa-

tion agenda in Mozambique. Is the explosion of funding for non-governmental - and formally apolitical - organizations an attempt to demobilize and depoliticize popular demands? How does the solidarity movement respond to the charge, as D. W. Nabudere puts it, that "the NGOs will become an important aspect of . . . imperialism of low intensity management at the grass roots level" (*Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly* (Harare) February 1990, p.4). If Mozambique and Zimbabwe focus such debates now, the forces contending for a role in a post-apartheid South Africa are already posing such questions anew.

### Looking forward

As the movement looks forward, its central problem may be to cast its net wider, to link together a greater constituency. Similarly, greater linkages with groups in southern Africa need continuation and expansion, not initiation. In large part, work in these areas has been the ongoing process of the 1980s, and needs to be built upon as we build the movement against sanctions and support for the ANC and the MDM in the immediate future. A far greater challenge will be to seize the ideological initiative and win support for democratic and socialist initiatives of the peoples of southern Africa.

Take, for example, the issue of negotiations and a post-apartheid settlement. Here the U.S. movement is quite capable of winning support for one-person, one-vote in a unitary South Africa. Anything less can be revealed as the old separate-but-equal ideology of segregation.

But how might attacks - such as President Bush's - on the ANC's and MDM's call for nationalization be countered? Here we will have to hammer home the inequalities fostered by, and the undemocratic power exercised by, South Africa's handful of monopolies. And at the same time emphasize the democratic right of the majority of South Africans to decide their own future,

including the break-up of the economic institutions created by apartheid.

Another question might be how will the continuing challenge of internationally-imposed structural adjustments of the IMF and the World Bank be countered? Facing this need a few years ago, Latin American activists in the U.S. formed a "Debt Crisis Network" that sought to link the issue of debt with popular local pressures in the United States against banks and savings and loans companies. No such ties have taken hold in the southern Africa activist community.

Yet, the protests in southern Africa against the costs of privatization, structural adjustment and "free enterprise" economics that have recently been discussed in these pages can only continue to escalate. The southern Africa solidarity movement's inability to increase the awareness of dictated foreign pressures or to generate support for resistance against them, will be a critical issue in the 1990s. It may also entail greater sympathy with the contradictions and opponents of state policies - no matter how progressive such states may be.

None of these campaigns will be as easy as the above might suggest. Each will require considerable sensitivity to a more complex situation in southern Africa, a far more discerning eye between competing political movements and parties on the ground. Even more challenging is the question of solidarity work in the context of a post-apartheid southern Africa. If the solidarity movement has a poor record of responding to the needs of newly independent countries, what might the 1990s bring in southern Africa? Can we turn the absence of the cold war and support for popular sovereignty to our advantage? Or will southern Africa, in light of the changes in Europe and Asia, become but a backwater of U.S. public concern and thus a free field for U.S. intervention?

# Mozambique: The Debate Continues

## Michel Cahen Writes...

Last spring (1989) I sent your magazine the enclosed manifesto, "Vaincre la Guerre, Par la Démocratie, Par le Socialisme" [translated below; ed.] signed by Claude Meillassoux, Christine Messiant and Michel Cahen of Paris and Jorge Derluguian of Moscow. Because the war of aggression in Mozambique has been transformed into a civil war, and because, after fifteen years of independence under a one-party system, Mozambican society badly needs democratization – in order, in particular, to revitalize the class struggle – we call for direct negotiations between Frelimo and Renamo and for free elections. Later this manifesto was signed by Samir Amin and Alfredo Nergarido.

*SAR* didn't publish this document at the time [it is, however, reproduced immediately after this letter – ed.] – that's your right. However, I feel this is part of a more general pattern of *SAR*'s systematically ignoring French writings on Mozambique and Angola, and especially those writings that have been developing

a Marxist critique of those countries from the very beginning – and not merely since the introduction of these countries' new economic programmes. Thus, *SAR* has never published reviews of Michel Cahen, *Mozambique, la Révolution Implosée* (Paris: d'Harmattan, 1987); *Politique Africaine*, #29 (May, 1988), special issue entitled "Mozambique: Guerre et Nationalismes"; and *Laboratoire "Tiers Monde-Afrique," Bourgs et Villes en Afrique Lusophone* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 1989), a book with two extended articles on Angola.

