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WIP 78 * October / November 1991

PROGRESS



SITTING ON A CLASS CRISIS

- * AFTER THE PEACE ACCORD
- * NEW ALLIANCE TO VAT POWER
- * THE SORRY STORY OF SOVIET 'SOCIALISM'

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Oct / Nov 1991 No 78

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18, 26
Dynamic Images: Page 3
NECC: Pages 20, 22
23
ANC: Pages 37, 43
Mbulelo Mdledle: Page 10
Tammy Shafer: Page 24

GRAPHICS:

Charlotte Peden: Pages 32, 33
Socialism for
Beginners: Page 47

CARTOON:

Judy Seidman: Page 8

EDITORIAL

In any period of transition from an old order to a new, moments of hope and optimism merge with moments of doubt and pessimism. As the saying goes, the old refuses to die, and the new strives to be born.

Such is the situation in the Soviet Union. The hope of a brighter future free of a decrepit self-serving bureaucracy, where the ideals of true democracy spring sharply to the fore, are enmeshed in the quagmire of ethnic carnage, and the rise of neo-fascism.

South Africa is also caught in this interregnum.

There is much to be hopeful about. There is now a slowly expanding intellectual climate of free and open debate, and notions of political tolerance and democracy are fast gaining currency.

The National Peace Accord, despite its serious flaws, at least holds out the promise of a more accountable and well-behaved police force during the transition.

Disciplined, well-planned and non-violent mass action, such as the current Cosatu-led anti-VAT campaign, gives hope to the idea that De Klerk can be forced, through similar action, to give in to the constituent assembly demand — the only democratic route to a new SA.

The recent ANC-PAC-Azapo formulation of a 'pre-constituent assembly conference', as opposed to De Klerk's 'multi-party conference', is not a mere semantic quibble. It deeply entrenches the idea that a 'multi-party' get-together can only have one item on the agenda — the modalities of moving towards a constituent assembly.

This, of course, would incorporate the notion of a 'transitional authority' or an 'interim government', where the present (illegitimate) regime gives up all its powers. A Patriotic Front of all democratic organisations can only accelerate this process.

But South Africa currently moves between the hope of freedom, and the fear of barbarism. The carnage immediately preceding the signing of the National Peace Accord, and the assassinations following it, are a grim reminder that the culture of violence that has gripped many communities will not be easily erased.

While particular strategies of liberation organisations, and the actions of ill-disciplined members of these organisations, have contributed to this culture of violence, the brutal policies of this government over the years must bear primary responsibility. In addition, there is strong evidence to suggest a high degree of orchestration in most, if not all, of the recent violence. The fingerprints of De Klerk's security forces are everywhere.

The descent into barbarism can only be reversed once this government stops pretending that its hands are clean, and that it is morally and otherwise equipped to lead the transition to a democratic future.

A neutral, representative authority has to replace this government as soon as possible. Only such an authority can act with legitimacy and purpose to root out forces of barbarism — in particular those neo-fascist elements within the security forces — and create the necessary climate for a peaceful transition to democracy. *

CONTENTS

LETTERS 2

BRIEFS 3

- * 'We made great gains', say Vula operatives
- * Food production in crisis
- * Natal cleaners' strike spreads
- * Dispossessed try to reclaim land
- * Where have all the men gone?

PEACE ACCORD

- Between freedom and barbarism
Devan Pillay
- Inkatha goes on rampage
Mbulelo Mdledle
- Police abduct and torture returnee
Mbulelo Mdledle
- Peace accord is flawed — PAC
Mbulelo Mdledle
- Policing the accord
Etienne Marais and Janine Rauch
- The quest for impartial policing
Clifford Shearing

EDUCATION CRISIS 20

- Fighting for 203 schools for 3 million kids
Glenda Daniels
- Soweto schools in decay
Mosito Raphela

GENDER 24

- Women chart the way forward
Glenda Daniels

LABOUR 26

- Labour leads fight against VAT
Glenda Daniels
- Farmers block agricultural workers' unions
Simon Norfolk

SOVIET 'SOCIALISM' 31

- The socialist ideal remains intact
Ben Turok
- The Soviet coup: Where should socialists stand?
Alex Callinicos

ECONOMY 37

- Interview with Max Sisulu
- IMF and World Bank: Colonialism in a new guise
Sipho Buthelezi

BOOKS 41

- Redistribution and nationalisation
Neva Seideman Makgetla
- Urbanisation in post-apartheid South Africa
Alan Mabin
- Foundations of the new SA
Raymond Suttner
- Sharing the load
Glenda Daniels



Between freedom and barbarism

While the National Peace Accord offers some hope for peace — particularly in terms of reigning in the police force — the violence aimed mainly at ANC members and supporters persists

Pages 8 — 19

Cosatu leads anti-VAT alliance

Cosatu has brought together a remarkable range of organisations in the burgeoning campaign against VAT

Pages 26 — 27



The NECC's recent campaign to occupy empty white schools has forced the government to take the education crisis a little more seriously
Pages 20 — 23

Occupation of white schools

SA needs a single police force

Dear editor

In an otherwise meritorious assessment of the aftermath of the Inkatha funding scandal and the prospects of success of the National Peace Accord, John Aitcheson raises problematic rhetorical questions and makes incomprehensible statements (*WIP 77*).

For instance, he wrote: 'In a sense the debate [about cultural weapons] serves as an enormous distraction, for what right-minded state would allow the provocative carrying of lethal weapons in public at a time of unrest'.

It is not so clear whether the state is 'right-minded', but even if it was, what if it agreed with the purpose of carrying them, particularly because of who is carrying them. Further, must they carry these weapons at a peace ceremony instead, as they did at the Carlton Hotel in Johannesburg? How can Aitcheson also correctly make the following observations: 'What they [the conflict watchers (and victims — LT)] had privately known



LETTERS

Write to: The Editor
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for years, that the security police had an intimate relationship with Inkatha and Uwusa, was now public knowledge. Double and hidden State and Inkatha agendas are now hanging out to dry and looking considerably bleached.'

Also: 'So far their [police] attempts [to take effective action against murders, arsonist and intimidators] (in so far as there were attempts given the collusion between the security police and Inkatha) have been dismal.

And then proceeds to conclude that the Real Problem is that the police have been totally ineffective in halting the slaughter of thousands of people by men armed with assault rifles,

shot guns and variety of hand weapon? Is this what the real problem is? And does it make sense to have expected the police to have demonstrated effective crime combating behaviour if we are saying they had a longstanding intimate relationship with the alleged criminals?

This comes across as surprisingly naive given the arguments in the article and what Aitcheson must be aware of.

The real problem is the involvement of the police in acts of violence by commission or by omission, as maintained by victims and what he calls conflict watchers. It also appears quite incredible to make an assessment of the state of play of violence in Natal, and especially discussing policing, without even a mention of the KwaZulu Police.

This is particularly so not only because of the controversial origins of the KZP, but that serious allegations of bias in favour of Inkatha have been made against them. Gatsha Buthelezi in his capacity as minister of police has in recent months received several thousands of rands

in out-of-court settlements. These settlements arose from civil claims against the KZP. The continuing handing over of police stations to them (KZP) has become a headache of immense proportions to non-Inkatha members of whatever hue.

The unrest monitor Mary de Haas, based at the University of Natal (Durban), is scathing in her attack on the KZP. She maintains that no matter how many peace accords we sign, no peace would prevail without a single police force in Natal. She believes that just as we called for single education and health departments, must we call for a single police force.

There are elements of truth in what she is saying, but perhaps it remains important to search for the real cause of violence, so that what we propose as solutions become effective. Would for instance anybody care to explain what happened to what the media called 'faction fighting', which was a peculiarity of Natal — *Lechesa Tsenoli, Durban*

WIP is not critical enough

Dear editor

I find that much of the critical analysis which *WIP* used to contain is no longer in evidence, and the kind of hagiography which characterised the most recent editorial (presumably *WIP 76* — ed) has become the norm — *Patrick Pearson, Wits*

The mind boggles. This year *WIP* has been praised for being independent and constructively critical, and condemned for being an ANC journal (by ANC critics), for being a PAC journal (by one ANC hack), and for being too ultra-left (by a member of staff)!

PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

Work In Progress is a forum for analysing, debating and recording the major issues of our times, as well as the aims and activities of the various organisations of the democratic movement. To this end it requires contributors to conform to the following guidelines:

1. Constructive criticisms of organisations are welcome. However, articles of a sectarian nature, or which indulge in personal attacks on individuals, will not be published.
2. Contributions to *WIP* should not exceed the following lengths:

* analytical articles	2 400 — 3 000 words
* debates and reports	1 500 — 2 400 words
* reviews	800 — 1 800 words
* briefings	750 words
3. Articles should be submitted in a final and correct form, preferably on disk (Wordperfect 5.1) or via worknet. Hard copies should also be sent. In the event that the editor decides that other than minor editing changes are required, the article will be referred back to the author.
4. Articles should be written accessibly, with a minimum of jargon, footnotes and references.
5. All material submitted will be treated in confidence (except in the case of public documents).

Please contact the editor for more details.

We made great gains - Vula operatives

MORE than a year since Operation Vulindlela was first exposed to the public, its former operatives are saying it was a great success.

Vulindlela or 'open the road' was a top secret project of the ANC, directly under the command of its then president Oliver Tambo. Its main objective was to locate a national leadership inside South Africa. That leadership collective had to encompass members of the NEC and other leading cadres in exile, and proven leaders inside the country.

In June last year, the South African security police announced a breakthrough when a number of people were arrested in Durban and Johannesburg. Among them were Mac Maharaj, a member of the ANC's national executive committee (NEC), and Sphiwe Nyanda, a top commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Both entered the country clandestinely in the late 1980s and operated underground until their arrest.

'Red Plot!', screamed the headlines in the mainstream press as stories unfolded of police discovering weapons' caches and a massive underground network linked by a sophisticated computer system.

Vula was characterised by the state and rightwing media as a communist conspiracy whose main objective was insurrection.

The arrests of the Vula personnel, including

Maharaj, received a low-key response from the leadership of the ANC, prompting speculation that the process of talking to the government was eroding its militancy.

Coordinating mass resistance

WIP recently spoke to Nyanda and four other ex-Vula operatives about this controversial top secret project led by the president's office of the ANC.

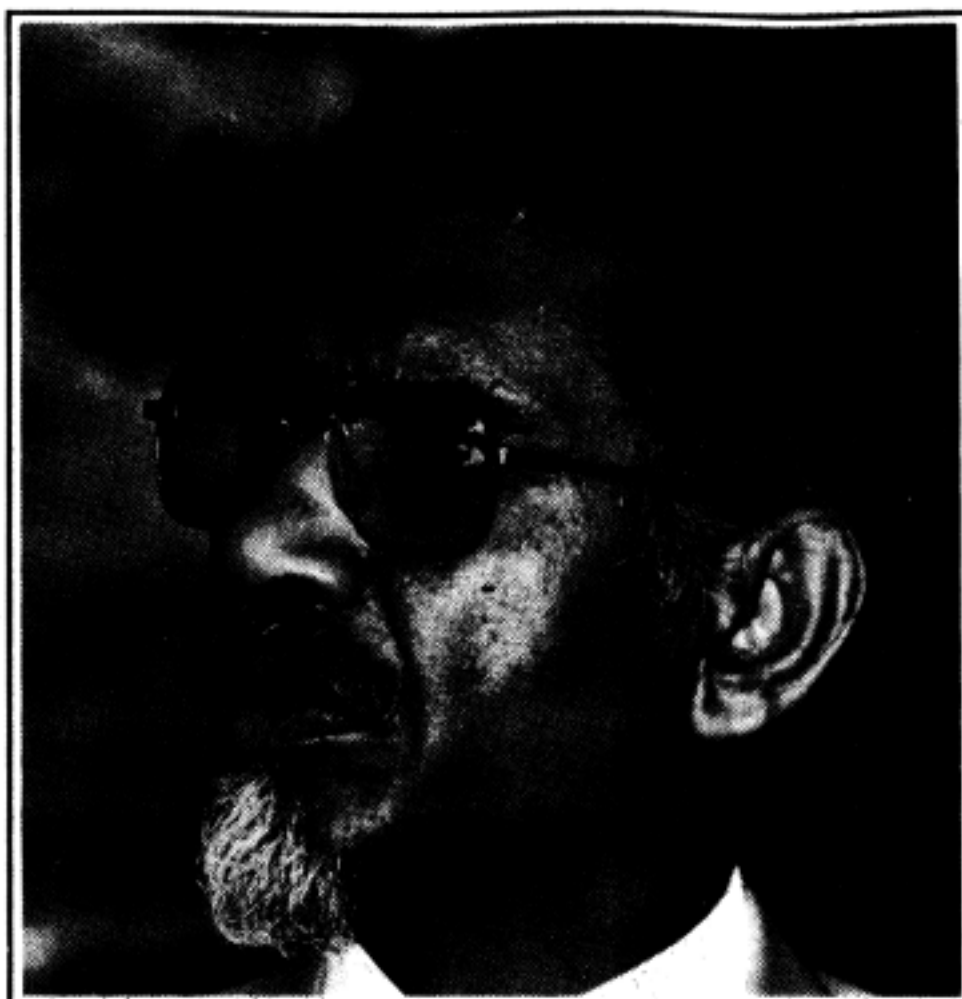
We asked them: 'Was it worthwhile?' Nyanda, subsequently elected to the ANC NEC, answered emphatically, 'Yes!'

'The ANC was building an enormous underground,' Nyanda says. 'It gave a morale boost to the people and it scared the hell out of the government. And, don't forget, a substantial part of it has until today not been exposed.'

Ex-chairperson of the Durban Vula structure Jabu Sithole, now lecturing at the University of Zululand, agrees: 'Vula managed to bring people together. From 1984 onwards there were violent and massive uprisings of people against the apartheid system. But there was little co-ordination. The presence of the ANC inside the country had increased, but our underground was in no position to unify its personnel with these revolts, which would start and die down. Vula tried to change that.'

Scott Mpho, joint secretary of the Durban structure, managed to evade arrest and remained underground until he received indemnity in June 1991.

He says: 'Vula intended to shape and fashion the revolutionary army of the people, which was to be rooted in the country under the day-to-day leadership of



Mac Maharaj: the arrests of Vula members received a low-key response from the ANC leadership

the ANC. That was important.'

Praveen Gordhan, who was Mpho's joint secretary-colleague, characterises Vula as the 'maturing of the revolution at that stage.'

In the two years Vula was in operation, from 1987 until July 1990, important progress was made, including the building of an underground press.

'We managed to distribute a lot of literature regularly and timeously. Vula made crucial inputs, for instance in the mass defiance campaign of 1989,' he says.

This and other campaigns, they say, were instrumental in convincing the minority government to change strategy and recognise the liberation movement, and pursue the negotiations option.

Communist plot?

How do the former operatives feel about Vula being labelled a 'communist plot', and police allegations that its purpose was to undermine negotiations between the ANC and the

government?

Those interviewed are still furious about 'that smear'.

On the other hand they recall the official ANC response without comment. Only wry smiles.

Vula operative Ivan Pillay says: 'I was only satisfied in June this year, when Nelson Mandela himself explained at a press conference the truth about Vula.'

Mandela stated: 'Vula was a mission undertaken by our movement. In its planning and execution it brought together almost three decades of clandestine struggle. The time had arrived where the conditions had been created for the leadership of our movement, who had been driven into exile, to begin relocating itself within the country, despite the formidable power of the apartheid state.'

By merging with forces inside the country 'such a leadership would enable the movement to respond speedily and effectively to the rapid changes that were taking place.'

series of missions, carefully planned and with the fullest regard for the immense risk involved. It was not a knee-jerk reaction, but a plan in terms of the long-term strategy of the movement,' he said.

Mandela emphasised that Vula was not a communist plot.

Pillay shows *WIP* notes written to him by OR Tambo. 'These notes are specific. They show that Comrade Tambo was not just the nominal head of Vula. It was his creation and he was involved in the details. Anybody who knows OR knows that he was a cautious man and a stickler for detail. And he was in charge.'

Responding to the allegation that Vula sought to undermine negotiations, Mpho says: 'At the time of the arrests, the ANC had no agreement with the regime to suspend the armed struggle. So there was no breach of any agreement. We acted within the policies of the ANC. We fully support the talks to achieve a transfer of power to the people of South Africa.' — *AIA/Ravi Krishna*

Food production in a major crisis

CONTEMPORARY agriculture in South Africa is in crisis and a major issue facing any post-apartheid government will be land reform and food production.

This was the opinion of speakers at the recent Spring Fair workshop at the University of the Witwatersrand, where the future restructuring of agricultural production and ways to embark on a green



revolution were examined.

Bongiwe Ncube of the ANC's land commission pointed to the crisis facing the black peasantry. Over the decades, but especially in the 43 years since the advent of apartheid, the black peasantry has been severely undermined.

Today there are very few black households which sustain themselves purely through agricultural production.

In most cases income is supplemented by a member or members of the household working in the cities, she said.

At present food production is dominated by the approximately 60 000 white commercial farmers who own about 80 percent of the land.

However, as Mark Lyster of the Development Bank of South Africa indicated, this sector is also facing serious

difficulties and decline. White farmers owe the state and private banks around R17 billion (US\$4.7 billion). Many are going insolvent as they are unable to service their debts.

The state is no longer subsidising the interest rates on their loans and the number of commercial farmers has dropped from 130 000 to 60 000.

Speakers said the crisis is reflected not only in the sphere of production and insolvencies.

Environmentally, the farmlands of South Africa are in a dire state. The peasant holdings are ravaged by erosion due to over-use, while the white commercial areas are saturated with pesticide and have also suffered enormous top-soil loss.

A final problem that emerges extends beyond the agricultural sector.

Although South Africa is an exporter of food, a high percentage of the population is under-nourished. Lack of income and high food prices are the key factors responsible.

India and China

At the same workshop, Professor Utsa Patnaik from the University of New Delhi suggested that South Africa can learn a great deal from the experiences of other countries. In India, for example, she argued that a green revolution did occur.

With the help of new seed hybrids there was a substantial increase in agricultural output. However, only the richer peasants were able to partake in this green revolution.

Professor Patnaik pointed out that 'the peasantry in India are still severely stratified', because although land reform was carried out post independence, it was limited.

After the land reforms, 60 percent of the peasantry owned only five percent of the land. The average amount held by peasants, the poorest grouping, was half an acre.

Professor Patnaik noted that China had been far more successful than India in terms of food production. Whereas 'in India food production in the mid 1980s was 165 kilograms per capita per annum, in China it was 250 kilograms.'

She identified two key reasons for this superior performance.

Firstly, the system of land reform in China had been far more radical and thus more equitable. All peasants have access to decent-sized land-holdings.

Secondly, the collective nature of investment meant that enough capital was available for each collective to purchase or construct (for example dams and irrigation

systems) the requisite inputs.

No clear ANC policy

It is clear that a post-apartheid government faces an enormous political challenge as regards the land question.

Professor Patnaik's analysis indicates that a successful agrarian programme requires very substantial land reform.

But how will this land reform in South Africa be instituted?

The ANC is still vague on the question of land reform. As yet the movement has not formulated a clear policy regarding the future of the white agricultural sector. There is a legitimate fear that any seizure of land will lead to a massive counter-revolution by rightwing forces.

On the other hand it will be difficult to raise the capital to buy out commercial farmers. In addition, the process of dislocation from the land due to apartheid has been so massive that it is unclear how practical the endeavour to reconstruct a black peasantry is.

The question is: Does a sufficient black peasantry still exist and, if it does not, can it be resuscitated? —

AIA/Alan Morris

Natal cleaners' strike spreads

A strike by cleaning staff, which began on 9 September and initially confined to indian schools, has spread to nearly every office in Durban and surrounding areas.

Some 8 000 workers, all

members of the Cosatu affiliated Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), are demanding a living wage of R1 000 a month.

The workers have rejected a 16 percent wage increase, which would take the minimum wage for contract cleaners from R435 to R509 a month. Part-time workers earned R261 per month at the time the strike broke.

The action by the cleaners at indian schools has forced the closure of 120 schools and the postponement of examinations.

The House of Delegates (HOD), which signed the contract with Sneller Services, the employers, have refused to intervene on behalf of the workers, except to issue an ultimatum to Sneller that their contract will be terminated if the schools were not cleaned. This has prompted Sneller to threaten the workers with dismissal if they did not return to work on 1 October.

The intransigent position of the HOD has seen some 5 000 cleaners, students, teachers and parents joining together in a march on Truro House, where the HOD has its offices, but were forced out by the police.

As the strike gained momentum there have been increasing allegations of intimidation.

In one incident widely reported in the press, two workers were allegedly herded into a rally and sjambokked for not participating in the strike. The two women workers were saved by the intervention of Agrippa Mpanza, the union's Southern Natal chairperson.

In an earlier development, cleaners at the University of Durban Westville (UDW), employed by, Supercare

ended their strike when the UDW administration offered the workers a subsidy of R128 a month.

The cleaners' strike comes in the wake of widespread strike activity across the city.

Three hundred workers at Metal Box in Prospection are on strike, as well as 130 workers at Nampak Polyfoil in Westmead, 35 workers at Fedics Airport Services and workers at various Edgars branches.

A threatened strike by 240 employees at a KwaZulu psychiatric hospital has been put on 'hold' by a court interdict.

Negotiations between the Durban Integrated Municipal Employees Society (Dimes) and the Durban City Council over working conditions and pay for city police, security personnel and firemen have ended in deadlock.

Dimes general secretary Nad Murugan has threatened strike action. This militance has fed into a vigorous anti-VAT campaign. Already one demonstration in the city centre drew thousands of workers.

Meanwhile, talks between the TGWU and the National Contract Cleaners Association remain deadlocked, as cleaners in Pietermaritzburg threaten to join the strike. — *Ashwin Desai and Evan Mantzaris*

Residents in bid to reclaim their land

APARTHEID practices are still very much alive in this country, as De Klerk's government continues to perpetuate a grave injustice — the callous dispossession

of black farmers of their land.

When the owners of the land at Goedgevonden tried recently to get their land back by reoccupying it, the government opposed their claims. The community, however, is still fighting...

On April 9 1991, 15 black South Africans left Vrisgewaagd, a shack settlement in Bophuthatswana, and travelled 230 kilometres westwards. In the early hours of the morning they reached their ancestral home, a farm called Goedgevonden, in the Western Transvaal. They immediately started to set up home on the land from which they had been removed in 1978 and which they claim is their rightful land. In the next three days another 400 ex-Goedgevonden residents joined them.

The farm Goedgevonden was originally settled by black farmers in October 1947. The land was made available by the then South African Native Trust under the Trust and Land Act of 1936.

Under this notorious Act, land owned by the South African government could be made available for african occupation. Community leaders claim 'the land was advertised in a newspaper and that the Commissioner for Potchestroom gave them a green document which said that the land would ultimately be theirs'.

By 1978 the farm supported a community of approximately 10 000 people, many of whom were successful peasants.

Mr Olefile Levy Segopolo, a leader of the community, was 13 when he and his parents settled in Goedgevonden in 1947. He has very fond memories of Goedgevonden, recalled in the following affidavit prepared for the recent Supreme Court case in

which the government attempted to have the community legally evicted.

'My community and I thrived on the land which had been allocated to us. We all lived in stone and brick houses which we built ourselves. We farmed various crops such as maize, pumpkin, sunflower, groundnuts and beans, which we grew for our own consumption as well as selling our produce on the market ... We were a community of self-sufficient and productive farmers and enjoyed a life of modest prosperity and stability.'

Stable community disrupted

In 1978 this stable and contented life was abruptly ended. Residents were approached by government officials and told that in terms of the government's 'homeland consolidation' plans the community had to move to two neighbouring farms bordering Bophuthatswana, Vrischgewaagd and Ganalaagte.

The residents offered little resistance. They were terrified that if they refused to cooperate they would suffer the same fate as their black neighbours, who had been forcibly removed earlier in the decade.

On moving to Vrischgewaagd, the large majority of the community were settled on plots which were not sizeable enough to sustain them. Government promises that additional land would be made available came to naught, and due to the lack of grazing land residents were forced to sell their primary assets, their cattle. In the meantime all the brick homes, churches and the community school in Goedgevonden were demolished. No compensation was paid for the fruit trees, blue-gum tree plantations, boreholes,

water troughs, windmills and reservoirs left behind.

As Mr Segopolo said, the removal ensured that 'a previously self-sufficient, productive community became largely destitute and dependent'.

To add to the injustice, the Goedgevonden land was rented out to white farmers for 17 cents a hectare, approximately twenty times less than the market rate of around R3.30.

The injustices meted out to the Goedgevonden community did not end with the removal. In 1983, without any consultation and unbeknown to the community, Vrischgewaagd was incorporated into Bophuthatswana, with serious repercussions. Residents lost their South African citizenship and South African pension payouts.

Repression intensified, as residents were detained, harassed and community meetings banned.

'Bophuthatswana's problem'

The South African government refused to negotiate with the residents. A letter from the director general of the Department of Development Aid dated the 29 October 1987 argued that because Vrischgewaagd



The AWB mobilised farmers to attack the Goedgevonden community

'is within the jurisdiction of the Bophuthatswana Government ... all problems concerning the residents of Vrischgewaagd should be directed to the government of Bophuthatswana'.

The state president's speech on 2 February 1990 renewed the community's hopes that they would be allowed to return to Goedgevonden.

Endeavours to reopen negotiations with the government however, proved fruitless. The old apartheid arguments were used to justify the state's total intransigence.

On 10 May 1990, the deputy minister of Education and Development Aid, Mr Piet Marais, in a letter to the lawyer representing the community, repeated the view that the problem should be addressed by the Bophuthatswana government.

In desperation the community, with the assistance of the Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC), decided to re-occupy Goedgevonden. The re-occupation of the farms between 9 and 12 April almost immediately evoked a hostile response from the government.

The Department of Agriculture, assisted by the South African Police, set up a road-block on 12 April and continue to control access to the land. Even Operation Hunger have not been allowed access. The second tactic of the government, with white farmers renting the land, was to launch an urgent application to the Supreme Court for an interdict to evict the black farmers.

Besides the government, the ultra-right in the form of the AWB was also actively organising against the community. On the nights of the 10 and 11 May a large group of white

farmers, many of whom were apparently AWB members, attacked the Goedgevonden community.

The attack was repulsed by the South African police, causing a major public outcry.

On 3 June Justice Goldstein ruled that in terms of the law he had no option but to order the eviction of the community. The community was given three days to leave the area.

In the interlude the lawyers representing the community succeeded in obtaining leave to appeal, and for the moment the community is 'safe'. — AIA/Alan Morris

Where have all the men gone?

WHILE everybody at Ukwama village in Tanzania's Southern Highlands' Makete district complains that it is too cold, 27-year-old Angela Sanga seems not to feel the chilling weather.

She is busy thatching her three-bedroomed mud hut which she built herself, right from the foundation.

Angela is one of the Makete district women who have found themselves at the head of their households in the absence of their husbands, who have migrated elsewhere to provide cheap labour in mining, lumbering or plantations.

One official at the district planning office admits that, at any time of the year, nearly half the households in the district are headed by women.

Duties traditionally handled by men, like house construction, are done by

the women.

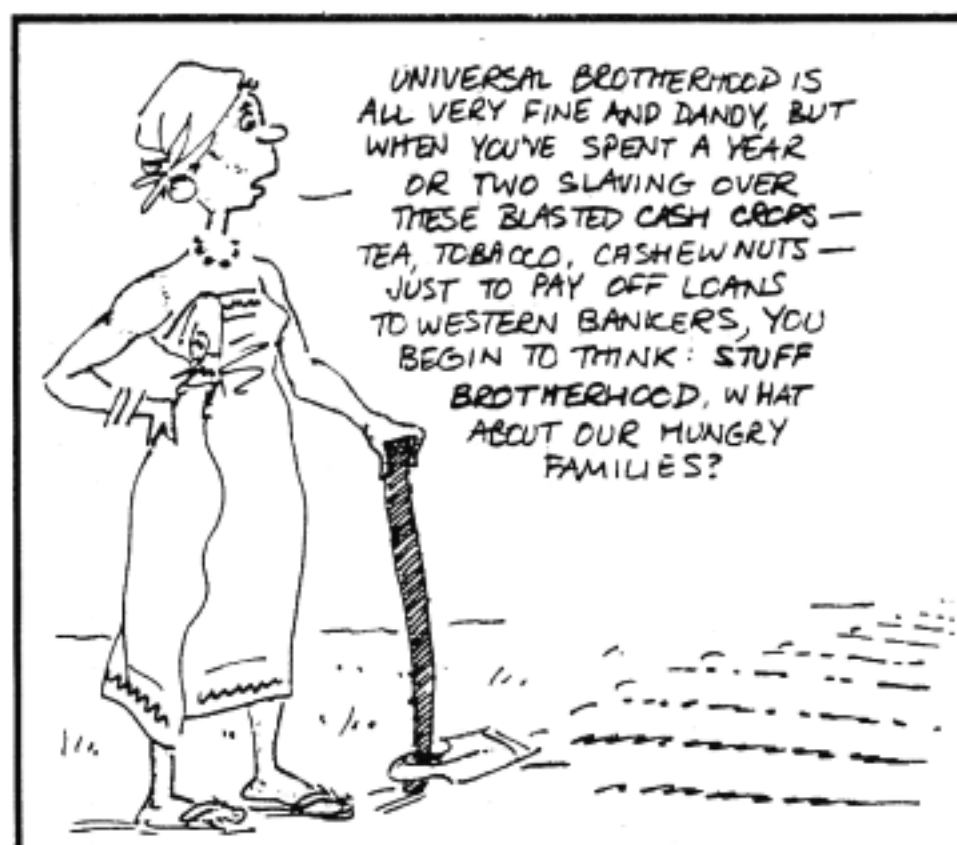
The absence of men in Makete is the source of great amusement to people in the surrounding areas. Makete women are constantly asked how they 'satisfy their lust' and are the butt of many a sexist joke.

