

ekapa



EDITORIAL

These are bitter times in our lives. Crossroads have become a fountain of pain from which all are forced to drink. What do the vultures want with us? Our children cry day and night from hunger and the cold, and now, the ever falling rain.

You see we have become a symbol. A symbol of defiance and of the courage of all our struggling people. This too is a part of our land, so why must we be moved? Some of the community have sold out for silver. They are now like cochroaches in sour-milk.

The police with all their guns, could not do their business here. I read of Ayanda Silika. He is dead now. The police took him away. They said that he shot a policeman from Pretoria. The police said that they had to do their business early in the morning. Why could they not come in the brightness of the sun, for all to see? Because, we had made this place for us. That is a reason why our houses are burnt and our lives are scattered.

Ayanda Solika was 23 when they killed him. In 1976 he was 13 years old when Hector Petersen was killed. Like so many of these young comrades who battle without fear. I get strength from all this. The embers of Soweto 76 and the embers of Crossroads, are part of the same fire. And the Phoenix always rises from the ashes. Tomorrow we will still be here. And those who have gone will come back again. And we will live here like before. And the vultures can come, but those who run will be few. We the many will stand for we are gaining strength. Even now we are building again. Have they not heard our song of our people who fall, like leaves from a tree, but the tree still stands. That is a song of our lives.

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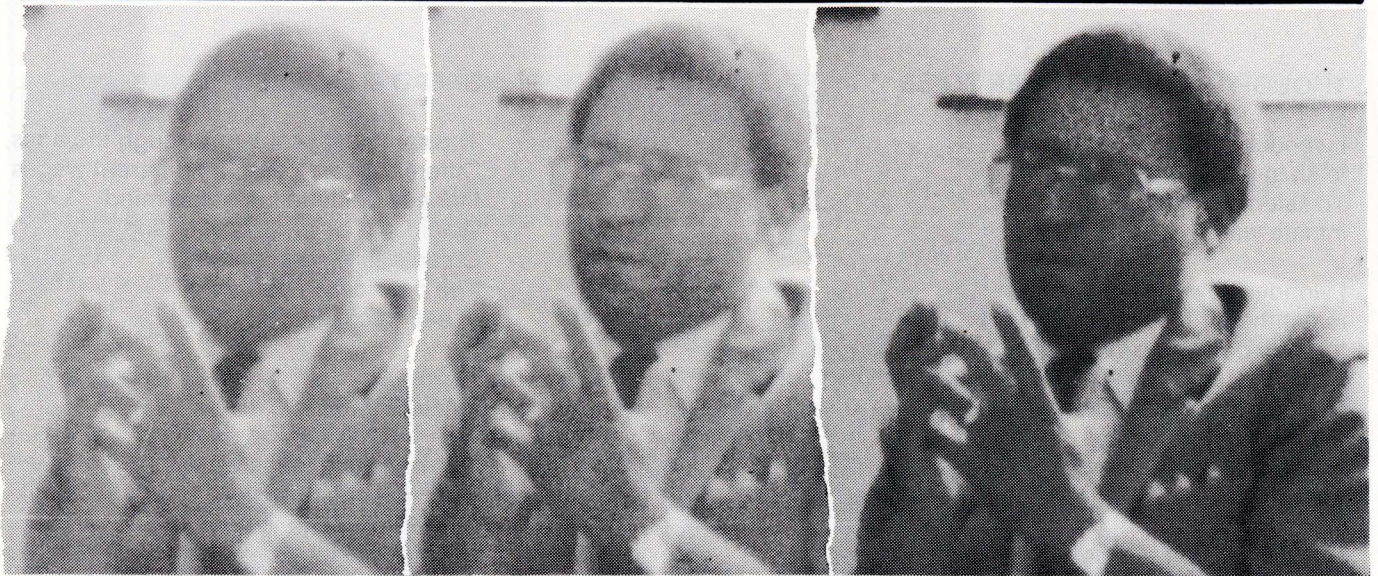
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Interview with Dr Allan Boesak



Dr Allan Boesak, the second youngest of eight children, was born in Kakamas in the north-western Cape. Reflecting on that time he says, "It was not an ideal place for a black kid to grow up in, even now". His father, a teacher at the local church-school, died when Allan was seven. The family moved to Somerset-West. "My mother was a strong influence after the death of my father, a person who kept the family together. She worked as a seamstress. With very little money she managed to give us some education... and taught us what in life was important".

He attended high school in Somerset-West: "there were teachers who taught me political values which I did not get immediately at home. In those days, with the struggle around "Coloured-Affairs" and the Treason Trial, one or two teachers tried to interpret for us the import, political or otherwise, of those times".

In 1963 the young Allan Boesak went to the seminary at the University of the Western Cape. Ordained in 1968. Ministered in Paarl, where he met and married the attractive Dorothea in 1969. And then there was his time in Holland.

"I left in 1970 a naive, pietistic Sendingkerk dominee. I came back much more of a theologian than I would ever have been if I had stayed in this country. For the first time I could really see what South Africa was like. Once you are out of this situation and you have a broader view of, not only of the situation you have lived in, but of the whole of South Africa seen in the context of the broader world. Holland.... a open, extremely tolerant, democratic society... the contrast with this country is just mind-blowing. I learnt to look at myself quite differently. They did not teach me Liberation Theology, they could'nt. But they give me the instruments of thinking theologically. This liberated me from the enslavement-theological kind of thinking that one gets in this country".

EKAPA went to visit Dr Boesak at his Bellville-South office. Here are some of the questions we asked him in our hour-long interview.

Q. The Government, when it is confronted and often to justify its deeds, often reminds us of the threat of Communism...."

"No, I do not see that as a threat. We need to differentiate between Communism on the one hand, as definite political and economical and religious philosophy.... I say religious because in a strange way it is..... and for instance Socialism. I do not believe it is right to simply say "Oh the SA government is trying to fight Communism", and to use Communism to scare people into submission. As if anything else than Apartheid will have to mean the virtual destruction of our society. What we will inevitably have is some sort of socialism society. I am myself what one could call a Democratic-Socialist."

Q. "And your view on Capitalism?"

"I certainly do not see in Capitalism any future that is meaningful for South Africa. It is a system wherein profits are all important and more important than people. I do not see it responding to the needs of the people".

