

Southern Africa REPORT

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December 1994

Mozambique:

The "Peace Election"

FIRST-HAND
ELECTION REPORTS

from
Stephen Allen
Lois Browne and
John S Saul

M Z MAYEKISO
RETHINKS SOLIDARITY

WISEMAN CHIRWA
on
MALAWI after KAMUZU

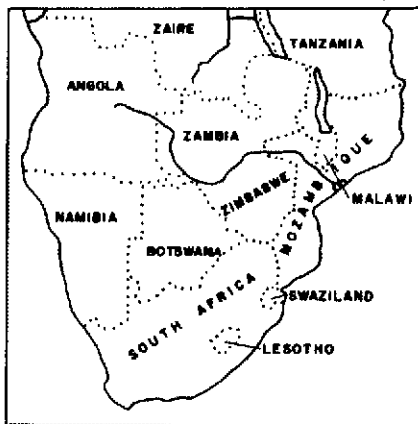


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Two Cheers for Democracy

Democracy is a "good idea," not least in southern Africa. There have been too many right-wing authoritarian regimes there, certainly. And few will mourn this year's passing - via the electoral route - of South Africa's apartheid regime and that of Hastings Kamuzu Banda in Malawi.

But authoritarianism has been a problem not only on the right of the political spectrum in southern Africa. The fact that left-wing regimes within the region have tended to lose their momentum can also be explained, at least in part, by their undemocratic

nature: their refusal to allow the people, in whose name they have claimed to speak, any real control over the levers of state power in their societies. Certainly this was true of Mozambique's experience of socialism - however much outcomes in that country were also determined by the brutality of South Africa's strategy of destabilization.

In consequence, it's appropriate to hail the coming of electoral democracy to Mozambique, the detailed, first-hand coverage of whose recent election forms the main focus of the present issue of SAR. And yet it is difficult to shake the

conclusion that, at most, only two cheers are in order for this most recent manifestation of democracy in southern Africa. Why is this so? The question is an important one since misgivings about the precise weight and import to be attached to such multi-party elections have implications for our thinking about the region that reach well beyond the specific case of Mozambique.

Begin with the fact that the alternatives offered to Mozambican voters were not especially attractive ones: a once-proud Frelimo now rendered crippled and corrupt versus a once-barbarous Renamo, still

all too slow to cast off the trappings of its grim origins as South Africa's agent of destruction. Small wonder that many weary voters in Mozambique found themselves, in John Saul's phrase, "voting as much for peace as for party," fastening on the electoral process itself as representing one last opportunity to replace the cruelties of war with a more benign brand of political competition.

Peace: another good thing, no doubt about it. The question remains, however: just how empowering of ordinary people an election carried out under such circumstances can actually be – especially when we also note how little divided the two front-running parties in the Mozambican election are programmatically. This, too, is no accident. As Saul further argues in his lead article in these pages, "the scope for national decision-making is, at least for the moment, defined particularly narrowly in a recolonized country like Mozambique. Economic decision-making rests largely in the hands of the World Bank, the IMF, various aid agencies and a particularly aggressive band of pirate multinationals, and the state itself has been eviscerated." To repeat: what meaning can "democracy" actually have when, in the course of electoral competition, Mozambicans are in no way encouraged to debate the real circumstances in which their country finds itself?

In fact, what is missing, in Mozambique as in many other places, is (in the words of Perry Anderson) "any conception of the state as a structure of self-expression deeper than the electoral systems of today. Democracy is indeed now more widespread than ever before. But it is also thinner – as if the more universally available it becomes, the less active meaning it retains." Such, perhaps, is the most obvious political fall-out from the now seemingly ineluctable process of "globalization," and from the passivity towards the workings of

the international market-place that the currently prevailing ideology of neo-liberalism encourages on the part of Third World states and peoples.

Yet the developmental promise of neo-liberalism for the countries of southern Africa is by no means obvious. And if development should not occur via this route, the implications could, once again, be dire. It has been argued before in these pages that regimes which pursue economic liberalization may ultimately be drawn back towards authoritarianism, precisely to suppress the resistance of those large numbers of citizens who are likely to be hurt by "structural adjustment" and other related programmes (see, for example, Marcia Burdette, "Democracy vs. Economic Liberalization: The Zambian Dilemma," *SAR*, 8, #1).

But there are other dangers as well. Wiseman Chirwa, for one, hints at these dangers in his trenchant analysis of Malawi which is also published in the current issue. Thus, in the absence of a (class-based) politics of social and economic purpose for Malawi, he fears the country could simply unravel along regional and ethnic lines, an outcome foreshadowed, he senses, in the extreme disunity that an otherwise democratic electoral process has helped draw ever closer to the surface in his country. (Other observers, even less sanguinely, have seen the seeds of a Rwanda-style outcome for Malawi in the pattern of politics that is emerging!)

In Mozambique the fact that Renamo did so well by basing much of its campaign on various sectional appeals also suggests the potential for a similar unravelling of politics there. Perhaps this is, in part, why various international observers have put so much stock in Mozambique's President Chissano ushering Renamo into some kind of power-sharing arrangement, a possible outcome that, we are

told, may be in the process of being negotiated even as we put this issue of *SAR* to bed. On the other hand, there is nothing in Renamo's previous record to suggest that its inclusion in a new government will help Frelimo to recover its old sense of purpose or its old scepticism about benefits to be derived from subordination to international capitalism. Quite the contrary.

* * *

Not that peace is guaranteed, by any means, in Mozambique. The ghost of Angola hangs over the country even if, for various reasons, the comparison is not altogether appropriate. We must hope that the election will at least have delivered such a peace. If so, perhaps this will begin to provide the space within which Mozambicans can hope to rebuild their lives, as well as to lay an even more effective basis for their long term political empowerment – from the ground up and through "the institutions of civil society" (as Mozambique's Graça Machel phrases the point elsewhere in this issue).

Of course, we must hope for a similar outcome in Angola itself, where prospects for peace, as Alex Vines reminds us below, continue to hang on a very thin thread indeed – in spite of the recent signing of various peace accords between Unita and the MPLA government in that country. The development of the situation in Angola, where, as we know all too well, the holding of "free and fair" elections several years ago made little immediate difference to political outcomes, is something we will continue to monitor in these pages. Just as we will continue to monitor (as we are invited to do by South African grass-roots activist, Mzwanele Mayekiso, in another instructive article presented below) the degree of empowerment that this year's democratization of South Africa has actually brought to ordinary citizens there.

Mozambique: The "Peace Election"

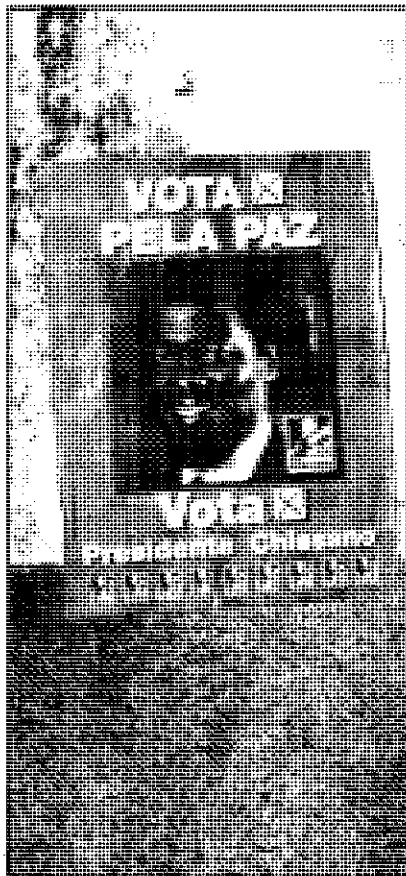
BY JOHN S. SAUL

John S. Saul, who was an international observer on the Oxfam-Canada electoral mission, is a member of the SAR editorial collective.

Six months ago I was an official observer at the South African election and I reported on that experience in a previous issue of *Southern Africa Report* ("Now for the hard part", *SAR*, July, 1994). In October I returned to southern Africa to witness the mounting of a second election, this time in Mozambique. But the tone of things, on this second occasion, was very different from the first.

In April, the overriding mood of most South Africans had been one of euphoria. Their's was, after all, a "liberation election," one in which a very large majority of South Africans felt themselves to be voting, quite literally, for their freedom. Unfortunately, Mozambique offered a far more sombre context for exercise of the franchise. Indeed, large numbers of Mozambicans encountered by our Canadian observer teams (CIDA-funded and drawn from such NGOs as OXFAM-Canada and Cooperation Canada-Mozambique) seemed to be voting, first and foremost, for the very idea of voting itself. Their apparent hope: that the election would prove to be an arena within which political differences might, at last, be resolved peacefully, and the violence that has scarred their lives for so long, might end.

For Mozambique is a society now almost completely shattered by a sustained and merciless war, a reality evident to us as we travelled throughout Maputo Province in the days before the election: to Magude, to Matatuine, to Moamba. These districts are pock-marked with landmines, burned-out buildings and



Bruce Paton - CIDA

the visible flux of displaced people trying to find their way home.

This war was initiated, when it first began more than a decade and a half ago, as part of apartheid South Africa's defensive strategy of actively destabilizing its neighbours. South Africa's target was the government of Frelimo (the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique), the liberation movement that had defeated the Portuguese colonial power in the mid-1970s and established Mozambique's first independence government. And its chief instrument of destabilization was Renamo (the Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique). Now, as one further step in a difficult peace process, Frelimo and Renamo were to face each

other as electoral, rather than military, combatants.

It was not just Mozambicans who sought peace by this means, of course. The international community has been a central player in the process, with the United Nations itself investing some \$95 million dollars in seeing the elections through. And it was also prepared to hand over large sums to Renamo: to ease its transition from guerilla organization to political party, it was said, though some sceptics saw it to be a fairly straightforward bid to buy off the movement's leadership in order to ensure some form of stability for the country!

Noteworthy, under such circumstances, was the consensus of virtually all foreign observers (including our Canadian delegation) that the election had been run by Mozambicans with great care and scruple. This, in spite of the enormous logistical difficulties spawned by Mozambique's extreme degree of underdevelopment (and even some difficulties experienced by Frelimo activists in penetrating Renamo-dominated areas in order to campaign). And when, right in the middle of the three-day voting period, Renamo's presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama momentarily dropped out of the race protesting fraud, Renamo's own senior representatives on the National Electoral Commission confirmed publicly the fairness of the elections. With any luck, it will prove more difficult for Renamo arbitrarily to disown the electoral process than was the case in Angola where Unita, a movement of roughly similar provenance, arbitrarily rejected a result deemed "free and fair" by international observers and resumed its war against the MPLA government.

Of course, Renamo also has done surprisingly well in the election

(see accompanying box). But the fact remains that Frelimo has won, Alberto Joaquim Chissano scoring firmly over Dhlakama in the presidential balloting and the party itself scraping a rather narrower majority in the National Assembly. In consequence, much is now said to ride on Chissano's willingness to incorporate the defeated Renamo leaders into a coalition government (a deal which might also include governorships for Renamo people in the five provinces, where their party has carried the national vote).

Equally important are Renamo's own intentions. Will some of

its people choose to stand, once again, and fight? It can be said that Mozambique, in this respect, is no Angola. Many of Renamo's traditional backers - South Africa and Malawi - have changed inalterably, for example. And both the government's forces and those of Renamo have been considerably depleted, vast numbers of soldiers on both sides bought off by U.N. demobilization allowances and a visible measure of war weariness. Yet arms caches remain and some soldiers are in readiness - even if there is nothing that approximates to the level of war-

preparedness that Unita's Jonas Savimbi retained while waiting out the Angolan balloting. At the very least, some have argued, Renamo is readying itself for a period of "armed negotiations" in which it flashes the card of militarism in order to strike a better deal for itself with the Frelimo government.

What about a coalition government, then? In fact, agreement on a "government of national unity" (on the South African model) was what senior United Nations personnel and western diplomats had been pushing Chissano to embrace in the run-up to the election itself. If any-

The Election Results

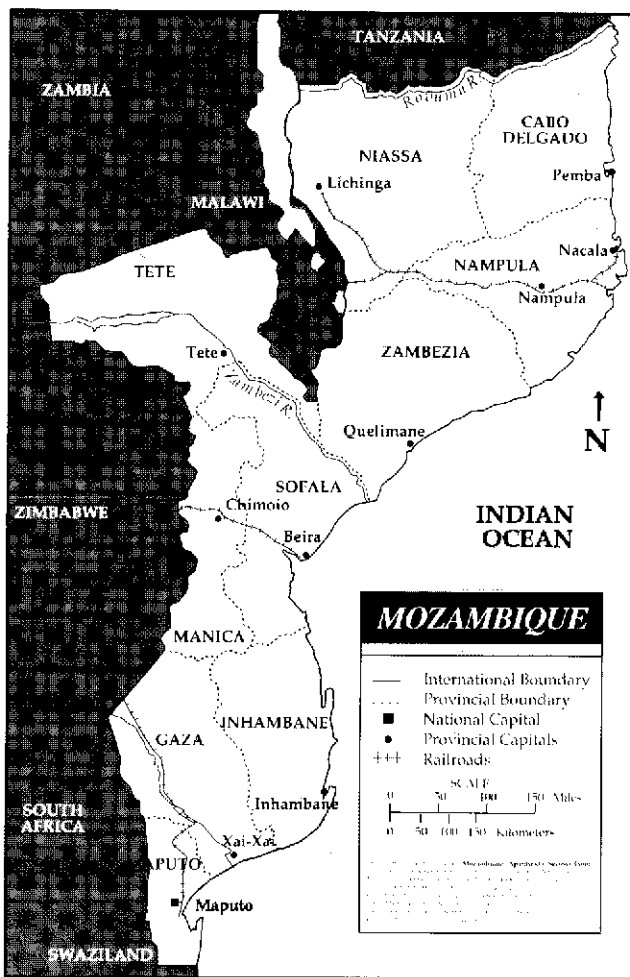
Presidential vote:

87.87% turnout (5,402,940 voted); 5.78% blank votes; 2.76% spoiled votes; valid votes: 4,941,515; Chissano (Frelimo): 53.3%; Dhlakama (Renamo): 33.73%; all others (10): 12.96%, of whom 3 with over 2%, 2 over 1%, and others less.

