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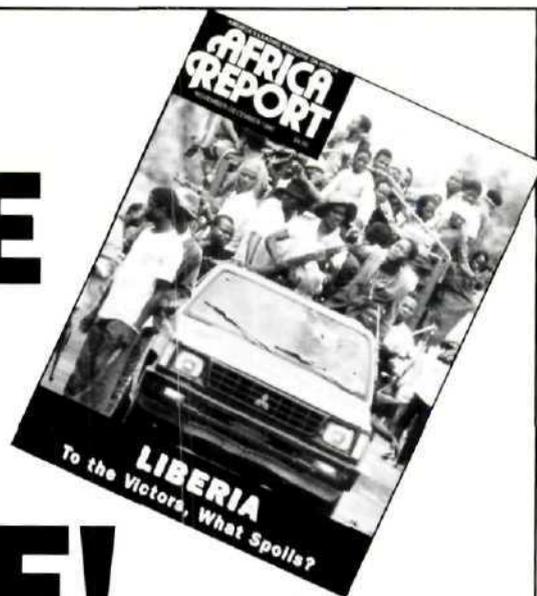
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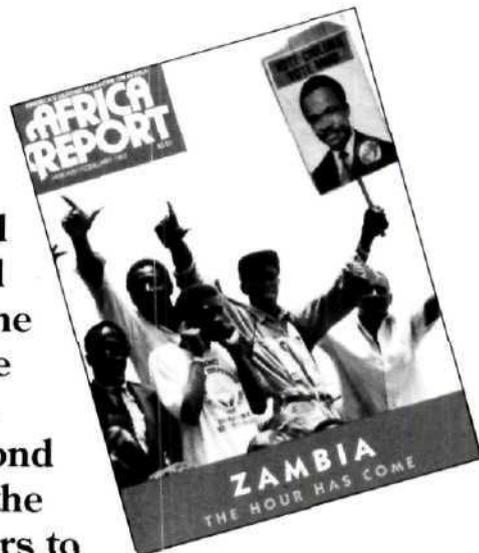
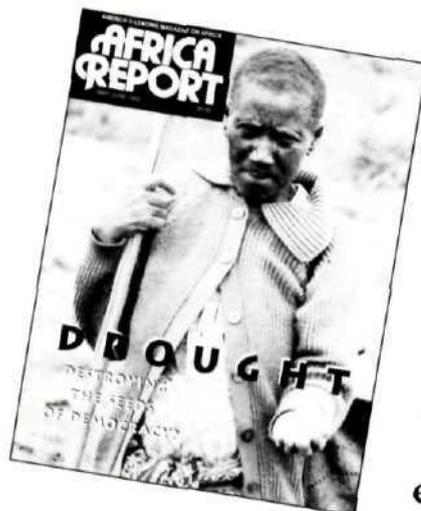
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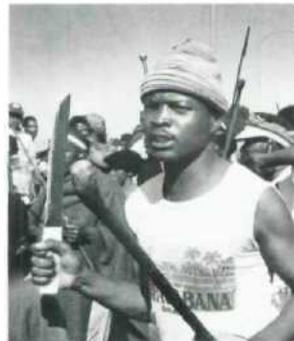
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State of Emergency
Page 13



Tough Talks
Page 25



Elder Statesmen
Page 44



Democracy's Gauge
Page 60

Update

Editor: Russell Geekie

5

Zambia

History Repeats Itself
By Melinda Ham

13

Malawi

Banda's Last Waltz
By Melinda Ham

17

Mozambique

Life After Landmines
By Dan Isaacs

22

South Africa

Finding Common Ground
By Patrick Laurence

25

Problem Child

By Anne Shepherd

28

Egypt

Terror on the Nile
By Sarah Gauch

32

Sudan

While the People Starve
By Mark Huband

36

Western Sahara

The Forgotten Front
By Alfred Hermida

40

Somalia

The Best Chance for Peace
By Rakiya Omaar

44

Senegal

Diouf's Tarnished Victory
By Peter da Costa

49

Zaire

Permanent Anarchy?
By Makau wa Mutua

52

Liberia

An Uncivil War
By Janet Fleischman

56

Media

The Measure of Freedom
By Barry Shelby

60

Democracy

Officers and Politicians
By William J. Foltz

64

Culture

A Celebration of Cinema
By David Turecamo

68

The Back Page

By Steve McDonald

70



UPDATE

IN THE NEWS

The ANC's Most Popular Militant Assassinated

On Saturday morning, April 10, Chris Hani, the South African Communist Party chief and ANC national executive committee member, was gunned down in the driveway of his home by a white extremist, Janusz Walus. The assassination of the ANC's most popular leader after Nelson Mandela was a major blow to the organization, which had relied on Hani to sell its negotiating stance to South Africa's militant youth.

Against a backdrop of fears that the murder would trigger an unprecedented escalation in the violence plaguing South Africa, hard-liners in the Congress called for the suspension of recently resumed multi-party negotiations on South Africa's future. Instead, the ANC leadership quickly reaffirmed its commitment to the process and called for peace.

Suddenly, the Congress seemed closer to power than ever. It was ANC President Nelson Mandela—and not State President F.W. de Klerk—who appeared on South African television calling for calm the day of the assassination, an implicit acknowledgement by the government that it needed the Congress to govern.

But the ANC strategy to channel black anger to hasten the demise of white rule—without breaking off negotiations—also exposes a potential vulnerability of the organization: It risks attaining power without the support of the militants it is now largely using to get there. And it no longer has Chris Hani to bring the youth back into the fold.

For the ANC, there is simply no substitute for the charismatic Hani. There is probably no national leader with his militant credentials and popularity, let alone one who is willing to urge support for peaceful negotiations. As former commander of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, and head of the South African Communist Party since December 1991, as well as being feared and hated as a "communist demon" by many white

South Africans, Hani's credentials as a militant were never challenged by the "young lions," who regularly accuse other leaders of selling out.

For the ANC, the challenge in the wake of the assassination was to channel the fury of the militants into peaceful mass action protests, and it frequently recalled the slain leader to achieve this. "Chris Hani was a soldier," Mandela said in a second nationally televised speech on the eve of a day of national mourning on April 14. "He believed in iron discipline. He carried out instructions to the letter. Any lack

of discipline is trampling on the values that Chris Hani stood for," Mandela said.

In comments directed at the group most incensed by the loss of Hani, he said, "To the youth of South Africa we have a special message: You have lost a great hero. You have repeatedly shown that your love of freedom is greater than that most precious gift, life itself. But you are the leaders of tomorrow. Your country, your people, your organization needs you to act with wisdom."

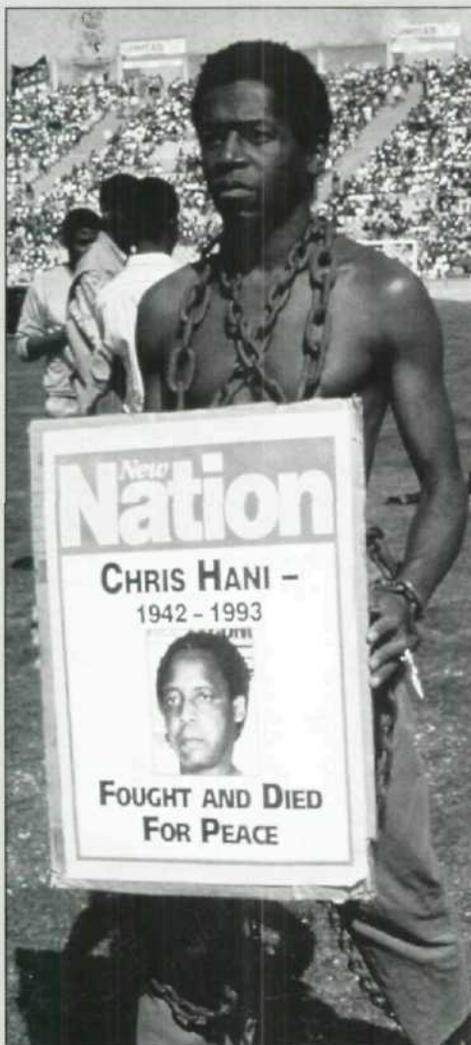
The ANC's calls for disciplined mass protest are widely credited with having defused tensions in the wake of Hani's assassination. Nonetheless, success for the ANC meant that it was able to keep disorder to a minimum, and bloody incidents took place all over South Africa.

Among the episodes that made the headlines in the first few days of the crisis was the killing of three whites on April 11. The men were burnt to death by angry blacks after attending an illegal bar in a township near Cape Town, fueling fears of a race war.

Then on April 14, during a national protest strike and on the day of mourning for Hani, riots broke out across South Africa, leaving at least eight dead and millions of dollars in damage. In Cape Town, where ANC marshals were unable to control protesters, a senior Congress leader, Trevor Manuel, was punched in the face when he confronted an unruly demonstrator.

ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa called the actions of the protesters "measured," considering the anger Hani's assassination generated and the scope of the mass strike, which the Congress said brought over 1.5 million people into the streets.

But the violence aside, protesters made known their displeasure with the ANC's "soft line" toward the government. At a rally in Soweto, Mandela's assertion that the National Party had expressed its sympathy over Hani's



For the ANC, there is no substitute for the charismatic Hani

Patrick Roberts/Sygnia

death was met by jeers. At the same rally, hard-line black leaders, including the Pan Africanist Congress head, Clarence Makwetu, received thunderous applause.

The worst incident of the day took place when demonstrators, who had been at the rally, marched on a nearby police station. Security forces opened fire on the protesters, leaving four dead and as many as 250 wounded. But the Congress continued to call for restraint.

That Chris Hani's funeral itself on April 19 passed without major incident bode well for the ANC's efforts to show that it has control over its followers. Tens of thousands of mourners viewed Hani's body in a soccer stadium outside Soweto, before he was brought to Boksburg to be buried.

The ANC has used the crisis—and its successful reaction to it—to press de Klerk to speed the transition to democracy. This—the thinking in the ANC leadership goes—could be the best way to shore up support among its increasingly impatient young militants. Specifically, the ANC is demanding that it be included immediately in running government, that its guerrilla wing be integrated into South Africa's security forces without delay, and that an early date be set for the elections, which both parties previously agreed would be held by April 1994.

Another demand the ANC and other black groups have called for from the onset of the crisis is a proper investigation into Hani's murder. Anything less could lend credence to charges by some black leaders and their followers that the government was an accomplice to the crime, potentially crippling the negotiations. Because of fears that the police might try to cover up state complicity in the assassination, the investigation is being monitored by two Scotland Yard policemen and a German officer.

To date, the only direct connection between the government and the assassination is that the gun used to kill Hani was one of the weapons the right-wing Afrikaner nationalist Piet Rudolph stole from an air force garrison in April 1990. Upon his release from prison in 1991 under South Africa's amnesty, Rudolph declared that he had carried out the crime with cooperation from within the military.

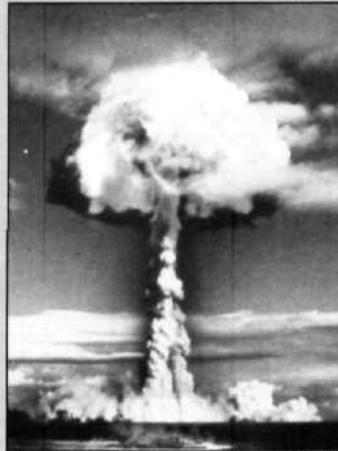
Few analysts expect the government to be implicated in Hani's assassination. But evidence that the killing was a right-wing conspiracy has mounted

since police arrested Walus, a 40-year-old Polish immigrant and member of the neo-fascist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), half an hour after he committed the crime. By April 21, police had arrested six figures in connection with the case, including prominent members of the Conservative Party, the official opposition in Parliament.

In the meantime, the ANC continues to push de Klerk to speed up the transition to majority rule. And while it battles to keep the left-leaning youth in its ranks, it must also contend with the conservative Inkatha Freedom Party which threatens to sabotage any agreements made between the Congress and the government. ■

De Klerk: South Africa Had the Bomb

South African President F.W. de Klerk confirmed on March 24 what international atomic experts had long suspected—that South Africa had produced weapons-grade uranium and used it to manufacture a nuclear bomb. In breaking the news to a specially summoned joint session of Parliament in Cape Town, de Klerk admitted that his country built six crude atomic bombs and was at work on a seventh



UN/Sygnma

when it decided to dismantle its 15-year clandestine nuclear weapons program in 1989.

De Klerk told Parliament that South Africa devised and built its bombs without help from other countries, contradicting widely held suspicions by experts and diplomats that several foreign countries had collaborated in the development of South Africa's nuclear programs. "I wish to emphasize that at no time did South Africa acquire nuclear weapons technology or materials from another country, nor has it provided any to any other country, or cooperated with another country in this regard," de Klerk said.

The president also told lawmakers that the decision to build the weapons in 1974 was taken "against the background of a Soviet expansionist threat in southern Africa, as well as prevailing uncertainty concerning the designs of the Warsaw Pact." He insisted that the bombs were built purely as a deterrent and that his country never intended to use them. Instead, the strategy was that if the situation in southern Africa deteriorated seriously, South Africa would detonate a test device to demonstrate its nuclear capability, and threaten to use the weapon unless the U.S. intervened.

De Klerk said his country decided to dismantle the weapons soon after he came to power in September 1989 because of a changed international climate, noting the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall. "In such circumstances, a nuclear deterrent had become not only superfluous, but in fact an obstacle to the development of South Africa's international relations," he said.

Critics say, however, that the government's decision to rid itself of the nuclear program was motivated by a desire to prevent its atomic weapons from falling into the hands of a future majority-rule government. The U.S. and other foreign governments had reportedly been putting pressure on Pretoria to destroy any nuclear weapons technology and high grade uranium before a new government, most likely dominated by the ANC, comes to power. Washington is reported to have been particularly concerned with the ANC's links with Libya.

De Klerk said his country's decision to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in July 1991, and its subsequent strict adherence to the pact, is proof of the country's willingness to eradicate its nuclear program. Noting that South Africa has been cooperating fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the nuclear watchdog group, de Klerk added that the IAEA inspectors will now have "full access" to inspect the facilities of the program and to satisfy themselves that there is nothing hidden and nothing to hide. "South Africa's hands are clean and we are concealing nothing," he said.

Officials of the IAEA in Vienna welcomed de Klerk's statement and said that

Continued on page 11

MALI

Student unrest brought down the 10-month-old government of Prime Minister Younoussi Touré on April 9, 11 months after Mali held its first multi-party elections since independence.

Months of demonstrations by students demanding larger grants reached a flashpoint in the capital, Bamako, on April 5. Several dozen university students set fire to the new National Assembly building, offices of the ruling Alliance for Democracy in Mali party, President Alpha Konaré's private residence, the Minister of State for National Education Baba Akhib Haidarra's house, and the homes of other state officials.

Later in the day in a statement broadcast by Radiodiffusion-Television Malienne, the prime minister appealed for calm and said the students' acts of violence were no longer educational but had become political. Four days later he resigned.

In an April 9 address to the nation in which Konaré accepted the resignation of Touré and thanked his government for their dedication and sacrifices, the president said, "The situation concerns not just one man, nor a government. It attacks the very foundation of the republic and of democracy." He asked the Malian students not to "destroy, or accept that you have to destroy, public property or the property of others, for they constitute your only heritage tomorrow, your only trump card."

On April 13, Konaré appointed Abdoulaye Sekou Sow prime minister. Sow had served as minister of state in charge of defense under Touré.

NIGERIA

The Nigerian government's blueprint for the nomination of presidential candidates came to a successful conclusion at the end of March when Alhaji Bashir Tofa and Chief Moshood Abiola were chosen to be the two candidates in the country's presidential elections, scheduled for June 12.

Tofa, a wealthy businessman who had been financial secretary for the now-defunct National Party of Nigeria, was nominated to be the presidential candidate of the National Republican Convention at the party's March 28 convention in the city of Port Har-

POLITICAL POINTERS

court. The Muslim candidate from Kano state won the votes of 4,218 of the 5,307 delegates in a four-way race. On April 20, Tofa chose Sylvester Ugoh, a former minister of science and technology, to be his running mate.

Chief Abiola became the Social Democratic Party's candidate after defeating Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe the same day in the city of Jos. Having received the votes of 2,683 of his party's 5,139 delegates, the Yoruba businessman from southwestern Nigeria (who is also wealthy) was expected to choose a running mate from the north to bolster his support there.

The campaign period, which began in April, was scheduled to end on June 11.

Nigeria's military ruler of seven years, President Ibrahim Babangida, has promised to step down when power is turned over to a civilian government, scheduled for August 27. However, skeptical Nigerians were not surprised to hear an April 8 radio report from Lagos which reported that the military government had given the National Electoral Commission the power to postpone the June 12 presidential elections "indefinitely" in the event of unfair election practices. The last attempt to hold presidential elections in Nigeria was brought to an abrupt halt last October when the government disqualified all the candidates for their part in campaign fraud, which included widespread vote-buying.

Nigerians are hoping the relative calm and cooperation that characterized the primaries from the time they began on February 6 holds for the upcoming elections.

ANGOLA

Angolan government delegates and representatives of the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita) began a round of United Nations-sponsored peace talks in Côte d'Ivoire's capital, Abidjan, on April 12.

Unita, which failed to attend the last round of UN-sponsored negotiations in February, reportedly agreed to

send its delegation after being pressured to do so by the United States.

Despite Unita's stunning victories in the war since it resumed fighting last November (it controls at least 70 percent of the country), both sides in the conflict concede that an all-out victory is impossible.

One of Unita's main demands is that a transitional government be set up in which it has equal footing with the Angolan government. The government is demanding that Unita recognize the results of last September's election and abide by the 1991 cease-fire agreement.

The fighting over the last six months has left at least 15,000 Angolans dead.

RWANDA

By March 19 the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) had returned to positions it held before the latest round of fighting between the rebel group and the Rwandan military broke out on February 8.

The RPF's withdrawal from the northern districts of Ruhengeri, Byumba, and Mutara was confirmed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU)-sanctioned Military Observer Group (MOG). Under an agreement between the military and the RPF, the MOG will administer the recently demilitarized zones.

The RPF troop withdrawals have led to a French commitment to remove a contingent of soldiers it sent to the country in early February ostensibly to protect its estimated 400 nationals from the fighting. The RPF had earlier accused the French of aiding Rwandan government troops, a charge confirmed by observers from the OAU.

The RPF instigated the latest round of fighting when it attacked government positions in northern Rwanda in response to the slaughter of Tutsi there at the hands of Hutus. The Tutsi-dominated RPF accused the government of complicity in the attacks which left more than 300 dead. The ethnic bloodshed in the north began shortly after the RPF and the government signed a peace agreement in Arusha, Tanzania, on January 9.

In April, talks in Arusha between the two sides continued on the composition of a future Rwandan army, comprising both rebel and government soldiers.

AFRICAN OUTLOOK

Eritrea Votes to Become Africa's Newest Nation

Cameraspix



After 30 years of fighting, Eritreans are turning to the task of nation building

After winning a 30-year armed struggle to break away from Ethiopia in 1991—first against the forces of Emperor Haile Selassie, and then against Mengistu Haile Mariam's Marxist Dergue—Eritrea is poised to become Africa's newest nation on May 24. The Red Sea territory's voters decided overwhelmingly in favor of independence in a United Nations-sponsored referendum in late April.

The groups that forced Mengistu from power agreed to the referendum at the Democratic and Peaceful Transitional Conference of Ethiopia held in Addis Ababa in July 1991. In return, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)—which began its secessionist struggle when the province was annexed by Selassie in 1962 and attended the conference as an observer—has promised that an independent Eritrea will not impede access to the Red Sea ports of Massawa and Assab. This was a crucial condition for the other parties—including the dominant Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)—because Ethiopia will be landlocked after Eritrea's independence.

Despite the agreement, resistance to Eritrea's self-rule continued in Ethiopia up until the referendum. The most organized and vocal opposition to the secession came from Amharas in the capital, Addis Ababa, who ruled the nation when Mengistu was in power. In January, demonstrations turned violent when Amharic students protested

against UN support for the referendum during a visit to the capital by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Security forces opened fire on the demonstrators, killing several of them.

In an interview with local journalists on January 30, Ethiopia's President Meles Zenawi, who supports Eritrea's right to self-determination, declared that

"the issue of [the] referendum is not something that can be solved by student demonstrations. Indeed, even the military force of the Dergue failed to stop it." He cautioned that refusing Eritrean independence would lead to "needless fighting" that his country could ill afford.

On top of convincing Ethiopians of the need for the referendum, Eritreans also faced the reluctance of the international community to support the vote because of fears that it would set a precedent for other separatist movements across the globe. Significantly, the Organization of African Unity (OAU)—with a policy not to support secessionist movements all but built into its charter—agreed to send a delegation to supervise the referendum. The OAU's ambassador to the UN, Ibrahim Sy, said the decision to send an observer team to the vote was taken in accordance with the UN General Assembly's approval of the referendum and Ethiopia's request that the mission be sent.

The UN mission to monitor the vote, headed by Samir Sanbar of Lebanon, was also joined by several other international observer teams including the Arab League and the U.S.-based African-American Institute. In a March meeting between Sanbar and the head of the transitional government, EPLF Secretary-General Isaias Afwerki, to discuss the UN's role in the referendum, the EPLF leader expressed hope that the UN would

play a significant role in Eritrea's reconstruction efforts, according to the Asmara-based Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea radio.

In an interview with *Africa Report*, Vicky Rentmeesters, director of research and information for the Eritrean mission to the U.S. and Canada, outlined areas in which her country needs international assistance. "Reconstruction will be our number one priority. We have places where entire cities are just bombed flat—the roads are really messed up, and all kinds of communications are destroyed. Agriculture has also been disrupted by the war and the bad drought in the 1980s. By the end of the war, about 80 percent of the people depended on relief supplies for food," she said.

Eritrea's scarce resources will also be strained by attempts to repatriate refugees who fled during the war. Many who have returned to Eritrea found their towns in ruins with the provisional government unable to meet their basic needs. "Half a million of the refugees are in Sudan and they want to come home. They are coming home to a village where there is no home, no school, and no health care," Rentmeesters said.

To date, however, Eritrea has basically been "going it alone" in its reconstruction efforts. Because the status of the territory was in limbo, donors have only provided humanitarian aid. But Eritrean leaders fear that the large amounts of aid the reconstruction of the province requires will not be forthcoming—even when Eritrea is independent, as worse-off countries in the region and elsewhere compete for ever scarcer resources. According to *African Business*, the post-war reconstruction is expected to cost \$2.5 billion, of which only \$140 million has been pledged by donors thus far.

Another potential problem facing an independent Eritrea is the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, and a possible split between Muslims and Christians. As part of an effort to guard against this threat and with an eye on the ethnic factionalism that has plagued virtually every other country in the region, Isaias

Continued on next page

Who Attacked Eyadema's Compound?

On March 25, a group of commandos stormed President Gnassingbé Eyadema's military compound in northern Lomé, killing at least one high-ranking officer and fatally wounding another before retreating across the border into Ghana. The apparent target of the attack, Eyadema himself, emerged unscathed.

Togo's Defense Minister Inoussa Bouraima condemned the raid hours later as an attempt by opposition forces to disrupt the work of Togo's six-week-old "crisis government" and "end the democratic process in our country," according to a Togolese radio report monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

But Togo's Collective of Democratic Opposition (COD-2)—which doesn't recognize the government and refuses to call off a devastating four-month-old general strike aimed at forcing political change—has denied any involvement in the attack. In an interview with Africa No. 1 radio on March 30, opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio said, "One wonders whether the attempt on [Eyadema's] life was not a ploy by the general himself." The opposition speculated that the raid was orchestrated to dispose of key military personnel whom the president perceives as a threat.

Indeed, at least 50 soldiers sought refuge in Ghana after 17 servicemen were killed in what was rumored to be a military purge. Many of the soldiers who fled Togo's ranks claimed that the purge was directed against elements of the army who do not belong to General Eyadema's ethnic group, the Kabyé.

In an April 3 communique, the ministry of defense denied reports of "ethnic cleansing, manhunting, and massive desertion." While it was acknowledged that one officer had been beaten to death by Togolese soldiers for his alleged involvement in planning the raid, officials claimed that any deserters were "beginning to return to the...great family of the Togolese Armed Forces."

The defense ministry also accused the Ghanaian govern-

ment of training the forces that staged the March 25 attack. But Togo's western neighbor dismissed the indictment, accusing Eyadema of "laying the foundations for aggression." While concerns persist that the long-standing antagonism between Eyadema and Ghana's President Jerry Rawlings could escalate into an armed conflict, officials in Ghana insist that their country has no intention of adding to Togo's growing political turmoil.

Relations between Togo and its eastern neighbor, Benin, have also been strained. Most recently, Benin's President Nicéphore Soglo expressed his apologies to Eyadema after the COD-2, meeting in Benin's capital, Cotonou, on March 22, nominated Jean-Lucien Savi de Tové as prime minister—despite Eyadema's having reappointed Joseph Kokou Koffigoh to the position on February 11.

Koffigoh—whom the transitional High Council of the Republic made prime minister in 1991 after it stripped Eyadema of power—has fallen out of favor with the opposition for his continual compromises with Eyadema.

While the COD-2's nomination of Savi de Tové awaited approval of the HCR, Defense Minister Bouraima declared the HCR's maneuver unconstitutional and warned, "These people forget that Togo already has a legitimate government that is working for the restoration of peace and concord."

But it was because of the government's failure to promote peace and national concord that France and other Western donors suspended aid to Togo earlier this year. While the recent replacement of France's socialist government by a conservative administration has sparked some optimism in the Togolese government, it is premature to assume that Eyadema will be able to recapture sorely needed aid and diplomatic support from Togo's former colonial ruler. The new French administration has already followed the lead of the old in refusing to issue a visa to Zairian dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. ■

Eritrea *Continued*

has said future political parties will not be allowed to form along religious or tribal lines. Eritrean schoolchildren over the age of 11 are also now all being taught English to help defuse tension between the nine different language groups.

Indeed, the unity the territory has shown—cemented during 30 years of war—is a hopeful sign for its future. But Eritrea has more than its unity going for it. The East African nation has a wealth of unexploited resources including copper, gold, oil, and gas.

Should the unity hold, the reconstruction effort get the foreign support it requires, and Eritrea's many skilled workers return home (almost a third of the territory's registered voters live abroad), Africa's youngest nation should have a recipe for success. ■

BCP Finally Takes Power in Lesotho

Two decades of rule by decree or the gun came to an end on March 27 when Lesotho's voters went to the polls and gave the Basutholand Congress Party (BCP) a landslide victory over its main rival, the Basotho National Party (BNP).

The election results—a sweep of all 65 constituencies for the BCP—were particularly sweet for the party's founder and leader, Ntsu Mokhehle. The 74-year-old Mokhehle has been waiting to take power since his party was robbed of a victory in the last general elections in 1970. The then-ruling BNP cancelled the elections, suspended the constitution, and outlawed the BCP.

The wait continued for Mokhehle after Lesotho's military government—which seized power from the BNP in 1986—promised in 1991 to

return the country to civilian rule, only to postpone polling four times since last May.

When the elections were finally held, many feared a return of the inter-party violence that marked the 1970 elections in which 500 people were killed. But with soldiers guarding shops and government buildings as people went to the polls, the voting was characterized by cooperation and relative calm.

In a view echoed by other international observer teams, the Commonwealth Observer Group declared "that those who voted were able to freely and fairly exercise their views." While no significant irregularities were reported, some minor setbacks included a five hour delay in the opening of most of the

Continued on page 11

Moi Rejects 'Unrealistic, Dictatorial' IMF Reforms

"The action of the government was intended to save the economy from collapse and to alleviate the suffering of the majority of Kenyans. It was not intended to result in a break with the IMF or the World Bank," Kenya's Finance Minister Musalia Mudavadi said on March 26. But the government's action a few days earlier—the reversal of free market reforms that had been implemented at the behest of the International Monetary Fund—confirmed that a crisis had indeed developed between Kenya and the lending agencies.

Kenya rejected the reforms after the international donor community adopted the IMF position that the one-time "model of capitalism" in Africa had not done enough to warrant a resumption of aid which has been cut off since November 1991 pending economic and political changes. "Unilateralist, unrealistic, harsh, and dictatorial," were words President Daniel arap Moi used to describe the IMF's policies at the onset of the crisis, which is viewed as a challenge to the conditions Western donors place on aid to the continent.

Critics were quick to draw parallels between Moi's rift with the IMF and then-President Kenneth Kaunda's high-profile challenge to the Fund's policies in 1987. Like Moi, Kaunda lambasted the IMF when he decided to abandon the agency's economic adjustment program—only to resume the reforms in 1989. And like Kaunda's actions, Moi's criticisms of the IMF and World Bank are public expressions of what is said behind closed doors by other leaders throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Should Kenya convince Western donors to ease the conditions required to resume aid, other countries will have grounds to demand that the doses of their IMF medicine be reduced.

From Moi's point of view, Kenya had bent over backwards to satisfy the donor demands to open up the political system and liberalize the economy and he fully expected a resumption of the roughly \$40 million a month in balance-of-payments support suspended in November 1991.

Last December, Kenya conducted its first multi-party elections in 27 years. While there were irregularities during the electoral process, Western governments considered the exercise—which gave the opposition 88 of the 200 seats

in Parliament—a step in the right direction.

Feeling that he had satisfied Western demands to democratize, Moi focused in February on implementing economic reforms required by the Fund. On the eve of a visit by an IMF team in late February, the government floated the commercial exchange rate for the Kenyan shilling; relaxed price controls on a number of commodities, including fuel, corn, maize, and wheat; and allowed businesses to keep foreign exchange earnings in "retention accounts," rather than remitting them to the central bank.

When the IMF mission left Kenya in early March without giving the economic reforms its stamp of approval, the government went even further in a bid to win the agency's approval before a March 15 meeting of donors chaired by the World Bank. Measures to rein in excess liquidity were announced and the official exchange rate was lowered by 20 percent. The IMF had reportedly insisted that the government work to merge the commercial exchange rate with the official rate, which is used to service public debt and pay for government imports.

But when donors met in London on March 15, they heard that the government had not gone far enough in satisfying IMF demands. The \$40 million a month in quick-disbursing aid was left frozen as was a World Bank export promotion loan reportedly worth \$150 million.

The government's reluctance to take stronger measures to mop up excess liquidity was one of the main reasons the IMF maintained the aid cut-off. Kenya's money supply grew by 30 percent last year—the result of an estimated 9 billion shillings being printed mostly to pay for Kanu's election campaign and to bail out failing banks which were owned by members of the ruling party. The rapid money supply growth contributed to over 30 percent inflation in January. The liberalization reforms in February—taken without adequate measures to put a check on the money supply—made for even greater inflationary pressure as the floating shilling plummeted more than 60 percent against convertible currencies.

Donor concerns that corruption had not been adequately addressed were also bolstered in mid-March by the dis-

closure that the central bank had rolled over loans worth almost \$100 million to two politically connected banks. The loans were made through a frequently abused scheme intended to provide cheap credit to exporters, which the government claims has now been discontinued.

In order for aid to resume, the donors at the March 15 meeting demanded that Kenya increase its interest rates to about 45 percent to mop up the excess liquidity, cut its bloated 270,000-strong civil service by tens of thousands, take bolder steps on price liberalization, reduce its strategic reserve of maize, and move more quickly on its promise to privatize unsuccessful state industries.

A frustrated Moi decided the demands were too much, ostensibly because of the toll reform was taking on ordinary Kenyans. Unpopular policies such as the massive increase in food prices had raised fears of civil unrest. "Kenya will no longer agree to policies which are economically suicidal...The government is to rethink the country's economic arrangements and take the necessary steps it deems fit to safeguard the welfare of the people," he said on March 19.

But the reversal of economic reforms—which included the reimposition of price controls, abolishing the "retention accounts," and reestablishing foreign exchange control over Kenya's main foreign exchange earners, tea, coffee and tourism—has been called a victory for hard-liners in Moi's government. Opposition members and diplomats have said the hard-liners resist reform because the controlled economy allows them to mete out patronage and manipulate business conditions to favor their interests.

Widespread corruption and mismanagement are considered greatly responsible for stifling Kenya's economy and were prime targets of the Western demand that Kenya democratize. Donors who looked to the new Parliament for much needed accountability in the economic sphere were pleased to see that all three of the main opposition parties have come out strongly against Moi's decision to reverse the IMF reforms.

