

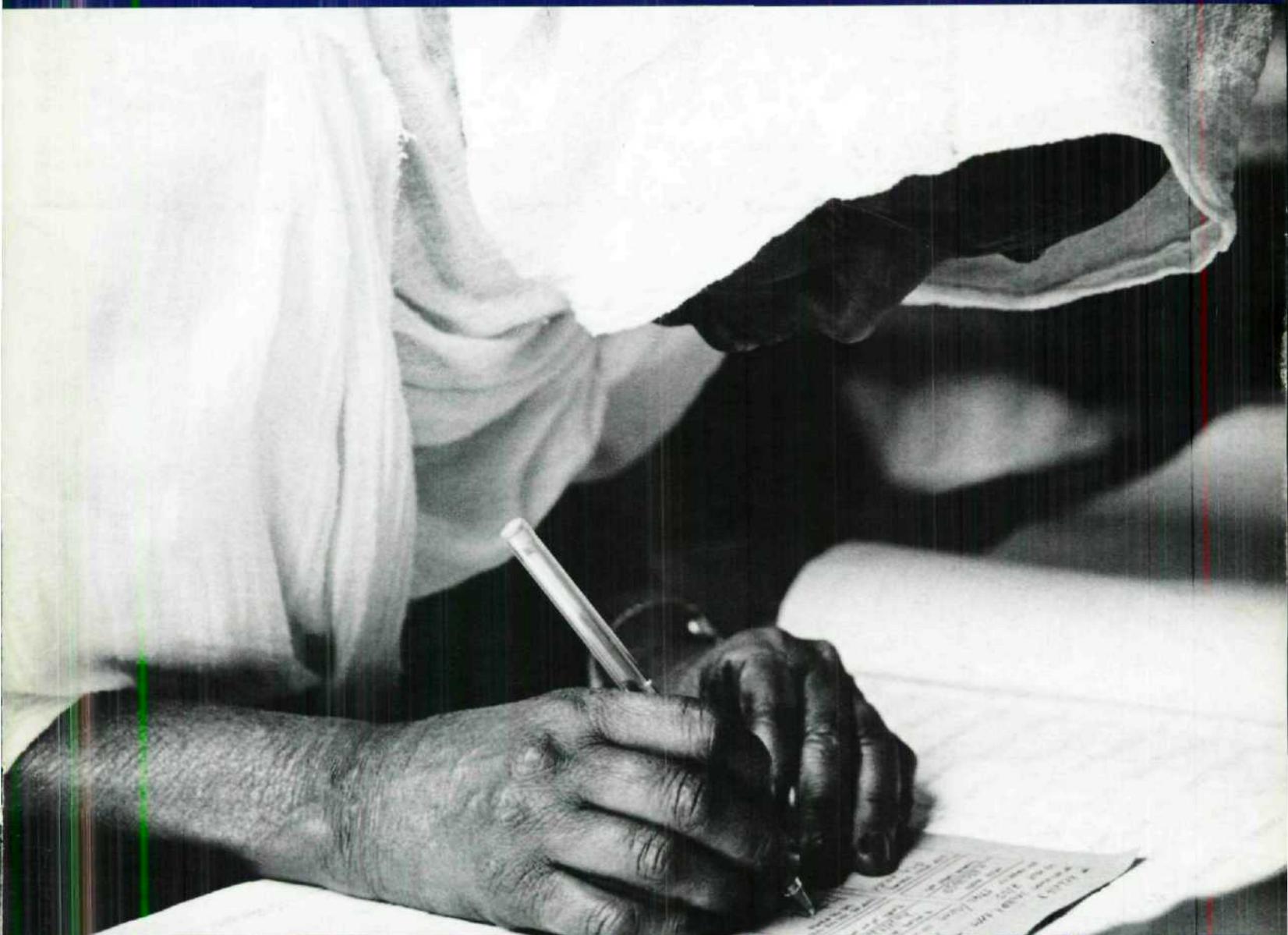
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AMERICA'S LEADING MAGAZINE ON AFRICA

# AFRICA REPORT

JULY-AUGUST 1993

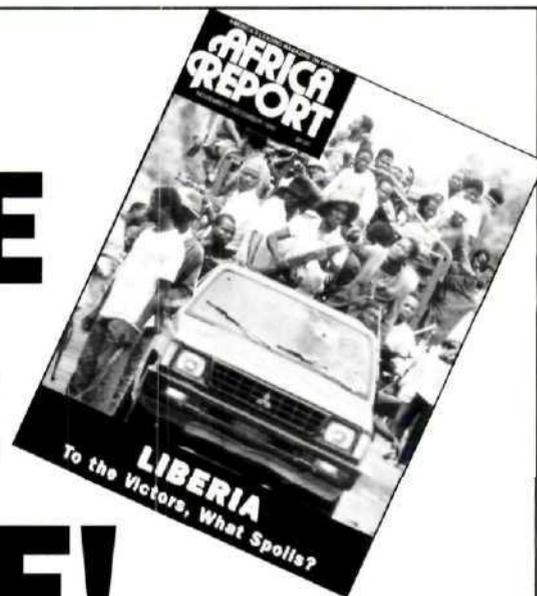
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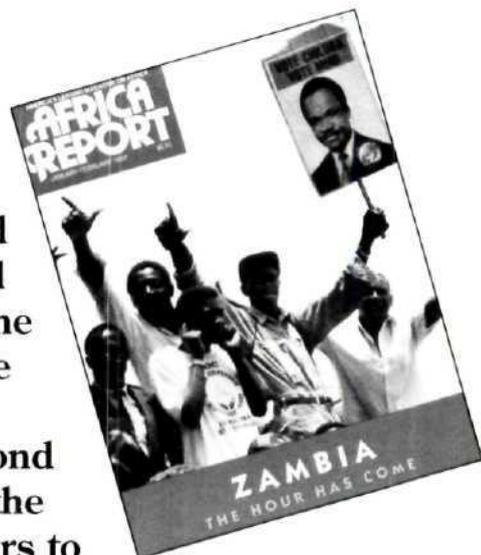
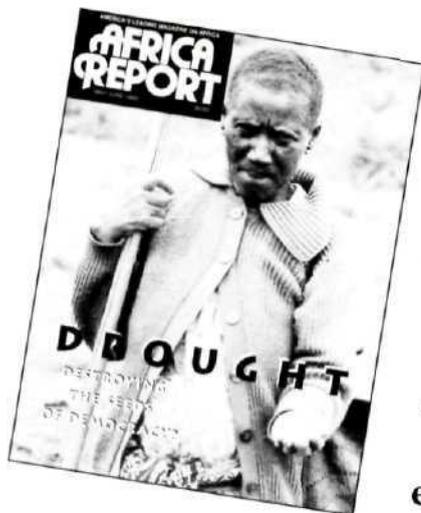
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# AFRICA REPORT



# UPDATE

IN THE NEWS

## Burundi's Buyoya Can Claim Victory in Defeat

When Burundi's 2.8 million voters went to the polls in the country's first multi-party presidential election on June 1, many expected President Pierre Buyoya, who seized power in a coup d'état in 1987, to win the contest. Instead, the opposition Burundi Democracy Front (Frodebu) candidate, Melchior Ndadaye, outpolled Buyoya by a 2-to-1 margin.

But the outgoing president could claim a triumph in his defeat: He had worked hard to promote reconciliation in Burundi after decades of ethnic massacres and domination of the majority Hutu ethnic group by the minority Tutsi. That the voting was conducted under peaceful and free conditions bodes well for his "national unity" campaign.

As the country geared up for legislative elections scheduled for June 29, hopes ran high that Ndadaye, who was set to become Burundi's first Hutu head of state, would be as successful in carrying out the reconciliation process begun by his predecessor as he was in the presidential balloting.

The final results of the three-way presidential election gave Ndadaye, a 40-year-old banker, 64.7 percent of the vote, against 32.47 percent for Buyoya, who was the Union for National Progress (Uprona) candidate, and 1.44 percent for Pierre Claver Sendegeya of the People's Reconciliation Party (PRP). Local and international observer groups concurred that Burundians had generally been able to vote freely. The U.S.-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), which sent a 15-member delegation to observe the election, described it as "an historic model" for other countries in central and East Africa.

With the impressive election win behind him, Ndadaye wasted little time in expressing his belief that Burundi's voters had given him a mandate for change and that he would indeed be promoting national unity. "You have

just voted for a new Burundi, breaking with years of ill feeling and drama," he said in a statement read on Radio Burundi on June 2 after early returns indicated he would win the race. "Today marks the start of an era of a culture of human rights...[including] political rights, the right to life, and



President Pierre Buyoya shed his uniform to contest the presidential election

economic and social rights...The true promotion of these rights will cement unity among the sons and daughters of this nation," he said.

The foundation for national unity had been built over the last six years under Buyoya's rule. After taking power from Col. Jean-Baptiste Bagaza in 1987, Buyoya brought Hutus into government and released hundreds of political prisoners. Nonetheless, power remained in the hands of a Tutsi elite and it was not until a round of ethnic violence in late 1988 led to the slaughter of as many as 20,000 Hutus that the reform process was given lasting urgency.

The massacre—the worst the country had seen since between 100,000 and

250,000 Hutus were killed following an abortive coup attempt in 1972—took place after the Tutsi-dominated army was dispatched to the north of the country where hundreds of Tutsi had been killed by Hutus. By October 1988, Buyoya named a Hutu, Adrien Sibomana, prime minister; more Hutus were brought into the ruling council so that it was comprised of equal numbers of Hutus and Tutsis; and a commission for national unity was established.

On February 5, 1991, the Charter of National Unity was adopted by 89.2 percent of the electorate in a national referendum, although the document, written under the auspices of the ruling Uprona party, had been highly criticized by opposition groups, including the externally based and then-principal Hutu party, the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (Palipehutu).

A new constitution, paving the way for multi-party democracy, was approved by over 90 percent of the electorate in March 1993. The constitution disallows political organizations which advocate "tribalism, divisionalism, or violence," and stipulates that parties must be representative of both the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups. While opposition groups, including the moderate Frodebu, contested the stipulation, all the candidates in the presidential election advocated national unity in the run-up to the vote.

The constitution also disallowed servicemen from seeking office. Undeterred, Buyoya—whom critics accused of manipulating the electoral process in favor of his Uprona party—simply shed his uniform (but maintained the support of the army).

Nonetheless, after it became clear that Ndadaye had won the election, Buyoya maintained his conciliatory posture. He promised to "bow before the verdict of the people" and said he would continue to work for the good of all Burundians.

Not all Burundians were as concilia-

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The cover photograph of a voter in Eritrea's referendum was taken by Betty Press.



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tory as Buyoya. In the week following the election, University of Burundi students and civil servants took to the streets in the capital, Bujumbura, to protest against what they said was the ethnic character of the presidential election. The Tutsi protesters demanded that the legislative elections be called off.

While the demonstrations were relatively small and peaceful, Tutsis—who make up 14 percent of Burundi's population, but have dominated the political landscape since the 16th century—continued to express unease about the prospect of being ruled by the 85 percent majority Hutus. Many point to neighboring Rwanda where a Hutu-dominated government has been accused of complicity in the slaughter of Tutsi.

Indeed, Uprona supporters had fed these fears during the election campaign, accusing Ndadaye of representing the outlawed Palipehutu, which was blamed for attacks in the northwest and in the capital.

In the week following his victory, Ndadaye announced an amnesty for some 500 political prisoners that could be seen as a conciliatory gesture to both Tutsis and militant Hutus. Under the amnesty, hundreds of Hutu prisoners accused of taking part in ethnic clashes in November 1991 would be released, as would a group of Tutsi soldiers who took part in a March 1992 coup attempt aimed at thwarting Buyoya's reform process.

Ndadaye also promised to include Tutsis in his government and select a Tutsi prime minister. It was reported that the prime minister could come from Uprona, depending on the outcome of the June 29 legislative elections.

In a country that has been ruled for the past 25 years by successive coups, Ndadaye urged mutual trust between Burundians and the army, which continues to be dominated by the Tutsi. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Michel Mibarurwa promised the nation, "We are going to support our president. We are going to collaborate with him without any problem."

As some 800 candidates campaigned for the 81 seats up for grabs in the June 29 legislative elections, it remained to be seen how much of Ndadaye's success in the earlier vote would carry over. Frodebu, Uprona, and PRP were joined by three other parties in contesting the elections. But only the three

parties which fielded presidential candidates competed in all of Burundi's 16 constituencies.

Regardless of the final results of the legislative elections, it seemed certain that Tutsi domination of Burundi was over. A successful democratic transition in a country that has one of the longest

histories of ethnic bloodshed in Africa could be a welcome boost to the continent's shaky moves toward democratization. It would certainly offer hope in Rwanda, where a lasting settlement continues to elude the government and the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front. ■

## Unpunished Massacre in Chad

Chad's President Idriss Déby confidently told Radio France International on June 13 that the "first steps" had been taken against officers believed to be responsible for mass executions of civilians in the southern province of Logone Oriental between January and April. But Chad's human rights organizations remain concerned that a full accounting of the atrocities—which they say were carried out almost exclusively by the president's now-disbanded Republican Guard—will never be conducted.

An investigation into the massacres was considered a priority by Chad's new transitional government, which took power at the April 7 close of the country's Sovereign National Conference. A "joint" commission of inquiry—composed of eight government and security officials; two members of the High Council of Transition (CST), the legislative body charged with leading Chad to elections in 12 months; two members of human rights groups; and three journalists—was sent to the south April 19-28. According to Radiodiffusion Nationale Tchadienne, the commission reported that "it appeared that between January and April, more than 200 people were killed in the region."

The National Recovery Committee for Peace and Democracy (CSNPD), the armed opposition group in the south led by Moise Ketté, said the massacres were perpetrated against civilians suspected of collusion or sympathy with the opposition, a charge substantiated by the international human rights group Amnesty International.

Following the commission's report, the transitional government's prime minister, Fidele Moungar, told the nation, "It was firmly established that servicemen massacred unarmed civilians in various places and looted their property." Moungar maintained that the military personnel responsible would be arrested and face trial. Moreover, new administrative and military officials would be appointed to the region and aid would be provided to the estimated 12,000 refugees who fled the violence to Central African Republic.

But the commission's report failed to confirm the involvement of the Republican Guard, a unit of the Chadian National Army comprised of northern Muslims from Déby's Zagawa ethnic group and directly responsible to the president. Local inhabitants had reportedly told the commission that the Guard was responsible for the massacres. Amnesty International reported that the two human rights groups which participated in the commission of inquiry had released their own report of the commission's findings which pointed a finger at the Guard. The groups also claim that the Guard had acted "with the knowledge and on the orders of" Déby, according to Amnesty.

Still, the government's official report went further than Déby's February delegation of inquiry into the matter, which failed to find any elements of the army responsible. The February delegation called the killings "a fight between pastoral and agricultural communities." At the time, Déby refused further inquiry into the massacres.

But following the April commission, Déby—who retains his position as supreme head of the armed forces and administration in the interim before elections—held a special session of the transitional government on May 4 to announce that he would dispatch another government delegation to southern Chad to meet both with army elements and the people to "restore peace and security in the region."

Déby continues to be accused of human rights violations despite the pledge he made to bring an end to the violence in Chad after seizing power in the beginning

*Continued on page 11*

## MALAWI

Malawians rejected President Kamuzu Banda's one-party state in a referendum on June 14. According to results read on state radio, 63 percent of the electorate voted in favor of a multi-party system advocated by Malawi's two main opposition groups, the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) and the United Democratic Front (UDF).

The opposition has called on Banda to form a transitional government to lead the country to elections, to be held before Christmas. AFORD's leader, Chakufwa Chihana, said Banda could act as a ceremonial figurehead of the government.

But in a speech following the voting, Malawi's 90-something president said, "The win of the multi-party side of the referendum does not mean that the [ruling] Malawi Congress Party ceases to exist. Neither does it mean that the multi-party advocates have been elected to replace in any way the present government." Under the constitution, elections do not have to be held until 1997.

Chihana, who returned to Malawi from exile last year only to be thrown in jail, was released from prison two days before the referendum after serving six months of a nine-month sentence for possession of "seditious" documents. The documents included a speech calling for multi-party democracy.

## SIERRA LEONE

On April 29, Capt. Valentine Strasser, who seized power in a coup d'état in April 1992, announced that Sierra Leone would return to civilian rule by 1996. Strasser made his promise of "multi-party democratization, with a view to ensuring a broader and equitable participation of the citizenry," before a crowd of more than 20,000 at the National Stadium in Freetown, according to the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service.

Strasser's address also contained promises of human rights reform including the abolishment of Public Notice No. 25 giving ranking police and military personnel authority to enter and search any premise without warrant. Notice 25 also restricted press freedom.

According to *West Africa* magazine, the reaction by those attending Strasser's address demonstrated that his

## POLITICAL POINTERS

move is "indeed popular, and may give the regime a much needed boost." But Sierra Leoneans, tired of unmet promises, remain guarded in their optimism. When Strasser first took power, he claimed to have two primary objectives. The first—"to ensure that the rebel incursion is brought to an immediate end"—has remained unmet, over a year later. The second objective was "to sincerely pursue the process of returning our country to true multi-party democracy."

## CAMEROON

On May 7, Bernard Muna was ousted from Cameroon's leading opposition party, the Social Democratic Front (SDF). Until his expulsion, Muna was the party's second-in-command and served as its national campaign manager. In response to the dismissal, he said, "I remain a fervent and committed activist of the SDF, a party I helped to build and to whose policy and organization I entirely subscribe."

But it is unlikely that the SDF will allow Muna to regain his leadership position. The move to expel Muna was triggered by comments he made in a recent issue of *Jeune Afrique*. In an interview, Muna rebuffed SDF leader John Fru Ndi by expressing support for the party's participation in the upcoming Great National Constitutional Debate called by President Paul Biya—a strategy vehemently opposed by Ndi. Muna also questioned Ndi's "unilateral" decisions to call for a sovereign national conference and resume demonstrations against Biya's recent re-election.

## SENEGAL

Only six days after Senegal's May 9 legislative elections, the vice president of the body charged with confirming the results of the poll was gunned down in Dakar. The assassination of the Constitutional Court's Babacar Seye cast a cloud over the vote, which already suffered from a low turn-out and charges of fraud.

A group calling itself the People's Army claimed responsibility for the

attack on Seye in a telephone call to the newspaper *Sud Quotidien*. The group reportedly said, "This is a warning to the other magistrates of the Constitutional Court or Constitutional Council so that they will actually respect the people's will...We are not a political party; our aim is not to assume power, but we want to help the forces of change bring about a change in the regime."

Opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade—who disputed the February election results which handed a victory to his arch-rival President Abdou Diouf—and three of his associates were picked up by police on May 16 and held for three days in connection with the killing.

Wade's Senegalese Democratic Party made considerable gains in the elections, unexpectedly claiming 27 of the 120 seats in the new national assembly. But Diouf's Socialist Party maintained its majority in the assembly by taking 84 seats (down from the 103 it held before the election). The remaining nine seats were split among four other parties.

The results were ratified by the Constitutional Council on May 24.

## SOUTH AFRICA

African National Congress President Nelson Mandela met with his rival, Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, for the first time in two years on June 23.

At the end of their 10-hour meeting convened by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the two leaders agreed to take steps to curb the violence between supporters of their organizations. The steps included joint appearances by Mandela and Buthelezi in strife prone areas and the banning of weapons at political rallies. The violence has resulted in more than 15,000 deaths since 1984.

But the two leaders did not agree on a date for the country's first non-racial election. Mandela had hoped to announce such a date—an ANC precondition for the lifting of sanctions—before he and President F.W. de Klerk visit the United States to meet with President Clinton in July.

On June 3, the 26-party negotiating forum on South Africa's future reached a provisional agreement that the date for the election would be April 27, despite objections by Inkatha and other parties.

## AFRICAN OUTLOOK

## INTERVIEW: JOHN GARANG, LEADER OF THE SPLA TORIT FACTION

**W**hen representatives of Sudan's military government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) began a second round of negotiations in Abuja, Nigeria, in May, hopes ran high that a lasting settlement to the 10-year civil war was within reach. But after almost a month, the talks broke down with virtually no progress made between the Islamic regime and the rebel group. While a third round of talks in Abuja was scheduled for mid-June, fighting between two factions of the SPLA persisted and hundreds of thousands of Sudanese caught up in the war remained at risk of starvation. Africa Report spoke to the leader of the mainstream faction of the SPLA, John Garang, in May, shortly before the Abuja II talks broke down.

**Africa Report:** What is the purpose of your visit to the United States and who have you met with here?

**Garang:** Firstly, it was to update the administration, the American people, and the United Nations about the ongoing peace talks at Abuja. Secondly, to appeal for greater relief and humanitarian action in southern Sudan, the Nuba mountains, and other war-affected areas of the country. With respect to the Abuja II talks, I believe that Nigeria's President Ibrahim Babangida has moved the talks to a high level, but they have gotten stuck there. It was an achievement for President Babangida to keep us in Abuja for three weeks. I appeal to the international community—through the UN Security Council, individual countries like the United States, and organizations like the EEC—to reinforce this progress.

At the State Department in Washington, I met Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose, who conveyed his appeal and concern. I also met Frank Wisner, the undersecretary-designate of defense for policy. And I met Congressman Frank Wolf. I am going to meet the Black Caucus and other congressmen and senators.

I also exchanged views on the situation with the UN secretary-general and I requested formally—in a letter—for UN involvement in the peace process.

We also discussed the question of relief. There are two problems with respect to relief: a lack of resources and the problem of accessibility. About 2 million southern Sudanese are displaced, and the resources now being provided through the UN or operations like Lifeline Sudan and other NGOs are inadequate to meet these needs. It is a tragic situation in the country, so I'm appealing to the international community.

With respect to the problem of accessibility, we are committed—we assured the secretary-general—to facilitating humanitarian relief to all those who are in need and at risk of starvation. Whether they are in areas we control or areas under government control, the civilians that are caught up in the war have to have their human rights protected.

**Africa Report:** What do you expect the policy of the Clinton administration will be toward Sudan and southern Sudan?

**Garang:** That's what I've come to find out. I've come to listen, as well as to make the requests that I've just outlined. They are obviously concerned. There's a humanitarian input in the Clinton administration—a concern about human rights, and a concern about suffering in areas of conflict. But with



respect to Africa and Sudan, I don't know how their concerns will crystallize into policy.

**Africa Report:** While you are negotiating with the government in Abuja, there is ongoing fighting between your faction of the SPLA and the Nasir faction. Could you describe the split?

**Garang:** There is massive disinformation in regard to what is happening within the SPLA. What actually happened in 1991 was that two of our commanders, Lam Akol and Riek Machar, announced a coup. But you cannot stage a coup in a guerrilla movement because you don't have a situation where power is concentrated. When you stage a coup, the first target is the leader—but I was 600 kilometers away from them, and I heard about the coup over the BBC like everybody else. After the leader, you then target the institutions of government. And the radio station is one of the prime targets, to air your message to the people. But we don't have a radio station; we don't have banks; we don't have government institutions; we don't have anything to be taken. I live in a grass hut, and we don't have to fight over that. Anybody who wants it can have it. I'll go and make another hut somewhere else. In a guerrilla movement power is diffuse. That's the minimal character of guerrilla warfare.

My reading of the situation is that after the collapse of the Mengistu regime, these two commanders theorized that the armed struggle could no longer be sustained. They saw themselves as the ones to wind it down with the Sudan government. When the coup failed, the Sudan government stepped in and took them over; they became part of the government armed forces and they have been fighting us for the last two years. Now there is a shift of focus from the main problem, which is religious and racial apartheid in the Sudan, to factional fighting in southern Sudan. It is a classic problem in situations of oppression, like in South Africa where there is emphasis on black-on-black violence—between Inkatha and the ANC. But that is not the problem, that is a symptom. Unless the problem of apartheid is resolved, this black-on-black violence will continue because it is provoked, encouraged, and organized by the regime in Pretoria.

Our situation is the same. If this group was to split with us and continue to fight the al-Bashir government, then, objectively, we could call it a split because the enemy remains the same. In this case, I would rather call it a defection. When their movement failed to take over the leadership, they began receiving logistics, ammunition, uniforms, and rations from the government. And this was obviously not to fight the government, but to fight us. They have become part and parcel of the government.

This is nothing new. The government fought us before using Anya Nya II as a militia. And curiously enough, the

Russell Greinke

Anya Nya II in 1984 said they disagreed with us because they wanted separation of southern Sudan. Now this Nasir faction says their principal disagreement with us is over separation of southern Sudan. But like Anya Nya II before them, they have ended up with the Khartoum government.

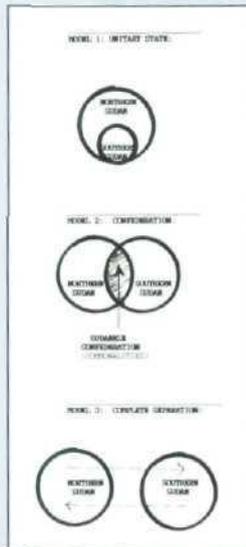
**Africa Report:** What is your position on secession for southern Sudan? Have you moved closer to demanding secession rather than a federal structure at the Abuja talks?

**Garang:** We have issued our position paper at the Abuja talks. We presented the situation as follows. There are three models. The first we call the unity of state model, where the Sudan is depicted as one country. Southern Sudan is inside it, and northern Sudan dominates. The aim of this model is to crush southern Sudan through Islamization and Arabization so that you have one circle without this smaller circle inside it—a united Sudan that is Arab and Islamic. This model is the one that has been enforced since independence in 1956. It has cost us two wars—17 years of Anya Nya I and 10 years of SPLA.

We are saying let us move away from this model, to model two which we call a Sudanese confederation—that is what we have put on the table at Abuja II. We are looking at the Sudan as consisting of two confederal states, a northern state and a southern state with some commonality. Issues that are controversial—like *shari'a*—are on the white part and what we have in common is in the shaded area. This would be a transitional arrangement where we stop the war. After two years, we hold a referendum so that the people of southern Sudan and associated areas where there is war, including the Nuba mountains, are asked: Do they want to remain in a united Sudan? Do they want to remain in a confederal Sudan? Do they want self-determination and to become an independent state? We would welcome international monitors for such a referendum. So we are struggling to create the necessary conditions whereby the people of southern Sudan have that freedom to express their wishes. This model two provides an opportunity for the Sudan to remain together; to see during the interim period whether the marriage is sustainable. It also provides an opportunity for southern Sudanese to say that the marriage is not sustainable.

Now, in terms of secession, you don't just say, "I want secession." You want it from whom? If you want secession, you fight for it. It is not a negotiable entity. If we were to take southern Sudan, then the situation would be similar to that of Eritrea. But on the ground, the Sudan government has its troops in Juba, Malakal, and Wau.

Model three is the interim model where there is a military victory on the ground. We don't have that, so secession is not a negotiable entity. The government will not even talk about it. They are rejecting model two, let alone model three. They are seeing model two as a secessionist model. We are saying it is not necessarily a secessionist model, it could be either one depending on the good will of both sides. Model two can develop into a healthier union by the expansion of the shaded area until it becomes a full circle and that is our definition of a new Sudan. It could also lead



The models Garang presented

to model three, by the shaded area diminishing to zero. It is a process.

**Africa Report:** The government seems to have signalled to the international community that it is softening its stance on southern Sudan. Do you believe that it now wants a settlement?

**Garang:** No. They don't want a settlement, but they can be pressured into one. That is the character of the new international situation where you can no longer commit human rights atrocities and claim sovereignty. There is an international component to conflict situations. The international community's right to a say is developing, à la Somalia, à la Bosnia, and so on. In Sudan, international input could be developed to help bring the war to an end.

**Africa Report:** But there is also the argument that the main reason the government wants to end the war is that it is simply too much of an economic drain on the north.

**Garang:** It's a combination of the two. If they were to win an outright victory, then there would be no chance of the international community intervening. But the war is ongoing and it is costing them \$8 million per day—that's a lot of money for any country, let alone a poor country like Sudan. So it's not just the international component that is the pressure in the situation, but also our continued resistance. It's really a combination of factors, which also include resistance in the north itself.

**Africa Report:** Your movement has been accused of human rights abuses. In fact, this was one of the main reasons that the Nasir faction gave for its split. Have you addressed this issue over the last year?

**Garang:** It is a claim by the Nasir faction. Only five days ago, seven of its members broke away from it, including Alfred Ladu-Gore and Barri Wanji. They accused the Nasir faction of exactly the same thing that the Nasir faction accuses us of—human rights violations. So these accusations and counter-accusations are really mud-slinging. Some of these people have been with me for six or seven years. If there were human rights violations committed by the movement, they cannot at the end of the day wash their hands of it and say they are angels. We are engaged in a liberation movement, in war, and in war mistakes do occur.

**Africa Report:** What about charges that you've used food as a weapon?

**Garang:** It's also not true. We don't use food as a weapon. It's another accusation brought by the Nasir faction to mud-slinging the movement. Where is this food? Relief food? There are relief monitors that report to their donors that food goes to the targeted population. And in terms of accessibility I've come here to give assurances to the UN system that we will facilitate the movement of food to the targeted population. We don't take the UN food, we allow it to move. It goes to the people in areas under our control.

The Nasir faction also accuses us of being a dictatorship. But we never claimed that we were elected by anybody—we have a revolutionary mandate, not an electoral mandate. With the end of the war, southern Sudan, all Sudan, must be opened up for the democratic participation of all its citizens whether they were involved in the war or were in exile. But these people are talking about democracy in the army, and an army by definition is undemocratic. Whether it is the U.S. army, the British army, or the SPLM army, it moves by orders. But in terms of our vision of the Sudan and southern Sudan, we envision a democratic society where we have free elections, where we have freedom of political association as well as private association. We are committed to this. ■

# UN Conference Debates Meaning of Human Rights

Twenty-five years after the first United Nations Conference on Human Rights, delegates from over 160 countries meeting in Vienna in June for the second such conference were hotly debating what exactly human rights are. The battle lines were roughly drawn between Western countries, which assert that individual human rights must be applied universally, and the less developed nations, which advocate placing greater importance on religious, cultural, and economic factors in defining human rights.

In three separate regional meetings held prior to the Vienna conference, Asian, African, and Latin American nations recognized in part that cultural differences must be considered when defining human rights and that developing countries have an absolute right to economic aid. The countries from these three regions however, did not come to Vienna espousing one common platform, and different countries stressed different challenges to the "Western" concept of human rights.

Nonetheless, at the outset of the conference, Asian countries, led by China, spearheaded a drive to have human rights redefined on a region-by-region basis which would take into account cultural particularities among other concerns. These countries argued that human rights have been unfairly used by Western nations as instruments of political pressure and conditions for development aid. Forty-one African countries asserted that the "right to develop is inalienable," implying a right to aid regardless of human rights conditions. The West was also accused of practicing a double standard by aiding regimes with poor human rights records when it served its interests, a charge supported by independent human rights groups.

But the human rights organizations—which met on a separate floor from the official delegations—and Western nations agreed that the argument to recognize certain rights at the expense of the concept of universal human rights is a ploy by autocratic regimes afraid of losing economic aid.

