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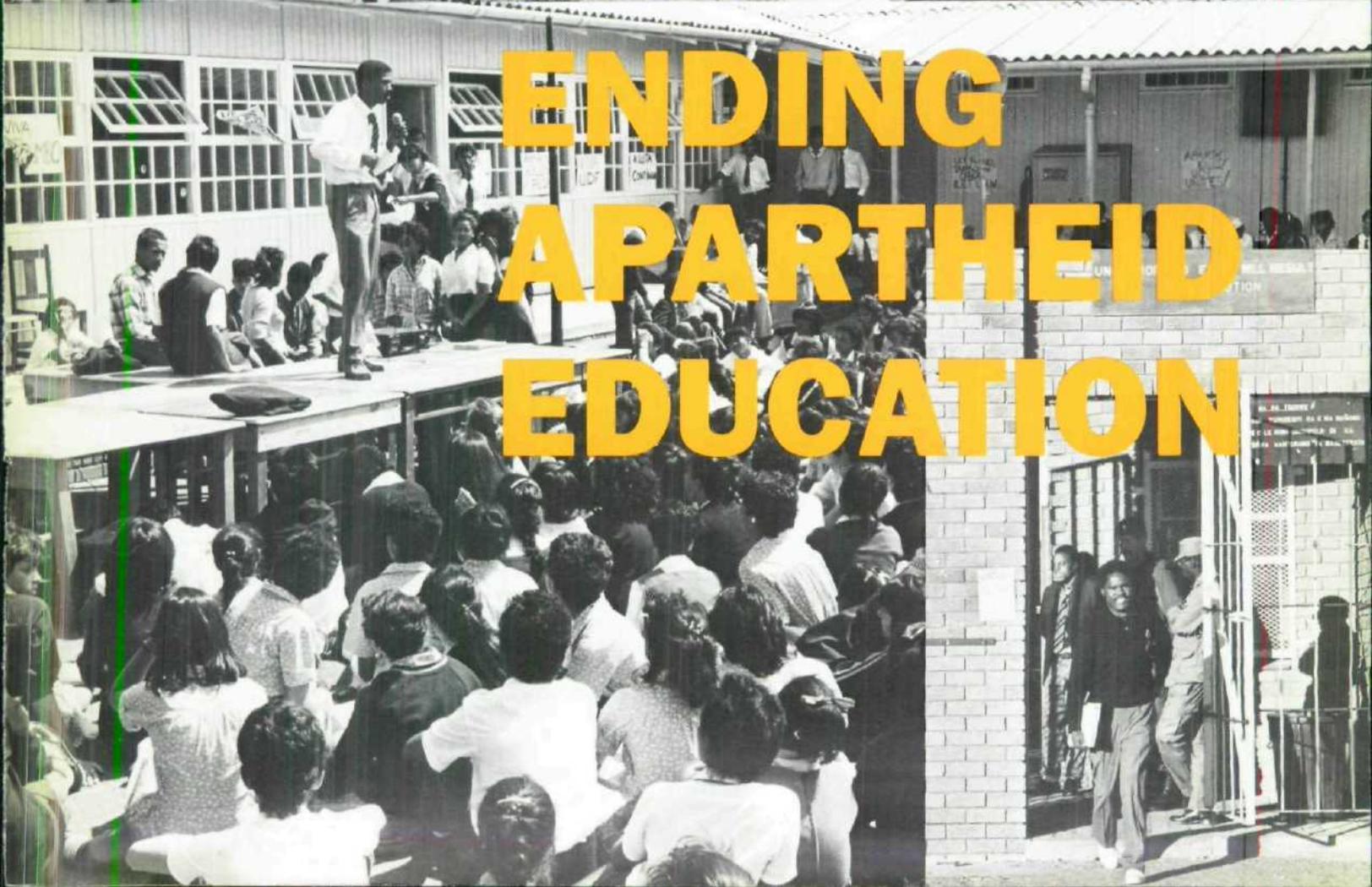
AFRICA REPORT

MAY-JUNE 1991

\$4.50



South Africa



ENDING APARTHEID EDUCATION

**FOLLOW THE MAN
WHO FOLLOWED
HIS CONSCIENCE**

MANDELA IN AMERICA

This authorized collector's video features an exclusive interview with Nelson Mandela and never-seen-before footage, including comments by:

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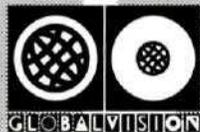
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Produced by
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Africa Report (ISSN 0001-9836), a non-profit magazine of African affairs, is published bimonthly and is scheduled to appear at the beginning of each date period at 833 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017. Editorial correspondence and advertising inquiries should be addressed to *Africa Report*, at the above address. Subscription rates: *Individuals*: USA \$24, Canada \$30, air rate overseas \$48. *Institutions*: USA \$31, Canada \$37, air rate overseas \$55. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: If this magazine is undeliverable, please send address changes to *Africa Report* at 833 UN Plaza, NY, NY 10017. Telephone: (212) 949-5666. Copyright © 1991 by The African-American Institute, Inc.

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The cover photographs of students in South Africa were taken by Avigail Uzi, Dave Hartman, and Steve Hilton-Barber of Impact Visuals.



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UPDATE

IN THE NEWS

South Africa: Reforms Yes, Contrition...Certainly Not

Ever since South African President F.W. de Klerk's historic address to Parliament in February, his promise of major reforms, and ultimately the abolition of apartheid, has triggered deep introspection about the morality of apartheid. As a policy for four decades, it was convenient to make a case for realpolitik without moralizing racism—it was after all the law.

But since the renunciation of apartheid as national policy, the ruling National Party has inevitably been forced to confront the moral dilemma it has wrought. Did apartheid fail because it was unsustainable, or did it collapse under its own deadweight of evil?

Whatever the answer, the exigency of survival has prompted the government to attempt to recast itself as the benign catalyst of change in South Africa. The first move has been to redress the legalistic aspects of apartheid—Parliament has been given until June to pass legislation that will scrap the more than 15,000 regulations and 200 laws that have for 42 years been the legal armature for the grotesque society that apartheid has created.

In apartheid, there has been a pernicious redistribution of resources: with whites outnumbered five to one, 87 percent of the most fertile land has been reserved exclusively for the 5 million whites, leaving the remaining 13 percent of mostly arid land for 30 million blacks. Some 17 million blacks have been arrested since 1948 for straying into white-held lands, another 3.5 million blacks have been forcibly dispossessed of their homes. Forty thousand South Africans have been driven into exile, and over 80,000 blacks have been detained. The net total, minus death and misery, has been the patent failure of apartheid as a philosophy.

Recognizing this a year ago, de Klerk announced that "the time for reconstruction and reconciliation [had] arrived." The former task of "recon-

struction" is at the core of his reforms; the latter and more delicate task of reconciling a fragmented society rent asunder by economic racism is proving much more difficult. For, unlike the ready economic and legalistic indices of apartheid that President de Klerk is tinkering with, the more invidious legacy of apartheid poses stark moral choices.



The Dutch Reformed Church: "Some of us are sorry"

So far, de Klerk and his National Party have strenuously tried to deflect responsibility for the ethical dimensions of apartheid. Their public position has been that apartheid was devised essentially by God-fearing men who are now giving it up because of its impracticality, and certainly not because it was morally wrong. But not all members of the party agree with that position. Deputy Foreign Minister Leon Wessels in February told a stunned Parliament that "we now know that we hurt our fellow countrymen." Calling apartheid "a terrible mistake that blighted our land," he said, "I am sorry for having been so hard of hearing for so long."

And a week after the president's landmark address to Parliament, Finance Minister Barend du Plessis, in a prepared statement, gave a trenchant denunciation of apartheid and in the process a self-indictment of his party by saying, "You could have put more peo-

ple in jail for longer, you could have shot many of them to death, but the ideas for which they stood—that they wanted freedom in the land of their birth and a say over their own lot—could not be destroyed that way."

Talking to *The New York Times*, Prof. Sampie Terreblanche, a liberal economist at Stellenbosch University, the most prestigious Afrikaans academic institution, said, "It is a bizarre state of affairs. The unwillingness, the unpreparedness of de Klerk and his people to make a confession for the National Party and its guilt for this suffering. They are convinced about the unworkability of apartheid, not about the immorality or exploitative character of apartheid."

If the secular institutions of state have been somewhat reticent about proffering a full-blown apology, the sectarian institutions, specifically the redoubtable Dutch Reformed Church, would seem to have undergone a "road to Damascus" experience. For decades, the church provided ethical cover-fire for the proponents of apartheid by invoking biblical justification for eugenics—blacks were genetically inferior, therefore it was morally right that they should be treated as such.

For all the moral anguish that some members of the congregation might have felt, the proselytism of the church was a long time coming. For years the church was the sectarian custodian of Boer bigotry and economic privilege. And in the eyes of many blacks, this sudden epiphany, including the surprising public apology from one of its high priests last November, is a crock of belated platitudes.

Addressing a multiracial church conference in Rustenburg on behalf of his Dutch Reformed Church and Afrikaner brethren, Willie D. Jonker, a Stellenbosch theologian, confessed to "my own sin and guilt, and my personal responsibility for the political, social, economical and structural wrongs that

have been done to many of you." And in a formalized document known as the Rustenburg Declaration, the church branded as sinful and evil "the heretical policy of apartheid which has led to extreme suffering for so many of our land." It ended with a call on government "to join us in a public confession of guilt and a statement of repentance for wrongs perpetrated over the years."

But for many whites like Koos van der Merwe, the Conservative Party whip, there is absolutely nothing to apologize for. Speaking to *The Washington Post*, he said: "We are First World people like yourself," referring to the reporter. "The creator has dumped 5 million of us among 30 million Third Worlders." It is partially that familiar rationale of some kind of a "manifest destiny" and therefore some sense of divine justification for apartheid that was up until now the moral argument for "separate development."

With that argument in tatters, the more astute reasons for the economic racism that is apartheid are in open conflict with the politics of change. In the biography *F.W. de Klerk—The Man and His Times*, written by his older brother, Prof. Willem de Klerk, the elder de Klerk says, "to my mind, it remains a pity that there has not been an open and firm confession that apartheid was an error. I think F.W. owes it to South Africa."

De Klerk and the National Party are unlikely to make a public show of contrition, ostensibly because they would rather move ahead with reforms and as Renier Schoeman, the chief spokesman of the National Party put it, "We should be judged by our [present] deeds." But the real reasons hinge on the very survival of the party, and ultimately the preservation of the white status quo. De Klerk probably fears that an unreserved apology will play into the hands of white right-wing extremists, and possibly also undermine the exclusively white constituency that the National Party represents.

And worse still, a *mea culpa* with the implicit expectation of penance will open the floodgates of compensation and restitution for 30 million dispossessed blacks. In the months after his February address, de Klerk, under pressure from the church and liberal voices, has waffled variously on the meaning of "sin" and "restitution"—preferring a

restrictive and legalistic subterfuge to explain his position, saying that apologies and analyzing the past could "go too far."

But the issue refuses to be wished away. In a government white paper issued recently, the suggestion was that blacks should forget the past and, "In the interest of peace and progress, the present situation [regarding land restitution] should be accepted." The present situation being inter alia, that white farmers have an average holding of 1,700 hectares of which 286 hectares is arable, while blacks have on the average 13 hectares, of which only 0.9 hectares is arable. And added to this is the fact that white farmers receive about 50 times more financial assistance than black farmers.

Will black South Africa accept the "present situation?" Highly unlikely. Will black South Africa accept a plea

for forgiveness? Possibly. It would certainly be in their favor to do so, and it is an integral part of any plan for national reconciliation. "Just three words," says Rev. Beyers Naudé, a Dutch Reformed minister speaking to *The New York Times*, "we are sorry"—will do more to restore meaningful relations between blacks and whites in South Africa than all the sermons I or anyone else could preach."

Enos Mabuza, chief minister of the Kangwane homeland and member of the African National Congress, as reported in *The Independent* of London, agrees that an apology from the government and substantial political change would boost its credibility among blacks, especially among the more militant and skeptical youth sector. "It is not enough, however," he added, "just to have piecemeal gestures from certain quarters." ■

A Makeover for Libya's Qaddafi?

Operating under the canopy of the Gulf war, Libya's Colonel Muammar Qaddafi has been quite busy brushing up his image. The ad hoc agreements of the war have enabled him to play the role of a respectable pan-Arab statesman, busying himself with the initial quest for a diplomatic solution, and with the war's outcome, camped on the side of the victors.

His strong condemnation of Iraq's invasion in consonance with pro-Western Arab states initially startled some observers who had expected a reflexive pro-Iraq position in reaction to U.S. involvement in the dispute. That would have been fine with "the old Qaddafi," the new and not necessarily improved Qaddafi is carrying out business, especially with the West, more diplomatically these days.

Qaddafi's position on Iraq was partly informed by a long-standing rivalry with Saddam Hussein for preeminence within the Arab world, and Hussein's sponsorship of covert operations to undermine Qaddafi's government in retaliation for Libya's support for Iran during the Iran-Iraq war.

The fluid alliances formed during the war also provided him with the opportunity to share common ground with the West, and he succeeded in some rapprochement with France and to

a lesser degree the U.S. But by far his greatest successes have been on the continent where he has striven for strategic influence, by supplying money and materiel to various war efforts.

After Iraqi military support in 1987 enabled Chad's Hissène Habré to rout Libyan bases in southern Libya, Qaddafi recoiled from direct military involvement in the crisis, but continued to support rebel forces opposed to the regime in Ndjamena.

His support for the Patriotic Salvation Movement (PSM), led by Gen. Idris Deby, has since paid off handsomely. With an aloof France standing aside and watching, claiming through Defense Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement that "arms deliveries are not enough to define a case of downright military aggression," Gen. Deby's forces overthrew Habré's eight-year-old government in early December last year.

However, Qaddafi's other military adventure in Liberia has not yielded expected returns. Under President Blaise Compaoré, Burkina Faso has become a recipient of considerable Libyan aid and the conduit for funneling arms to Charles Taylor's insurgency. That effort has been stymied with the unprecedented intervention of

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LIBERIA

Remember the ongoing "Liberian crisis?" Well, it is no longer a strictly Liberian affair. In the last three months, hostilities have spilled into Sierra Leone with the very real threat of domestic turmoil and regional dislocation. Late in March, Freetown reported border incursions by members of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia army. And although Taylor initially denied involvement in the incidents, his foreign minister, Ernest Eastman later tried to put a soft spin on the accusations.

Speaking at a news conference in Abidjan, he said that Taylor regretted the clashes, specifically the incident when "some of our boys went into the Sierra Leone section and perhaps overindulged." Sierra Leone's military commander, Maj-Gen. Mohammed Sheku Tarawali, later reported the capture of 83 members of the NPFL army.

In the wake of the first raids on the border towns of Zimmi and Potoru to the south-east of Freetown, there was speculation that renegade members of the NPFL militia were responsible for the looting and the scores of civilians killed. But the insurgency is rapidly assuming a domestic identity. Another rebel leader, Corporal Foday Sankoh, has emerged to claim responsibility for the latest incursions and the occupation of Koindu, another border town.

Speaking to the BBC, Sankoh stated that his group, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, intends to overthrow the incumbent regime because of President Joseph Momoh's refusal to bow to popular demands for multi-party elections. Observers feel that while this crusade is certainly opportunistic—feeding off the crisis in Liberia—the call for multi-party democracy is consistent with events elsewhere in Africa.

President Momoh, meanwhile, is not taking any chances; an appeal and a desperate trip to Lagos have yielded some results. Nigeria and Guinea—Sierra Leone's neighbor to the north—have deployed troops to help contain the spread of hostilities. His other appeal to the U.S. "for certain items"—presumably military assistance—was being sympathetically considered. Since the deadlock at the all-important March 15 conference in Monrovia, there are

POLITICAL POINTERS

increasing signs that the cease-fire might soon snap, with violence erupting again in Liberia, and possibly beyond.

But a crucial decision by Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaoré to send troops to join the Ecomog contingent represents a loss of major logistical and military support for Taylor's army, and might alter the balance of forces in Liberia. For now, the regional spread of the crisis is giving post-dated validity to the military intervention by Ecomog.

TOGO

"Is the President of the Republic Again Legitimate?," the front-page headline of one of Togo's new independent papers asked in March. The answer from anti-government demonstrators was a resounding no when 26 bodies were dredged from a lagoon in the capital, Lomé, in April. The protesters quickly identified the dead as victims of police beatings. Authorities denied the charge and declared a national day of mourning, but the incident is believed to have further strained President Gnassingbé Eyadéma's 24-year-old reign after widespread riots, which began in March, forced him to grant several concessions to opposition groups.

Four days of unrest, which left at least two dead and 100 injured, began on March 13 at the University of Lomé when a group of Eyadéma supporters threw stones at several hundred students demonstrating for multi-party democracy, according to a student representative. The riots quickly spread to other schools in Lomé and the working class suburb of Tokoin, as protesters reacted angrily to the use of soldiers in restoring order.

On March 15, several thousand Togolese marched to the American embassy, demanding the release of students detained two days earlier. Togo's Human Rights League claimed that 15 students were being held and that 12 had "disappeared" during the two previous days of government crackdowns. The protest was broken up by baton-wielding soldiers and police.

While rioting continued on March

15, the Front of Association for Renewal (FAR) was formed. The umbrella group, consisting of the Togolese League of Human Rights, four independent student organizations, and five other pro-democracy groups, called for the right to create political parties immediately, a general amnesty, and a national conference on Togo's future.

Several thousand demonstrators heeded a call by FAR to carry out a previously banned demonstration on March 16. When the group attempted to enter Freedom Square in the capital, it was challenged by military vehicles. The government reported that a policeman was stabbed to death and a child killed in the ensuing battle.

On Sunday, March 17, FAR called for a two-day general strike for the following Wednesday. By this point, Eyadéma had seen enough and agreed to meet with the group in an attempt to broker an end to the demonstrations. After meeting with FAR representatives the next day, the president accepted in principle an amnesty for political prisoners, promised to take measures to allow alternate political parties to form rapidly, and agreed to meet with students to discuss their grievances. He also agreed to a national forum that would take place from June 10 to 20, with a mandate to appoint a transitional government and legislature and set a date for elections.

The agreement helped to calm the violence, but did not put an end to student protests or labor strikes. When the bodies were fished out of a lagoon on Thursday, April 11, demands for political change were stepped up. The next day, political parties were declared legal. The following Monday, leading opposition figures met and demanded that the national constitutional conference be held prior to the planned June date.

Since Eyadéma first agreed to the creation of a multi-party system in October 1990, following violent demonstrations which left between four and 17 dead, he has progressively lost the ability to control the pace or direction of events in Togo. The president's conduct will certainly be a factor in determining if Togo will make a smooth transition to multi-party rule—one Lomé resident reported that a pamphlet was being widely circulated which declared that civil war was at hand.

AFRICAN OUTLOOK

And Another One Bites the Dust, This Time in Mali

Last October, when as an initiator of a historic UN conference on children, Mali's President Moussa Traoré rose to give a keynote address in the General Assembly, he looked resplendent in his grand boubou. With measured elocution and before 70 other heads of state, he made an impassioned appeal to the world to save its children.

That role—grand African statesman—was how the 54-year-old former lieutenant preferred to cast himself, and the imperial protocol of high office evident at that conference seemed to suit his remote and detached personality.

In subsequent months, that detachment manifested itself as a serious lapse in his understanding of the forces of change in a continent attempting to redefine itself. In the new political lexicon of change, the military coup that overthrew his government on March 26 lies somewhere between a Liberian-type scenario—bloodshed and carnage—and the Benin scenario—the inevitability of quick democratic reforms.

When the Malian capital, Bamako, convulsed in violent demonstrations on January 21 and 22 after the government had moved to blunt the drive for multi-party democracy, Traoré (wildly underestimating the resolve of the coalition pushing for change) said that "the street [was] not the appropriate place for political struggle."

After his avuncular appeals failed to placate the riotous mobs, he simultaneously imposed legislative restrictions on free speech and political activities and then unleashed his armed forces, first the police and next the army, in a rapid escalation of violence.

This was not the first time since 1968—when Traoré led a handful of young officers in the overthrow of the charismatic Modibo Keita—that the military had been called to quell civil disturbances. Following the death in detention of Keita (widely acknowledged as the father of Mali's independence) in 1977 under Traoré's rule,

serious rioting broke out in the streets of Bamako.

That crisis prompted the demilitarization of his government, and the beginning of Traoré's political engineering that, by 1979, had him installed as a civilian president and the Mali People's Democratic Union (UDPM) as the singular authority in Mali.

In 1980 during another of the periodic demonstrations against his government, the death and subsequent martyrdom of Abdul Karim Camara became

World Bank and the IMF, the government had not paid its civil servants for months.

This round of demonstrations began on Friday, March 22, when students staged a protest to demand the payment of scholarships, and an independent inquiry into the prison deaths of student leaders and other government critics. Troops reportedly shot and killed 28 demonstrators, triggering riots that spilled tens of thousands into the streets.

Over that weekend, the violence and deaths mounted, forcing the Traoré government into dialogue with the leaders of the pro-democracy movement and wresting concessions and promises of democratic reforms. But in reply to the raucous demands on the streets for his resignation, Traoré told a French radio station (on Sunday), "I will not resign, my government will not resign, because I was elected not by the opposition but by all the people of Mali."

He displayed the same obstinacy in last year's Franco-African summit in which French President Mitterrand laid out the new political conditionalities for francophone Africa, namely multi-party democracy. Traoré reportedly viewed the "wind from the East" with deep apprehension.

By Monday, the anti-government protest was billowing out of control, with reports of at least 200 people dead, and the entire country all but paralyzed by a general strike called by the National Union of Malian Workers. The next day, the army, under the command of Lt.-Col. Amadou Toumani Touré, moved to restore order by arresting renegade soldiers loyal to Traoré, and announcing Traoré's arrest and the overthrow of his government.

Following his arrest, Traoré is reported to have said "my fate is now in God's hands." Perhaps so, but the fate of the country is in need of more meticulous attention, and according to Demba Diallo, head of the Malian League of Human Rights and a leader

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Moussa Traoré: "My fate is now in God's hands"

the rallying cry of students of succeeding generations, including the ones that spilled out onto the streets recently.

As with previous demonstrations, the underlying causes of the rebellion were economic. Situated south of the Sahara desert, Mali has suffered from recurring drought that has decimated its once-large livestock resource, and for the 73 percent of the 8 million people involved in agriculture, the drop in world prices of cotton and groundnuts (that make up 90 percent of export receipts) has been disastrous.

And with a per capita income of \$190—making it among the world's 10 poorest countries—the onerous legacy of 22 years of uninspired, repressive, and reportedly corrupt leadership made it ripe for such a change. What helped ignite this simmering discontent was also the fact that despite help from the

INTERVIEW: CARLOS VEIGA, PRIME MINISTER OF CAPE VERDE

The massive electoral victory in February by the Movimento para a Democracia over Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde (PAICV), while instructive for the rest of the continent, was of particular import to lusophone Africa. It signaled the changing of the old statist/Marxist guard that had jealously preserved the privileges that went with being veterans of independence, to a young and vigorously pro-capitalist generation, that has grown weary of unfulfilled promises. Personifying this change is Carlos Veiga, a 41-year-old lawyer, who now heads the new government in Praia. In a post-election interview, he spoke with Carol Castiel about his party's victory, and the direction of his government.

Africa Report: What factors led to the Movement for Democracy's (MPD) victory over the ruling African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV)? Some analysts speculate that the churches and the emigrant vote were critical.

Veiga: I wouldn't say it was the emigrant vote—the number of emigrants who voted was very small. Nor were the churches a principal factor because we won by a large margin in islands such as Sao Vicente where the Catholic Church doesn't have much influence. We won because we were able to articulate and respond to the popular dissatisfaction simmering for many years which the PAICV failed to perceive, because it distanced itself from the population. We knew about the dissatisfaction particularly in Praia and Sao Vicente. Throughout the course of our work, we verified that this malaise extended to all Cape Verde. Our biggest virtue was to be able to voice this discontent and articulate the need for change. Therefore, the PAICV ended up losing because in these last 15 years it was incapable of satisfying the people's yearnings. The MPD represented hope for the concretization of these yearnings.

Africa Report: What is the MPD's ideological platform?

Veiga: We don't like to define ourselves ideologically—our supporters are united on the basis of the common principles of liberty, multi-party democracy, social solidarity, justice, peace, and national consensus. Our political program seeks in the first place to institute, consolidate, and render irreversible a true Western-style multi-party democracy where there are competing political forces whose well-defined statutes are regulated by the constitution.

From the economic point of view, we defend a mixed economy whose guiding force is private initiative. The state would interfere only in the most strategically and socially indispensable spheres. Thus, the most important factor would be private initiative. We also insist on establishing and guaranteeing fundamental human rights.

Our foreign policy plans to reinforce human rights and a pluralistic democracy. However, we will also target greater economic integration at the global level and bring the emigration issue to the forefront. We believe that the emigration question is an extremely important one for Cape Verde. During the last 15 years, there has been a feeling of distrust between the state and the emigrant community. We will have to entice emigrants to Cape Verde, as well as encourage investment and lending of technical expertise. In return, we will also have to support the emigrants in their various "host" countries so that they can improve and stabilize their situation. The better off they are, the better off we are. Basically these are the broad policy outlines we have traced.

Africa Report: In the last couple of years, the PAICV government began adopting a comparable policy of economic and political liberalization known as *extroversao da economica* favoring export development and greater civil liberties. How does the MPD economic program differ from that of the PAICV?

Veiga: Over the last few years, the PAICV was attempting to narrow the differences between us; the MPD is in fact comprised of former PAICV members who distanced themselves from the party to defend ideas like human rights and economic liberalization. Later the PAICV absorbed these ideas, adopting them as their own. Nevertheless, we did not believe that the same persons who governed for over 15 years would be capable of pursuing such a radically different set of policies [than they originally supported]. Although Cape Verde never installed a permanently repressive system, there was a form of societal control which became violent at certain times when the regime felt it was warranted. In these violent moments human rights were not respected—there was torture, arbitrary jailing, and prison deaths.

On the other hand, one hears a lot about economic liberalization, yet we continue to see the state dominate the economic sector. Most of the companies are state-owned; the management of these parastatals has not changed. Even among mixed enterprises in which the state is a partner, the management is still similar to a parastatal operation. Thus the state ends up in all sectors of life—cultural, sports, social, and economic. The MPD says no. We affirm that it is necessary to completely change this, to release energies and private initiative.

Africa Report: The church has expressed its dissatisfaction with the PAICV, particularly over the abortion law. In exchange for its significant support for the MPD, does the church now expect a revocation of the law, or at least a referendum on the issue?

Veiga: The MPD made no promises whatsoever to the churches. We had contacts with representatives of the churches as did the PAICV. In relation to the abortion law, our position is that the law was approved without having been publicly discussed.

Africa Report: The MPD's massive victory resulted in over two-thirds majority in Parliament [56 seats for MPD and 23 for PAICV]. Given this lopsided proportion, is there a risk that the MPD, formerly the opposition, could commit the same errors as if it were a single party?

Veiga: No, we have a commitment to pursue policy based on consensus. Despite the fact that we have a large majority which will permit us to draft a new constitution, we want to proceed on the basis of dialogue and consensus. We will open and will take every initiative to generate dialogue. We know the danger of falling into the trap of acting as though a sole political party exists. However, the opposition will be asked to express itself frequently—we will take into consideration the position of the opposition without putting up any barriers.

Africa Report: In forming your government, you have adhered to the policy of administrative reform promulgated under the PAICV government. For instance, you have reorganized and reduced the number of ministries. What are the implications of these changes?

Veiga: We wish to emphasize the idea of regional and local governance. We believe that the development of Cape Verde depends primarily on local power. ■

INTERVIEW: MAXIME FERRARI, SEYCHELLES ADVOCATE OF DEMOCRACY

Dr. Maxime Ferrari has held various top cabinet posts in Seychelles since independence in 1976 and during the first seven years of the 13-year-old one-party rule of President Albert France René. Ferrari left the country shortly after resigning from his post as minister of planning and external relations in 1984. He spent the next five years as the regional representative and director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) regional office for Africa. Since his retirement in 1990, he has devoted his time to promoting multi-party democracy in Seychelles. In December last year, he formed the Seychelles Institute for Democracy, an apolitical organization dedicated to returning democracy to the country by allowing freedom of speech and the press, a multi-party system, and respect for human rights. He also helped to form the Rally of the People of Seychelles for Democracy (RPSD), which elected his son, Jean-François Ferrari, as its chairman in April.

Africa Report: You have been organizing support for multi-party rule in Seychelles from outside the country, but what is the extent of the democracy movement in Seychelles? Are people being mobilized?

Ferrari: Yes, but it is being done with great difficulty. For instance, one of the leading members in Seychelles is my son [Jean-François Ferrari]. He was arrested three times in November for distributing leaflets in the streets. He tried to have a newspaper and they turned it down, so he distributed those tracts and the police arrested him. At a certain stage, the president signed a detention order. It was confirmed that the chief of police refused to arrest my son. The president sent for him and received him for about an hour and said: "You cannot expect me to institute multi-party democracy because I do not believe in it. I do not believe in the virtues of a multi-party system." These were his own words.

Africa Report: Do you think that there is the potential for violent upheaval in Seychelles that has been seen in other parts of Africa over the last year?

Ferrari: I don't think so because the economy is not too bad, although it has deteriorated.

Africa Report: What about the Gulf crisis? Tourism has dropped substantially; isn't that going to play a role?

Ferrari: Yes, tourism is down by about 47 percent—I think, according to the latest figures I have—which must be very bad. The effect will be even worse because payments usually come two or three months later. So things are bound to get very bad in the next few months—economically. As people talk more and more, there is a chance that they might come down into the street. And of course this is what I'm hoping for because this would be the pattern of what has happened in Eastern Europe, and what happened in Mali—except there they arrested the president. But in a number of African countries, it's turning out like that and that's the best thing that could happen—that you have demonstrations, with as little violence as possible, and force the man out.

Africa Report: In a communique that you signed, which grew out of the March meeting between Seychellois opposition movements in Belgium, the international community was urged to tie aid to the Seychelles to political and eco-

omic reform. Can you comment on that vis-à-vis the United States, as well as the international community?

Ferrari: In the Seychelles, the United States doesn't want to make trouble. They have a [satellite] tracking station and they are getting on fairly well with René. They are prepared to close their eyes to the problem of what they call minor human rights violations. I was told at the State Department that there is nobody in detention, that there are no political prisoners. The only thing is that there is no democracy. I got very upset because it is an awful thing to say from the mouth of an important diplomat—the only thing is that there is no democracy!

I think the aid donors should use carrot and stick diplomacy. I've worked too much myself in international cooperation to say, "no aid." Aid is necessary. Food aid should always be given without conditions, but economic aid should be restricted more and more with countries who refuse to make structural changes. This is the policy of the French government, and it seems to be the policy of most European countries, and I think also the United States. But the United States is forever making exceptions. Recently they made an exception for Kenya, because Kenya was nice during the Gulf crisis.

Africa Report: Do you think that after the UN Security Council listed the Seychelles as one of the 18 nations most affected by the Gulf crisis that it is going to be harder for the Western governments not to give aid?

Ferrari: No, I don't think anybody is going to give. The French foreign ministry told me that they are not going to give anything.

Africa Report: Although the president has stated that he has no intention of abolishing the single-party system, hasn't the government's economic policy been liberalized over the last year?

Ferrari: In the Seychelles, there was always some sort of free market but it was polluted by a sort of imposition of centrally planned prices. He is moving away from that because of the failures—not because of pressures coming on him.

Africa Report: Your forte is the environment. Could you elaborate on the linkage you made in the RPSD plan of action for Seychelles between environmental protection and people's participation?

Ferrari: My experience as a government minister in a small developing country for 10 years, and five years as the regional representative of the United Nations Environment Programme in Africa, has convinced me, along with more and more people now, that development has failed in Africa. Everybody is responsible for it. It is not only Africans who are responsible, but the aid donor is also responsible. The international organizations, the World Bank, the United Nations, the UN organs like FAO, UNDP, all are responsible. I think that this has failed for two main reasons. We have not considered the environmental issues in our economic planning and development activities, and more and more, I am convinced that we have not done it in democracy. In other words, we have done things, so called, *for* people. We have not done it *with* people. We have not had people's participation. To me, people's participation is the basis of democracy. ■

Libya *Continued*

Ecowas troops and the imposition of a ceasefire.

