

## **The Churches in South Africa: Preaching Whose Gospel?**

**INCLUDES ARTICLES BY:**

**Bishop Desmond Tutu**

**Archbishop Denis  
Hurley**

**The Reverend Allan  
Boesak**

**The Reverend G.S.J.  
Möller**

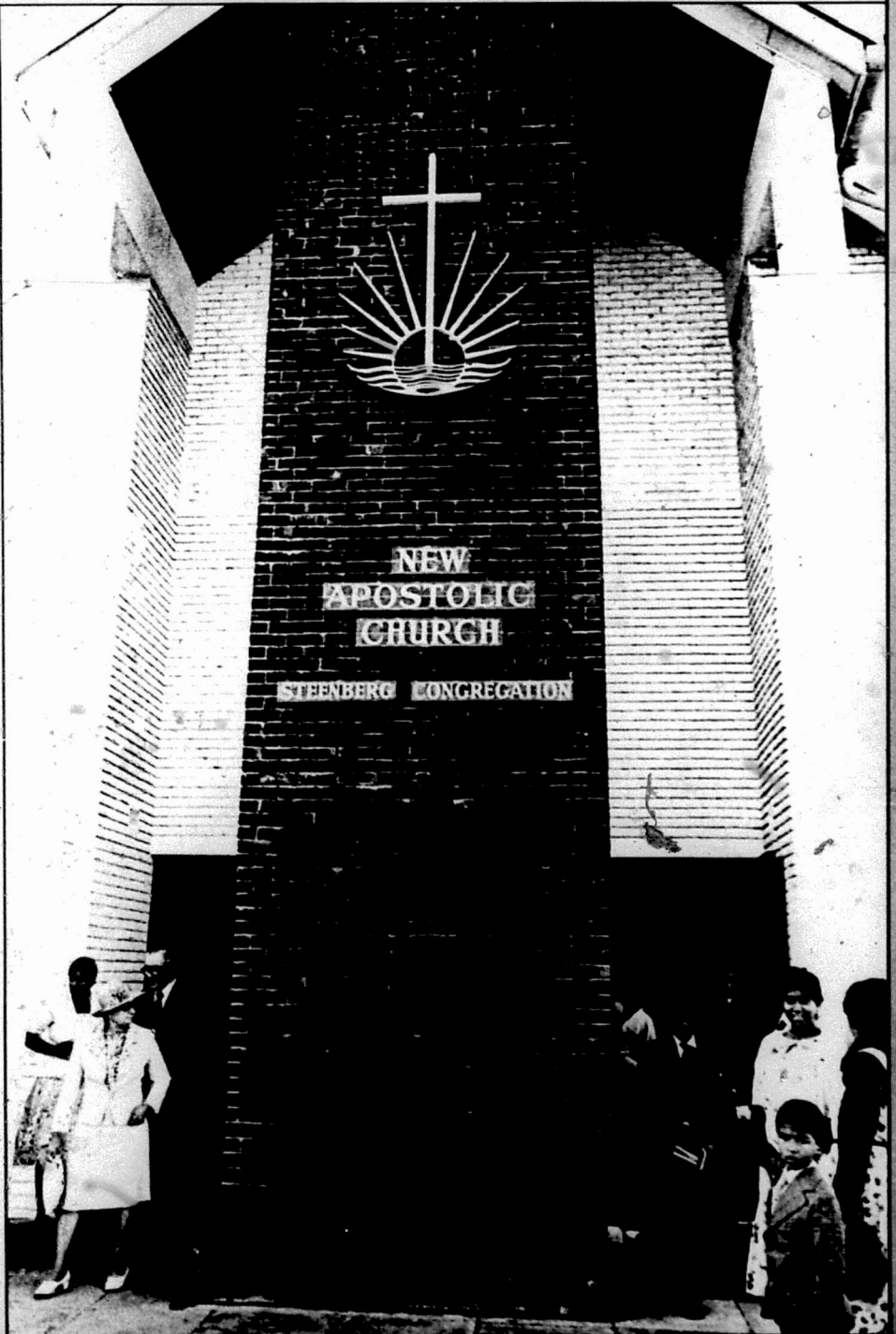
---

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

**Drought in Southern  
Africa**

**Anti-apartheid at the  
UN**

**"Reform" in South  
Africa**




# JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Summer 1983

Volume 37/1

What effect will Japan's emerging status as an economic superpower in the post-war era have on the world political system? A distinguished group of international policy-makers and scholars examines the international ramifications of:

## JAPAN'S NEW WORLD ROLE

- 
- Yasuhiro Nakasone** ..... *Perspectives on Foreign Policy*  
**Zbigniew Brzezinski** ..... *East Asia and Global Security*  
**Saburo Okita** ..... *Japan and the Pacific Basin*  
**Robert Ingersoll** ..... *Improving Economic Relations*  
**Sadako Ogata** ..... *Japan in the United Nations*  
**Toshihiro Tomabechi** ..... *U.S.-Japan in the World Marketplace*  
**Akio Morita** ..... *Business and Japan's New World Role*  
**Reinhard Driete** ..... *The European Community and Japan*  
**Shinkichi Eto** ..... *Evolving Sino-Japanese Relations*  
**William Rapp** ... *Industrial Structure and Trade Friction*  
**Hiroshi Kimura** ... *Japan and the Soviet Initiative*  
**Timothy Curran** ... *Negotiating with Japan*  
**Susan C. Schwab** ... *Japan and the U.S.*  
**R.B. Byers and Stanley Ing** ... *Japanese Security in the 1980's*

Published since 1947, the Journal has a readership in over 70 countries.

Subscription Rates:	One Year	Two Years	Three Years
Individual	\$11.00	\$21.00	\$31.00
Institution	\$22.00	\$43.00	\$64.00

Foreign subscribers, except Canada, add \$3.50 per year postage.

single issue price: \$5.50

Mail all orders to: **Journal of International Affairs**

Box 4, International Affairs Building • Columbia University • New York, N.Y. 10027

— *One step ahead of the latest headlines* —

# AFRICA REPORT

America's Leading Magazine  
on Africa

Please enter my subscription as indicated below (six issues per year):

**INDIVIDUAL**

\$21/1 year

\$39/2 years

\$56/3 years

**INSTITUTION**

\$28/1 year

\$53/2 years

\$72/3 years

—Regular Mail to Canada/Overseas: Add \$6 per year.

—Air Rate Overseas: Add \$24 per year.

—First-class within USA: Add \$7 per year.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

The total amount of my order is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed (Make checks payable to Transaction Periodicals Consortium).

Please bill my:  MasterCard  VISA

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Interbank No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



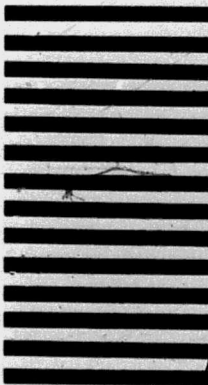
No Postage Stamp  
Necessary if Mailed  
in the United States

**BUSINESS REPLY CARD**

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 1129 NEW BRUNSWICK NJ

**AFRICA  
REPORT**

Transaction Periodicals Consortium  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903



**The African-American Institute**

**Chairman**

George N. Lindsay

**President**

Donald B. Easum

**Publisher**

Frank E. Ferrari

**Editor**

Margaret A. Novicki

**Assistant Editor**

Michael Maren

**Washington Correspondent**

Richard Deutsch

**Editorial Secretary**

Ellen E. Brown

Circulation, Subscriptions, Advertising, Management, and Production Services by Transaction Periodicals Consortium:

**Art Department**

Judith Martin Waterman

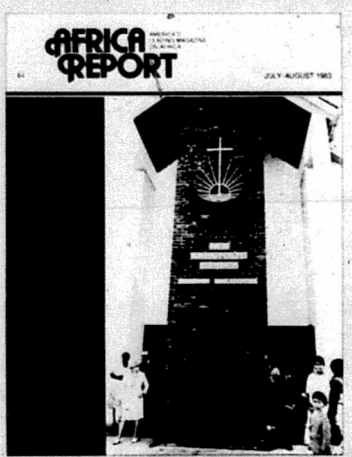
Dena Leiter

**Production Editors**

Alex Fundock III

George P. Bassett

*Africa Report* (ISSN 0001-9836), a nonpartisan magazine of African affairs, is published bimonthly in January-February, March-April, May-June, July-August, September-October, and November-December, and is scheduled to appear at the beginning of each date period at 833 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017. Editorial correspondence and letters to the Publisher should be sent to this address. Correspondence regarding subscriptions, distribution, advertising, and other business matters should be sent to Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Dept. 8010, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903. Telephone: (201) 932-2280. Subscription rates: *Individuals*: U.S.A. \$21, Canada \$27, air rate overseas \$45. *Institutions*: U.S.A. \$26, Canada \$34, air rate overseas \$52. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: If this magazine is undeliverable, please send notice to *Africa Report*, Transaction Periodicals Consortium (address above). Telephones: Publisher (212) 949-5717; Editor (212) 949-5731. Copyright © 1983 by the African-American Institute, Inc.



**IN THIS ISSUE**

Religion and politics go hand in hand in South Africa. While the white Dutch Reformed churches provide theological justification for the apartheid system, South Africa's other Christian denominations are increasingly seen as vehicles for the expression of black aspirations and have produced some of the government's most outspoken critics. In this issue, we examine the complex role of the churches in South Africa today. Bishop Desmond Tutu, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches; Archbishop Denis E. Hurley, president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference; the Reverend Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches; and the Reverend G.S.J. Möller present their views on the position of their respective churches and on the role of religion in the apartheid state. Political currents within the churches are examined by Charles Villa-Vicencio, a Methodist minister.

We also provide analyses of current political and economic developments in South Africa. John Dugard discusses the implications of Pretoria's plan to denationalize all South African blacks via the granting of "independence" to the homelands. Barry Streek assesses whether government policies indicate a trend toward reform. White perceptions of South Africa's regional position and foreign policy implications are examined by John Seiler. David Robbins investigates the drought afflicting southern Africa.

And we introduce a new column, "At the United Nations," expected to become a regular *Africa Report* feature. Monique Rubens describes the myriad efforts being undertaken at the UN to combat apartheid and secure Namibia's independence.

**South Africa**

The Blasphemy That is Apartheid  
*By Bishop Desmond Tutu*

4

**Interview**

The Reverend Allan Boesak,  
President, World Alliance of  
Reformed Churches

*Interviewed by Margaret A. Novicki*

7

**South Africa**

The Church:  
Discordant and Divided

*By Charles Villa-Vicencio*

13

**South Africa**

The Catholic Church and  
Apartheid

*By Archbishop Denis E. Hurley*

17

**South Africa**

Toward a State of Siege?

*By John Seiler*

20

**African Update**

*Editor: Michael Maren*

*Editorial Assistant: Jason Zweig*

23

**South Africa**

The Dutch Reformed Church and  
Separate Development

*By the Reverend G.S.J. Möller,  
in collaboration with  
the Reverend L. Moolman*

39

**South Africa**

Denationalization:  
Apartheid's Ultimate Plan

*By John Dugard*

43

**At the United Nations**

Combating Apartheid

*By Monique Rubens*

47

**South Africa**

The Myth of Reform

*By Barry Streek*

53

**Economy**

Drought Plagues Southern Africa

*By David Robbins*

56

**Photo Credit:**

The cover photo was taken in Steenburg, South Africa, a Coloured residential area, by Bea Berman.

# The Blasphemy That is Apartheid

BY BISHOP DESMOND TUTU

**P**olitics always looms large in South Africa. Despite protests to the contrary, politics and religion have always been mixed in South Africa, so that the question is not whether religion and politics should mix, but what sort of religion and what kind of politics have actually mixed in our beloved land. The churches in South Africa can be conveniently divided into three groups: the Afrikaans churches, the so-called English-speaking churches, and the black churches. We can refine this description slightly and show how politics impinges on the life of the church, because as a rule of thumb you would not be far wrong in saying that the Afrikaans churches almost entirely support the Nationalist party regime with its apartheid dogma. The English-speaking churches by and large are opposed to apartheid, and they tend to be members of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), which is like a pebble in the government's shoe and is currently being investigated by the government-appointed Eloff Commission. Most of the black churches are what have come to be called separatist or independent churches — they tend to

---

Bishop Desmond Tutu is general secretary of the South African Council of Churches.

---



Photo: Religious News Service

**Bishop Desmond Tutu: "Politics enables Christians to realize the implications of the tenets of their faith"**

be charismatic, to some extent syncretistic with a tendency to being fissiparous. They seek to be indigenous, truly African. Many are apolitical. They are increasing at a phenomenal rate. There are well over 3,000 such churches, ranging in size to the nearly one-million-member Zion Catholic church to obscure sects with negligible membership. Some have quite exotic names, such as Castor Oil Holiness church.

Our phenomenological description has not yet been completed because it has still to be refined further. There are three white Dutch Reformed churches. By far the largest and most powerful, with most of the ruling class belonging

to it, is the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), the staunchest supporter of the present regime. Then we have the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk (NHK), which is the second largest of the Afrikaans churches and is the apartheid church par excellence. It does not countenance any racial mixing anywhere at all, whereas the NGK allows for some racial mixing in church for certain occasions. The smallest white Dutch Reformed church is the Gereformeerde Kerk, which has tended to be somewhat more enlightened than the other two white Dutch Reformed churches but has little clout. The Hervormde Kerk recently promised prizes to white parents who bore many children to counter the threat of the black peril posed by the fact that blacks outnumber whites something on the order of 5 to 1. I don't know whether you would not be justified in regarding such an attitude as antediluvian, given the very serious threat posed by the population explosion. This is another example of politics and religion mixing — unfortunately rather bad examples of each.

I am afraid we have not yet completed our analysis. You will just have to bear with this complex country of complex problems. The largest white Dutch Reformed church (the NGK) gave birth to no less than three black churches. In line with our national obsession, race, these daughter (or, as

they prefer to be called, sister) churches have been divided not according to dogma and practice, but according to ethnicity. They all worship the same God presumably, and they hold to the same confessions of the Christian faith and worship this God in much the same way, but there is a Dutch Reformed church for the Africans (NGK in Afrika), one for "Coloureds" (NG Sending [Missionary] Kerk), and one for Indians (the Reformed Church in Africa). Is that not just incredible? But separation is the name of the game in South Africa. Dr. Allan Boesak belongs to the Sending Kerk.

If you are feeling confused, then do not sigh with relief just yet. You will recall a reference to English-speaking churches. Please do not be taken in by that description. The fact of the matter is that nearly all of these churches have an 80 percent black membership, whose home languages are anything but English. These are what are often called mainline churches, in contrast to the independent African churches. They are churches like the Methodist, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian, many of which were established in South Africa by English-speaking missionaries. Although they are multiracial and in their highest courts almost always opposed to the government race policies, they are not untainted by apartheid in their own life and structures. Their parishes, situated in segregated residential areas, are usually used by the race in whose area they exist. The leadership has largely been white, and so while things are changing they have tended to be white-dominated in the style of government and conduct of meetings, with racially determined appointments and until recently racially structured stipends.

Some of the white leadership has been wonderfully courageous in standing up for the Gospel imperatives in an unjust society. And many have been drummed out of the country — for instance, the late Ambrose Reeves, once bishop of Johannesburg, who annoyed the government for pointing up the horror of Sharpeville in 1960, when 69 blacks were shot dead after protesting peacefully against the Pass Laws; or the late Colin Winter, bishop of Namibia, who exposed the unjust situ-

ation in Namibia; or David Russell, the young Anglican priest who was banned for five years because he was concerned about the plight of black migratory workers living unnatural lives in single-sex hostels away from their families for up to 11 months of the year. Father Russell's banning order has now expired, and he is free again.

As to the black churches, not all are of the Zionist, charismatic type. Some are black versions of white denominations such as the Evangelical Presbyterian church, the Presbyterian Church in Africa, and the Reformed Presbyterian church, whereas the American Methodist Episcopal church is a transplant from the United States and still has black American bishops at its head.

#### EASIER TO BE CHRISTIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

Sometimes people overseas feel sorry for Christians in South Africa. Spare yourselves that bother. I say so because it is in many ways easier to be a Christian in South Africa than in many other parts of the world. This is because the issues are so much clearer in our land than elsewhere. You are either for or against apartheid. If you are for apartheid (do you see politics rearing its ugly head again?), then you know you can rest happily, approved by the regime and giving religious sanction to the status quo. The NGK (the white Dutch Reformed church) has on the whole done this, trying to give scriptural justification for the system I have denounced as the most vicious since Nazism and communism. I must hasten to add that within that powerful church, there have sounded many dissenting voices who have challenged their church in its political stance. The NGK has used biblical stories such as the tower of Babel story about the confusion of tongues to justify apartheid, neglecting to point out that the Bible sees that confusion and dispersal of peoples as divine punishment for the human sin of pride, a story that is believed was comprehensively reversed at the first Christian Pentecost. They have used the story of the so-called curse of Ham to justify the idea of blacks being hewers of wood and drawers of water forever.

When you oppose apartheid, then

you can be sure you will be in for a tough time from the government and its supporters. Politics enables Christians to realize the implications of the tenets of their faith. They are faced with having to decide either for Christ or for Caesar. There is no way in which a committed Christian can be on the touchline.

#### THE BLASPHEMY THAT IS APARTHEID

In the name of a Christian government, millions of people have been uprooted from their former homes, where they had reasonable accommodation, and dumped (used advisedly, since you dump rubbish or things) in some poverty-stricken Bantustan resettlement camp where, for lack of accommodation, they will often have to stay in tents. These resettlement camps (more properly dumping grounds) are often littered with tin latrines, and the people must live in shacks or tents. There is little food and work. They are really ghettos of poverty and misery, limitless reservoirs of cheap labor from which the father must go to the white man's city as a migrant worker and live in a single-sex hostel while his family ekes out a miserable existence in their rural dumping grounds. Why is all this being done? The answer is that our white overlords believe the most important thing about a human being is the color of his or her skin, a biological irrelevance as useful in determining the worth of a person as the color of one's eyes or the size of one's nose. Does the size of my nose tell anybody anything worthwhile about my quality as a human being?

The government spends 10 times as much per annum on the education of one white child as it spends on that of a black child. The entrance qualifications for college are not primarily academic. It is the color of the skin that determines whether you qualify for entry into university. If you have the wrong skin color, then you must apply to the appropriate minister for the necessary exemption. You may not live in a "group area" set aside for a specific race unless you belong to that race or have been specially exempted. You can marry anybody as long as he or she is in your

racial classification. The Nazis had a similar obsession with race, called Aryanism. Apartheid is equally vicious and equally blasphemous. Apartheid restricts the vote to those with the right skin color. I am a bishop in the church of God. I am 51 years old, and a few people might be led to believe that I am reasonably responsible. Yet in my country, where I was born and bred, I lack the vote. A white child of 18 years can vote just because he or she is white.

Apartheid exalts race to a blasphemous position because it says the most important thing about human beings is their skin color, a biological fact they can do nothing about. The Christian faith says the most important thing about human beings is that they are created in the image of God and thus are endowed with infinite worth intrinsic to their being, underscored by their having been redeemed by Jesus Christ as Savior and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. So the churches' opposition to apartheid is theological through and through. It has nothing to do with politics, though it has political consequences.

Hence the Roman Catholic church, whose Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban is the president of its Bishops' Conference, opened its white schools to

all races because this church believes all children have the right to the best educational facilities, from which they must not be excluded merely on the grounds of race. A few denominations have decided they will marry couples across the color line in contravention of the provision of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act. Most SACC member churches have advocated more generous state recognition of conscientious objectors not only on religious grounds. A few have also condemned apartheid as a heresy.

#### THE SACC AND THE ELOFF COMMISSION

The apartheid dispensation is totally evil and unjust. For that reason the SACC member churches have opposed it consistently. It has given rise to those who have believed that fundamental change in South Africa can come only through violence. Many have been arrested, and they have become political trialists. The SACC has among several other programs a fund to provide legal defense to those so tried. Upon conviction, they become political prisoners. The SACC, through its Dependents Conference, supports the dependents of such people as well as the banned and those detained without trial.

I have no doubt that it is this work that has annoyed the government officials more than anything else the SACC does. They obviously don't like our being a thorn in their flesh, constantly opposing this or that iniquitous action or piece of legislation on their part. The government consequently has taken the opportunity to appoint the Eloff Commission, which is investigating the SACC. The appointment of this commission is purely and simply a political ploy. The government is determined to destroy or seriously handicap the SACC. The police, in their testimony to the commission, recommended that the SACC be declared an affected organization, in order to prevent it from getting overseas funding. Since over 90 percent of our funds come from overseas, this development would seriously disrupt our work.

But the government has already lost. We are on the winning side because the God of the Exodus, the great liberator God, is on our side. Even to be destroyed is not necessarily defeat. Our Lord died an ignominious death on the cross, but what seemed to be abject defeat turned out paradoxically to be the means of glorious victory.

The church of Jesus Christ must suffer, must bear the cross to follow its Master. A church that does not suffer cannot be the church of Jesus Christ. Suffering authenticates the credibility of the church.

We need the support of the international community to exert pressure on the South African government to persuade it to go to the conference table before it is too late. It may be too late, for a massive bomb exploded in Pretoria recently, marking a new phase in the armed struggle for liberation. We condemn all violence, that which upholds an unjust system and that which seeks to overthrow that system. The Reagan administration policy of "constructive engagement" would not qualify under my rubric of international pressure. It condones an evil system that has caused untold human suffering and continues to do so. The churches need help to work for justice, peace, and reconciliation.

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" □



Photo: Bas Berman

Members of a Zionist church near Crossroads: Many black churches are "apolitical"



# The Reverend Allan Boesak,

## President, World Alliance of Reformed Churches

---

INTERVIEWED BY MARGARET A. NOVICKI

---

*The Reverend Allan Boesak, a Coloured theologian of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Kerk (Dutch Reformed Mission church, for Coloureds) in South Africa, was elected president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, which represents 70 million people worldwide, at its August 1982 session in Ottawa. The August meeting also suspended from WARC membership the white Dutch Reformed churches of South Africa because of their continued support of apartheid, which was declared a heresy. A chaplain at the University of the Western Cape, Reverend Boesak is also a vocal opponent of the South African government's constitutional proposals, intended to provide limited political participation to Coloureds and Indians, but not to blacks. He has helped to form a coalition of anti-collaborationists - the United Democratic Front.*

**AFRICA REPORT:** What, in your view, should be the role of the churches in South Africa today? Are they agents for constructive change, are they retrogressive? If events in South Africa should lead to increasing violence and more widespread armed struggle, what kind of position do you think the churches should take?