I don't write out of a sense of personal grievance but rather because the ignoring of this work affects negatively the quality of *SAR*. Thus, I have read with interest, though also with sadness, Otto Roesch's article, "Nampula: What's Left?" (*SAR*, November, 1989). But what this article criticizes – correctly – is something about Mozambique that has been studied in France for many years! For example, the tendency towards the return of forced labour in Nampula was studied in my book,

*Mozambique: la Révolution Implosée*, in a chapter written in 1986, while the effects of villagization were studied by Christian Geffray in his writings (published in part) of 1985 (I hope, incidentally, that you will be able to find space to give proper attention to his powerful forthcoming book, *La Cause des Armes. Anthropologie de la Guerre Contemporaine au Mozambique*). In addition, a great many fundamental problems have not yet even been taken up by *SAR*, beginning with the very process of first constructing the Mozambican and Angolan states. The fact that *SAR* is a militant review with limited space does not justify such silence. One can be both militant and critical, but you have been critical – and then only relatively so – for a mere two years. In general, *SAR* condemns only those errors of Frelimo and the MPLA that the two parties have themselves already criticized: re-read your various issues and you will see that this is the case.

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(Translated from the French by *SAR*)

## The Cahen Document: Victory via Democracy for Socialism

Beginning in 1976, and particularly since 1984, Mozambique has experienced a horrifying war. Frelimo, whose anti-colonial armed struggle led the country to independence, is set against Renamo in this conflict. At the beginning, Renamo was made up of no more than a few hundred defeated Mozambican soldiers from the colonial army and a handful of turn coats from Frelimo, who were regrouped, financed and trained by Rhodesia and certain sections of the defeated colonial bourgeoisie, and later by South Africa. Imperialism initially, and South Africa until today, bear major responsibility for this situation. But in the thirteen years of conflict, the war of

aggression has become a civil war. Today, even as everyone recognizes that there is no military solution to the war, the Mozambican state's diplomatic offensive to put an end to the conflict has finally run aground.

### The impasse of the one-party system

Today Frelimo's leadership confronts a dilemma which is imposed by the constitution of the one-party state.

On the one hand, it can agree to direct negotiations with the enemy. Because of the constitutional make-up of the country, which mandates a one-party system, such negotiations could have no other

goal than the incorporation of some members of a seditious organization into Frelimo and the state it controls. This power-sharing within the Party-State implies major political concessions on Frelimo's part.

On the other hand, if the Frelimo leadership remains faithful to its goals and principles, it can repudiate such concessions and refuse to open political negotiations. It would have no other option then, than to tempt and lure individual members of the enemy to desert, while at the same time pursuing military offensives. Amnesties and pardons which permit dignified surrender are indeed indispensable, and from some perspectives, exemplary and courageous, but they have been shown to be unable to put an end to conflict.

The constitution of the one-party system gives rise to this conflict between negotiations and betrayal of principle, on the one hand, and insufficient amnesties, on the other. But it also has other consequences.

### **Isolation of the government and comprehensive social crisis**

The absence of pluralist institutions, and of parties and other organizations independent of the state and speaking for the diverse and contradictory forces within Mozambican society, has produced a situation in which only the highest party leaders can take the initiative in making criticisms and proposing solutions. This is why President Samora Machel was simultaneously the most forceful critic of the state and also its leader. But if he led the extra-official campaigns to re-establish civic order and productive capacity, it was because no regular procedures existed to accomplish these goals. "Popular power" could be nothing else, structurally, than the power of the party, and in turn, of its leadership. Thus the state and the party which controlled it came to be perceived as exterior and often hostile forces in relation to the population they claimed to represent and administer. A profound demobilization resulted, to the ex-

tent that some of the population felt that the conflict between Frelimo and Renamo was a private war between two rival armies over the rewards to be obtained from controlling the people. Part of the rural population was able to accept the local authority of Renamo without necessarily adhering to its "aims," in order to protect themselves from the most deadly consequences of a politics which had nothing in common with its real aspirations.

The absence of pluralist institutions therefore indirectly played a part in the transformation from a war of aggression to a civil war.

### **The Democratic Outcome**

With the preparatory debates for Frelimo's fifth congress in progress [Ed: the article is dated March 30 and April 15 1989, before Frelimo's congress], and at a time when constitutional change is on the agenda in Mozambique, the leadership has the means to break out of the sterile alternatives of negotiation/betrayal or amnesty. The best solution would be that Frelimo compel Renamo to become a legal political party, and that the international community then monitor its attempts to achieve legitimacy through elections, if such was the will of the people, in competition with Frelimo and any other political organizations. Within this perspective, direct negotiations with the enemy would no longer entail betrayal, because their goal would no longer be power-sharing. It would be only a question of discussing technical arrangements for a cease-fire and for disarming. Frelimo would then have created the conditions for pursuing the struggle by other means than war: no fundamental political concession would have been required on its part, no "reconciliation" would have taken place, and Frelimo would not have withdrawn the political assessment which it has already made of the nature and objectives of Renamo.

