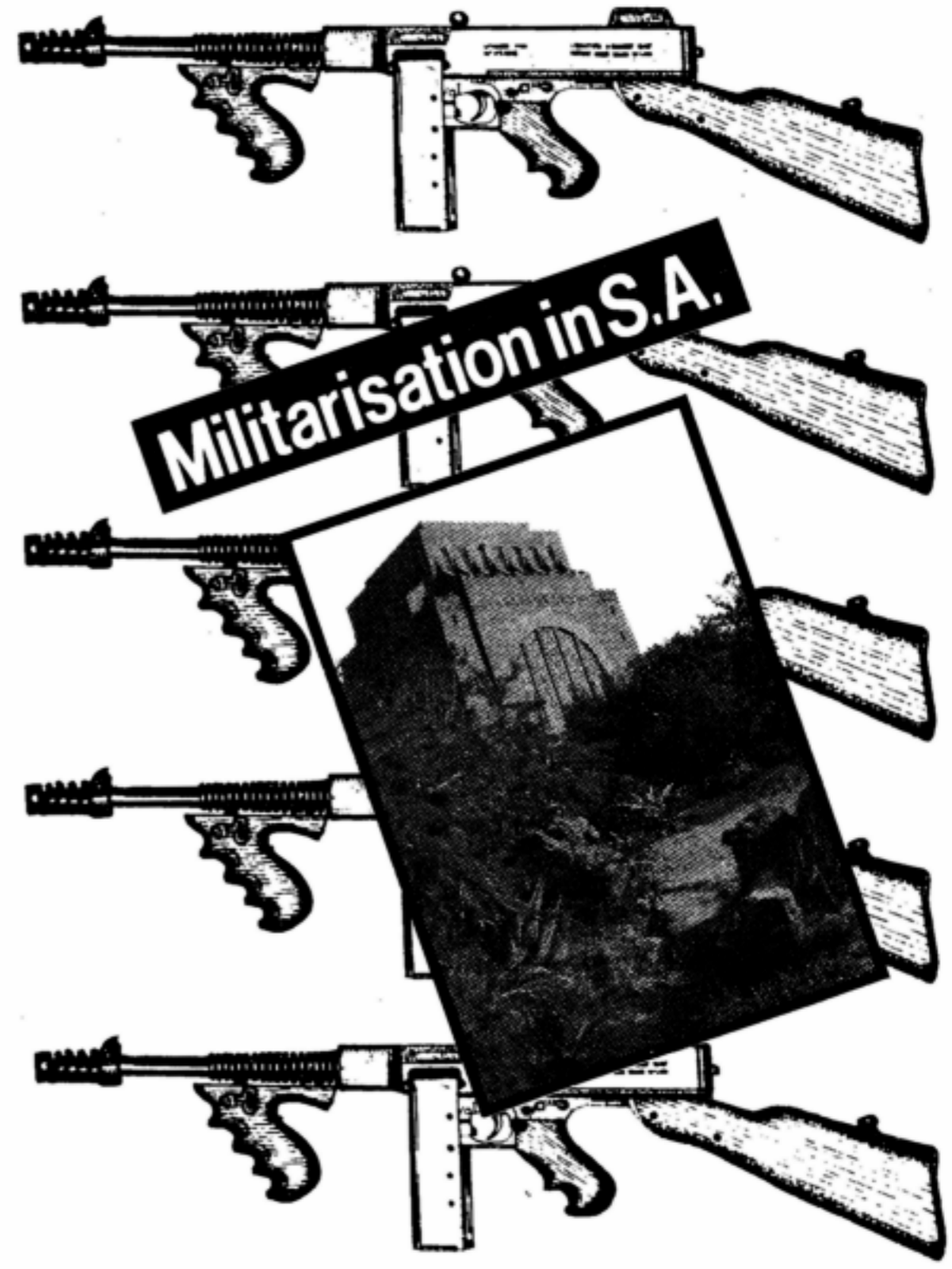


# WORK 24 IN PROGRESS



1982

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Cover by Kevin Humphrey



The nature of Work In Progress, which is to stimulate debate and present controversial views on a wide range of subjects, ensures that the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of members of the editorial collective.

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# EDITORIAL

If there is a theme to be found in the articles in this edition of Work In Progress - the last SARS publication for 1982 - it is 'restructuring'.

The first three articles deal with attempts to change the institutions of political representation in South Africa, and with the increasing structural and ideological involvement of the military in day-to-day affairs.

The question is asked why 'reforms' are being discussed in ruling class circles, and why the National Party is risking the alienation of many of its own supporters. To what extent has 'reform' in South Africa become just another term for the entrenchment of the status quo? And are the two aspects of 'reform' and 'repression' contradictory or complementary parts of the same strategy?

The theme of 'militarisation' is explored explicitly in one article, and is implicitly raised in a number of the other contributions. But this is a term that is open to abuse if it is not clearly defined (another catch-all term which describes everything and explains nothing is the over-used idea of 'total strategy').

Militarisation does not in itself explain what is happening in society, but needs to be explained. Careful studies of the way in which it finds expression in different arenas need to be undertaken - in schooling; in the media; in the state and its apparatuses; in production of armaments. What interests do the military represent, and how do these relate to other ruling interests - those of government, capital, etc?

Does the representation of the military in the state, and the cooperation between military and capital in arms production, resolve the crisis of profitability which the South African economy faces? What are the economic and social effects of withdrawing an increasing number of men (and a few women) from society and from production for long

periods; while they do military duty? Are there limits to state expenditure on 'defence' and if so, how does one calculate them? These are some of the questions which further discussions of militarisation need to consider if the term is to become explanatory, and not just descriptive.

The exposé of USA involvement in labour affairs is extremely pertinent because of the recent visit to South Africa of a US labour delegation representing the AFL-CIO and the African-American Labour Centre. The authors of the article argue that, going on past performance, the composition of the delegation has ominous implications for trade union development in South Africa.

A previous article which appeared in WIP 23 dealt with the anti-colonial struggle in Namibia. The contribution on Namibia in this WIP supplements the first one, both bringing it up to date and concentrating on a greater number of the organisations and interests involved in the Namibian conflict.

Several contributions on labour deal with such diverse issues as organising african mine workers, and the religio-industrial views of eastern Cape pineapple king Corder Tilney.

Enormous obstacles have always stood in the way of successful long-term organisation of african mine workers. They are housed in controlled compounds, and many are migrants from several countries in southern Africa as well as the bantustans. State involvement in labour relations on the mines has always been immediate and direct, crushing indications of worker resistance and organisation. What is currently of interest is why the mining houses and the Chamber of Mines have recently taken to 'encouraging' certain unions to organise african miners. The question of whether union activity on the mines is even possible without employer consent must be raised; and if this is the case, it must also be asked how management will 'select'

unions that are to be allowed access to african mine workers.

The South African Transport Services' (SATS) dispute hinges around the crude creation, by a state department, of a tame union (the Black Staff Association) to keep out the independent General Workers' Union. This is another example of the way in which reform (in the labour field) and repression (of workers' own choice of representation) are combined and go hand in hand in South Africa at present.

The theme of 'restructuring' is well illustrated in the various contributions on labour. In a number of areas, ruling interests are intervening in an attempt to restructure the way in which the working class will be represented in industrial disputes. Mine management seems to be slowly accepting the inevitability of unionisation for african workers - and is intervening to choose which unions should represent workers; SATS will not accept the union which workers want to represent them, and instead champions the Black Staff Association; and leaders of US labour begin a process of intervention in labour relations which aims to structure worker representation in the interests of US foreign policy.

As always, the editors ask for discussion of these issues, and for contributions that can clarify the problems that have been raised both in this editorial, and in the contents of the publication.

The editors thank distributors of SARS publications, who this year have had to distribute six SARS publications, rather than the usual five. They have also had to put up with the confusions associated with a ban on Work In Progress - subsequently lifted - and all that was entailed in dealing with that.

# STATE, REPRESSION AND REFORM

OVER the last five years at least 2 318 people are known to have been detained under South Africa's security laws. The number detained in each year is as follows:

|      |           |
|------|-----------|
| 1977 | 259       |
| 1978 | 360 (99)  |
| 1979 | 113       |
| 1980 | 956 (188) |
| 1981 | 630 (469) |

(Figures in brackets indicate the number detained in the bantustans; the first figure includes the bantustan figure).

One of the most disturbing features of these statistics is that, despite much talk of reform in South Africa, there is as yet no indication of the rising trend in detentions being reversed. In fact quite the reverse: the figures actually point to a marked increase in detentions over the last two years. Moreover, recent political developments suggest that this horrifying trend may well increase even further in the future. Both the government's acceptance of the Rabie Commission's proposals to tighten up and intensify South Africa's security legislation, as well as its favourable response to the Steyn Commission's proposals for further restrictions on press freedom, suggest that the future will bring with it even greater repression and restriction of democratic rights.

The question which needs to be posed is: why? Why is there this marked increase in the restrictions imposed on the people of this country? There are, I'm sure, many answers to this question, but I want to isolate what I think is one of the major

considerations involved here - and that is the growing political insecurity of the present government. Underlying this insecurity - and, therefore contributing to it - are a number of major social, economic and political changes. These include

1. The growing politicisation of the african population and the resurgence of militant political activity among other oppressed racial groups (expressed most clearly in the successful anti-SAIC campaign);
2. The growing militancy and organisation of black workers;
3. The continuing crisis in black education;
4. The failure of the bantustan policy to win any serious support, either among black people in South Africa, or internationally;
5. The escalation of the guerilla war against South Africa;
6. South Africa's current economic decline;
7. The stalemate over Namibia, encouraging even deeper armed incursions into Angola which do nothing to remove the likelihood of a SWAPO government coming to power in that country;
8. The dissention within the government's own ranks coupled with a lack of coherence in government policy.

While this list implies that government is being forced even deeper into a crisis situation - and hence becoming increasingly insecure - what needs to be done is to analyse the inter-relationship between these eight points. Only if that interrelationship is clearly grasped can we come to understand the full extent of the current crisis facing the government.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order to do that adequately one needs first to go back 20-odd years to the time of Sharpeville and the mass popular uprising which was led by the ANC and, to a lesser extent, the PAC, because that period is a watershed in South Africa's history. Not only was it around that time that the popular movement for democratic change was smashed, but also

that period represented the transition from an era of sporadic and uneven economic growth to one of rapid and sustained economic growth.

Now these two factors are not unrelated. South Africa's shaky economic performance during the 1950s had a number of economic causes but, in addition to these, there can be no doubt that the growth of popular resistance played an important part in retarding economic growth, both directly through strike activity, stay-at-homes and other forms of worker resistance and, indirectly, through the effect which social and political instability had on discouraging foreign and local investment. However, the smashing of the popular movement changed all that!

First, because the defeat suffered by the Congress Movement eased the pressures on the South African government to introduce political democratic reforms in South Africa, specifically around the slogan of one-man-one-vote, and gained the government time to implement instead its own politically divisive and repressive solution in the form of the bantustan policy. Without any major internal opposition movement, it was easy for opportunists like Matanzima to begin to collaborate closely with the government in the hope that this would bring some credibility to the bantustan idea.

Second, the effect of the defeat meant that at an economic level the path was cleared to allow businessmen to reorganise their enterprises based on the relatively sure knowledge that the mass of the labour force was now demoralised, disorganised and pliable. The era of the 1960s was thus one in which the South African economy expanded enormously. During the mid 1960s, for example, South Africa's economic growth was the second fastest in the Western world. The weakness of black labour encouraged a resurgence of foreign investment which had fled the country en masse in the immediate aftermath of Sharpeville. Now with the mass movement defeated, foreign capital flowed back into the country on an unprecedented scale, moving this time not only into its traditional haven of mining,

but also into the new growth area of manufacturing industry.

This period of rapid economic expansion was characterised by a marked lack of industrial action on the part of black workers and the only real problem of the time was the growing shortage of skilled labour. The latter problem can again be related to the conditions of struggle of the period in that the smashing of the mass movement, which incorporated a significant worker element, meant that black workers were unable to press their demands for access to more skilled jobs and, consequently, job reservation was entrenched to provide greater protection for a labour aristocracy of predominantly white workers.

From this brief survey one can gain some idea of the power base of the government at the time. Within the racial spectrum of white South Africa its main support came from farmers, small industrialists (who formed the vast majority in industry at that time), workers and sections of the intelligentsia - many of these classes and groups coalescing around the ideological banner of Afrikanerdom. It was thus a government dedicated to defending whites, and a few black hangers-on like Matanzima, against the 'swart gevaar' primarily by means of 'kragdadigheid'. What this meant in practice was the erection of a massive apparatus of repression, which included the introduction of detention without trial, first through the 90-day clause and then through 180 days. These new repressive measures - which were necessary if the state was to break the back of the popular movement - enabled the state to concentrate significantly more power into its hands and, correspondingly, extended the role of the security police in our society.

However, during the 1970s the political and economic conditions which had produced the political alignment discussed above began to change. In fact, the seeds of this change are discernable in the events of the 1960s themselves.

#### SOCIAL CHANGE AND STRUGGLES IN THE 1970s

As far as the economy was concerned, the quantitative growth which occurred during the 1960s was accompanied by a more subtle and yet equally profound qualitative change: that of the increasing monopolisation and modernisation of the South African economy. This latter change affected every major economic sector, albeit differentially. In general there was a marked swing towards mechanisation and the emergence of large-scale production in most sectors of the economy. These developments pointed to a greater sophistication of the South African economy and to the start of a process of domination by large corporations, usually either foreign-controlled, state-controlled or linked to the mining houses. These important economic developments were to be accompanied by significant social and political changes in South Africa.

First, rapid economic growth was accompanied by spiralling inflation which increasingly began to eat into the already meagre wage packets of the black work force in particular. The first signs of trouble emerged with the black dock workers' strike which occurred in Durban in 1969.

Politically, there were also signs that the government's bantustan package was running into trouble when in 1969 black students formed themselves into SASO and, under the banner of the black consciousness movement, began rejecting not only contacts with whites, but the whole bantu education and bantustan package. In this development we find the first seeds of a major new assault on the political policy of apartheid.

Externally, too, the seeds of opposition were being sown, not only through the African states' boycott against South Africa but, more specifically, with the strengthening of support for SWAPO among the people of Namibia. The massive 1971 contract workers' strike in Namibia was a clear warning sign that the government's policy towards its colony was heading into serious trouble.

Thus, by the start of the 1970s the seeds for a major economic, social and political transition had

been sown in South Africa.

The first major thrust in that transition came as the economic boom dried up in the early 1970s and the economy lurched into recession. As smaller companies found it increasingly difficult to stay afloat and as even larger companies found their resources being squeezed, a spate of mergers and take-overs began which were to last throughout most of the decade. The result was the emergence of a number of giant corporations in control of key sectors of the economy: the rise to prominence of such giants as the Anglo American Industrial Corporation, Barlow Rand and a range of other industrial-financial conglomerates dates from this period. By the end of the decade it was clear that the process of monopoly concentration had produced a new form of capitalism in South Africa - monopoly capitalism - in which a handful of large corporations controlled vast economic resources. For instance, in 1977 five percent of all firms in the manufacturing sector between them controlled 63 percent of turnover in the sector; five percent of all firms in the wholesale and retail sector controlled 69 percent of turnover; five percent of all firms in construction accounted for 63 percent of turnover; and five percent of all firms in the transport sector accounted for 73 percent of turnover. A new economic era had dawned for South Africa.

If the transition to monopoly control of the South African economy is one of the major economic characteristics of the decade of the 1970s, another was the continuing high inflation rate. Certainly, inflation was a major cause of the industrial unrest which began in Durban in 1973. That unrest spread rapidly over the next few years to all the major industrial centres in the country and soon spawned a new and radical black trade union movement. Though the state initially tried to curb this advance through standard measures of repression, such as banning of trade union leaders and the victimisation and harassment of workers, while at the same time promoting works and liaison committees

as substitutes for unions, the new union movement nonetheless continued to grow through the mid-seventies.

Then, in 1976, tensions among the black student and school community reached breaking point, culminating in the massive Soweto revolt which rapidly assumed nationwide proportions. Again, the state resorted to the tried-and-trusted method of repression to quell the revolt, and hundreds of black children lost their lives while their organisations were banned. Although the initial cause of the uprising was a rejection of bantu education, there can be little doubt that the political momentum which had begun with SASO in the late 1960s had now produced an explosion of anger against the system of apartheid as a whole. While the student forces sought to rally their parents and workers to their side, seeking to develop a mass movement for democratic reforms around the slogan of black consciousness, the other side of this coin was the increasing mass rejection by blacks of the government's bantustan solution.

The state thus found itself in an unenviable position: faced with a growing black political movement the state sought, as it had done in the early 1960s, to smash these forces through repression while accelerating the bantustan policy. However, though it was relatively successful in smashing the democratic forces of the black consciousness movement, its own bantustan policy was greeted with mass rejection and the demand for internal democratic reforms reasserted itself. Faced with the state's intransigence on this issue, many young blacks began to leave the country, thus fuelling the ranks of the externally-based guerilla movement and, subsequently, leading to an escalation in armed conflict. Nor was this the only outcome of the state's intransigence: many of those blacks who remained inside South Africa adopted an increasingly militant stance against the state, fuelling a growing politicisation among the black masses.

But these processes received tremendous support

from the political changes which were occurring in the southern African region as a whole. The end of colonialism in Mocambique and Angola, together with the collapse of UDI in Zimbabwe, not only provided the guerilla movement with new and sympathetic bases from which to operate, but also encouraged the flowering of black nationalism within South Africa. At the same time, SWAPO stepped up its campaign against South Africa in Namibia. Despite the increase of military activity against SWAPO (and the Angolan government), and despite the attempt to undermine SWAPO's internal support through the creation of the DTA, it was clear to most observers that South Africa could not win the guerilla war in Namibia (though they did not seem likely to lose it either); nor could the DTA ever supplant SWAPO as the most popular political organisation in the country. (This point has received further confirmation in the past few days as the South African government has made plain its strategy of withdrawing support from the DTA).

In other words, both internally and in its foreign policy the South African government was seen to be floundering and following policies which were not only bankrupt but were actually leading to an escalation of various forms of hostilities against them.

#### LABOUR REFORM

However, there was one sphere in which the government did attempt to promote certain reforms - and that was in labour. Here the Wiehahn Commission recommended the legalisation and registration of trade unions for african workers - a unique development in South Africa's history. While this concession represented a significant victory for african workers, it is equally true that the aim of this reform was to try and co-opt the leadership of the black trade union movement and to break the power of the rank and file on the shop floor. But what is important here is that for the first time the government sought to achieve its aims largely through co-option rather than solely through

repression. This represented a significant departure from earlier government thinking and therefore we need to ask why it occurred.

A crucial point to take account of here is the growing technical sophistication and monopoly character of South African industry. With black workers now occupying increasingly important skilled and semi-skilled positions in more mechanised and much larger factories throughout the country, the extent of their power in industry had grown enormously. Once it became clear that these workers had rejected the formal system of works and liaison committees, many employers - particularly those in large corporations - began to negotiate with trade unions as the most representative mouthpiece of workers to try and promote communication and stability with the black work force. The key point here is that management was beginning to come to terms with the need to develop new forms of control that were more compatible with the conditions of modern mechanised production. Forms of direct - and inevitably, racial - oppression on the shop floor, as well as the more paternalistic approach which had characterised small scale industrial production, were no longer compatible with the requirements of modern mechanised factories employing hundreds and often thousands of black workers in relatively skilled positions. Trade unions were now being seen by a section of management - albeit reluctantly - as the most appropriate means through which communication with the work force could be maintained and, if possible, through which conflict could be institutionalised or even averted.

But if employers - particularly the larger employers - were now less afraid of negotiating with black workers and their unions, white workers were much less sure of the wisdom of this approach. Some, like Arrie Paulus of the Mine Workers' Union, saw the legalisation of black unions as a clear indication that the state was gradually withdrawing the privileges which had previously been afforded

white workers. And, it must be said, there is a certain amount of truth in Mr Paulus' argument.

It does seem as if the thrust of government's and employers' strategy towards black labour is aimed at co-opting a skilled and semi-skilled elite. However, to do this means conceding higher wages to this group, which means that unless industry is to decline, there should be a corresponding downward pressure on white wages, or, alternatively, an attempt to reduce the overall white wage bill through retrenchment of white workers. Such a development becomes even more pressing and likely when the economy, as now, is moving into serious recession. No one should underestimate the seriousness for the South African economy of the plunge in the gold price to \$300 an ounce earlier this year. It is just not going to be possible for the state to finance its own massive economic commitments (such as SASOL, SATS, ISCOR, etc); finance an escalating military bill (which must increase as the guerilla war escalates); and pour money into the economy to promote the kind of industrial growth which will enable employers to increase wages for both white and black skilled and semi-skilled workers. Something has to give somewhere. It can't be the military bill - in fact the military's role has increased substantially over the past decade - and, since black workers today are a far more serious threat to political and economic stability than white workers, it is unlikely that it is black workers who will be completely denied. That leaves the white worker!

The recent attempts by SEIFSA and the Chamber of Mines to peg white wages at absurdly low levels are only the first indicators of a hardening of employers' attitudes over the issue of white wages. As the state and employers adapt to the wage demands of black workers, so the white workers will come to find themselves increasingly out in the cold - which is why so many of them are deserting the ranks of the National Party and turning towards the purer racism of the HNP and the Conservative Party, whose policies include support for job

reservation.

But if co-option of sections of the black labour force is the joint aim of employers and government, it needs to be said that there are important differences both within and between them, over how this is to be implemented. On the one hand, the main thrust of support for the strategy of recognition of black unions seems to be coming from the larger employers - the monopoly groups and their associates. Small employers generally are markedly less enthusiastic about this development. Furthermore, while there have been major developments in the sphere of organising urban-based black industrial workers, as yet there has been precious little progress in organising black workers in either mining or agriculture. Certainly, as far as the latter is concerned, the majority of South Africa's white farmers, especially the smaller ones, must view with growing fear and trepidation the moves towards union recognition in the urban areas. What might be an acceptable strategy for large urban-based industrialists to follow in relation to black unions is far from serving the interests of small farmers.

It is at this point that the recommendations of the Riekert Commission become particularly pertinent to the government's overall labour policy: the further tightening up of influx controls recommended by the Commission is designed to throw an ever more stringent administrative cordon around the major urban-industrial complexes which will deny migrants access to these areas even if they are offered jobs there. The new restrictions on employment of 'illegal' workers in the urban areas, including the harsh new fines introduced for those employing such workers, contained in the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, as well as the recent move by WRAB to refuse to allow contract workers in the urban areas to change jobs, are the first prongs in this attack.

The overall effect of the strategy is to isolate the permanent urban workers - those with Section 10 rights under the Black Urban Areas Act -

from their migrant brothers and sisters; the result will be to allow only those with Section 10 rights to have access to jobs in the main urban areas and to force the migrant workers to seek work only on the peripheries of these areas: in border industries, on the mines and on the farms - ie those areas where wages are lowest.

The aim is to divide the black working class: to allow an elite of relatively skilled, higher paid unionised workers with some form of property rights to develop and reproduce itself permanently in the urban areas in isolation from the relatively less skilled and non-unionised migrant workers. The latter will have no residence rights in the urban areas and will therefore be condemned to a life of cheap labour on the mines, farms and in peripheral and border industries. Through this strategy the state, inter alia, hopes to meet the requirements of all employers in the country: to concede to the wishes of large industrial employers that they be allowed to recognise and negotiate with black unions and to respect the wishes of employers in agriculture and, to a lesser extent, the mines and border industries that no unions be tolerated in their sectors of production. (As far as the mines are concerned, this policy may well be reversed if a majority of mine employers decide to negotiate with black unions, and if resistance from the MNU can be overcome in one way or another).

However, to say that the state has been prepared to concede legal recognition to black unions in industry does not mean that it has not also sought to impose certain formal restrictions on these unions, nor has it sought to free them from harassment by security police. These formal and informal restrictions have caused much resentment among workers and have also led to criticism from some elements of management. In fact, the issue of security police harassment has even provoked criticism from within the ranks of the state itself, with the Department of Manpower being openly critical of the effect which security police harassment has on the promotion of better

industrial relations in industry. On the other hand, these restrictions on union activity have failed to quell the fears of those in the white community, and especially among white workers, who feel that the legal recognition of black unions is a recipe for long-term political disaster in South Africa.

The government's labour reform strategy thus finds itself caught between conflicting pressures, and unable for the moment to satisfy either side - yet providing the all-important political space within which union organisation can consolidate and expand. It is impossible that the future course of unionisation in this country will be smooth or easy - already there is a clear hardening of attitudes among employers in the eastern Cape and as the recession intensifies, these attitudes will spread to employers in other parts of the country. But it is equally impossible that after the gains that have been made so far, the process of unionisation can now be stopped without dire costs for the future of industry and for social and economic stability as a whole.

#### POLITICAL REFORM

The important changes in the field of black labour have not, however, been mirrored in the sphere of political rights for blacks. In this latter area we have heard much grand talk of 'power sharing', but as yet little of substance that one can point to which suggests real change. In fact, government's reluctance to accept the full findings of the de Lange Commission on education, and its uncompromising rejection of the Buthelezi Commission findings, coupled with its enthusiasm for the findings of the Steyn and Rabie Commissions, suggests the very reverse: a rejection of reform and a tightening up of political repression. Yet, on the other hand, we have the undeniable fact that PW Botha finally threw down the gauntlet to his far right wing and cast them out of the National Party. Yet what is the ostensible issue over which this split occurred? It is the terms over which so-called coloured and indian people should

be admitted to the President's Council. Undeniably, such a reform, if it were to be seriously implemented, would indicate a further shift in government thinking - but it is far from fundamental. The coloured and indian communities have always been in a sort of political limbo and bringing them into the President's Council is not a fundamental deviation from government policy. It is simply opening the white laager a bit to absorb what the government hopes will be useful allies in the struggle against the major threat to government power - the african people.

In other words, these so-called reforms are very far removed from the kind of political changes which are necessary if South Africa is to avoid an inevitable drift towards increasing conflict and social instability. So where does that leave the government and PW Botha in particular? It leaves him making tentative moves towards minor reforms - towards broadening the base of his laager - in the hope that this will win him more support among the white opposition, the business community, coloured and indian groups and, of course - and importantly - the international community. He hopes in this way to strengthen his political base and win support for his bid to impose a bantustan-like structure on South Africa, ie to deny africans any meaningful political rights in South Africa. Yet even this tentative bid to broaden his power base has cost him a sizeable amount of support among the extreme right wing, threatening to turn him into a pariah among the Afrikaners. So he wavers, unsure precisely how far to go, while black opposition against him continues to mount.

But what real chance is there that the present political reforms will succeed in widening government's social base of support? This is a question which should not be dismissed before it has been seriously considered, since the National Party at least seems to see these reforms as having a good chance of succeeding.

Perhaps the place to start in answering this question is to ask what new powers these reforms

actually offer those groups that the government hopes to win over. Formally, the reforms do of course offer both the coloured and indian communities access to the new parliamentary system: they will have representation in two of the three racially separate chambers that will be created under the new system (the third will of course be occupied by whites). They will also be represented on the new President's Council which will consist of 35 elected representatives, of whom ten will be coloured, five indian, and 20 white. They will also be represented on the electoral college which will elect the President (the college will consist of 50 whites, 25 coloureds and 13 indians). Since the President will appoint the cabinet and since there will be no fixed racial composition in that body, coloured and indian persons may well be members of a future South African government. Thus, in formal terms, there clearly is an advance on the existing situation in terms of drawing coloureds and indians into the new decision-making machinery.

But what real power will these formal changes actually confer? In terms of representation in the new chambers of parliament it should be noted that white, coloured and indian chambers will play a dual role. They will deliberate partly on matters which the President decrees are of interest to their communities only - and in this sense the coloured and indian chambers will probably emerge as no more than glorified versions of the present CRC and SAIC. However, where a matter is decreed by the President to be of mutual concern to all three racial groups (one wonders which matters won't have such relevance?), it will be debated in all three chambers and if there is disagreement among the chambers the matter will be referred to the President's Council. Here the whites have an in-built majority with 20 elected members as opposed to a combined strength of 15 for coloureds and indians. But will it not be possible for some of the whites in the Council, say those who are members of the PFP, to link up with the coloured



and indian representatives and out-vote the Nationalist representatives? This is unlikely, since in addition to the 35 elected representatives of the Council, the President will be empowered to appoint 25 members of the Council. Mr Botha, it seems, is leaving nothing to chance!

Finally, under the new system massive powers will be concentrated in the hands of the President who will effectively combine the functions of the present President and Prime Minister. The portfolios and powers falling under his control will thus be removed from the ambit of control of the three chambers and the President's Council. In other words, these latter bodies will have considerably less power than does the present all-white parliament, while the President will become a new and potent force in South African politics. His election will be controlled by whites who will have a majority of 12 on the 88 member electoral college. Thus, in the final analysis, the control which whites have through the electoral college gives them the power to elect the President who in turn gains awesome new powers and also, through his right of appointment to the President's Council, gains for the whites control over the President's Council. In real terms, then, these reforms do little to enhance the power of coloureds and indians.

But of course this does not necessarily mean that there will not be members of these racial groups who will not seek access to these bodies. Undoubtedly there will, but it is difficult to see how such access will help them to bring about the changes which they will need to win if they are to gain popular support among their respective communities. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that these reforms are being introduced at a time of rising political consciousness among the coloured and indian communities (witness the success of the anti-SAIC campaign earlier this year), and of growing demands for unity amongst all racially oppressed people in South Africa - ie, including africans! And the most glaring omission of all in the proposed reforms is that

they make no attempt to include africans. For the african people, political representation remains confined to the bantustans.

But this need not of course always be the case. It is quite possible that present government claims that some way must be found through which urban-based africans are incorporated politically into the bantustans could be reversed in the future, and place be made for the inclusion of urban africans into the President's Council system. It would require certain alterations in the proportions in which the different racial groups are represented on the Council, but there would be no major difficulty in including an african chamber - representing urban africans only - in the new system.

Were such a change to be introduced it would be a continuation of the process carried out by the Riekert Commission which sought to divide urban africans from migrants. With no rights of residence in the urban areas, migrants would continue to be represented in the bantustans while the higher paid, more skilled and unionised african workers and their families would gain political representation in the new President's Council system. The aim of such a manoeuvre would clearly be to further extend the white-controlled laager by making greater inroads into the unity which is being built among the african people.

But what if these elaborate plans do not achieve the support of significant sections of the black population? What if the whole constitutional reform programme has the reverse effect and, as the far right no doubt fears, simply encourages black people to intensify their opposition to the system of white domination no matter what its form? Should such a scenario develop, the government will have little choice other than to try and crush such resistance. That is why together with all the talk of reform at the moment we also have an intensification of repression: the further curbing of press freedom, tightening

up of the security laws, an ever larger political role for the armed forces. The government cannot enter into the choppy waters of reform without guarding itself against the danger of being swamped. It is no accident that when the Prime Minister moves around the country advocating his reform strategy, General Magnus Malan is never far behind.

Duncan Innes

This article is based on a public address that was delivered to the Detainees' Support Committee in Durban earlier this year.