When the new Parliament officially opened on March 24—two months after being suspended by the govern-

ment—two of the parties boycotted the session and the leader of the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD)-Asili, Kenneth Matiba, walked out at the beginning of the president's speech. Opposition MPs called Moi's decision to reverse the reforms "economic suicide," among them, Paul Muite, vice chairman of another opposition party, FORD-Kenya, who called for a campaign of civil disobedience to protest the government's break with donors.

On March 31, Finance Minister Mudavadi and Minister of Labor Philip Masinde said they were not opposed to opposition requests that a parliamentary select committee be set up to look into alternative measures of reviving the economy. "With such a committee, the opposition will not continue blaming the government for the country's economic woes," Masinde said. The opposition also looks to take up the issue of Kenya's over-reliance on foreign aid.

From the donor perspective, many viewed the government's reversal of

economic reforms as a bargaining position to force a softer line on the resumption of aid. Others, however, said that Moi is serious in his "go it alone" approach on the economy. The French ambassador to Kenya, Michel de Bonnacorse, reportedly said that aid should be resumed to "rescue" the Kenyan economy.

For his part, Moi insists there is no rift with Kenya and its donors. He said he was merely putting the "brake" on Kenya's structural adjustment program to avoid a crisis, according to a Kenya Broadcasting Corporation report. "The government is continuing the dialogue with the two institutions [the IMF and World Bank] and other donors but on the basis of more rational and sustainable measures," Mudavadi said shortly after the reversal of reforms was announced.

At least one event in late April lent credence to Mudavadi's words. On April 20, on the eve of a World Bank visit, Kenya devalued the shilling by 23 percent and raised interest rates to the 45

percent donors had demanded. Encouraged by these moves, and other actions taken by the government against failing banks, the World Bank President, Edward Jaycox, announced in Nairobi the next day that roughly \$85 million in aid would be made available to Kenya.

World Bank officials predicted that the IMF and other donors would follow suit with increased support for Kenya. But the real aid prize—the \$480 million a year in balance-of-payments support—remained on hold pending IMF approval for its resumption.

An IMF team was due in Kenya at the end of April to review the economy and again press its demands. Other African governments watched closely to see if donors would in fact soften their position on turning the aid tap to Kenya back on again.

If the IMF's strict line on conditionality holds, the government will have to make further concessions for aid to be resumed. In the meantime, the economy continues to deteriorate and ordinary Kenyans continue to suffer. ■

Lesotho *Continued*

1,600 polling stations, as well as the late arrival of ballot boxes in some areas.

Despite calm at the polls, uncertainty loomed as some political parties threatened to reject the election results. Prior to the polling, the royalist Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP) had issued warnings of violence should the new government fail to restore King Moshoeshoe II to the throne. Moshoeshoe was banned

from government politics in 1970 after repeated clashes with BNP leader Chief Leabua Jonathan, and was exiled 20 years later. Moshoeshoe's son, Letsie III, has presided as Lesotho's monarch, reportedly under the tight control of the government.

A larger threat to the BCP, however, comes from the BNP. In a statement issued in the capital, Maseru, on March 28, BNP officials claimed that the elections were "generally against every tenet and spirit of fairness and equity."

In a Radio Lesotho report the following day, the BNP leader, Evaristus Retelisitsoe Sekhonyana, suggested that the BNP could not accept the election results until alleged irregularities were addressed.

Mokhehle's party also faces a possible threat from the military regime that ruled Lesotho for the last seven years. The former government's frequent postponement of the elections date helped to fuel fears that the military will once again seize control.

In the midst of these uncertainties Mokhehle has attempted to resolve tensions with the opposition parties. In an April 2 election victory address he praised the former ruling military council for helping to make the election a success and said he recognized the need to cooperate with the BNP and other parties.

Prior to the elections, on March 13, leaders from the BCP, the BNP and the MFP showed that the parties could agree on at least one issue. According to a Radio Lesotho report the following day, the three parties unanimously agreed that, "cordial good neighborliness [with] post-apartheid South Africa is of primary importance to the socio-political and economic welfare" of Lesotho. The mountain nation is completely surrounded—and economically dependent—on South Africa. ■

Bomb *Continued*

they would take up South Africa's offer to "send inspectors to the sites involved in the former weapons program and review historical records as soon as possible." In Washington, the White House communications director, George Stephanopoulos, said, "We welcome President de Klerk's statement today that South Africa has destroyed all its nuclear devices, and is adhering strictly to the requirements of the NPT." The Clinton administration also noted that the South African president's candid disclosure was not specifically required by the treaty.

But Pretoria's reluctance to disclose that it had developed nuclear weapons, as well as the lack of infor-

mation concerning the size of stockpiles of highly enriched uranium, fed concerns that South Africa has not fully accounted for its nuclear program.

The ANC, while welcoming de Klerk's statement on the weapons, has demanded that he disclose all the details of the program, including the extent of international cooperation, and the size of stockpiles of highly enriched uranium. The group said de Klerk's "claim that there was no foreign assistance to a local weapons program contradicts substantial speculation that there was indeed foreign involvement," and it added that it would not believe "South Africa's hands are clean until all details of the weapons program have been disclosed." ■

ECONOMY

The World Bank's latest report, *Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries 1993*, forecasts a 3.7 percent growth rate for sub-Saharan Africa in the decade ahead, compared to 2 percent growth in 1982-1992. But the GDP rate is expected to only barely eclipse population growth.

The growth rate for Africa is also contingent on an expected improvement in commodity prices such as tea and coffee, according to the report.

Overall, economic performance in the developing countries is expected to improve from an average rate of 2.7 percent in the last decade to 4.7 percent in this one.

"This brighter outlook is to a large extent the dividend of the wide-ranging—and often painful—economic policy reform of the past decade," the report says. This reform included trade liberalization, a shift away from import substitution schemes, the correction of over-valued exchange rates, the improvement of public finances, the cutting of inflation, and the privatization of state enterprises.

The report also warns that the high projected growth rates for the developing world over the next decade are tied to some uncertain projections. These include economic recovery in the developed world and an increase in international trade.

Africa can also expect to face a limited share of aid in the 1990s, according to the World Bank report.

Meanwhile, the "economic performance was well below expectations in most less developed countries [LDCs] in the early 1990s," according to the 1992 annual report of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), released in March.

The report said that the 47 poorest countries, which averaged 1.4 percent growth last year, had experienced a drop in per capita income for the past three years and that their tenuous economic reform programs were threatened by the world recession and inadequate international support.

For many of the LDCs that are plagued by civil war and natural disaster, including Liberia, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Mozambique, "the development process has come to a virtual standstill," according to UNCTAD.

Further decline, the report warned, could lead to more Somalias in Africa.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

NIGERIA

In April, Nigeria postponed its pledge to cut oil subsidies scheduled for June 1 on the grounds that such a move would provoke widespread unrest and risk marring the June 12 presidential vote.

"The government remains committed to ensuring that nothing is done to impede the progress of the transition" to civilian rule, an official statement explaining the decision said.

Indeed, the proposed increase in the price for fuel—which the government now claims will be implemented after the military government of President Ibrahim Babangida ends its seven-year rule in August—had prompted strike and riot threats.

But the postponement was seen as a blow to Nigeria's efforts to secure an early agreement with the IMF—a prerequisite for the economically mismanaged country to reschedule its staggering \$29 billion debt, more than half of which is owed to the Paris Club of donors. The IMF team will reportedly wait to see the intentions of the new government before it agrees to a program with Nigeria.

In the meantime, the *Financial Times* reported on April 27 that Nigeria was cracking down on the smuggling of gasoline—which is by far the cheapest in the world thanks to the subsidies—into Benin and other neighboring countries. The threat that Nigeria would end the subsidies had led to a considerable increase in the smuggling.

Philip Asiodu, an official in the oil and mineral resources ministry estimated in March that losses from oil being smuggled out of Nigeria was costing the country \$2 million a day, according to a Voice of Nigeria radio broadcast.

LIBYA

The United States backed away from its efforts in early April to persuade the UN Security Council to strengthen sanctions against Libya

which are aimed at forcing the North African country to turn over two suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. But the Council voted on April 8 to extend existing sanctions on Libya.

In testimony before a Senate Subcommittee on March 30, Secretary of State Warren Christopher had said, "I think the time has come to stiffen the embargo against Libya. We're consulting with our allies now about ways to stiffen it and one of the things we want to talk about is an oil embargo." But the administration determined that it was unable to muster the 10 votes it needed on the 15-member Council to impose sanctions on the purchase of Libyan oil. The effort reportedly encountered strong resistance from France, Arab countries, and nations which purchase Libyan oil.

A successful full oil embargo would wreak havoc on the country's economy, which earns 90 percent of its income through oil exports. The U.S. and its allies on the Security Council have considered imposing lesser sanctions on Libya, including a ban on the sale of oil-producing technology to the country.

The existing sanctions ban air links with Libya, prohibit the sale of new aircraft and spare parts to the country, and disallow it all military aid and training.

The suspects wanted in connection with the Lockerbie bombing, Abdel Basset Ali Megrahi and Lamén Khalifa Fhimah, are also sought in connection with a 1989 terrorist attack on a French UTA flight, which blew up over Niger.

SUDAN

Sudan was expected to open a stock exchange in April or May, according to an article in *African Business*. The general manager of the exchange, Ali Abdalla Ali, said some 50 companies would participate in the market, which the article reports is intended to establish a free market for hard currency.

African Business also reports that the government hopes the exchange will eliminate the black market for hard currency, fix one exchange rate for all transactions, and speed up privatization of state enterprises and encourage investment. The establishment of the exchange was called a major step in the liberalization of Sudan's economy.

HISTORY HISTORY REPEATS REPEATS



Melinda Ham

Kenneth Kaunda governed Zambia under a continuous state of emergency, which he used to

ITSELF

ITSELF

silence opponents for 25 years. When President Frederick Chiluba's Movement for Multi-party Democracy ousted Kaunda in 1991 in the country's first democratic elections, the emergency lapsed. Eighteen months later, Chiluba declared that Zambia's democracy was threatened by some in the opposition who allegedly planned to make the country ungovernable, and he reinstated the emergency. Whether Zambia's fragile democracy can survive this authoritarian action is a question both Chiluba's friends and foes are asking.



n the evening of March 4, television viewers in Zambia were ready to watch the latest episode of the American soap opera "Dynasty" when the Zambian army's brass band came on the screen and began to play the national anthem, the traditional prelude to a special presidential announcement.

Instead of "Dynasty," Zambian viewers were treated to the first installment of a real-life national drama that would become the hottest topic since the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) took power. President Frederick Chiluba, who was elected in the October 1991 multi-party elections, declared a threatened state of emergency that shook the very foundations of the 16-month administration that had been hailed internationally as a new model of democracy in Africa.

"Zambia is threatened. Our young democracy is at stake. The danger is real and the consequences if not attended to are grave. The political climate is being systematically poisoned by a few of our citizens who are bent on plunging this nation into chaos," the president said.

His declaration would prove to be a major test for Zambia's democracy and demonstrate how fragile it was. Although he did not specify why he had invoked the emergency, by the early hours of March 5 it was clear.

Fourteen members of the official opposition, the United National Independence Party (UNIP), were arrested and detained without charges. They included Wezi Kaunda, son of the former president, Steven Moyo, former head of the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, Henry Kamima, former director-general of the Zambian Intelligence Service, some members of Parliament, and ordinary UNIP members. Two other sons of Kaunda, Panji and Tilenji, were arrested later.

Ten days earlier, the state-run *Times of Zambia* had published excerpts from a document called the "Zero Option" plan, allegedly authored by a group of embittered UNIP members. The aim of the plan was to "wrestle power from the MMD in order to form a government responsive to the people's needs...before the 1996 general elections."

The plan outlined a proposed campaign to incite civil disobedience, riots, strikes, and a rise in crime to make the country ungovernable and discourage foreign investment, using the trade unions, students' organizations, "mishanga boys" (unemployed youths), marketeers, retired intelligence, army and police officers, civil servants, and employees of state companies.

Chiluba also said in his broadcast that relations with Iran and Iraq would be reviewed, and within a few days, Foreign Affairs Minister Vernon Mwaanga announced that diplomatic ties with the two countries had been severed because of their alleged "interference in Zambia's internal affairs." The "Zero Option" said that UNIP would

ask friendly countries such as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Libya for assistance. Kaunda had enjoyed close relations with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

According to sources within Chiluba's cabinet, the MMD government acted so rashly because it was caught completely off-guard when the "Zero Option" excerpts appeared in the *Times*, as its own intelligence service had been unaware of the plot.

A crisis cabinet meeting was called on March 3, 24 hours before the declaration was made. The meeting highlighted serious tensions within the cabinet. The legal affairs minister, Roger Chongwe, the minister without portfolio, Godfrey Miyanda, and Labor Minister Ludwig Sondashi, and several others reportedly fought vehemently against the emergency declaration.

Some ministers maintained that the apparent necessity of the emergency demonstrated that in their 16 months in office the government had failed completely to reform, retrain, or re-equip the police and security forces. Legal and constitutional reform also had been negligible. Arguments raged until nearly 3 am, when, finally, the majority of ministers agreed that the president should proceed.

But some legal advisers seem to have misinformed the president. A headline in the independent *Weekly Post* on March 11 shouted: "Chiluba signed the wrong declaration." The newspaper revealed that he had invoked article 31 of the constitution, declaring only a threatened state of emergency. Under this article, the state cannot restrict fundamental rights and freedoms. Only under article 30, a full state of emergency, can this be done, thus making the detentions unconstitutional.

So the *Weekly Post* claimed that the 14 UNIP detainees, who grew to 18 the next day and 23 a couple of days later, had been detained illegally and had the right to sue for damages. Once the presidential advisers realized their mistake, the president signed article 30 on March 8, which only then gave police the authority to detain people without charges.



The "Zero Option" plan exposed a power struggle within UNIP, between the supporters of the plan and a reformist faction led by UNIP president Kebby Musokotwane, former high commissioner to Canada and one-time prime minister under Kaunda.

The reformists aim to revamp UNIP's image after its

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crushing 1991 election defeat and mold it into a viable alternative to the MMD. It seems the government is well aware of the split, as Musokotwane has not been detained, while two of his supporters, Chibembe Nyalugwe, secretary for youth, and Lucy Sichone, political secretary, were detained briefly and then released.

Musokotwane admitted at a press conference that "Zero Option" was written by UNIP member(s), but would not reveal their identity and emphasized only that the document had not been adopted as party policy.

The hard-liners, who reportedly include Wezi Kaunda, Rupiah Banda, the secretary for international relations, and publicity secretary Bwendo Mulengela, allegedly view the MMD as an American-backed puppet administration. At the same time they have little patience for the Musokotwane-led revival campaign. Instead they want to capitalize on the rapidly deteriorating economic situation to overthrow the government as soon as possible.

But despite its internal divisions, those UNIP members who have not been detained have shown party loyalty and held numerous press conferences to complain about the treatment of the detainees. They claim that many have been interrogated without lawyers for as long as 39 hours at a stretch. One MP, Cuthbert Nguni, was allegedly made to stand on two bricks for up to half an hour at a time or to squat and turn in circles. When he fell over, he was beaten by his interrogators.

Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organization, has declared that the detainees are "prisoners of conscience" and has appealed to the government to release or charge them as soon as possible.

Zambia had a continuous state of emergency from independence from Britain in 1964 until it lapsed under the new constitution, seven days after Chiluba came to power.

*Opposition
hard-liners allegedly
view the Chiluba
government as an
American-backed
puppet*

Kaunda had used the emergency to silence political opponents. They included Chiluba, who was then leader of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), and his deputy, New-

stead Zimba. Former politician Vernon Mwaanga was held on drug-trafficking charges, while Gen. Christon Tembo, former commander of the army, and Brig.-Gen. Godfrey Myanda were jailed after a coup plot in 1988. They are now all cabinet ministers.

After the cabinet's approval, the emergency then had to be ratified by Parliament to extend it for a further 90 days. This issue was the first real test of the separation of powers between the executive and legislative wings of government, and raised serious questions about Parliament's independence.

The MMD controls 125 of the 150 seats and 63 of those MPs are ministers or deputy ministers, sitting on the front two benches in the House.

It did not take much to silence enough back-benchers with promises of senior positions in the next cabinet reshuffle for the government to win a comfortable majority of 114 to 23. Only three back-benchers voted against the motion, although several registered protest by not showing up.

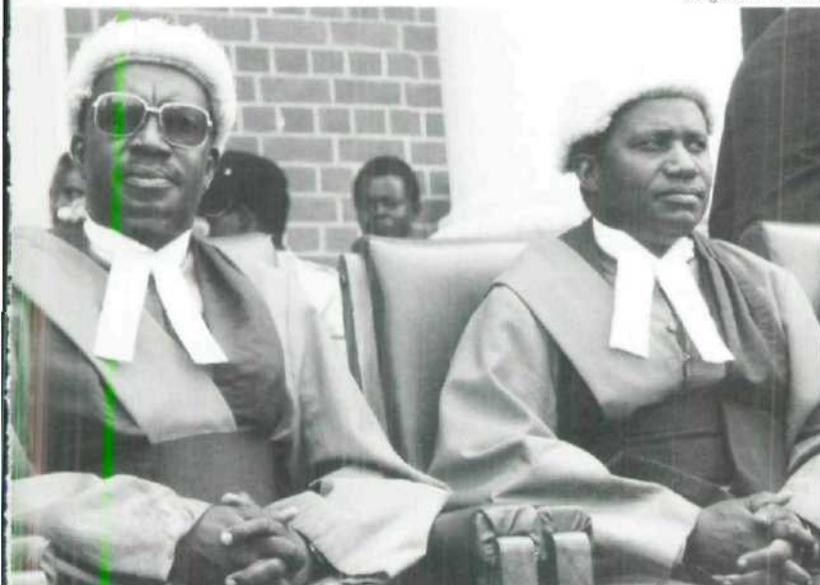
The emergency debate took an ironically historical turn. Two children of former opposition leaders in Zambia's short-lived era of multi-party politics, 1964 to 1972, who had opposed the introduction of a one-party state, took the floor.

Chilufya Kapwepwe, a daughter of Simon Kapwepwe, the leader of the United People's Party, which was banned and had 123 party members detained in 1972 under the state of emergency, spoke first. She contended that the same arguments the Chiluba administration was using to justify the emergency now, the Kaunda administration had used nearly three decades ago. Not much had really changed in Zambian politics, as history was repeating itself.

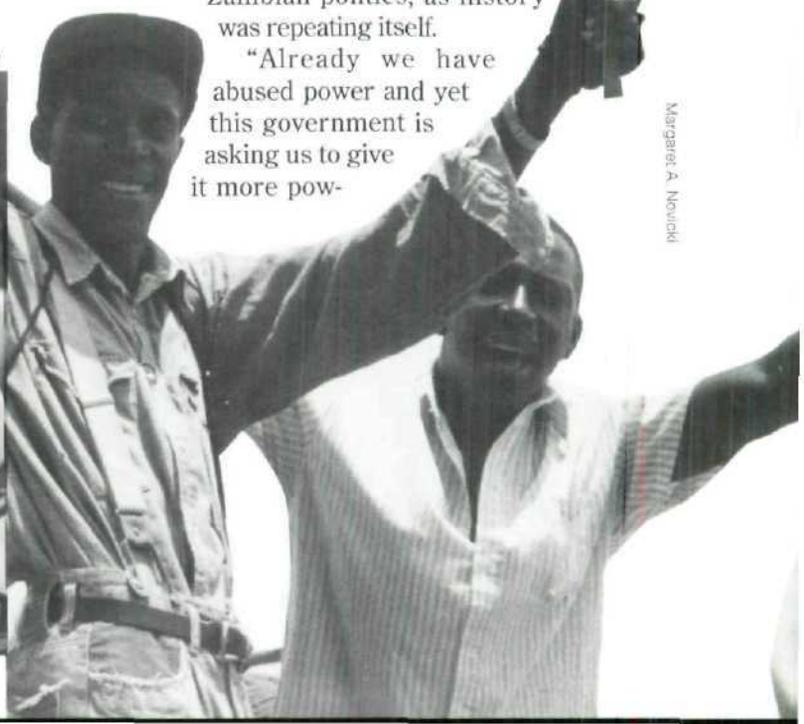
"Already we have abused power and yet this government is asking us to give it more pow-



Margaret A. Nowicki



Margaret A. Nowicki



Margaret A. Nowicki

er. If the government is scared that it is sitting on a volcano which is about to erupt...it will not restore the confidence of people in this country by declaring a state of emergency," Kapwepwe argued, adding that many MPs were supporting the bill only because they saw Parliament as a route to a ministerial position.

The youngest son of Harry Nkumbula, the late leader of the African National Congress (ANC), which controlled most of Southern Province and later also Western Province before it was banned when Zambia became a one-party state in 1972, also argued against the emergency.

Baldwin Nkumbula, who was minister of youth and sport before he resigned last August, referred to a statement made in 1965 by the ANC's vice president, Mungoni Liso, who maintained that if a government detained people without charges or trial, it was afraid to bring those detainees before a magistrate because it knew there was *inadequate evidence to convict them*. Such a government, he said, was a dictatorship.

"When we created the Movement for Multi-party Democracy," Nkumbula argued, "our ideal was to get rid of dictatorship. That ideal has not been achieved. With this instrument that we now wish to apply...this hope of ever seeing democracy in this country goes away forever."

Although the debate dragged on for 10 hours over two days, the handful of courageous back-benchers failed to change the minds of most in their party.

The vote set a worrying precedent for the future of a democratic Zambia. Cabinet ministers and MPs were persuaded to vote in favor of a motion which many of them did not actively support. Few of them had seen the "Zero Option" document and were only following their leaders on blind faith.

Western diplomats voiced their concern against the route the government was following at a meeting between Lusaka-based diplomats and Chiluba at State House. Eldred Maduro, the Netherlands' ambassador, said, "Our governments are disturbed by the state of emergency, which is viewed as an unfortunate development. We...trust it will be limited in time and focus." Other diplomats said that they thought the state of emergency was an "over-reaction" to a situation that could have been dealt with under existing laws.

Zambian representatives were due to meet Western aid donors in Paris on April 6 and 7 for the annual Consultative Group (CG) meeting to discuss 1993-94 aid pledges, and review Zambia's political and economic progress.

One diplomat, who wished to remain anonymous,

warned: "By the CG, we expect that, first of all, the reasons behind the state of emergency will have become clearer, secondly, that detainees will have been charged or released, and, thirdly, that allegations of torture of detainees have been proved baseless, otherwise this is a violation of human rights. If this does not happen, many of us will be forced to reconsider our pledges."

When Chiluba made his emergency declaration, he assured Zambians that their fundamental freedoms would be protected under the declaration, even though the whole purpose of the emergency is to suspend these guaranteed constitutional rights.

"We will uphold the conditions in which our people will enjoy to the fullest extent possible their democratic rights. Therefore, only those who break the law and wish to bring anarchy will face the wrath of this state of emergency," he said.

And to its credit, the MMD government has not prevented the state-owned and privately owned media from covering the emergency in full detail and it has faced the wrath of angry editorials. UNIP and other opposition parties also held a protest march through Lusaka's city center.

Former President Kaunda has also spoken out. "This is the beginning of the end of this government. It can't go on like this or the people are going to explode. It's a far cry from democracy," he told reporters. "The government is made up of mad people. They are sick with power."

Even the ZCTU that acted as a launching pad for Chiluba's political career has described the emergency as "intimidatory" and hopes it will not be used against workers if they strike.

The Law Association of Zambia criticized the government for not revamping the existing criminal law and enforcement machinery as a priority after it took office. The association chairman, Isaac Chali, maintained that infringement of citizens' rights was inevitable. "We believe these are bound to suffer if the declaration were to be ratified even for a short time. Let us be seen to contribute to the building of a true democracy for ourselves and for posterity," Chali said.

All this criticism demonstrates the beginnings of a vibrant civic society, one of the pillars of democracy. But the emergency has also demonstrated how fragile Zambia's democracy is, that the division of powers between the executive and legislative wings of government are blurred, and Parliament has little power to challenge the cabinet. UNIP, the only existing viable opposition, is weakened and faced with a split, which raises the worrying specter of another de facto one-party state.

In the next few months, domestic and international observers will carefully scrutinize every move of the Zambian government. Neighboring governments in Malawi and Zimbabwe, and elsewhere on the continent that have not gone through the multi-party process yet, are waiting eagerly to see whether this experimental "model for democratic transition" in Africa will succeed or collapse.○

A WEAKENED OPPOSITION RAISES THE SPECTER OF ANOTHER DE FACTO ONE- PARTY STATE.



Andrew Meldrum

BANDA'S LAST WALTZ

One major obstacle stands between Malawi and democracy—the ninetysomething

Life President Kamuzu Banda. In spite of his authoritarian rule, there are two active opposition movements, which attract . . .

. . . large crowds at their rallies as they and their supporters look forward to eventual multi-party democracy. They have been forging on despite periodic bannings of their newspapers and rallies and the jailing of the Alliance for Democracy leader, Chakufwa Chihana, for "inciting hatred" toward Banda.

It was a battle of wits in Malawi's Supreme Court on March 8 as four British barristers made their submissions, two in support and two against the appeal of opposition leader Chakufwa Chihana, serving a two-year prison sentence for possession of "seditious" documents.

Chihana's detention is perhaps the largest of the many obstacles which Life President Kamuzu Banda and the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) have erected on Malawi's rocky road to its referendum on multi-party democracy to be held on June 14.

The government only reluctantly agreed to the referendum because donors froze \$74 million in aid, and the two opposition movements, the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), chaired by Chihana, and the United Democratic Front (UDF), chaired by businessman Bakili Muluzi, stepped up political pressure.

Even though their leaders have been detained, their rallies and newspapers banned, AFORD and UDF continue their campaign undeterred. They are buoyed by the tens of thousands of supporters who have flocked to more than 75 of their rallies held in every district of the country.

Outside the Supreme Court, in the commercial capital of Blantyre, thousands of angry supporters chanted slogans praising Chihana. Their sentiments reverberated through the crowded courtroom's open windows. Inside, British barrister Edwin Glasgow, Chihana's chief defense lawyer, laid out the arguments in support of the appeal.

Chihana was detained on April 6 last year, after he read a speech calling for multi-party democracy as he stepped off a plane at Kamuzu international airport in the capital, Lilongwe. He was convicted on December 14 for possession of "seditious" documents, which included the text of his airport address.

Glasgow argued that Chihana's conviction went against section 2 of the Malawi constitution, which states: "The government and people of Malawi shall continue to recognize the sanctity of their personal liberties enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Michael Wood, the second defense

lawyer, told journalists later: "Our appeal went very well. We gave very powerful arguments that we feel are unanswerable, unless the prosecution argues the Malawian constitution has no effect, international law has no effect, and the UN charter of human rights has no effect on this case," he said.

The prosecution's case, led by British barrister John Belveridge, rested on a 1940 judgment on possession of seditious documents under the British colonial government.

Glasgow argued that if the Supreme Court upheld Chihana's conviction based on this colonial precedent, then it meant that Malawi in effect was still a colony. Such arguments should "have no relevance in a modern democratic society and where fundamental freedoms are protected by the constitution."

After both sides' submissions in the one-day appeal, the Supreme Court judges said they would make a ruling before the end of March. But then the Malawi government played its next card. The chief justice, Richard Banda, and Minister of Justice Friday Makuta were summoned to the life president's hilltop palace outside Blantyre.

Makuta reportedly told the nonagenarian leader that the prosecution's case had crumbled. It was legally impossible for the conviction to stand and Chihana would have to be freed. The life president said he never wanted Chihana's name mentioned again. He wanted the AFORD leader silenced.



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Melinda Ham

Until then, the judiciary had maintained a degree of independence from government and had decided several cases in favor of the opposition. But Banda's political interference was a crushing blow to Justice Minister Makuta, and he resigned.

Chief Justice Banda ruled on March 29 that Chihana will have to serve a nine-month sentence (many had hoped he would be freed) for "inciting hatred among Malawian nationals toward the life president."

The ruling party also tried to muzzle the UDF. At a rally in the southern town of Balaka in February, Wadson Deleza, minister without portfolio, said that the life president had ordered the arrest of UDF chairman Muluza on charges of embezzlement committed 12 years ago when he was MCP secretary-general.

That weekend, 14 armed paramilitary police officers went to arrest Muluza at home, but he had been tipped off and had gone into hiding. Instead, the police rounded up nine members of UDF's executive and held them for several hours. The next day, Muluza turned himself in to the police. He was detained for a few days and then released on bail after being charged with stealing party funds.

Chakufwa Chibana, left, has been imprisoned for more than a year after he gave a speech calling for multi-party democracy

Edward Bwanali, a former health minister and now UDF publicity secretary, said, "His arrest was

clearly politically motivated. It is obvious to everybody that the MCP is trying to intimidate us and frustrate our campaign. But they can't stop us. UDF will continue to strive for a new Malawi."

The MCP struck another blow and banned all opposition rallies in northern Malawi when Banda hit the campaign trail in February to whip up support for the one-party state. When he arrived in Mzuzu, the largest town in the north and allegedly an AFORD stronghold, angry residents pelted his presidential motorcade with stones and eggs.

MCP spokesman Dr. Hetherwick Ntaba argued: "We have been faced with a lot of unwarranted provocation from the opposition. On many occasions they have defamed the character of the life president, using outright abusive language. Their supporters have blocked traffic as they come back from rallies. The police are trying to maintain peace and calm."

City councils in Lilongwe and Blantyre then followed suit and banned all opposition meetings on public property. Four leading AFORD churchmen, Revs. Aaron Longwe, Peter Kaleso, John Mwambira, and Willie Zingani, were prohibited from addressing public meetings. The high court later ruled that the police had no authority to ban speakers because under the referendum regulations anyone was free to speak at rallies.

But a visiting United Nations team headed by Horacio Boneo, director of the electoral assistance unit in the department of political affairs, put the government under increased international pressure to improve its conduct during the referendum campaign.

The team's report warned that if the referendum was held on the original date of March 15, "the result might not be accepted unless there is conviction that the process has been free and fair. Therefore, one of the objectives of the government—normalization of relations with donors—may be more hindered than helped."

At least three additional months were needed so that international observers could be invited, voters could register, and both the opposition movements and ruling party would have time to campaign for and against the issue.

UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali wrote a personal letter to the life president to persuade him to delay the poll and Banda gave in, although he emphasized that it was because of the secretary-general's letter and not opposition demands.

The UN team also made other recommendations, on which most donors will hinge their support of the referendum, while UDF and AFORD threatened to boycott the polls if the recommendations were not followed.

Recommendations included one ballot box instead of the two traditionally used at MCP elections, equal representation of the opposition and the ruling party on the presidentially appointed Referendum Commission, dialogue between the MCP and the opposition, and equal access to the media.

Hosting Mozambique's Refugees

The road from Ntcheu to Dedza was once an ecological dividing line between the ravages of Mozambique's civil war and the relative calm of Malawi's one-party state.

"Even two years ago, fields of dust west of the road stopped where Malawi's forests began," said a European development official in the capital, Lilongwe. "Now there are so many people along the border it's hard to find a tree standing."

Logging areas at Zomba near the end of the central African rift system show swaths of saplings aside old growth, evidence of the success of commercial reforestation.

But on the Kirk Range south of Dedza along the largely unpatrolled border with Mozambique, the quest for firewood has stripped most of the area bare. Children and goats compete for what shrubs remain as men from a nearby village drag off trees and dig roots for charcoal.

The effects of deforestation by nearly 1 million Mozambican refugees and this small southern African nation's own swelling population are likely to worsen as drought, a faltering economy, and the suspension of development aid threaten the fragile ecological balance of a country that is one-fifth covered by water.

During the last decade, the World Bank estimates Malawi cut 150,000 hectares of its 4.2 million hectares of forest and woodland each year, or

about 3.5 percent annually, while only 6,000 hectares were replanted each season. Fuelwood and charcoal production of roundwood has increased by 30 percent since the late 1970s. Over-cultivation of the hills around the commercial center of Blantyre has eliminated much of the natural tree cover and increased the threat of erosion once rains return.

As home to more refugees from one country than any other nation in Africa, Malawi runs a close second to Ethiopia as host of the continent's largest displaced population, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, at a time when its own burgeoning population is stretching limited natural resources.

