

Southern Africa REPORT

Vol. 11 No. 2

January 1996

Southern Africa's Tragedy?

A N G O L A

It's Not
Over

Z I M B A B W E

ESAP's
Fables

M O Z A M B I Q U E

Twenty Years After:
Recolonization in
Mozambique

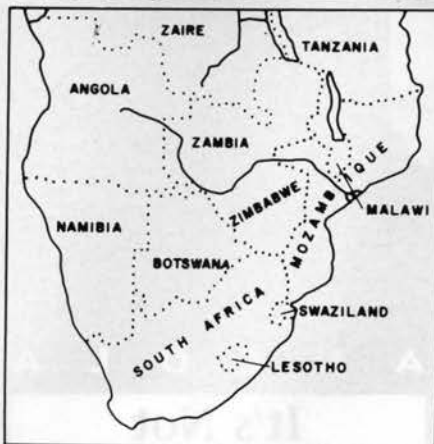


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Southern Africa REPORT

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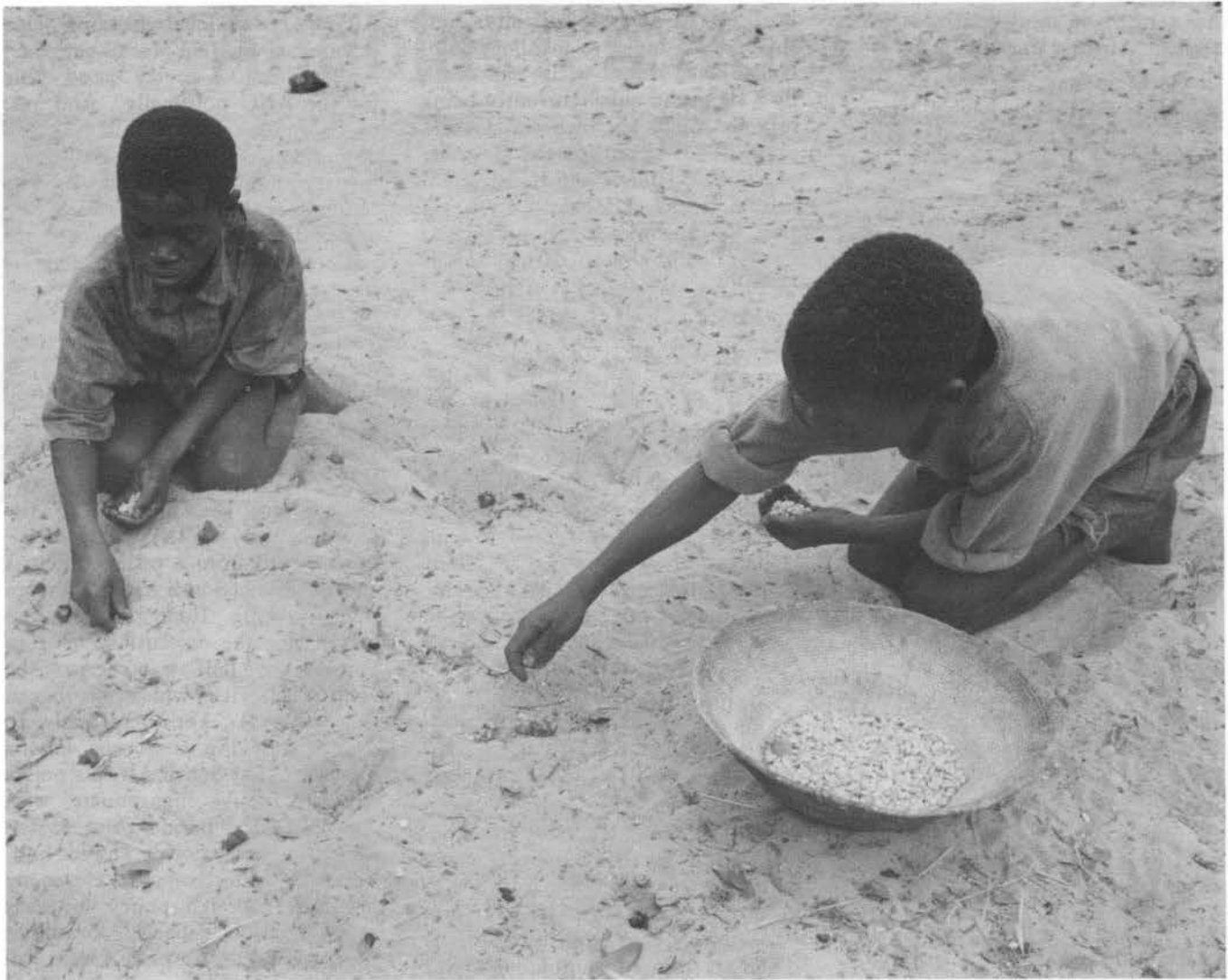
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Angolan children picking up grains of corn spilled during unloading of relief food

Southern Africa's Tragedy?

Did anyone notice? 1995 was a year of anniversaries in southern Africa: twenty years of independence in Angola and Mozambique, fifteen in Zimbabwe. Yet even in these countries themselves there seemed little enough to celebrate.

Not that anyone would wish a return to the bad old days of white minority rule in the region, of course.

But the fact remains that, increasingly, southern Africa is itself less easy to distinguish from the rest of the continent than it seemed to be in the days of liberation movements and righteous struggles against antique colonialisms and anachronistic pigmentocracies. True, the region did provide Africa with its one recent moment of "good press"

in the western media: the 1994 South African election. Now, however, it is the horrors of Rwanda and — with the quasi-judicial murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa — Nigeria that are much more likely to grab the headlines. And, as if in tandem, the countries of southern Africa seem merely to be yielding up their own variants of what Colin Leys

has termed, in more continent-wide terms, "Africa's tragedy."

Such, in any case, is the clear implication of this issue's trio of lead articles on the past year's anniversaries: Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Note, however, that Leys' interpretation of Africa's tragedy is rather different from that normally to be found in our newspapers. In recent writing (notably in his article "Confronting the African Tragedy" in *New Left Review*, #204 and in his new book, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*) he does not ignore (or excuse) the failures of Africa's political elites, and he is also cognizant of the fact that African crises often take on an "inter-tribal" cast. But he does insist on linking these realities to the globalizing tendencies of a currently ascendant transnational capital: to the false promise of an all-wise and benevolent market, and, absolutely central, to "the acceptance of the freedom of capital to move across national boundaries" without let or hindrance.

Indeed, as he has written, the "death of society" which this kind of market utopianism (delivered, most often in Africa, in the name of "Structural Adjustment") has imposed on the continent has *not* resulted in "a market-based social and economic recovery based on individuals and their initiatives in the marketplace. It has been, instead, an ethnic-based regression, as people have been pushed back on reliance on precolonial social bonds for survival; and in some cases it has resulted in economic and social catastrophe, aggravated by the legacy of three decades of superpower sponsored militarization."

Leys' conclusion: "that, for all countries of the world, recapturing control over their own destinies requires the re-establishment of social control over capital and the resubordination of markets to social

purposes." As he also points out, this is as much a challenge for Canadians – faced with "the death by a thousand cuts" currently being inflicted upon our own society and sense of social purpose by the likes of Chrétien, Harris and Klein – as it is for Africans. The only difference is that, "for the weaker regions, such as most of sub-Saharan Africa, this is literally a matter of life and death"!

Leys has ideas about what might be done in and for Africa – in terms of creative initiatives dealing with issues of debt, trade, aid and development strategy – but, as he further states, "such ideas would come to seem rational only in a world that was in the process of rejecting the currently predominant ideology of the market." His sobering conclusion: "While this world must come, it is not yet in sight, and meantime the African tragedy will unfold."

Unfortunately, there is little in the picture drawn in our three lead articles to qualify the starkness of this conclusion. Africa's tragedy has indeed moved south – even if somewhat unevenly (the situation in Zimbabwe described by Richard Saunders is different from that in Angola, detailed by Victoria Brittain, and Angola in turn is different from Mozambique). Nor are the threads of resistance to such a fate – a resistance that is certainly present in each of these countries – always easy to discern. These articles are therefore as much challenge as reportage. "While this world must come . . .", writes Colin Leys. As he would certainly acknowledge, there is a great deal of political work to be done – in Africa, in Canada, elsewhere – to make that statement more than just another avowal of faith, utopian in its turn.

* * *

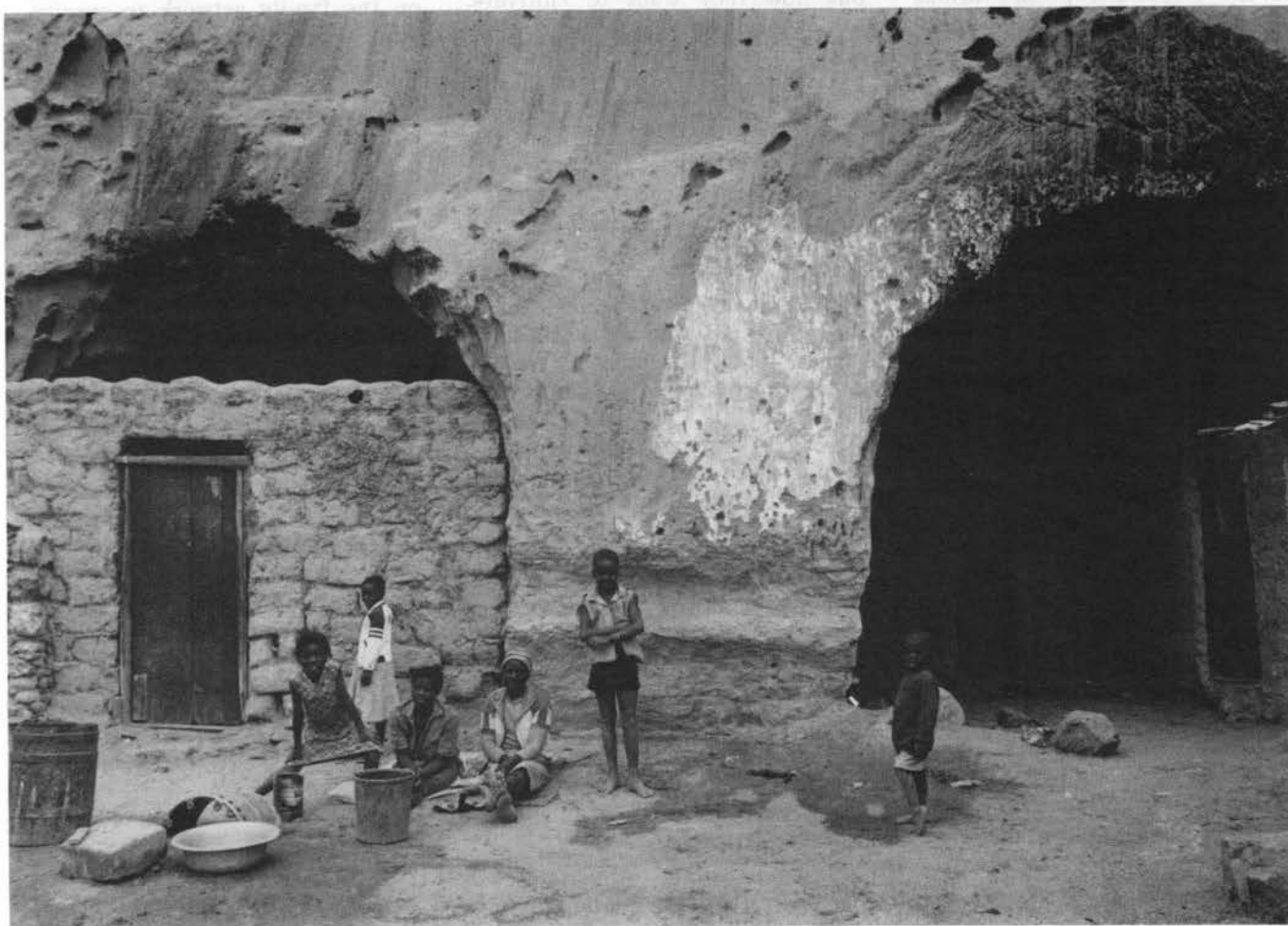
Is South Africa the exception that proves the rule in the region? The answer must be "yes and no," as our coverage in this issue of South

Africa's recent local elections helps document. As Hein Marais suggests, it has been a pretty good year for the ANC politically. And yet, as he further testifies, finding the economic key to unlocking progress for large numbers of South Africans remains an elusive goal for the ANC, one full of especially dangerous portent for the future. This is most true of Kwazulu-Natal where, for various bad reasons (as David Pottie reports), the local elections did not take place. Indeed, in that province the continuing escalation of violence suggests that, for many South Africans, southern Africa's tragedy is now.

Nor are the tensions of the time – and of the continent – absent even from a rather different sphere, that of South Africa's foreign policy-making. Here, ironically, we return to the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, half way across the continent, with which we began this editorial. For there seems to have emerged a consensus among observers that South Africa's policy of "constructive engagement" with Nigeria in the period prior to the execution was seriously flawed: half-hearted, ineffective, too clever by half ("SA foreign policy in crisis after Nigerian debacle," headlines *Southscan*, for example). As you will see below, these events lend added point to the debate about "the huge shortcomings in South African foreign policy" here forwarded by Dan O'Meara – in response to articles on the subject in a previous issue by Roger Southall and Peter Vale (both of whom have also provided replies, at once gracious and thoughtful, to O'Meara's own intervention).

The truth shall make us free? Not necessarily. But our feeling is that the pursuit of greater clarity, a pursuit that premises this kind of debate, can't do the cause of resistance to the tragic overtones of southern Africa's current plight any harm either.

Angola: It's Not Over



John Liebenberg - Impact Visuals

BY VICTORIA BRITTAIN

Victoria Brittain of The Guardian is SAR's Angola correspondent.

President Eduardo Dos Santos finally got the White House invitation (on December 8) that signals the Angolan government's long-sought acceptance by the Clinton administration. But it has come too late, and after too much ambivalence about US attitudes to Jonas Savimbi and the rival power base he has created at Bailundo. More than ever Angola is on the brink of catastrophe, torn by unprecedented social crisis, its political direction lost, and the state virtually collapsed. The Unita general who warned in

late 1992 that their movement was poised to turn the country into another Somalia if they did not win the election spoke more literally than anyone could have realized at the time.

The post-election war did not end with the Lusaka Protocol signed more than a year ago, and this recent period has been perhaps the most destructive of all the twenty years of war since independence in 1975. All this added to the legacies of under-development has left two generations of Angolans burned out from a struggle fired by overwhelming external forces. Unita, the proxy of those forces

– South Africa and the Reaganite United States in particular – has survived its own profound internal crises over the last four years thanks to its patrons, and is still able to deny the government control over large swathes of the country.

The international community's long destructive relationship with Angola – from CIA-funded mercenaries in 1975 to full-scale South African invasions of the 1970s and 80s – has merely entered a new phase with the United Nations' myopic policies of the last three years. The Western strategy of appeasement of the Unita leader culminated in the offer of the Vice-Presidency to Jonas

Savimbi. This did nothing to improve stability at home and externally it deepened confusion as Savimbi travelled to Europe and various African countries presenting himself as reconciled to his new role.

In fact, the key elements of the Lusaka agreement – sending home the mercenaries (mostly from Zaire and South Africa), releasing prisoners, effectively creating cantonment and demobilization or integration into the army, allowing freedom of movement of the population throughout the country – have been delayed for months by Unita. Aid agencies working in many provinces of this vast country, which has been awash with arms for decades, report constant military tension and outbreaks of violence, often linked to the competition for food, but also over strategic points of territory. Recently the tension was vastly increased when the Unita Chief of Staff, Arlindo Chenda Pena 'Ben Ben', claimed to have been the victim of an assassination attempt in Luanda and pulled out of talks at the Joint Commission and returned to Bailundo.

Despite the cease fire agreed at Lusaka last year and reinforced verbally in later meetings between the President and Savimbi, government military sources say that Unita has continued to receive large quantities of military supplies by both air and land, through Zaire. UN aid officials in the northern provinces say the deliveries are not even camouflaged and are an open secret within UNAVEM (the UN's peace monitoring force). The deployment of UNAVEM's 7,000 troop monitors has been repeatedly hindered by incidents with Unita.

