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**ZABALAZA — DAWN OF A NEW
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EDITORIAL

A NEW PHASE IN NEGOTIATING PROCESS

The result of the talks on August 6, between the ANC and the Pretoria regime, signalled the end of the phase of 'talks about talks.' The parties on both sides agreed that the road to negotiations about a future constitution had been paved.

Commitment to the Groote Schuur Minute, resulting from the first encounter in May, was re-stated by both sides, whilst the report of the Working Group set up in Groote Schuur was also accepted by both parties. These agreements are significant and will take the negotiations process a step further.

But whilst we speak about a step forward, we must also speak about a step backward. Whereas the ANC agreed to suspend its armed struggle with the aim of prompting the De Klerk side to speed up the process of removing the remaining obstacles to negotiations, the De Klerk party refused to take responsibility for the fascist actions of its police.

De Klerk stressed that his police had been even-handed in handling the situation in Natal and elsewhere, but that is not true. He cannot plead ignorance as he has been informed on so many occasions about the evil deeds of his police.

Full responsibility must be taken by the South African regime for most of the violence that grips the country today. The black vigilantes are everywhere supported by the police, while the white right-wing groups enjoy a tolerance that urges them on to more serious crimes.

The very giant step that is required from the South African regime is to ensure that it acts together with the ANC and other peace-seeking forces to remove from the South African scene the violence that stands in the way of progress and peace.

On the issue of the suspension of armed struggle by the ANC, it can only be said that the ANC successfully achieved what it sought to do, that is, to give an impetus to the negotiating process. The ground has been cut off from those who

would have sought to use the logjam in the talks to derail them.

The way has been opened for a move towards the drafting of a new constitution for South Africa. The task that lies ahead for all patriots in South Africa today is to work together towards the realisation of the idea of a Constituent Assembly. And, as the Pretoria Minute which was issued by both parties at the end of the August 6 meeting stated, the parties that met in Pretoria do not pretend to be the only parties involved in the process of shaping the new South Africa. They know there are other parties committed to peaceful progress, and all can henceforth walk that road in consultation and co-operation with each other. The Pretoria minute said in part:

"We call upon all those who have not yet committed themselves to peaceful negotiations to do so now ... Against this background, the way is now open to proceed towards negotiations on a constitution."

There is need to move forward as speedily as possible, and, to this end, the Pretoria meeting decided to open up channels of communication, with due cognisance of the interests, role and involvement of other parties.

The struggle continues for a non-racial and democratic South Africa. The armed struggle has played its role in putting us where we are today. It is not by chance that the ANC is sitting at the "talks" table with the South African regime today. The armed struggle and other forms of struggle employed by the ANC, built people's organisations and gave the people confidence to liberate themselves. This remains our main strength. **The people are behind the leadership of the ANC and will give support to its initiatives through the negotiating process. They know that mere posturing against negotiations cannot advance the struggle.**

AN ALLIANCE UNSHAKEN

Some events leave their mark on history by their sheer magnitude, but there are some, such as the public launch of the South African Communist Party on July 29, which leave their imprint because of their impact on the course of history.



Comrades Mandela and Slovo at the SACP launch

As the majority of the people in the country prepared themselves to rejoice and celebrate on July 29, some forces of darkness were congregating elsewhere and plotting how to discredit the SACP and present it as being against negotiations. The security police of the regime announced that a "red plot" for insurrection had been uncovered. Countrywide arrests were made, and Foreign Minister Pik Botha quickly briefed the western embassies about the "plot."

After much speculation in the press about the future of the negotiation process, especially about the participation in that process of Joe Slovo, the General Secretary of the SACP, it came out that the security establishment could not substantiate their claims, nor make their analysis of the situation acceptable to anyone. Yet again, the ineptitude of the regime's security forces had been exposed. Its anti-communist, anti-democratic and racist attitude had once more shown itself to be as intact as it had ever been.

For the ANC, the public launch was as historic as it was a giant political leap. It signified a victory for the democratic forces who had for forty

years unrelentingly demanded that the communists be allowed to express themselves freely.

The Deputy-President of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, put into perspective this struggle in his address to the rally, in which he said:

"Surely, there are today happy smiles on the faces of the political thinkers who said that, though they might disagree with opposing views that some people might express, they would nevertheless defend with their lives the democratic right of such opponents to express themselves.

"The ANC is not a communist party. But, as a defender of democracy, it has fought and will continue to fight for the right of the Communist Party to exist. As a movement for national liberation, the ANC has no mandate to espouse a Marxist ideology. But as a democratic movement, as a parliament of the people of our country, the ANC has defended and will continue to defend the right of any South African to adhere to the Marxist ideology, if that is their wish."

Addressing himself to those within the Nationalist Party who consider themselves to be democrats, he said:

"They need to learn very quickly. The lesson they need to learn is that it was fundamentally wrong to have enacted the Suppression of Communism Act in 1950. The lesson they need to learn is that it is fundamentally wrong today to seek to build an atmosphere of democratic tolerance of different views by attempting to demonise those who choose to hold communist opinions. Such a posture leads to one thing and one thing only, namely, the denial and suppression of democracy itself."

Others would argue that we, as the ANC, had cause to defend the SACP; after all, they are our allies, as we have repeatedly emphasised. But how and when is an alliance formed, and why?

The ANC-SACP-SACTU (now COSATU) alliance came into being in struggle, and was not just a matter of discussions at leadership levels, but resulted from the dependability of each in the struggle, and the consistency with which each ally has focused on the common objective of our national liberation.

Throughout the years that this alliance has endured, the SACP has recognised that the ANC is an independent body and leads the alliance. In the words of Nelson Mandela:

"The Communist Party has understood and respected the fact that the ANC is an independent body. They have never sought to transform the ANC into a tool and a puppet of the Communist Party ... They have fought to uphold the character of the ANC as the parliament of the oppressed, containing within it people with different views, united by the common perspective of national emancipation represented by the Freedom Charter."

Despite the meeting between the Deputy President of the ANC and Pretoria's President de Klerk on August 1, aimed at clearing the air surrounding the allegations made by the racist security forces, much still needs to be done. There is no doubt that the anti-communist hysteria continues, and may well reach new levels in the near future.

Just as the regime blew its horn at full blast when the security police's "communist conspiracy plot" was reported to it, it must now act with urgency to go to the bottom of the police plot. They are the ones who want to stand in the way of negotiations, and not the South African Communist Party.

The suggestion that the Communist Party harbours ideas of unilateral military action against the peace process is an insult not only to the SACP but also to the ANC. It is a well-known fact, repeated many times by even the regime's strategists, that the strategic use of the weapons in the hands of the liberation movement is deter-

mined by the ANC. Thus, the regime's anti-communist plot backfired precisely because it went against the history and principles of our struggle.



Mac Maharaj

In the final analysis, now as in the past, the attack on the SACP will serve to strengthen the alliance and bring more and more people on to the defence of its existence. On the other hand, the successful public launch of the Communist Party means that it will become more accessible to the democratic, oppressed and exploited majority in South Africa.

Those who have over the years rejected the capitalist system, especially after witnessing its evil super-exploitation of the black people in South Africa, will have now found a home in the public South African Communist Party.

ZABALAZA FESTIVAL

THE VOICE OF SOUTH AFRICANS IN EXILE

by Moira Levy

Zabalaza, the two-week cultural festival held in London in July, follows in the tradition of Culture and Resistance (Gaberone, 1982) and Culture in Another South Africa (Amsterdam, 1987). But it represented a significant shift to a new phase of cultural struggle.

For one thing it was organised, not by sympathisers, but by South Africans — exiles based in London. Secondly, in their performances, exhibitions and workshops, it was not the voices of the sympathisers that we heard, but the voices of South Africans themselves.

But, more importantly, delegates and organisers agreed that what set Zabalaza apart from its predecessors was its intensive training and workshop programme. For the first time a South African festival went beyond celebrating our people's culture to make a serious attempt to redress the legacy of inequality in skills and resources that has always marked our struggle for a post-apartheid people's culture.



Sophie Mgcina and Lindiwe Mthembu in performance

Zabalaza set out with two objectives; to provide skill training for the 106 participants from South Africa and ANC missions in exile and to bring the emerging post-apartheid culture to a British audience through a multi-venued programme of plays, exhibitions, gigs, poetry readings and public debates.

Zabalaza achieved some of its objectives, and failed in others, "but at the very least it demonstrated, to the the participants and the British audiences, a vision of what is possible in South Africa," said Comrade Wally Serote, one of the festival co-ordinators.

Serote concluded that the festival was weak on the performance side. He cited "huge logistical crimes" to do with stage management and technical organisation. "We were like fire brigades, constantly rushing out to deal with unexpected emergencies."

"However, we achieved most of our major objectives. Participants and co-ordinators seems to agree that Zabalaza made some contribution towards imparting skills, expertise and cultural empowerment to our people."

Serote said the presence of Deputy President Nelson Mandela in England at the start of the festival "helped create the right political and cultural climate."

The participants — who were "fortunately all political activists as well as cultural workers" — were able to take the political debates about sanctions, the cultural boycott and the need to maintain pressure on De Klerk government into the homes of their British hosts. "They were able to explain that political change is on the agenda, but that nothing has changed politically."

Serote said one of the highlights of the festival was the opportunity for delegates to visit President Oliver Tambo. Group visits were arranged where participants "were able to brief Tambo on events in their part of the country."

He said the discussions between participants, most of whom had never met, give them an opportunity to learn about developments, political and cultural, in other parts of South Africa.

"And it helped those of us in exile to locate ourselves in South Africa, giving us a fresh understanding of our expectations and the problems we face."

Training

For months before, training collectives in all the art forms devised tailor-made programmes for each discipline in consultation with cultural structures in South Africa.



Scene from the play, 'Bambu'

The delegations took part in an intensive programme of workshops, seminars, discussions and lectures. Training centred in Shadwell, an institute for adult education in south London, where up to 50 South African cultural workers met for classes each day.

Writers, led by a lecturer in literature, Liz Gunner, and ANC writer, Gillian Slovo, spent

two weeks in workshops on the novel, short story, editing and desk-top publishing.

Wanjiro Kihoro and Pat Bardill ran an intensive two-week programme for cultural **administrators**, using participatory education models that participants can translate into practice in their work at home.

The **photographers'** training, co-ordinated by Beverley Friedman, included a round of visits to London's leading and less-known photographic institutes and exhibitions, with lectures by leading British photographers.

John Matshikiza, South African actor exiled in London, led the **performers** in sessions on make-up, mime, story-telling and radio skills, at London's National Theatre.

Film-makers stayed on in London after the festival for an intensive six-week training programme on video production.

At the start, there was concern that two weeks would not be long enough. By the final Assessment Session, participants were confident that they had gained sufficient skills to contribute to cultural development on their return.

Said one delegate, "this has become the Zabalaza chorus; the festival was a resounding success."

Said another: "Zabalaza has given us a walking stick. Now we are on our feet, the next step will be to remove that stick and walk forward."

A writer from the Eastern Cape added: "our workshop started off with minimum participation. But by the end we were all joining in. We took this as proof of the literary maturity we reached through Zabalaza.

"We came to London with very limited, very South African perspectives. But I think we are leaving with much broader perspectives. We have learned that writing is not only a South African experience, it is a universal one."

The consensus was summed up by one participant: "Today we know what we did not know before. This has been an eye-opener."

Discussion and debate

A high point of Zabalaza was the Talks series held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts open-

ed by Winnie Mandela with a strong call to the British public to maintain the cultural boycott.

Much of the debate took as its starting point Albie Sachs' argument on the role of culture as a weapon of struggle. The Talks opened with a panel discussion in which the Congress of South African Writers' Nadine Gordimer and Junaid Ahmed reiterated calls for a culture that is both politically directed and aesthetically advanced.