'Sex maniacs should go to Makete and they will get more than they need', is a typical comment.

During the 1988 national census, enumerators counted only 48 442 men who slept in the district on the counting day as against 67 038 women. The total district population stood at 115 480 people living in 25 148 households with an average family size of 4.5 people.

In Ukwama ward, where Angela's village is located, enumerators counted only 2 800 men compared to 8 306 women.

But where have all the Makete men and boys gone? As soon as boys finish their



seven year compulsory primary education, they move out of the district in search of employment at sisal, tea and tobacco estates in other districts.

At Lupila ward, a secondary school managed to enrol only 11 pupils in form one last year. This year, forceful methods had to be used — including the

imprisonment of some parents — to bring back the children into the district for enrolment at the school.

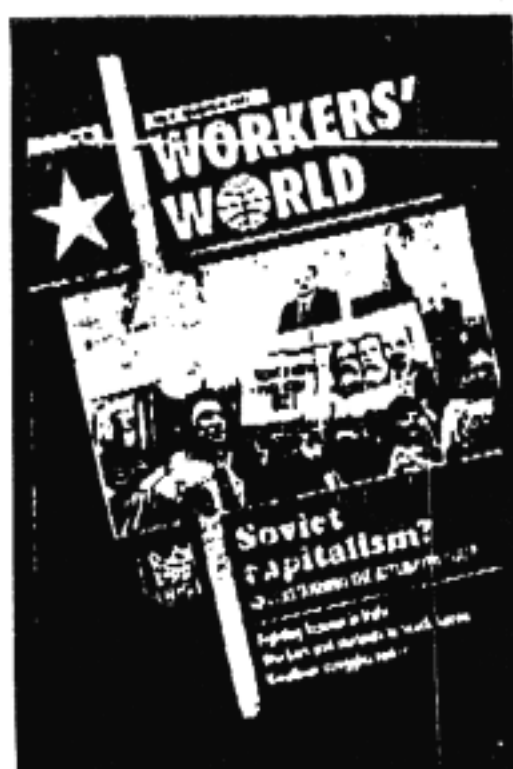
The Makete women complain that their husbands hate self-employment, preferring the monthly wages that are only available from the estates, mines, lumber mills and towns.

'They rarely come home, and when they do it is only to impregnate their wives', jokes one midwife at the district's main hospital.

Residents from this district have scattered to almost all the regions of this country and to neighbouring states — including South Africa.

The compulsory payment of poll tax has forced residents from labour reserve areas to move to the estates where they can get cash needed to pay the tax. Married men were not allowed to take their spouses along, and women were forced to remain behind shouldering all family tasks.

While an old Chinese proverb says 'women hold up half of the sky', American visiting sociologist at the university of Dar es Salaam, Lynda Ann Ewery believes that 'Tanzanian women hold up more than half the sky'. — AIA/Lawrence Kilimwiko



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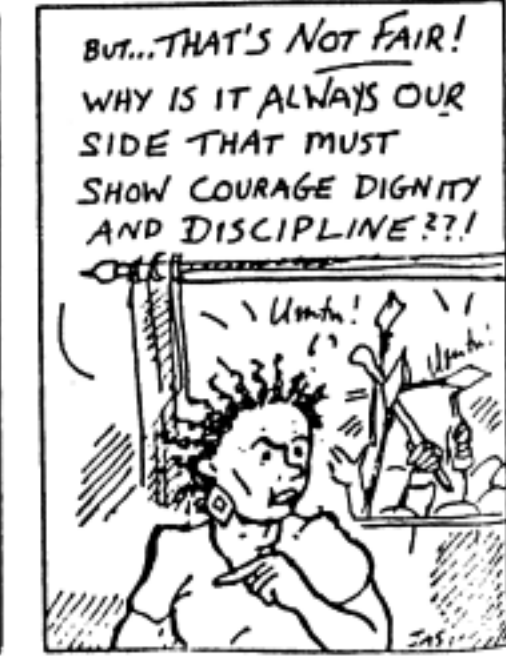
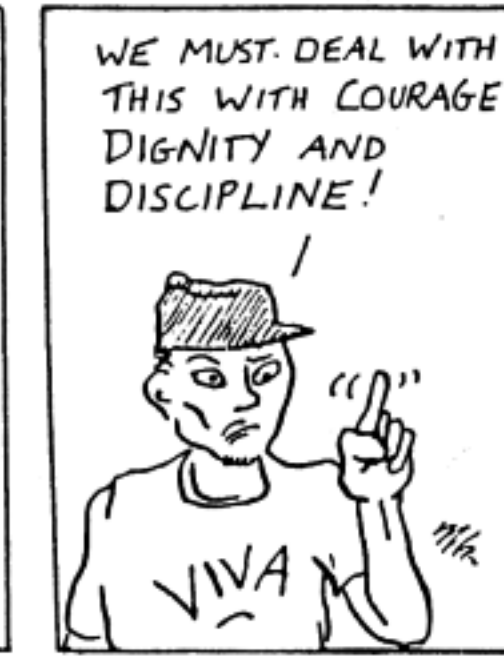
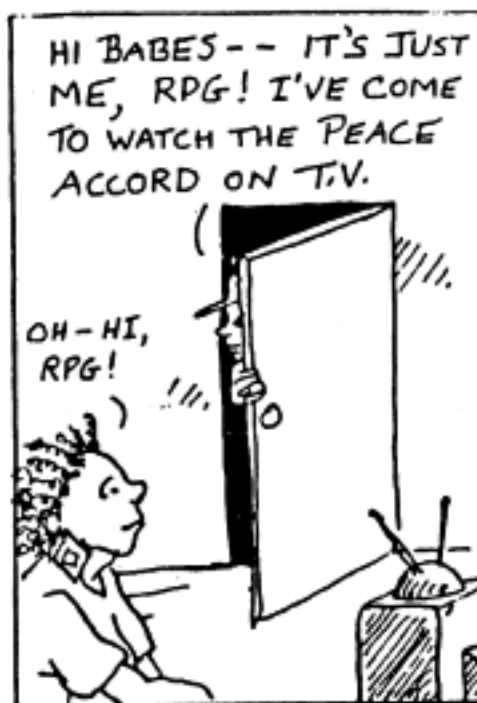
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The cold-blooded murder of civic leader Sam Ntuli after the signing of the peace accord follows the brutal murder of almost an entire family in Soweto and the barbaric abduction of ANC cadre Tommy Nhlapo by police (see pages 10-11).

Inkatha has admitted to the Soweto carnage, and Ntuli's murder has also been linked to the organisation. In addition, Buthelezi's reluctance to attend the signing of the National Peace Accord, Inkatha impis defiantly brandishing dangerous weapons at the signing, and reports that Inkatha members at grassroots level do not support the accord, are ominous signs that the descent into barbarism will continue.

According to the Black Sash, 65 people were killed in Natal during September, including seven ANC members shot in the back by men wearing camouflage. Over 30 homes were destroyed in the region, and cattle stolen, in what appeared to be 'excessive intimidation' of ANC activists.

But it is not enough to simply blame Inkatha for the carnage. After the Inkathagate scandal, there is now ample evidence which suggests that elements within the state are orchestrating most, if not all, of the violence.

South Africa, at the dawn of freedom, is at the same time facing a future of increased barbarism — a condition nurtured in the first place by years of cruel repression and injustice, at the hands of a party that now wishes to be seen as our only hope for democracy.



Between freedom and barbarism

The PAC, Azapo and Wosa argue that the government cannot be trusted. They suspect that the peace accord may do more to neutralise the organisations and structures of the victims of violence, thus aiding the perpetrators, rather than contributing to peace (see pages 12-13). There is therefore a strong argument for not endorsing the accord, as the ANC

and SACP, amongst others, have done. Wosa argues instead for 'peace from below'.

There is indeed every possibility that De Klerk is a conscious accomplice in what the Human Rights Commission has called a 'new total strategy' to destabilise the liberation movement to ensure white capitalist rule in a new form.

But there is as yet no evidence to prove that he is party to the barbarism that pervades the country. If De Klerk and his negotiating team were behind the violence, it would be a very short-sighted strategy, because ultimately there would be no winners — except the worms and weasels that thrive in a wasteland.

Nevertheless, even if we were to accept that the state president's hands are not completely dirty, he has not acted with the necessary resolve and determination to strike at the root of the problem. He is allowing neo-fascist elements within his security forces to continue to plot murder, either directly or through a variety of agents in disguise.

The peace accord, as is argued on pages 14-16, does hold out some promise of controlling the police, and creating a climate conducive to a democratic transition process. These must be exploited to their maximum.

But it would be foolish not to study the full implications of the mechanisms outlined in the accord. If the worst fears of the accord's critics are realised, the delicate flicker of democracy will be extinguished for years to come. — *The Editor* *

Inkatha goes on rampage

On 8 September, Inkatha warlords coming from a rally at Jabulani Stadium killed the entire family of Mr Elliot Motsoeneng of Mofolo in Soweto, except for Motsoeneng himself and his 13-year-old daughter. This act of barbarism, admitted to by Inkatha, occurred a week before the widely publicised signing of the National Peace Accord.

According to Motsoeneng, he was standing next to the Assemblies of God building in Crossroads when he saw Inkatha men and police swarm into his house further up the road. There were six hippos and a police Mazda 626.

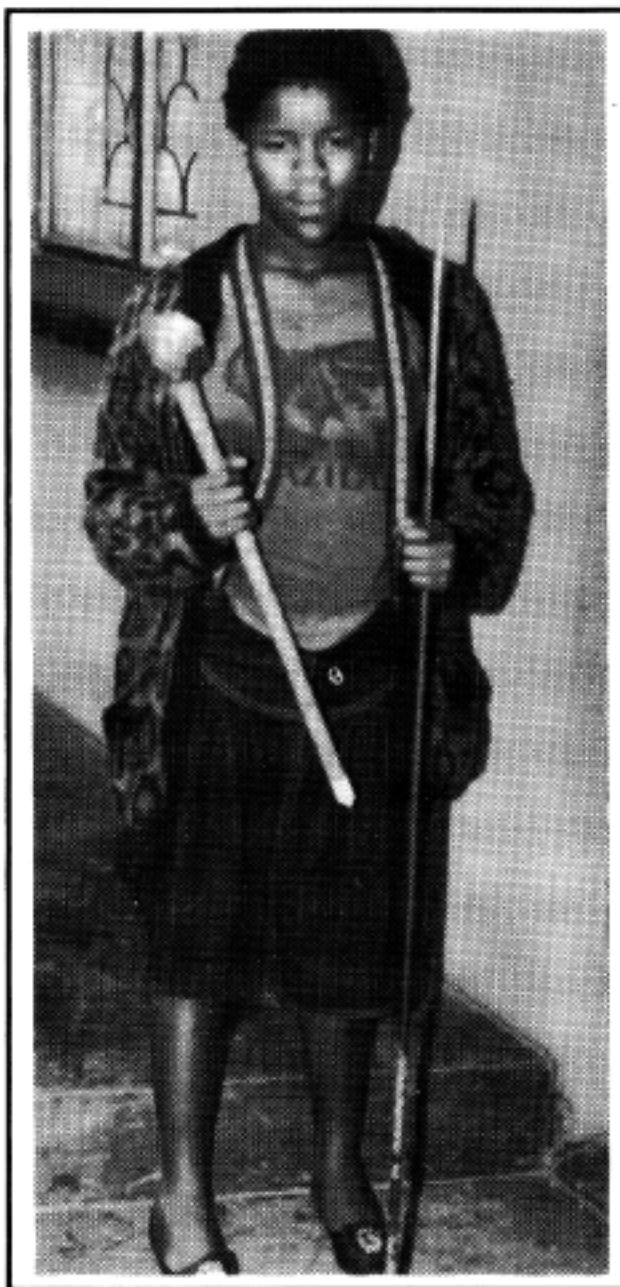
On entering his yard, he says, he was welcomed by two corpses which were unknown to him. Then his 13-year-old daughter Esther, dripping with blood, came running out of the premises and crying hysterically that they had shot and killed 'Gogo' (grandmother). The front door had been chopped down and inside everything was upside down.

Motsoeneng's mother was lying dead in the kitchen, covered in blood. In one of the bedrooms, his dying sister Joyce tried desperately to raise her hand to speak, in vain. In the wardrobe, Motsoeneng found Janet, another daughter, dead. Her denim jeans were halfway down her legs. When he tried to pick up her corpse, he found his wife lying dead underneath.

Then Motsoeneng cried, and there was nobody around to hear him. He went into his backyard where he found his dog lying dead with three bullet shots. On re-entering his house, he came across two white policemen who, when asked what they were doing, told him that they were looking for empty cartridges. It was then that he saw some lying on the floor, picked them up and told them that they would not get them.

Motsoeneng then demanded their identification cards, which they presented and he took down their particulars. Before they left, the police told him to pick up all empty cartridges. They would return for these the next day, they said. They never did.

According to Esther, who had a superficial cut across her throat and other stab wounds in her body, the police intervened, saying 'there's enough killing for the day'. That was how she escaped death. She says the warlords were crying



Esther Motsoeneng, a survivor of the carnage, shows weapons left behind by Inkatha

MBULELO MDLEDLE reports on a rampage by Inkatha supporters in Soweto a week before the signing of the peace accord

for money when they butchered the family.

They took the family's television set and a hi-fi set which was later loaded in one of the hippos. A number of witnesses to these acts of violence say that invariably after an attack, the Inkatha warlords loot the premises and load the property in the hippos. There were more attacks the same day.

Across the street at 359C White City Jabavu, an expectant wife was butchered and miraculously survived although the eight-month-old baby she was carrying died. At 1357A the warlords allegedly killed the father of the house and the entire family fled the area.

On Monday 15 September, Inkatha

supporters allegedly killed Nancy Twala with three gunshots. They also stabbed her with an assegai, according to her companion Mzakes Dudu.

Louisa Twala, a sister to Nancy and a survivor of the attack which took place at Mshenguville squatter camp, says the couple decided to dismantle their shack and leave the area after Inkatha strongmen demanded of squatters a R25 protection fee and R20 for arms confiscated by the police in a raid.

Louisa also alleges that the roof of her sister's house was being used as an 'armoury' by Inkatha. She suspects the reason Nancy died is that she knew 'too much'.

Inkatha admits responsibility

According to Inkatha Youth Brigade leader, Themba Khoza, Inkatha only went on a rampage in retaliation. Khoza claims Inkatha members were attacked with grenades, just as they were going past the intersection near Ipelegeng Community Center.

On leaving the stadium after the rally, some Inkatha members, including Khoza, drove back in their bakkie along the same route they had used on their way to the rally. Khoza says he sensed that the impis might be attacked, and would retaliate. Just as they got into Mofolo, they were attacked, and one explosion after another was heard. On looking around, says Khoza, he saw 'Inkatha members falling'.

He claims he saw 'members of the ANC with an assortment of weapons.' His efforts, complemented by those of the police, could do little to cool off the flaring tempers.

Khoza says he used his bakkie to ferry injured Inkatha members to Baragwanath Hospital. Six were certified dead on arrival. By the time he came for the second load of wounded Inkatha supporters, Inkatha members had left the scene, he says. He alleges that Inkatha members were prompted to violence by ANC supporters who launched a hand grenade attack.

Khoza adds that on 9 September, his office was crowded by members of the public, some from Mofolo, who said they were prepared to testify in court. Some claimed ANC supporters had attacked Inkatha people from the safety of their houses.*

The life of a returned exile is fraught with dangers, and it often contrasts sharply with the smiles and handshakes of the conference tables. Tommy Nhlapo, a returned ANC cadre, is one of those still alive to tell his tale of abduction and brutal torture at the hands of the police.

Nhlapo was abducted at 3.40am on August 19 by seven members of the security forces from 7764B, Zone 2, Diepkloof. The police told him they had information that he had an AK-47 rifle and roughed him up before taking him away in the boot of a Volkswagen Golf, with a tube pulled over his face. He passed out.

When he regained consciousness, the police were beating him up, kicking and punching him. They then threatened to shoot him. They fired three shots from a pistol into the air.

This happened behind a mine dump which Tommy assumes might be next to Shareworld. Later they pulled a balaclava over his face and drove away. Next, he found himself in an office — either in Mondeor or Southdale, he is not sure where. He was tied to a table with a thick white plastic rope and left for an hour. At about 9 am he was untied and introduced to a senior officer named Meshack, who told him he had two options.

He could either 'rot' in the cells or work for them. Tommy opted for the latter. He was given briefings to prepare himself as he was to be deployed at Shackville. Accommodation and other matters would be catered for. His duty would entail spying on MK members, especially those close to him, and try to infiltrate the circles of those distant to him. He was then set free, although the police came later in the evening to his Diepkloof home and searched for the AK-47 which he did not have. By that time he had already gone underground, having reported the matter to ANC headquarters on his release.

The nightmare did not end here for Tommy. On Friday September 6 the police found him after asking a naive young girl in the neighbourhood his whereabouts. They came in through the unlocked kitchen door and punched him while he was in the bathtub.

After that they searched the house looking for an 'AK-47'. Later, the five black and a white policemen took him to Protea Police Station in a white Nissan E20 kombi, registration number LTV431T.

At the police station, they did not find

Police abduct and torture returnee — claim

MBULELO MDLEDLE relates Tommy Nhlapo's story about how he was abducted and tortured by police last August

their 'senior' and drove to Florida Park where they met a thickset man, the one they were looking for. The police had a braai while Tommy was tied upside down with leg irons on one of the swings at the playground. Tommy was kept like this

for an hour, before the thickset man said: 'Footog! set die skepsel vry' (Shame, set the wretch free).

Tommy then went to ANC headquarters where, once again, a statement was taken. The ANC are investigating. *

FOR thousands of returning exiles, coming home means coming down with a bump. The realities of life in the 'new' South Africa, the lack of opportunities and the unemployment, are almost as depressing as the bureaucracy swamping the ANC.

In any administration, bureaucracy is inevitable and will be tolerated, provided it is efficient. To returnees, the ANC administrative horror feels something like trying to fit square pegs in round holes. Officials are always in meetings. Those with minimal authority have their discretion fettered by policy while those with a lot of power are, in some instances, abusing their discretion.

The government doesn't try to make for easier conditions for the returnees. According to the National Coordinating Committee on Repatriation (NCR's) Moss Chikane, requests to the government for housing for returnees met with a negative response: they will not be given 'special treatment' (this, however, is also the demand of the ex-Robben Island community and of ANC branches throughout the country)

Single returning cadres who

Returnees complain about ANC bureaucracy

have no homes are being housed in conference rooms, says Chikane.

He says there is a greater problem for married couples, especially those who left in the '60s and have no way of tracing their next of kin.

South African returnees face problems unlike those of other countries which became independent in the last three decades: The ANC does not have a monopoly of state power; the land which is desperately needed to build houses for the returnees is in the hands of the Nationalist Party and the private sector; there is a problem of funds; there is severe unemployment — there were more than three million unemployed before the repatriation programme started. And then there is the violence.

— Mbulelo Mdllele



Peace Accord flawed — PAC

The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) has potential political strength both at grassroots and at future government level. With the Patriotic Front shaping up, and with agreement reached on a 'pre-constituent assembly' conference, different strategies and tactics by liberation movements can lead to a common objective. Unlike the ANC, the PAC decided not to sign the National Peace Accord. MBULELO MDLEDLE asked them why

The PAC, whose commitment to the cause of black liberation in South Africa means 'non-collaboration' with the system and security forces, is not in a position to sign the National Peace Accord now and in the future.

PAC West Rand regional chairperson, Ntsundeni Matsunya, says the business-church brokered accord does not identify the basic causes of violence in the country. Thus PAC did not sign the September 14 accord, but opted instead for observer status at the conference.

In addition, they feel the accord suggests that the salvation of black communities from the prevailing violence lies at the mercy of security forces, which implies that 'Africans' (in the PAC's wider sense) cannot make peace among themselves.

The PAC slogan 'War with the enemy! Peace amongst Africans!' captures the perspective that while, on the one hand, the state and its repressive arm has its fingerprints on most of the violence, it is on the other hand also possible to minimise the extent to which these forces can exploit divisions within the black community.

Thus, while PAC's Northern Transvaal organiser Philemon Tefu does not rule out the possibility that 'there can be

characters on the payroll of security forces, especially in the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party)', he stresses that this 'cannot be viewed in isolation, but in a broader perspective'.

Tefu elaborates: 'In the past, certain organisations were involved in necklacing, this also cannot be singled out and treated in isolation. But certain members of families are still angry'.

In other words, while some black people involved in violence may be agents of the state, many others are either being used unwittingly, or acting out of their own sense of grievance.

It is in this context that the PAC believes it is most important to 'create the conditions where the security forces will have absolutely no base in winning Africans to their side'.

To this end, the PAC is working with organisations like the ANC, the Azanian Peoples Organisation (Azapo) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

The PAC is confident that with careful negotiation among the extra-parliamentary organisations, the violence can be ended. It points to the success made by the Peace Monitoring Committee formed on 15 November 1990, which aimed at stopping violence in the West Rand township Bekkersdal. This violence erupted immediately after organi-



sations were unbanned in February the same year (see WIP 73).

The committee was initially composed of the ANC, Azapo and PAC — whose supporters were fighting each other — and was later broadened to include local priests and concerned residents. It eventually achieved success at a peace rally on 3 February this year.

Patriotic front

Matsunya claims the PAC is the 'initiator and driver' of the formation of a Patriotic Front, which is to consist of all organisations committed to a democratically elected constituent assembly (see WIP 74). The front is to come together for the first time later this month.

The PAC met the ANC and Azapo in Harare earlier this year, as well as the IFP in Ulundi, as part of its search for common ground.

The April meeting between the ANC and PAC was described by PAC president Clarence Makwetu as 'a landmark with regard to the unity of the liberation movements in South Africa'. Then ANC deputy president Nelson Mandela said both organisations had reached an 'excellent' stage towards closer co-operation, and the adoption of a common position on major national questions.

Makwetu said the organisations met because of a general feeling, especially at grassroots level, that the parties should explore avenues and formulate strategies to confront 'the enemy' with one voice.

The Patriotic Front will have much on its agenda, including: the question of transition, the all-party (or pre-constituent assembly) conference, a constituent assembly and an interim government.

The PAC has also thrown its weight behind the anti-VAT campaign, spearheaded by Cosatu (see page 26). Its national working committee took a decision on 19 September that the introduction of VAT, in an apartheid society with vast income disparities, would affect black people most. So they picketed all major shopping centres on 28 September, and participated in the nation-wide anti-VAT marches. *

Wosa calls for peace from below

IN statements issued before and after the National Peace Convention, where the peace accord was signed on 14 September, the Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action (Wosa) rejected the accord as 'disempowering', and incapable of bringing lasting peace.

Wosa asserted that the government has done nothing to 'demobilise the increasingly organised and militarised rightwing', while it seeks through the accord to subject self-defence committees to SAP 'ilason'.

According to Wosa, if the government is really sincere about peace, it would immediately agree to calling a constituent assembly 'with full powers to decide the future of the country'. This is because the government is primarily responsible for the 'apartheid-capitalist system that breeds the violence in our lives'. True and lasting peace, Wosa believes, needs democracy, and democracy 'requires first that we convene a constituent assembly'.

Wosa sees real dangers in the mechanisms proposed by the accord. All the structures are 'effectively parallel state support structures', which are unlikely to be accepted by grassroots activists, because they will 'serve as the eyes and ears of the police'.

In this sense they feel that the accords are 'an act of total collaboration' with the government, and 'can only serve its purposes'. The logic of the accords is that the system of apartheid-capitalism can

only be changed 'from within', which, said Wosa, would not bring 'the transfer of power to the majority'.

Wosa further argues that the 'reconstruction and development' proposals in the accord will 'disempower popular structures', and subject them 'to the control of so-called development experts'. Their independence will be destroyed once they are linked to state structures, which will 'curb their creative initiative and discourage progressive development agencies'.

The gist of the proposals, they say, is to make the victims of violence 'feel responsible for the crimes against them, and to rope them into patching up the system whenever it breaks down'. Thus mass action, termed 'social unrest', will be transformed from a 'liberating process' into a 'destructive force' to be avoided or opposed.

Wosa intends seeking agreement on the following at the October Patriotic Front meeting:

* A peace from below agreement between all 'liberation organisations and popular structures', including support for an independent community-based Unity and Peace Councils, with their own self-defence committees under popular control'.

* A code of conduct between all popular structures and organisations, which will not allow for any outside agency enforcing such agreements.

Azapo's Strini Moodley says the National Peace Accord fails to identify key causes of the violence. He says the document lets the government and security forces get away with 'blue murder', and that insufficient steps were taken in drawing up the document to make the SAP and SADF accountable for 'crimes committed'.

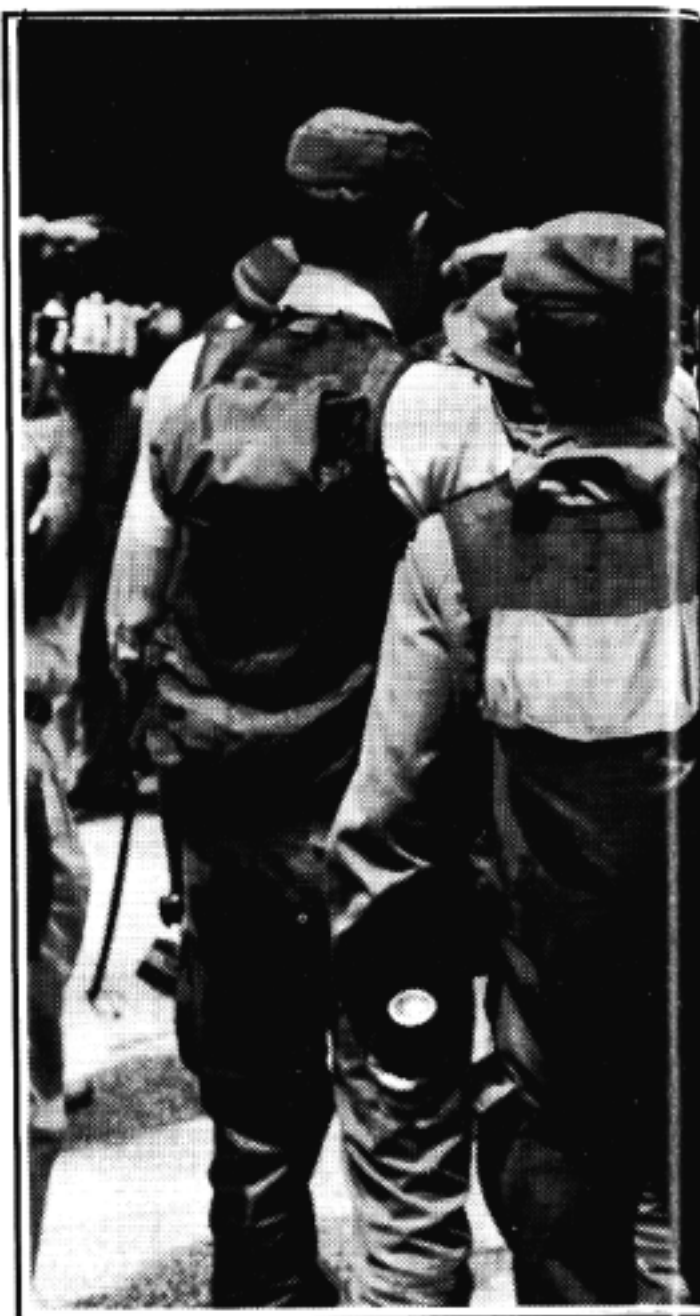
Moodley says Azapo is convinced the government will continue to wage war against

Accord does not address political tolerance — Azapo black people.

