

# Southern Africa REPORT

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Don't Forget . . .

## Namibia



CHRIS TAPSCOTT  
SUSAN BROWN  
COLIN LEYS

*on Namibia*



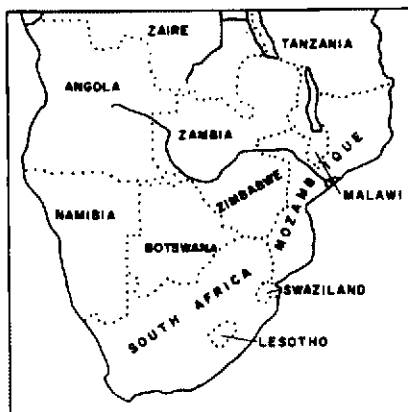
GERHARD MARÉ *on Inkathagate*

ROB DAVIES *on Peace and War  
in Mozambique*

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# REPORT

November 1991



## Southern Africa REPORT

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# Blowin' in the Windhoek



John Liebenberg/Afrapix—Impact Visuals

Expectations have been cruelly lowered in southern Africa, as a cold gust of the new realism continues to cut a swath across the region. Nowhere is this more true than in Namibia, a territory that a year or two ago experienced its own brief flash of headlines in the world's press. But Namibia has since disappeared into the nether-world of global indifference, its dramatic liberation from South African overrule now, to many, not much more than a historical footnote. For the anti-apartheid movement the reasons for a certain lack of interest in a "liberated Namibia" are rather more complex than merely a short attention span, however. The fact that, in many particulars, the new SWAPO government has provided a pretty conventional "neo-colonial" denouement to the long freedom struggle waged by Namibians, helps explain this response. Even at a point when distinctly lowered and "more realistic" expectations are the order of the day, it is not easy to rationalize the very great gap that exists between

the socialist promise of SWAPO's 1976 Political Programme (cited in Chris Tapscott's lead article in this issue) and the present, much greyer reality.

There is, of course, much more to be said about Namibia's present-day reality than we attempt to cover in the three lead articles (by Tapscott, Brown and Leys) that provide the thematic centre-piece to the current issue. But Tapscott's analysis is a sobering one, nonetheless, teasing out the signs that SWAPO leaders are being drawn, willy-nilly, into the small, self-referential world of a deracialized privileged elite in their country, at the expense of their presumed vocation to advance the interests of the much larger number of Namibian underprivileged. SWAPO leaders, queried recently on such matters by a member of *SAR*'s editorial working group, were quick to highlight the broader constraints within which they have been forced to define their independence project: the gale forces that have blown apart the erstwhile "socialist bloc" and left standing ever more firmly a rapacious "new world order" under western capitalist auspices; the winds of change in the region that produced for SWAPO a transitional process and a new constitutional dispensation very far from that movement's heart's desire. Yet even when appropriate weight has been given to such factors, the central questions posed by Tapscott's analysis remain: has SWAPO much too readily trimmed its sails to catch the prevailing breezes? have its leaders much too comfortably made a virtue of the "necessities" that undoubtedly do crowd in upon them?

These are questions that can be asked of other leaderships in the region, of course, as the struggle continues to redefine "the art of the possible" on the very difficult terrain that southern Africa has recently become. In the Namibian case there may be additional grounds for scepticism about the present leadership's progressive credentials. After all,

the history of SWAPO's own evolution as a liberation movement is a checkered one, too often marked by the kind of authoritarian turns that produced, most graphically, the cruel and well-documented atrocities in SWAPO's own Angolan bases in the 1980s. The swirl of revelations around South Africa's Inkathagate scandal has recently produced further evidence of the way in which South Africa sought surreptitiously to tilt the balance against SWAPO in the elections leading up to independence, one more index of the way in which external forces have sought to conspire against the movement. Quite probably, this was one way in which very conservative forces within Namibian society have indeed been strengthened.

At the same time, the fact that such machinations may have helped keep SWAPO from gaining a two-thirds majority in the pre-independence election (and hence a much freer hand in constitution-making) is not deeply to be regretted. For this, in turn, forced SWAPO to accept a much more open political system than it might otherwise have been prepared to consider. True, it is the right (notably entrenched white interests) that has, up to now, most effectively taken advantage of this political space for its own purposes. Nonetheless, the possibility exists that popular forces will begin to emerge on this terrain that can, over time, challenge Namibia's new elites and pressure parties like SWAPO to be more honest to their stated left-populist purposes.

Not that the picture is entirely bleak, even as it stands. As Susan Brown documents in this issue, the SWAPO-sponsored Land Conference in June of this year provided an innovative and scrupulously open forum within which the central issue of land was intelligently debated and a wide array of voices heard. Of course, only time will tell whether this conference was designed primarily to be a mere lightning rod for

possible tension, a context for "letting off steam," or instead designed to facilitate the development of progressive policy innovations in this sphere. Nonetheless, the conference seems to have been a particularly impressive moment.

Colin Leys focuses on a rather less salient sphere, but one no less important to the health of emergent Namibian society than the resolution of the "land question": the sphere of policing, where the grim legacy of the past combines with the contradictions of the present in a way that stretches the imaginations of policy-makers in particularly challenging ways. Moreover, it is on just such apparently modest fronts that many of the most important advances will have to be made in southern Africa in the coming years. The anti-apartheid movement, with its eyes turned to the "big picture" and the overall pattern of development in the region, must also take seriously, as Leys does here, the complexity of struggle in such spheres.

Complexity is the key then, in Namibia as elsewhere in the region. Certainly, the Inkathagate scandal in South Africa was more complicated than most commentators, of left and right, suggested when it first broke earlier this year; Gerhard Maré provides *SAR* readers with some much needed perspective on Inkathagate, and some fresh questions, in this issue. The peace process in Mozambique? Not so very straightforward a matter either, for reasons Rob Davies draws out in another article in this issue. Indeed it is precisely with these kinds of articles that *SAR* is attempting to fill what we take to be our mandate. To work with others in the solidarity movement to sustain great expectations, but to do so, as the present challenging context of our work demands, on the basis of the most rigorous and realistic possible assessment of our circumstances, both in southern Africa and closer to home. To beat against the wind if need be, but not without a compass.

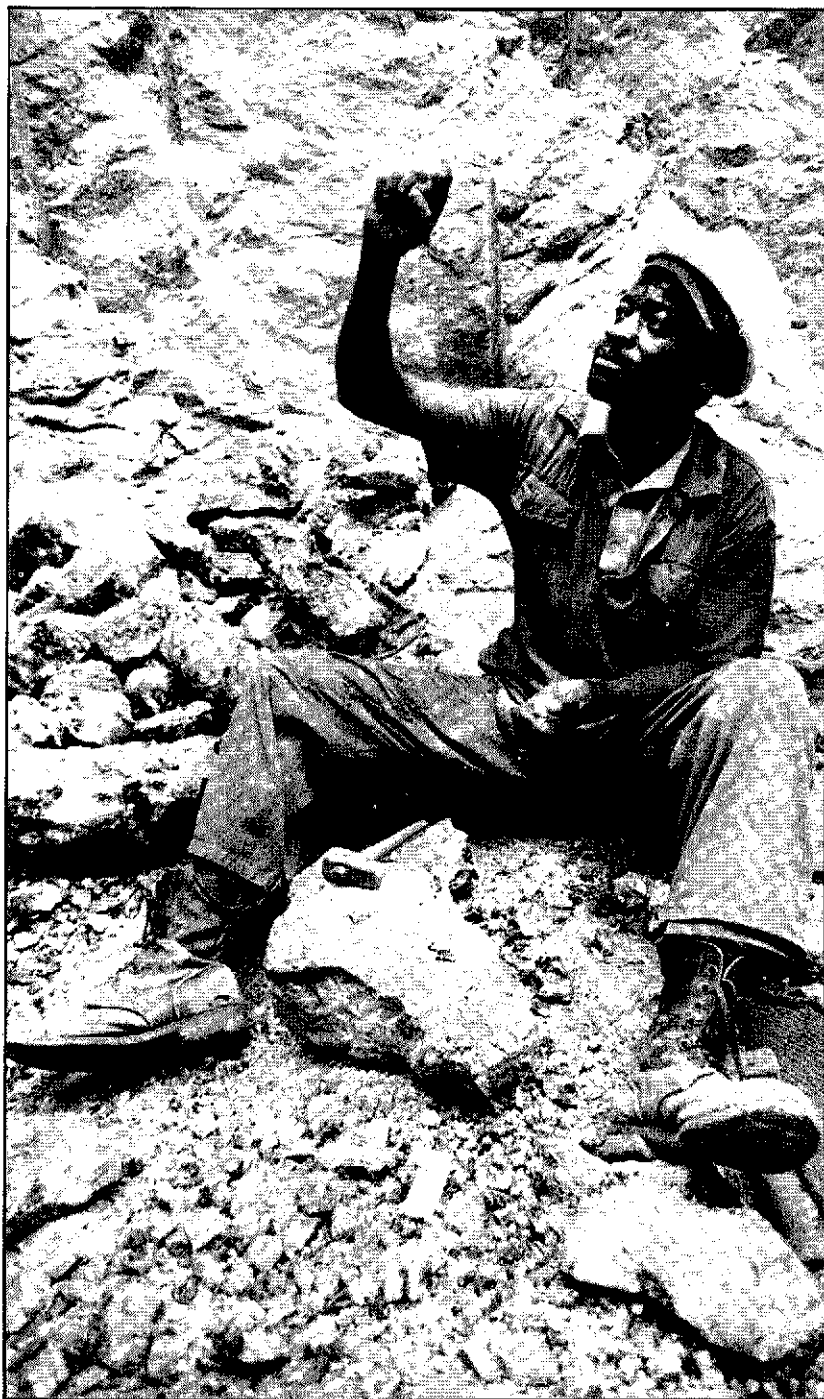
# Namibia: A Class Act?

BY CHRIS TAPSCOTT

*Chris Tapscott heads the Namibian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) at the University in Windhoek, Namibia.*

The independence of Namibia in March of 1990 brought to an end more than a century of colonialism. For the majority of Namibians the history of colonial rule was characterized by dispossession, national oppression and poverty. The policies of this era served, moreover, to reify racial and ethnic divisions within the society, to the extent that different communities were segregated geographically, economically and socially. As in South Africa, class and racial categories in Namibia overlapped, and the small white settler population (backed by Pretoria's military might) controlled the economy as well as the political order. The settler community, together with a tiny black elite which had emerged under the interim government, comprised just five per cent of the population but in 1989 were estimated to control 71% of the GDP. The bottom 55% of the population, in contrast, controlled just three per cent of the GDP. In the context of this structured inequality, most Namibians hoped that the advent of independence would lead to a more equitable and non-racial social order.

In the post-independence era, the form of social stratification does appear to be changing, but not in the way that the dispossessed masses of Namibia might have wished. While it is not possible merely to read off class formation from a series of social indicators, there is evidence of growing stratification in class terms that transcends previous racial and ethnic boundaries. Key to this is the emergence of a new elite, with members of the pre-existing white settler elite now being joined by a new class of senior



*Worker in amethyst mine, Namibia*

Paul Weinberg/Afrapix-Impact Visuals

black administrators, politicians and business people. This new elite inhabits an economic and social world largely divorced from that of the majority of the urban and rural poor. Small wonder that visitors to Windhoek comment with surprise at the number of BMW and Mercedes Benz cars in what is, after all, a third world country. With the limited resources available to the country, critics argue, sustaining the lifestyle of this elite must inevitably occur at the expense of development projects for the poor.

While this trend is by no means unique among newly-independent countries in Africa, it is of special interest in a country ruled by a political party that was, until recently, viewed by many western governments as Marxist in orientation. Furthermore, South Africa in part justified its continued occupation of Namibia in terms of the need to stem the spreading tide of communism, and in this scenario SWAPO was portrayed as being the hand-servant of Moscow. Nor was such a portrayal entirely the fictive creation of Total Strategy theorists seeking to drum up support for their notion of a "total onslaught" against South Africa. SWAPO had, in its 1976 Political Programme, firmly committed itself to the pursuit of scientific socialism and the introduction of a classless society on assumption of power.

#### Nationalism and elite formation

The abandonment of socialist ideals in post-independence Namibia should not be seen merely as some reflex of the global decline of the socialist order. True, certain segments of SWAPO did embrace socialist principles, while the party as a whole was heavily dependent on support from Eastern Bloc countries. Nonetheless, SWAPO was first and foremost a nationalist movement, composed of a broad spectrum of social strata mobilized towards national liberation. As has been true of many other national-

ist movements, SWAPO's populism, packaged in the rhetoric of socialism, became in significant part a vehicle for the self-advancement of specific interest groups within the movement. Although there is little evidence that individuals from among the (extremely small) indigenous elite joined SWAPO specifically to advance their own interests (this only occurred, to a limited extent, towards the end of the liberation war), it is the case that the nationalist movement began to create its own elite, both amongst those in exile and even amongst those who remained at home.

Thus, beyond the consolidation in power of a cadre of political and military leaders who grew out of the liberation struggle and who now occupy leading positions in the new government, the primary determinant of social and economic standing in the post-independence era has become educational attainment. Of the 40,000 to 50,000 Namibians who went into exile, a relatively small proportion (15% at most) underwent comprehensive post-secondary training. The remainder were trained as soldiers or learnt rudimentary artisanal and agricultural skills in camps in Angola. And this differential access to training continues to differentiate exiles, both in their present employment opportunities and in the diverse life-styles to which it accustomed them: although educated individuals by no means lived lives of affluence in exile, their expectations regarding the good life post-independence were clearly influenced by their years in Europe, the USA and elsewhere.

#### Limitations of the Economy

While the demands of the liberation struggle may have served to differentiate its participants, the political economy inherited by SWAPO has also reinforced tendencies towards elitism. Namibia's economy is both dependent and narrowly based, and despite its size, the land is not richly endowed. The country's GDP

is largely accounted for by four sectors: mining and quarrying (32%), general government (18%), wholesale and retailing (13%), and agriculture and fishing (11%). A tendency towards greater capital intensity in both the mining and commercial agricultural sectors has increased the demand for skilled workers and, at the same time, has limited the potential for mass employment generation.

As a consequence of a distorted economy and as a legacy of apartheid rule, there is thus, paradoxically, both a critical shortage of skills (one exacerbated by the departure of many South Africans) and a severe problem of unemployment among the semi-skilled and unskilled. For those black Namibians with skills, demand generally exceeds supply and thus far there has been little competition for employment. Moreover, the jobs they fill tend to be in the urban areas (in Windhoek in particular) where social services are relatively good and life is easier. The converse applies to those who have limited skills. Competition for employment is fierce, wages are low, and many are forced to eke out a subsistence in the rural areas where services are limited or non-existent.