**BOESAK:** I believe that, in principle, the churches ought to be involved in the whole social and political struggle in South Africa. I think that the church cannot avoid that. The fact that the church works with the people and is concerned with their plight and with their future means that it must be concerned about issues of justice, peace, and the fulfillment of people's humanity. On that principal basis, I think the church has no other choice. For me, that is not even a point of discussion any longer.

The churches in South Africa have never been as involved as they are right now. The conflict between the government and the churches in South Africa is also at a point which has never been before. The church has become much more aware of its own responsibility in terms of the struggle of the people for recognition of their human dignity, for justice, and for liberation. Because of the fact that so many black organizations have been banned by the government and so many black leaders have been exiled, jailed, killed, or put on Robben Island, the churches, without wanting it, have become more and more a vehicle for the expression of the political aspirations of black people in South Africa. The church has always been a focal point in the black community and has always provided leadership. Now that the church has been called upon to provide leadership in terms of defining more clearly where we want to go politically and what people ought to be doing in terms of the struggle, I think it's only natural for the church to respond and make clear to people in South Africa that the struggle for liberation in our country is commensurate with the gospel of Jesus Christ. That I think is important. I believe that the churches are trying to do that. The churches are much more constructively involved with purely secular organizations like the trade unions and students' and women's organizations.

The churches, in terms of their own understanding of the nature of the gospel and of the analysis of the South African situation, have also a very clear, independent stance on political, social, and economic issues. The very fact that the South African Council of Churches is on trial, so to speak, is a clear indication of where we are. So too is the stand of

the Roman Catholic church on the civil war in Namibia and the position of SWAPO [South-West Africa People's Organization]; and the stand of my own church, the Dutch Reformed Mission church, that apartheid is a heresy with all of the political and theological implications, not only for the white Dutch Reformed church, but also for the white government, which wants to be such a very Christian government—taking away the ideological basis, the foundation of the hegemony of the government, by attacking that religious assumption of the dominant class in South Africa.

What should the churches do if the struggle becomes a more violent struggle? That's a very difficult question. The church is, by its nature, bound to be a peace movement. These are big words. We have failed miserably in that respect. We have often found ourselves on the side of the status quo as a church in our history. We have condoned and sanctioned violence simply because it was the violence of those in power. We have not always been true to what I see as the essential meaning of the gospel in terms of calling for peace. We have developed all kinds of intricate theological theories, like the "just war" theory, to justify our position and to justify the security that we receive from people who are willing to use violence in societies.

But I believe the church has always been on the side of the poor and the oppressed. The task of the church is to work as hard as it possibly can to use nonviolent means to change the situation. It must even try to persuade people who have come to the point of saying, "We see no other option but to take up the gun," that the way of peaceful negotiation, the way of putting down the gun and talking to each other as human beings is still the more excellent way. And I personally will advocate that stance as long as I possibly can. But I also recognize that there comes a moment in history when the forces of evil who happen to be in power are so strong, so intransigent, that people will say, "I have no other choice." When that moment arrives, again, the church must take the side of those who have been wronged, oppressed, despised, pushed into the corner, and forced to take up the gun against the overwhelming might of the oppressor. Then the church will have to say, "We are with you although we would still like to impress upon you that violence ultimately will not really solve the problem." We will still have to say to people, "Although we understand your violence is a counterviolence . . ." and all revolutionary violence is counterviolence, called forth by the violence that exists institutionally, militarily, and otherwise in a society like ours in South Africa, but even so, the church will have to say to people, "Violence tends to create a climate in which my sensitivity as a human being is undermined. It creates a climate in which I tend to think less and less about taking a human life." I do not think theology can ever justify any kind of violence. I think the most the church can say to people is, "If you feel compelled to take up the gun, remember that who you are shooting at is a creature of God, bearing His image." "That's not something that I as a churchperson can absolve you from. That is something you will have to deal with with God. And you will have to ask forgiveness from Him." But sanctification of violence does not exist. Justification of it does not exist, although there is

the understanding of the church as to why people out of their helplessness and powerlessness are driven to a situation in which they become so desperate that the taking up of the gun is the only answer. In that respect, the church has a clear pastoral responsibility to those people.

**AFRICA REPORT:** What is the significance of your position as president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, which represents 70 million people worldwide, with respect to the position of the white Dutch Reformed church in South Africa?

**BOESAK:** The white Dutch Reformed church finds it very hard to accept this position. I remember very well when I was elected and we came home from Ottawa, Canada, last year, the white Dutch Reformed church journal wrote an editorial on the front page in which it said it could somehow deal with the suspension of the church's privileges of membership, but the thing which is the most bitter pill of all to swallow was my election. I think it angered them because they now have to deal with someone who comes from a group of people that they have always despised and that they did not have to take seriously. When you are so powerful economically, socially, and militarily, and when you are white, the last thing you want to be confronted with is a black who now all of a sudden has been elevated to a position that you can no longer deny. Also, it means that my presence, being a South African, brings the issue of what happened in Ottawa right into the lives of the South African churches. They can no longer avoid it.

What they have done is whenever a church in Europe or in America had said something about apartheid and about [the Dutch Reformed church] position, they would come home and lament about the communist conspiracy in the churches, about the influence of Marxism and about those churches not listening to God *anyway* and then forget about it. Now, it's impossible. The decision of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches is alive in a person amongst them and as long as I can speak and as long as I am there, they'll have to face the issue. It's very, very difficult for them and it's very uncomfortable, and I must say, it is good that it is so. I do not intend, in any way whatsoever, to alleviate this position for them. I do not intend to make it easier. They can, of course, like they did, refuse to let me speak at their General Synod, but then they will have to answer to the world why not.

My election has meant that for the first time in many, many years, a position taken up by the ecumenical church has become a clearly unavoidable issue right in the middle of the white Dutch Reformed church. Even if they want to ignore me as president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, they still have to deal with me as a member of the executive of my own church, which is so close to their heart. So for the first time they are really so confronted and my presence makes a difference in the sense that I am a South African. I am born in the Dutch Reformed churches. I speak Afrikaans and I speak it in a way that is their language. They recognize it very clearly. I know them so well. They cannot lie to me as they lie to overseas people. They cannot bluff me with all kinds of so-called changes that are taking place in the church because I know that as long as I

am not welcome as a black person in a white Dutch Reformed church and as long as I don't get an invitation to speak or to preach in their churches, all of their beautiful, lofty words will mean nothing at all. I think therefore, that my election can prove to be one of the most important events in terms of keeping the issue on the agenda of the white church and on the agenda of all the other English-speaking churches in South Africa.

**AFRICA REPORT:** Recently over 100 white Dutch Reformed church ministers in South Africa signed an open letter condemning apartheid. Does that reflect a split developing in the white church?

**BOESAK:** There is not a serious split. You see, Afrikanerdom is a kind of magic circle. It is very hard for the Afrikaner to move out of that magic circle. He is not at home anywhere else in the world unless that person has undergone such a fundamental change in heart, in his or her life, in their whole thinking, that they can break that mystique of being an Afrikaner. It does something to you when you have been told for 300 years that you are really the chosen people of God. You know that out of the history of the United States—that idea of a manifest destiny and God's favorite chosen people is a very powerful thing. And the cultural ties that bind these people are very strong. But some of them have broken it. There are young whites who have come over to our church and broken totally with the white church. They have identified with our community and they have been surrounded with a community and a love that they have not found with their own people. Those are the signs of hope, but it is not true to speak of a serious split. Of the 123 white ministers who signed the letter, most are concerned, enlightened, but when you are black in South Africa, terms like concerned, enlightened, liberal, and even progressive don't mean too much. You are forever looking for signs that are filled with more meaning and content. You are forever looking for deeds that mean something.

Those people are not willing really to challenge the white hierarchy in the church and they're not really ready to challenge their own people. They are not willing to take that final step that will make them break with the white church. And so black people are still waiting for those whites to make up their minds as to where they will go. I think that letter was a flash in the pan. Inasmuch as there are people who have serious misgivings about the direction of the white church within that church, they will get my support and our support in general. We are always ready to talk to them, but I don't think that we are ready to have long drawn-out discussions about this anymore. There is too much at stake and there are too many life and death issues already in our own community and in the churches. There is no time for intellectualizing of the issue.

**AFRICA REPORT:** You are a very outspoken critic of the government's constitutional proposals, which envisage a three-chamber parliament for whites, Coloureds, and Indians. Can you outline your position on the issue?

**BOESAK:** I believe that the new constitutional proposals of the government do not represent even a fraction of what the majority of South Africa's people want. People who say that they do represent a significant move away and a pro-

gressive step forward are arguing from within a white position. And people like that are forgetting that there is a large majority out there of black people who also have an opinion and who live there and who want to be reckoned with when political moves take place in the country. The new constitutional proposals entrench white superiority, and white domination in politics as well as in the economy. There is not a single fundamental move to change apartheid. The basic tenets of the system remain the same, for instance, the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act, which divide the country into the different ethnic groups and therefore give each ethnic group its place in the hierarchy in South Africa—it's what I call "pigmentocracy"—that remains, separate education remains, the Political Non-Interference Act remains, all of the things that form the foundation of the system remain untouched. In the new system, they will not even be up for negotiation. Those are the non-negotiables.

Within the framework of the new system, white supremacy is built in. There's going to be the 4-2-1 ratio in favor of white people. As long as the Political Non-Interference Act exists, it means that the so-called Coloureds and the Indians who will be in the parliament will not be able to make common cause with the white opposition. You will go into that separate little Coloured chamber as a Coloured person and you will have to deal with what is called "Coloured affairs" or "Indian affairs" and the government decides what will be common affairs. The common affairs, we know already now, are going to be things like defense, because the Coloureds and the Indians will have to go off to the border to defend apartheid in the civil war. There will be foreign affairs, because you do need a Coloured or an Indian ambassador to come and explain to people abroad that things are really changing. That is going to be common, but that is not going to make any difference to the fact that millions of black South Africans have lost and will continue to lose



The Reverend Allan Boesak: "The churches have become more and more a vehicle for expression of political aspirations of black people in South Africa"

Photo: Bea Berman

their citizenship. It will not make any difference to the fact that the pass laws will remain, that the homelands policy of the government, in the words of the President's Council report, is "irreversible." That means that you are saying to the large majority of South Africa's people, "Your political future is out there in some homeland" where the inevitable result is the kind of dictatorship that you find in the Transkei, in Ciskei, and in Venda, where those black governments are faithfully imitating their masters in Pretoria and are doing exactly and with even more enthusiasm what Pretoria has been doing to black people for so many years. The fact that these proposals exclude some 80 percent of the population of my country seems to me not to be a step in the right direction, but a recipe for further violent confrontation, for disaster, and for heightening the frustration and anger of a large majority of the people. I cannot even think as a Christian of accepting the so-called privileges that are given to me—political and social and economic privileges—and at the same time by law and by the very creation of the system, not given to the rest of the population. How can I plead for one united Reformed church in South Africa where white and black and everybody are going to be alike and equal and at the same time accept a political dispensation that will divide black from black, making so-called Coloureds a further privileged class and driving the Africans even more into the wilderness? I think that that is not only politically untenable and irresponsible, it's also morally unacceptable, and as a Christian I have to say no. These for me are the basic reasons why I cannot accept these proposals and why I will continue to resist them and continue to exhort people in South Africa inside and outside of the churches to resist them.

**AFRICA REPORT:** The Coloured Labor party, which announced its acceptance of the constitutional proposals, contends that it will "fight from within the system" once it is in Parliament, as it once claimed with the Coloured Persons Representative Council. On the other hand, Labor did not even try to win concessions before announcing its acceptance of the plan. In your view, does Labor have any legitimacy and does it stand a chance of changing apartheid from within?

**BOESAK:** This is quite a different ballgame from the Coloured Persons Representative Council that we saw in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This is supposed to be Parliament. There is much more at stake now than there was in terms of the creation of that dummy institution in the 1960s. The Labor party, no, they cannot change anything from inside. The system has been set up in such a way that the government is clear on what is negotiable and what is not negotiable. I think for the first time in many, many years, the Nationalist government has been honest with us, telling us, "These are the things that you are going to talk about, these are the things that white people talk about." And the things that white people alone can talk about are incidentally the things that really matter. So whether the Labor party goes into the Parliament, or whether they stay out will not make one iota of difference in terms of the execution of government policy, which they know they have to accept if they accept these proposals. You cannot accept proposals

that are based on the fact that the homelands policy is irreversible and then tell the people, "We are going in there to change the government's mind on the homelands policy." It's foolishness and it's dishonest. You know you're not going to do that.

The Labor party has always enjoyed very limited credibility in the Coloured community and they have lost much of that even now. Always, you must remember, the people who are willing to participate in the government's proposals to create separate ethnic institutions have never been more than about 20 percent of the Coloured community. Within that margin of 20 percent, the Labor party has enjoyed the majority because they went in there on an antigovernment platform, but that means that about 80 percent of the people were outside that stream of politics. Even if you say that 30 percent or 40 percent of those left are indifferent, then you still have to deal with about 50 percent who made a conscious political decision not to participate. Now the Labor party has joined the government. They have become the junior partners of apartheid. They have accepted apartheid. The people are rejecting them in the same way as they have rejected all other black political parties who have joined with the government in executing its policies.

And so what one sees in the Coloured community is a very comprehensive rejection of the Labor party and of its decision to join. And I have no doubt that subsequent events will show that this assessment is right, that there is no desire on the part of the people to become involved and to accept these new constitutional proposals, and that the Labor party will have to go into the Parliament knowing that they do not represent any significant portion whatsoever of the community.

**AFRICA REPORT:** The South African Human Sciences Research Council conducted a poll that showed that 62 percent of Coloureds and 68 percent of the Indians surveyed said they endorsed negotiations with the government over the constitutional proposals. Does that accurately reflect the sentiments of the Coloured community?

**BOESAK:** The Human Sciences Research Council is a government-funded body. I spoke to those people. They're all Nationalists. You tell me, to what other result can they come, but that? In Uitenhage—a supposed Labor stronghold and hometown of Rev. Allan Hendrickse, leader of the Labor party and minister for 25 years—if only 600 people turn up there for the meeting, what is 600 people? If in Stellenbosch, the home of David Curry, who is the national chairman of the Labor party, they have to bring people from outside Stellenbosch with buses to fill up their hall and even at that, the meeting was broken up and only 80 people stayed behind to give them their vote of confidence, what is that? So these polls, I'm afraid, are not the kind of thing that I take very seriously. I think that the government will be willing to spend a lot of money to create the impression that many people are accepting these proposals so as to have a climate in which other people will say, "Well, if 62 percent or 70 percent or whatever accept these proposals, what am I doing not accepting them?" But I think it's a little game and again I am sure that within the next year or so, it will be clear that it is a little game that's been played.

**AFRICA REPORT:** Can you describe the organizational composition of the United Democratic Front (UDF), a coalition to boycott the constitutional proposals, of which you are being cast as the leader? How do you see its role and is it not a political organization? Given the fact that even the Labor party itself has been the target of security police harassment and repression, do you not fear that the UDF will be subject to banning and detention?

**BOESAK:** It probably will. The United Democratic Front simply wants to bring together all of the organizations in our community. Now there are a great number of community organizations because they are working within every single little community, in every township. There are sports, students, women's organizations, there are the churches, the trade unions. What I asked was for all these organizations to simply say, "On this issue, let's pool our resources, let's get together, let's bundle our energies and let's not allow the government or the Labor party to get away with this." The UDF is going to be a strong organization and it will convey to the outside world the wishes of a very, very large group of people, the majority of the people in the communities. And it will bring together the opinions and the strengths of a great number of organizations right across the country. It will inform the people of the fraud that is going to be perpetrated in their name. It will inform the people of exactly what these proposals are. It will make sure that people understand what to do on the day of the election. In general, it will be a counterinformation service to try and see whether we can do anything about the propaganda that is being spouted from the radio, television, and press. It will give people an opportunity to come together and see how their organization is part of a very large group of people who are fighting for the same goals. And it will make clear at the end to the government and to the world where the broad consensus of the masses lies in terms of the future of South Africa. It will bring out a declaration that will state very clearly what we want, which is a democratic society with meaningful participation of *all* of its people, and the government will have to deal with that, and so will the Reagan administration, which so enthusiastically wanted to endorse the constitutional proposals. As time goes by, they will find out what kind of a mistake that was.

**AFRICA REPORT:** It seems likely that Prime Minister Pieter Botha will at some point form a fourth parliamentary chamber for urban blacks, but not for so-called citizens of the homelands. What would be the effect of that on the black community?

**BOESAK:** What they are doing now, with all these things that are happening, is two things. One, they are creating the illusion of change, and secondly, as a result of that, creating a lot of confusion. As time goes on, the South African government will try one scheme after another. But I think that one must remember that when the government is talking about urban blacks, they are not talking about all blacks who live in the cities. They're talking of all those black people who qualify under Section 10 of their law, and whatever subsections of Section 10 there may be. When you're black in South Africa, you have to be a legal expert, in spite of illiteracy, to know what you are, let alone to know what

you're supposed to do and not do. So the idea of urban black participation must not mean to people, "All of those blacks in Johannesburg and Cape Town and Port Elizabeth will now participate." That's not what the government means, because there are people living in the cities who have already, outside of their own will, been made citizens of some homeland where they have never been. So they will not count. Bishop Desmond Tutu will not be represented in that Parliament because he's supposed to be a citizen of the Transkei. Nthato Motlana will not be counted because he's supposed to be a citizen of BophuthaTswana. So once you have that clear in your mind, then the picture is a little different.

I would simply say that even if the government should announce that, the very fact that it's a fourth chamber is another ethnic thing, and I suppose that government will have a long fight as to what that fourth chamber will be. Will it be Sotho, will it be Zulu, will it be Xhosa? Really, according to their own ideology, it needs to be a chamber for every single language group, so they need about 9 or 11 chambers, for all those little urban groups that might still qualify. It's conceivable under that plan that you might find a chamber representing about 120 people. It's



Jailed students: "The church has become more aware of its responsibility in terms of the struggle of the people for recognition of their human dignity, for justice, and for liberation"

Photo: Religious News Service

rather silly, isn't it? So I would not even give that serious consideration. Should the government do so, my question would still be: What is the basis of all this? What has fundamentally changed about apartheid? What is the position now in terms of white supremacy and dominance in terms of politics, in terms of the social structure, and in terms of economics? I will still want to ask the questions: What is meaningful participation of all people? What about the redistribution of wealth in the country? Those kinds of questions remain the basic thing, whatever kind of plan the government comes up with.

**AFRICA REPORT:** You are being characterized as a potential leader of South African blacks. How do you see your own role?

**BOESAK:** Those are lofty words. I find myself to be a spokesperson for many people simply because I say what's on my mind. I did not intend to go out and speak for black people. Each time I speak, I talk about the things that I believe in and I challenge the government on things that I believe in. I analyze the situation and, to my surprise, I find that what I say is nothing new, and neither is it original. It is in the minds of millions of black people.

I must say, God has given me a position that most black people do not have, through things beyond my own control. I have been given an opportunity to study. I have been given this position as World Alliance president and therefore I can say more than my people can in general. And I saw it much more as an obligation because I have been so privileged, that I should speak up for those who have no voice because their situation is so difficult. Before I knew it, I was catapulted into a position where people now expect me to take the lead in many things. I have publicly said that I do not seek political office, and I really don't. I'm basically a simple guy who likes to be with my friends and who'd like to be involved in good things like fighting for justice. The South African government happens to be on the other side fighting to uphold injustice, so we clash. If people give me leadership, it's because they want to. As long as I enjoy their trust, as long as they think I speak for them, I will try to do so. But seeking political leadership in the sense of, for instance, wanting to become the president of the United Democratic Front, no. I don't want that. I'll speak if they need me and I'll fight for the cause because I believe it's right to fight for that. I will not do otherwise. But leadership is a heavy word. If it's thrust upon one, one accepts it. I can only do so because of the incredible support—it is surprising to see how deep it goes with people—that I do get from all sections of the community. And that helps when one has to face the wrath of white South Africa with all of its considerable power.

**AFRICA REPORT:** How do you envision change coming about in South Africa? Is there any way apartheid can be reformed or modified?

**BOESAK:** Apartheid can never be modified. A system as thoroughly evil as apartheid cannot be streamlined, cannot be reformed. It can only be totally and irrevocably eradicated and that's what we have to work for. Apartheid has to be challenged, not in terms of its effects only on people, but in terms of its roots, its inner core, and the heart of that sys-

tem which is theological. Change will come about when we address that root problem of the system. And change will come about when we are in a position to put unprecedented pressure on it, by taking away that ideological foundation upon which the system rests. No ideological system can survive merely on political and economic dominance or circumstance, or even military power. All of that rests on a whole foundation of ideas, perceptions, and behavioral patterns. That in turn is based on a culture, and, in South Africa, especially on religion. So that foundation has to be shaken and those walls have to come tumbling down. Pressure is needed to do that. You need economic pressure; you need to tell the South African government that if you don't change, something will happen. You need all kinds of political pressure to make that happen. And I'm afraid, and this is not the way that I would have chosen, but the South African government has, with the support of Western governments, been so successful in resisting all other kinds of pressure that the forces who say South Africa can only be changed by military pressure will grow. I can see that. You can be sorry about that, you can regret it. You can say this should not be. But nonetheless, one must realize that this is ultimately where the intransigence of white South Africa is leading my country. I see as far as that is concerned, a very, very difficult time ahead. One must do what one can, but one must also be very realistic and say that without these pressures, change will probably not happen.

**AFRICA REPORT:** What effect do you think the Reagan administration's policy of constructive engagement is having on South African intransigence?

