

Southern Africa REPORT

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DROUGHT

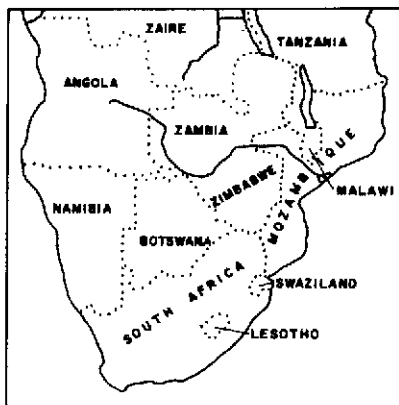
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Southern Africa REPORT

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Drought & Democracy

Much of the discussion of the states of southern Africa in the pages of SAR has turned on questions of their destabilization by South Africa and their "recolonization" by such external actors as the World Bank and the IMF. And recolonization does continue, as each day - or so it seems - we are forced fur-

ther to water down our notions of what had once been considered irreversible progress. Take Mozambique and Angola, for example; the latest news finds ex-Portuguese settlers positioning themselves for a return from Lisbon or Johannesburg to the property and privilege of colonial times. Or consider Judith Mar-

shall's pithy description (expanded upon elsewhere in this issue and reinforced by Brad Lester's eloquent letter from the field) of the kind of fall-out from structural adjustment that she witnessed across the region during a recent visit: "There is a dramatic increase in unemployment and a huge proliferation of the informal sector. The contrast between rich and poor becomes more stark. There is a severe degradation of the social fabric and a dog-eat-dog mentality comes to prevail. Violence - both community and family - is on the increase."

But now, suddenly, drought seems the central story coming out of the region. And certainly, as described by Carol Thompson in our lead article, the southern African drought is a calamity of staggering proportions, one that threatens to frame, in the coming winter months, a full-scale famine. Anyone who cares about the fate of the people of the region must take this prospect very seriously indeed. Millions will probably die, the experts say, in countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique, their lost lives mute testimony to the fragility of the region's economies.

But it is also appropriate to ask why these economies are, in fact, so fragile. Western experts are quick to argue that it is because structural adjustment has not had time to work and that drought now delays the benign developmental ef-

and central Mozambique is killing them, for the people have no margin left after 11 years of war by apartheid-backed RENAMO. The response by the apartheid regime was to turn the electric fence back on at "low voltage" to burn and scar Mozambicans trying to escape RENAMO and the drought by crossing into South Africa. In contrast, Zimbabwe is including the needs of Mozambican refugees in its food requirement estimates; Mozambicans are pouring over the border, and are expected to triple their number in Zimbabwe to 300,000. In two weeks in April, 8,000 Mozambicans sought refuge in Malawi, adding to the 1 million already there. Southern Africa appears to be headed for continued economic and physical hardship.

SADCC on the move

What is new for this drought in Southern Africa is that policies have been carried out to meet some of these daunting conditions. State plans or regional coordination cannot bring rain, but they can alleviate the consequences of drought.

With Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Swaziland and Zambia having to import maize in the largest amounts in recent history, the capacity of regional railways becomes a matter of life and death. Setting railways and ports development as top priority in 1980, SADCC (Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference) assured that transport corridors from Beira and Maputo, Mozambique and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania are able to handle this enormous increase in demand.

The commitment of 40 percent of project funding (\$3.3 billion of an overall \$8.5 billion) since 1980 to increase capacity and efficiency of the transport corridors is paying off. For example, the importation of the 1.86 million metric tons of grain for Zimbabwe relies heavily on the Beira corridor, requiring three additional train loads a day for the rest of this year. The Limpopo Corridor from Maputo to Harare is now secure

from RENAMO attacks and will add one maize train a day. The Dar es Salaam Corridor will bring maize to Zambia and Malawi.

The Managing Director of the Beira Corridor Group (BCG) of Zimbabwean businessmen, David Zausner, confirms that the corridors are meeting the regional emergency. Contrary to reports in the Western press that South African ports and rails are "saving" the region, the Beira Corridor alone hauled more maize in the first two weeks of April than all of the South African rails or roads. SADCC can rightfully claim it has reduced its dependence on South African transport lines.

In the 1983-85 drought, SADCC coordinated its requests for drought relief from donors and is doing the same again this year at the June 1st conference in Geneva. The ten neighbours together, not each individual country, have spent four months assessing their joint needs and are proposing their own solutions to the massive logistical task. A Logistics Co-ordination Centre, recently established within the SADCC Food Security Unit in Harare, is coordinating the many tasks which range from the rapid unloading of ships, to deciding which trains or trucks will carry the maize inland, to the purchase of tarpaulins for temporary storage. However, this centre was not set up without debate with US AID (United States Agency for International Development), which tried to insist that the logistical nerve centre be stationed in Johannesburg. SADCC rejected this apartheid coordination of their vital food imports.

SADCC programs also emphasized research and production in the sorghum/millets food grains more resistant to drought than maize. Especially in Botswana, this production has reduced the impact of the drought. SADCC has recently developed cow peas in Mozambique to increase protein consumption. Yet much more can be done as Zimbabwean farmers have resisted shifting

to sorghum because it requires extensive labour inputs to keep birds away from the exposed ripening kernels.

Outside "assistance"?

Although donors will certainly keep many Southern Africans alive this year, donors have often added to the hardships of natural disasters. The United States, for example, pressured the Zimbabwean government for several years to lower the price offered for maize production because Zimbabwe had surplus maize which was costly to store and because its high grade tobacco could bring in foreign exchange. Zimbabwe resisted this policy, citing the SADCC general goal of regional food security in grain.

But in 1990 and 1991, the price of maize was lowered to encourage both commercial and small farmers to shift to tobacco production - which they did. Zimbabwean cereal production fell 21 percent in 1990-91, exceeded in the region only by Mozambique, whose war-ravaged production dropped by 25 percent. Compared to previous years, Zimbabwean farmers only planted 60 percent of their land in maize for the 1991-92 season.

The current Zimbabwean shortfall is therefore only partially due to drought. Irrigated maize instead of tobacco could be feeding more people. And because the demand for maize is high this year, international prices have soared, with Zimbabwe paying about \$300 per metric ton, instead of the local producer price of \$110.

The European Economic Community (EEC) also has added to the burden of the drought. SADCC has planned since 1982 to build regional grain storage silos, so a surplus producer like Zimbabwe could have a guaranteed market and a deficit country like Mozambique would know ready reserves were at hand. The EEC agreed to finance the first three years in 1988, but then told SADCC that it would decide who received the grain and when.

SADCC refused this offer of outside control over their regional food supply. Because the costs are high to build silos and initially store the grain, the project is still not off the ground. Yet regional reserves could have greatly reduced costs this year. Donors still seem to prefer to ship their surplus food (not all as aid) than to promote development of regional food self-sufficiency.

Now the United States is promoting a Chicago trade board style of setting agricultural prices. Although the international donors used to prefer grain marketing boards to stabilize prices and actually established some (e.g. National Milling in Tanzania set up by the World Bank), the fashion is now to privatize everything.

Setting up the right prices for farmers is crucial to successful food security policy and often the Southern African governments have erred. However, it is not clear to SADCC how inserting private traders (and their profit) as middle-

men will reduce the cost of grain while encouraging farmers to grow it. They have also noticed the corruption scandals which have periodically rocked the Chicago Board of Trade.

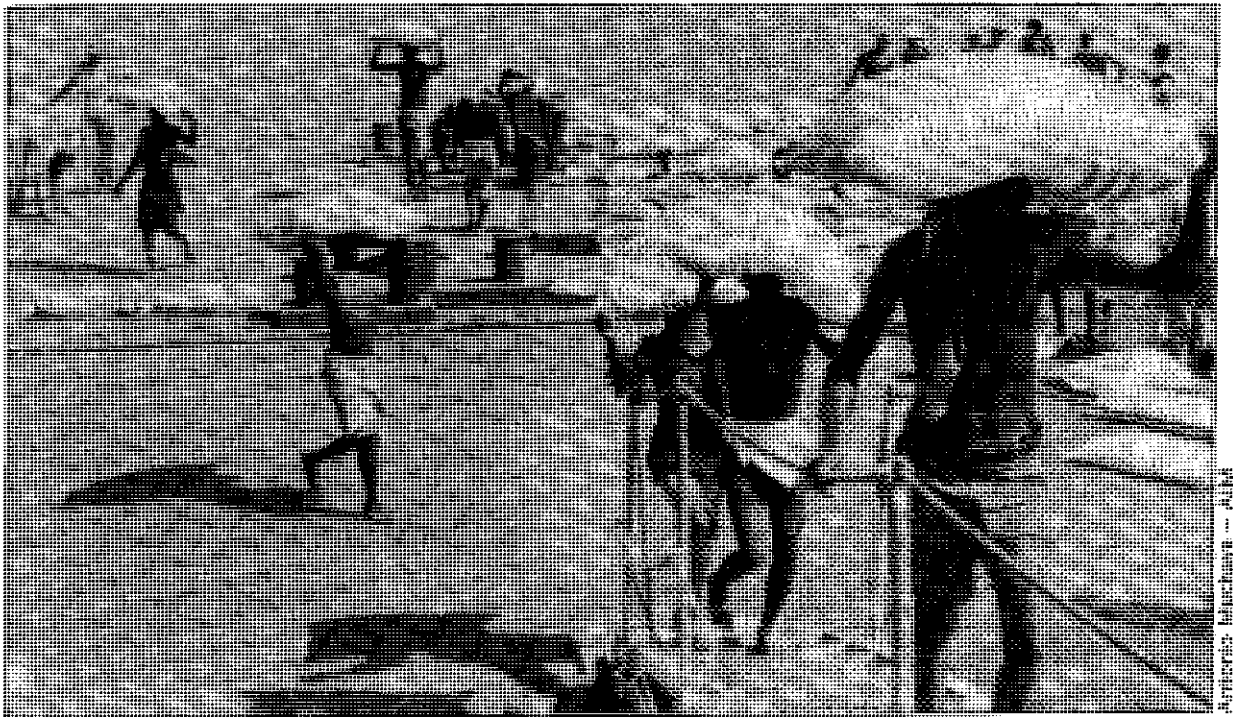
Mozambican railway (CFM) officials were told in a meeting in February in Maputo by the World Bank, Canada, EEC, and the US that they must privatize Mozambican rails or aid money would stop. Railways are very strategic, so the Mozambicans delayed by asking for a study of cost effectiveness. They, however, expect the southern lines to South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe to be privatized within a year. And who will buy them? Not Mozambicans, for they have little capital or collateral for loans.

Southern Africa's ability to respond to the drought is further constrained by over a decade of apartheid aggression in the region (costing \$65 billion 1980-90 with over 1.6 million killed according to

UNICEF). Can those who have been Western partners of apartheid simply divert their view and claim "donor fatigue" for Southern Africa? Early estimates state that less than 30 percent of the 11 million metric tons needed (including South Africa) will be donated as food aid.

President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique reminded the international agencies at the January SADCC conference in Maputo that "the people of this region have committed themselves to the liberation struggle because they were aspiring for not only their freedom, but also their *well being*. Such was the posture of the people of Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and still today, of South Africa."

Southern Africans are asking for outside assistance to address their drought disaster, but they are also finding their own solutions and assisting each other. The Macua proverb of Mozambicans summarizes their efforts: "Living is helping one another to live."



Unloading emergency food aid in the port of Vilankulo, Mozambique



Margaret A. Novicki - Africa Report

Democracy vs. Economic Liberalization The Zambian Dilemma

BY MARCIA BURDETTE

Marcia Burdette is an Ottawa-based consultant on international affairs with special reference to Africa and teaches at Carleton University. Ms. Burdette spent six years in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

One of the most telling indicators of economic and social distress for today's Zambia is the country's appearance in 1991, for the first time, on the U.N.'s list of Least Developed Countries.

This depressing achievement comes despite a relatively well-developed industrial sector, a high adult literacy rate (72.8 per cent)

and a life expectancy three years over the average for other African Least Developed Countries. Zambia's economy, however, is in a tail-spin. The steady decrease in Zambia's real GDP over the last 16 years has increased human suffering and signalled a deepening vulnerability of the Zambian economy. Debt is now edging near to U.S. \$1,000 for each member of the population, while per capita GNP is a little over one-third that level.

At the same time that the U.N. acknowledged the depth of Zambia's economic problems, Zambia also welcomed a peaceful change of government in November 1991.

Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP), in power nearly thirty years and as a one-party government for the past 18 years, was replaced at the polls by the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD), headed by trade unionist Frederick Chiluba.