In other less hostile initiatives, Qaddafi is seeking to mend fences with Egypt as a possible entrée back to good relations with the U.S., and with a nod from France, better relations with Togo, Cameroon, Niger, and Zaire. He has had less success with Nigeria, his populous and strategically important neighbor to the south, which continues to view him with deep suspicion.

But for all his current brinkmanship and public relations efforts, he is still the target of numerous covert attempts to undermine his government. One such operation came to light recently, with the overthrow of Habré.

In the wake of Habré's hasty departure from Ndjamena, an awkward legacy of some 600 armed Libyan guerrillas, part of a secret army deployed against Qaddafi by the Central Intelligence Agency, became "hot potatoes" as one Pentagon official described them.

The anti-Qaddafi force—originally captured Libyan soldiers and deserters—were organized and funded by the CIA à la "contras," with special training in sabotage and land navigation

provided by U.S. special forces from a base in Ndjamena. There are reports that Baghdad also backed the contra army, whose main brief was to destabilize the Tripoli government.

But without any clear proof of their operational success, they were, with the routing of Habré, suddenly cast out of Chad with literally nowhere to go. The U.S. hastily organized an evacuation of the dissidents, with no clear destination in mind. The CIA was then faced with the problem of finding a home for the Libyans.

After a brief stopover in Nigeria, the rootless army was herded to Zaire, where longtime American ally President Mobutu Sese Seko provided short-term succor. Mobutu, apparently smarting from U.S. congressional criticism of his abysmal human rights record, was hoping that his hospitality would secure the release of a \$4 million military aid package that Congress had previously blocked.

When this did not happen, he allowed Libyan agents access to the "contras," who somehow persuaded about 250 of them to return home. The remaining 350 were then moved on to Kenya for a more secure asylum. For his unusual hospitality, President Daniel arap Moi's government was paid

\$5 million out of a \$10 million military aid package that had been withheld by the U.S. since last year due to his deteriorating human rights record. The State Department, which had earlier justified the payments by alluding to Kenya's improved human rights record, did a volte-face when the story behind the junket unravelled.

Said a senior State Department official, "We compromised our human rights policy in Kenya somewhat but we felt we had little choice. We feel a humanitarian responsibility for these people." In the meantime, while the U.S. is seeking permanent resettlement through the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, another exiled Libyan has stepped forward to take over the peripatetic "contras."

The New York Times reports that the exiled Prince Idris of Libya has offered to take control of the paramilitary force. In a statement released at the Rome headquarters of the royalist Libyan government in exile, royalists state that "having received pledges of allegiance from leaders of the force, Prince Idris has stepped in to assume responsibility for the troops' welfare." For the time being, home for the commandos is still Kenya, but from all indications that might soon change. ■

Mali *Continued*

of the uprising, "Mali is at the hour of renewal."

The new government quickly moved to establish links with the pro-democracy coalition, and set up a 17-member military Council of National Reconciliation, with a pledge to work with the democrats toward rapid political reforms. "One of the essential aims of our arrival," said Touré, "is to install multi-party politics, real democracy in the style of certain other countries." When? "When the conditions are right," he said.

Having met with the coup leaders, the democratic coalition group, Mali's Committee of Pro-Democracy, stated that they were "satisfied with this first contact," and Diallo expressed confidence in "this group of patriotic officers." But some observers are wary of the situation in spite of the 43-year-old officer's assurance that "the army will no longer meddle in politics." "The army," said Touré in a radio broadcast, "will return to

its barracks after establishing an unlimited multi-party system, social justice, and total democracy."

However, the presence of prominent members of the old guard, notably Traoré's former aide-de-camp, Lt.-Col. Oumar Diallo, and Lt.-Col. Cheikh Oumar Diarra, former director of the Defense Ministry, in the new dispensation raises some disturbing questions about the sincerity of the military as a catalyst for democratic change.

The pro-democratic opposition realized this dilemma, and has been unrelenting in its political pressure. "If they hang on to power, we'll fight them as we fought Moussa Traoré, and we'll beat them as we beat Moussa Traoré," said Diallo. But casting fiery rhetoric aside, by threatening another general strike, the opposition forced the institution of a transitional government headed by a civilian.

The interim prime minister, Soumana Sacko, a senior official with the United Nations Development Programme, for now seems to have allayed

the fears of the democrats that there has been merely a change of the guard.

And Sacko certainly has his work cut out for him: As head of most government operations, he will have a tough job placating frustrated and impatient Malians who have high expectations and want immediate economic redress. Added to that, he has to constantly fend off conservative elements in the military, while at the same time playing midwife to the birth of a new republic.

In three months, he is expected to convene a conference of Mali's political parties, to lay the groundwork for the writing of a new constitution. There is general optimism that with the overthrow of Traoré, Mali can now begin a new chapter. Said a French foreign ministry spokesman, Daniel Bernard, Mali's future "appears promising and full of hope."

And for Traoré and his 22-year travesty of governance, history will probably remember him, in the words of a *Le Monde* editorial, as a "soldier without imagination [who] aged badly in power." ■

SOUTH AFRICA

As legal aspects of apartheid crumble, sanctions are becoming more difficult to justify to the West. Although there has been surreptitious trading between South Africa and the West for years, the facade of sanctions was nonetheless maintained. Well, not anymore. Last December, the European Community lifted its ban on new investments, thereby setting the tone for the announcement in mid-April that economic sanctions would be lifted.

Although many members of the European Parliament in Luxemburg were against the move, the foreign ministers were unanimous on the issue and asserted their position by blocking open debate on the parliamentary floor.

The revocation ends a five-year-old ban on the import of gold coins, iron, and steel, but falls just short of a complete reprieve by its adherence to the United Nations embargo on arms sales. While U.S. sanctions remain in place because of South Africa's non-compliance with some of the conditions set by Congress, the mood in the West is certainly anti-sanctions.

The Japanese are also getting in on the act. A high powered group of businessmen, the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren), is scheduled to visit South Africa and meet with government, members of parliament and black leaders.

For the African National Congress grappling with organizational and ideological restructuring, these changes threaten an important canon, and its reaction is crucial to its image abroad. Even on the continent, ANC representatives shuttling between capitals are finding their pro-sanctions position a hard sell to many African governments intent on resurrecting trade ties with South Africa.

Coming on the heels of the EC announcement, Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida announced that Nigeria was "gratified by the recent positive developments" in South Africa and would consider lifting sanctions to reward initiatives toward dismantling apartheid undertaken by his South African counterpart, F.W. de Klerk. Politically, this reads as a major policy shift for Nigeria, with an almost certain domino effect for the rest of Africa. Economically, it signals the opening up of new trading frontiers.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

In the last few months, there has been a flurry of trade delegations to and from Pretoria. South African business leaders have fanned out armed with contracts for investments and joint ventures. South African businessmen are suddenly finding themselves welcome in places as far away as Senegal and Nigeria. They have infiltrated recent Preferential Trade Area (PTA) and SADCC meetings either individually or through one of the several South African Chambers of Commerce.

At the head of one such group is the South African Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs, Dr. Dawie de Villiers, who has been touring Africa with oil and mining co-operation at the top of his agenda. His most notable achievement was the promise of an oil deal with the Angolan government from which South Africa can expect to obtain 100 million barrels of oil a year.

Pretoria has also opened a trade mission in Lomé, with a few others projected for Lusaka and Libreville, to add to the already highly active ones in Antananarivo, Maputo, Abidjan, Kinshasa, Harare, and Windhoek. De Beers Consolidated Mines and its Swiss offshoot, De Beers Centenary AG, has been quite visible in sub-Saharan Africa, drawing Angola's Endiama into the Central Selling Organization and obtaining prospecting rights in previously unthinkable locations such as Tanzania.

Other South African companies finding their way into African markets include Soekor, South African Airways, Sun International, Gencor, and Eskom (currently involved in the rehabilitation of the Cahora Bassa Dam in Mozambique).

African governments have been quick but cautious in responding to the South African initiative by sending their own trade delegations to Johannesburg. The stalling of the peace process in Angola and the collapse of talks with Namibia over the future of Walvis Bay still cast ominous shadows. Nonetheless, there are few who do not admit that sooner or later, the role of South Africa in Africa's economic recovery will become vital.

WEST AFRICA

At a recent meeting in Dakar, Senegal, French Cooperation and Development Minister Jacques Pelletier announced that the CFA franc was not likely to survive the introduction of a single European currency. For the delegates at the conference—agriculture ministers from West and Central Africa—this was truly disturbing news.

For the 14 francophone countries that utilize the CFA as legal tender, and the 36 others that use it as convertible currency, the significance of that message is far-reaching. The CFA franc, with solid French support, has been largely insulated from the wild inflationary fluctuations that the various structural adjustment programs have induced.

With some national currencies losing as much as 1,000 percent of their pre-SAP value in the last five years, the CFA franc has been a buffer currency for a significant portion of the continent. The price tag for France has been considerable; in 1982 for instance, the French subsidized the CFA franc to the tune of \$1 billion and Pelletier's unsettling message was essentially the end of French monetary subsidy.

Put within the context of European economic integration, it signals the waning if not the end of the cozy bilateralism of many African states and their erstwhile colonial masters. The new rules for doing business with a unified Europe are expected to be under the various Lomé conventions that document trade regulations between the European Community and the African, Caribbean, and the Pacific group of countries.

Mindful of this new regime, the heads of state of Togo, Senegal, and Nigeria—Gnassingbé Eyadema, Abdou Diouf, and Ibrahim Babangida, respectively—met early this year to discuss plans for the accelerated integration of the two major regional economic groups, the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) and the West African Economic Community (CEAO).

The obvious need for a unified economic organization—once obviated by the strong French presence in the region—will be given a fillip with the demise of the CFA franc. The ensuing vacuum argues for the introduction of a new sub-regional currency that Ecowas is expected to fill.



SOUTH AFRICA

THE ABCs OF APARTHEID



United Nations/Contact

Created by apartheid's architect, Hendrik Verwoerd, bantu education has left a bitter legacy not only for blacks who have suffered from inferior schooling, but also for the nation, which needs an educated workforce to fuel economic growth. Looking toward the post-apartheid era, the government and the African National Congress have begun the arduous task of reconstructing the educational system.

By PETER TYGESEN

Of all the legacies of apartheid's planners have left for future South African governments to rectify, the deliberate miseducation of the country's blacks may well prove to be the worst.

The "bantus" education system designed for blacks has left South Africa with a majority of its people functionally illiterate and its economy shackled by a lack of skilled manpower.

Recently, the African National Congress and President F.W. de Klerk's government established a joint working group with the goal of integrating the existing 14 educational departments and producing immediate and short-term solutions to the crisis. The group is faced with a daunting task.

Surveying the muddy courtyard of Soweto's Morris Isaacson High School, headmaster Gabriel Madida expresses pleasure at having students attend classes again. "Things are almost back to normal here now," says Madida. "There is a promise in the air this year that things will get better."

"Back to normal" for Madida means that students are at school and are not boycotting classes. To him, "getting better" indicates a hope that the students will stay and study. But very little appears normal to a visitor to the school. Every window is broken and every book is gone from the library. "Vandals," explains Madida, shrugging his shoulders. "Poor people need to make a living."

Soweto has plenty of poor people and some have made a living out of tearing his school apart. They come at night, hold a gun to the chin of the lone watchman, and start ripping out windows and bricks to sell and to use in building their ramshackle huts in nearby squatter camps.

"Things have been pretty bad around here," sighs Madida. This is

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obviously an understatement. Madida is seated in his tiny 10 by 15 foot office, beneath a gaping hole in the ceiling created by yet another batch of thieves. A cold wind gushes through a shattered window, a remnant of the all too frequent shootings in the embattled township.

The horrendous physical degradation of South Africa's black schools is only the tip of the iceberg. The magnitude of South Africa's education problems is staggering. As cabinet ministers openly admit that the application of apartheid in education was a "terrible mistake," the creation of bantu (black) education seems to have been the biggest mistake of all.

One out of every five black children has no access to school. Of the remaining four, a second is likely to drop out of school during the first two years. Statistically, a third student will drop out before finishing seventh grade. Consequently, more than 50 percent of South Africa's 30 million blacks are functionally illiterate.

"This is not because the system failed," says Stan Kahn, a former director of the Funda Center, an educational resource center in Soweto. "On the contrary, it succeeded." Kahn explains it is a wonder that any blacks have become educated at all, as they are forced to learn in a system designed to lower their aspirations and are confronted by constant turmoil and strife in the schools.

Depriving blacks of a proper education was a deliberate goal of apartheid. South African Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd was the ideological architect of apartheid and one of his cornerstones was a separate and completely different education system for blacks. "The natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them," Verwoerd declared to Parliament in 1954.

Second to this political objective of teaching blacks to accept the status of being inferior creatures came the teaching of the 3 Rs. This could, however, be kept to a minimum, according to Verwoerd, as there was "no place for the African in the European

community above certain forms of labor."

Four separate education systems were set up with four different syllabuses for white, Coloured, Indian, and black. In line with Verwoerdian thinking, the four departments were not allocated equal funding. In recent years, the difference has been narrowed, but the de Klerk government is still spending eight times as much on educating a white child as on a black child.

Bantu education was designed as a cornerstone of apartheid. It also proved to be a powder-keg of discontent so explosive that when it ignited, it blew away the entire system.

It was the 1976 revolt of schoolchildren that initiated the political upheaval which has reached its final stages today, when the Afrikaner government is finally negotiating with their parents in the ANC. Inflamed by the imposition in 1976 of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in high schools, black students took to the streets. As they quickly expanded their protest to target the entire system of bantu education and apartheid itself, they had indeed initiated the first full-scale attack against the Nationalist government since it banned the liberation movements in 1960.

Students, a new generation of them, were once again on the frontlines of the anti-apartheid revolt when it picked up steam in the mid-1980s. Under the slogan, "liberation first, education later," the schoolchildren became the foot soldiers of the townships' bloody street battles.

After such adrenaline-pumping activities, it has been difficult to get children back to school, according to today's community leaders. Township activists too easily resort to proven old ways of mobilizing schoolchildren for mass actions, they say. In addition to getting schools back in session on a regular basis, the community leaders must dismantle the now fully entrenched Verwoerdian plan of four separate and unequal educational systems.

With more than 35 years of vast differences in syllabuses, teaching

methods, and funding, these departments have grown into autonomous and entrenched bureaucracies. Although they have the same objective of educating the country's children, there is hardly any communication between them. The departments are governed by different cabinet ministers and even fall under the auspices of three separate houses of parliament—white and black education in the white house, and Indian and Coloured education in their respective houses.

To make matters worse, each of the 10 black homelands has its own education department, with even less money available than that allocated for black education in South Africa proper.

To untangle this huge bureaucratic mess, the political activists must find another battlefield, says education expert Kahn, in order to free the schools for teaching. And education must finally be planned according to the needs of the communities, not the wishes of the oppressors.

Neither of these aims is likely to be fulfilled immediately. Events outside Kahn's Johannesburg office all too clearly highlight this. Across the street at the prestigious Witwatersrand University, black student activists occupied administration offices for a week. Their battlecry of rendering the university "unadministrable" was a conscious echo of the 1984-85 slogan, "Make the townships ungovernable."

In nearby Alexandra township, school activists made their point. Teaching in the township had become virtually impossible since the schools had not been provided with enough textbooks and teachers. Months of pleading with the white administration proved fruitless. But when hunger-striking students collapsed at the doorstep of the Transvaal Provisional Authority's office, the minister finally intervened and promised prompt action.

Faced with a brewing crisis of such dramatic proportions and prompted by last year's poor exam results for black students, Nelson Mandela urged President de Klerk to

take immediate action. In February, the two leaders met for a full day to discuss educational matters and they agreed that the inferior education provided to South Africa's blacks must be ameliorated.

At this meeting, the government agreed in principle to put apartheid in education to rest, and to create a single, unitary education system for all races. Potentially more significant, however, was the creation of a 10-member working group, tasked with not only making proposals for achieving this aim, but also addressing immediate policy questions. In establishing that group, de Klerk for the first time has allowed the ANC to take part in formulating government policy.

Still, participants in this exercise doubt each other's motives. "Although there is consensus on the need for a new system, we are still a very long way from defining what that new system will be," said Sheila Sisulu of the anti-apartheid South African Council of Churches education program. "The government saw it as a question of rationalization, we saw it as a moral crisis."

Lindelwe Mabandla of the ANC's education department agreed: "The government's major problem in education is legitimacy. The people have become so cynical about the government promising this and promising that. The crucial point is whether government is ready to consult with the people or not."

In the 1991/92 fiscal year, there will be no increase in real spending on education, but spending on black education will rise 10 percent, while that for white education will fall by 10 percent. Mabandla said the budget's special \$72 million allocation to build new schools in black areas is the first concrete result from the joint working group.

Mabandla is cautious about whether the government will satisfy popular demands. "Unless the government seriously involves the people in decision-making, this exercise is not going to take us anywhere," he said. "We are waiting to see what happens."

The ANC representatives on the joint group put forward a list of demands to the government which included the establishment of a single education department and a single curriculum for all races, the establishment of interim structures until the first is achieved, and steps to end the present crisis manifested by the high failure rate. The ANC delegates also called for new school buildings in black areas, a program to upgrade the training of black teachers, and the provision of adequate books and other supplies to black schools.

The government agreed in principle to these demands, but it remains to be seen how they will be implemented. And the de Klerk government has already indicated that fundamental changes in the education system cannot take hold immediately. When asked how long it might take once the government begins the job of creating a new, non-racial education system, the minister of national education, Louis Pienaar, said it could not be achieved overnight.

"It might take a generation to equalize. It is a question of political attitudes and money," Pienaar told *Africa Report*. There is no question that time is running out. Throughout the 1980s, South Africa's economy grew at a sluggish average annual rate of 2 percent, well short of the 2.8 percent population growth rate and far below the 5 percent rate economists say is needed to maintain the country's economic status quo.

After sanctions, the lack of a skilled and sophisticated labor force is South Africa's major impediment to economic growth. Even when the country made its living from harvesting corn and mining gold, the white population could not itself provide enough technicians and professionals to keep the economy ticking. In the 1960s and 1970s, nearly 25,000 skilled whites annually were attracted to the country by its easily available jobs and high living standards.

Today, this living standard is declining, and since the major unrest began in 1985, South Africa has been a net exporter of educated whites.

LESSONS FROM ZIMBABWE

At Hatfield Girls High in suburban Harare, the school's first black headmistress found an old letter while moving into her new office. Dated 1981, it was from an irate white mother who was taking her daughter out of swimming classes because the girl would have had to share the pool with black students.

Graced with a sense of humor, the new headmistress posted the letter on the staff bulletin board with a note, "Look how far we've come."

Zimbabwe's educational system has come a long way indeed since majority rule in 1980, and in both its successes and failures are lessons for the South African educational system as it embarks on a new course.

The major change in Zimbabwe's education system was the eradication of racial discrimination in access to education. Robert Mugabe's government made primary education free for all students and the percentage of children attending primary schools jumped from 40 to 93 percent.

Before independence, just 12.5 percent of the entire primary school enrollment continued on to secondary school, as a result of the very limited places available for black students. The Mugabe government opened a secondary school for every 10 primary schools and within a few years, nearly 100 percent of those attending primary school continued on to secondary schools. This necessitated a quantum increase in numbers, from 150 secondary schools in 1980 to 1,500 today.

In rural areas, new schools were built with funding from the government for materials, and labor was provided by the communities themselves. In urban areas, the previously all-white

schools quickly became virtually all-black. In 1981, there was a brief controversy as parents in wealthy white suburbs questioned whether the children of their domestic servants had the right to attend the local schools. The government ruled "yes" and soon the children of household servants were seated next to the children of privilege.

In order to further integrate schools, the government quietly began busing students from overcrowded township schools to the spacious, previously all-white suburban schools.

Nearly 11 years after independence, the township schools remain all black, while the schools in formerly all-white areas have two or three white kids per class of 35. Most white students are now being sent to private schools. The government has permitted the new private schools, provided that they educate a percentage of black students to prevent any all-white enclaves.

"In Zimbabwe, in three or four years, schools went from being all-white to nearly all-black," said former teacher Colleen Dawson. "The speed with which it happened and the lack of incidents is a credit to Zimbabwe."

There was a shortage of teachers and the government began training thousands of teachers in accelerated courses. People with only high school level qualifications were also pressed into service and teachers were recruited from England and Australia.

Even now, many primary school teachers are classified as "temporary" after many years in the classroom since they still have only the equivalent of a high school diploma.

Following the swift transformation of the educa-

With the declining role of gold and agriculture in the economy, the country desperately needs well-educated blacks.

The "wisdom" of Verwoerd's apartheid has prevented this. In 1985, only 8.1 percent of the country's graduate medical personnel, 7.4 percent of accountants, and 0.1 percent engineers were black. In 1987, only 26 blacks graduated with engineering degrees and 26 in computer science.

Consequently, South Africa will face a shortage of 200,000 workers with appropriate degrees, diplomas, or comparable qualifications at the end of the decade, according to economists.

Even drastic measures cannot quickly alleviate this shortage, as the student material is too poor, fettered by the dismal bantu curriculum and additionally hindered by the political disruptions.

"Every single high school graduate who comes out of the system these years," Sheila Sisulu points out, "has had his or her entire schooling in the post-Soweto uprising era. This has been a period of constant turmoil and unrest in the schools, with not one single year of uninterrupted learning." As a result, the number of blacks who fail their high school matriculation, or graduation, exam, has been rising over the last few

tion system in terms of race and numbers came the more difficult task of reshaping the content so that what was taught would be more relevant to an independent Zimbabwe.

"Many course syllabuses were rewritten with independent Zimbabwe in mind; for instance, general science was re-oriented toward agriculture and health care, physics was re-directed toward energy use and telecommunications, and chemistry was re-oriented toward mining and industrial-chemical processes like fertilizer production," said Dawson, who taught sciences at township schools from 1981 to 1990. "History was completely rewritten to be oriented toward the whole population, as opposed to just recounting the history of white settlers."

Rewriting curriculums, syllabuses, and textbooks takes time, and many of the newly designed courses and books are only now being introduced in the schools.

South Africa will have a special problem in rewriting its curriculum, said Dawson, who recently moved from Zimbabwe to South Africa and is now the commissioning editor for science books at Heinemann's Publishing.

"In Rhodesia, there was separate administration of black and white education and certainly there were dramatically different rates of how many black or white students would continue on to secondary school. But there was not a separate curriculum such as South Africa's bantu education," Dawson said. "Those blacks in Rhodesia who did get into secondary schools got the same syllabus and studied for the same examinations as the white students."

"In that way, South Africa has a much bigger gulf to bridge in terms of the difference in the quality of education offered to whites and to blacks."

Zimbabwe's continued reliance on the British O-

level and A-level examination system is proving to be a problem.

"The exams are good in the sense that those who pass them are sure that they have reached the same level of education as in the past," said Dawson. "But the drawback to the system is that there is no back-up for those who do not pass the exam."

Zimbabwe's unemployment level is so high, currently estimated at well over 50 percent of the potential workforce, that only those students with five good O-level passes can get into polytechnic schools and apprenticeship programs. Those who have failed must try again or join the ranks of the unemployed.

Zimbabwe's raging unemployment is an economic problem, but it is also an educational one. Each year more than 200,000 students finish secondary school, but there are only 10,000 job openings. This discrepancy is producing social and political pressures. The government cannot continue to spend a quarter of its budget on the educational system, especially when the economy cannot absorb the high numbers of graduates. The Mugabe government is currently going through a painful re-think on education and is setting up a new system of school fees.

"Perhaps one of Zimbabwe's lessons is not to expand too quickly," Dawson said. "Expansion should only be as fast as the system can maintain teachers and books in the classrooms. Expansion should only be as fast as what the economy can support. The economy should be able to absorb graduates into the job market. When the educated cannot find jobs, it does not augur well for the stability of the society." ■

—Andrew Meldrum
Harare, Zimbabwe

years. This year, 67 percent failed.

As well as trying to ease the problem, the country's education system will have to struggle to serve nearly 50 percent more students, as it is estimated that the burgeoning population will cause enrollment to increase from the 1990 level of 9.5 million to 14 million in the year 2000.

South Africa's education system will have to cope with that increase as

well as respond to the need to offer a better post-apartheid education for blacks. It means drawing up new curriculums, writing new textbooks, and staffing and equipping new schools. It will be an exacting test for the government to see if it is truly committed to a post-apartheid, democratic South Africa. It is a fearsome challenge for all, but it is clear that equality in education is what the country's black majority demands and it is what

the country's economy requires.

"We are happy that things are finally moving after so many years of continuous crisis," said Sheila Sisulu on the establishment of the government-ANC working group. "Nobody yet has a detailed proposal for a solution," she said, indicating that she herself has much lower expectations. "Whatever is done, I'll be happy as long as the situation does not deteriorate." ○

JOHN SAMUEL:**Ending Apartheid Education**

Margaret A. Novicki

As the African National Congress's director of education, John Samuel is a member of the recently established joint working group whose task, with government participation, is to look at ways that the historical backlogs created by decades of bantu education can begin to be redressed.

Dr. Samuel, who visited the U.S. with a delegation of South African educators under the auspices of the African-American Institute, spells out the immediate needs including classroom and textbook provision, as well as longer-term issues, such as the type of education and training that will be relevant in a post-apartheid era.

By MARGARET A. NOVICKI

Africa Report: How would you characterize the current educational crisis in South Africa? What is the legacy of bantu education?

Samuel: The word *crisis* has been used to describe the educational situation in South Africa, but quite frankly, it doesn't quite do justice to the extent of educational damage in South Africa. To describe it more in terms of a national disaster would convey both the scale and the depth of what's actually happened.

The more obvious manifestations of apartheid education can be seen in the unequal provision of educational resources, by indicators like teacher-pupil ratio, inadequate provision of classroom space—the usual portrayal of apartheid education. But what is probably more significant are its hidden consequences—for example, the huge disparities between the levels of training and educational development so that now we have vast disparities between the numbers of white graduates and black graduates, and the number of whites and blacks who are trained and skilled. That's one level of the less obvious consequences of apartheid.

But when you look at the social consequences of apartheid, what apartheid has done in education is set in motion a series of processes that have led to a larger number of people being excluded from education than included. We have close to 8 million adults who are illiterate. We have large numbers of young people unable to continue their education. We have a million and a half children that can't get into schools.

More than that has been the consequences to education in implementing the grand design of apartheid structurally. To illustrate: What we've had over the years is a shifting of the educational population from the urban to the rural, so that the majority of children in schools today are not urban-based, they're rural-based. They're in the homelands, they're in rural areas, they're in farm schools. That provision of education in the rural areas is vastly inadequate, even when compared to what's provided for blacks in the urban areas. These are the challenges we face as we begin to reconstruct education in South Africa.

Another long-term consequence is the skewed distribution of the kind of education that's being provided, so that at the higher education level a large number of our students go to areas such as social sciences and liberal arts. A very small number go into natural sciences and technology. There's a very major imbalance in the kind of education that has been provided.

At the high school level, it tends to be guided toward subjects that have very little relevance in terms of career options or it's under-provided for. For example, children study subjects like economics and business sciences, but they don't do mathematics, which renders their study of

business sciences totally inadequate when it comes to going on to further study at universities. There are a host of sub-surface consequences to apartheid that quite often we don't see, but which are nevertheless going to be some of the major challenges.

There is a significant skills shortage, some of which has been caused by the nature of training provided and because it has been so narrowly focused. For example, in the technical area, you are trained probably to do one particular kind of activity—hammering in a nail—and you're trained just to hammer in a nail; you're not even taught what a hammer is, or what a nail is. What is important is to begin to diversify training as well.

What we face at this current juncture is an educational system that is not only in deep crisis, but that has also generated huge backlogs of lasting inequalities and major challenges. It is against this background that we have a number of options. One, we can sit back and wait for things to change. Two, we can intervene now and bring maximum pressure to bear on government—political intervention—to begin addressing immediately the historical backlogs. It is important for us to do exactly that because not only will we be addressing the historical backlogs, but if we are strategic, we will also begin laying the foundations for fundamental change that will lead to the creation of a democratic, non-racial educational system in South Africa.

It was precisely for that reason that the deputy president of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, put together a very broad-based delegation of educators, educational organizations, and mass-based organizations to meet with the president [F.W. de Klerk] to impress upon him the absolute urgency for the state to address immediately the various manifestations of the educational crisis.

Out of this February meeting emerged a joint working group between government and the educational delegation, whose task is to develop a set of proposals that will be presented early in June to the president and to Mandela. Then, government will have to provide some form of response to that in terms of what it wants to do both in the short and the medium-term.

The thrust of the work of the education delegation is in three directions: one, to address the historical backlogs and the immediate manifestations of the crisis in terms of school provision, classroom provision, textbook provision, and some of the more obvious manifestations in terms of disparities. Secondly, to begin to shift toward one educational system. That's a key issue. And thirdly, to look at what kind of long-term changes will begin to construct a new educational order in South Africa. It is within that framework that the joint working group is attempting to give detail to those three fundamental pil-

What we are doing here is setting in motion a process that will result in shifting the parameters of education.

lars of the education delegation proposal to the president in February.

Africa Report: What is your sense of the government's commitment and interest in this process?

Samuel: Having committed ourselves to the joint working group, we need to enter the discussions with a sense of cautious open-

ness. I don't think that we can expect government necessarily to make some of the long-term changes. That is going to be the task of a new political order in South Africa. But what we definitely need to do is to shift government from the paradigm that it has been locked into for the last 20 to 30 years—which is essentially the paradigm of apartheid. Government clearly realizes that it is dealing with a situation in which, one, there is no overall plan as to what to do, and two, there has been a realization that they cannot continue to run education the way they did in the past, that they need, for example, to involve communities.

There is a realization on the part of government that it is not business as usual. Part of this is probably manifested in its willingness to create this joint working group. So I am not romantic that we will make immediate and startling gains—but that what we are doing here is setting in motion a process that will result in shifting the parameters of education.

One's got to see this initiative of the joint working group in a larger context. It is not as if we are putting all our eggs into one basket. Clearly, other aspects of the struggle will continue. We'll continue to bring pressure to bear on government, we'll continue to shift the political context. I think it's strategically wrong to see this initiative as the only one at play in the country. It's one initiative. It's a more direct political intervention that seeks to push government further than probably what it would have achieved on its own. There is general consensus on the extent of the crisis, on the need to intervene in the crisis, and on the need to shift to one educational system.

Africa Report: Given that reform of an entire inequitable educational system will take some time, what immediate steps can be taken to begin to improve the situation?

Samuel: What we need to do is to bring as much pressure to bear on the issue of addressing the immediate backlogs. And this is not just confined to education, it's in many other arenas—housing, health, land, etc. One of the fears that many of us have is that if we do not address the historical backlogs now, whenever a new political dispensation is created in South Africa, a new South African government will face an enormous task of having to correct the imbalances, as well as lay the foundations of a new society. That would somewhat overwhelm any new political dispensation.

What we are looking at is a scenario that lays out some immediate short-term gains and some medium-term developments that will lead toward our long-term objective. And our long-term objective must always be one educational system, a democratic South Africa, a non-racial, non-sexist South Africa—that's the overarching principle that drives our short-term gains.

And we don't have time on our side. We are dealing with an alienated young population that no longer believes in the provision of state education. We are dealing with a level of parental impatience with the inability of the government departments to address some of the more obvious manifestations of the educational crisis. We're dealing, in fact, with political constituencies who are also beginning to question both the ability and willingness of the state to move along. What we need to be able to do is shift government along on this issue.

Some of our immediate areas of concentration are in classroom provision, maintenance of classrooms, provision of textbooks to ensure that some kind of schooling can continue, and the greater involvement of parents and teachers in the running of the schools. And then, addressing the education needs of children in squatter communities, because there's been a rapid process of urbanization and we have vast communities of displaced people in urban areas. They are urbanized and they have to be provided with school facilities. At the moment, government has been making minor provisions, because their argument has been that these people are not their responsibility. We're also looking at improved provision in rural areas, at farm schools, and a much more urgent schools building program that will address the tremendous shortage of school provision. Another short-term issue is more effective utilization of educational resources. At the moment, if you look at teacher-pupil ratios, you have huge disparities. In the Transkei, for example, you have a teacher-pupil ratio of between 1 to 80 to 1 to 100 in primary schools. The average teacher-pupil ratio in white schools is 1 to 25.

If you look at the absolute number of teachers and the absolute number of students we have in South Africa, we come out with a reasonably favorable ratio—1 to 35.