Such a process would be uncertain. Whatever its outcome, it

would permit Frelimo and the government to take the political initiative, and to regain its lost credibility with the nation, since it would have had the courage to submit to the will of the people. Taking this road would also reinforce their international stature, as have the initiatives of the Sandinistas when confronted by the Contras.

A party which claims to be the leading force in society must struggle daily and democratically to win this political role, a role which no constitution could, or should guarantee. The view that each class finds its expression in a single party and that the state power of a class can only be materialized in the power of a single party does not belong to the marxist tradition. It is the creation and the inheritance of the Stalin era. Only the pluralist democratization of the nation, through trade unions, associations and political parties, can create the conditions for a new dynamism in the movement of society. This is indispensable if the socialist orientation is to be renewed, since it derives its power from the consent, mobilization, responsibility and sovereignty of the people, instead of from their blind respect for orders.

Anyone who thinks that pluralist democracy doesn't make sense "in Africa" because of its level of social development, is a racist. In the countries of Africa, as elsewhere, the genuine expression of social movements requires pluralist institutions in order to facilitate the dynamic unfolding of the class struggle.

Claude Meillassoux (Director of Research, CNRS, Paris)  
Christine Messiant (Researcher, EHESS, Paris)  
Michel Cahen (Researcher, CNRS, Bordeaux)  
Jorge Derluguian (Researcher, Inst. World History, Moscow)

(Translated from the French by SAR)

# Otto Roesch

## Replies

Cahen's letter and the manifesto reproduced above (to which Cahen is a co-signatory) raise a number of provocative and important issues about the nature of the war in Mozambique, the options for peace, and the politics of solidarity work and scholarship.

In his letter Cahen charges that *SAR* is "systematically ignoring" French scholarly production on Mozambique and, worse yet, belatedly converting to positions long since advanced by French Marxist scholars, without acknowledging it.

Let me begin by assuring Cahen that there is no conspiracy within *SAR* to ignore French scholarly production on Mozambique and Angola. Of course, limitations of space, the varying availability of suitable reviewers and the dictates of our own editorial judgment regarding *SAR*'s priorities do determine how much we can and will cover. Nonetheless, we welcome the opportunity to present our readers with differing views and analyses of events in southern Africa and are pleased to have the opportunity to do so again with Cahen's own correspondence.

More substantively, with regards to Geffray's pioneering work on the communal villages of Nampula and the role of forced villagization in escalating the war in that province, I am quite willing to acknowledge the influence of his findings on my short article in the November 1989 issue of *SAR* to which Cahen refers in his letter. (For what it's worth, an earlier version of this article actually contained an explicit reference to Geffray's work, but it was edited out of the final published version for reasons of space.) I have also ac-

knowledged the importance of Geffray's work in the context of a debate currently taking place in the pages of the *Southern African Review of Books* with which Cahen is quite familiar, though he may not have seen my contribution before writing his letter. As I make clear in my contribution to this debate, while I recognize the importance of Geffray's work, I do not necessarily share the interpretations which Cahen and others have made of it. It is accordingly with great anticipation that I and others in the *SAR* editorial collective look forward to receiving a review copy of Geffray's "powerful" forthcoming book.

