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The cover photograph of a political rally in Kenya was taken by Betty Press.



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To the Editor,

Catherine Watson's article on the conflict in my nation ("War and Waiting," November-December 1992) presents a distorted view of the plight of the Banyarwanda people. Ms. Watson appears to have bought into the myth, promulgated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front, that casts the insurgency as a quest for homeland by an abused and homeless population. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

At present there are three categories of Rwandan migrants found living in countries neighboring Rwanda, including Uganda, Zaire, Burundi, and Tanzania. During the 1950s, prior to independence, many Rwandan nationals emigrated from Rwanda in search of economic opportunity, settling and becoming integrated in newly adopted countries. They have neither grievances nor pretense for violent action against their motherland.

During the early 1960s and following the overthrow of ethnic Tutsi domination and its monarchist government, a new wave of political emigration occurred. From 1962 until 1967, and again beginning with the October 1990 invasion, it is this group which has served as a hotbed for violent attacks against legitimate Rwandan authorities.

Yet a third wave of emigration took place during the 1980s, as Rwandan citizens, in search of arable land, informally settled in the rural borderlands of Tanzania. As a result of their status as squatters, they have been evicted by the government of Tanzania. Like other migrants having purely economic motives, they had neither reason nor the impulse to engage in violence against their motherland.

Ms. Watson is wrong in suggesting that the present insurgency draws support from all of these groups. Conflict began in 1990 when troops of the Ugandan National Resistance Army, recruited among

Rwandan refugees, invaded their country of origin with the apparent complicity of that government. Insurgent leaders are seeking to oust Rwanda's legitimate government and occupy positions of national leadership themselves.

Watson is correct in arguing that the insurgency in my country has "unleashed immense suffering." Over 350,000 people have been displaced by this conflict whereas, as she points out, a mere 2,600 civilians now inhabit the guerrilla-occupied zone. But Watson's emphasis on "the eerie calm of insurgent-occupied zones" overlooks the misery and starvation of the many refugees from that deceptively peaceful and quiet zone.

Finally, I regret that instead of appealing for tolerance among all members of the greater Rwandan community, Ms. Watson abets violence by praising the insurgents' subjective values.

In Rwanda, we know that peace will require good faith and compromise. However, we must resist ethnically based solutions to political problems. The people of Rwanda, like those of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia, know that an ethnic crusade is too often the mask behind which cynical power-mongers hide.

Aloys Uwimana
Ambassador of the Rwandan
Republic to the United States

To the Editor,

I would like to comment on *Africa Report's* November-December issue, concerning Cameron McWhirter and Gur Melamed's article on Eritrea. First of all, I would like to thank the reporters for doing an article on Eritrea because not much is said or reported in the American media about what goes on in Eritrea.

The report was very informative, but your article seems to criticize

the provisional government of Eritrea on the nationality issue stating that the government is deporting Ethiopian civilians because there are a large number of Ethiopians (mostly Tigreans) living in major Eritrean cities and towns. It would be impossible to deport all of them back to Ethiopia.

The only Ethiopians deported back to their country were the Ethiopian soldiers numbering 82,396, and 43,527 of their families dependent on the soldiers, including the members of the Workers Party of Ethiopia (ESEPA) and the various security forces that were operating in Eritrea. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has a right to deport those forces; after all, they were the ones who had made the 1 million Eritreans flee abroad for years. Unlike the Mengistu regime's torturous treatment of Eritreans, both civilians and fighters, the EPLF has always been very kind and humane toward the Ethiopian POWs.

The EPLF deported the Ethiopian soldiers and their collaborators for a simple reason: because of their brutal and inhumane actions toward the peace-loving Eritrean people by imprisoning, torturing, displacing their families, and murdering them throughout the war for no reason, but for just being Eritreans.

The Eritrean people have paid a high price just to get the world to recognize their legitimate right to self-determination. And all this was done without anyone's help, militarily, politically, or diplomatically. The only weapons Eritreans possessed were perseverance and self-reliance.

We Eritreans have made our dream and our enemies' nightmare come true—an independent Eritrea, and thank God we did it despite the world giving us a cold shoulder.

Sirak J. Haile
Shoreline College
Seattle, Washington

UPDATE

IN THE NEWS

Zaire's \$2 Bank Note Leads to 300 Deaths

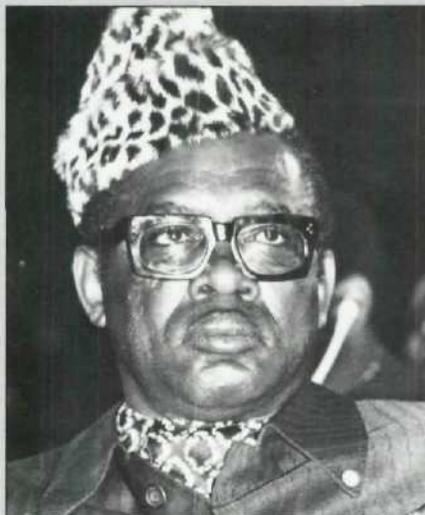
"The circulation of the 5-million-zaire note is raising a few small problems in the capital," the Voice of Zaire radio commentator announced on February 7. That the "problems" were limited to reports of shopkeepers refusing to accept the new high-denomination note was both a relief and a cause of concern for Zairians listening to the broadcast. The previous week, merchants' refusal to accept the new bills had led to much more serious trouble: Soldiers who had just been paid with the notes went on a rampage in the capital, Kinshasa, leaving hundreds dead.

The problem with the note issued by Zaire's autocratic president, Mobutu Sese Seko, was that it was not legal tender—at least according to his arch-opponent, the transitional government's prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba. While the disagreement over the legality of the note was only the latest in a continual series of bouts between the 28-year ruler, Mobutu, and the opposition Sacred Heart, it may prove to be a turning point in Zaire's political crisis. The tussle over the note was at the heart of a struggle for control of the country's treasury, and indeed had come to symbolize the struggle over Zaire's destiny. Now, many fear the explosion of violence it sparked off in the capital is a harbinger of the country's disintegration.

The bank note crisis began heating up in November when the Bank of Zaire (at the behest of the president) announced that the new note would be circulated on December 1. For Mobutu, issuing the note was a way to keep up with the country's hyperinflation, estimated to be running at over 6,000 percent annually. Indeed, despite the note's high denomination, it was worth less than \$2 by January. But fearing the inflationary effect the note would bring about, Tshisekedi ordered it withheld from circulation. Mobutu and the Central Bank continued to insist that the bills be accepted.

While the legality of the bank note

was being argued in early December, another event took place which greatly heightened the tension between Mobutu and the opposition. Zaire's 14-month-old national conference came to an end on December 6 and a transitional parliament, the High Council of the Republic (HCR), was formed to lead Zaire to elections, slated for August



President Mobutu Sese Seko has refused to cede power 1994. Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya was made chairman of the HCR, and Tshisekedi was reinstated as prime minister. Under legislation approved by the national conference, most of Mobutu's powers were to have been conferred on the prime minister.

Mobutu—who was allowed to remain president—wasted little time in moving to reassert his rule. But not all of his efforts were successful, including attempts to close down the HCR and remove Tshisekedi and Monsengwo from office. The new transitional government was bolstered by a massive pro-democracy rally in Kinshasa and also continued to gain the support of Mobutu's one-time staunch foreign backers, France, Belgium, and the United States, which called on the president to relinquish full control of Zaire's ravaged economy to the prime minister.

It was in front of this backdrop that Tshisekedi's calls to keep the new notes

out of circulation proved effective, as most Zairians deemed them worthless. But Mobutu remained determined to exert control over the national treasury he had pillaged for years.

In one telling sign of the volatility the notes could cause, soldiers in the Kisangani garrison, 750 miles northeast of the capital, staged a short-lived mutiny in late December after being paid their previous month's wages with the new notes, according to a Radio France International broadcast.

When Mobutu paid troops in Kinshasa with the "worthless" notes in late January, he may well have known that the action would lead the soldiers to go on a pillaging spree. In September 1991, riots by the army—because they had not been paid at all—left some 250 Zairians dead in Kinshasa, leading to a suspension of aid by Western creditors and an exodus of 20,000 foreigners. But even Mobutu might have underestimated how far out of control the disturbances in January would become.

Soldiers began shooting and looting in the capital at midday on January 28. Among the dozens of people killed on that day was France's ambassador to Zaire, Philippe Bernard, who was reportedly watching the violence from his office window when he was shot in the chest. Since then, the French have wavered over whether or not the machine gun bullet that killed the ambassador was a random shot.

On the second day of the looting, Mobutu's elite presidential guard was deployed to control the situation. The violence quickly evolved into fighting between troops loyal to Mobutu, who used armored vehicles and hand grenades, and those loyal to the opposition. But the president's soldiers did not limit their activities to putting down the mutiny, as many reportedly took advantage of the situation to loot as well.

Also entering the chaos in Kinshasa on the second day were French paratroopers who arrived from the neighboring Congo to protect French nation-

Canterbury

als, many of whom were holed up in the French embassy compound.

Belgium, the former colonial power in Zaire, had also amassed commandos in Congo to evacuate many of their country's 3,000 nationals who reside in Zaire. But Mobutu reportedly said they had no right to intervene. Instead, it was Zaire's presidential guard which evacuated Belgian nationals. One report said that a group of nearly 400 Belgians who had started the trip across the Congo River to Brazzaville on a ferry were stopped and forced to board the presidential yacht to complete the journey.

By February 1, the presidential guard had sealed off the center of the capital, ending the heaviest fighting. The maneuver was seen as more of a signal to Belgium not to bring in its forces than a deterrent to looters. The death toll in the capital of 3 million ranged from at least 300, by the Belgian foreign minister's estimate, to 1,000, according to a spokesman for Tshisekedi. Sporadic fighting continued in the capital and clashes in other parts of the country were also reported.

In response to the crisis, France, Belgium, and the United States delivered a joint message to Mobutu on February 3, "forcefully" insisting that he yield control of the economy to the transitional government and allow Tshisekedi to govern. The communique, which was made public, squarely put the blame for Zaire's economic and social crisis on the president's failure to "transfer authority to the transitional government." Mobutu would nonetheless be allowed to retain control over foreign affairs and the military accord-

ing to the proposals put forth in the message.

Representatives from the three countries met in Brussels the next day to discuss how to force Mobutu to cede power. Among the options they considered were a seizure of the considerable assets Mobutu has abroad and limiting the travel of Zairian officials. The three planned to coordinate further action at a mid-February meeting of the International Monetary Fund, according to diplomats.

But Tshisekedi would like to see foreign action go beyond freezing the billionaire dictator's bank accounts and seizing his villas and yacht. Emerging on February 4 for the first time since the fighting began, the embattled prime minister appealed to the international community to intervene in the crisis militarily because the Zairian army "does not respect the rule of law." He added, "One of our friends, Belgium, has troops just across the river."

Mobutu remained defiant. In response to the specter of action by foreign creditors, he accused his former allies of punishing the "firefighter" while allowing "the arsonist to go free." On February 5 the president issued a decree dismissing Tshisekedi. Officially, Mobutu says he fired the prime minister because of his inability to form a broad-based government.

Tshisekedi refused to step down, maintaining that the conference had already stripped Mobutu of the authority to appoint or fire the prime minister (Mobutu had appointed national men to the post on five occasions).

since the national conference began in 1991). The prime minister also said that he had been unable to include representation from the president's party because Mobutu's backers had not supplied him with any names to choose from. The HCR was also quick to reject Mobutu's call to dismiss Tshisekedi.

But Mobutu remains in control of the army and the central bank. It also appears that he has prevailed in the bank note struggle. By the middle of February, most Kinshasa merchants were reportedly accepting the notes. Reports of soldiers shooting market traders who refused to do so may have had something to do with their decision. Mobutu even announced that a 10-million-zaire note would be introduced soon. The announcement no doubt frustrated Zaire's creditors, whose only concrete action since the late January violence began had been Belgium's seizure of a planeload of 5-million-zaire notes.

With Mobutu showing few signs that he is willing to yield power—and the opposition seemingly unable to force him to do so—Zaire's crippling impasse continues. The notion of sending foreign troops into the country is an unappealing one to Mobutu's former backers, who remember the disastrous UN intervention in Katanga (now Shaba) Province in the 1960s. If sanctions to force Mobutu to yield power prove ineffective, however, the option of inaction is also unappealing. As Zaire's economy continues to falter, the threat of the country splitting and turning into another Liberia or Somalia is a very real one. ■



Chapman

MADAGASCAR

By late February, it appeared certain that opposition leader Albert Zafy would succeed Madagascar's 18-year head of state, Didier Ratsiraka. With more than 90 percent of the votes counted in the second round of presidential elections on February 10, Zafy was ahead of the incumbent in the polling by a margin of two to one.

Radio Madagascar reported on February 16 that Zafy had received 2,743,057 votes to Ratsiraka's 1,371,992. Votes still trickling in from remote parts of the country were not expected to have a significant impact on the final results of the election, which was called when none of the eight candidates in the November 25 presidential election secured the majority of votes needed to avoid a run-off. Zafy also trounced the incumbent in that election, taking 46 percent of the vote, as opposed to Ratsiraka's 29 percent.

While there were fears of violence in the run-up to the voting, an election observer team from the U.S.-based African-American Institute (AAI) reported in a February 13 press release that "the election process was...conducted in a calm and orderly fashion." The release added that "no significant irregularities" were observed.

The co-leader of the AAI team, Mabel Smythe-Haith, said, "The trust in the democratic process and the good-faith participation of the candidates and the electorate is a hopeful sign for the Malagasy people as they move forward in democracy and development." But a member of the delegation also stressed that the February 10 elections were only one step in this move forward, and that the democratization process in Madagascar is "by no means complete." The next stage in the process is in May, when parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held.

SIERRA LEONE

Twenty-six people were sentenced to death by a military tribunal and executed at the end of December for their alleged role in two attempted putsches against Sierra Leone's 10-month-old military government.

According to statements from Captain Valentine Strasser's National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), 17 detainees were sentenced for their part in an attempt to overthrow the govern-

POLITICAL POINTERS

ment in November. Nine others were tried by the tribunal almost immediately after attempting to stage a second coup on December 28.

West Africa magazine reported that the latter putsch attempt began when a group of armed soldiers, calling themselves the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM), attempted to invade Strasser's official residence on the night of December 28. The group was caught in the act and three of its leaders were killed in the ensuing fire-fight. According to the article, the coup plotters had brought a tape recording of a speech that they planned to broadcast upon seizing power. The 40-minute speech gave the reasons for both the November and December putsch attempts, which included the poor state of the country's roads, excessive school fees, and a determination to end the rebel war. The tape recording also explained that the NPRC had been too slow in releasing political detainees and in forming a civilian government.

Strasser hastily announced on the radio that those implicated in the coup attempt would be brought before a special military tribunal. The nine putsch plotters who survived the fighting at his residence were put to death by a firing squad the next day.

The executions were condemned by Amnesty International and the international community. British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd announced on January 5 that Britain was suspending all new economic aid to Sierra Leone—worth \$6.2 million—in protest of the executions.

The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service announced that a rally in Freetown's Victoria Park brought thousands of people out to protest against the coup attempt and show their support for the NPRC. But Sierra Leoneans' reactions to the executions have been mixed. The Sierra Leone Bar Association has asked the government to repeal the decree it issued to set up the military tribunals to try the coup plotters.

SOUTH AFRICA

On February 18, the African National Congress approved a plan that would

give minority parties representation in government for five years after the end of white monopoly power in South Africa. But the plan—which was also endorsed by President F.W. de Klerk—has come under fire from black groups to the left and right of the ANC, as well as by elements of the government and the Congress.

When representatives of the ANC and the government—South Africa's principal negotiators—tentatively agreed to the plan at a February 10-12 meeting, it was heralded as a landmark compromise. The government dropped its long-held demand that minority rights be enshrined in any post-apartheid constitution. In return, National Party representation in government was virtually assured until 1999. The agreement stipulates that any party receiving at least 5 percent of the vote in South Africa's first non-racial election be guaranteed spots in a new cabinet. The elections—to be held by April 1994—will put in place a 400-seat interim Parliament which will be charged with writing a new constitution. The party which gains the most seats would name the president.

Reaction by critics of the agreement was immediate. The conservative leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, said, "If the ANC-SACP [South African Communist Party] alliance and the government are serious in proceeding along the lines described, they are going to have to factor into their plans the need for using the South African Defense Force and the private army of the ANC-SACP [Spear of the Nation] to achieve compliance in KwaZulu-Natal." Groups to the left of the ANC were no less critical. The Azanian People's Organization said the plan would lead to "ungovernability." The organization's spokesman said, "The credibility of any black organization which chooses to get into co-governance with the white minority regime, however temporarily, will plummet."

But Mandela has been quick to play down that his party has entered into an alliance with the white government. "An interim government of national unity is not power-sharing...This proposal is designed to create national unity," he said.

The success of the proposal will be tested when it is discussed at soon to be resumed multi-party talks on South Africa's future.

AFRICAN OUTLOOK

Security Forces Open Fire on Demonstrators in Togo

Ernest Harsch



President Gnassingbé Eyadema dismissed the prime minister

A French and German delegation arrived in Togo in late January in an effort to defuse tension between civilian reformists and President Gnassingbé Eyadema, and to put the country's tenuous democratization process back on track. But soon after the delegation began its work in the capital, Lomé, on January 25, security forces fired on a crowd of opposition demonstrators. The bloody incident sparked off the country's latest wave of violence, prompting thousands of Togolese to flee into Ghana and Benin.

Tension in the capital had been running high since November when opposition parties and trade unions called a general strike, demanding the creation of a politically neutral security force, the formation of a new government, and the holding of free and fair legislative and presidential elections. Eyadema—who has used his close ties with the military to take back much of the power he ceded to Togo's national conference in August 1991—has all but ignored the demands and refuses to adhere to the transitional government's election timetables.

With the strike still on in January, Eyadema argued that the mandate of the transitional government, the High Council of the Republic (HCR), had ended on December 31. Later in the month, he dismissed the transitional prime minister whom he has continually bullied into submission, Joseph

Kokou Koffigoh—only to reappoint him five days later. Eyadema's maneuvers infuriated the Collective of Democratic Opposition (COD-2), which has also been increasingly frustrated at Koffigoh's frequent compromises with the president.

The general strike was in its 10th week, on January 25, when security forces opened fire on thousands of opposition supporters who had earlier converged outside a meeting between the Franco-German delegation and COD-2. France's Cooperation Minister Marcel Debarge told Radio France International that at

least 20 people were killed in the assault.

The situation grew worse on January 30 when two security officers were murdered in Lomé. The deaths of the two men, one of whom was reportedly burned alive, prompted the security forces and army to go on a retaliatory killing and looting spree. Initially the minister of defense and the minister of territorial administration and security issued an inflammatory joint statement on Radio Lomé which accused COD-2 of fomenting the chaos to force "law enforcement agents to adopt a vigorous riposte, which then can be used as a pretext to justify COD-2's security demands and thereby throw the country into total disorder."

But later the president "strongly" condemned the punitive action perpetrated by the soldiers, and the next day the two ministers also issued a more conciliatory communique. The pattern of army abuses—which frequently benefits Eyadema—followed by the president's apparent action to bring the violence under control has become familiar in Togo over the last year. According to the ministers' communique, five people were killed and 14 wounded in the soldiers' rampage. But the chairman of the Togolese Human Rights Commission estimated that dozens had been killed and a spokesperson for one of the opposition groups, the Democratic Convention of African Peoples, told Radio France

International that hundreds had been slaughtered.

One sign that the violence had been worse than the government reported was that within three days of the soldiers' rampage, some 40,000 Lomé residents had streamed across Togo's borders into neighboring Ghana and Benin, and thousands more were on their way to destinations north of the capital. In another communique broadcast on Radio Lomé, the minister of territorial administration and security blamed the exodus on a terror campaign by COD-2.

But across the border in Ghana, the government places the blame for the influx of refugees into its territory on Togo's soldiers. In a January 31 statement the Ghanaian government said that it was astonished that Eyadema continued to deny that security personnel loyal to him were responsible for the deaths in Lomé.

The tenuous relationship between Eyadema and Ghana's President Jerry Rawlings had already been strained earlier in the year when a Ghanaian government official told Agence France-Presse that there was little time left before it would be necessary for Ecowas to send troops into Togo. Rawlings himself has said that Togo must not be allowed to become "another Liberia."

Ghana also announced on January 31 that it had placed troops on full alert and was mobilizing them along the border to ensure the safety of the refugees. Eyadema responded that Ghana was "warmongering."

But a senior Ghanaian security official said on February 2 that his country had no intention of attacking Togo and would not allow itself to be drawn into an armed conflict with its neighbor. Instead, Ghana has said that it will consult with other "international partners," including the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, to help bring about an end to the crisis. Togo's other neighbor, Benin, offered to help mediate an end to the conflict.

To date, however, the Franco-German initiative has been the most earnest voice of mediation in the crisis. French and German delegates pushed

Continued on page 11

Violence Follows Peace Agreement in Rwanda

Violent demonstrations in Rwanda's capital, Kigali, and the killing of more than 300 people, mostly Tutsi, in the north of the country followed the signing of the most recent peace agreement between the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the government in Arusha, Tanzania, on January 9. The renewed violence is a blow to the complex mediation effort in Rwanda, involving the government, the RPF, and the country's political parties.

If implemented, the January 9 agreement on power-sharing would give the rebel group and four opposition political parties increased control over the cabinet and the National Assembly. The accord allotted six cabinet posts, including the presidency, to the ruling National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND), five to the RPF, four to the opposition Republican Democratic Movement (MDR), and the remaining seven to three other opposition parties. This would give the RPF and the opposition parties together a two-thirds majority in the 22-member cabinet, which is sufficient to override any MRND votes. Under the agreement, the Assembly, which is to be divided among the country's 17 registered political parties, would also effectively be controlled by the RPF and the opposition.

But the day after the agreement was announced, MRND Secretary-General Mathieu Ndirumutse told a rally in Kigali that his party would reject participation in any power arrangement that relegates the MRND to a position of political observer. His party later released a statement that it "categorically refuses to participate in the future broad-based transitional government."

Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana also replaced the leader of the government's negotiating team, Foreign Minister Boniface Ngulinzira, an MDR member, with the minister of defense. But the move has not been accepted by the coalition government's prime minister, the MDR's Dismas Nsengiyaremye.

On January 19, supporters of the MRND and its ally, the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (CDR), began two days of violent demonstrations against the power-sharing agreement in the capital, Kigali, and in the northern town of Ruhengeri. The openly anti-Tutsi CDR had been excluded from the new government. The demonstrators erected barricades, stopping traffic along several major roads. On January 20 two people were killed and dozens injured during the demonstrations.

Nsengiyaremye called for the "troublemakers" to be "brought to book," and a curfew was imposed in Kigali on January 20, helping to bring about a lull in the disturbances.

But a new wave of ethnic violence broke

out in Rwanda on January 22. The violence in northwestern Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, and other prefectures, was mostly directed at the minority Tutsi, who have suffered several waves of repression since the majority Hutu secured power with the help of Belgium shortly before independence in 1962.

Alison Des Forges, a board member of the human rights group Africa Watch who left Rwanda on January 21 after a two-week investigation, told *Africa Report* that in two of the areas she visited, local officials threatened to "take care of the Tutsi" once her group departed. Indeed, some 300 people were killed and more than 100 others were "missing" by early February, according to Des Forges. Among the victims were women and children, some hacked to death.

Observers said the ethnic violence was sparked off by the violent demonstrations against the latest Arusha accord. Referring to the violence, Des Forges said, "It is clear those who are opposed to the accords at the highest levels of the government are trying to indicate that the country is ungovernable without their collaboration."

Habyarimana did not take public action to halt the violence until a speech on January 28 in which he proclaimed that the bandits responsible for the vio-

lence were hiding behind the MRND label. He later toured Gisenyi, where most of the killing took place, allegedly to establish accountability for those slaughtered.

In the meantime, a round of talks over military matters, which was scheduled to take place on January 25, had been postponed, and the Tutsi-dominated RPF announced in early February that it was ceasing talks until the ethnic bloodshed ended.

Then on February 8, the RPF—which began its armed rebellion on October 1, 1990, and signed a ceasefire agreement with the government last year—attacked government positions in northern Rwanda in response to the slaughter of Tutsi there. Hundreds of thousands of Rwandans reportedly fled the fighting for Kigali.

On February 10, the RPF announced that it was "clearly understood" as to why it resumed fighting, and declared a ceasefire. But the Rwandan defense minister announced on February 11 that the ceasefire had not taken effect because the RPF continued to stage attacks. The minister added that the government would respect the 1992 ceasefire pact if the RPF returned to its February 8 positions. The RPF's Radio Muhabura said on the same day, however, that it was the government which continued to stage attacks.

In the capital, the four main opposition parties which have representation in government accused both the RPF and Habyarimana of being directly responsible for the renewed fighting and urged a return to the Arusha negotiations.

Despite a break in the violence on February 13 and 14, the U.S. State Department issued a voluntary evacuation order to its personnel in Rwanda.

While negotiators, including the Organization of African Unity, tried to get the talks back on track in February, the situation was becoming increasingly precarious for hundreds of thousands of Rwandan refugees. The World Health Organization declared in January that a critical stage had been reached for the estimated 250,000 to 500,000 civil war refugees housed in camps in the north of the country and in neighboring East African nations. That was before the fighting began again. ■



President Juvenal Habyarimana

Cameras

INTERVIEW: ENOCH SITHOLE, THE NEW NATION'S POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL EDITOR

The New Nation was one of South Africa's first alternative newspapers to grow out of the liberation struggle of the 1980s. Established at the height of the struggle in 1985, the provocative weekly was a leader in calling attention to state abuses of human rights. As a result, the New Nation's journalists were frequently harassed and detained, and the paper was at one time banned by the government.

The New Nation remains a critical voice in South Africa, even as press restrictions are lifted and apartheid dissolves.

Africa Report's Marks Chabedi spoke to the New Nation's political and educational editor, Enoch Sithole, about the changing role of the alternative media in the new South Africa.

Africa Report: Who reads the *New Nation*?

Sithole: The bulk of our readers are activists—at the grassroots and in leadership positions. For instance, our readers in the trade union movements range from shop stewards to the Congress of South African Trade Union (Cosatu) executives.

But we also have a very good readership among academics, and I am pleased to say that a senior National Party member of Parliament has said that she likes to read my newspaper because it informs her of the thinking of opponents at the grassroots level. So I assume that even National Party leaders read the *New Nation*.

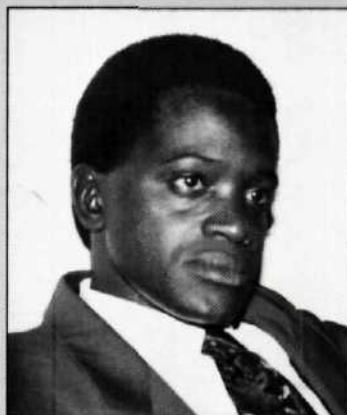
Africa Report: What is the current state of the alternative press in South Africa? How has it changed since the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress, and other anti-apartheid organizations in February 1990?

Sithole: The trend since 1990, when the liberation movement was unbanned, is such that the whole notion of alternative press has disappeared. The term which is now used to refer to the alternative press is "independent newspapers." Traditionally, when one talked about independent newspapers, one talked about newspapers which did not belong to the government. But in South Africa we have a different scenario where many newspapers do not belong to the government but do belong to the major corporations. So newspapers like mine are regarded as independent newspapers in the sense that they belong neither to the monopolies nor to the government.

The only difference between the days of grand apartheid and after February 2, 1990 is that the state-owned and the commercial press somehow used to be silent when the apartheid machinery was mowing down people.

Since February 2 the playing field has apparently changed. Now all that we write about, they can also write about. There is no longer a clear line as to what belongs to the alternative press and what belongs to the mainstream press. But the independent press has the tradition of criticizing, which the mainstream press does not have. And we believe that even if we move into a democratic society, the independent press will carry along with that tradition. It is a tradition of democracy which is about self-criticism, challenge, and questions. The alternative press has that tradition.

Africa Report: The state crackdown on the press in the 1980s has been relaxed since February 2, 1990. What about other forms of censorship, including intimidation and attacks



Russell Geeke

on journalists by people who disagree with them? Is that a major impediment to your work?

Sithole: It has impeded our work somewhat, but that is not the major problem. What we need to take into account of when such things happen is that South Africa does not have a culture of political tolerance. And apartheid is responsible for that. Whether

apartheid is over or not, black communities are still oppressed.

I will give you an example of why journalists have had problems in the townships. We have violence in South Africa, people are defenseless, and the state security apparatus is either supporting those who perpetrate violence or they are doing nothing to stop it. So you have people taking the law into their own hands. That is why they are sensitive when journalists enter into the townships and investigate people's capability to defend themselves. A journalist has to think twice: Do I write about the capacity of a self-defense unit in a particular street that tomorrow is mowed down by the police, or do I just ignore that and allow the people to defend themselves because no one is there to defend them? The situation has changed, but it is a very complex situation.

The ideal situation would be to have the security forces play their role, have the politicians and everybody working towards political tolerance so that we can have a violence-free society, and the journalists can be left free to do their work. It cannot be expected that journalists will be above the violence. If there is violence in South Africa everyone is affected.

Africa Report: How do you transcend the perception that the alternative media is partisan in that it promotes the views of other groups and ignores some groups in the context of the liberation struggle?

Sithole: That has a tradition of its own. During the days of struggle people had to take particular positions, including journalists. For example, some journalists in the alternative press—myself included—believe in complete non-racialism. That is the basis for which we have opposed the apartheid system. But some segments within the liberation movement do not believe in non-racialism and it is difficult for some of us to associate ourselves with their racialistic or quasi-racialistic ideas.

The ideal situation is where all liberation movements come together. Then the public and the journalists could say, "We are not going to support any particular political organization, but we are going to support the movement toward genuine democracy."

Now we don't see genuine democracy happening in South Africa if there is still room for racialism of some kind. We understand the inequalities and the reality of South Africa, but we don't believe that we will be helping the situation by supporting such positions.

Africa Report: You talked about the traditions of the alterna-

tive or independent press, but the whole landscape is changing, so traditions too must change. How do you see your role changing in the new South Africa?

Sithole: We have changed already. During the 1980s, and perhaps a little beyond 1990, our role was to protest and campaign along with the oppressed people for the dismantling of apartheid. Although much of apartheid has been dismantled, the core of apartheid, which is the vote, has not been attained by the people. During this period of transition we have played the role of exposing the hidden hand of the apartheid machinery in the violence that is delaying the progress of our country. By so doing we are not trying to weaken the National Party, but we are trying to clean it, to ensure that it comes to the negotiating table with only one agenda, which is moving South African society to a post-apartheid era.

That has been our role so far. But beyond that, and in 1993, our role will be to help prepare the voteless South Africans for their first vote ever. We see ourselves as part of the whole movement of encouragement, of preparing people to go to their first election ever. Beyond that if there is a non-racial government in South Africa, I am afraid our role, particularly that of my newspaper, will be making the life of every dishonest politician uncomfortable. We will not allow corruption. We will expose it as we have done with the National Party. We did not criticize the National Party because it was a nationalist party, we criticized them for what they were doing, and some of the things they were doing were against the laws they wrote themselves.

For that matter, we will also not allow an ANC government to come into power, write very bright laws and not follow them. Our role will be to say, "You've got the law, now you've got to follow it."

Africa Report: Then you see yourself as being more of a watchdog in the future?

Sithole: Yes, we see ourselves as watchdogs on behalf of the community. We will be the watchdogs of the people who will not have direct access to the House of Parliament and so on. We will watch for them how funds are being used, how the politicians are tackling the problems of upliftment of the society as a whole.

Africa Report: Cosatu has threatened to wage a consumer boycott of South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) advertisers if the state does not relinquish control over SABC. What is your view on that, and whom do you think the control of the state-controlled broadcasting should be relinquished to?

Sithole: The control of the SABC is an issue in discussion at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). The views which have been put forth there, and which apparently enjoy the support of most, if not all, the Codesa participants, is that there should be an independent media commission—independent from the state and independent from any political party—that should run SABC and all the other state media. It is necessary—particularly during this period of transition—that no political party has unequal access to the SABC than others. So that is the position which I personally, and I believe most journalists in South Africa, support.

Africa Report: How do you view Western reporting on South Africa and Western correspondents who are in South Africa?

Sithole: I do not know because since I arrived in the U.S., I haven't seen a single article in the major U.S. newspapers. But generally I believe the Western press has a tendency of reporting about South Africa, or Africa for that matter, only when there is a crisis. I am not sure whether U.S. readers are really aware of the processes that lead to crises. I think it is doing a disservice to report major confrontation in Soweto between Inkatha and the ANC without having written about the background. People need to be informed on a daily basis about the forces at play so that they can understand the reasons for tensions—and the reasons for not having tensions, if that is the case.

