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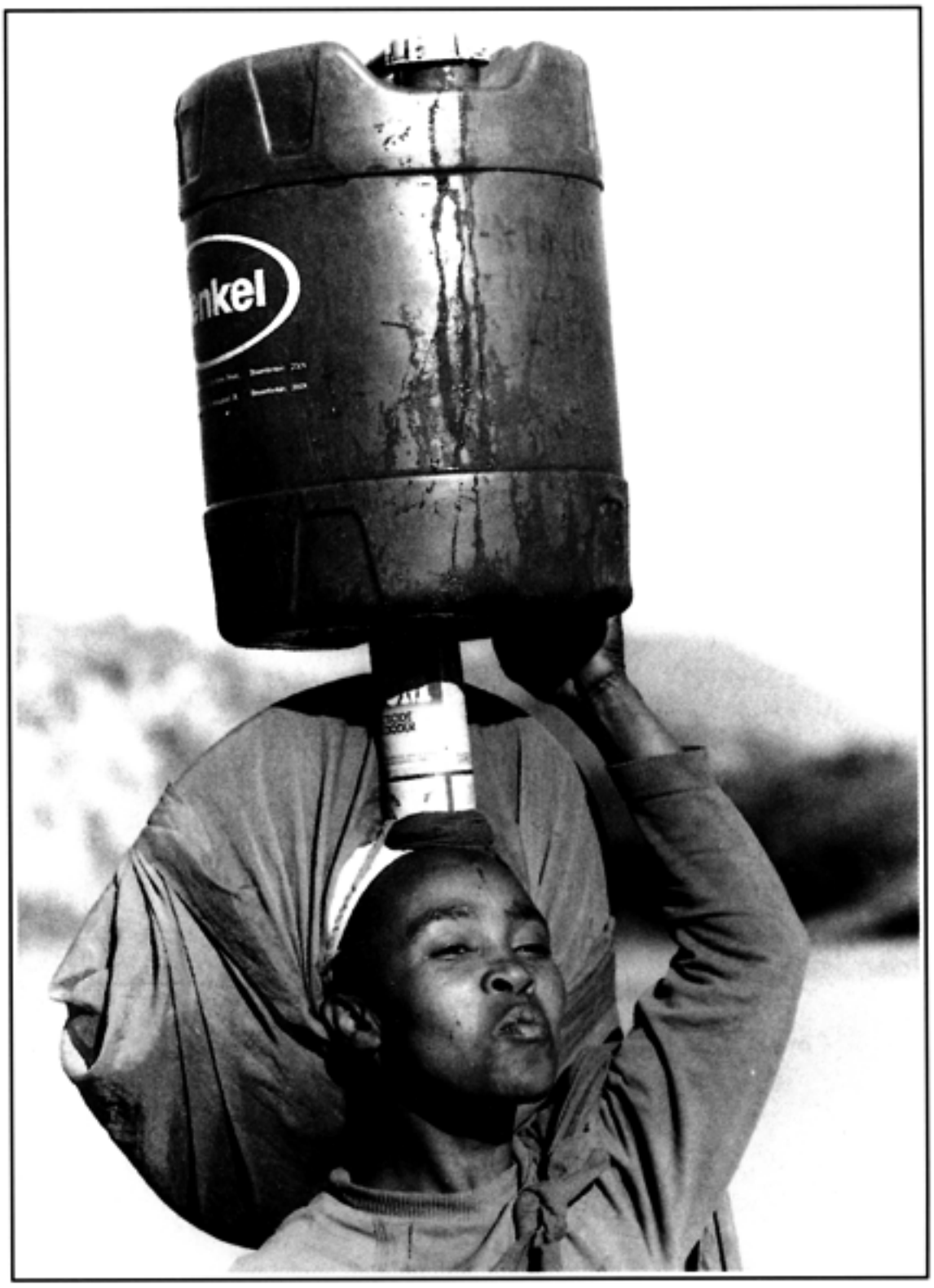
SASH



KWAZULU NATAL
LEGACY AND LEGITIMACY

POVERTY AND THE RDP CHALLENGE
INVESTIGATING THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE
A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACH TO AIDS
TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL ALLIANCES

Cover:
A woman carries water, Msinga, KwaZulu Natal (Photo: Paul Weinberg)

SASH magazine

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All political comment in this issue, except where otherwise stated, is by Georgina Hamilton, 5 Long Street, 7700 Mowbray.

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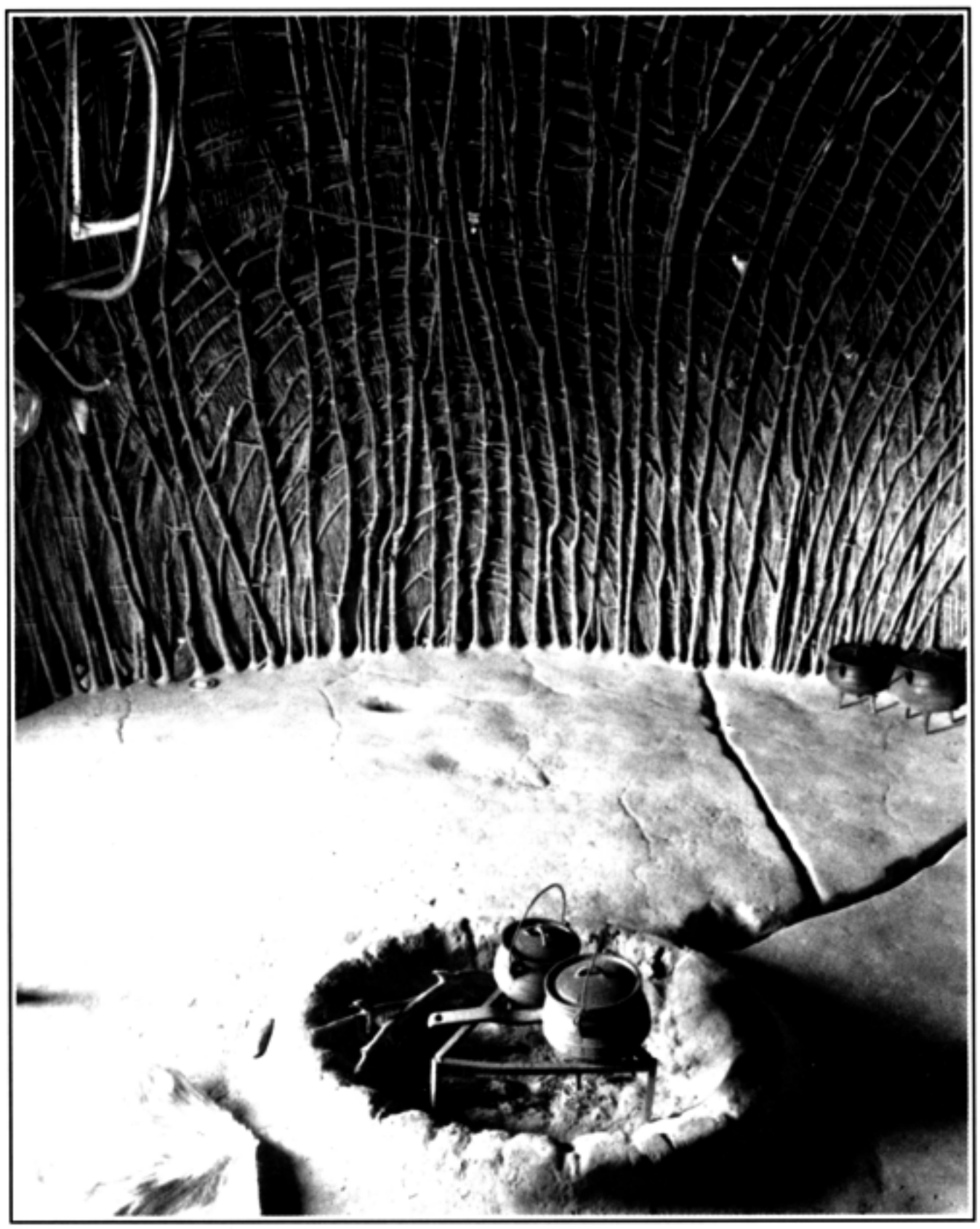
Volume 37 Number 2

SASH contents



Photograph and text: ***David Goldblatt***

The home of Mildred Nene, two unmarried daughters, their three children and three other grandchildren in KwaCeza. The hut took two months to build in 1987 from wood and grass brought on their heads by the three women. At 59, Nene did not yet qualify for a pension. Sometimes one of her seven children or the father of one of her grandchildren would send money. There was no other income. Adjacent to the hut was a brick-built room with a steel roof, the house of her son Isaac who worked in Durban and who came home for annual holidays. He sent her no money but would bring something on these visits. Near the hut was a byre for Isaac's two cows. Nene used to have some goats but they were stolen. She knew who took them but thought it best to keep quiet. People do not help each other, she said. The chief helped according to the size of the gift one gave him. Isaac sometimes wrote to her. What about? "His chest, which gives him trouble." When asked if she ever wrote to him, she replied, "He knows my life. I can't tell him anything".

Editorial

The idea of an issue of SASH focussed on KwaZulu Natal was conceived almost a year ago when the country faced an election boycott by the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) now the government of the region. The distress and death attending this boycott were echoed nationally, particularly in violent turmoil in the major urban areas of Gauteng.

As was often the case in the previous decade, KwaZulu Natal gained national attention because of the levels of violence it suffered and exported. For its residents, the 1994 election perpetuated that pattern. The scene was familiar: a deluge of international journalists, a rash of commentary, a brief moment of notoriety in national and international media, an aftermath of confusion, and a sense that tragedy had been commodified for the world while the region remained embattled and its critical problems obscured.

The shock of ANC supporters at the IFP victory was offset by hope that the violence which had bedevilled the region for so long would end. Sadly, as the first year of service of the new government comes to a close, there is no end in sight. Entrenched animosities linger.

Conservative groupings continue to revere a notion of tradition that is often invented and expedient. More urbanised and progressive groupings claim a different sphere: entitlement to the "modern" politics of the present. In the past the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the ANC emphasised modern freedoms and rights in their political campaigns leaving the way open for organisations like Inkatha to claim exclusively the past and tradition as their own. Critics now point to the contradictions of the ANC's recent shift toward wooing traditional leaders and incorporating institutions of the past into their programme.

The well-worn polarities of regional politics are not helpful or healing. Historically we are schooled in the sophistication of the town and the crudity of the countryside. At some levels there is clear evidence of this dichotomy. The provision of services and the incidence of poverty are markedly different depending on where one is living. Similarly, it is frequently observed that reactionary traditions are more strongly entrenched in the rural areas. Yet articles in this issue of SASH suggest a different and more complex reality. There is no sharp geographical division now that apartheid, drought and ecological disaster have destroyed the "garden of Eden" myth once associated with KwaZulu Natal. Cities are not sealed off from the traditions historically considered to have originated and been entrenched in the countryside. Town and country, black and white, exist together, constantly engaged.

KwaZulu Natal has been synonymous for much of what is most difficult about South Africa's transformation to a more democratic future. Yet there are problems and polarities which in significance go well beyond the region. How can different institutions pull together to bring about development and reconciliation? Which are best placed to deliver services and rights to people historically denied them? How can the lessons of one region be put to the use of others and parochialism be harnessed to the centrifugal forces for national unity?

Georgina Hamilton

The rocky road to democracy and development in KwaZulu Natal

Eric Miller

Women gather to do their washing in Bhambayi. Violence has impacted on family life, and on the provision of services in the province.

In the most divided and troubled province, there have been improvements since the April elections. But the challenges still loom large. ***Deborah Ewing*** *outlines important problem areas.*

People-driven processes are the only politically correct kind in South Africa's new democracy. However, they are not self-fulfilling prophecies – calling the RDP people-driven does not make it so. There is evidence that many of those people whom the new system exists to serve are excluded from it.

Four fundamental elements in the creation of a participatory, rather than a representative, democracy are intended to be inclusive of all citizens - reconstruction and development, local government, truth and reconciliation, and constitution-making. Legislation, white papers, budgets, task forces, negotiating forums have all been put in place to direct these. Feedback suggests widespread fear that these developments will happen to people, rather than through people.

Two factors that most disempower people from involving themselves in development and democratisation are lack of information and instability. Both remain major hurdles in this province. Violence is reported locally in sensationalist terms, with no analysis of causes and no effort to challenge security services on their handling of it. The majority of people are not in a position to demand from the media the comprehensive and objective journalism they need to keep up to date with and critique the agenda and decisions of policy makers.

- How do you put forward a project proposal for the RDP?
- How can you stand or nominate someone for election to local government?
- How can you pursue a grievance against the security services?
- How do you raise a concern about the Constitution?

These are basic questions that many people are still unable to answer. Progress is being made towards addressing this but there are factors weighing heavily against full involvement of citizens in securing a better future for themselves.

Violence

Human Rights Committee (HRC) reports show that assassinations and other orchestrated violent crimes continue in the province. The use of firearms in crime has increased since March 1994. The defection of MK/SANDF to the ranks of Pat Hlongwane's allegedly IFP military units, the failure to integrate security services and call them to account,

and to make community policing more than a slogan, give people little grounds to trust the police. In Z section, Umlazi, faction-feuding proceeded unchecked during September and October 1994, with continued allegations of KwaZulu Police (KZP) failure to investigate killings.

Uncertainty over the future of peace structures is undermining the work done thus far to hold communities together. Provincial premier Frank Mdlalose says the National Peace Accord structures will be decentralised and provincially funded, but they are floundering for want of funding while this is being explored.

In the long-term, the function of monitoring and mediation must reside within communities. But there hasn't been sufficient recovery time or resources since the elections to equip community organisations with conflict resolution skills. The Independent Mediation Service of South Africa (IMSSA) is pioneering a community mediation network to trouble-shoot on request. Meanwhile, if interventions are not consistent, peace initiatives will be temporary solutions.

"Two factors that most disempower people from involving themselves in development and democratisation are lack of information and instability. Both remain major hurdles in this province."

Mercifully, the death toll is down in KwaZulu Natal – October showed the lowest monthly figure (52) ever recorded by the HRC. However, the first anniversary of National Peace Day, on 1 September, 1994, commemorated the deaths of 2196 people in the province in 12 months.

Political conflict is being tackled through bilateral peace agreements between the IFP and ANC. An agreement signed in Ezakheni, northern Natal, has held since October. There have also been efforts by political leaders to defuse tensions. In Ndwedwe, there were calls for reconciliation following a massacre, and in Gezubuzo, there was a call for peace by the IFP's David Ntombela following an attack on a chief. Community policing forums also contribute towards building up understanding.

October saw the first massacre since the elections, with 14 people killed and 169 families displaced in Gcilima, on the South Coast, allegedly by an *impi* of 100 men from Mbvotchini.

The Network of Independent Monitors (NIM), which investigates violence and human rights abuse cases arising from its monitoring work, says that concerted political violence around hit squads is still prevalent. NIM is among those concerned that as the restructuring and integration of the South African Police Service (SAPS) is unlikely to begin in earnest until legislation comes into effect next August, the KZP could still be used for political ends.

Even cases of non-party political violence bode ill for prospects of stability. A particularly ominous case is the gunning down of the leader of a development committee near Mtubatuba, attributed by the community to supporters of a second, "rival" development committee.

The press and some academics persist in drawing the misleading distinction between "criminal" and "political" violence. Whereas violence was the last resort of a liberation movement whose every other political activity was criminalised, there are now other options. To persist in describing some crimes as "political" is to suggest they are less deserving of investigation and prosecution. It also allows the conservative media to focus on a rise in "criminal" violence in a way that contributes to a reactionary approach to economic issues.

Provincial and local government

IFP-ANC disputes have hindered progress towards a government of provincial unity. Conflict over the location of the capital, allocation of portfolios and the role of the *amakhosi* (chiefs) has done nothing to generate confidence among the most disadvantaged sectors of society in the province's ability, or will, to deliver. The delay in devolution of powers from central government has exacerbated this.

The uproar, over the House of Traditional Leaders' Bill, reaffirming home affair's minister Mangosuthu's Buthelezi's role as "traditional prime minister" and effectively giving him a seat in the provincial legislature, while making the king no more than a chief, has serious constitutional implications. The bill is being challenged as unconstitutional – it also provides for decisions of national government to be vetoed by the province – but is being pushed by the IFP in the hope of setting up the house before any constitutional ruling is made.

The decision of the premier, Frank Mdlalose to set up an economic advisory committee has provoked opposition from COSATU as an attempt to undermine Jacob Zuma's authority as Minister of Economic Affairs and Tourism. Zuma's office is more cautious in its response. A spokesperson said there was nothing necessarily sinister in a committee that informed the premier on economic affairs, since he was not an economics expert. Since the terms of reference and status of the body were not yet finalised, Minister Zuma would not take a rigid position.

The complex process for the restructuring of local government has been rendered almost impenetrable in KwaZulu Natal by the provincial leadership's decision to place all tribal areas under the Department of Traditional Affairs rather than the Department of Local Government. This attempt to preserve the current jurisdiction of the *amakhosi* cuts across national policy on drawing chiefs into local government as ex-officio members of elected authorities.

Lack of awareness among the public about local elections is compounded by the uncertainty

and fear over the role of the *amakhosi*. Among party activists little organisational and campaigning strategy has yet been developed. The swallowing of civic leaders, union activists and others into local authorities will increase representation but will leave fewer skilled people on the ground to organise around the daunting problems facing people from day to day. Also, the haste and political expediency with which candidate lists were drawn up has alienated many from the process. It was undoubtedly influenced by the desire to reward some of those who missed the boat at national and provincial level.

It is an achievement that the interim appointed Transitional Metro Council is in place. Massive corporate advertising proclaims this to newspaper readers but, beyond the urban centres, there is a dearth of information. The convener of a large development forum in northern Natal complains: "We need books and materials; we are in the bundu up here, trying to find out what is going on!"

Radio Zulu reaches millions of rural people but the station's Mtholephi Mthimkhulu says the broadcasters can't get all the information they need for listeners who don't understand the basic concept of local government. "One person was asking me 'Why are we having elections? We had them in April.'"

There has been a distinct lack of progress towards democratic local government in rural areas. There is no legislation to facilitate this and very few transitional structures have been set up. A national task team on rural local government has proposed a two-tier system of district and local councils, mirroring the Regional Service Councils (RSCs) and Joint Services Boards (JSBs), with traditional leaders as ex-officio members. Communities are free to contribute to the task team but, in the absence of rural organisation and infrastructure, the white-led RSCs and JSBs, have been allowed to dominate.

Traditional authorities

The Interim Constitution and the Local Government Transition Act do not confront the issue of how customary law and its practitioners fit into the new system. Provision for a House and a Council of Traditional leaders with an advisory role, and for the inclusion of unelected chiefs in local government, amounts to grafting the traditional system onto democratic government, with the risk that neither will produce green shoots.

That the traditional system is undemocratic does not necessarily devalue it for the many rural people whose lives it regulates. President Mandela pointed out in his speech to the regional ANC conference on 3 December 1994, that it was apartheid that had removed the dignity of traditional leaders and that under a democratic system it could be restored: "No longer should it be that decisions about them and their communities are taken without their participation. No longer should it be that they are used as tools of political parties...Freed of apartheid chains, they can play a critical role in the Reconstruction and Development Programme."

Applying democratic principles to policy and decision-making that affects those under customary law might draw the *amakhosi* into a more constructive engagement. However, there have been several reports of *amakhosi* withdrawing from development forums. Some see them as a threat to their jurisdiction – one chief in northern Natal is said to have opposed the electrification of his village because it would encourage *tsotsis* (gangsters). In other cases chiefs obeyed instructions from Ulundi.

Ideally chiefs must be part of the process of creating a culture of tolerance and democracy, not alienated from it. But the opinions of those who live under customary law have not been adequately canvased or considered, and the concerns of those who administer it are not generally known, since the *amakhosi* seldom speak out publically, or independently of Ulundi.

Expectations

Research conducted before the national elections showed that many people were voting for the party they believed would bring them peace, freedom and democracy. Many others were voting for Mandela. Contrary to reactionary opinion, poor people were not voting for instant running water, houses in Ballito or free Mercedes.

In the local elections, parties won't be able to play the "freedom card" or the "Mandela card"; people will be voting for named representatives to bring about tangible improvements in their standard of living. Nationwide, no party will be able to rely on political loyalties alone to win votes. In KwaZulu Natal, the two main parties have a lot to prove. The ANC needs to show that IFP fraud and political horse-trading cost it a majority in the region and the IFP needs to prove that its victory was due to genuine widespread support.

Despite loss of funding and problems of positioning and direction, the province's NGOs and civic organisations have worked hard to inform themselves about the complexities of the Local Government Transition Act and the voter registration process to prepare for another major voter education initiative. However, civil society is not yet geared up for this task and voter educators face the prospect of operating in a climate just as hostile as in the run-up to the national elections – and without the limited protection of observers and peace monitors.

A culture of (in)tolerance

The latest Idasa research report indicates that attitudes are still highly racial and antagonistic. The study results suggest that the huge effort made by NGOs to promote racial and political harmony, a culture of human rights and tolerance (especially in KwaZulu Natal, where it was a life and death issue), has not borne the desired fruit.

"The issue of truth and reconciliation is particularly fraught in KwaZulu Natal. People have lost their loved ones in clashes within the community, even within the family. The vast majority of atrocities are not celebrated cases but small, silent tragedies that will never reach the Truth and Reconciliation Commission."

"KwaZulu Natal has the highest unemployment rate (25,4 per cent registered jobless, though the actual rate is estimated at 55 per cent) of all the provinces, the fourth lowest income per head of population (R1 190), one of the highest rates of infant mortality (33:1000 for black children), the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS infection. The urgency of development is glaring."

The Interim Constitution enshrines the right to freedom of speech, movement and association. Published results from the Idasa study show that large numbers of people are not prepared to respect these freedoms for others: 39 per cent of ANC supporters questioned said they would not allow an opposition party protest in their town, as did 29 per cent of IFP supporters and 17 per cent of National Party supporters. Among supporters of the IFP, 33 per cent said they would not allow canvassing by other parties in their areas.

There was considerable intolerance towards the idea of opposition party members living in the same neighborhood. Twenty nine per cent of ANC respondents, 27 per cent of IFP respondents and 13 per cent of NP respondents said they would definitely not allow this.

Economic development and the RDP

KwaZulu Natal has the highest unemployment rate (25,4 per cent registered jobless, though the actual rate is estimated at 55 per cent) of all the provinces, the fourth lowest income per head of population (R1190), one of the highest rates of infant mortality (33:1000 for black children), the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS infection. The urgency of development is glaring.

The KwaZulu Natal Economic Workshop called by Premier Mdlalose in November generated a wide range of priority areas of action to get the economy moving in the province, through a partnership of business, labour and government.

It was acknowledged that rural people and women were not properly represented at this workshop but the event was also dominated by high-level business and political interests. For example, the workshop on tourism talked about community involvement but unionists and political activists present felt the focus neglected community and labour needs in favour of profit opportunities.

Concerns from business about crime and violence inhibiting investors emphasized the assumption that peace must come before development. The view and experience of many communities and civil society organisations is that development can contribute to peace and stability.

The province's leading RDP projects are in Cato Manor, Pietermaritzburg and Empangeni. Other projects in the pipeline include a R30 million community-based public works programme, a R125 million municipal services project, a fund for urgent rural water supplies and a pilot land reform project.

Although school, clinic and water projects have started in the province, random questioning of Durban township residents indicates few have yet felt the benefits of the RDP. Mtholephi Mthimkhulu says: "Information about implementation of the RDP is still very sketchy. The wheels of the RDP are not turning fast here and as journalists we are not fully briefed, but we know people are very impatient about housing and the unemployment problem."

Jacob Zuma's office is launching a project preparation committee to assist communities to formulate RDP project proposals. Dr Langa Bheki says this will be publicised and communities can contact the office directly for advice.

The prospect of development in rural areas is meaningful only in the context of land. Less than one per cent of the country's land is to be available for redistribution. Following the stealthy transfer of most KwaZulu land to King Zwelithini, under the Ingonyama Trust Act in April 1994, it is unclear how allocation and redistribution will work. There is some movement and a pilot project that could restore land to thousands of people in the Weenen/Estcourt area will go before the KwaZulu Natal Cabinet in 1995. However severe drought was affecting this region toward the end of last year and land without water will not benefit its owners.

Constitution-making

The Interim Constitution is not widely available in plain English and there is no Zulu version. Although the final Constitution is not due to be completed until May 1996 and the Constitutional Assembly has promised extensive public hearings and training to ensure maximum participation in the drafting, there is very little information available about how the consultation process will work, or about scope for communities to influence the final document.

The Community Law Centre has published a book addressing the implications of the Constitution particularly for rural communities. Several NGOs plan to popularise the provisions of the Bill of Rights. But it will be a long and complex task to assist people to come up with practical responses to some of the glaring contradictions between those rights and the regulations of customary law.

