WORK IN PROGRESS

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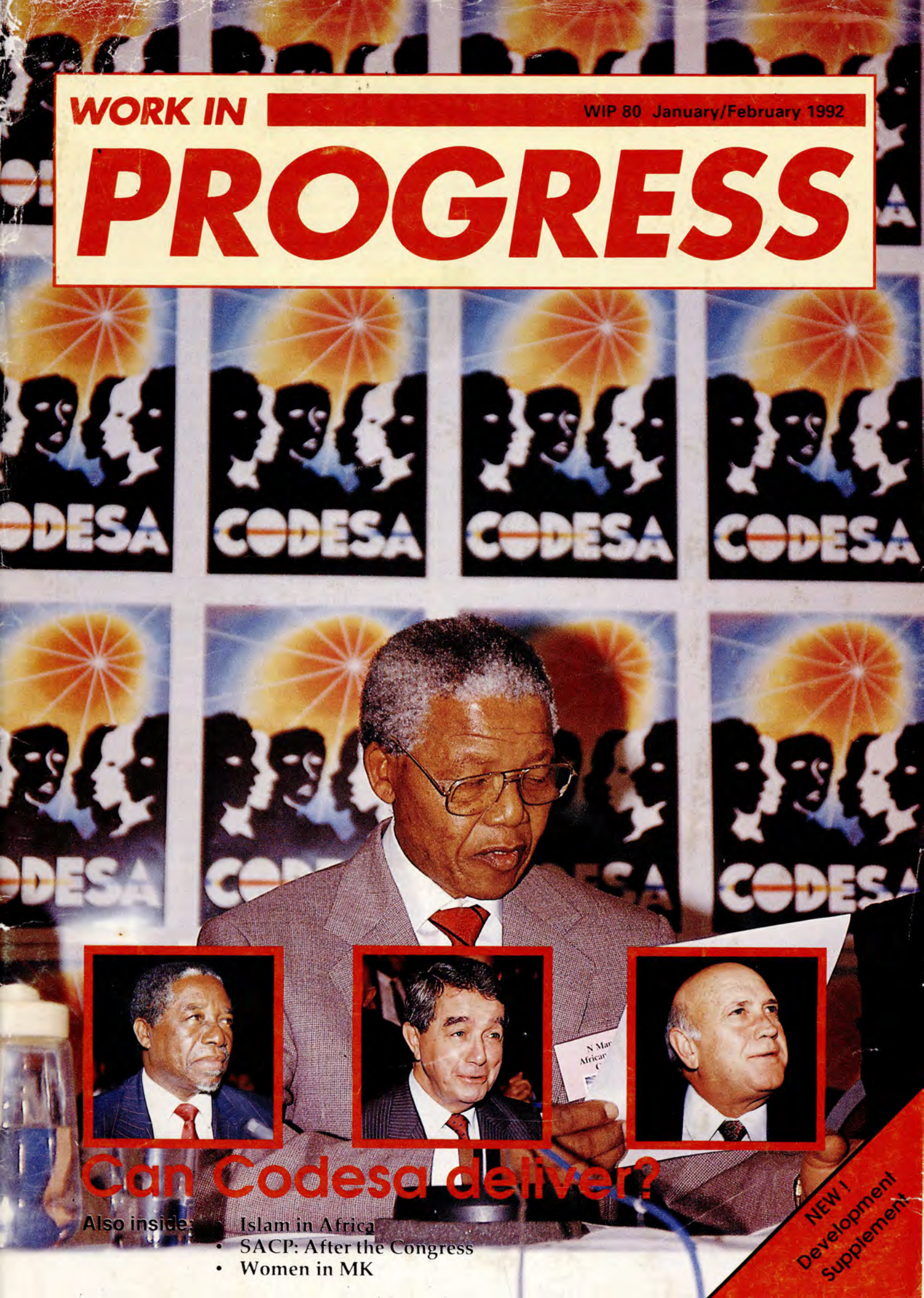

Can Codesa deliver?

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- Islam in Africa
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EDITORIAL

The pace of negotiations is proceeding at breakneck speed. As things stand, the strategic objective of the Patriotic Front, namely the election of a constituent assembly (CA) to draw up and adopt a new constitution for the country, is still in sight.

The optimistic view is that the government is making all the concessions, the most significant being the acceptance of an *elected* body to draw up a new constitution. Only the finer details now have to be worked out.

The pessimistic view is that the ANC-led alliance has already 'sold out' on the CA, and will eventually succumb to either a meaningless, watered-down version, or an interim government with a long life-span.

This is the view that sustains a boycott of Codesa from the 'left'. The underlying perspective of the two main 'boycotters', the PAC and Azapo, seems to be that 'we will only go into negotiations once all violent options have been exhausted'.

This, we fear, is the perspective of groups that are not sure of their support on the ground.

After all the hype about 'the oppressed' being against Codesa (PAC), or 'the oppressed' being against the Paul Simon tour (Azapo), we eagerly awaited demonstration of some sort of mandate from 'the oppressed'.

All we got was less than a hundred oppressed demonstrating against the tour, and less than a thousand marching against Codesa, in what was billed as a national show of force against the talks.

This is not good enough.

Yes, Codesa includes unrepresentative tricameral and bantustan politicians who are only in it for the fame and fortune. That is why the sooner we have elections to prove who has support, the better. So the constituent assembly demand is key.

Yes, the ANC *may* compromise on the constituent assembly demand (although this is strongly denied). That is partly why Cosatu is eager to be independently represented at Codesa – to strengthen the hand of those ANC-SACP leaders who are not prepared to compromise on key issues.

Surely that is the best strategy – a focused resolve to firm up support for a constituent assembly *inside* Codesa, rather than 'in the streets' where few people seem to support abstentionist politics.

In our last issue (*WIP 79*), our editorial gave the impression that the ANC had not met with ex-SADF major Nico Basson. This was in fact incorrect, as meetings between Basson and at least three ANC officials did take place. We therefore apologise for any embarrassment our editorial may have cause to the parties concerned.

We would, however, like to point out that we still stand by the essential thrust of our editorial, namely that Basson had not been substantially debriefed by the ANC in the manner in which he requested. This, in our view, has resulted in the organisation being deprived of the strategic knowledge he possesses, and which he has been willing to impart to the ANC.

SARS would like to extend a warm welcome to Kerry Cullinan, who has joined our editorial staff. Kerry was formerly a reporter at *New Nation*. She will be mainly responsible for our new development supplement, *Reconstruct*, which appears in this issue.

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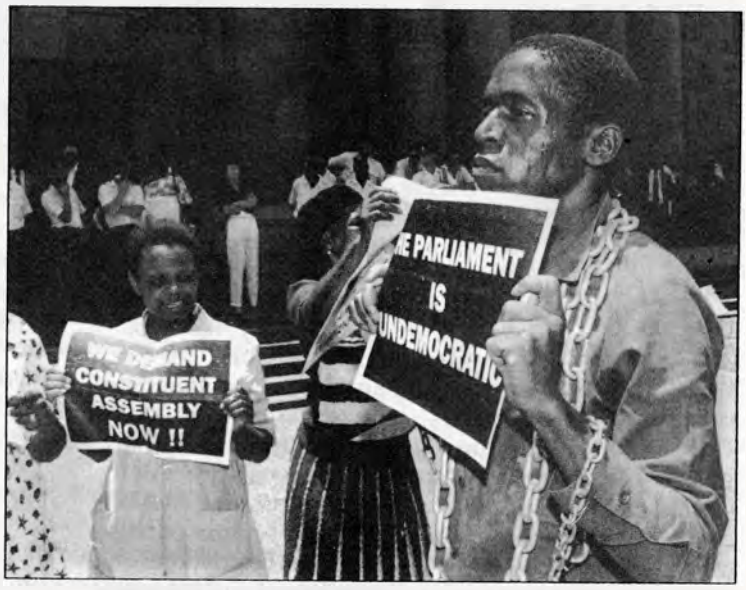

As Codesa picks up momentum, the country looks to the politicians with a mixture of hope and fear. WIP looks at Codesa from a variety of angles.
– pages 8-17


Reconstruct
Work in Progress Supplement February 1992
Transforming the IDT

Reconstruct

WIP introduces its new, regular supplement specifically devoted to development issues nationally –centre pages

SACP: Having its cake and eating it?

Can the SACP maintain its current overlapping alliance with the ANC, and at the same time become an independent party with a distinct programme of action?
– pages 20-22

LETTERS

Write to: The Editor
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Cuban brief is incorrect

Devan Pillay's brief, 'Cuban Democracy Deepens' (WIP 79, Dec 1991) is too factually incorrect to pass without comment. For a start, the Fourth Congress or, the policies initiated by Castro's 'rectification of errors and negative tendencies' speech in 1986, was not characterized by a recognition of the 'political mistake' of the planned economy. On the contrary, it attempted to reverse the movements towards economic decentralization and the use of market forces which began in the 1970s.

The second inaccuracy is that 'small-scale private enterprise' was not introduced 'for the first time' in 1991. This has been a feature of Cuban life since the adoption of the system of Economic Management and Planning (SDPE) in the 1970s.

A third error concerns the statement that the party had been, 'since its formation', 'Marxist Leninist'. It was only in 1961, four years after the seizure of power, that Castro suddenly announced: 'I am a Marxist Leninist'. In his attempt to destroy opposition, Castro even placed the former leaders of the Communist Party on trial for resisting the destruction of their party. The lie of a continued 'Marxist-Leninist' heritage may have helped secure generous Soviet foreign aid, but it was believed by no one except, perhaps, the editor of Work In Progress.

My most serious disagreement with the brief concerns the statement that the west has failed to notice Cuba's moves to greater democracy because it 'measures democracy in multi-party terms'. The need to extend democracy beyond the realm of party politics is unquestionable. However there are other reasons why 'the west' criticizes Cuba. For example, the fact that they have had up to 80 000 political prisoners; that homosexuals are sent to labour-camps; that AIDS victims are isolated and there are restrictions on movement and information. Cuba has also had its share of show-trials, public 'confessions' and executions, such as the Padilla Affair in the 1970s and the execution of General Ochoa in 1989. These are not examples of a commitment to increased democracy. Rather, they are attempts to tighten the grip of the Party over Cuba political and social life in order to avoid the fate of the Nicaraguan revolutionaries.

Stephen Louw
Department of Political Studies, Wits University.

Basson is unclear in his analysis

I would like to comment on Nico Basson's article, 'De Klerk's Double Agenda' (WIP No. 79, December 1991). Basson's piece contains some valuable insights, but it is also problematic. There is a complete lack of clarity in his analysis of the National Co-ordinating Mechanism. Basson provides us with a chart, but he never guides us through the relationship of each component in the chart. Furthermore, when looking at his chart, it is hard to believe that the NIS security secretariat is so far removed from the economic and security committees that directly serve the cabinet. Basson would have us believe that the security secretariat is independent of these components and can only access the mechanism through 'working groups' (which he never defines).

In contrast, according to *SouthScan* (Vol.6, No 40 October 25, 1991):

- The two sub-committees were created after De Klerk took office and are directly accountable to himself and the cabinet;
- Each sub-committee has a secretariat run by the NIS;
- These secretariats feed and are fed by any of the 70 task forces created and run by the department head committee.

The challenges to a democratic government are clear. How can an interim government handle, monitor or dismantle this deeply layered substructure, which is clearly the essential support mechanism behind internal and regional destabilization? The chief threat is the degree to which the security structure can reproduce itself both within and without the boundaries of central government.

Jack Umshini Wkubala
New Britain, USA

World Bank puts money in Africa

While South Africans are right to be wary of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund after the experience of the rest of Africa, the article by Sipho Buthelezi was seriously misleading (WIP 78).

His central contention is that the structural adjustment programmes implemented by countries under the direction of these institutions are 'the bridgehead of a new imperialism for the recolonisation of Africa'. The reality is far more depressing. The truth is that there is simply no interest in Africa on the part of most international investors. Despite countries accepting every recommendation from the IMF and World Bank, there has been almost no new investment in the continent.

Even South Africa is not particularly appealing. At the end of September, the first international fund designed to tempt investors back into South Africa, launched by the Old Mutual, flopped. Two other investment houses shelved similar schemes for lack of interest.

In these circumstances, the World Bank is one of the few bodies willing to sink funds into Africa. It provides long term development loans at very reasonable rates of interest. These must be repaid, but if they are properly used they should generate the funds needed to service the debts.

The real problem is that so many African states have been so badly run for so many years by elites who have regarded the national wealth as their personal piggy bank that their economies are close to collapse. Structural adjustment programmes are measures of a last resort, adopted when there is no real alternative. The answer is to run the economy in such a way that they are not necessary.

Martin Plaut, London

SAP parade: Popcru condemns the PAC's attacks on black policemen

Police killings

Popcru requests meeting with Apla

THE POLICE and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) has requested a meeting with the PAC's armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (Apla) in Dar es Salaam to discuss Apla's recent attacks on policemen.

PAC general secretary Benny Alexander said the PAC had forwarded Popcru's request to Apla who was discussing it.

Alexander added that the PAC understood the need to divide the forces of the oppressor by winning over sections of enemy forces to the side of the people. But, he added, these forces had to prove their usefulness by bringing information of intended attacks as well as assisting to defend people during such attacks. Popcru, according to Alexander, had failed to supply information about impending train attacks and had also failed to defend the people.

If Popcru wanted to make peace from the enemy side with the people's army, they were wasting their time, Alexander said. But if they wanted a meeting to get advice about their role in the defence of the people, he did not think Apla would have a problem in meeting them.

Meanwhile, Peter Nkuna, leader of Popcru's Transvaal Region said his 15 000-strong union abhorred the attacks on black policemen by Apla as much as they abhorred certain acts of some members of the police. Nkuna said the police force had to be democratised and that Popcru wanted to be involved in the dismantling of the present security forces.

Nkuna added that the PAC, as the mother body, was responsible for Apla's actions.

The PAC has made it clear that it supports the armed struggle being waged by Apla against the South African Police. According to the PAC, various political parties participating in Codesa keep private armies and have declared so publicly.

The PAC also condemned the US government for criticising Apla's attacks on the SAP while the SAP 'continues to be involved in a daily catalogue of killings, fanned by a Codesa participant, the Pretoria regime'.

– *Mbulelo Mdledle.*

MK's Codesa

THE ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) wants to form its own 'Codesa' with other armies, its commander, Joe Modise, said in Johannesburg last month.

According to Modise, there are two major players on the military field -- MK and the SADF. It is these two armies that will play a decisive role in the formation of a new defence force.

Modise stressed that the envisaged army would not be ANC-dominated, but a merger of MK, bantustan armies, the SADF and private armies willing to join a national defence force. The ANC has already embarked on training of MK cadres both in the navy and airforce.

The new South African army envisaged by Modise will owe allegiance to parliament and not to any 'small party', and political parties will not be allowed to own private armies. The new SADF will have a high level of education. Educational institutions will be available within the army to help those who are underprivileged academically.

At present, MK is calling on the SADF to accept a code of conduct which would allow it to play a more positive and constructive role in ensuring a climate of peace and stability.

This code was necessary, Modise added, as there was ample evidence of the clandestine activities of elements within the SADF who had and continued to play a pivotal role in instigating political violence.

The SADF had evolved into an extension of the National Party, said Modise. Far from being an impartial state apparatus accountable to parliament, the SADF has actively engaged in activities designed to bolster apartheid and destroy any threat to its continued existence.

'Within the SADF are some of the most reactionary rightwing elements. It has been synonymous with brutalisation and oppression. It is a defence force that enjoys no moral and political legitimacy in the eyes of the oppressed in this country,' said Modise.

However he stressed that MK would not be demobilised, nor would the military headquarters (MHQ) of MK allow a situation to develop whereby MK forces were dispersed. While the MHQ identified negotiations as the dominant form of struggle, MK believed that other forms of struggle would not be abandoned.

But MK would not be politically irresponsible, stressed Modise. The organisation was fully committed to the agreements reached with the government regarding the armed struggle. But given the level of violence directed against black communities and the ANC, Modise MK was committed to assisting people to protect themselves.

– *Mbulelo Mdledle*

Peter Mokaba (right) – re-elected president of ANC Youth League

ANC Youth League

Sombre mood as leaders fight for power

THE FIRST congress of the ANC Youth League in 30 years passed by virtually unnoticed in Siyabuswa, KwaNdebele, between December 9-12 last year, signalling that the 'young lions' of the eighties are no longer taken as seriously as before.

Unlike the SA Youth Congress (Sayco) congress some 18 months previously, the mood at the ANCYL was much more sombre.

Virtually all Youth League delegates were drawn from african townships, whereas at the Sayco congress a fair proportion of delegates had come from coloured and indian communities.

Dominating the congress was the election of new office bearers. This had become a particularly conflict-ridden area, partly explained by the fact that a number of different organisations – most notably Sayco, the ANC Youth Section and student organisations – had come together to relaunch the Youth League, but that these organisations had not yet overcome their different histories and experiences.

Ironically, though, the most controversial contest for leadership was between two people who had worked closely together within the same organisation: Peter Mokaba and Rapu Molekane, Sayco's former president and general secretary respectively.

Although Molekane's motive for standing against Mokaba is not clear, he was said to have been backed by ANC Youth Section members, students from the former SA National Students' Congress (Sansco) and his home constituency, Soweto.

Mokaba could still count on the support of most former Sayco members, despite damaging allegations that he had been a state spy.

Although it became clear early on in the congress that Molekane's challenge would not succeed, he surprisingly did not withdraw his nomination.

The electoral committee was then forced to rule his nomination invalid after he failed to win the necessary support from 400 of the over 1 800 delegates, or from four regions.

Mokaba then went on to be elected unopposed as ANCYL chairperson, while Molekane became the secretary general. Former Cosas president and ANCYL Eastern Cape chairperson, Lulu Johnson was elected vice-president, and is strongly believed to be the person who will take over from Mokaba.

Perhaps the most healthy aspect of the congress was that the Youth League's 14 regions – until now generally marginalised by the national leadership – came into their own. It was the regional leadership, and not the Youth League's interim national leadership, that dictated the pace of congress.

This trend is set to continue, as delegates voted that the ANCYL's full-time officials should be reduced to 15 – five office bearers and 10 additional members. The national executive committee shall comprise of these 15 officials plus 28 regional representatives – two per region.

And given that the contest for the Youth League's chair has left a bitter aftertaste among key officials, regional leaders will be forced to take responsibility for maintaining the organisation's unity in the coming year.

– *Kerry Cullinan*

Affirmative action

Race dominates

THE COMMON view of 'affirmative action' is a racial one, with little understanding of the need to redress past discrimination against women, rural people, the disabled and others. This came forth clearly at a conference on affirmative action late last year.

The idea of an affirmative action conference was first mooted at the ANC's July conference, after the heated debate about whether there should be a quota of seats for women on the NEC. It dawned on most delegates that the concept of affirmative action is barely understood. It was in this context that the ANC hosted a conference on the issue in October last year, focusing on education, public sector employment, private sector employment and entrepreneurship.

The vast majority of international guests were from the US Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, who co-sponsored the conference. Other international guests were from Norway, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Namibia, Canada, India, and Kenya.

The South African delegation comprised academics, business people, and representatives from the ANC's various national departments and Cosatu.

However, the large and rather vocal international guests tended to dominate the conference, and there was little time for adequate debate. → **(To page 5)**

Electricity

More power to the people

THE ANC hosted a two-day national meeting on the problems of electricity distribution in South Africa recently.

A representative of the electrification meeting secretariat, Paul Theron of UCT's Energy Institute, says there is an urgent need to identify obstacles and build consensus on the restructuring of the distribution sector of the electricity supply industry on a viable and non-racial basis.

Access to electricity is highly unequal in this country, he says. While there is currently a substantial excess reserve capacity on the national grid, and the Electricity Supply Commission (Eskom) produces more than 50 percent of the available capacity in the African continent, electricity is provided to the homes of only about one third of the population and to users in the developed sector of the economy.

Institutional and financial blockages in the electricity supply industry have prevented progress on electrification from being made. Crucially, Black Local Authorities (BLAs) in almost all urban areas have failed to provide a reliable or affordable service to existing consumers, he says.

Themes considered included the relationship between non-racial local government structures and future electricity distribution authorities, the lessons from international experience in electrification planning and community development finance for electrification initiatives.

Some of the organisations which attended were the National Interim Civic Conference, the Civic Association of the Southern Transvaal, Cosatu's Goods and Services Committee, Development Action Group, Rural Advice Centre and Planact.

There were also representatives present from the major city councils in the country as well as from the provincial governments of the Transvaal and the Cape.

- AIA/Zubeida Jaffer

(From page 4)

Predominantly white delegates at a recent media conference . . . affirmative action however is not just about race

A number of delegates tried to locate affirmative action within a South African context. Sadly, however, the form the conference took did not allow for such a debate to be developed.

As a member of the worker rights committee of Cosatu, which has a 'close' working relationship with the constitutional committee of the ANC, it was disappointing that we were not consulted on the direction and content of the conference. Cosatu would have argued that the issue of women ought to have a prominent place on the agenda, as well as the issue of the unemployed and the rural poor, amongst others.

As it turned out, the ANC Women's league tried frantically at the conference to address the lack of attention paid to women in the programme. It was eventually decided that all women present would make interventions in every aspect of the proceedings, which they did in an articulate and forceful way considering the circumstances.

However, Velaphi Vuyo Duba, a senior law lecturer at Fort Hare, seemed to capture the prevailing attitude when he claimed: 'The liberation of blacks goes hand in hand with the liberation of women and therefore no special emphasis will be laid on women'.

What was clear was that there were vastly differing views on affirmative action: From conceiving of affirmative action as a tool to achieve equal employment opportunities, to Anglo American insisting that their policies of employee share ownership schemes was the ideal way forward, to affirmative action being seen as part of a transformatory process.

Affirmative action is seen as addressing discrimination primarily on a racial basis, and not in terms of other criteria such as gender or rural areas.

But the debate has only just begun. Hopefully it will begin to filter down to the grassroots structures of the ANC and Cosatu. – *Desiree Daniels.*

ZAMBIA: PTA Plans a Regional Common Market

Lusaka (AIA/Mungo Tshabalala) – Africa has lost a substantial part of its share in the world market for its exports and the situation will be harder from this year following the realisation of a single European market.

So says Zambia's deputy minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Dipak Patel. Opening the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) intergovernmental commission of experts in Lusaka last month, Patel said the advantage of the African countries' exports to the EC under the Lome IV Convention was being threatened by proposals under the Uruguay round of negotiations and political events taking place in Europe.

Africa's generally poor performance during the past 10 years had been reflected in weak growth in production sectors, poor export performance, mounting debt, deteriorating social conditions and declining investment, coupled with ill-conceived and inconsistent economic planning, he said.

'Africa, especially the PTA subregion, has unexploited resources and a population that can be mobilised to make use of these resources for the benefit of people of the sub-region,' said Patel.

ZAMBIA: The Country's First President Becomes Joe Citizen

Lusaka (AIA/Mungo Tshabalala) – The United National Independence Party (UNIP) has now endorsed former Zambian president Dr Kenneth Kaunda's desire to retire as party president after 33 years at the helm.

UNIP top brass met in Lusaka for three days recently to try to salvage the party from total collapse. It was on this occasion that 67 year old Kaunda's wish was granted. The UNIP central committee also reviewed past and present circumstances and declared that from now on all posts in UNIP would be elective.

New UNIP party secretary-general, Kebby Musokotwane, who is a former prime minister and also a former Zambian high commissioner to Canada, told reporters after the meeting the UNIP congress would be held in April this year.

President Kaunda greeting Nelson Mandela in 1990. Kaunda has now decided to retire as party president after 33 years at the helm

TANZANIA: Disease, Environment Damage Rife at Hydroelectric Dam

Iringa (AIA/Lawrence Kilimwiko) – Irreversible damage to the environment has been caused by thousands of people dependent for survival on the fish they can catch in the Mtera dam, part of the great Ruaha power project which forms a nerve centre for the country's hydroelectric power grid.

The more than 600-square kilometre dam in central Tanzania was completed in 1984 in an attempt to decrease the dependency on imported fuel for the production of electric energy.

But from the start, the dam attracted an unexpected influx of fisher folk and subsistence farmers who are susceptible to a range of poverty-related diseases like cholera, typhoid, malnutrition and respiratory infections in the unplanned, mushrooming settlements where more than 10 000 people live.

The world of Babes Mabida . . .

Can Codesa deliver?