Africa Report: What is the most important message about South Africa that you would want Americans to remember?

Sithole: The important thing is that South Africa is working toward an election. Whether there is an agreement at Codesa or any other multi-party forum, the reality is that an election cannot be delayed any longer.

That does not mean to say that there is consensus among all South Africans that there should be elections. Some groups who have ganged up in what they call the Concerned South African Group argue that we shouldn't have an election. But it is clear to everybody in South Africa—except to them—that they are spoilers. Any intelligent Inkatha member knows that they have a lot to lose if elections are held tomorrow because they are in power in the homeland and do not want to see an end to their power base. The message here is that leaders in South Africa who are committed to moving toward democracy should be encouraged by the American public. And those who do not want progress because they are already in power should be isolated. ■

Togo Continued

hard in early February for the convening of "round-table talks" in France, which included representatives of the prime minister, the chairman of the HCR, the president, the former ruling Rally of the Togolese Party, and the various opposition groups. But the meeting convened in Colmar, France, on February 8, was short-lived. Eyadema's representatives reportedly left the country on February 9, after 12 hours of fruitless talks. The negotiations have since been suspended.

As a result of the failure at Colmar, France announced the suspension of its civilian cooperation with Togo. Military cooperation had been broken off in November. The French promised to supply Togo with humanitarian aid. Germany had earlier announced the suspension of new aid for Togo.

With no clear end to the impasse in sight, Koffigoh surprised observers on February 11 when he announced that he had struck an agreement with Eyadema. Radio Lomé read a prepared statement which outlined seven basic principles agreed to by the two

leaders, including provisions to neutralize the army and keep it in the barracks except in extreme circumstances. It was also announced that the prime minister would name a new transitional government.

Critics have greeted the prime minister's announcement with skepticism, but any hope it breathes into the situation may be welcomed by Togolese. Prior to the agreement, Diyanama Ywasa, a Togolese human rights lawyer, told *Africa Report*, "There is now a dimension of violence there [in Lomé] that feels close to a civil war." ■

SOUTH AFRICA

The African National Congress announced on February 20 that all remaining international trade, investment, and aid sanctions against South Africa could be lifted as soon as a date for the country's first non-racial elections has been set and a transitional executive council established.

Such a move represents a shift in ANC policy, which had previously called for the remaining sanctions to stay in place until the election of a non-racial interim government.

In calling for an end to the sanctions, it appears the ANC's primary concern is South Africa's worsening economy, and in particular the high level of unemployment. Nelson Mandela said prior to the change in policy that a failure to bring an early end to sanctions "would make it difficult, even for a democratic government, to repair our economy." In Washington for President Clinton's inauguration ceremony, the ANC president told a news conference that he would recommend that the ANC's executive council adopt the new sanctions position if the future creation of jobs would be guaranteed. "If I can get an assurance from business that they will be able to make a significant contribution toward cutting unemployment within the next six or 12 months, and freeze retrenchment then I am prepared to go back to my organization," he said.

The ANC's green light would probably speed the lifting of restrictions by more than 150 U.S. cities, counties and states on American firms investing in South Africa. These local sanctions remain in place despite the Bush administration's July 1991 executive order that lifted the federal sanctions of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act.

Mandela added that once sanctions are removed he foresees an important role for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in the revitalization of the South African economy. "We are already in contact with the World Bank on ways in which it could help the country," he said. The Bank has had a team of specialists researching South Africa's post-apartheid needs for more than a year. The Bank is reportedly poised to grant loans for

BUSINESS BRIEFS

as much as \$1 billion a year, primarily to finance electrification, water, sewer, and road projects in black townships and to improve education.

In a related story, Norway's foreign ministry announced on February 23 that it would lift economic and trade sanctions against South Africa on March 15 because of the democratic reforms there. The ministry said that Norway would continue the embargo of arms and oil products to South Africa, as mandated by the United Nations Security Council.

MOZAMBIQUE

The World Bank has approved a \$10.5 million program aimed at privatizing management of the Maputo corridor—Mozambique's war-wrecked port facility and railway system.

The Journal of Commerce reported that prior to Mozambique's civil war, the corridor system—including the Port of Maputo and railway links to Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and South Africa—earned as much as \$110 million annually. Since the mid-1970s, fighting between Renamo and government forces ruined the corridor's rail line infrastructure and traffic plunged to 1.6 million tons in 1992 from a high of 18 million tons in 1973.

The corridor is currently run by a government company, Empresa Nacional de Porto e Caminhof de Ferro de Mocambique (CFM), which relies on millions of dollars in subsidies. Under the World Bank program, the government would retain control of the corridor's assets, but a private company would run the system on a lease arrangement. "The objective is to increase the efficiency in the operational management of the CFM," René Bonnel, a World Bank official told *Africa Report*.

The Bank plans to begin the program by issuing a tender for a consultant to design an efficient private man-

agement plan for the corridor. Once this is completed, Mozambican officials will allow prospective companies to submit proposals to manage the port and railway system.

The efficient management of the corridor provides potential benefits to other countries in the region. "It will reduce transport costs for the international traffic of Zimbabwe, Swaziland and the northeastern Transvaal region of South Africa," Bonnel said.

Observers feel the chances for the success of the project are good in light of the successful UN-sponsored peace accord signed by President Joaquim Chissano and the Mozambique National Resistance Movement leader, Afonso Dhlakama, on October 17. Security has improved considerably in Mozambique since a program to disarm and resettle the warring factions was started in December.

BENIN

In January, Credit Lyonnais became the fifth bank to open a branch in Benin since the 1989 collapse of the nation's state banking system. The French institution is expected to claim 20 percent of Benin's banking market and is being seen as a boost to the country's efforts to regain the confidence of foreign investors. According to Radio France International, the funds of the four other banks operating in the country total about \$330 million.

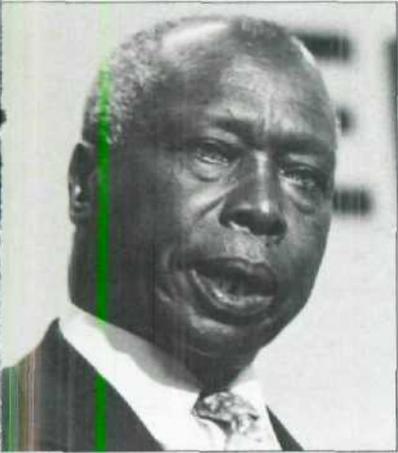
Also in January, the International Monetary Fund announced the approval of a \$65 million, three-year loan to Benin under its enhanced structural adjustment facility.

NIGERIA

Britain's Prime Minister John Major reportedly responded favorably in February to Nigeria's request that its almost \$28 billion external debt be rescheduled on the condition that Nigeria speedily implements economic reforms it outlined in January in its 1993 budget.

The prime minister's approval of Nigeria's economic plan was given in a meeting with the chairman of Nigeria's transitional council, Ernest Shonkan.

|| KENYA ||
BY RUSSELL GEEKIE



UNM Tzovaras



Betty Press

A year after the international donor community forced President Daniel arap Moi to open up the authoritarian political system, Kenyans voted in the country's first multi-party elections since 1966. But pre-election enthusiasm deflated when the opposition

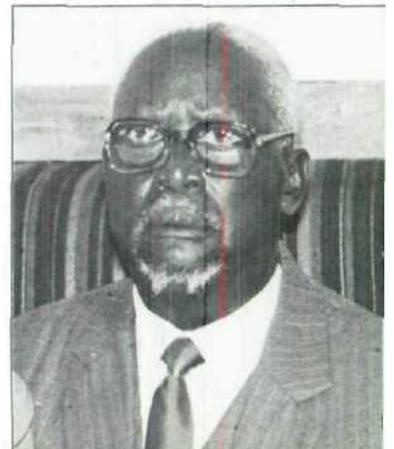
SPLIT DECISION

divided, letting Moi win with 37 percent of the vote. Concerns about the elections' validity and the president's virtual exclusion of two of Kenya's most powerful ethnic groups from his new government have cast doubt on the legitimacy of Moi's rule—and whether Western donors will be satisfied.

Clockwise from upper left: President Daniel arap Moi, Kenneth Matiba, Oginga Odinga, and Mwai Kibaki



Camerapix



Camerapix

"**W**

e want change," a panhandler said as he walked past Nairobi's manicured City Square less than a week before the country's first multi-party elections in 26 years. The man said he

was looking forward to the prosperity the voting would bring. Jobs would become available, he reasoned, when a new government replaced President Daniel arap Moi's Kenya African National Union (Kanu) regime.

Few Kenyans pinned such a complete reversal of fortune on the elections. But expectations for change ran high when more than two-thirds of the country's registered voters went to the polls on December 29, just over a year after the international donor community suspended aid to force Moi to open up the political system.

Following the polling, enthusiastic voters could be seen huddled around radios to hear the Kenya Broadcasting Service announce returns trickling in from each of the country's 188 constituencies.

Partial returns made for a somber New Year's Eve for many Kenyans however, as it became clear early on December 31 that a divided opposition had allowed Moi to win the presidency with little more than a third of the vote and his Kanu party was on its way to taking the most seats in Parliament. Doubts over the validity of the electoral process and the president's failure to include viable representation from two of Kenya's most powerful ethnic groups now throw into question the legitimacy of his rule and his ability to restore sorely needed foreign aid.

That Moi lacked a commitment to democracy and would go to great lengths to retain his 14-year grip on power was never in doubt in the minds of the opposition. Prior to the government's December 1991 decision to repeal section 2A of the constitution (the provision which had made Kenya a de jure one-party state in 1982), Moi argued vehemently that opening up the political system

would lead to widespread civil unrest. Indeed, in early 1992, the worst ethnic violence in Kenya's 29 years of independence came to pass. Critics contend that the clashes—ostensibly over land disputes—were in fact fomented by the president, first to postpone the multi-party process and later to divide the opposition.

The violence—which claimed almost 800 lives and left thousands displaced in the early part of last year—was most explosive in Rift Valley Province where members of Moi's Kalenjin ethnic group attacked Luos, Kikuyus, and Luhyas, who support the opposition. The worst of the clashes subsided before the run-up to the voting was in full swing, but violence continued, making an electoral atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Although members of all the main parties were guilty of menacing their political opponents in the campaign, election observers said government officials and members of the ruling party were primarily responsible for the intimidation. Rough-and-tumble tactics left several constituencies in the Rift Valley virtually off-limits to the opposition. A member of the Commonwealth Observer Group speculated that this was done to "free up resources" to be used in other places.

Incidents on behalf of Kanu also took place in such opposition strongholds as Murang'a, the Central Province town which is thought of as the "Kikuyu Homeland." As one approached the town by road from the capital in December, the opposition's strength in the region was evidenced by its campaign posters adorning virtually every multi-colored *matatu* (taxi-van)—and by the flashing of two-finger multi-party signs by the vehicles' packed-in passengers. Posters of the president or the ruling party symbol, the rooster, were not to be found.

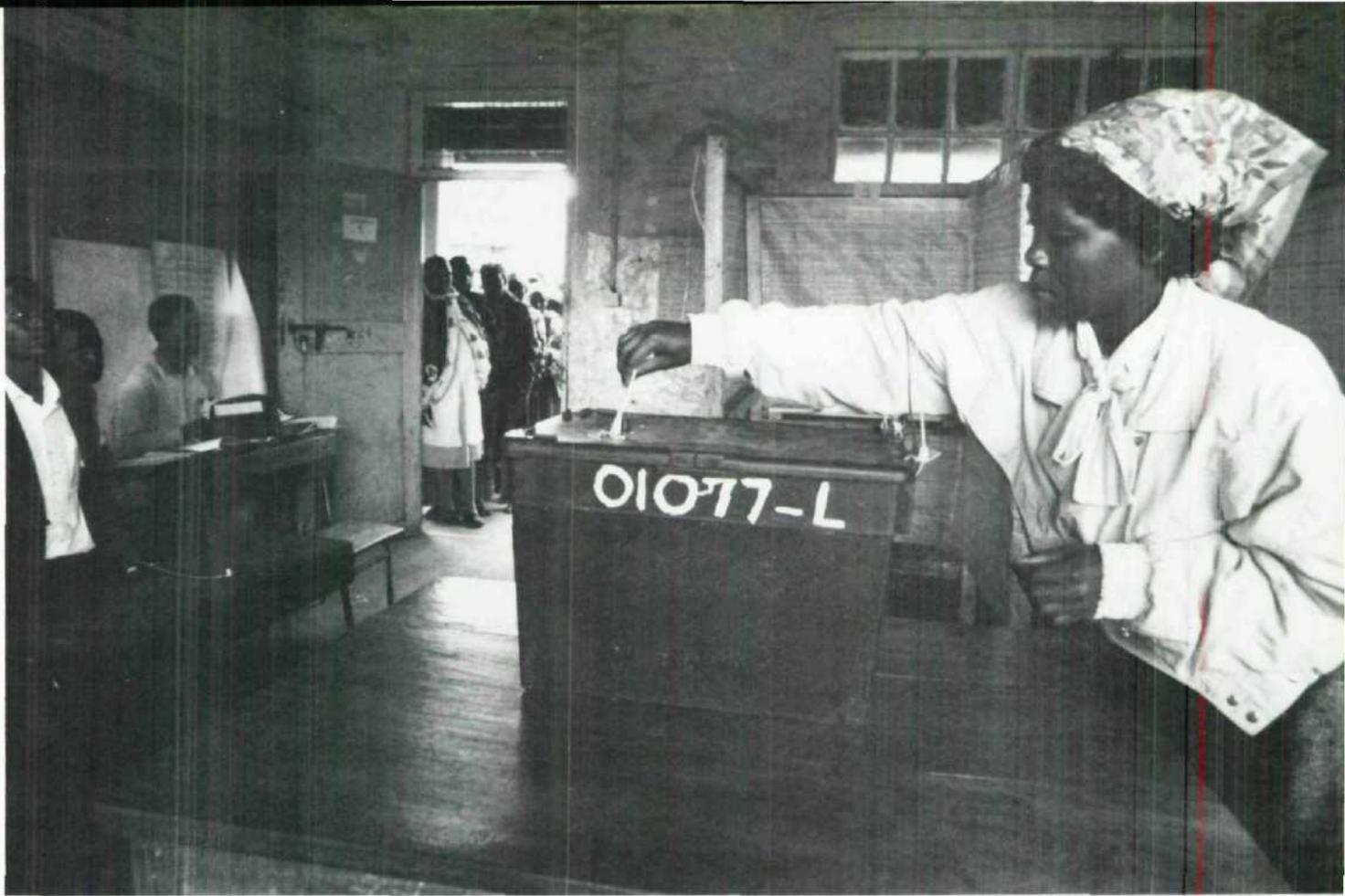
In Murang'a, a reverend from the Church of the Province of Kenya, James Kamau, recounted acts of violence that Youth for Kanu '92 had instigated. Telling of the state's hand in violence, he explained that Kanu youths were not arrested by security forces for their part

in clashes with opposition party supporters. Youths associated with the leading opposition group in the area, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Asili (FORD), had been detained.

The chairman of the Commonwealth observer group said of the elections: "The results in many instances directly reflect, however imperfectly, the will of the people"

Russell Gookie





Betty Press

Government officials' involvement in election irregularities throughout the country went further than turning a blind eye to the Kanu youths. Government funds, civil servants, and state-owned vehicles were all used on behalf of the ruling party, while the state-run radio and television were also biased in favor of Kanu.

In a December 16 preliminary statement of findings, the largest of the international observer groups, the Washington-based International Republican Institute (IRI), reported that the electoral process had been "severely damaged" by the government's "centralized and systematic manipulation of the administrative and security structure of the state to the ruling party's advantage."

The government's reluctance to de-link itself from Kanu during the campaign and its involvement in the violence lent credence to opposition claims that Moi essentially stage-managed the electoral process.

Irregularities which favored Kanu took place at virtually every level of the process, beginning with the inadequate June-July registration of voters. An estimated one million young Kenyans were unable to register because they had not obtained their prerequisite national identification cards by the July 8 close of registration. This was largely due to administrative delays in issuing the cards. Many refugees of the violence were also unable to register.

Ruling party supporters were bused across constituency lines to illegally register in areas where Kanu felt it needed to bolster its chances of winning. In one

polling area, 5,700 people—all of whom had apparently Kalenjin names—listed the same post office box as their address, according to an election observer.

The setting of an election date itself—which the president termed his "secret weapon"—was irregular. When the National Electoral Commission (NEC) published its long-awaited electoral timetable on November 3, opposition officials discovered that the time allotted for the nomination of candidates had been illegally shortened from 21 to 10 days. This would have allowed for a snap election on December 7. Kenya's High Court ruled that candidates had to be given more time to submit their nomination papers.

Another problem with nominations began with the

Continued on page 17

Betty Press



America's Maverick Ambassador

When the Bush administration's ambassador to Kenya, the conservative Smith Hempstone, arrived in Nairobi three years ago, few expected he would exhibit anything but a continuity of the American tolerance for the ruling party's transgressions. But with the end of the Cold War having lessened the perceived strategic importance of the East African country, the former newspaperman became an outspoken advocate for democratic change and a catalyst for the opposition. The ambassador's refusal to tone down his calls for democratization and accountability infuriated the Kenyan government—and frequently frustrated the administration that appointed him. To the chagrin of the administration, Hempstone's views on another matter were made public when he argued forcefully on the eve of Operation Restore Hope against U.S. intervention in Somalia in a cable to Undersecretary of State for International Affairs Frank G. Wisner. Africa Report spoke to the controversial ambassador in Nairobi, shortly after Kenyans went to the polls on December 29 and before all the election returns were announced.

Africa Report: What were your general impressions of the voting on December 29?

Hempstone: In the first place, you have to understand that the embassy sent out 15 teams. Each team visited an average of 10 polling places. That's 150 out of 10,499. It's a reasonable little sample, but it's certainly not definitive. The reporting of all 15 teams was really remarkably similar. I think we would give the people of Kenya an "A" for their patience, good humor, and disciplined steadfastness in their desire to vote. I think we would probably give the administration, police, and General Services Unit a "B" for their restraint and cooperation, which was far better than we might have expected.

It is clear that there were widespread anomalies and irregularities. What is unclear is whether these were caused by inefficiency or by plans to hamper the opposition. As I understand it, and again, you have to realize that we have far from complete returns at this point, it would appear that the presidential vote in Rift Valley is extremely high, running as much as 90 percent of registration. We would have to compare that, and I don't think we have yet, to how it runs in opposition strongholds.

Africa Report: Were you surprised at the relative lack of violence during the elections?

Hempstone: Yes. I didn't expect wholesale violence or serious violence, but I did expect fairly widespread scuffling and the sort of thing that you would get in many elections. In my own case, I went to 14 polling places in four areas. I would say the same there.

Africa Report: Do you consider the elections a fruitful step in the democratization process?

Hempstone: Sure. Flawed as it is or may be, it is a step down the path. There will be an opposition in the Parliament. For that alone I think the elections were worthwhile. I would have much preferred a cleaner, more efficient election.

Africa Report: Do you think there is room for Kanu to clean itself up?

Hempstone: I don't know why not. It looks like they've gotten or will get rid of a fair number of some of the worst people in it. If you think of government without some of those people, you're thinking about a hell of a lot better government.

Africa Report: Could you talk a little bit about what you feel you've done in Kenya in the last three years? Are you satisfied with that?

Hempstone: Well, this is it. And I'm not happy about it. It's like having a deformed child, but you still love the

kid. Even though it's got six arms and no legs. And I think we did accomplish something. So, if that's all there is, as the song goes, I guess I have to settle for it.

Africa Report: Do you think the democratization process is irreversible here?

Hempstone: Yes. That's the thing that encourages me about it. Messy as it is, it's a start in the right direction.

Africa Report: Turning to Somalia. There is a widely publicized cable that you sent to the undersecretary for international affairs. You were strongly against intervention. Are your views the same on that now? And what would you advise?

Hempstone: Yes, because most of the things I mentioned in there are coming about, are coming to pass. It's not quite accurate to say I was opposed to intervention. I was simply asked my advice and I simply pointed out a few precautionary notes of what they're getting into. That's all. I'm not a pacifist. I don't mind a little blood here and there. I didn't then and I don't now see where our national security interests were involved. In fact, I don't think anybody's made the case that they are, including the secretary of defense.

Africa Report: What advice would you offer the Clinton administration in shaping an Africa policy?

Hempstone: I think there are difficult times ahead. The multi-party thing, I have to admit, hasn't been a total success. We've had Cameroon, we've had Togo, and we've had Angola. I don't think the Clinton administration is going to need my advice on that. They will recognize what their own priorities are, and I don't think they'll be very far from those of the Bush administration. It looks like—and I suppose we ought to take a jaundiced eye at this—that we're going to be bogged down in a lot of Somalias. I'll give you two Somalias: southern Sudan, Mozambique.

Africa Report: Do you support the United States turning over more authority to the United Nations?

Hempstone: Turning over more authority? I guess to answer a question put that way I would, as an American nationalist, have to say no. But I certainly don't object to cooperation.

Africa Report: What are your plans for the future?

Hempstone: I and all other political ambassadors have been told to vacate by March 1. That I will do, unless I receive specific instructions to the contrary. That's just a general message going out to everybody, not just to me. I don't know, I may write a book, in which case I may have to leave town. I may go to work for some publication. I may do some teaching. I haven't decided yet. I may become Kenyan ambassador in Washington. ■

—R.G.

requirement that parliamentary candidates or their agents hand in their papers in person on the new deadline, December 9. As many as 50 opposition candidates or their agents said they were physically prevented from reaching nominating centers with their papers. They reported the snatching of nomination papers, threats, illegal roadblocks, and in some cases, kidnappings.

The actions helped some 15 Kanu candidates to run unopposed. Several opposition candidates also suspiciously rejected their parties' nominations, allowing Kanu candidates to run de facto unopposed. When opposition officials appealed the nomination irregularities to the electoral commission, the matter was deferred to the courts. Political rallies were another obstacle for opposition candidates, who faced difficulties in obtaining permits in several regions.

In one of the more blatant displays of government support for Kanu, state-sponsored celebrations throughout the country for Jamhuri Day—the December 12 celebration of Kenya's independence—reportedly turned into campaign rallies, complete with speeches and entertainment in support of the ruling party. Partisanship at the main independence celebration in the capital's Nyayo National Stadium prompted the American, German, Danish, and Swedish ambassadors and the Canadian high commissioner to walk out of the event.

Addressing the stadium crowd, Moi explained the reason why the dignitaries had staged the walkout. Members of the audience responded with shouts of *jogoo* (Swahili for "rooster"). He added that Kanu came to the celebration because of the role "we" had played in independence and questioned why supporters from the main opposition parties, FORD-Kenya, FORD-Asili, and the Democratic Party (DP), had not turned out for the event.

Government and election officials were effective in assuring election observers that irregularities would be taken care of and that the management of the elections was in good hands. But in response to a question about a procedure which could allow ballots to be traced back to the voter who marked them, Reuben Ryanga, the director of elections, told a small group of observers, "In this country nobody cares who you vote for. There is the rule of law."

Fears that the rule of law would break down were bolstered in mid-December, when 16 Kikuyus were killed and some 10,000 were forced to flee their homes in the Rift Valley town of Burnt Forest.

But the widescale violence that many feared would take place on election day never materialized, and over five million people went to the polls under mostly peaceful conditions.

Administrative delays were reported at the majority of Kenya's more than 10,000 polling stations. But in a sign of their commitment to democracy, voters waited on long lines in the hot sun, and in some cases into the night, to exercise their right to vote.

The results of their patience would be a victory for

Moi with little more than 36 percent of the vote and 112 seats in Parliament for Kanu candidates, including 12 the president was entitled to name. The three main opposition parties would combine for the remaining 88 seats.

With the votes still being counted on December 31, the two largest international observing teams, the 54-person IRI and the 38-member Commonwealth groups, held separate press conferences in which both cited irregularities. These included the pre-election problems, the delays in opening the polls, and delays in the counting of votes. Other election day irregularities that were cited included poor ballot box security and ballot secrecy not being maintained.

The groups refused to say whether or not the elections were free and fair, relaying that it was up to Kenyans to make that judgement. But the impression was that despite the myriad of irregularities, the observers found the results broadly acceptable.

The Commonwealth's chairman, Justice Telford Georges, may have revealed some of the pressure to come to this conclusion in his groups' press conference, when he said, "Whatever we say, it [the election results] will stand."

By accepting the results, the observer groups encouraged the opposition—which was finally united in defeat—to call off a threatened boycott of Parliament. Many observers said that it was better for the opposition to accept the returns and have a voice in Parliament, than to reject the results and possibly plunge Kenya into civil war.

The domestic workhorse of the observing groups, the National Election Monitoring Unit, said in a January 2 statement that it found various irregularities, but added, "Our people have come a long way toward exercising their choice...For this reason, we would urge that everything should be done to avoid doing anything that may jeopardize what has already painstakingly been achieved." On the same day, the Commonwealth's chairman said in a statement, "The evolution of the process to polling day and the subsequent count was increasingly positive to a degree that we believe the results in many instances directly reflect, however imperfectly, the will of the people."

In a sign that later, more comprehensive reports on the elections would be more critical, IRI released a statement on January 4, which said, "We believe that the electoral environment was unfair and the electoral process seriously flawed." But it also gave legitimacy to the vote, saying, "We feel that this process is a significant step in Kenya's transition to genuine multi-party democracy."

Regardless of the freeness or fairness of the elections, it was the opposition's inability to form an alliance that allowed Moi to win the presidency. Indeed, had any two of the three main opposition parties been able to pool their votes, they would have exceeded the almost 2 million the president polled.

Many critics of the president—who fully expected him to remain in power at the onset of the vote—still had expectations that the multi-party exercise would foster meaningful change on Kenya's political and economic

Russell Geokie



map. They saw Moi's inability to capture a majority of the vote and the rejection of 15 of his cabinet ministers in parliamentary races as a clear signal that it was time to create a more inclusive and accountable government than the scandal-ridden Kanu had previously supplied.

"You have made your choice and your choice is clear," the president said in his inauguration speech on January 4. He promised to do his best "in the service of all Kenyans—and I mean all Kenyans."

But early on in his new term, Moi made clear that he would do things his way when he spurned an early invitation to meet the representatives of the three main opposition parties together. Instead, he reportedly held secret meetings with incoming opposition parliamentarians who had support from the Luo or Luhya communities. But there were no reports of meetings with representatives from parties with support from Kenya's single most influential ethnic group, the Kikuyu.

The Kikuyu control much of Kenya's economic wealth and the main Kikuyu candidate, FORD-Asili's Kenneth Matiba, came in second in the presidential polling with 27 percent of the vote. The third-place finisher, Mwai Kibaki of the DP, is also a Kikuyu and even FORD-Kenya, which is led by a Luo, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, drew some Kikuyu support. Many feel that a failure to deal with Kikuyus could lead to renewed ethnic fighting.

The new cabinet Moi named on January 13 was the most visible sign yet that the president is not interested in building a consensus government, but is instead interested in continuing patronage politics. The cabinet appointments rewarded the ethnic groups and individuals who supported Kanu on December 29 and included no meaningful representation from the Luo or Kikuyu communities, both of which offered virtually no support for Kanu in the polling. The only appointments from these groups, Joseph Kamotho and Dalmas Otieno, a Kikuyu and Luo respectively, were both soundly defeated in parliamentary races in their home areas. They were also among the several cabinet ministers who were trounced at the polls only to be included in Moi's 12 appointments to Parliament. Kamotho stayed on as education minister and Otieno as transport minister.

The cabinet was trimmed from 32 to 25 members, an austerity measure that was seen as a concession to donors. But the concessions apparently stopped there. Donors—who had wanted a change in economic policy-making personnel—were reportedly displeased with the

Women buddled together on voting lines: Voters waited on long lines, and into the night, to exercise their franchise

cabinet and its ability to deal with Kenya's mismanaged economy. It appears that Moi and the former finance minister, George Saitoti, will retain control of economic policy. Although Saitoti was moved

IRREGULARITIES WHICH FAVORED KANU TOOK PLACE AT VIRTUALLY EVERY LEVEL OF THE PROCESS, BEGINNING WITH REGISTRATION.

to the planning ministry, he was kept on as vice president. His replacement at finance, 32-year-old Musalia Mudavadi, inspired little confidence in the face of Kenya's great economic problems: Inflation exceeds 40 percent a year, foreign exchange is tight, and the budget deficit is soaring.

Another institution donors had hoped would create much needed government accountability and lead to better economic management was the new Parliament. But government critics pointed to the

president's temporary suspension of that body on January 27 as another reason not to restore the \$400 million in aid currently on hold.

Even when Parliament is restored, Kenyans and the international donor community wonder how effective the opposition's 88-seat voice will be. There are already questions as to whether or not the opposition, which shot itself in the foot in the elections, will remain cohesive.

Nonetheless, Kanu was prevented from obtaining the two-thirds majority necessary to pass constitutional amendments, and many observers feel the young and inexperienced Kanu representation will be ineffective. At the least, the opposition can use its presence in Parliament to expose corruption and human rights abuses, and push for legislation in these areas.

Even though the elections were far from perfect, the pressure to restore aid to a country which did in fact accede to donor demands to democratize is great. But Moi's maneuvers in January made it difficult for the IMF, which sent representatives to Nairobi in February, to sanction a resumption of financing.

It was also clear that the final reports of international observing groups would be more critical than their initial statements. The Commonwealth's final report presented a greatly flawed picture of the electoral process, and was particularly critical of the NEC chairman, Justice Zachaeus Chesoni. But in the end, the report maintained the Commonwealth's earlier position that the elections were a "giant step on the road to multi-party democracy." Several observers told *Africa Report* that members of the Commonwealth—with their many vested business interests in Kenya—had been looking to restore aid as quickly as possible after the election.

The U.S., whose ambassador, Smith Hempstone, had played such a strong role in supporting the democratization process in Kenya, was expected to be less forthcoming with assistance.

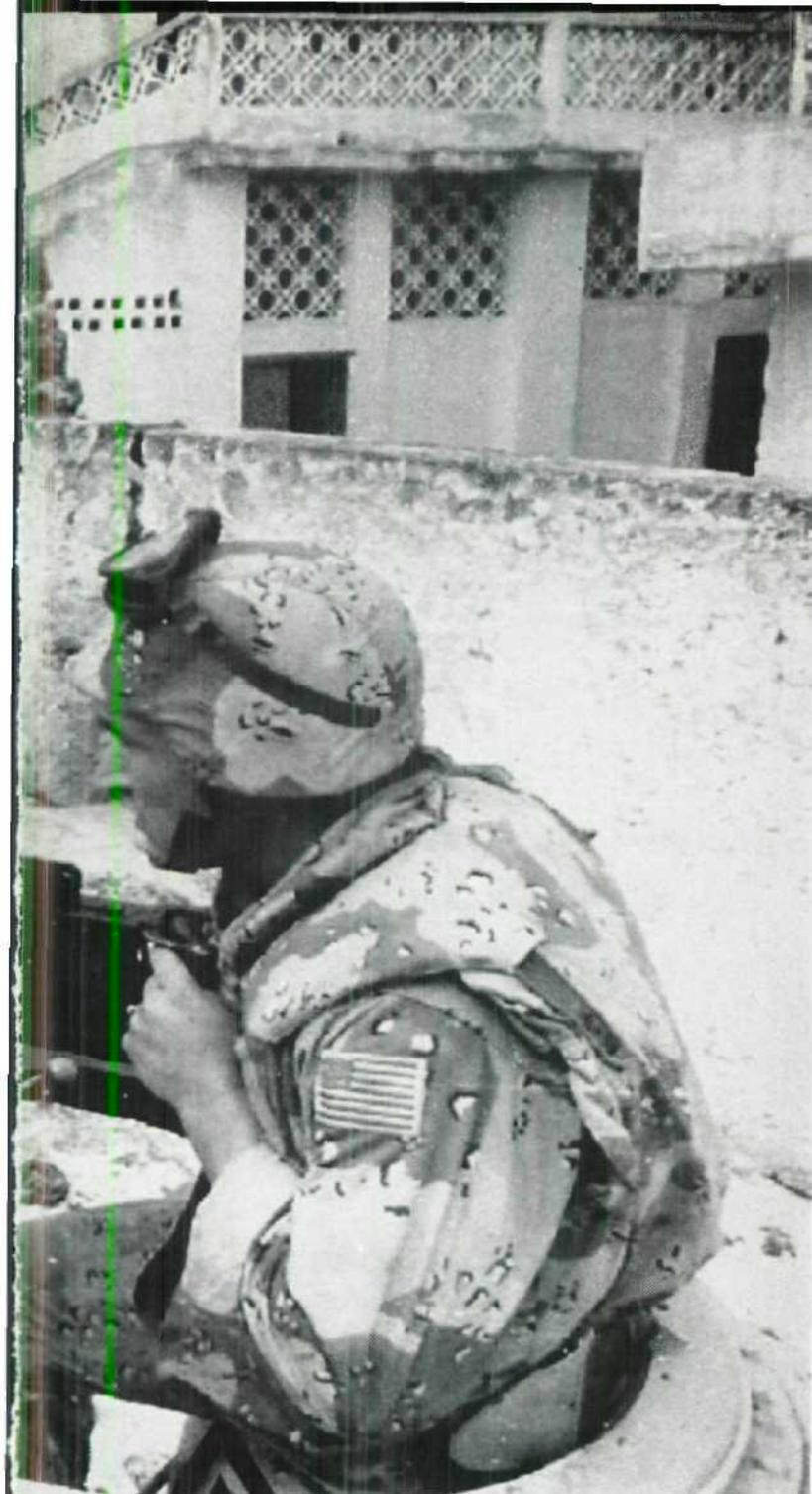
Whatever the level of international support for Kenya, the opposition will be given an opportunity to exact concessions from the new government in June. Kenya's finance bill comes up that month and passage requires a two-thirds majority from the Parliament, meaning Moi will have to persuade at least 22 opposition MPs to vote his way. ○



WHEN
YANKS
GOES
HOME

Patrick Robert/Sygma

With great fanfare, U.S. marines kicked off their humanitarian intervention in Somalia on December 9. When they leave—with the Pentagon probably having declared Operation Restore Hope a stunning success—what will be left behind? Our correspondent suggests that before the marines arrived relief agencies were already doing a good job of delivering food. The biggest shortcomings of U.S. policy may prove to be the immersion of troops in a murky political situation and a lack of preparation for the eventual United Nations takeover of the operation.



much food as the U.S. troops did during the same period. The ICRC has refused to have visible military escorts accompanying its food convoys for fear that it would compromise its neutrality if, for example, it were to become engaged in negotiations between Somali factions and the foreign troops.