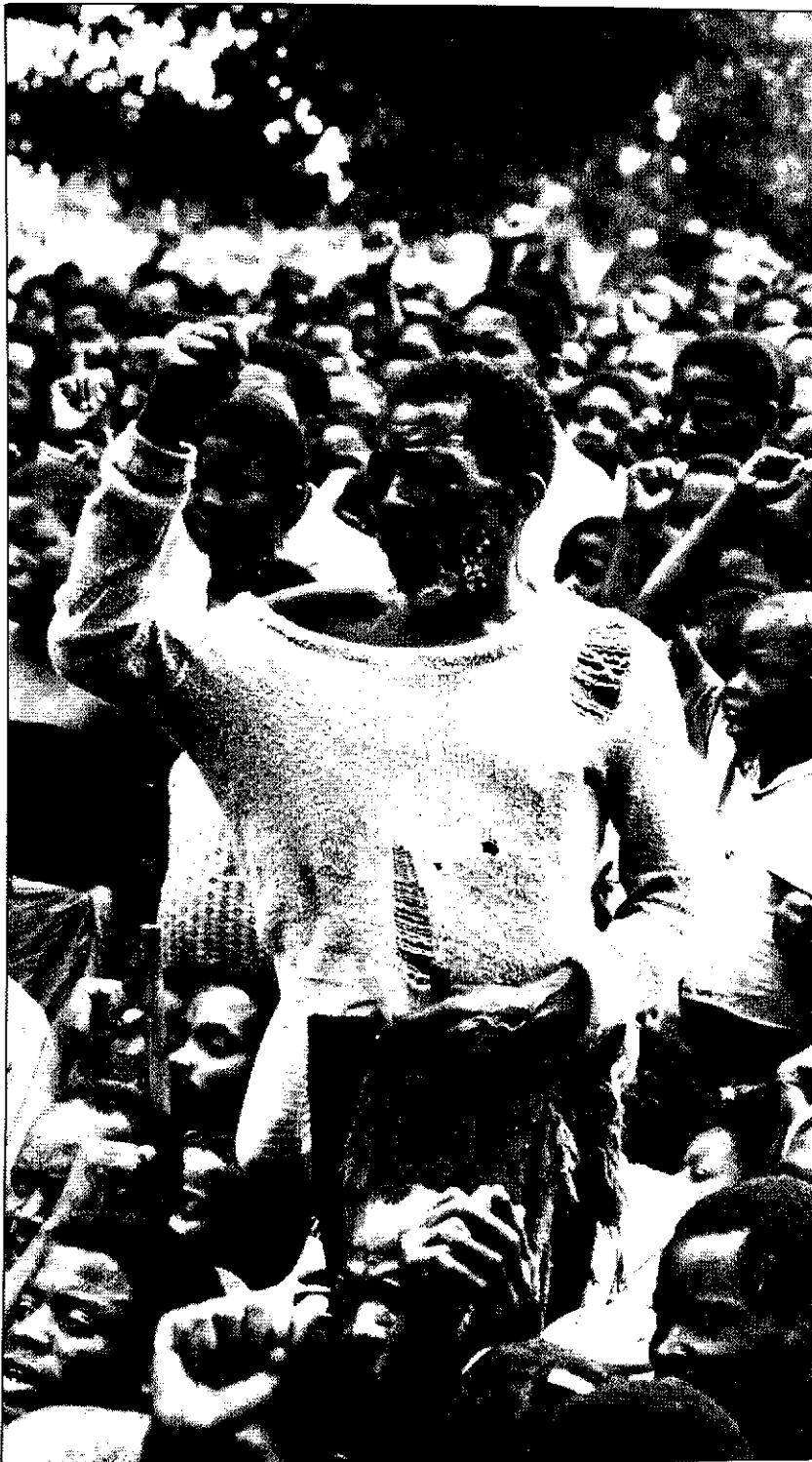
It is perhaps precisely with regard to the question of differing interpretations of Mozambique's current crisis that Cahen's unhappiness with *SAR* should be seen. He accuses *SAR* of taking a critical position towards Mozambique only over the past two years, since the introduction of the structural adjustment programme, and of pointing to Frelimo policy errors only after Frelimo has itself done so. It is our view that our analytical starting point has always been one of critical solidarity, though it is true that our criticisms of Mozambique have become sharper since 1986, as the country's political drift away from a socialist project became increasingly apparent. If Cahen feels that he and other French Mozambique scholars were correct in seeing, from a very early date, some kind of inevitability or inarrestability in this drift then he is welcome to that interpretation - although many of us will continue to find the development process in Mozambique to have been quite a bit more contradictory and contested than Cahen's rather schematic nostrums would permit. Yet as the manifesto co-authored by Cahen itself makes clear, what is at issue here is less a matter of historical analysis than of how Mozambique's current crisis is to be interpreted.

Thus, while many of us here at *SAR* share the concerns expressed

by Cahen and his co-authors about the need for greater democratization in Mozambique, and would concede that in the past we have indeed given insufficient critical attention to the nature of the Mozambican state, we have a number of major reservations about the proposals put forward in the above article and the assumptions which underlie them.

First, the article's characterization of the current conflict in Mozambique, as a war of external aggression now become civil war is, we believe, fundamentally misguided. It is our position that the conflict remains a war of aggression against Mozambique, organized and nurtured by elements within South Africa and right-wing groups elsewhere in the world, and that this externally organized war has generated *not* a civil war, but rather a process of anomie and general social breakdown, especially in the countryside. As Geffray's own early work in Nampula shows, and as my own research in that province continues to confirm, peasant alienation from Frelimo has not entailed large-scale active political support for Renamo, but at best passive neutrality towards both sides. The peasants may be embittered with Frelimo, but they are far from embracing Renamo. Those Mozambicans who compose Renamo's rank and file are either captives, forcibly recruited into its ranks, or alienated peasant youths with opportunistic motives, who see membership in Renamo as merely a vehicle for plunder and personal accumulation. Renamo's recruits give no evidence of being ideologically motivated and are totally lacking in any sort of political commitment or discipline. In short, Renamo does not enjoy a social base in any conventional guerrilla warfare sense of the word and lacks a clearly defined political project. It remains pre-eminently an instrument of foreign destabilization and terror which ultimately speaks for no one inside the country.