In an interview earlier this year the army commander, General João Matos warned that the government was in danger of being suffocated by Unita's waiting game which was producing an intolerable level of social tension. "Why does

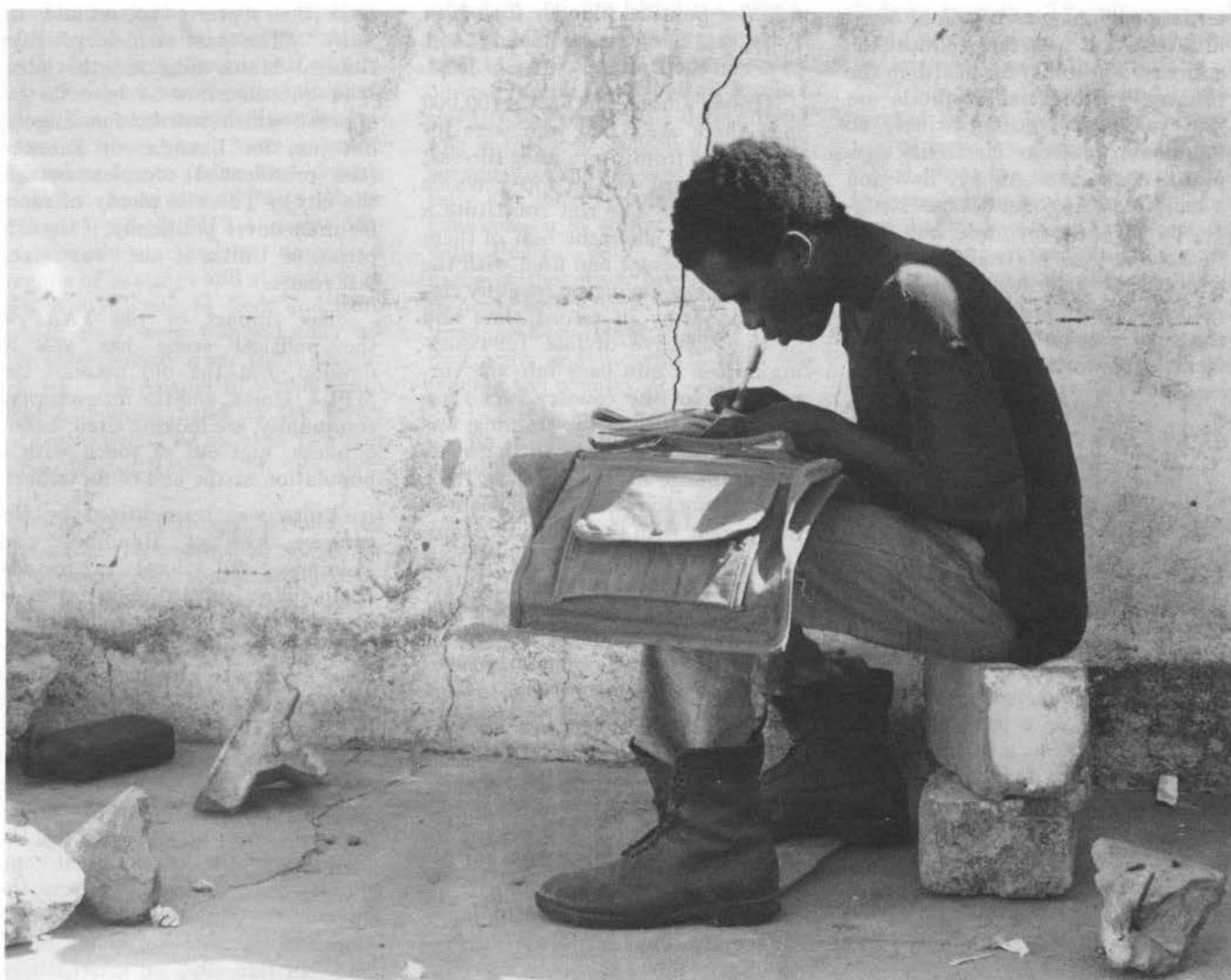
Unita prevent movement? The population can't go on living like this – they understood it in wartime, but now they want to cultivate, to engage in commerce – the strikes and criminality we see now are the manifestations of intolerable crisis." The General's picture of the situation on the ground contradicts the optimistic presentations of the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali and his Special Representative in Angola, Alioune Blondin Beye, whom the General accuses of a very superficial analysis that has led them to "play with fire." "We can not go on pretending that all is well; the reality is not that. Twenty kilometres from here, ask the people if they see peace – they see deaths, mines, no peace."

It says much about the weakness of the Angolan political leaders who have sanctioned the time-wasting negotiations with Unita since late 1992, that none of them has publicly voiced misgivings about the UN's performance or the paralysed peace process. It may also reflect the fact that few of them leave Luanda to see the ravaged and isolated provincial capitals for themselves. If they do travel, it is usually abroad.

Meanwhile, the economic situation is so bad that for urban dwellers of every class the daily preoccupation is with having enough to eat. Inflation has rocketed daily ever since the war started again after the 1992 election. The fighting cut off most of the country from commerce, slashed agricultural production as three million or more people fled off the land to the cities, and virtually the entire industrial production base was destroyed in Unita's attacks on the towns in 1993. Strikes have recently hit almost every sector of the economy, including hospitals and schools in some provinces. In many places civil servants have not been paid for months. But even when they are paid, their wages are utterly inadequate after a se-

ries of huge devaluations, and everyone who works in the public sector must either have a second job or rely on the family network to survive. A university professor, for instance, earns \$25 a month, a civil servant \$3, a nurse \$1. As a result the intellectual capital of the country is being lost as cadres desert the state sector for low level jobs in the aid industry where payment is dollar-linked and they can realistically expect to earn at least 100 times more. In a grave portent for the future, Luanda university is only functioning at minimal level with four out of six faculties closed or almost closed and the remaining teachers either part-timers with other jobs (especially lawyers), or foreigners brought in on international salaries that are a devastating drain on the country's education budget. A generation of intellectuals is being lost to the country and the next generation is not being developed. Last summer an Angolan student in Moscow committed suicide after his scholarship had not been paid for seven months and his petitions and hunger strikes outside the embassy produced no help or concern. It was a death that reflected the utter despair of even the most fortunate young.

Chianga, Angola's internationally known agricultural research institute on the outskirts of Huambo, is a symbol of how the intellectual future has been lost with the destruction of Unita's war compounded by neglect and incompetence from the government. Savimbi lived on the campus with a secure three-room underground bunker beneath his house, during the occupation of Huambo from 1993 to November last year. After he left, the research laboratories and offices were looted by government soldiers and then by a destitute population reduced to an economy based on theft. Last summer, the last valuables from Chianga, priceless original books from the library, appeared for sale in the market in Huambo.



anonymous — Impact Visuals

The war, the liberalization of the economy imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the late 1980s, and remarkable incompetence, have contributed to a wild capitalism here in the last year or so. The provinces of Lunda in the northeast on the Zaire border are anarchic. The country's diamonds are mined in industrial quantities by business interests from France, Britain and South Africa protected by shady military alliances that appear to have produced, in some places, a tacit division of the spoils between Unita and some elements (whether former or current it is impossible to know) of the government army. Ominously, in

recent weeks Unita has gone on the offensive in several key areas in the Lundas.

In Luanda, the corruption of the political class and military officers (mostly no longer serving) is ostentatious. New restaurants and mushrooming construction in the capital contrast dramatically with the wild children in rags, amputees in old army uniforms, and naked mad men with open sores who roam the streets begging. Advertisements on radio and television offer the new bourgeoisie an escape from these realities with remodelled kitchens or holidays in South Africa. The crime wave in the capital is dramatic, and the corruption of the police is

endemic, fostered by paltry salaries they can't live on.

Luanda is swollen with half a million refugees living in utter misery and growing impoverishment. There is little chance that, even if the cease fire holds and precarious peace begins, they would go back to the rural areas; research indicates that they have passed the cutoff point of two seasons missed from planting, which turns peasants into urban dwellers. Across the nation in what were their home towns and villages, the health service has collapsed. Epidemics of tuberculosis, malaria and sleeping sickness are rampant, according to the in-

ternational non-governmental organizations that now carry almost the entire responsibility for health in the country. Provincial hospitals are graveyards with no medicines, no functioning water or electricity supplies. With extraordinary devotion a handful of Angolan doctors struggle on in the provinces, but with the blank eyes of trauma victims and a deep bitterness. Some Vietnamese doctors are also assigned to the provinces, but say they have no facilities to work.

These days you can find a young Angolan doctor working as a UN telephonist, teachers as drivers or interpreters. Twenty years of building national capacity have been destroyed by the government's inability to solve the crisis of salaries for professionals as the cost of living has soared. The crisis of cadres and the loss of social morality are the two most urgent questions facing civil society. But the near collapse of the MPLA as a party since the election has left the country without a framework for tackling anything so fundamental. The government both at national and provincial level, with a handful of exceptions, is busy doing business, and even petitions to the highest level about corruption and waste do not change even the most notorious faces in power. The country has got used to living in a state of cynicism and complete uncertainty. No plans for the future are made because no one believes in it.

The Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) in Angola today provides a contrast to this dismal picture and is becoming a new factor in the political equation. For the first time ever there is a non-political, professional army. The old government army, FAPLA, which grew out of the MPLA's guerrilla war against the Portuguese, was dismantled under the Bicesse agreement signed by the MPLA. It was considered a bitter betrayal by the Party that has not been forgotten. It also turned out to be

a major political blunder for which President Dos Santos nearly lost power in the Unita offensive of 1993.

Today among the FAA's 100,000 men there are 3,000 who were incorporated from Unita after Bicesse; about a third of the top generals are ex-Unita. The rest constitute a new military class, the best of them highly competent and fired with the confidence of having successfully created an army in record time and in the offensive of late 1994 having beaten Unita back into the current 40% of the country. The use of South Africans for training was an emergency strategy in the bleak and dramatic situation in late 1992. Attempting to recruit Angolans who had fought with the South Africans, the army was approached by the now well-known business firm of Executive Outcomes, then supplying men to Unita. With remarkable pragmatism on both sides and at a considerable cost, 300 of them began to work with the FAA and have proved effective; 174 now remain on contract.

Last year's successful offensive gave the first hint of the new relationship evolving between the army and the MPLA, which though part of a multi-party government remains unquestionably dominant. Under pressure from the Americans to halt the offensive short of Huambo and sign the Lusaka Accord with its cease fire leaving Savimbi in his headquarters, the MPLA Central Committee voted to take the FAA advice and authorize the taking of the city. At the same time, on the northern front, the FAA retook the strategic town of Uige. Both urban areas are now islands in Unita areas, linked precariously by newly opened roads to the government-controlled coast. US influence, however, remains strong enough for them to have persuaded the President to end the offensive sooner than his army commanders – scenting military victory – believed was good military tactics. The price is the tense no war/no peace situation of today with Unita having

used the reprieve to rebuild its army. "The past is history," says General Matos nine months later, "the question now is how to get a peace which will be for Angola, not just for Luanda, or Futungo (the presidential complex outside the city). There is plenty of room for manoeuvre politically, if the UN pressures Unita; if not, war is the last resort."

The impact of the FAA on the political scene has yet to develop, but the old actors: the MPLA, Unita, and the international community, are looking tired, bereft of ideas, and out of touch with a population at the end of its tether.

Unita was traumatized by the surprise loss of Huambo, and Bailundo, 60 kilometres to the north, is no substitute in terms of prestige. The July visit to him there of Dr. Boutros Ghali, after he refused to come to Luanda, citing fears for his safety, and the October visit by top US official George Moose, have however given it, and Savimbi himself, international status as a second, and alternative, power in the land. It is a measure of how far the attitudes of the international community have shifted *away* from the government since they won the election and Savimbi began his rebellion. In late 1992 an international mediation team from the Organization of African Unity, led by President Robert Mugabe, came to Angola, but never considered meeting Savimbi once he refused to reenter Luanda. Now almost every international aid agency works with Unita, accepts their refusal to allow Angolans from the government side to be part of aid teams, accepts having to negotiate every journey with Unita, frequently being refused access, always being prevented talking freely to the population. Unita's tight control over the 40% of the territory in which it is active has the same flavour of repression and paranoia that characterized Jamba, the pre-1992 headquarters in the southeast. Aid agency staff who

southern africa

lived through the Unita occupation of Huambo describe an organization with no capacity for civilian administration and no apparent interest in civilian structures. Huambo became a silent ghost town haunted by spies, secret police and denunciations. Survivors of Unita labour camps – mostly MPLA minor officials or educated cadres – describe a regime of beatings and starvation in which many people died, and from which they were released only after intervention from the Catholic church. An Angola in which Unita had a defining hand on the levers of power would be an even grimmer place than it is now.

The UN's strategy, beyond the lip service to peace and reconciliation, is not easy to discern. UN officials come and go on fairly short-term contracts and rare are those

who look further than the propaganda value of selective road or bridge opening to a peace process officially on course. But in fact the UN has played the determining role in the post-election period: the elected government has fundamentally lost its sovereignty to a Joint Commission in which it has parity with Unita. And, worse, in the name of the peace process, and in response to US pressure, the government has been forced to over-rule its own army and prevent it from defending the country.

As in Bosnia, the UN presence has deeply confused the issue of the war. Peacekeepers can not, everyone now agrees, keep a peace which one, or both, warring parties do not want kept. By obscuring that, as the UN did in Angola in 1992 and thereafter, they invite a deepening of

today's tragedy. The international community's promise of democracy to Angola through the elections of 1992 has been betrayed and transformed into a legitimization of the use of force by Unita. The forces which, from the dying days of Portuguese colonialism, sought to prevent Angola becoming the exception to Africa's post-independence neo-colonialism, have succeeded – at a terrible price. The most bitter betrayal though, to Angolans, came with President Nelson Mandela's reception of Savimbi earlier this year and his call for reconciliation, on the pattern of his own with Chief Buthelezi. Mandela was the symbol for whom Angola sacrificed tens of thousands of lives in the war to end apartheid in which Savimbi fought on the other side and has since changed neither his allies nor his ideological stand.



John Liebenberg – Impact Visuals

Zimbabwe: ESAP's Fables

BY RICHARD SAUNDERS

Richard Saunders is SAR's man in Harare, only now he lives in Oxford. He is a correspondent for Africa Information Afrique (AIA).

Just when it seemed things couldn't get much worse for the beleaguered Zimbabwean economy, government was dealt another blow in September by the death of recently-installed Finance Minister Ariston Chambati. Following new evidence that the country's experiment with structural adjustment has produced a costly dud and not a World Bank miracle, Chambati's passing threw the ruling ZANU (PF) – already put off-balance by rising challenges from civil society – into further disarray.

Under attack from a range of allies at home and overseas, Robert Mugabe's government is being forced to fight fires all over the hot terrain of social policy. But increasingly, government is facing a shortage of both political capital needed to fight the flames and – perhaps more importantly – a coherent strategy indicating how to go about the job.

Does this mean that the Mugabe government, desperate for breathing space, will soon be forced to seek the cooperation and consensus of its majority population rather than deepening its dependence on its ever more demanding Bretton Woods partners? And if this is the case, are Zimbabweans now witnessing

the rewriting and revitalization of a popular nationalist agenda for the '90s?

While the answer is far from clear, it is nonetheless apparent that the *old* commandist nationalism of the liberation war and 1980s is crumbling quickly, exposing a variety of options for *political* reform both within and outside of the ruling party.

ESAP fosters disaffection

What is indisputable, too, is the role of Zimbabwe's failed structural adjustment programme (known by the acronym ESAP) in fostering the widespread, popular disaffection that now confronts the ruling party.



Richard Saunders

When at the outset of ESAP in 1991, ZANU (PF) abandoned its mild social welfarism of the 1980s to go into partnership with the World Bank as Africa's newest reform-oriented star performer, the party promised reduced unemployment, less bureaucratic red tape, higher productivity and rapid wealth creation. The price for rapid development, it cautioned, was short-term deepening hardship in the form of social services cutbacks, skyrocketing consumer prices, the swamping of local markets with imports and sharp temporary increases in unemployment.