Gordimer, quoting Berthold Brecht's line, "to speak of trees is treason," said: "We owe a great deal to the changing times. Now we can speak of trees, we can speak of human beings and all their faults, we can write about the totality of human nature. That is what Albie Sachs is calling for and that is what we all want. So many stories are untold, the fullness of life is untold."

Staffrider's Andries Olifant reminded the audience of the need to mobilise all cultural workers in the forging of a new national cultural identity. "We must tolerate the scribbler alongside the craftsman. We must cultivate a culture where all streams, including settler and indigenous, are freed from the fetters of dominance and arrogance.

"We must keep in mind that the history of dominance and subordination will not disappear under majority rule. Democracy cannot be declared or promulgated. It has to be struggled for."

He pointed to a need to "develop a more subjective, humanist perspective in our writing."

"There is a tendency to stress the external conditions responsible for the oppression of apartheid. We must delve into the minds of South Africans and explore how apartheid has settled in our consciousness."

He said there was also a need to develop a comic literature: "we South Africans are not a humourless people. We have always been able to see the absurdity of apartheid bureaucracy."

Speakers focused on the need for cultural — in particular language — diversity. Ben Mokoena, of the ANC's Department of Arts and Culture, outlined a post-apartheid language policy under the ANC that would practise affirmative action, "deliberately developing the indigenous languages and reducing the dominance of the language of the oppressor group.

"In the spirit of forging a common national identity, all South Africans will be encouraged to master at least one indigenous language."

Mandla Langa, the ANC's cultural attaché in London, identified the need for writers to train and perfect their skill. "Since the written word is a vehicle, the interlocutors need to know how to drive."

He emphasised the need to move beyond protest culture — "where we have to write about AK47s and Nelson Mandela" — to draw on the richness of indigenous culture: its myths, legends, language. "Let us look deep down into the resources of our own culture.

"Apartheid is dying. If we become overly preoccupied with it we run the risk of inheriting the stench of a corpse."

Performances

Zabalaza peaked at the final week-end with the first London appearance of Brenda Fassie. Dressed in skin-tight black, green and gold, she drew the audience to its feet with a dramatic rendition of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. The Fassie combination of street pop — "Weekend Special" — and political pop — "My Black President" — kept it on its feet and dancing.

Earlier in the week, the audience at London's Riverside Theatre heard Mswakhe Mbuli perform his poetry in a telephone link-up with his Soweto home, after being denied a passport. In the telephonic question-and-answer session, he said: "I would not be using the telephone if things were really changing in South Africa."

"Blood is still being spilled in our country, the police are still arresting our people, the army is still patrolling the townships, whatever is happening at the top, life on the ground is still terrible."

The festival opened with a sell-out concert with Sakhile topping the bill. The British public queued to hear the band last heard at Wembley.

A photographic exhibition — featuring the work of experienced photographers Santu Mofokeng, Rashid Lombard and Paul Weinberg alongside that of unknown photographers — also opened that night.



Participants at the festival discuss the training programme

Comrade Hilda Bernstein opened an exhibition of the drawings and paintings of three South Africans — Dumile Feni, exiled in USA, Louis Maqhubela, exiled in London, and David Koloane, a participant from South Africa — who last worked together at home in the seventies.

Music events, plays, poetry readings and exhibitions took place at different venues in and around London and Oxford.

Cultural boycott

Zabalaza translated into practice the principle and policy of cultural boycott. President Oliver Tambo said in 1987 that apartheid culture must be isolated at the same time as the people's culture is strengthened, supported and nurtured.

Through its training programmes, workshops,

performances, debates, even its informal discussions, Zabalaza did just that. It produced a core group of cultural workers trained and ready to redistribute their newly-acquired skills and expertise, through their local community and cultural structures, to a broad mass of activists. It also brought to a world stage the cultural products and creativity of our people.

Comrade Serote said that Zabalaza provided a forum where cultural workers could effectively articulate the role of the cultural movement in relation to political struggle. And it went further to pose the question: can South African culture stand on its own anywhere in the world?

"Zabalaza looked at how South African cultural workers will contribute to world culture, and to an international civilisation that tolerates and celebrates cultural differences," he said.

SOUTH AFRICAN WHITES TIME TO MAKE A CHOICE

By Jean Middleton

History is catching up with South African whites. Many are turning to face their destiny, to consider what their place will be in our new society, and what contribution they can make to building it. Whites cannot go it alone, and they will survive only if they co-operate with other groups.

In the past, there were always a few whites in South Africa who refused to accept racism, and committed themselves wholeheartedly to the cause of democracy. They were very few, and there were not many organisations they could belong to. The Communist Party of South Africa was the first political organisation open to whites to stand firmly for democracy and an end to race discrimination; so, in the 1930s and 1940s, progressive whites joined it. There, together with members from other racial groups, they found an alternative to the segregated life that, as whites, they would otherwise have been obliged to lead. They also acquired a political training and a political understanding they could not have found anywhere else.

After World War II, white ex-soldiers in the Party succeeded for some time in mobilising other white ex-soldiers in the Springbok Legion, on the grounds that soldiers who had fought fascism overseas should be prepared to fight it at home. Their most important campaign was that in opposition to the removal of Coloured voters from what was called the 'common voters' roll' (though this was a misnomer, for the roll had been common only to whites and Coloureds, and Africans and Indians had never had a place on it).

Those years came to an end. The Nationalist government came to power, Coloured voters were removed from the roll, the Communist Party was banned.

A stream of propaganda from the regime presented communism as evil, and identified as communist any talk of democratic rights for all South Africans. Whites who had been in the Par-

ty were isolated from most other whites, who feared the law; and they had no political home.

They filled the gap in 1952, when, in consultation with the ANC and the Indian Congress, some of them became the founder members of the Congress of Democrats (COD). COD was tiny, but it took its place in the Congress Alliance, and helped to organise the Congress of the People at Kliptown. Some of its national and local officials were among the 156 people arrested in 1956 and brought to court in the Treason Trial, in which the regime attempted in vain to prove that the Freedom Charter was 'communist' and therefore 'treasonable.'

The brief of COD was to present the principle of one person one vote to whites, to interpret for them the policy of the other Congress organisations, and to involve them in Congress campaigns. The task exposed members to police harassment and brought few rewards, but during its life the COD brought out innumerable statements, articles, leaflets, posters, directed at whites. Activists pushed slogans in response to events of the time: "No passes for African women" — "Vote no for a Verwoerd Republic" — "Do you want a fascist education for your child?"

As the first-generation members, one by one, were served with banning orders that prevented their taking part in the organisation, the COD continued to attract a small but steady trickle of enthusiastic new members, who kept it going till it was banned in 1962, under the Suppression of Communism Act.

Illegal slogan-painting continued for a time ("Apartheid is the killer" and "Hang Vorster"

were responses to the Sabotage Act) but all attempts members of COD made to found new white organisations failed. The new organisations didn't get off the ground. "I am ashamed of my fellow whites," a comrade who had been in COD told the court in 1965, before she was sentenced to two years for illegal political activity. That must have been the general feeling at that time, among former members.

What had made the Congress of Democrats unique was its relationship with the Congress Alliance. Through it, whites could become part of the mass movement, informed and led, as democrats should be, by the wishes and aspirations of the majority. When COD was banned, the ANC was underground, and other Congress organisations were soon effectively disabled by banning and general harassment of individuals. There was no legal mass organisation left that was able to speak for the mass of the people, and White democrats, who wanted open political activity and believed that the will of the people should direct it, were in a vacuum.

Some found their place in the underground Communist Party. The membership of the Party came from all race groups, the Party had always given unequivocal support to the Congress movement, and in its ranks the voice of the people might still be heard, though quietly, and in secret. Later, when membership became open to them, some joined the ANC underground.

There was only one other non-racial organisation, the Liberal Party, which continued to exist until the late 1960s. Those who had been in or close to COD, however, found the Liberal Party an uneasy place to try and make a political home in, for it had been divided over the questions of universal franchise and of support for the ANC.

Those were arid years. There was only one white organisation in that time whose numbers grew and whose policy developed. It was the Black Sash, a women's organisation. It had begun in the 1950s as a band of white women protesting against repressive legislation; it grew into an active, campaigning body which is now affiliated to the Federation of Transvaal Women and the Federation of South African Women.

In the 1980s, the changes that took place in South African politics were so wide-reaching and so profound that political analysts and historians will be discussing them for a long time to come. There was a corresponding change in white attitudes. We can speculate about the conditions and events that forced this change.

There were the pressures from overseas criticism of apartheid. Whites found the political, cultural and sporting isolation of South Africa burdensome. The sports boycott in particular touched them where it hurt, and the rows over such matters as the rebel cricket tours and Zola Budd's attempts to evade the boycott must have served as an example to many ambitious young white South Africans who were hoping to get into international sport.

Whites in general knew that in the outside world Nelson Mandela was praised everywhere while they, as the beneficiaries of apartheid, were regarded in many quarters with contempt and dislike. Their South African passports, and even their distinctive accents, had long been a source of embarrassment for them when travelling overseas. Many began to wonder whether the privileges they enjoyed were worth all this.

Most important, perhaps, was the fact that they saw the international campaign for sanctions and disinvestment contributing to the collapse of the South African economy, in which they were all involved.

The emergence of a new generation had something to do with it. Like the French in Algeria and the United States in Vietnam, South Africa found its colonial wars undermined by disaffection among conscripts and their families. The End Conscription Campaign provided a focus of protest. It also began to organise friendly social contact between young whites and young blacks. The organisers believed that white boys who had taken part in 'fun runs' and other such enjoyable activities with black kids would later be reluctant to go into the townships as soldiers and oppress black kids there.

When they found themselves involved, or about to become involved, in fighting against Angolan villagers and the people of the South African townships, some young conscripts rebelled, and resisted taking part in something

they believed to be morally indefensible. Some of them left the country; some stood up and refused to fight; some went absent without leave. Their parents were dismayed, and joined the campaign, and white mothers demonstrated against compulsory military service and against the war itself. There was objection to the war, too, on grounds other than moral grounds: for people in general began to perceive it as yet another drain on the failing strength of the economy.

Some fears whites had for the future were dispelled as they began to find out about the realities of the ANC and ANC policy. In discussion throughout the country, the terms of the Freedom Charter were becoming known. Under the auspices of IDASA, numbers left for 'talks' with members of the ANC, and returned to report on fruitful discussions. Quite a number of whites must have heard and pondered over the words addressed to them in the January 8th Messages of 1986 and 1987, in which the ANC called on whites to join the democratic struggle, and added words of praise for young army refusers.

Most important of all in changing white attitudes was the protest and resistance of the oppressed people themselves.

Whites with decent feelings were disturbed at the unrest of 1984-1986, and greatly shocked by the brutality used against it by the state. When new mass organisations like the UDF and COSATU came into being, their spectacular growth, their tremendous power, was clear from all reports. White shopkeepers and shop-owners affected by consumer boycotts made representations to Pretoria to meet the boycott demands. They began thinking about how to ensure their future by having a better relationship with the consumers, and they saw the example of the Watson brothers, who continued to do a thriving trade because they were known to have previously shown loyal friendship to people of other races. Strikes, particularly the SATS and NUM strikes, shook the economy of the country and the equanimity of the privileged.

Many whites began to accept then that there was no stopping the march to freedom. When all the mass action culminated in the great De-

fiance Campaign of 1989, many joined it.

The UDF provided a point of affiliation for a wide range of organisations. White organisations that accepted the principle of one person one vote were able to affiliate. Thus, after more than 20 years, white democrats were again able to be part of the main political thrust in their country, take part in discussions on the Freedom Charter, take their place in the general struggle for freedom.

In the sixties, there was only one white organisation that was part of the liberation movement. Now there are several.

The Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (JODAC), launched in February 1984, with sister organisations in Cape Town and Durban, was the first. It said in a statement:

"While some whites are involved in a number of non-racial affiliates of the UDF, JODAC is the only affiliate organising whites qua whites. We believe that this is a crucial contribution to the achievement of a peaceful and just society in South Africa.

JODAC does not represent 'white interests' in the UDF — rather we try to represent the UDF in the white community."

Over the years, JODAC held a number of successful and well-attended public meetings. (The most recent was held earlier this year in the Great Hall at the University of the Witwatersrand, and was addressed by Walter Sisulu.) Nevertheless, members of JODAC began to feel that other organisations — notably the Five Freedoms Forum — were doing a better job than they were of organising whites into the mass democratic movement. "FFF was holding good meetings, too," says one JODAC activist. "People were coming to our meetings, but they weren't signing up." In May 1990, JODAC took a decision to dissolve itself. It decided that its members should join the ANC and work to spread the influence of the ANC among whites.

Besides the Five Freedoms Forum, there are other white UDF affiliates, doing more specialised educating and mobilising work. The Afrikaans Demokrate, a small but enthusiastic organisation working among Afrikaners, showed its support for the ANC when it took its banner to the Soc-

cer City rally in October. In Johannesburg, Jews for Social Justice and, in Cape Town, Jews for Justice, work in the Jewish community; both report successful meetings with new faces, and interested enquiries.

Whites are not all moving towards the democratic camp, of course. The full picture is one of increasing polarisation. Isolated and alone in a population that calls for peace, the white right wing speaks increasingly of conflict and physical violence.

The National Party itself experienced the upheavals of polarisation when the Conservative Party broke away. At a rally in May at the Voortrekker Monument, Andries Treurnicht of the Conservative Party defied De Klerk's policies, said the third war of Afrikaner freedom had begun, and spoke in defence of right-wing vigilantes.

The Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging has as its leader the notorious Eugene Terre'Blanche, who makes public statements urging whites to carry arms. Another group, the Wit Wolwe, is typified by the mass murderer, Barend Strydom. There are reports of a proliferation of organisations. One, founded by a former member of the Hitler Youth, is for children; at least one claims international connections; some are openly vigilante groups formed to "guard white property" and to "prevent crime."

Somewhere in these ranks, and undoubtedly connected with members of the strangely-named and recently disbanded Civil Co-operation Bureau, are those shadowy figures who attack

activists in the democratic movement with bullets, petrol bombs and letter bombs; who roam the streets of small towns at night looking for blacks and murdering those they find. It can indeed be said of them, as Moses Mabhida said of the anonymous killers of Ruth First, that they "live in secrecy and will die in shame."

The fact that they hope to achieve their bizarre objectives shows how out of touch they are with reality. Even the most exaggerated notion of their own superiority cannot lead them to suppose that they are capable of subjugating the whole South African nation by force. Demographers now claim that, in 20 years' time, whites will form only 10% of the population of South Africa, and Afrikaners 5.8%. These right-wing white killers, whose political thinking is all in terms of bloodshed and threats and intimidation, are therefore the minority of a minority. Brutal as they are, murderous and unscrupulous as they are, they can never be a significant force in the future of South Africa. The mass democratic movement can deal with them, and it will.

Many whites are still sitting on the fence, immobilised by fear and doubt. History is not going to wait for them. They should decide now to join, as equals and countrymen, in building our common future in South Africa. Democracy and peace should hold no terrors for them.

(Acknowledgements for the help of veteran democratic activist Esther Barsel and SADF refuser Morris Zwi, in preparing this article.)

"... our white compatriots should make a clean break with the past and themselves declare war on racism as the enemy of all the people of our country ...

The call of the day is that black and white should come together in a massive democratic coalition to oppose the racists and to struggle, side by side, as equals, for the birth of a new South Africa."

— ANC January 8 Message, 1987

BLACK SASH — FRIEND AND ALLY OF THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE

By Sara

Black Sash has waged a bitter and non-violent struggle for the past 35 years against the South African racist regime. Founded in May 1955, Black Sash still continues to function despite unbelievably appalling pressures on its members. Initially a group of six middle-class, middle-aged white women decided to protest against a law which was to remove Coloured (people of mixed race) voters from the electoral roll. Although they lost that case, they have never faltered in their aspiration to broaden their campaign to extend civil rights to all the disenfranchised black people of South Africa.

Despite all the cosmetic government changes since then, they maintain that there was much more freedom to demonstrate in 1955 than there is now. At that time mass marches and country-wide protests were held whenever the law allowed them. Members used to hold vigils in the public gallery of the House of Assembly in Cape Town. They stood in dignified silence in public places — always dressed in white with a black sash draped diagonally from one shoulder.

Since 1976 the Riotous Assemblies Act has prevented them from protesting in groups. The government banned all outdoor gatherings: a "gathering" means more than one person. In response Black Sash members have stood alone with posters or carrying placards of protest, out of sight of each other. They became easy targets for the upholders of the apartheid system who abused and harassed them. They have refused to give in to the endless strategies of intimidation against them.

Indomitable freedom fighters

We wish to honour and pay tribute to these gallant, courageous, indomitable freedom fighters for campaigning against all evil racist

laws, homelessness, lack of pension rights and many more abuses. Above all we salute them for their struggle to restore the dignity of the black majority of South Africa.

"With each major blow to human rights, each assault on the rule of law, and each erosion of racial justice over the past 28 years in South Africa, they have stood by to mourn the occasion," wrote an *Argus* newspaper correspondent on December 19 1983.

Initially membership was opened only to women voters who, by definition are white in South Africa. Subsequently all women could join. The first group of women came from the United Party, which was defeated in 1948.

Since 1988 more and more career women have been drawn into the movement, wanting to contribute to the inevitable political changes that are taking place. Although its membership is about 20 000, it has tremendous influence on the political climate. Women need to participate in public life and Black Sash plays an important role in giving them the support and encouragement they need. Mrs Burton, the National President of the Black Sash said:

"Black Sash is the first step to changing one's whole perception of what apartheid means to people in South Africa. The more one knows, the more impossible it is not to contribute."
(*Star*, 19.3.88)

One of the Sash's policies is to inform people, (particularly the majority of the whites who still support the apartheid system) of the plight of the African people. Many white people simply do not see the violence perpetrated by the security forces in the black townships. Another major factor is the censorship on the press, and the South African Broadcasting Corporation's one-sided reporting. Therefore, many South African whites

in general are not aware of the many atrocities. They do not live with the obligation of having to carry passes or identity cards on them all the time for fear of arrest. African people cannot live as free men and women in the country of their birth, for civil liberties and human rights are denied to them by law.

Mrs Sheena Duncan former President of the Sash, who had taken over from her mother, Mrs Jean Sinclair, a founder member, spoke at one of their annual conferences of the atrocities committed by the army during the State of Emergency in 1985. The South African government brought the army into the townships to control the civilians. They raided Duduza township on the East Rand where parents of young sons disguised them as girls in order to escape the police. This was during the height of the stone-throwing allegations when thousands of children, 10 to 15 years old courted imprisonment. Sheena said:

"It reminds me of nothing so much as the Nazi occupation of Europe and the hiding of Jewish people."

Another distinguished Sash member Molly Blackburn, was killed in a car accident in 1986. When 20 000 Africans turned up for her funeral to display their affection the South African authorities banned the memorial service saying that it posed a danger to public peace. When asked once what motivated her, Blackburn had replied, "I don't like bullies."

The courageous women of the Black Sash held a week-long vigil in 1983 to mourn the 70th anniversary of the Land Act of 1913. This Act deprives the Africans of owning a piece of land and living where they wish. It has actually contributed to the current situation in South Africa where tens of thousands of "cardboard box" dwellings are springing up in and around the major cities. Owing to mechanisation in farming, workers and their families are flooding into the urban areas in search of work. These downtrodden people are desperately seeking employment and homes.

The whole concept of law is against the black people of South Africa; its laws in fact oppress them rather than protect them. The South



African racist government uses the legal system to prevent legitimate opposition by making laws which deprive people of their citizenship, their land, and their family life.

Apartheid supporters on the other hand are critical of Black Sash, maintaining that their concern for blacks is cosmetic. They have been labelled communists and agents working for the African National Congress. Black Sash members have been subjected to death threats. The houses

and offices of some of the senior officials have been raided. Some years ago, their main office in Johannesburg was bombed. An advisory office in Port Elizabeth was burnt down, after a six month long campaign of terror and intimidation, by unknown arsonists and right-wingers. Regardless of the abuses and harassment against them however, they carried on steadfastly, protesting, advising and acting as the conscience of all South Africans who felt shame at what was being done in their name. They have consistently refused to give in to the relentless campaign of police harassment against them.

Moira Henderson of the Black Sash worked with a section of the organisation which looked after prisoners' children. Observing the plight of prisoners, she became a frequent visitor to Robben Island and found that the prisoners were not allowed access to newspapers. She succeeded in ensuring that they did receive them. "The difference this made to them was satisfaction enough for me," she said.

Basically a humanitarian organisation and a respected protest group, the Black Sash is now having to play a wider role because of the current developments in seeking a non-racial democratic alternative for South Africa. It intends to continue as an independent body supporting issues rather than parties. That position was made clear at its annual conference this year — that it would retain its independent role

regardless of any political changes thus far. Protest action has always been an integral part of the Sash's policy, while another primary aim is also to keep people informed through their advisory offices and publications.

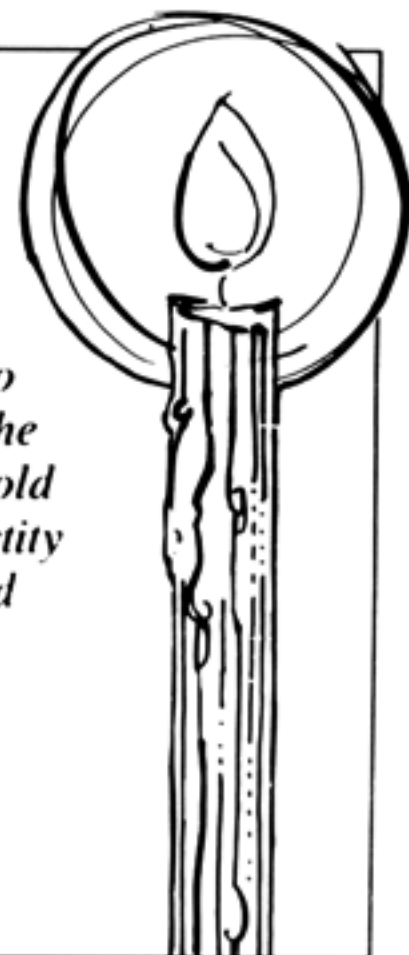
Invaluable research

In 1982, Black Sash produced an 18-page booklet which became a best seller. It advised the African people who qualified for Section 10 rights to apply for them before The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill became law. They then brought the situation to the attention of various employers, community organisations and trade unions and asked them to inform the workers about this booklet. It explained that all those who did not already have these rights recorded in their reference books should apply immediately, as people who had not been formally granted their rights could find themselves permanently displaced if the Bill became law.

Invaluable and meticulous research of this nature, published by Black Sash, has become compulsive reading for the public and for some organisations which depend on their accurate research and reports; for example the Institute of Race Relations, as well as the US Monitoring Group and the Ford Foundation rely on this service which helps to meet the costs of running

The Black Sash Dedication

In pride and humbleness we declare our devotion to the land of South Africa; we dedicate ourselves to the service of our country. We pledge ourselves to uphold the ideals of mutual trust and forbearance, of sanctity of word, of courage for the future, and of peace and justice for all persons and peoples. We pledge ourselves to resist any diminishment of these, confident that this duty is required of us, and that history and our children will defend us. So help us, God, in whose strength we trust.