The instrumental and artificial



A man who spoke during a rally with President Chissano, Gorongosa, Mozambique, October 1989

Alfredo Mueche/AIM

political nature of Renamo was clearly evidenced in the abortive round of church-mediated negotiations which Frelimo sought to hold with Renamo in Nairobi this past summer [Additional evidence is provided in the article on Renamo in this issue.] Divided and lacking clear political orientation, Renamo representatives were hardly able to formulate a coherent response to Mozambican government proposals. Moreover, up until two years ago, Renamo was an organization dominated by white Portuguese nationals, not by Mozambicans, and only through the efforts of Renamo's western sponsors to groom black Mozambicans for leadership positions, has the organization been able to salvage a modicum of international political credibility.

This being the case, and without wishing to apologize for the authoritarian tendencies in Frelimo's one-party system, what would Mozambican citizens have to gain by dealing with Renamo through a Sandinista-style exercise in multi-party electoral politics as advocated by Cahen and his co-authors? While it would certainly win them the approval of western governments, why should Renamo, which continues to be the external arm of the South African military, be the beneficiary of such a political opening? The Nicaraguan contras clearly represent not only the external interests of the U.S. administration, but also the internal interests of the pre-revolutionary Nicaraguan ruling class and certain sectors of the Nicaraguan middle class. But which internal interests does Renamo represent? Where is its political/class constituency inside Mozambique? If Frelimo chooses to adopt a pluralistic political system and a multi-party system, which may now indeed be the only potential guarantor of real democracy inside Mozambique, let it be for the benefit of genuinely Mozambican political groups, not for the benefit of the South African military and its surrogates.

# Courageous Lives

BY LINZI MANICOM

*Linzi Manicom is currently doing research on South African women.*

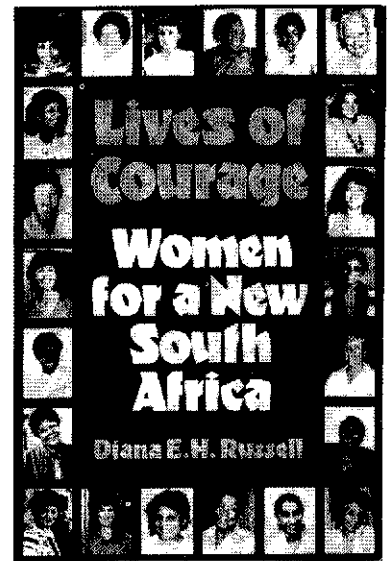
*Lives of Courage: Women for a New South Africa* by Diana E. H. Russell, Basic Books Inc., New York 1989, Hardback, (Cdn\$24.95). 375 pages

*Lives of Courage* is yet another collection of interviews with South African women. About five years ago there was a mild rash of such books (See *SAR* Vol. 1, No. 2, October 1985) the interview format being a preferred one within the slim bibliography of literature on South African women. With good reason: women's life stories simultaneously document the particularly heavy burden that apartheid lays across black women's shoulders while demonstrating the ways in which women have been coping, resisting and actively engaging in anti-apartheid struggle. Even more importantly, interviews give space for South African women to speak in their own words to an international readership, and to communicate and define the issues in their own terms. While belonging to this popular genre, *Lives of Courage* offers some new and distinctive perspectives.

All 24 women whose stories fill the pages are political activists. Certainly many of the same interviewees appear in this book as did in those earlier publications - the inevitable Winnie Mandela, octogenarian activist Helen Joseph, UDF leader Albertina Sisulu, ANC executive member Ruth Mompati, the outspoken trade unionist Lydia Kompe, and Black Sasher Sheena Duncan, amongst a few others. But there are also new voices and personalities, many of a younger generation of women whose biographies reflect the impact of the mid-eighties uprising and ongoing States of Emergency.

The intensified repression of this more recent era of resistance is evident in the interviews in the first section of the book which focus on the physical and emotional torture sustained and survived by women in prison. The experiences are recalled in sometimes horrific, other times disquietingly dispassionate imagery. In fact, almost all the women interviewed, who range in age from 13 to 82 years old, have had some experience of detention and prison. Other women describe their experiences of living under surveillance or on-the-run, of withstanding Inkatha's violent rampages, of participating in volatile mass demonstrations.