Should Codesa, as a forum loaded with government creations, be boycotted by the left, or is it our only hope for genuine democracy? DEVAN PILLAY looks at the options.

ANC delegation at Codesa

It is two years since state president FW de Klerk unbanned all political parties, and began the process towards the 'New South Africa'. Today we have Codesa, which is the 'all-party' or 'multi-party' talks first put forward by the government, and then the ANC a year ago.

Codesa brings together 19 parties. Besides the government, the National Party and the Democratic Party, three are tricameral parties, and 10 are bantustan parties. Thus 16 of the 19 parties are products of the apartheid system. But of those, at least four (DP, Labour Party, Inyandza and Transkei) support an elected constituent assembly or constitutional conference (CA) to draw up a new constitution. Therefore, if the ANC, SACP and NIC/TIC are included, then at least seven parties are committed to a constituent assembly.

These calculations, however, may not be of decisive importance. The two key players who have to come to an agreement are the National Party and the ANC. Once they agree, other parties, with a few exceptions, have so far followed suit.

Bantustan 'spoilers'

However, in what may be a sophisticated government strategy, certain bantustan parties are acting as spoilers. These include Inkatha and the Bophutatswana government, with the Ciskei and Qwa-Qwa ruling parties beginning to emerge as possible spoilers (see pages 11 and 14). So far these dissenting voices have not prevented progress.

What may emerge once key issues are debated – most notably on whether an elected CA draws up a constitution or not – is that the government will be seen to concede the CA demand, only to have it blocked by one or a chorus of bantustan parties. On the surface, then, the government would be in alliance with the ANC and its allies, against a few stubborn bantustan parties.

ANC, SACP supporters, protesting the opening of parliament outside the Rand Supreme Court – participation in Codesa has not ruled out simultaneous mass action

Such a devious move, which could also be accompanied by a dramatic rise in township violence, could put the ANC alliance in an awkward situation (and strengthen the hand of those in the alliance who are already willing to compromise).

The ANC may not be able to prove that the bantustan parties are being used by the government, so it might have to accept its *bona fides*. It could then be forced, in the interests of 'progress, peace and stability', to compromise, and give the government what it wanted in the first place – an unelected body composed of parties with unproven support, but weighted in favour of established interests, drawing up a new constitution.

Only a few weeks ago, the gap between the Nationalist Party and the ANC-led alliance was huge. The government has now conceded that an elected body should draw up a constitution, but insists that it has to be an elected interim government, which could rule for up to 10 years. Its scenario includes a referendum, in which white votes would be counted separately.

But these are merely bargaining positions. Predict- ably, the ANC has rejected such a referendum because it amounts to a white veto on constitutional progress, but has expressed 'optimism' that the government will eventually give in to an elected CA. Whether it does so with one hand and takes it away with the other depends on how effectively the ANC-led alliance uses all the tactical options at its disposal – including peaceful mass action.

Anti-Codesa front . . .

If the CA demand is met, then the Codesa route to a democratic South

Africa would be vindicated. The PAC and others would have to concede that they made a mistake in rejecting Codesa, and underestimated the ANC's ability to use the forum to force the government into meeting the key Patriotic Front demands.

But the anti-Codesa front, led by the PAC and Azapo, seem convinced that, through a 'secret deal' with the government, the ANC has already given up on the idea of an elected CA. This was part of the reason the PAC gave for walking out of Codesa (see pages 12-13).

The ANC's Mohammed Valli Moosa emphatically denies this. 'What the PAC did was to act against the spirit of the Patriotic Front', he says. 'Their conduct suggests that the walkout was a publicity stunt to gain maximum publicity'.

Moosa insists that there is 'no talk within the ANC of compromising' the CA demand. He adds: 'In fact, we are more resolute about this demand than ever before. We have not even considered a fall-back position if this demand is not met. We have to win this demand.'

Moosa points to a key weak spot of the PAC since it was unbanned. Strapped for cash, and unable to match the organised popular support of the ANC-led alliance, the PAC seems to have resorted to desperate measures to raise its public profile.

. . . has minimal support

Its 'armed struggle' amounts to no more than a few isolated attacks on black policemen. More militant members have now resorted to attacking white teachers in township schools. Its 'mass struggle' against Codesa during the opening of parliament attracted no more than a thousand people (compared to the ANC alliance's 30 000 plus on the same day).

The only 'mass action' and 'armed struggle' conducted so far by Azapo been over a 'soft' issue guaranteed to bring maximum publicity – the Paul Simon tour.

While it succeeded in getting massive publicity (contrary to their frequent complaint that the press ignores their 'struggles' in favour of the ANC), Azapo and its 'armed wing' Azanla did not manage more than a hundred demonstrators against the Simon concerts, and one minor grenade blast outside an office related to the tour.

But neither the PAC nor Azapo seem perturbed by their lack of support. Following classical 'revolutionary' (and for that matter religious) thinking, they give the impression that, as possessors of the real Truth, the masses will eventually follow them. As things stand, they are being misled by their own 'false consciousness'. As members of the PAC youth wing told the *Sunday Star* recently, 'democracy is what the oppressed masses of Azania say, and we, the PAC, *are* the oppressed masses'.

Strategic objectives

The strategy of the anti-Codesa front has at least three possible objectives:

The first possibility is that the front is slowly creating the conditions for mass insurrection against a Codesa 'sellout'. The second is that it is building up pressure outside Codesa for the CA demand to be met. The third is that these groups are (opportunistically) positioning themselves as the 'true' revolutionaries, hoping to attract potential voters away from the ANC alliance.

Azapo members protesting against the Paul Simon tour – less than 100 demonstrators showed up

The latter, is based on the premise that anti-Codesa forces will let the ANC dirty its hands in Codesa, while the front stands by to benefit if Codesa does result in a process towards an elected CA – including the crucial issues of neutralising the security forces, and 'democratising' the media (see pages 15-17).

It is very likely that, whatever their strategic objectives, the anti-Codesa front will fail. The first two options are virtually ruled out by the all-too-evident lack of mass support and organisational muscle of the parties opposed to Codesa. At most they can disrupt the political process, and achieve the same ends as their seeming opposites, the far-right – namely, the 'Lebanisation' of South Africa, with no winners, just losers.

And if the front is not seen to have done anything to bring about elections for a CA, why should the electorate vote for them?

Fighting inside and outside

As things stand, negotiating inside Codesa, while at the same time engaging in peaceful, targeted mass action, seems to be the only realistic route to an elected CA is won.

If, despite Moosa's assurances, the ANC is tempted to compromise on this key demand, then the idea of Cosatu participating in Codesa makes sense – if only to strengthen the hand of those in the ANC/SACP who are not prepared to compromise. Cosatu, after all, was the first in the alliance to put forward the demand for an elected CA.

The presence of more groups in Codesa committed to an elected CA adds that much more pressure on the government, and may be a vital element in a strategy to counter spoiling tactics by government allies.

The NUM's position against participation, as outlined by Jerry Majatladi (see page 10), is not convincing. Participation in Codesa does not have to mean union leaders abandoning their immediate consti- tuency for jobs in government.

For the Patriotic Front, Codesa is primarily about winning an interim government and a constituent assembly. Once that is won – and it can take only a few months, the unions can retreat back to their traditional areas of focus. Future involvement in the state-political arena can then be confined to assisting the ANC-led alliance in the CA elections.

The road to a constituent assembly is full of pot-holes. There is every possibility that the liberation movement will trip and fall – and never make it there.

But it is also still possible that the dangers will be averted, and that the dream of genuine and lasting peace and democracy will become a reality.

Should Cosatu be independently represented at Codesa?

There are strong differences within Cosatu over whether it is correct to apply for membership of Codesa as an independent group. RANDALL HOWARD, TGWU assistant general secretary and member of the ANC-Cosatu-SACP negotiating forum for Codesa, and JERRY MAJATLADI, NUM publicity officer and SACP member, gave GLENDA DANIELS two contrasting views

Randall Howard

Jerry Majatladi

RANDALL HOWARD

Many unionists disagreed with Cosatu's decision in December not to apply for independent representation at Codesa.

There are pros and cons to this debate. Some saw this as an unstrategic move to withdraw because of the long-term implications. The view was that the ANC did not push hard enough to for Cosatu's inclusion. It is a difficult situation. The whole question of the alliance and union independence has now come to the forefront.

Others felt that Cosatu had no role in talks and should have backed off to concentrate on macro-economic issues, to concentrate on putting real worker issues back on their agenda. At the moment Cosatu is represented on the negotiating forum (with the ANC and SACP). All decisions that are made at Codesa would have to first go through this forum.

Although I personally have a problem with Cosatu not being at Codesa as an independent partner, it is unrealistic to say that if the government does not want Cosatu there, then talks should be suspended. The NEC itself, like Cosatu, was not unanimous about this decision.

There are certain principles that for Cosatu are non-negotiable, like the demand for a constituent assembly. We currently have to direct our energy through the alliance with regard to this demand and other issues. We also firmly believe that the whole process should be open to the public, through the media. If the working group should deadlock, the deadlock should be in the public eye. This is a principle for us. It should be absolutely open to the media.

We also raised the issue of a draft constitution. Codesa is not meant to be drawing a draft constitution.

This whole thing has been a test case for Cosatu. Cosatu has never discussed what it is going to do if the ANC compromises on certain principles that we hold dear to us.

JERRY MAJATLADI

Negotiations is a strategic initiative and is about bringing power to an alliance of all classes.

We have the ANC and the SACP. The ANC represents all classes, and has a document to guide it, the Freedom Charter, which is not an ideological document. Cosatu also endorses this document.

With the SACP there is a difference. It is concerned solely with working class interests. It has an ideological basis upon which it operates, which is Marxism-Leninism.

The trade union movement is there to look into changing their members' conditions of employment and economic conditions.

The trade union movement can be schools of socialism, a place of education to raise class consciousness. Elevated from the trade union movement workers begin to join the party and begin to contest political power.

But when trade union leaders become members of parliament, then this becomes syndicalism, which is dangerous in my view. There are about 10.5 million South African working people. Say for example Cosatu represented all of them, it becomes the strongest organised force in the country – but it is not a political force.

If Cosatu won an election, the government could then consist of all the general secretaries of the different affiliates. Where does that leave the workers – leaderless!

Further, politically Cosatu does not have a programme of transforming South Africa, it would go into Codesa fumbling. And what was the criteria we used in the first place? Numbers – it does not make sense.

Worker control at production level, yes, but not at state level. There has to be a strict definition here between the trade union movement and politics. There are definite limitations to the trade union movement, strict ones. Trade unions in the world have never brought about a revolution.

All traditions and struggles are now at a critical stage, they have to be re-thought. The argument for Cosatu to be there as an independent partner – to 'give weight to the talks' holds no water because of the argument I have already outlined.

If Cosatu is included, how can you exclude Nactu and conservative white trade unions, all the different civic movements, Uwusa, cultural organisations, religious bodies, stokvels etc. Cosatu would fumble. The ANC and SACP have politicians that should be dealing with negotiations.

Why don't we see Harry Oppenheimer and Bobby Godsell at Codesa? Because big business is represented already by the National Party! ■

Bantustan leaders cosy up to ANC . . .

but not everyone is amused

A realignment of forces has taken place at Codesa, as former government 'puppets' side with the ANC-led alliance against their master. MOSITO RAPHELA takes a closer look at Qwa-Qwa's Dikwankwetla Party and the United Peoples Front of Lebowa

Against the general perception that the Dikwankwetla Party is a tribal organisation based in Qwa-Qwa, the party's general secretary, Daniel Mokoena, insists that it is a national party open to all South Africans. 'We have quite a few whites, Zulu- and Xhosa-speaking members', he says.

Mokoena claims that 'we were the first party to call for a constituent assembly'.

Convinced that Codesa is representative of the majority of the people, the party suggests that the National Party should hand over its powers to an interim government -- a key ANC demand.

But Mokoena is at pains to emphasise that the Dikwankwetla Party is composed of 'independent thinkers', and will support any party with which it agrees.

Mopedi, however, is very conscious of where the real power lies. At a cabinet meeting recently, the chief minister expressed fears that the smaller parties may be marginalised at Codesa. 'The ANC and NP have, in deed and word, become co-rulers of this country', he observed, adding that the other parties merely rubberstamp decisions that 'have already been taken behind closed doors'.

'Mopedi unrepresentative'

Beneath the gloss painted by Dikwankwetla, which was formed in 1974, is a sea of disenchantment amongst the residents of Qwa-Qwa

According to a local National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) activist, Mopedi has lost total control and support of the people.

Nelson Ramodike

Activists are angry about the way the Qwa-Qwa government treats its workers. The government-owned Qwa-Qwa Transport Corporation proudly claims that, at R710 a month, its workers are the highest paid in the bantustan. Some workers earn as little as R45 a fortnight.

Last November the workers went on strike over wages, and won the solidarity of residents. Busses ran empty, and were often escorted by police casspirs.

The strike lasted for three weeks, and ended with some workers being dismissed.

Activists also allege that Dikwankwetla's campaign in the last Qwa-Qwa elections was sponsored by Pretoria. Mopedi declined to comment.

In response to suggestions that he has little support amongst Qwa-Qwa residents, Mopedi could only say that 'there will always be those who do not agree with you'.

Mopedi is also battling to win the full support of his cabinet. It is alleged that he fell out with his cabinet following AWB leader Eugene Terreblanche's visit to the territory and rumours that Mopedi's policies on federalism were influenced by him.

Mopedi dismisses this rumour as 'nonsense'. 'We have met the NP, and other parties. In fact we were persuading the AWB leader to join Codesa', he says.

He claims that he is not aware of differences within his cabinet. Some members resigned their posts because of their business interests.

Ramodike's clones

Enter Lebowa's United People's Front (UPF), led by chief minister Nelson Ramodike, who appeared on an ANC platform last year. The UPF was formed last July.

Ramodike is ambitious, and employed questionable tactics when launching the party. He reportedly called school principals to the Chuene holiday resort to canvass the idea of the party that, he claimed, already enjoyed the blessing of the ANC.

Ramodike's ANC membership has since been suspended.

He also visited pension payout points, and pensioners were warned that if they did not sign up for the party they ran the risk of losing their payments.

Lawrence Phokanoka, head of the ANC's department of political education in the northern Transvaal, says that the ANC regional office is on 'good terms' with the UPF. However, they regard it as an ethnic organisation.

He condemns Ramodike's methods of organisation as 'politically very distasteful'

The UPF says it aims to 'conscientise, politicise and mobilise' the people towards a 'non-ethnic United States of Africa'.

But the only mobilisation in the area has been against the Ramodike administration. Recently education was almost brought to a halt when, according to a resident, teachers were not paid.

A teacher believes membership of the party is being forced on public servants. Failure to sign up, will mean losing their jobs.

The participation of parties in Codesa with little legitimacy beyond what the apartheid government has bestowed upon them, adds a touch of farce to the proceedings. The sooner there are elections to decide who really represents the people, the better. ■

The PAC walked out of the first preparatory meeting of Codesa, and vowed at its December conference to campaign against the forum. GLENDA DANIELS spoke to PAC official DIKGANG MOSENEKE about how his organisation sees Codesa.

Moseneke: there are some in the ANC who have discomfort with the idea of a constituent assembly

The PAC has alleged a 'clear pattern' of the government and the ANC supporting each other at Codesa. Can you explain?

The pattern emerged at two levels – at the preparatory meeting itself and also in the agreements that had been arrived at between the government and the ANC before this meeting.

Had it not been for our presence at the preparatory meeting, the occasion would have lasted an hour. All the proposals made by the government were seconded by the government and the tricameral and homeland leaders would follow.

The PAC would seek to raise other views on the matter, but the other parties would not be specific on matters, not even on the constituent assembly. The agenda made references to a 'constitution making body'. We asked for a subheading on the constituent assembly to make it explicit. The other representatives felt the 'constitution making body' was accommodative enough.

We sought to broaden our representation through worker representation. The ANC opposed our demand, and the government supported them. I don't know what they had agreed on behind the scenes. There was a fairly tough exchange between Barney Desai and Cyril Ramaphosa. Desai said to Ramaphosa that he expected him of all people to understand why worker representation was necessary.

What was your problem with the chairing of the preparatory meetings?

We rejected the idea of judges chairing because . . . they are appointees of the present illegitimate government. We thought, as a starting point, that the chair should rotate among parties present. We proposed this and at the very least, thought the ANC would support us because of our position in the Patriotic Front. But the ANC, the government, tricameral leaders supported the idea of the two judges chairing the meeting.

Did the PAC have problems with the name and venue of Codesa?

We wanted the name Convention for a Constituent Assembly, because the crux of the matter for us is the demand for a constituent assembly.

With the venue, we agreed that it must be neutral. By neutral we interpreted it to mean outside the country. The ANC interpreted neutral to mean inside the country but not in government offices. I suppose it could be interpreted either way.

Does the PAC believe that the ANC will drop the demand for a constituent assembly under pressure from the government?

There are some people in the ANC who have discomfort with the idea of a constituent assembly. Thabo Mbeki briefed an ambassador a few

days before the preparatory meeting, and made reference to the discomfort some people have with a constituent assembly. These people see it as an obstacle to fast constitutional changes.

We feel uncomfortable with this because it is one of our basic and minimum demands. We therefore urge all compatriots to remain faithful to this demand. The formation of Codesa is no reason to abandon this demand. I don't want to speculate further on whether the ANC will drop this demand.

What is the significance of little parties like Inyandza and Dikwankwete attending Codesa?

Firstly, they are reactionary parties. We and the ANC sought to draw them into an alliance in the Patriotic Front because it is tactically necessary to do so. It does not alter the fact that they are reactionary. There are about 17 or so of these parties, which constitute the majority of Codesa.

After Codesa, opposition parties in places like Bophuthatswana expressed their dissatisfaction over puppets like Mangope being there. He is now allowed to have a say in the future of the country and will tilt the scales in favour of the government. Rajbansi and Gatsha Buthelezi have also gone on record to oppose the constituent assembly. Codesa could be very reactionary because the majority of the participants are reactionary.

Is it not possible that these parties could move closer to the liberation movement?

If they did move closer to the liberation movement, it would be a miracle. The crunch will come when we talk of the nature of the constitution; whether it will be unitary or federal.

Was it not then a mistake, given that there are so few representatives from the liberation movement at Codesa, for the PAC to walk out?

We would have been bound by the decisions made by consensus if we had stayed. Well, do you stay and compromise completely? Time will tell whether we have made a mistake. We have seen in the past how influential working on the outside can be.

Would you have been prepared to sit down with the Conservative Party, had they had accepted the invitation to be there?

Yes, we would be prepared to sit with the CP. We stand for the transfer of power from representatives of the government to the representatives of the oppressed. In between, there are all shades but they don't hold political power.

The Patriotic Front sought to bring the real representatives together, but now there is a whole mishmash of all sorts and so we have a totally lopsided Codesa. I have doubts whether it can be changed to realise certain aspects of our demands.

What are the implications of Azapo and the PAC's lack of involvement in Codesa?

It really means we are questioning the legitimacy of the process. At present, it is only the ANC and the SACP – who represent a section of the oppressed – at Codesa. The government has all its allies there, plus the National Party and the government had three representatives each.

We thought that the PAC and ANC would stand together on issues with the government on the other side. As partners in the Patriotic Front we should have more in common with one another than with the oppressive government. We should know that we have a joint responsibility to protect the interests of the oppressed in this country. This did not happen.

From the outside, there are a whole range of ways to influence the process. Decisions taken by the ANC and the government are not final. The deal they make will only work if it is truly progressive, otherwise the people will rise against it.

What are the implications of the walkout for the Patriotic Front?

The Front is absolutely essential. It is about unity of the oppressed and should remain in place. We did not expect the relationship to be cosy all the time. We have always had criticisms of the ANC as they have had of us. We could have gone quietly into this thing and come out like lambs, getting caught up in a pre-arranged agreement. It would not have advanced the debate. Today there is a healthy debate about the way forward within the PAC and the ANC.

The walkout was said by the ANC to be a case of showpersonship and pre- planned. It was also said to be the result of the threat of a breakaway in the PAC because of the organisation's involvement in the talks. Can you respond?

There is no breakaway in the PAC. There were a few enthusiasts claiming to be PAC members that supposedly held a meeting at which about seven people attended, plus the SABC. We do not deny that hefty debate is happening in PAC structures like Paso [the Pan-African Students' Organisation], in the women's structure, in Nactu [the National Council of Trade Unions] and Azanyu [Azanian Youth Unity]. It is healthy. I would be surprised if there was no debate on the wisdom of our participating in a structure like Codesa. The allegation that we are placating our constituency has no substance.

As regards the actual walkout, it is true we walked when there were just two items left on the agenda. But by that time, we had gone through about 18 items where we had witnessed cattle voting. We could not move or persuade one way or the other.

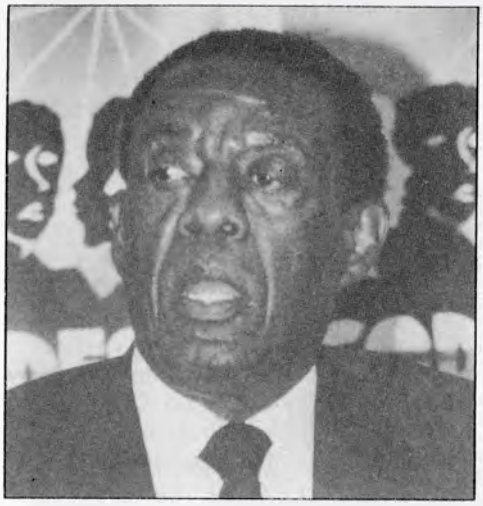
The walkout was far from pre-planned. If most of the issues we raised had received open debate, the situation might very well have been different.

Are all the issues you found problematic principled ones? Are you prepared to compromise at all for the good of negotiations?

We lost the question of the chair, the media and worker representation, but we still re- mained in the meeting. We also lost out on the dates we proposed for Codesa. It was not a case of all these issues being principled ones, but on principled issues like the constituent assembly we are not prepared to bow down. We thought we would see healthy and clear debate emerging and our disappointment was cumulative, resulting in the walkout. ■

Bop repression continues

While Codesa considers mechanisms to ensure free political activity during the transition to democracy, repression continues in the 'independent' bantustans over which the South African government claims to have no control. MBULELO MDLEDLE looks at the situation in Bophuthatswana



Lucas Mangope at Codesa

The Mafikeng Anti-repression Forum (Maref) has appealed to Codesa to ensure that there is free political expression in Bophuthatswana and that there are mechanisms for enforcing this.

The spotted bantustan, scattered all over the Transvaal and the Free State, is a land of conflicting standards and misery. Since the February 1990 unbannings – which brought a relaxation of repression in the rest of South Africa – repression has worsened in Bophuthatswana.

All opposition has been brutally stifled by president Lucas Mangope and his administrative machinery. Organisations like the Black Sash, opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP), the Transvaal Rural Action Committee (Trac) and the Bafokeng Women's Club, an organisation headed by the wife of exiled Chief Lebone Molotlegi of the Bafokeng region, are banned. The ANC is *de facto* banned as it is prevented from holding meetings and organising openly.

Systematic torture

Maref has a number of affidavits alleging systematic torture of detainees in the Mafikeng area. These are corroborated by other detainees who witnessed the beatings, which included electric shocks.

Youths have been teargassed at fundraising discos in Kuruman and then systematically beaten and even shot as they tried to escape. Vehicles of ANC supporters are stopped at roadblocks and the occupants assaulted and shot. People are also routinely picked up for wearing political T-shirts.

Allegations have also been made of attacks on village residents by vigilantes supported by the Bophuthatswana security forces. These accounts emerge particularly from Braklaagte, which has been forcefully incorporated into Bophuthatswana.

Even the foreign press have been subjected to harassment. Three Danish journalists who visited 26 hunger strikers at Bophelong Hospital in Mafikeng late last year were detained for a day.

At the time of going to press, five political prisoners had been on hunger strike since January 2. They are Timothy Phiri, serving 18 years for his involvement in the 1988 coup attempt; Petrus Mothupi, an MK operative serving 10 years for attempted murder and violations of the bantustan's notorious Internal Security Act; Andel Loureangio, also an MK operative serving four years for possession of arms; and Peter Modisane and Sipho Ramasera, both sentenced for public violence.

Bop TV is being used to promote the objectives of the ruling Christian Democratic Party and the image of Mangope. Bop TV, Radio Bop and Radio Mafikeng do give coverage to opposition groups such as the ANC, but only on issues which do not affect Bophuthatswana.