Zambians wanting economic renewal and a more open political system pushed Kaunda out. But the pressures for economic liberalization and for greater democracy formed a temporary alliance only, coinciding just long enough to bring in a new government. In the future the economic and social goals

likely to emerge from a genuinely open political process are much less likely to coincide with those preferred by the international financial institutions whose funding is crucial for Zambia's economic survival. The contradiction between these pressures – between the claims of democracy on the one hand and the logic of structural adjustment on the other – could well put Zambia, once again, between a rock and a hard place. Moreover, intensifying these problems is a famine worse than any that the Zambian people have known since independence in 1964.

The regime shift

By any standard, the peaceful end to UNIP's 18 years of one-party rule has been one of the most significant events in modern Zambian history. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda was one of the longest serving chief executives in Africa when he was replaced by Frederick Chiluba in a surprisingly sudden shift in the country's political regime. As Larry Garber, a member of the international observer team led by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter put the point, in the experience of those who have monitored elections around the world "we have never had a president sworn in only 36 hours after the close of elections. We never have witnessed such a landslide victory."

The long-term decline of the economy had led Zambians to a generalized dissatisfaction with UNIP, in power since 1964. Since the mid-1980s many of the reforms connected to earlier attempts to restructure the economy – major price increases and a decrease in spending on social services – had put a heavy strain on the population. It was out of this rising discontent that a demand for political democracy came, during the past few years, to complement the imperative of economic reform.

In 1990, a referendum on whether to restore a multiparty system was announced and postponed several times and police in riot gear

broke up various MMD meetings. Ultimately, however, critical voices from within UNIP (particularly the Wina brothers, Arthur and Sikota) joined a chorus from outside, especially trade unionists and University of Zambia students, calling for an end to one-party rule.

The man who would eventually replace Kaunda, Frederick Chiluba, had been at loggerheads with the government for many years. The son of a copper miner and the long-standing head of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), Chiluba is a lay preacher who often quotes the bible in his fiery political speeches. Detained for alleged anti-government activities in the early 1970s, he regained the spotlight in 1990 when he denounced the UNIP one-party government as undemocratic and unaccountable. In his capacity as vice-chairman of the new MMD and head of ZCTU, he called for an interim committee – not answerable to UNIP – to oversee the referendum. His challenges were ignored at the time but such suggestions helped focus the groundswell of popular support for a change of regime.

Public discontent was fanned by press reports of corruption by Kaunda, his family and associates. These accusations surfaced during a trial of Lt. General Christon Tembo for treason, linked to efforts made to overthrow Kaunda in 1988. When a brief military coup occurred in June of 1990 (the second in two years), the vulnerability of the regime – set against the evident popular desire for a change – was underscored.

Steadily, former members of the UNIP government and various prominent businessmen, church leaders, students and trade unionists joined the MMD and other smaller parties. Massive rallies were held on the Copperbelt and in Lusaka with the MMD spearheading a multiparty lobby. Equally important, as the 1980s came to a close, was the fact that the forces for political change received substantial re-

inforcement from international aid donors and financial institutions.

Economic reform?

Since the early 1980s, Zambia, its economy in dire straits, had entered into a series of agreements with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank. Yet most of these accords broke down when Zambia, often because of popular resistance to their impact, was unable or unwilling to meet one or more of their targets. Thus, when an earlier program with the Bank and Fund demanded an increase in prices along with devaluation of the kwacha (the local currency) in December 1986, pent-up anger exploded into rioting on the Copperbelt and along the Line of Rail. Fifteen people were killed and a pattern of food riots developed.

Caught already in the vise of contradictory pressures and trying to avoid the most punitive of the IMF and the World Bank's conditions, Zambia's leaders decided to go it alone in 1987, developing their own New Economic Recovery Programme (NERP). This interim programme was followed by the Fourth National Development Plan which focused on the rehabilitation of the manufacturing sector and a more internally directed pattern of development and consumption. However, this approach did not receive vital donor support and arrears accumulated rapidly on the US\$6.6 billion external debt. Kaunda was forced to return to the international bargaining table.

The result: since 1989, Zambia has been under an informal or shadow structural adjustment arrangement with the IMF while having, in addition, an actual program with the World Bank. Zambia had promised to service its current debt to the IMF (and other multilateral donors) and over time slowly pay off its arrears to the IMF of over US\$1.0 billion (accumulating rights to future borrowing as it fulfils these conditions).

Once again on the road of full-blown trade liberalization, tight fiscal restraint and demand compression, it was equally vital for Zambia to maintain its debt servicing. This debt servicing, excluding payment of arrears, represented 58 per cent of the value of exports of goods and services in 1989. In addition, the UNIP government agreed to undertake unpopular policies such as the introduction of fees for universities, colleges and institutions.

It was at this point, too, that the pressures for economic liberalization and political democratization began to come together in the international financial institutions. As it happens, many multilateral and bilateral donors assume that democratizing the political system will mesh smoothly with economic liberalization. The OECD reports of 1989 and 1991 state a definite connection between democracy and the most extreme version of market-oriented policies, for example. According to the 1989 report, "More open competitive systems will improve effective resource use, growth and employment and will create more favourable conditions for a more equitable income distribution." The argument runs that greater free trade, lessening of the interfering hand of the state, reduced bureaucracy and regulation and privatization will allow a more rapid growth for the economy which will in turn create jobs and an optimistic spirit in Zambians. And the political process that fosters this kind of economic regime requires western democratic processes - free and fair elections, multi-party system, effective and accessible legal systems, freedom of assembly and a free press.

Civil unrest

The likelihood of such a comfortable fit occurring, under Third World conditions, between political democratization and economic liberalization is, in fact, quite doubtful. Nevertheless, international financial institutions did begin to

impose certain political conditions which meant, at a minimum, Zambia had to respect basic human rights and due process - this at a time when private citizens and organized groups such as the unions and churches had begun to make their own demands for more openness to different points of view and, in particular, for the right to reestablish a multi-party system.

Initially, Kaunda's government did move to follow the key elements of their now newly-accepted, externally-dictated structural adjustment program. Thus, in compliance with the program, in June 1990, the price of maize meal, a staple of the Zambian diet, doubled. But a week of riots and looting followed, as well as an attempted coup from within the lower ranks of the military. This time civil unrest was put down by the paramilitary police; at least 24 Zambians died in these disturbances. Between June and October of 1990, 23,000 workers took part in illegal strikes and the government alleged that ZCTU was playing a politically motivated role in them.

Meanwhile, the hard economic and social facts of life continued to oppress the population. Real GDP was dropping. The mainstay of the economy, the mines, clocked a 17.4 per cent drop in production in 1991 while imports fell by 11.5 per cent. Although inflation slowed (in 1989 inflation was 158 per cent but only 105 per cent in 1990), it did not ease problems for the Zambians who were having an increasingly hard time making ends meet. To underline the disintegration of public services, cholera epidemics struck the cities for two years running, killing over 800 people in 1990 and 1991.

Faced with growing social unrest, the president finally signed legislation in December 1990 allowing the existence and organization of other political parties. Kaunda also announced that a referendum would be held in October on whether to restore a multi-party system, and he released political prisoners.

Eventually the referendum idea was dropped and an election called instead.

Paradoxically, despite the fact that the main charge behind Zambian political demands was their negative reaction to the economic reforms that increased their hardship, the donor community also supported the promised political changes. This was one factor leading them to contribute heavily to Zambia in early 1991, both to allow the initiation of new projects and to allow Zambia to begin to clear arrears and to service external debts.

But reforms like the liberalization of import policies came too slowly. By mid-1991 the international financial institutions and many donors were intensely irritated by delays on the Zambian side. When the Zambian government did not meet its fiscal and monetary targets, and once again withdrew the decision to tax fringe benefits while permitting the main mining companies to fall well behind in fulfilling income tax and other financial obligations, the foreign donors no longer listened to the government's pleas for more time.

Kaunda had balked at the idea of another set of subsidy removals realizing it would set up his government for electoral defeat. Ironically, the MMD supported the most unpopular of economic reforms. And yet such was the unpopularity of Kaunda (and such, perhaps, the level of mass uncertainty about just what were the implications of the international squeeze in which Zambia now found itself) that Chiluba's MMD had little trouble becoming a lightning rod for dissent from all directions against the old regime.

Perhaps believing that the donors would not insist on more drastic economic action before elections scheduled for October 1991, Kaunda's government dragged its feet. In the event, when the government defaulted on its repayment

of US \$21 million in arrears to the World Bank, the Bank suspended its program, freezing the second tranche of about \$78 million. Most donors followed suit in September 1991, just one and a half months before the elections.

In the end, this was just one more of the many factors that now came together to produce one of the swiftest and most peaceful electoral changes in African history, ending 18 years of one-party rule.

The challenge for MMD

What next? In fact not so very many aspects of the cruel situation in which many Zambians now find themselves have changed. Most importantly, the major source of finances for Zambia's restructuring is from multilateral and bilateral donors that have a particular economic and political model in mind. Many wonder how the new government will itself deal with the tough conditions that donors attach to continued financial support.

Brought in by an overwhelming majority in the elections, the new Chiluba-led government seems eager to restructure the economy along Bank and Fund lines. During the campaign, Chiluba and MMD spokespersons such as Arthur Wina and Vernon Mwaanga had made clear their support for a more unqualifiedly capitalist future for Zambia. In December, the new finance minister Emmanuel Kasonde stated that at the heart of the reform is the need to create a better investment climate and full liberalization of the economy.

The problems are many, of course. Since the 1930s, the economy has been heavily dependent on copper mining and during the past two decades, copper exports have earned between 85 and 90 per cent of Zambia's foreign exchange. The manufacturing sector created in the 1970s is vulnerable because of its dependence on imports and technology and because it needs copper-generated revenues to cover losses.



above: Kenneth Kaunda, below: Frederick Chiluba



The country's agriculture has been neglected, despite Zambia being one of the most fertile regions in Central Africa. Experts estimate that only between five and ten per cent of arable land is cultivated and an estimated 80 per cent of commercial farmland is under or unutilized. Over the years, the country often has had to import food to feed its heavily urban population, and the debt burden has grown.

During the past ten years, Zambian planners and civil servants have undertaken various measures to diversify the economy and to deal with the ever-increasing debt. However, neither problem has been successfully tackled and the situation has become critical. Known copper reserves are being depleted; it's estimated that overall production will fall below 400,000 tons in 1992 and will decrease to two-thirds of current production by the end of the century. Mine closures due to depleted or uneconomic ore bodies are a very real prospect in the next few years, especially if worldwide supplies improve and prices drop.

The new broom

The MMD used its honeymoon period (November 1991 to March 1992) to take the tough actions demanded by the World Bank, IMF and many external donors but resisted by Kaunda for fear of the political costs. These actions included a removal of 90 per cent of the maize subsidies, increase in fuel prices and the devaluation of the kwacha (the local currency) by 30 per cent without a corresponding rise in salaries. Also on the agenda is an aggressive privatization program and the cut-back of 10,000 jobs in the civil service. The first MMD budget, in January 1992, was characterized by fiscal prudence and clear intentions to encourage business and also rehabilitate education, medical and road systems. The targets for growth in the policy framework paper for 1992-94 are very ambitious, projecting growth rates of two per cent by

1992, three per cent by 1993 and four per cent by 1994.

Since these early actions, however, the party seems to have become mired in its own internal problems and the immediate crisis of the drought. Cleavages in Zambian society are mirrored within MMD and many people had predicted from the start a shakeout of the coalition as it settled into power. As a rallying point for all who opposed UNIP and/or Kaunda in their declining years, the ranks of MMD include former UNIP stalwarts such as Vernon Mwaanga (the former - and current! - minister of foreign affairs) and Arthur and Sikota Wina, who had fallen out with KK. The present ministers of finance, transport and mines were all members of Kaunda's cabinet at one time or another or served in the role of permanent secretary. Other prominent individuals, including General Tembo, who had just had charges of treason dropped against him, were accommodated in the new government.

Pitted against these old timers are the "youngsters" such as the crucially placed Vice-President, Levi Mwanawasa, and Akashambatwa

Mbikusita-Lewanika, the minister for science, technology and vocational training. Mwanawasa is a young lawyer who put his neck on the line to oppose the earlier plan by UNIP to take over the state-owned *Times of Zambia*.

The ethnic question raises its head again as many see the MMD led by the Bemba such as Chiluba himself, and other ministers. Particularly outspoken about this Bemba dominance has been the old Lozi upper class, such as Arthur Wina, the present minister of education. In many ways this factional infighting is a replay of ethnic politics in Zambia which had been muted in the past by Kaunda's careful balancing act and constant shifts in jobs for the senior personnel.