The decision to opt for a "mixed economy" - in practice a capitalist economy - was dictated in part by circumstance (Namibia's dependent economic status, and the collapse of support from socialist countries in particular). Once taken, however, it too limits any very egalitarian policy options that might be chosen by the new government. While SWAPO controls the political arena, it does not control the economy that continues to be dominated by forces which vary, in terms of their support for SWAPO, from indifference to outright hostility. Consequently, in its efforts to promote the confidence of the business sector (which retains the ultimate sanction of disinvestment from Namibia), the gov-

ernment has moved extremely cautiously on issues of affirmative action, minimum wages and the question of land redistribution.

In fact, the SWAPO government has yet even to fully capture the state. As a further consequence of compromises agreed to in the process of constitution-making, job security had to be guaranteed to the middle management of a public service still extensively controlled by civil servants from the former colonial administration. While some of these individuals have adapted to the new order, others appear insidiously to be obstructing efforts to build a more egalitarian and non-racial society.

#### National reconciliation and retention of the status quo

Viewed from one angle, the new government's pursuit of a policy of national reconciliation was both politically astute and economically necessary. Not only did it forestall the flight of much needed skills and capital, it also minimized the potential for political destabilization by disaffected opponents. Nevertheless, the policy of national reconciliation (mediated by a constitution which was forged through inter-party consensus) has done much to reinforce the status quo and further to strengthen trends towards elitism amongst the indigenous population.

Of course, defenders of the new order also point to the fact that subterfuge on the part of the South African government and other opponents of SWAPO in the run up to the 1989 elections (a charge further substantiated by recent revelations out of South Africa), helped deny the party a two-thirds majority in the Constituent Assembly. Such a majority, it is argued, would have freed SWAPO of the necessity of negotiating a constitution that entrenched many of the existing privileges of the colonial administration.

However, in assessing the motivations of the new elites in government, the aphorism that individuals



always have two reasons for doing anything, a good reason and the real reason, springs constantly to mind. It is true that most government policies can be rationalized as being in the interests of national reconciliation or as being determined by the inherent limitations of the constitution or the economy. Nevertheless, it is equally clear that certain specific segments of the population benefit more directly than others from the chosen courses of action. This is nowhere more evident than in state policy towards conditions of service in the public sector.

In that regard, Article 141 (1) of the Constitution served to reinforce the status quo by affirming that "any person holding office under any law in force on the date of Independence shall continue to hold such office unless and until he or she resigns or is retired, transferred or removed from office in accordance with law." This clause

has been interpreted to imply that individuals employed by the colonial government would lose none of their existing employment benefits including generous housing, pension, medical aid and car allowances. The provision, in essence, presented the SWAPO government with something of a dilemma: whether to implement a differential system of benefits for existing and in-coming civil servants (many of whom were SWAPO members) or whether to equalize all employment packages. For various "good reasons" the decision was taken to maintain the existing system of benefits. The result: Namibia is now reputed to have one of the highest civil service salary structures in sub-Saharan Africa. However understandable at one level, this decision does little to redress one of the most glaring inequities of the colonial system, the disproportionate spending of public funds on a largely urban elite.

### Inter-ethnic accommodation

On existing evidence, there is little to suggest that elite formation is preceding primarily along ethnic lines, as many of SWAPO's opponents had predicted. A review of recent senior appointments to the civil service does not indicate any undue favouritism towards the Ovambo-speaking population who form the backbone of SWAPO and who comprise nearly 50 percent of the total population. Although race and ethnicity remain latent lines of stress, they do not, at present, appear to be a limiting factor in the development of a broader class identity.

As for racial integration in the post-apartheid era, that has tended to take place almost exclusively in the upper echelons of the social order. This process was set in motion by the establishment of a government of national unity, whereby a number of opposition leaders were brought into the Cabinet and white Namibians (not all of whom are SWAPO members) were appointed to key portfolios in the Ministries of Finance, Agriculture, Justice and Transport. But high incomes have also now ensured the purchase by most senior black civil servants of homes in the upmarket and formerly exclusively white suburbs of Windhoek. Not a single cabinet minister, for instance, now lives in Katutura, the African township formerly the bastion of political activism in Namibia. Senior government officials, in part for language reasons, have also tended to send their children to formerly exclusively white schools, where the medium of instruction is English and where the standard of education is generally higher than in predominantly black (but less expensive) schools.

### Growing dissatisfaction

The government's caution in effecting extensive changes within the political economy has led to charges that national reconciliation is a one-sided process that is benefiting the white settler community far more than the poor majority. Such bit-

terness is perhaps most strongly felt by the thousands of repatriated exiles who are struggling to re-enter the labour market and to fully reintegrate themselves into Namibian society. For these individuals, the widening economic gap between themselves and their former comrades-in-arms is being most cruelly felt.

The "land question," in particular, remains a vexed issue. Unequal access to productive land and to water is a central feature of Namibia's colonial inheritance. In a context where both resources are absolutely scarce, the private ownership of some 45% of the total land area and 74% of the potentially arable land by some 4,045, mainly white, commercial farmers is a major factor in determining inequality of incomes and wealth. In attempting to redress these imbalances, however, the government once again confronts the challenge of matching increased production (or at least maintaining existing levels of production) with greater social equity, since much of Namibia is unsuitable for agriculture. Whilst a measure of consensus on the issue of redistribution was reached during the National Land Conference held in June 1991 (see the article on this conference by Susan Brown), the land question remains far from resolved.

The issue of social equity in the countryside is not confined solely to imbalances in land ownership between white and black Namibians, however. In the post-independence era the most vocal and articulate claims for land redistribution have come not from the land-scarce or landless poor but from wealthier black farmers seeking to increase their own access to land. Nor are these claims confined to the commercial farming areas. In a number of the communal areas (in Ovambo, Kavango and Hereroland in particular), there is a growing trend among certain larger-scale African farmers to illegally fence rangelands, hitherto recognized as communal pasture, for private use. For such indi-

viduals it is not the inequitable distribution of land *per se* that is unsatisfactory, but rather the size of their own share in the system. Although the government has indicated that it will take action against illegal fencing, it appears to feel little urgency to do so.

For many repatriated exiles, as well as many others who supported SWAPO during the liberation struggle, hard lessons are being learned about the distinction between party, government and state. For those repatriated exiles schooled in the old Marxist tradition, the three entities were supposed to be largely synonymous, or at least closely interactive. SWAPO was, after all, the party of the workers, of the students and of the dispossessed. Yet in the name of "national reconciliation," the government now chooses to portray itself as the government of "all Namibians." In so doing, it has not backed the workers in some celebrated instances of industrial dispute, for example, and has, in certain instances, pursued policies that favour minority groups rather than the masses.

Although there are no serious signs of desertion from SWAPO at present, there is unquestionably growing disillusionment in many quarters (particular in the populous Ovambo region - the party heartland) with the pace and form of economic and administrative reconstruction. NANSO, the national student organization and formerly a staunch SWAPO supporter, recently disaffiliated itself from the party. Rumblings within the trade union movement indicate similar dissatisfactions, particularly with regard to delays in the implementation of a labour code and the introduction of a policy on minimum wages. If present trends continue, the party might struggle to win a majority in the next election. Not that great numbers of former supporters would necessarily vote against SWAPO (traditional loyalties run deep). But it is quite possible they would demonstrate disapproval by abstaining.



# Land in Namibia: Rhetoric, Reform or Revolution?

BY SUSAN BROWN

*Susan Brown, a freelance journalist, lives in Windhoek, Namibia.*

The National Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question ended in Windhoek on July 1st this year on an upsurge of goodwill and mutual congratulations by participants. A range of political parties congratulated the chairman, Namibia's Prime Minister Hage Geingob, on being a master of consensus. Black farmers expressed strong optimism; white farmers were subdued but not hostile. In the exhilaration of the moment, it appeared that the 24-point document adopted as "The Consensus of the Conference" would provide the foundations for a land reform policy with broad political support.

It was true the Prime Minister's concluding speech stressed it was a "consultative conference," implying that government did not regard the Consensus as binding, but optimism was the keynote.

Now, three months later, an astonishing range of people - from cabinet ministers to ex-combatants and returnees - are expressing cynicism, doubt or despair about prospects for land reform. The most optimistic comment to be heard was that substantive land reform will take at least a generation, and the legislative and executive framework to make it possible won't be in place for years. This slide into pessimism after a few brief months also indicates the volatility of post-independence expectations and the lines along which, consciously or unconsciously, land lobbies are beginning to form.

## Content of the Consensus

One of the major issues many hoped the Conference would deal with was

the question of land nationalization. By the terms of independence, nationalization of land was effectively impossible because they specified that no person was to be deprived of property save in the public interest and subject to just compensation as determined by Parliament.

Most of the 500 delegates to the Land Conference were hoping that a way around this article would be found. The majority of Namibians - up to 80 per cent are still economically rooted in the countryside - saw this question as the test of the government's political will to transform the ownership base of the country.

The first eleven articles of the Land Conference's Consensus document deal with commercial land. The vast majority of commercial land in central and southern Namibia is ranchland, stocking cattle and sheep. The densely-populated communal areas along the northern border combine subsistence cultivation with stockfarming. The Consensus articles conclude that the unjust colonial distribution of land must be rectified, but they reject ancestral rights as a basis for land redistribution.

This marked one of three major defeats for the traditional leaders' lobby which had argued that the government had a duty to restore the status quo in acquiring, controlling and utilizing land. They also wanted to re-establish this historical importance and standing in the community. The efforts of traditional leaders to recapture for themselves the massively powerful political and economic role of appropriation, management and redistribution of commercial land had been an unrealistic hope from the beginning.

The issue of foreign ownership of land was also tackled. SWAPO's

position was that foreigners should not be allowed to own Namibian farmland, though they might lease and develop it "in accordance with Namibia's 'open door' policy towards foreign investment" SWAPO, in fact, favoured blanket expropriation of foreign-owned land, but this position was mitigated by the investment policy argument. According to the predominantly white Namibian Farmers Union, foreign landowners are a minute proportion of commercial farmers anyway.

SWAPO also wanted abandoned and underutilized commercial land to be "reallocated and brought into productive use." The commercial farm lobby let this go by, both because there is little, if any, abandoned and unused commercial farmland, and because the task of defining underutilization can be expected to lead into a legal bog.

Absentee landowners were also to suffer expropriation, according to the Consensus, but "there should be a distinction, in respect of owners who do not live on their farms, between citizen and foreign landowners." But the problem is the same. A definition of what constitutes absentee landlords will run into legal problems. A substantial number of the opposition MPs, black and white, are farmowners - and multiple farmowners at that, now supposedly forbidden - but so are many members of the present Cabinet. Those holding land managed for them in communal areas also qualify as absentee landlords.

The consensus was that there should be a tax on commercial farmland, a position supported by the "progressive" farmers that dominate the Namibia Agricultural Union. They hope it will ensure the productive use of land. However, con-

sidering the wide (though contracting) range of subsidies enjoyed by commercial farmers to date, the tax breaks available to them are so comprehensive that the commercial agricultural sector is a drain on government revenue. In response to that criticism, commercial farmers are quick to point out the sector employs 20% of Namibians with jobs, if the dire serfdom in which most Namibian farm workers live can be called employment.

Looking at what little progress has been made towards the re-allocation of land illustrates why people are angry. To deal with the policies on land, the Consensus calls for a technical committee to study the facts regarding underutilized land and absentee ownership, viable farm sizes in different regions of the country, multiple farm ownership and land taxation. Unfortunately, the government has been tardy in carrying out this recommendation and that has prompted a good deal of the doubt and cynicism of the post-Conference backlash. A proposed list of members for the Committee will be presented to Parliament by the government at the forthcoming session. Meanwhile, the government ministries most likely to be concerned in devising the measures - Agriculture and Rural Development; Land Resettlement and Rehabilitation; Local Government and Housing; Finance - say they know nothing of such a committee, and one Minister says it was his belief that the notion had sunk without trace.

The Prime Minister's well-known doubt as to the ability of some of his ministries to get things done, especially where shrewd negotiation is concerned (not to mention the kudos and power accruing to the politician who spearheads land reform), may well be powerful motivations for him taking the issue onto his own overcrowded agenda. But delay and disappointment may also exact political penalties.

The expansive and time-consuming discussions of the pre-

ceding issues prompted the Conference to impose three-minute limits on speakers. According to members of the Conference's organizing committee, when the draft of the Consensus document was submitted to

farmers security of tenure while unifying all land tenure under the ultimate ownership of the state. To make this transition, the state may assume the right of first option on leasehold land coming onto the mar-



Grain storage baskets, Oshana, Namibia

the Prime Minister, he sent them back to amplify it, roughly following the SWAPO policy proposal. The result was the position that land is a resource of the state and commercial farmland, now privately owned on freehold tenure, should be converted to leasehold which would give

ket and incentives should be established to encourage farmers to convert voluntarily.

No one was happy with that proposal - neither the opposition party nor the communal area farmers' unions. This would amount to nationalization of land, and was un-

constitutional, it was argued. It did not represent the discussion of the issue by the Conference. In the way of things, established farms would be the last to be converted and new black landowners would be entangled in red tape. It did not represent the discussion of the issue by the Conference. It would paralyse transfer of land to black co-operatives which managed to mobilize finance. Did this mean the state was going to take over communal land? It would end any prospect of job-creating investment in other sectors. It did not represent the discussion of the issue by the Conference ...

With a snap, the chairperson-Prime Minister called a recess, during which he forcefully consulted the Attorney General, who shook his head gloomily. Unconstitutional.

Thus Article 9, as adopted, read not that land should be owned by all Namibians as represented by the state but that "all Namibians should have access ..." to the land. The technical committee to be set up will "evaluate the legal options concerning possible forms of land tenure consistent with the Constitution."

There was another defeat for traditional leaders when the Conference resolved that households should not be required to pay traditional leaders for obtaining farmland under communal tenure for their own subsistence - required mainly in the heavily crowded Ovambo region, and to a lesser extent in Kavango, and again when widows or heirs take over land previously granted to a family head. If the land is for business purposes, users will pay, but to the government, not to traditional chiefs.

The Conference also agreed that communal areas, for the present, should be retained, developed and even expanded, where necessary. The Constitution says Namibians may live and move where they choose in the country, but by implication that could threaten customary land tenure, which would be politically disastrous. Thus Article 13 of the Consensus resolves that while

"all Namibian citizens have the right to live where they choose within the national territory ... in seeking access to land, applicants should take account of the rights and customs of the local communities living there." Priority should be given to the landless and those without adequate land for subsistence.