Deportations

Another weapon used by Mangope is the Security Clearance and Public Services Act which gives the president the power to terminate the services of any employee of the state, parastatals or education institutions, if such a person 'endangers or constitutes a threat to the public safety or national security or the maintenance of law and order'.

Mangope has used this act extensively to get rid of scores of his political opponents, including Dr Thabo Rangaka, a Maref executive member and superintendent of the Bophelong hospital in Mafikeng at the time of his dismissal and Dr Paul Sefularo, former deputy superintendent of the Thusong hospital outside Itsoseng.

Bophuthatswana also 'deports' South African citizens. Last year Paul Daphne, a lecturer at the university and secretary of the ANC's Mafikeng branch and Dr David Green, Maref chairperson were 'deported'. Later that year, George Madoda, a teacher in Atamelang and member of the Atamelang ANC executive, was also deported as was the wife of exiled Chief Molotlegi, who had lived in the Bafokeng area for 27 years.

Although PPP leader Rocky Malebane-Metsing has been given indemnity by the South African government, the Bophuthatswana authorities have stated that he will be arrested if he enters Bophuthatswana.

There are also a number of political trials taking place in Bophuthatswana. The majority of these are for illegal gatherings, while some are for intimidation, incitement and contravention of the Prisons Act. All of these are charges as a result of legitimate, non-violent political activity.

There is also labour legislation currently in force which prevents workers from joining trade unions affiliated to the major South African federations, Cosatu and Nactu. Employers face massive fines if they agree to recognise Cosatu and Nactu affiliates.

Media monopolies and market censorship

DEVAN PILLAY argues that, as long as the media industry remains monopolised by five companies, the 'free flow of information' which everyone professes to believe in will be nothing more than so many words on paper

As the prospect of democratic elections for a constituent assembly begins to loom, the state of the media, in particular the SABC and newspapers, assumes critical importance. Can the media industry, which is currently firmly in the hands of a few white, middle-class males, be trusted to fairly and accurately inform the public about the diversity of views within the political arena?

These issues were under detailed scrutiny at a major conference organised by the Campaign for Open Media (COM), which brought together a range of media, political and professional organisations in Cape Town recently. Its main resolution, which will be forwarded to Codesa, was that a new independent SABC board of control should be established as a matter of urgency. The conference also urged Codesa to look into ways of securing and extending press diversity in the current period.

The conference follows the publication of the ANC's draft media charter, which contains many encouraging proposals on how to democratise the media, and ensure freedom of the press during the transition to, and as part of, a democratic South Africa.

Perhaps not surprisingly, established media interests virtually ignored the COM event, and launched into scathing attacks on the ANC's charter. As former *Star* editor-in-chief Harvey Tyson admitted at the conference, while newspaper barons relish the prospect of the break-up of the SABC broadcasting monopoly, they defend with breathless audacity their right to monopolise the print media (see *Financial Mail* 17/1/92).

White, male, capitalist

South Africa is faced with a stark picture: except for Radio 702 and Capital Radio, and the entertainment channels M-Net and Bop-TV, the airwaves are controlled by and reflect the interests of the National Party government.

That much is hard to deny – although the SABC's Johan Pretorious tortuously tried to convince the COM conference that the SABC had in fact changed substantially, but no-one was prepared to acknowledge that it is now an 'independent' organisation.

The print media is not government-controlled. Aside from the media restrictions which have recently been eased, the print media is at the mercy of 'market forces'. However, contrary to what the media moguls would have us believe, it is not a 'free' market, as those who monopolise the economy, monopolise the print media. Four companies, in which the giants Anglo-American and Rembrandt have considerable interests, own almost the entire industry.

'So what?', says Times Media's Stephen Mulholland, and the *Sunday Times*' Ken Owen. The captains of industry, they tell us, may pay their salaries, but they do not tell them what to publish.

There is certainly a measure of truth in that. The nature of ownership in South Africa, and amongst the English-language press, is not as interventionist as, say, with British newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch or the late Robert Maxwell and (until perhaps recently) amongst the Afrikaans newspapers. Harry Oppenheimer is not known to breathe down the necks of his editors if he dislikes what they publish.

But the control is much more subtle – and arguably more effective. As the saying goes: Ken writes what he likes because Harry likes what Ken writes.

In other words, the owners of capital are not going to appoint an editor who does not promote certain basic issues, such as anti-sanctions, and an unregulated 'free' market. Where they have appointed men who deviated, such as Allister Sparks (*Rand Daily Mail*) and Anthony Heard (*Cape Times*), they found an excuse to either close down their newspaper, or fire them.

The *Sowetan*

But what about the *Sowetan*, South Africa's largest daily, ostensibly run by black people? Most of its reporters are either Azapo or PAC supporters, while its recently appointed assistant editor was the editor of the ANC-oriented weekly, *South*. Surely this disproves the connection between ownership and control?

Not really. The *Sowetan* operates

within the very strict constraints imposed by its owners. It is geared towards generating the maximum amount of advertising. Thus, one could almost hear them say: 'if black politics sells, then let them write about black politics – but don't let them go too far'. Thus, while the *Sowetan* may occasionally run a rambling piece by Azapo on why they believe in 'scientific socialism', you will hardly ever find a well-written, investigative piece exposing the hidden reality of exploitation in the mines or factories owned by Anglo-American.

The *Sowetan* has yet to stimulate debate and discussion on issues of crucial concern to black people, such as the constituent assembly, land redistribution, 'third force' violence, self-defence units or worker participation in industry. Given the political complexion of the newspaper's staff, one would have thought that these kinds of issues would be given at least some treatment. There is obviously more than what meets the eye . . . !

Even if the *Sowetan* was a truly independent newspaper, this would not necessarily disprove the link between ownership and control. The *Sowetan* is only one newspaper out of many owned by the Argus Group and Times Media. The important, influential newspapers that play a crucial role in shaping the perceptions of the bulk of the newspaper reading public, black and white, are in the hands of 'secure, dependable' editors.

The alternative press

The rest of the print media is comprised of a variety of local and regional newspapers, glossy magazines and the alternative press. The established magazines offer little beyond the glitter of sex, sport and scandal.

If it were not for the alternatives, information about the 'third force', and Inkatha's role in fomenting violence, for example, would still be awaiting publication. Instead, we would be at the complete mercy of occasional bouts of 'anti-communist' hysteria.

Take for example the Vula debacle in 1990, where security force information about an alleged 'communist plot' to overthrow the government was taken at face value. More recently there was the wealth tax controversy, where a one-line comment from an individual at a conference was transformed by the press into a sinister policy position of the ANC (see *WIP* 79).

The alternative press, since its re-emergence during the 1970s (with journals such as the *South African Labour Bulletin* and *Work In Progress*) and 1980s (*Weekly Mail*, *New Nation*, *Vrye Weekblad*, amongst others), has challenged the complacency of the established press, and forced them to wake up to some of the realities of South African life.

It is therefore true that the gap between the alternatives and the established press has narrowed somewhat – but there is still a huge gap.

No establishment newspaper or magazine has seriously debated gender, labour, civic, education, international, socialist and other issues, which the alternative press, particularly the magazines and journals, place emphasis on.

The alternative press, by exposing the public to a range of perspectives other than that which appears in the established media, plays a vital role in the creation of a culture of democracy in this country.

External funding

But if the print media is not to be owned and controlled by the state, does that mean that the vagaries of the market should have full sway? If so, then the alternatives will vanish quickly, once overseas funding disappears (as is likely to happen once a democratic government is in place).

As long as access to the market remains severely constrained, the alternative press cannot be financially self-sufficient. Most advertisers steer clear of the alternative press, and distribution networks, owned by those who control the media, are reluctant to distribute alternative magazines. This has been called 'market censorship'.

No publication can survive, and be effective, purely on the basis of revenue generated by sales. Advertising revenue, or outside funding (whether it be through donors, or a mother company keeping a publication afloat – as the Argus company did for the *Sowetan* for ten years) is necessary.

Without the alternative press, the reading public will once again be at the mercy of those who own and control industry – white, male capitalists.

Without a pluralistic press representing a range of interests, the fragile bud of democracy that has begun to emerge recently will find little room to breathe and grow.

It is clear, therefore, that the (not-so-free) market cannot be the sole arbiter of whether a publication survives or not. In the absence of overseas funding, a democratic state should make provision for a pluralistic press.

Media subsidy system

The ANC's proposals, in light of the scenario painted above, attempt to steer clear of state control of the media, without conceding that only the market must decide who owns what. The proposals, however, do not specify a mechanism to ensure press diversity, both during the crucial transition period, and when a democratic government is in place.

The COM conference has recommended that Codesa investigate the formation of a statutory, independent communications development trust, which could subsidise struggling alternative media, including community radio. Such a trust could be funded by the state and the media monopolies, in the interest of ensuring a diversity of ownership in the industry.

The media monopolies could also be encouraged to provide printing and distribution services at reduced rates.

The media monopolies react with scorn at the suggestion of a media subsidy (it is 'communistic', 'the market should decide' is their simple worldview). They forget that respectable capitalist democracies like Sweden, Holland and Belgium provide for a state subsidy for struggling publications.

An independent development trust could be composed of media practitioners representing the full spectrum of media interests, and operate within a set of criteria that have been agreed on after discussion involving Codesa, the alternative media and the established media.

A media subsidy system would not prop up publications with insignificant readerships, or which are badly run. The system should be oriented towards assisting those publications which have proven (or

potential) viability.

The 'democracy' of the 'unregulated' market is the 'democracy' of the jungle, where the fittest survives. This is not in the interests of the poor, down-trodden and voiceless, black and white, who have been given at least something of a voice through the alternative publications. Democracy demands that they be given a substantial voice, alongside the many other voices which have always been heard.

Even though they do not seem to realise it, this is in the long-term interests of those who wield power today. Suppressed voices find other means of expression . . . and these are not usually peaceful. ■

The ANC and the alternative media

While the ANC leadership may have the best intentions with regard to press freedom, there is no guarantee that, once in power, it will not succumb to the temptation to whip the press into line. This sense of caution arises out of two sets of experiences.

Firstly, there is the experience of journalists in the field, who encounter activists still moulded in the Stalinist conception of press freedom – you may write what you like, as long as we come out smelling like roses. Black journalists in particular are frequently threatened with physical harm by members of political parties across the spectrum – including the ANC.

We have yet to see a robust intervention by the ANC on behalf of these threatened journalists.

Secondly, there is the Janus-faced approach of the (collective) ANC leadership. On the one hand, ANC president Nelson Mandela expresses the view that the press, including the ANC-supporting press, has to be free to criticise the ANC, so that the organisation can have a mirror in which to view itself. This is a far-sighted approach to press freedom, which embraces the notion that, to echo our editorial in *WIP* 72, constructive criticism, and not blind obedience, is an act of loyalty.

But at the same time, individual members of the same ANC leadership feel 'betrayed' when they, or the ANC, are criticised by 'their' publications. It is perfectly correct for anyone who feels they were unjustly criticised, to want to reply to that criticism. No alternative publication has disputed that. But some ANC leaders are not satisfied with a right of reply.

Because they do not (yet) have state power, they cannot ban those publications that assert their independence. So they resort to threats and intimidation. For example, a senior ANC official told one of *WIP's* staff members recently: 'We are watching you!'.

Paranoia

In mitigation, given years of ANC-bashing in the media, some ANC leaders cannot at times distinguish between constructive criticism – including exposés of corruption and incompetence – and sinister attempts to undermine the ANC.

For example, one response to the recent *Vrye Weekblad* exposé of members of the ANC paying an AWB member to kill an ex-ANC/MK member, was

ANC communications chief Pallo Jordan

that it was 'another attempt to discredit the ANC'. It is at moments like these that the ANC behaves no differently from the government, or its security forces. The instinctive response is to deny and counter-accuse, rather than recognise that a publication such as *Vrye Weekblad* will not set out to embarrass the ANC for the sake of it.

WIP also had a (friendly) brush late last year with the ANC's department of information and publicity (other ANC officials were not so friendly). A (relatively minor) factual error on our part (see Editorial) encouraged the ANC to issue what must have been its first press statement criticising an alternative publication. It implied that we had been duped into carrying out the government's work of undermining the ANC.

What does this tell us about the ANC's attitude towards the press? These episodes bring to the fore the ANC's own incomplete understanding of what press freedom means in practice.

It will be a great victory for democracy when organisations fighting for democracy do not expect to be above criticism. If individuals within an organisation are corrupt or incompetent, then it is surely in the interests of the organisation that they are exposed. The best media charters or bills of rights cannot guarantee democracy. Some of the most impressive charters and codes have been trampled underfoot by corrupt and power-loving leaders.

The only institution that can empower the public to assist genuinely democratic leaders is the mass media, however imperfect it may be.

Without the media as an independent, critical force, democracy is doomed.

– *Devan Pillay* ■

Women in MK

Former MK commander and newly-elected SACP central committee member ***THENJIWE MTINTSO*** *talks to DEVAN PILLAY about her experiences as a woman in the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.*

To what extent have women participated in MK?

We can now openly admit that there has been a low percentage of women in MK structures. The reasons for this are located both within the ANC and MK, and amongst the women themselves. This issue has not been taken seriously. There has been no conscious effort by MK to recruit women. But we have to make a conscious effort, otherwise women will remain under-represented.

What specifically prevented women from reaching higher rank within MK?

When women arrived in MK camps, gender stereotypes persisted. It is true that women trained with men, but most did not stay in MK as long as men. And this is part of the problem. You develop within a camp from the rank-and-file upwards, to commander status. Very few commanders do not go through the various stages to reach their positions. So you have to spend *time* in camps to build up experience and expertise, in order to reach higher positions.

Many women were nursed in the camps. Because of the gender stereotypes, women were not made to do certain things. They were called *umzana*, which is a derogatory 'pet name' meaning 'delicate thing'. So women were often removed from camps to do secretarial jobs in military headquarters (MHQ), or at regional offices. They were not available for long-term training. You would be lucky to find, out of 60 cadres in a camp, that two were women.

Mtintso: women were often removed from camps to do secretarial work

Very few women 'made it' in terms of being sent into the country to do combat work. Those who did, or who were in forward areas, were given supportive roles to men. For example, they would house the soldiers, transport them, be couriers, or do reconnaissance work.

To what extent were women themselves responsible for their own marginalisation?

Many women saw themselves as delicate flowers, who were not supposed to endure all the rigours of camp life. So they tried to get through camp as quickly as possible.

This is partly related to women getting pregnant. There are no facilities in camps for child-bearing, so pregnant women have to be removed. In addition, when women got married, most found it difficult to strike a balance between their revolutionary obligations and their social responsibilities. There was a tendency for couples who married, especially if they had children, to move out of the camp.

Therefore, women's marginalisation is not only a problem of the ANC and MK, but also of women being victims of socialisation. They limited their role in the army. Some opted for being wives. But this was not true of all comrades who married or who bore children. A small number did remain in the camps.

There is now a sizeable amount of women in MK. There was also a sizeable amount in the 1976 detachment, but most have now fizzled out. So while as many as 15-20% of those trained in the army were women, because of the flux, the actual percentage now is much lower. At the MK conference last August, there were only 12 women out of 240 delegates.

What was your own experience like as a woman in MK?

Personally, I did not encounter any specific inhibitions. I had an advantage over most of the women in that, by the time I joined the army, I was quite old. Many were young and also not political activists when they joined.

I had already worked in ANC structures in the forward areas, so I did not feel any pressures because I was a woman. I could observe the gender problems, and was not quiet about gender issues. But during the various trainings, when you sat back and analysed yourself, you wondered whether you were given certain responsibilities in your own right, or because you were a woman. This is the negative aspect of affirmative action.

During our training, we felt that we had to perform three times more than a man. If, for example, you fell during training, the would say 'hey *mzana*, stand up' – which was belittling. For men they would say 'hey soldier', but for women they would imply that you were lazy.

But this was to be expected. The commanders were products of their socialisation, which stressed women were helpless creatures.

Were there any attempts to introduce political education and consciousness-raising on gender oppression?

In my time there were attempts. The commissars were pushing this discussion. But there were no serious attempts at an in-depth analysis of gender relations, and how to overcome the inequality beyond the camp situation.

We had women's sections in camps, and forums to make our own criticisms, and attempts at developing women soldiers. The camps reflected the problems women have with illiteracy in wider society, so we tried to upgrade women educationally and politically.

But this tended to marginalise women. It led to an attitude that women's problems had to be addressed by *'umzana'*. There were a lot of negative attitudes regarding women, because it was felt we produced friction in the camp. Because there were so few women in relation to men, they made approaches to us – yet we were seen to be causing friction amongst the men competing for the women.

Mtintso: (centre) at MK's 30th anniversary rally in December

What issues did you discuss? Did you address inter-personal relations between men and women?

To a very limited extent. We focussed on women and the struggle, where women's oppression was subsumed under national oppression. It was only recently, in 1990, that the ANC began using the slogan 'non-sexist' in its vision of a new South Africa.

Recently we began to see sexism as an issue on its own in camps. Before it was seen as divisive and reactionary to discuss or even imply that there was gender oppression in the camps. This could be the root cause of the attitudes, and why people have not changed and understood the depth of gender oppression.

The concept of triple oppression was a slogan, because we were dabbling with Marxism-Leninism, and got bogged down with class issues. Marxism-Leninism is not very clear on sexism. It tended to always be related to class.

Was it the case of class exploitation being dominant, and gender oppression secondary?

Yes, this was the view of commissars and comrades who had been to party school and so on.

So they felt that if the class question is solved, gender oppression would automatically be resolved?

Yes. Their approach was that society is divided into two main classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In a classless society there would be no stratification, and therefore all serious inequalities would be removed, because women would be participating in the economy and in all spheres of social life.

Were there any soldiers who felt that women had no place in MK?

No, I did not come across the pure traditionalist argument.

So basically most soldiers believed in 'women's liberation' according to the vague picture of what they thought was happening in 'socialist' countries?

There was also the school of thought which stressed that, because of the mere fact that we were there together, there was no discrimination between men and women in the camp. We had to channel the struggle against one common enemy; towards national liberation. They did not address the fact that issues of women do not die once liberation comes.

There were no feminist positions argued, because most soldiers viewed feminism in the negative sense, namely, that strand of feminism which sees men as the main enemy, which negates the biological being of women, which vulgarises women's oppression by burning bras, and having no children.

So those who were feminists were put on the defensive?

Well, the word feminist had a derogatory meaning. Even now, it is not yet understood, not only in the ANC, but also in Africa generally. There is no understanding that there are various trends in feminism.

But have there not been advances in the ANC Women's League on this?

Yes, but there has not been radical progress. There is still no uniform understanding in the ANCWL of feminism and the content of women's emancipation. There is still talk of 'we as mothers and wives'. To me this is indicative of a problem.

But there is an openness beginning to emerge. We are trying to get a clearer definition of these issues. In the past we only dealt with practical gender issues, such as family problems, child problems, creches, educational programmes for women etc. Strategic gender issues, about building a non-gendered society, and changing the gender roles, were not raised at all. We did not question who the head of the family should be, or the role of the father, or single parenthood rights.

These debates began to emerge in exile from around 1981, when we had a Women's Conference. In Africa generally the debate moved further after the 1985 Arusha Conference of women. So the ANC and MK have been influenced by the politics and debates in the continent. Inside the country, however, apart from a few women in the academic community and the unions, these issues were not debated by activists in women's structures, as they are now. One reason, of course, was the repression of the time. ■

Having its cake and eating it

– can the party make up its mind?

The SACP resolved at its recent congress to continue with its unique overlapping alliance with the ANC, while at the same time strive to assert an 'independent' profile in the political arena. The party also re-asserted its 'Marxist-Leninist' principles, while seeking to build a non-authoritarian socialist order. ***DEVAN PILLAY*** *asks whether the party is trying to have its cake and eat it*

The South African Communist Party is now a visible actor on the negotiations stage. It is independently represented at Codesa – indeed, as party chairperson Joe Slovo proudly told its 8th national congress last December, it was the SACP which proposed that the all-party talks be called the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa).

But has the party come out of its congress more self-assured, and with a clear vision of where it is heading, and how to get there?

Overlapping alliance

Its major problem, which was explicitly acknowledged in the organiser's congress report, was that despite the growing membership of the party, activists had no clear sense of what to do as party members, which they could not do as ANC, Cosatu or civic members.

This problem would be considerably diminished if the party maintained its underground character as a secretive, conspiratorial 'vanguard' party, with a focused mission to infiltrate and control the mass organisations (ANC, Cosatu, civics), in order to ensure the eventual realisation of its 'Marxist-Leninist' dream.

But the party leadership, beginning with Joe Slovo's major intervention *Has Socialism Failed* two years ago, has expressed a deep desire to move speedily away from past thinking and practice, and renew itself as a democratic party which seeks fundamental democratisation (in the real, not vulgar, sense) of social life.

The party has, during its 70 years of existence, represented some of the best, *and* some of the worst, in liberation politics. In *WIP* 76 (July/August 1991), we said that, in this context, the party faced three choices: to maintain its current relationship with the ANC; to become more independent; or to dissolve as a party and become a socialist 'platform' within the ANC.

At its congress, the SACP made it clear that dissolving was not even on the agenda. The party expressed a determination to carve a distinct role for itself as the transition to democracy gains momentum, while at the same time maintain its overlapping alliance with the ANC and Cosatu. It remains to be seen how this unfolds in practice.

The party also resolved to maintain its adherence to 'Marxist-Leninist' ideology – to the extent of expunging all mention of 'democratic' next to 'socialism' in its new *Manifesto* – while at the same time seeking to give it a more 'democratic' content.

The congress proceedings and the resolutions adopted represented a fascinating mix of the old and the new – the old 'Marxism-Leninism' refusing to die, and the new 'democratic socialism' struggling to be born.

Democracy in action

The congress was marked by a high level of participation by the over 400 delegates present, the majority of which were from the working class (organised workers and unemployed youth). In the presence of a large press contingent, delegates discussed and debated with a remarkable degree of freedom and openness. The level of debate was certainly much more focused, and of a higher quality, than that at the ANC's July congress.

The key debate was on whether the party should retain its adherence to 'Marxism-Leninism', and describe itself as a 'democratic socialist' party. The national leadership favoured a radical shift from the party's traditional positions, towards a greater emphasis on democracy. Communist stalwarts like Natal Midlands leader Harry Gwala, however, were concerned that the party was drifting towards 'social democracy', and dropping its Leninist principles.

Harry Gwala came first in the debate but 10th in the election

The congress, after debate, overwhelmingly rejected the qualification 'democratic', stressing that socialism is *inherently* democratic. This implied that what had passed for socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe was not really socialism, or a 'distorted' socialism. Indeed, the congress re-affirmed, in its definition of socialism, the democratic content stressed in recent years by the party leadership.

While the decision to stick to the jargon of communist orthodoxy was clearly a slap in the face for the party leadership, it did not represent a rejection of them as leaders. The delegates were merely exercising, in admirable fashion (whether you agreed with the final decisions or not) their right to differ with those in whom they place their trust as leaders.

Indeed, some of the most outspoken proponents of 'democratic socialism' were enthusiastically voted into the party leadership. At least four of the top five national officers (Hani, Slovo, Nqakula and Mhlaba), and the top eight elected onto the rest of the 30-member central committee, voted for

'democratic socialism'. Party theoretician Jeremy Cronin, one of the most articulate advocates of a fundamental revision of 'Marxism-Leninism', received the highest number of votes. The staunch defenders of orthodoxy, Natal Midlands leaders Blade Nzimande and Harry Gwala, came only ninth and tenth in the elections.

Cloudy definitions

But while the congress resolved to reaffirm the party's commitment to *'socialism'*, and not 'social democracy', a clear definition of a (non-authoritarian) socialism was not forthcoming. A central committee member, when asked after the congress about the difference between 'social democracy' and 'socialism', stumbled a bit before admitting that 'more thought and discussion still needs to take place in the party before we reach clarity on that issue'.

Delegates at the congress – only four women made it onto the central committee

The official party response is that social democracy confines itself to 'humanising' capitalism, whereas socialism (or democratic socialism) is specifically geared towards the ultimate goal of a classless society. This implies that, before that goal is reached, there will be a strong resemblance between 'the-transition-to-socialism' and 'social democracy'.

What the party still needs to address urgently is what a 'socialist' society will look like beyond the abstract generalities.

Before it was easy. Socialism was what was practised in the Soviet Union, and consisted of: a one-party state, and state control of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

But the party, in its new *Manifesto*, explicitly endorses a multi-party system of government, limited nationalisation and the empowerment of civil society institutions, including independent trade unions and civic associations.