Q. "Fidel Castro is noted to have said that the revolution and christians should enter into an strategic alliance. Your comments..."

"In any struggle, Christians have found two things: One, that the struggle for national liberation of a people cannot be "Christianised and it is not the property of the Church. And therefore the Church has no right to say.... we will do this out of our own conviction.... and the rest must wait until that they have either become christian, or where we can see a little place for them. That is silly. You participate in the struggle and you make your contribution as a christian. But there other people, for instance, Marxists, who say we do not want to participate as christians. Let them. And in that sense you work together, trying to achieve a goal which is more than just a goal for one particular group. That is one thing. That is not unique. In the Second World War, there was no hesitation whatsoever... for the countries of the west to make an alliance with Soviet Russia against Adolf Hitler. This in spite of all the claims of Christianity that Hitler was making at the time. And in spite of so much Christian support that Hitler was given in Germany. In that alliance the Russians lost something like 20 million people.

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Poetry

THOUGHTS OF A PRISONER TO BE

I wonder how it would be
to sit in jail,
To listen to the caged
inmate wail.

I wonder how it will be
to eat the food,
to sit all day and brood

About the world outside,
My family, my friends,
I hope they'll remember
me as I was.

I wonder how it will be?

Adrian Adams Std 7

BREAD & CAKE

The same old problem through the ages,
Different people earning different wages
Marie-Antoinette comes to mind
Would she be surprised to find
Bread's still so expensive,
The poor can't even think
of eating cake?

HARD TIMES

The butter's expensive
And so is the bread.
When I am dead,
Put a sandwich on my grave
Instead of flowers.

Peter Clarke

POETRY MUST NEVER DIE VOICES NEVER DRY UP

We with fists, rock, song and bullet
create a truth in this cesspool of lies
that must tell the story
in the blood and in the fire
of a simple humanness laid bare

Jericho's wall must crack
at the tremulous echo - "hayi-hayi"
and Nkosi Sikele must bind our hearts
to granite resolve

Every cornered heart, every desperate yearning
every broken limb, bruised head, every swollen eye
every birdshot back, hear these sounds
lighting paths, melting despair, telling truths.

Sounds to launch attacks, light fuses, pull triggers
for in our arsenal poetry
also sits

Let all who love their country
shout, dance, write, sing

Poetry must never die
Voices never dry up

Alson Welby

RAIN

My heart is a metronome
Beating to the strains of the falling rain,
My breathing is an echo
Vibrating to the sounds of the flowing rain,
I dissolve into a raindrop
That melts away on a window pane
Like a tear slipping down a cheek
Slowly liquefying
Into cipher.

Raindrops as round as earth
Purl puddles of fluid rain
Modulate into restless rivers from street to street
Roaring to rushes of flaming rain
I wish to merge into this myriad mass
That swells expectantly throughout a mirrored sky
Like a pulsating pendulum striking
Incessant crying
for freedom enshrined in future tenses.

Lisa Combrinck



Two Exiled Poets

Dennis Brutus and Arthur Nortje

Although vastly different in age, approximately twenty years, these two poets belong to an era that must surely be regarded as being one of the most significant decades in "black" South African literature - namely the sixties. Their lives too, crossed fairly frequently, beginning with Brutus being Nortje's schoolteacher for a short time in Port Elizabeth, until the latter's sad and tragic death in 1970, and it is quite clear that Brutus had a considerable influence on the young Nortje.

Brutus was born in 1924, in Salisbury, Rhodesia of South African parents. He was educated at Fort Hare College in the Cape and at the University of the Witwatersrand. He taught in various High schools until 1962 when he lost his job. Unemployed for a quite a time, he eventually found work as a tea-boy at Wits University. At this time he began participating fervently in anti-apartheid campaigns and was particularly active in campaigns against racism in sport.

He was subsequently banned from holding any meetings concerning politics and/or sport. It was also deemed illegal for his writings to be published in South Africa. In 1963 he was arrested for holding a meeting, and was released on £200 bail. He fled to Swaziland from where he tried to get to Baden-Baden in Germany where the Olympic executive committee were meeting. The Portuguese Secret Police at the Mozambique border handed him back to the S.A. Security Police. Realising that few people knew of his capture, he tried to escape but was shot in the back on a Johannesburg street. After his recovery he was sentenced to eighteen months hard labour on Robben Island. It was while there that he wrote the famous "LETTERS TO MARTHA". The poems took the guise of letters because he was forbidden to write poetry. It was written for his sister-in-law whose husband (Brutus's brother) had also been arrested.

On July 8, 1965 he was released from prison and was permitted to leave the country with his wife and their seven children (later eight) on an exit permit. After some years in London, where he helped to found the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (who were instrumental in South Africa's expulsion from the Olympic Games), he moved to the U.S.A. where he became involved at the United Nations, serving on their Defence Committee for a while. He is presently Professor of English at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He has published several anthologies of poetry. Unfortunately they are all banned in this country.

Arthur Nortje was born in the year 1942 in the Southern Cape town of Oudtshoorn where his mother still lives. He schooled in Port Elizabeth and later studied at the then newly formed University College of the Western Cape. He taught for a short time in Cape Town, but after receiving a scholarship, left for the U.K. to study at the highly respected Jesus College at Oxford.

After completing his studies there, he moved to Canada but returned to England a year later. Increasing loneliness and an unsuccessful love affair caused him to suffer from bouts of depression and he began using drugs such as LSD. On the 8th of December 1970, he



died mysteriously from an overdose of drugs. He was only twenty-eight years old.

It is difficult to assess when he began to write. He won the Mbari Prize, a prize also won but declined by Brutus, when he was only nineteen. (The Mbari Prize is offered by the celebrated Nigerian literary periodical, "BLACK ORPHEUS"). At that stage, however, he was still too concerned with trying to imitate his great model Gerard Manley Hopkins. Nortje had a great passion for reading and inquiry and felt as T.S. Eliot and Valery did, that poetry was something that had to be worked at "as the gods only grant you the first line." When he died he was arguably the most promising poet to emerge in Africa and it is a shame that the man and his work are not more widely known in his own country. A posthumous collection of his work "DEAD ROOTS" (Heinemann Africa Writers Series) was published in 1973.

Mark Espin

AmaJingqi

If you have a yen to get closer to Africa and her sounds, AmaJingqi, will start the hairs on the back of your neck standing on end.