In addition, Azapo feels that the accord does not address the question of political tolerance. It has no programme of joint political education at grassroots level. As far as Azapo is concerned, this cannot be organised with the government.

Policing the accord

The National Peace Accord, endorsed last month by a range of organisations, could be looked back on as a major turning point in South Africa's history. ETIENNE MARAIS and JANINE RAUCH examine the impact of the accord on issue of critical concern to the transition process — the role of the police force



The contradiction of policing without this basis of consensus is basic to challenges around the credibility of the police force. SAP leaders should welcome the peace accord as it provides a set of principles and values on which consensus has been reached.

This consensus could in the interim period fill the gap left by the absence of representative government and enable the police force to build a broader legitimacy for itself.

The most significant achievement of the accord in relation to policing is the creation of a structured and formalised relationship between the police force and a range of civilian interest groups. The various structures of the peace accord provide the potential for greater police accountability at a range of levels:

* **Politically:** It formally promotes the notion that parties other than government have a legitimate right to question and contribute to policing policy.

* **Legally:** By providing for external monitoring of complaints against the SAP, it makes investigation into police criminality more reliable.

* **Internal discipline:** The 'Police Code of Conduct' should become the reference point for police behavior. Transgressions of the code could be dealt with through the public structures of the peace

facilitate the peace accord.

* The existence of a more broadly legitimate commission of inquiry which may also involve a degree of multiparty participation.

* The fact that self-governing states and bantustan governments are signatories, makes for wider changes in areas where the role of the police has been highly controversial.

The potential to limit violence

The peace accord has the potential to decrease violence in three ways:

* By effectively promoting political tolerance and providing mechanisms for local dispute resolution. The promotion of the 'Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Organisations' at grassroots level has the potential to contribute to a reduction in the tension and hostility which exists in politically divided communities.

* By increasing the effectiveness of the criminal justice system through greater police-community co-operation and the provision of better organised resources for the policing of violence, as well as the provision of streamlined court procedures.

* By limiting the potential of any groupings (from within the security forces or elsewhere) to promote violence and destabilise the process of building peace.

A new basis for policing?

A principle of policing is that the police derive their authority and their special powers from society — they are delegated this authority and power on behalf of the people. In addition, the laws which are enforced by the police should be based on societal consensus on the values and principles to be protected.

In South Africa, the police have not been delegated authority by most of the citizenry. South African law is not the product of a process of democratic government and is thus not formally based on consensus.

A brutal week of widespread carnage, random attacks on commuters and question marks over Chief Buthelezi's willingness to commit the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) to the peace accord, all contributed to a dramatic backdrop against which a remarkable 'deal' was successfully clinched.

'The Nation's birth certificate', and the 'Day of the Vow' were the terms in which the media described the tripartite peace accord. There is little doubt this accord constitutes a unique agreement. It represents the first substantial negotiated agreement which allows parties other than government to play a role in the management of the transition process.

But will 14 September 1991 be looked back on as an important milestone in South Africa's quest for a new democratic order? And what of the role of the police force in the quest for peace? The role of the security forces during the transition phase is one of the key factors to determine the success or failure of the transition itself.

What will the impact of the accord be on policing and what are the implications for the negotiations process in general?

A unique accord

The specific features of the National Peace Accord, which make it more likely to succeed than any previous peace agreement and local peace accord, include the following:

* Detailed codes of conduct for political organisations and the security forces.

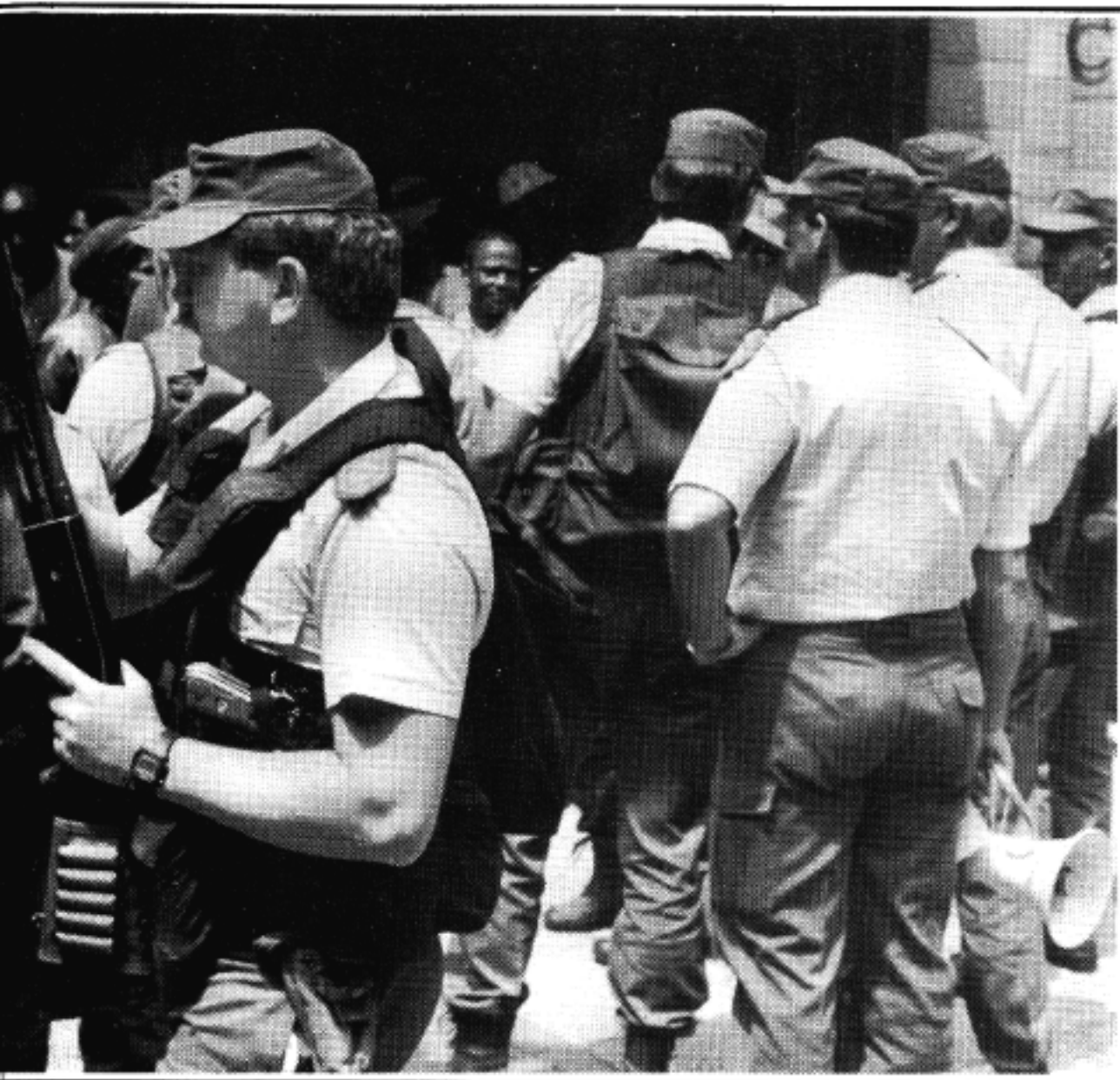
* Improved mechanisms for dispute resolution.

* Provision of swifter mechanisms to process violent crime.

* The accord is binding on security forces and is supported by the leaders of the SAP.

* Structures to facilitate multiparty monitoring of the SAP.

* The allocation of state resources to



The peace accord provides the opportunity for the relationship between police force and society to be transformed

the police force as part of the broad strategy of 'depoliticising' the police force.

Police community liaison: The 'partnership in policing' between the police and the public is a central theme in the SAP's view of what constitutes good policing. The establishment of police-community liaison structures around the country is not new.

Special SAP investigation units: Such units have also been set up prior to the peace accord — usually on an ad-hoc basis — to investigate allegations of SAP misconduct. In the Pietermaritzburg district, a more permanent unit was established and has been separated from other units. The special unit for investigation into cases of political violence (based in Durban) has also played some role in investigating allegations of security force criminality.

While there is no doubt that the provisions of the peace accord contribute to police reform, these 'changes' to the SAP are not as radical as they might initially appear. This is borne out by press reports in the days following the peace summit, which presented provisions of the peace accord as initiatives from the police force itself.

It is arguable that the outcome of negotiations around policing is dominated by the SAP's own vision of the kinds of structures and processes needed to build greater police credibility, rather than by popular demands for a new style of policing. This should be seen in the context of the importance for the government of maintaining the initiative in the negotiation process. It also reflects a weakness in the political programme around policing on the part of other political organisations.

During the peace talks, however, the SAP's own view of 'police reform' was somewhat modified. This suggests that the other negotiating parties are beginning to be more effective in challenging the SAP's technical control over the policing arena. It remains possible that the accord offers some real opportunities for multi-lateral determination of police policy, particularly if the police board is utilised to the full.

A good example of how a government proposal was modified through the process of negotiations is the commission of

accord, rather than in closed SAP structures.

*** Community accountability:** The new police community liaison procedures have the potential to heighten police sensitivity to community needs and provide for greater community determination of policing priorities.

Multiparty control

Does the peace accord go far enough? Does it really entrench multiparty management of the police force? Adriaan Vlok, the then Law and Order minister, stated earlier this year that 'the police were prepared to consider any proposal on joint management emanating from the multiparty conference.'

The SAP's own proposal in respect of multiparty participation has centered around a police board, which is now presented as part of the accord. The precise status of this board has been unclear. Senior police officers commented in July that they weren't sure whether the board would be accountable to the minister, or the minister accountable to the board.

Under the peace accord, however, the minister is clearly still in charge. The board is an advisory structure and offers access to influence the direction of the SAP without offering *real multiparty*

management.

SAP's reform agenda

In assessing the extent to which the peace accord has moved the process of police reform forward, we need to be aware of the SAP's own internal reform agenda. An examination of this shows marked similarities with the peace accord itself.

The key proposals of the peace accord which relate to police functioning are the following:

Police Reporting Officer (or 'Ombudsman'): The notion of an ombudsman has been on the agenda within National Party ranks since at least early 1990, and has been previously mentioned by the minister of Law and Order. Police officers view the ombudsman serving a useful purpose in ensuring that the process of investigating complaints against the SAP is not *seen* as a whitewash. The nomination of a regional police reporting officer by the Bar Council and the Association of Law Societies does, however, potentially give this person more independence than earlier conceptions of an ombudsman.

Police Board: The establishment of a police board on which civilians from a range of political backgrounds serve, has also been suggested before in the SAP's own strategic plan. It is seen by

PEACE ACCORD

inquiry into the prevention of public violence and intimidation. The commission arose from FW de Klerk's first peace summit (May 24-25), and the proposals of the peace accord make the commission more widely representative, linking it into the peace structures, thus making it likely that it will be more legitimate and effective.

An 'interim arrangement'

While the accord does not constitute multiparty management of the police force, it does allow for a more passive form of multiparty *monitoring* of the police force which is not, in principle, different from the role performed by UNTAG during the Namibian elections.

This poses the question of whether such multiparty monitoring can actually serve one of the functions of an interim government, namely that of ensuring that the police force is not used to promote one party's interests during the transition to a genuinely democratic government. Does the accord thus serve as a precedent for an 'interim measure', which gets other parties involved in the process without reducing the government's ultimate authority during the transition?

ANC leaders will argue that the interim government is still on the table and must be negotiated at the multiparty conference. However, the grassroots work that will be necessary to promote the accord certainly makes it a real, as well as a theoretical precedent.

Local level implementation

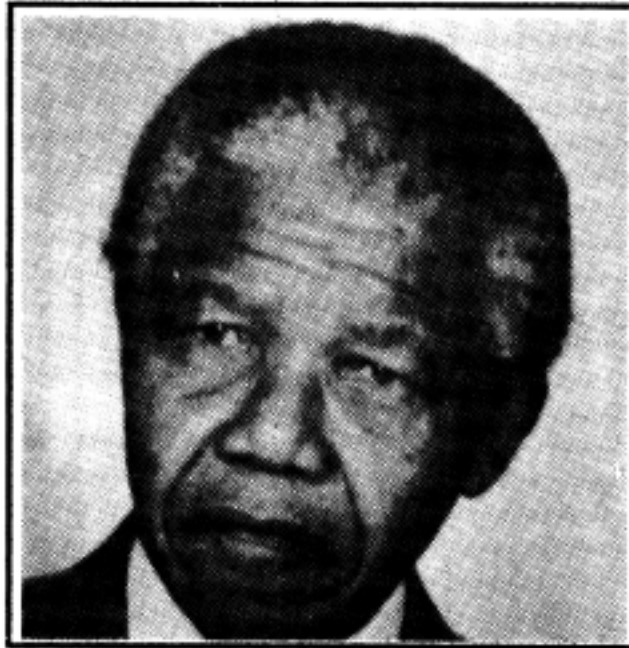
Because of the vagueness of the peace accord, and the nature of monitoring and dispute resolution, the way in which the process will work is, to a very large extent, dependent on the way in which participants operate at a local level. All the structures and processes of the accord will have to be negotiated and given concrete form by the various parties, and local variations in police operations will have a significant impact on potential police reform.

The capacity of the accord to really restrain local violence thus depends on:

- * Good faith on the part of the signatory parties.

- * The commitment, capability and attitude of local level political constituencies and police personnel towards the peace agreement.

- * The organisational capacity of the signatories to take the accord to their membership in local areas, to act on information from their constituencies and to maintain good lines of communica-



Nelson Mandela (above) and Gatsha Buthelezi (below): Grassroots work will be necessary to promote the accord.

tion with these constituencies.

There is a danger that an imbalance in resources between different parties (particularly the resource advantage of the government) could mean that opposition constituencies are 'disadvantaged' in the peace process. This may mean that the peace structures are not seen to be dealing with conflict in a fair and legitimate way — and, in turn, may undermine those parties which are unable to participate to the full extent.

Active participation by all parties in every level of the new peace structure is necessary to make peace possible. Furthermore, committed participation in the police board and various police monitoring structures is the only hope for improving police accountability and giving communities a real voice in determining police policy.

Because all the suggested changes to the policing process are focused on the violence, police-community relations in general are highly dependent on the success of the peace process. The failure or limited success of the peace accord

will adversely affect the community attitudes towards structures such as police-community liaison committees, police reporting officers and civilian police management boards. If groups from within civil society do not strive for a say in policing at this time, the likelihood is that the police force in the new South Africa will be as closed, autocratic and unresponsive as the much-maligned SAP of the past.

From a policing point of view, it is essential that the structures of the peace accord are given 'teeth' and made effective. The danger is that all the eggs of police-community relations have been placed in the basket of violence.

Basis for challenging NP hegemony

The National Peace Accord is not a magic fix and is unlikely to instantly end political violence. The key to its success is implementation and education at a grassroots level by all parties and institutions involved. While this poses significant challenges to the signatories, the process is likely to be aided by two factors.

Firstly, the existence of the increasingly credible 'facilitating group' which has the ability to monitor the broad commitment of political players to the accord. Secondly, state controlled media and other institutions must be seen to be positive towards the peace accord.

The peace accord provides the opportunity for the relationship between police force and society to be transformed from one characterised by the exclusive political control by the National Party to one which is inclusive of the wider South African community.

Both the police force and the 'liberation movements' are faced with vital choices in their response to the peace accord.

By making the peace accord and its structures central to the management of policing, and by allowing structures like the police board to function meaningfully, the police force will be giving itself the opportunity to become more credible and in the long run enhance its capability to fight crime.

For opposition groupings, the priority is a concrete engagement with issues of policing and a real acceptance of the framework of the peace accord as a basis for challenges to National Party hegemony in the arena of law enforcement.

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CLIFFORD SHEARING

argues that, while a future police force should be accountable to 'the people' as a whole, and not simply the governing party, the Canadian experience suggests that the notion of police 'independence' holds many dangers

President FW de Klerk, in his startling 2 February 1990 speech, set a new strategic direction for the South African government. As part of this initiative, De Klerk has proposed a more limited role for the South African Police (SAP) as an essentially crime-fighting force. He spelt out this vision in a speech to senior police officers in January 1990, just a few days before his 2 February bombshell.

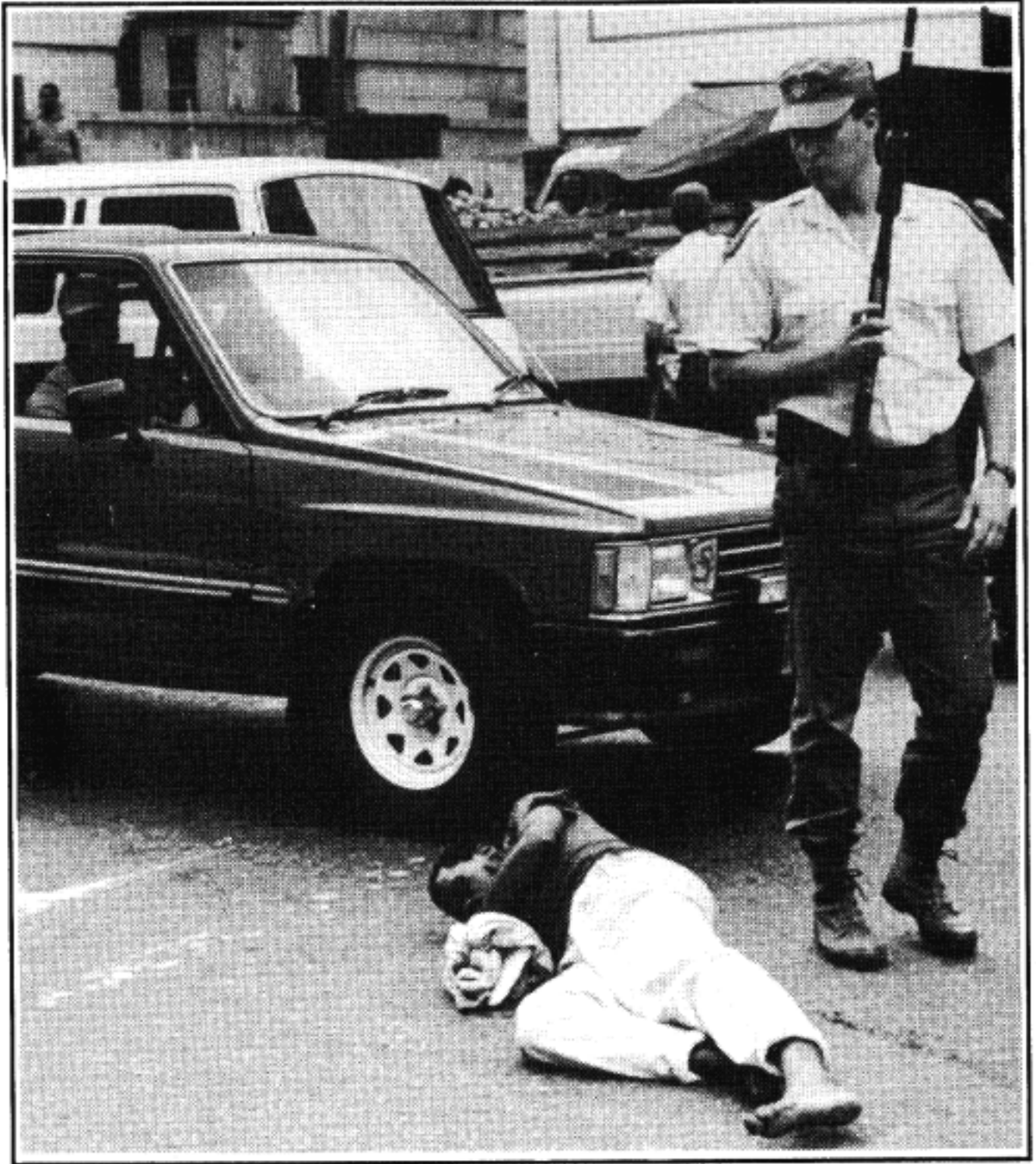
De Klerk drew a distinction between the traditional role of the SAP as a 'political' force dedicated to the preservation of white privilege and black oppression, and a 'non-political' police:

'We don't want to use you anymore as instruments to reach certain political goals. We as politicians must take the full responsibility for politics. We must stop requiring of the police to lay in the first line of trenches in the political battles. As ordinary citizens policemen have the liberty and freedom to vote for the party of their choice. But in the execution of their duties they must ensure that normal activities, whether it is swimming or holding political meetings, take place in an orderly and lawful fashion. This is the direction we are taking and I want you to make peace with this new line (South African Press Association News Bulletin, 27/1/90).

Whatever one might think of De Klerk's broader strategy, there is no doubt that a South African police force genuinely committed to protecting all South Africans from predatory crimes, and to promoting the conditions for normal political activity, would be a vast improvement.

The question is how is this to be achieved, so long as the police are the coercive arm of a government that is a partisan player in the current negotiations over the future of South Africa?

This problem was put into sharp relief, no doubt unintentionally, by the deputy minister of Law and Order, J



Police and government: The quest for impartial policing

Scheepers, in an address to a graduating class of police recruits in Cape Town recently:

'The government and the SAP have as their objective the creation of a totally professional police force — apolitical and impartial, yet loyal to the government of the day' (Cape Times, 19/6/91).

How can the police be apolitical and impartial if they are loyal to a government that was not democratically elected, and that is so evidently a partisan player in the transformation of South Africa?

Although the scepticism and the dilemma this question expresses is par-

ticularly acute in South Africa, it is not peculiar to this country. It also bedevils representative democracies.

Accountability and democratic governance

Accountability, understood as the requirement to answer to an authority and to accept its directions, is an essential feature of governance. A government cannot govern effectively unless the agencies of the state are accountable to it. A central feature of democratic governance is the idea that government is answerable to 'the people' and subject to

PEACE ACCORD

their control. Indeed, a political system is said to be democratic to the extent that government is accountable to 'the people'.

In a 'representative democracy' government is answerable to, and ultimately controlled by, elected representatives who in turn are accountable to the electorate. Within this system the institutions of government that make up the state are accountable to 'the people' to the extent that they are accountable to government.

Representative governments that operate within a 'rights culture' conceive of the political process as a whole as being limited by a framework of fundamental rights that impose limits and requirements on government. These conditions do not contradict the basic principles of democratic accountability.

Police independence in Canada

The public police, as purveyors of physical force used to maintain the order promoted by government, is a very significant institution. Given this and the importance of the principle of democratic accountability just outlined, we would expect to find in place, in a representative democracy like Canada, clearly established mechanisms for ensuring that the public police are accountable to government. This is not so.

The Canadian police are not accountable to governments in Canada in any clear, direct or simple way. Indeed they are, for the most part, so independent of governmental and legislative control that they could almost be described as constituting a fourth branch of governance (along with the executive, the judiciary and the legislature). Canadian governments simply do not have clear or unambiguous control over their police.

The independence of the police is something many Canadians are proud of, as one of the great strengths of their public police. Indeed the concept of 'police independence' from government has for many years been a sacrosanct idea in Canada, in much the same way as it has been in Britain.

Accountability to the Law

Police independence involves the claim that the police should take their direction directly from the law of the land, rather than from a political authority. This claim assumes that the law comes closer to representing the will of the people than the directions of particular governments, because it is the product of successive governments as well as the reflections over time of the judiciary.

The law, it is argued, may not per-



fectly reflect a 'common good', but it comes closer to doing so than the inevitably partisan directions of particular governments. In this conception law is given an autonomous character that separates it from government and is accorded a 'voice' that speaks to the police directly on behalf of 'the people'.

Within this conception public policing will be impartial to the extent that the police are independent of government and take their direction from the law. Police officers are viewed as having an 'original authority' that comes to them directly from the law.

Police discretion and professionalism

The central problem with the idea of the police taking their direction from the law directly is that the 'voice' of the law is seldom clear or unambiguous. The law requires interpretation, which compels police officers to exercise discretion, which creates a space that can be used to undermine the very impartiality 'police independence' seeks to guarantee.

The response to this problem is 'police professionalism'. The idea here is that partisan influence, either directly from government officials or more indirectly through the police sub-culture, can be forestalled if the police are oriented to an impartial professional ethic, or code of conduct, that governs law enforcement.

Professionalism, it is argued, contrib-

utes to the development of impartial policing because it establishes standards and directions for police action that are independent of partisan interests; standards that will ensure that the police will act in the 'public interest'. In a nutshell the argument is that even if you can't trust politicians, you can trust the police because they are professionals.

A mask for partisan policing

This feature of the Canadian situation raises doubts about the notions of a democratically accountable police. If Canadians have developed institutions that deliberately insulate the police from government, should the police in a new democratic South Africa be answerable to, and controlled by, government?

The answer developed below is an emphatic 'Yes'. The police in South Africa should be directly and unambiguously accountable to a democratically elected government.

The ideas about police independence and police professionalism have been vigorously challenged on the grounds that it creates a body of police officers answerable to no one but themselves. Questions have been raised about the ability of the police (or anyone else for that matter) to police themselves.

These concerns have been raised most vocally by disadvantaged Canadian groups (women, indigenous people, blacks, homosexuals, poor people) who have pointed out that an 'independent, professional police' does not police impar-

tially.

Instead, they use their power of coercion, under the protection of the doctrine of police independence, to promote and maintain an order of inequality.

These criticisms have given rise to a host of academic investigations of the way in which police discretion is exercised. A central finding of these studies is a pervasive hypocrisy in which the liberal vision of equality before the law is routinely violated by the police, as they systematically privilege high status groups and disadvantage those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder.

Police deviance from liberal legal and professional standards, it has been argued, constitutes a subterranean mechanism for maintaining socio-economic inequality that works against the rhetoric of equality before the law. This deviance is promoted by tacit support from supervisors, and the law itself, within a 'blind eye' culture.

An important institutional feature of this deviance-promoting mechanism are internal systems for handling public complaints against the police — justified in terms of independence and professionalism — that cover up rather than root out police deviance.

Police ombudsman

There is now in Canada a growing dissatisfaction with the notion of police 'independence'. However, there is at the same time a cautious reluctance to abandon it, given the absence of an alternative mechanism that will guard against the very real dangers associated with direct government control of the police.

The challenge is to find an alternative system for limiting the extent to which the police can be used as a partisan tool, that does not leave them ultimately unaccountable. One alternative is an external review or oversight mechanism.

Such a mechanism would provide legislators with the information they require to hold governments accountable for all aspects of police activity and, equally importantly, for the directions they give the police.

What is emerging in Canada is a system that requires governments to remain aloof from police handling of particular cases but that permits, and indeed requires, intervention in exceptional cases.

There is now a growing acceptance of the idea of proactive monitoring of the police that is not merely complaint-based. A proactive approach permits a police review authority to act on its own initiative to review police action and the struc-

tures and processes that support it.

If this idea takes root Canadian review authorities will develop an audit-like function that will require them, on a routine basis, to comment on such things as training, recruitment, resource allocation, and the like.

Re-thinking impartiality

If an independent police has not achieved its intended aim of impartial policing in a representative democracy like Canada, it is unlikely to do so in South Africa, where the police traditionally have been employed to deny the majority of South Africans the most basic human freedoms.

Police 'independence' would embed the practices and values of the old apartheid regime within the new state. It would be like giving all the members of the present South African judiciary life-long appointments on the grounds that this will assure their independence from political control.

How then can the vision of an impartial police that promotes fundamental human rights be realised in a new South Africa?

Firstly, we must reject the utopian vision of the police as non-political. To police is by definition to promote an order, and order is always political in the sense that it seeks to institutionalise a way of doing things that realises particular interests and values. All state police seek to guarantee a politically endorsed order. What differs is the legitimacy of the order they promote.

A more realistic meaning of police impartiality is a police which enforces the order endorsed by the state without bias — that is, without allowing their own or others' values and preferences (including those of the government of the day) to persuade them to deviate from this order in their enforcement practices.

Impartiality in this sense is independent of legitimacy. Thus, for example, a police operating under the old apartheid order would be considered impartial to the extent that they acted to maintain the inequalities it sought to realise without fear or favour. Within this conception an impartial police is only as legitimate as the order it seeks to guarantee.

An accountable SA Police

The critical question facing South African policing, and one that embraces both these concerns of legitimacy and impartiality, is: how is the role set out for the police by De Klerk to be realised given

the undemocratic character of his government?

This goal can only be achieved if two fundamental conditions are met:

- * The existence of a legitimate authority committed to these goals that is required to, and is capable of, directing and controlling the police.