The party states that there cannot be 'redistribution without growth'. It implies the need for export-led economic growth during the 'national democratic' phase, and a form of social contract between employers, the state and workers, through 'macro-economic bargaining', where workers 'take more of the initiative in planning and implementing a new growth strategy'.

Thus, during the transition to 'socialism', 'the capitalist sector continues to occupy a significant place' in a mixed economy. At the same time, the *Manifesto* argues, there needs to be 'a widening of economic democracy' where there is 'growing popular control over planning, production and distribution.

If this is achieved, then the economy will resemble a 'social democracy' of the Scandinavian kind. The *Manifesto* implies that 'socialism' is reached when 'institutions of popular democracy' dominate all spheres, including the political, economic, social and cultural.

In the economy this does not mean wholesale nationalisation. The *Manifesto* talks of 'state, municipal, collective, co-operative and small-scale, non-exploitative family owned enterprises'.

But how will property be transferred from the present owners, to these institutions of popular democracy? Does this mean wholesale expropriation from existing and future owners – the same owners the 'national democratic' state will rely on to help stimulate economic growth, and make the South African economy competitive on the world market? If so, will individual capitalists be banned from operating?

What implications will this have for future economic growth and the continued existence of a non-authoritarian, multi-party system of democracy? The party does not say.

Can 'socialism' be non-authoritarian?

Alternatives to social democracy, whether from a Stalinist or Trotskyist perspective, have implicit in them a strong authoritarianism: A multi-party state is a temporary phenomenon, only for the transitional period before capitalism is completely rooted out. A great deal of force will be needed to put down the capitalist rebellion which will follow the expropriation of private property – whether it has been democratically decided or not.

A variant of this view is that a multi-party system will continue, but within very strict limits. As it stands, the SACP and ANC agree that no 'racist' parties will be allowed to operate in a 'non-racial' democracy. This can be very easily extended to include 'anti-social' parties – those that advocate policies which are contrary to the 'wishes' of the 'vast majority', including 'capitalist' parties. Thus you are free to form any party of your choice, as long as it is a socialist party.

These are some of the logical directions that a desire *not* to be 'social democratic' can lead to. Indeed, sentiments of this nature were expressed by delegates at the congress, where some argued that the party should not commit itself to fight 'democratically' for socialism, as this precludes the possibility of 'class war'.

In other words, is there a non-authoritarian alternative to social democracy? If there is, the party needs to present it to the public in more concrete terms, beyond the abstract generalities that, in the end, say very little.

Authoritarian residues

While the party's congress was an impressive display of democracy, there remains a strong residue of authoritarianism within the party. This emerged in the discussions about 'democratic socialism', and it emerges also in some of the practices of individual party members.

Most on the central committee are either reborn democratic socialists, or watered down (or quiet, or confused?) Stalinists. (A prominent Numsa unionist and independent thinker, Enoch Godongwana, for example was not elected. Was he *too* independent a thinker?)

What is to be made, for example, of allegations that the party seeks to control the ANC and Cosatu; that it caucuses to ensure that its candidates always get elected to key positions?

Caucusing needn't be a bad thing. It may be argued that it is necessary to ensure that 'good' people are elected, if the motive is not narrow sectarianism, where non-party members are campaigned against simply because they are not party members.

The party's past record was abysmal. Is it very different now?

In Numsa there is apparently a party caucus which meets regularly before union meetings, to influence their outcome. Union officials (including ANC members) have expressed concern about these developments in Cosatu, because they feel it undermines union democracy. Party members will come into a meeting with a block vote, and this inhibits free discussion, they say.

In the Western Cape elections for the ANC regional executive, concern has been expressed that an SACP caucus prevented many able union leaders, who were not party members, from being elected.

These practices bear strong resemblance to practices of old, where a candidate's narrow allegiances rank higher than his or her leadership capabilities.

The party needs to be at the forefront of building a new democratic culture, as a watchdog for democracy. It should empower the people by exposing corruption, petty politicking and narrow ambitions. If it is itself guilty of such practices, then its reason for existing as a champion of the voiceless and excluded disappears.

Code of conduct

Two years ago Joe Slovo, in an interview with the *SA Labour Bulletin* (Vol 14 no 8), argued that the party needed to spearhead a campaign for a code of conduct for national leaders in the ANC and SACP. Liberation leaders should not be living it up in Houghton, while the masses continue to wallow in abject poverty, he said.

Two years later, some leaders are more than living it up – yet the party's congress did not even mention a code of conduct, let alone a campaign to popularise one. If ever there is a campaign to boost the party's profile as an independent party that is serious about promoting a culture of democratic accountability in this country, this is surely it. Yet all the party could offer its members was a campaign in support of Cuba, and a campaign against VAT and the cost-of-living (which Cosatu is already spearheading).

Given the party's current weaknesses, it is not surprising that Cosatu is nervous about allowing its political allies to represent its interests at Codesa.

The world's only growing communist party has to make up its mind – it cannot have a party, and try to eat the cake without eating it.

New leadership

The congress elected a younger central committee, with an average age of 49 years. The average age of the five national office-bearers, however, is 60.

Only four women made it onto the central committee and, surprisingly, only six unionists were elected (four of which remain active).

The national spread of the leadership is very limited. At least half of those elected onto the central committee come from, or have recently been active in, the Transvaal. Only five are from Natal, three each from the Western and Eastern Cape, and two from Border.

The central committee is highly educated. Almost half have degrees, three of which are doctorates. Ten have matric, and three reached standard eight.

The average central committee member, then is a 49-year old african male from the Transvaal, with at least a matric certificate.

NATIONAL OFFICERS:
Chris Hani (general secretary); Joe Slovo (national chairperson); Charles Nqakula (deputy general secretary); Raymond Mhlaba (deputy national chairperson) and Kay Moonsamy (treasurer).

ORDINARY MEMBERS, IN ORDER OF ELECTION:
Jeremy Cronin, Ronnie Kasrils, Chris Dlamini, Sydney Mufamadi, John Gomomo, John Nkadimeng, Billy Nair, Moses Mayekiso, Blade Nzimande, Harry Gwala, Sizakele Sigxashe, Essop Pahad, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Raymond Suttner, Jenny Schreiner, Sam Shilowa, Tony Yengeni, January Masilela, Garth Strachan, Thenjiwe Mthintso, Stan Nkosi, Brian Bunting, Govan Mbeki, Matthew Makhalima, Nozizwe Madlala. ■

Reconstruct.
Work in Progress Supplement February 1992

New beginnings: communities take control of development.

Welcome to the first edition of *Reconstruct*, which will be a regular supplement in each *Work in Progress* throughout 1992.

Reconstruct was initiated by the Urban Sector Network (USN), and will be produced by *WIP*.

The main aim of the supplement is to share information and promote debate among those working in urban development. Contributions are welcome and can be sent to:

Work in Progress, PO Box 32716, Braamfontein 2017. Telephone: (011) 403 1912 or fax (011) 403 2534.

INSIDE:

Transforming the IDT

The Independent Development Trust has come under criticism from the community based sector for failing to listen to the voice of communities. Reconstruct looks at the problems and some of the solutions being posed.

Although the formation of the IDT was initially welcomed by a wide range of organisations – including the ANC – many community-based organisations that have worked with the trust are now bitterly critical of its style and strategy.

One of the biggest criticisms being made is that the IDT is not committed to community-based development, but imposes its own view of how black people should live on communities.

Some organisations have begun to outline possible changes to the trust that would make it more acceptable to the community based sector.

The IDT approach

The IDT's approach can be summed up by a single statement of principle:
'The IDT will provide a capital subsidy for sites serviced according to predetermined specifications on the point of transfer of each serviced site to the ownership of an individual who qualifies in terms of specified criteria.'

In practice this means:

- the subsidy finances the capital component of a serviced site, not the ongoing use of that site;
- the subsidy can only be used to finance basic services predetermined by the IDT. The site size, water and sewerage connection, road system and related service systems are all standardised by the IDT, implicitly based on its vision of how and where 'blacks' should live;
- the subsidy cannot be used on a project basis, but must be awarded to an individual 'head' of a household;
- the individual 'head' of a household becomes the owner of the site, and must conform to criteria set by the IDT;
- the subsidy is transferred after construction is complete, which assumes that capital was available to finance construction in the first place;
- the subsidy is fixed at R7 500 per site and does not accrue interest between allocation and the point of transfer. The IDT accumulates the interest, which is then allocated to other projects;
- individual, private ownership is the primary, non-negotiable tenure option.

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Contradictions in the IDT's approach

In a recent memorandum the service organisation, Planact, lists 'five basic contradictions in the IDT's approach'. It gives these as follows:

The IDT's insistence on a standardised product versus community participation:
designing a standard product then insisting on community participation assumes that all communities will come to the same conclusions about what they want, irrespective of where they are located, their culture, level of knowledge and the extent of demand for sites. Community participation is only possible if the community is trusted to come up with its own policies.

The allocation of a subsidy without interest at the point of transfer versus community participation:
by allocating the subsidy without interest, the IDT is penalising the community for the time it takes to plan its project. With each month that passes, inflation reduces each R7 500 subsidy by approximately R100.

Individual ownership versus development for the poor:
by insisting on individual ownership, the sites become open to downraiding, or middle-class buy-outs. Very poor people are given assets worth R7 500, but if they cannot afford to pay monthly service charges, they can be bought out by better off residents. This could open up newly developed communities to wide scale speculation, and force the very people who fought for the land back into squatter camps. This undermines the unity of such communities who have collectively fought and negotiated for land, but have to fend for themselves once they have been allocated a site.

The non-allocation of resources for empowerment versus community participation:
the IDT insists on community participation, but has failed to allocate resources for this.

Non-racialism versus peripheral development on cheap land:
Because land costs are included in the subsidy, there is pressure to locate sites on land on the outskirts of towns and cities as this is where land is cheapest. This reinforces the structure of apartheid cities.

An alternative framework

At a recent development management course, attended by members of the ANC, civic organisations and trade unions, an alternative framework for the IDT was discussed.

One suggestion was that such an alternative should take as its starting point the following statement:

'Grassroots development institutions must be established to take delivery of funds to finance products determined in a democratic process by communities in accordance with the requirements of an appropriate framework of accountability.'

This statement has the following implications:

- it focuses on the human and institutional capacity of people to identify priorities and control development resources;
- resources for establishing appropriate grassroots development institutions and training must be made available;
- the development process is linked to the end result to ensure that money is provided for projects whose priorities have been properly determined by local communities according to their needs;
- if institutions exist on the ground, they can take delivery of development finance upfront and invest it so that the community is not penalised for planning;
- to facilitate community-determined development, a wide range of tenure options need to be available without sacrificing the security of individual beneficiaries;
- a range of creative financing mechanisms aimed at extending credit and circulating savings need to be developed to foster community control and decision-making about the development product;
- a new legal, institutional framework of accountability will be needed to ensure effective and accountable expenditure of public money;
- the role and cost of professionals involved in development will have to be assessed to ensure that their financial needs and conduct does not undermine community initiatives.

This alternative approach can only be implemented if it is linked to urban transformation generally. The restructured, democratic local authorities, in particular, could play a central role in community-based development.

Modifications of the IDT's framework

Although changes to the IDT's entire framework have to be thoroughly debated, community organisations have suggested some short-term changes to make the IDT more acceptable in the interim.

As far as increasing community participation is concerned, the IDT could put up money for development training and employing full-time development workers.

If communities were given the interest generated by their subsidy while they were planning, this would also increase participation as civic associations could explain each step of the project to their constituency without having to worry about inflation eroding their money.

Although this would mean that the IDT would have slightly less money to allocate, it would also mean that IDT sponsored projects would have a greater chance of long-term success, as they had been thoroughly planned.

More community participation in allocating sites – such as allowing 10 to 20 families to decide on allocations in their area, based on predetermined, objective criteria – could defuse this potentially explosive issue.

If tenure options were more flexible, communities could pool resources to build clinics, community halls and schools as well as developing sites. Community trusts could also be set up to guard against downraiding. And where site costs are lower than R7 500, the IDT could allow leftover money to finance projects of benefit to the wider community, such as buying more land and additional services.

The IDT could also help build community unity by providing resources for the establishment of legal bodies, such as housing clubs, to increase co-operation between family units of up to 20 families.

The IDT could also consider funding a community banking project.

Independent consultants – appointed jointly by the IDT and community organisations – could assist in evaluating all IDT projects according to a set of criteria. Not only would this ensure that projects are developing properly, but such assessments could be used to avoid the same problems repeating themselves.

While these short-term solutions are by no means exhaustive, they would begin to pave the way for more meaningful community participation, which in turn would safeguard the long-term success of the IDT's development ventures. ▲

What is the Urban Sector Network?

USN member organisations help to improve the lives of urban dwellers.

The USN which initiated *Reconstruct* – brings together Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) assisting largely urban communities throughout the country.

It was formed to share resources and ideas, co-ordinate urban development strategies and help to get resources to unserviced areas. It has 12 member organisations throughout the country.

Transvaal

In the Transvaal, the USN is made up of three organisations, all based in Johannesburg:

Co-operative Planning And Education (Cope) assists co-operatives and community businesses in the housing sector. Cope's main services include undertaking feasibility studies, project evaluations, training and information for clients. Contact no: (011) 339 6752

Planact works in the fields of housing, local government and urban development. It provides technical, professional and organisational assistance to communities adversely affected by state planning, apartheid policies and economic inequalities. Most of Planact's clients are in the PWV area. However, it has assisted organisations in areas such as the Northern, Eastern and Western Transvaal, the Orange Free State and Northern Cape. Contact no: (011) 648 9117

Proplan is based at Wits University's town planning department. It provides a research service, mainly for other development agencies, in the fields of housing, planning and the urban environment. Contact no: (011) 716 2688

Natal

Both Natal affiliates of the USN are based in Durban.

The *Built Environment Support Group* is based at the University of Natal's Faculty of Architecture and Allied Disciplines. The services it provides to democratic organisations include planning and project-based training and research. Contact no: (031) 816 2267

The *Centre For Community And Labour Studies* was formed when the Community Research Unit and the Labour and Economic Research Project merged recently. It assists communities and trade unions with research, training and projects. Its work is divided into four broad areas, namely the urban sector programme, economy and labour programme, human resource development programme and the resource centre and information dissemination programme. Contact no: (031) 309 2912

Eastern Cape and Border

Three organisations make up the USN in the Eastern Cape/Border area.

Corplan is a community-based research, planning and development organisation that was set up by civic associations involved in the East London One City campaign. It assists Border communities with technical, research and planning skills in development administration and local government. Contact no: (0431) 433 830

The *Eastern Cape Land Committee*, which is based in Port Elizabeth, focuses on urban and rural land and housing issues in the Eastern Cape. One of its main aims is to assist communities in their struggles against all forms of injustice and discrimination arising out of their relationship to the land. Contact no: (0441) 735 336.

The Port Elizabeth based *Urban Services Group* is in the process of setting itself up formally, but it has already begun to assist communities with research, technical planning, training. It was formed at the request of the Eastern Cape Civic Organisation to assist communities with issues related to town planning, local government and housing in particular. At present, a task group is drawing up a constitution for the USG. Contact no: (041) 414 690.

Western Cape

The Western Cape member organisations are all based in Cape Town.

The *Development Action Group (Dag)* offers planning and development-related services to marginalised communities in the Western Cape region, from Port Nolloth on the west coast to George on the south coast. Most of its work is focussed on the upgrading and development of squatter areas. Another major area involves educational work. Contact no: (021) 47 8567.

The *Foundation For Contemporary Research's* main focus is helping community-based organisations with research and training in local government and development issues. FCR runs a six month training course for members of community organisations, as well as shorter courses. Research is either issue-based or oriented towards formulating policy. Contact no: (021) 951 4906.

The *Surplus People's Project* works on land, local government and housing issues affecting urban and rural communities in the Western Cape, the west coast and Namaqualand. The services it offers to communities include research, paralegal advice and educational programmes. Contact no: (021) 696 8026.

The *Local Government Policy Project (Logopop)* is based at the University of the Western Cape. Contact no: (021) 959-2501.

Southern Cape

The *Southern Cape Land Committee*, which is based in George, is also a member of the USN. Although it has mainly focussed on helping rural communities, the SCLC is also involved in local government negotiations and housing.

Contact no: (0441) 73 5336 ▲

Some lessons

Through a long and intensive campaign, Wattville residents have won more land for themselves and initiated a development programme, one of the victories of which is the delivery of Tamboville to the community. KERRY CULLINAN speaks to community leader Abie Nyalunga about what this transition from resistance to development has meant for the people of Wattville.

Abie Nyalunga negotiates with Benoni councillor Denys Conradie.

Wattville is the most densely populated township on the East Rand, with over 13 people per matchbox house. No new council houses have been built in the township in 30 years. The only new houses that have been built are those by private developers, which are being sold at around R40 000. As 40 percent of all Wattville adults are unemployed and 53 percent of the community earn under R1 000 a month, these houses are way out of reach for most residents.

After repeated attempts to engage the black local authority on the question of housing through the Wattville Concerned Residents' Committee (WCRC) and mass demonstrations for more land and houses, the community decided to take the matter into their own hands.

On July 2, 1990, a piece of land south of Wattville, which was owned by the Benoni council, was occupied and named Tamboville. After ongoing discussions between the WCRC and the Benoni council, the council agreed to allocate R500 000 to developing 659 sites at Tamboville.

A Joint Technical Committee involving the Benoni and Wattville councils and their advisers and the WCRC and their advisers was set up to work out the nuts and bolts of developing Tamboville. The initial amount was renegotiated to R2-million as a 'soft loan' from the Benoni council.

The Benoni Forum, made up of the Benoni and black local authorities and civic associations in the greater Benoni area, was also set up at about the same time to look into the crisis in the provision of services, and examine setting up a single municipality.

It soon became clear that Tamboville could not accommodate all those on the housing waiting list, so a second land invasion took place. This resulted in residents being allocated land in what is now known as Tamboville Extension Two, which can accommodate 82 sites. Land investigations are now underway for the development of a third extension of some 1 000 sites.

The IDT recently agreed in principle to fund the consolidation of Tamboville and Extension Two, and indicated it was keen to establish sites at Extension Three in the second round of IDF subsidies.

Progress through participation

WCRC's chairperson, Abie Nyalunga, is a former UDF organiser in the East Rand. Although he is a seasoned and respected community organiser, Nyalunga claims no credit for the development of Tamboville. The success of the project, he insists, is due to sustained community involvement.

'I would say the most important lessons for any civic becoming involved in development projects are:

- consolidate your support and unify the community;
- make sure that decision-making starts at the lowest level. It takes time, but the community must be allowed to shape and decide its own future;
- jealously guard your victories.'

The development of Tamboville expanded the range of people the WCRC had to represent. The civic now represents those living in Wattville matchbox houses, private home owners, those living on sites in Tamboville and those are still waiting for sites.

Each of these groups has its own interests and problems. To accommodate these, the civic set up seven zones where the different areas could meet on their own to discuss problems. It also set up six sub-committees – land, finance and administration, negotiation and technical, unemployed, health and amenities – to attend to the different needs and problems.

'We also reached an understanding from the beginning that developing Wattville is a long-term thing. Their problems won't be solved overnight,' said Nyalunga.

Nyalunga also points out that, just because a person now has a home or site, their problems are not over.

'The people living in privately developed homes came to the civic after their homes started cracking. We now call that area Long Cracking Homes,

from Tamboville

and it is a zone of the civic. We have to deal with this problem, and also the post-occupancy problems in Tamboville; how to raise money to build houses and fixing taps and toilets that break.

'And everyone is still committed to getting more land. The ones who have been allocated sites will fight tooth and nail to make sure that those on the waiting list with them get sites.'

But it is possible that residents could be at loggerheads with one another. For example, said Nyalunga, after the WCRC has negotiated for the transfer of houses to individual owners, these owners could then want to evict their long-standing tenants.

'That is why we believe that development to be directed by a policy framework, so that there are guidelines about how a civic should act in different situations,' said Nyalunga.

Keeping in touch

To make sure that every resident is kept informed about developments, mass meetings are held every Wednesday. These are usually attended by 400 to 600 people out of the 35 000 strong community, and last for three hours.

'If you are have attended some meetings on behalf of the community that week and you don't report back, you will be disciplined by the meeting,' says Nyalunga.

The WCRC has also enlisted the help of service organisations to assist with the technical aspects of development. But, insists Nyalunga, this does not mean that the development of Tamboville has been taken out of the hands of the community.

'As a civic, we don't have the capacity to deal with the technical aspects of development. For example, what does water pressure mean to the end user? There an organisation like Planact informs and advises us, and by working with them and being represented on technical committees, we learn for ourselves what these things mean.

'In the long term, we want to get bursaries for promising individuals to be sent to technikons and universities, so that we are in a position to supply engineers, town clerks and the like. We are working on this and short-term training courses. There is a possibility of working with people who could be our mentors. For example the Dutch city, the Hague, has adopted us as their sister city. They may send out a town planner to work with us.'

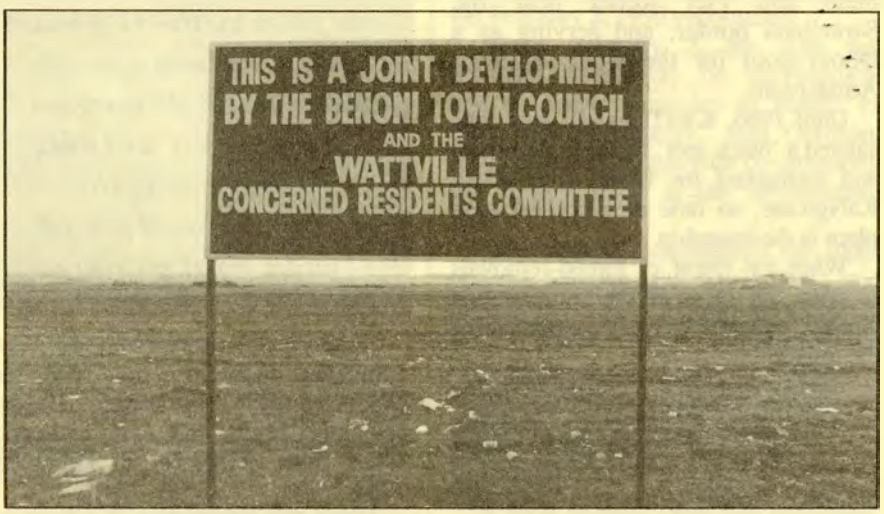
Co-option, violence and stress

Taking part in rebuilding Wattville – as opposed to the civic's past role of resisting apartheid – has taken its toll on the civic leadership and the community.

'Besides, we have made it quite clear that we are not prepared to administer apartheid. The Benoni council talks of joint administration of Wattville. We want a single city and a single municipality.'

The next step

The next phase of development involves using IDT funding made available in terms of its capital subsidy scheme to consolidate Tamboville and develop Extensions Two and Three. Negotiations between the IDT and the WCRC as to how to utilise these funds are progressing well. It seems likely that the community will win the right to control the use of this funding through a community-based development trust.



Sign of the times . . . Tamboville's construction begins.

Residents and civic activists have had to sacrifice much of their time to attend workshops and meetings. In the last few months of 1991, after each major victory, civic activists, their families and their property were attacked by gunmen the WCRC believes are connected to the state. Their family lives have suffered as a result of this danger.

In the face of these tensions, one temptation facing the WCRC is to cut down on the painstaking consultations with its members and to simply forge ahead with developments through the Benoni Forum and the Joint Technical Committee.

But while he acknowledges that civic leaders are overworked, Nyalunga does not believe that the WCRC is in danger of being co-opted.

'We are still seen as radicals by many Benoni councillors. It seems that the National Party councillors would like to go into an alliance with the Wattville councillors, who are Inkatha members and seen as moderates. But these guys don't utter a word in meetings of the Benoni Forum and they don't have support on the ground, so the Benoni councillors are forced to deal directly with us.

Civic's future

Nyalunga laughs when I ask if be and other civic members are lining themselves up to become part of the local council and its bureaucracy.

'We won't reach any permanent agreement with the local authorities until national policy has been agreed on through negotiations.

'But we think there will always be a role for the civics, even after apartheid. We don't see a situation where the civic puts up people to be elected onto the local council. One option is the Netherlands model, where the local authorities make sure that civics are formed in all areas under their control and allocates money to the civics. These civics are completely separate from the council

KwaThandeka:

A number of urban townships in the Transvaal are successfully negotiating their development with the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA). However smaller townships in the province have been less successful. One such community is KwaThandeka, a small Eastern Transvaal township lying between Ermelo and Piet Retief near the Swaziland border, and serving as a labour pool for the white town of Amsterdam.