But because education is structured along apartheid lines, our resources are being vastly under-utilized. We're very concerned, not only about human resources but also physical resources. So you have technical colleges (technicons) that are under-utilized, teachers colleges that are under-utilized, because their criteria for admission are based to a large extent on race or other criteria that exclude a kind of moving population. This is something that government can address immediately, short-term.

Africa Report: Is curriculum revision being looked at in the short-term?

Samuel: Yes. Take, for example, looking at the social relevance of what is being taught. In areas like history and the social science subjects, literature, and so on, we can begin. And we should begin encouraging our teachers to challenge the basis of the existing culture. Even on a short-term basis we can begin strengthening the teaching of mathematics, science, and language, because one of the objectives of apartheid education was to deliberately under-educate our children in these areas. For example, in 1990, of the total student population of about 200,000 schoolchildren in high school, only 12 black children obtained an A-grade pass in mathematics. Twelve out of 200,000!

Africa Report: What is the impact of a generation of school drop-outs during the township rebellion of the 1980s? How can you address what represents nearly an entire lost generation of youth?

Samuel: That's going to be one of the major challenges we face not only long-term, but also immediately. Clearly, in the context of the 1980s, it was very difficult to actually begin to focus on this issue, precisely because of the intense repression and resistance. Many of us have talked about this issue, but are somewhat overwhelmed by both its nature and the possible interventions. We have a historical obligation to address this because many of the young people were driven by a singular determination to end what was not only a terrible period of repression, but a social system that was vastly unjust and repressive. In fact, the adult generation has an obligation to not only accept our responsibility in education, but also to ensure that that generation of young people of the 1980s does not lose out in the long-term.

Having said that, what do we do? I think there are a

number of different things that need to be done simultaneously. One certainly is that political organizations, trade unions, church organizations, women's organizations, and so on must continue to reinforce or to assist in the creation of an appropriate climate that would turn education to the national agenda. This is very important. Unless you actually have the right social climate in the country, efforts will not in fact be successful because that



United Nations/P. Njugabane

cultural awareness would not exist. That has to be undertaken, and it is the responsibility of mass-based organizations to actually do that.

Secondly, one needs to begin to look at, even now, a range of programs that will address the out-of-school youth—these could be educational, they could be training, vocational, technical, and so forth. We need to begin to look at a national strategy. We have to involve the young people themselves in this. What we've got to do as a starting point is to create a base of confidence with young people so that they begin to participate right at the outset and they are not seen as beneficiaries but really as participants in the program.

The danger that we've got to guard against is further alienating the youth. We've got to find ways of integrating youth back into the mainstream of our society. Now is the time for that. I don't think we can wait. It is a host of different kinds of interventions. In some cases, it will be education; in other cases, it may be just providing space for these people to find their own solutions. We

"Some of our immediate areas of concentration are in classroom provision, maintenance of classrooms, provision of textbooks to ensure that some kind of schooling can continue"

must be careful not to have too many preconceived notions of what we should do, but develop it in a participatory manner that will ensure that the youth feel that it's not yet again somebody doing something for them just as objectives or recipients of aid, but as really active participants.

Africa Report: To what extent will you be looking at experiences of other countries such as Zimbabwe for models in educational reform?

Samuel: We're looking just about everywhere, in fact. Some experiences are more pertinent and more relevant to our experiences. For example, we're looking at beyond the borders outside Africa to Latin American experiences, to some of the European countries and some of the southeast Asian countries. Yes, I think it is very important for us to take advantage of many prior lessons

The danger that we've got to guard against is further alienating the youth. We've got to find ways of integrating youth back into the mainstream of our society.

that have occurred in education, because we are not going to create something that's so spectacularly new and different. We need to pay careful attention to what's worked, what has not worked, and why, bringing that international perspective to bear on how we begin addressing some of the critical issues that are going to be long-term challenges for South Africa.

Central to one of those long-term issues is the role of education in relation to work creation, employment, and skills training, because there is a kind of seduction in some of the arguments that basically seek to imitate what seem to be the economic miracles of southeast Asian countries. There can be very little doubt that we need skilled and trained people, but I think it's very important how we skill and train our people.

While one can point to some of the economic miracles of some of the southeast Asian countries, you can also point to some pretty horrendous social consequences, where, for example, the labor movements have been suppressed. We want to avoid that situation. In attempting to create a democratic society, we should be driven by that principle and not see the narrow

demands. We are not against training. But it is how you train and how you relate that training to the economic and social goals of the country. That is where one of the major challenges for a future educational system is going to lie in South Africa.

Africa Report: What do you hope to achieve by your visit to the United States? What role do you see for the U.S. in aiding your educational reform?

Samuel: In trying to answer that question, one needs to disaggregate the United States because there is a whole range of different actors. There is the U.S. government that has a reasonably large aid program in education in South Africa, approximately \$40 million. Then you have the U.S. foundations which also make significant interventions. Then you also have the broad community, the American people who've been involved in anti-apartheid activity. There are different roles for different actors in the United States.

What we are hoping to achieve [in the U.S.] is to highlight the challenges. I think the story of apartheid education has been told. One may need to re-tell it. But in a way, we need to move beyond that. We need to move to the challenges: What can we do to begin addressing the consequences of apartheid education? That is where the international community, including the U.S., can play significant roles in terms of how they strategically intervene. Clearly, the major obligation must remain on the plate of the state. We don't expect the U.S. to come in there and put right the historical imbalances, but rather complement that major thrust in many different ways, for example, by providing aid that would enable us to develop curriculum reform, to develop learning materials, research into curriculum reform and change. That is where I see the contribution of foundations, of the U.S. government, and so on, in supporting and complementing our major educational gains by reinforcing them with qualitative educational input in terms of training, research, and materials development.

We always tend to look at the issue of resources almost entirely in terms of money, but I think we need to broaden that and look at resources in terms of people. There may be ways and means of us tapping into existing human resources that would help us in this process of reconstruction. You've had a wealth of experience in the U.S. You've had to deal with inequalities in education and broader social inequalities. I'm not saying the South African experience is exactly the same as the American experience, but there are similarities. We need to examine those similarities and see how you've responded, or haven't responded, to those issues. People who've been involved in that could be invaluable resources to us as we attempt to find solutions to our vast problems in South Africa. ■

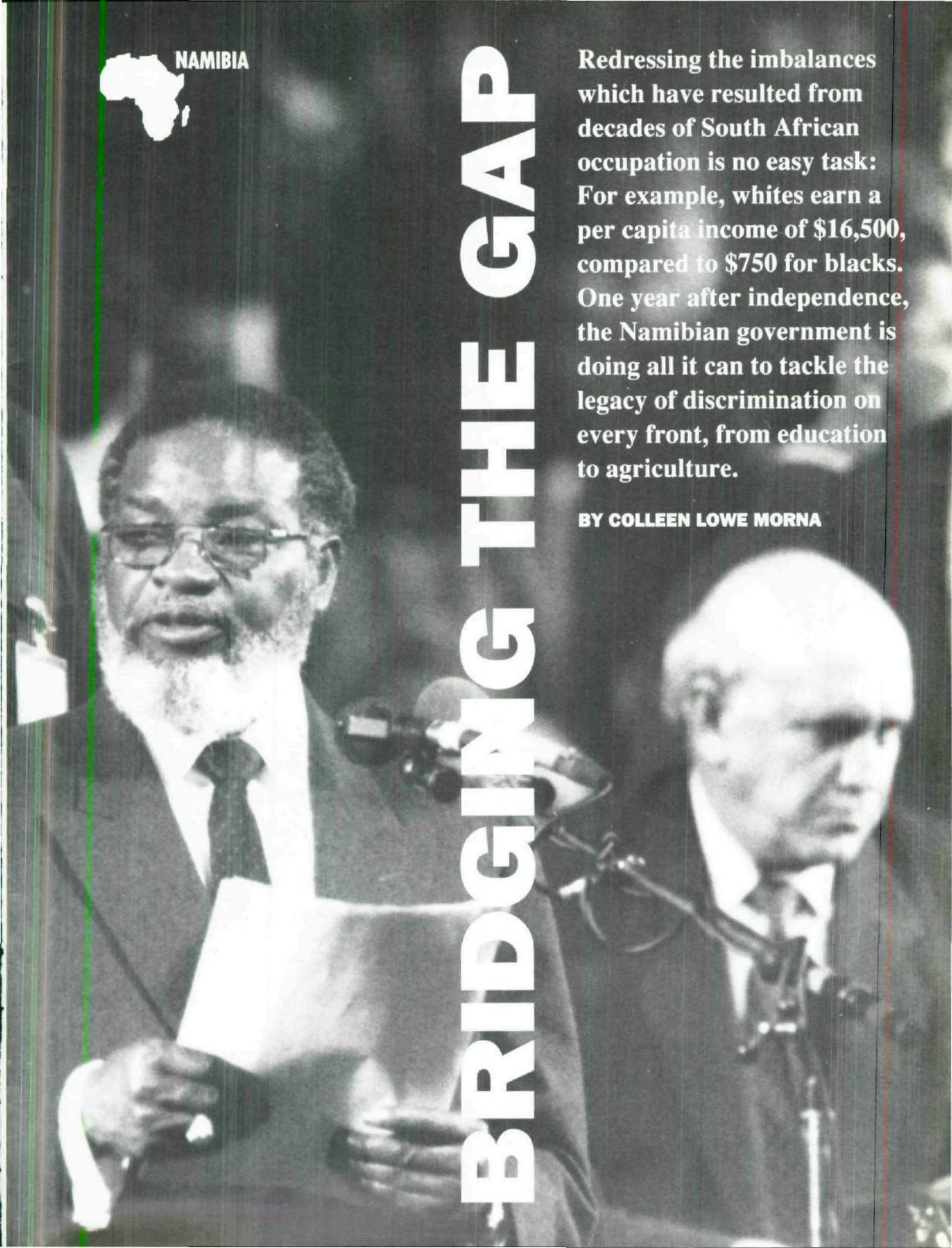


NAMIBIA

BRIDGING THE GAP

Redressing the imbalances which have resulted from decades of South African occupation is no easy task: For example, whites earn a per capita income of \$16,500, compared to \$750 for blacks. One year after independence, the Namibian government is doing all it can to tackle the legacy of discrimination on every front, from education to agriculture.

BY COLLEEN LOWE MORNA



Barely a week goes by in Namibia without one more seminar on how to create jobs, build more and better schools, or vaccinate more kids before the end-of-year deadline. For although the new Namibian government has not been able to deliver all that the majority of the electorate would have hoped for in the first year of independence, President Sam Nujoma and his team are making a concerted effort to redress some of the more glaring imbalances of the past.

Under South African occupation, Namibia was carved up into 11 ethnic "homelands," with the 6 percent white population owning 60 percent of the country's land. Men had little option but to look for jobs in the towns, mines, and commercial farms, leaving women and children to tend the cattle and till the land.

Yet, as a result of veterinary restrictions, black peasant farmers could not sell their cattle south of a "red line" that effectively meant they could not sell commercially, and little attention was paid to peasant farmers in this vast, semi-arid country.

In towns, racial discrimination, compounded by generally lower levels of education, condemned blacks to the lowest paying jobs, and current unemployment is estimated at 40 percent. With a per capita income of \$1,200, the huge, mineral rich country of less than 1 million people is regarded as one of the richest in Africa. But this average figure masks huge disparities.

Whites enjoy a per capita income of \$16,500—similar to most Western countries. On the other hand, blacks working in the modern sector of the economy earn an average of \$750 a year, while the average wage of those dependent on subsistence agriculture is a mere \$85. The low economic status of black Namibians, coupled with a health system geared toward whites, and toward curative, rather than preventative medicine, explains the disparity in other social indicators.

"There is an incongruence," notes

Colleen Lowe Morna is a Zimbabwean freelance journalist based in Harare.

Unicef program officer Macharia Kamau, "between gross national product per capita, which should normally indicate the ability of a country to provide for its people, and the actual figures that indicate whether or not a country is able to deliver."

Thus, for example, the infant mortality rate in Namibia, at 105 per 1,000, is the same as that for Tanzania—one of the poorest countries in Africa—and much higher than Botswana's, with which the country shares a similar per capita income. Literacy, at a mere 35 percent, is way below that of both countries.

The new government's room to maneuver has been severely restricted. Despite the country's enormous potential, the economy stagnated in 1990, and was expected to go into recession in 1991. The poor performance is partly explained by falling prices for Namibia's main mineral exports, drought in some parts of the country, and steep increases in the price of oil as a result of the Gulf war.

However, it is also explained by the current recession in South Africa, which has profound effects on Namibia, because the country belongs to the rand monetary area, and therefore has no control over its monetary policy. The presence of United Nations election supervisory forces, estimated to have spent \$300 million in the country, helped to delay the recession, which is now catching up.

In an effort to extricate itself from South Africa's financial clutches, Namibia has established its own central bank, but it will be at least two years before it has its own currency. Meanwhile, the country has to contend with a \$232 million per annum cut in budgetary support from South Africa, and an inherited debt of \$192 million.

However, because of Namibia's relatively high per capita income, efforts to get the country classified as "least developed," which would put it in line for more concessional donor funds, proved unsuccessful.

At a UNDP-sponsored donor conference for Namibia held in New

York in June 1990, donors pledged an initial sum of \$220 million—roughly equivalent to South Africa's budget cut. But the amount of donor funding is expected to average \$160 million for the subsequent three years, against an estimated need of \$270 million each year.

The difficulty of securing aid, and the urgent need to create jobs, underscored the huge investment conference held in Windhoek earlier this year. But that has meant compromises such as moving softly on land reform and nationalization of the big mining companies which in the past have siphoned off huge profits from Namibia and are the main source of government revenue. In line with the government policy of national reconciliation, care has also been taken not to force any whites out of their jobs.

However, a start has been made with the dismantling of the 11 ethnic administrations (which themselves led to considerable duplicity and wastage). These are being replaced by regional and district administrations, implementing a uniform and equal set of policies from the center.

Finance Minister Otto Herrigel has resisted pressure from private

The government is morally obliged to meet some of the expectations created by independence.

companies to cut taxes, on grounds that the government is morally obliged to meet some of the expectations created by independence. The 1990/91 budget indicates a major reorientation in spending priorities. With defense spending reduced to 4.8 percent of the budget, the government has been able to realize a "peace dividend" of \$114 million. Allocations to health (13.7 percent of

Unemployed youths: Formal employment in Namibia has historically been severely restricted for blacks



the budget) and education (18.2 percent of the budget) show a considerable increase over the past.

A broad policy statement issued soon after independence places the highest sectoral priority on agriculture and rural development, education and training, and health and housing. The paper pledges to ensure that every citizen has "equal access to public facilities and services, as well as to an acceptable standard of living."

Although agriculture accounts for a mere 10 percent of Namibia's GDP, 70 percent of the country's people—largely women and children—rely on it for a livelihood. Unlike Zimbabwe, there is no fund in Namibia for buying back land from white farmers for resettlement by peasant farmers, and the country's constitution forbids the expropriation of land. In the long-term, the government is determined to bring about a more equitable distribution of land, and a major conference on

this issue is scheduled to take place in mid-1991.

In the interim, however, several measures are being considered to improve the lot of peasant farmers. According to the new permanent secretary for agriculture, Vilho Ngihipondoka, provision of water holes in various parts of the north will unlock new grazing areas. The government has also approached donors to "assist us with veterinary services, so that we can shift the red line to the border with Angola, and so that peasant farmers are free to market their cattle in the same way as commercial farmers," the Namibian official noted.

Extension officers, being trained en masse, are to be deployed to agricultural development centers in each district. Consultants in Windhoek are studying how the present land bank, which in the past provided credit only to commercial farmers, can be adapted to serve small-scale farmers.

The Agronomic Board, which purchases all agricultural products, is looking to set up more collection points in the rural areas to encourage surplus production. A major new development in 1991 was the announcement by the government that it planned to put up \$5 million for the purchase, processing, and sale of millet, which never passed through commercial channels before.

Greater attention is also being paid to relevant research. For example, an NGO recently found that, with better seed, the production of millet can be doubled.

Formal employment in Namibia has historically been severely restricted for blacks. Out of a potential labor force of 400,000, only 184,793 people are in formal jobs—the majority working as farm hands, domestic workers, or miners.

A new draft labor code, expected to be published mid-year, will define domestics and farm hands as work-

ONE COMMUNITY'S SOLUTION

In Windhoek's sprawling black township of Katutura, it is rare to find kids with a definite plan for their future. Esther Avula is an exception. A confident and bright-eyed nine-year-old who speaks fluent English, she says: "When I grow up, I want to be a lawyer, so that I can help people in trouble."

Avula is one of a thousand kids attending the People's Primary School (PPS), an innovative attempt by the local community to overcome some of the shortcomings of the apartheid education system including disparity of access, ethnic divisions, instruction in Afrikaans, and the National Christian Education philosophy.

According to Selma Shejavali, headmistress of the PPS, when parents came together in 1986 to launch an independent primary school, "it was a kind of cry that they were not satisfied with bantu education, and that they wanted to do something about it."

A primary concern was to set up an English language school. "Parents hated Afrikaans because it was the language of the South African government, which they rejected. In addition, Afrikaans is not an international language. Parents knew that when Namibia became independent, English would become the official lan-

guage. They wanted to prepare their children for this."

Initially, the school included the Afrikaans language as a subject, because parents figured that as long as it remained the lingua franca of the country, their kids would need it to get by. But, according to Shejavali, who is also the wife of the head of the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN), Abisai Shejavali, "the children themselves refused to learn Afrikaans, and so we stopped teaching it."

Some discussion took place over whether or not the school should be offering instruction in indigenous languages. "The problem," recalls Shejavali, "is that there are so many different indigenous languages." And one of the aims of the school was to break the ethnic barriers in education. "This is the first school in Katutura where children from all ethnic backgrounds are able to mix. We decided instead to emphasize to parents the importance of respecting and teaching the home language at home," she says.

A key policy of the school has also been to forbid corporal punishment, and in meetings with parents, to discourage the beating of children at home. "If a child comes from a fighting environment, plus a fighting family, and then goes to a

ers for the first time, and create a special department within the ministry to ensure that they work fair hours and are given time off. In line with a constitutional provision for affirmative action to help redress the disparities created by apartheid in Namibia, the draft also proposes setting up an employment equity commission, to investigate complaints of discriminatory practices in employment. The commission will also require that enterprises set quotas for the hiring of blacks and women, which it will monitor.

However, a major requirement, if black Namibians are to compete with their white counterparts, is a revamping of the education system, in which—in the past—six times more was spent on the education of

white than on black children. Under Namibia's new constitution, primary school education is now compulsory. Creating sufficient capacity in the short term is a tall order, as illustrated by a recent newspaper report that 7,000 pupils in the populous northern Ovamboland were without places at the start of the 1991 school year.

A key objective, however, is to prevent the huge dropout rate from grade to grade each year. Thus, community initiatives are being encouraged, and double seating practiced in some schools. To improve the quality of education (85 percent of teachers in black schools are without teacher training), the government has embarked on a comprehensive in-service teacher training program, made all the more important by the

sudden switch to English as the medium of instruction.

Urgent efforts are also underway to review curriculum, based on the authoritarian South African "National Christian Education" philosophy which justifies white supremacy. For starters, corporal punishment has been abolished in schools. New guidelines have been issued for junior secondary schools, and a National Institute of Educational Development is being established to review curriculums more fully. Grassroots efforts at reform are also being encouraged. And the government has established a commission, consisting of several well-known international academics, to make recommendations on higher education, considered key to the

fighting school, the child can only turn out to be a fighting child," says Shejavali.

Before independence, the school had no choice but to follow the government curriculum. But, according to Shejavali, "we only used this as a guideline, and the school has always encouraged critical thought."

A teacher of many years experience, the headmistress relates an instance in which one of her first grade pupils asked why there were two hospitals in Windhoek. Impulsively trying to dodge the question, Shejavali replied that there are many people in Windhoek.

"But why is one for blacks only and the other for whites?" the pupil pressed. "It turned out," Shejavali recalled, "that the child had had an eye problem which could not be treated at the Katutura hospital. He had to be taken to the white hospital for a few hours to have an operation. The difference between the two hospitals deeply affected the child."

Faced with such situations, Shejavali said, "I had to tell the truth. We discussed these things openly. This is one thing that would never happen in government schools." It also often put the school in trouble with the government authorities, who regarded the PPS as a brainchild of the (now ruling) South West Africa People's Organization.

But Shejavali notes, the school's foresight has been vindicated. With independence, English has been declared the formal language of Namibia. As other schools struggle to make the language change, the PPS is at a distinct advantage. "Some

of my friends are finding it hard to learn English," says Avula. "I am happy that I can speak this language."

Curriculum changes have so far only been introduced at junior secondary school level, but are soon to follow in primary schools. When that happens, says Shejavali, "we will be well-placed to make changes." In the meantime, she adds: "We know that emotionally we are with our government, and that whatever we do here, we don't have to do it with fear."

Since independence, the PPS has also been given the major task of catering for about 500 children of returning Namibian exiles. "Some parents are still looking for jobs, some don't have homes yet, some are outside Windhoek, and some come from English medium schools. We at the PPS have tried to make the transition for these children as smooth as possible," the headmistress noted.

With the huge increase in number, donor funds have been made available to the school for new classes and hostels, now going up around the ramshackle buildings where the CCN started.

One of the hopes of the school, which has struggled financially, is that the government will take over payment of teachers' salaries, which are about half what other teachers receive. Even so, teachers at the school have been among the first to participate in an in-house teacher upgrading program being run by a non-governmental organization to help teachers in Namibia to cope with the new demands in education. ■

—C.L.M.

country's future manpower requirements.

These will also hinge on having a healthier nation. As in the case of education, disparities are marked. While whites enjoy a health care system comparable to that in industrialized countries, a recent Unicef survey found that, in mid-1989, there were only 22 doctors and four specialists in the whole of Ovamboland, a ratio of 1 to 21,000.

Another shortcoming of the past administration, notes Christine Mutirua, head of the ministry of health family and community health division, was "the curative approach, with very little emphasis on preventative medicine or primary health care."

This explains anomalies like the

presence of sophisticated equipment for complex operations at the Oshakati hospital in Ovamboland, while only 2 percent of the children in the province had full immunization. It also explains why—despite Namibia's relative wealth—the country is still battling against outbreaks of diseases like measles and malaria which have been brought under control in many parts of the Third World.

One of the government's first actions has been to outline a primary health care strategy, including the promotion of proper nutrition and adequate supply of safe water, maternal and child care including family spacing, immunization against major infectious diseases, basic housing and sanitation, education, and community participation.

An immunization campaign, launched with huge political support in the middle of last year, has succeeded in providing basic protection to the vast majority of Namibia's children.

Hundreds of community health workers are being trained, some in neighboring countries like Zimbabwe and Botswana. A huge seminar on primary health care was held in Oshakati in February to map out an implementation strategy.

Mutirua, a former nurse, and her team have worked overtime to produce local educational materials. Packing up for the day after a recent interview she reflected: "We are overwhelmed. But there is a good feeling to it—slowly, but surely, we are making progress." ○



SOUTH AFRICA

Although the African National Congress and the Organization of African Unity continue to take a hard line on ending sanctions against the de Klerk government, self-interest has caused some

The Pariah's New

By COLLEEN LOWE MORNA

As political reforms gain momentum in South Africa, the gap between rhetoric and reality is widening on the rest of the continent. Officially, most African governments and their regional organizations hold the view that it is not yet time for sanctions against Pretoria to be lifted. But last year, trade between South Africa and the rest of Africa doubled.

The enthusiasm with which African countries regard their southern neighbor and vice versa is becoming difficult to contain. For example, in Zimbabwe—which has taken one of the most hardline stances on South Africa in the sub-region—the only queue to be found in Harare is that outside the South African trade mission, where Zimbabweans are prepared to spend hours in the sun waiting for a visa.

Around the corner, prominently displayed at the embassy of Angola (which until recently was at war with South Africa) are photocopies of a newspaper article suggesting that the white-ruled economic giant might soon become Luanda's largest trading partner.

A South African journalist passing through Harare recently was pleasantly surprised to find that he had no difficulty obtaining a visa to Ghana. What's more, he received royal treatment in Accra.

In the Namibian capital, Wind-

southern African states to begin cozying up to South Africa. Increasing financial difficulties and little prospect for Western investment have turned neighbors' eyes to the economic giant, a potential engine for the region's growth.

hoek, onlookers were surprised at the huge turnout of West African officials and businessmen, resplendent in caps and flowing robes, at a recent investment seminar. Their interest was not in Africa's youngest nation, but in the window it provides on Africa's largest economy next door.

"At conferences and in public fora, the self-righteousness over sanctions still reigns," comments a Harare economist. "But the reality is that it's a practical decade. No one, including the politicians themselves, is really paying much attention to what they are saying."

The reasons for maintaining the boycott on South Africa are well-founded and have been clearly articulated.

Following the unbanning of the African National Congress and release of Nelson Mandela in 1990, South African President F.W. de Klerk early this year proposed to repeal the Group Areas Act, the Land Acts, and the Population Registration Act—the last main institutional pillars of apartheid.

But, as Mandela pointed out at a press conference in Windhoek during the annual consultative conference of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference

(SADCC), the Internal Security Act remains in place and black South Africans still do not have the vote.

"Our position is a very simple one," he said. "The international community must continue to isolate South Africa, as sanctions were introduced to force South Africa to repeal all apartheid measures. That has not been achieved."

A communique issued at the close of the SADCC conference which, in addition to the 10 member countries, brought together 13 donor countries and 25 regional organizations, affirmed that it would be "necessary for the international community to maintain the measures taken against apartheid until the system is completely dismantled."

Responding to repeated suggestions in the corridors by Western donors that SADCC start dialogue with forces in South Africa other than just the liberation movements, SADCC executive secretary Simba Makoni retorted: "There is no basis for SADCC to relate to any institutions of apartheid. When a popular dispensation, to which the people of South Africa as a whole, but especially the majority, is put in place, then we will be able to engage with those institutions."

Colleen Lowe Morna is a Zimbabwean freelance journalist based in Harare.

Almost simultaneously, the Organization of African Unity ad hoc committee on southern Africa, meeting in Harare, and taking an even more hardline position than the liberation movements had been pushing for, issued a similar statement. At a press

Pals

conference attended by OAU secretary-general Salim Salim and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, the OAU urged the international community to maintain sanctions and all forms of pressure against the de Klerk government.

Behind-the-scenes lobbying by African governments and the South African liberation movements was largely responsible for a decision by the EEC and Commonwealth not to ease sanctions further. (In April, the EEC lifted sanctions.)

To what extent Western sanctions are being observed in South Africa, and with what effect, is a hotly debated issue. But by far one of the most visible new developments in the country—apart from new-found relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—is Pretoria's growing links with African neighbors.

Although trade figures with the rest of Africa are not made official, government sources in South Africa have been leaking information to the effect that by 1990, trade with Africa accounted for 10 percent of South African exports, compared with 6.5 percent in 1984.

Members of the Pretoria-set up Southern African Customs Union—Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, and Namibia—have always had close economic links with South Africa. What has been most significant in the last year is the number of countries that previously took a hard line on South Africa and which have now softened their stance.

The reasons vary from country to country. But a common thread seems to be that, faced with mounting eco-

nomic problems and little hope of attracting foreign investment from the West, African countries see South Africa as a motor for growth. Individual citizens, frustrated by low pay and working conditions at home, but restricted from working in industrialized countries, are also hungrily eyeing Big Brother down south.

For its part, South Africa is desperately in need of many of the raw materials found in neighboring countries, including oil, water, and hydroelectricity. The country's manufacturers, although sophisticated by African standards, are not competitive in Western markets and are seeking outlets for their wares. They are also enticed by the idea of cashing in on \$15 billion a year in Western aid contracts to the rest of Africa.

Equally important, contacts with the rest of Africa are seen by South Africa as crucial to gaining international acceptability. Economic ties—in the current climate of structural adjustment and pragmatism—are seen as being the best route.

This coincidence of interests is illustrated in a number of recent developments:

- In August last year, South Africa made one of its biggest diplomatic coups when Madagascar, once a staunch critic of Pretoria, invited President de Klerk on a state visit, which included the signing of a reciprocal air link agreement. The main motivation for Madagascar—a poor island with little going for it other than its water and beaches—was to capture a share of the South African tourist market before others stepped in.

- Kenya, which despite its conservative government has opposed South Africa, licensed South African Airways (SAA) to begin regular weekly flights to Nairobi to facilitate tourism and trade. The agreement was temporarily suspended following a stopover in Nairobi by Mandela, during which he protested the move as a breach of sanctions. But the short-lived nature of President Daniel arap Moi's retreat testified to the power of self-interest over lofty political ideals.

- In West Africa, President

Houphouët-Boigny opened the door to new ties with South Africa when he allowed Pretoria to start a trade mission in Abidjan and granted SAA landing rights.

- Pretoria has since opened a trade mission in Lomé, Togo, and high-level contacts have been made with other francophone states, including Cameroon and Gabon. The two major anglophone West African countries, Ghana and Nigeria, have kept up the verbal distance. But their embassies in southern Africa are battling to keep their nationals from fortune-seeking in South Africa's nominally independent homelands, not to mention South Africa itself. Some reports suggest that Nigeria, the African heavyweight, will soon be seeking a softening of the OAU stand on South Africa.

- In southern Africa, the most dramatic turn in relations has been with Angola. Because of sanctions, South Africa has been forced to buy oil at a premium and develop expensive coal-based alternatives. South Africa is hungrily eyeing Angola as a future source of oil. Now desperately trying to pull itself out of a war and failed socialist policies, Angola sees South Africa as a potentially lucrative market and source of technology. Already, the huge South African-based diamond mining conglomerate, De Beers, has signed an agreement with Angola's diamond mining parastatal, Endiama.

- Mozambique, which was historically close to South Africa and is also pushing for peace and market reforms, has gone out of its way to woo South African investors. Government officials have attended two investment seminars in Johannesburg, a consultancy firm has opened in South Africa to assist businessmen wishing to go back to Mozambique, and inquiries are pouring in. South Africa has also recently resurrected a preferential trade agreement with Mozambique, enabling the country to export to South Africa manufactured goods which it would find difficult to sell elsewhere. South Africa has been involved in the rehabilitation of Maputo port, and of late has

started extending "soft aid," such as setting up a technical training school in Maputo.

•Zambia, another critic of apartheid, but also a SADCC country striving to save itself from economic ruin, has lifted a ban on South African transport routes, put in place to encourage use of Dar es Salaam and Beira ports, neither of which has proved efficient. The South African Trade Organization (Safto) recently paid its first official visit to Lusaka, and is discussing joint ventures with the Zambian Industrial and Mining Corporation, a state enterprise overseeing a wide variety of interests. Safto is also looking into funding improvements of Mpulungu port on Lake Tanganyika, which would give South Africa easy access to central African markets, through a route considerably cheaper than going via sea to the Kenyan port of Mombasa.

•Of all the SADCC countries, Zimbabwe has retained the most hard-line public stance against South Africa and thus contributed to a massive disinvestment of South African companies in the past few years. However, with the possible exception of Namibia, nowhere else do old ties run as deep as between white Zimbabweans, still a dominant force in the economy, and the ruling elite in South Africa. After a long hesitation, the country has recently launched a structural adjustment program, and is desperately seeking foreign investment. South Africans are not being overtly encouraged to come back, but they are not being discouraged either. According to financial sources in Harare, South Africa has quietly been extending preferential trade terms to the country.

•Newly independent Namibia is trying to reduce its excessive economic dependence on South Africa through establishing its own central bank, as well as encouraging local farming and manufacturing. But, as evidenced by the fact that it has joined the custom union, and is moving cautiously on introducing its own currency, Namibia has decided to adopt a pragmatic approach in its

relations with South Africa. The fact that the country widely advertised its recent investment conference in the South African press and that over half the participants came from South Africa illustrates the mutual interest that the two countries perceive in dealing with each other.

During the SADCC conference which preceded the Namibia investment gathering, executive secretary Simba Makoni excused the behavior of his member governments on the ground that "there is a distinction between the policies of national governments and those of SADCC as a collective body."

But contradictions are also starting to emerge at the regional level. For example, when the east and southern Africa Preferential Trade Area held a summit in Mbabane, Swaziland, recently, South African businessmen were invited as observers. But when Safto, the South African Chamber of Business, and National African Federated Chambers of Commerce invited African businessmen to a conference in Mbabane in March to discuss business prospects in the region, the PTA secretary-general declined to attend. Swaziland's King Mswati, current chairman of the PTA, also failed to show up to open the conference.