At the conference's opening, prospects that the chasm between the West and the developing nations would be bridged seemed remote. Many passages of a draft document drawn up in preparatory sessions for the conference

remained in brackets, signifying that they had not been agreed upon.

But by the midpoint of the conference, delegates had reportedly agreed that while "historical, cultural, and religious background must be borne in mind, it is the duty of the states, regardless of their political, economic, and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms." Western countries—led by the U.S.—have in turn moved closer to accepting development as a human right.

Not all issues warranted such heated debate at the conference. One place where consensus existed right at the start was on the issue of women's rights. Championing these rights was the Global Campaign for Women's Rights, an international coalition of over 900 women's organizations.

The coalition—which official delegates took heed of—reported its broad

goals at Vienna as "the formal recognition that women's rights are human rights; real structural change to integrate women's concerns into every level of UN operations; and action to guarantee women's rights worldwide, including the appointment of a special rapporteur on systematic gender discrimination and violence against women."

Most of these goals were addressed—without brackets—in the conference's draft declaration. That a passage reportedly said the UN "welcomes" the appointment of an envoy to report on violence and discrimination against women was considered a victory for the coalition, which had focused its demands on the issue of gender-based violence.

It seemed less likely that the conference would agree to a proposal to appoint a new U.N. commissioner on human rights, a major demand of Western nations. ■

## FRUD Boycotts Djibouti Election



President Aptidon

On May 7, President Hassan Gouled Aptidon was elected to a fourth six-year term in Djibouti's first multi-party presidential election. Aptidon, the candidate for the Popular Rally for Progress (PRP), received over 60 percent of the vote, easily surpassing the majority required to avoid a run-off. The remainder of the votes were shared by four opposition parties, with 22 percent of the vote going to Muhammad Jama Elabeh of the Party for Democratic Renewal (PRD) and 12.25 percent to Adan Robleh

Awaleh of the National Democratic Party (PND).

But Aptidon's impressive victory came in the face of an election boycott spearheaded by the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD), an armed opposition group. Both FRUD and the four opposition groups that took part in the presidential voting charge the government with election fraud. The charge was substantiated by international election observers behind closed doors, according to *Africa Confidential*.

FRUD was formed in April 1991 by three armed Afar groups. The Afar, who make up roughly 40 percent of Djibouti's population of 500,000 and originate in the north, have historically been the opponents of the Issas, who hail from the south and dominate the president's party. FRUD has gained control of roughly 40 percent of Djibouti in its two-year-old armed insurgency.

An impasse between the government and FRUD has existed since last year's talks failed to reconcile differences between the two groups. According to a Radio Djibouti report, Aptidon said in a speech in early June that the country's "problems would be settled through peaceful talks." The president called for FRUD to "come to round-table talks which would be held in the country." But FRUD has insisted that talks must take place outside of Djibouti, under the auspices of a third party. In an interview conducted by Agence France-Presse, FRUD military commander Muhammad Adoyata said that the group "will never negotiate inside Djibouti...these talks must take place in a neutral country...the intermediary could be a state or an organization such as the OAU or United Nations." ■

# Disputed Election Results Lead to Violence in Congo

Violence broke out in Congo's capital, Brazzaville, in the wake of the second round of legislative elections held on June 6. At least three people were shot dead and several were wounded in clashes that began after opposition leader Bernard Kolelas told supporters in a June 8 television address to undertake a "civil disobedience" campaign. Kolelas's call was aimed at forcing new elections in 12 constituencies that the opposition claims were unfairly decided in the first election.

According to Congo's interior ministry, the original round of voting gave President Pascal Lissouba's 60-party coalition 62 seats in the 125-seat National Assembly. Forty-nine seats went to the opposition coalition Union for Democratic Renewal-Congolese Workers' Party (URD-PCT), two seats went to the party of former transitional Prime Minister André Milongo, and one went to Mathias Dzon's Patriotic Union for National Renewal. In addition, in 11 constituencies no candidate secured the 50 percent of the vote needed to secure a victory, forcing the runoff, which took place on June 6 after originally being scheduled for May 23.

But Kolelas, who leads the URD-PCT coalition, told Radio France International on May 9 that the May 2 election had been "tarnished by monstrous irregularities." He said these included electoral lists with fictitious names, the armed forces' lack of neutrality, and the holding of political meetings after the official close of the campaign.

On May 21, Congo's National Commission for the Organization and Supervision of the Legislative Elections (Conosela), whose chairman is a member of the URD-PCT, announced that Lissouba's coalition had gained only 50 seats, and not the 62 the ministry was claiming. The URD-PCT announced that it would refuse to participate in the second round of voting unless new elections for the 12 disputed seats were held.

A report issued by the U.S.-based African-American Institute, which sent observers to the vote, stated that it "found no events or occurrences that would lead [it] to conclude that the [May 2] election was seriously flawed or open to challenge." But, in a May 30 interview with Radio France International, Ambroise Nouamazalaye, secre-

tary-general of the PCT, responded, "We are not questioning what took place in the whole of the country. We are disputing what took place in some constituencies...I was in the interior of the country, and I know what took place."

The situation remained tense in mid-June as opposition protesters erected barricades throughout the capital and leaders of other political groups supporting the presidential movement warned of a crackdown. "The districts of the capital seem to be patrolled more and more by the personal guards or militia of political leaders," Radio France International reported on June 13.

Responding to the "serious political crisis," the Congolese Armed Forces announced on June 9 that they were taking special security measures to address the situation and on June 13 talks between the two sides were reportedly held at army headquarters.

Meanwhile, the interior minister announced on June 11 that the president's coalition had won seven seats in the runoff, with the remaining four going to Milongo's Union for Democracy and the Republic-Movinda. ■

## Chad *Continued*

of 1991. "Never again!", he had exclaimed.

The president has taken steps to improve his human rights record. On May 10 he issued a decree dissolving the government intelligence service, the Center for Research and Coordination of Information (CRCR), in accordance with the demands of the Sovereign National Conference. The CRCR has been accused by the opposition and human rights groups of being a political police in the service of the government. But, according to a May Amnesty International report on Chad, it is "unclear how different the new security service will be from its predecessor, both in its functions and personnel."

Meanwhile, reports of violence in the south continue. On May 10, Defense Minister Lieut.-Col. Loum Hinassou Laina accused the CSNPD of staging an ambush. The CSNPD denied the accusation, stating that the attacks came from pastoralists and farmers clashing at Bibanassa. ■

## UN Peace-keepers Attack Aidid in Somalia

"The back—the military back of Aidid is broken," President Bill Clinton told reporters at a White House news conference on June 17.

To be sure, in an aerial attack begun on June 12 by U.S. AC130H gunships and Cobra attack helicopters, UN forces had wreaked havoc on Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid's command and control center in Mogadishu. The bombardment destroyed the militia leader's radio station and many of his arms storage sites in the city. And in an operation that preceded Clinton's comments by less than a day, UN ground forces seized what was left of Aidid's headquarters.

But despite the military setbacks to Somalia's infamous warlord, his militia has proven adept at urban guerrilla warfare (employing tactics such as civilian shields to attack UN troops). And the aerial and ground attacks on his forces have left scores of Somalis dead, leading to greater resentment of the UN "occupation force" and bolstering Aidid's political clout. On top of this, Aidid remains a free man.

Although the UN special representative in Somalia, Jonathan Howe, issued an arrest warrant for Aidid, UN military officials have declined undertaking an operation to capture him. The officials reportedly said that such an operation could involve a large number of casualties or turn the clan leader into a martyr. In addition, in a country with virtually no court system, trying Aidid would involve complex legal problems.

The UN attack on Aidid's headquarters was in response to his forces' June 5 ambush of UN peace-keepers. The ambush claimed the lives of 24 Pakistani soldiers and prompted the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution the next day approving the arrest, prosecution, and trial of "those responsible" for the incident.

"His forces were responsible for the worst attack on United Nations peace-keepers in three decades," Clinton said in his June 17 news conference. "We could not let it go unpunished." ■

## WORLD BANK

For years, the IMF and World Bank have imposed development plans on reluctant African governments. Now, in a radical shift in policy, the World Bank's vice-president for Africa, Edward V.K. Jaycox, says the institution will be "insisting that governments generate their own economic reform plans."

Jaycox, who announced the new approach in an address to the 23rd annual conference of the African-American Institute (AAI) on May 20, said that the imposition of unwelcome foreign technical assistance had been "a systematic destructive force" on the continent.

In addition, the Bank's top analyst on Africa admitted that the rigid conditions of structural adjustment had not worked. As an example, he cited the lending institution's infamous demands that African governments cut their bloated civil services. This, he said, resulted in "social problems with no savings."

An essential aspect of the new approach, Jaycox said, will be "capacity building"—that is developing Africans' ability to help themselves. "The fact of the matter is in most of these countries, they're not capable yet of putting together plans which will solve their problems," he said.

To rectify this, Jaycox said the Bank would create a demand for professionalism in Africa by requiring governments to write their own economic reform plans. He rhetorically told African officials in the audience that they would have to find the "domestic capacity" to accomplish this task, be it from the private sector, the university, or abroad. "We'll help you pay the bills," he said. "But we're not going to do this work anymore." By this, Jaycox meant the Bank would stop hiring expatriate consultants.

Another way Jaycox said the Bank would promote capacity building would be through collaboration with Africans on economic reports. He promised that part of the \$20 million per year the Bank earmarks for economic and sector work would go to such efforts.

In addition, Jaycox promised an increase in direct support for capacity building, including the training of civil

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

servants and managers. Funding for this training would be demand-oriented to improve training institutions, he said.

Jaycox also stressed the need to improve African universities. "Africa has world-class economic problems; it needs world-class economic managers. There is just no doubt about it and they cannot come from far away—they have to be home-grown."

Jaycox's speech was made at a closed session of the AAI conference and was intended to be off-the-record, but he later agreed to release it for publication.

## SOUTH AFRICA

On May 11, South Africa's second largest mining house, Gencor, announced that it would unbundle its considerable non-mining assets. The decision by the huge conglomerate—which has assets valued at over \$6 billion, more than half of which are stakes in non-mining subsidiaries—was being closely watched by South Africa's other colossal firms which are under pressure to do the same.

The African National Congress (ANC), which is likely to control any government in the new South Africa, has made clear that it is committed to introducing anti-trust and anti-monopoly legislation to erode the power of the giant corporations which dominate the economy. Some 70 to 80 percent of the total capitalization of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange is controlled by four conglomerates: Anglo American, Rembrandt Group, Sanlam (which controls Gencor), and Old Mutual.

The traditionally top-heavy South African economy became even more diversified during decades of sanctions and isolation as divesting foreign firms were forced to leave behind their subsidiaries.

The ANC's decision to focus its energies on breaking up South Africa's corporate behemoths is a shift away

from its former strategy of nationalization, which was shunned by investors.

But Gencor claims that its decision to unbundle its non-mining assets—which include shares in Sappi, Malbak, Genbel, and Engen—was not motivated by a desire to please the ANC. Instead, the conglomerate is looking to focus its operations and unlock wealth. (According to the *Financial Times*, Gencor was trading at a discount of roughly 19 percent the net value of its assets.)

And while Gencor was busy unloading its non-mining assets, it was reportedly negotiating a possible \$1.8 billion deal to buy the Royal Dutch/Shell-owned Billiton mining and metals company. Gencor was reportedly interested in the company because of Billiton's aluminum interests. A final agreement between the two parties was not expected for several months.

Meanwhile, a few days after Gencor announced its plans to unbundle, both Anglo American and Old Mutual released statements saying they would not follow the smaller conglomerate's lead. Anglo—by far the largest firm in South Africa—said its size allowed it to undertake large capital projects.

As part of the unbundling arrangement, Gencor will be transferring its non-mining assets to shareholders by the beginning of the new financial year, September 1.

## SEYCHELLES

Seychelles—which has already earned a listing in the *Guinness Book of Air Facts and Feats* as the smallest state in the world with scheduled inter-continental service—has added a second long-haul aircraft to the fleet of Air Seychelles, according to an article in the May issue of *African Business*.

The new addition, a Boeing 757-200ER, is equipped to carry 170 economy-class and eight first-class passengers. The airline will now add Nairobi, Madrid, Zurich, and Bahrain to its list of destinations, which already includes Johannesburg, London, Paris, Rome, and Singapore.

According to the article, the airline reported a \$3.35 million profit for the 1992 operating year and has made "no provisions" for a government grant to support its 1993 budget.



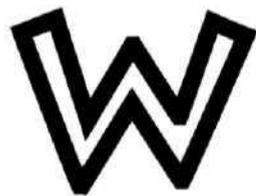
Peter Biles

# BIRTH OF A NATION

III ERITREA III  
BY PETER BILES

After 20 years of war and two years of provisional government, the former Ethiopian province of Eritrea is now a sovereign nation. Although not happy about it, Ethiopians will have to cooperate with their newly independent neighbor—not least because Ethiopia has suddenly become landlocked.

While the outcome of the independence referendum was a foregone conclusion, Eritrea's biggest hurdle will be attracting the aid and investment needed for reconstruction and development.



While marshals restrained the cheering crowds on the sidewalk, a jubilant young Eritrean woman pushing a disabled war veteran in a wheelchair kept pace with the military band as it marched toward the Kagnew barracks in Asmara.

Almaz Isaac was barely a teenager when she left Asmara 10 years ago. With a group of friends, she walked for a month to reach neighboring Sudan, fleeing the horrors of life under the Dergue—the totalitarian regime of Ethiopia's former president, Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam. Eventually, she settled in Kansas City in the U.S., a world apart from the war raging in the barren wastelands of northern Eritrea.

"This is the first time I've been able to come back, to see my family. We waited, our people fought, and now this is it. We have our freedom." As she strode on, Almaz Isaac seemed to symbolize the determination of Eritreans to make a fresh start after their 30-year struggle for independence.

Eritrea was an Italian colony until Italy's defeat in World War II. After being governed by a British military administration, it became part of a loose federation with Ethiopia in 1952. The armed uprising against the Ethiopians began in 1961, shortly after which Emperor Haile Selassie annexed Eritrea.

Two years ago, on May 24, 1991, the forces of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) entered Asmara as Mengistu's army—once the largest in sub-Saharan Africa—collapsed. It had been the longest war in Africa this century. The EPLF immediately set up a provisional government under its leader, Issaias Afewerki, and announced that a referendum on independence from Ethiopia would be held after two years.

No one ever doubted the final outcome, and when Eritreans went to the polls in April, 99.8 percent voted in favor of independence. Landslide victories of this magnitude in Africa are traditionally viewed with the deepest skepticism, but Eritrea is fast proving to be an exception on the African continent. Beforehand, some international observers had expressed the hope that a small percentage of "No" votes might give the referendum greater credibility, but in the event there was barely a flicker of opposition, while United Nations monitors declared that the whole process had been free and fair.

Of the more than 1 million people who voted, only

1,822 rejected the proposal that Eritrea should become an independent sovereign state. It seemed likely, however, that most of the "dissenters" had simply been confused by the voting procedure, and cast a "No" vote in error.

Eritrea has enjoyed de facto independence since the EPLF victory two years ago. Soon after the takeover, the name "Ethiopia" was erased from most public building and businesses in Asmara. The Eritreans have long claimed a distinct cultural identity, and schoolchildren are no longer taught in Amharic, but in the dominant language of Eritrea, Tigrigna, as well as in Arabic and English.

The official declaration of independence was, however, a moment of sheer exhilaration. On the eve of the three-day referendum, thousands of people took to the streets of Asmara. Each consecutive night, the crowds grew in size. By the end of the week, it seemed as if the entire city had turned out to celebrate.

Soon after the local radio station—The Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea—broadcast the result of the referendum, the bells of the Catholic cathedral rang out. Loudspeakers relayed Eritrean music in the streets. Local people played their own musical instruments. Car horns blared as motorcades weaved through the city center. Women in traditional white dresses ululated for hours on end, as the singing, clapping, and dancing went on late into the night. In a part of the world renowned for misery and suffering, it was a therapeutic experience. Here at last was something good out of Africa.

"Eritreans have gone through agony and pain for so many years. They have been displaced, suppressed, and deprived of their rights. Now for the first time in our history, there is joy and happiness in the hearts of every Eritrean," explained the director of Eritrean television, Girma Asmerom, who was formerly chief of protocol for the EPLF.

"The striking feature of life here today is the complete absence of armed police or military in the city," remarked a Western diplomat in Asmara. "The EPLF fighters awaiting demobilization are out working voluntarily, helping to repair roads and such," he added.

The most visible scars from the 30-year conflict are to be seen at the Red Sea port of Massawa. In February 1990, the EPLF captured Massawa, cutting the government's lifeline to the sea. Mengistu responded by ordering the air force to bomb Massawa. The ancient coastal settlement with its beautiful Ottoman buildings suffered extensive damage, and eyewitnesses reported that the

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## The City on the High Plateau

**I**n the cactus groves and brush shelters of northern Eritrea, where the fighters of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front educated their children, they dreamed of Asmara. In their English classes, they recited sentences that contained references to their holy city: "Osman lives in Nacfa, but his cousin, Habte, lives in Asmara...Asmara is a beautiful city on a high plateau."

"Though I thought their cause was just, I never thought they'd actually get here," says the Australian writer Thomas Keneally, who travelled with the EPLF in 1987-88 in order to research his novel *Towards Asmara*. None of the younger children, nor Keneally himself, had ever seen Asmara.

Five years later, admiring the jacaranda trees in full bloom and the mauve bougainvilleas creeping over the walls of the spotless whitewashed villas in Asmara, Keneally confessed not to be disappointed. "It has its slum section, of course, but Asmara does have a charm, and it's one of the few African capitals I've visited where the clocks and fountains work. What's more, the morale of the people here is extremely high and that gives life a zest."

In the 1940s, Asmara was described as one of the cleanest and most beautiful cities in Africa. Its Italian heritage gives it the feel of a Mediterranean city. In the plethora of small bars and cafes, the older waiters still speak Italian as they serve fresh pasta and cups of cappuccino and espresso. The principal thoroughfare, lined with palm trees, has undergone several name changes in the past 60 years. Before 1941 when Eritrea was an Italian colony, it was known as the Viale Mussolini. Later, when Eritrea was tied to Ethiopia, the main street bore the name of Emperor Haile Selassie. Under Mengistu, it was simply National Avenue. Now, it's been renamed Liberation Avenue.

"Welcome to a free and independent Eritrea"

Ethiopians also dropped cluster bombs and napalm.

An old Ethiopian tour guide points out that "Massawa has been taken and retaken over the centuries...by the Turks, Egyptians, British, and Italians, each of whom have left their small mark on its architecture." The irony is that it was the Ethiopians who destroyed it. Parts of the town now resemble the ruined Somali capital, Mogadishu.

With the fall of Massawa, the Ethiopian Second Army

reads the sign above the entrance to the Nyala hotel. "I was confused when I returned to Asmara because I'd forgotten what the city was like," confessed Seneit Ayob, a 34-year-old mother, who spent 13 years fighting with the EPLF. "After years of 'darkness,' the people here are free to move, free to talk, and to do whatever they like," she added.

It was fascinating to contrast the relaxed atmosphere in Asmara with the mood which prevailed during my last visit to the Eritrean capital in 1990. At that time, the Ethiopian authorities in Addis Ababa insisted on foreign journalists being accompanied by minders from the ministry of information. It was impossible to talk to local people in Asmara, who had been terrorized and tortured by what was perceived as an Ethiopian army of occupation. Our minder, whose name coincidentally was Asmara, did not relish his job, but he was obliged to carry out his duties, openly discouraging me from taking innocuous photographs of the Catholic cathedral. Many government buildings were cordoned off for security reasons, forcing people to step into the road rather than pass by on the sidewalk. Mengistu's young conscripts were visible everywhere.

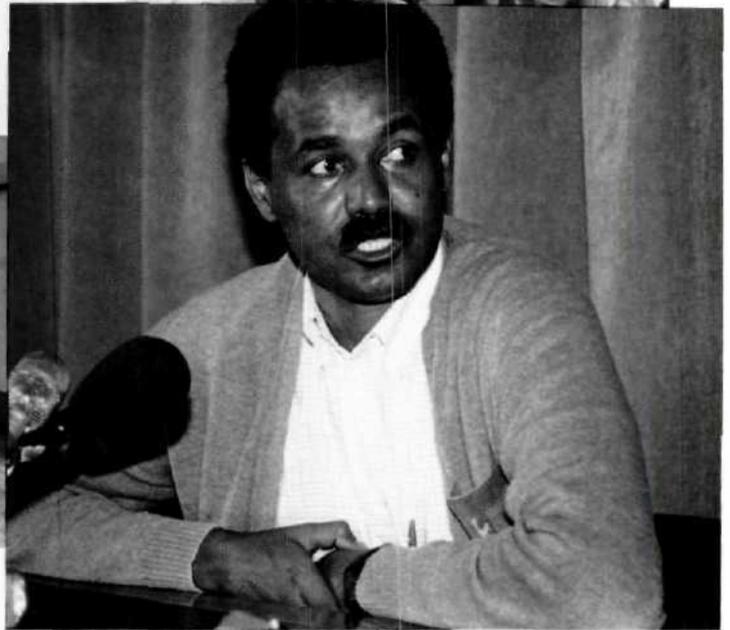
Today, the only army to be seen in Asmara is an army of street-sweepers, meticulously cleaning the city every morning.

"When the EPLF soldiers captured Asmara, I would have expected them to whoop it up a bit and shoot out lampposts, and swagger. I would have thought they were even a bit entitled to it, but they didn't," says Keneally. "It was a promising sign. So too is the lack of resentment by those who fought in the war toward the people who sat tight in Asmara. It all offers hope that this revolution is going to break the mold by not devouring its own children." ■

—P.B.

in Asmara came under siege, but the EPLF held back from attacking what it regarded as its shrine. It had learned a bitter lesson from the bombing of Massawa, and had no desire to see Mengistu retaliate against Asmara in the same way.

By early 1991, Mengistu's army was deeply demoralized, the government no longer had Soviet military backing, and it also faced a challenge from the Tigrayan-led rebel movement, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary



*Scenes of Eritreans voting in the referendum*  
*Above, Issaias Afewerki, secretary-general of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front*

*PHOTOS BY BETTY PRESS*

Democratic Front (EPRDF). When Mengistu decided to flee the country, the EPRDF closed in on Addis Ababa, and eventually took control there four days after the EPLF seized Asmara.

Today, about a mile from the center of Asmara lies a monument to Ethiopia's part in the Cold War. Hundreds of Mengistu's Russian T-54 tanks, armored personnel carriers, army trucks, and jeeps have been abandoned in a vast graveyard of military hardware.

Peace has come to Eritrea, but it will be many years before the memories of the war are erased. On the contrary, the provisional government was still drawing attention to it during the April referendum. The voting slips were divided into blue and red sections. The blue paper was to register a "Yes" vote. The red half, symbolizing blood and the prospect of a return to war, was a vote against independence.

Outside many polling stations hung blue and red posters. Blue posters depicted fields of wheat, children receiving proper health care, and general prosperity. Red posters featured a photograph of a soldier carrying a human skull on a piece of string looped over his shoulder. The message was unambiguous, and some observers questioned whether the EPLF had overstepped the mark with this rather blatant propaganda. Meanwhile, in the hotels of Asmara, EPLF videos of the war continued to be screened for the benefit of the international observers.

As the referendum results were declared on April 27, the EPLF secretary-general, Issaias Afewerki, announced that Eritrea was a sovereign country. Within days, Ethiopia's transitional government confirmed that it would recognize Eritrea's independence.

Many Ethiopian nationalists, primarily the once-dominant Amhara community, still oppose Eritrean secession, but the Ethiopian leader, Meles Zenawi, and his Eritrean counterpart were longstanding allies in the fight against Mengistu's dictatorship, and agreed in 1991 on Eritrea's right to self-determination.

In a recent interview, Meles said: "I cannot say that people here in Addis Ababa are enthusiastic about the independence of Eritrea, but they know that it has to be accepted because the other option is war, and those who have paid dearly in the past are not willing to go back to war."

Meles predicted that Ethiopia and Eritrea would enjoy "a more fruitful relationship than ever before," and both leaders have pledged to work toward economic integration. Ethiopians will want to ensure that promise is fulfilled, not least because the redrawing of international boundaries—the first in post-colonial Africa—has left Ethiopia landlocked. What was Ethiopia's main port, Assab, is now part of Eritrea.

Issaias has refused to be drawn out on Eritrea's political timetable after independence, raising some fears that the EPLF is trying to postpone the introduction of democracy. Issaias insists, however, that the EPLF is

committed to the holding of multi-party elections, although not for the foreseeable future.

"We need to have democratic institutions before anything else in this country. The politics of organizations or associations will come later...the formation of political parties will definitely take time." He also confirmed that the EPLF would eventually be dissolved, but not while there was the risk of a political vacuum.

There are nine different ethnic groups and languages in Eritrea, while the population of 3.5 million is 50 percent Christian and 50 percent Muslim. The Eritrean government dismisses any suggestion that divisions could emerge. There has been little discussion of the Muslim-dominated ELF (Eritrean Liberation Front), which launched the fight for independence in 1961, or the serious rift which developed when the EPLF broke away in the early 1970s.

"We can't expect 100 percent consensus," said Issaias, "but the war created a spiritual unity which has consolidated the harmony among the different groups."

Observers agree that the EPLF has succeeded in molding a strong sense of national unity. One diplomat remarked: "There are no real complaints about this government. They're light-handed, and their economic philosophy is marked by a concern for people's welfare. For the first time since the Italians left, Eritreans are being given things like clinics and schools."

However, the task of reconstruction is daunting. The government estimates that \$2 billion will be needed to rehabilitate the Eritrean economy and initiate development programs. "They've got many years of struggle ahead of them...not an armed struggle, but an economic struggle," said John Bowis, a British parliamentarian who came to observe the referendum. "No part of the civilized world could just stand back and fail to support them, first and foremost with recognition, and almost as quickly I hope, with development aid and advice to get Eritrea on its feet again," Bowis added.

Last December, the World Bank pledged \$140 million toward reconstruction, and in an obvious attempt to woo foreign investors, Issaias has said the EPLF is now inclined toward a free market economy, rather than a mixed economy to which it was committed five years ago.

The rehabilitation of the port of Massawa will be crucial to Eritrea's economic recovery. The UN World Food Program spent \$4 million on Massawa in 1991, and more work is planned, although the UN is concerned that donors have not responded to this year's appeal for port equipment.

Two years of good rains have produced the best harvests in Eritrea for more than 10 years. But while Asmara displays an air of relative affluence, the majority of the rural population still lives in absolute poverty. Four out of five families lost their livelihood during the war years and still depend on food aid. "We have to provide the small farmers with the means to earn their own

## Getting All the Help They Can

**F**ollowing years of drought, Eritrea had good rains last year. Agricultural output, still recovering from years of famine, rose four-fold after the government distributed seeds, fertilizer, and oxen.

"We've already started turning the economy around," said G. Michael Mengistu, head of the External Economics Cooperation Office. "Industries are operating. Agricultural activities have started to improve. We've also begun generating revenue from internal resources."

When the Eritrean People's Liberation Front liberated the territory in May 1991, it inherited a bankrupt treasury and a collapsed economy. The infrastructure was shattered: There was no water or electricity. Roads were blown to pieces, and the 220-mile railroad was completely dismantled. After years of recurrent drought and neglect, agriculture was ravaged. All the publicly owned factories were idle.

In May 1991, the EPLF began reconstructing Eritrea. Everywhere there are signs of renewal. Villas, storefronts, and hotels are under repair. Freshly painted signs identify the different government departments. Bougainvillea spill from the walls, and gardens are well-kept and blooming.

Two-thirds of the 3.5 million population are dependent on foreign food aid and 80 percent earn a living from farming. "The government's first priority is to develop our agriculture. It is aware of the dangers of food aid and dependency. Now it is weaning people from aid, so we won't go on begging for food," said Nerayo Teklemichael, director of the Eritrean Relief and Rehabilitation Agency.

With official distribution of inputs and livestock,

agricultural output increased from 70,000 tons to 260,000 last year. Because deforestation and a lack of water are major problems, the administration planted 28 million trees and constructed terraces, dams, ponds, and hand-dug wells.

Getting the country's factories working is another priority. Besides the medium to large publicly owned industries, many of the 600 small to medium-sized private concerns are functioning again. The government has started evaluating the public sector in preparation for privatization.

Today, all the main roads are passable, bridges have been reconstructed, and Massawa port, 745 miles northeast of Asmara, has been widened. People can telephone outside the country, and there is public transportation by bus or taxi. However, much infrastructure is still ruined and needs repair.

There is overwhelming support for the government. It has brought the population calm and stability after three decades of violence and death. Just as most Eritreans worked during the war—fighting, donating money, or working in schools and hospitals in the liberated areas—now they are helping to rebuild and repair. "Everyone is struggling to help," said Tesfai Areoai, a port assistant officer with the United Nations World Food Program. "This is how Eritreans got their freedom, because everybody tried to help as much as they could."

The government needs all the help it can get. While fighters now working in the government agreed to work for two years without pay, the administration estimated it still had only \$500,000 from May 1991 to May 1992 after operating costs. This figure excludes remittances from Eritreans

living again and support themselves," argues Trish Silkin, program coordinator for the British relief agency, Oxfam.

The long conflict wreaked havoc on the Eritrean countryside. Scott Jones, a British forestry specialist who has worked with the EPLF's department of agriculture for the past nine years, says that Eritrea has suffered widespread deforestation and soil erosion. "Trees were cut down to build trenches for the military and to provide fuel. The environment has become unstable and that means we have a lack of food security." He warns that it

could take 20 to 25 years to stabilize some areas, and produce adequate amounts of food.

Amanios Makonnen, an Eritrean engineer who recently returned home after living in Germany for seven years, agrees that reconstruction will take many years. "The destruction in places like Massawa is massive, but people have to be organized, and we also hope the international community will provide some support in rebuilding our economy and our devastated towns."

Eritreans are already renowned for a high level of

abroad, the major hard currency earner. Other income sources are sales and income taxes and custom duties.

Foreign aid agencies were reluctant to contribute financially until April's referendum, prior to which Eritrea was not officially a country. All assistance had to go through the Ethiopian government. The Eritrean administration's inflexibility in negotiations also limited foreign financial assistance. The government wants to reconstruct its own way, and has refused aid with too many conditions attached. It has rejected, for example, attempts to hasten free market reform, instead proceeding cautiously to allow investment projects that will help, not hinder, the area's development.

"The Eritreans are very proud, and they don't like to be told what to do," said one foreign diplomat. "It will take them time to find a modus operandi that will allow them to enter into a satisfactory situation, where they maintain their independence and aid agencies get what they want."

Foreign assistance is starting to trickle in, however. In mid-December, a World Bank-sponsored mission, including representatives from the United States, Italy, and the European Community, pledged \$140 million for the area's reconstruction, the largest foreign contribution yet. (The Eritrean administration estimates it needs \$2 billion.)