Like the great AmaMpondo, this energetic youthful fusion which entirely made up of still-school-going youths, their music is a sunthesis of sounds and songs rooted in traditions from Africa.

Going through the annals of local music history, perhaps it's true that these two indigenous music groups have managed against heavy odds to win local and international acclaim for their true, undiluted African music.

AmaMpondo were the first traditional outfit from the Mother City to make national headlines.

While they were winning endless superlatives from critics for their breathtaking performances all over the country, in their shadow loomed a group of youngsters who sought and found their "tribal" home in the kwaJingqi territory somewhere in the Ciskei.

They also became a group of very enthusiastic exponents of true African music.

Hardly three years old, this outfit has shown without having to consult 'experts', that the force behind it's meteoric rise are young and gifted budding musicians from the 'ghettos', who have made known in very quick time of their existence.

Because they call themselves "the people's group", to support that claim for the past two years of their brief existence, they have, more than any other group around, combed the streets and corners of the Cape Peninsula either playing for charity or fun while on the other hand looking for fame and success.

Now their vigorous, but indigenous sounds, have now become part of this lovely city.

This lads and their dazzling dancers, need no introduction any more. They have grown in stature, and now have the world ahead of them. The material that makes up for their vibrant music is rooted in tradition from all over "Jingqiland".

They no more play second fiddle to the undoubtedly highly-successful AmaMpondo. They are now of age and as far as they are concerned there is no turning back.

Right now they are concentrating on developing their own resources and creating authenticity of their own by exploiting the vast reservoir of cultural wealth.

They once turned down what one would thought to be an offer of a lifetime to any local musician - a gig with the great Hugh Masekela in Botswana.

Besides their musical exploits, these young lads and lasses have to find time to continue with their school studies. That is why according to leader Kgolewa Mosala the group turned down the trip to Botswana.

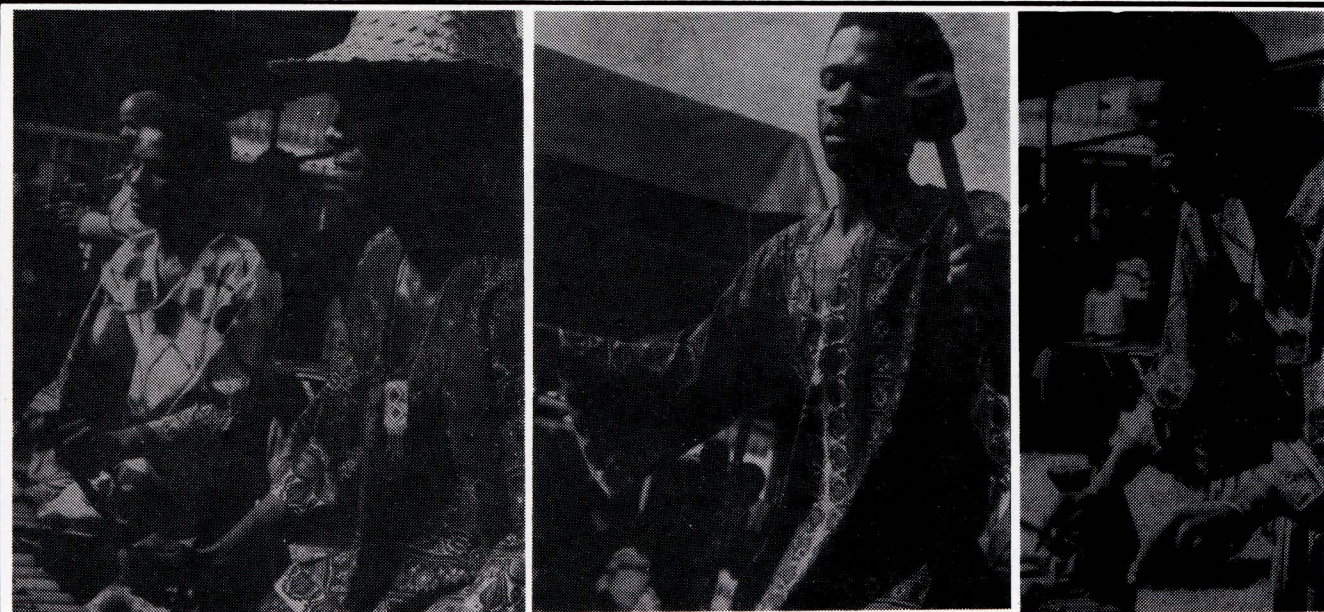
From time to time during off season, they pay visits in the remote areas of the North 'just to increase their influence on the sub-continent'.

"There were many occasions when prospective promoters failed in their cunning attempts to lure us into signing contracts.

"Contracts and the other things that tie one up, are not for us."

"AmaJingqi want to free and enjoy their music" said Kgolewa.

Sure, these lads have pride and they want to keep it that way.



Crossroads... A War Zone

For the uncritical observer, the battles between the "witdoek" vigilantes and the "comrades" is just another example of "black on black" violence. The writer of this article shows that things are not always what they seem to be.

The battle of Crossroads seems to be far from over. Fears are that the battle-lines will be extended to the KTC squatter camp and Guguletu township. The results of the conflict are devastating - 20,000 to 30,000 homeless, between 25 and 44 people dead and up to 3,000 homes burnt. Thousands of people are streaming into Site B at Khayelitsha as a benevolent Western Cape Development Board helps the homeless, provides tents and helps a variety of welfare organisations.

One should not, however, let the image of the "witdoeke" fighting the "comrades" obscure some of the underlying reasons for the present conflict. The net result has been that within less than a week the "witdoeke of Old Crossroads have been able to do what the government and the Housing man of the Year, Mr Timo Bezuidenhout, could not do - remove the three most coherent and consistently resistant squatter communities in the Crossroads complex.

SCARCE LAND

These communities, under the leadership of Mr Christopher Toise, Mr Melford Yamile and Mr Alfred Sipika, have borne the brunt of the conflict. Although some of the aspects of the conflict go back a long time, the present situation can be traced to struggles over scarce land and resources in the Crossroads complex. When Dr Gerrit Viljoen announced in October 1984 that all squatters - legal and illegal - would move to Khayelitsha, all the squatter communities categorically refused. This apparent deadlock between the government and the squatter leaders broke with the February 1985 conflict with the threat of removal to Khayelitsha, in which 18 people died.