Earlier, the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) invited South African businessmen to attend a regional business conference, addressed by three Zimbabwean ministers, including the senior minister of finance, economic planning, and development, Bernard Chidzero, in Victoria Falls.

Soon after, the minister of state for regional and international cooperation, Simbi Mubako, said that the time was "not yet ripe" to make overtures to the captains of South African industry, as this would undermine the "push for political change in the region."

In a sharp reply, the head of CZI, John Deary, pointed out that Mandela has addressed gatherings of the same businessmen. "How can Mr. Nelson Mandela be said to be slowing down political changes?" Deary asked.

To complicate matters, during the SADCC conference, Makoni denied any SADCC participation in the Victoria Falls conference. But it later surfaced that the SADCC regional business council, which is also based in Gaborone, funded many of the delegates who attended.

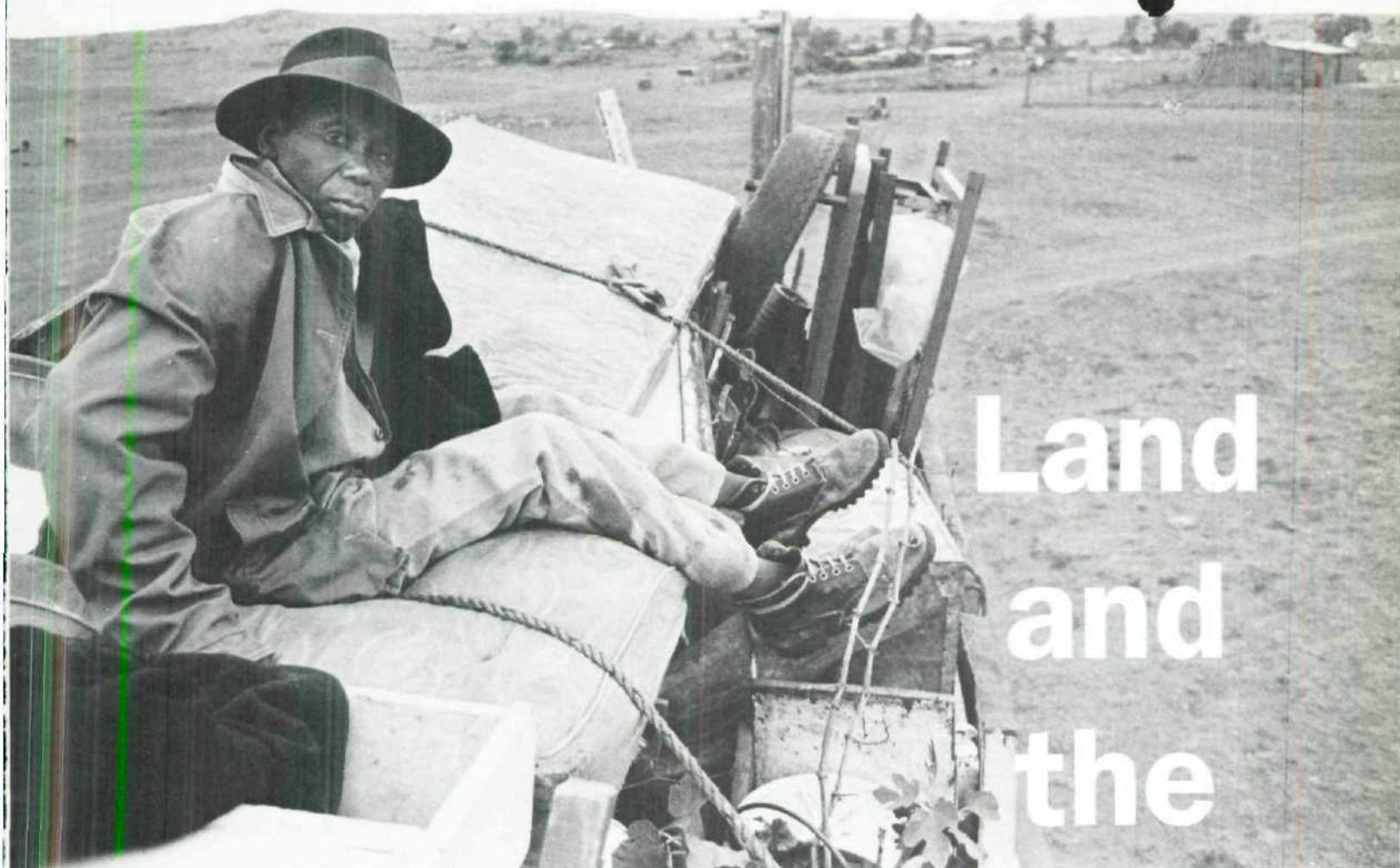
Another controversy has been sparked by press reports that South Africa's electricity parastatal, Escom, attended a meeting of the SADCC energy sector. SADCC officials deny this. What cannot be denied, however, is that Escom is pushing ahead with plans for a regional power grid—once a SADCC dream—and has already successfully cut deals with Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Meanwhile, Transnet, South Africa's recently privatized transport parastatal, has been actively scouting out business opportunities in the region. One of SADCC's biggest achievements has been to rehabilitate shorter transport routes, particularly through Mozambique, which the region is starting to use.

But, trading on its efficiency and the fact that regional rail lines frequently rent its freight cars, the rail division of Transnet is aggressively marketing the South African alternative. One attractive technique being employed—in light of the hard currency shortages in the region—is to offer barter deals such as exchanging hardwoods, palm oil, coffee, and even second-hand rails in payment of services.

According to press reports, South Africa's department of foreign affairs has also recently put to nine out of the ten SADCC states a plan for a southern African common market centered around South Africa, and reminiscent of the old Pretoria dream of a "constellation" of neighboring states with a focal South African star.

Regional officials take comfort in assurances by the liberation movements that a democratic South Africa will join the existing organizations and not seek to dominate them. Analysts caution, however, that at the current pace of developments, such a position might be too complacent. ○



Land and the

Landless

By **PATRICK LAURENCE**

Although President de Klerk's promise to repeal the Land Acts has been hailed as a major step toward ending apartheid, his government's plans regarding land reform remain highly controversial. While blacks insist that land must be restored to the people from whom it was wrested, the de Klerk government, utilizing historical myths to justify its present distribution, concedes only that blacks will now be free to buy land.

The pending repeal of South Africa's Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 has been presented as a major step toward the fulfillment of President F.W. de Klerk's promise to rid the statute books of racially discriminatory laws by the end of June.

But, ironically, his plan of action, as outlined in the White Paper on Land Reform, is seen by a wide range of opposition forces as a move to protect the beneficiaries of

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apartheid without properly compensating its victims.

The Land Acts reserved barely more than 13 percent of South Africa for black ownership. In the remaining 87 percent, white interests were supreme. The land outside the "native reserves" was under white control.

Vast tracts were owned but not always occupied by whites. Black people were allowed in the areas outside their reserves or reservations under sufferance on terms dictated by whites.

For nearly 30 years, from the mid-

1950s to the mid-1980s, successive South African governments, inspired by the vision of "grand" or territorial apartheid, sought to clear white-designated South Africa of black settlements or "black spots." These were small areas of land scattered throughout South Africa where, for historical reasons, blacks had acquired ownership rights.

According to the Surplus People's Project, 3.5 million people were forcibly moved, sometimes at gunpoint, from "black spots" and herded into their allotted tribal homelands.

But the de Klerk administration's White Paper dismisses the notion of restoring their land to these uprooted people as impractical, arguing that the present position should be accepted in the interests of "peace and progress."

One of de Klerk's trouble-shooters, the smooth-talking minister of education and training, Stoffel van der Merwe, argues disingenuously that whites had to give up land as well and that they too suffered.

This argument impresses few people outside the governing National Party. Whites were not moved at gunpoint and they were usually paid huge sums, often after long periods of haggling, as distinct from the meager and arbitrary payments made to blacks.

Van der Merwe's sophistry echoes the more crudely expressed view of Andries Treurnicht's ultra-right Conservative Party. Fulminating against the government White Paper, the Conservative Party evokes history to justify the status quo in land distribution.

"We acquired our land through lawful occupation of large tracts of uninhabited land, through agreements, through cession, through barter, and to a lesser degree, through justifiable conquest," the Conservative Party said in an angry statement.

The whites did not exterminate indigenous peoples to wrest their land from them, the Conservative Party added, although the whites were themselves the targets of attempts to wipe them out.

"Whites have given away million

of hectares of land without charge to [black] people who now occupy some of the most fertile and water-rich areas in South Africa."

Then came another statement denying that the land had been divided between white and black on a 86-to-14 ratio and insisting that the division was instead 40-60.

"If one includes Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland and the [tribal] homelands, non-whites own more than 60 percent of the land," the Conservative Party averred. It gave no explanation for its inclusion of three independent neighboring countries in its equation of land distribution in South Africa.

The Conservative Party's view of the past, and, in a more refined manner, van der Merwe's, rests on—to use a phrase of the French historian, Marianne Cornevin—historical falsification.

The falsification consists of a series of interrelated historical myths, which combine to offer a justification of the present distribution of land. In her book *Apartheid: Power and Historical Justification*, Cornevin identifies the myths which have been imbibed by whites and which are integral to their view on the land question.

The myths include:

- The view that whites and blacks in South Africa arrived simultaneously.

- The belief that blacks were footloose migrants until they met the whites.

- The perception of the great warrior chiefs, Shaka, Dingane, and Mzilikazi, as no more than bloodthirsty tyrants.

- The legend that only the advent of whites saved blacks of lesser tribes from complete destruction by the warrior kings and the "hordes" which they stirred into action.

These myths—which as Cornevin shows in detail have been integrated into history textbooks used at white schools—justify white possession of land one way or another: as joint colonizers of it, as the destroyers of tyranny, as the settlers of uninhabited land, or as peace-makers.

The myths, as much as considerations of realpolitik, explain the refusal of the de Klerk administration to consider restoration of land, except by removing the restraints on blacks to participate freely in the land market and making loans and aid available on a non-racial basis.

Its stand has, however, served to unite the quarrelsome black opposition organizations in the same way as the original Land Acts united them years ago, temporarily at least.

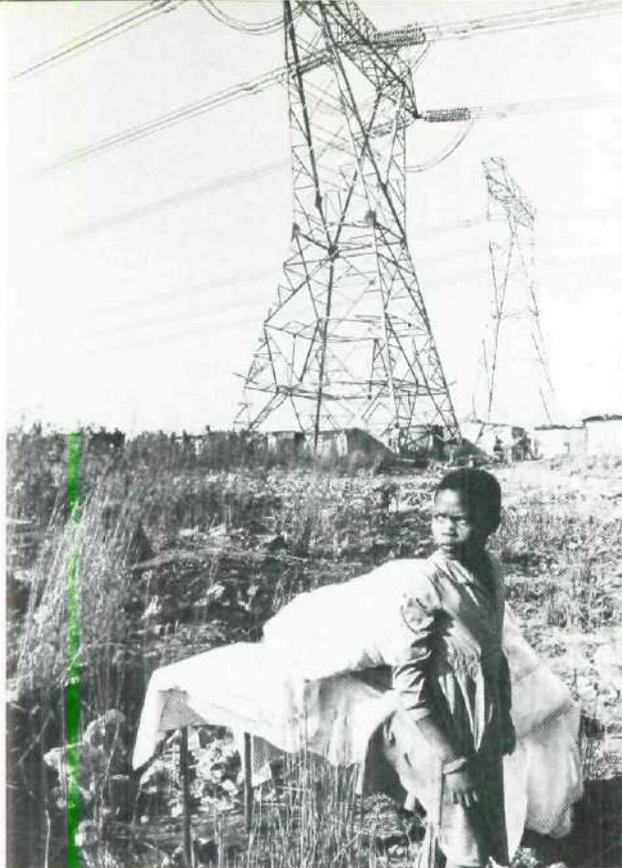
The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), declaring that the land was usurped from the indigenous people by "settlers," says it is illogical to expect people to buy back land which was stolen from them. As PAC President Clarence Makwetu puts it, repeal of the land laws without restitution for their victims is grand apartheid "dressed up in new clothes."

The African National Congress (ANC) insists that restoration of land to the victims of forced removal is indispensable to a credible land policy. The White Paper, it says, "absolves the white population of all responsibility for the long, tragic history of black dispossession."

The importance of land to blacks is reflected in the slogans of their oldest nationalist movements, the ANC and PAC.

ANC members often chorus "Mayibuye i' Afrika" to one another. It is at once a lament and a war cry. The slogan means "Africa, may it return to us" and implicitly asserts that the land was taken away by colonial interlopers. PAC members greet one another with an open-palm salute and the words, "Izwe Lethu, i' Afrika." They translate it as: "The land, Africa, is ours." Its political message is obvious.

The land question is central to the PAC's quarrel with the ANC. Black nationalists or Africanists in the ANC broke away in 1958. They formed the PAC the following year because they believed that the ANC had compromised on its commitment to fight for the return of the land to the indigenous people by its acceptance of the Freedom Charter of 1955.



Justin Sholk

Squatter camp: 3.5 million people have been forcibly moved, sometimes at gunpoint, from "black spots"

Where the ANC Youth League Manifesto of 1944 and, to a lesser extent, the ANC's 1949 Program of Action asserts the primacy of black African rights to the land, the Freedom Charter eschews the language of African nationalism.

It speaks to the "people of South Africa" rather than the "African people" and says: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white...the land shall be shared among those who work it."

The PAC contends that the ANC was misled by white liberals and white communists when it accepted the Freedom Charter. It says that these whites, uncomfortable with and threatened by the nationalist creed of the original ANC, successfully sought to dilute it.

The differences are not merely of historical interest. They remain pertinent today. The ANC, anxious not to be outbid by PAC zealots on the land question, is just as adamant in its repudiation of de Klerk's land reform policy.

It is important to remember another point: The ANC leader, Nelson Mandela, was a founding mem-

ber of the ANC Youth League and thus a man who once subscribed to Africanist views. At the Rivonia Trial of 1963-64, he described himself as an "African patriot," indicating that he was not deaf to his Africanist past. He is therefore unlikely to preside over any softening of ANC views on the land question.

Political organizations on the left representing black interests have been supported by a wide range of pressure groups and university professors. In a declaration, they have called on the government to go ahead with its plans to repeal the Land Acts, but to impose a moratorium on all related measures, including its contentious decision not to return land to the victims of apartheid.

Rejecting the government's mid-April deadline for representations on its White Paper, they say: "The intention of the proposed land reform is to legitimize and entrench the legacy of apartheid while repealing the laws which created it."

Equally as important, a report by the government's own Law Commission has endorsed the concepts of affirmative action and "expropriation of property with compensation" to meet the aspirations of all South Africans. These sentiments, as Mike Robertson of the University of Natal has observed, are "markedly similar" to those expressed in the African National Congress's constitutional guidelines, published in 1988.

The White Paper on Land Reform raises another question of central importance to de Klerk's pledge to remove discriminatory laws from the statute books: the future of the 10 tribal homelands.

The Land Acts, as the White Paper frankly acknowledges, provided the legal framework for the policy of separate development or apart-

heid. But, the White Paper hastens to add, repeal of the Land Acts and related discriminatory laws will not affect the status of the "homelands."

It is striking that de Klerk's February 1 speech—in which he promised to clear the statute books of the remnants of discriminatory legislation "within months"—makes no mention of the Status Acts, the laws which granted "independence" to four of the 10 tribal homelands.

These laws, however, went further than that—they deprived millions of blacks of South African nationality on the grounds that they were nationals of the four independent territories, even though many were outside their tribally allotted "homelands."

The Status Acts were compared at the time to the notorious Nazi law which deprived Jews of German citizenship.

Responding to pressure at home and abroad over these laws, the government offered blacks deprived of South African nationality an opportunity to reclaim it via the Restoration of South African Citizenship Act of 1986.

The Restoration Act was open only to people permanently resident in South Africa and, initially at any rate, was hedged with restrictions and red tape. Hence, only a minute proportion of the estimated 9 million blacks who lost South African nationality have since regained it.

A request by the Transkei, one of four nominally independent states, for the blanket restoration of South African nationality to its designated citizens, appears to have fallen on deaf ears.

The issue, however, will not disappear. As the ANC has observed, the homeland system is part of the apartheid system which President de Klerk has committed himself to eradicating.

The ANC will not allow him to forget his pledge. Nor will the millions of people who were deprived of South African nationality during the heyday of grand apartheid and who remain, even today, technically alien in South Africa, the land of their birth. ○

Fit.-Lt. JERRY RAWLINGS:

Constructing a New Constitutional Order



Betty Press

Ghana's post-independence history has been turbulent, with civilian and military governments alike afflicted by corruption and maladministration. The Rawlings government, widely credited with having instituted accountability in politics and having revived a moribund economy, is now looking at returning the nation to constitutional rule.

In this exclusive interview with *Africa Report*, Ft.-Lt. Rawlings outlines the steps that have been taken to date in the nation's efforts to devise a democratic system appropriate to Ghana's unique history and circumstances. The Ghanaian leader also spells out the next stages in the process which will lead to elections and a new constitution.

By MARGARET A. NOVICKI

Africa Report: There has been a lot of speculation about the direction Ghana's political development will take over the coming years. You've said you're winding up the provisional phase of your government and establishing a new democratic order. What will the new order be composed of?

Rawlings: If there is any speculation, it will be by those who are so impatient to see business as it was in the past resume immediately without incorporating remedial designs to deal with identified defects. This is to enable them to get out of a so-called "democratic" system what those who have manipulated it in the past think democracy offers to them. Allowing things to happen this way is to bring to waste all the experience of the people, especially the possibilities we have experienced these past 10 years. A responsible provisional government should lead our nation into the future bearing in mind our past and present experiences and the prospects they provide for the future. When this is done, we can hope to develop a new order whose contents respond to the new aspirations of Ghanaians.

The content of the new democratic order has not been pre-determined by the PNDC [Provisional National Defense Council] as it leads the people to identify and shape its elements. We will not be tempted to voice what we expect to be the sound and sustainable contents of the new order ahead of the open deliberative process which will take place during the sittings of the consultative assembly. This assembly will soon be convened by the government as the next stage of our action program designed for the attainment of a home-grown democratic system considered relevant and appropriate for our circumstances.

As a government, we will not remain silent forever when it comes to shaping the contents of the new order. We are not short of ideas—we have firm ideas of what our people need and do not and a comprehensive issues paper articulating such ideas is currently being prepared after receiving the report of the National Commission for Democracy [NCD]. Government's paper will be issued to the nation through the consultative assembly to reflect our own thinking on what the majority of the people seem to opt for.

Even so, this document will not attempt to constrain the consultative assembly to think in any particular direction; it will attempt to cause the assembly not to ignore the views and aspirations of the broad masses or majority of our people whose interests we have always sought to champion and protect within the context of an ongoing revolution of thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

Africa Report: What steps have been taken so far and what are the next steps and the ultimate goal of the process—multi-party elections?

Rawlings: Our move toward a new democratic order has already involved the following processes: one, re-awakening the consciousness and confidence of our people through calls on them to wake up and play their rightful roles. We have attempted to achieve this through processes of mass socio-political and economic mobilization involving the majority of ordinary people of our country who, in the past, were driven into limited and marginalized roles which their circumstances compelled them to accept.

Two, the creation of appropriate frameworks and platforms for all sections of the population to express their views on the way forward in our search for functional and sustainable democracy using the intermediation of the National Commission for Democracy leading to the issue of a report on the people's views.

Three, running of government along such policy lines and within such an administrative and institutional framework of decentralized authority as to provide a living possibility for those who will be involved in shaping the content and practices of the new democratic order.

The next steps which have already been announced are the following: One, convening of a consultative assembly to discuss the content of the next democratic constitution. Two, the legal drafting of the new democratic constitution which will go on side-by-side with the deliberations. Three, the voters' register will be re-opened as part of our preparations toward the holding of national elections. Dates will be announced as soon as factors have been fully assessed.

Africa Report: What is the timetable for the transition period and what will the role of the PNDC be in the process?

Rawlings: The period during which all these will be done will represent the period for the transition. We have chosen to follow a timetable of key events to be executed within periods determined on best effort possibilities, rather than laying down a rigid timetable of calendar dates unrelated to realities. The major known role of the PNDC is the management of the transition—what is left to the people to decide is whether or not the PNDC, as a process or a governing body, will have a role beyond the transition.

Africa Report: The NCD is to convene the consultative body to discuss the content and form of the new constitution. Who will form this body?

Rawlings: I must correct you here. The NCD has compiled and presented a report based on the contributions of the many individuals, groups, and organizations who either submitted memoranda or spoke at public fora on Ghana's political future or both. This document has been published and therefore made available to the public.

It is not the NCD's task to convene the consultative

assembly which will use this report as one of its basic working documents, together with previous constitutions and other relevant source material. As with all such previous assemblies, the government will legislate for the establishment, composition, and functions of the consultative assembly.

We expect to have this law ready by mid-year. It will follow the precedent of similar bodies in the past by drawing its membership from the political and administrative districts throughout the country, as well as from various identifiable groups or organizations. It is our intention this time to include all such bodies in true democratic traditions. We have involved them in the earlier discussion processes and they have to continue. The outcome of the consultative assembly's work will then be put into shape by a team of legal draftsmen, to become our draft constitution by the end of this year.

Africa Report: The goal of your government has always been to ensure people's participation in the processes by which they are governed. How would you rate your success in this regard over the last 10 years? What has changed under your leadership in the Ghanaian body politic?

Rawlings: It is difficult to be objective without seeming to be rather vain about our achievements and without going into numerous little details. But broadly speaking and allowing for the inevitable teething problems involved in instituting and testing out new systems, we can justifiably claim that among our ordinary men and women there is an increase in confidence, self-respect, and sense of responsibility, as well as a practical understanding of the basic purpose for and machinery of government at the district level.

People are no longer intimidated by local problems, economic, social, or environmental, but are ready to tackle them. People have also discarded the notion of central government as the only remote source of development and now understand that the progress of their areas depends primarily on generating local initiative and resources, using them efficiently and with a proper sense of priorities, and mobilizing their communities to take part in planning, execution, and monitoring. This is the most fundamental requirement for taking the process toward the national level.

Africa Report: We've seen a lot of political ferment in the neighboring countries, with increasingly bold calls for democratization. Are there any similarities with the Ghanaian situation?

Rawlings: In reference to the ferment and calls for democratization, I see this as a very encouraging development. Starting with the demystification of the military and its dictatorship in places like Uganda and Liberia by the mass of the people and the general defiance of the

civil populace in other areas, I can only say that this is long overdue. Nowhere can you have freedom without the courage to defy.

We had our explosions in 1979 and managed under very trying conditions to contain and prevent the anger of the explosion from taking its natural course. Most of those whose economic and political activities laid the foundations that resulted in the revolt seem to have very short memories. However, the healthy development of that popular revolt has been put to a good overall use and will have to be politically consolidated.

The emerging revolts and defiance in some of our African countries and elsewhere, therefore, come as no surprise to some of us. I can only hope that the leadership and governments in those areas recognize the trends quickly and either bow out or create the conditions for democracy to prevail. Better now—though long overdue—than wait for a violent outburst. Our economic relationship with the North is injurious enough as it is. To add the insult of depriving our poor people of their right to the dignity of freedom and justice even in our poverty is like adding insult to injury.

To answer the question more directly, I will say we began our process long before the current calls for democratization became fashionable. In some countries, they may simply reflect a desire for change, where regimes had long become static, dictatorial, and non-responsive. But it is sometimes hard to tell whether this arises from a real perception of a need for new systems, or merely a wish for new personalities to head old or slightly modified systems.

Where the calls are directed toward developing countries by the major economic powers as a condition for financial aid, the question arises as to whose definitions of democracy we are talking about. Those countries which claim to be models of democracy have some glaring discrepancies between democracy as defined and democracy as it is practiced in reality. Thank God that some sections of these donor communities are fast realizing that democracy, like technology, must be appropriate.

In Ghana, some of the internal voices calling for a return to democracy really mean the patterns of the democratic practices of our sad past so that they can return to the old ways by capturing the route back to the political center stage. But I would say that Ghana is going through an exciting process of evolving democratization which will enable us to say to other nations: "This is ours, an organic consequence of our culture and history." Perhaps this will be the difference between ours and others.

Africa Report: In the past, elections were "vulgarized" in this country, with a lot of corruption and political

opportunism. If a multi-party system is introduced, how can one ensure that this does not resurface, that the principles of accountability that your government is known for will be continued?

Rawlings: Several of the individuals and groups favoring a return to party politics have suggested that we retain the system used during the district level elections of the mounting of political platforms, publicity, etc. being provided by the NCD equally for all candidates. In this way, no candidate is disadvantaged because of lack of funds. It would also be a good thing if we can also educate the people not to sell their votes secretly to people who are rich or sponsored by the rich.

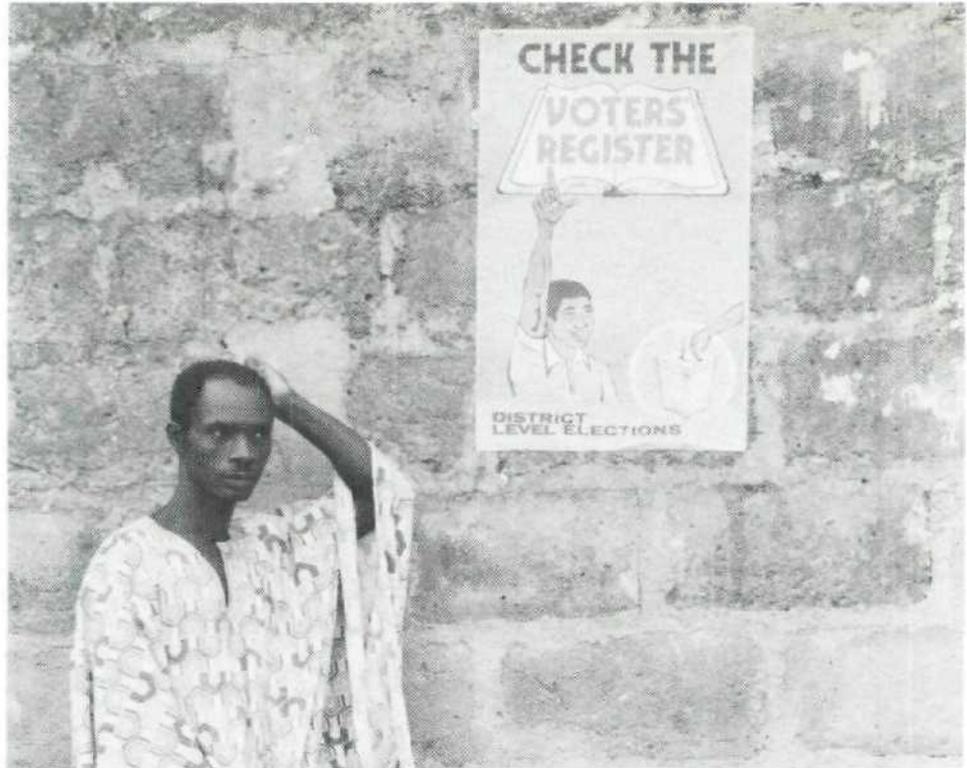
No amount of constitutional checks and balances can completely ensure accountability unless at the same time ordinary men and women have the self-confidence and vigilance necessary to challenge wrong-doing and to hold officials accountable. We, in our time, have introduced new systems to expose wrongs which the old inept machinery was unable or unwilling to deal with. They also provide useful lessons for the new order which must also come with a revised state structure and machinery.

Africa Report: What is your view of the multi-party versus no-party debate?

Rawlings: I do not want, at this stage, to send out any signals which will influence the debate one way or another. Ghanaians have experienced both forms of government in several variations and should be capable of weighing the options. It is my hope that whichever option is finally chosen will be accompanied by an appropriate set of checks and balances to cope with our previous experiences.

Africa Report: What is the role of district assemblies in the transition process? Will a national assembly be elected prior to presidential elections?

Rawlings: We have had various forms of local government in the past. The district assemblies have not only enabled a much wider representation of the people, ensuring that the smaller communities in a district have their assemblymen and women, but they have much greater authority and responsibilities in the areas of



Margaret A. Nevich

"My vision of Ghana is one of a democratic society in which the people are determined to work to sustain democracy without fear and inhibitions"

finance, planning, legislation, and socio-economic development. They have opened the eyes of many people to the practicalities and responsibilities of government. We now have a people with a much deeper political awareness, and this is the basic ingredient necessary for further progress.

Whether there will be national elections prior to presidential elections is not for me to say. This will depend on the outcome of the consultative assembly's deliberations.

Africa Report: What is your view of the call for a referendum on Ghana's political future?

Rawlings: A referendum, by its nature, must be a yes or no affair, or must at least deal with a very limited number of simple options. I fail to see how the complex options presently before Ghanaians can be reduced to such terms. Are we prepared for the consequences of this over-simplification? If, to be fair and comprehensive with our search for democracy, we were to subject each issue before us to a separate referendum, how long will it take us to be there? Will the same voices not be heard loudly complaining of a foot-dragging approach to democracy? To attempt to do so would be such an over-simplification that many vital issues would be overlooked and the people would have no chance to express their preferences. We have no intention of being stampeded into superficial exercises.

Africa Report: How do you see the role of the military in the transition process and the new political order?

How do you ensure that it plays a positive rather than disruptive role in the evolving democracy?

Rawlings: The new military, that is, since the revolt of May/June 1979, has been partly responsible for the democratic process and stability that has been achieved so far. I do not know of any profession that carries as heavy a political burden as the military—to have sworn to die for their fellow men and to defend the territorial integrity of this country.

Such a responsibility as offering your life for man and country presupposes that you are doing so for ideals and principles of freedom, justice, and democracy. Such ideals are difficult to die for unless they stop being mere concepts and become more meaningful realities reflected in our lives. While it is good and sensible to be prepared to die for such ideals, it is even better to prevent the socio-economic injustices for which human beings have to die.

The military has been one of the institutions that has been misused by both civilian and military governments. Our military, since the revolt, has ceased to be a politically isolated institution, neither can the military nor any other institution for that matter exist in a vacuum.

The economic successes that we have achieved so far are the direct result of a democratic atmosphere that evolved from the revolt. We are not unaware of the loud and articulate minority who are waiting to manipulate the grassroots power out of the people's hands. We will do everything possible to manage and consolidate that basic power in a structured and constitutional framework.

The military has played its complementary role as equal partners with its civilian counterparts in managing affairs during the transition to constitutional rule. This role has included participation in government at central, regional, and district levels even though at all these stages they have been in the minority. They have played roles in direct development, especially in areas of infrastructural rehabilitation and expansion. The new improved road access into the Afram Plains—a potential breadbasket for Ghana—would have been very difficult without the pioneering activities of personnel of the Field Engineers Regiment, for example. They have participated in the maintenance of the national interest, both military and otherwise.

The series of attempts initially made by previously entrenched interests to disrupt our democratic march was repulsed by the military in partnership with the police and cadres of the revolution and they have also worked with their civilian counterparts to search and destroy acts of those who harm the national interest through economic, social, and environmental crimes. These experiences of our present military constitute a wealth of opportuni-

ties which may be tapped by the consultative assembly if they should choose not to ignore these experiences and therefore seek to find a positive role for this important organ of state both in times of peace and in times of strife.

Africa Report: What is your vision of a true democratic order for Ghana? Can it develop in conditions such as Ghana's, with continued economic and social inequities?

Rawlings: I have always had a vision of a truly democratic order not just for our country, Ghana, but for all countries of Africa and indeed of the Third World. I guess every positive citizen of the world is entitled to develop such a vision of the environment in which he lives and in which his children will develop. My vision of Ghana is one of a democratic society in which the people are determined to work to sustain democracy without fear and inhibitions. Democratic values and principles should urge the people and their government to see democracy both as a means and an end.

The democratic rights of the people to meaningful existence should translate into rights and responsibilities of all concerned. Social, cultural, spiritual, material, and environmental development must be seen to be complementary to each other in the pursuit of national activities within the new democratic order. Freedom and justice should not be applied to individuals depending on their status in society. True peace and security will be the net result of the observance of the rights of all and not the imposition of the will of the strong in the society.

Democracy for the envisioned Ghana must, both in theory and in practice, be a government of all the people—weak, strong, rural, urban, rich, poor, literate, illiterate—and not the minority, for the whole people, especially those in the majority, but without ignoring the legitimate concerns of the minority and not just for some, and by the people through appropriate representative structures which involve as many people as possible and not by usurpers of the people's rights. But even with an ideal political system and a well-informed, committed, and confident people, all our plans can be disrupted overnight by some sudden speculation on the world commodity markets or by pressures, sometimes subtle and sometimes not, by multinational corporations or major economic powers.