Mission representatives were pleased with the EPLF's accomplishments so far. "The motor is working and they haven't waited for aid. This is a positive sign," said one foreign aid worker.

The government is actively encouraging local and foreign private entrepreneurs to invest in publicly owned industries and new projects by offering incentives, including tax exemptions of as high as five years and the importation of agricultural machinery without custom duties.

The government has begun preparing its most promising economic sectors for future private investment. These include fisheries, tourism, and

oil and gas. With 465 miles of coastline, hundreds of islands and waters that are virtually virgin since few would dare to fish there during the war, marine life is one of Eritrea's best resources.

The administration is also studying a master plan for tourism development along Eritrea's coast of bright blue Red Sea waters and wide sandy beaches. It is renovating several hotels in Massawa and Asmara and negotiating projects for tourist villages, hotels, and other tourism activities with investors.

Despite these and other efforts to attract investors, the business community reaction has been lukewarm. Foreign entrepreneurs, like the aid agencies, want faster economic reforms. They complain that the new investment code prohibits majority foreign ownership. They are also disgruntled by the suspension of their import licenses, forcing them to go through an Eritrean middleman and sometimes pay high commissions to import.

The administration has countered that the investment code allows majority foreign ownership, depending on the project. Foreign import licenses are slowly being renewed, but Eritrea has no central bank and still uses Ethiopia's currency.

Another problem is reintegrating the nearly 1 million refugees outside the country in the coming months. This will further tax an already overburdened system. Over half of those outside Eritrea are in Sudan and they may bring Islamic fundamentalist passions to this firmly secular area, while members of the diaspora in Europe and the U.S. will bring Western attitudes and expectations.

After fighting a war for 30 years, the Eritrean government and people have another battle to fight, rebuilding their country-to-be. They will need continued determination and hard work, the international community's cooperation, and a bit of good luck. ■

Sarah Gauch  
Cairo, Egypt

organization and enterprise. This reputation was first established years ago when they set up schools and medical facilities in the underground caves and bunkers behind their front lines.

More recently, the international observers and journalists arriving in advance of the referendum were stunned by their reception at Asmara airport. Immigration and customs formalities, baggage reclamation, foreign exchange facilities, hotel reservations, airline bookings, and accreditation were all handled with rapid dexterity in one specially erected marquee. "Where else in Africa would you find

anything so well organized?" asked one observer.

Stability in Eritrea could have important repercussions for the troubled Horn of Africa. "If you create an atmosphere of peace here, it will have an encouraging impact on the region," said Samir Sanbar, the UN special representative based in Asmara.

Eritrea lies in a dangerous neighborhood. The Horn of Africa has been characterized by conflict and drought for decades. But for the past two years, Eritrea has remained stable. If it remains so, it has, perhaps, the best chance of success. ○

# TICKING T

Six months after Kenya's first contested but manipulated election in 26 years, uncertainty and fear still rule this East African nation. Many Kenyans had hoped that last December's election would resolve the crisis in governance, but President Daniel arap Moi claimed the narrowest of victories after widespread government misconduct and a divided opposition compromised the electoral process. Now, with the election fever gone, and the economy on the brink of collapse, the opposition parties have yet to find a coherent agenda and an undisputed leader even as Moi holds on for dear life. Meanwhile, an increasingly impoverished population has become the equivalent of a ticking time bomb.

The current political paralysis and economic crisis are largely the direct outcome of the electoral process and its results. In the 188-seat National Assembly, the opposition captured 88 seats, while Moi's Kenya African National Union (Kanu), the ruling party, claimed 100 seats. Kanu's margin in Parliament was bolstered by 12 more parliamentarians whom Moi was entitled by the constitution to name. But Moi's simple majority in Parliament, as well as his share of the presidential vote, a mere 36 percent, did not give him a mandate to govern. To effectively run Parliament, Kanu would need a two-thirds majority, the number required to pass constitutional amendments. As a consequence, Moi still commands the allegiance of the security and armed forces, but the opposition and emergent non-governmental organizations have not allowed him to re-impose the most despotic and authoritarian aspects of the one-party state.

The most threatening crises, however, are those of

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economic decline, mismanagement, and official corruption. Kenya's economy, heavily dependent on massive infusions of foreign funds, suffered a severe shock when Western aid donors suspended further assistance in November 1991 pending economic and political reforms. With the exception of Britain, which opposed aid suspension and fought hard for its restoration following the election, other donors remained concerned about high-level corruption, the bloated bureaucracy, banking abuses, loss-making state enterprises, and excessive money supply. To finance his re-election, Moi and Kanu printed excessive amounts of paper money, raising inflation rates to unprecedented levels. After the election, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank increased pressure on Moi to implement austerity measures and stem official corruption before they would resume aid to his cash-strapped economy.

But Kanu's entrenched and corrupt elite resisted these conditions, fearing that they were a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the conditions would adversely affect Kanu cronies by reducing official graft, and making it difficult for them to use the state for self-aggrandizement. On the other hand, they would also further undermine Kanu's stranglehold on power by devaluing the currency, laying off workers, and removing subsidies on essential foodstuffs. On March 22, Moi bowed to his cronies and denounced as "suicidal and dictatorial" conditions set by the IMF and the World Bank for the resumption of aid. He scrapped most of the reforms urged by the World Bank, including the so-called retention accounts which allowed exporters to keep hard currency earnings instead of remitting them to Kenya's Central Bank, the centerpiece of official fiscal corruption.

After denouncing multilateral aid agencies for imposing "suicidal and dictatorial" conditions, President Daniel arap Moi quickly capitulated and became chief salesman for an onerous financial package he desperately needs to prop up both the plummeting

# MOI BOMB



UN Photo/M. Tzovaras

By May, however, it had become abundantly clear that shortages of fuel and food, a direct result of the aid suspension, would quickly become the undoing of his regime unless Moi caved in to World Bank and IMF conditionalities. But the first signs that Kenya was about to accept the conditions of donors came in April when the World Bank broke an 18-month standoff with the government and announced the resumption of balance of payments support by releasing about \$85 million.

On May 15, following the second IMF mission to Kenya this year, *Moi announced that his government and the IMF and the World Bank had agreed on reforms to revitalize the Kenyan economy.* In an effort to get back in the donors' good graces, the government devalued the Kenyan shilling for the third time in four months, ended most import restrictions, brought back retention accounts for importers, abolished restrictions on foreign exchange dealings, and promised to rein in "political banks"—a financial plague upon the land—which have been used as channels for billions of shillings from the Central Bank to shadowy creditors and Kanu cronies in the past.

It was ironic that Moi, who just two months before had denounced the lending agencies, had now become the salesman for the deal. Trapped in his own economic mess, he could either swallow the donors' "bitter pill" or watch his government go down the tubes. As a diplomat aptly remarked, "Moi roared like a lion, but signed like a lamb."

In a bid to sell the agreement, he told Kenyans, without elaborating, that the donor agencies had agreed to protect *wananchi*, Kiswahili for ordinary citizens, from the negative effects of the structural adjustment pro-

gram. He said that the donors had agreed to further consultations on the social dimensions of the program. Repeating the tired rhetoric of the past, Moi said that the government had agreed to a strict management of the economy, the euphemism for stemming official corruption. For the umpteenth time, he exhorted farmers to raise productivity and promised that favorable prices for their produce would be worked out in the economic restructuring program.

Many government critics liken the resumption of aid by donors to pouring money down a bottomless pit. Paul Muite, the vice chairman of FORD-Kenya and an elected parliamentarian, said: "Moi and his cronies are incapable of curbing official corruption and embarking on economic reconstruction. Any funds released to them are a total waste." There is no evidence that Moi and his clique are serious about liberalizing the economy and rooting out corruption. Although the donors argued that by resuming aid, they were giving Moi the last chance to clean his house, indications are that additional loans will be mismanaged and misappropriated, increasing the already enormous national debt.

Critics point out that where the government waffled before, nothing has changed; the same corrupt and incompetent political aides continue to dominate public policy. Although Musalia Mudavadi, a product of political patronage, is the ostensible finance minister, Vice President George Saitoti and other key advisers from Moi's Kalenjin community run the treasury like a personal bank account. Another influential and reputedly corrupt member of the Moi cabinet is Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, the new foreign minister, who is a neophyte in international diplomacy.

economy and his corrupt government. But there is no quick cure for Kenya's political and economic paralysis, except perhaps for the unlikely event of the opposition sharing power, or failing that, in the long term, giving it to a new generation of politicians.

Other prominent political appointees who enjoy Moi's confidence are Education Minister Joseph Kamotho and Transport Minister Dalmas Otieno, both of whom were deeply humiliated in the polls but nominated to Parliament by Moi. For Moi, the lifting of the ban on aid buys his regime a lease on life; for the opposition and the country, it prolongs the agony of mismanagement and misrule, and merely postpones the day of reckoning.

The period leading to the government's acceptance of IMF conditionalities was replete with posturing and political maneuvering. Particularly noteworthy was the row in April and May between the government and the Kanu-controlled Central Organization of Trade Unions (Cotu), the umbrella organization that comprises 30 major unions. Created in 1966 under Jomo Kenyatta, the late president, Cotu was affiliated to Kanu and its leaders, including the present crop, have always been sanctioned by the state. Under Cotu, the word "strike" was expunged from Kenyan public life, depriving workers of their most potent weapon.

It therefore came as a major surprise when Joseph Mugalla, the Cotu secretary-general and a long-time protégé of Moi and his top officials, called a national strike for May 3 unless Moi dismissed Saitoti, the vice president and for 10 years until December 1992, Kenya's finance minister. They accused him of messing up the economy and also demanded wage increases and the removal of wage guidelines.

Mugalla and his top leadership were arrested after the May Day rally for refusing to call off the national strike scheduled for May 3. Many workers, suspicious of Mugalla and the motives behind the strike, refused to support it. Many observers believed that Mugalla and Cotu were being used by Moi to oust Saitoti whom the donors reportedly wanted replaced. Willy Mutunga, the chair of the Law Society of Kenya, says that "the strike may have been orchestrated as a pretext for sacking workers and civil servants to fulfill one of the demands of the IMF and the World Bank, namely, that Moi trim his overstuffed bureaucracy."

For now, Saitoti remains in his position while Mugalla and his colleagues, whom many believe will not stand trial, are out on bail. On May 19, the government raised the minimum wage by 17 percent and instructed trade unions and employers to start negotiations on wage increases and terms of service, in an effort widely seen as a ploy to defuse any action by workers. The raise followed meetings between Cotu and the minister for labor in which Cotu demanded a 100 percent across-the-board

increase to neutralize the same rate of devaluation of the Kenyan shilling since February. If the strike was a Mugalla-Moi ploy to pave the way for the IMF deal, then it appears to have worked perfectly, defusing opposition by workers and leaving them empty-handed.

Many Kenyans and political observers believe that in spite of massive infusions of capital, there is no way out of the current economic crisis unless the opposition, the reservoir of the best brains in the country, effectively participates in governance to police corruption and help streamline the economy. But this is unlikely to happen because Moi is not about to share power with his opponents. Equally important, however, is the failure of the opposition to create a common united front based on a vision of accountable government and economic rejuvenation. For the foreseeable future, such unity will continue to elude the opposition parties unless they shed their liabilities and create room for young and dynamic leadership.

If there was any lesson from the general and presidential election last year, it was that none of the three major opposition presidential candidates—Jaramogi Oginga Odinga of FORD-Kenya, Kenneth Matiba of FORD-Asili, and Mwai Kibaki of the Democratic Party (DP)—has the imagination and leadership to unite and lead the Kenyan nation. Although the elections were rigged, none of these candidates, including Moi, could project themselves beyond their ethnic strongholds.

They are still trapped in the politics of ethnicity and patronage. In two cases—those of Matiba and Kibaki—their political parties are merely vehicles for their presidential ambitions.

Many commentators cannot see how both FORD-Asili and the DP could survive the death of either of their founders, Matiba and Kibaki, respectively. While FORD-Kenya, the most nationally broad-based of the three opposition parties, will certainly outlive Odinga, he postpones its development by clinging to leadership so late in his life.

In keeping with democratic traditions, a leader who leads his party to defeat should give way to other more imaginative colleagues. It makes little sense for Odinga to stifle FORD-Kenya's growth by insisting on being its supreme leader. Unless he, Kibaki, Matiba, and Moi leave the political landscape to a new breed of politicians, no amount of foreign assistance will turn the Kenyan economy around. Kenya's short-term salvation lies not in the dinosaurs of yesteryear, but in the new generation of reformers and young democrats. ○



*None of the opposition candidates has the imagination and leadership to unite and lead the nation*

# interview

**PRESIDENT YOWERI MUSEVENI BY MARGARET A. NOVICKI**

## Uganda's Man of Vision

In 1986, Yoweri Museveni led the National Resistance Army into Kampala to overthrow the corrupt and brutal dictatorship of Milton Obote. Among the many tasks ahead of the Museveni government was restoring a positive image to Uganda, a nation victimized since independence by despotic leaders like Obote and Idi Amin. Rebuilding a bankrupt economy and quelling armed rebellions were other major challenges.

Today, no one doubts that Uganda has made great strides from the dark

Margaret A. Novicki



days of its past—the luster of the “pearl of Africa” has been restored, thanks to President Museveni, one of Africa’s most independent thinkers and a strong advocate of “no-party democracy.” In this exclusive interview with *Africa Report*, he explains why multi-party democracy is unworkable for Uganda at present. He also reflects on his seven years in power and offers some suggestions for the Clinton administration as it formulates its Africa policy.

**Africa Report:** What is your criticism of multi-party democracy that has caused you to favor a “no-party democracy” for Uganda?

**Museveni:** Multi-party democracy would have no problem if the parties would polarize themselves along lines of principle, on policy issues. For example, one party wants East African unity, another does not, something like that. But they don’t. Most of the time, they polarize themselves along sectarian lines—either on religious lines, as was the case in Uganda in the past, one for Catholics, another for Protestants, or on a tribal basis, as was the case in Nigeria in the 1960s, and as is the case in a number of countries which I don’t want to mention now. Our fear of multi-partyism is not in the multi-parties themselves, it is in the effect that it will have on the unity of our people and stability. For us, this is not surprising, because we don’t think there is yet a social basis for these parties. We are just grafting something onto something that doesn’t exist. Just because somebody gives you a suit of this size, you must put it on whether that is your size or not.

We want democracy, but the form should be examined, and we favor the form of democracy without parties, where you more or less have a beauty contest. When I say beauty contest, I mean preference of somebody because of what he has done. It may not be the most democratic, but it is safer in our circumstances. You don’t allow this negative polarization to go too far. At the same time, you have representation and accountabil-

ity and regular changes of leaders peacefully. So what are you missing? You have democracy, but without sectarian divisions. These people who support multi-party democracy, they say they want competing programs. But this never happens. We never have competing programs in elections in Africa. It is always sectarianism, but clothed in party colors. As a strategy for maintaining harmony for long enough to cause social transformation, which will permit the existence of healthy party competition, we should support this approach, which is less confrontational in the short run.

**Africa Report:** Has this approach been tried anywhere else in Africa?

**Museveni:** No, it hasn’t been tried except in Uganda. In the last seven years, we have tried it and it has worked very well.

**Africa Report:** Are Ugandans generally in favor of this approach?

**Museveni:** Oh, definitely. The Constitutional Commission went around asking the elected councils what they thought. I think as much as 75 percent preferred this arrangement to the multi-party one, because they also know about multi-partyism. We had it between 1962 and 1966 and between 1980 and 1985. But they find this model to be very agreeable to them—no conflict, harmony. You choose the best individual to represent you. You change them if you don’t want them.

You have local opportunists who fear being assessed on the basis of merit. They want to hide behind groups,

either tribe or religion, to get to power. They are the ones who fear this system because it will completely undermine their base. And the second group are the foreigners, the Westerners, who think that what is good for them is good for everybody. It is really arrogant.

**Africa Report:** Have Western governments or multilateral agencies exerted pressure on you to hold multi-party elections? How do they view the no-party democracy idea?

**Museveni:** No, not really. They know that what we are doing is democratic, and they know that we base ourselves on a democratic mandate. But what they are talking about is a level field for we who believe in no-party democracy and those who believe in multi-party democracy. In other words, we should not use the state to put our case and suppress the case of the other people, which we don't. At one time though, there was some confusion. Some of them were trying to say that even if the people don't want multi-party, it will be forced on them. We said this is not possible. If they express in a referendum or in an election the no-party democracy, then that is what we shall go with.

**Africa Report:** The assistant secretary of state for African affairs, George Moose, recently said that U.S. aid will go to those countries embarked on the road to democracy. What is your view of that policy and will it work in your favor?

**Museveni:** I would have no problem with that position if a government is repressive. Why should other governments that have surpluses in their budgets sustain it with funds? But the problem is with the definition of democracy. A government should be democratic, but democratic in what way? If we could have learned his definition, then I would have no problem with that position of Mr. Moose.

**Africa Report:** What is your definition of democracy?

**Museveni:** My definition is government that exists because of the people's mandate and which regularly goes back for a fresh mandate from the public. That is democracy. But to say that it should be in a certain form I think is a mistake. Democracy yes, but the form to be determined by the people themselves.

**Africa Report:** How have you exposed yourself over these years to the people's mandate?

**Museveni:** First, we had elections up to the sub-county in 1986-7. Then we had elections up to the district in 1989. Then we had elections up to the national parliament. I did not go for elections myself. When we were in the bush, we had a small committee of about 33 people, plus about 20 army officers. This was the original governing council when we came from the bush. These are the ones who did not go for elections, but others went for elections. There were elections for a Parliament of 270 people. We were the only people who didn't go for elections. Everybody else did.

The reason we did not go for elections was because we had many other priorities: first of all to make the country peaceful, because whatever you do you must have a basis for it. It is not just a fashion, this is what really offends me. If conditions are not ripe to have elections because of insecurity, why have a bungled election? So the priority in those days was to bring peace, to

open up the infrastructure, and now that we have done it, we are going to have elections for everybody. Because we are doing for ourselves, it is not showmanship. It is real life, it is the destiny of our people. Why do we have to appear to do things just for an audience of external observers? It is our destiny, our livelihood. We didn't go for elections because of those preoccupations. Now that we have solved them, we are going to go for elections, all of us. In the colonial times, there were no elections for 60 years. Forget about five or six years!

**Africa Report:** You said you had a lot of work to do when you came to power seven years ago. Can you reflect on those years and assess what your greatest successes and failures in governing Uganda have been?

**Museveni:** I think we have been successful first of all in the economy. The economy is now developing again. Between 1971 and 1986, we had a cumulative decline in GDP of 25 percent. Since 1987, the economy has been growing at the rate of 6 percent, a big success. We have controlled inflation, we have restored security. We have restored the unity of the people who are no longer divided. We have improved the external image of Uganda. We have had many successes. The only thing we are still grappling with is corruption in the public service. This is not disappointing because we know why. It is partly due to poor remuneration of the public servants, which we are going to resolve. It is also due to the deterioration in the quality of the cadreship over the years, so it is not surprising. It will be dealt with in its own time.

**Africa Report:** What advice would you give to your African colleagues who are resisting movement toward democracy?

**Museveni:** I have no sympathy for those who resist democracy. Democracy should not be resisted. Power belongs to the people, not to an individual. Why should you want power for yourself? Who are you? You are a servant of the people. If the people don't want you, then you go and do other things and they elect whom they want. I have no sympathy for them.

But what I think is dangerous is this interference. Things are not done according to internal dynamics, they are done in order to appear in a certain light to certain audiences. This is where the danger is. But internally, people must be governed by those whom they elect. If there is a transition period from a one-party state, or a military dictatorship, or following a revolutionary war, then that transition can be understood in that context, but not as a permanent feature of governance. Power must be to the people. I am not in sympathy with the dictators at all, those who don't recognize the sovereignty of the people. The people are the sovereign force.

**Africa Report:** What should be done about countries like Togo or Zaire that are heading toward the anarchy of a Somalia or Liberia? In this post-Cold War period, what should the U.S. be doing in these circumstances, especially in countries like Zaire which is a traditional ally of the U.S.?

**Museveni:** The danger is that by excessive interference, you emasculate the local forces, so you create a vacuum. This is the problem in a country like Zaire. The people who are there appear not to know what to do. They are appealing to the West, come and liberate us.

But why don't they have their own capacity to kick this chap out? What is so difficult about Mobutu? He doesn't control more than Kinshasa. That means the problem is not with Mobutu only. The problem is with the whole political spectrum. They don't know what to do. Some people are saying, let the big powers come and throw the dictators out themselves. But then will they occupy the country, stay there to keep these sponsored groups, because you will be more or less sponsoring a group to take legitimate power? How do you sustain them in power? Are you going to stay and have an army there, or what?

That's why my emphasis is on the people themselves resisting the dictatorship. If the people can't stand up to dictatorship, who can bankroll their freedom? Who can underwrite their freedom? Is it not dangerous for the future? Suppose it is not a local dictator, suppose it is foreign occupation. How will they resist it? The people must be the custodians of their own freedom and not anybody else. If the situation is so bad that there is no local force with the capacity to end anarchy and genocide, then we must accept it as a failure of the local people to guarantee their own freedom. But this should not be made a habit of, because that will emasculate the people's will.

**Africa Report:** What is your view of the U.S. intervention in Somalia?

**Museveni:** In the case of Somalia, there was really no alternative. It was in the category of total collapse. We had already done it in Liberia. I am the one who encouraged Babangida [president of Nigeria] to go into Liberia because if the opposition is as hopeless as the government, what do we do? What is the hope of the population if there is no alternative locally? Should the people be exterminated? But my concern is that some people seem to welcome interfering everywhere. It should not be a course of first resort, it should be rather a course of last resort.

**Africa Report:** Do you think the way to go for conflict resolution in Africa should be through regional structures like Ecowas in Liberia?

**Museveni:** Yes. The problem is just resources. They have tried to contain Taylor and those who were backing him. Libya was behind it.

**Africa Report:** Africa is known for having too large armies. Uganda has a very large army, parts of which you are in the process of demobilizing. What useful role can the military play in Africa's future?

**Museveni:** The army should be just for guarding the borders and maintaining internal peace in the case of unconstitutional groups who want to seize power. That's all. They should not take part in usurping the sovereignty of the people. They should guard what the people want, not do what the people don't want. I don't agree with military governments. I am a soldier because we had to fight a dictatorship, but not as a profession. So I don't agree with military governments. What is their legitimacy? Where do the people figure in all this? I don't see how a group of people can go and govern contrary to the wishes of so many people. How can 20,000 soldiers dictate the destiny of 17 million people in Uganda? Who are they? I don't think the army has a role in gover-

nance. They could participate. I also don't agree with those who say they shouldn't participate. In our case, we put them in Parliament.

**Africa Report:** What are you going to do with 30,000 demobilized soldiers?

**Museveni:** We used to have a very big army, 90,000 soldiers, which we have now reduced. They can produce, they can train. We have a lot of instability in the area—problems in Sudan, Kenya, Zaire, Rwanda, so we may need to defend ourselves against all those threats.

**Africa Report:** How are relations with Kenya?

**Museveni:** Relations with Kenya are alright. We have survived all their schemes. There is civil war in Sudan, Zaire there is chaos, Rwanda there is a war going on there and the French are on the side of the regime.

**Africa Report:** You have been accused of fomenting the insurrection in Rwanda.

**Museveni:** Yes, but I just remind them that I was 15 years old when this problem started. They could ask the Belgians. They were the ones who were there, or the French who have been there longer! It is a well-known problem. How can you force 1 million people out of their country and think that you will be at peace? It is just mismanagement by the local reactionaries, compounded by the French involvement. This external involvement is a very big mistake, because it makes people not concentrate on internal reconciliation. One of the factions which thinks it has external backing neglects internal reconciliation. If I knew that I have got to live with you if we are going to have peace, I would have to look for ways of how we can reconcile.

The Soviet Union was able to live with the U.S. peacefully. Although they had all these dangerous weapons, they never fired them. They knew that there was no other way. But if somebody thought he could go to Mars and get support from there, then come and suppress the other one, then he would not concentrate on reconciliation. So this external involvement is a source of lack of peace. One of the factions which has external backing does not care about internal reconciliation. They just think they can vanquish their internal enemies through external alliances. This is not good for peace.

**Africa Report:** What would you like to get across to the Clinton administration as it formulates its Africa policies? What should be the priorities of U.S. policy in Africa?

**Museveni:** If their priorities were three—encouraging the World Bank to give soft loans to those African countries which use them well to build infrastructure, American private sector investment, and trade—the rest the people can do themselves. After all, if a few African countries could manage to develop as Uganda is developing now, it will also force others to imitate what is going on. It will be a challenge because their own citizens would be able to compare and say: Look at Uganda, what are we doing? It is because we have not had a local example of success that there has been all-around stagnation. But if we have got one or two or three cases of success, then that would also act as an implied criticism for those who are not moving. There are enough local forces to bring change in that area. We don't have to import patrons! ■

# BABANGIDA'S BOONDOGGLE

Nigerians finally went to the polls in June to choose a civilian president. Voters' skepticism over President Ibrahim Babangida's transition program to civil-

ian rule was well-grounded—before the returns, which showed Moshood Abiola as the victor, were finished being counted, the military government suspended the results, fulfilling warnings by critics such as Olu-

segun Obasanjo (left). Babangida then announced that new elections with new candidates will be held in July. In this report, our correspondent provides the background to the latest setbacks to democracy, the acid test for which will come on August 27, the "irrevocable" date Babangida has set for the military to step down.



Commonwealth



Beth Press

**C**oercion is an unusual way of preparing a nation for democracy, but Nigeria's military leader, President Ibrahim Babangida, is handing over to civilian rule on his own terms.

When the planned elections were cancelled last October, cynics said Babangida would never give up power, but some prominent Nigerians saw it as an opportunity to get the transition right next time. An appeal for a national conference to debate how Nigeria should be governed was supported at the end of last year by elder statesmen, including Olusegun Obasanjo, the only Nigerian head of government to hand over power freely.

Anthony Enahoro, a former minister and a pioneer of independence in the 1950s, spoke against Nigeria's adopted U.S.-style presidency and proposed a return to government by a prime minister, like the system inherited from the British or as practiced in France. Minority ethnic groups in the east who question their allegiance to Nigeria raised the specter of a violent break-up of political boundaries.

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Secession is anathema to Babangida, who lived through the Biafran civil war. He dismissed any constitutional debate, rejected the national conference, and set August 27, 1993 as the date for civilian rule. He also appointed a group of civilians to form a Transitional Council, a caretaker cabinet as a front for the National Defence and Security Council, where real power still lies. The wider national issues have been brushed aside by Babangida's transition program, which has run since January with military precision after three cancellations since 1991.

Tight control of the elections, death threats against dissidents, and press closures have reinforced the transition to elected civilian rule, ignoring public opposition to the flawed electoral system, the institutions of government, and the federal structure of Nigeria. The transition program has negated any attempt at national consensus or popular involvement in the evolution of government and society in Nigeria.

After a decade of military rule, there are few signs of enthusiasm for civilian rule from Nigeria's population, many of whom have just had their first chance to vote.

Nigerians welcome the departure of the old regime, but no popular movement has emerged to give shape to the coming civilian era. Nigerians, who have grown used to military dictatorship, now regard the transition to democracy with detachment and an air of resignation.

The uncommitted public greeted the new politicians vying for power with a mixture of apathy and cynicism. Doubts about the quality of the candidates running for the presidency of the next republic grew stronger when neither party offered any fresh approach in its campaigning.

Both the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) are artificial creations of the military regime, with their manifestos issued like equipment, designed to take the sting out of ethnic divisions and to take the policies out of civilian parties. Both parties' presidential candidates, Bashir Tofa of the NRC and Moshood Abiola of the SDP, have close connections with Babangida and other members of the military hierarchy.

There is a sense of pessimism about Nigeria's ability to manage its national resources, not helped by the feeling that the issues which really matter are not publicly debated. Nigerians associate the structural adjustment program (SAP), half-implemented by Babangida, with lots of pain and no gain, but they are not easily fooled by the blithe assurances of the new band of politicians. Slogans about hope and prosperity make little impression on a people who for a decade have seen living standards decline and public transport, health, and education collapse while governments, supported by corrupt civil servants and security forces, talked of the next five-year plan for a thriving economy.

Both presidential candidates were active in the last group of civilians in power, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), which was ousted by soldiers when corruption and electoral fraud had weakened its authority.

Nigeria has not developed into a federation, but acquired a patchwork of 30 areas which lack autonomy. Babangida has increased the number of states to 30 and created a new layer of local government which has weakened provincial power. Each state has the trappings of authority—a house of assembly, a governor, and a capital—which eat up nearly all its budget. Virtually every state now has its own university and school system, spreading resources so thin that books and equipment are very scarce and almost an entire academic year has been lost to strikes.

Yet ethnic loyalties and enmities remain the driving force of Nigerian politics. The large ethnic groups—the Hausa in the north, the Ibo in the southeast, and the Yoruba in the southwest—have been divided among several states and depend on patronage from central government, while the smaller tribes are set against one another in states which have no ethnic identity. Bashir Tofa shrewdly exploited tribal and religious loyalties when he chose Sylvester Ugoh, a Christian Ibo, as his

running mate and forged an alliance in the NRC between the Muslim north and the Christian southeast. Emeka Ojukwu, the former Biafran leader and still influential among the Ibo, promptly abandoned the SDP, for whom he had stood as a candidate, and threw in his lot with the NRC.

Clashes between neighboring ethnicities, such as in the rural state of Taraba or in the oil town of Warri, have left thousands of people dead. Religious intolerance in northern Nigeria, ignited by friction between Muslims and minority Christians, has flared up into religious riots, a military tribunal which condemned suspects to death for inciting the Zangon-Kataf in Kaduna last May has increased suspicion in both communities.

In Rivers State in the southeast, the half-million Ogoni people are beginning to disrupt the Shell-operated oil fields, which produce half of Nigeria's \$6 billion oil export revenues. Led by Ken Sara-Wiwa, the Ogonis claim that their land has been polluted and they have received nothing in return from the central government, which absorbs all the oil proceeds. Their campaign has served as a focal point for a number of minority tribes in the east who feel disenfranchised by the federation and are threatening to secede.

The decline of the economy remains the principal concern for most Nigerians. The Transitional Council's leader, Nigeria's foremost industrialist, Ernest Shonekan, said in his January budget speech: "Uncontrolled public spending is the bane of our economy." He has tried to strengthen the role of the private sector and check the rampant overspending of the federal budget, which has plunged Nigeria into the World Bank's lower income bracket (per capita income of around \$290 a year com-



Betty Press

pared to \$1,000 10 years ago). He summoned businessmen to advise on economic policy reforms, courted investors at home and abroad, and toured the major capitals of the world to lobby for debt relief.

Shonekan's proposed medium-term program is along the lines which the IMF would support and has won the approval of governments in London and Paris, but he has neither the power nor the time to implement it. The mili-

tary hierarchy has balked at floating the naira, which is propped up at an official rate at least 50 percent higher than on the open market, and called a halt to Oil Minister Philip Asiodu's plan to phase out the fuel price subsidy on June 1.