Until 1986, KwaThandeka was considered a 'black spot' by the government and earmarked for forced removal to KaNgwane, so little development took place in the township.

When the threat of forced removals receded, the focus of the community's struggle changed to the development of the township.

Over the past five years, the residents of KwaThandeka have taken the initiative and prepared several development proposals which they have submitted to the TPA. However, the TPA has failed to respond to these proposals. Instead, it has produced its own proposals based on apartheid planning.

This calls into question whether the TPA is genuinely committed to negotiating township development with black communities, or whether it has been forced through mass protest action and publicity to heed community demands.

It would appear from the KwaThandeka experience that, when mass protests and publicity are absent, so too is the TPA's willingness to negotiate.

Successful negotiations between civic structures and the TPA have been well documented. But the experiences of small communities that have been given the cold shoulder by the TPA have generally been ignored. JOHN ABBOTT argues that the TPA will only negotiate with communities if placed under great pressure.

Community initiatives

When the KwaThandeka community was faced with the threat of forced removals, it formed a Home Committee to represent residents. This committee, together with a Youth Committee, later became the vehicle for the community's struggle for improved services.

After the black local authority attempted to increase service charges, the community embarked on a rent boycott in 1987. In August of that year, the TPA – in a bid to end the boycott – agreed to start developing KwaThandeka in consultation with residents.

The Home Committee appointed a professional engineer to help them with the township's development. Through the Legal Resources Centre (LRC), the committee raised their own funds and conducted their first survey of socio-economic needs and existing service levels from September to December, 1988.

Using this information as a basis for discussion, the committee entered into negotiations with the TPA. As a sign of their goodwill and believing that the TPA would negotiate in good faith, the community also called off the rent boycott.

The Home Committee and the Youth Committee surveyed almost all 263 occupied plots. They found that most families had been forced to build second dwellings to accommodate all their members, and that over 4 200 people lived in KwaThandeka. This was almost three times bigger than the official government figure. The average household had 9,8 members. Less than three people in each household were employed and 70 percent of all households had a monthly income of less than R500.

Nine out of ten households cultivated their plots, and 40 percent said their gardens either supplemented, or was their only, food source. Services were grossly inadequate, and found to constitute a serious health hazard.

Approaches to development planning

Following the 1988 survey, two totally different approaches to developing KwaThandeka came about: one from the community and the other from the TPA and the local black council.

The community's approach was based on its socio-economic and technical studies. It took into account the problems faced by residents: low incomes, the lack of job opportunities and the recognition that, as the area had limited growth potential, existing land resources had to be maximised.

The community also accepted responsibility for assisting farm workers who were being forcibly removed from nearby farms and resettled in KwaThandeka.

This led the community to develop a proposal based on small-scale urban agriculture and a unified plan for Amsterdam and KwaThandeka.

The TPA and its black council, on the other hand, based its plan solely on an aerial photograph of KwaThandeka. In this process, they ignored all existing site boundaries and simply assumed that there were 521 individual sites scattered randomly on 150ha of land.

Had their plan been implemented, it would have resulted in the multiple subdivision of sites with, in some cases, boundaries being drawn right through people's homes. It would also have meant the total loss of the food-growing capacity of the sites and the creation of an urban slum.

The number of sites proposed by the authorities was far in excess of that required for normal expansion and growth. It would appear therefore that the authorities' plan was actually based on a hidden agenda, namely to create a settlement for farm workers who they planned to forcibly remove from surrounding white farms.

In spite of the TPA's earlier promise to consult with residents, the first the KwaThandeka people knew of the plan was when it appeared in the Government Gazette.

The community assembled a list of objections, which they submitted to the TPA. This halted the authorities' plan but, because the TPA refuses to accept the community's proposal, a stalemate exists, and no development whatsoever is taking place.

Bona fides questioned

The TPA's attitude towards the people of KwaThandeka and their development

victim of TPA double standards

Residents are forced to add on to their homes to accommodate their families.

The TPA made promises in a bid to stop the rent boycott. Once the community had called off the boycott, it no longer had leverage over the TPA and the TPA no longer felt pressurised into developing KwaThandeka with the community's participation.

initiatives calls into question its bona fides in community negotiations.

Some sectors of the community now believe that the boycott should be resumed as evidence elsewhere indicates that, where the TPA faces sustained mass action and a high level of adverse publicity, it takes a different line. This is evident in the PWV where, in negotiations with communities organised under the Civic Associations of Southern Transvaal (Cast), the TPA professes a willingness to negotiate meaningfully to upgrade areas and develop unified structures of local government as Cast is able to mobilise mass support and publicity.

KwaThandeka's future

After the TPA's failure to respond to the community's proposals, residents formed a Planning Committee which submitted an application for funding to the Independent Development Trust (IDT). However the IDT rejected their application as KwaThandeka is not within a growth area.

At present, development in KwaThandeka can go one of two ways.

With the first option, the community can be developed along the lines of the authorities' present plan. This is a short-sighted plan, which will result in more overcrowding, reduced job opportunities, a greater strain on services and a reduced quality of life for residents.

The second option, arising from the community's proposals, is more viable and has a long-term vision. This proposes a sub-regional development plan incorporating Piet Retief, KwaThandeka-Amsterdam and southern KaNgwane – and drawing in residents, officials and the private sector.

If these communities were planned as a single, integrated, economic unit, resources could be maximised and all residents of the sub-region would benefit from the stability that would arise.

The community is currently holding discussions with a variety of parties and intends pursuing its proposal.

But ultimately projects can only be implemented through established processes. It is in this area of implementation that the TPA's negative attitude can seriously hinder, if not totally prevent, the proposal from going ahead. ▲

* *John Abbott is a civil engineer and development consultant.*

Think-tank plans policy

The National Development Forum (NDF), which has set itself up as the mass democratic movement's development think-tank, aims to have formulated policy guidelines by June.

The guidelines are currently being worked on by the forum's six sectors: the urban, rural, education, health, welfare and income-generating sectors.

According to ANC Department of Economic Planning (DEP) official Ketso Gordhan, the NDF became critical after the February 2, 1990 unbannings.

'Since February 2, the state has focussed extensively on development and economic strategies to further its own political strategy,' said Gordhan, who has been charged with co-ordinating the ANC's work in the development field.

'The state has established the Independent Development Trust (IDT) and released R1-billion from its oil stockpile for development projects. The Development Bank of SA (DBSA) has changed its orientation from homeland projects to urban development, and there have been reforms in laws governing land and local authorities.'

It soon became clear that co-ordination between Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) organisations was essential if the state's attempts to 'win legitimacy and entrench its market-oriented, product focussed, top-down approach' to development were to be opposed, says Gordhan.

The NDF was thus established in September last year, drawing together the ANC, Cosatu, civic organisations and service groups working in development.

The forum unites organisations around four basic aims:

- building a common development policy framework and strategy;
- developing guidelines for engagement and negotiations in the transitional period;
- improving on the MDM's institutional capacity at all levels to meet the challenges in the field, through measures such as building organisation and improving technical and management skills;
- building the NDF and its constituent parts, its sectors and regions, to carry forward a democratic approach to development.

'The long-term vision of the NDF – despite the strong ANC presence at present – is to establish itself as an organ of civil society,' adds Gordhan.

– Kerry Cullinan ▲

New experience in community control

A housing utility company has recently been launched by the Border Civics Congress (Bocco). Comprised of members drawn from all the sub-regions of Bocco, the company is in the process of appointing directors and soliciting funds.

The company has grown out of the civics' experiences with the IDT and existing utility companies such as Unifound. The empowerment and skills transfer that civics were seeking has not been forthcoming from any of the seven IDT funded projects in the region. However the civics have lacked the necessary expertise to go it alone on projects. This prompted the formation of a community-controlled utility company that would provide managerial and technical back-up to local civics.

Local civics have not had the capacity to set up and manage a large number of community trusts or other organisations, so it was decided to pool resources and form a regional company that could work with local civics on specific programmes. Corplan is a consultant to Bocco on the project.

The company has the following components:

- land aquisition and servicing;
- a building resource centre with training facilities, information on housing delivery programmes and a tools library;
- a bulk-buying facility for building materials;
- on-site block yards and self-help programmes;
- a small loans facility.

A utility company, or Section 21 has been chosen over other kinds of development institutions as it allows for direct accountability of the directors to the members of the company. This level of formal accountability is not possible with trusts.

The legal status and tax exempt nature of Section 21 companies is also clearly enshrined in law, whereas the status of trusts is vague and hence vulnerable. The provision of security for trustees is not necessary with a Section 21 company.

The lean, efficient management structure that can be created is attractive to funders, especially from the private sector.

Section 21 companies also have flexibility of structure, and a range of interlinking components, such as finance and development corporations, can be created. – *Corplan* ▲

Housing forum aims for official status

The newly constituted National Housing and Development Forum (NHDF) may become the official structure for formulating and implementing housing policy.

'Although the status of the forum depends on the outcome of Codesa's discussions on the formation and powers of an interim government, we do not expect the government to have veto powers over decisions taken by the forum,' said the ANC's representative to the forum, Thozamile Botha.

'The forum has been set up in this interim phase with the participation of the government and major political players, so we believe that the government must give legal effect to decisions taken in the forum.'

The NHDF is made up of four government representatives, two each from employer organisations and civic associations and one each from the ANC, PAC, Azapo, Inkatha, Cosatu and Nactu.

Development agencies have been given observer status, while the role of the Development Bank of SA (DBSA), the Independent Development Trust (IDT), organised business and Uwusa still has to be resolved.

According to Botha, the idea of such a forum came about after a meeting convened in August last year by the DBSA DBSA and the IDT to look at transforming hostels into family units.

Thozamile Botha

'A working committee to look into transforming hostels was set up. This committee agreed that it was impossible to deal with hostels without looking at a national housing policy,' said Botha.

The suggestion that a housing forum be established was unanimously accepted in November by a follow-up meeting of the broad group. This meeting also agreed that the transformation of hostels was urgent, given the potential for violence at hostels. Discussion and planning around hostels will thus continue in a sub-committee of the NHDF.

The meeting adopted guidelines for transforming hostels, which include:

- any local hostel initiatives would have to be agreed on by hostel dwellers, affected residents, hostel owners and township company administrators;
- the support of local organisations such as civics, trade unions and employers must be secured for such initiatives;
- training must be given to local people to ensure their proper participation in initiatives;
- there should be a moratorium on hostel demolition unless local community organisations involved in negotiations sanction such an action.

The meeting also agreed that not all hostels would be transfomed into family units, as single people had to be accommodated.

The sub-committee has requested a R150-million grant from the government and big business to finance the first phase of transforming the hostels.

The nuts and bolts about how the NHDF will function still have to be finalised but the key to its success lies in the government's willingness to accept that it is an equal participant in the forum, and should not have the final say.

It failed to accept this role in the National Manpower Commission (NMC) – a joint government, employer and union forum – when the manpower department tried to change decisions reached by NMC. Unless it has learnt from this experience, it will be difficult for NHDF decisions to be implemented.

- *Kerry Cullinan* ▲

Peace pacts and urban reconstruction

***MARK BYERLEY** and **DOUG HINDSON** examine two local peace pacts in Hammarsdale and Lower Umfolozi, and argue that the peace has to be built area by area and not just at a national level, if the violence is to end and development projects are to succeed.*

One reason why the National Peace Accord has been so slow to produce positive results is that none of the signatories have sufficient support from their constituencies. As has been argued elsewhere, the violence is rooted in localised power struggles over scarce resources in divided black residential communities. [1]

The parties in conflict at a local level often act independently of the national political organisations, though they may be identified with, or formally allied to, them. Similarly, elements within the repressive state forces at local level continue to operate beyond the law. In some places, the police continue to instigate violence, ally to one or other side in a confict or fail to intervene impartially to quell the violence.

For the National Peace Accord to work, it is necessary to build peace at a local level. Given the relative autonomy of local power structures, this requires that rival political bodies, as well as the police and other local agencies with an involvement in the violence, be brought to the negotiating table, area by area. Agreement on the rules of political contestation and on the role of the police and other repressive agencies has to be underpinned by agreement on steps and procedures to address the socio-economic need of divided communities.

This article examines the peace and reconstruction process in two previously violence-torn areas of Natal, Hammarsdale and the Richards Bay/Empangeni area. We describe how the peace process was initiated in the two areas. We also examine the procedures and mechanisms used in moving from the stage of negotiation between political enemies to agreement over development priorities.

Background

Hammarsdale and the adjacent black township, Mpumalanga, were created as an industrial growth point under the apartheid policy of border industrial decentralisation in the 1960s. The complex is located on the outer periphery of the Durban/Pinetown metropolitan area. Lower Umfolozi refers to the Richards Bay/Empangeni complex, including the townships of eSikhawini, eNseleni and Ngwelezana. The townships in both areas are typical apartheid constructs, built in the 1960s and 1970s as labour supply satellites for neighbouring white towns. All are located within KwaZulu to form border commuting areas from which workers and shoppers travel daily to the white industrial and commercial centres.

In the 1970s and 1980s, employment expansion in Richards Bay and Empangeni attracted a growing African workforce, but housing construction failed to keep pace. The population of the area has virtually trebled since 1970, with the result that many migrants settled, together with their families, in the tribal areas surrounding the formal black townships. Influx control in these areas became increasingly difficult to implement. The tribal authorities, far from actively seeking to curtail urbanisation, stood to benefit from the allocation of land to new settlers. In Hammarsdale, where the african population increased four fold from 1970 to 1986, a similar process has occured but in this case it has been compounded by economic decline in the 1980s.

The consequence of rapid urban settlement in these two areas was to place increasing pressure on scarce residential resources. Formal housing construction stopped in Mpumalanga in the late 1960s and in the Lower Umfolozi townships in the late 1970s. This meant that services built to cope with a limited population became overloaded.

From the mid-1980s, the problem was compounded by the growth of lower middle class housing estates within or adjacent to the townships, a process encouraged by state reforms. This was most pronounced in eSikhawini and Ngwelezana, but was also evident in Mpumalanga.

The outcome was to produce a three-way social division in which working class townships were flanked by new, relatively affluent, housing estates and burgeoning squatter settlements. This served to heighten tension around the allocation of infrastructural and other scarce residential resources.

Roots of violence

While the violence is rooted in competition over scarce resources, this competition does not automatically lead to violent conflict. The origins of the conflict in these areas are to be found in struggles between local communities and the state over such issues as rents, bus fares and township administration.

But since the mid-1980s, the violence has become increasingly internecine. The violence is most sustained where power structures develop around the allocation and control of residential resources and where competing power structures are allied to differing political organisations.

The unions established a

presence in Mpumalanga during the 1970s, yet it has been claimed that up to the mid-1980s, Inkatha dominated the township politically. The township was internally divided between, on the one hand, trade union and UDF dominated areas, and on the other, Inkatha dominated areas. It would appear that this resulted in the UDF (later ANC) grouping successfully capturing most of the formal township and Inkatha largely retreating into the adjacent squatter areas. The result was the creation of war zones; a residential geography of political divisions.

The situation in Lower Umfolozi differs in important respects. Here the UDF/ANC have been unable to attain a hegemonic presence in the townships. Inkatha tends to dominate the area and attempts by the ANC to expand its organisational base are constantly thwarted. Politically and historically, the area has been dominated by Inkatha and traditionalists in the form of the Amakhosi. From the early 1980s, however, the trade unions began organising the industrial labour force in the region, with considerable success. The divide between Inkatha and the unions was sharpened by a local bus boycott in 1985 and by the launch of the Inkatha trade union, Uwusa, in 1986.

More recently, the ANC sought to organise in the townships but has met with opposition from Inkatha. This resulted in conflict breaking out, especially in eNseleni, but also in eSikhawini and Ngwelezana. This led to the formation of residential political turfs. The unions and the ANC have their strongest support in eSikhawini, though their position remains tenuous. Ngwelezana is a heavily contested area, while Inkatha is dominant in eNseleni, the squatter areas and the rural peripheries.

Despite the extensive conflict experienced in both Mpumalanga and Lower Umfolozi, local peace accords emanating from these areas give reason for some optimism about the future. It is to an examination of these peace accords that we now turn.

The peace initiatives

Decisive in the whole peace process is the involvement of some independent individual or body acceptable to the warring parties.

In our examples, it was management, but church groups or other impartial bodies can play a similar role. These bodies have to be trusted by all – or most – of the key parties in the conflict, commit themselves to the peace process, become deeply involved in it, and remain consistently impartial. Furthermore, they must have a sound knowledge of local conditions and personalities.

In both our examples, local unions initially approached Inkatha to embark on a joint peace process, but were rebuffed. They then turned to management and sought from them the role of facilitator. Management went independently to both warring groups. Each side was asked to draw up a list of grievances for meeting. When these items were consolidated it became clear that there was considerable overlap between the warring groups; they shared many of the same interests and concerns arising out of the violence. This made it far easier to gain acceptance of the agenda for the first meeting.

Inkatha'a Gatsha Buthelezi and the ANC's Nelson Mandela: their historic meeting a year ago did not stop the violence

Management and the unions were the first to take active steps to end the violence, possibly because they shared an interest in reducing the consequent disruption to productive activities in their areas. For other groups such as the unemployed, youth, tribal authorities, political parties, security forces, local authorities and so on, it has been more difficult to stand aside from the violence. For these parties and groups, peace may have seemed less urgent, or even to have posed a threat to their ambitions in an area. However, their inclusion in the peace process has proved critical. Where this does not occur, the potential for disruption and renewed violence remains high.

The interests of township youth and the unemployed in violence appears to shift over time, depending on perceptions of the balance of power in an area. If the opposing forces are seen to be on the defensive, they may opt to continue to use violence to achieve political ends. Likewise, if they perceive themselves to be on the losing side they are more likely to pursue a negotiated settlement. The challenge faced by the initiators or facilitators is to get these groups to accept that violence is not in their long term interests.

The role of key local personalities can be important. In Mpumalanga, two leaders from opposing sides were seen publicly making friends and interacting socially. This facilitated social contact, which in turn helped to build trust and cement local peace negotiations.

The timing and pacing of the peace process may be critical. If the competing parties still think they can win by means of force, the prospects for peace remain weak. The whole process has to be sufficiently drawn out to ensure that all affected parties are supportive and committed to peace. If it is rushed, key actors may feel excluded and there may be insufficient time for a peace agreement to gain grassroots support.

The fragility of the peace in the Richards Bay/Empangeni area may be related to the speed with which an agreement was reached. The parties were brought together over a matter of weeks. One of the mistakes made was to exclude the tribal authorities and KwaZulu MPs, who then felt under no obligation to abide by the agreement.

Linking peace and development

Political conflict in the black residential areas we have examined has brought existing urban planning and development projects virtually to a standstill. It is not surprising to find that attempts to

introduce development into conflict-ridden black residential areas or areas that have a potential for conflict, often become catalysts for violence rather than the means of resolving problems.

Resources introduced into black residential areas through urban development programmes often become a focus for intense competition. Infrastructural development such as road construction or the laying of sewerage or water lines threatens to dislodge some people and benefit others. The minor variations in advantage and access between residential groups may then become the basis for inter-communal conflict.

Inkatha's Frank Mdlalose (centre) and the ANC's John Nkadimeng visit Mpumalanga

In the Hammarsdale Peace Accord, there was a more explicit focus on the development of the area than in Lower Umfolozi. What development meant, in the first instance, was addressing the material destruction that occurred as a result of the violence. One problem was to rebuild houses destroyed in the violence. Another – especially important in Hammarsdale – is the re-allocation of houses occupied by people from the 'enemy' camp.

In Lower Umfolozi, part of the agreement was that refugees from eNseleni township should be allowed to return to their houses, but this essential first step has not yet been taken (late 1991). The only explicit developmental goal expressed in the Lower Umfolozi Peace Accord was the rehabilitation of refugees in their own towns. The ongoing violence in the area has made this difficult.

Credible mechanisms

For a peace agreement to hold, one critical factor is the establishment of a credible mechanism to ensure that the terms of the peace agreement are upheld. The absence of such mechanisms, or the delay in constituting them, appears to be one of the major factors preventing the peace agreement from becoming effective.

Local development planning clearly needs to go beyond merely rebuilding houses and repairing the damage brought about by the violence. In Mpumalanga, people involved in the peace initiative identified items of collective consumption, community resources such as schools and recreational facilities, as priorities for development. In addition, it was argued that the development process should include training and employment of local labour as this addresses immediate needs and creates the basis for future employment and development.

It is very important how the development needs are prioritised and which individuals and groups are given attention, and in what order. Where one group – for example, refugee squatters who have lost their homes to others – is neglected or feels that they have not been given priority in the reconstruction process, this may lead to further tension and outbreaks of violence.

The best way of ensuring that there is not a relapse into conflict is to build structures which ensure that the agreements over the development process are realized. These structures would have to deal with conflicting claims and disputes relating to the reconstruction process.

The structures that are put in place to bring about peace in an area may not be appropriate when it comes to implementing the development process. The difficulty with the peace structures is that they bring together competing political groups whose power in part depends upon their capacity to deliver resources to their constituencies. If these political groupings remain directly involved in the re-deployment of resouces within a development process, there is the potential for political competition to degenerate into violence over resource control and allocation.

There is a very real problem with the establishment of a development committee in a previously divided community. On the one hand it is essential, if that committee is to operate effectively, that it has a degree of autonomy and latitude in its function. On the other hand, precisely because the community has been so heavily divided and conflict ridden, the parties in the conflict will insist upon representation within that committee to ensure that their interests and those of their constituencies are seen to.

At some stage there has to be a separation of party politics from urban reconstruction and between party politics and the administration and management of urban development.

Peace must precede development

Where communities have been torn apart by political violence or where there is potential for violence, it is necessary to tackle the politics of violence first including the issue of security force partiality. Agreement amongst the different political groups should include an understanding about residential development. In other words, it is not merely violence that has to be tackled, but also the material needs and divisions which underpin the violence.

The lesson from Hammarsdale and the Richard's Bay/Empangeni areas is that peace must precede development and development is needed to consolidate the peace. The process must take place area by area and not just at a national level. ■

(1) M Morris and D Hindson, 'Political Violence and Urban Reconstruction in South Africa' Working Paper 3, Economic Trends Project, University of Cape Town, 1991.

* *Doug Hindson and Mark Byerly are based at the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Durban-Westville.*

World Women's Congress for a healthy planet

The predominant focus of the recent World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet in Miami – which brought together over 1 000 women from 90 different countries – was on the linkages between environmental degradation and the global economic crisis.

JACKLYN COCK REPORTS

In the major sessions, a panel of five women judges heard testimony on the growing gap between North and South and the devastating environmental implications of world debt.

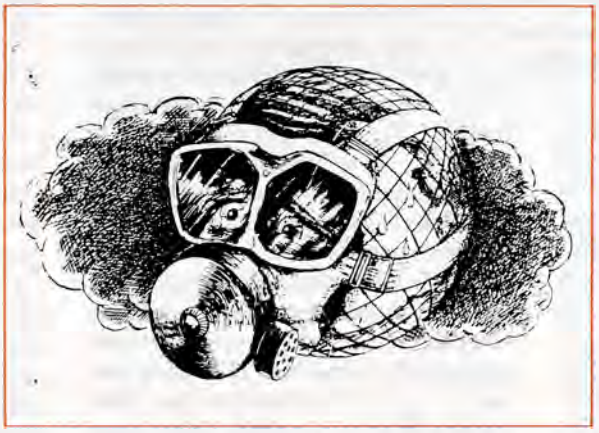
Environmental issues were also directly linked to struggles around human rights. Dr Vandana Shiva, who works with India's Chipko movement – the best known example of women protesting against forest destruction – maintained that 'the real issue is one of rights. Unless people have a right to resources, they cannot conserve them, and those rights have been denied since colonial times'. The general consensus was that a healthy planet involves fundamental change to achieve human rights and a more just economic order.

The congress also exploded a powerful myth in the modern world: that the military protects and defends us. As Rosalie Bertell from the Toronto based International Institute of concern for Public Health said: 'It is the military who are destroying the earth' in the name of 'national security'. The main sources of environmental destruction are the 'smart bombs', chemicals, pesticides and defoliants created for the Vietnam War, not aerosol deodorants, she asserted.