A deeper rift exists between what might be called social democrats and neo-conservatives. The social democrats are looking for some form of economic recovery that protects the poorer people of the country. They see a legitimate role for the state, if not in owning the means of production, at least in directing it. Their social base is the intellectuals and technocrats.



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By contrast, the neo-conservatives promote dismantling of the state, fiscal probity and freeing up of import and export trade. Some members, such as Rev. Stan Kristafor, also press for a more active role of religion in daily life, a move which seems to sit poorly with the secular and sophisticated Zambian upper and middle classes. Many owners of small and medium-sized businesses joined the movement when they heard of plans for a more open economy and of opportunities to make money, such as doing business with South African firms or individuals. The power of this element is that they have the ear of the president plus a base in the churches and indirect access to church-owned newspapers such as the bi-weekly *National Mirror*.

Behind the scenes are an informal group called "the Godfathers," older men who have had senior positions in the previous era but have chosen not to be active in the present regime. They meet often, discuss issues and have channels to the president who, at least so far, listens but remains very much his own man. Conspicuously absent are women in this new dispensation. The women on MMD's national executive are well-known figures, highly connected to the powers that be. However, of the 150 MMD election candidates, only seven were women and no women sit in the new Cabinet.

It is perhaps not surprising that many of these temporary allies should fall out under the pressures of actually governing the country. Opportunism surfaces as soon as conflict occurs; moreover, the new government has demonstrated some heavy-handedness towards the press and insensitivity on touchy issues (as when, for example, it ordered squatter areas outside Lusaka cleared last November).

And then came the drought

The push for change has come up against another adversary —

this time nature's doing. A terrible drought has struck the whole region [see the previous article in this issue by Carol Thompson — ed.], exacerbating problems in a food production and distribution system which has rarely run smoothly. On February 26, 1992, President Chiluba formally declared a Total National Crop Disaster, thus contradicting some very optimistic projections made when the rainy season began in late 1991. The increased production expected from better prices for farmers has been undercut by the sheer lack of rain. The new government is faced with such unenviable choices as using limited foreign exchange to buy food and to spend resources getting it to those who need it, or to service the debt and stay within the current structural adjustment program.

Zambia's new minister of agriculture was able to begin early purchases of food because the U.N. early warning system predicted a poor harvest. Now he is faced with the daunting task of moving 970,000 tons of imported food to where it's needed. Even more crucial is the fact that, while the drought's logistical problems are immediate, the new government also has to deal with the external funders and with promises of reform made under the terms of the structural adjustment agreements.

Although the donors have been quite supportive of Zambia's efforts to come back in under a structural adjustment program (and were particularly generous at the March 1992 consultative group meeting in Paris), such is the severity of the present crisis that all available funds must be channelled into relief and other measures to offset the impact of the drought. Zambia has estimated it will need \$1.0 billion in external funding to import food and operate relief efforts, plus continue structural adjustment reforms. These targets were more than met in Paris when 13 donor countries

and international financial institutions pledged a total of US\$1.35 billion in the form of balance of payments support, debt relief and food aid. However, the donors were reluctant to allow flexibility in the targets and time frame of the current policy framework paper, the key document for a structural adjustment program.

Donor intentions may become clearer at the meeting of creditors in July. At that time some serious discussion may take place about ways to progressively reduce the private debt, possibly through debt-equity swaps and pipeline dismantling. Government to government debt is trickier. Although some bilateral donors have forgiven debt, money owed to international financial institutions like the World Bank and the IMF must be honoured. And they represent a larger and larger portion of the external debt (now close to 40 per cent).

Not so very unlike its predecessor, then, the new government of Zambia finds itself caught between a rock and a hard place. External actors insist on certain economic policies and deadlines as well as a more open political system. The coalition nature of the MMD, however, is threatened not only by its own internal tensions and lack of an agreed direction but also, more crucially, by the heightened social protest that often characterizes such economic restructuring efforts. Despite his trade union origins, Chiluba now faces increasing strikes as well as resistance from his backbenchers — for example, over the decision to dedicate 9.0 per cent of the GNP to defence. Some outspoken women point to the lack of progressiveness on gender issues. The legal community is concerned about the accumulation of powers in the hands of the new president. Straws in the wind? It is hard to escape the conclusion that the unresolved strait between the contradictory pulls of political democratization and economic liberalization may augur more tough times ahead for Zambia.

Malawi: Revolution Without Leadership?

BY MELVIN E. PAGE

Mel Page has lived and worked in Malawi at various times over the last twenty years, most recently in 1991. He is a historian currently teaching at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City. This report is based on his own observations and analysis, as well as published accounts and sources within the country.

The Malawian Secretary General of the Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC), Chakufwa Chihana, caused a considerable stir with a statement at a meeting of Malawian dissidents March 20 in Lusaka. It was better, he said, for Malawians to "die on their feet than live on their knees." This was an extraordinary comment coming at a time when the ranks of the country's labour leaders had long since been purged of anyone thought to harbour the slightest doubts about the leadership of President Dr. Kamuzu Banda and his ruling Malawi Congress Party (MCP).

Chihana's forthright remarks brought a swift response. On April 6, returning from Lusaka, he was seized by government officials on the tarmac at Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe and whisked away into detention. Charges of sedition were filed against him but when the court convened for his May 6 hearing, the government failed to produce their prisoner for trial. In an exceptional decision, the judge found the government in contempt of court. Subsequently, Malawian officials did permit an international delegation of African labour leaders to visit Chihana and confirm he was still alive.

These developments had a major impact in the international commu-

nity. Dr. Banda's right hand man, John Tembo, went to Washington in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent a cut off of all except emergency aid to the country until its human rights record improves. There was also some reaction at home, but Chihana's call does not seem to have resulted in the emergence of vital opposition leadership within the country. Rather this affair serves to illustrate the effective way in which Banda's government has managed to eliminate virtually all potential leaders of opposition factions. Any attempts to assert even modest dissent - often far less strident than Chihana's bold statement - brings swift retribution.

Suppressing dissent

There has been a long history of frequently unexplained deaths among Malawi opposition leaders and suspected dissident members of the MCP. Several have died in mysterious auto accidents within the country. Some, such as Atati Mpakati and Mkwapatira Mhango, have been targeted for assassination in other countries, with President Banda sometimes bragging about efforts to eliminate his enemies. Others, most notably Albert Muwalo, have actually been tried and hanged.

There have also been massive arrests at various times under a preventive detention clause in Malawi's Constitution. Thousands of Malawians have spent years in jail for suspected political offenses. One former senior official, Aleke Banda (no relation), has been in prison or under house arrest as a result of such an order for fourteen years. These and other examples are well-documented in the 1990 Africa Watch report on Malawi, *Where Silence Rules*.

Usually no reasons are given for an individual's incarceration and frequently such prisoners are released en masse in apparent efforts to gain either internal or international good will. But the former prisoners often have no idea what specifically prompted their arrest. One recent detainee, the poet Jack Mapahje, is reported to have been so incensed after more than three years in custody that he refused to leave Mikuyu prison near Zomba unless he was told the reason for his detention. His jailers almost literally had to throw him out of prison!

As with much in Malawi's history since independence, these developments have their antecedents in the politics of colonial Nyasaland. Under British rule, anyone who seemed even the slightest bit inclined to question government authority was imprisoned. Isa Macdonald Lawrence, for example, was convicted in the 1920s of importing copies of Marcus Garvey's *The Negro World* into the Protectorate and confined for several years, as were other readers of that supposedly seditious newspaper.

Once such possibilities for dissent were uncovered, the colonial authorities were always ready to follow up any suggestions of sedition. And as nationalist sentiment grew, so did the willingness of British officials to strike out at its agents. Perhaps most famous were the arrests in March 1959 of Dr. Banda and more than 1300 leaders of the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC). All were suspected of plots against the government and were incarcerated without trial.

Just as I. M. Lawrence, who after his prison term became a leading political figure and a founder of the

NAC, Dr. Banda and his followers were greeted as heroes on release from detention. They then went on to lead Malawi to independence under the MCP banner. Ironically, if there was one lesson Banda himself seemed to have learned from these experiences, it was not only that opposition can be attacked through police powers, but also that it must not be allowed to return.

Since independence in 1964, the Malawi government has worked very hard to ensure that both of these lessons be applied to any suggestion of opposition. From the time of an infamous government crisis only months after independence, Dr. Banda has been chasing his detractors. Most of those cabinet officers who rebelled in 1964 left the country, as have many dissidents since. When they have been able, considerable numbers of other Malawians have followed suit.

It is perhaps the greatest tragedy of Malawian political life that the chief quality which has characterized those who have spoken out against the government, as well as many of those who have left in frustration, has been competence. Able to see clearly the lost potential and the possibilities for corrective action, they have become suspect. As a result, the best and brightest of Malawi's independence generation are now gone, unable to provide leadership for the future.

Many people have met violent deaths. Others, like Henry Chipembere, have died of natural causes in exile. Some, like Orton and Vira Chirwa, remain in prison in Malawi. And in Zambia, Tanzania and across Africa to Senegal, Malawian exiles hold significant, responsible positions in business, education and international agencies. Others are working in Europe, Canada, the United States and elsewhere. But for their countrymen who remain in Malawi, frustrated by the continued political and economic poverty of their nation, this missing generation can provide little leadership.

Recent unrest

Recent events in Malawi have amply demonstrated the problems of political leadership that the nation faces as it enters the second quarter century of independence.

Although among the world's poorest nations, Malawi has generally been able to feed itself and even export food to its neighbours. But it now faces an unprecedented threat of widespread famine. Brought on by the severe drought conditions which threaten all of southern Africa, the situation is exacerbated by the million or more refugees from Mozambique who are currently living in Malawi. The suspension of all but emergency aid from international donors will make matters even worse.

In this situation, President Banda seems even more removed and aloof than ever. He has spent more time abroad, rumoured to be ill (not unlikely for a man in his nineties). Moreover, his opulent life style and grand corruption are increasingly evident, not only in Malawi itself but to Banda's international supporters as well. A few British officials, recently confronted by public evidence of massive diversion of funds to support high living by the President and his retainers, have begun to question the appropriateness of some kinds of foreign assistance to the country.

Those who surround Banda and support his continued leadership, most notably his 'official hostess' Cecilia Kadzamira and her uncle John Tembo, have begun to consolidate their authority. Tembo, who has served as governor of the Reserve Bank of Malawi, has begun to acquire more unofficial influence in government. In mid-1991, Miss Kadzamira was in Washington on a private and unofficial visit, shoring up support for the eventuality of Banda's death, promising the release of many political detainees. There were some people released in 1991 (including Mapanje). However, during Tembo's more recent visit to the

United States, he is reported to have denied - against all evidence - that any political prisoners remained in detention.

There also remains massive corruption at the top, skimming the country's wealth for the key leadership and especially Dr. Banda. Structural adjustment agreements with the World Bank and others have produced little change and now appear to have collapsed. A desperate government may even be turning to North Korea and China for assistance. Meanwhile, Malawians remain among the most impoverished peoples in the region. The example of their Mozambican neighbours, however, has been used by the government to insist that Malawians are better off than citizens of surrounding nations.

It is clear that the current crisis stems from fundamental doubt about the truth of such claims as well as doubts about the willingness of the government and the MCP to make improvements which will affect all the people, not just the national elite. Moreover, the MCP has steadfastly refused to consider broadening the political process, renouncing any suggestion of multi-party democracy while at the same time insisting that everyone be registered to vote in preparation for promised new elections.

Recent political changes in Zambia, though largely unreported in the Malawi press, have prompted modest protests. On one campus of the University of Malawi anonymous notes appeared last November pointing out that free speech and expression had served to improve conditions in Zambia, while in Malawi repressive activities of the MCP, the army and the police were "soiling the society." The government response was to send a police contingent and end the campus term several weeks early. In Zambia itself, Malawian dissidents (including Chihana) were encouraged to meet and organize a formal opposition.

What sparked wider political disturbances with the country, however, was a pastoral letter issued by Malawi's Catholic bishops criticizing government policy. An unprecedented move, the letter brought the government, and by implication the MCP, into question not only in the churches but throughout the country. Government response was swift, sending several leading Malawian priests into house arrest and deporting senior foreign priests. Demonstrations on several of the university campuses followed, with police quickly reacting, using tear gas to disperse the students.

These events were followed by a 20 per cent devaluation of the kwacha, the national currency, coupled with civil service wage and salary increases. The latter, however, were disproportionately large for senior officials, up to 80 per cent. Even mid-level government employees received increases of 50 per cent or more. The vast majority of government workers, those in already low-paying clerical and technical positions, only received increases which matched the currency devaluation.