The Population Crisis Committee, a Washington-based public interest organization, has named Malawi one of the world's five worst population situations, with an annual growth rate of 3.6 percent predicted through 1995. Malawi is one of the continent's most densely populated countries with as many as 300 people per square kilometer, and this rate of growth could push the population of 9.4 million near 25 million into the next century, surpassing Zimbabwe, which has four times the surface area.

With staple food prices up nearly 20 percent following devaluation of the kwacha, economists say that Life President Kamuzu Banda's attempt to buy

The UN team maintained that two ballot boxes was a hangover from colonial rule and had been abandoned in most parts of the world. Their report added: "Unless people are sure that their vote is completely secret, they can be subject to intimidation from one side or the other."

These issues were explored in unprecedented roundtable discussions between MCP cabinet ministers and representatives of UDF, AFORD, and the churches, which formed the Public Affairs Committee (PAC).

The participants agreed that there must be parity on the referendum commission, and UDF and AFORD submitted 20 names to the life president, from which he will choose 12 to match 12 MCP members.

But then the government made its next strategic move and banned AFORD's newspaper, *Malawi Democrat*, and the *UDF News*. The PAC pulled out of the talks immedi-

ately, and said it would not resume them until the newspapers were unbanned.

"This shows that the government is not serious about the referendum. They have violated the referendum regulations which state that anyone can campaign freely, using newspapers, pamphlets or the radio," Madicai Msisha, a prominent lawyer and PAC member, said.

"Since the government controls their own radio and two newspapers, and we can't have access to them," Msisha said, "it is our right to have our own newspapers as well. If the papers remain banned, the talks won't resume, our points of contention will not be resolved, and we will be forced to boycott the referendum."

Msisha was invited recently to address a select committee of the British House of Commons about the cur-

peace in the wake of unprecedented urban unrest may ultimately backfire. Doubling the municipal minimum wage to \$1.25 a day will still fall short of feeding households accustomed to subsidizing meager earnings with backyard plots of maize and other vegetables.

Malawi needs over 800,000 tons of maize imports during the next year to meet minimum national nutritional requirements and, located at the end of sub-regional transport lines, it relies almost entirely on the goodwill of neighbors to move emergency drought relief supplies along the way.

Anxiety over food supplies in a society already increasingly dissatisfied with Banda's rejection of political pluralism has helped spread calls for fundamental reform from the urban population to rural Malawians now experiencing a standard of living that more closely resembles that of their Mozambican guests.

Predominantly subsistence farmers and rural plantation workers, some refugees arrived with cattle and small harvests while some return to their country across the road to tend small plots during the day. But failed rains have scorched the land, and with little vocational or academic education, refugees are hard-pressed to provide for the preponderance of orphans, single mothers, and handicapped victims of war without international assistance.

UNHCR plans to spend \$35 million on Mozambicans in Malawi this year, but relief officials say drought has blurred the line of suffering as food distributed to refugees in villages in invariably shared with hungry Malawians facing many of the same

concerns about the availability of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.

"When family needs help, you help," said a woman selling shriveled peanuts near the Mengowambalame border crossing south of Dedza where as many as 400,000 Mozambicans have found shelter in the village community. "Now [the refugees] help us because they get food. Without that, what will anyone eat?"

Malawians have so far avoided scapegoating refugees for the country's declining fortunes, and Malawian hospitality appears to be weathering the increased demands of drought as it has weathered decades of repression before. But even this refugee food supply lifeline to Malawian civilians may be threatened by the country's increasing alienation from the international donor community.

U.S. State Department officials say Malawi has repeatedly tried to use its refugee program to blackmail donors into continuing support for Banda's 28-year hold on power. When former Vice President Dan Quayle told Banda during his visit to Malawi last year that bilateral relations would suffer if the country failed to improve its human rights record, Lilongwe responded with a press release warning that any cut in developmental assistance would immediately affect feeding programs for Mozambican refugees.

"They're doing a great job with the refugees and they know it," a Western diplomat said. "We all sympathize with the situation in Mozambique, and we all want to help them, but I wouldn't put it past this government to use them as pawns if it means more money." ■

—Scott Stearns

rent political situation in Malawi. He told the more than 100 people who came to hear him speak that the opposition faced more problems not addressed by the UN recommendations.

These included the fact that anyone can be detained indefinitely without trial and denied access to lawyers, clergy, or relatives. Msisha argued that this threat of possible detention was used by the MCP as a tool of coercion. This combined with the questionable independence of the judiciary from the executive, which can replace judges and magistrates at whim, did not create a climate conducive to a referendum.

AFORD and UDF began to believe that because the referendum has been delayed it might be more cost-effective to follow the Zambian model—cancel the referendum altogether and have multi-party elections right away.

"We have already won the referendum with the huge crowds that UDF and AFORD draw at every rally, compared to the tiny crowds attending the MCP rallies," said AFORD secretary-general Denis Nkwazi, just before he left on a fundraising tour of the Scandinavian countries.

He added: "We might as well scrap this referendum, campaign for an amendment to the constitution to remove article 4 so we can form parties and then concentrate on our party strategies and platforms instead. All sides will save a lot of money."

In an ironic turn of events, on March 22 the life president pre-empted the opposition and asked Parliament if it would prefer to abandon the referendum and proceed directly to a general election. But all the cabinet ministers and MPs remained mute, not knowing what answer Banda wanted. ○



LIFE

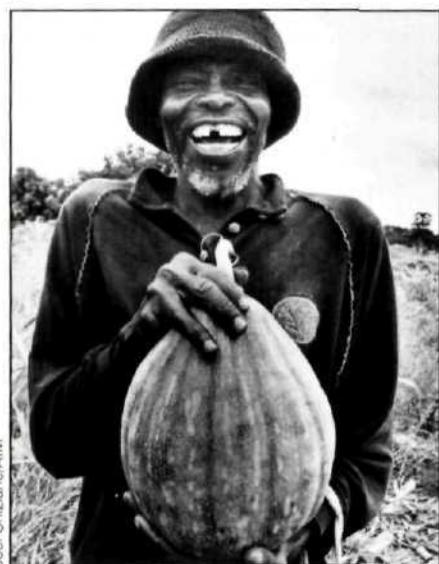
AFTER



Joel Chiziane/AIM

LANDMINES

Fed up with war, Mozambicans are eagerly embracing the peace. The process of turning a war-ravaged country into a peaceful democracy,



Joel Chiziane/AIM

however, is fraught with danger—from clearing the landscape of deadly landmines, to integrating former combatants into a national army and absorbing a million or so refugees back into the economy. But the signs of recovery are hopeful, with both sides in the long civil war talking cooperation, reconciliation, and national unity.





long a narrow dirt track, on the approach to an old rusting bridge, an empty beer can has been placed on top of a stick pushed into the ground. Buried in the earth beside it, and just visible above the surface, is a small green anti-personnel mine.

On this stretch of road, north of the town of Gorongosa in central Mozambique, the beer can markers are a familiar sight. But not for much longer—a de-mining team is already busy clearing the road. Laboriously they have been checking every inch, investigating every metallic object that registers on their detectors. On a good day they cover just over a mile.

"When we discover a mine, we tie a rope around it, withdraw to a safe distance, lie down flat and pull," said bomb disposal expert Ian Gregory, explaining his crude but effective methods. "If it blows the first time, that saves us a lot of bother. If it doesn't we help it along with a small explosive charge. But we spend most of the time just looking for them. It's quite boring work, really."

The United Nations estimates that there are 2 million unexploded mines in Mozambique, litter left behind from two wars and almost three decades of fighting: First, from 1964 it was the Frelimo liberation movement fighting for independence from Portugal. Then, with a short pause for breath after independence in 1975, the Marxist Frelimo government entered its second war, fighting Rhodesian- and then South African-backed Renamo rebels. Now, finally, with last October's ceasefire still holding, the time has come to clear the mines, but a few strategically placed beer cans are not a good enough guide. There are no reliable maps to locate explosives that have been scattered everywhere—in fields, on village footpaths and along dirt tracks such as this one.

As the de-mining team works its way methodically down the road, a small pick-up truck arrives. It is weighted down with passengers, chickens, and sacks of corn. This is the daily bus service from Gorongosa to Carvelo, 18 miles up the road, and they want to get past. "I'm not worried in the least about the mines," explains Arlindo, the driver. "I make the journey almost every day now, and if there were any along here, we would have hit them by now. And besides, now the war is over, the people want to travel." And off they all go, laughing and clucking into the distance. "What can you do?" says the technical coordinator of the de-mining operation, Matt Metulevicz. "This is the Africa factor. Nothing will stop them using the road—except one of those mines, of course."

This stretch of road is controlled by Renamo. Snaking its way around the dense woodland of what used to be one of southern Africa's finest nature reserves, it continues on to Renamo's headquarters at Maringue high up in

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the hills around Gorongosa Mountain. Under the peace agreement, Renamo continues to administer areas of the country that they controlled at the time of the ceasefire. Until very recently that meant extremely limited movement either in or out for the civilian population. But that is now changing, and the people travelling in the overloaded bus had started their journey in the government-held town of Gorongosa and had already passed through a Renamo checkpoint in order to reach their destination within a Renamo-controlled zone.

Local officials encourage the informal links now being forged among ordinary people. "Breaking down these artificial barriers within our country, is the great task that confronts us," explains Artur Canana, the governor of neighboring Manica Province. "First is the need to establish contacts, not only with Renamo structures but also with the population. It is good to see that this is happening in some places where people are exchanging chickens and dried meats. I wish I could say that this was happening all over my province, all over the country, but it isn't. We still have a long way to go."

Most of the new travellers make journeys of only a few miles to a market, while others travel greater distances to visit, or even return permanently, to areas they fled during the war. Already, after only a few months of peace, the more optimistic are on the move. And the return of vast numbers of refugees who fled the country into Malawi and Mozambique's other neighbors has begun as well. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that over half a million will have returned by the end of the year with another 800,000 returning over the next two years. "This year's arrivals will come in two main groups," says Philip Clarke, director of the World Food Programme (WFP) in Mozambique. "The first will be in the middle of the year, after the harvest in neighboring countries, and the second group will come around October ready to take advantage of the sowing season in Mozambique."

The absorption into the country of so many people, although a logistical nightmare for aid organizations such as the WFP, could provide just the economic stability that the peace process needs. The country's devastated economy will, for many years to come, rely on agricultural production. And it is hoped that a productive rural sector will reduce the dependency on external aid and provide a real force for peaceful reconstruction of the transport infrastructure, which has already shown itself remarkably flexible to the needs of the country's new travellers.

The World Bank representative in Maputo, Nils Tcheyan, is optimistic about the role to be played by a thriving post-war agricultural sector. "Mozambique is amongst the poorest countries of the world, but the important, and the good, news is that with peace, economic growth in Mozambique could double its levels to perhaps 6 to 7 percent per year, largely coming from



increases in agricultural output, improvements in transport services, and development of mineral and other resources that the country has available."

Fortunately, over much of Mozambique the



rains have been good this year. In some areas market stalls are groaning with fruit and vegetables. But overall, it has not been a particularly good harvest—a shortage of seeds has prevented a better crop. The demand for seeds throughout the southern African region, emerging from its worst drought in decades, far outstripped the available supply. Food and seed distribution was also hampered within Mozambique last year by Renamo's reluctance to allow UN and Red Cross convoys to enter areas under their control. Because of this, "only about 60 percent of seeds planted in a normal year were available, and they were not of a very good quality," explains WFP's Clarke. "And even in a normal year, the crop provides only half the country's needs. So the emergency is far from over." This year the WFP plans to distribute not only to the returning refugees but also to over a million people displaced within the country, many of whom will be returning to their home areas and will need to be provided with seeds, and fed until their first crops ripen in the new year.

And if that wasn't enough population movement to contend with, there's more to come. Under the peace agreement, the intention is to guide over 80,000 former combatants from the two sides to 49 different demobilization camps spread around the country. Once there they must be disarmed, demobilized, and fed. All this is to be done under the watchful eye of the United Nations. But the UN has been battling with its internal bureaucracy and although the arrival of an expected 7,000-strong peace-keeping force has begun, it is still well behind schedule.

The delay has effectively frozen the peace process in its tracks. Renamo leader Alfonso Dhlakama has insisted on the majority of UN forces being in place before he will order his own men to start moving to the assembly points. Dhlakama has been well aware that once he begins to disarm, his much smaller force will very quickly arrive at the point of no return, and so he wants to be absolutely certain that the UN is on the ground in force to control government forces should they try any dirty tricks.

That the peace has held so well has surprised many people. But not Mozambican journalist Carlos Cardoso. "It's certainly not a matter of luck," says Cardoso. "It's a

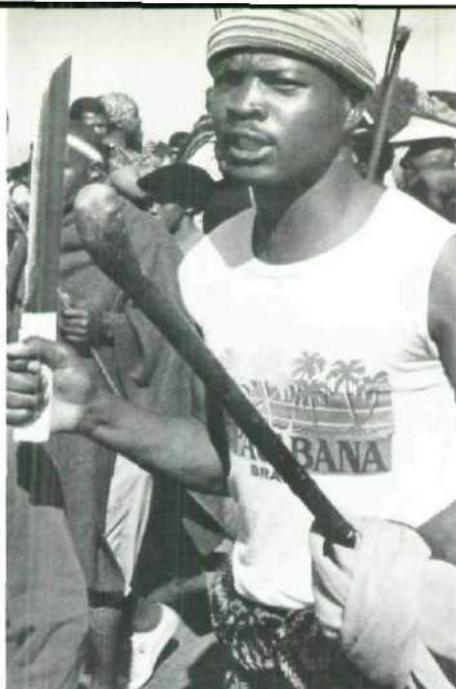
matter of the people of this country being so fed up with war that they won't tolerate anybody that has any idea of continuing it. But the big danger now," says Cardoso, "will come from the government army, not Renamo. If, say in a year's time, they don't get what they want then there may well be a resumption of hostilities. Not full-scale war, but maybe pockets of discontent."

The fear of instability within the army arises out of some simple arithmetic. More than 60,000 government soldiers will have to be demobilized. Renamo forces are outnumbered over three to one. The new unified army is to be made up of 15,000 men from each side, which means that although Renamo will be hard pushed to provide even that number, the majority of Frelimo's army will be out of a job. They will be provided with a lump sum, perhaps some seeds and tools and a journey back home. Although many soldiers have had enough of fighting, their dream may well not be a life of farming. There are also former combatants who left the army before the end of the war and who stand to gain nothing from the demobilization package. The vast majority of them have been unable to find work in the towns and have been demanding to be included in the overall peace package. With urban unemployment already extremely high, and with arms readily available in a country awash with weapons, it is a warning to be taken seriously as a destabilizing factor in the peace process.

But the Renamo military cannot be completely left out of the equation. The experience across the continent in Angola—where Unita was not disarmed, refused to accept the election result, and returned to war—has been a sobering one. But Renamo is rejecting any comparisons with Unita. "I think that everybody feels that the Angolan experience is a great tragedy," explains Renamo's chief negotiator Rau Domingos. "I hope that both sides here want to learn from that experience. And on Renamo's side in particular, I can say that if we lose the elections, we have no problems accepting the result, because that is what democracy is. If the people of Mozambique vote for President Chissano, we shall accept him as President of Mozambique. I believe that President Dhlakama and all of Renamo will do so." When it was suggested to Renamo leader Alfonso Dhlakama that he could follow Unita leader Jonas Savimbi and take up arms again if he lost the election, his reply was blunt. "Alfonso Dhlakama is not Jonas Savimbi. Renamo is not Unita. Mozambique is not Angola."

"If Renamo loses the elections there isn't much they can do except learn how to be in opposition," says journalist Carlos Cardoso. "Renamo is too small, they've lost their South African support, they are finished now as a military machine. Now that there is no foreign power interested in pumping more weapons into Mozambique, we really stand a good chance of having peace." ○

|| SOUTH AFRICA ||
BY PATRICK LAURENCE



Kevin Carter/The Weekly Mail

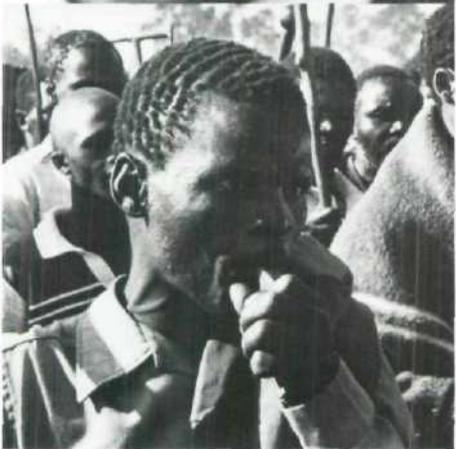
FINDING COMMON GROUND



Margaret A. Novicki

Even before the assassination of Chris Hani (left), head of the South African Communist Party and a charismatic leader of the African National Congress, South Africa's peace negotiations were proceeding delicately. Now, the killing has shaken the foundation beneath the discussions and tested the resolve of the country's political factions to stay on track to a peaceful settlement.

Violence threatens to tear the country apart and even as the negotiators talk, civilians die every day—killing is now part of the South African way of life



Kevin Carter/The Weekly Mail

After faltering and then breaking down completely, South Africa's search for a negotiated settlement to its protracted conflict had resumed again when the news of Chris Hani's assassination shook the country. The resumption had generated cautious optimism. Heads which were kept below the parapet during the second half of last year were now peering anxiously over it as political leaders tried once again to find a formula for a peaceful compromise.

If the assassination doesn't derail the process, the resumed negotiations—a preparatory conference in February cleared the way for full-scale multi-party bar-

gaining in April—appear to have a better chance of success than the aborted discussions at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa between December 1991 and May 1992.

The new talks are more inclusive. Parties present at the resumed talks which were absent from earlier negotiations include the vociferously militant Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the right-wing Conservative Party (CP) and its off-shoot, the Afrikaner Volksunie (AVU).

Places at the negotiating table have also been found for traditional or tribal leaders, including, significantly, the Zulu monarch, King Goodwill Zwelethini, whose presence was repeatedly demanded by Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) during last year's talks.

The renewed negotiations cover the entire political spectrum, with the exception of the neo-fascist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) on the extreme right and the Azanian People's Organization (Azapo) at the opposite end of the continuum. Azapo, however, has decided in principle to come to the negotiating table and is waiting for an opportune moment to take its seat.

The greater inclusivity of the resumed negotiations means that if an agreement is reached it will have a better chance of forming the basis for a durable settlement. On the other hand, it will be harder to forge an agreement among such a disparate range of parties.

The most hopeful aspect of the present negotiations is the bilateral agreement hammered out in a series of high-powered and secret meetings between the de Klerk administration and the African National Congress (ANC).

The agreement—described as a pact or collusion by rival political forces—rests on four salient points:

(1) The final constitution for a non-racial and democratic South Africa should be drawn up by a popularly elected constituent assembly, consisting of 400 members and functioning within the boundaries of a set of constitutional principles agreed to at preceding multi-party negotiations. Target dates have been set for the election: September 1993 (ANC) and April 1994 (de Klerk).

(2) The constituent assembly will fulfill a dual function: serve as a constitution-making body and as a transitional Parliament pending finalization of the new constitution.

(3) After the elections, a Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) will be established, drawn from all that win between 5 and 10 percent of the vote (the ANC favors 5 and de Klerk 10 percent). Parties will be represented in the TGNU in proportion to their strength in the constituent assembly.

(4) The life of the TGNU could be extended for five years, meaning that if the final constitution is completed in, say, two years, its implementation could be delayed for another three.

Thus, under the ANC-de Klerk accord, South Africa

will have a TGNU, in which the ANC and the National Party (NP) are likely to be dominant partners. It may last until the turn of the century and provide a link between the old and new orders and, it is hoped, guarantee the loyalty of the white-dominated civil service and security forces.

The ANC-de Klerk deal is seen by observers and many South Africans as a hopeful development. The belief is that it will serve as a cornerstone upon which the new South Africa will be constructed, that it will help buttress the center and, to quote Yeats, prevent things from falling apart and anarchy from being "loosed upon the world."

The deal, however, has been criticized from within both the ANC and the government. In the ANC, radical elements see it as a risky compromise, accepted to ensure, in the words of Winnie Mandela, "a short-cut route to Parliament by a handful of individuals." In the government and its handmaiden, the NP, malcontents see it as capitulation to the ANC and betrayal of Buthelezi's IFP. Already two of de Klerk's men, Jurie Mentz and Henrie Bekker, have defected to the Zulu-based IFP. They may be straws in the proverbial wind.

The deal has been criticized by parties on the outside. To them it reeks of "collusion." They suspect an ANC-de Klerk maneuver to impose their will on the negotiating process. The response of parties as divergent as the PAC and the IFP is to cry: "Hijack!"

Taking a broader view, two blocs can be identified at the negotiating table as the different parties haggle for advantage.

In the first, which includes the ANC, the government, and the PAC, believes that the new constitution must be drafted by an elected constitution-making body if it is to acquire the necessary legitimacy.

The second, led by the IFP, argues that an elected body will result in the majority party imposing its will and that its constitutional strategy will be to secure its own power rather than to establish democracy. The second bloc wants the new constitution to be drafted by the multi-party conference, aided by constitutional experts. It cites the 1979 Lancaster House conference—which drafted Zimbabwe's first post-independence constitution—as a precedent for its approach.

But another fundamental difference divides the negotiating parties, one which put the government closer to Buthelezi's bloc than to the ANC. It concerns regionalism.

With the exception of the PAC and Azapo, all the parties—including the ANC—favor regionalism, or, more specifically, the division of South Africa into some 10 regions with a high degree of autonomy over their own affairs.

The ANC, however, advocates a system under which the balance of power will rest unequivocally with the central government. It will have concurrent and overriding powers. Against that, the remaining parties favor a division of power in favor of regions rather than the center.

Patrick Laurence is a specialist writer on the Johannesburg Star, South African correspondent of The Economist, and a contributor to The Guardian of London and The Irish Times.

Under their plans, regional governments will have original and inviolable powers.

Buthelezi's IFP favors a system in which the regions will retain all the powers which they do not specifically cede to the center. Buthelezi has already published a constitution for KwaZulu and Natal, an area where he hopes that the IFP will emerge as the majority party.

Under the proposed constitution, KwaNatal, as KwaZulu and Natal are known collectively, would be able to veto the deployment of federal troops or the imposition of federal taxes and decide, via a special constitutional court, which South African laws had jurisdiction in Natal.

Some observers contend that the IFP constitution provides for KwaNatal to be a largely independent state in a South African confederation rather than an autonomous region in a federation. Thus Etienne Mureinik, professor of law at the University of Witwatersrand, writes: "KwaNatal would require a separate and insular statehood, just as Hendrick Verwoerd might have hoped."

The ANC, as Thomazile Botha, head of its department of regional and local government, has made clear, fears that confederation is the first step to secession and disintegration of the South African polity. It will resist any move in that direction of confederation.

The dispute over the question of regional power tends to obscure another equally important divergence over the issue of who should determine the regional boundaries.

Buthelezi believes the existing regions should do so. He is supported by the CP, the AVU—both of which aim at establishing an Afrikaner state—and the governments of Bophuthatswana and Ciskei, putatively independent states established under the now discarded doctrine of territorial apartheid. The ANC reckons that it is a task that should be referred to the elected constituent assembly.

Thus the negotiating parties face two interconnected and fundamental questions. Should the new constitution be drafted by an elected constituent assembly or by the multi-party conference? Should the powers and borders of the regions be determined by the constitution-making body or by the existing regions (provinces and tribal "homelands")?

A possible middle course is under discussion. It will require great ingenuity for the negotiators to get it accepted.

The "third way" is for the multi-party conference to draw up a list of constitutional principles. These will serve as guidelines within which the constituent assembly will have to draft the constitution. Thus there will be input from both the multi-party conference and the constituent assembly.

Much will depend, however, on whether agreement can be reached on the constitutional principles.

The ANC is wary of attempts to define these principles in such detail that the constituent assembly will find that its work has been pre-empted. Joe Slovo, the shrewd national chairman of the South African Communist Party, fears that the constituent assembly could be left to decide

WISDOM AND PATIENCE WILL BE NEEDED BY THE NEGOTIATING PARTIES TO AVOID THE MANY SNARES.

minor issues such as the color and design of the flag and the wording of the preamble to the constitution.

On the other side, the Buthelezi bloc is determined to guard against what it fears will be the tyranny of the majority party. It will thus want to draw the boundaries as

narrowly as possible, leaving the constituent assembly with little scope.

In theory the multi-party conference will seek to reach consensus. If it cannot reach complete consensus, however, it will decide on the basis of the doctrine of "sufficient consensus." The problem is that "sufficient consensus" is an ill-defined concept. It has been defined tautologically so far. The multi-party planning conference defines it as "enough agreement" from enough participants to enable the process to move forward.

If the parties cannot agree, who will decide whether or when there is sufficient consensus to proceed?

Does sufficient consensus mean, as some political analysts contend, concurrence between the ANC and the government? If so, is there not justification for these two central forces of collusion? Have they secretly decided to try to persuade as many of the parties to join them as possible and then to move forward anyway?

These tricky questions lie waiting to ensnare the negotiating parties. To avoid the traps will require the wisdom of Solomon and the patience of Job.

Meanwhile violence threatens to tear the country apart. Even as the negotiators talk, civilians die every day, as assassins strike, killing women and children, white as well as black. Murderous ANC fanatics, IFP zealots, and renegade security force members have been joined by fanatical gunmen from the PAC's armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army. Killing is now part of the South African way of life.

Buthelezi, who wants elections to be held under a constitution drawn up by the multi-party conference, has declared that free and fair elections cannot be held in this prevailing climate. De Klerk has insisted that South Africa's first priority must be to end the violence.

But Slovo argues, "In moving rapidly, now, towards one person/one vote elections, we will show those forces who have unleashed the violence in our country that they cannot stop the movement toward democracy with an escalating body count. But if we falter now, we will encourage ongoing carnage."

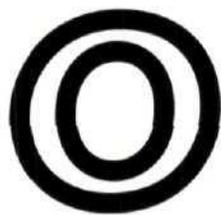
The problem of going to the vote before the violence subsides is that it may result in the elections being decided by the party or alliance of parties which can create the biggest or most "no-go" areas. It would be a most inauspicious start for the "new South Africa." ○

PROBLEM CHILD



William Campbell/Sygma

One of the stickiest issues facing peace negotiations in South Africa is the fate of the "homelands" created by the apartheid government. While some have agreed to be incorporated into an independent South Africa, officials in Bophuthatswana are holding out for sovereignty, while using increasingly repressive measures to stifle debate on the subject.



Officials of the "independent" South African homeland of Bophuthatswana like to boast about the peace-loving nature of the Tswana people.

The territory, they say, did not sign the National Peace Accord that most South African parties and "homelands" acceded to in September 1991 because it doesn't need to. "The peace accord is irrelevant here," declares Bophuthatswana's minister of justice and prison service, S.G. Mothibe. "There is no violence in Bophuthatswana."

That, say opposition groups and human rights monitors, is a mirage. "Don't be fooled by the calm here," says a spokesperson of the Mafeking Anti-Repression Forum (Maref), an independent monitoring network. "It is a false calm, brought about by repression." As we talk in

the garden of a hotel in Mmabatho, the "capital" of Bophuthatswana, plainclothes men, whom Maref claims are secret service agents, pace up and down within hearing distance.

Indeed, the tensions that underlie the surface in this bizarre entity—six pieces of land straddling three provinces of the country—are reminiscent of South Africa before the repeal of its most repressive legislation three years ago. While South Africa has done away with most apartheid legislation, the laws creating the four "independent" and six "self-governing" homelands based on ethnic affiliation remain in place. So too, particularly in Bophuthatswana, do many of the tools of repression invented under the apartheid system.

As multi-party talks aimed a reaching agreement on South Africa's first one-person, one-vote elections resumed, the question is no longer if, but how, the homelands will be reincorporated.

And the general consensus is that Bophuthatswana—popularly, if disparagingly, referred to as "Bop"—is

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

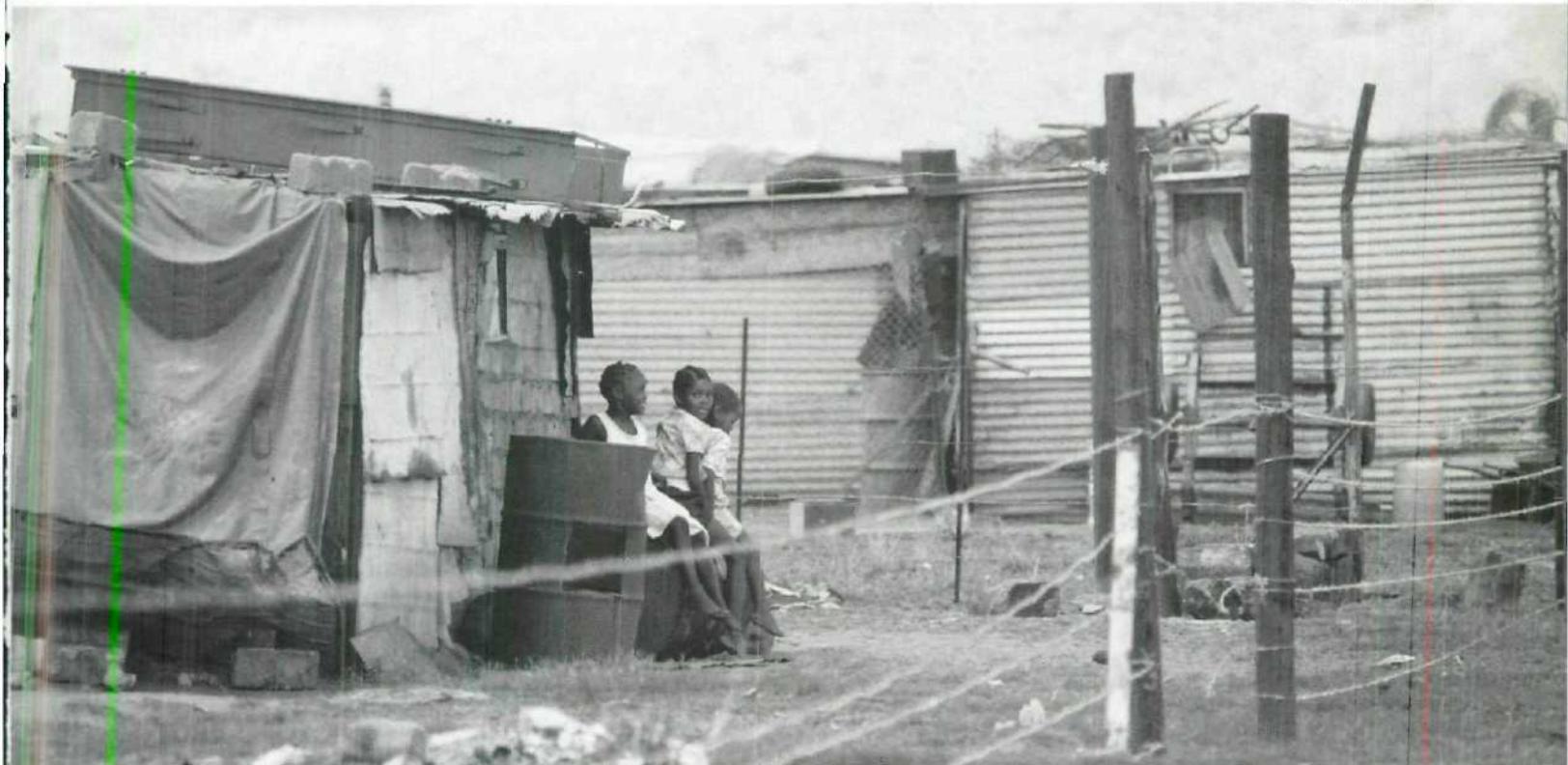
likely to prove the hardest nut to crack. "For historical, cultural, geographical, and political reasons, Bophuthatswana is likely to prove the most intransigent of the TBVC states," notes John Dugard, a South African constitutional expert who has written extensively on the four "independent" homelands of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei.

Transkei and Venda long ago cast their lot with the African National Congress (ANC). They have fully accepted the principle of reincorporation. The main ques-

British did them out of the right to be part of the Bechuanaland protectorate, which led to Botswana's achieving its independence while apartheid persisted in South Africa.

They argued that the "independence" option offered by South Africa in 1977—albeit fragmented and in the context of the grand apartheid strategy—gave them the opportunity to make up for this historical injustice. The rulers of this territory therefore see themselves as fundamentally different from Transkei, Venda, and Ciskei.

