

# **DPSKEMPI**

## **Part 1**

**—Thabo Mziweke**

One would certainly not be accused of irrepressible pessimism, of being a prophet of doom, if one declared that South Africa inescapably fills any shrewd observer of political phenomena with a sense of impending tragedy. Viewing this preternaturally beautiful — and yet unspeakably ugly — country, one can't help thinking of a child caught up by a changing traffic light in the middle of a busy street. It would be easy for most of the oppressed black majority — those who definitely have done nothing to contribute to what one disaffected observer chillingly referred to as the man's mess — to sit back and watch everything go to ruin. But that defeatist attitude would inevitably club them together with the murderers who have perpetrated so much iniquity with impunity.

Whilst this goes on, then, the sense of tragedy brought about, like in a classical Greek tragedy, by a hubristic disposition in the psyches of the rulers of the land, is not lost to the helmsmen of the boat that's increasingly getting off its moorings. That is why South Africa has had such a welter of gambits and manoeuvres that one's imagination simply boggles. It would seem that the double-talk of incredible people like Dr Piet Koornhof aids in further confusing the white electorate, albeit with their connivance. This adds a piquant flavouring to this impending and inevitable tragedy.

The Botha-Malan clique, like a conjuror who's got only one rabbit left at the bottom of his magical tophat of tricks has, like their predecessors been quite liberal with dispensing with white bunnies — euphemistically called Bantustans, The New Deal, Give me six months, etc. — in an attempt to extricate himself from the morass of his, and his forebears', making.



Gen. Magnus Malan,  
Chief of the South  
African Defence Force.

The latest bunny from the Botha—Malan tophat is DPSKEMPI. At home, the Financial Mail reports, the Defence Force under General Malan has extended the internationally recognised components of an insurgent war. In Particular, the threat has been identified under the near acronym DPSKEMPI. Each letter stands for a component of the threat — thus: diplomatic; psychological; semantic; cultural; economic; military; political and intelligence. In Malan's view a

balanced strategy must match up to every component of the threat. Clearly the required range of action is beyond the scope of any army that does not itself virtually constitute a military government, but he is well-suited for the task — as Chief of the Defence Force he has excelled as a coordinator of different areas of operation.

### SOME EARLIER GAMBITS

To go back to the mid-1970's. One hears the then Prime Minister John Vorster talking about *detente* and we think of Vorster's shuttle diplomacy in Black Africa with his erst-while crony Eschel Rhodie. In those halcyon days even some of Apartheid's opponents adopted a "wait-and-see" attitude. Vorster did successfully visit some of Black Africa's leaders; the whole can of worms spilled over with the catapulting of the Information Scandal to the fore. In Afrikaner Government circles the name Rhodie is as much of a conversation stopper as are Burgers and McLean to the British. Judy Seidman in



Dr Kamuzu Banda with South African Prime Minister John Vorster. They had an interchange of visits, dancing with each other's wife.

her illuminative book *Facelift Apartheid* says Vorster hoped, by underhand means, to buy foreign opinion. His strategy differs from that of P.W. Botha's in that the latter assessed the seriousness and urgency of both the international and domestic situations and has made it clear that, regardless of political losses, and a rightwing backlash, he is determined to implement these changes regarded as vital to South Africa's 'survival'.

Botha decided on what he viewed as a foolproof plan: the co-option of a token number of Africans who would be duped into thinking that they have a stake in the existing system. As Patrick Laurance, the *Rand Daily Mail* political correspondent put it in December 1978: "The strategy was to woo the black middle class as an ally of the white minority or, as an Afrikaans newspaper put it, to consolidate the middle class as a bastion against an attack on South Africa's free capitalist way of life. The Nationalist Party appropriated the liberal strategy of alliance with the black bourgeoisie and grafted it to its early policy of winning over the chiefs and headmen through the homelands policy..."

"The success or failure of the policy is of crucial importance to the future of South Africa. On it will depend the extent to which the authorities can win black allies, and on that, in turn, will determine in what measure insurgents are isolated."

It would be impossible for this black elite to be formed without Botha applying some stringent and draconian measures on the majority of Africans who won't be counted among this select few. *Financial Times* pointed out this dichotomy aptly: "Government's aim of course, is to build a stable black middle class, to the exclusion of migrants and homelander."