**BOESAK:** Constructive engagement is a beautiful form for support of apartheid and inhumanity in South Africa. I'm very clear about that. And I always explain this with people in terms of an example. When Jimmy Carter was president of the United States in 1977, Steve Biko was tortured and killed. Many governments in the world, including the U.S. administration, protested rather vigorously. That so shook the South African government that between 1977 and 1981 no one died in detention, no one fell from the tenth story window of some police office block, no one hanged himself, no one slipped on soap in the shower. It was clear. When President Reagan came into office in 1981, it immediately started all over again. Many were detained without trial, many were tortured, and some are beginning to die again. I believe that's because a climate was created in which the South African government thought they could continue to do things with impunity. And in terms of where I am, working with people, knowing some of those who have gone into those jails and have come out broken, come out dead, I don't even want to talk about the philosophical arguments in terms of constructive engagement. All I know is the difference it made in terms of life and death for people in my country who are even more vulnerable and more defenseless, even more voiceless because this most powerful government in the world has seen fit to support the South Africans in whatever they do. And that is constructive engagement for millions of black people in my country. And by that standard and by that experience, we judge the U.S. administration. □

# The Church: Discordant and Divided

---

BY CHARLES VILLA-VICENCIO

---

**T**here is no escape — the churches, like all other institutions in South Africa, are an integral part of the overall socioeconomic and political structure of the country. They tend to reflect and even fuel, rather than ameliorate, the ideological conflicts that threaten to tear this land apart.

Any evangelical hope that Christians across the numerous divisions of this land will embrace one another in Christ and usher in a new age of peace and harmony is little more than idealistic utopianism. And any fanciful dream, which fires the hearts of some, that one day the church will stand up against the government and say "no more" is both naive and dangerous. There is no homogeneous church in South Africa, and the numerous individual churches and church groupings have been penetrated by every ideological option facing the people of this subcontinent.

## WHERE CHURCHES DIVIDE

An analysis of church institutions in South Africa will help provide an in-

---

Charles Villa-Vicencio, an ordained minister in the Methodist church, teaches in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. He is coauthor, with John DeGruchy, of *Apartheid is a Heresy* (Cape Town: David Philip, and London: Lutterworth, 1983). The book will also be published by Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

---



**Religious service in Cape Town squatter camp: "The churches contribute to ideological torment and division in South Africa"**

---

sight into the various ideological tensions within the country as a whole. First, there are those churches that for various historical reasons have come to symbolize the legitimization of the white status quo. These are essentially the three white Afrikaans Reformed churches — the powerful Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), with approximately 40 percent of the white population; the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk; and the Gereformeerde Kerk — commonly referred to collectively as the Dutch Reformed churches. In different ways, each of these churches has contributed quite explicitly to the emergence of Afrikaner

chauvinistic nationalism; together they have given birth to the ideology of apartheid; and they continue to support this policy. As a result, they have been excluded from every major ecumenical alliance in the world; and in South Africa, dialogue with them has been terminated by virtually all other major denominations.

Then there are those churches — the black mainline denominations — that for similar historical reasons have come to symbolize the legitimization of the black quest for liberation. These consist essentially of churches that belong to the Alliance of Black Reformed Christians in South Africa (Abreca), with the leadership of this alliance provided by the black Dutch Reformed churches: the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk (NG Mission church, consisting largely of the so-called Coloureds), the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika (the so-called Black NG church), and the Reformed Church in Africa (the so-called Indian NG church). This alliance, under the dynamic leadership of the Reverend Allan Boesak, has been largely responsible for the recent sustained theological attack on apartheid, which resulted in the decision of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) in Ottawa last year to declare apartheid a heresy.

A further major group of churches, numerically by far the largest group in South Africa, is the "nonracial" member and observer churches of the

South African Council of Churches (SACC). These are often referred to as the English-speaking churches, although the majority of their members are black and do not regard English as their first language. Until recently, the leadership of such churches has been white, with a few "token" exceptions. These churches have traditionally tried to adopt a nonaligned position regarding the political struggle, with a concerted desire to minister to all people in their need. They have sought to exercise an "objective" analysis of the political situation and have endeavored to proclaim both the grace and the judgment of God in a "value-free" manner to all people in all situations. These churches are less doctrinally self-conscious than either of the other groups already identified. They are also somewhat eclectic in their selection of theological and analytical tools and generally like to regard themselves as tolerant, liberal, and charitable. At worst, they tend to be a little cynically aloof from what are regarded as the mere passing political struggles of the day. At best, while leaning now to the right and now to the left, they possess a broad-based membership inclined to expose its individual members and groups to the claims, fears, hopes, dreams, and experiences of God that its different people have.

In short, it is difficult to absolutize or anathematize anything in these churches. And this is both their strength and their weakness. They have both produced an acquiescent stance in relation to the state and, at other times, made creative and brave prophetic stands against the government. It must also be said that these churches have produced, both by nurture and by reaction, some of the most dynamic black liberation leaders that the struggle against apartheid has known — Albert Luthuli, Lillian Ngoyi, Robert Sobukwe, Z.K. Matthews, Oliver Tambo, Helen Joseph, and Steve Biko, to mention but a few of the better known.

In more recent times, dynamic black leaders in these churches, such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, have provided us reason to suppose that they could become more directly engaged in the South African political arena. The question is whether such leaders, who

are still very much in the minority in these churches, will be able to move them out of their liberal tradition of constraint and caution.

There are also the black independent churches, which began to emerge in the last century in reaction to racial and other forms of domination in the missionary churches. Many of these churches are today regarded as apolitical. The leadership of the powerful Zionist Christian church, promoting an ethic of clean living and hard work, has for example repeatedly shown a willingness to support the present apartheid regime. Yet the roots of these churches are firmly planted in protest; the various independent churches have provided political leadership, and the large, black, grass-roots nature of their membership could ultimately prove them to be more politically relevant than they now appear to be.

Finally, mention must be made of those churches that deliberately choose not to become involved in sociopolitical issues and therefore support the status quo by default. This group consists mainly of exclusive, evangelical-charismatic churches. However, sometimes these churches generate a community of people who become a dynamic counterpolitical force in society — for example, the Mennonite churches and the entire Anabaptist tradition.

Given the labyrinthine nature of the churches in South Africa, it is clear that romantic talk of church-state confrontation in South Africa is both ambiguous and all too simplistic. Clearly there are individual and minority groups within most, if not all, churches who perceive that the moment to profess one's faith and to resist the present oppression has come. But then, prophets have always emerged in the most unexpected places. This is what makes Dr. Beyers Naude such a remarkable figure. As an Afrikaner of Afrikaners, and a one-time moderator of the white NGK, he has become the leading white dissident in the country. This is also what contributes toward Allan Boesak's being so significant. His voice has emerged from the NG Mission church, designed by the white NGK to be a servile instrument of racial segregation.

The question is whether dissident individuals and groups of Christians within the churches of South Africa can become a catalyst and force for meaningful change. Or will the dominant ideological divisions between them simply contribute to the impending chaos?

#### POLITICAL CURRENTS WITHIN THE CHURCHES

The above analysis shows that the sociopolitical forces within the churches can be reduced to three currents. The first encompasses those churches that explicitly legitimize the apartheid system. The ballast for this process has traditionally been provided by the Afrikaans Reformed churches, and judging from their response to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches decision, there is every indication that they will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. There is in fact increasing evidence not only that these churches are continuing to provide legitimation for apartheid, but that a significant section of the leadership and members are opposed even to Prime Minister P.W. Botha's hesitant and cautious program of reform.

Yet there is also reason to believe that more and more Christians from outside these churches, having hitherto opposed the naked racism of the regime, will find themselves being drawn into this legitimation process. There is a sustained attack on those who criticize the government from a theological perspective from rightist movements like the Gospel Defense League, which operates almost exclusively in the English-speaking churches. This, together with the seething discontent by groups of whites who threaten to break away from their churches because they are "too political," as well as the presence of the reactionary Catholic Defense League in the Roman Catholic church, augurs well for the legitimation of the present regime among white Christians.

Second, there are those churches providing soft legitimation of the status quo. P.W. Botha's alleged reformist policy will in the near future move South Africa away from explicit, obvious, and overt racism. This can only in-





Reformed Methodist church in Crossroads, Cape Town (above) and white Dutch Reformed church (right): "The discordant and divided church"

crease the likelihood of further support for the present government from the broad-based, liberal English-speaking churches. Petty apartheid will diminish; the so-called Coloureds and Indians will be brought into the cabinet; homeland leaders whose power is dependent on the Bantustan policy of the government will become increasingly cooperative; the army will become increasingly racially integrated; sports teams will include more black players; and universities will be allowed their quota of black students.

This scenario, promoted by the media, will convince many whites who have traditionally opposed the ruling Nationalist party that "things are improving." Then too, as this government continues to enjoy the support of the Reagans and Thatchers of this world and the "communist onslaught" is increasingly magnified throughout the Western world, the cooptation of larger sections of the church by the government will become increasingly likely. Liberal churches will, of course, not be totally convinced by all this, because there will need to be increased acts of naked aggression by the government against all of its opponents for this regime to survive. The liberal, "always fair" English churches will obviously find such exploits difficult to handle, and restrained opposition from the

churches will in turn probably be tolerated provided they do not question the legitimacy of the regime itself.

A quid pro quo is already quietly developing. Prophetic outbursts are accepted, provided the essential affirmation of South Africa as a Christian country fighting against the wiles of communism and liberal decadence is upheld. This government simply cannot afford, and will not tolerate, any church undermining its people's belief in their own integrity. For example, shortly before it was banned, the Christian Institute was criticized in Parliament for "trying to inculcate a feeling of guilt among the whites of South Africa." An increasing number of church leaders have learned this lesson and are anxiously determined not to cross this line.

This basic sensitivity on the part of church leaders, together with an inherent commitment by whites to maintain their privileged position in society, makes for a rather subservient and restrained church. Add to this the pressure being placed on churches in the black homelands to acquiesce and the influence of "new right" religious groups within all the major denominations, and there is little likelihood of the mainline English-speaking churches — or, for that matter, the Roman Catholic church — being prepared as institutions

to stand readily with uncompromising firmness against the present government.

The third current is embodied in radical Christianity, epitomized in the Ottawa resolution of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the stance taken by the SACC under the leadership of Bishop Desmond Tutu, and the liberation theology debate. Not all black churches affirm this position, and not all black people recognize Boesak and Tutu as their spokesmen any more than they recognize exiled, imprisoned, detained, or banned liberation figures as their leaders. The recent attack by Bantustan leaders on the African National Congress (ANC) and the SACC has, for example, made this point clearly. Black theology and liberation theology does provide food for the soul for some blacks, but others regard it as a foreign intrusion into the "pure" gospel.

What then is the role of the church, or more accurately the churches, in South Africa? The de facto answer is a simple one: they contribute to the ideological torment and division that eats away at the quality of life and human existence in South Africa. The more interesting question is: What, at the level of hard-nosed realism, can those Christians within the various churches be expected to contribute to-

ward meaningful change in this country?

## AN ORGANIZED CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CHURCHES

At one level the answer to this question is, not a great deal. There is much in addition to this discord and division that militates against the church's being an effective instrument for meaningful change in South Africa today. A vast system of security laws renders it virtually impossible for a person to offer any meaningful opposition to the government, as do the indiscriminate use of spies and paid informers and a sustained propaganda attack on the ecumenical movement both in South Africa and abroad.

Two commissions of inquiry have in recent times been appointed, which further contribute to undermining the witness of the church. The first is the Steyn Commission, appointed to investigate the press and the news media. Strangely enough, it produced among other things a 500-page report highly critical of liberation and black theologies. With this, the theologies that inspire and motivate many Christians, both black and white, in their quest for liberation and change suddenly became the focus of government inquiry and attack. The second is the better-known Eloff Commission of Inquiry into the South African Council of Churches. Again the theological basis of the SACC has come under consideration, as is clear from the initial address of Bishop Tutu to the commission: "It is our Christian faith . . . [that is] on trial. It is our Christianity, it is our faith, and therefore our theology that are under scrutiny, and the central matters at issue are profoundly theological." The testimony of the South African police to the commission is at once both extremely tedious and yet fearfully enlightening in this regard. It leaves no doubt that as far as the police are concerned the commitment of the churches to meaningful change in South Africa ought not to be tolerated.

Every meaningful attempt by Christians in South Africa to institute fundamental change has been crushed by the present government. This is clearly witnessed by the bannings of October

1977, which included the Christian Institute and its executive officers. And it appears in one way or another now to be the fate of the SACC.

It may just be, however, that such actions will have precisely the opposite effect to that hoped for by the government. The Eloff Commission, representing a further phase in a long and sustained attack by the present government on the church, may just thrust some of the churches in this land into a crisis, forcing them to face reality and to make political choices that are irrevocably for or against the process of liberation, and so accelerate the inevitable flow of history. The liberal illusions that the present government is prepared to hear criticism and institute change in response to theological and ethical persuasion may then be put to rest once and for all. There is clearly nothing less than an organized campaign by the present regime against Christian theology and the witness of the churches in South Africa today. Should the government be foolish enough to act boldly against the SACC, it may well help to make this clear to all who will hear. A more subtle response by the government could only prolong the advent of that moment of realization.

Such confrontation would usher in a new wave of persecution for Christians. This will, however, only increase the integrity and affirm the authenticity, in the eyes of the oppressed majority, of those Christians who are committed to live their faith amid the onslaught of the state.

### WHEN THE CHURCH IS THE CHURCH

Such confrontation could force a small but increasing number of Christians, scattered among the various churches, and others who have long since left these institutions, to reaffirm a radical faith in God that can only render all other allegiances and authorities relative and ultimately worthy of disdain. Such people realize that a church that is determined to be the church cannot compromise on radical obedience to God and that it is obliged to proclaim his liberating gospel in relation to every aspect of life. In so doing, the church dare not seek confrontation with the state. The church

must indeed pray that such confrontation does not come and must bear in mind that should such conflict occur, there is a sense in which it will lose and the state will triumph. Yet there is another sense in which the state can ultimately only be shipwrecked by such a confrontation. This the state knows, and that is why it is so determined to control and domesticate the church.

There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come. When this idea is nourished by a gut-level theological and religious motivation and sustained by a latent, broad-based groundswell of black grass-roots support, there is nothing in heaven or on earth that can contain it. This realization is gradually beginning to dawn on more and more people in and beyond the churches. Those who support and defend the white status quo will grow wary, and their resistance will ultimately fail. Those whose spirits may have been broken by years of oppression but who, at a deep and often inarticulated level, support the forces of liberation will gain a renewed sense of expectation. When that happens, the end of this age will not be far off, and the arduous and costly task of building a new one will begin. This is the simple story of history.

Those who perceive this can engage in no greater service to all the people who inhabit this subcontinent than to persuade all concerned that that moment is perilously close. If it is not ushered in with reason and restraint, the consequences could be such that this land with all its promise will not recover for generations to come. Any sane person can therefore only ask that it be ushered in creatively and with dignity. But that the new age will ultimately dawn is beyond all doubt.

Those persons who know this and who are sustained by a historical biblical faith shall, in the words of the prophet, "mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." To understand this deep-seated spirituality is to understand why it is that oppressive governments the world over do not quite know how to handle those peculiar persons who call themselves Christians. The South African government is no exception. □

# The Catholic Church and Apartheid

---

BY ARCHBISHOP DENIS E. HURLEY

---

**W**hite occupation of South Africa and racial discrimination are practically synonymous. The churches that came to South Africa to ensure pastoral care of immigrant whites and to engage in evangelization of the blacks generally accepted the situation as they found it and developed a two-dimensional approach with a fairly clear-cut dichotomy between the church for white settlers and the missionary church for the blacks.

Until well into the twentieth century, there was little by way of Christian conscience about this dichotomy, nor was there much by way of social concern about the racial segregation and economic exploitation that characterizes South Africa. This did not make the Christian scene in South Africa very different from what it was in other countries. It was merely the South African expression of the inadequate social dimension characteristic of Christianity the world over.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, the Anglican church in Johannesburg took the lead in Christian social concern under the inspiration of Trevor Huddleston, Michael Scott, and Bishop Geoffrey Clayton, later archbishop of Cape Town. After traditional segregation became more clearly and mercilessly formulated in 1948 in the policy of apartheid, Christian reactions

multiplied in the form of synodal resolutions, statements, and declarations.

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, constituted five years before, made its first statement in 1952, but was little involved in the political ferment that developed as blacks in South Africa launched wave after wave of agitation against the system they detested. Leading figures in the Anglican and English-speaking Protestant churches were much more committed. They were united in the Christian Council of South Africa, later the South African Council of Churches, which from the mid-1960s on came under the questioning and probing influence of the Christian Institute of which Dr. Beyers Naude of the Dutch Reformed church was the leading spirit.

By the mid-1970s, the Christian Institute and the South African Council of Churches were deeply involved with the black consciousness movements that had Steve Biko as their inspiration. The great collision between black consciousness and the South African regime occurred in 1976 when disturbances broke out among black high school students in Soweto near Johannesburg and spread to many other parts of South Africa. They resulted in 700 officially recorded deaths.

Steve Biko died in detention on September 12, 1977, and in October of that year the Christian Institute and 17 black consciousness organizations were suppressed, 70 persons were detained, and the leadership of the Christian Institute was banned. The curtain had come down on an impressive association between Christian concern and black

consciousness, in which a great step forward had been taken in the realization that the initiative for justice in South Africa would not come from white Christians who had too much to lose in terms of power and privilege, but rather from whatever black agitation that could be mounted, whether or not it included a Christian dimension.

The South African Council of Churches survived to battle on, and under the dynamic leadership of its first black general secretary, Bishop Desmond Tutu, continued to proclaim the essential connection between Christian concern and black aspirations.

Throughout all this hectic period of roughly 30 years, the Catholic church was far less conspicuous than representatives of other churches. I say "representatives" advisedly, for it cannot be held that the churches themselves nor even their leadership structures were involved to any great extent. The Christian involvement that took place was concentrated in a small number of persons who more by personal choice than by explicit church mandate worked in the Christian Institute or the South African Council of Churches to ensure a Christian presence among the black consciousness movements.

While observing a cautious reticence, the Catholic church associated itself with a certain amount of what was going on in the Institute and the Council of Churches. In the 1970s, as the lessons of the Second Vatican Council began to sink in, it began to involve itself more in practical action.

One of the first signs of greater practical involvement on the part of the Catholic church was the decision taken

---

Denis E. Hurley, OMI, archbishop of Durban, South Africa, is president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

---

by the Bishops Conference in February 1972 to study the possibility of integrating two regional seminaries for the training of diocesan clergy, one for black students, one for white students. Integration had already been achieved in a seminary run for its own students by the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in a rural area in Natal.

The process of integrating the two seminaries for diocesan students, St. John Vianney's in Pretoria and St. Peter's in Hammanskraal, got off to a slow start with inquiry and research. Just when it seemed on the point of consummation, everything blew up at the time of the Soweto disturbances in 1976. However, with patience and perseverance and goodwill on all sides, the issue was finally resolved three years later, and seminary integration is now an accomplished fact. An extraordinary upsurge in vocations to the priesthood has been registered in the last three years.

When the seminary situation was developing, the school issue was raised. In 1973, the Commission for Justice and Peace of the Archdiocese of Cape Town asked that an endeavor be undertaken to test South African law on racially mixed schools. The Department of Schools of the Bishops' Conference took up the issue, as did the Association of Women Religious. At the beginning of 1976 the issue broke into the headlines when a resolution of the conference favoring integration became known. By the end of that year and for some time thereafter, as the number of black pupils in the "open schools" continued to grow, the church and the government were locked in negotiations, with the latter trying, without an outright prohibition, to restrict to a minimum the number of admissions of black pupils to schools that had been exclusively white, and the former endeavoring to make that number meaningful. Within two or three years, the number became more than token. In terms of the law, indeed of the state constitution, the government could have come down hard. It preferred to condone and negotiate.

Given the small number of Catholic schools and pupils and given too the middle-class character of these fee-supported "open schools," the devel-

opment has little importance for South Africa as a whole and is still questioned by many blacks, but for others it is a practical proof of the church's resolve to shake off the shackles of apartheid.

In the meantime, efforts at more coherent pastoral planning had been launched. In July 1974 the Bishops' Conference passed a resolution to this effect and in due course the project came to be known as "Evangelization today in South Africa." Before reaching its final formulation, it was overtaken by other developments. In February 1977 the ordinary plenary session of the conference devoted three days to a consultation organized by its Department of Justice and Reconciliation. The emphasis in this consultation was on justice and reconciliation within the church and resulted in a Declaration of Commitment on Social Justice and Race Relations. By way of illustration, the following are some of the issues it dealt with: the promotion of black persons to positions of responsibility in the church, the appointment of black priests to the charge of white parishes, and the need to minister more effectively and visibly to squatters, political prisoners, detainees, and banned persons and their dependents.

The implementation of the declaration still leaves much to be desired. In regard to the appointment of black priests to predominantly white parishes, little has been done. However, black priests are in positions of responsibility in the General Secretariat of the Bishops' Conference and in St. Peter's Seminary in Hammanskraal. Ten black bishops were ordained between 1972 and 1982 and now constitute a third of the Bishops' Conference.

The final article of the declaration recommends: "To take into account the singular situation and resultant tensions of the church in South Africa, where 80 percent of the laity are black and 80 percent of the clergy white, and to investigate as a matter of extreme urgency the feasibility of a Pastoral Consultation in which lay people, religious, and priests, in large majority black, may participate with the bishops in arriving at policy on church life and apostolate, but not on doctrinal and canonical matters."

The organization of this pastoral consultation got under way in February

1978, and in the light of responses from diocesan consultations, the national event was held from August 29 to September 1, 1980 and dealt with six major themes: catechesis, liturgy, lay responsibility and adult formation, justice and reconciliation, marriage and family life, and youth. The consultation was an exciting and creative event but produced such a plethora of recommendations that the Bishops' Conference has not found it easy to deal with them. In January 1983 the conference decided to take up again the question of pastoral planning mooted in 1974 in an endeavor to reduce to more simple and manageable proportions all that the consultation had proposed.