# dissertations

## DSG/SARS DISSERTATION SERIES\*

The Southern African Research Service (SARS), in conjunction with the Development Studies Group (DSG), is publishing certain dissertations which would not otherwise become easily available.

The first in this series, submitted as part of a BA (honours) degree at the University of Witwatersrand by J. Perlmán, is entitled

The State and the African Working Class in the Pretoria - Odi Area: Population Relocation, State Management and Class Restructuring.

This publication will become available during August 1982 and can be ordered from either

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This dissertation, by John Perlmán, examines the policies, practices and structures through which the South African state has tried to regulate the residence, movement and employment of the african population - and the working class in particular - in what the author calls the Pretoria - Odi complex.

The focus is mainly on Ga-Rankuwa and Mabopane, which are townships in the 'independent' bantustan of BophuthaTswana; on Soshanguye which was excised from BophuthaTswana in 1976; and on the densely-settled 'squatter' areas of Minterveld and Marikana which border on these townships.

The Pretoria townships of Mamelodi and Atteridgeville are also discussed and examined.

\* The DSG/SARS Dissertation Series complements and expands a similar service run by the Africa Perspective group. Forthcoming titles produced in both series will be announced from time to time.

# CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS

AFTER the 1981 general election revealed a rightward swing disquieting to the government, one newspaper commentator suggested that it should dissolve the electorate and choose another. At the time, the suggestion was made in jest. When the official proposals for a new constitution were released this year, however, it seemed as if it had been taken all too literally.

The mounting popular challenges to the South African state, along with the changing needs and composition of capital, have led the dominant classes to seek new alliances and policies to promote their interests, while classes formerly allied to them struggle for a return to old strategies. The process of restructuring is already well underway in a number of areas, such as labour and education. This year, the restructuring of the political system began, as the ruling party proposed a new constitution and underwent a severe split.

The proposals, as framed by the Constitutional Committee of the President's Council and detailed by the government, provide for a dominant executive President chosen by whites, a tri-cameral parliament including whites, coloureds and indians, and the continuing denial of any say in the central government to the african majority. Liberal commentators have praised the proposals as a breach in the political colour bar, and some English-language newspapers have joined their Afrikaans counterparts in campaigning vigorously for their acceptance. Critics have focussed on the extremely circumscribed nature of the 'power-sharing' proposed and the exclusion of africans, along with institutional issues such as the President's proposed powers.

While such an approach may be adequate for purposes of public propaganda, it is no substitute for rigorous analysis of the new proposals. There is no

doubt that they are a fraud, intended to postpone the democratisation of South African society, but they represent, nevertheless, a significant change in the strategy of domination which has been followed in South Africa ever since Union. They represent an attempt to enlarge and re-cast class alliances which form the dominant bloc in South African society, replacing lower-class whites with support from segments of the coloured and indian communities. It is consequently important to assess the degree to which this initiative is likely to succeed, along with its probable consequences, and to weigh up the implications for democratic political movements.

This paper will attempt to address these issues, in the hope of stimulating further thought and debate. After recapping the origins and highlights of the constitutional plans, it considers the intensification of class struggle among whites, and the National Party's response. The discussion of coloured and indian politics which follows suggests that the new deal represents a bid to capture the support of petty bourgeois leaders and their followers, and that it is likely to prove attractive to some of them. The conclusion presents some of the tactical options in relation to the new dispensation which are open to those interested in establishing a genuinely democratic society in South Africa.

## CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSALS

THE EXPLOSION of anger in South Africa's black communities during the 1976 uprisings made it clear even to the ruling party that some sort of political change was necessary. The initial response of BJ Vorster's government was an unwieldy scheme, produced in 1977, for three separate parliaments for coloureds, whites and indians, each with their own Prime Minister and cabinet. Each would have had full legislative authority over their 'own' matters, while a consultative council of cabinets would have operated under an executive President to decide 'joint' issues.

Rejection of this scheme, which would have left control of the non-reserve areas overwhelmingly in white hands, was so unanimous that the government was forced into a rethink. The issue was handed to the Schlegel

Commission, which pondered it for two years, only to recommend the creation of a President's Council, as envisaged in John Vorster's plan, to consider the constitutional issue still further.

The President's Council (PC) was established in 1980, following the abolition of the Senate, as an official, multi-racial advisory body on political and economic affairs. Because it excluded africans, it was boycotted by the white official opposition, the Progressive Federal Party, and by virtually all the movements with any influence among coloureds and indians. A majority of its 54 members were consequently white supporters of the National Party, including a collection of out-to-pasture politicians, businessmen, and technocrats. The coloured and indian minority was comprised largely of figures plucked from obscurity, such as the Port Elizabeth social worker, and a few reliable wheelhorses from the established coloured and indian political machinery. Other members included crypto-Nats from the New Republic Party, a renegade ex-Prog, a coloured trade unionist from the conservative Trade Union Council of SA, and a right-wing political scientist with curious overseas connections. From its membership, it was difficult to escape the impression it had been set up to produce a political and intellectual figleaf to cover the NP's political designs.

The subservience of the council was shown even in the timing of its report. According to press accounts, the council originally intended bringing national constitutional proposals out only in 1983 or 1984, with at most a report on local government this year. It promised to provide both in the first half of 1982, only after being called sharply to order by Chris Heunis, the Minister with responsibility for constitutional revision.

This impression was confirmed when the proposals of the Council's Constitutional Committee were released this May. The main points included:

- The creation of a single legislature to represent whites, coloureds and indians, with africans still voteless.
- Transfer of authority to an indirectly-elected executive President, with power to appoint a

multi-racial cabinet whose members cannot retain seats in the legislature.

- Replacement of the four provincial governments with eight multi-racial regional authorities, shorn of legislative power and reduced to purely administrative bodies.
- The maximum possible devolution of authority to racially segregated local authorities for whites, coloureds, indians, and africans. These bodies would control so-called 'soft' functions with 'cultural content': schools, swimming pools, town amenities; etc. Multi-racial metropolitan authorities would control 'hard' (eg less controversial) functions such as sewer and electricity provision.

While they generated great publicity before and after their release, these recommendations amounted to little more than a public relations exercise in aid of the National Party's own ideas for constitutional reform.

As Robert Schrire put it:

Although the language of scientific analysis is used throughout the report, this often serves merely to justify proposals which reflect National Party interests.  
(RDM, 14.05.82)

Indeed, even in April, before the release of the report, NP members of parliament were already aware of the government's response and its final plans.

The haste with which the report was prepared, along with the need to give the Council's masters some room for manoeuvre, may help to explain the extraordinary vagueness of its contents. A number of points which were crucial to the determination of the true seat of power under the new plan were not spelled out. These omissions included:

- whether whites, coloureds and indians would sit in one parliamentary chamber or in racially separate chambers;
- how the powerful executive President is to be elected;
- whether the provinces should have appointed or elected executives;
- how the proposal for weighted voting in municipal elections (one for ordinary voters, two for property owners, three for corporations) would distribute votes among the races or classes.

The blanks were filled in by the Prime Minister, PW Botha, at the National Party's extraordinary Federal Congress at the end of July. In his speech, he sketched the outlines of a new constitution, based in large part on the NP's own constitutional plan of 1977. It included:

- One parliament with separate chambers for whites, coloureds and indians. The white chamber will have more members than the other two put together.
- An executive President, elected by an electoral college. The college is to be composed of members elected by the controlling party in each of the three chambers of parliament. Since the ratios of the college members will be the same as those in parliament, the candidate supported by the white chamber will win.
- A multi-racial cabinet, whose members may retain parliamentary seats if they wish.
- Joint committees of the three chambers to iron out differences in their versions of legislation.
- Disputes not resolved by the committees to be referred to a revamped President's Council, also indirectly elected. Twenty five members will be appointed by the President, and 20 by the white chamber of parliament, forming a controlling majority, while the coloured and indian chambers will elect 10 and 15 members respectively.

Decisions on provincial and local government have been deferred until at least 1983, so this paper will focus primarily on the new plans offered at the national level.

It is expected that these proposals will be implemented over the next two years. Legislation to establish the executive presidency and the new chambers of parliament is expected during the 1983 session. There is talk in official circles of holding the first elections for the coloured and indian houses during the second half of next year. The pace of planning thus makes it urgent for progressive forces to consider their response. South Africa is likely to be governed in terms of these new proposals as it ushers in 1984.

#### WHITE POLITICS: GOVERNMENT BY DEFAULT

TO a large degree, the new constitutional proposals reflect

the NP's thinking on how to retain political control despite the intense resistance its reforms have generated among the whites who will have to bear the costs. Many features of the new constitution are aimed as much or more at the white right than at white liberals or black opponents. They will enable the National Party to lose elections yet retain power.

Such measures are required by the intensification of class struggles among whites during the past decade. As the effects of the maturation of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie and the increasing centralisation of capital made themselves felt, intense strains emerged in the class alliance which had been organised to back the National Party.

As Dan O'Meara recently put it in these pages:

The verkramppte/verligte conflict was essentially a struggle between those who wished to preserve the class alliance dominated by the interests of farmers and the petit bourgeoisie against those who realised that in 20 years the social base of Afrikaner nationalism had shifted profoundly, and wanted to transform the ideology and politics to suit the changing class composition of the 'volk'. The verligte phenomenon was a response to the emergence, particularly in the 1960s, of a class of aggressive, self-confident Afrikaner capitalists, whose interests now went beyond those of the narrow class alliance out of which they had emerged.'  
(WIP 22:supplement page 10)

The crisis following the 1976 uprisings, and the state's attempt to meet it through restructuring the labour process and the provision of governmental services, produced a profound realignment in white political alliances, as the old ethnic blocs split along class cleavages. Botha's reformist rhetoric of 1979, along with the Information scandal, produced a powerful backlash among working class, rural, and petty bourgeois Afrikaners. By-election swings ran up to 25% or 35% against the ruling party in previously safe seats. These trends were confirmed in the 1981 white general election, when the Herstigte Nasionale Party and the National Conservative Party garnered more than 200 000 votes, or 14% of the total. Their real gains were even greater, with the far right vote rising from a derisory 3% to 10% levels, to respectable 20% to 30% levels in scores of farming and mining seats. All told, in 1981, some 38% of Afrikaners did not vote for the National party, according to estimates in the

Afrikaans press (Charney, 1981:3-8).

Thus, even before the Conservative Party break-away, the National Party had lost the support of a large proportion - if not the majority - of the groups which had historically provided its greatest voting strength: Afrikaans-speaking workers, farmers, and civil servants, especially in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Analysis of a poll taken by the Star newspaper in three constituencies showed that HNP support was heavily concentrated among these groups. It also suggested that many NP voters thought like HNP supporters, but remained bound to their old party home only by fraying emotional ties (Charney, 1981:10, 19).

Craig Charney commented:

The government's timid moves towards reform - along with its hints of others to follow - have threatened the fragile prosperity of those blue collar whites and smallholders. A freer labour market and better black training would erode the inflated wages of the white labour aristocracy. Many wage-earning whites see real wages falling already. As inflation sprints ahead white employers hold back on their increases to push up black's breadline wages. Small farmers, threatened with being driven off the land, are worried about maize price increases and government policies which increasingly favour the big farmers.

All these groups are bound together by the rigid racism often found among those directly in the path of black advance. It is thus no small wonder that miners and ticket-takers and many others who know they owe their livelihood to the colour of their skins are drawn by the HNP's promise to go back to Verwoerd.

(ibid, 9, 12)

Among more affluent Afrikaners, on the other hand, patience was wearing thin with the slow pace of reform. Of professional, supervisory, and middle-to-upper management Afrikaners in the Star poll, some 24% supported the PFP, against just 9% of their lower-class counterparts (ibid, 10).

Political changes were also underway among English-speaking whites, after the old United Party disintegrated under the lashing of the crisis. While the better-off were drawn to the PFP, the lower-class began to vote predominantly Nationalist (ibid, 10). It also appeared, however, that the working-class English vote was 'up for grabs' on the right: 46% of this group had no regular party identification, and

even among those who did identify with the NP, fewer than one-third said they did so strongly.

After the Conservative Party broke off from the NP in February, opposing PW Botha's acceptance of 'healthy power-sharing', President's Council style, as part of NP policy, the defections became even more menacing. National Party support among the white electorate slumped from its 55% level in the 1981 election to 44% in two polls taken in April, 1982 (Rapport, 02.05.82; Sunday Tribune, 02.05.82). The Rapport poll found the CP and HNP together to be leading the Nationalists among Afrikaners in the Transvaal. This conclusion was dramatically confirmed in the Germiston district by-election in August, where the combined right-wing vote was comfortably ahead of the Nationalist's score in a previously rock-solid Nationalist seat. In the wake of Germiston district, hardly a Nat seat in the Transvaal could be considered 'safe'.

The Conservative split cost the NP important elements of support on the middle reaches of the social scale. There were major defections among elements of the petty bourgeoisie: rural notables, farmers (especially in the Transvaal and Free State maize regions), churchmen, intellectuals, mid-ranking civil servants, etc. The CP success in rallying the petty bourgeois elements traditionally so important to the NP in the north was reflected in press reports suggesting it was winning the struggle for dominance in the Broederbond, the key network for ideological organisation. In turn, its success among these opinion-forming groups solidified the anti-NP trends among those lower down the social scale.

Now, the NP strongest support comes from the urban Afrikaans-speaking bourgeoisie and professions, with the rural bourgeoisie. It is also supported by segments of the intelligentsia, and the better-educated, more secure part of the urban petty bourgeoisie, particularly in the private sector. It also retains part of the skilled workforce, and its English working-class supporters though these groups are looking decidedly fickle.

All this adds up to one conclusion: the National

Party can no longer be certain of winning either a majority of the electorate or a majority of seats in a parliamentary election. The fate of Dirk Mudge in Namibia who destroyed his base among whites through reforms without gaining popularity among blacks, is before their eyes. (Indeed, if it agrees to a political settlement in Namibia, the government is likely to lose another chunk of its supporters.) A new set of political alliances is clearly called for.

Nevertheless, the Nationalists still wish to avoid the logical alternative, an alliance with the PFP. Much of their reluctance can be attributed to prejudices, socialised over the decades into all classes of Afrikaans-speakers. Even though they accept the need for specific social and economic reforms which will give blacks strategic positions in the economy, the Afrikaner bourgeoisie and political elite remains convinced that giving them equivalent political responsibilities will lead to chaos (Management, Oct 1982:31). Of course, such prejudices could be unlearned if they were perceived to clash with their holders' interests.

However, at present the verligte Nationalists have embarked on a different strategy to shore up their party's sagging fortunes. They prefer to try to win back a substantial share of the Afrikaner farming and working class elements, rather than converting PFP supporters, in accord with a political and economic approach which differs sharply from that of the Progs. While liberal thinking, like that of the Progressives, aims at creating a political and economic system accommodating enough to co-opt aspirant bourgeois elements from all races, thus defusing the threat posed by the African National Congress, the verligtes are merely seeking to acquire some black allies for a civil war against the ANC. Compared to liberal strategy, the verligte scheme implies much less redistribution and much more control (on both black and white sides). Given these ideological differences, despite the material convergences, it is thus not too surprising that a NP MP has said that his party 'would only consider a coalition with the Progs as a last desperate measure before bowing out' (ibid).

The new constitution, evidently, is designed to fit into this strategy. If the NP failed to obtain a parliamentary majority, as is quite possible after the next election, under a Westminster-type system, it would be obliged either to resign or form a shaky minority government. However, under the new constitution the NP will be able to exercise full power as long as it remains the largest single white party even if it has just 34% of the seats.

The key to the new system lies in the manner in which the President and the President's Council are to be elected. The electors who choose the President are in turn selected by three parliamentary chambers. As long as the unlikely event of the PFP and the far right agreeing on a single candidate is excluded, the NP should be able to choose all the white electors, assuming it retains the largest block of MPs. Since these electors will constitute a majority of the electoral college, they will ensure the election of a Nationalist President. In a similar manner, the Nationalist MPs will be able to choose the white members of the President's Council, while the Nationalist President will appoint enough additional members to give his supporters a comfortable majority in the crucial revising body.

Once in, those who assume power will be able to use the new system to perpetuate their rule. The President himself will not be responsible to parliament, and thus will not be able to be unseated by a legislative defeat or a motion of no confidence. He will be in a position to play the opposition parties off against one another in order to pass legislation, leaning right on some issues and left on others. (This is the respect in which the new constitution represents the 'de Gaulle option', recalling how a politically invulnerable President de Gaulle formed shifting coalitions in the French parliament during the first years of the Fifth Republic.)

The opposition parties may not even be present at a critical stage of law-making, the joint committees between the three chambers. And the President will always enjoy the safety net of the President's Council, with the power to revise legislation and

reconcile conflicting versions, which will remain under the control of presidential supporters.

The new constitution will thus make it possible for the minority of a minority to retain control of the political system. The old way of doing this, through loading electoral divisions in favour of the platteland, is no longer possible now that the country is aflame with CP sentiment. Thus, the leaders of the ruling party have been forced, instead, to revamp the institutions to beat back the growing challenge on the right and left. The new constitutional proposals will make possible a government with less popular support than any before in the history of South Africa.

#### BLACK POLITICS: CO-OPTION ON THE CHEAP

WHILE the new constitution will enable the government to sacrifice the support of some segments of its former white constituency, it also represents a bid to incorporate segments of the coloured and indian populations into the white political fold. The goal appears to be preventing the alignment of these groups with the revolutionary nationalism of the ANC, and increasing the defensive capabilities of the existing regime. The means to accomplish this will be constitutional mechanisms granting coloured and indian representatives little real power, but offering the trappings of equality and sufficient largesse to enable them to construct followings through patronage.

Prof Gerrit Viljoen, Minister of National Education, is in a sense correct in saying that the new dispensation reflects the success of separate development (Star, 14.07.81); but while he lays the stress on 'development', the important consequences are those of 'separation'. The 'Age of Social Engineers', as TRH Davenport called it, is over: coloured and indian people have been removed from most desirable residential and trading areas, largely to the benefit of Afrikaner workers and petty bourgeois elements. The market can now be trusted to retain these patterns. Likewise, disenfranchising the coloured and indian populations was a Nationalist priority

in the 1940s and 1950s, when they feared black votes could be used to oust them, but the NP is now confident enough of its ability to co-opt leading segments that it is willing to re-admit them to a subordinate political role.

If the search for a new approach has been made possible by greater self-assurance, it has been precipitated by the growing threat of instability. The years since the protests of 1976, and especially since those of 1980, have seen increasingly urgent attention paid by the government to ways to change the dispensation governing coloureds and indians, as the old methods of control have begun to fail.

The Nationalist Party government has never enjoyed much popularity in coloured and indian areas, but it has kept control through a sprinkling of patronage and heavy intimidation. The cornerstone of the system was the intense social disorganisation prevailing among the two groups. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, many coloured and indian communities were disrupted by relocations under the Group Areas Act, which dumped residents in unknown places without familiar neighbours or a sense of cohesion. This disorganisation was reinforced by repression, which sent most leaders into exile or jail. Fear of a banning order, detention, or a visit from the security police was sufficient to keep most potential non-conformists in line. In such circumstances, where mass action appeared impossible, the ability of those working in officially-sanctioned consultative bodies to dangle even minor benefits like houses or permits was a real source of influence over isolated, atomised populations.

In the indian areas, the official machinery grew from the basis of the Local Management Committees and the South African Indian council. These institutions developed no real class base, but positions within them gave certain petty bourgeois individuals patronage power, which they used to effect a limited mobilisation of members of their extended family and language or religious groups. A classic example of this process occurred in Actonville, Benoni, where SA Mayet used positions on the Indian Consultative Committee and the SAIC to enrich himself and become a feared figure in the

community (Star, 03.11.81). Most other Indian townships, at least in the Transvaal, have similar 'kingpin' figures, while in Natal, the petty bourgeois Reform Party used the Local Affairs Committees and the nominated SAIC as its power base.

A variety of indications show that these institutions never really afforded their members a popular base in the Indian community. Their inability to mobilise more than 10% to 20% of the population to vote in LAC and SAIC elections in recent years is indicative of their limited support. A recent review of survey data suggests that no more than these small proportions are presently in favour of groupings working 'within the system' (Post Natal, 16.06.82). As long as no one pushed against them, however, their rickety structures sufficed.

The position was slightly different in the coloured areas, where the coloured Labour Party has occupied an ambivalent position. Despite its petty bourgeois leaders, it has presented itself as 'anti-apartheid', and it has enjoyed a significant measure of popularity. It won clear majorities of the vote in the Coloured Persons Representative Council elections of 1969 and 1975, on turnouts of 49% and 46% respectively. Its intransigent refusal to allow the Council to operate smoothly eventually led the government to abolish the toothless body, although the coup de grace came at a time when other ways to incorporate coloureds were already under consideration.

However, at the local level, the Labour Party was difficult to distinguish from its Indian counterparts, except in its somewhat greater political skill and mass support. It took hold of the Management Committees in the coloured townships, and it used their patronage powers (along with those of the Coloured Representative Council) to establish a power base. In the process, it earned the same sort of criticism from within the community as the RP had done.

These structures of co-optation and control began to break down as the wounds of the 1950s and 1960s healed. With time, the new communities began to develop a sense of identity, as people grew used to the new residential patterns. As these sentiments emerged, so too did a new generation of young people, who had not

lived through the heartbreak of earlier crackdowns, and refused to be intimidated by their elders' fears. In 1973, the Natal Indian Congress was reborn, while coloured youth participated vigorously in the 1976 uprisings in the Cape.

By the early 1970s, the capacity of the system to contain popular discontent in the coloured and Indian communities was also in decline. The most important stream of patronage, housing, was drying up, as the tiny group areas allocated by the apartheid planners filled up. The burgeoning shortages of housing, school facilities, and amenities also helped make many residents intensely angry. Repression alone could not hold the line once many began to speak out. Though the resources of the state were large, it could not detain the entire coloured community.

Resistance was rekindled in this situation, especially among the young, as the massive support for the 1980 school and university boycotts showed. Following these boycotts, community organisations began to grow rapidly in the Cape Town and Durban townships, pressing claims on local authorities and giving residents an awareness of their own power. Their impressive capacity for popular mobilisation was revealed in the 1981 anti-SAIC campaign, which helped produce a 90% stayaway in the SAIC elections.

On the part of the government, there has been a growing acceptance that the strategy of baaskap is outmoded, and an attempt instead to win some degree of acquiescence from coloureds and Indians. Since 1976, the authorities have been aware of the growing threat posed by the ANC, and they dread an alliance which would unite coloureds and Indians with revolutionary African nationalists. Conversely, they are painfully aware of the limited defensive manpower available from a population of 5-m whites, and they seek to augment the ranks with 3-m coloureds and Indians. (The draft call-up bill prepared by the Ministry of Defence last year provided for the conscription of young Indian and coloured men, but was shelved until they had been granted 'political rights' of some sort.) There are also important economic considerations: projections by the National Manpower Commission and other bodies point

to a rapidly increasing need for supervisory manpower in the years ahead, and the somewhat better educational and social backgrounds enjoyed by coloureds and Indians (compared to Africans) make them the most obvious candidates.

Achieving the government's objectives, furthermore, does not require unanimous or even necessarily majority support among the coloured and Indian populations. The support of an influential minority would be sufficient to make divide-and-rule work, and encourage a flow of volunteers to join the army, while the shifts in labour demand will appear more the consequence of market forces than of official policy.

The wholesale incorporation of the coloureds and Indians is not on: not only is it not necessary, it is also too expensive, given the limited resources available for redistribution in terms of National Party thinking. Eliminating housing waiting lists running in the tens of thousands, and equalising educational expenditures, while coping with new demand, would present enormous costs, to say nothing of attacking other areas of social inequality. Likewise, the imposition of universal call-up for coloured and Indian youth would overstrain the training facilities and budget of a military establishment already at its limits, to say nothing of the loyalties of the young men themselves. (In Zimbabwe, the imposition of a call-up for educated blacks by the Muzorewa regime merely drove many of them into ZANLA instead: see Frederikse, 1982:235.)

Nevertheless, the new processes will probably produce some differences in political outcomes, which are likely to enable the government to bid for support among the better-off strata of the coloured and Indian communities. There will be a series of forums where blacks discuss issues with whites, such as the joint committees and the President's Council, which will probably help blunt some of the racist crudities traditionally associated with the National Party. Moreover, while the ultimate control will remain in white hands, its exercise will be tempered by the need not to force the coloured and Indian representatives to quit, making the whole structure collapse. The sort of departures such a set-up will probably allow was illustrated by the recommendation

of the existing President's Council that District Six and Pageview be returned to their original inhabitants, without challenging the notion of group areas themselves. The limits to the adaptations possible will be the limit to the sacrifices demanded of whites.

These will still leave a substantial margin to offer benefits to the coloured and Indian petty bourgeoisies. These could include reductions in educational disparities (perhaps through De Lange's subsidised private schools), more places at white universities, 'grey' areas under the Group Areas Act where they can rent or build houses, trading rights in the cities, and perhaps help from the Small Business Development Corporation or even the Industrial Development Corporation.

The proposals to devolve power to ethnic local authorities also offers a number of temptations, even while limiting the redistributive capacity of the new political system. Current thinking seems to be to give each such authority a fixed claim on local tax revenues. Coloured and Indian municipalities would thus have control over significant numbers of jobs, housing and zoning, and other forms of patronage. They would also be in a position to improve local amenities somewhat. However, the placement of facilities like urban swimming pools and schools under white local authorities would ensure that they would not be integrated. 'The result would be something that looks like South Africa today, but with black and coloured communities developed to the fullest,' according to one Nationalist MP (Post Natal, 12.05.82).

The consequence may well be the establishment of sharp class and ideological divisions within the coloured and Indian communities. The new dispensation may well allow sufficient opportunities to allow petty bourgeois blocs to coalesce, appealing to skilled and even unskilled workers with patronage and appeals based on racial solidarity. Already it appears more successful than the earlier efforts: even if a majority rejects it, it is supported by many more people than favour working 'within the system' at present. A poll taken at mid-year found that 41% of Durban Indians would vote in favour of the proposals at a referendum, with 53% opposed. Among coloureds in Cape Town, around 30% were

in favour, and 57% opposed (Sunday Times, 15.06.82).

Opportunities which conservative petty bourgeois leaders can exploit are thus definitely present, both material and ideological. Effectively, the new dispensation is a bid for an alliance between the National and Labour Parties, making the two partners in oppression. 'I wonder if Alan Hendrickse (Labour's leader) realises that he holds the future of the National Party in his hands', one Nationalist said in private.

The Labour Party does indeed seem aware of the role it is being asked to play - and it appears anxious to fulfil it. Immediately after the release of the President's Council report, the party declared its willingness to negotiate about participation, breaking ranks in its alliance with Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha movement (Sunday Times, 16.05.82). It is clearly sorely tempted by access to patronage and a platform - lost at national level since the demise of the CRC - most observers expect it will go into the new setup.

If it does, the move will mark off the political fracture lines within the coloured community. About two-thirds of Labour's urban supporters are conservatives, while one-third are radical. (The party's rural supporters are probably more conservative still.) Entering the new dispensation would almost certainly drive the radical wing out of the party, while attracting new elements drawn by its new respectability and largesse.

Though Labour's leadership and orientation is petty bourgeois, it is most popular among unskilled and semi-skilled workers, according to the Star poll. The better-educated petty bourgeois elements - especially among the young - feel a strong attraction towards the ANC. This apparent paradox is probably explained by the fact that the class position of the unskilled coloured is similar to that of the unskilled white, and that both feel attracted by racist and defensive postures, while the better-educated and more secure identify themselves and their interests with the liberation of the African majority.

What this may mean is that the new dispensation may lead to the creation of one petty bourgeois-unskilled bloc, acting as a counterweight against another, composed of more radical petty bourgeois elements and semi-skilled

or skilled workers. The latter grouping may be organised around the expanding network of community organisations within the coloured townships, particularly in the Cape.

However, the potential for divide-and-rule politics should not be underrated. While Labour appears to have only a minority following, it is not an insignificant one: in the Star poll of 1981, 24% of Cape Town coloureds said they would vote for it.

Among Indians, the position is somewhat different. There is, as noted above, no 'in-the-system' party with even a glimmer of credibility at present. The SAIC and the Reform Party appear almost totally discredited. The Congress movement is well-organised and strong: the most recent review of the survey evidence suggests its support is of the order of 30% to 35% (Post Natal, 16.06.82).

However, this political vacuum nevertheless contains room for exploitation, particularly since 49% of the Star's sample of Durban Indians said they had no partisan affiliations. (Similar findings were reported in a recent poll by the Sunday Times.) Attitude surveys of Indians suggest there might be significant support for a credible liberal party not tainted by association with bodies like the SAIC. The obvious candidate for this role would be the Progressive Federal Party, which one commentator has suggested could rival Congress for influence among Natal's Indians (Post Natal, 23.06.82). Once ensconced in power, of course, Indian Progs could play a role very similar to the divisive one outlined for the Labour Party under the new dispensation.

#### PERSPECTIVES FOR DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

THE NEW constitution thus represents a new attempt at political control. While it is clear that it must be opposed, the question is how. Is a strategy of total boycott, as adopted towards the old consultative institutions, necessarily the wisest? The new institutions themselves may offer opportunities for popular mobilisation which are worthy of consideration.

The recognition of the need for consent, implicit in the new constitutional proposals, implies the possibility of dissent. Although repression is

envisaged to ensure that dissent is not manifested too powerfully, the new proposals could not function if consent were merely orchestrated rather than freely given on the part of co-opted elements. Thus there will be institutional opportunities for the expression of reaction to the new dispensation, in the form of elections for the new parliament and possibly referendums on the new institutions themselves. There will also necessarily be a greater tolerance of overt, peaceful political opposition to those participating in these institutions, as complete elimination of the opposition would render them useless as devices for building support.

This attitude was already reflected by the fact that the authorities permitted the anti-SAIC campaign, despite its open support for the Freedom Charter. While some bannings and detentions followed the campaign, merely allowing such a campaign to take place would have been unthinkable a decade ago, and would probably have led to major prosecutions. However, doing so in the context of the SAIC election campaign would have rendered the elections an obvious farce.

These changes in the political climate associated with the introduction of the new dispensation create new possibilities for struggle, which must be debated on the basis of tactics rather than principles. If a referendum is held on the new proposals, it may be wiser to campaign for a 'no' vote than to call for a boycott. Such a campaign could put a spanner in the works, if the proposals were rejected by one or both of the black communities concerned.

A response to elections for the new chamber must be based on the configuration of political forces which participates, and the alternatives which appear the most effective. These include an outright boycott, outright participation, and a 'boycott ticket' which runs to demonstrate support but resigns if it wins any seats. (Such a boycott ticket was used by the ANC in elections for the Native Representative Council in the 1940s.)

If only the discredited conservatives participate, a boycott may be the most useful way to demonstrate solidarity in opposition. (Or would a boycott ticket be more useful for its disruptive ability?) If PFP-type groups contest the election, it may be wiser to contest

the elections and demonstrate that they do not enjoy supremacy, whether the seats won are ultimately assumed or not. Democrats also need to consider whether there is merit in trying to make the operation of the system impossible, as the Labour Party did with the CRC, and whether it might be helpful to have spokesmen in parliament with the immunities against banning and detention which such positions would imply.