After the half-hearted privatization efforts of SAP, the state monopolies—NNPC in fuel refining and distribution, NEP in electricity supply, and Nitel in telecommunications—retain their stranglehold on the lives of most urban Nigerians who depend on them, and remain irrelevant to the rural dwellers, who do without them. Despite its great agricultural potential, Nigeria is a large net importer of food, and although it produces more than half the oil in sub-Saharan Africa, the country suffers from fuel shortages.

With this legacy from Babangida's eight years of military rule, the two political parties seemed to represent a civilian offshoot of the regime, a guarantee of safe conduct for the outgoing hierarchy and perhaps a return ticket if civilian rule quickly disintegrated. Option A4, the electoral system introduced in January to prevent vote-buying, produced two presidential candidates whose main achievement has been to make large fortunes, but who have no record of public service. Tofa emerged from almost complete anonymity outside his native Kano to win the nomination for the NRC in Port Harcourt. Abiola has never suffered from obscurity and won the nomination of the SDP in spite of his reputation for excelling at the business methods for which Nigeria is notorious.

Threatened probes into the backgrounds of Tofa and Abiola produced nothing and corruption charges against both men were waved aside by the National Electoral Commission (NEC). The politicians of the NRC and SDP appeared irrelevant to the real debate about Nigeria's future, which ranged from outspoken critics at the fringes and coded messages from the president interspersed with repressive decrees.

Obasanjo warned a group of former political and military leaders before the election that "all that is necessary for the enthronement of evil is for good people to remain silent and inactive." His residence became a focus of opposition and he published the text of one of his private speeches declaring open opposition to the candidates and the regime that had spawned them. "We see increased activities of people known to be of dubious character and doubtful integrity. The silent majority looks almost helplessly on as the nation is allowed to be toyed with by these crooks and criminals alike."

A treason decree in mid-May threatened the death sentence for anyone whose words or deeds might undermine "the fabric of the nation" and was aimed at detractors of the transition program as well as at the secessionists in the east, but Obasanjo was not the only one to defy it. A series of raids on the press showed the military regime's extreme sensitivity to criticism of its record in office.

The liberal weekly news magazine, *The News*, was

closed by the government on May 22. The State Security Service sealed off the premises and impounded 80,000 copies of the issue due for release on May 24. This edition carried a cover line, "Help, Nigeria Is Dying." Editor Bayo Onanuga is becoming used to having his office closed by policemen. He was the editor of *African Concord*, the weekly owned by Abiola's Concord group, when it published an edition in March 1992 devoted to Babangida's mismanagement of the economy. The government closed the magazine for two weeks before Abiola secured the reopening in return for an apology for editorial misjudgment. Onanuga resigned rather than apologize.

Another liberal weekly journal, *Tell*, has become a government target, publishing a long interview in May with Obasanjo in which he launched a scathing attack on Babangida. Weeks later, the security forces impounded all the copies of an edition with the cover line, "Transition: 21 Traps Against Handover." The northern newspaper, *The Reporter*, was closed down indefinitely in March before it could publish stories critical of the Babangida administration and discussing the president's new quarters in Minna, where he has promised to retire in August, but which will also be the new headquarters of the army.

A more subtle response to the lack of confidence in the transition program was Babangida's mid-May speech at the War College in Lagos. "The military's commitment to withdraw to the barracks is irrevocable," he said. "With the countdown to the elections in June, all seems set for the conclusion of the experimental political journey we commenced in 1986. By August, this administration would be ready to hand over the baton of leadership to an elected president."

He warned when the handover was due, "members of the armed forces must not be found on the other side of the democracy barricade" and reminded them to be "prepared for a democratic civilian succession to which they must be subordinate."

The speech attempted to deal with discontent in the armed forces as well as to reassure civilians that he really did mean to go. It was a rare display of political philosophy and a self-justification for the role of soldiers in the government. He laid claim to the military's guardianship of the national interest and recalled that the coup ending the Second Republic (under Shagari in 1983) "came in the wake of the collapse of the economy and polity."

Yet passages of his speech were ambiguous and left the door open for the military to stay or to intervene again if the "constitution" required it. "The boundary between civil and military society, in our own peculiar situation is not clear-cut." Military ethics, said Babangida, carried a responsibility "to defend the constitution of our nation as well as the general will of the people."

When the armed forces retire to the barracks, they will take that responsibility with them, in case the Third Republic politicians repeat the mistakes of the Second Republic. ○

LIBERIA  
BY MARK HUBAND



Patrick Robert/Syigma

## TARGETING TAYLOR

An increasingly tempting solution to Liberia's anarchy is to remove rebel leader Charles Taylor (right) of the National Patriotic Front from the scene. Assassination is apparently a goal of the Nigerian-dominated Ecomog force (top), but not necessarily one shared by the



J. Ozanne/Syigma

other West African partners. Unfortunately, for every Taylor or Prince Johnson that transforms the landscape into a killing field, only to fade away, a new one pops up, such as Alhaji Kromah, the leader of yet another rebel group, Ulimo, that wants a piece of the action.

**I**nternal tension within all of Liberia's disparate military and political factions is now bringing the country to the verge of complete disintegration. More than two years of discussion has failed to bring substantial agreement between the warring sides and instead has led to the emergence of a war of attrition, which the fragile forces sent to arrest this trend are now finding they have insufficient resources to confront.

Following the disappearance of the last vestiges of trust between the conflicting sides—largely due to the rebel leader Charles Taylor's attempts at seizing the capital, Monrovia, last October in an unprovoked attack—regional states and the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) led by Amos Sawyer are now left with only a military option. This course, however, is least likely to bring them success in finding a solution with anything resembling the broad appeal which is vital for genuine reconstruction.

Responses to the rising tide of violence have now come to dominate the agenda. On June 6, the West African intervention force, Ecomog, discovered the mutilated bodies of 300 civilians believed to have been massacred by Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) at Harbel, 40 miles from Monrovia. The slaughter came two weeks after the NPFL publicly announced plans to wage a war of terror, with its traditional targeting of defenseless civilians the main strategy.

Military force now appears to be the only choice Ecomog has available to it, as without a significant move against Taylor's NPFL, it is unlikely that peace talks can restart on the basis of mutual respect. With 11,000 troops from six regional states at its disposal, Ecomog is now attempting to confront Taylor's declaration of a guerrilla war with tanks, artillery, and air strikes—military tactics which are now sending shock-waves throughout the region.

"There's no pressure in Ghana to withdraw from Ecomog. But if there's pressure, it's because we are being realistic. It cannot be a perpetual exercise," said Ghana's information minister, Koffi Totobi Quakye, in an interview with *Africa Report*. "That is why Ghana is very anxious to find areas of compromise. Compromise lies in the hands of Charles Taylor...There's a Nigerian passion to annihilate Charles Taylor. Charles Taylor is aware that the Ghanaian way of doing things is more accommodating and is looking more at the way of achieving the end of having an election," he said.

Quakye refused to elaborate on suggestions that Ghana was about to host a new round of peace talks, but he made it clear that it now regards itself, along with the United Nations, as playing a negotiating role. Such a role from within the region has been absent since the current chairman of Ecomog, Benin's President Nicéphore Soglo,

refused to take as active a role over Liberia as his predecessor, Gambian President Dawda Jawara.

At a press conference in Abidjan on May 12, Soglo was openly irritated by the regional preoccupation with Liberia, saying: "It's necessary that not all our energy is expended on that one question of Liberia...Instead of talking about regional integration, we are talking about the problem of Liberia...It's a mess," he said, adding that he has tried three times since last October's upsurge in fighting to convene a meeting of the Ecomog negotiating committee on Liberia, but each time, regional presidents failed to attend.

As with members of IGNU, Soglo is now looking to the UN to take what will effectively be the leading negotiating role, regional initiatives having largely failed and trust between the regional states and Taylor having evaporated. Following the massacre at Harbel, IGNU's information minister, Lamine Waritay, appealed to the UN and the international community "to come to our rescue and save us from ourselves." However, stinging attacks on the UN relief operation in Liberia from IGNU have in recent weeks soured relations with the UN.

An Ecomog demand that UN and other relief workers bring all food into Taylor-held territory via a corridor of tranquillity starting from the Ecomog-held southern port of Buchanan has led to an increasingly strained relationship. Ecomog's declaration of the corridor stems from its belief that relief food convoys travelling direct from neighboring Côte d'Ivoire into Taylor's territory were being used as cover for transporting military supplies to the NPFL, though no proof of this claim was ever presented.

While the UN has accepted the corridor in theory,



Peter da Costa

**Ecomog now views the destruction of the NPFL's military strength as the only solution**

demands for proof that it will work in practice have not been met. Ecomog initially said its troops would accompany relief convoys to a point 24 miles outside Buchanan, whereupon they would be handed over to the NPFL. Taylor has rejected the entire concept of the corridor and said he will shoot at convoys attempting to enter his territory from Buchanan. Meanwhile, Ecomog was only able to accompany UN officials three miles out of the port when they

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visited the town to see how far Ecomog authority stretched and realized the troops only control a buffer around the port, the rest of the territory being in NPFL hands and the Monrovia-Buchanan road under threat of NPFL ambushes.

As part of a propaganda campaign against the UN, members of IGNU have complained that the UN has been deliberately bypassing government departments and refusing to acknowledge IGNU legitimacy by avoiding the establishment of joint relief projects with the government. Such views first emerged when the UN special coordinator, Ross Mountain, insisted on working with both IGNU and Taylor's National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government, thereby according a minimum of recognition to Liberia's two authorities in order to facilitate the relief operation.

In recent weeks, this has led to stinging personal attacks on Mountain in the Monrovia press, with articles written apparently by IGNU officials using pseudonyms accusing him of souring the relationship with IGNU. To discredit him further, some even went as far as accusing Mountain, a New Zealander, of having served in the New Zealand intelligence service before joining the UN, a charge he has denied

Criticism of Mountain's handling of the relief operation also came from some individuals within the relief community, though along the lines of questioning his ability to handle press criticism rather than his ability to help those in need. Mountain's contract ended on June 30 and he has now left Liberia, his departure coming at a time when it was clear he was being used as a scapegoat by the beleaguered and under-resourced interim government. Mountain believes that the souring of the relationship stems from an increasingly widespread view that the humanitarian operation should operate under the auspices of Ecomog.

"Sensitivities were heightened by the NPFL attack on Monrovia in October 1992. People have felt that our continuing insistence that we were trying to reach people even in NPFL land on humanitarian grounds was something that they had difficulty accepting. Some people seem to believe that everything that goes into Taylorland will be misused by the military forces. Part of our good record on that is that when we have had troubles in NPFL territory, we haven't been shy in going back to the NPFL and making strong representations. The irony is that we have been discussing getting assistance in with Ecomog," said Mountain in an interview with *Africa Report* before his departure from Monrovia.

Accompanying the campaign against Mountain was

**ECOMOG NOW  
OPENLY REGARDS  
CHARLES TAYLOR  
HIMSELF AS A  
LEGITIMATE  
TARGET.**

IGNU's expulsion on May 15 of an Australian UN employee, Maxwell Hills, who had been employed as a logistics officer. A former gold prospector, Hills had moved to Liberia in May 1990 and been caught by the war. Over the subsequent months, he became close to various warring groups and operated a clinic in territory held by the now-defeated rebel leader Prince Johnson. He was employed by Mountain due to his knowledge of much of the terrain in which UN food convoys were travelling in NPFL territory. IGNU expelled him for conducting activities beyond his capacity as a UN employee, although refusing to specify the exact details. His expulsion is also regarded by the UN as part of a scapegoating campaign to discredit the UN so as to diminish criticism of its own, understandable shortcomings.

IGNU's diminishing authority, its inability to oversee the apparently unending transition in the face of worsening political stalemate due to the failure of the regional peace accord signed in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, in November 1991, and the continued lurching of the country between total war and fragile peace are fast depriving this tragic country of any alternatives, save a military onslaught whose outcome is plagued by uncertainty and to which regional states will find it hard to give a unified commitment.

Ecomog now openly regards Taylor himself as a legitimate target. Nigerian jet fighters have bombed NPFL territory and convoys in which Taylor is thought to have been travelling. On May 26, Ecomog aircraft strafed a bridge at Liberia's border with Côte d'Ivoire, which Taylor had crossed two hours beforehand en route to a meeting in Burkina Faso with the UN special representative to Liberia, Trevor Gordon-Somers. Ivorian soldiers fired back when the Nigerian jets strayed into their air space, an Ivorian government statement said.

The American ambassador to Liberia, William Twaddell, now believes a resolution to the conflict cannot be left to West African states already groaning under the expense of Ecomog. "It seems to me that West African states have a claim on international support for the contribution they have made to stabilize and bring order back to Liberia," he said.

According to UN sources, Taylor has agreed to an agenda for UN-sponsored talks, but has not agreed to the prerequisite of disarmament and encampment of his forces, which has heightened the determination of his numerous enemies to force him into submission. He has now exhausted what appeared at times to be the infinite patience of regional leaders in their attempts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict over the past two years.

Despite Gordon-Somers' efforts to launch a fifth attempt at peace talks since the civil war erupted in 1989, military and political sources in Monrovia say Ecomog now views the destruction of the NPFL's military strength as the only solution to the crisis.

"This is Nigeria's war. [Ecomog field commander Ade-tunji] Olurin is unclouded by doubt. Taylor is clearly evil,

and he is a liar, and Olurin clearly sees it as part of his mandate to kill him if he can," said one senior relief official in Monrovia who preferred anonymity.

"Taylor lies with blissful persuasiveness," said one of the four diplomats based in Monrovia, "and is motivated by his own survival. But I think that before he is convinced that he should go, he has to realize that he can't win an election. If political personalities are moving around the country, he would be killed within days. There are so many personal vendettas against him."

Further complicating the military situation is the evolving role of the multitudes of militias now carving out their territory in the country. Chief among them is self-styled Maj.-Gen. Alhaji Kromah who invaded Liberia last year from neighboring Sierra Leone. He and his largely Muslim group of Liberians emerged out of the 250,000 refugees in Sierra Leone who fled the advance of Taylor's NPFL rebels on Monrovia in 1990. There they formed the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (Ulimo) and invaded Liberia's northwestern counties.

Trained and supplied with weapons by Sierra Leone, the at most 1,000-strong Ulimo surprised all the disparate forces within Liberia by pushing deep into Taylor's territory and eventually reaching Monrovia. Its success gave a new lease on life to the murdered Liberian president Samuel Doe's Krahn tribe, which dominates Ulimo numerically. Doe is openly venerated by Ulimo supporters.

"Personally I think Doe sacrificed his life for thousands of people in Monrovia," says Alhaji Kromah, Doe's former information minister and a member of the mainly Muslim Mandingo ethnic group, which was allied to the Krahn and became Taylor's victims during the war. "I saw Doe as the symbol of the breakdown of the Americo-Liberian hegemony," he says, referring to Doe's bloody 1980 coup which ended 133 years of rule by descendants of freed American slaves who founded Liberia and formed the country's elite by subjugating ethnic groups like the Krahn.

"I'm more concerned about Kromah than I am about Ulimo," says Interim President Amos Sawyer. "It's a classic case of a group of lads being used as a vehicle, in this case a personal vehicle. I told Alhaji Kromah that if you're going to lead a group of people and that they will have to take up arms, you have to prepare these people for life without arms. But what is Kromah's purpose—to replace Taylor and dig for diamonds [in the area he controls] and do exactly the same thing Charles Taylor is doing?" he asks.

Ulimo recognizes IGNU, but refuses to allow it to administer the territory it captured from Taylor during its advance across the country last year. While this clearly raises questions over IGNU's sovereignty, the real issue facing the government is whether it could administer the area around Tubmanburg which Ulimo controls. Sawyer, who is trying to run IGNU on an annual income

of \$12 million earned from the Liberian-registered merchant fleet, the world's biggest, is now swamped by corruption allegations against the government. "IGNU is in a very shaky financial position," says Tiawan Gongloe, special adviser to Sawyer. "We have already had to sack 20 Central Bank officials over a check fraud."

But despite IGNU's problems, Sawyer himself remains one of the few clear-sighted politicians in a position to steer events. "Everything now comes against the background of not trusting what Taylor says. He has to be put in a corner with limited military options and without much economic resource and in an international climate that has decided he is the bad guy. This will smoke him out," said Sawyer. "Taylor makes it clear that he doesn't believe in any of the political 'isms.' But in Liberia, you don't have to fight for the capitalist system that he so clearly wants, because everybody here believes in it anyway," he says with characteristic candor.

Now, as Ecomog troops mass in preparation for an expected attack on Taylor's headquarters at Gbarnga, retreating NPFL fighters have started to carry out Taylor's orders for them to launch a guerrilla conflict against the West African forces. As usual, it is unarmed civilians who have become the targets, with scores of civilians being massacred by retreating NPFL forces.

"The day the rebels came to my home in Nyaemas Town, I was walking to Careysburg to get rice. I was carrying two machetes I used in the fields, and I heard the rebels were in my town so I went back to find my family," said 72-year-old Maurice Gaye. "They chopped me with their machetes and tied me up and beat me with the butt of a rifle, then left me when they thought I was dead," he said, his neck and right ear covered in bandages from the beating.

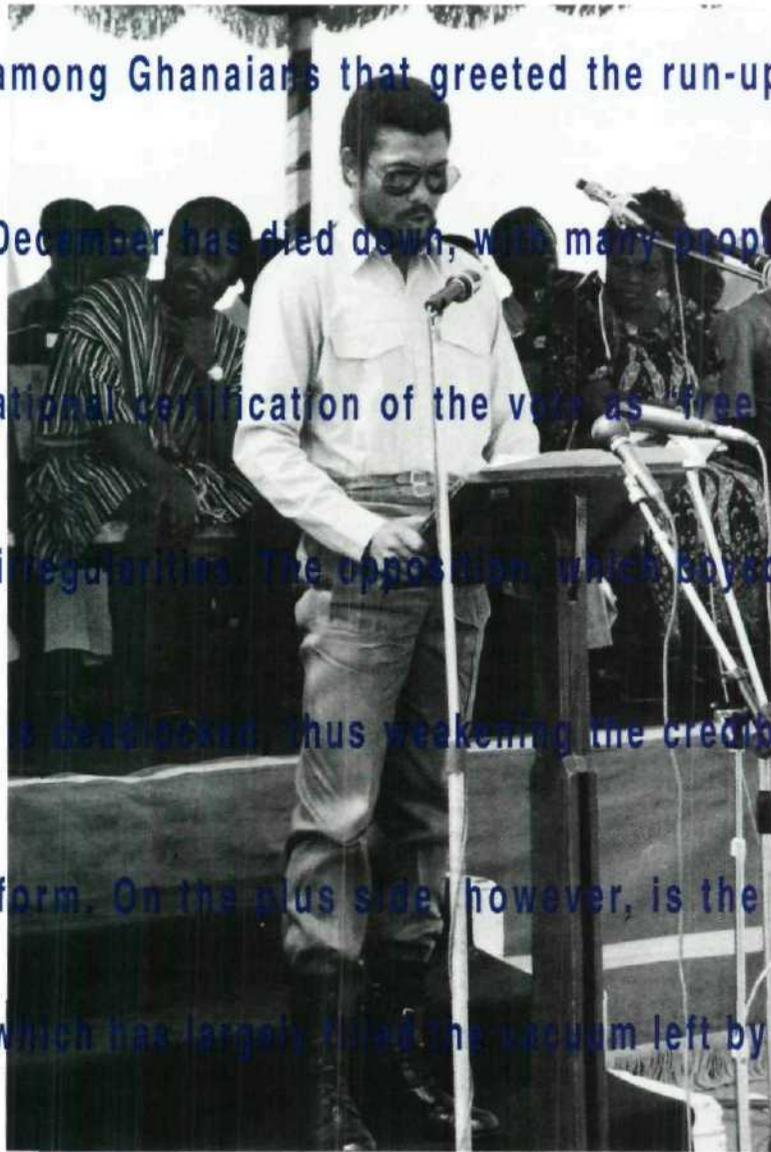
The NPFL troops ordered another villager, 16-year-old Sarah Howard, to "go behind the house. I held my daughter's hand, and I joined the people there. They didn't kill me because they knew they had already killed the rest of my family. My mother. My father. Uncle. Brother and sisters. Six people killed," she said. According to Emmett Togar, the village leader from nearby Togars Town, 38 of the 78 people living in Nyaemas Town have not been seen since the attack and are feared dead.

According to Ecomog sources, over 300 NPFL fighters have now infiltrated Monrovia, a city cut off by fighting from its rebel-controlled, food-producing hinterland. Consequently, Monrovia's spend three or more hours each day at checkpoints where their cars, bags, buses, and trucks are searched as the city cowers under the threat of bomb attacks and sporadic killings.

As always in this conflict, it is civilians who are suffering. "Arms," says a banner suspended over Monrovia's Randall Street, "are for hugging, not for killing." Painted on a bed sheet above the hum of traffic and sweating peace-keeping troops, another sign says: "The children do not want any more war." But nobody who really matters is listening to them. ○

# THE ELECTIONS CONTROVERSY

The euphoria among Ghanaians that greeted the run-up to multi-party elections last December has died down, with many people believing that despite international certification of the vote as "free and fair," there were electoral irregularities. The opposition, which boycotted parliamentary elections, is discredited, thus weakening the credibility of Ghana's multi-party reform. On the plus side, however, is the free-wheeling private press, which has largely filled the vacuum left by the opposition.



Margaret A. Novicki

**I**n James Town, a seaside ghetto in Ghana's capital Accra, three elderly men sipping draft beer at the Havana Bar smiled uneasily at the suggestion that Ghana is now a democracy where people can speak their minds freely.

"No," said the retired teacher, checking that no one was listening. "I cannot give you my candid views of the

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political situation because of fear. Haven't you read the private press? A man was picked up by the BNI [Bureau of National Investigation] recently and held for three days. He talked against the government.

"Some of us may be opposition supporters and our views may be irreconcilable with anyone listening," continued the teacher. Eventually, his friend, the accountant, blurted out their main concern—that the recent presidential election was rigged.

Bitterly, the third man, a clerk, added that the international observers (the Carter Center, the OAU, and the Commonwealth Observer Team) condoned the presidential election result. "Even before the results were all in, nothing was changed in this country and if you publicize our names, anything could happen to us and who would know...But you can read all these things in the private press. They tell us what's going on."

Such is the mood in Ghana, where the words "free and fair" as declared by the international observer groups have taken on an ironic meaning.

Less than a year ago, multi-party reform was ushered in with the completion of a new constitution, the unbanning of political parties, the emergence of the private press, three new human rights organizations, and the release of remaining political detainees. All this culminated in a brief period of euphoria between September and November last year.

Massive colorful campaign rallies and popular political ditties and slogans characterized the mood of expectation and the hope for change. Ten years of tough IMF structural adjustment policies backed by strong military rule were giving way to a new era.

On the hustings, Rawlings promised continuity. He said there were more tough times ahead and no easy answers. His rivals promised employment, economic prosperity, respect for the rule of law, and restitution and retribution for the years of military rule.

Rawlings won the election with 58 percent of the vote and November's euphoria gave way to December's gloom, followed by five months of political angst and stalemate.

In January, a shadowy organization calling itself Farigan claimed responsibility for a spate of bombings in Accra and the nearby industrial city of Tema. Led by Lagos-based Alhaji Damba, Farigan was bent on destabilizing the new government. To the west of the country, in the Ashanti region, a temporary state of emergency was declared to stop the violent mass demonstrations of angry opposition party supporters. An opposition party building was blown up, but the most gruesome incident occurred when a ruling party activist was burnt to death.

Four factors caused this sudden plunge into political instability. The first was the strong belief among a portion of the population that the elections were fraudulent. All were agreed the register was faulty with around 1 million ghost names, while many legitimate voters were not registered.

The second factor was the boycott of parliamentary elections by the four opposition parties—the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the National Independence Party (NIP), the People's National Convention Party (PNC), and the People's Heritage Party (PHP).

The NPP especially had been quite certain of ousting Rawlings and, having lost through what it believes were fraudulent processes, boycotted parliamentary elections, thereby denying the Fourth Republic the legitimacy it might have had.

The NPP later produced a report titled "The Final Verdict." NPP leading supporter Professor K. Folson admits the report did not conclusively prove systematic rigging, but says it discredited the interim National Electoral Commission, which was implicated in the rigging.

Back in December, realizing the legitimacy of the whole process was at stake, the government delayed the parliamentary polls and made strenuous efforts to persuade the boycotters to return to the election race. "We bent over backwards," recalls Koffi Totobi Quakye, minister for information.

The opposition wanted to postpone the parliamentary elections for two years, time enough to compile a new

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register and set up an identification card system. They wanted an interim parliament with equal representation for all the parties. But the government side argued that the people had voted for a new constitution to take effect from January 7, and that timetable could not be sidestepped, recalled Quakye.

Most of the senior opposition leaders were willing to lift the boycott, said Quakye, except the NPP presidential candidate, Albert Adu Boa-

hen. "We are where we are now because of intransigence and recalcitrance," said Quakye. He blames Adu Boahen's political ambition.

Kwesi Yankah, a linguistics professor and Ghana's most popular political satirist, believes that Boahen's intransigence was an expression of popular will. Many other opposition leaders have confirmed the view that their supporters would not have countenanced a lifting of the boycott.

Inevitably, however, the opposition parties worked themselves into a political cul de sac. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems had warned the opposition parties that with the faulty register, free and fair elections could not be guaranteed. The advice was to wait until there was a new register.

Yankah says that the opposition, having taken part in the presidential race, lost the "moral authority" to back out of the polls. Suffering from "an illusion of tremendous popularity," as Yankah puts it, the opposition parties wrongly believed they would win regardless of the odds.

And so, on January 7, for the third time, Jerry Rawlings, 46, assumed the leadership of Ghana, watched by a populace increasingly enveloped by what Yankah describes as "a mood of bitterness and acrimony."

Donor countries urged dialogue between the government and the opposition parties. All sides realized that Ghana's multi-party system would have little credibility while the two sides remained at loggerheads. But it was too little, too late, for the opposition to enter Parliament at least for the next four years.

"Dialogue with the opposition is important to give legitimacy to the multi-party system and the practice of accommodating dissenting views," said Yankah.

In his first address to Parliament, the president invited the opposition parties to a dialogue with the ruling parties in Parliament. He said a new electoral register would be compiled before 1996 together with an ID card system.

The NPP, despite its language of bluster and resistance, took up the president's offer and presented an alternative economic package to Parliament on May 21. "The MPs literally jubilated," says Yankah. "All of a sudden, it was as if they [the MPs] realized it had all been a hoax."

President Rawlings now faces his toughest test yet—that of shedding the image of the radical military dictator and becoming a democratic constitutional ruler able to create a climate of tolerance.

Rawlings is handicapped by his own admitted disdain for multi-party politics and Ghana's opposition parties in particular. Rawlings' continued slanging match with the opposition has not helped either.

Observers say he is genuinely hurt by the rigging claims and wants his presidential win to be fully accepted by all. The opposition for its part feels cheated and finds it difficult to recognize Rawlings as president.

The most radical, men like Kwesi Pratt of the Popular Party for Democracy and Development, continue to label Rawlings "a brutal dictator." Valerie Sackey, head of press and public relations in the Office of the President, says the opposition has to take back its accusations of rigging before any healing can really begin.

But Yankah believes that the onus is on Rawlings. In one satirical piece, Yankah criticized both the president and the First Lady for continuing to be partisan.

"You would consider it a primary objective of any government to start healing wounds, bringing people together," said Yankah with frustration. "As soon as the head of state has won the elections, he becomes the father of the nation."

While the opposition has yet to find its place in the sun, the private press has. Vida Ofori (no relation) is a young female student who was shot in the spine in her bedroom when police attacked striking, unarmed students on campus. Through emotive press reports, Ofori has become a symbol of the defenseless citizen at the mercy of an uncaring state.

That she has assumed this status is a measure of the growing power of the private press, whose importance has been heightened by the absence of the opposition in Parliament.

Now the weeklies come out with allegations of corruption in high places regularly and without fail. Anguished editorials calling for greater government sensitivity and accountability fill the columns.

Around 20 private papers emerged just a year ago. At the time, many were just four-sheet rags which based their soaring sales on Rawlings-bashing headlines. Though primitive in layout and journalistically poor, their arrival marked the end of over a decade of media silence.

The government turned a blind eye to the papers' taunts and jibes with one exception, that of George Naykene, 54-year-old editor of *The Christian Chronicle*.

Naykene published an article alleging that Rawlings and his former colleagues of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council took bribes from the civilian government of President Hilla Limann, to whom Rawlings handed over the government in 1979. Naykene was convicted of criminal libel, jailed for 18 months, and adopted by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience.

On his release last May 14, senior journalists gathered at the new press center in Accra to welcome Naykene. Daniel Ansah, owner and editor of *The Voice* newspaper, says constitutional rule has dramatically altered the human rights situation in Ghana. "Before, it was easy to pick up people like George Naykene. Now journalists are writing worse things than Naykene did. The point is the constitution allows for the right of rejoinder. The government realizes it can't walk over the private press anymore."

His *Voice* newspaper, together with the *Ghanaian Chronicle*, the *Independent*, and *The Statesman*, an NPP paper, now constitute a major force, says Ansah. Together they have a circulation of about 130,000 per week.

"We have become opinion leaders with financial independence and that gives us courage and credibility," said Ansah. "If you arrest any of us, you are in trouble."

Kabral Blay-Amihere, president of the Ghana Journalists Association, agrees that the government is trying as much as possible to respect the new situation, but he says it will take time to adjust.

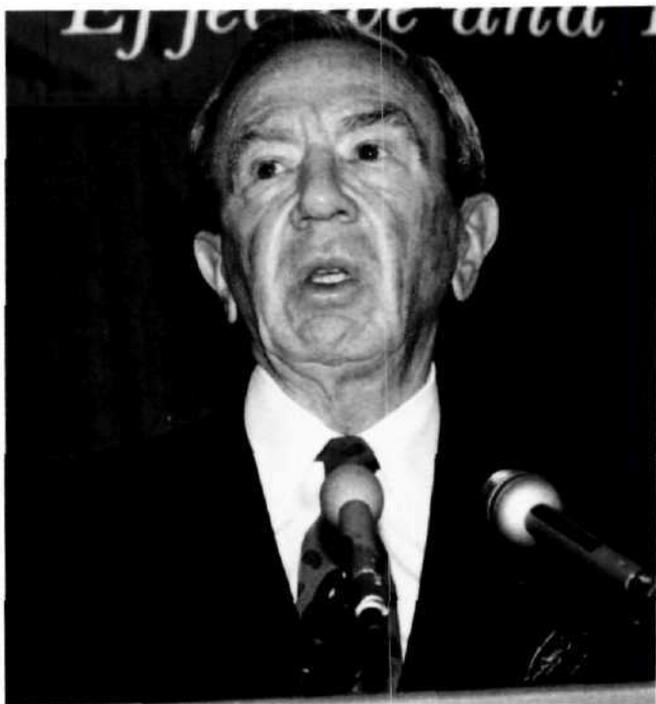
A measure of the government's new hands-off stance is that even Yankah, the most acerbic critic of dictatorship, fears that press freedom is being abused. "The private press is fanning the flames of ethnic prejudice," he warns.