This sparked reactions throughout the country, not just among the students. There were spontaneous strikes in numerous places. Demonstrators surged through the streets in the southern commercial centres of Blantyre and Limbe, as well as in the capitol, Lilongwe. These were followed by work stoppages in some rural areas. The government officially reported that 20 people were killed in the south, although unofficial estimates put the death toll at twice that number.

The President was reported by *The Malawi News* as being calm in the face of these demonstrations, but also asking the nation for calm. Nonetheless, a call was made for a national strike to be held the week of May 15, which coincided with the scheduled celebrations of Kamuzu Day, the President's 'official birthday'. Rumours spread that some senior army officers

actually took the unprecedented step of informing the president that they were unwilling to order the troops to put down internal disruptions. A sense of anticipation gripped the country.

Any expectations of political change were short-lived. The government announced massive additional wage increases, upwards of one hundred per cent for the lowest-paid of its employees. Kamuzu Day came and went without major incident, although the attendance at the principal celebrations in Blantyre was far below normal. The national strike fizzled. And the army remained loyal. Quiet seemed to return to the country.

But there are other indications the government has reacted as before. People involved in the disturbances are nowhere to be found. Reports circulate that the political prisons are once again filling up after many held in detention for years were released in 1991. Krishna Achutan, son-in-law of Aleke Banda, was one of those detained, probably for speaking out on the BBC calling for his father-in-law's release. In the Ndirandesi district of Blantyre, shooting can be heard every night. Student demonstrators have been informally advised that they need not return to the campuses when they reopen.

1950s parallel

In many ways, these most recent happenings are reminiscent of events in the 1950s when many Malawians felt they had been excluded from the economic benefits that seemed to flow to the few, most notably the European elite. The creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland had been bitterly opposed by Africans who were also despondent over their failure to prevent its inception. There appeared to be no political leadership to carry the struggle forward.

In these circumstances, small, scattered, spontaneous demonstrations began. Then in August 1953, a series of riots began in the Thy-

olo district. African resentments spewed out into attacks on European property. The police responded with tear gas and charged the crowd; at least one demonstrator was killed and several were wounded. The disturbances spread throughout the southern portion of the Protectorate and there were more deaths and injuries.

Despite the grievances, the government was able to gain the upper hand. Many who had taken part in the demonstrations were arrested. There appeared to be no Africans willing to seize the opportunity and offer leadership to the mass of disaffected Malawians. Indeed, the leadership of the NAC laid no claims to having led the demonstrations (which was clearly true) and even disavowed the demonstrators.

This failure of leadership was nearly crippling to the NAC. Neither the colonial government nor the African masses took it very seriously. Only the emergence of new, younger leaders such as Henry Chipembere and Kanyama Chiume (who had returned from studies in South Africa and Uganda) resuscitated the Congress. And not until Dr. Banda was recalled from abroad did the nationalist movement really take fire.

It was part of Banda's leadership genius that he realized the inherent weakness of the NAC and its failure to seize opportunity in 1953. Thus when the NAC was banned by the colonial government in the wake of the massive 1959 detentions, he directed the formation of a new entity, the Malawi Congress Party which was able to fill the leadership vacuum in the country.

Who will lead?

Nearly forty years later, Malawians face the same kind of dilemma. There are clear grievances that drive ordinary people to vent their frustrations when they have no political avenue to express them. The disaffections are widespread; rumours abound of a secret opposition party

forming within the country. Yet there appear to be no leaders able or willing to openly take up the cause and seek solutions for the people's problems.

Today, however, the difficulties in finding leadership for change are much greater than they were in 1954. After almost 30 years of government activities designed to eliminate any possibility of opposition leadership, there does

not appear to be anyone to step forward. Even among the many Malawians outside the country, there do not seem to be many candidates able to step in and fill the vacuum, certainly not among the discredited long-standing opposition movements. Even the recent Lusaka meeting produced only one candidate in Chakufwa Chihana who has, at least for the moment, been eliminated.

It may well be true, as Chihana claimed, that Malawians will be better off "to die on their feet than live on their knees" under their present government. Yet who will be the first to stand up and speak for the people? Who will lead them to a new, more democratic political order? Malawi will need an answer to those questions before any considerable political changes can take place.

Race, Class & Land in Zimbabwe

BY KIMBERLY LUDWIG

Kimberly Ludwig, a graduate of the University of Southern California, recently completed five months' study in Zimbabwe with the School for International Training (Vermont).

As the effects of the drought in Southern Africa worsen, and land-poor peasants become more desperate, the land debate in Zimbabwe is taking on an especially emotional charge. The debate is increasingly expressed in racial terms, i.e., the "white commercial farmer," vs. the "black government" and/or the "black farmer." This ideological polarization between blacks and whites threatens to obscure the class distinctions that do exist between the parties and interests involved. The fact that there is a growing number of black commercial farmers who identify more with the needs and values of their white counterparts than with the peasants or the government highlights the existence of this class component.

Nevertheless, the racial factor is a critical consideration. We must not forget that given the country's racially discriminatory past, virtually all of the land has historically been inequitably distributed between the races in a manner which glaringly favoured the white population. In the current debate, the fact that the commercial farmers are predominantly white, while the

peasant-farmers are primarily black, significantly affects the manner in which the whole question of land usage and distribution is perceived. This is evidenced by the white community's efforts to emphatically distance themselves from the colonial past and the equally insistent demands from many blacks that injustices of the past be redressed through land redistribution. As the population queues up with its respective community, the racial polarization threatens a sensible land-use policy.

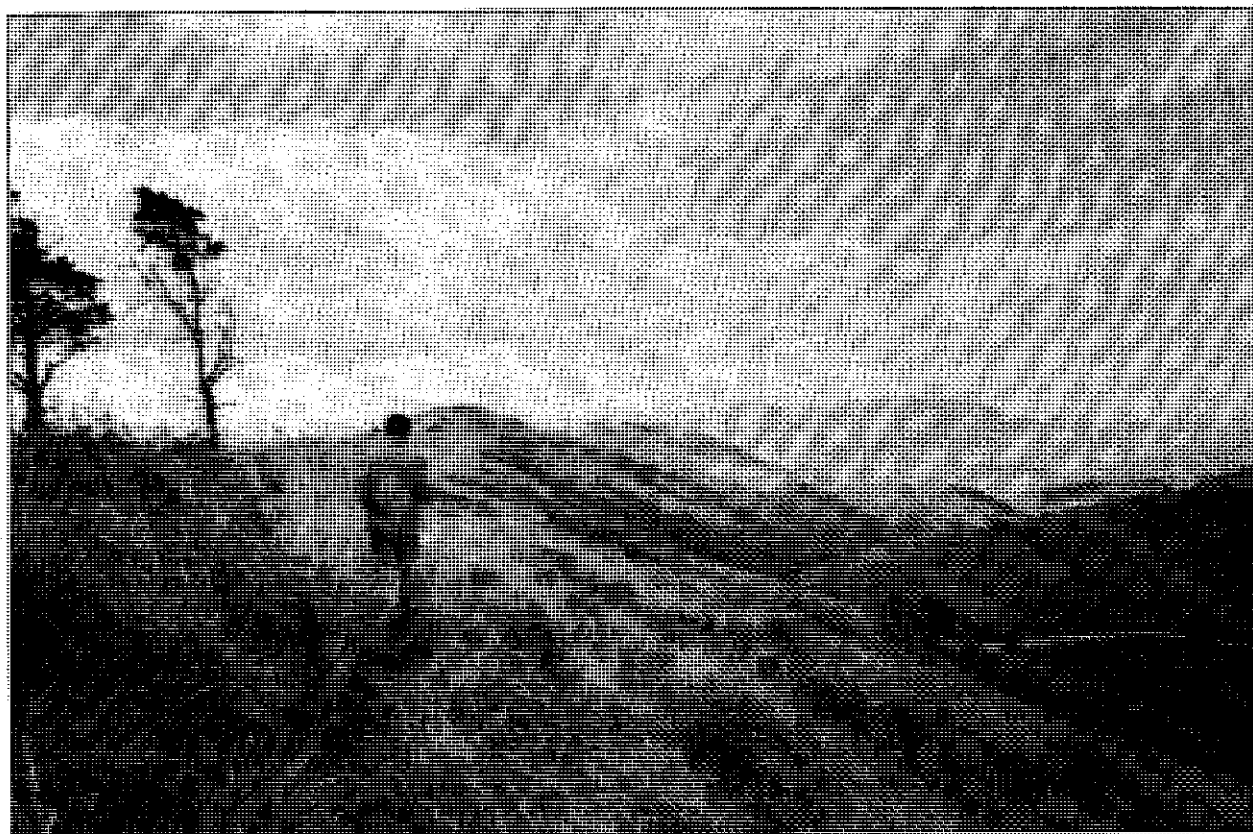
One indicator of this polarization is the question of ownership and property rights. The debate belies a central difference in the basic assumptions that the commercial farmers and the peasants bring to these concepts. As the commercial farmers express it, ownership and property are two of the most important "basic human values." For the government to take away their property without fair compensation based on market value is nothing less than "theft." As one farmer put it, such action violates "international norms such as security of investment, the rule of law and order, and the ability to operate in a market-led environment."

However, in many peasants' opinion, the land was stolen from their ancestors to begin with, and they do not agree with the

"ownership rights" that are the basis of the commercial farmers' claim to the land. From the peasants' perspective, a war was fought, and won, over the question of a much-needed redistribution of land, and the subsequent right to this redistribution merits more weight than any existing rights of ownership. This historical inequity has left present-day Zimbabwe with over six million Africans on 50 percent of the country's land, much of it in the poorest soil regions. By contrast, roughly sixty thousand white commercial farmers have exclusive access to the other 50 percent of the land in the richest agricultural regions. Moreover, 60 percent of the commercial land is under-utilized.

Waiting for land

To be fair, the Zimbabwean government's ability to address the land issue has been limited. Under the terms of independence, the Lancaster House Agreement severely restricted the government's ability to acquire new land for resettlement. Land could only be transferred in compliance with the "willing buyer-willing seller" principle. The result was that most of the land offered for "willing sale" was in the worst regions and the government lacked the funds to be an effective "willing buyer." Although funds were promised at independence from



Bruce Paton

Britain and the U.S., very few funds actually materialized. Britain committed US \$34 million, of which only 80 percent has been used to date.

Zimbabwe has honoured this agreement and never confiscated one acre of land without fair compensation. In an interim attempt to fulfil promises of land resettlement, the government did implement a land acquisition act in 1985 but the land acquired under the provisions of this act proved to be inadequate. The result was the appearance that the Zimbabwean government was inept at dealing with the contentious issue.

With the expiry of the Lancaster House Agreement in 1991, the government gained the opportunity to act. In response, the Land Acquisition Act was passed early in 1992. The purpose of the act is to provide the legislative framework for the acquisition of land. The Act has

three main categories: it empowers the president and other authorities to acquire land, with compensation in most circumstances; it establishes a process for "designating" rural land to be acquired for resettlement; and it enables the President to acquire derelict (abandoned) land free of compensation.

The government has made clear its intention in passing the Act. The purpose of the legislation is to facilitate the acquisition of a further five million hectares of commercial farmland from the 11.4 million hectares that still remain in that sector. The beneficiaries of the Act are to be "the peasantry, the landless, and the aspiring farmers among the Black community." In Parliamentary debates, members expressed the sentiment that the Act was widely popular among their constituencies.

"A racial bit of legislation"?

In sharp contrast, white commercial farmers have expressed their dissatisfaction through the Commercial Farmer's Union. The main subject of contention is the issue of designation. While the government insists that designating the land to be acquired will help both commercial farmers and resettlement planners to make better, more complete preparations for resettlement efforts, commercial farmers claim that it will have a negative effect on their production because it will destroy "investment confidence."

In keeping with the spreading racial discourse in which the land acquisition debate is discussed, a white farmer claimed that the Act is a "racial bit of legislation designed to take land from farmers of one colour and give it to those of another."

In addition to doubts surrounding the government's willingness or ability to pay fair compensation, white farmers express anger over the review process of designated land assessments. Compensation amounts are to be determined by a committee appointed by a government minister. The Administrative Court does have the power to review these assessments but it cannot set aside the committee's decision unless the committee has failed to observe the conditions of the Land Acquisition Act. In the case of non-designated land the court has the power to ensure that fair compensation is paid.

The commercial farmers contend that their constitutional right to access to the courts is violated by the Act because of the manner in which compensation for designated land is handled. They argue that it is unfair that they cannot appeal to the court to have the amount of compensation reviewed and amended, as is the case with non-designated land. The Commercial Farmer's Union has reportedly created a fund to help designated farmers challenge each case as it comes up in court.