Black Sash's seven regional offices. When Helen Suzman, former MP for Houghton was commended at the Sash's 35th birthday celebrations for her efforts in Parliament to improve the living conditions of the displaced and homeless black people she said:

"Without the statistics provided by the Black Sash, I would not have had the strength to fight those issues in Parliament like I did."

Dr Beyers Naude, an ANC delegate in the recent ANC-South African government talks, was another guest speaker, at the celebration. He paid tribute to the Black Sash for their outstanding contribution. He went on to say:

"Women can be the most powerful bloc. When I was a committed member of the Broederbond in 1958, we regarded the Black Sash as the most formidable threat to South Africa." Herald (21/5/90).

He further said that three outstanding perspec-

tives characterised the Black Sash:

- ★ The power of women.
- ★ The power of committed women.
- ★ The power of liberated women.

We say the sacrifices and contributions made by the Black Sash are not in vain. The long queues at their advisory centres no doubt show how much their aid means to all the helpless African people who seek their advice daily. There is still, however, a tremendous amount of work to be done to undo the damage and suffering brought about by the apartheid system. *Sechaba* appeals to the white community to stand with the Black Sash in bringing about a speedy end to that evil apartheid system which is still in place despite the unbanning of the ANC. As Black Sash is all too aware, many problems still exist and much has yet to be done before South Africa becomes a truly non-racial democratic country.



ANC STATEMENT

INKATHA SEEKS TO SPREAD ITS VIOLENCE BEYOND NATAL

Today, 26th July 1990, an Inkatha leader addressed a meeting at Unit Number 1 of Jabulani Hostel. During the course of his address, it is reported that he incited his audience to launch physical attacks on persons wearing or displaying the hammer and sickle insignia or other emblems associated with the South African Communist Party.

On the same day, reports reaching us indicate that, at Jeppe hostel, other spokesmen for Inkatha are organising Inkatha sympathisers for a second attack on Sebokeng township on August 4th. It is alleged that the police are deeply embroiled in these preparations and have assisted in arming the hostel dwellers for this second attack.

Further reports allege that the residents of hostels in Soweto are being mobilised to launch attacks on anyone opposed to Inkatha or who appears not to support it. There are also charges that people are being forcibly enrolled as members of Inkatha in both the Soweto hostels and those in Jeppe.

The ANC is particularly alarmed by these reports and wishes to bring them to public attention.

As the criminal actions of vigilantes in Sebokeng this weekend demonstrate, there is a sinister and well-orchestrated campaign afoot to spread the violence that has plagued Natal beyond that province. The persons behind this plot are receiving active assistance from elements in the police. The purpose of this unholy alliance is to terrorise the people in the most militant townships into submission, destroy and disrupt the people's organisations, and to undermine the prospects of the forthcoming meeting of August 6th.

It should be a matter of grave concern that while the South African government speaks of peace to the peoples of the world, inside South

Africa elements of its security services are deeply implicated in fomenting violence and participating in carnage.

The charges of police involvement with Inkatha vigilantes are too numerous to be ignored. Thus far no action has been taken against the criminals who caused such mayhem in Sebokeng on Sunday July 22nd. After repeated warnings that violence was imminent, instead of disarming the Inkatha supporters, the vast majority of whom were bussed in from outside Sebokeng, the police escorted them to their rally and through the township. Rather than subduing the attackers, the action of the police targeted residents of Sebokeng who tried to defend themselves.

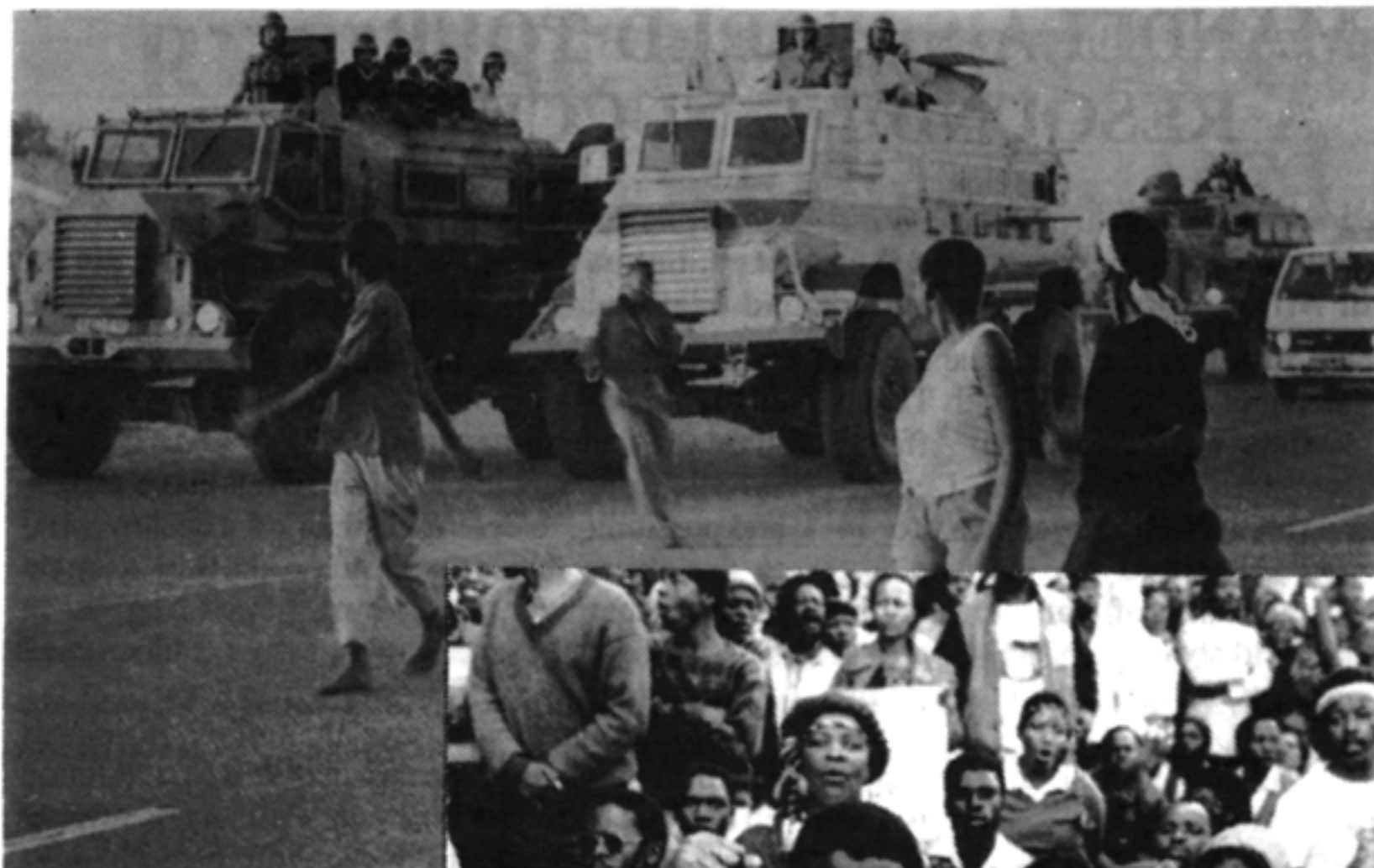
Despite the fact that the police had every opportunity to identify the perpetrators of this violence, not a single person has yet been arrested or charged for the crimes committed in Sebokeng this weekend.

Emboldened by such inaction, the Inkatha vigilantes yesterday attacked a trainload of commuters, resulting in the hospitalisation of at least twenty. Again, the police had been warned in advance that these attacks were imminent. The reports of today's activities indicate that further attacks are being planned even at this moment.

The inaction of the police in Sebokeng; their alleged involvement in the incidents in Jeppe; their demonstrable unwillingness to arrest and prosecute the warlords and inciters of violence, are of a pattern with those of Natal.

Under the prevailing circumstances the people must reserve their inalienable right to defend themselves when attacked. The responsibility for any violence that ensues, as a result, devolves squarely on the police.

The African National Congress demands that President de Klerk take immediate steps to put



SADF troops deployed in Sebokeng



Protest in Johannesburg against the war in Natal

an end to the violence by:

- ★ Ordering the arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators of the Sebokeng massacre;
- ★ Ordering the immediate suspension of the police officers who stood by while the vigilantes attacked people in Sebokeng;
- ★ Taking action against those fomenting violence in the PWV area;

- ★ Instituting an independent inquiry to investigate the violence of the weekend and the attempts to spread the violence beyond Natal.

**African National Congress
Department of Information and Publicity
Johannesburg
July 26, 1990**

MANDELA'S WORLD TOUR: A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

Mayibuye, the journal of the ANC inside South Africa, has surfaced. For about ten years it was produced and distributed underground in the country, but at the end of July this year, it hit the streets of South Africa, continuing the work it had been doing all along.

One of the major stories that the first issue of this new *Mayibuye* carried is an interview with Thabo Mbeki, ANC Secretary for International Affairs, on the highly successful trip of the Deputy-President of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, to 14 countries.

Because of the importance of that tour, and the need to inform the world about the ANC's appraisal of the trip, we produce, below, a summary of the interview.

The delegation was able to visit all the major western countries and in all these countries met either heads of state or government. One of the principal results of these visits is that these powers now accept the centrality of the ANC to the processes leading to the emergence of a democratic South Africa.

The fundamental implication of these successes is that communication has been established and will be maintained. Further, the South African government can no longer present its foreign policy objectives as it used to, and be assured that these will be accepted without finding out how the ANC feels and thinks about them.

Concerning the issues raised above, but taking Britain specifically, the message that came across from Mrs Thatcher and her Foreign Secretary was quite clear: first of all, a very strong statement against apartheid and in favour of a speedy abolition of this system; secondly, a very strong statement towards making some contribution by the British government to the process of ending apartheid; and finally, a statement that to achieve that purpose, the British government would be very keen to have close communication with the ANC.

The way that the Deputy-President was received was an extraordinary thing. The mass of ordinary people were deeply moved. Everywhere the delegation went, in public meetings, people would actually break down and cry. This is because they understood the suffering that he and other political prisoners had gone through. They appreciated the absence of bitterness, a very generous attitude towards FW de Klerk and his colleagues and the constructive attitude towards the problems facing our country.

In all the encouraging support the ANC received, an important point was made throughout the visit: that one of the aims of our struggle is to ensure that the people of South Africa have a right and possibility to determine their own destiny. And to the extent that people supported the struggle against apartheid, they were supporting us in fighting for the exercise of that right to determine our own destiny.

A question that was raised a number of times is the formulation that appears in the UN Declaration on South Africa: that sanctions will only be reviewed when profound and irreversible changes have taken place in South Africa. People then ask the question: specifically what is meant by these profound and irreversible changes!

In the Harare Declaration that definition has been given: that sanctions will only be lifted at the point when a democratic constitution has been agreed upon. The UN Declaration puts it in the broader context. Our response to this question is based on the Harare Declaration.

The point has to be made all the time that sanctions were imposed in order to put pressure so that we get rid of the apartheid system. That was the purpose of sanctions. And they remain a valid instrument for the attainment of that objective.

If we said we shall address the issue of sanctions when we have reached stage so and so in our discussions with the government and yet the following day there was an intervention from the armed right-wing, which reverses this whole process; obviously it would have been wrong to have taken a decision to get rid of sanctions.

Therefore it has to be a political decision which must be based on a sound, serious assessment of where the political process has reached. The ANC itself is very interested in ending sanctions as quickly as possible. We are by no means after the destruction of the South African economy. But sanctions must end as a consequence of progress achieved in ending the apartheid system. We want to move quickly on the issue of ending apartheid so that we can move quickly on the issue of ending sanctions.