According to Bertell, who is a medical doctor specialising in environment-related cancer and birth defects, since 1945 about 1 900 nuclear bombs have been exploded both in the atmosphere and underground. The explosive force of these tests totals about 40 000 times the force of the Hiroshima bombs. Bertell blames the military for the greenhouse effect and global warming. She said 'these weapons were designed to destroy food, drinking water, jungle foliage and air . . . The research and development involved meant that between 70 000 and 100 000 new toxic chemicals were introduced into the air, water and land globally)'.

The congress insisted that the end of the Cold War did not necessarily mean that our planet is a safer place. The threat of nuclear proliferation is deepening as 24 third world countries will have acquired ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons by the end of the century.

The congress demanded that all nuclear weapons be dismantled and destroyed and that nuclear testing cease immediately. It also urged an immediate 50% reduction in military expenditure, that military activities should be open to public scrutiny and national armies should be converted into environmental protection units to monitor and repair damage to natural systems.



The action agenda, which was presented to United Nations officials at the end of the congress, drew attention to 'the disastrous environmental impact of *all* military activity, including research, development, production of weaponry, testing manoeuvres, presence of military bases, disposal of toxic materials.'

It was suggested that women support the recommendations of a report by a UN study group on potential uses of military resources to protect the environment. This proposed developing mechanisms for transferring some of the world's vast military resources to environmental protection and development programmes.

Some possibilities include:

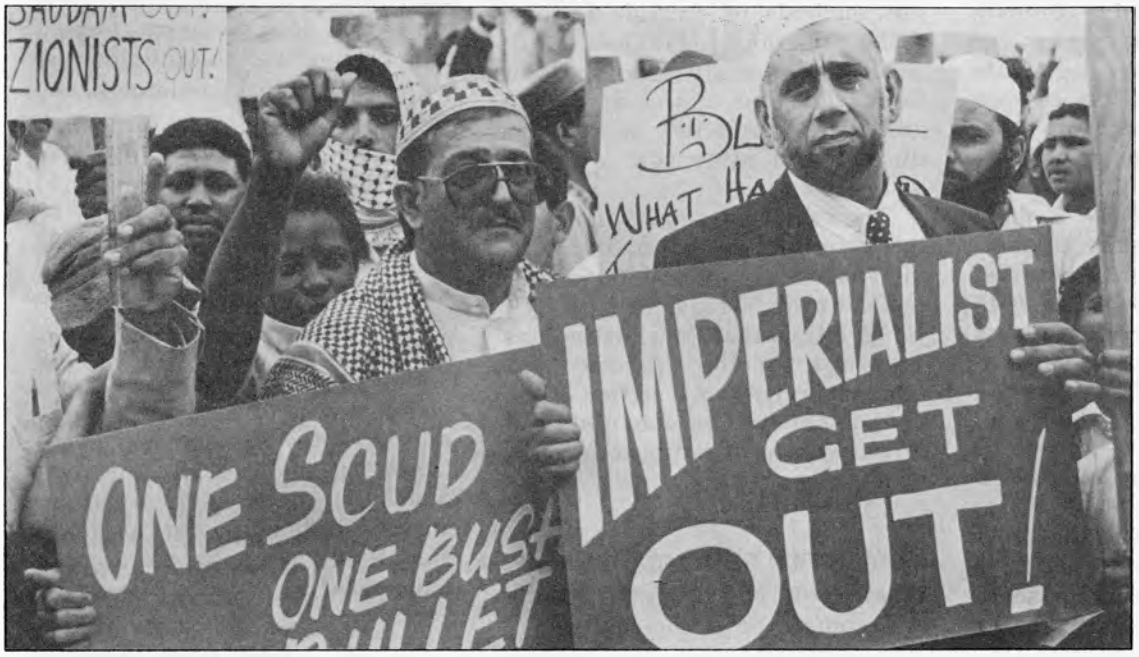
- using military-related satellites and other information-gathering systems for global monitoring and sharing of environmental data;
- creating UN international environment disaster relief teams that would rush to the scene of environmental disasters to provide emergency assistance, measure damage and also help with enforcement of treaty provisions;
- governments integrating the aims of environmental preservation and sustainable development into their concepts of security.'

The resolution which drew the loudest applause was that: 'We will educate our daughters and sons to shun military service if it is in the service of governments which use military power to exploit the resources and peoples of other nations.'

Peggy Antroubus, Director of the Women and Development Unit at the University of Barbados, stressed that while women were cleaning up the environmental mess at the local level, they were largely excluded from the institutions which created the mess in the first place. The congress participants thus resolved that all decision making bodies should be made up of 'no more 60% and no less than 40% membership of either sex'.

Despite many international conferences and meetings, the gap between the overdeveloped North and the impoverished South has widened and the position of women in the South worsened. The crucial question is whether the Miami conference and the 1992 Brazil Earth Summit can help to reverse this tragic trend. ■

Muslims are becoming a political force



South African Muslims are asserting themselves politically

ZUBEIDA JAFFER reports –
Islam would reflect a major ideological grouping in South Africa if the Muslim community were to be united under one leadership.

With close to one million Muslims in this country of about 40 million people, such a formation would be larger than any other existing political party and could therefore have an impact on the entire liberation process, says Qibla leader Imam Achmad Cassiem.

Cassiem – a former Robben Islander – has committed himself to work towards the establishment of a supreme council for Southern Africa to bring about such unity.

'It could be called by any other name,' says the Imam. 'But such a council would bring about, reflect and maintain the unity of all the Muslims in this country.'

For him, such a formation would mean that the strength in numbers of the Muslims, their financial resources and their military capabilities would be consolidated.

Fighting 'obligatory'

'The moment a person embraces Islam, fighting becomes obligatory. Under what conditions and when to fight, depends on the leadership. But if a supreme council is established, the spin-offs of that unity will have an immediate impact,' he says.

When such a formation would come off the ground, however, is difficult to say.

'Those who are opposing it are already getting their swords sharpened since they would not like us to succeed,' says Cassiem.

Efforts to bring about unity are being made in obedience to the Islamic command 'not to be disunited and divided amongst yourselves'.

Adds the Imam: 'We are not doing this out of political expediency. We are saying to Muslims they have a personal obligation to unite. If needs be they must unite over the heads of the ulema (traditional leaders) who have been dividing the masses and have been dividing themselves for all this time.'

Despite efforts by the state to prove a link between his organisation and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) during his trial in 1988, Cassiem insists he is not aligned to any political party.

At the time, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for 'terrorism' in terms of the infamous security laws of this country.

On February 22 1991, he was released on R5 000 bail pending an appeal against his sentence.

His bail conditions stipulate that he cannot speak on behalf of the PAC or Qibla. He also has to report to a police station once a week and may not travel further than 100 kilometres from his home without police permission.

Prior to his most recent term of imprisonment, the Imam served 10 years on Robben Island after which he had two five-year banning orders slapped on him.

Against negotiated settlement

He remains committed to the establishment of a just social order in this country and has serious reservations about the present efforts to reach a negotiated settlement.

'From the Islamic viewpoint, our minimum and maximum demand is for a just social order. If people are going to sacrifice their lives to attain the scrapping of apartheid, we say it is merely removing the symptoms of colonialism and not removing colonialism itself. We

find this untenable. At this moment the trend is towards replacing racist fascism with multi-racial fascism,' he says.

He considers the call for an all-party conference to be tantamount to saying that all races will be welcome. What he would rather see is the convening of a conference of the oppressed to work out a common strategy to confront the oppressors.

'But unless our legitimate demands are backed up by our right to self-defence, all those other demands will be rendered impotent,' he says.

Cassiem says this is not propagating violence but counter-violence. In his view, the oppressed are 'going like sacrificial lambs to the slaughter'. He can see no reason for the suspension of the armed struggle at a time when state and criminal violence are in the ascendancy.

'There should be an intensification of revolutionary violence to counter and stamp out the other forms of violence. Muslims have contributed in the ideological sense the concept of Jihad which means that they exert themselves to the utmost in order to attain a just social order and therefore would have no truck with compromise with the enemy. For them every day is a good day to die – to achieve martyrdom is to achieve a victory. We are not talking at all of suspending the armed struggle, of calling off our methods of struggle because that is prescribed in the Quran.'

This is especially important at a time when the oppressed people are being massacred in a co-ordinated and systematic way, he adds.

'The role of the security forces in this is quite self-evident. To blame the violence on political intolerance is a half-truth,' he says.

At a time that the situation has worsened for the oppressed, he finds it strange that a section of the liberation movement sees it fit to sit down with an illegitimate government.

Conference of the oppressed

What would he put on the agenda at a conference of the oppressed?

'We first have to deracialise our thinking. We also have to create a 100 % literate community – 80 % are illiterate presently. We need to strive for unity on the basis of what we wish to achieve and not just on the basis of what we are against. We must avoid being prescriptive. Once we get to a round-table conference, each sector can present their perspective. The solution will come out of that conference,' he says.

The first objective for Cassiem, however, is to bring an end to division among South Africa Muslims. While he harbours no illusions about the difficulties that lie ahead, he believes such unity is essential to bring about a just social order.

'If we are convinced about the Quran being the absolute truth, and we live on the basis that every day is a good day to learn and every day is a good day to die, then certainly there will arise a strong enough leadership and a strong enough following to execute the demands of the situation,' he says.

Muslims and Robben Island

A hazy green and gold light filters through the incense-filled room. The heavy red drapes fall around the tomb built over the grave of Hadji Matarim, an Arab sheikh exiled to Robben Island by an Indonesian Sultan in 1744.

The kramat stands at the far corner of the infamous Robben Island Maximum Security Prison. It is a simple square building built from local 'leikklip' with a green dome and four miniature domes at the corners.

Standing at the kramat, I can see the entire prison – starting with the look-out posts, the high barbed wire fences, the playing fields and finally the cell area. And beyond, in all its majesty, lies Table Mountain, just 11 kilometres away.

I have wandered away from the visiting group of journalists to see what I can of the kramat. It is locked but a broken window-pane allows me to connect with the greatness contained within those walls.

When the touring bus passed the kramat earlier, the guide from the Department of Correctional Services informed the visiting foreign journalists that this was a shrine of a priest who had been brought to the Island to 'minister to the Malays'.

This is a complete distortion of fact. The hadji had been a political exile and had died on Robben Island in 1755. And he was not the only one. Behind the kramat is a small walled-in area containing two headstones believed to be the graves of other Muslims exiled from the east. The body of one such exile, Pangerau Chakra Deningrat, who was the Prince of Madura, was returned to Indonesia after he died on the island in 1754.

Here lies a history to be reclaimed – a history to be relearnt to become an integral part of the Muslim and South African community at large.

That kramat represents for me not only spiritual greatness but the physical pain of slavery, of colonialism, of violence, of life in exile.

Just 11 kilometres from the Cape mainland, there lies more than just an infamous maximum prison where people were made to suffer for opposing apartheid. Right alongside it, there is a monument, a shrine that should be a sharp reminder to Muslims that their known connection with this island stretches back to the 18th century.

With the changing political scenario, the time has come to reclaim Robben Island.

- Zubeida Jaffer

Muslims get recognition in Malawi

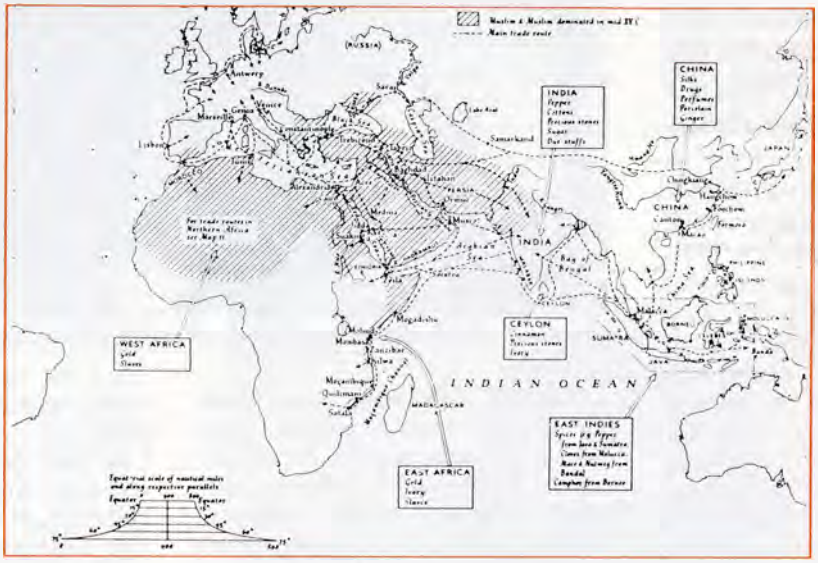
By FELIX MPONDA (AIA)

'It is no longer a shame to be a Muslim in Malawi,' says the Muslim Association of Malawi's executive secretary, Ebrahim Milanzi.

Milanzi is one of a young breed of Muslims in this Christian-dominated country fighting to maintain the dignity and image of the Islamic faith after many decades of it having been regarded as a shameful and backward religion.

In the past, Muslims were called *anasala*, a derogatory term meaning backwardness. Today, there has been a marked turn around in attitudes towards this religion.

Concedes Malawi's Muslim leader Sheikh Hussein Mwalabu: 'Muslims have now gained a respectable place because there are educated Muslims in almost every field, unlike in the past when lack of education hindered them from participating in national development.'



The spread of Islam down the East coast of Africa during the 15th century

Islam was the first religion to blaze a trail of conquest in this country. It arrived with the Arabs during the ivory and slave trade era.

'Islam wasn't well developed until recently,' Milanzi said. He believes Christianity, which came to Malawi much later, overtook Islam in popularity because 'Christianity came well developed, with trade and education systems'.

It was not until the 1940s that Muslims came together to form an organisation of their own aimed at safeguarding the interests of the religion. In 1957, the faith was officially registered with the colonial government.

But with no educational facilities of their own, Muslims still remained uneducated as parents feared sending their children to Christian-controlled schools in case they would be converted – a school requirement at that time.

With independence in 1964, the government started encouraging Muslim parents to send their children to school, with the agreement that they would not be forced to convert.

The turning point

According to Milanzi, the turning point for the religion came in the late 1970s when the association formed a youth committee which comprised a number of highly educated Muslims.

'The youth committee set things in motion. It started to be responsive and more open to the needs of the religion. It started seeking financial assistance for charity work, building new mosques and educating the Muslim community through offering bursaries to needy students and improving some schools belonging to the association.'

A magnificent mosque, believed to be the only one of such grandeur in the Southern Africa region and which cost over R1-million, is a showpiece of architectural design in Blantyre's 'Asian city' of Limbe. More modern mosques have mushroomed throughout the countryside, underlining the fact that Islam is very much alive and kicking.

According to Milanzi, there are now 80 new mosques, most of them built with assistance from the Kuwait-based African Muslim Agency, which provides 70% of the money needed to promote the faith in Malawi.

A secondary school offering Islamic and secular education and catering exclusively for Muslim students with expatriate teachers from Sudan, India, Egypt and Somalia, opened its doors a few years ago.

Those who excel there are sent abroad for professional courses in medicine and engineering. Under the sponsorship of the Islamic Development Bank, there are now 15 Malawian Muslims studying in Pakistan and Turkey in the two fields, with the first two graduates expected home later this year.

Strong following

Milanzi, who has been executive secretary of the Muslim Association for the past five years, estimates there are about two million Muslims in this nation of eight million people.

'The attraction with Islam is that it is strong on monotheism (the worship of one God) like Judaism and Christianity. Our approach to our religion is different from others. There is a strong spirit of brotherhood and uniformity of prayers all over the world.'

Is the choice and freedom to marry a maximum of four wives still an added attraction to join Islam in Malawi?

Milanzi dismisses this notion, and says most good Muslims are monogamous. 'The burden is big in terms of obligations when one marries four wives because Islam demands that the four wives must be treated equally. When you consider the economic implications, it no longer becomes attractive to marry four wives.

'Islam as a religion has really grown big and is respected in that we are treated as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which can contribute to national development,' Milanzi concluded. ■

Zambian Muslims expect harassment after Chiluba's speech

By MUNGO TSHABALALA (AIA)

A religious war of words is raging here in Zambia between Muslims and the government over the latter's declaration late last year that Zambia is a Christian nation.

Zambia's President, Frederick Chiluba, made the controversial declaration on December 29 1991, when he addressed a gathering at State House in Lusaka.

At this gathering, Chiluba read the Movement for Multiparty Democracy's (MMD's) manifesto, which calls Zambia a Christian country 'tolerant of other religions'.

Later, at the same gathering, Chiluba again declared Zambia a Christian country, to loud applause from scores of Christians who attended.

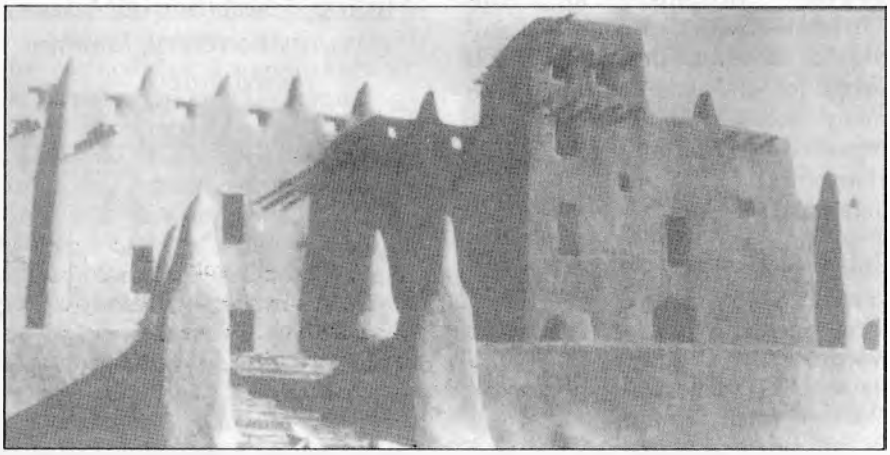
Muslims in Zambia were outraged by the president's comments, coming hot on the heels of the banning of Muslim radio programmes by the minister of information and broadcasting, Stan Kristafor. This ban has subsequently been rescinded after clarification from vice-president Levy Mwanawasa that Muslims have been guaranteed freedom of worship in terms of the constitution.

Clarity required

But with Chiluba's post-Christmas declaration, Muslims have asked the government to clarify its position.

Led by their organisation – the United Islamic Organisation (UIO), which is a co-ordinating body of Muslim groups in the country – the Muslims say that while 'the constitution provides for freedom of worship and protection of religious minorities, we feel the president should confirm this once again and make it clear to guard against smaller religions being harassed'.

The UIO observed that Zambia might be a predominantly Christian country but said other religions had a right to exist and that there should be universal consideration.



Mosque showing the amalgamation of Islam with indigenous African culture

The Muslims have been supported by many people here, including some newspapers. Two Lusaka residents for instance, both MMD members, feel the action to declare Zambia a Christian nation was unconstitutional and urged President Chiluba to leave religious matters to the Church.

The two argue that the Republican Constitution does not say Zambians must tolerate all religions but that 'there should be freedom of worship'.

'Tolerance and freedom of worship do not mean the same thing,' they say.

And in its editorial comment the *Times of Zambia* newspaper asked: '. . . but why should declarations about Zambia's being a Christian country come from State House, and are these the kind of declarations that need to be made now?

'Zambia is an African country and to label it Christian is a delusion,' added the *Times*.

The newspaper added Christianity is alien, brought to Zambia by people who labelled as 'evil' every aspect of African civilisation, and that it is peddled mainly by hysterical pastors who warn of 'fire and brimstone' but line their pockets at every turn.

'The right place for these people to make their apologies and thank the Lord for the bounty, is the pulpit and that is exactly where they should be – and not on the lawns of State House,' the *Times* advised.

Says another independent paper, the *Weekly Post*: 'President Chiluba could have set a dangerous precedent by declaring Zambia a Christian nation. The President effectively implied that a head of state can, at a whim, turn his beliefs into a national religion.'

The paper asked: 'Do leaders have the moral superiority to decide what religions are most suitable for the people?'

Church welcomes declaration

But President Chiluba's declaration was warmly received by some churches.

In Kitwe, a mining city on the Copperbelt province for instance, the Apostolic Council of Churches even warned that the government's tolerance of other religions besides Christianity should be monitored closely because some religious forces might take advantage and disrupt peace in the nation.

Council chairperson Reverend Paul Mutunda says some 'fanatical' groups are likely to take advantage of prevailing freedom of worship to confuse Christians – and he has singled out followers of Islam.

Mutunda adds that 'since Zambia has been declared Christian, Muslims should be given little chance of collaborating with local people.

As the religious war of words continues, it will take either Parliament to solve the matter once and for all, or the President's clarification of his earlier declaration if an ugly religious confrontation is to be avoided. ■

Gandhi, Nehru and Indian communism

SITHARAM YECHURY, a member of the secretariat of the central committee of the Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPI-M), attended the SACP's national congress last December. DEVAN PILLAY spoke to him about the rise of communism in India, and why his party believes that socialism is only possible through the expansion of capitalism

While communist parties are on the retreat in most of the world, interest in socialist ideas and South Africa's communist party has increased. Little, however, is known about the communist or leftwing parties in India, which as the Left Front coalition, retains power in the eastern state of West Bengal, and at the last election lost power in the southern state of Kerala by 1% of the vote. The Left Front is composed of the Communist Party of India (CPI), the CPI-M, which split from it in 1964, the All-India Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP). In part two of this interview (see *WIP* 81), Yechury will talk about the relative strength of the different leftwing parties, what the Left in power means in India, and why there is so much poverty in the cities, amongst other things.

What makes the south and east of India the strongest areas of communist support?

The most important are the socio-historical factors. Bengal has always been in the forefront of the anti-imperialist movement, since the beginning of the century. The first stirrings against the British began in Bengal in 1905.

Secondly, unlike other parts of India, Bengal also had a strong social reform movement, which fought essentially against the caste system, the rigid divisions of Hindu society.

Calcutta was also the capital of the British Raj from 1757 to 1857, before it shifted to Delhi. It was British India which brought in capitalism to India, and Calcutta was the capitalist centre of British India for almost a century.

So the foundations of a modern working class in India lay in Bengal.

Mahatma Gandhi: while he could bring the masses onto the field, into political action, he could also stop their militancy

During partition in 1947, when Bengal was divided into East Bengal [later renamed East Pakistan and now Bangladesh] and West Bengal, the most productive parts of Bengal, excluding Calcutta, was arbitrarily put into East Pakistan by the British. This caused people to come out against the partition, and this struggle spread to other issues.

In the 1950s, there was a very big famine in Bengal, which gave rise to a food movement, with the CPI in the leadership. That was the beginning of the people's struggles which gave the communists the basis to grow.

Was the situation similar in Kerala?

In the south, Kerala also had a strong social reform movement. Comparatively, it also had very strong progressive traditions.

The evolution of the Indian communist movement is important to keep in mind as well. The party emerged in the 1930s, as a group from within the Indian National Congress. The communists had been working within the Congress, and the first split was the Congress Socialist Party (CSP). Our soon-to-retire general secretary, EMS Namboodiripad, was the general secretary of the CSP in 1936. Later, from the CSP the communists came out and formed the CPI.

So in those areas where the communists were able to command a large section of the Congress following, are areas where the communists are still strong. Kerala is one such area.

Why has the left been unable to advance in the rest of India?

The absence of a strong social reform movement keeps the people within the bounds of caste and religion. This is what the BJP [a rightwing Hindu nationalist party currently gaining popularity] has been able to exploit. In the entire region of Northern India, which has about 400 million people, the sheer

backwardness, both economic and in terms of social consciousness, is a breeding ground for the right.

These are largely pre-capitalist agricultural societies. Even in this area, we note that where capitalist agriculture has made inroads, the right has not been able to mobilise support to the extent that they have in the pre-capitalist areas.

So the national liberation movement was under the leadership of the communists in the south and the east. In the west and the north it was primarily under the leadership of the Indian national bourgeoisie.

What was Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards the communists?

It was blow hot, blow cold, in the sense that he thought, where the communists were able to mobilise the people for the freedom struggle, he would be cooperative etc. But ideologically he was an out-and-out anti-communist.

Among the left within the Congress, which I mentioned earlier, there was also a trend that remained within the Congress, but remained left. The main figure here was Jawaharlal Nehru [the first Indian prime minister, from 1947 to 1964], who couldn't break out of his class background, but in terms of his consciousness, he was a leftist.