But while suffering over the last five years proved even more intense, widespread and chronic than the state initially predicted, the pay-offs did not materialize. Five years on, most of government's promises remain unfulfilled, while the hardship of ordinary Zimbabweans seems without end.

Despite its comparatively high-performing economy over much of the 1980s, Zimbabwe now appears firmly lodged in a quagmire of mounting debt, generally inadequate growth and plummeting living standards. Most macroeconomic indicators show continued overall decline and little relief on the horizon.

Deficit mushrooms

In what would be his first and last budget in July, Chambati – a leading industrialist until his entry into Cabinet in April of this year – delivered more sobering news. The government deficit, he revealed, mushroomed to Z\$7 billion (or 13 per cent of GDP) in 1994-95, nearly triple the five per cent target set by ESAP planners.

Even though Zimbabwe's donor partners have clamoured to blame public sector overspending and demand cuts in recurrent expenditure to reduce the deficit, most of the increased debt is accounted for by heavy ESAP-related borrowing encouraged by these donors (including US \$3.5m from the World Bank in

1991-95). Indeed, in five years of reforms the accumulated foreign-held debt has doubled to more than 100 per cent of GDP. Meanwhile, the even higher (and still rising) domestic debt has come to consume more in interest and principal payments than any other budget item – including education and defence.

Rather than recommending the rescheduling or cancellation of some or all of this debt, however, international donor agencies have applied greater pressure for bigger sacrifices at home. In May, the IMF temporarily suspended its ESAP-related lending programme in reaction to Zimbabwe's failure to "gain control" of its deficit. Tellingly, this was one crucial fact which was NOT mentioned in this year's budget statement.

What the IMF and others donors do not factor in, of course, are the growing social and political stresses to which ZANU(PF) and its state have been subjected because of liberalization – and the potentially disruptive nature of these tensions for the programme, the state and the national political economy.

Lost jobs not replaced

While government struggles to cut spending, it is also under intense pressure to create jobs replacing those lost through ESAP, and maintain at least parts of its lauded social services. ESAP has forced government to consider the attack on unemployment and moves to improve services delivery as mere rearguard actions, in comparison with the war on budget deficits.

High unemployment continues apace – reaching 50 per cent in some parts of the formal sector – as spiralling production costs continue to undermine much of the import-beleaguered manufacturing sector. Government itself has set retrenchment targets in the public service at 23,000. In the private sector, it is likely that more than double this number have lost their jobs (including 23,000

last year alone). On the other hand, only 16,000 new jobs were created annually for the 220,000 school leavers who came onto the labour market in 1991-93. Lately job creation levels have dwindled.

In the lower-income informal sector, which provides a diminishing livelihood for as many as two million Zimbabweans, economic marginalization is even more pronounced due to the higher relative impact of cost of living increases.

The situation is also bleak for many employers. In the last four years, business failures have accelerated, turnover and profit rates have dropped and export earnings have been erratic. In the face of this onslaught very few sub-sectors, mainly those involved in primary production for export like mining, agriculture and horticulture, have made substantial gains. And even in such cases, the results have been mixed, and not wholly attributable to government reforms.

Economy de-industrializing

Official figures show more than 130 company liquidations since the early 1990s, as well as an accumulation of heavily-indebted, interest payment-plagued enterprises. Several independent observers now refer to the prevailing "de-industrialization" of Zimbabwe's once relatively self-contained, highly-integrated economy.

This dramatic decline and impoverishment has not gone unnoticed by different factions within the ruling party itself. In an oblique partial rebuke of the fundamental "free market" principles of ESAP, this year's budget quietly moved to help bolster some of the national stalwarts of the economy, invoking lapsed protectionist measures for certain sectors like clothing and textiles, beverages and motor vehicle assembly, which have been under intense stress from cheap (often dumped) finished imports.

Yet these changes were nonetheless limited, and government's overall take-no-prisoners reform policy remains on track, for the moment. In this strategy, the dominant sections of the private sector – those largely controlled by white and foreign capital – are still regarded as Zimbabwe's main "engine of growth," while ordinary consumers and the country's fledgling so-called "indigenous" business community of black entrepreneurs are increasingly marginalised.

This year, for example, government increased sales taxes by 2.5 per cent to 15 per cent, added new taxes on electricity and other items, and refused to offer substantial further assistance to emergent black businesspeople. New spending on land resettlement was effectively curtailed by a paltry budget allocation of Z\$10 million, and a similar 48 per cent cut in outlay on new capital wipes out hopes of significant public sector infrastructure development. In this regard, then, the shortcomings of policy refinements have only worsened the political problems of the government.

ZANU(PF)'s apparent abandonment of many of its old constituencies has been met with a rising chorus of complaint, in which a broad range of popular groups have harmonised on broadly popular-nationalist leitmotif. The "new" nationalism contains different themes, including criticisms on the one hand of the continued dominance and privileges of white private society; and on the other, of the controlling presence of foreign capital and international financial institutions. It's a compelling mix that resonates deeply in black society, and threatens to undo ZANU (PF)'s links to its mass constituency in civil society.

In response, the party has taken steps to quieten the noise-makers, through patronage, co-option or harsher means. But the chorus of complaints continues – and gets louder as hardships persist – from

all quarters. The question now is, who will take control of the score and direct the growing choir?

Black businesspeople increase pressure

In the last two years an increasingly vocal lobby of small-scale black businesspeople has applied pressure to obtain funding, political support and other policy concessions from government in favour of black business development. Grouped primarily within two umbrella advocacy organizations, the Indigenous Business Development Centre (IBDC) and the more aggressive Affirmative Action Group (AAG), this fraction of black enterprise has met with some success, in the form of preferential awarding of smaller government contracts and access to government and donor-guaranteed concessional loans. ZANU (PF)'s strategy has helped pre-empt the formation of a credible, adequately financed and organised political opposition in multi-party Zimbabwe.

But now that the chips are down – in the form of further budget cuts demanded by large (mainly white) national capital, World Bank strategists and donors alike – the party has been forced to distance itself from the high-profile local black business lobby.

In response there have been angry threats. Government "has gone out of its way to protect multinationals and ex-settler businesses against competition from outside, so that they can consolidate their hold on this economy," raged the IBDC-affiliated Indigenous Business Women's Organization in July, "but has not cushioned aspiring black businesses from evil competition applied by the monopolies and oligopolies in this country. Blacks in their eyes should remain consumers of basic commodities rather than owners and creators of wealth."

"We're now wondering whether our government is scared of whites ... because what there is now, is a recipe for confrontation with the black people," says AAG President Philip Chiyangwa.

On the other side of the black political spectrum, trade unionists have re-entered the national political stage after several years of being shut-out by a hostile, union-bashing, reforming government. In a scenario unthinkable until recently, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) emerged in September from its fourth-ever National Congress with an offer to join hands with government, in a bid to counter the deepening negative impact of ESAP.



Transport of maize from Beira to Zimbabwe in 1992

Ernst Schade – Impact Visuals

Some question the logic of this apparent concession by workers. But perhaps the new rising tide of corporatism does not signal a defeat of the union movement, so much as the increasing weakness and flexibility of the ESAP-battered state.

For the ZCTU, the current softening of government and civil society by the failed liberalization programme has opened the space for new policy initiatives from outside the state. One of the primary thrusts of this year's congress was recognition of the need to seize the occasion, and seek meaningful participation in a range of structures related to reconfiguring ESAP.

"The work we have done recently at tri-partite level in developing one labour law, in discussing wages and salaries, in developing the NSSS (National Social Security Scheme), in drafting a code on AIDS and Employment and in the tripartite Zimbabwe Occupational Health and Safety Council signals the ability and potential for government, labour and employers to work in a tri-partite manner," ZCTU President Sibanda told congress delegates.

But at the same time, ZCTU leaders aim to deepen workers' representation in such bodies while questioning the ruling party's strength within civil society by appealing to a new, reworked, more popular sense of nationalism. Recent remarks by some ZCTU leaders indicate that not only ZANU (PF) is capable of adopting "dual strategies" of engagement with adversaries, in an attempt to win consensus and weaken at one and the same moment. Evidently, co-operation from the popular sector will increasingly come at a price.

"There is a need for the role of the State to be properly defined," says ZCTU Secretary General Morgan Tsvangirai. "We believe the State has a role to play in the economy - we don't believe in the com-

plete withdrawal of the state from the marketplace and society. But we think the State needs to intervene to empower, not to control; to redress imbalances, and do so under a consensual process."

In exchange, Tsvangirai and other labour leaders now concede that ESAP can no longer be scrapped without dire consequences. Yet they have phrased their critique in a way that opens a debate on the wider question of democratic participation in government and policy making; and by extension, on the shape, nature and leadership of popular nationalism in the 1990s.

"In implementing ESAP there are important choices to be made involving the issues of indigenization, land reform and so forth," Tsvangirai argues. "But none of these are addressed specifically by ESAP - though they need to be dealt with if the policy is to succeed. In this regard the trade unions have not played a role to date - neither has the peasant sector, nor representatives of small-scale indigenous businesses. What kind of 'national programme' is that?"

ZANU critics challenge status quo

It is unclear if the ZCTU will be able to muster enough popular support inside and outside its ranks to press the ruling party more closely on the matter of access to policy-making, but there are signs that other players in civil society are emerging to challenge the political hierarchy with similar aims.

Inside ZANU (PF), a new and growing group of disparate critics is publicly questioning the status quo, and beginning to have an impact. Earlier this year, a number of ruling party MPs were defeated in party primary selection polls, in advance of this year's general elections in April, thereby forcing them out of Parliament. More recently, local government elections in October saw an unprecedented number of independent candidates -

including the new mayor of Mutare, the country's third city - winning over ZANU (PF) standard bearers. Ten of these fifteen independents were cast-offs or deserters from the ruling party.

In late November ZANU (PF)'s most famous current dissident, former Harare MP Margaret Dongo, will stand as an independent in a re-run of her April contest with ZANU (PF)'s Vivian Mwashita. Mwashita's victory in the general election was nullified in August by the High Court, following Dongo's uncontested submission that her result had been rigged. Whatever the final result, Dongo's successful court challenge has inspired many democratic activists.

Other organizations that target democratic mobilization outside the ruling party, including human and civil rights groups like Zimrights, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, are aiming to pick up some of this momentum and sink the foundations of new democratic practices deeper, against increasing resistance from the party.

"We are aiming to move the democratic process out of ZANU (PF), and into the national community where it should be," says Rev. Murombedzi Kuchera, the Secretary-General of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches. "We want to see a real participatory democracy, on all sorts of issues. Currently most policy and implementation is done beyond the consultation of the people, the NGOs and the community-based groups; it should be done with their full participation."

In what is perhaps an indication of the new battles to be fought for democracy in the course of the elaboration of a new national consensus from below, Kuchera points to the weak underbelly of a misdirected ruling party. "Government should be answerable to the people, to the community," he argues, "and not just to donors like the World Bank, the IMF and the others."

Twenty Years After Recolonization in Mozambique

BY JOHN S. SAUL

The following is a version, edited and abbreviated, of a talk given at a conference sponsored by the Canadian Research Consortium on Southern Africa (CRCSA) at Carleton University earlier this year. Our thanks to Linda Freeman who transcribed the original text for a forthcoming volume of the conference proceedings. John Saul, based in Toronto, is a member of the SAR editorial working group.

June 25th, 1995 marked the twentieth anniversary of Mozambican independence, the original moment, in 1975, having been the occasion for a joyous celebration that I was privileged to attend. To return to Mozambique this June – and to view the country in the light of the high hopes and expectations which so many of us held for the revolutionary process that Frelimo (the liberation movement in Mozambique) had set in train during its armed struggle against the Portuguese – was an extremely sobering experience, however. Certainly, quite visibly, the anniversary was not one that anybody felt very much like celebrating

This is not surprising. At the moment, by the World Bank's reckoning, Mozambique is the poorest country in the world with a gross domestic product per capita of approximately \$60 in 1990. It is also one of the most dependent on foreign assistance, which accounts for 2/3 of its measured GDP. Indeed, aid receipts per capita amounted to approximately \$60 in 1990, almost double the figure for Sub-Saharan Africa (see David Plank's exemplary article in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (31, #3 [1993]) entitled "Aid, Debt and the End of Sovereignty: Mozambique and Its



Jonathan Kaplan – Impact Visuals

Queue for water at a village pump, Manica province

Donors"). So Mozambique presents an extreme case, one where, among other things, the state has virtually been destroyed. Currently, it is true, the country is inching its way back towards some kind of political stability, one that, for the moment at least and for the first time in many years, provides the rudiments of peace for Mozambicans. But it is not providing much else for the vast majority of them.

What happened?

Explaining this denouement has become a controversial undertaking. Recently, reviewing some of my own work, Bill Freund has suggested that those of us close to the Frelimo project in the early years lost our "critical edge" in celebrating the movement's "socialist" efforts, and he argues, instead, that "the jury is still out on the structure and character of Frelimo." I don't know: perhaps you really did have to be there! I know of few who were who didn't think that indeed, something "truly stirring" was happening. But such first hand witness seems to count for little in the current sceptical climate.

Still, I think I'll stick with the opinion of Jorge Rebelo, one of the early Frelimo leaders. A close friend of two former Frelimo Presidents, Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel, Rebelo is one Mozambican leader who has managed to retain much of his own personal integrity in the current general climate of *saue qui peut*. He expressed his thoughts on this 20th anniversary in an interview that appeared in the Maputo daily *Noticias*:

We all agreed that we were going to gain independence, but his was not the ultimate object; that was in fact the creation of a progressive society which would bring an end to misery in our country. This was not merely a slogan. It was inside of us. It is for this reason that some of us remain very demoralized with the situation which has brought us to the point where we are today. On

the one side however, we think that perhaps it wasn't possible to have done things very differently. But we can't help but be shocked by the distance between that which was our objective and what is the reality today.

Rebelo went on to talk about how sad it was that young people in Mozambique are at the moment lost, without much sense of a future for their society. In response to a final question suggesting that "20 years after independence, and 30 years after joining FRELIMO this isn't the country which you dreamed of," Rebelo replied: "Clearly it's not."

Rebelo also recalled leaving a meeting at the Ponta Vermelha Palace just after independence and having President Machel say: "Now we have the power and we can finish with misery in Mozambique in two years." Someone said, "No, two years is too short a time." And Machel replied, "Okay, three years then." "We have to say now," Rebelo continued, "that this was a bit of voluntarism (*voluntarismo*) on our part. We were imagining things that in reality were not possible. But that's what we wanted to do."

Of course, Rebelo is signalling both the leadership's sincerity of intention *and* the fact that profound errors of judgement and mistakes in policy were made – springing, not least, from this kind of "voluntarism" and leading Frelimo to try to do too much, too fast. There was also an arrogance of purpose that encouraged the Frelimo leadership to do things much less democratically than they might, and should, have done ... as well as a vision of socialism far too exclusively cast in an eastern European mode. But, as we also know, there was the desperately difficult situation left by the Portuguese and, above all, there was South African destabilization: willfully attempting not only to assert control over Frelimo's actions, but even to break the back of Mozambican society.

Still, whatever balance sheet one strikes on this history, the fact remains that it has left a Mozambique dependent in its poverty on the behest of the World Bank, the IMF and the external aid community. And it leaves a leadership which has certainly lost touch with the aspirations of ordinary people. As Graça Machel, the widow of Samora Machel and an important political actor in Mozambique in her own right as a minister in the first Frelimo government and now active in the NGO sector, put it forcefully to me during my recent stay there: "Workers and peasants don't count for anything in this country any more."

True, in the 1980s, the Mozambican leadership tried to find ways of dealing with the external financial institutions in such a way as to protect achievements in social spheres like education and health, while keeping some kind of state involvement in the direction of the economy. Thus the country's first economic recovery program sought to finesse the World Bank and others into allowing space within which to give a more humane face to the compulsory restructuring that was going on.

Recolonization

This didn't last long, however – and soon privatization had become the alpha and omega of policy. The state is being forced back in every sphere, while many of those who staff the state are looking for their own ways into the private sector: the Minister of Finance announces the privatization of the two main state-controlled banks; the cotton industry is turned over to large cotton concessionary enterprises, driven by firms like Lonrho, who have established private fiefdoms along the lines of the *prazos* that existed in the 19th century; forests are stripped; and land is being granted, in the name of increased productivity, to South African farmers who are fleeing the

advent of black power in their own country.