While food convoys protected by marines have not been attacked by Somalia's notorious armed gangs, the fate of the food after it is released into villages remains uncertain. Military security zones have centered on towns and airports, while outlying villages remain vulnerable. The ICRC instead has used its long experience of Somalia and links with the Red Crescent Society to try to establish food security without military help. "Despite the constant looting, ICRC has had less food misappropriated because they are good. It has a very good network of local staff," said Gemmo Lodesani, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) deputy director of operations in the capital, Mogadishu.

Death rates are the best indicator of success with regard to food distribution. Red Crescent Society figures show a small decrease in the death rate in Baidoa, until recently the town worst-hit by the famine, from 100 per day in December to between 80-90 in late January. Meanwhile, the situation in Bardera was worsening because of up to 55 displaced people arriving every day, according to the French relief organization Action Humanitaire Contre La Faim.

Figures are one gauge of the effect the troops have had. It was the figures which brought them in, and examination of the specific reasons behind the U.S. decision to send troops is essential to understanding what has been achieved since they arrived.

For two weeks before the troops arrived, the WFP allowed U.S. government officials to disseminate a figure showing that 80 percent of relief food to Somalia was being looted. WFP knew this figure was an enormous exaggeration. A WFP spokesman, Paul Mitchell, justified the non-correction of this by telling journalists in Mogadishu on December 9, "We were never asked to correct it."

ICRC, the biggest food distributor in Somalia outside the UN, says the figure for food looted was nearer 10 percent. CARE International, which distributed food on behalf of WFP, claims it was 50 percent.

When the figures for food looted since December 9 have been compiled, they will certainly show a dramatic fall from 80 percent, largely due to this initial exaggeration.

In the same vein, the U.S. special envoy to Somalia, Robert Oakley, in a bid to prove that the troops have created a "secure environment," claimed that American troops witnessed a "full-scale civil war" when they arrived in the country. Such a situation no longer exists—nor did it exist last December. He later retracted the statement in an interview with *Africa Report*, but did not correct it in the minds of the journalists present when the statement was made.

A

s American troops in Somalia begin to leave the country, confident of having achieved their objectives, doubts over the real achievements of this unique operation remain among the people the

marines will leave behind.

Since the first marines arrived on December 9, the troops have escorted thousands of tons of food to some of Somalia's estimated 2 million people reckoned by relief agencies to be in danger of starvation.

In contrast, during December 1992 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delivered twice as

Mark Huband is Africa correspondent of The Guardian of London.

Such claims heighten the troops' apparent success and could be seen merely as publicity stunts. But there is also the danger that by exaggerating the problems, apparently dramatic results will make relief agencies and their donors believe that Somalia's crisis is over when in reality the situation has a long way to go before it can really be deemed a success.

Most relief agencies believe that the security situation in Mogadishu has worsened since the troops came. Conclusions about the situation in other towns vary, though all explanations center on the failure of the foreign troops to develop a consistent policy with regard to the disarmament of the gunmen who are responsible for random killings and theft.

"The overall security in Mogadishu has definitely not improved. We can only serve two out of our nine Out-Patient Dispensaries with drugs because of the insecurity. Before the U.S. arrived all the OPDs were accessible," said Horst Hamborg, a spokesman for the ICRC in Mogadishu. "Elsewhere the situation varies from okay to being pretty desperate, as is the case in Bardera."

"We are prisoners of ourselves. I'm scared now. I'm scared. You think we are not scared because the troops are here. There are a lot of guns," said Gemmo Lodesani.

The continued division of Mogadishu between rival warlords Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi Mohamed, despite a breakthrough in peace negotiations coming only two days after the marines arrived when the U.S. brokered a meeting between the two enemies, was interpreted as a sign that the political impact of the troops' presence had lost its initial momentum.

"The green line [dividing the city] is still there. The troops still haven't been able to secure the route from south to north Mogadishu. The security here remains very poor," said one senior United Nations official.

Meanwhile, U.S. control over food distribution has deprived the warlords of much of their remaining authority: "The military organizations are losing control over their own people because they are no longer involved in fighting," said Oakley.

Few Somalis, particularly those not directly connected with the warring factions, believe the foreign military presence is the obvious way to resolve the crisis. While few deny the cruelty of the bandits and gunmen, as well as the power hunger and heartlessness of the faction leaders, many view the weeks since the troops' deployment as having exposed how inappropriate they are.

One of the most senior Somali employees of CARE, who preferred not to be named, said: "I believe that there wasn't much problem in delivering food to the areas where it was needed. The [non-governmental organizations] were in favor of bringing in forces because they were personally threatened. But it was not a problem of delivering food. There are many times when we delivered food safely, many miles from Mogadishu. The expatriates created a reality of their own. There will never be

THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

KNEW THAT THE
80 PERCENT
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EXAGGERATION.

a political solution while the troops are here, because the warlords will just play up to the foreign military for their own gains."

CARE's team leader for southern Somalia, Rhodri Wynn-Pope, acknowledges that serious bureaucratic blunders were made which led to shoot-outs between local employees in the office

compound. These could have been avoided if the elders of clans had been consulted more often when disputes broke out, he said.

He rejects the claim that food was not looted. However, he acknowledges that the agencies' determination to bring relief food into Mogadishu's insecure port, a key factor in bringing in the troops, destroyed the remnants of the local market by reducing the value of plentiful crops growing in the country's breadbasket south of the capital during the famine.

If farmers had been encouraged to sell, the port would perhaps not have become the political arena where factions fought battles in search of food, and security would have been less of an issue. Subsequently the monetization of relief, which was encouraged by the sacked former UN special envoy Mohamed Sahnoun, would have become highly developed. "It wasn't malcoordination, it was miscoordination. The farmers didn't speak up and the aid agencies didn't know the crops were there," said Wynn-Pope. "But we won't die to deliver food."

Only in late January were relief agencies such as CARE, Save the Children, and Catholic Relief Services planning to buy up part of the local crops.

While the foreign military operation has been centered on food delivery, and can be judged on the figures which show limited success, the simultaneous U.S. immersion into Somalia's political web is the most obvious shortcoming of its policy since December 9. The clearest failure lies in the absence of real preparations for the UN's assumption of control over operations at an as yet unspecified date.

Oakley was instrumental in encouraging Somalia's faction leaders to attend peace talks in Addis Ababa in January, the squeezing effect of U.S. military might revealing limited success where solely UN initiatives had previously failed to take off. The talks, chaired initially by the UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, ended with agreement on a ceasefire and disarmament of the warring factions. However, this ceasefire followed a similar agreement, also brokered by the UN and signed in April 1992, which failed and exacerbated the devastating famine.

January's Addis Ababa agreement failed to resolve the

political problems, notably the issue of who should be allowed to attend a national peace conference, scheduled for March 15. In effect this failure means that the issue of who will influence the future power structure of Somalia remains undecided. While 12 of the 14 factions represented did agree on the composition of the conference, the faction led by Aidid refused to budge. This largely nullified the importance of the agreement among the other factions, many of whom are already united in an anti-Aidid alliance known as Manifesto, led by Aidid's main rival, Ali Mahdi Mohamed.

The UN's unpopularity in Somalia means it cannot assume a political role, and the failure of the Addis Ababa talks to substantially break the political deadlock means it has no real political breakthroughs to exploit. "If Somalis see the U.S. withdrawing, then they will perceive it again as a UN thing. Then it might be that we go back to square one," said a senior UN official in Mogadishu.

The nature of the discussions—and particularly their failure—are a sign of the limits on American influence over the political conflict which remains at the heart of the crisis. They are proof that even if the agenda of the foreign military force had included steering aspects of the political agenda, it would have failed to move the stubborn and desperate warlords from their destructive path.

Meanwhile, the euphoria with which the ceasefire agreement was met by the U.S., and particularly the American media, despite the absence of any real political agreement, appears to have stemmed from a need to retain the impression that Somalia was still on track as far as the achievements of the U.S. military were concerned. This theme was taken up by Australian forces when they arrived in the country in January and declared that they would be present for exactly 17 weeks, come what may.



Bernard Bissou/Sygnia

Pressing domestic issues within the U.S. led initially to a timetable for the military presence being discussed, if not being formally drawn up. The foreign military force really was prepared to imagine that its operations in Somalia could reach their objectives within a pre-planned time-span, without even a bare minimum of consultation with the relief agencies whose programs it was being sent to protect.

It is now increasingly likely that Operation Restore Hope's military chiefs will find they can take advantage of the uniqueness of the Somalia operation by declaring success whenever it suits them to do so. There are no comparisons to be drawn with this operation. It is therefore relatively easy for the military, which is defining both its goals and its success in achieving them, to decide when to pull out with glory.

Within the U.S., debate over the Somalia operation is bound to intensify, especially as the cost becomes clearer. The latest estimates put the cost for the first 90 days at \$583 million, compared with the \$400 million originally announced. Before the inauguration of President Clinton on January 20, the Bush administration was proposing to fund the operation by cancelling other Defense Department programs. About \$248 million is expected to be found by cancelling an order for eight C-130 transport planes for the North Carolina Air National Guard, and a further \$230 million by cancelling university research programs.

Somalia's future is now dependent on U.S. domestic priorities, not its own requirements. This is why the mili-



Bernard Bissou/Sygnia

The UN's unpopularity in Somalia means it cannot assume a political role

tary operation, leaving aside its positive and negative aspects, should have been a UN operation from the very beginning. The suggestion of an early U.S. withdrawal—initially by January

20 and then the constant discussion of later dates—instilled deep anxiety among those who were, and are, relying on the multinational force to provide them with security. Such a public discussion of military tactics would never have been aired had Restore Hope been an operation with strategic importance to the United States.

Now the UN is clearly ill-prepared for assumption of control. Its special envoy to Somalia, Ismat Kittani, has been regularly absent from Mogadishu while receiving hospital treatment in Europe and has in the past been treated for cancer. There is still the probability that many of the countries now part of the multinational force will pull out once the U.S. leadership retreats, revealing a damaging lack of faith in the UN. Equally, it is highly unlikely that the Somali gunmen, victims of Somalia's past isolation, xenophobia, and occasional racism, will respond as nervously to Nigerian or Saudi Arabian troops as they do to U.S. marines.

Whatever successes Restore Hope has so far had are largely due to the fact that it is American-led. As the UN prepares to take over, America's self-proclaimed success may increasingly come to be seen as its failure. ○



Camerapix

THE SHADOW

Somalia is now a universal symbol of an African basketcase. In fact, despite official statistics showing the country to be in a state of chronic disaster throughout the 1980s, the economy was thriving. But it was not the easily measurable economy. Instead, it was a hidden economy—comprising black marketeering, smuggling, corruption, stolen food aid, most of it in the hands of various elites—and it is prospering today as the political and social structures of Somalia continue to disintegrate.

A decade ago, a group of international consultants studying the Somali economy wrote that the common perception of Somalia was that it "is widely regarded as a hopeless case...The formal economy has been in crisis since at least 1978, the Somali indigenous private sector is generally regarded as inefficient and static...Agriculture in Somalia is generally considered to be inefficient, environmentally destructive and more or less permanently in a state of crisis."

Such prophets of doom may believe they have been vindicated by Somalia's recent catastrophic famine and political collapse. They would be utterly wrong. For a start—as acknowledged by the group of consultants brought together by Boston University—the "doomed economy" scenario was false. In fact, Somalia's economy was dynamic and relatively wealthy—but largely outside the formal sector. The cause of the current disaster was not the poverty of the country, but instead the way in which economic dynamism was forced underground. An alternative economy grew up, centered on a small elite group with close connections to the president, operating like a mafia, relying on secret and non-legal dealings, family connections, and the sanctions of violence. Deeply intermeshed with the abusive and dictatorial regime of former President Siad Barre, this shadow economy prospered while the country disintegrated. It continues to thrive, remarkably unchanged and intact.

The evidence for a vibrant economy was on display in Mogadishu and the other main towns throughout the 1980s. New Toyotas jammed the streets. The shops were full of consumer goods, such as Western clothes and household electronic appliances. Salaried officials whose

ECONOMY

official pay packets would scarcely cover a month's staple food could be seen living in relative affluence, apparently enjoying the fruits of a full-scale if somewhat erratic economic boom.

In the rural areas, official statistics pointed to a chronic disaster: a life expectancy of 41 years, an infant mortality rate of 177 per 1,000, and calorie consumption grossly inadequate for healthy living. The nomadic pastoralists, who comprise the majority of the population, were characterized as particularly badly off: lacking housing, schooling (education expenditure averaged a miserable \$2 per head), and facing starvation if the rains failed. However, again, visible appearances indicated that the pastoralists were well-nourished and even prosperous. Rather than the dejected and desperate people one would have imagined from the picture implicit in the statistics,

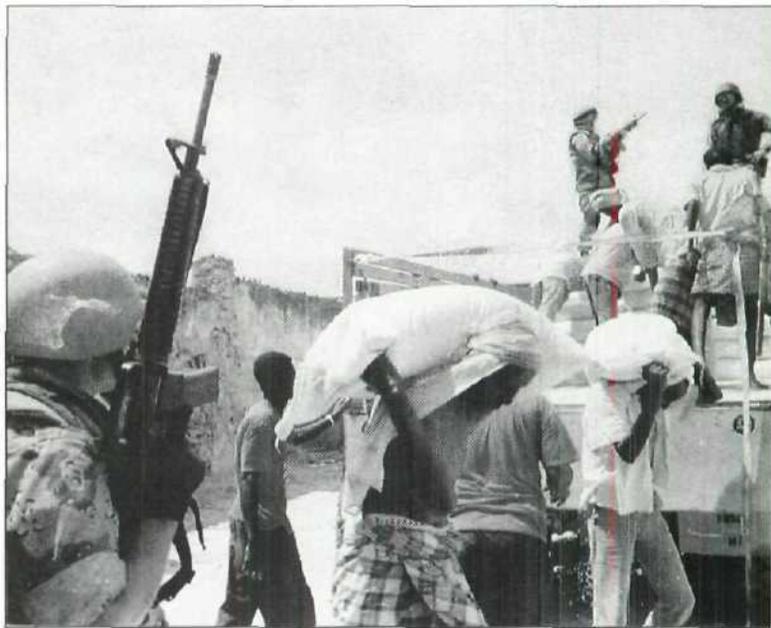
Alex de Waal is co-director of African Rights, a newly established human rights organization.

rural Somalis were enterprising and hopeful, busy with a range of productive and trading activities.

The answer to this paradox is now well-documented. The official statistics failed to capture the most important and dynamic elements in the Somali economy.

The income figures for pastoralists were particularly low, often below \$100 per annum per head. As the economist Vali Jamal pointed out, "some of the figures advanced are so bizarre that a sizable percentage of the population fails even to obtain sufficient calories to sustain basal metabolic rate." Jamal revised these figures by the simple expedient of adjusting the official figures for milk production by animal herders to bring them into line with the amounts known to be consumed by those herders. Milk production estimates instantly rose six and a half times, and pastoral incomes more than doubled. Total gross domestic product rose 68 percent.

This was only a beginning. A second revision required taking into account the earnings of the estimated 200,000 to 250,000 Somali migrants in the Arabian peninsula. The importance of the remittances of these people, and the consumer goods they imported into Somalia on the franco valuta system (whereby traders were given the freedom to import consumer goods using their own foreign

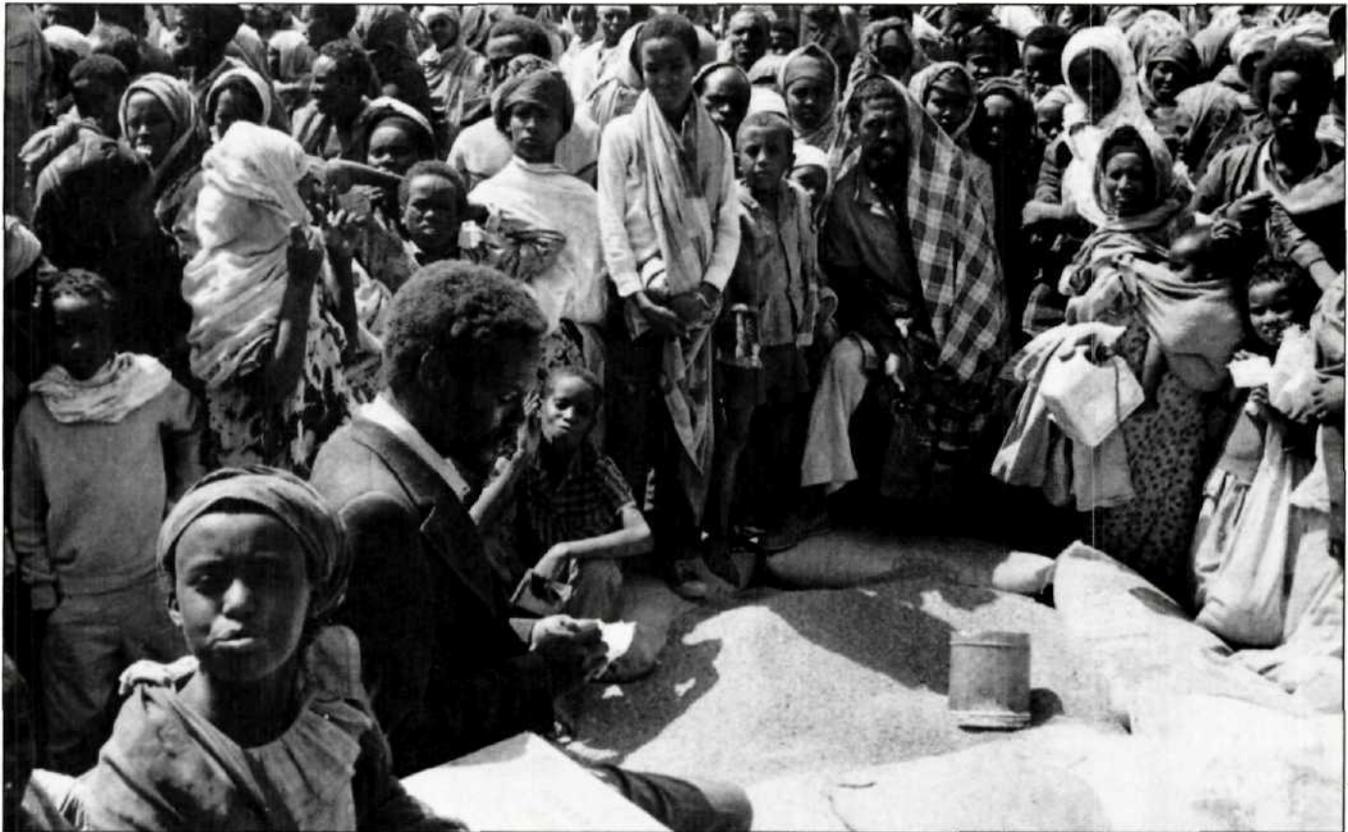


exchange) had long been recognized, though not incorporated into official statistics. Vali Jamal, using very conservative estimates, calculated that two-thirds of urban Somali income originated from remittances from abroad, amounting to about 40 percent of GNP.

The multiplier effect of these unrecorded transactions also needs to be taken into account. The income from remittances and "illicit" trade was a major source of employment. The Boston University group estimated that the value of wage labor in the Somali economy was underestimated by between four and 20 times.

The aggregate impact of revising our picture of the Somali economy to take account of these mismeasure-

Patrick Roberts/igms



Betty Press

ments is quite staggering. Jama's calculations suggested that the 1982 GNP per head was over \$400—higher than the official figure for Kenya, which is often pointed to as an economic success story in Africa.

Another important facet was foreign aid. After Siad Barre was abandoned by the Soviet Union in 1977 and decamped to the Western bloc, Somalia became the largest recipient of foreign aid per capita in sub-Saharan Africa. Much of this consisted of exceptionally generous food aid, intended for refugees from Ethiopia. The Somali government put the refugee numbers at 1.3 million—in fact, half that number would have been a more realistic estimate. However, full rations were provided for the inflated number for most of the 1980s. The extra went into the pockets of government officials, traders, the military, and the guerrillas of the Western Somali Liberation Front. The WSLF was fighting the Ethiopian government until 1983 and thereafter acted largely as a counter-insurgency militia on behalf of Siad Barre. A report by the U.S. General Accounting Office in 1986 estimated that under 20 percent of the food was actually consumed by the refugees. Other assistance was provided for ambitious development projects, most of them located in the main cities and the southwest. At its peak, this aid matched the amount of the entire formal economy. When included in the calculations for national income, it is possible that Somalia would have then broken the \$500 per head barrier and count as a "middle income country."

This wealth should have ensured the country's prosperity. Unfortunately, it contributed to disaster. A small

The food needs of the destitute should be met by buying food inside Somalia

elite benefitted hugely from this booming hidden economy, while others did not. This elite engaged in non-legal and unsustainable commercial activities. When harder times came, with recession, drought, and a cut-off in foreign aid, they could only preserve their incomes by resorting to corrupt and violent practices.

One of the most important illicit activities was cattle smuggling to Kenya. This became particularly important after Saudi Arabia banned the import of cattle from Somalia in 1983 because of (unfounded) fears of rinderpest. During 1987 and 1988, it is estimated that unofficial cattle exports to Kenya ran at a level six times as high as official exports through Kismayo port, amounting to about 50,000 head of cattle. Moreover, the returns to middlemen for the illicit export of cattle were about twice those for official exports, and also well above earnings for sale to Mogadishu. As in all forms of illegal or semi-legal trade, organization was founded upon the twin principles of family membership and the ability to enforce contracts through force of arms. Competition between the Maxamad Zubeer subclan of the Ogaden clan and the Harte of Kismayo was particularly intense, laying the basis for the violence between these groups in 1992-3. As the profits in the cattle trade slumped after 1983, acquiring and maintaining monopolistic control over cattle exports became increasingly essential, and competition became harsher.

Other forms of smuggling were also extremely profitable, especially after restrictions were imposed on the franco valuta system in the early 1980s. These consisted

of both bringing in consumer goods and exporting or *transiting ivory and gems*.

Throughout the 1980s, there was fast-growing demand for food, especially vegetables, in Somalia's urban centers. The best land for cultivation was occupied by the Rahanweyn, Digil, and Bantu—traditionally disadvantaged and often despised groups, who had little access to state power. Though farming incomes certainly increased substantially during the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the economic crisis of 1983-84, more powerful groups were eager to take advantage of the opportunities for profit provided by farming, especially in irrigated areas. This was a time of large-scale land grabbing. According to the 1975 land reform, all land had to be registered with the central government for ownership to be proved. This was an extremely expensive and time-consuming business with no guarantees of success, unless one happened to be wealthy or well-connected in the ministry of agriculture.

The Rahanweyn, Digil, and Bantu faced great difficulties in registering the land they had cultivated for generations; Marehan kinsmen of Siad Barre and other powerful groups were able to register large tracts of land with ease. If these lands were already cultivated, then the existing farmers were frequently forced off at gunpoint. For example, 43 families inhabiting the village of Hufey in the upper Juba valley were dispossessed of about 150 hectares of land by a group of armed Marehan in July 1983, and forced to cultivate a mere nine hectares nearby. The new Marehan owners established a cooperative farm, registered in their name as "Nasibwant," which translates as "lucky break."

Violent tactics and trickery were also used to ensure that the marketing of vegetables and other produce from farms was kept in a few hands. The supply of essential inputs—irrigation, pumps, trucks—was controlled by a relatively small number of urban-based merchants, most of them from the Marehan, Hawiye, or Harte, who protected their oligarchy vigorously. The non-legal import of the stimulant khat was also a source of profit.

The authority to issue trade licenses and other concessions—including the printing of money—was an important source of income for those in government.

Control of foreign aid was another route to self-enrichment. The massive diversion of food aid has already been mentioned. Development aid was no different.

An excellent example is the Baardheere dam. This was envisioned as the centerpiece of Somalia's economic development, to irrigate up to 200,000 hectares and supply electricity to Mogadishu and other cities. No matter that soil scientists warned that the irrigated farmland would rapidly become saline and useless, and that economists calculated that the electricity generated would be far in excess of Somalia's total national demand, with no prospect of exporting to neighboring countries, while substantial areas of fertile farmland would be flooded. The dam's contribution to national development was

almost certain to be negative. The real value of the project lay in its cost—over \$750 million—to be borne by foreign donors, who would thereby provide lucrative contracts to Somali, Italian, and other companies, and massive payoffs to government officials. World Bank objections to the scale and cost of the project were overridden in March 1986 when the Italian prime minister, Bettino Craxi, visited Mogadishu and the relevant government department was upgraded to become the ministry of Juba Valley development. The monumental environmental, economic, and social disaster that would have been the Baardheere dam was prevented only by the war.

Similar practices operated to broker deals for factories in Mogadishu, plantations in the lower Juba Valley, etc. Even these central elements of the formal, measured economy were, for the Somali government and businessmen, essentially facets of the shadow economy.

The economic policies forced upon Somalia by the Western donors aggravated the situation. The IMF analysis of the economy was based upon the official figures, which were grossly misleading. IMF analysis implied that the central problems were excessive government expenditure and regulation, an imbalance on the current trade account, and inflation caused by a fast-increasing money supply. This is a typical diagnosis of the ills of an African economy. The medicine prescribed was familiar—a structural adjustment program, with severe deflationary consequences for the formal economy, and repeated devaluations of the Somali shilling.

This remedy was harmful. Given that the majority of the foreign exchange transactions involving the Somali shilling were carried out by expatriate Somalis and currency dealers, any attempt by the government to reestablish control over the value of the currency was doomed to failure. Moreover, deflating the formal economy merely drove entrepreneurs into the informal economy. Ordinary people were also driven to engage in illegal or semi-legal activities. While prices rose by a factor of 35 between 1970 and 1986, government salaries hardly rose at all—a recipe for forcing employees to look elsewhere for income.

A more realistic set of economic policies would have been based on legalizing—and taxing—the profitable sectors of the economy. In fact, the reverse occurred. The late 1970s and 1980s saw most of the profitable business in Somalia removed from a public, legal, and accountable arena to a shadowy realm where mafia-like cartels operated, using governmental connections, family loyalties, and the sanction of violence, to make large amounts of money. The beneficiaries of this process were largely those with access to government offices and foreign currency.

The losers were the politically marginal. Important groups of losers were the Rahanweyn, Digil, and Bantu. These groups are farmers living in the fertile area between the Juba and Shebele rivers. Between 1980 and 1985, they succeeded in doubling grain production, and

putting the country on the road to self-sufficiency in food. This, however, merely made them prey for better connected and better-armed commercial predators.

By the late 1980s, the state and the commercial elites associated with it were obtaining their wealth, not through production, but by expropriation. This ranged from price gouging by controlling trading licenses to outright forcible dispossession of assets. Commentators quipped that Somalia was no longer a state—it was a process of commercial predation.

When Siad Barre was driven from power in January 1991, little changed except that the main government-centered options for obtaining wealth were unavailable. The smuggling of cattle and other goods has continued. The extortion of money and food from aid agencies has continued. Protection rackets have continued. The most extreme form of forcible asset transfer—looting—has also intensified.

Looting is not a random occurrence, though its perpetrators plan to be as unpredictable as possible, to make defense as difficult as possible. Looting is organized. In the cities, looting takes the form of systematic commercial acquisition of goods with a resale value—starting with electronic consumer goods, moving on to furniture, light industrial goods, then metals (for instance copper wiring and aluminum). Much of this has gone for export, to Kenya, Sudan, and the Arabian peninsula. The most comprehensive and profitable looting was carried out immediately after the flight of Siad Barre, with subsequent bouts whenever there has been a new round of fighting, as each militia loots property belonging to the others.

The option of small-scale freelance banditry means that militia commanders and financiers do not need to pay their gunmen when they do not need them for military action or commercial looting. Ironically, banditry often decreases when organized fighting takes place.

In the rural areas, looting has consisted chiefly of armed roadblocks for extorting payment from merchants, and organized night-time attacks on villages. Most looting is carried out when there is no armed combat between militias—it is not an offshoot of fighting, but how the militias and their leaders sustain themselves. The Juba Valley and the Bay Region have suffered the most from looting by militias. This has been due to the numerous waves of occupying forces that have crossed the area, including Siad Barre's Somali National Front, several factions of the Somali Patriotic Movement, and Gen. Aidid's United Somali Congress. None of the local groups has been well-enough armed to resist. The massive systematic looting carried out by Siad Barre's forces in March-April 1992, on the eve of their military defeat by Aidid, was the final factor in creating the famine that has ravaged the area.

Just as in the 1980s, the diversion of food aid remains an important source of income for armed groups—only this time without the tacit consent of the donors.

Meanwhile, competition for the possible future benefits

of state power intensified. Government office is a license to print money. It is no accident that two of the main clashes between interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and Gen. Aidid were sparked by incidents in which Ali Mahdi tried to bring in planeloads of bank notes. Ali Mahdi's huge number of ministerial appointments (over 80) owes as much to the need to offer the prospect of future economic rewards to his allies as the need to build clan alliances.

This degeneration of the Somali economy into commercial predation has profound implications for the future rehabilitation of the country.

It is now widely understood that the politics of warlordism in Somalia is no more than a logical extension of Siad Barre's methods of wielding power. There is a pressing need for a process of national reconciliation, but a top-down process based upon reconciling warlord politicians who are widely reviled as war criminals risks reestablishing the same sort of authoritarian clientistic rule as existed before.