In any event, whatever decision is reached regarding participation in the new national political structures, building strong and effective community organisations in the black communities remains an essential priority. These will be essential if the attempts at sowing division through the new institutions are to be resisted.

At the same time, the new local authority schemes may create new openings for gains by community organisations. The biggest problem of the new institutions will be their ability to 'deliver the goods', which will always be restricted by the need to limit the sacrifices asked of whites. At the same time, however, the new local authorities will probably be more susceptible to pressure from community bodies, since they will contain blacks themselves.

The consequence is that community organisations should be able to exact a series of gains for their residents by keeping up the pressure on the new institutions, while at the same time discrediting them by continually revealing their limitations. Their demands can be pitched always one step further than the authorities are ready to go. In this race for popularity, those who choose to participate 'within the system' will be like a runner chained to an iron ball: the ball of white resistance.

The new constitution is thus likely to mark the start of a new political era for both the dominant groups and the democratic opposition in SA, in which opportunities for legal, peaceful political activity which have been absent for two decades are likely to re-emerge. The implications need to receive wide debate and a creative response. The new institutions will pose new dangers, but they will also create new possibilities.

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# MILITARISATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

THIS article is an attempt to understand the increasing militarisation of South African society. Such an attempt necessarily involves a discussion of those crises which emerged during the 1970s, and the response of the military - and other interests - to them.

The major focus of the discussion which follows involves an attempt to explain the increasing dominance of the military, the expanding spheres of its activity, and some of the effects of this on society.

No analysis of militarisation can ignore the question of the state, and the way in which the state is viewed is of great importance. If the state is seen as the tool or instrument of one class, or of one part of a class, then it becomes impossible to trace out and understand the process of militarisation in South Africa.

A more complex notion of the state is needed, which takes account of contradictions and conflicts between and within state apparatuses and institutions. The possibility of class and other struggles within the state itself also has to be taken note of.

In this article, the state is seen as a complex and complicated set of relations and apparatuses (institutions), involving internal contradictions and conflicting interests. The state is thus an area where struggle takes place, with different interests competing for dominance.

## THE CURRENT CRISIS

Dan O'Meara has identified three areas which have produced shifts and changes in the balance of class forces, which characterise the current South African

crisis. These are

1. The growing crisis of capital accumulation, and hence profit, in the 1970s;
2. The rapid intensification of class struggles during the decade;
3. The workings of Nationalist politics.<sup>1</sup>

The clampdown on popular opposition and resistance organisations in the early 1960s paved the way for an increase in the exploitation of workers, and hence for rising profits. This meant a massive expansion in the South African economy; however, the economic expansion had limits because of a fairly small consumer market (workers were not paid sufficient to buy the goods they produced), the rising rate of unemployment, and a shortage of skilled labour.

In 1969 there was a shortage of 47 000 people to fill skilled positions in the economy; by 1971 this had risen to 95 655.

After Sharpeville, with the crushing of popular and class-based resistance, foreign capital began to pour into the manufacturing sector. Between 1965 and 1974 R3 559-m was invested in South Africa. Many new industries were started, others expanded and modernised using the technology of their foreign parent companies. During the 1960s, the growth rate of the economy expanded considerably.

The 1960s saw the establishment of monopoly capitalism as the most important form of capitalism in South Africa. Monopoly capitalist production, using more machinery and less labour than other forms of capitalism, created demands for semi-skilled and supervisory labour. This changed the previous division of the workforce into skilled and unskilled labour. As semi-skilled machine operators were drawn into the economy, many unskilled migrant workers became unemployed, and were dumped in the bantustan areas. White workers whose skills were no longer appropriate for new ways of producing tended to move into technical and supervisory positions.

The economic boom of the 1960s gave way to the recession of the 1970s. The high growth rate

in the economy fell; there was negative growth in the first half of 1976, and zero economic growth in 1977. Total investment dropped 13% between 1975 and 1977; the inflow of foreign investment began to dry up, dropping from R1 561-m in 1975-76 to R452-m in 1976-77. This recession made the problem of unemployment even worse, and it was estimated that there were 2,3-m unemployed in 1976. Despite unemployment, the shortage of skilled and technical workers was estimated to be 99 000 in 1977.

This crisis in the economy demanded a complex set of changes for capitalist production, involving a restructuring in all sectors of the economy.

But it is not sufficient to isolate the economy as the sole area of crisis. As a number of writers have noted (O'Meara, Saul and Gelb, and Moss)<sup>2</sup> class struggles intensified during this period as well.

From the early 1970s, a growing working class militancy took root. It began with the 1973 Durban strikes, with workers demands primarily being for higher wages or union recognition. The number of strikes rose from 76 to 384 between 1970 and 1974, and between 1977 and 1981 they rose from 90 to 342.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from workplace struggles, there were conflicts at many other levels during the 1970s. The 1976 revolts shook the political stability of the apartheid state. Initially, these were directed at a particular facet of the education system. However, they soon developed into a demand for the complete abandonment of the education system. By 1977, student struggle broadened and began confronting the institutions of township control. This resulted in the scrapping of the Urban Bantu Councils.

The state responded to the crisis in urban management by seeking new forms of control. In 1977, community councils were established, but this only provided urban african communities with new sites of struggle. The Soweto community council was elected in a 6% poll following a boycott of elections.

Other struggles in urban black communities revolved around rising rents, housing, bus fares and education.

The restructuring of capital, combined with intensified class and popular struggles led to pressures for changes which had become necessary to secure the domestic stability vital for economic growth. 'Reformists' highlighted the need to ease restrictions on the mobility, training and employment of african labour, and to reorganise the procedures for collective bargaining. They also argued that it was necessary to create the conditions for the development of a black petty bourgeoisie or middle class.

But the reformist or restructuring initiatives of the Botha government do not only have their origins in the changing demands of capitalist production, coupled with intensifying class struggle and resistance. Another important factor involves the rising dominance of the military, and this is the area that can now be examined.

#### THE RISE OF THE MILITARY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The war in Namibia has intensified over the past decade. There is presently an occupation force of the order of 80 000 South African troops in Namibia.<sup>4</sup> The military has rapidly become over-extended in its present form. The protracted and ever-escalating guerilla war in Namibia has highlighted its essentially political nature. In response, political and ideological strategies aimed at 'winning the hearts and minds of the people' have been sought by the military. With the increase in popular resistance in South Africa, the SADF has increasingly engaged in openly political and ideological activities. They have canvassed for state policies which are 'militarily defensible', particularly since PW Botha took office as prime minister. The openly political role of the military has, however, brought it into conflict with other state apparatuses which have traditionally adopted repressive strategies in periods of crisis.

The restructuring of the economy and the struggles of the dominated classes have brought to

light the realignment of class forces and interests within the ruling National party. Both Moss and O'Meara have emphasised the reconstitution of the class alliance that had formed the basis of NP rule since 1948. The white working class has gradually lost its position in that ruling alliance. Its numbers have decreased as white workers have moved into supervisory positions. Under-capitalised, small agricultural interests have also lost out in the ruling group as monopoly interests begin to dominate the leadership of the NP; the party increasingly becomes a bourgeois political party representing capitalist interests.

Afrikaner business interests have pressed for changes, especially through the mouthpiece of the Handelsinstituut. These reformist tendencies within the NP have shaken the long-standing class alliance which bound the party together, and have resulted in the rupture which led to the formation of the Conservative Party.

After the debacle of the 1975 Angola invasion, and the 1976 revolts, the reformist positions of the leadership of the SADF and powerful capitalist interests began to develop into an ever-closer alliance. The defeat of South African forces in the Angolan invasion highlighted the need for restructuring within the SADF itself. It was realised that defence technology needed to be improved, and the hiring of military technicians from other countries was stepped up.

In 1977, the call up for white males was extended from one to two years to meet the SADF's growing personnel needs. In this year, the restructuring of Defence policy was expressed in a white paper as a 'total strategy' to combat the 'total war' against South Africa.

The process of ensuring and maintaining the sovereignty of a state's authority in a conflict situation has, through the evolution of warfare, shifted from a purely military to an integrated national action. The resolution of a conflict in the times in which we now live demands interdependent and co-ordinated action in all fields - military,

psychological, economic, political, sociological, technological, diplomatic, ideological, cultural, etc. We are today involved in a war....The striving for specific aims...must be co-ordinated with all the means available to the state.<sup>5</sup>

The co-ordination of this strategy seems to be undertaken by the State Security Council which was established in 1977. It aims to co-ordinate action on a unified basis; it functions to

advise the government regarding the formulation of national policy and strategy in connection with the security of the Republic, the manner in which this policy must be carried out, and a policy to combat any particular threat against the security of the Republic.... The aspects of national security which require attention are the following:

- Political action
- Military/para-military action<sup>6</sup>
- Economic action
- Psychological action
- Scientific and technological action
- Religious-cultural action
- Manpower services
- Intelligence services
- Security services
- National supplies, resources and production
- Transportation and distribution services
- Financial services
- Community services
- Tele-communication services<sup>6</sup>

The shift in defence strategy to include political and ideological strategies marks the beginning of the rapid militarisation of South African society.

We can now examine some of the areas in which militarisation has occurred. For convenience sake, these have been broken down into economic, political and ideological levels of society.

#### MILITARISATION AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL

In the area of government, the cabinet and state bureaucracy have been reorganised since PW Botha - a long-time minister of defence - took office as prime minister. This has concentrated power in the office of the prime minister. Six cabinet committees have been established which are responsible to neither parliament nor the NP caucus. Each is headed by the prime minister or his nominee, covering the following areas: internal affairs, social affairs, economic and financial affairs. These committees are not only composed of

members of parliament or NP members, but include military officers and key businessmen. This is an indication of the extent to which both military and capital have institutionalised their roles within the executive arm of the state.

In respect of defence strategies of the state, the State Security Council is the most important decision making political institution. It, too, includes both high-ranking military officers and businessmen.

At an inter-departmental level, national security is co-ordinated by 15 inter-departmental committees which are also recently established structures. These allow for a co-ordinated and multi-dimensional approach to the policies and actions that they initiate. These committees cover all major aspects of government. They process the total national strategy directives of the State Security Council into inter-departmental strategies which are co-ordinated. National strategic planning is a process of continuous planning activity demanding a great deal of integration and co-ordination. There are military advisors present on these committees. There are also military officers on most public commissions set up by government. The inclusion of Magnus Malan in the cabinet as minister of defence was the first time that a military officer has occupied this position.

Increasing militarisation, with its demand for more personnel, has led the SADF to try and include other 'race groups' into the military apparatus. This has had important political repercussions as the state has attempted to incorporate 'coloureds' and 'indians' into the political structure. Chief of the defence force Constand Viljoen recently said that whites could no longer carry the full burden of defending South Africa and that the country had no choice but to involve other races (Star, 21.08.82). Similar sentiments have been expressed by PW Botha and Magnus Malan, emphasising that these 'population groups' cannot be expected to defend the country without having political rights.

It is in this light that the constitutional proposals of the President's Council (PC) must be seen. The proposals involve an attempt to draw certain strata of coloured and Indian leadership into an alliance with the white ruling class, thereby excluding the majority from effective political participation. The proposals also involve an attempt to further divide the dominated classes without altering the essential structures of apartheid. Such proposals create the basis for an organised response by the dominated classes. The struggle against 'dummy institutions' has thus become more intense as the need for the dominant classes to create them has increased.

The inclusion of Africans within the SADF is primarily tied tobantustan independence. The SADF has trained and established the Transkei Defence Force, the BophuthaTswana National Guard, and the Venda and Ciskei National Guards. The SADF aims to 'help the National and Independent States to maintain their security'<sup>7</sup> through military agreements that are entered into when these areas obtain 'independence'. Between 1974 and 1979, 1 200 black troops were trained and deployed. This comprised of 5 000 Namibians, 1 000 from the Transkei Defence Force, 1 000 from the BophuthaTswana National Guard, 600 in the SADF (ie 21 Battalion at Lenz), 4 000 coloureds in the Cape Corps, and 750 Indians.

It has been alleged that South Africa has been involved in attempts to destabilise certain of the countries in southern Africa, particularly Angola and Mocambique, but also Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho and Botswana. This has been denied both by the SADF and government sources, but the allegations persist.

Those who claim that South Africa is involved in destabilisation programmes suggest that they are aimed at

- \* damaging the economies of the frontline states;
- \* supporting materially and logistically opposition dissident groups in those territories with a view to creating internal stability;

- \* preventing those states involved from offering their territories as bases for South African and Namibian guerilla fighters;
- \* in some cases, to instal more sympathetic governments, at least in Mocambique and Angola.

Adherents of these views claim that the strategies employed to achieve these aims involve acts of sabotage, banditry, assassinations, and acts of savagery against members of local populations. They point to the following in support of their arguments:

- \* The 1975 invasion of Angola attempted to prevent the MPLA from assuming power by supporting and attempting to instal a UNITA government. However, the advancing SADF and UNITA columns were stopped and eventually repulsed by a combined MPLA/Cuban force.
- \* Since 1976, the SADF has continued to attack Angola through ground attacks, air attacks, border incidents, mine laying, artillery bombardments and combined ground and air attacks. During 1980 there were 1 100 recorded acts of aggression against Angola, and in the first half of 1981, the figure was 650.
- \* The Matola raid into Mocambique in January 1981 left 13 dead, and at least three ANC trained guerillas were kidnapped and taken to South Africa. One of them remains in prison.
- \* It is claimed that South Africa controls and directs a number of armed groups hostile to Mocambique. In particular, the MNR (see elsewhere in this publication) has carried out acts of sabotage, murder and committed atrocities in an attempt to undermine the political work of the Frelimo government.
- \* It is alleged that violations of Mocambique's airspace are frequent, involving reconnaissance and the provision of troops and supplies to the MNR.
- \* In 1975 it was claimed that South Africa was training Zambian dissidents in Namibia. They began operating against Zambian defence forces in 1976. There may also have been direct engagements between South African and Zambian forces along the

Caprivi strip.

\* South African forces are alleged to be training 5 000 former Rhodesian auxiliaries in the northern Transvaal. Denials of this have been weakened by the recent entry of South African trained ex Rhodesians into Ziababwe, and the subsequent engagement between this group and Zimbabwean forces.

\* The Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) is allegedly supported and armed by South Africa. It has undertaken assassinations and other attacks inside Lesotho.

South African authorities, including the SADF, repeatedly deny these allegations. The admitted interventions in Angola and the Seychelles do not add credence to these denials.

#### MILITARISATION AT THE ECONOMIC LEVEL

Here, militarisation is reflected in

1. Increasing expenditure on defence;
2. The expanding armaments industry.

South Africa's Defence budget has risen as follows: R44-m in 1960, R472-m in 1973, R1 899-m in 1978, and R2465-m in 1981. In the past 10 years, there has been an increase of 860%.

This steady increase in Defence expenditure has forced the state to cut back on social services such as housing, health services and education. This results in a further deterioration of these services. Government spends 0,53% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on african housing, and 1,36% of GDP on housing for all groups. Dr Michael Sinclair, lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand, is quoted as saying that the war in Namibia is costing R320-m a year, and is creating a 'dearth of funding for education, training and housing at home' (ADM, 12.05.82).

#### The armaments industry:

It was during World War 2 that South Africa began producing arms, making shells and bombs for the Allied war effort. During the 1950s and 1960s the SADF was equipped primarily with British and American armaments. In August 1967, the UN Security

Council called on all states to stop supplying arms to South Africa. However, the UK, USA, France, Germany, Italy and Israel continued to supply South Africa with arms. Anticipating an arms embargo, South Africa began to develop an arms industry by manufacturing ammunition in 1961. In 1964, with the assistance of private industry, the Armaments Board and the Armaments Development and Production Corporation were established. In 1977, the Armaments Development and Production Act combined both of these bodies into one - the Armaments Corporation (ARMSCOR).

ARMSCOR consists of nine nationalised manufacturing subsidiaries, and it distributes work to over 1 200 private industrial contractors and sub-contractors. In 1981 it was reported that it was the largest undertaking in South Africa, with assets of R1 200-m. These had risen from the 1974 figure of R200-m.

In 1981 it employed 29 000 people, while 90 000 more were engaged in armaments production in the private sectors of industry.<sup>8</sup> During 1981 ARMSCOR produced R1 400-m worth of defence equipment which included guided missiles, aircraft, artillery, armoured vehicles and computers.<sup>9</sup> For the past few years, there have been persistent reports that South Africa has exploded a nuclear device.<sup>10</sup> In February 1982 the Star reported that a US study had concluded that South Africa certainly had the technological and economic capacity to produce nuclear weapons (Star, 09.02.82).

South Africa, reported to be the world's tenth largest arms producer (Star, 31.03.82), also produces many other military products such as napalm and is preparing to produce submarines.

In 1979, 400 companies relied to a significant extent on defence contracts. For private manufacturers, the gaining of defence contracts means securing a stable market. Companies are thus eager to gain a share of the arms market. This would be even more so in a period of recession.

#### MILITARISATION AT AN IDEOLOGICAL LEVEL

At the level of ideology, militarisation aims to do one of two things through special programmes. Firstly, it attempts to encourage a militaristic consciousness among the dominant classes while at the same time appearing as a threat to the dominated classes. This takes place through the following programmes:

The schooling system (cadets, youth preparedness programmes, veld schools);

The Civil Defence programmes;

The increase use of women in active roles or in support organisations.

Secondly, the military aims to 'win the hearts and minds' of certain sections of the dominated classes through Civil Action Programmes. This is especially so in areas of strategic importance.

The school cadet system was officially launched in 1976 and is co-ordinated by the SADF and the six education departments. It serves as a forerunner to national service, promoting an interest in civil defence and aiming to 'stimulate in cadets a loyalty to their country'. With cadet training being started at coloured and indian schools, it is anticipated that the number of cadets will rise to 200 000.

The Civil Defence Programme was initiated by the Civil Defence Act of 1977. The aim of the programme is to

provide, by means of planning and provision of emergency measures, with a view to an emergency situation, the RSA and its inhabitants with the greatest measure of protection and assistance and to curtail civilian disruption in the most effective manner.

The local authorities bear the primary responsibility for the implementation of the programme. They are expected to establish an effective organisation that can

go over to organised action with a view to saving lives, protecting property and maintaining the essential services necessary for the survival of a civilised community.

Industries, commercial undertakings, schools, universities etc are also expected to create their

own civil defence organisations that can co-operate with the local authorities.

Civil Defence involves people in various aspects of emergency work such as traffic control, fire fighting, first aid, etc. At the local level in urban areas the programme is co-ordinated by a block co-ordinator who can mobilise volunteers in the area. Volunteers are expected to serve at least 96 hours per year. They can be called on at any time and are expected to be ready for duty. Regular drills are done and the SADF has a rating system, by which it assesses the various civil defence organisations depending on the state of their emergency plans, their speed of mobilisation and their level of preparedness.

Women were first used in the SADF with the establishment of the Civil Defence College in George during 1971. Initially they occupied traditional female roles such as nursing and clerical services; more recently, they have taken 'active' roles in the intelligence services and the Signals Corps.

Wives of serving members of the SADF automatically belong to the Defence Force Ladies Association. This strives to provide 'sympathetic understanding and active support for the husband's duty as defender of the RSA'. They organise group discussions and pay special attention to, and provide support for women whose husbands are 'on the border'. Women also fulfil supportive functions outside the SADF in organisations such as the Southern Cross Fund which spends R5,5-m per year on parcels and presents for national servicemen, and particularly for 'boys on the border'.

The civil action programme is focussed primarily on rural communities where there has been guerilla activity, or on areas that are seen as strategic. The strategy involves countering the political activity of guerilla fighters. National servicemen with particular skills are used for 'development' programmes in these areas (eg parts of Namibia, northern Natal, and the northern and eastern regions of the Transvaal. They are used as

teachers, technical instructors, doctors, veterinarians and agricultural advisors. There have been recent reports of the use of SADF teachers to alleviate the shortage of teachers in township schools.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Growing militarisation has inevitably caused resistance to its processes. These are very difficult to gauge or quantify, as much resistance would be informal, spontaneous and not immediately visible.

However, it is of interest to note that formal conscientious objection has grown over the years: in 1975 there were 10 objectors; in 1976, 18; in 1977, 25, and this has grown to 137 in 1981.

There is also some indication that the numbers of people avoiding call ups, or camps, has increased considerably over the years, although reliable statistics on these are hard to come by.

What is clear is that the crises of the mid 1970s shook the military to its core, causing it to embark on a major restructuring programme which has had important effects on the whole structure of South African society.

#### Notes

1. O'Meara, D. 'Muldergate' and the politics of Afrikaner nationalism. Supplement to Work In Progress 22, April 1982:2.
2. See, for example, the work of O'Meara, Saul and Gelb, and Moss.
3. Cooper, C. Strikes from January - June 1982. SAIRR, 1982:5.
4. The 1981 Survey of Race Relations in South Africa quotes The Economist as saying that there are 73 000 South African troops in Namibia.
5. White Paper on Defence, 1977, quoted in Moss, G. Total Strategy, Work In Progress 11, 1980.
6. *ibid.*
7. White Paper on Defence, 1982:3.
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9. *ibid.*

10. *ibid*:61.

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# TRADE UNIONS: America steps in

## INTRODUCTION

The recent visit of an American trade union delegation to South Africa could have important ramifications for the trade union movement. The possibility of excessive American support for certain unions may have the effect of placing control firmly in the hands of leadership rather than rank and file membership.

As an organiser from a Cape Town union put it, 'Although we have agreed to meet the delegation, we have misgivings about the role the United States government plays in the African-American Labour Centre.'

Its previous courses at Cornell University have had a corrupting influence on South African unionists. Their lavish way of throwing money around is not the way we believe in running a union.

A Scandinavian trade union official was even more candid:

The Americans are travelling around offering money independently to trade union leaders. That way of buying friends, goodwill and agents must be directed to the upper structure of the national unions as the goals are mainly political.

It is obvious that the (American unions)... don't consider trade union assistance from the point of view of giving a hand to the common worker's situation, but as part of US foreign policy. They don't give a damn about the common workers' situation, as you can easily see from their training programmes. They are always geared to trade union leadership training. But if you never train the rank and file members how will they defend their rights, especially against dishonest leadership...?

The history of American trade union intervention in Africa and Latin America involves the creation and exploitation of splits between unions, the playing off of union leaders against one another, and the

attempts to undermine some unions while supporting others.

Such intervention is not surprising; for while the rhetoric of the American union leadership involves a rabid anti-communism, this translates into an aggressive pro-imperialism, which of its nature involves intervention in the affairs of other countries to advance American ruling class interests.

In this context, the words of Irving Brown, long-standing American labour leader who will feature again and again in the article below, are worth bearing in mind: 'Why', asks Brown, 'shouldn't covert action be acceptable in peace time to try and prevent the possibility of war?'

## The AFL-CIO delegation

THE September 7 - 16 whistle-stop tour of local union offices by four officials of the American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO) - and the sudden flurry of interest in South African trade unionism which preceded it - has yet to be adequately explained.

Despite occasional appearances on the South African labour stage - one of them the offer of 'large sums' for 'properly organised black trade unions' by Irving Brown of the AFL-CIO's African-American Labour Centre to TUCSA shortly after the massive 1973 strikes - American union leaders have shown uncharacteristic reticence towards South African labour.

In the 1960s and 1970s their involvement was limited largely to recruitment of a handful of black unionists to their Cornell University training programmes - compared to the tens of thousands of Latin American unionists and workers given training and financial aid in the same period - and a watching brief by US labour attache's in South Africa.

The current tidal wave of American concern for the plight of local unionists dates from mid-1981, as, locally, the growth of independent (the US term is 'emerging') trade unions reached its peak and, internationally, the International Labour Organisation's 1980 programme of action against apartheid ground slowly into operation.

As the newly-formed International Labour Organisation (ILO) committee against apartheid met in Zambia during May last year, local unionists received drafts of the AFL-CIO's own programme of action 'in support of black trade unions in South Africa'.

The programme included the establishment of a South African unit in the African-American Labour Centre (AALC) 'to co-ordinate all US labour activity in support of trade union development' in South Africa; the programme also aimed for

- \* the creation of a special labour fund to finance trade union activity here;
- \* the development of other specific programmes in South Africa and the US 'for assistance in organising unions, collective bargaining, leadership and cadre training'.

The recipients were asked to comment on the draft programme.

In October, the full ILO adopted the May proposals for policing the anti-apartheid programme, including measures to enforce the political and economic isolation of South Africa. A month before this decision, the AFL-CIO released details of its own programme of action, to be greeted enthusiastically in South Africa by only Lucy Mvubelo's National Union of Clothing Workers, and the allied Garment Workers' Union.

Surprisingly, TUCSA's Arthur Grobbelaar, previously one of the local union leaders closest to US unionists - TUCSA and CUSA together accounted for 17 of the ± 22 South African trainees at Cornell - denounced the AFL-CIO plan as 'presumptuous', as local trade unions had not been consulted.

Journalists covering the September '82 visit

said that they observed a marked coolness to TUCSA on the part of the Americans, and were told privately by the delegation that they did not believe TUCSA was acceptable to the black community.

In his article 'CIA and African Trade Unions' (published in Covert Action's The CIA in Africa),

Canadian journalist Barry Cohen suggests that

...the US (is) clearly aware that the formation of a moderate pro-Western union movement will be essential in preserving the substantial Western stake in South Africa.

A visibly conservative, white dominated federation would clearly be unequal to such a role, and Grobbelaar, on seeing the AFL-CIO's draft, almost certainly realised this.

In August 1981, the AFL-CIO began its bid for

black community acceptability with the appointment of ex-PAC secretary for culture Nelson 'Nana' Mahomo as director-designate of its South African programme. To be based in Gaborone, Mahomo would be largely responsible for the running of the programme.

At about the same time, and emphasising the unilateral nature of the AFL-CIO's planned entry into South African labour, British trade unionists Bill Sirs, general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, and Terry Duffy of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, abruptly cancelled a planned trip to South Africa, with the explanation that

The (South African) black trade unions have

expressed some misgivings and we have not had the commitment we expected. I wouldn't visit any country except at the invitation of the free trade unions.

Another interesting side-light a month later was the startling threat to mobilise Namibian workers in support of an immediate national minimum wage by Swapo-Democrat labour secretary and head of the previously unheard-of Namibian Trade Union Council, Solomon Mifima.

Mifima had, at the time, just completed a 10-day course in trade unionism in Gaborone, courtesy of the AALC. Within a week the director of the AALC in Gaborone had slapped Mifima down with the announcement that his call had been 'premature'. Neither Mifima nor his NTUC raised the issue again.

Matters rested there until earlier this year, when the AFL-CIO signalled its growing concern for South African unionism with the launching of a newsletter entitled 'South African Labour News'. Militantly - if liberally - critical of apartheid and the South African government's approach to labour relations, the publication was followed by a 'strongly-worded' (to quote volume 1 number 3 of the newsletter) telegram from AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland to PW Botha over police involvement in the suppression of the black miners' strike in June.

Pregnant with phrases such as 'inhuman conditions' and 'brutal methods ordered by your government', neither the telegram nor the newsletter explain how, a scant two months later, the four-person AFL-CIO delegation was allowed into South Africa, nor why they were assured entry by the South African labour attache in Washington when they visited him.

A further signal of AFL-CIO priority interest in South Africa came with the August announcement that the George Meany Human Rights Award - awarded the previous year to Solidarity leader Lech Walesa - had been jointly won by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and Neil Aggett.

Almost simultaneously came the AFL-CIO's



THE AFL-CIO DELEGATION IN SOUTH AFRICA:  
O'Farrell, Brown and Chaiken.

justification for the South African visit: an invitation to US labour leaders to visit this country, issued on behalf of CUSA by Jane Hlongwane, secretary of the Steel and Engineering Workers' Union of South Africa. According to the July edition of 'South African Labour News',

she spoke (in the US)...of the urgent needs that face the emerging black trade unions: the need for trained personnel, transportation for organising and recruiting purposes, funds for legal services and office equipment.

The same edition also carries an announcement that the AFL-CIO programme of action had been put before the executive council only in February 1982 - a demonstrable untruth, in the light of the draft sent to South African unionists almost a year earlier.

One possible explanation for this is hinted at later in the same article: it refers to the programme of action being carried out in co-operation with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

CUSA, a major recipient of ICFTU funds in South Africa (reportedly R800 000 last year), early this year became the ICFTU's latest affiliate - and the first South African member since the demise of the ICFTU-funded Federation of Free African Trade Unions in South Africa (FOFATUSA) in 1966. (For details of FOFATUSA's formation, see the articles which follow this).

The US unions, not normally sensitive to the feelings of the ICFTU, had rejoined the international confederation in January, 1982, after an 11-year break (brought about by George Meany's accusation that the ICFTU was soft on communism and run by 'fairies'), and their South African programme would therefore have to have included at least a gesture towards international participation.

The delegation arrived on August 7, consisting of: Irving Brown, former AALC chief, appointed two months earlier to head AFL-CIO's international affairs directorate (as such he is the US unions' link man with the ICFTU); Patrick O'Farrell,

a US Marines' sergeant-turned trade union leader, now head of the AALC; and AFL-CIO executive members 'Chick' Chaikin and Frederick O'Neal.

Their first press conference was notable, if for nothing else, for the decidedly muted tones of the delegation. In the AFL-CIO's initial announcement in May last year, it stated frankly: 'At the present moment in history, we have mapped out our path. It is our commitment to see that this approach succeeds'. The statement was laced with references to the tenuous, incipient nature of South African trade unionism, and advocated a strong, paternalistic role for the AFL-CIO programme in helping black workers 'achieve a measure of organisation, trained leadership and a solid foundation on which to build'.

Not surprisingly, this aggressive promise of paternal aid disappeared as soon as the delegation set foot in South Africa (to be resurrected only occasionally by Brown, to the embarrassment of his colleagues, in private interviews). Local union leaders, even those sympathetic to the programme, would be hard put to admit in effect to their own incompetence.

And local union sympathy was hardly unanimous. Right wing and conservative group (South African Confederation of Labour and TUCSA) were wary of the programme's emphasis on black unions; while among others, attitudes to the visit ranged - generally - from the cool to the outrightly hostile. Even before their arrival, SAAWU and MACWUSA had indicated their hostility to the visit, while FOSATU had publically doubted the need for an 'external body'. A Cape Town unionist, probably speaking for many of the independent unions, said flatly: 'We will meet the delegation...we will certainly not agree to any involvement in their programme'.

Chaikin, answering questions at their first, Carlton Hotel, press conference, did not help matters by admitting, when asked who had invited the delegation, that he didn't know. An attempted rescue by O'Farrell, to the effect that the

invitation was 'a general one, expressed over many years by many unionists' fell equally flat.

All four US delegates were, however, at pains to point out that their trip was a fact-finding mission, intended to feel out South African union attitudes to the 'proposed' programme: 'We'll only come if we're wanted' was the main thrust of their statements - this at a time when a director for the programme (Mahomo) had been appointed more than a year previously.

The Americans were clearly treading carefully around local union sensitivities.

