

SASH



FOCUS ON CORRUPTION

**UNRAVELLING THE AFRIKANER "BROEDER" BONDS
BRIDGE-BUILDING IN BERMUDA
MOBILISING THE UNIONS
DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN - A PHOTO ESSAY**

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editorial

Corruption has become endemic in South African society. Every day there is some media coverage of yet another scam. We chose this theme for our September issue in the hope that we would be able to present more than merely the obvious.

Although the weight of our coverage falls on corruption within the existing regime, we realise the rot does not stop there. For instance, we would like to have focused on corruption within oppressed communities. That we have not done more to explore corruption in other areas is not for lack of effort.

It appears that self-criticism is too often perceived as 'reactionary'. This is compounded by the current restriction of freedom to debate principles and methods employed by organisations. It is a sad indictment that one of the few people prepared to voice her concerns did not want to be named.

While we were compiling this issue, many Black Sash members were travelling beyond our borders: to Lusaka for the Five Freedoms Forum/ANC conference; Harare for the 'Women in the Struggle for Peace' conference; Black Sash president Mary Burton toured the USA and Helen Zille covered a conference in Bermuda attended by many of the political protagonists in South Africa. To give you some insight, we have included their own accounts.

The questionnaires included in the last issue have been partially analysed. Your comments on the cover, design, layout and general appearance of the magazine have given us the go-ahead to improve the look of the magazine. We have decided to experiment with announcements of contents ('barkers') on the cover and welcome feedback on this.

We have tried to introduce a bit of levity into the issue to break up some of the weightier sections. We hope you still find SASH a good, solid read.

Hilary Ivory

Andrea Weiss

some ideas about corruption

When you come across corrupt individuals the nature of the problem seems easy to understand: they have lost their moral bearing, they are consumed with envy, or perhaps the temptation to take advantage of an opportunity simply becomes too great. The result is exposure and expulsion.

Where patterns of corruption become noticeable however, the causes are far more elusive and the problem resists solution.

We would like to think that greedy bureaucrats and politicians have the monopoly on corruption, but there is enough evidence to show that companies, journalists, doctors, lawyers, activists, engineers - the list is endless - can also fall into patterns of corruption.

Perhaps the best-known explanation of such patterns is that 'all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely'. Because power allows people to enforce their will over others, it provides the powerful with enormous temptation to abuse their position; when that power remains unchallenged, the greater the abuse.

Others argue that it is not power *per se* that weakens the resolve: people are by nature weak. This interpretation holds that humans are sinful creatures, prone to jealousy and greed. Positions of power provide them with the opportunity, though not the cause, of corruption. The recognition of human fallibility should not, however, lead to resignation. Organisations need to be built to encourage honesty, to educate people from childhood in civic responsibility and ethics, and to exercise moral leadership in business, politics and social life.

'It's the fault of human nature' and 'It's the fault of power' can only take us a certain distance. American political traditions, for example, maintain a distinction between business and honest business. Politicians get into trouble when they steal in a way that insults their constituencies - when huge amounts disappear on record and typists who can't type are flaunted around town. Many interpreters have linked this acceptance of corruption to America's liberal inheritance. This inheritance sanctifies self-advancement while removing morality from public life. To put it bluntly, 'we are all here to promote our own interests'. Since no public institution or school may promote a set of morals, this argument holds, everything soon boils down to how much you can get for yourself - and you can get so much more if you are in a position of power.

Critics of liberal societies create their own patterns of corruption. In many countries, there are certain institutions invested with so much power that party leaders and government bureaucrats eventually think they are above the people they are supposed to serve. Endowed with a 'superior understanding of history', an infallible ideology, a belief in their own racial superiority, or the political vanity that their interests are consonant with those of the people, such leaders eventually behave as though they are beyond reproach. They exist across the political spectrum.

Here we find secrecy ('the inferior have no right to know'), deception and lying ('it's not in their interests to know'), greed ('by helping myself I am really helping the people'), and fraud ('the right cause makes things add up in the end'). In this environment, individuals are frequently made into scapegoats. This is yet another lie about the single rotten apple in the barrel.

Those who have surveyed corruption in Third World settings have extended the 'power corrupts' dictum: it is true, they say, that power corrupts. Colonialism makes some lord over others and the powerful can justify their theft and misrule with all sorts of inventions about how it benefits the people. When colonialism is in its last throes, a veritable festival of corruption may ensue among those who are to be deprived of the spoils. Indulgence becomes both rampant and justified by a vindictive intent on leaving nothing of value for 'worthless' enemies to inherit.

But it is also the absence of power that corrupts. The colonised can become preoccupied with the wealth of the rulers; lawful behaviour can be undermined by summary arrests and illegitimate laws, and personal pride eroded by a daily diet of horrors. Though often romanticised as an ennobling experience, powerlessness presents awesome challenges to the integrity of the human spirit.

Many post-colonial societies bear the hallmark of corruption. Suddenly finding themselves in positions of power, people resort to creating their own wealth. Colonial habits are repeated in the aimless malice of minor officials. Governments behave as though they permanently know better because they once fought a just cause. Laws, procedures and human rights are ignored by rulers' search for 'efficiency'.

Even where colonialism may not have cut deeply, corruption can still develop in patterns: the oil boom of the 1970s provided several independent states with undreamt-of wealth. Corruption seemed justifiable because there seemed to be more than enough to line every pocket. But when the boom went bust, only some pockets were lined and integrity was in tatters.

Unchallenged power, excessive self-promotion, people who think themselves superior, unrepresentative government, vindictiveness and the unexpected arrival of a pot of gold create patterns of corruption in all realms of life. □

lobbying for truth

Formerly Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of Cape Town, George Ellis is now Professor of Physics at Trieste. In this article, he argues that responsible government and citizenship rest on respect for truth in public life.

One of the most important problems facing South Africa in recent times is the increased loss of truth in public life. This has undermined the trust which is a necessary foundation for the building of consensus and the process of reconciliation.

This problem has roots stretching far back in history. It began to seriously take hold on the one hand with the use in legislation of language designed to mislead, and on the other with the establishment of the SABC as a propaganda medium in which the government interpretation of events would be given exclusively, disguised as factual or news presentations.

Examples of the first kind are naming one law 'The Extension of University Education Act' while it actually restricted educational opportunities available to black people, and another 'The Abolition of Passes and Consolidation of Documents Act' while it actually reinforced the pass laws restricting the freedom of black people.

Examples of the second kind are the use of the SABC to propagate the propaganda myth of the 'Total Onslaught', and a television broadcast just after the award to Archbishop Tutu of the Nobel prize purporting to represent his views, but which was actually a misrepresenta-

tion of the man and everything he stands for.

This trend has been reinforced by legislation such as that limiting our knowledge of energy-related news, which has been used to prevent the South African public from knowing about fraudulent events known to the public everywhere else in the world.

A watershed was passed when it was publicly established that it was acceptable for ministers of the state to tell straightforward untruths in parliament.

This happened in 1976 when the Minister of Defence flatly denied that South African troops were in Angola, when they were indeed.

This fact later became public knowledge, but the public did not call the Minister to account for deceiving them. Thus we became accomplices in our own deception. It was, therefore, no longer surprising when public funds were deceitfully used for secret purposes, or a senior official in the security forces disclosed that 'disinformation' was regarded by them as acceptable - that is, they could manufacture and spread untruths if they believed it would serve their purposes.

This again appears to have been unquestioningly accepted by the general public. In recent times, two important aspects of the loss of truth have to be considered: the making of many public promises that are not then fulfilled (most importantly, the signing of treaties that were apparently never adhered to); and the suppression of information of vital importance to the public about the real situation on our borders and in the black townships - in particular about the activities of the army and police. This is exacerbated by the secrecy surrounding the decisions of the Security Management System.

The basic reason for this loss of truth is that it is seen by those in power to be necessary for their retention of power. Injustice cannot bear being exposed to the light of truth; it has to pretend it is something else. But if one asks, 'Why does it happen?', an essential part of the answer is because the South African public allows it to happen.

We have accepted from our leaders halftruths and propaganda dressed up as news, instead of demanding honesty and our right to



SAVE THE



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know about what is happening here and overseas that vitally affects us.

The implications are extremely serious. The public is denied access to knowledge, uncomfortable as it may be, that is vital to their future welfare. We are led to believe in myths designed to protect the vision of apartheid, rather than the truths that can lead to a proper understanding of future possibilities. We are from time to time fed incorrect information designed to discredit opponents of the government. The government itself is not immune to this pervading lack of truth, and itself becomes the victim of this propaganda. Indeed, in this situation no one is immune.

We do not raise this issue to condemn or judge, but because truth is necessary for reconciliation in the future.

How can this situation be remedied? Two-fold action is needed.

The government must realise that it cannot negotiate meaningfully in a climate in which its statements are often not believed. How can the public at present know when it is really telling the truth? The fact that this is vigorously stated no longer suffices to establish confidence. Only a clean break with the past will be sufficient - a public statement of intent that from now on there will be no more untruths, half-truths, or suppression of news and a cessation of all covert activities; and then a rigorous adherence to this declaration and prosecution of public officials, of any rank whatever, who violate it. Any lesser steps will not be adequate to provide a new basis of trust that is desperately needed at the present time.

On the other hand, we the public must demand that this change take place - that the government act to re-establish public truth in this country now. If we do not insist on this and actively ensure it takes place, we will not get that access to knowledge that is vital to making meaningful choices about our future. The present situation is frankly disrespectful of the public and their right to know what is happening in their own country. We must actively re-establish that right and then vigilantly guard it; for this is the basis of responsible government and responsible citizenship. □

a case in point

During 1987 and 1988, in attacks separated by 18 months, Cosatu House and SA Council of Churches (SACC) headquarters at Khotso House were badly damaged by bomb blasts.

It seemed that bombs had been planted in the basements of both buildings rendering them structurally unsound and displacing a number of anti-apartheid organisations.

A third attack came in October last year when Khanya House, the Pretoria headquarters of the SA Catholic Bishops' Conference, was set ablaze in a petrol bomb attack.

While no prosecutions have arisen out of these attacks, police explanations have drawn heavy criticism from the organisations which occupied these buildings.

Shortly after the Khotso House bombing - which also destroyed Blash Sash offices - senior policemen implied in news reports that the destruction of the building had been caused by the premature explosion of explosives stored in the building for intended use elsewhere.

These suggestions were vehemently rejected by SACC general secretary, the Reverend Frank Chikane.

'We are outraged at the innuendo that the SACC or any other occupants of Khotso House should be under any suspicion,' he retorted in the press.

In January this year, deputy CID chief Major-General Joubert, appointed by Law and Order Minister Mr Adriaan Vlok to investigate the incidents, read out a statement by the Minister alleging that former UCT student and trade unionist Shirley Gunn had had a hand in the Khotso House bombing along with two 'unidentified men'.

At the same time, he said police were looking into whether Wit Wolf Barend Strydom had anything to do with the Khanya

House attack and alleged that the Cosatu House blast had been caused by 'a person or persons either living in or frequenting the building'.

This time, Cosatu spokesman Frank Meintjies went on record with a counter-statement rejecting the notion that the union's head office had been bombed by 'frequent visitors' to the premises.

Also in criticism, Argus columnist Hugh Robertson described the Minister's statement as a 'fanciful attempt to clarify the mystery of terrorist outrages against opponents of his government'.

Of the suggestion that the Wit Wolf had been involved, he said: 'It is most irregular for anyone, least of all a Minister of Law and Order, to voice suspicions about an awaiting trial prisoner....But this is something which Mr Vlok undoubtedly must have known and the fact that he chose to ignore the *sub judice* rule behind which he and his colleagues so often hide is perhaps the most revealing aspect of his curious statement to the Press.

'It suggests that the statement might have had an essentially political motive, that the object was not so much to give a clear, confirmed and reliable progress report to the public, but to create a particular impression - and one which cannot be convincingly substantiated.'

Mr Vlok's most recent comments on the bombings were made in parliament in April when he named two men whose identity documents had allegedly been found in the basement of Khotso House. One of the men was dead, the other not in custody.

In what could only have been a snipe at remarks made by Hugh Robertson, he said he could not comment on the Wit Wolf and Khanya House because of the '*sub judice* ruling'!

And the matter rests there....

the brotherhood syndrome: the origins of favouritism

Sampie Terreblanche is Professor of Economics at the University of Stellenbosch. This article is part of a paper presented at a College Lecture at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg on May 10 of this year. In this extract, Prof Terreblanche examines how social systems, originally implemented as 'survival mechanisms', have become the prerogative of the ruling tribe at the expense of other communities.

My dictionaries give a wide spectrum of definition of the word 'corruption': rottenness, impurity, bribery, dishonesty, fraud, shady dealings, wickedness, immorality, sinfulness, debauchery, vice, wrong-doing, degeneracy, decadence, looseness, etc.

In a political context the word 'corruption' is normally used in a rather narrow sense: the misuse, for personal benefit, of public funds, information or status by people endowed with public authority. Such actions are normally regarded as corrupt even if they are not illegal because they nevertheless undermine the ethical standards of society. Corruption, however, is not necessarily limited to those endowed with public authority. Any person unduly favoured by public action can benefit from corruption or can use his or her influence to be protected or favoured in an improper or corrupt way.

Afrikaner favouritism

Almost immediately after the National Party took office in 1948, it started to implement a three-pronged programme. Additional discriminatory laws were enacted and also extended to so-called coloureds and Indians; the bureaucracy was systematically enlarged and additional parastatals were developed to create lucrative opportunities mainly for Afrikaners; and a variety of welfare



Guy Tillim/Afrapix

(or redistributive) programmes were launched to uplift the mainly Afrikaans-speaking poor-whites.

During the greater part of the 1950s, these measures were easily justified as temporary measures to solve the alleged (undeserved) poverty of the Afrikaners. When this moral justification became questionable at the end of the 1950s, Dr Verwoerd removed almost all moral discomfort by offering an ideological justification in terms of Grand Apartheid, ie the idea of separate freedoms

and national self-determination of every ethnic group.

After Verwoerd, Afrikaner favouritism was perpetuated not because the Afrikaners were still poor and needed upliftment programmes, but simply because it was then regarded as ideologically expedient to continue with it. It was seen to be part of the birthright of Afrikaners in the land of their birth. Through this ideological propaganda, it was blatantly alleged that the greater part of the country did not belong to the

blacks and that they had no claim to it.

The improvement in the relative economic position of the Afrikaners over the last 40 years has been quite dramatic. In 1946, their per capita income was less than half that of English-speakers. It is now three-quarters of the (now much higher) per capita income of English-speakers.

This 'embourgeoisement' of the Afrikaners has had unfortunate side-effects. Not only have they become as materialistic as their English-speaking counterparts, but they have also become spoiled. (To what extent the strong materialistic attitudes of English-speaking whites can also be blamed on the NP government is hard to explain. The easiest way to handle this thorny question is to allege that the government has not weakened but strengthened this attitude.)

If the favouritism of the Afrikaners had continued for only 10 or 15 years after 1948, its damaging effects may not have been as great or as permanent. But continuing with it almost unabatedly for more than 40 years has not only spoiled them but corrupted many of them in at least the following ways.

Firstly, it turned them into typical *nouveaux riches*. After being pampered for 40 years by the apartheid government, many Afrikaners today behave in a very avaricious manner. For them, observable status symbols are of the highest importance. But in many cases these symbols only serve to display to the world the typical *petit bourgeois* values of the newly-rich.

A second unfortunate characteristic of the white *nouveaux riches* in this country is their inclination to display a pejorative attitude towards so-called coloureds and blacks who have not been as successful as they have been. This is an alarming example of a sick and corrupt value orientation. When displaying this pejorative attitude, many whites are either unaware or unprepared to take into account that they were heavily pampered while blacks have been the victims of exploitation.

A third consequence of 41 years of favouritism is the unreasonably demanding attitude of large sections of the white electorate. The advent

of the extreme right-wing in Afrikaner circles over the past 10 years can, to a large extent, be ascribed to the fiscal inability of the government to maintain the high level of patronage.

I am of the opinion that it is wrong to regard the extreme right-wing in Afrikaner circles as mainly an ideological phenomenon. We must remember that South Africa has been experiencing a decline in its real per capita income since 1974. During the 1970s it was quite easy to shift the larger portion of the creeping poverty onto the lower economic strata of the black population. But since the early 1980s it has no longer been possible for the government to protect all whites against the impoverishing effects of the low growth rate or to compensate for this impoverishment. When members of the white electorate - in both the NP and CP circles - put forward their very high demands on government for all kinds of financial support and protection, they display very little, if any, awareness of the alarming poverty of blacks and are not prepared to consider for one moment blacks' urgent need of financial support.