Legislative vote:

87.87% turnout (5,404,199 voted); 8.46% blank votes; 3.21% spoiled votes; valid votes: 4,773,325; Frelimo: 44.33%; Renamo 37.78%; União Democrática (UD): 5.15%; all others: 12.74%, all with less than 2% each. Seats: Frelimo, 129; Renamo, 112; UD, 9. (Regional distribution: In the south, Renamo got one seat each in Maputo Province and Maputo City and 3 in Inhambane; UD got 1 in Gaza and 2 in Inhambane; Frelimo took the rest - 57. In the centre, Frelimo got 3 in Sofala, 4 in Manica and 5 in Tete; UD got 1 in Tete; Renamo the rest - 35. In the north, Frelimo got 20 in Nampula, Renamo 32 and UD 2, while in Zambezia, Frelimo got 18, Renamo 29 and UD 2. In the far north, Renamo got 6 in Cabo Delgado and 4 in Niassa; the UD got 1 in Cabo Delgado, and Frelimo the rest - 22.

The inexperience of the electorate is perhaps most clearly shown in the rather high proportion of blank and spoiled ballots. Most observers also agree that the UD's high vote in the legislative election can be largely explained by its position on the ballot: it was listed last, the same position occupied by Chissano on the presidential ballot, and many illiterate voters are thought to have merely tracked their vote across from one ballot to the other. Indeed, some suggest that most UD votes should be thought of as Frelimo votes, which would have given Frelimo close to 50% in the legislative election (i.e. rather closer to the percentage achieved by Chissano in the presidential poll).



thing, and despite Chissano's refusal to concede any such deal prior to the voting, the pressure will have increased in the wake of the results.

There is an irony here, of course. Those who once, for some good reasons, rejected the claims that one-party states can contain the stresses and strains inherent in underdeveloped societies, now seem willing to argue the virtues of "one-government states" for very similar reasons. One might question how quickly one can learn lessons regarding the legitimacy of responsible opposition and the values of a democratic culture under such dispensations.

But perhaps the possible prospect of achieving peace by such a route should take priority. And, in any case, such a resolution may not be as difficult to achieve in the Mozambican case as might at first appear. After all, Mozambique is by now a very different society from what it was when South African destabilization first began at the end of the 1970s. As one South African journalist commented of the election, it seemed to be marked by a kind of "moral amnesia." Frelimo's own high purposes at independence seem but a distant memory and Renamo's history as first Rhodesia's and then South Africa's brutal cat's paw have also been obscured by time.

In addition, Frelimo had been, in part, responsible for making itself vulnerable to attack by Renamo and by that movement's South African sponsors. Too undemocratic, too insensitive to peasant needs and desires, too indifferent regarding diverse regional and other sectoral demands: so Frelimo's critics have charged. Then, as the war ground on, the government's morale snapped. Mounting corruption and the increasingly arbitrary use of power by both military and civilian authorities threatened to drag Frelimo's project down to Renamo's own level. As Renamo itself turned to more conventional pol-

itics some of the distance separating the two began to disappear.

True, there is evidence that, in Nampula say, or Tete, some may actually have voted for Renamo because they feared a return to war if it lost (a vote for "sobrevivencia" [survival] rather than "preferencia"). And indeed, certain of Dhlakama's statements did warn of this possibility. But there is little doubt that, particularly in the centre of the country, one found a strong anti-government vote. It lead at least one observer to wonder aloud to me what might have happened had "a respectable third force got itself together and done some work to present itself as the peace party!"

But this did not happen. Instead, the levelling-down process between the two leading parties was further reinforced by a second factor. The scope for national decision-making is, at least for the moment, defined particularly narrowly in a recolonized country like Mozambique. Economic decision-making rests largely in the hands of the World Bank and the IMF, various aid agencies and a particularly aggressive band of pirate multinationals, and the state itself has been eviscerated. The result: in substantive policy terms, too, there was little enough to divide the two parties.

A coalition government - and some kind of peace - may be in the offing, then. But what else can one say, more broadly, about the kind of politics this situation has begun to produce in Mozambique? How important is the fact that the recent multi-party election in Mozambique has failed to provide Mozambicans with the opportunity to debate their long-term future in any meaningful way? Thus, Frelimo, once the proponent of a clear socialist development alternative, ran a campaign centred on "show-micios" (a play on the Portuguese word "comicio"), rallies where show business trappings, the trivialization of issues and the glorification of the

candidate took precedence over real substance.

For its part, Renamo tended to fall back on the rather calculated manipulation of various regional, ethnic, religious and (advanced in the name of "tradition") gender-oppressive particularisms and animosities in building its own electoral base. On one occasion, for example, Dhlakama threatened to "drive the Shangaans [the ethnic majority in southern Mozambique] back to Zululand," setting, in this and other ways, a number of dangerous precedents regarding the texture of future political debate in Mozambique.

Small wonder, under such circumstances, that many voters did indeed find themselves voting as much for peace as for party. Mozambicans deserve peace, of course - and they also deserve much more democracy than they have experienced either under colonialism or in the more recent past. Yet not all forms of democracy are equally empowering of people, and the importation into Mozambique of the electoral model we observed - one too much like our own? - probably had as many costs as benefits in this respect.

True, if this particular stab at democracy does indeed reconcile enemies and produce peace, it will have served a worthwhile purpose. But it was difficult to escape the feeling, in Mozambique last month, that something more is needed. One may hope that the Frelimo government, realizing it has not been overwhelmingly endorsed at the polls by any means, will feel constrained to clean up its act. As it happens, on the occasion of one of his press conferences, Chissano did acknowledge that he would eventually have to move against the rising tide of corruption within the state apparatus. But this was very far from being a major campaign theme. Moreover, the prospect of an influx of Renamo-sponsored politicians and bureaucrats into a



Bruce Paton - CIDA

new coalition government hardly strengthens the promise that such a revitalization of the state will occur.

Still, as noted, some kind of lowest common denominator government of national unity may be just enough to satisfy the ubiquitous "western ambassadors" who now loom so large on the Maputo political scene. These are, in any case, no friends of a strong state in Mozambique. But representatives of the Canadian NGOs who went to observe the Mozambican election had another reaction, one that found its way into their various reports back on the election process.

For they were forcefully reminded, by the visible limitations of political parties and electoral machinations, of an alternative source of possible renewal for Mozambique, one close to the surface of their own experience in that country. In recent years such organizations (OXFAM-Canada, COCAMO) have been linking up with Mozambicans who are attempting - through the construction of green-zone cooperatives, women's organizations, trade unions and the like - to strengthen their ability to build and control, from the ground up, their own lives. If these latter can succeed in this undertaking, the necessary underpinnings for pressing even more powerful democratic demands upon governments, parties and the electoral process itself will be that much more firmly in place.

In this regard I was myself reminded, while observing the elections, of a conversation I had had a few months earlier with Graça Machel, former minister of education in the Mozambican government and widow of Samora Machel who, as Frelimo leader, had been the country's first president. Saying that she would not herself be standing for the Assembly this time round, she told me that she would, however, be voting for Frelimo. I was taken aback. This was an answer to a question it would not have dawned on me to ask.

Yes, she went on, Frelimo still represents more of a national project - Frelimo's most crucial historical accomplishment, in her view - than any other alternative currently on offer. But in terms of deepening democracy and ensuring the eventual revival of other, more progressive strands of Frelimo's original undertakings for the country she saw the chief hope to lie in the strengthening, in her phrase, of "the institutions of civil society." And this is the sphere towards which, for the foreseeable future, she intends to direct her own considerable energies.

The View from Manica

BY LOIS BROWNE

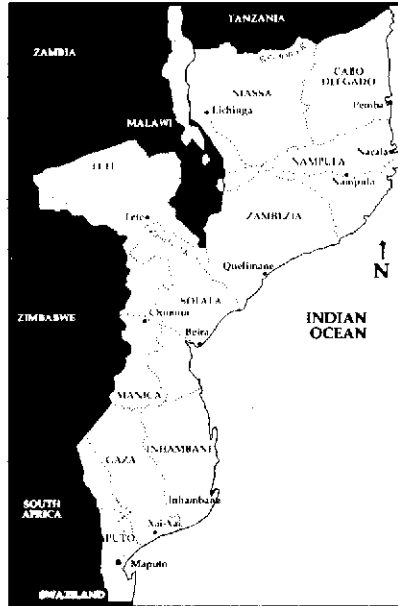
Lois Browne, who was an international observer on the Oxfam-Canada electoral mission, is a member of the SAR editorial collective.

One of the benefits that peace has brought to Mozambique is that visitors can move about much more freely than has been possible for over a decade. In my case, returning after an absence of eight years to observe the country's first multi-party elections, it meant I was able to travel considerable distances in central Mozambique both by car and helicopter and gave me a chance to see the electoral process from a vantage point far from the large urban centres.

The process in Manica province had a somewhat different cast than what took place in the south and north of the country, perhaps because there was less tension there between the two major opponents and, given the relatively small population, there was less riding, in national terms, on the results. In consequence, other factors – perhaps of greater importance than the elections themselves – were more noticeable.

As in other parts of Mozambique, the electoral process in Manica province was carried out according to the plan mounted by the National Election Commission (NEC), with considerable assistance from the United Nations operation known in Mozambique as UNOMOZ.

Mozambicans were registered in the same location where they were to vote. Voter education was carried out under the auspices of NEC but with involvement by a vast range of NGOs, community groups and UNOMOZ. Election kits that provided everything necessary for a voting station for 1,000 voters were delivered on time to even the most distant post. The



dozen smaller parties were provided with modest financing for their campaigns, although Renamo and Frelimo had much greater resources for posters, t-shirts, capulanas, radios and other goodies with which to entice voters to their camp.

Election materials like posters and banners dotted store windows and thatched huts in the smaller centres, but nowhere did they dominate the landscape. Major public meetings in Manica were confined to the provincial capital and were built around visits by party leaders.

Both Frelimo and Renamo complained that they were being denied access to some parts of the country, but UNOMOZ was able to resolve the major disagreements. Almost all the smaller parties complained that their lack of resources kept them from campaigning effectively. But few of them indicated that they had anything to say to the public in any event.

And on election day, despite doubts about Mozambique's ability to carry off this last vital step

in the process, it went remarkably smoothly. Even the temporary withdrawal of Renamo from the election had almost no impact on the process in Manica. Renamo party representatives appeared at the polling stations along with voters and seemed unaware that Renamo's president, Afonso Dhlakama, was threatening to destroy the entire process.

By the end of the three days of voting, despite claims by Renamo of fraud, all observers could testify to the fact that the elections had been free and fair by the standards usually applied.

But Mozambique is a good example of how limited the notion of free and fair elections is. Despite the successful elections, there were a significant number of Mozambicans who were eligible to vote but who never got a chance. In totting up the numbers of eligible Mozambicans who, because of poverty, underdevelopment and population displacement, did not vote, it is easy to come to the conclusion that Mozambican voters who were disenfranchised reached into the hundreds of thousands.

A lack of education may have been the most significant factor in disenfranchising some Mozambicans. There were people who were registered, came to the voting station, and must have heard some kind of explanation for what the process meant and what their role in it was. But once in the voting booth with the unfamiliar pieces of paper and a pencil, they couldn't translate the little they had learned into action. Most observers could tell stories of the old women who shuffled across the voting station into the booth, only to stand apparently without movement for ten minutes or more before emerging again with ballots folded. But, one suspected, without the ballots being marked. In the

final count, there was a high percentage of ballots that were blank and many more that were wrongly marked.

The war has had a tremendous effect on who got to vote. Mozambique at one time had 4.5 million internal refugees, mostly peasants who had fled the countryside for the relative safety of the towns or cities. Many of these people were registered where they had relocated, which would also be where they had to vote. But by the time voting day arrived, people had already begun to move back to their farms to prepare the land for planting. For many it would mean a day's walk each way, plus the time they would spend in the voting queue, with only the food and water they could carry with them. In many communities where we asked if everyone who had been registered was likely to return to vote, the answer was a doubtful shake of the head.

Another million people were still outside Mozambique, in refugee centres in Zimbabwe and Malawi,

during the registration process. In the time that followed, they returned to Mozambique (at a rate of 5,000 a week in Manica province) but it was too late for them to be added to the voting rolls.

Between 40% and 50% of Manica's territory was considered to be under Renamo control. Renamo had always held that anyone working for the state was a Frelimo supporter and a natural enemy. Holding to that belief, Renamo refused to allow some registration brigades into their territory until the process was well advanced. The result was that large tracts of territory yielded far fewer voters than they should have.