An amendment to the article dealing with the rights of women (and put forward by an urban lobbyist), was accepted without enthusiasm by the predominantly-male conference. The amended version allows women to own the land they cultivate and to inherit and bequeath land. It provides for an affirmative action programme to help women through training and to provide low interest loans and other mechanisms to help them compete on equal terms with men, and it calls for the end to all discriminatory laws or practices, whether statutory or customary, that disadvantage women. While likely to be ignored by traditional authorities, at least at first, this may boost the efforts of the weak women's rights lobby. In time, it may give some leverage to a lot of women who might otherwise be bereft of everything they have - widows or single parent families usually shoved aside by competing neighbours in stock-farming areas, or widows in northern communal areas, who may be dispossessed from land and homestead by their husbands' families, who traditionally inherit.

Article 18, on land allocation and administration, again cuts into traditional leaders' and chiefs' prerogatives without satisfying those who want such powers curtailed. It specifies that their role should be legally defined (rather than customary and discretionary), and that the process of land allocation and administration should be institutionalized under the control of the state, but the Consensus doesn't specify the process. So although traditional leaders see this as a major erosion of their powers, local farmers and NGOs

worry the government has almost no structures to implement changes. In communal areas, with chiefs threatened by central or regional government's intention to usurp their hereditary authority, they can and probably will block efforts to deliver local reforms.

While some traditional leaders have lost legitimacy because of their collaboration with South Africa, or their corruption, ineffectiveness, nepotism and poor management of communal land, enough of them still have substantial influence and loyal local followers. If chiefs are convinced that the government intends to spurn them, they can be a formidable obstacle to district level reform - as in many cases they have been in Zimbabwe.

Article 20 resolves that all illegal fencing and enclosure of communal land must stop. This has been a major point of conflict because of the inequalities in wealth and political leverage endemic to the communal areas. But when in the wake of the land conference, the Ministry of Land, Resettlement and Rehabilitation began to assemble evidence to prosecute those who had fenced and enclosed, officials found that many had done so with support from legally-established structures.

### Can it be done?

The major political pressure the government is experiencing is from returned exiles and ex-SWAPO combatants, who are becoming vociferous and hostile to politicians and officials as their disappointment grows over demobilization payouts, access to land and lack of jobs.

The great majority of them have settled in northern Namibia where they know the land and how to farm it. The more arid stockfarming regions in the south and central areas of Namibia are different except in a few cases where land is irrigated. Development Brigades, administered mainly by the Ministry of Land, have become discontented at "working for nothing" and at the

lack of food and resources. The Minister of Land and Resettlement was threatened with assault on a visit to one such project near Omega base, and a Ministry official was locked in a shed for two days.

This Ministry, which bears the brunt of discontent over unfulfilled expectations, like many others lacks the practical capacity to successfully implement programmes. Of six farms the Ministry bought this year before the land conference, none has been resettled, as far as is publicly known. With the radically differing regional agricultural systems, communal and commercial, ultimately district and regional solutions will be needed. Structures on this level are either incomplete or absent. They

may continue to be until regional councils are elected next year.

The forthcoming session of Parliament should see the delimitation of constituencies for regional elections determined, if not the framework for these elections. The new Agricultural Finance Bill should also come before the assembly, diverting a substantial proportion of cheap finance from white to black farmers. So some foundations may be laid.

Meanwhile, the major government ministries who must play a part in land reform – Land, Rehabilitation and Resettlement, Agriculture, Rural Development, Water, Finance, Local Government and Housing and of course the Prime Minister's office – must develop lines of

communication between one another as well as resources and the ability to implement programmes on regional and district level. Thus far, most expansion has been in central government.

But pessimists to the contrary, talk of land reform is not mere rhetoric. Nor, given the many limitations and obstacles – not least the current fundamental changes in the world system, and their effects on political policies available to African governments – is there likely to be a speedy revolution in land tenure and black Namibians' options of ownership. The conference itself is an indication that something is beginning to shift, though the timescale to watch is ten years rather than two.

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## Police Story: A Tough Transition

BY COLIN LEYS

*Colin Leys is a professor of political studies at Queen's University. He has visited Namibia several times and spent six weeks there this summer.*

If there has been a week since independence in Namibia when the police (NAMPOL) have not been in the news, it has no doubt been ringed in red ink on the calendar of NAMPOL's official spokesperson, Commissioner Sigi Eimbeck, because the news has rarely been good. The problems of creating an efficient, non-violent police service, committed to 'policing by consent', in place of the former South West Africa Police (SWAPOL) force, have been enormous.

At independence, the 6,000 members of the U.N. peacekeeping force dispersed to their home countries. Just over half of the 4,000 SWAPOL police officers packed their bags and mostly followed the last of South Africa's soldiers back to the Republic. Only about 1,500 police officers remained and over the subsequent months, their numbers dwindled further.

It is true that Namibia has a small population, estimated at about 1.5 million, but it is dispersed over a huge territory. Even with the assistance of 300 'student constables' (new untrained recruits) and 1,700 Special Constables (untrained policemen, paid on a day to day basis, and mainly doing guard duty, driving and the like), this was a completely inadequate force. Besides, at the time of independence, those who remained in Namibia were disorganized and disoriented, even if senior officers who stayed included some with a genuine commitment to build a new kind of police service.

SWAPOL had also become so discredited that no police service that might be seen as its reincarnation had any chance of success. At independence it had only 125 Ovambo officers (six per cent of the total) and only one Ovambo inspector, in a country where more than half the people are Ovambo. More importantly, SWAPOL had become almost wholly dedicated to the repression of SWAPO, which meant the repression of most of the black

population. It used harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrest and torture in an increasingly routine fashion. Most accounts of brutality in Namibia during the war years focus on incidents perpetrated by the military or by Koevoet ('Crowbar'), the paramilitary counter-insurgency force developed for the purpose of killing members of SWAPO's military force (PLAN) and their internal helpers. What is less appreciated outside Namibia is the extent to which the regular police force had also become subordinated to South Africa's 'total strategy'. Even during the transition to independence in 1989-90, lawyers working for the Legal Assistance Centre in Windhoek discovered special 'interrogation units' in more than one police station, separated from the other offices and equipped with torture instruments.

Black Namibians had no illusions. In the north or in any other major town, if you went to SWAPOL for help to recover stolen property or complain about an assault, you were liable to be pulled in

yourself and assaulted by the police. In a case brought before the O'Linn Commission on Electoral Malpractices, two Ovambo men living in Windhoek's black township of Katutura went to the police station to collect a radio belonging to one of them. They were systematically tortured for no apparent reason other than that they were suspected as being 'SWAPOs'. With the partial exception of the sparsely-populated south of the country, the police were

dard, or Grade, Eight) to be trained as police officers were also wanted by other employers. With the help of Britain, Namibia began a difficult process to try to blend the remnants of SWAPOL with personnel from PLAN and other returnees, and to retrain and reorganize them into a new service dedicated to 'policing by consent'.

By mid-1991, the results were roughly as follows. There were some 2,250 regular police officers (which

these recruits did not have a true equivalent of Standard Eight, especially English-language skills; this was even truer of the Protection Officers, who now made up 51% of NAMPOL. Training courses were set up, again with British assistance, for all levels of the service, from basic training to 'management' training, to impart essential skills *and* the new values needed to turn the police into servants of the public and effective crime fighters.



*Namibian boys joke & laugh at ex-Koevoet turned SWAPOL, Ongwedva, Namibia, 1989*

John Liebenberg / Afrapix-Impact Visuals

justifiably seen as one of the main threats to people's security, not its main guarantors.

But the new SWAPO government could not scrap SWAPOL. To build a new police service would take time, and the experience, infrastructures and equipment inherited from SWAPOL were assets that could not be dispensed with. At the same time, while there were thousands of Namibians in need of jobs, including thousands of returning exiles, very few had police training. Those who had the necessary education (Stan-

included police women, a small but growing element) plus 2,400 Protection Officers, the new name for Special Constables, now permanent staff rather than paid on a daily basis. Most Protection Officers had been recruited from among ex-PLAN combatants, though a minority were former SWAPOL Special Constables. About half the new regular police officers had been trained abroad (mostly in Tanzania) by SWAPO, or were new recruits with Standard Eight or its equivalent. In practice, many of

But it was an uphill struggle. Training can't accomplish miracles, and there were and are severe tensions, causing avoidable inefficiency, between the remaining ex-SWAPOL officers and the incoming personnel, even though the Inspector-General of NAMPOL remains an ex-SWAPOL Afrikaner, Piet Fouche. Some senior ex-SWAPOL officers have adopted a negative, minimum-effort attitude, relishing the mistakes made by the newcomers that effective leadership on their part could have prevented; while some



Members of Council consider emergency and with families of victims of Etosha, Namibia, 1987

of the incoming officers probably do lack essential skills and aptitude for police work, even though others are clearly well-trained and capable.

The result is that the police are widely seen – at least for the moment – as fundamentally useless. When notified of a crime, they seem slow to arrive, if they come at all, and are then seen as either unable or unwilling to do anything effective. Constables in charge-offices at police stations too often lack the English-language skills and the training and experience needed to prepare case-records on which a prosecution can be successfully based. There is a prevailing weakness in routine investigative practices, inherited from SWAPOL, that makes follow-up work difficult. NAMPOL is also too small a force – and current budget projections imply it won't get much bigger – for very extensive patrolling to deter crime. Much of the patrolling is done by Protection Officers, who were mostly trained as bush fighters rather than as police.

Given all this, the really interesting fact is that there is no real evidence of a 'policing crisis'. Much of NAMPOL's bad publicity involved a

temporary force of Border Guards and the Presidential Guard Unit, recruited wholly from PLAN. Both were originally in NAMPOL, but have since been hived off.

As regards crime levels, the evidence put forward is inconclusive. NAMPOL's own figures on the value of property stolen do not actually suggest a massive crime wave, although the media tends to imply otherwise. Insurance companies have increased their premiums for insurance against theft, justifying it by saying their losses are mounting. The impression that there is more crime may be based, at least in part, on other changes brought by independence. Black Namibians can now move freely in the centre of the capital and its white suburbs, where formerly they were apt to be arrested on sight after working hours. This gives rise to white anxiety and, perhaps, to a more 'normal' geographic distribution of criminal activities. But given current levels of inequality and poverty, and especially the very high unemployment in Windhoek – where at least three-quarters of all thefts (by value of goods stolen) are reported – it would be surprising if there had not been a

rise in crimes against property. And it should be remembered that people are no longer being killed on a daily basis as they were during the war, even if violent crime is a serious problem, especially for the residents of Katutura. Moreover, and this should not be underrated, while NAMPOL may be seen as inefficient, it is no longer seen as an instrument of terror. Some NAMPOL officers still use violence, especially in Windhoek, but it is no longer the norm.

A balanced view is probably that crime levels have settled down to a level 'appropriate' to a country with Namibia's social and economic problems. The police, for some time to come, will at best be able to deter and clear up most of the serious crimes, like murder or treason. But although their inability to do more than this is a problem, it is not (or at least not yet) as serious as one might suppose.

The point is this: if one took seriously the view promoted by most police forces – that they are all that stands between society and anarchy – one would think that the situation in Namibia was desperate. But what all research on policing

consistently reveals is that the police, *at best*, reinforce what communities do themselves to define and control crimes. All the evidence shows that increasing police patrols has virtually no effect in reducing crime levels. As for investigation, according to British sociologist Robert Reiner in his book *The Politics of the Police*, "if adequate information is provided [by members of the public] to pinpoint the culprit fairly accurately, the crime will be solved; if not, it is almost certain not to be." The tenacious police detective beloved of detective novels and television series, who solves crimes through painstaking methodical effort plus profound insight into the criminal mind, is not frequently found on the case in real life. What counts is community concern. A SWAPOL officer told a researcher in 1989, "policing in Ovamboland always used to be easy; in nine cases out of ten, an officer called to the scene of a crime would find all the witnesses waiting to see him, with the culprit." He may have thought he was making a point about the simplicity of the Ovambo; in fact, he was describing the essence of successful police work everywhere.

So far, this reality about policing with its implications for Namibia's new police service, has not been fully appreciated. In the understandable anxiety to get a new police service in place quickly, and confronted by so many other pressing policy issues, the SWAPO government has tended to leave policing policy to be determined mainly by policemen. NAMPOL has reached out to the public by forming a Police-Public Relations Council which has had some success in making the police service and some members of the public more aware of each other's problems. A local-level P-PR Committee has also been functioning for the township of Katutura. But many of the real determinants of people's security lie outside the scope of any body that is primarily concerned with the police as such.

For instance, in the rural 'communal' areas (non-settler farm areas), where the most serious crime is stock theft, the real problem is not the remoteness or inefficiency of the police, but the lack of any effective court system. People may identify stolen stock and even the thieves, but the traditional court system has become corrupted. At one time, the chief - who is also a judge - was hereditary, and was trusted to deal with most non-violent rural crime and awarded compensation to the victim rather than jail sentences or fines to the culprit. Under the South Africans, chiefs became political appointee and traditional courts are now increasingly untrustworthy. The magistrates' courts, meanwhile, are too far away, too slow, and rarely award compensation.

Conversely, in the urban townships where the biggest source of insecurity is robbery, often by gangs, measures like the provision of street lighting and more telephones in vulnerable neighbourhoods seem to be an obvious and not very costly step forward. So far, however, these needs have not been put at the top of the agenda. In particular, the police response to community-based self-policing committees has been lukewarm, on the grounds that the initiative to form them has generally come from political (SWAPO) activists. But that has to be expected, given that the black townships were divided, apartheid-style, into separate 'ethnic' neighbourhoods, and that SWAPO has been the main agency of political mobilization for most Namibians for more than twenty years.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Lucas Pohamba, a cautious but realistic man, thinks that in fifteen years the police service can become a fully professional

and effective force. Barring political upheavals, this could happen; but for this really to mean a higher level of security for most Namibians, a wider set of changes, such as those affecting the court system and reductions in unemployment and inequality, will also be needed. As Commissioner Eimbeck puts it, "the police must be the pivotal point for all crime prevention activities, but the public must be the main preventers of crime." If this is taken seriously, and the public's security needs in the widest sense are made the focus of policy-making, Namibia could pioneer some radical advances in policing. But this would call for a degree of empowerment and democratization at the community level which would challenge some traditional interests and thinking, from those of chiefs to those of many policemen and bureaucrats, and no doubt some politicians. The issues involved go to the heart of the relation between the state and its citizens. It is a dimension of post-independence development that deserves to be followed closely, not least for the lessons it may offer to South Africa.