Not only does government persist with this favouritism in spite of growing poverty and deprivation in the black community, but it also persists in using favouritism as a method by which to recruit electoral support. Instead of re-educating the white electorate as regards the difficult and deteriorating situation in South Africa, the Nationalist government is still using its fiscal authority and its propaganda machines (some supported by tax money and/or bureaucratic favours) to strengthen the racist and ethnic prejudices and the corrupt value orientation of many whites.

It can easily be seen that there is a rather close link between prolonged favouritism, the decline in economic growth and the sudden emergence of legal forms of corruption. During the period of high growth and artificial Afrikaner upliftment, a very conspicuous get-rich-quick cult developed in white society. However, given the economic stagnation of the past decade, it is no longer possible to satisfy the spiral of rising expectations generated by this kind of cult. Siege economies necessitate

careful strategy - in this case the financial rand system. This offers very tempting and, for many, irresistible opportunities for getting rich quickly.

Co-option of black leaders

During the 1970s, the government started to supplement its policy of favouritism with a policy of co-option. The motivation for this was an attempt to broaden its support to include other population groups. Over the past 20 years leaders of almost all the non-Afrikaner population groups have been co-opted in one way or another. As one could have expected, this policy of co-option - in all its ramifications - has opened up a Pandora's box of corruption. We must remember that the word 'gekoop' and the word 'gekoop' in Afrikaans are spelt in almost the same way. Perhaps their meanings have become confused.

The first group to be co-opted were the homeland leaders. As is now quite common knowledge, the price of this co-option has been considerable over the years. When it became evident that homeland leaders regard costly gifts and favours as a normal part of their political remuneration, it was justified by claiming that in terms of African culture, such things are symbols of trust and friendship. Soon there were whites - many drawn from the last white tribe of Africa - especially those in close contact with homeland leaders, who felt that they, too, needed gifts and favours as symbols of friendship and trust. When a government creates sub-systems that deteriorate this easily into all kinds of corruption, one should expect that the corruption will become contagious.

I would very much like to know how many cents out of every rand allocated for black upliftment actually reach their real target.

The tricameral parliament represents a second example of the government's policy of co-option - the findings of the James Commission are adequate proof of that. Perhaps the rumours about activities in and around the two new houses justify a few more James Commissions.... Surely the chickens of this clumsy system are starting to come home to roost? □



education for liberation

Evading responsibility as a student can lead to a form of corruption that undermines the very cause you might wish to serve, argues a university lecturer who chose to remain anonymous.

I write about a form of corruption that is part of any social system disempowering one group in favour of another: it is, though, corruption not of those exercising power, but of those oppressed. It often involves confused notions about what freedom is.

Although this form of corruption is, judging by what I see and hear, pervasive, I will focus on it as found among students at university and in students' representative bodies. What I say may *sound* conservative and/or reactionary, but it grows out of experienced realities of the processes of change already underway in education, and a concern that no precious ground is lost nor resources frittered away.

At university, this kind of corruption may express itself as an evasion of what it is to be a student: that being a student means using one's study grant to buy books and stationery as well as entertainment; that a student reads, takes notes and gets assignments in on time. Whether

or not students perform these tasks is usually linked to the understanding of certain factors: that disciplines (although open to development in exciting new ways due to the unique South African situation) *do* have a body of knowledge and certain skills that demand hard work and application, and that most lecturers and tutors act in good faith much of the time (even though they are, of course, as fallible as the next person).

Among student representative bodies this kind of corruption may manifest itself as reluctance to face the fact that negotiation entails agreeing to some ground rules, and then honouring them - *especially* as the discovery is made that any form of negotiated agreement leads to *some* restriction of choice and action.

In short, this form of corruption involves refusing to take responsibility for oneself and one's actions. This refusal leads to the following chain of 'logic': I am a victim, therefore I am entitled to squeeze whatever I can, by whatever means, out of the system. The first two steps do not necessarily lead to the third, but, when they do, the corruption of which I speak comes into play.

The dangers are obvious, and serious. The waste of valuable resources - not the least of which being the time and energy of committed educators; the retarding of individual growth through reluctance to accept responsibility for oneself; and, on a group and community level, making excuses and laying the blame for all wrongs on an abstracted, all-powerful 'system' delays the development of the alternative social structure this country urgently needs. □



Can I ask you another really stupid question?"



"Look ... You've got Lenin ... and Leninism ... and Stalin ... and Stalinism"

feminism: not just a middle-class cause

Carla Sutherland is vice-chair of the Cape Western branch of the Black Sash, and is an MA student in the Department of Politics at the University of Cape Town.

One of the most poignant stories to be told, informally, at the 'Women in the Struggle for Peace' conference in Harare was by Ndane, a former guerrilla from Zimbabwe. While her descriptions of the hardships she faced during the seven years she spent fighting were compelling, it was her day-to-day experiences since independence that touched me the most.

While the men of ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) were welcomed back as national heroes, women like Ndane received rather more ambivalent treatment. Most people were unsure of how to respond to them: although occasionally lauded from the public platforms, they were, for the most part, cast into the outskirts of society. Ndane's common-law husband, who had fought alongside her during the seven-year period, left her to marry a woman who had not been involved in the armed struggle. The other

members of the group which she had led had little time for her, preferring to spend their time with women who fitted more comfortably into the traditional image of what a woman should be. Her arrival home was marred by laughter at her unfashionably long dress and platform shoes, the clothes that she had worn before she had left to join ZANLA. For Ndane and many like her the period since independence has not been one of reaping the rewards of her contribution, but rather one of bearing the cost of being labelled 'different' and 'unfeminine'.

This story, for me, became even more compelling in the context of the often vigorous debates over 'feminism' that took place at the conference. Certainly there was agreement that women in South Africa are discriminated against legally, economically and socially. We agreed also that this issue needs to be addressed. What divided us were the questions of



"Now, what I'd like to know is



"... Who on earth was FEMIN?"

'when' and 'how'. While these were essentially questions of strategy, they also served to highlight the deep-seated resistance to, and suspicion of, feminism that exists within many progressive organisations in South Africa.

Frequently this is simply a matter of resistance to the label. The word has become imbued with negative connotations. Feminism has come to mean much more than a commitment to equality and justice for women. It has come to be associated with the rejection of a whole set of values that many women find important: primarily a rejection of traditional family structure. In the South African context, where a labyrinth of legislation, from the Group Areas Act to the creation of Bantustans, has destroyed the fabric of family life and resulted in literally millions of families being separated, it is hardly surprising that black women in particular have little time for feminism as presented in this form.

But it is the perception in South Africa that feminism is exclusively about the promotion of women's interests and needs without reference to wider racial oppression and exploitation that has allowed it to be dismissed as 'divisive' and 'irrelevant'. Certainly historically, instances of such exclusivity can be identified: the acceptance on the part of our suffragettes of the extension of the vote to white women with hardly a murmur about their black sisters, or indeed even a critique of the racial basis of the franchise; the creation of the Women's Bureau which strives primarily to enhance the position of white women in business; and the new brand of 'Cosmopolitan Feminists' ('Women who have had the strength and stamina to fight it out in a man's world', who 'set out to get their equal share of the economy or politics... dressed according to the fashion, coiffured by top

crimpers, they manage to smuggle themselves along the corridors of power ... definitely a new breed of women' [*Cosmopolitan*, June 1988 p60]), stridently capitalist and oblivious to the fact that in South Africa often their achievements are gained at the expense and exploitation of black women domestic workers.

One is left with the disturbing sense that in South Africa, the perception that feminism is about white women entrenching and extending their already privileged position is true. What is needed now is a re-assertion of what feminism is really about. It's not about bra-burning and man-hating, it's not about producing women business executives, nor even about giving women the tools to be successful in a 'man's world'. It is about resisting oppression and discrimination and challenging the limiting and denial of options for all people on the basis of gender. But most of all it is about a genuine commitment to social justice, and as such it is intrinsically linked to broader concerns about racism and exploitation. In short it's about freeing human potential from the socially constructed rules of what men and women can and can't do.

The cost of not recognising gender issues as a legitimate facet of our struggle will be high, as the Zimbabwean experience has shown repeatedly. The fact that some women in our society are far more privileged than many men does not constitute a basis on which to discount sexism. It does mean, however, that there is a real need for feminism to be promoted sensitively. The Black Sash, particularly as a women's organisation, but primarily as an organisation committed to justice, equality and democracy, needs to be actively pursuing these ends. □

'... feminism is really about... resisting oppression and discrimination and challenging the limiting and denial of options for all people on the basis of gender... about a genuine commitment to social justice...'

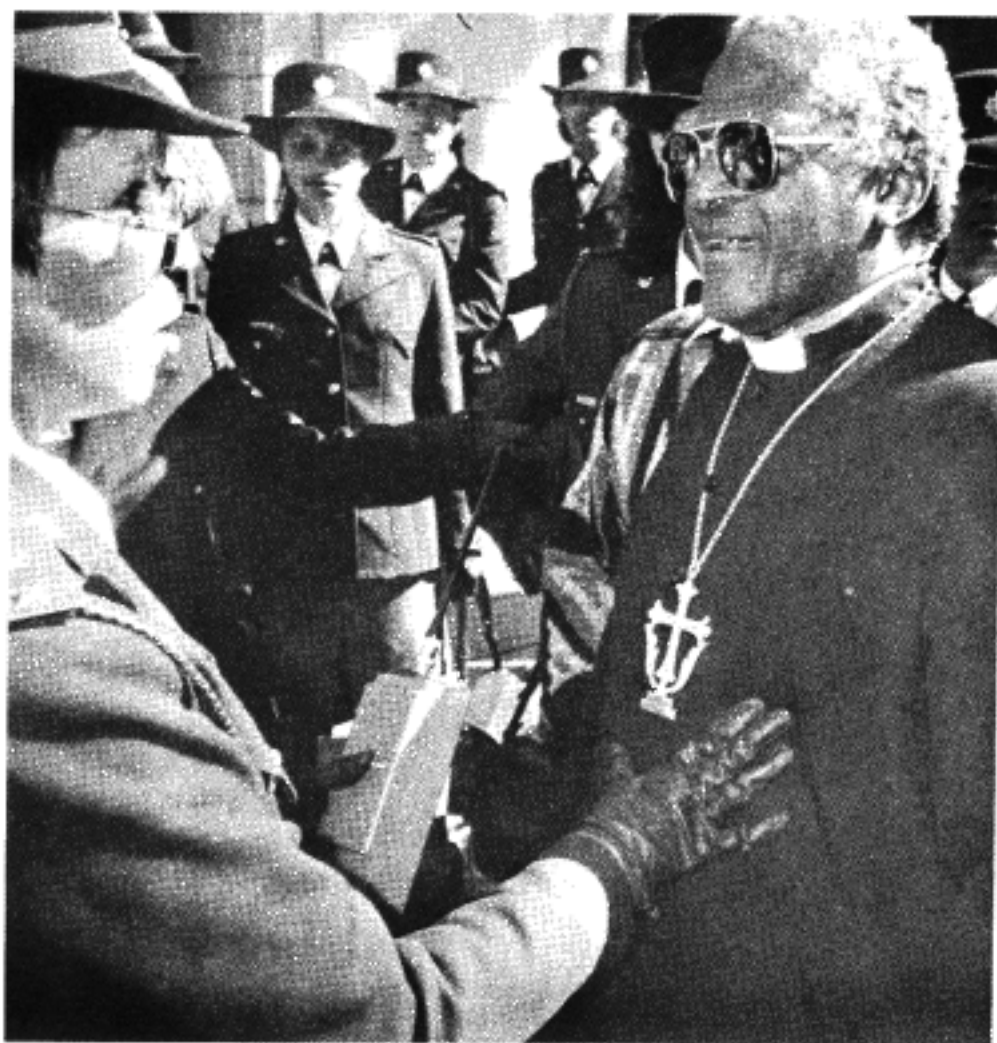
defiance campaign

In the weeks before the September 6 election, a renewed spirit of political opposition emerged in the form of the defiance campaign organised by the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM). All over South Africa, people took the initiative in hospitals and on beaches; in churches and at schools and challenged the laws that govern the apartheid state. Eric Miller of Afrapix documented events in Cape Town.

Mama Zihlangu, right, during a court break in Athlone following her arrest for breaking her restriction orders.



A policewoman stops Archbishop Desmond Tutu during a protest march through central Cape Town. A squad of policewomen was used to prevent a group of 120 people led by Archbishop Tutu from completing the march.



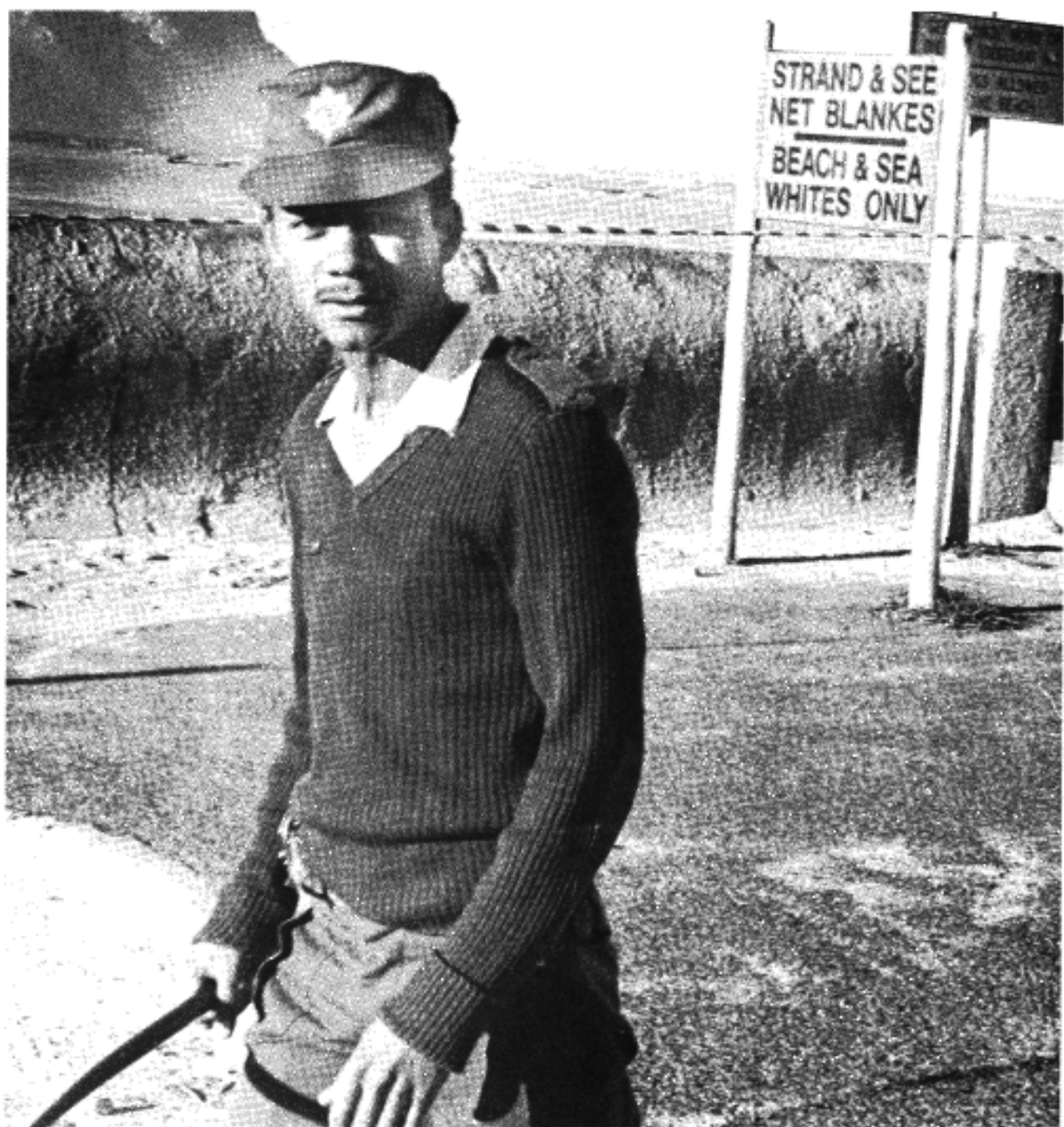
Jakes Gerwel, rector of the University of the Western Cape, talks to students at UWC after a protest meeting.

University of Cape Town students demonstrate at the beginning of August when thousands of conscripts began two years of military training.





A group of teachers from three different schools in Bishop Lavis march in support of students.