The central role that South African women play in holding their households together, and as being primarily responsible for children adds a particular dimension to their experience of apartheid's repression. Ruth Mompati, member of the ANC national executive, recalls poignantly the experience of having to leave behind her young children when she was forced into exile, losing their childhoods before meeting them ten years later. Thirteen year-old Leila Issel talks of the trauma she went through during the harassment and detention of her parents, while her mother, Shahieda, speaks of the emotional strain of trying to balance maternal and political responsibility. Unionist Emma Mashinini talks about the hardships experienced by pregnant women workers. Women's sexuality leaves them vulnerable, in a gender-specific way, to the threat and practice of sexual humiliation and abuse at the hand of their oppressors. The more painful passages of the book contain descriptions of forms of "sexual terrorism" experienced by women prisoners and, in different ways, by domestic employees.



Compared with previously published interviews, the ones in this book are seemingly more reflective about social identities and feelings, sometimes quite intimate ones; they are more articulate about the personal and emotional impact of the racist and patriarchal structures of apartheid. This certainly attests to the orientation, skill and trust of Diana Russell as interviewer. But it also suggests a growing legitimacy for "the personal" within the political discourse of women in the broad liberation movement.

The kinds of political activities that are recounted in many of the interviews are ones which were not prominent in the repertoire of resistance even half a decade ago, or are forms of struggle in which women at that time were not particularly involved. Paula Hathorn describes the draft resistance work organized by the End Conscription Campaign in which young white women have tended to be centrally involved. A couple of women talk about counseling rape victims, about organizing against sexual violence and harassment in schools and other locales. The popular movement's strategy to organize broadly at regional and national levels is reflected in the accounts of some of the



women. Florence de Villiers tells of the formation of a national domestic workers' union for instance, and Gertrude Fester discusses the issues being addressed by those engaged in organizing women into the Cape-based United Women's Congress and in attempting to form a national women's federation.

Reading of the daily preoccupations of these activists, the taken-for-grantedness of working under the ominous and omnipresent eyes of repressive state apparatuses, and the ongoing intensity of political developments that call for rapid organizational response, one gets a vivid sense of the culture of anti-apartheid activism in South Africa and the tremendous energy, courage and commitment that sustains it. One can also read in the women's narratives the way in which this culture of resistance is shaped by gender: women are more involved in supporting the families of detainees, in addressing the welfare needs of displaced persons, in taking on the nitty-gritty work that maintains organizations - "the invisible work," as one woman put it. Some suggest that they also bring a distinctive perspective to their activism. As Elaine Mohamed puts it: "I think [women] are more radicalized than a lot of the men because they're far more emotionally involved in the pain and trauma of what's going on in this country."

Sexism and gender inequality in the democratic movement (and in South African society generally) are candidly criticized by a number of the women. In fact, what distinguishes *Lives of Courage* from earlier collections of South African women's stories, is the explicit discussion and debate of issues of gender and feminism by the interviewees. Russell has enhanced this discussion by directly questioning her respondents about the role of women in the anti-apartheid struggle and by gathering together some of their views in a special section. The book as a whole provides an interesting index of the

development of the debate around feminism within the South African democratic movement over the past few years.

In previous discussions, the particular oppressions wrought by apartheid on women were rarely perceived in terms of gender oppression. Women interviewed tended to reject the idea of women's oppression by men as being an issue of political concern for black South African women; the government, the apartheid system, was the oppressor. If the issue of women's liberation was acknowledged, it was subordinate, in this prevalent view, to the fight against apartheid.

A number of women in Russell's book, particularly the younger ones, hold a very different position today. Proclaiming themselves feminists, they argue that the struggle against sexual and gender oppression is as important as the fight against other forms of oppression. They refer to the male domination of the democratic movement, the lack of women in leadership positions, the silencing of women's interventions, as well as the sexist practices of their comrades as issues that must

be taken up immediately. Some of the younger generation feel that the older women, those of the 'Fifties generation of activists, basically do not see the import of gender issues and are complicit with the men in suppressing them. "The old women still believe that the men run the show together with a few important females ... I feel that the message often comes from the top that we should subdue our feminist or gender struggle for the broader national struggle, and that there will be time for the gender struggle later."