The lack of a developed infrastructure contributed to disenfranchising people. Poor roads and no transport meant that registration brigades had trouble getting as far into the countryside as was required to cover the entire province. Despite protests from one community and an election law that stated no voting station should be more than 10 km away, some polling stations were up

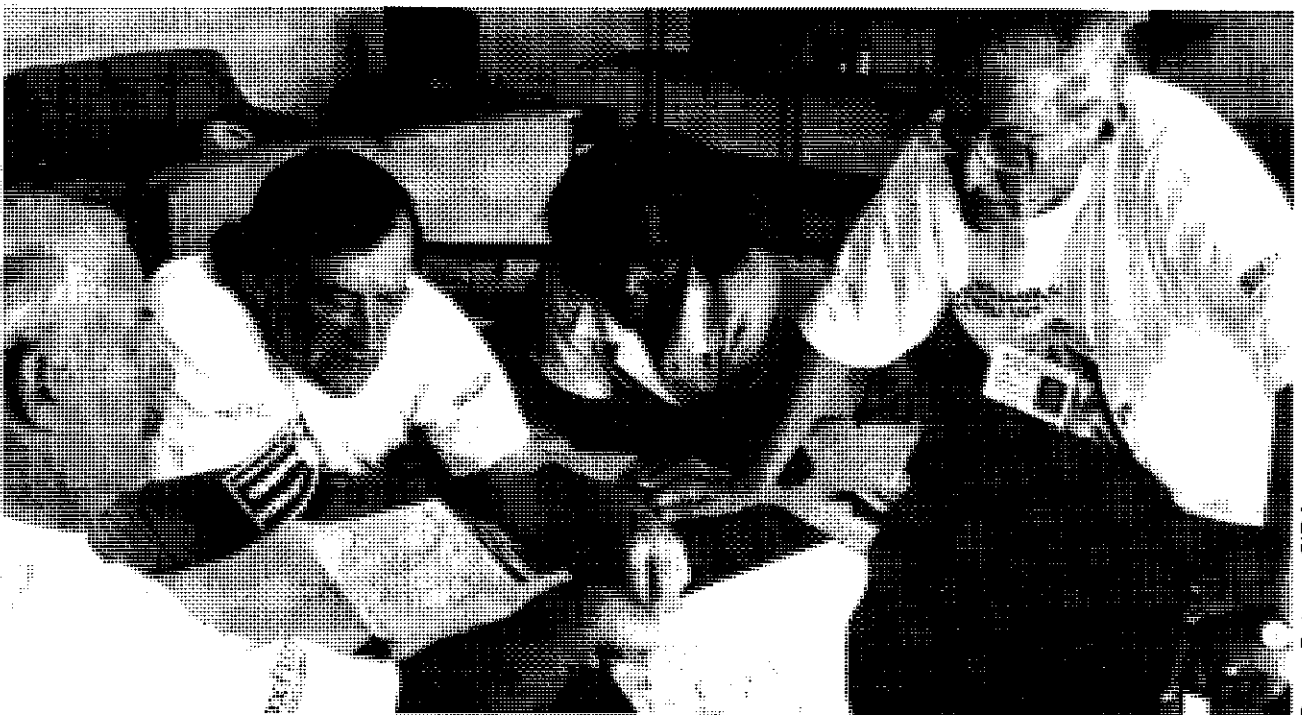
to 40 km away from voters, making it impossible for them to vote.

Added together these numbers become quite substantial and tend to qualify the notion of 'free and fair' elections.

Future prospects

Nevertheless, if the elections were a harbinger of peaceful change for the better, there would be some compensation. Unfortunately, how much the lives of most Mozambicans will change for the better is open to question.

Among a defenceless people, women and children are especially susceptible to exploitation. The single positive aspect of these elections for Mozambican women is that they had the vote on an equal footing with men. And although that 'equality' is derived from the Constitution and flies in the face of traditional culture, women's right to vote does not appear to have been contested. But according to the Organization of Mozambican Women (OMM) in



Members of the Oxfam-Canada electoral mission

Bruce Paton - CIDA



Mozambican refugees returning from Malawi, January 1993

Chimoio, Manica's capital, many women were under pressure in the home to vote as they were told by their husbands.

Maria Magdalene Charomar, provincial head of the OMM in Manica, said that her organization advised women to "avoid getting into the kind of fight that will land you in the hospital" and to try to get information through the media or talking to other people. But, they also emphasized to women that the vote is secret and no one would know whom they voted for.

That kind of pragmatic advice or support for women in difficult situations was limited. It certainly wasn't available from the political parties who had little to say on any issues, and nothing to say to women specifically.

In fact, public comment by those running for election drew a very clear picture of women's vulnerability within the traditional family. In a public speech, Afonso Dlakhama, president of Renamo, criticized Frelimo-inspired communal villages because they don't allow men the privacy to beat their wives without traumatizing the children.

The liberalization of the economy is opening up exploitation of women and children through the sex trade. UN troops were involved in a particularly nasty and brutish scandal in Manica involving child prostitution and porn videos; one of the most revolting details involved sex with a child as the prize in a bingo game. When the head of Redd Barna, the Finnish Save the Children, exposed what was happening to the international community, his child was kidnapped and threatened. Just how degrading and disgraceful the details were can be inferred from the fact that an entire battalion of Italian soldiers were sent back home. But although that particular set of culprits was removed from the scene, no one supposes that the problem has been eliminated.

Survival, even prosperity, for women is most likely to come through farming, and land use is of vital importance in Mozambique. People can't own land and under new regulations, they can gain exclusive use of it only through a registration process. Most people, especially women, don't have the resources to do that. Consequently,

land use is being given away to those who can claim it formally, irrespective of who has been using it or who needs it most to survive. In many cases, that means foreign interests who are now involved in mining, forestry and large-scale farming.

At the same time, the environmental, political and economic controls that we take for granted in our own countries, inadequate as they are, are non-existent in Mozambique. In fact, the ease with which foreign interests can establish themselves in Mozambique is one of the best reasons for feeling optimistic about the end to war. Those who once backed Renamo have much more to gain through peace.

Without a strong state or public officials who will defend the interests of the country as a whole, Mozambicans must find ways to protect their stake in the country. As in other countries in the region, the network of NGOs, advocacy groups and community organizations that is evolving in Mozambique is the country's strongest hope for building on this first tentative step towards true democracy.

Nampula Diary

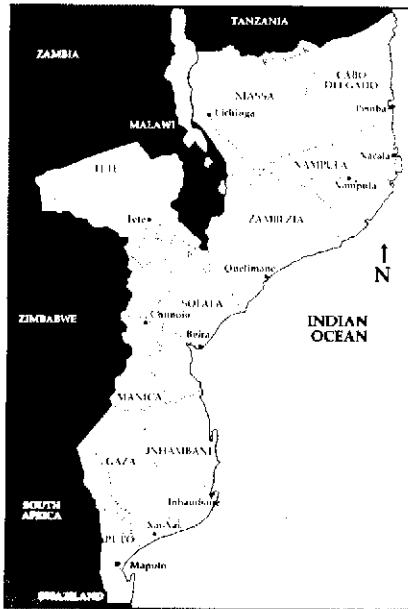
BY STEPHEN ALLEN

Stephen Allen represented OXFAM-Canada on the COCAMO Election Observer Mission to Nampula province. This mission was financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). He spent three weeks in Nampula province.

Many images stand out in my mind a month after the elections in Mozambique. One of the strongest was on returning to Nampula City one evening following a visit to the district of Murrupula. The sky was ablaze; as we drew nearer, we realized that the fields were burning. It was a scene that we witnessed on many other occasions. There may well have been an election campaign in full swing, but farmers were preoccupied with slashing and burning their land which they would shortly begin planting. Two short years ago, this area outside of Nampula City would likely have been inaccessible to farmers because of the war. Now, people were able to return home and reclaim the land they had had to flee.

Nampula province will carry political clout in the new political configuration emerging in post-war Mozambique. It is a rich agricultural province, ranking with Zambezia in its potential to feed a country that war and drought has made dependent on international food aid. Its large population gives it even more influence. Nampula province will send fifty-three representatives to the National Assembly.

The dynamics of the conflict that ravaged the country for over a decade were as complicated in Nampula as anywhere in the country. The French anthropologist, Christian Geffray, drew attention to these dynamics and generated a measure of debate in his book *La Cause des armes: La Guerre en Mozambique*. In a nutshell, Geffray ar-



gued that a social base for Renamo developed because Frelimo's rural policies alienated rural communities. The creation of communal villages and the disenfranchisement of traditional leaders were two policies in particular that fed growing disenchantment. Renamo, for its part, exploited Frelimo mistakes. By the time the Peace Accord was signed in October 1992, Renamo had firmly established a presence in many rural areas of the province.

Registration

As we talked to people and asked questions, we were told that the groundwork for the election began with a registration campaign that signed up an estimated 80% of eligible voters across the country. The last census was done in 1980 and, given the upheaval since then, no one was able to make accurate estimates of the population in 1994. Thousands of people were excluded from the registration process because they were living outside the country and no doubt thousands more were missed because

of the large numbers of displaced people who are slowly returning home. Still, this is the closest the country has come to a census carried out under very difficult circumstances.

Able to see the election process at the local district level, I was impressed by the work of the all-party electoral commissions. Our own observations suggested that these structures worked effectively, an impression that was confirmed by UNUMOS observers who had been working in the districts since early May. Problem-solving on a consensual basis is no easy task and this experience may serve as a model in peacefully resolving political conflicts in the future.

The Campaign

Perhaps it was no coincidence that Frelimo kicked off its election campaign in Nampula province with rallies in Angoche, Ilha da Moçambique, Murrupula and Nampula City.

This was an election carried out in a post-war context. In some ways the campaign may well have begun several years ago. I recall a report in *Tempo* magazine (published weekly in Maputo) in 1991, on President Chissano's visit to Nampula. That week's cover carried a photograph of Chissano in traditional Islamic clothing. If memory serves me right, during this visit President Chissano frankly admitted mistakes Frelimo had made in its rural programme. This attempt to identify one's Party with specific ethnic communities, and to express some regret for past mistakes, was echoed throughout the election.

We heard little serious debate during the campaign. While some of the candidates made rather inflammatory remarks, all of the parties generally promised a better

mozambique

future. The statement by Afonso Dlakhama, Renamo's president, in the northern province of Niassa that he would expel all Shangan speakers (native to southern Mozambique) to KwaZulu/Natal was typical of the regional card that we saw Renamo too often resort to.

Of the dozen or so political parties taking part, only Frelimo and Renamo were visible in Nampula and it was a campaign that ebbed and flowed, picking up some steam on October 24, the final day of the campaign. The first rally we witnessed was organized by Renamo and it took place near the airport. Three to four thousand people congregated around several cultural activities. Like the rest of the rallies we observed that day, there were no speeches.

Later on, we followed a Frelimo rally as it wound its way through Nampula City. This one was much louder with 10,000 people making their way to the party offices.

T-shirts or capulanas (cloth all-purpose wraps worn by women) adorned with party emblems or the

faces of party leaders were a common sight, although we quickly came to realize that because someone was wearing a particular party's T-shirt, it did not necessarily mean they supported that party. During the Frelimo rally, we saw several people wearing Renamo T-shirts or capulanas heckled and intimidated by Frelimo partisans. On each occasion, those that were being heckled were led away either by the police or other Frelimo supporters. Frelimo supporters we talked with did not approve of intimidation. There were a few rock-throwing incidents but generally there was very little violence.

Women's Voices

Radio Mozambique reported that a women's march for peace had taken place in Maputo on the same day. It was organized by Graça Machel, a senior Frelimo member and widow of the country's first President. This non-partisan march was perhaps the only occasion during the entire campaign when the concerns of women were front and centre. Perhaps the march

served as a sign that civil society is slowly emerging from the ashes of the conflict.

Voter education

I saw impressive efforts being made in the civic education programme, involving the formal structures of the electoral commissions and Mozambican non-governmental organizations. This programme was aimed at teaching voters not only the mechanics of voting, but also the role it played in the democratic process.

I spent several days in a town some three hours west of Nampula City, called Ribaue, which has not had electrical power in years. One evening, the technical staff of the Provincial Electoral Commission organized a programme in which a video was shown. A small generator in their truck powered a VCR and a large screen carried the image. Under a full moon and bright stars, over 3,000 people gathered at the soccer stadium to watch what turned out to be an entertaining and educational video which dealt with national reconciliation, the multi-party system and the actual voting process. An electoral official, microphone in hand, translated much of the dialogue into Macua which is widely spoken in the province.

The novelty of a video show drew many people that evening but those I spoke with said that they had come to learn as well. If there was a weakness in the event, it was the lack of any discussion after the video ended.

The civic education I saw carried out by Mozambican non-governmental organizations was less formal, but just as impressive. The Association of Rural Women invited us to a session they were doing in Bairro Natikiri on the outskirts of Nampula City for members of the Union of General Coops (Paulo Samuel Kancoba Coop). This was a low-tech affair; the props were limited to a bench borrowed from a co-op member's house. There were



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fewer women than I expected, but nonetheless the community theatre approach was appreciated by all who were there. Apart from focusing on the voting procedures, there was an added ingredient missing from the more formal programmes I saw. The play was effective in addressing women's issues, sadly absent in the policies of the political parties. Still, it is important to note that some of the literature of the National Electoral Commission was geared specifically to women.

Towards the end of the election campaign, the Provincial Electoral Commission in Nampula organized a series of events one Sunday morning. The one event that stands out was a play about the signing of the Peace Accord in Rome - reinforcing a recurrent theme of national reconciliation.

We saw the end result of all this work on voting day, and from our observations, it was clear that many voters had been missed in the civic education programme which could have used more time for the work that had to be done. Members of our Observer Mission frequently met civic education officials who travelled to remote villages by bicycle or on foot. Salaries weren't always paid on time and some of the educators, known as brigadistas, may have gone without food on occasion. Any shortcomings or mistakes need to be understood in the context of what is, after all, Mozambique's first effort. This effort is something of a victory and, as our report so eloquently puts it, a cause for celebration.

Frelimo/Renamo tensions

I could never quite get a full picture of Renamo-controlled zones in the province and the impact this had on the campaign. An area along the Lurio River in the northeastern corner of the province was apparently controlled by Renamo and inaccessible to other parties. But one of my colleagues asked a Frelimo member what it would take for Frelimo

to campaign in this area and he was told that Frelimo would need permission from the government. Apparently, the government wanted to avoid any provocative acts. Presumably there would need to be negotiations between the government and Renamo before this issue could be resolved.

An area in the District of Murupula was Renamo-controlled and inaccessible to other parties until late August. A UNUMOZ observer facilitated a meeting of five political parties and the problem was solved. While such problem-solving is certainly welcomed, it is ironic that such parallel administrative structures violated the Peace Accord and the country's Constitution.

Voting

One of the many logistical challenges facing the Electoral Commission was the distribution of election materials to all of the voting sites on time. There were ninety-two tons of materials distributed in Nampula province and many electoral officials worked all night long. There was a great deal of assistance from UNUMOZ and with few exceptions, voting was ready to start on October 27.