William Campbell/Sygnia



tion is whether they would choose to stand with, or alongside, the ANC in an election.

Ciskei's military ruler, Brig. Oupa Gqozo, has had strained and bitter relations with the ANC. The relationship hit an all-time low after the ANC march on Bisho on September 7, 1992, in which 40 civilians were killed by Gqozo's forces. But maintaining control over an area traditionally regarded as the ANC heartland (Ciskei is home to many ANC leaders) has not been easy, even using repressive methods.

And with 80 percent of his budget coming from Pretoria, the Ciskei ruler is especially vulnerable. The recent withdrawal of South African Defense Force personnel who had been seconded to Ciskei after the Bisho incident, and reversal of legislation that allowed detention without trial and limited free political activity, have made it possible for the ANC to campaign freely in Ciskei.

However, Bophuthatswana stands out as South Africa's most difficult "problem child" for a number of reasons.

Historically, Bophuthatswana officials claim that the

The desperately poor rural areas are a far cry from the mushrooming high rises and bustling traffic of the capital.

Mmabatho

They also harp strongly on their ethnic identity—an emphasis which has hurt those on the boundaries of the territory who are not Tswana.

Bophuthatswana is also economically the best off of the homelands, sitting as it does atop one-third of the world's platinum and chrome deposits. The territory's economy

grew at a rate of 18.4 percent between 1985 and 1989; a fact reflected in the mushrooming high rises and bustling traffic of Mmabatho even if this hectic pace is a far cry from the desperately poor rural areas.

Bophuthatswana is heavily dependent on South Africa. Some 21 percent of its budget comes from Pretoria, and another 30 percent from the Southern African Customs Union. About half the Bophuthatswana labor force works in South Africa. But the bit of economic clout which the Lucas Mangope regime has given Bophuthatswana the confidence to go out on a limb.

Politically, the territory is not as obvious an ANC base as Transkei. However, even sources who have worked

Bophuthatswana's Squatter Problem

Despite the claims that Bophuthatswana's economy is booming, the evidence is hard to find among the shacks that have mushroomed around the "border" town of Hammanskraal, not far from Pretoria.

The destruction of over 600 of these ramshackle dwellings, including a community-built school, is thus especially painful for the residents of the area. The dispute here, common on many of the fringes of this unwieldy territory, is deeply rooted in the political paradoxes of South Africa. Repeated attempts to resolve the issue through the legal system have simply underscored that until the fundamental issue of Bophuthatswana's reincorporation into South Africa is resolved, recourse to the courts is likely to prove futile.

Ndebele chief Johannes Kekana, whose descendants are the traditional authorities in the area, is reputed to have bought the land in 1912.

closely with Mangope concede that he is deeply unpopular. Back in 1977, many opposed independence on the grounds that they would lose their South African citizenship. Despite the lip service that Bophuthatswana pays to democratic ideals, only a quarter of the potential voters in this territory of just over 2 million people actually voted in 1977.

In the last election—October 1992—no opposition candidates were nominated for the election; thus those put forward by the government returned unopposed.

Mangope, who reputedly built himself a bunker on his private farm after a failed coup in 1988, is surrounded by right-wing advisers of questionable reputation, including the power-behind-the-throne in Mmabatho, a former Rhodesian minister, Rowan Cronje.

"The pattern of repression during the past two years in the nominally independent homeland of Bophuthatswana has contrasted markedly with that in most other parts of South Africa. The authorities have continued to rely on their powers under security legislation to silence their opponents," notes the recently released Amnesty International report on South Africa, titled "State of Fear."

Shortly after the release of ANC leader Nelson Mandela, in early 1990, Bophuthatswana introduced a state of emergency. This has since been lifted, but the existing Internal Security Act gives the authorities wide powers.

Under this legislation, several political organizations and interest groups remain banned. Technically, the

In 1977, South Africa incorporated the land into Bophuthatswana without consulting the Kekana royal family. This was achieved by deposing Nathaniel Kekana, then chief, and replacing him with an appointed replacement willing to sell the land. The Kekana royal family never recognized this transaction.

Matters came to a head late last year after the parastatal Bophuthatswana National Development Corporation (BNDC) made it known that it wanted land in the Morokolong suburb of Hammanskraal for industrial development. The BNDC maintains that it would never have just thrown people out of their homes and into the streets to achieve this objective. But the Bophuthatswana police—despite a court restraining order—apparently relished the task of razing the homes of these people.

Further problems have been experienced in the Sekampaneng township, where several homes, and

ANC is not banned. However, to be able to meet without seeking permission from the minister of law and order (Mangope), under the Internal Security Act the organization would have to register as a party. The ANC has refused to do so, because this would represent de facto recognition of Bophuthatswana. Only Pretoria recognizes the homeland as a separate state.

A further stipulation is that only "citizens" of Bophuthatswana can engage in political activity in the territory. This immediately omits the thousands who opted not to take Bophuthatswana citizenship for fear of losing their South African nationality.

Although the number of political prisoners has been reduced from 140 to five, and a moratorium placed on the death penalty, detentions and torture continue unabated, according to the Amnesty International and Mafef reports.

Recently publicized incidents include the death of one person, and injuries inflicted on several others by the Bophuthatswana police in response to a protest against alleged police and army harassment; efforts by the police to disrupt a church voter education workshop; the detention of two foreign ecumenical monitors attending a funeral; and denial of access to international observers seeking to visit the sites of recent forced removals.

These latter two incidents have prompted the international observer missions based in South Africa to help stem violence under a UN Security Council resolution to call for a repeal of the Internal Security Act, and to "allow

the school which the community struggled to build, have been destroyed. In one locality, two homes were destroyed to make way for a private business enterprise that involved a Bophuthatswana "minister."

According to local press reports, police in armored vehicles have struck in the Hammanskraal area more than 10 times since January 12, demolishing homes and forcing 600 families to flee to neighboring villages.

Bophuthatswana officials claim that they have a duty to control squatting, otherwise "squatters" will continue to pour into the homeland for economic reasons. But those affected maintain that the exercise is a cover for purging members of the community who favor reincorporation into South Africa. There is also an ethnic dimension to the conflict, as many of the inhabitants are Ndebele, not Tswana.

Efforts by international observer groups based in South Africa—the UN, Commonwealth, EC, and Organization of African Unity—to investigate the issue have come to naught. According to a press release from these missions, when they visited the Hammanskraal areas under the auspices of the National Peace Secretariat, the Bophuthatswana minister of external affairs and information, Tom Sethiloane,

all political parties and interest groups to express themselves freely, especially during this time of transition to a democratic South Africa."

So far, however, such calls have been ignored. Far from relaxing restrictions on political activity, Bophuthatswana's main preoccupation is angling for the best deal it can get in the multi-party negotiations.

The "Concerned Group of South Africa" (Cosag), composed of Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, the Inkatha Freedom Party, and several right-wing groups, is campaigning for a solution that would give maximum autonomy to the homelands. Ideally, it would like a confederal state, but would settle for a federation. The ANC has proposed a plan that would carve the country into 10 or 16 regions which, while enjoying some autonomy from the center, would essentially break up the current homelands.

Bophuthatswana, which alone among the homelands declined to sign the "Declaration of Intent" at the previous multi-party talks, is still saying that it favors the status quo and would be willing to go it alone. Most commentators believe that is just posturing, but recent reports that Pretoria is arguing for Bophuthatswana to be treated as a "special case" and not be subject to agreements on reincorporation have raised a storm of protest by the ANC.

Equally controversial is the issue of when the homelands cease to become entities: before or after an election. Both the government and ANC agree that the issue

barred them from visiting the sites of recent forced removals.

Lawyers for Human Rights, a local NGO, is helping to seek legal redress. But a number of court cases, while leaving no doubt that the Bophuthatswana authorities did ruthlessly destroy these properties, have failed to bring respite to victims.

One problem is that efforts by the Royal Council or the chief himself to take the matter to court on behalf of all those affected have been thwarted by the ruling that they have no legal right to represent everyone.

The question of who actually owns the land is complicated by the dispute over whether the chief who sold the land was empowered to do so. The whole chieftancy issue is the subject of a separate court case.

Lawyers who have been working on these cases are losing hope of ever getting the people back the land they lived on, let alone compensation for property destroyed, under the present dispensation. As one of the lawyers working on the Hammanskraal cases comments: "This is a political issue—not a legal one." ■

—A.S.

of the nature of a future South African state should be decided by the elected constituent assembly. However, that would imply that the homelands remain in place during the election. This is especially problematic in Bophuthatswana, where present legislation is far from conducive to a free and fair election.

The international community, which has directed its complaints on the state of affairs in the homelands to Pretoria fails to understand why Pretoria refuses to simply "pull the plug" on these entities. Even Bophuthatswana, it is widely agreed, could not survive a week if South Africa seriously imposed sanctions against it.

Constitutional expert John Dugard offers a tantalizingly simple solution to the problem: just as Pretoria gave independence to the homelands, so it can repeal the very same legislation. He is of the view that it would be impossible to hold an election in South Africa with these entities in place. This strategy has been embraced by the ANC, but the government appears unlikely to take action, especially in the case of Bophuthatswana.

For all that South Africa has repented of its other sins of apartheid, Dugard adds, it has "still not shown any significant regret for the creation of the homelands—and especially Bophuthatswana. The government is going to back the solution that gives the greatest status to the homelands."

That, he adds, with the discontent simmering beneath the surface in Bophuthatswana, can only be a recipe for more open confrontation in the run-up to elections. ○

The bombing of the World Trade Center in New York and a series of terrorist attacks in and around Cairo have brought international attention to the rise of Islamic radicalism in



Thomas Hartwell/Sygma

Egypt. The violence has devastated Egypt's tourist industry and

provoked the institution of new, harsher anti-terrorist laws. But how much of a threat do the radicals really present for Hosni Mubarak's government?



Betty Press

Oslamic extremists are posing an increasing challenge for the Egyptian regime. After a year of militant attacks against tourists, Coptic Christians and police, and the assassination of a well-known secular intellectual, Egyptian authorities are now locked in an escalating battle of attack and counter-attack with the militants.

Still, while the rise of Muslim extremism in Egypt has hurt the regime economically and become a significant irritant, it will not likely topple the administration of President Hosni Mubarak.

"Is it threatening the government in the sense of a *coup or mass upheaval*? No," commented Dr. Aly Dessouqi, political science professor at Cairo University. "Is it threatening tourism? Yes. Does it constitute a major challenge? Yes."

While Islamic militants have long been a problem for the Egyptian government, in the last year they have become stronger and bolder. Since the summer they have attacked foreign tourists in order to humiliate the Mubarak administration and damage the country's tourism sector—Egypt's main hard currency earner at over \$3 billion per year. In March they also warned foreign and Egyptian businesses to leave the country or face attacks.

While incidents against foreigners began in Upper Egypt, with militants throwing explosives at tourist buses and Nile River cruise boats, in February attacks started in *major tourist destinations in and around Cairo*. In mid-March a bomb exploded in the capital's center at the Egyptian museum, housing the world's most extensive selection of pharaonic treasures. A couple of weeks later, the Islamic extremists claimed responsibility for a bomb that exploded inside one of the pyramids, the most frequented tourist site, just outside Cairo.

"The Islamic Group urges tourists and investors to leave the country from this moment, because the time for warnings has ended," a communique following the pyramid explosion read.

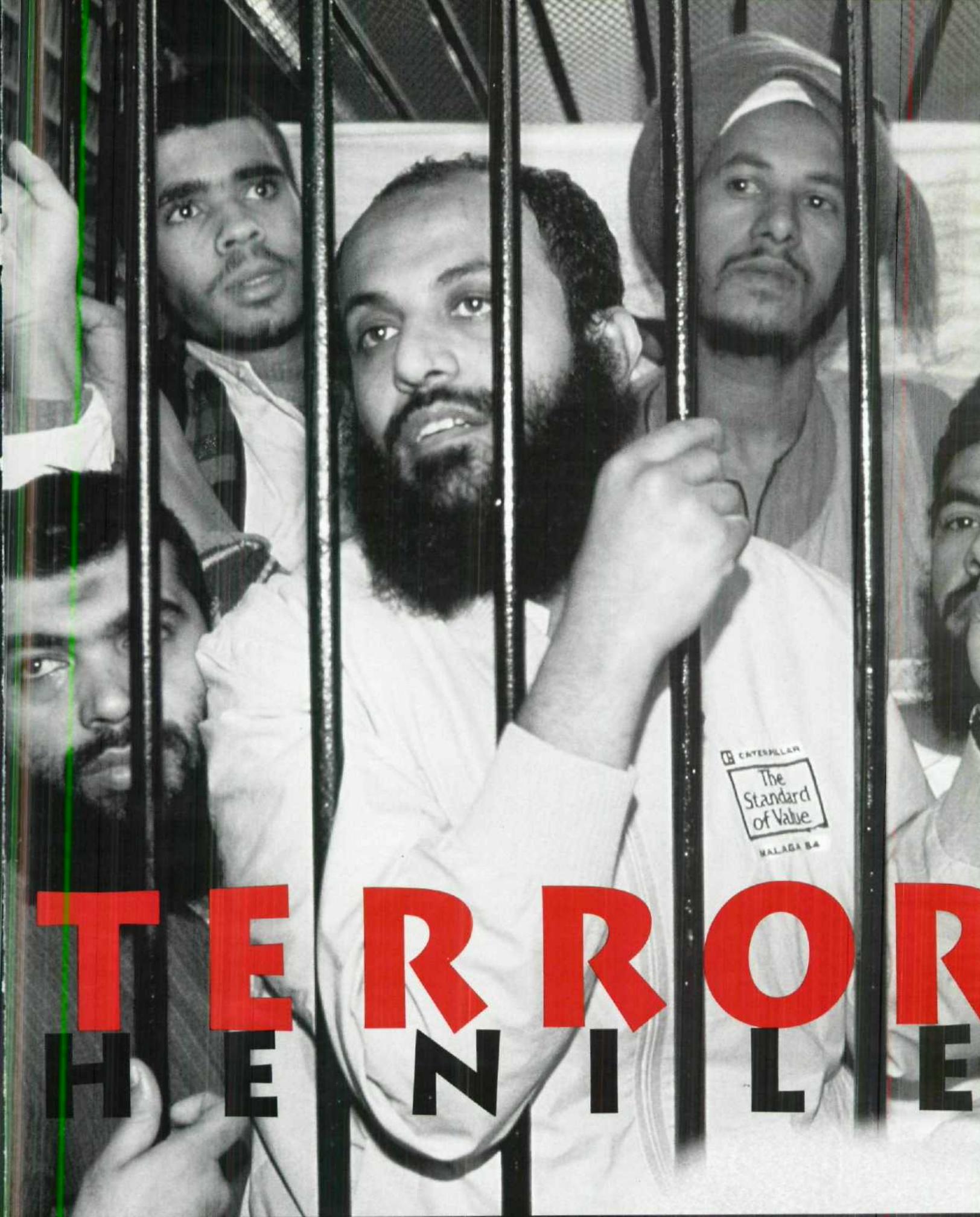
These attacks have left three foreign tourists dead and at least two dozen wounded. They have also devastated the tourism industry, decreasing revenues by as much as 70 percent.

Right, some of the defendants in the trial of 49 Islamic fundamentalists charged with attacks on tourists



Thomas Hartwell/Sygma

O N T



T E R R O R
H E N I L L E

The latest round of Islamic militancy began increasing a year ago when Coptic Christians and Islamic fundamentalists clashed in the southern town of Dairut. Fourteen people were killed, all but one Christian.

A month later Faraq Fouda, a secular writer and open critic of Islamic extremism, was assassinated. The Islamic Group claimed responsibility.

This organization, a decentralized conglomeration of militant groups, demands an end to the current administration and full implementation of Islamic *shari'a* law. With 20,000 followers, according to Egyptian interior ministry estimates, it is the most influential extremist organization in Egypt today.

The Islamic Group's religious leader is the 54-year-old blind cleric Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, living in the United States for the last three years. An Egyptian, Mahmoud Abouhalima, the alleged ring leader behind New York's World Trade Center bombing, extradited from Egypt in the end of March, has close ties with Abdel Rahman. Mohamed Salameh, a Palestinian, the first suspect arrested in connection with the Trade Center explosion, attended the same mosque in Jersey City, N.J., where Abdel Rahman sometimes preached.

Many political analysts in Egypt saw a possible link between Rahman and Islamic extremists and the Trade Center incident. Militants could be expanding their struggle to the international arena to protest a variety of recent events, they speculate: the United Nations Security Council's neglect, for example, to penalize Israel for deporting 400 suspected Islamic extremists from the occupied territories or its hesitancy to punish Serbs for the atrocities inflicted on Bosnian Muslims in the former Yugoslavia. Meanwhile, the Security Council has insisted on imposing sanctions against Iraq and Libya.

"They might have been responding to the abhorrent double standards in international relations at the time of the bombing," said Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a specialist in Islamic extremism and sociology professor at the American University in Cairo.

Some commentators, however, argue against the involvement of Abdel Rahman or Egypt's militants, even peripherally. They question why Abdel Rahman would taunt the United States and risk deportation to Egypt, where he faces prosecution. On April 6, a case accusing him and 46 of his followers of participating in an anti-government demonstration and the illegal possession of weapons among other accusations, reopened in Cairo. Others say the techniques used in the World Trade Center bombing were far too sophisticated for people connected to the Islamic Group. Some even implicate Israel's secret service, saying the bombing was an Israeli plot to demonize the Islamic world.

Indeed, if Abdel Rahman is interested in expanding his organization's struggle abroad this is not reflected in his

invective, which is mainly directed toward Egypt and Mubarak's administration.

Previously a scholar at Cairo's Al-Azhar University, the center of moderate Sunni Muslim teachings, Abdel Rahman today calls for the overthrow of the Egyptian government and Mubarak's assassination. His message is communicated to his followers in Egypt through tens of thousands of cassette tapes that are smuggled into Upper Egypt, south of Cairo, the power base of the Islamic Group. Abdel Rahman is widely believed to be the man who issued the religious edict or *fatwa* calling for Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's murder in 1981.

His Islamic Group differs from Egypt's more well-known Muslim Brotherhood, which also wants to establish a pure Islamic state, but advocates nonviolent means. While the Islamic Group is made up mainly of the young, angry, poor and uneducated, the Muslim Brotherhood's members are Egypt's bourgeoisie, including doctors, lawyers, and engineers. The Brotherhood is also widely believed to be the only organization with enough popular support to assume power in Egypt.

In the past, the government's strategy had been to reintegrate the Muslim Brotherhood into Egypt's political arena, thus separating the nonviolent extremists from the violent ones and weakening support for the militant radicals. The Brotherhood had seats in Parliament, influence in professional syndicates, and its own newspaper.

Over the years, however, this more moderate organization has been increasingly marginalized. It boycotted the last parliamentary elections in 1990, claiming an unfair electoral process, and subsequently lost its seats in the People's Assembly. After the group gained control of the lawyer's union last fall, giving it authority over almost all of Egypt's professional organizations, the government changed the law for syndicate selections, making it more difficult for fundamentalists to get elected.

"The Muslim Brotherhood is the only political power that represents an alternative to the government and it knows that," said Hala Mustapha, a specialist in Islamic extremism at the Al Ahrum Center for Political and Strategic Studies, a Cairo-based think tank. "When the government saw the growing presence of this group in associations and political and social organizations it wanted to put a stop to it. The new law for professional syndicate elections indicates the government's concern."

While the government uses judicial measures to suppress the Brotherhood, it is increasingly using force to fight the Islamic Group. Whether for purposes of revenge or defense, the militants are striking back.

"There is an escalation of violence, which has acquired an enormous proportion, because of action and reaction," said Mohamed Sayed Ahmed, a prominent journalist and intellectual.

In March, 28 people were killed and more than 50 injured in confrontations between the police and militants. Most of these casualties occurred in the southern tourist

Sarah Gauch is a Cairo-based freelance journalist whose work has appeared in The Christian Science Monitor, U.S. News and World Report, and The Times of London.

city of Aswan as security forces and radicals clashed in one of Egypt's bloodiest battles in a decade.

The Egyptian administration defends its repressive tactics by claiming these measures are working to control the Islamic trend. "Terrorists' despair comes from the feeling that the noose is tightening around them on the one hand by the Egyptian people, who have joined to eliminate them, and on the other hand by the security agencies which effectively and courageously confronted these terrorists," said Mubarak in an interview published in the Kuwaiti newspaper *Al-Syassa*.

The government has also made its anti-terrorist laws harsher, giving authorities broader power to detain, arrest, interrogate, and try suspects. The government announced a plan to bring all mosques under its control, and suspected militants can be tried in military, instead of civilian, courts to expedite their sentencing.

The administration has broadcast more religious programming on television and radio to gain support from an increasingly religious population. It also tries to use the revered and state-run Al-Azhar University to denounce the militants' actions.

There have been only minimal attempts by the government to deal with the growth of Islamic militancy through socio-economic measures such as creating jobs. The World Bank-sponsored Social Fund was supposed to begin operation in the fall of 1991 to ease the economic hardship of International Monetary Fund-inspired reform. It wasn't until last summer, however, that these projects began to deliver.

Just recently the Egyptian government began mentioning plans for an employment program in Upper Egypt, where in some parts it is estimated as many as 80 percent of people are out of work.

While some may call for more of these sorts of projects to eradicate Islamic militancy, many Egyptians agree with the government's use of force against Muslim radicals. "The government has to hit them and hit them hard," said Gamal Abu Zeid, 30, a vegetable seller in the affluent neighborhood of Zamalek.

Many Egyptians see the Muslim militants' activities as contrary to Islam. "They (the Islamic Group) are crazy. What they are doing is completely opposite from Islamic teachings. It is not human," said a 31-year-old Egyptian business center manager. The antipathy people have towards the Islamic Group is accentuated because its actions threaten many people's livelihoods—those working in tourism, foreign businesses, and even maids and drivers employed by foreigners living in Egypt.

Still, the reasons behind the growth of Islamic extremism in this country are deep-rooted and complex. They probably cannot be extinguished by brute force, political analysts agreed. Under IMF-inspired economic reforms, the country is experiencing a recession linked to its transition from a socialist to a capitalist economy. Prices have increased and government has decreased its hiring and expenditures for employment programs.

The rich are getting richer and the poor poorer. While it gets more difficult for the poor to feed their families, increasing numbers of Mercedes crowd the streets and expensive clothing stores line the sidewalks.

One Muslim militant in Assyut, complaining about the government's ineptitude, explained that of the \$30 per month he made, \$25 went to rent and electricity and \$5 was left to feed his wife and two children.

Living under these tremendous financial constraints, many young people have turned to Islamic extremism as the only escape. "We are fighting to free our country," said this Muslim radical. "We have given our souls to God. With God's help we will succeed."

In addition to economic difficulties, the population has few outlets for political expression. While there is an opposition press, it is prone to exaggeration and falsehood and is largely discredited. While there are elections, they are skewed in favor of Mubarak's ruling National Democratic Party, and Egyptians are not free to elect a new president.

The extremist groups also attract followers by compensating for the government's failure to provide social services. These organizations offer funds to the destitute, health services and protection against crime. In the first few days after an earthquake hit Cairo last October, the fundamentalists were more effective than the authorities at distributing blankets and food.

It is believed that the militants might get some of their funds for community assistance and weaponry from Sudan and possibly Iran. "Egypt is a very poor country, but one militant might have a machine gun and other equipment valued at \$5,000. Who finances these weapons?" asked Prof. Dessouqi of Cairo University.

Egyptian officials claim extremists bring weapons over Egypt's porous southern border with Sudan, where they also receive training. Several hundred Egyptians, who fought in the Afghan conflict, have also brought new skills in guerilla warfare back to Egypt.

Some political analysts say Israel might even be assisting these groups. "I wouldn't rule it out," said Ibrahim. "If the Islamic extremists destabilize a neighboring country it may serve Israel's short-range interests, because it is trying to pose Islamic militants as the new devil in the world."

In any case there appears no end to the problem in the near future. The government's attempts to solve the threat of Islamic militancy through force is just fueling the violence, not smothering it, political scholars said.

No one believes the Islamic trend will disappear in the near future. At best the government and extremists can come to a temporary truce. The government could also develop a new strategy, forming an alliance with one or several political opposition groups to fight the fundamentalists. "I don't believe this phenomenon will end in the short-term," said Hala Mustapha. "All we can expect is a kind of reconciliation to stop the violent acts on both sides. The state can also change its alliances to support another political force, a secular force." ○

WHILE THE PEOPLE STARVE



Betty Press

Betty Press

Rival factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) are battling over turf in southern Sudan while civilians are starving to death. At the same time, the SPLA prepared for crucial

negotiations with the Sudan government, scheduled to be held in May in the Nigerian capital of Abuja.

On March 27, forces loyal to the SPLA's Torit faction leader John Garang attacked the town of Kongor in Jonglei region, forcing supporters of the SPLA's Nasir faction led by Commander Riek

Machar to flee. According to one eyewitness who was with Riek's forces, 81 people were killed during the fighting, which began with a dawn raid by Garang forces.

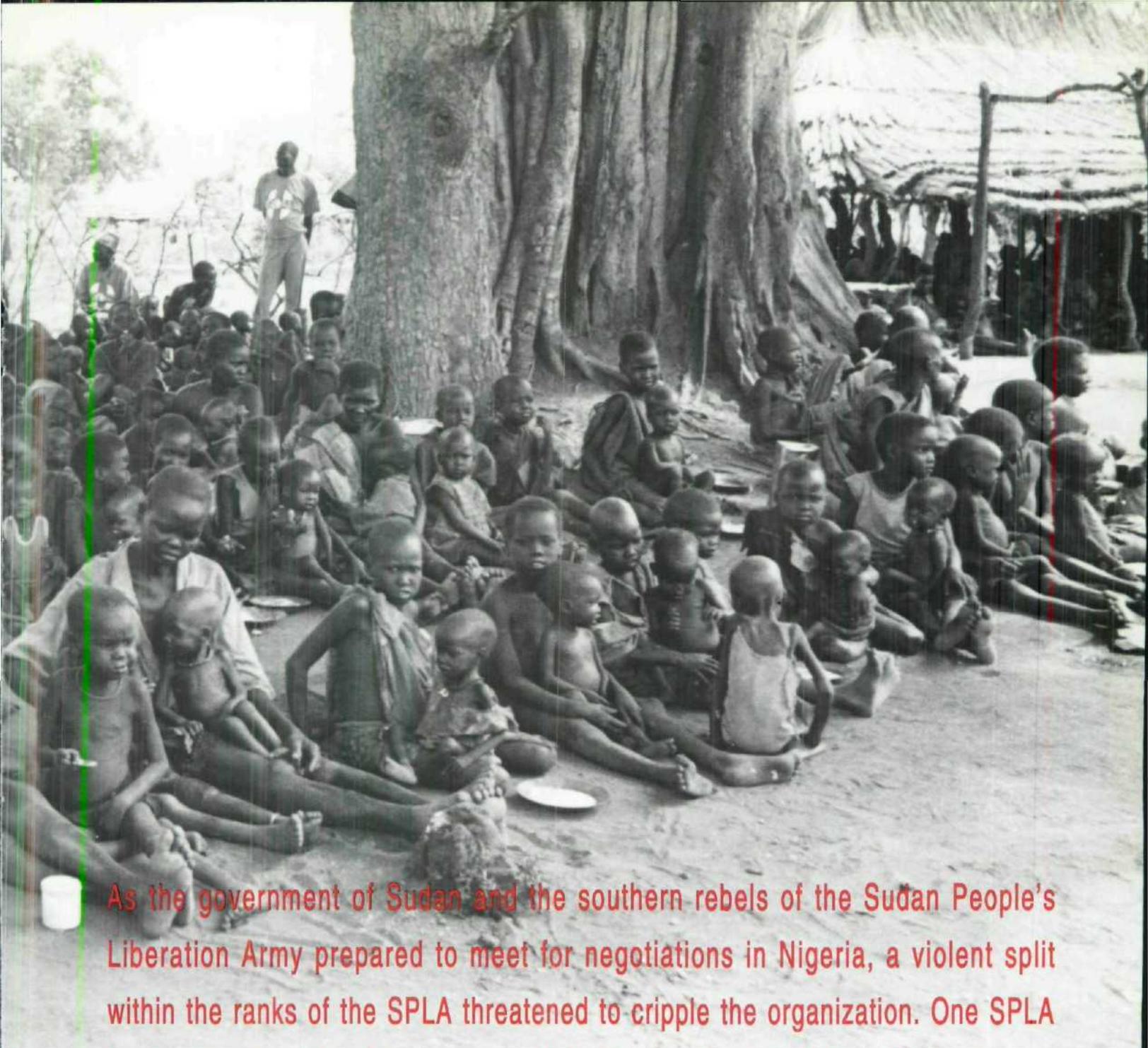
According to the eyewitness, 15 of the dead were from Riek's forces, 21 from Garang's and 45 were civilians living in the town. Riek's forces had been aware for several days that Garang planned an attack, but still appear to have been taken by surprise when it finally came.

According to Nasir faction military sources, Riek withdrew to the town of Foktap, eight miles from Kongor. However, Garang supporters say that Riek's forces stayed in the town while their own troops occupied the surrounding area.

The attack on Kongor can be interpreted as

Inset, Lt. Gen. Omar Hassan al-Bashir, leader of Sudan's Islamic military regime

Mark Huband is Africa correspondent of The Guardian of London.



As the government of Sudan and the southern rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army prepared to meet for negotiations in Nigeria, a violent split within the ranks of the SPLA threatened to cripple the organization. One SPLA faction leader, John Garang, now finds his toughest fight is with breakaway commander Riek Machar to win the hearts and minds of southern Sudanese. And while their leaders fight with each other, the people of the south battle starvation.

a sign of Garang's determination to prevent Riek from forging a strong political alliance which can use the Abuja peace talks as a springboard to recognition of the Nasir faction as a major player in the 11-year civil war.

Riek led a split in the SPLA in 1991, amid accusations that Garang had become a dictator within the movement and was responsible for human rights abuses. Initially Riek was strongly criticized for causing a split which

placed the SPLA in an extremely vulnerable position with regard to the overall effort among southern Sudanese fighting the Islamic government in Khartoum to achieve autonomy for the largely Christian south.

However, the day before the March attack on Kongor, Riek had convened a meeting in the town which effectively consolidated the Nasir group as the faction with the broadest appeal within the SPLA. If Riek continues to

be successful he could emerge as a formidable political force in time for the Abuja talks.

The intention of the Kongor meeting, taking place in Garang's birthplace, was to encourage members of the Dinka, who would traditionally have supported their fellow Dinka—Garang—to join the Nasir group. Riek, a member of the Nuer tribe, has realized that support from the Dinka is essential if he is to lead the SPLA and force the government in Khartoum to hold a referendum of people in the south which would allow them to accept or reject his demand for full secession from the rest of Sudan.



Camerasix

Riek insists on secession for the south, and he rejects Garang's goal of establishing a federal state within Sudan.

At the Kongor meeting, an eyewitness said that up to 5,000 people were addressed by a former Garang supporter, Arok Thon Arok, a Dinka from the town of Arok, who fell out with Garang in 1987 and was imprisoned by him for six years before escaping last September. Arok urged the Dinka to support Riek's Nasir faction. Arok's appeal to his fellow Dinka was followed shortly afterwards by the attack by Garang's forces, so its impact remained unclear.

However, the Nasir faction's intention of attracting the Dinka to its side could create a much more assertive and directed movement. Exasperation with the longevity of the conflict, as well as the internal split having distracted the SPLA from its stated aims, have led to an examination of what those aims really are.

Also present at the Kongor meeting was the leader of a third SPLA faction, William Nyuon, whose forces have been clashing with Garang's in the southeastern province of Eastern Equatoria. Nyuon has both Dinka and Nuer lineage. Five days after the meeting, Riek announced that his and Nyuon's forces had formally merged, furthering Riek's attempts at establishing a broad alliance within the Nasir faction.

Despite the formation of alliances and the evolution of the SPLA in apparent attempts to push the conflict toward a resolution, there remains a widespread feeling within the movement that a clear military victory over the government in Khartoum is unlikely. It is for this reason that military operations swing around the southern Sudanese provinces without any apparent direction, creating havoc among the civilian population, which in many areas is totally reliant on emergency food supplies flown in from neighboring Kenya by the United Nations's Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS).