Indeed, for months, articles have appeared accusing the government of ethnic bias in favor of the Ewes, the second largest ethnic group after the Akans. This again is the outcome of the presidential election results. Ewes in the Volta region on Ghana's eastern border overwhelmingly voted for Rawlings, their favorite son candidate, while the Akan vote was more evenly spread.

Now newspaper articles ask whether there is an Ewe plot to rule Ghana with Rawlings at the center. The cabal is given an international dimension, with Rawlings accused of ambitions to unite Ewes from Ghana eastward through to neighboring Togo and Benin. ○

# A NEW RELATIONSHIP

In a major address before the African-American Institute's 23rd African-American Conference in Reston, Virginia, in May, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher outlines an unprecedented emphasis on Africa as a foreign policy priority of the Clinton administration. Democracy, human rights, and conflict resolution are the cornerstones of a new U.S. approach to the continent.



Margaret A. Novicki

**A**merica and Africa are linked in fundamental ways. As the world's oldest democracy, we have an enduring interest in the success of the new democracies of Africa. As a multi-racial society, the U.S. is especially encouraged by the approaching transition to democracy in South Africa.

And there are links of conscience—and links of cooperation. When a child dies of hunger in Africa, that tragedy touches us in America. When American scientists seek a cure for AIDS, they carry the prayers and hopes of Africans and Americans.

When our Agency for International Development makes a substantial investment in child survival programs, that makes a difference in helping Africa to reduce infant mortality rates. And when the American company Merck provides a drug that frees millions of Africans from the devastating effects of river blindness,

that action not only extends the frontiers of pharmacology, but lessens the distance from America to Africa.

That distance is also lessened by the end of the Cold War. During the long Cold War period, policies toward Africa were often determined not by how they affected Africa, but by what advantage they brought to Washington or Moscow. Thankfully, we have moved beyond the point of adopting policies based on how they might affect the shipping lanes next to Africa, rather than the people in Africa.

In today's changed world, we can and will move to a productive new relationship with Africa. The president and I are committed to building that new relationship based upon our common interests and our shared values.

The Clinton administration will provide strong and visible support for the movement to freedom in Africa—to democracies and free markets. We will work with the nations of Africa to address the health, environmental, and

population issues that threaten lives and imperil sustainable development. And we will help Africa build its capacity for preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution so that the people of that continent can live free of the terror of war.

### Promoting Democracy and Human Rights

At the heart of our new relationship will be an enduring commitment to democracy and human rights. President Clinton has made it clear that promoting democracy and human rights is a pillar of American foreign policy. And that pillar stands just as tall in Africa as it does in every part of the world.

It is democracies—not dictatorships—that offer the best means to defend human rights, to put African nations on the path to progress and to address the vital social and economic concerns that cut across national borders.



United Nations

The United States will work through our aid program and with the multilateral assistance and lending institutions to help Africa build its economic capacity. Under the Clinton administration, these global concerns will not be relegated to the footnotes of our foreign policy agenda. Instead, they will be given the top tier attention they deserve.

Today, Africa has gained our attention and respect through the courageous efforts to build democracy and opportunity on that continent. While the drive for democracy and free markets has attracted more attention in Eastern Europe and Latin America, the people of Africa are demanding their freedom as well.

Listen to the words of President Chiluba of Zambia: "We know what is right. Democracy is right. The greatest lesson we can learn from the past 27 years is that freedom is at the core of every successful nation in the world and in Africa today."

The people of Africa know where their future lies: not with corrupt dictators like Mobutu, but with courageous democrats in every part of the continent. From Senegal to Benin, from Madagascar to Mali, African nations are building strong democratic institutions. They recognize that democracy offers the only framework for tolerance and harmony because it safeguards individual rights and provides protection for minorities.

The African-American Institute has played an extraordinarily useful role in promoting democracy. You have monitored elections, trained officials, and provided civic education. You understand that democracy must work not only on election day—but every day—through a vibrant civic culture and a commitment to free and open debate and the rule of law.

Democracy worked on election day last September in Angola. But since then, the people of Angola have been denied the benefits of their participation in that process. President Clinton acknowledged the importance of that free and fair election when he announced that the United States now recognizes the government of Angola.

We intend to remain actively en-

*"Our most enduring contribution may be assisting Africa to build its own capacity for conflict resolution"*

gaged in promoting a negotiated settlement between the Angolan government and Unita that enables all the people of Angola to enjoy the benefits of democracy. U.S. recognition is designed to help achieve that goal and to encourage Unita to join the process of peace and national reconciliation. As President Clinton said, we hope Unita will be a part of the government we recognize. We continue to believe there can be no military victory in Angola—and the U.S. will not support those who pursue a military solution.

Now South Africa stands on the verge of its own transition to non-racial democracy. The United States supports that peaceful transition. We oppose those who seek to derail the negotiations and we reject those who resort to violence. We hope that within a short time, a date will be set for a truly democratic election in South Africa. That election will echo around the African continent and across the world as a roaring triumph of human rights.

The credit for that monumental achievement will belong most of all to those in South Africa who dedicated their lives—and in some instances, gave their lives—so that a new day of freedom would dawn. Credit will belong to Nelson Mandela, who walked out of prison after 27 years—unconquered, unbowed, standing tall in his belief that the people of South Africa could still build a future based upon the inherent worth and dignity of every human being.

It will also belong to F.W. de Klerk, whose vital contribution can be measured by how far his views have evolved, and by how far a majority of white South Africans have come with him.

The transition to non-racial democracy in South Africa is also the product of principled opposition to apartheid in the international community. In the finest American political tradition, a coalition of conscience in this country has carried out a long and uplifting campaign against the apartheid system half a world away. Our own sanctions have played an important role in the progress made to date.

The installation of a non-racial government in South Africa will resonate with every American, but especially with those in cities and towns across this nation who joined the effort to bring an end to apartheid.

In sharing the spirit and lessons of our own civil rights movement, we are not saying that America has found every answer or that we have yet formed a perfect union. But we are committed to the basic principle that human rights are universal—that every citizen in every country ought to be judged as an individual, irrespective of race or economic condition.

South Africa's successful transition is important for Africa, the United States, and the world. The United States will help and we expect the other industrial democracies to help as well. Once a Transitional Executive Council has been put in place—and a date for elections has been set—we will work with our G-7 partners to help South Africa re-enter the global economy. We have urged the World Bank and the parties in South Africa to begin planning now the projects that will translate into economic growth. Similarly, the American business community should be a part of the effort to help the people of South Africa build a strong and vibrant economy once the progress toward democracy is irreversible.

Unfortunately, South Africa has had no monopoly on the violation of human rights on the continent. American policy must reflect that fact. We cannot hold Africa to a lesser standard for human rights than we apply to other parts of the world. I want to make clear that the United States will take human rights into account as we determine how to allocate our scarce resources for foreign assistance.

The promotion of democracy is central to the goals of the Clinton administration. That is why President Clinton chose to invite the first president of a democratic Namib-

ia, Sam Nujoma, as the first African head of state to be recognized at his White House.

### **Sustaining Africa's Capacity for Development**

It is the democratic nations of Africa, reflecting the will of their people, that are best positioned to make the kind of economic changes that improve the lives of their citizens. The development challenge facing most African nations remains imposing, but it is within the capacities of free market democracies to overcome.

Economic crisis still afflicts many of the continent's nations. For many countries, per capita incomes have been stagnating or falling; trade and investment flows have remained weak; debt burdens stunt the prospects for new growth. Drought, famine, and civil war have turned crises into calamities; no region of the continent has been spared the ravages of man or nature.

The trend toward democracy in Africa must be reinforced by sustainable economic development. The peace and stability that democracy brings can lead to desperately needed private investment—and with it, development capital, technology transfer, and technical expertise. Disinvestment in Africa will only be reversed when Africa makes itself a more attractive place for new capital. Applying the rule of law, reducing corruption, assuring the remittance of profits, and building more skilled workforces—all of these things will help give Africa a far greater role in the global economy.

The first responsibility for building that capacity rests with African countries themselves. But the developed nations of the world—including the United States—share a responsibility to help. For the coming fiscal year, we are requesting bilateral development funding for Africa of \$800 million. In addition, we will continue to provide over half a billion dollars in humanitarian and other assistance to Africa.

The United States and the international community will be more willing to support the economies of African nations that have embarked on serious reform. We are working with other creditor nations to provide additional debt reduction for countries cooperating with IMF adjustment programs. The administration is requesting congressional support to enable the U.S. to participate in a multilateral debt relief effort. This new initiative would reward those poor countries implementing difficult reforms.

New trade policies will also help African nations to compete in global markets. Protectionist barriers still impede Africa's competitiveness and its prospects for growth. Africa has much to gain from a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round negotiations that the U.S. is pushing to complete by the end of this year.

Africa's economic future is inseparable from its environmental future. An Africa that is yielding to the desert sands and scrub, and an Africa whose soil is eroding, is an Africa diminishing its capacity to feed itself. An Africa that is losing its forests and renewable water supplies is

an Africa that is compromising its ability to meet basic needs for the future.

One African leader has said that the problem of soil erosion has become so serious that his country, viewed from space, appears to be bleeding into the ocean. We must help to heal these environmental wounds. To that end, AID will spend at least \$70 million on environmental and natural resource projects in Africa this year.

One environmental challenge in which the U.S. was particularly helpful was the devastating drought in southern Africa. Working with interested nations and the donor community, the U.S. provided close to \$1 billion to respond to this catastrophe. Today, the threat of famine is gone and the countries of the region are harvesting a good crop.

Sustainable development cannot be accomplished without a renewed sense of urgency about population growth rates that will double the size of many African nations in 15-20 years. Rapid population growth imperils efforts to combat poverty and protect the environment. No longer will the United States pretend this problem does not exist. Instead, we will work in partnership with nations in Africa and elsewhere to provide a full range of family planning and reproductive health services, and we will work to improve the status of women.

#### **Resolving Conflicts in Africa**

Let me be clear: The Clinton administration's new relationship toward Africa will differ in important respects from the approach of the past 12 years. At the same time, I salute former President Bush for launching Operation Restore Hope—a military mobilization for a mission of mercy in Somalia. What a proud moment it was to see American soldiers help to feed starving children in a place far from our shores but clearly close to our hearts.

Certainly America was not alone in that effort. Other nations—including many in Africa—were instrumental in providing relief. While serious problems persist in Somalia, the efforts of the international community have alleviated suffering and provided the opportunity to rebuild that nation. Somalia's experience reminds us that the international community can respond compassionately and effectively. But it also reminds us that we must not wait until thousands of people have succumbed to starvation.

Now we need to apply those lessons in Sudan. The civil war in Sudan has resulted in terrible suffering and appalling violations of human rights. The U.S. is working with governments in the region, the UN, and others to bring the fighting to an end. We must do whatever we can to ensure the delivery of adequate relief supplies to stem this tragedy, especially as the rainy season begins.

In Liberia, where brutal conflict has raged, we support the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) to restore peace. We seek a negotiated settlement leading to full disarmament of all warring factions; free and fair, internationally monitored elections; and the establishment of a democratic government.

But Liberia's future will be determined in Monrovia, not in Washington. Only Liberians can create a real and

lasting peace, heal the deep scars in Liberian society, and determine who will lead them in the future.

Liberia's suffering must be brought to a swift and peaceful end. That country deserves a better fate, like the future now dawning to the east across the continent in Eritrea. The intertwined tragedies of Eritrea and Ethiopia are receding into history, we hope, never again to be repeated. After 30 years of civil war, an independent Eritrea has emerged, aided in part through peace talks sponsored by the Carter Center in Atlanta.

Eritreans voted overwhelmingly for independence from Ethiopia in a UN-monitored referendum. On April 27, Eritrea declared independence—and that same day the United States recognized Eritrea. Alongside a newly democratic Ethiopia, this new nation can take its rightful place as a beacon of hope astride the Horn of Africa.

I have spoken of American efforts to end some of the military conflicts in Africa, but our most enduring contribution may be assisting Africa to build its own capacity for conflict resolution and peace-keeping. The United States is working closely with the Organization of African Unity, providing support for peace-keeping in Rwanda, and training for election monitors elsewhere. As the OAU prepares to observe its 30th anniversary, it is important not only to recognize what that organization has done, but to focus on how it can play a greater role in preventing and stopping wars on the continent.

I also want to acknowledge the often-overlooked involvement of Africans as peace-keepers abroad. Nigeria and Kenya in the former Yugoslavia, Cameroon in Cambodia, Ghana and Sierra Leone in Lebanon: These and other African nations are making the world safer.

The OAU and other African organizations need to step up mediation and preventive diplomacy to give people in Africa the chance to live free of war. In the exercise of creative, often life-saving diplomacy, Africa's destiny will be shaped by Africans.

#### **A New Relationship**

I have outlined today the basis for a substantially new American relationship with Africa. It will be a new relationship in which America can assist Africans in building democratic institutions and laying the foundation for economic growth, but in which our role is to enhance—not to erase—African solutions.

It will be a new relationship grounded in our firm belief that while dictators in Africa are not yet extinct, the future lies in free elections and free institutions. It will be a new relationship reinforced once a new South Africa has moved from repression to democracy.

The people and governments of Africa are moving to democracy and free markets with a growing conviction that they are on the path to progress. They are embarked on a uniquely African journey, as awe-inspiring as anything on this continent of breathtaking beauty.

It is a journey worthy of America's respect and support—and that respect and support is what I pledge today. ○

Deployed around Mozambique, a United Nations peace-keeping force of more than 6,000 troops from several nations (including the Italians in photo) is guarding vital land corridors and waiting to begin disarming and demobilizing the estimated 82,000 former fighters. The ex-combatants wait and wait, while UN mediators hammer out details of the election process and Frelimo and Renamo contemplate transforming themselves into vote-getters in an election that won't be held before June 1994.

## WATCHING AND

Kok Nam/Tempo



**O**n the bedroom of a Portuguese colonial villa in the Mozambican port city of Beira sits an Italian general behind a large desk. "My soldiers are trained in the snow and ice of the Italian mountains. This makes a man strong in the body and the soul and he can survive anywhere in the world."

When they first arrived in Mozambique in March, Gen. Fontana's men looked distinctly uncomfortable. They had left the snow and ice of a northern Italian winter and arrived in the steamy heat of a southern African summer. And there are few places as steamy and smelly as the city of Beira—its drainage system gave up long ago, and when it rains, raw sewage bubbles up onto the streets.

A few months on, the weather is cooler, the rains have come to an end, and the Beira air, with the wind in the right direction, almost smells fresh. In his villa by the sea, doubling as a command post for the central region of the United Nations peace-keeping operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ), Fontana stares at visitors with eyes that would penetrate metal plate at 50 yards. "This country may be new to me, but the situation is not. I have 1,800 men under my command, patrolling two land corridors making 330 miles of roads. I have a job to do, and it is the same job as I have done all my life."

Fontana is in command of one-third of the UN peace-keeping force in Mozambique. In total, more than 6,000 UN soldiers have been deployed, guarding the country's five strategic land corridors.

But for now, the ceasefire is holding and the general's men have extremely little to do. They patrol the roads, phone home to their families twice a week, and eat pizza made at their own bakery. They, like everyone else, are waiting for the start of the demobilization of Renamo and Frelimo forces.

Many months behind schedule, the disbanding of the two fighting forces has been held up by endless disputes between Renamo and government negotiators sitting on the peace commissions in Maputo. The UN has not helped either. Delays in approving budgets and sending troops brought further complications to the negotiations.

Now, even though the UN is here in force, and all budgets are approved (at least for the present), former combatants are waiting for the start of the demobilization process. Seventy-five miles to the north of Fontana's villa, a Renamo soldier sits beside an airstrip in the early morn-

ing sun, idly drawing pictures of animals in the dust with a stick. "Now the war has finished," explains Francisco Antonia, "we are all just waiting for orders to disarm. We have been waiting a long time."

Francisco is guarding the airstrip near Maringue. Accessible only by air (the roads are still mined), this town in the Gorongosa district of central Mozambique serves as the bush headquarters of Renamo. When Francisco was 17 and still a student, he decided to join Renamo. His friends told him to follow them into the bush to the nearby rebel base. His reasons for doing so had something to do with not liking the Marxist-Leninist path of the Frelimo government, but even more to do with the local Frelimo administrator's commandeering his father's bicycle for use by the party. "My father was a schoolteacher, and he needed that bicycle to get to school in the mornings. Frelimo officials did that sort of thing all the time. I didn't like it."

Francisco is now 30, his parents have long since fled to Malawi, and he has been fighting with Renamo all these years, moving between military bases in central and northern Mozambique. "We have done a lot of fighting, a great many people have been killed, but in war these things happen. Now the war has finished, I would like to live in one of the big cities and maybe work for a company there."

When the demobilization finally starts, Francisco Antonio, along with an estimated 82,000 former combatants (20,000 Renamo fighters and 62,000 Frelimo), will move to 49 designated assembly areas scattered around the country. Once there, they are all to be disarmed and demobilized under UN military supervision.

The figures for the numbers of soldiers are the official ones provided by both sides. In practice, the actual figures are likely to be considerably less, particularly on the part of Renamo. This is partly to do with over-inflated initial estimates and partly with what the UN euphemistically calls "self-demobilization"—a practice known in the real world as "desertion." This is happening as soldiers are drifting off home, bored of waiting around for the politicians to get on with it.

It is unlikely that Renamo has enough soldiers presently under arms to provide its quota of 15,000 to the new unified 30,000-strong army. However, this won't trouble Renamo too much. With the substantial and open support for Renamo now on show in some of the towns of central Mozambique (red, black, and blue Renamo party badges are now a familiar site in Beira and Chimoió), one way or another, Renamo's leadership will have little difficulty presenting 15,000 recruits for training in the new army.

*Dan Isaacs is the correspondent for the BBC World Service in Maputo, Mozambique.*

# ITING

The stage has been set for demobilization since the arrival of the last UN soldiers at the end of May, but the blockage is political. In order for it to begin, both "partners in the peace process" must jointly approve the assembly sites. For this, they must be sitting around the same negotiating table in Maputo. Unfortunately, Renamo's representatives walked out of discussions in early March and left town as well. Renamo's chief negotiator, Raul Domingos, was not happy with the way he and his colleagues were being treated by the government, the international donor community, and the United Nations.

From the government, they demanded more accommodation and office space; from international donors, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama demanded \$15 million; and from the UN, Renamo demanded the presence in Mozambique of all the promised soldiers.

The last of these demands has now been met—Maputo, Beira, and the northern city of Nampula are crawling with UN soldiers and white UN Land Rovers speed down the country's roads, blue flags flying. It is the first two that have proved to be the really intractable issues.

The now rather dog-eared peace accord signed in Rome last October commits the government to "facilitate" the provision of housing and office space to Renamo. As a result of the Frelimo government's communist past, all housing is state-owned. And as a result of Mozambique's economic collapse over 16 years of destructive war, virtually no housing has been built in the capital since independence in 1975. There is therefore an acute shortage, and those houses which are available are extremely valuable. The government has therefore been very reluctant to hand over prime housing—usually restricted to those who have the influence to jump queues—to its once sworn enemies.

The government, however, has provided 18 houses, one of which, down a picturesque side street and across the road from a primary school, has now become Renamo headquarters. But Renamo wants more—including one suitable for Dhlakama. Each house offered, including in a fittingly ironic twist, the former Yugoslav embassy in Maputo, has been roundly rejected as too small or too insecure for the Renamo president.

But the housing game, which both sides have fully played to their own advantage, could now have an end in sight. Tiny Rowlands, the British executive director of the multinational Lonrho, has ridden to the rescue. Last year, he played a central role in persuading Dhlakama to sign the Rome accord—offering among other things, the use of his private jet to get to the talks on time. This time, he has placed the luxury Cardoso Hotel (with its glorious view over Maputo Bay and in which Lonrho has a controlling interest) at the disposal of up to 70 Renamo staff

expected to come to Maputo, when they finally decide to return to the negotiations. At this point, Renamo has made no firm commitment, but it will be difficult to refuse the offer at least as a temporary solution.

The irony of the situation is that while the two have argued over living and working space for Renamo, an army of UN personnel has moved into the city, occupying every possible nook and cranny. They, however, have paid astronomic rents for buildings, for which the town's inhabitants are happy to hand over their homes—prices which Renamo on the other hand cannot afford.

That leads to the thorny problem of Renamo's little nest egg. To operate as a political party and be able to fulfill its duties as a "partner in the peace process," Renamo requires funding. It's all there in the peace accord and it has also been discussed at a donor conference held last December in Rome. Donors pledged \$320 million for Mozambique's transition process, 10 percent (\$32 million) of which is destined for the opposition political parties. Renamo naturally expects the lion's share, which Dhlakama worked out as a tidy \$15 million.

In arriving at this figure, it appears that he was helped by the Italian government, which played the role of mediator during the lengthy peace negotiations and has been extremely keen to see the process through to a successful conclusion. When donors demonstrated their reluctance to honor pledges with hard cash for the opposition parties, the Italians signed a deal with Renamo and the government, under which they would provide an amount near to that demanded by Dhlakama.

The only problem was that the deal was done in secret (it subsequently became clear that neither the UN nor the donor community were aware of it). All of which would have been fine had it not been for the unforeseen collapse of the Italian government. Renamo waited for its bank account to grow a few zeroes, and then waited a bit more.

But when, by April, the money still hadn't arrived, Dhlakama let out a great cry from Maringue, exposing the Italian "secret deal" and demanding the cash. The Italian ambassador to Maputo, Manfredo di Camerana, was left having to admit all while the UN stood quietly on the sidelines.

But the whole peace process had stalled on the crucial issue of funding and soon the UN special representative, Aldo Ajello, took some unilateral action. He spent the months of April and May not only flying around Europe trying to persuade donor governments to release funds for Renamo and the other opposition parties, but also flying around Mozambique, acting as mediator between Dhlakama and Mozambique's President Joaquim Chissano.

His prominent role in trying to move the process for-



*President Joaquim Chissano, left, and Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama*

Sarah-Jane Poole

Sarah-Jane Poole

## Keeping the Peace in Mozambique

**I**n total, there are 6,171 armed UN "blue helmets" now deployed in Mozambique (a figure which may increase slightly in the coming months). The force is made up principally of five infantry battalions totalling about 5,000 men. One battalion has been assigned to each of the five strategic land corridors through Mozambique. The remaining force of a little over 1,000 UN soldiers is made up of units offering logistical support to these battalions.

Bangladesh has sent the largest contingent of 1,328 soldiers who are protecting the corridor from Malawi to the northern port of Nacala. The Italian battalion of 1,039 soldiers is guarding the Beira corridor—the road, railway, electricity, and oil pipeline which runs across central Mozambique from the Zimbabwean border to the deep-sea port at Beira. The 820-strong Zambian battalion is stationed along the Limpopo rail corridor from Chicualacuala on the Zimbabwean border, across southern Mozambique to Maputo. Some 817 Uruguayans are guarding Mozambique's main

north-south road (National Route No. 1) that runs from Maputo over 900 miles to the northeastern province of Cabo Delgado on the border with Tanzania. Finally, the corridor across northwestern Tete province from Zimbabwe to Malawi is being protected by a battalion of 721 soldiers from Botswana.

The largest support unit comes from India (around 840 men), with smaller units from Japan, Argentina, and Portugal. Also present in the country as part of the UNOMOZ operation are about 300 non-armed military observers from 17 countries and about 200 staff attached to the UNOMOZ headquarters in Maputo.

The budget for the total UNOMOZ operation is \$260 million. However, this total does not take into consideration the delay in holding multi-party elections which has now become inevitable. Originally scheduled for October this year, the UN special representative to Mozambique, Aldo Ajello, says that the earliest possible date is now June 1994. ■

—D.I.

ward has irked some of the participants. The Mozambican foreign minister said in an interview recently that Ajello ought to be playing less the role of mediator and more that of a referee. He went on to say that Renamo should not be being treated like a "premature baby," a clear reference to Ajello's tireless and continued dialogue with Dhlakama despite the latter's refusal to talk to Chissano face-to-face.

But as a result of Ajello's pressure, European governments, including Italy, are now prepared to place money into two trust funds set up by the UN to provide finances for Renamo and the other emerging opposition parties. Although the money is not yet flowing in quite the quantities that Dhlakama had been demanding, it may just be enough to bring Renamo delegates back to Maputo. The Renamo leader promised Ajello as much during their last chat in Maringue in mid-May, but Dhlakama is in no real hurry. The more time he has to transform an extremely crude fighting machine into at least a passably presentable political party, the better. On that score, Renamo still has a very long way to go.

But in the meantime, there are many bridges to rebuild. The two sides distrust each other from deep within their bones; they are squabbling for power in a

country awash with weapons and littered with land mines; there are two armies to dismantle and a new "unified" one to create; there will be tens of thousands of ex-soldiers looking for jobs that the government is unable to provide; and of course there are 3 million displaced people returning to their homes.

The "referee" to this spectacle, UN representative Ajello, won't yet be pinned down to an election timetable. Originally scheduled for October this year, he has talked of elections in the middle of next year. "When I was talking about June next year, I said that the first possible date after the rainy season was June, but that doesn't mean it must be June. We must make sure that we follow the schedule month by month. Everything must be carried out before the elections, that was my first declaration when I came to Maputo. No elections without demobilization and disarmament of troops, and I'm more convinced about that than ever."

That, of course, is a lesson well learned from the ever-worsening disaster across the continent in Angola. There are few who believe that those events could be repeated in Mozambique. But they will grow steadily the longer tens of thousands of armed soldiers are left drawing animals in the dust and waiting for orders. ○



# GOING HOME

**I**t was not yet dawn in Mbare market, a muted blue shrouding the few shapes moving at that hour, when we set out on what seemed an impossible journey. Rives Mafuta, an elderly “houseboy” in a white northern suburb of Harare, Zimbabwe, was travelling to Mozambique to find the sister he hadn’t seen for 30 years.

Armed only with a couple of envelopes inscribed with “Jose Samuanibuino Cherene, Caixa Postale 52, Tete”—the postal address of his sister Filiosa’s husband—Mafuta was setting out on a quest that less than a year ago would have been unthinkable. The bus, a ramshackle overworked vehicle, would travel Hell’s Highway—the notorious Tete corridor, a 157-mile stretch of road in northern Mozambique dubbed the “gun run” because of

the fatal ambushes that took place on it during the country’s 16-year civil war.

With the advent of peace, however, heralded by the ceasefire signed last October in Rome by the Frelimo government and the rebel Renamo movement, traffic has dramatically increased on the Tete corridor. Indeed, two Zimbabwean bus companies launched a regular passenger service between Harare and Blantyre, Malawi, via the corridor earlier this year.

Thus it was that an African domestic worker could plan a visit to a city that during the war was accessible only by truck convoy or aircraft. Mafuta and the journalist accompanying him simply bought a ticket to Tete at Harare’s main bus terminal and settled in for the five-hour ride.

But this is Africa, as people here are wont to say when things go awry. First, it was the bus breaking down halfway to Mozambique and an interminable delay until

*Heather Hill is a freelance journalist based in Harare, Zimbabwe.*

Our correspondent accompanies an elderly "houseboy" from Zimbabwe who returns to his homeland, neighboring Mozambique, for the first time in 30 years to search for his sister. A year ago, a trip venturing only 87 miles along the notorious Tete corridor would have been extremely hazardous because of ambushes, but now a typically dilapidated bus makes the journey...not exactly easy...but adventuresome, as peace finally comes to Mozambique.



Heather Hill

"emergency travel document" out of his hands, informing him it didn't entitle him to re-enter Zimbabwe. "Finished" was the curt response to questions about the precious piece of paper.

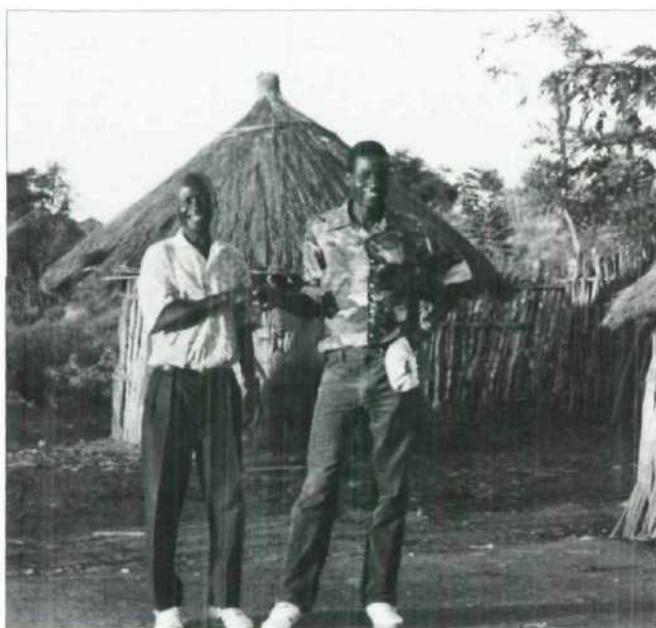
Like many Africans, Mafuta doesn't have a passport. He had applied to the Mozambican embassy in Harare for a single-entry visa. But the pass he obtained after considerable difficulty and delay was, as far as Zimbabwe's immigration officers were concerned, a one-way ticket to Mozambique.

"Do you still want to go?" I asked the small, frail man of over 60, who was facing the obdurate trans-border bureaucracy for the first time in his life. "Yes," was the reply. But trepidation was printed like a worn map on his face.

Next came the challenge of finding transport for the remaining 87 miles to Tete. It was just after 4 pm and darkness takes on a sinister significance in a country as raw as Mozambique. We sat with the other long-distance travellers on the side of the road, brooding about the approaching nightfall. At this hour, few vehicles leave the border for the drive to Malawi.

Our deus ex machina was an army Landcruiser moonlighting as a taxi. It roared up to the collection of shops on the Mozambican side of the border post and the driver, a taciturn, red-eyed Mozambican in blue jeans and a brightly patterned shirt, proceeded to pack as many people as possible into the vehicle at \$2 a head.

It was the kind of ad hoc paramilitary travel arrangement that reigned on the Tete corridor between 1990 and last November. In December 1990, the Zimbabwean sol-



Heather Hill

*Top right, Rives Mafuta greets Filiosa Chereene, the sister he had not seen for 30 years*

*Above, Mafuta with his nephew, Alberto Chereene*

the dozen long-distance passengers were transferred to a local bus that went only as far as the Nyamapanda border post. Then there was the minor disaster when immigration officials snatched Mafuta's

## Sowing Peace

**S**milting as she rounds up 20 children, Lina Georges explains that now peace has returned to Mozambique, she can teach at a pre-school in her rural home near the central city of Chimoio.

"Since the ceasefire in November we have had peace and good rains," said Georges, 20. "I have harvested a good crop of maize, sorghum, and beans. I get a salary for working at the pre-school. Things are going well."

The peace is holding throughout Mozambique and the population, weary from 16 years of one of Africa's most vicious wars, is returning to a semblance of normal life.