A policeman patrols Strand beach on the day campaigners said they would defy beach apartheid. Only about 200 protesters went on to Strand beach because of heavy road blocks. Buses were rerouted to Bloubergstrand, where more than a thousand people went onto the beach before they were dispersed by police.

from conflict to resolution in south africa



Helen Zille

The year 1989 is likely to be remembered as the year in which the word 'negotiation' rose to prominence across the spectrum of political rhetoric. This was, in itself, a significant development after a decade dominated by such concepts as 'total onslaught' and 'people's war'. Indeed, as the year began, few observers would have predicted the imminent shift.

*But how much substance lies behind the new rhetoric? Does the potential exist for the kind of negotiations that can achieve a legitimate constitutional settlement? Or do the non-negotiables on all sides still outweigh the potential areas of compromise? These were some of the issues addressed at a landmark conference in Bermuda in March organised by the Washington-based Aspen Institute. Intended to brief United States policy makers, senators and members of congress on developments in South Africa, the conference was addressed by representatives of most of the country's major political constituencies as well as a range of 'academics and experts'. In remarkably open and analytical exchanges, the conference also provided the South African participants with new insights and cautious optimism that the country might be entering a pre-negotiation period. **Helen Zille** was a member of the panel that summarised the proceedings. This is an edited version of her summary.*



'... no constituency has a definitive answer on how our conflict can be resolved.'

My task, at the end of this conference, is to draw together the major points that have been made, and in particular to assess the potential for moving towards a resolution of the South African conflict.

If one thing has become clear, it is that no constituency has a definitive answer on how our conflict can be resolved. But certain pointers have surfaced and they are significant because they generally point in the same direction.

All participants from the major political tendencies addressed the issue of conflict resolution, and in doing so, they all focused on the concept of 'negotiation'. In particular, they used the concept of constitutional negotiation aimed at establishing political 'rules of the game' acceptable to a broad spectrum of constituencies inside and outside the country. Based on the inputs at this conference, it is possible to define the crux of South Africa's political problems as the absence of a legitimate constitution capable of meeting the demands of the majority while addressing the fears of the minority. It is largely because these two imperatives are widely regarded as irreconcilable that South Africa's conflict continues.

So it is possible to re-phrase our starting question (how to move from conflict to resolution) as follows: How do we reach the point at which meaningful constitutional negotiations take place?

I propose to start by examining the significant areas of consensus that have emerged across the political spectrum at this conference, incorporating all participants including the Conservative Party (CP) and the African National Congress (ANC). These areas of consensus are significant because they would not have

emerged in this way, even a year ago, and they are encouraging because they could indicate the start of a broad-based trend in the direction of meaningful constitutional negotiations. Nevertheless there is still a long, hard road to travel.

Based on the presentations of the spokesmen and women at this conference (many of whom were invited as representatives of South Africa's major political protagonists), the following broad areas of agreement have emerged.

White minority rule is unsustainable

Although apartheid has become an international byword for white minority domination, its original formulation was based on the insight that white domination was unsustainable in the long term and that there were only two options for South Africa's future: partition or majority rule in a united country.

The National Party (NP) government opted for partition, called it apartheid, and introduced a host of accompanying segregationist measures to provide the necessary social and economic infrastructure for partition. Although the theoretical rationale was to move away from minority domination to a system in which each ethnic group would have its own country, the policy could only be enforced by extreme coercion, in practice amounting to comprehensive minority domination. This is apartheid as most South Africans and the rest of the world have come to understand it. Nevertheless the original kernel of insight - that white minority domination was unsustainable - persisted and its cogency has been reinforced by the fact that white domination failed, even as the transition mechanism it was allegedly intended to be, to enforce partition. This fact is no longer disputed and was accepted by all participants at the conference. This has led to the second area of consensus.

Apartheid (partition) has failed as a constitutional mechanism in South Africa

Even the CP spokesman at this conference accepted this - a significant acknowledgement. Rather than striving for partition, the CP is beginning to talk of secession - an important conceptual difference. Instead of pursuing its traditional policy of dividing up the country and defining all Africans out of South Africa by designating them citizens of various 'black states', the CP spokesman said his party was increasingly focusing on an alternative approach, which he called secession. He explained this as the attempt to secure the right of those Afrikaners who consider themselves a separate nation (and other whites who associate themselves with this aspiration) to negotiate themselves out of a common society. At a minimum, the

CP wished to negotiate the establishment of a 'homeland' in which the Afrikaner nation (Boervolk) could govern itself. The CP spokesman would not be drawn on the proposed boundaries for such a state - an issue which constitutes the major point of divergence between various right-wing organisations. However, he emphasised that the CP would only be prepared to negotiate on the minimum condition that the issue of an Afrikaner 'nation state' featured prominently on the agenda.

While the secessionist objective still points in the opposite direction from the goal of a unified nonracial country, it is fundamentally different from the original apartheid conception. It is, if you like, apartheid turned on its head.

All other participants agreed that apartheid - partition - had failed, but they were not seeking alternatives to a common society. Instead they all professed to be seeking a viable formula that could contain South Africa's diversity in a common political system. They agreed that an integrated economy inevitably required a common polity, and that this premise, inimical to apartheid, had increasingly been conceded in such developments as the government's recognition of the permanence and rights of black South Africans in the cities; the granting of 'industrial rights' through the legalisation of black trade unions; the scrapping of influx control; and the official recognition, conceded on several occasions by P W Botha himself, that political rights in a common system would have to be addressed.

Despite these areas of agreement, the 1980s have been characterised by the government's inability to find a formula for the political inclusion of the majority of South Africans. And more especially, this period has been characterised by the persistence of the NP's fundamental fallacy: that it had the unilateral right to work out such a formula. This resulted in the tricameral parliamentary system, the revamped black local authority structures and the National Statutory Council. The creation of these structures represents the government's attempt to recognise the common political-economy without conceding majority rule. However, the events of the past few years have led to another area of consensus, admitted by all participants at this conference.

The tricameral constitution has failed

This has increasingly been conceded inside South Africa as well, most notably in President Botha's admission that the tricameral constitution was only the beginning of a process of constitution-making and by [former] cabinet minister Chris Heunis' announcement that black local authorities would be included in the multiracial Regional Services Councils. (This



was a clear acknowledgement that the exclusion of Africans from a common constitution was untenable.) The failure of the tricameral system has played a pivotal role in the development of the next area of consensus, which lies at the heart of this conference.

South Africa needs a workable constitution - and a workable constitution implies a legitimate constitution

It has been generally accepted at this conference that previous attempts at devising constitutional solutions have died from a lack of popular legitimacy and from the coercion necessary to enforce them. These insights have led to the next broad area of consensus.

If a constitution is to be legitimate, it must emerge from negotiations between the recognised leaders of all significant political groupings

This insight was reflected unambiguously by the NP spokesman's statement that the government would be willing to enter constitutional negotiations that included the African National Congress - and that the government's insistence on the ANC's renunciation of violence need not prove an insurmountable obstacle to such negotiations. At the same time, the CP spokesman indicated his party was ready to negotiate secession with all comers.

All of the above implies another area of emerging consensus, explicitly conceded by all participants.

'... the 1980s have been characterised by the government's inability to find a formula for the political inclusion of the majority of South Africans.'



'... South Africa's conflict will have to be resolved by political, not military, means.'

The conflict in South Africa is not going to be resolved by one side achieving a military victory over the other

Both the ANC and NP spokesmen stated that South Africa's conflict will have to be resolved by political, not military, means. This insight was accompanied by a clear recognition that no party would be able to dictate the terms of the political solution unilaterally and that negotiations would require compromises on all sides.

However, the mutual recognition of the inevitability of eventual negotiation does not imply a rejection of the role of military force or 'armed struggle' in the transition process. In fact, just as the major protagonists recognised the need for negotiation, they also acknowledged that military force was an important component of a pre-negotiation period, as each party attempted to establish a favourable bargaining position and force the other to the conference table.

Nevertheless, it is worth repeating that the broad areas of consensus listed above represent significant progress. Indeed, when the major protagonists start defining the central questions in similar terms one can justifiably talk about entering a pre-negotiation phase.

But if we are in a pre-negotiation phase, there are still a great many obstacles ahead. These do not only relate to the obvious thorny questions like: WHO WILL NEGOTIATE? and ON WHAT AGENDA? (although these issues could constitute significant sources of conflict in themselves).

The major reason why we are only on the threshold of a pre-negotiation phase lies in the fact, repeatedly stated during this conference, that *the climate is not yet ripe for negotiations*.

In analysing why this is so, I shall concentrate on the position of the two major antagonists in the South African conflict, the ANC and the NP government. I do this reluctantly because I do not think it is useful or accurate to characterise the South African struggle as a battle between two monolithic forces. It is unhelpful for a variety of reasons, not least because it reinforces the intolerance of political competition that exists right across the political spectrum in South Africa. But in assessing why the climate is not yet right for negotiation, I think it is valid to concentrate on these two protagonists, not only because each has defined the other as its major opponent, but because each has a military capability, which makes the inclusion of both a pre-requisite for constitutional negotiations aimed at producing an alternative to ongoing conflict. On the above assumptions, there are two clear reasons why the climate is not right for negotiations:

1. There is no shared perception of stalemate within either constituency. Various speakers have made the point that parties to a conflict only negotiate when there are no other options left. Although significant tendencies within each side believe that the time for negotiation is ripe, this is by no means a uniformly held view.
2. Neither side has achieved the pre-conditions it considers necessary for meaningful negotiations to take place. These pre-conditions hinge on the creation of circumstances that would enable each side to mobilise and maintain the support of its constituency through what would inevitably be a long and difficult negotiation process.

If the right negotiating climate is to be created, these two aspects must be addressed.

It is useful to examine the reasons that have emerged (often in informal discussion) at this conference as to why these circumstances are not yet right either for the ANC or the National Party.

The African National Congress

Within the ranks of the ANC there is no uniformly shared perception of stalemate. While the ANC spokesman at this conference

stated his organisation's willingness to enter into constitutional negotiations, this does not imply a consensus within ANC ranks that the time is right to do so. There is a strong position within the movement that holds that

- armed struggle has by no means begun to achieve its potential.
- through military escalation it will become possible to negotiate on much more favourable terms for the direct transfer of power.
- it would be a political error to negotiate at a point where the organisation was too weak to enforce these conditions.

This position reached its zenith about two years ago, but has by no means been eclipsed, despite developments internationally and in southern Africa that have made the escalation of armed struggle a less viable option than it has been for decades.

Nevertheless, the fact that this position still has significant support makes it all the more imperative that those who favour a political resolution through negotiation should be in a position to take their constituency with them. And this makes the achievement of the pre-conditions for negotiation, set by the ANC and re-stated at this conference, all the more imperative. Of these, the two major pre-conditions are:

- the release of political prisoners and
- the lifting of the State of Emergency and other restrictions in order to establish conditions for open political organisation and debate.

Without the creation of these pre-conditions, the ANC argues, it will be impossible for the organisation to be represented by its elected leadership, nor will negotiations be rooted in popular consent.

Setting pre-conditions for negotiation is often regarded as a way of putting deliberate obstacles in the path of the process. However, the ANC spokesman went to great lengths to emphasise that, far from being obstacles to negotiation, the pre-conditions could themselves create opportunities for preliminary negotiations. It was possible, he said, for the major parties to negotiate the achievement of the pre-conditions, making them part of the negotiation process rather than an obstacle to it. This has been one of the major conceptual breakthroughs of this conference - and it was a point accepted by the NP's representative as well.

However, the ANC spokesman also acknowledged that it would be almost impossible for the government to meet these pre-conditions without two grave consequences:

- an upsurge of popular revolt,
- a severe backlash from the white constituency.



He said the ANC understood that these were genuine problems for the government but suggested that it was possible to negotiate ways of resolving them.

Firstly, he said, the ANC would be prepared to discuss ways of managing popular response on the release of political prisoners. And although he offered no proposal on how the government could contain the white backlash, there was an implication that preliminary negotiations around establishing the pre-conditions might focus on a way of lifting the State of Emergency, including restrictions on all political organisations, and co-ordinating this with a possible suspension of the armed struggle as a precursor to constitutional negotiations. This might offer the 'quid pro quo' the government requires to carry its constituency along with it.

But even this tentative prospect poses extreme difficulties because - despite the rhetoric of the past months - the climate for negotiations is not right on the government's side either.

The National Party

The NP (and the state in general) are just about as far from a uniform perception of imminent stalemate as it is possible to be.

Only those who understand that in the longterm a negotiated settlement provides the only prospect of a resolution to our conflict, perceive the looming stalemate. It was this perspective that the NP's spokesman presented at this conference. It is difficult to estimate how many of the NP's caucus share this view but, before the September general election, the number was said to be as high as 50 out of a

'... Within the ranks of the ANC there is no uniformly shared perception of stalemate.'



'The government is starting to assert that negotiation is inevitable and necessary...'

caucus of 120. While it is impossible to give an exact headcount of the number of negotiators in the NP, there can be little doubt that they will struggle to assert their dominance. The major question raised by F W de Klerk's accession to the party leadership is whether the negotiators will be able to wrest the initiative from the securocrats whose agenda was dictated by the objective of crushing the ANC, not negotiating with it. The securocrats still believe theirs is an achievable objective and point to developments over the past year to underscore their point. They say their rejection of past attempts to initiate negotiations between the government and the ANC (such as the efforts of the Eminent Persons Group) has been vindicated and that the government has subsequently substantially strengthened its position.

They argue that they succeeded in crushing the internal revolt of 1985/6, cracked open substantial cells of underground resistance and effectively wiped out ANC bases in neighbouring states. They claim to have contributed to conditions that have secured the removal of foreign troops from the subcontinent and brought some neighbouring states to the brink of collapse, giving these countries a crucial interest in avoiding further decline through economic sanctions or continuing warfare.

On the basis of these arguments, the securocrats assert that their strategy has worked; that what is needed is more of the same. They believe it is possible to marginalise the ANC because, they argue, disillusionment in the organisation's inability to deliver results will begin to erode its internal and external support base and its international status.

Facing these arguments, those within the NP who seek constitutional negotiations that include the ANC are battling against the wind to assert that negotiations will be inevitable and that it is in the NP's interests to negotiate from a position of relative strength. For, ironically, it is this position of strength that militates against a perception of stalemate, which is one of the crucial ingredients needed to bring a group to the negotiating table.

Nevertheless, the NP's spokesman at this conference seemed confident that those in the party caucus who favour negotiations are in a position of reasonable and increasing strength.

However, he also conceded that the conditions were not right for the party to take its constituency into constitutional negotiations and that it would first be necessary to find a viable way of achieving this. Any understanding of current dynamics in South Africa would be incomplete without a perception of the extent to which the government has managed to demonise the ANC within the white constituency - a major problem for those in the NP who wish to create a negotiating climate. The NP spokesman at the conference offered no suggestion as to how the NP's negotiators intended to deal with this, although he suggested it might be possible for the government to 'negotiate ourselves out of the corner'. [This was an enigmatic comment at the time, but the NP's strategy has become clearer during the election campaign. The government is starting to assert that negotiation is inevitable and necessary - and that the NP is the only party that whites can rely on to represent their interests in negotiations. Thus is the NP inching towards negotiation without abandoning its perceived role as the champion of white interests.]

Nevertheless, while the popular white perception exists that the security forces are able to contain and crush resistance, it cannot be assumed that the majority of whites will perceive the necessity of negotiations that include the ANC. It is inevitable that the NP's halting attempts to motivate the need for such negotiations will divide its polarised constituency still further. The outcome of the September election could give a preliminary indication of how much. If there is a significant loss of support to the Right it will underscore the extent of the challenges that lie ahead.

Yet, there is a mainstream developing for negotiations in South Africa. This has been the most significant political development of 1989, because this movement for the first time spans such a broad constituency. It includes members of the NP and members of the major resistance groupings. It includes the liberal opposition and it includes Inkatha. Amazingly, it could even incorporate the CP if the agenda included setting aside a piece of land where die-hard

whites could move and govern themselves so that the rest of South Africa could get on with the business of building a non-racial society.

What, then, can be done to foster this mainstream and create conditions that might enable negotiations to occur sooner rather than later?