Fighting is really intended as a way of preventing the military government in Khartoum from gaining the upper hand despite its superior firepower. Meanwhile, the SPLA has held talks with two successive governments in Khartoum, first with the civilian administration led by Sadiq Al-Mahdi and, after his overthrow in 1989, the Islamic military regime of the current president, Lt. Gen. Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

Because there are few illusions that force of arms can settle the conflict, the opportunity to wield power at talks and a readiness to resolve the dispute peacefully are weapons which give added importance to the political maneuvering currently under way.

During an interview in southern Sudan with *Africa Report* a few days after he fled from Kongor, Riek said that despite the accusations levelled against Garang, discussions had to be resumed: "It's necessary that we talk with John Garang. We can talk. It doesn't mean that we agree. Rapprochement with him is possible," he said. "[The Nasir group is] going to Abuja as one group. But we also think that the Garang group will cross the floor and join us."

But members of Garang's group who defect to Riek will be in the difficult position of joining a group which, while it may seem to have more political direction than Garang's faction, appears seriously hampered by its lack of military strength, as the loss of Kongor revealed.

ALL SIDES HAVE STRESSED THAT OVERSEAS CONCERN FOR THE SITUATION NEEDS TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO ACTION.

Meanwhile, fears are increasing that the factional conflict will increase hunger as relief workers have reason to fear for their lives. On March 31, relief agency staff were withdrawn from the towns of Waat, Ayod, and Yuai after a virulent private message was sent by Garang to

the UN accusing UN staff of assisting the Nasir faction with food and transport.

The UN took the threat seriously, while denying the accusations. The threat to UN staff was made clear when Garang's forces attacked Kongor, stripped the UN repre-

sentative in the town, Jean-François Darg, to his underwear and marched him through thorn bushes in scorching heat. After a few hours he fell to the ground, whereupon Garang's troops opened fire on him. They missed. He was later found by Riek's troops and evacuated to Kenya.

Strains between Garang and the UN emerged when the private message to the UN was followed by a press statement, stating, "Clearly what is going on in the Kongor area is not relief work but massive political involvement in the affairs of the SPLA by certain individuals," a clear reference to the UN, which is directing most relief in the region.

OLS director Philip O'Brien angrily condemned the statement, and met with Garang in Nairobi on March 31. Following the meeting, Garang issued a humiliating retraction of the earlier statement, saying, "We regret the remarks and the incident. The SPLM/SPLA leadership would like to dissociate itself from the remarks...and is reassuring the international community that it has full confidence in the United Nations Operation Lifeline Sudan and the NGOs."

The UN then decided to shuttle staff to the three towns on a daily basis from the OLS base at Lokichoggio in northern Kenya. If relief flights are affected by further fighting, then it will mean that 75,000 people in the towns will be without relief food, upon which they are totally reliant.

According to O'Brien, of the 3 million people in southern Sudan regarded as being at risk from food shortages, those in Ayod, Waat, and Kongor are the most vulnerable. He described the daily withdrawal of staff from the region as "the only response to what may be an escalation in the fighting."

"Launching offensive military operations in this environment of human suffering indicates a callous disregard for human life," the acting U.S. Agency for International Development administrator, James Michel, said in a written statement. "Military actions by any faction or

Left, John Garang, leader of the Torit faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Army

Right, soldier of the SPLA's Nasir faction

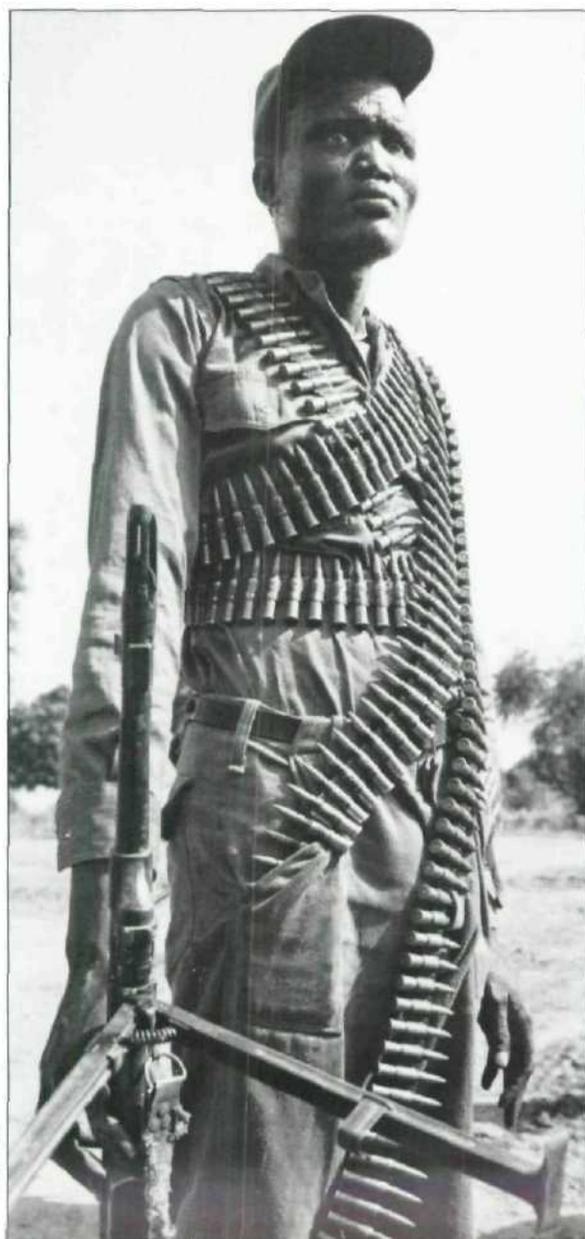
group in this area of extreme need deserve the world's utter condemnation and contempt...and calls into question the motives and basic humanity of the participants."

The State Department's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance recently estimated that one-eighth of Sudan's 27 million people had been affected by the combination of famine and civil war; 1.7 million Sudanese are estimated to have been driven from their homes and several hundred thousand face starvation if they do not receive assistance in the coming months. The situation "is a major disaster" on a par with the anarchic state of Somalia prior to the international military intervention, U.S. officials have said.

In the run-up to the Abuja talks, all sides stress the need for overseas concern about the deteriorating situation to be transformed into action. On March 31, the government in Khartoum appealed for the first time for outside intervention to stop the fighting between the rebel factions. A statement said: "The government calls upon international communities in general and African leaders to exert necessary pressure on...rebel factions to stop the raging combat immediately and begin serious preparation for the forthcoming peace talks."

Khartoum's calls for a ceasefire between the factions came two weeks after the Garang faction had announced a unilateral ceasefire in its conflict with the government. The Nasir faction, though, was not a party to the ceasefire, which it regarded as having been arranged simply in order to allow Garang's troops to attack the Nasir faction in Kongor.

Certainly there was little effort made to bring the Nasir group into the ceasefire agreement, and it was highly unlikely it would have joined in any event given the availability of opportunities for increasing its own popularity in the weeks prior to the peace talks. If there is further fighting between the SPLA factions it may not bring about an end to the peace process. Instead, it may mark the beginning of a new phase in the conflict which will see Garang under increasing pressure to make his intentions clear in order to avoid losing support to rivals whose vision of the future is clearer than his own. ○

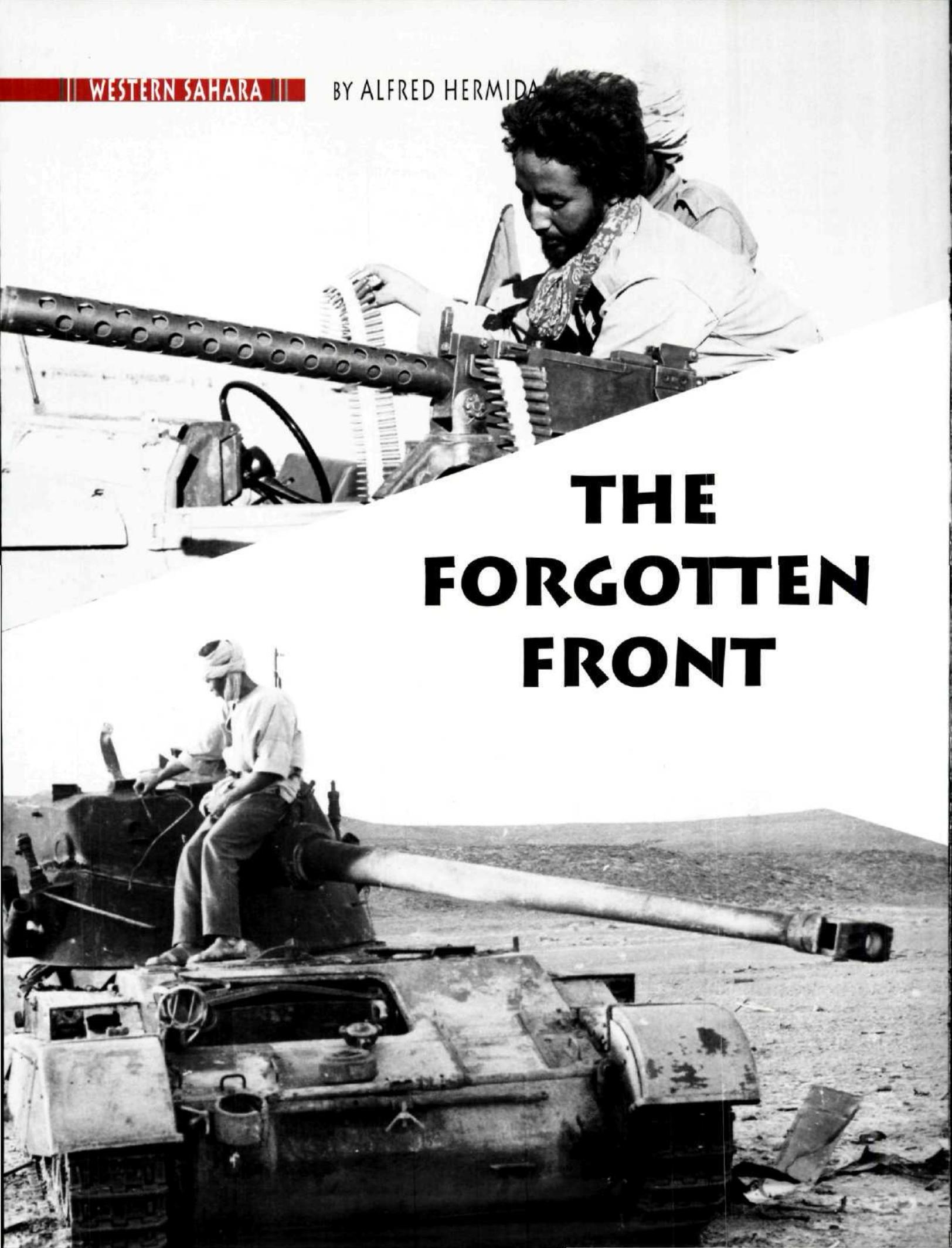


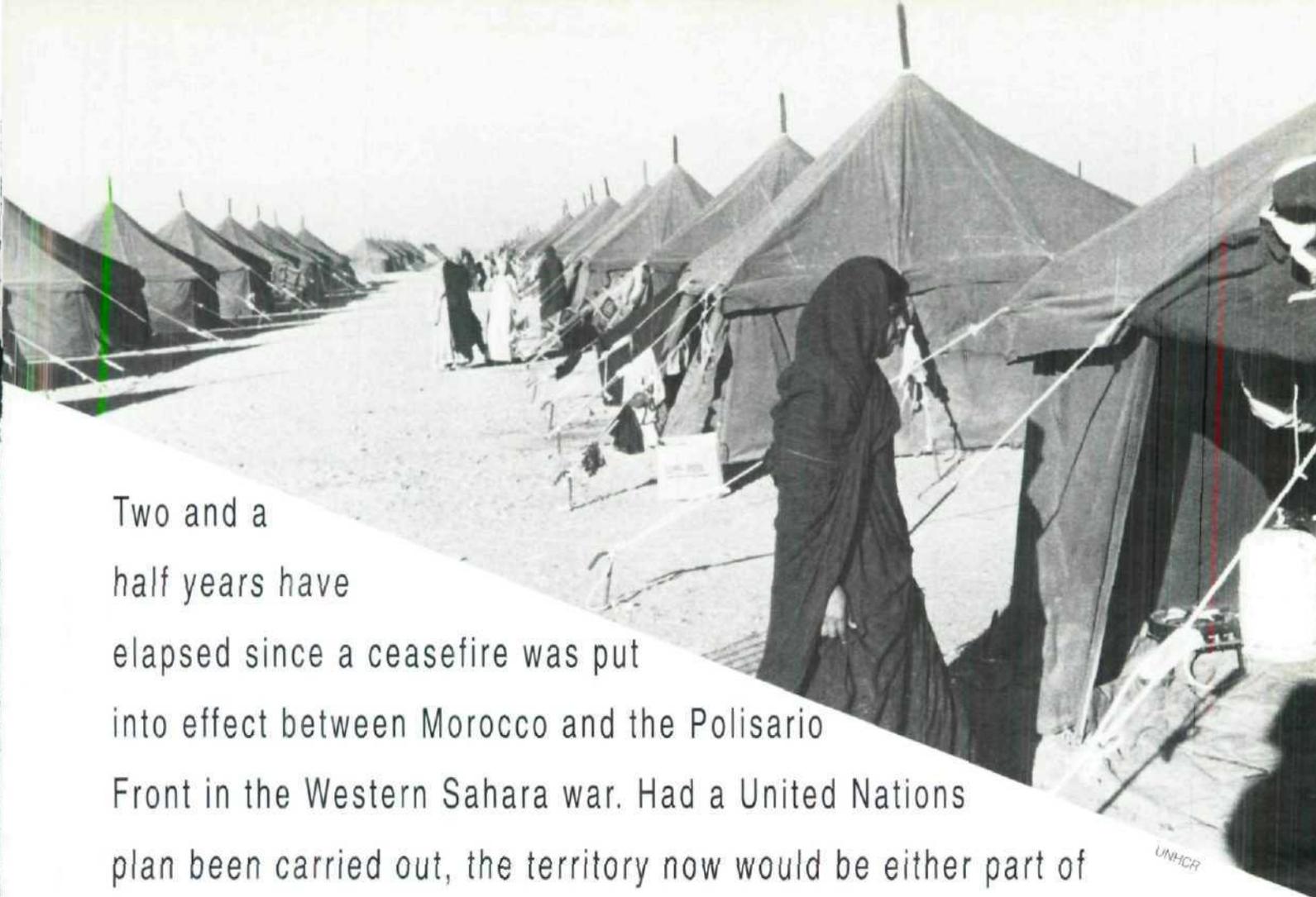
Betty Press

WESTERN SAHARA

BY ALFRED HERMIDA

THE FORGOTTEN FRONT





Two and a half years have elapsed since a ceasefire was put into effect between Morocco and the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara war. Had a United Nations plan been carried out, the territory now would be either part of Morocco or an independent country. Instead, it is a land in limbo, with neither side apparently able to agree on the groundwork for the planned referendum.

Twenty-five-year old Ittah Mahfoud taught himself English slowly, one word at a time, using only a battered pocket dictionary. But then, he has had plenty of time on his hands. For the past seven years, Mahfoud has been marooned at the Polisario desert outpost of Bir Lahlou, in the Western Sahara.

Despite the endless vigil in the desert, there is little talk among the Polisario fighters of giving up the struggle for independence. "As long as the Moroccans are on our land, we must fight to defend our people and our country," Mahfoud said.

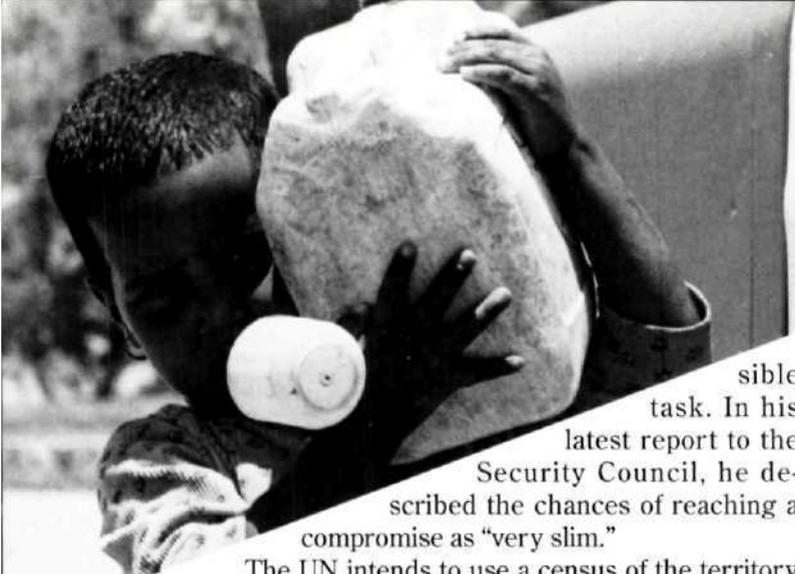
The Polisario Front and Morocco have been fighting

for control of the Western Sahara since Spain gave up its former colony in 1975. Morocco occupies the territory, although Polisario says it has "liberated" a substantial amount of land along the border with Mauritania.

The war in the Western Sahara came to a halt in September 1991, with a United Nations-sponsored ceasefire. This was due to be followed by an exchange of prisoners, the repatriation of Saharawi refugees in southern Algeria and a referendum on the future of the territory. But none of this has happened. The UN peace plan has been in deadlock as Morocco and Polisario cannot agree on exactly who is entitled to vote in the referendum.

In a last-ditch attempt to salvage the peace plan, the UN Security Council has given the secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, until the end of May to find a formula acceptable to both sides. He faces an almost impos-

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sible task. In his latest report to the Security Council, he described the chances of reaching a compromise as "very slim."

The UN intends to use a census of the territory taken by Spain in 1974 as the basis for a new electoral register. Morocco wants the UN to add some 120,000 names to the 75,000 already on the census. Moroccans maintain these are Saharawis who migrated to Morocco during the time of Spanish colonial rule and they should have a say in whether the Western Sahara should be independent or part of its northern neighbor.

Polisario strongly rejects Morocco's proposals. It says the proposed voters are in reality Moroccans and accuses King Hassan II of trying to rig the voting lists to guarantee victory in the referendum.

There are signs that the UN is running out of patience with both sides. It wants to dispense with the question of the Western Sahara, and has stressed that the referendum must be held by the end of the year. If Boutros-Ghali fails to stop the squabbling between Morocco and Polisario, the UN may decide to press ahead with the referendum, with or without the cooperation of the two sides. This was one of the options presented to the Security Council by Boutros-Ghali to break the deadlock over the Western Sahara. He suggested adopting the Moroccan position.

In recent months, Polisario has repeated its threat to take up arms again if the UN sides with Morocco over the issue of the voting lists. "We have high hopes for the peace plan and we don't want it to fail," said the commander of the Bir Lahlou military region, Abdelahi Lahbib El Belal. "But if it does fail, we are ready to start fighting again and to make more sacrifices in order to achieve our independence."

But Polisario's war cries are little more than a hollow threat. For the first few years of the war, the intensity and frequency of Polisario attacks made Moroccan entrenchment in the Western Sahara difficult and slow. But the construction of a 2,500-kilometer wall of sand in the mid-1980s, bristling with radar and observation posts, effectively sealed off most of the territory. The wall put an end to Polisario's damaging guerrilla raids against Moroccan targets, such as its fishing fleets, its valuable phosphate mines at Bou Craa, and the 120-kilometer conveyor belt that carries minerals to Atlantic Ocean ports.

For the past few years, Polisario's guerrilla operations have done little more than demonstrate that the Front

still exists. Its forces are no match for Morocco's. Polisario's army of 15,000 men is outnumbered by more than 10 to 1 by Moroccan soldiers in the Western Sahara. Its battered Kalashnikov rifles and its handful of aging tanks and armored vehicles cannot compete with the state-of-the-art weaponry of the Moroccan army.

The Polisario Front tries to put a brave face on its military shortcomings. "We have a motivated army, fighting for a national cause," said Mohamed Ali Ahmed, the director of Polisario's military college. "The Moroccans are the invaders and they are trying to fight against a people."

Polisario's only leverage over the Moroccans is not military but financial. The costs of maintaining control over the Western Sahara are tremendous and a constant drain on the kingdom's resources. The Moroccan annual defense budget swallows up more than \$1 billion, most of which is spent on keeping four-fifths of the army in the territory. Furthermore, many Moroccan soldiers have had enough of serving on the wall of sand.

The success of the Polisario Front in any future fighting would depend on continuing political and material support from Algeria. Last year, Algerian support for Polisario appeared to be on the wane after Mohamed Boudiaf was appointed head of state in January 1992. Boudiaf spent more than 20 years in exile in Morocco and sympathized with King Hassan over the issue of the Western Sahara.

During his brief term in office, Boudiaf stressed that he wanted to resolve the differences between Algeria and Morocco over the Western Sahara. One of the first things he did upon taking office was to dispatch his interior minister to Rabat for top-level meetings with Moroccan officials.

But Boudiaf's assassination last June brought to an abrupt end the attempts at reconciliation between the two sides. The appointment of Ali Kafi as head of state and of Belaid Abdessalam as prime minister marked the return of the old guard. They see the Polisario Front as a liberation movement fighting for independence against a colonial power, as Algeria did against France. As a sign of the change of

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attitude by Algiers, Polisario officials are now treated with the respect accorded to visiting ministers.

Algiers' renewed enthusiasm for Polisario has stalled any hopes of a reconciliation between Algeria and Morocco. Relations were at a low point already following a newspaper interview by King Hassan in which he regretted Algeria's decision to cancel elections in January 1992 to prevent the election of an Islamic fundamentalist government. The king said a fundamentalist government in Algeria would have been an interesting experiment for the region. His comments caused outrage in Algeria and led to almost daily anti-Moroccan polemics in the Algerian press. In the words of the Moroccan monarch, relations between the two countries are currently at a "strict minimum."

Hassan has staked his throne on the question of Western Sahara. He masterminded the famous "Green March" of 1975 at a time when he was under pressure at home. By occupying the Western Sahara, he managed to divert attention from his domestic problems. Virtually all political parties in the kingdom agree that the territory should belong to Morocco. Many go further and see the Western Sahara as a small part of a much larger "Greater Morocco," which includes Mauritania, as well as parts of Algeria and Mali.

The Saharawi refugees who fled to Algeria following the Green March are under no illusions about the king's position. They are pessimistic about the chances of achieving independence because they realize that Hassan cannot afford to lose a referendum.

Some 160,000 refugees live in four camps near the town of Tindouf in southern Algeria. After 18 years the camps have taken on the appearance of small towns, with mud huts dotted alongside tents donated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Despite the harsh conditions, few refugees talk of returning to the territory while it is under Moroccan control. At the same time, there is a small but steady flow of Saharawis making the trek from the Western Sahara across to Algeria. But this must be set against a number of high-profile defections from Polisario to Morocco. The defection last year of Brahim Hakim, a former Polisario foreign minister,

and his subsequent appointment as Hassan's special ambassador, was particularly damaging for the Front.

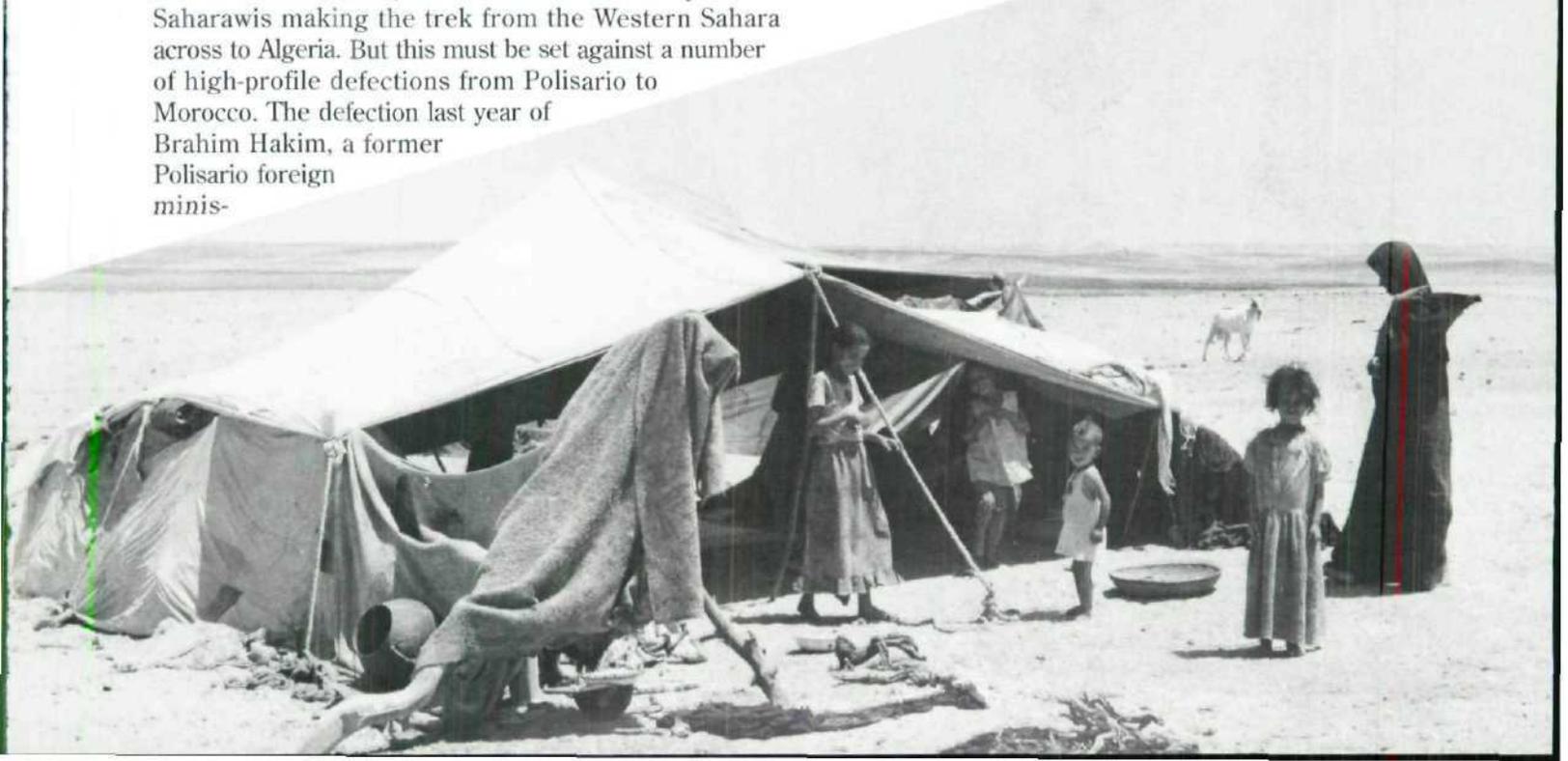
Twenty years ago, Polisario formed the Democratic Arab Saharawi Republic. The pseudo-state is recognized by more than 70 countries and it is a member of the Organization of African Unity. The Saharawi camps are totally isolated from the nearby town of Tindouf and they operate like a small state. Each camp is divided into districts, with local committees responsible for distributing the supplies of sugar, beans, flour, milk powder, and other essentials which arrive once a month. This basic diet is supplemented by vegetables grown in hand-tended gardens in the desert. Friendly governments such as Cuba, Spain, and Austria have donated hospitals and schools, which serve as symbols of the state the Saharawis do not have.

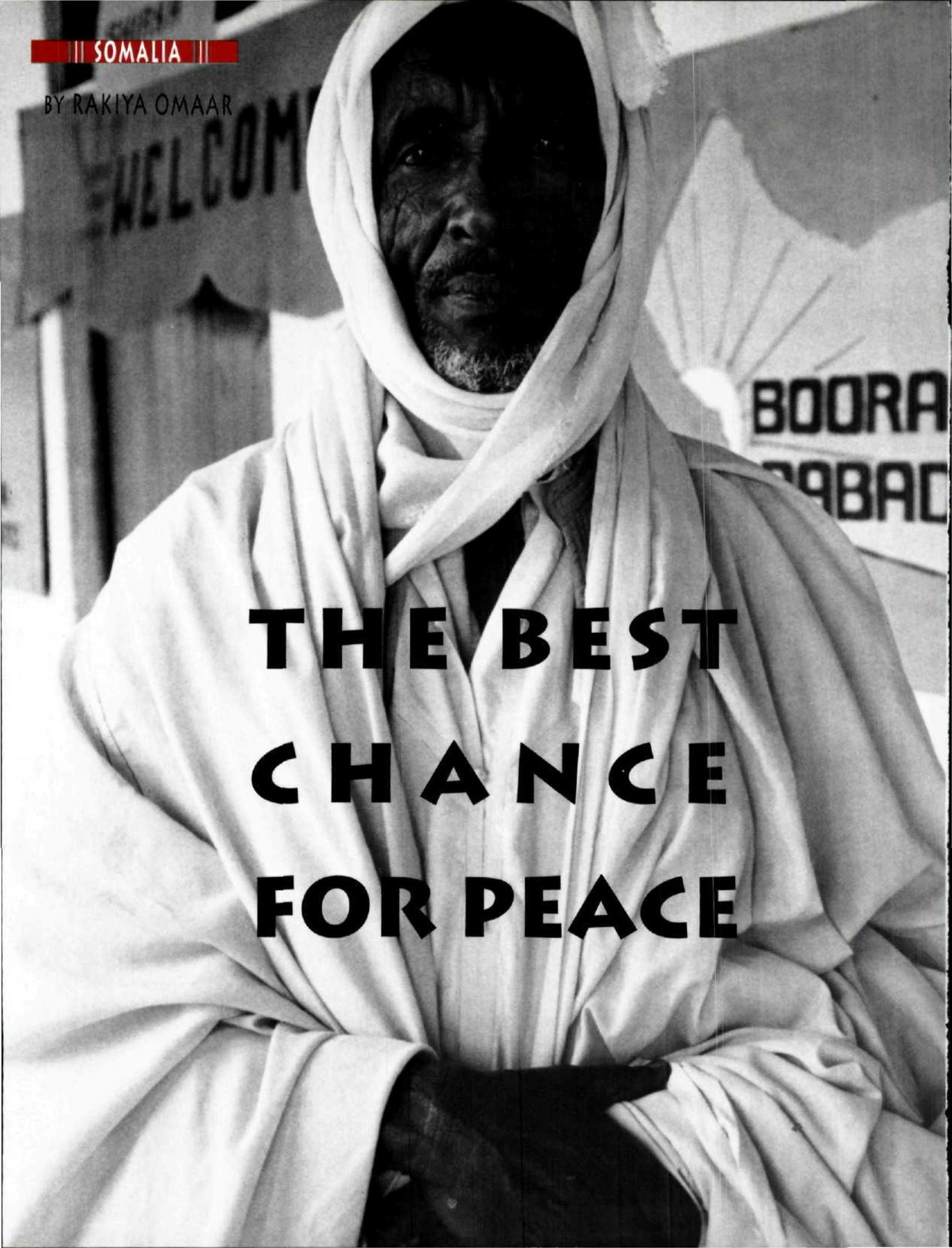
The Saharawis' best chance of achieving real statehood rests with the UN. But the UN plan for the territory has been ill-fated from the start. In May 1991, the UN General Assembly approved resolution 690 which proposed a budget of \$200 million for the referendum program and laid out a detailed timetable for the peace plan.

Two years later, there is no sign of the referendum, and little else is going according to schedule. The UN planned to deploy three units throughout the territory to prepare for the referendum: a civilian force of UN civil servants, a military force of 1,700, and a 300-strong police force. But only some 300 UN military observers are on the ground, amid allegations that Morocco is hampering their work.

With both sides firmly entrenched in their positions, the UN faces a difficult task. In the end it may decide to impose a solution on the two sides. But there are no guarantees that Polisario and Morocco would accept the settlement. So the UN could find itself trying to enforce peace in the Western Sahara with the same chances of success as elsewhere in the world. ○

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|| SOMALIA ||

BY RAKIYA OMAAR

**THE BEST
CHANCE
FOR PEACE**



With the UN- and US-led multinational forces nowhere in sight and away from the media spotlight, there have been a few diplomatic breakthroughs in the breakaway Republic of Somaliland (northern Somalia).

Somali clan elders have used their authority and diplomatic skills to push through a series of peace initiatives at local levels. In the town of Borama, the Council of Elders (Guurti) met in March and April to negotiate a comprehensive peace deal for Somaliland and to set the political framework for the two-year transition period due to expire in May.