Moving a bit further north, South Africa's diplomacy has been a curious mixture of the openly aggressive and the kid-glove treatment with Botha really wanting to woo his neighbours up north; he would like the Southern African states to be party to the colossal exploitative gambit, the "Constellation of States" where these states would be totally within South Africa's sphere of dominance. In the same breadth South Africa will not stop its sabre-rattling insofar as the African states are concerned; boasting of a mammoth military machinery, South Africa has threatened Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique — it has repeatedly attacked Angola, killing Angolans in its pretext of "hot pursuits" against SWAPO's PLAN.



One victim of South Africa's Bombardment of Lubango in Angola.

### MERCENARIES

On November 25 last year, mercenaries from South Africa attacked

Mahe Airport in Seychelles in an abortive *coup* attempt. They were repelled. They hijacked an Air India aircraft to Durban where, presumably, they'll scorn international law happily ever after. The arch-imperialist, United States of America, despite denials, knew of South Africa's wild adventures in the sub-continent and the Indian Ocean. It would seem South Africa is the cat's paw: a sheep in sheep's clothing doing the wolf's work. But like all diplomatic gambits based on hoodwinking the people, based on depriving the majority of the people access to the means of production and stopping them from being masters of their destiny, these Botha-Malan manoeuvres are doomed to a resounding and inelegant failure.

## FACTORS

One of the factors that will succeed in bringing about this graceless failure is the fact that Southern African states are not asleep. The first economic summit of heads of states and representatives of nine Southern African countries, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, was held in Lusaka on April 1, 1980. The nine countries ended by adopting a document in which they declared: "In the interests of the people of our countries, it is necessary to liberate our economies from their dependence on the Republic of South Africa, to overcome the imposed economic fragmentation and to co-ordinate our efforts towards regional and national economic development."

## TOTAL STRATEGY

P.W. Botha finds his spiritual sustenance from and is informed by a little-known book written by some obscure French general, Andre Beaufre titled *An Introduction to Strategy*. It is the first manual to define "Total Strategy" and to involve not only the armed forces in national defence but many spheres of civilian activity. Botha can be increasingly heard mouthing gems like, "Everyone knows war today is total... In other words it will be carried in all fields, political, economic, diplomatic and military... Such, with its varying shades of emphasis, is the pattern of the cold war. Equally therefore, strategy must be total."

General Magnus Malan, as Minister of Defence, saw that the battle for South Africa is 80 per cent political and 20 per cent military. So, not unlike the late American President Johnson who found himself neck-deep in the Vietnam mire, Malan has to launch, or launches, a battle "for their hearts and their minds." In June 1976 the South African racist



**Women Training in the use of Fire-arms.**

leave Goebbels green with envy.

It starts with little white boys and girls. In 1978 sales of war games in toy shops increased by 500 per cent over the previous year. Amongst white youth this crime is committed through the "Christian National Education" system in that the Minister of National Education has decreed that every teacher "must be trained in a Christian National fashion" He went on to declare that the history, language, traditions and national symbols of the country should be held in high esteem and promoted. Influential Professor Nic Wiehahn unambiguously wrote: "To motivate them, young white people need an inspiring cause and this could lie in a fight for survival and the preservation of their own identity."



**School Holidays – Boys at a Vacation Camp for Military Training.**

The way the regime has attempted to capture and warp the minds of the whites permeates their everyday activity. This fact alone cannot be over-emphasized. Blacks, on the other hand, are everyday bombarded, via the media, with negative self-images and they get their daily propaganda pabulum from censorship-crazy managers and engineers of Radio Bantu and SATV 2/3, apartheid's audio-visual aids.

## **THE WORD GAME**

In the art of obtuscation, hiding behind words, double meanings, dissembling, South Africa takes the cake. Trying to read the *Government*

*Gazette*, trying to make sense out of the officialese and legally-phrased gobbledegook is like trying to negotiate an obstacle field. When reading South Africa's statutes or trying to decipher what they mean in parliament one gets the feeling that the statutes are so prolix — and the print is really fine! — that the reader is supposed to collapse from exhaustion before he comes to the clause he wants.

### PREDECESSOR

John Vorster, Botha's predecessor, was the past-master in the art of dissembling. When *Newsweek* senior editor Arnaud de Borchgrave interviewed Vorster on whether the USA sanctioned and encouraged South Africa's first involvement in Angola in 1975, Vorster said: "I do not want to comment on that. The US government can speak for itself. I am sure you will appreciate that I cannot violate the confidentiality of government-to-government communications. But if you are making the statement, I won't deny it."