Much recent writing on Mozambique – as, for example, Joseph Hanlon's eloquent *Who Calls The Shots?* or David Plank's important article, cited above – focusses on the extent to which policy is being dictated from outside. Moreover, Plank introduces the concept of "recolonization" quite self-consciously into the discussion as something more than a mere metaphor, suggesting on the basis of his findings in Mozambique, that there and elsewhere "the most likely successor to post-colonial sovereignty will be neo-colonial vassalage, in which Western powers assume direct and open-ended control over the administration, security and economic policies of 'deteriorated' states under the banner of the U.N. and various donors".[†]

He also compares this kind of "recolonization" suggestively with the earlier form of colonialism that Frelimo had first rebelled against; it seems worth quoting him at length on this subject for *SAR* readers.

Although the abject status of several African states is being characterized as a new form of colonialism, there are three fundamental differences between Mozambique's past and present situation.

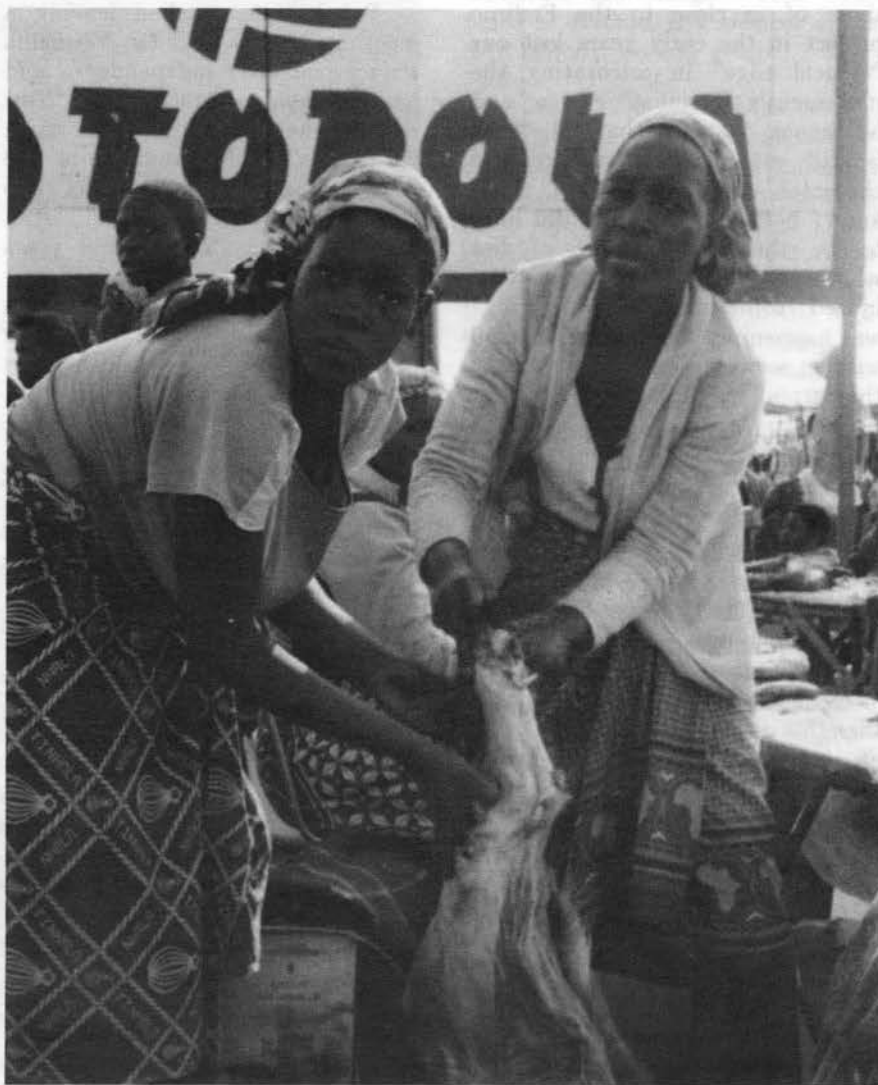
First the relationship that is now emerging between the country and its donors is less overtly intrusive than direct administration by a colonial power, but its effects are more pervasive. The bonds of debt and dependence that tie Mozambique to its donors were entered into voluntarily by a nominally sovereign state and may in principle be repudiated at any time. The policy

[†] As Plank adds, "the interests of many Africans have been served in nation-states ruled by aid-sponsored despots, but there is little reason to suppose that they will be better served in a world governed by U.N. proconsuls, U.S. marines, and World Bank economists."

changes prescribed by the principal donors aimed to accelerate the integration of Mozambique into the global market and to transform the domestic economy to this end. Beyond this, however, the West's policy prescriptions implied dramatic social and political consequences, including the exacerbation of social inequalities, the aggrandizement of local and expatriate elites and the subversion of prevailing political arrangements. Attempts by the World Bank and other agencies to remake the Mozambican state in their own image, accompanied by their insistence on the reduction and redirection of public expenditure suggest

the extent of changes that are in prospect.

Second, the relationship now being constructed between Mozambique and its donors is potentially far more durable than traditional colonialism. The country's subordinate status is currently rooted not in discredited ideologies of racial superiority, imperial destiny or Christian mission, but in the precepts of modern economy orthodoxy. Dominion is exercised not by the agents of a colonial power, but by the technically sophisticated and politically disinterested economists of the IMF, the World Bank and of bilateral aid agencies, whose prescriptions are determined



Skinning a goat at an illegal Maputo market – to sell below butchers' prices

Ussene Mamudo – AIM/Impact Visuals

not by parochial national interests but by economic analysis. Resisting the power of the major donors is consequently difficult, because Mozambique's subordination is portrayed as a natural consequence of global economic trends rather than an imposition by a specific colonial power.

Finally, the new relationship has no place for the reciprocal obligations that in principle characterize colonialism The absence of formal political ties between Mozambique and its donors leave the Government powerless to refuse the policy prescriptions of the principal aid agencies, because the flow of funds must be maintained at virtually any cost The donors enjoy considerably more autonomy than they would if bound by the statutory obligations to traditional colonialism, while Mozambique is in some respects more dependent on them than it was on Portugal before 1975.

While this is an accurate picture of what has happened to Mozambique – inside from the outside, as it were – there are also Mozambicans who are buying into this process to their own advantage. Still, they are not all that many, given the overall state of the economy, and the advanced condition of collapse of most state-centred social provisioning. Take the health and education systems, for example, once the pride of the early post-independence years. Both systems are being privatized precipitously, where they are not just rotting away, and, self-evidently, this is happening at the expense of the interests of the poorest of the poor.

It is also difficult to be entirely sanguine about the rush to embrace “traditional authority” as one of the bases for local politics. True, Frelimo did often overlook, in a high handed manner, the claims to some kind of integrity of existing rural social and political structures. Let's remember, though, the flip-side, that this was done, at least in part, in the interests of certain kinds of social change –

including, amongst other things, the transformation of gender relations – that will now be much more difficult to realize if “tradition” is to become too central a touchstone of policy. And there is also a whole range of regional, ethnic and other identities that Frelimo also tended to override rather highhandedly, as threats to what it felt to be a necessary sense of national purpose. Perhaps, in so dealing with these identities, Frelimo actually heightened the possibility that they would eventually become politicized in divisive ways. But the fact remains that there are equally important, present-day reasons why such identities now threaten to surge forward uncontrollably into the political realm.

Globalization and “democracy”

For the souring of “identity politics” can be one of the most critical symptoms of the economic and social stagnation generated by the negative impact of “globalization.” Societies rot out from underneath when political options that evoke the existence of some shared sense of societal purpose are not available. It is then that people are tempted to fall back on the lowest common denominators of socio-political identity to give resonance to their lives. It is in such a world, in fact, that the Rwandas and Yugoslavias can become the face of many countries' future (see, on this subject, Bernard Barber's recent volume, *Jihad vs. McWorld*).

Yet what sense of collective purpose can arise in a Mozambique where, as one member of parliament described the situation, “the biggest moment of Mozambican politics this year was when the government went to Paris to meet with the donors. That was where parliament really was held in Mozambique this year, the donor meeting in Paris.” As another MP explained, unlike other countries and parliaments, “we accept that our budget is really set by donors at the annual Paris conference. We accept that our priority is to develop a donor

acceptable budget.” The claim he then advanced for elected politicians was correspondingly modest: “But the assembly must be part of that process, that is what democracy means in Mozambique.”

That, and an electoral process which – as I have argued in an earlier number of *SAR*, and elsewhere[†] – did at least as much to disempower Mozambicans as it did the reverse: what can be the substance of a “democratic” debate in which the crucial policy options are delivered on a plate from Paris to all parties! Not that we need then trivialize the importance of the breathing-space that peace and a certain kind of democratization have brought to Mozambique. The virtues of peace are self-evident. And there are also benefits to be found in consolidating even the most formal of democratic structures: as one erstwhile senior Frelimo politician – himself an architect of some of the most undemocratic features of Frelimo's strategy – admitted to me self-critically, if there had existed the present kind of democratic structures in the old days (including the far greater freedom of the press that now exists) obvious abuses of authority like the disastrous “Operation Production” of 1983 would not have been possible. Moreover, as Ken Wilson argued firmly in the most recent issue of *SAR* (November, 1995), the room for manoeuvre for local communities, for trade unions, for women's organizations, that is provided within a more open political system has permitted some revival of positive energies at the base of the system as well – even if the precise extent and impact of the revival he identifies remain to be seen.

[†] See “Mozambique: The ‘Peace Election’ ” in *SAR*, December, 1994, and the chapter entitled “ ‘For fear of being condemned as old fashioned’: Liberal Democracy vs. popular democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa” in a forthcoming book on democracy in Africa edited by Cyrille Daddieh and Kidane Mengisteb.

For the moment, however, it is a less edifying kind of politics that often prevails, notably the grinding on of the bleak polarization between Frelimo and Renamo, with hints of renewed violence always in the air. But there are also tensions, apparently, within Frelimo itself – focussing principally, it is suggested, on the struggle between one faction, centred around President Chissano and his cabinet, and another, centred around Frelimo leaders in the legislative assembly. It is acknowledged that such intra-Frelimo factionalism is probably linked, in part, to a jockeying for position over who shall be Frelimo presidential candidate “next time.” At the same time, there are those who argue that more substantive strategic issues are also, increasingly, at stake.

For this parliamentary faction has also been seen as beginning, in however rudimentary a fashion, to exemplify the ambitions of a “national bourgeoisie,” one that might defend, against the presumed imperatives of globalization, the claims of a “national [read: “national bourgeois”] interest.” Indeed, the advocacy of this kind of economic nationalism can easily pass for progressive politics in Mozambican intellectual circles these days, the alternative language of socialism having been so profoundly discredited. I was struck, for example, by the vigour with which the well-known Mozambican journalist Carlos Cardoso argued the case, at the time of my visit, on behalf of domestic cashew processors defending their interests against the World Bank’s preferred strategy of opening up the trade in *unprocessed* cashews directly to India – even though this latter strategy would actually assure the peasant producers of higher prices.

Interestingly, one Canadian diplomat with whom I talked found danger precisely where Cardoso found hope: he feared that “the nationalists” might actually use parliament to disrupt the plans of

a newly ascendent cadre of efficient, technocratically-inclined Ministers within the Cabinet, a cadre on whom he (and, he suggested, other Western interests) have pinned their hopes. Not that he was terribly worried about such nationalists, it must be admitted. In the end, most observers agree that the promise/danger of some putative national bourgeoisie quarter-backing the emergence of a more independent and economically buoyant Mozambique under present circumstances is not a strong one – not least because those who might be thought of as possible candidates for such a role tend to behave more like pirates and/or racial demagogues than like potential captains of industry.

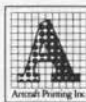
No, on the whole, Westerners in Maputo seem to feel pretty confident of the intellectual hegemony they have established over (and the community of interests they have established with) the present Frelimo leaders, only wishing, perhaps, that more of them were a bit more competent ... and some of them a bit less corrupt. Such Westerners seem to have little doubt of the leadership’s general acceptance of the wisdom of World Bank/IMF nostrums. And they have particular enthusiasm for the close and comfortable links of the most competent (and least corrupt) of this leadership group to their counterparts

in the international financial institutions (some of whom, it bears noting, are themselves Mozambicans, often of formerly left-wing provenance, who are now comfortably ensconced in the IFIs!) There is only one real problem, of course: as suggested earlier, there is little sign that the “market utopianism” of such Frelimo cadres – however ascendent – can and will produce positive economic outcomes for the country.

A celebration?

Twenty years after? This year, in Maputo, there seemed little enough ground for optimism, or, as suggested earlier, for celebration. Not that many in Mozambique would wish the country back to the period of authoritarian rule – however much some of that authoritarian structure may have been crafted, by Frelimo, in “a good cause.” Yet there was a sad irony in the observation of a Mozambican friend, a journalist and a firm supporter of freedom, not least of the press, in his country. Certainly, he wished for no return to the bad old days of government dictation of the “party-line” to his newspaper. Yet, he confessed, he couldn’t escape the feeling that the workers and peasants in Mozambique had actually had more power under the “old” Frelimo regime. Then, he said, the leadership took their interests seriously, their voices actually were heard more clearly than they are now, under liberal democracy: in the present system their votes are merely canvassed in a competitive manner that has little to do with advancing their life chances or helping them to clarify their socio-economic options.

In short, both periods – that of old “Frelimo state” and that of the new – have their down side. One could conclude, nonetheless, with the observation that what has been lost, most visibly, from the early period of post-independence Mozambican history, is something terribly important. It is, precisely, a strong sense of *public* purpose,



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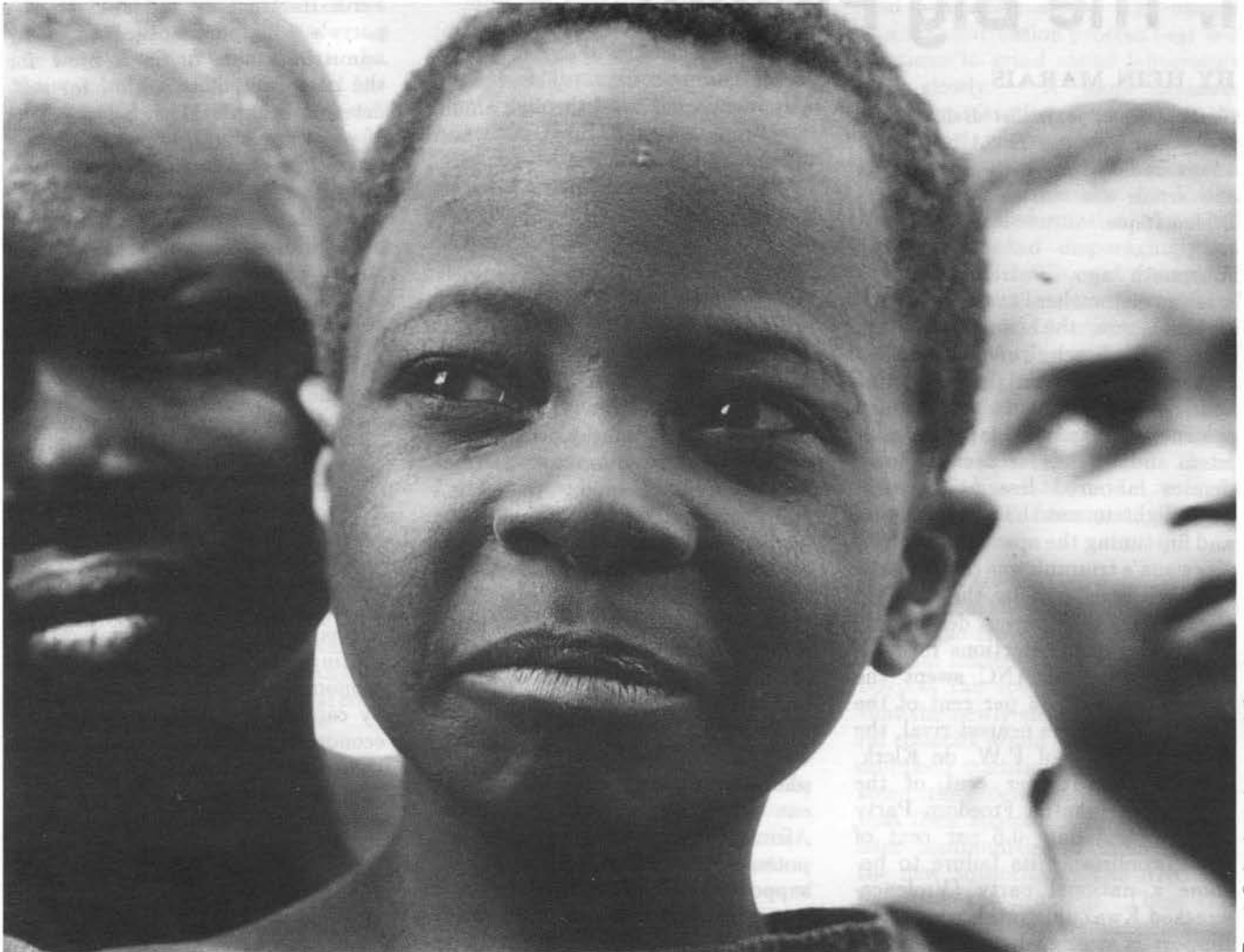
one premised on the envisaging of society-wide transformations that might actually change the lives of the vast majority of Mozambicans in positive ways.