At its plenary session of 1976, the Bishops' Conference, thanks to the good offices of the Young Christian Workers and their national chaplain, heard a presentation on the topic, "The Church's Mission to Workers in Industry." It was a timely subject because widespread strikes by black workers in 1973 had led to a significant development in the black trade union movement. In 1977 the conference set up a Department of Church and Industry under its Commission for Laity, and in 1982 held a special study day during its plenary session at which a number of leading black trade unionists spoke. This has led to the establishment of sympathetic links between the Bishops' Conference and some sectors of the black trade union movement, which are reflected at the parish level.

Further manifestations of the Catholic church's growing practical approach to South African issues are to be found in the attitude of abstention in regard to the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the South African Republic in May 1981 and in the publication of a statement by the Administrative Board opposing the organization of international rugby tours to and from South Africa. But the principal issue that came up that year was Namibia.

The Namibian situation had been festering for a long time. The guerrilla war had been in progress for 14 years, but it had not become a burning issue in church circles in South Africa. Not even the South African Council of Churches had placed it high on its agenda. There had been too many domestic issues to worry about. Then at

the beginning of 1981, an official of the Department of Justice and Reconciliation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference came back with a disturbing report. The conference decided that six of its members should visit Namibia to get first-hand information and that two of them, who happened to be planning overseas journeys, should include in their itinerary the five countries of the so-called Western Contact Group — Britain, Canada, France, the United States, and West Germany — negotiating with South Africa and SWAPO (South-West Africa Peoples Organization) for Namibia's independence.

The conference published its "Report on Namibia" in May 1982. It caused quite a sensation by its reference to atrocities attributed to members of the South African armed forces and to the commonly held opinion among black Namibians that the armed forces were an army of occupation more feared than SWAPO. The report went on to say that "whatever the Marxist tendencies of SWAPO, it seems to be a movement with powerful popular support inspiring little apprehension in the majority of Christians in Namibia and looked upon as a certainty to win any free and fair election under United Nations supervision"; and that it was clear enough to the bishops that "the great majority of Namibians have one overriding desire and that is the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435, resulting in a cease-fire, the withdrawal of South African security forces, and the holding of elections under United Nations auspices."

The visit to Namibia of the delegation from the Bishops' Conference was followed by visits from the British Council of Churches, the South African Council of Churches, and in 1983 by bishops and other representatives of the Anglican church. All these bodies reached the same conclusions as the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference and all were a strong endorsement of what the Council of Churches in Namibia had been saying for some time previously.

The Bishops' Conference called for a "Day of Prayer" for Namibia on November 14, 1982. Among the literature circulated for this occasion was a four-page abridged version of the "Report on Namibia." This, in January

1983, was declared undesirable literature by the South African Publications Board. It was characterized as "bordering on high treason." The abridged version contained nothing that had not been said in the original report, so why the former was banned and not the latter remains a mystery.

Concern about Namibia led inevitably to an intensification of concern about conscientious objection. The Bishops' Conference collaborated very closely with other churches in endeavoring to persuade the government to make generous allowance for conscientious objection. Little success was achieved.

In the course of discussion about the Namibian issue, members of the Bishops' Conference pointed out that the conference could hardly get so involved in this issue without showing equal concern for what was developing in the Republic of South Africa. This led the conference to take up again the question of pastoral planning both in regard to the internal life of the church and to its relations with South African society. This will obviously lead the church into further confrontation with the apartheid establishment at a time when conflict is intensifying.

The regime talks of a "total onslaught" against South Africa planned and orchestrated by Moscow. The African National Congress (ANC) would appear to be its immediate spearhead. The ANC celebrated its seventieth birthday last year. For 50 of these years, it had endeavored by pleading, persuasion, and peaceful protest to bring about a change in white attitudes. After the 1960 Sharpeville turbulence and the banning order inflicted on it, it went underground and initiated a campaign of limited violence, characterized by acts of sabotage with avoidance, as far as possible, of death or injury to persons. In due course, the leaders were arrested and imprisoned or fled the country. Among those imprisoned is the charismatic president, Nelson Mandela. The sabotage campaign continues to be organized from outside the country, carried out by young men who manage to leave South Africa, secure training in countries sympathetic to the ANC, usually Marxist ones, and infiltrate back into South Africa via neighboring states.

South Africa reacts to this by cross-border raids and various other destabilizing procedures.

While engaged in fending off the "total onslaught," South Africa is also busy with its internal organization. It is giving itself a new constitution in which the center of gravity moves from Parliament to an executive president and in which Coloured and Asian people are to be granted a whiff of participation in government. This whiff will not be granted to the African population whose political destiny is to be limited to the so-called homelands.

Internal organization will also include intensification of influx control, that is, of measures designed to regulate as strictly as possible the movement of Africans from the poverty-stricken rural areas into industrial and commercial centers in search of work. The goal of the present government is to persuade all the homelands to accept independence so that no single African would be a citizen of the Republic of South Africa. All would become *gastarbeiter* (foreign workers).

The pastoral planning of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference must obviously take all this into account and react to it. The reaction must be as ecumenical as possible. Moves in that direction are already taking place. As a foretaste of things to come, the conference, at its 1983 plenary session, decided against the publication of a "Report on Removals and Resettlement" along the lines of the "Report on Namibia," in order to collaborate with other churches in a broader-based report, which it is hoped will appear early in 1984. Removal and resettlement is the process whereby pockets of the black population are uprooted from their traditional homes in white areas and relocated in black areas, principally the so-called homelands.

In broad outline, these are the issues engaging the attention of the Catholic church in South Africa today. In this short essay, the treatment is inevitably partial. It has concerned itself exclusively with the leadership of the church and passed over in silence the multitude of less conspicuous, but often very meritorious, instances of witness to the Christian gospel at many levels of involvement in the life of the church. □

# Toward a State of Siege?

---

BY JOHN SEILER

---

The African National Congress' destructive car bombing in central Pretoria on May 20 marked a decisive shift in the conflict between the ANC and the South African government. The conscious change in tactics brought the anticipated reaction both in rhetoric and in the reprisal air attack on a Maputo suburb. Most South African whites support the government's swift reaction, and while the evidence is necessarily skimpy, one could safely assume that most blacks cheer the new ANC tactic. This heightened conflict makes more immediate the achievement of a South African siege state and will lead to still greater levels of conflict regionally and within the Republic. U.S. policy, near collapse over Namibia, has contributed to South African self-confidence in its regional policy. It now requires a thorough reappraisal.

## HOW DOES SOUTH AFRICA VIEW THE WORLD?

The South African reaction to the Pretoria bombing did not surprise attentive observers. It is not as if South Africa has been reticent about its views and policy goals. It is true that its present policy, "total response to total onslaught," involves an increasingly energetic effort to bring all South African resources to bear in defense and internal security programs, but the perspective and general policy approaches underlying this effort have been central to South African thinking for at least 20 years.

Pretoria has long believed that it is a special target of a monolithic international communist conspiracy that directs SWAPO and the ANC and to which Western governments and many individuals in public life give unintended support by adherence to liberal, humanist, and secular values that vitiate the fibre of Christian society. Recurrent South African attempts to achieve greater Western appreciation of this view and greater sympathy of its own policies intended to meet this threat seldom succeed enough to abate a sense of growing isolation. Sometimes traumatic Western failures — the withdrawal of tacit U.S. support for the 1975 South African invasion of Angola, for example — accelerate this

process. Increasingly, South Africa sees itself standing alone as a bulwark of Christian civilization in a continent that desperately needs its help and in the face of a profoundly threatening world.

For Pretoria, since the Angolan war, self-reliance has become the sole answer to the threat and to the isolation. That self-reliance was enhanced first by the Carter administration's inability to match its rhetorical attacks with any substantial pressure and, since 1981, by the Reagan administration's forthright endorsement of Pretoria's self-image and perspective on southern Africa. Preemptive attacks and economic destabilization are the major products of South African confidence in regional policy, but despite these punitive steps it still believes that its black neighbors will accept its own image of regional stability in return for South African economic assistance. How else to explain the apparently bizarre conjunction this past May of official talks with Mozambique on the improvement of relations followed in a few days by the retaliatory air attack on Maputo?

While ingenuousness better explains this behavior than the extraordinary cunning and manipulation sometimes imputed to Pretoria, it is true that vigorous calculation has become integral to its regional policy since the early 1970s. Its first flowering came in Eschel Rhoodie's antics as secretary for

---

John Seiler is a visiting associate professor at the University of Connecticut and visiting professor at the U.S. Army Institute for Military Assistance. He taught at Rhodes University in South Africa for four years and is completing a book with the title *South Africa: Toward a State of Siege?*

---

information, capped by his unsanctioned arrival in the Ivory Coast with the South African foreign minister to force President Houphouët-Boigny into bilateral talks, and his equally clumsy effort to buy the *Washington Star* in order to have a sympathetic outlet for South African views in the United States.

Since 1979 this calculative element has been institutionalized with the vitalization of the State Security Council and the rapid expansion of the Office of the Prime Minister. Increased staff, centralization of planning, and coordination in implementation have measurably improved the rationality and consistency of South African regional and internal security policies, but the values underlying these activities remain the near-paranoid ones common to almost all Afrikaners. The result is less regional stability as the government acts with greater aggressiveness to weaken what it perceives as its regional enemies.

Aside from its immediate destabilizing impact, some basic flaws in official political insight make South African regional initiatives even more hazardous. First, Pretoria still fails to distinguish adequately among communist governments and between them and SWAPO and the ANC. In its usual assumption that both nationalist movements are totally controlled by the Soviet Union, it forgets to its detriment the history of the Afrikaner nationalist movement as it reacted against British rule and cultural domination. Secondly, it repeatedly exaggerates the strength and impact of Cuban troops and East German and Soviet advisers in the region. For instance, in 1979, the South African government insisted that East Germany had 8,000 men in Angola, despite pointed rejoinders from U.S. observers that the total was less than 1,500.

#### WHITE VIEWS OF SOUTH AFRICAN REGIONAL POLICIES

It is not surprising that most whites share the government's perception of a threatening world and agree with government policy in reaction to that perceived threat. Afrikaner institutions — family, churches, schools, universities, newspapers, and the South African

Broadcasting Corporation — have projected this perception for more than three decades. Perhaps less obviously, given the American tendency to give undue weight to expressions of white liberals in South Africa, the social institutions of English-speaking whites have been only modestly less conservative.



Oliver Tambo (left) of ANC and SWAPO's Sam Nujoma (right): "Pretoria believes international communist conspiracy directs SWAPO and ANC"

Photo: Camerapix

The results of white attitudes are demonstrated clearly by the first nationwide poll of white opinion on foreign policy issues taken in February 1982. (See Deon Geldenhuys, "What Do We Think?: A Survey of White Opinion on Foreign Policy Issues," an occasional paper published in November 1982 by the South African Institute of International Affairs. There is yet to be a similar survey of black opinion, although polls of both black and white views on various domestic issues have been done since the early 1970s.) In Geldenhuys' survey, 79.9% of the respondents agreed with the government appraisal of the communist threat; 70.5% believed that Zimbabwe constituted a threat to South African safety; 81.1% supported military attacks on "terrorist" bases in neighboring black states "which support or harbor terrorists"; only 25.4% favored negotiation with SWAPO over Namibia's future; 72.3% believed that South Africa could win a military struggle against SWAPO; 77.2% believed a

"terrorist" war like that underway in Namibia was inevitable within the Republic; 73.1% were convinced that South African blacks had no reason to take up arms against the government; and 61.6% concluded that these same blacks could not be trusted in case of a war against South Africa. The illogic of the three last responses probably rests on the common white conviction that blacks are easily manipulated by the ANC without any genuine self-motivation.

The connections of opinions to language and political preferences were determined. Although Progressive Federal party (PFP) supporters among English-speakers were critical of government domestic policies, their differences about foreign policy were usually slight. On the question of "hot pursuit" and preemptive raids, 73.2% of the PFP supporters agreed with government policy, compared to 86.2% among National party supporters. Only on the Namibian question was there a substantial PFP difference: 51.6% supported negotiations with SWAPO and 52.7% believed that South Africa could not win the war against SWAPO. But PFP support among English-speaking whites remains small, with as many supporting the Natal-based New Republic party and an even larger portion voting for the National party.

In short, most whites see no alternative to present government emphasis on self-reliance and the strengthening of white military resources against an inevitable communist-inspired war within the Republic. This widespread siege mentality must profoundly disappoint those people inside and out of South Africa who believe that regional stability requires a less bellicose attitude by the South African government and its white supporters.

#### IS PEACEFUL CHANGE POSSIBLE?

Given South African regional actions and the results of this opinion poll, it is necessary to ask whether any hope remains for that "relatively peaceful change" discussed in the 1981 Rockefeller Commission report. Changing white attitudes, changing government regional and domestic policies, and changing institutional arrangements would all contribute to an optimistic as-

assessment. But the government, in both its regional and domestic policy formulation, ignores public opinion surveys. A classic instance involves polls showing white rejection of the Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts. The government is concerned with constituent opinion, of course, as its preoccupation with a few thousand voters in the three May by-elections shows. It moved back from support of Dirk Mudge when Namibian NP supporters combined with NP backers in the Republic in a way that seemed to threaten party and parliamentary approval of the tri-part constitution plan, as it had done in 1979 over Dr. Koornhof's proposal to permit the Crossroads squatters to stay on that site when several NP parliamentary caucus members from the Western Cape complained to Prime Minister Botha.

A reversal of white support for present regional policy seems unlikely, unless the Namibian fighting rises to a much higher level. Then, English-speaking whites might shift their views drastically although Afrikaners are unlikely to do so. That shift might translate into enough added parliamentary seats for the PFP to weaken the NP hold. Then, and only then, the government might adjust its Namibian policy to recoup English-speaking support. But it is equally possible that it might continue its present policy based on unswerving Afrikaner support and ignore the English-speaking change in sentiment as contemptible and disloyal.

Given these patterns of white support and official preoccupation with NP constituent views — a concern that gives far greater weight to *verkramp* deviations than to *verligte* ones — nothing but limited resources will halt Pretoria's commitment to what it perceives as effective response to the "total onslaught." Within government, more and more centralization in decision making seems likely, running contrary to parallel efforts to provide greater scope for local governance in black townships and hindering tentative efforts to work out schemes for regional administration combining black and white government units — KwaZulu and Natal; Soweto and other Rand townships and Johannesburg.

In the larger society, separation of ethnic groups will remain the government's guiding principle — in the distinction between urban blacks and homeland blacks, in universities, and in residential areas. While its necessarily more pragmatic approach to economic policy issues apparently muddles effective separation, the government will keep trying to maintain control over an increasingly fluid situation. Encouragement of increased training and education, and provision of better housing and related services for some blacks will be offset by efforts to restrict the flow of rural blacks into cities and to keep the black trade unions from becoming national focal points for black political aspirations. In all this, the present coordination between the South African Defense Force and the police will grow.

The unchecked South African inclination to regional military reprisals and economic destabilization will have several related results. Black opinion in South Africa will harden in favor of the ANC and against peaceful change. More slowly, the level of fighting will increase as more young blacks leave the Republic for military training and as the level of their fighting skills and arms improves.

Pretoria's reaction to this pattern is not likely to be rigorous self-examination. It is much more likely to blame the ANC and SWAPO once again, to insist that it faces an implacable communist threat, and to demand more sacrifices from whites and blacks alike. In time, it would move toward a siege state — one whose very justification and modus operandi are articulated in terms of the self-generated threats to its existence.

#### WHAT SHOULD THE U.S. POLICY RESPONSE BE?

Disinvestment or dismissal might appear the most appropriate U.S. policies, given this ultimately self-destructive South African dynamic, but the human and economic costs within the Republic and in southern Africa would be too great to justify either alternative. No short-run policy will work, but a steady longer-term commitment to the expansion of influence of both pragmatic Afrikaners and educated blacks

would have a modest chance of effectiveness. The "critical mass" of pragmatists among Afrikaners in public life is still too minute to have much impact, but in a decade or so their numbers could grow substantially, especially if simultaneously the size and quality of a black group ready to take up productive roles in the economy and larger society continues to grow at the rate of the past few years. If any accommodation between white and black can be made in South Africa, it will come between these groups — not between *verkramp* Afrikaners and the masses of semi-educated, partly rural blacks neither trained in nor desirous of making their way in an industrial urban setting.

But it will not come soon, and in the interim, U.S. policy needs to avoid some mistakes made by both liberal and conservative administrations. The present administration has erred by first appearing to endorse South Africa's regional assumptions and goals, and increasingly, in the past year, explicitly sharing them — the demand that regional stability requires the removal of Cuban forces from Angola. Previous Democratic administrations and their liberal friends in U.S. foundations erred by assuming righteousness that institutional creations of apartheid — homelands, township councils, black universities — were by their very act of creation made unworthy of American support. That attitude is slowly changing, but it must be put totally aside. Black institutions in South Africa, regardless of their genesis, must be judged on their intrinsic achievement and potential. Some are indeed made rotten by their official masters, but others seem to grow more independent in that tension.

An effective U.S. policy would thus combine encouragement for pragmatic Afrikaners and blacks with efforts to make clear to Pretoria that our views of the region are quite distinct from its views. To bolster that distancing, and simply to provide some increased security, the U.S. should give considerably greater economic aid to the independent nations in the region and should also consider giving them modest amounts of security training and arms. □



July-August 1983

## Polisario pulls out of OAU summit to 'safeguard African unity'

A collapse of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit in Addis Ababa was averted when the Polisario Front agreed to leave the meeting, temporarily ending the crisis which had threatened the OAU's existence. States opposing the seating of the Front, led by Morocco, had threatened to boycott the summit in protest.

Ibrahim Hakim, foreign minister of the Polisario's Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), said that the decision to pull out was voluntary and "in conformity with our wish to safeguard African unity." He stressed, however, that his organization was only removing itself from this summit meeting, not from the OAU itself.

In return for withdrawing, the Polisario was able to gain one concession from Morocco's allies who ac-

cepted a resolution calling on Morocco to negotiate a cease-fire directly with the Polisario. Morocco has thus far refused to negotiate directly with the Front, claiming that the Polisario guerrillas were mercenaries supported by Algeria and Libya. While accepting the call for a cease-fire, Morocco held to its refusal to negotiate directly.

The Polisario question has paralysed the OAU since February 1982, when Edem Kodjo of Togo, the former secretary-general of the OAU, decided, at a meeting of foreign ministers in Addis Ababa, to admit the Front under the name of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic.

In response, Morocco led a 19-nation boycott which forced the cancellation of last year's summit meeting in Tripoli. As leaders ar-

rived in Addis Ababa for this year's meeting, the Polisario issue was again threatening to force a cancellation. Morocco and its allies could easily have prevented the conference from assembling the requisite 34-member quorum, but the 26 states which recognize the Polisario Front threatened to hold the meeting without a quorum, possibly resulting in a permanent split within the ranks of the OAU.

Closing the summit, the new chairman of the OAU, Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia, referred to the settlement saying, "We have proved that one of Africa's traditions is collectively consulting together to seek solutions to common problems." But, as the beginning of the summit was delayed over the Saharan issue, the closing was also

*Continued on page 25*

## ANC warns of new attacks on 'enemy forces' and foreign firms

The acting president of the banned African National Congress, Oliver Tambo, said that May's Pretoria bombing—the worst such attack in South Africa's history—signals a change in strategy from sabotaging installations to "attacking the enemy forces."

Seventeen people were killed and about 190 wounded in the bombing, most of them civilians according to the South African government, but as many as half the casualties may have worked for the armed forces, according to other sources.

The toll could have been much higher as hundreds of military personnel would normally have gathered in the street to await transport just minutes after the bomb went off. Thus, there was speculation that they were the intended target.

Tambo also warned that foreign firms operating in South Africa may be subject to attack. "Foreign firms have become militarized," he said.

"Foreign capital is now part of South Africa's military might."

Tambo had warned last December after the South African commando raid into Lesotho, in which 42 people were killed, that many black South Africans did not understand the ANC's policy of restraint. "We will move in the direction dictated by our people," he said then.

In South Africa, the car bombing may have bolstered black support for the ANC. The Azanian People's Organization, which is black consciousness-oriented rather than multiracial like the ANC, said it deplored the loss of life but pointed out that "in our country . . . meaningful bargaining is only left to the barrel of a gun." Inkatha leader Gatsha Buthelezi said he was absolutely opposed to violence but the government was in a position to prevent the occurrence of "such atrocities."

The blast may have been timed to

underline blacks' anger at the constitutional "reform" bill, currently being debated in parliament, which will give Coloureds (mixed-race people) and Asians a limited share of power in the parliament. The bill completely excludes the black majority and is opposed by virtually the full range of black political opinion.

The South African government may not have calculated the extent of black opposition to the bill. At rallies, Buthelezi, who is also a homeland leader, refers to the bill in four-letter obscenities and is enthusiastically cheered. A white political scientist said he thought the Pretoria bombing was "a crucial warning" to the government to reconsider the exclusion of blacks. (London *Guardian*, May 24, 1983; Johannesburg *Star*, May 23, 1983; Sowetan, May 23, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 23, 1983.) □

# National policies at fault in Africa's chronic food shortages

This year's disastrous drought, which has affected large parts of every region of Africa, is calling new attention to Africa's chronic shortage of food. "The Green Revolution," which transformed agriculture throughout the rest of the Third World, has largely bypassed Africa. Africa is the only region in the world where per capita food production has declined over the last 20 years. Reliable figures show that total African production of major food crops was 14 percent less in 1980 than in 1961. As a consequence, malnutrition and famine can afflict Africa even in the absence of drought. In many countries, 25 to 30 percent of the population is malnourished most of the year regardless of climatic conditions.

Africa's climate is certainly a large part of the problem, for much of the continent is either too wet or too dry for most crops, while infestations of the tsetse fly render much of Africa's arable land unusable. But natural conditions alone are not sufficient to explain the desperate state of food production in Africa.

Far more often, public policy inhibits adequate production and equitable distribution of food. One of the most damaging legacies of the colonial period is the continuing emphasis on the export of commodities such as minerals, oil, cocoa, coffee, and sugar. Much of the best land in Africa is either mined or given over to the cultivation of crops used predominantly for export. Domestic farm production suffers from the lingering perception that food is not a source of wealth.