Although the majority of black commercial farmers tend to publicly agree with the need for redress, in many ways their economic interests are aligned with those of white commercial farmers. They are equally concerned with the protection of their property. Their union has also challenged the Land Acquisition Act as a constitutional violation of their ownership rights. However, due to the growing racial polarization (and perhaps the coming election), black commercial farmers are perceived to be on side with the government and the peasants.

As a result, while the government and commercial farmers battle over land designation millions of peasants may have to wait even longer for the land they believe is owed them.

Land to the peasants

With the new Land Acquisition Act the government has publicly com-

mitted itself to the peasant farmer and landless citizen. However, given the present state of the economy and the disappointing record of the management of land resettlement the government's intentions are puzzling. On the one hand, the government claims that the acquisition of a further five million hectares will help solve the predicament of the staggering number of land-hungry peasants, but so far the five million hectares that the government has already acquired remains largely unused or under-utilized. On the other hand, the government cannot realistically provide the necessary infrastructural and agricultural inputs for resettled areas, or for that matter, even to buy any significant amount of land under the terms of the Land Acquisition Act. The government agenda therefore appears to be either impractical, or, more ominously, an opportunistic political manoeuvre.

A third outcome is that land acquired through redistribution will go not to peasants as expected, but to black farmers who have already proved their productive ability and can largely provide their own capital inputs. This class of black small-scale commercial farmers and master farmers also has access to credit. This option will help maintain the government's image by allowing it to visibly redistribute land to members of the correct community while being fairly sure that the land will be productive without much direct government investment.

The latter consideration is very important in the overall success of Zimbabwe's solution to the land problem. At present, commercial agriculture is praised as one of the country's most profitable sectors. Some argue that taking land from established and productive commercial farms and giving it to a subsistence-level peasant farmer will result in a decline in the agricultural sector.

There are several grounds on which to dispute this argument. The success of commercial agriculture

is partially due to the historic levels of support and subsidies that have sustained its profitability while peasant agriculture struggled alone. Since independence, some support has flowed to the peasant sector but the commercial sector still leads in terms of equipment, technology, acreage and quality of land. Despite this inequality, in 1985 peasant agriculture provided 60 percent of the nation's maize supply.

Another ground for dispute is the living standard of the agricultural worker versus that of the peasant farmer. In terms of quality of life, recent studies show that workers on large scale commercial farms lag far behind peasants. Deficiencies in housing, nutrition and health care, and wages that are 40 to 44 percent of the minimum subsistence level have resulted in the poor living conditions of the agricultural worker.

Unfortunately, the financial constraints on government spending make it doubtful that the existing peasant agriculture will receive the kind of subsidies and infrastructural investment that has helped to build the commercial sector. Without such support for the peasant sector, commercial agriculture will continue to be acknowledged as the most profitable system of production.

The drought is expected to exact its toll on agricultural production for at least one more season; if land redistribution is to be part of Zimbabwe's response to the land crisis then the landless and poor peasants cannot afford to wait forever. The land debate continues to be played out in racial terms that are overlaid with distinct economic interests. Without government support it is unlikely that peasants will be able to buy the confiscated land. As a result, any land reform that does take place may very well redistribute land from one segment of the "haves" (white commercial farmers) to another segment of the "haves" (black master farmers and small scale commercial farmers).

At War with the Future?

Black South African Youth in the 1990s

BY COLIN BUNDY

Colin Bundy is Professor of History at the University of the Western Cape and is author of numerous books and articles on South Africa.

When Nelson Mandela addressed a tumultuous crowd in Cape Town on the evening of his release from prison, he listed individuals, organizations and groups that had sustained his struggle against apartheid. "I pay tribute," he said at one point, "to the endless heroes of youth. You, the young lions. You, the young lions, have energized our struggle."

Mandela's salute to the young lions - and the roar with which it was received - acknowledged a central and persistent feature of South African politics over the last twenty years: the prominence of student and youth activism. Ever since the youth revolt which began in June 1976, student and youth activism has delivered a considerable voltage to a highly-charged circuit of resistance.

Yet in the past couple of years it has not been the heroism and courage of the youth that has attracted attention, but different aspects of the many-sided "youth crisis." In the ruling class press and broadcast media, it has become commonplace to refer to a "lost generation," and alarmist references are made to "Khmer Rouge teenagers." There has been more understanding, but no less concern, amidst social workers, teachers, church leaders and community activists who work directly with young black South Africans. There is a growing awareness of the desperate state of black schooling, steepening rates of unemployment and crime, disintegrating family structures, and the threat of AIDS.

The pro-ANC newspaper, *New Nation*, finds that black schools have become "sites of despair and demoralization" and that in student politics "on-the-ground active participation has collapsed." Senior office-holders in student organizations, interviewed in December, 1991, concurred. "The black student community is currently largely apolitical, demoralized and individualized," said Siphso Maseko, the President of the Azanian Students Convention (AZASCO). The "real crisis" faced by students had "created a strong sense of demoralization and frustration over the past two years" added Moeti Mpuru, National Projects Officer of the South African Students Congress (SASCO). Political organizations are concerned about their ability to hold the loyalty of their youthful supporters.

The Young Lions

What has happened, then, to the young lions? What are the components of the "youth crisis," and how serious is it? The various symptoms are sometimes conflated in a malaise described (somewhat inadequately) as "marginalized youth." This was the title of an important conference held in June 1991 under the auspices of the Joint Enrichment Program (JEP), a church initiative.

The JEP conference established overwhelmingly the magnitude, urgency and complexity of the problems confronting black youth in the 1990s. As working definitions, the conference organizers suggested that "marginalized youth" referred to people between the ages of about 13 and 30 who were typically neither in school nor work, nor exercising responsibility as household heads. They could not "easily be integrated into society's educational,

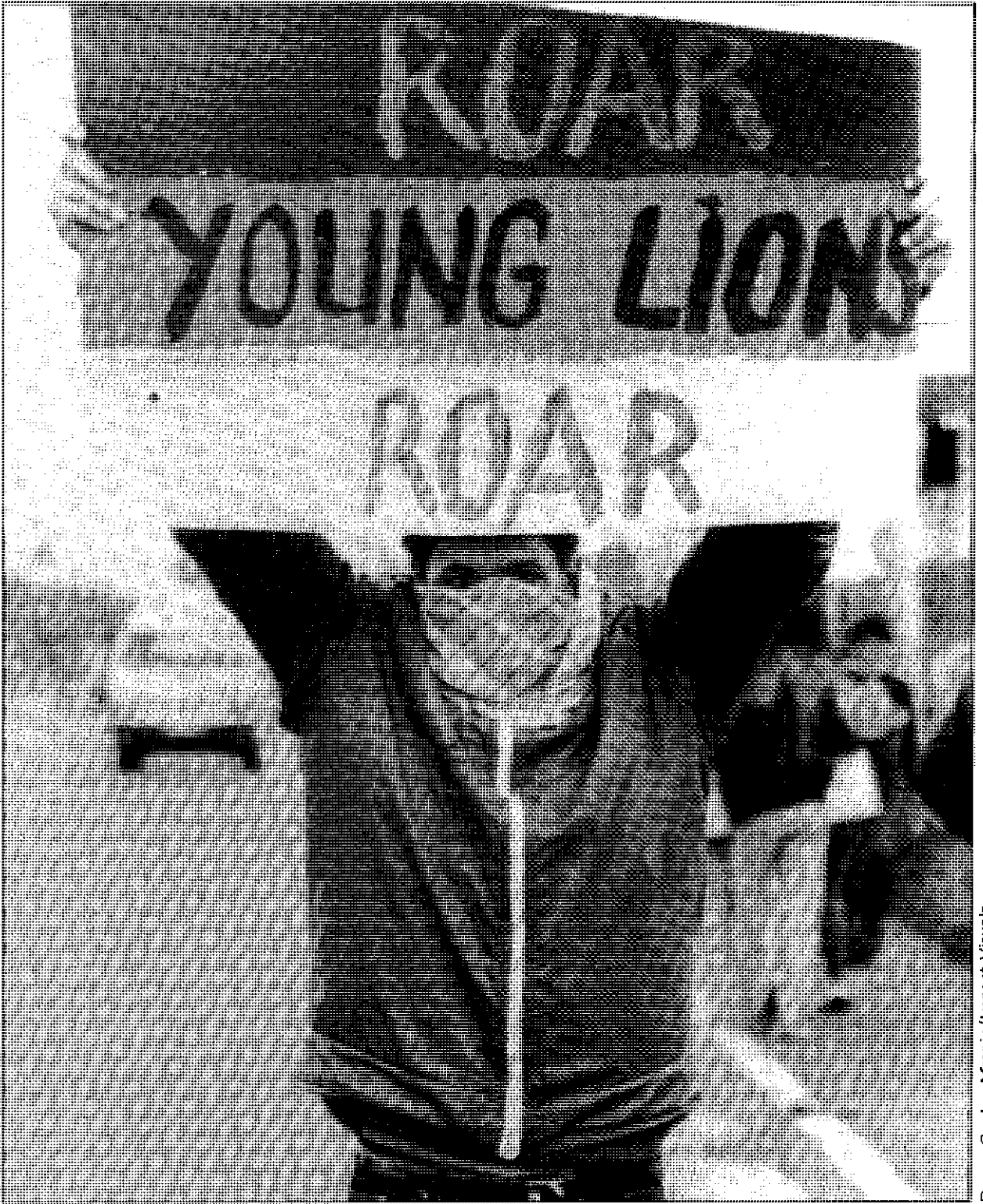
economic, social or political institutions - now, or in a future South Africa."

This article identifies some of the structural features that shape the youth crisis, and how these are expressed in an increasingly violent youth culture and consciousness.

The first and most obvious structural aspect is demographic. The South African population is increasing at about 2.5% per year, which means that the total doubles every 30 years. Not only the size of the population but its shape is significant. The demographic profile is typical of a period of accelerated growth in that a very large proportion of the population is youthful. Half the population is under the age of 21. Nearly 44% of Africans are under the age of 15. In the year 2,000, fully 60% of the African population will be aged twenty or less.

Political considerations entirely aside, these figures guarantee that in the foreseeable future there will be very large numbers of children and young adults with a wide range of wants and deprivations. They ensure a continuing and acute pressure on educational resources, and they mean that schools are likely to remain crucibles of discontent.

The second and equally inescapable pressure on youth is economic. South African capitalism is in the grips of a recession whose depth and persistence have been abundantly documented. The economic factor with the most direct implications for youth marginality is unemployment. Formal unemployment in South Africa today stands at about 42%. In October 1991, the Development Bank of South Africa released staggering figures: over the



Benny Gool - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

past five years, only 8.4% of nearly 400,000 people entering the job market found work.

The great majority of these new job seekers are of course school leavers. Unemployment is a mass phenomenon, but is visited with particular ferocity on the age bracket 16-30. Up to 90% of the unemployed may be under the age of 30. A financial journalist concluded recently that "a more accurate name for the unemployment crisis is the youth unemployment crisis."

The Education Crisis

The third structural pressure point is the education crisis. The disaster in black schooling has of course been long in the making, and is rooted directly in the system of Bantu Education introduced in the 1950s. This provided for rigid educational segregation and profound inequalities. Although spending on black education has increased substantially in recent years, the state still spends about \$160 a year on each black student, as against over \$1,000 per white student.

Schools in black townships and Bantustans are overcrowded, under-equipped, poorly staffed, and desperately short of funds. Only five per cent of black children who enter the school system graduate from high school: 60% do not complete primary school.

An already dismal situation was transformed in scale during the 1970s and 1980s. For the first time, high school education for blacks became a mass phenomenon, and pressure on existing resources grew worse. In the mid-1980s, politicized black school students demonstrated their rejection of the system by boycotting their schools. Hundreds of thousands of scholars simply dropped out of school; many who stayed or returned received patchy, disrupted, deteriorated schooling. Increasingly, educationists warn that the "culture of learning" is being eroded in

black schools. "Simply put," said one, "this means that students and teachers alike have lost all faith in the system."

Fourthly, the demographic, economic and educational features outlined above will increasingly be concentrated in the cities. The collapse of "influx control," plus rural poverty, makes pell-mell urbanization inevitable. People will pour into the cities even while unemployment rises and resources shrink. Many of the new city dwellers will live as squatters; already, an estimated seven million people live in squatter communities. The demands for housing, health care, food and jobs will be intense - and a very high proportion of the new urban population will be youthful. Specifically urban phenomena of youth culture - like criminal gangs and street children - will reach new levels.