Truth and reconciliation

The issue of truth and reconciliation is particularly fraught in this province. This is not simply because of the scale and brutality of violence in recent years. In most other provinces, people have experienced violence and harassment perpetrated directly by the regime and its agents as an external force intervening in their lives. In KwaZulu Natal, people have lost their loved ones in clashes within the community, even within the family. The vast majority of atrocities are not celebrated cases but small, silent tragedies that will never reach the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. While the cut-off date for crimes eligible for amnesty applications is December 1993, this province is still experiencing violence. ❑

Deborah Ewing is a development journalist based in Durban. She currently works with Artworks/ Y press.

The minister, the king and regional politics

Mike Hutchings

***Gerhard Maré** examines the fluctuating fortunes of the Zulu kingship. He argues that the alliance between Chief Buthelezi and King Zwelethini has broken down and that the king's position is tenuous.*

On Sunday evening, 25 September 1994, Minister of Home Affairs in the Government of National Unity, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, stormed into a TV studio in Durban. He and his bodyguards confronted, "disarmed", and evicted Sfiso Zulu, junior prince in the Zulu royal house, in full, if indistinct, view of television watchers. Buthelezi occupied the chair vacated by Sfiso Zulu. Breathing heavily, he then accused Zulu of lacking respect and of having no right to represent the views of the king.

On that evening viewers saw some of the mysteries of regional politics exposed. No longer could Buthelezi pose credibly as the wronged and misunderstood gentleman of South African politics. No longer could the simmering tension between the royal house and the leadership of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) be explained away as the creation of malicious journalists and political malcontents.

Buthelezi survived the public embarrassment, but only just. Uncharacteristically he made a public apology. More typically he presented himself as the wronged party. His followers built on this position by demanding that Sfiso Zulu be charged with attempting to "assassinate" Buthelezi. But reasons for Buthelezi's continued dogged presence near the centre of South African politics have to be sought in deeper history.

Buthelezi has dominated regional politics for twenty five years but his position has not gone unchallenged. Power has been contested at three levels. Firstly within the Zulu royal house and among associated "traditional elites" (the chiefs). Secondly between the KwaZulu homeland government and central government in Pretoria over the extent of regional power and thirdly, between inhabitants of the region organised in the last fifteen years into two distinct groupings. On the one hand was the UDF/ANC, supported largely by urban dwellers and containing the politically influential "comrades". On the other, Inkatha, supported by people in the rural areas and led by older men, either chiefs or self-made leaders. This article focuses primarily on the first area of contestation.

"Zulu tradition is viewed as a legacy or an ethnic construct of apartheid. From this point of view it is surprising that the ANC has chosen uncritically to accept the validity of the Zulu monarch and "traditional" Zulu political offices."

The decline of the Zulu kings

We know a lot about the Zulu monarchy in the 19th and early 20th centuries from the work of historians including Shula Marks, Nicholas Cope, Carolyn Hamilton, John Wright and Jeff Guy. In this period the fortunes of the king changed. Powerful in 1830, the monarchy was weakened by competition with Boer and British settlers. In 1879 the kingdom was formally defeated by Imperial forces. In the four years thereafter, the Zulu Royal House was devastated by a civil war fueled by colonial intrigue. The kingdom was fragmented and powerful rivals to King Cetshwayo were supported. In 1907 King Dinuzulu was exiled for "complicity" in Bhambatha's Rebellion (1906) and the monarchy reached its nadir. Only in the 1920s and 1930s was it resuscitated.

The rise of Buthelezi

The National Party's separate development policy in the apartheid era provided the opportunity for the re-emergence of the king as a key political figure. Buthelezi came to prominence in this period. He argued that the Zulu king should be a constitutional monarch. In the 1970s Buthelezi succeeded in getting Goodwill Zwelethini recognised as king. More significantly he claimed for himself the title "traditional prime minister". In effect he controlled the politics of KwaZulu using the rhetoric of traditionalism and the aura of monarchical legit-

"In the 1970s Buthelezi ... controlled the politics of KwaZulu using the rhetoric of traditionalism and the aura of monarchical legitimacy to secure his position and that of Inkatha. The king and KwaZulu's chief minister fed each other the legitimacy that was essential for their mutual survival into the new South Africa."

imacy to secure his position and that of Inkatha. The king and KwaZulu's chief minister fed each other the legitimacy that was essential for their mutual survival into the new South Africa.

Politics in the region were radically altered by changes in the wake of F.W. de Klerk's speech of 2 February 1990. National negotiations superseded debates over Buthelezi's dream of regional consolidation. He held out for certain concessions at the Codesa (1991 & 1992) and Multi-Party Negotiations (1993). The IFP only participated indirectly in the negotiations. As IFP president and principal adviser to King Goodwill, Buthelezi refused to take part directly, preferring to issue threats and demands and play the politics of brinkmanship.

Buthelezi wanted three concessions: first, that the writing of the constitution should be a single process with the final document agreed upon before elections – this would strengthen his hand, untested as it then was by elections, as one of the "big three" in South African politics. Second, that the constitution reflect a federal orientation and that each unit-area be allowed to write its own constitution – this would strengthen his ability to maintain and extend the region that he had ruled since 1970. Third, that the package of "traditional" goods that he claimed to represent be acknowledged. The package included the consolidating symbol of the king, chiefs, the old bantustan government, Buthelezi himself as "prime minister" and the territory of KwaZulu.

The April elections

After weeks of tension and vacillation, the IFP entered the elections mere days before they were held on 27 April 1994. By then Buthelezi had managed to make considerable headway. He had some of his demands added to the set of "principles" attached to the interim constitution under which the elections took place, principles that govern the present Government of National Unity and bind the constituent assembly that will draw up the new constitution. He had achieved, along with several other parties, a measure of regional autonomy and the creation of nine provinces that had not been part of the ANC's initial position envisaging a strongly centralised state. Finally, he had ensured acceptance of the Zulu king and agreement on a "mediation process" that would follow the elections and that would spell out the powers of the monarch and, hence, the package of "tradition".

In the battle for these concessions, King Goodwill supported Buthelezi, giving legitimacy to his demands. Only rarely did he act directly. Early in 1994 he gave speeches "allowing" his "subjects" to boycott the elections. He also claimed the right to secede from South Africa if his kingdom was not acknowledged. It seemed that Goodwill and Buthelezi were inseparable, and that the ANC would fail to ensure a "neutral" monarch. However, national developments presented the king and those around him with more options than before. The king's mind was focused on the new options by the emerging power struggle in the royal house, growing differences with Buthelezi, and the realisation that his new patron would probably be the central government.

The comfortable relationship between the king and his minister had not been without its critics. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s political opponents mounted challenges. From the Black Consciousness Movement, to the trade unions and the UDF-aligned civics, Buthelezi and Inkatha were criticised. In 1987 one of the most sustained indictments was launched by (the now deceased) Mzala, an exiled intellectual and ANC activist. Buthelezi was infuriated and threatened legal action against Mzala's book, *Chief with a Double Agenda.* It nevertheless circulated clandestinely.

Buthelezi said that he was "traditional prime minister", whereas Mzala claimed in the book that he was not and that someone else should occupy this position. Where Buthelezi said that he was a "prince", Mzala argued that he could not claim this title and then indicated who were the princes. Where Buthelezi claimed a specific Zulu lineage, Mzala questioned whether the Buthelezis were Zulus. Mzala called into question the very tradition upon which Buthelezi based his legitimacy.

In the recent past the king has himself become the object of criticism. He has become distant to his followers, inaccessible and often remote. In a region of acute poverty his wealth seems ostentatious and unbecoming. The king is a very wealthy man, maintained in style through tax payers' money. He has no fewer than seven palaces; he has farms and an extensive farming operation. He has five wives, and is accompanied by hordes of lackeys (the author observed thirteen vehicles accompanying the king on an apartment-viewing trip in Durban). It is remarkable that within the furore surrounding the "gravy train", the king's drain on public funds has hardly featured.

The ANC and Buthelezi

The politics of tradition, so effectively blended with modernising class advancement by Buthelezi, has been analysed and condemned by several commentators. Zulu tradition is viewed as a legacy or an ethnic construct of apartheid. From this point of view it is surprising that the ANC has chosen uncritically to accept the validity of the Zulu monarch and "traditional" Zulu political offices. There are many recent indications of this choice. After the 1994 elections ANC member of parliament, and senior Zulu prince, Israel Mcwayizeni, started taking a prominent role in the politics of the Zulu royal house. This signalled that the ANC would challenge Buthelezi's special relationship with the king, but also accept the ethnic parameters of "traditional" Zulu politics.

In September 1994 a public row erupted over Shaka's Day celebrations. An invitation was issued (or not issued, depending on whom you believe) to President Mandela to attend the annual celebration in Stanger on the north coast. This was the last

straw for Buthelezi who saw it as a slight on his "traditional" prime-ministership: if there had been an invitation it should have gone through his office.

Mandela diplomatically agreed not to fan the flames of regional confrontation further and cancelled his attendance. The royal house then attempted (but failed) to cancel the celebrations and Buthelezi made full use of the opportunity afforded to him, speaking out powerfully against the ANC and his local opponents.

The battle to reshape the region's political terrain also included the chiefs. Pressure from the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa), a body formed to support the ANC and oppose Buthelezi, has forced central government to plan the establishment of provincial and national houses for traditional leaders. Without the chiefs, the king is isolated. Ironically, however, he already appears to have lost their support. In October the KwaZulu Natal provincial parliament debated a bill on traditional leaders. The bill provided for the "traditional prime minister" (obviously seen to be Buthelezi) to have a seat. This would, in effect, allow Buthelezi a political position from which to consolidate his power if his position as national Minister of Home Affairs becomes too problematic.

The bill was speedily passed. The overwhelming majority of chiefs supported Buthelezi and the minority bloc of ANC members in the KwaZulu Natal parliament walked out, in part because the bill undermined the powers of the king.

King Goodwill did subsequently criticise the bill. But this could not mask the fact that his meagre support base had been exposed. There is a possibility that he will be isolated and possibly even removed from office if he cannot demonstrate that he carries the support of "his people".

Inkatha is being accused of attempting to limit the powers of the king. In 1972 the National Party and arch-traditionalists made this charge. Today it is the ANC and a grouping of traditionalists. The irony is that Buthelezi, arch-creator and manipulator of tradition, is being accused of obstructing and negating the very tradition upon which his own power and support base rests. ❑

Gerhard Maré lectures in the sociology department at the University of Natal, Durban. His recent book on ethnicity, Brothers Born of Warrior Blood, *is published by Ravan Press.*

Chiefs – bureaucrats, bullies or popular champions?

What role should chiefs play? ***Peter Rutsch*** *argues that the traditional role of chiefs has been corrupted and that their legitimacy needs to be restored.*

Chiefs or *amakhosi* are conservative and reactionary. When young people are dissatisfied, chiefs organise *impis* to discipline them. When there are demands for change, chiefs oppose them. This view of the *amakhosi* is still commonly held.

The view became widespread in the 1980s when it was believed that chiefs were assisting the IFP to crush the UDF. In the early 1990s chiefs were often considered to be anti-ANC. While there is some truth to these observations, the situation is much more complex. Chiefs are not just bully-boys for the IFP. The emergence of the ANC-leaning Contralesa, an alliance of traditional leaders, is proof of that.

In this article the position of the chief is examined in historical context. It will be argued that the institution of chiefship needs to be retained but transformed.

Before colonial rule, the political structure within a tribe started at the grassroots with the homestead or kraal of an extended family. The head of the family, the *umnumzane*, administered the family, but did so by collective decision-making. Several families within an *isigodi* were linked together under the administration of an induna and they were linked together, within the tribe, under the administration of the *inkosi*. Both the *izunduna* and the *amakhosi* acted, within

Paul Weinberg

Mangosuthu Buthelezi leads a march of traditional leaders.

"The present strife occurring in Zulu affairs to control the amakhosi *and to place them centre stage in the political struggle for control of the province undermines the possibility for a better system. Every succession to the position of* amakosi *will be contested by political forces."*

their areas of jurisdiction, under a collective decision making process involving their respective councils. The induna and the *inkosi* were the personification of the unit and were accountable to it.

The advent of colonial rule brought important changes. The form of the tribal system was retained but Africans were settled in reserves. Theophilus Shepstone, the creator of the system, left tribal members under the control of the chiefs and the traditional administrative and legal system.

There was one significant difference. He made the Governor of the Colony the Supreme Chief over all Africans. He had the power to appoint, recognise and depose *amakhosi* and *izunduna*. He ruled that indigenous law would only apply if it did not offend against the concepts of "civilised behaviour" as defined by Roman Dutch law. By doing this, Shepstone reversed the role of the *amakhosi* and *izunduna* in one fell swoop from that of the personification of the tribe to that of servant of a political master.

Natal's colonial system as it affected chiefs was brought into the law of the Union of South Africa. The Native Administration Act No. 38 of 1927 perpetuated the position of chiefs as government servants. In addition the Minister of Native Affairs took over the powers claimed by Natal's governor: to appoint and depose chiefs.

That these powers were absolute was confirmed by the Appellate Division in a case concerning the present Minister of Home Affairs, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi *(Buthelezi v Minister of Bantu Administration* 1961 (4) SA 835 AD). His appointment as chief of the Buthelezi was challenged in the Supreme Court and, in upholding his appointment, the Judge of Appeal said: "There is nothing in Act 38 of 1927 which gives the son of a hereditary chief any claim whatever to the chieftainship, and the Governor-General is entitled to appoint a successor without any notice to him".

Chiefs and the tribal authorities were expected to carry out and enforce government policy but they were given no executive powers to do so. Nor a financial base which would have enabled them to exercise even a part of their traditional role. They thus became instruments of government.

The power over chiefs and tribal structures was passed to the homeland governments on the assumption of self government. In 1990 the KwaZulu Amakhosi and Iziphakanyiswa Act No. 9 was legislated. The law instituted no major changes to the role of chiefs. The KwaZulu cabinet, a state structure created by apartheid, remained the centre of homeland power.

Section 12 of the Act empowers the government to appoint or depose any person as an *inkosi*. Even though section 16 of the Act requires the government to appoint an hereditary claimant, this does not guarantee that the hereditary claimant will be appointed. If the KwaZulu legislature had intended that to be the case, it would have provided that the hereditary claimant, determined according to the rules of the tribe concerned, would automatically be recognised (not appointed), and then provide a procedure for resolving disputed succession.

Section 18 of the Act describes the duties, powers and functions of the *amakhosi*. As in the case of the South African legislation, the *inkosi* is given no executive authority, nor has any financial base. So the *inkosi* and his or her tribal council are, in law, nothing other than a conduit for government administration and control.

The Act also gives power to the KwaZulu government to discipline *amakhosi* for misconduct, including the power to depose them. The "royal establishment", if one might term the traditional system such, plays no part in such decisions, nor does the tribe whose *inkosi* is under enquiry, have any role to play. Thus the *amakhosi* are again seen as creatures of government.

From personal observation, it is recognised that despite the legal and financial disabilities under which the *amakahosi* find themselves, many have retained the support of their subjects and many apply and continue as best they can, to apply the traditional systems and values. To consider destroying the institution is short-sighted and doomed to failure.

If we are to provide a proper and respected place for the *amakhosi* in the South African body politic, we need to re-evaluate their position *vis a vis* government, both at national and provincial levels. The king of the Zulus is right when he seeks to bring the *amakhosi* above party and partisan politics. They have no place in the political environment, and the constitution and the financial structures of the state should reflect that. The tribal system plays an immensely unifying role and provides a cultural value system which offers stability and strength to the members of the tribe, whatever their own philosophical background.

In a re-evaluation, it will be necessary clearly to distinguish the role and functions of the *amakhosi* and the tribal authorities as against service-providing local authorities. These latter institutions, in this time and age, must and will be democratically elected by the populace, who demand a direct and modern say in the issues of service provision and development. It is surely not beyond the leaders of the country to seriously and dispassionately consider the relative roles of *amakhosi* on the one hand and of local government on the other, and to give them complementary roles within this fair province.

The present strife occurring in Zulu affairs to control the *amakhosi* and to place them centre stage in the political struggle for control of the province undermines the possibility for a better system. Every succession to the position of *amakosi* will be contested by political forces. Chiefs who lose politically will turn against the system and divide the community. The traditional terrain will be a constant field of political struggle, and disharmony will result. ❑

Peter Rutsch is an attorney who has worked with the Legal Resources Centre, Durban, for the past eight

A different kind of healing

***Di Oliver** and **Georgina Hamilton** visited Sibongile Zungu at her home in Ngwelezane, near Empangeni, northern KwaZulu Natal.*

Until her matric year, Sibongile Zungu had never seen a science laboratory. She learnt physics by "imagining experiments" and only began to study biology at medical school. The dedicated doctor is now a chief or *inkosi* in KwaZulu Natal. She has had to give up hospital work in order to fulfil her role as a cultural and spiritual reference point for the people she serves as *inkosi* and to carry out the development work that she feels should be part of that job.

Zungu eschews the politicization of "traditional leadership" under apartheid, especially as it has allowed and even promoted division and violence in recent conflict in KwaZulu and Natal. Listening to Zungu, her place within the ranks of traditional leadership seems something more than the residue of corruption and manipulation generally associated with chiefs through the years of colonisation, segregation and apartheid. She seems to hearken to a distant call, not of some glorious past, but of a possible future, where modern medicine can recognise the needs of the spirit; where development can and should allow the cohesiveness of ritual around its more linear furrows.

There is an historical precedent for a woman being a chief in the KwaZulu Natal region but Zungu's appointment was an unusual step. Her accession to her current role would be tragic if she had not already begun to carve an inspiring new model of community leadership. Zungu and her husband were in a car accident which left them both severely injured. A few weeks later, on 5 August 1989 her husband died. Zungu's own internal injuries meant that she lost her yet-to-be-born son as well as her husband. It was the loss of her son that changed the course of her life. She can hardly speak as she recalls this miserable irony. It was a sorrowful burden, to bear the loss of husband and son yet to become the *inkosi* in the vacuum they had left. She also had two small daughters to nurture and took up her new obligations in a period riven with political conflict. She reflects: "With all the problems I've had to go through, I'm now quite happy that I accepted. It was quite needed for a woman to be in that situation at that time. It would have been too

Zungu believes that the key to resolving problems is communication; that people must be free to discuss their fears, hopes and vision.

Natal Newspapers. *Sunday Tribune*

"If people do not fulfill customs, then they may feel very strongly that something is missing, or they live with guilt which might cause them to develop psychological problems."

difficult for a man."

Zungu's succession was not an undisputed heritage though she played little part in the machinations. Because her husband had neither a son nor a brother at the time of his death there was a debate about succession. Zungu punctuates the story with wry comments about her discovery that she was to be part of a "chiefly" family at all. She met her husband at primary school. It was only when they were to be married that he informed her about his family and that he would become chief. She had already accepted his proposal before he put her in the picture: that there was a need to take over the chiefly role soon and that he could only do so if married. She jokes that she might have had a different response to his proposal had she known in advance.

After lengthy consideration by the family, a commission of enquiry, and a number of different recommendations, the KwaZulu government appointed Zungu as *inkosi* in 1991. There is a view that sees her appointment as an attempt by the authorities to soften accusations of sexism levelled at traditional leadership. This, at a time when the Inkatha Freedom Party, the king representing the Zulu nation, and the KwaZulu government were gearing for national negotiations.

Initially, Zungu was depressed by the decision. She was only 27 years old and unfamiliar with traditional norms and issues. To this day she overcomes some of this unfamiliarity by trying to sit among younger people at functions as they are less likely to notice if she takes a wrong step.

One of the awkward difficulties she faces is that she is expected in many instances to behave like a man, to accept being served first for instance. It is expected of her as *inkosi*. As we talked to her she pointed out, in jocular vein, that we were required to serve her the coffee that had been brought in for us. She explained with ease that this was the way it should happen in her position.

Nevertheless some men and women in her area have difficulty accepting her position as chief though she concedes that she has been able to turn suspicion around to a large extent. This is due in some part to her initiation of a development committee which oversees all development taking place in the area. Representatives are elected by ward and the committee operates independently though it reports to the tribal council from time to time. Some decisions are taken jointly. Many women serve on the development committee and its sub-committees which take responsibility for particular concerns such as peace, roads, gardens and local government. Zungu says that there are no consultants working in the area and that the committees are driving processes themselves. This is significant for her, as consultants are very costly and frequently do not take the capacity building of others seriously.

A concern of Zungu's is that women apart from herself be represented on the tribal council. She feels that they do much of the work, are committed, and are available because they are generally unemployed. As head of the Madlebe Tribal Authority, Zungu says she is required at present to deal with concerns ranging from the general welfare of the community to dispute resolution. For instance, the authority has been participating in the Greater Empangeni Negotiating Forum, but recently decided to assume observer status because of concerns about the way in which land will be divided. Some land now part of the tribal authority is earmarked to fall under a future local council. This raises the possibility that enhanced services will be provided there, but not everywhere else. This might cause tension and violence.

Zungu believes that the key to resolving problems is communication; that people must be free to discuss their fears, hopes and vision. She worries that the two major political parties in her region, the IFP and the ANC, have not resolved their differences and that tension and fighting continue over "who should be the top guy". Zungu has made tremendous efforts to bring the political parties in her area together. A successful joint rally in December bodes well for the future. She feels that the outcome of the general election was a "relieving factor". It seems fair to her that the substantial support for a party other than the ANC in the region should be reflected the provincial results.

However she insists that traditional leaders ought to have a neutral public stand. A house of traditional leaders seems to her a good idea in principle if it observes a distance from party politics. In its proposed form she thinks it is much too big. "How are we going to afford 80 odd people to serve on such a body in KwaZulu Natal?" she asks.

New and old roles seem to mesh quite peacefully in Zungu's current life. The doctor turns her hand to a different kind of healing. " Everyday life revolves around tradition. Marriages are blessed by the *inkosi*...and a family has to be cleansed after a funeral," she explains. She adds, using language blending past and present: "If people do not fulfill customs, then they may feel very strongly that something is missing, or they live with guilt which might cause them to develop psychological problems". ❑

Di Oliver and Georgina Hamilton are members of the committee of the Durban Black Sash.

Reflections of a "bantustan" bureaucrat

Liz Clarke gives her perspective on the challenges of being a civil servant

In white liberal circles it was fashionable to work at Charles Johnson Memorial Hospital at Nqutu in northern KwaZulu Natal in the 1960s and 1970s. Anthony and Maggie Barker were a remarkable couple who ran a remarkable institution. They had little time for apartheid rules and regulations and even less for the bureaucrats who implemented them. The opportunity was given to all of us who worked there to experience the warmth and challenges of living in a non-racial community. For many this was a cherished experience that changed our lives.

When the state started taking over mission hospitals in 1973, it was fashionable for many of the white staff to announce that they would move on rather than work for the state, which they did. The black staff and the rural poor who were served by these institutions did not have the same options and this weighed heavily on my conscience. At that time, 1974, I was strongly moved and motivated by Martin Luther King and often listened to his stirring speeches some of which were banned. In particular I was struck by his words: "I am not free to be what I want to be until you are free to be what you want to be – and you are not free to be what you want to be until I am free to be what I want to be." These words ultimately convinced me that I should stay and work within state structures alongside thousands of people who simply had no choice about where to be nurses, teachers, agricultural officers and social workers among millions of poverty-stricken rural people who in turn had no choice of where to go for their health, education, agricultural and welfare services. It was an unusual decision. I never expected anyone to understand it or believe it so I never bothered to explain it to anyone.

In the minds of most, working in a bantustan bureaucracy was supposed to be a bad experience at all times – an ongoing combination of corruption, incompetence, and intolerable political coercion. This was not my experience in the Bureau of Community Development. I have had some rich learning experiences and encountered many good and competent people. If I do have some unique insights into rural development, it is through listening and talking to hundreds of dedicated nurses, teachers and social workers working in remote areas and dealing with immense problems with minimal support.

There is the notion that party politics drives appointments and promotions. The question of party affiliation was never raised in any of the appointments, dismissals or promotions for which I was responsible. Even now I have no knowledge of which political party my colleagues identify with. Unashamedly, however, I admit that I do not want political activists of any persuasion working in the bureau. It is common knowledge that they lack real commitment to development.

Getting community development going within a bureaucracy in the 1980s seemed like an impossible task. Part of the problem was that there was no training that produced development practitioners with some hands-on skills to offer. There were plenty of B.A. graduates but they were not interested in working in remoter rural areas and had no development skills. Their generally elitist approach to rural communities made them aloof and remote from the people they served. "You can't tell me I have to listen to illiterate rural people when I have a B.A. in Social Work", one pompous individual remarked to me as he adjusted his three piece suit in a dusty village in Nongoma district.

"The poor overall performance of 'homeland' governments in development was a favourite topic of research and debate. Yet anybody who worked to improve that performance was labelled and isolated to such an extent that he or she was rendered considerably less effective. One was judged not on grounds of association with the rural poor but on assumptions made about the 'homeland' governments that served the rural poor."

Many NGOs engaged in training development workers excluded those from the "homelands" from their courses. Trainers from universities thought I was doing a good job but did not want to be seen tangling with a bantustan so also would not help us with our training. The official training offered by the state was obsolete and paternalistic

"The worst horrors of apartheid are behind us but there is very little that has changed in the rural areas. There is minimal capacity in terms of adequately trained human resources to implement the flurry of new 'community driven' programmes. Raised expectations are giving way to frustration and disillusionment."

in approach and offered no skills at all. In effect we had nowhere to go and no one to help us so we used our training sessions to talk among ourselves in a fairly focused way, often just sharing what we were doing. We worked quietly, always entrenching community ownership of projects .