RELEASE ALL DETAINEES DOWN WITH REPRESSIVE LAWS

The Internal Security Act is one of the obstacles to free political activity.

But detentions continue ...

Section 29 is still being used to silence opposition to the government. The detention, under this law, of Mac Maharaj, National Executive Committee member of the ANC, and many others goes against the spirit of Groote Schuur and the commitment to remove obstacles.

The detention of activists has been roundly condemned throughout the period in which this measure has been used. Repressive laws stifle democratic activity and cause untold suffering to the families of detainees. They are used to silence our people, to destroy and weaken our organisations.

FIGHT AGAINST DETENTIONS

We cannot allow the government to continue acting in this way. Our voices must be heard, our organisations allowed to operate freely — without fear of harassment, proscription or detention of activists.

The ANC calls upon every democrat to condemn this attack on fundamental freedoms. Demand the scrapping of the Internal Security Act. Join the national campaign demanding the release of all detainees.

Our actions must be felt.

THE ANC DEMANDS:

**Release Mac Maharaj
and all political detainees**

**ANC
Johannesburg**

Among other measures we strongly recommend the following for activists outside South Africa:

- ★ Picket South African embassies, consulates and trade missions**
- ★ Pressurise your government to intervene to secure the release of all the detainees**
- ★ Urge political parties, trade unions, parliamentarians and other public figures to put pressure on your government and the South African regime**
- ★ Mobilise individual members of the anti-apartheid and solidarity movement to write letters of protest to the embassy and/or phone to demand their release.**

ECONOMIC BASICS AND BASIC NEEDS

By Ben Fine

The question of a mixed economy in post-apartheid South Africa, and the balance between public and private ownership, is one of great importance and urgency. It is at present being extensively discussed in the ranks of our movement, both inside and outside the country. The article below puts a point of view on the question. The writer is a member of Economic Research on South Africa (EROSA) and works in the ANC economic unit in London.

Between April 28 and May 1, an unprecedented meeting was held in Harare, which brought together economists from COSATU and the ANC to discuss policy for post-apartheid South Africa. No fewer than fifty papers were presented, each rich in empirical detail and each imaginative in policy perspectives. Summary proposals from the conference have been made widely available.

Certainly, there were many differences amongst the participants. But what all shared in common was a commitment to the mixed economy as the vehicle through which to meet the basic needs of the people and through which a fundamental shift in the distribution of wealth, income, power and control could be effected.

There are, of course, those who do not share this framework and these objectives. But as the apartheid regime crumbles politically, only an increasingly marginalised right-wing minority feels able to defend the leaving of apartheid's economic structures intact. There are others, though, who more cleverly seek to retain the economic privileges, and even practices, of apartheid whilst pretending that its political counterpart can be discarded. In other words, let the politics of apartheid go but let its economics remain essentially untouched.

Such a strict division between economics and politics is not so simple — access to jobs and places to live and work, after all, have an economic and a political component. But what is intended and pretended by those who seek

business as usual is that such a separation is realisable post-apartheid by commitment to a pure market economy run by private capital with some sort of democratic state standing idly by as far as the economy is concerned.

The arguments put forward to support this approach are entirely spurious, however much they may have been bolstered by Thatcherism and Reaganism. More significantly, they are deliberately misleading. For whilst the intent is to preserve and consolidate the economic privileges built up under apartheid, it is pretended that opposition to meeting basic needs and shifting economic resources to the majority is not so much a matter of principle as of pragmatism. It cannot be done, much though this is desirable, because the market won't stand for it and the state will muck it up.

Such, in a nutshell, is the considered response on July 1 to the Harare conference by *City Press*. They have found an "expert," Luis Emiliano, to say so. Let us examine his expertise a little closely. His views are based on three principles — the "basics," the headline screeches, that the ANC ignores.

First principle: "Do not transfer resources from those who produce to those who consume." This is utter nonsense. Every economy in the world makes provision for those who do not produce — for children, for those in education, for those who have retired or are ill, and so on. Where Emiliano does have a point, clearly unintended, is with the military and the police.

They consume vast resources but produce nothing other than oppression. Certainly no resources should be transferred to them.

And then there are those living on stocks and shares and property income — consumers but not producers. By all means let us transfer resources away from them and increase the wages of the producers. This is not, of course, what our expert has in mind either. He has carelessly invented a principle to cut and constrain welfare expenditure designed to meet basic needs. But, properly applied, this principle is remarkably close to Marx's dictum for socialism — "from each according to ability, to each according to work."



The kernel of worth in our expert's proposal, however, is that meeting basic needs may in part be achieved by welfare programmes that generate work through economic linkages (such as co-operatives) rather than simply depending upon income supplement to fund consumption. But this is precisely an initiative to be found in the Harare proposals.

Second principle: "Do not try to replicate the market mechanism of demand, supply and price with central planning." I know of no economic theory or policy that has ever tried to do this, since it would be pointless to set about accomplishing with planning what the market would

achieve in any case. But then a subsidiary proposition is slipped in: "The market has proved to be the most efficient mechanism to signal to producers what and how much to produce and to consumers what and how much to consume."

I imagine there are quite a few capitalists who have found themselves in the bankruptcy courts who might disagree with this. But again there is absolutely no basis in economic theory or practice for this assertion to be made without such deep qualifications and reservations as render it redundant. Even Adam Smith, revered founder of the theory of the invisible hand operating through the *laissez-faire* market, never went as far as this.

More significantly, Lionel Robbins put forward a similar view by defining economics as the science of the allocation of scarce resources between competing ends. The irony is that he did so in Britain in the midst of the Great Depression in the early 1930s, when massive unemployment and excess capacity meant that scarce resources were the least of the economy's problems. By the same token, it is the failure of the market system to produce anything at all as far as the mass of unemployed in South Africa are concerned, rather than what and how to produce. And we all know what consumers want — jobs, houses, food, clothing, etc. The more the better.

Again the Harare conference broached these issues with some sophistication. In much of South Africa (as in the rural areas), the market scarcely exists at all because of the lack of resources and infrastructure. There is no market mechanism upon which to rely. Consequently, the very success of the market (and the mixed economy) depends upon state intervention to bring about income transfers and the provision of infrastructure in order that production and consumption can flourish. The market is not just a price system based on private ownership — it is a set of resources and institutions, transport systems for example, that have most often been set up through the state, which can continue to play a major part in their development and use.

Third principle: "A successful long-term deal between capital and labour has to be based on a win-win situation." Essentially, this promises

all and delivers nothing. It means that labour can only be allowed to "win" (presumably gain wage increases) if profits increase as well. Thinly veiled, this means no redistribution in favour of labour — all must share equally in future progress, with the result that existing inequalities are preserved. Moreover, the experience of such economic compromises has always meant in practice a prior commitment to profitability over wages should the win-win scenario prove elusive. In short, this is a claim for guaranteed profits even at the expense of those yet able to earn a living wage.



*JSE and
worker on strike:
worlds apart*

So much for our expert's principles. What about his general empirical knowledge? We can give him full marks for dogma. He appeals to the experience of Latin America and of Eastern Europe to assert that state economic intervention and ownership do not work. He claims that private works better than public enterprise. This is simply false, as many studies have shown for example that public utilities such as electricity or telecommunications work as well if not better under public ownership. Much more important is how they are run and for what purpose.

This proved the starting point for the Harare conference with public ownership as the means of guaranteeing economic objectives as and when it proves necessary. This is not to suggest that

we are unable to learn from the experience of failure and success in other economies. But this cannot be done through crude identification of success or failure with public or private enterprise (or *vice versa*, depending upon your ideological commitment). And the framework of mixed economy is one in which public and private enterprise are to co-exist in mutual support rather than antagonism — though the balance between the two is a matter for dispute. It is as well to recognise that the twentieth century successes of the capitalist world, such as Japan and South Korea, have relied heavily upon the role of state economic intervention.

Not surprisingly, then, our expert is particularly perturbed at the proposal to renationalise recently privatised corporations. Why should this be done? Say in the case of ESKOM, should this have been privatised? The matter is simple. ESKOM has the ability to extend electricity to the mass of the people, with consequent long-term economic and social benefits that are highly positive but not all of which accrue to ESKOM itself as a private company. As such, it would prefer to gain secure, possibly short-term, profits through investments outside South Africa — much as Anglo-American has acted as a major conduit for investment abroad. As a result, reprivatisation is not some act of revenge nor some ideological dogma; it is a sensible, thought-out policy for simultaneously extending electricity to the energy poor and retaining and shifting power within South Africa.

The more our expert moves away from false principles and false empirical generalisations, even further still — impossible as it may seem — he departs from reality. He objects to the policy of exploring the break-up of conglomerates on the grounds that "in an open economic system, the market should determine the optimum size of an industry." But conglomerate policy has nothing to do with the optimum size of an industry. It is a matter of whether a single company should simultaneously command the economic resources in a huge number of separate industries — mining, banking, brewing and so on. This conglomeration is possibly more advanced in South Africa than in any other economy and it is a source of overwhelming

economic power — at the expense of both efficiency and equity. It must be tackled, and has been, however effectively, in the United States for example, as a matter of economic principle and practice for almost a century.

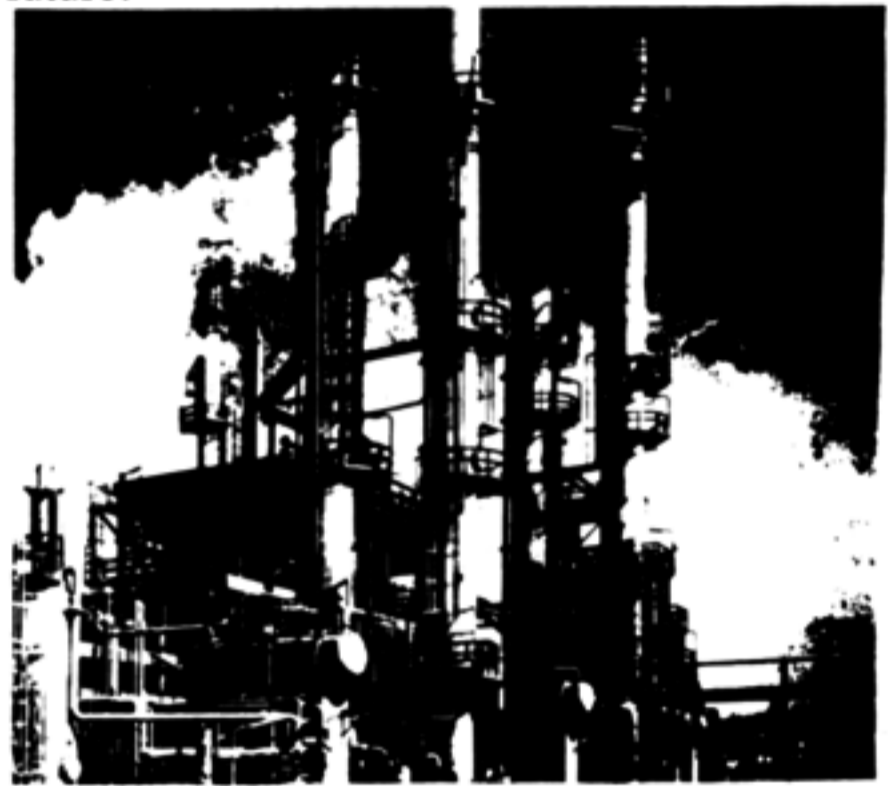
This is not to leave, however, the issue of firm size untouched other than through the market mechanism. At times the market leaves industry inefficiently fragmented — the South African motor industry is a good example, with many models each being produced in too few numbers to cover fixed costs adequately. On the other hand, large-scale capital can also confine itself to mass production in huge plants that only serve concentrated urban markets, and such technology will be inappropriate to serve the fragmented and dispersed needs of the rural population. The state will have a crucial role to play in developing and introducing appropriate methods of production in the post-apartheid economy.