The current strategic shifts in the international arena offer considerable scope for contributing to the creation of a climate in which South Africans can negotiate a constitutional resolution of their ongoing conflict. For the first time in decades, an international coincidence of interests has emerged, based on the perception that the South African conflict must be resolved by negotiating political compromises rather than military means. This offers significant scope for strategic intervention by the major powers. Britain has, over the past years, developed considerable leverage with the South African government. The Soviet Union has, over the past decades, developed similar leverage with the ANC. The United States stands somewhere in between but is significant because of its power and international leverage. This 'balance of leverage' between the major powers could offer considerable scope for influencing the major antagonists, expediting the creation of a negotiating climate and reducing the alternative options available. The settlement in Angola and Namibia was repeatedly referred to as an example where the international coincidence of interests was used to great effect, balancing pressure with incentives to achieve the necessary compromises on all sides.

No concrete suggestions were offered as to how this might be applied to South Africa. Indeed, there are varying examples of how this principle has been applied in past attempts to find constitutional resolutions in other southern African conflicts, for example, in Zimbabwe and Namibia. Nevertheless, it was generally agreed that the present situation offered the most conducive conditions yet for attempting to co-ordinate the strategic coincidence of interests between the major international powers. It was suggested that this coincidence be used to establish an agreed yardstick - such as UN Resolution 435 provided in Namibia - by which to measure progress towards an internationally recognised negotiation process.

All conference participants agreed that the international community's role was confined to leverage and that the major pro-active role would have to be played by South Africans themselves. Discussion on such strategies lay beyond the scope of the official conference proceedings. However, the South African participants spent much time during informal discussion time exploring potential ways in which this objective could be achieved.

Although new consensual ground has been broken in recent years, they agreed that much



more was needed to ensure the success of constitutional negotiations than broad concurrence on the failure of past constitutional efforts. The 'bottom lines' of the major protagonists were still too far apart to be bridged by the compromises various parties were prepared to make.

Is there any mechanism that might provide a set of guiding principles, acceptable to all the major protagonists, that could set the parameters within which constitutional negotiations might proceed? Some type of internal yardstick by which the acceptability of various constitutional proposals might be measured? It was in considering this question that a potential Bill of Rights evoked considerable interest. Although existing documents - such as the Freedom Charter and the SA Law Commission's proposed Bill of Rights - are not uniformly acceptable to all constituencies, there was broad agreement among all except the CP, that a negotiated declaration of intent, incorporating a commitment to internationally recognised human rights, might provide a potential starting point and establish the parameters for negotiating a future constitution for South Africa. The prospect is there. The years ahead will determine whether South Africans can achieve it. □

'The "bottom lines" of the major protagonists were still too far apart.'

*Illustrations by
Gus Ferguson*

[All groups were represented by prominent spokespersons. Their names have not been used in accordance with an agreement that they would not be quoted directly.]

white guilt wears thin

Andrew Donaldson is a writer and well-known cynic living in Cape Town, who specialises in doing lots for The Struggle for free - like this article...

Extrémist behaviour is exactly that - actions as far removed or as different from the norm as possible. While not unique to South Africa - like, say, the obdurate policing of race classification in the 1960s - our White Left has nevertheless honed extrémist and alienating behaviour to an art form of unholy magnitude, the likes of which we probably haven't seen since the time of the Caesars.

While they're not capable of the lunacy, perhaps, of the British Left or some of the things the Americans used to get up to in the 1960s - former California governor Jerry Brown, as a student, was ejected from a radically collectivist Berkeley campus house for bourgeois elitism: he used to close the door after him whenever he went to the bathroom - our chaps have that indefinable edge of mania that suggests, on the one hand, a level of reprobate smugness and, on the other, permanent residency in a parallel universe, a place where reality has as much relevance as Barry Manilow records.

Look, it's easy for the establishment to knock the Left - particularly the White Left. Indeed, the White Left somehow expects this from the establishment. Haven't they, after all, rejected, in their avowedly moral stance, the racism, greed, sexism and totalitarianism of the establishment? But from its peers, the White Left expects no reproach. Things are tough enough as it is. The fight, a good one, is nevertheless a bloody and hard one. The cause is just, the aim is true, the dedication unwavering - so why the smart-aleckness?

Because in all their exclusivist chumminess, the White Left seems to have lost track somewhat. Sometimes it seems that the general public's just not invited to join (unless, of course, the project committee's looking for someone to put up posters at 4am). Strange behaviour, you'd agree, for people wanting to mobilise a mass movement.

Granted, the White Left, in spite of severe restrictions, has accomplished a great deal of good. That is not my brief; we're here to look at their bad habits. So grit your teeth, this could be a rough ride. The following observations are made after years of peripheral involvement with them; at rallies (where they've dropped Obex so they could toyi-toyi with revolutionary fervour with the masses), at parties (which they've

ruined by dredging up highlights of cultural boycott debates and playing bad music just because it's cant-riddled), at dinners (where they've done much the same thing) and in bed (the only place, they say, where they'll tolerate their principles being violated or patronised).

And so, in no particular order, here are some Bad White Lefty Habits.

They don't respect property

Property is theft, they say: that's why you have to really bug them to return all the books they've borrowed from you.

They say they're feminists

Oh, the women automatically become feminists once they've joined the struggle. The state functions not only on the blood of the workers, but also by cruelly exploiting women. With great zeal and loud declarations of support for the women's movement, the men also claim to be feminists. They do so because they know that no self-respecting feminist will sleep with fascists. (You may have difficulty equating non-feminism with fascism, but believe me, a lot of feminists don't.)

They aren't particularly worried about their appearance

So what? Who really gives a damn when all that matters is that you're committed?

Look, no-one expects White Lefties to run around in designer outfits. A Katatura activist once told me that the Namibian township's residents were, quite frankly, unimpressed with the appearance of some of Windhoek's white activists. 'To township residents, they look dirty,' he said. 'Unshaven, dressed in rags, you expect us to take them seriously?'

He scoffed at the suggestion that this was how they identified with the workers. Workers might toil in rags, he said, but they don't like wearing them. Besides, he added, if they could keep themselves respectable-looking by washing out of buckets of cold water, so could Whitey who has a bathroom.

Which brings us to the story of a White Student Lefty at Rhodes who used to identify with the masses by washing out of a bucket in

the yard while his bemused housemates - grateful for more hot water - could splash about in the bath a little longer than necessary. For his pains, the masses thought he was cuckoo. (Once, the same activist caught his housemate putting on deodorant. 'How can you contribute to your own oppression like that?' he berated her.)

They like this idea of collective action

Just the idea, mind you. The actual practice thereof is a little different. Invite them round for a dinner party and see what I mean. After they've collectively eaten you out of house and home, they'll disappear as a collective when it comes to the dishes.

You can never reciprocate this kind of behaviour, of course; they're never at home. Somehow when it's a White Lefty's turn to have us over, he or she's suddenly gone into hiding, or dashed off to an emergency meeting. It's true, here things are done in a collective manner - usually by a committee.

And you know the jokes, of course. They're true. If a committee got together to design a horse, it would come up with a camel; if it was

reponsible for designing mankind, we'd all look like Ted le Platt or Samantha Fox.

They are intolerant

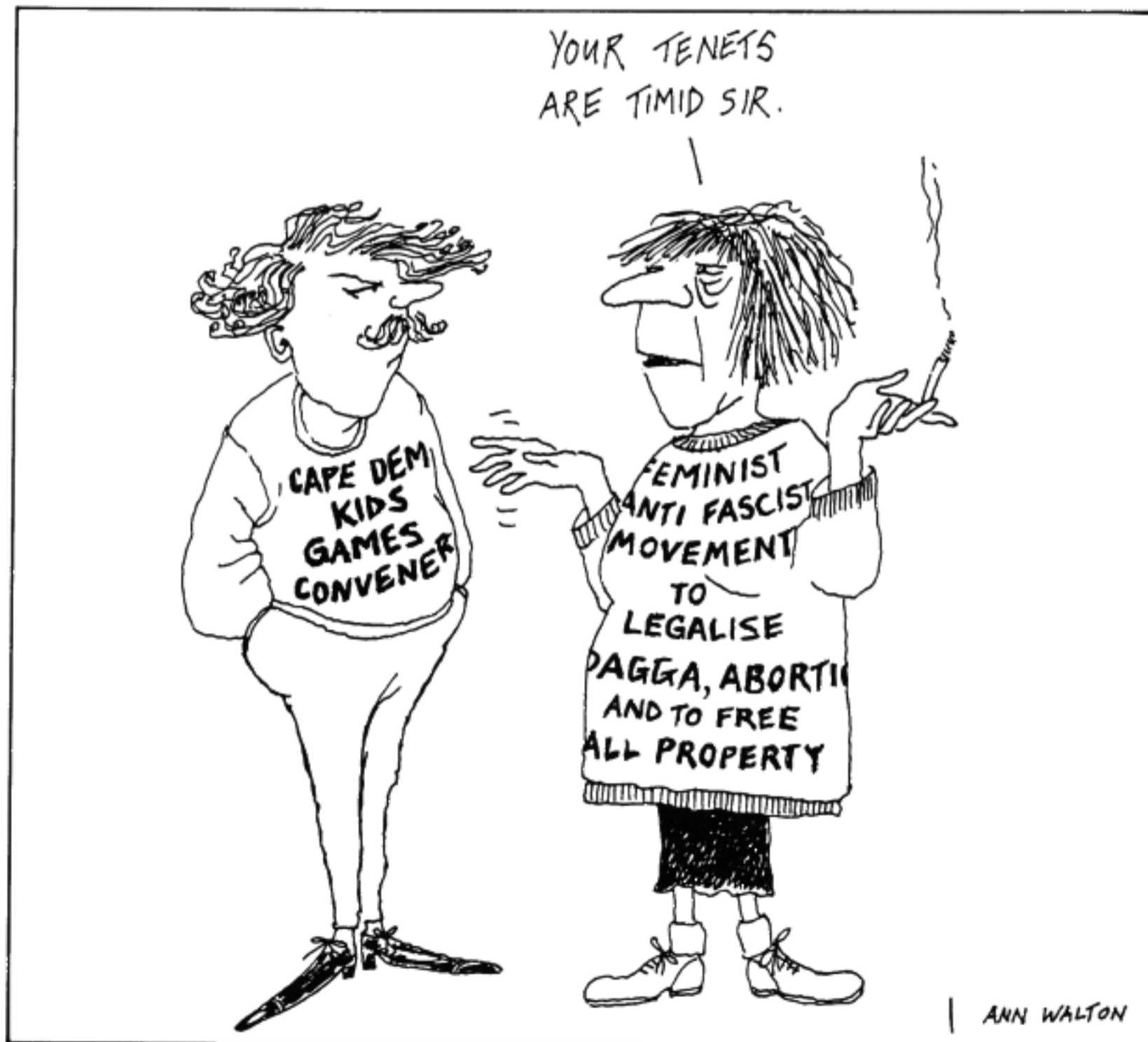
This really doesn't become them. At a dinner once, White Lefty guests expressed amazement at one woman who described herself as a post-feminist. It didn't stop with the amazement, though. Out came the catty and snide comments: 'I'm so very happy for you' and 'I'm very pleased to have met you; you must be one of 12 people in the whole world'.

Perhaps this reaction was to have been expected as it had been pointed out that very, very few women, indeed, were active in the women's movement. This was not a slur on its validity, though; just an indication of its lack of success as a mass movement.

They are paranoid and suspicious at the best of times

They have reason to be so at the worst of times.

But they sometimes go too far. A few years ago a colleague of mine was harangued at a Gayco cultural meeting. Stepping into the night



club where the event was held, he asked someone what was going on and was immediately suspected of being a police spy. (Do White Lefties think police spies aren't properly briefed?) They immediately called a meeting to deal with the issue.

Agnostic types who have Lefty friends can tell you of the fear of being taken in by the boere. This fear is usually accompanied by furtive bed-hopping activities in the middle of the night. You get woken at 3am and there's Frank on your doorstep. 'Look,' he'd say, 'all the mense are being pulled in. I need a place to stay for a few days, know what I mean?' 'Of course', you say, 'come in'. 'Uh,' he'd reply, 'is it okay if my, uh, friend stays as well?' And, sure enough, there's the lover, too, giggling on the doorstep. (Incidentally, Jannie, wherever you are, you left a whole lot of your law notes and an old collection of socks and underwear at the Kloof Nek House. I've thrown them away.)

Here's an apparently true Johannesburg saga. One committed type woke up at night to find the house she shared with about half a dozen others being raided by the police. She'd been expecting this for some time and had an overnight bag packed for the occasion. Grip-

ping it, she sprang into action and rushed out of her room as some of her housemates were being led away. 'Please,' one of the policemen said to her, 'go back to sleep.' This was a major disappointment: they weren't interested in her. But, she reasoned later, this was clearly a state tactic to undermine her role in the struggle.

They just aren't cynical enough

Extremely gullible at times, the White Lefty somehow lacks the ability to tell people who think they can communicate with dolphins or who only smoke imported cigarettes because they know the proceeds from sales go directly into ANC coffers that they are talking unholy bullshit.

And they somehow don't seem to understand that unrest photographs, laminated in plastic and sold at fetes and stalls as dinner placemats, are not a good way to stir consciences. Unrest photographs *can* stir consciences - but then only when they're placed in magazines and newspapers where they rightfully belong.

They can't seem to have fun

It's rather trying going to the theatre with committed types. 'That was very funny,' you might say after a show. 'I have difficulty with it,' a Lefty will reply. 'It didn't formulate a position.'

Formulating a position is quite important when it comes to culture. That is why most Lefties will jump up and down to, let's say, The Special AKA's 'Free Nelson Mandela' - standard fare at the Lefty hop, but a slice of culture that is as South African as gaucho cowboy pants or sushi. Nevertheless, the British group formulates a position. Ask them, though, who Dudu Pukwana, Caiphus Semenyana or Johnny Dyani are and they won't know what you're talking about.

The really atrocious among them will dismiss anything that has no South African connection as being wholly irrelevant to the struggle. Things like Shakespeare, Sam Shepard, G B Shaw, film noir, Elmore Leonard novels, Jean Luc Godard movies, etc etc. There really is no hope for this lot.

They are overtly sensitive

They won't believe a word of this. Or else they'll think it refers to somebody else.

But, on the other hand

Bad habits are better than bad politics. And White Lefties don't go around slashing car tyres and throwing bricks through shop windows.

What they'd want do to me after reading this, of course, is another story.... □



withdrawal symptoms: disinvesting on union terms

Mobil's recent disinvestment from South Africa illustrated trade union attitudes towards disinvesting companies. Dick Usher, a labour reporter on a large daily newspaper, outlines the issues.



The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) managed to secure several important advances in its disinvestment campaign when Mobil South Africa agreed to terms for its withdrawal.

Most important was that a major company was seen to negotiate benefits for employees before it transferred ownership to South African buyers, giving a firm founda-

tion to a principle for which the union has been campaigning for about two years.

Given Mobil's high public profile as a company of social conscience, as a company supporting change towards democracy in South Africa and one that fully supported workers' rights to collective bargaining, it would have been difficult for the company to ignore CWIU calls for

negotiation on conditions of disinvestment and simply turn around and disappear from this country.

Difficult, but it could have been done. The corporate mind is capable of such cynicism.

However, cynicism kept a low profile and Mobil agreed - among others - to severance pay for all employees and disclosure on the nature of the disinvestment sale, price,

shareholders and remaining business connections.

The agreement came almost on the eve of the effective date of the sale of Mobil to Gencor, and after two months of dispute which have seen strikes, threats of strikes and other forms of industrial action.

The terms, and the fact that they were negotiated, will make it more difficult in the future for companies which sell off their South African operations as a form of disinvestment to ignore similar calls.

And, as if to underline this, it was only hours after the Mobil settlement was announced on June 29 that the National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) announced that it had reached deadlock in negotiations over similar matters with Goodyear and planned to hold strike ballots nationally.

The disinvestment campaign, which has seen about 196 foreign companies withdraw from South Africa in some fashion, has come a long way since it first appeared in public during the early 1970s.

Then, and for several years thereafter, it seemed little more than a gimmick to publicise the South African situation overseas.

Motions at company annual general meetings by anti-apartheid groups that companies sever ties with South Africa were, as a matter of course, defeated by millions of votes, but they did give their proposers the opportunity to state their case for disinvestment and challenge corporate morality on continuing links with this country.

With more receptive organisations such as churches, universities and trade unions, the campaigners were in more sympathetic territory and over the years there has been a growing flood of major institutions withdrawing funds from companies doing business with South Africa.

Inside the country, it was not until after the Durban strikes in 1973 gave impetus for a fresh growth of unionisation amongst black workers and the Soweto uprising of 1976 did the same for communities, that the potential for articulating disinvestment and sanctions demands emerged.