- * The establishment of a mechanism both for assessing the extent to which police actions are in accord with legal and professional standards, and for making this assessment visible to the people as a whole through their representatives.

The first of these conditions will be met in the long term by the establishment of a democratic polity in which the government of the day has the authority to direct police action, but is required to make public any directions when handling individual cases.

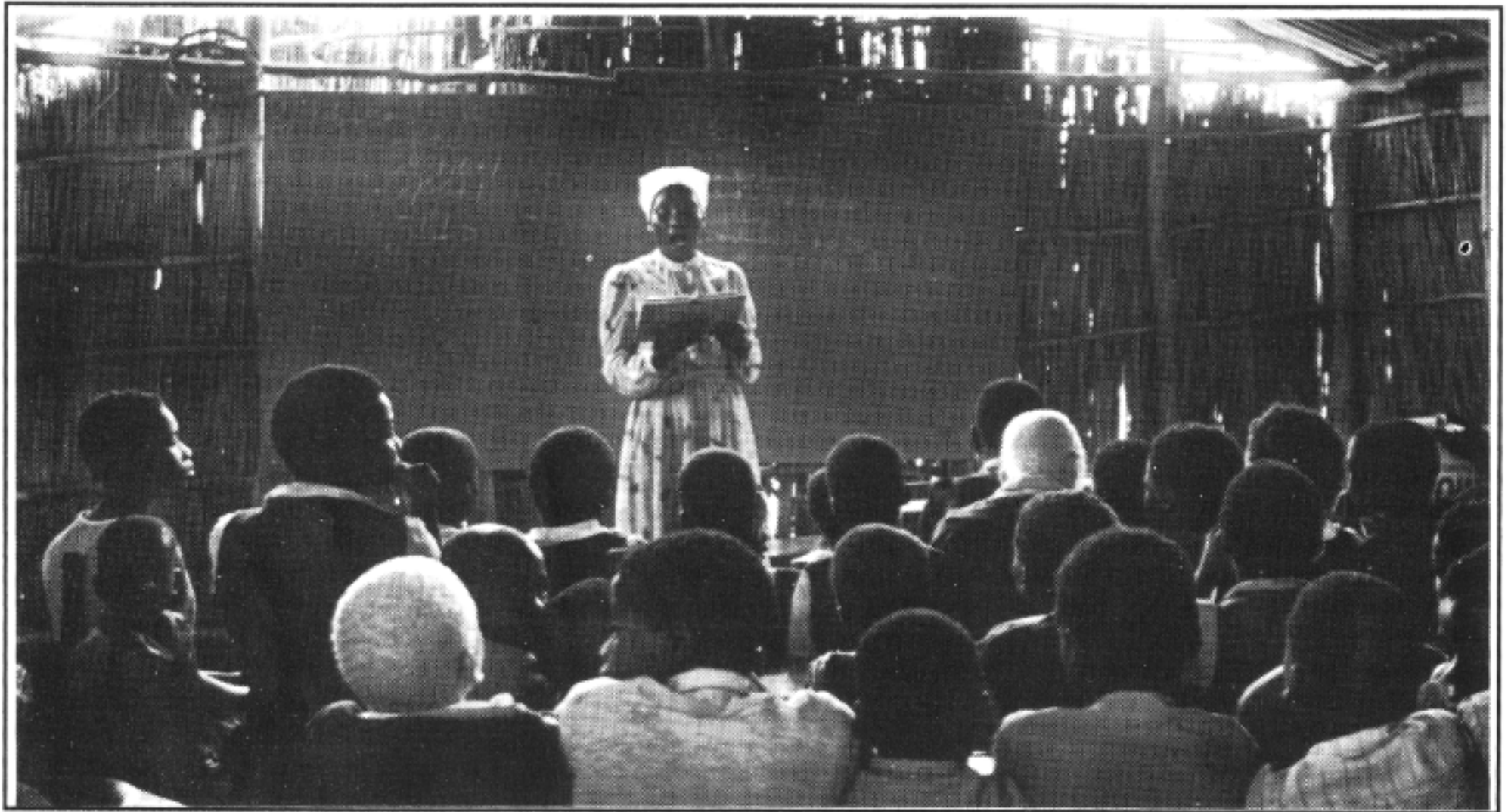
During the transitional period it requires the establishment of a body responsible for policing that can legitimately claim to represent the people. For instance, an interim government accountable to a democratically elected constituent assembly.

The second condition can be accomplished by the establishment of a review body with the authority to review every aspect of police activity it wishes, either in response to complaints or on its own initiative. In the long term this body would report to a new South African legislature, or legislatures if responsibility for policing is delegated to regional or local governments. During the transition period it should be responsible to whatever body is established as the ultimate political authority.

The recently signed Peace Accord goes a long way towards meeting this second condition by setting up a police review mechanism (see previous article). As this mechanism is largely controlled by the police, who act as its investigative arm, it is not truly external. This is a serious flaw that is likely to undermine its credibility and that of the accord more generally. Modifying the accord to ensure that it provides for an external review of the police should be on top of the agenda of the all-party conference.

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Over the past 10 years 203 white schools have been closed. The state has consistently refused to let them be used by education-starved black children. But next year the government will probably relent and open these schools — thanks mostly to the 'occupation of the white schools' campaign. GLENDA DANIELS reports on the controversial campaign in the context of the education crisis.



Fighting for 203 schools for 3 million kids

Despite the criticisms levelled at the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) from many quarters about the 'occupation' campaign and its execution in August, it has been successful in pressurising the state into undertaking the opening up of unoccupied white schools next year.

Initially the NECC campaign appeared to be a failure because it did not attract large numbers of students; many parents complained about yet another disruption in their children's education, while community organisations were miffed because they were inadequately consulted, if at all.

While the NECC cannot plead innocent to these allegations, their campaign nevertheless highlighted the education crisis and put the spotlight on the government.

This success, though, does not justify the way in which the campaign was handled and the NECC will have to be more measured in its actions in the future.

The state, as usual, has not come across too well with its flimsy excuses about not having adequate transport for

the children to move from one area to the other, reneging on its promise to allow demonstrations, and saying it had no mandate to open schools.

In african areas there is an additional problem to the shortage of schools. Where there are schools, they are overcrowded and undersupplied. Up to 60 students might be crowded into one classroom, sharing books where these are available and writing on the floors where there are no desks.

Meanwhile, matric students embark on their examinations in October amidst escalating township violence. The chances of a good pass rate have become increasingly dismal as the education crisis deepens with every year.

The 'occupation' campaign

Since the beginning of the year, the NECC has called for a Back to School Campaign, the aim being to encourage the youth to try to get an education. Despite some problems, the call met with a positive response. The ANC backed the campaign and thousands went back to school.

But when the children got to the school premises there were massive problems,

says NECC assistant general secretary James Maseko:

'We initiated a meeting with the state to get them to address some of the problems. We were trying to create proper conditions against the background of the poor matric results in 1990, where there was a 36.4 percent pass rate in african schools. Most of the problems related to massive overcrowding since the call to go back to school, the failure of the state to deliver textbooks and to repair existing buildings and a general shortage of schools.

'It was becoming very clear the state was not responding to the thousands of kids roaming the streets, who were turned away from schools after the rush for places. The ratio of teacher per student is 1:60 in urban areas and the situation is even worse in rural areas — the ratio is 1:90.'

White schools have the capacity of 1:30 and numbers are actually about 18 a class. The shortage of white students in classes must be coupled with the closure over the last 10 years of 203 schools which had no white pupils.

'This is an unequal and senseless underutilisation of resources in white communities, whereas in the black communities there is massive shortage and overcrowding,' says Maseko.

The NECC called on the government to open up all schools. The state's response was to give white parents ABC models to choose from (see *WIP* 75). This is a piecemeal solution, says the NECC, and does not address the real problem.

Further, when black parents heard certain white schools were accepting black children, they enthusiastically rushed to enrol their children. While some were accepted, others met numerous obstacles. Mainly, they felt a quota system was being applied and only small numbers of blacks were being admitted. At some schools the class background of the pupil was taken into account; where s/he came from and how well the parents and children spoke English.

It was against this background that the occupation of schools campaign was embarked upon. Initially it was decided to occupy half-used white schools, but then the organisers realised this would create conflict which they wanted to avoid, so they opted for only closed empty schools.

The objective was not merely to occupy the schools but to put pressure on the government to open them up for use. The NECC took the schoolchildren

to the white school premises, hoping they would be open so that some tuition could take place and the kids would have a chance to see what it was like to be taught in a school with proper facilities desks, a chair per student, laboratory equipment and so on. But the state did not open the schools. In most cases the buses carrying the children were blocked from leaving the townships.

On the morning of the campaign the NECC met the minister of the Department of Education and Training (DET) Sam de Beer, who was then Housing and Works minister. He claimed he had no mandate to open the schools. State president FW de Klerk agreed it was illegal to do so.

Nevertheless the government officials promised that no student would be blocked, and demonstrations at the schools would be allowed. Several hours later, the riot squad prevented buses carrying hundreds of students from leaving Alexandra and Wits University students were arrested when they joined the campaign.

Participation and criticism

The NECC has been severely criticised in the press and by some organisations for not providing adequate transport for the children; for disrupting their education; for a lack of consultation with parents and communities; for being confrontational; for using the children for their own political ends and for not being concerned about the children's safety.

On the question of disrupting education, the NECC feels that in a normal society accusations of disrupting education would be fair but as things stand there is no education to disrupt. A normal society would not be characterised by school boycotts and demonstrations.

Maseko argues these actions are strategies and not principles. 'We regard stay-aways and boycotts as unfortunate, but the reality is that the students and teachers are at the receiving end, having to go to schools which have no windows, no teaching aids and books. It becomes their democratic right to demand resources — but the NECC has never called for indefinite mass action.'

As for the issue of consultation, in the weeks before the campaign, says the NECC, it attempted to consult with the community, education organisations, parents and organisations in white areas in an attempt to minimise conflict.

The NECC admits it was not able to draw in large numbers from the parent sector and only a handful of teachers took part in the campaign, although there

was participation from university students.

Not expecting thousands

The NECC was not expecting thousands. 'We wanted a small figure that would be manageable. We were satisfied with the numbers that participated. By this stage we had also changed the focus from occupying many schools to targeting just a few,' says Maseko.

According to the NECC, the problems related to the campaign were of a political nature. Despite attempts to consult broadly with community organisations, the community and parents remained largely uninvolved. From this, the NECC has learnt a lesson, and has resolved to consult more fully in future.

Further, the NECC is merely a front of different education organisations, who all have their particular problems. Many teachers have not been paid for months. University students are fighting exclusions. Schoolchildren have no text books. So the accusation that there was a lack of cohesiveness was a misunderstanding of the situation, because all the organisations had to embark on their separate protest programmes to address their own needs. But the organisation concedes greater co-ordination is needed for further programmes.

Maseko also concedes the question of security was a problem considering the numerous threats made by the rightwing (and the subsequent two bomb blasts on Hillcrest school in Pretoria).

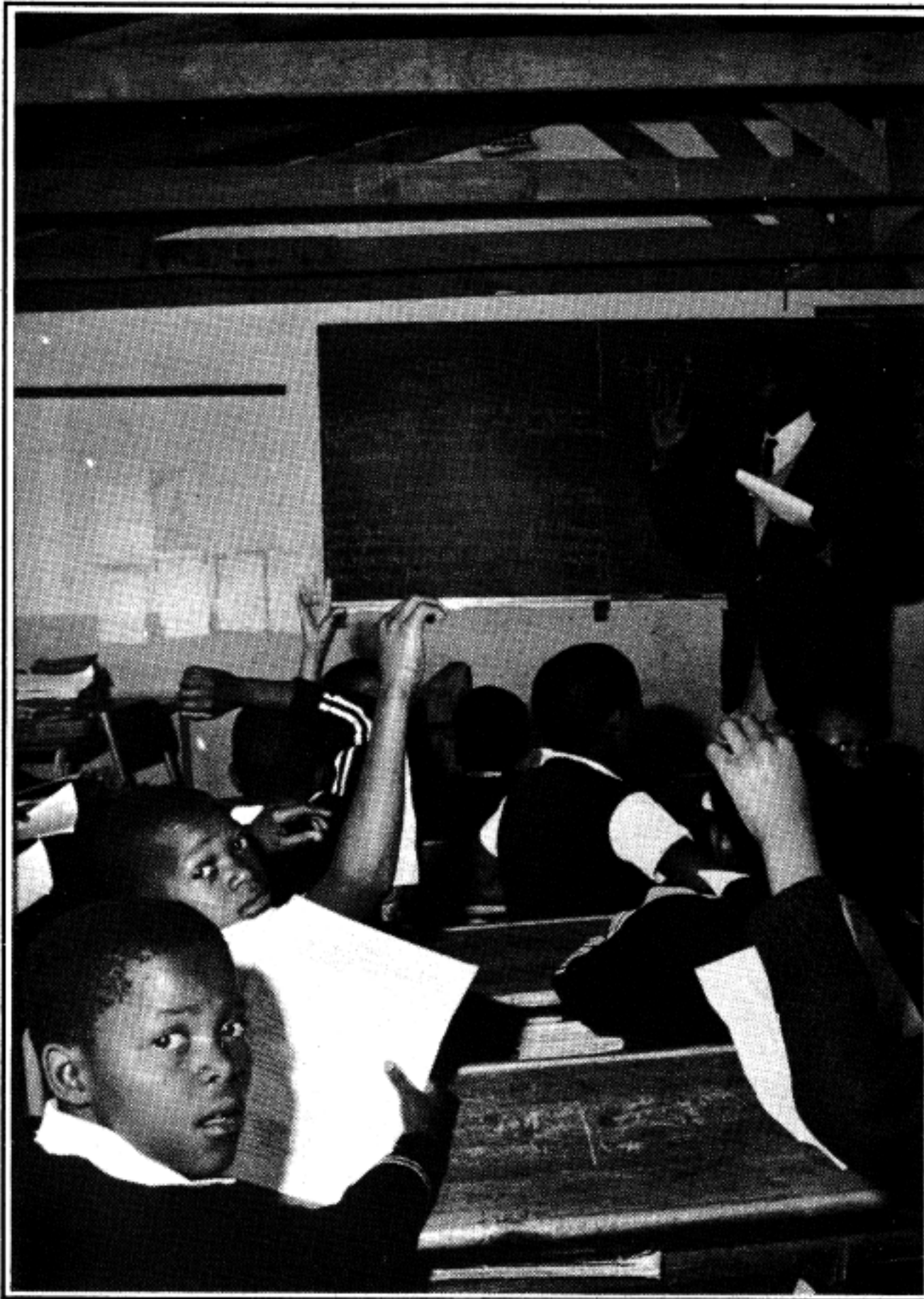
For the NECC, the 'occupation' campaign was a major victory because it was able to bring to the attention of the country and the international community the question of unused and under-used schools.

'Victory is in the pipeline. But we are only talking of 203 schools and it is estimated that there are three million children of school-going age who are not in school in the african townships,' says Maseko.

Events in the Western Cape

While all this was happening in the Transvaal, the Western Cape could not pull off a similar campaign. According to Fred Barron of the NECC in the Western Cape, the organisation got bogged down, ironically, because of the time spent on the process of consultation: among the SRCs and Cosas in classrooms and within the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu), which was then fighting for recognition.

'Certain organisations like Cosas and



The ratio of teacher per student is 1:60 in urban areas and the situation is even worse in rural areas — the ratio is 1:90.

Sadtu wanted the implementation of their own campaign prioritised rather than slotting into a joint campaign,' says Barron.

In the Western Cape the 'occupation' campaign took a different form and was symbolic in the sense that it involved, with some schools, a planned visit to selected white schools by black students and a joint call by the white and black school community for certain education demands to be met.

Single education department

Although NECC's direct concern is the establishment of one non-racial education system for children, with the same access to resources, schools and success

rates for blacks and whites, they are facing an even greater challenge. This is to transform Christian National Education. Both students and the state are incapable of embarking on this process on their own.

A single education department is needed to oversee the process of transformation, and presently intensive discussions with education, labour and political organisations are going on with a view to establishing a patriotic front in the education sector.

Part of the reason they are doing this is that education must be taken beyond political and ideological confines. Education is a community issue and affects all South Africans.

The NECC wants to establish a negotiating forum on education aimed at setting up an interim structure, which will begin to discuss ways of addressing the education crisis and lay the foundations for a single non-racial education department. This idea will be discussed with all political organisations.

The NECC has already launched a research project, the National Education Policy Investigation (Nepi) which is researching ideas for an educational policy unit.

Privatisation fears

The negotiating forum will look at other initiatives, for instance from the private and international sector. But their concern about these initiatives is the danger that the state will be abdicating its responsibility completely. It is clear the state is bent on privatising health and transport and is worried about the privatising of education.

Education minister Sam de Beer's spokesperson told *WIP* that 'redundant' schools belong to the House of Assembly: 'When a school is redundant we offer it for sale to another department, charity organisation, private education and several departments express interest in the property'.

But in August the government made an announcement that they were willing to transfer schools to black education without the usual financial transaction, where another department buys the property.

Says De Beer's spokesperson: 'A whole strategy (the "Educational Renewal Strategy") is being worked on. Continuous assessment is needed. We are constantly evaluating, there are regular meetings happening'.

On specific crises like the lack of textbooks, the spokesperson denies government responsibility because 'books are not being returned every year and there is a life expectancy for books'.

The approach of the government barely acknowledges the crisis in education, and it becomes clear that unless pressure is exerted, nothing will be done to resolve the situation.

Meanwhile, the NECC is presently engaged in an intensive learning programme to assist students with their examinations this month, and to boost low morale and loss of confidence. The organisation is setting up tutoring programmes in study centres and is also providing study guides, exam questions and model answers. All is not lost yet before this year's matric exams. *

Soweto schools in decay

MOSITO RAPHELA takes a look at Soweto schools and discovers that in some schools children are playing football in empty classrooms, while others are roaming the streets...

WALKING around the classrooms of Soweto schools one senses how students must feel attending schools in such pathetic and heart-rending conditions. Some students have left classrooms for the 'comfort' of township shebeens and the streets....

In one school, Jabulani Junior Secondary school, where graffiti such as 'Military Camp' adorns the walls, teenage boys play soccer in a virtually empty class, without chairs and tables.

It is a dismal situation where there is no incentive to study, no desks and a phenomenally high failure rate.

An observation of many schools in Soweto shows that the authorities have a lot to accomplish in refurbishing schools. Although a few schools like Musi High in Pimville and Thabo High in Naledi are being renovated, most schools are deteriorating.

Terrible delapidation

According to Congress of South African Students (Cosas) vice president David Serekwane, the refurbishment of most schools in Diepkloof has already taken place. But other schools are known to be crime havens and bases for gangsters. In Naledi, for example, a principal is reported to have announced the names of gangsters and their leaders in assembly. All the gangs in the area, which counted to no less than ten, were operational at Naledi High school.

Tladi High school is among the 'forgotten' schools in Soweto where no renovation is being done. There were no teachers in most classrooms when I visited, and some students were reading on their own.

Surrounding the two story Tladi building is a broken fence in a rubble with a terrible stench. What used to be walkways is now a road from one corner to the other, adjoining the nearby streets. The windows are broken, some of the doors ripped off. Chalkboards have been removed from the walls, and furniture stand broken. In front of one block of classes — disused and burnt — boys stood around smouldering fire, making no attempt to smother it.

Most of the schools visited in Soweto plead terrible dilapidation. At Prudence High School, a ten minute walk from Tladi High, the same conditions persist. One

block, windows and doors ripped off, is not used. At the nearby Dikwangkwetla Primary School part of the roof has been removed. In stark contrast, the driveway and administration building is graced with flowers.

At Aurora Girls school classrooms have been adapted to serve as administration offices, as what remains of the original administration block is now debris. Electric cables have been ripped off. A stream of dirty water meanders its way to the nearby main road.

A student comments: 'I have resigned myself to the situation, but I get worried when winter comes.'

Another reason for the poor state of education and lack of motivation is the 'teacher problem', according to some. One teacher blames other teachers for contributing to the chaotic situation. 'It is not unusual to see a teacher going to school as late as nine', he laments.

Students complain that in recent months teacher attendance has been poor. They make a show of coming to school when pay day approaches.

Cosas makes demands

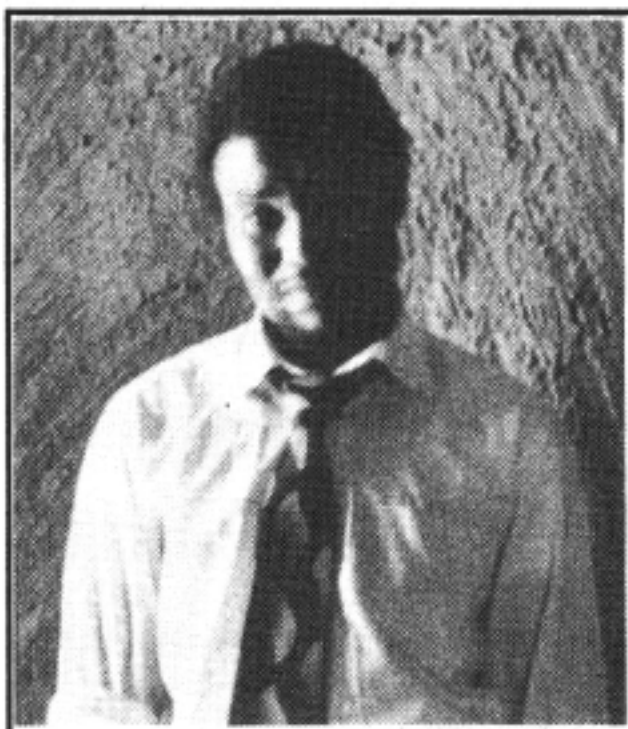
While the education crisis persists, with end-of-year examinations only a few days away, the students feel the education authorities still have demands to meet. Cosas intends engaging in mass action to force the authorities to meet their demands. These include the training of more quality teachers, supply of equipment and facilities, and admission of students who wish to further their studies but are prevented from doing so by the department.

The recent sit-in campaign did little to force the authorities to meet the students' demands (see main story). Cosas's presence during the campaign was equally less visible. Cosas officials assert that they had joined hands with the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) to occupy empty white schools. The idea, they claim, had been thoroughly canvassed amongst students, especially in the Soweto area. However, because the NECC kept changing the dates for sit-ins, students could not mobilise support.

The campaign, asserts Cosas, should have included discussions with white students. But this was met with an aggressive response

by security forces, who occupied the schools themselves.

During their recent national conference Cosas resolved to embark on an intensive learning campaign. The campaign will include encouraging the Department of Education and Training (DET) to admit students who wish to continue their studies, and engaging in mass action to force the department to supply schools with stationary and other necessary equipment. *



Women chart the way forward



Since the overturning of the 30 percent quota motion at the ANC national conference, the Women's League (ANCWL) has not been sitting back resigned and defeated. Instead it has brought together 35 South African women's organisations to discuss women's rights in a future constitution. GLENDA DANIELS reports

The 'Equality for Women' campaign, launched on Friday September 27, hopes to involve all South African women and will culminate in the drawing up of the Women's Charter by the end of the year.

ANCWL's general secretary Baleka Kgositsile says while the League is initiating and spearheading the drawing up of the Charter, it will have to involve all women irrespective of political affiliation, because the society oppresses all women. This is why women from organisations as diverse as Cosatu, the IFP Women's Brigade, PAC, Azapo, Black Sash, the South African Bureau of Women, Women for Peace, Powa, Rape Crisis and the Housewives League have decided to participate in the campaign.

The ANCWL launching conference in Kimberley resolved to bring out a Women's Charter by the end of this year,

but the League felt it could not do this without consulting the existing organisations. Thus began a process of workshops, seminars and consulting.

On Friday September 27 a meeting of more than 30 women's organisations discussed what the campaign entailed, and formed a steering committee to get the Women's Charter of South Africa off the ground and to ensure certain women's rights would be enshrined in a new constitution.

ANCWL's national organiser Nosiviwe Mapise says this committee will be brainstorming the way forward. 'We have to discuss the needs of women and what goes into the Charter, also what the Charter is about. We believe other women could identify needs we have not thought of.'

Mapise says this forum will be a 'stepping stone for a broad front for women, an alliance, which we have dreamed of. It does not mean we will not

continue our own programmes as separate organisations but there will be that contact.'

Kgositsile outlined some of the issues that will probably be discussed that affect all women. 'The peace process is happening yet women have not made their input on how violence affects them; we might look at the anti-VAT campaign and at how women are affected by this system.'

Enshrining women's rights in a constitution

Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) veteran Thandi Modise feels this is important because 'we have seen in other liberated countries with new constitutions how women have still been left behind, with no change in their position as women. We want to see ourselves there, participating.'

All three women feel that getting involved in the process of change as



Women 'reclaim the night' in Johannesburg: the Women's Charter campaign is a stepping stone for a broad front for women

is 'Is God a he or a she?' and the question of the ordination of women.

Kgositisile says the issue of traditional practices should be looked into properly. 'This is quietly eating away at possibilities for women's emancipation. It takes time to persuade and we can't alienate women. It's a tightrope situation. We want to be firm on what is correct and to influence society but we can't antagonise.'

The issue of lobola has become a sensitive one, with some women for it and some against.

She adds: 'Polygamy and lobola are not going to change overnight, but there are women who are pushing the League about challenging this issue.'

The quota debate

Modise says in the ANC conference 'we found out how much we are worth...men started thinking about women and they didn't sleep. They started seeing us as women. Now regions are going all out to say that half their executive should be women.'

Kgositsile concedes that not enough work was done to make people understand the issue of a quota. 'But we don't see it as a disaster that we didn't win the debate. It was a beginning. The debate must continue, there are different ways of approaching affirmative action and we are open to this.'

Apparently there were men at the conference and in leadership positions who had previously sprouted all the right rhetoric, but when it came to the quota debate at a conference, where the majority were men, they were the ones who influenced and swayed the debate to the disfavour of the women. And some men were even angry that the issue 'wasted' so much time, say the League leaders.

'It was the first time that women stood up and said "we want this discussed". It has always come up in a roundabout fashion in the past,' says Modise.

Mapise feels 'we should never lose sight of the fact that we are women, and this is a serious political issue. We need to fight for our rights as women. We do have a political role to play, but don't let us assume because we are in the ANC that gender will be addressed and there will be no oppression.' *

politicians does not help because one's specific oppression as women is not resolved.

Modise relates an incident. One of her comrades said to her when she raised a concern about a gender issue: 'I never expected you to become so womanist.'

She says it is 'as though the men expect you to deny the woman that you are'.

Kgositsile explains: 'there are women who have risen and when this happens they often pretend they are not affected by women's issues. They are scared to raise them for fear of being alienated and sidelined. They say if you are a soldier why should you be acting like a woman? At the end of the day you are still a woman and there are issues that affect you as such.'

The Women's League feels the ANC is slow in addressing the gender question. They are not sure how far the ANC

has gone in setting up the commission on the emancipation for women. 'The sooner the media starts going to the ANC to ask them about this the better', they say.

Issues

The women agree issues that will arise are wide ranging, depending on class, but there will also be those that cut across this divide, like rape.

Working women, says Kgositsile, will be affected in the workplace and trade unions might neglect this because the men are not affected. This is where the Charter becomes important.

Professional women, says Modise, are still undermined, no matter how high they have risen in their professions. 'It's a case of: "Oh! that's a bright idea", and it's taken nowhere because you are a woman.' Modise says another debate that might arise here, which has already come up in the UK with church women,

We eat meat, vegetables and eggs too, not just brown bread and maize, said one angry protester's placard on the anti-VAT march to the receiver of revenue's office in Johannesburg at the end of September.

The march was part of a national response to the government's temporary exemption of VAT on only a few foodstuffs such as maize, brown bread, pilchards and milk powder, and not either delaying the implementation of VAT, or exempting all foodstuffs and medical services.

The receiver of revenue had never felt so important before. He smiled at the chanting protesters from beginning to end. He posed in a neat suit and well-combed brylcreamed hair for all the photographers, proudly holding up the memorandum handed over to him. It was probably the first time he had ever received one.

The countrywide marches united about 100 000 people from organisations like Azapo, PAC, Wosa, ANC, Cosatu unions, Nactu affiliates and various women's and students organisations.

A PAC member's placard on the Johannesburg march read 'Give us votes not VAT.'

And Wosa, predictably, handed out pamphlets proclaiming 'Government is the third force! Halt negotiations!'

This impressive display of mass action followed the VAT summit on 23 September, where small business, trade unions, medical, welfare, political, consumer, religious and education organisations, grouped under the Co-ordinating Committee on VAT, began to earnestly flex their muscles against the system.