There were some strange contradictions to contend with. The poor overall performance of "homeland" governments in development was a favourite topic of research and debate. Yet anybody who worked to improve that performance was labelled and isolated to such an extent that he or she was rendered considerably less effective. One was judged not on grounds of association with the rural poor but on assumptions made about the "homeland" governments that served the rural poor.

As politics became increasingly confrontationist, things got tough for my colleagues in the field. Their government vehicles were targeted for attack and the people they visited were threatened. A group of pensioners near Groutville were very excited about having their own club which would teach a little handwork and encourage gardening and similar activities. The government-employed home economist really enjoyed working with the "oldies" and good progress was being made. One day it all changed. "Don't come back here," they warned, "the youth have said they do not want government vehicles here and they will burn yours." That was the end of the club.

Morale among civil servants deteriorated, especially among development workers serving districts. They were vulnerable to attack and felt unsupported by their head office staff who seldom visited because of the danger of travelling in government vehicles. Furthermore, the drought and an array of half-baked programmes like the National Nutrition and Social Development Programme which was foisted on them left them overwhelmed and demoralised. In the in-service training programmes for my colleagues, I began to review our work and the changes that were occurring. I paid less attention to service delivery and more to building morale and gearing for change.

It is against this backdrop that the people who have been isolated, criticised and demoralised for the past decade, are now supposed to play a key role in the delivery of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP is a great policy vision that embodies a multiplicity of programmes needed to turn our society around. It is the first national development policy to entrench rural development in its broadest sense. Yet, in real terms, it is difficult to come to grips with the RDP. In the rural areas it is still very elusive at this stage.

I have always taught my colleagues to test a new funder or programme first, especially if the project is to be "community driven". I advise them to pay attention to the way in which an application is managed. Is receipt of it acknowledged? Are complicated accounting systems required that community people may not be able to manage? Are reasons given why projects are turned down?

I put together a manageable capacity building programme for three less developed magisterial districts which are always bypassed by large-scale development programmes simply because there is no capacity in those districts to access funding. They are also areas which have seen factional and political violence and we have already gained some experience of successfully pulling divided communities together around the meeting of basic needs. For our application we used the forms and the format supplied to us by the RDP. Five months passed and we heard nothing. Then in a meeting I was attending coincidentally, I was told that all the projects from this region's administration had been turned down. I feel sorry for my colleague from the Department of Agriculture whose project for 300 much needed community gardens and the water to supply them was turned down. His field officers have some unhappy explaining to do at community level. It is part of the difficult lot of fieldworkers constantly to be helping communities to conceptualise projects and getting everybody motivated only to go back and tell them their project application was unsuccessful. They don't teach us much at universities about how to deal with such disappointments. There is little research as to what impact these experiences have on communities.

It is a great and challenging experience finally to be working for a democratically elected government during this time of transition. The worst horrors of apartheid are behind us but there is very little that has changed in the rural areas. There is minimal capacity in terms of adequately trained human resources to implement the flurry of new "community driven" programmes. Raised expectations are giving way to frustration and disillusionment. Demands for our services have increased dramatically. Our bureau would like to be doing more but, like our hospitals and welfare services, we do not have the resources. Our budgets were cut to finance the RDP. ❑

Liz Clarke is the head of the Bureau of Community Development and the Department of Traditional and Environment Affairs, KwaZulu Natal.

Occasional luck or magical reality

David Beresford, Guardian *correspondent,*

argues that the "Inkathagate" revelations had as much to do with chance as diligence and is wary of journalists' ability to keep track of the truth.

The sweetest moments in the life of a journalist must be those occasions when a scandal of major public interest drops into one's hands out of the blue. Perhaps the sweetest in my years covering the South African story came in 1991 when I settled down for a beer with a young man clutching a handful of documents at a bar in London's Soho.

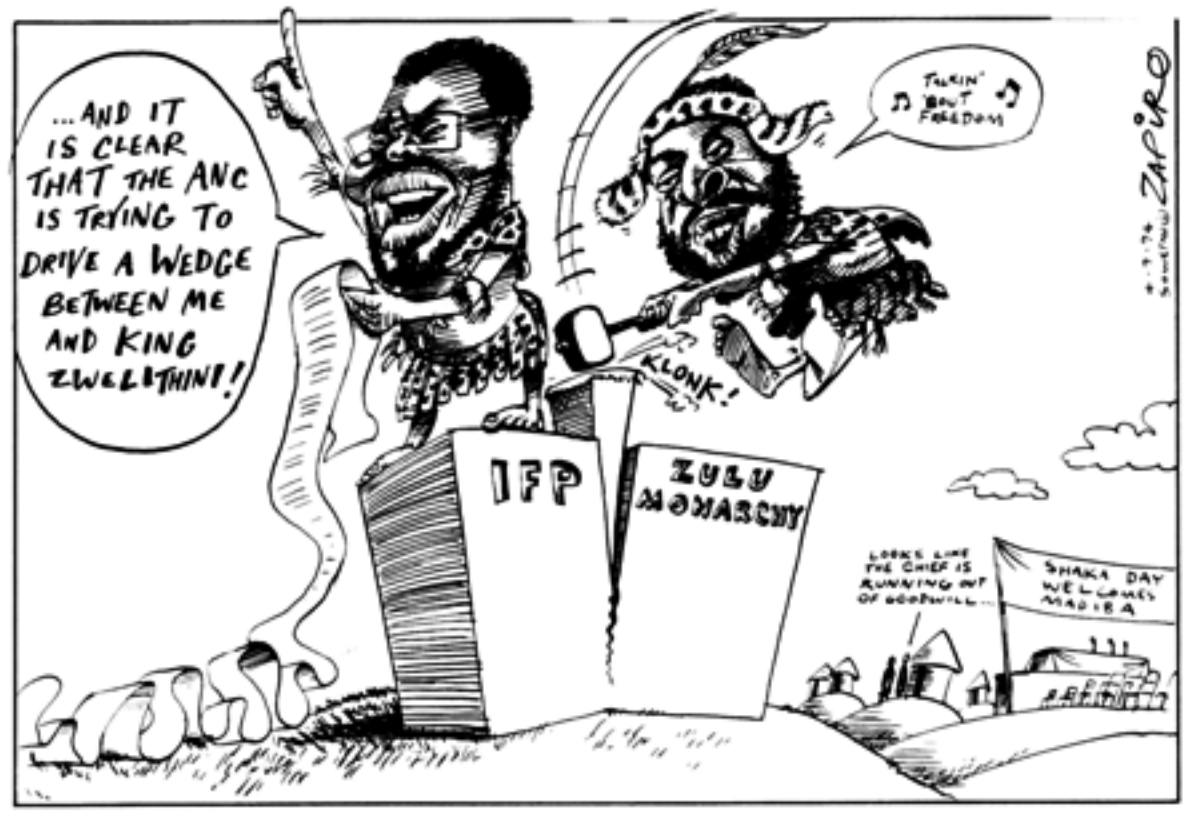
We had arranged by telephone to meet and had agreed that he would use a pseudonym and that I would make no attempt to discover his real identity. The documents he had were all I needed. Their contents are now well known – they were the top secret police files detailing covert payments to Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi in what was to become known as the Inkathagate scandal.

Recently I spoke to him again and this time he revealed his identity: Brian Morrow, a former warrant officer in the Durban security branch. The reason why he had decided to come out into the open was that he had been unable to get indemnity against prosecution for the "criminal" act he had committed by feeding me the documents – a breach of the Official Secrets Act. He was incensed at this and wanted to express his indignation in print.

His indignation was understandable. He had, after all, rendered a signal service to South Africa, exposing a major abuse of power by the government and the police as well as the political corruption at the heart of the power struggle in KwaZulu and Natal. And yet his only reward for this selfless act (he sought no payment, or other reward from me) was to have a criminal prosecution hanging over his head, which has effectively left him stranded in exile in England.

Whistle-blowers, unfortunately, rarely get their just rewards. Eschel Rhoodie (admittedly not as selfless an informant as Brian Morrow) paid for the Muldergate scandal in exile. The "Deep Throat" who was responsible for Watergate has never been identified, probably maintaining his, or her anonymity in recognition that there was a price to be paid for exposure – quite possibly career-threatening, if not life-threatening.

Talking to Morrow about Inkathagate brought home to me the ignorance in which journalists labour, without the rare appearance of the whistle-blower. He recounted how he had filched the documents when some closely-guarded filing cabinets were briefly moved to a less secure room during building operations at Durban police headquarters, CR Swart Square. Under suspicion for "disloyalty", he had to grab the little that he could in the time available. "There was far more there. There were other documents with Buthelezi's name on and documents with (FW) De



Zapiro

Klerk's name on," he told me. "I didn't have time to read them."

It leaves one wondering what other "Inkathagates" lay in those cabinets and, for that matter, in other filing cabinets in other regional police headquarters; in those of Military Intelligence, the National Intelligence Service and the State Security Council. Grounds for speculation are endless. What was the Third Force? Does conspiracy lie behind Inkatha's electoral victory in Natal? How did Samora Machel really die. . .?

Wisdom, so it is said, lies in the discovery of one's ignorance. But the acquisition of such wisdom does little to alleviate my growing disquiet at the realisation of how limited is the ability of journalists to inform the public as to what is "really" happening.

My current angst on this issue was born, I suspect, of my experiences covering the Gulf War. I clearly remember the sad farewells my family bade me, assuming there was a good chance that I was not going to return from this assignment. Chemical warfare was certain; the only question was whether the Iraqis would use their biological weapons.

My sense of impending doom was reinforced by a SAS captain who regularly went snooping about the enemy trench positions and was able to give me a detailed breakdown of the chemical weapons the Iraqis had stockpiled and how precisely they planned using them.

There were moments of doubt, as when a Scud missile crashed behind our hotel and I went to inspect the wreckage. I was handling a piece of the rocket casing, marvelling at the ingenuity of the Iraqis at having constructed such an awesome weapon out of bully-beef tins, when a Saudi secret policeman threatened to charge me with spying.

But such moments were swept aside by the knowledgeable, like CNN, pumping out to the world not only confirmation of the chemical weapons threat, but details of the immense and sophisticated fortifications prepared by the Iraqis in preparation for the Allied land invasion; the massive underground labyrinths constructed to protect the heavy armour against aerial bombardment; the giant artificial sand-dunes making miniature Maginot lines across the desert; the huge canals of oil that would be set ablaze when the tactical moment came.

As it turned out I went to war with the Egyptians. We swept right across Kuwait, through the battle-fields. Maginot lines there were none. There was one oil moat ... which I jumped across. The only underground fortifications I saw was a single line of trenches, the sophistication of which would have had a World War I combatant scoffing. An American communications expert who examined their equipment shook his head, saying he did not think the Iraqi radios were capable of transmitting to neighbouring trenches, much less headquarters. It is now a matter of record that there were no chemical weapons in the Kuwaiti theatre of operations.

I finally "liberated" Kuwait City, after being captured twice. First by the US 7th Army Corps and then by the US Marines who had little else to do to fill their time.

When I arrived in the city in the company of hordes of other journalists, we were mobbed as "liberators". The Allied armies were waiting to make sure all the television cameras were there before they actually marched in.

I left the Gulf suspecting that the real story of what I had experienced was not war as such, but a massive "psychops" operation – an exercise in the deployment of what Churchill referred to as a "bodyguard of lies" – on a scale and with a sophistication which the world has quite possibly never previously experienced. Certainly it had me questioning whether journalism – our attempts to "tell it like it is" – does not in fact render society a disservice, by misleading the public into the belief that "the truth" is actually discoverable, particularly when governments are determined to conceal and mislead.

The thought brings to mind a column in the Spanish newspaper, *El Pais*, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez in the aftermath of the Falklands war. The article purported to tell the inside story of that miserable little conflict – including hair-raising accounts of the savagery of the Gurkha troops who, according to Marquez, spent their time chopping people's heads off, as well the perversions of British officers whose predilection for sodomy had, again according to Marquez, landed large numbers of young Argentinean POWs in hospital nursing their rear ends.

My initial indignation at this obvious travesty of the truth began to fade as it dawned on me that Marquez had come closer than any journalist to communicating the "truth" of the Falklands. With the magical power of caricature and parody he had encapsulated the essential savagery and obscenity of war. It was, to use the phrase with which Marquez will forever be associated, "magical realism".

Is caricature and parody then a better way to discover and communicate "truth"? Does the likes of the "Dear Walter" column, run by *The Weekly Mail & Guardian*, come closer to capturing the quintessentials of South African public life than the acres of print to be found in the "news" columns?

Clearly the press cannot abandon its attempts to discover what is happening in the corridors of power. But if it is to do its job it needs help. Which is why I watch with intense interest the momentous battle being waged by civil rights activists to preserve the idealistic commitment to "freedom of information" entrenched as a right in South Africa's new constitution. Because, without help, journalism is in danger of becoming nothing more than the handmaiden of ignorance. To get at the truth we would do better to play the part of jester. ❑

"Wisdom, so it is said, lies in the discovery of one's ignorance. But the acquisition of such wisdom does little to alleviate my growing disquiet at the realisation of how limited is the ability of journalists to inform the public as to what is 'really' happening."

Twice the winner of the International Journalist of the Year Award, and author of the acclaimed book about the Irish hunger strikes, Ten Men Dead, *David Beresford is currently the Johannesburg correspondent for the* Guardian.

Letter to Soweto

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Walter,

It is nice to be back in Cape Town, but life remains busy. No sooner was the excitement of the inauguration over than we had to face the first parliamentary session. My biggest complaint is I don't have much time to think. I used to do much of my thinking in the early morning, pedalling my exercise bicycle. But it has become a bit difficult with all the noise Jomo makes. Ever since he went on a Secret Service course in Washington he insists on going everywhere with me. He has fixed one of those toy car dashboards to the back of my exercise bike – you know, with one of those make-believe steering wheels? It isn't the gear changes I mind so much, but the siren noises he makes.

More troubles with KwaZulu Natal. You know our people down there won't accept the election result? Zuma keeps going on about Eshowe, where 800 per cent of the population voted. Then, on top of it all, came these allegations that De Klerk gave all of the province to King Zwelithini as a present. I asked Chief Buthelezi about it and he demanded to know what was wrong with the king having a bit of land and when his great great grandfather Shaka ... well, you know what it's like with the chief, Walter; one just switches off after a while.

I actually had lunch with the king after the inauguration. He greeted me with tears in his eyes and said he knew what I had suffered, because he had just got out of gaol after 24 years. This was apparently a reference to the fact that he is no longer paid by his uncle. He spent the whole meal trying to persuade me to transfer the KwaZulu police force to the Cape Flats. There were tears in his eyes again when he left, thanking me for having made his uncle a cabinet minister and asking if it was true the chief would now have to live in Pretoria and Cape Town.

Actually I'm having some difficulty getting the chief to come to Cape Town; he was meant to be here on Friday, but he had arranged some sort of ceremony to introduce the king to the new KwaZulu Natal cabinet. Apparently the king failed to turn up and it all became very embarrassing. The chief insisted on going ahead with his prepared speech and the opening lines were: "I will not allow any leader, any political party, or any force to prise me away from your elbow, Your Majesty. I will be there constantly at your side whatever happens." There was a lot of sniggering in the audience, I believe.

It is difficult to stop Gatsha as you probably know. I'm told he insists on reading these speeches of his – memorandums he calls them – whenever he meets a foreign leader. He once delivered one at Versailles and paramedics had to be called in to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to Mitterand who fell asleep with his face in the vichyssoise.

Joe Modise is very excited, after discovering he has command of bunkers sunk beneath Magazine Hill, where the country's leaders are meant to take refuge from nuclear attack. He wants us to all move in straight away; he says George Meiring has photographs proving Lesotho is developing a nuclear capability. He says they are too top secret for us to see.

Enough for now. Spare a thought when you toast the good old days.

Stay well, my friend,

Nelson

(With thanks to the Weekly Mail and Guardian)

Exposing the truth

***Domini Lewis** discusses with **Jenni Irish** of the Network of Independent Monitors causes of the violence in KwaZulu Natal, the work of investigative groups and the challenges faced by the proposed Truth and Reconciliation Commission*

DL: What are the current political dynamics in KwaZulu Natal?

JI: It is conservatively estimated that at least 500 people were killed in politically motivated violence in KwaZulu Natal between May and December 1994. Besides the frequent massacres and attacks on rural homesteads which drew national media attention, there is ongoing violence, including torture and murders, throughout the province. Attempts to ascribe the death statistics to the impact of "factionalism" or the criminal element, ignore the reality of the problems in KwaZulu Natal which have to be addressed as a matter of urgency by the government of national unity.

There is also instability at a provincial government level as this is still a contested area of power. This situation is compounded by the fact that there is no real unity or purpose of governance. Tensions in the legislature are therefore playing themselves out in violence on the ground.

DL: Are there other factors which contribute to the continuing instability?

JI: A large percentage of the violence is about geographical control of areas because this gives access to people living there. The issue and contest

of geographical control is vitally important in the leadup to the local government elections.

We have identified a grouping which we call "political entrepreneurs". These are people who make a massive profit out of violence. As "businessmen" they force people living in urban or rural communities to pay protection money. This has resulted in mafia-style operations. Many of these entrepreneurs have affiliated themselves politically and forced people whom they control to support particular political parties.

These local entrepreneurs use their political affiliations as a means (or an excuse) to orchestrate violence in their areas. The reason for this is that once violence is labelled " political" it is seen as a legitimate approach and strategy, and the leaders are thus able to gain access to weapons, private armies and protection.

The local government elections planned for later this year provide an ideal opportunity for them to gain legislative powers as they have entrenched their social and political authority over communities. There is very little likelihood of democracy and free political choice for people over whom these entrepreneurs have exerted their control. In many ways this suits the agendas and aspirations of political parties in the province.

DL: What about the Third Force?

JI: Certain elements in the security forces who could be termed third force operatives are still working in KwaZulu Natal and fuelling the violence. Their historically anti-ANC position means that this organised group is still continuing in its efforts to undermine the work of the new national government.

But they are also driven by business interests which have developed from the period of Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) operations. Money has been made through illicit operations in drugs and the ivory trade, gun running and diamond smuggling. There has been some exposure of covert operations, but no effective action has been taken against the perpetrators who have refined their tactics. These current groupings seem to be well-organised and difficult to break. They also appear to have influential people protecting them.

We know that they often work with the "political entrepreneurs". This entrenches control for both parties, and perpetuates the demand/supply economy necessary for covert activities.

KwaZulu Natal is vulnerable due to its fluid and unmanageable borders with Swaziland and Mozambique. The violence and instability in the region hides the activities of third force groups. From their perspective, it is in their best interests that the violence continues. At the same time, the central government doesn't know what to do about the region, and this also covers the activities of the third force.

DL: What is NIM, and what impact do you see its work having on the violence?

JI: NIM is a network of human rights monitoring organisations, whose staff work primarily as investigative monitors. We focus on human rights issues in the region. We work on a premise of being truthful about the information we uncover, and where possible we take action. Due to limited resources, we are forced to priorities our investigations. Yet we have achieved some notable successes.

We take on cases if they follow particular trends or if specific people have been cited as being involved in incidents of violence. We often do the legwork and then hand over the cases to the Investigation Task Unit (ITU) and others to follow through.

I would say that NIM primarily attempts to ensure that the information received is properly handled for further indepth investigation, for example handed over to the ITU or the Attorney General. We also alert the central government to certain problems and to the need to deal with them.

DL: What is the role of the security forces in the region?

JI: Of concern to NIM is the lack of proper investigation into political violence and the lack of effective prosecutions. The result of this is that people take the law into their own hands, because it appears that there is no one who will deal with issues of real concern.

Historically, the South African and KwaZulu police forces have been seen as partisan, and they have not done much on the ground in the last few months to change that perception. In practice, they still operate in the old style, and their track record in investigating political violence is appalling.

On a number of occasions, NIM has been asked by community people to investigate incidents and cases which the South African Police Service (SAPS) seemed incapable of solving. NIM has been able to uncover witnesses and evidence to present to the Attorney General for further investigation and often prosecution. It is inconceivable to us that the SAPS is unable to act similarly. Granted, witnesses come to us because they trust NGOs more than the police, but I believe that the SAPS needs to seriously address the lack of investigative skills among its staff. It also needs to start treating all individuals and cases equally, and all criminal acts as criminal. It must stop protecting certain people.

NIM certainly does not see itself as an alternative police force or as taking the place of the police. We actively encourage the SAPS to play their proper role and to be proactive in their investigations. We are concerned however that certain individuals are not acting as they should.

We know that there are elements in the security forces which are involved in the violence. It is time for the SAPS to come clean on this issue. We have not seen any evidence from the SAPS of concrete investigations into the actions of its own members. These have all been done by outside groups such as NGOs, investigative journalists, political parties and most recently the ITU. The SAPS has responded by doing damage control. They must address the problem effectively and soon.

DL: What about the system of prosecution?

JI: We need speedy and effective prosecutional courts, to ensure that alleged perpetrators of violence are apprehended, charged and if possible remanded in custody. Too many people who took the risk and offered evidence as witnesses to atrocities and acts of violence have died recently. We are not happy with the system of prosecution as it is at present. Besides an effective and vigilant witness protection programme, the issue of bail has to be addressed. The current situation raises the question of whether despite the alleged perpetrator's constitutional rights, it might be better for communities if the individual was remanded in

custody, and bail applications were set at high levels or denied.

There is an urgent need for a joint strategy by the ministers of safety and security, and of justice to address the problems in a holistic manner.

DL: You've mentioned the Investigation Task Unit - what is their function?

JI: The ITU was formed in late 1994 by the Minister of Safety and Security, Sidney Mufamadi, to investigate allegations of hit squad activities by the KwaZulu Police; and also to conduct an enquiry into allegations of hit squad activities in the Midlands branch of the ANC.

The ITU is headed by Lieutenant Colonel Frank Dutton who investigated the Trust Feeds massacre, and consists of some of the province's best lawyers and detectives, including former members of the Goldstone investigations team. It reports directly to the minister via the Investigation Task Board (ITB) chaired by Howard Varney, a human rights attorney with experience in policing issues. The function of the civilian ITB is to oversee enquiries and to make reports and recommendations directly to the Minister of Safety and Security.

DL: You have expressed some concerns about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and its ability to work effectively in KwaZulu Natal. Would you elaborate?

JI: We have been told that the TRC will be given the necessary resources, legitimacy and authority by the state to undertake its work. The crucial issue of whether it can harness the skills, energy and commitment of people of integrity to see the process through is another matter. It will also depend on how members of the commission view their roles and the tasks as defined for them in the law.

Human rights workers, NGOs, investigative monitors and others working in related fields will be motivated to involve themselves in the process if they think that it will ascertain the truth about the atrocities of the past, and if it can be seen to make a real impact on the violence. If the TRC is merely a publicity stunt, they will steer clear of it.

I am not saying that we should write off the TRC, but these are issues on which both victims and people doing NIM-type work need clarification first.

DL: What are your thoughts on the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Bill?

JI: NIM, together with the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADEL), Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), and other human rights organisations based in KwaZulu Natal outlined their concerns in a submission to the justice department in January.

These include that victims should have the right to institute civil proceedings and private prosecutions against perpetrators of acts of violence; and that the destruction of any evidence should be considered a serious offence and deemed a statutory crime. The tasks of the investigations teams need to be clearly defined, and they should be properly resourced. Ideally these teams should be regionally based and directly accountable to the Commission.

We are also concerned about legal representation of those appearing before the Commission. We recommend that individuals should pay their own legal costs but that Legal Aid should be available if proper application is made. The resources of the present government (ie funds, state lawyers) should not pay for legal representation before the Commission.

DL: The proposal that applications for amnesty be heard in camera has proven quite controversial. What is NIM's position on this?

JI: NIM, together with NADEL and LHR, believes that all applications for amnesty should be heard in public, unless the applicant falls within the provisions of the existing laws, in terms of which an in camera hearing may be ordered, or unless reasonable cause is shown on application for the Committee to decide otherwise. We also recommend that once evidence is heard, if it is found that there is inadequate justification for the hearing to have been heard in camera, it should be made available to the public.

People bring NGOs information because they trust us to handle this information sensitively. If applications for amnesty are decided behind closed doors, victims who might have given information to us, for example, are separated from the process. They could then begin to distrust our motives for attempting to involve them in ascertaining the truth about an incident.

We also recommend that the Committee on Amnesty be empowered to order that people who have been granted amnesty and who have confessed to committing human rights violations ought not hold any public office, be placed in any position of authority, be members of the security forces, or be allowed to be in possession of firearms and ammunition.

The reason for this is not just to censure, but to ensure that perpetrators are never placed in a position where they are able to commit such crimes again. It is an important task of the TRC to halt the trend of impunity from gross human rights violations.

DL: Do you believe that the Truth Commission can work in KwaZulu Natal?