### FACET

Judy Seidman wrote: "The latest facet of Botha's 'Save South Africa' formula consists of concealment and confusion — so that no-one is quite clear what, if anything, is being altered. 'Facts and Figures' are issued apparently invented out of thin air; 'changes' are announced which never occur, or turn out to be only a change in name. Some of this, no doubt, reflects disagreements within the government: a change is announced and then rescinded or watered down until it becomes ineffectual when a proposal evokes a very negative response in the white population. But some can only be explained as outright lies."

### NAME-CHANGING

Government bodies really believe in name-changing. For example the Bantu Affairs Department (BAD) changed its name to the Department of Plural Affairs and Development. Blacks became 'plurals'. This was in 1978. In 1979, the term 'Black' replaced 'Bantu' and 'Native' in all official usage. The change of name to the Department of Plural Affairs does not mean that Koornhof has stopped lying. That darkies are now called 'Blacks' hasn't contributed an iota to change their station. Same difference.

One has already touched on the change of name from BOSS to DONS to DONI. The Bantu Education Department changed to the Department of Education and Training, and it was announced that Bantu Education was to be eliminated. The new 'Blacks-only education' is considered by many not to have been any change from Bantu Education.

A lot of people have died in detention, that is in the hands of the Ministry of Justice. To stem international outcry and to 'protect' this hideous ministry, the Ministry of Law and Order has been created to stem 'terrorism and subversion'. Presumably, in the interests of 'law and order, South Africa had to go as far as Seychelles to try to stage a *coup* there. The Ministry of Labour changed — on the recommendation of the Wiehahn Commission — to the Ministry of Manpower Utilization. It is all a case of the same soup warmed all over.



**Steve Biko, Murdered in Detention.**

## **THE BLUES PEOPLE**

Much has been said and written about how the lot of the black people will improve with the ages. But then we're increasingly driven to view these attempts with the greatest amused suspicion. Our attitude is informed by seeing the kind of charade that goes on within the hallowed halls of white power. In Parliament, the crucible of white South African might, we see the confusion engendered by nothing except that the rulers don't know what to do with us. And they can't wish us away. There's Treurnicht, Jaap Marais; there's P.W. Botha.

There have been myriads of commissions: Riekert, Wiehahn, Quail, Rabie. All of them are set up to find ways to 'better the lot of black people' — to make fascism have a more humane face — at the same time trying to have it both ways by propitiating the consciences of whites whose hands are drenched with the blood of the innocent. All this is done with more than just a little help from Big Brother, the USA. One can't help remembering Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy: NSSM-39; 'Tar Baby'; 'Crossroads' and USSALEP. All this was coupled — during the Carter

Administration — with an infusion of Black American entertainers visiting South Africa. There is nothing in itself wrong with Black Americans visiting South Africa, but there is something definitely wrong when they come, as unofficial ambassadors, to hoodwink our people to hanker for things American, to inculcate amongst the beleaguered people black middle class notions.

This was — and is — coupled with the strategy of our own country to woo the black middle class as an ally of the white minority. This was co-ordinated with the sprouting up of stations like Radio SR, 702, Radio Capital and Bophuthatswana Radio. This had a marked impression on the minds of black people. As one disgruntled observer said, "South African blacks are getting niggerized." The people popularised and exhibited by *Info* magazine, *Pace*, are so unlike most people you'd meet. They are black, all right, but there all the similarity ends. They are photographed probably under red 400 Watt Klieg bulbs coiffured, chic, in sequined or diapharous gowns exhibiting the latest fashions from Dick Halstead or Christian Dior, men wear their hair like space helmets.

Culturally then, there has been that attempt to infuse into the black psyche the kind of cultural assumptions that are a confirmation of the Western self-image. This is done in a curious, insistent and devious way. The media helps in this cultural bombardment on the sensibilities of the black majority. We have seen how scouts like Bertha Egnos *et al* go into the townships, pick the best of our music, plays, lifestyles and rhythms and then turn them into abscentities for the confirmation of white prejudices that blacks are shiftless, lazy; black actors and actresses, as in *Ipi Tombi*, *Meropa* and a host of other productions, pander to the prurient appetites of their white masters. Other actors perform in Information Scandal-sponsored films like "The Wild Geese", where John Kani and Winston Ntshona do more than enough to propagate the myth that the black man left his brains somewhere in the plantation.

There's nothing admirable about the South African white racist-oriented cultural pursuits. People like Mimi Coetsee and Ge Korsten certainly wouldn't excite or inflame a cheesecake. That is why they — and their insipid white musical groups that make so much Mickey Mouse squeaking in Radio 5 — can't spend time off from entertaining "our boys at the border", all the time wondering when SWAPO or MK is going to strike next.

**To be continued in the next issue.**