Gandhi was always strongly opposed to the left trend within the Congress. The left put up Subhas Chandra Bose [the founder of the All-India Forward Bloc in 1939, and leader of the Indian National Army] as its candidate for Congress president, in opposition to Gandhi's candidate, who lost.

So how would you characterise Gandhi, given that he was not a simple tool of the bourgeoisie? He was, after all, a man for the poor.

That is correct. He was a complex personality. His strongest quality was that he could associate with the common person. He could draw the people into struggle, and generate the force of mass mobilisation, which India had not seen before. All communists recognise this.

At the same time he had another very important quality. While he could bring the masses onto the field, into political action, he could also stop their militancy, at a stage when it would have gone out of control for the Indian bourgeoisie.

This happened thrice in the Indian freedom struggle. For example, in 1930, when a police station was captured by the people, to take over the arms, he went on a hunger strike, saying that unless you stop this violence, the movement would not continue.

At that moment the movement had reached a pitch, such that the British had found it uncomfortable to hold onto power. Gandhi was able to withdraw the movement, and it took us another 16 years before we got our independence.

So precisely because of this quality of his, he became the accepted leader of the bourgeoisie.

He was a unique leader in modern politics, in the sense that he was acceptable to opposing classes. He was acceptable to the Indian people, because he was able to draw them into struggle against the British. He was acceptable to the Indian bourgeoisie, because he was able to stop that movement from going beyond a certain stage.

Of course, from Gandhi's perspective, he was acting against violence, with the underlying premise that violence dehumanises those who perpetrate it, no matter how noble the cause.

We would not attach an absoluteness to violence in the way that Gandhi did. At a certain time, a violent response to violence may become necessary. If it is a response to violence, it is a defensive response, and not offensive violence.

What about the offensive violence in Kerala during the late 1950s?

There was a movement known as the Liberation Struggle, which was *against* the communist government [of 1957-59]. The Congress led that movement. This is the tragedy of the inheritance of Gandhi's philosophy – the first time that violence was used against an elected government, was in Kerala, led by the Congress. Nehru was asked, in 1959, as prime minister, because of the violence, are you going to dismiss the government? His response was: 'No, it is a duly elected government, I cannot dismiss it'.

Indira Gandhi [Nehru's daughter], was the Congress president, and she was at the press conference. She said: 'My father answered as the Indian prime minister, and I am answering the question as the president of the Congress party. Yes, we are going to demand the dissolution of the government'.

Nehru's consciousness was Left, but his material basis and standing was with the Indian bourgeoisie. So he was always torn in this conflict. He was able to convince large sections of the Indian people that he was following a left-of-centre course. Which, in all fairness, it was, in terms of India's foreign policy, its public sector, its mixed economy etc.

If Nehru were by himself in 1959, the dissolution of our government in Kerala would not have happened the way it did.

So Indira Gandhi had quite a lot of power at that point. How would you characterise her philosophy?

She became Congress president in 1958, and had the hangover of her father and his freedom struggle. So she carried the legacy of the anti-imperialist freedom struggle. She wouldn't have done, for example, what is being done in India today – privatisation, succumbing to the IMF. We said, when she was murdered in 1984, that this was the last of the links with the freedom struggle.

This was one aspect of her. The other was her ruthless ambition, which virtually decimated the Congress party from being a movement, into an organisation at the command of an individual.

When she became prime minister in 1967, there was a very deep and intense inner-party struggle in the Congress. There were leaders of the freedom struggle who were as tall as Nehru, and definitely taller than Indira Gandhi, who had rightful claims to the leadership, but who were sidelined. She split the party in 1969, and carried one section with her into mid-term elections in 1971, on the aftermath of the liberation of Bangladesh. She won the elections on that issue, and with extreme radical leftwing slogans, like the abolition of poverty.

She described her opponents in the Congress as the feudal gentry, creating an ideological divide

which was not necessarily correct. But she used the divide to say that she represented the left-of-centre of Congress, while her opponents represented the rightwing reactionary feudal interests.

In our assessment at that stage, we said that that division was not correct. Congress as a whole represents the interests of the feudal gentry and the bourgeoisie, led by the Indian monopoly capitalists.

The CPI and the Soviets accepted her logic, and went the whole hog with her. In 1971 the Indo-Soviet treaty was signed, and she received great support.

Did Rajiv Gandhi carry on this tradition when he took over power in 1985?

In our opinion, Rajiv represented a break from this tradition. We say that the 1985 election was not Rajiv Gandhi's election, but Indira's last election, because people voted for her.

Rajiv makes a significant departure in terms of the new economic orientation he gave India.

To put it briefly, our understanding is that India embarked on a path of capitalist development after independence, with the bourgeoisie in alliance with the feudal landlords. The Indian bourgeoisie required the support of the landlords to win elections in the parliamentary democracy. But capitalism cannot be built unless feudalism is destroyed.

This created a situation where the Indian market did not expand at a rate to sustain independent capitalist development. Further capitalist development could be possible only through the export markets. So this led to export-oriented growth models, which required modern technology. This had to be imported from the west, which created two conditions: the dependence on western capitalism increased, and India's imports increased tremendously.

So you had a situation where you increased imports in order to gain access to export markets. But no third world country has been able to make an entry into export markets apart from the Asian countries which started growing just after the Second World War. No other country has been able to break into this market, because by the time they entered the market, the technology they had, had been updated, which they were not in a position to do.

So you had a situation in India where imports grew, and exports did not match the imports, leading to a severe balance of payments crisis. So by trying to break out of the crisis through the export route, the Congress party only compounded the problem. It has reached a stage where today, when they talk of an economic crisis in India, it is not a crisis in the traditional sense.

An economic crisis is when you have a fall in industrial or agricultural growth rates. But we find that both the growth rates are rising in India, but the crisis is a balance of payments crisis. In order to overcome this, the present government has gone for IMF loans, with their conditionalities like privatisiation etc.

high in India. According to official statistics, we have more than the entire population living below the poverty datum line (nearly 400 million).

Secondly, it tremendously expands the local market. It has been estimated that if every person below the poverty line in India has got the resources to buy one item of clothing, the demand generated would be three times the capacity of the textile industry of India today. It will naturally give scope to capitalist expansion.

What, as Marxists, is your solution to the economic crisis?

Our solution is to initiate land reforms, to the extent of smashing feudalism, so that capitalism can develop. Our position is that unless capitalism develops, you cannot reach socialism.

In law, on paper, in India there is a certain ceiling for individual land ownership. The state has the right to confiscate land held beyond that ceiling and distribute it amongst the peasants already working there, or amongst the landless poor.

This has two aspects. Firstly, this will immediately relieve rural poverty, which is tremendously

Your perspective seems to run contrary to a Maoist perspective, which seeks an immediate transition to socialism?

Yes. But Mao has not been fully understood. Before independence, if the communists were strong enough, what Mao was saying would have been absolutely correct and valid. If the communists were able to take power then, as part of the liberation struggle, then we could have taken the country along the path of socialism, by-passing the stage of capitalism.

Because we were unable to lead that struggle we allowed independent class rule to consolidate itself. Today, to mobilise against this class rule, you have to bring in people outside the worker and peasant classes. That is why we have defined this as the people's democratic stage, which in one sense is similar to Mao's new democracy. But the historical circumstances permitted him to take China onto the socialist course. ■

Ethnic quotas – lessons from Malaysia

MARTIN PLAUT

argues that introducing quotas – as proposed by the ANC's Albie Sachs – can introduce as many problems as it solves.

Muslim guerillas – ethnic quotas encourage a communal, and not a national, consciousness

Taking political power is one thing, altering society is quite another. If the constitutional talks go well this year the ANC may be on the verge of taking control of the Union buildings. But whether this will allow the movement to alter the country's prevailing distribution of wealth and privilege is far from clear. As Albie Sachs, of the ANC's Constitutional Committee, put it in a recent lecture, it would be 'quite possible for the movement to win freedom without bread, while its objective is to win freedom with bread'.[1]

The question, then, is how to achieve this end.

The answer Sachs reaches for is quotas. The trouble with this is that it appears to raise as many problems as it resolves. Although stressing that quotas must be sensitively implemented, and hedged around with safeguards for human rights, they are, as he concedes, very blunt instruments indeed. Nonetheless, they are the prescription that Sachs suggests for providing a fairer system of resource distribution among South Africa's population.

This recommendation is based on the experience of three countries – the USA, India and Malaysia – countries which, he argues, have the 'greatest experience of affirmative action'. The American situation is relatively well know. The Indian case must surely have been thrown into doubt by the unsatisfactory record of attempts to assist what are termed 'backward castes and scheduled tribes'. Last year's proposals to increase the quotas for these groups led to violence and deaths, and were in part responsible for the fall of the government. The whole question has now become a political football, to be kicked around by the competing parties, to the benefit of no-one.

The Malaysian case

Less well known, however, is the Malaysian case. Sachs believes that affirmative action there has met with some success – opening up the civil service and commerce to members of the Malay community 'who had previously been grossly under-represented in both areas'.

This is an attractive claim, but does it bear scrutiny?

During the eight years or so of British colonial rule Malaya, as it then was, underwent major structural change. The economy was developed around the exploitation of two key economic resources – rubber and tin.

But the indigenous Malay population was considered generally unsuitable for this kind of employment, and as a result large numbers of Indian and even larger number of Chinese labourers were encouraged to immigrate to the country. Today the seventeen million people are divided roughly into 54% Malay, 35% Chinese and 10% Indian. Overlaying the ethnic divide is a religious divide. Most Malays are Muslim, while most Chinese are either Buddhist or Pantheist.

While the Malays continued to till the land, many Chinese and Indians did not. As one character in an Anthony Burgess novel observed; 'If only people would get on with their work – the Malays in the kampongs [villages] and in the paddy fields and the Indians in the

professions and the Chinese in trade – I think all people could be quite happy together'.

It was, of course, an imperial myth that could not last. In 1969, just 12 years after independence, rioting broke out that perhaps mirrored the anti-Indian riots that took place in Durban in 1949. When the Malay-dominated ruling party lost support to the Chinese-dominated opposition, serious inter-communal violence took place. Hundreds were killed, with the Malay Regiment shooting civilians and looting Chinese shops and raping Chinese women.

A state of emergency was declared, and parliamentary democracy was suspended for two years, while the authorities decided what steps to take. In the meantime, the Chinese poor, living in squatter camps around the capital, Kuala Lumpur, were driven from their homes. Some of the 150 000 affected were rehoused, but many were not.

The new strategy

It was in 1971 that the new strategy was launched. The new Economic Policy called for the eradication of poverty and 'eliminating the identification of race with economic function'. Behind this apparently neutral language lay a determination to better the lot of the Malay community. They were designated 'bumiputras' – literally 'sons of the soil' – and quotas were introduced across society to ensure that they prospered.

The most important measure was a plan to redistribute 30% of the nation's corporate assets to bumiputras by 1990. But the plan did not end there. The special position of Malays was to be safeguarded by reserving for them a proportion of civil service posts, scholarships and university places as well as business permits and licences. At the same time, freedom of speech was curtailed, and the sensitive issue of race was banned from public discussion – even in parliament.

Taking government statistics at face value, the policy has been a considerable success. **(See Table)**

There is no denying that many Malays have moved out of agriculture and into manufacturing and trade, while coming to dominate the civil service. And all this has been achieved while sustaining an enviable level of economic growth.

OWNERSHIP OF CORPORATE ASSETS (PERCENTAGE)

Group	1970	1990 target	Achieved
Bumiputra	2.4	30	20.3
Other Malaysians	32.2	40	46.2
Foreigners	63.3	30	25.1
Nominee Companies	2.0	-	8.4

Source: Economic Planning Unit.

In reality, progress has been less impressive than the statistics suggest. Many businesses continue to be controlled by Chinese or Indian owners operating through nominee companies owned by Malay front men. So complex are such arrangements that they are almost impossible to disentangle.

More importantly, the quotas have left an indelible anger and bitterness that now severely divides Malaysian society. This is something that Sachs concedes but in rather opaque terms: 'The price [of the progress towards greater equality] has been to reinforce a spirit of communal rather than national identity'.[2]

Quotas in the field of higher education have been particularly resented, and it is no accident that thousands of the best and the brightest non-bumiputran students have chosen to continue their studies at universities abroad. Few have returned.

Moreover, the political system, which was weighted in favour of the Malay community at independence, has been further strengthened. Seats have been gerrymandered in favour of rural constituencies – where Malays are better represented to ensure that the Chinese are unable to wield their due weight in Parliament (a situation not unfamiliar to South Africans).

Failed to deliver

But even within the Malay community, the policy has failed to deliver the wealth that was promised to all of the people. An elite has grown fat on acting as frontmen for Chinese businessmen wishing to win government contracts and the licenses necessary to conduct business. Income disparities are now greater within the Malay community than within any other ethnic group. The Malay poor are increasingly turning away from the ruling party, as the October 1990 elections indicated.

It is hard to believe that the ANC, having struggled for decades against racism, would seek to base its policies on a quota system that will only sharpen racial divisions and ethnic tensions within the country. There is no more certain way of engraining prejudice than using a system that allocates job and other benefits on the basis of skin colour. The beneficiary must always suspect that his or her success is predicated upon an artificial platform of race. Any loser's bitterness at what has been denied will inevitably be put down to an accident of birth, and will deepen with time.

And who, one might ask, will have the dubious distinction of sorting out the South African equivalent of the 'bumiputras'? Are only Africans to be classified as 'sons of the soil' or are Indians or Coloured also to be included?

Nor are quotas likely to redistribute wealth to all of the community at whom they are aimed, as the Malaysian experience indicates.

But Sachs and his colleagues need not look so far abroad to see a critique of this kind of policy. They need only consider the thousands of Afrikaners who now rely on soup kitchens to see its failure in their own back yards. ■

NOTES

1. 'Affirmative action and good government: a fresh look at Constitutional Mechanism for re-distribution in South Africa' Alistair Berkeley Memorial Lecture, Cape Town and Cambridge, November 1991. p10.
2. Ibid. p50

* *Martin Plaut works for the BBC in London.*

Africa's second independence

*Nigerian Professor **CLAUDE AKE**, a well known author of several books including Political Economy of Underdevelopment in Africa and Revolutionary Pressures in Africa, was in South Africa recently. He spoke to GLENDA DANIELS about Africa's woes.*

AKE: the people of Africa have always been involved in working for democracy but they have been repressed both by their own leaders and by the West.

What is needed to make Africa more developed and less dependent on the First World?

We have to dispense with the assumption that one people can develop another. Development is something you do yourself or it does not happen at all. Other people can assist the process.

In the colonial era, this consciousness was blocked by colonial paternalism. At independence we arrived without a development agenda and have never been able to evolve one. Our development strategies are still today in the context of Western initiatives and policies of the IMF and World Bank. We have to have our own agenda.

Another requirement, related to external dependence, is taking the ordinary people of Africa seriously. Development strategies have thus far revolved around loan arrangements, transfer of technology, improvement of trade, commodities, debt forgiveness, technical assistance.

What is interesting about all these things is that they seem to presuppose that what is needed is a transfer of skills from developed countries to Africa. They don't reflect the ability and potential of ordinary people for whom development must mean the making of their own history.

This is tied to the political marginalisation of the people by political violence. Political violence carried through the monolithic structures became themselves a major obstacle to development.

All this is tied up in a very complicated problem. The main feature is that neither African leaders nor Western leaders understand that development is what people endorse for themselves with assistance from others, if possible. If we had looked at it this way, we would have taken the people more seriously.

For this, we need a political climate creating enthusiasm for the enterprise of development.

The democratic movement in Africa is now, in a sense, trying to address this – but so far in a rather inarticulate and confused way. There has to be an understanding to get the politics right. Development can't be apolitical.

Do you think the move towards a multi-party system by some African countries will become a lasting trend?

Yes, the moves are definitely going to last. I believe changes to multi-party systems in Africa have an important objective basis to last, but one must ask whether changing to a multi-party system itself is really as interesting as it may seem in the African context. It seems to me that the demand for multi-party systems – clearly evident in Africa – is symptomatic of something more important. It is like a demand for second independence; if you like, a demand for self determination.

Whether multi-party systems survive or not will not really be that important a question for Africa. What is important is whether the specific kind of democracy that ordinary people are demanding in Africa will come about.

The form of democracy demanded is not competitive politics and pluralism and multi-party systems. Rather it is a democracy of concrete rights, particularly economic rights. This democracy is not merely procedural, nor concerned with abstract rights. It has to do with participation.

This process of participation has been derailed by a whole autocratic elite that inherited the colonial system and did not transform it. Failures of this elite and economic management were so catastrophic that millions of people in Africa are now struggling for mere survival. Their very existence is threatened. This political movement for change was the last resort.

Gaining control is a necessary condition for ordinary people's survival and material benefit, and of course cultural improvement.

What are the factors that led to these changes? Did the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have anything to do with the fall of these dictatorships?

No, I happen to think that the collapse of the Soviet Union has absolutely nothing to do with it. That view is part of the penchant of the Western press who see nothing noble in Africa, treating us simply as the mimics of Eastern Europe. After all, Africa is home of the oldest pro-democracy struggle in the world: the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa.

In their new enthusiasm for seeing the hegemony of Western values worldwide, Westerners are beginning to see emancipatory projects which they previously dismissed as racial struggles, ethnic struggles, confusion, chaos.

The connection between the changes in Africa and the events in Eastern Europe have not allowed Westerners to recognise events in Africa for what they are.

The West cannot see things the way they are, obviously because they are part of the problem. Colonialism was the ultimate negation of democracy.

The Cold War made various world powers try to win allies.

The winding up of the Cold War released the West to act in a more principled way towards Africa and to recognise and support the emancipatory projects in Africa.

It is not a simple case of the West always espousing democracy and now suddenly Africa is adopting it. The people of Africa have always been involved in the working for democracy but they have been repressed both by their own leaders and by the West.

What is your view of the IMF and its role in Africa?

I don't want to say that the IMF is the cause of Africa's woes. That is extreme. The IMF did not cause the problem but its solutions reflected values, concerns and interests that often have nothing to do with rescuing Africa. They have often made matters worse, for instance in imposing structural reforms so draconian that, for all practical purposes, social consensus breaks down. Coercion is required to implement the reforms, and the result is the militarisation of society. These cannot be conditions for development.

What kind of role – if any – should the IMF play?

I hope that the IMF becomes less and less important. Remember my premise that development is something you do for yourself. This is not a matter of being idealistic, simply because no person has the resources to develop or change another. Change must become part of the living experience of the people, otherwise it remains an alien factor.

How strong are social movements in civil society in African countries?

They are important factors in facilitating change. But unfortunately discussions about social movements in civil society have been Eurocentric and not useful in understanding the African reality.

The definition of civil society has historically meant a market society. But we have to remember that Africa is still an agrarian society and not yet a market society. We talk of civil society in terms of trade unions, civics and so forth. But there are also autonomous bodies within the African rural areas which are very important in understanding the state and society in Africa.

The social formations there have not been broken down by colonialism. Without them, Africa's plight would have been far more tragic than it is today. These social formations have been the basis of survival strategies that have limited the effects of the people who have inherited power and mismanaged it.

The failure of the state and Western development projects led people in rural areas, community groups, ethnic formations and village corporations to begin to control their own lives and to provide social services that the state lacked.

Groups raising money for self-help began to replace the state. In some areas they have built more schools and other facilities than the government, by self-help and borrowing and lending schemes. This dislodgement from the state has become an important process of empowerment. Now what is happening is the translation of this economic empowerment to political empowerment.

Can you comment on recent events in countries like Zambia, Zaire and Kenya?

What has happened in Zambia is an expression of the seriousness of the pro-democracy movements. Zambia is an interesting country with a seriousness to resist and Kaunda accepted this. Zaire, Sierre Leonne, Kenya, Ghana will go along with history or they will be dragged along screaming.

The masses are asking for more than elections. Elite parties secure in party machines can continually get elected without addressing real issues. It becomes superficial change.

Nigeria is a strange case, regarding social movements. Pluralism made it impossible to have extreme oppression as in other countries. It also means that radicalisation – like in Zaire – did not materialise in Nigeria. There is no broad or progressive movement like in South Africa with a strong trade union movement.

It is a quieter process towards democratisation, and may not be as deep as in other countries. There is a lot of corruption.

What about freedom of the press in Nigeria?

There are many different newspapers but no alternative ones like in South Africa. Press freedom is superficial and does not go below the surface.

The sheer size and complexity of the country, which has the largest population in Africa, prevented monolithic concentration of power and a stratified economy. People pursue their own agenda. Press freedom is superficial because it is the freedom of a small privileged elite conversant with gossip.

There is no alternative media because leftwing activity never captured space in Nigeria on a national level. The politics is not ideological because of traditional plural social structures.

There has never been talk, for example, of an elected constituent assembly in Nigeria because of a lack of a serious progressive organised force or movement. ■

Trotsky and Trotskyisms

THE REVENGE OF HISTORY :
Marxism and the East European Revolutions
By Alex Callinicos
Polity Press, Cambridge (1991)
R63,00

THE NECESSITY OF SOCIALISM
By Martin Legassick
Congress Militant Pamphlet (1991)
R1,50

Reviewed by JEREMY CRONIN

First a self-criticism: When it comes to Trotskyism I have, like the tradition to which I belong, been guilty of too easily establishing unexamined equivalences, of making gross reductions.

I am thinking, for instance, of the tendency to mechanically equate Trotsky with Trotskyism. I am thinking of the assumption that Trotskyism = Trotskyism, as if there were not significant differences amongst those so professing, or so labelled. I am thinking of a sometimes justified irritation with this or that Trotskyist grouping evoked as an excuse to ignore a rich, historical-materialist critique of Stalinism.

Nevertheless . . . and in very partial mitigation of the above self-criticism, consider the following:

Wosa

'WOSA (Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action) does not support the idea of an interim government...as proposed by Congress . . . This caretaker-type government can have only one class character – it will serve the interest of the ruling class. It has to, otherwise they will not agree to it . . .

'The ultimate limit on concessions is set by who will effectively control the state machinery and armed forces. And here the interim government as proposed by the Congress Alliance makes no inroads whatsoever. The Congress proposal relies on mass mobilisation to contain the armed forces.

'In a non-revolutionary situation this is a wholly unrealistic expectation. And if there did exist a revolutionary preparedness then Congress would have no need for an interim government because the seizure of power would be on the agenda.' (from *The National Situation*, Wosa central committee, May 1991)

Let's not underestimate the dangerous pitfalls in which an interim government might land the progressive forces in South Africa. But it is the *logic* of the argument advanced here by Wosa's central committee that I wish to underline. The fact is, *exactly* the same argument could be launched against any demand or campaign this side of communism.

For instance, Wosa, correctly, supports the demand for a democratic constituent assembly. But we could subject this demand to exactly the *same* refutation as it applies to the interim government demand.

Posa VERSUS Wosa

For the purposes of illustration, let me invent a new Trotskyist faction, Posa (Proletarian Opposition for a Socialist Advance), which in its founding Manifesto argues:

'The Wosa demand for a constituent assembly is reformist. A constituent assembly will only reform and therefore rescue the capitalist system in South Africa. This would be its historical role, otherwise the bourgeoisie would simply abolish the constituent assembly.

'At best the constituent assembly will be a nice talking shop, but how do you ensure that its decisions, if progressive, are implemented? Wosa argues that the decisions of the CA will be strengthened and implemented through supporting mass action to alter the balance of forces. That's unrealistic, bearing in mind that the security forces remain under the control of the present bourgeois ruling bloc.

'A constituent assembly can only be reformist in the present non-revolutionary situation. And if there were a revolutionary situation, the demand would be irrelevant, as the proletariat would then simply by-pass such a constituent assembly (as the Bolsheviks did in 1917) with insurrectionary workers councils.'

Posa, as far as I know, does not exist . . . yet. But for every maximalism, it is easy enough to invent an even more maximalist position. And the more maximalist you become, the more minimalist is your active involvement with reality.

So how do you defend, uncompromisingly, socialist principles and yet remain effectively engaged?

Defending principles

Among a number of publications avowedly within a broad Trotskyist tradition, published last year in response to the collapse in Eastern Europe and the (now late) Soviet Union, were notably Alex Callinicos's *The Revenge of History*, and Martin Legassick's 30-page pamphlet, *The Necessity of Socialism*.