Are such Mozambicans, like so many others around the world, now merely locked into the apparent iron logic of present-day capitalist-driven

irrational, socialism is unfeasible, in the real world, people starve – the conclusions we have reached are not encouraging.” Faced with this “logic,” can we ever hope, anywhere, to move beyond merely muttering an uneasy variant on an old slogan, “Dare to struggle, dare to whine”?

It is, of course, difficult to

against capitalism is strongest on the very plane where the reach of socialism is weakest – at the level of the world system as a whole”!) Perhaps the most that can be said is that the bleak realities we have identified will not disappear of their own accord. In fact, the one thing that was absolutely clear to the



Ernst Schade – Impact Visuals

globalization – with their leaders also left, as they claim, with no choice but to follow that logic? This is, of course, the apparent “common-sense” of the matter evoked so negatively by Colin Leys (as cited in the editorial that frames the present issue of *SAR*). It is also the ethos that can move a theorist like Adam Przeworski to observe grimly, of the current epoch, that “capitalism is

imagine that so bleak a prospect as Mozambique currently offers up can last forever – though it is equally difficult to see any ready way forward, either nationally or globally. (The picture at the national level is discouraging enough, as the situation so visible on the ground in Mozambique attests, but add to that the fact that, as Perry Anderson argues, “the case

visitor to Mozambique in 1995 was that it will now be necessary for Mozambicans to revive, slowly but surely, the kind of positive energies and sense of mission – resisting (re)colonization, (re)imagining the future, (re)asserting the claims of the *social* – that brought them independence twenty years ago. But that is true not merely for Mozambique.

South Africa: The Local Elections

I. The Big Picture

BY HEIN MARAIS

South African journalist Hein Marais is a senior producer in SABC current affairs radio. An earlier version of this article was written for le Monde Diplomatique.

A month ago, Patrick Xegwana was a dishwasher at a students' residence on the campus of the elite Stellenbosch University. Now he's a councillor on the municipal council in a university town which spawned six apartheid prime ministers and where, for decades, academics laboured less at promoting enlightenment than at designing and finetuning the apartheid system. Xegwana's triumph was one of many surprises registered by the ANC in the country's first-ever democratic local government elections in early November. The ANC swept the boards, winning 66 per cent of the popular vote. The nearest rival, the National Party of F.W. de Klerk, trailed with 15 per cent of the vote. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) polled only 0.6 per cent of votes, confirming its failure to become a national party (Violence-racked KwaZulu Natal, where IFP support is strong, did not vote; its residents will only go the polls next year).

In provinces like the Free State, the ANC will run virtually every town council, most of which will have only ANC councillors sitting on the benches. In the Western Cape (where the ANC was thrashed by the NP in last year's general election) the ANC now runs most of the major towns and many smaller

rural communities. The reason? An unexpected breakthrough among coloured voters, many of whom abandoned the NP and voted ANC, which has claimed "a 35 per cent swing" from the NP. (Cape Town, however, did not vote; a dispute over ward boundaries forced postponement of local government elections there until next year).

The ANC has greeted these results as a resounding mandate. Certainly, the tallies have confounded predictions that the slow and uneven pace of socio-economic transformation achieved by the ANC-led government of national unity would see protest votes siphoned off to more populist-minded candidates and parties. This didn't happen. The party of renegade former ANC politician Rocky Malebatse-Metsing, a rousing populist, for instance netted fewer votes in the mostly rural North West province than did the party of former Bophutatswana homeland dictator Lucas Mangope! And the Pan-Africanist Congress, long touted as a potential haven for disgruntled ANC supporters, collected only one per cent of the vote – less than the elitist urban-based Democratic Party.

It's been a good year for the ANC in power. The "miracle" of April 27, 1994, has lost some of its sheen and vibrancy, but the ANC has succeeded in holding a fractious society together. It has checked the secessionist aspirations of the IFP in KwaZulu Natal (though the battle is far from won). It also weathered the challenge from the white Right which is now in terminal

decline: Conservative Party leader Ferdi Hartzenberg reflected on the party's 1.65 per cent of votes by admitting that "it is a blow for the party and it is a blow for self-determination." With 5.1 per cent of votes, the slightly more moderate Freedom Front looks stronger than it is: it suffered defeat in every town it claims as part of an Afrikaner homeland, including Pretoria, the putative "capital" of a "volkstaat."

The news is less heartening, however, on the socio-economic front – with one exception. Goaded along by the organized workers' movement, the Labour Ministry nursed into being new labour legislation that ranks on a par with systems now under siege in many social-democracies of the North. But the macro-economic context in which the ANC hopes to improve the lives of the South African majority remains surprisingly conservative. Accepting what its regards as "global economic realities," and cheered on by capital, the ANC has opted for economic policies that differ from those inherited from the apartheid government only in their heightened emphasis on "liberalization." Exchange controls were loosened earlier in the year, prompting a modest rise in foreign investment which remains, however, diffident and speculative. Curbs on spending (through high interest rates) have pushed inflation below the 10 per cent mark – but they have not improved levels of savings nor encouraged significant productive investments by domestic capital which retains its penchant for short-term speculative investment, expressed extravagantly in the new office complexes and up-market shopping centres that clutter elite, white suburbs. As a result, the

economic growth rate labours beneath the 3 percent mark, severely narrowing the scope of the socio-economic changes the ANC has been promising.

Dormant – for now – are any signs of a development path that would creatively link initiatives geared at achieving both economic growth and redistribution of resources and opportunity in favour of the majority. Eighteen months ago, the vaunted Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) still pointed in that direction. Nowadays it conflicts only marginally and hesitantly with the imperatives of South African business which remains obdurate in its belief that boosted economic growth has to precede large-scale socio-economic transformation. The ANC's retreat on this front is perhaps not yet final. Elements within the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the SA Communist Party (SACP) are fighting a rearguard battle to check the slide, but the ANC has drifted markedly towards becoming the administrator of a "trickle-down" development process. Nevertheless, the ANC's election success has spurred new hope that the RDP might finally get out of the starting blocks and effect tangible change in more black townships and rural communities.

To date the RDP has lumbered forward, with grand development projects often arrested in the planning phase. Among the many factors compounding the delays has been the absence of functioning local government in most of the country. Those projects that have made it to implementation stage often dissipated in a twilight zone of debilitated municipal councils. Now, argues the ANC, that changes. Duly elected town and rural councils are in place; development can proceed. But several factors caution against this kind of triumphalism. For even in a town where the ANC occupies every single seat on the new council, it will still not *control* that town.

There are several reasons for this paradox. First, the financial revenue at the disposal of these councils is derived mostly from white (and to a lesser extent, Asian) business people, property owners and farmers. These sectors – which voted mostly for the NP and the right-wing Freedom Front – hold an effective financial veto over the ANC-run town councils. If the ANC town councils opt to steamroll through new initiatives, they might trigger rates and other boycotts by the white residents. The central paradigm of the South African transition – inclusion and consultation – therefore persists; these councils will have to steer their transformative plans through arduous and sluggish negotiations where the balance of power is determined less by votes than by financial muscle, and by planning and management expertise.

Which brings us to the second inhibiting factor. Echoing the dynamics at the national level, the ANC has now attained political power at the local level, but the party lacks the capacity to extend that dominance into the crucial administrative and management zones. The ANC and its allies have a thin layer of technical experts at their disposal; most have been drawn into national and provincial government, many others have opted for lucrative careers in the private sector. Thus, the technical apparatuses in these towns will still be run by the old order, creating a kind of dual power situation that is likely to betray hopes of rapid development. (If this stymies or delays desperately needed development projects, one outcome might be revived – civil protest by black residents, albeit less organized and strategic than in the past.)

Thirdly, this lacuna at the local level strengthens the hand of provincial governments. Seven of the nine provinces are run by the ANC but this does not guarantee common purpose or shared priorities between provincial and municipal

or rural politicians. South Africa's desolated periphery – its rural areas, where 40 per cent of the population survive precariously – has not become a priority for the ANC as a party, despite occasional rhetoric to the contrary. If current trends hold, ANC-led provincial governments are likely to focus resources on urban and peri-urban areas. The upshot is a transformation process that will continue to grind ahead laboriously and slowly. A more ominous challenge is also brewing in the rural outland, one that reveals a perilous hurdle to the transition. Pursuing an essentially modernist agenda of transformation, the ANC has long looked disparagingly on the country's traditional systems of authority – the intricate networks of chieftainship and traditional culture that still hold sway in many parts of South Africa. It's in these zones that Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party has entrenched itself within the KwaZulu Natal province. There, the ANC has laboured in vain to expel the IFP from that support base.

Now a traditionalist challenge is mounting in the Eastern Cape. Days before the November elections, traditional leaders there threatened to boycott the vote. They contended that the newly elected town and rural councils would sideline the chiefs and their traditional structures. Instead they demanded a guarantee that their structures should administer communities in tandem with the new authorities. The ANC has balked at the proposal. These traditional structures are unelected, often corrupt and (being staunchly patriarchal and authoritarian) socially regressive, it says; democracy and progressive change must hold sway. Principled as the ANC's response might be, it lacks the pragmatic and conciliatory stances the party has adopted towards much more recidivist political players. As one Eastern Cape chief told an SABC reporter: "What we do not understand is why the ANC is happy to

make deals and rule with the NP and the IFP, but it calls us reactionary and rejects us."

Until now the ANC has managed this contradiction between the modern and the traditional through a nominally allied organisation, the Congress of South African Traditional Leaders (Contralesa). The organisation was formed in 1987 with ANC blessings and support as part of a bid to undermine the Pretoria-sponsored homelands, and later to thwart the IFP's stranglehold on traditional leaders in KwaZulu Natal. But already there are signs that Contralesa is nobody's stooge. After Contralesa's president, Patikile Holomisa (also an ANC member), mooted a possible boycott of the elections, ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa urged the party to consider disciplinary action against him. Holimisa reacted by announcing his intention to resign from the party.

Holomisa is a not a high-profile party figure – the importance of his threat lies elsewhere. Few South African history books tell readers that Gatsha Buthelezi, today the scourge of the ANC, once also belonged to that party; nor do they inform one that Buthelezi formed Inkatha with the sanction of the ANC in 1975, only to be forced out of the ANC five years later in what was arguably a grave tactical error. By keeping Buthelezi within the party's fold, the ANC might well have contained the threat he later came to pose; the same applies in Holomisa's case.

It is too early to tell how this challenge from traditional leaders might play itself out. One option quietly mulled over by some Eastern Cape chiefs is to create a new political vehicle to better defend their interests, thereby casting issues of traditional authority and culture in a new political form. Radical populists like Winnie Mandela, who has pointedly maintained close relations with Contralesa and its East-

ern Cape leadership, might also decide to exploit such a development. The outcome, though, depends on President Nelson Mandela. Until now Mandela – a prince of the Aba Thembu tribe in the Eastern Cape, the second largest tribe in the region after the Xhosa – has adroitly straddled the divide between the traditional and the modern, regularly consulting with traditional leaders in that province. The question now is which way he will tilt in this latest stand-off.

The nation-building project in South Africa remains personified by Mandela who gingerly persists at his balancing act of national reconciliation. "I started reconciliation in South Africa after a lot of humiliation," says Mandela, "I am the architect of reconciliation." He scuttles between meetings with the remnants of the old order (like his controversial tea appointment three months ago with Betsie Verwoerd, the widow of apartheid architect Hendrik Verwoerd) and his own expectant constituency, corralled into township slums. Except for the relatively slim layer of upwardly mobile blacks who are rapidly being conscripted as junior partners in the white-run economy, reconciliation remains a symbolic enterprise that is not yet reflected in social intercourse.

Perhaps the grandest attempt to cast reconciliation into an institutional form is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Modelled on the Chilean Truth Commission, this body has the task of investigating and documenting human rights abuses committed during the apartheid era. In return for indemnity from prosecution, perpetrators of such crimes will testify before the commission, which will start its work by early 1996. The theory is that the promise of indemnity will prompt comprehensive revelations of human rights crimes committed during the apartheid era, both by the security forces and to a much lesser

extent by the liberation movement. And once the truth has been revealed, the nation can "begin healing itself." But the success of this commission now hangs in the balance.

Days before the local government elections, the KwaZulu Natal attorney-general, Tim McNally, made the surprise announcement that he would prosecute eighteen former top-ranking security officers, including the former Minister of Defence Magnus Malan. The accused have appeared in court, charged with complicity in the 1987 Kwamakutha massacre of civilians. Malan and his co-accused immediately cried foul, claiming that the move conflicts with the spirit of the Truth Commission. The accused had two options: apply for indemnity in exchange for their testimony before the Commission, or take their chances in the court case. The stakes they're playing for are high; surprisingly, they've chosen the latter route. Their defence will likely rest on a slew of technical objections and challenges in the Constitutional Court. And their case is bolstered by the fact that solid documentary evidence of their crimes is in short supply, despite the work of outfits like the Investigation Task Unit which built the case against these generals: in 1990, security officials incinerated tons of incriminating documentation.

Should Malan & Co. win their case, they will set a benchmark legal precedent, enabling apartheid criminals to hold their silence and shun the Truth Commission, knowing that once threatened with prosecution they too can take their chances in court ... and perhaps win. If that happens, the Truth Commission becomes a shadow play and the grand bid for national reconciliation might run aground. Will Nelson Mandela's ensemble of symbolic gestures and exhortations then be sufficient to soothe the pain and bitterness that courses through South African society?



Andrew Lichtenstein - Impact Visuals

II. ...but Not in KZN

BY DAVID POTTIE

David Pottie is a long time member of the SAR editorial working group currently based in Durban.

Most communities in South Africa went to the polls to vote in the first democratic local elections on November 1 (see preceding article). But not in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) where we didn't even get a public holiday.

Instead, more than 3,000 Cosatu, ANC/SACP supporters and others marched on Durban City Hall to protest against the non-elections and called for an end to violence in the province. In a memorandum to Mandela, the ANC provincial secretary said, "We blame the IFP for the failure to hold local

government elections in KZN. The people of this province intended to vote on this day, and the fact that they have not is reprehensible. We demand democracy and delivery of services to communities now."

Moreover, however accurate such statements may be, the sad fact is that matters are rarely left at the level of mere words in KZN. For the "debate" is also punctuated - even defined - by automatic gunfire, by house burnings and by largely ineffectual governance at the provincial level. In 14 months, the KwaZulu-Natal legislature has approved only nine laws, including two Acts relating to horse racing. The remainder of the 1995 session only had four items. It's plain to see that politicians in KZN must spend

much of their time engaged in other activities.

In the meantime, the national government has dedicated some R400 million (including R61 million to encourage voters to register) to the local government elections. These elections mark the establishment of single municipalities, integrated staff and line functions, the demarcation of new electoral wards, and new budgets. But the interim structures, established in June 1995 throughout KZN, will have to live on a little, and maybe a lot, longer than anticipated.