Cosatu takes the lead

Cosatu has succeeded in uniting sectors that on the surface have very little in common.

But this is an issue that is angering and unnerving virtually every citizen, because it affects day to day lives and cuts across race and class divides. When even middle class white South Africans phone in to talk shows on Radio 702 to complain about the sudden rise in food prices on supermarket shelves, one begins to see that the economic recession is not just affecting black South Africans, — but all South Africans.

With VAT the already bad situation is exacerbated and tempers are rising. Nervous rumblings are rapidly taking on a more organised form, with the different sectors, in a highly significant devel-



Labour leads fight against VAT

A wide range of organisations, in an unprecedented show of unity, express their opposition to the government's newly imposed and unpopular VAT system. GLENDA DANIELS reports

opment, moving closer to Cosatu for direction.

Given De Klerk's refusal to back down, Cosatu's national strike planned for the first week of November promises to be the most effective ever. It is aimed at making the government aware that the majority of the people in the country could severely dent the economy if their views are ignored.

Not only did organisations like the National African Chamber of Commerce (Nafcoc), the Muslim Youth Movement, the PAC and the Housewives League make contact at the Cosatu-organised second VAT Summit in September, but so did conservative white trade unions and Cosatu and Nactu come together.

Doctors attending the VAT Summit voiced the following views about health care: Private doctors service about 20 percent of the population. In townships they are the only accessible means to health care and more often than not there is a cheap fee ranging between R12 and R30.

The effect of VAT on medical services will be:

* An estimated quarter of those seeking

medical care in the private sector at present will be unable to afford it. This five percent will be pushed into the overburdened public sector, likely to make the already disastrous situation worse.

* Those GP's that do provide an affordable and accessible service may be forced to increase their charges. The doctors therefore resolved that should the government fail to zero rate all medical services and basic services, they would call on all medical doctors in private practice not to collect VAT on their services or to pay VAT to the receiver of revenue. They have also resolved to call on the public not to pay them VAT.

Small businesses

Organisations representing the small business sector felt equally strongly about VAT.

In a statement on the sector, the Co-ordinating Committee on VAT felt that the government is introducing a form of VAT so 'theoretically pure that it causes compliance problems for small businesses'. It said that no developing country in the world uses such a pure system, which is devastating for emerging small

business.

The Committee estimates that there are one million small businesses in South Africa, providing employment to 2.5 million people. Because of educational disadvantages, many small business owners are unable to follow the country's complex economic and tax laws. This sector includes organisations such as the Sunnyside Group and the National Industrial Chamber, which have been making proposals for a simplification of tax laws since 1987.

The National Industrial Chamber estimates that at least 20 percent of the approximately 70 000 small manufacturers are now selling to customers who will be VAT registered.

Most of them, according to the statement, will lose this business with the introduction of VAT: 'Their registered customers will want a tax invoice or a 10 percent lower price. There will be a disastrous and permanent split in the economy between the emerging entrepreneurs and the corporate sector, which very few will manage to bridge.'

With all these objections in mind the Coordinating Committee proposed a modification of penalties, which will give the receiver of revenue the power to close down non-complying small businesses; permitting the registered purchasers to claim input credits against invoices from legally unregistered small suppliers; compensating small businesses in full for their costs in acting as the state's collectors; lifting the VAT regis-

tration threshold from its present level of R3 000 sales per week to R10 000 sales per week; launching at the state's expense, a massive educational and practical assistance programme to help the thousands of disadvantaged to comply.

These are only two of the over seventy different sectors present at the VAT summit who are dissatisfied with the new tax system. Other organisations expressed similar objections but on how VAT will affect them specifically.

The Housewives League spoke about how it affects women in the society and the National Education Crisis Committee spoke about how it affects their sector of work.

Unions move closer together

Nactu president of the James Mdwaweni says that the opposition to VAT is the most 'interesting thing' that has happened to the country. 'It is significant that this forum (VAT summit) has brought together people which will present a dynamic force that the government will have to contend with.'

Mdwaweni says the level of participation helped unions towards a better understanding of each other. 'It is the first time that white unions have come in on an issue. They did not reject the proposed action (national strike, marches etc) although some have indicated constitutional problems but others have indicated their support. Its a most interesting case.'

He adds: 'This is leading to a unity of the working people and might lead to a united front against the government. It also leads to the possibility of one trade union federation in the country.'

While there may be grounds for such optimism, Ben Nicholson, director of the predominantly white Confederation of Metal and Buildings Unions, does not sound as enthusiastic. His union is also unhappy with VAT, but they are not excited by the means that Cosatu chooses to oppose it.

He did not attend the VAT summit but had earlier met Cosatu, for the first time, on the issue, and was not impressed. But he concedes that 'it is significant that we are sitting down to talk to each other and hear each other's views, but what is more important is to give our views. It is very clear that some of them don't understand what VAT is!'

He warns: 'We don't believe you can threaten the government with a general strike. We believe that you should negotiate with the government on this issue. This sort of political threat will only result in violence, which we are trying to resolve.'

'Morally unjustifiable'

The ANC's Cyril Ramaphosa said at the VAT summit that the VAT system is being 'rammed down the throats of the people forcefully and is politically, morally and economically unjustifiable. This makes a mockery of the whole process of consultations and negotiations'.

But the ANC is prepared to negotiate its way through this issue, says Tito Mboweni, ANC representative on the Coordinating Committee: 'The government won't get the confidence of investors if there is a major revolt. We should have learnt from our friends in the UK and their unpopular poll tax. The government should take this seriously and negotiate this with us.'

It becomes clear that there is opposition from all quarters, even though the tactics to oppose the VAT system differ. But the fact that different organisations are sitting down for the first time around a common issue is significant in South African politics, which has for too long been dispersed and fragmented. The major opposition movements, the ANC and Cosatu, on the one hand and a whole range of other organisations (see list) on the other, have in the past had very little contact and understanding of each other and what they represent.

The might of the people looms ominously ahead for the government. *

Organisations supporting the anti-VAT campaign

Aid International, ANC, Black Sash, East, Cosatu, Catholic Institute of Education, Centre for Developing Business, Citizens Against Vat, Congress of Business Economics, Consumer Institute for Research and Promotion, Fabcos, Housewives League, Islamic Council of South Africa, Jama'at ul Ulama, Johannesburg Child Welfare Society, Lawyers for Human Rights, Muslim Youth Movement, NAFCCO, Nactu, Namda, National Civic Interim Coordinating Committee, Natal Provincial Staff Association, National Black Consumers Union, National Black Consumers Union, National Industrial Chamber, National Union of Leather Workers, NECC, Neighbourhood Advice Centre, Operation Hunger, Pan Africanist Congress, Pretoria Muslim Trust, South African Communist Party, South African

Consumers Union, South African Council of Churches, Small Business Development Corporation, South Health Workers Congress, South Health Workers Congress, Society for Dispensing Family Practitioners, Sunnyside Group, United Taxpayers Front, World Vision Trade Unions, Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers, BAWU, Black Health and Allied Workers Union of SA, Confederation of Metal and Building Unions, East Rand Municipal Workers Union, Electricity of Workers Union, Fedcrow, Institute of Public Servants, Mafawu, National Union Foodworkers, NPASA, Natal Provincial Administration Personnel Association, Public Servants League, South African Plastic and Allied Workers Union, Union of Johannesburg Municipal Workers and the United Peoples Union of South Africa



Farmers block agricultural workers' unions

Motivated by the need to see sanctions completely lifted, the government has recently made attempts to incorporate farmworkers into the country's labour legislation. SIMON NORFOLK looks at these half-hearted moves, and finds growing opposition from white farmers

The ammunition of those supporting sanctions against South Africa had been considerably reduced in the past nine months, and agriculture should therefore not allow labour relations to become 'the final and only weapon of those who fuel sanctions'.

Thus spake Manpower minister Eli Louw, addressing farmers at the annual meeting of the Breerivier Development Association at Montague in November last year.

In April this year, workers in Kei Road near East London, who were earning as little as R40 per month, were dismissed and thrown off farms where they had been living and working. The farmers responsible said the evictions were in anticipation of the proposed

extension of labour laws to cover farm workers.

The recent process undertaken by the National Party government, aimed at incorporating farmworkers into labour legislation, has underlined some salient points in relation to the government's reform process, the reaction of agricultural employers and the lack of strong rural organisation among farm workers.

Half-hearted moves

The National Party is motivated by the need to remove sanctions against South Africa and end its international isolation. There is no deeply held conviction that the rights of farmworkers should be actively and vigorously defended.

Twice before the government has ignored the recommendations from established commissions to regulate labour practices within agriculture. Now the process through which the extension of the laws is being implemented shows there are still those within the Manpower department more willing to give credence to the opinions of organised agriculture, than to the development of a fair statute that sets farmworkers' rights on a footing with their industrial counterparts.

The varied reactions among the white farming community, including dismissals such as those at Kei Road, raise important concerns also about the effect the laws will have on the position of farmworkers and their families. Agricultural unions and farmers' groups do not want to see unionised farm workers and have threatened violent reprisals if organisation goes ahead.

Perhaps the most serious concern, however, arises because all these developments are taking place in the context of very weak organisation among farm workers, and rural workers in general. With no significant union presence and a total absence of a culture of solidarity from the urban workforce, farmworkers will remain extremely vulnerable — because of the threatened backlash from the growing rightwing groupings in agriculture; because workers will have little opportunity in the short term to enforce their new-found rights; and because they will, to a very large extent, be left with no voice with which to participate in the discussions around land reform and rural development.

Slow changing legislation

It has always been apparent, even before the minister's 'encouragement' to Montague farmers, that the government has been forced to commit itself to the exten-

sion of labour legislation in order to win support for the lifting of sanctions against South Africa. The 1981 Wichahn Commission, and the 1984 National Manpower Commission (NMC), both recommended that agriculture be regulated by at least the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA). The recommendations were ignored; the report of the NMC's probe has still not been released seven years after its completion.

Now, however, the climate has changed. In the last month, the Manpower minister has been explaining to farmers that the introduction of labour legislation in agriculture is necessary because its absence from South Africa's statute books 'has not escaped the attention of the labour community here and abroad'. Farmers attending the Northern Cape Agricultural Union congress were told 'it would be unwise of the agricultural industry to isolate itself...as its survival depends on exports.'

It is in this context, therefore, that in the reply to his budget vote in April 1990, the Manpower minister announced the inclusion of farmworkers under the BCEA would take place by means of an amendment Bill during 1991.

In the event, even this undertaking has been cynically complied with: the Bill was tabled in Parliament but only four days before the end of its 1991 session, with the obvious effect that its consideration, and therefore its implementation, was delayed until next year. The same situation applies to the extension of the Unemployment Insurance Act except that, because of clauses built into this Bill by the Department of Manpower, the fund will not be available to farmworkers until 1993, a full three years after the minister's undertaking.

Farmworkers, it seems, must wait. Meanwhile, the chiefs of Unifruco and the KWV (the major wine co-operative) are already expressing their pleasure at the lifting of US sanctions on South African agricultural products.

Government reluctance

It is not surprising that the delay in the recent process is seen by many observers as the result of a continuing government reluctance in recognising farmworkers' rights. A four-month period of discussion between members of the National Manpower Commission, Cosatu, the SA Agricultural Union (SAAU), Nactu, the Labour Party and representatives of the Rural Foundation resulted in the publication, in December 1990, of a report

setting out the recommendations of this committee in respect to the application of the BCEA to farm workers.

Included in this were detailed suggestions concerning the introduction or amendment of clauses to the existing BCEA. Many of these were adopted by the different interest groups on this committee as consensus positions, representing compromises for one or more of the parties. The report was submitted to the Department of Manpower in November, whose response in the form of a draft bill was published in March.

The draft bill demonstrated an almost total disregard for the recommendations of the NMC committee. Clauses set many conditions prejudicial to farmworkers, including those related to ordinary and extended working hours, notice, seasonal work, sick leave, work on Sundays and annual leave. There was often no motivation given by the department for their substantial deviations from the NMC committee's detailed recommendations; clauses were changed 'owing to practical problems mentioned in the representations' or 'owing to the diversity of the comment' or even, in some cases, because 'it was decided'.

As a result, Cosatu requested an urgent meeting with the minister of Manpower, during which the minister undertook to ensure that the Bill on the BCEA would reflect most of the unanimous decisions of the NMC. But, with a Parliamentary Select Committee still sitting now to discuss the form of the draft, the delay of two and a half months has meant that the farmworkers remain without basic protection for another year.

Growing reactionary forces

The evictions at Kei Road, where the farmworkers are still today living in tents in the township, is just one of the varied reactions to come from the white farming community in recent months. The siege mentality among farmers is not due to the extension of labour laws alone, but the threat of the government's unwillingness to maintain subsidies, by an increasingly serious debt crisis and, not least, by the process of land reform.

Some groupings of farmers have begun to demonstrate their dissatisfaction in increasingly belligerent statements and often violent forms of action. Others have embarked on a more sophisticated process of investigating ways in which the laws may be evaded or subverted. This has even included research work that is designed to limit the potential organising ability of the democratic un-

ions once the law has 'opened the door' for them. Whichever is the case, the lack of existing organisation among farmworkers leaves them open to acts of violence and oppression from the first group, and to manipulation and misinformation from the second.

At a special Free State Agricultural Union congress in Bloemfontein earlier this year, the minister of Manpower was told repeatedly that he was catering to the whims of the ANC, Cosatu and countries abroad. When the minister reminded the 900 farmers present that the Free State Union had been in favour of labour laws at their 1990 congress, an immediate motion was proposed (and adopted) to rescind the 1990 decision.

'Blood will flow'

Free State farmers have found much support from their brethren in the Transvaal. The Transvaal Agricultural Union welcomed the decisions of the Free State Union congress at which the minister got such a pounding, adding that should the government go ahead with its plans they would be in for some 'serious trouble' from farmers. TAU vice-president Willie Lewies has been quoted in the media as saying 'the blood will flow' if the Land Acts were scrapped.

Blood did flow at Goedgevonden, after an attack on the recently returned black farming community by the white farmers of Ventersdorp (see *Briefs*). The TAU's own congress dealt with the setting up of special area defence units for the protection of farmers.

The maize producers' organisation NAMPO has been less brutal and more far-sighted in their approach. It commissioned a report on the present perceptions of farmworkers in the maize sector towards the democratic unions. Armed with this important knowledge, employers will have the upper hand in trying to prevent organisation where others are trying to form it.

Farmworkers are already among the least informed sections of society because of their isolation on the white farms. A recent investigation found that many workers in the western Transvaal were unaware of the scrapping of the Land Acts; newspapers do not reach them and most cannot afford radios.

It is not difficult to imagine a situation in which farmers will feed their workers information designed to combat the unions' attempts to organise.

Challenge to unions

This situation is a real challenge to the



unions. It is not one which the Department of Manpower seems particularly interested in tackling. When given the chance to accept recommendations from the NMC committee, which would have required the displaying of summaries of the BCEA so that workers could understand their new rights, the Department declined, saying many farmworkers could not read. Presumably they were well aware that those who can read would then explain to their less literate co-workers, and were merely keen to prevent this happening.

Some district agricultural unions have begun to arrange day-long clinics for their members to learn from specially commissioned lawyers about ways in which the impending legislation can be evaded. Others arrange for 'management consultants' to explain the ins and outs of having to comply with labour regulations — regulations which up until now the farmers have maintained are unnecessary because of the 'special relationship' between themselves and their workers.

The nature of this 'special relationship', however, is one of the main reasons for the unions' insistence that the labour laws appear on the statute books as soon as possible.

The evictions at Kei Road happened specifically because of the possibility of a minimum wage for farmworkers, under the Wage Act. The recommendation flowing from the NMC committee was that this act should only apply to agriculture after a period of two years; the representatives of the SAAU maintained a hardline position throughout, arguing that this Act should not under any circumstances apply to agriculture. Wages, they maintained, could not be increased; farmers could not afford to pay.

But a look at the figures reveals a different situation. Among the maize producers of the western Transvaal, for example, labour costs amount to less than R50 per hectare, a mere eight percent of the total costs involved in production.

Farmers spend more money on fuel, on spare parts and repairs, and significantly more money on fertilizer than they do on paying their labourers.

And when Dr Kraai van Nierkerk announced that R5 billion of the R17 billion farmer's debt had been squandered on beach houses, gambling and imported saddle horses, the farmers reacted furiously. The commercial banks, however, agreed with the minister, adding only that they thought his figure was a little low.

Lack of rural organisation

The recent fourth congress of Cosatu resolved to create a new separate union structure for farm and plantation workers. Reports from the congress indicate that the debate around this resolution was heated, but that the result was an implicit acceptance of the fact that the Farm Worker Project, set up within Cosatu affiliates in 1985, had been a failure. Less than one percent of workers in the agricultural sector have been organised by the various unions.

Even in the townships of the white rural areas, the growth of the civic and other democratic structures has still left a large gulf between them and the farmworkers of the farming hinterlands. Farmworkers are seen at Christmas time, when they come to spend their meagre wages on a few special things for the holiday. The rest of the time they remain forgotten, abandoned to the oppression of a sector which is seen by trade unionists as 'too difficult to organise' or in which laws are needed which 'allow us to organise'.

With the recent reform process set in motion by the government, however, it is more important than ever that some form of organisation is nurtured. The introduction of labour legislation will only be as effective as its practical implementation. Through organisation, farmworkers may have some chance of defending themselves against dismissals, of improving substantially their working and living conditions and of countering either the rightwing backlash which is brewing, or the strategies of some farming sectors which are designed to reduce the intended effect of the reforms.

The farmers have little to fear from the normalising of labour relations within agriculture; under present conditions, however, the farmworkers have little to hope for.

* *Simon Norfolk works for the Farm Workers' Research and Resource Project* *

The socialist ideal remains intact, says Turok

*WIP interviews ANC and former SACP veteran BEN TUROK, editor of **Revolutionary Thought in the 20th Century**, and currently director of the Institute For African Alternatives (IFAA), on the collapse of 'communism' in the Soviet Union, and its implications for the African and South African struggles for democracy and economic justice*

Q: As a veteran of left politics in South Africa and Africa, what do you make of the collapse of the Soviet Union?

It is a tremendous shock. So much has arisen on the basis of the existence of what was called the foundation of the world socialist movement that it is hard to adjust to its passing. Yet we know the system was deeply and fatally flawed. We have to pull ourselves together and face the calamity, not of the collapse of this distorted system, but of the awful fact that it became so distorted that working people wanted to see it end.

Q: What is the significance of the banning of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSA)?

Since leading members of the party launched the coup against Gorbachev, this party had to be called to account. No matter how uneven the glasnost process was, it did represent an attempt at installing public democracy in the Soviet Union. An attack on Gorbachev was therefore an attack on democracy.

The party was the epitome of bureaucracy and stagnation. Brezhnev was a totally uninspiring figure representing a boring, tired system. Intellectual life in the Soviet Union was uncreative, academic life was stifled, public life was controlled by the grey suits.

This party had to be removed from its dominance of public life. The surgical step was necessary. No doubt the healthy elements in the party will regroup in another context and contribute to the revitalisation of a new socialism in the country.

Q: Was the socialist legacy flawed?

There are many aspects that need a thorough review and there are many errors and mistaken conceptions. But the critique of capitalism by Marx stands largely intact. He was no inventor. He built on the solid foundations of Adam Smith, Ricardo and others. He turned economic orthodoxy around, but he was in the main line of thought too.

Secondly, the ideals of socialism also have a long pedigree going past Marx. They have been incorporated into the ideologies and beliefs of many movements which are not Marxist and will be sustained by them, even if Marxism were to falter.

The Soviet legacy is more troubled. Despite present attempts to lump Lenin with Stalin, it is clear Lenin was fully aware of the dangers of an overblown party, of the bureaucracy and the

dominant state. His famous last letter warning against the rise of Stalin to power illustrates his feelings on power.

It is true that his views on the vanguard party have not stood the test of time but we must accept the vanguard is a very effective force. It won power in the Russia and in many countries around the world — China, Vietnam, Korea and many others. In South Africa, the SACP has been a powerful

instrument within the liberation movement. This is why the oppressed in many countries, including our own, respect it and are reluctant to see its influence wane.

Q: Some blame the deformities in the Soviet Union on the attempt to build socialism in one country. Do you agree?

No doubt that was a problem. Certainly Lenin had no thought of building socialism in one country prior to the opportunity arising. Then, when it did, he felt there was no choice but to proceed with the attempt.

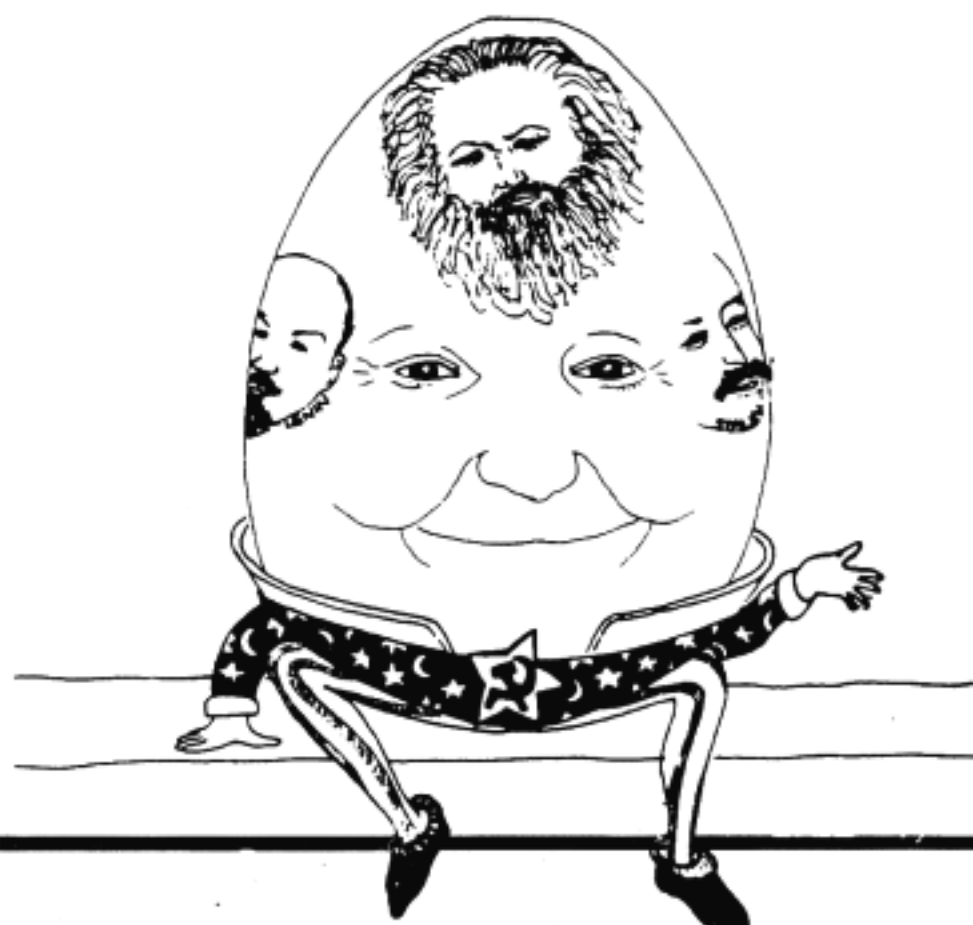
This led to the war economy to cope with the awful crisis in Russia, which then became the command economy, again to cope with the problems of construction. The latter

showed great strength at first in building a heavy industry and quantitative growth. But it inevitably came up against the constraints of dominant centralism and began to stagnate. This is the major lesson in the economy for all of us.

Q: So how does this relate to what came later in Eastern Europe, China and so on?

It is quite incredible how the Soviet model was taken up around the world, wherever the socialist forces gained power. It was partly because of the conditions which went with Soviet aid, to China for instance. But the model was adopted uncritically and followed even after the warning shot by Krushchev. He exposed the fallacies of the Soviet system, and the world ought to have taken him more seriously. I remember how shocked we were by his revelations of Stalin as a murderer and distorter of truth. Many who were misled by Stalin apologised, but soon went back to their former idealisation of the Soviet Union and some became even more vulgar in their portrayal of this 'ideal socialism' than before. Who could seriously believe that a country run by dullards like Brezhnev and his cronies could be an inspiration to the rest of us?





HUMPTY DUMPTY SAT ON A WALL



HUMPTY DUMPTY

I think the main problem was the hankering after the days when there was a 'monolithic world communist movement', where much was initiated by Moscow and the rest only had to follow. This was the political world I joined as a young man and it had a certain cosiness and much certainty. Many continue to hanker for this model now. Yet neither life, nor politics, is so simple.

Q: What about socialism in Africa?

Unfortunately many African leaders, including non-socialists, were heavily influenced by the Soviet model. Multi-partyism was despised, pluralism and diversity of views were repressed and the one-party state was born in Africa. This was especially the trend once post-independence governments found they could not deliver on the promises made during the anti-colonial struggle.

The formula 'the party and its government' became the norm and presidentialism and bureaucratisation followed. A self-serving elite seized the reins of economic and political power, at least that which was left to them by the former colonial powers, and extracted whatever surplus they could for themselves. Stagnation followed, just as it had done in the Soviet Union.

Q: What are the lessons for South Africa, economically and politically?

A crucial issue is whether we shall follow a command economy where the state plays a dominant role. We have learned to avoid that, but in a way the debate about nationalisation, forced upon the movement by local and international business critics, has not helped us develop a clear position. It's true that nationalisation often becomes mere state ownership where the bureaucracy manipulates the economy to serve its own, domestic business, or foreign interests, in some combination.

But nationalisation can open the door to socialisation under

a progressive government which keeps the needs of the majority in mind. Nationalisation has on the whole been a progressive phenomenon in the 'third world'. It enabled governments to control the flight of capital, the externalisation of funds, the payment of expatriate allowances beyond what was reasonable, to redirect production to suit domestic instead of foreign markets and so on.

Also, the attack against the role of the state is often pure hypocrisy. Thatcher's Britain has a high degree of state intervention in the monetary system, in the allocations of the budget and many other ways. Certainly a democratic South Africa will require a high degree of intervention. Planning will be essential. All agree on a mixed economy. But we must stress two things:

Firstly, the need for **emphasis on production**. People who are now wholly or partly unproductive must be enabled to produce, on however modest a scale. That means millions of people. It will require a total reorientation about how we understand economics. It is much more about how people produce and about basic needs than anything else. People must be the starting point and that means a bottom-up approach and a human-centred development policy.

Secondly, **luxury consumption must be constrained** and even basic needs provision must be carefully calculated so as not to overstrain government spending. There must be a large redirection of state spending to benefit the underprivileged.

Q: What do you understand as the main principle of democracy?

I think there are three principles: accountability, transparency and participation. None of these were observed in Eastern Europe, nor in most African countries.

There is now a wave of criticism in Europe and America about the way the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and World Bank operate. While they issue large reports of their



A GREAT FALL



AND ALL GOOD PEOPLE, WOMEN AND MEN
EVENTUALLY PUT HUMPTY TOGETHER AGAIN

views, very few are allowed to participate in their real deliberations or to influence fundamental policy. If we object to the way these bodies operate, then we must set the style for democratic operations and we should do so now, before we enter the structures of government.

Q: How do you see the ANC's role in the near future?

It would seem the exigencies of the present power relations are forcing the ANC into considerable concessions and conciliation.. These are harsh realities imposed upon us. Also, in order to counter the weight of the establishment and its supporters, we shall have to widen the coalition for a democracy where the majority counts, and this means softening certain aspects of policy. There may even be certain compromises with capital for the short term.

Hopefully, this will not prevent a process leading to the liberation of black people and to their empowerment. I imagine the ANC would not allow anything less to happen.

Q: Is there a role for socialists in South Africa?

Indeed. There is the need for a sharp critique of capitalism, and the ideals of socialism remain largely intact, as long as we separate these ideals from the practices of Eastern Europe and certain other countries and parties.

There is a major problem with the notion of a vanguard party. On the one hand it is certainly a powerful instrument of struggle, we can understand the oppressed masses feel the urgent need for such a powerful coherent political force which is unambiguous about the need to capture power, which does not seem to be vacillating and hesitant, which upholds principles, demands total commitment of its members and followers, and so on. There is an attraction in a strong monolithic political force of the kind of old communist parties — but the revelations of abuse of power are too great to accept this model any longer.

We expect these organisations to engage in a substantial auto-critique. So many people left these parties in disgust at their undemocratic practices. We need to learn from all that so that socialism can once again gain its appeal as a world philosophy. What I would like to see is a broad movement of all socialists in South Africa.

Q: How should the South African movement relate to the new world situation?