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*Inkatha warriors, Thokoza township south-east of Johannesburg, 1990*

## Inkathagate Revisited

BY GERHARD MARÉ

The Inkathagate scandal – sparked by revelations, earlier this year, regarding the South African state's secret funding of Chief Buthelezi's nefarious Inkatha movement – has been interpreted by many as weakening the credibility of both the de Klerk government and of Buthelezi himself – and providing the ANC with a golden opportunity to recover the initiative in South Africa. While this has proven partly to be the case, Gerhard Maré argues below that the scandal has not been nearly so damaging to its perpetrators as might have been hoped. Moreover, he continues, the fall-out from Inkathagate also reveals the ANC as itself being less than successful in dealing with the political contradictions thrown up by the remnants of the Bantustan system in South Africa. Maré, who teaches

labour studies at the University of Natal, is a long-time observer of Inkatha politics and co-author (with Georgina Hamilton) of *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and the Politics of "Loyal Resistance."*

The events that have become known in South Africa as "Inkathagate" have focused attention on secret state funding to Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha movement, now the Inkatha Freedom Party, its trade union adjunct, the United Workers Union of SA (UWUSA), and some other right-wing groups. In the immediate aftermath some minor players were sacrificed: Buthelezi's personal secretary resigned and the security police officer who had directly administered the funding was repudiated. More significantly, the ministers responsible for the police

and the military, Adriaan Vlok and Magnus Malan, were shuffled out of their portfolios. While these events attracted enormous media attention both locally and internationally, and undoubtedly have had an impact on the nature of politics during the present transitional period, the scandal has also tended to deflect attention from other important issues.

The revelations themselves and their immediate effects have already been widely discussed. But another dimension of the affair has received less attention. Inkathagate points to important underlying features of the relationship between the state and conservative and traditionalist forces in the black community. This has significant political consequences for the democratic opposi-



tion, which has not yet successfully formulated a response to Inkatha's manipulation of ethnicity and economic conservatism.

#### The events

Democratic Party MP Kobus Jordaan first asked a question in parliament in February of this year to police minister Adriaan Vlok about possible funding for Inkatha "or a certain trade union." The minister avoided the question, as did state president F.W. de Klerk in reply to similar questions, which had been expanded to include allegations about the SADF, the South African Police, SAP, and the National Intelligence Service, NIS. By May, a frustrated Jordaan, himself at one stage in the Department of Constitutional Planning and Development, said that the SAP had aided Inkatha through the Inkatha-spawned and supported UWUSA. In a subsequent interview with the *Vrye Weekblad* before the major revelations, Jordaan said that he was concerned that the "playing field for all players should be level."

Of course, the playing field had been anything but level. In recent decades, the ANC had been banned and thousands of its members detained and tried for as little as "supporting the aims of a banned organization," while Inkatha continued to operate. It could be argued, as Buthelezi frequently does, that this immunity from state action arose because the movement chose the right strategy - of "changing the system from within." But this begs the question as to what Inkatha did with the political space that it then occupied. In its "liberated zone," as the KwaZulu bantustan was pretentiously labelled, Inkatha was able to operate with considerable latitude because its resistance to some aspects of apartheid unfolded well within the boundaries of an ethnically-divided and unambiguously capitalist social order. Its greatest "achievement," refusing to accept apartheid "independence," did not prevent it from

accepting every power granted by the central state over its ethnically-divided people; in fact, it has served that central state loyally - even while claiming credit for the derisory level of services it was thus able to provide the people under its jurisdiction.

On July 19, the *Weekly Mail* revealed that the SAP had indeed provided money to Inkatha to counter support for the then-banned ANC, and to stem the downward slide in Inkatha's own support - these being the reasons for the funding explicitly stated in a secret security police document. The state's bumbling response to this exposé was to claim that the purpose had actually been to counter sanctions. For that reason, it was claimed, the funds came through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where minister Pik Botha had an undisclosed sum to be employed every year in combating the sanctions campaign. And, of course, Buthelezi had always been a prominent anti-sanctions figure both on overseas tours and within the country.

Subsequent reports of far more extensive funding for UWUSA, set up in 1986 by Inkatha with the express purpose of countering the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), underscored the fact that the real purpose of such funding was to prop up conservative organizations in their struggle against more radical and democratic movements. The bulk of the money in this case was directed to the field of labour: the formation of COSATU (in 1985) had consolidated the advances made in organizing workers since the strike in Durban in 1973, just as the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 had for the first time really challenged Inkatha on the ground in its claim to be a liberation movement in the ANC mould.

However, it was not only the cause of conservatism that the state was hoping to advance in this way but, more concretely, organizations whose members, including senior

leadership, were actively involved in perpetrating murder and mayhem in their struggle for political control, especially in Natal. It thus came as little surprise when the state also admitted to having trained 150 Inkatha members between 1986 and 1989 (supposedly in "security and VIP protection") at Namibian military bases. It has been alleged that members of this group participated in hit-squad activity on behalf of Inkatha, paralleling similar accusations made against those Inkatha members officially enrolled as "kit-skonstables" (instant constables) to serve in the very communities in Natal where Inkatha and the ANC were at war.

#### What have been the effects?

The revelations about funding certainly damaged Inkatha's media image both in SA and internationally, while also giving further weight to a range of other reports linking Inkatha to hit-squad activity. The ANC's demand for an interim government was also strengthened since the De Klerk regime had now been caught acting in more or less the same mode as previous National Party governments: once again the shallowness of the state's claim that it was merely a neutral body caught between two warring black political forces were exposed. It will now be very difficult for anybody to join or support Inkatha with the same selective blindness that sees Inkatha simply in terms of what it says about itself. However, in many ways the exposures merely confirmed what had already been known, rather than revealing anything new.

Indeed, it would be wise not to exaggerate the impact of the Inkathagate revelations. Certainly, the revelations will not discourage Inkatha from claiming a central position, one supposedly based on mass support, in future negotiations - a position, not simply as just another contender, but as one of the "big three" (alongside the ANC and the National Party). Inkatha's claim to

this position, however, rests not on popularity, which is in the region of four percent if a number of recent opinion polls give us any credible indication, but on power, on the ability to mobilize in a manner that is independent of local or national majorities but that, in its very ruthlessness, cannot be ignored.<sup>†</sup>

Nor has Inkathagate deterred the white right, at least those who have not felt at home in the various offsprings of Afrikaner nationalism (such as the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging and the National Party), from signing on. A remarkable number of letters of support have appeared in the commercial press, some even offering funds to compensate Inkatha for its decision to repay Foreign Affairs. A personal fund has been set up for Buthelezi by British zoo-millionaire Lord Aspinall, now made an honorary Zulu chief, and Australia's media-millionaire Kerry Packer.

Regional, and probably national and international business interests, have not shied away from contact with Inkatha and Buthelezi either. A month after the scandal Buthelezi could address leading industrialists in Empangeni, calling for a "partnership" with them, and offering to represent their views at future negotiations: "We want what you want ... We want to be able to go and negotiate on your behalf and return to you and say this is what we are doing, judge us and help us do better." A steady stream of politicians and business people still visits Ulundi, where the lavish KwaZulu parliamentary buildings dominate the thornveld and the township.

Moreover, the scandal has probably had little effect on much of Inkatha's existing rank-and-file



Peter Auf Der Heyde

*Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Natal, South Africa, July 1990*

membership. The politics of everyday existence and survival for hundreds of thousands living in non-urban KwaZulu, largely isolated from the symbols and issues created by the media (other than the Zulu-language radio broadcasts by the SABC and the Inkatha-owned newspaper *Ilanga*), leave them with more immediate concerns. These are also people who have been told that their unemployment and poverty are the direct result of sanctions, the very measures that, according to the Inkatha leadership, the secret state funds were intended to combat. Indeed, it was many such members who actually cheered when the government's funding was announced at the Inkatha conference, held during the period when the revelations were first surfacing! This is not to say that under a different balance of power such people might not transfer their support elsewhere. Free elections would probably con-

firm what the opinion polls are suggesting. But free elections are still in an unclear distance.

#### **The rumoured death of apartheid and the future**

Unfortunately, other crucial questions raised by the funding scandal have not received much attention. Inkatha and the class interests it represents have always benefited from apartheid, even if its leaders did not support the racist cruelties and exclusions of the system and have opposed the dubious additional benefits of "independence." And so long as the bantustan format – or something that replicates its regional and ethnic "traditionalist" structures – continues to exist, Inkatha will continue to benefit from the powers allocated to those who have chosen to participate in the system.

In this connection, a recent article in the *Weekly Mail* bears not-

<sup>†</sup> Inkatha also claims for itself a membership of some two million, including some 100,000 whites. This figure has frequently been refuted by analysts, while Inkatha has countered that inde-

pendent confirmation of the accuracy of its membership was given by Anton Harber, now the editor of, precisely, the *Weekly Mail*! Recently Harber has written that his "confirmation,"

in 1980, was nothing of the sort, and that his "sole conclusion" was that it was probably impossible to gauge accurately the membership of Inkatha because its records were in an almighty mess.

ing. It lists some of the major apartheid statutes still in existence, a list that includes no fewer than five acts relating to the bantustans and to "tribal authorities." The impact of this brutal attempt at social engineering has been enormous, of course, both in terms of human lives and in less tangible consequences. As is well known, these "homelands" were the centre-piece of the policy of influx control: the dumping grounds for millions; a site of the most grinding poverty; a crucial element in the attempted fragmentation and deflection of opposition.

Why then have many opponents of apartheid been so quiet on the question of the bantustans? True, there have been calls for the disbanding of these "national states," but the fact is that these have been directed almost exclusively against KwaZulu (and its repressive structures, including the KwaZulu police) and BophuthaTswana ("independent" and home of Sun City). But these calls are riddled with inconsistencies, allowing Buthelezi to turn them back and claim they are no more than ethnically-motivated assaults on the "Zulu nation," its "kingdom" and its chiefs. There is no doubt in my mind that such partial critiques have actually helped to strengthen the boundaries defining the ethnic identities of those "Zulus" who feel beleaguered and insecure amidst the rapid changes that are taking place. And these are just the kind of people at whom Buthelezi aims his appeals.

The inconsistencies and silences are most extreme when compared to the treatment accorded the Transkei bantustan by large sections of the anti-apartheid movement. Here, an undemocratic military government rules, having overthrown the SA government's own preferred set of leaders. Widespread reports speak of massive expenditure on government buildings (with helicopter landing facilities on their roofs and the like) and of detention with-

out trial and an extension of "security" legislation within Transkei. Yet these are developments the ANC regional structures simply refuse to condemn. Not to do so, however, is to lend dangerous fuel to Buthelezi's fire. For it is against the supposed "Xhosa-led" ANC, with a base in the Transkei, that Buthelezi most frequently defines the thrust of his own organization and the ethnic interests it represents. The ANC's open support for Transkei's General Bantu Holomisa and its defense of the integrity of Transkei thus does nothing to undermine the credibility of Buthelezi's claims amongst his followers. (And what of Holomisa's role in future negotiations or any multi-party conference? If he attends for whom will he speak? If he represents Transkei, would that license Inkatha to claim two places for itself, as a political party and as the representative of KwaZulu? The ANC itself has been noticeably silent on such questions.)

#### The future

We must remind ourselves of the support that Inkatha has been able to garner through its domination of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly: it has spent public money on such party ventures as the Inkatha Institute, the Buthelezi Commission, and the Natal/KwaZulu Indaba; it has been able to use its control over government funds to expand its membership; and it has shaped the regional administration according to its own agenda.

Taken together, such activities have meant that Inkatha has shaped a regional power-base that is going to be a crucial piece in the National Party and Inkatha's constitutional proposals, proposals likely to be premised squarely on achieving a type of federalism that will strengthen conservative interests. Indeed, the NP has just released constitutional proposals for debate, in which it proposes that the country be divided into nine regions. Natal (including KwaZulu) is obviously one. We have not heard the last of

Buthelezi then, not by a long shot.

Certainly Inkatha has been harmed by the revelations - no future supporter can claim innocence of knowledge regarding Inkatha's true provenance (although there are many who see its links with the state to be no "crime" in the first place). But the fact remains that it is less the shock value of revelations than the firm reality of a counter-balancing expression of political power, organized and democratic, that will do most to contain and ultimately to erase the damage that Inkatha and its policies have done to this country. Some sign of the possibilities in this respect has already been demonstrated by COSATU's mobilization against firms supporting UWUSA. But the force of this strategy is undermined by the inability of the ANC to effect a similar programme of mobilization. Its strength lies in its prospective ability to attract votes, and the electoral context within which such strength could be turned most effectively to account still lies out of sight. In the meantime mass action is not being effectively evoked or focussed. And militarily the ANC has not been able to prevent violence against its members.

For the violence does continue, preventing the formation of democratic structures in many areas. More generally, it also threatens to produce a milieu that will increasingly demand a violent political style from all sides, a situation in which there can be no innocent parties. In such a milieu democracy can be only an empty slogan. In addition, the bantustans continue. Here, too, a democratic future demands a rupture. The popular movement in South Africa must pay more than lip-service to the realization that any continuity in this sphere - any preservation, that is, of bantustan structures - can serve only the purposes of Inkatha and the state, and certainly not any more progressive purpose.

# Mozambique: Impasse in the Peace Process

BY ROBERT DAVIES

*Robert Davies is presently Co-Director of the Centre for Southern African Studies at the University of the Western Cape. In writing this contribution especially for SAR, Davies has drawn on his longer paper, "Implications for Southern Africa of the Current Impasse in the Peace Process in Mozambique," published as Southern African Perspectives No. 9 by the Centre at UWC.*

The long delays and frequent interruptions of the peace talks being held in Rome between the Mozambican government and the Renamo contra movement have led much of the rest of the world to look with growing indifference on events in Mozambique. What is occurring in Mozambique, while universally recognized as a human tragedy of major proportions, appears increasingly to be seen as marginal to the main processes shaping the future of southern Africa.

Any such view is extremely short-sighted. The way in which events in Mozambique unfold could have significant repercussions for the entire southern African region.

## Factors underlying the current impasse

The impasse in the Mozambican "peace process" is widely seen as deriving in large measure from Renamo's reluctance to enter into the type of ceasefire based on a multi-party elections deal that is being offered by the Mozambican government.

Three major hypotheses have been advanced to account for this. The first focuses on Renamo's origins as a contra force, created by the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) and taken over

by South African special forces, with its resultant (and well known) lack of political coherence. In a context where much of its professed political clothing – such as a multi-party political system and private enterprise economy – has effectively been donned by Frelimo, it is argued that Renamo has simply been unable to produce a coherent response. A second hypothesis argues that, deriving from its origins and nature, Renamo has a well-founded lack of confidence in its capacity to contest multi-party elections and is holding out instead for some sort of power-sharing agreement with Frelimo. A third possible interpretation suggests that Renamo may be trying to force Frelimo into multi-party elections without a ceasefire in the hope that, as in the Nicaraguan case, it can then hold the electorate hostage by indicating that only a change of government will bring peace.