JI: Where violence has reached the tragic levels it has in this province, you welcome any small victories for peace that can be achieved. If the Truth and Reconciliation Commission can impact on 3 or 4 significant issues in this region, it could go an important way to impacting on the violence. However, the Truth Commission needs to be a transparent process with integrity, which involves individuals and communities in the process. It also has to commit itself to investigate human rights abuses in their entirety whatever the political consequences. ❑

Jenni Irish is the national co-ordinator of the Network of Independent Monitors. She has worked as a human rights and investigative monitor in KwaZulu Natal for a number of years.

Domini Lewis is a member of the national executive of the Black Sash. She worked in KwaZulu Natal for part of 1994.

Psychological trauma and political violence

Endemic violence in KwaZulu Natal has challenged conventional models of trauma counselling. ***Anne McKay*** *describes the evolution of new strategies for coping with distress.*

Eric Miller

Children such as this boy in the Canefields refugee camp suffer severe trauma when violence becomes an everyday occurrence.

"We know that there are youth who are psychologically affected by the violence", says Nellie, a church youth organiser in KwaMashu. "But we don't know what we are supposed to do about it". An ANC youth leader is disappointed when few youth arrive at a holiday workshop for members to discuss the problem of youth affected by violence – but says she didn't know how to advertise the workshop. "I couldn't explain what exactly it was about, I wasn't sure how to say it," she says. An hour later, she and the other leaders are satisfied that this is indeed an important issue to tackle with their members and have agreed on a 1995 programme. Likewise a Lindelani (IFP) youth committee may or may not adequately have explained the purpose of our work to their members, but a one-day introductory workshop stretches over three weekends because there is so much to talk about when youth start to speak of their experience of violence.

Impact of trauma

The psychiatric textbooks see trauma as symptoms which occur after an event which is "beyond the realm of normal human experience, which almost any person would find distressing". The problem in Natal townships is that violence has been going on for so long that it is hardly beyond normal human experience any more. Yet it is traumatic. What are the effects?

Community workers have observed the following:

- moving from homes over and over means losing contact with friends and familiar surroundings
- children losing parents, parents losing spouses, and having to live with that grief as well as the consequent insecurity of life without that support
- losing trust in social structures: first police were oppressors in the name of apartheid, and even now they fail to protect people from violence and intimidation
- children lack years of schooling, and fear lifelong unemployment
- people becoming numb or exceptionally anxious from seeing killings and brutality at close hand
- many youth have been encouraged to participate in killing and destroying property. Some have become depressed, some brutalize, some feel rejected by their communities
- research done in Port Shepstone has shown

"The problem in Natal townships is that violence has been going on for so long that it is hardly beyond normal human experience any more."

that many boys grow up with no positive male role model – due to adult males being absent because of violence and other factors
- girls face an all too real danger of being raped
- some suffer from post traumatic stress disorder and are unable to function
- somatic complaints (hypertension, headaches, sleep and appetite disturbances)
- spouse and child abuse
- substance abuse (alcohol, dagga, mandrax)
- suspiciousness and paranoia in personal relationships and political organisations. Issues around revenge can tie up people's energy in destructive ways.

Classic model of trauma counselling

The classic model of trauma counselling has been used in the Wits Trauma Clinic and the Cape Town Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture (these centres also use group and community outreach methods). Counselling usually takes between two and six sessions to help the client come to terms with the grief, fear and anger consequent on a one-off traumatic event. The Regional Peace Committee in July 1994 estimated that 500 000 homes were destroyed in political violence in KwaZulu Natal over the last ten years. The conventional method of counselling through individual therapy would obviously out of the question in view of current health department budgets.

KwaZulu Natal initiative

The KwaZulu Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence was set up by psychologists involved in the South African Health and Social Services Organisation to find a model for intervention with survivors of violence which could work in the context of this province. As a first step, we spent a lot of time gathering information about what communities wanted, what other agencies were doing, and what models had been used to address this problem in other countries (to be published together with the IDASA Community Peace Project and the Peace Accord's SERD). We consulted widely with agencies involved in lay counselling training, in conflict resolution education and in sports development. Interestingly, the approach adopted by communities themselves is very closely matched to what other agencies were saying, and what has been done in other countries (so participatory democracy does work!).

Employment and sport initiatives

Education for employment is critical as the reality of no work is the primary anxiety of youth at the moment – whether at school or not. There have been some excellent initiatives which youth have taken for themselves. In Ntuzuma township, local youth watched the return of MK cadres from the SANDF with some alarm, worrying that these people might put the community at risk for violence. "They know how to use guns, and they are very frustrated," explained an ANC youth. So the youth organised jobs for them as security guards for a local developer. Since then no stock has been stolen, the cadres have work and a place in the community, and the youth have ten soccer balls acquired for them by the grateful company PRO.

In KwaMashu a youth leader set up a meeting with returned MK cadres and ourselves. Even over the organisationally-dead festive season they formed a committee, elected spokespeople, structured a four-part organisational and business skills programme for the year and set about finding the funds to run it. The community wants to support this initiative, partly out of fear of what the MK cadres might do if left frustrated and idle, and partly out of a recognition that they suffered much in their commitment to end apartheid and have had very few thanks.

Sports is the second most frequently mentioned priority of youth leaders in preventing violence and helping traumatised youth. "We want to see each and every youth committed in sport," they say. A fun run and soccer tournament was organised to keep youth busy over the holidays. Across the valley, the Lindelani Multi-Youth Forum held a very successful three day sports festival over 16-18 December. Everything from netball to karate to boxing and soccer was on offer. Their aim is to make sports available to every young person in the area. The youth leaders hope that participation in sports will give people a sense of identity and belonging, will create a social barrier against drugs and will create peace by having interaction with youth of different areas.

We took the KwaZulu Natal Sports Children's Development Trust into these areas to meet the organisers. The trust is promoting streetball – a modified basketball game – because it needs little equipment, can be played by teams from two-a-side to any size, by both girls and boys, and maintenance of the court is done by families living in that particular street. The idea has met with great

"Our dream would be a counselling unit in every health facility; schools open until late afternoon with cultural, employment and life skills programmes, sports for student and unemployed youth, and community cultural centres with libraries and recreational facilities in every township."

enthusiasm, and hopefully we'll be seeing Lindelani/ Ntuzuma 'friendlies' before too long!

Art therapy

Creative arts therapy is where healing is dealt with in a more direct way. The Imbali Rehab Project and the Culture and Working Life Project at Natal University have developed the use of art therapy, music therapy, story-telling, and drama in working with groups of youth affected by violence. We are working with them in using this model in schools and communities around Durban. Essentially, the group is assisted over time to use creative means to explore the trauma. A facilitator is there to contain feelings which might overwhelm the person or the group. As in more formal counselling the aim is to tell the story, acknowledge feelings and to find solutions within the group, and within the community at large. The making of art provides a sense of mastery over the trauma even in being able to make something creative out of it. If the community (especially parents) is invited to view these initiatives, this increases self-esteem and a feeling of belonging as well.

The idea is that youth who have been through this process, or teachers, will be in a position to continue running such groups, and also developing people's artistic skills into something recognisable. Music groups, singers at weddings, painters, sculptors and other creative people will be a resource for the community, and hopefully will be paid for their work in the long run.

There is still a lack of recreation facilities to promote youth culture. We are involved with youth in KwaMashu who are part of a committee raising funds to build a youth centre. They have a vision of a multi-purpose building with a library, halls for dance/aerobic/karate classes, a swimming pool and a computer room – all to be built by youth themselves while learning construction skills. This idea has received support from adults from all sectors in the townships.

Developing counselling skills

Counselling skills training is important, and with some professionals, it is the only appropriate way they can become involved. Nurses at the KwaMashu Polyclinic are being trained in basic counselling, dealing with child abuse (Childline and the KwaMashu Child Protection Unit helped here) and trauma counselling. With teachers and youth themselves, we don't aim to make people into fully-trained counsellors. Learning to listen and allowing people to talk about their difficulties will assist teachers with traumatised students and parents with children.

Conflict resolution training is one of the skills youth can learn in violence prevention. Being able to hear the essential factors in a conflict, whether personal or political, gives people both an experience of standing outside of their own fixed positions as well as a sense of control in a potentially violent situation – even if a successful negotiated solution is not arrived at or not possible. Both IFP and ANC youth in these areas are very keen for their members to understand that talking can be powerful and does not mean that leaders have "sold out". We also think that this skill can help children feel less powerless when there is family violence.

Direct community involvement in peace-making can be therapeutic in itself. The Peace Accord in KwaZulu Natal recruited residents of violent areas as peace monitors on a large scale for the first time in 1994. Opinion is still divided over whether hastily-trained and inexperienced monitors could do very much in a crisis. However, the monitoring clearly did something for them. The identity of being "peace monitors", with uniforms, training, and a mandate to do something about the violence clearly had an enlivening effect on those participating. It was a huge disappointment when the National Peace Accord closed down its monitoring operation after the elections. However, working with people grappling to take on the identity of peace gave us the practical experience of what social psychologists have been arguing for across the world: the creation of a positive social identity. And there are still the October elections for these youth to get through, and some are already talking of setting up monitoring structures among themselves.

This type of intervention with survivors of violence will only really be successful if it is adopted by education departments, health workers and community workers of all disciplines. The KwaZulu Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence is researching the effectiveness of each aspect of the model in improving people's lives – and if it works, we are going to do all we can to persuade government agencies to take it on. Our dream would be a counselling unit in every health facility; schools open until late afternoon with cultural, employment and life skills programmes, sports for student and unemployed youth, and community cultural centres with libraries and recreational facilities in every township. ❑

Anne McKay is a psychologist and the co-ordinator of the KwaZulu Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence.

Empowering union

Pat Horn describes how self-employed women have formed a union to support their initiatives

Sewu

Women in Block AK sew pillowcases and sell water containers to passengers at the bus station in Durban.

On 13 July 1994, the Self-Employed Women's Union (Sewu) was launched in Durban. Sewu is a trade union which organises women working outside the formal economy. The majority of Sewu's members are street vendors, and growing numbers are home-based. Sewu members are workers who by and large have no consistent identifiable employers.

Sewu aims to do the following:

- Build unity between women whose productive and subsistence work is not recognised.
- Develop negotiating skills so that women can negotiate directly with the city council, police, small contractors and middle-men, civic and political organisations, through their own elected representatives.
- Assist women with legal advice.
- Assist women to solve problems of child care, credit, lack of maternity, sick or disability benefits.
- Develop lobbying skills so that women can organise to get laws changed if they are not suitable to their needs.
- Develop leadership skills among women who work outside formal sector work.
- Provide access for women to other organisations that offer facilities such as:
  - skills training
  - credit and loan facilities
  - legal assistance
  - health advice and assistance
  - relief or counselling for survivors of violent attacks including rape.

The inspiration for Sewu comes from the Self-Employed Women's Association (Sewa) in India. Sewa is a trade union which was formed in 1972 in Ahmedabad, India, to organise impoverished self-employed women. Today SEWA has nearly 54 000 members and its own co-operative bank. It is known worldwide as an organisation that has empowered thousands of working class women. Six Sewa members visited South Africa and were present at the Sewu launch in Durban.

Informal sector: workers or entrepreneurs?

There is a popular view that all informal sector operators are independent entrepreneurs who choose to work in this way in preference to working in the formal sector of the economy, because they make much more money. This is a fallacy, especially in the case of the majority of women in the sector. Most are engaged in unrewarding, unremunerative, hard work for many hours each day, merely because there is absolutely no choice or alternative. Or they engage in informal sector activities to supplement low income earned in other jobs such as domestic work. For many women in this sector there are no certainties of profit. All they know is that there is some turnover of cash which is generated by being involved in trading.

"For many women in this sector there are no certainties of profit. All they know is that there is some turnover of cash which is generated by being involved in trading."

"It is the women who are suffering the most. We are the ones who carry the responsibility. Our children come to us when they are hungry – not to their fathers. If the men want a union, they can form their own."

The informal sector, just like the formal sector, has both employers and workers. However, because of deregulation and the very small size of enterprises, it is also a sector in which the entrepreneurs are often not able to meet the basic needs of the people whom they employ or contract. As a result it is a sector in which super-exploitative practices are fairly common. The workers in the sector are often paid to do different tasks by different people. They may also be self-employed workers who are themselves not able to run viable enterprises. Such workers face exploitation from a number of sources, such as suppliers, unscrupulous entrepreneurs, corrupt public servants who control access to various resources, and protection racketeers.

Sewu

Women home-workers in Newton C, Inanda.

Sewu recognises that there are both workers and entrepreneurs in the informal sector, and believes that the workers in the sector need trade unions as much, if not more than, workers in the formal economy. Sewu is one such trade union. Unlike other informal sector organisations, Sewu is not trying to build the small business sector, but to make women workers in the sector strong through their unity. Like other democratic trade unions, Sewu is run by elected structures which are controlled by members and not by the full-time union staff.

Why does Sewu organise only women?

Although the majority of people in the informal sector are probably women, women's earnings are proportionately lower than their level of participation in the sector. This is as a result of women being more concentrated in the low-income activities in the sector. When particular economic activities of women in the sector start to yield better returns, they are often then taken over by men.

Patriarchal relations dominate the forms of regulation in the informal sector. A higher proportion of women fall under the control of male traders, sub-contractors, suppliers or protection racketeers. A higher proportion of men have other people, often mainly women, under their control.

The key to empowering workers at the bottom of the informal sector, is to empower the women in the sector. However, most informal sector organisations' leadership is dominated by men, even if the vast majority of members are women. The leadership tends to promote its own interests, which are often the interests of small entrepreneurs, at the expense of the interests of the people (mainly women) at the bottom of the pile. It is clear that the women in the sector have to organise on the basis of their oppression as women within the sector, in order to be able to overcome these barriers to their empowerment.

Sewu decided to follow the example of Sewa and organise a trade union for women only. Women who have joined Sewu have never had doubts as to whether men should be admitted to membership or not. When a Sewu member was asked by a newspaper reporter at the Sewu launch why the union is restricted to women members, she replied spontaneously "It is the women who are suffering the most. We are the ones who carry the responsibility. Our children come to us when they are hungry – not to their fathers. If the men want a union, they can form their own." ❑

Sewu

Sewu members and visitors from Sewa, India, dance at the launch of Sewu in Durban, July 1994.

Pat Horn, a trade unionist since the 1970s, was inspired in 1990 to raise funds and support for organising self-employed women. She is now Secretary of Sewu.

Settlement in Durban's core

__Maurice Makhatini__ argues that the formal recognition and upgrading of settlements must be an essential component of any housing solution.

By 1950 there were as many as 120 000 people living in Cato Manor, which had become a bustling slum. In 1949 serious conflict had erupted between Indians and Africans in the area. This was followed by beerhall riots in the late 1950s which broadened into a challenge against white local authority.

The Natives Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts were applied and by 1965 both the landowners and the tenants of Cato Manor had been forcibly removed. The removals were met with rioting by Africans, resulting in loss of lives, and court action by Indian landowners. Both strategies failed.

From then until recently Cato Manor lay dormant, with undergrowth slowly covering the ruins of old buildings and rugged roads, but it lived on nostalgically in the memories of those who once dwelt there. The area remained undeveloped for three decades largely because of its controversial history.

A very small Indian and African population continued to live in the area clandestinely, but it was only in 1987 that squatter activity began, prompted by the scrapping of the Group Areas Act, township violence and the demise of apartheid. By 1992 there were around 600 shacks in Cato Manor: today there are several thousand.

Stages of squatting

There were three significant waves of settlers into Cato Manor, which seem to coincide with periods of intense instability on the city periphery. Other reasons for moving were township overcrowding, political changes and skewed distribution of resources.

Squatting took the form of staged, selective invasions of pockets of land by unorganised groups and individuals with the purpose of finding somewhere safe to stay.

Cato Crest was the first area to be invaded in early 1987. The next community seems to have arrived in early 1990, and the more recent arrivals in the middle of 1993. Families and small groups also steadily arrived, densifying already settled sections and being absorbed into communities.

The waves of land invasions all start clandestinely. The "hidden" stage of squatting begins with the moving in of an individual, family or group, and the settlement grows until a threshold is reached. Shacks are concealed from neighbouring communities and establishments.

A sense of community is generated by the constant threat of demolition and uncertainty about the future. This results in a desire to multiply and become a strong united front. The acceptance of newcomers, especially those seen as strong and well off, is high. This tolerance reaches a threshold when the authorities intervene, and may also coincide with unacceptable density and a desire by occupants to exert some kind of control.

The transition from the hidden to the "open" stage of squatting comes when a settlement is publicly recognised and numbers are allocated to shacks following negotiations with the authorities. The negotiated deal includes a moratorium on further squatting, to be enforced by the squatters.

Hidden squatting

The hidden stage sees the coexistence of virtual strangers, many of whom have fled political conflict. There is distrust and fear, with people reluctant to talk about their experiences to strangers lest they be related to "the enemy".

Leaders emerge out of vigorous resistance to demolitions. The kind of leaders needed at this stage are those who can lead marches against demolitions and help others get settled. Education, literacy and organisational skills are of secondary importance.

There is a significant absence of party political mobilisation, probably because party affiliations have not yet been established and because the settlers are tired and wary of political instability. Political mobilisation would also be unwise because it could undermine the collective struggle to remain.

Nevertheless, change from the camouflaged to the open stage takes place in a potentially volatile situation, largely because codes of behaviour and degrees of sacrifice to the common goal are still being established. These codes include access paths, charges for services rendered and exchange of materials and implements.

The hidden stage is also characterised by frantic activity aimed at keeping a step ahead of threat-

"The cycle of invasion-negotiation-breakdown-invasion will continue ... if a housing programme is not implemented very soon. The control mechanisms in Cato Manor are not adequate to deal with future invasions. It is essential to begin delivering development if disaster is to be averted."

ened demolition and banishment. The rapid setting up of homes opens up economic opportunities for site clearers, builders, handymen, latrine diggers, woodcutters, vendors of items from food to nails and building materials, and others.

Some opportunistic traders and artisans are brought in by potential squatters and linger on, taking on more jobs and eventually getting established themselves. This economic opportunism is not limited to locals but permeates into neighbouring communities and establishments. Neighbouring shops, for instance, suddenly start stocking commodities like nails, paraffin, loose candles, primus stove heads and cheap tobacco.

Most building and consolidation activities are performed at night, with days free of hammering sounds while people rest and anxiously await the reaction of the authorities to the previous night's visible accomplishments. Struggles are limited to a desire to remain in the area free of harassment.

Open squatting

The open stage is characterised by the emergence of new social relations and the strengthening of some old ones. People begin to see themselves as insiders, and realise the need to exclude newcomers who threaten their new found status and could undermine the invasion moratorium agreed to with authorities.

The open stage also sees the fall of some leaders, the strengthening of others and the emergence of new leadership. The new leaders are well informed and articulate, since this stage involves establishing relations with outside agencies and requires dedicated leadership, time, meetings and paperwork. Class and other divisions begin to emerge, and political flavouring is added to the legitimacy argument.

The moratorium on further squatting has detrimental effects for some traders and artisans, since there are few newcomers needing work done and the process of extending and consolidating shacks slows down. Some trickle out of the area to look for work in other areas and in the city.

Another characteristic of this stage is that demands to stay change into demands for infrastructure and services.

Consolidation

The third stage arrives when elected leaders negotiate the permanent future of the population – the current stage at Cato Manor. It is characterised by leadership struggles, with people aligning themselves with those they see as advocating the best possible deals, which comprise combinations of housing delivery systems, areas of permanent residence, levels of infrastructure and costs.

There are evident divisions about which demands are reasonable and which not. These divisions, which are usually based on differences in income, can result in rival groupings and have the potential to lead to serious conflict before development is delivered. The area becomes a target of party political mobilisation, and aligned power structures emerge.

The absence of sectional violence in Cato Manor seems partly due to the lack of a material base for the emergence of patronage relationships which require resources to distribute, especially land and security. Cato Manor is government land in a highly visible inner city area, and there are no threatening communities nearby.

Peace has been sustained by the Cato Manor Residents Association (CMRA) which predates the squatter influx. The CMRA, originallly formed to safeguard the interests of Indians removed from the land, got a second lease on life when squatting began.

Another factor may be the social composition of Cato Manor, which is a community with experience of violence, making it difficult for potential warlords to muster power and support. The formation of the Cato Manor Development Forum and its Cato Manor Development Association(CMDA) has also diverted potential conflict into constructive debate about development issues.

The authorities

Since the invasions began squatters have viewed authorities with suspicion bordering on animosity. They were seen as agents representing the interests of groups other than the squatters.

This perception was fuelled by numerous attempts to remove squatters from the various parts of Cato Manor at different times, and the initial reluctance of the authorities to supply services to squatter areas.

Constant breakdowns in agreements on further squatting can be understood in this context of suspicion. The agreements have always been that the community would stop further settlement in return for services and negotiation on housing delivery. But while communities were expected to effect their side of the deal immediately, the authorities earlier and the CMDA later did not appear to be fulfilling their side of the deal.

The CMDA has not allayed these suspicions sufficiently, and is still seen as an extension of authority rather than as an independent initiative concerned with development.

The cycle of invasion-negotiation-breakdown-invasion will continue, with more groups accommodated and given numbers if a housing programme is not implemented very soon. The control mechanisms in Cato Manor are not adequate to deal with future invasions and the monitoring system could collapse under pressure of determined invaders. It is essential to begin delivering development if disaster is to be averted. ❑

This is an extract from Makhatini's chapter in the book Here to stay: Informal settlements in KwaZulu Natal *edited by Doug Hindson and Jeff McCarthy, published by Indicator Press, University of Natal, 1994.*

The right to representation

Carmel Rickard looks at Judge John Didcott's dedication to making justice equally accessible to all

Sunday Times

Carmel Rickard

When the eleven judges of the new Constitutional Court take their seats in February 1995, one of their first cases will deal with an issue which has concerned the Black Sash for many years – the plight of the undefended accused.

For several of the judges, the question is very familiar. But for none more than Judge John Didcott formerly of the Natal Supreme Court. In 1988, he became the first judge in the country to set aside a conviction on the grounds that the trial was unfair because the accused could not afford a lawyer. His ground-breaking judgement in the Khanyile case, however, was viewed as so radical that the state took his decision on appeal.

Three years later Arthur Chaskalson SC, now president of the Constitutional Court, headed a top legal team which argued the appeal – and lost. Five Appeal Court judges, led by Chief Justice Michael Corbett, decided that in criminal appeals from the lower courts the judge was not supposed to enquire whether the trial had been fair "in accordance with basic notions of fairness and justice". Instead, the judge had to consider whether all the rules had been adhered to or whether there had been a departure from the "formalities designed to ensure a fair trial".

Of course, the Constitutional Court might now take quite a different view of what the judge's task should be: since April a constitution has been in place which guarantees many new rights to the public, including those people standing trial in the courts.

But even though the public is now protected by a bill of rights, the Didcott judgement continues to raise important issues. As in 1988, it is still not clear whether an accused person, who cannot afford legal representation, must be provided with counsel by the state. Now at last the Constitutional Court will finally decide the issue and it could well turn out that the Khanyile decision is at last vindicated.

At the time, the Khanyile case caused a tremendous response, and many human rights experts welcomed it as a breakthrough in the cause of the undefended accused.

The new constitution formally acknowledges the role that foreign court decisions may play in helping South African courts come to a decision. But six years ago, and without this specific mandate, Judge Didcott had already taken the risk of doing just that, basing much of his judgement in the Khanyile case, on major decisions by courts overseas.

He looked to the relevant provisions of international law, and went into detail about the development in the United States of the rights of unrepresented accused who cannot afford counsel.

Ironically, yet another Constitutional Court judge was involved in the judgement – Judge Richard Goldstone, then of the Transvaal Supreme Court, now in The Hague as chief prosecutor for the United Nations' legal team framing charges against alleged Yugoslavian war criminals.

"The new constitution formally acknowledges the role that foreign court decisions may play in helping South African courts come to a decision."

In his Khanyile judgement, Judge Didcott noted a recent decision of Judge Goldstone on a similar issue. In that case, Judge Goldstone had set aside two convictions because the accused had not been informed that they had the right to counsel.

Judge Didcott said that he could have set aside Khanyile's conviction on the same grounds, since the magistrate had also not informed Khanyile of his rights. However, the judge said he wanted to go further and consider the case of someone who knew of the right to counsel, but who could nevertheless not afford it. "The spotlight shifts, moving from the right to a representation that is obtainable and falling instead on a right to be provided with representation once it is wanted but otherwise out of reach."

"In 1988, he became the first judge in the country to set aside a conviction on the grounds that the trial was unfair because the accused could not afford a lawyer."

Judge John Didcott

Natal Newspapers, *Sunday Tribune*

And then he asked a telling question, whose answer he and the ten other members of the Constitutional Court must find, seven years later. "The question arising is whether the time has not come at last for our courts, which have long recognised and upheld the first right, to proclaim the second as a corollary."

Throughout the judgement, his passion for human rights and fairness shines through.

"The public conscience of this country, " he wrote, "the conscience of its people as a whole, can scarcely rest with any comfort on the thought of thousands standing trial in our courts daily who have no legal assistance because they are too poor to bear the cost."