But Brown, in a later, face-to-face interview with a smaller group, spoke more openly about the AFL-CIO's motives. Questioned on SACTU he declared (after an initial hesitancy who he was being asked about) that SACTU's Congress Alliance connections linked it to an ideology 'which we abhor', and which cannot 'lead to free independent unions'. In other words, it is not the fact that SACTU has political links, but rather that the American's don't like the sort of links it has.

The delegation's hostility to the ANC and its allied organisations was not hidden. Asked by a journalist whether they did not think they were ignoring one of the strongest factors in the equation, namely the ANC, a delegation member responded that he did not think the ANC was an important factor.

Brown spoke admiringly of Buthelezi as the 'leader of the biggest liberation movement here' (in the George Meany Human Rights Award citation, great pains are taken to emphasise that many of Inkatha's 'paid up membership of upwards of 350 000' includes 'many black trade unionists').

When a front page story in the Sunday Tribune linked the AFL-CIO delegation to the CIA, an outraged Brown - for one of the first times - 'vehemently' denied such links. His usual response to such allegations is that 'I wouldn't tell you if I was CIA'.

In a response to the Tribune story run a week later, Brown demonstrated a rather sketchy knowledge



of local unionism after 'many years of concern with trade union development (in this country': he included in a list of unions met by the delegation something called the 'Independent Union'!

While emphasising that it was up to South African unions whether the AFL-CIO moved in or not, he said his organisation was prepared to send experienced trade unionists into the country 'to work especially with the new, emerging trade unions'.

The tour, meanwhile, continued. The delegation announced that it would not be meeting representatives of the South African Transport Services - the biggest single employer in the country - because of SATS' intransigence over the General Workers' Union recognition dispute. (For details of this, see 'Dockworkers dispute' elsewhere in this publication).

Interestingly, it had no such reservations about meeting Manpower Minister Fanie Botha, nor his director general, despite the recent announcement on the use of UIF funds to pay workers who did not join strikes. In this case, said the delegation blandly, 'a government which makes it more difficult for unions to carry out strikes could fairly be asked to change its policy'.

Both SAAMU and MACWUSA (and its allied General Workers' Union of South Africa - GWUSA) formally announced that they would not meet the Americans, MACWUSA on the basis that the delegation had met registered unions - with which MACWUSA refuses to engage - and that the AFL-CIO had awarded the George Meany prize jointly to Buthelezi and Aggett. 'This implies that Gatscha is in the same class as Aggett', MACWUSA added.

The union also accused the AFL-CIO of supporting the Reagan administration's constructive engagement policy towards the South African government.

SAAMU's Sam Kikine said the delegation had not been invited by local unionists, but had come on its own initiative, thus SAAMU's refusal to meet them.

The tour ground on, with little public comment

on the response of local unions, until on its last day, the Rand Daily Mail suggested local unionists had responded 'coolly' to the AFL-CIO's advocacy of an 'in-country' training programme in South Africa.

The delegation, said the report, nonetheless continued to push for a training programme based in South Africa and run by AFL-CIO officials.

On September 17, the delegation departed quietly.

South Africa's deputy Information Minister, Berend du Plessis, provided an interesting post-script to the visit only days after their departure. In an address to the Yale School of Management in the US, on the subject of US business operations in South Africa, he suggested that foreign firms had a responsibility to isolate those who misused trade unions for political purposes. When this isolation process did not take place, police had to be called in.

Help was needed, he said, to de-politicise the trade unions.....

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## Brown and the AALC

71 year-old Irving Brown has a long history in labour, and his recent visit to South Africa as part of a four-man AFL-CIO delegation is by no means his first African assignment.

Currently director of AFL-CIO's international affairs department, Brown rose to prominence as assistant to Jay Lovestone during the 1940s.

Lovestone, born Jacob Liebstein, became second general secretary of the American Communist Party in 1919, but fell from grace over a doctrinal dispute at the 1928 Comintern congress. Despite an attempt at reinstatement - involving support for the 1934 Stalinist purges - Lovestone failed to regain power and became overtly and vigorously anti-communist.

Brown joined Lovestone in an anti-communist

IRVING BROWN - 'Why shouldn't covert action be acceptable?'

witch-hunt in the United Auto Workers Union, and this appears to have cemented their working relationship. In 1944 Lovestone was appointed head of AFL's Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), aimed at countering growing communist and socialist power in trade unions in Europe, Asia and South America. He called in Brown as

European representative of FTUC.

Brown's mandate involved breaking up communist-led unions in Europe - and it is claimed that this led to his initial involvement with the CIA (formed in 1947).

At about this time, the French Confederation of Labour (CGT) was leading a massive strike in Paris; while dock workers in Mediterranean ports were refusing to unload American goods.

Thomas Braden, head of the CIA's European operations from 1950 to 1954, takes up the story:

Into this crisis stepped Lovestone and his assistant, Irving Brown....It was my idea to give \$15 000 to Irving Brown. He needed it to pay off his strong-arm squads in Mediterranean ports, so that American supplies could be unloaded against the opposition of Communist dock workers.

Brown's intervention in European labour went further than the financing of thugs to coerce union members into serving American interests. He was actively involved in financing a split from the CGT, and assisted in organising an anti-communist union group, Force Ouvriere.

According to Braden, Brown and Lovestone appealed to the CIA for funds to finance this split. 'Thus began the secret funding of trade unions', says Braden.

Years later AFL-CIO president George Meany boasted that the split between the CGT and Force Ouvriere was engineered by American interests: 'We financed this split - we paid for it', he said in 1964.

Victor Reuther, who ran the CIO office in Europe before its amalgamation with the AFL, admitted that part of his job was to keep a watch on Brown's European activities. He noted that Brown was receiving 'incredibly large funds from some US government source to get European trade unions in his pocket'.

By 1949, Western unions - including the AFL - were meeting in London to form a new international labour body, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). From inception, ICFTU was strongly anti-communist, having been set up to

oppose the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) which included both communist and non-communist unions. WFTU opposition to America's Marshall plan gave the AFL an important stake in the splitting of WFTU, and the foundation of the ICFTU.

In the mid-1950s, the ICFTU set up a special 'solidarity fund' to assist with the setting up of trade unions in third world countries - and by 1959 Irving Brown held the post of ICFTU - United Nations liaison officer. This placed him in an ideal position to intervene in international trade union affairs via his relationship with the now-amalgamated AFL-CIO, the ICFTU and the solidarity fund.

Brown's passage to the top was not without opposition. In 1955 the Swedish trade unions complained that his anti-communism was 'phobic', and by 1959 British suspicions over US intentions in Africa centred around Brown. Despite this, Don Thomson, author of 'Where were you, brother?' says that in 1959 Brown was 'scampering off to Africa representing the ICFTU and AFL-CIO and pledging solidarity fund cash without it even being discussed by the ICFTU'.

Brown's activities in Africa during this period remain shrouded in secrecy: however, one area of his operations is worth speculation. In 1959, an attempt was made to split or weaken the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), which formed part of the ANC-led Congress Alliance. An opposition trade union federation - FOFATUSA - was formed, and the split between SACTU and FOFATUSA tended to reproduce the ANC-PAC split.

FOFATUSA was established with £35 000 from the ICFTU - probably from the solidarity fund. In later years, various ICFTU affiliates and office bearers claimed ignorance of this grant, and there is a strong possibility that it came from funds Brown was spreading in Africa.

The timing seems right: Brown was in Africa in 1959, the year of FOFATUSA's creation. And while there is no hard evidence that Mahomo was involved

with Brown in setting up FOFATUSA, their relationship was well established by 1963.

Brown recently told South African journalists that Mahomo 'has very good practical experience of the problems in developing a trade union because of the links he had with FOFATUSA'. Whether this implies that Mahomo was involved in forming FOFATUSA, or only established links once he left South Africa in 1960, is not clear. But by 1961 Mahomo was definitely representing FOFATUSA in Africa, as witnessed at the Casablanca conference.

Whether Brown actually funded the creation of FOFATUSA or not, it is most improbable that this could have taken place without his knowledge and active approval.

The AFL-CIO started their first trade union programme independent of ICFTU in 1961. This was the American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD), set up to intervene in Latin America after Castro's winning of Cuban state power caused American concern. AIFLD was set up despite an AFL-CIO pledge to the ICFTU not to start independent programmes.

At the same time, the AFL-CIO kept total control of the ICFTU's Latin American regional wing, ORIT. AFL-CIO boss Meany was, according to Don Thomson, so confident about US control (of ORIT) that he offered to place a Briton in the hierarchy...provided Irving Brown was given overall responsibility for Africa....

The deal was flatly refused. There were too many suspicions about Brown.

Three years later Meany was to get his way, and Brown took control of American labour interests in Africa. This occurred when, in 1964, the AFL-CIO set up its second independent programme, the African-American Labour Centre (AALC). Brown was its first director, a position he held until 1973. Meany became president.

As Don Thomson points out,

A Bizarre conflict of interests then developed, and was allowed to continue....Brown, in addition to running the independent African programme, was still holding down the position of Director of the ICFTU's New York office,

dealing with the United Nations.

The AALC has been a major vehicle for American intervention in African trade union and labour matters. According to investigative journalist Berry Cohen, the CIA assisted in the foundation of the AALC, and an AALC official has admitted that its first secretary treasurer handled 'other than trade union' monies in his activities.

In Nigeria, the AALC actively intervened in union affairs, supporting the United Labour Congress of Nigeria (ULCN) in an attempt to counteract the influence of the more radical Nigerian Trade Union Congress (NTUC). It was these activities which prompted ULCN leader Alhaji Adebola to say

I formed the impression that some of the officials of the foreign trade unions in Nigeria had something to do with the CIA... Since the advent of the African-American Labour Centre in Nigeria...treachery and betrayal has found a comfortable asylum in the Nigerian trade union movement.

A Nigerian government investigation revealed that AALC representatives had participated in union policy-making meetings, and that American funding of ULCN was so large that most of the unions did not bother to pay affiliation dues. AALC money was also used to bribe labour leaders to affiliate their unions to the ULCN rather than the NTUC.

Both Brown and the AALC seem to have had a long-standing relationship with Holden Roberto and his discredited FNLA movement. As noted earlier, Roberto was, with Mahomo, co-leader of a training camp in the Congo in 1963; it was this camp which received PAC exiles from Botswana courtesy of Irving Brown. Since 1969, the AALC has materially supported two Zaire-based trade union groups, which merged in 1973 to form the Centrale Syndicale Anglaise. This group is affiliated to FNLA - and hence the Roberto - Brown connection of 1963 is re-established.

The recently announced AALC South African programme sets out to develop

specific programmes in both South Africa and the United States for assistance in

organising unions, collective bargaining, leadership and cadre training which could include the following:

- a). Work/study programmes in the United States;
- b). Union to union training in the US;
- c). Seminars and training programmes in South Africa;
- d). Provide data to South African unions which will assist them in organising and their collective bargaining activities;
- e). Assignment of US trade unionists to short-term programmes in special fields;
- f). Assignment of an AALC representative to work in South Africa;
- g). Educational activities with selected educational institutions in South Africa;

As already noted, director designate of the AALC's South Africa programme is Nana Mahomo.

AALC activities are largely financed by the AID development programme, which falls under the American government's State Department. Various sources have identified AID as a major conduit for CIA funds. Between April 1979 and December 1981, AID provided the AALC with nearly \$8.5-m to 'strengthen trade unions in Africa'.

The other major source of AALC finance comes from American-based multi-national corporations with investments in Africa. The AALC has opposed the disinvestment of American and other foreign firms from South Africa.

Over the years the AALC has run courses for trade unionists at Cornell University: about twenty South African union leaders have attended these courses, and it is presumably the AALC's intention to increase the numbers with the advent of the South African programme. AIFLD, the AALC's Latin American counterpart, has put over 300 000 people through their education programmes. These courses have varied from between 1 week and 3 months, and were held at local, regional and national levels. In 1976 alone, over 23 000 workers and unionists from Latin America and the Caribbean attended these courses.

By 1973, Brown had vacated the post of AALC director, and was succeeded by Patrick O'Farrell - who formed part of the recent AFL-CIO delegation to South Africa. Brown accepted appointment as AFL-CIO representative to 'free European trade unions

and international organisations'. At the time, the southern European countries were in crisis, with the dictatorships of Portugal, Spain and Greece showing signs of decay. According to the London Sunday Times (27.10.74),

.....after the Caetano dictatorship fell, Brown arrived in Lisbon to see what he could do to develop anti-communist unions in Portugal. In July he travelled to Rome, where his goal was to try to encourage splits in the Italian trade union government and stop the trend towards a unified communist-dominated movement.

Historically, Brown seems to have moved to regions when events there have threatened long term interests of American foreign policy: the late 1940s in Europe; during the struggles for independence in Africa, and in the immediate post-colonial period; and back to Europe in the 1970s when events in some countries seemed to favour communist and socialist unions and parties. In this context, his 1974 comments are of interest. He suggested that

Now is the time to assist trade union organisation in...Mocambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau -

now, 1974, when after years of struggle radical interests seemed capable of taking power in the aftermath of the Portuguese coup.

Ex-CIA operative Philip Agee has identified Brown as 'the principal CIA agent for control of the ICFTU'. With the AFL-CIO's recent re-affiliation to the ICFTU (January, 1982), Irving Brown seems to have moved into a position where he is ideally situated to advance American foreign policy interests throughout the world. In June, Brown was appointed director of the AFL-CIO's Department of International Affairs. According to Kirkland, President of AFL-CIO,

a major aim of Brown's assignment will be to develop appropriate co-ordination of the AFL-CIO's international programmes, including the work of its Institutes for Asia, Africa and Latin America, with the activities of the ICFTU.

Brown has a long involvement in South African affairs; his links with Mahomo go back to at least

1963. In 1973, after the wave of strikes in Durban, he promised TUCSA funding for 'properly organised black trade unions'. At the time, an AALC publication commented that

Unless responsible black leadership is encouraged....the next series of strikes could be disastrous. If government does not permit blacks to form and run responsible trade unions, industrial chaos and the resulting explosion may in the end destroy the very fabric of South African society.

In 1978, Brown invited conservative TUCSA unionists to the AFL-CIO conference, where they strongly opposed a call for American disinvestment in South Africa, and recognition of SACTU.

More recently (1980), Brown urged the ICFTU to recognise Chief Gatsha Buthelezi as a 'potentially decisive' force in South African politics, adding that he had often championed the Chief's cause.

In past statements, Brown has laid stress on the importance of responsible trade unionism and leadership. His history must raise a question whether his recent visit to South Africa is to encourage unions responsible to rank and file membership, or to the interests of American foreign policy and its various vehicles.

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## The Director: Nana Mahomo

Nelson 'Nana' Mahomo, 52 year-old director-designate of the African-American Labour Centre's Gaborone-based Southern African Programme, is well suited to the job.

Like the organisation he represents, his credentials are dubious, his motives questionable, and his style of operation at variance with his supposed allegiances.

A South African by birth, Mahomo moved through the ANC Youth League into the PAC to become its secretary for culture, before leaving South Africa on PAC instructions, 24 hours before Sharpeville.

He re-appeared a year later as the PAC representative on the short-lived ANC-PAC United Front, at about the same time as he attempted to win recognition as the representative for the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA). This attempt was made at the founding conference of the All-African Trade Union Federation in Casablanca - and failed after objections from SACTU.

Unfazed, Mahomo promptly joined the Rhodesian TUC delegation. His appearance at Casablanca marked Mahomo's entry into the labour field - he had no known links with FOFATUSA while inside South Africa and it is not clear who asked him to represent FOFATUSA at the conference.

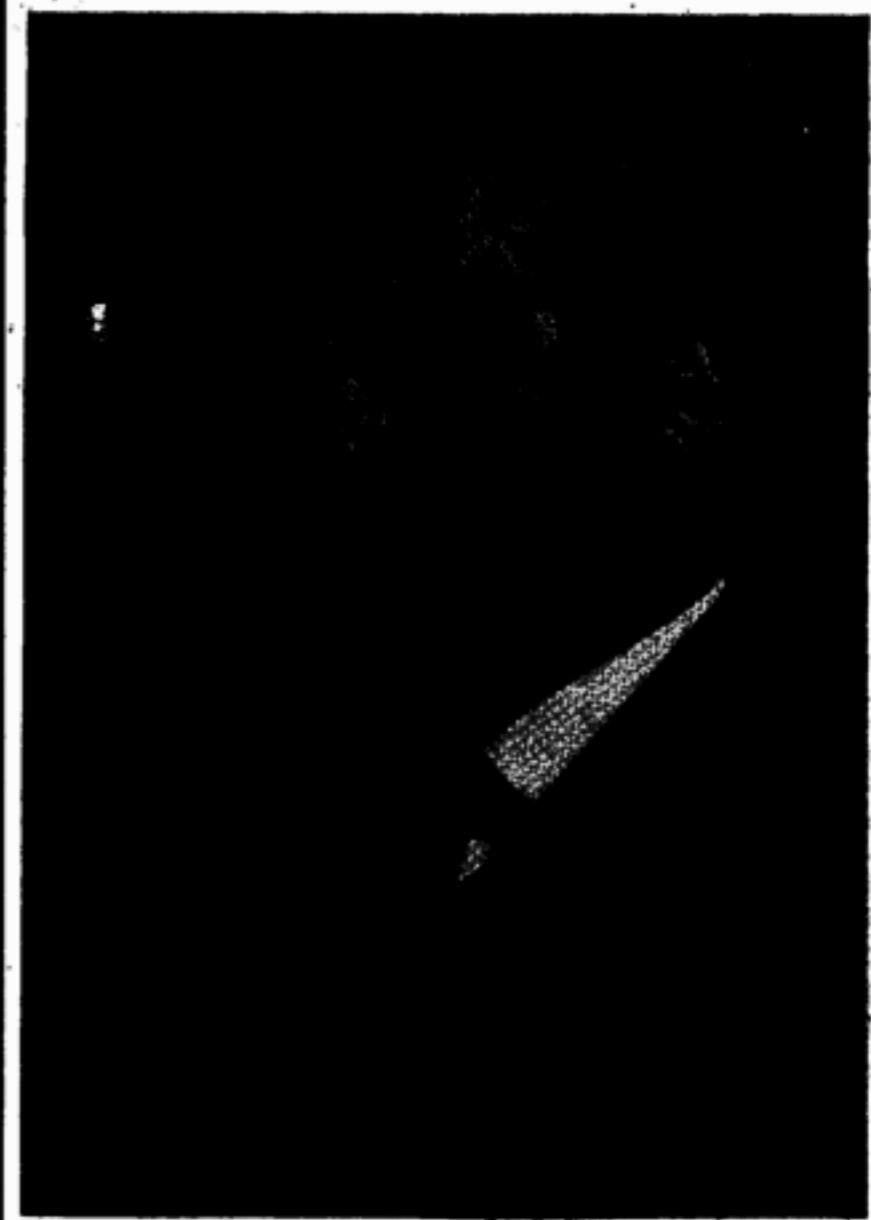
A possible explanation for Mahomo's sudden switch from culture to labour came from AFL-CIO's international affairs director Irving Brown, on his recent visit to South Africa. Referring to Mahomo's appointment to the Gaborone post, Brown told journalists that 'He also had good practical experience of the problems in developing trade unions because of the links he had with FOFATUSA'.

Given Irving Brown's likely participation in the formation of FOFATUSA (see the section in this publication on Brown and the AALC), and the close links between Brown and Mahomo evident by 1963, it requires no great stretch of the imagination to see Mahomo as a backroom link in the formation of FOFATUSA.

The Brown-Mahomo nexus was firmly established by 1963, when Brown helped Mahomo airlift PAC refugees from Bechuanaland and, later that year, financed the establishment of a training camp in the Congo - now Zaire - under the joint command of Mahomo and Holden Roberto, later to head the FNLA in Angola.

Mahomo took the post without authorisation from the PAC leadership and, when the camp disintegrated into faction fighting, left for London where he took over the PAC's regional office.

Both Gordon Winter - in the American edition of 'Inside BOSS' - and Mike Muendane, current PAC



AALC's NELSON 'NANA' MAHOMO - a CIA man?

representative in London, describe Mahomo as 'a full CIA operative' by this time.

Mahomo soon fell out with PAC chairman Potleko Leballo, largely over unauthorised activities and unexplained use of funds - among these the acceptance and unexplained use of funds from the AFL-CIO.

Identified as a CIA operative by R Barney Desai (former leader of the coloured arm of the Congress Alliance, who joined PAC in exile), and already in bad odour with PAC leadership, Mahomo

was expelled from PAC in 1964. He took with him, according to Winter, a large slice of PAC funds, refusing to hand them over to 'anyone but Sobukwe', who was in jail at the time, on the grounds that other members of PAC leadership wanted to steal the funds themselves.

Mahomo's attachment to PAC was, however, far from over. Two years after his expulsion, PAC accused him of introducing PAC dissidents to Irving Brown at a Latin American anti-apartheid meeting - presumably for financing. Another two years on, in 1968, Winter suggests that Mahomo and another PAC rebel, TT Letleka, planned an unsuccessful coup against Leballo. Leballo - also identified by an unusually open Winter as CIA-linked - later returned to the Transkei. As a diplomat for Matanzima's 'Republic', he underwent training in Washington.

Mahomo, meanwhile, had not been idle on other fronts. Joining up with Patrick Duncan - of the Liberal Party, later linked to PAC in exile - he produced, until 1968, a journal on southern Africa called 'Crisis and Change'. The journal declared itself to be directed at those fighting for change in South Africa, and was sent to journalists, 'opinion makers', banned persons and activists in South Africa.

Almost inevitably, Irving Brown was there to help it along. Research in the US indicates that the journal was financed through advanced order subscriptions - arranged through Brown.

Duncan was apparently unaware of Brown's - and Mahomo's - link in financing the journal.

With the closure of 'Crisis and Change' in 1968, Mahomo crossed the Atlantic to study at the Massachusetts Institute for Technology's Centre For International Studies - later revealed as having been established by and for the CIA. Here he was awarded a MA for his thesis on 'The rise of the Pan Africanist Congress in South Africa'. According to an unsupported claim by Winter, Mahomo studied further on guerilla warfare in South Africa - a subject of particular interest to the CIA at the

time.

Back in Europe in 1971, Mahomo appeared on a reception committee at a luncheon and dinner hosted by the AALC for third world delegates to an International Labour Organisation gathering in Geneva. With Mahomo in the reception line were two other ex-PAC leaders, one of them - Jacob Nyaose - being the founding secretary general of FOFATUSA, and PAC secretary for labour.

An American source claims that Mahomo received R2-m from the AALC at the time.

From culture to labour to academia and back again....Mahomo then turned his hand to movie-producing, with 'Last grave at Dimbaza' and 'End of the dialogue'. Both, according to Brown, were well-received and highly acclaimed among American trade unionists.

Thereafter, besides a brief side-appearance during the formation of the DTA in Namibia - when, again courtesy Gordon Winter, he introduced 'Kozo' Kozonguizi and Emil Appolus (both former SWANU exiles in the US) to the CIA - Mahomo disappears, until his Gaborone posting.

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# THE NAMIBIAN DISPUTE

## A. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS - The Settlement Negotiations

### RECENT EVENTS

AS FAR as the future of Namibia is concerned, recent developments once again leave more room for speculation than prediction as to the outcome of the protracted negotiations for the territory's independence. On 29 July 1982 it was announced that all parties involved had agreed provisionally to a ceasefire on 15 August - giving the impression that agreement on UN supervised elections had been reached, and that the end of the war was in sight. A week later, South Africa had once again invaded Angola, and also reiterated the position that the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola was a precondition for settlement. According to African diplomats, SA is 'fully aware' that the Angolan Government will not withdraw the Cubans until after a settlement, and has made such a withdrawal a condition 'in order to find a new excuse to abort the implementation of the UN plan or force Swapo out of any election'. A recent report in the Windhoek Observer stated that 'the Cuban forces in Angola are to remain and in fact will be strengthened before October. This means that if their demanded withdrawal is a non-negotiable condition for a settlement, the latter stands broken, a political force of even greater magnitude than the enfeebled coerced exercise launched in December 1978'. (WO, 19.06.82)

Scepticism regarding SA's intentions arises particularly from the SADF's continuing policy of 'pre-emptive' strikes into Angola, which leave an unresolved contradiction between the optimistic statements being made by the 'Western 5' and the intensity with which SA is dedicating itself to wiping out Swapo bases in Angola.

## SA'S TWO TRACK POLICY

IT SEEMS clear that SA is still pursuing what has been called a 'two track policy' - that is, of keeping all options open for as long as possible, of playing along with the settlement negotiations but spinning them out to a maximum, while at the same time building up the DTA as a de facto government, on the one hand, and on the other, launching massive raids into Angola in an attempt to wipe out the military wing of the party most likely to win a democratic election - SWAPO.

Probably the most important reason why SA has continued to be party to the diplomatic negotiations is that the Reagan administration will almost certainly negotiate the most favourable deal for SA, which must therefore be clinched while Reagan is in office. The US has used the bait of improved relations in order to get SA to give certain commitments, in what has been described as a 'carrots instead of sticks' policy. However, even 'Africanists' close to the Reagan administration have been aware that while SA has appreciatively 'gobbled up' the Reagan Administrations 'carrots' it has throughout the negotiations retained the ability to 'jump off the train onto another track when it appears that the domestic political costs of a settlement will be too high'. (Helen Kitchen, director African Studies Programme, Georgetown University Centre for Strategic and International Studies. Quoted RDM, 19.01.82.)

## GENEVA

SA'S TACTIC of stalling on the international negotiations first became obvious during the Geneva Conference in January 1981, when SA refused to take up SWAPO's offer of an immediate ceasefire on the basis that the UN could not be an impartial party to the whole process. At the time, it was thought that SA was stalling for time until Reagan took office a week or so later, but since then events have made it clear that SA has found one excuse after the other to delay the settlement process, while at the same time launching repeated

raids on both SWAPO and Angolan forces, as well as maintaining 'the Transkei' option inside Namibia.

Leaders of the Frontline states blamed the failure of the Geneva conference on the fact that no agenda was drawn up beforehand - as far as SWAPO was concerned, the purpose of so-called 'Pim' (pre-implementation) talks was to discuss the implementation of Resolution 435 of the UN plan, whereas for SA the aim was to prove the UN's impartiality. Frontline leaders said afterwards that the phrase 'to discuss the implementation of Resolution 435 and any other matters', gave SA the perfect loophole to bring up issues which would sabotage the negotiations. The Western Five and the UN should have known, they said, that SA did not intend signing a ceasefire or accepting Resolution 435, and (the convenors) therefore 'deliberately walked into a trap, giving SA an international platform to make propaganda for the internal parties'.

It is true that the DTA was given a measure of international exposure not previously enjoyed by that organisation, but it was SWAPO that emerged with the most decisive image and who created the most internationally favourable impression. After Nujoma had announced his party's willingness to sign a ceasefire, his entire delegation rose and saluted as he declared: 'My delegation is one, united, representing the oppressed people of Namibia!' During press interviews, the tone of SWAPO spokesmen was conciliatory and in marked contrast to the aggressive stance taken by SA. In fact, the compromising stand taken by SWAPO throughout negotiations particularly in the past 2 years, has led some observers to believe that the organisation has abandoned all elements of the programme adopted in 1976 which implied the overthrow of capitalism. Whereas SWAPO then committed itself to the aim of a 'classless, non-exploitative society' in which 'all the major means of production and exchange would be owned by the people', SWAPO leadership has in the last few years repeatedly declared itself

willing to guarantee the preservation of private ownership in Namibia. (Examples are: New York Times interview with Nujoma, 18.01.81; Garoeb in Salisbury quoted in RDM, 11.11.81.)

In terms of Resolution 435 of the UN plan (which was to have been discussed at Geneva), however, there are no a priori guarantees as to the future constitution - this is left to the elected constituent assembly to decide.

## CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES

Since the failure of the Geneva talks, the Western Five (and the US in particular) has sought to ensure that economic, constitutional and other guarantees, intended to keep Namibia within the framework of capitalism, are written into the settlement proposals.

This was also specifically in response to SA's statement during secret talks with the US in April 1981 (the contents of which were leaked a few weeks later), that SA could not live with a SWAPO victory that 'left SWAPO with unchecked power'. The assumption is, however, that SA would accept a SWAPO government but only within the severe conditions and restraints imposed by a neo-colonialist settlement.

The main points of the UN plan presented at Geneva (January, 1981) were as follows:

- + UN moves in 7500 troops under Prem Chand to take over from the SADF and SAP and monitor ceasefire (provisional date 30 March);
- + SA troops are scaled down from 20 000-1 500 over three months;
- + the creation of a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) 50 km wide on either side of the Angolan and Zambian borders;
- + A four month election campaign, followed by UN supervised elections (provisionally October). Transitional administration under the UN's Ahtisaari;
- + Total withdrawal of SA troops within one week of the election result;
- + Release of political prisoners and disarming of remaining armed groups;
- + The constituent assembly draws up a constitution.

The immediate consequences of the failure of the Geneva talks were renewed calls for sanctions against SA at the UN on the one hand, and the escalation of the war in Namibia on the other. During the March session of the UN General Assembly, SA tried to stage a 'walk-in' but was barred from participating in the debate, giving Pik Botha cause to unleash a torrent of abuse in a letter to UN Assistant President von Weizsäcker. (In January Botha had written an 18 page letter to the UN in which he described UN members and officials as 'malicious and vindictive hypocrites', and said that SA would rather face sanctions than UN supervised elections.) Von Weizsäcker replied by accusing SA of courting its own suspension from the General Assembly to support its claim that the UN was biased. The sanctions vote was defeated however, by the abstention of security council members Britain, France, the US, W.Germany and Canada, also members of the now-called 'Contact Group' (previously the 'Western Five').

In early April a US mission headed by Chester Crocker embarked on an 11-nation African tour to promote the contact group's 'revamped' independence plan. As mentioned above, the proposals now included the adoption beforehand of a constitution enshrining minority and property rights. Other points were that elections be run by a panel chaired by the West and composed of representatives of the Frontline states as well as UN staff, and that the contact group and SA act as guarantors of the new government and constitution.

While in SA, Crocker met confidentially with Pik Botha and Magnus Malan in Pretoria, and it was here that the question of Angola was discussed and for the first time overtly linked to a Namibian settlement. Stating that SA saw Savimbi in Angola as a buffer for Namibia, and calling for US support for UNITA, Malan declared flatly: 'Angola is one place where the US can roll back the Soviet/Cuban presence in Africa'. Pik Botha added that a 'wrong solution' in Namibia would result in SA having to 'invade' Namibia 'and other countries as well'.

'It would be better to have a low-level conflict there indefinitely' than this 'general conflagration', he threatened.

Thus after a visit to Washington in May, Pik Botha returned with a framework for a settlement consisting basically of the same proposals agreed to by the Western Five at a meeting in Rome, but which now also included the proposal that the Cubans be withdrawn from Angola. The plan also made no mention of a UN military peace-keeping force, making provision only for a civilian presence.

The constitutional safeguards, to be guaranteed by the Western Five, Frontline States and SA, were now listed as an independent judiciary; a multiparty system; property rights, and a pledge of regional stability. Other points were that the future of Walvis Bay would be left open to negotiate after independence, and that the West would promise post-independence investment.