Renamo's political incoherence is an undoubted fact, but this alone is probably insufficient to explain the current impasse. The second and third hypotheses suggested above can also help us to understand it. Thus, at the very least, the Renamo leadership (and/or its external backers) show every sign of holding out for a deal which gives the rebel group a privileged political status in a transitional government. Whether or not Renamo has the political sophistication to try to create a Nicaraguan-type situation is unclear, but it would certainly prefer to deny President Chissano any electoral kudos that might follow from his being seen as a peace-maker.

## Necessary elements for building peace: possible scenarios

In any event, the building of a vi-

able and durable peace in Mozambique cannot be reduced merely to the achievement of a ceasefire agreement between the current protagonists. An effective ceasefire is an essential first step, to be sure. But building peace will depend, secondly, on putting in place domestic political arrangements and socio-economic programmes capable of creating a measure of "social peace." A necessary third element, particularly important in this case, would be the establishment of effective mechanisms to put an end to external involvement in violent conflict in Mozambique.

The uncertainty about developments in each of these three respects implies that there are a number of possible scenarios for what might occur in Mozambique in the near future.

Thus, the long delays experienced in the Rome talks make even the first step in the process of building peace uncertain. It is by no means a foregone conclusion that a ceasefire will soon be agreed upon, or if it is that it will be effective. Without even this outcome assured, the outlook for Mozambique could be very bleak indeed. Then the war would continue and further economic, social and political disintegration would be likely. Already there are signs that the modest upswing brought about by the injection of new funding associated with the Economic Rehabilitation Programme (PRE) has begun to dissipate. 1990 saw the lowest rates of growth since the introduction of the PRE. Per-capita consumption in a country where two thirds of the population are estimated to be existing in a state of "absolute poverty," declined by 2.5%. While a num-

ber of factors contribute to these trends, the impact of the war is universally recognized as the major one. Any continuation of the war will inevitably see living standards falling further, leading to even greater devastation and misery.

At the political level, prolongation of the war could well lead to a debasement of national politics and even of a sense of national identity. There are already signs that, as the possibility of a project of social reconstruction benefitting the majority has receded, an opportunistic jockeying for position within the privileged minority has assumed greater significance in national politics. Ethnicity, regionalism and personal self-seeking have all become features of the Mozambican political scene. A continued inability to produce any solution to the war could exacerbate all of these trends.

Moreover, the rest of southern Africa would not be immune from the negative effects of any further social disintegration in Mozambique. The conflict has already shown a high propensity to spill over into neighbouring countries. One and a half million Mozambicans have sought sanctuary as refugees in neighbouring countries; many more have entered South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Malawi as clandestine migrants. Further social disintegration could see the numbers increase. In addition, the area of southern Mozambique bordering on Natal remains a sphere of Renamo activity, with allegations emerging about links between Renamo and warring factions inside South Africa. The existence of a flow of arms from Mozambique into South Africa and Swaziland is well-documented. Further disintegration in Mozambique could well fuel additional contratype violence in South Africa, producing, in effect, a reverse flow of destabilization. Such outcomes would, of course, have serious consequences both for a transition to democracy in South Africa and for plans and projects for regional co-

operation after apartheid.

The second area of uncertainty, noted above, arises in connection with the type of political deal any ceasefire agreement might produce. As indicated earlier, Renamo appears to be reluctant to commit itself to competing in multi-party elections, demanding instead some form of political power-sharing agreement. Acceding to this demand would not only amount to denying the Mozambican people their democratic right to choose their own political representatives in multi-party elections, it could also establish the precedent that violence and extreme brutality against ordinary civilians is a route to political power.

Closely related is the uncertainty regarding the extent to which building a political peace – assuming that such a project is on course – is likely to be accompanied by a programme of socio-economic reconstruction. It has been estimated that merely to re-integrate into productive activity the internally and externally displaced population would cost over \$100 million (with this figure, in turn, being based on the assumption, deriving from a UN High Commission for Refugees calculation, that this could be done at a cost of only \$23 a head). Certainly, without a programme capable of re-integrating the displaced poor peasantry into viable economic activity, fertile grounds will continue to exist for violence or “social banditry,” whatever its political complexion. Yet there are already signs of donor fatigue around Mozambique’s existing emergency aid programme. Only 86% of the \$116.9 million “bare minimum” requested to support the 1990/91 emergency aid appeal was pledged by donors, and only 124,000 of the 200,000 tons of maize requested for free distribution to displaced persons had arrived by the end of the fiscal year in April 1991.

Finally, there is the regional/external context; existing arrangements have clearly not prevented

significant external involvement in the violence in Mozambique. Evidence of such on-going support for or involvement with Renamo from outside – whether official, private and unauthorized or officially privatized – continues to emerge. The Nkomati Accord has been observed mainly in the breach. Former members of the SADF’s No. 5 Recce Commando have, for example, spoken of members of that unit being involved in attacks into Mozambique up to the middle of this year, and South Africa’s para-statal Electricity Supply Commission (ESKOM) is alleged to have supplied Renamo with uniforms and ammunition as part of a deal to secure Renamo’s agreement not to attack Cabora Bassa powerlines. Whether or not continuing support for Renamo from South African territory is officially authorized, the fact remains that no strong sanction exists against such actions, which continue with relative impunity. No prosecution or even official investigation has followed any of the allegations made about such support. Nor is it only across the South African border that support for the Renamo insurgency has passed. Security agreements with Malawi have not prevented a continuing flow through that country. Senior officials in Kenya have been implicated and “private” support networks in the USA, Germany, Portugal and other countries continue to provide a measure of support and encouragement which undoubtedly encourages Renamo in sustaining its insurgency.

### What needs to be done?

Some of the implications for the rest of southern Africa of not building a durable peace in Mozambique have already been referred to. The possibility that continued instability in Mozambique might impact negatively on a transition to democracy in South Africa or on the building of regional cooperation in southern Africa cannot be ignored. While this is a very real possibility, there

is also a more optimistic scenario for Mozambique. The process of democratization – of which the holding of legitimate multi-party elections is an essential part – could, whatever the outcome of elections, begin to rebuild a sense of national unity. Accompanying this with an effective programme of socio-economic reconstruction within a framework of post-apartheid regional cooperation could give new momentum to the inevitably protracted process of economic recovery. In view of the high level of external involvement in the conflict, actions by outside “interested parties” have the potential to inject a new sense of urgency and purpose into the process. At the very least, attention urgently needs to be paid to the following:

●First, ways must be found to prevail upon the historical or present external backers of Renamo to exert their influence on the organization to move rapidly towards a ceasefire

agreement. Renamo is probably currently under enough pressure to keep it participating in the negotiation process, but it is doubtful that it is under sufficient pressure to compel it to reach an agreement.

●Second, the call made by Nelson Mandela in February 1990 for legislation “to make the provision of support to Renamo a punishable offence” needs to be taken up. Effective deprivation of support facilities to continue its insurgency would send the clearest possible signal to Renamo that it should move rapidly towards a ceasefire.

●Third, the high level of outside involvement in the Renamo insurgency – whatever internal dynamic the organization may or may not have acquired – suggests the need to consider more effective long term guarantees against future external involvement in violent conflict in Mozambique. Some move in this direction will necessarily have to be

a part of any meaningful cease-fire and cannot be expected to wait until the reaching of a comprehensive post-apartheid regional security agreement (although it might, of course, become part of a dynamic leading towards such an agreement). It is possible that the United Nations could play a helpful role in this regard.

●Fourth, a regional and international campaign needs to be mounted to secure support for a programme of social and economic reconstruction in Mozambique. South Africa’s historic responsibility should oblige it to make some contribution to this. But the international community as a whole also needs reminding that the end of the armed conflict should be a signal for stepping up its aid and support rather than withdrawing further from providing emergency assistance to what is, in all probability, the poorest country in the world.

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## Healing Apartheid’s Work

### I. Defining the Problem

#### An Interview with Dr. Barry Kistnasamy

*South African health activist, Dr. Barry Kistnasamy, spoke with SAR in the spring about some of the issues being considered in discussions about transitional and post-apartheid health care planning and policy. Kistnasamy, an executive ex officio member of NAMDA (the National Medical and Dental Association of South Africa) is a specialist in community medicine, presently studying occupational and environmental health policy.*

One of the objectives of Kistnasamy’s short visit to Canada and longer study visit in the United States is research and evaluation of appropriate models for the much needed technical training of human resources for the health sector. “At

present,” says Kistnasamy, “we have something like 600 African doctors compared to 1,600 white doctors; 7 African occupational therapists compared to 1,070 white; 180 African dentists compared to 4,500 white; 61 African pharmacists compared to 5,000 white; probably not one African speech pathologist yet in the country. And looking at specialists, such as internists, gynaecologists, paediatricians etc., there are about 48 Africans.”

But, as Kistnasamy argues, the training of more black doctors and nurses and specialists alone, is not going to dramatically improve the health of the vast majority of the population. There has to be a broader understanding of how apart-

heid has devastated the health of that majority, and provision made for addressing some of the more structural and social aspects of apartheid’s unhealthy legacy. (Of every 1,000 white babies born alive each year 12 will die before they reach the first year of life, compared to 94 to 124 per thousand black babies who will die). About 80% of the health and disease profile of black South Africans is related to the lack of provision of water, housing and sanitation, and to conditions of work and environmental abuse.

Kistnasamy illustrated some of these points: “Each year in the mining industry 600 to 800 workers die in industrial accidents, 30,000 are severely injured. In non-mining industry which includes textile, auto, metal, but excludes the large categories of farm and domestic workers, approximately 2,000 workers are



Gisele Wulfsohn/Afrapix-Impact Visuals

Akwesasne Health Centre, Akwesasne, Ontario

killed in accidents each year and 300,000 are severely injured. Each day 6 workers are permanently disabled through some loss of a body part, an eye, a limb, etc. Apartheid's environmental toll can be found in the effects of the mining industry, especially gold-mining where chromic acid waste and arsenic left in mine dumps is now leeching into the ground water sources. Acid rain in the Transvaal highveld where we have all our coal power generators is said to be two to three times that of the former GDR. White farmers and agribusiness have been heavily using herbicides and pesticides over time which has led to a high phosphate content of the rivers. Last year we discovered the dumping of toxic mercury waste in Pietermaritzburg (in Natal province). And remember that this is the country which did the first heart transplant in the world! All of these factors impairing the health of the population have to be looked at if there is to be real change."

#### Violent afflictions

One of the issues that is starting to be looked at by health workers from the perspective of potential program interventions is the psycho-social effects of the endemic violence that has characterized apartheid. This violence remains tragically ongoing, its effects particularly acute in relation to children. "Approximately 50% of the African population is below 21. Some of us involved in psychological and social health issues are very worried about the generation that we have lost post-1976, militant youth who have been carrying the struggle forward (as have those on the factory floor) but often without the necessary political education and discipline. The result is a fairly ravaged population in terms of the rebuilding of civil society in South Africa. The migrant labour system, and the system of domestic labour where black women work in the white suburbs, are further instances of structural violence. Both of these have had negative con-

sequences for the black family unit. The squalor of squatter camps, poor shelter etc. has added to the psycho-social damage to children."

Programs for dealing with children and violence are still very much in discussion phase, and the focus on children is relatively recent. "The problem," according to Kistnasamy, "is that it is not being looked at in a concrete fashion. There is a program with UNICEF and the South African Council of Churches has done some work. We know we need to intervene but how to do so with so much violence in society, so many homeless children, children basically on the street, children in the bushes? At the height of the war (that is, early- to mid-1990) there were something like 500,000 people displaced in Natal. We are now thinking in terms of bringing in child psychologists and psychiatrists, and the development of a program is on the agenda of several upcoming meetings." Various pieces of research have been undertaken that

confirm the experience of trauma in children as a result of political violence, detentions, etc., but how this issue might be tackled is not yet clear. "But we need to look at these issues very quickly and very drastically. The program we are looking at has a wider perspective; we are looking at how to build up trust and confidence in children."

## Arresting AIDS

Another program area that has been put on the agenda of the progressive health movement is that of AIDS. As a recent article in *SAR* (vol. 6, no. 3, Dec. 1990) showed, the transmission of HIV and the treatment of AIDS is receiving far too little and rather inappropriate attention from the current government. "By the end of 1991 we project 300,000 people will have tested HIV positive with a doubling time of 8 plus months. We have developed a national AIDS advisory group which is looking at intervention and outreach programs, and at the moment funds are being raised. But we're running out of time. Social conditions for the transmission of the AIDS virus are very prevalent: the high prison population, the low status of women, especially black women, the 'contrawar,' and youth saying 'if I am going to be wiped out by a vigilante hit-squad tomorrow, why should I use a condom tonight?' There are five harbours in South Africa - with Durban being the busiest harbour in Africa - and commercial sex workers are not recognised or protected by the government."

The empowerment of women is especially important in relation to programs against the transmission of AIDS which, in the black community in South Africa, is mainly heterosexual. With the unequal power relations between men and women in most South African communities, it is difficult for women to insist on the use of condoms against the will of the men. But the issue of gender relations, according to Kistnasamy, is coming up in debates about how to propagate safe sex.

"We need interventive programs with full-time paid workers in all these areas. And this implies enormous resources, infrastructure and human resources. Volunteerism is becoming a swear-word in the progressive movement ..."

## Considering health services

"South Africa presently has a dual health system, one which is highly privatized with a semblance of a public health system. 80% of white South Africans plus 7% blacks are on pre-paid health insurance schemes and tend to go to the highly entrenched private health system. The rest of the population goes to the public health system with 150% bed occupancy rate like Baragwanath hospital in Soweto and King Edward in Durban, while whites go to hospitals that run at 40% bed-occupancy like the Johannesburg General or Durban's Addington." When Health Minister Venter announced in May last year that all hospitals were to be open to all races, the statement had little real meaning given the racial zoning and geographic access of the cities. "The people who go to Baragwanath are not going to go two hours cross town to the Jo'burg General in Parktown North when they have a stabbed chest."

But how to bring about change is, as Dr Kistnasamy stressed, a complex issue. While arguing for NAMDA's position on a National Health Service (see article by de Beer in this issue) he cautioned that "we cannot afford to be romantic about the possibilities of a fully nationalized health system. There are so many players in the field." He drew attention to the role of the multinational drug and medical equipment industries. 90% of the primary product of the 150 to 200 multinational pharmaceutical companies is imported, so the industry is very vulnerable in terms of any form of nationalization. Two companies control the health industry in South Africa - Afrox and Rembrandt. "We have to talk through

this issue quite carefully. We have begun talks about the transfer of skills with the pharmaceutical industry and with the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union, but again, we have to concretize these discussions. As the regime has accommodated itself more and more to privatization, the public health system has virtually collapsed."