The judge said he would have liked to make a ruling that every person charged should be entitled to defence, paid for by the state if the accused

"The public conscience of this country, the conscience of its people as a whole, can scarcely rest with any comfort on the thought of thousands standing trial in our courts daily who have no legal assistance because they are too poor to bear the cost."

could not afford the cost. "(That) would have been the beacon on which my sights were set, principle and policy propelling me towards it. That we should head in its direction, intent on remedying the deficiency and arriving there at last, I still believe."

In the meantime, because of a lack of national resources, he suggested a compromise: a way of identifying those cases in which state-funded counsel was essential.

He proposed a three part test: the complexity of the case; the gravity of the case and the likely sentence; and the maturity, sophistication and intelligence of the individual person standing trial.

Weighing these questions, the magistrate or judge should ask whether the accused person "would be placed at a disadvantage palpable and gross; that the trial would be palpably and grossly unfair, were it to go ahead without a lawyer for the defence."

The decision of the magistrate, made at the start of a trial, could later be reviewed by a Supreme Court judge who would have the benefit of the court record. For the reviewing judge, "the easiness or the difficulty of the matter, the man's competence or incompetence to run his own defence, and the impact on him of the result will no longer involve prophecy or speculation. Known by then they all will be, the record duly demonstrating them. And the question will be ... whether in the judgement of the court the trial already completed was indeed palpably and grossly unfair. No conviction can ever be allowed to stand which is the product of a trial so discredited."

Considering the trial of Khanyile, Judge Didcott felt that this was definitely the case and he set aside the conviction.

Didcott's judgements became well known during the consecutive states of emergency in the 1980s. And particularly during the period when the late Judge John Milne was judge president, the Natal courts gained a reputation in the rest of the country for their fairness and apparent desire to uphold individual rights where this was possible.

In the words of a senior member of the profession who was at the Bar during the emergency period: "Judging from the cases it heard, the Natal court became a very attractive forum for litigation testing the limits of the emergency regulations."

For Judge Didcott, consistently overlooked for promotion by the previous government, his appointment to the Constitutional Court must be a source of great satisfaction. He will be missed in Natal, but his new post will allow him to make a far wider contribution, helping to protect fundamental rights not just in his home province, but throughout the country. ❑

Carmel Rickard writes for the Sunday Times on legal and religious affairs. Throughout the 1980s she managed to write about the thorny politics of KwaZulu and Natal with unusual insight and accuracy. She was the 1991 South African Niemann Fellow at Harvard.

Local government elections

Jane Argall outlines the looming challenge facing NGOs

For some time now, the call from human rights and democracy organisations for mobilisation on local government elections has been heard loud and clear. Emphasis has been placed on the need for information about local government transition. Some progress has been made in demystifying the processes of negotiation and restructuring. Preliminary drafts of the electoral regulations have been published. NGOs can now begin realistically to assess their role and their capacity to enact it in the face of shrinking financial resources.

Lack of public information as well as the uneven development across the country in the formation of local negotiating forums and transitional councils threatens the prospects for maximum voter participation.

Local government education

Education about local government is required on two levels. On the one hand, information is needed about the process of desegregation and democratisation of local authorities and about the part that people can play in it. Already, some organisations have begun training local communities for participation in the processes, in skills development and confidence building. On the other hand, information is required about the meaning of local government generally and the potential of local government to work for all citizens.

The experience of local government in the past has not been a happy one. It has failed efficiently to provide the services urgently needed in local communities. Local government authorities still lack the legitimacy they will need in the future if they are to work for all people. Education, on a far wider scale, is required if local government is to become an empowering and meaningful social institution.

The challenge for NGOs

NGOs have been slow to respond to enter the fray and there is little time left for soul-searching and questioning. NGOs are caught in a double bind. If they allow themselves a "late start" to programmes of public education, they risk the same kind of marginalisation by the official structures experienced during the 1994 elections. If, on the other hand, they rush in without a clear educational strategy and timetable, they may duplicate or oversupply resources. Before the April elections NGOs improved their efficiency by working together in coalition bodies. With far fewer resources available, and lacking the glamour of the national elections, NGOs will need urgently to revive their partnerships.

The demographic conditions in the country remain very much as they were before the national elections. The highest concentration of voters falls into the provinces of Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal. A significant percentage of these voters live in rural areas and informal settlements where infrastructure is weak and resources few. Lack of political tolerance and violence have not been eradicated from our society. We are not yet rid of bureaucratic incompetence, nor do we have in place a sound electoral infrastructure. We have seen that loopholes and omissions in the legislation have created tension between political leaders and parties, and resulted in the alienation of important sectors of society such as traditional authorities.

"With donors increasingly backing the official structures, much less money will be available to NGOs for training and education. It requires us to find the most creative ways to plan and economize in our spending, and as far as possible to share what is available."

The challenges to NGOs are enormous and urgent. Four points need to be borne in mind as we try to come to terms with them:

- How can NGOs work alongside transitional authorities in public education, without compromising their independence from the processes and at the same time, having their efforts taken seriously by the official transitional structures.
- In defining target communities for public education on local government elections, NGOs should aim their efforts at recognised constituencies and in order to extend their reach further, could aim to structure their programmes in accord with the demarcations of local government bodies. While demarcation boards limp along in the finalisation of local authority boundaries, the process of identifying target communities will be retarded.
- What educational resources are available and what items need to be devised?
- How much funding is available for this work? With donors increasingly backing the official structures, much less money will be available to NGOs for training and education. It requires us to find the most creative ways to plan and economize in our spending, and as far as possible to share what is available.

The process of transition to local government faces an urgent timetable for the setting up of transitional councils, for the resolution of rural government structures, for the setting up of voter registration and the preparation of the public for polling itself. In this context, NGOs cannot afford to dally any longer with their identity and with feelings of paralysis. We have the experience and expertise necessary to get the job done. We will need to work a lot harder, however, in order to achieve success. It can be done. If we rise to meet the task, it may very well prove to be our salvation. ❑

AIDS: Another kind of struggle

***Michael Worsnip** argues that we should practise the lessons learned in the struggle against apartheid, in order to win the war against AIDS.*

Michael Worsnip

"How does a woman who is totally dependent on a man and often violently treated by him, negotiate the use of a condom?"

People often ask me why KwaZulu Natal has the highest HIV positive figures in the country. Its true, it does. In 1990, the province had a rate of 1.61 per cent. At the end of 1994 it was well over the 10 per cent (and probably nearer 12 per cent when you read this). The Cape, by contrast, is probably not even half that.

We don't know why KwaZulu Natal has such a high positivity rate. Some guesses include the following, most of which, if you look hard enough, you will find in other provinces as well.

Violence

Undoubtedly violence is a major contributing cause of the spread of HIV. Violence brings with it family disintegration and the destruction of community. When families are split up and when communities are ruptured, there tends to be much more sexual exploration outside marital/familial bounds, than in stable communities.

The violence also means that people live in constant fear and consequently, the news of a terrible disease which holds out the threat of death in some five or ten years, is really not feared. Generally, people tend to be more fixated on the immediate, rather than on the long-term, threat. What one finds, then, is that people live "kamakazi" existences, not caring very much about what might, or might not happen ten years down the line.

Poverty

KwaZulu Natal is not only among the poorest of the provinces, it is also the most densely populated. Durban, for example, is the third fastest growing city in the world. And as the informal settlements grow ever larger, so HIV spreads.

The virus spreads in these conditions because people do not have access to information about the disease, because health is generally poor, and basic facilities minimal. It spreads because there are very few recreational facilities and reliable condoms are difficult to get hold of even when there is a willingness to make use of them – which is certainly not the norm!

When people are malnourished, they are more susceptible to the virus. Where the Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) level is high, so too is the HIV level, for very obvious reasons. Poverty, in all its various manifestations, is an ideal breeding ground for HIV, not because poor people are more promiscuous, but because they are more vulnerable.

The border with Mozambique

There is good evidence now that the virus has spread in KwaZulu Natal, in part, because of its proximity to Mozambique. In the war situation which has prevailed there up until now, little AIDS prevention education has been possible. There are no reliable figures for Mozambique at present, but I think one can safely assume that they would be high. To what extent there is a connection, is difficult to say and one needs to be very circumspect in case blaming and victimization begins with regard to Mozambique and other African countries. I remember all too clearly the apartheid government urging people not to have sex with ANC members because "all ANC members have been to Lusaka, and Zambia has very high HIV positive figures". Naturally, most people dismissed the idea with contempt. But the fact remains, many returning exiles were affected, but happily the majority of them, positive and negative, also learned through experience that the condom can protect and I believe that the use of condoms amongst returnees is high, though, as far as I know, there has been no testing of this assertion.

What has been extremely sad for us in KwaZulu-Natal is that few returnees with HIV have felt able to go public about with their condition. We have had several well-known, respected and loved cadres die of HIV-related illnesses, but they were never public about the disease. This is a tragedy, because of the esteem in which they were held in the community. Public knowledge of the fact that they were HIV positive would have gone a long way towards destigmatising the disease.

The port and trucking routes

The fact that Durban is a very large port (and Richards Bay a growing one) and the fact that there is a well worked and largely unorganised

Progressive Primary Health Care Network

Nsosinathi Dlamini, community worker of the National Aids Programme-PPHC, seen together with traditional healers and other community volunteers holding their certificates after having completed a course on AIDS at Ekuvukeni in the Midlands.

sex-worker industry operating along the major routes to Gauteng and elsewhere, means an obvious spread-path for the virus. The Progressive Primary Health Care Aids Programme is one of the very few in the country which is addressing this problem. It is a very difficult task because sex-workers are neither organised nor legal and are hence extremely vulnerable. Understandably they are suspicious of AIDS workers. In some cases we have needed to supplement their earnings in order for them to attend workshops. I'm sure there would be many who would question the morality of doing so, but for us, we need to use every available means to try to change practices which serve to spread the virus and we make no apology for our methods.

By contrast, the truck drivers are more organised, but they are almost always on the move. In order to work with them, we need to have the kind of workers who are willing to travel with them, or meet them at truck stops along the route at night. This is difficult and very slow work.

Gender issues

Gender issues pervade every one of the above, but I mention them separately because of their absolute importance. I am not in a position to judge whether men in KwaZulu Natal are any more "macho" than in other provinces, but what is very clear is that a generalised and crazy "machismo" is a major cause of the spread of the virus. The demands which men make on frequently dependent and powerless women encourage the spread of the virus like nothing else. Women, especially younger women, are the most vulnerable to the virus. This is evidenced by the fact that women in the age group 19 – 24 years display the highest positivity.

How does a woman who is totally dependent on a man and often violently treated by him, negotiate the use of a condom if she gets a little suspicious that he might be "grazing" (a local expression for sleeping around) elsewhere? I don't know. I don't think it is possible. I am fairly sure that that woman will simply shut up and get infected. It is a pattern I have seen in Uganda, Kenya, Zambia and Tanzania. It is doubtless a pattern the world over, particularly in poor societies. The oppression of women is a major cause of the spread of the virus and until we deal with it, it will continue to wreak havoc.

There is some good news about AIDS. The disease is beatable. We can conquer it by changing our behaviour. I would agree, it is not an easy thing to do, but it is a real, achievable possibility. I do not think that we can solve the problem by simple technocratic vertical solutions and I fear very much that this will be the approach of the new government AIDS directorate. All too often we, in the NGO AIDS sector, hear that the solution (a borrowed, and untested, quick-fix, keep-the-funders-happy solution) is to treat STDs; increase condom usage; invest in sexuality education in schools; and put some resources into care, specifically medical care in hospitals. Consequently a programme such as our own, which depends on community based mobilization and education is almost completely unfunded beyond March 1995. The reason is that we as an NGO are facing the same crisis that other NGOs are facing – funders switching their attention to the state and the RDP. In addition, funders are looking for "quick-fix" solutions to the problem. They want to see immediate results for their money.

Having seen the slow, but clear benefit of a community driven approach, which might well include traditional healers, church groups, soccer clubs ... you name it, I feel that to invest in anything else would be to win a minor battle, but to lose the war. AIDS is a phenomenon which evokes a struggle in humanity. And we should learn the lessons which our struggle against apartheid has taught us. It takes concerted, costly, ongoing community mobilisation. It takes time, it takes conviction and it takes considerable sacrifice and courage. There is no quick-fix, no matter what the funders or the bureaucrats may say. ❑

Michael Worsnip is acting director of the Progressive Primary Health Care Network, National AIDS Programme.

"Having seen the slow, but clear benefit of a community driven approach ... I feel that to invest in anything else would be to win a minor battle, but to lose the war."

Fragile Paradise

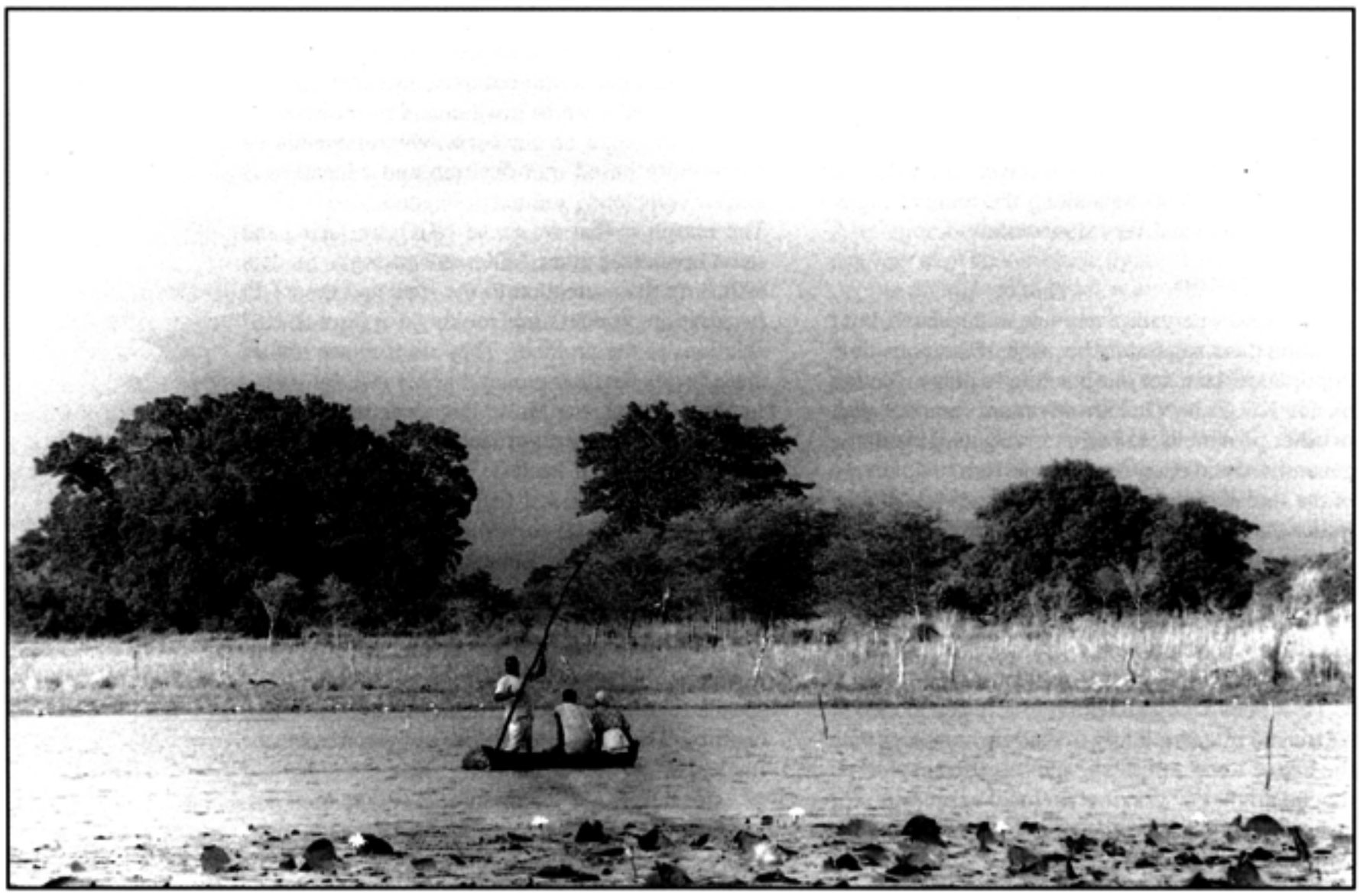
Text and photography: ***Paul Weinberg***

Maputaland is a grail for conservationists, whether green or of the more traditional khaki hue. There they vie with foresters, development workers, developers, water departments, educationists and agriculturalists for a stake in the treasure - remnants of unsullied nature – and the fealty of the local people. This area of KwaZulu Natal, abutting Mozambique to the North and stretching along the Indian Ocean to Lake Sibaya, has probably been the focus of more research than any other rural area in southern Africa. It is also one of extraordinary contest.

The local population is as rare as the place. Mostly Tembe Thonga, some continue to share an increasingly fragile existence with nature in the distinctive eco-zones ranging from coastal forest to plains of ilala palms that are the tourist-brochure signature of the region. Fish are still caught in time-tested basket traps woven of local materials. Wild medlars, marula nuts, grasses and many other indigenous plant resources are harvested to provide food, shelter and medicine.

But Maputaland is no Eden. Its families have been wracked by migrancy and apartheid. Now they are torn by the political contest of the day – the embattled issues of tribal authorities' place in local government, of democracy's place in systems of traditional administrative and patronage. Now too come the conservationists, the NGOs, the developers: heralds of eco-tourism and other drawing board plans, trying to carve stature for themselves in this last wild place.

Pristine riverine forest once stretched from Maputaland to the Tugela River. It was wiped out, largely by white farmers. Now there is a tiny and vulnerable stretch of forest that barely covers the distance between Kosi Bay and Lake Sibaya, and it is eyed enviously from wealthy heights and crowded beaches. That envy for a lost past, a destroyed past, makes its greatest demands on the people who dwell in its remnants. The election has given them a voice, but will it find a way through the thickets of competitors for paradise?



Crossing the Pongola River, Maputaland.

A man catches fish using a basket trap.

Discarded dreams

In 1970 ***Cosmas Desmond's*** *book,* The Discarded People *drew attention to the plight of uprooted Africans. The following year he was banned. Ever passionate, he takes up cudgels once again for the neglected people of the countryside.*

South Africa has no "buzz" any longer. The excitement, the passion, the hope and even the dreams have gone. They have disappeared in a whirl of pragmatism. In their place, has come the turgid verbiage of white papers and the pious utterances of politicians and bureaucrats.

The prevailing, somewhat dour, mood is due, I suggest, to the obsession with economic growth as the sole indicator of a nation's health. Keeping foreign investors happy is more important than making the people happy. It is also, more than incidentally, less fun: "Eat with the rich, but go to play with the poor, who are capable of joy". Important as growth is, it is not the be all and end all of human existence.

Apartheid did not only destroy the economy; it also destroyed communities and the whole ethos which sustained them. That ethos cannot be recreated simply by the multiplication (or even replication) of projects. Community development is all very well but you cannot develop that which no longer exists. Only the people themselves can create community, but in order to do so they need not only resources but also recognition, respect, and grounds for hope.

Certainly, in Natal, the region with which I am most familiar, there does not seem to be much recognition of the needs and aspirations of rural people – almost half the population – 74 per cent of whom have no adequate water supply and 94 per cent no proper sanitation, while the majority are unemployed. For thirty or forty years millions of them have been marginalised by society, being treated as "superfluous people", while at the same time subsidising the rich by bearing much of the cost of migrant labour.

Such people do, quite rightly, have expectations, but none of the many to whom I have spoken expect them to be fulfilled overnight. In the Limehill complex, between Ladysmith and Dundee, for example, people are now working on a water reticulation scheme. They know it will take two years to complete – since they are digging the trenches themselves, they can understand why, and they are not complaining.

People need to be made to feel that they are part of a new process, that they are no longer discarded and forgotten. Little has been done to instill this feeling however. They are expected to continue being patient, while the politicians sort out the structural problems at the top. The latter task has to be completed and it is doubtless made doubly difficult by an unsympathetic civil service, but one cannot expect the ordinary man or woman in the veld – there are no streets to speak of in many places – to appreciate that. They want to see some sign that things have changed. For the time being, I believe, many would be satisfied with that: a sign, a symbol, an earnest of the government's good intent. And, I suggest, it could and should be done immediately, while we wait for the RDP to go through its colour-coded stages.

Instead of flocking overseas in droves during the parliamentary recess, members of parliament and provincial councils could be dispatched to every corner of the country to explain to people what the government is trying to do and the reasons for the delay in implementing its promises, and to consult with them about some small but pressing need which could be met immediately. In Limehill, for example, every person I have spoken to has said that, while they need water, jobs, housing, schools, clinics, and roads, their most urgent need is for a community centre, which they are quite willing and able to build themselves. They have had architects' plans drawn and have listed more than a dozen functions which it could perform. It could, among other things, help to provide the link with the government and its agencies, the lack of which Cheryl Carolus has identified as a major problem: people simply do not know what is going on. Above all, they say, such a facility "would enable us to meet together and plan our own future". It would not, of course, solve all the problems but, for a relatively small amount of money, thousands of people would be made to feel part of the new process and given some hope to sustain them. They might even become "empowered", whatever that is really supposed to mean. ❑

"People need to be made to feel that they are a part of a new process; that they are no longer discarded and forgotten. Little has been done to instill this feeling."

"The Eagle-which-beats-its-wings-where-herds-graze"

Through an exploration of the imagery in Zulu cattle names, ***Marguerite Poland*** *shows that they are of great symbolic, cultural and spiritual significance in African society.*

The images of cattle have been depicted on the walls of rock shelters ands caves in North Africa for thousands of years. The intricate and unique colour patterns of African cattle have also featured in the paintings of Ancient Egypt where murals and friezes of beasts – the ancestors of the Nguni breed found in Southern Africa – parade in tones of dun, grey, white and red.

Historically, the importance of these so-called Nguni cattle to the Nguni people themselves, both in economic and cultural terms, cannot be underestimated. Not only did the herds provide food, they were a measure of wealth and prosperity closely associated with rituals and practices connected with the spiritual life of the people. They were the link between clans which intermarried and with the ancestral shades without whose presence and guidance all social cohesion and meaning at both a familly and community level would be lost.

Consequently, the Nguni not only bred and cared for their cattle, fulfilling their obligations as pastoralists, but they admired them, composed their praises and distinguished them with names that were not only descriptive and metaphorical but often symbolic. Many of these names not only describe an individual beast in terms of colour or type but link it – through visual imagery – with other beasts, elements and phenomena which form part of the pastoral world in which and through which the herds move.

When considering the Zulu language, the preponderance of cattle colour-pattern terms associated with the names of various birds is interesting: a comparison of photographs of the cattle themselves and the bird with which it is linked usually illustrates a striking similarity between beast and bird. For instance, a bull with speckled white head and black body is called *inkwazi,* the fish eagle; a red beast with deep mauve-dun flanks is known as *isomi,* the red-winged starling.

"Dark grey beast,
disturber of sleep;
Beast with many
white spots,
One with a musical tongue.
Stocky one that raises
weapons,
Provider of liquid food,
God with a moist nose."

Insingizi isuka – the ground hornbill flies away – carries this type of imagery further. A beast with this name is predominantly black with white on its lower rear flanks and back legs. Like it, the ground hornbill is black but displays the flash of its white primary feathers as it rises from the ground. This modestly-coloured beast, therefore, has associated with it a far more complex and sophisticated imagery than might have been imagined.

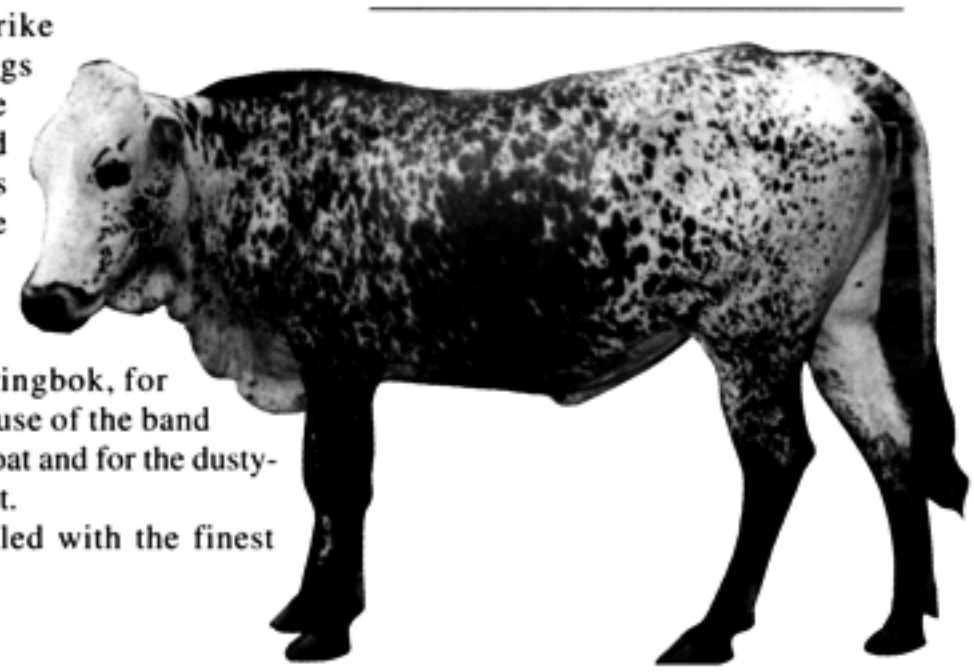
iNyonikayiphumuli is the name given to the white cattle of the Zulu king. This term is not the name of a particular bird but means "the bird that never rests" and is associated with the cattle egret.