Our movement, including its socialist component, should relocate itself in the 'third world', especially in Africa. Unfortunately, the need to foster support among African states and at the OAU has meant we have not been able to relate properly to the ordinary people of Africa and their popular organisations, because of their own opposition to their governments.

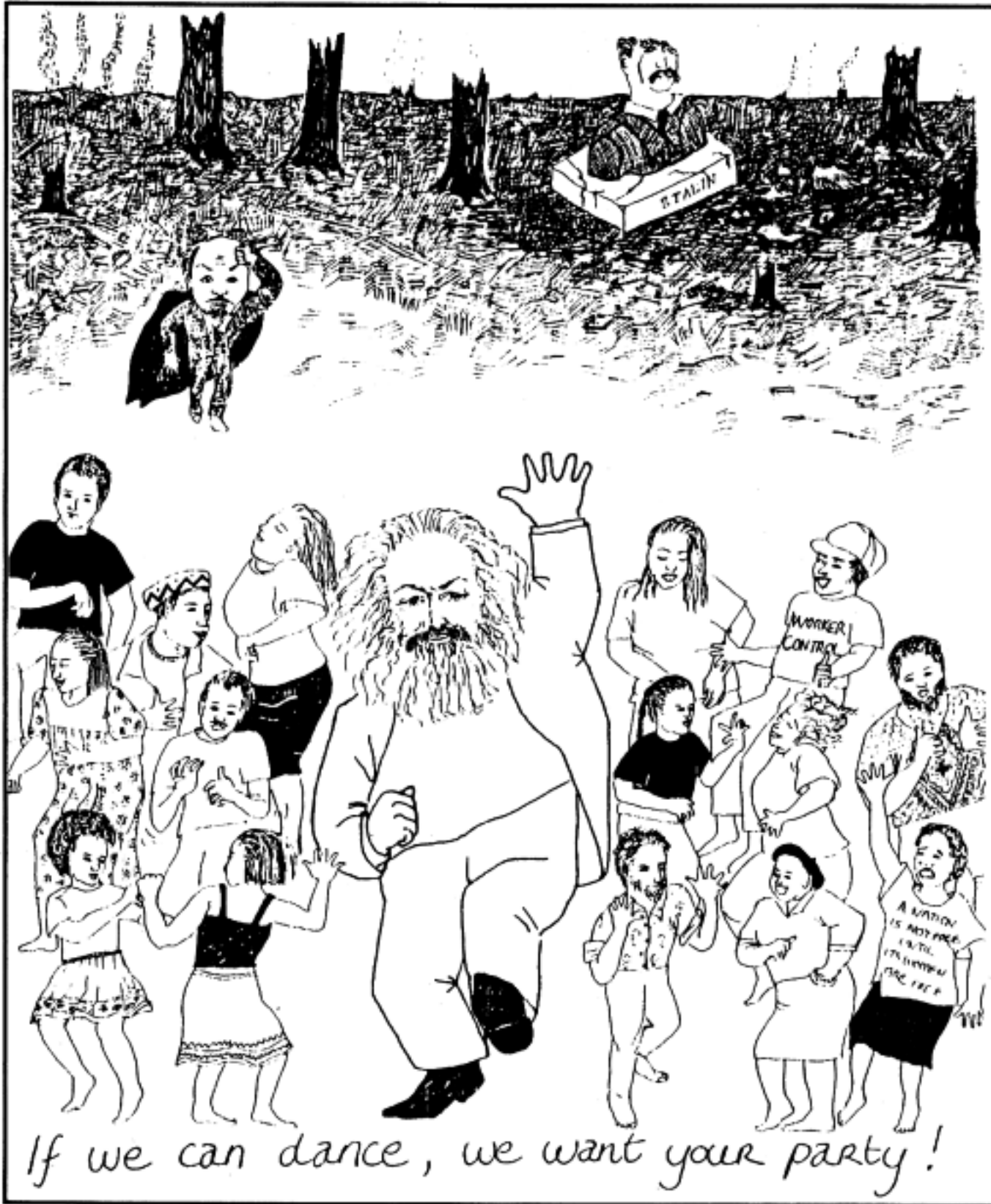
But Nyerere opened a new path for us when he said recently the OAU should have been constructed as an organisation of the people of Africa and not of states. This view, coupled with the immense drive for popular democracy right across the continent, should enable us to campaign for a new relationship across the continent in favour of democracy.

The Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA) has been part of this process for some time. We have not hesitated to be critical of African state practices, and have been heartened to see how the secretary general of the OAU and some of its leaders have also joined the chorus of criticism of the old bad way of authoritarian rule.

Also, we have extended our hand in friendship to build a new solidarity of democrats in the north and south based on genuine mutual respect and support.

Together we can produce alternative conceptions of the new democratic international order (NIDO) which will renew faith in our capacity to make a decent future for society. This must respect the rights of women, the environment, the sharing of wealth, and justice for all. *

The Soviet coup: Where should socialists stand?



While it was correct to oppose the failed August coup in the USSR, ALEX CALLINICOS argues that the liberals led by Yeltsin seek merely to replace one form of capitalism — bureaucratic state capitalism — with another, international capitalism

The abortive coup in Moscow on 19 August has caused an ambivalent reaction among many socialists. On the one hand, no socialists worth their salt can fail to welcome the defeat, by popular resistance, of an attempt to roll back the democratic changes of the past few years. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie internationally have seized on the failure of the coup and the attacks on the Communist Party and its symbols as representing the final and definitive death of Marxism.

The London *Financial Times* for example, welcomed 'the end of the grim totalitarian episode that began in 1917. Marxism is now reduced to the Western face of age-old oriental despotisms'.

The disarray evident on the left internationally — some communist parties either welcomed the coup (eg the Greek) or failed clearly to condemn it (eg the French) — is best addressed by considering five questions.

Was the coup an attempt to defend socialism?

Absolutely not. The members of the junta — the Committee for the State of Emergency — agreed with Gorbachev and Yeltsin that it is necessary, at least partially, to dismantle the Stalinist bureaucratic command economy and to integrate the USSR into the world market. What they feared was that the process of democratisation under way since the late 1980s threatened the power and privileges of the *nomenklatura* — the narrow elite of top party and state officials which has dominated the USSR since the 1920s.

The programme of the junta was summarized by one of their supporters, Prokoviev, the Moscow party chief. A few months ago he explained that he was in favour of the market, but that this didn't necessarily mean copying Western capitalist democracies like the United States or Germany. He was more interested in the models offered by Chile and South Korea — integration into the world market accompanied by brutal repression of the working class.

What is called the 'Pinochet solution' or 'market Stalinism' has widespread support in leading circles in the USSR, since it seems to offer the prospect of using authoritarian measures to overcome working class resistance to market reforms. Thus the coup had the tacit support of such figures as Viktor Gerashchenko, head of the State Bank of the USSR.

Gerashchenko had criticised the All-Union Treaty due to be signed on 20 August because it threatened to deprive the centre of all control over the money supply. Interestingly, after being sacked for going along with the coup, Gerashchenko was almost immediately re-instated as a result of pressure from Barclays, Deutsche Bank, and other Western banks, who see him playing an essential role in the move towards the market.

Why did the coup fail?

The coup revealed what Tony Cliff of the British Socialist Workers Party called a 'balance of powerlessness'.

One dimension of the crisis in the USSR is the deep divisions within the *nomenklatura*. On the one hand, the conservatives, with their base in the huge

military-industrial complex, have been pressing for a Pinochet solution. On the other hand, the liberals, including many former leading bureaucrats such as Yeltsin, Yakovlev, and Shevernadze, argue that economic reform requires political transformation — the replacement of one-party rule by a Western-style liberal democracy.

Gorbachev balanced between the two sides. At the beginning of 1990 he threw his lot in with the conservatives, backing the use of repression in Azerbaijan and the Baltic. The massive miners' strike of March/April 1991 seems, however, to have convinced him that repression couldn't work, and that it was better to ally himself with those, such as Yeltsin, whose popular support might allow them to contain working class resistance.

These divisions doomed the coup to failure. The junta were unable to rely on the loyalty of key military units. Even the elite KGB Alpha Group, the Soviet equivalent of 5th Recce, refused to obey an order to attack the Russian Parliament.

Although there was a general strike in Leningrad, and strikes in large parts of the coalfields, Yeltsin's call for a general strike met only with a limited response. Nevertheless, it was enough, in combination with the liberals' determined defence of the Russian Parliament, to defeat a coup whose leaders seem to have lacked confidence from the start (the Acting President Yanayev, and the Prime Minister, Pavlov, were both drunk throughout the affair).

Can Yeltsin solve the crisis in the USSR?

This seems very doubtful. The defeat of the coup has if anything exacerbated the problems which gave rise to it in the first place.

There is, firstly, the economic crisis, now reaching catastrophic proportions, with output falling fast and hyperinflation round the corner. Yeltsin has gained enormous popularity among the Russian masses by promising that liberal capitalism can solve all their problems.

Now he will have to put his money where his mouth is. In all likelihood he will, like Gorbachev, shrink from the Thatcherite programme of spending cuts and retrenchments pursued in Poland since the collapse of Stalinism for fear of the popular reaction. And so the crisis will drag on.

Meanwhile, Yeltsin's attempt to reconstruct the old All-Union state, now centred on his Russian Federation, is

merely accelerating the disintegration of the USSR. His threat to revise Russia's borders with the Ukraine and Kazakhstan has encouraged the other republics to leave the USSR. Yet, so great is the economic interdependence of the different republics, that breaking off trade links between them could lead to what the *Financial Times* has called 'economic death'.

The fate of Yugoslavia — political disintegration, economic collapse, and civil war — could be repeated on a far larger scale. In these circumstances, the prediction of the 'Black Colonel' Auksins, leader of the arch-conservative Soyuz group, that there will be other coups is all too likely to be fulfilled. Many liberals support a Pinochet solution.

A year ago Gavril Popov, the mayor of Moscow and a leading ally of Yeltsin's, argued that 'left populism' — ie working class resistance to retrenchments and wage cuts — might make a transition to the market by 'normal democratic' means impossible.

The next coup may well have the support of sections of the Yeltsin camp.

Where should socialists stand?

Despite what I have just said, any real socialist — as opposed to a Stalinist bureaucrat — would have sided with Yeltsin against the coup. The conservatives and the liberals differ not over ends — both want to integrate the USSR into the world market — but, to some extent, over means. Nevertheless, they were on different sides during the coup.

The junta wanted to destroy the mass democratic movement which has emerged in the past few years. Yeltsin and his allies depended for their position on that movement. Therefore, to survive they had to defend that movement and call on its support.

For the sake of the mass movement socialists should have been willing to fight alongside the liberals against the junta. Perhaps an analogy from the history of the Russian Revolution may clarify the point. In August 1917 General Kornilov marched on Petrograd to overthrow the Provisional Government of Aleksandr Kerensky and crush the soviets.

There is much evidence that Kerensky had himself been conspiring with Kornilov to suppress the Bolshevik Party. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks mobilised alongside Kerensky to crush the coup because they knew that Kornilov's victory would mean the destruction of the workers' movement.

SOVIET 'SOCIALISM'

Lenin, however, insisted that the Bolsheviks retain their independence of the Provisional Government in order to use the mass mobilisation against Kornilov to prepare the overthrow of Kerensky himself. A similar stance would have been appropriate in August 1991. Socialists should have argued, as indeed a tiny group in Leningrad did, that workers should oppose the coup, using their own methods, above all the strike weapon, and should preserve their independence of the liberals.

In this way they would prepare for the disillusionment likely to follow the gradual discovery by the working class in the USSR that the liberals have no more of a solution to their problems than the conservatives.

From this perspective, the August Days are simply one episode in the gigantic learning process the Soviet working class is undergoing as it awakens from the long night of Stalinism.

Our hope must be that it gropes — by what Trotsky called 'the method of successive approximation' — towards independent working class politics.

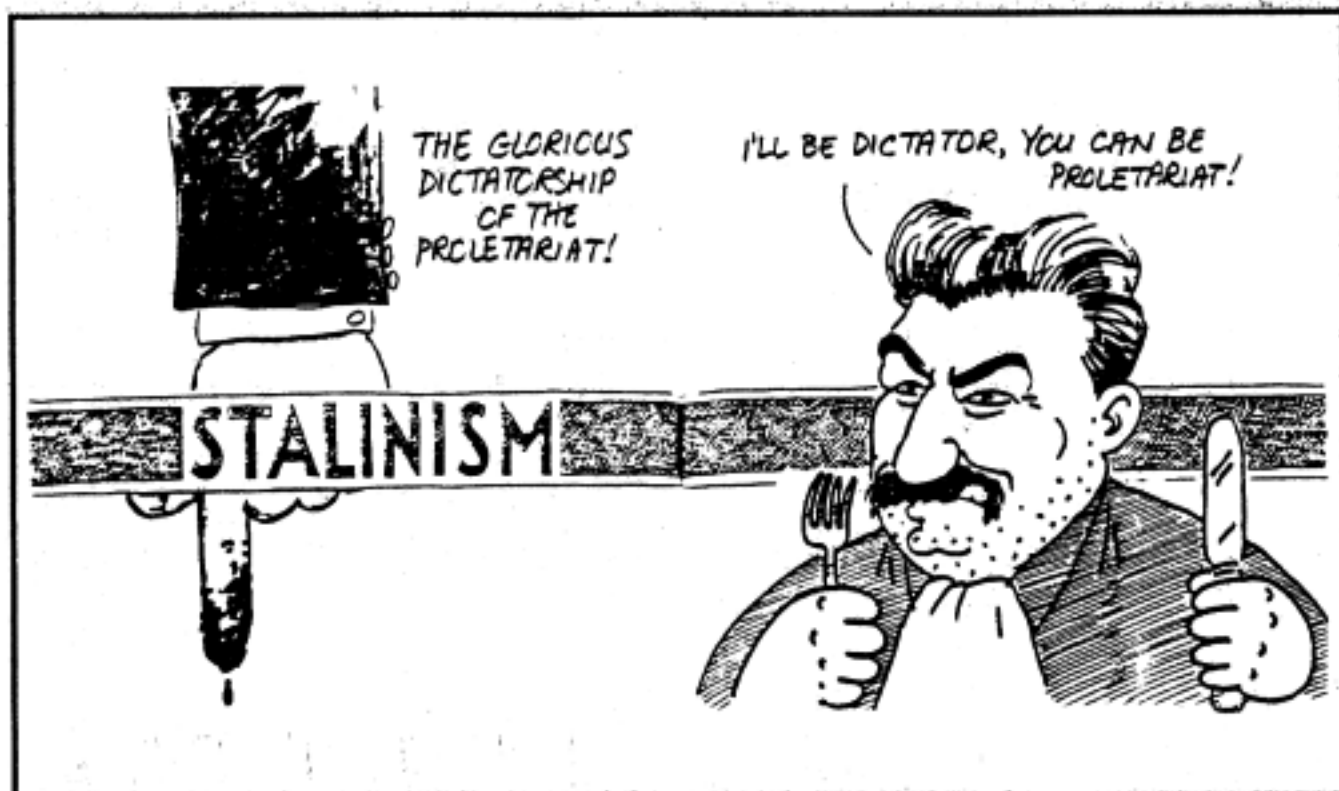
Should we mourn the death of socialism in the USSR?

Pallo Jordan wrote recently: After the triumph of fascism in Germany during the 1930s, the events of 1989 will probably be recorded as the second greatest defeat sustained by the working class in Europe during this century.

Many socialists wish to pass the same judgement on the aftermath of the coup in the USSR. Understandably enough, in South Africa, where the unbanning of the SACP in February 1990 was greeted with delight, the suppression of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in August 1991 is a matter for widespread dismay.

But is this really the appropriate reaction? To begin with, we should be careful about how we use the word 'defeat'. Hitler's conquest of power in 1933 involved the destruction of what was then the most powerful workers' movement in the world. That was a defeat alright. So too was the Chilean coup of September 1973, which left tens of thousands of working class activists dead.

The successful imposition of the State of Emergency in June 1986 was undoubtedly a serious defeat for the South African working class. But how did the East European revolutions of 1989 or the August Days of 1991 weaken working class organisation? They represented the collapse of the vast engines of repression allowing the masses to organize freely



for the first time in decades. Moreover, the CPSU was not a political party in the conventional sense. It was rather a vast apparatus of bureaucratic patronage and control through which the *nomenklatura* organised themselves and exercised power over Soviet society.

The real South African analogy would not be with the Communist Party or any other progressive organization, but with the National Party and the Broederbond.

I for one would not mourn their suppression. But the fundamental reason why we should not treat recent events in the USSR as a defeat for socialism, is that it hasn't existed there for over sixty years. The definitive triumph of Stalinism in the USSR at the end of the 1920s represented a *counter-revolution*, the destruction of all the remaining gains of the October Revolution. This can be seen, for example, in the catastrophic halving of real wages between 1928 and 1932, the death of millions in the famines of 1933-4, and the construction the vast Gulag Archipelago of forced labour camps.

The social meaning of this process was the installation of a particular variant of capitalism, *bureaucratic state capitalism*, in which the needs and interest were systematically subordinated to the demands of military competition with Western capitalism.

It is this system, not socialism, which is now disintegrating in the USSR. What liberals and conservatives alike are seeking to achieve is not the restoration of capitalism, but a move sideways, from one form to another, from obsolete state capitalism to the kind of multinational capitalism which prevails in the rest of the world. This process indeed threatens the jobs and living standards of the working class in the USSR, unless it develops its

own movement, organisationally and politically independent of all wings of the *nomenklatura*.

Socialism from below

The regeneration of the Soviet workers' movement would be greatly accelerated if it involved a recovery of the original meaning of the revolutionary Marxist tradition as it briefly triumphed in October 1917 — socialism as the self-emancipation of the working class, a necessarily democratic process of self-liberation powered by the struggle of the masses from below.

Socialists throughout the world are thus confronted with a moment of both danger and opportunity.

Danger: if we go along with the great propaganda barrage of the bourgeois establishment and accept the idea of the Eastern bloc as some form of socialism, perhaps 'deformed' or 'degenerated', then we will go down with the sinking ship of Stalinism, or at best end up, like the Western social democrats, pursuing the unattainable goal of giving capitalism a human face.

Opportunity: if we return to the authentic Marxist vision of socialism from below, then we can sweep aside the rubbish of Stalinism and begin to connect with workers as they continue their struggle against the brutal reality of international capitalism.

* Alex Callinicos teaches at the University of York in England and is a member of the Socialist Workers Party, British sister organisation of the International Socialists of South Africa.

The arguments underlying this article are much more fully developed in *The Revenge of History: Marxism and the European Revolutions* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991).

Q: The ANC does not have an official economic policy. What are the problems in formulating one and what are the problems that have arisen from not having one?

Not having an official economic policy does not mean we do not have views on the future economy. The process of policy formation has been an on-going one. The ANC, being a democratic organisation, continues to seek the active involvement of the people. There have been several workshops.

In Harare in May 1990, a conference was organised by the ANC and Cosatu. We looked at the broad economic issues and identified a research agenda. We took the suggestions and proposals to the leadership of the ANC and Cosatu.

These involved growth path, job creation, agriculture and land. The second conference was held in September last year, which brought together more than 60 ANC economists from inside and outside the country. Cosatu also participated. We looked at three areas: moving the department inside the country and setting up a structure; economic policy; and producing a discussion document on policy. We took the draft document to all the branches and regions in the country. People got involved. Not only the MDM, also the business sector and the media. In July 1991 the national ANC conference looked at the economic policy. It was designed specifically for conference.

The document was recognised as a working document. The conference decided on a special conference on policy by December/January on macro-economic as well as sectoral policy.

The process leading up to this will be detailed and democratic. There will be several more workshops and seminars to reach policy proposals. It is going to be a conference of affirmative action recognising race and gender inequalities. A joint workshop with Cosatu on investment policy and foreign investment was held in September. We also looked at the investment code of Malaysia which has affirmative action built in. All the various ANC structures will be participating.

Ensuring participation is two-pronged: (it requires) education and to go physically to people and talk to them. It is most important that education policy is not static. Policy has to be reflected in the day-to-day lives of people, for example in terms of VAT, job creation, housing. It has to address issues today and now and not wait for a post-apartheid South Africa.

There have to be inputs from the civics, from labour, the rural areas as well as small black business.

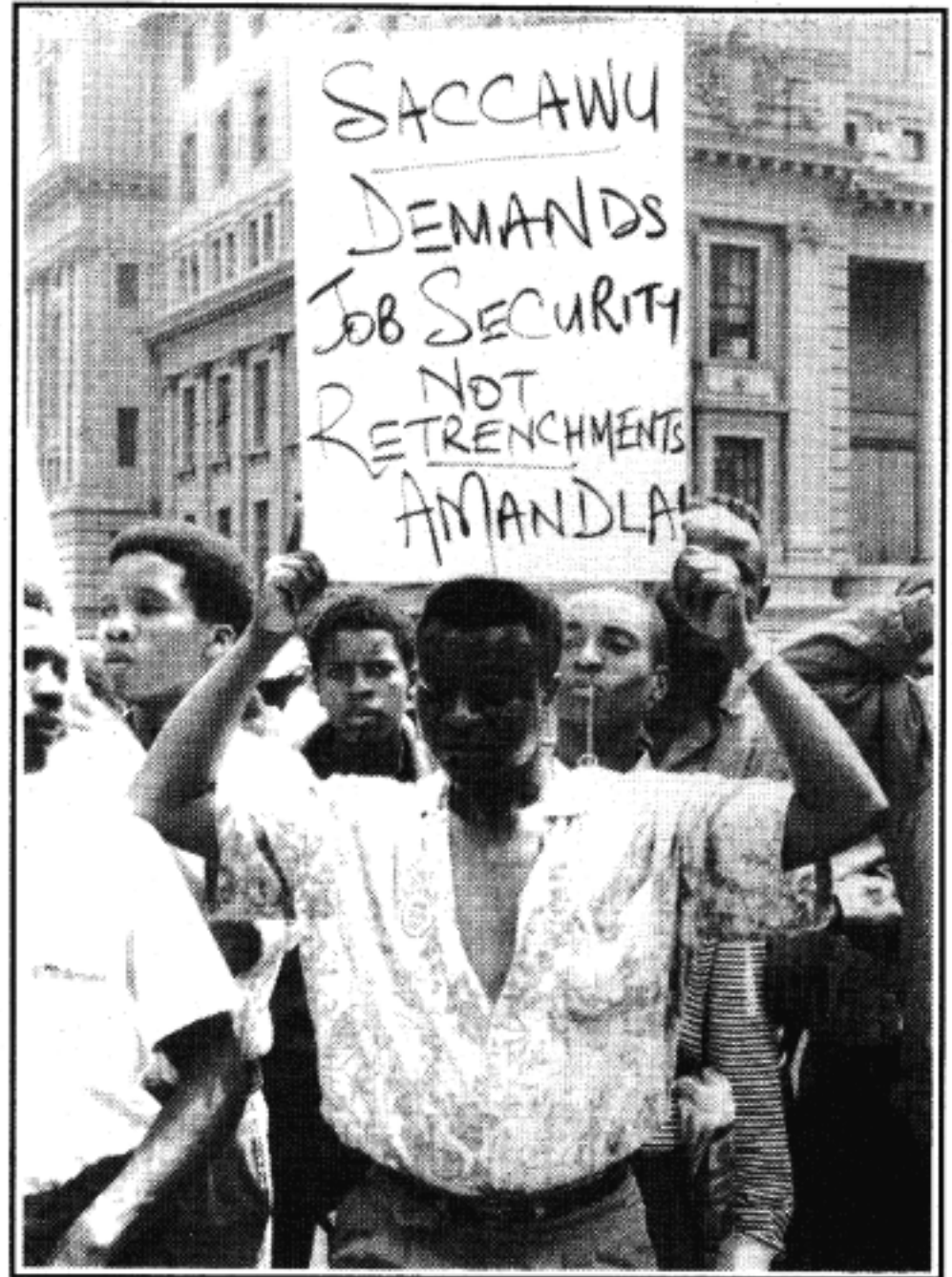
Q: What kind of economic future are we to expect in SA?

The ANC is attempting to address and redress problems of inequity and present inequalities, how to improve standards of living for the vast majority of people. It seeks to narrow the gap between black and white. We're looking towards a democratic mixed economy whose objective seeks to benefit not a section of the community but the whole. For a mixed economy we need three ingredients:

* A democratic political framework, which will have legitimacy.

* Economic growth. Without this, it is not possible to address poverty, housing and so on. We don't want economic growth like the '60s and '70s when the economy grew fast but the people didn't benefit. This period coincided with intense political repression.

* Redistribution. Without this there cannot be economic growth. There's a proposal for a slogan: 'growth through redistribution', meaning redistribution of wealth, income and opportunity. At present more than 90 percent of the wealth is concentrated in white hands; less than two percent of the



Growth through redistribution

Growth through redistribution of wealth, income and opportunity is the only way to democratise and deracialise the South African economy which is presently commanded by about 1 000 pale males, says ANC Economics department head MAX SISULU. Glenda Daniels asked the questions.

companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange is black owned. The richest five percent of the population owns close to 90 percent of all personally owned wealth in the country. Between 30 to 40 percent of the working age people are unemployed.

In addition, four conglomerates own more than 80 percent of all companies in the stock exchange. It boils down to about 1 000 white males in control of the economy in production, distribution and consumption. One seventh of the population (whites) consume 60 percent of the GDP. This is clearly unacceptable and unjust. It will have to change. In the ANC we speak of the need not only to restructure the economy but also, in the words of Nelson Mandela, to 'democratise and

deracialise' the economy.

Q: How?

The economy presently is stagnating and in decline. The GDP per capita is negative and has been for the past decade. There has been no formal job creation in this period because the growth path followed up to now is based on sectoral interests, designed to serve the interests of the white minority. It is hindering economic growth so we need a completely new growth path designed to satisfy basic needs of the majority of the people.

Q: What are these basic needs?

Housing. Close to seven million africans don't have decent housing; there is homelessness in a country where thousands of whites have swimming pools and africans don't have piped drinking water. In some cases 40 families have to share one tap.

Education and health facilities are in a crisis. It's a scandal in a country where some power stations are put in moth balls, 80 percent of the population don't have electricity. These needs will have to be addressed by a democratically elected government. It will have a multiplier effect, and will open up opportunities for job creation and income generation.

Other elements are training, job creation, welfare and pensions equalling the white level. This is possible by doing away with duplication and triplication in government departments and cutting down on money going to defence and so forth.

Other components for growth include ongoing research, for example in the industrial sector, the need to restructure and turn the manufacturing sector into an engine for growth and also to increase the potential for export. Further, we need a land reform programme to address land hunger and produce affordable food. We also need to husband our mineral resources to maximise benefits. Another need is to develop our human resources.

Q: Where will these resources come from?

Ending oppression will release some resources but not enough. It is also said that ending apartheid and lifting sanctions will give certain opportunities.

We need to restructure the capital market. At the moment a lot of resources are not used in their productive capacity, for example, education and training. Instead, money is put into expensive and prestigious shopping malls and luxury consumption, and money is chasing money. There's no production there. Certain companies are saying there is a need for investment in the country, yet they are investing outside the country. A democratic government has to mobilise its domestic resources.

Another important instrument of redistribution is the budget. The present budget is racist. We have to start allocating to the majority, set new priorities and look at where they are needed most.

Take taxation. The burden is shouldered more by individuals than by companies. The present VAT system will make the poor poorer...it punishes the poor for being poor! There is a need to reform the tax structure in this country, to become more efficient and equitable and to start allocating resources to the poor.

Q: When is all this going to happen?

It will not be overnight. There will have to be some prioritisation. This will have to be democratically defined. We need to begin to have some form of national consensus. We also need as far as possible to maintain macro-economic balances, otherwise inflation will have a serious effect on the economy. We believe the role of civil society is extremely important.

Labour and the private sector, small and big, black and white businesses, will have to play a role in restructuring and in issues that affect people, like VAT.

Q: What are the implications for the tripartite alliance in the decisions the ANC makes?

Decisions that are taken will not be detrimental to the trade union movement or civil society. We will have a mixed economy based on democracy and accountability.

Q: What are the implications for Southern Africa?

Our decisions will take on broad regional dimensions. The present economic relations are based on the domination of Southern Africa, and relations are unequal and unjust.

We need to restructure these relations, based on equity and mutual independence and corporation. As the ANC, we have participated in forums organised by the UN on commissions for Africa, the PTA (Preferential Trade Agreement) and so on.

Q: What is the ANC's relationship to the business community? And what is your view on the emerging black middle class?

We are having ongoing discussions with business, and we have had many joint workshops/seminars on different issues but especially economic issues. This is an important process.