Agriculture has never received a large proportion of budget allotments in most African countries. Commodity production, administrative development, and the military—which in some countries, such as Zambia and Mauritania, consumes around 10 percent of the gross national product—have all assumed greater priority than agriculture. The production of food has been so severely neglected by African governments that the continent now imports more food than petroleum. Africa now receives 50 percent of the world's aid supplies of grain, and African grain imports have doubled in just the last five years. Nigeria, once a large agricultural exporter, imported more than a billion dollars' worth of food in 1981.

In parts of Africa it is common for state grain agencies to pay farmers artificially low prices, on the theory that cheap grain ensures the popularity of the government among the mass of consumers. This pricing policy is not only a sharp deterrent to increased production. It encourages the development of a black market, with massive quantities of food sold illegally or smuggled into neighboring countries where currency exchange rates are more favorable.

In Mali, for example, a 1980-81 study revealed that the government paid farmers 23 Malian francs less per kilo than the actual cost of producing the grain, and that farmers could obtain 30 to 50 percent more for their rice by smuggling it outside the country. The depressed producer prices also cause "rural exodus." Farmers who cannot earn an

adequate living are forced to migrate to the cities, reducing the agricultural work force and increasing the restive city population demanding cheap food.

In other countries, forced displacement of large populations leaves arable land untended or overcrowded. The movement of armies, or the influx of refugees, can cause settlement patterns to change without warning. Often, however, African governments intentionally resettle large numbers of people, as in Tanzania's *ujamaa* villages, or as in Togo, where several thousand farmers were expelled without compensation from lands to be set aside for game reserves.

On the other hand, governments often force nomadic groups to "settle down" in one location. The nomadic life is well-suited to regions with sparse vegetation, but when nomads settle in one place, their herds tend to strip the land bare, usually resulting in irreversible desertification.

The food crisis becomes even more critical in the context of Africa's rapidly expanding population. Some countries, including Kenya, Malawi, Ivory Coast, and Cameroon, have made advances toward self-sufficiency in food, but there is little hope that food production in Kenya can keep pace with the country's population, which is expected to double by the end of the century. Most other African countries, even those whose food production is increasing, face the same predicament.

According to many observers, aid from the West has caused almost as much, and possibly more

## PER CAPITA ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF GRAIN IN AFRICA

(kg. per capita)

	1961-65	1975	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Wheat	21	21	20	22	21	18	20	19	16
Maize	54	62	62	64	53	58	66	62	52
Millet & Sorghum	64	51	45	49	44	44	45	44	41
Rice	19	19	19	18	18	18	19	19	18

\* Provisional figures.

\*\* Estimated.

Sources: FAO, USDA.

harm than good. The tremendous amounts of food imported by many African countries have created a kind of "welfare mentality," rooted in the belief that relying on free, or cheap, imported food is simpler than developing a solid policy of domestic agricultural production. Furthermore, most Western "experts" are not qualified in tropical or desert food production. Other Westerners insist that "high-yield" grains such as wheat and rice should be substituted for traditional African staples such as cassava and yams. In many countries, however, no market yet exists for the high-yield grains, which are alien to the African diet.

Some countries have begun to confront the food crisis on their own, but it is not easy to find solutions to so complex a network of problems. The simple expedient of raising producer prices is not a popular measure among consumers, and the diversion of emphasis from producing commodities to producing food creates an immediate drain on the flow of foreign exchange.

Nevertheless, some countries are devoting a greatly increased amount of money and effort toward the improvement of their agricultural production. Nigeria, alarmed at the sudden decrease in its oil revenue, is perhaps the boldest example. The 1983 budget proposed by President Shehu Shagari's government quadruples the allocation for agriculture to a total of over \$700 million.

Hope is also offered by new agricultural technology. A fast-growing hybrid pea has been developed at the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria, and new breeds of rice, maize, and manioc have been created by researchers in Africa and elsewhere. Irrigation is becoming more widely recognized as a vital part of agricultural planning.

Some first signs of improvement are beginning to appear. But distinguished observers warn against false optimism. Most experts feel that Africa will not become agriculturally independent until at least the year 2000. The catastrophic drought of 1982-83 is, they say, more a symptom than a cause of the crisis in African agriculture. (London *Guardian*, May 20, 1983; London *Times*, May 15, 1983; *Baltimore Sun*, May 5, 1983; *FAO Food Out-*

*look*, April 26, 1983; *Kenya Weekly Review*, April 1, 1983; *USDA World Agriculture Outlook and Situation*, March 1983.) □

## OAU continued

delayed in a dispute over who would succeed Kodjo as OAU secretary-general.

Neither of two rival candidates proposed by Mali and Gabon could attract a sufficient majority of votes to be elected, and after 20 ballots the Organization named an assistant secretary-general, Peter Onu of Nigeria, as acting secretary-general until next year's meeting in Conakry, Guinea. (*New York Times*, June 13 and 14, 1983; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 11, 1983; *London Times*, June 9, 1983; *London Guardian*, June 9, 1983.) □

## WESTERN AFRICA

### Chad

● Chadian and Nigerian forces have clashed in the Lake Chad area in a dispute over the border demarcation. Early reports from Nigeria stated that Chad lost 300 men and that 100 Nigerians were killed in the fighting in late May. The government-owned *New Nigerian* newspaper reported that Nigeria had launched a counter-offensive to retake an island in Lake Chad occupied by Chadian troops. Other Nigerian press reports have accused Chad of attempting to annex Nigerian villages with the aid of French mercenaries. The same reports claimed that 3000 Nigerian fishermen from five villages have been made homeless and the villages looted by Chadian invaders.

According to a statement from Lagos, Nigerian troops have been routinely stationed in the border area to protect the people, who are frequently harassed by Chadians crossing to extort food and money. Nigeria claimed that its troops were first fired upon in mid-April, and after firing back to protect themselves, they were met with heavy artillery and mortar fire.

Diplomatic sources in Lagos said that they had reliable reports that Nigerian troops were battling to recapture the islands, but they believed that Nigerian newspaper ac-

counts had exaggerated the scale of the fighting.

Part of the problem is that falling water levels in the lake have resulted in the appearance of new islands, which are being used as hideouts by Chadian rebels.

The clashes with Nigeria placed Chadian President Hissene Habré's already beleaguered government in an even more precarious position. In early May, Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi visited Lagos, after which ousted Chadian President Goukouni Woddeye's radio broadcasts quickly announced a "rap-prochement" between Nigeria and Habré's arch foe, Qaddafi.

Habré had been in Lagos just prior to Qaddafi's visit for a meeting of the Chad Basin Commission countries, but quickly left after learning of the Libyan leader's impending arrival. According to one report, Nigeria's President Shehu Shagari attempted to convince Qaddafi to soften his support for Woddeye. But the visit, along with Chad's new problem with Nigeria, raised the hopes of Woddeye's forces, which have claimed a series of victories in past months.

In late May, Lagos Radio announced that the border clashes had ended and that the troops had returned to the positions they had held before the fighting. The Nigerian Minister of External Affairs, Ishaya Audu, said that both long and short-term solutions to the border problem had been found. A joint border patrol, which had existed before the "slide into anarchy in Chad," will be revived and the Lake Chad Basin Commission will set up a committee to clearly demarcate the common borders of the four member countries, Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon.

The minister emphasized that a state of war had never existed between Nigeria and Chad. He



blame anti-Habré guerrillas for inciting the clashes and also corrected the earlier casualty figures, saying that only nine Nigerian and 75 Chadian soldiers lost their lives.

On the very day that these announcements were being made in Lagos, reports from Ndjamená were claiming that towns in Chad were under heavy bombardment from Nigerian aircraft.

Also in late May, a London newspaper carried a report that rebel forces were "closing in on the capital, Ndjamená . . ." The Habré government complained to the UN Security Council that Libyan troops were attacking in the northern regions. Military sources in Chad reported heavy fighting in the northern town of Faya Largeau but denied rebel claims that the town had been captured by Woddeye's forces. "There is fierce fighting in the area but we have beaten back Libyan troops and their mercenaries and we are in control," a spokesman said. Woddeye's forces continue to deny that Libyans are fighting with them. (London *Times*, May 28, 1983; Lagos Radio, May 27, 1983; London *Observer*, May 22, 1983; London *Times*, May 20, 1983; *New York Times*, May 18, 1983; Tripoli Radio, May 16, 1983.)

## Gambia.

• The April reshuffle of the Senegalese cabinet necessitated a change in the confederal Senegambian council of ministers. The new defense minister of Senegal, Medoune Fall, has switched his Senegambian portfolio from security to defense. His former security post in the confederal cabinet has been assumed by Ibrahima Wone, the new interior minister of Senegal. The Senegambian minister of transport is now Robert Sagna, who is also Senegal's minister of supply and equipment.

Another step toward Senegambian confederation went less smoothly. The publisher of *Le Politicien*, a Senegalese monthly satire magazine, launched an English-language Gambian edition in May, declaring that coverage on both sides of the border would provide a genuine contribution to unity between the two states. The journal appeared—carrying a cartoon of Gambian President Dawda Jawara and

referring to his fondness for playing golf—only to have its entire press run impounded by Gambian authorities. Members of the magazine's staff were arrested, held briefly, and then released. Despite its brush with the law, the journal plans to continue publication. (*Jeune Afrique*, May 11, 1983; Dakar Radio, May 7, 1983.)

## Ghana

• Ghana has introduced a multiple-tier exchange rate system of export subsidies and import surcharges in an attempt to combat the country's chronic balance of payments deficit without resorting to devaluation. Though the official exchange rate remains unchanged, the government has added a surcharge of 7.5 times the the official value of the transaction to the prices of items such as imported oil, tractors, and raw materials. Airline tickets and other luxury items are now saddled with a surcharge of 9.9 times the official transaction rate, plus a 5 percent tax. Similarly, exports of cocoa, timber, and other goods will bring 7.5 times the official rate and money earned from tourism will be 9.9 times the official rate.

The budget which was announced in early May has stabilized the prices of rice, maize, and sugar and lowered the price of soap, but nearly every other consumer item is now more expensive. The price of beer has doubled and meat now costs four times what it did before. The price rises were in part offset, however, by increases in the minimum wage and measures which brought the salaries of public servants more in line with those of the private sector.

Announcing the new budget, Flight Lieut. Jerry Rawlings said in a radio broadcast, "There is a great deal of hunger in the country. It is hard to ask someone who has already tightened his belt to the last hole to go and make an additional hole to tighten it even further." Continuing his explanation of the new budget, Rawlings noted that Ghana's economy had been steadily declining since 1975 and that past governments had avoided confronting the economic problems as a matter of political expediency. He said that his government was not seek-

ing political gains and had the courage to do what was necessary.

Rawlings, who has already survived two serious attempted coups, is clearly aware that devaluations and price increases are politically volatile issues in Ghana. This accounts for the government's avoidance of an across-the-board devaluation even though the current measures will have much the same result. While avoiding these internal political pitfalls, Ghana must also impress upon the IMF its resolve to combat its balance of payments deficits and to adjust its overvalued currency as a condition for receiving a \$300 million credit.

The budget has met with resistance from the Ghanaian Trade Union Congress (TUC) and from students. The TUC said that the government's decision to adjust wages without consulting the union was a serious attack on the concept of free and collective bargaining and violated the International Labor Organization convention to which the government is a signatory. The wage adjustments, they protested, were not enough to compensate for the "excessively high rates of increases" in the prices of consumer goods. "We wish to state that the repercussions of these increases are going to unduly affect the working people . . ." The TUC also called upon the people to exercise restraint at this critical moment of the nation's history.

Students have also protested the budget but have exercised less restraint than the workers. It was reported that workers at Accra's Legon University prevented the students from attacking journalists, and the university Workers' Defense Committee later issued a statement calling for the closure of the university. They said that the students would understand the crisis if they went home instead of sitting on campus eating three times a day at the government's expense. Another clash between students and workers was reported at Kumasi university. Earlier, students had rallied in Accra to demand that Rawlings turn power over to a "government of national unity." (London *Guardian*, May 9, 1983; *The Economist*, May 7, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 4, 1983; Accra

Radio, May 2, 1983; Ghana *Echo*, May 1, 1983.)

● Cocoa prices reached a three-year high spurred by concern over political unrest in Ghana. The drought, and fires in west Africa, as well as demonstrations and threatened strikes in Ghana could result in a drop in production of 80,000 tons this year. Other relevant factors are sharply increased fuel prices and greater producer demand.

In order to take advantage of the higher prices Ghana will have to put a stop to smuggling. It is estimated that 20 percent of the country's cocoa crop is being sold illegally in Togo and Ivory Coast.

The government is now offering a higher price for the crop and, more importantly, regular payments to farmers. Because of past low prices and the irregularity of payment, farmers converted much of their land to other crops. In the last 20 years, Ghana's cocoa output has dropped 50 percent from its former world-leading production. (*Financial Times*, May 18 and 20, 1983.)

## Ivory Coast

● President Félix Houphouët-Boigny visited with President Reagan in Washington in early June to discuss, among other issues, dropping commodity prices and their effect on Ivory Coast. Houphouët-Boigny received high praise from Reagan and from administration officials who commented that the Ivory Coast looks to the Reagan administration "to pose a real block to further Soviet expansion in Africa . . ."

Ivory Coast's 23 years of peaceful pro-Western free enterprise have earned it the respect of the Reagan administration, but behind the praise is concern that the country's stability is being threatened. A strike by secondary school teachers in late April brought many of the country's problems to the surface.

The teachers were striking to protest a government decision to cancel their free housing privileges which, they claimed, reduced their real income by approximately 70 percent. The president charged that the strike was inspired by a Libyan-backed conspiracy. "Today the Ivory Coast is considered an anti-communist bastion to be de-

stroyed," he warned.

Though the strike was settled after two weeks, there is evidence that Houphouët-Boigny's popularity and influence may have been permanently eroded. The teachers' strike had popular backing, and support from public servants in Ivory Coast, some of whom joined the strike to demonstrate solidarity with the teachers. Houphouët-Boigny's verbal attacks upon the teachers resulted in a debate about the president's own wealth and brought out charges of corruption against his family.

Responding to charges that he had amassed a fortune outside of the country, the president said, "I have billions abroad in Switzerland, but I also have billions in the Ivory Coast, which proves that I have confidence in my country." Later, realizing that the remark had been indiscreet, the president apologized. "I have said a lot . . . I even said too much and I am sorry for that."

Charges of corruption were also leveled in relation to the construction of the new capital, an "African Versailles," in Houphouët-Boigny's hometown of Yamoussoukro. The president and his immediate family own much of the land in the area. They stand to earn massive profits as property values are certain to soar when the government begins to shift to the new capital.

Falling coffee and cocoa prices have hurt Ivory Coast's economy and fueled unrest in the country, especially among the young educated elite who face an uncertain future. Students recently held demonstrations in Yamoussoukro, chanting, "Long live the second republic."

With a debt of \$7 billion and debt service taking 40 percent of export revenues, it is likely that the International Monetary Fund will demand more austerity measures from the Ivory Coast government, further testing Houphouët-Boigny's hold on the country. (*Business Week*, May 30, 1983; *Washington Post*, May 13, 1983; *West Africa*, May 9, 1983; Abidjan Radio, April 29, 1983.)

## Liberia

● Three years after seizing power in one of Africa's bloodiest coups,

Liberia's military rulers are making substantive moves toward a long-promised return to civilian government. In mid-April, the ruling People's Redemption Council (PRC) accepted a draft constitution which, pending final approval, is due to be enacted in April 1985.

Head of State Samuel Doe said that the draft constitution was "currently being circulated throughout the nation so that all our citizens will have an opportunity to carefully examine its provisions and make constructive inputs to that historic document." The draft will then be discussed by an elected assembly and finally voted upon by the Liberian people in a national referendum. The method by which the assembly will be elected has not been announced and is the subject of much speculation since Doe has recently re-emphasized the ban on all political activity.

The draft constitution appears to be closely modeled after that of the U.S. It calls for a president, a vice president, a senate, a house of representatives, and political parties. Under this proposal, the president would be elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term and would be restricted to two consecutive terms in office. The draft also provides for, and stresses the importance of, an independent judiciary.

At the same time that he announced the coming elections, Doe also declared that any government official wishing to stand for election would have to resign from the government by the end of April of this year. The announcement prompted speculation that Doe might be less than sincere about the proposed changes and that he might be using the lure of elections to expose disloyal elements within his government. Doe denied these charges and said that he had often warned members of his government against engaging in political activity, which he felt undermined their ability to serve the Liberian people. Still, the signals from Monrovia have been confusing and Doe's explanations have been received with some skepticism. Three officials had resigned when the deadline passed.

If Liberia successfully makes the transition from military to civilian rule it will be only the second Afri-

can country to do so. The first was Nigeria, where the military stepped aside after 13 years in 1979. (*West Africa*, May 2 and 23, 1983; *Washington Post*, April 17 and 30, 1983.)

## Niger

• While President Seyni Kountché was on a state visit to Guinea in early May, rioting broke out on the campus of the agronomy school at the University of Niamey.

The unrest began in March when a group of students returned from field work in the interior of Niger. Traditionally, the students on these expeditions had the choice of being graded individually or collectively. This year, however, the university administration decided to grade the students individually, with a single grade awarded for all four field trips made by each student. The students refused to accept the decision and in response, the administrators gave the students a "collective zero" instead. The students then called a general strike, during which they "sequestered" several university officials. A police officer was taken hostage near the university, after which the military police intervened "vigorously" to rescue their colleague whom, they later alleged, the students had tortured.

The show of force by the police incited larger protests during which 250 students were taken into police custody. One student died while being held in an army barracks, and several thousand students later rallied in the streets outside the morgue where his body was kept.

Although student unions throughout the country demonstrated in solidarity, the tension eased after Kountché returned from his trip abroad. By the middle of the month, the government announced that the schools had been reopened and the strike leaders suspended.

The student protests were not the first of their kind in Niger, but they were the largest and most widely supported. (*Afrique-Asie*, May 23, 1983; *Le Monde*, May 5, 11, 12 and 20, 1983.)

## Nigeria

• After meetings with private bankers in London and New York, it appears that Nigeria has reached an agreement on the refinancing of its

\$5 billion of arrears on trade payments.

"There has been progress in terms of the banks putting together an agreement to provide enough funds to give Nigeria some breathing space," the *New York Times* was told by a source who asked not to be identified. "Specifically we're talking about rescheduling \$1.5 billion of Nigeria's arrears with a three-year maturity and a grace period until January 1984. In other words, no payments before then."

The *Financial Times* reported that the main elements of the package were:

—Existing arrears on letters of credit will be rolled into a three-year medium-term loan to the Nigerian Central Bank. The extent of the arrears on letters of credit is uncertain, but they are believed to total about \$2 billion, less than half of Nigeria's trade arrears, and are owed to about 20 banks;

—It has been made a condition of the package that all banks involved must disclose their exposure to Nigeria;

—Banks' lines of credit to Nigeria will be maintained at previously agreed levels as the medium-term loan is repaid;

—A bank coordinating committee will be established to consult the Nigerians, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank to determine how much in new loans, if any, is needed by Nigeria; and

—The proposed three-year loan to cover arrears on letters of credit will be excluded from any future debt rescheduling.

After acceptance by the European banks, a formal offer based upon these proposals was due to have been made to the Nigerians in late June.

Earlier in the negotiations, the European banks proposed combining all of the arrears into an unconditional loan, but the American banks insisted that the refinancing be part of a more comprehensive program aimed at rectifying Nigeria's economic problems. The Americans have been pressuring Nigeria to approach the IMF for assistance and to agree to accept the austerity measures that the Fund imposes as a condition for its aid. Nigeria did meet with IMF officials

in Lagos and in Washington in late May, but there is no chance that the country will accept an IMF stabilization package prior to next September's presidential election, since any attempt at belt-tightening could only serve to hurt the re-election chances of President Shehu Shagari.

"The Nigerians are definitely serious about getting the IMF loans," said one banker. "But the commercial bankers understand that the Nigerians couldn't put together a program with the IMF until after the elections even if they wanted to." (*New York Times*, May 25, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 24, 1983.)

• The mid-April death of Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) presidential candidate Aminu Kano has added a new element of uncertainty to Nigeria's August elections. Most analysts agree that his death will spell the end for the already fractured PRP and that the hand of the Nigerian People's Party (NPP) will be significantly strengthened, possibly providing a margin of victory over President Shehu Shagari's National Party of Nigeria (NPN).

A key element in this projection is the late April defection of Kano state governor Abubakar Rimi from the PRP to the NPP. Rimi headed a dissident "progressive" faction of the PRP known as Imoudu which was denied permission to stand as an independent party by the Federal Election Commission (FEDECO). Rimi resigned his governorship under the PRP to contest the office as a member of the NPP. "With Aminu Kano's death and our exit from the party, it would be wishful thinking to expect whatever remains of the PRP to survive for long no matter who holds the registration certificate," Rimi said. He pledged to devote himself to building and strengthening the NPP, and he instructed all of the PRP offices under his influence to convert to NPP offices.

Kano's popularity was such that a defection from the PRP while he was alive might have been seen as an act of treason. For Rimi, who found himself ideologically at odds with the mainline elements of the party, Kano's death was a fortunate event. Rimi also cited "clandestine

moves" by the NPN in collusion with FEDECO directed against his bid to seek re-election as governor of Kano.

The Federal Election Commission has been routinely criticized and charged with being an instrument of the NPN by opposition elements. The criticism has recently centered around the announced timetable for the elections which schedules the presidential election on August 6, before the senatorial (August 20) and gubernatorial (August 23) elections. The opposition parties fear that if Shagari is returned to office in the early election he will use his power to influence the subsequent voting in favor of the NPN. In 1979 the presidential election was the final one held.

FEDECO is, constitutionally, the sole arbiter in election contests and it has been a target for all sides for its handling of nearly every aspect of the electoral process. The Commission is operating under severe constraints, particularly in regard to its budget and has had to, for instance, oppose a law that would allow independent candidates to stand for election on the grounds that it would be too expensive.

Justice Ovie-Whiskey, the FEDECO chairman, has admitted that the situation is a "total mess" and has tried to enlist public support and sympathy for FEDECO with the slogan, "Help FEDECO to help you vote." Regardless of the outcome of the elections FEDECO seems certain to be faced with more criticism, court battles, and litigation. (*West Africa*, May 16, 1983; *Africa Now*, May 1983; *The Economist*, May 7, 1983; *London Guardian*, April 7, 1983; *New Nigerian*, March 24, 1983.)