Kistnasamy stressed that any post-apartheid health care system would have to be realistically planned, in the context of the enormous debt that the future South African government was going to inherit, relations with the World Bank and IMF, and the new global economic order. The critical debates in the health care system must follow on the debates about the economy in the future South Africa. NAMDA's view is that there should be strong interventions in the areas of health, education, housing, welfare and social services. But what form of health services will be achieved will depend on the balance of power at the moment.

## Reorienting health science education.

Besides the restructuring of the professional health workers' bodies, Kistnasamy talked about the challenges facing the training of much-needed medical personnel. "How do you take a kid from Crossroad's squatters camp and give that child the world view to become a neurosurgeon? And then there is the serious problem of the brain drain of trained medical personnel from South Africa. 60% of white doctors graduating from the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Cape Town leave the country, even before they do their internship. 20 radio therapists were recruited from the Durban region last year by the Ontario Cancer Centre, and apparently Canada is looking at importing another 400 radiographers from South Africa. No country can afford such a brain drain. The expectant mass population is not just going to want community



and village health workers. They will not be happy with the development of a two-tiered system where whites and middle class blacks get heart transplants and dialysis and the rural and peri-urban squatters get barefoot doctors."

Kistnasamy had some strong feelings about the loss of trained medical personnel from South Africa at this time. "You get the Canadian government, for instance, saying they are clearly on the side of social change in South Africa and yet they accept all our trained people. We are saying: Close the doors! Likewise the United States and Australia. Close the doors to the skills drain from South Africa. Alternatively, if you want to drain people from South Africa, there are people in the peri-urban squatter camps who would happily improve the quality of their lives and would probably want to come to Canada. They should be offered immigration."

"Another possible way of controlling the problem is the withholding of passports. There is also the question of when you grant degree certificates. Maybe we should withhold the degree until after six years of service following the six years of training. Maybe there should be some point system where you ac-

knowledge how many years of service in rural community practice, urban communities, and upgrading various other programs. And all these things should be taken into account when you are considered for a residency post. The same with academic advancement: perhaps this should be based on 50% service to the community, 30% publish-or-perish and 20% involvement in human rights work, trade union organizing, health worker education." At present, as Kistnasamy pointed out, much academic advancement in the medical field in South Africa is predicated on the exploitation of black disease for research purposes. The white population is clearly too small to support the large number of multi-national pharmaceutical companies there. Their presence has to be due to the perceived experimental population on which to carry out drug research. South Africa is a unique country in its having both the high-tech laboratory capacity to conduct drug experimentation, and an uninformed, low-literacy mass base that is not going to question the doctors who are administering and testing various drugs."

"These are critical issues when you are talking about transformation. It's not just about sorting out Soweto and the Northern suburbs,

providing a bit of housing here and there. It's also about creating in people's minds - the doctors, the nurses, the pharmaceutical workers, etc. - the issues of humanism in medicine, and how we can serve the community better as opposed to how we can line our pockets better."

The progressive health movement in South Africa feels that there is much it can learn from experiences in other parts of the world around health care provision. "The technical corps needed to move things forward in South Africa is very small so we are appealing to progressive people in the international community to come and work with us now, even at this point of transition. We are looking at placements and exchanges, for our people to be in relevant programs internationally. We also want to learn a lot more about workers' health, and different health systems, such as that in Ontario. NAMDA is looking to build south-south linkages with other groups similar to ours in Brazil, El Salvador, Palestine, the Philippines etc. so that we can understand oppression on a much more international basis. Violence in society, and repression-related health work crosses all barriers and boundaries and we need to share and exchange ideas."

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## II. The Challenge of Change

BY CEDRIC DE BEER

*This article was prepared for SAR by South African health activist Cedric de Beer, of the Centre for Health Policy, The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.*

The campaign for changes in health services has been spearheaded by demands for a National Health Service (NHS). This demand has been made over the last decade by the progressive health organizations such as the National Medical and Dental Association (NAMDA) and the South African Health Workers

Congress (SAHWCO), and by increasing numbers of academics and health care providers.

There are two major reasons given for demand for a NHS. The first involves the need to overcome the effects of apartheid. The second is the need to deal with the inequalities and inappropriate health care priorities that arise from the size and influence of the private sector.

### Overcoming the effects of apartheid

The first challenge involves creating

a single, co-ordinated and truly national Department of Health. This means doing away with segregation and integrating all the homeland and "own affairs" Departments of Health into one department.

Politically, this integration will follow inevitably from the process of constitutional reform. However, administratively, and in terms of the actual provision of integrated, comprehensive care, this may not be so simple. For example, each of the "homelands" has its own, ethnically-defined nursing association. Each



Susan Winters/Impact Visuals

*Health educator teaching women oral rehydration therapy for gastroenteritis in remote village in South Africa*

has its own head office, its own treatment protocols for particular diseases, and its own way of organizing school health services, clinic services and so on.

To integrate all of this into a single, well-functioning department, is going to mean that a lot of people will have to accept a lot of changes. In particular, there are many senior officials who will find their status and personal empires being undermined as administrative procedures are rationalized and integrated. (After all, what will happen to the fourteen ministers of health and the fourteen secretaries of health and the fourteen chief nursing officers from each department?) It is to be expected that there will be a lot of resistance from mid-level managers to many of the changes that will have to be made.

Another major challenge confronting national health service policy-makers will be to achieve greater equality of health service provision between different regions of the country. Services in the "homelands" and in areas that have been designated as black living areas

are generally far poorer than those in white areas. Simply desegregating existing services will not solve this problem. Additional resources will have to be put into developing services in areas that are presently deprived. This will be a difficult problem given the limited resources that will be available for health care during the period of post-apartheid reconstruction. But until this challenge has been met, the stain of apartheid will continue to mark the health service of a democratic South Africa.

The political culture of South Africa has been repressive, hierarchical, authoritarian and racist. This culture is reflected in the health service by the rigid bureaucracy, the oppressive relationships between doctors and nurses and the racial and gender division of labour in which the majority of nurses are black women and the majority of doctors are still white males.

A post-apartheid health service will face a major challenge in encouraging genuinely cooperative relationships between the various pro-

fessional groups. We will have to work hard to create a management system which encourages creativity rather than suppressing it, and that makes the best use of the skills and experiences of health professionals rather than defining their roles in narrow bureaucratic terms, as happens at present, especially to nurses.

#### **Dealing with the private sector**

Implicit in the call for a national health service is a recognition that private sector health care in South Africa has three powerful drawbacks to an equitable health care system. Private sector health care is an important cause of inequalities in health care for the general population; it focuses on individual curative care at the expense of community-oriented comprehensive care, and it is very expensive. Indeed, private health care wastes resources by providing more service than is necessary and more expensive service than is necessary.

Therefore, the call for a national health service has often meant calling for the elimination of the private

sector, or its incorporation into the public sector. At least it has meant substantially reducing the size of the private sector and so also reducing its influence.

However, as the democratic movement finds itself facing the transition from opposition to the prospect of power, so it also finds itself confronted with an uncomfortable reality; the question is not "what would we like to do with the private sector?" Rather we face the problem of "what can we do about the private sector?"

The difficulty is that there is no infinite range of choices. The private sector consumes about 50% of health care expenditure. About 50% of doctors work in private practice. A significant and increasing proportion of hospital beds are owned or managed by the private sector.

Only by nationalizing private health care institutions, and by making laws that would force private doctors to work for the state, could a democratic government rapidly attain the goal of a state-run, state-owned and state-financed health service. However, almost everyone agrees that the political and economic cost to any government of such a drastic step would be enormous. Firstly, the government suddenly would have to pay twice as many doctors. Secondly, nationalization without compensation would not be possible in the present political and economic climate. If the state were to pay for all the private hospitals, it would cost a lot of money, and the government would end up owning many hospitals that it did not actually want or need.

So the question remains: what to do about the private sector?

Currently, two alternatives are being explored. The first approach suggests leaving the private sector alone, but taxing it more heavily and making it pay for the cost of training doctors and nurses who work in the private sector. This would generate more funds for the public sector and cause the private sector to become

less profitable, leading to the rapid decline of private health care as it became increasingly expensive.

A second approach would be to bring together the many private health insurance funds into a single national health insurance fund under the control of the Department of Health. Everyone in formal employment would have to contribute to such a fund and the government would pay for the unemployed. This would put all the money for health care into the hands of the state, which would then buy health care for everyone in either the public or private sector.

Those who favour such a scheme suggest that by controlling the money, the Department of Health would be able to prevent private providers of care from supplying expensive or unnecessary care. The private sector could also be encouraged to provide more preventive care, and to provide care in areas where previously there had been no market.

It is suggested that this national health insurance system would draw the private sector into a single national system in which health care is provided by a mix of public and private providers, who would compete with each other, thus improving the efficiency of the system. This would lay the basis for a single system that guarantees all citizens access to a uniform range of services that would be free, or nearly free, at the time of using the service. Those who could afford it would be permitted to buy additional care not covered by the basic national insurance package.

The debate about different possible options is still in progress. A new government will implement policy on the basis of the options it has in front of it, and in the light of the political and economic realities that it will have to deal with.

For this very reason, it is important not to sit and wait for a new government, in the expectation that

it will introduce all the changes in health care that we would like to see. The final section of this article discusses the role of the progressive health movement in ensuring a thorough transformation of the health care system.

## The role of the progressive health movement

Health care is quite low down on the agenda of all the major political actors in South Africa at present. Radical changes in the health service will only occur if there is sufficient pressure for change, and if those who provide care can be convinced that it is in their interests to change.

This defines quite clearly the tasks of the progressive health movement at this time.

Firstly, we need to keep up pressure on the present state to dismantle all forms of apartheid and segregation in the health services. Secondly, we need to make sure that the progressive political movement takes on a health policy grounded in a commitment to equity, rather than based purely on the interests of health care providers and the political elite. Thirdly, we need to encourage community and other organizations to demand adequate health care as a right. Finally, we need to take every opportunity to convince the large bulk of conservative health care professionals that a radical change in the health service would be in the best interests of everybody, including the health care providers; that the new South Africa will provide exciting opportunities and not just a threat to the status quo.

There is no doubt that within the progressive health movement there is both the infrastructure and the commitment for carrying out these tasks. The challenge that we face is to define them adequately, and to develop the appropriate strategies that take into account the changing political terrain in South Africa.

There is an urgent need to guarantee real changes in health care while the opportunity still exists.

## Structural Adjustment for Africa: Canada Jumps on the Bandwagon

BY CHRISTOPHER NEAL

*Christopher Neal is an Ottawa-based writer and communications consultant specializing in international development and aid policy.*

On a bone-chilling Ottawa day in December 1989, Bill Blaikie, then-New Democratic Party External Affairs critic, glowered at Marcel Massé, head of Canada's foreign aid bureaucracy, seated at the parliamentary committee witness table. Massé, a onetime IMF technocrat named president of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) only months earlier, had finished a strong defence of structural adjustment in the Third World.

"We have two alternatives set out for us by Mr. Massé," Blaikie said. "Structural adjustment, in which, as we know, children die; and no structural adjustment, in which, according to Mr. Massé, more children die. For God's sake, is there not some way in which we can get beyond the way the world works and have a program where children do not bloody well die to satisfy the economic assumptions and doctrines of the international marketplace?"

A hush fell over the hearing on international debt and adjustment. The spectacled, mild-mannered Massé seemed momentarily cowed. "I can only agree with the ultimate objective," he replied. "I have children too ... I guess my motives are as pure as those of anybody else. However ... I have to work with what I have. I am a pragmatic man who has to deal with the policies I have there."

That orthodox structural adjustment has become the economic medicine of choice among Canadian aid and finance policymakers was underlined by Massé's appointment. Canada, like other Western donors, has been deeply influenced by the

World Bank and IMF in accepting and applying the Bretton Woods approach - both at home and in dealing with debt-distressed nations in the South.

"Structural adjustment" refers to a package of economic policies that developing - and other - countries must adopt in order to get credit from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, as well as other financial institutions and individual aid donors. The package typically includes currency devaluation, import-export liberalization, cutbacks in government spending, especially in the social area, privatization of parastatals and emphasis on foreign-exchange-earning exports.

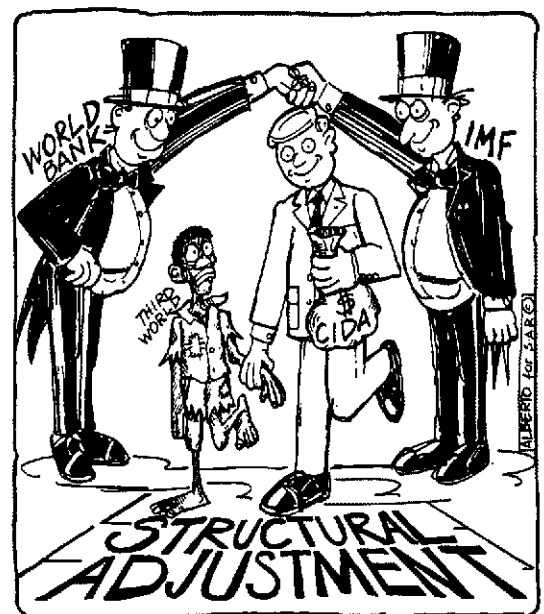
### Adjustment a pillar of Canadian policy

Structural adjustment has been a pillar of Canada's aid policy since the mid-1980s. In a major aid policy statement in 1987, Prime Minister Mulroney cited "structural adjustment policies that take into account their human impact on the people they are designed to assist" as a guideline for Canadian development assistance. Other publicly-vaunted touchstones for Ottawa's aid include helping the world's poorest people, women and development, food security and environmentally sustainable development.

Canada has been undergoing its own structural adjustment since the Conservative government was first elected in 1984. Deficit and debt reduction are the orders of the day in Ot-

tawa, with a strategy akin to that imposed by the World Bank and IMF on many developing countries and clearly influenced by market-oriented recipes applied in the U.S. and Britain. Deregulation, privatization, cuts in social programs, tax reform shifting the burden from rich to middle-income groups, a free trade agreement with the U.S. and the GST, have been the principal themes of Tory economic policy at home. Domestic and international business lobbies, as well as U.S. administrations under both Reagan and Bush have held heavy sway with Mulroney and his ministers, many of whom come from corporate boardrooms.