But until such time that a just world economic order is established, we cannot wait apathetically without making the effort to establish our own truly democratic system backed by a sustainable economy. We know it is fragile through no fault of ours. We know that it can be casually disrupted if the supposed interests of a major power happen to conflict with ours. But we have the pride and determination to persevere. ■



A VICTORY FOR DEMOCRACY



By **GEORGE NEAVOLL**

Margaret A. Novicki

Many were surprised when Mathieu Kérékou decided to run in Benin's first free presidential elections, fearing that the unfolding democratic experiment might be jeopardized. When the votes were tallied, however, despite violence and intimidation in the former president's home region, Prime Minister Nicéphore Soglo emerged as the clear victor, in an election widely praised as fair and a potential model for Africa's evolving democracies.

The showers that precede the rainy season in West Africa brought a sense of anticipation to the people of Benin in March. Anticipation was in the air for another reason as well. For the first time since Benin's independence in 1960, the people were voting in a free election for president.

Despite the geographical and political divisions in the country, this simple fact gave the people a pride and a determination that were palpable. Regardless of the outcome, nothing would deter them from having their democracy. This was as true in the north, around President Mathieu Kérékou's home base of Natitingou, as it was in the south, around Prime Minister Nicéphore Soglo's political base in the nominal capital of Porto Novo.

The first round of voting on March 10—among 13 candidates vying for the presidency—proceeded without evidence of intimidation or fraud. Even a rock-throwing incident when Soglo campaigned in Natitingou wasn't as serious as it first had seemed. Passions apparently were ignited when someone tore up a campaign poster in front of a crowd. It wasn't clear later whose poster it was.

When neither Soglo nor Kérékou won a majority of the vote on March 10, a run-off was scheduled for March 24. Although it was generally peaceful, the election was marred by violence in the northern prefectures of Atacora and Borgou. Security forces reportedly stood by without interfering when voting was disrupted by pro-Kérékou gangs in the prefectural capitals of Natitingou and Parakou. With the exception of these incidents in the north, voting observation teams from several countries—the U.S., France, Canada, and Germany—invited by the transition government reported no evidence of fraud or intimidation in either the first-round or run-off elections.

The violence in Parakou began, according to state radio reports, when

Kérékou supporters armed with shotguns, whips, sticks, and iron bars attacked alleged Soglo supporters shortly after the polls opened. Two persons were killed and dozens reportedly injured, forcing a momentary halt to the election. That evening, as the unrest continued, a 7 pm to 6 am curfew was imposed in the city.

The next day, Kérékou-supporting thugs again roamed the streets of Parakou, seriously injuring at least four people in machete attacks and sending more than 20 people to the hospital.

American election observers saw crowds at the Parakou train station on the night of the vote and the following morning, trying to flee by train to their home towns in the south. Earlier, the observers had witnessed the apparent intimidation of voters, as well as other election irregularities, at Gogounou, also in Borgou prefecture. At one point, men brandishing sticks and chanting "Votez Kérékou!" were stopping traffic. At one polling place, about 25 young men and boys were gathered inside, watching voters. (They left when the American observers appeared.) The three-sided voting screen was in the open where it was possible to see for whom one voted.

Both Soglo and Kérékou condemned the violence. Soglo said it was "absolutely outrageous," and promised that those responsible would be punished. Kérékou later claimed that "flagrant violations" of the electoral law had occurred in central Zou prefecture, where Soglo support was strong. Kérékou supporters

had been prevented from observing the vote.

"Our supporters and sympathizers have been subject to administrative harassment and intimidation as well as outright death threats. Facing such an atmosphere of total insecurity and terror, all of the people representing us in the voting stations were forced to leave," the president said. The presidential statement was signed "Général Kérékou," though the new constitution had required him to give up his military post in order to run in the election.

International observers said they saw no evidence to support Kérékou's claims. Instead, they reported some polling places had delayed the start of voting to await the arrival of Kérékou observers. In one instance, at least, election officials waited one hour before the polls were opened. No one can be certain how much the outbreak of violence and other incidents of intimidation in the north influenced the election there. There can be no doubt, however, about the outcome. Soglo's 68 percent of the vote overwhelmed Kérékou's 32 percent.

Benin's long road to democracy began in June 1989 when a group of Beninese leaders informed Kérékou that the country could no longer tolerate the political and economic cataclysm that had followed 17 years of Marxist rule. Kérékou, who had seized power in a 1972 coup and declared Benin a socialist state with a Marxist-Leninist philosophy two years later, was forced to relinquish control to a transitional government.

At first, he seemed to go along with the change. The entire Kérékou cabinet was dismissed, allowing the transition team headed by Robert Dossou, dean of the University of Benin's law faculty, to take over. Kérékou was allowed to keep his office, but was to be president in name only.

A national conference for reconstruction in February 1990 drafted a new constitution establishing a multi-party de-

Woman in voting booth in March 24 presidential election



Margaret A. Novicki

George Neavoll is editorial page editor of the Wichita (Kan.) Eagle. He was a member of the March 10 U.S. voting observation team in Benin, organized by the African-American Institute.

A Human Rights Lodestar

Few would have thought that the small sliver of a nation that is Benin would become a lodestar in the African continent's drive to democratize, but its successful transition from dictatorship to multi-party democracy is not the only accomplishment that has made it worthy of emulation. The defense of human rights is another.

Arbitrary arrests, detentions, torture, and other human rights violations were hallmarks of former President Mathieu Kérékou's 18-year rule. In 1989, toward the end of the Kérékou era, a group of lawyers, judges, diplomats, and professors got together and decided to organize a seminar on human rights to pressure the government on the issue.

The timing was propitious, explained Saidou Agbantou, president of what ultimately evolved into the Benin Commission on Human Rights, because the government was virtually bankrupt, it had just entered negotiations with the IMF and World Bank for a desperately needed structural adjustment loan, and its image was sorely in need of some polishing on the human rights front.

"We wanted to force the system to move quickly toward democratization, and we thought a human rights commission created by law would be a way of pushing the government along from dictatorship to more respect for human rights," said Agbantou, a lawyer and former president of the Benin section of the Association of African Jurists. Indeed, his group of human rights activists managed to do just that. They prepared a law constituting the commission, which was adopted by the National Assembly just prior to start of the year-long transition to democratic rule.

The Benin Commission's objective is not unusual—"the promotion and safeguarding of human rights," but it is unique in the African continent, because it is a non-governmental organization, and hence independent, yet with immunity from prosecution and endowed with the right to bring up on charges anyone who obstructs the investigation of known or alleged human rights violations. Whereas a government can always ban the activities of any organization, private or otherwise, only the National Assembly, having created it by law, can alter the commission's mandate.

Needless to say, the Kérékou government was far from pleased with the formation of the commission and in fact tried to block it from becoming operational, by raising complaints that its membership was biased in favor of the south. Nonetheless, upon its inauguration on March 30, 1990, the

commission immediately became actively involved in the transition to multi-party politics.

In addition to investigating complaints of victims of human rights violations, the commission saw civic education as one of its most important tasks. "During the elections," said Agbantou, "we issued appeals to the people to vote in calm and discipline. We spoke out against the violence in the north of the country, and we organized observer teams throughout the country for each election. We also translated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into eight national languages, printed, and distributed it."

Now that the fever of the elections has subsided, the commission is involved with several longer-term projects—revising the family code governing marriage and inheritance and drafting a business and commerce code. A seminar is in the works on teaching human rights and an awareness of the contents of Benin's new constitution in primary and secondary schools. An international conference on the creation of an African human rights court is also on the drawing board.

The commission remains on the look-out for human rights violations both at home and abroad. "We sent telexes of support to the Malian League of Human Rights during the recent unrest there, and also to [Togolese President] Eyadema to protest against his government's actions," said Agbantou. But all these activities cost money, and thus far, the commission is operating on a shoestring. "We just got an office, and we have a computer and fax now, but support from donors and private foundations would help us a lot," the commission president says.

Nonetheless, Agbantou is justifiably proud of his young organization, and sees it as a model for other African countries, as long as there is sufficient "political will." "We seized the opportunity when the country was having problems. If all had been going well, President Kérékou never would have accepted the creation of such a commission."

Now the democratically elected Soglo government has taken office, unseating Mathieu Kérékou by the ballot box. But the Benin Commission on Human Rights' work goes on. "We can't know yet if he [Soglo] will respect our democracy and its rules," says Agbantou. "Democracy is a permanent struggle. We must be vigilant to see that there is respect for the rule of law. We have a constitution, its themes are noble, but if it is not respected, then it's not worth the paper it is written on." ■

—Margaret A. Novicki



Ballots for the March 24 presidential election



mocracy, and embracing the principle of "government of the people, by the people, for the people." An interim government was named, to be headed by a prime minister, Nicéphore Soglo.

In a December 2, 1990, referendum, voters approved the new constitution by a more than 90 percent margin. Parliamentary elections on February 17, 1991, were to precede the March presidential election.

On the weekend of the parliamentary vote, Kérékou reneged on his tacit agreement to stay out of the presidential race. His

announcement that he would enter the race after all as an independent candidate was a "jolt" to the "likelihood of a smooth transition to democratic rule," wrote journalist William Keeling from Benin's political and economic capital of Cotonou. The president's decision "shocked" the other candidates already in the race, Keeling wrote.

For many younger Beninese, Kérékou was the only leader they ever had known. His campaign slogan, "You know me well, I know you well," struck a responsive chord, especially in the north, among those who didn't know any of the others running.

In the prefectures of Atacora and Borgou, covering the northern two-thirds of the country, many Beninese readily admitted, as first-round returns came in, that they thought Kérékou was a scoundrel. He was a northerner, though, they said, which is why they voted for him. Others

took a less sanguine view. "If Kérékou is returned to office, Benin will be the laughing stock of the world," a Natitingou resident said.

Beninese election officials were determined a different world view would prevail, however, one in which Benin would be seen—regardless of who won the race for president—as the catalyst for a continent-wide democracy movement.

By the time a Beninese citizen had voted for president, he or she already had voted three or four times in the democratic election process: first, in mayoral elections, then in the constitutional referendum, in parliamentary elections, and finally, in the first and second rounds of the presidential election.

At Boriyoure, the polling place in Natitingou where I observed both the opening and close of balloting, 470 of 669 registered voters, or 70.3 percent, had voted for president. A similarly high turnout was recorded nationally.

Some observers, Beninese and foreign, expressed dismay after the March 10 election that the largely discredited Kérékou had done so well, taking 27 percent of the vote as opposed to Soglo's 36 percent. There could be little doubt, however, that the election was eminently fair.

The March 24 run-off election was fair as well, even taking into account the scattered incidents of violence in the north. Everywhere else, the election went as smoothly as the first round had gone two weeks before. In some places, the turnout was even higher. In Cotonou, where many voters had had to wait in long lines before, more polling places were provided this time.

The election procedure most criticized by observers was the disposition of unused ballots. Even in the March 10 election, it would have been possible to determine, through the process of elimination, for whom one had voted by examining the ballots the voter had discarded. The problem was acute in the March 24 election, with just two candidates running. Election officials and onlookers easily could see whether a voter dis-

carded a green (Kérékou) ballot or a white (Soglo) one.

Even with the problems that occurred, Benin's first free presidential election in 31 years of independence was a "watershed event," said the head of the U.S. observer team, Carl Schieren, vice president of the African-American Institute. The Institute assembled the American observer team at the behest of the State Department, acting upon a request from Benin's transition government.

On the evening after the election, Monsignor Isidore de Souza, Roman Catholic bishop of Cotonou, appealed for reconciliation. The bishop, who also heads the High Council of the Republic that has overseen Benin's transition to a democratic government, said it was time not for retribution, but for healing.

That feeling may have been behind the new government's decision to grant Kérékou "personal immunity" for any crimes committed during his 19-year rule. The former dictator is alleged to have ordered the deaths and torture of political opponents, and to have stolen millions of dollars from the state.

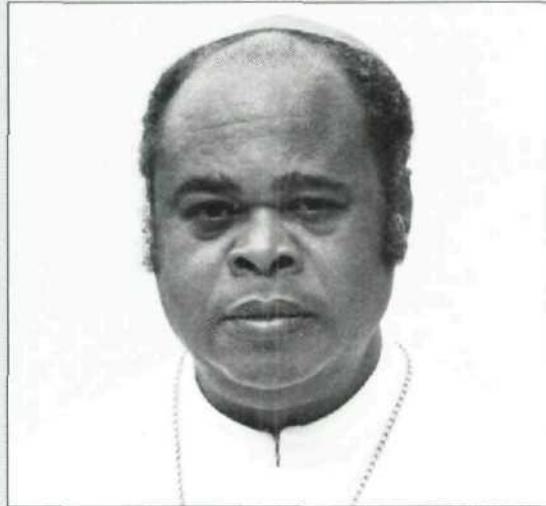
"If we succeed [in] this transition to democracy, we are sure many other African countries will follow," Francis Loko, minister-counselor at the Beninese embassy in Washington, said before the presidential balloting.

In the past year, at least nine countries have held multi-party elections, and at least 12 others have adopted reforms intended to pave the way for such elections. The week before Benin's first-round presidential balloting, the former Portuguese archipelago colony of São Tomé and Príncipe held its first presidential election.

"More governments introduced multi-party politics in the last year than in the previous 25 years combined," Salim Lone, editor-in-chief of *Africa Recovery*, a United Nations program, said recently.

Will Benin's experience speed the transition of other African states to that pluralistic political system that is the ideal? Perhaps. At least, the democratic tide is flowing, and Benin is riding the crest of the tide. ○

Msgr. ISIDORE DE SOUZA: Building a New Benin



During the year-long transition to democratic rule, **Mon-signor de Souza**, the *Catholic bishop of Cotonou*, served as president of the High Council of the Republic, the quasi-legislative body which supervised the interim government and the unfolding electoral process. After the presidential election, the prelate spoke with *Africa Report* about Benin's political history, the holding of free elections, and the tasks ahead for the Soglo government.

By MARGARET A. NOVICKI

Africa Report: After 18 years of repressive rule, Benin has just held democratic elections in which the challenger unseated the incumbent. How did this come about?

De Souza: I can't explain the current situation without referring back a bit to Benin's history. Dahomey, as Benin was known, was colonized by France in 1890. During the colonial period, Dahomeyans benefited from education which enabled them to serve as administrators throughout French West and Equatorial Africa. At the time, Dahomeyans were French subjects—not citizens—without any rights, but after the Second World War, a nationalist movement was born of those Dahomeyans who were opposed to what they saw as exploitation and oppression. Two French governors were sent

who didn't last more than a year in Dahomey, which came to be known as the colony which changed governors most often. I'm telling you this history to explain why after independence Dahomey was the champion of coups d'état—because already during the colonial period, the Dahomeyans had a reputation as a people who didn't submit easily, who openly denounced what was going on, who didn't accept 100 percent the colonial presence.

We achieved independence on August 1, 1960. Since then, political life in this country has been very turbulent. In 1963, there was the first coup d'état by General Soglo but instigated by the politicians. After that, we had a series of successive coups—governments which lasted a year, six months. The military intervened back

and forth on behalf of one or another politician, so we decided to put three—Maga, Apithy, and Ahomadegbé—in power together in a presidential council.

Unfortunately, that arrangement didn't work and there was a military coup. But this time the military decided to hold on to power, and that is how Kérékou got in. In the beginning, he wasn't Marxist-Leninist. Initially, the people accepted him enthusiastically. But everything began to change. The partisans of the Youth League [an extreme leftist faction, *les Ligueurs*] succeeded in imposing the Marxist-Leninist ideology. We rapidly became disenchanted, because human rights were no longer respected. There were arbitrary arrests, imprisonment, torture, a sad period. Banks, businesses, schools, land—everything was nationalized.

As long as the government could pay the civil servants, the situation continued—until 1989, when the government itself went bankrupt. The civil servants were no longer being paid, the economy had collapsed. Whenever there were problems like this, the president convoked a conference—whether of the intellectuals, the cadres, etc. It wasn't the first time he had done so, but what was different this time was that it was not just a conference of cadres, it was opened to all strata of society. Before the conference, feeling the pressures of popular discontent, he was forced to renounce Marxist-Leninist ideology, and to separate the party from the state. That eased tensions a little, but it wasn't enough because the students weren't going to school, there were strikes, and government had ground to a halt.

In this atmosphere, the national conference took place. It was supposed to only reflect on solutions to the country's economic problems. Kérékou at the time certainly wasn't intending such major changes as those which occurred. But during the conference, someone posed the question: What is our mandate? We decided to declare the sovereignty of the conference—that whatever the conference decides must be accepted and put into practice. At that time, we were going through a difficult period: Would we finish the conference or not, peacefully or in civil war? These were 10 very difficult days. Nonetheless, the conference went ahead and in the end resulted in a total political transformation. Our leftist, Marxist-Leninist, authoritarian government was transformed into a totally liberal one—without a single drop of blood being spilled and in a spirit of popular enthusiasm. We held our breath until the president's closing speech because there were certain forces—inside and outside the country—who did all they could so that the conference wouldn't succeed, because of the example it would set to other countries.

The second to last day, we elected the prime minister and after the closing, I learned that the previous night, opponents had almost launched a coup. It is even said that Kérékou came to the closing ceremony with two speeches in his pocket, one which would call everything into question, and another where he accepted everything. In the end, it was the latter speech he gave, to everyone's joy.

A transitional period of one year was announced,

and to lead the transition, we let the president stay as head of state for the year and we put in place a 30-member assembly to exercise legislative power and supervise governmental actions, and then we elected a prime minister to exercise executive power. Their main tasks during the transition were to put the country back to work, assuring the payment of salaries, to instill some sense of morality in the body politic, which had been totally corrupted, to privatize the economy and attract banking institutions, and to bring the economy back to life.

We couldn't do everything in this transition period, but the economy did come back to life thanks to discussions with the World Bank and IMF, and aid from Western countries. Then we organized local elections and a constitutional commission began drafting a constitution. It was drawn up, explained to the people, and then adopted in a referendum. Legislative elections were organized, and then presidential elections, which have brought us to this point.

Africa Report: As president of the High Council of the Republic, the body charged with overseeing the electoral process, how do you assess the conduct of the elections?

De Souza: One could have expected a low turnout for the presidential elections because the people could have lost interest by that time. There had been local elections, then the referendum, then legislative elections, and then the first and second-round presidential elections. But curiously, the presidential elections had the highest turnout—67 percent. Thus, the people had been well sensitized to the importance of voting; they turned out enthusiastically and voted responsibly.

Regarding the legislative elections, I must reproach our politicians for their attempts to influence the electorate. There were 13 parties, and we therefore had 13 ballots. For an illiterate population to distinguish between 13 ballots was a problem. The parties were very active and money played an important role. They spent millions of CFA to conquer the electorate. We tried to limit regionalism in the elections by having each party present a list in all six provinces. That forced the smaller parties to regroup and form alliances and the people to think more in terms of the nation than the region. This succeeded more or less, but nevertheless, the regional factor was important. The legislative elections went very smoothly, no violence.

The presidential elections were a little difficult. There were 13 candidates, there were divisions, regionalism played a part, as did money and political demagoguery. While the elections were peaceful, the results showed the strong influence of regionalism. The winners won the most votes in their home regions. In the first-round presidential elections, there was a little of that, but in the final round, it was more obvious, pitting the two northern provinces against the four in the south. This reawakened old divisions, a pity, because now we will have to deal with this problem.

Two people died in the north. Buildings and homes were sacked and burned, people were wounded. But despite the violent incidents, the elections went normally and we in the HCR decided to invite foreign election observers so that at the international level people would

know that it wasn't a masquerade, but that the elections were serious.

Africa Report: Regionalism played an important part in the elections. Some might use this factor to argue that multi-party elections breed division along ethnic or regional lines. What would be your response?

De Souza: It took centuries for France to accept the concept of nationhood, and even today at the dawn of the 21st century, one still hears talk of Brittany demanding its identity, the Basques demanding their identity. Thus there is regionalism in France. Even in the U.S.! If one were to say that regionalism is a sign of a lack of readiness for democracy, then neither France nor the U.S. are ready for it. If we say that electoral fraud—buying votes—is a sign of unreadiness for democracy, then what about the U.S.? In the U.S., billions are spent.

The great winner of these elections is the people, not the politicians, because those who tried to influence the vote with money were very much mistaken. I know a candidate who spent tens of millions of francs and he still lost the legislative election! I know a village where when they knew that a given candidate was coming, they quickly put up his posters, and cheered him. He gives a speech, they applaud, then he says, "Good, this village is for me." He passes out the money and leaves with the conviction that they will vote for him. The villagers start the same game when they hear another candidate is coming. At the end, after having receiving the money, they vote for whomever they want! So the thieves themselves were robbed!

The people were the great winners of these elections because they showed themselves to be disciplined and calm, except for a few exceptions, and for the most part, voted with dignity. Our elections were as serious as those which are held in a democratic country of the North.

Africa Report: How do you see the increasingly violent demands for democracy in Mali, Togo, etc.?

De Souza: I have to say that I admire President Kérékou, not for his errors over his 18-year rule, but for the end of those 18 years and the transition period. When there were strikes, and people were throwing stones, he could have unleashed the police to fight against the people. It was he who convoked the national conference, and after what amounted to a civilian coup, he could have refused to resign and reimposed himself by force. He called the conference and let it carry out its work up to its conclusion, respected its decisions, and did so during the entire year of transition—I take off my hat to him.

He was under enormous pressure from his head of state colleagues in Africa, and internally as well, to stay on. But he said no. Had he not run for president in the end, he would have been praised and cited as an example for all of Africa. I was pained to see him finish the way he did because he doesn't deserve such a fate. We went from a very tough regime to a liberal one legally and without a single drop of blood.

I can't ask other heads of state to follow Benin. But if they are intelligent, they can see it is possible. If they really love their people and if they aspire to multi-partyism and to freedom, they should look at what happened here. That

is better than civil strife. Look at Liberia—hundreds dead, the country destroyed—is that any kind of example, or what happened in Mali, where they shot into crowds with sophisticated weapons? You don't have the right to be head of state. Levy taxes on the people to buy arms to kill them? No! To stay in power at that price? It is obvious that Moussa Traoré had no love for his country.

We see other countries that are trying to move peacefully from one regime to another. The first who convoked a national conference after such experiences was Omar Bongo of Gabon. Today, in Congo, they are in the midst of looking at a similar path. I am convinced that non-violence demands much more, but is more effective than violence. In Liberia, after all this violence and Doe was killed, they find themselves around the negotiating table. What did the fighting solve?

Africa Report: What are the biggest problems facing the new government in Benin?

De Souza: We, the Beninois, are under an illusion that because we have changed presidents, everything has changed. No. It is rather now that the real sacrifices will begin. It is only by our own manpower—not by crossing our arms, and not by such an electoral victory, but by hard work—that we will change this country. Thus the most urgent task ahead is to put the people to work.

And in order for this to happen, the Beninois have to get rid of the civil servant mentality. In the U.S., nobody's dying to become a civil servant. They'd rather enter the private sector, have their own business. Here, the dream is to become a civil servant. That can be explained by our colonial history where Benin provided administrators throughout West Africa. As agriculture wasn't very well developed here, we didn't want to work the land. We've got to go beyond this mentality. Everybody's got to look for work and not sit around waiting for a job from the state. Not everyone with a diploma can be employed by the state, because where's the money to pay all of them? Civil servants don't produce anything exportable that would earn foreign exchange.

The state has to create the necessary conditions so that private initiative can flourish. Measures have to be undertaken to encourage people to open up small and medium-sized enterprises where the products can be absorbed by the internal market, with a little left for export. Forget about these huge factories that cost millions of dollars and that are operating at only a quarter or a fifth of capacity. Also a big helping hand to agriculture is needed, so that we can at least feed ourselves instead of always holding out our hand for aid.

We need to put our people to work, so that our new freedom doesn't become anarchy, that people work toward the common good. For that to happen, there has to be reconciliation. A lot of injustices occurred in the past—corruption, thievery, torture—and its victims may want to redress past wrongs. But we must work very hard to create a spirit of friendship, brotherhood, and peace instead of simply applying blind justice to redress the past. The new president must form a national unity government. He must appoint the right persons to the right jobs, and from there go forward to rebuild Benin. ■



NEW BREED

President Babangida's new brand of politics for the transition from military to civilian rule depends on drawing in a "new breed" of Nigerian politician from the grassroots, while excluding the old breed of wealthy and ambitious businessmen. But to cynical Nigerians, the new breed looks suspiciously like the old, dressed up in new clothes.

There is still a year to go before Nigeria's soldier-president Ibrahim Babangida hands over to a civilian government, but the hullabaloo of politicians at the hustings is already in full swing. Local government elections were held last December, contestants are limbering up for the governorship race later this year, and the list of presidential aspirants is ever-increasing. Party politics is up and running again after eight years of military rule. The hope is that this time it is in the right direction. As the radio jingles remind listeners in colloquial English, "We don tire for wahalla in this country" (*We are fed up with trouble*).

Out of 30 years of independence, civilians have ruled for only 10. The

two periods of democratic administration, 1960-66 and 1979-83, expired in a swamp of corruption and mismanagement. Both the Westminster and the presidential systems of government have been tried, and have failed. Now it is the turn for the Babangida brand of democracy.

The premise of his transition program is that the fault does not lie with the inadequacies of any particular system but with the politicians. There are two key terms in Nigeria's current political lexicon. The first is *new breed*, the virtuous and patriotic party men and women whom Babangida wants to see emerge. To that end, he has banned most cate-

gories of former office-holders from standing in 1992.

The second term is *moneybags*, the club of wealthy and ambitious businessmen Babangida wants to prevent from hijacking his goal of politics from the grassroots. To achieve this, he set a rigorous qualifications test for aspiring political parties and then disqualified all 13 aspirants on the grounds that they either looked suspiciously like the old parties in new clothes or lacked national appeal. It was a brave decision, but left Babangida with little option but to create two artificial parties from scratch—the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP)—and dress them up with constitutions and mani-

By OBINNA ANYADIKE

festoes. It is these two parties which are the basis of the government's lauded "new political order." They are conceived as sterile vessels in which to contain the rough and tumble of Nigerian politics, and surprisingly they have come to life.

But how successful has Babangida's experiment really been in giving Nigeria a fresh political start? Ideologically, the SDP and NRC are practically indistinguishable. Publicly, they make much of the fact that they have been allowed to review their manifestoes handed down to them by the government. But nobody is under any illusion that substantial changes can be made while the manifestoes' authors are still in office.

In particular, the government has made it clear that its painful structural adjustment policy is inviolate, despite the fact that it is a surefire vote-loser. The acquiescence of the parties to the government's wishes has earned them the title of the *Yes Party and Yes, Sir Party* (in the case of the NRC, which is seen as the government's favorite). The willingness of the politicians to compete on the government's terms has confirmed, for the habitually cynical Nigerian, their opportunism.

Ethnicity and religion rather than ideology are the nation's basic

political building blocks. The country is divided into three main ethnic groups: the Muslim Hausa-Fulani in the north (who traditionally have been politically dominant), the mainly Christian Yoruba of the southwest, and the Ibos in the southeast.

At independence, each group was represented by a political party more regional than national in outlook. The resultant social polarization was one of the causes of the country's slide into a brutal civil war in 1966. When Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo handed over power to the civilians in

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1979, he also provided a constitution which sought to guard against sectarianism.

However, the newly formed parties were basically a continuation of the political groupings at independence. The largest of these were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) drawing most of its support from the north; the United Party of Nigeria (UPN) led by the former western premier, Obafemi Awolowo; and the Nigerian People's Party headed by the respected Ibo leader Nnamdi Azikiwe. These party machines have proved enduring, and current politics is a hangover from that period.

The SDP and NRC are broadly alliances of the associations officially dissolved in 1989. The largest of these in turn were reincarnations of the former discredited political parties, front groups for banned but influential individuals, and the ubiquitous "moneybags." Having found themselves shut out after spending an estimated \$40 million in trying to get themselves selected as parties, their leaders and foot soldiers did the next best thing and gate-crashed the political program. Although the government insisted that this should be

joined by recently retired senior public servants. They also appear to have got themselves successfully classified as "new breed." Under the government's own admittedly ambiguous rules, they should be unable to stand. But the National Electoral Committee has remained strangely silent on the issue. However insipid the government's creations may be, the politically ambitious know that they are the only game in town.

In the last chaotic national election of 1983, six parties stood. Babangida has sought to simplify matters by allowing only two. This was intended to exclude ethnicity as a tool for mobilization after 1992. However, the politics of what is known in Nigeria as the Second Republic were an interplay of alliances within a federal system that had broken the political hegemony of the big three ethnic blocs.

The parties operated under the knowledge that none could rule without cross-ethnic support, and the potential clout of a united minority group's vote. The NPN made a strenuous effort to capture Ibo support. The NPP controlled the middle-belt

OLD POLITICS?

on an individual rather than an association basis, there is no doubt that they operate as cohesive blocs within the parties.

The SDP comprises an Awolowist faction, and the legacy of the loose alliance that formed to challenge the NPN in the 1983 election. The "god-fathers" of the party are a handful of wealthy but disqualified individuals, in particular a retired major-general from the Obasanjo era, Shehu Yar' Adua, who is widely believed to nurture presidential aspirations after the ban is lifted in 1996. The NRC is more directly the heir of the NPN. These groups, jockeying for influence within the parties, have been

Plateau state in a protest vote against northern influence, while the north itself was split by the success of the People's Redemption Party in Katsina.

Under the spectacularly corrupt civilian administration of Shehu Shagari, the prospects of government contracts were more important than hometown loyalties. After the 1983 election, the country was well on the way to a single-party state and the northern intelligentsia had been prepared to vote against an NPN out of control.

Much of the period of the Second Republic coincided with an oil price boom. But in the present climate of

economic austerity, regionalism and especially religion have taken on a fresh importance. The rise of Islamic fundamentalism, matched by the militancy of the Christian churches, has proved deeply destabilizing. Since the government attempted to negotiate Nigeria's entry into the Organization of Islamic States in 1987, there have been periodic bouts of serious religious rioting. Christian leaders complain about perceived northern and Muslim domination under Babangida's government, while their Islamic counterparts publicly insist that they will not accept a Christian president.

The national census, to be held in October, will be politically explosive, as its result will determine the regional balance of power. That has traditionally resided in the north, based on extrapolating colonial census figures. Since independence, there has only been one attempt at a headcount, which proved a fiasco. The fear in Nigeria is that whatever the result in October, civil disorder will follow and the transition program will be derailed.

The SDP is regarded as the party of the south and the NRC that of the north. This is an oversimplification. As a general guide, the north/south split was borne out by the local government elections in December, although both parties managed to capture at least a third of the vote in most states. The apparent regional identification of the parties hinges on who will be their presidential nominees.

The delicate subject of ethnicity in Nigerian public office is managed by the process of "zoning" key political positions in turn to the various regions. Therefore, to clear the way for a northern presidential contender, the NRC zoned the post of party chairman to the south. Its strongest presidential hopefuls appear to be the former security service boss under Shagari, Alhaji Umaru Shinkafi, and Jubril Aminu, the present petroleum minister.

The reverse is the case in the SDP, where a northerner was elected party chairman. But the SDP is a less cohesive alliance of political factions

and the issue of its presidential nominee is far from clear. The battle is between recently retired finance minister Chief Olu Falae from Ondo state in the southwest, and the party chairman himself, Babagana Kingibe from Borno state in the north. The latter was a member of a political association backed by Maj.-Gen. Yar'Adua, and he has the general's support.

For the government and the parties, the turnout at the local government elections was disappointingly low. The official figure was 20 percent, but in some wards booths closed without doing any business. The public's response can either be interpreted as general apathy or a rebuff of the choices presented. Rather than the issue of effective local government, this first outing for the political parties was really about personality contests, in which party heavyweights staked their claim to higher office by delivering the vote in their states.

The government's reaction was to announce that from September—just before the crucial governorship elections—state subsidies will end and the parties will be forced to finance themselves with ceilings on individual donations to limit influence-peddling. As intended, the surprise decision jolted the parties into life. Both are now conducting membership drives to capture support and membership fees.

The government is also studying its use of the open ballot system. It had argued that it was easier to administer and less amenable to rigging, but several of the election results were contested by both parties. The polls were, however, mercifully peaceful. Understandably though, Nigerians are averse to queuing in the sun all day behind the photograph of their chosen candidate. The NRC, which claims large middle-class support, has complained loudest.