Voting day began on a rather ominous note with the surprise news from Dlakhama that Renamo was withdrawing from the election. That morning I was in Rapale, the capital of Nampula District and, as far as I could see, the announcement had no impact on the voting. None of the Renamo party scrutineers left the voting stations, although apparently that wasn't the case in Nampula City.

Each voting station was limited to 1,000 voters and people had begun arriving at 4:00 a.m. Generally women and the elderly had the greatest difficulty in voting; marking their 'X' or fingerprint, as well as folding the two ballots, proved a challenge. With very few exceptions, electoral officials treated voters with respect and were very pa-

tient. Instructions were typically given in Macua. In voting stations like Rapale, a third day was needed, given that the polls opened at 7:00 a.m. and closed at 6:00 p.m., by which time the polling stations were shrouded in darkness. We estimated that it took almost three minutes for most people to cast their ballot and deposit it in the ballot box.

The situation in the urban areas was quite different. We briefly observed voting at Bairro Liberdade in Nampula City. Here, the pace was quite brisk and the voting was done by noon on October 28.

The voting stations we visited in the urban areas had greater representation of women at the voting tables. In the rural areas, we estimated that less than 5% of the officials were women.

Results

Following the election, it felt as if the country was holding its breath waiting for the results and their aftermath. Many Mozambican colleagues we talked with were worried that there would be increased tensions after the elections. Those that could had begun stocking food supplies.

But it appears that those worries were groundless. Unofficial results as of November 21 gave President Chissano 53.3% of the vote to Mr. Dlakhama's 33.7%. Frelimo will send 129 representatives to the National Assembly to Renamo's 112. Renamo gained the most seats in Manica, Sofala, Zambezia and Nampula provinces which should help to spread its political influence beyond southern Mozambique.

A new balance of power has emerged and it isn't entirely clear how this will be played out through the appointment of Provincial Governors and the like. Even though there is peace, Mozambique still must cope with large numbers of unemployed former soldiers, most of whom are still armed. One suspects that the power brokering will continue.



Cooperative Alpha, Mozambique

A piece of the war, July 1988

depicted a ravaged peasantry unable to resist Renamo's call for a 'retreat to tradition.' However, in the case of Angonia, the re-negotiation of the social fabric serves as only one of several elements contributing to the emerging political landscape that has seen Renamo move from a military power to political party. One of the other important factors is the unique political geography of the war and how Renamo's guerrilla tactics were particularly effective in exploiting Frelimo's military weaknesses.

Power, space and hegemony

The 1988 Gersony report, entitled

"Summary of Mozambican Refugee Accounts of Principally Conflict-Related Experience in Mozambique," provided detailed graphic evidence of Renamo's handiwork. However, it also suggested that there was a unique political geography evolving in Mozambique that had Frelimo and Renamo solidifying their control on a regional basis. It also gave internal spatial definition to the different levels of domination and control in zones of Renamo activity, namely: i) tax areas, ii) control areas, and iii) destruction areas.

Tax areas comprised of isolated

under-populated rural zones made up of small villages or manors that could not be protected by Frelimo troops. Because there was no viable means of resistance, the local population was forced to pay a 'tax' in the form of food, livestock, labour and, oftentimes, sex. Depending on the proximity of the manor, Renamo would extract their tax whenever they passed near on foot-patrol. Levels of violence were relatively low, although refusal was not an option. Importantly, the affected populations were not marginalized to the point where they fled to safe zones; rather they remained within

their traditional areas and continued to struggle to survive.

The control areas were comprised of captive populations (porters, women, Frelimo soldiers, ex-patriots). These areas can be further broken down into three sub-groups: i) combat bases, ii) field areas and iii) dependent areas. In these zones, violence and suffering were much greater because of the proximity of the front lines. Control areas were an active part of the military complex: the combat bases where the soldiers actually lived, the field areas where forced agricultural production took place, and the dependent areas, which held the elderly, who toiled, doing menial work and the children who represented the future indoctrinées.

The last, and most deadly category, were the destruction zones. Prime targets in these zones were small towns or district capitals, communal villages established by the government and road and rail links. Attacks in these targets normally resulted in great loss of life and property.

Research in Angonia shows that these zones of control and domination were constantly in transition and under threat by either Renamo or Frelimo, and there is clear evidence that both sides were responsible for attacking the local populations and the creation of displacees. Initially, the exposure to the ideology of Frelimo was central in this politicized landscape. However, this was challenged early in the course of the war via radio broadcasts made by Renamo from its bases in Zimbabwe.

Political rhetoric aside, when Renamo launched its campaign in Tete, it did not leave much room for grassroots debate. The resultant destruction is well catalogued. However, the question remains: 'Why would the local population elect the very band that is seen to be responsible for its suffering?' It has been suggested that Renamo's political platform is

loosely based on a combination of traditionalism, intimidation and a 'war of the spirits' against the social engineering of the ruling party. Oral testimonies collected in Angonia and the neighbouring refugee camps in Malawi, suggests that although their ideology was vague and sometimes fraught with compulsion, it indeed did win resonance with the peasantry.

The democracy dividend

Seeing the election process 'in action' in Malawi during the referendum debate on multi-partyism in 1993 and the subsequent elections held in May of this year, had an educating and empowering effect on the people of Angonia. Historically, there are strong cultural, kinship and trading links between the ethnic majority Ngoni of Mozambique and the Chewa in neighbouring Malawi. This is evidenced in the extraordinary gesture of the Malawian people who provided land for the refugees to settle while they themselves faced serious land shortages necessary for food production. Because the refugee settlements were highly integrated into the Malawian village setting, the dissemination of information on democratic initiatives in Malawi shaped much of the political discourse and understanding of the democratic process in Angonia.

Unlike the situation in South Africa, and to a lesser extent in Malawi, people in Angonia wanted present conditions, that allowed people to return home and begin the difficult process of reconstruction and reconciliation, to continue. The fact that Renamo controlled the majority of rural Angonia, and did not let Frelimo campaign in much of their held territory, clearly limited public resistance, but this in itself does not explain their support. What emerges is a calculating and active peasantry that partly rebuffed Frelimo on the grounds of its social and economic experiment. One of the

most commonly held memories was recounted by a manorial headman in the Chide area just west of Domwe:

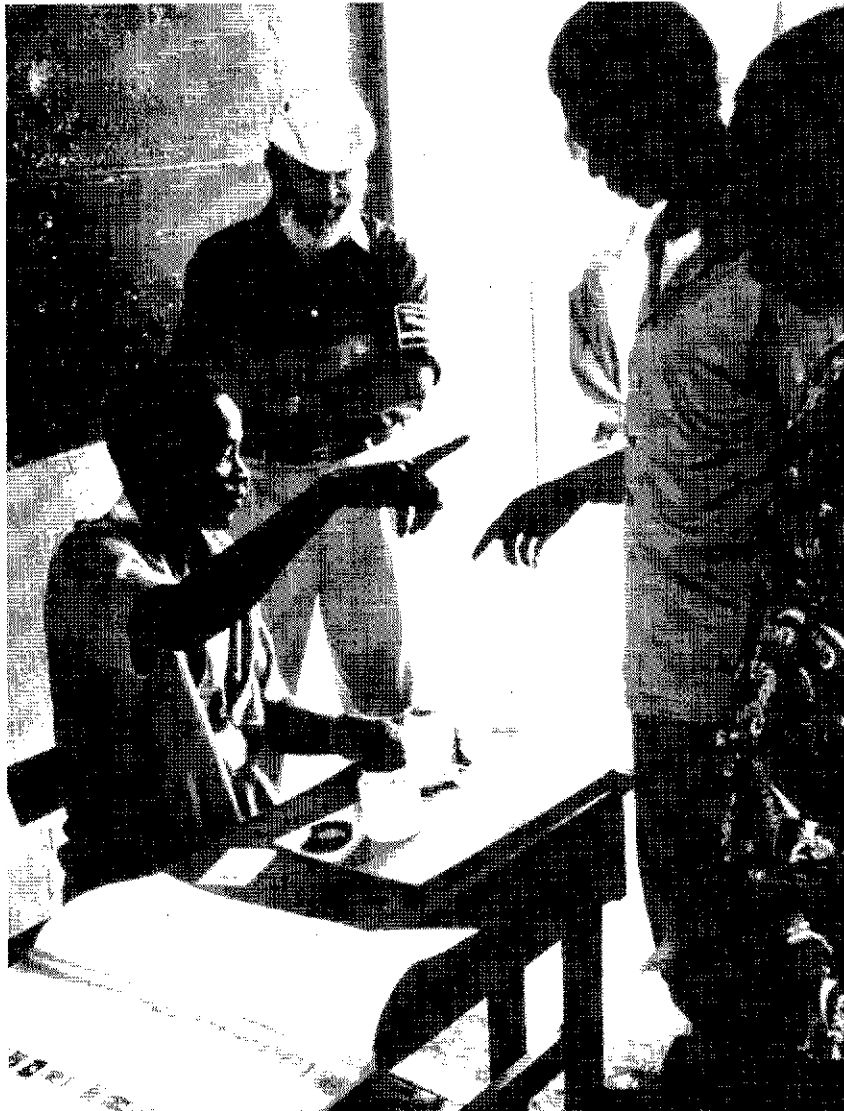
People were indeed happy that they were out of the bondage of the Portuguese; such things as live skinning and the whipping with Chamboko (thorned whip) stopped. However, by 1978 onwards, people saw that things became different and difficult, they could not even own a shop apart from the government. The government would not allow me to start a shop on my own without having to join hands with other persons (ten or more) even if these people had no money. This ruined most businesses. People at that stage thought Frelimo should be kicked out. During the time of Frelimo the economy was deteriorating; no matter how much you sold the money you got could not buy anything.

The introduction of collective and communal farms also produced substantial resistance. A local farmer echoed a familiar perspective on the changes brought by these policies to the rural economy:

At first people liked these farms, they thought that they will make a lot of money with that type of system but with time they realized that they were being cheated, and they started to oppose the system. Then the government became weak so nobody was forced to go because the Renamo war started. This was after three years in 1978. People were unhappy even before Renamo came.

A third major area of discontent was the replacement of chiefly authority with local chairmen appointed by Frelimo:

When Frelimo came they appointed chairmen and these were more powerful than the chief. The people were not happy because this is not good according to their tradition. The Frelimo could appoint anyone to become chairman. His role was to be the informer for the government. The people didn't like him but they



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respected him because of fear of the government.

Lastly, the inability of Frelimo to militarily win control over Angonia must be seen as one of the most significant contributors to the support eventually won by the rebels. The sheer rugged vastness of Angonia made it a difficult place to hold and protect for Frelimo. As Renamo was able to strengthen its grip in the outlying areas, Frelimo became more ruthless in attacking those people who remained in Renamo-held territory as supporters of the insurgents. However, as one

local who endured in Renamo-held territory throughout the war noted:

They all put on the same uniform. Both sides were doing the same thing (killing people) because they would say the people are supporting either Frelimo or Renamo. You could run into the bush to build a house but either Renamo or Frelimo would attack you there.

So regardless of the ideological terrain the peasantry might hope to claim, it was their spatial location that seemed to determine their fate. Even in exile the political

geography remained quite stark, as certain areas were settled by residents from Frelimo-held areas, while others were from pro-Renamo villages (although actual violent conflict was rare). Given Frelimo's poor military history, the fear that Renamo would not respect the outcome and would return to the bush to re-ignite the war loomed continuously on the horizon. But there were also the concerns, linked to the ability to simply return 'home' and re-gain control over everyday life after a decade of displacement, that influenced voter consciousness. Finally, when the UNHCR terminated its relief operation to all but approximately 5,000 so-called 'vulnerables' in Dedza District of Malawi at the end of 1993, the refugees who had repatriated to Angonia realized that the best way to secure their future would be through a lasting peace in the region.

As has been offered elsewhere, Frelimo's initiatives were subverted via external aggression. However, Frelimo itself must be criticized for many of its policies and responses to opposition. In Angonia, its inability to protect the people, and then its decision to force them to move to Malawi in an attempt to weaken Renamo's grip, backfired and only further alienated the peasantry. Renamo was quick to exploit this scheme, and together with Frelimo's earlier vision of rural transformation, was perceived as a bona-fide alternative. Equally, this is not to dismiss the atrocities committed by Renamo in the name of its distinctive version of 'democracy', but it does provide a framework for some general understanding of the recent electoral results. Set in this context we can see that the peasantry were victims of domination from both sides; their actions cannot be measured in purely ideological terms (neo-traditional versus progressive), but must also be understood within the spatial hegemony and will to survive that dominated life in Angonia.

Elections in Malawi: The Perils of Regionalism

BY WISEMAN CHIJERE
CHIRWA

Wiseman Chirwa who teaches at Chancellor College, University of Malawi, is SAR's Malawi correspondent.

It is a fact that in the May 17 presidential and parliamentary general elections, Malawians voted for presidential candidates from their own regions ... Whether the president [Bakili Muluzi] likes it or not, the people of this country have divided themselves through the elections ...

The Daily Times, Friday July 8, 1994

After 30 years of a one-party autocratic rule under Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, Malawi had its first ever presidential and parliamentary general election on 17th May this year, thus marking the re-introduction of a multi-party "democracy." The process of political change had begun in 1992. Then, under pressure from international donors, civil rights movement and institutions of civil society in the country, Dr. Banda called for a referendum in which Malawians would decide whether to continue with a one-party state or adopt a multi-party system of government. The results of the referendum suggested that it was an alliance of the democratic forces in the northern and southern regions of the country that led the multi-party advocates to victory. Of the 444,196 who voted in the referendum in the northern region, 392,569, or about 88.4 per cent, voted for the re-introduction of a multi-party system. In the most populous southern region, the figure was 1,201,195 out of 1,438,371, or about 83.5 per cent, in favour of a multi-party system. In sharp contrast, in the central region the vote was 832,413 out of 1,270,881, or 65.5

per cent, in favour of the continuation of the autocratic one-party system.