## Senegal

● President Abdou Diouf, re-elected by an overwhelming majority in February, is taking advantage of the momentum of his victory to revise Senegal's constitution and rearrange the government to his liking.

Under Diouf's constitutional revisions, the foreign minister's portfolio is now assumed by the president. The position of vice president has been abolished, making the presidency of the national assembly, now held by former Vice Presi-

dent Habib Thiam, the second highest government office. Diouf also changed his cabinet in April, switching several ministers to new positions and bringing in new officials to run important ministries.

Diouf said that the abolition of the post of prime minister will allow him to "impress more efficiency, speed, and simplicity on the workings of the government," and will "allow the head of state to directly manage the administration." Although opposition members in parliament fought the constitutional amendment, it passed easily in late April.

The elections and other political activity drew attention to the region of Casamance, in southern Senegal. Language and culture tie Casamance closely to neighboring Guinea-Bissau, and Gambia separates the region from the more prosperous northern part of Senegal. Traditional religion is dominant in Casamance, resulting in further separation from the rest of Moslem Senegal.

In recent months a separatist movement has emerged, alleging that Casamance is neglected by the central government, and demanding independence from Senegal. Before the elections, hundreds of people demonstrated in the regional capital of Ziguinchor in support of the independence movement. To appease the dissidents, Diouf appointed four residents of Casamance to serve on his cabinet, more than any previous administration included.

The post-election climate has also seen an accelerated drive to promote foreign investment in Senegal. The current five-year plan calls for substantial foreign aid to finance irrigation projects, mines, a harbor complex near Dakar, and improvement of specific industrial sectors. Foreign investors have taken note of the 15 percent increase in Senegal's groundnut harvest this year, and of the Senegalese banks' declaration that domestic businesses would be allowed to refinance their debts. (*Washington Post*, May 29, 1983; *Afrique-Asie*, May 23, 1983; *Financial Times*, April 6, 1983; *Jeune Afrique*, April 6, 1983; *Dakar Radio*, April 4, 1983; *African Business*, April 1983.)

## Sierra Leone

● In late May, the BBC and Monrovia Radio reported that a quarrel had broken out between two political factions in Sierra Leone, followed by a "political uprising" in the eastern part of the country. The reports added that several people had been killed and that "over a thousand refugees" had fled to Liberia. The Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone, Abdulai Conteh, responded quickly to the reports, declaring that "there seemed to be a deliberate attempt to fabricate and exaggerate certain minor incidents taking place in the country." Sierra Leone's president, Siaka Stevens, also denied the charges in a brief communiqué which stated that "there is no political unrest in Sierra Leone."

However, specific allegations continued to emanate from Liberia. Liberian Head of State Samuel Doe announced that his government was providing \$60,000 of food and medical aid each day to the refugees. He also said that Liberia had contacted the International Red Cross and other organizations to obtain further assistance. At one check-point along the Sierra Leone border, 668 refugees were said to have registered with Liberian officials, and Liberia estimated the total number of refugees at "nearly two thousand." Meanwhile, Sierra Leonean officials were reluctant to discuss the matter, while their denials lacked the intensity of recent verbal exchanges between Sierra Leone and Liberia.

According to diplomatic sources contacted by *African Update*, the violence is a delayed result of the tumultuous elections held in Sierra Leone last year. Riots, rockfights, shootings, and several deaths occurred during the 1982 parliamentary campaign, and the vote was annulled in many districts. The diplomatic sources believe that the latest uprising was caused by residual bitterness among voters who continue to feel that last year's elections were rigged. In the latest situation, the political dispute apparently erupted along ethnic lines, and large numbers of people have been driven from their homes.

In early June, the Geneva headquarters of the International Red

Cross revealed to *African Update* that there is definitely a "refugee problem" in the area. A May 28th telex from the Liberian Red Cross to Geneva headquarters said, "there are 3000 refugees, with more arriving daily," and the director of the Liberian Red Cross was dispatched to the area to determine the need for international aid. (Freetown Radio, May 23 and 24, 1983; Monrovia Radio, May 23 and 24, 1983.)

## Upper Volta

● President Jean-Baptiste Ouedraogo announced in late May that he would be turning power over to a **civilian administration** as soon as a draft constitution could be drawn up. He estimated that it will take six months to complete the task, which will then be followed by elections. Ouedraogo added that he would not contest the presidency. He also announced that the Peoples Salvation Council (CSP) had been disbanded and all political prisoners would be released.

Among those released were, Prime Minister Thomas Sankara and the others who were arrested in mid-May during what the CSP called a "preemptive coup." The Secretary General of the CSP, Jean-Baptiste Lengani, was also arrested at the same time. Several days later, other left-wing members of the government were jailed after making pro-Libyan statements in public. Ouedraogo accused all of them of "deviating the Council from its initial plans by demagogic and irresponsible comportment, statements and actions."

Most prominent among the others were Ibrahim Kone, the Sports Minister, and Soumane Toure, the Secretary General of the Voltaic Trade Union Confederation. They were accused of inciting students to demonstrate to demand the release of Sankara and Lengani. Following the arrests, the Libyan charge d'affaires in Ouagadougou was given 48 hours to leave the country.

A government radio broadcast announced that petitions demanding the release of Sankara and Lengani were seized in raids upon dissident groups. The broadcast reminded listeners that "political activities are suspended" and "any attempt at sabotage or to set up cells

will be repressed."

The arrests exposed what had been a growing rift in the CSP since Sankara was appointed Prime Minister last January. At that time, a series of contradictory signals began emerging from Ouagadougou. In his first speech as Prime Minister, Sankara said that his goal would be to rid the country of "humiliating tutelage and exploited dependence" within two years before returning the government to civilian control. He went on to forge links with North Korea and Libya while Ouedraogo was hinting that these developments should be understood by Westerners as pragmatic diplomacy. Ouedraogo issued statements saying that Upper Volta would encourage and respect free enterprise.

One Western diplomat was quoted before Sankara's arrest: "True, there have been some radical statements, notably from Sankara at the nonaligned summit earlier this year when he lashed out at imperialism and neo-colonialism in obvious references to the U.S. and France . . . but there has been no move against private enterprise and the word 'nationalization' is absent from their vocabulary." Some members of the CSP had privately assured American and French diplomats that there would be no altering of the country's basic political structures.

Sankara, however, was said to be sincerely committed to the ideology he preached. When he visited Libya, he was reportedly impressed with the progress he saw under "people's democracy." Muammar Qaddafi's April visit to Upper Volta was instrumental in further polarizing the two factions of the CSP, which culminated in the May arrests. (Ouagadougou Radio, May 24, 1983; *London Times*, May 23, 1983; *West Africa*, February 14 and May 23, 1983; *Washington Post*, May 20, 1983; *Le Monde*, May 19, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 10, 18 and 19, 1983.)

## EASTERN AFRICA

### Ethiopia

● Guerrillas of the Tigre Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) were due, in mid-June, to release 10 aid work-

ers whom they had kidnapped two months earlier. A spokesman for the TPLF said that the hostages would be released to their respective embassies in Sudan.

Reports about the number, nationality, and condition of the hostages were sketchy for several weeks after their capture but a British reporter with a camera crew found them after a week-long trek, and returned reports which indicated that all of the captives were healthy and in good spirits.

The guerrillas first claimed that the relief workers were taken so that they could be shown the effects of the severe drought in Tigre region. In subsequent statements they have denied abducting the workers, claiming instead that the relief workers happened to be in the town of Korem when it was taken by the TPLF.

Whether or not it was their purpose, the kidnapping has focused world attention on the TPLF and removed their cause from the shadow of the two more well-known Eritrean groups, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), and the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF), which are fighting for independence to the north. Though the TPLF maintains ties with the Eritrean groups, they do not share their goal of establishing an independent state. Instead, the TPLF is advocating a new federal type of constitution and the establishment of a democratic political system. Founded and led by Marxists, the TPLF opposes the Marxism of the current Ethiopian leadership and considers the Soviet Union and Cuba to be enemies.

Last February, the Ethiopian government launched a major offensive, sending 50,000 to 65,000 troops against the TPLF but they met with no success. According to TPLF spokesmen, more than 4000 Ethiopian troops were killed or wounded in the fighting. In the past few months, a series of attempts to encircle the guerrillas have failed. The Front now claims to control 85 percent of Tigre province and, as the episode with the hostages demonstrates, they are able to move about with relative freedom. (*London Times*, June 1, 1983; *London Guardian*, June 1, 1983; *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 4, 1983.)



## Pan-African News Agency begins operation

Though the Western press has been accused of biased reporting of African issues, the African Press, for lack of another source, has had to rely on Western news agencies for gathering reports from around the continent. A significant step away from that dependence occurred on May 25th when, after four years of planning, the Pan African News Agency (PANA) broadcast its first news release.

PANA, with headquarters in Dakar, and regional transmission centers in Kinshasa, Lusaka, Khartoum, Tripoli, and Lagos, will serve the continent as a clearinghouse for national press agencies throughout Africa. The national news agencies will be providing items through the PANA network of telex, radioteleography, and telecommunication, to the closest regional centers from where PANA, without editing, will redistribute them to its members. The Agency, with a permanent staff of a dozen journalists, will also originate its own articles.

The PANA system is currently able to handle 25,000 words of text per day, and will broadcast in English, French, and Arabic. News organizations in 22 African nations now participate in the network but officials of the Agency have expressed the hope that PANA will soon be represented in all African states.

PANA's Director General, Cheick Ousmane Diallo, said that the Agency's allow individual African states to disseminate daily information to all other African states. It is his hope that PANA "will enable each country to be heard" within Africa, and Around the World, and that PANA will meet its stated commitment to "reviving, promoting, and projecting Pan-Africanism." (*New York Times*, May 26, 1983; PANA Radio, May 25, 1983; *West Africa*, January 31 and May 23, 1983.) □

## Kenya

● When the Kenya African National Union (Kanu) governing council convened in mid-May, it was expected that President Daniel arap Moi would announce the name of the alleged "traitor" whom he had earlier accused of plotting with a foreign power to take over the government of Kenya. Instead, he stunned his audience by calling a general election for September, one year earlier than originally scheduled. Moi will be the only presidential candidate in the election and he indicated that he will use the elections to purge the government of those officials who he feels are disloyal to him.

Moi first mentioned the plot at the end of a routine fund-raising speech in the town of Kisii. The next morning's headline announced, "Plot to Install New President," and it was followed by weeks of national speculation and accusations concerning the identities of the "certain person," and the "foreign power."

The popular wisdom in Kenya, and the pundits in the foreign press, pointed the finger at Charles Njonjo, the powerful Minister for Constitutional Affairs, who hap-

pened to be in Britain on a "private visit" when the accusations were made. Njonjo was circumstantially connected with an arms-buying plot in 1981 and has made no secret of his admiration for Britain and British culture. A staunch conservative and the primary defender of Kenya's pro-Western stance, he is usually seen wearing impeccably tailored three-piece suits, earning him the sobriquet, "Sir Charles."

The foreign power thought to be involved was Britain, whose relations with Kenya have become increasingly strained since last August's attempted coup. Resentment centered on Britain's harboring of dissident Kenyan university professors who have used London as a base for attacking Kenya in the international press. The Kenya government's first public outrage surfaced when British Liberal leader David Steel criticized Kenya's handling of 12 Kenyans who have been detained without trial during the past year. Moi's accusations about the "foreign power" came in the wake of calls by Kenyan Members of Parliament for Britain to stay out of Kenya's domestic affairs. Israel was also mentioned as a possible culprit in the accusations.

Kenya's influential *Weekly Review* magazine directly accused Britain: "Britain's main interest in Kenya is to maintain the status quo, not of personalities, but of special interests which pertain to British investment in Kenya and British citizens in the country. If those interests were to be threatened, it is conceivable that the British might support an arrangement of political affairs—as they have done on numerous occasions elsewhere, especially in the Gulf—as to secure those interests."

The charges sparked a spirited witch-hunt for the alleged traitor who was variously called a hyena and a snake. Members of parliament suggested that the still unidentified person be burned alive, drowned in Lake Victoria, or rolled down a hill in a beehive. Upon his return from Britain, Njonjo issued a denial: "Let me say categorically that I am not being groomed by any foreign power power for any office in this country as has been suggested by certain politicians and the press."

Still, the allegations against Njonjo, neither confirmed nor denied by the government, are likely to hurt him in the coming election. Often rumored to be the power behind the president, Njonjo has lately been perceived as being in a battle with Vice President Mwai Kibaki for the powerful number-two position in the country. Kibaki is seen to be the clear beneficiary should Njonjo lose his parliamentary power base in the election. (*London Observer*, May 22, 1983; *Kenya Weekly Review*, May 13 and 20, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 18 and 19, 1983; *London Times*, May 17 and 18, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 17 and 18, 1983.)

● In early June, President Daniel arap Moi announced the release of 8,463 prisoners, mostly members of the disbanded Kenya Air Force, who had been held since last August's abortive coup. It was also reported that 22 political detainees had been released but no names were given and it is not known if any of the detained university professors were among them. (*London Times*, June 2, 1983.)

## Tanzania

● In early June, Tanzania announced a 20 percent devaluation of its currency. Charles Nyirabu, the governor of the central bank, denied that the devaluation was made under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He claimed that the measure was necessary to offset the effects of Tanzania's 26 percent inflation rate which had made its exports less competitive with those of its major trading partners.

However, Tanzania has been negotiating with the IMF and the World Bank in an effort to get emergency financial aid to meet its severe balance of payments deficit. The Fund was seeking to impose a devaluation on Tanzania that some sources have estimated to have been as high as 100 percent. Other measures proposed by the IMF were a doubling of interest rates, a ceiling on wage increases, and an increase in producer prices of 45 percent for export crops and 25 percent for food crops. Tanzania is also presently negotiating with the Fund for a rescheduling of its \$2 billion debt.

Some observers feel that the current domestic "campaign against corruption," which began in late March, is linked to an effort to improve Tanzania's bargaining position with the IMF and the World Bank. The government has focused its campaign against those whose activities have undermined the value of the Tanzanian currency. As of May, 1,294 arrests had been made including businessmen, factory owners, and government officials. A special tribunal has been appointed by President Julius Nyerere to try those accused of economic crimes.

The government still faces serious obstacles in its crusade, as the recent moves against the "economic saboteurs" have resulted in severe shortages of many basic commodities which were readily available in Tanzania's flourishing black markets. (*Wall Street Journal*, June 6, 1983; *Dar es Salaam Radio*, April 11, and May 5, 1983; *Kenya Weekly Review*, April 22, 1983; *Financial Times*, April 21, 1983; *London Guardian*, April 19, 1983.)

## Uganda

● Despite assertions by the government of President Milton Obote that guerrilla activity has been "wiped out," acts of terrorism have escalated sharply in Uganda during the last few months. One reason for the confusion is that guerrillas and civilians have been impersonating soldiers, and soldiers have deserted the army and joined the guerrillas, making it difficult to distinguish acts of the guerrillas from those of the government forces.

In late April, a leader of the opposition Democratic Party (UDP) was killed by "men in police uniforms" and a unit of the Ugandan army killed 30 people in a village to the east of Kampala in the mistaken belief that they were guerrilla sympathizers. In an attempt to tighten security, the government brought in North Korean military instructors, and the newly trained soldiers acted aggressively, killing guerrillas and rounding up several hundred civilians suspected of aiding them.

By May, refugees were being asked to return to certain regions which were claimed to be "cleared of bandits," but confusion and fear broke out again at the end of the month when two massacres were reported. According to a Ugandan Catholic journal, *Munno*, the bodies of 50 people were dumped from an unmarked truck 30 miles from Kampala, and perhaps as many as 200 people were killed in an attack on a refugee camp north-east of the capital.

The government blamed the killings on the dissident National Resistance Army (NRA), but NRA spokesmen dismissed the charges, accusing Obote's forces of the attacks and pointing out that the victims were members of the Buganda ethnic group, which forms the main constituency of the NRA. Opposition newspapers claimed that at least 500 people had been killed by government or rebel forces in the last two weeks of May, and that since March more than 100,000 civilians had been forced from their homes by the government and driven into refugee camps. According to the UN High Commission for Refugees, there are over 175,000 Ugandan refugees across the Sudanese border. (*London Times*, May 9 and 21, June 1, 4 and 6, 1983; *Wash-*

*ington Post*, April 29, May 29, June 1, 4 and 6, 1983; *Kampala Radio*, June 5, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 20 and 21, 1983; *Africa Now*, May 1983; *Le Monde*, April 21, 1983; *Refugees*, April 1983.)

● At the end of May, Obote celebrated the third anniversary of his return to power. Three years after his assumption of the presidency, Uganda is still not free of violence, but the economy is showing signs of recovery. Coffee production, which provides almost all of Uganda's trade income, is expected to increase in 1983 to the highest level in over a decade. Production of food and cotton has also risen. Large lending agencies, including the World Bank, the European Development Fund, and the African Development Bank, have recently awarded substantial loans to Uganda for agricultural and industrial reclamation. In May, the government raised the prices it pays producers of coffee, tobacco, and tea, and also scheduled a November increase of 20 percent in the producer price for cotton.

The government also indefinitely extended the deadline allowing Asians to reclaim property confiscated by the regime of Idi Amin. Obote's government hopes to encourage Asians to return to Uganda, where they once were important in business and industry.

As for Amin, he declared in April, from his exile in Saudi Arabia, that "my people have asked me to return and lead them in a war of liberation against the tyranny of Obote." Although Amin claimed that 25,000 men were ready to fight for him, he requested money and weapons from the world community. (*London Observer*, May 29, 1983; *London Times*, April 11 and May 12, 1983; *Kampala Radio*, May 7, 1983; *Financial Times*, April 29, 1983; *African Business*, April 1983.)

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### Central African Republic

● In early May, veteran Central African politician Abel Goumba was sentenced to five years in prison and 10 years loss of his civil rights. Goumba, the leader of the Oubangui Patriotic Front Party (FPO),

was arrested last August and charged with engaging in political activities, writing and distributing materials critical of the military government, and contacting foreign powers. He was rector of the University of Bangui at the time of his arrest.

Amnesty International has declared Goumba a "prisoner of conscience." He admitted recently that he had indeed committed criminal acts, "if it is a crime to defend the interests of the oppressed Central African people."

*West Africa* reported that Goumba sent letters from the Kasai military prison complaining that he was suffering from respiratory and urinary problems. Another letter from the prison, signed by 50 inmates, tells of the increasing use of psychological and physical torture against prisoners at Kasai.

In Paris, the president of the Committee for the Support of Central African Political Prisoners, Pierre Kalack, called the trials of Goumba and others "trials of opinion." He questioned the presence of 1200 French troops there "when there are no violent troubles in the Central African Republic." (*West Africa*, May 2 and 9, 1983.)

● In May, the military government of the Central African Republic officially designated the entire country a disaster zone. The country is still suffering from three months of unprecedented drought and has requested "urgent and massive" international aid. (*London Times*, May 7, 1983.)

### Equatorial Guinea

● In late May, there were reports from Equatorial Guinea of an abortive coup attempt against the regime of President Teodoro Obiang Nguema. The government announced that 80 military men had been arrested after trying to kill Obiang in the second attempted coup since he came to power in 1979.

The initial report of the failed coup came from Francisco Javier Ela Abeme, an exiled opposition leader who in mid-April became the head of a "coordinating junta" of 50 opponents of Obiang's regime representing five opposition groups.

The groups were: the Liberation Front of Equatorial Guinea (FRE-

LIGE), the National Alliance for the Re-establishment of Democracy in Equatorial Guinea (ANRD); the Movement for the Liberty and Future of Equatorial Guinea (MOLIFUGE); the Fernando Poo Liberation Front (FRELIFER); and the Democratic Reform for Equatorial Guinea Party. Conspicuously absent was the Democratic Rally for the Liberation of Equatorial Guinea (RDLGE), which formed a government-in-exile last March.

Meeting in Spain in April, the groups charged the present government with not living up to the expectations of the people since coming to power in 1979, and with violating the law and threatening freedom.

Following the government announcement of the attempted coup, the Spanish Foreign Minister, Fernando Moran, flew to Equatorial Guinea's capital of Malabo. The trip was viewed as an attempt by Spain to regain some influence in Equatorial Guinea, which has recently been turning to France for aid and leadership. France has been encouraging Equatorial Guinea to join the Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC) which is made up of the francophone states of Gabon, Cameroon, Congo, and the Central African Republic. Obiang's uneasiness with the Socialist government in Madrid, which is currently reassessing its aid commitment to Equatorial Guinea, has increased the likelihood that UDEAC will have a fifth member by the end of the year.

Along with UDEAC membership will come associate status in the Central African States' Bank. Largely French controlled, the bank manages currency in the UDEAC countries and controls foreign trade. Talks on financing Equatorial Guinea's entrance into UDEAC are expected to conclude without a hitch in late July. Both France and Spain have offered to cover the country's \$15 million debt.

A report on Madrid radio said that Spain does not share France's view that the diplomatic offensive in Equatorial Guinea would in no way affect relations between France and Spain. "Spanish sources close to the government state that France's designs in seeking to get involved in Equatorial

Guinea together with Spain must be construed as an endeavor to further expand its influence and preponderance in that part of the globe and to block Spain's only experience with the Third World." (*Financial Times*, May 25, 1983; *Washington Post*, May 24, 1983; *Africa Research Bulletin*, May 15, 1983; Madrid Radio, April 26, 1983.)

### Zaire

● Zairian political exiles were given until the end of June to return home and take advantage of a general amnesty announced in mid-May by President Mobutu Sese Seko. During a ceremony in which he made himself a six-star general, Mobutu declared that "there will be no more political prisoners in Zaire. . . I am a leader who knows how to punish but leniency is also sometimes necessary."

Mungul Diaka, head of the Council for the Liberation of Congo-Kinshasa, said from his exile in Brussels that he would have to examine the terms of the amnesty more carefully before deciding whether or not to return.

Three groups of people are eligible for amnesty: "any Zairian citizen convicted of endangering state security; any Zairian citizen forbidden from the exercise of civil rights, detained, or placed under house arrest for political reasons;" and "any Zairian citizen living abroad and sentenced for endangering state security, or having the status of political exile." (*Jeune Afrique*, June 1, 1983.)