These vital initiatives, which spring from the heart of Somali society itself, build upon painstaking grass-roots reconciliation efforts and enjoy widespread popular support. The Borama meeting is not only the best chance for peace in the north; the forces it represents could be a model for Somalia as a whole.

But now the greatest threat to the peace initiative may be the United Nations. Instead of supporting such initiatives, the UN nearly derailed the Borama meeting by announcing plans to send forces to Somaliland. There have already been demonstrations in both Hargeisa and Erigavo against the deployment of troops. Elders whose participation is crucial to the prospects of stability have also condemned the plans. Despite the significance of local peace initiatives, the government's failure to provide leadership, the dire eco-

When northern Somalia first broke away as the Republic of Somaliland, it seemed at first to provide a peaceful paradigm for the strife-torn south, until it too was riven by clan rivalries and warfare. However, without the intervention of foreign forces, clan elders have been inching toward a diplomatic solution whose success probably hinges on the international community providing much-needed assistance.

conomic situation, the fear and instability generated by fighting between various militias can unravel the work of elders. The dispatch of troops without prior consultations in the absence of sensitivity to the real political issues and without concrete evidence of a long-term commitment to economic reconstruction can only subvert the important, but fragile political process currently under way.

Rakiya Omaar spent six weeks in Somaliland in 1992. She is the co-director of African Rights, based in London.

Up to now, the main impact of the intervention, with its massive influx of U.S. dollars, has been a severe cash crisis in Somaliland. Immediately, the exchange rate between the dollar and the Somali shilling fell by 50 percent resulting in a sharp fall in revenues from livestock exports, on which the economy is based. Aid budgets, limited as they are, were also badly affected. (The rate has since improved.)

The decision of Somaliland to secede was taken in May 1991 a few months after the overthrow of Mohamed Siad Barre, under intense popular pressure from the largest clan in the region, the Isaaks. Throughout the 1980s, the leadership of the Isaak anti-government armed movement, the Somali National Movement (SNM), had consistently argued that they were not seeking secession. Many believed this would be a mistake but they were also anxious not to alienate the other anti-Barre forces and international opinion. But the rank and file had long argued in favor of a break.

In the months before the overthrow of Siad Barre, negotiations between the SNM and the principal anti-government groups in the south were expected to restore peace and lead to an equitable share of political power and economic resources. But the decision of southerner Ali Mahdi to declare himself president within days of Barre's overthrow reinforced fears among northerners that they were condemned to political insignificance and lack of control over their affairs. The showdown came at the SNM congress in Burao in May 1991.

Ordinary Isaaks had felt increasingly bitter toward the south, the seat of government which they blamed for their comparative underdevelopment, lack of political clout and their sufferings throughout the 1980s, particularly the horrors of the 1988-89 war. These grievances were heightened by the massive influx of Ethiopian refugees after the 1976-78 war with Ethiopia over the Ogaden. Government policies favored Ogadeni refugees and led to the creation of armed militias among the refugees who preyed on Isaak civilians living along the Somali-Ethiopian border. The result was the establishment of the SNM

in London in April 1981.

The government's response was to launch—and sustain—a furious assault against the SNM's civilian base of support. Interrogation, torture and imprisonment became widespread. Discriminatory policies crippled business practices. Nomads, seen as the economic and manpower base of the SNM, were singled out for a brutal campaign of murder, rape and extortion. Anyone who could emigrate left the country, and support for the SNM

grew. Many of its recruits were the boys who left as schools turned into war zones.

The SNM, based in Ethiopia, launched surprise attacks against Burao and Hargeisa in late May 1988, under pressure from the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia to move its military operations away from the border region. The government in Mogadishu then turned its full fury against Isaak civilians. Thousands were slaughtered in their homes as government soldiers conducted house-to-house searches. Several towns particularly the provincial capital of Hargeisa, were subject to intense indiscriminate artillery shelling and aerial bombardment. Within weeks, more than 400,000 civilians sought refuge in the harsh Ethiopian desert.

The refugees began to return home in February 1991 after Siad Barre was forced out of the capital, their numbers swollen by the thousands of Isaaks fleeing the war in Mogadishu. Fears of SNM retaliation against the non-Isaak clans in the north which had supported the regime—the Gadabursi, Dulfahante

and Warsangeli—encouraged many of them to leave for Ethiopia, especially after SNM forces destroyed the town of Dijla in February 1991. At the Burao congress the SNM reached a decision to pursue a policy of reconciliation with non-Isaak clans. This has encouraged non-Isaak clans to play a critical role in mediating intra-Isaak disputes. The decision to hold the meeting at Borama, the principal Gadabursi town, was of symbolic importance.

Many of the returnees have settled in Hargeisa, a city devastated by the war. More than 70 percent of the buildings have been destroyed by shelling and landmines. Anything that could be looted was taken. There is no electricity, no telecommunications or banking system. Landmines kill and maim people and livestock and have set back recovery of the agricultural sector. Today, many towns are a testimony to an extraordinarily cruel war. In former security service offices in Hargeisa, skeletons with rope tied around their hands or feet are all that remain of the Isaak men who were rounded up after the SNM attack. There are thousands of bones left on the outskirts of the city, the remains of those who did not make it to Ethiopia. Gobiley is surrounded by the hills where many were executed, simply for being Isaak.

The decision to secede was followed by a six-month honeymoon. Despite the reluctance of foreign governments to recognize Somaliland, the poor response by the international community in providing assistance, the absence of a strong central authority, the lack of functioning administrative structures, the collapse of infrastructure and the shortage of experienced administrators, the economy took off and spirits were high. Visitors com-

mented on the relative security. The port of Berbera, the economic nerve-center of the region, was bustling, importing building materials, essential foodstuffs, and exporting livestock.

But it was to be a short honeymoon. The fall of Siad Barre exposed the SNM's organizational weakness and its total failure to have planned for the post-Siad period. The SNM government which took power in May 1991 under the presidency of Abdirahman Ahmed Ali has been stunning for its lack of leadership and the absence of coherent policies on the economic front, education, or law and order. It has repeatedly ignored the pleas of elders and ordinary people to create a unified army out of the different clan militias. Nor has it made any serious attempts to formulate a policy on disarmament. Much of its energy has been squandered on factional squabbles between and among politicians and military officers. Its failure to organize a referendum on independence does not reassure non-Isaak communities or facilitate international recognition.

Tensions between the militias of the Habr Yunis and the Habr Jelo in Burao erupted in three days of intense fighting on January 12, 1992. Civilians from both clans who took no part in the fighting fled the town en masse. The fighting stopped only after both Isaak and non-Isaak elders intervened at considerable personal risk to their own safety. They used their own shirts when they ran out of white flags. They stayed for 28 days to negotiate an end to hostilities. The government, accused of complicity, did nothing to pre-empt or stop the fighting, ignored the plight of the civilian population, and refused to support the elders' mediation efforts.

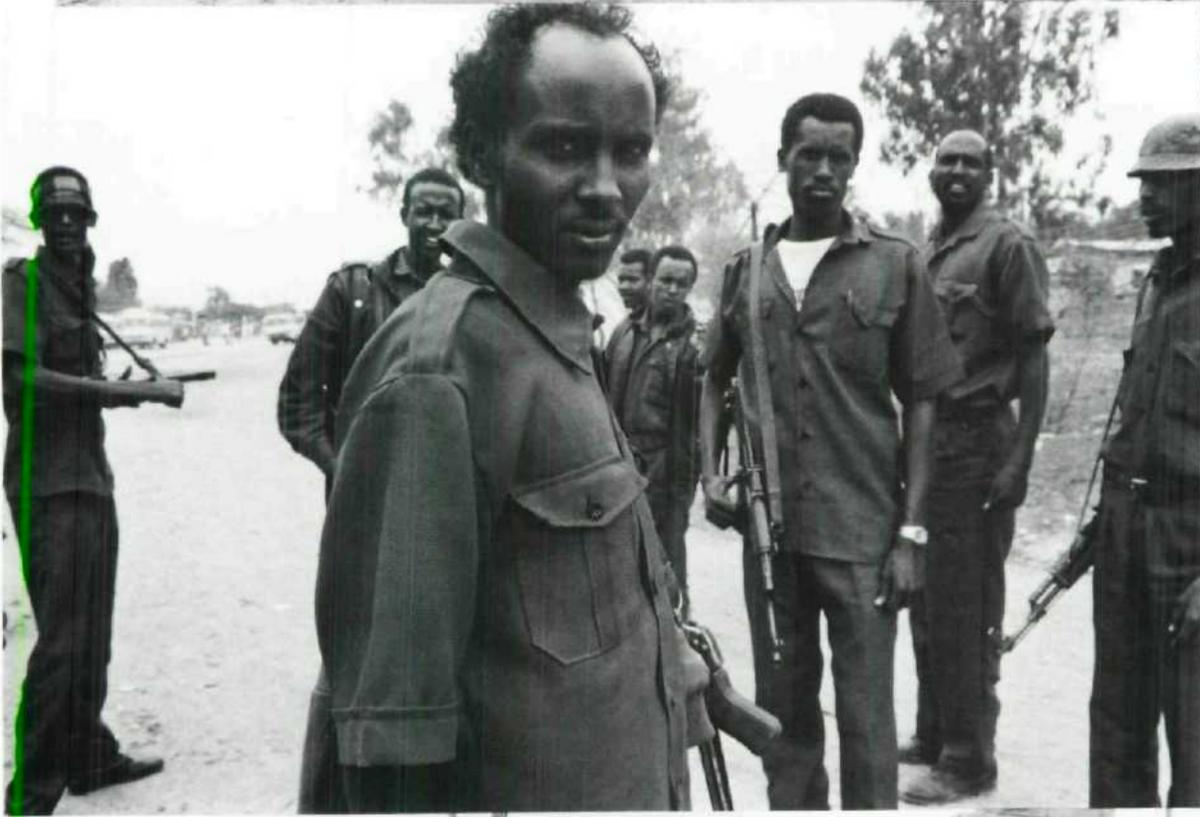
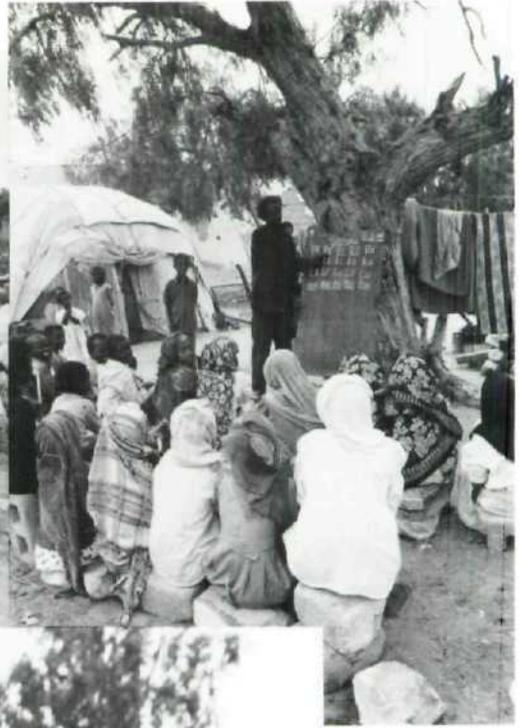
Far more serious was the outbreak of hostilities in Berbera in late March 1992 between the militias of the Habr Yunis and the Isse Muse who dominate Berbera. Intense shuttle diplomacy by elders came to nothing in the face of the government's determination to use the conflict as a proxy war, a means of settling political scores with some of its key opponents. Again, civilians most of them Isse Muse, fled in search of safety. The fighting also spread to Sheikh.

Economic activity, which had slowed down after the fighting in Burao, ceased altogether. The port came to a standstill, and the major roads between Hargeisa and Berbera and between Berbera and Burao were closed. The tension spilled over into Hargeisa, where throughout the summer fear of war was palpable.

The fighting was a severe psychological blow for civilians, sapping their confidence in the future. The economic consequences were disastrous. Export of livestock and the collection of port dues, essential for the government's resources, both came to an end. People lost the will to repair their homes and discouraged relatives from coming back.

The betrayal of the hopes for Somaliland by some power-hungry politicians and military officers has pushed traditional elders to take matters into their own

DIPLOMACY
HELPED TO
IMPROVE
RELATIONS
BETWEEN
COMMUNITIES.



*Photos by
Betty Press*



hands. Conflict resolution within clans and between clans has always been the responsibility of elders. But their authority was greatly enhanced during the years of armed struggle. Before May 1988, the SNM only had about 3,000 fighters. Unable to feed or equip the tens of thousands of men who joined after May, elders were given the responsibility to support their militias. Throughout the war years, they played an active political role. In recognition of their contribution and because of the continuing need for their skills, the Council of Elders is recognized in the constitution of Somaliland, though their role is not defined.

Worried that the Berbera conflict had paralyzed the economy, discouraged international assistance and was in danger of engulfing Hargeisa, elders concentrated their efforts on ending the Isse Muse/Habr Yunis conflict.

Their efforts culminated in a meeting of clan elders in Sheikh in October. Their first task was to arrange a ceasefire between the two groups.

Other wide-ranging provisions show a remarkable grasp of the intricacies of peace-making. To discourage dissatisfied individuals from exploiting popular ignorance of the agreement, it called for a delegation from the meeting to visit the rural and urban areas settled by the warring clans in order to publicize the peace agreement. It provided for the right of both clans to move freely in the areas settled by both groups and for the release of prisoners. Committees with representatives from the Habr Yunis and Isse Muse were established for the areas where both clans reside, in order to settle minor disputes and to promote the peace effort. In order not to create a sudden vacuum, the two militias were allowed to remain in their locations though they were to be organized on a peace-time footing, while security became the responsibility of elders. A special committee was established to work out the specific measures to be taken against the party that violates the accord. The elders of Somaliland as a whole agreed to stand together against the party identified as the cause of future problems.

The elders' success in bringing peace to Berbera has had dramatic results. Business at Berbera is reaching pre-war levels, with a sharp rise in livestock exports. The price of commodities is falling, partly due to the increase in volume of trade and competition. Nomads are now able to get a better deal when they sell their herds for food. Exceptionally good rains have also contributed to making food cheap and widely available.

Elsewhere patient diplomacy has done much to improve relations between different communities. Sanaag region, where Isaaks and the Darod clashed in the 1980s, was a potential flashpoint. In addition to the bitter legacies of the war, Darod clans were pushed out of Erigavo by the Habr Yunis (Isaak), which they had held during the war with government assistance. They also lost some of the grazing reserves and water-reservoirs they had recently acquired. Fighting erupted in 1991 and ended when elders arranged a ceasefire. It was agreed to

discuss the details of peace agreements in later peace talks.

Four subsequent meetings helped to consolidate this grass-roots process of reconciliation. The first meeting held at Shimbiraale in August 1992 provided for free trade, free movement of people, and the creation of a conflict resolution committee, with representatives from the three groups concerned. The framework for dialogue was then used to settle subsequent disputes over grazing land and the theft of camels.

The improved security situation and the easing of communal tensions immediately brought tangible results to the region. Trade through the small port of Mait increased dramatically, while many new shops opened up in Erigavo. The opening up of trade routes increased vegetable production, improved livestock health, reduced food prices and increased terms of trade in the exchange of livestock for food, all of which had a significant impact on nutritional standards.

Decisions of the second, third and fourth meetings echoed those of Shimbiraale. The content and detail of discussions depended upon the nature of the conflict between the relevant groups. For example, at Dararweyne, elders attempted to settle the sensitive disputes between the Dulbahante and the Habr Yunis over grazing land, water sources and personal property, especially water-reservoirs and private buildings in the main town of Erigavo. The meeting, considered the most important so far was also attended by religious leaders, professionals, members of the militias and three government ministers. While a peace agreement was signed without conditions on February 2, 1993, a 50-man team was chosen to work out the practical details. Herds belonging to both groups grazed peacefully together. Broader issues related to peace and stability of the region as a whole were to be finalized at a general meeting of all clans in the region in Erigavo beginning in April.

Despite the stunning breakthroughs at the local level, the potential for serious unrest still haunts Somaliland. The elders' initiatives and the popular support they enjoy shows that hope and confidence in traditional structures can defeat fear. But it is not enough. No one is more painfully aware of this than elders themselves. "Our task is to ensure security and reconciliation. The government's responsibility is management, administration and development, all of which it has failed to deliver," commented Sheikh Ibrahim, the chairman of the Isaak committee of elders in Hargeisa in July.

Optimism about the Boram meeting, the triumph of discourse over armed conflict, is widespread in Somaliland. But the continued failure of the UN to deal with the political and economic reality of Somaliland threatens to undermine the elders' peace efforts. Without stability other strong civic organizations will not emerge, allowing unscrupulous politicians and military officers to monopolize the political space, and prolonging hardship and despair about the future. ○

DIOUF'S TARNISHED VICTORY



Andre Astrow

Senegal's ever-present Parti Socialiste (PS) hoped that by thoroughly reviewing and re-vamping the country's electoral process it would silence critics of the multi-party system it has dominated for almost two decades. But February's controversy-riddled presidential poll rallied more anti-establishment voices than any other single act in the West African country's colorful political history.

Victory for Abdou Diouf—the lofty civil servant-turned-politician who literally stood a full head and shoulders above the seven challengers to his 11-year presidency—was nothing if not a *fait accompli*, given his party's expertise at managing electoral campaigns, its wealth of financial resources, and its undisputed control of the state's most powerful sectors. But few could have predicted the mess that would follow voting on February 21.

More than half of the 2.5 million Senegalese registered—including for the first time expatriates in France and the U.S.—voted on a day that passed almost without event. Diplomats mused over the administrative mistake that left a small number of the more than 8,000 polling stations countrywide without U.S.-donated booths and ballot boxes. And some 50 international observers on the lookout for irregularities found temporary excitement in the mystery of the indelible ink that voters reported could be easily washed off with soap and water (officials soon calmed fears of a loophole by explaining the ink, also courtesy of the U.S., had to be vigorously shaken before use).

A team of 30 monitors from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) declared voting on the day broadly “free

President Abdou Diouf, as expected, easily won a third term in February, but his nearly 2 to 1 margin of victory was marred by controversy over the electoral process—which had been anticipated as the fairest ever held by the continent's leader in multi-party democracy. The next seven years will not be easy for Diouf's entrenched Parti Socialiste, which must try to correct a deep-rooted economic malaise during an increasingly unsympathetic donor climate.

and fair,” reserving their substantive judgment until the Constitutional Council's declaration of a winner based on the work of the National Vote-Counting Commission (NVC). But the apparently simple question of arithmetic that remained soon took on the appearance of a constitutional conundrum.

The NVC, a nine-member body comprising a representative from each of the contesting parties and chaired by Court of Appeal president Andresia Vaz discovered evidence suggesting widespread abuse of the system of *ordonnances*, special dispensations to vote. By law, local magistrates could issue these dispensations to those ineligible to vote at time of registration but qualified on polling day (such as newly retired servicemen or teenagers turning 18).

Allegations of fraud came out into the open, and opposition passions were ignited when the pro-government *Le Soleil*—Senegal's only daily newspaper—prematurely declared a Diouf victory. Headlined “Abdou Diouf Wins in Round One,” the February 28 special issue based its lead story on unratified results from 10 of the 31 constituencies or departments. It reported that Diouf had secured 58 percent of the popular vote and amassed more than a quarter

of registered voters, two conditions he needed to avoid a second round.

On its front page, alongside a photograph of Diouf with arms held aloft in victory, *Le Soleil* gave limited prominence to the real story. Exasperated NVC chair Vaz had handed all electoral dossiers to the Constitutional Council, Senegal's highest electoral body and the pinnacle of a three-court system replacing the old Supreme Court. Vaz complained that were her commission to try and unravel the complex affair it would take “more than 120 days.”

Abdoulaye Wade, the 66-year-old constitutional lawyer

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

The Suffering Southern Province

T rue to their promise, loyalists of the separatist Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC) did all they could to sabotage the presidential elections in Senegal's southern province.

Radical elements embraced the armed struggle a decade ago in a bid to secure autonomy from Senegal's Dakar-based government in the north. Sporadic attacks—crowned by a rocket assault on the regional airport January 17, less than two weeks before President Abdou Diouf arrived to begin his campaign—were intended to show that the MFDC would not tolerate electoral activity in Casamance.

On the eve of the February 21 poll, 20 ruling Parti Socialiste (PS) supporters died when their van hit a landmine near Niadiou, a village 15 miles south of Ziguinchor town, the regional capital. Almost a month before, separatists had chosen the Niadiou area for their first attack using a landmine. In that attack, seven Red Cross volunteers died and several were injured. In an election day incident designed to deter would-be voters, armed men ambushed a bus carrying PS militants to polling booths, killing six and injuring 10.

Casamançais who voted now fear the worst and are abandoning their villages and farms in growing numbers. A development worker who travels regu-

larly to areas near the swath of territory stretching from Ziguinchor to the border with Guinea-Bissau, a region controlled by the MFDC, told *Africa Report* that many are fleeing because separatists have labeled voters as traitors.

"I saw truckloads of families leaving with as much of their property as they could carry, most heading for Guinea-Bissau," said the worker, who has been near the trouble-stricken border area since election day. "People say the rebels confiscated a lot of voting cards before the election, and went around telling everyone they would be killed if they cast their ballot."

United Nations officials confirm the mass exodus across Senegal's border into northern Guinea-Bissau. They say at least 17,000 refugees from Casamance are now being housed in camps at several frontier villages.

Some 6,000 have fled to border towns in the Gambia, which separates the troubled province from northern Senegal, since January last year. Gambia's relief authorities, stretched since Casamançais started fleeing an upsurge in separatist activity two years ago, say they will be hard-pressed to cope with further influxes. The local Red Cross volunteer corps has appealed for international assistance.

who heads the Parti Démocratique Socialiste (PDS) whose rallying cry of *sopi* ("change" in the Wolof language) has caught on in urban areas in recent years, was the only serious threat to Diouf. He told a press conference the NVC had neither the right to issue an incomplete set of results nor the mandate to pass the buck to the Council, whose job was simply to declare a winner after rubber-stamping the NVC's work.

Wade's allegation that up to a half million votes had been lost using forged ordonnances was soon echoed by other candidates. Citing irregularities in at least 18 departments they argued the matter was so serious as to warrant a re-run in affected constituencies. Some even raised the specter of a fresh election. The opposition used Kaolack—Senegal's densely populated urban area outside the region surrounding the capital Dakar—to highlight what they alleged was a carefully planned strategy by the PS to ensure victory for their candidate.

There, they claimed, more than 18,000 had voted using ordonnances, a figure that conflicted with the magistrate's

testimony he had issued little more than 2,000. "We discovered...when we counted the votes that there was a big discrepancy between people who registered in a number of constituencies and people who actually voted," fourth-place candidate Abdoulaye Bathily told *Africa Report*, "Kaolack is obviously a case of fraud."

Bathily, who leads the left-of-center Ligue Démocratique/Mouvement pour le Parti du Travail, said the PS had duplicated thousands of ordonnances "which they gave to their partisans who were able to vote several times." The 47-year-old history professor at Dakar's Cheikh Anta Diop University expressed doubts the matter would be impartially handled by the five-member NVC, which he alleged was packed with judges who were "henchmen of the ruling party."

With tension rising and riot police positioned in strategic areas of Dakar and its suburbs, many braced themselves for a repeat of the widespread civil unrest that greeted Diouf's controversial win in February 1988. Then, Wade's claim he had fraudulently been robbed of the pres-

In one Casamance village, residents of 40 households fled to the Gambia in early March after separatists targeted and killed a local Muslim leader, Imam Kutubo Manafang, because he had spoken out against violence. "At the end of Friday prayers, the imam would tell his followers that they should collectively pray so that the rebel activities could be curbed naturally and in their place be restored peace and tranquility," village elder Afang Bully Darbo told a local newspaper.

Human tragedies are now commonplace in Casamance. The fertile region's enormous potential in natural resources, agriculture, and tourism (which is at a standstill) have made a resolution of the conflict one of President Diouf's priorities. The goodwill generated after a 1991 ceasefire agreement between MFDC commanders and Senegal's defense minister, Madoun Fall, has now been lost—despite promises by moderate separatist leader Sidy Badji to hold his armed units in check.

By all accounts, Badji had demobilized his fighters to the north of Ziguinchor. But he has no control over the Southern Front, the faction with bases in Guinea-Bissau widely believed to be behind recent attacks. Diouf has repeated his pre-election decentralization pledge, reiterating that he will grant administrative autonomy to all the country's regions but will not brook secession. His resolve to send more troops to Casamance is, however, evidence of Dakar's increasing conviction a military solution is the only way.

Army units now appear to be pursuing a "shoot-to-kill" policy, seen at Badem, 17 miles south of Ziguin-

chor, in early March when 80 separatists were reportedly ambushed and slain. Their bodies, complete with *gris-gris* (magic charms the animist Diolas who dominate the MFDC believe make them invincible), were displayed at Ziguinchor's hospital to deter others.

If the army is moving to break the psychological hold the mystical MFDC has over what remains of Casamance's cowed population, it is likely to be bloody. The guerrillas are dedicated—and armed with sophisticated weapons.

The National Vote-Counting Commission reported a 40 percent turnout in Oussouye department, the epicenter of the conflict. In a department to the north, where Sidy Badji's armies have ceased activity, a surprisingly low 30 percent of the 63,000 registered voters turned out. In Ziguinchor itself, a high security presence ensured 50 percent of the 46,832 who registered voted. In all three constituencies of Ziguinchor region, Diouf won, with PDS leader Abdoulaye Wade second and the native Casamançais, Landing Savane, polling a poor third.

Diouf also swept polling in neighboring Kolda region, largely unaffected by the unrest, where registration was consistently higher (62,989 in Kolda department and 106,004 in Sedhiou). Voter turnout, however, was below the national average of 51 percent. Pollsters were surprised Diouf did so well in areas many expected would fall to the opposition, and put this down to the fact that the separatist campaign is an ethnic-based movement with little more than nominal support. The PS still draws most of its support from the rural poor. ■

—P.d.C.

idency landed him in jail, with Diouf declaring a state of emergency. After his release Wade spent seven months of self-imposed exile in Paris, returning to pressure the Socialists into the electoral reform he now claims much credit for.

The new, much-vaunted electoral code at stake in the presidential poll is a direct result of the flawed exercise in multi-partyism of 1988. Arrived at after unprecedented consultation among Senegal's 18 official opposition parties, the code is widely held to be fraud-proof—at least on paper. Among other reforms, it lowered the minimum voting age by three years to 18, made a secret ballot registration, allowed all parties equal access to state-run media (monitored by an independent High Council for Radio and Television), and allocated three weeks (as opposed to two under the old system) for politicking. Significantly, it limits future presidents to two terms, though the old five-year term is extended by two years.

The NVC's inability to discharge its functions cast doubt over how practicable the code really is, and taints

Senegal's reputation as the continent's leader in multi-party democracy. Keba Mbaye, the Constitutional Council president, threw the ball back in the NVC's court when he ruled it had a legal duty to attempt a resolution of the *ordonnances imbroglio*. Mbaye, who headed the commission whose work led to the new code being adopted in 1991, gave the NVC 72 hours to finish its work, failing which his own Council would declare a winner after five days.

A respected judge who served as vice president of the Hague-based International Court of Justice before retiring only to be persuaded into taking on the job of constitutional reform back home, Mbaye simultaneously announced he was stepping down. In his resignation letter from the Council chair on March 2, the 69-year-old eminence grise appeared to take personal blame for the post-electoral complications.

"It was the political parties who wanted and adopted the new electoral code," wrote Mbaye. "It is their baby, but it is also a little bit mine...I said to myself it would serve to

elevate [people's] mentalities toward the unreserved acceptance of the democratic game. Sadly, what has taken place before my eyes has shown me I was wrong."

Observers were quick to interpret Mbaye's resignation in mid-crisis as a strong indictment of Senegal's hierarchy and political culture, an analysis lent credence by the judge's assertion that for the electoral code to be workable in practice, adherence to the rules of democracy must be maintained "without deviation." Mbaye's words were immediately enlisted by the opposition in its campaign to prove allegations of fraud.

The inability of Vaz's commission to agree on returns from 20 departments left the council with no option, under its new president Youssoupha Ndiaye, but to declare Abdou Diouf the winner—a staggering three weeks after polling day. The official result was academic. Diouf polled 58.4 percent (757,311 votes) to Wade's 32.03 percent (415,296 votes). In third place was Landing Savane of And-Jef, a grassroots-tending socialist party, with less than 3 percent of the popular vote—a reflection of the fact that Senegal's multi-party democracy, riddled with political groupings, is to all intents and purposes a two-horse affair.

As expected, unrest did follow the belated announcement, with riot police employing teargas and armored cars against students and disappointed party militants who saw the ruling as an outrage. Many Dakar residents showed their contempt by simultaneously dumping their trash in the streets. Among rioters were many of the university's 20,000 students—whose month-long strike against living conditions was timed to coincide with the presidential campaign.

Critics directed their fury at the Constitutional Council, which had all but dismissed the ordonnances issue in its ruling, saying only 4,000 had been used to vote country-wide. Bathily dismissed the ruling as a "political and not a juridical statement." He told *Africa Report*: "I reject its content insofar as it did not address the issues raised by the seven candidates of the opposition...concerning the fraud which has been documented and evidence given and acknowledged by members of the ruling party itself."

For Bathily, Senegal's boast of being a bastion of democracy is a sham. "I think it's just a...symbol of what propaganda can make for a country," he said in an interview. "I have always said that whatever electoral code you have—and this one is generally considered a good document in theory—it won't work if the ruling party doesn't abide by its conditions."

With all legal avenues of redress now exhausted, the hapless opposition is looking to the legislative election in May. They hope to reduce the PS's 103 seats in the 120-member National Assembly (the rest are held by PDS deputies). Failure to unite over a single presidential candidate or a joint legislative campaign means the parties, many no more than political entities in name, have virtually no chance of upsetting the PS apple cart.

And Diouf's refusal to delay the poll means there is little time to overhaul electoral procedures as the opposition

is demanding. Only three parties—Savane's And-Jef, Iba Der Thiam's Convention des Patriotes, and Mamadou Lo's 1,000 Group—have so far agreed to put up a joint list for the legislatives, which are part direct election and part proportional representation.

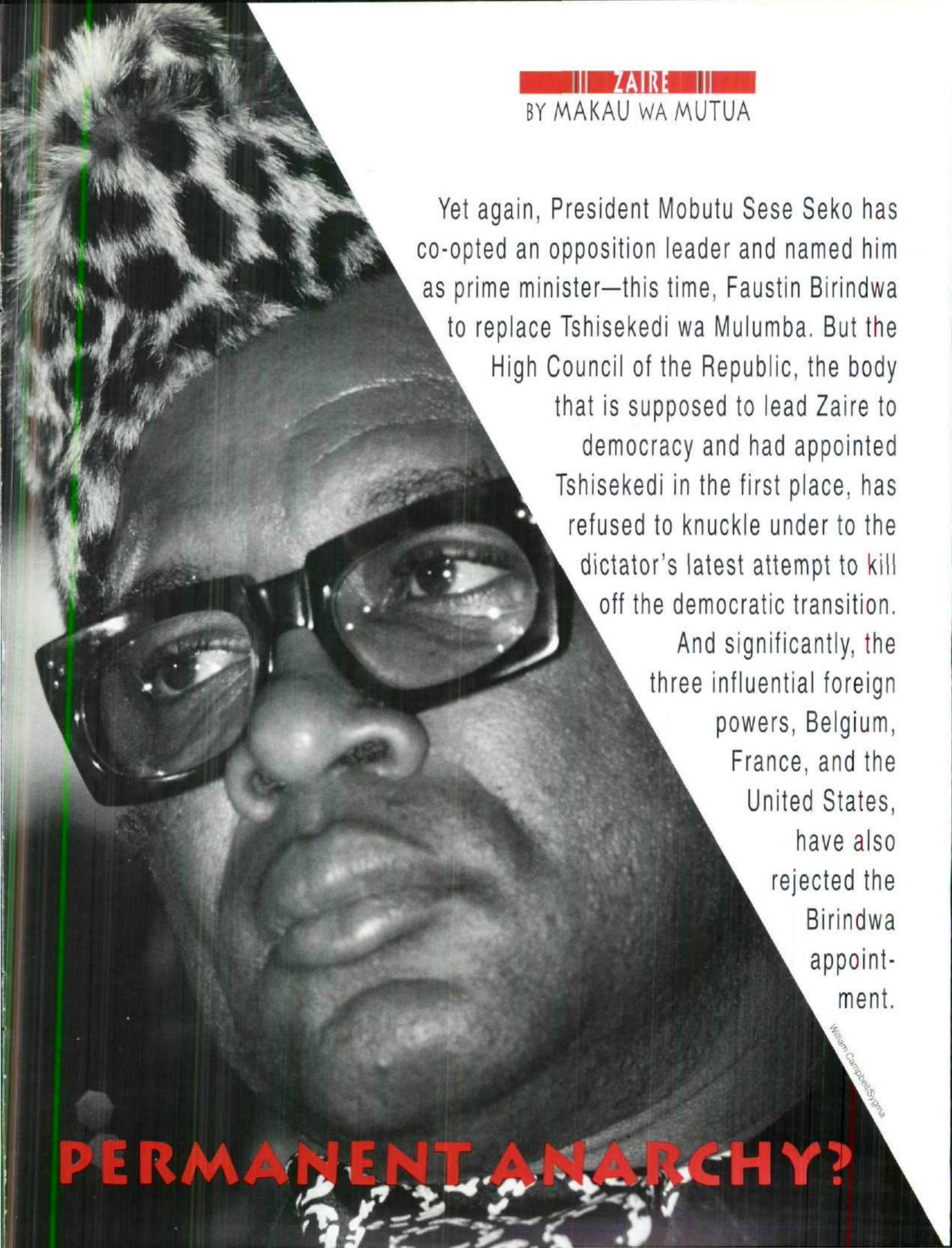
Under new pressures despite the clear margin of his victory (in 1988 he secured 72 percent), Diouf, 57, will be glad when the legislatives are over and his third term begins in earnest. Aware of the growing perception that his entrenched party is identified with much that is wrong with Senegal today (socialists have been in power since 1952), the president-elect will be hard-pressed to convince critics he is prepared to improve conditions in the impoverished Sahelian country.