We have identified areas where business can contribute, such as job creation and education training advancements. In business today only two percent are in senior management positions. We are also discussing with business the question of retrenchments and other national projects like the environment and housing as well as trying to involve them in the peace process.

On the emerging black middle class: our belief is that the economy must be opened up, and blacks must participate not just as labourers but also as producers and in management. They are presently invisible in these positions. Blacks up to now have been confined to the informal sector. We have been in discussions and consultations with black business about black economic empowerment and affirmative action programmes.

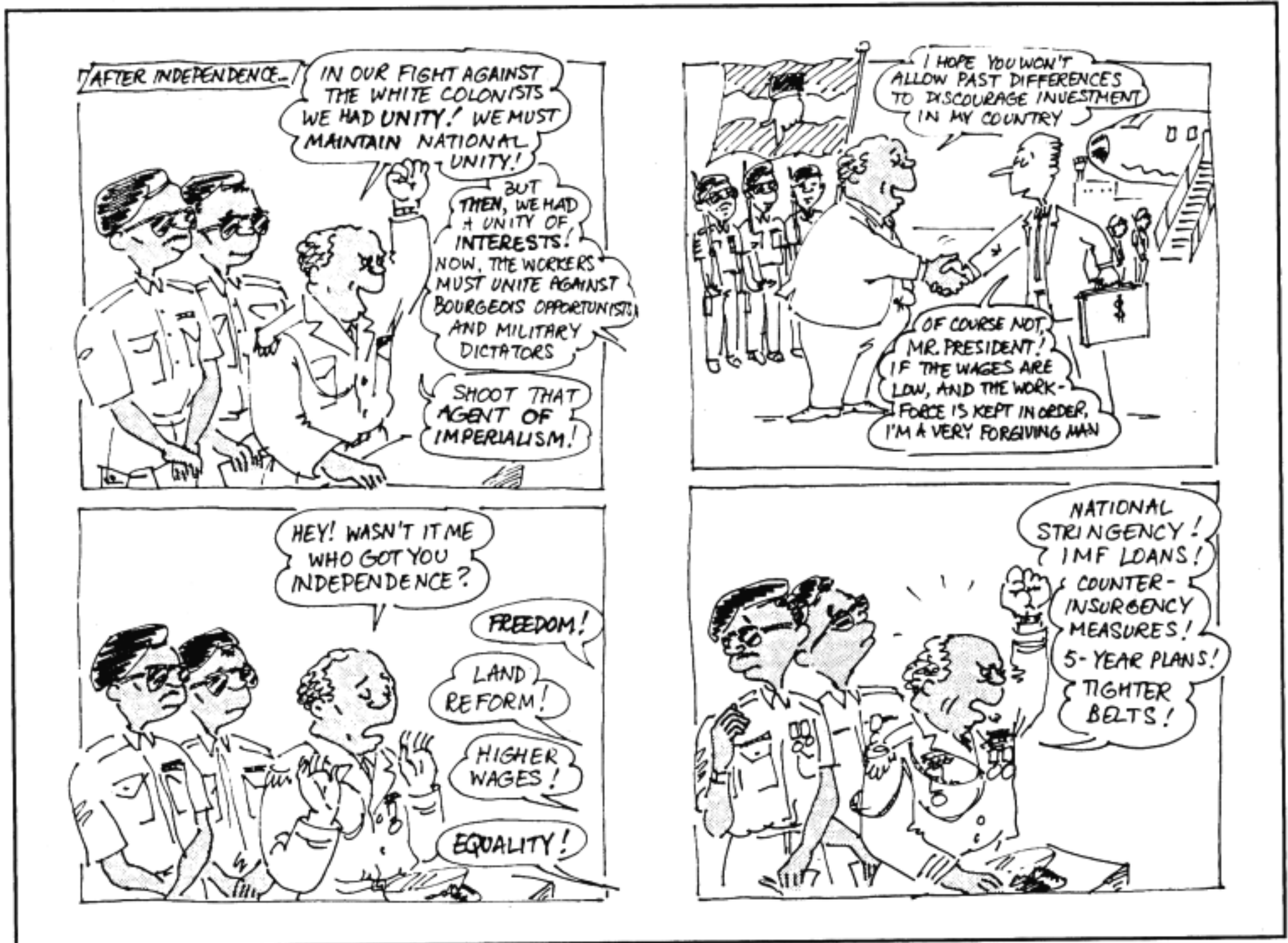
Q: What is your view on the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and World Bank?

The ANC has had discussions with the IMF and World Bank and both have exchanged views on the South African economy. We are of course very sceptical and very critical of the World Bank and their structural adjustment programmes in Africa, where we have seen the disastrous effects. The programmes have really impoverished the people and made economic conditions very difficult.

Therefore we need to manage our economy so that we don't go cap in hand to borrow money on their terms. *



IMF and World Bank in Sub-Saharan Africa



Colonialism in a new guise

SIPHO BUTHELEZI looks at the effect IMF and World Bank policies have had on women and children, and argues that a new form of colonialism is threatening the sovereignty of African and other poor countries.

For the proponents of orthodox structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in the IMF and the World Bank, Sub-Saharan African (SSA) governments are meant to accomplish two major goals: to minimise the role of the state apparatus in economic development and to implement economic reforms that would orient the economy toward export-led growth and a return to market forces.

Since 'adjustment' is a remedy reserved for the weak and the vulnerable — the deficit, least developed countries (LDCs) — the consequence of this bitter logic has been that the most vulnerable groups in our societies, the poor generally, and women and children specifically, have suffered most.

The key services from which women and children benefit have been decimated by public expenditure cuts — in health, education, nutrition and other basic welfare services. To counter the

negative effects of SAPs for the rural poor, various forms of intervention have been attempted in several African countries. These have invariably centered around land reforms, resettlement schemes, special credit opportunities and training programmes, although these specific immediate interventions share one common dimension — disastrous failure.

It is worth noting that several SSA countries have tried them, viz Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Senegal, the Gambia, Mauritania, Central African Republic, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Kenya and Tanzania.

Austerity measures and poor people

After undergoing tough austerity adjustment programmes, many SSA countries have found themselves with reduced real incomes, increased poverty, deteriorating social conditions, reduced growth potential and often with no significant

improvement in their external accounts. In the SSA region, export-led growth advocated by the IMF and the World Bank has meant intensified and tyrannical exploitation of primary commodity producers, the women.

Under the direction of SAPs, commodity producers have been encouraged to increase production. For example, both Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire have had programmes designed to increase cocoa production. This has led to an upward shift in production and downward pressure on prices.

Also, given the fact that demand elasticity is less for one than for many commodities, the net effect may have been to decrease gross foreign exchange earnings from some commodities, despite increases in production which involved foreign exchange and other costs. Consequently, looked at in terms of their aggregate effects, the IMF programmes have contributed to the worsening terms of trade suffered by primary producers, which were in turn partly responsible for the limited improvements in the current account of balances of many LDCs.

In simple terms, each month during the first half of the 1980s, close to one million people across the world have been pushed below the poverty datum line (PDL) as a result of measures aimed at fighting inflation, recession and the debt crisis. The immediate consequences of SAPs, intended to restore the balance of payments in the poorest countries of Africa, were suppression of credit, weakening of trade and stagnation of wages.

Criticism of IMF and World Bank policies

Given the disastrous consequences of SAPs, and the unacceptable burden of exploitation on women, it is imperative for us to give here a summary of basic criticisms of the IMF and World Bank policies on the people of the region.

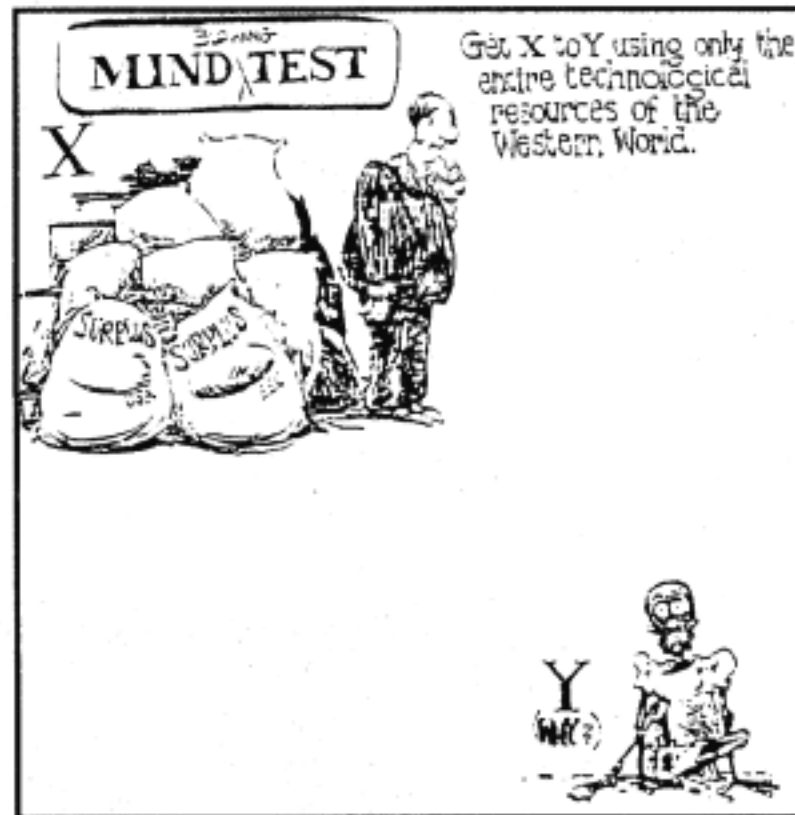
A 1978 report entitled *The IMF, World Bank and Africa* by African scholars has summarised the issue as follows:

*** Wrong economic principles in IMF and World Bank policies.** Many of the economic principles and theories on which the IMF and World Bank programmes are based are clearly wrong. They are based on a mixture of different and conflicting theories — classical, Keynesian, monetarist and neoclassical.

For example, the IMF and World Bank emphasise that poor countries must have foreign capital in order to develop. This

is false because the foreign capital inflow to these countries' governments is used to finance a flight of private capital from them into Swiss accounts. The capital inflow also leads to a net outflow in subsequent years because of high interest rates of external loans.

The prescriptions of balance of payments adjustments imposed by the IMF



and World Bank, which demand trade liberalisation, devaluation and flexible exchange rates, are also untenable. The removal of import restrictions worsen, rather than improve, the trade balance.

Devaluation of national currency also makes exports cheaper and imports more expensive. This is why, in spite of massive and continuous devaluations of their currencies, LDCs experience worse problems. For small and weak countries, flexible exchange rates will only weaken their currencies without attracting foreign capital or improving their trade balance.

*** The dominant roles of foreign trade, balance of payments and foreign exchanges** in IMF and World Bank programmes are untenable in economic theory. Available evidence suggests that it is precisely because of the undue emphasis of foreign trade, balance of payments and foreign exchange that poor countries get trapped into crises and adjustment programmes. African scholars argue that it is quite possible for poor countries to develop by relying mainly on their national resources, and there is no real alternative to this.

*** The existing reform programmes of the IMF and World Bank explicitly or implicitly assume away the serious problem of the excessive foreign depend-**

ence of these African and other poor countries which facilitates the smooth functioning of the international capitalist system. Thus reforms calling for additional foreign funding, export promotion, longer adjustment, and so on will worsen or prolong this excessive external dependence.

*** The existing SAPs are based on the acceptance of the present divisions between the rich and poor countries.** The rich countries are determined to control manufacturing, technology and finance, while the poor countries are to produce raw materials for the advanced capitalist countries — an extension of the colonial system of imperialism. As a result of SAPs, advanced capitalist countries have gained even more effective control over the production activities of the poor countries in order to deindustrialise them.

*** Structural adjustment or economic recovery programmes make the IMF and World Bank the bridgehead of a new imperialism** for the recolonisation of Africa and the rest of the LDCs. This is why these programmes now require total surveillance of the economies of poor countries, with

IMF and World Bank staffers as the new colonial administrators in the central banks, finance and other development ministries in poor countries. These developments clearly undermine the sovereignty of these countries.

*** Finally, the SAPs wave away the fact that the IMF and World Bank programmes are foisting an unregulated capitalist development model on Africa and other LDCs.** It is argued that even the advanced capitalist countries have welfare states, agricultural and other forms of subsidy programmes, and control their foreign trade.

But for Africa and other poor countries, the IMF and World Bank insist on a discredited economic liberalism of the 19th century. They insist that the welfare state, agricultural and other subsidies, regulation of foreign trade, public enterprises and even development planning must be abolished in the name of so-called structural adjustment.

In fact what SSA nations need is not 'adjustment' but 'transformation' in the interests of their working people, and not in those of the neo-colonialist bourgeoisie who manage IMF programmes.

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This is the second part of an article published in WIP 77.

In search of an economic policy

Both *Redistribution: Can It Work in South Africa?* edited by Peter Moll, Nicoli Nattrass and Lieb Loots, and Keith Coleman's *Nationalisation: Beyond the Slogans* examine the issues facing economic policy in a liberated South Africa.

Both provide a host of interesting, if controversial, insights. Certainly they represent important inputs into current debates. Both books demonstrate the problems facing economists in coming up with policy. Oddly enough, few academic disciplines seem so remote from the real world as economics.

With physics as a model, Western economists have sought the most general possible formulations, developed an impenetrable jargon, and used descriptive forms wherever possible. On the face of it, this methodology makes no sense. As no societies are identical, no social science should hope to find immutable generalisations.

In Africa in general, and in South Africa in particular, conventional economics methodology poses a dilemma to policy-oriented research. Theories that purport to describe inevitable relationships in the abstract make research unnecessary; yet they so often appear irrelevant to African conditions. If the factors influencing Western economics represent the norm, apartheid becomes a minor local detail rather than the shaping force in the economy. From this perspective, both these books represent valuable attempts to transform economics into a more useful force in policy debates.

The editors of *Redistribution* did us all a disservice by putting the weakest articles at the beginning and end. As a result, one might easily give up before reaching the interesting and provocative studies that form the core of the collection. Essentially, these chapters by Brian Kahn, Lieb Loots, Nicoli Nattrass, Andre Roux and Sirvaas van den Berg explore the potential of the South African budget as a means of redistribution.

Ignoring African economists

Terence Moll supplies the first two articles, which purport to review the international literature on redistributive policies. Unfortunately, the material covered will be familiar to any student of development economics. Moreover, Moll's review cites page after page of European and American experts — but not a single publication by an African, not even in reference to Zimbabwe or Tanzania. He ignores studies by Amin, Mhone, Nelson Moyo, Ndlela, Mkandawire, Rweyemamu and others, as well as the recent work of the Economic Commission for Africa.

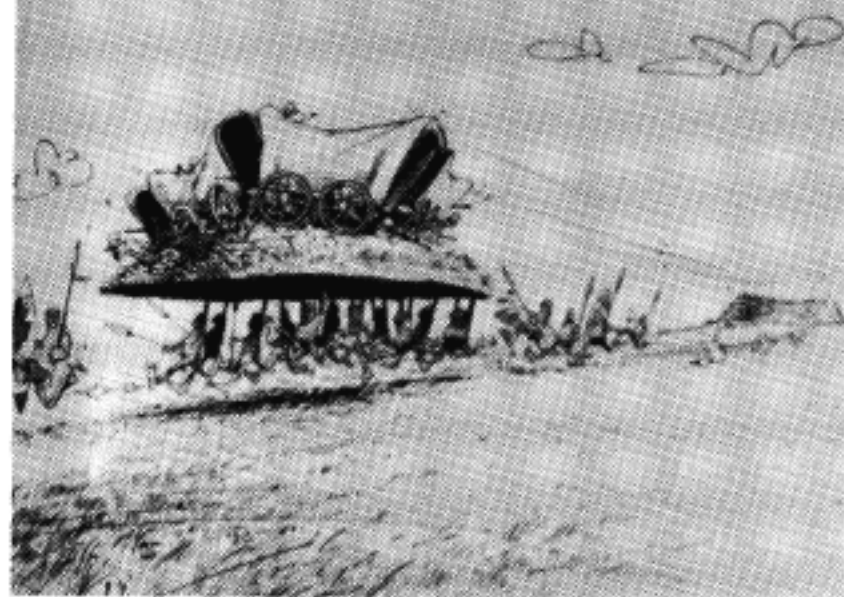
For too long, this sort of behaviour has excluded African economists from academic discourse about their own countries. How can economists propose policies for a new South Africa while they maintain segregation in their discipline? Indeed, this collection reflects the true tragedy of academic economics in South Africa — the failure to include people of colour. The book does not contain a single black author. The ten pages of the bibliography cite precisely three works by Africans. The bibliography includes just one ANC publication, and entirely ignores Cosatu and all other democratic organisations.

True, the apartheid structure of the universities and the apparent superfluity of economic theory have kept africans out of

REDISTRIBUTION

How can it work in South Africa?

edited by Peter Moll,
Nicoli Nattrass & Lieb Loots



REDISTRIBUTION: Can It Work in South Africa?
edited by Peter Moll, Nicoli Nattrass and Lieb Loots

David Phillip, Cape Town

NATIONALISATION: Beyond the Slogans
by Keith Coleman

Ravan Press, Johannesburg (1991)

Reviewed by NEVA SEIDMAN-MAKGETLA

most economics departments. But many blacks take part in the policy debates that *Redistribution* encompasses. Coleman cites a number of articles by Africans presented to the Cosatu-ANC Conference on the Post-Apartheid Economy held in Harare in April 1990. These papers were certainly accessible to the editors of *Redistribution*.

In short, editing this type of collection today surely imposes the duty of locating and encouraging black scholars and activists to participate in published debates. If academic economists do not contribute to the integration of their discipline, they both further an oppressive system and make their policy prescriptions irrelevant.

All white pitfall

Peter Moll's concluding study illustrates the pitfalls of an all-

white discourse. His long and patronising review of the constraints on policy in a liberated South Africa ends with a criticism of the ANC's discussion document on the economy, which he labels 'macroeconomic populism' (p130). Surely only an academic economist, trained in the belief that most people can never understand the intricacies of their society, could make 'populism' into an insult. But we need not panic, Moll reassures us; if all else fails, a *deus ex machina* waits in the wings — namely, 'foreign institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other aid, research and advisory organisations [which] are able to exercise considerable influence over domestic policy' (p134).

Thank goodness, even if political exigencies compel us to throw out the conservative, euro-centric, white economists that now make government policy, another set will soon arrive to keep us on the straight and narrow!

These unfortunate chapters do not negate the value of the rest of *Redistribution*. Loots provides a useful discussion of tax policies and theory.

Van den Berg presents his path-breaking research on government expenditures, and the room for reorganising them. Natrass and Roux give an insightful review of the options in welfare spending. Roux's contribution on employment creation proves particularly worthwhile, with an outline of the major causes of unemployment as a basis for looking at options in terms of state action, the informal sector and macroeconomic policies.

International experience

A common thread in all these articles is a somewhat facile reliance on international experience. Implicitly or explicitly, most South African economists have relinquished the abstract models propagated by European and American economists. But they have not re-examined the uses of generalisation in the social sciences. Instead, all too many embark on a search for another set of models, one rooted in the contemporary experiences of the Third World.

In this tradition, several authors in *Redistribution* present the experiences of other middle-income developing countries as the limit on South African options. Van den Berg notes that these nations spend no more than 6,4 per cent of the national income on healthcare (p76). He then treats that percentage as the maximum South Africa can afford.

Similarly, Loots suggests that if taxes equal no more than 30 per cent of the GDP for these states, then South Africa must not expand beyond that point (p41). In contrast, Natrass and Roux comment that, 'Recourse to international "norms" of spending as a guide to budgetary allocation is less useful than examining ways in which macroeconomic and growth objectives can be

made consistent with welfare priorities.' (p91)

Using comparative studies as a source of generalised strictures generates an inherent conservatism. Every redistributive measure has failed someplace, even if it has succeeded elsewhere. Used in this way, international experience becomes an argument against any innovative policy measures, dooming South Africa to continue a path of economic growth based on grinding poverty and oppression for the majority.

The reliance on models from other countries merely adapts the presumption that we can come up with general economic laws. A more useful approach, both to theory and to comparative studies, would transform these laws into heuristics — that is, into arguments that must be tested in every specific situation. From this standpoint, no generalisation or foreign experience *must* prove true for South Africa. Rather, it should generate hypotheses about the South African situation, which we can reject or refine on the basis of research into the South African economy itself.

Technocratic tenor

The reluctance to accept the tentative nature of generalisations in social science explains, perhaps, the surprisingly technocratic tenor of *Redistribution* — surprising because most of the authors have engaged, sometimes at a high personal cost, in the struggle for democracy. If we believe that general laws of economics exist,

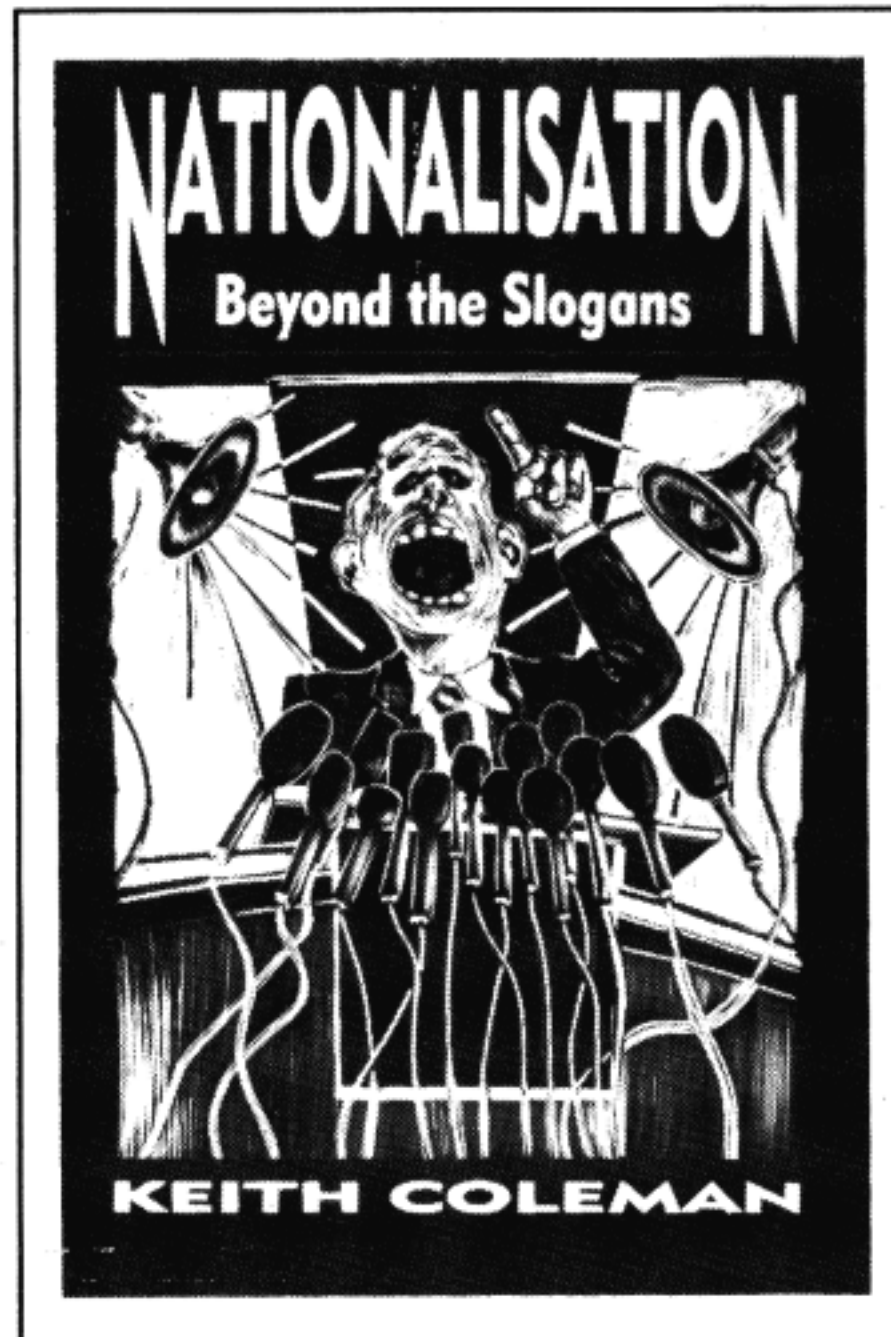
then we don't need a democratic policymaking procedure, we only need a trained economist or two. The technocratic strain emerges in a variety of ways.

Periodically, for instance, the authors imply that if only the politicians would let the economists know what they really want, we could get on with the job of telling society how to achieve those goals (see, for instance, pp 85, 100 and 123).

Popular debate would presumably stop as the experts take over.

This approach quietly suppresses the existence, generally, of a conflict society and, specifically, of disagreements between economists. In a similar technocratic vein, Peter Moll expands on the need to direct state aid only to the poorest of the poor. He stresses the relative prosperity of african workers in manufacturing, who average R12 000 a year. They are therefore, in Moll's opinion, too well off to deserve the rewards of a redistribution programme (p120; at this point, I always wonder how much the author himself earns). This perspective has the effect of placing workers earning just over the poverty line in a class with, say, the directors of Anglo American: they are the privileged.

Rather than trying to unite workers, the unemployed and the rural poor to demand their fair share as a group, it suggests that the state resist the claims of the urban poor, and organised



workers in particular. Since, by definition, the minority defined as 'poorest' cannot exert much political pressure, this re-definition of the problem ensures that economists and associated bureaucrats will control the redistributive process.

Redistributive measures

With the exception of Roux's article, all the chapters in the book evaluate specific redistributive measures — taxes and various aspects of government spending. This approach gives some important results. Necessarily, however, it limits discussion to the policy instrument being assessed, rather than permitting consideration of the entire range of policy tools that might help solve the massive inequalities facing South Africa.

Specifically, the articles on South Africa focus almost exclusively on the potential of budgetary measures. Yet virtually no one suggests that redistribution can take place primarily through the budget. A more detailed investigation of the nature and causes of inequality in South Africa would surely have thrown up a broader array of solutions. Andre Roux's article on unemployment suggests a more stimulating model for policy studies. He starts by discussing the extent of unemployment in South Africa, and then considers its causes. On that basis, he can suggest policies that address the major causes of unemployment in South Africa.

This analytical approach opens the door to research into South African conditions — both in defining the extent of the problem, and in assessing the analysis suggested by general theories or other countries' experiences. Moreover, it permits elaboration of a much greater range of solutions.

Nationalisation

In *Nationalisation: Beyond the Slogans*, Coleman essentially argues that the concept of nationalisation by itself tells us nothing about economic policy. A meaningful debate must look at the forms of ownership and management created, the companies affected, the nature of compensation, and business perceptions of all of the above.

For success, he argues, nationalisation must avoid capital flight; foster good working relations between workers, management and the state; and ensure that legal ownership translates into actual state control.

Coleman considers many aspects of nationalisation — the experience of other countries, the various ways of assessing and paying compensation, the difficulties of ensuring state control and creating democratic management, and the role of the market. In the process, he systematically reviews, in the abstract, the potential benefits and pitfalls of nationalisation. Crucial to Coleman's argument is that South Africa can afford neither the comprehensive state ownership of the Stalin model, nor the complete absence of state enterprise espoused by free-market economists. Rather, he argues, the state should consider nationalising the 'commanding heights' of the economy, a term he mistakenly traces back to the British Labour Party (In fact, it originates in Lenin; but who could resist the more respectable source?).

The metaphor implies the need to nationalise only those companies that wield exceptional influence in the economy. As Coleman says, the term emphasises the difference between 'what is *strategic* and what is *big*' (p35).

As many African countries discovered too late, expanding state ownership indiscriminately means the state will become overextended and lose real influence over the companies it nominally owns. Moreover, the 'commanding heights' strategy seeks to minimise economic disruption. On this basis,



Coleman constructs a stimulating research agenda for deciding when nationalisation should prove appropriate (pp38-9).

Markets and profits

A caveat arises in connection with Coleman's research agenda, however. His treatment of the market and profits in relationship to nationalised industries remains unresolved.

On the one hand, he justifies nationalisation in some cases 'where the market mechanism is dysfunctional' (p9) — for instance, where business has excessively short planning horizons, externalities are high, or monopolies arise. On the other, he stresses that nationalised industries should prove profitable in competition with other firms (p137).

Yet a market imperfection arises precisely because firms, to maximise their profits, must act contrary to the interests of the majority.

By extension, if the state compels them to act differently, they may suffer losses, at least in the short run. In particular, the state may find it worthwhile to inflict losses on a nationalised company that constitutes a 'commanding height' in order to raise productivity and profits throughout the economy. In short, as Coleman notes (pp140f), it may not be easy to combine market criteria and national goals; his insistence on profitability in this context seems inconsistent.