UPGRADE SCHEME

Dr Viljoen, in an attempt to defuse the situation, offered Old Crossroads a long sought-after upgrade scheme. There was one problem as far as the government and the squatter leadership was concerned - too many people living on the land to make the upgrade scheme feasible. Mr Bezuidenhout managed, through what he calls contact and the offer of 18-month permits, to persuade a number of leaders to move to newly prepared Site C at Khayelitsha. By May last year, more than 35,000 people were living there. The squatter communities of Mr Toise, Mr Yamile and Mr Sipika continued to refuse to move unless given full rights to live and work in Cape Town.

CONTROL

In Old Crossroads itself, new dynamics were at work. When Mr Johnson Ngxobongwana came out of jail in the middle of 1985, having been arrested with the "comrades of New Crossroads and Nyanga over resistance to rent increases, he suddenly turned against progressive organizations in the area. The Cape Youth

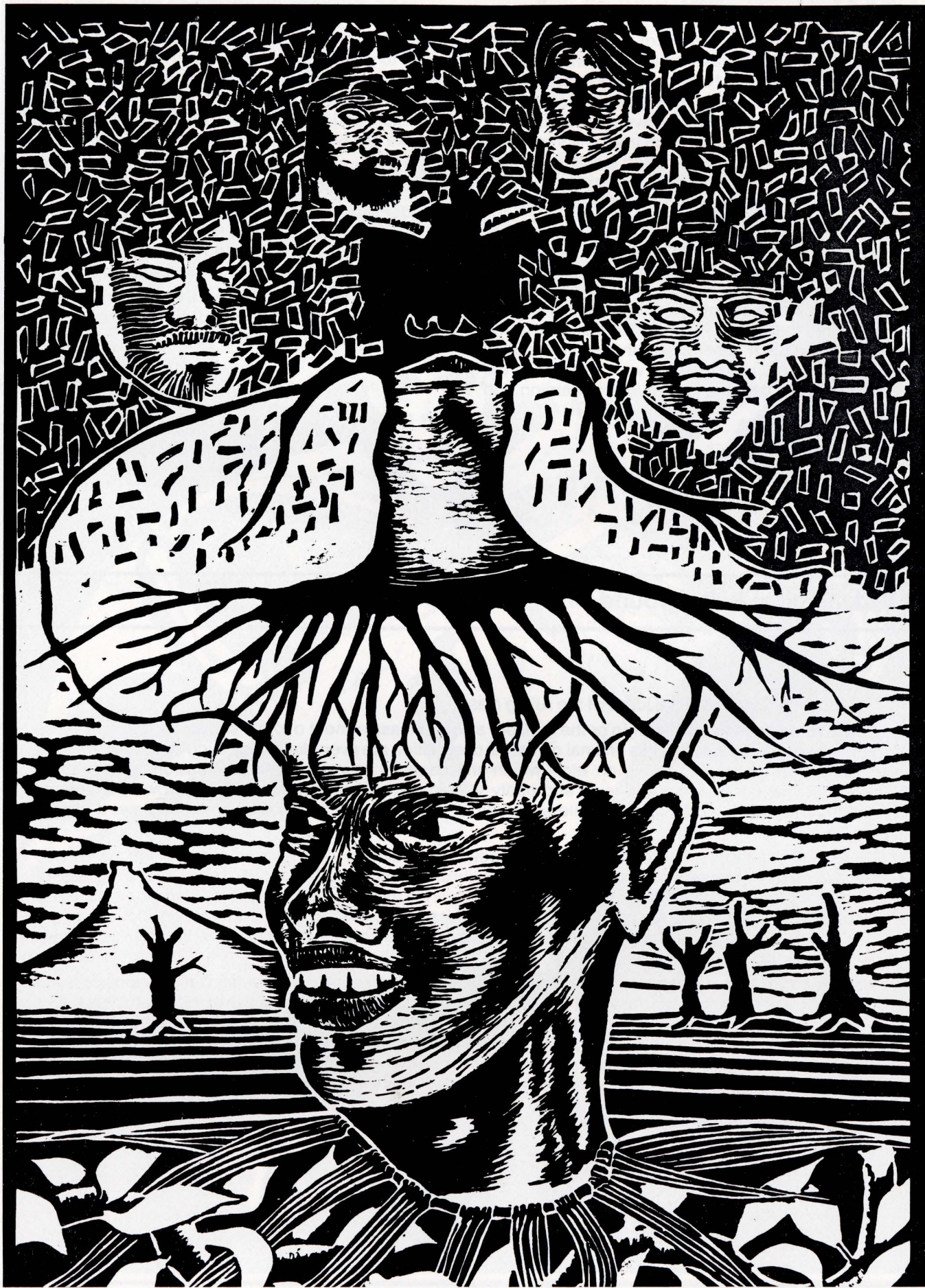
Congress (CAYCO), the United Woman's Organization (UWO) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) were under constant verbal attack inside Crossroads. These organizations had become a threat to Mr Ngxobongwana's political and economic control over New and Old Crossroads. CAYCO in particular had made allegations to the community that Mr Ngxobongwana and his executive were corrupt.

ELECTIONS

In an attempt to re-establish his credibility, Mr Ngxobongwana attempted to hold elections late last year. This was thwarted by the reluctance of outside organizations such as the Black Sash and the Urban Foundation to monitor them as requested. The elections took place, however, in February this year. These elections are critical to any understanding of the present conflict and implicit - if not explicit - government support of the Old Crossroads leadership. The committee (elected by little more than 5,000 votes in a community of at least 87,000 adults) is in effect a potential community council or black local authority. In a letter to the Minister of Constitutional Development, written one week after these elections, the new committee offered themselves a "a link between us as a community and Urban Foundation and your Planning and Development department.

WHITE PAPER

It is clear that the aspirations of this new committee of Mr Ngxobongwana fused with present government strategies of "orderley urbanization" and black local authorities. On its own admission, the government can no longer implement influx control and forced removals. In the eyes of the international community and in the townships in practise, centralized control is no longer feasible. In a recently published white paper on urbanization, the government made it clear that local authorities would be expected to take over controls of squatting and "orderly movement". What begins to emerge from the chaos and confusion of the past few days' events is a coincidence of interests between a Crossroads elite (more than 50 percent of the new committee are relatively affluent businessmen) desperate to maintain political and economic control over the area as well as upgrade Old Crossroads, and present government strategies at a number of levels: The removal of the communities of Mr Toise, Mr Yamile and Mr Sipika from the Crossroads satisfies the objectives of both parties.