Regional differences in voting patterns were again reflected in the presidential and parliamentary general elections this year. Seven parties contested the 177 seats in parliament. Of these, three major ones – the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), and the United Democratic Front (UDF) – contested the presidency and they were also the only ones to win parliamentary seats. (Prior to the elections, four or five of the smaller parties had aligned themselves with the UDF in what was called a Common Electoral Group, but that did not help them win any seat in parliament.)

According to the *Malawi Daily Times*, the country's oldest newspaper and its leading one, the results of the election "seem to reflect that people voted for candidates not because of the policies their parties stand for, but rather the region a party leader comes from" [*Daily Times*, 19/5/94; 20/5/94; 8/7/94]. This is evidenced by the way voters overwhelmingly favoured presidential candidates from their region. Tom Chakufwa Chihana, a Tumbuka from the north, and presidential candidate for AFORD, scooped up over 85 per cent of the votes from his region, as against his 8 per cent from the centre and 7 per cent from the south. Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the incumbent president, a Chewa from the central region and candidate for the MCP, got nearly 70 per cent of the votes from his region as against 16 per cent from the south, and 9 per cent from the north. And Elson Bakili Muluzi, a Yao from

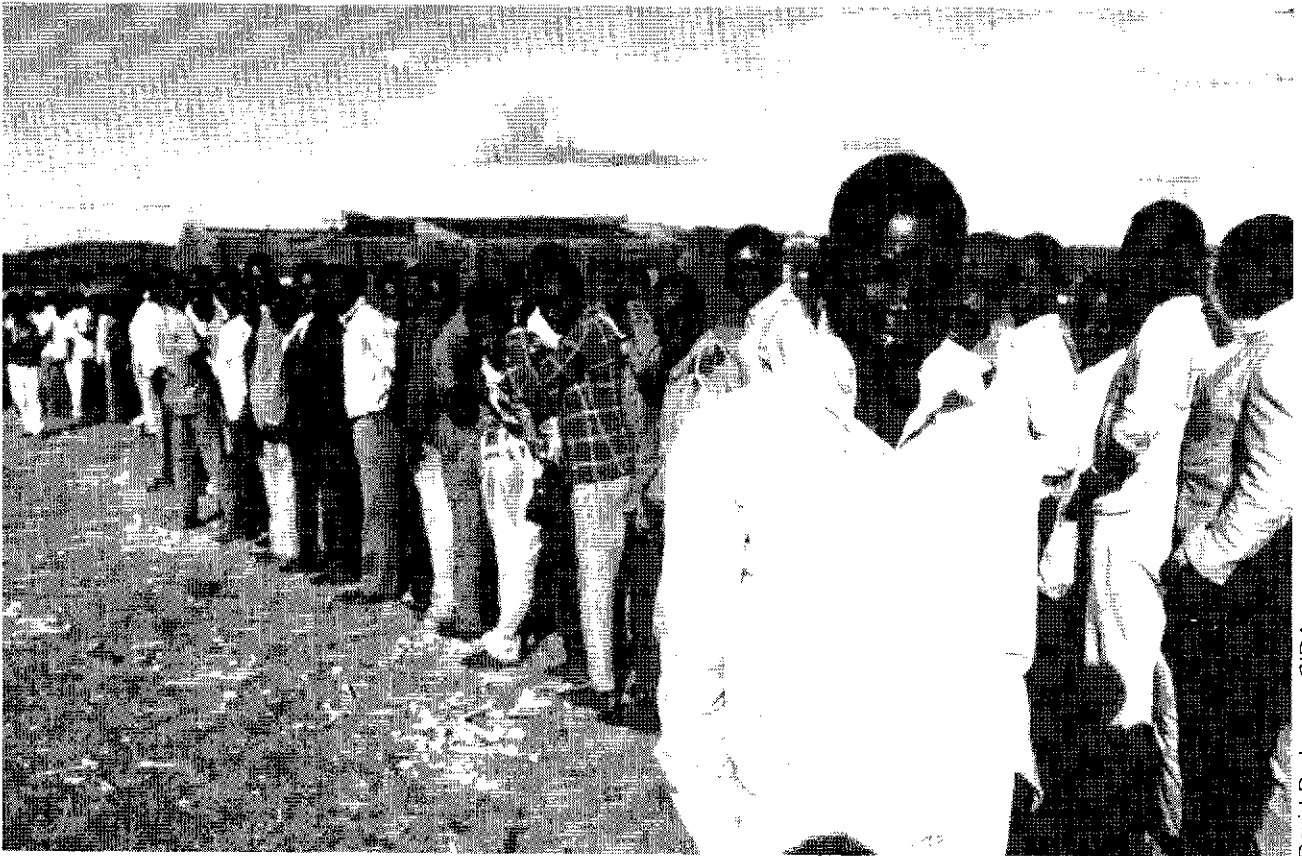
the south, candidate for the UDF, got 75 per cent of the votes from the most populous southern region, as against 23 per cent in the centre and 7 per cent in the north. Some 4,753,152 people out of the country's 1987 population of 9,574,661, or 50 per cent, are from the southern region; 3,728,686, about 39 per cent, from the centre; and 1,092,823, about 11 per cent, from the north. "This state of affairs," argued the *Daily Times*, "enabled Mr Muluzi to win the elections since most of those who voted for him come from the south."

The results of the parliamentary elections followed the same pattern. Chihana's AFORD swept all the 33 seats in the 5 districts of the north, plus 3 out of 66 in the 9 districts of the centre; and none out of 78 in the 10 districts of the south. The MCP got no seat in the north, 51 in the centre, and only 5 in the south. The UDF won no seat in the north, 12 in the centre, but 73 in the south. This means that AFORD has 36 seats in parliament, the MCP 56 and the UDF 85. Such "regional fragmentation" of the country, according to the *Malawi Democrat*, is a "national problem, our problem."

The roots of division

Two questions need to be answered here. First, what are the implications of these results for the country's political process? Second, why is it that regional and ethnolinguistic differences came out so clearly in these results?

"Regional fragmentation" has immediate constitutional and parliamentary implications. For example, the UDF, which won the presidential elections, is now a minor



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ity government with the two opposition parties in a majority position within the house. However, since the new constitution requires a two-third majority vote for any of its sections to be amended even these two parties acting together could not bring about any meaningful constitutional changes. Nor can the ruling party acting alone do so. In short, amendments would require a joint two-third majority vote drawn from both sides of the house and that will not be easy.

Of more immediate importance is the fact that the ruling party, in a minority position, will find it difficult to have its bills and programmes approved and passed by the house. The opposition has the capacity to vote as a block against bills introduced by the ruling party. If it should happen, it would frustrate the president and his party's members of parliament

while also producing the potential danger of political stalemate in the proceedings of parliament, if not in the political process as a whole. This will lead to a weak government that will not be in a position to effectively deliver to the fullest expectations of the Malawian people (and will probably also lose power in the next general elections). One only hopes that the opposition will have the country's interests at heart and avoid being naively obstructive by merely voting along partisan lines at all times.

Of course, on the plus side, the current distribution of seats in parliament does provide the opposition with the means to check the ruling party and the president and reduce the potential for abuse of power. Under such circumstances it will be rather difficult for the UDF and Bakili Muluzi to manipulate the constitution in the way Dr. Banda

and his ruling Malawi Congress Party did over the thirty years of one-party rule. It also puts AFORD, the second opposition party, in a very strategic position when it comes to power brokering. It can align itself with either the UDF in government, or the MCP in opposition whenever it feels the necessity of doing so. Both the UDF and the MCP need AFORD to boost their strength in parliament and to create a good popular "national" image outside the house. Given that no party in the country can, as of now, claim to be a national party in the strict sense of the word, there are a lot of possibilities for shifting alliances and instances of power brokering. AFORD holds the trump card in this. (The current alliance between the smaller parties and the ruling UDF does not give the latter any additional strength, a situation that would change only if

the smaller parties were eventually to win seats in parliament).

However, mere power-brokering will not solve the ethno-linguistic and regionalist tendencies that define the power bases of the country's major political parties. Such tendencies spring from factors that go beyond political campaigns for presidential or parliamentary office. Five related factors play a key role here.

The poverty of ideology

First, multi-party politics in Malawi, as in Africa in general, suffer from the poverty of ideology. This is a crucial circumstance which permits the highlighting of ethno-linguistic and regional divisions. Where and when there is a clearly articulated ideological contestation, such divisions are overshadowed by ideological struggles. The poverty of ideology is closely linked to the weakness of class identification/consciousness, something which further contributes to the tendency towards parochialism and "primordialism." This poverty of ideology is clearly reflected in the manifestos of the major parties. Conspicuously absent in these are clauses defining the fundamental principles and politico-economic beliefs of the parties.

Second, Malawi is ethnically very diverse. There are more than 25 ethno-linguistic groups in the northern region alone; not less than 5 in the central region; and not less than 7 in the southern region. There is no dominant ethno-linguistic or tribal group, though the Banda regime claimed that the Chewa of the central region, where Dr. Banda comes from, were the country's majority tribe (This claim has no demographic or ethnographic validity.) Because of the country's ethnic diversity, it is difficult to base political mobilization on tribal identity, very narrowly defined. There is instead the need to construct a wider unit (for non-class based) political discourse and mobilization. It is for this reason that the region, a geographical



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and administrative unit that puts together several districts and ethno-linguistic groups, has become an important unit for competition for political and economic resources. This is where ethno-linguistic and regional identities find their meeting point to the point where it is not now easy to separate the one from the other.

Third, a lot of people in the southern region are second or third generation Malawians. Their ancestors migrated into the country during the colonial period, fleeing vicious Portuguese rule in Mozambique, or coming to work as wage labourers and tenants on the settler plantations of the Shire Highlands in the southern region. These immigrant ethno-linguistic communities now constitute more than half of the southern region's population and probably a quarter or more of the country's overall population. They suffered from a crisis of identity during the colonial period and over the

last thirty years of one-party rule when their historical and cultural traditions were deliberately and politically subjugated, by the state, to those of the indigenous groups. With the opening up of the political system, they have begun to assert their "Malawian identity" and to flex their numerical power. Choosing political leaders from their own ethno-linguistic groups is an important way of ensuring for themselves future political dominance in the country's most populous and most urbanized region.

Fourth, over the last thirty years the Banda regime pursued a policy of systematic ethnic discrimination, especially against Malawians of northern origin and, to some extent, against those from selected immigrant ethno-linguistic groups in the southern region. For example, the majority of political detainees were from the north and the south. Politicians and top civil servants from the two regions were fre-

quently dismissed and publicly humiliated often for very trivial reasons. Between the 1970s and early 1990s, the civil service, the university, and important government departments and state-aided parastatal organizations were purged of northerners. And, in 1989, a quota system was introduced in university selection to restrict numbers of northerners attaining higher educational qualifications.¹ As a result of these policies, many northerners and southerners were resentful of the Banda regime, and, as noted, tended to take the lead (through AFORD and the UDF) in openly challenging it.

The material bases of division

Lastly, the economic imbalances between the regions played an important role in determining the material bases of politicians and their supporters. The north, sparsely populated, is the least developed. Education and wage labour within and outside the country are the major avenues to material accumulation and socio-economic advancement. Higher educational attainment and exposure to the outside world through migrant labour to South Africa and Southern and Northern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia) enabled northerners to take the lead in politics during the

¹ Prior to 1989, the northern region, with just about 11 per cent of the country's population, accounted for half of university entrants – thanks to the higher quality of schools established in the region by Scottish Presbyterian missionaries during the colonial period. With the quota system each district was guaranteed 10 places in the university, and should there be any spaces remaining, they were occupied according to population distribution. Given that the north has 5 sparsely populated districts, against 9 in the centre and 10 in the south, it meant a major reduction in the numbers of northerners making it through to university.

colonial period. They were also quick to take advantage of their education to move into good positions in the civil service. The centre, fairly populated but relatively behind in terms of literacy rates and educational attainment, is the country's "bread basket." It produces the largest portion of the country's tobacco, the major export crop and foreign exchange earner. The majority of people from the centre are therefore tied to the land and pseudo-traditional forms of rural accumulation play an important role in socio-economic advancement. The south was the centre of the colonial economy. Large numbers of people came to this region from other parts of the country as well as from Mozambique to work on settler plantations and other establishments in the colonial economy. Many of these immigrants permanently settled in the region. Today, the southern region is the most populous and most urbanized. It is here that a small, but noticeable, industrial working class has emerged.

How do these economic imbalances affect the country's major political parties? AFORD is dominated by northern intellectuals, the Presbyterian clergy, and the middle sectors of the civil service, and widely supported by university students and plantation wageworkers. The MCP draws much of its support from the central region farmers, from the middle peasantry and from traditional authorities afraid of losing control over the power derived from traditional institutions and from pseudo-traditional forms of rural accumulation. The UDF is dominated by the southern region business people – Malawi's national bourgeoisie – urban employers, and the lumpenproletariat. What this means is that the power bases of these parties are closely linked to ethno-linguistic and regional identities on the one hand, and to the economic characteristics of their leaders and inner core supporters on the other. In this way, ethnicity and

ethno-linguistic identities assume a class basis (albeit an all too hidden one) and are used rather manipulatively as social and political ideologies by those – most often the bourgeoisie and/or petit-bourgeoisie – who advocate them and seek thereby to advance their own interests.

Prospects

If this combination of factors continues to prevail, it will be very difficult for presidential candidates from poor and minority regions such as the north to win, no matter what merits they might have. More generally, one way forward would be to create class alliances that cut across ethno-linguistic and regional identities. As seen, this is limited both by the present "poverty of ideology" and by the economic and educational imbalances between the country's three regions. These latter lead, in turn, to various imbalances, to differences in class formation and identification and in political consciousness and motivation. Under such circumstances, the progressive alliance that might most plausibly be forged is that between the clergy and intellectuals on one hand and the urban lumpen proletariat, and industrial and plantation workers on the other, this alliance then campaigning on the platform of workers' rights and economic and social justice for the underclasses, including peasants. In a country where the rural and urban poor constitute more than 90 per cent of the population, the adoption of such a populist political platform would appeal to many and would be a good way of dealing with regional and ethno-linguistic divisions. This would also represent the first step toward the construction of a class-based ideological identity for the majority of Malawians. Without this, they will be left, by the present advocates of multi-partyism, with no vision of the kind of society that might be constructed in Malawi, and some danger that the country's divisions will become even sharper and more perilous.