And when it comes to agriculture, our expert patronisingly warns against "taking away land from productive owners to give to less productive farmers." He seems totally unaware that a large tranche of South African white farming on large estates has long been teetering on the brink of disaster, insolvent and unprofitable but for the interest-free loans or other subsidies that have forestalled bankruptcy. As experience has proved throughout the world, and as is recognised by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, smaller-scale farming and initiatives with producer/owners are potentially of much greater benefit by a whole range of criteria. Yet we are told to "forget about ... formation of rural co-operatives and so-called grassroots participation."

Moreover, on the large-scale farms that can be run successfully, it is also more a matter of producing food for the majority and serving the needs of the rural population, especially women, than of seeking out the maximum commercial return at the expense of ecological decay and with no sensitivity to the land issue which requires redressing the historic and continuing violation of the rights of the people to land.

To conclude, the rantings of this expert would not be deserving of such close attention if they were but an isolated example of the response to

the sorts of economic policies being debated for post-apartheid South Africa by ANC/COSATU. Unfortunately, such ill-considered dogma is all too common, shrouded as it is in principles and conventional wisdoms that have no foundation in theory or fact. As already indicated, our position is clear — the framework of the mixed economy within which to achieve the objectives of meeting basic needs and of shifting the distribution of economic wealth, income, power and control. These are the parameters within which debate must proceed, and indeed policy fought for now as well as in planning for the future.



Super-industry: who benefits?

Those, whether commentators, advisors or negotiators, who genuinely seek to witness the end of apartheid and its heritage as an exploitative economic system, must engage in debate on these terms — within which there is considerable grounds for disagreement as to objectives, priorities and means. Those that do not accept these terms, usually by appeal to an abstract philosophy in exclusive support of private capital and the market mechanism, must be considered as the bantering apologists of entrenched economic privilege. Currently, apartheid big business and the state are still posturing along the lines that profit and property are sacrosanct, pretending that this is a matter of economic efficiency rather than of self-interest. The sooner they respond seriously to ANC/COSATU proposals, rather than fobbing them off with jesters and gesturing, the sooner the post-apartheid economy can become a reality.

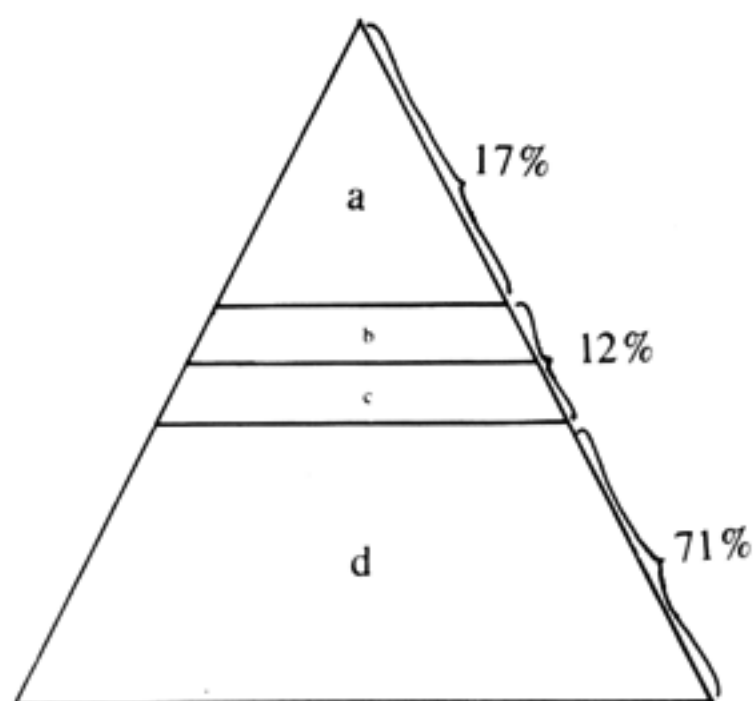
THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION IN A NEW SOUTH AFRICA

By Xoliswa Skomolo

It was the deliberate policy of the racist lawmakers and planners in South Africa to give an inferior education to blacks. The result was a tragic waste of black minds and black talents. This article discusses some strategies for redressing the situation in a post-apartheid South Africa.

The deliberate creation of a 'permanent under-class' composed of the non-white racial groups in South Africa was propagated and perpetrated by the white minority ruling class through, among other things, education. From the Cape School Board Act of 1905, which established separate schools for the different racial groups, through to the Bantu Education Act of 1953, up to the bill that led to the Soweto riots of 1976, Act after Act was promulgated to entrench a vicious circle of educational deprivation for the majority of the South African population. This was done for the purpose of creating and perpetually maintaining a privileged white minority class whose assumed superiority and supremacy over the other racial groups would, as such, be unquestioned.

Needless to go into the unsavoury history of education in South Africa, but suffice to present the educational social spectrum consequently existing in the South Africa of today, in the form of the pyramid shown here:



A. A small, highly privileged and over-pampered class composed of whites only. All members of this class have as their special prerogative full educational opportunities and superfluous educational facilities. Education has been free and compulsory for them up to the age of 18 years since 1923. Out of the 16 universities supported by the government, 11 cater exclusively for this class. Observers express the feelings that these white universities rank close to the best anywhere in the world.

B. A small class of Asians and some privileged Coloureds. Though educational facilities are sparse for them, their affluence enables them to pay for the education of their children.

C. A relatively small class composed of Asians, Coloureds and upper-class Africans. This class also pays to a great extent for the education of their children.

D. A large class which could be referred to as 'the wretched of the South African earth,' mainly composed of blacks. This class is characterised by a 'blockade' of educational opportunities and lack of educational facilities, poverty and unemployment, frustration and desperation which often explodes into violence, deprivation and strangled aspirations which result in a life of emptiness, devoid of educational motivation.

Talking about a new South Africa of the imminent tomorrow which will be non-racial, democratic and reconciliatory, it becomes pertinent to mention that the avoidance of delving into the unpleasantness of the past will be the beginning of wisdom for all those entrusted with the task of building the new nation. It is,

however, important also to point out that, since the educationally disadvantaged class forms the vast majority of the nation, the new nation-builders should have a vivid and uncamouflaged view of the Herculean task facing them in the removal of educational inequities that have been institutionalised for so many decades.

This article therefore is a modest contribution towards this end. It is a brief expression of a vision which may complement or contribute to the ideas of the various committees that are already attending to the education problem of blacks in South Africa.

Powerful potential of education

I shall start by sharing an excerpt from the Report of the Education Commission of the Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid (1971):

"Education which helps to realise the potential of every individual plays an important part in creating an acceptable society. Such education serves society by making available to it every person's gifts and labours."

There is no doubt that the powers which have been ruling South Africa over the past centuries well understood the powerful potential of education in enriching man and his environment. It is for this reason that they made sure that education for themselves was in accordance with the principle expressed in the above quotation. It was, however, profitable for them to withhold this kind of education from a class they intended to perpetually keep as "hewers of wood and drawers of water."

The task at hand now is to bring that understanding and that awareness of the powerful potential of education to the same class which has been educationally deprived, and to equip its leaders with the tools that will break the barriers which have stood so formidably against the acquisition of education by the people. These are barriers such as:

- ★ Inadequate basic educational and personal development of young blacks — including motivation — in the elementary and high schools:
- ★ Gross inadequacy of educational facilities for

Blacks at all levels of education.

- ★ Limited educational opportunities open to blacks in the training of both middle-level and high-level manpower.

- ★ Lack of incentives and counselling for both black learners and black teachers.

- ★ The poor quality of public education generally (Bantu Education) which blacks have been receiving since 1953.

The educational constraints listed above have resulted in a tragic waste of the black mind and talent. What must be well appreciated is that the quality of public school education one receives determines to a very large extent the kind of

higher education one pursues, one's life career and one's contribution to society. It is from this consideration that a clear understanding of the powerful potential of education is of high significance in every attempt that will be made to redress the situation of the enormous waste of the black mind and talent which has prevailed in our country for such a long time.

It is not a task to be undertaken by slaves of elitist educational orthodoxy, but a role to be assumed with a revolutionary approach, which at the same time comes to grips with the reconciliatory reconstruction of the nation. As such, care should be taken not to take drastic measures that may arouse the fears of the privileged classes which our leaders have allayed, even though they definitely will lose some of their privileges.

Strategies for a redress

In a progressive approach to solving this problem, educational rhetorics, abstract political ideas and philosophical questions must give way to educational practices, concrete ideas that can crystallise into actions, and practical questions which can be answered practically. We find ourselves faced with a population majority that has inherited years of cultural deprivation, educational retardation and personality devaluation. As such, we need to ask very salient questions, whose answers, we hope, may direct, dictate what actions to be taken, and give the insight, the knowledge and the ability to tackle the prob-

lem. These are questions of the following nature:

1. What are the problems — psychological, social and economic — that prevail in the townships and the rural areas which create an educational drawback? What is the nature and magnitude of those problems? How can rural and urban schools be made to be responsive to these problems?
2. What special educational problems are generated by life in ghetto communities, and how can they be solved?
3. What special counselling is needed for children from seriously disadvantaged educational and economic backgrounds and where in the educational process should it begin?
4. How can educational motivation and 'self-concept' be developed among black youth, and what structure of education will encourage motivation and enhance 'self-concept'?
5. What financial aid or financial aid programmes are needed to reduce the financial barriers to higher education?
6. What are the specific barriers that keep blacks from admission into universities and from successful pursuit of professional studies?
7. What incentives in terms of continuing education and remuneration are needed for the upliftment, encouragement and professional growth of black teachers?

Two forms of action are prescribed for the initial revolutionisation of education as a measure for redressing educational inequity. These are:

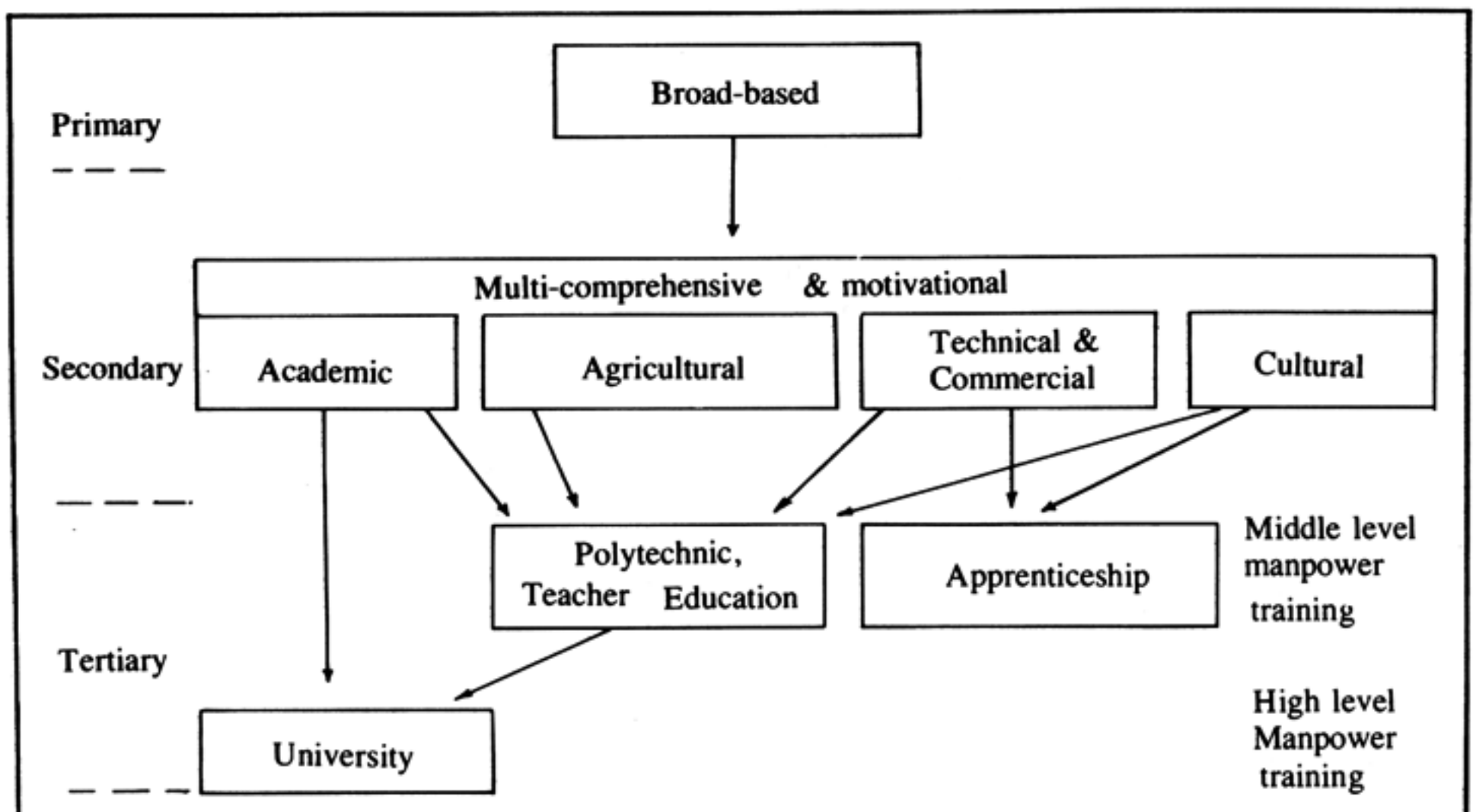
1. The enactment of an education policy for the immediate restructuring of primary and secondary education in particular, and tertiary education if need be. The new structure must be broad-based, multi-comprehensive and motivational, especially at the secondary level.
2. The establishment of a National Institute of Education which could be an affiliate of either the University of South Africa or Witwatersrand University, with a branch in each of the three other provinces — Orange Free State, Natal and the Cape

AND/OR

The establishment of an Educational Research Foundation which could be sponsored by the business sector. It would operate on the same modalities as an institute, or collaborate with the Institute if both Foundation and Institute are established.

The new structure of education

An education structure of the model below is prescribed.



A. Primary education to be broad-based and directed towards proficiency in literacy and numeracy.

B. Secondary education to be multi-comprehensive — that is, catering for the abilities, talents and intellectual aptitude of pupils from all social classes. Also to be motivational — that is, incorporating pupils' various talents into the school curriculum so that they are made examination subjects instead of being extra-curricular activities.

This simply means that, at secondary level, pupils will take the conventional subjects, which are: English, a second language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science. In addition to these five, they then take two subjects in their area of interest (talent) to make seven subjects in all. The components of the areas are as follows (see diagram on page 26):

Academic: Languages, History, Geography, Economics, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

Agricultural: Soil Science and Animal Science.

Technical and Commercial: Business and Commercial Studies, Home Economics, Dressmaking/Tailoring, Catering, and so on. Trade studies, for example, motor mechanics, carpentry, welding, and so on.

Cultural: Music, Theatre Art (acting and dancing), Games (sports, athletics, acrobatics, and so on), Fine Arts, Crafts and so on.

A secondary education curriculum of the above model will certainly be highly motivational, as it will remove the 'intellectual mysticism' that is associated with Matriculation. Every child of average intelligence is capable of completing high school education and obtaining a good matriculation certificate, as long as the education he or she receives is in line with his or her talents. Whether secondary education would be

single-tiered or double-tiered would depend on the duration of primary education.

C. Tertiary education to concentrate on the training of manpower, especially middle level manpower professionals. This would mean an intensification in the development and establishment of Polytechnics and Colleges of Education (teacher training institutions).

The National Institute of Education, or the Educational Research Foundation would be charged with the duty of seeking answers to questions posed by fundamental problems and problems that crop up from time to time in the process of uplifting the educationally disadvantaged — questions such as the seven problems to be redressed, raised earlier in this article. This would be done through the following methods:

- ★ Intensive research work in the form of surveys, educational experiments, relationship studies, curriculum research studies, tests and measurement of prescribed remedies, and so on. and giving reports with facts and figures as to the nature, the magnitude and the dimensions of problems and effectiveness of remedial programmes.

- ★ Developing and running educational programmes such as continuing education centres, educational counselling centres, holiday and refresher courses for teachers, teacher resource centres, workshops, schools' competitions, and so on.

- ★ Liaising with and advising the Government Department of Education on crucial matters that affect the education of the South African populace.

In the new South Africa, it is hoped that people will not only 'hear' their freedom but 'feel' it as well. We have lessons to learn from many an independent country of our continent where the people have only 'heard' their independence from colonial rule, but never 'felt' it. This should not be allowed to occur in our land. The liberation of South Africa, for which our people have fought for centuries will not be complete if it is not accompanied by the obliteration of the atrocities of inequity which the forces of oppression have perpetrated on the people. The liberation of our people, therefore, must be viewed now, from the start, as a phenomenon that goes far beyond the abrogation of apartheid laws.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

In a future democratic and non-racial South Africa, the ANC government would establish an economic structure on which would arise a political and legal system, accountable to the people as a whole.

In practical terms such a structure would entail the nationalisation of monopoly industries and banks. Without bridling these monopoly sectors of the economy, the future democratic state would not be in a position to implement social policies that could enhance the welfare of the people and guarantee the economic and political independence of South Africa.

Opponents of nationalisation often argue about the "inability" of a nationalisation policy to produce the desired results. Attempts are made to force people to believe that the spontaneous operation of economic laws inherent in a monopoly capitalist economy are efficacious. Certainly, individual economic units under capitalism are highly organised! It is only on a macro-economic scale that capitalism experiences chaos. A mixed economy would at least reduce this anarchy of production. Most important, the economic sectors which are nationalised will include those which are going to satisfy the basic needs of the society as a whole.

A democratic state must redress the balance in order to meet the needs of its population. To be able to do so, it must have resources — it must control banks and other businesses. Then the state would not be faced with problems of allocation — especially when it comes to granting the necessary assistance to strategic industries.

In redressing inequalities created by apartheid, the democratic state will, as one of the measures, have to embark on an urgent programme of housing the millions who are without shelter. On the one hand, such a tremendous project would obviously require a large outlay, and on the other hand, people would be expected to pay lower rent as part of raising their standard of living.

This means that, once implemented, such a housing policy would certainly require a lengthy period of recoupment. Given these conditions, a capitalist motivated solely by profit would not venture to invest in a scheme which does not promise good

returns, to say nothing of super-profits. Implementation of such a housing policy would be successful only when the state nationalises key sectors of the economy.

A mixed economy with a people's government in control can somehow ensure environmental protection and minimise an ecological crisis. Market forces on their own cannot tackle these problems, which gravely affect mankind. Even though a capitalist government can introduce taxes, rates and other prohibitive measures, these cannot suffice since they would be overwhelmed by profit-seeking efforts. In South Africa, certain species of fauna and flora are endangered, and the Pretoria regime is importing huge amounts of toxic waste material.

We need to build an economic model which is progressive. For such a model not to remain a pipe-dream, all people should participate in it — they should create material values. Preconditions for full participation include among others, the creation of new jobs and the eradication of illiteracy. Only a planned and balanced economy can eradicate unemployment and effectively combat illiteracy. Only a people's government can pour adequate financial resources into these social schemes.

Nationalisation is an indispensable condition for the realisation of the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

The Charter is not a blueprint for socialism. It simply calls for, among other things, the application of justice to all aspects of life in South Africa. The wealth of the country is one of these aspects. It calls for the emancipation of blacks, especially the Africans, and the social emancipation of all South Africans, black and white.

Nationalisation means equitably redistributing our country's wealth. In no way does this imply the introduction of socialism; nor would it be correct to reduce socialist principles to such a relatively narrow politico-economic view as elaborated in the Freedom Charter. Nationalisation would, of course, deal a fatal blow to both financial and industrial monopoly capital.

BM

People's Republic of Angola

REVIEW OF VIVA MANDELA

NELSON MANDELA was released from 27 years' imprisonment on February 11, a Sunday that changed the perceptions of a large section of world humanity. For almost three decades of incarceration, volumes of text, thousands of feet of film, innumerable songs and poems were composed, published and exhibited in Mandela's honour. Some of the cultural products saw the light of day via vehicles that bespoke skill and craftsmanship, magnificent tributes by the world community to a truly great man who has become a legend in his lifetime. Others, of course — this world having its fair share of hustlers and glorymongers — were occasioned by, in Kgositsile's words, "dollar-green eyes" focused on the fast buck.

VIVA MANDELA is a two-hour video by Robert Lemkin, Paul Snell, Shaun Fenton, Jane Jackson, Andrew Hunt and Christopher Stylianou. It was produced for the Canon Collins Educational Trust for Southern Africa. The blurb on the cover tells us that this video "was specially commissioned by the (Trust) and spans the years from 1918 to February 11 1990." The narration is by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia.

The video, however, begins, as it were, at the start of formal dispossession of African people, the 1913 Land Act. Here — punctuated by haunting music that evokes a mixture of sadness and anger — the viewer is taken on a tour into the kind of past that still reverberates today. The image of landless people who have to eke out a meagre living on postage-stamp-sized plots immediately rules out any argument against the freedom struggle.

One's rage heightens in this informal history lesson, when South Africa dispenses with pretences, when naked oppression is unleashed on already dispossessed people. The tired land makes it automatic for the men to go to the mines in the Transvaal where they are penned, like animals with no name, in single-sex hostels. Their sole function? To generate wealth for the

masters of the land. Here, as in almost all literature on South Africa, there is the ubiquitous coal train that transports the nameless to the plateau of dreams. Hugh Masekela sings "Stimela." The song is delivered with barely-suppressed violence, the words hurled like an insult:

Sihlezi njengezinja we mame!

Emigodini

Sikhal'abafazi bethu.

(Oh, we are living like dogs, Down in the mines. We miss our wives,) and the viewer is taken to the 1946 Great Miners' Strike and people are reminded about the men who were shot dead in that show of resistance.

The Nationalist Party comes into power in 1948; Verwoerd, looking incredibly smug and self-satisfied, assures the white electorate that it has nothing to fear, everything is under control. The black children will get the kind of education that won't threaten the citadels of Pretoria and Cape Town. But then, Verwoerd hadn't taken into account what happens when people start demanding what is truly theirs.

There are scenes of volunteers during the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and this reviewer was chilled when he realised that, in those days, black lives counted for nought. It will be interesting, in the near future, when all those unmarked graves and unremembered names are unearthed and the people are given the voice to ask the question: What happened?

Because, men and women were thrown into police waggons, singing, their fists raised. They sang through the blasphemed years of the Freedom Charter to the salvo that echoed through the world in Sharpeville. There is here an indelible image of a youth and a girl running with the lifeless body of a young one who has been punctured by police bullets. That image recurs in Soweto in 1976; this is a savage comment on what happens in South Africa to this day.

VIVA MANDELA is, however, a celebration of the human spirit; it is an eloquent comment

VIVA MANDELA!

LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO
 HUGH MASEKELA BLACK UHURU
 MANFRED MANN BOB MARLEY
 SONNY OKOSSUN ASWAD
 THOMAS PAPADOUBAS SOUTH
 AFRICAN EXILES THE ANGOLAN
 FREEDOM FIGHTERS GURUSHAMBE
 LATIN QUARTER "MAMBAZO" GIL
 SCOTT-HERON BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

VIVA MANDELA!

VIVA MANDELA!