By 1985, at the formation of Cosatu (Congress of South African Trade Unions), these demands were

outlined in a resolution on disinvestment that read:

'This congress:

- 1 Believes that all forms of international pressure ... including disinvestment - is an essential and effective form of pressure on the South African regime and we support it;
- 2 Further believes that if this government remains intransigent ... this pressure will have to increase as an act of solidarity with our struggle for liberation from exploitation and oppression; and
- 3 Commits itself to ensuring that the wealth of South Africa remains the property of the people in South Africa for the benefit of all.

The Cosatu founding congress was held at the end of a year of rising activism against apartheid and the disinvestment resolution was fully in accord with demands being articulated by community groups across the land.

It also reflects elements of the Freedom Charter, that 'the people shall share in this country's wealth' which said: 'The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people...'

At its national congress in June 1987, CWIU laid out its own position on disinvestment and sanctions, noting that only 'comprehensive and mandatory sanctions were likely to be effective and that the calls for such sanctions had been and are being twisted by imperialist states into ineffective selective sanctions packages, often serving their own interests rather than the interests of the working class.'

On disinvestment the congress said that what was taking place was not disinvestment but little more than corporate camouflage which often allows the disinvested company to increase its support for the South African regime.

Congress set out a package of minimum conditions for acceptable disinvestment: proper notice, disclosure of information and bona fide negotiations and certain guaranteed payment.

By the end of that year CWIU was involved in a 'disinvestment' campaign of a different nature.

Rustenburg Platinum Holdings, owner of platinum refineries in Wadeville and Royston, England, through subsidiary Matthey Rustenburg Refiners (MRR), proposed in 1986 that a giant new precious metals refinery, with 'the capacity to refine in excess of Rustenburg's current rate of production of platinum group metals' should be built in Bophuthatswana.

While the company said that the move 'should allow significant savings in operating costs' through a new process developed at Royston, it emerged that it planned to close both Wadeville and Royston, and CWIU accused it of moving to Bophuthatswana to take advantage of labour laws there which effectively prevented any unionisation of workers.

'The closing of the plants and the move to Bophuthatswana is seen by workers as confirmation that MRR and its owners support apartheid and the bantustan policy,' said CWIU.

MRR managing director J E Forbes said this claim was 'absolutely ridiculous' and that the site chosen for the new plant had no 'political connotation'.

About 200 workers at Wadeville were on strike at the time in protest at the planned move. Later in the dispute CWIU claimed MRR were planning a lock-out in retaliation.

Underlying this dispute was the political standpoint that South Africa was indivisible, that the homelands were illegitimate offspring of the apartheid system serving as colonies of the metropole which, through denying workers the right to combine, continued the metropole's exploitation and deprived the people of their right to share in the wealth of the nation.

The same rationale underlay all subsequent efforts by CWIU around the disinvestment question.

At the same time as it started a campaign for national bargaining in the oil industry, CWIU also set out demands for national bargaining over disinvestment with 39 multinationals in the chemicals sector.

When the companies refused to negotiate, CWIU declared a dispute and applied to the Minister of Man-



Chris Ledochowski/Altopix

power for a conciliation board to hear it.

This was rejected in October 1988.

At the time CWIU, with no idea that it would later lock into a dispute with Mobil over disinvestment, said that it was one of the companies which portrayed a liberal image in terms of their social responsibility and anti-apartheid stance, yet had failed to address seriously or negotiate the demands of their workers.

The rationale for demanding negotiation over disinvestment stood on two legs: that foreign companies had for years been deriving inflated profits from South African operations through low wages, and the suspicion that disinvestment deals were merely strategic withdrawals which maintained a corporate presence and profit generation through licensing deals, held the possibility of a future return to South Africa in hidden aspects of the deal

and continued the flow of product and technology to support apartheid.

The CWIU sought to ensure that workers received, through severance pay, some recompense for the repatriated profits they had helped create, that some measure of the wealth of the nation remained with the nation, and that disinvestment did not mean that the parent company walked away with proceeds of a sale that probably covered its original investment.

Its demand for disclosure of the terms of disposal, in instances where the South African assets were sold to a local operation, sought to ensure that no 'hidden' deals were built into the sale.

Thus, in the dispute with Mobil, the union said that wealth accumulated in South Africa should remain the 'property of the people of South Africa for the benefit of all' and that the 'profits gained from apartheid' be diverted to a union-nominated trust fund. □

Mobil workers protest on disinvestment - Cape Town 1989.

taking stock

Stock farmers in the Northern Richtersveld are no longer under threat of dispossession after successful negotiation with the National Parks Board over a proposed park in the area.

But the way ahead is not easy, writes Lala Steyn, field worker for Surplus People Project.

A Richtersveld national park in which stock farmers will be able to continue grazing their stock and over which local inhabitants will have joint control is on the cards.

If this becomes a reality it will mean that residents of the Northern Richtersveld will not be deprived of their land and will stand to benefit from the positive aspects of the park such as possible job opportunities.

It will also mean that an area which the National Parks Board describes as unique for its vegetation and geomorphology will be protected from, among others, tourists in four-wheel drives and succulent collectors who have been destroying the environment over the last few years.

Residents in the Richtersveld rural area, on the Namaqualand border between South Africa and Namibia, have refused to give up the land that they have farmed for generations. This beautiful mountainous semi-desert has supported generations of stock farmers, descendants of the nomadic Khoikhoi who have lived in the area for at least the past 1500 years.

Their right to land was recognised by the colonial administrators at the Cape who granted tickets of recognition to the inhabitants. This land is now held in trust for these communities by the Department of Local Government, Agriculture and Housing (from here on called the Department) in the House of Representatives and are known as 'coloured reserves'.

An important aspect of the history of South Africa is how people were dispossessed of their land - and Namaqualand is part of this history. Since the early 1980s, the department has tried to implement a privatisation



scheme but has met with large-scale resistance. In both the Leliefontein and Steinkopf reserves opposition was so intense that the community took the matter to the Supreme Court. The scheme was declared invalid and the communities' victory was expressed in celebrations attended by adjacent reserves.

When stock farmers in the Richtersveld were told that they would have to vacate 162 445 hectares of their land for the formation of a national park, they saw this as another case of dispossession.

Matters came to a head in March this year when residents from Khubus and Dryfsand, the two small settlements in the Northern Richtersveld, went to court to stop the signing away of their land for the park.

A contract was to have been signed by the Northern Richtersveld Management Board (the local authority), the Minister of the Department, the National Parks Board and the Minister of Environmental Affairs. The contract would have set aside for a period of 99 years, 162 445 hectares of the area for a national park. Mr Justice H Tebbut postponed the matter and efforts have been underway since then to negotiate a settlement.

The deadlock was broken at a meeting in June when the Parks Board agreed that stock farmers could remain in the area. The Parks Board agreed that a flexible management plan that makes provision for maximum community participation and caters for changing circumstances should be drawn up.

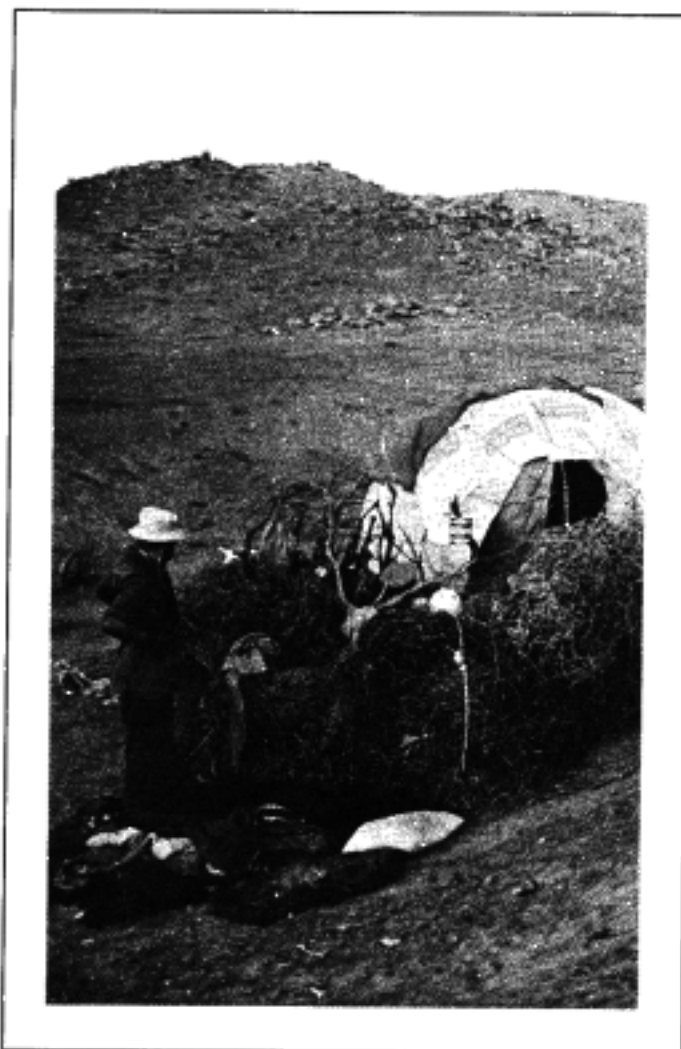
A team of anthropologists will also help the stock farmers to map their movement patterns and the areas which are particularly overgrazed so as to determine core areas that will be protected from stock. Stock farmers are also happy that small areas where unique succulent plants such as the halfmensboom occur be fenced off.

Both the community and the Parks Board were delighted that the deadlock had been broken. Mr Pums de Wet said: 'We were not opposed

to the establishment of a park but only wanted to be acknowledged in its planning. Dr Robinson (head of Southern Parks of the National Parks Board) has undertaken to draft a new agreement open to our criticism.'

Once this has been done, the new agreement will be discussed and changed if necessary.

At the heart of this controversy is an approach to conservation - does it



include or exclude people?

Richard Hill, an environmentalist from UCT, said in a supporting affidavit in the court application that the 'long-term protection of the environment in the Northern Richtersveld is only possible if policies respect the inhabitants as the descendants of the first people of the land'.

The original contract failed to do this and residents were vehemently opposed to it because all stock farming in the area was to have been phased out.

Joel Swartbooi, a stock farmer in the Helsberge within the proposed park, explained why he is not prepared to move out of the area: 'Since 1944 I have maintained my household with stock. What will happen to my people if I lose my stock?

I am thinking of them...we cannot relinquish our land where we have grown up for an unknown place. We will not move even if we lose all.'

The Parks Board insisted that stock leave the area as they asserted that stock farmers have overgrazed the area and their withdrawal 'is a prerequisite for the rehabilitation of the area'. This position was attacked by the pastoralists who felt particularly indignant when the Parks Board did not produce scientific evidence to back up their position.

Dr Norbert Jurgens, a botanist from Hamburg University who has studied the vegetation of the Richtersveld over the past 10 years, said that the 'Nama-speaking inhabitants with their careful way of field management over long periods of time are not a problem for the Park, but should be seen very much as its natural preservers in the past'.

Because he was prepared to help in any possible way, he was present at the meeting in June in Khubus. Here he agreed that the Richtersveld was unique and that it required some form of protection. He explained that the destruction of the area was due to a number of complex factors including 'accessibility of the area by roads, mining activities, tourism, and succulent plant collectors...' and could not be ascribed to stock farming alone.

His input and that of other environmentalists and botanists who are presently debating this issue, contributed to an understanding that conservation of plants and stock farming can occur at the same time.

The June meeting was clearly unable to resolve all issues. Stock farmers are particularly concerned that a controlling committee be set up to control the formation and running of the park. Dr Robinson suggested that the community, the stock farmers, the Parks Board and the Department be represented on this. Exactly how this will be established will have to be determined in the future. During the talks it became clear that the Northern Richtersveld Management Committee, the local authority, is totally unrepresentative

and out of contact with their own community.

During the June meeting, there was a plea from the side of the community for reconciliation between the Management Board, the Residents Committee and the broader community. People are particularly concerned about rumours of corruption and a pending case of mismanagement of funds by the secretary of the Management Board. In the light of these concerns it is imperative that a representative committee for the park that also handles financial matters be established.

Since the June meeting it is un-

clear what will happen to the corridor-west farms that were originally offered as compensation.

Residents claim that these farms and the land all the way to the sea were originally theirs and thus they see no reason why the farms should not be included into the Richtersveld and used for the benefit of all. Stock farmers from the park area have stated that they are not prepared to move to this area as it is unsuitable for their stock and lacks water. But they feel other farmers, especially sheep farmers, would benefit from it.

Residents are also opposed to the originally proposed 99-year contract

as they feel it binds them to something they can then not change for 99 years. This is why they have insisted that a management plan that is flexible and open to review must be drawn up. They feel it is important that they and the Parks Board have the right to cancel the contract if the park is not working out.

At the June meeting, an important step was taken on the road to establishing a park that involves the local people. Clearly this road is still long and dusty. Whether the park will be successful or not, will depend on the ongoing negotiations that still need to take place. □



home truths

While Black Sash members are familiar with the battle for political rights, how do they view the demands of the domestic and farm workers they come into contact with? Black Sash Cape Western field worker Annemarie Hendrikz poses the question.

Domestic workers and farmworkers are realities in any Black Sash member's life. We may buy our designer clothes, Persian rugs, delicacies and appliances from European, American or Japanese workers; but the bread and butter, fruit, wine and flowers that lighten and sustain our existence are generally the product of the hard work of farmworkers. The sparkling windows, gleaming floors, shiny pots and ironed clothes are usually the result of an arrangement we have with a domestic worker.

We also know, all too well, of the appalling circumstances of their lives. Today, five years and many thousands of rands later, the recommendations of an official enquiry into their working conditions have still not been publicised, let alone implemented.

Not only do these workers have no statutory legal protection, but when the law does touch them, it often does so in a peculiarly prejudiced way.

For example, the press reveals disproportionately harsh legal punishment for farmworkers who lash out in violence against the tragic circumstances of their lives. Farmers are often treated very lightly by the courts when they (ab)use their privilege and power by adding physical and mental tyranny to debasing conditions of employment. Some farmers who have killed workers, after subjecting them to painful and humiliating treatment have been fined a few thousand rand and/or given a suspended sentence.

Abuse suffered by domestic workers, like most domestic violence, is usually carefully hidden behind the closed doors of 'home'. Who would take up the case of the domestic worker who tries to report - to the wife? to the police? - the incident where the man of the house

demands that his morning coffee be brought to him while he lies naked in bed? How many 'white' children shout at, and order about, mature and intelligent women - without a word of reprimand from their parents?

Where does a Black Sash member fit into this? I am often concerned that we, all too conveniently, ignore connections. We may be out somewhere fighting for their rights in our political work, but what status do domestic workers or farmworkers have in their working relationships with us?

I hope that the way of writing this article, that is, by engaging members in discussions - at meetings, on the telephone, at home - or by asking them to respond to written questions, and then sketching a few profile relationships, will yield some useful material for further thought and discussion.

Each example is a collage of attitudes and not the exact reality of one member. As with all questions of values, there is no simple right or wrong. But, South Africa has a future and what we do now is part of that future.

Perhaps you can identify with one of these sketches, perhaps not. I hope they will stimulate you - as they did me - to reconsider the scope of our struggle.



'She is a servant. I don't have a problem with this word - we are all servants in some respect. As a servant, we expect her to respond to our needs. My husband works and my involvement with Black Sash issues feels very much like a full-time job.

'There is an understanding of a job description but this must of course remain flexible. She's been with us for 12 years and is like one of the family. We pay the minimum wage recommended by South

African Domestic Workers Union (SADWU) and she has her own room, bathroom with hot and cold water, toilet and colour TV. When she helps with a dinner party she gets overtime, also based on SADWU's rates - and, of course, our guests often tip her as well.

'She basically works a five-and-a-half-day week, but because she's a widow and her children are in Transkei, she tends to be around most of the time, and we have an informal understanding regarding Saturday and Sunday evening clearing up.

'She gets three weeks' paid leave in December each year. It's quite a bother for us, but seems to be the best time for her to go home.

'She's absolutely wonderful!'