Deseni Moodliar - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

King Goodwill Zwelethini & Mangosuthu Buthelezi celebrate Shaka Day, September 1988

Royal Watching in Buthelezi Country

BY GERHARD MARÉ

*Gerhard Maré, a sociologist teaching at the University of Natal, Durban, is author of *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood: Politics and Ethnicity in South Africa* and is co-author of *An Appetite For Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and the Politics of "Loyal Resistance"*.*

On Sunday evening, 25 September 1994, Minister of Home Affairs in

the government of national unity, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, stormed into a TV studio in Durban. He and his bodyguards confronted, 'disarmed', and evicted Sfiso Zulu, junior prince in the Zulu royal house, in full, if indistinct, view of TV watchers. Buthelezi then occupied the chair recently vacated by Sfiso and, while breathing heavily, was wired for sound to launch an

attack on the royal spokesman (there are no spokeswomen in this 'traditional' tumult). It was good television. It was good politics to have Buthelezi expose the side that was so frequently hidden from South African viewers and readers by the many sycophants in the media.

However, as so often in the past and despite the usual predictions, it

is not the end of Buthelezi's political career. He apologised to 'the nation' after a cabinet meeting, and immediately attacked the SA Broadcasting Corporation; his followers have demanded that Sifiso be charged for his 'assassination' attempt on Buthelezi (he has since been charged with the illegal possession of a firearm) and, as before, his efficient use of documents, carefully kept and released, has shown opponents to be over-hasty and inaccurate in their statements.

The studio invasion was just one event, the most public by far, in a sideshow to South Africa's political history of the last few decades. That the struggles in and around the Zulu royal house should be a minor attraction does not mean that it has not been, and is not being, fought with a great deal of sound and fury, intrigue, farce, and also tragedy. In addition it has wide implications for the type of society being constructed in the main arena.

Historians (such as Marks, Cope, Hamilton, Wright and Guy) have given us glimpses into the machinations of the politics of the Zulu monarchy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. More recently, during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the struggles intensified with the prize being a restored king - either as 'constitutional monarch', as Buthelezi and his supporters wished, or as 'executive king' with Swaziland serving as model. The latter option was desired at the time by the National Party government and elements within the royal house.

The politics of tradition

It is now history that the Buthelezi version won out, after many skirmishes during the 1970s. The king and his 'traditional prime minister' (Buthelezi himself) became political siamese twins in the rhetoric of traditionalism in the Natal/KwaZulu region during the 1980s and until the elections in April this year. They fed

each other the legitimacy that was essential to both for surviving into the 'new' South Africa.

However, 'tradition' cannot tolerate the 'new' or change. In its politically frozen variant it is presented as confirmed by the 'truth' of 'the past' and historical events. That has been the terrain on which Buthelezi and Inkatha have operated with confidence for more than 20 years (as had the National Party with its apartheid policy of ethnic separation). For the first 17 years or so there was no opposition to this aspect of regional political mobilization and when the ANC entered the arena it did so with a similar commitment to a 'true' tradition, the mirror image to what Buthelezi had to offer.

Mzala, ANC activist and intellectual in exile, a Zulu-speaker, wrote an indictment of Buthelezi in 1987 that infuriated the then-chief minister so much that the book was distributed only clandestinely in South Africa, under threat of legal action. Where Buthelezi said that he was 'traditional prime minister', Mzala said that he was not (and that someone else should occupy this role). Where Buthelezi said that he was a 'prince', Mzala argued that he could not claim this title (and then indicated who were the princes). Where Buthelezi interpreted Zulu history, Mzala cast doubt that the Buthelezis were even Zulus, and so on. In this way 'tradition' was once more sanctified, except that the new, the ANC-approved version, was the 'correct' one.

The politics of tradition, so effectively blended with modernizing class advancement by Buthelezi, has been analyzed and suitably condemned by several commentators and politicians during the years since 1970 when the KwaZulu bantustan had its origins. It comes as somewhat of a surprise, though, to find the ANC in a position

remarkably similar to that of the previous government some 26 years ago. Ethnicity and 'tradition', not as displayed in the 'many cultures, one nation' concert after Mandela's inauguration, but as elements within the terrain of political competition, are being used by all.

More recent events in South Africa have illustrated one of the contradictions that the African National Congress' inadequate notion of 'tradition' and its 'broad church' approach to politics in the lead-up to the elections bequeathed to the new democracy. The most recent that brought it to the fore was an invitation issued (or not issued, depending on whom you believe in this sorry saga) to President Mandela to attend the annual Shaka Day celebrations at Stanger on the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) north coast on the 24th September.

Within the present context, as there had been during the 1970s, there are two distinct struggles, separable but not separate. The first occurs within the extensive Zulu royal house (Zulu kings have been polygamists), convoluted and filled with enough intrigue and rumour to satisfy the most ardent royalty watcher - but a struggle played out at such a distance from the lives of the millions of subjects in the province that commentators have to engage in the methods of 'China watchers', speculating on every presence or absence, word said or unexpectedly unsaid.

The second is much more public, for here it is the contest for political power in the region, a contest that the Inkatha Freedom Party won during the recent elections, albeit with a healthy dose of electoral fiddling (not that the other side did not engage in sharp practice itself, but less successfully). It is probably safe to say that Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) won the elections in KZN, though not with the recorded margin of victory, through effective control of the

means to deliver rural voters at the polling booths. The amakhosi or chiefs, another element within 'tradition', accepted by both the ANC and Inkatha, provided the means to this end. They have remained central to the present conflict.

However, before examining the unintended continuities in the manner in which 'tradition' serves in contemporary politics, let us first examine the most important recent events. As usual in South Africa, they have been moving with great speed and are still unfolding.

Inkatha's constitutional pitch

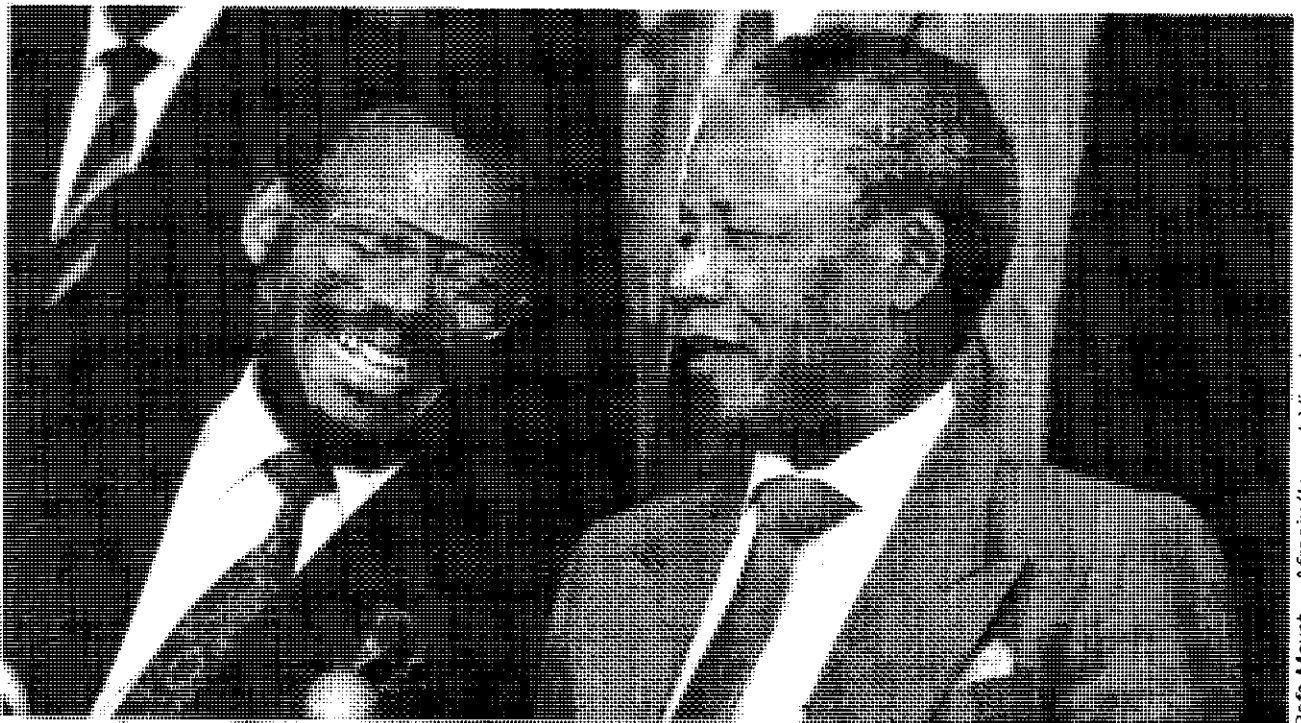
The politics of change became centred around national negotiations rather than the regional consolidation Buthelezi had, with a degree of success, waged during the 1970s and especially the 1980s. When this occurred, Buthelezi held out for certain concessions from the CODESA and Multi-Party negotiators. His party participated in the negotiating fora for much of the time but

as IFP president, Buthelezi, now in his role as principal adviser or 'traditional prime minister' to Zulu king Goodwill Zwelithini, refused to take part directly. Instead he preferred to issue threats, demands, and play the politics of brinkmanship to the extreme with tragic consequences for many ordinary people.

Buthelezi wanted three concessions. First, he demanded that the writing of the constitution should be a single process with the final document agreed upon before elections. This would strengthen his hand, untested as it was by elections, as one of the 'big three' in South African politics. Second, he tried to maximize the number of federal elements in the constitution, including a provision that each federal unit be allowed to write a constitution of its own. This would strengthen his ability to maintain and extend the region that he had ruled since 1970. Third, he insisted on acknowledgement of the package of 'traditional' goods that he claimed to rep-

resent. This package (under the consolidating symbolism of the king, and including chiefs, the old bantustan government as the 'government of the Zulu people', chiefs, Buthelezi himself as 'prime minister', and territory) would ensure undemocratic or even anti-democratic power and authority.

It is history that the IFP entered the elections mere days before 27 April. By then Buthelezi had managed to make considerable headway in each of these areas. He had some of his demands added to the set of 'principles' attached to the interim constitution under which the elections took place, principles that govern the present Government of National Unity and bind the constituent assembly that will draw up the new constitution. He had achieved, along with several other parties, a measure of regional autonomy and the creation of nine provinces that had not been part of the ANC's initial position envisaging a strongly centralised state. Finally, he had ensured



Buthelezi & Mandela at meeting in Durban, 29 January 1991

Rats Mayet - Afrapix/Impact Visuals

acceptance of the Zulu king and agreement on a 'mediation process' that would follow the elections and that would spell out the powers of the monarch and, hence, the package of 'tradition'. Through agreement that KZN would be a monarchy, Buthelezi, furthermore, claims that he won the 'principle of asymmetry', or the right of each province to determine its own constitution, rather than have a template imposed by the central authority. This last point, by the way, was also what he had achieved against the NP government when it tried to gain acceptance of their own bantustan constitution for the KwaZulu bantustan in 1972.

In his battle for these concessions King Goodwill played a central role as legitimator of the demands made by Buthelezi, as well as occasional direct actor, such as when he made speeches 'allowing' his 'subjects' to boycott the elections and, most dramatically, when he claimed at the beginning of 1994 the right to secede from South Africa if his kingdom was not acknowledged. It seemed that Goodwill and Buthelezi were inseparable, and that all the efforts by the ANC in the years leading up to the elections to gain the benefits that would accrue to the Congress, of a 'neutral' monarch, had failed forever. However, change presented the king and those around him with more options than before. It needed the power struggle in the royal house, against Buthelezi, and the reality that his new patron would probably be the central government, to focus his mind on these options.

Post-election patronage

The king is a major absorber of patronage (what he dispenses is largely legitimacy). King Goodwill is a very wealthy man, maintained in style through tax payer's money. He has no fewer than seven palaces, he has farms and an extensive farming operation, five wives, and is accompanied by hordes of lackeys (the author observed 13 vehicles accompanying

the king on an apartment-viewing trip in Durban). The ANC has taken this extravagance on board through its acceptance of 'tradition', and specifically of the Zulu kingdom. It is remarkable that within the furore around the 'grave train' the king's drain on funds has not featured once, except when Buthelezi reminded him publicly who had for all the years spent money on him.

When ANC member of parliament, and senior Zulu prince, Israel Mcwayizeni, started taking a prominent role in the post-election politics of the Zulu royal house it was clear that the battle was on. The ANC would again contest the special relationship that Buthelezi had enjoyed during the 1980s. Ironically, Mcwayizeni had also featured in the struggles of the 1960s and 1970s, but then on the other side, with the NP government and in favour of 'independence', opposing Buthelezi's rejection of apartheid independence and the limited role for the king in KwaZulu politics.

The 'invitation' to Mandela to attend Shaka Day celebrations was the last straw in the struggle for the favour of the royal house. Buthelezi took this, quite correctly, as a slight on his claim of prime ministership - if there had been an invitation it was to have gone through his office. The attempt by the royal house to cancel the Shaka Day celebrations failed, after Mandela diplomatically agreed to cancel his appearance to avoid fanning the flames of regional confrontation further. Buthelezi spoke at and gave the go-ahead to the celebrations.

Now the battle has, predictably, shifted to the other elements within the 'traditional' package - most immediately the chiefs. Without the chiefs the king is isolated. Ironically it is the central government that has announced that provincial and national houses of traditional leaders will be established soon, as the constitution requires, probably due to pressure from the Congress of Traditional Leaders of SA, a body

formed to support the ANC and oppose Buthelezi.