"Most people are happy to return to their traditional land, but many want to keep their places back at the refugee camps, in case there is more war," Georges said.

Mozambique's canny peasants want to farm their lands, but also want to keep a foothold in the more secure urban areas because they know their country balances uneasily between war and peace.

The ceasefire has held throughout the southern African country, but neither of the warring sides—the government army nor the Renamo rebels—have been disarmed or demobilized. Nor has Renamo taken up its seats in the capital on the joint government/rebel commissions to oversee the peace process. Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama and his top deputies remain at their bush headquarters in Maringue.

In late May, Dhlakama stated that Renamo need-

ed a grant of \$100 million, either from the UN or donor governments, in order to allow the group to mount an adequate election campaign. Dhlakama said the ruling Frelimo party had an unfair advantage because it has been in power for 17 years and has control of all the levers of power. Several countries are ready to help Renamo make the transition from guerrilla group to political party, but none are prepared to grant Dhlakama such a large sum of money.

Mozambicans and foreign diplomats alike are worried that Dhlakama may keep the peace process and the elections on hold, or that the rebel leader will plunge the country back into war, as Jonas Savimbi has done in Angola.

But, for the time being, the peace has stabilized central Mozambique, allowing peasants like Lina Georges to reap a bumper crop. All along the Zimbabwe-to-Beira road, families can be seen busily harvesting their crops. This good harvest is especially important following Mozambique's disastrous drought last year.

While war raged throughout the Mozambican countryside, some 7,000 Zimbabwean troops safeguarded the 180-mile road and rail route connecting landlocked Zimbabwe to Mozambique's Beira port. The Zimbabwean troops kept that narrow transport corridor safe from Renamo attacks. With the signing of the peace accord between Renamo and Frelimo in October, the Zimbabweans agreed to withdraw, which they did in April.

diers who had guarded the Tete corridor since 1985 withdrew to a six-mile limit along the Beira corridor under a partial ceasefire agreement. During the first six months after the withdrawal, the ambushes resumed, and the governor of Tete began providing Mozambican soldiers to escort convoys, made up mostly of trucks ferrying food relief to the nearly 1 million Mozambican refugees in Malawi.

"You bought your way onto the convoy," explained Chris Notley, liaison director of the Beira Corridor Group, a Harare-based consortium of business interests in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. "Private motorists travelled at the front. Right at the back was a recovery vehicle for breakdowns. There would be up to 150 vehicles in the convoy, 12 miles in length. They concertinaed like crazy."

It was privately understood that the fees exacted for the protection were split with the "enemy" soldiers in the bush. But there had been enough trouble along the highway, especially in 1987 when bloody ambushes took place about twice a month and drivers were routinely killed, for the truckers to pay up.

The bad old days are almost forgotten now as some 90 transport trucks a day freely ply the Tete corridor in both directions. Since the ceasefire, Renamo has virtually melted away; the soldiers get enough food from their rural *shamvas* that they don't need to attack a truck to survive. The 750 Botswana soldiers who arrived on April 12 to guard the corridor under the UN peace-keeping banner are having a far easier time of it than their counterparts on the Beira corridor, where several incidents of banditry have taken place since March.

Now the corridor is guarded by 1,000 Italian troops as part of the UN's 6,000-strong peace-keeping force. Sporting blue berets and Uzi submachine guns, the Italians speed along the Zimbabwe-to-Beira road in gleaming new armored vehicles. Their crucial task is to keep traffic moving safely along the road and rail route and to keep the oil pipeline pumping fuel to Zimbabwe.

With rations of imported pasta and freshly baked pizza, the battalion from the Italian Alps is happily settling in for a stay in the tropical plains surrounding Chimoio, midway between the Zimbabwean border and Beira.

Additional UN battalions, from Uruguay, Japan, Botswana, and Zambia, are guarding other important transport routes. Brazilian Major-General Lolio Gonçalves Rodrigues da Silva commands the entire UN force in Mozambique.

Enthusiastic and energetic, the crack Italian force has made sure that traffic is safe along the strategic route. Trucks, buses, and taxis move freely along the Beira road, as well as on secondary roads that have been closed to traffic for years. But by late afternoon, vehicles scurry for their destinations because there have been 16 night-time armed robberies along the road in the past two months, according to military sources.

"The Italians do a good job of keeping the road secure during the day, but at night the road belongs to anyone," said a Mozambican resettlement officer. The danger at night is posed by the many fighters, from both Renamo and the government, who are armed, poor, and hungry.

It is the lack of progress in disarming and demobilizing Mozambique's two armies that is the most worrying indicator that the peace may not

last. Neither the estimated 20,000 Renamo rebels nor the 40,000 government troops have assembled in camps to give up their weapons. In fact, by the end of May, UN officials had only visited the proposed sites of the 49 assembly points and had begun to draw up plans to establish adequate housing, and water and toilet facilities essential to an organized demobilization. Renamo leader Dhlakama has said his rebels will demobilize only when all the camps are open.

In addition to Dhlakama's procrastination, another stumbling block to the Mozambican peace process has been delays by the UN. Last December, the UN representative in Mozambique, Aldo Ajello, an Italian, got the Security Council to agree to an ambitious Mozambican peace plan including more than 7,000 personnel and a budget of \$332 million.

Ajello stressed that the UN would not make the same mistakes in Mozambique that were committed in Angola. He said the election campaign would not begin until after all army and Renamo troops were disarmed and a new national army comprised of fighters from both sides was established. Ajello's operation now takes up five floors of Maputo's Rovuma Hotel. UN operation officials are working to get all sides to agree to a new timetable for demobilization and elections, which even the most optimistic say are not possible until mid-1994.

But these obstacles to Mozambique's peace process do not worry Lina Georges. She is already planning to expand her crops in the coming season. "Everybody is sick of war," said Georges. "Both Renamo and Frelimo are tired of fighting. I think we can all get along in peace." ■

—A.M.

And the road is in surprisingly good condition. The bush has been cut back from the verges, and patches of maize and munga (a drought-resistant cereal) have been planted by peasants who no longer fear being kidnapped by Renamo while they are working in the fields. As the sun's rays lengthen, our Landcruiser rolls through the pastoral landscape gracefully strung with silvery hydroelectric power lines emanating from the Cahora Bassa dam in northern Mozambique like a giant iron spiderweb. The power lines were built in the 1970s all the way down to South Africa. Up here, they are intact; south of the Beira corridor, Renamo blew up almost every single pylon in the early 1980s.

The lights of Tete are now visible in the near distance, and the difficulty of tracing Filiosa from a scrap of information can no longer be pushed to the back of the mind.

The Landcruiser negotiates the dusty potholed streets of town and deposits us in front of the Hotel Kassuende.

The Hotel Kassuende may be in Tete, but it has its spiritual location in Graham Greeneland. A crumbling waystation in a tattered former colony, it is the nexus for a cast of disparate characters: on this evening, a British backpacker heading for Lake Malawi, a crippled beggar, a mad woman, South African tourists short-cutting back to Johannesburg, a Malaw-

**ENTHUSIASTIC  
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ian selling pharmaceuticals out of his suitcase, and a proprietor with assorted sons, some legitimate and some not.

Mafuta, who had not anticipated a hotel room eating into his \$30 budget for the trip, inquires of a local fixer, a genial multilingual African, where the railway station is so he can doss down in the waiting room. "Railway station?" the fixer says incredulously. "My friend, the railway station closed down 15 years ago."

Nor had the fixer heard of Jose Samuanibuino Cherene, who Mafuta says is a shopowner in Tete. "There are only two African shopowners that I know of here and neither of them is this man."

So hotel room it was, but sleep was impossible. Between the night-long cacophony in the street, malarial mosquitoes, and the fear of failure, we started the search next morning tired and anxious.

We went first to the post office. Closed. Next door, a government fax-telex service was open. The manager, Arnaldo Sabonete, not only spoke good English, but he sympathized with our story and took us to the postmaster's home. He in turn abandoned his vegetable patch to open up the post office and check the records for the owner of Box 52. The card, alas, had no address. Nor did Senhor Cherene have a telephone, according to the hand-written record book.

"There is only one thing to do now," said Sabonete cheerfully. "We must put out some announcements on Radio Mozambique." He led us to the government radio station, where a softspoken young man agreed to read out five hourly bulletins for a fee of \$3. By now it was noon, and there seemed nowhere else to go but back to the hotel, the meeting place given out on the air, and wait.

But Mafuta went trudging out into the street with his two envelopes to ask shopkeepers where his brother-in-law lives—a daunting task for someone who speaks no Portuguese. Born near Chimoio and raised near Changara, Mafuta grew up in a country that had no government schools for Africans in rural areas. It was the era of travel restrictions, limited opportunities, and slave wages. Mafuta, like thousands of Malawian and Mozambican men, gravitated to the relative affluence of Rhodesia.

In 1963, he walked across the border to Mutoko and boarded a bus to Harare, leaving behind his father and sister and some step-siblings whom he has lost track of. Only the ineradicable bond of the African family, reduced for him to this one sister, could pull him back here.

Ninety minutes later, he returned. "Has there been

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anyone?" he asked. When I said no, he sat down uncomplaining, but despair was plain on his face. It was my turn to walk through the streets. The few people about were clusters of poor heading for the shops to collect their ritual Saturday afternoon handout of food, an act of charity by the Indian proprietors.

Tete was once a pretty colonial town, rising like a pastel cameo from the south bank of the Zambezi River. Through neglect rather than artillery fire—Mozambique had a low-budget war—it is crumbling and peeling, a shell shut off from the world. A small historic fort on the highest hill still looks proudly down on the river, but its walls are a facade for the shantytown that mushroomed around the European city as people fled the fighting.

A few small posters around the town advertise the first public meeting of Renamo, scheduled for April 18 in the Tete sports arena. "*Viva a Renamo! Viva Dhlakama! A Vitoria e Certa!*" The exhortations rise scarcely above a whisper in this society trying to survive.

When I returned, Mafuta was still alone in his chair. My heart sank at the same instant as he looked eagerly up at me. "Did anyone come?" I asked disbelievingly.

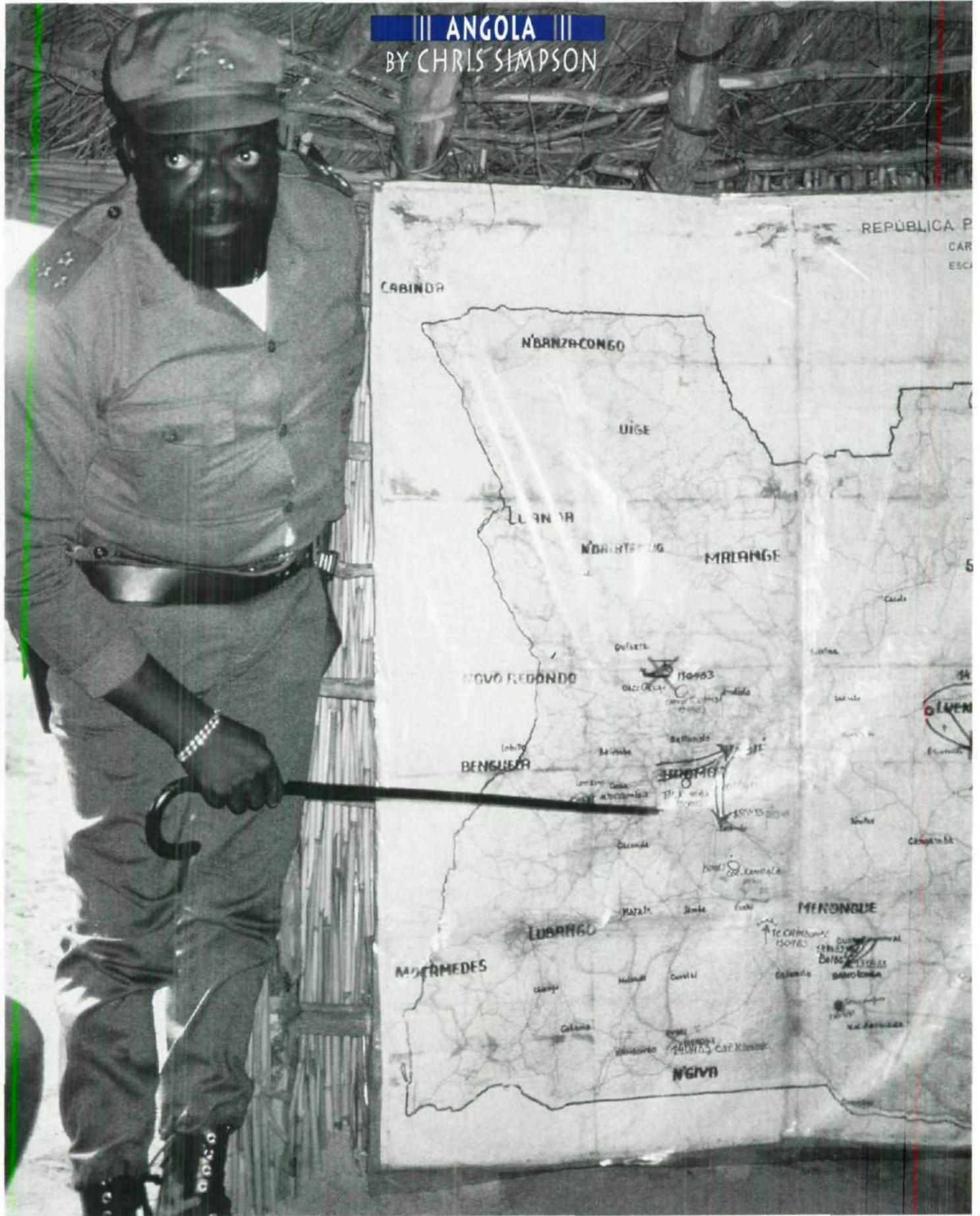
Yes. Mafuta's nephew, Alberto, the only one of Filiosa's and Jose's seven children living in Tete, had been listening to the radio—and like a needle jumping out of a haystack, came to claim his uncle. Presently the nephew reappeared and the dingy hotel bar was transformed by wide smiles and cries of "*Ah-ah-ah, Sekuru!*" (uncle).

From there it was a short walk to Alberto's home, a two-room concrete shack which he proudly showed off. We drank a glass of water to fortify ourselves for the trip to the family home 11 miles outside Tete. We had to pay for the journey, of course, because few drivers in the world's poorest country let people ride in their vehicles for free. After a handful of *meticais* changed hands, we were deposited on the side of the highway and walked to a nearby compound of clay huts and goat kraals. By Mozambican standards, Jose Cherene is a wealthy man, possessing goats, ducks, two wives, more than 10 children, and a small shop purveying basic commodities to Africans.

We sat on tiny wooden benches against one of the huts and waited. Filiosa, small, solemn, and self-contained like her brother, eventually returned at dusk from her farm plot several miles away. With characteristic African formality, brother and sister greeted, bridging three decades of separation with smiles, a handshake, and ceremonial clapping. A goat was killed and a feast prepared while Filiosa and Mafuta shared their histories of marriage, children, grandchildren, work, and the prices of things.

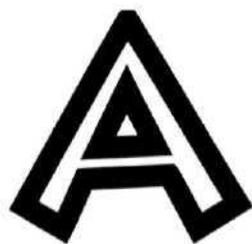
And now it will be Filiosa's turn to visit her brother and his family in their snug little house in St. Mary's township near Harare. The trip is planned for September, after she has finished processing and storing her food. Mafuta will return to Mozambique, this time with a passport, to accompany her over the border. Despite formidable obstacles, the old and troublesome political boundaries are giving way to the powerful bond of the family. ○

III ANGOLA III  
BY CHRIS SIMPSON



# THE UNDEMOCRATIC GAME

With an intransigent Unita held largely responsible for the collapse of peace talks with the Angolan government, Jonas Savimbi's rebel organization seems to have lost the luster it had acquired over the years among conservatives in the international community. Having turned his back on the outcome of the elections and restarted the civil war, Savimbi appears to be incapable of adapting to democracy. More war is inevitable, unless the United States, which officially recognized the Angolan government during the peace talks, has some leverage to apply.



As the Abidjan peace talks on Angola drew sadly to a close after six weeks, the only participant who could manage a smile at the end was Unita's delegation chief and information secretary, Jorge Valentim. "I am not tired after 40 days," he told reporters. "I still want to negotiate."

Valentim firmly denied that Unita was to blame for the breakdown in Abidjan, although he generously refused to incriminate the Angolan government. He did argue that Unita's concerns had not been taken seriously by either the government or mediators—"this is not a game of football, this is a serious business"—but that complaint aside, Valentim was confident negotiations could resume within a matter of weeks and adamant that Unita still had numerous friends it could call on. "You will see," he promised.

Valentim looks, at least at this juncture, to be badly wrong on both counts. No one else at the talks—the Angolan government, the UN, observers from the United States, Portugal, and Russia, even Côte d'Ivoire, which had been such an enthusiastic host at the start—anticipated a prompt restart. The suspension of talks sine die was, to most onlookers, a disaster and a disaster, moreover, for which Unita was held largely responsible.

Whatever Valentim said to the contrary, Unita's diplomatic stock can seldom have been lower. Years of patient diplomacy, much of it the work of men who later fell afoul of Unita leader Jonas Savimbi, and the studied reasonableness of current senior cadres, like Unita's Washington representative, Jardo Muekalia, count for little now. Unita is commonly perceived as a guerrilla/peasant movement which singularly failed to adapt to the rigors of democratic politics. It lacks ideological coherence and political maturity and suffers, above all, from being iden-

tified with a leader incapable of playing by the rules of the democratic game.

To those who have been hostile to Unita all along, damning the movement for its alleged ties with Portuguese intelligence, its proven relationship with the South African military, and its strategic alliance with Washington, Unita's behavior over the past eight months has vindicated all the misgivings. For those, particularly in Washington, who backed Unita through the long, lean years, there is a rueful acceptance that Unita has moved beyond the pale.

"We're out of carrots, now it's time to use the stick," was one U.S. diplomat's reaction on being asked where Washington went, post-Abidjan. "There is no doubt in my mind that Unita is primarily responsible for the situation the country is now in," was the reaction of another, who had been instrumental in forging Washington's relationship with Savimbi in the 1980s.

The chorus of outrage against Unita is stronger than ever, but it remains to be seen whether that outrage can be translated into motion. The Angolan government could look on Abidjan as a moral victory. It agreed to sign a peace agreement, despite reservations on key sections of the text, and was applauded accordingly, the key trib-

ute coming with the Clinton administration's belated recognition gesture.

But while the diplomatic stakes have shifted in the Angolan government's favor, the military stakes remain much the same as before, and the government's position is far from comfortable.

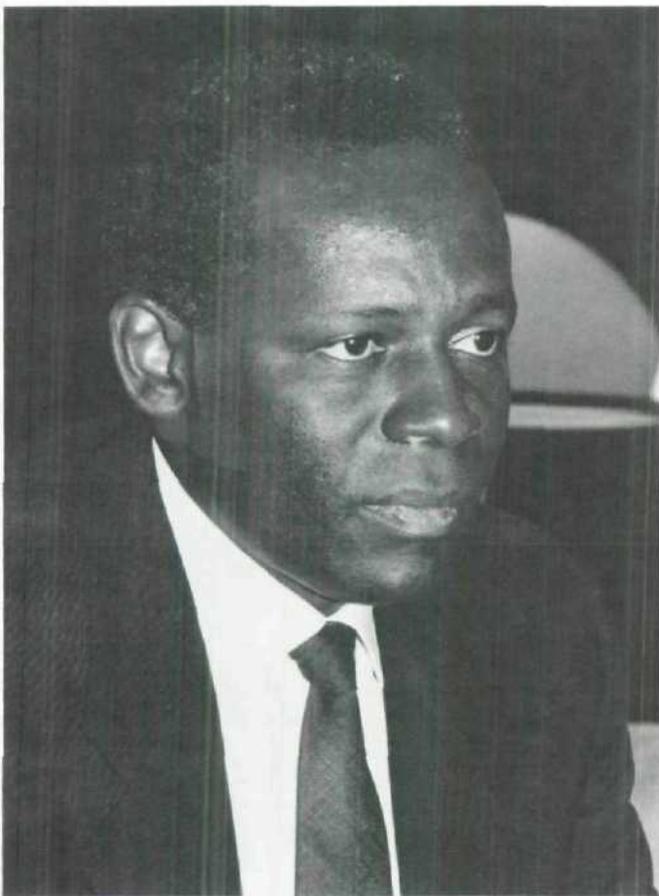
As had been the case since hostilities resumed

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*Chris Simpson is a freelance journalist based in Luanda, Angola.*

last October, the war in Angola remains notoriously difficult to follow, particularly from Luanda. The government fiercely disputes claims that Unita controls over 75 percent of national territory, pointing out that the vast tracts of land allegedly under Unita control are often virtually uninhabited. Nevertheless, Unita is entrenched across a daunting spread of provinces: Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul, and Moxico in the east, Kuando Kubango in the south-east, and Bie and Huambo in central Angola.

Elsewhere, Unita may have its forces more thinly spread, but it still has considerable nuisance value, particularly in Uige and Zaire provinces to the north. Within 48 hours of the collapse of the Abidjan talks, Unita was celebrating the recapture of the strategic oil town of Soyo in Zaire province, which it originally took in January, but lost two months later amid government claims that an offensive was underway which would clear Unita from the north. That offensive, like several others before it, appears to have been quietly forgotten about.



Margaret A. Novicki

President José Eduardo dos Santos's hope is that a revitalized national army will in the long run prove too much for Unita, while the considerable international sympathy that rests with the government will be converted into military assistance. The government has appealed on several occasions, most recently at Abidjan, for the repeal of the Triple Z Option, the clause in the 1991 Bicesse accords which precludes outside military help. The UN and observers made it clear at Abidjan that

Triple Z had to stay if the Bicesse accords were to retain any credibility. But it is commonly accepted that both sides have violated the clause at will and both will continue to look for fresh arms supplies.

In this context, it is difficult to see what the UN and other would-be peacemakers can do to help end hostilities. For the UN, the Abidjan outcome could hardly have been worse, a dismal reward for months of patient peacemaking and a bitter blow for UN Special Envoy Margaret Anstee, who looks set to step down with the situation worse than at any time since she first arrived in Luanda.

Had an agreement been reached in Abidjan—and some observers believe it was genuinely feasible—provision had been made for a substantially expanded UN presence in Angola, with the Security Council ready to examine the possibility of international peace-keeping troops being sent in. The UN's second Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM II), by common agreement, has been a failure, not because of those who administered it, but because it was saddled with an inadequate mandate.

*President José Eduardo dos Santos: Angola's short-term prognosis is depressing almost beyond belief*

But a new, upgraded mandate requires guarantees of peace and good faith that neither side is in a position to give. Given the UN's current workload, there will be little incentive to consider any

large-scale intervention in Angola. It should also be pointed out that this is a war which generally, despite the efforts of individual congressmen and other assorted friends of Angola, has little hold on the public imagination. The only real question may now be: How bad can things get before someone decides to do something?

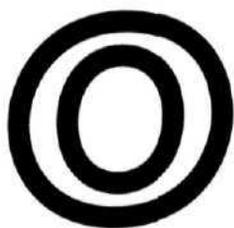
In terms of the stock indices of human misery, the Angolan conflict offers firm competition to other wars, although the population's actual needs are not helped by the propaganda claims of both sides. There is a massive internal refugee problem. Hunger is a real threat in some areas. Medical supplies are in fierce demand. Lives are being lost, hundreds a day, but few reporters are there to see the killing.

But Angola's real problems are more structural. Even if peace were to break out tomorrow, with both sides demobilizing and Angola advancing under a brave new coalition, the problems ahead would remain colossal. Angola is left dilapidated and broken, its infrastructure grievously damaged, its economy drained by the war effort, dependent on the patience of foreign oil companies.

The short-term prognosis is depressing almost beyond belief. Both the government and Unita have repeatedly stressed that war offers no real solution to Angola's problems, but both seem more than ready to continue fighting. It remains to be seen what, if any, leverage the U.S. and others have. The fact remains that Angolans and only Angolans can put their nation back together again. ○

More than three years after independence, although apartheid has been formally dismantled, it still remains entrenched in the fabric of Namibian society. The white South Africans who ran the civil service are still there, prevented by the constitution from being removed to make way for black Namibians. And the best land is still disproportionately owned by the commercial farming white minority, while the majority of farmers eke out a subsistence living.

# JOBS AND



In his 64th birthday, Sam Nujoma has taken the decision to eat red meat only once a week. That's unheard of in a sub-continent of white and black carnivores. He could be risking the macho vote. But if Namibia's president is sending a signal that he intends

to be around a while yet, who will begrudge him a lengthy stay in the presidential residence?

During those thankless years of drumming up support for the cause, he must have seen more hotel foyers and airport terminals than any exiled leader bar Yasir Arafat. Yet his country needs him for reasons more pressing than mere personal comfort. These are unpredictable times. Angola's civil war spills over to the north, while southwards, who knows the damage South Africa's perilous interregnum might inflict. A wily hand on the tiller is what President Sam has to offer.

Namibia rarely makes the front pages these days. After the liberation war and decades of United Nations wrangling, it is happy to keep it that way. There have been tan-

gible improvements since independence in 1990. Namibia now shares in the running of the port of Walvis Bay, though the incorporation of the South African enclave itself remains a high-priority aim of the new state. The fishing free-for-all of colonial times has ended with the extension of the international limit from 14 to 200 nautical miles. Gone are the Soviet trawlers which used to declare their hake catches as the more common horse mackerel. Fish stocks are up, and income from fishing and processing is a rare plus-factor in an ailing economy.

Apartheid, to be sure, has been formally ditched, but its heritage remains, most lastingly in the inequalities wrought by Bantu education. The South African military is back home, while the Koevoet paramilitaries, who slaughtered Swapo guerrillas and innocent villagers alike, have been integrated into the police force.

I was in Namibia for the first time in 17 years, glad to see the outcasts holding the reins of office. Peter Katjavivi, newly installed as head of the University of



*Denis Herbstein is the author (with John Evenson) of The Devils Are Among Us—the War for Namibia, published by Zed Books Ltd., London and New Jersey.*



John Liebenberg

Namibia, revived memories of a 1968 interview after he opened Swapo's dingy office in London. Hidepo Hamutenya, minister of trade and industry, proffered the slightly sinister tinted shades he used to wear when briefing European journalists. Said to be a strong contender for the presidency, though no vegetarian.

Hanno Rumpf, German-Suidwester draft resister, now a much-travelled head of tourism and wildlife. The Rev. Hidipo Shenyengange, who fled to London from the war zone and provided intimate insights of life under the "Boers" for a book I was writing on the liberation struggle. Now he edits the Lutheran church's Ndonga-language weekly.

There was a poignant reunion with a man who chose

*Unemployed  
northern youths  
in Windhoek:  
Apartheid's  
legacy still  
remains*

not to go into exile. One morning in October 1976, Dan Tjongarero picked me up at my Windhoek hotel and drove hell-for-leather to the Otjimbingwe Theological Seminary on the edge of the Namib desert. As our VW Beetle jerked across the dry riverbed, the principal, with the entire student body in tow, set off on a

march around the dusty campus, not forgetting the well-chosen slogans outside the residence of the apartheid commissioner, who peeped through the curtains.

That day in New York, the United Nations was voting yet another unanimous resolution ordering Pretoria to do this or that about its colony. South Africa counted on the occasion passing unnoticed at home. I had witnessed the only demo in the whole country. Dan drove back in time

for me to do a BBC broadcast and write a piece for *The Guardian* in London. A month later, I was thrown out of South Africa and "South West Africa." Now, as I looked across the desk at deputy information minister Tjongarero, I had to ask: "Still manipulating the news, Dan?" The seminary principal, Zeph Kameeta, is now deputy speaker of Parliament.

Jobs and land, the basics of life, have not been vouchsafed to the many who struggled for something beyond a decolonized Namibia. Yet, it has to be said that those most satisfied with independence are the very fellows who brought the country to its knees. When you ask why the South Africans who ran the police and enforced the Group Areas Act with such relish are still there, the reply is "one for one." At first I thought "one for one" was a matching job arrangement with the 40,000 returning exiles. But no. Clause 141 (i) of the constitution declares that "any person holding office under any law in force on the date of independence shall continue to hold such office, unless and until he or she resigns or is retired, transferred or removed from office in accordance with law." Which means not just jobs, but the housing, pensions, medical aid, and car allowances which Pretoria lavished on its "own."

Hamutenya explains that everyone was kept on "to reassure people," or the whites might have panicked and fled, as the Portuguese *colons* did in Mozambique. As a result, apart from the soldiers, few South Africans went home, though some have their hearts in the old Transvaal, if the senior official at trade and industry, who is inclined to refer important matters to Pretoria, is anything to go by. These were the civil servants who successfully lobbied against the enactment of a mild affirmative action in employment bill aimed at a gradual redressing of the racial imbalance.

The preposterous consequence of this clause 141 is that the workforce of all the 11 bantustans, Ovambo, Nama, San-Bushman, et al., remains on the payroll. The very system which corrupted and wellnigh bankrupted the colony lives on in the hearts and pockets of its enforcers. In the meantime, only 8,000 returned exiles have been taken on in the public service which, weighing in at 40,000 (not counting teachers), and offering those juicy extras, is an indulgence a million and a half Namibians cannot afford.

Nor has the private sector shown a hunger for recruiting returned Swapo. Tsumeb Corporation, the South African copper giant and one of the big three mining houses, employs only two black foremen. Some returnees have excellent West European qualifications, but they ask what chance there is when middle management whites sport swastikas on their cars. The constitution, of course, outlaws racial discrimination. It's worse down on the farm, where the traditional mix of brutality and picayune wages indicates that the new regime has some educating to do. But changes there are. In the Windhoek High Court, I heard two white farmers explain

how they had battered a laborer to death with a car jack. In the old days, the case might not have come to court. Now the judge was black.

The overly cautious approach may in the end be the wise one. But if you relied on the public statuary, you might think Namibia still adulated the colonizers. The imposing mounted figure which guards the road to the Tintenpalast, the Parliament, honors the "glorious Germans" who died in the Herero and "Hottentotten" War. Opposite Windhoek railway station is a Garden of

**THOSE MOST  
SATISFIED WITH  
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ITS KNEES.**

Remembrance for 12 South African soldiers killed in a campaign against the Kwanyamas. Also buried there, though few know it, is a relic of Mandume, the chief who had resisted the pacification of his country. The Boers captured him, cut off his head, paraded it through the countryside before

burying it in that garden. A small notice would do.

Perhaps the worthiest memorial a Swapo government can offer is a fair settlement of the land question. We know from Cyprus, Northern Ireland, and Israel how each party looks back to its own segment of history to justify its claims. Thus, the Hereros and Namas, having lost their best grazing to the Germans 90 years ago, might have hoped for restoration by a black government. In other words, displacing the German and South African farmers assiduously positioned there by Pretoria during the League of Nations mandate—the farms were virtually given away through soft loans of 4 percent over 25 years. But then the black ranchers had earlier grabbed the same land from the Bushmen, who hunted and gathered there for 20,000 years. A government-sponsored Land Reform Conference concluded in 1991 that "ancestral rights" was no yardstick for settling the matter. But the government still aimed to "transfer some of the land from those with too much of it to the landless majority." The figures speak eloquently of what remains to be done.