It is true that many of the older generation continue to talk about political struggles without acknowledging gender, referring to women only as victims of apartheid and as mothers. Winnie Mandela and Albertina Sisulu, for instance, hold this line, suggesting that the inordinate pressure on women under apartheid has forced them to be strong and therefore not subordinate. "We transcend sexism because we are not given the opportunity to feel that we are women." But it also seems, from the interviews in this book, that even amongst the earlier generation of activists, there is



Gertrude Fester talks of *The United Women's Congress*

Lives of Courage

creeping acknowledgment of gender oppression as a political issue, and one that must be tackled by the liberation movements now.

Diana Russell's identity as a South African-born sociologist now resident in the US, well-connected within the democratic movement, and a feminist, clearly informed her perceptions and contributed to the quality of the interviews. Her presence in the text, in the informative introductions and commentary, enhances our appreciation of the women she talked to. To strengthen the book's value as a solidarity tool, she asked women specifically for their views on the role of international pressure and sanctions on bringing down apartheid. But what will be most valuable in eliciting solidarity for the struggle for a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa – as the January 1990 Malibongwe SA Women's Conference in Amsterdam demanded – is this portrayal of women activists as extraordinarily courageous, sensitive, astute and tenacious.



Lives of Courage

*Lydia Kompe talks of Sexism in the Union and at Home*

## Readers' Forum . . . .



### Pierre Who?

April 3, 1990

I am writing as a supportive and enthusiastic subscriber to your magazine which in my opinion is superb. We in the churches value highly the quality and extent of the information updates and analysis *SAR* provides on southern Africa, and we eagerly look forward to each new issue.

I am concerned, however, about some recent editorial decisions you have taken involving the publication of articles pseudonymously and unsigned. I refer specifically to "In a Lull: Canada's Anti-Apartheid Movement" (December 1989) and "Buying Silence" (February 1990).

In the case of "In a Lull", many of your readers either knew immediately or quickly figured out Pierre Francois' true identity. Many who didn't know soon found out via the always active anti-apartheid grapevine. Certainly there were questions about why the author would want to use a pseudonym, but equally there were questions about why *SAR* felt in necessary to agree to the author's request for anonymity. What were your reasons editorially?

I have some experience with editorial policy governing such matters, having edited and published a magazine in my university days, worked professionally for five years as an editor for a publishing house, and worked for five years as a freelance journalist for a wide variety of magazines and newspapers. In most cases, only under extraordinary circumstances, usually involving risk

to the career or physical well-being of the author, would a decision be taken to conceal his or her true identity. Did Mr. François fear for livelihood, life or limb?

In the case of "Buying Silence", again there was little doubt among *SAR* readers I spoke with about who actually wrote the article. I think *SAR*, its readership and the issues addressed in the article would have been better served had it been published either as an unsigned editorial or with a byline. I want to be clear that my problem is not with the content of the article. In fact I share many of its perceptions. I do have a question about the timing, in that recent meetings between the NGO, church and solidarity group community have demonstrated an unprecedented (in my experience) spirit of cooperation and collaboration. My main concern is with your decision to hide behind a curtain of anonymity. It suggests to me that you lack the confidence in yourselves to simply lay your concerns, perceptions, opinions - all of which, whether true or not, are legitimate - squarely on the table.

By taking the editorial decisions you have in both these cases, it seems to me you have, inadvertently I am certain, promoted secrecy and intrigue around issues that, if they are to be resolved in the best interests of the common struggle to end apartheid, require open and frank discussion. Secrecy and intrigue will not advance our common cause, they will only set us back, and I am certain that is not your desire or objective.

I eagerly await the next issue of *SAR* which I know will, as always, provide me with materials important to and useful in my work with the churches.

Yours sincerely,  
Gary Kenny  
Education Project  
on Southern Africa  
Inter-Church  
Coalition on Africa  
Toronto

## SAR Replies

We in the *SAR* collective appreciate Gary Kenny's very generous assessment of the journal. He raises serious questions about our editorial policy that merit a considered response.

A year ago we argued that Canadian solidarity activists "are not doing enough serious rethinking and evaluation of our strategies and priorities to respond to the more intricate issues now being posed" (*SAR* vol. 4 no. 5 (May 1989) p.2). We've been concerned that these discussions have been slow to happen.

We published Pierre François' "In a Lull" because we saw it as a provocative call to reflection and renewal. The author insisted on a pseudonym. Our decision to accept his condition was based on our assessment of the real interest of the article to our readers and its potential value in stimulating discussion.