A black cloud hung over Wynberg Supreme court on Monday May 19. There was a feeling of intense sadness when it was learnt of the harsh penalties imposed on 9 high school students. Certainly nobody could have imagined that the state would avenge in this way. Mothers wept openly after hearing their children's fate. These scenes again defeat the notion that the courts of law are the expression of justice. It is clear that in South Africa this is not the case and that it is designed to reflect the aims of a minority government.

The sentences of the 9 ranged from 12 months to 5 years on charges of public violence. A great many students had payed dearly for alleged public violence of last year. The harsh sentences of the 9 only reaffirms the belief that the state is determined to suppress any kind of resistance. It is not ironic that similar "public violence" incidents by ultra-right wing radicals in the Transvaal 4 days later are settled with a warning and light fines.

If maintaining law and order means causing grief and agony to youths (some not older than 14) then things are definitely very wrong. This is fascism gone mad. This type of action just breeds more frustration and discontent and the democratic student movement shall not take this lying down.

The 9 students were however later granted an appeal and were released on bail of up to R500 each.

The question should be asked whether our judicial system is as impartial as it professes. Of course not. A magistrate is far more prepared to accept the testimony of a police official than that of the accused.

Maybe it should be expected that the protectors of apartheid will use these methods undermine our struggle for a just South Africa.

The Ideological Battleground

"The dominant ideas are the ideas of the ruling class."

We are ruled not only by the whip or the gun, but also by an assortment of other subtle means. I call these "soft weapons". Included in this arsenal of mental destruction are everyday things such as the mass media -newspapers, magazines, television, etc. - which unashamedly lie, paint pictures of illusions and promote self-indulgence; the school curricula and badly written textbooks, which are shoved down the already choking throats of impressionable children; religion, which used as a drug, numbing the blows it cannot remove.

These "soft" weapons incessantly spray their deadly ammo, aiming to subvert the minds of the masses. To rule completely means to rule the minds of those you wish to subjugate. The capitaist class, the ruling class of our present society, has wielded these weapons effectively in the promotion of the only moral they recognize - profit making. They have successfully implanted their mines of distortion in peoples' consciousness. It is their norms and values that have become accepted as having always existed and that will remain immutable until judgement day.

It is within this context that "our poets and writes, our artists and all who want a better way" should approach their work. To "point towards the way things should be" requires a clear perspective of the ideological forces ranged against us. These have to be identified, analysed and laid bare in order to render their influence impotent. In fact, it becomes our duty to illustrate by whatever means at our disposal the rottenness and degeneracy of the system which control our lives and in so doing urging the downtrodden to take control of their own lives. The oppressed and exploited must break their chains of bondage so as to liberate their minds and herald in a new dawn.



KTC, like the better known Crossroads, is an area within the African townships of Cape Town where makeshift housing is seemingly permitted. Because of the system of racial capitalism, cheap labour reservoir areas like Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and all the other 'Bantustates' have increasingly failed to meet the day to day needs of the indigenous masses. These people have thus in large numbers moved to urban areas such as C.T., Jhb., P.E. and others in search of work and hopefully a better life. The racist urban authorities have, on the other hand deliberately, over the last two and a half decades, not provided sufficient and adequate housing for the ever-increasing worker population. These two factors have thus, to a large extent given rise to the so-called 'squatter areas' throughout the country.

The KTC, as in all other such communities, overcrowding, poor housing and terribly poor sanitary facilities exist. Frequent flooding occurs with perennial stagnant pools of dirty water. Curative health services are virtually non-existent. If, in addition, one takes into consideration the fact that the existing health care system discriminates against the disfranchised poor people of S.A. then it becomes abundantly clear that the people of KTC suffer many problems of ill-health and also that the overwhelming disease in the area is one of poverty. It is clear also that the residents of KTC have been and still are engaged in a revolutionary struggle for (1) the right to live and work in the Western Cape (2) the right to decent housing and (3) the right to adequate and accessible health care.

Presented with such a scenario, we as committed health workers who are involved in such communities are left with the by question 'what is the way ahead'

If we examine health care systems in some countries an important lesson can be learnt.

In China the crucial element in its health revolution is its total political commitment at all levels of government and society to health as an integral part of social equity.

The Cuban state has established a highly disciplined social order based on equity and social justice which has caused a dramatic rise in levels of public health.

The Indian State of Kerala has demonstrated that in a democratic system with a strong political commitment to equitable socio-economic development high levels of health can be attained. Widespread people's participation in political processes has resulted in more equitable distribution of land, income and public services such as education and health.

The underlying principle in the above exs. is that only a radical restructuring of economic, social and political institutions can solve the problem of ill-health; the socio political commitment is crucial.

Surely then it is reasonable to deduce that through involvement in the health arena we could in some way influence the socio-political situation. If further we believe as a lot of us here do, that the working class should lead and coordinate exploitation and that the struggle is a total one that has to be conducted at many levels including the economic, educational and health (amongst many others), then it becomes an important

task for us to organise health workers on the factory / hospital floor and at the community level. We must promote then also alternatives to the existing unjust bureaucratic health structures. It would be our duty to demystify health, to eradicate the concept that health is a commodity and replace it with the concept that health is everyone's right and everyone's responsibility. Our involvement in community programmes is legitimate because health worker trade unions are weak and the workers are poorly organised. Through our involvement consciousness will be raised by our endeavours to organise a democratic health care system. This will give rise to stronger worker/community structures. The oppressed workers will realise that they through their own efforts will be determining the destiny of some aspect of their lives and will want to apply this all round - this is realising worker power.

This struggle to end exploitation would thus be conducted at two levels (1) promoting the organisation of the unorganised workers (2) democratic involvement in community health projects of the entire community in order to promote social transformation.



Martin Stevens



Artists Against Apartheid

Over fifty top British musicians and artists have signed up with Artists Against Apartheid, the cultural initiative set up in solidarity with the US-based "Artists United Against Apartheid", the grouping who produced the "Sun City" LP and video.