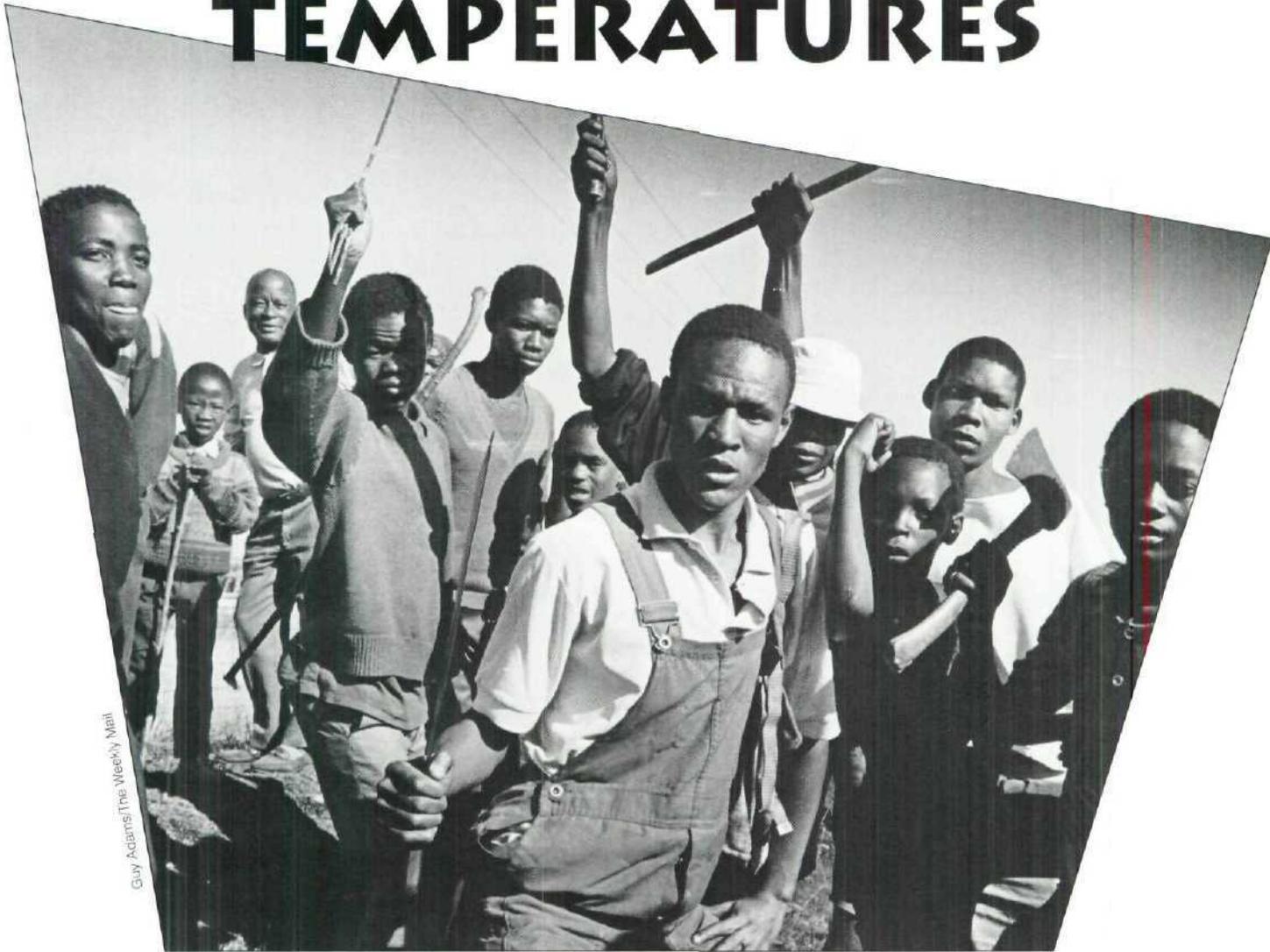
Similarly, the economics of looting, smuggling, and extortion are no more than a continuation of what has gone before. The process of a shrinking formal economy and an expanding hidden economy has reached its logical conclusion—Somalia has no national accounts and no official gross national income at all, but the markets are well-stocked, most people can obtain the essentials of life, and some are continuing to prosper—while the weak starve.

There is an urgent need for economic reconstruction. But most donors envisioned this as awarding big aid contracts to rehabilitate the physical infrastructure of the country, to restart the large "development" projects together with token aid to smallholder farmers and poor pastoralists, and to continue shiploads of free food. Everyone will doubtless call for "more aid." But Somalia is no aid virgin: quite the reverse. Aid to Somalia has been part of the problem, not part of the solution.

The reconstruction of Somalia calls for a degree of imaginative thinking that is rarely found in the aid world. Certainly, the foundations for a new economic system should be sought from the bottom up. Regulation of trade should not be placed in the hands of a central government, but in local, accountable leadership. Planning development projects should also be decentralized. The process of building a national economy can proceed from there. This may make it difficult for aid agencies—but the exercise is not designed for their benefit.

It is important that free food aid be stopped as quickly as possible. The famine-stricken areas are almost exclusively the farming areas, where people rely on selling food for an income. The moment there is a prospect of a harvest—and experience of other famines suggests that this will come much sooner than anticipated—food relief should be reduced as much as possible. The food needs of the displaced and destitute should then be met by buying food inside Somalia, helping the farmers rehabilitate themselves. ○

TEMPERATURES



Guy Adams/The Weekly Mail

As South Africa unveils the details of its historic power-sharing agreement, F.W. de Klerk finds he is

RISING

creating more controversy—not less. His enemies on the right think he's done too much and his enemies on the left accuse him of not doing enough. Polls indicate that most South Africans, black and white, are looking for peaceful solutions. They're just not sure if de Klerk is the man to keep the reform process on track.

P

resident F.W. de Klerk looks more vulnerable and less sure of himself than at any time since he came to power four years ago.

The days when de Klerk dazzled friend and foe alike with a series of brilliant moves appear to have receded irrevocably; both he and his ruling National Party (NP) are reacting defensively to events instead of controlling them.

He has been abandoned by several of the lieutenants who strode with him into the future in search of a negotiated settlement with the forces, mainly by the African National Congress, which their predecessors failed to destroy during South Africa's 30-year war to pressure apartheid.

Barend du Plessis, the man who came within a few votes of defeating de Klerk when the NP caucus chose a successor to P.W. Botha in February 1989, has quit the political arena. So, too, have Gerrit Viljoen, whom many observers saw as the eminence grise of the NP, and Stofel van der Merwe, who served as the NP's seemingly indefatigable secretary-general until disillusionment wore him out late last year.

De Klerk's plight is summed up in a cartoon published in the journal *Suid-Afrikaan*. It shows an anxious de Klerk suffering from insomnia. At his wife's suggestion he counts sheep; the sheep turn out to be the lieutenants who have resigned; he wakes up, startled by a frightening image—the sheep have become rats leaving a sinking ship.

Opinion polls confirm the visceral sense that de Klerk is in trouble. One, conducted by Omnichex, shows that the number of whites who believe that he is doing well as president dropped nearly 20 percent—from roughly 60 to 40 percent—between April and December last year. Another, carried out by Markinor, reflects similar disillusionment among whites and blacks. In the white community, Markinor reports, de Klerk's score is the lowest of any South African leader since 1978, the year in which the survey started.

One cause of the crisis relates to the situation in the South African Defense Force (SADF) where, on de Klerk's own admission, malcontents in military intelligence have tried to sabotage his program of reform and his quest for a constitutional settlement.

Suspicion that the crisis is bigger than de Klerk has admitted, and that he is loath to take firm action against military dissidents, has grown since his dramatic announcement shortly before Christmas that he had dismissed or suspended 23 military officers and "civilian collaborators."

The minister of defense, Gene Louw, has since identified nine of the military officers, including two generals.

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Six officers were "compulsorily retired"—although they were, in Louw's words, "not linked to criminal or illegal activities"—and three were sent on compulsory leave, pending an inquiry into their possible connection to unlawful or criminal activities. Louw's statement, however, has raised new questions about his and de Klerk's action: Why were the six officers forced to retire if they were innocent and who are the "civilian collaborators" whom they declined to name?

Quoting "top military sources," *The Star*, South Africa's leading daily newspaper, has named several of the alleged civilian auxiliaries. Its list, uncontradicted by the SADF, includes Daniel "Staal" Burger and Leon "Chappie" Maree, two members of the infamous and supposedly disbanded Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB). Burger and Maree—who are wanted by Namibian authorities to stand trial for the murder in Windhoek in September 1989 of the white Swapo leader Anton Lubowski—are reported to have been incorporated into another secret military unit, the Directorate of Covert Collections (DCC).

These unchallenged reports have strengthened suspicions that CCB was not really dissolved as de Klerk insists, but allowed to survive in spirit, if not in name, within the DCC. South Africans know, thanks to the investigations of Judge R.J. Goldstone, that another former CCB man, convicted murderer Ferdi Barnard, was employed by the DCC for his expertise in underground warfare. Secret documents unearthed by Justice Goldstone show that Barnard suggested a plan to the DCC command to use prostitutes, criminals, and drug addicts to discredit the ANC.

While de Klerk's opponents on the left think he's done too little, too late to reign in dissident officers, his enemies on the right think he has done too much, too soon. The right-wing Conservative Party has accused him of disloyalty to his soldiers and of seeking to appease the ANC. The disaffection has percolated through to de Klerk's traditional supporters in the NP.

After a lengthy judicial inquest found there was not enough evidence to conclude that Barnard had been responsible for the May 1989 assassination of anti-apartheid activist David Webster, Barnard hinted that security and intelligence operatives could embarrass de Klerk by disclosing the role that NP politicians played in authorizing or conniving at their activities. Even low-ranking intelligence agents know enough to cause "a lot of discomfort" to high-ranking government officials, Barnard says.



Margaret A. Novicki



Tom Edley/Sygnma



Guy Adams/The Weekly Mail

De Klerk appears to be caught in a dilemma. Distrusted by the right wing and elements within the security forces, he is seen as an appeaser, a South African Kerensky preparing the way for a "Communist take-over." At the same time, however, he is not trusted by the main black organizations. He is perceived as a cunning politician, maneuvering to surrender the shadow of power to the black majority while retaining the substance for whites.

The NP, which once dreamed of winning black support, has made little or no impact in the black community. With a non-racial election no more than 15 months away by de Klerk's own reckoning, the NP's hopes of winning blacks to its side, either directly or through proxy forces, are dwindling by the day.

Relations with Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Zulu-based

Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)—which the NP once hoped would deliver a million or more anti-ANC votes—fluctuate between acrimony and distinct coolness. It is not the stuff from which alliances are made.

The quarrel with the IFP, sparked by IFP suspicions that de Klerk's NP is colluding with the ANC to share power in a "secret deal," has implications for de Klerk within his own party. Several key members of the NP, including the Natal leader, George Barlett, are unhappy at the prospect of concluding a deal with the ANC which excludes the IFP. They believe that preference should be given to the IFP above the ANC.

De Klerk's problems have been aggravated by attacks on white civilians by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (Apla) which have angered the white community and made de Klerk more dependent on the security forces. The raids have, however, succeeded spectacularly in raising Apla's profile and that of its political wing, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

But it is debatable whether Apla's attacks—in which six white civilians, including a 15-year-old girl, were killed—will help the PAC to realize its potential as a force to be reckoned with.

The attacks, carried out in King William's Town and Queenstown, near the Transkei border, and on farms along the Free State/Lesotho frontier, represent a form

of propaganda, advertisements for Apla and the PAC through armed action.

Assuming that a coherent rationale lies behind Apla's attacks, they appear to be activated by the belief that blacks, or a significant proportion of them, applaud the murder or maiming of whites. They seem to be based on a conviction, experienced viscerally if not expressed openly, that there is a deep rage in the hearts and minds of black people, that whites collectively are responsible for the sins of apartheid.

Frantz Fanon reflects the rage that subordinated people can feel in his powerful study, *The Wretched of the Earth*. "For the native, life can spring up again out of the rotting corpse of the settler," he writes. There is an echo of Fanon's words in the Apla-PAC shibboleth, "One settler, one bullet." It is not a harmless slogan as PAC leaders insist when they are criticized for its use: It is a reflection of, and an incitement to, homicidal anger.

But the empirical evidence points in the opposite direction: The vast majority of black South Africans were strongly in favor of negotiations; they yearn for an end to violence, not for an intensification of it.

For that reason the killing of white civilians or the assassination of policemen—another strategem deployed by Apla insurgents—is unlikely to win substantial support for the PAC and make it a major contender for power in the pending non-racial election.

The empirical evidence aside, there is another reason why the attacks are unlikely to benefit the PAC—its leaders have been reluctant to acknowledge responsibility for the attacks and are psychologically defensive about them. It is hardly calculated to commend the attacks to the masses and make maximum use of "armed propaganda."

The reaction of PAC leaders to Apla attacks is instructive. Benny Alexander, the PAC's secretary-general initially refused to confirm or deny that Apla was responsible for the attacks; Johnson Mlambo, the PAC's senior deputy president, later admitted that they had been carried out by Apla but his admission had to be extracted from him.

The following excerpts from an interview with Mlambo illustrate the point:

Q: Is Apla or is Apla not responsible for the King William's Town and Queenstown attacks?

A: Well, we have been informed that Apla operatives were involved.

Q: How do you reconcile the attacks with your principled policy of attacking only unarmed men?

A: The Apla operatives come from an environment where there is a lot of violence. We should therefore perhaps see what is taking place in the context of the overall violence.

Mlambo's tentative tone is reflected in his frequent use of the word *perhaps*, as the following quotation shows: "We are perhaps looking at the incidents that

have taken place. We are perhaps seeking to understand from Apla what is happening. When we have perhaps concluded our investigation you might hear from us."

Another interesting aspect to emerge in the interview was Mlambo's disclosure that he is no longer Apla's commander-in-chief, although top PAC men, including the PAC national organizer, Maxwell Nemasivhanani, raised no objections when he was given that designation in the media only hours before the interview.

The suspicion is that Mlambo's title as Apla's commander-in-chief contradicted the PAC's official line that Apla is "operationally independent" and that the PAC leadership is therefore not accountable for its actions. Hence, it is postulated, the PAC's decision to divest him of the embarrassing title.

Mlambo, speaking in his capacity as the PAC's senior vice president, says: "[There are] those who are prepared to carry on...the armed struggle. We have no moral right to stop them...although we do perhaps exercise some sort of political and moral guidance."

Two interpretations can be offered for the PAC's equivocation on Apla terror attacks. Either it is involved in a deliberate subterfuge by ordering the attacks but then refusing to accept responsibility for them, or it has lost control of its fighters but cannot admit having done so.

Both are equally damaging to the PAC. Its failure to condemn attacks on civilians has won it international censure, including indirect but definite condemnation by the OAU. The PAC's subsidy from the OAU as a recognized liberation movement may be in jeopardy, according to the South African Defense Force. For once that might be more than wishful thinking.

Apla's emergence as a military force since 1990 contrasts with its quiescence during most of the three decades between 1960 and 1990 when it was an outlawed organization. During that period, the brunt of the military resistance to apartheid was borne by guerrillas from the ANC's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

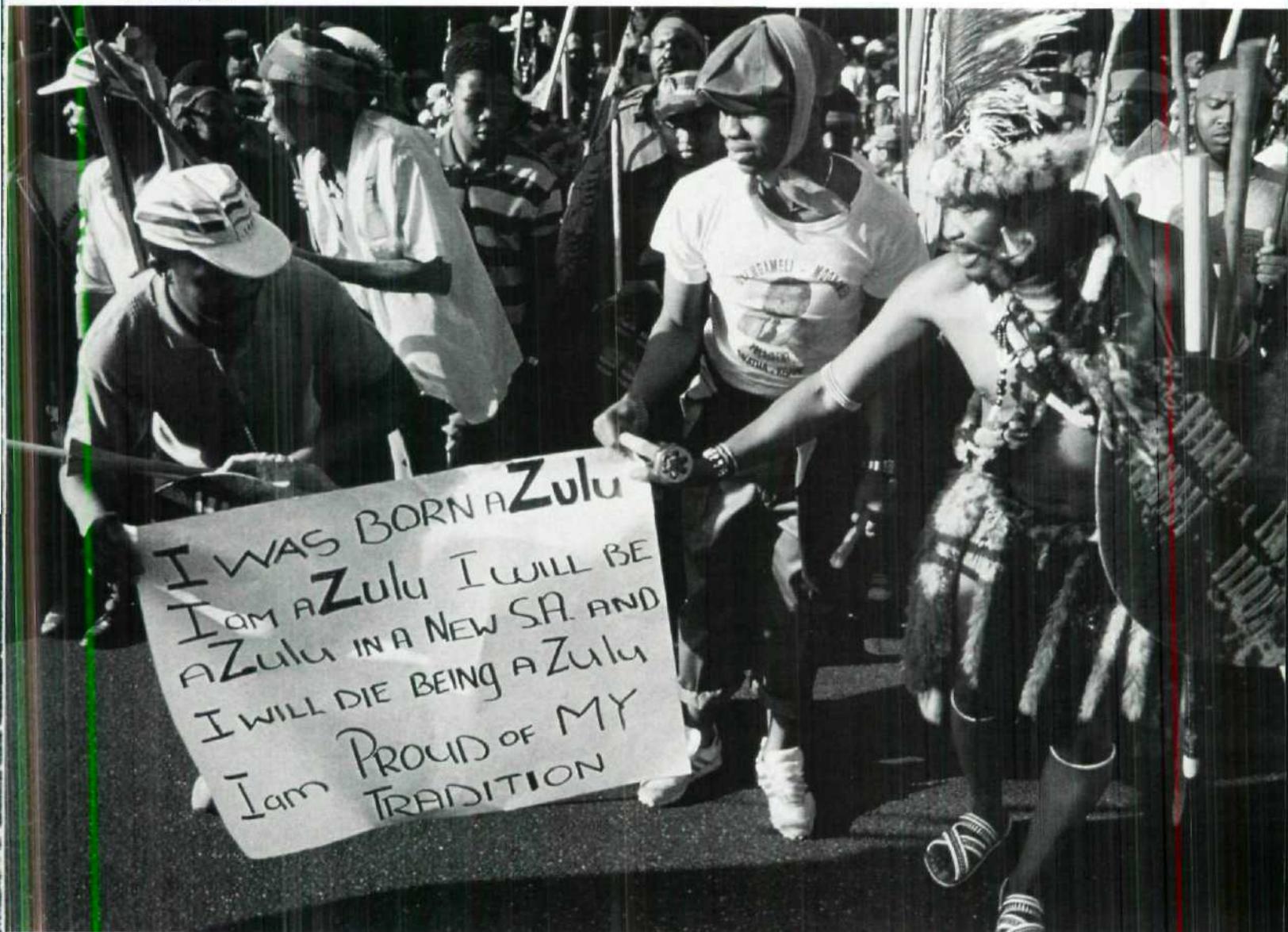
Apla's military role after de Klerk's February 2, 1990, speech, which marked the beginning of the end of apartheid and led to the ANC's decision to suspend its armed struggle, suggests that it took advantage of the situation to assert itself.

As ANC leader Joe Slovo has sarcastically remarked, the PAC's post-1990 military action marks a formal end to its "30-year ceasefire."

Whether its newfound militancy (it claims responsibility for the record number of 226 policemen who were killed last year) will help it regain the support it lost during its "30-year ceasefire" is dubious.

Most blacks remember that it was the ANC and ANC-aligned organizations that led the struggle, at home and abroad, against the apartheid regimes of John Vorster and P.W. Botha. Opinion polls indicate that they expect their leaders to gain the ascendancy at the negotiating table and consolidate their gains in the pending elections, not to indulge in a new round of bloodletting. ○

Marinovich/Sygma



RAISING THE STAKES

Natal Province has been wracked by seven years of bloody battles between supporters of the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party. Now, as South Africa moves toward freedom, the stakes have been raised, and the violence threatens to explode out of control.

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he province of Natal, once renowned for its rolling green hills and exotic coastline, is better known today as the boiling pot of political violence in South Africa. Instead of lush holiday resorts, Natal conjures up images of war and devastation.

Though holidaymakers continue to frequent the sea-side resorts and vibrant port city of Durban, seven years of ceaseless fighting between supporters of the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) have turned pockets of the province into war zones.

A sizable portion of the province is KwaZulu—the homeland set aside for Zulus when, in the 1970s, the National Party government carved up the country into 11 “ethnic” homelands, four of which are “independent”—Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei.

The KwaZulu chief minister and IFP leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, once a genuine critic of the government’s “bantustan” policy, long resisted attempts to thrust independence on his homeland. Now however, the tables have turned as his efforts to entrench himself in a new government as “leader of the Zulus” become more desperate—and more dangerous—by the day.

Increasingly, he is turning to right-wing proponents of “ethnic self-determination” for support, as the government, once an enthusiastic ally, shows signs of disaffection.

In areas under KwaZulu’s jurisdiction, political repression is intense. KwaZulu government officials are compelled to be members of the IFP. Although the first democratic elections loom near, the ANC is still unable to openly campaign there. The KwaZulu police force exists as little more than the IFP’s private army.

Despite the efforts of local and regional peace structures set up by the National Peace Accord—to which both the ANC and IFP are signatories—the violence continues. Both international observers and local peace monitors are unable to curb the cycle of bloodletting and many Natalians are expecting the worst. Surveying the scene of a recent massacre in Umlazi township, young Learned Mshinga said, “The only way this thing can end is if the government leaves us alone and lets us fight it out. At the end of the day we’ll all be tired and then we can sit down and talk.”

Although the conflict is described as a “low-intensity war,” the province is undoubtedly descending into further anarchy.

Security forces are a permanent fixture along key roads in Natal, guarding tourists and residents against marauding gangsters who ambush passing cars. The Internal Stability Division, formerly a riot-control unit in the days of “total onslaught” against anti-apartheid activists, is thickly deployed in Natal’s trouble spots.

An ISD officer spoke out recently about his experi-

ence trying to police the war zone. “There’s no law and order out here. It tends to get to you after a while. I get nervous when I go out. I never know if I’m going to come back. I could get ambushed and that’s that.”

He claims to be neutral, saying, “I’m here because I’m dedicated. I don’t support either side. Anyway, you don’t usually know whether a person is Inkatha or ANC.” He admits, however, that youths wearing ANC tee-shirts are likely targets for trigger-happy cops.

In some of the trouble spots, such as Umgababa on the south coast, Umlazi and kwaMashu near Durban, and Empangeni up north, people have had to flee their burnt-out homes. Some sleep in the forests at night for fear of attacks.

Durban, one of the fastest-growing urban centers in the world, is stretched to capacity, having to provide a home to scores of refugees who have fled the violence in the rural areas.

A conduit for guns from Mozambique in the north and Transkei in the south, Natal is a paradise for criminals. Increasingly, the line between criminal and political violence is blurred. Assassinations of local political leaders and ordinary citizens occur weekly, if not daily. While battles between the ANC and IFP no longer consist of frontal ground attacks with large numbers of casualties, the violence is just as relentless. Faceless killers wearing police or army garb regularly gun down community leaders and innocents, stoking conflict between formerly peaceful IFP- and ANC-supporting communities. IFP warlords, who have by and large the backing of the KwaZulu police force, continue to amass arms and hit squads to keep the war going. Members of the ANC’s military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, are also running amok. Unemployed and undisciplined, they resort to gangster activities that help fuel the conflict. They also have their hands on a steady stream of guns from abandoned ANC arms caches that find their way into Natal via the Transkei.

The hardline stance of the Natal Midlands ANC leader, Harry Gwala—who has virtually declared war on all IFP warlords—has further exacerbated the situation. His charismatic deputy, Reggie Hadebe, was gunned down in a moving car late last year.

While the ANC has majority support in Natal’s urban areas, the IFP has a sizable constituency in the rural areas among more traditionalist Zulus, who fear and revile the “modern” thinking of young, disrespectful ANC comrades. Despite initial reluctance of the ANC’s more militant Northern Natal and Midlands regions, a long-awaited meeting between Inkatha and the ANC—paving the way for a future meeting between Buthelezi and the ANC leader, Nelson Mandela—took place in January.

However, Buthelezi is playing an increasingly obstructionist role as the ANC and government of President F.W. de Klerk move closer toward agreements on joint control of the state-run media and security forces for the transi-

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tional period and constitutional guarantees for substantial powers for regions. While the ANC favors a strong central government, the government is keen on a federal system that would safeguard minority rights.

Ever since the Inkathagate scandal in 1991 blew the lid off the government's covert funding of the IFP, it has been more cautious about openly backing Buthelezi. While the 64-year-old Inkatha leader continues to have the support of Natal-based National Party MPs and many of the sugar cane farming magnates in the area, who back his federal proposals for KwaZulu/Natal, his popularity among certain key MPs—particularly those in the forefront of negotiations with the ANC such as the minister for constitutional affairs, Roelf Meyer (de Klerk's "blue-eyed boy")—is beginning to wane.

As the government and ANC move to strike a deal for a transitional period of power-sharing after the first democratic elections, Buthelezi appropriates the "spoiler" role with a vengeance. When the ANC and government revived the stalled negotiations process in October with the Record of Understanding agreement, Buthelezi withdrew from the talks in disgust, alleging the two parties were making secret deals. The day before they began tentative bilateral negotiations in early December, he unveiled his constitutional proposals for a federal KwaZulu/Natal state, threatening a "go it alone" approach if the people of the territory approved his option through a referendum. His well-timed move led to frenzied speculation about possible secessionary intentions.

Although the government desires similar constitutional guarantees for regional powers, and will in all likelihood enter into an election pact with the IFP in Natal, government players, irked by Buthelezi's flirtations with the right wing, are beginning to doubt he will be a reliable partner. Furthermore, they can no longer afford to jeopardize the ever-delicate relations with the biggest player—the ANC.

Buthelezi and other homeland leaders anxious to retain power in the new South Africa (the Bophuthatswana leader, Lucas Mangope, and Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, military leader of Ciskei), as well as right-wing "self-determinists" like the Conservative Party and Volksunie, together formed the Concerned South Africans Group. But Cosag, attempting to coordinate efforts to guarantee strong powers for self-governing states, seems to have lost momentum recently with Buthelezi playing a two-faced game.

His attempts to transform the Zulu cultural organization, Inkatha, into a political party with a national constituency, the IFP, have failed dismally. He knows full well that a general election will not guarantee him the power seat he seeks.

A forced recruitment drive in the Transvaal in 1990 exported the Natal violence into the Reef townships surrounding Johannesburg, and factional ANC-IFP violence continues there today. While accusations of the ANC's

RIGHT-WING U.S. CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERTS ARE ALSO PLAYING AN INFLUENTIAL ADVISORY ROLE TO THE IFP LEADER.

intolerance of political opponents are not without substance, there is overwhelming evidence of a "hidden hand" stoking the conflict. Without substantial popular support, the last card that Buthelezi, disaffected sections of the security forces, and right wingers can play is violence.

There is growing evidence of cooperation between the IFP and the militant Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) in Natal—despite Buthelezi's dismissal of a pact signed between the AWB and Transvaal IFP leader Musa Miyeni last year. For right wingers, blacks are no longer the enemy in a climate where friends are increasingly scarce. These days "communists" are the baddies and conservative, more traditional blacks who support capitalism, like IFP supporters, are worth forming alliances with.

More and more whites are openly aligning themselves with the IFP. The National Party MP for Vryheid, Natal, resigned in late January to join the IFP.

There is dissatisfaction among many key members of the IFP's central committee—including national chairman Frank Mdlalose—over the core of whites who occupy powerful, behind-the-scenes positions around Buthelezi, particularly Walter Felgate. Felgate is said to have strong personal influence over Buthelezi and sways him from the more conciliatory stance advocated by people like Mdlalose. A central committee member and Buthelezi's speechwriter, Felgate has a shady past, which includes military intelligence links. Right-wing U.S. constitutional experts are also playing an influential advisory role to the IFP leader.

Some private security companies, run and staffed by ex-Special Forces men, disillusioned members of the South African Police and the South African Defense Force, are beginning to move their head offices to KwaZulu, where there is little control over their activities. Unlike in South Africa, there is no law in KwaZulu barring security companies from employing guards with criminal records. Evidence has come to light of the involvement of at least two companies in political violence on the side of the IFP.

The ANC is demanding the reincorporation of all the homelands back into South Africa—something Buthelezi, Mangope, and Gqozo will resist at all costs. The government can pull the plug on the financially dependent homelands whenever it chooses. Whether it can also neutralize their covert right-wing and disaffected security force allies, thus deflating the artificial power bases from which these homeland leaders posture, will help determine whether the new South Africa will be a place worth living in. ○

The author becomes involved in an effort to help a school in South Africa's KwaZulu "homeland" and learns firsthand about the challenges facing black South African students—racist syllabuses, no books or electricity, unqualified teachers. He also learns that a little encouragement can help students overcome almost anything.

BACK TO SCHOOL

The drive from Greytown in the Natal Midlands to Dolo in the KwaZulu bantustan takes 50 minutes, offering views of expansive farms and what look like storks grazing in the fields. As the road slices through vast plantations of eucalyptus and wattle, car windshields are splattered with flying ants, which are said to be rich in protein. Soon after leaving what is still called "white" South Africa, the landscape changes. The hamlets are lifeless, no one seems to be cultivating the soil, the cattle are leaner, the cars more battered. In the distance the mountains are a majestic blue, but as is often the case in rural Africa, they mask a grinding poverty.

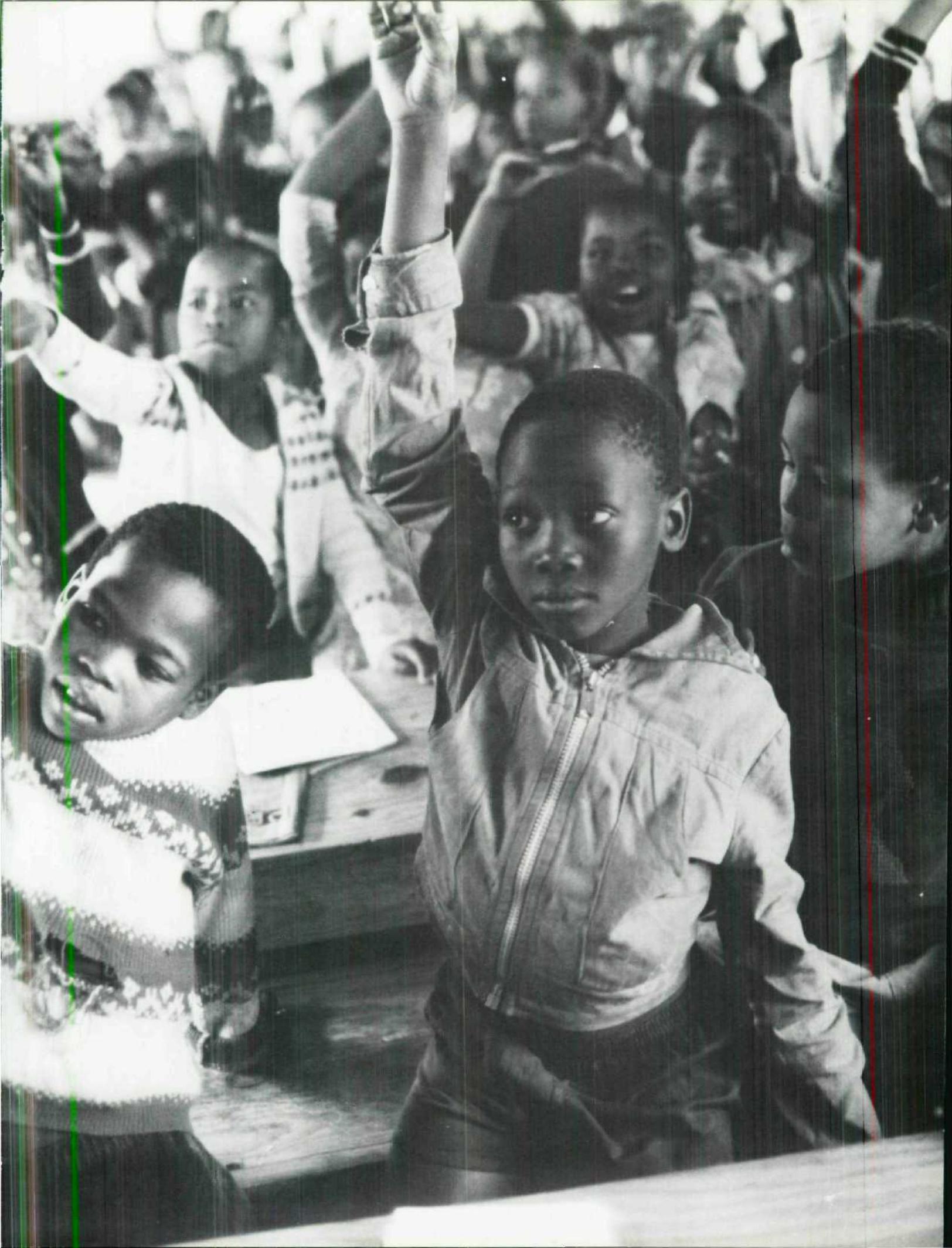
I was driving that route on a mission, looking for the Higher Primary School at Dolo. A year earlier, my cousin, editor of the local newspaper in Greytown, had faxed me a letter from Titus Ngubane, the new Dolo headmaster. Moving into the job, Ngubane found the kitty empty and the school in disarray. The classroom window panes were smashed, the toilets had been vandalized, there was no running water, and six pupils crammed around desks meant for two. And then they had no textbooks. The KwaZulu government was strapped for cash. Raise the money yourself, Ngubane was told.

Denis Herbstein, freelance journalist and author, lives in London and returns regularly to his native South Africa. He is writing a book on Canon John Collins' International Defence and Aid Fund.

I passed the letter to the headmaster of my son's school, St. Michael's, a borough institution in the Highgate section of London. Could we help? Raise money and consciousness at the same time, perhaps? No harm in our kids being made aware how lucky they were. So the parents made cakes and ice cream and the children sold them in the playground after school. In a week they raised £150. Each of the 26 members of the class of 4G wrote to a Dolo counterpart. A classroom exhibition showed pictures of the Dolo school and its location on the map. The story, unsurprisingly, led the front page of the *Greytown Gazette*, under the headline: "Nine-year-old UK sanctions busters aid local school." I pointed out tersely to my cousin that humanitarian aid was not on the list of banned exports to the apartheid state. Family ties have survived.