Abstract and general

While Coleman provides a first-rate review of the conflicts and dangers, as well as the potential benefits, of nationalisation, his study remains frightfully abstract. Like most of the articles in *Redistribution*, it seeks to assess the potential of a particular policy instrument.

Coleman is well aware of the need to tailor policies to solve particular problems; but he has limited himself to a review of one policy instrument. He ends up listing the problems nationalisation may resolve, without examining its capacity for addressing any specific problem in South Africa in detail. Moreover, he does not discuss other policy instruments that might prove more useful. As a result, at a number of points he lapses into tedious generality, recounting potential hazards and strengths without any exploration of how likely they are to materialise in South Africa.

Both *Redistribution* and *Nationalisation* prove most interesting when they offer detailed analyses of the South African situation. Hopefully, as policy debates continue, economists will realise that restatements of general theories, or even reviews of foreign experience, can generate neither definitive nor particularly exciting policy research. In any case, these books form welcome contributions in the search for an economic policy in a liberated South Africa.

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The future of our cities

We do not really enjoy much public debate on urban policy in South Africa or for that matter on the future of any of our cities. Such debate as does occur in the media is dominated to a remarkable degree by the interventions of the Urban Foundation (UF).

While that organisation does not have a completely uniform and consistent position on issues such as housing, land for housing the poor and regional policy, and while the views of the civic movement and its service organisations occasionally challenge the dominant position of the UF, its voice is often the only one to be heard (or read) on vitally important issues.

In this context, views which are somewhat at odds with the UF's published positions must surely be welcomed.

Such views will be found in Richard Tomlinson's book, which is unfortunately very expensive in this country, having been published in London with no South African co-publisher. Tomlinson's aim is to stimulate thinking on appropriate policies to improve the position of the urban poor.

While his concept of 'the poor' is perhaps problematic, the seriousness of his work cannot be doubted. He spent a year reading the international literature on urban policy and engaging with a range of actors in the international urban development field, and his book is valuable in reporting the results of this work in the context of South African conditions.

World Bank vision

The book's policy recommendations differ from those which dominate in South Africa in a number of ways.

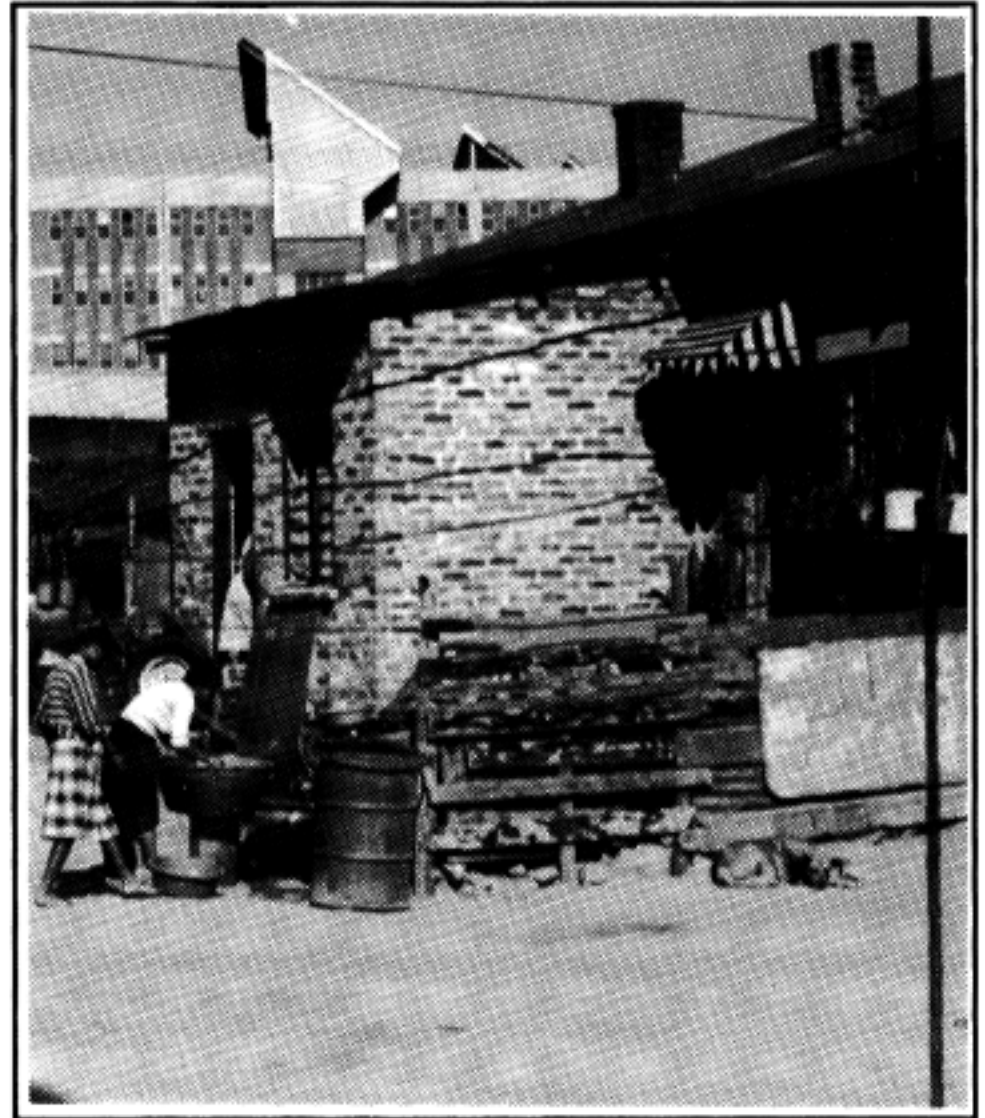
For example, the author is very keen on the idea of publicly-owned land development corporations playing a central role in urban land supply. But he does not go so far as to challenge the predominant policy of both the state and actors such as the UF, which is to concentrate on peripheral, distant land for housing the poor.

He suggests the need for the cities to change in form; for example, to become much more dense, so that more people can live close to work and other urban facilities, but provides few recommendations on how such changes could be achieved. Yet the recommendations which he offers are provocative, and should contribute to policy thinking on the left as well as the right.

Perhaps the chief limitation of the book, as other reviewers have noted, is that it essentially accepts the vision of development which prevails in World Bank and similar circles; a vision in which 'free markets', cost recovery from the poor and unfettered accumulation of wealth by the rich form key elements. Despite Tomlinson's attempt to grapple with the problems of the urban poor, and despite his acknowledgment in places that neither profit-driven nor cost-recovering projects are likely to supply housing and other basic needs to many urban people, in the end his policy prescriptions do not depart from the dominant ideology of the international funding circuit. They provide variations on the themes made familiar by the UF rather than serious alternatives.

Alternative policies ignored

If our cities are to avoid the deterioration and mass poverty of many other parts of the 'third world', other policies need to be



URBANISATION IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

by Richard Tomlinson
Unwin Hyman, London (1990)

Reviewed by ALAN MABIN

explored. There are places where alternative policies are being tried out experiments in collective action and public funding which unfortunately do not make their appearance in Richard Tomlinson's book.

They are embattled experiments, mightily opposed by the purveyors of the ideology which permeates this book. Some will fail; others show prospects of success.

But the excluded half of our urban population desperately need information on the nature of these alternatives. Richard Tomlinson's book does not provide insights on the alternatives which fall outside a fairly narrow spectrum.

It seems to underestimate the struggles of the poor and to envisage a rather technicist process of policy formation. But it is a readable book, more accessible than many academic and professional volumes. It does bring a wealth of international ideas and examples into comparison with South African conditions.

As a result it is a thought-provoking and useful volume. It should stimulate some much-needed debate.

We will need many more such contributions to debates on urban policy over the next few years if successful programmes to provide for the urban poor are to emerge.

* Alan Mabin is a lecturer in Development Planning at Wits.

History from below

This work was initially prepared as a text book for students at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania. It is a very useful introductory work that can be read with value by beginners, and I imagine also, professional historians. It is 'history from below', attempting to return the people to their own history, to tell of their heroic resistance to conquest and their struggle to transform their existing conditions.

Marxist historiography

Contemporary academic historians speak of a fundamental new trend in South African history writing, starting in the late 1960s with the publication of the Oxford History of South Africa, later challenged by a school of neo-Marxist historians.

In fact the racist historiography of South Africa was not only challenged by liberal historians before this date. There had also been a substantial Marxist historiography predating this period. The Non European Unity Movement made an important contribution, with the work, *Three hundred years* by Mnguni, published to coincide with the 300th anniversary of Van Riebeeck's landing in 1952, N Majeke's *The role of the missionaries in conquest* and works by Van Schoor and others.

Within the Congress alliance Lionel Forman made important contributions with his *Black and white in South African history* and *Chapters in the march to freedom*. Various documents of the ANC and Communist Party also located our understanding of South African history within a materialist framework, giving proper due to the role of the oppressed. Of very substantial significance was the contribution of Jack and Ray Simons, especially their *Class and colour in South Africa*.

But there is no doubt that the neo-Marxist scholarship of the 1970s uncovered material and explained a great deal that had not previously been tackled from a Marxist perspective. This process continued into the 1980s and the present.

Race and class

In correcting the emphasis on race and bringing out the class element, many of these writers unfortunately sometimes lapsed into a one-sided emphasis on class. In much of this literature very little attention was paid to the contribution of the Congress alliance and that of the Communist Party in particular, in analysing the South African social formation.

This school, describing itself often as 'revisionist', emerged primarily in Sussex, Oxford and London Universities, amongst South African scholars. Significantly, the 1980s saw a substantial development of this approach by scholars within the Republic, mainly at UCT and Wits, in Economic History and Industrial Sociology dissertations, theses for higher degrees and seminar papers, and articles in such periodicals as *Work In Progress* and *Africa Perspective*.

Taken overall, many of these books, articles and dissertations helped disentangle the mass of wars and migrations and provided a framework for understanding the early history. Unfortunately, in regard to contemporary history these works were slower to appreciate the importance of the national question.

John Pampallis distils many of the insights from these works and provides readers with a broad introduction to the struggle from the imposition of colonialism in South Africa to the



FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA
by John Pampallis
Maskew Miller Longman, Cape Town (1991)
R29,95 (327 pages)

Reviewed by RAYMOND SUTTNER

present period of its dismantling and the creation of a new society. At the centre of his study is the national question, interlocking class exploitation and national oppression and the resistance waged against both. There is extensive quotation from relevant documents, such as the Dadoo-Naicker-Xuma pact, the Youth League Manifesto and others, as well as extracts from many interviews of participants, and an appendix with some documents printed in full.

Another useful component of this work is that each chapter concludes with exercises and questions that could be used profitably in study circles. In a situation where many who want to study our history have had little formal schooling, it would be valuable if more authors of works similar to this one were to try to visualise how non-academic readers can discuss the issues and formulate questions similar to those in this book.

BOOKS

That having been said, the work is not above criticism. In some important aspects of the history of the ANC Pampallis may be misdirecting his readers, in my view. Speaking of its early period he writes: 'The Congress was not then the revolutionary organisation that it later became. It was a moderate, reformist body'. And here he quotes the objectives of the organisation from the 1919 constitution. These were, amongst others, to: 'educate parliament ...and the public generally regarding the requirements and aspirations of the Native people.'

It is true that such an objective does not conceive of the fundamental alteration of the existing order. But is it helpful to label this as 'reformist', and to speak of the 'development of the ANC from the reformist nationalism of its early days to the revolutionary nationalism of later years?' Is it not more correct to regard the formation of an organisation aimed at uniting all Africans in a 'white state' as immediately holding out objective revolutionary implications for the future?

Pallo Jordan has argued that the call for the convocation of the African National Congress 'by the emergent black national leadership posed an alternative conception of the "nation". Though few at the time would have recognized this, Seme and the founders of the ANC were laying out the tasks that the national liberation movement would have to assume in order to fulfil its historic mission. In addition to abolishing the colonial relationship, establishing democracy to secure the right of self-determination, it would also have to unify the South African people and act the midwife at the birth of a new nation.' (in Maria van Diepen (ed) *The National Question in South Africa* (1988), p113-114)

Lessons for the ANC

When those of us who are political actors read a work like

Pampallis's today, one of the things we want to do is derive lessons that assist us to build the ANC.

It has become a habit for some of us to point to the need to build the organisation in campaigns and to illustrate how the Defiance campaign led to a rise in membership from 7 000 to 100 000. This is duly recorded by Pampallis. But we know that this momentum was not maintained. Membership went down again and there were a series of unsuccessful campaigns. We need a discussion of the reasons why. A very brief allusion to the anti-Bantu education campaign gives some indication of one of the campaigns that failed and contributed to a decline in Congress.

The ANC campaign against the Bantu education act was to advocate a complete boycott. For many children this meant no schooling. The campaign appears to have worked only where alternative schooling was available. This holds lessons about the organisation's need to be close to the people and prepare carefully before undertaking any such campaign.

Perhaps there are other examples that need similar discussion. The point is that we need to be looking more critically at the history of our struggles, so that we do not repeat errors or assume that an adequate foundation for further advance has been built, where there is merely a shell. There are enough examples around the world at the moment to warn us.

The book presents South African history as a history of struggle. All in all it is a very good read. The book provides a useful basis for others to pursue some of the problems further, and with the return of many of our most famous leaders from jail and abroad, there is a possibility to fill in some of the gaps with interviews.

* Raymond Suttner heads the ANC's Department of Political Education.

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INSIDE:
INTERIM GOVT - HAS THE
ANC SOLD OUT?
VAT, SOCIAL CONTRACT
AND THE WORKING CLASS

Union tackles gender issues

Challenging gender stereotypes is an important priority for freedom in a new South Africa, says *Sharing the Load*, which looks at the issue within the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu). The book calls on fathers and employers to share the load of childcare with women.

Chapter One deals with how Ccawusa, now Saccawu, has taken gender issues seriously since its formation in the '70s. It details battles against the victimisation of women, and gains such as parental rights' agreements. The book says Saccawu has fought exploitative conditions for working women who are mothers not only on the shopfloor but also in the community and the home. Women tell of their trials and efforts through interviews and pictures.

Parental rights victory

In the '80s, the union signed its first widely publicised agreement with OK Bazaars on maternity rights. The agreement protected women from losing their jobs if they fell pregnant.

It also guaranteed their jobs back after 12 months of maternity leave. This agreement was the first of its kind in South Africa. In 1987 the Parental Rights Agreement was signed between the union and Pick n' Pay. With this agreement the union says 'it hoped to change the way in which men and women see their roles in society. It wants its members to think about the way in which society constructs roles for men and women'.

Chapter Two investigates conditions for women on the homefront which, says the book somewhat vaguely, are 'complicated' by culture and socialisation. Unfortunately *Sharing the Load* shies away from harnessing the issues into a discussion. This is a serious shortcoming. After agreements were signed, the union got involved in critical debates about childrearing and whether the woman should continue carrying the responsibility for this if she is involved in union work as well. The conclusion here is that unless there is a change of attitude by management towards women workers, it will be difficult to change relationships between men and women in the home. I found this approach somewhat reductionist and simplistic.

Lack of childcare facilities

The third chapter looks at the lack of childcare and pre-school facilities for black children. There are approximately 5.5 million black pre-school children, of whom only 113 000 are accommodated in creches. The 538 000 white pre-school children have no such problems. The childcare campaign took

up the demand for creches and in November 1990, at Cosatu's Workers' Charter conference, a demand was put forward for state provision of childcare and parental benefits. Further, it was agreed that domestic work and childcare should be shared by men and women and that this should be enshrined in a family code of conduct as part of a democratic constitution. Chapter Four looks at the big chasm between theory and practise within Saccawu itself. It raises the following issues:

- * Saccawu has a high female membership yet there are more male shopstewards;
- * less than 10 percent of officials are women;
- * women in the union are in administrative positions;
- * there are very few women at national level.

Why? The explanations rendered are not adequate or in-depth, but then providing answers was never the intention of the book. *Sharing the Load* says that the broader society is reflected in the union where stereotypes get perpetuated. Heightened male understanding of women's loads is the exception rather the rule. But there is potential for change within women's forums and a small, growing consciousness among male comrades; some form of affirmative action might be an appropriate lever, it concludes.

The debate about a quota system as a form of affirmative action is still raging in union and progressive circles.

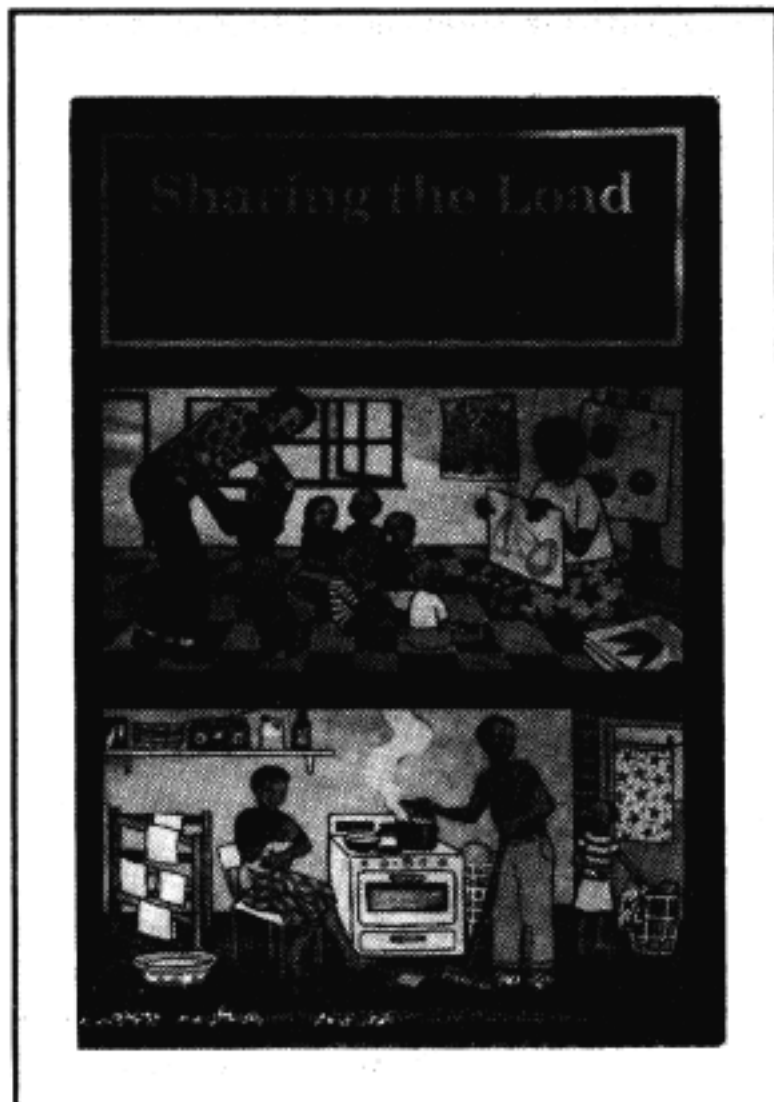
In the final chapter Saccawu officials are interviewed on how they envisage a future free from exploitative gender relations. The union feels pre-school would be a good start in the promotion of progressive gender relations because it is here that gender stereotypes are entrenched: 'From pre-school, children learn what a boy or girl should do; girls cry, boys don't; girls cook, boys don't, girls

play netball, boys play soccer, girls wear pink, boys wear blue...'

Sharing the Load is accessible and goes beyond rhetoric. It is not lost in the ethereal world of theory and makes its points bluntly. Its weakness is that it sometimes glosses over the surface of certain critical gender issues by invoking those sacred cows, tradition and culture.

And then there's the statement that very little will change if management does not change. What about change in the individual (and perhaps a mention of how the 'personal is political')?

What about challenging reactionary norms and retrogressive culture in the different race groups? Addressing such questions would take the gender struggle much further. *



SHARING THE LOAD: The Struggle for Gender Equality, Parental Rights and Childcare
Learn and Teach/Saccawu/Lacom,
Johannesburg (1991)

Reviewed by GLENDA DANIELS

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044	Grey stripe scarf	25.58							
045	Flash white tie	25.58							
046	ANC table flag	8.28							
047	Paper flag	1.04							
051	Liberation cloth badge	1.56							
052	ANC logo cloth badge	1.56							
053	Spearman cloth badge	1.56							
054	SACP cloth badge	1.56							
055	Umsebenzi	1.00							
056	African Communist	5.00							
057	The Red Flag	5.00							
058	Mayibuye	3.00							
059	Bill of Rights	5.00							
060	The New Constitution	7.20							
061	Women's Rights	7.20							
062	Path to Power	5.00							
063	ANC logo T-shirt	6.96							
064	Govern T-shirt	12.00							
065	Mass Action T-shirt	13.57							
066	Equal Rights T-shirt	6.96							
067	Spearman T-shirt	6.96							
068	Peace/Freedom T-shirt	12.00							
069	Nylon tracksuit	81.36							
083	ANC flag belt	38.88							
084	ANC logo belt	38.88							
085	ANC belt	38.88							
086	Big Spearman tr/st/w	72.13							
087	Small Spearman tr/st/w	72.13							
088	Big logo tr/st/w	72.13							
089	Small Logo tr/st/w	72.13							
090	Big ANC tr/st/w	72.13							
091	Small ANC tr/st/w	72.13							
092	Big Spearman tr/st/b	72.13							
093	Small Spearman tr/st/b	72.13							
094	Big logo tr/st/b	72.13							
095	Small logo tr/st/b	72.13							

Total of the above purchases _____
 Plus postage (if order less than R50.00) _____
 Contribution to the work of the ANC _____
 Total enclosed _____

WIP

NOTE

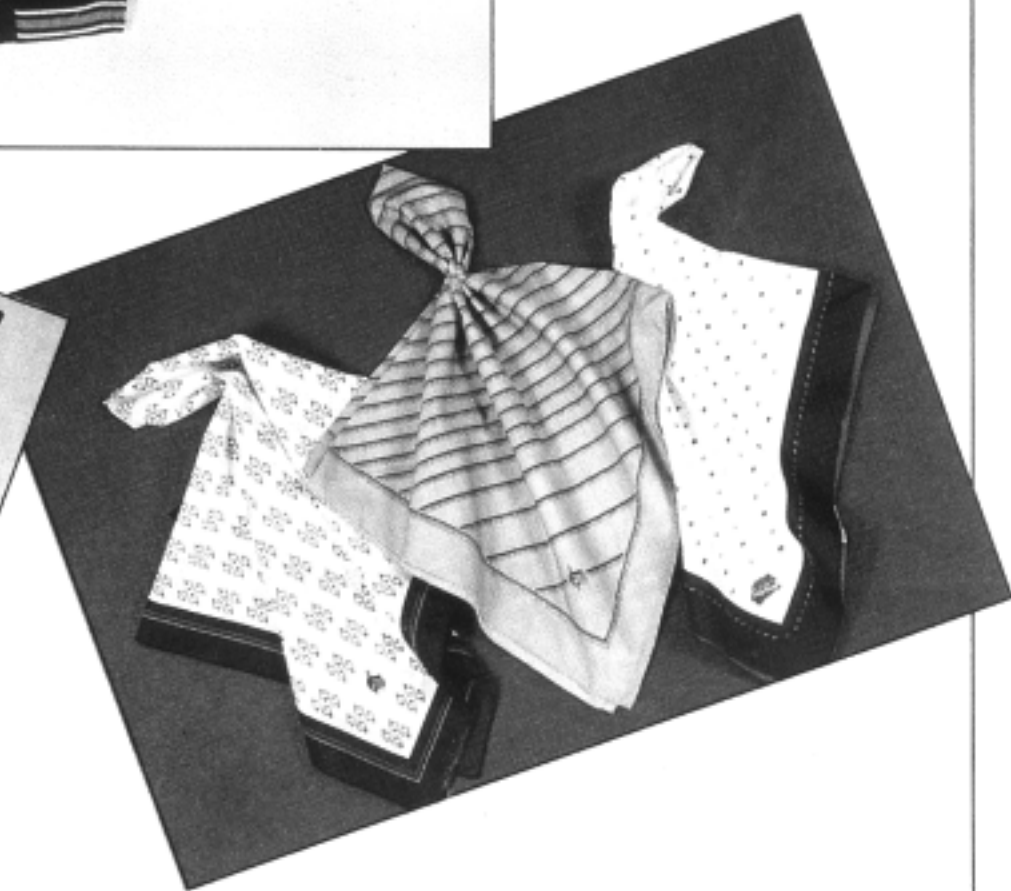
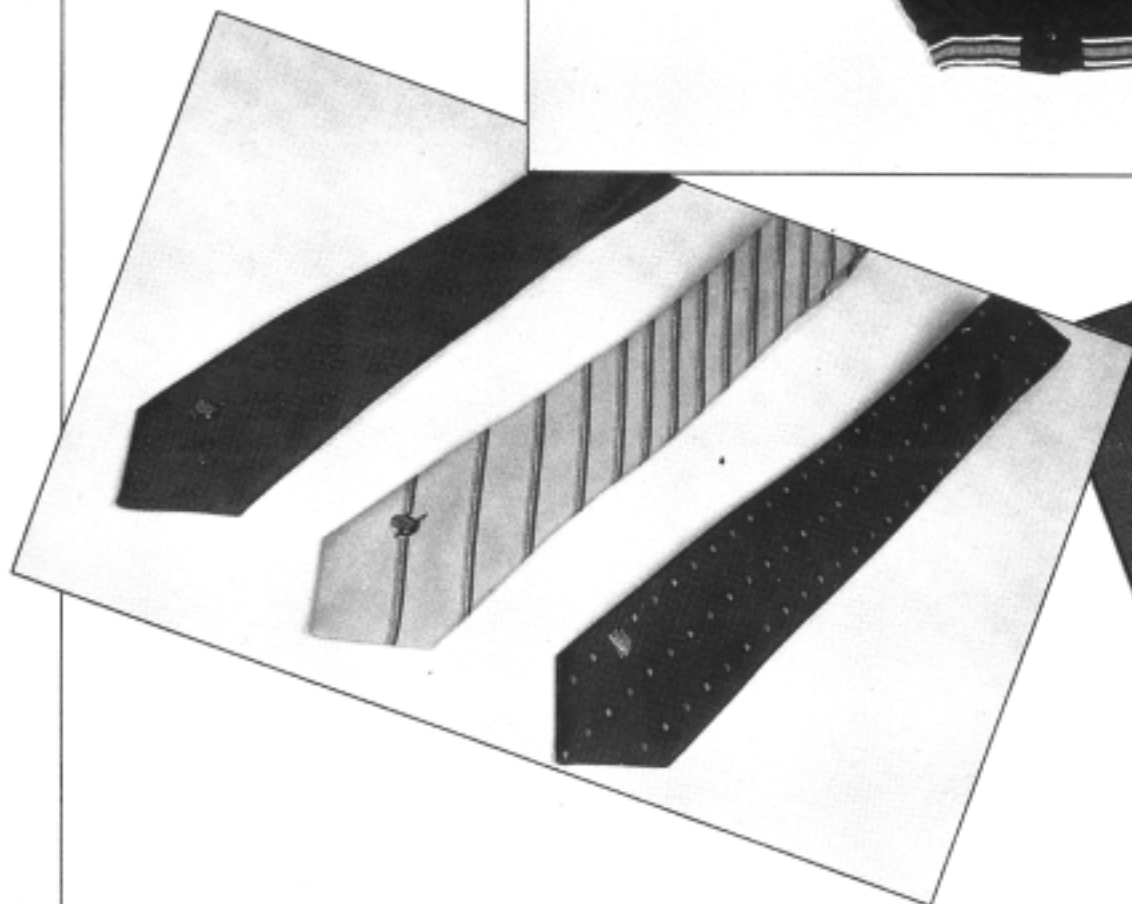
1. If you are ordering a single item than add R3.00 for postage.
2. If you are ordeing items for up to R50.00 then add R6.00 for postage.
3. For orders above R50.00 postage is free.
4. For orders outside the republic please add R5.00 for clearance of foreign cheques and an additional R15.00 for postage.
5. Unfortunately, we cannot accept COD orders.
6. All prices include GST.
7. Please allow 4 (four) to 6 (six) weeks delivery.
8. Cheques must be crossed and made payable to Movement Enterprises (Pty) Ltd.
9. For more information please phone (011) 29 3032/5.
10. Please indicate which size t-shirt you require.
11. A full colour catalogue will be sent to you.

**Please
send your
orders to:**

Movement Enterprises
PO Box 1092
Joubert Park, 2044
Johannesburg
South Africa

I enclose crossed cheque/postal order for
 R..... made payable to the ANC
 Name:.....
 Address:.....

Now available...



**These and much more ...
See order form opposite**



**Let all
know peace**