Without local elections rates go uncollected in many regions of the province, RDP funds are withheld from infrastructure projects and people remain cut-off from the level of government that is supposed to represent their daily interests. According to Cyril Ramaphosa,

secretary-general of the ANC, the campaign was "about the delivery of affordable services and the democratic participation of people in decision-making at the local level." Three main interrelated reasons can be cited for the delay in local elections to the new target date of March 31, 1996: political/criminal violence, local demarcation disputes and disagreement over the provincial constitution. Taken together, these factors are the most important among the range of forces that have delayed not only the elections, but have further jeopardized the prospects of getting KZN onto the road to development promised by the April 1994 elections.

Crime and punishment

In the minds of most observers, violence and KZN have become synonymous. The crime figures are a daily staple of local news in KZN. Car hijackings, theft, rape, murder (over 70 members of the South African Police were killed in KZN during the first 9 months of 1995, and police say at least 2,500 people were killed in the first six months of this year) and the ANC's repeal of the death penalty have combined to make getting tough on crime the main platform of both the National Party and the Democratic Party. Judging by letters to the editors of both black and white newspapers crime is a top priority of most voters as well. Violence is cited as an obstacle to investor confidence, rising insurance premiums, falling property values and the slow pace of development in the province. Less often mentioned, but also of crucial importance, is the impact of other kinds of violence - often much more politically rooted - in the former townships: violence which sees houses burned, children kept away from school and families forced to keep on the move.

Yet speaking at a recent Institute for Multiparty Democracy Forum on the impact of violence on democracy, IFP MP and leader of the IFP Women's brigade, Faith Gasa, tried

to sidestep the issue of violence, opting instead for the platitudinous advice that "We need to find each other," and, speaking to the women in the audience (many of them clearly IFP supporters bussed in for the occasion), "Women must build, we must not destroy." Such calls for solidarity seemed vague and imprecise when juxtaposed to the hard reality of "hit squad" charges currently being laid against the KZN public works and social welfare ministers and national IFP MP Themba Khoza, and other charges, linked in part to their erstwhile "dirty work" in KwaZulu, laid against former defence minister Magnus Malan and 10 former security officers.

Still, even if the IFP has been at the root of continued violence in KZN, it is perhaps not so easy to define all politically-related violence in KZN as IFP-led. As University of Natal violence monitor Mary de Haas notes, the ANC and the IFP both contribute to the violence that straddles political and criminal motives. Each of them share similar objectives: securing territorial control prior to elections and attempting to win political concessions at the negotiating table. Both IFP Self Protection Units (SPUs) and ANC Self-Defence Units (SDUs) have effectively created no-go areas for security forces. Although the identity of the attackers remains unknown, a November ambush of a SANDF patrol in Maphumulo by between 60 and 80 men armed with automatic weapons gives some indication of the level of antagonism that exists in the province. Yet the fact is that most voters simply want a stop to such violence, and calls for more police, greater powers of detention and the return of the death penalty receive a responsive audience in embattled KZN.

As regards the prospect of solving things by merely putting more police on the streets, de Haas charges that the criminal justice system itself is bankrupt - police

still beat witnesses in criminal cases, for example, and bail conditions enable multiple murder suspects to go free. Yet any possible resolution of the crime problem points to the need for political solutions, in this case a political initiative that could underwrite substantive reform of the justice system. And political solutions are not easy to come by in KZN.

Local demarcation and traditional leaders

The ANC sticks to its core position: that much of the violence in KZN is itself deeply rooted politically - in the activities of the IFP. It also argues that political violence is unlikely to be halted unless effective local government and a resolution of the constitutional impasse at the provincial level create a new political dispensation in KZN. But even laying the administrative groundwork to enable local elections to take place has become the centre of more dispute among all the political parties. Durban's demarcation process, like such processes in other provinces, was governed by the guidelines of the Local Government Transition Act. Of course, the disputes that arose over the new local authority boundaries, their breakdown into wards, and the allocation of eligible voters amongst them, did not distinguish KZN's experience from that of other provinces. And yet the demarcation process has dragged on longer here than anywhere else in the country, thereby possibly placing even the new March deadline for province-wide elections quite out of reach.

At the centre of the demarcation dispute is the role of traditional leaders and their control over land. Of importance here is the status of the Ingonyama Trust Lands, an area that comprises all of the former KwaZulu homelands (93% of land in KZN, including state land), now held in a trust in the name of King Goodwill Zwelithini by virtue of last minute sleight of hand legislation,

courtesy of F.W. de Klerk in the dying days prior to last April's elections. This land is currently under the control of tribal chiefs, who are not elected representatives of the population. The status of the chiefs, and the land they control, has not been resolved as the ANC and the IFP continue to offer proposals and counter-proposals for the degree to which the chiefs can be included in local government structures. (The ANC professes its willingness, for example, to include tribal chiefs in the transitional local councils – but only as ex-officio members. The IFP wants 50% of all rural structures to be comprised of chiefs and 50% to be elected.)

Equally fraught is the case of the Durban Transitional Metropolitan Council (the interim structure provided for by the Local Government Transition Act). This Council's very establishment was delayed after an IFP-ANC dispute over the projected inclusion of 14 surrounding tribal areas. This was argued for on the grounds that Durban is the economic base for those areas, the ANC thus seeking a broader definition of the metropolitan region and advocating the inclusion of tribal areas that clearly straddled urban areas. In the end, the ANC compromised, agreeing to include only five of the areas.

Nor was this the end of the story. The Demarcation Board's eventual recommendations on the outer and inner boundaries of metropolitan Durban sought to accommodate these differing views of local government but ran into opposition from the MEC for Local Government and Housing, Peter Miller. Miller and the IFP wanted all tribal areas to be excluded from the metro boundaries. In the end, a Special Electoral Court sat in Durban on November 27-30 to resolve the dispute between Miller and the Demarcation Board's recommendations. The court ruled that tribal areas would NOT be included in the outer boundary of metropolitan Durban on the ba-

sis that the tribal chiefs had been "improperly consulted." This ruling is a definite setback for the ANC's goal of securing uniform local government elections throughout KZN. Residents of the excluded areas will now be served by the proposed Regional Councils, although these structures themselves remain in dispute.

It's a constitutional thing

In the end, then, what links these various activities is the control of land and the issue of how the people on that land are to be represented. And it is by this route that disputes over local authority demarcation bubble up, inevitably, to the provincial level. Yet the fact is that they appear even less likely to be resolved easily at that level – for it is precisely there that the IFP and the ANC are now engaged in a high stakes politics, a politics that threatens to unravel even many aspects of the national compromise that allowed the 1994 elections to occur. The IFP's last minute participation in those national elections and its April 1995 walkout from the constitutional assembly have ensured that the province itself has become the chief focus of political attention here, and it is to such politics – and the jockeying for position of provincial politicians – that local electoral contests are now being held hostage. This often means, from the IFP, merely a strategy of non-compliance and withdrawal: for example, some commentators have argued that the IFP rejected the Demarcation Board's proposals precisely because they don't want to see a strong metropolitan government emerge as a counterweight to the IFP's provincial power!

In addition, the IFP is now seeking to re-enact the Ingonyama Trust Act as a provincial act – even as National Land Affairs minister, Derek Hanekom plans to amend the original act, but with the aim of excising all townships and state

land from the trust. Buthelezi's motive: a call to "seize once and for all the exclusive competence of our kingdom on matters which relate to land."

And finally the IFP's recent constitutional proposals – although these change almost every week – infringe upon all manners of national competencies, calling for provincial control of territorial waters, for example, while placing the judiciary under the premier's control and proposing a provincial constitutional court. Although the IFP recently sacked its own moderate chairperson (one more sign of a growing rift between moderates and hardliners within the organization) of the provincial constitutional committee and redrafted the composition of the committee to ensure IFP dominance, they will still require a two-thirds majority in the provincial legislature to pass their constitution (which, in any case would be subjected to numerous challenges in the national constitutional court). The IFP therefore requires the support of all of the smaller parties in KZN – the National Party, the Democratic Party, the PAC, African Christian Democratic Party and the Minority Front. If it fails, it promises to call a provincial elections in the hopes of securing its own two-thirds majority at the polls.

Local government essential for development

And yet, whatever their political leanings, what is uppermost in the minds of many new voters is the belief that the local authorities are meant to be the point of delivery for much of the RDP. Thus, the Sunday Times recently echoed this popular conception of local government when it wrote that "without effective local government, it is difficult to see how the delivery of bulk infrastructure – water, sewerage and roads – can take place."

Moreover, such a perception is an accurate one, with this in turn



Jonathan Kaplan - Impact Visuals

meaning that, in KZN, stakeholders in every sphere of developmental activity, ranging from interim government councillors to bureaucrats to civics to private developers, are currently operating under conditions of great uncertainty. Clearly, a successful holding of the local elections is a crucial precondition to building a climate of development.

And yet the people of KZN can probably not expect these elections to take place any time soon. As the preceding discussion indicates, the really divisive issues of local politics – those that are crucial in holding up the elections, for example – are not merely local ones: they overlap decisively with provincial and national issues. The IFP's poor showing in local elections elsewhere in the country only reinforces their desire to hold on in KZN and at the moment, holding on in KZN means securing the maximum degree of political power at the provincial level itself. Thus, as the IFP has pulled out of most national coordinating structures as it presses for more and more concessions to provincial competence.

To be sure, the ANC claims to be ready for any fresh provincial election that might be forthcoming, professing itself confident that it can secure a majority of its own. In the meantime, though, it appears that politics as usual will rule the day in KZN. Unfortunately "politics as usual" in KZN is also the politics of the gun and the spear. The prospects of any more satisfactory kind of political solution appear to be remote in the near future.

South African Foreign Policy

What's the Problem?

BY DAN O'MEARA

Dan O'Meara, author of a new book on the decline and fall of the apartheid state, teaches politics at the Université du Québec à Montréal. Here he critiques a pair of articles – by Roger Southall and Peter Vale – on South African foreign policy that appeared in SAR's issue of July, 1995. He hopes to offer his own substantive analysis of the new SA's foreign policy in a future issue of SAR.

My congratulations to *SAR* for facilitating the discussion of a new foreign policy for a post-apartheid South Africa. However, was I the only reader to feel that the contributions by Roger Southall and especially that by Peter Vale served more to tantalize than to take this debate very far forward?

Despite the differences between these texts, the gist of the complaint of both authors seems to be that the foreign policy of the new South Africa is too much like that of the "old" apartheid regime – in terms both of who is really making foreign policy and in terms of its content. While clearly there is much truth in these charges, the way both authors make their case seems to me too simple and too naive. A full critique of these texts would take much more space than is available (I would ideally like to challenge Vale's article virtually word for word, for example). However, I will confine myself to five interrelated issues: these authors' peculiarly ahistorical view of foreign policy; their understanding of the nature of foreign policy; the existing policy context and imperatives of the current conjuncture; the theoretical perspectives underpinning these articles; and the "solutions" offered.

Policy-making

To begin with, Southall and Vale's

shared view that the foreign policy of the "new South Africa" is essentially being made by those who shaped the foreign policy of the apartheid state rests on a curious overstatement of the role of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) under the National Party (NP) government. For most of the apartheid period, neither the DFA, nor the responsible minister really "made" foreign policy (in the sense of taking the key decisions). For long stretches of NP rule after 1948, the DFA was presided over either by political hacks, or by men (Eric Louw, Hilgard Muller) with little political clout. This meant, in effect, that from 1948 to 1966 the Prime Minister rather than the Minister of Foreign Affairs effectively decided on the key external initiatives (D.F. Malan was, in fact, his own Foreign Minister). Then, when John Vorster came into office in 1966, he effectively ceded control over foreign policy to the Bureau of State Security. In all of the flashy external initiatives of the Vorster government – from the "dialogue" initiative to the invasion of Angola – the Foreign Minister and his department were explicitly and deliberately marginalized. So much so that in August 1975 the DFA first became aware that South African troops had undertaken their then largest foreign intervention since WWII when it received a note from Portugal protesting South African military presence deep inside Angola!

Pik Botha broke this mould of a weak minister in Cabinet with no clout in party or Cabinet. However, he too was soon trapped in a largely unsuccessful struggles for control over foreign policy with various other state departments, ranging from the old Bureau for State

Security to Military Intelligence. Of the few successful foreign policy initiatives of the apartheid regime, responsibility for only two – the Nkomati Accord and the Brazzaville Protocol – can legitimately be laid at the door of the Foreign Ministry. And the former was soon wrecked by the SADF, which also did its damndest to derail Namibian independence.

This means that while the DFA undertook much diplomatic activity, it neither "made" nor controlled foreign policy. Vale makes the absurd claim that under the NP "the [foreign] policy process was cut off from domestic politics" (p. 7). Yet, however domestic politics are defined, they surely include internal struggles within the state and government. And far from being "cut off" from such domestic politics, South African foreign policy – in terms of its content, of who determined it, and of how it was implemented – was a product of what I would argue was the only "domestic politics" that really mattered: conflict within the government and the National Party. Even the most superficial reading of South African "domestic politics" since 1966 makes this very clear.

This is no mere historical quibble. It goes to the heart of the assertion that the institutional interests which "made" South African policy in the past are simply up to their old tricks. Understanding the history and politics of South African foreign policy both illuminates the DFA's present role and leads to a more inclusive concept of foreign policy than the one advanced in both these articles. Given the fact that the DFA spent so long in a losing war to defend its own policy terrain, a different reading of its bureaucratic

behaviour at the moment might suggest that it is merely lording it over its old rivals – particularly the Defence Force – and insisting on its own preeminence on this terrain of policy.

The ANC's responsibility

But how important is this factor, really? Here the sheer incompetence of Minister Nzo and his deputy Aziz Pahad muddies the analysis of both authors far more than is necessary, and becomes a key factor in encouraging them to overstate the importance of the bureaucrats. Southall, for example, concludes his article by asking whether, with such ministers in place, the ANC is in "sufficient control of the DFA" to shift South African foreign policy? Clearly it is not. Yet Southall, in particular, passes in silence over a broader and far more important point: the very limited capacity for creative foreign policy thinking inside the ANC itself. It is, of course, true that Nzo and Pahad represent the most bureaucratic tendencies of a highly bureaucratic organization. Yet, crucially, even the ANC critics of their minister have shown very little ability to meet the challenges of new situations. Mention is made of the criticism of existing policy by the ANC chairman of the parliamentary foreign affairs committee, Raymond Suttner. Yet Suttner himself also long exemplified a particularly sterile brand of ANC policy thinking.

For the problem goes beyond mere individuals, and is deeply rooted in the ANC's own history. During its long exile, the movement did display some diplomatic finesse. But this was largely limited to a single issue – isolation of the apartheid regime. The ANC overall foreign policy stance was frozen in the most rigid of cold war postures. This was an organization whose members were all aware of the need to toe the central line, an organization never known for its willingness to tolerate – let alone

encourage – creative thinking about difficult issues. This leads one at least to question the ANC's ability to think its way through the immense challenges of the post Cold War international order. In an era in which diplomacy is not just "multinational," but has to grapple with the rapidly changing and immensely convoluted transnational politics of complex interdependence, it would seem to me that the ANC is almost as ill-equipped as the DFA.

Our authors' insensitivity to institutional and political history is evident at another level. Both of them, but Southall in particular, emphasize the new South Africa's "moral" foreign policy. One does not have to be an unreconstructed "realist" (in international relations theory terms) to be a little sceptical of this. The kind of moral declarations thus evoked – and also the tone of critics urging the government to greater effort in this area – are strangely reminiscent of debates in the rest of Africa during the 1960s. New states in new situations are given to grand idealistic pronouncements. Unfortunately these seldom amount to much, not because they are not sincerely intended, but because foreign policy involves something more than lofty declarations and good intentions.

Here Southall and Vale display not only a peculiarly South African insensitivity to the history of the rest of Africa, but, more seriously, they both exhibit a flawed understanding of the nature and scope of foreign policy. The foreign policy capacities of this or that state are not simply a matter of statements of principle, of votes in the UN, or even of its overall diplomatic profile. Underlying all these specifics is the issue of the institutional capacity of the state in question to develop creative foreign policies, implement them in a coherent fashion and adapt these policies to their own, largely unforeseen consequences.

What about globalization?