In October the KZN provincial parliament debated a Bill on Traditional Leaders and, as could be expected, it provided for the 'traditional prime minister' (obviously seen to be Buthelezi) to have a seat. This would, in effect, allow Buthelezi a political position from which to consolidate power if the position as minister of home affairs becomes too problematic - there is every indication that he will be blamed for several of the intractable problems that such a position faces, such as the position of 'aliens' in South Africa on which he takes a popular hard line.

The ANC members of the KZN parliament walked out, in part because the Bill undermined the powers of the king! The Bill was so speedily passed because a meeting of the overwhelming majority of chiefs in KZN supported the stance adopted by Buthelezi in the confrontation with the king. King Goodwill has since addressed a press conference criticising the Bill, but unless he can show that he has more than the support of presently-dominant elements in the royal house it appears that he will be isolated (and possibly even removed from office as not carrying the support of 'his people').

Once again it is Inkatha that is being accused of attempting to contain the powers of the king - the first time was in 1972, by the NP and by arch-traditionalists; this time it is by the ANC and a similar grouping of traditionalists. Once again the accused is Buthelezi and his supporters, whose powers had themselves in large part been built on traditionalism. The struggle continues in a space where democracy does not reach, where many women are not only sidelined but continue in the subservience of their 'traditional' roles, and where ethnicity continues to be the major factor of political mobilization.

The Killing Machine

BY ALEX VINES

Alex Vines, Research Associate at Human Rights Watch/Africa, is author of *Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War Since the 1992 Elections*, published in November, 1994.[†] Here he summarizes some of the central findings of that report for SAR.

Angola returned to civil war within one month of its first nationwide elections, held in September 1992. The human cost since fighting resumed is impossible to determine with precision, but the United Nations estimates that more than 100,000 have died. The U.N. reported that as many as 1,000 were dying daily from conflict, starvation, and disease in mid-1993 – more than any other conflict in the world at that time. In October 1993, 250 child deaths were reported each day in the besieged government-held city of Malanje alone.

In addition to the appalling levels of death and destruction, the war is notable for widespread and systematic violations of the laws of war by both the government – the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) – and the rebels – the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA). In particular, indiscriminate shelling of starving, besieged cities by UNITA has resulted in massive destruction of property and the loss of untold numbers of civilians, and indiscriminate bombing by the government has also taken a high civilian toll. As noted by an Africa expert from the U.S. Department of Defense, “This

type of warfare bears mainly, cruelly and disproportionately on the populace, which is caught between the warring parties.” If the human cost is staggering, so is the lack of international attention. Angola has earned the sobriquet of “the forgotten war.”

Human Rights Watch visited both government and UNITA areas in May-June 1994. In its report *Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War since the 1992 Elections* it documented the influx of weaponry feeding these violations since the elections in 1992. The elections were the culmination of a flawed peace agreement, known as the Bicesse Accords, signed in Portugal on May 31, 1991 by the MPLA government and UNITA. The accords contained a so-called “Triple Zero” clause which prohibited either side from acquiring new supplies of weapons.

Nonetheless, during the transition period leading up to the September 1992 elections, the government and UNITA failed to abide by their obligation to demobilize soldiers. Instead, both sides apparently illegally maintained secret armies, and the government created a new paramilitary police force, known as the “Ninjas.” The United Nations, with a limited mandate and grossly inadequate resources, was ineffectual during this period, and was virtually silent on human rights abuses.

When the MPLA won the elections (which were widely deemed to have been “free and fair”), UNITA rejected the results and launched a military offensive (see “Angola Democracy: The International Betrayal,” Victoria Brittain, *SAR*, 9, 3, Jan. 1994). This quickly escalated into a return to full-scale civil war, and fighting remains intense to this day.

The renewed conflict, and accompanying human rights abuses and violations of laws of war, are being fuelled by new flows of arms into the country. There is some evidence of arms shipments to the government in 1991 and 1992 in violation of the Bicesse Accords, notably from Russia and Brazil. Then, when war resumed in Angola, the government revoked the Triple Zero arms embargo, and went on an international arms shopping spree, buying more than \$3.5 billion worth of weapons in 1991 and 1994. Weapons procurement has reached record levels, surpassing even the extraordinary years of the mid-1980s when the Soviet Union was pumping arms into Angola as part of a super-power proxy war. The government of Angola has unquestionably been the largest arms purchaser in sub-Saharan Africa during the past two years. Indeed, the government appears to be undermining its economic future through massive arms imports, some analysts believing that Angola has mortgaged the next seven years of oil production to finance arms buys, even though its current oil reserves are estimated to last only fifteen years.

The government is continuing to purchase a full range of weaponry, from small arms and ammunition to tanks and aircraft, including some advanced systems not seen in Angola before, such as the T-72 tank. The government is buying weapons from numerous sources, including governments in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, although much of the weaponry is purchased from international arms dealers. Most of the arms deals are cloaked in secrecy and subterfuge, many involve false documentation and multiple governmental and private actors. Russia appears to have inherited from the former Soviet Union the distinction of

[†] This 163 page report is available in North America from the: Publications Department, Human Rights Watch, 485 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6104, USA, and in Europe and Africa from: Human Rights Watch, 33 Islington High St., London N1 9LH. UK.

being the largest arms supplier to Angola. Other nations apparently involved in arming the government include Brazil, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Uzbekistan, North Korea, Portugal, and Spain. In acting as they have, Portugal and Russia have acted irresponsibly in undermining their role as members of the official "Observing Troika" for the peace process.

UNITA is purchasing large amounts of weaponry from foreign sources, as well. Such purchases also violate the 1991 Bicesse Accords, as well as the international arms and oil embargo against UNITA imposed by the United Nations Security Council in September 1993. UNITA has been effective in "sanctions busting" through neighbouring countries, especially South Africa, Namibia and Zaire. UNITA appears to obtain much of its weaponry from private sources, rather than foreign governments, although there is some evidence that Russia and Zaire, and others have provided arms. Zaire has become the most important source of support for UNITA. UNITA uses Zaire as a transit area and conduit for diamond sales and weapons transfers, maintains a number of small rear bases in Zaire, and receives operational support from Zairean troops.

UNITA is financing its military campaign, including illegal arms imports, with Angola's diamond wealth. The De Beers diamond cartel and other international dealers are buying diamonds illegally mined in UNITA-held territory. Most of the diamonds are smuggled across Zaire's southern border, and to a lesser extent, the Zambian border. De Beers admits spending \$500 million to buy legally and illegally mined diamonds from Angola in 1992.

The Angola government has been responsible for widespread human rights abuses and violations of the rules of war since the October 1992 elections, including:

- indiscriminate aerial bombardment of population centres;
- use of torture, disappearance and summary execution, particularly against suspected UNITA supporters in the urban areas;
- the killing of civilians and pillaging during military operations;
- restrictions on relief operations by international and U.N. agencies, and impunity given to army officers and others who profiteer on relief food;
- underage and forced conscription;
- forced conscription of foreign nationals under U.N. protection into military service;
- forced displacement of the civilian population;
- cruel and inhuman prison conditions.

Moreover, government forces, and civilian groups armed by the government, killed and tortured thousands of suspected UNITA supporters - civilian non-combatants - between October 1992 and January 1993 in a purge of the cities after the war resumed. Thousands more civilians have been killed or injured in the indiscriminate bombing of population centres in UNITA-controlled zones during 1993 and 1994.

UNITA has committed systematic and horrendous violations of the war, including:

- indiscriminate shelling of besieged cities;
- summary execution and torture;
- attempts to starve civilians by attacking international relief operations, mining footpaths and fields, sabotaging road transportation, and capturing or killing those tending their fields;
- mutilation of the dead;
- abduction of civilians, including women and children, for forced conscription, sometimes treating them like slaves;
- underage and forced conscription, and denying unaccompanied minors

the opportunity to be voluntarily reunited with their families;

- taking foreign nationals as hostages, including using them as "human shields";
- restriction of the movements of civilians in areas it occupies, confiscating food from them and forcing them to do unpaid labour;
- cruel and inhuman prison conditions.

In addition, UNITA laid siege to a number of cities and towns, most notably Huambo and Kuito. UNITA rained as many as 1,000 shells per day on both cities. An estimated 10,000 people died in the battle for Huambo, many of them civilians. After capturing Huambo, UNITA slaughtered many civilians on the roads exiting the city, and many of the civilians died in the nine-month siege of Kuito that completely devastated the city. UNITA sieges have caused widespread starvation of the civilian population, especially in Kuito and Malanje. UNITA attacks on humanitarian relief operations are numerous and well-documented.

Mine warfare has also intensified since hostilities resumed, with thousands of new mines being laid by the government and UNITA to obstruct roads and bridges, to encircle besieged towns with mine belts up to three kilometres wide and to despoil agricultural lands. There are more than nine million mines laid throughout the country. The U.N. has estimated that the number of amputees in Angola will reach 70,000 in 1994.

U.N. and other mediation efforts have been undermined often by intransigence on the part of both UNITA and the government, and by attempts by both sides to use negotiations for battlefield advantage. Hopes that the current Lusaka peace talks may yield a lasting ceasefire agreement shortly have to be balanced against a military situation which is changing to the gov-

ernment's advantage. Thus, even though the Lusaka Protocol was initiated on 31 October – the culmination of eleven months of negotiations, it points towards the 15 November signing of a final protocol and a ceasefire 48 hours later – intensified fighting continues across the country.

Both sides apparently believe they can gain more territory before any peace accord is signed. Thus

government forces are trying to consolidate their position around the oil town of Soyo (Zaire province) and are within 10 km of Huambo city. Unita's forces are trying to take over Waku Kungo and Gabela (Cuanza Sul). On 3 November UNITA warned that the government's intensification of armed activity might jeopardise any ceasefire agreement. Two years on, then, lasting peace and

reconciliation remain an elusive goal.

Soon after Vines filed the above report, the government's military offensive led to the capture of Unita's Huambo headquarters. Nonetheless the ceasefire deal was indeed signed – on Sunday, November 20 – and was to come into effect at 1200 GMT on Tuesday, the 22nd. As we go to press doubts remain as to whether it will hold, the government accusing Unita of attacking both Uige and Catengue in the aftermath of the ceasefire. Southscan reports (November 25), that the government is trying to set up a meeting between President José Eduardo dos Santos and Unita's Jonas Savimbi (who did not travel to Lusaka for the signing but has backed the peace deal).

According to Southscan, the U.N. has said it is ready to redeploy some 500-600 military observers to monitor any ceasefire and, ultimately, some 6-8000 troops to help with the demobilization and integration of the rival forces into a new joint army. There is also some talk of South Africa playing an active peace-keeping role but this possibility remains to be spelled out.

As for the peace accord itself it agrees, amongst other things and in addition to specifying the modalities of merging the two sides' armies and police forces, to the completion of the 1992 electoral process (i.e. the holding of the run-off election for President); the implementation of power-sharing at the ministerial, deputy ministerial, ambassadorial (Unita gets Canada!), provincial governorship and deputy governorship and local administrative levels; and the installation of Unita deputies, elected in September, 1992, in the National Assembly. We hope to have a further report, from our own Angola correspondent, on the extent of the implementation of this agreement and its broader ramifications in the next issue of SAR.



Sygm

The New Terms of Solidarity

A South African View



BY MZWANELE MAYEKISO

Mzwanele Mayekiso is the international representative of the South African National Civic Organization.

As a national organization committed to social justice, the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO) has focused much of its attention on the overthrow of the undemocratic apartheid state. We focused our resources on struggles over local politics, and we sometimes neglected our global analysis. Now

that democratization of the state and society is firmly underway, it is incumbent upon us to look to the international lessons that can be learned from campaigns for broader socio-economic justice.

We are now searching for a way to address local needs that builds upon international struggles. There is a false dichotomy in the inward versus outward approaches to South Africa's development that are posed by forces hostile to the aims of the social justice movement in South

Africa. The proponents of export-led growth simply say that a focus on domestic industrialization is the approach of the apartheid regime. I think we must have both strategies that emphasize industrialization for both the domestic and foreign markets, but in very specific ways.

Meeting basic needs

The first priority is to begin to meet people's needs for jobs, land, housing, water, electricity, telecommunications, transport, a clean and healthy environment,

nutrition, health care and social services. We in the civic movement have very high hopes for the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which makes providing basic needs its central focus. We support the RDP in part because our own SANCO RDP was taken into consideration in the ANC's draft. In some areas, such as housing, it was the basis for the ANC policy. (SANCO does not normally affiliate itself with any particular party, but this year we agreed to endorse the ANC since it supported our aims, objectives and policies, and claimed a democratic, anti-apartheid legacy.)

Controlling international capital flight

Capital flight is out of control in South Africa. More than R10 billion in foreign reserves fled the country in the last six months of 1993, much of it through illegal banking transactions, according to recent newspaper reports. The Reserve Bank is largely to blame. It is meant to protect against illegal capital flight, yet a recent investigation unveiled fraud in every major financial rand transaction examined during the late 1980s in cases involving the Reserve Bank and major commercial banks. One top Reserve Bank official was even caught trying to steal \$1 billion!

The South African banking industry is, simply, unpatriotic. The four major banks - ABSA, FNB, Standard and Nedbank - have opened more offices in the Cayman Islands recently than they have in Soweto. The need to retain control of such capital is a good reason for a more inward-oriented financial strategy. The first step in such a strategy is to make the Reserve Bank more accountable, a policy that is endorsed in the RDP.

Regulating imports

My home township is Alexandra. If I walk two kilometres to the west, I come across 'Village Walk'

in Sandton. How do I feel, you might wonder? The degradation of Alexandra, and the opulence of Village Walk, are an insult to humanity. There are enough imported luxury goods there to feed thousands of hungry families in Alex if we had a fairer distribution of wealth.

At least this may change, according to the RDP: 'The design of reconstruction levies will depend on the aims of the RDP as a whole, especially in terms of promoting development and growth, but could include levies on capital transfers, land and luxury goods.'