Perhaps the most widely-noted result of these pressures has been that, for many young South Africans, life has become increasingly violent. The international media have concentrated upon political violence; but statistically, this is dwarfed by extremely high levels of criminal violence. Common to political and criminal violence is the prominent featuring of black youths as both perpetrators and victims.

This observation needs to be put in context. South African society is permeated by violence. Segregation and apartheid made industrialization in South Africa a particularly violent and traumatic process. In addition to high levels of state repression in recent decades there is a less apparent but palpable violence of unnecessary death, disease and degradation stemming from racially discriminatory policies. South Africa has extremely high rates of alcohol and drug addiction, of motor vehicle and industrial accidents, of suicide, homicide and family murders. It has the highest known incidence of rape in the world.

It was against this background that political violence became more visible and intense in the 1980s, with mass based political protest and heightened state repression its most obvious indices. The massive involvement of young people in political protest also made them mass observers, victims and vectors of violence.

Social workers and psychologists speak of "brutalization"; an alternative term might be the internalization of violence. The central fact is that violence generates violence; that brutality is a learned response. Levels of socialized or learned violence among children and youth increased dramatically during the 1980s. Parental, school and other institutional controls were weakened or swept aside. Dangerously polarized and simplified forms of politics developed. People were killed because they wore the wrong colour T-shirt or walked on the wrong side of a boundary road.

Of those who drew attention to the brutalizing of a generation, none did so more eloquently than Percy Qoboza, editor of the mass circulation black newspaper, *City Press*, in April 1986:

If it is true that a people's wealth is its children, then South Africa is bitterly, tragically poor. If it is true that a nation's future is its children, then we have no future and deserve none ... [We] are a nation at war with its future ... For we have turned our children into a generation of fighters ... What we are witnessing is the growth of a generation which has the courage to reject the cowardice of its parents ... to fight for what should be theirs, by right of birth. There is a dark, terrible beauty in that courage. It is a source of great pride - pride that we, who have lived under apartheid, can produce children who refuse to do so. But it is also a source of great shame ... that [this] is our heritage to our children: The knowledge of how to die, and how to kill.

These words were written at the height of the repression, during the State of Emergency. There are grounds for hope now that were not available then. But South Africans cannot ignore the realities of brutalization amongst their youth, any more than they can afford to overlook the grave social and structural pressures that threaten to deepen the alienation of the young.

The question of what policy responses are appropriate and possible cannot be explored here. Very briefly, it may be useful simply to identify some of the most obvious areas that will engage policy makers.

- First, there is an acute need for imaginative and effective social welfare programs that deal directly with some of the effects of youth marginalization. At the JEP conference there was a call for

purposive state intervention on behalf of school drop-outs on the lines of "youth brigades," "civilian conservation corps," and the like.

- Secondly, an area of absolute priority is the transformation of South Africa's educational system. More resources will have to be directed to schooling, and the existing clutter of racially distinct school systems must be replaced by a unitary, non-racial system. These are necessary but not sufficient responses to the crisis; the long term challenge is how to ensure equality of access to learning in a society so profoundly unequal as South Africa is - and will continue to be, even after every apartheid statute is scrapped.

- The third area which virtually defines itself is job creation. Speakers at the JEP conference identified ways in which community organizations, employers, trade unions,

donor agencies and foreign aid can help; but the scale of the problem is so massive that many believe it can only be resolved by job creation on a mass scale by government. South Africans have been "rediscovering" the New Deal experiments in job creation during the 1930s, with an emphasis on programs that would simultaneously create jobs and build much-needed schools, roads and houses. Calls for programs like this have been supported, on the one hand, by advisers to institutions of finance capital and, on the other hand, by left-wing researchers close to COSATU.

- Crucially, none of these policies will work unless they actively involve people at the grassroots level. By any standards, extraordinary levels of dynamism and social purpose were achieved in community-based organizations in South Africa in the 1980s. Similar levels of mobilization will have to be achieved in the 1990s. Winning the commitment of a new generation of young activists is essential. The young lions who helped tear down apartheid must be actively involved in constructing the future.

Although they can be separately identified and discussed, the problems that make up the "youth crisis" are simply a subset of the problems that will confront the post-apartheid government. That government will have to distribute resources more equitably than any previous South African regime has even envisaged - at a time when those resources are cruelly straitened. It will have to repair grievous damage to basic social institutions, buffeted by expectations for the future while it inherits the follies of the past.

This is a daunting prospect. But the success of any popularly elected government in South Africa will depend in large measure upon how it recognizes and responds to the problems that confront young South Africans on a mass scale. Only then might South Africa become a nation at peace with its future.



End Game ?

The ANC's Victor Moche Interviewed



David Hartman

SAR finally caught up with Victor Moche, the ANC chief representative in Canada, on the very day of his return from South Africa where he had gone to attend the ANC's important Policy Conference at the end of May. Before his departure for South Africa, we had agreed to have an extended interview in Toronto shortly after his return, but that return had been delayed and now, only twenty-four hours before our copy deadline, a telephone conversation with him from Ottawa was all that proved possible. Not adequate, of course, but we share Moche's expressed conviction that the next few months could comprise one of the most crucial periods in South Africa's entire history. As a result, we thought it important to record for our readers the highlights of Moche's own immediate impressions of the situation back home.

The stage for the interview had been set by developments in South Africa and reported in our local press: "ANC threatens unrest to push for reforms: Black group gives Pretoria 30 days to accept demands for multiracial democracy" (*The Globe and Mail* (Toronto), June 1) and "S. Africa puts reserve soldiers on standby: Set to quell ANC protests" (*G & M*,

June 13). Moche certainly confirmed the general mood of "deep anger and frustration" of the black population, tired of de Klerk's "jiving" and "fudging with real democracy." Their hopes had been raised by the referendum but de Klerk, in choosing to (mis)interpret "the result of the referendum as a mandate to stall" and as an excuse to derail CODESA II, had dashed such hopes. As a result Moche discovered, in his elegant phrase, "a sense of diminishing charity on the part of our people" towards the wielders of power in South Africa. Small wonder that intensified "mass action" is now seen as an essential means for giving ANC negotiators the added clout they need in the negotiations process.

Moche was reminded of Dan O'Meara's doubts, expressed in a recent SAR interview, regarding the ANC's ability to bring sufficient political force to bear upon de Klerk to force him to yield to democratic demands. For Moche this interpretation surrendered too much to the media image of de Klerk as dictating, more or less unilaterally, the pace of reform in South Africa. In fact, de Klerk has already been forced, within the arena of negotiations and without, to yield up ground every step of the way. And the strength of the popular movement that forced open Mandela's prison gates "has not simply dissipated into nothing." True, the organizational difficulties attendant upon the movement's transition back inside the country were considerable, as were those inherent in the on-going violence unleashed against it. Nonetheless, this reconstruction of the ANC's presence on the ground is now much further advanced - "an unparalleled achievement," in Moche's view - thus making organized mass action a much more effective potential option.

Key, then, was the ANC's formal announcement at the end of its conference that July would

see just such a programme of mass action, including a general strike, if the government had not met movement demands by the end of June. Lending additional clout to this prospect was an almost simultaneous announcement by the country's leading trade union movement, COSATU, that it, too, was preparing for a general strike in July or August in order to force an acceleration of the negotiations process. Such a strike "could be bigger and longer than the VAT strike," COSATU promised, mindful that the anti-VAT (Value Added Tax) action in November, the largest mass action ever in South Africa, had itself involved three and a half million people! Indeed, the anti-VAT general strike was the chief precedent cited by Moche to ground his argument about the democratic movement's capacity to act en masse.

Regrettably, Moche argued, this necessary escalation of political pressure is not likely to occur without incident. Much will depend on the nature of the regime's response, but Moche himself expects that the state will exact a price in blood from those who demonstrate. Before he left South Africa he had already begun to see major movements of police and army units, the troops back out on the streets in numbers and the general atmosphere reminiscent of the State of Emergency days. Yet Moche remained relatively sanguine: the situation is not right back were it started from. As noted, de Klerk has yielded ground month after month, but he has not done so without a push. And the events of July and August may represent the most important push of all.

Moreover, de Klerk is finding renewed difficulties in having it all his own way abroad. Moche cited, as an example, the recent refusal by Heinz of Pittsburgh to follow through on investment plans - despite a personal commitment to Mandela to eventually do so - which

was explained by the company in terms of its negative appraisal of de Klerk's reluctance to facilitate change. De Klerk also returned empty handed from a recent trip to Japan and Singapore to drum up investment and he found his government shut out of the world-wide environmental conference in Rio. And even old friends are beginning to grumble about his lack of delivery on promises made and expectations raised. De Klerk, Moche feels, will not be able to have it both ways - as the "reformer" who nonetheless aggressively defends white minority power - very much longer.

But what, in the meantime, are ANC supporters abroad to make of the fact that global corporations like Heinz are now such earnest advocates of the ANC's position? Do they see the ANC's democratic political programme as promising merely a deracialization of South African capitalism but otherwise business as usual? Moche affirmed that the policy conference had also found time to actually discuss policy on this and other fronts - despite the fact that the more immediate concerns spawned by the failed politics of CODESA II provided the charged political atmosphere within which delegates worked. He mentioned steps now being taken to work out an investment code, for example; this would reflect, in Moche's phrase, a "realistic appraisal" of business' likely role in a post-apartheid South Africa, but not (his phrase again) "a blank cheque." Needless to say, such phrases suggested many more matters for further discussion. And we agreed with Victor Moche to have just such a conversation in the fall. In the meantime, however, to the issue most dramatically at hand: a major confrontation is now apparently inevitable over the question of political democracy in South Africa. July and August in South Africa: will this finally be end-game for apartheid?

sition that it would not accept the International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) invitation to send a team to Barcelona unless:

- the sports bodies involved had created and begun to implement a plan for extending opportunities into black communities.
- only new identities (flag, anthem and mascot) would be used - to symbolize the aspirations for a new, non-racial nation.
- blacks were well represented in the team's leadership and management.

While Ramsamy & Co. realize that the current state of opportunities means that the Barcelona team will be monopolized by whites, they are not prepared to accept such an imbalance over the long term. (Ramsamy repeatedly said he was determined to avoid "another Zimbabwe," where 12 years after independence, sports continue to be dominated by whites.) By accelerating grass roots development in the black communities, they hope to reach parity in the numbers of black and white athletes by the Atlanta Games in 1996, and black majority participation by 2000.

Implementation and enforcement remain big questions, but NOCSA has obtained development agreements for every sports association on the plane to Barcelona, and kept off those which refuse to sign. Not surprisingly, given the deep emotions released by sports, they encountered the greatest resistance on the "identities" issue. Ramsamy was reviled as a "traitor" by the government and the white media when he unfurled NOCSA's new "neutral" flag and announced that the Afrikaners' cherished springbok would no longer be used as the emblem of national teams. Despite De Klerk's prior agreement, the government persuaded the IOC to pressure NOCSA to use the apartheid flag. It was only when Ramsamy made it clear that there would be no South African team in Barcelona without new identities that the furore subsided and the IOC relented. Unless

and until a democratic government creates new symbols, NOCSA's emblem will be the protea, a flower which grows abundantly in the western Cape.

Needless to say, the present terrain is significantly different than that on which the anti-apartheid forces conducted the international boycott. While the non-racial sports leaders have skilfully repositioned

"When we were invited [by the IOC] to participate in Barcelona, I myself had mixed emotions. With so little political movement toward one-person one-vote democracy, and with so much frustration among the black community, we had to consult widely. After considerable discussion, the membership in those organizations which had led the anti-apartheid struggle - the National and Olympic Sports Congress and the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee - decided that we should not hesitate any longer in sending a non-racial team abroad. So we will be there in Barcelona, the first time all of South Africa will be represented in the Olympic Games."

Sam Ramsamy

themselves so that they can direct change within South African sport, they are nevertheless dependent upon both international and internal forces and vulnerable to changing circumstances. Although the IOC and the international sports federations have promised to enforce NOCSA's conditional sanctions, the haste with which they have sought South African representation in their major events suggests that they have little real appetite to get tough with backsliders. The ANC has garnered so much praise for its role in ending the in-

ternational moratorium that it, too, seems reluctant to take a strong position on conditional sanctions to force the pace of change. The National and Olympic Sports Congress (NOSC)/NOCSA agenda is further complicated by the failure of the democratic forces to date to obtain a political settlement, the legacy of the Group Areas Act (which means that most blacks are geographically separated from the outstanding facilities and programs in the white communities) and the continuing ravages of apartheid in education, health, and so many other spheres of everyday life.