#### DTA AND INTERNAL SOLUTION

BY THIS stage, the DTA had made clear its emphatic rejection of UN supervision and had announced its refusal to negotiate a settlement based on Resolution 435. As Ben Afrika put it: 'We regard Resolution 435 as a sunken ship...with no chance of salvage'. However, a DTA delegation's visit to the US in March to 'explore the idea of an election outside the UN plan, with the Reagan administration playing a leading role', had not met with much success - not only because it had coincided with sensitive discussions between US and SA military intelligence chiefs (the DTA had ignored a State Department request to delay their visit).

At home, attempts to broaden the base of the DTA-dominated National Assembly, with SA preparing to confer increased autonomy on local government, were also meeting with difficulty, and events during the next few months would serve to confirm that the 'internal solution' was becoming less and less viable.

#### TENSION WITHIN CONTACT GROUP

BY EARLY July 1981, at a contact group meeting in Ottawa, the US was said to have abandoned attempts to link a settlement to a Cuban withdrawal as the view of other contact group members was that there should be no preconditions, and that 'there was a good chance that Angola would ask the estimated 20 000 Cubans to pull out when SA left Namibia'. However, tensions were beginning to emerge within the contact group, particularly between the US and France since the socialist victory in France's April elections. During contact group discussions in Paris at the end of July, both France and W Germany showed their keenness to adhere to Resolution 435, whereas the US insisted (on behalf of SA) that minority guarantees were a 'key point'.

The massive raid into Angola by SA troops during August (Operation 'Protea') in which over 1 000 people were killed, further divided the Western powers when the US vetoed a Security Council Resolution condemning SA, and instead issued the most forceful expression of support for SA since Reagan took office, stating that the US 'would not weaken its support for Pretoria to curry favour elsewhere'. Chester Crocker, while acknowledging that the reasons for the US's high interest in Southern Africa were that the region was an 'increasingly contested arena in global politics' and Southern African trade worth some \$6 billion to the US, nevertheless tried to defend a neutral position on Angola, saying that 'it is not our task to choose between black and white in Southern Africa' - words which were described by an American columnist as 'so lacking in morality as to make a jackal puke'.

Nevertheless, US support for SA paid off in terms of the settlement negotiations - SA softened its stand on UNTAG, and by September was ready to accept a Western plan said to be 'founded on Resolution 435'. The deal seems to have been that the US would put pressure on Angola with regard to both the Cubans and Unita, in return for SA conceding UN supervision - complete with a UN

military presence.

#### 'AGREEMENT'

ON 19 September 1981, it was announced that both SA and the Frontline States had agreed to the 'Western Five Peace Plan'. The key points were that SA and SWAPO would, before elections, agree to a binding constitutional framework safeguarding individual rights (these would be entrenched in the constitution and only amended by a two thirds majority);

-During the transitional period, Angola was to guarantee that Cuban forces would not cross south of a 'red-line' in Angola, or undertake any military activities;

-SWAPO units in Angola would be restricted to base under UN supervision;

-The UN contingent would be composed of soldiers largely from the west.

The implementation of this plan was scheduled to start in January 1982, with independence by January, 1983. While the plan was claimed to be based on Resolution 435 (to meet SWAPO and Frontline demands), it was evidence rather of collaboration between the US and SA - during the secret discussions in Pretoria (April), Crocker had said:

...we believe SCR 435 is a basis for transition to independence for Namibia, but not for a full settlement. We wish to meet SA government concerns, while taking account of views on the other side. We cannot scrap 435 without great difficulty. We wish to supplement rather than discard it.

#### 435 AND MINORITY GUARANTEES

AS FAR as SWAPO was concerned, 435 was 'non-negotiable' as the basis for a settlement, and representatives of both internal and external wings found themselves hard-pressed to accept a plan which 'put the cart before the horse' (Tjongerero in Windhoek), or 'tied the hands of Namibians long before independence in the exercise of domestic and foreign policy' (Garoeb in New York). SWAPO was 'absolutely serious in its search for peace in Namibia' but could not accept that 'the future

of Namibia was being drawn up by foreigners. It is the prerogative of the Namibian people to do this', said one spokesman. At a Commonwealth summit in Melbourne in October, various countries (notably Nigeria) supported SWAPO's line against tampering with the UN plan, including the attempt to link a settlement with the presence of Cubans in Angola.

The reason why SWAPO objected to guaranteeing the rights of minorities, said Timothy Hishongwa (SWAPO rep, Europe and Scandinavia) was that the SWAPO constitution 'guarantees equal protection for all Namibian citizens - as individuals, not as groups', 'so there'll be no minorities', he said. (RDM, 19.01.82)

By the end of September, the Western package deal proposed a 'Bill of Rights' instead of minority guarantees, but the plan now also included the use of US surveillance technology to monitor SWAPO bases in Angola and Zaire. SWAPO was said to have conceded to SA's demand that 1 500 SA troops remain in Namibia during elections (confined to bases), as well as that the SAP and civil servants remain at their posts during a transitional period, and by mid-November SA, SWAPO and the Frontline States were reported to have agreed to the '1982 package'.

The DTA, at this stage showing the strains of internal divisions, muttered unhappily about 'insufficient constitutional guarantees, and claiming that their objections were being ignored, continued to assert the possibility of an 'internal solution'. However, during meetings between PW and Pik Botha and the internal parties, the latter were told that 'Phase 1' of the negotiations was virtually 'wrapped up', and that Phase 2 (transition) was now being discussed. PW Botha also dismissed the possibility of rightwing pressures disrupting the settlement process as 'the price of holding on to SWA was too great'.

#### THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

NEGOTIATIONS on Phase 1 - the constitutional proposals - were far from complete however. In December 1981

the issue of an electoral system threatened to deadlock talks, with SWAPO favouring a system of direct representation and SA insisting on a combination of elected and appointed members of a constituent assembly. Again pandering to SA, Western Group drafted proposals which included a mixed direct and proportional system, making provision for all parties to be represented in a constituent assembly, via a 'national list' system, while 50% of the seats would be filled by directly elected representatives.

Then, a week later, 'revised constitutional proposals' put forward the idea of 'one man - two votes', where each voter would have two votes - one to be counted on the level of a single national constituency and the other on the basis of a local constituency. Members elected from either system would have equal status in the constituent assembly and would draw up the constitution after independence.

This scheme was seen as a variation of the 'appointment' system and rejected by SWAPO as 'non-democratic'. Efforts by the Western group to reach a compromise by proposing a 'one man - one vote' system, but with each vote counting twice, were also rejected as being too complicated. Apart from this, the seven month pre-election period was also not enough time to draw up a constituency system.

This issue seems to have been set aside during the negotiations this year, in order to try and resolve other problems (the Cuban issue taking prominence), but latest reports seem to indicate that a system of 'one man - one vote' might be accepted, but 'the issue of constituency or proportional voting would be left to the Administrator General to decide'. (Star, 29.07.82)

#### THE CUBAN ISSUE

THE FIRST few months of 1982 saw concerted efforts by the US to make a deal with Angola concerning the Cubans. In January, Crocker met Angolan government representatives in Paris 'to explore the issue of recognition by the US of the Angolan government'. The US was privately offering to open an Embassy in Luanda - but a reconciliation with UNITA would also



be part of the deal. As far as the Cuban issue was concerned, MPLA spokesmen reiterated the Angolan government's position that constant attacks by SA were preventing Luanda from negotiating their withdrawal.

This issue remains as the main sticking point - although there are several other issues which have not yet been resolved and which run counter to the optimism being expressed by spokesmen for the Western Five. These include:

- the electoral system;
- the question of UN impartiality (a problem which loomed large again when Perez de Cuellar, recently-elected UN Secretary General, blamed SA for the failure of settlement negotiations);
- the size, composition and functions of UNTAG;
- an international fund for development to be sponsored by the west.

These are all problems raised by SA, whenever reasons for stalling outweigh the pressures to settle - and opportunities for stalling abound. As one correspondent wrote: 'Haggling over detail took two years last time. If SA chooses to, it can play the same game again.' (Allister Sparks, Sowetan 07.10.81) SWAPO, for its part, has made vast concessions, and the leadership has, in the process (as in Zimbabwe), been forced to abandon the essential basis of a revolutionary transformation in Namibia. The outcome of the Lancaster House conference, and the survival of capitalism in Zimbabwe, has given the Western powers confidence that a regime on a similar basis can be sustained in Namibia. And indeed, this was confirmed in a recent interview with SWAPO's Moses Garoseb when he said that SWAPO would be committed to 'racial reconciliation, the rule of law, political stability and a pragmatic economic policy...including cordial relations with SA'. SWAPO would draw on Zimbabwe's post-independence experience, he said; 'like Mugabe, we want a radical economic transformation without disrupting production.' (Star, 11.11.1981)

## THE STATE

A KEY component of the settlement in Zimbabwe was the maintenance of the old state machinery, largely intact, combined with the confinement of guerrillas in 'assembly points'. This allowed the new government to be constituted on the basis of the old state. In Namibia, the conditions are slightly different in that the existing state machinery rests on the armed power of SA forces. Were they to be withdrawn and replaced by SWAPO guerrilla forces, there would be the rapid disintegration of any coalition government (a coalition government being most that SA and the West can hope for), and the possible development towards a socialist state. Hence the hasty efforts by SA in the last few years to 'Namibianise' the existing armed forces (the SWA Territory Force, SWATF) and the administration of the state. The exclusion of SWAPO forces from the country during the transitional period and the maintenance of the SA Police force and Attorney General during elections, can also be seen in this light. Moreover, in the settlement talks so far, it is still far from clear to what extent the guerrilla forces would be integrated into the post-independence state.

## SWAPO AND INDEPENDENCE

HOWEVER, it is obvious to most outside observers that whatever the conditions of a settlement, and whatever constraints are imposed on the election process, there is very little that could be done to prevent an overwhelming SWAPO victory at the polls. The fact that SWAPO forces may be kept 350 km north of the Namibian border will not alter this; as a member of the local population told Leon Kok, editor of the Windhoek Advertiser, 'SWAPO is the people, the people you see around you'. (RDM, 15.02.1982)

The claim by SA military commanders that they would win 'the hearts and minds of the Namibian people' has been shown to be a hollow boast - in fact the presence of the SADF has had the opposite effect, and has convinced the people that only when a SWAPO government is brought to power can

there be peace.

An end to the war there would be - but it can by no means be assumed that a SWAPO government, arising on the basis of the current settlement proposals, and adhering to their terms, would be able to solve any of the material problems of the Namibian masses, or bring more than 'formal independence' to the country. It would inherit a bankrupt capitalist economy without the possibility of providing jobs or a decent living for the working class within the inherited framework.

Development will only be possible with massive injections of aid, and then only within limits. There is already a crisis in agriculture as a result of years of drought. The international recession in diamonds has begun to have a grave effect on exports. Added to that is the plunge in overseas markets for Karakul skins.

The underdevelopment of industry is shown by the fact that nearly half the government revenue comes from taxes on mining.

In 1981-2, government expenditure amounted to R888-m, and the revenue account could only find R514-m. While SA presently pays Namibia's deficits, an independent Namibia would have to finance them from aid or international bank loans.

Thus the country will be trapped in continuing dependence on the capitalist West, while also dominated economically and threatened militarily by SA.

All these circumstances combine to prove how closely the future of Namibia is bound up with the progress of the struggle in SA itself, if the aim is not just to defeat colonialism in the form of foreign domination, but as capitalism itself.

## B. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS 1981-2

### SA IN ANGOLA

DURING the past few years, SA military activity north of the Namibian/Angolan border has increased to such an extent that it would be true to say that the 'operational area', previously northern Namibia, is

now southern and even central Angola, and that a full-scale war is being waged in this region. According to a European Economic Community (EEC) fact-finding mission, the SADF was involved in nearly 2 000 operations inside Angola during 1981 and has maintained a constant military presence in, and effective control of, large parts of the Cunene province (Reported in the London Observer and quoted RDM, 3.02.82). Apart from the stated aim of destroying SWAPO's military bases in Angola, SA's objective seems to have been much greater: repeated attacks in the southern and central provinces, and on both SWAPO and Angolan army positions, indicate that the intention has been to create a 'no man's land' or buffer-zone where only SA and UNITA troops would be free to operate. Furthermore, the general destabilization of the region ensures that the Angolan situation be linked to a settlement in Namibia, ie that Angola, weakened by constant bombing raids and a deteriorating economic situation, is forced to negotiate both the withdrawal of the Cubans and a deal with UNITA.

Nevertheless, the main intention of SA's repeated ground and air attacks in southern Angola has been to curb SWAPO's military strength by continually disrupting their lines of reinforcement and supply, and by bombing both civilian (refugee) and military camps.

After the massive invasion by ground and air forces in August-September 1981 (Operation 'Protea' - see below), military observers spoke of a 'shift' in SA strategy in terms of the belief that a war against SWAPO was 'winnable' (the Economist, Sunday Tribune, 30.08.81).

SA, it was said, had revised the assumption that an international political solution would have to be negotiated (since it might result in a SWAPO victory which 'left SWAPO unchecked'), and was going all out for the 'military solution'. However, it is the writer's belief that SA military intelligence is aware of the fact that (a) SWAPO's ranks are replenished just as soon as they are depleted; (b) that they are deploying increasingly sophisticated weapons and tactics, and that in this sense the war is

no more 'winnable' than was America's war against the guerillas in Vietnam. SA's intention seems more to keep SWAPO's military forces as far north from the Namibian border as possible (in order, perhaps, to limit the influence SWAPO guerillas may have on any election process), with a longer term strategy of destabilising Angola so that the MPLA government is forced into a compromise situation with regard to UNITA and the Cubans.

In this military policy SA enjoys the scarcely veiled support of the US who refused to join in UN condemnation of SA after the 'Protea' invasion. (The fact that the incursions give Angola reason not just to maintain the Cuban presence but to increase their numbers, is outweighed by the greater dependence on co-operation with western investors which SA aggression ensures.)

#### OPERATION PROTEA

THE prelude to the massive strike in August, 1981, was Major-General Charles Lloyd's announcement early in July that SA forces were going on the offensive: 'Our purpose is to end the war and bring peace... the best way to do this is to follow the enemy and destroy him in his base. From now on we shall keep this up until SWAPO's military strength is broken.'

(Alister Sparks in Sowetan, 10.09.81.) The search-and-destroy raids, of which there were at least 15 in the first 6 months of 1981, caused SWAPO to change its tactics - troops were segmented into much smaller units and withdrawn further from the border. This in turn resulted in SA forces penetrating deeper into Angola, air attacks became more frequent, and the pattern of escalation was set.

In August 1981, Angola installed a defensive radar system and ground-to-air missiles. SA then embarked on a major expedition to destroy the installations in what became the biggest military assault into Angola since the 1975 war - the so-called 'Operation Protea'. One month after military operations in the Cunene province during July had left 114 dead, SA tanks and motorised infantry columns were reported to be 200 km inside Angola, heading for Lubango. (Star 26.08.81.) Within days, SAAF jets had bombed towns as far north as Tchibemba, 400 km north of the Namibia/Angola border (see MAP), and by the end of August, SADF spokesmen announced that more than 450 SWAPO and FAPLA members had been killed. (RDM, 31.08.81.) Two weeks later, the figure given was 1 000 dead. (RDM, 15.09.81.)

As reports filtered out over the next few weeks, it became clear that SA had been attacking



From Star, 26.08.81

both SWAPO and Angolan army positions, and the SADF subsequently admitted that only a 'small percentage' of those killed were SWAPO, adding that it was increasingly difficult to distinguish between SWAPO and their Cuban/Angolan protectors' (Sunday Express, 30.08.81).

A party of British journalists who were in a convoy which was strafed by a SA jet near Cahama, said it was clear that SA was waging war against Angola, and not SWAPO, as no SWAPO bases were seen. (RDM 07.09.81.) SADF spokesmen replied that since SWAPO had moved its bases closer to those of FAPLA, it was 'inevitable' that the latter would be drawn into the conflict.

(The moving of SWAPO bases away from the border and closer to Angolan army positions, as well as the construction of 'Vietnam style' bases consisting of trenches and underground quarters, had become necessary for SWAPO to escape ready identification from the air - SC.)

#### 'PLAN'/SWAPO FORCES

IT GOES without saying that SWAPO's military wing (PLAN) has become more sophisticated during the course of the 16 year bush war, making it a very different enemy to that of 1966, and an 'increasingly difficult target'. Estimates of PLAN's fighting strength ( $\pm 8$  000 according to SADF) have not dropped, despite the regular destruction of bases and the high kill rate claimed by SADF (the ratio given is usually  $\pm 20:1$ ) - a 'remarkable testament', as one writer put it, 'to SWAPO's resilience and ability to regenerate itself'. (B Pogrud, RDM 19.04.82.) The weapons used by the guerilla army are vastly superior to those of even a few years ago, and their supply has been facilitated by the use of a route via the southern Angolan port of Mocamedes (where a radar tracking station has been installed), instead of the slow and unreliable route from Dar es Salaam.

However, SA has also adapted its forces for war in Angola rather than Namibia. Early in 1981 the activities of a crack squad known as '32 Battalion',

or the 'Buffalo Regiment', began to be reported. This Battalion consists of about 1 100 men, of whom about 80% are black Portuguese-speaking (ex-FNLA) mercenaries, and operates exclusively in southern Angola.

According to the separate evidence of two deserters from this regiment, Edwards and Belmudo, the Battalion is responsible for the destruction of civilian targets in Angola (including villages, roads and bridges), which is passed off as the work of UNITA, as well as the 'deliberate killing and terrorising of Angolan civilians in any area where SWAPO might find support or help'. (Edwards' evidence from the Guardian, 29.01.81, RDM 30.01.81; Belmudo in RDM, 03.02.81.) The more horrific details of this squad's operations will not be documented here - suffice it to say that the allegations were denied by the SADF who questioned the 'moral fibre' of a deserter.

By early September, 1981, the effects of 'Operation Protea' on the Angolan civilian population began to be known: the bombing of the town of Cahama (250 km north of the border) had left 3 000 people homeless (RDM 02.09.81) and by early October there were said to be some 1 200 Angolan refugees in northern Namibia (RDM 08.10.81). During the operation, SA had captured R200m's worth of arms, as well as taking 79 Angolans prisoner - including a Russian Major, Nicolai Pestrotsov, who is still being held in Pretoria. By mid-September, the Angolan ambassador, speaking at the UN, said that 15 000 S Africans were still in Cunene (RDM 10.09.81), and by early October SA had launched a second offensive in the region, reoccupying the towns of Xangongo and Mongua. (According to the Afrikaans newspaper, Rapport, UNITA forces were holding the southern Angolan towns, not SA. No further information was available on this, but it is clear that the follow-up operation to 'Protea' - called 'Carnation' - was launched with the express purpose of creating and maintaining a 'buffer zone'. Further evidence of the co-operation between SA and UNITA in this respect was given in an article from the magazine Soldier of Fortune, where it was said that during Operations Protea, SA did not destroy the several hundred metre

long bridge across the Kunene at Xangongo 'so as not to isolate UNITA' (Soldier of Fortune, January, 1982, p42.)

In November, 1981, an Angolan MIG jet was shot down in a clash with SA Mirages, in the first ever air combat incident. The SAAF claimed that the Angolan MIG was 'aggressive', but as a Rand Daily Mail reader pointed out in a letter to the editor, SA action was totally unjustified since SA jets were more than 200 km inside Angola, blatantly violating airspace (RDM 02.12.81). The fact that Angola intercepted the SA planes however, is evidence that the radar system, allegedly destroyed during the August invasion, was in operation, and that resistance to SA attacks was increasing (RDM 09.11.81).

#### OPERATION 'DAISY'

DURING this same period (although details were only released more than a month later), SA troops conducted an 18 day 'search and destroy' mission, code-named 'Operation Daisy', described as the deepest penetration by ground forces since the 1975 war (RDM 07.12.81). Temporary headquarters were set up at Ionde (120 km inside Angola and once a Portuguese trading store and landing strip), and a 'massive' air and land attack launched on the towns of Chitequeta and Bembi in south-east Angola, followed by 'area operations'. According to SADF reports, 70 'SWAPO members' were killed or captured, for the loss of 3 security force members (RDM, 07.12.81).

The Angolan news agency, ANGOP, reported, however, that 46 civilians had been killed and 34 wounded in the same period. It was also claimed that toxic gases were used in battles during December 1981, when Angolan troops attempted to re-capture the Cunene towns of Umbe, Xangongo, Mongua and Ngiva (occupied by SA/UNITA), and were repulsed by SA forces (RDM 22.12.81). At this stage, the death toll for 1981, according to SADF sources, was 1 479 SWAPO guerillas killed (excluding 'Operation Protea'), 56 security force members and 90 civilians. There is no way of verifying these figures, or of ascertaining how many of the so-

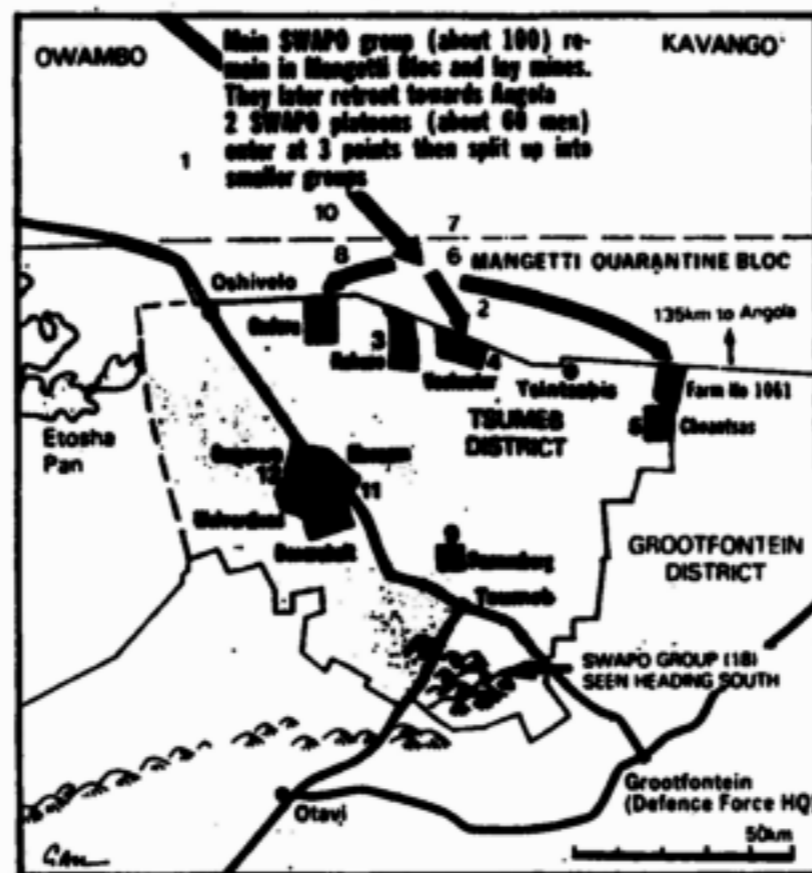
called SWAPO losses include Angolan non-combatants or Namibian refugees, but the Defence Force claims to have killed 3 856 SWAPO insurgents in the past 3 years (RDM 19.04.81), which would be nearly half of SWAPO's forces (according to the previously mentioned estimate). Either SWAPO's strength in numbers is vastly underrated, or the death toll is exaggerated (or both), since SWAPO action during the past two years hardly indicates that it is a spent force, or even drastically weakened. SWAPO'S ranks are continually supplemented by refugees from Namibia - particularly since compulsory military service was introduced in the territory in August, 1980, causing a virtual exodus of youths, who were at one stage said to be crossing the border at the rate of 100 per week (interview with SWAPO Defence Secretary, Peter Nanyamba, Star, 28.01.81). This same source estimated the number of Namibian refugees in Angola at 30 000, but the figure is now held to be closer to 70 000. Although this would include a great number of women and children, it can reliably be guessed that several thousand of these refugees are being trained as SWAPO fighters.

#### SWAPO INSURGENCE

INFILTRATION by SWAPO guerillas back into Namibia and incidents of sabotage continued through 1981, despite the escalation of SA raids into Angola which were ostensibly to prevent this activity. The main sabotage attacks were those at Oshakati (in February, 1981) and Okolongo (May) in Ovamboland, as well as at the Ruacana complex, where a mortar attack on the power pylons in November resulted in week-long power cuts throughout Namibia.

Infiltration by groups of SWAPO guerillas into the white farming areas also increased, particularly in the Tsumeb-Grootfontein area (the so-called 'Terror Triangle'). In April this year, in the most concerted thrust ever made, an elite squad of about 100 insurgents crossed the operational area's 'red line' and moved undetected into eastern Ovamboland. The group then split into small bands, one group moving east of Tsinsabis, another west, and the third

penetrating the Tsumeb district (see MAP). By early May, 5 civilians, 11 SADF personnel and 33 of the guerillas had been killed in various clashes with the security forces, but about 80 insurgents were still being hunted in the rugged and bush-covered mountains near Otavi. Meanwhile, posters offering rewards for information leading to the capture or death of the guerillas indicated that for the security forces the life of a SWAPO insurgent was worth less than some of his equipment: R2 000 was offered for the former, while the capture of a SAM



From Rand Daily Mail

ground-to-air missile would fetch R5 000 (RDM 08.05.82).

By 12 June, 1982 no incidents had been reported for more than two weeks and it was believed that insurgents who had escaped the dragnet had found their way back to the border regions. In April the SADF claimed that they had known of SWAPO's plans to launch a major offensive - hence 'Operation Super' during March in which the SAAF and 32 Battalion were reported to have killed 200 SWAPO

members at Cambena - but they thought they had wiped out the entire infiltrating force. Intelligence reports also led the SADF to believe the attack would be initiated from the Angolan coastal town of Mocmedes. The operation was in fact launched more than 400 km further to the west. The force then split into two groups, one of which was encountered at Cambena as they moved south-west towards the Kaokaveld. The second group 'consisting of some of SWAPO's best soldiers' moved undetected into Ovamboland (report from the Star, 24.04.82).

During this same period, three guerillas captured in the Tsumeb district during a previous incursion were convicted under the Terrorism Act in the Windhoek Supreme Court. Leading evidence in mitigation of their sentences, Prof John Dugard called for Prisoner of War status for SWAPO combatants, arguing that in the eyes of the international community SA's presence in Namibia was illegal, and that the actions of SWAPO guerillas was therefore regarded in a less serious light by a large segment of the Namibian population, as well as internationally (RDM 14.05.82). It is worth noting that this argument is similar to that presented by Herman Toivo Ja Toivo when he conducted his own defence during the Pretoria treason trial in 1968; Toivo was however sentenced to 20 years imprisonment, whereas Jason Segarius, Theophilus Jason and Lucius Malombo were given 9, 9 and 11 years.

#### SADF ATROCITIES

DURING the early months of 1981, when Generals Malan and Lloyd were still talking of a 'political' rather than a 'military' solution, it was announced that the SADF was backing its military operations with a programme of 'civic action', whose purpose was to 'win over the hearts and minds of local inhabitants and create a positive attitude to the SADF'. As the war situation has intensified, however, widespread allegations of security force brutalities against civilians in the border regions indicate that the method has been partly one of intimidation and force. Recent visits by clergymen

from the British and SA Council of Churches, as well as the Catholic Bishops Conference, have confirmed that SA troops are regarded by local inhabitants as an 'army of occupation', whereas SWAPO is seen as a legitimate liberation movement. A report drawn up by the British Council of Churches claimed that SA troops in northern Namibian 'were responsible for a reign of terror over the people they were allegedly protecting', (published in the London Observer, 14.02.82), and the SACC reported that 90% of the atrocities in the operational area were committed by SA forces (Star, 27.02.82), who are known to the Ovambo population as 'omakakunya' which means 'bloodsuckers' or 'bonepickers' (Catholic Bishop's Conference Report, S.Express, 16.02.82). According to the SACC report, the atrocities include 'burning homes, raping and killing women, detaining and torturing people and laying landmines which they want the people to believe are the work of SWAPO' (Sowetan, 24.02.82). The BCC report described one 'particularly objectionable practice of dragging through the villages the bodies of alleged terrorists behind vehicles and exhibiting them to parents, villagers and even schoolchildren' (Star, 15.02.82).

It was also noted that civilian casualties, other than landmine fatalities (which were always said to be the work of SWAPO), were never mentioned in communiques, but were given as 'terrorist deaths'. The SADF denied these allegations, but when Sunday Times journalists visited Kavango in March 1982 to investigate the claims, they found the allegations of torture and intimidation substantiated: civilians had been shot dead without any questions being asked (this referred to a particular incident on 22 February), school principals and church members, accused of being pro-SWAPO, had been assaulted and given electric shocks and then released without charges (S Times, 07.03.82).

The SADF subsequently announced that a board of inquiry would be set up to investigate allegations of security force atrocities - but the committee would consist of 'senior military personnel and

Ovambo representatives'. Calling for an independent tribunal, representatives from Namibia's three major church groups said they would refuse to serve on such a committee since 'the security forces could not be both the accused and the judge in the same trial' (Sowetan 28.05.82).

The only solution would be for SA to withdraw its forces from Namibia, concluded church representatives, adding that the longer the SADF is in Namibia, the greater the support for SWAPO. (RDM 19.02.82).

#### 'NAMIBIAN' SECURITY FORCES

IT SHOULD be noted, however, that a significant number of the security forces (40% of those in the operational area (S.Express 30.05.82)) are black - one unit in particular, the SAP 'secret operational unit' whose existence was only revealed in May this year, consists of 80% Ovambos (RDM 28.05.82). This is in line with the policy of 'Namibianising' the armed forces and the recent announcement by Maj-Gen Lloyd that the SWA Territory Force will form the basis of Namibia's Defence Force (Star 11.09.82). Thus a withdrawal of SA troops from the territory would still leave a substantial core of SA-trained and armed Namibian security forces, and unless the withdrawal is accompanied by the implementation of UN Resolution 435, ie free elections for a majority government, the war against SWAPO and its supporters will continue - with the SWATF and police units taking over SA's role. This would bear out Gen Malan's statement in December last year that SA is prepared to carry on the fight against SWAPO 'indefinitely' - but SWA would later have to take over itself if 'conflict in other areas necessitated SA's withdrawal from SWA' (RDM 18.12.81).

#### SA WITHDRAWAL AND THE CUBANS

THE QUESTION is: is the SADF pulling back? The recent Angolan offensive (July-August 1982) certainly gave room for scepticism regarding SA's intention of withdrawing from Angola, never mind Namibia. On the other hand, significant weight should be given

to the fact that the war is costing SA R1-m a day (RDM 13.11.81) and the taxpayer R320-m per annum (RDM 12.05.82). (In March, Gen Malan also asked parliament for an extra R100-m for a special defence account to finance operations 'Protea' and 'Daisy' (RDM 03.03.82).) It is possible therefore that the latest strike, in which 16 members of the SADF died when a helicopter was shot down and altogether 253 SWAPO guerillas were reported to have been killed (Windhoek Observer 21.08.82), was part of a final thrust before preparing for a phased withdrawal of SA troops (in the long term) and the transferring of responsibility onto the territory forces. However it is clear that such a withdrawal will not take place until there is a parallel movement of Cubans out of Angola - an objective which SA is trying to achieve by exploiting Washington's obsession with Cuba, whom the Reagan administration sees as a Soviet proxy operating around the globe.