And this is the heart of my disagreement with these articles. Both seem marked by a fairly simplistic understanding of foreign policy (the making of decisions) to the neglect of discussing the vitally important domestic and external issues that shape the process of decision-making in foreign policy and determine its policy content, its mode(s) of implementation and its impact.

It is in this context that we must consider the most glaring omission of all in these articles. I was astounded by the absence of any real discussion of the overriding issue for all states of the new transnational politics since the end of the Cold War: the ability "the state" to deal with the enormous pressures, political as well as economic, attendant upon the galloping and largely unchallenged process of globalization. To the extent that economic issues appeared in these articles, they were either characterized as those of "development," or dismissed as part of an emerging neo-mercantilism.

Here, three points must be stressed. Firstly, globalization has severely negative consequences for South Africa's already declining place in the international division of labour. Secondly, globalization is the issue which presses most strongly on all of South Africa's immediate neighbours. Thirdly, and most importantly, globalization is transforming the nature and powers of "the state" itself. I was stunned that two articles by such eminent commentators as Southall and Vale paid virtually no attention whatsoever to what is the overriding issue confronting the new South Africa's attempts to find its place in the new, post-Cold War global order. When Southall discusses the redefinition of security, surely this issue should have taken precedence.

Part of the problem here is theoretical. While *SAR* is clearly not the place for theoretical debates,

the issue of theory is raised explicitly by Vale and semi-explicitly in Southall. Both articles seemed to me trapped in a fairly conventional theoretical conception of foreign policy and international politics. This is most clearly evident in Vale's piece.

Vale legitimately criticizes old style realist approaches to foreign policy. Yet his irritatingly trendy post-structuralist language actually reproduces many of realism's most questionable assumptions. Consider, for example, the following statement: "At issue here is the immediate problem of bureaucratic transformation, but much deeper is the issue of foreign-policy making in a democracy. How free is South Africa to produce an individual and authentic narrative of itself in the world beyond the Cold War?"

Going behind the silly jargon (I refuse to say "deconstructing"), a number of old realist shibboleths resurface. First, the state is conceived in personified, monolithic terms. "South Africa" (not South Africans, nor even South African policy makers) has to act. Secondly, the foreign policy of this personified, individualized state is simply a matter of developing a "national weltanschauung," or an "authentic"

(!!!) self-concept. What on earth does this mean? This sort of language used to be used by Joseph Mobutu. Most charitably it seems to involve much the same thing as the realists' (authentic) notion of national interest.

Too simplistic

Yet completely absent here are the problematic notions of who makes policy through which contested processes; and the fundamental distinction between the contested process of arriving at a decision to adopt a particular policy profile (decision-making) and the very different, yet also always contested, politics of implementing such policies. Moreover, even should "South Africa" arrive at such an "authentic narrative," one of the oldest saws in foreign policy studies tells us that there is a world of difference between the self-concept and explicit objectives of a policy (even if it is applied in the way the decision-makers intended) and the actual consequences or outcomes produced by such policies. Developing an "authentic narrative" might say something about objectives, but it says little about the means or resources available to realize such objectives, let alone the ability of the bureaucratic matrix in question to adapt its "narrative"

to the consequences such policy unleashes.

Here is the nub of my dissatisfaction with the two articles, then. Both Southall and Vale are accomplished analysts, well versed in the shortcomings of international relations theory. Yet their articles focus on only very few of the complex array of factors necessary to analyze the foreign policy of this or that state. Their treatment of even some of these factors is superficial and some of the solutions proposed do not take us anywhere towards opening a real debate about the huge shortcomings in South African foreign policy.

Thus, the solutions offered by Vale - a more clearly defined public profile and a turning to the insight and energies of a wider group of intellectuals in the defining of foreign policy - are woefully inadequate to facilitate the charting of the kind of activist foreign policy both authors appear to favour. The first seems to reduce politics and policy solely to image and "idiom." As for the need to widen the debate about South African policy, I fully agree. But if such a debate is to lead to a more coherent, effective South African foreign policy, it will require analysts to move beyond the restricted notions presented in these texts.

Southall replies

Thanks to Dan O'Meara for raising questions about my recent piece on regional security. His critique is thoughtful and provocative, and raises important questions about how we should conceptualise South Africa's new foreign policy - its making and content. However, I would argue he has gone overboard. So, just a brief response.

Apart from the fact that I centred my article around regional security, and I did not attempt to

address South African foreign policy as a whole, I have two major gripes.

Dan complains that both Peter and I projected an ahistorical view of South African foreign policy-making and policy (SAFP), suggesting that the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) was in control in the past, and that consequently it is in control now. In retrospect, I accept that I should have acknowledged that in the past, notably under total strategy, that

SAFP was fragmented, and much responsibility was hi-jacked by the generals. (When addressing an informed audience, one often cuts corners). But I reject any suggestion that the DFA was so marginalised that it lacks responsibility for the past; and I do suggest that, today, the DFA is becoming the central locus of SAFP. OK, President Mandela, Cyril Ramaphosa and others are jumping in on the action because of the inadequacies of the DFA under its present

political leadership. None the less, as indicated by its failure to secure its Corvettes, the Defence establishment is being reined in, notably with regard to regional policy. It is precisely because the DFA is moving back in charge of its brief that there is so much concern here, in the media and within civil society more generally, at its failure to handle internal transformation of the Ministry, and to respond adequately to the new demands being placed upon it. The recent Nigeria debacle is an obvious case in point.

Morality and globalisation: no responsible commentator would fail to acknowledge the fact that globalisation poses the greatest challenge to SA, and will come to shape SAFP in its broader and regional manifestations. However, Dan does seem to be donning the realist clothes he claims he does not want to wear

when he laments my focus upon the failure of the new "SAFP" to take greater account of human rights concerns. Much of the immediate debate here, and rightly so, has been precisely about the questionable morality of SA's continued participation in the arms trade, its friendly dealings with fairly loathsome regimes, its budgetary bias towards western trade partners to the detriment of its expanding relations with Africa and so on. Yet it is because pressures emanating from globalisation are pushing SAFP to maximise trade and investment benefits, to the exclusion of wider political considerations, that a wide variety of outside critics, in trade unions, NGOs, universities and elsewhere, are asserting the importance of moral considerations having an important part to play in the shaping of a defensible SAFP.

Indeed, an important aspect of

the debate, raging in a host of forums, is exactly the assertion that SAFP cannot become the property of the DFA alone: in the democratic society which SA aspires to become, there must be genuine provision for a democratic input into foreign policy.

Patrick MacGowan, the distinguished international political economist, has probably done more than anyone else in recent writings to evaluate the prospects for the "new South Africa" within the new international division of labour. Yet it was he, who in a recent dialogue around SAFP argued, first, that SA's "national interest" should be defined in terms of its sustaining its new democracy; and second, that this implies that SAFP should be driven by democratic as much by economic values. The concern with the human rights agenda for SAFP does not ignore the imperatives of globalisation.

Vale replies

Thanks for letting me respond to Dan O'Meara's creative - albeit typically caustic - response to my article on SA's foreign policy in *SAR*. This intervention is confined to four brief points: the DFA, the international role of the exiled-ANC, a dash of theory, and outcome and expectations. (The centrality of globalisation and the limited institutional capacity of the DFA, I have addressed in parallel work over the past few years.)

Of course the DFA has had to contest its role in the making of foreign policy: to believe otherwise, is to misunderstand the nature of international relations and the South African state. My sense however is that Dan O'Meara falls into the trap so carefully laid by countless South African diplomats that they were innocent but highly professional bystanders (read: closet anti-apartheid liberals) in a wicked

attempt by other departments to undermine their authority.

Secondly, there has been an effort - led by myself mainly - to romanticize the diplomatic capacity of the exiled ANC. This has been a mistake: the line of enquiry suggested by Dan O'Meara may well open helpful explanations for current policy failures. But let's not fail to recognise that the UDF, the Trade Union and other internal strands of resistance to apartheid had an appreciation of international affairs which was more nuanced than that which prevailed within the straight-jacket of Cold War exile.

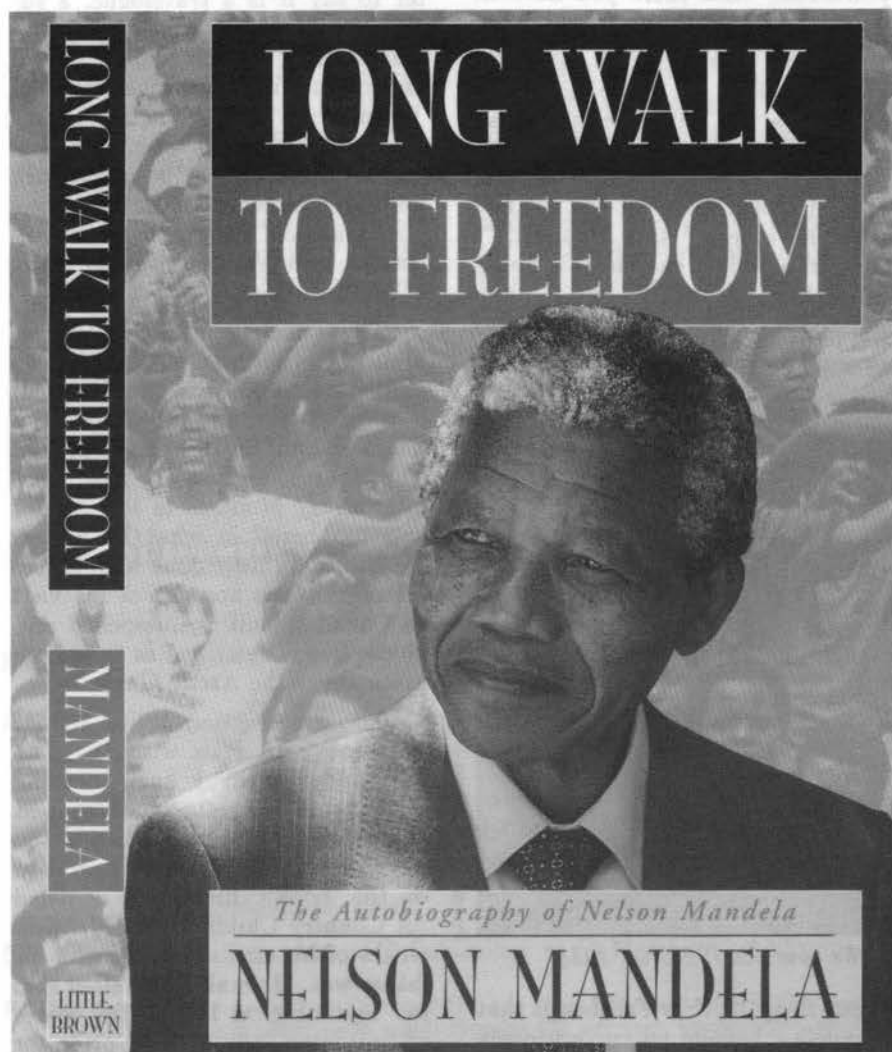
On theory I'm frankly confused. Is Dan O'Meara really telling us that the snake-oil which passes for international relations theory helps us understand anything, let alone the foreign policy making in the post-Cold War period? It is certainly true that - possibly - theories of for-

eign policy-making might be more helpful. Unfortunately, Dan doesn't draw a distinction between the two.

And outcomes and expectations? Whatever Dan O'Meara might suggest, the international community looks to South Africa - or, more correctly, Nelson Mandela - for some new voice (must I really worry that this way of putting it will irritate Dan?) as the century closes. For evidence of this look no further than the recent CHOGM gathering in Auckland in the aftermath of the slaying of Ken Saro-Wiwa.

There is much more to say on all this which is why I look forward to Dan O'Meara's own essay on this topic in these pages with great anticipation. As usual he has brought a sharp historical and analytical eye to bear and has certainly lifted my thinking on all this a few floors.

Reviewing Mandela's Autobiography



Long Walk to Freedom, The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela. Little Brown & Co., Boston, New York, Toronto, London, 1994. 558 pages.

munity and international investors? I think the latter.

This is no revolutionary. This is a man born of the ruling class, raised to be counsellor to a king, exposed from adolescence to the science of governing, to the mechanics of addressing the innate conflicts of humanity. This is no zealot, no burning reformer of the order of things. Never, he explains at length, was he a Marxist; he was interested in dialectical materialism only as a way of explaining history. Never was he a Communist; the Communist friends he made served mainly the purpose of introducing him to a wider society which did not pay attention to racism. Never as he rode the tiger's back was he in danger of winding up inside the tiger's tummy: the alliance of the African National Congress with the South African Communist Party he likens to the Allies' alliance with Stalin against Hitler and he writes: "Who is to say we were not using them?"

It is undoubtedly necessary to say all this. This is no wounded, angry, vengeful, dysfunctional ego. Mandela is an imminently sane, well-grounded human being. He understands the motivations of his oppressors. He writes of the friendships he made with some of his jailers and the birthday remembrances he sent to their children. He knows the psyches of his political opponents — he knows that to undermine them would undermine the stability of the country. He displays spleen only toward the Pan African Congress. He is discrete ... about Winnie, and, for the most part, about F.W. de

I. Michael Valpy: * (one star)

Michael Valpy, columnist for *Toronto's Globe and Mail* was the *Globe's Africa and Middle East Bureau Chief* from 1984 to 1988.

Reading this enjoyable book left me with the impression that two Nelson Mandelas wrote it. There is the Mandela who experienced the life and events recorded in its pages and, always looking over his shoulder, there is the second Mandela —

the shrewd pragmatist with a careful political eye to the portrait being presented. Do we have true autobiography as a result, a connected narrative of the author's life with stress laid on introspection? Or do we have well-crafted mythology, the selling of the Father of the Nation, the Trustworthy Helmsman, the Reliable President who merits the confidence of his uneasy, troubled people and the domestic business com-

Klerk. And, all in all, the reader is not going to feel satisfied.

As I turned the last of this book's 558 pages, I did not feel that I had seen inside one of the century's outstanding human beings. Rather I feel I have read something that could have been put out by the publishers of *Boys Own Annual* under the series rubric "Great and Courageous Leaders of Our Times." There is a meal here, but it never transcends comfort food. There is no revelation. We all know the story of the struggle against apartheid. We all

before, during and after his 27 years of imprisonment, a supremely competent, skilled, sensitive, utilitarian politician. And there you have it. That is his book, that is what it says.

Maybe this story is too well known. There are more clothes to Mandela's life than we have had before. But there are no surprises. No jagged edges. And, no, not much introspection. "I am not and never have been," says Mandela, "a man who finds it easy to talk about his feelings in public." He remains masked. What is disappointing

not the information they present but the biases of those who write for them.) But autobiography? Better to say it is a travelogue, a superb travelogue, a wide-angle camera panning with exquisite detail and colour from the royal court of Thembuland to the intellectual vibrancy and frenetic events of Second World War-era Johannesburg and Sophiatown and the gathering anti-apartheid struggle to the awfulness of, and triumph over, 27 years of imprisonment.

The book is in four sections: Mandela's childhood and youth, his political activism, his imprisonment - which takes up more than 200 pages - and his life after prison. The fourth section is the least interesting; Mandela is too careful and too banal in what he writes. He also could have done with better editing: in his account of his visit to Canada, Inuit is misspelled and Goose Bay is described as "a remote place above the Arctic Circle."

The first section I like by far the most. It deals with the part of Mandela's life I knew nothing about. It suggests what shaped the man. And, alas, there's too little of it. In the lovely narrative of the book's first part - titled "A Country Childhood" - Mandela writes of his exploration of who his father was. He makes his father into his mythological hero. He writes of becoming infused with pride for Xhosa and Thembu culture, of acquiring his father's devotion to history.