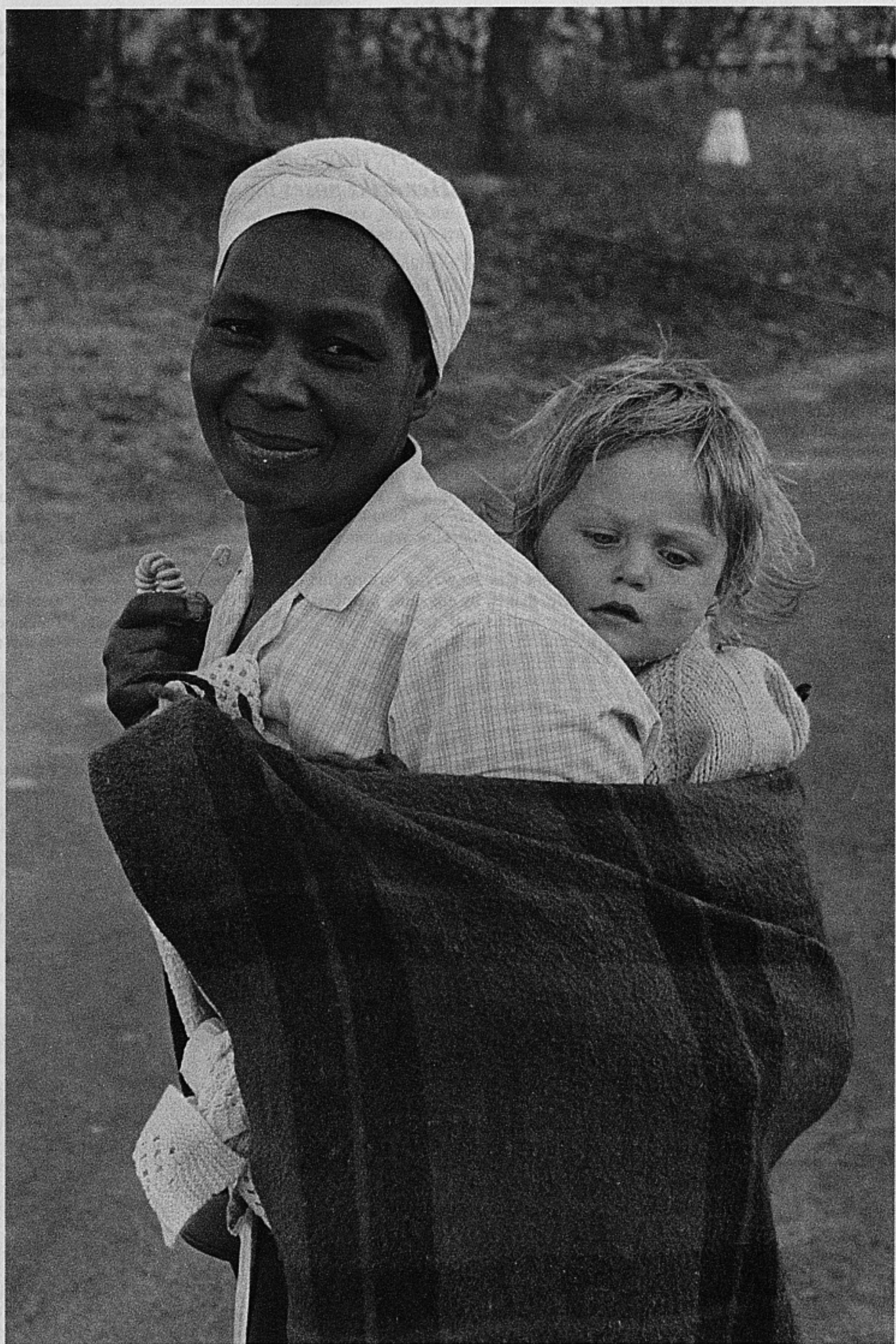


'It was quite a difficult decision for me to employ a domestic worker, but as I got more and more politically involved I found I couldn't cope. I'm a single parent and full-time lecturer.

'One of the reasons it was a difficult decision was that we had to give up quite a few things we really enjoy. I also didn't want the children to develop expectations that someone else was going to take over some of their very basic personal responsibilities.

'Anyway, it worked out quite well. The children make their beds, keep their clothes and toys packed away, clean the bath and take turns to do the dishes. They're both learning to cook too, but at the moment that's my responsibility. Nopasika works from 12 to 7.30 p.m., cleaning the house, washing, ironing and being around for the kids to lean on when they need adult support.

'Her wages are about halfway between a real subsistence wage calculated by Unisa (*footnote p37) and the living wage recommended by the



Labour Research Service (* footnote p37), plus time-and-a-half when Nopasika stays late on my two regular meeting nights. I try to ensure that her annual increase is always higher than the inflation rate. I think I understand the principles behind SADWU's wage recommendations, but for me this presents the issue of under-valuing domestic - traditionally women's - work. Of course, Nopasika still earns less than half of my wage, and that bothers me. But it seems an inevitable and necessary characteristic when one wage earner employs another.

'Nopasika also comes to be with the children during school holidays when they're not with their father, and this is also at the overtime rate. She lives with her husband and children, and we take her home by car at night. She comes to us by bus or taxi and pays for this herself.

She gets 15 working days leave at the same time I have my long break in December. Her contract also allows maternity leave and sick leave, but she hasn't needed these as yet.'



'We've had a domestic worker all our married lives, and recently became aware of some of the contradictions in this relationship in terms of our political views as South Africans.

'Our worker, Sophie, earns quite a bit more than the SADWU recommendations - partly because we're wealthier than many people, and also because Sophie has been with us for seven-and-a-half years now.

'Sophie works eight hours a day - 7 to 11 a.m. and 4 to 8 p.m. - five days a week. She has a young cousin Maggie (a scholar at a local private school) who assists us for two hours each on Saturday and Sunday evenings. We pay Maggie the hourly rate suggested by SADWU.

'They both live on the premises, in separate rooms with communal bathroom, toilet and living room with TV. Sophie's husband is usually with her over weekends and they are allowed to have guests on Saturday until midnight.

'Sophie gets a month's paid leave a year, and Maggie takes over most of the cleaning duties.

'We encourage Sophie to participate in training programmes, and allow four working hours a week for

this as well as paying for transport. Last year she did a sewing course with SADWU, and ended up joining the union. We were thrilled. She has become much more aware of the problems - and rights - of workers in other sectors. We recently negotiated an additional two hours of her working week for SADWU meetings. She pays for her own transport to meetings.

'The other day Sophie asked us if she could use the kitchen and back verandah for a Sunday meeting of other domestic workers in the area to meet with a SADWU organiser. We haven't quite decided because it's rather a complex issue *vis-à-vis*, for example, our privacy, theft, political security and our neighbours, the other employers. And what will it lead to? What if it means that by next year we have groups of radical women toyi-toyi-ing on the tennis court every Sunday?'



'Maybe on bigger farms it's a possibility, but from my perspective, a minimum wage for farmworkers would be disastrous. Farm profits vary from season to season, and we think it's far better to pay a low basic wage and then give a bonus if it's a good year. This doesn't raise expectations that we can't fulfil, and it also motivates workers.

'We have a verbal contract, because most of our workers are illiterate. I'm not sure how many of them understand the conditions of employment when they start, but they learn by trial and error, and seem happy enough.

'All the workers work a ten-hour shift Mondays to Fridays and two weekends a month each. All workers get one month's paid leave a year and there's hardly ever more than one away at a time. The women help out in season and get the same wages as the men.

'Each worker has the use of a house and a small garden plot. We allow them to keep chickens but no other stock. The houses are small, three rooms and a kitchen with running water and a wood store. We would like to upgrade them but honestly can't afford it. Each has an outside pit toilet and we recently built a commercial block of three showers and two baths.

'I wouldn't like the union organisers to come onto the farm. They don't seem to understand the relationship between farmer and worker, let alone the economic realities. My workers and I reach agreement on issues as they crop up, and they all know they are free to speak me any time they have a problem - individually or as a group.'



'For some time now, our farm has been part of a project to improve the conditions of employment of the workers. Our views are unashamedly capitalist; with the added bonus of all the space and tranquillity which is part of life on a farm, productivity and profit is what it's all about. We are therefore deeply committed to education and training. Workers receive ongoing training, both on the job and on special courses. Because of the time allocated to training, there has been no reduction in the numbers of workers despite increased productivity. There's a crèche on the farm and the older children are transported to and from a local school daily.

'Our workers, including two retired couples, all have accommodation according to size of family. This varies from fully equipped three-bedroom houses to single quarters with communal cooking and washing facilities.

'It is an expensive exercise to maintain these standards, but the rewards are greater profits and a stable and contented workforce.

'We have a written contract of employment and a basic minimum wage which is comparable to that suggested by SADWU for an "unskilled" labourer. Of course, our skilled workers receive considerably more taking into account the housing and other benefits, more than an average factory worker.

'The workers are represented by an elected committee, and this saves a lot of my time in negotiations, dealing with family problems, etc.

'International boycotts would bring all these developments to a standstill, and I don't really see how we as farmers can make the government change its policies.

'I wouldn't like the unions organising on my farm. Not that I think they'd find anything to complain about - but unions must by nature be

confrontational with management, otherwise workers will see them as useless. I think a union would see me as a soft target, and push me beyond

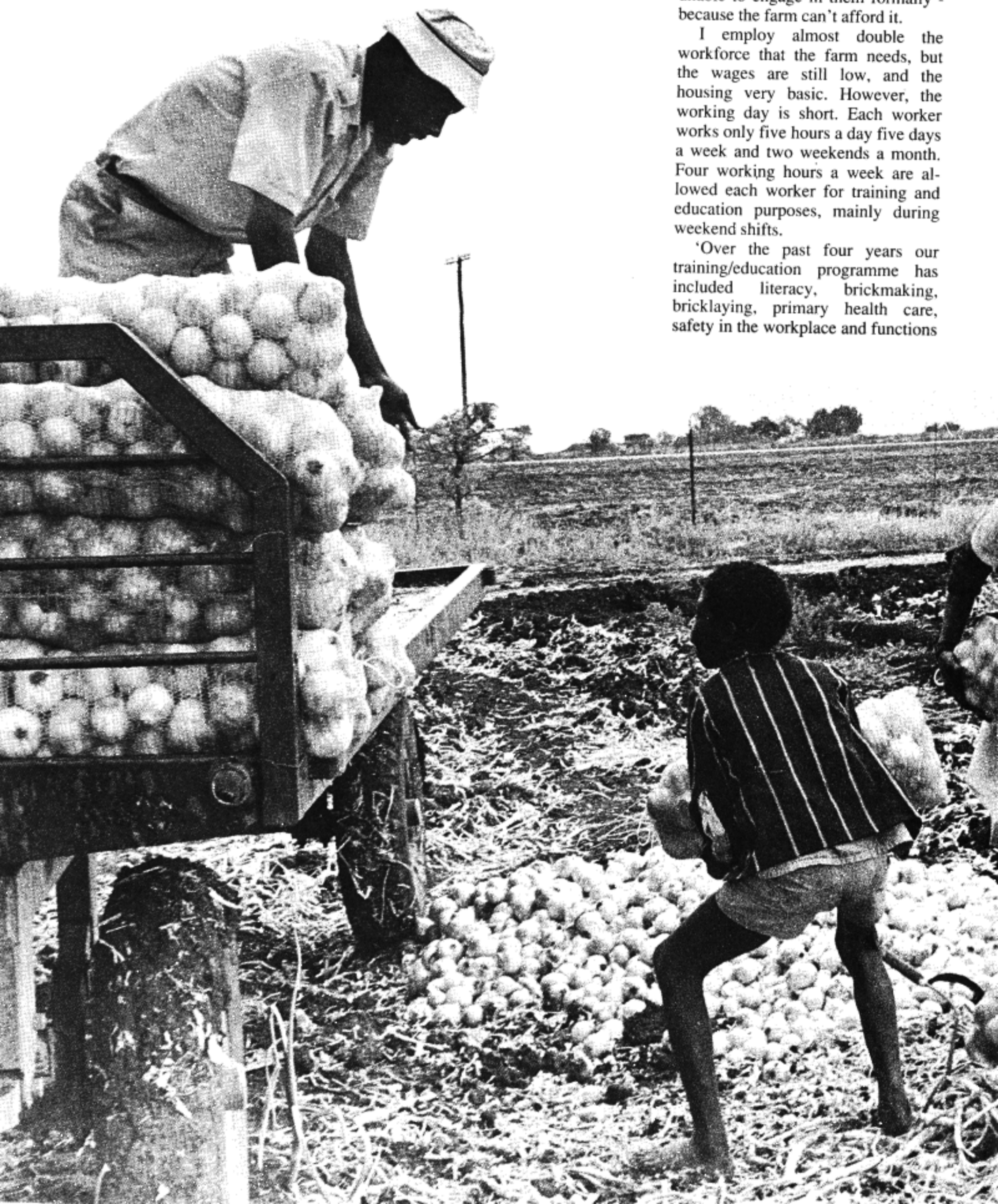
my limits. And as a farmer, I simply don't have the time for protracted negotiations while a whole season's profit rots in the lands.'



'We have learned an enormous amount from studying some of the structured initiatives to improve conditions for farm-workers, but find ourselves unable to engage in them formally - because the farm can't afford it.

I employ almost double the workforce that the farm needs, but the wages are still low, and the housing very basic. However, the working day is short. Each worker works only five hours a day five days a week and two weekends a month. Four working hours a week are allowed each worker for training and education purposes, mainly during weekend shifts.

'Over the past four years our training/education programme has included literacy, brickmaking, bricklaying, primary health care, safety in the workplace and functions



of a committee.

'We have also spent more than six months working out a preliminary employment contract. We still haven't come to a satisfactory agreement about the notice period, which is presently one month for job and house. We seem to be trapped between the realities of life on the farm and life in South Africa.

'The workers have elected a representative committee for dealing with daily matters. This committee meets with me on Fridays, and the rest of us all meet together once a month on a Sunday. This system is working quite well, although there are lots of conditioned apartheid attitudes that get in the way of good communication.

'Our housing project is starting on an exciting phase. We had a building

co-op "expert" with us for a month, and workers are now busy upgrading or extending their houses. I provide the cement, timber, tools, etc. and workers provide the labour. They're making their own bricks, door- and windowframes, and they do one house at a time.

'At present the primary school children are transported daily to and from a school on a bigger farm about 10 km away, and the older children have to leave home to attend high school. Both situations are unsatisfactory.

'It would probably cause even more problems for us to deal with, but I would welcome the unions on the farm. All of us here need to become more conscious of the general issues facing workers in our present society, as well as agricul-

tural alternatives for the future. I don't know how to go about it, and my degree in agriculture and years of working with my late father don't seem to have helped much.'

* The University of South Africa's Bureau of Market Research gives R647,11 a month as slightly more than bare subsistence level based on current average rental in African townships. The Labour Research Service gives R1140 as the required minimum wage based on the real cost of a modest two-bedroomed home in a black area with 25% of the income used for housing. The principle is that every worker should earn enough to afford a decent home. □

The South African Domestic Workers' Union minimum wage recommendations:

Monthly unskilled domestic wage (live out) R350 plus travel
 Monthly unskilled domestic wage (live in) R350 plus food
 Monthly skilled domestic wage R450 plus food/travel
 Fortnightly rate R175 plus food/travel
 Weekly rate R80 plus food/travel
 Daily rate R28 plus food/travel
 Hourly rate R3,50 plus food/travel

Demands for legislation:

The abolition of child labour (under 16 years of age)
 Maternity leave of eight weeks antenatally and six weeks post-natally
 Days off to attend ante-natal clinic without salary reductions
 Annual leave of 21 working days fully paid after a period of 12 months' employment
 Leave pay to be given to worker before she goes on holiday
 One full day off per week as well as Sunday, plus one full weekend off per month
 All public holidays unless a separate arrangement is made and overtime paid
 14 days paid sick leave a year with medical certificate offered if four days or longer are taken off
 Pension, medical aid and an annual bonus plus assistance where possible and necessary in putting down a deposit on a housing unit in a township or time off to attend self-improvement educational courses
 One month's notice on either side
 Decent accommodation with washing facilities



looking at lusaka

Black Sash national vice-president Jenny de Tolly reports on the Five Freedoms Forum/ANC conference in Lusaka attended by the first official delegation of Black Sash members.

Before I left home, an apolitical friend, on hearing that I was going to Lusaka, earnestly warned me to 'be careful, there are a lot of the ANC there'. Indeed there were 'a lot of the ANC' in Lusaka and for three days we debated issues, talked about 'home' (with great longing on their part) and got to know one another.

From the start the welcome was warm. On the evening of our arrival we attended a reception at the State House in Lusaka - an event which was to set the tone for the following days.

On the rolling lawns in front of the red-bricked, colonial-style mansion, we were welcomed to Zambia, second home to the ANC and other national liberation movements in southern Africa, by president Kenneth Kaunda. Alongside Kaunda stood ANC president Oliver Tambo.

Both leaders made clear their desire to rid South Africa of racism and minority (white) domination and to find lasting solutions to the problems of South Africa and the southern African region. They welcomed this conference as part of that search.