Each of the Dolo standard fives, the final year of primary school, wrote back. The letters had a couple of lines in Zulu, with English translation, a reminder to monoglot Londoners that their correspondents were writing in a second language. "Your school is the talk of the place because of the help you gave us," said one. Another was impressed by the photographs: "You are lucky you have a beautiful school with beautiful playgrounds. I wish I was in your school." In KwaZulu, a schoolgirl's lot is not a happy one. The Dolo classrooms are cleaned by the girls, according to a strict timetable. Zwelinjani Sang-

*Bantu education
has indeed
achieved its
bidden agenda*



weni wrote: "Our fathers still believe that if you educate a girl she will go away from home."

The £150 was enough to glaze the windows, thanks to a 10 percent fee reduction from the local Indian hardware shop. St. Michael's must have been occasionally in their minds in the chilly winter. Last Christmas, as I was setting out for South Africa, the St. Michael's head, Rex Price, gave me another £250 check for Dolo.

Titus Ngubane's enthusiasm is infectious. "The school is beautiful now, but when I came here it was so bad I decided not to stay. Then, out of pity for the children, I thought I should." To have tapped the resources of suburban London shows initiative beyond the call of duty. Black teachers are so badly paid that anyone with his flair and imagination is normally snapped up by industry and given a company car and a 3 percent mortgage. We toured the school, starting with the first years in Sub A, where 194 children were taught in two shifts. Those who couldn't cram into the desks knelt on the floor or stood on their toes so as not to miss a word the teacher was saying. Few will make it all the way. As our tour went up through the years, conditions became less cramped. South Africa's black drop-out rate ensures that fewer than 3 percent of beginners reach standard 10. The nine girls and 22 boys in standard five, the last primary year, serenaded us and stamped their feet in a style that Zulus have made their own. No British district commissioner was feted better.

The parents hereabouts are subsistence farmers, and the sparse rain and lack of arable land make life a dire struggle. The only money that comes in is through the region's biggest export, manpower, to the mines and industries of the cities. Still, headmasterly methods are the same the world over. "I keep close contact with the parents. I give them financial reports," Ngubane smiles. "Then I ask for more money." The St. Michael's help triggered all sorts of enthusiasms. Parents were proud that children in London were thinking of them. They came to fence the school grounds, and the headman—the headman-cum-mayor—provided land for more classrooms. *Word has got round. Children are walking across distant hills to seek enrollment.*

The entire student body, swollen to over 700 by Zulu enterprise, gathered in the quadrangle for the presentation. As I started my little speech, the sky darkened and the heavens opened. Even the goats stopped nibbling—the new fencing could not have been perfect. The children retreated to the stoop. Had I broken the drought as well? I handed over the check and the thrum of rain on the tin roof was blotted out by the cheers. "Ayee," shouted Titus Ngubane, "this is too much. The committee is going to be very happy." And he handed over a receipt.

I drove back through the kamikaze ants, and pondered what the future held for the children of Dolo. Of all the problems facing that country—the white backlash and black homelessness and the whole frightening lega-

cy of the apartheid years—black education is the most troubling. It is awful to think that Bantu education has indeed achieved its hidden agenda, of making blacks unable to compete on an equal footing with whites. In 1953, my last year at school in Cape Town, Dr. Verwoerd, the spooky architect of apartheid, unveiled his Bantu Education Bill. The phrases ring out across the years. "Natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them...There is no place for [the Bantu] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labor...He has been subject to a school system which...mised him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze."

And the homily ended: "Race relations cannot improve if the wrong type of education is given to natives." How right he was. Bantu education triggered the Soweto uprising in 1976. After which, white rule was doomed.

The main work in this vast salvaging operation must be carried out by the state, but a state that loves rather than despises its citizens. There will have to be a single, non-racial education system, with a more equitable division of the cake. But there is a role, too, for well-intentioned whites. Before going to Dolo, I called on the founder of the African Scholars' Fund in Cape Town, Margaret Elsworth. From her living room, flanked by a small committee and a small computer, she offers a thousand scholarships to black high school students in the Cape Province.

Dr. Elsworth knows better than most white people the high hurdles facing black children—bad teaching by teachers who are themselves the product of Bantu education; headmasters driven to drink by classroom violence; racist syllabuses; no electricity for home study; illiterate parents; unwholesome food; and the "liberation before education" schools boycott of the late 1980s. The Fund provides money and a sympathetic ear. "I cordially invite you to solve all my problems," one applicant wrote. They cannot do that, of course, but once the social and material gap is reduced, students manage more than adequately on their own. The pass rate of the scholarship students in 1990 was 86 percent, comprehensively above the national average. All are from poor backgrounds. And not only the brightest applicants are selected. The magic ingredient, as at Dolo, is personal encouragement. A scholar once told her, "You are the only people who write to me; when I get a letter I know it is from you."

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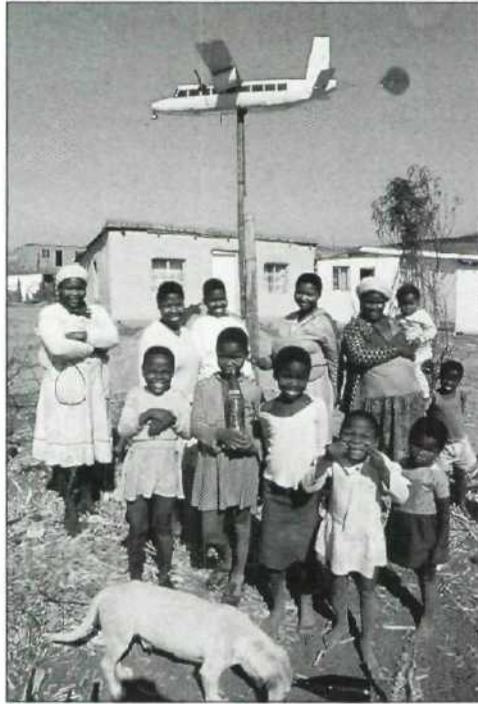
The Fund has been around since 1970, and at first much of the money was raised by blacks themselves, from choir competitions and sports contests. After the Soweto uprising, black parents were frightened off. And there were real worries about raising white money when teenagers were seen to be burning their schools. But donors came forward from among Cape Town's whites, and several multinationals, among them British Petroleum and Caltex, were perhaps happy to deflect criticism of their presence in South Africa.

Beneath Elsworth's stern veneer a soft heart lurks. "I know each of these kids," she says, paging through letters written on green, pink, or blue paper. She or one of her committee has visited all 300 schools where the students are enrolled. It was the week before the start of the school year and her committee was making last-minute judgments on the doubtful cases. "Like playing God," she said. They discuss a girl from Adelaide in the barren Karoo with a 49 percent pass in the standard eight Junior Certificate, has no maths, poor English, but did well in agricultural science. "The size of the family?" someone asks. An orphan and two children. It's a marginal case. The judges um and aah. "Let's give her another chance," says the doctor, "and I'll write her a warning letter. She must pull her socks up." She muses, "Yesterday I wrote such a stiff letter to someone I had to unstuck the envelope and take it out."

If black pupils fail miserably in math, it's because their mastery of English is not precise enough. I tried to imagine my son's class doing arithmetic in French. As for history, another pitfall of Bantu education, how can they excel when the black contribution to South Africa is falsified or simply ignored? How in fact can there be an acceptable history when the two sides have been fighting each other for three centuries?

To find out for myself how the scholarship students were faring I went to Dimbaza, 600 miles east of Cape Town in the Ciskei bantustan. Dimbaza is one of the notorious names of apartheid. Here, in the early 1970s, were dumped the so-called "surplus people" whose labor was no longer wanted on white farms. They were joined by political prisoners straight off Robben Island, men from the cities who were expected to keep out of mischief far away in the veld. It was soul- and body-destroying. A clandestine British film of the period, titled *Last Grave at Dimbaza*, highlighted the cemetery where a neat line of undersized graves awaited the next infant corpse.

Today Dimbaza is a fair-sized town, but life is dour and



unremitting. Witness Archie Velile High School, where the air is thick with menace. It is the Thursday of the first week of term. Last year's kids have been readmitted and, looking smart in their yellow and black uniforms, patrol the dusty streets. But the quadrangle is the setting for a shoot-out in a Hollywood western. A score of determined mothers stand about, looking as though they've been there all week. Some have been. I tip-toe past. My knock on the headmaster's door is rather too firm. I knock again, gently this time. A movement inside and the door opens. Half a dozen women teachers fan away the withering heat while M.C. Kotani considers the options of his latest appointment. In these parts, principals come and go at speed.

Either they can't stand the pace or, here in the Ciskei, if a parent doesn't get a child enrolled, he appeals to the president's office and, whoosh, the head could be off to another school.

Kotani was faced with a tricky dilemma. There were 60 children to a class. Indeed, Dimbaza could do with another two high schools to soak up demand. When did he think lessons might begin? He hoped it would be next Tuesday, if the matter of enrollment was settled. Journalist that I was, I made my excuses and left.

Dimbaza is still without street names, so it took a while to track down the house number of Elvis Mnyaka, in standard seven at Archie Velile, and the recipient of a scholarship of 100 rands from the African Scholar's Fund. It would go toward school fees and the uniform which accounts for much of the cost of a black child's education. What puzzled me was where he hung his white shirt, trousers, and jacket. For Elvis lived in a tin shack in the yard of a council house. His father couldn't afford a better place on the 200 rands a month he earned as a gas station attendant. Parents and seven children crowded into two rooms and a kitchen. At night, Elvis and five brothers and sisters lay down on plastic mats on the 10 foot by 6 earth floor of the kitchen.

Elvis's subjects are English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, accounting, business studies, math, and general science. Somehow he finds a place to do homework and regularly comes top of the class. He is not sure where he wants to go in life, but surely it is upward. He could make it to university, become an engineer or a member of a non-racial Parliament. Or, more importantly, a schoolteacher. To do that, Elvis Mnyaka, like Titus Ngubane, needs all the help he can get in the uncertain times that lie ahead for the new South Africa. ○

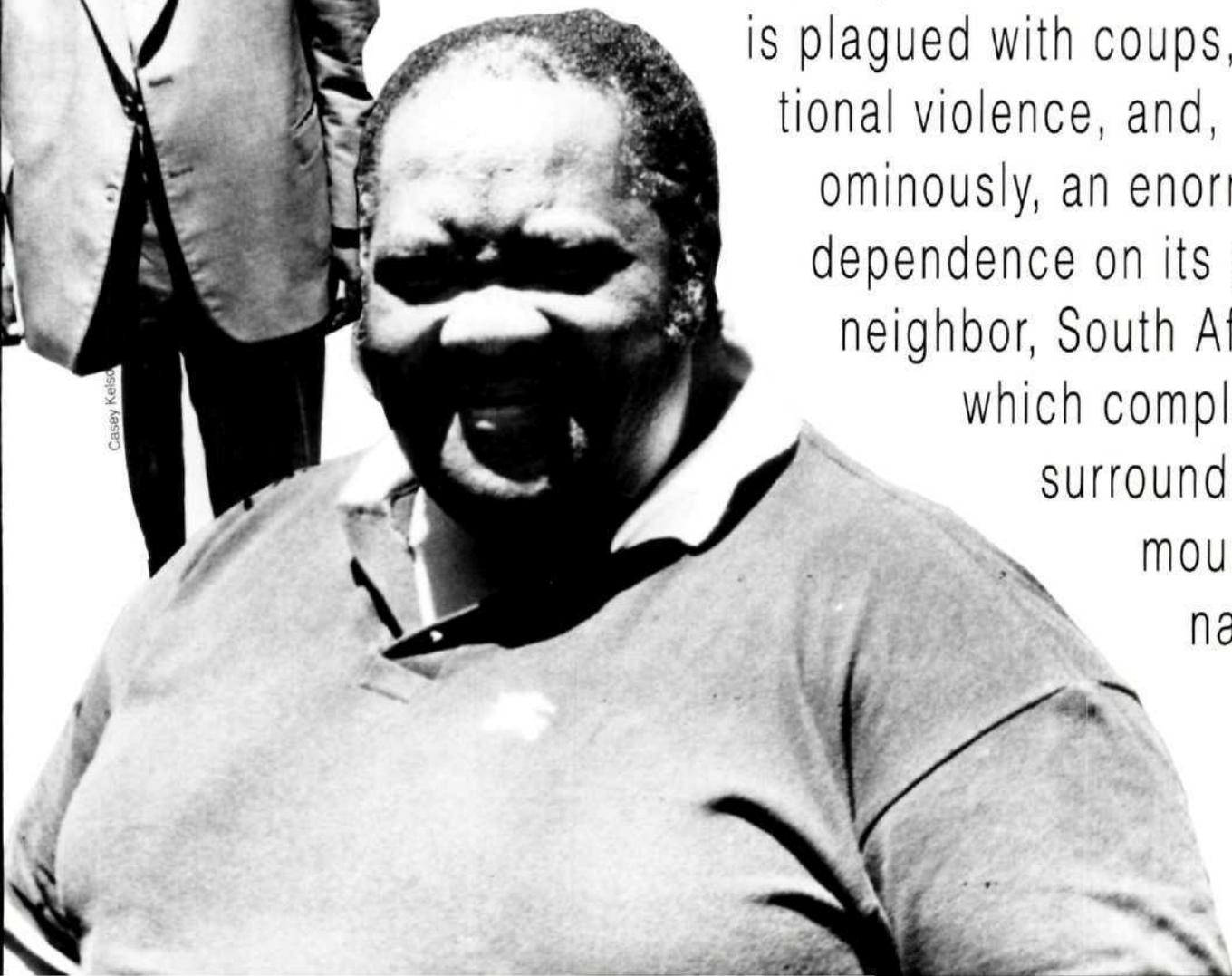
Two decades of rule by decree or by the gun will come to an end in March when Lesotho's voters are scheduled to go the polls. Instead of euphoria over the impending democracy, however, a cloud of uncertainty hovers over the country's 1.8

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million people. Lesotho's history is plagued with coups, factional violence, and, most ominously, an enormous dependence on its giant neighbor, South Africa, which completely surrounds the mountain nation.



Casey Kelso



Casey Kelso

Ntsu Mokhehle is of the same generation as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, and Kenneth Kaunda. But unlike those early African nationalists who assumed leadership when their countries gained independence in the 1960s, Mokhehle's struggle for his party to rule post-independent Lesotho is in its 41st year.

Mokhehle, now 74, faces taunts from critics who say he should be closer to the grave than to power. Indeed, the walk of the once-fiery politician is unsteady, and the younger comrades of his Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) do most of the talking.

But his long struggle symbolizes the evolution of politics in much of southern Africa, from an early pan-Africanist movement to a guerrilla army to an officially recognized candidacy in multi-party elections. The prospect of democracy is pushing Mokhehle and the tiny nation of Lesotho toward still more change.

The military-ruled country of 1.8 million is expected



TAIN FUTURE

to return soon to civilian rule, with its first democratic elections in 23 years. The incoming government, which analysts predict will be the BCP, will face a tough task of keeping the peace in a nation ruled by decree or the gun for more than two decades.

The winner will also face tough issues. High on the list is how to create jobs, increase social services and, ultimately, whether to merge with a democratic South Africa. That volatile country surrounds Lesotho on all sides and has played a pivotal role in both its economic and political history.

Today, Mokhehle has dramatically turned down the volume on his opinions and even switched others—at least publicly. He once said, for example, that it would be “inconvenient” for Lesotho to remain independent; today, he talks of Lesotho's hard-fought-for sovereignty.

As a former African National Congress youth leaguer who founded the BCP in 1952, his political quiescence and milder rhetoric could be a tactical move to court supporters who are wary of the BCP's former firebrand style of politicking. But Mokhehle says otherwise.

“We're pragmatic,” he said. “It's a terrible word but we

do have a process of change taking place, with new directions. It has taken 40 years to mellow. How long does French wine take?”

Mokhehle's role as the chief

BCP leader Ntsu Mokhehle, far left, and BNP leader Evaristus Retselisitsoe Sekbonyana

B.J. Kelso is a freelance journalist based in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Above and right, supporters of the Basutoland Congress Party at a rally

opposition leader hasn't been easy. His party narrowly lost the 1965 pre-independence elections to its rival, the Basotho National Party (BNP). In 1970, the BCP won a majority but then faced the wrath of the BNP government, which suspended the constitution, established rule by decree, and jailed its opponents, including Mokhehle, for 17 months.

After an uprising by BCP supporters in 1974, Mokhehle was exiled until 1988. His homecoming, however, didn't jump-start his political career. Instead, Lesotho was under a new ban on partisan activity, this time enacted by the military which seized power from BNP leader Chief Leabua Jonathan in a 1986 coup.

That ban was finally lifted in 1991 when the military announced it would return to the barracks following elec-



Casey Kelso

tions now scheduled for March. Today, Mokhehle's party, the BNP, and 15 others are busy campaigning, especially in the mountainous countryside, only by horse in many areas.

Of course, everyone is promising more jobs, but issues are not at the heart of their campaigns. Instead, history is the candidates' favorite subject, and how citizens feel about it could well determine their votes. One commonality is fear: Rather than election euphoria, one finds a dark cloud shrouding Lesotho.

Politicians, civilians, and donors alike question whether the BCP or any of its competitors would be able to maintain a democracy because of the nation's violent political past. They fear polling could be marred by vote rigging and violence.

The on-again, off-again status of elections hasn't helped. The balloting was first scheduled for May, then July, then November, then January. The most recent postponement in early January to March came only two weeks before voters had expected to go to the polls.

All the setbacks followed problems with the preparations, said Noel Lee, the Commonwealth-appointed chief electoral officer. The latest was the inclusion of too many or too few people in some of Lesotho's 65 constituencies.

The new delay surprised few and was even welcomed by some because it created more time for campaigning by candidates who, like the populace, are largely unaware of electoral procedures. (Denmark has donated an estimated \$165,000 to be divvied up among the parties for candidate and voter education.)

On the other hand, the delay increased existing frustration and suspicion. The accusation of possible electoral fraud and violence is being leveled by, and at, all the major players.

The Commonwealth's January replacement of Lee by a new appointee—Joyce Lucas of Trinidad—didn't help matters either, although Lee said his departure was unrelated to Lesotho's politics and would enable him to work on elections in his home country of Jamaica. International poll observers in Lesotho will number less than 50.

"We are afraid that probably somewhere, somebody is hatching something," said Thabo Motlamelle, publicity secretary for the Basotho National Party. "We really doubt the bona fides of government to take us back to elections and democracy."

Factions in the military government could threaten the transition to civilian rule, or its subsequent stability. Metsing Lekhanya, the major-general who led the 1986 military takeover, met his downfall in a 1991 coup by fellow soldiers. Less than one month later, his successor, Col. Phisoane Ramaema, dismissed 20 officers for allegedly plotting a coup to oust him in turn.

Analysts predict that some soldiers may not be willing to hand power back to civilians. Lesotho's army of about 2,500 soldiers has been needed for little else other than to curb internal opposition, so a new government would likely begin a demobilization program. And while Ramae-

ma supports the BCP, lower-ranking soldiers are said to support the BNP.

Regardless of the military's position, either political party could destabilize a democratic Lesotho on its own. Some BCP members have said that once in power, the party would seek revenge for its past persecution and oppression. Win or lose, that party's factional squabbles don't bode well for peace.

At least 1,000 members of its former military wing, the Lesotho Liberation Army, are believed to still be armed in South Africa, where the LLA formed after the exile of many BCP members in 1974. These guerrillas, like other BCP members, are said to be in strong disagreement with their leaders on key issues.

Inside Lesotho, the former LLA members are also eyed with suspicion. Along with Mokhehle, most returned home under a 1988 amnesty after the BCP dropped demands that its liberation army be merged with the Lesotho Royal Defense Force. They still have weapons caches since the amnesty did not include disarmament.

Despite worries about its rivals, the BNP may not be a good loser either. Its North Korean-trained youth militia played a key role in the witchhunt of BCP members in the 1970s and it was blamed for widespread lawlessness in the 1980s. Many believe the 1986 military revolt was spurred, in part, by Chief Jonathan's use of the youth as a second armed force to quell dissent.

In BNP rallies, however, the party's new leader, Evaristus Retselisitsoe Sekhonyana, is asking for peace from his own followers and forgiveness from the BCP for the past.

"It's not out of a sense of guilt or shame, but without reconciliation there can be no peace," Sekhonyana explained from his palatial home that doubles as the BNP headquarters. Then he quickly added: "But I can understand why we did what we did."

Unlike other countries where a constitutional monarchy often provides balance, the issue of Lesotho's kingship could be a flash point for conflict as well. The country finds itself in a royal predicament: An exiled king, Moshoeshe II, has returned home in want of power as his son sits on the throne.

The question is whether the traditional power of the king, long marginalized, should be restored. At issue is also whether the royal reins should be returned to Moshoeshe, who was deposed and exiled in 1990 after repeated clashes with Chief Jonathan.

The resolution to both issues will depend on who wins a majority at the polls. But the royalist party, the Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), is already issuing its own warning of violence should Moshoeshe not be reinstated and with greater authority.

"If the king does not go back to power there will be trouble and it should not be blamed on us," said MFP leader Moeketse Malebo, who is particularly upset that Moshoeshe has been barred from taking the issue to

court. "If you cannot even allow me to go to court, won't I have to take my own gun?"

It is difficult to gauge just how many citizens support Moshoeshe. The MFP says it has 200,000 members but only about 500 turned out to welcome the former king home from exile in mid-1992. In the last democratic elections, held in 1970, the MFP won only one of the then 60 parliamentary seats.

Perhaps the greatest threat to Lesotho's stability lies outside its borders—on all sides. South Africa has meddled in Lesotho throughout its history and South Africa's future will shape Lesotho's as well.

South Africa has exploited the smaller nation's predicament to create political and economic conditions in Lesotho to suit itself. In the pre-independence elections, for example, it helped secure Chief Jonathan a victory by allowing him sole access for campaigning in the South African mines, where more than 100,000 of Lesotho's adult males work.

Tension between the two countries later escalated when Jonathan began voicing anti-apartheid and pro-ANC sentiments and established ties with Eastern bloc nations. South Africa was said to be helping arm the LLA, which launched a series of attacks on Lesotho beginning in 1979 from a base in the South African homeland of Qwaqwa. A 1982 raid by South African commandos in search of ANC members in Lesotho's capital left 42 people dead.

A 12-day border blockade by South Africa in 1986 served as the main catalyst for the military coup. Immediately after the takeover, the blockade was lifted. One week later, about 60 ANC members were expelled from Lesotho. The relations between the government and South Africa have since been based on cooperation.

Lesotho is the economic hostage of its neighbor. It is one of the world's least developed countries and it has few resources to change this. It will be a tall order for the new government to scale down the volatile military while redirecting those funds to social services and sorely needed jobs.

Lesotho is virtually devoid of industry and only 10 percent of its land is suitable for arable agriculture, leaving few citizens with the means to support themselves inside the country. Many have long regarded the nation as South Africa's first labor reserve, a situation that is changing as its neighbor continues its painful lurches toward majority rule.

The remittances of Lesotho's migrant laborers are at the heart of Lesotho's dependence on South Africa. But their numbers are dwindling as more South Africans are taking the jobs. In 1992, up to 10,000 of Lesotho's miners were expected to lose their contracts. Those who still hold their jobs are rarely at home.

At Christmas, the miners' return is evident. In cities, dozens of men sport hard hats. In the countryside, miners can be spotted by their stylish attire. One stood in a muddy village sporting shiny loafers and a crisply ironed shirt and tie. He shrugged when asked about his political

affiliation: "We're never home enough to know much about politics here."

Lesotho increasingly finds its miners coming home unemployed and its foreign aid threatened as donors shift emphasis to the needs of a new South Africa. In the process, the possibility of integration with South Africa has become an issue much as it was before independence when Lesotho nationalists fought against it.

Today, the same question is asked in an entirely different context. But it is mostly academics who see a merger—politically and/or economically—as inevitable and laden with benefits. Becoming a federal state of South Africa, they say, could secure the jobs of Lesotho's miners and help the nation to beat long-standing dependence on foreign aid.

For some, like political science professor Sehoai Santho, the question has been pertinent since first posed in the early 1990s. Santho, a founding member of the Patriotic Front for Democracy, refers to South Africa as "The Constant Factor" in the evolution of Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, and Namibia.

"The most dependent [country] and with the least options is Lesotho," he said. "Some people feel we are too obsessed by this question of possible integration, but we have to be. In Lesotho, the variables keep coming and going, but you would have to be naive to see an attaching process with South Africa."

But many Lesotho citizens believe the country would have options, with the right government in place. They say past governments toadied to South Africa and ignored the interests of their countrymen. One frequently cited example of this is the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, a multi-billion dollar joint venture between the two countries.

The huge, donor-backed project includes the construction of five dams over the next 27 years. Massive pipelines will harness the reservoirs created from Lesotho's mountain rivers and transport irrigation water to the Orange Free State of South Africa. In return, Lesotho is expected to become self-sufficient in electricity. But few houses have access to electricity and the project will displace nearly 20,000 subsistence farmers.

Most of the political parties are advocating a renegotiation of the project's 1986 treaty to provide more benefits for Lesotho, and they expect a new government in South Africa to agree to such a review. One glaring inequity is that Lesotho must source its own funding for the hydroelectric generating facility.

The manner in which a black-majority government in South Africa handles the lopsided treaty could indicate how it would treat Lesotho should the two countries merge. But the majority of Basotho oppose unification. The ever-present South African influence has left its scars, and the Basotho are fiercely proud of their sovereignty.

They also know their greatest challenge is to reconcile with each other, rather than to wait for their neighbors to do the same. And in Lesotho, the chance to do the same could come soon. ○

Upset at his loss at the polls, and charging the government with election fraud, Jonas Savimbi and his Unita troops have once again taken up arms. As the two sides are trading bullets and blame, Angola has once again become a bloody battlefield. Our correspondent reports on a country plunged into despair.

Slowly, gradually, and tragically Angola slid back into war. A last-minute attempt to bring together the Angolan government and the Unita rebels at a negotiating table in Addis Ababa might succeed in resolving the differences between the two sides. But most international observers were gloomily predicting continued fighting.

The return to war began when Jonas Savimbi, leader of the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita), rejected the results of the September elections. Savimbi refused to accept that he received only 40 percent of the presidential vote and that Unita won only 32 percent of the parliamentary seats. He claimed the elections were "rigged" and threatened renewed civil war.

Jonas Savimbi, leader of Unita, has threatened a renewed civil war with the government of President José Eduardo dos Santos (inset)

Margaret A. Novicki



Daphne Pinkerson

TWO STEPS BACK

From that point on, there were several steps back to conflict. During October, Savimbi refused to come to the capital, Luanda, to discuss the election results, charging that he would not be safe. Violence erupted in Luanda in the first days of November in which more than 1,000 people were killed. Unita sustained the heaviest losses and was largely forced out of the capital.

But Unita scored military victories throughout the rest of Angola. Taking advantage of the fact that its troops had not disarmed or demobilized before the elections, Unita forces surrounded and occupied numerous key provincial capitals and ports. By the start of 1993, Unita was estimated to control 75 percent of Angola including the key port, Lobito, and its twin city, Benguela, the northern provincial capital, Huige, as well as Malange, Namibe, Kuito, Caxito, and N'Dalatando. Virtually all of the country's roads were controlled by Unita. Surprisingly, not many shots were fired as Unita gained these key positions. Many observers said Unita was merely negotiating through force to get a better settlement from the government.

Once again Unita refused to return to the capital, this time to take up its 70 places in the 220-seat Parliament. The new government, controlled by the MPLA party that had ruled Angola since 1975, offered Unita a humiliating token position of one insignificant cabinet post.

Then, in January, the new government went on the offensive. On the strength of its oil revenues, the government had gone shopping for new weapons, ammunition, and armored vehicles. Using its impressive air force, arguably Africa's mightiest with a fleet of Russian MiG jet fighters, and its heavy ground artillery, the government forces regained many of the cities that Unita had taken. Oddly, the towns once again changed hands without protracted battles. Lobito port and Caxito returned to government control. The government also regained control

of Huambo, Savimbi's headquarters. Unita's offices and Savimbi's home were largely destroyed and it was reported that Savimbi had fled the city. Some reports said he had fled to Zaire.

But neither Savimbi nor Unita were finished yet. Unita troops regrouped outside the urban centers and planned new attacks. The force of Unita's new offensive was surprising. Lobito, Benguela, and N'Dalatando became embattled. The northern town of Soyo, center for one-third of Angola's oil production, fell into Unita's hands. This was notable because Soyo is far away from Unita's traditional area of support, the central and southern region where the Ovimbundu people are concentrated. This led to government charges that Unita's northern offensive had been backed by neighboring Zaire. By taking Soyo Unita succeeded in preventing the government from earning revenue from a substantial part of its oil production, although experts agree that Unita does not have the expertise to itself produce the oil around Soyo or to market it internationally.

Unita also won control of Angola's diamond-producing region in the Lunda North and South provinces. Reports from Europe's diamond-cutting centers are that Unita succeeded in smuggling and mailing diamonds worth more than \$100 million.

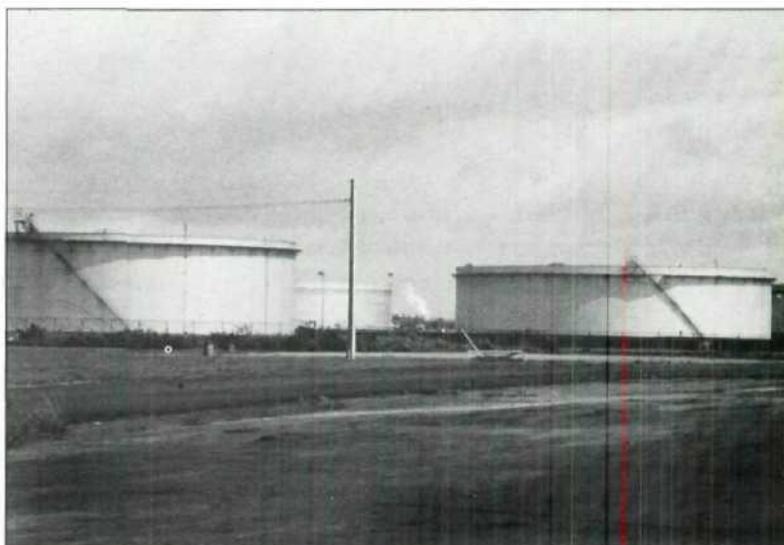
But the heaviest fighting in Unita's counter-offensive was over Huambo, the central city of Angola's fertile *piano alto* (high plateau). Unita managed to seize control



Mercedes Seyjaques/WFP

of the northern center of Huige but found that Unita had carried out a scorched earth policy, leaving next to nothing in working order. The government even took control

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Margaret A. Novicki

of the city, which is Angola's second largest, but then the government air force began daily bombings of the area. It is said there was not a window in Huambo not shattered, either from the shooting, the bombings, or the sonic booms from low-flying jet fighters.

Further bad news for Angola came from New York where the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, announced he intended to scale down the UN's mission to the war-torn country. He recalled half of the UN personnel in Angola and said he would allow the UN's mission there to expire at the end of April.

The UN presence of about 600 personnel had always

been too small for the major tasks of overseeing the demobilization of both armies and of monitoring the country's elections. Also, without a peace-keeping force, the UN Angolan Verification Mission (UNAVEM) was unable to show any muscle in its feeble attempt to get the armed forces to disarm. Just a week before the poll, at the end of September, the UN special representative to Angola, Margaret Anstee, confirmed that only 50 percent of the armed forces had been fully demobilized. Even that was a misleading figure, as most of those demobbed were the government forces and Unita's troops were left virtually intact. This was a crucial factor which gave Savimbi the force to take over strategic cities when he rejected his election defeat.

Despite the weakness of the UN mission, the announcement by Boutros-Ghali that the UN effort would be winding down came as a blow to Angola's dwindling hopes of peace. The OAU sent a fruitless mission headed by Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe to Angola, which left without ever having met with Savimbi. South Africa's foreign minister, Roelof (Pik) Botha, also tried to get in on the act by meeting with Savimbi in Huambo, but he was unable to patch up the split.

Similarly, the United States had proved ineffective in attempting to bring Savimbi back into Angola's political mainstream from his military outpost in Huambo. U.S. diplomats expressed frustration that their erstwhile ally, Savimbi, had refused to heed advice to tone down his aggressive rhetoric during the election campaign. After the elections, Savimbi publicly told the assistant secretary of state, Herman Cohen, to "go to hell" for urging him to respect the conditions of the peace accord and respect the election results.