In his talk at U of T, Ramsamy was sanguine about these considerable pressures and difficulties, while also stressing the urgent necessity for the achievement of a democratic, non-racial government. He admitted with regret that the new strategy has disappointed many of his old supporters in the international anti-apartheid movements, who were reluctant to see the blanket boycott taken down without the prior achievement of a democratic constitution. But overall, he exuded optimism and an eagerness to get on with the task of reconstruction. He spoke of the need to pursue "reconciliation" with the bitter enemies of the boycott campaign in the effort to build non-racial sports, and the unexpected embrace he has received from many in the white sports community.

One of his new allies, for example, is Zola Budd, whom he once forced from international competition ("This Budd's not for you," *Southern Africa REPORT*, 2(1) 1986.) Last fall, when the opposition to NOCSA's new "identities" was at its height, Budd showed up unannounced at one of Ramsamy's press conferences and declared her support for his new flag and emblem.

It was the first time they had ever met. She will probably be a member of the team he will lead into the Olympic Stadium in Barcelona.

Mozambique Revisited

Two snapshots of Mozambique: one by Judith Marshall, long-time TCLSAC activist (and former cooperant in Maputo), who has just returned from a flying visit to Mozambique and reports on both positive and negative aspects

of the broader political scene there; the other by Brad Lester, presently a cooperant in Nampula whose "open letter" evokes some of the realities close to the ground in that province.

I. The Struggle for Mozambique: An Activist's View

BY JUDITH MARSHALL

From a distance, the impressions of Mozambique are uniformly troubling. The war grinds on, the only new element being the recent American announcement of a more active role in the peace talks with Renamo. The electoral process unfolds, with multiple parties emerging, all too many of them giving prominence to political figures of the old nationalist movement days of the 1950s and 1960s. In general, they seem more prone to grinding axes from the past than honing instruments to build a more democratic future.

The new story is drought — the worst in this century for southern Africa. The impact will be devastating. As always with natural disasters, the weakest will suffer most, so predictions are that Mozambique will suffer most severely. The entire central and southern area falls within the drought zone.

A two-week visit in April added some more close-up impressions. Representatives from COCAMO (Cooperation Canada-Mozambique) went to work with Mozambican counterparts to restructure the consortium and think ahead to the next three years. The NGO representatives from Canada included CUSO, Oxfam, YWCA, Lutheran World Relief, Canadian Cooperative Association, Steelworkers Humanity Fund, CIDMAA and PAC. We worked with the Nampula NGOs

that have begun to emerge — the General Union of Agricultural Cooperative (UGCAN), the Rural Women's Association and KARIBU, a community education group.

The major impression of the week together was how quickly the NGOs in Nampula have taken shape over the past five years, a fact that, in turn, underscored other issues: on the one hand, the nature of the social and political impact of an operational "northern" NGO on the ground and the difficulty of shifting such an NGO out of the driver's seat once it is in it and, on the other, the slowness of Mozambican government authorities to recognize the role of Mozambican NGOs and community groups as legitimate forces.

Out of the driver's seat? We came up with recommendations for a radical restructuring that puts Mozambican and Canadian NGOs in parallel structures, the ultimate policy-making body being a joint Mozambican and Canadian board to meet annually. The COCAMO office in Nampula will undergo a transition and become a secretariat accountable to a board of Mozambican NGOs. And the interface with the Mozambican government will occur through the joint board (and Mozambican NGO secretariat) rather than continue the anomolous situation of "northerners" (COCAMO) negotiating the division of the pie between Mozambican NGOs and Mozambican government structures.

One of the most interesting aspects of the week's work was development of a significant new dimension of joint programming, one that would involve, among other things, a much more substantial in-Canada programme. Thus different clusters of Canadian and Mozambican NGOs will be encouraged, under the umbrella of the consortium, to get together for direct linkage programmes, both intra-regionally in southern Africa and between Canada and Mozambique. Cooperatives could then link up directly with other cooperatives and women's groups with women's group, sharing experiences, pooling skills and building up networks. On this new terrain, policy dialogue could then become a much more significant feature of the work of the consortium than has been true in the past: specific groupings of members might interact around questions of refugee resettlement, for example, or another cluster of NGOs might work out a joint action programme around structural adjustment with sharing of documentation and research, conferences and action campaigns. It all looks excellent on paper. Can we make it operational?

The days in Maputo after our time in Nampula pointed to other significant local activity. Much of this represents a response to fallout from the politics of structural adjustment. Subsequent visits to Harare and chats on return with people from Peru and the Philip-

piners point to the commonness of the phenomenon. There is a dramatic increase in unemployment and a huge proliferation of the informal sector. The contrast between rich and poor becomes more stark. There is a severe degradation of the social fabric and a dog-eat-dog mentality comes to prevail. Violence – both community and family – is on the increase.

The other dimension of the local picture, however, is the survival and resistance activity that is evident. There seem to be a more widespread insistence on holding political leaders accountable throughout the region. Thus, Zimbabwean trade unions were virulent in their insistence that their government leaders were responsible for the current suffering caused by the fact maize meal and sugar are not to be had and food riots have become the order of the day. "If Zimbabwe government leaders accepted the World Bank advice last year to sell off maize stocks and let the market regulate, you can be sure they pocketed a good bit from the sales. They have to assume responsibility for the present situation."

In Mozambique, there were interesting conversations about opposition that have emerged within the Mozambican Assembly. Assem-

bly debates now find some members pushing the government strongly, reminding government members that they are a Frelimo Party government in power charged with implementing Frelimo party policies for which they are accountable. The hand-lettered May Day signs carried by railway and port workers, for example, were more insistent on better answers from management and government bodies to problems the country is experiencing.

There seems to be a different sense of political space available within which ordinary people can organize. The Nampula cooperative union has already expanded from 39 member cooperatives and associations to 52 and new producer associations are fast appearing with lists of members signed up and requests to affiliate. They have heard through friends, neighbours, and family members of UGCAN's effectiveness in serving peasant producers, and spontaneously take the initiative to group themselves and apply for membership. On other fronts, a training course for health and safety activists in the food sector was going on while I was there. Journalists have formed a media co-op. And a number of initiatives were referred to that sought to link community level groups in Mozambique with their counterparts elsewhere in

the region.

How to assess these multiple impressions drawn from a very brief visit? Could any positive impressions arise from willfully disregarding too many of the tragic dimensions of the broader Mozambican picture? And certainly there are plenty of negative "macro-level" indicators, ranging from the extremely poor performance of the economy in year two of the second three-year economic recovery programme to the staggering statistics regarding food needs and the drought.

All this notwithstanding, however, it was still possible to tap into a flow of energy at the grassroots. Small groupings of people are organizing – and even winning small victories. For us in Canada, the politics of solidarity would seem, at the moment, to involve giving whatever support we can to such efforts, while sharing with these Mozambicans colleagues our own struggles against the crippling logic of globalization and the "New World Order." Whether it is efforts by southern Africans to survive – and find alternatives to – structural adjustment in that region of the world or our own to do the same *vis-à-vis* the North American Free Trade Agreement in the Americas, we need each other.

II. Grass-roots Mozambique: A Cooperant Reports

BY BRAD LESTER

I'm writing this letter individually, as a cooperant or "tecnico" employed to work for the cooperative movement in Nampula. I've been struggling, trying to cope and to understand the current situation in the country. I've attempted to approach it from various levels and to think through how NGOs like the Canadian consortium, COCAMO, can respond to the problems facing

grassroots organizations and popular groups in Mozambique today.

You've asked us to reflect on the "changing needs and circumstance in Mozambique." That's a question needing serious consideration and analysis. Personally I am overwhelmed with the current situation and the future perspectives for people in Mozambique.

In simple terms it appears that, although it took the death of Samora Machel, the PRE (structural adjust-

ment program) and the war to do it, all the gains of the first years of independence are being reversed. In the name of "democracy" and "free market capitalism," we are heading to a point of chaos and anarchy where, in the final analysis, the peasants of the country and the urban working class will face higher levels of suffering and exploitation than ever before.

It may be that Nampula is a particularly extreme case, of course.



"Ninja" killed by a mob in front of a Maputo police station where he had killed a policeman

Historically, Nampula was a centre for the Portuguese culture, a key military base and an important zone of heavy exploitation of the peasants through plantation type production of cotton and sisal. People still talk about the wars and banditry before the Portuguese pacification of the population. Apparently, this continued in pockets of the province even after the Portuguese were well-established.

Recolonization?

Today the Portuguese are already returning and demanding their property back. The Casa de Cultura is now going back to the Catholic Church. A Carpenters' Cooperative is being evicted from its workshop to make room for a South African firm set to exploit ebony and other precious woods.

While the infrastructure and services of Nampula collapse, the merchant class is driving late model BMWs, Mercedes and Toyotas. These same merchants seem to be the only people able to access the USAID programme for getting new trucks, and these trucks are primarily being used to carry cases of South African beer to various city bars. Meanwhile, programmes are being considered to have the street kids and war orphans repair the roads so that these cars can circulate without fear of potholes. The most recent news is that Texmoque, a major Nampulan industrial employer, has closed its textile mill indefinitely.

The major *bairros* are in chaos. These days people regularly program their evenings in the townships to eat supper early and then begin moving closer to the centre of town to sleep along the rail line or on someone's veranda. Night after night there is shooting and burning of houses. Sometimes people are taken away. In the end people say it was bandits, or maybe the military. Who knows? Militia members and police officers are free to kidnap and assault whoever they like. Three family members of the pres-

ident of the cooperative federation, UGCAN, were abducted overnight on January 1, at the instruction of a ward leader. They were returned the following day. After a minor incident between the children of neighbouring families, one of which was that of our Transport Manager, traffic police intervened, arresting the entire family, beating some of the members and taking them all to prison. They were only freed the following day. The Transport Manager would like to prosecute. I wonder if it's worth the effort.

The failure to respond to this anarchy means people are living in fear, without any security that there is a centre of society where justice or accountability is recognized. The social impact of the war and the PRE, combined with Mozambique's colonial heritage, have resulted in a society torn to pieces. The points of reference no longer exist. Norms of behaviour and social control have no framework.

Within this social/cultural vacuum, we are now facing the returning Portuguese, the daily birth of political parties, the continuing deterioration of the economy. The security situation verges on a type of permanent terrorism because it is impossible to verify who is where at which time. One day we hear the attacks are the fault of Renamo. The following day we hear it was disgruntled military. How about a gang of ninjas? Namparahama, a movement based on traditional spirits, was doing great work on the government side. Today it's an ally of Renamo. We hear the nearby Rapale was attacked and occupied for a length of time on January 3. Is it true? What about the persistent allegations against the militia members?

As a cooperant, I myself draw a generous living allowance in local terms. Our family needs, in North American terms, are very simple. When I can be amazed and flabbergasted with the cost of living, it is unimaginable how a common person can survive.

Measuring sustainability

Within this fluid and evolving context, which I've tried to convey in a very personal and non-scientific way, the question of "changing needs and circumstances in Mozambique" as they impact upon our own development contribution needs a clear analysis and nuanced response. We have to ask different questions of a development programme than we do in other contexts.

My standard vision of sustainability relies on the economic viability of a program of institutional development through training, or the development of forms of economic production. It includes the clear needs and support of the participants in the program as well as the recognition on a wider level that the program has a necessary place in society.

At this time, the changing circumstances of Nampula are beginning to crystallize for me a recognition that "sustainability" for the cooperative federation I'm working with has little relevance if measured in standard terms. Technically, with support and training, UGCAN can grow and develop to become an independent, indigenous NGO. The support for UGCAN which began formally only in April 1990 is now at the end of its second year. Just about everyone, from a range of people like FAO experts, agroforestry extension specialists, expert planners, political leaders from other provinces, government technical staff responsible for family sector agriculture in the Directorate of Rural Development and cooperators from other provinces recognize the grassroots strength of UGCAN. They further recognize UGCAN's community involvement, the economic functions of UGCAN and its direct link with member cooperatives and farmers, not in terms of a support project, but in terms of something real and alive, a social movement of farmers.

The question of sustainability of UGCAN depends more on the abil-

ity of the UGCAN and society at large to come through the on-going and escalating crisis of emergency, war and social, political and economic transformation. Up until now, UGCAN has been able to operate rather freely. There has been some dissatisfaction. Some authorities have felt that they have missed the opportunities for financial support because UGCAN has been the recipient. The Director of Agriculture, however, has stated publicly that the development of UGCAN was positive and necessary. He has recognized that the cooperative movement is something growing over the long term rather than the overnight solution which many officials still dream is possible.

I believe that there is also recognition that UGCAN has good relations with the mass of the population. Therefore, it has a certain weight in society. UGCAN, in fact, is one of the few organizations which the people can see and touch, that is active on behalf of ordinary people, with concrete services like agricultural supplies, credit, training, services and marketing, all at fair and accessible prices.