The Five Freedoms Forum had invited 114 people from around South Africa to take part in a conference with about 80 ANC members. It was the biggest-yet delegation from South Africa: delegates came from 13 towns and cities in South Africa and represented over 30 groups working for change - both inside and outside of parliament.

There were eight of us from the Black Sash - by no means the first Black Sash members to meet the ANC-in-exile, but we were the first official Black Sash delegation to do so.

In his introduction and overview of the current state of white politics, Mike Olivier, chairperson of the Five Freedoms Forum in Johannesburg, said: 'If we are to be part of a common and peaceful future we need at least to understand each other. What I think we all have in common is a desire for a non-racial and democratic future. I suspect we will not all

agree on what exactly this entails and how best we should get there - but this is the essence of what we are here to talk about.

'Let me also make it clear that this is not simply a visit to the ANC. It is a working conference to debate real issues facing all of us in South Africa. We are not here to engage in academic debate, but to develop understanding and clarity about our own roles in the future South African society.'

From then on, we set about addressing the issues under discussion by breaking into groups or commissions.

The commissions each ran for four hours and were so organised that lead-in papers were presented by an ANC delegate and an FFF delegate, with group discussion and debate following. In most of the commissions there was sufficient expertise present in the group to delve into the topics with reasonable depth. Talk was encouragingly open, and many differences of opinion were expressed. Fierce debates raged on issues such as sanctions and violence.

Topics debated ranged from those dealing with strategies (negotiations, violence, sanctions) to those looking at future dispensations (socialism, nationalisation, free enterprise and models for South Africa's future constitutional dispensation). Also discussed were the roles of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition, local government, business, the media and women in shaping the future.

The commissions provided an opportunity for the ANC to clarify their position on many issues, and also an opportunity for those from 'inside' to share some of their hands-on experiences.

Of interest were the inputs of businesspeople and economists, who while agreeing on the need for the redistribution of both political and economic power, sounded warnings on the realities facing a post-apartheid South African economy, especially in the light of extensive disinvestment.

The issue of negotiations has clearly become



Elisabe Wassels/Vrye Weekblad

an important topic at this particular time as pressure increases on both the Nationalist Party and on the ANC to begin the process of negotiating a political settlement.

While the ANC's stance on some issues like the demand for an immediate transfer of power has shifted, their pre-conditions for a negotiated settlement were again made quite clear, ie the releasing of all political prisoners, the lifting of the State of Emergency and other laws which criminalise political activity, the unbanning of banned organisations, the withdrawal of the SADF and para-military forces from the townships and the safe return of exiles.

They said that the aim of the conditions was to enable the ANC to participate meaningfully in the negotiating process and for the ANC to be able to consult with its constituency.

For me the conference did achieve its stated purpose, namely to develop understanding and clarity about our own roles in the future South African society, and it is that which has given me cause for hope. We reaffirmed that we have a role to play in the **process of transformation** in South Africa **now**. We claim a common commitment to a future non-racial democracy, but apartheid and the entrenched racial domination and inequalities will take a long time to

unravel, and real democracy is a frail ideal to keep alive in the struggle for power.

It was gratifying that the Black Sash was recognised at this conference for the contribution that it makes to South Africa.

In his welcoming address, Kenneth Kaunda paid tribute to Helen Suzman and to the Black Sash, saying '... and the brave housewives of the Black Sash who went out and struggled and fought for people who were not even their own colour. They have made a great and significant contribution to your country.'

A press statement drafted by Black Sash members at Lusaka airport summed up our experience: 'Over the past three days we have had a chance to explore with our fellow South Africans in the ANC, the issues that confront our country today and our common future. We did so in an atmosphere of mutual warmth and acceptance that made it possible to be completely honest and outspoken.

'These valuable and unique exchanges reinforced for us the urgent necessity for the unbanning of the ANC. South Africa cannot afford to be denied the *ubuntu* (togetherness/humaneness) and expertise of our exiled compatriots in the building of a strong, proud, democratic nation.' □

*Left to right:
Glenda Glover,
Sarah Burns, Joyce
Harris, Beva
Runciman, Judy
Chalmers, Oliver
Tambo, Judith
Hawarden, Jenny
de Tolly, Kerry
Harris and Fidela
Fouche.*

REVIEWS

South African Keywords

Emile Boonzaier and John Sharp (eds) (David Philip, Cape Town, 1988)

This book, sub-titled *The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts*, and consisting of chapters written by 11 different authors, is an extremely useful aid to clarity of thought and discussion. It was conceived by its editors in response to a perceived need in their own department of anthropology at the University of Cape Town, and designed 'to help students, and people outside the universities, to analyse the nature of the society in which we live'.

As a past student in the department, I can vouch for the need for such a book. The topic for the first essay I was required to write was 'What is Race?', and it was all too evident that the conventional definitions were not only inadequate but loaded with preconceptions. The education and socialisation of many South African students have not equipped them to question the classification which forms part of the basic structures of their society.

The 12 essays in the book form much more than a handbook for students. They offer a starting point for anyone who has to deal with the complex political issues of present-day South Africa and who seeks the precision of accurate language in order to do so most effectively.

The book can be used as a source of reference to specific concepts - culture, race, tribe, ethnic group, first world/third world, development, gender, community ... It also contains a wealth of useful information, much of it derived from the original research of the contributors themselves. The bibliography alone stirs a hunger to read and understand more about how concepts and terminology can be manipulated to serve political ends.

As editor John Sharp points out: 'It is the fact that they are propagated by the powerful which makes these representations (of racial and ethnic groups and unique cultures) conventional: those who hold power are able, at least in some respects, to impose their conventions on others.'

The authors also compel us to look closely at our own use of such concepts. They are critical of their own discipline (see particularly the essay by Andrew Spiegel and Emile Boonzaier, 'Promoting tradition: Images of the South African past'). They do not flinch from pointing out that while words such as 'group' and 'community' can be made to serve the ends of the South African government, they can also be used by anti-government organisations of the right and of the left. They point to the dangers of using such terms as 'community leaders' and 'community support' when these are not accurate descriptions of reality (see Mamphela Ramphele and Robert Thornton) and of classifying people into 'groups' - by language, custom, gender or age.

The chapters in the book could usefully serve as the basis for study groups in organisations such as the Black Sash. For example, John Sharp's 'Two worlds in one country: First world and third world in South Africa', challenges us to examine how we use these terms, and how they can lend weight to a justification of separation and domination. Rhetoric can generate a dynamic of its own, and Sharp warns that 'ways of thinking about the constitution of society and the nature of political authority in it become deeply ingrained with the passage of time. Even in post-revolutionary situations, the new discourse about the nature of society may owe a great deal to the vision it replaces.'

The editors believe that there are many people who recognise that the ability 'to distinguish good sense from nonsense' is diminished where there is a lack of critical discussion and a confusion about basic concepts. We could all find our discussions enriched and our perceptions sharpened by this guide to key words in our lexicon. *Mary Burton* □

The Prisoners of Tradition and the Politics of Nation Building

Charles Simkins (South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1989)

The South African conflict is not only a human tragedy but also one of the greatest political dramas the world has witnessed in recent times. The great majority of South Africans only have vague and confused impressions of how this drama is unfolding. They have to rely on a stream of inadequate media reports, occasional attitude surveys and chance encounters with politicians and activists. Very few have the opportunity of going out to feel the pulse of South Africa and subject spokesmen for the key political organisations and parties to tough questions about their respective policies and future expectations.

During the second half of 1987, Charles Simkins, accompanied by Monty Narsoo, travelled from Johannesburg to Pretoria, Natal, the Eastern and Western Cape, Harare and Lusaka. They spoke to 22 special interest groups, both political and economic (employers' organisations and unions). The purpose of the exercise was to explore the extent to which a political common ground existed. Although Simkins does not say so specifically, this work is guided by the belief that without a growing sense of common nationhood South Africans of all colours and classes are doomed to at least three decades more of strife and turmoil.

Simkins' reminds me of two similar exercises undertaken by native sons of other troubled lands. In the mid-1950s the American poet and novelist, Robert Penn Warren, who grew up in the South, travelled through Kentucky, Tennessee,

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Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana and reported on his conversations with a people caught up in a storm over desegregation. At the end of his evocative essay, *Segregation: The Inner Conflict in the South*, Warren conducted an interview with himself. Asked if he is a gradualist on the matter of segregation, he replies: 'If by gradualist you mean a person who thinks it will take time, not time as such, but time for an educational process, preferably a calculated one, then yes. I mean a process of mutual education for whites and blacks. And part of this education should be in the actual beginning of the process of desegregation. It's a silly question, anyway, to ask if somebody is a gradualist. Gradualism is all you'll get. History, like nature, knows no jumps. Except the jump backward, maybe.'

In 1982 the Israeli novelist, Amos Oz, became a tourist within his own country to report on the implacable oppositions within Arab and Israeli feeling - Zionist, non-Zionist and anti-Zionist. Shaken by the raw emotions he encountered, Oz reached this conclusion: 'Concede heavenly Jerusalem for the sake of the Jerusalem of the slums, waive messianic salvation for the sake of small, gradual reforms, forgo messianic fervor for the sake of prosaic sobriety. And perhaps the entirety of our history is not a story of blood and fire or of salvations and consolations but, rather, a story of a halting attempt to recover from a severe illness. Perhaps there is no shortcut.'

Simkins differs from Warren and Oz in three respects. Firstly he is not a novelist but an economist attached to the University of Cape Town. Secondly, while a gradualist like Warren, he is more desperate for a solution which would reinvigorate the economy and enable the state to cope with the sharply rising demands and expectations. Finally, while not propagating messianic salvation, Simkins wants a solution that meets the criteria of liberalism and, in particular, John Rawl's two principles of justice. In Rawl's terms each person has an equal right to basic liberties, and inequalities are to be addressed in such a way that the

least advantaged benefit most, but without sacrificing fair equality of opportunity.

Simkins argues that to achieve a liberal solution South Africans have to learn to think differently about the problem of political power. By and large, we tend to think that power is the ability to get what one wants, despite resistance. In this perspective it does not really matter how one gets it; all that counts is whether one can keep it.

The other perspective is the communicative view of power. Power belongs to a group in the making, like the South African nation which is being born. People who co-operate freely to achieve their self-chosen purposes are empowered. But they can develop communicative power only if there is freedom of association and of the press and if all political organisations accept the principle of open competition with one another for popular support. Only if groups are formed on this basis, can a genuinely free political system be constructed.

But can the communicative view of power ever win through? Simkins is not over-confident, for South Africans are, as he states in a catching phrase, 'prisoners of tradition': we tend to believe that power is an all-or-nothing affair and do everything to keep or win exclusive power.

As the conflict escalates parties do nothing more than hold on to what they have and prevent opponents from getting their way. This gives rise to our highly symbolic politics in which 'popular fronts' unite behind symbolic actions but spend very little time on spelling out principles and programmes. Minor organisations in a popular front soon lose their political identity in a process best described by the tendency that was known in Nazi Germany as *Gleichschaltung* or in Afrikaans as *gelykskakeling*. There is precious little tolerance within our black and white racial estates for political competitors or for people proposing to build bridges across the racial divide. Accordingly, where interest groups have emerged which try to establish themselves in the middle ground, they are subject to intense cross-pres-

ures from the main power contenders. Franklin Sonn's Cape Teacher's Professional Association is a good example.

Simkins believes that enough openings exist for strategies that could lead us out of the current stalemate, a point demonstrated by the trade union movement which has won for itself unexpected space. However, far too often the anti-apartheid opposition eschews strategy for expressions of moral denunciation which make little contribution towards ending the present political order. As Simkins puts it: 'Their cost may be that they have become a substitute for tactics which would yield real but limited long-term gains and that they create a climate which makes the adoption of such tactics more difficult.'

If Simkins gives a brilliant analysis of the subject of the first part of the book's title - the 'prisoners of traditions' - he leaves us groping as regards the second part, namely the 'politics of nation building'. In a much too brief section he contends, without offering any argument, that slight adjustments in the current economic system and a greater emphasis on development would command widespread support. Why would it get support from blacks who together own less than 10 per cent of the instruments of production? Simkins does not say.

Furthermore, while Simkins writes sensitively on how the demands of the African and the Afrikaner sub-nationalisms can be accommodated, he categorically rules out the demand of whites that they be allowed to choose their own representatives in any power-sharing arrangement. Normatively there are sound reasons for rejecting such a demand but can one ignore the political reality? More than 90 per cent of whites in polls insist on exactly this: to have their own chosen white representatives at the negotiation table and government.

I have often wondered why there is such a fierce opposition today to the idea of a white party or white self-representation. After all, in 1967 the Progressives, unlike the Liberals, decided **not** to disband when the

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government passed the Act on Improper Political Interference outlawing mixed parties. No one, not even politicians in the extra-parliamentary movement can doubt that the Progressives made the right decision.

Without conceding to the whites, at least in a transitional period, the right to self-representation, the

stalemate in South Africa will not be broken. In what other way can we become engaged in that 'process of mutual education for whites and blacks' that Robert Penn Warren spoke of? Need we not, in Amos Oz's terms, rather accept 'small, gradual reforms and forego messianic fervor for the sake of prosaic sobriety'?

Charles Simkins is, in that word which we should use sparingly, a seminal thinker. His 'Prisoners of Tradition' is one of the most valuable political contributions of the decade. His 'Politics of Nation Building' needs further thought and elaboration. But for what we have received we are truly thankful. □

Hermann Giliomee



NEWS-STRIP

Black Sash president Mary Burton writes about a recent visit to the USA

'The United States Information Service organises visits to the USA for people from all around the world. I spent from mid-March to mid-April on a trip with a theme of 'Pluralism in the USA'.

This international visitors' programme is designed to expose participants to aspects of American life which will expand their knowledge and equip them better for their own work.

Group visits as well as individual trips are planned and I travelled in the company of two others from South Africa: the Reverend Michael Mjekula and the Reverend Canon Mncebisi Xundu, both from Port Elizabeth. We were accompanied by

our American escort Mr Arnold Daniels jun.

Our itinerary covered eight cities in 30 days: Washington, Charlotte, Albuquerque, Portland, Billings, Chicago, Hartford and New York. We met people involved in civil rights movements, churches and community services. In each city arrangements had been made for us in advance by the local international visitors offices, but we were also free to make other contacts.

We saw a fascinating museum established to foster pride in the history and culture of the local people; we visited a drug treatment centre, a reception centre for recent immigrants and a college created to

serve the Crow people and preserve their language.

I was overwhelmed by the extent of the resources available - institutes for research, planning and policy study, all working to meet the requirements of public representatives. There seemed to be federal and state funding for innumerable programmes for development and welfare.

Most of all we talked and listened, we argued often, we learned a great deal and I think we helped others to understand more about the situation in South Africa.

Possibly because of the theme chosen for our trip, I was particularly struck by the extent of the fragmentation of US society along ethnic lines. We met people and groups who defined themselves as black Americans, hispanic Americans, native Americans or 'Anglos'. We encountered people who saw themselves as marginalised and discriminated against, in spite of legislation which exists to protect those who are victims of racism, oppression and exploitation.

This led me to appreciate more fully the difficulties of resolving conflict and competition for resources. It seemed to me that people emphasised their group identity as a means to mobilise themselves for action and pressure, but that this in turn made them vulnerable to manipulation and even made it easier for them to be excluded, as groups, from access to opportunity, power, influence and wealth. I lay awake at night wondering what hope there might be for South Africa if the USA with all its might and resources had not found ways to meet these problems.

Finally, and only after my return and the time to think through all I had seen, I came to believe with stronger conviction than ever that the best future lies for us in building unity, in minimising conflict and division, in sharing resources, and in strengthening democracy and non-racialism. I know that this conviction is shared by many others around the world and in the USA itself. It was a great privilege to have the opportunity to travel, to examine my own beliefs and learn from those of others. □



NEWS-STRIP

reported to have used whips and teargas at the graveside. They denied this. □

Natal Midlands Black Sash



Mary Louise Peires

Farewell to Mary Louise Peires

The Albany region recently said a sad farewell to Mary Louise Peires who has moved to Umtata. As co-chairperson with Rosemary Smith for the past two years, Mary Louise endeared herself to fellow members with her wit, charm and keen intelligence. Her delightfully individualistic form of expression - not surprising in a teacher of linguistics - will probably become entrenched in the idiom of the Grahamstown branch. In a farewell tribute to Mary Louise, Rosemary noted that a difficult report or statement to be written invariably evoked the response 'give it to me and I'll cobble something together' - a phrase which characteristically underestimated the lucidity and incisiveness of the final result. Mary Louise will be greatly missed in Grahamstown, but hopes to continue her Black Sash work in Umtata. □

Nova de Villiers

Grahamstown Festival stand

The Albany Black Sash held a stand during the Grahamstown Arts Festival in July. On two occasions, Black Sash members lined a route to the 1820 Settlers' Monument, holding luminous posters which called for an end to detention, house arrest, conscription, group areas, capital punishment and apartheid.