There are cattle named for the honey guide, for the pipit, for the kori bustard and the plover, for the helmet shrike and the fiscal shrike and the fledgelings of the owl. There are others named for animals such as the Cape file snake which has the same pale ridge on its back as the beast, for the springbok, for the rinkhals because of the band of white at the throat and for the dusty-yellow medlar fruit.

A beast speckled with the finest spots of rust is known as "the eggs of the lark", another as "the castor oil bean" so closely do its markings resemble the mottled seed. *Abafazi bewela* is a richly descriptive name meaning "the women cross or wade through [the stream]". A beast with this colour-pattern has white legs and underbelly and where this colour meets the darker tones, the waving line which divides them resembles the mark left by water lapping at the legs of a woman who has raised her skirt to wade. A beautifully evocative name is "the spaces between the branches of the trees". A beast with this name has a pattern reminiscent of a tree silhouetted against the sky.

The most striking aspect of a study of Nguni cattle patterns and the names ascribed to them, is the aptness with which – metaphorically – the colour of the beast's hide is associated with some other natural phenomenon. The names are not fanciful but descriptive in a way that closely links cattle to the other creatures which share the environment or to features which form a part of it and which are intimately-known in the world of the Zulu-speaking pastoralist. ❑

Novelist Marguerite Poland is currently working on her doctorate at the University of Natal. Her latest book "Shades" was published in paperback by Penguin in 1994.



Returning the land to the people

***Estelle Randall** charts AFRA's transition from helping people to resist removals to its current role in land restitution*

On 17 November 1994 at the stroke of a pen, President Mandela closed the chapter on forced removals and committed his government to compensate victims of apartheid land laws.

In the lustre of this promise of reconciliation, it's easy to forget that behind the passing of the Restitution of Land Rights Act lies decades of ordinary rural people's determination to see justice done. Elliot Mngadi, Solomon Makhubu, Roosboom and Charlestown are some of the thousands of people and places whose struggle against apartheid forced removal finally flowered in this act.

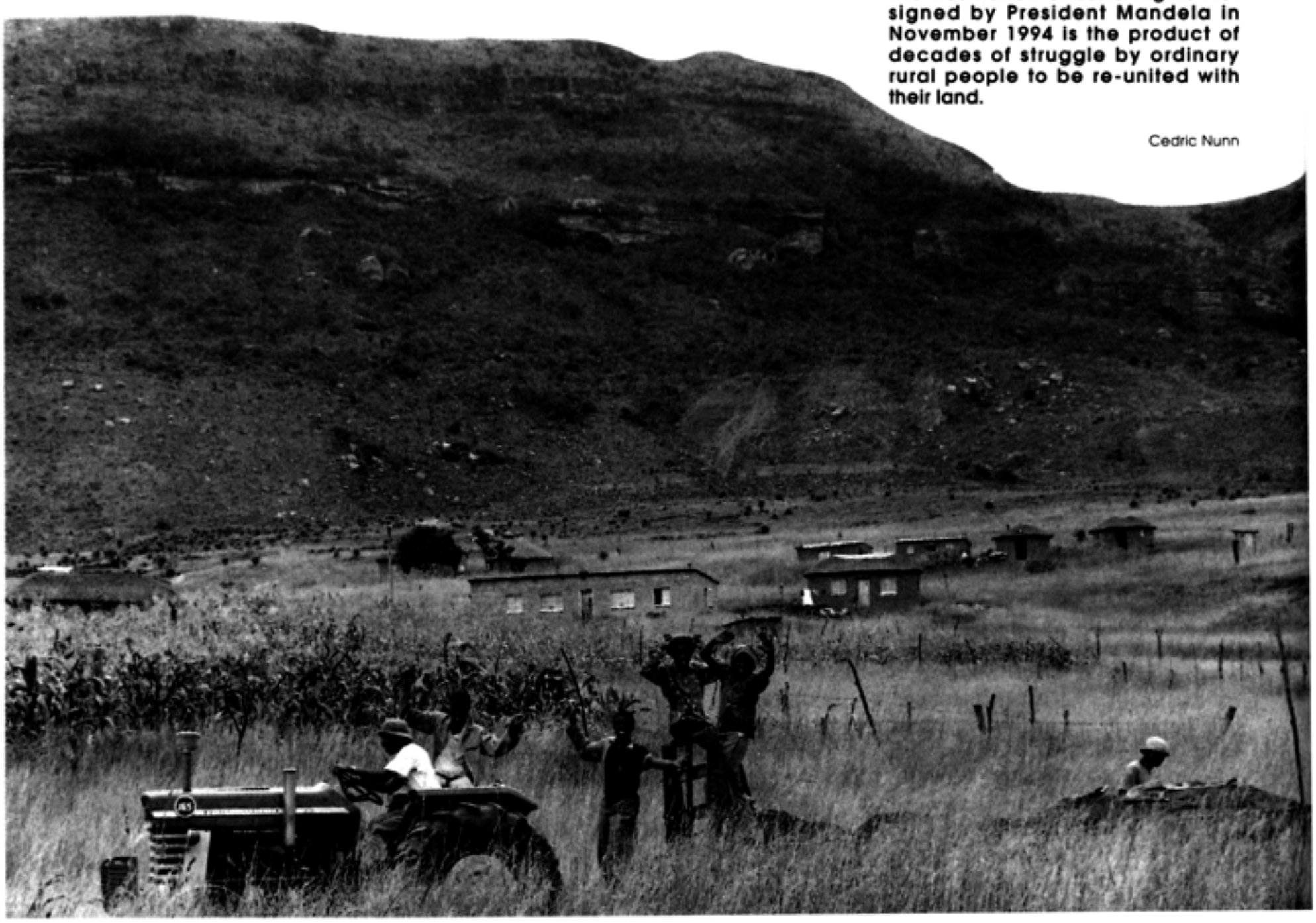
An organisation centrally linked to this struggle is the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA). It was fitting, then, that on the day Mandela signed the Restitution of Land Rights Act, AFRA celebrated its fifteenth anniversary.

AFRA's founder, Peter Brown, recalled that the organisation's roots reach back to the 1950s and the Liberal Party, the ANC (under Chief Luthuli) and the Northern Natal African Landowners' Association. It was then that Brown met Elliot Mngadi, son of a Roosboom landowner.

Roosboom was an African-owned freehold property near Ladysmith in KwaZulu Natal, bought in 1907. When the National Party government started its policy of "black spot" removals in terms of the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act, the Roosboom community was targeted for "resettlement".

"In 1964," recalled Brown, "Elliot organised a conference, attended by more than 1 000 delegates from "black spots" in Natal. The conference sent an appeal to the government to end "black spot" removals. The government's response was to ban Elliot Mngadi and confine him to the Ladysmith district. Along with the rest of Roosboom, he was removed in 1976. He was offered compensation for the loss of his property, but challenged the amount in court. A year later, Mngadi got more than twice the amount originally offered him."

Mass removals had begun. After Roosboom came Charlestown, where



The Restitution of Land Rights Act signed by President Mandela in November 1994 is the product of decades of struggle by ordinary rural people to be re-united with their land.

Cedric Nunn

"Redistribution will provide access to land for landless people generally disadvantaged by apartheid land laws, while the restitution mechanisms now being put in place require lodging specific claims to specific pieces of land."

African people first bought property in 1911 and with which Selby Msimang, ANC member and member of the Natives Representive Council, was closely associated.

Mr. Solomon Makhubu of Charlestown remembered the ruthless arrogance with which people were treated. "When I tried to explain that the land was mine, legally, and that I didn't want to move, the reply was: 'Put that land on wheels and go with it.' "

"Black spot" removals continued throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. When AFRA was formed in 1979, its main role was to help rural Natal communities to resist removal and to publicise its effect and extent.

An important product of this period was a set of comprehensive research reports, which documented the extent of forced removal in the four provinces. This material was used to raise public awareness of forced removals and to lobby support from foreign governments and human rights groups in South Africa. Between 1960 and 1982, three and a half million people were forced out of their homes, 745 500 of them in Natal, according to the reports. Today they still provide a reliable record which the new government uses extensively.

In 1990 the National Party government was forced to reprieve communities under threat of removal and to start reviewing its racist land laws. By 1991 the Group Areas and Land Acts had been scrapped.

In response to the changed context, AFRA began to transform itself from a short-term crisis and resistance organisation to a long-term advocacy and development one. It was preparing for post-apartheid land reform and reconstruction.

With forced removals at an end, rural communities began to demand the restoration of their land rights, lost under apartheid. The National Party government saw things differently. "We must forget the past, let bygones be bygones," was their view.

This did not sit well with those who had been forcibly removed. They began reoccupying their expropriated land and the former government was forced to return land to some of these communities.

In 1991 it established the Commission on Land Allocation, with the limited brief of making recommendations on the allocation of state land. Although it fell short of the restitution communities demanded, Roosboom and Charlestown were among the dispossessed communities who successfully used the Commission to get back their land.

Spurred on by their gains, communities campaigned to expose the limitations of the former government's policies on land claims and to popularise their demand for a land claims court as a mechanism to deal with land restitution. This campaign has now come to fruition in the Restitution of Land Rights Act.

In this context, does an organisation like AFRA have a future? AFRA director, Richard Clacey, believes it does: "Of the 3,5 million people forcibly removed under apartheid land laws, 'black spot' removals accounted for only 614 000. The largest category of removal – about one million – was that of farm tenants and farm workers." Clacey points out that the land needs of most of these people are likely to be addressed under a government land redistribution programme, rather than the restitution promised by the new Act.

"Of the 3,5 million people forcibly removed under apartheid land laws, 'black spot' removals accounted for only 614 000. The largest category of removal – about one million – was that of farm tenants and farm workers."

Redistribution will provide access to land for landless people generally disadvantaged by apartheid land laws, while the restitution mechanisms now being put in place require lodging specific claims to specific pieces of land.

AFRA , itself, has focused on establishing a precedent of land rights for farm tenants who have occupied and used land for a long time. "We made an important breakthrough with an agreement reached in early 1994 between farm tenants and Mondi forests, where Mondi ceded a quarter of the farm it legally owns, to the tenants," Clacey says.

In 1993 AFRA also began to address land distribution by assisting the freehold communities of Cornfields and Tembalihle to acquire 8 000 hectares of additional and through a government subsidy scheme. They were the first communities to do so. Clacey said AFRA's experiences with the "nitty gritty" of of redistribution in these two communities could help to refine the redistribution mechanisms used in the future.

AFRA intends to walk the road of "critical partner" with the new land ministry. Clacey says it will be important for the land reform programme to balance the needs of people seeking land for commercial agriculture and those who need it for survival. "As an independent rural service organisation, we'll monitor and critique the government's land reform programme when the interests of marginal rural people are threatened," Clacey promises.

Clacey confirms, however, that AFRA and the new Ministry of Land Affairs share perspectives and will work together. "AFRA' s past experience and future strategies are a sound basis for us to act as an implementing partner with the new government and rural community institutions to meet the RDP's land reform component in KwaZulu Natal." ❑

Estelle Randall is the media officer for AFRA. She was active in trade unions for a number of years, and has worked as a journalist.

Paul Weinberg

The Greater Pietermaritzburg Environment Coalition

***Anne Harley** explains a unique attempt by environmentalists to impact on environment and development debates occurring within the Pietermaritzburg area, in response to changes taking place in local government.*

KwaZulu Natal has always prided itself on its "environmental-friendliness", and boasts a high number of concerned individuals and organisations. As in the rest of the country, however, the environmental debate in this province is an increasingly complex one, as development and environment issues often appear in conflict.

Because of the complex political circumstances in KwaZulu Natal, changes in the local government in the capital city have been more difficult that in many other cities in the country.

In 1992 a Greater Pietermaritzburg Local Government Negotiating Forum was established. It created sub-committees to look at development, health and transport issues. No environmental sub-committee was set up. Initially, environmentalists in the city believed that they could impact on debates within the forum through the City Council Environment Committee. This committee was a collection of interested individuals and organisations, ranging from the chamber of commerce to Earthlife Africa.

The environment committee was advisory and hence never taken seriously by the council. The negotiating forum viewed it as an apartheid structure and ignored it. A strong environmental lobby was the answer.

The Greater Pietermaritzburg Environment Coalition (GPEC) was established in October 1993. Its aim is to guide future local government policy and development practice with the goal of sustainable development and maximum environmental quality.

The coalition is made up of a broad spectrum of organisations and individuals including the Natal Bird Club, Institute of Natural Resources, Wildlife Society, Earthlife Africa, Combined Residents and Ratepayers Association, Black Sash, Built Environment Support Group, National Monuments Council, Natal Museum, Greater Edendale Environment Network, and the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness.

To overcome the possibility of fragmentation, all members agreed to accept differences in outlook. This sensitivity went some way towards allowing the group to work together. The underlying approach has been to keep the implicit definition of "environment" as wide as possible in order to ensure that the coalition could continue to hold together.

The first meeting of the coalition proposed a number of areas for action:

- drawing up an environmental manifesto to act as the basis for a future environmental policy for the city
- intervening directly in the Local Government Forum process

- lobbying the committee which would select candidates for the Transitional Local Authority
- lobbying organisations likely to put forward candidates for selection
- putting forward an environment candidate for selection.

The coalition produced a draft manifesto which has been hailed as the first such independent initiative from civil society in South Africa. It has been widely circulated locally. It was received by all participants of the Pietermaritzburg Local Government Negotiating Forum (LGNF); various local environmental lobby groups; the Natal Midlands region of the National Women's Coalition; and the environment committee of the city council. Individuals supported the draft manifesto by adding their names to a rapidly growing petition. All or part of the draft manifesto has received support in principle from key players in the local government process, including the Hilton Town Board and the Sobantu Town Committee.

The draft manifesto answers questions frequently raised about the "elitism" of environmental concerns, since it assumes a definition of environment which incorporates basic needs and power relations. The preamble of the draft manifesto sets out basic principles of justice, equity and rights which should guide any future environmental policy-making for the city. Policy statements include land use and development; public and private transport provision and control; working environment and AIDS. It is a document in which statements about accountability, democracy, transparency, needs and rights stand next to the more predictable statements about waste and pollution.

The coalition as a whole felt that it was important to have representation on the local council, both to further the aims and aspirations of the draft manifesto, and also to be able to create environmental caucuses across party lines. It believed that unless there were strong environmental candidates on the transitional council, environmental concerns would once again be neglected.

Two candidates were nominated by the coalition and their names put forward to the selection committee of the negotiating forum. Both candidates have been involved in community environmental issues in the greater city over a period of time.

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It was clear from the start that simply drawing up a statement of principles (the draft manifesto) would not guarantee the acceptance of those principles by the negotiating forum or the future transitional structure. The GPEC thus believed that lobbying member organisations of the forum, as well as the forum itself was a crucial part of the campaign. Three issues were to be lobbied around:

- getting the draft manifesto endorsed by as many organisations as possible, and preferably by the forum itself
- ensuring that candidates put forward for appointment as councillors of the transitional structure by member organisations were at least environmentally literate and preferably pro-environment
- ensuring that GPEC's own candidates were appointed to the transitional structure.

Approaches to the LGNF secretariat resulted in GPEC being recognised as a non-statutory body in the forum itself, with representation on the plenary as well as the health, planning and development, constitutional and legal, institutional, and amenities working groups.

The draft manifesto found favour with the City Council's Environment Committee and was circulated to all statutory committees within the existing council. In addition, representatives of the ANC and the Greater Edendale Environmental Network (GREEN) supported the document.

It has been a difficult process. The negotiating forum was ultimately unable to agree on any of the tasks allocated to it: it could not agree on a boundary for the transitional structure; it could not agree on the type of structure (metropolitan or single city); and thus it could not agree on the number of, nor the names of, the future councillors.

Towards the end of 1994, these tasks were handed to a provincial committee for determination. This committee divided the negotiating forum area into four individual local authorities, and determined the number of councillors for each. At the time of writing, the committee was calling for nominations for each authority.

Obviously, given the political difficulties experienced by the forum over a lengthy period of time, the environment has not been a priority. Within this context, GPEC has played a remarkable role in ensuring that environmental issues have not been lost in discussions about future policy. Indeed, it is due almost entirely to GPEC that the environment constitutes a considerable component of the "Urban Reconstruction Research Programme" recently commissioned by the forum.

In many ways, GPEC is a unique experiment. An initiative driven by civil society, it managed to bring together a very inclusive range of individuals and organisations with knowledge, experience and interest in the environment. The environmental manifesto is the only one of its kind in this country and can be used as a "greenprint" by other areas. Its particular contribution is in its very broad definition of environment to include transport, health, and worker issues, and in its bringing together conservationist-type concerns with second generation human rights. The draft manifesto reflects a coming together of gender, development and environmental issues. ❑

Anne Harley is a contract researcher and currently working at the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. She previously wrote a book for the Black Sash entitled "No Blood on our Hands".

The Qunqun

Ari Sitas

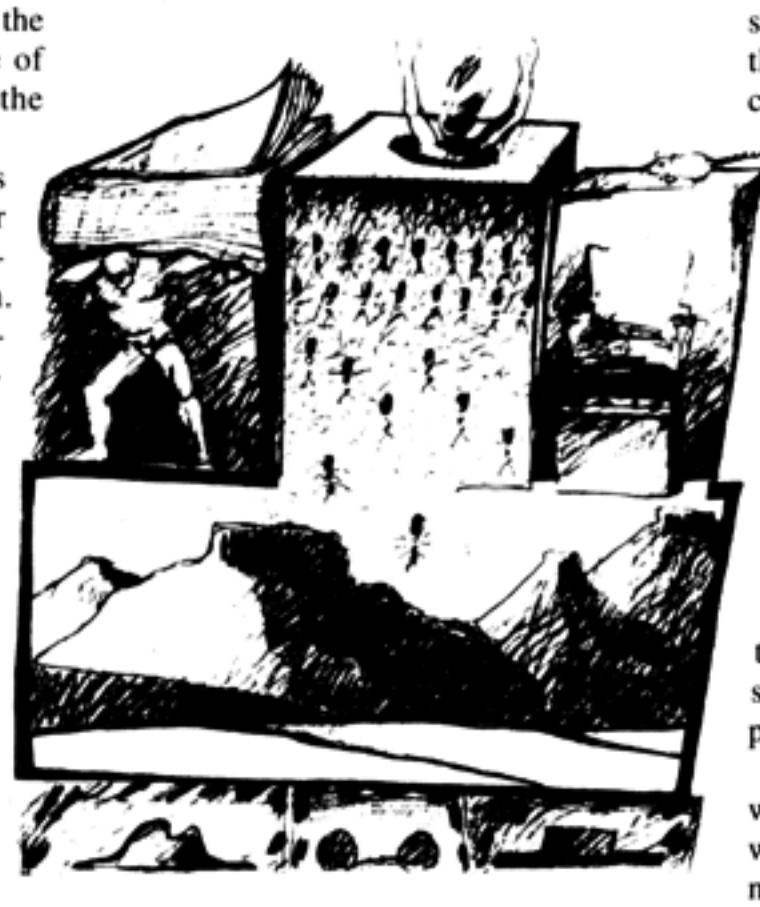
The "qunqun" would gradually eat up the stuffing of trees, the innards of bodies, the substance of things until their bark, their skin, their surface membrane would crack. And then, they'd crumble: the tree into a mound of wood-dust, earth and saliva, the body into shards and ribbons of tendon.

This work of millions of little sedentary ants, with their little jaws and antennae and spit, determined and imperceptible, keeping the surface of things intact until the final crumble, was turned into a poetic and a political concept in the Ethiopia of the late nineteenth century. The "qunqun" came to describe the eating up of the stuffing of people, the devouring of their souls, their moral fibre, their steering mechanisms. People were seen to crumble. Imperialism from the outside, apostates from the inside of the country were seen to release the gnawing feast.

Chroniclers and poets, monks and seers claimed then, the power of detection – the outward consistency of forms did not fool them. The more spiritual in their gatherings could sense emanations, subterranean changes, a new sense of tint and texture in the air around them. Theirs was the most powerful writing. The more materialistic ones pointed to the migration of aphids from the leaves, the gathering of low flying birds around the trees and sometimes the refusal of dogs to lift their legs against them. Both would prod surfaces with their fingers and count the mounds on the landscape. Both claimed the gift of special vision, and, neither side entertained the thought that they too had the qunqun's spit and chew inside their brain.

We cannot be so sure in the KwaZulu Natal of the new South Africa. After the euphoria epidemic that had spread from shack to shack when Mandela danced on TV; after too, the results that had cheated everybody of a sense of clear victory or defeat in the region, the few writer friends that I ran into were convinced that the "qunqun" or some, suchlike creature had worked its way into our psyche.

Despite our protests though, Musa Mabeyakhulu insisted that we were all wrong. He pointed to the peace epidemic that was spreading all over the region; he pointed to the sighs of relief, homestead to homestead, that fanned the curtains open and the new songs. He talked of new poetry books with bittersweet words and people holding hands and holding more hands. He described how he embraced the councillor who made a sieve out of his body with an R1 rifle, in the dark a few months back, and how despite the fact that he cannot close his one eye anymore and that his face looks like a



bundle of leather tussles, they were both ready to turn a new page. It was only the other day that Musa met his erstwhile enemy at a store buying a brand new briefcase for the new provincial government meetings. Musa was looking for a hat with floppy ears because he was invited to read poems at a festival of laughter.

Lulu Nene disagreed. She pointed to the rusted cranes and ships in the harbour. There she said, over there, she repeated. We turned and looked at Durban from the harbour-head where we had been sitting drinking from a brown paper bag and saw the cranes and the ships and behind them, lights. She had been away from this place – a scholarship got her far away from the cinder of her ex-home and her ex-community and the flames had chased everything she used to call a home. There must be millons out there, chewed up inside, bitter, angry, staples for trauma units, confused, jobless, rudderless, speechless, torn wombed and spined. It would be comforting to know they are there but don't ask me to go and find out. I am happy here in town with my child and my typewriter.

The qunqun, pronouncing the "q"s with a click, has been at its ghastly labours, shouted Jeffrey Meintjies. I don't care what Ms Lulu Nene says, with her scholarships and books. I don't care whether Musa walks around with hats with floppy ears, what we have out there are empty husks and shells, we have thousands of murderers walking around without a stain of blood to soil their clothes, we have shadow-people, we have photostats of their old photographs, we have only carbon copies of their lives, we have walking stories without a language, we have mounds. And let me tell you, he said, it is our duty to name the disease and describe its gilded process.

I was worried. I could see the tiny jaws active everywhere, but wondered whether it was not all inside my head, distorting the machines that print images between my ears, whether I was projecting my phantoms onto the landscape, whether I needed the landscape to be tattered and torn. I could see people smiling, but could sense a nervous tic pulsing on their trigger-finger.

I was there repopulating a new world with my old phantoms. There was nothing that I looked at that did not turn twisted and ragged and mean. Even my old lefty friends were in new suits, smiling as we queued outside banks, and corporate headquarters.

Lulu Nene had the last word. She frowned and said that in the new KwaZulu Natal of the new South Africa, we shall be writing about the qunqun's absence; even if its there?-asked Jeffrey; even if its there inside my soul?-I asked. Even if its there, she confirmed.

It made some new kind of sense. ❑

Ari Sitas co-ordinates the Centre for Industrial and Labour Studies at the University of Natal, Durban. He describes himself as also being involved in scribbling creative pieces and making theatrical noises.
Illustration: Karin Bredenkamp

The Black Sash challenge

*National president **Mary Burton** explains what the organisation is doing to ensure longer-term sustainability*

The November 1994 meeting of the Black Sash's extended National Executive (ExNex, which includes Advice Office Trustees and members of staff), was scheduled to consider proposed budgets for 1995. It was instead confronted with the harsh prospect of having no certainty of obtaining the funds necessary to meet those budgets. USAID's decision to discontinue its support was a significant factor, although not the only one.

We had previously negotiated a retrenchment policy with our staff, an agreement which included a 3-month notice period preceded by time for discussions. In the light of the financial situation, it was decided that the only responsible step would be to embark on that process. If the situation could not be remedied, retrenchment notices would have to be issued at the beginning of December.

Radio, television and newspaper coverage of the possible closure of the nine Black Sash advice offices elicited widespread concern and many tributes. The threat of staff retrenchments was frequently interpreted to mean also the disbanding of the organisation – the British *Daily Telegraph*, for example, headlined its story "Black Sash women face their final fight".

However, the decision taken by ExNex was not simply to wield the retrenchment axe. It was rather to enter into the first phase, the discussion with staff members, and simultaneously to appoint a special strategy team to explore all other options.