The list of support is too long to reprint here, but includes names such as UB40, Harry Belafonte, Sade, Aswad, and movie producer, Sir Richard Attenborough. Other people supporting include disc jockeys, stage and movie actors, producers and musicians. Members of the exiled South African community have also involved themselves, with Hugh Masekela, Julian Bahula, plus the ANC's Amandla Cultural Group high on the listing.

AAA was launched in London on April 15, and has already embarked on a series of street concerts. Plans include the recording of a record, and the staging of several large music festivals later this year. All projects will benefit Anti-Apartheid causes.

But AAA does not see itself as a mere fundraising vehicle: "We aim to increase British public awareness as to the nature of Apartheid", they say. And there seems to be a real interest to support the cause of a "free, non-racial and democratic South Africa," by cultural means".

Two of the key movers behind the campaign are Jerry Dammers (vocalist and keyboardist with the Special AKA's), and Dali Tambo, son of ANC leader, Oliver Tambo. The Special AKA's are the group whose "Nelson Mandela" single hit the British charts a two years ago, and AAA now plan to re-record the single, releasing a new version which features some of the musicians and artists which have signed up with AAA.

Already British reggae poet Benjamin Zephaniah has teamed up with Bob Marley's group, The Wailers, to re-record his song, "Free South Africa". Work for the record was recently completed in Marley's Tuff Gong studios, and a June/July release date is expected.

The project has already received prominent coverage in the New Musical Express. "Members of AAA will not play Sun city, but they will go and play in a free non-racial South Africa, and be welcomed, not only as artists, but as fellow freedom fighters. The purpose of the launch is to send a clear message of support to the oppressed people of South Africa", Dammers told the NME.

We, the youth of Ekapa, know only the Apartheid reality of Group Areas, bad schools, unemployment, street-life and overcrowded houses. For some of us, the idea of "culture" and "music" as a liberating force could seem ridiculous.

However, a growing number of progressive musicians, concert-goers and general jazz enthusiasts are challenging this view. Some of them have organized themselves into a Cultural Resource Group. Their mission is not just to create "popular" music, but to promote and develop revolutionary music. Sounds weird? Read on.

Here is one view on South Africa today: It is an exploitative and racist mess. There is only one path left to long-term justice, decent living standards and peace for all. A combination of hard-hitting revolutionary struggle and powerful mass organisations, will smash the apartheid machinery. State power will be transferred into the hands of the majority. So the theory goes. And some says that anything that distracts the masses from this path - disco, the church, soccer, national education and so on is dangerous. They say it weakens the forces of resistance and strengthens the hand of the enemy.

But lets look at this thing more closely. Ordinary South Africans participate in organized activities everyday. They go to work, school, church, to sport - all activities which have specific social functions i.e. they are tools with uses. They either make you understand the world or they confuse you. They make you strong and proud or weak and dependant. They make you selfish and individualistic or responsible and sharing. They make you feel part of a nation and increasingly also a class. Or, make you feel like a hotnotjie, kaffertjie, coolie or whitey.

All these activities which we call cultural activities can be examined carefully and we can expose whose interests they serve.

Now some things are simple. If you voted in the tri-cameral elections or sing coon tunes at the whites only state opera house - you are participating in the culture of apartheid. Kla gelag. But things are not that simple. When the Sendingkerk declares apartheid a heresy can we still regard the church as a conservative force? When Adre Odendaal forgoes his chances of being a Springbok cricketer to join a Sacos cricket team can we say that sport distracts him from the struggle? When 5,000 boycotting Bush students rise to their feet in applause to the opening sounds on "Manenberg" can we say that Basil Coetzee is leading them astray? Of course not.

The point is that every single aspect of the cultural life of the country is a battle-ground. Between the interests of the majority - exploited and downtrodden as they are and the minority - rich and racist as they are. More often than not, it is the minority that has won these battles. They have defined the churches and schools we go to. They have controlled the way we play sport and music we listen to. They have been able to exercise this cultural domination because they control the resources - the wealth of the country and the state - the parliament, army, police etc. But they have never had total control. As more and more people are drawn into the

struggle, as international support increases and mass organisations are strengthened, so the oppressed are able to push back frontiers of domination more and more. Looking at education over the past year alone we can see how clear this is. Here the racists are forced to accept that we can hope the power. That nothing will stop us in our fight for a peoples education. But what about music.

Today the people of South Africa are building a new nation. We are resisting attempts to exploit our labour. Everywhere the demand for a new nation, a new way of living is taking root. Along with this, a cultural character of the nation is slowly taking shape. Just as freedom won't happen one magic day-but will be built in a process which is happening now, so patriotic musical forms are emerging now as a process.

If we look at the youth here in Ekapa what are the elements of this process. What is the musical raw material which the youth of the oppressed in the Western Cape take as their own? What are the elements of the process.

The first obvious component can be heard every weekend in most townships - disco's, jazz, Shakatak, Spyrogyra, George Benson kind of sounds reproduced by the leading bands in Cape Town. However politically improved, those rhythms and sounds have defined the musical sensibilities of most youth here.

The second musical influence which oppressed youth see as their style is Mbanganga "township jive". Driving repetitive bass lines Mbangana matched by a strident brass section is the hallmark of this sound. Dollar Brands "Manenberg" is probably the most well known e.g. through the Dynamics, Mapantaula'a, are producing a more contemporary sound in this vein.

It is useful to note that township jive is influenced strongly by traditional mainstream jazz - the techniques of each musician developes around themes while playing a number being an example of this. The general origins of this sound lie in the Marabi of the '50s.

The third element of popular musical culture is the "ethnic sound". Though not visibly influential on the urban music scene, groups like Andrew Tracey Steele Band, Amaondo and Amagazi are always popular. When we dance and applaud their acts we also express our awareness of our heritage as non-racists patriotic South Africans to build their own nation and culture without Capab, Satv and Gé Korsten.