NEVILLE BROTHERS CARLOS SANTANA ARTISTS UNITED AGAINST APARTHEID SWAPO
 CULTURAL GROUP SUPER DIAMOND DE DAKAR SPECIAL AKA BENJAMIN ZEPHANANI
 KINENE ROBERT WYATT MALOPOETS THE AFRICAN CONNEXION SIPHO MABUSE
 SIMPLE MINDS DAN DEL SANTO JOHNNY CLEGG & SAVUKA YOUSSEU NDIOUR HZWAKHE

NARRATION BY
 KENNETH DAVID
 KAUNDA
 PRESIDENT OF ZAMBIA

NARRATION BY
 KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA,
 PRESIDENT OF ZAMBIA



14:16 GMT, 11th February 1990



VIVA MANDELA! was specially commissioned by the Canon Collins Educational Trust for Southern Africa, and spans the years from 1918 to 11th February 1990. Throughout this two-hour film, documentary and newsreel footage is augmented by background music and live appearances from over thirty artists. The narration by Kenneth David Kaunda, President of Zambia, was recorded at State House, Lusaka on 13th May 1990.

Funds from the sale of this video are for the benefit of students from The Solomon Mshlanga Freedom College in Tanzania.

VIVA MANDELA! carries the full endorsement of the African National Congress.

Soundtrack includes

- BOB MARLEY
- NEVILLE BROTHERS
- JOHNNY CLEGG
- SIMPLE MINDS

120 minutes plus
 MEN 2 228
 COLOUR B & W
 STEREO

VHS

CASTLE
 HENDRICK

SOUNDTRACK INCLUDES
 BOB MARLEY LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO JOHNNY CLEGG & SAVUKA UB40
 BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN YOUSSEU NDIOUR SIMPLE MINDS

...the failure of the Pretoria regime to mould the oppressed in its own image. It is a catalogue of battles and skirmishes, of men and women who fought and died and infused in the younger generations a spirit of resistance. Umkhonto We Sizwe comes into growth in 1961 after the banings of liberation movements, there is the long scream of 1976. There follows a silence which is shattered by operations such as the bombing of Sasol and Voortrekkerhoogte and the country is in an irreversible path towards change.

The music in the film plays an important part, acting as an indicator, signalling a transition from one level of intensity of struggle to another. One has to admire the producers of *VIVA MANDELA!* for their selection of songs and archival footage. Even though music has played such an inspiring role in our struggle, this is one instance where it is both celebratory and acting as a chronicle. There is the acapella, "Sicathamiya," of Ladysmith Black Mambazo;

Bob Marley, Black Uhuru, Amandla, Latin Quarter. There are too many groups and individuals to mention.

The video, however, omitted one of the most important developments of the struggle, the Women's March. One was also watching out for that timeless scene where women armed with knobkerries and cudgels chase men out of beerhalls. This does not mean that the film is without its humour. There is a poster of one woman Nationalist Party candidate who looks as if a spider is crawling up her trouser leg and she can't scream because she's on television.

Finally, the film will become an important milestone; it will be a record for the coming generations. They will possibly wonder what all this was about. People must buy *VIVA MANDELA!*, look at it and be educated. Some of us might even buy it just for the music.

— Mandla Langa

BOOK REVIEW

Lauretta Ngcobo: *And They Didn't Die*, Virago Press, London, 1990. — *Patric De Goede*

My first thoughts when being asked to review Lauretta Ngcobo's book *And They Didn't Die*, was to think, "But this is another one of those women's books; why don't they ask a woman to review it?" My own gut difficulties pigeonholed the book as one of those books for women by a woman. I wonder how many times men miss out on reading a good book and broadening their understanding of what is, for them, unplumbed realms.

This book, indeed, was a woman's story, which furthermore did keep me thinking about gender issues throughout. But it was much more than a woman's story as such. It was a story about South African rural people, focusing in on one individual's struggle through life under apartheid, in the context of her dispossessed community, Lauretta Ngcobo takes us on a journey through the life of Jezile from the early days of her one month-a-year marriage to Siyalo, a migrant labourer, through to mature motherhood where her life's experiences are again thrust upon her, through the sufferings of her now adult children.

The book is an unfolding story of pain, humiliation, bravery and toughness. At times I was saying to myself, "Wait a minute. This woman is suffering every conceivable problem that one can imagine. It's unreal. Surely the author should spread it around a little." Then I remembered my own single mother, an urban factory worker since she was 13, and her painful life. How many times, in relating her story, did people not say the same thing to me. When you really think about it, human suffering in South Africa does come in large doses.

After reading *And They Didn't Die*, I understood the title thoroughly, realising that for black rural people, women in particular, it was not even a question of huge doses of suffering; life was just one great dose of pain. But the title says it all. The book is not just about suffering. It's

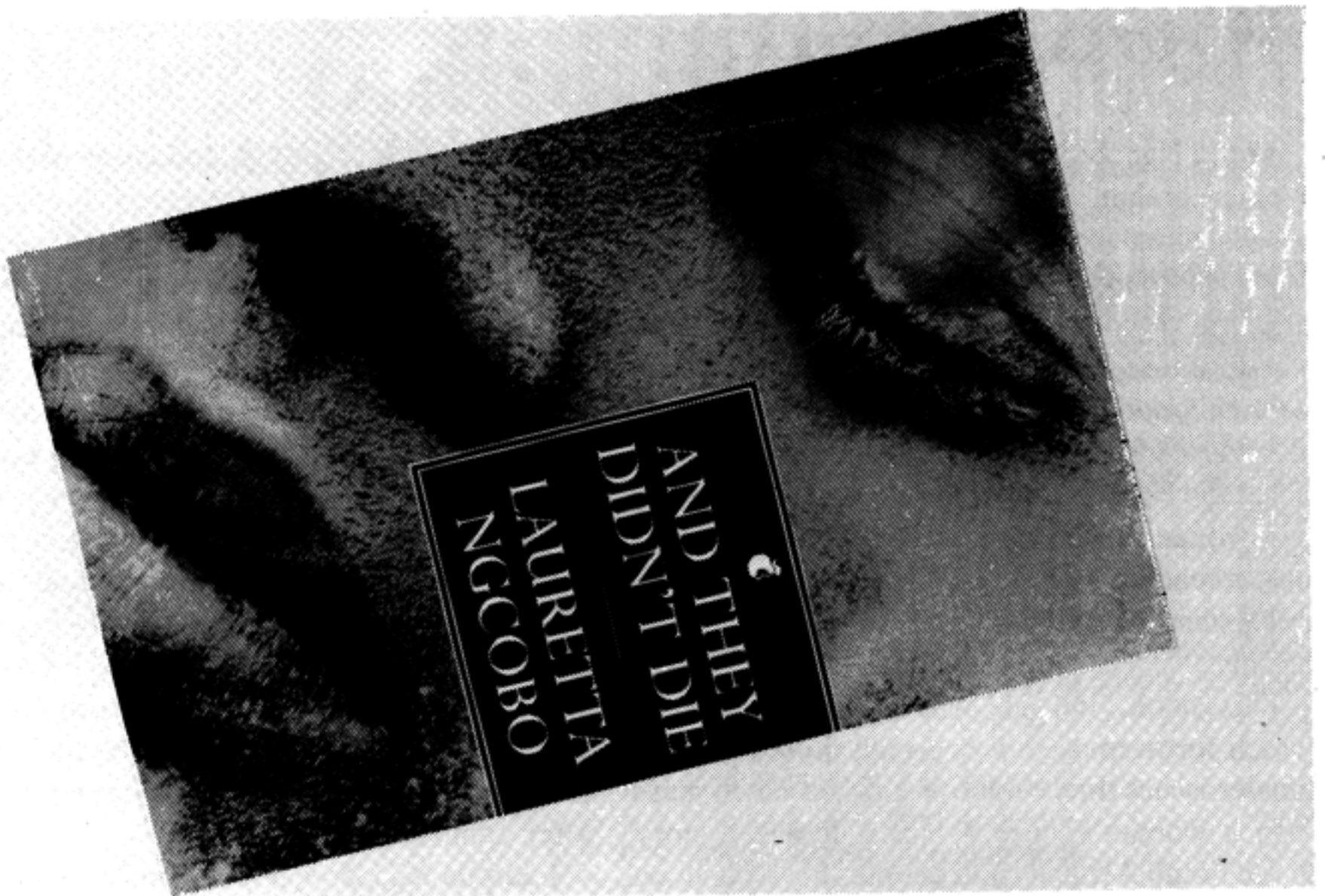
about surviving, fighting, and rising above it all. It's about strength.

Jezile lives a hard life, coping with a myriad of traditions, some enhancing, and some an assault on her confidence and individuality. She, along with her in-laws and community, eke out a living from a barren land and starved cattle, weighed down by oppressive laws, harassed and watched by the apartheid authorities. The neighbouring white farmers create paradise farms under Jezile's nose, through state subsidy, irrigation schemes and cheap black labour. In the midst of this, Jezile stands tall. She knows what she wants and she goes for it. Her dignity, and that of her community, is paramount. In standing her ground, she has to pay one high price after another.

Lauretta Ngcobo's book is probably unique in its thoroughness, through the novel form, in portraying the scourge of apartheid South Africa. Certainly, the life of South African dispossessed rural people has not been so precisely portrayed in literature. It is indeed a book which highlights exactly what is meant by the oft-quoted phrase, "the triple oppression of South African black women."

The book vividly portrays this oppression, which encompasses race, class and gender, but goes further to suggest that a gulf often exists between the city women and the rural women, and the book shows just how much at the bottom of the pile in the oppression pyramid is the rural woman. Jezile ventures out from the rural area at different times in her life; once to get some extra time with her husband in Durban, another time to join other delegations of women in mass protests, and yet again to work as a domestic worker. Each occasion unravels another facet of apartheid oppression, and exacts a price from her. She experiences degradation, violence, imprisonment and rape. She bears the child of her white rapist employer, and sees her marriage disintegrate. Still, she stands tall.

Jezile rears her three children, and Lauretta Ngcobo graphically portrays that struggle in all



its dimensions. When her children grow up, she watches them go through what she went through. Her son, whom she is forced to think of as 'coloured,' is maimed by a soldier's bullet in a demonstration at school, and one of her daughters goes off to become a guerrilla soldier. When Jezile is faced with the rape of her other daughter by a white soldier, she steps in and reacts with all the force that the years of built-up pain have created, and kills the perpetrator. This protects her daughter and exacts a revenge of sorts, but for killing a white man Jezile and her household will once more be the victims. Regardless of everything that is thrown against her, Jezile embodies what is meant by the old song:

*When you have touched the women
you have struck a rock
you dislodge a boulder
which will crush you.*

The weakness of the book is that, periodically throughout, the novel form gives way to the political tract or academic study form. The reader becomes disoriented from the drama of Jezile's story, which stands on its own powerfully and satisfactorily, without long explanations of the apartheid system. There are many non-

fiction books on the various forms of apartheid oppression. On the other hand, there are few easily read stories, which give the human face to the academic study. Fact and fiction mix easily in South African literature, but we must be careful to keep some demarcation in approach.

The ultimate value of Jezile's story will appear when it can be read by the average rural and urban South African. How fantastic it would be for such a book to be used for comprehension exercises in high school, for instance. The struggling women of South Africa would benefit greatly from the power mirrored by this book. South African men would learn a great deal about the strength and spirit of our sisters. Urban dwellers would find the book enlightening and a useful tool to bridge the gulf of ignorance and arrogance which sometimes separates us from our rural compatriots. Statistics show us that by the year 2 000 most of the populations of our cities will have doubled. Such a speedy coming together of rural and urban people, in a situation of high unemployment, housing and education crisis, requires of us that we take more care in getting to know each other and breaking down barriers. A book like *And They Didn't Die* will contribute positively to this process.