The decision to publish "Buying Silence" as a "response from a group of Toronto-based southern Africa solidarity activists" entailed more complex calculations. We decided to publish it as an unsigned article for two reasons. First, although there was some overlap between the editorial working group and said group of "solidarity activists", the statement was not that of the editorial working group. Secondly, an unsigned article would undoubtedly have been interpreted as a statement of TCLSAC policy which it was not. Some amongst those of us who were part of the group thought that anonymity would enable people to speak more frankly. In the end it was a judgment call and we decided to go with publication without naming the solidarity activists.

We are perhaps less confident than Kenny that the ethics of pseudonymous publication are clear cut. Many journals permit the writers of letters to the editor to withhold their names. Kenny suggests

that anonymity implies a "lack of confidence." Perhaps, but it can also be conducive to a more frank presentation of opinion.

Neither decision was taken without serious discussion. In each case, we felt that the benefit to the solidarity movement in having these issues discussed openly outweighed any potential for injured feelings and the atmosphere of "secrecy and intrigue" over which Kenny is legitimately concerned.

We are gratified at his words of praise about the value of *SAR*'s contribution to ongoing solidarity work in the churches and look forward to continued collaboration with him in future as a contributing author, an active promoter and a critical challenger to *SAR*.

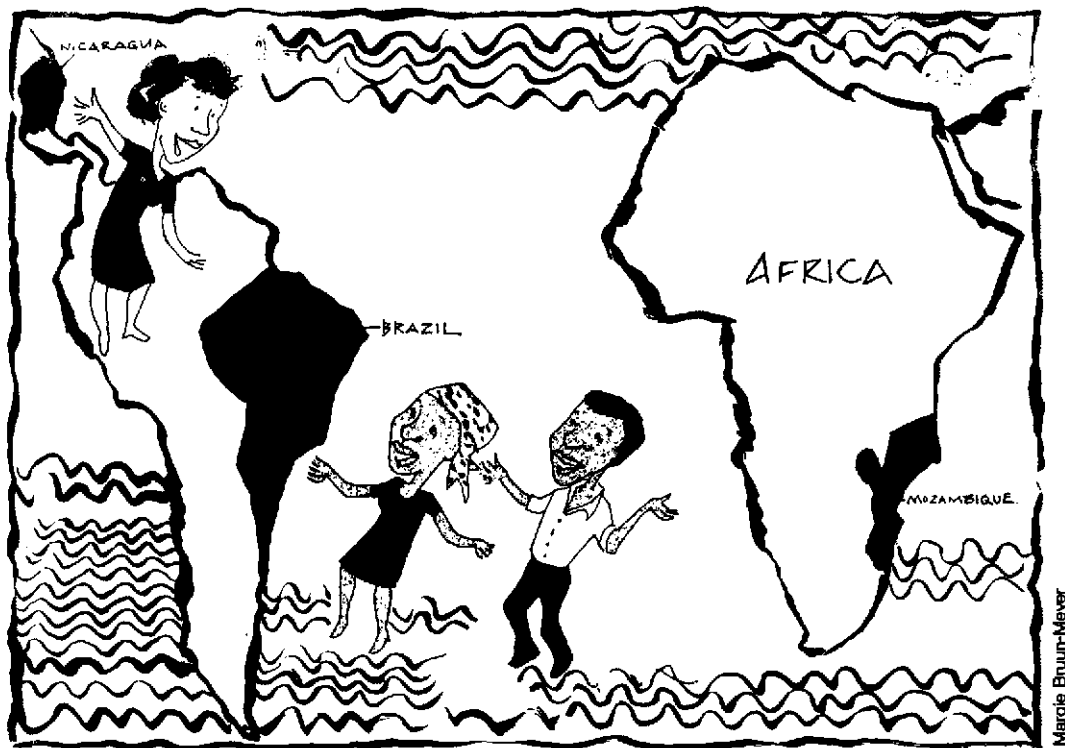
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## Silence?

7 April 1990

We have heard tell of strong negative reactions to our article, "Buying Silence?" in the last issue of *SAR*. As members of the group who wrote the piece, we have been on stand-by to respond to letters taking up the substantive issues. Unfortunately, none has reached us in written form as the current issue goes to press. We have also had conversations with other activists during the weeks since "Buying Silence?" appeared. Their commentaries on the article have ranged from "too intolerant about the multiple ways to do solidarity work" to "Exactly what I've been experiencing and worrying about. Thank goodness you've put out a really strong position for us to engage with." We really urge *SAR* readers to find the time to put their reactions on paper for the next issue. We think these are crucial debates at this juncture in our work.

Judith Marshall  
John Saul  
Toronto



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**Shirley Walters**, Centre of Continuing and Adult Education, University of the Western Cape, South Africa

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**Bev Burke and Rick Arnold**, popular educators, Doris Marshall Institute, Toronto

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