But even though it had not demonstrated influence over Savimbi or Unita, the outgoing Bush administration would not recognize the new Angolan government. Many African diplomats charged that its refusal encouraged Savimbi to continue his war against the Luanda government.

The new Clinton administration did not immediately announce a clear policy toward Angola, except to make a statement over Angolan radio and television warning Savimbi from attacking any property owned by American companies, specifically the oil installations in the northern exclave of Cabinda. This tiny territory, geographically separated from the rest of Angola, is particularly strategic. It produces two-thirds of Angola's oil and has such massive proven reserves that U.S. diplomats have spoken of Cabinda as "another Persian Gulf." That oil production is dominated by American firms. Cabinda has a 50-year-old separatist movement fighting for independence from Angola. As the Angolan conflict raged, militant Cabindans could decide the time was ripe to declare independence.

Angola's final glimmer of hope to avoid a protracted fight to the finish came at the end of January when Anstee, the UN special representative, managed to convene a meeting in Addis Ababa between delegations from Unita and the new MPLA government. The purpose of

the meeting was to reestablish a ceasefire, but from the outset Unita stated the negotiations must address "political questions, such as power-sharing in government." There had been hopes in the Angolan government and in the UN that a split would appear in Unita between Savimbi, who led the hawks, and other Unita officers who wanted to make peace. No sign of peace-makers emerged at the start of the talks.

But even as the two sides came to the negotiating table in Ethiopia, the situation worsened in Angola. While daily fighting raged in Huambo, battles continued elsewhere.

Law and order broke down in a frightening manner. In Luanda, many suspected Unita supporters had been hunted down and killed by civilians who had been supplied arms by government officials. Similar manhunts occurred in Lobito and Benguela. The people called it *limpeza*, the Angolan version of "ethnic cleansing." Whole families suspected of supporting Unita were gunned down. More than 2,000 were killed, according to Benguela residents, including 150 Unita supporters who were burned alive when police fired into the trucks in which they were trying to flee the city.

For its part, Unita had also carried out a number of waves of killings when it had control of various cities.

The Angolan government's charge that Zaire had given Unita support encouraged the capital's fevered population to attack Zairian market traders as supporters of Unita. Twenty Zairians were killed at Luanda's main market, the infamous Roque Santeiro. Meanwhile, Zairians took advantage of Unita's occupation of Soyo by spilling across the border to loot the Angolan city. Unita guards stood by as the Zairians stole anything of value, according to reports.

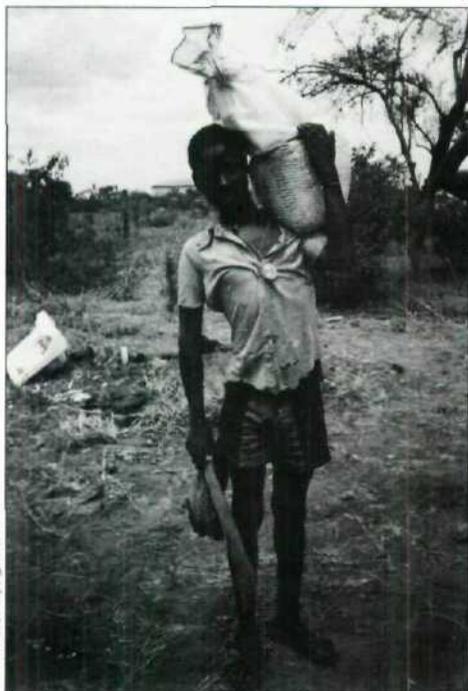
"This is much more disgusting than the war," said Jean Martens, a relief worker with Médecins sans Frontières. Martens told the London *Guardian* newspaper: "Everybody is speaking about *limpeza*. They smile when they talk about it. They don't just kill men, they kill families. It is terrible."

Although the Angolan government has superior weapons, especially its air force, Unita is understood to have a healthy stockpile of American- and South African-supplied weapons. It is estimated that Unita can hold out for a minimum of six months, probably longer.

After 17 years of civil war fed by Cold War rivalry between the U.S. and the USSR, there were high hopes that, left to themselves, Angolans would set aside their differences. Those hopes proved to be ill-founded and naive. The elections completely failed to establish a new working relationship between Unita and the government. Urgent negotiating efforts collapsed. Most tragically of all, the grisly "ethnic cleansing" killings showed Angolans enthusiastically participating in a spiralling bloodbath that could only lead to more suffering for the country, and more bitterness and hatred for years to come. ○

|| MOZAMBIQUE ||
BY ANDREW MELDRUM

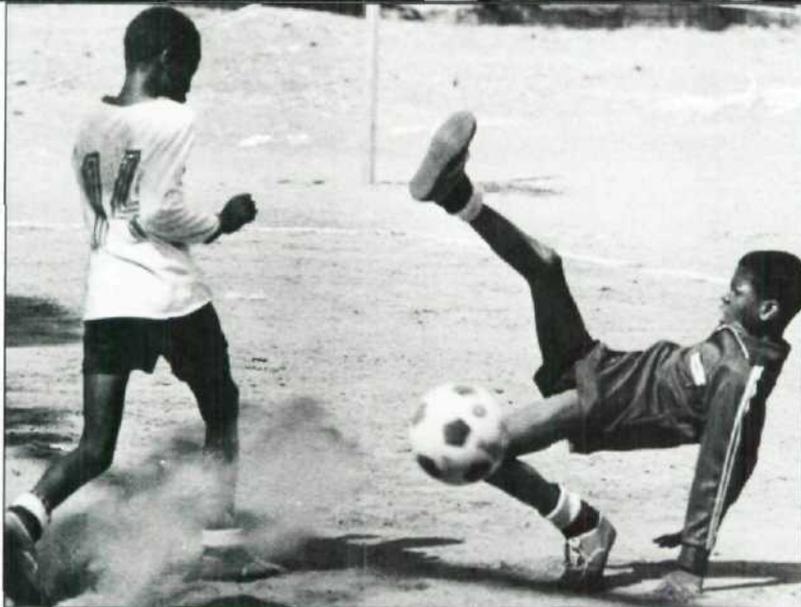
PEACE AT LAST



Mercedes Savagues/WFP



Mercedes Savagues/WFP



Alfredo Mueche/AIM

After years of ferocious civil war, Mozambique finally seems on track for peace. Crucial to keeping the peace and running elections will be efforts to bring Renamo rebels into the country's political and social mainstream.

Despite lingering antagonisms between supporters of Renamo and those of the Frelimo government, this plan is being carried out with the help of massive international food aid and a 7,500-person United Nations operation overseeing the peace and the elections.

The town of Inhaminga, deep in central Mozambique, has been cut off from the outside world for seven years by the country's civil war. Now a stronghold of the Renamo rebels, the town has been beset by war for 20 years. In 1975 it changed hands from the Portuguese colonialists to Frelimo (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique). Then in 1985, after years of battle, Inhaminga was taken by the rebels of Renamo.

Today the town is still controlled by Renamo but thanks to Mozambique's ceasefire, Inhaminga, 75 miles northwest of Beira in Sofala province, is making initial contacts with outsiders, such as officials delivering desperately needed food aid along with a handful of journalists.

Inhaminga has a ghostly air, haunted with many ghostly tales pressing to be told. The intense yet remote stares of its barefoot population of 20,000 silently tell of killings and mutilations, family members dead or disappeared, and of deprivation and starvation.

The outskirts of the town are pocked by trenches dug by Frelimo troops who vainly tried to defend the town from Renamo. Faded Marxist slogans and a wrecked and rusted Soviet tank conjure up the era when Frelimo received Soviet military support.

Inhaminga's wide tree-lined avenues with once-hand-some commercial buildings and spacious homes testify to the boom years when the town was a thriving agricultural center and railway junction linking Beira port to Malawi. Now the buildings are missing windows, doors, and roofs. The streets are littered with burned-out shells of cars, trucks, and armored troop carriers.

Inside a cavernous warehouse, several rusting locomotives evoke Inhaminga's bustling past as a regional engine maintenance center. Now the railway's giant cranes and drills stand idly by as women camping in the warehouse pound grain with large wooden cudgels.

The twin bell towers of the Catholic church still rise majestically over the rolling plains around Inhaminga, yet the gaping holes in its roof, its shattered windows, and broken statues tell of years when the Western world was held at bay. Older tribal ways have come to the fore, as evidenced by the intricate patterns of tiny scars which lace the cheeks, foreheads, and chests of young women.

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Inhaminga was badly stricken by southern Africa's drought, and in the past year many people died. Under tents of plastic sheeting a few dozen of the weakest people have gathered for special feedings. The rest of Inhaminga's people are thin and dressed in rags, grain bags, and cloth made from tree bark.

Yet eye-catching verve and style can still be seen in the jewelry fashioned from bits of plastic and the patchwork clothes, especially the cone-shaped, Madonaesque bras sported by many women.

In many respects, Inhaminga appears a hopeless casualty of Mozambique's years of war. Yet it is in Inhaminga that the seeds for the country's future peace are being sown today.

Renamo officials are cooperating with the Maputo government and with international organizations. Inhaminga remains inaccessible by road because of landmines, so emergency food relief must be airlifted to the town. In addition, seeds and hoes are being distributed to help people start cultivating new, self-sufficient lives.

The old Catholic priest who left the town more than 10 years ago has returned and plans to re-open the church. Renamo officials have pruned the flowering jacaranda and flamboyant trees that line the streets. They have whitewashed a few buildings. They have requested technical experts to get the water and sanitation systems to function again.

The people in Inhaminga, as throughout the rest of Mozambique, are setting aside their differences and enmities in order to get on with building a lasting peace.

"We are all tired of war. We cannot survive if we continue fighting," said José Augusto Xaviere, Renamo's director-general of internal

affairs, who is the top administrator in Inhaminga. "First, we start by getting the people enough food to be healthy. Then the people will be able to grow their own food."

Articulate and efficient, Xaviere challenges the widely held view that Renamo has no administrative capabilities. He said Renamo would not turn Mozambique into another Angola.

"Renamo will respect the election results, even if we

**THE PEOPLE IN
MOZAMBIQUE'S
VAST RURAL
AREAS UNDER
RENAMO'S
CONTROL LARGELY
ACCEPT ITS
LEADERSHIP.**

Learning from Angola's Mistakes

Maputo is returning to its 1960s glory as a regional tourist resort. The neon signs for cafes, bars, restaurants, and bakeries have been turned back on and the establishments opened for business. The fabulous Polana Hotel has been remodeled and refurbished by a South African hotel chain. It is now patronized by hundreds of Portuguese residents who fled to South Africa in 1975 and now visit Mozambique to see about regaining their property.

Long-time Maputo residents are delighted by the new freedom to drive in safety throughout the country. Until the ceasefire, which came into effect on November 4, 1992, it was not safe to drive more than a few miles outside the city because of frequent Renamo ambushes. Now people are driving up to beach cities like Xai-Xai, Inhambane, and all the way up to Beira and Nampula.

"It's fantastic," exclaimed one eager motorist. "I have visited places I haven't seen in 15 years. I can take my children who have never seen the country."

One of the main reasons Mozambicans are so hopeful that the peace is going to be sustained is the decision by the United Nations security council on December 17 to allocate a substantial mission to Mozambique to oversee the peace process and elections. The UN Operation in Mozambique will consist of a force of 7,500 troops, police, and civilians. The international peace-keeping force will include five self-sufficient infantry battalions, each containing 850 soldiers, an engineer battalion to rebuild roads and bridges, three logistics companies, as well as communications, medical, air, and transport units.

In addition to the 354 military observers, there will be 128 police and army civilians and up to 1,200 international observers during the election campaign. The operation is budgeted at \$330 million.

The United Nations special representative to Mozambique, Aido Ajello from Italy, is determined not to repeat the mistakes made in Angola.

The UN commitment to Mozambique compares favorably with the much smaller delegation to Angola. The UN sent only 800 personnel to Angola. The lack of a UN peace-keeping force in Angola is widely blamed for the failure of the UN to ensure that Jonas Savimbi's Unita rebels were completely disarmed and demobilized before the elections. Because Unita was still armed and concentrated in

strategic positions it was able to reject the elections and return to fighting.

"We will not permit the elections campaign to start until the demobilization of the armed forces is complete and a new, national army, made up from both sides, is in place," said Ajello in his Maputo office.

"We have learned a great deal from Angola," he continued. "This time we decided the UN had to start with the highest possible profile. We are planning to have a substantial armed force to ensure security in Mozambique while the government army and Renamo troops are demobilizing. We intend to guarantee the security of the transport corridors in order to allow free circulation of humanitarian aid. Food is the secret. If we cannot provide enough food, people will fight for survival and the peace process will be in jeopardy."

Ajello has met twice with Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama and said he is favorably impressed. "We have had two five-hour meetings and have discussed the nature of democracy and the need for Dhlakama to turn Renamo into a real political party. We also talked about the possibility of Renamo's losing the elections and how it could function as an opposition party," said Ajello. "Dhlakama showed a sophisticated understanding of the situation and I believe he has the ability to make the transition from a guerrilla leader to a politician."

Ajello added that Dhlakama, at age 39, has time on his side. He might lose the election, but he is still young enough to be able to win a future election.

All signs are that Mozambique's first-ever multi-party democratic elections will be postponed. According to the Rome peace accord the elections should be held in October 1993. But there is so much work to be done to demobilize the armies and prepare the country for elections that virtually all officials agree that a date in April or May of 1994 is much more realistic.

In the meantime, Mozambique needs a great deal of international financial support. Continued emergency food aid is necessary as well as funds to resettle the 5 million people displaced inside the country and the 1 million refugees outside the country. The Paris Club has granted Mozambique \$780 million in financial support for the coming year and in Rome, international donors pledged \$320 million to mount the elections. ■

—A.M.

lose," said Xaviere. "We are not like Unita, who are only after power. We fought for the principles of multi-party democracy and a free-market economy. The Chissano government has already instituted those changes, so we have already won. Even if we lose the elections we will have won because there will be democracy in Mozambique."

Asked about Renamo's reputation for brutality, massacres, and mutilations, Xaviere dismissed the charges as Frelimo propaganda. "The same things were said about Frelimo when they were fighting against the Portuguese," he said. "Now they are in power and they are making the same charges against us, calling us terrorists."

Such responses are obviously self-serving, but Xaviere's answers nonetheless contain positive indicators that Renamo would like to see peace established in Mozambique.

"It makes me furious to hear Renamo saying such things," said a Mozambican journalist. "I have seen people whose noses and ears were cut off by Renamo. I have interviewed 10-year-old boys in Renamo who have killed whole villages. I want to shout at Renamo members and denounce them. Because of what they have done, Renamo members are not even like people. But I keep quiet because I know we have to make peace. To continue the war will only continue the suffering. We have to have peace and that means allowing Renamo to function as an ordinary political party. It disgusts me, but it is necessary."

President Joaquim Chissano's government has obviously made a similar decision to allow Renamo to move into the political mainstream. Mozambican television recently broadcast an interview with Renamo President Afonso Dhlakama. Dressed in combat fatigues at his bush headquarters in Marique, Dhlakama lectured on Renamo's positions. He gave answers remarkably similar to those of Xaviere, saying that Renamo had fought for democratic principles and would respect the election results, even if it is defeated. Dhlakama was warmly received by Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe in Harare in December and met with Chissano and the leaders of the other frontline states.

And Renamo does have some bona fide supporters. The people in the vast rural areas under Renamo's control largely accept its leadership. Even in Maputo, the capital and government bastion, some people will now openly speak up in favor of Renamo. Much more support for Renamo is evident in the port city of Beira. Many of the urban supporters are disgusted by the rampant corruption and inefficiency of the Frelimo government, which has been in power since 1975.

COOPERATION OF ALL SIDES IN THE DELIVERY OF FOOD AID AND THE ONSET OF GOOD RAINS BODE WELL FOR MOZAMBIQUE.

At Inhaminga's muddy airstrip, two miles from the town center, daily flights bring in tons of desperately needed food. Russian Antonov jets with Russian crews deliver bags of American and European maize. The Russian planes and crews were hired by the United Nations' World Food Programme for the massive airlift needed in Mozambique. The British charity, Action Aid, is funding the delivery of the food to Inhaminga.

"By giving aid to the people in Renamo areas we are hoping to show Renamo that the international community is working toward peace with them," said Colin Baker, director of Action Aid's emergency unit, of the flights bringing 360 tons per month to Inhaminga. "By delivering emergency food to Renamo areas we are helping to consolidate the peace. This is the start of bringing Renamo into the country's mainstream."

The cooperation of all sides in the delivery of food aid and the onset of good rains bode well for Mozambique. But things could go wrong very quickly. Many areas are not yet receiving food aid and there are reports of hungry crowds attacking food convoys. Renamo and Frelimo troops have not yet begun to gather at the 49 assembly points in order to demobilize and disarm. Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama has delayed going to Maputo to take part in the preparations for elections. Dhlakama complains that President Chissano is establishing a crack police force, currently being trained by Spanish experts, similar to the special force the Angolan government used against Unita in Luanda following the elections.

The specter of Angola's return to war hangs heavily over Mozambique. Yet Mozambicans from all sides, diplomats, and aid workers agree that with work the country can achieve lasting peace.

About 2,000 people have gathered around an abandoned schoolhouse, where food aid is being distributed through their *regulo*, a Portuguese colonial term for traditional chief. Action Aid and Renamo officials work together over the *regulo*'s list of families, which gives the number of adults and children. The *regulo* calls out the name of a family and when they step up they receive rations of maize, beans, and cooking oil as well as seeds, hoes, and machetes. They carry away the precious food in baskets, bags, and sacks.

The atmosphere is rather anxious as the hungry people await the food. Once several families receive their share without problems the mood lightens. A Renamo official leads the group in cheers. "Viva Renamo!" he shouts, punching a fist in the air, and the crowd responds, "Viva!" "Viva Presidente Afonso Dhlakama!" "Viva!"

The aid officers are noticeably uncomfortable to see their food donations become the excuse for a Renamo rally. A few words are exchanged and the Renamo leader quickly grasps the situation. He leads the cheers again, this time to everybody's satisfaction as his exhortations encourage the national peace process.

He enthusiastically shouts, "Viva Mozambique! Viva Paix [Peace]! Viva Democracia! Viva!" ○

THE LANDLESS BUSHMEN

For more than a 100 years Botswana's nomadic, desert-dwelling bushmen have been pushed off their land, first by whites and now by the country's most affluent, who want the land for



cattle ranches and mineral exploitation. Thousands of bushmen have been put into resettlement camps, a government policy to integrate them into the larger society. For the country's remaining 39,000 bushmen, descendants of people

The 39,000 bushmen of Botswana are being "developed" by the government of President Quett Masire (left)

who settled in Botswana 25,000 years ago, it is a constant struggle to assert their identity—and hold on to their land.



John Liebenberg

A new word has entered into the vocabulary of the ancient Nharo click-language of Botswana's bushmen. It's *politeek*.

The word, a corruption of the English term "politics," signifies a great deal of talk and promises that produce little positive results. A bushman in a settlement outside of Botswana's northeastern town of Ghanzi explained: "The hunting was

taken away and the [game] wardens arrest you for killing animals," he said. "Now that we're settled, there's no means of living. And the government's stopped giving us food assistance, so there's nothing to eat. That's politeek."

The remaining bushmen of Botswana, numbering some 39,000, have learned the hard lessons of politeek as they struggle to retain their identity in the face of an aggressive effort by the government to "develop" them.

Ironically, the transition from hunting and gathering to a cash economy has left most of the bushmen landless and destitute. They face discrimination from the domi-

Casey Kelso is a journalist based in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Discrimination and Brutality

Botswana's bushmen are subjected to widespread torture, pervasive discrimination, and forced relocation off their traditional lands, according to a consortium of local churches.

The religious group, the Botswana Christian Council, made the charges in a report entitled "Who was (t)here first?" The human rights assessment followed a survey of bushmen, also known as Basarwa, in the remote northeastern district of Ghanzi.

"We have strong indications that the situation described is more or less the same all over Botswana," said Churchill Gape, the general secretary of the council. "As churches, we cannot remain silent when we listen to the cries of God's people."

The report's most shocking allegation describes the torture of bushmen at the hands of local police and game wardens with the department of wildlife and national parks. The officers allegedly abused bushmen suspected of hunting wildlife on their former traditional lands, now fenced off as private or state property.

The officers wrap a rubber ring around the bushman's testicles, while a plastic bag is fastened around the victim's face, the report alleges. "You are castrated," one bushman said. "You are throttled so that you excrete all which you have eaten."

Those suspected of "poaching" also suffer beatings and illegal lengthy detention, and once in court face judges unlikely to accept that poverty, hunger, and tradition might prompt the bushmen to break a new hunting ban, according to the report.

Botswana politicians have remained mum on the specific accusations, instead counter-charging that foreign agitation led to the charges. Since releasing the report, the council has also silenced itself by declining public comment in fear of further straining relations with the government.

The report is not only aimed at publicizing the situation, but also at prompting Botswana to find solutions. The author, British-trained lawyer Alice Mogwe, presented to the government a series of recommendations made by the bushmen, and others of her own.

Among Mogwe's recommendations are that an investigation be immediately launched into the allegations of torture and illegal detention. Such an

investigation, when reported back to the Ghanzi community at its conclusion, would assure bushmen that the judicial system will protect their rights, Mogwe said.

Mogwe also called for the court enforcement of Botswana's constitution, which protects against discrimination.

In their recommendations, bushmen strongly urged that they be given a large area of land as their own. The bushmen asked that communities still facing forced removal be helped to remain on their ancestral territory or, if moved, be compensated for their loss.

The bushmen also suggested that a teacher speaking their language should assist youngsters early in their education.

"It is sincerely hoped that the recommendations made above will assist in giving a voice to the Basarwa, who for so long have had 'development' planned for them and around them without actually reaching them," Mogwe said.

Many others share her opinion behind closed doors, but few have dared criticize the government on such a sensitive issue. Mogwe, however, may be immune to government intimidation as the daughter of cabinet minister Archie Mogwe.

But whether her report will actually prompt any changes remains questionable.

At a recent Namibian conference on bushmen, a highly placed Botswana official publicly blamed the bushmen themselves for their problems. Another government-appointed politician from the Ghanzi district, Xukuri Blockman, characterized the bushmen in his area as a healthy and happy community.

It is statements like these that led the bushmen to speak out frankly during the human rights assessment, and later to do so at the Namibian conference.

"We Basarwa of Botswana are the most oppressed and do not have anything as compared to others in Botswana," bushman Jim Morris told the conference delegates. "I am so ashamed and embarrassed of what my countrymen have just reported to you." ■

—C.K.

nant Tswana society while their traditional land is systematically being taken away. Government development efforts often appear paternalistic and heavy-handed.

Bushmen still live in the most remote sections of the country. Their home, however, is no longer the open veld but shanty-towns, government resettlement camps, private ranches, or the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. Today, their fate lies in the debate between the government and outside foreign aid donors on how their society will be transformed.

Botswana's economy is one of the strongest in the developing world. Rapid economic growth is fueled by the mining of gem-quality diamonds. The country's gross domestic product has grown an average of 13 percent each year since independence, making per capita income rocket from next to nothing in 1966 to \$1,600.

But income distribution shows a far different picture to this success story: The poorest half of the 1.3 million population receives about one-sixth of the nation's total earnings, while two-thirds goes to the richest 20 percent. Government policy and spending is focused on urban districts, while the standard of living slips lower and lower in the rural areas, where three-quarters of Botswana's people live. The ravages of drought only make their plight worse.

In the government's 1991-92 budget that totals roughly \$1.8 billion, Botswana plans to spend \$2 million—or 0.1 percent—on its Remote Area Development program. Donations by Scandinavian countries, principally Norway, fund the project.

The bushmen are officially termed "Remote Area Dwellers" in government parlance. Translated to bushmen as "those-who-are-deep-inside-deep," the word prompted one bushman to wonder if that meant his people were considered dead and buried. "Has their soil covered ours?" asked another.

Bushmen traditionally define themselves as those "who move to where lightning is seen," because small bands of families migrated to rainfall areas in search of animals attracted to newly grown grass. The first bushmen arrived in Botswana some 25,000 years ago, settling in the arid desert region.

Anthropologists call them "San," but bushmen have never known the term. "Basarwa," their name among the majority Tswana ethnic group, connotes a derogatory lack of cattle. Most now embrace the term "bushmen," originally an insult, but now seen as an accurate description of their relationship to the environment.

Soon, however, even the term "bushman" may be technically inaccurate, as "the bush" of Botswana is being drawn and quartered into cattle ranches and mining concessions.

The greatest threat to the bushmen's cultural survival is the gradual erosion of their land rights, a process that began in 1847 when white settlers arrived in the remote town of Ghanzi and pegged out large tracts of the nomads' traditional land.

The grab of bushman land continued, but dramatically intensified in the 1980s when the Botswana government gave ranches of up to 25,000 acres free of charge to affluent Tswana cattlemen. Only an estimated 3,000 bushmen continue to live as their ancestors did in Botswana's Kalahari desert.

Those still living in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve are under intense government pressure to move into grim resettlement camps where thousands of their counterparts have been relocated.

Officials claim such a move is to preserve the environment, but oil and diamond exploration trucks are now bustling through the reserve. The bushmen of Xade, a tiny village in the reserve, recently scored a victory when authorities declared their camp as "permanent." But the nearby communities of Metsiemanong, Molapo, Mothomelwe, Kakau, Gugamma, and Gope still face forced removal.

More than 50 percent of the country's land is being explored for different minerals by 27 companies. Most prospecting licenses encircle the central desert areas where the bushmen once roamed.

While mining accounts for 60 percent of the government's revenue, cattle production plays a significant role as well. Together, the two have dispossessed thousands of bushmen. In Ghanzi district on the northern edge of the desert, for example, the estimated 12,300 bushmen make up 43 percent of the population, but only 2 percent of the region's landowners.

The average land holding in the district is 17,300 acres. These cattle posts are run by managers in the absence of the influential city-dwellers who visit their farms only on the weekends. President Masire owns

seven such ranches in the district; his two brothers hold two others.

Bushmen working on the farms earn only about \$12.50 a month. The jobless are often declared squatters and moved into any of the seven district resettlement villages, which now hold up to 5,000 bushmen. The government built schools and clinics in these camps

and provided fields, seeds, and fertilizer for crops.

The resettlement efforts, however, appear to fracture bushman society. Bushmen lack viable opportunities for hunting and gathering on the limited land and therefore remain destitute. The scarce and erratic rainfall in the arid region also dooms their "plow, plant, and pray for rain" style of farming.

Bushmen become dependent on handouts. For example, mortality rates sharply increased because of

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DESERT.**

widespread malnutrition that followed a 1990 end to drought relief assistance. This year, the government imposed a total ban on hunting and the new drought is already hitting the settlements hard.

Most bushmen want to stay on their traditional land, despite shortages of food, firewood, and water. One government survey of 100 bushmen found more than half continued to live as "squatters" on the newest set of cattle ranches 60 miles south of Ghanzi because they feared life in the settlements would be worse.

"If their possibilities of making a living on freehold farms are very poor, their opportunities in villages are even worse [because of] extremely bad living conditions," the study states.

Even the bushmen's settlement lands are not safe from outside exploitation. Cattle from overgrazed commercial ranches nearby invade the ranges and destroy their meager crops.

The bushman communities of New Xanagas and West Hanahai in the Ghanzi district have repeatedly petitioned local government for permission to erect a perimeter fence. That fence is unlikely to be approved: A district council officer privately admitted that influential neighbors continue to block such a move.

The controversy regarding government policy toward the bushmen is sharpened by Botswana's extreme sensitivity to issues of race and ethnicity. Both government officers and activists who campaign for bushmen refer to neighboring South Africa's apartheid policies when talking about the Botswana situation.

Authorities decry attempts to lobby on behalf of the bushmen as arguments for homelands and special privileges for a single ethnic group. Proponents of bushmen rights, on the other hand, speak of "apartheid discrimination and seizure of land."

How bushmen should be merged into the collective society remains hotly debated. Politicians angrily denounce international criticism as an effort to keep bushmen as a tourist attraction, like a zoo. They say resettlement must proceed in spite of the cultural disintegration under way.

Non-governmental organizations find themselves at odds with the government because few bushmen are organized to assert their rights. Foreigners speak out when no bushman voice is heard. Bushman society is *traditionally egalitarian and loosely structured*, so decisions are reached by consensus. As a result, few leaders exist to fight for the community's rights in modern times when government decisions about the bushmen's future are often made without representation.

For example, local authorities appointed their own man from the Tswana ethnic group as headman of the D'Kar bushman community. The residents were never consulted. When they protested to District Commissioner Samuel Rathedi, he warned them to "avoid tribalistic tendencies, as they can be dangerous." The outsider remains the official leader of the community.

When a delegation of bushmen journeyed to the capital of Gaborone to meet with officials, they were given a stern lecture by Pelonomi Venson, the permanent secretary for the ministry of local government, lands, and housing. She castigated them for following "the indigenous minorities fashion."

Venson told the bushmen that Botswana is a signatory of international conventions that bind the state "to develop and integrate the Basarwa by improving their standards of living."

That same mission when pursued by development aid groups isn't always welcomed by the government, especially when it involves land.

The Ghanzi District Council officially leased three ranches totalling almost 50,000 acres on behalf of the bushmen, then invited a consortium of non-governmental organizations to assist in developing it. The Norwegian Agency for Development gave \$180,000 to the Botswana government to finance fencing and wells.

Then influential interests, rumored to include a cabinet minister, a member of Parliament, and a former district commissioner, began maneuvers to take the ranches away. Norwegian representative Vid Kun Isaaksen threatened to cut off his nation's assistance to Botswana if the bushmen lost the land, but Botswana bluntly told the foreigners to stop meddling.

Earlier this year, Botswana grudgingly guaranteed that the bushmen would get the farms, but only if they developed the land in the next four years. At the same time, government ill will forced the consortium to dissolve, a move that could ensure that the powerful private interests will eventually prevail.

"It's a shame the big cattlemen want that land," said Francis Johnston, who heads a local grassroots development group involved in the disbanded consortium. "They could have ranches elsewhere, but the bushmen can't go elsewhere for land."

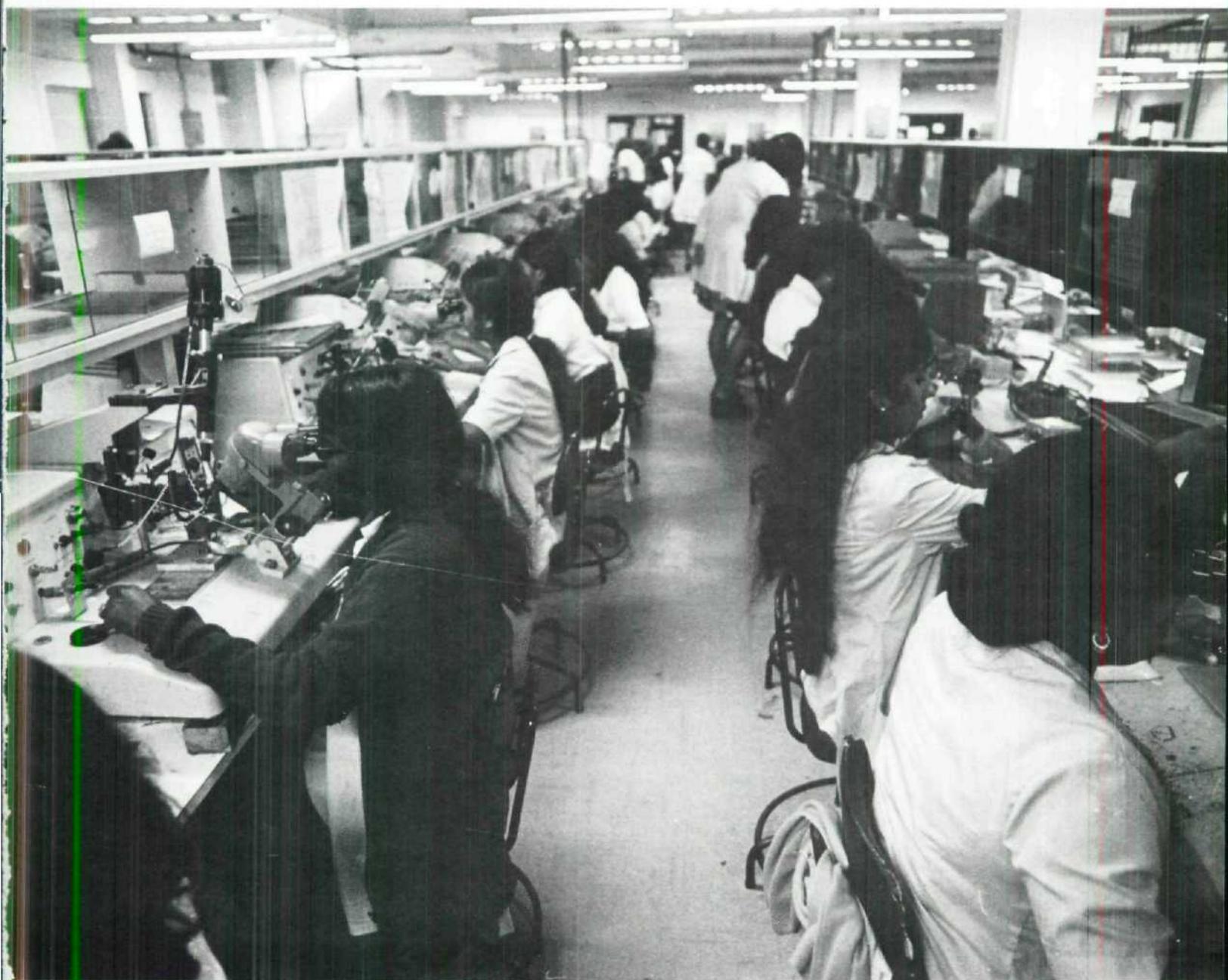
The bushmen are philosophical about the scandal, according to John Hardbattle, a British-educated cattle rancher who is part bushman. "They say why argue about not getting something when we never had it before?"