### Zambia

● Zambia reached an agreement with its principal Western government creditors at the Paris Club in mid-May for the rescheduling of its 1983 debt. The payments on the official debts, including interest and principal for this year, will be rescheduled over 10 years with a five-year grace period. According to the most recent figures from the Bank of Zambia, the total of the public sector foreign debt was \$3.33 billion at the end of last year. Debt service falling due this year is believed to be around \$651 million and its ratio to export earnings could reach 50 percent if further agreements are not reached.

The Paris Club agreement marks the second stage of a three-part pro-

gram. It follows an April agreement for a \$230 million standby credit with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and a second IMF loan for \$105 million to cover losses in export earnings. The third stage of the program began in late May when Zambia met with private creditors in London to discuss the rescheduling of private debt.

The country has not escaped having to pay a high price for its loans and credits. In May, the price for the staple maize meal was raised by 30 percent and the cost of fertilizer was hiked by 60 percent. Both of these items were heavily subsidized by the government in recent years, and the increased prices will most seriously affect peasants, workers, and commercial farmers. President Kenneth Kaunda said that the price rises did not mean that he was abandoning his "moral obligation to uplift the living standards of the people," but that the measures were necessary to obtain foreign exchange to revive Zambia's industries which have been operating at 40 percent of capacity.

The most important challenge to Kaunda's efforts to bring the economy under control comes from the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and its leader Frederick Chiluba. The unions achieved a small victory in May when they convinced the president to relax an IMF-imposed limit on wage increases. The raising of the limit from 5 to 10 percent is probably not enough to placate the unions but Kaunda could not have raised it any higher without drawing protests from the IMF. The fund did cancel one loan to Zambia in 1982 because of Zambia's failure to meet its obligations.

Chiluba, who was jailed for three months for calling strikes in 1981, recently warned of growing worker frustration over the combined effects of inflation and wage ceilings. "We are running out of time," he said. The ZCTU claims to have a membership of 300,000, representing 80 percent of the nation's workers. (Lusaka Radio, May 24, 1983; *Wall Street Journal*, May 24, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 4 and 17, 1983; *The Economist*, May 14, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 4, 1983.)

## NORTHERN AFRICA

### Egypt

● The recent publication of a book criticizing late President Anwar Sadat has caused an uproar in Egypt. *The Autumn of Fury*, written by Mohamed Heikal, former Minister of Information and ex-editor of the prominent newspaper *Al Ahrām*, portrays Sadat as having been dictatorial and disloyal to the spirit of pan-Arabism. Although sale of the book has been prohibited in Egypt, it has been excerpted in European newspapers and is circulating underground in Egypt. In his May Day address, President Hosni Mubarak attacked the opposition press, accusing left-wing journalists of "stabbing and slandering Egypt's leaders" and "publishing dirty things in our newspapers." In mid-May, Mubarak announced a law prohibiting the press from investigating public figures within five years of their departure from office. (*Le Monde*, May 12, 1983; *London Times*, May 2, 1983; *Cairo Radio*, May 1, 1983.)

● In late May, Egyptian-American talks on altering an Egyptian military base to accommodate American forces were suspended. The Reagan administration had hoped to make the Ras Banas installation, on the Red Sea, suitable for use by the American rapid deployment force, which has access to similar facilities in Oman, Somalia, and Kenya. The United States agreed to bear the costs of improving the installation, but Egypt refused to permit full American control over base operations.

Other American interests, however, were advanced in Egypt. General Motors announced in May that it would build a truck and bus assembly plant, scheduled to begin production in 1985. The GM agreement, years in the making, designates the American company as the managing partner, with capital holdings of 31 percent, while Isuzu Motors of Japan will hold 20 percent of the capital, and private Egyptian interests will control 33 percent. The new venture is the largest Western investment in Egypt outside the oil industry. In a related development, two agencies of the

World Bank have loaned Egypt \$268 million to finance the construction of a steel mill near Alexandria. (*The Economist*, June 4, 1983; *Cairo Radio*, May 21, 1983; *New York Times*, May 20, 1983; *World Bank News*, May 19, 1983; *Washington Post*, May 6, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 4, 1983.)

### Libya

● In late April, four Libyan transport planes claiming to be carrying medical supplies to Nicaragua were discovered to be loaded with military equipment when they made an emergency landing in Brazil. The airplanes were carrying approximately 200 tons of weapons, munitions, and military spare parts. The Reagan administration immediately accused Libya of exporting the supplies to the Sandinista rebels in Nicaragua. Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi did not deny the charge.

Brazilian officials were greatly embarrassed by the landing of illegal cargo within Brazilian territory, and they impounded the entire shipment of war materiel. There were also indications that at least some of the weaponry had originally been sold to Libya by Brazil. According to the authoritative guide, *The Military Balance 1982-1983*, Brazil is the world's fifth-largest arms manufacturer, and Libya purchases a quarter of all Brazilian military exports. Libya is known to equip armed forces throughout Africa and the Middle East, but Brazil's shock at the Libyan shipment of arms to Central America has jeopardized future relations between Libya and Brazil. As of June, Brazil had not yet released the impounded materiel. (*The Economist*, June 4, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 21 and 22, 1983; *Tripoli Radio*, May 20, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 4, 1983; *Sao Paulo Radio*, April 22, 1983; *Merip Reports*, February 1983.)

### Sudan

● In mid-May, garrisons of the Sudanese army mutinied in the southern towns of Bor, near the regional capital of Juba, and Pibor, near the Ethiopian border. Reports indicated that the troops, after not being paid for several months, attempted to rob a bank. After the robbery attempt, they obtained weapons from

underground sources, recruited men from the Anya-Nya II rebel movement, and then deserted. Northern troops loyal to President Gaafar al-Nimeiry were flown in to crush the rebellion, and in the subsequent fighting at least 70 rebels were killed, while the loyalists suffered eight casualties. Two weeks later, captured rebel soldiers were executed "in batches of six."

Another possible factor in the rebellion was an attempt by the government to transfer soldiers who are from the south to garrisons in the north.

Troop transfers have always been a volatile issue in the Sudanese army. To supplement their military pay, soldiers depend on allowances from their extended families and therefore prefer to remain stationed in their home regions. However, the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972, which ended the 17-year insurrection in the southern Sudan, specified that the army must include comparable numbers of northerners and southerners. This arrangement was designed to ensure army loyalty to the central government in Khartoum without making southerners feel threatened. But the integration effort was not fully enforced in some southern regions, including those where the mutinies occurred, and southern soldiers in those areas who received transfer orders apparently felt they were being singled out for unfair treatment.

A similar mutiny of southern soldiers led to the formation of the Anya-Nya movement in 1955. There is speculation that the latest rebel troops, by combining with "Anya-Nya II" forces, could form a newly strengthened resistance movement in the southern Sudan.

President Nimeiry, who was recently re-elected to a third presidential term in an unopposed election, responded to the mutinies by dividing the semi-autonomous southern region into three administrative provinces, appointing in each an interim governor and cabinet. Nimeiry had been planning to divide, or "regionalize," the south for several years, and the mutinies provided ready justification for the move. The division is intended to reduce the strength of the south as a bloc and increase the central government's power in dealing with the

individual provinces. (*London Observer*, May 22 and June 6, 1983; *London Times*, May 5 and 25, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 7, 19 and 24, 1983; Khartoum Radio, May 23, 1983; *Financial Times*, May 19, 1983.)

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Angola

● President José Eduardo dos Santos led an Angolan delegation to Moscow in mid-May. Expressing the desire to broaden his country's relations with the Soviet Union, dos Santos met with Soviet leader Yuri Andropov and signed an agreement to purchase more arms from the Soviet Union.

The arms deal is meant to counter the broadening military offensive of the UNITA rebels in Angola. Conflicting reports indicate that UNITA may control as much as a third of Angolan territory, with its greatest strength concentrated in the south-east near Namibia and Zambia. UNITA is intensifying its attacks on installations which are vital to the functioning of Angola's economy, such as dams, ports, roads, and railways. Analysts believe, however, that the MPLA capital of Luanda, to the north of the rebels' power center, will not be endangered in the near future.

In an interview with the *Christian Science Monitor*, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi expressed his willingness to negotiate a truce with the MPLA government. Savimbi declared that "taking Luanda by force is meaningless. Luanda must be taken politically, not militarily." He went on to say that "a peaceful settlement . . . is what we are trying to achieve." The primary obstacle to negotiating a settlement, according to Savimbi, is the continuing presence of Cuban troops. (*Christian Science Monitor*, June 2, 1983; *Washington Post*, May 29, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 18, 1983; *London Times*, May 17, 1983; Luanda Radio, May 16, 1983.)

● UNITA forces, as of June, continued to hold hostage 84 Portuguese and Czech civilians captured in an early March raid on the industrial complex of Alto-Catumbela. UNITA was seeking to exchange the Czechs seven British and Irish

mercenaries who were captured by the MPLA in the 1975 civil war, and who are serving long sentences in Angolan government prisons. UNITA has told Lisbon that the Portuguese hostages will be released on condition that the government of Portugal must refuse to sign a pending economic agreement with dos Santos' government. Indicating that further hostages may be taken to discourage foreign organizations from assisting the MPLA government, UNITA issued repeated warnings that all foreigners working on development projects in Angola should leave the country as soon as possible. (*Christian Science Monitor*, May 3, 1983; *London Observer*, April 17, 1983.)

● Confidential negotiations between American and Angolan officials were held in Washington in mid-April. Alexandre Rodriguez Kito, the Angolan Minister of the Interior and reportedly the second most powerful official in the MPLA government, met with Vice-President George Bush and Secretary of State George Shultz over a three-day period. Because the United States and Angola have no diplomatic relations, the talks were held in secret. Among the issues believed to have been discussed were the joint withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and of South African troops from Namibia. No important agreements seem to have been achieved. (*New York Times*, April 14, 1983.)

### Lesotho

● The recent series of bombings in South African cities has caused new tension between South Africa and its smaller neighbors. Pretoria again accused Lesotho of harboring members of the African National Congress (ANC), which the South African government blames for the explosions. In late May, South Africa limited traffic passing through its main border post with Lesotho, effectively sealing off the tiny enclave from contact with the outside world. South African border police then proceeded to search all people and vehicles crossing the border.

The slowdown occurred even before the ANC bombing in Pretoria, apparently as a demonstration of South Africa's displeasure with the termination of Lesotho's relations

with Taiwan. South Africa considers Taiwan to be one of its closest allies and views black African ties with Mainland China as part of the communist threat to the continent. The Prime Minister of Lesotho, Chief Leabua Jonathan, recently returned from a trip to the communist countries of eastern Europe.

The May bombing in Pretoria worsened the border restrictions already imposed. Two weeks of stringent security checks and limitations of border traffic placed Lesotho "under siege," in the words of South African newspapers. The border restrictions caused delays in the delivery of food and other necessities. South Africa's stranglehold forced Lesotho to pledge, at a meeting with South African diplomats in early June, that the ANC would be prohibited from operating in Lesotho. The government of Lesotho has consistently denied giving any support to the ANC, while making counter-allegations that South Africa supplies and encourages the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA), which seeks to overthrow Jonathan's government. During the talks in June, South Africa tacitly admitted its support of the LLA, for the agreement states that "it was extremely important for the two countries not to give refuge to people planning or involved in any subversive activities against any other country." (Johannesburg Radio, May 25 and 29, June 3 and 4, 1983; Maseru Radio, May 26 and June 4, 1983; *London Times*, June 4, 1983; *London Guardian*, June 3, 1983.)

● In a mid-May session of Parliament, Jonathan's Basutoland National Party introduced a bill repealing the 1970 suspension of the constitution. The bill also called for elections, although Jonathan stated that elections could not be held until the LLA ceases its guerrilla activities. The opposition party demanded that all members of the Basotho ethnic group, both within and outside the country, should be allowed to participate in the elections. The amendment, which would permit voting among the exiles led by the LLA's founder, Ntsu Mokhehle, was tabled. Mokhehle, living in self-imposed exile, is an outspoken and still-popular critic of

Jonathan's close relationship with South Africa. (*London Guardian*, May 19, 1983; Maseru Radio, June 4, 1983.)

## Malawi

● Opposition leader Orton Chirwa, and his wife, Vera Chirwa were given time to plead for clemency after being condemned to death for treason. The Chirwas were sentenced in May after being found guilty of plotting to overthrow the government of Malawi and to assassinate President Hastings Kamuzu Banda.

Orton Chirwa was one of Banda's chief supporters and a former minister of justice who became critical of Banda's increasingly authoritarian regime. The Chirwas fled to Tanzania and then to Zambia where they remained until being abducted and forcibly returned to Malawi early last year.

The stay of execution was probably granted as a result of pressure from human rights groups and governments from around the world. Among those who requested that the Malawi government grant clemency were: Kenya's President Daniel arap Moi in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU, President Shehu Shagari of Nigeria, the American Bar Association, the African Bar Association, and many church groups. Referring to reports that the Chirwas would be executed, a government spokesman said: "Their appeal has yet to be heard and even if their appeal in the National Traditional Court fails they can appeal to the President for clemency. No date has yet been set for the first appeal. This whole procedure could take a lot of time."

Though the government statement shed some light on the Chirwas' fate, very little else is clear in Malawi's politics these days. Reports being received in Harare tell of disappearances and murders but diplomats in Malawi can only say that the scene has become "confused and awash with rumors."

According to some reports, Banda either planned to step down at the end of June or take a year's "sabbatical" and place the governor of the central bank, John Tembo, in the president's office. The Save Malawi Committee, re-

cently formed by exiles in Zambia, charges that Tembo, an uncle of Banda's long-time companion Cecilia Kadzamira, was to be appointed to begin a Kadzamira dynasty in Malawi.

The Committee has also claimed that ministers who supported the presidential bid of Dick Matenje, the secretary-general of Banda's Malawi Congress Party, were killed by security police. The government claimed that the ministers were killed in an automobile accident but the Committee's claim seems to be universally accepted.

The Committee further alleged that Matenje and 60 officers who supported him have vanished.

Other reports from Malawi said that Matenje and the disappeared ministers had launched a coup attempt in mid-May during which some were killed while others had escaped to Mozambique. Reporters could get neither confirmation nor denial of any of the stories from sources in Malawi. "All I can tell you," said one senior official, "is that parliament and the cabinet have been dissolved to prepare the way for the general elections to be held on June 29." (*London Times*, June 7 and 8, 1983; *London Guardian*, May 25 and June 7, 1983; *London Observer*, May 22, 1983.)

## Mozambique

● In late May, a South African strike force of seven aircraft attacked a suburb of Maputo with rockets and machine-gun fire, killing six people, including two children, and wounding 26. The raid was declared to be in retaliation for the African National Congress (ANC) bombings in Pretoria a few days before. South Africa has often alleged that Mozambique harbors ANC members, and the raid was meant as a warning that Pretoria will not tolerate the granting of sanctuary to ANC members by neighboring countries.

The South African forces had been ready to attack the alleged ANC base in Maputo for several months, for they had made a scale model of the target area and, according to Mozambican sources, had sent unmanned reconnaissance planes over the city some time before the raid. A similar "spy

drone," allegedly sent by South Africa to determine the extent of the damage, was shot down over Maputo just days after the attack.

The raid came a few weeks after the foreign ministers of South Africa and Mozambique had met along the border of the two countries to discuss charges that each government was attempting to destabilize the other. At that meeting the South Africans brought up the issue of possible ANC bases in Mozambique and charged that Mozambique "was being used as a springboard for terrorist activities in South Africa."

A week after the South African raid against Maputo, President Samora Machel announced a reshuffle of his cabinet. Machel assumed the portfolio of Defense Minister, declaring that the South African attack "demands that the leadership of defense be centralized at the highest level." Machel's assumption of control over the defense ministry was the culmination of a week of cabinet changes. Earlier, he had changed the ministers of Justice, Security, Economy, Interior, and Agriculture. Machel also projected a sharp reduction in the number of public employees and a new emphasis on the encouragement of small farms and private enterprise. (*Financial Times*, May 23 and 25, 1983; *New York Times*, May 23, 24, and 25 1983; *Washington Post*, May 22, 1983.)

## South Africa

● Prime Minister Pieter Botha said that despite May's parliamentary by-election results, "there is no question of putting the brakes on reform."

Commentators in South Africa had suggested that the results could dictate a more cautious approach to the already cautious "reforms" proposed by Botha. Analysts said the white electorate was "deeply divided" and that Botha now cannot count on an overwhelming "yes" vote in the planned referendum on the move to give Coloureds (mixed-race people) and Asians, but not blacks, a limited share of power in the parliament.

The elections, however, turned out a lot better than many National Party supporters had feared and do not prove that Botha faces any real

## Apartheid after-life?

The leader of an extreme right-wing women's movement, the Kappiekommando, has suggested there may be separate heavens for whites and blacks.

After dropping this bombshell, however, Marie van Zyl refused to elaborate, telling reporters, "Talk to my lawyers." One black woman, quoted in a South African newspaper, said she hoped the whites "will be able to manage in the white heaven without anyone to make the tea." (*London Sunday Times*, May 8, 1983.)

threat from the extreme right-wing Conservative Party founded by Andries (Dr. No) Treurnicht.

The only loss was to Treurnicht, who held the seat anyway by virtue of his previous election to parliament as a National Party candidate. He had also been Nationalist leader of Transvaal province. But the two other seats were retained by the NP, albeit by narrower margins, and there was evidence that some English-speaking whites defected from the official opposition to the ruling party.

● Alfred Nzo, secretary-general of the African National Congress (ANC) said that his organization would avenge the deaths of three ANC members who were hanged in early June after being convicted of treason and murder by a South African court. "Their example and their sacrifice must and will, for us, serve as a call to battle."

South Africa ignored world-wide pleas for clemency, including one from President Reagan, and carried out the execution at dawn inside Pretoria's central prison. The three men—Simon Mogerane, 23, Jerry Mosololi, 25, and Thabo Motaung, 27—were the first ANC members executed since 1979. The government refused to give the bodies to their families for burial, fearing that it would spark anti-government demonstrations.

Clemency had earlier been granted to three other ANC members who had been sentenced to die. The government said that the distinguishing factor was that no one was killed in that attack while Mogerane, Mosololi, and Motaung

were being held responsible for the deaths of four policemen.

At a memorial service in Johannesburg, the men were described as martyrs. "We are here to bury our heroes. They have lost their lives in a noble cause," the congregation was told. (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 10 and 11, 1983; *Washington Post*, June 10, 1983.)

● Associated British Foods sold its South African interests in May to a local consortium for \$314 million, the largest-ever divestment by a foreign company.

ABF's chairman, Garfield Weston, said the sale was prompted by the high price offered and the February lifting of exchange controls, which allows the company to take the cash out of the country, as well as by the low South African tax liability. But the sale caused speculation in South Africa that foreign investors are increasingly concerned about political developments following May's Pretoria car bomb explosion.

## Swaziland

● Two alleged members of the African National Congress (ANC) were arrested in late May near the capital of Mbabane. Earlier reports had said that the men had been captured in an alleged ANC training camp complete with a substantial cache of arms, but the police denied those reports, confirming only that the men had been arrested. The denials were intended to dispel potential South African charges that Swaziland tolerates the presence of ANC bases within its territory.

The ANC arrests were a public demonstration of Swaziland's policy of preventing the insurgents from using the country as a "springboard" from which to launch attacks against South Africa. Since the death of King Sobhuza II last August, and particularly since the March removal of Prince Mabandla and his replacement with Prince Bhekimpi Dlamini, Swaziland has sought to improve its relationship with South Africa. King Sobhuza had been a member of the ANC, and one of his sons is married to a daughter of ANC leader Nelson Mandela. But the South African offer to cede two "homelands" to Swaziland has caused Sobhuza's

successors to adopt an attitude of conciliation toward South Africa. The crackdown against the ANC is a central element in the attempt to improve Swazi relations with South Africa. (Mbabane Radio, May 30 and 31, 1983; London *Guardian*, May 27, 1983.)

## Zimbabwe

● Six members of the former Rhodesian Air Force have alleged that they were tortured into confessing that they aided in the sabotage of 13 planes at Zimbabwe's Thornhill air base last July.

The government has charged that the six had formed a "sabotage committee" to help three South African agents who blew up the planes, causing \$7.1 million in damage. The government's case against the defendants rests predominantly on their confessions, which may now be ruled inadmissible if the allegations of torture are proven.

Five of the six testified that they had confessed after receiving electric shock torture and the sixth claimed that he had been deprived of sleep until he made a statement. One of the defendants said that the "torturers" had identified themselves as members of Zimbabwe's Fifth Brigade.

Following the allegations of torture, it was revealed that some of the defendants now on trial had earlier been part of a board of inquiry which had accused two of the other defendants of participating in the sabotage. The state has maintained, however, that the proceedings of the board of inquiry should be dismissed as an attempt by the officers on the board to divert attention from their own guilt.

All of the accused have pleaded not guilty to the charges. If convicted, they could face the death penalty.

In another controversial trial, the government, in late April, rearrested six former members of Joshua Nkomo's disbanded Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) moments after they were acquitted of treason charges. Among them were: Dumiso Dabengwa, former intelligence chief of ZIPRA, and Gen. Lookout Masuku, who was Deputy Commander of the Zimbabwe Army at the time of his arrest last year. The judiciary

was accused by the government of "appearing to sow the seeds of revolt" and of "encouraging the growth of the dissident element."

The case against Dabengwa rested on a letter which he sent to the Soviet KGB shortly after independence. In the letter he asked for "further assistance" against "imperialist intrigues." Dabengwa said that he sent the letter because he believed that Mugabe and ZANU were abandoning the principles adopted by the Patriotic Front Alliance.

The judge in the case, however, praised Dabengwa as "the most impressive witness any of us has seen in court in a long time." He said that the state had failed to prove that the letter had anything to do with a plot to put military pressure on the government.

The men were rearrested under the Emergency Powers act which was inherited from the former regime of Ian Smith. Under this act they can be held indefinitely.

Despite fears that Dabengwa's detention could widen the rift between supporters of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the government, there have been signs of reconciliation between ZAPU and Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's ZANU government.