The stand on the second evening was disrupted by a group of security and uniformed police, who claimed that the six women were infringing a municipal by-law! After taking details of the posters, and names and addresses of those involved, they told the women to disperse. Ironically, far more 'subversive' activities were going on without harassment in various mainstream and fringe events at the Festival. It was noted that the stand had been effective and had provoked comment amongst Festival visitors. □

Val Letcher

Education concerns

There is growing concern amongst educationists at the examination and marking procedures being adopted by the Department of Education and Training (DET). Lack of resources in DET has admittedly reached crisis proportions, but acknowledgement of this should not be used to excuse practices which seriously disadvantage pupils. In what follows, some of these practices are described. The account is based on the experiences of two administration 'aides' who checked the marks allocated by markers in the Pretoria area during the marking of 1988 DET matriculation papers. Several disturbing features emerged:

- 1) a heavy emphasis is placed on the quantity rather than the quality of work done by markers and aides (both are paid per paper marked or checked);
- 2) 'minor' inaccuracies in the adding-up of marks are frequently disregarded;



Grahamstown Festival Stand

Black Sash Albany

**NO
APARTHEID**

NEWS-STRIP

Corruption in the East Cape

A former senior officer of the Department of Health and Community Development in Port Elizabeth, Gert Jacobus Niemand, was convicted of 22 counts of fraud and jailed for five years recently. He had been in charge of the emergency food parcels project in 1987, had set up a fictitious company under the name *EC Foods* and had instructed junior officers to sign requisitions for food parcels, the cheque payments being subsequently deposited in the account of *EC Foods*, to which he was the only signatory. The total amount involved came to R219 542! How many desperately needy people could have benefited from food purchased for this amount of money! □

L. Frescura

June 1989. The prayer service, initiated by the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA), was held at the roadside where about 140 evicted farmworkers had been dumped. Marie Dyer, AFRA vice-chairperson and Black Sash member, gave the opening address, and Renate Cochrane read two scripture passages. Pat Merrett gave a message of support on behalf of the Black Sash.

The 30 families are living in appalling conditions with inadequate shelter and no facilities. Members of local parishes, and people from the Weenen Emergency Camp (themselves previously evicted) attended the service, as well as representatives from supportive organisations in Pietermaritzburg. All were moved by the words of Archbishop Hurley as he gave his sermon.

The evicted workers are from labour or 'thorn' farms in the Weenen district and have no rights to the land they have occupied for generations. □

Natal Midlands Black Sash

September to 4 October 1989. It was decided to make this an annual event following the successful launch of a human rights festival in December 1988. The theme will be: 'Strategies Towards a Changed Society', and some eminent speakers will address a two-day conference at the East Cape Training Centre. There will also be a 'School for Human Rights' aimed at Std 9 and 10 pupils on Friday, 29 September - this will be run by the education group of the Black Sash Transvaal branch who put this programme together initially. Other events envisaged are a 'Run for Rights'; a national schools art and essay contest on the subject of 'Anything pertaining to the declaration of human rights with reference to its application in South Africa'; at least three live theatre presentations; a film festival and possibly a concert. Contact Amber Cummins at the Human Rights Trust (041-555979). □

L. Frescura

Weenen farm labourers evicted

A number of Natal Midlands Black Sash members attended an outdoor solidarity service at Weenen on 29

Human rights festival

Once again the Port Elizabeth-based Human Rights Trust is holding a human rights festival from 28 Sep-

Black Sash protest, 19 June 1989

A single poster stand took place immediately after the funeral of trade unionist, Jabu Ndlovu, to protest at the insensitivity of police in refusing family members admission into the church to attend her funeral service. Black Sash members who arrived before the quota of 200 was reached were allowed into St Mary's Catholic Church, Pietermaritzburg. When they realized there was a problem, they asked if they could change places with relatives outside. The police would not allow this.

Ms Ndlovu was fatally injured in a vigilante attack on her home and died later in hospital. Her husband and daughter were killed in the attack.

A photograph of the stand was used to help illustrate the news story on the front page of the *Natal Witness* the next day. The police were



Outdoor solidarity service at Weenen.

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- 3) marks are subtracted arbitrarily if cheating is suspected;
- 4) ideal answers are followed slavishly by markers - candidates whose poor grasp of English prevents them from phrasing their answers exactly like the ideal answers are severely disadvantaged;
- 5) in at least one instance a chief marker refused to act when several inaccuracies in ideal answers were pointed out.

It appears that the DET is attempting to circumvent the kinds of difficulties mentioned above by introducing 'marker-friendly' examination papers. For example, last year a multiple-choice paper was used in the English literature matriculation examination. This development requires close investigation to determine *inter alia* whether or not candidates are being further disadvantaged. □

Pretoria Black Sash education working group

hardly a dry eye as all the delegates linked arms and sang 'We shall overcome' and consensus was reached that apartheid must go.

The disadvantage of such a diverse group was that it was hard to get some of the discussion focused and in some instances to get beyond the superficial. There was an emphasis on mothers rather than attempts to formulate shared oppression. Perhaps the greatest value came in the de-mythologising on both sides and in the words of one of the ANC women, Frene Ginwala, 'In the three days of discussion a

chink has opened the barriers between us. This has been a two-way process and our understanding has been enhanced through the exchange of our personal experiences.' □

Rosie Smith

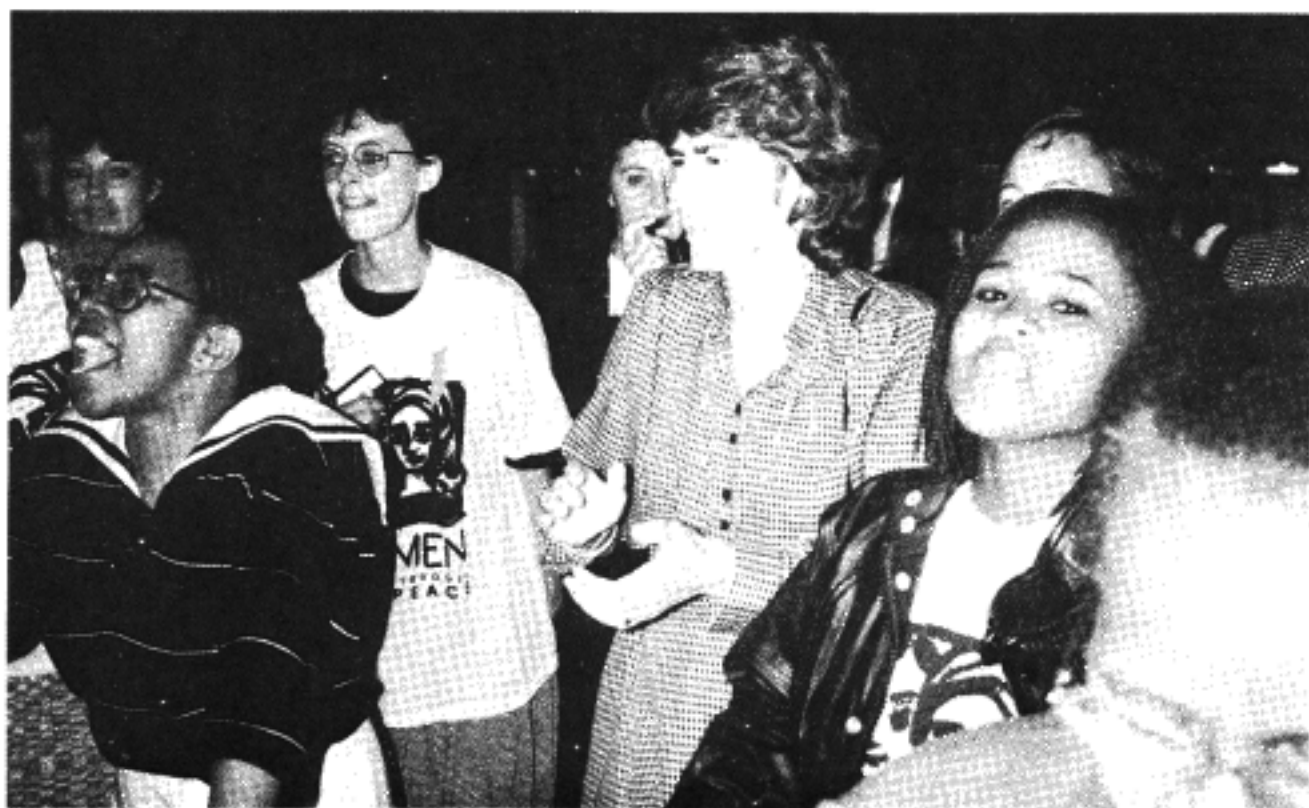
Idasa conference, Harare

Attending the IDASA conference 'Women in the Struggle for Peace' in Harare in April was exciting and challenging but above all one felt as though one was encapsulated in a big emotional bubble. For 55 women from South Africa to meet with 25 South African exiles from the ANC missions around the world, the experience was bound to be charged with emotion.

The South African delegation was a disparate one both in terms of backgrounds and political traditions which proved to be both advantageous and disadvantageous. One advantage was that one felt this was a reaching out, a conscientising for some women who barely knew their fellow South Africans and had previously stereotyped the ANC. At the end of the conference there was



Rosemary van Wyk-Smith addressing the conference



Women in the struggle for peace in Harare

Braklaagte banning

The Transvaal Rural Action Committee, a subcommittee of the Black Sash, was banned from Bophuthatswana after exposing an outbreak of violence in the twin villages of Braklaagte and Leeuwfontein.

Early in July, nine policemen and two villagers were killed in clashes after Bophuthatswana police had intervened in a protest against the incorporation of the two villages into the 'homeland'.

The Bophuthatswana government has accused the Black Sash and Trac of instigating the revolt and of being 'engaged in activities which endanger the national security or public safety'.

The Black Sash's response has been: 'We have not created these conditions, we have merely exposed them. Banning the Black Sash will not mean opposition will cease to exist.' □

NEWS-STRIP

OBITUARY NOTICES

Moira Henderson

02.09.23 - 21.05.89

Moira was a founder member of the Black Sash, served on the Regional Council of Cape Western Region and was co-director of the Black Sash Advice Office. She was a founder member and Black Sash representative of Defence and Aid, Cape, and when the organisation was banned in 1966, continued to work on the Dependant's Conference, first as a voluntary daily worker, then committee member and finally chairperson until she retired. Moira was a very modest woman, and her many friends were amazed to hear her wide-ranging achievements and activities recounted by Francis Wilson and Archbishop Tutu at the Memorial Service.

We offer our deepest sympathy to her family. She will be much missed by so many. □

Noel Robb

Jeanette (Netty) Davidoff

We are sad to report the death of Netty Davidoff, a founding member of the Black Sash, at the age of 82. A full obituary will appear in the next issue of SASH.

Essential report on record keeping:

Pretoria's Black Sash branch has compiled an informative report on the importance of efficient record keeping and disposal. It has a twofold purpose: the first describes the record management system designed by the branch, and is a useful guide for other branches, giving pointers as to how they can organise their own records - an important function which is often a neglected area of branch management.

Secondly, the report lists guidelines for the efficient disposal of all files and records - the necessity for which has been comprehensively demonstrated by incidents

such as the Khotso and Khanya House bombings, and cases where records have been confiscated by the police.

This document is available on request from the Pretoria Black Sash. *Verne Harris* □

Cape Human Rights Exhibition

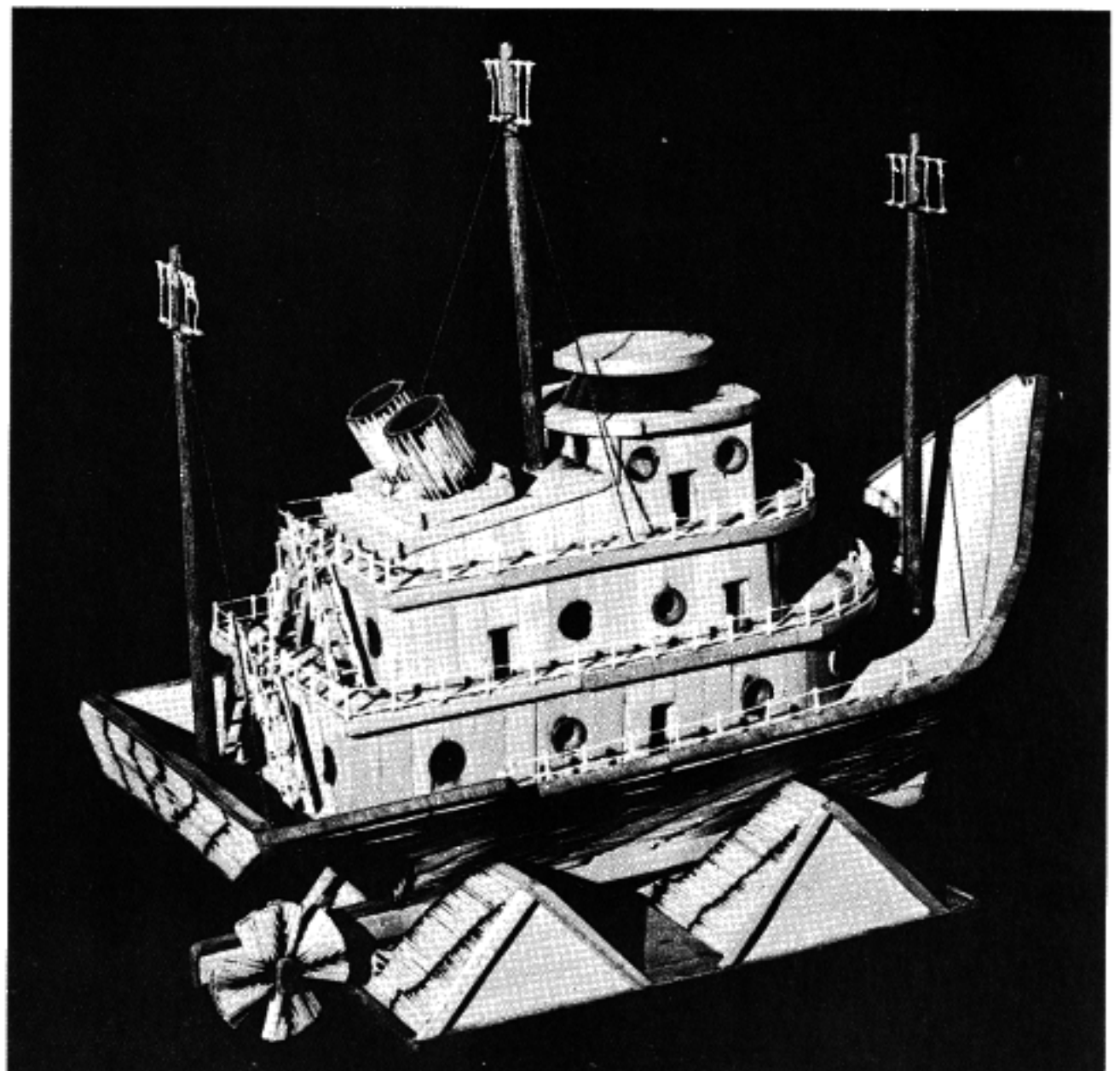
Following the Transvaal Black Sash's Human Rights Photographic exhibition compiled by Afrapix, Cape Western Region recently hosted the same exhibition at the Baxter theatre. Running concurrently was an exhibition of photographs by Eric Miller taken in and around Pabellelo township - where the 'Upington 26' come from - and a masterful collection of matchstick

models made by the 'Upington 26' trialists while awaiting sentencing. (14 are now on Death Row.)

After two weeks at the Baxter, the exhibition moved to the Centre for African Studies at UCT, where it ran for three weeks.

The exhibition was very successful, generating offers of exposure in a number of media, including the SABC, and some of the models are now permanent exhibits in various galleries. A wide-ranging audience was reached, and numerous orders have been placed for the models. As prisoners on Death Row are not allowed to indulge in 'creative activities', we are hoping the accused who received community service sentences will be able to continue to produce these magnificent models, proceeds from which go to aid the Upington 26.

Orders for the models and for Eric Miller's colour photographs may be placed with Cindy Tyrrell via the Cape Western advice office. □ *Cindy Tyrrell*



Matchstick model made by 'Upington 26' trialist.