Hardbattle, the son of a London policeman who came to Africa as a soldier at the turn of the century and never left, grew up as a member of the Nharo tribe. Packed off to an English boarding school at 15, he came home to Ghanzi in 1965 to inherit his father's 100,000-acre ranch. His home serves as a center for the bushmen's traditional activities, such as trance dancing.

Hardbattle says the bushmen are tired of politeek, but they do not want to regress to a traditional life lacking "civilized" amenities like sugar, health care, and clean water. The alternative, however, is slowly strangling their way of life.

"We must use the machinery that now exists to better the bushmen's lives," says Hardbattle, a spokesman for the Ghanzi bushmen. "But it's grim. There are no bright spots now, only red tape covering their future." ○

|| MAURITIUS ||
BY ANNE SHEPHERD



SAVING THE 'TIGER'

Twenty-five years after independence, Mauritius is an economic success story. But the tiny Indian Ocean island has greater ambitions than just an economy based on cheap labor and sugar production. It wants to become

Africa's first "newly industrialized country," and that will mean developing more sophisticated industries, such as electronics, and attracting increased investment, domestic and foreign.



Just as Mauritians thought they could sit back and revel in their hard-earned success, the island's leaders are warning that tougher challenges lie ahead.

On March 12, the island celebrated its 25th anniversary of independence from Britain. Few African countries, on similar occasions, have had so much to be proud of: a functioning democracy; consistent growth in GDP; full employment; low inflation; no arrears with the IMF; a manageable debt burden; population growth of less than 1 percent; free health care and education.

Yet in the run-up to the independence celebrations, Prime Minister Sir Aneerood Jugnauth spent most of his time reminding the islanders that none of this should be taken for granted. His favorite analogy is of an airplane which, having soared into the air, needs fuel to keep it going.

Mauritius is a victim of its own achievements. Its success in pursuing an export-led growth strategy led to a rapid rise of the textile industry exploiting the country's then-abundant cheap labor. But now the island is short of workers. Meanwhile, global recession, and threats to its preferential access to European markets as the Uruguay round of GATT talks proceeds, have led to a realization that this is no time for complacency.

The island's leaders also have ambitions far beyond their present level of success. Having climbed halfway up the development ladder, their most cherished goal is to see Mauritius become Africa's first NIC (newly industrialized country) by the turn of the century. Privately, they see Mauritius becoming to Africa what Singapore is to Asia.

But that implies a fundamental shift from a labor- to a capital-intensive economy, already evident in moves to mechanize and shift upmarket in the agricultural, industrial, and tourist sectors, as well as a new drive to develop the island into an offshore banking, business, and trade center. For an island marooned in the Indian Ocean 900 miles off the coast of Africa, the first challenge is to find new markets, sources of business, and investment, against a backdrop of the considerable economic problems still besetting its hinterlands.

Unlike the past, skills and not just hands are the key to success.

The "second phase" of the island's development also calls for a new "industrial mentality," which scares many of the gentle, beach-loving islanders. But it is a reality that must be faced.

Anne Shepherd is a London-based journalist who has travelled widely in Africa and written extensively on African economic and political issues.

"Until recently, we have sat back and thought it inevitable that we would become the tiger of Africa," said Pierre Yin, managing partner of Wilton Associates, a firm of economic consultants in Port Louis. "Yes, compared to other African countries we are an exception," he continued. "But in global terms we have barely started. The first phase was the easiest. What we have to face now will be the real test of our ingenuity."

The island's greatest hope is its historically proven ability to win against the odds.

A volcanic extrusion somewhat larger than Oahu and bearing no known mineral resources and rocky agricultural land, Mauritius was first sighted by Dutch sailors, whose only contribution was to feast on the now-extinct dodo, the friendly duck-like bird which has become the island's national emblem.

French, and then British settlers (who claimed Mauritius as a spoil of war in 1810) introduced sugar, and brought in slaves from East Africa and then, when Britain abolished slavery, indentured labor from India to work the plantations. Today, 52 percent of the 1 million inhabitants are descendants of Hindus from India; 17 percent are Muslim Indo-Mauritians; and 27 percent are Creoles, or Mauritians of French and African origin. Franco- and Sino-Mauritians make up the remainder of the population.

In many countries, such a mix of peoples has spawned endless bickering and even civil wars. Mauritius has managed instead to thrive on its diversity. Its people speak English and French interchangeably, and among Indo-Mauritians, usually an Indian language as well. Creole, a sort of pidgin French, is the lingua franca. At a restaurant, one can enjoy all at once the best French wines, Indian curry, and the distinctive dance of Afro-Mauritians—originally from Senegal and Mozambique—called the *seaga*. If there are any tensions in this society, they are kept well hidden below the surface.

Politics is a more vociferous affair, laced with intrigue and revolving-door coalitions which are difficult for the outsider to fathom. The present government is a coalition of the Mouvement Socialiste Mauricien, led by Jugnauth, and the Mouvement Militant Mauricien, led by Foreign Minister Paul Berenger, who had a serious falling out with Jugnauth 10 years ago.

The last elections, held in September 1991, were punctuated by the first cries—in years of faithfully holding parliamentary elections—of foul play. These have been championed by the leader of the Labor Party-led opposition coalition, Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, whose father was the country's first prime minister, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam.

Ramgoolam has put his case before the Supreme Court, respected internationally for its independent status. Western diplomats doubt that the young Ramgoolam stands much chance. He has similarly lost credibility over a campaign a year ago against the island's breaking ties with Queen Elizabeth II (as titular head of state) and becoming a republic within the Commonwealth. Ramgoolam argued that this move should have been preceded by a referendum. But public sympathy was overwhelmingly in favor of becoming a republic.

The Labor leader's party is privately annoyed with Ramgoolam, a medical doctor, for spending much of his time since the election in London studying for a law degree.

These details aside, the island's hyperactive political scene and independent media have provided Mauritius with a rare public eye on government. Political disagreement has also always stopped short of diverting the basic economic thrust.

Like many African countries, Mauritius initially adopted inward-looking strategies in attempting to address the typical problems of a one-crop economy: high unemployment, balance of payments problems, and shrinking standards of living.

However, as early as 1972, the island set up an Export Processing Zone (EPZ), which provided attractive incentives to local sugar barons, as well as foreign investors, to go into labor-intensive industries, primarily textiles and garments. These incentives were beefed up in 1981, when the island also made a determined effort to correct macroeconomic distortions under the tutelage of the IMF and World Bank.

The island's export-led growth strategy was greatly aided by the Lomé Convention between African, Caribbean, and Pacific nations and the EC. The Sugar Protocol appended to the convention permits 507,000 tons of Mauritian sugar (about 80 percent of total production) to be sold in Europe at a price equivalent to that received by European beet farmers (about double the world market price). The convention also allows duty-free entry into the European market of manufactured products satisfying certain rules of origin. This gave the textile business an important edge over emerging Asian competitors.

What is important is that Mauritius seized on these advantages, and provided an avenue for sugar surpluses to be invested in new areas. Some 45 percent of the investment in the EPZ is local, the rest coming primarily from Hong Kong, India, France, South Africa, and Germany. Between 1982 and 1991, agriculture as a share of GDP declined from 18.7 percent to 12.3 percent, while manufacturing rose from 14.9 to 23.3 percent, with the EPZ alone accounting for 12.8 percent.

Over the same period, GDP grew at an average rate of 5.6 percent per annum. Thanks to a vigorous family planning campaign, relatively high levels of education among women and the job opportunities open to them in the

EPZ (where female labor predominates), the population growth rate fell from 3 to under 1 percent.

This means that standards of living have been rising by some 5 percent per annum. Per capita income stands at \$2,600 a year, placing Mauritius in the middle income bracket, and unemployment is down to a negligible 2 percent. Inflation, which had reached 12 percent in 1991, has been brought down through prudent macroeconomic management to 2.8 percent.

Mauritius' newfound prosperity has been ploughed into improving social services. The island boasts a 95 percent literacy rate among the under-30s; provides free health care; and looks set to provide housing for all by 2000.

The IMF is not complaining: In May, Mauritius will become one of the few African countries to meet all its repurchase obligations to the Fund. The easing of foreign exchange restrictions has led to a surge of imports, causing a widening of the trade deficit. However, this has been covered by an increase in "invisible" foreign exchange earnings, primarily in the tourist sector, which until recently grew at an average rate of 10 percent per annum.

The result is a healthy balance of payments position, with foreign exchange reserves worth seven to nine months' import cover. Debt service rate (the proportion of debt repayments to export earnings) stands at a respectable 8 percent.

These achievements mask underlying tensions. Full employment has led to critical labor shortages in all sectors, especially agriculture, and has been accompanied by rising wages and absenteeism. A drought in 1991 hurt the sugar crop, which normally accounts for 30 percent of export earnings. Another drought appears to be on the horizon this season. World recession has affected both the tourist and EPZ sectors, which posted relatively low growth rates of 3 and 5 percent respectively in 1991, with overall growth in GDP slowing to 4.7 percent.

The long and short of it, said Ariff Currimjee, managing director of Bonair, one of the country's largest knitwear concerns, is that Mauritius can no longer count on free lunches or easy advantages. So far, he explained, the island has exploited its main advantage—cheap labor. The challenge now is to go into the relatively uncharted territory of growth based on investment and innovation.

The move upmarket is evident in every sector of the economy. Under the Sugar Efficiency Act of 1988, the government announced a series of fiscal incentives for modernization and diversification in the agricultural sector. Some 70 percent of the crop is now mechanically loaded, and research is going into improving yields so as to increase mechanical harvesting (which adversely affects yields).

Mauritius now produces 70,000 tons per annum of special sugars, which fetch high prices on the world market, and are becoming increasingly popular because of health concerns. Bagasse, a by-product of sugar processing, now

supplies a quarter of the island's electricity. Most sugar plantations are also trying high-value, low-volume crops like flowers and fruit. The island is now the world's second-largest exporter of anthuriums, a distinctive, long-lasting flower that flourishes in the humid sub-tropics.

Within the EPZ, there has been some debate over whether to abandon textiles for higher value-added pursuits, or exploit new possibilities in this area. Currimjee firmly believes there is a lot of life left in the textile business, and his firm, which employs 3,500 people, proves it. Value added at Bonair amounts to 70 percent, compared to the EPZ average of 32 percent.

To assist smaller producers to move with the times, the government has created an Export Processing Zone Development Authority (EPZDA), which one government official describes as the equivalent in industry of an extension service in agriculture. The parastatal, which is supported by the UN Industrial Development Organization, is determined to halt the series of closures in the EPZ (56 last year) by showing that quitting need not be the first option.

The authority is also determined to promote new areas of industrial development. The government has recently provided a series of fiscal incentives to the electronics industry. It is also building a state of the art informatics park, in which Mauritius hopes to put its high level of educational and bilingual advantages to good use in areas like translation, secretarial services, and desk-top publishing.

In addition to the three pillars of the economy—sugar, industry, and tourism—Mauritius is developing a fourth: financial services.

This has involved modernizing domestic financial services by abolishing credit ceilings and cutting interest rates from 11 to 8 percent in the 1992/93 budget.

Five years ago, the island set up a stock exchange which, with a capitalization of \$300 million, is tiny in global terms, but is expanding rapidly. Recent measures to encourage local companies to go public, permit indirect investment in some parastatals, and allow foreign investment on the stock exchange through a country fund are all exciting new developments.

Four years ago the island passed legislation to allow the establishment of offshore banking units offering advantages like very low tax rates, free repatriation of profits, and complete freedom from exchange control. Seven banks, including Barclays Bank and Banque Nationale de Paris Intercontinentale, have set up offshore units.

The government has recently widened this drive to include offshore companies by offering similar incentives, backed by a legislative framework adopted in June last year. To spearhead promotion efforts, and act as regulator, the government has set up a Mauritius Offshore Business Activity Authority. Eighty offshore licenses have since been granted.

THE EMERGENCE OF A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE A BOON FOR MAURITIUS.

Alongside these developments, Mauritius has put in hand the legislative framework, and physical works, for a freeport in Port Louis. This aims to act as a bridge for trade between Asia and Africa by providing incentives for trans-shipment and reexport of goods.

A recently established Mauritius Freeport Authority, headed by Sir Edouard Lim Fat, who masterminded the EPZ, will oversee freeport affairs. Operations are expected to start later this year, and the authority reports that 15 applications have already been received.

Mauritians are realistic enough to accept that these sorts of activities, while providing high-quality jobs and some foreign exchange earnings, are not going to lead to the same rapid growth as when the EPZ came into being in the 1980s. "There are no quick results as we move into higher gear," noted Raj Makoond, deputy secretary-general of the Mauritian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The more critical question is whether the island can make the final leap to NIC status. The general consensus is that Mauritius has what it takes, but that there are considerable challenges ahead.

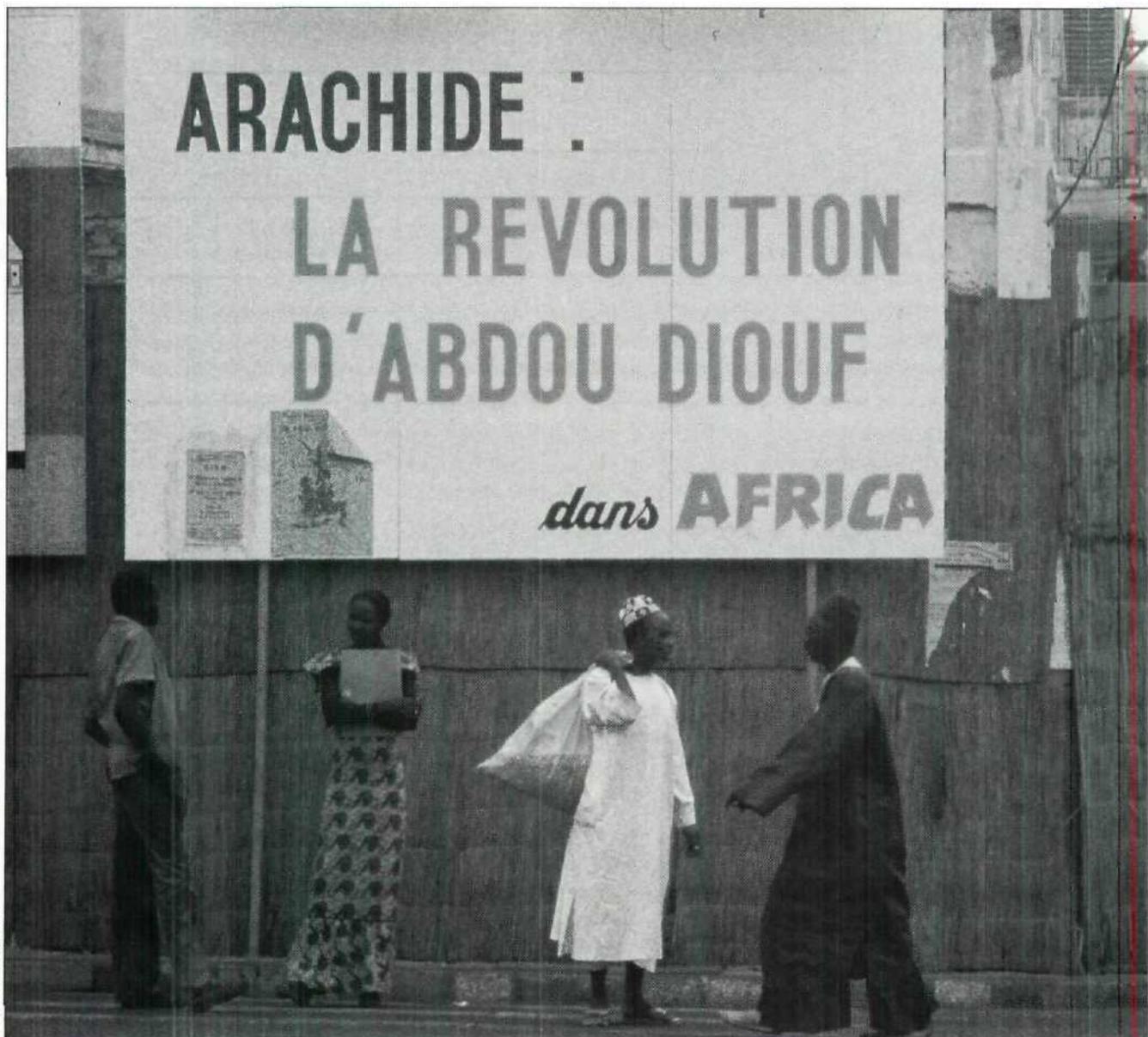
For one thing, businessmen point out that the island has to adopt a far more targeted approach toward seeking out investors and markets than in the past. Attracting investors to the electronics industry in a far-flung island like Mauritius, for example, will take more than the usual road show on Mauritius in foreign capitals.

Developing regional markets also assumes greater importance. The island's natural market for sophisticated products, and its main hope for establishing a freeport, is the east and southern African Preferential Trade Area, to which it belongs. Recent moves to bring down trade barriers in this group, as well as the existence of the Harare-based Clearing House, which eases foreign currency constraints to trade, are viewed with great optimism in Mauritius.

The emergence of a democratic South Africa would also be a boon for the island. Finance Minister Rama Sithanen pointed out that no region in the world has ever succeeded without an economic powerhouse. He predicts a free South Africa will be to Africa what Japan has been to Asia.

For the island, considerable investment must now go into high-level training and instilling a new industrial culture on an island where the day begins at 9 am, ends at 4 pm, and weekends are spent basking in the abundant sunshine.

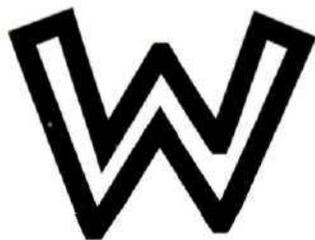
As much as Mauritians revere Singapore, they cringe at the idea of the social engineering and programming which have been a part of the Asian tiger's success. That may be extreme, said economist Pierre Yin. But, he noted, "no plan to modernize has ever worked without corresponding changes in attitude." ○



J. Pavlovsky/Sygma

CASAMANCE QUANDARY

Symbolically, President Abdou Diouf inaugurated his February reelection campaign with a flying visit to Casamance, the troubled southern province where violence by separatist guerrillas threatens Senegal's image as a thriving democracy. While the Senegalese army battled the separatists, Diouf refused to consider the secession issue or barter with his country's sovereignty, but Casamance remains Senegal's most intractable problem.



When campaigning for presidential elections got under way in Senegal on January 31, there were fears that separatist unrest in the southern province of Casamance could mar what election organizers were touting as a perfect example of how multi-partyism should work in Africa.

Most of the eight pretenders to Senegal's presidency chose to begin their campaigns in home constituencies—but not Parti Socialiste (PS) leader Abdou Diouf. He flew to Casamance for day one of the three-week campaign, a bold move that really set tongues wagging.

President Diouf arrived in the regional capital, Ziguinchor, amid what was described as the tightest security ever seen in recent years—undeterred by a January 17 rocket attack on the regional airport, which was intended, say analysts, to warn the president and other political aspirants to stay away.

The government blamed the airport incident on loyalists of the Mouvement des Forces Democratiques de la Casamance (MFDC), which since 1982 has employed violence (to dramatic and often bloody effect) in pressing home demands that the province—separated from northern Senegal by a sliver of land that constitutes the Gambia—be granted autonomy or independence.

Its thick forests, particularly to the south of Ziguinchor, make Casamance ideal for any guerrilla movement using hit-and-run tactics against conventionally trained armed forces and defenseless soft targets. And that is precisely what the MFDC has done, especially in the last 12 months.

After a temporary lull brought about by a May 1991 ceasefire signed by MFDC commanders and the Senegalese army at Cacheu in neighboring Guinea-Bissau, guerrillas stepped up their low-level war, mainly attacking armed units and villages. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees officials say at least 12,000 Casamançais had fled to Guinea-Bissau as of December 1992, while another 5,000 had sought refuge in the Gambia since January 1992.

The January 17 rocket attack on Ziguinchor airport followed repeated warnings by separatists that any attempt to stage preelection campaigning in the province would be vigorously opposed. The airport incident was the first time heavy weapons—described by official government sources as Soviet-made rocket launchers—had been used by the MFDC. Though no one was hurt, damage was reported to the control tower.

Red Cross volunteers travelling on a dirt road 12 miles south of Ziguinchor were not as fortunate as airport staff. Seven were killed and several injured on January 26 when their vehicle drove over a landmine.

Mostly due to the massive security presence accom-

panying Diouf, the Senegalese president's two-day campaign visit passed without incident. Diouf addressed a gathering in Ziguinchor and headed for the troubled department of Oussowye to the south, before staging rallies in Ziguinchor and Bignona the next day. Throughout the campaign, a peace commission charged with finding a solution to the Casamance crisis met to evaluate the situation.

Nearly a third of Senegal's 7 million citizens were believed to have voted in February's presidential poll. Legislative elections are scheduled for May. Diouf started as the favorite for a third consecutive term. The election was particularly significant for Senegal since it was preceded by a rigorous reform of the electoral system, at the behest of the opposition.

In the last election in 1988, Diouf took 73.2 percent of the presidential votes cast with a turnout of 58.6 percent,

THE BELLIGERENT SOUTHERN FRONT IS AGAINST ANY COMPROMISE WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

while his PS won 103 of the 120 national assembly seats. But the poll was marred by violence, as opposition stalwarts alleged vote-rigging. Since then, a new "fraud-proof" electoral code has been put in place. It lowers the voting age from 21 to 18, imposes a limit of two presidential terms (albeit increased from five to seven years), provides for equal access to state-run media by all 16

opposition parties, institutes a secret ballot, and reforms the electoral register. All the opposition parties have approved the new code.

But Senegal's biggest headache remains the separatist south. That Diouf chose to begin the frenetic three-week run-up to the February 21 presidential ballot in Ziguinchor indicates just how seriously the political crisis is viewed, despite official disdain over separatist demands and allegations that the MFDC is dressing up what is essentially an ethnic campaign with political trappings. If government estimates that 70 percent of eligible Casamançais had registered to vote were to be believed, fears that the exodus of residents could render regular electoral activity a virtual impossibility would appear to be unfounded.

It remains to be seen, however, whether the optimism of the electoral authorities was well-founded. The U.S. government considers the province to be so volatile it has withdrawn all AID, Peace Corps, teaching, and other technical assistance staff to Kolda, a region which is considerably safer. A travel advisory warns Americans to avoid the area. France has also told its nationals to stay away, adding to the despair of Senegal's beleaguered tourism industry.

Peter da Costa is a freelance journalist based in Banjul, the Gambia.

As unpredictable as the separatists have proven to be, they have so far avoided full-scale urban attacks, despite declaring civilians and tourists legitimate targets. Most of the clashes have taken place in a semicircular swath of territory south of Ziguinchor stretching as far down as the Guinea-Bissau border. It is in the dense forests around Oussouye department that Senegalese army units have sought, and found, engagement with the separatists.

Insurgents have raided villages, apparently selected because their residents are not of Diola ethnicity (Diolas, a minority in Senegal, are said to dominate the MFDC), and killed men, women, and children before retreating to bases inside Guinea-Bissau. After one such raid late last year Senegalese air force jets violated Guinea-Bissau airspace in hot pursuit, strafing several suspected MFDC bases and provoking an angry response from the Bissau government.

Marcel Bassene, the Casamançais parliamentarian appointed by Diouf to head the peace commission, has identified a split in the MFDC as the main cause for continued conflict in the province since the Cacheu ceasefire. One faction, known as the northern front because it is based in Bignona department north of Ziguinchor, is believed to have stopped fighting. One of its leaders, Sidy Badji, who signed at Cacheu, has been a vocal advocate of reconciliation and dialogue in recent months.

The belligerent southern front has rejected the overtures of Badji and other moderates, and is totally against any compromise with the central government in Dakar. Reports say this faction, billeted in bases inside Guinea-Bissau and well-organized, is behind the current campaign of terror to Ziguinchor's south.

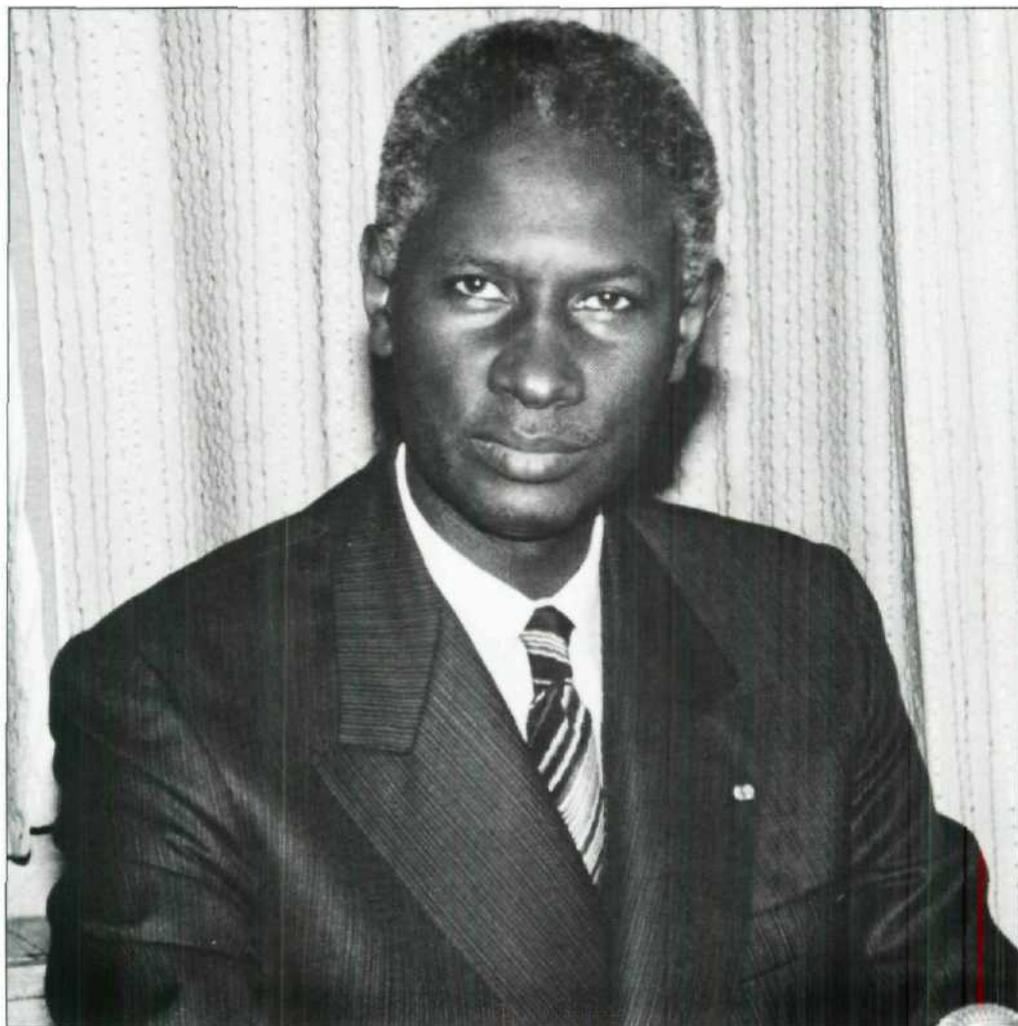
Much about the separatists remains hidden, partly because so little news of the conflict is reported by the self-censorious Senegalese media, but also because the Diola

*President Abdou Diouf:
It is clear that his
government is more than
concerned about the
Casamance problem*

culture of silence and government paranoia both militate against news-gathering. What is clear is that Diouf's government is more than concerned about the problem. In mid-January, it recalled its 1,500-strong contingent from peace-keeping duties with the West African task force in Liberia, citing "reasons of internal security." And sources close to the military confirm the army's presence in Casamance, bolstered last August, has been quietly increased again.

With Dakar refusing to discuss separatism or barter with sovereignty, the immediate prospects for peace remain remote. Landing Savana, a Casamançais who ran for president against Diouf, says nothing short of a referendum on autonomy will satisfy the people of the province. But the chances of that are virtually nil. And with the type of weaponry used in the airport and Red Cross attacks lending credence to reports that the southern front has recently acquired a stockpile of Soviet-made weapons, a military confrontation of disturbing proportions looks more than likely.

Beset by a deep-rooted economic and social malaise, and concerned to maintain his country's much-vaunted, donor-friendly image as a peaceful market leader in African multi-partyism, Diouf will be lucky to keep the lid on separatism in Senegal's troubled south. ○



André Astrow

interview

NI JOHN FRU NDI BY RUSSELL GEEKIE

Biya's Anglophone Adversary

From a moral standpoint at least, the Social Democratic Front (SDF) chairman, Ni John Fru Ndi, made great strides in the last quarter of 1992. In the country's first multi-party presidential election, the undisputed leader of anglophone Cameroon proved that his support reached beyond English-speakers. His almost 36 percent of the vote was only 4 percent less than that of the winner, President Paul Biya, in an election that most international observers—including the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute (NDI)—agreed was skewed in the incumbent's favor.

After opposition party supporters demonstrated against the election results, Biya responded by staging a clampdown on the SDF and placing Fru Ndi under house arrest. The clampdown prompted widespread condemnation by human rights groups and the international community.

But the SDF's boycott of the parliamentary elections in March 1992 left the most popular opposition group with no repre-

Africa Report: The opposition and the government both essentially rejected Archbishop Desmond Tutu's mediation effort in November. Why was that?

Fru Ndi: It is not that we rejected Archbishop Tutu's call for dialogue. But knowing that Biya is a man who doesn't keep his word, we believe that dialogue should be done with the participation of international observers, who could act as a neutral body and come out with an objective report. The resolutions or conclusions of dialogue should be monitored so that they are binding.

Africa Report: More specifically, could you explain why you rejected Tutu's proposal for a unity government? And what conditions are necessary to end the impasse between the government and the opposition?

Fru Ndi: We rejected a unity government because the present constitution would not give us room to operate. A

Russell Geekie



sentation in the country. Then, Fru Ndi's position was further weakened when other, less popular, opposition groups joined Biya's government. In addition, the most influential foreign power vis-à-vis

Cameroon, France, has continued to support the embattled Biya regime, endorsing the election results and granting Cameroon \$110 million in aid to stave off sanctions by the IMF and World Bank.

Fru Ndi remains undeterred in his quest for change in Cameroon. The impasse between the opposition and the government remains greater than it was before the elections.

One place the opposition leader has looked for support has been the United States, which suspended \$14 million in aid to Cameroon in November. *Africa Report* spoke to Fru Ndi in January, when he was in Washington to attend President Clinton's inauguration ceremony.

unity government, with Biya remaining president, would not allow any new programs to be put into action.

The point in question—the bone of contention—is a stolen election victory. We think the simple way out is to call for fresh elections. If Biya is a democrat and prepares himself for elections and believes that he still has the confidence of his people, why is it so difficult for him to accept a second round of elections?

The SDF, with the other members of the Union for Change, proposed a two-year program with a transitional government. During that time, a new constitution would be written to enshrine the separation of the judiciary, the legislative, and the executive powers. With the present constitution, all these powers are in Biya's hands.

We have pressing problems in the country. We have a constitutional crisis, which is why we wanted the two-year term to allow for a constitutional conference. The constitu-

tion would be put to a referendum of the people. We have a confidence crisis, which is why we wanted the people to elect a leader they trust. And we have this economic crisis, so we wanted a party that has a program to revive the economy. People are supporting the program that has been tabled before them; they are not supporting Fru Ndi per se. In reading through our articles you hear the slogan "power to the people"—that means we want the people at the grassroots involved in governance. But Biya wants a centralized system of governance.