To defend revolutionary socialist principles in the 1990s means, amongst other things, answering the question: Has socialism failed? And this is where both Callinicos and Legassick begin. Both, in fact, completely disassociate socialism from whatever it is that collapsed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

'Has socialism been tried?', Legassick asks rhetorically, '. . . in my view . . . socialism has not failed – because socialism has not been tested.' (p5)

A deformed workers' state

Legassick follows Trotsky's characterisation of the system that emerged in the Soviet Union as 'a *workers'* state' but one which had become 'hideously deformed' as a result of the bureaucratic *political* counter-revolution spearheaded by Stalin in the 1920s.

'The imperfect workers' democracy established in 1917 was replaced by the dictatorship of a bureaucracy, which developed as a privileged caste, presiding over, and parasitic on, a state-owned and planned economy.' (p8). But, as far as Legassick is concerned, the working class still remained the ruling class.

Legassick quotes Trotsky: 'The anatomy of society is determined by its economic relations . . . So long as the forms of property that have been created by the October revolution are not overthrown, the proletariat remains the ruling class.' (p9)

Leon Trotsky

The rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy represented, not a return to capitalist class exploitation, but social parasitism 'on a very large scale'.

Nevertheless, while not being capitalist, the distorted workers' state was also not socialist, says Legassick. It remained a social formation blocked in transition somewhere between capitalism and socialism.

Callinicos – state capitalism

While agreeing that it is not socialism that failed in Eastern Europe, Callinicos for his part goes further than Legassick (and indeed Trotsky).

Following Tony Cliff (leader of the British Socialist Workers' Party), Callinicos argues that the forced collectivisation and industrialisation of the Soviet Union in the period 1928-1932 marked the point at which 'the bureaucracy transformed itself into a ruling class collectively exploiting a vastly enlarged proletariat . . . The "Stalin revolution" was thus a *counter* -revolution, in which the remnants of the "workers' state with bureaucratic distortions" surviving from October 1917 were destroyed and bureaucratic state capitalism was installed in their place.' (p29)

How significant is the difference in characterisation ('a deformed workers' state' versus 'state capitalism')?

This very difference has, frequently, been grounds for organisational divorce among those proclaiming themselves Trotskyist. And what about the explanatory power of these competing characterisations? If you accept the Callinicos position ('it was state capitalism'), you are able to explain the remarkably rapid and (at least among significant sections of the bureaucracy) avid shift from Brezhnev's command economy to Yeltsin's 'free market'.

On the other hand, you will not easily illuminate, in my view, the *contradictory* historical role this bureaucracy has played. As another eminent Trotskyist, Ernest Mandel, has argued (*Trotsky. A study in the dynamic of his thought*, 1979, p84-5), at three crucial historical moments this bureaucracy refused to ally itself with domestic proto-capitalist and international imperialist forces in restoring capitalist relations.

During the 1928 economic crisis, it did not support, but rather it crushed by terroristic means the kulaks and Nep (New Economic Policy)-men. During and after World War II, the Soviet bureaucracy 'did not capitulate and transform itself into the nucleus of a new, neo-colonial bourgeoisie at the service of German or US imperialism' (Mandel, p85). And in the period of 1944-5 in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, the Soviet bureaucracy did not maintain but abolished private property.

Which way forward?

Neither Callinicos nor Legassick confine themselves to an analysis of the Eastern European collapse. Both develop lucid and relevant critiques of world capitalism, and both go on to assert that an advance to socialism is a necessity for humankind.

But what is socialism, and how do we get there? On the latter part of the question Callinicos is more or less silent. And his silence, in my view, is not unconnected to what he understands by socialism. He places overwhelming emphasis on *work-based* factory councils or 'soviet democracy'. In doing this he becomes exceedingly one-sided. He goes so far as to argue that:

'The progressive atomisation of social life under modern capitalism leaves the workplace as the *only* remaining focus of collectivity, unless one counts those forms of identity – nationality, religion, race – which act as the basis of usually reactionary political mobilisation.' (p113)

Callinicos is in danger of defining himself into an abstentionism with regard to any concrete struggle that is not narrowly directed to the perspective of building insurrectionary factory councils.

(My fictional Posa, incidentally, might like to refer to pages 116-7 of Callinicos, where he argues that, as opposed to factory councils, the constituent assembly form of democracy is *inherently* liberal and anti-worker).

Perhaps South Africa is exceptional. But certainly the township (along with the workplace) has been a critical 'focus of collectivity' within our struggle. Precisely because the racially defined South African township is dominated by the working class, the national/race

mobilisation that has occurred within our townships over the last 15 years has been eminently progressive.

Given our own concrete experience of struggle, it would be unthinkable for us to consider socialist democracy as one-sidedly rooted in a network of factory councils. Socialist democracy must embrace also the civic, the street committee, the residential (and not just the work-place) self-defence unit, the SRC, the PTA, and many more structures of popular power. Socialist democracy, in my view, should also not abolish representative forms of democracy (a national parliament, for instance).

Legassick

In the conclusion to his intervention, Legassick revisits the question of the road to socialism in South Africa. As he explicitly acknowledges, by way of a brief self-criticism of an earlier paper, he has now shifted his perspective somewhat. In 1979 he was arguing ('too baldly') that democratic gains in South Africa 'will be firmly secured . . . only if the working class proceeds without pause to the overthrow of the bourgeois state and the bourgeoisie.' (p24)

'That', he now admits, 'is not on the immediate agenda. The process of transformation in South Africa is working itself out in a more complex way than perhaps anyone anticipated.' (ibid)

Well, reality is always more complex than we ever anticipate, but the *strategic* position to which Legassick now moves is, in my view, largely correct. His new position is that, while socialist transformation is not on the immediate agenda in South Africa, it is crucial that the working class should 'take power, at the head of all the oppressed' to advance the democratisation process (to 'complete the bourgeois democratic revolution', as he puts it), and 'begin socialist transformation'. (p25)

That is not a million miles away from the central thrust of the SACP's latest manifesto (entitled, precisely, 'Building working class power for democratic change').

Legassick concludes his brief intervention with a plea: 'I believe we need a climate in our institutions, and in the organisations of our movement, in which different ideas can contend and be measured against the test of practice and experience.' (p.25)

I agree. Just as I agree with his argument that a socialist outlook is born essentially out of 'the experience of the working class . . . The idea that "socialism" comes to the working class "from the outside" is based on a totally one-sided interpretation of Lenin's *What is to be Done?* (1902) – a mis-interpretation which Lenin himself sought to correct within a year.' (p17)

Legassick Two

But I wonder just how squarely this voice (the voice of Legassick One) sits with that other Legassick, who says things like: 'Only a handful of Trotsky's followers, in my view, were able to pass through the whole period since his death and consistently apply and develop the Marxist tradition that he carried forward. Through them, the essential framework and method of Marxism has been maintained and enriched..." (p20)

This is Legassick Two. It is the voice of one of the elect, of those who have passed through the eye of the needle, of the sect and its pedigree. Isn't this the small (threatened) but always enlightened elite that 'BRINGS' socialism to the working class?

Two final thoughts:

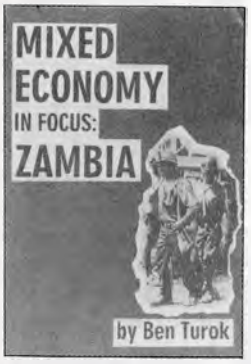
- It would be very wrong to assert that Legassick One = Legassick Two.
- I thoroughly hope the first triumphs over the second. ■

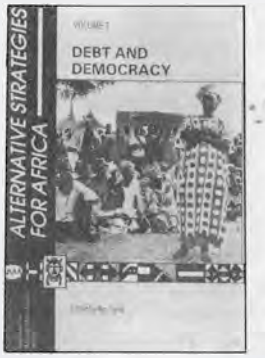
Learning from Africa

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR AFRICA
Vol 1: Coalition for Change
By Bade Onimode et al
(1990)
Vol 3: Debt and Democracy
Edited by Ben Turok
(1991)

MIXED ECONOMY IN FOCUS: Zambia
By Ben Turok
(1989)
Institute for African Alternatives (Ifaa), Johannesburg & London

Reviewed by NEVA SEIDMAN-MAKGETLA





South Africans on both Left and Right occasionally ask what they can learn from the rest of Africa. These three volumes published by the Institute for African Alternatives (Ifaa), suggest a one-word answer: Plenty. For this object lesson we must be grateful to the Institute, which recently moved to Johannesburg from London.

The studies record and analyse an experience we all hope soon to share – the transition from essentially colonial regimes to democratically elected states. In the process, they suggest the difficulty of raising living standards in an economy historically shaped to serve, not the majority of its people, but external markets and a high-income, politically powerful minority.

Coalition for Change and *Debt and Democracy*, which publish papers from a conference on Alternative Development Strategies held in Dar es Salaam in 1989, provide an additional service. They underline the success of the independent states in developing strong African academics.

In this regard, the books point up depressing comparisons with South Africa. For instance, a recent *South African Journal of Economics* special edition on Africa did not include a single black author. Bizarre episodes of this kind suggests that the social construct of 'expert' in South African academe continues in large part to reflect a list of extraneous criteria – foreign, male, and white. The dangers of such a prejudiced, parochial and patronising approach seem obvious.

Hopefully, Ifaa's books will stimulate South African editors and conference organisers to include African colleagues in future.

People-centred strategies

Two themes run through *Coalition for Change* and *Debt and Democracy*. The first theme poses the problem of replacing state-centred development efforts with people-centred strategies. The second suggests the way in which foreign debt, and the consequent involvement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, have limited Africa's options.

In 'Beyond State-Centred Development' (*Debt and Democracy*, Ch. 11), Samuel Chambua argues that a key cause of the current socio-economic crisis in Africa remains a 'state-centred development approach which left very little room for the participation of the masses -- the civil society.' (p183) In Africa, he argues, 'the state did not entertain or encourage any self-activity of the common working people, typically regarded as illiterates and hence obstacles to development.' (p187)

Chambua points out that state-centred development efforts started, not at independence, but with the advent of colonialism. The colonial state acted ruthlessly 'to keep society under its control', encouraging popular political activity neither within state structures nor through civil society. (p 184)

To transform the economy, Africa's independent governments had first to transform the inherited state and, with it, civil society. Instead, to a very large extent, they retained the existing structures. The surviving institutions continued to glorify the central state, while bureaucratic regulation and open repression prevented the growth of civil society. Rather than establishing truly democratic institutions, independence brought little more than African prime ministers and nobly articulated goals.

Platitudes

The conference papers underline the need for a new, more democratic society as the basis for appropriate and sustainable development. Unfortunately, however, they rarely get beyond platitudes in suggesting how to achieve or initiate that development (in this, they remind one of the parallel discourse in South Africa).

Various authors list necessary rights and freedoms that could have been drawn from any American highschool civics text (see, for instance, Chambua,

pp195-6; Onimode, in *Coalition for Change*, pp23-4; Sunmunu in ibid, p75; Mabiriizi, in *Debt and Democracy*, pp243-4).

At most, as in the articles on rural development in Nigeria (by Dickson Eyoh) and Lesotho (Mabiriizi) in *Debt and Development*, they point up the need to avoid excessive generalisation in this connection.

A more useful approach would ask why democracy has not flourished to date, despite the initial establishment of governments in the mould of European parliamentarianism. As Mabiriizi points out (p243), in most of Africa 'the rule of law has been set at naught, and military neo-fascist regimes have come to power, often riding high on the people's demand for a change.'

Rather than citing abstract European and American norms, the authors might fruitfully have explored how existing institutions and resource constraints rule out popular participation in development. These hindrances include the nature of the inherited ministerial system, which tends to centralise power in the hands of the civil service; the low levels of education inherited at independence; and the subjugation of women.

In fact, none of the articles on people-centred development deal explicitly with the position of women. This weakness suggests the excessive abstraction surrounding the concept. How can we aim for popular control unless we come to grips with the subordinate position of more than half the population?

World Bank and IMF

The authors reject, virtually unanimously, the proposition – supported by the World Bank and the IMF – that an unregulated market economy represents a form of people-centred development. Eyoh stresses that 'The toll of SAPs' [Structural Adjustment Programmes] human casualties is sufficient reason to query the wisdom of "market liberation", even when it is sugar-coated with democratic aspirations.' (p224) In fact, as Onimode points out, 'Even though the IMF and World Bank are screaming "democratization" in Europe, when they come to our countries they encourage dictatorship', by their secretive and elitist approach to negotiations. (*Coalition for Change*, p57)

The theme that the ideological free-market programmes supported by the World Bank and IMF undermine people-centred development efforts runs through most of the articles in *Debt and Democracy*. Articles by Campbell, Mahdi, Onimode, Ihonvbere, Moyo and Seidman, among others, stress the need to find alternative strategies. In the process, they provide a substantial amount of information on African debt and policy responses on both the national and international level.

Unfortunately, once authors examine foreign debt in itself, they tend to adopt a dependency perspective. All too often, they appear to blame most of Africa's difficulties on foreign debtors and multilateral agencies. A classless Africa emerges, with all its people united against a hostile foreign world. Teresa Moyo declares, 'Africa knows what has to be done.'(*Debt and Dependency*, p115)

This attitude virtually rules out progressive national or regional policy responses. It seems particularly odd because many of the authors, including Moyo, have published extensively elsewhere on the potential of a pro-active response to the debt crisis.

New bureaucratic bourgeoisie: Zambia

In *Mixed Economy in Focus: Zambia*, Turok argues against a simplistic dependency perspective. Essentially, he treats Zambia's experiences as an instance of state-centred development. Turok demonstrates how a group that takes over the state but lacks economic assets can substantially reshape class relationships to extend its power. This prospect should prove fascinating reading for South Africans.

In Zambia, as in South Africa, the parastatals represent a key nexus between the state and the economy. They account for some 80% of production and, together with the civil service, almost three quarters of formal-sector employment.

Officially, Zambia's parastatals represent the state's response to the immense economic imbalances inherited at independence. At independence, Zambia had under a hundred university graduates, and fewer than a thousand highschool graduates. (p37) The entire colonial economy was geared to the production of copper for export, with virtually forced labour and profits going to build up the infrastructure in what was then Southern Rhodesia, rather than in Zambia itself. The big copper companies, South Africa's Anglo American and AMAX, owned most of the economy.

In these circumstances, Turok notes, the state initially sought to use state power 'to insinuate African businessmen in the interstices of the white-controlled economy', but failed because 'market mechanisms and existing institutions favoured settler and foreign business interests'. (p62)

Next, the state began to acquire 51% shares in leading Zambian companies, including the mines.

Zambia's new bureaucratic bourgeoisie, however, proved incapable of introducing a coherent development strategy. Instead, it expected the parastatals both to function like private firms and produce basic necessities at a sub-economic price. It achieved success in the first aim at the cost of the second. According to Turok, 'The Director General of ZIMCO certainly sees no basic difference between one of his companies and a private one.'(p66; see also Ch 4, passim.)

State capitalism

Turok argues that these policies directed Zambia, not toward socialism, but toward state capitalism. He defines this as a system where 'a state bureaucracy/bourgeoisie' takes control of the commanding heights, finding new ways to 'collaborate' with foreign capital; the commodity market remains essentially unplanned; and a coercive state ensures continued exploitation of 'workers and peasants'. (p11) He explores in some detail the way in which this contradictory situation led to Zambia's current crisis.

Turok provides a thoughtful analysis with a host of interesting facts. Unfortunately, the book could use some rigourous editing to refine the main arguments and eliminate repetitions. Moreover, Turok's vocabulary, rooted in the Left debates of the decades just before and after World War II

All three books are worthy of serious consideration. Above all, they bring to South Africa a much-needed taste of the discourse going on down North.

* *Neva Seidman-Makgetla is based in the Economics Dept, Wits University*

The politics of posters

IMAGES OF DEFIANCE:
South African resistance posters of the 1980s
By the Poster Book Collective (South African History Archive)
Ravan Press, Johannesburg (1991)
R30 (180 pages)

Reviewed by MUFF ANDERSSON

At the launch of this book last October, Cosatu's Jay Naidoo said something about the gloriousness of the images of struggle 'marching' through its pages.

It would be hard to conjure up a more apt description for what fills the 180 pages of this book. It's a stylish and strident, memorable and moving tribute to one decade in this country's resistance struggle (the 1980s).

The 320 posters captured in *Images of Defiance* are not always examples of great artwork and sometimes the lettering is a bit 'iffy'. But each poster lives and tells its story loud and clear: the struggle against the forced removals in Huhudi in 1985, the Cosatu launch the same year, a soccer match in 1987 held in memory of an activist.

The poster collective, who produced this book, say in their preface they used the following criteria for deciding whether or not to include a poster (and they had to choose from a collection of nearly 2 000 in the possession of the South African History Archive (SAHA)): whether the poster accurately reflected the times, and whether it captured in words, images, design, shape or colours, a significant moment in the struggle.

The book doesn't only contain posters but a history of the poster movement in South Africa, and an abridged South African history of resistance. Most useful, at the back of the book, is a one-page chronology of significant dates in this country. But the posters speak louder than the words.

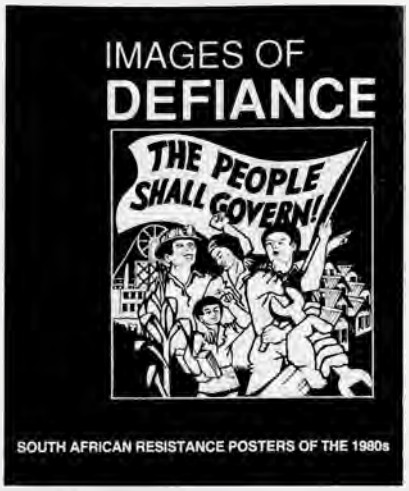
Collective spirit

The authors refer to the process of making these posters. There has obviously been a lot of discussion about the attempt to strike a fine balance between a fairly repetitive political imagery and the creative interpretation of symbols (like, for example, the clenched fist salute. It takes a lot of skill to make that fist look like it's making an original statement); and between the use of a community-oriented technology and commercial printers.

In the community-oriented efforts, the pro is the political mobilisation which occurs as large groups get together to produce posters. The con is the unprofessional look of the posters. With commercial printers, it's the other way round.

The book glorifies the collective. Several times we are told by the authors that names of individual contributors have been omitted because the purpose of the book is to 'celebrate that collective spirit'. Thus the authors are simply 'the poster book collective' of SAHA, and organisations, not individuals, are credited with poster designs.

This is noble, comradely and political quite 'on'. So would it seem perverse, in these circumstances, to draw out two names from the collective tat and compliment them on their contribution, not just to this book, but to their long and ongoing association with cultural work and resistance?



Too bad if the answer is yes, because I am going to mention Morice Smithers, the founder member of the Screen Training Project (STP) in 1983. It is largely through the hard work of STP, which was forced underground at times, and later of both STP and the Zimbabwe based Political History Trust (PHT), which later merged with SAHA, that these posters were collected.

Then there is Judy Seidman, an artist who has produced at least three of the posters reproduced in this book, although she is responsible for literally hundreds of political posters, graphics and cartoons.

Medu Art Ensemble

Judy was one of the most active members of the Medu Art Ensemble in Botswana from its beginnings in the late '70s to its demise in 1985. She worked closely on political graphics with the late Thami Mnyele, who was murdered by troops of the South African regime in June 1985, and who has been mentioned on a couple of pages in this book.

The significance of the Medu association should not be underestimated.

Medu, as the book tells it and as all those associated with it recall, was the organisation which brought to South African artists the concept of culture and resistance; that it wasn't enough to keep portraying oppression and suffering only within political art -- there must also be that spirit of resistance, of defiance, of the will to struggle and win.

It was within Medu too that the term 'cultural worker' was coined, leading to numerous debates which go on today about whether a cross-class sector (comprising a mixed bag of artists, writers, singers and so on) should rightly be called workers.

Judy, like Morice and the others in this collective, must feel an enormous sense of achievement when they hold this book. – *AIA*

LEFT BEHIND

the barbed column that steps on everybody's toes . . .

IF THABO MBEKI has his way, it seems, ANC employees may soon be relocated to the Union buildings. Mbeki reportedly told Cosatu organisers recently that the ANC's biggest ally at this stage -- and probably for the next 10 years -- was the National Party.

According to my source, he told the stunned unionists that shouting 'down with the racist regime' at FNB stadium was all very well, but the government was in an even *bigger* hurry than the ANC to dismantle apartheid!

Needless to say, the unionists were not impressed . . .

THE ANC'S WORKERS are not the only ones to suffer at the hands of 'progressive' employers. A progressive newspaper recently retrenched three of its staff – including a seven months' pregnant woman – as they said they were the least productive members of staff.

Justifying the action, a senior staff member said that the pregnant woman was an obvious choice as 'she was about to go on maternity leave anyway'! As compensation, the employees were offered five days' pay for every year of service.

As we all know, it has never paid to work for the progressive movement . . .

ON THE OTHER hand, if you're high enough up in the hierarchy, it seems to pay very well.

A rumour circulating in business circles has it that Lonrho, owned by British millionaire Tiny Rowland, put up the money for ANC chairperson Oliver Tambo's R3.5 million Johannesburg home.

(Rowland is famous for using his fortune to buy favours from African leaders, and has a particularly close relationship with Malawi's dictator, Hastings Banda).

The plush Tambo residence is next to that of Anglo American's financial director.

I am unable to confirm that the story was dreamt up by an envious neighbour...

In case you think I have it in for the ANC . . . .

THE PAC HAS always been riddled with factions. The exile-based military wing, Apla, apparently tries to keep the internal leadership under tight reign. When internal leaders visit southern Africa, Apla 'bodyguards' are known to keep a watchful eye on them, to make sure they do not meet any 'undesirable' characters.

It is no wonder that the PAC's most able spokesperson, advocate Dikgang Moseneke, shuffled nervously when, on SABC-TV's Agenda programme recently, Adrian Steed asked whether he condoned Apla's campaign of police assassinations.

His reply went something like this: *Umm, uhh.....well you should ask Apla in Dar es Salaam.* But is Apla not *your* military wing? *Yes, well, but....don't worry, I'll arrange a meeting for you.*

You could almost see the gun against the back of the poor man's head!

IN KEEPING WITH their 'one settler, one bullet' slogan, PAC militants have switched their violent attacks from black policemen to white teachers.

Although the PAC has disowned these Katlehong-based militants, besieged residents are not convinced. The 'true' face of the PAC, they say, is being shown.

In the best traditions of revolutionary madness, the youthful militants attend school classes with loaded pistols on their desks. They tell their classmates that the bullets are only for 'settlers'.

Most reassuring . . .

PAC MILITANTS ARE also *gunning* for leaders who do not see the sense in turning South Africa into a wasteland. Recent targets are said to include Moseneke, PAC president Clarence Makwethu and publicity officer Barney Desai (who has suddenly disappeared on 'sick leave'). Their new slogan? 'One intellectual, one bullet'.

As Pol Pot did not say ... the extreme left and the extreme right may look different, but they smell the same.

MANDELA HAD SOME mild, reassuring things to say to investors in Switzerland recently. Few people seriously believe nowadays that an ANC government will engage in extensive nationalisation. Even the SA Communist Party advises strongly against 'redistribution without growth'.

Yet, in response to Mandela's speech on Agenda, the sleepy spokesperson for the Afrikaanse Handels Instituut felt it necessary to ask: where in the world has a centrally-planned, Marxist economy worked?

If only we could warm their behinds for not concentrating....

ITS AMAZING HOW former 'national socialists' who enjoyed years of state privilege, now embrace the most primitive form of economics, *laissez faire* capitalism.

At the Campaign for an Open Media conference in Cape Town recently, a reborn NP delegate opposed the idea of a new SABC board, because all boards of control were the 'invention of Hitler'. He then opposed 'affirmative action', because it is 'communistic'!

It took laws to give white people a head start. It will also take laws to level the playing field again. So the best way to maintain your privileges, and still be a champion of 'freedom', is to oppose all laws!

Whoever said white people were stupid?

PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

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

1. Constructive criticisms of organisations are welcome. However, articles of a sectarian nature, or which indulge in personal attacks on individuals, will not be published.
2. Contributions to ***WIP*** should not exceed the following lengths:
   - * analytical articles — 2 200 - 2 800 words
   - * debates and reports — 1 400 - 2 200 words
   - * reviews — 750 - 1 500 words
   - * briefings — 500 words
3. Articles should be submitted in a final and correct form, preferably on disc (Wordperfect 5.1) or via worknet. Hard copies should also be sent. In the event that the editor decides that other than minor editing changes are required, the article will be referred back to the author.
4. Articles should be written accessibly, with a minimum of jargon, footnotes and references.
5. All material submitted will be treated in confidence (except in the case of public documents).

Please contact the editor for more details

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