(In a recent article published by the New York Times, a professor of political science at the American University argues that 'a close look at Cuban behaviour in Southern Africa suggests that the Cubans have not posed a serious threat to US interests, as it was expected they would, and he cites instances where Cuban policy in Southern Africa, (even if not by design), has been consistent with Western interests, not in conflict with them. 'If the Cubans are Soviet proxies in Angola, then they are strange ones indeed', he says. For example, in 1977 the Cubans joined with forces loyal to Angostinho Neto's 'non-aligned' faction of the MPLA to defeat a coup attempt by Nito Alve's pro-Soviet faction. Moreover, the Cubans have not pushed Angola to break ties with the West or to reorient its economy towards the Soviet Union - Cuban troops in fact stand guard at Gulf Oil's refineries in the Cabinda province. In relation to Namibia, Cuba has not used the repeated SA attacks on Angolan territory to carry the war to Namibia; instead Cuban troops have been stationed well away from the border to avoid clashes with SA. ('The Cuban Issue - An Ideal Excuse' by WM LeoGande, reported in Windhoek Observer, 21.08.82).

Nevertheless, the Cuban issue remains an 'ideal excuse' to delay negotiations while SA looks for a way to sidestep the implementation of UN Resolution 435, viz by seeking to establish a 'more effective' interim government in the territory based on a system of appointed 'ethnic' representatives. The implication of this scenario is that even if the Cuban issue is resolved, and SA troops are in the long run withdrawn from Namibia, such a withdrawal would not have to include a commitment to internationally supervised elections nor would it imply an end to the war.

#### C. INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS - Politics and the Economy

DURING 1981, moves to install the DTA as a de facto government in Namibia increased dramatically. In February it was announced, after talks between PW Botha, members of the SA cabinet and the SWA Ministers Council, that the latter was to take full control of executive functions in Namibia. By August, all executive powers except control of constitutional, security and foreign affairs (but including control of the civil service), had been transferred to the Council of Ministers (referred as the 'Cabinet'), and SWA was said to be on the 'brink of self-rule' (RDM 28.08.81).

However, a crucial component of this strategy was that the DTA-dominated 'interim government', as it has come to be called, broaden its basis of support. This section will look briefly at events which have led to the steady disintegration of the DTA, especially in the last two years, as well as the increasing division between the white parties in the territory. These developments have forced the SA government, in its determination to find an 'internal' solution for the territory, to consider an alternative to the DTA-led National Assembly. At the time of writing, allegations by Mudge are that the plan involves replacing senior DTA members of government with representatives from the second-tier ('ethnic') administrations (Star 08.09.82).

#### AG 8

THE TERMS of Proclamation (AG) 8 of the 'interim

constitution' make provision for 12 governments in the territory, with the DTA-controlled Ministers Council at the top (but still subordinate to Pretoria and the SA appointed Administrator-General, at present Danie Hough), and eleven 'ethnic' administrations, or 'second-tier Authorities', which are autonomous in certain areas - notably health and education. AGB was introduced by Gerrit Viljoen, then Attorney-General, as a compromise between the NP and the DTA, but because the NP won the white administrative elections it has had the effect of entrenching apartheid in certain spheres. This means that not only is Mudge a 'Prime Minister without power', since the second-tier authorities have powers cannot be tampered with by the Ministers Council, but his chances of consolidating his power base are slim while political groups in the territory see the ethnic system of government as an extension of SA's homelands/apartheid system. Thus, attempts to increase support for the so-called 'interim government', by wooing groups outside the National Assembly have proved to be a dismal failure. Groups such as SWANU, SWAPO-D, the Federal Party, the Namibian Independence Party and the Mbanderu Council have consistently refused to be part of a system composed along ethnic lines, calling it 'repugnant', whilst other groups argue that the 1978 election (in which they refused to take part and which brought the DTA to power) were never intended for an interim government, but merely for a constituent assembly. Furthermore, they argue, their entry into the National Assembly would delay the implementation of the UN plan (RDM 03.02.81). Many parties are themselves losing support (never mind 'lending' it to the DTA) as well as running out of funds, after nearly four years of negotiations without a settlement.

#### KALANGULA SPLIT

Groups within the DTA have meanwhile become more and more dissatisfied, particularly with the provisions of AGB, and by the end of last year there were signs that the rift between DTA President Kalangula and Mudge would lead to the second DTA

breakaway in six months (the Labour Party, under Ministers Council member, Joey Julius, split in August). In February this year Kalangula walked out of the DTA, taking with him the last remnants of Ovambo support for the Alliance. He also took with him his German advisor, Werner Neef, causing Mudge to accuse the West German government (and senior SADF officials) of assisting Kalangula in the breakaway (RDM 26.03.82). In May, 1982, Kalangula formed his own party, 'Christian Democratic Action for Social Justice' (CDA), but he has nevertheless retained his National Assembly seat as well as chairmanship of the second-tier Ovambo authority.

This raises the question of the composition of the Ministers Council and the National Assembly; several examples of non-elected Ministers have even further diminished the credibility of these institutions. Ben Afrika is one such example - having lost the Reheboth election in 1979 to Hans Diergaard he has nevertheless stayed on as a member of the Ministers Council and his party as members of the National Assembly. Similarly, Engelhard Christie lost the election for the Damara representative authority to Justus Garoeb's Damara Council, but Christie remains a member of the Ministers Council and his party member of the National Assembly.

#### DAMARA COUNCIL

The Damara Council itself has significant support among the estimated 90 000 Damara-speaking people - the third-largest grouping in the territory - and since it swept to power in Damaraland against the DTA-aligned SWAPDUF, the DTA has made several unsuccessful attempts to win its support. Instead, Garoeb has recently called for the dissolution of the National Assembly and Ministers Council (RDM 05.03.82). Kalangula, who initially aligned himself with the Ovambo-based 'National Democratic Party' after the DTA breakaway, also hoped for a unity move between the NDP and Damara Council, but Garoeb has remained aloof from any attempts at incorporation, even breaking away (in March) from a loose alliance with the NNF. Garoeb has recently stated his party's

preparedness to co-operate with SWAPO.

#### WHITE OPPOSITION

White parties have been under no less pressure to support the internal dispensation, but equally without success. The schism between the DTA's Republican Party and the more rightwing political parties was brought to a head when, in March this year, the NP and AKTUR withdrew from the National Assembly (because it was 'not representative of all ethnic groups'), and were followed by the HNP. This means that there is now no opposition to the right of the DTA in the National Assembly, giving Mudge less of a smokescreen from behind which to pretend a 'progressive' policy.

The fact that the DTA's credibility is at its 'lowest possible ebb' (Gwen Lister, Windhoek Observer 21.08.82) is demonstrated by the way in which the party has stepped up its campaign of intimidation in the last few months, disrupting SWAPO and recently, Damara Council meetings with megaphones, pamphlets and low-flying planes. Tactics like these have, of course, only added to the DTA's unpopularity, and it now seems unlikely that the DTA would, even in the event of an internal election, return enough candidates to retain effective control of a constituent assembly. Recently, there have been indications that the alternative system (to the DTA-run National Assembly being contemplated, would be along the lines of the system proposed by the President's Council for SA, in which the second-tier ethnic governments will be allowed to nominate representatives to the central government without the A-G having to call a general election (SE 05.09.82).

As far as the 'white' parties are concerned, the NP has recently repeated its refusal to take part in UN-supervised elections, proposing instead elections on an ethnic basis, and a geographical division of the country such that the south would be white-controlled. Right-wing groups have meanwhile been making concerted efforts to mobilise white resistance and at a rally organised by the HNP in October last year, whites were told not to hand in

their weapons to UN troops. This call was repeated at another meeting convened by SA's 'Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging' (AWB) in November 1981. (Since most whites, and all farmers, belong to commando units and have access to automatic rifles, ammunition and even mortars at Unit Headquarters, a refusal to surrender arms is a threat which has not been ignored by the SA government - hence the reassurances to whites of minority guarantees in a future Namibia.)

The last-ditch attempt by whites to oppose a settlement brought about by UN elections seems to arise from a growing awareness of the fact that SWAPO would win such an election. NP chairman, Kosis Pretorius, said in January this year that SWAPO would win a UN election 'hands down', and then qualified this to say that he meant that 'Resolution 435 and UN-supervised elections would create the climate for a SWAPO victory' (ROM 18.01.82 and 21.01.82).

A glance at the situation within Namibia, however, suggests that the climate for a SWAPO victory has very little to do with Resolution 435 or the UN, but has rather to do with the massive popular support for the organisation. An indication of SWAPO's strength is given by the attendance at public meetings, which varies between 1 000 and 4 000 people. Despite continued harassment and detention of its leaders, which at one stage threatened to force the movement underground, SWAPO has managed to maintain a public profile and thus give some idea of its political position vis-à-vis internal and international developments.

#### SWAPO MEETINGS

At a meeting held in Windhoek in May, 1981, to commemorate civilians and refugees killed at Cassinga, and attended by 2 500 people, US overtures to SA were condemned, and Reagan described as 'just a cowboy who has put down his guns to become President'. Immanuel Nahombo (SWAPO Windhoek committee) said that SWAPO was not a communist organisation, but 'if the West does not give us water, we'll take it from the communists'. Nor was SWAPO anti-Afrikaner, merely against the Afrikaner oppression of the Namibian

people. Tribalism was being used to carve up the people into 'ethnic groups', whereas 'SWAPO was trying to achieve nationhood' he said (ROM 12.05.81).

In July, 1981, a public meeting was called in Windhoek to protest against the law making military service compulsory for all citizens. Namibian conscripts had begun training in March, 1981, and during June-July alone over 100 people had fled to Botswana to evade call-up (ROM 12.06.81). It was claimed at the meeting that SWAPO supporters who were conscripted were given discriminatory treatment, and were disarmed, separated from other trainees and 'sent to the border for re-orientation'. Other speakers called for a general election to 'test the will of the people', since the National Assembly was not recognised as the legal government, 'nor was SWAPO the enemy' (ROM 13.07.81).

At a 'Namibia Day' rally held in Katutura on 26 August, 1981 (the anniversary of the commencement of armed struggle), DTA supporters tried unsuccessfully to disrupt the 4 000-strong meeting at which support for Sam Nujoma was affirmed. A march through the streets was eventually broken up by police, and within a week nearly all SWAPO's top officials had been detained. These included Immanuel Nгатjizeko (acting administrative secretary, National Executive), Andries Temba (Windhoek Executive), and Gabriel Shikongo (Youth League executive) as well as SWAPO branch members in Tsameb and Luderitz.

However, neither these measures, nor the attempt to curb SWAPO outside the borders, have succeeded in lessening the influence of the movement. This was the theme of a meeting held in Windhoek after the series of devastating strikes into Angola between August and December, 1981. 'We are not destroyed!' speakers told the cheering crowd. Each time the SADF announced that SWAPO's military forces were destroyed, follow up operations were necessary - 'this proved that SWAPO was not defeated as planned', they said (ROM 15.12.81).

#### THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

In the meantime, sporadic incidents of unrest

as well as a rapidly deteriorating economic situation, exacerbated by one of the 'worst droughts in living memory', have contributed further to the country's general instability. It is ironical that five years ago, observers noted that while an independent Namibia would not be without problems, the fact that the territory was 'mineral rich' would at least tide the economy over a transitional period. Now even the territory's mineral wealth is in question: in a recent address in Windhoek, Douglas Hoffe (chairman Chamber of Mines) disputed that Namibia was 'mineral rich', saying that 80% of the mining industry's contribution to the GDP was from three mines - CDM, Tsumeb Corporation Ltd, and Rossing - and the former two were 'very old properties' (W Observer 14.08.82) (suggesting perhaps that they were already 'milked?').

It might be added that Rossing's contribution would be a lot greater if it were not exempt from taxation - according to reports, Rossing Uranium Ltd made £63-m profit in 1981 (£54,4-m in 1980), not a cent of which goes to the State Treasury in Windhoek until the 'company's capital investment is redeemed' (ibid). The mine produces some 5 000 tons of uranium oxide per annum and its uranium energy potential is said to equal that of Saudi Arabia (H Rudolph in Africa Insight Vol II no 1 1981 p19), but whether majority shareholders Rio Tinto Zinc will be prepared to renegotiate their mineral contract with a future government in Namibia, remains to be seen. At present both Rossing and CDM claim that their contribution - together worth R180 m - is by way of 'wages and salaries, supplies and services' (W Observer 14.08.82).

However, it is the second most important feature of the economy-commercial agriculture- which is in a state of real crisis, directly affecting one third of the economically active population, the 5 000 commercial farmers (mainly whites) and some 100 000 subsistence farmers. Farming output, which is made up of 50% beef, 30% karakul pelts and wool, and 15% mutton and pork, declined 32% between 1976 and 1980 and is likely to drop further. The reduction of livestock herds has been 'dramatic': at the end

of 1981 the cattle population was 170 000, from 250 000 a year while the number of sheep and goats declined from 6-m to 450 000 (RDM 23.11.81). On the whole most (white) cattle farmers have been compensated for their losses by the high price paid for beef, but subsistence farmers have been the worst hit, with starvation deaths being recorded in Kackoland where the drought has decimated three quarters of the livestock population (ibid).

The fishing industry - once a substantial contributor to export earnings - has also declined dismally, with output half what it was six years ago (four out of eight factories in Walvis Bay have closed in the last three years). In this case the decline has less to do with environmental factors and more to do with greed and over-exploitation; the fact that the pilchards resources have been completely destroyed and other fishing reserves seriously depleted, is largely due to the desire on the part of a handful of company-owners to realise immediate profits when the industry was at its peak (and possibly before the territory became independent).

Thus, the outlook for an independent Namibia is far from optimistic. In 1977 it was estimated that the territory would have to be subsidised from outside sources by about R120-m per annum over 1978/9-1985/6 (originally expected to be the first 7 years of independence), and an additional R1,2-billion would have to be found. This figure is now substantially higher. Other crucial factors include the expectation that between 30-40% of skilled whites will probably leave the country - although the UN Institute for Namibia in Lusaka has for several years been training refugees with the aim of producing an essential core of public service administrators, etc.

Above all, the country's economic dependence on SA (to the extent of 50% of the budget) is a factor which membership of SADCC is unlikely to change. According to Wolfgang Thomas (at SA Institute International Affairs Conference (23.01.82) while Namibia would face similar problems to Zimbabwe, 'its dependence on SA tends to put it more in the class of Botswana in relation to SA'.

In conclusion, recent events indicate that SA is presently considering ways of maintaining a neo-colonialist regime in Namibia, which would entail by-passing a UN election and instead propping up ethnic leaders who would be openly favourable to SA interests. But even if, as is likely in the long run, SA proves incapable of sustaining such a system in the face of mass opposition, and SWAPO comes to power in its place, 'the struggle for control of Namibia's future will by no means be over. That struggle will still need to be fought long after the South African soldier has left Namibian soil' (Duncan Innes 'Monopoly Capital and South African Imperialism in Namibia', Chapter V of Thesis 'Monopoly Capital and Imperialism in Southern Africa: The Role of the Anglo American Group').

Sue Cullinan



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# UNIONISING MINE WORKERS

THIS investigation was inspired by developments which could have major implications for the working class movement in South Africa, and change the nature and role of industrial conflict on the mines.

During August and September 1982, it was announced that a number of unions were beginning to organise african workers on the mines. To date, there have been reports that five unions are making moves in this direction. These include the Federated Mining, Explosives and Chemical Workers Union (FMECWU), which is affiliated to TUCSA; the Black Mine Workers' Union; the National Union of Mineworkers, affiliated to CUSA; the independent Municipal and General Workers' Union of South Africa; and the Black Allied Mine and Tunnel Workers' Union, affiliated to BAWU. (See the appendix to this article for further detail on these unions).

The Chamber of Mines (CM) has just signed a recognition agreement (09.09.82) with the FMECWU, this being the first time in its 95 year history that an agreement has given bargaining rights to workers who are not white. The Black Mineworkers' Union has been granted access to mine property for the purposes of recruitment, and the National Union of Mineworkers is presently awaiting a response to a request for similar access. The Municipal and General Workers' Union, and the Black Allied Mine and Tunnel Workers' Union have not entered into any negotiations with the CM (Chamber of Mines).

Interviews conducted during August and September, 1982, with the industrial relations officers of the CM and gold mining houses, a member of the CM's research department, as well as interviews with some of the unions involved, provided the basis for this article.

Interviews were organised with the intention of

firstly obtaining information about the CM's policy towards unionisation, and to arrive at some understanding of how the unionisation process and form of bargaining will proceed. The recognition agreement between the CM and FMECWU raises important questions and is discussed in some detail.

The second aim of the inquiry was to obtain information with regard to trends and issues facing the industry and miners at this time. The changing pattern of labour recruitment, the alteration of the content of the 'colour bar', struggles occurring at the work place and between black and white miners are all discussed. This information will hopefully provide space for speculations on where unions will intervene, and the constraints facing them in their attempts to organise workers on South Africa's mines.

It was not possible to interview or obtain detailed information from all the actors involved in the current negotiations. This was due both to limited time, and the refusal of management to be interviewed. It is well known that individual mining houses are reluctant to discuss matters outside of CM 'consensus statements' and views. The article is accordingly not complete or final, but has been written to raise discussion and questions for further investigation.

Since the late nineteenth century, the gold mining industry has been the backbone of South Africa's racial capitalist system, and a fundamental structure of apartheid. Not only did gold mining play a central role in the entire process of economic development, but has also over the years enabled South Africa to remain relatively untouched by crises in the world monetary system. Gold has also provided this country with large amounts of foreign exchange, and is a major employer of labour: in 1980, the industry employed 41 000 whites and 598 000 blacks.

The industry developed on the basis of a coercive labour system which brought high profits by paying low wages to a migrant labour force.

Despite years of resistance from african miners and international criticism of the overall oppressive conditions of employment, the industry has continued to expand with little change in conditions of work for african workers. The migrant labour system, the compound structure,<sup>1</sup> and the elaborate systems of authority and control dominating all aspects of mining life, have largely prevented african miners from forming unions, and kept them apart from the struggles occurring in the rest of society. (The notable exception to this is, of course, the African Mine Workers' Union and the 1946 mineworkers' strike). The industry remains the centre of the apartheid structure in that it is here that the most extensive institutionalisation of racial discrimination developed.<sup>2</sup>

The unionisation of african mineworkers may lead to changes in the structure of the industry, and therefore has wide implications for the entire apartheid system. Miners in other parts of the world have tended to form powerful unions which have often played major roles in the politics of the wider society. Sociologists Kerr and Siegel argue that miners have a tendency to become highly militant as their conditions of work enable them to develop a consciousness of collective grievance. This leads to a tendency to form strong emotional attachments to their unions.<sup>3</sup>

For these, and other reasons, the unionisation of african mineworkers in South Africa is an important subject necessitating attention and study.

## CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORKFORCE

In the mid-1970s, the gold industry experienced significant changes. The rise in the price of gold from R46,81 in 1972 to R112,24 in 1975 enabled the companies to use african workers in more skilled positions, increase wages, and offset reaction from white miners by increasing their pay. It was only in 1979 that white miners struck over the progressive relaxation of job

reservation suggested by the Wiehahn Commission.<sup>4</sup> The policy of the industry to reduce dependence on foreign workers, together with increased violence and unrest on the mines during the 1970s, led to the introduction of structural changes in the industry.

#### Decreasing the percentage of foreign workers

The policy of increasing the supply of local South African labour was formulated after the Malawi government stopped all further recruitment of labour for the South African mines in 1975. This occurred after 72 contract workers were killed in an air crash on their return to Malawi. The ending of Portuguese rule in Mozambique, and mine unrest dominated by Lesotho workers over the deferred pay clause - which forced Lesotho miners to defer 60% of their monthly wages to the Lesotho National Bank<sup>5</sup> - led the industry to change its labour recruitment policy. These changes aimed at preventing further vulnerability through reliance on foreign mineworkers, and involved an increase in the supply of South African migrants. This was also necessary due to the shortages of underground labour requirements which after the withdrawal of Malawian workers stood at 22%. In 1973, only 28% of African miners were South African. By 1974, 60% were recruited in South Africa, and only 40% were foreign. In order to attract South African workers, the Chamber of Mines was forced to increase wages.

#### Reduction of the contract period

In the mid-1970s, government was forced to repeal the Bantu Labour Act after a threat that South African coal exports to the USA would be prohibited from entering the country in terms of American legislation. This legislation prohibited the importation of goods produced under conditions of indentured labour. The South African Act which made it a criminal offence for a miner to break contract was therefore repealed. This compelled the mining industry to reduce contract periods as they were

not able to prevent miners from returning home when they wanted to. Contracts were reduced from 14 months to 6 and 8 month periods. The Valid Re-engagement Guarantee System was introduced: this guaranteed a miner that if he returned to the mine within a specific period, he would be given back his job, together with a bonus payment. This system led to an increase in the proportion of men returning to the mines after a contract period had ended.

The proportion of those employees categorised as 'specials', holding the Valid Re-engagement Certificate, recruited from Lesotho, increased from 31% in 1976, to 60% in 1979, to 76% in the first four months of 1980.<sup>6</sup>

The industry expressed these changes in the following way in 1980:<sup>7</sup>

Mining in South Africa is increasingly becoming an attractive career for black workers, not only because wages have increased six-fold in the last seven years, but because of improved living conditions and career opportunities. More and more of the workforce now returns to the industry for additional contracts and their level of expertise increases as well.

#### Effects of resistance

Extensive unrest on the mines during the 1970s led to a major enquiry entitled the 'Inter-departmental Committee of Inquiry into the Riots in the Mines'. Of the 41 principal gold mines in South Africa, 22 were directly affected by unrest during the period January 1972 to June 1976. The unrest caused gold production to slide from 48 119 kilograms in 1974 to 44 532 in 1976, with profits falling by R35-m in the same period.<sup>8</sup>

The Committee recommended improvements in living conditions and conveniences, provision of married quarters, and a revision of the industrial relations processes. It also recommended a change from housing on an ethnic basis to a system based on work sections.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the fact that the report attributed unrest mainly to the 'quality of life' and 'inter-

ethnic conflict', it is evident from other analyses that many of the disturbances were a result of wage demands and the transitions from old heavy manual production methods, with the accompanying adjustment in methods of social and physical control.<sup>10</sup> The report essentially suggested policies leading to the stabilisation of the workforce on the mines, rationalising of wages, and giving 'fixed' workers a larger wage increase.

It also suggested the redefinition of some job categories.

#### UNIONISATION: POLICY, PROCEDURES AND ATTITUDES

##### The Chamber of Mines' policy

In 1981, the Chamber announced that it had formulated a policy regarding the unionisation of blacks on the mines. The essential features of this policy (as reported in the Anglo-American Corporation's Industrial Relations Quarterly Review, 1981) are that

- \* The Chamber of Mines will not negotiate with unregistered trade unions;
- \* Unions registered for workers in the mining industry will be subject to further recognition criteria set by the Chamber;
- \* Unions will have to prove 30% representivity of a certain class of employee throughout the industry. This applies to new and existing unions seeking to represent blacks;
- \* The Chamber of Mines will refuse to recognise a union which seeks to represent workers in classes or occupations who are already represented by another recognised union;
- \* Unions seeking to recruit mineworkers will be investigated by the Chamber to determine whether they are 'registerable'. Unions registerable and unregistrable who refuse to register will be denied access to mineworkers;
- \* There will be no extension of the 'closed shop' to any new unions;
- \* Check-off facilities should not be granted to unregistrable trade unions but only to those unions which have submitted proof of their

30% representivity.

In a recent interview, the Chamber's industrial relations officer Liebenberg said that these guidelines are in the process of being revised, and that a report will be released within the next few months.

#### Centralised or decentralised bargaining

The Chamber of Mines has always acted on behalf of its members when negotiating conditions of employment with white trade unions, and has regularised and controlled many other procedures. This has enabled the industry to maintain its monopolistic character over the low cost of black labour power. The role of the Chamber in either maintaining control over the unionisation process, or enabling individual mining houses some autonomy over the recognition of unions, is a central question.

According to the Chamber, this problem is presently being negotiated. The recognition agreement with FMECWU is being tested as a model for further recognition agreements. Commented the Chamber's Liebenberg,

We do recognise that there are certain issues which will have to be dealt with at plant level and issues that are going to remain controlled at central level. The problem is that a union is going to start organising workers on one mine, not all three simultaneously, so that the moment it has got some of the workers organised it will want to negotiate with management on that mine. The management on mines have not been free to negotiate all conditions of employment with the unions - the unions can only approach the Chamber of Mines once it is sufficiently represented throughout the industry. The union will be able to have the rights for plant level bargaining before it has recruited throughout the industry.

The way in which negotiations will take place is at central level with the management of the mine concerned; head office officials as well as Chamber representatives. At the same time the union can be represented by head office officials as well as shop stewards from the mines.

This is what we have agreed to with the FMECWU. We have recognised it as representing classes of employees on the mines

and as it progresses in the recruitment process we will add the additional mines accordingly.

In discussing this same issue with a spokesperson from Rand Mines, there appeared to be a latent conflict over it:

We would like negotiations done on an industry basis because if our workforce is called out on a one day strike and we respond by saying that we are not in a position to talk to them - this will lead to tremendous problems. We will try and persuade the Chamber of Mines to go the industry line. Unions do not like the Industrial Council system - it is the old story, they will say that it is not the Chamber of Mines who pays us - it is you. We have to be flexible in this matter.

#### ISSUES ARISING FROM THE FMECWU RECOGNITION AGREEMENT

##### The changing content of the 'colour bar', and competition with emerging black unions

Determination 27 issued in 1971, which reserves the jobs of samplers, surveyors and ventilation officials for whites, appears to be in the process of being repealed. The workers who fall under this legislation belong to the Mine Surface Officials Association (MSOA), the Underground Officials Association (UGOA) and the South African Technical Officials Association (SATOAA). These associations are recognised trade unions with 'closed shop' agreements with the Chamber of Mines. Both the MSOA and the UGOA have opened up membership to blacks - however, they have not been granted multi-racial status by the Chamber. If Determination 27 was repealed, or the 'closed shop' was extended to blacks, this would lead to a possible overlap between recruitment of black workers into the officials' associations, and the operation of newly-formed unions like FMECWU. Both the MSOA and the UGOA appear to be in agreement on the abolition of Determination 27 only if africans promoted to officials' jobs receive the same rate of pay, conditions of employment, and are allowed to join the associations. Disputes in 1981 and again in 1982 between the MSOA and the Chamber revolved around the payment of lower wages to african workers who were performing the same

jobs as white officials.<sup>11</sup>

Liebenberg of the Chamber confirmed that 'considerable progress is being made in negotiations with the UOA with regard to the extension of the "closed shop" agreement to blacks'. According to the Chamber of Mines, the inflow of blacks into these categories of jobs could amount to 1 500 over the next few years.

##### Relationship between FMECWU and the Officials' Associations

The FMECWU is in the position of recruiting black officials. Ike van der Watt, secretary of the union, said that although he 'does not intend recruiting officials, there are many blacks performing jobs which are the same as officials, and there needs to be a redefinition of "official's" job categories'.

Theoretically, blacks in the positions of samplers, surveyors and ventilation officials will have the right to decide to join either the officials' association or the FMECWU. According to the Chamber, if Van der Watt has a low percentage membership, he will not be able to negotiate conditions of employment for those members as the officials' association represents the majority of this class of worker. If FMECWU were to represent a larger percentage of this category of worker, the Chamber would ask these unions to jointly represent this class of worker in negotiations.

At the present time, the FMECWU will be negotiating for all workers in the categories of vehicle drivers, painters and handymen at the Vaal Reefs and Hartbeesfontein mines, whether they are members of this union or not.

##### Resistance to the abolition of Determination 27

A spokesperson for JCI has revealed that negotiations concerning the abolition of Determination 27 are being met with resistance from the white Mine Workers' Union (MWU). The movement of black workers into the position of surveyors poses a direct threat to the white stoppers who are MWU members.

Stopers carry blasting certificates, and are responsible for the breaking of ore in the stopes. This is an essential position in the process of mining.<sup>12</sup> Stopers earn piece wages, and are often employed under contract.

Surveyors gauge the progress of stopers, and report on the area covered to a higher authority. According to the JCI spokesperson, white miners fear that black surveyors will not maintain accurate records. This, they claim, will affect wages of stopers, who are paid piece-rates.

#### CHAMBER AND COMPANY ATTITUDES TOWARDS UNIONISATION

Interviews with Chamber officials and representatives from the mining houses revealed that much attention was being paid to the moves being made by unionists, with management quick to point out that they were quite 'open' to unionisation. The following are extracts from some of the interviews:

Employers in the mining industry have not attempted to retard the development of unions for our labour force - our general philosophy and policy is that it is not the employers' function to establish trade unions for black workers - it is obviously also not our policy to retard the development of unions for our labour force.

- Liebenberg, the Chamber's Industrial Relations Officer.

Industrial Relations Officer Morton of Rand Mines confirmed that the Black Mineworkers' Union had been given access to one of the mines. He went on to say

We are quite happy about it - we will know who we are talking to - at the moment we do not. We have extensive committee systems but they are not negotiating bodies at all. The committee system is only an upward communication system and cannot be considered anything else. Unionisation is a natural development.

I myself have had 15 years experience of black trade unions before I came here. I have no fear of unions and nor does the company as long as the thing is organised. We do not insist on recognition (sic) at this stage - if people want to talk to us we will talk to them.

We know that the unions here are going to be political - it is the only way in which you can show your clout. Many of the union leaders are arrested not for union activity but for

furthering the aims of communism. But in an industry where 46% is foreign labour who do not want to become involved in local politics - this will make the union's task more difficult..

Other interviews revealed some scepticism on the part of management: some felt that mineworkers would not be as 'amenable to unionisation as factory workers - this could be because of the rural origins of a large proportion of mineworkers and the fact that they are migrants...coming for only 13 months.'

#### SECTION 12 OF THE MINES AND WORKS ACT

This Act remains a major bone of contention for the entire industry. The Act essentially protects white workers as 'scheduled persons' by granting only them a certificate of competency, or blasting certificate. This enables a miner to be in charge of the mine gang, essentially controlling major aspects of the production process from which blacks are excluded. Because of a shortage of miners holding a 'blasting certificate', there has been pressure to open up this category of work to black mineworkers.

The Act was reviewed by the Wiehahn Commission (part 6 of its report) in 1981. The Commission recommended that the definition of 'scheduled person' be replaced by a non-discriminatory definition of 'competent person'. However, the government white paper stated that while it was in principle in favour of the recommendation, this would only take place at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner. It left it to the discretion of the employer and employee organisations to negotiate this within a reasonable time. No legislative amendment was proposed on this subject, and government said this would not happen before 'alternative safeguard measures (for whites) had been effected'.

There was discussion around the granting of blasting licences to african mineworkers in BophuthaTswana during 1980. In proposals drawn up by an 'inter-state' committee of South African and BophuthaTswanan officials, it was suggested that a new category of worker, the 'licenced

mining assistant', be created. After training, such workers would be issued with blasting certificates only for the mine for which they were issued. This proposal has been blocked by the Mine Workers' Union.