Poverty, unemployment, rural-urban migration, and rumblings of discontent are all symptomatic of the deep-rooted economic malaise that makes life a daily struggle for Senegal's 8 million people.

Many argue the socialists have institutionalized corruption to such a degree that nothing less than a change in the political hierarchy will bring progress. "Nothing changes with this election," a Dakar-based donor representative told *Africa Report*. "Everything that is wrong with Senegal is linked to the whole rotten system of patronage, protectionism, and clientelism." Donors are known to be disappointed with the lack of depth displayed by candidates in the pre-electoral campaigning, since most preferred displays of populism to serious analyses of the state of the nation.

With France's center-right parties weakening the power of ailing President François Mitterrand, whose sentimentalism has served Africa well, Diouf may find his role as spokesman for the francophones increasingly difficult, especially with regard to economic assistance. Speculation is rife that a right-dominated French government will devalue the CFA franc which it has guaranteed against the French franc at a fixed parity of 50 to 1 for more than 40 years. Shortly after his victory—on the eve of France's elections—Diouf responded to devaluation talk with an emphatic "no." But economists say the eventuality is inevitable and advise Diouf to prepare a realistic economic blueprint that will cushion Senegal's already fragile society from the shocks to come.

Short of announcing he will create 20,000 jobs a year, and send more troops to quell a separatist uprising in the southern province of Casamance, Diouf has remained cagey about his plans for the last seven years of his administration. To stifle critics of the PS's omnipotence he may opt for another "cohabitation" experiment by drafting his most powerful opponents, specifically Wade. An 18-month coalition of three parties ended late last year when Wade resigned as minister of state and withdrew with his two PDS compatriots, complaining of marginalization. In the wake of his defeat, Wade remained silent, but he is known to favor an executive prime ministership and may yet use his considerable support to push for a share of power. ○



|| ZAIRE ||

BY MAKAU WA MUTUA

Yet again, President Mobutu Sese Seko has co-opted an opposition leader and named him as prime minister—this time, Faustin Birindwa to replace Tshisekedi wa Mulumba. But the High Council of the Republic, the body that is supposed to lead Zaire to democracy and had appointed Tshisekedi in the first place, has refused to knuckle under to the dictator's latest attempt to kill off the democratic transition.

And significantly, the three influential foreign powers, Belgium, France, and the United States, have also rejected the Birindwa appointment.

William Campbell/Sigma

PERMANENT ANARCHY?



n March 18, Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko appointed Faustin Birindwa as prime minister. Birindwa is a co-founder of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), Zaire's largest and most influential opposition

party. The appointment pitted Birindwa against his long-time ally, Tshisekedi wa Mulumba, the Mobutu foe who was appointed to the premiership last December by the High Council of the Republic (HCR), the interim parliament attempting to restore democracy in Zaire.

Mobutu's dismissal of Tshisekedi and appointment of Birindwa was immediately rejected by the HCR, leaving Zaire with two rival prime ministers, and deepening the political crisis. Mobutu's antics would be funny if they were not so tragic; the country, mired in what appears to be a permanent state of political and economic anarchy, is on the brink of total collapse.

When Mobutu announced in April 1990 that he would introduce a limited form of democracy, it seemed unlikely that he would still be in power today. But the wily and ruthless dictator, who has ruled with an iron hand for 28 years, has managed to cling to power by defying the wishes of the national conference and its successor, the HCR. Through his control of the elite security forces, in particular the Special Presidential Division (DSP), Mobutu continues to withhold democracy and prolong tyranny, often through mass killings. His one-man rule, although universally opposed by Zairians, is buttressed by his military control over the nation's treasury and the state-owned radio and television.

From the moment the HCR took over last December, Mobutu has stood in its way. Among other things, the HCR was mandated to lead Zaire to its first open vote since 1960. In view of recent developments, it will be a miracle if the vote, slated for August 1994, takes place at all. Since the announced political reforms in 1990, it has been clear that Mobutu never intended to hand over power.

At first, he tried to shut down the national conference. When that failed he attempted to limit its powers and weaken it by coopting some of its leaders with a succession of impotent puppet governments. In a span of three years, Mobutu has appointed at least five prime ministers in a bid to thwart the ascendancy of Tshisekedi and the pro-democratic Sacred Union, the coalition of about 150 political parties which controlled the national conference. Each prime minister was driven from office in disgrace after failing to outwit and crush the Sacred Union.

Mobutu's intransigence notwithstanding, the national conference has bravely soldiered on, solidifying its legitimacy and further undermining Mobutu's tenuous hold on power. On December 6, the national conference took a giant step by forming the HCR and renaming Tshisekedi prime minister. Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo, the

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respected Catholic cleric who impressively and resolutely led the national conference, was made the HCR's chairman. Under the new constitution approved by the national conference, Mobutu was allowed to stay on as president but most of his powers were given to the prime minister, Tshisekedi, and the HCR. The HCR was invested with all legislative powers. When Mobutu unsuccessfully attempted to dissolve the new government, he chose to raise the heat by insisting on his control over the treasury.

The centerpiece of the dispute was a decision by Mobutu to introduce the 5-million zaire bank notes, worth less than \$2, partially as a way of coping with the country's 7000 percent rate of inflation. In a test of wills and economic judgment, Tshisekedi ordered the notes withdrawn, but Mobutu refused to back down. Merchants and traders, however, heeded Tshisekedi's call and did not accept the new notes as legal tender. In this polarized atmosphere, Mobutu added fuel to the fire when he decided to pay his hungry soldiers with the new notes. The traders refused to accept them, touching off a spree of looting and killing by the soldiers beginning on January 28. According to Zairian human rights activists, as many as 1,000 people, most of them regular soldiers, were killed by Mobutu's security forces.

A significant casualty of the mutiny was the French ambassador to Zaire, Philippe Bernard, who was fatally shot by Mobutu's soldiers as he reportedly watched the looting from what he thought was the safety of his office. As the crisis continued, France, Belgium, and the United States, the three powers which supported Mobutu during the cold war, asked him to step down and hand over the nation's purse strings to Tshisekedi's transitional government. On February 5, a defiant Mobutu tried to dismiss Tshisekedi but without success. He accused the

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three Western powers of meddling in Zairian affairs and dictating to him like a colony. Tshisekedi asserted that Mobutu had no power to fire him.

In a bid to dislodge the interim government and push Tshisekedi into political oblivion, Mobutu convened in early March a political "conclave." The attendees were a collection of

his hand-picked cronies led by his office director, veteran politician Professor Vunduawe Te Pemako, formerly a member of the central Committee of the Popular Movement for the Revolution (MPR), the single party that ruled Zaire until 1990. On March 8, this "conclave" met with Archbishop Monsengwo to map out an agenda for a meeting between the two sides to end the political crisis.

Mobutu had his agenda: He wanted Tshisekedi replaced. He wanted the interim constitution rewritten to restore his powers. He wanted a shorter timetable for elections instead of the two-year transition period approved by the national conference.

The Mobutu "conclave" did what it was supposed to. It recommended to Mobutu that he dismiss Tshisekedi and replace him with Faustin Birindwa. Birindwa was a faithful Tshisekedi aide and a senior leader of the UDPS until February when he was dismissed from the party for "political truancy," a euphemism for selling out to Mobutu. An Italian-trained economist married to an Italian,

from the UDPS and the Sacred Union. If history is any guide, he will go down to a humiliating defeat in the next several months.

In the meantime, the political "conclave" convened by Mobutu to lend "legitimacy" to the Birindwa appointment wound down on March 19 after passing a resolution "downgrading" the HCR to just one of the "political organs" of the transition to democracy, a move intended to take away its legislative and parliamentary role. Closing the "conclave," Mobutu stunned Zaire observers by announcing that he would call a special parliamentary session of the defunct MPR legis-

lature to discuss the constitution and the transition to democracy. The resurrection of the one-party MPR parliament, which has no standing in law, is designed to marginalize the HCR and allow Mobutu to recapture the ship of state through the Birindwa appointment, effectively killing the transition to democracy.

On March 29, the MPR parliament met, in a direct challenge to the HCR, to hijack the process of reform. The rubber-stamp National Assembly, which was suspended in 1992 by the national conference, is expected to review and amend the laws and rules governing the transitional period.

Meanwhile, the HCR had approved on March 26 the 32-member government proposed by Tshisekedi. Only several MPR ministers whom Tshisekedi had named to his government as a gesture of reconciliation have refused to join his cabinet, a development that is expected to have no consequence in the standoff between Mobutu and the pro-democracy forces, or the steadfast support that the HCR has so far given Tshisekedi.

The crisis in governance is expected to escalate when Birindwa names his cabinet. Whether Mobutu manages to cow Tshisekedi and the HCR will depend largely on popular support for the democratic process in Zaire and the support of the international community, especially that of the U.S., France, and Belgium, still the three most influential countries in Kinshasa. On April 1, the governments of France and Belgium announced that they did not recognize Birindwa as prime minister and pledged their support for Tshisekedi and the HCR. France emphasized that the "Zairian government should emerge from the High Council of the Republic." In another positive move, the French denied Mobutu and his entourage entry visas. The three Western governments should mount pressure on Mobutu by organizing the seizure and freezing of his assets and accounts abroad and denying him and all his officials entry visas until he bows to the HCR and allows the democratic process to go ahead. Otherwise, Zaire is condemned to permanent anarchy as long as Mobutu continues in power. ○



Syigma

Mobutu's one-man rule is buttressed by his military control over the treasury and media

is surprising that a person of Birindwa's political experience and history of opposition to Mobutu would agree to participate in what will in all likelihood turn out to be another failed attempt to halt the democracy train.

In his first public statement upon being named by Mobutu, Birindwa promised to work with the dictator in a "spirit of non-conflict," a pledge that underlines his status as a Mobutu lackey. Incredibly, Birindwa claimed that Mobutu had given him free rein over state finances while the two would share responsibility over defense and foreign affairs. His appointment appeared headed nowhere as it was overwhelmingly rejected by Tshisekedi and the HCR. France, Belgium, and the U.S., which have all but ordered Mobutu to cede power to Tshisekedi, sharply denounced the appointment and refused to recognize it. The Clinton administration went further, announcing that its departing ambassador, Melissa Wells, would not be replaced. Birindwa, who has been rejected and soundly denounced at home and abroad for his opportunistic enlistment in Mobutu's machinations, has indicated that he still intends to form a government

Birindwa, 53, has been the victim of Mobutu's despotism on several occasions. In 1988, he was banished to a remote village in eastern Zaire for political dissent. It



Patrick Robert/Sygma

Patrick Robert/Sygma

The civil war in Liberia has taken a new turn, one that demands resolute action by the international community to prevent renewed violence and recrimination from engulfing the country.

If the cycle of abuse is to end, steps must be taken to protect the civilian population of Nimba County—birthplace of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Another rebel group—the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (Ulimo)—now threatens to reach Nimba. This group's abusive record is reason to fear that the lives of Nimba residents would be in jeopardy. To avoid a bloodbath, the West African "peace-keeping" force, Ecomog, should be pressed to get to Nimba first and make protection of civilians its priority.

Nimba County, in the northeastern corner of Liberia, is home to the Gio and Mano ethnic groups. In 1985, after Samuel Doe, an ethnic Krahn, stole the presidential elections, he brutally suppressed a coup attempt led by Thomas Qwiwonkpa, an ethnic Gio. Doe's soldiers, the

Krahn-dominated Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), engaged in bloody reprisals against real and suspected opponents, targeting mostly Gios and Manos; hundreds were killed and hundreds more were detained without charges or trial. This violence and the subsequent repression of independent activity and political opposition set the stage for the country's ethnic conflict and civil war. On December 24, 1989, Taylor launched his incursion from Côte d'Ivoire into Nimba. The AFL responded with a ruthless counter-insurgency campaign, indiscriminately killing civilians, burning villages, raping women, and looting. The brutality served to swell the ranks of NPFL recruits, many of whom were Gio and Mano boys orphaned by the fighting or enraged by the AFL's conduct. The NPFL, for its part, targeted suspected supporters of the Doe regime, particularly members of the Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups, slaughtering civilians and destroying villages along the way. By the summer of 1990, when the war spread to Monrovia, the level of atrocities committed by all sides reached astounding proportions.

The Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) peace-keeping force, Ecomog, is an unprece-

Janet Fleischman is research associate for Africa Watch, a division of Human Rights Watch. She travelled to Liberia in March.

AN UNCIVIL WAR

The civil war in Liberia grinds on with the West African “peace-keeping” force, Ecomog, now on the offensive, shelling and bombing positions held by rebel Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia forces. But the war has taken a new twist, with Ecomog recruiting some unsavory allies in its campaign against Taylor, threatening even more violence and human rights violations.

dented five-nation West African military detachment, though heavily dominated by Nigeria. (The main franco-phone contingent, from Senegal, withdrew its troops in January.) Ecomog arrived in Monrovia in August 1990 to separate the warring factions and to stop the bloodshed. Unfortunately, with NPFL attacks continuing, there was no peace to keep, and Ecomog was thrust into combat to push the NPFL out of Monrovia.

Although the participating states may have had ulterior motives for intervening in Liberia and their conduct has been far from perfect, Ecomog accomplished certain concrete objectives: It established a semblance of order and peace in the battered capital, which allowed international humanitarian groups to return to Liberia. It confined the AFL and another rebel group, the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), led by Prince Johnson, to their barracks. It installed the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU), headed by Amos Sawyer. And it obtained a ceasefire. One would be hard-pressed to visit Monrovia without hearing, time and again, “Thank God for Ecomog.”

For two years—from November 1990, when the ceasefire was signed in Bamako, until October 1992—an

uneasy truce reigned in Liberia, with the West African troops guarding Monrovia and the NPFL controlling the rest of the country. During this period, Ecomog’s role was confined to that of a police force; it was unable to bridge the political division of the country, and lacked the mandate to confront Taylor militarily. On the diplomatic front, a series of Ecomog-sponsored peace talks, culminating in the October 1991 Yamoussoukro IV accord, sought disarmament and encampment of all warring factions, to be followed by elections. Despite hopes that all sides would comply with Yamoussoukro, Charles Taylor continued to renege on his commitments to disarm, and depicted Ecomog—especially Nigeria—as his principal adversary.

The picture was further complicated by the rise of Ulimo, formed in 1991 by ex-AFL soldiers who had fled to Sierra Leone. Ulimo’s political agenda is unclear, despite its claim to seek peace and democracy for the country. After skirmishing with the NPFL many times since late 1991, Ulimo launched a surprisingly successful incursion in August 1992 and routed Taylor’s NPFL from two western counties. Taylor immediately charged that Ulimo was in cahoots with Ecomog.

The increasingly tense situation exploded on October

15, when Taylor launched "Operation Octopus," attacking Ecomog positions around Monrovia, and even striking the AFL, which was encamped at its Schiefflin barracks on the outskirts of the city. For almost a month, Ecomog struggled to repel what is called "the siege of Monrovia." Fighting raged in and around the city, with the suburban areas of Gardnersville, Barnersville, New Georgia, and Caldwell particularly hard hit.

Approximately 200,000 people displaced from these areas flooded into the central city to escape the fighting. Other civilians were pushed behind Taylor lines into the country's interior, joining thousands of displaced persons there. Ecomog began conducting bombing and strafing raids on Taylor territory, which the NPFL claims have caused many civilian casualties. In late October, five American nuns, based in Gardnersville, were killed by the NPFL. Although the nuns represented a tiny fraction of those killed, their deaths attracted international attention to the resurgent war.

The urgency of the situation compelled Ecomog to adopt a new strategy: It accepted the assistance of other Liberian factions in fighting the NPFL. The human rights record of these factions—Ulimo and the AFL—range from suspect to abysmal. The AFL was thoroughly discredited by its horrific abuses during the 1980s and especially during the war in 1990 when it massacred civilians and devastated Monrovia. Ulimo is an offshoot of the AFL, and its conduct in the areas it captured in 1992 reportedly included attacks on civilians, looting, and executions of suspected NPFL sympathizers. The formal connections between the AFL and Ulimo are unclear, although most of Ulimo's key commanders are former AFL leaders, and hundreds of AFL soldiers apparently left their barracks to join Ulimo.

The relationship between Ecomog and these groups seems to be built upon the classic view that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." After first supporting the right of the AFL to defend itself from attack, Ecomog soon permitted the AFL to operate alongside the multinational troops, although the AFL retained a separate command structure and controls certain areas on its own. Ecomog claims that Ulimo operates independently, but it is clear that some coordination exists. There is little indication that Ecomog tries to curb excesses by these factions.

Still, Ecomog regards the AFL with disdain; the Ecomog chief of staff accuses it of "every type of indiscipline—looting, indiscriminate firing," and complained that "trained soldiers wouldn't do what they do." Realizing the dangers posed by the Ulimo and AFL fighters moving freely in Monrovia, IGNU prodded Ecomog to push the fighters out of the city. Although Ecomog has conducted sweeps and trucked many fighters to the city limits, anyone visiting Monrovia can see that plenty of Ulimo and AFL fighters remain, many of them armed and hauling back loot from the front lines. (Ecomog soldiers have also been accused of looting.)

This new arrangement has changed the dynamics of the war, and raises questions about Ecomog's commitment to human rights. Some observers justify this uneasy marriage on the grounds of military necessity, arguing both that Ecomog was stretched too thin and that Ecomog soldiers needed Liberian guides to show them the terrain. Clearly, the AFL and Ulimo were viewed as lesser evils than the NPFL. Expressing the sentiments held by many in Monrovia, one Liberian remarked: "To hell with human rights. We have to get this thing over with."

Since Ecomog re-established its defensive perimeter around Monrovia in late 1992, it has taken the offensive. A pattern has emerged in which AFL or Ulimo soldiers form the front lines of attack, while Ecomog follows with heavy weapons. It is difficult to document the AFL's and Ulimo's treatment of civilians, but there is ample reason for concern. In one high profile case in January 1993, Brian Garnham, a British citizen working at the Liberian Institute for Biomedical Research, an affiliate of the New York Blood Center, was killed by the AFL. The lab is located near Robertsfield airport, which has been controlled by the NPFL since 1990. Witnesses indicate that the AFL soldiers who murdered Garnham arrived in advance of Ecomog. Earlier, as the fighting approached Robertsfield, Ecomog had been notified of the presence of civilians at the laboratory. "Unfortunately," the Ecomog chief of staff later commented, "we weren't the first to get there." After the killing, AFL soldiers went on a looting spree, emptying the laboratory compound of whatever they could carry.

The investigation launched by IGNU into Garnham's death does not inspire much confidence that the perpetrators will even be identified, let alone punished. A commission of inquiry has been formed and meets at IGNU's ministry of defense. It is headed by AFL General Pelham, and includes representatives of the AFL and IGNU's ministry of justice. Although outside observers were invited to participate in the inquiry, including the Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Commission and the U.S. embassy, they have been excluded from important meetings on security grounds, and the Justice and Peace Commission pulled out. By all accounts, the commission of inquiry is reluctant to blame the AFL, which is trying to recast its image as the legitimate national army. As of mid-March, the only witness who had been interviewed was Garnham's American wife, Betsy Brotman, and that was at her initiative.

A further indication of the brutality of Ulimo and the AFL is found in the testimony of displaced persons. Many of these people are found in camps outside Monrovia. When asked under what conditions they would return home, the vast majority stated that they would not go back until Ecomog was there. Adam, a middle-aged man from Grand Cape Mount, put it this way: "I won't go back if Ulimo controls the area; I don't trust them. I don't trust the AFL either. We know about them. If you know a leopard, you know what a leopard can do."

Ulimo is now behaving like the NPFL. It is limiting the free movement of people and goods in its territory. It denied Africa Watch a pass to travel to its areas without a Ulimo "escort"; and it has established checkpoints along the roads, at which civilians often face harassment. Liberian human rights monitors have raised concerns about abuses by Ulimo, including summary executions, beatings, and arbitrary arrests. "A system of control makes a lot of money," commented a foreign relief worker. Ulimo is clearly setting up a military occupation of areas it has "liberated" and has given no indication that it is investigating reported abuses.

"Ulimo has accelerated the Liberian crisis by affirming people's worst fears—that there would be more warring factions," according to the head of a Liberian relief group. The specter of the country degenerating into a Somalia-like situation, with armed factions killing and looting with impunity, looms large to many Liberians. These concerns are well-founded. A recent split in Ulimo's political leadership between Alhadji Kromah and Raleigh Seekie could foreshadow further splintering. The AFL has re-armed and resumed fighting. IGNU has formed its own militia, the Black Berets, which has been incorporated into the AFL. At least two "warlords" who broke off from the NPFL have surfaced in Lofa County. And a shadowy group called the Nimba Redemption Council has recently emerged in Nimba.

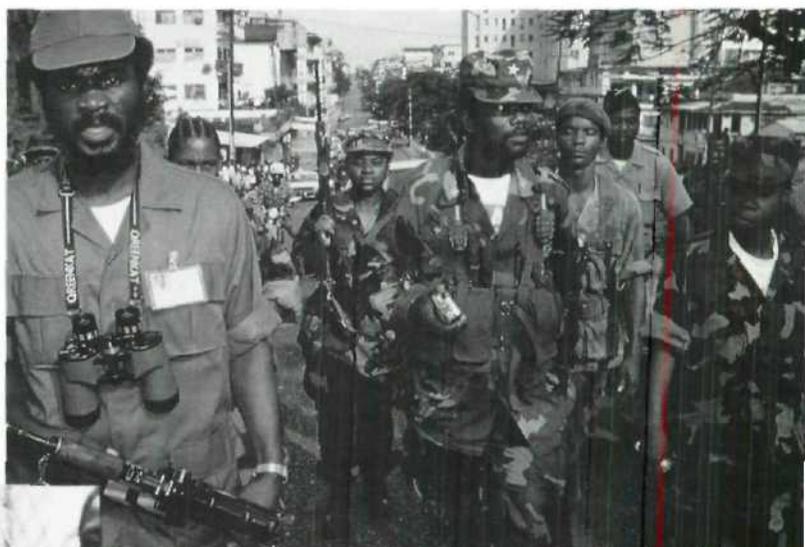
The question naturally arises as to whether Ecomog will be able to control and disarm these factions. Ecomog officials claim that they will disarm all parties simultaneously, as provided for in the Yamoussoukro accords. They maintain that once the NPFL agrees to a ceasefire, the others will fall into place. Their confidence is not shared by many Liberia watchers.

The UN's role also deserves scrutiny. After finally addressing the Liberian crisis in November and imposing an arms embargo, the secretary-general dispatched a special representative, Trevor Gordon-Somers, to investigate the situation. Human rights language is notably absent from his report, which was released in mid-March, thus missing yet another occasion to insert human rights protections into the peace negotiations. The report suggested that there might be a role for UN observers to monitor a new ceasefire agreement, but foresaw no human rights monitoring component to their mandate. This is an unfortunate omission, since it would

have afforded an unprecedented opportunity for transparency throughout the country.

By all accounts, the war is fast approaching Nimba County, and Ulimo forces are well ahead of Ecomog. It is a critical moment for the international community—especially the United States and the UN Security Council—to bring pressure to bear on both the Ecomog commanders and the Ecomog heads of state to use their leverage to stop the Ulimo and AFL advance and to ensure that Ecomog reaches Nimba first and acts in accordance with international humanitarian law. The leaders of these fac-

Patrick Roberts/Sygnia



Above, boys suspected of being NPFL combatants

Top right, Prince Jobson (center)

Bottom right, Ulimo soldiers

Patrick Roberts/Sygnia

tions have professed a commitment to the Yamoussoukro framework, and this is an important moment to pull them firmly into the process as the price of their claims to international legitimacy.

Ecomog has indicated that human rights were among the reasons for its intervention. This commitment will be credible only if Ecomog itself respects human rights and exercises control over the warring factions with which it is nominally allied. Similarly, the international community must act to break the cycle of ethnically motivated abuses in Liberia, thus paving the way for reconciliation in this traumatized nation. ○

Janet Fleischnan/Africa Watch

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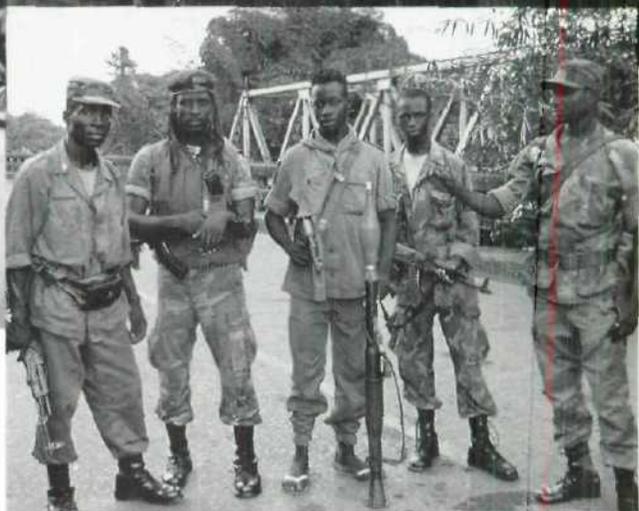
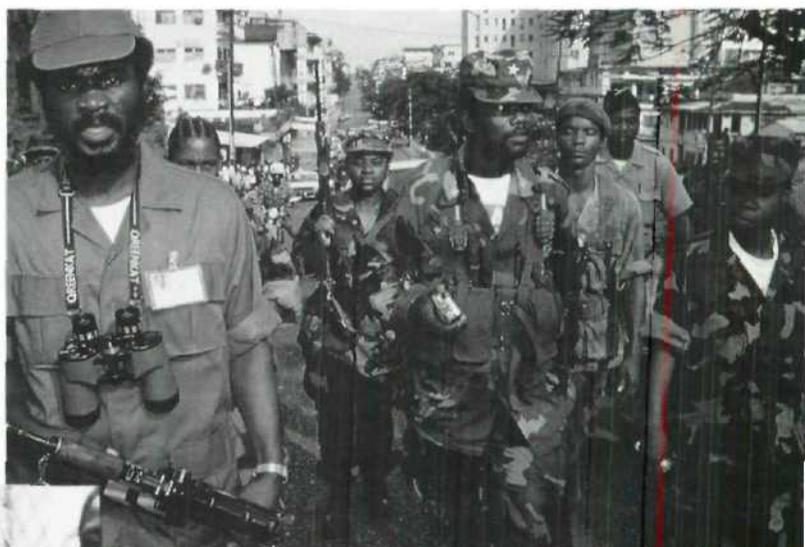
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Janet Fleischer/Africa Watch

THE MEASURE OF FREEDOM



As if he were speaking about someone else's life, Pius Njawe, editor and publisher of *Le Messenger* in Douala, Cameroon, nonchalantly explained how a cop lowered the barrel of his gun at him during a protest rally in the fall of 1991. "It was all nicely set up. I was going to be caught in an altercation and shot. It would be blamed on police misconduct."

Njawe was not shot. Later at the police station, where

Barry Shelby is a senior editor at World Press Review magazine in New York.

many of the demonstrators were detained for the day, the provincial governor told Njawe he would intercede on his behalf (thanks to a direct appeal from Njawe's wife)—but not before a lecture. Njawe recounts the exchange. "He said, 'Let me tell you something: Stop provoking us.' So I said, 'No sir, it is you who provoke us. You suspend our newspapers. We want to use one of the most legal means to protest against the suspension and you sent the army and the police in to suppress the demonstration. Please let me tell you that this morning I came close to being gunned down like a dog by a soldier.' And he said, 'Yes, yes, he could have shot you!' And I said, 'Oh really? Was

Africa's troubled transition from authoritarianism to democracy is reflected in how the media is treated. Where countries are not serious about democratic reform, the media is hanging on precariously. With very few exceptions, the press is being squeezed, rather than serving its prime role as independent watchdog and communicator to the people of the changes taking place.

today's order to shoot me down?' And he said, 'Well, all I can tell you is: Don't provoke us anymore.' "

A week after that incident, Njawe recalls that he went to the governor's office to inquire about the arrests of opposition leaders. Again he was warned about his behavior. "Now, when you strip somebody and hit him 200 times," Njawe says, "how do you go further, except to kill him?"

Last year, when Njawe heard that his name was on a government hit list, he fled the country for awhile. Today he is back and he waits, amid rumors that the government is trying to build a case against him on criminal charges that range from drug trafficking to arson to plotting the overthrow of the government. Of course, Njawe had committed only one sin—he and his newspaper did not back the re-election of President Paul Biya in the long-awaited multi-party election last October.

One of the surest signs that African countries are experiencing troubled transitions to democracy is the treatment of the press. To the extent that the free press should be a gauge of liberty and freedom, countries are not living up to expectations. When the so-called new "wind of change" began blowing across Africa at the start of the decade, many forecast that it would sweep the shackles from journalists. And many new independent, privately-owned publications have started up as the dictators have fallen down. But the breeze appears to have been diverted too often.

Old habits do die hard. For more than two decades, one-party states dominated Africa. The belief in "nation-building" was sincere and deep following the colonial experience: It meant that the press had to go along with this goal, and dissent was tantamount to blasphemy against the "founding fathers." While lip service is today paid to a new dawning of democracy, the reality too often is much closer to business as usual. In Zaire, Togo, Kenya, and Cameroon, one-party states have been opened up enough to allow new political groups to form but not so far as to provide the mechanisms for their fair participation. The press, which could serve as the independent watchdog as well as the source of information on political developments, is given little room to

maneuver, let alone fill its central role in a democratic society.

According to the recently released annual report, *Attacks on Journalists*, issued by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), "Regimes in Africa hold far fewer prisoners (six) than they did two years ago (31), when the Sudan alone held 20." But intimidation and harassment continues. In Kenya for example, the task has fallen to an organization named Youth for Kanu '92, which is allied with the ruling party. "African leaders often denounce attacks on the press, but they seldom do anything to stop them," CPJ notes. "Virtually none of the cases [discussed in the report] have been investigated."

The view that not all is well in Africa is backed up by the London-based International Press Institute. "There

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are fears that many of the apparent moves toward democratization are little more than cosmetic exercises," wrote IPI director Peter Calliner in the organization's December 1992 *World Press Freedom Review*. So while imprisonment seems less in favor, regimes are willing to try a variety of means to silence newspapers.

An editor in Zaire, Modeste Mutinga, outlined the press situation there for the Belgian daily *Le Soir*. Many new newspapers have a share of the market, Mutinga says—and all have been subjected to attacks. Mutinga's paper, *Le Potentiel*, had its print shop set afire and its equipment, including telex, printers, and computers, stolen.