Under Monique Landry, a former wine importer from suburban Montreal, Canada's aid has been increasingly conditional on adjustment policies. Recipients of Canadian assistance are pressed to get their economies into harmony with global market forces. Although CIDA insiders say the agency's decision to skew support in favour of countries undergoing adjustment programs was made by officials, not politicians, it has been enthusiasti-



cally endorsed by Landry, Wilson and other ministers.

Massé, Landry's deputy, is a formidable defender of adjustment. He has a didactic style, an appetite for public debate and a shrewd understanding of Canadian and international bureaucracies. He knows CIDA intimately, having been its president in the early 1980s, and lunches regularly with IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus. Since he returned in 1989 after four years as Canadian Executive Director of the IMF, Massé has been tireless in preaching the structural adjustment gospel.

It is a switch for Canadian aid philosophy and, apparently, for Massé himself who, as CIDA president in 1981, defended an earlier Canadian aid emphasis on education and health. "A key part of what we have learned," he wrote in the 1981 CIDA annual report, "is that we must respect the right of others to choose their own path."

At the time, Canadian aid was aimed at helping to foster economic growth in developing countries, "in a way that will produce a wide distribution of the benefits of development among the populations of these countries..." This followed an ambitious strategy in the 1970s emphasizing social justice, participation and "basic needs".

#### "Taking a leap of faith"

Now, Massé said in a speech soon after returning to CIDA, the agency has embraced structural adjustment, which he compared to "taking (a) leap of faith, while also walking through a maze, blindfolded." He is also pressing for "more macroeconomists" at CIDA, a shift likely to occur during a major downsizing-restructuring that is expected to transform CIDA this winter.

CIDA, according to an internal agency document, accepts the IMF-World Bank "definitions and leadership on (structural adjustment) as the only sensible way to proceed." The same paper says "Canadian

aid should normally be provided within the framework of an agreed IMF/World Bank-supported adjustment program," and that "CIDA aid flowing in support of adjustment should ideally be conditional upon the existence and achievement of IMF/World Bank conditions."

Canada has implemented the policy since the mid-1980s, by devoting around ten percent of bilateral aid to direct support of structural adjustment programs. This is in addition to the large portion of Canadian financing to the World Bank, UN organizations, regional development banks and NGOs that goes to structural adjustment support.

In Anglophone Africa, over 20 percent of Canada's bilateral aid is in quick-disbursing lines of credit or social sector support directly conditional upon adjustment programs. In some countries, such as Ghana, nearly half of Canadian assistance is tied to an adjustment program.

Canada has turned balance of payments support on and off to African countries according to whether or not they meet commitments to the IMF. Said one CIDA official: "If negotiations between a country and the IMF break down, we pull back on aid." Zambia, for example, had its aid from Canada (along with other donors) severely reduced when it abandoned its IMF program in 1987. It has since been re-established, as Zambia returned to an IMF-approved program in 1990. As if to underline conditions for Canadian aid, CIDA dispatched a senior Bank of Canada official, Jacques Bussi eres, to Zambia in 1990 to be governor of the country's central bank and architect of its adjustment program.

"There's a fairly broad consensus that the issue is not whether structural adjustment is good or bad," said one CIDA official. "Everyone agrees that it is good. The question is how to make it work better."

That consensus, in fact, is largely limited to Northern donor coun-

tries. In 1989, African finance ministers unanimously endorsed a plan to shift African economic output from its current focus on primary exports to producing more for domestic and regional African markets. The proposal, developed by the UN Economic Commission for Africa and entitled the "African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation," challenges IMF-World Bank assumptions that African countries can take advantage of liberalized markets.

"In the African situation," the report says, "the simple truth is that many countries have moved towards freer markets without being in a position to take full advantage of available market opportunities because of the low capacity to adjust their fragile production structures." As a result, "the main burden of adjustment has been borne by drastic reductions in domestic expenditures."

#### NGOs sceptical of CIDA claims

While CIDA claims to alleviate negative effects of adjustment on the poor, many are sceptical. Government promises to "put poor people first" in distributing Canadian aid are undermined by the parallel commitment to orthodox adjustment, critics say. Chris Bryant, former director of CUSO, told the parliamentary subcommittee on Third World debt that "Canada's support for current structural adjustment has resulted in more poverty for millions," and that "compensation for the so-called new poor, victims of adjustment programs Canada supports, is not really aid at all."

Tim Brodhead, director of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and Canada's representative on the NGO Working Group on the World Bank, describes CIDA's adherence to orthodox structural adjustment as part of

*continued on page 33*

## Fighting Sexual Oppression: Two-Way Solidarity

BY JULIE C. BLACK

*Julie C. Black is an anti-rape activist, and an AIDS worker at a community-based organization in Ottawa. She is currently conducting a study visit of South African AIDS educators.*

Recent issues of SAR have featured and sparked some of the contemporary debate about what forms of solidarity work best suit the current situation in southern Africa. The debate has focused on a central dilemma – how much of our energy should we expend in supporting local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and how much needs to be given directly to the main liberation organizations? The arguments for supporting NGOs, particularly those that advocate for people further oppressed by gender, class, sexual orientation, and so on, centre on their role in making/keeping the main liberation organizations democratic and progressive. Others contend that groups like the ANC, SWAPO, and FRELIMO need all of our support now, if they are to survive this critical, violent time. Contained within this debate is the broader question of the relationship and power dynamics between Western solidarity groups and the front-line organizations we have chosen to support. At our best, solidarity groups create a partnership with front-line organizations, which means that we have respect enough to offer not only our support but also our honest criticisms; at our worst, the relationship ranges from solidarity groups imposing our own doctrines and agendas, to supporting anti-democratic forces, to patronizingly “toeing the party line.” I have written this piece on the work that my organization does in support of the liberation of southern Africa to further what I consider to be a very important discussion.

I do unpaid work at the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa, a feminist crisis centre offering counselling and advocacy to women who have been raped as adults and/or as children, and education/outreach to our community. In response to an invitation from Rape Crisis Cape Town, my colleague Caroline Ford and I recently spent two months meeting and working with like-minded organizations in Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

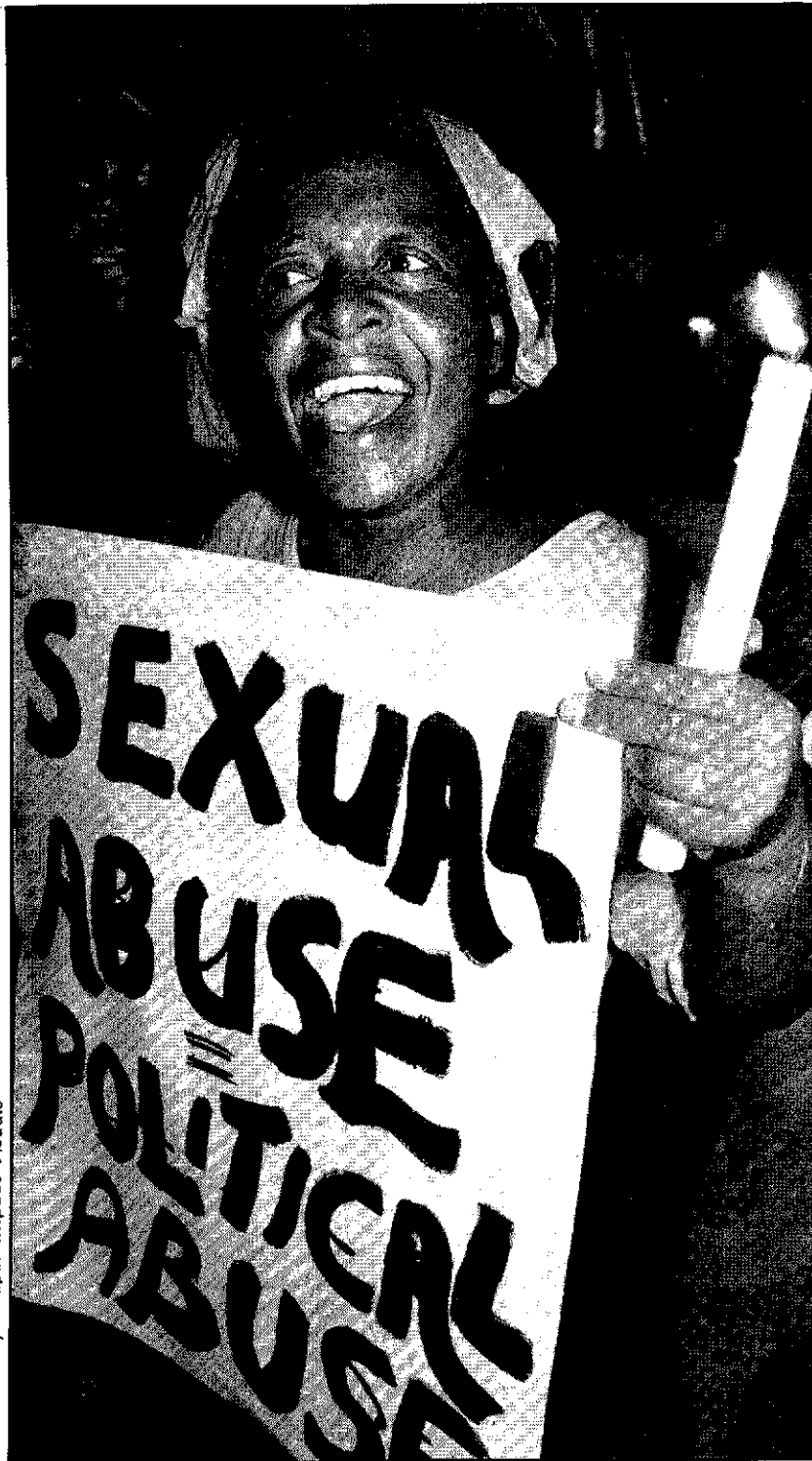
Rape Crisis has served for years as an anti-sexist, non-racial organizing space, and, as an internationally-funded social service NGO, was able to remain somewhat active during the years of heaviest government repression. The political credibility of Rape Crisis, plus its impressive links within the mass-based liberation struggle, meant for us that we were able to meet with a variety of groups within South Africa and from as far away as Zambia. Rape Crisis' political acumen also meant that we were able to see who was missing from the network, to understand how women have been divided from one another by state repression and by (male) party lines, and to witness the ongoing strategies to pull women together. Rape Crisis was one of the central organizers of the November 1990 Stop Violence Against Women march, the first ever held in South Africa, and has been heavily involved in the now-disbanded Federation of South African Women (FedSAW) and the newly developing National Women's Alliance, which meets July 7th in the Western Cape.

### The war against women

It has become a truism to talk about the “culture of violence” that the state has managed to create

in South Africa, and yet barely a word is spoken, hardly an action is taken, within the general liberation movement, to counter the specific war against women which is also raging. With little support, women activists are hard at work in South Africa, uncovering the layers of silence in which sexual violence thrives, organizing and conscientizing women, and pressing the political and moral leaders to do public education campaigns and to create structures within all organizations to stop male violence against women.

As in Canada, the widespread and systemic nature of male violence against women is only painfully being uncovered. For obvious reasons, rape by stranger or acquaintance is generally the first type of male violence against women to be addressed by anti-rape activists. In South Africa, state security forces have often chosen rape to torture women and some men in detention, and in the terror campaigns against activists. The vulnerability and isolation of women working as domestics and as farm labourers have often been sufficient excuse for male employers to sexually assault them, and we can expect similar revelations to come out of the investigations into the slave trade of Mozambican refugees. And, as a final example, male gang-members in the brutalized minimal- and sub-economic districts often rape women members of the opposing gang as a way of humiliating the opposing men, with the degradation of the women caught in the middle only a happy coincidence. Clearly, the rampant existence of rape serves to bolster the power of men over women, white over black, rich over poor, and to attack the very capacity the victimized have to struggle for their own rights.



Cedric Nunn/Afrapix-Impact Visuals

Women's candlelit 'Reclaim the Night' march, Hillbrow, Johannesburg, 1991

In this context, it is difficult to see how the struggle against rape is anything but a crucial element of the overall liberation struggle.

Confronting the violence men commit against their own family members is an even more complex and agonizing task, because it is "our men" battering "our women" and often "our children" too. Activists who educate that a punch in the face is a punch in the face and it is wrong no matter who the perpetrator is, are often accused of "dividing the movement." Rarely do we hear that men who beat women, who refuse to let them attend meetings, are dividing the movement, and ensuring that it can have only limited success.

The work of activists in "developing" countries, and the work of First Nations, Inuit, immigrant, and rural organizers in Canada and the US, have been instrumental in the current global re-examination of the shelter strategy as the main response to male violence against their families. A major problem with shelters worldwide is that as soon as they're open, they're full, and no one has been able to obtain the resources needed to set up enough shelters. The demand on shelters is further compounded in regions like South Africa where the housing crisis is so severe it can take women years to obtain alternate housing. Further to these practical problems is the cultural specificity of the shelter strategy. For women who belong to cohesive communities, going to a shelter can take them away from their traditional support systems, such as extended families, neighbours, and church groups. It has only been through the sharing of women's experiences worldwide, challenging the hegemony of white middle-class women within the movement, that such a reexamination of strategy is coming about.

South African activists are incorporating these experiences into their daily work and into their plans for the future. Canadian organizers can

learn from the Rape Crisis initiatives which have led to the formation of small "satellite" groups of women offering counselling to the women in their community, to counter the economic, transportation, and cultural barriers which have kept many women from the Rape Crisis offices. We can anticipate that activists will be negotiating for legal reforms which will result in the abuser being taken out of the home and not the woman and children, and for massive public education campaigns to address the years of violence, with violence against women and children at the forefront.

Another form of male violence against their "families" occurs when men in the liberation struggle sexually harass or rape their women colleagues. While it is wholly accepted that racism and racially-motivated violence severely undermine the struggle, there is no parallel recognition of the destructiveness of sexism and sexual violence. Nor is there a widespread recognition of how racism and sexual violence are linked, and how we have to root out not simply the forms of domination but also the will to dominate. This seems to me to be the ultimate response to those who believe that violence against women is a "social problem" that can wait until "after the revolution."

Perhaps the most devastating form of male violence is the sexual abuse of children, and women within southern Africa are beginning to confront it. The Canadian rape crisis movement has been working with adult survivors of childhood sexual assault for over ten years, and we have been able to offer a wealth of experience and analysis for our colleagues in southern Africa to use as they see fit. Over the course of our trip, it also became clear that we have many common enemies, including the "experts" from the psychiatric system from the West who are being invited to southern Africa to teach the most regressive methods and analyses of incest work (such

as "blame the victim," "blame the mother," and "mental illness" approaches). Intellectual exports are one of the most destructive elements the West forces on "developing" countries, particularly to the progressive community work which is essential to a truly democratic and just nation. I want to make clear that I do not consider an exchange of ideas between progressive/feminist groups in the West and in the "developing" world to be the same sort of intellectual colonialism; in fact, the most effective response we can make to this colonialism is to talk with one another more and not less.