The team swung into action immediately: the budgets were re-examined and all expansion projects were placed on hold; new fund-raising possibilities were identified while existing funders were assured of our determination to meet our commitments; members of staff, understandably anxious, nevertheless responded with determination that the work must continue and that the needs of the people whom we serve must be the paramount concern.

Throughout this period, as we contemplated the problem of our own advice offices, we also remained concerned for the many community-based advice offices whose situation was even more parlous. Advice offices must work together to promote a broad recognition of the service they offer and the need for funding, including state support, to ensure their continuation. There is a growing recognition that working for justice is in itself a developmental task, and messages of support from government spokespersons underline this.

The end of the year brought better news: the more stringent budget and the confirmation of continued support from two major funding partners enabled the strategy team to decide not to implement the retrenchment procedures. Black Sash offices all round the country were able to close for the year-end break in the knowledge that for several more months at least, the staff positions were secure.

For the strategy team and the national executive, however, the major challenge still lay ahead. The November meeting mandated the team not only to seek urgent remedies, but also to explore ways to reassess and restructure the organisation's work, to avoid duplication with work done by other agencies, to consider streamlining or redefining where necessary.

The assumption of the media that the retrenchment of staff would be synonymous with the closure of the advice offices and also with the demise of the Black Sash itself needed to be carefully considered. The volunteer component of the work has always been acknowledged as valuable, but could it be sufficient on its own? How could the other aspects of the work, that which happens outside the advice offices, be sustained – the legislation monitoring, the political pressure and public information, the campaigns against militarisation, capital punishment, gender discrimination and all injustice, the consistent protection of people's rights?

"Advice offices must work together to promote a broad recognition of the service they offer and the need for funding, including state support, to ensure their continuation."

We must decide how a 40-year-old organisation which simply grew to meet the needs of one period should now adjust to meet new circumstances under a new government and new conditions. A great deal of thinking about these issues has already been done. The strategy team has decided to appoint an independent consultant to help us to chart a way through to the next phase.

By the end of February a workshop to be attended by representatives from all regions should equip us to draw up a plan of action. National conference at the end of April could unveil a Black Sash facing its 40th birthday with maturity and the conviction that it is poised to make its own special contribution to the one-year-old but still "new" society which, along with thousands of others, it helped to shape. ❑

Funding for NGOs: A lost cause?

***Bill Davies** examines the impact of the funding crisis on the work of NGOs*

The recent funding crises which confronted the Black Sash has served to highlight the precarious predicament of many South African NGOs. Organisations are at risk as donors begin to reassess and redirect their funding. That the Black Sash is by no means alone in this quandary, adds an urgency to the need to address the issue.

NGOs are still very much in evidence, despite the country's quantum shift to a democratic political dispensation. In fact, it is precisely this shift that has given rise to many uncertainties. The post-1990 transitional period, and particularly the time since the April elections, has generated a state of flux characterised by cautious engagements, some sparring and considerable rhetoric. NGOs have been left confused about their own transitions and uncertain about their funding sources.

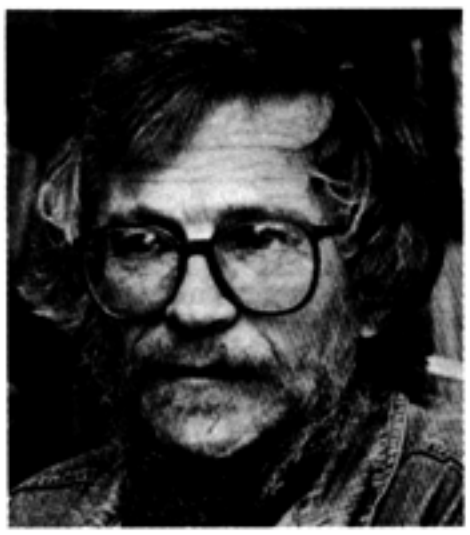
Building a sustainable service or resource organisation dependent on donor funding is difficult and uncertain at the best of times. When it is subject to the fluctuating whims of donors who change direction in pursuit of more fashionable or politically correct involvements, or whose understanding of community dynamics, needs and priorities is shallow, distorted or misinformed, it is well-nigh impossible. There is, of course, another side to this coin. Donors are faced with a rapidly proliferating phalanx of competing NGO interests; some good, others somewhat mediocre, and many that are ineffectual or simply downright bad. For donors to tread their way through this minefield without being misled, lied to, manipulated or otherwise abused, can also be a stressful experience. Even with the best of intentions, screening mechanisms and reporting requirements, most donors have burnt their fingers, often several times, and many have developed a cynical and skeptical first approach to funding proposals.

In the recent past South African NGOs have received millions of rands in funding from foreign governments. Prior to 1990, these funding links were largely clandestine or disguised, and were predominantly associated with support for opposition and resistance initiatives. Some of this funding came through foreign embassy funding programmes, where these existed in South Africa, and others directly from foreign governments through a variety of innovative transfer mechanisms. Despite attempts by the apartheid government to block or control these resources, many local NGOs established quite stable relationships with foreign government funding sources. Indeed, the NGO route was the only way in which foreign governments were willing to contribute towards the development/ resistance cause in South Africa.

More recently, with a new legitimate government in place, foreign missions have flocked back to South Africa, and NGOs anticipated a stronger, more secure, funding relationship with the governments they represented. However, this has not materialized quite as expected, because foreign governments have tended to shift their support towards longer-term development programmes through direct government-to-government financial assistance. In particular, the South African government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) has been increasingly acknowledged and adopted as an appropriate target for foreign government funding. In most instances, the expectation is that NGOs should be able to gain access to those resources because they are part of the civil society component involved in implementing the RDP. Whilst this shift has not closed off direct foreign government support for NGOs completely, it has effectively reduced it substantially, and made it much more difficult to access.

"Funding for NGOs should not necessarily be a lost cause; much depends upon the extent to which NGOs can rise to the occasion and marshal their considerable human resources towards organising themselves into a force to be reckoned with."

Local private sector corporate funding constituted a major source of NGO funding in the 1970s and 1980s. While this sector still funds social responsibility programmes, these are being re-positioned towards government-approved (RDP) involvements. Major financial commitments have been made, particularly to housing and education, which has all too often been used as a convenient excuse to reduce project and programme funding directly to NGOs. Moreover, corporate funding which is not specifically RDP-orientated has tended to reflect a preference for undertakings that are directly related to company employees, or that are associated with particular geographical areas where companies have business interests. Whilst these corporate sector funding trends have by no means been universal, and are not necessarily intrinsically incorrect, there is no doubt that they have significantly reduced the sources of funding that



SASH archives

Bill Davies

"Building a sustainable service or resource organisation dependent on donor funding is difficult and uncertain at the best of times. When it is subject to the fluctuating whims of donors who change direction in pursuit of more fashionable or politically correct involvements, it is well-nigh impossible."

NGOs rely upon.

Funding for NGOs' operating costs from local and foreign non-governmental donors has tended to become much more conditional and difficult to access. These organisations generally consist of large foundations, trusts and other development agencies dedicated to supporting the kind of work that development-orientated NGOs are engaged in, and from which they naturally expect some support. However, two problem areas have become evident. The first concerns a clear preference by foundations and trusts for carefully packaged "projects", rather than requests for contributions towards general running costs in the form of salaries and administrative /operational expenses. Whilst there is some validity and merit in this approach, it misses the point that it is seldom possible to effectively design, manage and implement "projects" without some form of overall organisational support which also costs money. Secondly, these kinds of funders have also begun to shift towards an overt RDP preference, again to demonstrate their commitment to the programme's principles and intent. There is nothing wrong with this tendency – in fact, it should be encouraged because it may result in a more appropriate allocation of resources – but it does have the effect of reducing the funds that are available to NGOs in the pursuit of their own initiatives, most of which may also be RDP-related. It should be noted, too, that many of these kinds of funders are themselves undergoing significant repositioning changes or are very new to the complexities of the South African development scene. Under these circumstances, their behaviour probably reflects a cautious testing of the waters before making critical funding policy decisions that may turn out to be inappropriate – in the interim, many are quite comfortable on the fence.

It seems clear that the advent of the RDP has had a major influence on donor organisations, and that this has, in some respects, impacted adversely on the activities of the NGO community. However, this is by no means a catastrophe. In fact, it provides two fundamental opportunities for NGOs. Firstly, the RDP provides, for the first time in South Africa's history, an opportunity for a common or shared focus regarding what development should be about and how it should be approached. Any NGO, working in any area, can find a role for itself in the context of the RDP – and should do so. To the extent that the RDP gains ground and that a shared understanding of its intent permeates throughout South African society, there will emerge a powerfully cohesive people-development process the likes of which the country has never experienced before. Of course there will be charlatans and opportunists – some are already evident, amongst NGOs and donors alike – but their effects are unlikely to cause more than very temporary hiccups which the process will surely survive. Secondly, and flowing more or less from the above, there is now a clear opportunity for the NGO community in South Africa to engage in a major re-organisation and rationalisation of its components and activities. South Africa does not have an effective national organisation of NGOs through which such an imperative could be organised with the degree of commitment that would be required.

An initiative towards this end has already begun, in the form of the Independent Study into an Enabling Environment for NGOs launched by the Development Resources Centre based in Johannesburg. Based on comprehensive consultations with NGO interests throughout the country, the Independent Study has laid the foundation for reaching consensus regarding the formulation of legislation that would strengthen the NGO movement and provide it with a capacity to organise and monitor its activities through registration arrangements and the formalisation of constructive working relationships with government structures. This includes an active role in public policy deliberations where these impinge upon issues that are likely to affect NGOs and their activities – such as access to funding and the nature of their potential for participation in realising the purpose of the RDP. Clearly, such an initiative would also provide opportunities for the NGO movement to address the problems of incompetence, corruption and tendencies towards "gatekeeping" that are all too evident in some organisations. It would also provide some recourse for organisations (like the Black Sash) that have a well-established track-record of excellence in the service of poor and disempowered people, and whose existence is threatened by the vagaries of donor interests.

Funding for NGOs should not necessarily be a lost cause; much depends upon the extent to which NGOs can rise to the occasion and marshal their considerable human resources towards organising themselves into a force to be reckoned with. ❑

Bill Davies is professor of Development Studies at Rhodes University. His research interests lie in community capacity building and organisational development.

Organising the NGO sector

Meetings are the bane of NGO life. Despite this, Sheena Duncan notes that important forums and coalitions have emerged and evolved. The Black Sash is hard at work in many of them.

David Goldblatt

Sheena Duncan

An American who was a regular visitor to this country during the apartheid years once said to me, "When I used to come here before, everyone was in hiding in afro shirts in the townships. Now they are all in suits attending meetings".

Meetings – workshops, conferences, seminars, congresses, sub-committees, working groups, forums, committees, think tanks, brainstorms – have filled our diaries and taken a huge chunk of our time during the post-election period. If organisers want to make it clear that their meeting is more important than anyone else's they call it a "summit".

Almost all meetings start late. The same people chat to each other over the same kind of hotel buffets (whatever became of the old style of meeting place in church halls and youth hostels?), and complain about the air conditioning, the food, the organisers and the transport arrangements.

Sometimes it has been very difficult to endure. But at the end of 1994 everything started to come together in a most satisfactory way with the promise of enhanced communication, co-operation and co-ordination for the future within the context of that great national effort – the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

Black Sash members in different parts of the country have been involved in some of the initiatives. Among the most important have been the following.

The RDP council

This council is to be a structured coalition. The core group consists of membership-based organisations outside the structures of government such as the ANC, Cosatu, Sanco, SACP, the Churches, and includes the Black Sash. Its decision-making plenary council will include representatives of the sectoral forums of NGOs which have been created through a great deal of hard work over the past two or more years.

The purpose of the council is to make sure that the RDP is a "people driven" process and to build on the networks we have all established through years of work with the oppressed majority. Members of the Council do not commit themselves to participate in every campaign of the Council but do so where it is most appropriate on a basis of sharing information and resources, much as it was done in the Independent Forum for Electoral Education (IFEE) which was such a successful model of co-operation.

"The Black Sash provides a thorough basic training for community-based advice office workers with great stress placed on their role as agents of development in their communities. We insist that development is all about conveying information which enables people to make their own decisions as to what they will do to solve their problems."

The first campaign of the Council will be in January 1995 to encourage a clean-up and repair of school buildings, "making the schools a national asset", and work to encourage a culture of learning. Member organisations have already involved themselves in the Gun-Free South Africa campaign and are committed to the demilitarisation of our country and the reduction of violence.

There are two areas of the Council's work where the Black Sash already has a strong national focus - democratisation and governance, and social security and welfare. As provincial councils are formed next year, it is likely that the Black Sash regions will become involved in many other aspects of the work according to our own regional priorities.

An NGO council

NGOs recently agreed that they need to form an NGO council to protect their interests. This followed almost three years of work and workshops by the Independent Study into an Enabling Environment for NGOs (established by the Development Resources Centre). Tax benefits for NGOs and the repeal of the Fund Raising Act and its replacement with a much simpler, less restrictive system of registration will be lobbied for.

The effort was nearly torpedoed by the sudden intervention of Minister Naidoo's department which called a summit in August 1994. NGOs were ordered to get themselves organised.

There was a good deal of anger because the RDP department seemed to be ignoring the work which had taken place and there was also resentment about duplication.

Fortunately these difficulties have been ironed out. There is now only one process and the Development Resources Centre has been asked to act as secretariat so we are back on track.

This process is parallel to, but in close touch with, the RDP council.

The 17 sectoral forums which are part of the NGO interim council will also be represented on the RDP council if they so desire.

The Welfare and Development Forum

The Black Sash was instrumental in initiating this forum in November 1993. Marj Brown, our national researcher, is to represent the forum on a new committee set up by the Department of Welfare to examine legislation. She will also be working on a sub-committee looking at urgently required amendments to the Social Assistance Act and its Regulations.

This is a good example of the way in which all the frustrations involved in endless networking and arguing and pushing and shoving bear fruit in the end.

The para-legal process

For more than a year we have been working with other institutions which provide para-legal/basic advice office training, and with the established network of community-based advice offices, towards the formation of a para-legal Institute. It has been a difficult process because of the very different understandings we all brought to it.

The Black Sash provides a thorough basic training for community- based advice office workers with great stress placed on their role as agents of development in their communities. We insist that development is all about conveying information which enables people to make their own decisions as to what they will do to solve their problems. Other institutions provide a much more advanced training in the law which enables people to put their feet on the first steps of the ladder towards becoming fully fledged lawyers.

While the discussions have continued, some of the community-based advice offices have collapsed because of a sudden withdrawal of funding.

"If we think the work we do is important, and if we continue to work coherently with all the other people who have brought about South Africa's miracle, we will survive."

Why do some donors not see the connection between the enforcement of human rights and development? But here too things are coming together as the community advice offices form provincial associations. Plans are also being made for concrete steps towards the formation of a paralegal institute and possibly a trust to assist with funding problems.

The above are only some examples of the work in which the Black Sash is involved at the present time. The networks and shifting coalitions in which we are engaged are all the fruits of our history and there are many other examples in the different regions.

Funding

Funding will remain a problem as outlined in Bill Davies' article in this issue of Sash. It has never been otherwise for us. The people we serve are the very poor and there is no way our advice offices can expect to be "sustainable," in the current fashionable jargon, now or in the future.

We have always had to struggle for money to keep going and we have only managed to do so because of the enormous voluntary contribution of our members over the last forty years.

We remember with fondness those thousands of receipt slips printed in the name of the Women's Defence of the Constitution League in 1955/56. These slips only finally disappeared from our book keeping system in 1988 when Khotso House was blown up, taking many of our archives into the hole in the basement.

If we think the work we do is important, and if we continue to work coherently with all the other people who have brought about South Africa's miracle, we will survive. ❑

Sheena Duncan is the chairperson of the Black Sash Advice Office Trust.

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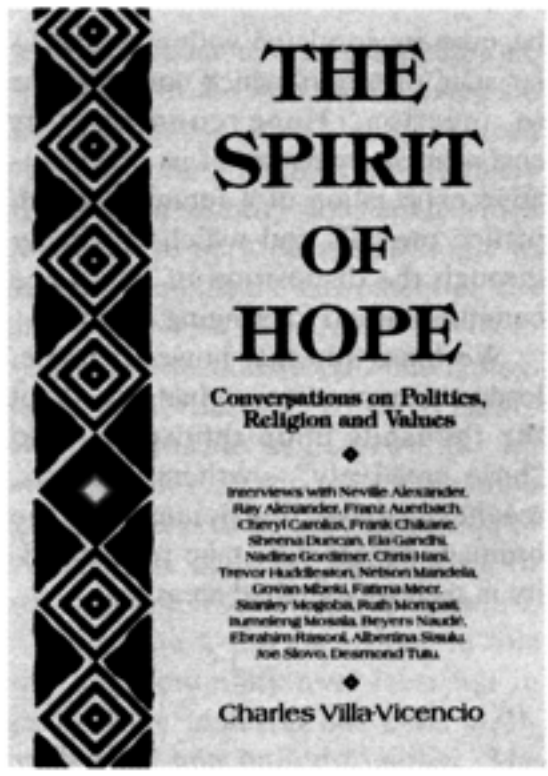

The Spirit of Hope

Charles Villa-Vicencio (Skotaville Publishers, undated)

The 21 people interviewed by Charles Villa-Vicencio are public figures, their political views well-known, but here they tell their personal stories and speak of the beliefs, religious or ethical, which have shaped their values. This book explores what Robert Sobukwe described as the "vision of faith, hope and glory" which inspired the struggle for democratic freedom in South Africa.

Despite the wide variety of their traditions and inspirations, which often superficially appear mutually exclusive, there emerges a common ethical vision; it is a vision rich and complex, recognising not denying, its constituent parts. Common to all is the desire to build a fair and just society, to ensure respect for the individual, and the need to become fully human.

Villa-Vicencio writes that the book is about people driven towards freedom. Equally it is about people such as Joe Slovo, Sheena Duncan, Desmond Tutu who by their living have given unique expression to hope.

This is no passive hope or simple optimism, but the hope Johan Degenaar has defined as "creative expectation". "Hope," he writes, "is that attitude which enables us not to

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become encapsulated within a particular state of affairs which condemns us to inaction. Hope counters this enslavement by nature of its being creative expectation of a future in which justice prevails and which, precisely through the disposition of hope, one commits oneself to bringing about."

We know too that however noble, leaders cannot achieve change without the thousnds upon thousands who "hope creatively" – writers, activists, teachers, artists, musicians, and the ordinary people who take responsibility in their own limited areas.

Come and Hope with me

Wally Serote (David Philip, Cape Town; 1994)

Creative hope is also the theme of Wally Serote's new epic poem. Whilst still confronting the forces of evil, this remarkable poet-cum-freedom fighter-cum-parliamentarian celebrates "the goodwill in our hearts as we walk the dangerous street". He calls on us to hope and work for a better future, to rebuild our land, and to enjoy its beauty "like the shimmerimg rainbow in the wind/let's whisper and whistle/let's ululate/call on peace to come to our land in our life...we must delight in the orchestra of our many languages".

Brief extracts give little indication of the power of the poem, for Serote's strength lies in the blending of his vision, brilliance of imagery and subtle play and sweep of rhythm. His return to his true vocation is indeed welcome – we need good members of parliament but we need good poets even more. Serote the poet is unique.

Nancy Gordon

"Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished"

(Long walk to freedom, *Nelson Mandela)*

Long Walk to Freedom: The autobiography of Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela (McDonald Purnell, Randburg, South Africa; 1994)

Mr Mandela is a gent. He walks tall. He learned the lessons of democracy and diplomacy at an early age. He does not fail, even in the thick of the treason trial, to remember "the redoubtable Mrs Thayanergee and her friends", who daily prepared lunch for the accused on the vicarage lawn adjoining the court.

Much later, when Helen Suzman visits Robben Island, he not only remarks on her courage, but also endows her with "grace". "She was the first and only woman ever to grace our cells", he writes. When Mandela is committed to hospital under armed guard in 1987, the nurses ask him to a party. When the authorities refuse permission, the whole bevy of "beautiful young ladies" in shiny frocks descends to party in his room.

It is charming to discover that Mr Mandela allows his grandchildren to eat their pudding before the main course. The reader needs these lighter moments in the story of this life of epic hardship.

Once Nelson Mandela and his colleagues are committed to life imprisonment on Robben Island and kept, ignominiously sockless and in short trousers, to break stones in a lime quarry, one needs to savour their small victories; such as the single copy of the *Economist* that slips through the censor's net, after the men have been given leave to receive library books.

Given the total news blackout, information trickles in via the changing waves of political prisoners who appear over the decades. These include MK cadres, activists, lawyers, SWAPO and Black Consciousness members, youth of the 1976 Soweto uprising.

Mr Mandela is given to graceful understatement, as he takes us through the matrix of legal apparatus constructed by the white state to terrorise nine tenths of its own population. "It is not pleasant to be arrested in front of one's children," he observes as, in the years following the National Party victory in 1948, black South Africans move from a position of being merely landless, disfranchised and harassed by pass laws, into a new Dark Age.

The book is most searing in its portrayal of the harshness of the island prison and in the author's yearning for

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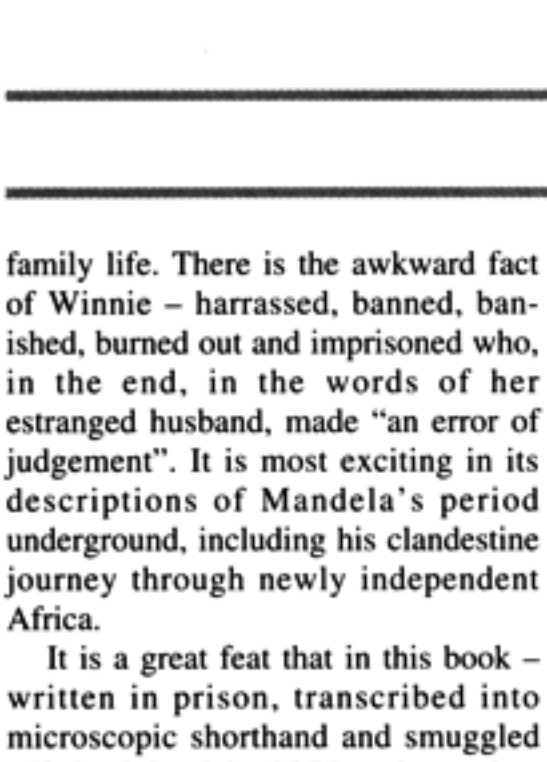
family life. There is the awkward fact of Winnie – harrassed, banned, banished, burned out and imprisoned who, in the end, in the words of her estranged husband, made "an error of judgement". It is most exciting in its descriptions of Mandela's period underground, including his clandestine journey through newly independent Africa.

It is a great feat that in this book – written in prison, transcribed into microscopic shorthand and smuggled off the island in 1976 – the author never presents himself as victim. His every court appearance puts the state on trial instead and, by the late 1980s, as the world's most esteemed prisoner, he is seizing the initiative and calls all the shots. He emerges from prison determined to liberate not only the oppressed, but the oppressor. In a bizarre vignette, Mandela, clad once more in a suit, waits nervously for his first interview with President Botha. As he does so, the Head of Intelligence crouches to re-tie the prisoner's shoes.

"I am," Mr Mandela has earlier observed to his readers, "just an ordinary man."

Barbara Trapido



A Culture of Censorship

Christopher Merrett (University of Natal Press, David Philip; 1994)

Meandering through Christopher Merrett's *A Culture of Censorship* is like returning to the dark days of apartheid. Although there are chapters on censorship before 1950 and in a democratic South Africa, the book is essentially about censorship and the authoritarian apartheid state. The book is encyclopedic in nature and shows remarkable attention to detail gleaned from vast stores of material.

Merrett does not confine himself to the most obvious forms of censorship such as censorship of literature, the press and other media, but tackles the alternative methods the state applied to ensure censorship or self-censorship. These included detentions, bannings and listings, house arrest, banishments and the prevention of coverage of political trials.

The author has also traced the state's development and fine-tuning of censorship as a tool of repression over a period of more than 40 years, identifying distinct periods each with its own characteristics. Initial forms of censorship were fairly heavy-handed as the state made no effort to disguise its intentions. Later, censorship became more sophisticated and subtle.

Many of us have long forgotten just how effective the red bogey of communism was in justifying massive control of our thought processes or the role of acts such as the Suppression of Communism Act which came into effect as early as 1950. Merrett reminds us that this was, at the time, part of an international trend as the Cold War intensified and post-war America was afflicted with what he terms "a paranoic anti-communism". He shows how the wide powers of the South African legislation were used to crush legitimate opposition – communist or not.

Much other legislation – some still on the statute books – followed on this act and Merrett has recorded it all, and its effects, meticulously. He also discusses the impact of censorship on academic work, creative writing, and librarianship, while critically examining how individuals and professional groups either rose above or succumbed to accepting the boundaries created in their fields.

One of the strengths of the book is that it continues to examine South Africa's attitude to censorship after the unbanning of the liberation movement. Merrett also chides the liberation movement for its rather wishy-washy approach to security legislation which continued to be used against some of their own members and others at this time.

The sub-section on informal repression in the "Glasnost" period is particularly valuable as it provides an in-depth look at how adept the state had become at using the suppression of information and the engendering of self-censorship to advance its cause.