Sustainability in the present context has two important features. First, as time goes along, the concrete work of UGCAN in marketing, defence of land rights, legalization of small-scale farmers cooperatives, etc. will begin to impact on the planned future of the peasant sector of society. The role of UGCAN to empower peasants socially and economically will be in direct conflict with the new directions of the country. The commitment of the members and staff of UGCAN will be stretched to the limit to defend the interests of the peasants.

Difficult times

The second point is closely related. In the continuing chaos and social anarchy, each person, alone, will be battling to survive. The perceived lack of support for their efforts and the hopelessness of the daily struggle will wear people down one



A woman at a quarry, taking out a living breathing stone by hand for sale in Maputo

by one. It will be almost impossible for them to commit themselves to a struggle for institutional survival, after the accumulated hardships, disappointments and struggles of the past 15 years.

Some analysts project that the next two to three years in Mozambique will be even more difficult and unstable. The mood will vary with bursts of optimism over peace accords, cease fire agreements, multi-party democracy and elections. Each sign of hope will be followed by a cycle of disappointment and pessimism as the signs prove to mark not a definitive end to the problem but just another pause or stock-taking. Meanwhile, for most, the downward spiral of suffering will continue, including a deterioration of basic amenities, social services and even justice.

Perhaps by 1994 or 1995, there will be a sense of order in place and people will finally understand that the new economic, security and political structure is now mounted. This will have returned us to a time

when the rich few are benefiting. The mass of the population will likely be in worse shape than in colonial times.

For the UGCAN and whatever supporters it may have, these will be difficult times. If organizations like UGCAN are not active and are not given financial, technical and moral support during this transitional and traumatic period, all of us will be the losers. An opportunity will have been lost.

In the heady days of independence, the word was the "socialist project" in Mozambique. The world is now spinning. I don't know where we'll find new "projects" to carry forward a valid dream. However, in Nampula, now more than ever, the "changing needs and circumstances" demand that anyone who has an interest in development and justice should try, with full commitment, to work with UGCAN. Maybe over the next two or three years UGCAN should be considered a crack in the wall to the future. With or without support, this crack could still be plastered over. Other "projects"

may emerge instead, projects which, in the name of progress, merely exploit the human resource of the peasantry in Mozambique.

If the crack is not plastered over, then perhaps by 1994 or 1995, the base established by the UGCAN, in conjunction with national, regional and international networks and linkages, will be strong enough to shift the balance of power in favour of the small farmer. If not, what we will have is just more of the internationally based hierarchy of pillage and exploitation so familiar to us all.

Perhaps looking for a shift of the balance of power in favour of the small farmer is too optimistic a perspective to hold. But there must be at least a space for the small farmer to exist. I don't think that "technical sustainability" is the question over the next few years. The question is the hope for survival in a dangerous, deteriorating country where our sustained support and solidarity will be one of the few positive contributions to human development.

Striking Back: An Insider's View of COSATU

BY DAVID POTTIE

David Pottie is a member of the editorial working group of Southern Africa Report.

Striking Back: A History of COSATU by Jeremy Baskin, Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1991. 488 pages

COSATU's political work and trade union work have always been linked. The mass mobilization of workers made COSATU one of the pillars of the anti-apartheid struggle. And as a union movement, the active participation of its members in the decision-making process stands as an example of internal democracy.

But in the changed political context since February 1990, the climate in which unions organize has been altered. COSATU continues as a key player at many levels: in anti-VAT campaigns, in part of the National Economic Negotiating Forum and a presence at CODESA through tripartite alliance working groups. However, COSATU finds itself juggling the demands of its members, the restructuring initiatives of capital and national level negotiations all at the same time. How well-adapted are COSATU's organizational structures to the significant changes of this transition period in South Africa?

Striking Back, Jeremy Baskin's detailed history of COSATU, provides the necessary context with which to evaluate this question. Baskin sustains a balanced appraisal of the emergence of the world's fastest growing trade union federation and successfully negotiates a complex history of personalities, organizations and shifting alliances. Baskin's argument is that despite



its public profile as a political organization, COSATU functions first and foremost as a federation of trade unions whose work is mass organization of employed workers.

Baskin is currently national coordinator of COSATU and he has been involved with the South African trade union movement since the early 1970s. The result is a valuable insider's account that takes a sustained look at the dramatic transformations in South African labour since 1985. *Striking Back's* main weakness is Baskin's reliance on recounting COSATU's history as a story of mass action without always explaining how the organizational impacts of this tendency will figure in the 1990s.

History "up close"

Baskin first establishes a brief history of trade union activity in South Africa and the union unity talks that took place between 1981 and 1985. The basis for federation was composed of nine principles: non-registration; shop floor bargaining; binding federation policy on affiliates; worker control; non-racialism; participation in community issues and rejection of reactionary bodies, both nationally and internationally. Baskin also touches upon divisions at the talks such as the debate over the tactics of union registration, though he is less concerned with covering the familiar ground of the debates than in demonstrating how COSATU has since developed as a structure that accommodates differences while representing worker interests.

The remainder of the book follows COSATU chronologically. It is impossible to summarize the content of Baskin's work, since he describes in great detail every major event (and many minor ones) in COSATU's first five years. In the process, he weaves a tightly written narrative that highlights the dual nature of COSATU's leading role in both union organization and

liberation politics. The history of COSATU becomes the story of how COSATU emerged from and mirrored the political debates in the wider liberation struggle.

We must not forget that COSATU was born into a state of emergency. But Baskin does not imply that COSATU became a political substitute for UDF's banning during the state of emergency. If anything, the state of emergency heightened COSATU's union character by forcing affiliates to rely on the shop floor to continue action.

Baskin argues that increased repression and the denial of the right to picket during strikes sparked innovative responses such as the sleep-in. This tactic gave workers control of the workplace and prevented entry of replacement workers, provided the opportunity for intensive education among members and built links between the factory and the community when coordinated with a consumer boycott. On balance however, the real achievement of COSATU in this period lay not in the tactics it adopted but in its survival of the state of emergency.

Baskin's belief in the union movement is unflinching - but he does not shy away from criticizing COSATU. The precision of Baskin's criticisms reflect his keen awareness of the difficult task of building a broad federation. For example, he argues that Elijah Barayi's (then president of COSATU) intemperate remark at COSATU's opening Congress that homeland leaders were "puppets" was a serious political error because it gave the impression that COSATU's aim was to oppose KwaZulu's Buthelezi and the homeland system. However, Baskin does not level any fundamental criticisms at COSATU's *raison d'être*; instead he limits himself to organizational failures and specific events. Baskin uses the state of emergency as a backdrop rather than a justification for COSATU's shortcomings.

But too close?

At another level, Baskin argues that COSATU is based on four key principles: mass organization based on democracy, a vision of social and economic transformation, strong and effective organization and mass action.

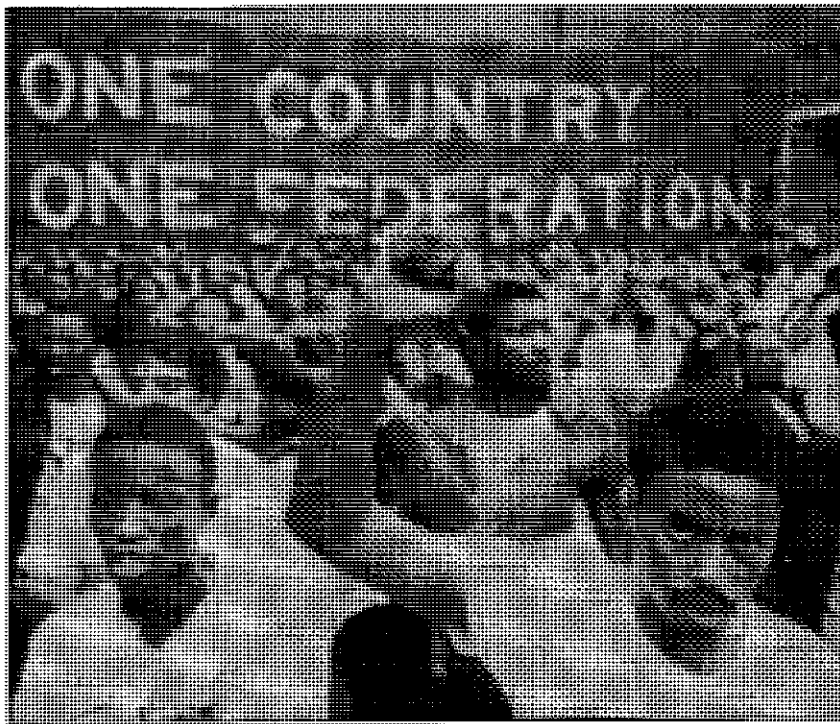
Although Baskin intends these themes to remain as the organizing principles of his book, he is occasionally overwhelmed by the mass of unions, labour actions, strikes and individual union members that figure prominently on almost every page. The operation of broader forces tends to get lost in this detail.

What is Baskin's intention in pursuing this route? Indeed, the story is worth telling and Baskin seems to have been well-placed to tell it; he takes advantage of his access to COSATU documents and officials to provide us with the kind of inside perspective we are not likely to find elsewhere.

Baskin is most effective when he provides the inside institutional detail that explains COSATU's organizational success as a federation. He is strong when he describes the web of apartheid bargaining structures that faced COSATU's attempts to secure centralized bargaining based on strong factory organization. Mass action alone does not support Baskin's contention that COSATU's rapid growth necessitated complex and nationally centralized structures. Baskin should have maintained this focus. With its emphasis on labour actions, *Striking Back* at times runs the risk of reading like a list of strikes and COSATU Congresses.

Mass action

Baskin also displays a preoccupation with the *size* of mass mobilization achieved by COSATU. He hopes to convey a sense of accomplishment by COSATU's success as a large federation. But a bigger and more complex organization not only puts more issues on the agenda, it also makes participation by the rank and



COSATU launching congress, Dec. 1985 - (illustration from the book)

file more difficult.

In union locals, shop stewards are directly elected, most by secret ballot, by the rank and file at regular intervals. However, in the case of CODESA it is not possible to cope with the demand for day to day consultation. Jay Naidoo (COSATU Negotiations Co-ordinator) remarks, that as negotiations progress and the issues grow in complexity, there are signs the grassroots get left behind. Clearly, democracy becomes more of a challenge as the major points of conflict move to the national level. Union locals and their shop stewards must not become passive recipients of national directives.

Baskin would agree. He points out that there can be no strict division between COSATU as a trade union federation and COSATU as a political vehicle. He argues that COSATU's experience with disputes over union mergers, despite COSATU's founding slogan, "One industry, one union," revealed the

need for "the adoption of bold and unambiguous policies, clearly aligned with a particular political current." This broad political unity of COSATU involved acknowledgement of UDF as COSATU's principal ally and acceptance of ANC as the leading organization in the fight for national liberation.

But Baskin does not specify how these broad terms sustain themselves among the members. Worker control cannot be an article of faith. Baskin mentions the circulation of discussion papers to all structures of the federation but he does not expand his discussion of internal democracy, nor does he follow the paper trail or even make a case study of how internal democracy works. He only mentions an "organizational culture that balances officials and workers" in a footnote.

A working class agenda

Whatever the limitations of Baskin's approach, he correctly points out

that ongoing struggles around the issues of political alliances and the role of organized labour in a post-apartheid South Africa would be areas of concern for the 1990s.

The debate on a COSATU-ANC-SACP alliance appears to bear out Baskin's confidence that COSATU has grown as a structure that can accommodate differences over policy and tactics. Despite the tensions involved in sustaining a tripartite alliance, COSATU has not suffered a simple split in ranks over the alliance. Instead, as Baskin argues, debate has been healthy and open, and differences exist within unions, as well as between unions.

The institutional power of labour in South Africa also means a future South Africa will have to accommodate the interests of organized labour at all levels of policy. COSATU's active involvement in the struggle for liberation as outlined by Baskin makes it a necessary and significant participant in any post-apartheid South Africa. The existence of a strong labour movement opens up the possibility of a strong working class agenda but Baskin is not clear how this might be accomplished.

Nevertheless, Baskin's insider account is extremely valuable. This is a strong book precisely because Baskin does not hide his commitment to workers and their struggles for social justice. Mass action coordinated by proper organization and ongoing contact with workers remains a powerful tool. But many May Day 1992 rallies had lower than expected attendance.

In the rapidly changing face of South Africa a strong and clear voice of labour is imperative. Just as COSATU's history reflects how structures developed to deal with the immediate task of union organization in the 1980s so must COSATU now continue to find immediate and effective alternatives with which to face the complex issues of national politics.