The government has procrastinated, but appears likely to introduce a secret ballot, with all the risks that entails for public order, in the next round of voting for the state legisla-

ture. If it does not scrap the system, it is highly unlikely that any elected government would choose to do so given the advantage it provides an incumbent administration when voters are forced to declare their loyalty publicly.

In the same vein, there has been pressure for the government to make the National Electoral Committee an independent body before the handover to civilian rule. The committee's forerunner, FEDECO, did not acquit itself with much honor during the civilian regime of Shagari. Several of its decisions were judged blatantly partisan in favor of the ruling NPN, and after the 1983 elections its offices and officials were the targets of enraged mobs in Oyo and Ondo states.

There is a common saying in Nigeria that you cannot change the country until you change the Nigerian. Babangida's experiment in political engineering is aimed at changing the politicians. Whether that can be achieved by legislating political parties into existence, or sending party officials back to school at the Democratic Studies Centre to become virtuous and diligent, is a different matter. It has, however, been a brave attempt.

The transition program hangs on the emergence of the "new breed." But to most Nigerians, they look very much like the old breed, and a good deal less charismatic. As one leading businessman and former politician scathingly observed: "I'll tell you what the Nigerian new breed is. He is 60 years old, he is a known crook and vagabond, he has no background, he is a wheeler-dealer, and he is a politician. Ever since independence he has been going for election and losing. His people never wanted him in office and he has never served. Today he is a new breed."

The "new breed" have also demonstrated a disturbing willingness to jump through whatever hoop the government puts before them. Nigerians hope that this is motivated by a sincere belief in the business of politics rather than the politics of business. ○



Gitobu Imanyara,
editor of *The
Nairobi Law
Monthly*



Joseph Margolis

The Moi government's use of a major colonial legacy, its legal and judicial system, to silence critics of its repressive one-party rule is being undermined by the very people who know it best—the lawyers. Since 1987, *The Nairobi Law Monthly's* crusading editor, lawyer/journalist Gitobu Imanyara, has been in and out of detention for his campaigning on behalf of the rule of law and democratic practice.

Sedition by Edition

By LUCY HANNAN

In Kenya, "urban guerrillas" are having a measure of success besieging the government. It's proving a strange war but, claim the "guerrillas," uniquely appropriate for Kenyans.

The battle is one of law, legitimacy, and legal wrangle, and the ammunition for both sides comes from an identical source—the legal machinery and the Kenyan constitution. Fought tenaciously in

the courts by a small section of the legal community, the guerrillas are battling against the legal thuggery of a government which has depended for a long time on disposing of its critics through the court system. Repression and intimidation have been cloaked in what the government hopes is seen as legal respectability, with critics and scapegoats regularly processed through a well-established route to rot in jail. The judiciary is infamous for its slavish allegiance to the state, and Kenyan jails are designed for rotting.

But the 1990s have seen a visible break from the secrecy and cowed resignation of the past, with a relentless push toward a new multi-party system. The most publicized aspect



of this "debate" is the manner in which Moi's one-party state has been increasingly confronted by its own claim to legitimacy by a group of people most ably equipped to do so: the lawyers. While they are not alone in their opposition to a government considered repressive by even its mildest critics, they have, above all others, managed to capture the attention of an international community wedded to a language of "legitimacy."

In March, one of Kenya's best known legal guerrillas was brought to court to be charged for the second time with sedition, and now awaits his fate under the appalling conditions of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. Gitobu Imanyara, lawyer and journalist, editor of *The Nairobi Law Monthly*, was seized by eight plainclothes police officers on March 1, and taken for a "weekend away" with the Special Branch (political police) before being produced in court and charged with publishing a seditious publication.

His abduction caused considerable distress among the legal community who believed—going on the record of deaths and torture in police custody—his life was in serious danger. Only two days before, he had been attacked on the street outside his office by a group of young men who hurled rocks and threatened to kill him. During the attack, a number of Special Branch officers, maintaining around-the-clock surveillance on the editor, watched the assault without making any attempt to intervene.

Imanyara's "crime" was to publish news of the formation of a new political party by former Vice President Oginga Odinga, despite a black-out by the rest of the national press. As well as featuring the formation of the party and printing its manifesto, Imanyara's accompanying editorial posited that one of the greatest problems facing the country was favoritism exercised on an ethnic basis. He listed positions dominated

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As the calls for democracy and a new political agenda persist, there is a relentless search by the government for "the enemy."

by Moi's own minority tribe, the Kalenjin, in public offices and parastatals, concluding the editorial with: "We raise this issue in the full knowledge that it will cause anger in certain quarters, that we may be accused of being 'seditious,' and that there will be further calls for the banning of this publication...."

His comments could not be considered more prophetic—although such accuracy is not so much remarkable as an indictment on the thoroughly predictable tactics of the state and the Special Branch. When he was produced in court on March 4, the editorial provided the basis for the charge. But it was no secret that the basis of the interrogation was the publishing of the manifesto of the new party.

Nobody has illustrated the sorry state of human rights in Kenya by personal example as publicly, tenaciously, and creatively as the editor of *The Nairobi Law Monthly*. He established the magazine in 1987 to provide a much needed forum for scholarly legal debate and human rights issues, which could not fail to incur the wrath of a government which treats criticism as tantamount to treason.

Since setting up the magazine, Imanyara has alternately been charged with "subversion," "sedition," and "contempt," and has faced numerous petty criminal charges

relating to the running of the magazine. Arrested, charged, remanded, released, he has yet to be tried. He was also detained for three weeks under the National Public Security Act as a leading advocate for a multi-party system, when President Moi's one-party state was shaken by pro-democracy demonstrations and riots in July 1990.

These repeated but spurious charges levied against him have provided the state with an opportunity to punish Imanyara without having to prove him guilty. His appeal for bail was denied, and appeals repeatedly "adjourned." It is a common and effective practice designed to demoralize and silence critics—and has generally proved very successful. Bail is routinely refused by the courts when the prosecution for the state objects to the application. The defendant, then remanded to a maximum security prison, is effectively kept as a political prisoner while the wait for trial is deliberately prolonged.

Over the last year, however, people are proving less easy to intimidate and more eager to expose the treatment they are subjected to. Four people charged with sedition in July 1990 are still being "remanded in custody" in prison conditions they likened to "Nazi camps." George Anyona, Professor Edward Akong'o Oyugi, Isiah Ngotho Kariuki, and Augustus Njeru Kathungu—all ex-detainees—recently complained of torture and inhuman treatment.

The judge refused to let them detail complaints of torture, but could not stop Anyona from throwing light on life inside a maximum security prison: "We have been placed in a block consisting not of remand prisoners but of convicted prisoners, the majority of whom are lunatics... We are being kept incommunicado and are kept in cells throughout and only allowed out for a few minutes daily to empty our bowels... We have to wipe ourselves with our hands... We are made to wade through urine and human feces while queueing for the toilet in our bare feet which have sores... I have seen prisoners walking

naked in there. Ours looks like a political case and not a criminal one; otherwise we should be treated like other prisoners facing criminal charges."

Imanyara's new address is unlikely to shock him. He is already an expert on prison conditions—and not merely by academic or professional acquaintance. He has been hounded by the state since 1982 when he distinguished himself as the first lawyer to accept a brief to defend one of the soldiers charged with treason in the August coup attempt: "For several weeks, the entire legal community waited to see what would happen to me. For the time being nothing happened and other lawyers accepted briefs. It was no minor triumph for the rule of law."

He then managed to win the only acquittal out of several hundred officers charged with mutiny. "But I was not aware that while I was busy at the military barracks defending the 'rebels,' investigations into my professional career were going on quietly...." Imanyara was subsequently jailed for five years in November 1984 after being found guilty of stealing money from a client. The matter—which concerned an uncleared check—had been previously dismissed as groundless by the Law Society, but the attorney-general, Matthew Muli, insisted on bringing him to court and personally conducting the case.

A successful appeal reduced the sentence to two years. Imanyara served the sentence in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison where, although he had been found guilty of a criminal charge, he was treated as a political prisoner throughout. He recalls the experience as "thoroughly dehumanizing...impossible for someone to imagine if they have not experienced it." He says it was the shock of seeing people treated "like animals" in prison that inspired him to set up a magazine committed to justice and the rule of law, and to provide a human rights forum.

Since establishing the magazine, Imanyara has twice revisited the

place he described as "like the Gulag Archipelago." After being detained for three weeks in July 1990, he was immediately transferred to Kamiti on charges of sedition and held in what is called "the lunatic wing," where prisoners declared insane are kept.

He and other political prisoners were kept in solitary confinement next to the cells of the mentally ill, who would run up and down the corridors shouting and crying and throwing urine in through the small grill in the cell door. "I had to use the same small basin as a toilet and for washing. There is no toilet paper, and no toothbrush and they make sure they give you no chance for washing. You are allowed out to empty the basin once a day. The cells are small and windowless and filthy—the smell is sickening. They just want to completely dehumanize you."

Imanyara's case is a frontline fire on the battleground. The government has already hung at least 14 possible years in the "Gulag Archipelago" on Imanyara's head, but has not succeeded in killing his voice or his magazine. The next issue was ready for printing despite the confiscation of thousands of copies from the street by the Special Branch, harassment and interrogation of the magazine staff, and systematic intimidation of printers.

Two other magazines—*Society* and *Finance*—have seemingly derived strength from example and recently exhibited an editorial policy as independent, if not as sophisticated, as that of *The Nairobi Law Monthly*. The editor of *Finance*, Milton Gatabaki, reportedly went underground following Imanyara's latest arrest, after being interrogated by the Special Branch.

At the same time Imanyara was charged, a British man, Dominic Kenneth Martin, was brought to court for printing the magazine without "posting the necessary notices." Pressure on the printers by the government, and economic sanctions wielded through the banks, have made it almost impossible for critical magazines to be printed. Those that

manage get banned, as was *Beyond* in 1988, and *Financial Review* in 1989. Last October, the attorney-general finally added *The Nairobi Law Monthly* to the list, but remarkably, this "dead" magazine refused to roll over.

Imanyara issued a press statement calling the ban "outrightly unconstitutional" and vowed to fight it in court. He did, and won the first successful legal challenge to a banning order in Kenya. The case, destined to be tried by a judge who has consistently ruled in favor of the government, was somehow placed in front of one of the few judges known to be "pro-constitutional." A number of court clerks reportedly spent the night in custody as the police launched an investigation into how such a serious "mistake" arose. One of Imanyara's advantages is undoubt-

The over-the-shoulder glances and the lowered voices may be considered theatrical to the outsider, but fear in Kenya is still pervasive enough to form a habit.

edly that he is swimming with the legal tide—even the most sycophantic of judges reads *The Nairobi Law Monthly*.

It is his determination to take on what has previously been seen as not only impossible, but highly dangerous, which is making Imanyara as much a popular hero as the *bête noire* of the state. And for as long as one reputation parallels the other, there may be a measure of personal

safety guaranteed. His magazine has enormously increased on last year's readership of 5,000 and now sells over 15,000 copies. Just after the ban was overturned, a taxi driver buying *The Law* said it had become the most popular magazine in Nairobi—"because of the editor. We like this magazine because the editor is a brave man." This is despite the fact that some of its issues are virtually impenetrable to the layman in its legalistic style of scholarly and elitist discourse.

It has, above all, become important as a symbol of defiance and progress. More recently, however, the government inadvertently popularized it—and politicized it—further by linking its fate with that of the poorest section of the population, the hawkers and vendors.

After the Special Branch had harassed and threatened the street sellers, confiscating thousands of issues in a city sweep on February 29, Imanyara issued a press statement: "Has Kenya now officially become a police state?...Has our constitution been suspended? Who will compensate the poor innocent vendors whose sole livelihood is the selling of newspapers and magazines? Who will pay for the cost of the production of the 20,000 copies of *The Nairobi Law Monthly* that cannot now be sold?"

The symbol is increasingly powerful in a country where people are literally crying for change. The human rights organization Africa Watch believes over 100 people died nationwide during pro-democracy riots which were put down brutally by paramilitary security forces last July, although the government claimed 20. Criticism is now becoming remarkably public in a society which suffers from secrecy and fear as marked as that associated with the former Eastern bloc countries. Even the limited amount of criticism expressed in the national press would have been unimaginable a year ago. The over-the-shoulder glances and the lowered voices may be considered theatrical to the outsider, but fear in Kenya is still perva-

sive enough to form a habit which haunts exiles and refugees for some time after they've escaped.

Like some of the colorless and sinister aspects of the collapsing one-party states in Eastern Europe, Kenya denies its citizens freedom of movement—both inside and outside the country. The north-eastern province, a vast area of Kenya, remains under a state of emergency where movement, employment, and association are policed. Nationwide, passports are treated as a privilege for the faithful, with only the briefest taste of freedom allowed for critics, whose passports are confiscated as a matter of course.

Kenya denies it has any refugees, but it does. A number of Kenyans fled from the country during July 1990 as the Special Branch trawled the community for ex-detainees, former political prisoners, student leaders, intellectuals, and former politicians—anyone they didn't like very much—in their attempts to silence the calls for democracy. Homes were raided in the early hours of the morning, and left-wing and socialist literature confiscated.

Hundreds of Kenyan Somalis have fled the country as a result of a national screening exercise initiated in 1989 which issued all ethnic Somalis with separate pink identity cards. Not only was the move denounced by lawyers, the churches, and international bodies as highly discriminatory and unconstitutional, but it was also carried out with exceptional callousness and brutality. Thousands became stateless "deportees," families were forcibly separated without warning, and children were left abandoned. There was no attempt to fairly try "illegal aliens" in court, and the constant trickle of Kenyan Somalis escaping repression in the north-eastern province became a flood. It is something the government has never acknowledged.

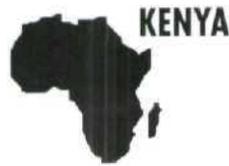
As the calls for democracy and a new political agenda persist, there is a relentless search by the government for "the enemy"—and the more amorphous and entrenched "the enemy" seems to be, the more exact-

ing the persecution gets. There is a well-established government penchant to extract "confessions" of guilt from people detained for prolonged periods in police custody, held incommunicado and amid allegations of torture and duress. Eight people now face charges of treason carrying the death penalty, of which two are ex-detainees, and two are lawyers well-known as government critics—one of whom attempted to sue the state for torture and inhuman treatment during his three years of detention.

Two other former detainees who also filed torture complaints have since been forced to flee the country. None of the three suits were successful; none of the three ex-detainees remain "free" Kenyan citizens. The number of political prisoners is unknown, because most are sent to jail under false charges, but over 100 people were reported as charged with sedition after the July riots. One of the former cabinet ministers and Odinga's son remain detained without trial. (Charles Rubia was released in April.)

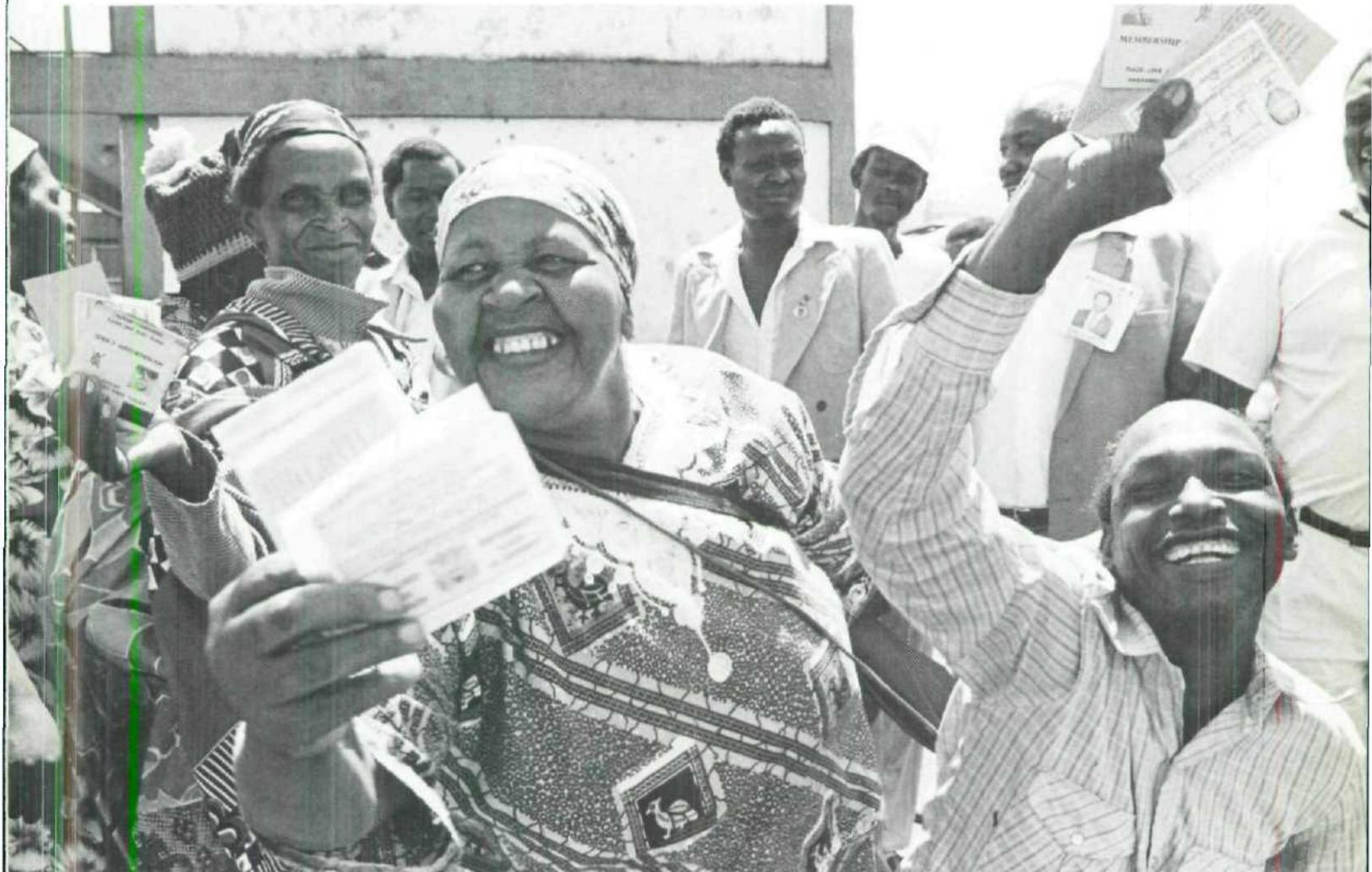
Where change in Kenya is proving stubborn, it is slowly being forced. The government's attempt to placate public demands with minimum change for maximum credibility are not proving very successful. At the moment, the war appears to be confined primarily to a battle of legal wits, but the potential for bloody conflict has always been a matter for serious consideration.

Western governments which have long propped up Moi's government as "stable" and "democratic" are having second thoughts on account of its human rights record. As the ex-colonial power, Britain dreads civil war and despite threats to tie aid to evidence of greater democracy, is most reluctant to desert what it still claims is "better than the alternative." Along with other Western donors, Britain has to make up its mind soon. After all, Britain is the one which provided the ammunition for the present battle—its legacy of colonial law was designed to be implemented as a political weapon for small, extremely powerful minorities. ○



DANCES with State

By HOLLY BURKHALTER



Betty Press

The United States's relationship with Kenya teeters back and forth between concern over its human rights record and political self-interest. While aid hangs in the balance, President Daniel arap Moi and his single party, *Kanu*, bridle at every American criticism, especially from the U.S. Congress and from the outspoken American ambassador.

Above, queuing to vote in the February 1988 elections

In recent months, the United States government and the government of Kenya have been dancing a minuet around the question of human rights. One partner curtseys, the other bows, one initiates, the other responds. The process has been fascinating to watch, but it is too early to tell what the end result will be for Kenyan rights. There is the possibility that

the U.S. will persuade the Moi government that if it wants to remain in the dance, it will have to learn some new steps. On the other hand, the U.S. government may falter and find itself led by a wily President Daniel arap Moi, who is making a concerted effort to call the tune himself.

Human rights have been on a steady decline in Kenya for the past several years, but until 1990, the United States was a steady supporter of the Moi regime. That changed with the appointment of an outspoken ambassador to Nairobi, Smith Hempstone, who bluntly stated in May 1990 that when Washington considered which countries to provide with foreign aid, it would give preference to those nations that "nourish democratic institutions, defend human rights, and practice multi-party politics."

The statement outraged Moi and Kanu, the country's sole political party. The day after Ambassador Hempstone's speech, Moi pointedly noted that Kenya was a "sovereign state and equal to other states and does not require any guidance from outsiders on how to run its affairs." And days later, a cabinet minister was publicly accusing the U.S. embassy of engaging in treason by pouring money into dissident activities. Kenyan democrats, however, were delighted with the ambas-

sador's high level of identification with their peaceful struggle for human rights and democracy.

Hempstone's warnings notwithstanding, human rights in Kenya went from bad to worse over the summer of 1990, with the government implementing a harsh crackdown on democracy movement leaders and the police indiscriminately opening fire on urban demonstrators, causing over 100 deaths. The State Department issued a tough condemnation of the jailing of opposition politicians and an angry Congress insisted that the Bush administration hold back some \$5 million in military aid to Kenya as a show of displeasure.

The most important demonstration of concern was articulated in the foreign aid appropriations act for fiscal year 1991, passed and signed into law in November 1990. Initiated by Senator Edward Kennedy and included in the bill by the chairman of the Appropriation Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Patrick Leahy, Section 597 of the act required that President Bush certify that the Kenyans had met four human rights conditions before releasing an estimated \$7 million in economic support funds and \$8 million in foreign military financing aid. (The conditions in the law were that the Kenyan government take steps to charge and try or release all prisoners, including any persons detained for political reasons; cease any physical abuse or mistreatment of prisoners; restore the independence of the judiciary; and restore freedom of expression.)

In case the Moi government missed the point, Leahy and his staff travelled to Nairobi in November. He made strong representations on behalf of imprisoned democracy advocates, and reiterated the concerns expressed in the foreign aid appropriations act. In the meantime, the Kenyan authorities took a number of steps in

hopes of calming their critics and restoring foreign aid. At least 20 prisoners were released from jail, though they continued to face charges for possessing seditious publications. In August, Kanu created a commission to conduct country-wide hearings to discuss elections and the role of the party.

In spite of Kanu's attempts to limit the debate at the hearings, Kenyans took advantage of the opportunity to speak out on the wider issues of democracy and the conduct of the government. Moreover, while the authorities attempted to suppress media coverage of the criticism by excluding the press from the hearing, opposition participants managed to publicize their criticisms by providing documentation directly to the press which did cover such issues as corruption and multi-party democracy.

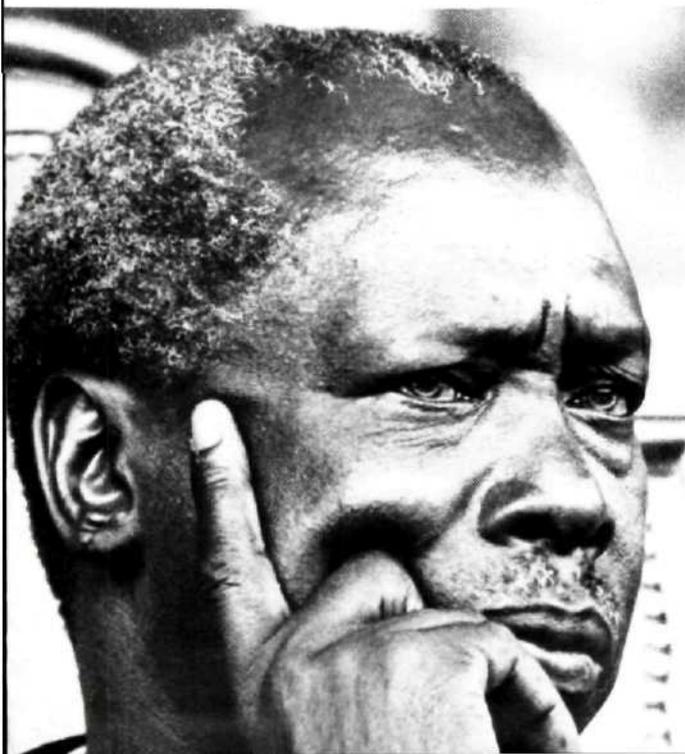
And in January, the Kanu-controlled Parliament enacted legislation which placed a layer of bureaucracy between the executive and the judiciary. Under the new law, the president was vested with the power to create an appointed commission to inquire into the conduct of judges. While the creation of the new panel did devolve some of the president's authority, it did not restore the independence of the judiciary; the 1988 constitutional amendment which had revoked judicial tenure remained intact and the commission itself is highly vulnerable to presidential prerogative.

Also as a result of the Kanu hearings, the Review Commission recommended that the policy of "queueing"—that is, lining up behind the candidate of choice when voting—be abolished, and the commission eliminated its "70 percent" requirement. Both moves were important because the changes permitted the possibility of voters choosing competing members of the single party.

Yet despite these moves on Kenya's part, the human rights picture remained overwhelmingly bleak in 1991. The three democracy movement leaders jailed in July remained imprisoned without trial, and the

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health of one of them, Kenneth Matiba, deteriorated. No proper investigation of last summer's spate of police violence was carried out, and political arrests and intimidation continued. Moreover, in December the Kenyan Parliament passed a Non-governmental Organizations Registration Bill which required private organizations to register with the government and established a "coordination board," appointed by Moi or his ministers, to oversee their activities and finances. Human rights and church advocates feared that the act was a blatant effort to skim off private funds and regulate the activities of activist organizations.

Notwithstanding this record, the Bush administration rewarded the Kenyan government with \$5 million in military assistance in early February. To avoid the human rights conditions on 1991 foreign aid funds for Kenya, the State Department instead drew the \$5 million from 1990 assistance in the pipeline, which Congress had withheld last July.

The administration justified the grant on several grounds. First and foremost, Moi had helped the U.S. deal with the embarrassing problem of several hundred Libyan prisoners of war in Chad, whom the U.S. was arming and training to use against the Qaddafi regime. When the Habré government fell to a pro-Libya faction, Kenya accepted the Libyans who were no longer welcome in Chad. The Kenyan government also aided the U.S. by helping evacuate Americans from Mogadishu and Khartoum who were thought to be at risk when Gulf hostilities commenced.

And finally, the aid was justified by "marginal improvements" in human rights. At a March 12 press briefing, the State Department's Richard Boucher stated that the assistance was provided "to acknowledge limited steps that occurred in the area of human rights...." He cited new limits on the president's authority to dismiss judges, reinstatement of secret balloting in primary elections, and hearings on party reform. He also stated that the U.S. remained con-

cerned about other human rights issues, including detentions without charge.

The U.S. Congress, however, appeared wholly unpersuaded by the State Department's arguments, and within weeks of the announced granting of the \$5 million in assistance, Senators Paul Simon (chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Africa subcommittee), Nancy Kassebaum (the ranking Republican on the Africa Subcommittee), and Leahy had issued strong rebukes to the State Department, and Kennedy introduced a new resolution calling for a suspension of assistance. On the other side of the Capitol, members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee heckled Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman Cohen about the decision during congressional hearings on the administration's foreign aid request for the coming fiscal year.

Cohen defended the decision, but his heart did not appear to be in it. Congressional staff indicated to Africa Watch that Cohen had been embarrassed by the granting of the assistance, and some suggested that he had privately opposed the arms deal which had been promoted by the hard-line political and military affairs bureau of the State Department.

Two weeks after receiving the \$5 million, Moi repaid the Bush administration for its pains by jailing one of Kenya's most prominent lawyers and journalists, Gitabu Imanyara, editor of the independent *Nairobi Law Monthly*. The State Department responded with a very strong statement on Imanyara's behalf, issued simultaneously in Nairobi and Washington. Stating that the United States was "dismayed" by the arrest of Imanyara, the administration called for his release without delay and prompt action by the Kenyan authorities on other outstanding human rights problems.

Congress echoed the administration's concerns with an outpouring of congressional letters and cables to the Kenyan authorities on Imanyara's behalf. The Kenyans offered a

response. Gitabu Imanyara remained in jail, but in mid-March, the Rev. Lawford Imunde, a Presbyterian minister who was serving a six-year jail term for the possession of seditious materials, was released instead. The "seditious" publication in Rev. Imunde's case was his own private diary, which security forces seized during a raid on his home. He confessed to the "crime" after having been held and tortured in incommunicado detention and subjected to a trial without benefit of legal counsel.

On March 25, Hempstone met with the Kenyan attorney-general and made representations on behalf of Kenneth Matiba, Charles Rubia, and Raila Odinga. (Rubia was released from prison in April.) He reportedly asked the attorney-general to tell him how often the prisoners had received visits from physicians, family, and lawyers. After the meeting, he told the Kenyan press exactly about the meeting, and reiterated his concerns.

Kanu erupted again in fury and held a session of Parliament to denounce the ambassador. But a leading church figure, Rev. Njoya, publicly called Hempstone "God's blessing on Kenya," and said that Hempstone's recent action made it clear that the U.S. was no longer going to participate with the government in repressing the Kenyan people.

And thus the minuet continues. The administration pressures, and the Kenyans respond, although all too often new human rights abuses outweigh their positive steps. The Bush administration's signals to its partner have been mixed, but after frequent prodding by an activist U.S. Congress, it has generally adopted a higher profile in recent months than it did in the past. At the moment, the State Department has good reason to feel sorely embarrassed by Moi's rude response in Imanyara's imprisonment to their \$5 million carrot. This is a good moment for the U.S. to change the tune, and loudly and consistently demand that the Moi regime make real and sustainable human rights improvements before foreign aid is restored. ○



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My Somali companion shook his head in disbelief: "This is the last sign of Siad Barre's inhumanity...shelling defenseless people in their own homes," he said. We were standing surrounded by empty ammunition cases in the grounds of Siad Barre's former official residence, Villa Somalia, looking out over Mogadishu toward the nearby suburb of Wardiigleey. The hundreds of dark gaping holes in the roofs of the small houses showed the extent of the damage inflicted by Barre's forces when they unleashed their final burst of firepower on Mogadishu.

The flight of President Mohamed Siad Barre on the afternoon of January 26 marked the climax of 21 years of dictatorial, repressive, and opportunistic rule. "When the end finally came, it was just like a popular uprising," said one eye-witness. "Hundreds of people stormed Villa Somalia and ransacked it."

Shortly beforehand, the octogenarian leader had managed to make his escape. He was reportedly seen leaving Villa Somalia in a tank, accompanied by a contingent of loyal troops, and heading south toward the coastal town of Kismayu.

His flight followed four weeks of heavy street fighting in Mogadishu, after rebels of the United Somali Congress (USC) had launched their final offensive and achieved what no other armed Somali opposition group had done previously—bring-

ing the civil war to the heart of the country's capital.

The death toll will never be known, but some say that as many as 20,000 people may have been killed. By the end of January, the once picturesque Arab/Italian city of Mogadishu lay in ruins. In the central business district, I searched in vain for a building that had not been damaged either by shelling or gunfire. "And yet, I'm happy to see Mogadishu like this," said Dr. Hussein Mursal, the country representative of the British charity, Save the Children. "I was expecting much worse. We knew what happened in Hargeisa in the north," explained Mursal. When the Somali National Movement (SNM) attacked Hargeisa in 1988 and the local population fled, government forces bombed the town from the air and flattened it. "Here in Mogadishu, at least most of the buildings are still standing," Mursal said.

In his office compound, he showed me the vehicle inspection pit where some of his colleagues had taken shelter during the height of the shelling. But he added: "One of our staff was killed standing right here under this tree."

In the busy Kaaraan district, a few miles from the center of the city, lies the headquarters of the international charity, SOS Children's Village. When the USC offensive began in early January, the mother and child clinic was rapidly converted into an emergency surgical unit to treat the casualties of the fighting.

Peter Biles is a freelance journalist based in Nairobi.