Thembuland formed part of the Xhosa nation in what is now Transkei. Mandela was born the son of a Thembu chief, Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa, who was both an adviser to kings and a king-maker, sometimes referred to as the prime minister of Thembuland. He accompanied the Thembu kings on their travels through their domain and was with them during meetings with important government officials. He also was the acknowledged custodian of Xhosa history. He had



Peter Magubane - Long Walk to Freedom

"Our supporters joined us in song outside the court in Pretoria, 1958"

know about the dumb-brute racism of apartheid's *apparatchiks*, the demeaning, stupid and violent acts of its bureaucrats, its police, its jailers. We know about the Rivonia treason trial. We all have read accounts of the political prisoners on Robben Island. We all know about the major decisions Mandela made to accept the tactic of the violent struggle for the ANC while he was still espousing non-violence, to begin negotiations with the apartheid government without consulting or even informing his ANC colleagues. We all know the general dimensions of his personality - courtly, dignified, intelligent, committed, uncompromising, a tower of strength and civility

about *Long Walk to Freedom* is that Mandela - beyond an unconsciously moving revelation of his relationship to his father and confessing to being a lousy husband and father who methodically subordinated personal relationships to his political mission - rarely reveals the human elements of himself that lets the reader meet and comprehend him.

Which is not to say, "Don't bother reading it." This is an enjoyable book. It is written by a man who has both a superb eye and a superb memory. The voice is authentic Mandela, certainly what I imagine Mandela's voice to be: ironic, wise. (He says of newspapers that what he finds useful about them is

a tuft of white hair just above his forehead and, as a boy, Mandela would take white ash and rub it into his hair in imitation of him. When he refused to acknowledge a summons to appear before a local colonial official, he was summarily stripped of his title and wealth – deprived of most of his land and cattle and the revenue that came with them. He had four wives, the third of whom was Mandela's mother. He died in poverty on the dirt floor of Mandela's mother's hut when Mandela was nine.

Soon after his father's death, the acting regent of the Thembu people, Chief Jongintaba Dalindyebo, made young Mandela his ward. Mandela describes leaving his village of Qunu to walk with his mother to the royal residence at Mqhekezweni, provisional capital of Thembuland. The window he opens on a sad little boy departing forever from his childhood home is moving. "We travelled by foot and in silence until the sun was sinking slowly toward the horizon. But the silence of the heart between mother and child is not a lonely one. My mother and I never talked very much, but we did not need to. I never doubted her love or questioned her support." (He was in prison when she died; his jailers refused permission for him to attend her funeral.) His description of life – his formative adolescent life – at the royal residence is fascinating but too brief and, regrettably,

too shallow. He writes: "The two principles that governed my life at Mqhekezweni were chieftaincy and the Church" – personified by two men: the regent and the Reverend Matyolo, pastor of Mqhekezweni's Methodist Church. We are not shown enough of either. Mandela merely tantalizes the reader with skimpy details of their personalities. We're told the Reverend Matyolo had a deep and potent voice, that his Methodism "was of the fire-and-brimstone variety, seasoned with a bit of African animism" and that the first story Mandela heard of him was that he had chased away a dangerous ghost with only a Bible and lantern as weapons. But Mandela gives us little clue to the reverend's influence on him and, of the regent,

we hear not much more (except that he was clever enough, when Mandela decided to run away to Johannesburg to escape an arranged marriage, to anticipate his ward's action and inform the train-station agent not to sell him a ticket).

The first 40,000 South African copies of *Long Walk to Freedom* were bought up within hours of going on sale. Subsequent shipments sold just as quickly. The picture of himself Mandela showed to his fellow citizens and the world would leave no unpleasantness with the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Thus the story of Nelson Mandela's life is set down ... always very, very readably, often movingly. But the end-product is more high-grade entertainment than illumination.



"With Walter in the prison yard, 1966"

S.A. archive photos

II. David Cooke: **** (four stars)

A member of the SAR editorial working group, David Cooke teaches English at York University's Glendon College.

This century has had its share of liberation movements, some of whose leaders have achieved legendary stature. Tracing the story of these movements is always interesting, but it is especially inviting to see it through the eyes of one who was at the head of the struggle.

In *Long Walk to Freedom*, Mandela gives an engrossing account of becoming a freedom fighter, organizing the strikes and stay-aways, launching the armed struggle, then later suspending it. He tells about relations with the Communist Party, the Indian community and other members of the movement, about conflicts within the

movement, about the Treason Trial and Rivonia, and the shadowy time spent underground. He describes survival in prison for 27 years, the negotiations for his own release and for that of other political prisoners, and the curious story of re-entering society, at first clandestinely, then in a blaze of publicity. Overall, it is a story of tension, courage and passion.

In the process Mandela captures the painful drama of critical decisions. He gives his insider's view of the practical politics of the daily struggle, details some of the immense personal costs suffered, and unwittingly reveals a number of unresolved tensions and conflicts in his own outlook.

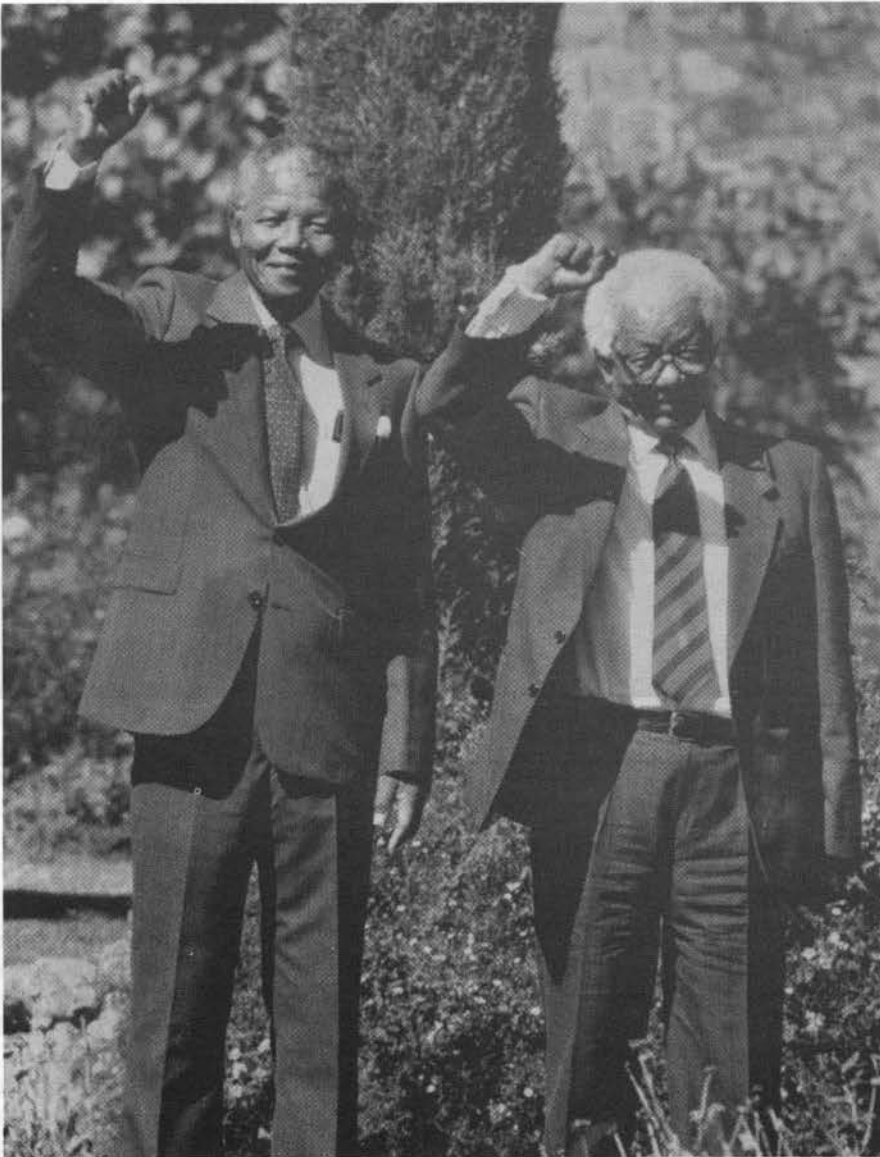
One intriguing question is how a person of relatively favoured estate and status abandoned the comfort and security of his courtly early life for the dangerous rigours of a freedom fighter. Mandela

approaches this question more by the sweep of his story than by his commentary, though at the end of the book he looks back to observe, "I slowly saw that not only was I not free, but my brothers and sisters were not free. ... That is when I joined the ANC. ... It was this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life." In powerful vignettes, he details his development. In one, he describes how he came to reject the way "paternalistic British

colonialism" was creating a black elite. In another, he admits he hesitated to include the Indian community in the growing battle against apartheid. The turning point for him was the Indian community's campaign of passive resistance against the Ghetto Act, which severely restricted rights to movement, trade and ownership. He describes how numbers of the community engaged in the campaign "suspended their studies ... and went to prison," including the school-age Ahmed Kathrada, who eventually spent many years locked up with Mandela. Mandela records the breakthrough in his thinking: *I often visited the home of Amina Pahad for lunch, and then suddenly, this charming woman put aside her apron and went to jail for her beliefs. If I had once questioned the willingness of the Indian community to protest against oppression, I no longer could.*

This is also a story of leadership, Mandela's and others'. Mandela is constantly aware of the fact and repeatedly comments on the role of the leaders in the movement. In a telling incident, he displays the ability to take leadership at a crucial moment. As he arrives at Robben Island with other political prisoners, the warders shout "*Haak! Haak!*" Afrikaans for "move," usually addressed to cattle. Mandela and Tefu deliberately set a slower pace, "to show them that we were not everyday criminals but political prisoners being punished for our beliefs."

Naturally the political theme runs through the story and leads inevitably to some of the critical debates that embroiled the movement. In the Defiance Campaign of 1952, for instance, the argument centred on whether the original stance of non-violence was an "inviolable principle" or "a tactic to be used as the situation demanded," a disagreement that pitted Mandela against Gandhi's son, Manilal. Two years later, a key issue was how to conduct the school boycott cam-



Gideon Mendel/Magnum - Long Walk to Freedom

"Walter & I had been imprisoned together on Robben Island for 2 decades..."

paign: Mandela concludes that on this occasion, the National Executive Committee saddled the activists "with a boycott that would be almost impossible to effect." By 1961, in the wake of a less than successful stay-at-home campaign in his "Black Pimpernel" days, he proposed to the ANC executive the "fateful step" of renouncing nonviolence, involving intense disagreement with Chief Luthuli and the National Executive. And much later still he was central to the tense decision to suspend the armed struggle, on Slovo's suggestion. Many such debates took place in the rush and heat of having to make rapid decisions under great pressure. This is, after all, the story of a movement of many people, as well as the account of a singularly brave man.

Yet in the course of these fast-moving events, there were times when Mandela unrepentantly took unilateral action on behalf of the movement or the ANC, without reference to others. In calling off the stay-away in 1961 after the Treason Trial, for instance, Mandela met with local and foreign press and openly questioned the ANC policy of non-violence, to considerable publicity. While the executive criticized him at the time for not consulting with them, Mandela comments, "sometimes one must go public with an idea to push a reluctant organization in the direction you want it to go." Emphasizing as he does the role of leadership throughout, Mandela occasionally reveals a willingness to take independent action that seems to jibe with the very disciplined, democratic process of decision-making that the ANC had evolved.

During the struggle, Mandela reassessed his earlier opposition to communism, influenced by his friendships with Party members Moses Kotane, Ismail Meer and Ruth First, and noting the sacrifices they were willing to make. ("I was finding it more and more difficult to justify my prejudice against the

party.") It is in his recounting of such events and relationships that a central contradiction becomes apparent. In somewhat laconic capsule paragraphs that interpret key parts of his life, he offers tantalizingly brief glimpses into his thinking that invite fuller exploration. He would seem, for instance, to be well on the way to an overt Marxist interpretation of his experience when he can declare after the Treason Trial, "I went from having an idealistic view of the law as a sword of justice to a perception of the law as a tool used by the ruling class to shape society in a way favourable to itself." But for those trying to identify his political framework, he appears to slide away from the issue when he comments in his address at Rivonia, "The Communist Party sought to emphasize class distinctions whilst the ANC seeks to harmonize them." Other commentaries in the book leave questions like these unresolved, even though on Robben Island he finds it attractive to use a socialist analysis in devising courses for young prisoners from the 70s resistance. It seems that while Mandela is especially strong on the pragmatic politics of the freedom fighter, he has adopted a kind of intellectual eclecticism that stops short of thoroughgoing political theorizing.

Mandela, however, is entirely thorough-going in another arena. He very readily acknowledges the contribution of both leaders and populace ("It was humbling to see how the suggestions of ordinary people were often far ahead of the leaders' "). He is also generous in his praise of others in the struggle, including rivals such as Robert Sobukwe of the PAC. Indeed this generosity of spirit marks the whole account, with moving tributes to such as Bram Fischer, one of his lawyers, who eventually went underground to join in the struggle more vigorously, ultimately at the cost of his life.

Understandably, the most heartfelt tributes are paid to "the Tam-

bos, the Sisulus, the Luthulis, the Dadoos, the Sobukwes." From these comrades, Mandela learns "that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it." And throughout the whole experience, his own humanity persists: "Even in the grimmest times in prison, when my comrades and I were pushed to our limits, I would see a glimmer of humanity in one of the guards, perhaps just for a second, but it was enough to reassure me and keep me going."

Readers' Forum . . .



Connell article

6 August 1995

Congratulations on Dan Connell's report on *What's Left of the Left in South Africa* (*SAR* vol. 10 no. 4). Having just returned from South Africa, where I attended a "Writers' Summit" which created the umbrella Interim South African Writers Organization (ISAWO), I can attest to the accuracy of his account.

South Africa is going through a difficult transitional period and the signs are not all promising. Connell's report is both perceptive and honest.

Dennis Brutus
Africana Studies
University of Pittsburgh

We all stand before history. I am a man of peace, of ideas. Appalled by the denigrating poverty of my people who live on a richly endowed land, distressed by their political marginalization and economic strangulation, angered by the devastation of their land, their ultimate heritage, anxious to preserve their right to life and to a decent living, and determined to usher to this country as a whole a fair and just democratic system which protects everyone and every ethnic group and gives us all a valid claim to human civilization, I have devoted my intellectual and material resources, my very life, to a cause in which I have total belief and from which I cannot be blackmailed or intimidated. I have no doubt at all about the ultimate success of my cause, no matter the trials and tribulations which I and those who believe with me may encounter on our journey. Nor imprisonment nor death can stop our ultimate victory.

I repeat that we all stand before history. I and my colleagues are not the only ones on trial.

Shell is here on trial and it is as well that it is represented by counsel said to be holding a watching brief. The Company has, indeed, ducked this particular trial, but its day will surely come and the lessons learnt here may prove useful to it for there is no doubt in my mind that the ecological war that the Company has waged in the Delta will be called to question sooner than later and the crimes of that war be duly punished. The crime of the Company's dirty wars against the Ogoni people will also be punished.

On trial also is the Nigerian nation, its present rulers and those who assist them. Any nation which can do to the weak and disadvantaged what the Nigerian nation has done to the Ogoni, loses a claim to independence and to freedom from outside influence. I am not one of those who shy away from protesting injustice and oppression, arguing that they are expected in a military regime. The military do not act alone. They are supported by a gaggle of politicians, lawyers, judges, academics and businessmen, all of them hiding under the claim that they are only doing their duty, men and women too afraid to wash their pants of urine. We all stand on trial, my lord, for by our actions we have denigrated our Country and jeopardized the future of our children. As we subscribe to the sub-normal and accept double standards, as we lie and cheat openly, as we protect injustice and oppression, we empty our classrooms, denigrate our hospitals, fill our stomachs with hunger and elect to make ourselves the slaves of those who ascribe to higher standards, pursue the truth, and honour justice, freedom, and hard work. I predict that the scene here will be played and replayed by generations yet unborn. Some have already cast themselves in the role of villains, some are tragic victims, some still have a chance to redeem themselves. The choice is for each individual.

I predict that the denouement of the riddle of the Niger delta will soon come. The agenda is being set at this trial. Whether the peaceful ways I have favoured will prevail depends on what the oppressor decides, what signals it sends out to the waiting public. In my innocence of the false charges I face Here, in my utter conviction, I call upon the Ogoni people, the peoples of the Niger delta, and the oppressed ethnic minorities of Nigeria to stand up now and fight fearlessly and peacefully for their rights. History is on their side. God is on their side. For the Holy Quran says in Sura 42, verse 41: "All those that fight when oppressed incur no guilt, but Allah shall punish the oppressor." Come the day.

Ken Saro-Wiwa's closing statement to the Nigerian military-appointed special tribunal