Namibia is twice the size of California. Only in the densely populated subsistence farming area of the north is crop production viable. For most of this arid country, Karakul sheep, goats, or beef cattle are the summit of a farmer's ambition. Some 5,000 white commercial farmers (and 181 blacks) own 45 percent of the land, farm size averaging 20,000 acres, which means 4 percent control most of what's good down on the Namibian farm. As opposed to the 140,000 black farmers, grazing their cattle on overcrowded pastures, though there was some respite with the drought-breaking rains of the past summer.

As Lenin used to ask, "What is to be done?" It has already started in an immodest sort of way. The soft loans are now being steered to the black middle

class—at a “concessional rate,” as Minister Hamutenya explains. These affirmative action loans are available to blacks only, and last year there were 80 purchasers, among them ministers, ambassadors, and senior officials, though the permanent secretary at the agriculture ministry lost his job after channelling funds to friends in Kavango.

For the black masses, soft loans and green pastures are the stuff of dreams. The Land Reform Bill is being formulated, though some believe it is now too late to heal this weeping sore of Namibian life. But Hamutenya, who is the strong man of the cabinet, vows that reform will have to “break the land monopoly.” Others believe that just enough will be done to defuse the issue, providing a political and not a socially just solution.

There are easy options, such as expropriating the 400 foreign absentee landlords or limiting owners to one farm. This is nibbling at the edges. One of the myriad foreign experts operating in the now “PC” Namibia, Martin Adams, wanted the Land Conference to offer an incentive for farmers to switch to leasehold tenure, so that farms come on the market more often and the government could buy and offer to blacks. Freeholders would be punished mildly with a one rand per hectare tax. If Swapo “had gone for conversion at a critical moment in the conference,” says Adams, “it would have been a symbolic return of the land to the people, opening up the market and generating revenue for the purchase of land.”

The belief that land hunger cannot be stilled by conferences is confirmed by a group squatting on a narrow verge alongside the turn-off to the Daan Viljoen game reserve, where white Windhoek repairs at the weekend for *braaivleis* (barbecues) and recreation. The Augeikas (or, reflecting the Damara clicks, *!Ao//xas*) chose the spot so “people could see the seriousness of our situation.” They once lived on the game reserve and surrounding white farms; their graveyards and dams are still there.

Forty years ago, they were persuaded to move to what was described as a Garden of Eden, but it turned out to be marginal land, a hell on earth aptly known as *Soros-Soros* (sun-sun). Said one, “A lot of people died of sorrow because they did not see what they were promised.” After three years of drought, they had had enough. Last December, they brought their cattle south, where even the meager grass on the verge is more than they get in their old Damara bantustan.

I called on a chilly May evening. Here was a typical African squat—clothes drying on the thorn trees, a woman preparing for bed inside a station wagon, water casks courtesy of a guilty government, and goats and chickens snaffling at the meager fare. An elderly man skinned a goat with great expertise, watched by little boys and hungry dogs. “It’s for lunch tomorrow,” he said in Afrikaans. “Mother’s day, you know.” The ministry will find them a better place, though Edens are rare. But there will be other *!Ao//xas*.

For the first time in a hundred years, Namibia has a

government which loves its people. Experts and Namibians alike tell me it is reasonably well run, “by African standards,” to which I replied, “and brilliantly by Western standards, I suppose.” It suffers from the absence of a credible opposition. The improbable Democratic Turnhalle Alliance is divided between Germans and Afrikaners on the one hand, and traditional Herero leaders on the other. Hence the importance of a lively and at times nasty press, and an intelligent council of churches.

I found Namibia a calming place, after a fraught month in my native South Africa. They are keeping the lid on racial strife. The government has made English the official language, though, as in India, it is the mother tongue of very few, perhaps fewer than 20,000. Afrikaans, the lingua franca of the south, is seen less as an oppressor’s language than in the Republic.

The Babel of Namibia is illustrated by a notice in a Windhoek public garden:

“Keep Off the Grass”

“Bly van die Gras af” (*Afrikaans*)

“Igâna xu ligoâre” (*Damara/Nama*)

“Za ko komwiidhi” (*Oshi-Wambo*)

“Ama yanda pehozu” (*Oshi-Herero*)

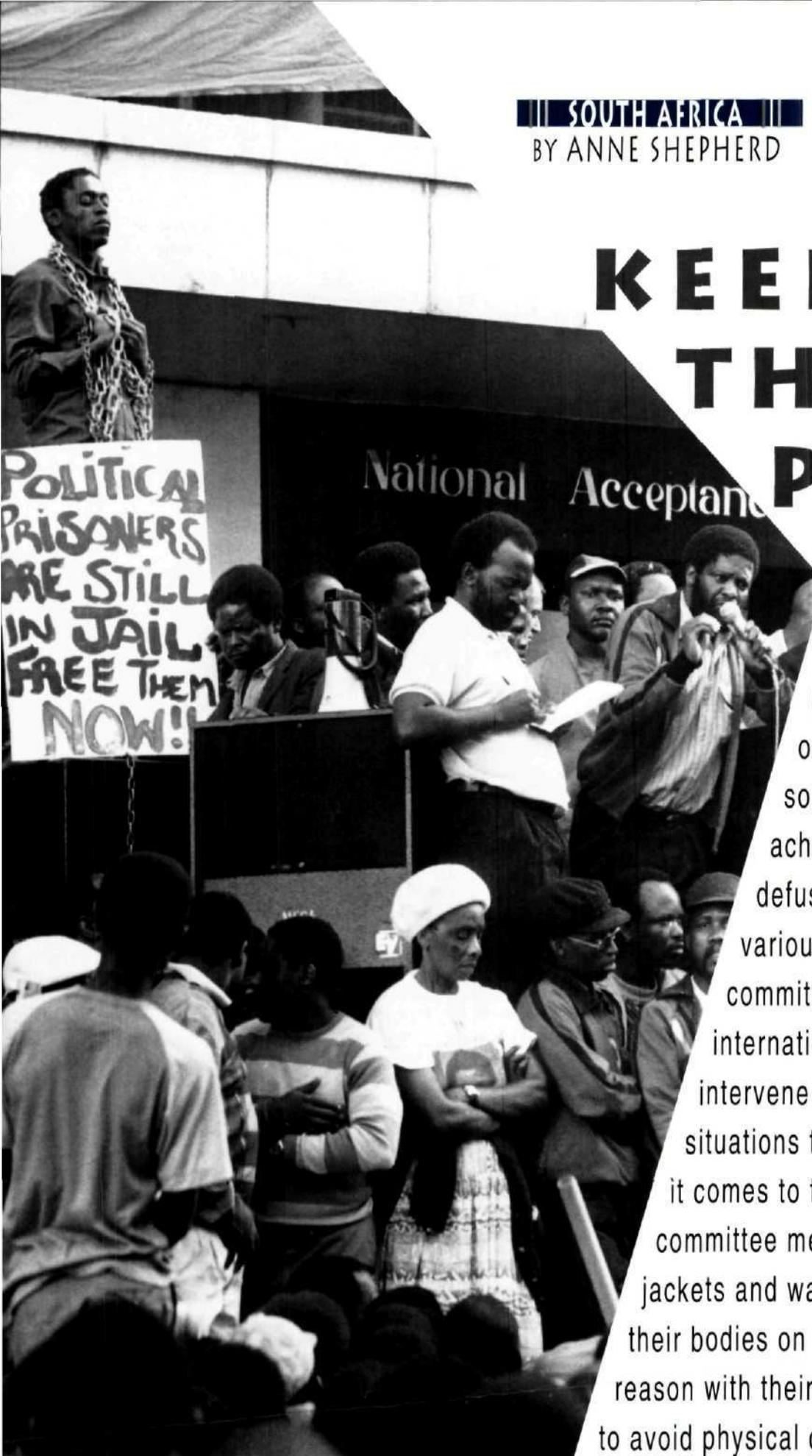
Germans, Kavangos, Tswana, and San-speakers presumably know without having to be told.

Finally, the detainees. Few ministers wish to talk about them, but the anguish of the exiles imprisoned by Swapo in various locations in southern Angola lives on, as is documented in a paper published in April by the Namibian Institute for Social and Economic Research. The figures do not always agree, but a UN mission found that 914 Namibians had been imprisoned by Swapo, though barely half this number were repatriated. The Red Cross has mounted a mission to trace those who have not been accounted for in neighboring countries, but with little success. The report found that the reception the returnees got on their return depended on their “personal background.”

Thus those from the “south,” in other words, Namas, Coloureds, Damaras, and Hereros, were met with belief and support by family and friends. Those from the north, where Swapo has a blanket following, “faced disbelieving or hostile families.” The sister of one ex-detainee wanted to kill him. Another found that though her parents accepted her back, they did not want to hear about her detention. Some who suffered have been given jobs in government, and one, the unbelievable case of Mrs. Nujoma herself, occupies the presidential residence. The report says that “almost all ex-detainees wish to see their names cleared by Swapo and/or the government.”

There may well have been Pretoria plants among them, but the great majority of these men and women—and children, too—were unjustly and brutally treated. The Swapo government is rightly proud of its human rights record. If it cannot come clean—as the ANC is doing in South Africa—then how can one expect the white racists to say “sorry” for their crimes? ○

# KEEPING THE PEACE



South Africa's peace accord—signed by 29 political parties and organizations—has gone some way toward achieving its goal of defusing tension between various factions. Local peace committees, aided by international observers, try to intervene in potentially tense situations to avert violence. When it comes to the crunch, peace committee members wearing orange jackets and waving orange flags put their bodies on the line, trying to reason with their respective groups to avoid physical clashes.

Half drunk cups of coffee littered the conference room of the Wits/Vaal Regional Peace Committee (RPC) offices in Braamfontein, central Johannesburg. With each passing hour, cigarette smoke hung ever more heavily in the room, as nervous peace monitors awaited the outcome of negotiations taking place next door.

A few minutes before midnight, Rupert Lorimer, Democratic Party member of Parliament, and a co-chair of the Wits/Vaal RPC emerged, a broad smile signalling success. A deal had been brokered by the RPC between the Alliance—comprising the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu)—and the South African Police (SAP). It was a watershed agreement.

Hours before, it had been reported on television that Johannesburg would be declared an unrest area that night to prevent a massive march on April 17 into South Africa's commercial capital following the assassination of SACP Secretary-General Chris Hani.

The RPC—a structure of the National Peace Accord (NPA) signed by 29 political parties and organizations on September 14, 1992—supported the Alliance view that such a move would simply fuel a nationwide eruption that would cause far more damage than the march. For hours of the preceding day, the RPC struggled to convince the SAP of an alternative—and in the South African context—thoroughly unique approach.

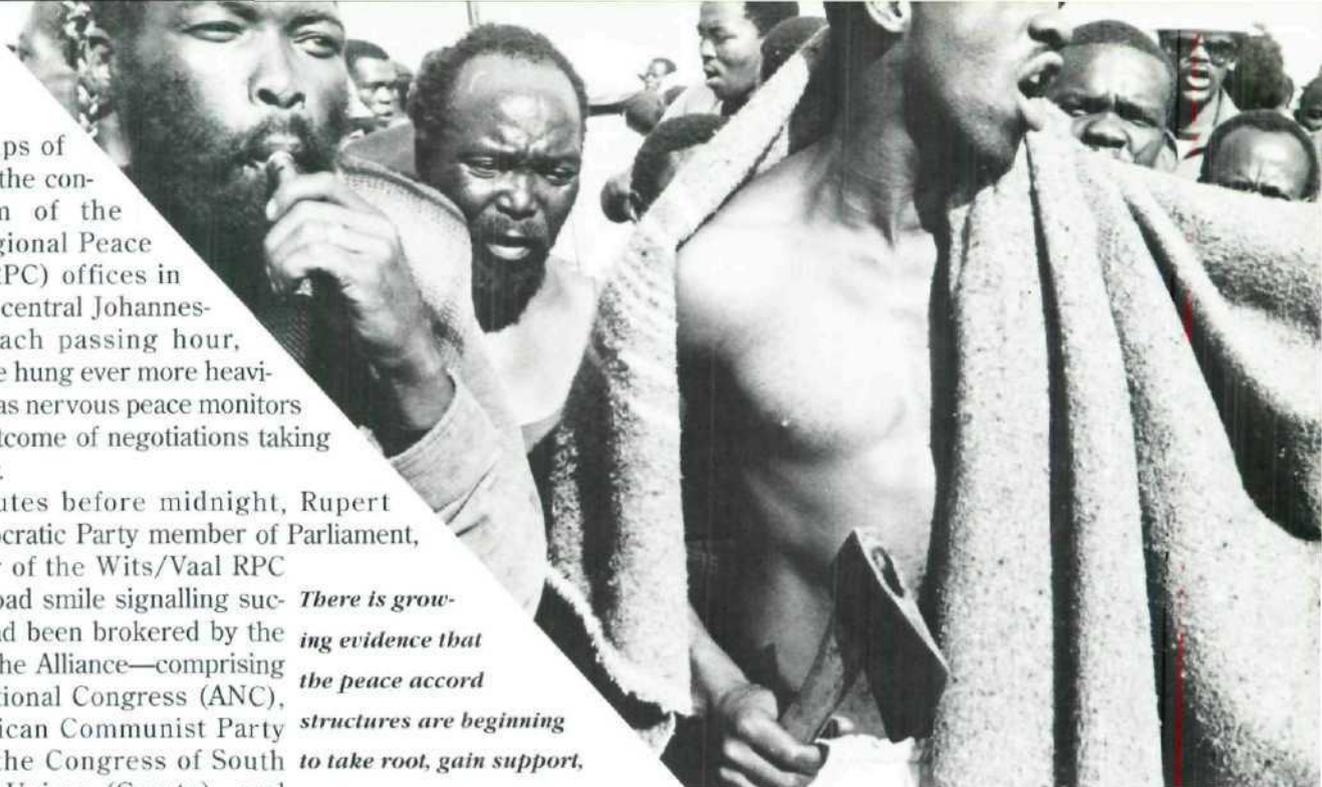
At the eleventh hour, the police, albeit reluctantly, agreed not to declare Johannesburg an unrest area. Furthermore, they agreed to take a low profile, leaving the first line of law enforcement to the ANC marshals, regional, and local police monitors, supported by international observers who have been in the country since the last quarter of 1992.

Realizing the responsibility on their shoulders, the peace monitors in the RPC room, accompanied by colleagues from the United Nations, European Community, Commonwealth, and Organization of African Unity, left to catch a few hours of sleep. On the following day, they acquitted themselves admirably.

True, the fact that only 50,000 marchers descended on the city compared to an anticipated 150,000 helped to make the crowds manageable. But the fact that barely a window got broken on this emotive occasion was a remarkable achievement.

Much of the publicity on the events

*There is growing evidence that the peace accord structures are beginning to take root, gain support, and command credibility*

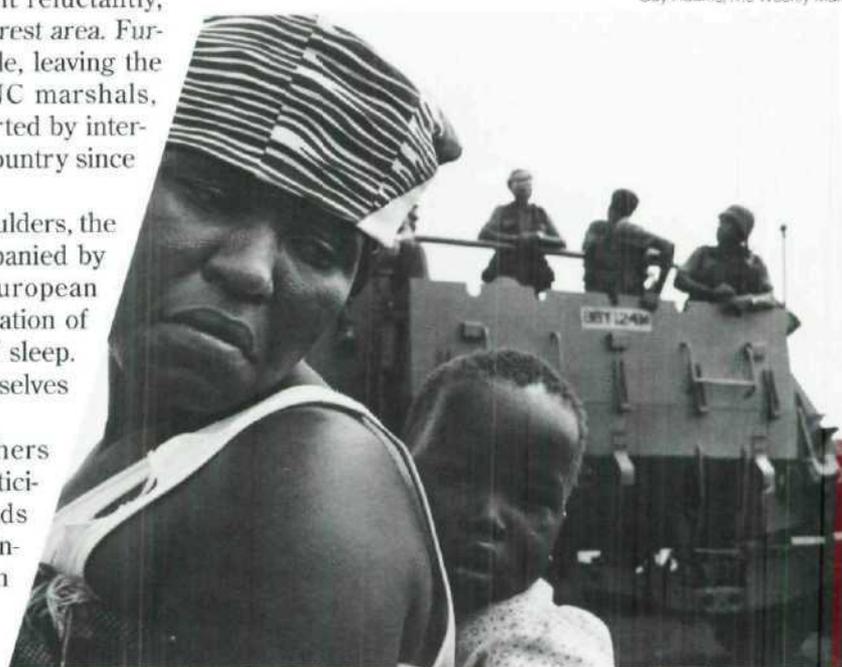


Guy Adams/The Weekly Mail

surrounding the Hani assassination has centered on the upsurge of violence during the week, graphically portrayed on TV screens around the globe. These include the destruction of property in Hani's white neighborhood on the funeral day, burning of homes in the stadium area, the killing of four people and wounding of several others when the police at Protea police station in Soweto opened fire on the crowds, and the massacre of 19 people in Sebokeng on the eve of the Hani funeral.

Yet, as noted in a preliminary inquiry into the violence ensuing after the Hani assassination conducted by the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, "having regard for the anger, the emotion, and frustration of millions of

Guy Adams/The Weekly Mail



South Africans" at the time, the fact that "there was not an appreciably higher level of violence" is remarkable.

In addition to the constructive approach of the Alliance and SAP, the report cites the National Peace Secretariat and its regional and local peace committees as playing a key role in defusing tension.

Much maligned in some quarters, and still viewed with suspicion by some of its signatories, the peace accord is increasingly standing out as a beacon of hope in the fraught final phases of South Africa's political transition.

As a recent survey of the accord in the Johannesburg-based *Finance Week* magazine put it: "If the peace accord did not exist, it would have had to be invented. The accord supplements and is an integral part of the negotiated transition to democracy."

Credit for the accord—which has no precedent in other trouble spots of the world—goes to a core group of church and business leaders who, recognizing that the fate of the country could not be left in the hands of politicians, worked to get them to agree to some fundamental principles for peace.

The signatories, including all the main political parties such as the National Party, ANC, and Inkatha, pledged to "bring an end to political violence in our country and to get out codes of conduct, procedures, and mechanisms to achieve this goal."

At the apex of the NPA is the National Peace Committee, which includes senior representatives (but not at leadership level) of all the signatories, chaired by John Hall, also chief executive of Barlow Rand, a major South African corporation.

The day-to-day management is seen to be by a statutory National Peace Secretariat, chaired by a prominent Johannesburg attorney, Antonie Gildenhuys. Under this are 11 Regional Peace Committees, and some 80 Local Peace Committees (LPCs).

The Goldstone Commission, chaired by Judge Richard Goldstone, and vested with extensive powers to probe and investigate cases of public violence, forms the third leg of the tripod on which the NPA stands. The Commission has compiled a total of 16 reports and 21 inquiries, covering major massacres, covert operations, taxi violence, train violence, and an ongoing investigation into the activities of armed formations.

Several problems have bedeviled the peace accord. Squabbling between its members started minutes after the signing ceremony—when ANC leader Nelson Mandela objected to the presence outside of Inkatha supporters brandishing traditional weapons.

A Complaints Investigating Committee has received some 200 complaints of breaches of the accord. The most serious of these was Inkatha leader Chief Buthelezi's complaint that Mandela had transgressed the accord by calling him a surrogate of the government in a speech

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before the United Nations Security Council. Despite calling in ex-Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda to help adjudicate, the NPC could not reach a decision on this matter.

The stalemate between Mandela and Buthelezi has in part led to multiple postponements of a proposed meeting of signatories to the accord—which would be the first since its adoption—to give it a political boost.

Many signatories to the accord have an ambivalent attitude toward it. All but the parties to the far left and right of the political spectrum (including the Conservative Party, on the one hand, and Pan Africanist Congress on the other) found it in their public relations interest to sign the accord. But many have since kept a distance from it, at times labeling it a government creation, partly—analysts say—so that they could disassociate themselves from it in the event of failure.

Government funding for the accord, including providing the permanent staff of the national and regional peace structures, poses a dilemma, since no other source of funding has been forthcoming.

Another problem is the white male dominance of leadership positions in the peace accord structures, starting with its three main pillars. The most frequent explanation given is that to ensure neutrality, leaders have had to be drawn from either the church or business and—especially in the latter case—such individuals are likely to be white and male. But the failure to actively seek to diversify the leadership profile has caused dissent in some quarters.

Allied to this are the oft-heard complaints that the peace accord structures are top-down in their approach, and barely known to the communities they serve. A business-funded marketing committee has tended to employ Western advertising techniques such as buttons, tee-shirts, and television advertisements, to the exclusion of rallies and cultural events that are proven to be more effective in the townships most troubled by violence.

Over the last few months, however, there is growing evidence that the peace accord structures are beginning to take root, gain support, and command political credibility. According to the Human Rights Commission, there were 36 unrest-related killings in the PWV region in March, compared to 276 during the same month last year. In a statement issued on April 21, the South African Institute of Race Relations noted that the average daily fatality rate resulting from political violence had dropped to 4.25—half last year's rate.

Press reports speculate that one of the reasons for this decline is the raid carried out by the Goldstone Commission late last year on military intelligence which resulted in a purge of its ranks, and is thought to have led to a lessening of covert operations. Credit is also increasingly being given to the peace accord structures for helping to defuse violence.

The structures have undoubtedly been given a major boost by the arrival late last year of about 100 observers

from the four international organizations. All of these work under the umbrella of UN Security Council Resolution 772, which obliges the groups to work in close coordination with the structures set up under the National Peace Accord.

In some instances, international observers have helped to set up peace committees in problematic areas. The Commonwealth Observer Mission to South Africa (COMSA) for example, has played a facilitative role in Natal, where ANC/IFP rivalry is most marked, and where the peace accord has faced its greatest difficulties. In general, however, the international observers have helped to enhance confidence in local efforts.

This involves attending regular meetings of local peace committees, which are a forum in the first instance for people from widely different backgrounds to resolve their differences.

The Northern Transvaal RPC, for example, was for months stymied by bickering between the chairman (a retired official of the South African Defense Force, now *in business*) and a representative of the SACP. In the end, the committee faced three choices: for both to step down, one or the other to stay, or both stay, on condition they found ways of getting along. After much agonizing, the committee decided on the third option—the least palatable, yet ultimately only route to genuine reconciliation.

In Ratanda township on the East Rand, an LPC meeting almost collapsed when a police officer insisted on speaking in Afrikaans, drawing protest from the black members present. As a result, the other police officers in the room stormed out.

The chairman of the committee—a white South African—upheld the right of the policeman to speak in the language of his choice. But, with the assistance of an international observer, he persuaded the police officer that given the sensitivities to the Afrikaans language, and the fact that the officer could speak English, he should exercise better judgment. In the end, apologies were offered all around and the meeting resumed.

In the Vaal, where the ANC withdrew from the peace accord structures after the Boipatong massacre last year in which nearly 40 people were killed, allegedly by IFP supporters assisted by the police, the LPC worked tirelessly to bring the ANC back in. Heads were bashed together at a weekend retreat which ended with all signatories to the accord signing a copy of the "little blue book" anew.

Weeks later, when tensions rose again in the Boipatong area following the murder of a KwaMadala hostel inmate, the LPC and international observers held meetings with both sides, and then a joint meeting between the two sides, averting what might well have been "another Boipatong."

On March 21—the commemoration of Sharpeville Day, when 69 black South Africans were killed by the police in a march on the Vaal township in 1960—the Wits/Vaal RPC faced its first major public gathering test,

when the IFP, ANC, and PAC announced that they would be holding rallies within miles of each other.

The committee recognized both the potential for catastrophe and the powerful message that could be sent out to the community as South Africa heads toward its first democratic elections if three different parties could hold a rally in the same vicinity on an emotive day.

During a week of long and often frustrating negotiations, the RPC brokered a groundbreaking deal in which the ANC and IFP agreed to a set of routes that would keep their supporters on different courses, agreed to jointly marshal the event, and agreed that the police would take a low profile.

On the day, the plan started to come to grief when an IFP group broke away from the agreed course and barged onto a road with a busload of ANC supporters. An IFP and ANC member of the local peace committee—clad in their luminous jackets and waving orange flags—surged forward, each cajoling their party supporters to see reason. A major crisis was averted.

Numerous similar examples can be cited in the week following the Hani assassination. During the memorial services held on April 14, for example, local and international observers stationed themselves in front of an IFP hostel, where two ANC supporters en route to the Hani home had been shot that morning. Further shootings were prevented.

Similarly, by arranging transportation, standing between factions, and keeping a watchful eye on white right-wing elements who stood ominously at the fringes of the cemetery, local and foreign observers helped to contain at least some of the potential violence at the funeral.

The growing army of peace-keepers in South Africa—many of whom work long hours, without pay, and at considerable personal risk—are painfully aware of their limitations. Despite the presence of observers, for example, a white man, allegedly with right-wing leanings, drove into a crowd of marchers in the Vaal in one of the post-Hani events and shot two blacks dead at point blank range.

In spite of the unique agreements that the Wits/Vaal RPC has been able to broker with the police, the old mentality frequently rears its ugly head, as happened outside the Protea police station in Soweto. And the massacre of 19 people in Sebokeng by masked gunmen—in a manner suspiciously similar to the Boipatong massacre—has once more raised the specter of a "third force" still at work in South Africa.

Such instances point to the deep-rooted causes of violence in South Africa, which are unlikely to be effectively addressed until there is a representative government in place. But for the moment, as one local newspaper recently commented, it is the "thin orange line" formed by National Peace Accord monitors that holds the peace in South African townships. These peace flags, by and large waved by young South Africans, are likely to be relevant well into the future as a nation rent by centuries of hatred and division fights to make a new start. ○

# GETTING OUT THE VOTE

**B**y this time next year, if all goes well, the people of South Africa should have elected a constituent assembly which will write a constitution for the "New South Africa." This looming general election will be no ordinary event, where the loser can try his luck again four or five years' hence. In the "mother of all elections," the consequences are intended to be enduring for all the parties. The vote will also serve the vital purpose of clearing the air, establishing which of the factions have the "beef" and which have a cupboardful of rhetoric.

The African National Congress (ANC), because it is rightly perceived as the leading instrument of change, is certain to become the majority party. But white voters have an awful lot going for them at the start of the campaign. The more delegates they elect to the constituent assembly, the greater will be their ability to thwart genuine black aspirations.

Elections are nothing new for the white sixth. They first exercised "their" democratic right as long ago as 1854, when the British granted representative govern-

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Muzeni Zulu/Sovetian

ment to the Cape Colony. For a hundred years, a substantial number of Cape Coloureds and a few score Africans were allowed to participate in what were disarmingly described as "general elections." Then, despite solemn promises entrenched in the constitution of the Union of South Africa, the black and Coloured votes were abolished. So whites have the habit of fighting elections, of campaigning, influencing the media, getting out the vote.

Getting the rural voter will be key to the ANC's success. The higher the percentage poll, the worse it will be for the "white" parties. They are mostly in the towns, and those in the veld will pile into the *bakkie* (pick-up) and surely won't offer a ride to the "herdboy" and his wife. An 85 percent white turnout will surprise no one. If a million farm workers miss out, through fear, ignorance, or lack of transport, the exercise in democracy will be skewed. However, with three days of voting, one being a Saturday or Sunday, a scheming mine owner or farmer will find it difficult to obstruct the vote.

But for five out of six of the 21 million-plus voters, being alone in a polling booth will be a novel experience. The challenge of this first "free and fair election," whether for the ANC, the Pan Africanist Congress, or

A tentative date, April 27, 1994, has been set for the election of a South African constituent assembly, which will write a new constitution and serve as the first post-apartheid Parliament. Now, the long and arduous task begins of familiarizing the black majority with a commonplace process from which they have so far been excluded—voting.

Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha, is how to prepare a population which has never participated in a national election.

"Look what we are up against," says the ANC's Terror Lekota. "Sixty percent of our potential voters are illiterate, and 64 percent of Africans are in rural areas. The first are out of the reach of newspapers, the second do not have television. Radio is the most effective means of reaching them, but we can't ask them to phone in because they don't have phones."

But the ability to read and write does not guarantee an appreciation of democratic values. Both white and black need to be prepared for people's power. The preparation, in the words of the Matla Trust, ranges from "encouraging political tolerance between supporters of different political organizations, through instilling an understanding of the concepts and institutions of democracy, to the nitty-gritty of voting." And, in the light of the Angolan disaster, accepting the verdict of the electorate.

Matla, which is Sesotho for "empowerment," was launched on the proceeds of money collected by the Washington-based Mandela Freedom Fund during a tour by the ANC president. Substantial support also comes from Scandinavia and from private South African businesses aware of the need for voter education. But the Trust is not alone in the civics field. Various left-of-center bodies, representing the churches, the white women of the Black Sash, Dr. Frederik van Zyl Slabbert's Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa, university research centers, and even the YWCA, have grouped together under the Independent Forum for Electoral Education. The Forum's task is to ensure that the election takes place on a less uneven playing field.

Matla is at pains to be nonpartisan. Central to its program is training trainers to train others in the concept of democracy. Fifty organizations are trying to penetrate the most inaccessible areas of the Republic to persuade factory and mine owners to allow trainers onto the premises to explain the electoral process. The Ford Foundation is one of a number of foreign organizations involved in this civic education. The ANC alone is planning to send out 175,000 voter education volunteers.

Matla's touring drama, "Moments," has a blatantly didactic style intended to show the rustics what voting is about. Not whom to vote for, but how and why. Commuters travelling in the station-wagon taxis which are currently colonizing the roads of South Africa will listen to tapes in which messages about "democracy," political

tolerance, and the need for having the right identity documents are interspersed with pop music. The ANC is already running mock elections in the townships.

I listened to a voter education phone-in on the Johannesburg black radio station, Metro. The callers wanted to know about practical things like registration and symbols on the ballot paper. But one inquiry seemed to pinpoint much of what could go wrong: "How can we be sure that when we go in to vote, there will be no gunshots to kill us?"

This fear of violence can be more damaging to the ANC's prospects than an illiterate electorate. Each party has "no-go" areas where it is dangerous to electioneer. The ANC cannot operate safely in the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana bantustans; Inkatha and the ANC would be wise to stay out of the other's patch in most areas of Natal; the National Party will be unwelcome in many Transvaal and Eastern Cape townships. And then there are the neofascists of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

But when the caller talks of "gunshots," he also means the ancient fear of the "white man" in his various guises. Terror Lekota has heard of ANC followers complaining that "Mandela wants us to vote in a police station," which

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they confuse with a polling station. "This is a new word in their lexicon and we are now switching to 'voting' stations," says Lekota. The Forum wants voting to be held in "neutral places," such as clinics, community schools, and churches, and not in government buildings. A peaceful run-up to the election will be difficult to guarantee, but the large presence of inter-

national and domestic observers, and a police force hopefully under multi-party control, might help to avoid Marcos-of-the-Philippines style ballot box disappearances.