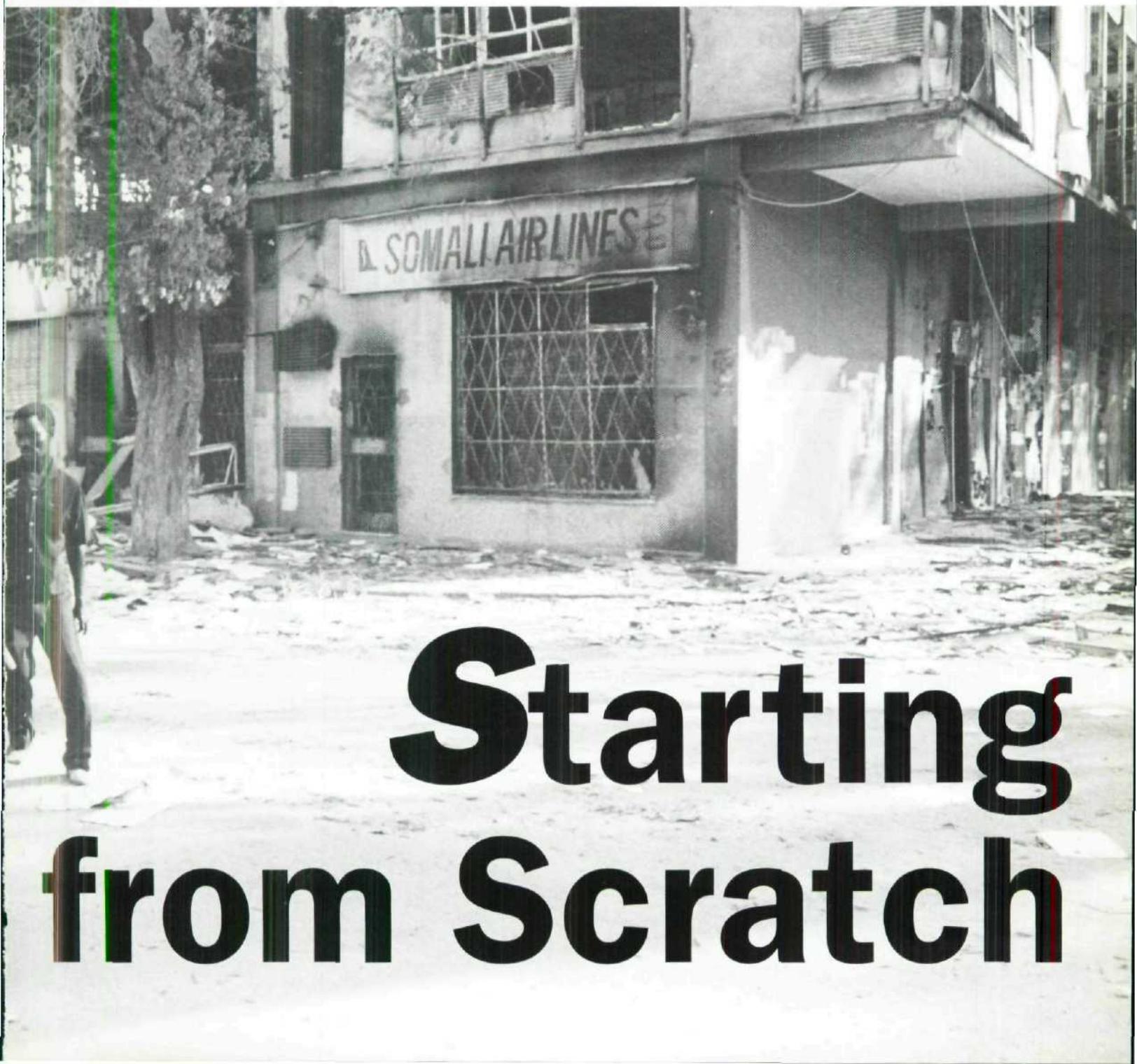


Mogadishu after the fall of Siad Barre

Civil war still rages in Somalia, threatening to split the country into rival factions, after failed attempts to hold a national reconciliation conference. While some observers believe the country is a “total write-off,” the interim prime minister remains optimistic —“I’m confident that our people have had enough,” he says.

By **PETER BILES**

Betty Press



Starting from Scratch

If there had been any medals for courage in the midst of this conflict, one would surely have gone to Willy Huber, an unassuming 38-year-old Italian, who is the SOS regional director. On December 1990, he and his family packed their bags in preparation for a transfer to the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. "I'd taken all the luggage to the airport, and I was returning home to fetch my family," recalls Huber. "But I couldn't get back to the SOS village because of military road-blocks. That was when the fighting had started. Our luggage left Mogadishu on the plane without us."

Nine days later, Willy Huber's family was safely evacuated with hundreds of other foreigners who fled the city. But he stayed on, the only expatriate relief worker in Mogadishu to do so.

In early January, the SOS Children's Village found itself in the frontline of the fighting. Like everywhere else, it was not spared by the looters. "It was when I saw the young children from the village standing in front of the gates of the hospital, keeping the looters at bay, and saying: 'Shoot us first if you want to take our goods,' that I knew I couldn't possibly leave Mogadishu and just run away," says Huber. "And with the number of injured people coming into the hospital, there was hardly even time to think about it anyway."

For weeks, Huber and his small team of dedicated Somali doctors and staff provided the only health care in Mogadishu. In a small operating theater, the surgeons worked around the clock performing hundreds of life-saving operations, while outside in the corridors, dozens of seriously wounded patients lay in pools of blood waiting for treatment. On the roadside in front of the medical center, the wind would sweep in off the Indian Ocean and whip up the red sand from the makeshift graves of those who could not be saved.

Occasionally though, there were moments when the morale of the Somali doctors was lifted by small "miracles." One day, a woman who was nine months pregnant was

admitted to the SOS hospital with a bullet wound in her shoulder. The doctors were unable to find the bullet, but when the woman successfully gave birth a few days later, the bullet was discovered lodged in the infant's leg.

The violent looting of Mogadishu had started many months earlier when Siad Barre's government troops, many drawn from his minority Marehan clan, began commandeering expensive four-wheel-drive vehicles, much favored by the expatriate community in Somalia. And when the last American nationals in Mogadishu were airlifted by helicopter to the safety of a U.S. warship waiting off-shore, it was a group of government soldiers who ransacked the new \$35 million American embassy.

"Minutes after the helicopters had taken off from the embassy compound in the early hours of the morning, the human locusts arrived," recalled one U.S. official. The soldiers used rocket-propelled grenades to blast down the doors to what was one of the securest embassy buildings in Africa. Within a few hours, they had departed with vehicles, computers, air conditioners, and furniture, leaving behind only a trail of destruction.

As the city descended into complete anarchy, looting became a way of life and a means of survival for thousands of people with their plethora of newly acquired weapons, carried openly on the streets. Weeks after Barre had fled and the USC had established a caretaker government, I saw booty still being carted away by men pushing rickety wheelbarrows, piled high with every moveable asset, including on one occasion, the proverbial kitchen sink.

It was well known, of course, that Siad Barre's Somalia had been on a downward slide for years. Various rebel groups had extended their control over the countryside. The economy had collapsed, leaving the country bankrupt. Somalia had earned a reputation for having one of the worst human rights records in the world. But when the insecurity in

Mogadishu escalated and the international community began leaving, it signalled the beginning of the end.

It was no surprise that the people of Mogadishu were gripped by feelings of euphoria in the weeks following the ousting of Barre. Almost to their disbelief, the dictator had finally gone.

Outside Villa Somalia, young USC fighters, toting AK-47s and sporting dark glasses like third-rate film gangsters, had boldly donned the red berets left behind by fleeing members of Barre's feared Presidential Guard. On the wall at the main entrance to Villa Somalia, they scrawled the word *Afweyne* ("Big Mouth")—a derisive nickname given Siad Barre after his false promises of political reform for the stagnant nation. Elsewhere, the ubiquitous slogan: "USC—Guul [victory]" was quickly plastered across the city.

"We've built this country before. We can do it again," said one man optimistically. "All that matters is that we've got rid of Siad Barre." But was it, I wondered. What future awaits a nation which was plundered by its own people, torn apart by years of civil strife and insoluble inter-clan rivalries, and which has lost all strategic interest to the superpowers? "We're starting from scratch," admitted interim Prime Minister Omar Arteh Ghalib. "The country has been robbed of all its resources. We have nothing."

Within weeks of the USC takeover, the mood of reality had spread. Thousands of people who had fled the fighting in Mogadishu began returning to the city. Most were destitute. In the National Showgrounds, I visited 2,500 families who had found temporary shelter. They were Ogadeni refugees who had previously been accommodated in camps run by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at Jalalaqsi, north of Mogadishu. When fighting broke out in their region, they were forced to make their way to Mogadishu on foot. On their arrival, many of the children were severely malnourished and were being given only weeks to live. "The medical

needs of this country are as high as the sky and as wide as the Somali desert," remarked one aid worker.

In a heavily guarded compound a few miles away, a local sheik was protecting and caring for a thousand women and children from the Galgalo clan whose men had all been killed. The Galgalo are a sub-clan of the Hawiye from which the USC draws its support, but the Galgalo were armed by Barre's forces when the Somali leader was engaged in his favorite pastime of playing off one clan against another in order to stay in power. Many of the Galgalo men had apparently been the victims of the inevitable reprisals that follow in the wake of any civil conflict. It was the plight of the Galgalo orphans which seemed to symbolize above all else the hopeless, despair, and confusion in Somalia.

In February, the interim government, hastily established by the USC in Mogadishu, invited all the armed groups which opposed Siad Barre to attend a national reconciliation conference in the Somali capital. But many of the rival groups outside Mogadishu have refused to negotiate with the provisional government, arguing that they were not consulted before it was set up. Twice the conference was postponed, with some opposition groups expressing fears for their security if the conference was held in Mogadishu.

In the meantime, the Somali National Movement (SNM), which controls the north-west of the country, has shown an increasing desire to break away from the south, and create its own regional administration. The SNM has also pledged to review the 1960 act of union whereby the former British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland merged to form the new independent Somali Republic.

The USC is believed to be wary of sharing power with the powerful Isak-dominated SNM, although the interim prime minister, Omar Arteh Ghalib, is himself a member of the Isak clan, and has offered a hand of friendship to all the rebel groups in the country. "The tradition of the past has been tribal wars, but when

What future awaits a nation which was plundered by its own people and lost all strategic interest to the superpowers?

they're over, the elders and the wise men meet under a tree and discuss their problems frankly and objectively," says Omar Arteh. "In keeping with the tradition, we'll do our best to prevent further tribal conflict. I'm confident that our people have had enough," he added.

But for centuries the nomadic Somali people have traversed the country fighting each other for cattle and water-holes. And under Siad Barre, the state itself became one of the spoils. "The attitude toward the state has been one of plunder," says one Western diplomat. "It's a great treasure chest in which one could grab at everything. That's the way the Marehan ran the country after 1978." Observers fear that having captured the first prize—Mogadishu—the Hawiye may decide their turn has come. "Another minority dictatorial government in Somalia is the nightmare scenario," said one analyst.

In the months following the USC victory, the conflict has simmered in southern Somalia. The USC insisted that it was doing no more than tracking down the remnants of Barre's army. The former leader was believed to have taken refuge in his home region of Gedo in the south-west of the country. But in the large coastal town of Kismayu, 500 kilometers south of Mogadishu, strong resentment was being expressed toward the USC by members of the large Darod clan. "The Darods have been humiliated by the Hawiye," said one man. "They've been forced

out of Mogadishu, stripped of everything, and now they're bent on revenge. The showdown is still to come."

Mohamed Omar Giama, a former Somali ambassador to the European Community and a former vice-minister in Siad Barre's government, is one of the many people who have fled to Kismayu. "The United Somali Congress in Mogadishu has embarked upon a policy of genocide," he alleges. "They seem to want to drive us [the Darods] out of the country. So the only option is to fight back and defend ourselves."

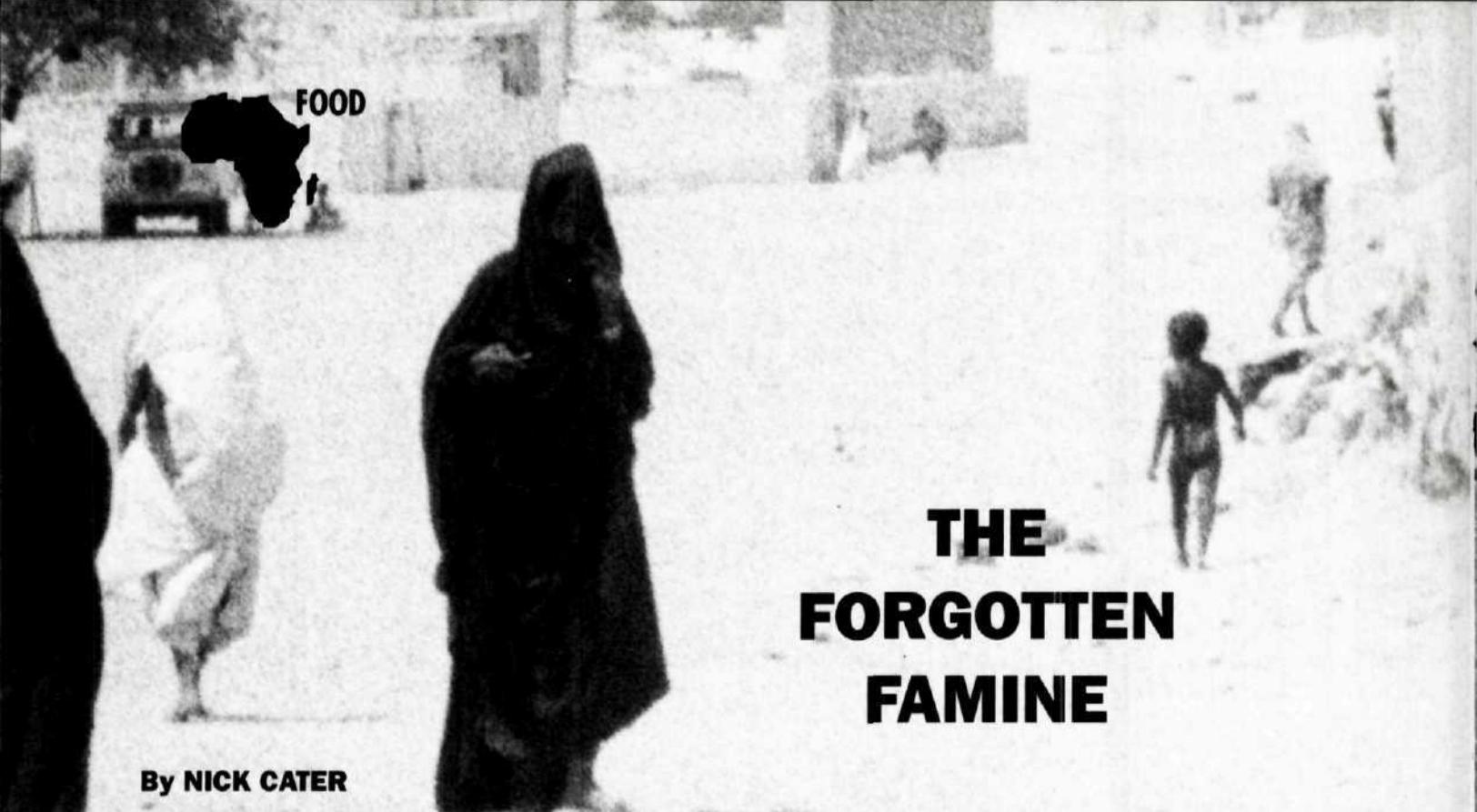
Under the umbrella of the Somali National Front (SNF), a number of Darod-based groups, including the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), have continued to engage in skirmishes with the USC forces.

Against this background, thousands of Somalis have fled the country completely. Many have crossed the border into neighboring Ethiopia and Kenya, while others have set sail for the Kenyan coast in an assortment of dhows and small motor vessels, many of which are far from seaworthy. In March, about 150 Somalis were drowned when their boat capsized on the coral reef a few hundred meters from the Kenyan resort of Malindi.

As the Somali nation tries to throw off the legacy of Siad Barre's regime, there is a good chance the world may turn its back on a country which many people now regard as "a total write-off."

Dr. Murray Watson, a British ecologist who has worked in Somalia for 12 years, says: "From the humanitarian angle, it's quite clear that the initial interest of the international welfare community was negligible. That doesn't augur well for the later sensible attention of the donors. Everyone is inclined to think that Somalia is a hopeless problem."

Interim Prime Minister Arteh admits that Somalia's reputation has been badly damaged by the actions of Barre and his government. "Now we'd like to turn over a new leaf, and ask the world to believe us. We're only saying: 'Please try us again.'" ○



THE FORGOTTEN FAMINE

By NICK CATER

Amid the deepening tragedy of famine deaths in Sudan and Ethiopia, food aid experts and climatologists in the U.S., Europe, and Africa are warning that the failure of this year's rains—due in the next few months—could throw millions more across the Sahel into a crisis well beyond the capacity of national governments or international agencies to tackle.

Throughout Africa, 20 million people were assessed as "at risk" at the start of 1991 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) following two years of bad harvests in many countries, with the latest estimates of 5.1 million tons of food aid required and hundreds of millions of dollars for transport to deliver it, a total cost put by the World Food Programme (WFP) at well over \$1 billion. Without good rains and a good harvest, these figures will rise sharply next year.

Those comparing today's drought with that of 1984-85 go beyond tonnages. Reports from the Geneva-

based League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies emphasize the vulnerability of millions of Africans: deeper national economic crises, bigger debts, eroded welfare structures, increased populations, degraded environments, renewed conflict and refugee flows, and the poor grain and livestock reserves of farmers and herdspeople who had not recovered from the last disaster when the latest crisis arrived.

Appeals for victims of Liberia's civil war have joined calls for help for 4 million threatened in Mozambique and Angola, adding to pressure on the financially beleaguered UN High Commissioner for Refugees, but it is in the Horn and Sahel where fears are greatest of a catastrophe far worse than in 1984-85.

Political and military factors are hampering food deliveries in Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Increasing numbers of displaced people and refugees are fleeing fighting in all three countries. In the Sahel, two years of patchy rains have left Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Mauritania struggling to secure enough food aid to keep hunger from becoming starvation.

Warnings have come thick and fast. Gary Eilerts, a senior official of the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) of the U.S. Agency for International Development, said: "Problems in many African nations are already severe. Failed rains in 1991 will plunge the western Sahelian countries into a crisis of similar proportions to that faced by Ethiopia and Sudan this year. We could be looking at a gigantic disaster."

Among so many disasters, Sudan stands out because of the scale of the crisis, the complexities of food delivery in the face of war and political chaos, and the obstructive nature of the Islamic fundamentalist military junta. Roger Winter, director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, warned recently: "Children are already dying, and within weeks thousands of other Sudanese of all ages will begin to die what were once avoidable deaths from war and drought-induced famine."

With the pre-rains hungry season gripping Sudan, there is anger at how the junta—embarrassed by a failed self-sufficiency campaign—at first dismissed its disastrous last harvest as merely a "food gap" and has

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hampered aid agencies and blocked food distribution to Sudanese ethnic groups it apparently regards as its enemies because of the civil war in the south with the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army.

In particular, officials of the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are privately furious at the constant harassment of Operation Lifeline Sudan and other efforts to deliver food to civilians in conflict zones, from unrealistic demands about the proportion of aid to be delivered into junta and SPLA-controlled areas, to bombing schools, hospitals, and dirt airstrips in the south.

General Omer al-Beshir's often incompetent regime has abused human rights, allowing its fundamentalist supporters to run "ghost house" torture centers, while mishandling the food crisis by shuffling officials and responsibilities for relief, food stocks, displaced people, and refugees between ministries. Hungry for arms, in 1989 and 1990, the junta even sold harvest surpluses rather than build up its strategic reserves.

As in 1984-85, when then-President Gaafar al-Nimeiry was ousted, in part because of his mishandling of the famine, many of Sudan's 25 million people are today on the move, searching for food, forage, and work as grain costs soar and livestock prices crash.

Up to 10 million people are at risk in Sudan, according to FAO estimates, with 1.2 million tons of grain required. Camps of the displaced have formed around El Obeid and other towns in the west since a severe harvest failure last year in Kordofan and Darfur regions, while thousands are trekking into Omdurman to join many who never left after the last famine. In the east, worst hit are again Beja people of the Red Sea hills, whose old and young have begun to come down to beg and—it is expected—die along the main Port Sudan-Khartoum road.

Even in Khartoum, where 2 million or more people displaced by war and hunger from the south, east, and west live in rat-infested shanty-

towns, food is not reaching those who need it. Indeed, lured by the regime's hollow promises of Operation Lifeline food and a small cash grant, tens of thousands of southern women and children have tried to go home, only to have junta-backed militias on the north-south border steal their last possessions.

Overland convoys by such groups as Norwegian Church Aid and World Vision are keeping the southernmost Equatoria region supplied with at least some food, while SPLA-besieged Juba town survives on a Lutheran World Federation airlift. Hundreds of miles away, the Bahr El Ghazal and Upper Nile regions—particularly the heartlands of the largest ethnic group and strongest SPLA supporters, the Dinka—are rarely reached by road, air, river or railway while fighting continues and the junta blocks aid efforts.

Epidemics of meningitis and leishmaniasis known locally as *kala azar* are growing as hunger lowers resistance and drug supplies are exhausted. Around the rebel-held town of Yirol, 35,000 died of meningitis in the last year as food ran out; Sudanese are fleeing into Zaire and the Central African Republic.

Roger Winter has already drawn comparisons with 1988, when the then democratically elected government unleashed army-backed Arab militias on southerners in a bloody campaign of murder, rape, and enslavement, while denying access to humanitarian groups. Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children walked for weeks to escape into Ethiopia; 250,000 died on the road.

The 1988 Sudanese arrivals are still there, joined in eastern Ethiopia by a flood of refugees and Ethiopian returnees escaping the fighting in Somalia. Food aid needs for Somalia, including its remaining Ethiopian

refugees, have been assessed at 226,000 tons, although the focus of relief has so far been on urban areas, especially Mogadishu, where one aid agency helping to run a hospital was forced to hire a local militia to prevent ethnically related killings on the wards.

The refugee flow into Ethiopia—up to 1 million Sudanese and Somalis have already arrived—coincides with rapidly expanding rebel activity in Tigray and Eritrea, as troops of the coalition Eritrean People's Revolutionary Democratic Front advance to within 50 miles of Addis Ababa.

Ironically, the last Ethiopian har-

Two years of drought in the Sahel have left 20 million people at risk of famine, and the rainy season has yet to begin. But Western donors are not rushing in to feed the starving. Instead, they seem to be suffering from "donor fatigue"—a syndrome deepening Africa's marginalization and threatening the continent's fragile future.

vest was a record, but Tigray and Eritrea suffered major crop failures and some surveys of children are finding severe malnutrition rates of 40 percent. Overland supply routes through Sudan organized by Western relief agencies and the rebel-run Eritrean Relief Association and Relief Society of Tigray are trucking food into both regions, while new supply routes through war lines are delivering grain from the rebel-controlled port of Massawa.

Up to 5.6 million Ethiopians and refugees are in need, and the FAO estimates that 1.1 million tons of food aid will be required this year, warning of an "alarming inadequacy of pledges of emergency food aid" and a "serious supply breakdown" for refugee camps in remote areas, while emphasizing that "the food aid pipeline is virtually exhausted." Wollo, Hararge, and Gondar also

require emergency distributions, along with the Ogaden's pastoralists.

Across the Sahel, no country has escaped the impact of the drought, and several have drawn down national food stocks, putting their people at even greater risk next year if the drought continues. Population movements have begun as one response to food shortages, as the grain-livestock terms of trade worsen with lower animal prices and rising cereal costs.

With its last harvest the worst since 1984-85 in some areas and needing 65,000 tons of food aid for 600,000 people at risk, Chad has thousands on the move, according to the Ndjamena office of the agency CARE. In prefectures close to the Sudanese border, grain is almost unobtainable, livestock prices have fallen, and villages are being abandoned. FEWS has warned that the situation in eastern Chad is "much more grave than first thought," especially in Biltine region, reportedly depopulated north of 15° N, while camps of the displaced collect around Iriba in Biltine, Am Dam in Ouaddai, and Mangalmé in Guéra. Millet prices have shot up at the important Am Timan market in southeast Chad, with Sudanese buyers coming from hundred of miles away across the border.

After the third poor cereal harvest, Niger's efforts to deflect famine and mass movements have already led the Office des Produits Viviers du Niger to distribute national security stocks in food-for-work schemes. Up to 1.8 million people are at risk, with 113,000 tons of food needed. The most affected areas are in the northern Tillabery, Tahoua, Zinder, and Diffa departments. A Diffa mission report by the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies indicated that people resorted to coping mechanisms much earlier than usual. October's harvest was exhausted by February, livestock sales climbed, and people began migrating to look for temporary work in urban areas and in Nigeria.

With 2.6 million people at risk, Burkina Faso has revised its food aid needs upward to cope with a cereal

The starving seem doomed to return to Western TV sets just in time for the media to report on the triage.

deficit of around 600,000 tons, particularly in the central and northern provinces of Bam, Passoré, Sanmatenga, Soum, and Yatenga, where families have been on the move in search of food and work, such as gold mining, leaving entire villages deserted. Limited government food distribution from emergency stocks has been carried out.

With problems of labor, late planting, and poor flooding of the Senegal River, Mauritania has asked for 100,000 tons of food aid, claiming more than 1 million people are affected, with those most at risk in the northern wilayas of Tagant, Inchiri, and Adrar; high malnutrition rates have already been reported from Tichit in Tagant. And although Mali outperformed its neighbors with an above average harvest, local shortages in northern drought-affected regions have been assessed at 30,000 tons for 280,000 people. Mali's Comité National d'Actions d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation released national stocks to maintain price stability, but the drawdown left stocks too low to meet 1992 needs without major support if drought persists.

Although for months reports from FAO and WFP in Rome have urged donors to step up help, governments have—with the Gulf, Eastern Europe, recession, and the Soviet Union all higher on political agendas—been slow to pledge and even slower to deliver. WFP's exasperated executive director, James Ingram, recently described his agency's reserves as at

"such low levels that only the most immediate needs can be met."

At FEWS headquarters in Virginia, Eilerts is worried: "Across Africa, all I think we can expect are late deliveries. Niger will be lucky to receive 15,000 tons before August or September, Chad might get 10,000 tons by then. Everywhere we'll see 10-15-20 percent of needs actually arriving; it won't even approach 50 percent." By early April, only around 200,000 tons of Ethiopia's needs had been pledged, and just 50,000 tons delivered; for Sudan, pledges were higher but deliveries were even worse.

At a famine seminar hosted by ICRC, Dr. Peter Onu, special political adviser to Nigeria's minister of external affairs, had no doubts: "Certainly, there is donor fatigue. Aid assistance volumes are well down. Part of the blame has to go to Africa, calling today for refugees, tomorrow for drought or a development project. Eastern Europe has diverted interest. Africa has been marginalized. As of now, Africa no longer counts—and no one knows what its future will be."

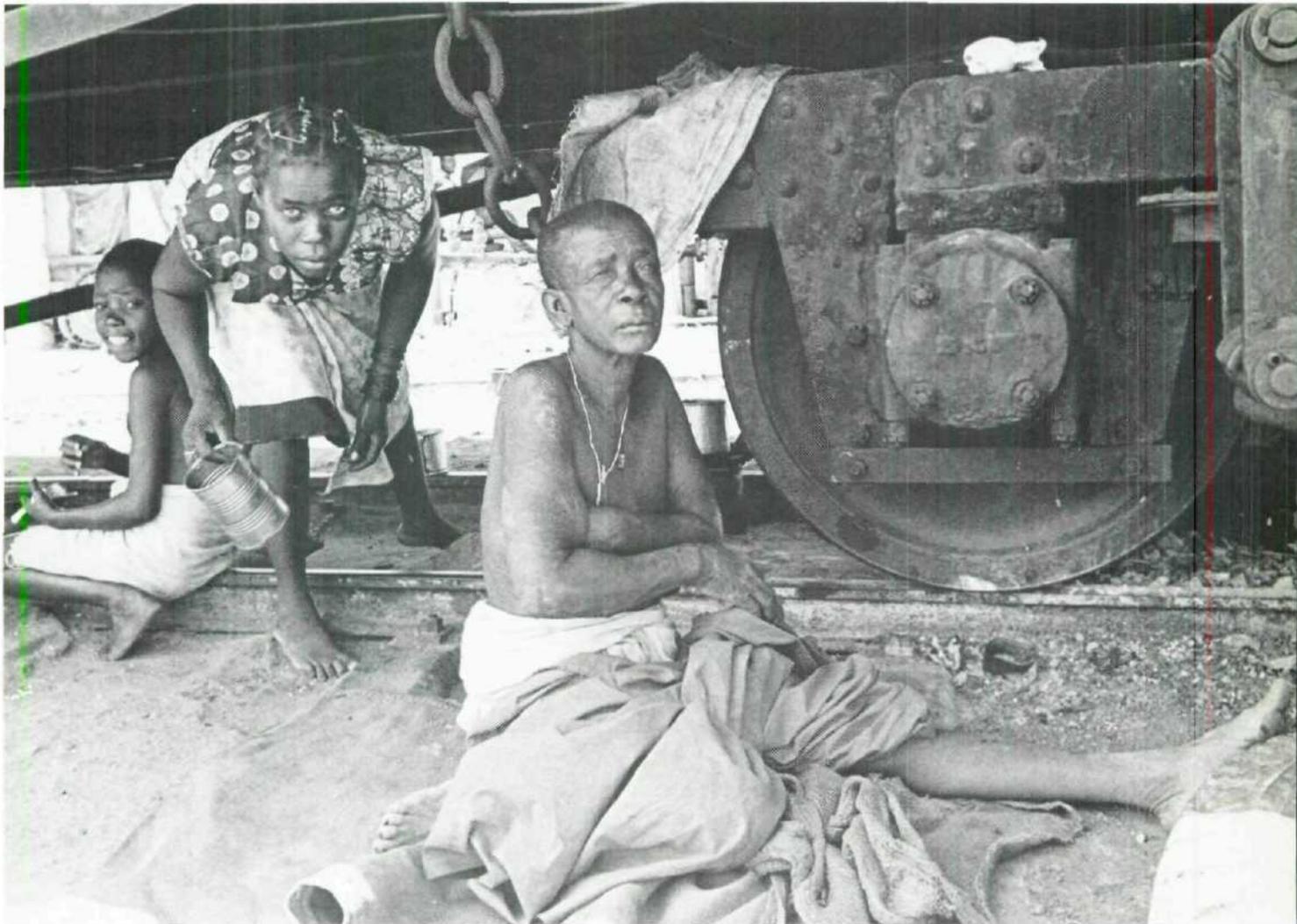
From the Red Sea to the Atlantic, failed rains this year could be the final factor deciding the fate of millions of poor farmers and nomads. Often far beyond aid supply lines, they face a simple choice: death—or survival in impoverishment, losing lands and herds, migrating into grim urban slums to await the next crisis. Even if rains come, disrupting deliveries during the hungriest time of the year, many will have already eaten or traded seeds and livestock; others are abandoning their fields in despair.

The starving seem doomed to return to Western TV sets just in time for the media to report on the triage. Despite the plethora of agency alarm bells, and no matter what new pledges are made now, it will be months before that food arrives, too late for many already going hungry. Having demanded and created early warning systems after the 1984-85 crisis, donor nations which asked, "Why are they starving again?" may soon be asking, "Why didn't we listen to the warnings this time?" ○



Railway of Refuge

By ANDREW MELDRUM



T. Driver

The Beira Corridor, connecting Zimbabwe to Mozambique's Indian Ocean port, is guarded by 10,000 Zimbabwean troops and hence has become a haven for a quarter-million Mozambicans fleeing the violence of the civil war. The city of Beira—once a popular tourist spot, but now dilapidated after years of war—is beginning to show new life, with its port bustling with traffic and a new private enterprise involvement.

Two Mozambican girls hopefully tend a stall featuring piles of mangoes and bunches of bananas while nearby a patrol of Zimbabwean soldiers guards the point where a railway bridge crosses the road. Across the heat-shimmering plain looms cloud-capped Gorongosa Mountain, stronghold of the Renamo rebels who launch murderous strikes into the countryside.

This is the Beira Corridor, the 1,980-mile route through Mozambique's narrow center which connects landlocked Zimbabwe to Beira port. Much of Mozambique's horrific rebel war has focused on the strategic transport route, along which Zimbabwe has deployed some 10,000 troops to safeguard it.

Now a jittery peace prevails over the corridor, as Renamo and President Joaquim Chissano's government have agreed to a partial ceasefire in the on-again, off-again peace talks held in Rome. In Beira itself, the port is bustling with new activity, while the city is still struggling to pull itself out of the mire of disrepair caused by years of warfare.

The uneasy peace along the Beira Corridor is in dramatic contrast to the war raging throughout the rest of the country. Following the breakdown of peace talks in Rome in January, Renamo rebels stepped up their sabotage attacks in southern Mozambique, cutting off power to Maputo for several days in February and killing 15 people at a restaurant just south of the capital.