I also look at some of the industrial sites around Alexandra: Wynberg, Marlboro, Kew, Louis Botha Avenue. This is the economic spine of our area, and yet some of the vertebrae are missing. Too many of the machines in these factories are imported. We are dependent upon capital goods - machine tools, transport equipment, heavy machinery - from abroad. It is one area where 'import substitution' failed to promote local economic growth.

Maintaining the integrity of the state

The big challenge for inward-oriented development is to make the state accountable, democratic and powerful enough to help civil society prosper and meet basic needs. The integrity of the state is crucial for this. A common problem with an outward-oriented strategy is the loss of that integrity. The RDP makes clear that this must not be South Africa's fate.

According to the RDP, relationships with international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund must be conducted in such a way as to protect the integrity of domestic policy formulation and promote the interests of the South African population and the economy. Above

all, we must pursue policies that enhance national self-sufficiency and enable us to reduce dependence on international financial institutions.

International financial institutions

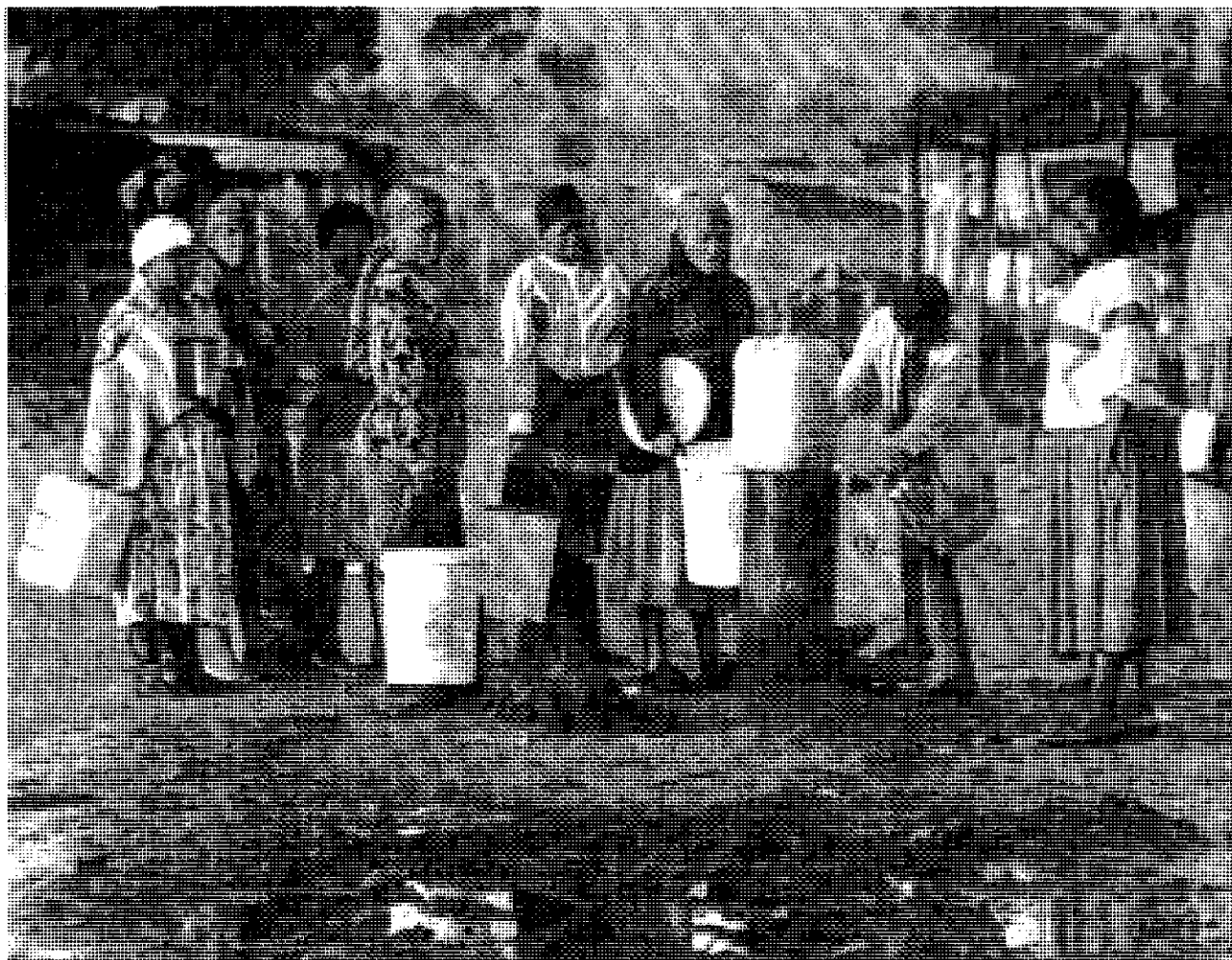
If we maintain the integrity of our policy-making process - so that South Africa is ruled from Pretoria, not Washington, DC - then we will avoid domination by international financial institutions. Specifically, an inward-oriented strategy will prevent the classic Third World foreign debt trap.

In South Africa, now that we have an opening through the democratization of the state, the World Bank has adopted a strategy of working with the ANC. This is not designed to benefit the poor, but to confuse us for the purpose of future exploitation. Many of our comrades have resisted this, have become more aware of the World Bank's agenda, and remain cautious about dealing with the Bank.

In our civic movement, we adopted a flexible counter-strategy. When faced with a Bank mission, the Civic Associations of Johannesburg, for example, came up with a proposed 'protocol' to regulate the Bank's activities and ensure that the Bank followed our movement's non-racist, non-sexist philosophy. The Bank rejected the protocol saying that this was not standard operating procedure.

Unrealistic reliance upon trade

Foreign trade is working against South Africa. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will cost this country US\$400 million extra annually in lost trade revenues within eight years, according to the World Bank. And even with GATT, the North American Free Trade Agreement and other such deals, trade wars appear to be very much a part of the present world capitalist economy.



Eric Miller - Impact Visuals

Blockombos Squatter Camp, Cape Town, 1993

While seeking to improve exports generally, let us nevertheless be reminded that the basic conditions for a given country's success within the competitive global economy - an oppressed, low-paid labour force, an innovative entrepreneurial sector and a competent state - do not really exist in South Africa. If we rely too heavily on trade and export-led manufacturing, we may end like Zimbabwe, which has been suffering deindustrialization since World Bank imposed measures were introduced.

Local economic development

Finally, there is scope in a demo-

cratic South Africa for a great deal more local economic development. In meeting basic needs such as housing, there are many local linkages between production and consumption (such as use of local building materials and labour) which have not been made, for two reasons.

First, the structure of production is highly concentrated, with most building material sectors controlled by three or fewer companies. This must be corrected by anti-trust action and by promoting local black businesses, perhaps through direct local government purchasing arrangements or

outright state subsidies, especially when the enterprises are worker-owned or community-controlled (as the RDP recommends).

Second, black South Africans cannot afford the cost of most major commodities. Only 10% of the township population can afford to buy a house on the open market, even with a 20-year mortgage loan. Yet if the state adopts appropriate policies, the demand for local production can be enhanced by use of subsidies. According to the National Housing Forum, there should be a 50% subsidy on each R25,000 house in

order that those without housing, at present, may buy a home. The RDP commitment to this large level of subsidy is unmistakable.

Outward-looking strategies

The pressures of the world economy and the operations of international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and GATT, affect our neighbours and South Africa in different ways. In the case of our neighbours, they were pressured into implementing programmes with adverse effects on employment and standards of living. It is essential that we combine to develop effective strategies for all Southern African countries.

It is now accepted wisdom that the democratic government must foster a much more balanced development strategy for our region. That will entail an outward-oriented, progressive approach to the region – even, as the RDP puts it, ‘Developing the capacity of our neighbours to export manufactured goods to South African markets.’

There are, however, many problems associated with the flow of immigrants to our townships. Alexandra has many thousands of Mozambican, Zimbabwean and other African migrants, who are technically illegal and impossible to organize. They are offered extremely low-paid jobs by unethical companies and have no rights to defend themselves. Community tensions are certainly rising.

Rather than threatening to remove foreign workers, we must look after the African immigrants’ interests in South Africa. We can do that, in part, by raising living standards and economic conditions across the region, because by so doing we will ultimately increase our own living standards.

Exchange of ideas and experiences

As a general principle, one of

the most important features of our relationships with other peoples across the world is the exchange of ideas and experiences. We are embarking on many initiatives in SANCO to promote such exchange, including direct people-to-people contact. But it is also in the media and through electronic mail networks and other forms of communication that information, strategies and tactics are being shared. This is one of the main priorities for my department within SANCO. Once we have an exchange of ideas, it is obvious how similar our conditions in slums and townships are, globally, and how we can develop solutions by learning from each other.

Political solidarity

People-to-people relationships have become commonplace. We have a whole new way of approaching the ‘foreign policy’ of ‘civil society.’ South Africa is a bastion of such thinking, because of the political solidarity that we have experienced in past years.

Anti-apartheid movements in Britain, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland and elsewhere remain important sources of future support. However, as the democratic stage of our struggle is won, the anti-apartheid networks re-


quire revitalization as broader solidarity networks that can both support SANCO (with technical support, campaign support and perhaps funding) and be supported by SANCO, through our guiding example in grassroots mobilization, local democratic transformation and people-centred development. I think of the group Comafrika in Rio de Janeiro as an interesting example of a Southern solidarity group, and the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa – and now Links with Southern Africa – as an ideal Northern partner.

Progressive international organizations

I would suggest that these people-to-people relationships can be solidified if we strengthen progressive international organizations. The Third World Network, based in Penang, Malaysia, is the most prominent of these. But from my recent visits to the US inner-city ghettos, to the barrios of Mexico City, Puebla, and other Mexican villages, and to the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, I have a growing conviction that an international organization devoted to linking civic associations will soon be a reality.

There are many difficulties in organizing such a body, of course. But while we cannot uncritically translate the local experience to the global, my view is that our processes of mass mobilization, democracy-building, addressing local grievances and building new institutions in the community, can all be shared with our comrades in other oppressive societies.

Such difficulties have been overcome in the past, for example, in linking 2,000 South African civic associations in SANCO, or in bringing international trade unions together in the various federations. One way is to build on the trend to establishing sister-community relationships and other formal relationships between progressive international institutions and municipal-



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ities and South Africa. The political and material support that these relationships provide have been a key element, in some cases, in the very survival of the South African partner.

Engaging common problems

We must go beyond the traditional progressive slogan, 'Think Globally, Act Locally' - we must act globally, with the Southern African region and with our international allies.

Indeed what all of this should make evident, is that the daily struggles of people across the world

have much in common. There is, in fact, a growing recognition that poor and working class citizens of different countries now have more in common with each other than they do with their own elites.

Unfortunately what we have in common with our sisters and brothers across the world is economic inequality and uneven development. Racial apartheid may become class apartheid, which is a phenomenon in many countries at present. One unfortunate result is a spate of 'IMF riots' which have helped to top-

ple many dozens of governments, but which have not been sufficiently well-organized to replace corrupt regimes with anything better thus far.

The common conditions that structural adjustment is imposing on all poor communities must be understood in global terms. This will allow us to develop stronger links between the oppressed peoples, and to develop organizations that serve our interests in international fora. If we have common problems, we logically have common solutions.

In Darkest Hollywood

BY DAVID POTTIE

David Pottie is a member of the SAR editorial collective.

In Darkest Hollywood: Cinema and Apartheid, a film written and directed by Daniel Riesenfeld and Peter Davies; a Nightingale/Villon production, 1993; 112 minutes.

Hollywood's diversions were welcome escapes from apartheid, opening a world of Zoot suits, Floorsheim shoes and the latest adventures of Clark Gable, Betty Grable, Tyrone Power, or in a later era, Kevin Kline and Donald Sutherland. As Bloke Modisane wrote in his autobiography, *Blame Me on History*, "If Hollywood had intended to influence the development of a particular kind of person, I am that product; the tinsel morality, the repressed violence, the technicolour dreams, these are the things I absorbed in the name of culture." But this was no ordinary dream world, at least not in the eyes of Daniel Riesenfeld and Peter Davies, makers of the documentary *In Darkest Hollywood: Cinema and Apartheid*.

In Darkest Hollywood deals with three main issues of cinema and apartheid: the impact of Hollywood films in South Africa, the depiction

of South Africa in Hollywood films, and finally, the emergence of an indigenous film industry in South Africa. The film makers frame this history of film in South Africa within the history of national liberation, drawing from it the conclusion that South Africans must recover their voice in the cinema.

In Darkest Hollywood is organized chronologically from the beginnings of film in South Africa, but focuses on the era since 1948. The film follows the release of major Hollywood pictures in South Africa, as well as key South African films, and juxtaposes the screen material with the changing political climate within South Africa. Deft engagement with newsreel footage, film clips, and interviews saves *In Darkest Hollywood* from succumbing to trite pronouncements on the evils of apartheid. Instead, Riesenfeld and Davies shed clear and uncompromising light on the role of feature films in South Africa.

But most of all, *In Darkest Hollywood* is steeped in people who love making and watching films. Their reminiscences and experiences are catalogued here in such a way that a dialogue is created between artists and the

history of apartheid on film. On the issue of the depiction of South Africa in Hollywood films, *In Darkest Hollywood* demonstrates, for example, how Hollywood has established a series of black-white pairings in its film treatments of South Africa: 1974's *Wilby Conspiracy* with Sidney Poitier and Michael Caine, 1987's *Cry Freedom* with Denzel Washington and Kevin Kline, 1989's *A Dry White Season* with Zakes Mokae and Donald Sutherland. But Riesenfeld and Davies also reveal such pairings to be a cinematic convention (and an over-simplification at that) of the idea of dialogue.

For Riesenfeld and Davies the idea of dialogue is much more complex. We are reminded that the issues of apartheid have never been clear-cut. To be sure, petty-apartheid laws treated colour as the basis of identity and treated the space of the body as the irreducible element of social being. But in the cinema this social ordering and regulation of the body was extended not only through segregated cinemas, but to the very regulation of the 'symbolic order' of the imagination. John Kani, actor-director, remarks that not only was everything controlled by whites but



Photo: H. Wilson

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