There are a few omissions in this amazing compilation of facts but in general the material has been well-researched and pulled together. The only major omission from such a detailed history, is that of the censorship which was applied on campuses, particularly in the 1980s. I refer to the times when students drove certain local and international speakers off campuses thereby seriously affecting freedom of speech. This happened on both right and left wing campuses and should be included in any history of South African censorship.

Laura Pollecutt

Paton Now

Colin Gardner explores the relevance of Paton's vision in South Africa today

Alan Paton has been in the news this year. A mild sensation was caused by some incautious publicity for Peter Alexander's serious and absorbing biography. Now there is a good deal of discussion of what *The Weekly Mail and Guardian* describes as South Africa's "first major post-election film production", the new version of *Cry, the Beloved Country* being made by Darrel Roodt and Anant Singh.

What are we to think of Paton? Is *Cry, the Beloved Country* "the one definitive classic about contemporary South Africa", as Roodt says, or is it embarrassingly colonial and patronizing in many of its attitudes and assumptions?

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Literary criticism and theory tend to change from decade to decade. Current ways of thinking in this area would tend to eschew the simple either/or decisions of the past; they would also be apt to shy away from the old desire to see important writers as gurus or total intellectual heroes. Viewed in their context, and indeed as in many ways products of their contexts – most writers of any significance come across to us as a mixed bag. Their strengths, their insights are on the whole what we read them for, but mixed in with these are ideas and assumptions that many readers cannot accept.

And so it is I think, broadly, with Paton. His most famous work was written nearly fifty years ago, long before either oppositional political analysis and strategy or human rights thinking had reached the degrees of sophistication that developed later. Many of the political attitudes contained in the novel, though (from a white perspective) generous and enlightened for their time, have not worn well. The implied admiration for the Rev. Stephen Kumalo's social humility, and the clearly suggested dislike of his brother John Khumalo's political activism are aspects of Paton's novel that have annoyed many South Africans.

Yet the book won't die. It somehow retains its classic status, even in the eyes of those who have spent considerable energy denouncing it. How is this to be explained? I think the reason may be that, beneath the rather inadequate socio-politics of the novel, there is a deeper dynamic: within the structure of the story and in Paton's probing and compassionate commentary, there is a clear and prophetic recognition that South African society had slipped, had been pushed by the unreflecting self-interest of the ruling whites, into a state of division and tension that seemed likely to end in a national disaster.

The book's strength, then, is its socio-moral awareness and its sense of incipient tragedy. To have arrived at this vision of things before the Nationalist electoral victory of 1948 is a considerable achievement. At this level then, I believe, *Cry, the Beloved Country* is unchallengeable: it is perhaps indeed the classic account of twentieth century South Africa. It is for this reason that one of the most haunting sentences in South African literature is the one spoken by Reverend Msimangu: "I have one great fear in my heart, that one day when they are turned to loving, they will find we are turned to hating". In these terms even the humility of Kumalo and Msimangu, and of Paton himself, makes sense: it represents not conformity of any sort, not a lack of courage or conviction, but the anxious awe with which a sensitive person confronts a perhaps ultimately unsolvable moral crisis.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the years of conflict between the regime and the militant opposition – between the "system" and the "struggle" – Paton usually seemed an old-fashioned and marginal figure. It was a world of hard strategy and tactics. Had liberal-Christian good feeling and sympathy anything to offer in what had essentially become a war situation?

But in the end, it became necessary for both sides to recognise that they would be unable to achieve the complete victory that they had each been working for. Some sort of compromise was necessary. It was no mere stalemate; the rising force of the majority was able to set the terms, and the introduction of a non-racial democracy became the condition required for negotiations. But these negotiations – which Allister Sparks has shown began some years before they surfaced publicly – brought together people who had been profoundly opposed to one another.

They came together through bitter necessity and tough political pragmatism. But beneath this there was something which created a real bond: a desire to make South Africa a workable society, a desire to avoid that appalling future "too ghastly to contemplate". This bond seems to have been sufficient for the forging of real relationships. It is perhaps only now, some months after the successful elections and the reasonably harmonious functioning of the Government of National Unity, that we can recognise that – for all the slight practical unreality of their idealism – there is an important truth in the words spoken by Msimangu just before the memorable sentence I quoted earlier:

"But there is only one thing that has power completely, and that is love. Because when a man loves, he seeks no power, and therefore he has power. I see only one hope for our country, and that is when white men and black men, desiring neither power nor money, but desiring only the good of their country, come together to work for it."

Political situations always involve power; they almost always involve money too. Yet, for all that, shouldn't Paton, who died in 1988, be acclaimed one of the true prophets of 1994?

Colin Gardner

My chief and I ...

Frances Colenso. Edited and introduced by M.J.Daymond. (University of Natal, Pietermaritsburg, 1994)

This book appeared within days of the passing of the 1994 Land Rights Restitution Bill. Its re-issue over one hundred years after the event reminds us of the long history of land removals which contributed significantly to the impoverishment of black rural communities. The book is also a painful reminder that gender prejudice today is slight compared to that suffered by Victorian colonial women.

The "chief" in the title was Colonel Anthony Durnford who was vilified by racist Natal settler society for his role in the notorious Bushman's River Pass affair during the Langalibalele "rebellion" of 1873. After a minor infraction of a local magistrate's order, the Hlubi and their neighbours the Putini (Ngwe), were "eaten up" – their land and cattle confiscated, their possessions and crops destroyed, and they were parcelled out to local white farmers as cheap labour. The book concerns Durnford's attempts to rehabilitate the Putini in the eyes of the Natal colonial government, to obtain their pardon and the return of their land. He succeeded, but the Putini were never fairly compensated for their terrible losses.

Frances Colenso's motives were

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two-fold: to expose the racial injustices of the Natal government, and to extol the virtues of the man she loved passionately and who she believed had been unjustly treated. However, due to contemporary gender and racial prejudices, she could not openly espouse these causes. Victorians decreed that only men, as rational beings, could engage in political debate. They also frowned on relationships between married men and other women, and Durnford was a married man (although separated from his wife). Frances' controversial father, Bishop Colenso, had also incurred local hostility and she did not wish to harm Durnford's humane efforts. So she was forced to hide her identity behind a fictional persona.

This was Colenso's first attempt to engage in political polemics in her own right, and later she wrote two substantial political books under her own name. Yet she has never been accorded the status she deserves as a well-informed historian on Natal and the Zulu kingdom. Margaret Daymond, in her richly argued introduction, suggests that this is due to the powerful shadow of the Bishop, to gender prejudice, and to the failure of historians to subject her work to creative historical enquiry.

But the most fascinating aspect of Daymond's introduction is her assessment of Frances Colenso's place in South African literary history. Briefly, Daymond claims that *My Chief and I* was the first known instance of a South African woman writing political fiction, predating Olive Schreiner's exposure of Rhodes' land-grabbing activities in *Trooper Peter Halkett of Mashonaland* (1897). Colenso thus inaugurated that interventionist tradition of fiction internationally associated with women such as Schreiner, Bessie Head and Nadine Gordimer.

A short review cannot do justice to Daymond's subtle and stimulating treatment of literary and gender issues. It is to be hoped that her *Introduction* will achieve its expressed aim and re-invigorate questions about local writing. As for the book itself, it remains an entertaining and powerful attack on racial injustices. It is a pity that there is no index to the political aspects of the book, and to the *Introduction*, for both are authoritative.

Pat Merrett

OBITUARIES

Lu Harding

On 21 November Lu Harding died at her home in Lakeside, Cape Town. She had battled stoically against secondary cancer for over a year. Born Lucille Rocher, she was a third generation member of the Black Sash, and instrumental in founding the Southern Cape Branch and the Knysna Advice Office. After five years in Knysna, Lu returned to Cape Town where she continued to work among the voteless and disadvantaged. Of Lu, the husband of a Knysna colleague wrote:

"To Lu, of love and acceptance. On 21 November 1994 Lu Harding accepted death after a long and painful struggle with cancer – a sharp image of her life for those who knew her. For `Mama Lu', as she was known, careless of her time, her reputation, her status, her safety, devoted her attention to those who were victims of our common political past. Yet she never stopped loving even those who regarded her as an eccentric, misled, obsessed or even as revolutionary or demented. I have a powerful memory of her sitting benignly through an attack on all that she stood for, an attack disguised to some extent by concern for her well-being. Where I defended her, she on the other hand offered no objection. But the curious power of the memory in my mind is that in her bearing she blessed those attacking her. It was as if her silence was a filter of the good in those who could hurt her. Lu was a hero of the Black Sash movement. In her life she epitomised the greatness that all of the women who belong to that organisation recognise and wish to participate in: quiet yet stunningly powerful, feminine yet universally human, loving yet accepting."

She is sadly missed by her family, and by her many friends and colleagues.

Mary Shepherd

Edith English

Edith English became involved in our advice office in 1986 during the second State of Emergency. Although elderly then, she was one of our most dependable and regular voluntary workers. She sat past lunch time interviewing clients, dealing with problems ranging from labour issues to detentions. Nothing daunted, she tackled legally related problems with determination. She took part in the one person demonstrations permitted at the time, went into the townships with us and on one occasion faced armed troops. "I'm Sash," she would say proudly, and Sash in our region was enriched by her presence.

She epitomised the spirit of the Black Sash to me – someone with moral worth who cared about the rights and dignity of her fellow South Africans, and who was prepared to tackle confrontational issues. Someone to be respected.

Edith was so much part of the now, the present, that her age was soon forgotten and she was just Edith – topical,

OBITUARIES

determined, annoyed about injustice and with the strength of character to do something about it in spite of censure from the general public.

She died late last year (in her early 90's) a few months before the election she so badly wanted to take part in. "Why don't they just get on with things?" she would snort impatiently. "I wish they had, Ed's. It would have made 27 April perfect to have had you there in person as well as in spirit."

Shelagh Hurley

Norah Henshilwood

Norah Henshilwood, a dedicated Black Sash member since the 1950s, died peacefully in Rondebosch at the age of 93 on 1 November 1994. When Norah retired from teaching in 1958 she found her niche helping in the forerunner to the advice office, the "Bail Office" in Athlone. Later Norah served on the regional council and was a delegate from Cape Western to national conference. She was a staunch supporter of the annual morning market and a keen member of the False Bay branch to the end of her life. Norah had a strong sense of justice and gave her support to organisations such as the Institute of Race Relations, the Civil Rights League and the Women for Peace movement. She was always ready to speak out, to contribute to efforts to alleviate the results of injustice, and to work towards the construction of a just society. Norah greatly treasured her membership of the Black Sash. She felt deep regret when ill health prevented her from continuing to play an active part in the organisation. Her message to all of us would be, Continue to Go Forward.

Mavis Orpen

NEWS-STRIP

Natal Midlands

Toxic waste protest

Members of the region's environment group took part in an Earthlife street-theatre protest against the importing of toxic waste. They dressed in boots, yellow overalls and gas masks, and dispersed drums marked "toxic waste" all over a busy street. They received a great deal of public and media attention.

Payments to clients

Our advice office has handed over R133 700 to our clients this year, elicited from inaccessible, unsympathetic or inefficient bureaucracies. This sum does not include money paid directly to our clients' addresses, nor the considerably greater sum of state pension arrears, achieved by threats and pressure from our office and our generous attorney, but which are given out by state officials.

Monitoring pension payouts

The co-ordinator has been monitoring pension payouts paid on behalf of the KwaZulu government by a private high-tech undertaking. The money is calculated by computers and to that extent accurate; but the firm only pays out under instructions from the government. Corruption at the payout is reduced, but application still has to be made through government clerks. We have received many reports of clerks "mislaying" the application unless it is accompanied by a bribe.

"Say no to rape" booklet launched

This booklet was launched in October in the Black Sash's pocket-size format. We hope and believe that it will be a valuable and useful resource, and are distributing it widely as we have received many requests for copies. A Zulu translation is being prepared and we intend other languages to follow.

Interdicts against domestic abusers

The region is represented on a broadly-based human rights committee to publicise the new regulations for obtaining interdicts against domestic abusers. The committee managed to have an unsympathetic court official transferred, and has organised lectures to doctors and other groups. Our advice office co-ordinator wrote an informative article on interdict procedures for the bilingual township supplement of the Natal Witness, and a Zulu version was prepared by a case-worker. After publication of these articles, the number of women applying for interdicts doubled.

Marie Dyer

Northern Transvaal

Capital Punishment

It appears that the first case to be heard by the new Constitutional Court could lead to a definite ruling on the death penalty. Isobel Pretorious and Ruth Meyer write that "....the time has come for all concerned individuals and organisations to work together to remove this abomination from our statute books". They met with Wim Trengrove who has been appointed counsel for the defendant to discuss the issue further. He has a copy of the Black Sash's publication "Inside South Africa's death factory" and has welcomed our input.

The region is overjoyed that all four people Isobel and Ruth visit on Death Row have had their life sentences commuted to life imprisonment. The only sad thing is that we won't be able to visit them on a regular basis now. Paul Swarts, whom Isobel visits in the Klerksdorp Prison, had a letter published in *The Citizen* in which he wrote that the Black Sash was amongst only a few organisations who had worked "tirelessly to see our lives spared".

It is however worrying to note that some prisoners are mistakenly under the impression that they deserve amnesty. This is something we feel needs to be addressed in the near future.

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Advice office workshops on gender issues

The advice office has started a workshop programme dealing with gender issues. People from NGOs and other groups have been invited to participate in workshops on such topics as rape, abuse of women and family violence. Further workshops on counselling victims of abuse and on the abuse of children have been requested by participants.

Heidi Schoeman, the advice office co-ordinator, is putting together a package of resource material on domestic violence, with the intention of defining its nature and clarifying the Family Violence Act of 1993. A clear step by step direction of the procedure involved in obtaining a peace order is also to be included. It is hoped to use this package as a basis for further workshops and training courses to be held in the region.

Maintenance and child support

Martha Olifant is involved in a project monitoring the maintenance courts and Department of Home Affairs queues in order to discover common problems being experienced. She is being assisted by member Louise Du Plessis who is a lawyer. A report is expected early in the new year.

Marilyn Donaldson

Cape Western

Advice office clients' concern about possible closure

Our clients in the advice office were very concerned when they heard that we might close. Some even took our cards to ask their church ministers to pray for the Black Sash. Ms Munnik (CPA) phoned to say that when she read about our situation in the newspapers, she and her mother prayed, and asked how Cape Town will be without the Black Sash advice office.

Nomahlubi Nabe, organiser

Domestic maintenance

Anna Zieminski, photographer and Black Sash member, is working with the Cape Western advice office to compile a photographic essay on the subject of child support and the Black Sash's work on this topic. We have interviewed women from across the spectrum in connection with our maintenance project and have found similar problems relating to fathers, husbands, and the courts. We hope to have this documentation ready by early 1995.

Bastienne Klein, advice office co-ordinator

Natal Witness

Members joined an anti toxic waste protest in Pietermaritzburg.

Open the meetings of standing committees!

Upon being told that standing committee meetings of the provincial legislature were closed to the public and the press, our provincial legi-monitoring group collected further information, liaised with other groups, and held a stand to voice our concerns. Thus began a campaign for transparency in provincial government which culminated in the signing of a memorandum by representatives of eleven political, religious, legal and social welfare organisations, and eleven prominent Capetonians. This was delivered to the Speaker's office on 14 October. The next day, it was announced that the meetings would henceforth be open. We continue to actively monitor provincial legislation and liaise with other concerned organisations where necessary.

Margaret Nash

Natal Coastal

Education for Democracy

Durban Black Sash plays an active part in initiatives on local government and democracy education. The KwaZulu Natal Forum, formerly an IFEE affiliate, operates as a co-ordinating body,and draws together over forty NGOs.

Providing information about local government processes is the most pressing demand on our time and resources. The Forum hopes to produce a poster and pamphlet series early in the New Year to mobilise interest and participation in the local government negotiating process. The Black Sash has also been asked to publish a booklet dealing with local government.

It is expected that voter registration will become our core focus in the months ahead. The Forum will lobby local authorities to attach education units to the registration teams and will offer its expertise in these activities. We will also look at deploying monitors to local areas where registration drives are underway.

Jane Argall

East London advice office

While the staff primarily focus on case-work, the co-ordinator's time has largely centred on broad "para-legal" issues.

This has involved participation in the birth of a number of new national structures:

* a funding crisis committee was formed in response to the critical financial situation facing the majority of advice offices. Iit aims to secure bridging funds until such time as a national trust is established. In response to the brief given to the committee, a questionnaire is being administered to determine the current and future financial status of advice offices. In addition, the Department of Justice and the Legal Aid Board are

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being approached to ascertain their support.

* a national trust to raise, administer and distribute funds for para-legal structures

* a national institute to organise the para-legal sector and co-ordinate issues such as training and certification, the development of a data base, lobbying and networking

* a national structure of community-based para-legal organisations, which will be responsible for the co-ordination of activities in regions

In November the Ministry of Justice organised a forum to bring together members of the legal profession to debate the government's proposed five-year plan, which includes increasing access to the legal and judicial system. Para-legals are in a strong established position to assist, and gave input around the role they have, and can fulfil.

The forum set the scene for the emergence of the developing para-legal structures. Progress of consolidation and co-ordination of such structures is slow, but the rewards for the Black Sash to actively participate in the process will prove worthwhile as we look to restructuring and to greater participation with organisations offering a service similar to our own.

Penny Geerdts
Advice office co-ordinator

Cape Eastern

Following a regional strategic planning workshop, it was decided that we would focus on three areas of action and that a gender component would be built into all our work.

Local government

As Port Elizabeth's Transitional Local Council is already in place, members are observing TLC and related committee meetings on a regular basis. The TLC Agreeement makes provision for a civil society forum "so as to allow civil society the opportunity of effective interaction with the councillors on municipal matters". We have a member on the steering committee of the forum, and another attended a trainer's workshop on local government and education for democracy. Training of members and staff is due to take place.

Education for democracy

The advice office is hosting a Danchurchaid volunteer, Eva Green. She is designing a workshop on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, which will be conducted with rural advice offices and communities. Eva will also be training members and staff to continue this work once she returns to Denmark.

Legi-watch

This will focus on the Eastern Cape Legislature in Bisho and will be done in conjunction with Albany and East London. Activities to date have included ordering the Government Gazettes (which still say "Western Cape"!) and trying to find out "who's who" in Bisho.

The Argus

Margaret Nash protests the Defence Budget outside Parliament in Cape Town.

Truth and Reconcilaition Commission

Members have attended workshops on the topic, and were interviewed for CCV's magazine programme "Era". The SABC head office evidently ordered that the programme not be screened until legislation had been passed. The producer has decided to take this up with the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

Advice office work

Members continue to volunteer in the advice office. Should closure of the advice office become inevitable, it is extremely difficult trying to imagine where clients will go with their problems – clients have taken to sleeping in the alley way next to the building to be assured of a place in the queue. The regional executive and the advice office management committees have joined forces as a strategic team to try and chart the way forward.

Social pensions crisis

There is currently a crisis in the administration of social pensions in the Eastern Cape region. Amalgamation of the various bureaucracies, including the Ciskei and Transkei, has been a bit of a non-starter. We have been engaging the strategic management team, have submitted a joint memo to the national and provincial ministers and have travelled to Bisho to discuss this. Media coverage is planned as the next step. Other significant work has included the submission of comments on the Prisons Amendment bill, most of which were incorporated; submission of a memo to Parliament regarding the UIF funding shortage, and participation on the committee investigating the extension of the Wage Act to the domestic sector.

Laura Best
Advice office co-ordinator

Southern Transvaal

Cronin's support for Black Sash work

At a meeting held by the region to discuss the RDP and the role of NGOs in the process, Jeremy Cronin of the South African Communist Party emphasised that a great deal of work lay ahead and that NGOs had an important contribution to make. He noted that the RDP is a people-centred process, and that the masses should be seen as an asset and not a liability. He stated that the Black Sash needed to continue to be a watchdog and fierce lobbyist, and to inform people of their basic human rights. Cronin commended our stand on demilitarisation

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and said that campaigning on this issue was vital as money saved through a reduction in the defence budget could go towards the RDP.

Demilitarisation

Nan Cross, Black Sash member and demilitarisation campaigner, recently visited Armscor as part of a delegation of church dignitaries and Ceasefire members. Despite some rather probing questions by the delegation, most of their queries were brushed aside with long-winded responses from their hosts.

Nan felt cheated by the lack of real discussion and stated that she would prefer their next meeting not to be at Arsmcor's plush offices, but rather at a more neutral and conducive venue.

Laura Pollecutt

Albany

Workshops with rural women

During the month of September the region conducted three workshops with diverse groups of rural women. The motivation and funding for the workshops came from the Swedish-based Olaf Palme Institute with the idea of gauging women's needs in terms of the RDP. The workshops were held in Alicedale, Grahamstown and Bathurst. The women themselves were from widely varying backgrounds: highly politicised activists, farm labourers and farm owners. Black Sash workers and volunteers were involved in the organisation and running of the workshops. Discussion during the sessions was frank and lively.

There were no surprises or startling discoveries made, rather the report documents what many of us know about rural women – that they are impoverished and their needs are often neglected and forgotten.

Following this short project, Albany Black Sash plans to run a series of educational workshops with women farm labourers dealing with issues such as UIF and maintenance grants – topics in which we have expertise and in which workshop participants expressed great interest.

Julia Segar

Media Outreach

Following the extension of basic conditions of employment to domestic workers early in 1994, we began to receive a steady stream of enquiries from both employers and employees. With an advocate in our midst whose speciality is domestic worker legislation, we were well placed to launch a series of question-and-answer articles in the local press. These ran for about ten weeks, and covered a wide range of issues. We were also interviewed on Radio Xhosa.

Women's Issues

Our next opportunity to rush into print came with an invitation from the editor of the *Daily Despatch* to run a fort-nightly column on issues affecting women. The column was headed with the "Womandla!" banner, and had as a subtitle "Speaking Personally". Writers have included anthropologists, social workers, lawyers, a linguist and a general practioner, and they have based their articles on personal experiences. Subjects have included child abuse, the rights of gays to custody of their children, abortion, sexism in language, the equality clause in the new constitution, bridal wealth, and nuclear families.

Lynette Paterson

National

Danish Peace Prize

The Black Sash has been awarded the annual Peace Prize by the Danish Peace Foundation. The institute, one of the largest of its kind in Scandinavia, aims to support peace and disarmament work and the promotion of human rights internationally. Mary Burton and Nomahlubi Nabe will travel to Copenhagen in February to receive the award.

Monitoring the national parliament

Alison Tilley, national legislation monitor, with the support of Cape Western's Legislation Watch Group and inputs from regions, advice offices, and issue co-ordinators, has presented a Black Sash position to parliament on a number of important issues.

These include steps to challenge the ongoing discriminatory taxation of women; written and oral submissions about the Human Rights Commission Bill, the Correctional Services Amendment Bill, and the Reconstruction and Development Programme White Paper; a submission to the Abortion and Sterilisation Sub-committee; letters giving our reasons for opposition to the fourth and fifth amendments to the interim constitution; a submission on the proposed Truth and Reconciliation legislation. Also, a letter to Cyril Ramaphosa expressing concern about the constitutional assembly's proposed timetable and costs, and one to Kobie Coetzee on the question of transparency .

The presence of a dedicated legislation monitor and volunteers has created an active presence in parliament, the constitutional assembly and the numerous committees which are often the best place to influence policy and voice concerns in the support of human rights.

Candy Malherbe

The "Say no to rape" booklet is available in all regional offices

Till Love is Lord of the Land

Chris Zithulele Mann

We shall dance through the doors of the prison
and dance through the prison gate,
We shall dance through the hills of the country
and dance through the streets of town,
We shall dance with the old till the evening
and dance with the young till dawn,
We shall dance in the arms of the spirit
and dance to the spirit's drum.

And the dogs of the days of darkness
the dogs shall cower on the sand,
and we shall not cease our struggle
till love is lord of the land.

And the walls in the hearts of the haters
the walls shall be broken down,
And the walls in the hearts of the hated
the walls shall be broken down,
And the fear in the bowels of the tyrant
the fear shall be pacified,
And the wrath in the blood of the captive
the wrath shall be pacified.

Chorus:
And the stones of the people's power
the stones shall be gathered up,
And the bullets of the tyrant's power
the bullets shall be melted down,
And the knot of the hangman's necklace
the knot shall be cast aside,
And the flame of the people's necklace
the flame shall be cast aside.

Chorus:
And the steel of the soldier's rifle
the steel shall become as a plough,
And the blood of the broken bodies
the blood shall become as the soil,
And the bomb of the freedom fighter
the bomb shall become as a seed,
And the sweat on the workers' foreheads
the sweat shall become as the rain.

Chorus:
And the wounds that are deep as the dongas
the wounds shall begin to heal,
And the scars that are deep as the ghettos
the scars shall begin to heal,
And the grass on the hills of freedom
the grass shall be green again,
And the fruit on the vines of freedom
the fruit shall be sweet again.

And the dogs of the days of darkness
the dogs shall cower on the sand,
and we shall not cease in our struggle
till love is lord of the land.