But blacks have another problem—for good reason they fear their employer will find out how they have voted. Take the rural voter. Over 7 million farmworkers and their families still live on white-owned farms. The abolition of much of statutory apartheid has made little

impact on their lives. They can still be, and are, evicted and their houses bulldozed, even after living on a farm for decades. They have more to gain from a decisive ANC victory than most other sections of society. Yet their very isolation makes it difficult for ANC and PAC canvassers to reach them.

There was the case of a man looking for work being chased off a succession of farms. He went to an advice office and was told the farmers may not have liked his ANC tee-shirt. He was illiterate and hadn't realized what it meant. Nor had he heard of the ANC. Women in rural areas are a special problem. Exhausted by the daily grind to make ends meet, coupled with a culture which leaves *these things to the men, they might simply find it easier to stay at home and look after the kids.*

The first stage in this pioneering election, however, is to establish who actually has the right to vote. Candidates will not stand in constituencies. Instead, there will be parties with national lists of candidates, rather like the Israeli system, though the details have yet to be finalized. All the whites, and only a small minority of the other racial groups are on an electoral roll. The ID document will get you on the voters' roll, and the department of home affairs is reported to be issuing them at an impressive rate, though it is a race against time to get through *the backlog.* Barry Gilder of the Matla Trust says there are reports that officials speed up distribution of IDs to Inkatha areas, but are slower in ANC strongholds. And then there remains a residue of suspicion of the booklet for its association with the *dompas*, which until fairly recently adult Africans had to carry at all times.

The ANC wants to make it easier to become a voter, though appreciating that many residents do not qualify—in particular, a million and more refugees from Mozambique. But, says Lekota, "People should be allowed to produce documents proving they are bona fide South African citizens. In addition to the ID, we would accept a birth or baptismal certificate, a school report, title deeds to a house, and if someone had no documentation of any kind, then a senior citizen would make a sworn statement that he or she knows the person."

Gilder admits there is a danger of cheating, "but because of the understandable black suspicion of government, they should be given more chance of identifying themselves than from official papers." To avoid the phenomenon of "vote early, vote often," either the elector's body or ID book will be stamped with indelible ink.

At last, alone in the booth, South Africa will come face to face with democracy. That's the high-sounding language, but the reality can be different. Lekota, who observed the Angolan elections, recalls seeing voters going into the booth, "waiting three minutes, then coming out without a mark on the paper." There were said to be a half-million spoiled ballots out of 4.5 million on the register. It is difficult to understand the fear of those who cannot read. They might still hear the words of an employer—"If you don't vote for X, I will fire you...and

make no mistake, we know how you vote." More simply, they will be confused by a ballot paper with, at the latest count, 17 parties.

Voters will have before them two columns: one, the name of the party, the other, its symbol. Some symbols, like the ANC's clenched spear and the black, green, and yellow flag, are well known. But not well enough, it fears. The ANC wants a third column, portraying the face of the party leader. The Nelson Mandela personality cult will help recruit doubters from the minor parties, but equally it would help other televisual figures like Gatsha Buthelezi, F.W. de Klerk, and the Bophuthatswana president, Lucas Mangope, whose party has no symbol, though a roulette wheel, representing the coffers of Sun City, might be appropriate. Identifying one's favorite party is not the end of the matter for nonreaders. They are not versed in the mechanics of using a pen or, if it is a matter of impressing an inked thumb, they could smudge and spoil the paper. The ANC's 130-page "campaign manual" deals with those practical problems.

Three years of violence and seeming indecision has brought on a mood of cynicism toward politics and politicians among some black voters. Pollsters are finding a mix of anger and despair in black communities. Is the election really going to deliver a better deal for blacks? *These doubts will be fuelled by reports that the ANC has made a number of compromises that could reduce the impact of the constituent assembly.* Thus more power would be devolved to the regions, so that in the Western Cape and Natal, where the ANC might not be the victor, other political philosophies would prevail.

The lesson of the Namibian constituent elections is ever-present. Pretoria promised faithfully that they would be free and fair, yet years later Foreign Minister Pik Botha confirmed that it had secretly funded the anti-Swapo parties. The Inkatha-gate scandal, where again the white National Party government funded Buthelezi's party and trade union movement, is another reason for the ANC and PAC to be meticulous, even persnickety, about the elections.

One important development will make for a wider debate of the issues. The South African Broadcasting Corporation, which was controlled by the Afrikaner secret society, Die Broederbond, for 45 years, is about to get an independent board of trustees. A wide enough spread of South African life will be represented in the management of the corporation for it to enlighten rather than obfuscate the issues in the coming months.

The major parties have had all the time in the world to examine the collapse of sound government, human rights, and economic well-being to their north. They are well aware that simply eradicating apartheid and installing black rule is not an end in itself. Not everyone will accept the outcome of this election, but if it is well-conducted, and the wind is taken out of the sails of the far right and left, the country will have made a first confident step toward recovering from the ravages of apartheid. ○

Sarah-Jane Poole



## THE POOR PAY THE PRICE

The poor have been hardest hit by Zimbabwe's structural adjustment reforms—food staples have lost their subsidies, inflation bites, and social services are cut back. The government of President Robert Mugabe is palpably unpopular in the cities. But in the countryside it is a different story. The government's voter appeal may rest on its success in redistributing land and keeping it productive.



young man in overalls frowns as he studies the supermarket sign which announces an impending 30 percent hike in the price of Zimbabwe's staple food, maize (corn) meal. Like several other shoppers, he loads his cart with two 25-pound bags in order to

stock up before the substantial price increase.

"What's going on with our country?" asks Tendai Mushamba as he counts out \$14.50 for the meal and few other groceries. "Everything is getting so expensive. How can the people survive?"

Mushamba's frugal shopping for very basic items is in stark contrast to the supermarket shelves, which prominently display imported cheeses, wines, and liquors, as well as fresh oysters and lobsters flown up to landlocked Zimbabwe from South Africa. These luxury items are stocked not only for diplomats, but also for whites and the growing number of middle-class black Zimbabweans who shop side by side with those whose impulse buying is severely restricted by their meager incomes.

Mushamba, 23, works as a gardener in Harare and earns \$33.80 per month. It seems a paltry salary, but it is above Zimbabwe's monthly minimum wage of \$28. Although living quarters are provided at his workplace, Mushamba, his wife, and six-month-old daughter survive on a diet of *sadza*—a stiff porridge made from corn meal—and vegetables he grows. The family can afford meat only once a week or on special occasions.

"I'm better off than most industrial workers because I don't have to pay rent and I don't have to pay bus fare to work," says Mushamba. "I don't know how those workers can support their families. This structural adjustment is making things so expensive. Life is becoming so hard."

Mushamba's complaints about the rise in Zimbabwe's cost of living can be explained by the country's economic structural adjustment program, which was designed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and is now in its third year. Like the many other structural adjustment programs throughout Africa, Zimbabwe's plan opens up the country to imports, improves incentives for investors, reduces government spending, and removes government subsidies on food products.

The structural adjustment package may eventually make Zimbabwe more attractive to foreign investors and therefore promote badly needed economic growth and the creation of new jobs. But in the short term, it has made day to day life more difficult for most Zimbabweans, as prices have increased while wages have remained static and social services have been reduced.

The increase in the price of maize meal that distressed Mushamba was caused by the government of President Robert Mugabe's decision to remove the \$85

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million subsidy, which had kept the price of the staple very low.

The government has already removed the subsidy on wheat, which caused the price of bread to double, and on dairy products, which placed milk and cheese out of reach for many Zimbabweans. These price rises have contributed to an annual inflation rate estimated at 34 percent. While the spiralling rise in prices worries Tendai Mushamba and many Zimbabweans like him, it is an improvement on last year's rate of 45 percent.

Not only has structural adjustment caused food prices to go up, the tough economic measures have eroded the improvements in public health and education achieved by the Mugabe government since independence. In 1991, the government introduced "cost recovery measures" to make the country's poor pay for hospital care. The result is that many poor Zimbabweans have not gone to hospitals or clinics. A key health indicator—the maternal mortality rate—has increased dramatically. The number of women dying in childbirth has gone up from 101 deaths per 100,000 births in 1989 to 350 per 100,000 births in 1992, according to a Unicef report, "Structural Adjustment: Protecting the Vulnerable Through Adversity."

"These figures show that Zimbabwe's poor are paying for the demands by the International Monetary Fund for debt repayment," said Carol Thompson, associate professor of political science at the University of Zimbabwe. Thompson, an American, is one of the most outspoken critics of structural adjustment policies in force throughout Africa.

"It is not a question of short-term belt tightening for long term gain, as the World Bank likes to paint structural adjustment," says Thompson. "It is a matter of long-term belt tightening to achieve debt repayments."

The big question is whether the Mugabe government's structural adjustment policies can demonstrate an economic improvement to satisfy the Zimbabwean people. General elections must be held by 1995 and if inflation and unemployment, currently estimated at 40 percent of the potential workforce, remain high, Mugabe's ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front



Sarah-Jane Focile

**President  
Robert Mugabe:  
Can reforms demon-  
strate an economic im-  
provement to satisfy  
Zimbabweans?**

(Zanu-PF) could find it very difficult to be reelected to a fourth five-year term of office.

Already Mugabe's government is palpably unpopular in Zimbabwe's urban areas. Cynical jokes about the Zanu-PF government are heard regularly, such as the one about Zimbabwe's need to ration electric power: "Have you heard Mugabe's latest way to save electricity? He's turned off the light at the end of the tunnel."

Popular comics in independent magazines also lampoon politicians. Corruption scandals are uncovered almost weekly and yet the fat cats remain in Mugabe's swollen cabinet of 43 officials.

"We are sick of this government," said a Zimbabwean secretary. "We know Zanu-PF fought for Zimbabwe's independence. But now they are simply serving themselves. It is time for a change."

Confronted by such voter antipathy in the urban areas, Mugabe's party is looking for support in the rural areas, where 70 percent of Zimbabwe's 10 million people live. Zanu-PF has traditionally enjoyed enthusiastic support in the rural areas and every rural village has a local party chairman and a chapter of the party's women's league. But even with its rural network, Zanu-PF is finding an increase in voter apathy.

One strategy might be to call an early election. "The party might be able to win an election by riding on the coat-tails of the drought," said one political analyst. "The government did a good job of distributing emergency food aid during the drought and of distributing seed packs and fertilizer. To a large extent, they can claim credit for the bumper harvest enjoyed this year. That might encourage Zanu-PF to call an early election."

Another strategy to reinvigorate rural support for the party is for the government to renew its land redistribution program. Thirteen years after independence, the country is still wrestling with the land problem, one of the

## CORRUPTION SCANDALS ARE UNCOVERED ALMOST WEEKLY AND YET THE FAT CATS REMAIN IN PRESIDENT MUGABE'S SWOLLEN CABINET OF 43 OFFICIALS.

main issues which motivated the war against Rhodesian minority rule.

Controversy has erupted over the April 30 announcement by the Mugabe government that it intends to buy 70 large farms, covering 190,000 hectares, to start a far-reaching plan to redistribute 5 million hectares of largely white-owned land to black peasant farmers.

White farmers cried foul and warned the resettlement will bring ruin to Zimbabwe's agriculturally driven econ-

omy. The government replied that it has the legal right to forcibly purchase the farms and will do so in the national interest. Western diplomats and World Bank officials have warily kept out of the fray, but keenly watch the land developments, which are certain to have a great impact on Zimbabwe's economic and political future.

The country's land wrangle started with the expropriation by Rhodesian authorities of more than 15 million hectares of African land—47 percent of the country's land mass—between 1910 and 1970. Black peasants supported Mugabe's nationalist guerrillas in order to regain that land.

Restricted by Zimbabwe's British-drafted constitution, Mugabe had to respect the right of white farmers to own property, but he also had to satisfy the burning land hunger of his rural supporters. The result was an ambitious plan to purchase 5 million hectares of white-owned land on the open market for the resettlement of 162,000 peasant families (about 1.2 million people). In the end, the government bought only 3.3 million hectares for the resettlement of 50,000 families (400,000 people). The unwieldy resettlement neither achieved productive use of the acquired land, nor satisfied the rural folk's desire for more land.

Now political considerations have brought Mugabe back to the land issue and back to resettlement. In a move widely seen as courting the rural vote, the government has announced a new land redistribution program to buy an additional 5 million hectares for resettlement. This time, the government is



Sarah-Jane Poole

## A Viable Alternative to Mugabe?

**W**ith a striking set of alternative policies, the Forum Party has taken the lead as the most serious opposition party to challenge the 13-year rule of President Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF government.

Urging free enterprise economics, a drastic reduction in the size of government, and respect for human rights, the Forum Party launched itself in Bulawayo in March with the election of well-respected former Chief Justice Enoch Dumbutshena as its chairman.

"We are determined to replace dictatorial tendencies with democracy, corruption with transparency and an open society, denial of human rights with respect for human rights and the rule of law," said Dumbutshena to cheers from the 800 founding members.

"We want to replace a government that condones violence and intimidation with one that loves peace," continued Dumbutshena in a broadside against the Mugabe government. "There are deep divisions in our country but there has been no peaceful and democratic way of expressing even ordinary discontent. The Forum Party will correct this imbalance. The Forum Party will bring our people and country together."

The Forum's core, consisting of intellectuals and businessmen, both Shona and Ndebele, as well as

white liberals, brings together the country's major ethnic groups as no other party has attempted. Since the party's launch, there have been a number of rallies in Harare and Bulawayo.

Dumbutshena explained that the Forum hopes to win rural votes with popular measures such as restoring power to traditional chiefs, improved land reform and agricultural education efforts.

"Our rural people have already thrown off the yoke of colonialism and when they see and discuss our policies, I think they will decide it is time for another change," said Dumbutshena. "On weekends and holidays, the city-dwellers flock back to the rural areas and the families talk about everything. I think this will be an important way to build up support in the rural areas."

With flecked gray hair and a carefully articulate, gentlemanly manner, Dumbutshena, 72, is every inch a distinguished barrister. The son of a trade unionist, Dumbutshena was educated at Methodist mission schools and earned a bachelor's degree in history and politics from the University of South Africa and a diploma in education from South Africa's Fort Hare University. He qualified as a lawyer in Britain in 1963.

Dumbutshena's nationalist credentials are equally impressive, dating back to the 1940s. He was a key member of the main nationalist parties and when

fortified with constitutional amendments and new legislation which empowers it to forcibly purchase whatever land it wants and to set its own price.

The country's 4,300 large-scale commercial farmers, nearly all of them white, are understandably nervous. The government's target of 5 million hectares represents almost half of their remaining 11 million hectares. According to the Land Acquisition Act of 1992, the government can pay a fraction of the property's current value and farmers do not have the right to appeal to courts for a fair price.

Despite the good rains Zimbabwe had this year, the commercial farmers are having a bad time because of the low prices that Zimbabwe's tobacco is getting at auction. Tobacco is the country's largest single export and this year's bumper crop of 210 million kilos is fetching about 93 U.S. cents per kilo from international buyers. That is less than half the expected price and

according to the farmers, below their break-even line of \$1.40 per kilogram. This lower-than-estimated tobacco price means Zimbabwe will earn about \$150 million less in exports this year, a heavy blow to the country's balance of payments. This highlights how vital commercial agriculture is to the nation's economy. Yet 15 tobacco farms are among the 70 farms designated for government purchase.

In addition to earning badly needed foreign exchange, the commercial farms together are also Zimbabwe's largest single employer, which is not to be sneezed at when the country has an estimated unemployment rate of 40 percent. The Commercial Farmers Union maintains it can find under-utilized land suitable for resettlement, but not as much as the government's goal of 5 million hectares.

Yet the minister of agriculture and resettlement, Kumbirai Kangai, maintains the white farmers need not worry.

Zanu split from Joshua Nkomo's Zapu, Dumbutshena unsuccessfully tried to reconcile the two groups. Concentrating on a thriving law practice in Zambia in the 1970s, Dumbutshena took a lower profile in politics. He became legal adviser to Bishop Abel Muzorewa's United African National Congress, but his reputation did not seem to be tainted by the bishop's ill-fated alliance with Ian Smith.

Dumbutshena became Zimbabwe's first black High Court judge in 1980 and served as the first Zimbabwean chief justice from 1984 until 1990. Dumbutshena established a judicial system proudly independent of the country's politics. His courts produced many judgments that were unpopular with Zanu-PF and he won respect within Zimbabwe and internationally. Dumbutshena currently serves as acting Supreme Court judge in Namibia and as judge of appeals in the Transkei Supreme Court.

But can a noteworthy judge become a successful politician? The balanced reasoning of a judge's decision is far removed from the ruthless cut and thrust of politics. Dumbutshena speaks intelligently on all issues, but his answers are deliberate, even ponderous. The politician sums things up, or trivializes issues, in catchy phrases and 10-second sound bites.

Likewise, it remains to be seen if the Forum Party, comprised at this point of well-meaning, well-educated Zimbabweans, can succeed in the dirty business of winning votes.

Dumbutshena and the Forum Party will have to grapple with the hard realities of politics to win against the solidly entrenched Zanu-PF government. Despite the existence of more than seven parties, Zimbabwe still operates very much as a

one-party state. The government recently paid \$3 million directly to Zanu-PF. The civil service, the army, police force, and especially the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) are loyal to Zanu-PF. The Forum Party will have an uphill battle to defeat those formidable forces in the general elections, due by 1995.

"We know that Zanu-PF has tremendous advantages such as all the government machinery and government funds for the party's political purposes. The CIO will probably be used to intimidate us. But we are determined and we will prevail," said Dumbutshena.

He showed some of the rhetorical fire needed by a politician when asked why the Forum Party has been launched now. "We don't want to be in a country where there are two sectors, the privileged political leaders and the less privileged," said Dumbutshena. "We don't want to be in a country where the sons of cabinet ministers can commit crimes and not be punished. We don't want to live in a country where people disappear and nothing is done to apprehend the culprit. Or nothing is done to prosecute the culprit. Our people fought too hard for our independence to put up with that kind of shoddy government."

With its support for private enterprise, multi-party democracy, and liberalism, the Forum Party appears ready to emulate the success of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy in Zambia. But the new party has an uphill battle to gain the groundswell of popular support, both urban and rural, needed to win the elections. ■

—A.M.

He says the purchases will be done legally and should not disrupt farming or economic activity. Other government officials assure that reasonable prices will be paid.

Economists caution that however the land is redivided, it should be done in a way that continues the land's productivity. High yields are needed to maintain the country's much-vaunted ability to feed itself and to export crops like tobacco, cotton, coffee, tea, flowers, fruits and vegetables.

So far the Mugabe government has not described how the newly acquired land will be redeveloped. The previous socialist-inspired resettlement schemes were harshly criticized in a report by the auditor-general, who concluded that political interference and bad administration resulted in a costly loss of productivity. That report, as well as the Zimbabwe Farmers Union, representing black farmers, have urged that the new resettlement should select only successful, well-trained farmers who

will be able to make the most of the new land. In addition, they call for the black farmers to get title to the lands so they will invest in it.

Zimbabwe's land, who owns it, and how it is farmed will continue to be a hot topic for years to come. Whether or not it is politically useful in the short term, the Mugabe government must carefully assess the land's continuing economic importance. Only policies which encourage the most efficient, productive use of the land can truly be said to be in the national interest.

A combination of structural adjustment economics and rural land redistribution are the factors that may well influence Zimbabwe's political fortunes in the coming years. If the economy can achieve growth and the land redistribution pleases rural peasants, then Robert Mugabe may be assured of another term of office. But if those critical programs do not go well, then 1995 may see a new party and a new president elected to office. ○

Sarah-Jane Poole



# HUNTING FOR CONS

**E**ach day, the village chief watched as a nearby squatter settlement mushroomed on the periphery of Zambia's Kafue National Park. He ordered the squatters who poached the park's wildlife to move, and didn't wait for police help when they refused. The chief and others simply burned their shanties to the ground.

In another Zambian community, a headman rounded up all the dogs in his village and took them to the authorities. "You can shoot them, these dogs, they are eating all the wildlife," he told National Parks and Wildlife Service officials.

Few would have thought rural Zambians would take such action to safeguard wildlife. The residents of these same villages and even the chiefs may have once been poachers themselves. They certainly offered refuge to those who prospered by decimating the nation's wildlife, especially its rhino and elephant populations.

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"These two cases could have been sensitive issues for the government, but the people took action themselves," said Gilson Kaweche, deputy director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. "Things are coming around in Zambia. The people, not just the government, are now the custodians of our environment."

It's an important switch. Anti-poaching programs are often doomed to fail without the support of rural dwellers, many of whom poach wildlife for subsistence or profit. Indeed, the failure of past conservation efforts led Zambia's rhino population to be virtually eradicated and its number of elephants to plummet from 161,000 to about 20,000 during the last decade.

Early last year, this bleak reality prompted Zambia to withdraw from a plan by four other southern African countries to sell ivory in violation of the international ban on such trade. This year, however, Zambia's programs are reporting victories. Researchers say poaching has declined 88 percent in some areas, and the controversial ban has not been a factor.

The key, they say, is community involvement and increased enforcement by officers untainted by corruption. But as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Malawi move ahead with their plan to sell ivory, Zambia's conservation successes are expected to prompt its return to the cartel because of the lucrative market and the high cost of conservation. The local media already speculates it will.

Rural Zambians working to protect wildlife in their areas benefit financially from doing so. One community-based program teaches the value of wildlife to villagers living in game management areas, which are hunting zones that border the 19 national parks. The people help in wildlife management, and share 35 percent of related proceeds for community improvements.

The program, the Administrative Design for Game Management Areas, is certainly not Western-styled conservation. The proceeds include meat from the culling of plentiful wildlife and fees paid by safari hunters. But involving African rural populations in what is termed the sustainable use of wildlife is one of the most effective tools against poaching.

Under the Zambian program, involvement ultimately means cash, jobs, and village improvements for the rural poor. At any given time, sportsmen on safari are hunting in each of the 33 game management areas, and each safari earns the state at least \$15,000. This year, the villagers are expected to share a pot of \$81,600, according to Kaweche of the National Parks Service.

Village improvements have included new clinics, wells, schools, and even the creation of a carpentry col-

Zambia is steadily reversing the precipitous decline of its wildlife, especially rhinos and elephants, through a program of community involvement and increased enforcement of anti-poaching laws. Once probably poachers themselves, villagers are now custodians of the

# CONSERVATION

lective. Jobs are created by legislation requiring safari companies to employ local Zambians, and by the training of villagers as government wildlife scouts. This year, the number of scouts hit a record high of 500, and the number of poachers they deter is said to top that figure.

Zambia's Luangwa National Park has served as a slaughtering ground for elephants and rhino. In the 1970s, the park's southern stretch and the adjacent Lupande Game Management Area was home to 35,000 elephants. Today, only 6,000 remain. In North Luangwa National Park, poachers butchered more than 12,000 elephants.

Yet today, community conservation projects in the park boast the most success countrywide. Their achievement is documented both in a recent government-commissioned study of the South Luangwa National Park and Lupande GMA, and by American zoologists who created a community project in North Luangwa National Park.

In the study, renowned biologist Richard Bell and



Sarah-Jane Poole

environment because the program translates into cash, jobs, and improvements to villages.

## The Ivory Cartel

**A**lthough not exactly wallet-sized, elephant ivory from southern Africa may soon resemble major credit cards in more ways than one.

The ivory cartel of Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, and Zimbabwe says it has finally found a foolproof method to distinguish legal from illegal ivory: a hologram, serial number, and bar code.

The decision to imprint the ivory with such identification has pushed the cartel's plan to trade in legal ivory even closer to reality. Representatives of the cartel say it expects to begin operating this year, despite the international ban on trade in ivory and other elephant products.

The cartel, the Southern African Center for Ivory Marketing, holds large stockpiles of ivory confiscated from poachers or collected from the culling of elephant populations said to be too populous. Zimbabwe's ivory cache alone exceeds 27 tons.

Customers are already lining up, and even rhino horns could be up for bid. Mike Kock, a Zimbabwe Department of National Parks wildlife veterinarian, said Zimbabwe's legal ivory trade has been small-scale to date, but is expected to soon reap vast profits.

"They've had people coming within the last six months and offering huge amounts of money," said Kock, coordinator for Zimbabwe's rhino dehorning program in Hwange National Park.

The cartel plans to open a market in legally obtained ivory with the dozens of countries that are not signatories to the 112-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. The convention adopted the three-year ban in 1989, and renewed its support at its eighth triennial meeting in March 1992.

The cartel members have opposed the ban from the beginning, contending their inability to sell ivory costs them millions of dollars each year that

could otherwise be spent on conservation. Still, such sales face fierce opposition from environmentalists in other African countries battling to save their elephants.

At the heart of the cartel's argument is that their own elephant populations are plentiful, but the numbers of each country's elephants differ significantly. Zimbabwe reports that it has 70,000 elephants, fully double its desired number. Yet the population in Malawi numbers only 2,000 and in Namibia, 5,000.

Poachers halved all of Africa's elephant population to 600,000 in the decade before the ban, and many countries have reported dramatic declines in poaching since its inception. Kenya, a staunch opponent of any ivory trade, reported only 46 elephants killed in 1992 compared to 4,000 in 1989. In addition, the price of ivory plummeted, in some cases by an estimated 70 percent from its early 1989 value of nearly \$300 per kilogram.

In addition, a two-year investigation by the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency has found that none of the cartel members have the ability to ensure that illicit ivory won't be laundered through any planned identification system.

But the southern African bloc disagrees. Having the freedom to do as they wish with their wildlife has also become a source of national pride in the respective countries. The governments are often cash-poor and citizens are increasingly speaking out against unpopular constraints they say are dictated by the West.

"The ban on ivory is not our country's thing and it's voluntary," said Namibia's deputy wildlife minister, Ben Ulenga. "We stand for the wise use of natural resources, but we determine what that means. We have the final say: These are our elephants." ■

—B.J.K.

several prominent members of the national parks department conclude that poaching in the southern area declined between 1988 and 1992 by 88 percent to its current "acceptable level" of 30 elephants a year. This number is acceptable because it is less than the 6 percent annual growth rate in the population of 6,000 elephants.

They attribute the decline to increased law efforts and

rural involvement in the Luangwa Integrated Resource Development Project. In the four-year period, for example, wildlife scouts in the area arrested 2,406 people and confiscated 3,391 guns. The ban, the researchers conclude, had no effect at all. Instead, they found lower rates of decline in poaching incidents in the two years following the ban than in the three preceding it.

The zoologists, Delia and Mark Owens, documented

their accomplishments in *The Eye of the Elephant*, a 1992 book about their anti-poaching crusade in the North Luangwa National Park. The valley, which Mark Owens characterizes as "an elephant's Auschwitz," was once home to 17,000 elephants. Only 5,000 remain. The rhino fared far worse: They once numbered 8,000; today, none.

The Owens created a far-reaching community program, and have since seen the number of elephants poached each year fall from 1,000 to 12. The project has created jobs and its staff has taught skills to people in the nearby villages, leading to an overhaul of the rural economies previously based on poaching.

The couple has brought unprecedented progress to Zambia's conservation efforts, and the other community-based programs are not far behind. But ironically, these very achievements may lead Zambia to rethink its stance on ivory sales. Tourism Minister Christon Tembo has said the pull-out will be reviewed once anti-poaching programs begin to "yield positive results." They have.

But few people involved in the conservation efforts would support such a reversal, at least not at this stage of what they still characterize as a war. The Owens, for example, were instrumental in getting Zambian President Frederick Chiluba to withdraw from the cartel, which was formed by a 1991 agreement signed by his predecessor and the other southern African leaders.

The departure was marked by the ceremonial burning of Zambia's eight-ton ivory stock. It was celebrated by the National Conservation Society of Zambia and environmentalists, who still hold the same views as they did during the bonfire. "Much as we want to support sustainable utilization, the force of the ivory trade cannot be contained because poaching is still very bad," the executive director, Mwape Sichilongo, said. "Every part of an elephant is worth something and if we can't control the trade, it's still just too risky to make a market of it."

The society stands virtually alone among its counterparts in the countries that form the cartel. The Zimbabwe Wildlife Society is a staunch supporter of that country's efforts to open a legal ivory market. The Kalahari Conservation Society of Botswana supports a limited resumption in the trade of elephant products.

Yet Zambia's wildlife society continues to stand firm, and it is reporting its own breakthroughs. The society runs education programs in 1,000 schools and a weekly program on national radio. Most important, it has what many sister organizations in the other countries sorely need: rural support.

But touting Zambia's successes during conversations with Zimbabweans solicits a harsh rebuke. The decimation of Zambia's wildlife has forced its poachers to make incursions into neighboring countries. Zambians, or at least poachers based in Zambia, are partly to blame for Zimbabwe's wildlife killing fields. Poaching in Botswana's parks can also be traced to them.

This strains diplomatic relations and threatens anti-

poaching efforts throughout the region. It's also killing Zambians: Game wardens in Zimbabwe parks are believed to have killed more than 100 Zambians suspected of poaching. As a result, Zambia is working to eradicate this cross-border hunting and has seen positive results on the conservation front as well.

At the forefront of the battle is the Species Protection Department of Zambia's Anti-Corruption Commission. The department is overseen by a former policeman and targets the middlemen in the ivory trade. Most poaching is done by rural villagers for cash offered by such businessmen, who smuggle and market the illicit ivory throughout the region and abroad. Last year, the department confiscated 600 kilos of ivory and 14 rhino horns.

This year, with a grant of \$80,000 from the World Wide Fund for Nature, its officers are working to increase cooperation with counterparts in other southern African nations. They have visited other enforcement programs in the region and established radio links with officials in Zimbabwe's national parks.

Most of the illegal ivory still finds its way to South Africa from its landlocked neighbors, so Zambia is teaming up with that country as well. Earlier this year, the department performed a joint raid in Livingston, Zambia, with the Species Protection Unit of the South African police. The officers netted five poachers, three AK-47s, four rhino horns, and 23 kilos of ivory.

The Zambian Species Protection Department also began a publicity campaign about conservation efforts, and not just their own. The literature and radio announcements include Zimbabwe's rhino dehorning program, a move SPD Chief Investigations Officer Edwin Sakala said may help deter cross-border rhino poaching.

The officers responded to questions about Zambia possibly resuming the ivory trade with silence, sometimes surprise. But said Special Investigations Officer Clement Mwale: "We couldn't, we're just not ready yet. The elephant wouldn't survive."

Mwale said Zambia cannot wisely participate in any ivory trade until poaching is under control and customs and security officers learn to detect illicit ivory. To date, the department has conducted several seminars just to educate the officers about what ivory looks like and how to handle suspected smugglers.

One problem yet to be solved is that in Zambia, like in other countries, ivory smugglers and poachers can still be government officials, members of the security forces, and even game scouts charged with protecting wildlife. But the Species Protection Department has already successfully prosecuted several police and military officers and more are under investigation.

Other gains made by Zambia are a new, mandatory five-year jail sentence for poachers and the approval for the parks service to nearly double the number of its game guards. The bottom line in Zambia's ivory war: Even a small victory can save a life—either of an elephant or one of the humans working to protect it. ○

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