Because of white mineworker resistance to the repeal of this legislation, it appears that there will be no significant changes in this section of the Act in the near future.

According to Liebenberg, it is the

White miners' fear that the employer will exploit the situation by employing blacks at one quarter of the pay paid to white miners.

This may be a tempting idea for management as white miners demand higher and higher wages. This was shown in the dispute this year (May 1982), when the Council of Mining Unions demanded a 15% increase, while the Chamber offered only 5%. The state was forced to intervene in the dispute, pushing the Chamber to raise its offer to 12%.<sup>11</sup>

Liebenberg, commenting on this issue, said:

We want to man the mines with the best people irrespective of race which means we have to train more people and we need the right to train them and put them in these jobs - a right which we don't freely have now - a right to utilise human resources irrespective of race and sex.

This will only take place through a gradual process of negotiation. We would like to do this without losing the existing employers who have served us well over many years.

#### CONTRADICTIONS ARISING FROM STABILISATION POLICIES

##### Job satisfaction

The increased percentage of miners returning to the mines has led to demands for advancement, and to higher expectations. According to the Chamber of Mines' research department, this is placing pressure on management to open up jobs held by whites. At the same time, there is an attempt to introduce new bonus schemes to alleviate this problem.

##### Indigenous recruitment

According to analysts close to the industry, the

attempt to cut down on foreign labour is very slow. There are problems with recruiting South African mine workers because of the competition with higher wage scales paid by industry.

Foreign miners have become a large percentage of the skilled labour force and the industry retains a reliance on them.

The 1982 Mining Survey reports:

Despite the new emphasis on locally-recruited workers, TEBA (the agency responsible for recruiting all labour for the industry) has maintained traditional links with surrounding countries.

Mocambique supplied 40 000 workers in 1980, Malawi after the ban was lifted supplied 14 000.

Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland together supplied 131 850 workers.<sup>15</sup>

In 1981, Zimbabwe announced that the Chamber of Mines would no longer be able to recruit miners from Zimbabwe, although workers could remain in South Africa until their contracts expired.

Recruitment nevertheless appears to be increasing with regard to the bantustans. Mining Survey 1(1), 1982 carries an article acclaiming the entry of 'Zulu' workers into the industry. This figure rose from 4 000 in 1974 to 40 000 in 1981. The article argues that 'the earning capacity of the mineworkers has a strong influence on the economy of developing areas'. Buthelezi's co-operation in this is displayed in his speech opening the new TEBA offices in Ulundi. According to the article, Chief Buthelezi

said the TEBA office at Ulundi represented not only opportunities for individuals to find employment. 'Not only do people get jobs but they get wider opportunities in addition to jobs. They get both the opportunity to improve their skills in the mining industry and the opportunity to use the mines as a door to other industrial jobs'.

#### CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The unionisation of black mineworkers is clearly an enormous task for unions to undertake, facing

on the one hand management and the individual companies, and on the other the bureaucracy of the Chamber of Mines. The possibility of entering the mines at this time comes at a crucial moment in the history of the industry which faces the pressures of the recession, shortages of skilled labour and increasing unrest from the black miners as well as the whites. This latter group fears more than ever the undermining of their privileges at the workplace as well as the loss of their position in the ruling alliance.<sup>16</sup>

The need to increase the skilled workforce as well as the reluctance of the Chamber of Mines to pay the demanded increases to the white miners as witnessed earlier this year, give the emerging black unions a strong bargaining position. Furthermore, information obtained from the interviews indicates that management requires better 'communication systems'. The unrest in 1981 at Anglo American's President Steyn mine, and the strike at Rand Mines' East Property Mines, together involving 13 000 miners, was cited as an example - the unrest was due to a lack of understanding of proposals put forward by management for the introduction of death benefits.

Other sources close to the mines confirm that there is a need for a more efficient consultation process as the liaison committees are rejected by the workers.<sup>17</sup> According to this analyst, workers have also successfully forced management into considering new conditions of employment, and higher wages. (The extensiveness of this was shown this year in the strikes involving over 70 000 miners at General Mining Union Corporation (Gencor) and Goldfields of South Africa - over low wage increases).<sup>18</sup>

The increasing strength of the workers is also leading to discussions over pensions, death benefits, fatal accident compensation and health and safety regulations.<sup>19</sup>

Other areas where resistance is increasing, caused by the colour bar, concerns that of late

hoisting. According to two spokesmen interviewed, resistance to late hoisting is occurring more and more frequently, and is taking the form of underground occupations/strikes. Whites and blacks are hoisted to the surface separately and often delays occur due to insufficient numbers of cars, or accidents. Whites are transported to the surface in half empty cars, while blacks are forced to wait hours beyond their shifts. Refusal to return to the surface has the effect of delaying the entire production process.

This example of resistance, combined with increasing expectations for job advancement from black mineworkers, will force unions to not only confront the formal colour bar legislation, but other aspects of racial privilege and overt racism (as described between the stopper and the surveyor) which operates on the mines.

If the closed shop agreements of the officials' associations are opened to blacks, this may raise the problem of competition between emerging black unions and the associations for membership. This was, however, shown to concern only a small proportion of the workforce. It is also unlikely, according to some of the unionists, that the black skilled and semi-skilled workers would be open to joining these associations or a union such as the FMECWU.

To speculate more fully about the likely responses of skilled black miners to the emerging unions, a number of factors have to be taken into account. These include the complexity of the internal structure of the mines, the systems of domination and control, as well as the relationship between black officials, team leaders and white miners.

The stabilisation policies are only partially successful. 40% of the workforce is still made up of foreign migrants. However, with the continuing recession and increasing unemployment in South Africa it may be possible to increase the percentage of indigenous workers at a faster rate. As foreign workers have been shown<sup>20</sup>

to often be the first to take up grievances, they could well be very receptive to unionisation. The fact that legislation prevents accommodation in married quarters to only 3% of the workforce, (although according to some sources there is an appeal to have this extended), suggests that it is unlikely that management will be able to co-opt a better-off, more skilled group. This tactic has been attempted in other areas of South Africa.

Whatever miners may gain in the long term through the process of unionisation, unions will initially be forced to confront low wages, badly defined job categorisation, management procedures such as selection and grading of black miners, black listing and unfair dismissals. In addition to this, unionisation may alter formal and informal mechanisms of control, as well as management's tactics of fostering ethnic divisions.

Georgina Jaffes

#### APPENDIX

The Federated Mining, Explosives and Chemical Workers Union (FMECWU), and the Black Mine Workers' Union.

The FMECWU was established in 1975 as an offshoot of the Boilermakers' Society, a TUCSA-affiliate. The Boilermakers' Society was forced to transfer their coloured membership to the FMECWU in 1975 to gain registration. Ike van der Watt, secretary of both FMECWU and Boilermakers' Society, said that the formation of FMECWU was undertaken with the intention of the union amalgamating with Boilermakers' once it had gained registration. However, this was not legally possible, and the unions remain separate.

Both unions have a recognition agreement with De Beer's, and according to Van der Watt represent 60% of the total workforce in the industry. With this success at De Beer's, the union began discussions to move into gold mining.

However, according to Van der Watt they felt that it was too big for one union to handle, and they attempted to find a group of unions to move into the industry.

At the present time, only Chillian Motha of the Black Mine Workers' Union is working closely with FMECWU, and has been given an office by the Boilermakers' Society.

The FMECWU represents mainly skilled coloured workers and has a recognition agreement with the Chamber of Mines: this allows them to organise the semi-skilled categories of handyman, painters and drivers, which includes african workers.

Van der Watt claims that the recognition agreement was finalised only because the union threatened to take the Chamber to the Industrial Court. Due to this, individual mining houses put pressure on the Chamber to recognise the union, and to negotiate conditions for its members.

The Municipal and General Workers' Union.

Union president Gatsby Mazwai - who succeeded Joseph Mavi after his death - announced at their August 1982 AGM that they intended to incorporate mine workers into the union. This is part of a general plan to recruit migrant workers.

This union was previously known as the Black Municipality Workers' Union, the name being changed in August 1982 to accommodate other migrant workers.

The fact this union has begun to recruit on the mines was confirmed by a management representative in mid-September.

Black Allied Mine and Tunnel Workers' Union.

This union, formed in 1980, is affiliated to the Black Allied Workers' Union (BAWU). Recruiting of members takes place mainly in Natal, although they claim some membership on some of the Transvaal mines.

President B Khumalo said that the Chamber's attitude towards recognition procedures was

problematic. However, he claimed that workers had themselves been demanding union recognition through strike action. The union is not opposed in principle to registration.

National Union of Mineworkers, an affiliate of the Council of Unions in South Africa (CUSA).

At an August 1981 conference, a decision was taken to begin unionising mineworkers and security workers. The National Union of Mineworkers was set up, under secretary general Cyril Ramaposa. CUSA is presently negotiating with the Chamber, and was reluctant to comment any further.

According to Parishaw Camay, general secretary of CUSA, they decided to organise mine workers because of approaches from miners themselves.

#### NOTES

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2. Johnstone, FA. Class, race and gold: a study of class relations and racial discrimination in South Africa. This includes a detailed analysis of this point. See also a forthcoming book by Innes, D, Anglo American and the rise of modern South Africa. Heinemann, 1983.
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4. See Cooper, C, 'The mineworkers' strike', in South African Labour Bulletin, 5(3), 1979.
5. See Kirkwood, M, 'The mineworkers' struggle', in South African Labour Bulletin, 1(8), 1975, p 29.
6. For further information, see Murray, C, 'Stabilisation and unemployment', in South African Labour Bulletin, 6(4), 1980, p 58.
7. Mining Survey, Number 1, 1980.

8. Hemson, D and A Morris, 'Working class resistance on South African mines'. Unpublished paper, n.d.
9. For a summary of this report, see South African Labour Bulletin, 4(5), 1978.
10. Hemson and Morris, op cit, and Plaut, M, 'Report on the AAC gold mines', South African Labour Bulletin, 2(8), 1976.
11. RDM, 28.05.82.
12. See Sitas, A, 'The Mine Workers' Union and defence of the colour bar' for job description, South African Labour Bulletin, 5(3), 1979.
13. Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1981, p 153.
14. SARS Information Sheet, August 1982.
15. Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1980.
16. See the article on the new constitutional proposals, elsewhere in this Work In Progress.
17. See the article by Duncan Innes in this edition of Work In Progress.
18. Between 700 and 800 workers have died in mine accidents, and an average of nearly 28 000 have been injured every year between 1970 and 1977. See Kooy, A, 'Notes on mine accidents', in South African Labour Bulletin, 4(9 & 10), 1979.
19. See documentation on this in SARS Information Sheet, August 1982. See also Baskin, J, 'Mass strikes on the mines', South African Labour Bulletin, 7(8), 1982.
20. Horner, D and A Kooy, 'Conflict on South African mines', SALDRU Working Paper 29, University of Cape Town.

# INFORMATION

## dock workers dispute

### SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSPORT SERVICES (SATS)

#### CHRONOLOGY OF THE CRISIS

1981

April

SATS dock workers in East London begin joining the General Workers' Union (GMU).

May

SATS Black Staff Association (BSA) begins recruiting drive in Port Elizabeth.

June

East London dockers hold meeting and decide to request recognition from SATS for GMU Workers' Committee.

July

21

East London Port Manager replies that SATS will only talk to the BSA.

October

GMU stevedores begin recruiting dock workers in Port Elizabeth.

9

SATS General Manager, Loubser, confirms East London Port Manager's refusal to talk to GMU.

December

GMU requests recognition of PE Workers' Committee, and encloses a list of members.

23

Agreements between GMU and stevedoring companies in Cape Town, PE, and EL increase minimum wages from 11% to 64%.

31

GMU alleges that at a meeting in PE, union members were threatened with dismissal.

1982

January

7

Jeremiah Tolwana, chairman of the PE Workers' Committee, dismissed.

25

GMU's Dave Lewis phones SATS Assistant General Manager for personnel to request urgent meeting. AGM Venter refuses and reads ban on strikes from Railways Act.

March

International Transport Workers' Federation (ITWF) expresses concern at dispute in telex to Loubser.

11

Loubser refuses to recognise GMU in speech to Indian Staff Association of the railways. Dispute becomes public.

April

28

Transport Minister, Hendrik Schoeman, says that the railways will only deal with its own BSA, and will never recognise 'outside unions'.

May

1

Anton Moolman takes over as SATS AGM for personnel.

June

9

At press conference, Moolman says he will not recognise the GMU 'unless circumstances change considerably'. He said he was morally bound to deal with the BSA which best represented the workers' interests.

10

GMU replied, saying the workers had chosen to be represented by it, and not by the BSA. Ford's Fred Ferreira issues statement expressing concern at the stalemate.

11

Moolman flies to PE for discussions with Ferreira.

14

Letter signed by 264 GMU members alleges that they were harassed by Railways Police.

24

Federal Council of SATS Staff Associations warns against recognising GMU.

25

Two decisions by SATS hampering GMU reversed: stevedores allowed to collect GMU dues on SATS property, and BSA dues no longer collected from the 500 GMU men who quit it.

July

14

ITWF letter to Loubser repeats allegations as of 14 June GMU letter, which went unanswered.

August

16

ITWF representative, Harold Dunning, visits SA to consult with Transport and Allied Workers' Union (TAMU) and with GMU.

16

PE workers give SATS ultimatum to negotiate by 23 August or they would plan further action.

23

Midland Chamber of Industries calls for delegation to settle dispute.

23

Schoeman offers to investigate.

30

1 000 dockworkers in PE begin go-slow protest.

September

1

Schoeman reports that investigation indicated no dissatisfaction by the workers.

2

400 workers fired (Star, 02.09.82; according to RDM, 02.09.82, eye witnesses report 900 sacked; SATS officials state 200 dismissed). Bussed to townships by SATS. PE stevedores

- stage brief stoppage in protest.
- 3 SATS workers refuse to accept termination pay and rail warrants back to the 'home-lands'.
- ITWF warns of sympathy action.
- 4 Meeting between PE stevedores and SATS workers. SATS workers refuse to return until all are reinstated.
- 6 AFL/CIO delegation cancels its planned meeting with SATS in protest. Stevedoring companies intervene in an appeal to SATS to negotiate. Stevedores threaten sympathy strike.
- 9 Meeting between stevedoring firms and Schoeman reaches deadlock. Stevedores agree to postpone strike until outcome of subsequent meeting.
- 16 Meeting of 580 SATS dockworkers and the GMU decides to make representations to a SATS committee investigating the Staff Associations.

DISPUTE BETWEEN THE GENERAL WORKERS' UNION (GMU) AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSPORT SERVICES (SATS).

The General Workers' Union has gained recognition for its members employed by stevedoring companies at all four of SA's ports. The stevedoring firms and GMU say the relations between them are excellent.

The stevedores who work alongside the dockworkers employed by SATS, began recruiting SATS workers to become members of GMU. GMU has for the past 11 months been demanding that SATS recognise their union. It claims to represent 1 100 workers at two SA ports - East London and Port Elizabeth. The union has stated that it is only demanding recognition for these ports, because it represents the majority of workers there.

SATS has persistently refused to meet GMU's demands. Transport Minister, Hendrik Schoeman, has repeatedly stated that the Railways will only deal with its own Black Staff Association (BSA), and will never recognise outside unions.

The BSA is to become an affiliate of the Federal Council of the South African Railways and Harbours Staff Associations. In 1942 when the Federal Council was established it had seven white unions affiliated to it. Two coloured unions and one union for indian employees

have since joined. The BSA, which at present has observer status, is expected to join the Council soon. Many of the dockers in PE, who originally joined the BSA, have since chosen to join GMU.

GMU is affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITWF). There is a long history of solidarity amongst its various affiliates throughout the world. In the words of Harold Dunning, European representative on a recent visit to SA:

... the ITWF has become well-known for taking international action in support of workers' rights when it had been impossible to settle problems on a national level. (Sowetan, 16.08.82)

International support for railway workers who have joined the GMU has already been offered by the German, American and Canadian dockworkers, who have threatened an embargo on loading and unloading cargoes to and from South Africa's ports.

SATS has faced a local display of worker action in the go-slow which began towards the end of August. It has displayed stubbornness in refusing to be moved by that protest. There now looms an even more threatening prospect of, firstly, local stevedores engaging in a sympathy strike and, secondly, the threat by international dockworkers to take action.

Industry in the eastern Cape is resting on the brink of an explosion, if the dispute is not resolved soon.

Industrialists in the eastern Cape have attempted to persuade SATS to start discussions with the GMU. Assistant General Manager for personnel at SATS, Dr Anton Moolman, is adamant that SATS will not talk to the union, because 'once you have begun talking to someone it is a kind of recognition', he believes.

The Ford Motor Company has appealed to SATS to recognise GMU. The Midland Chamber of Industries has also expressed its concern over the matter. Brian Matthews, executive director of the Chamber, has said:

Industry is bringing goods through the port and we'd like this to continue without any hassles. We don't want supply lines disrupted particularly as 60% of the regional economy is dependent on the motor car industry. If SATS can't supply the industry with components, this could impact on the region. (Financial Mail, 03.09.82)

Why then is SATS refusing to negotiate with GMU? One of the reasons for SATS' refusal to recognise the GMU, and its unyielding stance in dealing solely with the BSA, may be located within the nature and composition of the existing transport unions affiliated to the Federal Council.

The seven white unions represent the 115 000 white SATS employees. SATS has prided itself over the fact that its relations with these unions have resulted in four decades of industrial peace. The coloured and indian unions within the council have a potential of representing 25 000 coloured and indian workers. SATS employs 130 000 african workers, of whom 50 000 are said to have joined the BSA over the last 18 months. (Statistics obtained from Survey of Race Relations, 1982).

What SATS fears more than the threat which GMU and the international port unions pose, are the enfranchised white workers it employs (115 000 of them), many of whom are foremen who manage and control its operations. Schoeman has manipulated the situation and has succeeded in appeasing the white workers' fears of a militant 'outside' black trade union influencing labour relations at SATS. The Federal Council publically thanked the Minister for the strong stand taken against the recognition of an outside union, which they said would 'bring chaos and confusion' (RDM, 25.06.82).

A strike by the 115 000 white workers would be unlikely. However, since white railway workers are traditional National Party supporters, the risk of alienating 10% or more of the white electorate must give pause to a National Party government already threatened from the far right.

The situation, however, still remains serious for both SATS and GMU. The 400 workers bussed out of the harbour in Port Elizabeth, when they refused to abandon their go-slow protest, have been sacked. GMU made the following statement about having to resort to industrial action:

However, mindful of the seriousness of their particular dispute and its potential consequences for the stability of the Eastern Cape, the workers have decided to engage initially in limited industrial action.

We wish to reiterate that workers have



embarked on this course with extreme reluctance and are ready to talk to their employer at any time.  
(RDM, 31.08.82)

According to the Rand Daily Mail (29.07.82), SATS suffered an R85-m deficit for the first three months of this year. It began a drastic drive to reduce costs for the rest of the year. Its General manager, Kobus Loubser, explained that this was to have far-reaching implications for its staff of 279 000. By July it had already been 'mutually agreed' that 400 people over the age of 60 be retrenched.

SATS could, therefore, hardly feel the threat of a strike or a go-slow by some hundred GMU members. When the go-slow was not abandoned they merely took the opportunity to sack the workers. It is the threat of supportive action by local stevedores and overseas dockworkers which must surely now plague the minds of the Minister and the SATS management, if they continue to opt for non-negotiation with the General Workers' Union.

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## a christian capitalist?

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TWO years ago, East London pineapple 'king', Corder Tilney, fired 400 workers after a work stoppage at his cannery where pineapples are prepared for export in the largest pine exporting business in South Africa. The cannery was closed for a week, and Tilney won few friends with his hard-headed attitude towards the unregistered African Food and Canning Workers' Union, which was just gaining its footing in the coastal city.

He was also criticised in several circles for his refusal to listen to the worker representatives, after retrenching 22 workers, which sparked off the strike.

Tilney recently set out his Christian attitude towards the unions in an article for his Methodist church magazine in East London, 'In Touch'.

'In my opinion', says Tilney, 'it is a Christian's responsibility to protect his employees from being exploited by, in particular, those who are using labour unrest to further their own political aims.'

Tilney says that he has no doubt that the unregistered unions - 'who caused a lot of unrest some months ago' - are doing just that.

And, he added, 'we have a very serious responsibility to our employees to protect them from this abuse'.

Seeming to refer directly to his actions in depriving 400 people of their income, Tilney continues:

It is very important to deal with any problems that may arise in as fair a way as possible. But being soft is looked upon as being weak and in the end does not achieve anything.



CORDER TILNEY, managing director of Shelford Pineries, East London. His company exports ½ million cases of pineapples annually.

I am not suggesting that oppression of black labour is the norm, but there is no doubt that when there is confrontation there is a tremendous temptation to oppress and act harshly and this is where the Christian has to think very carefully about how he reacts in that kind of situation.

Later in the article, referring directly to the incident at his cannery, Tilney writes:

A few months ago I encountered this very same problem myself when faced with a labour force of 450 people who were being led by political activists trying to use labour unrest as a means of disrupting the economy of our country. I spent much time in prayer to ask for guidance as to what my reaction should be, but it was very clear to me that my responsibility was not only towards my company, but more important, towards my employees who were being abused without realising it.

I had numerous meetings with leaders of the unregistered unions in whose faces I saw only hatred and contempt for the rule of law. These people oppose the government and everything that it stands for. In fact, they are quite happy to create chaos and unrest no matter who gets hurt in the process. They fear the police and police action and then use the excuse that our police force arrest anyone and illtreat them for no reason whatsoever.

Outlining his own feelings about police action, Tilney continues:

I do not live in fear of being arrested or intimidated by the police and those who do have this fear are obviously doing something wrong. It has always been said that the Churches are not getting involved in this type of action and although I was always suspicious of the action of the World Council of Churches as far as aiding terrorists was concerned, I never for one minute thought that the South African Council of Churches was in any way involved in creating unrest.

You can imagine my shock when I discovered that the organisation that was in fact sponsoring these militant activists by paying their rent as well as providing funds for strike pay was the South African Council of Churches.

But what should the employer do when confronted by these people with 'hatred and contempt' on their faces? Tilney offers the following advice:

### EMPLOYER'S REACTION

One wonders how the Christian should react to this. However, this still does not make me change my view that as Christians, we have a

tremendous responsibility to all our employees and to the masses of unemployed in our area, and it is our responsibility to help them to help themselves.

I stress this point, because I do not believe that our black brothers want charity from us and in fact, I think we would be insulting them by giving them charity. It is our task as Christians to create black leaders, black entrepreneurs and industrialists so that they in turn can help to employ all their people.

I ask the question - where are the black entrepreneurs and industrialists who should be providing jobs for the masses of black unemployed people that they are continuing to produce at such an alarming rate, and is it really the responsibility of the white man to provide jobs and livelihood for these multitudes of blacks?

It is time that a much more responsible attitude is adopted with regard to family planning because if the masses of black people continue to produce more and more people at the rate that they are at present, there is no way that we can prevent starvation on a fairly large scale in the future.

#### NEED FOR PRAYER

I therefore come to the conclusion that our most important responsibility is that of education and helping our labour to uplift themselves, so that they in the long run, may be able to enjoy a better kind of life. However, I am still not sure in my own mind, in spite of much prayer about this matter, as to where our Christian responsibility begins and ends.

FOOTNOTE: Last year Mr Tilney was chosen as the Border Marketer of the Year by the East London daily newspaper, the Daily Dispatch. Presenting the award, the newspaper attributed Mr Tilney's success to 'his own inventiveness, initiative, planning, motivation and foresight'.

# labour action

## TRANSVAAL

Company: Auto Plastics (Rosslyn)

Date: 12-13 August, 1982

Workers: 500

Union: National Automobile and Allied Workers Union (NAAMU)

Workers downed tools in protest at the planned retrenchment of 63 workers. They returned on 13 August, after the management opened negotiations with the NAAMU.

As a result of the talks the company agreed not to lay off the workers but to go on a shorter working week. Union shop stewards stated that they had also submitted retrenchment procedure proposals to management. (RDM, 14.08.82; Star, 18.08.82)

Company: B and S Engineering (Brits)

Date: 7 September

Workers: 1 000

Union: Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU)

Workers at two B and S Engineering plants downed tools in protest at the sacking of a colleague. The strike followed talks between the company and MAWU over union recognition. Reports that the company had closed the plants and fired the workers could not be confirmed. Workers at the plant had also gone on strike a few weeks earlier over planned retrenchments at the plant, but the dispute was later resolved. (RDM, 08.09.82).

MAWU claims that 900 workers were fired during the strike and rejected reports by the company that 70% of the workers had returned by 13 September. (Star, 15.09.82).

In a subsequent development, a foreman at the factory appeared in court on charges under the Intimidation Act. The foreman, Jacob Mahakine, chairman of the workers' committee at B and S, was remanded in custody and the case was postponed until 20 September.

Company: Chubb Alarms (Johannesburg)

Date: 9-10 August

Workers: 30-60 worker

Union: none

Workers struck over new disciplinary rules imposed by new managers, specifically over the searching of their lockers. They also complained that they were no longer allowed to go to the toilet; to talk to each other during working hours; they no longer received sick pay; and were fined R7,50 if they were five minutes late.

A company spokesman confirmed that discipline had been tightened. During discussions with the workers management explained that the R7,50 was a bonus which workers forfeited if they arrived late. Searches were carried out on all employees regardless of race, to counter theft.

The workers returned after management had 'investigated their grievances and found that there was no substance to them'. (RDM, 11.08.82).

Company: Coffin manufacturers (Brits)

Date: 26-31 August

Workers: 60

Union: Metal and Allied Workers' Union

Workers struck in protest at the dismissal of a fellow worker, who had stayed away from work for two days. Management claimed that he had 'deserted', but the workers claimed that he was given a letter by management allowing him to stay away from work to see a doctor. He could only see the doctor on the second day. The strike ended after the company had agreed to reinstate the man. (RDM, 31.08.82 and 01.09.82).

Company: Colgate Palmolive (Boksburg). For background see WIP 18:44-5; 19:54-5; 20:43; 23:52

Date: 25 August

Workers: 100

Union: Chemical Workers' Industrial Union

Singing workers marched through the company's plant in a 20 minute protest against the demotion of a colleague and in support of claims that management was doubling the workload in its boilerhouse without hiring new staff.

Workers sang union songs and displayed a poster which read 'Boilerhouse FOSATU'. Management did not appear to intervene directly in the march. In a statement issued after the protest, CWIU members at Colgate accused management of doubling its operations in the boilerhouse and refusing to acknowledge workers' demands that it hire additional staff. They said that the grievance had first been raised in April. They also stated that a union member had been demoted and his place taken by a non-member. The union also called on the company to account for the presence of security police during the protest march.

The company denied any knowledge of the presence of the security police. Management also stated that the march was 'irrelevant and unnecessary' and that the complaints raised by the workers were still going through the grievance procedure negotiated between the company and the CWIU. (RDM, 26.08.82; Sowetan, 27.08.82).

Company: Distillers Corporation (Wadeville). For previous coverage see WIP 22:29

Date: 10 August

Workers: 570

Union: National Union of Wine and Spirits Workers

Workers struck over a demand that a supervisor, who had been transferred, be returned to the original plant. The Corporation's PRO, PJ Retief, said that the workers were not happy about the transfer, but did not make representations to management until the 10th when they stopped work.

Management stated that it was prepared to take all workers back who showed interest. There were no further reports. (Sowetan, 12.08.82).

Company: De Luxe Consolidated Dry Cleaners and Launderers (Pretoria). For background see

WIP 23:50; Information Sheet August, 1982:1 On 26 August, the secretary of the Transvaal (Pretoria) branch of the General Workers' Union of SA (GMUSA)

appeared in the Pretoria magistrates court on a charge of inciting a strike at the company in 1981.

Mr Khumalo pleaded not guilty. The company's managing director, B Kaplan, said that he had been approached twice by Mr Khumalo, who had said that he wanted to discuss labour relations with him, before about 400 workers struck.

Kaplan said he refused to deal with the union after he had read its constitution, and had heard that it was 'illegal' because it was not registered.

Advocate Martin Brassey, for the defence, told Mr Kaplan that the fact that the union was not registered did not mean it was illegal. The case was postponed until 4 October. (Star, 27.08.82).

Company: Hawker Siddeley Electrical Company (Roodepoort). For previous coverage see WIP 22:29; 23:53

Date: 16 August

Workers: 200

Union: Metal and Allied Workers' Union

Workers struck over pay demands. Management stated that they had dismissed themselves because they had acted 'outside their rights'. The workers, mostly members of MAMU, downed tools when negotiations between their representatives and management broke down on 16 June. They had demanded a 20% wage increase.

Workers stated that 12 of their colleagues had been sacked following their representations to management, whereupon they had walked out. (Sowetan, 17.08.82)

The managing director, P Maguire, said on the 17th that he was engaging a new workforce. Former employees could apply. (Star, 17.08.82)

Company: ICS Foods (Olifantsfontein)

Date: 9-10 August

Workers: ?

Union: none

Workers struck over wages. An ICS spokesman stated that the strike had occurred as a result of a failure in 'communication' over new wage terms. He stated that there was no outside influence in the dispute and the issue was resolved at plant level. (Star, 11.08.82)

Company: Marjon Electrical Component Manufacturer (Industria)

Date: 27 August

Workers: 40

Union: none

Workers struck when wage increases announced by a junior partner in the company, who was also the son of the director, were withdrawn by the director, S Feinstein. Feinstein senior stated that increases were only due to workers earning the minimum wages prescribed by law - other workers would receive increases in March, 1983. Workers stated that the management should pay for the confusion. Feinstein stated that he needed all the workers back and would welcome them if they reported for duty on 30 August. (Sowetan, 30.08.82)

Company: Music for Pleasure (Steeldale)

Date: August

Workers: several hundred

Union: none

Workers struck over wages. They claimed that the firm had failed to pay half-yearly increases. No further news.

Company: OK Bazaars (Johannesburg and Alberton)

Date: 17 August

Workers: 700

Union: Commercial and Catering Workers' Union (CCAMUSA)

Workers at OK's Johannesburg warehouse and at their two warehouses in Alrode struck over wages. They demanded increases of R85,00, which would have brought their basic monthly wage to R300. They also called for the recognition of union shop stewards and an end to pay and sex discrimination. Talks between the CCAMUSA officials and OK management ended in deadlock on 21 August.

Allan Fabig, a director of OK, said that the workers should return to work before they resumed negotiations. Workers rejected this. On the same day senior OK executives addressed the warehouse workers and warned them of 'serious consequences' unless they returned by the morning of the 23rd. Workers failed to do this and were dismissed. This led to workers at about 12 city centre stores downing tools in protest.

Management and office staff, supplemented by school children, staffed the stores. On 24 August management stated that about half the workers who had struck in sympathy had returned. This was disputed by P Rojie, a workers' representative, who said that new stores had joined the strike. Warehouse workers refused to collect their money on the 25th as instructed by management. They stated that they would also not reapply for their jobs until their demands were met. Rojie stated that workers had been given no chance to decide whether to return to work, but had merely been dismissed.