Renamo also increased its warfare in northern Mozambique. Forty-five people were killed when the rebels attacked a convoy travelling along the Tête road connecting Zimbabwe to Malawi. The rebels have effectively closed that road, which is Malawi's lifeline for food supplies. Now all supplies to Malawi must go through Zambia, a much longer route estimated to cost nearly double that for

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freight hauled on the Tête highway.

The nervous peace along the Beira Corridor is thanks to the partial ceasefire between Renamo and the Mozambican government. According to the Rome accord, the rebels agreed not to attack the Beira Corridor or the Limpopo railway line further south as long as the 7,000 Zimbabwean army troops deployed in Mozambique are confined to a three-kilometer zone on either side of the two transport routes.

Members of the eight-nation Joint Verification Committee monitoring the ceasefire have set up an office in Chimoio, midway along the Beira route. Renamo charges that the Zimbabwean troops are breaking the

The uneasy peace along the Beira Corridor is in dramatic contrast to the war raging in the rest of the country.

ceasefire, although the eight-nation team has not been able to verify any such violations. To protest the alleged Zimbabwean violations, Renamo has repeatedly attacked the Limpopo railway line.

Ordinary Mozambicans have been quick to endorse the effectiveness of the ceasefire, flocking in their thousands to the six-kilometer-wide Beira Corridor safety zone. More than 250,000 Mozambicans are estimated to be huddled along the Beira Corridor and in some places the route resembles a long, thin refugee camp. Clusters of huts line the road, while newcomers make do in tiny thatched shelters. Sadly, drought has parched the fields of maize planted along the road. The only glimmer of economic activity is the makeshift stalls where peasants sell mangoes, bananas, and firewood to each other.



T. Driver

Road and rail traffic passes freely along the route. Cars and trucks barrel along the road, dodging large potholes at high speed for fear of a random rebel attack.

The Italian commander of the Chimoio verification team, Lt.-Col. Pasquale Cardines, said he is worried by the drought-induced hunger evident among the people living along the corridor. He is also concerned about the large number of arms in the country. Military sources estimate that as many as 1.5 million Kalashnikov rifles are circulating in Mozambique. On the Beira route, a foreign businessman was offered an automatic rifle for a two-pound sack of sugar. The combination of a concentration of hungry people and lots of rifles may well prove to be explosive.

Trish Perkins is a Christian missionary whose farm and orphanage sit atop a hill overlooking the road and rail corridor. The 50 workers at the mission sleep in the bush or hike to the nearest town because they are afraid the rebels will attack the houses.

Perkins is familiar with the terror of a Renamo attack. In 1987, she and her husband, Roy, were part of a group kidnapped by the rebels. During their four-month ordeal, the missionaries were marched to the rebels' Gorongosa headquarters and they were finally released in Malawi.

Top Renamo officials, including the information secretary, Vincente

Ululu, told Perkins that the rebels were fighting to end Mozambique's Marxist one-party rule and to bring free enterprise to the country. Now that President Chissano's government is making Mozambique a multi-party state with a market-oriented economy, Perkins asks, "What else is Renamo fighting for? I pray that [Renamo commander Afonso] Dhlakama will negotiate and not continue fighting simply for power."

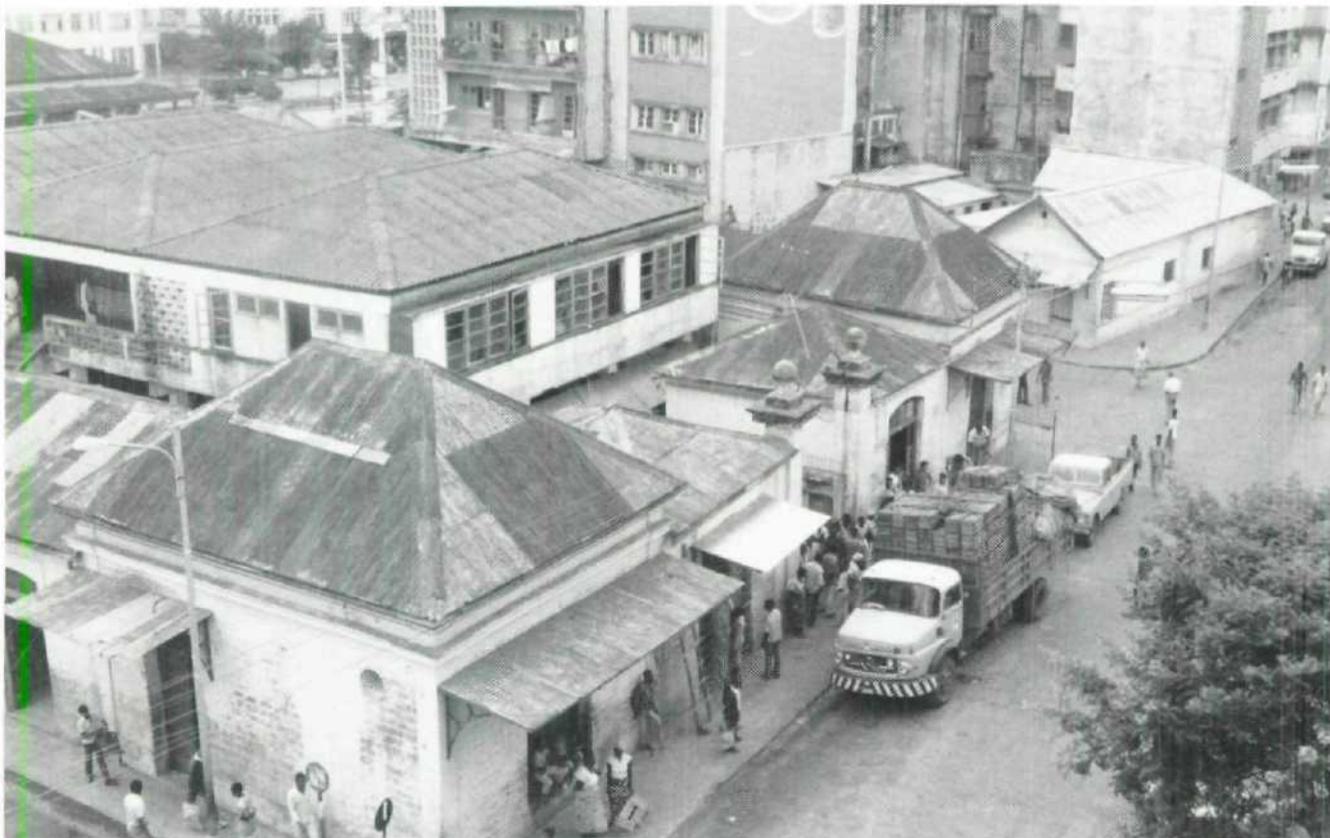
Unfortunately, the suspension of the Rome talks and the recent spate of rebel attacks indicates that Ren-

Renamo is battling with the Mozambican army to regain control of strategic areas of the northern Manica, Tête, and Sofala provinces. Once negotiations begin again—some say in April—the rebels want to control large tracts of those populous provinces and demand government representation according to their geographic control.

Even as the limited ceasefire holds along the Beira Corridor's six-kilometer-wide strip, Mozambique's war continues to grip the rest of the country. Renamo has apparently

ing standards, and the busy shipping activity contrasts sharply to the desultory, languid pace of life throughout the rest of the tropical, tattered city.

Fifteen years of the rebel war, years without the port's vital economic activity, and months on end without electricity and water have turned the once-prosperous port and flamboyant seaside resort into a ghost of its former self, seduced by its own memories and haunted by the staggering amount of work needed to bring the city back to life.



Margaret A. Novicki

Left, taking refuge from the war in disused railway wagons, Moatize

Above, the city of Beira is in an unbelievable state of disrepair

amo broke off the Rome peace talks in order to concentrate on winning as much territory as possible in northern Mozambique.

"Renamo is frightened of the prospect of national elections, which Chissano plans for later this year," said an observer. "Renamo does not have much in the way of a platform and they fear they will not win many votes. Instead, they will rely on controlling as much territory as possible."

found it is easier to terrorize people than to win their votes.

The road and rail traffic passing along the corridor is heading for the port of Beira. The city itself is in an unbelievable state of disrepair, but the port bustles with new business. Cranes hoist crates of coffee onto one ship, while containers of Canadian food aid are lifted off another freighter. Nearby, workers strain under the beating sun to lay a sturdy platform over the new concrete piles supporting the rebuilt port.

The massive construction work, carried out to the highest engineer-

The striking sight of the red windmill of the Moulin Rouge nightclub is still the first thing seen by all those leaving the port. The trademark windmill used to beckon sailors into the three-story club for food, wine, music, and an introduction to Beira's legendary ladies of the night. Today the rusting windmill tilts unsteadily, the ballroom roof has collapsed, and the plate-glass windows are long shattered. Yet, so indicative of Beira's struggle to keep going, in the cavern of the Moulin Rouge, there is a brisk business in grilling piri-piri chicken for take-out.

"I think Beira reached rock-bottom in about 1984. There was nothing to eat, nothing to market, the electricity was off, there was no water for five months. It was terrible," recalled Antonio Gaspar, shaking his head. "We couldn't get any soap, so my wife used to wash our clothes with papaya leaves."

Gaspar, 73, has lived in Beira since 1939 and can remember its peaks and troughs. "I've seen this city develop and I've experienced its deterioration. Now I want to see it come up again," said Gaspar, the commercial director of the large AMI freight firm.

Beira's story began in about 1899 when Portuguese colonialists leased the territory to the British who developed the port as the best outlet to the sea for Rhodesia. In 1939, there were three wharves handling Rhodesia's mineral exports and all its imports. Mozambique was exporting maize, grown in the area now called the Beira Corridor.

"There were 400 British here then. The city was administered under British law and we used British currency," said Gaspar. "That was really the high colonial period. All the British wore white linen suits and pith helmets to protect them from the heat. They built a trolley system and Africans would push a car carrying three or four people along the tracks."

Gaspar's assertion that it was hotter in Beira in those days seems impossible, until he explains that the streets were sand, which reflected the heat, and there were no trees for shade.

Gaspar also remembers that under British rule, he, the son of a Portuguese trader, and his African wife were not permitted into Beira's posh hotels. Then in 1949, Beira reverted to Portuguese rule. By that time, the port was so busy that many ships had to discharge their freight onto barges because there was no room at the wharves and work began to increase the port to its current 11 wharves.

By the mid-1960s, the port was handling 4 million tons of freight

annually, exports of maize, and all sorts of imports.

The Portuguese also developed Beira as a resort, building hotels, restaurants, and nightclubs. British colonialists in neighboring Rhodesia soon flocked to Beira for the sweeping beaches and lively nightlife.

Today, even the hardest-bitten ex-Rhodesians get a romantic, misty look when they talk about Beira. "Leave here [Harare] at 6 am, be in Beira by noon," said one former rugby player. "Then it was seaside cafes, *cervezas* [beer], and prawns piri piri. There was always something going on."

"Those were the times. Beira was booming," recalled Gaspar. "On holidays, the town would be full of Rhodesians, drinking beer. At the bullfights, they would jump into the ring. In town, they would drink beer and then dive into a central fountain. The police would chase them around and we all watched, it was a spectacle."

Gaspar said Beira's fevered high life continued right up to 1975 when Mozambique won its independence from Portugal. Then Beira's bubble burst. The Portuguese fled the country en masse and the new Marxist government closed its border with Rhodesia to enforce international sanctions against the Smith regime. Beira's tourism dried up and so did much of its port traffic. The decline began.

By the 1980s, the city's depression intensified as a result of Renamo's war. Cafés closed, shops were shuttered, and the port traffic slowed to a trickle of just a few hundred thousand tons. Sabotage knocked out power, water, and bridges. Refugees from the rural areas flooded the city. The city infrastructure, designed for about 70,000 people, is now straining to serve some 500,000.

Slowly, painfully, the city is stirring back to life. As in its beginnings, the port has been the focus for Beira's new growth. International aid has poured some \$370 million into rebuilding the dilapidated port and improving its transport connections. With the support of Zimbabwean

troops, the transport route from Zimbabwe to the port is relatively secure. Zimbabwe is moving one-third of its traffic through Beira and in 1990 Beira's freight was up to 2.2 million tons. By 1992, the new wharves will be completed and the goal is 5 million tons of traffic per year.

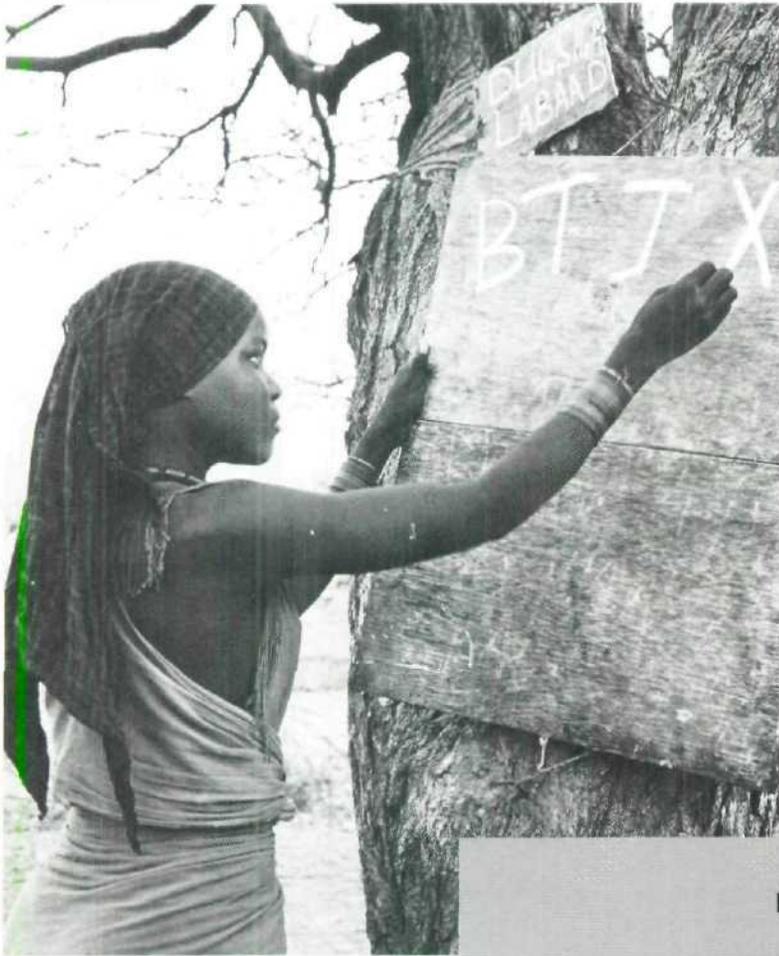
"Sometimes it's good to dream," said Antonio Magide, a Mozambican engineer overseeing work at the port. We must have targets to be able to reach them."

The electricity supply is now secure, reforms have brought back free enterprise, and there is new commercial activity in the city. Sidewalk cafes and restaurants that were closed for years are now back in business, even if what they offer is a meager Coca-Cola in a rusted can. It's a far cry from the heyday of capuccino and croissants at continental cafés, but it is a start.

The amount of work to be done is daunting. Beira's water system is on the brink of collapse. The city's roads need to be rebuilt. But every week a new store or a new business is opening in once-empty premises. The return of tourism is still a way off. Zimbabwe's Cresta hotels have a multi-million dollar plan to rebuild the seaside Dom Carlos and Estoril hotels, but work cannot begin until the refugees squatting in the hotels are rehoused. The once fabulous Grand Hotel is now a stinking squatter camp with ragamuffin children playing in the lobby and excrement-stained stairways. But amid the city's current squalor, there is an expectant hope that Beira can once again become a bright light.

"I think Beira's future is bright," said Antonio Gaspar from his office overlooking the port. "The only thing hampering progress is the war. The port is already operating well and could soon be really busy. Sofala, Manica, and Zambezia are rich provinces and we could be the urban center for all that. Even tourism could take off again, if only there were peace. We have to look forward to that. If there were peace, Beira could boom again." ○

Somali Ministry of Information



At independence, Somalia inherited three languages—Italian, English, and Arabic—but not its own. A British-naturalized Pole created the written script for the Somali language, achieving legendary status and leaving a lasting practical legacy for the Somali people.

By DENIS HERBSTEIN

THE ALPHABET WAR

There is no entry for Bogumil Witalis ("Goosh") Andrzejewski in the British *Who's Who*. Maybe he became a professor too late in his career, and his British contemporaries were given first nod. Yet, in the Horn of Africa he is considered the very finest example of an Englishman: reserved, courteous, respectful of the indigenous culture. Indeed, few living "Englishmen" have done more to improve the daily

life of a people than this naturalized Pole. Virtually unknown in Britain outside a small academic circle, in Somalia he is a legend. His achievement—to create a written script for the language of that nomadic nation. Yet his adult life began in rather more dramatic style.

When the Germans came to War-

saw, Goosh was 17, preparing for his university entrance exams. They closed the schools, threw his language on the scrapheap, sent the nation's intellectuals to Auschwitz for extermination. Goosh headed for the nearest haven, across Europe to British Palestine. The seminal event of this hazardous journey occurred

in Budapest, when he bought a tattered volume in German, *English in 30 Hours Without a Teacher*. On arrival in Haifa, he enlisted with the First Polish Carpathian Brigade, part of the British Eighth Army, and then was wounded at Tobruk. In hospital, he bounced English off his Australian, New Zealand, and British fellow-patients—to good effect, for he became an army interpreter on his release. Suffering from the aftermath of jaundice, he was put ashore in England. Within a few years he had acquired an Oxford honors degree in English.

After the war, Goosh wrote off without success for dozens of jobs in Britain and the colonies. Landing in Somalia was sheer chance. The money was poor, says Goosh, and few applied. But he happened to be the ideal choice to develop a "scientific orthography for colonial officials in British Somaliland." The government hoped the script would be accepted in schools. At Goosh's request, the project was later extended to the Italian trusteeship in the south.

A Victorian foreign secretary, Lord Salisbury, once declared Somalia to be "a coast without harbors, trade, produce, or strategic advantage. But as everybody else is fighting for it, I suppose we are bound to think it valuable." After a crash course in Somali and phonetics, Goosh, aged 28, sailed for the British north.

He teamed up with Musa Galaal, a poet and collector of oral literature. The erudite Galaal and the self-effacing Pole were well-suited. "We did not live like ex-pats," said Andrzejewski. "We had no electricity or Land Rover or servants. Sheila [his wife from Nottingham] did the cooking. There were no barriers between us and our Somali friends. I

kept my notebook in my pocket so they wouldn't be put off, and afterwards wrote down what I had heard." At the wells and villages and among the herders tending the goats and camels they listened to the language. The sounds were recorded on bakelite disks powered by a rotary converter run off the batteries of their truck. The "records" were sent back to Goosh's project supervisor, Professor Firth, at the London University School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

The international Phonetic Alphabet can cope with every sound uttered by the human head, from the lips, teeth, tongue, nose, palate, pharynx, uvula, epiglottis, larynx. No tongue, not even the clicks of the San of Namibia, is beyond its range. Over the years, hundreds of languages have been set on paper in this way. Now the two men fashioned out of it a written Somali which fitted neatly into a Roman script using the letters on a typewriter keyboard. "It was a beautiful script," says Goosh, "easy to use, like Italian."

Some letters were changed—*ch* became a guttural *h*, and *c*, a sound low in the throat which is unknown in European languages, though used by the early Hebrews. Goosh returned to London to teach Cushitic languages at SOAS, and Galaal became his researcher. They wrote their report and it was duly pigeon-holed.

On independence in 1960, Somalis inherited three official languages, Italian, English, and Arabic, but not their own. Africa is a Babel of 750 languages, yet here was a country where everyone had a means of talking to one another. Instead, children went on being taught through alien tongues. The Somali embassy in London had to employ translators to exchange messages with their own government. And, as entrants to the civil service

were required to know only one official language, they would often refuse to initial a document they did not understand.

There had been several earlier attempts to write the language down. The first, "Cismaaniya" (pronounced *osmaniya* after its inventor, Osman), invented letters to represent Somali sounds. It was very accurate but required new typewriters, printing presses, and a re-education program. Even so, in a Moslem country, it would have been natural to write in the Arabic script, but written Arabic could not comfortably contain all the sounds of Somali. Other "Moslem" languages, Turkish, Swahili, Hausa in West Africa, had long abandoned Arabic for the more expansive Roman alphabet.

But the imams were appalled at the idea of the Prophet's name being written in the letters of the infidel and the colonizer. When a language mission, of which Goosh was a member, visited Somalia in 1966, their hotel needed police protection. Goosh smiles at the passions of those times. "Certain Arab emissaries paid the rioters 10 shillings a time."

Still the politicians dithered. It took a military dictator, Siad Barre, to ram through what his democratic predecessors had balked at. On the third anniversary of his coup, at one of those tedious celebrations in the sports stadium in the capital, Mogadishu, a helicopter flew over and scattered colorful leaflets. "It was like a command from the ancient Cushitic sky god," Goosh recalls. Not the usual pep talk about scientific socialism, but strange letters with a familiar ring. The official script was to be the Andrzejewski-Galaal version, with one change (*x* for *ch*).

Siad was anything if not practical. He once declared that he had no objection to Somalis associating with expatriate Christians for materi-

Denis Herbstein's most recent book, The Devils Are Among Us—The War for Namibia, (with John Evenson) was published by Zed Books, London, and Humanities Press International, New Jersey.

al gain. But take their faith seriously, he warned, and you will be shot. Now the president launched an alphabet war. In three months, all written messages in the bureaucracy were to be in Somali only. Those who could not comply were sacked. Recalcitrant Koranic schools were threatened with loss of land and an end to their subsidies. One resister was locked up for five years. A task force of 30,000 teachers and children went into the countryside on an "instant literacy" campaign.

The script strengthened the hand of the president. It was one of the few good things Siad had done. "Like all technology," says Goosh, "writing is a two-edged sword." Policemen, civil servants, and magistrates who fled the tyrannical rule were quickly replaced by the newly lettered, who were not competent in a foreign language, and so less likely themselves to flee.

The script behind him, Goosh Andrzejewski turned to collecting Somalia's oral culture. By now he was thoroughly proficient in the language. "I usually travelled in communal taxis. I would start a poem or proverb and the other passengers would take it up. Often the drivers refused to accept my money since the passengers insisted on paying my fare. They wanted to reciprocate for my respect for their cultural heritage. Arabs and Westerners puzzled over my interest. For them Somali was a dialect, because it was not written down.

"We assume that because the West has the nuclear submarine and Africa has the dugout canoe that the culture is inferior too. The villagers were at the technological level of the biblical Abraham. But their poetry was not limited to the songs of shepherds. It was as sophisticated as Dante's, with figures of speech, metaphors, symbolism, scansion, comparable to what I had known in Poland and Oxford."

Poems have a supremely practical role in daily life. They have ousted a president (in the 1967 elections), conspired against the colonial powers, stirred clan to war against clan. The Mad Mullah, Sayyid Mohamed Abdullah Hassan, whose Dervishes outwitted the British for the first two decades of the century, doubled as the national poet. Guerrillas would carry his versified military messages through enemy lines as effectively as field telephones.

The poet, having composed in his head, recited his oeuvre to "memorizers." One recital was normally enough to remember a lengthy passage verbatim. The memorizers jumped on their horses and galloped off in sundry directions to relate the message to other memorizers at popular meeting points. They, in their turn, sped off. The pre-satellite form of mass communication stretched from the Gulf of Aden through the Ogaden and the river country of the south to the Somali speakers of northern Kenya.

The crowds at poetry recitals were "like an Elizabethan audience cutting through the complexities of a Shakespeare play." Which is why some poems have been circulating for 150 years, and were only written down recently.

The transistor radio, the tape recorder, and now the written word, have undermined the role of the memorizers. But they still practice their trade, some with a "play-back" of 15 hours. The new alphabet has had less of an impact on the nomads, who retain a refreshing shrewdness. No power ever really conquered Somalia. Their language has prevented what Goosh calls "the colonialism of the brain."

Now, 40 years after Goosh Andrzejewski first set foot in the Horn of Africa, the language is thriving. "Every language is capable of infinite expansion of vocabulary. Look how biblical Hebrew has

become a tool of a technological state." Thanks to the "infidel" script, math and physics are taught in Somali in schools, though for the time being Italian is used in the university. The largest dictionary already has 40,000 words, yet gaps remain.

When no word exists, they are wary of co-opting the European version. Not for them "Somalglish." The first satellite became *dayax-gacmed*, hand-made moon. "Triangle" has a practical ring—*saddexagal*, from *saddex* (three) and *xagal* (bend of a limb).

When President Siad Barre was overthrown earlier this year, he left only one practical legacy—the written language. Goosh, now Emeritus Professor of Cushitic Languages at SOAS, still appears at academic shindigs where the minuscule group of the world's Somali specialists gathers to discuss syntax and hybrid verbs.

And in his maisonette at Harpenden near London, Goosh, assisted by Sheila, is preparing another substantial contribution to his adopted culture with a translation of the classical period of Somali poetry.

In a tower block in the East End of London, Mohamud Jama Galaal, a young Somali poet, nods toward the man chewing hard on his Somali-style dried meat: "I have never heard a non-Somali speak it like him."

At Bush House, home of the BBC's World Service, Rashid Hassan talks of "the premier Somali language scholar, one of the founders of our script." Florence Akst, present head of the Somali service, says that "though others also played a role in the script, it was Goosh who cut the Gordian knot."

And renown in a restaurant in Berbera, north Somalia. A waiter: "It's funny, I know your voice, but I don't know your face." Another waiter: "That's the infidel who speaks on the radio." ○

***Fighting Years: Black Resistance and the Struggle for a New South Africa*, by Steve Mufson (Beacon Press. Boston: 1990. 360 pp. \$24.95)**

I do not believe that South Africa's liberation can be a gift of history, God, a revolutionary vanguard, or foreigners wielding economic sanctions. Black South Africans are the driving force for change within their own society."

When Steve Mufson arrived in South Africa in November 1984, he was there to write a piece on nuclear arms proliferation for *The Wall Street Journal*. He did not intend to stay there long. Yet it was three years and three visits later, a total of 25 months, when he finally left, not by his own choice. He was expelled by the South African government.

South Africa has cast its spell on many a visitor: teachers, church workers, academics, and journalists. Within a matter of weeks or even days, they are sucked in, consumed, mesmerized by the unfolding drama that is South Africa. Yet few become as immersed as Mufson, as is evident in *Fighting Years*.

The cataclysmic years of the mid-1980s resulted in unprecedented press coverage in the U.S. Television viewers were offered a daily diet of riots and searing violence. But what was often not provided was a look behind the masks: the thousands of ordinary people, the hundreds of organizations, and the events that led up to the conflict.

Now, as South Africa makes its shaky way to the negotiation table, *there is a lack of understanding of, firstly, who all these millions of black South Africans are, and secondly, what mark the mid-1980s might have left on them.*

Fighting Years goes a long way in filling that gap. It is not a mere documentation, a week by week recounting of those hurly-burly years. Mufson's pen goes beyond the barricades and into the black communities, organizations, and households, from the sprawling townships of the Transvaal to the dusty towns of the Eastern Cape, right up face-to-face with not only the leadership figures of the day, but also the men, women, and children.

SOUTH AFRICA AS SEEN BY JOURNALISTS

What is clear is that his interviews were not inspired by the need to find the requisite number of quotes for newspaper articles. He talks to hundreds of people with a fascination and an empathy for their plight. It could not have been an easy feat to achieve for the very practical reason that at the time whole communities were taking on the South African police and army, and any person wishing to be there was in grave danger.

Fighting Years is first and foremost a tribute to these ordinary people who challenged the South African regime: the youths that took to the streets, the children of June 1976 who formed a solid core of young, local leadership, the singers and poets who became the soul of the nation, the workers in the mines and factories. Yet it is not a sentimental, uncritical tribute. Mufson does not flinch from the fratricidal violence that burst with grim frequency onto the streets.

Instead, he offers a clear explanation of the events leading up to the mid-1980s. Why, when it was the black consciousness organizations that dominated in the 1970s, did the non-racial organizations of the United Democratic Front and the African National Congress rise to the fore? *Fighting Years* carefully uncovers the layers of black resistance this century—the long history of the ANC, the rise of the trade union movement, the impact of art and

culture—and the twists and turns of government response, usually brutal, and how that in turn affected resistance.

One is left with a picture of who the contenders are now—the ANC, Inkatha, the PAC, and other smaller political groupings—and where they came from. And one is left sharing Mufson's awe at the sheer bravery of the thousands that took on the might of the South African government, and ultimately forced it to the negotiation table.

***The Mind of South Africa*, by Allister Sparks (Alfred A. Knopf. New York: 1990. 424 pp. \$24.95)**

This is an awesome task," Allister Sparks admits in his author's note. And so it is. For this book is many things: a history of South Africa, an exploration of the minds of those who inhabit it, and an examination of the author's own beliefs and feelings as a fifth-generation South African.

A lesser writer would have failed. But with rigorous research combined with the deft journalistic touch of 30 years' experience and the compassion of a patriot, Sparks infuses the text with a landscape of detail mixed with insightful analysis, breathing life into history and politics.

Drawing on a plethora of historical material, Sparks provides fresh detail to those who consider themselves familiar with South Africa's history. Who would have guessed that the song "Transvaal My Country," of nationalistic importance to the Afrikaners during the years of the Boer War, was a hit in Moscow at the time?

Sparks goes to great lengths to make this a book about people. The forces of politics and economics must come second. This emphasis is understood in the light of his reference to an African proverb: "People are people through other people," or *Ubuntu*. It is a recurring theme and one in which Sparks puts great store. It is this philosophy, or way of life, that he trusts as the ultimate redeemer of South Africa. Yes, history is the conflict between people, but for Sparks it is also the battle that takes place within every person, of good against evil. And it is Sparks' belief in the ultimate goodness of

Reviewed by JEREMY BORAINÉ

people that gives rise to his cautious optimism in his conclusion.

His best chapters deal with those people "who became, surely, the simplest and most backward fragment of Western civilization in modern times"—the Afrikaners. Sometimes a neglected tribe, they are often best known for their hateful invention of apartheid and coarse accents. Little is known about what gave rise to these people, but Sparks carefully traces their arrival from Holland, a country at the time fighting for independence from Spain. He follows their migration into the interior, along with the growth of a fierce obsession for land and isolation.

It is only two centuries later, at the turn of the 1800s, that a nationalism is forged. Here the book delves deep into Calvinism and the debates of the influential Dutch theologians. It also draws parallels with the national socialism of Europe in the 1930-40s.

Sparks is not unmoved by the plight of the Afrikaners. He quotes an Afrikaans journalist of the 1930s, Schalk Pienaar, to highlight their dilemma: "Unlike the English in India and the Dutch in Indonesia, the Afrikaner has nowhere to go. For him there is no Britain and no Holland to return to; for him no central shrine of national existence to survive the death of the outposts. On the soil of Africa he, and with him his history, culture, and language, stay or perish."

In doing so, Sparks goes far beyond the usual cataloguing of apartheid legislation and vilification of a people. Yet he does not downplay their role in the history of South Africa. He exposes their perverted morality that gave rise to apartheid. Sparks has a term for the inward obsession of the Afrikaners, their blindness to the world around them: *narcissism*.

My major criticism of the book is its coverage of black resistance. It is certainly not absent, but one gains the impression of a weak and disorganized rabble, and it is almost something of a shock when one remembers just how far South Africa has come in the last 10 years. Who is to take credit for these changes? This book suggests that the moral bankruptcy of a society leads to such rottenness that decay and collapse

are inevitable. That may be so, but certain forces are always there to guide and accelerate that collapse.

However, justice is done to a people's ability to survive three centuries of domination. *Ubuntu* is central to that survival, adapted to the harsh squalor of township slums and the wretched poverty of the rural wastelands.

Despite the fact that this book was finished before the watershed of 1990—the release of political prisoners, the unbanning of parties, the talk of negotiations—Sparks offers an insightful assessment of the possible direc-

tions that South Africa could take. He poses the question on the lips of many: Will South Africa slide into the abyss of violence and disorder? His answer: "The new South Africa will not be born soon and it will not be born easily. But it will be born. And when it is, South Africa will cease to be a world symbol of racism and division and become a symbol instead of national reconciliation and racial harmony." People are a people through other people. ■

Jeremy Boraine is a South African freelance journalist based in New York.

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Published in London. Subscription Rates (6 issues a year): £7.50 UK;

£10.50 (US\$16) Overseas; £13.50 (US\$22) airmail.

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