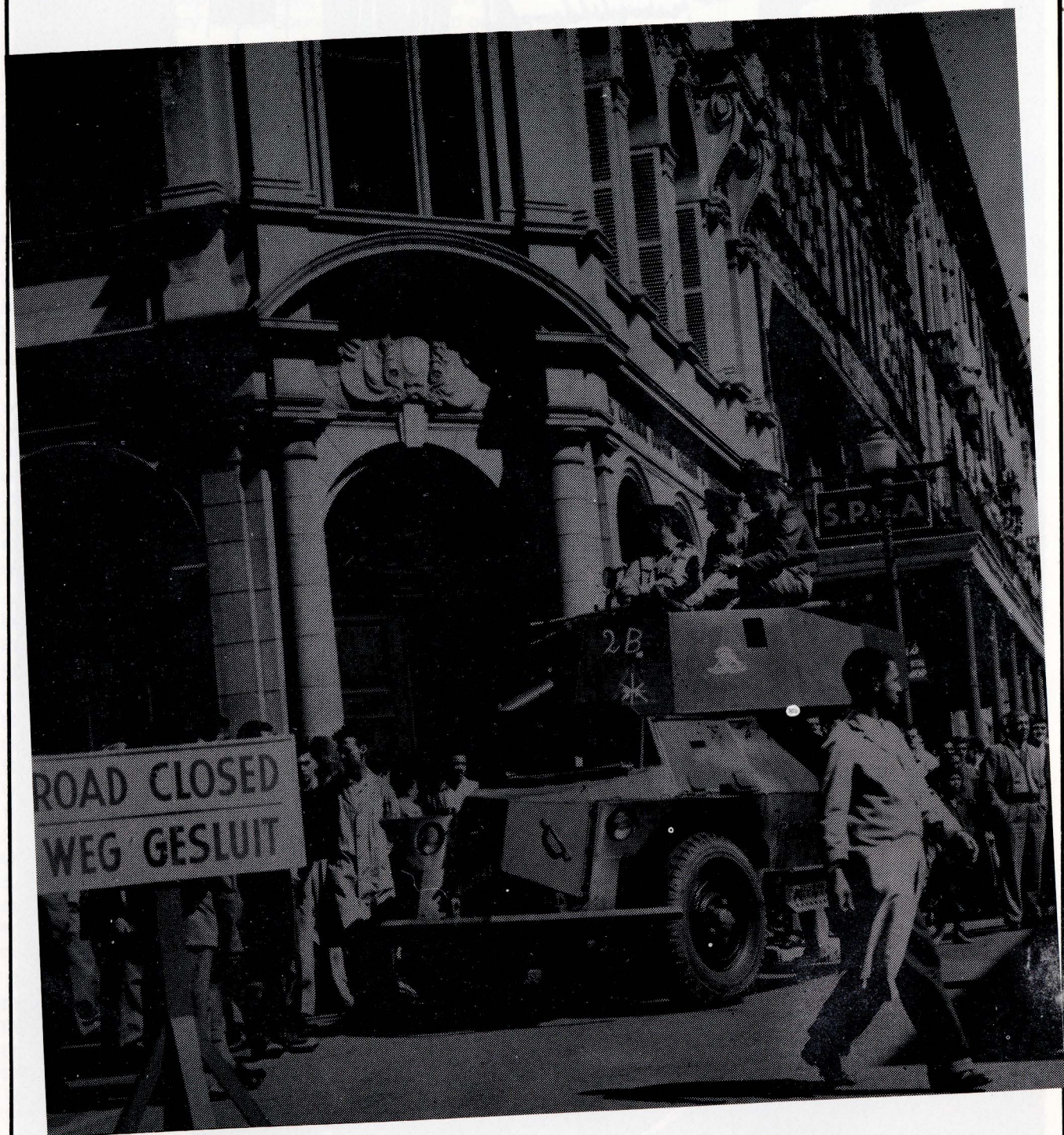
Musicians who produce these kinds of music function under an apartheid society. Their legitimate activity as groups and individuals is for financial security. More often than not this leads to a stamping out of creative contributions to a peoples music. Their lack of contact with the mainstream of political struggle also means that they more easily accept the elitist, racist, competitive and greedy values of the enemy.

Music is a powerful force in the life of our people. For it to play its proper role as a uniting and inspiring activity within a general culture of resistance, much work needs to be done.