So we proposed a two-year government of transition and a national conference. Within those two years you would have a new electoral code and an independent electoral commission to have fresh elections. The party that wins could then come in to implement its own program based on a constitution set down by the Cameroonian people.

Africa Report: The National Union for Democracy and Change (UNDP) and the Union of the Cameroonian Population are now represented in government. This effectively leaves no opposition in the Parliament. In light of that, do you regret the SDF's decision not to participate in the March legislative elections?

Fru Ndi: No. The SDF's rejection of participation in the March legislative elections came about because we knew that we would be there under the same constitution that is now giving all the power to Biya. The Parliament has never been effective, and people who have participated in this present Parliament will tell you that it, too, has not been effective. They have not passed any bills, they have not changed anything. When it comes to decision-taking, Biya tells you, "You've talked and thank you very much, but this is what I'm doing." It's a rubber stamp Parliament. We knew that with the present constitution, Parliament would have no powers.

Africa Report: The Cameroonian Anglophone Movement advocates a return to the federal system abolished in 1972 by then-President Ahmadou Ahidjo. Does lacking a voice in government bring the SDF closer to that position?

Fru Ndi: No. We still think that the SDF is the only unifying factor at the national level because the various groupings in Cameroon have come closer to each other under the SDF. We are still a national party that can offer the Cameroonian people a better program for change. The anglophone issue will be resolved alongside other issues. If you come into Cameroon, you can see the anglophones have a unique problem, but you cannot solve this through a simple mandate.

Africa Report: I want to get back to the UNDP. Do you think the SDF and UNDP can again be united at some point now that they have accepted cabinet positions?

Fru Ndi: No. I don't know how we can be united. They are in government, while we refused to go into government after the election results gave Biya a victory. [UNDP leader] Bello Bouba Maigari was the first person to endorse the election results of the Supreme Court and he sent his people to Parliament. He admitted that he was negotiating with Biya to form a unity government. How can you be in opposition, rejecting what Biya is saying, and then go into government with him? It means he's drilled Cameroonians back to a one-party state. Bello

Bouba is in government and that means he accepts what Biya is doing.

Africa Report: The United States has been critical of the Biya regime and the election results. Can the U.S. influence the less critical stance of the French?

Fru Ndi: The United States government is being accused by France of supporting the SDF. The French government's ministry to Cameroon openly accused the U.S. government of giving a package deal of about \$47 million to help the SDF in its campaigns. This has been repeated over and over by the Cameroonian papers.

I have never had any support from the U.S. government at all. But the U.S. is supporting genuine democracy, not only in Cameroon but in Africa. We want them to maintain that stand and put pressure to bear on France to make sure that the elections are re-conducted because the NDI report shows that the elections were fraudulent. Instead of folding their hands and sitting down to watch us have a civil war, the French should intervene.

But the French are supporting Biya. They gave \$110 million for Biya to help him reschedule his debt to the IMF and World Bank. But because of the confidence crisis, this is only a temporary measure for the problems of the country. We are looking for lasting solutions. If Cameroonians are able to vote for a president whom they have confidence in, then things will start working.

There are Cameroonians abroad who will want to invest back home, and who want to open small industries. But the atmosphere is not conducive. There are Americans, Britons, and people from other countries who want to do business in Cameroon. But with the present constitution, their businesses are not protected. So, we think that an atmosphere of confidence should be created. The U.S. government should pressure Biya and the French people to make sure that the second round of elections are called.

Africa Report: Although the French essentially endorsed the electoral results, is there still room for France to change its course in relation to Cameroon?

Fru Ndi: They've certainly not been close to me, so I don't know how they feel. But look at the French radio stations, it took so much time before they came. Thank God that when they finally came they did a good job. They were able to send a journalist out to investigate and do some objective reporting. Before that, the French were never interested in the affairs of the SDF at all. Maybe the French people were mistaken in their views toward Cameroon because the ambassador never gave a true picture of what was happening there.

I hope the election results will change French opinion which has undermined the SDF, and Fru Ndi as an anglophone. Anglophones comprise only about 25 to 30 percent of the population of Cameroon. The French thought that because I was only supported by anglophones, I could not win. But now, with the election results, they have found out that the policy and ideas of the SDF are supported by the whole country. As a result of this, I think the French might change their attitude toward the SDF and the anglophone community, and Cameroonians in general. Because they thought that the SDF was just some party that wanted Biya out. It's not just about wanting Biya out, it's about wanting change. ■

THE WIDOW'S REVENGE



A movie about a widow, her relatives, and inheritance laws was a sleeper hit in Zimbabwe last year. The low-budget film, *Neria*, spotlights how women are treated as virtual chattel in many African societies, a situation the heroine manages to overcome. The film's message has struck a responsive chord in a country where the marriage of the old and new ways is difficult, but women are discovering that tradition can be defied.

When Godwin Mawuru, a rising star in Zimbabwe's film industry, was 19, his father died in a car accident. A death in the family is always a terrible tragedy, but when the family is African and the husband has left no will, it can be a catastrophe for the widow and her children.

Mrs. Mawuru saw the life she and her late husband, a civil servant, had built up together get knocked down bit by bit and divided among his sisters and brothers-in-law. A bitter fight broke out over who would get how much of the widow's pension. The household goods were claimed by assorted relatives. Mrs. Mawuru was forced to move from her home in the town of Shamva to a homestead near the Mawuru clan. And Godwin Mawuru had to leave school so that the depleted family finances could be spent on the education of his two younger brothers.

Such is the widow's plight under the traditional inheritance laws in Zimbabwe and most other southern African countries. When the husband dies, his family is entitled

under ironclad customary law to take everything, including the children. But for Godwin Mawuru, the experience was an utter shock. Until it happened to his mother, he had no inkling of the exact nature of the plight of the African widow.

"Women are scared to talk about these things," explains Mawuru, now 31. "They think there will be pressure from family members. They don't want that. It's so bad in itself that you don't want to talk about it."

Mawuru himself was reluctant to tell people what had happened. But slowly, the conviction to speak out took root and grew. The result, 12 years later, is the film *Neria*, a low-budget, donor-financed, meticulously researched film about inheritance laws. The film's stunning success has surprised even the people who made it, including Mawuru, its director.

In a country where a woman not under the control of a father or husband is regarded as a prostitute, and where the very notion of women's rights produces a stream of moral condemnation on the *Sunday Mail* editorial page, a film about a widow who fights back—and wins—should be a definite non-starter.

But instead of being consigned to workshops and

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women's conferences, *Neria* packed them in at commercial movie houses after its release on March 20, 1992. The film stayed in the theaters for six months, outgrossing even *Terminator 2*, and it reached the rural population that normally does not go to the movies. People made pilgrimages to the cities where it played or organized car pools for the drive-in shows.

Neria audiences identify strongly and vocally with the characters. They boo and groan at the greedy, hypocritical brother-in-law, Phineas, who regards himself as a modern man but who self-righteously cites tradition to justify taking his sister-in-law's house, furniture, money, and children; and they cheer the eponymous heroine's ultimate victory in the courts.

"What we're saying here is, you've got rights; now it's up to you. Don't be afraid. Whatever the issue is—inheritance, wife-beating, sexual harassment—we're telling women to exercise their rights," says Louise Riber, *Neria*'s scriptwriter and co-producer with her husband, John.

The message sounds almost quaint to First World women who burned their bras almost 30 years ago and are now coming to terms with the phenomenon of post-feminism. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, the revolution is just beginning. A near-feudal social code, under which women are virtual chattel of men and have about the same rights as cattle, still holds powerful sway. It is the cities of Africa that are growing a new, and as yet fragile, culture of women who are slowly and painfully breaking with traditional ways.

That means a wave of women who are moving to towns and acquiring post-secondary education or some professional skills; who are delaying marriage by a few years;

*Both pages, stills
from the movie Neria:
Audiences identify
strongly and vocally with
the characters*

who want a love match when they do get married; and who strongly oppose the assumed right of husbands to beat their wives and keep as many girlfriends as they want or can afford.

These expectations, found in varying degrees among women, are so sharply contrary to tradition that opposition from the male establishment was inevitable. In Zimbabwe, it took the form of an assault on a young woman wearing a miniskirt on the campus of the University of Zimbabwe on November 11. About 100 male students, outraged at this deliberate flouting of the convention of modesty, surrounded her and ripped off the miniskirt, shouting and manhandling her until the fracas was stopped and the woman was taken to the campus infirmary.

The incident sparked a protest by some female students, who demonstrated at the university in miniskirts. There was also a flurry of letters and editorials in the newspapers, which were sharply divided between those who were embarrassed and concerned about Zimbabwe's image and those who defended the students.

"It's really pathetic, the intellectuals of tomorrow behaving in such a fashion," said Gladys Siwela, editor of *Speak Out!*, a newsletter on women's issues. "Unfortunately, you even have the *cheffes* [bosses] standing up in Parliament and saying women shouldn't be wearing trousers."

Petronilla Chikambi wears trousers and short skirts to work and thinks nothing of it. The unmarried 24-year-old computer operator for a Harare publishing company also goes to bars for a social drink now and then and enjoys spending her disposable income on restaurants, clothes, and foreign travel, just like any other young working woman.

Except that Chikambi is all too aware that there is a big difference where she is concerned. "Life is tough for a woman," she observes in her deceptively soft-spoken manner. "But life is doubly tough if you're a woman, black, and living in Africa."

The product of a middle-class family in an affluent northern suburb of Harare, Chikambi is coolly analytical of her predicament. "My parents are staunch Catholics; they had a white wedding in addition to the traditional wedding. Catholicism is just like any other colonial weapon used on the African people. So the values given to me are a blend of traditional and Catholic. It makes it very difficult." Especially when the mismatched set of values joins the march of progress toward modernization.

The result was a young woman who refused to accept *prima facie* the dictates of tradition. "As I grew up, I always questioned why my sisters and I had to cook and do the usual feminine chores. And I always hated bowing to men. For my father, I don't mind, but for anyone else, when you're giving food or greeting them, I hate that. I sometimes still do it if I have to. I just grit my teeth and do it."

Despite her freedom now, Chikambi knows that the day of conformity will come. "My independence, I won't be able to maintain it after I'm married. I will have to accept my status as a *muroora* [daughter-in-law]." But even within that narrow framework, Chikambi will still be fighting for her personal rights. "It's social politics," she says. "And everybody wants to run away from the problem. But we should try to establish a meeting point."

That is the achievement of the cinematic heroine Neria Katsande. After the court confirms her right to the family property in a Harare township, she travels to the rural area where the Katsande family is based. Here she undergoes the ritual of choosing who, from among her late husband's male relatives, has the right to sleep with her. Neria examines them all carefully in turn—and then chooses her son! It is a symbolic reworking of tradition, and one to which her *ambuya*, her mother-in-law, gives her blessing.

The optimistic message the film puts forth is twofold: that an African woman can fight back through the courts and win, and that tradition can be adapted to fit a changing world. It is an encouraging and uplifting proposal, one that has obviously found a receptive audience among both women and men who identify with the victim of this insidious problem rather than with the villainous brother-in-law who perpetrates it.

In reality, the meeting of the old and the new ways is not easy. "I can understand why the customary laws are the way they are," says Louise Riber. "They made sense in that [rural] context. But black women are now in towns and having careers and earning money. It is changing, and because it is, there are a lot of women who are being exploited by men who help themselves from either culture when it suits them."

Indeed, the grip of tradition cannot be overestimated. No young African woman would dream of evading *lobola*, the bride price a man pays to his fiancée's parents. And the vital need to have a husband means that many young urban women will sacrifice their small freedoms to acquire one. This has led to what Everjoice Win, a high-profile proponent of women's rights in Zimbabwe, calls the "Third Year Girl's Syndrome"—a yearning for matrimony so strong that female students will allow themselves to get pregnant as a stratagem to be married before graduation.

"The guy is probably in third year too," says Win, "a guy who hasn't seen much of the world. Two to three years down the road, the working environment changes things so dramatically. Half of those who married split up."

Despite the flux in the social order, one dominant theme has emerged: Women are demanding more rights. At a conference of the Harare-based Women's Action Group (WAG) in September, the members passed resolutions on legal and health matters that affect not just the urban minority, but *all* women in Zimbabwe.

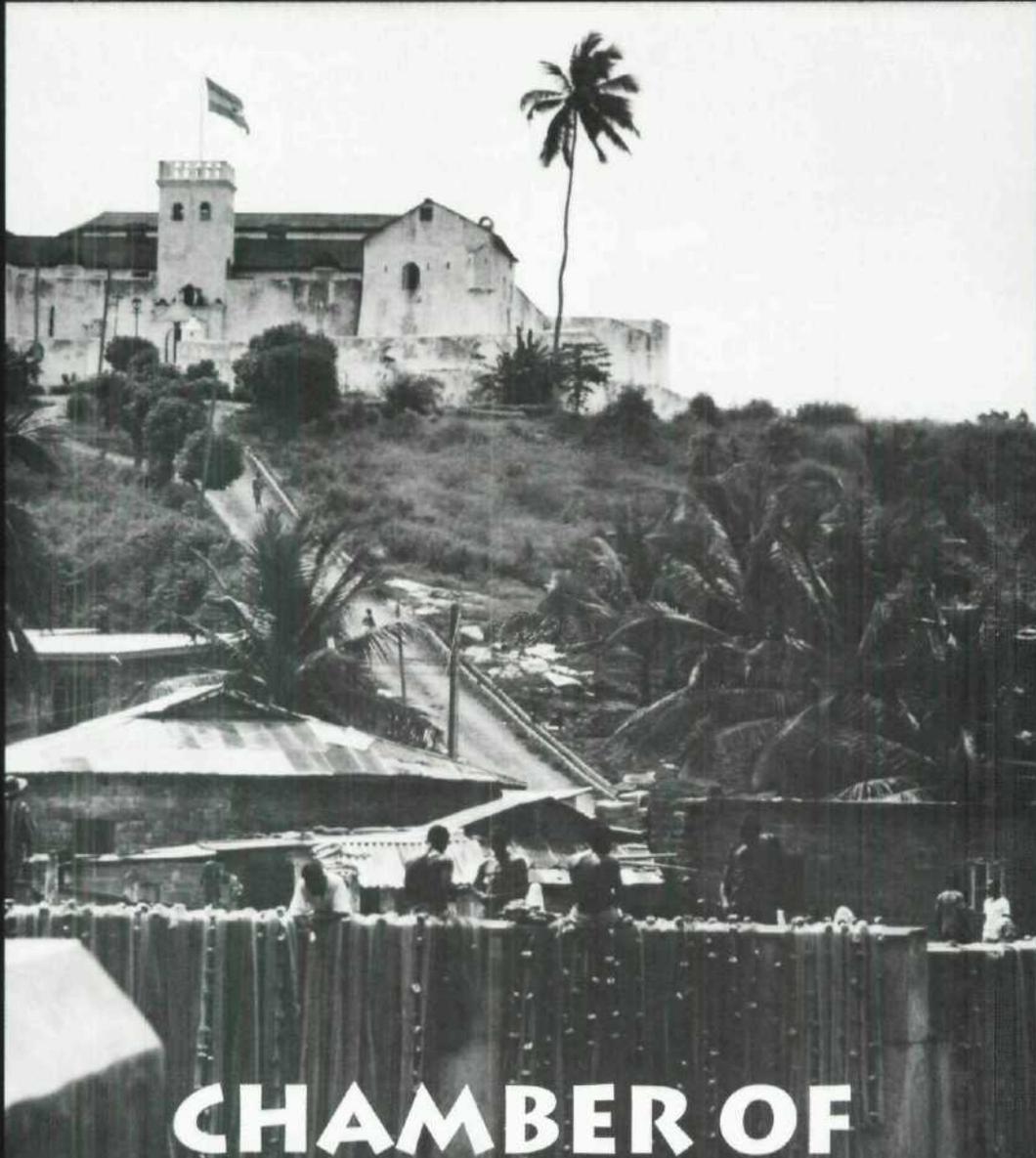
The conference called for court procedures for family maintenance fees to be made easier and faster for the thousands of divorced women. "[The WAG members] would like to change the attitude of court officials because people who go asking for maintenance are thought to be prostitutes," explains Gladys Siwela.

There were also resolutions to educate men and women on the differences between customary and civil marriages, and to clarify the customary law on inheritance to strengthen the rights of widows. On health, the conference agreed that HIV test results should be known to both a husband and his wife so that the wife can protect herself if the husband has tested positive. Another resolution was for free Pap smears at all hospitals and health clinics in the country.

The WAG awareness campaign has started to penetrate the rural areas. "We used to concentrate on the city center," says Siwela. "But now we have reliable vehicles and we have been to every province in Zimbabwe. Our main target is rural women. It's difficult to judge whether they use the laws [available to them], but they show a little excitement at the idea that they can. They say, 'I wish I'd done this, but I was scared.'"

Fear is the biggest obstacle to the progress of women in Zimbabwe and southern Africa but it also represents the most startling breakthrough. Just as Neria Katsande overcame her fear of defying tradition and angering the family compact, so real women are tentatively discovering that there is redress for them in their unequal lives. The reports from the battlefield are that a centuries-old credo is crumbling, come what may.

"There's always been this myth that the dead spirit [of the husband] will come back and haunt them," says Siwela. "But women now are fighting that idea." ○



CHAMBER OF HORRORS

Dozens of castles along the West African coast stand today as monuments to the victims of the Atlantic slave trade, and reminders of one of the greatest crimes in human history. Our correspondent visited Cape Coast Castle in Ghana and confronted this chilling and gruesome legacy.



Empty wine bottles and wreaths of ribbons and flowers mark a religious shrine on steps that lead to a 50-yard tunnel to the Atlantic Ocean. Looming behind are three huge chambers with thin shafts of sunlight falling through holes cut high up into the brick walls.

At first sight, the floor appears to be made of tightly packed gray earth. But the fact is that to visit the slave dungeons of Cape Coast Castle, an English-built fortress on the coast of western Ghana, is to walk on human excrement. It was the product of thousands of slaves who inhabited the dungeons until they walked down the tunnel to British ships to ferry them to the New World. There were no toilets.

"It was like a test—if you could survive down there for six to 12 weeks, then you were strong enough to be a slave," said Robert Bentrill, the Ghanaian information officer for the West African Historical Museum at the castle. "The dead ones were brought out and thrown over the wall into the sea."

Cape Coast Castle was one of dozens of fortresses built by European colonial powers down the west coast of Africa in the 16th and 17th centuries to facilitate trade, some mineral, some vegetable, but much of it human. From the mouth of the Senegal River to southern Angola, a distance of 1,300 miles, three centuries of slaving took, by conservative estimates, 15-20 million West Africans to the Americas.

Not all Africans were victims. Many local chiefs, eager for the tremendous profits made possible by the slave trade and for imported European products, filled the slavers' insatiable demand by raiding neighboring villages for captives. Indeed, the European officials running the various castles and forts usually paid rent to the resident chief.

Gold, still one of modern Ghana's principal exports, was initially the major attraction for Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, and English merchants. Up until independence in 1957, Ghana was known as the Gold Coast. But with the opening of the colonies in the Americas came increased demand for labor.

Forced labor and disease had wiped out millions of the original Indian peoples of the Americas, and the Europeans could not do the work. So the job was left to Africans. Besides, not only could Africans survive the adverse climate, but they were also skilled in tropical farming and mining.

The historical stakes were high. Profits from plantations and mines in the New World provided the capital Europe and England needed to kick start the transition to capitalism. And so the men and women who walked in chains down that tunnel to the ships and survived the grueling transatlantic journey became footsoldiers in Europe's industrial revolution.

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For Africa, though, it was an entirely different story, from which the continent has never fully recovered. Besides the loss of 20 million or so Africans who made it to the colonies, millions more died either in the raids carried out by local chiefs, in the conditions of the dungeons, or on the trip across.

While villages lost their strongest and ablest young people, the battles waged by local chiefs to obtain more captives spread instability throughout the coast. The trade also fostered an appetite for European goods and an abandonment of local production, trends the English encouraged. The logic was spelled out in a 1751 directive from the British Board of Trade to the English resident of Cape Coast Castle.

"The cultivation of agriculture and promotion of industry among the Negroes is contrary to the established policy of this country, England; there is no saying where this might stop, and that it might extend to tobacco, sugar, and every other commodity which we now take from our colonies in the New World and elsewhere, and thereby the Africans who now support themselves by wars, would become planters and their slaves be employed in the cultivation of these articles in Africa, which they are employed to work in America..."

It is said that at the time no European ever entered the dungeons. The task of feeding the live slaves and dragging out the dead ones was left to African domestic servants.

The English governors were close by, however. After the Dalzel tower was built in 1790, the governor at Cape Coast lived right on top of the dungeons in a breezy two-room apartment overlooking the castle and the ocean.

Even so, the whites' resistance to malaria and yellow fever prevalent in the steamy climate was fragile. In the center of the castle's parade grounds lie the graves of a governor, Capt. George Maclean, and his wife, the famous English poet Letitia E. Langdon, who died shortly after joining her husband in the early 19th century, just after Britain abolished slavery.

Today, the view from the old governor's residence is of the gunnery wall, surrounded by ancient black guns and cannon balls, and of excited young children playing in the violent surf at the castle's edge. The entrances to the tunnel have long since been covered by bricks, though as the wine bottles and wreaths indicate, local residents still pass through the dungeons to pray at the shrine.

The Ghanaian government has been restoring many of the old forts as a national heritage, and 600 tourists a month visit Cape Coast Castle. "There is a great difference when African-Americans go down in the dungeons than when Europeans go. The African-Americans you can see feel very sad for their forefathers," said Bentrill. "We Ghanaians feel sorry, but it is history, and that is why we are trying to preserve the castle so people will remember." ○

Book Reviews

THE BLACK MAN'S BURDEN: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State, by BASIL DAVIDSON. (Times Books. New York: 1992. 352 pp. \$23.00)

HIGH NOON IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood, by CHESTER A. CROCKER. (W.W. Norton & Company. New York: 1992. 533 pp. \$29.95)

It has become fashionable of late to dismiss the arguments of those who would assign blame for Africa's woes to the West as rank apologists. In many circles, merely citing the destructive meddling of Europe or the United States suffices to see oneself classified as a nostalgic or naive yearning for the 1960s and 70s, when for many, grand theories of neo-colonialism, class struggle, and non-alignment seemed powerful keys to understanding the world.

This stylish new viewpoint was argued to its logical conclusion in a recent column by George B.N. Ayittney, a Ghanaian economist at American University, which appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* under the headline "How Africa Ruined Itself." It denounced what it called the "rhetoric of victimization and blame," while urging Africa's leaders to get on with their own development.

However well-conceived that advice—for it is by now obvious that no one else will lift Africa out of its poverty—in their own very different ways, two new books serve as timely and piercing reminders that if the continent's post-independence history has been full enough of its own home-grown failures, it would be more than rash to let the West forget its part of the responsibility for Africa's enduring poverty and carnage.

That the books support this conclusion while arguing from vastly different political perspectives only reinforces the message.

In *The Black Man's Burden*, Basil Davidson adds to a nearly shelf-full of books by him on Africa. But

AFRICA AND THE WEST

instead of the stale retreat of past scholarship one might have expected from someone who has been at it so long, in his modest-size tome Davidson delivers one of the most penetrating recent analyses of modern African history.

The other work, *High Noon in Southern Africa; Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood* by Chester A. Crocker is an insider's account by Ronald Reagan's former assistant secretary of state for African affairs of Washington's diplomacy toward the continent. Although the work is essentially a lengthy attempt at self-justification, it manages nonetheless to detail a ravaging of a region by the super powers.

One of Davidson's central strands is that Europe's fin-de-siècle invasion of Africa, as opposed to its long commercial ties with many coastal areas, brutally disrupted a process of nation-forming that he asserts was well under way. In place of locally produced nations, which he suggests would have enjoyed a measure of legitimacy, Europeans, with designs of conquest fancily wrapped under the more noble banners of commerce, Christianity, and civilization, imposed structures of their own design which have struggled to assert their relevance ever since.

**Reviewed by
HOWARD W. FRENCH**

Although many examples are discussed in the work, Davidson draws heavily from the Asante kingdom of Ghana, which maintained quasi-parliamentary tradition with annual meetings of elders, the Asanteman, policed their roads, and operated a "complex network of administrative communications".

Where European travelers to the continent in the mid-19th century saw undifferentiated chaos, justifying and even compelling the wholesale importation of Western civilization as an organizing rationale, for Davidson, the Asante, like some 60 other ethnic groups around the continent, already boasted the attributes of a nation-state.

"It had a given territory, known territorial limits, a central government with police and army, a national language and law, and beyond there, a constitutional embodiment in the form of a council called the Asanteman," he writes.

Britain's invasion of Asante in 1874, however, marked the beginning of the end of this autonomous political development. Although the Asante were able to resist for some time, nothing, not even Kumasi's offer of an all-encompassing commercial franchise, would stop London's all-out drive for territorial ownership that its European competitors were executing elsewhere in Africa.

"With this, as events have shown," Davidson writes, "the whole scope for possible development into modernizing structures was stopped dead, and could not be started again so long as colonial dispossession continued."

An introductory anecdote confirmed by the experience of any land traveler on the continent quotes the former secretary-general of the Organization of African Unity, Edem Kodjo, on this alienation: "There may be few African frontiers today, certainly in West Africa, across which, day by day, or night by night, people do not take themselves and

their goods in complete defiance of the constitutional law."

What follows from Davidson is a stirring account of how the imposition of newly contrived structures in the place of old ones left demolished after nearly a century of dispossession has fed the institutionalization of tribal clientelism as the prevailing system of "government" on the continent, whatever particular ideological inspiration Africa's leaders might claim.

The rest is depressingly familiar: "Soldiers evidently incapable of tolerance or mercy rode to power as champions of this or that 'ethnic group,' even when actual ethnic differences had little or nothing to do with their coercions or plunderings," he writes. "Politicians harvest the spoils of kinship manipulation with an ingenuity of crime and corruption that rivaled anything of the kind managed elsewhere. Presidents outrageously enriched themselves; governments mocked the most elementary justice; officeholders turned themselves into licensed profiteers."

Throughout, Europeans, whose decolonization strategies seemed aimed foremost at cutting administrative costs while maintaining, even strengthening, commercial advantages, have raised few objections.

In this, the United States with its only recently ended Cold War obsession can share much of the blame.

By pursuing what he sees as a policy of consistently opposing "radical innovation," even when the evidence clearly showed how tragically wrong the chosen route had been, Davidson assigns intellectual authorship to Washington for much of the continent's stagnation.

Washington, indeed, never wavered from its Cold War ideology, as Crocker's book demonstrates. Like the Europeans before them, the United States and the Soviet

THE CYNICAL CARRYINGS-ON OF OUTSIDE POWERS HAVE BEEN DETERMINATE IN SHAPING THE FATES OF AFRICAN PEOPLES.

Union stumbled onto the fresh, new playing field that the continent represented for them, seemingly oblivious to the interests and concerns of the peoples whose destinies their battles were shaping. Again, the banners hoisted, capitalism and democracy on the one hand, and Marxist internationalism on the other, had little to do with the real struggle taking place.

For evidence, one needs only look at Angola today, which, with the world communist threat thoroughly dissipated, has been allowed to stew on fires stoked by now-departed outsiders.

Crocker, whose book examines his central role in the diplomacy surrounding the Angolan civil war and the independence process in Namibia, of course, does not see things this way. Throughout, one encounters startling phrases like "we could neither align ourselves with the land of apartheid, nor walk away and let nature take its course," which betray not a trace of irony or self-consciousness.

Fortunately for the reader, there are also interesting sketches of regional leaders, along with some readable accounts of the endless diplomatic rounds behind the region's negotiations. Reagan's team, at the time almost monochromatic to the outsider, comes across as a surprisingly diverse collection ranging from the reasonable center, which Crocker seems to claim for himself, to the near-crazy right. Unfortunately, almost everyone to the left of this slanted spectrum ends up being

skewered by a man of decidedly little stomach for criticism and dissent. Especially singled out for attack are all those, from Congress to pressure groups like TransAfrica, which supported sanctions against South Africa that the author blames for "loading our lines of communication with static and distrust."

Beyond Crocker's denial of the efficacy of international sanctions in bringing about political compromise and change in South Africa itself, however, his book's central point of interest, at least for this reader, was the way it seems to admit, often between the lines, the thesis of those like Davidson who say that the cynical carryings-on of outside powers have now, for a century and a half, been determinate in shaping the fates of African peoples.

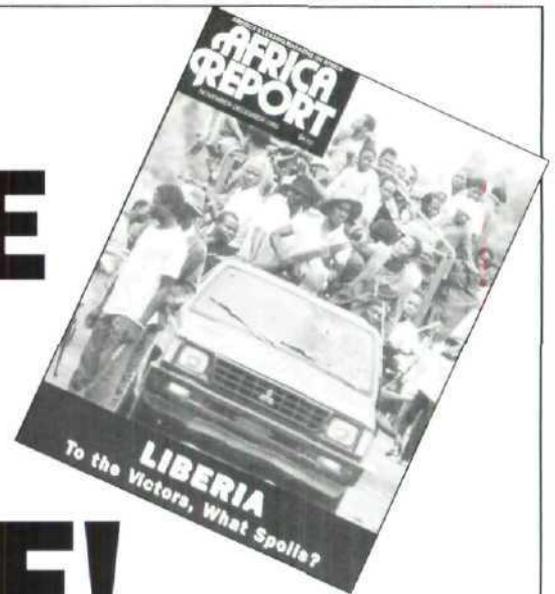
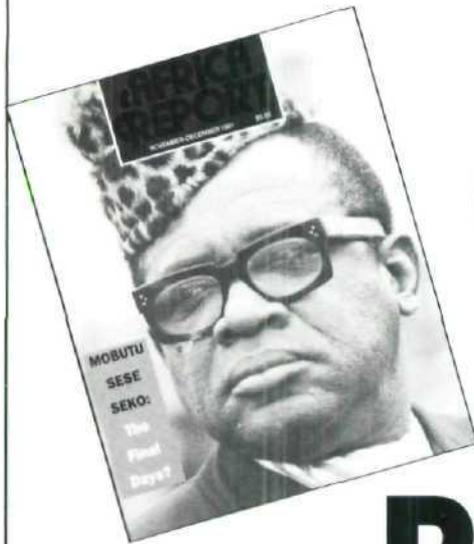
Given current events, Zaire is a worthy example. Crocker, like others before him and since, supported Mobutu Sese Seko with aid, ego massaging, and protection from enemies at home and abroad not so much for reasons of Zaire's immense wealth, but because of this violent and patently corrupt dictator's cunning penchant for supporting Washington's Cold War agenda.

Indeed, Crocker makes this admission on the very first page, when, after claiming to tell the story of "peace-making in Africa in the 1980s," he reveals what most readers will likely glean as a truer-ringing message from the text: "the record of American diplomatic strategy which helped us win the Cold War in the Third World."

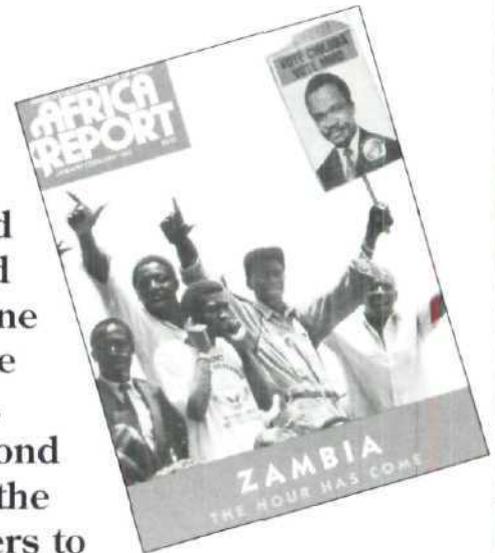
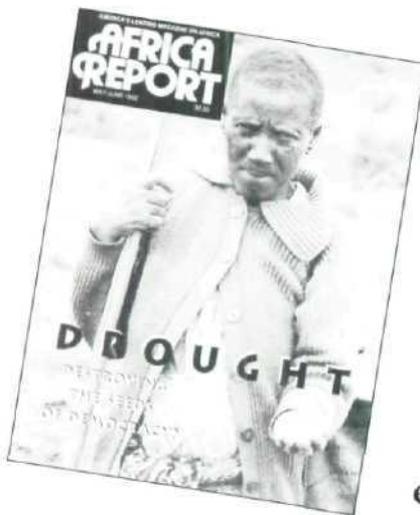
"The West was on trial in southern Africa: our values and principles, our system and our global standing," Crocker writes, explaining the inspiration for his eight-year involvement in diplomacy there. "It was time to compete in shaping the destiny of this region."

Now that the Soviets are defeated, the reader wonders which elements of this inspiration still stir his breast. ○

Howard W. French is a Miami-based reporter for The New York Times who formerly resided in Côte d'Ivoire.



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