"These criminal acts were committed solely due to differences in political opinion," Mutinga said. "The aim of all these acts of aggression is to mute the press. Television and radio, which over the months had gradually gained a certain freedom of speech, have been muzzled once again. Journalists and professional news readers have been sacked in favor of other, more docile, replace-

ments. I'll have to start over because these thugs have destroyed seven years of investment. We will have to purchase equipment because I don't think any Zairian printer will consent to print our paper, for they too have received threats."

In other countries, expectations were probably unreasonable from the start. Sierra Leone was not necessarily any closer to democracy when Valentine Strasser, the 28-year-old army captain, toppled the one-party rule of Gen. Joseph Saidu Momoh last year. But Momoh had given observers little to hope for, and Strasser at least went through the motions of restoring a modicum of democracy. In one refreshing although somewhat quaint act, the one-time disco dancer installed suggestion boxes around the capital so that people could have a say in his rule. But when the press began to question his administration, the whip came down, ending what some had described as a "honeymoon" between Strasser and journalists. This year, the editor of *The Pool* was arrested after his newspaper criticized the summary execution of more than 25 Sierra Leoneans who had been accused of plotting a coup. *The Pool* had suggested that an open trial would have been the proper way of handling the case.

In Tanzania, which has restored multi-party politics but not held an open election, the government banned two independent newspapers this year. The reason given by the state—"Violation of journalistic ethics"—is believed to be a cover for a political message to all of the independent papers that have sprung up recently. One publication's sin was publishing a story titled, "My lover has asked for unnatural sex."

"The emergence of a vibrant private press has opened a new chapter in Tanzania's state-controlled information system," the London-based Newlink Africa feature service reports. "Some newspapers have published exclusive stories exposing government shortcomings, mismanagement, and failure to tackle theft and corruption. This has angered the ministry of information and broadcast, prompting it to look at ways to plug the publication of such stories."

One means to accomplish that is to establish a national register of journalists and expell those who transgress. Others see the recent bannings—and the government's refusal to grant licenses to other independent papers—as the state's way of eliminating the competition. Its own publications had a lock on the news market until a few years ago. Because the independent press is vulnerable economically, simply pulling one issue off the stands can kill a publication. Few have deep pockets; most are dependent on sales rather than advertising—particularly in those states with limited private industry—for income.

The worst transgressions in recent months have been in Cameroon. After winning an election in October that many thought to be rigged, President Biya unleashed a campaign against those who dared to reject his candidacy. For Biya, public enemy number one may be editor and publisher Njawe. *Le Messager* and Njawe have been

on Biya's hit list for some time. Njawe has always been very clear on the limits that Biya has put on the democratic reforms he imposed from the top. "You can't talk about democracy in a system where the freedom of the press is trampled underfoot," he has said. "We've been given multi-party politics, but not the corollary."

Njawe was inventive in tweaking the government censors, who repeatedly laid waste to his paper. Instead of running white spaces where passages had been excised, Njawe once chose to print a quote from a Biya address that said people no longer had to leave the country to express their views. When *Le Messager* was suspended, he followed the letter of the law and published under a new title, choosing the feminine form of the word, *La Messagère*. "All I was trying to do was make them feel foolish and make the point that the law could be used against them. If they suspended *La Messagère*, I would create *Le Message*."

Biya turned more vicious in the wake of his election victory, however, and Njawe went into hiding when he heard that his name was on a government hit list. His less for-

fortunate nephew was detained along with a journalist from the newspaper who was seized after dropping off Njawe's children at school. They were reportedly forced to eat glass and suffered beatings, as the police tried to force them to sign a denunciation of Njawe. Serious harassment has also been levied on journalists at the *Cameroon Post*. Its publisher, Paddy Mbawa, has also gone underground. His paper was confiscated in January.

The Biya government has thwarted efforts by international observers from the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, and Reporters Sans Frontières of Paris (for which Njawe served as an African representative), to go to Cameroon. Visa applications have been denied repeatedly.

Njawe has no shortage of friends among journalists outside of Cameroon, not only because of his unflappable commitment to his craft but also because of his easygoing nature. In between threats and seizures last year, he took the time to talk to an American journalist with the dubious assignment of reporting on Cameroonians' penchant for carving wooden bicycles. He seemingly enjoyed the contact, even if the subject was frivolous given Cameroon's political upheavals. "If it were not for a resurgence of international solidarity, I'm not sure whether I would still be alive," he has said. This year he received an award from the Paris-based International



Kim Bruce

Federation of Newspaper Publishers, which said: "Njawe is an authentic hero of the struggle to win freedom of the press, not only in his own country but throughout Africa, where this basic human right continues to be violated by a majority of countries."

But again, not all the signs in Africa are terrible. Two examples of a press largely flourishing in new-found freedom are in Benin and Mali, where several new titles have been established and publish freely—most of the time. There have been reports from Cotonou of President Nicéphore Soglo—a former World Bank official—singling out three publications for practicing "rotten journalism." He has urged journalists to receive some training abroad to improve their skills and judgment. Two papers, *Le Soleil* and *Tam Tam Express*, had called the president's wife an "ugly witch." The director of a third publication, *L'Observateur*, was harassed and eventually sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

In southern Africa, a new organization has been launched by editors in the frontline nations, as well as in South Africa, with an ambitious list of goals to ensure press freedom in the region. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) governing council is chaired by

*Plus Njawe, left:
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Gwen Lister, editor of *The Namibian* in Windhoek. "We feel strongly that there isn't a free press, even if you look at Zimbabwe," where there has been only "tolerance" of a free press, she says. "We want to emphasize the vital



Photo d'Afrique/Akwes

importance of a free and independent press in moving a country toward democracy in the region."

In Zambia, the government has said it plans to privatize the state-owned media. Although Zambian President Frederick Chiluba surprised many by returning to old-fashioned politics this year when he recently declared a state of emergency, the order did not impinge on press rights. The peace accord in Mozambique is supposed to guarantee equal access to the media, and an independent newsletter, Mediafax, has been launched. In Zimbabwe, the first independent daily newspaper, *The Daily Gazette*, continues to challenge the monopoly once held by those owned by the state's media trust.

Zimbabwe has been something of a textbook case. An

ostensibly one-party state under President Robert Mugabe, the government held the controlling interest in the largest newspapers, but proclaimed them virtually free. Editors and reporters walked a tightrope, and whenever they failed to toe the government line to the government's satisfaction, they were reprimanded. Former editor of *The Chronicle* in Bulawayo, Geoff Nyarota, was kicked upstairs to an executive position with the state Zimbabwe Newspapers Ltd. in 1989 when *The Chronicle*, always a bit more aggressive than *The Herald* in Harare, ran a series of investigations on government corruption. Dubbed "Willowgate," the scandal revolved around government ministers' procuring cars on the cheap from the Willowvale Motor Industry and reselling them at a handsome profit. The public attention led to the resignation of some ministers. One committed suicide. Recently, Nyarota has been active in starting the MISA chapter in Zimbabwe.

When Lister traveled to the U.S. earlier this year, she was hoping to raise a little money—although she was not very optimistic. Most of the attention these days is on Eastern Europe. "Africa has been forgotten," she says. Her paper's immediate goal would put any additional money toward the salary of a business manager she has hired recently. Beyond that, she would like also to not depend on the commercial printing houses that are owned by the opposition party, which publishes its own papers. "We are all battling for self-sufficiency," she says. "We don't want to ask for handouts, but at the same time we need a bit of help to just get to that point where we are financially self-sufficient or self-sustaining. It would be a very sad day to see papers like *The Weekly Mail* in South Africa disappear simply because there was no one interested."

Dana Bullen, executive director of the World Press Freedom Committee in Reston, Virginia, acknowledges that assistance from the U.S. has been funneled to Eastern and Central Europe. "The climatic impact of events in Central and Eastern Europe has diverted attention to that sector and has obscured other parts of the world," he says. The U.S. International Media Fund, for example, which has set up a print shop in Albania for six independent newspapers, doesn't do any work in Africa. The terms of its grant from the United States Information Agency limits its mandate to Central and Eastern Europe. But Bullen believes the pendulum will swing back and Africa will return to focus. His organization has proposals pending, at least, to investigate the situation, which he knows has changed in recent years. There is a strong feeling that they want to operate a truly independent and free press.

Although it may take a few years, Bullen believes that help is on the way. In the meantime, the independent media will have to fend for themselves and seek help from elsewhere in the West. "Assistance can be very helpful, but it is more important that journalists be able to stand on their own feet," Bullen says. "By necessity, it forces them to be more independent." ○

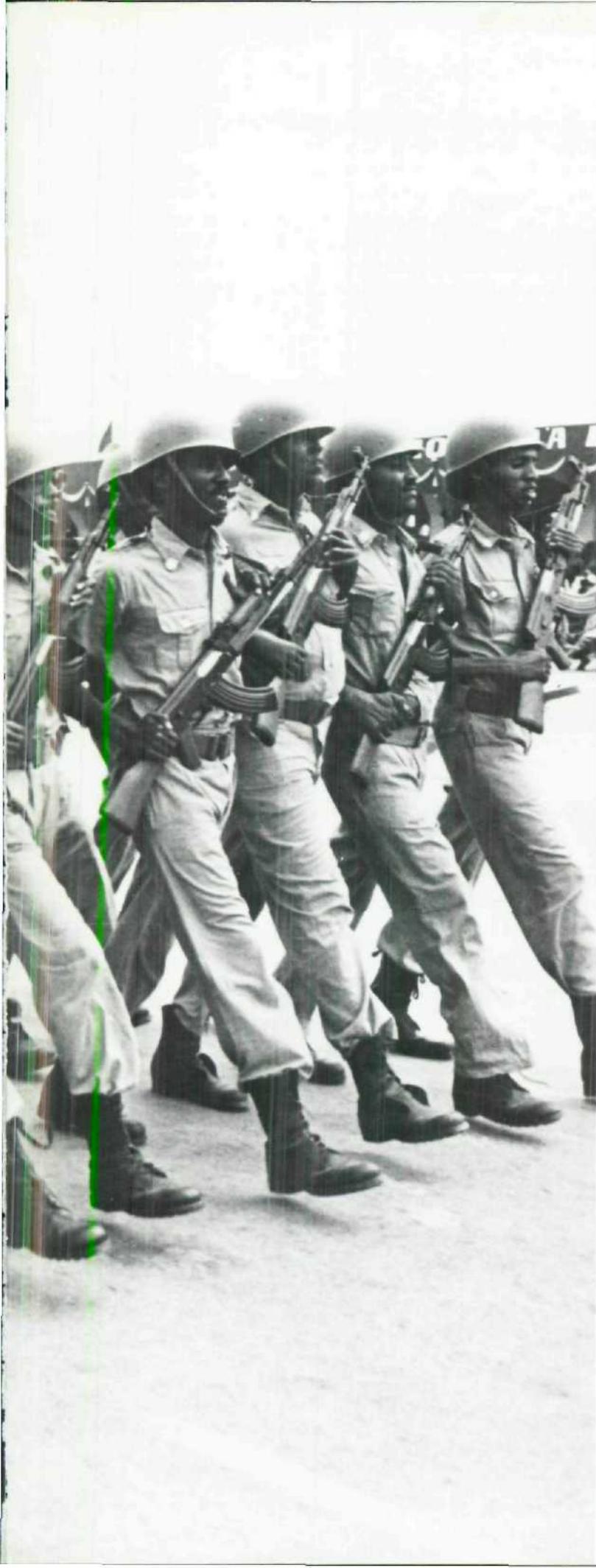
|| DEMOCRACY ||

BY WILLIAM J. FOLTZ

OFFICERS



POLITICIANS



In most of Africa, government has been synonymous with the military. Today, as civilian administrations struggle to create democratic traditions, their toughest task may be to convince their armies to accept secondary status and maintain political neutrality.

The colonel pounded the table for emphasis: "Democracy cannot come about without the army's participation!" This was no threat from a would-be coup-maker; it was an earnest reminder to his audience that serious plans for democratic transition in Africa had to include the military and had to find a new basis for relating the military to civil society and political authority.

The scene was Bujumbura, Burundi's capital, where from January 31 to February 4, 1993, 64 senior military officers and civilian leaders from nine African countries and the Organization of African Unity wrestled with the topic, "Democratization in Africa: The Role of the Military." The countries represented were Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The conference had been the initiative of Burundi's president, Major Pierre Buyoya, whose country is in the early stages of a democratic transition. President Buyoya turned to the African-American Institute to organize the *conference in consultation with his government*. Financial and logistic support came from the American embassy in Bujumbura, the U.S. Departments of State and Defense, the World Bank, the United Nations Devel-

William J. Foltz is the H.J. Heinz professor of African studies and political science at Yale University. He chaired the Bujumbura conference.

opment Programme, and the Burundi government and armed forces, which provided attentive hospitality.

The goal of the conference was not to pass high-flown resolutions of good intent, but to provide formal and informal settings for serious exploration of a crucial and difficult subject. Plenary sessions provided lectures by African and American military officers and academic specialists on subjects ranging from civil-military relations in a democracy to case studies of the military's role in the attempted transitions to democracy in Mali, Benin, and Togo. The hardest work was done when the participants divided into five small groups to discuss the issues raised in the plenary sessions. The conversations in and out of meetings were intense. These most often crossed national lines as when, for example, Chadian, Ethiopian, and Namibian officers compared notes on demobilizing surplus troops. Some of the most fruitful conversations brought together officers and civilians from the same country who had never before met for serious discussions. The final sessions brought reports of the discussion groups to the full conference, highlighting differences as well as broad agreement on some of the most fundamental issues. Here are some of the highlights.

The heritage of colonial armies got civil-military relations in independent Africa off to a bad start. The colonial powers had used their African forces more for civil repression than for defense of territorial integrity or civil society. Recruitment was usually ethnically biased, and attempts by successor African governments to change the army's composition usually overlaid new biases on old and hastened the politicization of the military. As the army became a political force, so it grew in size and cost. The 73 successful coups d'état that the continent has experienced since independence are a sign of severe social and political disequilibrium. Whether or not the military formally controlled the government, all African armies have been deeply implicated in the failure of their states to develop economically and politically in the last two decades. Now, the military cannot escape the domestic and international pressures for fundamental reform.

From this history, some basic lessons emerge. The proper relationship between the military, civil society, and government must be clearly set out in a constitutional document, as it is, for example, in the new Namibian constitution. The army's mission and control structure should be clearly distinguished from those of the police and gendarmerie. The military, it was readily agreed, must be "politically neutral," above the play of partisan politics, though discussants disagreed on the details of this neutrality. Should a serving officer have the right to run for office? Even if he resigned his commission? Could an ordinary soldier have the right to join a political party? Should soldiers vote in their barracks, or should their vote be mingled with civilian votes so the army's preference would be disguised?

The military, it was emphatically agreed, should be a "national institution"; that is to say, it must be recruited

on a national basis, with no suspicion of ethnic or regional bias. Almost all participants, not least the Burundian hosts, recognized this as one of their greatest challenges, raising all the complications of affirmative action plans, including discrimination against those (often poorer) parts of the country, for whose young men military service had been an expected career. Whatever the complications, recruitment had to be public, equitable, and transparent.

Civilian control of the military is the essence of democratic rule. This everyone could accept; yet some were not ready for all that it implied. Some military officers from francophone states were taken aback when an anglophone member of Parliament outlined how the military had to appear before the appropriate parliamentary committee to plead for new funds, and then would have its accounts scrutinized by the auditor-general's office. Civilian control must have its limits, many argued. The military must be guaranteed a sphere of "professional autonomy" if it was to be able to operate effectively.

The actual transition from authoritarian to democratic rule poses particular problems for the military. Three distinct phases can be distinguished:

- disengagement of the military from the existing authoritarian system (most difficult when the army functions as an agent of ethnic domination; often helped by economic distress affecting the army and civilians alike);
- encouragement of, or at least neutrality in, the transition process (difficult decisions must be made about whether the military is to help set up democratic elections);
- establishing new relations between the military on the one hand and civil society and the government on the other (civilian politicians should not underestimate the nervousness, even fear, that campaign oratory may generate in the military, out of concern both for the institution and possible personal retribution).

Relations between the military and civil society should not be left to happenstance. Several participants urged that vigorous education campaigns be undertaken within the army and within civil society as a whole. These should educate both civilians and soldiers about their mutual rights and responsibilities. Uganda, with one of the heaviest legacies of abusive military rule, has perhaps made the strongest commitment to "demystify the military for the ordinary citizen." One central aspect of the military's relations with civil society involves respect



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for human rights. As one discussion group participant emphasized, "Human rights should be in the curricula of the military and all other educational systems." Furthermore, the military justice system must protect the rights of the ordinary soldier. If the soldier's own rights are violated, he is unlikely to respect the rights of others.

Conference participants were well aware of how difficult it was to change the basic culture of most African militaries to make them more respectful of human rights. Yet, democratic governments which could not bring the military under control could not hope to survive. Perhaps the most effective argument for respecting human rights came from the military commander of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), who had fought a 17-year war to defeat the much larger Ethiopian National Army. Central to the EPRDF's training program "was the principle that the fighters must respect, honor, and defend the rights of the population." This respect gave the EPRDF an advantage in popular support that was decisive to its victory. The clinching argument for democratic authorities and for their military leaders ought to be that disciplined respect for human rights in the end confers military advantage. Soldiers who violate such rights should be held responsible for weakening the army and the political order it is supposed to defend.

Armies are heavy burdens on African budgets. Can part or all of the army be redeployed in peacetime to help develop the nation? Is such a role desirable in practice? Both American and African military officers spoke of the advantages that states can derive from setting the army, or at least its corps of engineers, to building infrastructure for civilian use. Examples abound in Africa, from the Senegalese army's road and bridge construction to the Tanzanian military hospitals, 90 percent of whose patients are civilian. Furthermore, it was noted, such activities would have the political advantage of breaking down barriers to understanding and respect between the military and the civilian population. "The army is a very big parasite," said one civilian politician in calling for the army to take on economically productive tasks. "Besides, we need to keep those boys busy and out of trouble," he added.

Others sounded notes of caution. Most of these experiences have not proven their economic worth, said one economist. Most of these tasks could be done more effectively and at less cost by private contractors. Use of the military could represent just another way of subsidizing an inefficient state sector. It could also be an excuse to maintain an army larger than necessary and give it too big a say in civilian affairs. Quick agreement was reached on two points. The military should be given priority training in disaster and famine relief, and this should be a major component of any civic action mission. The military should also put great emphasis on training all levels of its personnel in skills that would be useful to the civilian economy, with basic literacy as a priority. Otherwise,

ARMIES ARE HEAVY BURDENS ON AFRICAN BUDGETS. CAN PART OR ALL OF THE ARMY BE DEPLOYED IN PEACETIME TO HELP DEVELOP THE NATION?

different national contexts, traditions, and definitions of democracy would influence how expansive the military's economic role would be.

One generalization holds true for all Africa's armies: They are too big and they cost too much. Reducing the size and cost, as Americans should be aware from their own current military retrenchment, is inevitably a painful and controversial matter. The problem is most

acute in countries emerging from extended combat. These countries must not only drastically reduce the number of men and women under arms, but also integrate once-opposed military formations into a single force, responsive to democratic leadership. The experiences of Zimbabwe and Namibia show that such integration and reduction can be accomplished, but only with political will, money, and outside assistance. The current drama of Angola shows how badly things can go wrong when those elements are not present. Even without a history of combat, every country represented at the conference felt some internal and external financial pressures to reduce its military's size and cost.

Five elements of a proper demobilization program were distilled from the discussions:

- legal instruments must guide demobilization to ensure fairness;
- demobilization should be voluntary and gradual;
- bodies should be created to counsel veterans and monitor their progress after demobilization;
- financial assistance and vocational training are essential; they must be related to real job possibilities;
- civilian populations in impacted areas should be consulted.

Effective programs of demobilization and reintegration into civilian life are difficult to carry out and they are expensive. There is probably no single area of African military affairs in which outside assistance is more necessary or more appropriate. And there is probably none in which it would be more welcome.

Could African countries do without armies altogether? Could regional security arrangements supersede national armies? Such questions were occasionally touched on, but participants felt they had quite enough to deal with in reducing the existing military establishments and bringing them under democratic control. The greater questions would have to be pursued at some future conference, or even more appropriately, by the democratically elected authorities of each African country. ○

A Celebration of Cinema

Twenty-three years ago, African filmmakers gathered for the first time in Ouagadougou to screen the few films produced on the continent. At that time, most Westerners' idea of an African film was limited to *Tarzan*. Today the festival, Fespaco, is an international event attracting Hollywood stars, wheelers and dealers, and corporate sponsors looking to find their next big hit in the new wave of African cinema.

By David Turecamo

When the Pan African Film Festival (Fespaco) began 23 years ago, there were films from only five African nations. The organizers decided to hold the event every two years, it is said, in order to give people a chance to save up for the airfare to Ouagadougou. In 1971 it was cancelled due to a now forgotten war between Burkina Faso (then known as Upper Volta) and neighboring Mali. This year there were more than 200 films from 60 countries around the world and while some people may have saved for two years to get there, the international elite that descended on "Ouaga" seemed hardly to notice that the taxi fares rivaled New York's.

Fespaco is now the single most important cultural event in Africa, a gigantic, week-long celebration of cinema, art, and ideas. Besides filmmakers, distributors, and journalists, the festival draws an impressive roster of celebrities and intelligentsia. Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o and film critic Manthia Diawara arrived with a high-powered Ameri-

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David Turecamo

can film crew to document the event. Alice Walker was there with Tracy Chapman. They'd "always wanted to come." Jon Singleton, writer/director of *Boyz N the Hood*, slipped in and out of screenings without fanfare. Euzan Palcy, the filmmaker from Martinique who directed *Sugar Cane Alley* and *A Dry White Season*, tried to see films in between interviews about her latest, *Simeon*.

By 8 every morning, the thatched-roofed breakfast patio at the Hotel Independence was filled with

wheelers and dealers, producers and packagers from European TV. There were reporters, critics, and actors networking over croissants and coffee. Everyone insisting, "See this film."

The screenings began at 11 am and ran until after midnight at the 13 theaters scattered throughout this dusty West African capital. From the plush Cine Burkina, to the open-air Cine Oubri, audiences lined up for the chance to see *Malcolm X*, dubbed in French, *Gito l'Ingrat*, the

first feature film produced in Burundi, and *Thomas Sankara*, a documentary about Burkina's assassinated president. There were the mildly amusing, like *Le Clandestin*, a comedy from Algeria, to the dreadful, like *Sankofa*, beautifully photographed but a one-note diatribe about slavery. And there were the absolutely enthralling films like *Rabi*, a lyrical study of life's passage by Gaston Kaboré of Burkina.

Minibuses shuttled viewers back and forth and the streets were dotted with spectators wearing the laminated badges that identified the bearers as press, VIP, or invited guest. Fespaco is big. Attendees filled every square inch of hotel space in town. Fespaco is important. When the top honor, the Etalon de Yennenga, was awarded to a film from Côte d'Ivoire, Ivoirians in the audience chanted "Côte d'Ivoire has won." The prize instilled a kind of nationalistic fervor matched only by soccer's World Cup.

But if Fespaco's size and significance have grown since it began in 1969, it has also made the fundamental problems of African filmmaking more visible. Thirty years after most countries won their independence from Europe, their films, like their economies, are still wedded to "the North." Though the festival is open only to "African" cinema, the films are heavily financed by French and German television, international development agencies, or the governments of their countries of origin. One film's opening credits began: "Produced in association with The Danish Volunteer Services, The Danish National Forest and Nature Agency, The Media Office of the Ministry of Education of Denmark, Ministry of the Environment, Denmark, DANITA, and the Danish Red Cross." This is an African film?

In fairness, the credits of major American productions are beginning to look like the list of corporate sponsors for the Olympics. Sony, JVC and Coca-Cola are all producing movies, and a cottage industry has grown up in Hollywood to "place"

products in productions—it's not by chance that stars wear Reeboks, drink Evian or drive a Honda.

But when filmmakers have to tailor their scripts to fit the requirements of an aid organization, what happens to free expression? Unicef held a press conference mid-week at Fespaco to encourage producers and

Robin Holland



Ousmane Sembène

directors to make films for and about children. Ironically, the theme of Fespaco this year was "Cinema and Liberties," but whatever relevance that may have had was lost amid the funding themes of reforestation, gender roles, and birth control. Several films dealt with each.

The biggest problem facing what could be a thriving film industry is distribution. Africa is now the worst place to see African films. Most screens are dominated by American and Indian productions. Sturkinecom, the largest theater chain in southern Africa, is also among the world's top ten consumers of Hollywood movies right up there with the U.S., Canada, Britain, and the rest of Europe. It controls an enormous market, more than 400 theaters in South Africa alone, but it is geared mainly to South Africa's 4 million whites.

"African films are relegated to a cultural ghetto," said director Simon Bright of Zimbabwe. "There are now 30 'African' film festivals from Tokyo to Los Angeles, but only one of them is held in Africa. And when a lot of the audience is from somewhere else, they're looking at these films to find 'exotic' cinema, the 'village film,' in which Africans are

just one step removed from Tarzan. When will Africans be allowed to make movies for the sake of sheer entertainment?"

John Riber, a producer from Zimbabwe, blames it on donor funding. "It's created a laziness among some filmmakers," he says. "Too many filmmakers feel their job is done once they've raised funding from a development agency. The film doesn't have to be good, doesn't have to draw audiences the way a *Terminator* does, because it's paid for."

Yet the mere fact that a film is African virtually guarantees that it will draw African audiences who seldom get a chance to see Africa portrayed by Africans. Certainly, most of the audience at Fespaco is Burkinabe, local residents anxious for a brief respite from kung fu and car chases. Yet even the continent's leading directors don't acknowledge the importance of their own markets. *Guelwaar*, a brilliant film by Senegal's internationally acclaimed Ousmane Sembène, was shown out of competition, presumably because the film has a chance to win something at Cannes, and would automatically be disqualified if it had competed in any other festival. The result is that the top prizes in Fespaco then may be awarded to films of lesser distinction.

But like the hero of *Gito l'Ingrat*, an African torn between the cultures of Europe and his village, it is a dilemma that the filmmakers are not afraid to confront, even make fun of. Or as Sembène himself observed, "To be a filmmaker is not merely a right, but a responsibility." ■

"To be a filmmaker is not merely a right, but a responsibility"
—Ousmane Sembène

THE BACK PAGE

NEWS COMMENTARY AND OPINION

By STEVE McDONALD

You can still count them on the fingers of one hand. They are the countries of Africa that have made the peaceful, electoral transfer of power that must, in the end, be the only yard stick of a true democracy. Even then, the sustainability of that democracy is questionable. As has often been noted, democracy is not proven by the installation of an elected government, but by the acceptance by that government of its own political demise in a further election. Until that second generation of power transfer occurs, it is hard to judge if the new government is any more democratic in its tendencies than the former. And Africa is still struggling through the first generation of power transfer where, in a country like Angola, even the results of that first democratic election have not been accepted by all the parties to it.

It's not that there aren't some fledgling democracies like Botswana, Senegal, and the Gambia, and further movement in that direction in other parts of Africa. In fact, the last two years have seen an unprecedented movement away from autocratic, military and one-party governments as well as reform of centralized, state-planned economies. At least 22 countries have begun—and are at some stage in—a process of democratization, from national conventions to full-blown multi-party elections. This "second revolution" in Africa, as it is being called by some observers, is due mostly to popular pressure brought on by deteriorating economies and/or endemic human rights violations. Of course, it has been encouraged by the insistence on political and economic reform by international donor countries and multilateral institutions, particularly in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the newly independent states in East and Central Europe. Political and economic reforms have become quid pro quos for developmental aid.

Even so, the existing democratic states and initiatives leave some cause for concern as they have yet to prove themselves. Newly independent Namibia may offer the brightest hope of all. It has seen stirring constituency assembly elections that led to its independence, and opposition candidates have been freely elected to Parliament and in local elections held subsequently. But, the promise of Namibia has yet to be tested in a transfer of power to see if powerful, albeit fairly elected, ruling parties will accept defeat. This is the same case in the stable and long standing democratic government of Botswana, the only real model on the continent, continually ranking high in the eyes of such chroniclers of democracy as Freedom House in New York. Botswana has repeatedly, since its independence, held elections that were openly

and freely contested by the opposition. But, in reality, the opposition has been only token, never taking more than a half dozen seats in Parliament. Cynics are quick to point out that a true challenge to the ruling party of President Quett Masire might unmask this seemingly politically tolerant Botswana. In Senegal, Zimbabwe, and the Gambia similar situations exist. Opposition parties are legal and they contest elections, but the ruling parties dominate. Elections procedures and results have been flawed in ways that have led opposition leaders and outside observers to question their validity. In Senegal, the last two elections have resulted in protests from the opposition that have led to violence.

The democratic processes undertaken so far have moved in fits and starts, and the picture across the continent is not, at first glance, a particularly inspiring one. Bright spots are in Madagascar, Benin, Zambia, and Cape Verde where, over the last two years, opposition candidates have been installed through elections processes that were essentially free and fair. In each case, these were the first-ever democratic elections. In Zambia, a recently called state of emergency by the government because of a reported coup attempt has shed some doubt on the democratic leanings of President Frederick Chiluba's government. In the others, despite some peripheral violence, the transitions seem to have taken hold and the world can only await the next rounds of elections to see how deep that hold is.

Less stellar performances of democracy have been witnessed in the recent elections in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Togo where the processes were seriously flawed or subsequent actions by established power centers reflect substantially on the validity of the results. Somewhere in the middle are countries like Niger, Burundi, Uganda, Chad, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Nigeria, and the Seychelles where plans are being pursued toward elections and a variety of democratic mechanisms are being put in place. The opening of the political processes in those societies warrants optimism that at least serious attempts are under way. At the bottom of the spectrum are countries like Zaire and Côte d'Ivoire where the democratic process is being actively resisted by the existing governments. Finally, there are Somalia, Angola, Liberia, and Sudan where conflict situations exist in unfettered and unabashed attempts at usurping or guarding power through force.

Where can the observer find solace in all of this? Even the success stories carry their caveats because their fragile democracies have not endured long enough to prove their commitment. Is it enough to try? Can intent be taken as proof of a sustainable movement away from the centralized statism of the past? Is the fact that Europe has now shown itself to be as ethnically divided and

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prone to brutality as Africa and no more enlightened in its ability to deal with the troubled social and economic fabrics of its nations an acceptable excuse to tolerate continued totalitarian governments in Africa?

These questions require answers that only the perspective of history will be able to fashion. But, preliminary soundings are not all bad and can be taken to show that, at the very least, the Africa of today is a very different one than the Africa of yesterday. The promise for the peoples of Africa is real. The fact that so many countries on the continent are undergoing or have undergone, for the first time, processes that are meant to open up those societies and create more pluralistic and democratic governing structures cannot be ignored. However imperfect and fitful some of the efforts have been, they do mark a change of attitude. The new generation of Africa, the second generation of independent Africans, is impatient with its forebears who saw the breaking of colonial rule as the zenith but whose vision stopped there. Closed and non-pluralistic patterns of colonial government were readily and easily assumed by their independent successors. Personal and kinship group gain was accepted as an appropriate goal of government. Power became the goal of politics and its maintenance the work of government.

Although pockets of power-hungry oligarchs still lurk in Africa, they are now the embattled species. Young

and educated elites around the continent realize their countries' failures are not inherent. They know they can do better. People—the legendary "masses" in whose name all of this was supposedly done—have lost patience with the corruption, inefficiency, cyclical hunger, and interminable poverty that independence has given them. Most of Africa is worse off, in terms of income, infrastructure, health care, and security than it was at independence. Africans now know that doesn't have to be, and they are demanding better. Herein lies the big change: a change of outlook and a change of attitude. Slowly, the systems are changing, too.

Ironically, this apparent dedication to a course of democratization and economic reform, no matter how imperfect, and an adherence to existing boundaries and the avoidance of ethnic schisms that Africa has undertaken have not resulted in an outpouring of support from the donor nations and multilateral institutions. Russia and the other newly independent states of Central and Eastern Europe, where the will for compromise and cooperation has seemingly disappeared, are reaping billions in aid while Africa struggles on, for the most part alone. The old adage, "Democracy is not free," is one the West has expounded repeatedly. Those in Africa who are trying hard for democracy understand its costs, but they would welcome a little help with the bill. Those might be dollars better spent than in Europe. ■

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