A man suspected of being a spy for management was attacked by striking workers at a meeting on 24 August. An official of CCAMUSA intervened and brought an end to the attack.

The Inkatha Movement for Peace (?) called on the workers to return. D Mdluli, a spokesperson for the Movement, said that the workers should not forget that OK Bazaars was prepared to employ them, despite their lack of education. (Citizen, 26.08.82).

Fabig said he would reinstate workers without loss of benefits if they returned to work.

Workers returned on the 28th without loss of benefits after further negotiations between CCAMUSA and the OK. Workers agreed to return only if negotiations continued in order to resolve their grievances.

Company: Stobar Reinforcing (Elandsfontein)

Date: 27 August

Workers: 76

Union: Metal and Allied Workers' Union

Seventy six workers were fired at this firm. Mawu has decided to take the matter directly to the Industrial Court in an attempt to have them reinstated. Such

action is unprecedented, as in the past the court has only been allowed to intervene after the dispute has been discussed at industrial council level, or after a conciliation board had been set up. MAMU is basing its action on new rules published by the court on 10 September, which allow the court to intervene while the dispute is being discussed at the various intermediary levels.

It is unclear from the report as to the circumstances which led to the dismissals. MAMU referred to them as 'disguised retrenchment'. (RDM, 14.09.82)

Company: Unilever (Boksburg). For previous coverage see WIP 22:31; 23:54

Date: 16 September

Workers: about 1 000

Union: Food, Beverage and Allied Workers' Union

The workers downed tools demanding wage increases of 38%. Management's offer was 15,7%. Workers have been demanding this increase since July. Negotiations between the union and management, as a result of the strike, have reached deadlock.

Company: Vaal Transport Company. For background see WIP 21:59

Date: December, 1981

Workers: ?

Union: ?

Eight employees pleaded not guilty to a charge of holding an illegal strike last year. They appeared together in the Vereeniging regional court. One of the drivers, Happy Ngwala, explained to the court that he had expressed his dissatisfaction about the dismissal of a colleague to a Mr Grobler. A meeting was then called by Grobler to discuss the dismissal with other workers. He then promised to sort the matter out with management, but this failed.

Ngwala said the police arrived and he and other workers were arrested. The hearing continues on 12 September. (Triangle Extra, 20.08.82)

Company: Woolworths (Johannesburg)

Date: 5 August

Workers: 500

Union: Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union  
Workers downed tools in support of demands for an increase in wages of R50 per month and recognition of the union and in protest over the firing of a colleague. On the 6th the strike spread to all the company's Johannesburg branches, involving about 300 workers.

After talks between the union and the company, the company agreed to reinstate the workers and to recognise the union. On 10 August stores on the east and west Rand joined the strike in support of the pay demand, bringing the workers out on strike to 500.

Workers were given an ultimatum to return to work or be fired. Workers refused to comply and were fired. The dispute was settled on the 11th. All workers could return and no action would be taken against them. The company agreed to grant all workers earning up to R300 a month a R40 increase from September. Those earning R300 or more would get a 12,5% increase. (RDM, 12.08.82)

**NATAL****Company:** CG Smith (Natal)**Date:** -**Workers:** -**Union:** National Union of Sugar Manufacturing and Refining Employees

The union decided to take CG Smith to court over the status of workers employed in the loading and unloading of cane to the mill. The union claimed that the workers were industrial workers, and should be paid industrial council rates. CG Smith claimed that the workers were agricultural workers and fell outside the council agreement. Wages paid to industrial workers are more than 50% higher than those paid to agricultural workers.

The industrial court ruled that the workers in the cane loading zones and mill sites were industrial workers. It recommended that conditions of employment for those workers should be renegotiated. (Financial Mail, 27.08.82)

**Company:** Defy Metal Industries (Durban). For background see WIP 21:52; 22:31**Date:** -**Workers:** -**Union:** South African Allied Workers' Union

Workers at this firm have been negotiating with management for about nine months to have their contributions to the Metal Industries Pension Fund refunded. Defy says that they cannot meet the demand because of the fund's rules. SAAMU says it is considering appealing to the Minister of Manpower to grant the workers exemption from the provisions of the fund; asking the company to establish a non-contributory fund; seeking a Supreme Court order.

The Steel and Engineering Industries Federation (SEIFSA) has refused the company exemption from the pension fund. (RDM, 27.08.82)

**Company:** Iscor (Natal)**Date:** ?**Workers:** -**Union:** Black Allied Workers' Union

BAWU took legal action against Iscor because the company had deducted contributions for a burial fund and a facilities fund from union members' pay packets. Iscor settled out of court by paying back more than R27 000 to BAWU. (Star, 09.09.82)

**Company:** SA Fabrics (Durban). For background see Information Sheet August, 1982:5**Date:** July, 1982**Workers:** 60**Union:** National Union of Textile Workers

The NUTW has alleged that the 60 workers laid off in July, were retrenched without prior consultation with the union. A conciliation board is due to meet soon to rule on the matter.

**EASTERN CAPE****Company:** Busaf (Port Elizabeth)**Date:** 6 August**Workers:** 25% of the workforce**Union:** ?

The services of about 25% of the african workforce at Busaf vehicle body manufacturing plant in PE were terminated after a work stoppage.

No further news.

**Company:** Ford, General Motors, Volkswagen (PE)

Disputes over pay at the GM, VW and Ford plants continued in August after a 10 day stoppage in July, involving at least 10 500 members of the National Automobile and Allied Workers' Union (NAAMU). On 30 August Volkswagen closed its giant Uitenhage plant 'until further notice', and about 5 000 workers were sent home because of a go-slow over pay demands.

NAAMU's general secretary, F Sauls, stated that the workers were demanding to negotiate with management over their pay grievances, rather than through the industrial council for the industry.

On 4 August General Motor's vehicle assembly plant and Ford's truck plant were closed after workers had downed tools. Sauls stated that his union's national executive had decided to 'firmly resist' arbitration. He said that they believed that collective bargaining should take place between employers and workers only, and that they would not accept involvement by third parties. He said that workers were increasingly demanding to negotiate directly with individual companies rather than through the council.

At report back meetings on 5 August workers rejected a renewed offer by employers of an additional five cents an hour, made at a meeting of the industrial council for the industry. GM and VW workers accepted a management proposal for 'lay-off pay', but this was also rejected by Ford. This offer was accepted by the white workers' union on the council - the SA Iron and Steel Workers' Union. The Ford and GM plants resumed production on the 5th. However, GM and Ford's Neave and truck plants closed again on the 6th after renewed strikes by workers at these plants. P Searle, managing director of VW, stated that employers might introduce robots into plants if the labour situation remained unchanged.

Talks continued to be deadlocked when the employers and NAAMU met on 9 August, with NAAMU then withdrawing from the industrial council. Sauls said that the union had left the council chiefly to avoid arbitration of the dispute by a third party. The employers had suggested that they go to arbitration to settle the issue with the arbitrators appointed by themselves.

VW and GM remained closed with Ford's plants in partial production with a stay away of 25%.

On 10 August Ford announced that it would close its plants in eight days from 11 August, because workers again downed tools after six workers had been sacked. The move affected about 5 000 workers. However, both VW and GM announced that their plants would begin full production on the 11th. Ford's industrial relations director, Ferreira, stated that all workers affected would receive three days leave pay during the closure which would enable the company to 're-align stocking

levels and redraft forward production schedules'.

However, production was brought to a standstill again at GM on the 11th when workers downed tools because of the sacking of 18 colleagues, one a shop steward. The workers were sacked concerning incidents when some workers allegedly assaulted others and destroyed company property.

Around this time the International Union of Automobile Workers (UAW) wrote to Ford and GM in the USA, calling on the companies there to help resolve the critical situation in the eastern Cape motor industry. It stated that the wage proposals presented by the union to GM in SA were fair and responsible. (RDM, 12.08.82)

On the 12th GM workers returned and the plant resumed normal production, only to be closed at 14h00 because there were too few vehicles available for building.

During the closure of its plant Ford announced that it would lay off 507 hourly paid workers at its production plants. NAAMU attacked this move, saying its members would not react 'positively and without resistance'. Ferreira stated that although July car sales had been high, a marked decline was expected in the future. He said that the unions had been apprised of the situation for over three months. NAAMU said that the layoffs proved that Ford acted only 'in the interests of the profits of its shareholders at the expense of workers and that management and worker interests were irreconcilable'. (RDM, 14.08.82)

There was strong reaction by NAAMU workers at VW to a statement by the Reverend Allan Hendrikse, leader of the Labour Party, who said that the eastern Cape community did not support the workers' demands, and accused NAAMU of 'misusing the strike weapon'. A NAAMU organiser said that VW workers had passed a resolution 'condemning the Labour Party and Rev Hendrikse's approach to the dispute'. (RDM, 17.08.82)

Ford opened on the 20th, but was immediately hit by a strike by 400 workers at its truck plant as well as its cut and sew and part and accessories divisions, in protest against the retrenchment of the 500 workers. (RDM, 21.08.82) Production returned almost to normal on the 23rd.

Informal negotiations between NAAMU and employers continued and workers met on the 24th and reiterated their rejection of an interim wage increase offer by employers of 20 cents.

In early September Ford and NAAMU announced that they had reached an agreement on the procedure for rehiring the 507 workers. They would hire them as vacancies occurred, and would not hire new staff unless specific skills were required which none of the retrenched workers had. (RDM, 07.09.82)

VW announced in late August that it had shelved a R100-m expansion programme because of labour unrest. It denied that it had plans to move to another part of South Africa or to retrench staff. Sauls said that VW had made the announcement to gain a stronger bargaining position for future wage negotiations. (Star, 27.08.82)

On 31 August the employers announced that they would unilaterally implement the 20 cents an hour interim wage increase, to come into effect retro-

spectively from 22 August. They also announced that negotiations on workers' pay should continue. (RDM, 01.09.82)

Both NAAMU and the Motor Assemblies and Component Workers Union (MACMUSA) rejected the offer. (Sowetan, 02.09.82)

In September, in a shock move, the government announced that it would set aside R2-m from the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) to help motor workers who refused to join strikes but who were unable to work because their factories were strike-bound. During the motor strikes, Henry Ferreira, deputy chief secretary of the white Iron, Steel and Allied Workers' Union, had stated that white workers had been victims of the situation because they wanted to work but were prevented from doing so. (Star, 17.09.82) NAAMU attacked the government's move as 'one-sided', and accused the Minister of Manpower of siding with the employers in the strikes and accepting only their account of the strikes.

GM's managing director said the proposal was 'alarming' and would set a precedent which would be costly, while Ferreira of Ford said that the proposal was 'undesirable'. In announcing the move the Minister stated that during the recent strike 'responsible' workers were prevented from working by 'a disruptive work stoppage caused by workers in the same undertaking'. An initial R2-m would be set aside 'to combat unemployment' by placing these workers in jobs and ensuring that they received their normal income'. (RDM, 03.09.82)

Company: General Motors. See above

Company: South African Bottling Company. For background see WIP 21:60; 23:54

Date: 1981 strike

Workers: 200

Union: General Workers' Union of SA (GMUSA)

A boycott of Coca Cola products in the eastern Cape ended in the last week of August, with an agreement being signed between SA Bottling Co and GMUSA. The agreement provided for the re-employment by the company of more than 200 workers fired during the strike at SA Bottling last year. According to the agreement the company will rehire, by January, 50 workers out of an agreed total of 111. GMUSA and the company would then decide how to phase in the remainder. There would be close communication between the company and the union on the rehiring, preferential treatment would be given to fired workers when vacancies arose, and benefits would be reinstated on existing policy. In turn the union agreed to call off the boycott. (RDM, 27.03.82)

Company: Veldspun International

Date: 4 August

Workers: 1 000

Union: TUCSA-affiliated Textile Workers' Industrial Union (TWIU), and the FOSATU-affiliated National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW)

Initially 30 workers were retrenched at the end of July. Thirty colleagues from another department were called in to do the work of the retrenched workers.

They refused, and were all dismissed.

On 4 August the entire workforce of 1 000 came out on strike in sympathy. Four weeks later Veldspun had 900 workers in its employ, of whom 500 are new employees and 350 are old TWIU members who had returned to work. There are another 50 who are either non-members or NUTW members. The rest of the NUTW workers are still on strike and have resolved not to collect their pay.

Veldspun is owned by Romatex, which is a member of the Barlow Rand Group. Mike Rosholt, chairman of the group, has declined to intervene in the dispute. Rosholt referred the matter to Romatex industrial relations director, Bruce. Since then management's sole interest seems to be to discuss the position of the 30 retrenched workers and not their fellow workers who are on strike.

Company: Volkswagen. See above

#### WESTERN CAPE

Company: Cape Herald (Cape Town)

Date: 3 September

Workers: ?

Union: Media Workers' Association of SA (MWASA)  
MWASA members staged a brief strike after their editor, Ted Doman, had failed to respond to their grievances.

## courts

#### TREASON TRIALS

Between February and November, 1981, eight explosions rocked the Durban area, causing extensive damage. Some of the targets attacked, like the SADF recruiting offices in Smith Street, had obvious symbolic value for the saboteurs; others, such as the Indian Affairs offices, were attacked on the day of the South African Indian Council (SAIC) elections, which were the subject of a successful anti-SAIC boycott campaign.

Late in November, security police detained a number of people, allegedly in connection with the bomb blasts; and at the end of April, 1982, three men appeared in court charged with High Treason.

The accused were:  
Patrick Ntobeko Maqubela, a 32 year old Durban attorney; Mboniswa de Villiers Richard

Maqutyana, a 29 year old Umlazi bakery worker; and Seth Mpumulelo Gaba, 24 year old resident of Mdantsane township, East London.

The state alleged that the accused were party to a conspiracy involving the African National Congress, its military wing Umkonto we Sizwe, Cyril Abrahams (also known as 'Bruin Ou'), Mpampa Maduna, Zweli, Douglas, Mduduzi Guma and Prince Madikizela.

According to the state, the object of the conspiracy involved an attempt to overthrow or coerce the South African government by means which included violence. The acts allegedly committed in furtherance of the conspiracy included

- \* recruitment of people for military training;
- \* establishment of arms caches, and supplying people with weapons and explosives;
- \* deployment of trained and armed people to commit acts of sabotage.

In addition to the charge of High Treason, the accused faced a further 56 counts involving the Terrorism, Sabotage and Arms and Explosives Acts.

The specific acts alleged against each of the accused were set out by the state as follows:  
Accused 1 (Maqubela):

The accused joined the ANC, and was stationed in Durban. From there, he served as a link between the ANC, the other accused and other people based in Swaziland.

Maqubela allegedly arranged for the hire of cars which were used to convey explosives, couriers and information to and from Swaziland. Near Umlazi, the accused established caches of arms and explosives for people committing acts of sabotage.

The accused also had in his possession, or under his control, the following explosives, arms and ammunition:

- 20 kg plastic explosives
- 19 x 200 g blocks of TNT
- 3 x 400 g blocks of TNT
- 16 hand grenades
- 1 AK 47 rifle
- 120 x 7,62 mm cartridges

Accused 2 (Maqutyana) joined the ANC, and established or had knowledge of arms caches near Umlazi. He was in possession of, or had control over

3,8 kg plastic explosives  
5 x 200 g blocks of TNT  
11 x 400 g blocks of TNT  
16 x 1kg plastic explosives  
3 limpet mines  
Safety fuse and detonators  
A Makarov pistol and cartridges

The third accused, Seth Gaba, joined the ANC, and underwent military training in Swaziland. He attempted to recruit Mpilo Ichabod Taho to undergo military training in Mocambique under the auspices of the ANC.

Gaba returned to South Africa to reconnoitre places in Durban and Mdantsane with a view to possible acts of sabotage. He established or concealed caches of arms and explosives near Mdantsane and Durban, and was in possession of

400 g TNT  
4 x 200 g TNT  
4 x 75 g TNT  
1 kg plastic explosives  
Detonators  
2 hand grenades  
A Makarov pistol and ammunition.

In addition to this, the accused were all charged with criminal liability for the eight bomb blasts mentioned above. The state did not allege that all three accused had actually detonated the bombs, but that they had been involved in the planning or executing of the attacks in one way or another.

The state set out details of these blasts as follows:

| DATE   | PLACE                                      | DAMAGE CAUSED | NO. INJURED |
|--------|--|---------------|-------------|
| 07.02. | Scotts Stores, Harriet House, Field Street | R13 590       | 1           |
| 25.05  | Railway line at Umlazi bridge              | R 1 448       | NIL         |
| 27.05  | SADF recruiting offices, Smith Street      | R23 385       | NIL         |

|       |  |          |     |
|-------|--|----------|-----|
| 26.06 | Cenotaph, Francis Farewell Square      | R 2 300  | NIL |
| 26.07 | McCarthy Leyland, Smith Street         | R38 588  | NIL |
| 26.07 | Parks for Peugeot, Smith Street        | R221 000 | 2   |
| 10.10 | Whitehead Building                     | R148 894 | 4   |
| 03.11 | Indian Affairs Offices, Stanger Street | R 26 624 | 2   |

The trial began on August 2, 1982 in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court before Justice Auret van Heerden and two assessors.

A major feature of the trial involved the number of witnesses called by the state who refused to testify. All received very lengthy sentences, which were in some cases the heaviest ever imposed by South African courts for refusing to testify. Most of those who would not give evidence had been in security police detention for long periods before being brought to court.

Those who refused to testify were:  
Litha Jolobe, 25-year old law student from the University of Swaziland. Detained on 23.11.81, Jolobe was sentenced to four years imprisonment for refusing to testify;  
Mbulelo Hongo, a 26 year old legal clerk, was detained on 04.12.81. Refusing to testify, he was sentenced to three years imprisonment;  
Bululane Ngcuka, a 28-year old attorney, and cousin of Maqubela, was detained on 30.11.81. He was sentenced to three years imprisonment;  
Mpilo Ichabod Taho, 28, is a former Fort Hare student, and is listed as a SAAWU member in some reports. Detained in December, 1981, he was sentenced to the maximum possible imprisonment for refusing to testify, namely five years;  
Alyanda Mpahlwa, a 23-year old Durban student, was initially held by security police on 03.12.81.

Brought to court during August, 1982, he was sentenced to four years imprisonment for refusing to testify.

A trial within a trial was held to establish the admissibility of a statement made by accused number 3, Seth Gaba, while in custody. Gaba claimed that he made the statement as a result of severe assaults committed by security police, and in particular, a Lieutenant Naude of East London.

While police denied the assaults, Gaba claimed that his hand had been handcuffed to a chair, and he was ordered to write about his ANC involvement with his other hand. All this time, Lieutenant Naude was hitting him across the back of the head. Naude then allegedly placed a wet canvass bag over Gaba's head, and he was handcuffed with his hands behind his legs in a crouching position with a stick between his legs and arms; he was then suspended on the stick between two tables.

According to Gaba, Naude said that he had a 'six-point plan to make terrorists talk'.

Naude denied that he had assaulted Gaba, admitting only that he had slapped Gaba when he had arrested him: this was because Gaba moved towards a cushion under which a Makarov pistol was subsequently found.

Presiding judge van Heerden ruled that the statement had been made freely and voluntarily, and was therefore admissible against Gaba as evidence.

In the statement, Gaba said that he had gone for military training in Swaziland in October, 1980. He was taken to Durban to accused number 1, Maqubela, who arranged the trip for him.

In Swaziland, he received training on how to make explosives, in the use of hand grenades, and how to handle a fire-arm.

When I was ready to leave I was given a sketch showing where I would find the goods in Umtata cemetery. At first I was to operate alone...I was to obtain information on Major-General Ngceba, Transkei Commissioner of Police and head of Transkei's security police, and if I had the chance, I was to shoot him.

I was also to blow up the magistrate's office in Amanziatoti.....

I found the goods in the Umata cemetery... On the day Chief Bambilanga was appointed I placed goods in a parked vehicle. The bomb was to explode...at 6 pm and was to protest against Bambilanga being appointed in place of Sebata.

I put the second bomb in a litter bin in Field Street, Durban..... Because I did not have a target on Republic Day I blew up an electricity supply pole between Butterworth and Idutywa.

After this, Gaba received a message from one Madikizela to go back to Swaziland, where he was trained in the use of mines. 'My instructions were that I should do nothing until December 16, the birthday of Umkonto we Sizwe'.

The defence also claimed that accused number two, Maghutyana, had been subject to a 'severe, prolonged and particularly vicious assault' while in security police custody. As a result, he had received a burst eardrum and had to receive medical treatment.

A librarian at the University of Natal's Durban campus told the court that on November 23, 1981, she saw that a black man sitting at a table in the library seemed to be feeling for something underneath the table. Some time later, a student, Michael Pace, came into the library and sat at the same table. He too seemed to be feeling for something under it.

The security police were informed of this, and a trap was laid after the contents of the envelopes found under the table had been inspected. Later that day, a man came into the library, felt for the envelopes - and was immediately arrested.

One of the letters read

Dear Comrade Richard,  
Please arrange to have the following material deposited at Durban station cloakroom immediately and hand the ticket to G. 20 kg plastic explosives, 10 electric detonators, 10 electronic delay devices, 25 m demolition cord, two pairs rubber gloves, 6 hand grenades.

According to the state, one of the witnesses

who refused to testify was expected to establish that 'Q' was the code name of one of the accused.

At least one state witness testified in camera, with the presiding judge ruling that none of his evidence could be reported.

Verdict: All three accused were found guilty of High Treason. Accused number 3, Gaba, was also found guilty under the Terrorism Act in regard to certain of his activities in the Transkei.

Sentence: The state asked that the death sentence be imposed on all three accused. This was opposed by the defence, who called Archbishop Dennis Hurley, and Dr Simon Gqubule, head of the Methodist Church, in mitigation of sentence.

Sentence of 20 years imprisonment was imposed in respect of all three accused.

After sentence was passed, police fired tear gas into the court to 'quell the unruly crowd'. After being sentenced, the accused raised their hands in ANC salutes, and began shouting ANC slogans. Almost the entire public gallery took up the cry until police intervened with teargas. (Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court, 07.09.82).

Suzman Nkopane Mokoena.

The accused in this trial, allegedly a trained guerilla fighter, faces a main charge of treason, and various alternative counts under the Terrorism Act.

The state alleges that Mokoena underwent military training under the auspices of the ANC; between September and November, 1981, it is claimed that the accused and others established a cache of arms and explosives in GaRankuwa.

Mokoena is alleged to be part of the ANC's Gebuze Machinery, a task force which, inter alia, planned to sabotage the Rosslyn electric sub-station, the Eerstefabriek railway line, and the Waltloo petrol depot near Mamelodi.

The trial of Mokoena is set down for hearing on October 18, 1982, in the Pretoria Supreme Court.

Barbara Anne Hogan (30).

The accused faces a main charge of treason, with alternative charges under the Terrorism and Internal Security Acts. She is alleged to have joined the ANC in Swaziland in 1977, and to have performed various acts in furtherance of its aims.

The state has alleged that Hogan was instructed to work in the labour field on behalf of the ANC. She is alleged to have set up a system of dead letter boxes and codes to communicate with the ANC. On several occasions, it is claimed, she visited Marius Schoon, an ANC member in Botswana, conveyed information to him and the ANC, and received further instructions about her ANC activities.

Three documents were alleged by the state to have been drawn up and sent by Hogan to the ANC: these were entitled  
Social problems of working class leadership;  
Problems arising from internal political work;  
Close comrades.

Hogan has admitted drawing up the last two of these documents, but denied drafting the first.

The accused is alleged to have negotiated with SAAWU - the South African Allied Workers' Union - over the possible establishment of an unemployed workers' union, with the aim of furthering ANC aims and objectives. She is also charged with working closely with various ANC supporters in South Africa, and attempting to win over individuals, groups and organisations to the ANC.

At the beginning of her trial, Hogan pleaded guilty to the alternative charges under the Internal Security Act, namely membership of the ANC, and furthering its aims. She pleaded not guilty to treason, and to the Terrorism Act charge.

In general, Hogan has admitted most of the allegations levelled against her by the state. However, she has denied that the sole aim of the ANC is to overthrow the government through violence, or by other means which include the crippling of the economy. She has said that she associated herself with those ANC aims and activities which did not include violence or the

general crippling of the economy.

The case is an important one, in that the state is seeking to establish that non-violent ANC activity amounts to Treason, while the defence claims that it is possible to be an ANC activist without being guilty of Treason or Terrorism.

The trial, which began in the Rand Supreme Court on August 2, 1982, is being heard by judge van Dyk. The state's main witness was ex-spy and security policeman, Major CM Williamson, who gave evidence on the nature of the ANC and its activities.

For the defence, Tom Lodge, lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand, gave evidence on how the accused could have associated herself with the ANC, but not with its violent activities. He testified that since the formation of MK (Umkonto we Sizwe, the military wing), the ANC had continued to maintain its non-military organisation which worked separately from the military wing. The ANC, according to Lodge, has a 'multi-dimensional' strategy, and anyone in broad sympathy with the organisations social aims - as set out in the Freedom Charter - could be incorporated into the organisation's activity.

Industrial sociology expert, Eddie Webster, testified that strikes, boycotts and trade union organisation did not necessarily cripple or prejudice industry and the economy. Neither did the organisation of unemployed workers.

Webster claims that these activities were an attempt to place pressure on employers once all else had failed. An unemployed workers' union could prevent scab labour from taking the jobs of strikers, and thus prevent conflict between workers.

Judgement in this trial is expected in late October.

#### TERRORISM ACT TRIALS

Alan Morris Fine (29).

The accused faces a main charge of Terrorism, with an alternative count under the Internal Security Act. The state alleges that, by involving himself

in the activities of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), he furthered the aims of the banned African National Congress (ANC). SACTU is itself not a banned organisation.

During late 1977, the accused is alleged to have visited Jeanette Schoon, an official of SACTU in Botswana. He is further alleged to have sent information to Schoon for the use of SACTU, by the use of dead-letter boxes, ordinary post, and meetings in Botswana.

Fine admitted that he had sent certain legal information to Schoon from late 1977 to September, 1981: however, he denied that this involved a conspiracy to further the aims of the ANC via SACTU. He also denied the state's allegation that SACTU aimed to organise workers to play a militant role in a revolutionary process.

Major CM Williamson, security police spy who infiltrated the ANC and informed on their activities, gave evidence in the trial. He admitted that he was not an expert on SACTU. According to Williamson, SACTU has its own identity, but is also part of a revolutionary alliance led by the ANC.

The ANC was regarded as a mass democratic organisation working towards national liberation. It was supported by various other organisations including SACTU and the Communist Party. The revolutionary aim of the national liberation movement meant that radical changes in society would have to take place. Williamson admitted that these could occur by violent or non-violent means.

Williamson agreed that it was not necessarily unlawful to send information to SACTU, depending on the motives of those involved.

Williamson also conceded that the fact that the accused operated in a clandestine manner, using dead letter boxes, sending information in magazines, etc) did not make the communication itself unlawful. He agreed that people 'on the left' tended to behave clandestinely for fear of banning or detention, even if what they were doing was not unlawful.

Fine, in his evidence, said that he understood that SACTU was an independent organisation, and that in working for SACTU he did not believe he was breaking any law.

However, I am aware that many SACTU officials and supporters have suffered from harassment. It was for this reason that he agreed to communicate with Jeanette Schoon in a clandestine manner.

Fine explained that he was prepared to associate himself with SACTU, as it had (together with other members of the Congress Alliance) declared the principles of the Freedom Charter to be its objective. He believed that radical change could take place without violence, and that a strong trade union movement could exert pressure for non-violent change.

Industrial sociologist Eddie Webster testified that strikes, boycotts and trade union organisation did not necessarily aim to cripple South African industry. According to Webster, strikes are considered to be the ultimate weapon when all else fails during a dispute.

The defence has argued that Webster's evidence puts the activities of the accused into a proper perspective. He was participating in normal, lawful activities which were part of a continuing process of change in South Africa. In so far as he supplied SACTU with information about labour matters, he did not, according to the defence, endanger the maintenance of law and order.

The state has claimed that Fine's activities had the likely result of endangering the maintenance of law and order, and that he is accordingly guilty of Terrorism. Alternatively, according to the state, he entered into a conspiracy with SACTU which furthered the aims of the ANC. This would render him guilty of the Internal Security Act charge.

Fine, who was detained in September, 1981, and has been in custody ever since, will have judgement passed on his activities on 8 November, in the Johannesburg Regional Court.



Amos Siphiso Buthelezi (27), Amos Dlomo (34), and Mkipheni Nyandeni (33).

The state alleged that the three accused underwent military training under the auspices of the ANC, and returned to South Africa where they conspired to sabotage petrol depots and murder farmers.

On completion of their training, they were supplied with arms, ammunition and explosives, and were instructed to return to South Africa and establish caches of weapons. The accused were also charged with recruiting others for military training, and possession of AK47 rifles, limpet mines, and hand grenades.

A witness who had undergone ANC training identified the three accused as having been in a training camp in Angola, where they had the code names of Vusi, Jerry and Mose. The witness named only as a Mr Kekelene, said he left South Africa in 1978 to join the ANC. However, on his return to South Africa, he surrendered to the police.

Verdict: Guilty.

Sentence: In passing sentence, presiding judge Didcott said that it was widely recognised that black people in South Africa had real and legitimate grievances. The accused all came from humble backgrounds, and it was impossible not to have sympathy with someone in that situation, or to brush aside their frustration and despair.

However, the judge said that no state could allow violence or violent activity go unpunished. He sentenced each of the accused to seven years imprisonment.

(Durban Supreme Court, 22.09.82).

A number of part heard Terrorism Act trials are currently being heard in various courts. Details of these will be provided when these trials are completed. They include

state vs Gacar Mpethe and others (Cape Town);  
state vs Neville Sello Motlhabakwe and four others (Kimberley);  
state vs Harold Abel Mazala (Johannesburg);

State vs Stanley Radebe and three others (Kempton Park);

state vs Roger Hofseani Chamusso (also known as Patrick Shange) (Pretoria);

state vs Thozamile Gqwetha and Sisa Njikelane (East London).

In addition to this, charges in the Terrorism Act trial pending against Sam Kikine have recently been dropped by the state.

#### INTERNAL SECURITY ACT TRIALS

Strike Ishmael Bila (28), Bernard Makgonyana (19), and John Gotso (35).

The accused faced a number of charges relating to possession of Communist Party and ANC literature; putting up prohibited posters, signs or marks at various places in and around Mamelodi and other Pretoria townships; and furthering the aims of the ANC by acting as messengers, visiting people in Botswana associated with the ANC, distributing ANC literature, and recruiting members for the ANC.

Verdict: Bila and Makgonyana were found guilty of furthering the aims of the ANC, and possessing prohibited literature. Gotso was acquitted on all charges.

Sentence: Bila was sentenced to two years imprisonment, plus a fine of R300;

Makgonyana was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, six months of which was conditionally suspended. (Pretoria Regional Court, 23.08.82).

A number of part heard Internal Security Act trials are currently before the courts. These include  
state vs Lillian Keagile (Johannesburg);  
state vs Thebo Lerumo and Akila Mapheto (Johannesburg).  
Charges against Baby Tyawa (Johannesburg) and the Rev Ivor Shapiro in terms of this Act (Kimberley), have recently been withdrawn.