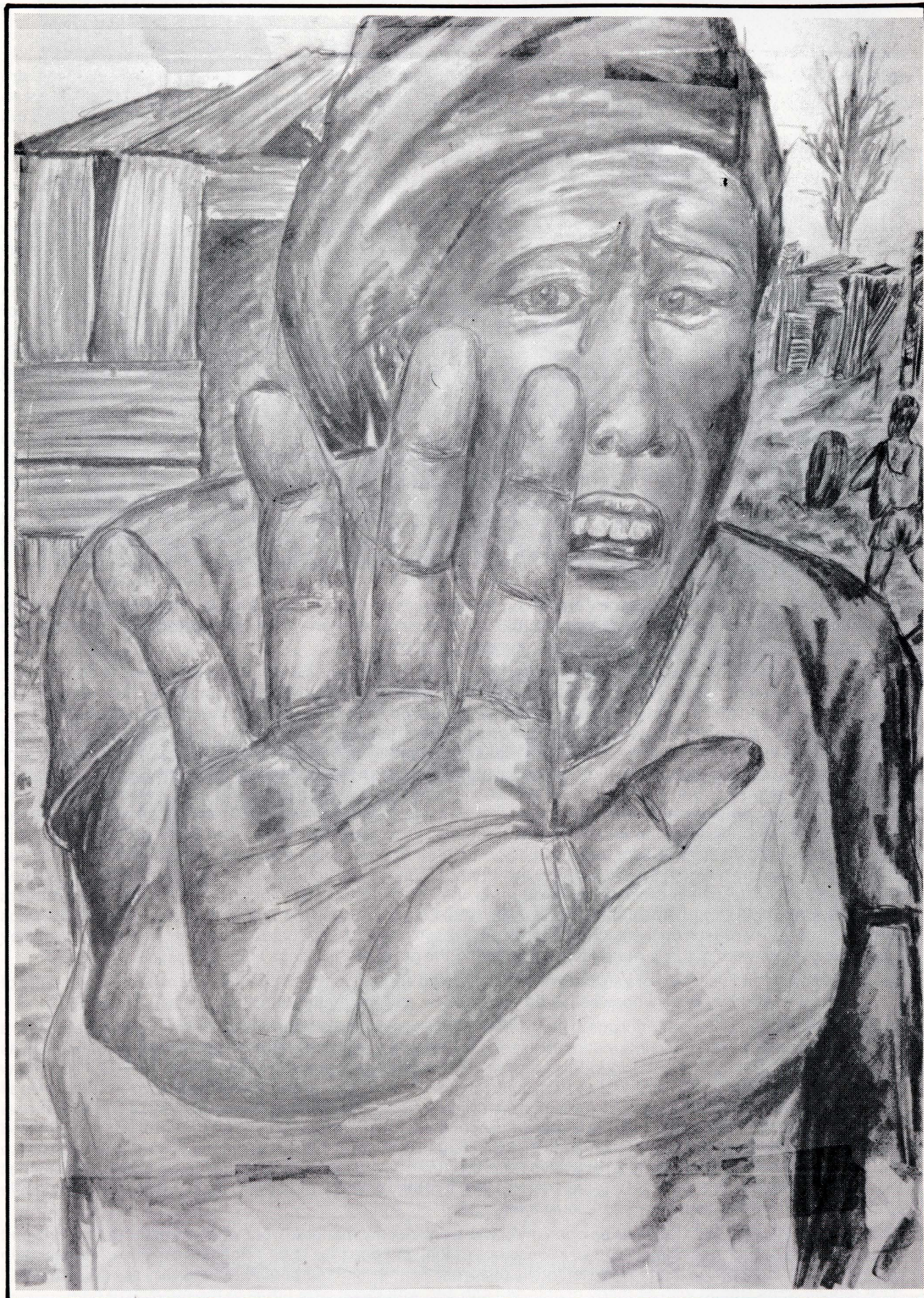


Hanover Park Fun Run

On Saturday morning the 12 April '86 saw Hanover Park Youth turn out in full force to compete in a 6 km "Run for Mandela" race through their neighbourhood.



Jerome Meyer



So in that sense there was an alliance, and there have been alliances ever since that time, and I think we are discovering that there are certain things that Christians believe that ought to be done in the world, that are not so alienated from certain things that people who hold onto the Marxist philosophy would want themselves. And the problem is; whether we would be mature enough to recognise that, and to therefore work with those people without given up one's Christian convictions, and simply try to be a witness for Jesus Christ in all those situations in which we find ourselves.

Q. How far can the Christian and the Marxist venture on the path of revolution together?

It really depends on the situation. It's difficult, because there are Marxists who say that, without the necessary violence and participation in that, change cannot come. Then again, that is not unique. There are Christians who say that. I have difficulty because I would probably differ from both. For better or for worse I have come to the conclusion that what the Gospel really asks of us is to walk the way of peace as far as that is possible. I believe that the Christian Church, when it decided to join Constantine in his state religion and to embrace violence as an instrument of "preserving the Kingdom of God", did lose sight of the Gospel. It did not have the Gospel on its side in that decision. I am one of those people who do not believe in the just war theory. I have great difficulties with the Christian Church's justification of war and violence over all the centuries. Therefore I would say that I believe that a Christian should participate in the struggle to the very end, but I would probably say that - and I say this with some hesitation and fear - rather than taking the life of another person, I would probably give my own life first.

I think that violence is such a destroyer of yourself, as well as of the other person, it takes away every single alternative for human life and for reconciliation because the other person is no longer there to be reconciled with. And these things worry me. I do not say that there can never be any moment where a person can say I have tried my best.... I've worked in every way that I can.... now I have found that just in order to hold onto something that is worthwhile, we have to stop this other destroyer with violence by destroying him before he destroys us and everything that is worthwhile. That sort of situation may arise.... but when people make that decision, I will not judge them. I will support them with prayer, I will talk to them, I will tell them you must please know what you are doing.... It is not easy, I do not like any glib talk and romanticisation of violence and the killing of other people.

Q. "The Nicaraguan priest and poet, Ernesto Cardenal, says that when... a people make a revolution their culture becomes revolutionary. To what extent is that true of the church here. To phrase it differently... why don't we have Base Communities as in some Latin American countries."

"If one understands the Gospel correctly, then the church by its very nature is revolutionary. A church in a revolutionary situation must, if it is truly the church, must undergo very fundamental changes. The church in SA does not understand that it is a church in a revolutionary situation. We still believe that the church is the bishop.... or its decision-making synods and assemblies or high profile church leaders.... and that the church has not spoken until they have spoken.... Essentially when the church speaks it is merely only words. The church is where the people of God participate in God's struggle for justice and freedom... where on the streets they make the Gospel come alive, outside the structures of the church. And we put too much faith in these structures. And why we don't have Base Communities... the situation here has a character all its own. We are not Latin America... one of the biggest mistakes we can make is to romanticise the situation there. Not that it is not good over there.... but thinking that because it is this way in LA it should be here. I am very excited about the church because I see young people, who under normal circumstances would have left the church long ago in disgust and disillusionment, and still they are there. And they when they participate in their own way in the struggle, they do so as Christian young people. I have seen mothers and fathers and workers and priests and pastors who were not told by a bishop.... go there.... and while the bishops and the moderator were still up there trying to work out a response and they would face the press... the people led by their local pastors were actually out on the scene facing the guns and the dogs and the teargas.

Q. "It has been critically said of you that you are not rooted enough in the community.... and there is the issue of mandate... and that is on whose behalf do you speak.... and the matter of responsibility"

One can understand all those criticisms. If they are valid I will take them very seriously. I do not believe that they are true tho'. I have ecumenical and international responsibilities which at some level have got nothing to do with SA as such. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches is very much concerned about SA. Wherever I go, I somehow represent this country and the struggle and whatever happens here. But on another level there are other churches all across the world. And they have problems which are uniquely their own. My being the president of an international organisation places demands on me that goes way beyond our particular needs in this country. That I'm not rooted enough is certainly not fair. One of the things that will remain with me is when I came into a very rural dorp once and was surprised with an incredible reception. I was then introduced to the crowd as the peoples Rev. That to me I will remember as long as I live. If people feel that and they feel they have the right to say that... then I think that people who say that one is not rooted enough, must think again.

The question of a mandate is always an open one; where do I get my mandate from when something happens and you need to respond immediately? I'm very conscious of that and one tries to be extremely sensitive. I hope that in the things that I have said... that I have not totally distorted the ideals of our people. Whenever I say something... I have regular consultation with as many people as I can and with those who I trust in the movement here."



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All material for publication to be sent to:

EKAPA
P.O. BOX 424
ATHLONE
7760

Front and Back of Cover by Sydney Holo and Albert Hess respectively.



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