### **A dual form of solidarity work**

Our trip and ongoing networking have been as much of a boost to the Canadian anti-rape movement as they have been to the movement in southern Africa. Activists within South Africa have an understanding of and a belief in a democracy and a philosophy of accountability which Canadians do well to learn from. And we have much to teach one another about our shared challenges: how to build political allegiances across class/race/cultural lines, how to move through the conflicting elements of the numerous kinds of oppression, how not to get demoralized in a brutally violent world. None of us had concrete answers to any of these issues, and were conscious of the radically different contexts from which we spoke, but we had lots to teach one another about seeing things differently and anew.

Even as I characterize our relationship as mutually beneficial, I recognize that the significant material advantages that Western groups have compared to the groups in the "developing" world give us extra responsibilities. While most of us are not in the position to fund southern African organizations, we are in a position to monitor and lobby the international funding groups. Many of the women's organizations we met with feared that they would soon lose their international funding, be-

cause of the dominant belief that apartheid is virtually over and because of a shift in funding priorities toward Eastern Europe.

Working to secure funding is, of course, only an interim measure in the broader campaign to achieve a truly equitable sharing of resources among "developed" and "developing" nations, men and women, rich and poor. While it is vital to maintain our campaigns for just foreign policy initiatives, we must not forget that many of the impacts on southern Africa directly stem from the corrupt and violent systems we live in here at home, which are our responsibility to change. Many of the activists we met were well aware that our solidarity work must not stop at the rape crisis movement, the broader movements to liberate southern Africa, or even the global women's liberation movement: we also have to be a part of a broader movement here in Canada for our own democratic and progressive revolution. We met many activists, particularly in South Africa, who were demonstrating with their lives how to work both inside and outside the general liberation movement at the same time.

Obviously I believe there is a strong case to be made for supporting progressive/women's NGOs within southern Africa, now and "after the revolution." The rape crisis movements of southern Africa clearly believe that now is the time for mutual exchange with sister movements around the world, so that together we can increase the likelihood that more women in southern Africa will survive to see the days of true national liberation. I would argue strongly for solidarity groups to create networks with Canadian grassroots organizations to provide this support. The intense level of political activism happening in all of southern Africa means that activists there are fighting on many fronts at the same time, and it challenges those of us wanting to act in solidarity to do the same.



# Readers' Forum....

## Our Readers Write

We're always happy to hear from our readers, especially when someone has a well-reasoned argument to some article we've published.

During the past few months we've also received a lot of off-hand comments on *SAR* from subscribers in many parts of the world that show just how far the magazine travels. We've been gratified to get such positive feedback to our efforts and we'd like to share some our readers' reactions with you.

George Manz of the prairie magazine, *Briarpatch*, tells us "SAR is a joy to read!" From Winnipeg, Wendy Boyd writes "This past year especially we have really appreciated the solid analysis and thoughtful debates that Southern Africa Report provides." Two former Mozambique cooperantes, Kathie Sheldon and Steve Tarzynski, now in the U.S.A., dropped us a line to say how much "we really appreciate your articles in *SAR*. The latest on grass roots resistance [in Mozambique] was particularly informative and thought provoking..." That sentiment is shared by some inside Mozambique. We heard from Dr. George Povey, a Maputo based doctor who offers "a vote of confidence in your position regarding Mozambique as reflected in recent *SARs*. We can be most useful to people here as critics - they've had their share of romantics," he suggests, concluding that "I hope you continue to write good stuff."

And from Austin, Texas, Se-biletso Matabane writes that "Your journal is one of the very best in North America which addresses the South African problem squarely. It is always a delight to pass it on to friends."

Thanks to all of you. Don't hesitate to write us anytime you've a comment to make - good or bad. We'll be glad to hear from you.



## The Theory Corner

We've found that the exchange on "civil society" we highlighted in several previous issues of *SAR* (see "On Civil Society: Moses Mayekiso Interviewed" and Mala Singh, "Deconstructing Civil Society" in volume 6, numbers 1 and 3 respectively) has struck some real sparks. We've had good verbal feedback but also an extensive commentary on the previous contributions from Lee Cokorinos, a sometime contributor to *SAR* (see his article on Zimbabwe in *SAR*, vol. 6, no. 1) now residing in Botswana. Too long and a bit too unapologetically theoretical readily to fit our *SAR* format, some of the main points Cokorinos makes seem worth summarizing here, for their own merits but also to help keep alive a debate we think worth pursuing. We've encouraged Lee to publish some version of the original elsewhere but we'll be happy to forward a copy (in a plain brown envelope) to anyone who sends us three bucks to cover photocopying and mailing costs. Note: what follows is *SAR's* summary, not Cokorinos' own. *Caveat emptor*.

Cokorinos likes the debate - "this extremely rare encounter between a philosopher and an activist could only take place in an activist journal like *SAR*" - but he is uneasy with Singh's argument nonetheless. While Singh does "raise some of the social and political complexities of

socialist transformation" Cokorinos feels, she much too glibly juxtaposes "state" and "society" in doing so. In particular, he feels, the notion of "civil society" must be treated much less uncritically than she does. For he sees its widespread currency as problematic, the concept susceptible to misuse as part of a disturbing general tendency in the discussion of Africa. "Under the appealing guise of the language of democratic pluralism" (Cokorinos here paraphrases the Ugandan author, Mahmood Mamdani) there may lie "the ideological camouflage behind which politics are being transformed in the age of Structural Adjustment"!

To begin with, "the broadening of 'civil society' in both pre- and post-apartheid South Africa is not simply a question of the relationship between party-political formations like the ANC and SACP on the one hand, and grass-roots organizations on the other." True, Cokorinos argues, it is "of paramount importance to be implicitly reminded (as Singh does...) of the repressive records of Stalinist and, more relevantly, nationalist regimes." But a mere opting for "pluralism" is not an adequate response to this danger. For "civil society" can also throw up a whole range of quite conservative and reactionary expressions - including, in South Africa, all kinds of demands for "group rights" and the like that threaten to undermine the possibility of concerted post-apartheid governmental action to confront "acute socio-economic crisis, underdevelopment or external destabilization."

Indeed, Antonio Gramsci (the Italian Marxist so often quoted in defense of the concept of "civil society") argued cogently that a strong political centre (e.g., a political party) is necessary to give effective political focus even to the most progressive of grass-roots workers' organizations. And Marx and Engels themselves kept the concept of "civil society" at arms length, Cokorinos reminds us, precisely because it gave

a "foggy, diffuse, 'decentered' representation of power that tends to hide, rather than expose, the reality of class power." Hence Cokorinos' suspicion that "the social forces outside the intellectual community which are in part driving these debates [about such issues as 'civil society'] have bigger fish to fry: they are attempting to abort an anti-capitalist revolution in South Africa, and are spending a great deal of money doing it."

In effect, Singh is branded by Cokorinos with giving (however unwittingly) aid and comfort to this kind of counter-revolutionary project, for the various "essential building blocks of civil society" she identifies ("gender, class, race, political creed, etc.") cannot ever exist in abstract, completely "autonomous" or independent form: "like it or not, they operate in a conflict-ridden medium of heavily institutionalized social and political power" and take much of their meaning from how they relate to this structure of power. Even more important than the mere fact of the "autonomy" of these "building blocks" (this being the limited preoccupation of the pluralist) is how they are linked up into the broader struggle to define society's direction, a struggle that necessarily implicates political parties and the state as well as the components of "civil society."

In short, says Cokorinos, for many of the most important purposes a simple, "dualistic 'state-society' framework" is singularly unhelpful. The fact is that "both the state and civil society are shot through with cross-cutting social antagonisms" - especially class antagonisms. The big question - which class interests will be repressed, which empowered, in post-apartheid South Africa - is blurred if mere "autonomy" is taken as the touchstone of freedom in political debate about South Africa: "transformation in a socialist direction will not be guaranteed by the 'autonomy' of the socialist or popular el-

ements of civil society, but by [the nature of] their involvement in and active intervention in party life." In short, Cokorinos suspects that the term "civil society" is just too ideologically-charged - and in too negative a way - to be of much use to those who seek to point the way forward: "to give a deconstructionist or radical pluralist twist to mainstream political theory's fetish of the distinctions between state and social power doesn't bring us a millimetre closer to assessing (the) concrete correlation of forces" that will produce "either socialism or a form of neo-colonial capitalism in the post-apartheid era"!†

Cokorinos is even suspicious of the use of the concept of "civil society" in the hands of a Moses Mayekiso, though he concedes that "the thrust of Mayekiso's article (and certainly his practice) does take cognizance of the class-divided nature of what others might choose to define more restrictively as 'civil society'. To address the anti-democratic and anti-socialist chill winds that are blowing from this reality he proposes a strategy of building concrete, worker-based organizational safeguards through mobilization - rather than, as Singh demands, 'ground rules' for 'sustaining distinctions'."

"The demobilization and 'expert'-ization accompanying the transition process is already well advanced in South Africa, and Mayekiso is right to mark it out for concern." But what, substantively, is the chief implication of the fact that doors may be closing. [Note: Cokorinos advanced these arguments *before* the ANC's own July Congress and the "Inkathagate" scandal, events that might have altered his emphasis somewhat.] The answer is to be found in the dangers posed by the surfacing of "class divisions" not only within South African society as a whole but "in the liberation movement in particular." Cokorinos' conclusion: "People in Mayekiso's position ...

will ignore (these dangers) at their peril. In the constitutional round table shaping up, the workers will have a very small place setting indeed, if any at all. How they respond will determine, more than any other factor, the character of South African politics over the next decade. Stripping the situation in South Africa of its social class elements is a recipe, if not for disaster, at least for a certain type of [negative] outcome we [have seen] emerge elsewhere in Africa."

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† Cokorinos contrasts the debate about civil society with the "wide-ranging discussion (some years ago) of the difficulties, contradictions and benefits flowing from the COSATU/ANC/SACP alliance." Since then (Cokorinos regrets to note), "discussion of the specifics of class, political and national interests in South Africa, and how they are related, and the recognition that these interests and identities in South Africa are antagonistic and often mutually exclusive rather than simply overlapping, seems to be taking a back seat to the 'discourse' of civil society." His conclusion: "It is time to return to and deepen those debates rather than fall into step with the intellectual project Mamdani ... warns us against."

## Keep on Truckin'

9 July 1991

Thank you for your copy of [*Southern Africa*] REPORT July 1991 which, as ever, was read with great interest. In it you state: "... beyond the US, whether the international anti-apartheid movement still has the gumption to monitor activities of financiers - as was done so well in the mid- to late-1980's - is not clear." Fear not. ELTSA (End Loans to South Africa) is in its eighteenth year researching and campaigning on loans to South Africa and on oil and gold sanctions. Campaign successes include the Barclays Boycott, forcing South African gold out of the

shops of Ratners, the biggest jewellery retailer in the UK, and other work on gold, banking and oil sanctions. Our most recent campaigning has concentrated on seeking an assurance from UK banks that they will not make new loans until there is profound and irreversible change. We recently achieved success when Standard Chartered Bank followed the lead of High Street UK banks in giving a categorical assurance on no new loans under present circumstances. Details are available in the June 1991 ELTSA Newsletter.

The next ICABA (International Campaign Against Banking on Apartheid) Newsletter, which we produce jointly with the World Council of Churches, will include campaigning articles from Germany, Switzerland, US and France as well as an article from South Africa. ELTSA recently wrote to over 150 top international banks to seek an assurance on no new loans. In many countries vital campaign work is being sustained in often difficult political circumstances.

It is now very widely recognised that financial sanctions were and continue to be an important lever for change. As the ANC has made clear, co-ordinated international pressure continues to be a vital component if the transition to a non-racial democracy in South Africa is to be successful. How are campaigns going against banks in Canada?

Yours sincerely,  
David Craine  
End Loans to South Africa  
56 Camberwell Road  
London, SE5 0EN

## Structural Adjustment

*continued from page 27*

a trend affecting all official Western aid agencies. It has emerged, he says, from the World Bank's new-found "intellectual dominance of development thinking" over the UN development agencies who once set the agenda for international cooperation.

While the World Bank's discourse has evolved to include "poverty alleviation policies" among conditions for loans to developing countries, its reliance on "market forces" as the primary engine of growth is undiminished. The U.S. and U.K. lead the charge at the World Bank in favour of market forces, say most observers. Some dissidence expressed by an emphasis on the social impact of adjustment comes from the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and France.

Morris Miller, Canada's director at the World Bank in the early 1980s, says the U.S. muscle is flexed not by exercising its 18.93 percent of the vote, but by holding up general capital increases. "Everyone has to pretend that they favour free markets and monetarism," Miller said in an interview. "There's always this pressure to placate the Americans." Canada, he added, typically succumbs to this pressure. "I don't think

the Canadian government gave a damn (about debt-distressed developing countries) when they supported structural adjustment lending. They just wanted to support the U.S., who only wanted to help the banks get their debts serviced."

### Parliamentary committee challenge

This approach faced a challenge from the parliamentary committee Massé tried so hard to win over to World Bank/IMF analyses and prescriptions. The Commons all-party external affairs subcommittee on international debt recommended in June 1990 that "Canada use its position to advocate major changes in the way that the international financial institutions (such as the World Bank) respond to the debt crisis of developing countries."

Its report expresses the view that structural adjustment "has been tried and found wanting ... it is not working." The subcommittee urged "a fresh approach" to policy-based adjustment and conditionality that is "human-centred, democratic and sustainable." Canada, it concludes, "should be an advocate for reform in the international financial institutions, including at the highest level."

In a response tabled in Parliament by then-External Affairs Minister Joe Clark last November, the government rejected most of

the subcommittee's 19 recommendations. Among them was a recommendation that Canada press for a global conference on debt and adjustment policies; that a high-level task force be set up including NGOs, government, business, academic and Third World representatives to advise the government on debt policy; and that Canadian banks be required to write off or reduce debts owed them by poor countries in return for tax relief.

The tone in the government's response reflects little of the subcommittee's urgency; it also shows scant willingness to act independently as the subcommittee urged. The response, as such, infuriated several MPs on the subcommittee, prompting them to issue an unprecedented "reply to the government response" in March. In their reply, the six subcommittee members - including three Conservatives - describe the government report as "far from meeting our expectations ... (and) dispiriting in approach, especially in what it has evaded or managed not to say ..."

The subcommittee's reply calls on the government to "revisit" its earlier recommendations and to move ahead with a promised seminar on debt, with involvement of the public. To date, there has been no official reaction to the subcommittee's reply.

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