In early May, "unity talks" began in Harare which were aimed at merging the two parties as a step toward the establishment of a one-party state. Eddison Zvogbo, Zimbabwe's Minister for Legal and Constitutional Affairs, said that he could foresee no problems in effecting a merger since the differences between the two parties were related to leadership rather than to issues.

ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo, from his exile in London, has denounced the talks as an effort by Mugabe to introduce a ZANU dictatorship. A merger between the two parties could be a serious challenge to Nkomo's leadership, but although his lieutenants seem willing to participate in the talks, many observers feel that ZAPU'S Ndebele supporters would be unwilling to accept a merger or a change of leadership in the party. (London *Times*, June 6 and 8, 1983; *International Herald Tribune*, June 7, 1983;

*New York Times*, April 28, 29, and June 6, 1983; *Christian Science Monitor*, April 29, 1983.)

● The Zimbabwe government announced in mid-June that six foreign tourists who were kidnapped by dissidents last year were executed within two days of their capture. Though the bodies have not been recovered, the government apparently felt that the evidence was sufficient for them to advise the foreign governments involved to notify the tourists' next-of-kin. (*New York Times*, June 13, 1983.)

● A delegation representing Zimbabwe's private sector has been visiting Europe and the U.S. to try to correct what they feel is the inaccurate portrayal of Zimbabwe by the press. At a press conference in New York, spokesmen for the delegation focused their criticism on the negative manner in which Zimbabwe's socialism was being portrayed and on the media's exaggeration of the country's political problems.

Addressing the issue of political instability, a member of the delegation said that the violence of the past months had occurred in less than one-tenth of the country while press reports were giving the impression that it was nation-wide. He noted that 25,000 people had recently heard Mugabe speak at a rally in Matebeleland, indicating that he was recognized by all of the people as the leader of the nation.

Though not an official delegation, the group said that they had the support of the Zimbabwe government. As private businessmen they said that they completely supported the government and felt free to criticize it. They described the government's economic policies as "an entirely pragmatic approach to our economic problems." While admitting that the country was still going through a "settling down process," they said that there is overall stability and a healthy investment climate in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is clearly in need of foreign capital. Since independence, there has only been one new major investment by a foreign firm and two large companies recently withdrew after initially expressing an interest in investing. The delegation hopes that its efforts will lead to increased investment in Zimbabwe.



# The Dutch Reformed Church and Separate Development

---

BY THE REV. G.S.J. MÖLLER, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE REV. L. MOOLMAN

---

**T**he Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, or Dutch Reformed church (NGK), is the oldest and biggest church in South Africa. It was brought to the southern-most tip of the vast continent of Africa on April 16, 1652 when the first governor, Jan Van Riebeeck, landed at Cape Town, then known as the Cape of Storms, but later renamed Cape of Good Hope. The first settlers who accompanied Jan Van Riebeeck were members of the Reformed church in the Netherlands; and thus the reformed faith and the NGK became rooted in South Africa.

It is significant that immediately after his landing, Jan Van Riebeeck, in the presence of his company of 200, offered a prayer wherein he beseeched the Lord that they might be instrumental in bringing the reformed faith to the aborigines of this unknown subcontinent.

---

The Reverend G.S.J. Möller is a minister of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), the Dutch Reformed church of South Africa, and editor of *Die Kerkbode*. The Reverend L. Moolman is also an NGK minister and director of information of the church's western Cape synod.

---



**Soweto black township: Separate development "brought tremendous advantages for Coloureds and blacks"**

---

In 1665 the first resident minister, Joan Van Arckel, arrived at the Cape. The date of his arrival is considered to be the date of establishment not only of the first congregation of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Cape Town), but also of the Christian church in South Africa as an organized institution.

The result was that the NGK has gradually grown to be a church with 1.5 million adherents organized into 1,222 congregations and 11 different regional synods. The church has 1,700 ministers serving in congregations, administrative posts, and as lecturers at the three theological faculties at Stellenbosch, Bloemfontein, and Pretoria.

The Missionary Outreach of the NGK began with the arrival of Jan Van Riebeeck and his company in 1652.

At the meeting of the first synod in 1824 a resolution was passed committing the church to its mission responsibilities. Over the years the mission work of the church spread and grew in stature. Jan Van Riebeeck's prayer that the reformed faith be established in southern Africa was richly blessed, because no fewer than 11 independent autonomous churches have been established in the Sudan, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Caprivi, and South Africa as a result of the missionary outreach of the NGK. This is a remarkable feat in the history of the missionary work of the Christian churches of the world.

In South Africa, the Federal Council of Churches consists of the NGK and all the younger independent churches that were established as a result of the Mission Outreach of the NGK. This council for "The Family of Dutch Reformed Churches" meets every two years and all matters of mutual interest and concern are discussed.

In addition to the Federal Council, the plenary executives of the churches meet regularly. The agenda is drawn up from the items that the different

# The Myth of Reform

BY BARRY STREEK

There is plenty of talk about change and reform in South Africa these days, and there have been some changes in Nationalist policies, but is it real change? Certainly, the breakaway of 16 Nationalist members of Parliament last year from the party that has ruled South Africa uninterrupted since 1948 has created the appearance that government-initiated change has begun to open up cracks in white minority rule. This, it is argued both inside and outside South Africa, is a process that must be supported because it is perhaps the only way towards peaceful, or relatively peaceful, reform in South Africa.

It is this very assumption that provides the rationale for the U.S. government's policies of "constructive engagement" with the five-year-old administration of Prime Minister Pieter Botha. It is, however, an assumption that is strongly disputed by a wide range of groups.

The Afrikaans writer, Andre Brink, for example, reacted angrily to this approach this year when he received an award for English literature. He said:

---

Barry Streek is a freelance journalist, based in Cape Town, South Africa. The former political correspondent of the *East London Daily Dispatch*, he is the co-author, with Richard Wicksteed, of *Render Unto Kaiser* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981), an expose of developments in Transkei since it was granted "independence" by the South African government in 1976.

---

"[Neil] Aggetts still die and security police are still allowed a mandate to do unto others what may be done to them under another regime. [Saul] Mkhize is still shot when they dare to publicize the fact that their people are uprooted from their traditional homes, and hundreds of thousands of people are still dumped in pseudo-concentration camps in the wastelands of allegedly independent states. Beyers Naude and Winnie Mandela and the Reverend Maquina of Port Elizabeth are still silenced. The place of one's abode and the choice of one's marriage partner are still determined by one's pigmentation. If black trade unions are now legal their leadership is still being harassed and persecuted and driven into exile or death. If the new dispensation allows Coloureds and Indians the vote (on separate rolls of course), they will still remain second-class citizens."

"Above all, secrecy and the proliferation of lies still determine the actions and decisions of an increasingly militarized society, under the cloak of the greatest lie of all, the total onslaught," he said. Referring to the role of the writer, Brink continued: "The suggestion of change is also a matter of sophistication. Any authoritarian regime feels the need, from time to time, to justify its repressive apparatus, and how can it be done better then by revealing to the world the existence of dissidents?"

If someone like Andre Brink can react so strongly and with so much bite to the appearance of change, what on

earth is really going on in the land of apartheid? There can be and is much academic argument about the meaning of "change" and "reform," particularly in the context of a divided and painful South Africa, but the essential question in the end is whether Botha government policies are opening the way towards legitimacy — a government regarded by the majority of South Africa as just, as their own. Are the government's reforms and its recently released constitutional proposals, despite Nationalist denials, the first hesitant steps towards fundamental structural change with majority legitimacy? Or are they the moves of a sophisticated machine, shaken by the 1976 disturbances, to modernize and entrench its control?

The right-wing perception of those changes — that they are basically the first step to major change and they are selling out the white man — and the government's defense of the proposals, in which it has stressed that it is a party of change, have served to reinforce the view that a positive answer to the first question is what the reforms are about. The reality, however, may be very different.

Many Western governments, particularly the American, with the Reagan administration's constructive engagement approach, hope perhaps desperately that the reforms could lead to peaceful change, spearheaded by moderate leaders, and preempt the Moscow-backed African National Congress and its guerrilla strategies. This in-

churches submit from time to time. Frank and meaningful discussions are held on the subject of church unity. The NGK has no links with the South African Council of Churches.

There are no statistics available of how many members of the NGK are also full members of the Nationalist party. All the existing political parties in South Africa count members of the NGK among their supporters. It can, however, be assumed that the majority of the members of the NGK are supporters of the ruling Nationalist party as well as the Conservative party and the Herstigte Nationalist party. (The latter two parties represent the ultraconservative viewpoint in the South African political scene.)

In the past the NGK has often been accused of being "a church of the government" or "the National party at prayer." But the fact is that the NGK has no official ties with any of the political parties. There is also no agreement or arrangement or alliance that morally binds the NGK to the National party or any of the other political parties. Just as the Roman Catholic church has no official tie with or authority over the ruling party in Italy or Spain, so the NGK has no official tie with or authority over the ruling National party of any other party in South Africa.

The argument is often used that the NGK must take disciplinary steps against its members who have seats in Parliament, especially when so-called discriminatory legislation is passed. But this is an oversimplification of the matter.

The fact that the majority of the members of Parliament and of the cabinet are also members of the NGK does not give the church any special jurisdiction over the government. The church has no means to force the authorities to withdraw a bill or change a system that it may consider to be unbiblical. The church can only give its prophetic witness, preach the norms of the word of God to the authorities, and warn them when injustice is being done. In its church order the NGK has expressed its relation to the state in the following words: "As an institution the church submits itself to the authority and laws of the state, as far as its participation in the normal processes of

justice and the exercising of civil rights are concerned, provided that this legal order is not in conflict with the word of God."

In this respect the General Synod of the NGK has, among others, made the following statements:

- It is the function of the church to bring to the attention of the relevant authorities any plight, need, or injustice that may occur.
- The NGK conscientiously adheres to the principle of sovereignty in its own sphere, and therefore as an institution it under no circumstances takes part in politics.

First of all it may be helpful to get clarification on the word apartheid. This term came into use in the South African political vocabulary before the National party came into power in 1948. Apartheid was at that point in time the political concept that conveyed the policy on which the National party fought and won that election. This policy had its roots in certain political, social, and economic circumstances that prevailed in South Africa during the third and fourth decades of this century. One must, in this connection, recall the plight of many nations during the early 1930s as a result of the terrible depression that turned the world economy upside down. What made circumstances considerably worse in South Africa was the fact that a devastating drought brought bankruptcy to the large numbers of the white population and that dire poverty and unemployment drove whites as well as Coloureds and blacks from the farms and small towns to the cities in search of work and lodging.

Many families found shelter in slum areas where the mixing of races took place on an extensive scale. This led to increasing numbers of mixed marriages between whites and Coloureds while immorality and miscegenation posed real problems. One must keep in mind that at that period in the South African history a considerable gap existed between whites, Coloureds, and blacks as regards levels of education, culture, and social development.

The NGK and white cultural organizations feared that miscegenation could lead to the lowering and deterioration of the standard of moral and spiritual life

of church and society. This could hamper the work of the church and had urgently to be stopped. Under these circumstances the NGK and some other churches and welfare societies were deeply concerned. Although, all churches in South Africa were at that stage convinced of the fact that racially mixed marriages were undesirable and that miscegenation spelled great problems for the future, it was especially the NGK that held the opinion that matters could not be remedied by a process of education alone, but that legislation was necessary. Church bodies and conferences therefore appealed to the ruling government to take measures to bring about social separation between whites, Coloureds, and blacks. The NGK was convinced that the solution of the problem would lie in a policy of separate development if ever the whites, Coloureds, and blacks were to be morally, spiritually, and economically uplifted.

In those days the National party was the opposition party in Parliament. Since the majority of its members were members of the NGK and vice-versa, it was only logical to expect that the political solutions that the National party would seek would more or less coincide with the NGK's convictions, although there were no official links whatsoever between church and party.

At the same time, South African politics were in turmoil as a result of the fact that Coloureds could vote in elections between white political parties. Although Coloured voters were a small minority, they nevertheless played an important part in elections because their votes could determine the outcome in quite a number of constituencies. This caused bitterness between the white political parties. The National party realized that the position could be reversed if Coloureds were no longer to play a part in "white" politics and therefore would no longer have the balance of power. It came as no surprise therefore when the National party candidates went to the polls in 1948 on the platform of apartheid. They pledged to bring about separation in the political and social sphere, to pass strict legislation against mixed marriages, and to work steadfastly for the separate development of all race groups. When they

got into power they promptly started to put into practice what they had pledged.

I think that this rather lengthy background is necessary to show that the word apartheid was in fact an unfortunate misnomer for the policy.

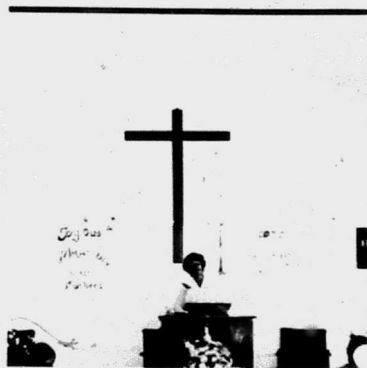
It only presented and accentuated one single aspect, namely the negative goal to bring about separation, while the positive and most important goal, to enhance development, was more or less repressed and did not come to the fore. While it is true that the process of separation brought resettlement, hardships, and unhappiness for large communities, especially among Coloureds, Indians, and blacks, it cannot be denied that the process of development, on the other hand, brought tremendous advantages for Coloureds and blacks and opened vast possibilities of advancement and progress in every sphere of life. It is an uncontested fact that the government of South Africa annually spends more money on development and uplifting of blacks in this country than the United Nations is spending in the interests of Third World countries around the globe!

It is therefore a pity that the concept of separate development (with the accent on development) is not sufficiently grasped and that it is simply equated with apartheid and rejected forthwith without appreciation for what is positively being brought about. The NGK prefers the term separate development because it presents both the aspects of separateness as well as development.

As far as the theological views on separate development and black South Africans are concerned, it is true that during the third, fourth, and fifth decades, NGK church bodies and church leaders tried to defend the policy on theological and biblical grounds. Many Bible texts were advanced to prove that the separation of nations was a biblical concept, and that racially mixed marriages were not permissible.

As the years went by, continued intensive theological research showed that many of the biblical texts on which the political policy had previously been defended could in fact not be employed to substantiate the policy. In 1974 the General Synod of the NGK endorsed a report, "Race Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of the

Scripture," which clearly explains the theological stand of the NGK. While the report points out on the one hand that many of the biblical texts that were formerly advanced to defend a system of separate and autogenous development were not valid, it states on the other hand that there are no clear biblical grounds on which autogenous development per se is conclusively condemned, provided that in the practical application of the policy (and this applies for all political policies), the biblical commandments about justice and brotherly love are obeyed. According to the report, "A political system based on the autogenous or separate development of various population groups



**Mother's Day service at Coloured church: "There is no direct pronouncement in scripture that either approves or condemns racially mixed marriages"**

Photo: Bea Bertram

can be justified from the Bible, but the commandment to love one's neighbor must at all times be the ethical norm towards establishing sound inter-people relations." Where this proviso is not obeyed and people are subjected to unjust and unkind treatment, it obviously remains the calling and task of the church to witness clearly in the name of Christ.

The NGK's stand on the controversial law on racially mixed marriages is not based on theological and biblical grounds but on practical circumstances. In its official report the NGK pointed out: "There is no direct pronouncement in scripture that either approves or condemns racially mixed marriages."

The General Synod resolved that such marriages are physically possible, but emphasized that "factors that impede the happiness and full development of a Christian marriage and those that would eventually destroy the God-given diversity and identity would render such a marriage extremely undesirable. Such factors are manifest when there are substantial differences between the two partners in respect to religion, social structure, cultural pattern, biological descent, etc. Such marriages are undesirable for as long as the impeding factors exist."

In 1982 the General Synod once again spent time on a lengthy debate on mixed marriages and immorality across the racial line. The synod decided in the end, by majority vote, that on the South African scene impeding factors still prevail and that the existing laws should therefore, at least at this stage, still be retained.

The views of the NGK on separate development have been declared a sin by churches throughout the world. It was the NGK Mission church, which in 1978 advanced a theological basis for the rejection of the policy of separate development. This policy, the NG Mission church concluded, was based on the supposition that individuals and communities of different races were basically irreconcilable, whereas Christ through his death on the cross had in reality reconciled man unto God, and man unto man. The conclusion was then evidently taken further and applied to the reconciliation of race unto race.

This theological argument was subsequently echoed almost verbatim in all resolutions taken by church assemblies and theological conferences throughout South Africa, Europe, and America. It was on this ground, and because the NGK abided by its conviction that a political system based on autogenous development can be justified in the light of Scripture, that the Ottawa Assembly of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) declared separate development a sin and the theological justification of the policy a heresy. As a result, the membership privileges of the NGK have been suspended.

The General Synod of the NGK subsequently replied to this action as follows: The synod takes note of the

course and decisions of the WARC with regret. These decisions come down to: (1) A one-sided image of the Dutch Reformed church being presented to the member churches in Ottawa. (2) A shocking judgment being passed on the Dutch Reformed church by the WARC in a manner for which and on the grounds of which no provision was made (at the time of the Dutch Reformed church becoming a member) by the constitution of the WARC. (3) Suspended membership was also not included. Certain conditions were given to the Dutch Reformed church, which they had to satisfy in order to become a full member. (4) The fact that they were unmistakably taken from the viewpoints of the theology of liberation, which is, according to the Dutch Reformed church, basically contrary to the Bible and the reformed theology. (5) The Dutch Reformed church, being placed in a very delicate position, has no choice but to make the following statement:

- That the Dutch Reformed church cannot be content with this suspended membership.
- That the Dutch Reformed church regards its position under such circumstances, that for all practical purposes it is no longer a full member of the WARC.
- That the Dutch Reformed church in deep humility wishes to profess before God that it is not above all criticism, but the synod also wished to declare in all sincerity that in view of what it had at its disposal, it has always applied itself to the justice and dignity of people.
- The Dutch Reformed church is still prepared to prayerfully grapple with these actual questions in the light of God's word, and is also willing to listen to the opinions of other Christians who accept the Word of God as the highest norm for life and creed.
- The synod commissions the plenary executive to give the WARC an official and complete answer in the light of the above-mentioned decisions of the General Synod.
- The synod decides that in the event of the WARC not unconditionally reinstating full membership and privileges to the Dutch Reformed church, it will make a final decision at the following General Synod.

This decision is to be conveyed to the correct authority (i.e., Executive Council) as soon as possible.

During September 1982 the resolutions of the WARC were fully endorsed by the synod of the NG Mission church. The synod not only declared apartheid a sin and the theological backing thereof a heresy, but also accused the NGK of idolatry. The synod furthermore declared the matter a *status confessionis* and actually framed a full-fledged confession. These decisions were officially conveyed to the General Synod of the NGK in October 1982, apparently in expectation that the latter would reply forthwith. The General Synod, however, did not have the time to study the document thoroughly during its session. The reply will probably be forthcoming during the latter part of 1983.

The relationship between the NGK and the ruling Nationalist party is definitely not one of uncritical endorsement of everything the state does. From time to time the state is urged to proceed in a manner that will cause the least hardship. When the church finds it necessary to contact the state about any matter it is always done through the various church bodies, but mainly through the General Synod's Liaison Committee for negotiations with the authorities. This committee approaches the government from time to time on important matters that deeply affect the lives of different communities in South Africa. Among such matters are: beer halls near black churches, housing problems, unemployment, suitable training for employees, problems like riots, labor unrest, general areas of friction, detention without trial, squatter problems, migrant labor, the gap between wages for different labor groups, community facilities, security legislation, laws on censorship, etc.

The NGK in this way does play an active role within the social and political context, but without getting involved in party politics, political movements, or political campaigns. No minister of the NGK is, for example, allowed to serve on committees of political parties or to be a candidate in political elections, as is the case with the Methodist church in South Africa. Be-

fore he makes himself available, a minister of the NGK has to resign as pastor. Ministers of the NGK are not expected to make outspoken declarations of a party political character, because this causes disunity and strife within the church and harms the kingdom. The NGK is therefore neither progressive nor retrogressive in the political sense of these concepts, but tries earnestly to fulfill the well-known motto of the reformed churches: *Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda* ("a reformed church is always reforming").

The General Synod decided in 1982 to revise the booklet, "Race Relations and the South African Scene," in the light of the Scripture, and revision has already commenced. The report will probably be available in the course of 1984 and will be tabled at the General Synod meeting in 1986.

We conclude with the following extract from a pamphlet entitled "Introducing the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa": "The NGK does not proclaim that the policies and the situation generally in South Africa are perfect, that there are no social injustices or other defects, that the answers to all problems have been found, that there is no remaining task for the church in this field, and that she is acting with perfection and without human frailty and failure. She is conscious of the existence of vital problems in the sphere of race and human relations and subscribes to the same ideals of social justice, human rights, and the self-determination of peoples as that held by other Christian churches. The church is aware of many interim hardships and difficulties in the process of solving the involved social and political problems. She also realizes that the task of the South African government is a superhuman one and that they not only require Christian guidance but also sympathetic understanding and prayer. Where the NGK differs from other churches, she maintains that it is not because of a difference of opinion and moral concepts and Christian ethics, but because of a different understanding of, and a different approach to, the situation in South Africa. The difference is not one of ideals and aims, but of the best method of achieving them." □

# Denationalization: Apartheid's Ultimate Plan

---

BY JOHN DUGARD

---

In South Africa today, there is so much heady talk of reform, new constitutional plans, and movement away from discrimination that the National party government's most blatant act of race discrimination since the inception of apartheid in 1948 — the withdrawal of South African nationality from some eight million blacks that accompanied the granting of "independence" to Transkei (1976), BophuthaTswana (1977), Venda (1979), and Ciskei (1981) — has gone largely unnoticed, or has at least failed to receive the attention it deserves.

The conferral of "independence" on these "states" has been so skillfully presented as an exercise in self-determination and as an extension of political rights to blacks that the full horror of this action has been obscured. Not only have millions of blacks living in these homeland-states been transformed into foreigners overnight by legislative de-

creed, but so too have several million blacks living permanently in the urban areas of South Africa itself. Pretoria has set in motion the implementation of its ultimate fantasy — a South Africa in which there are no black South African nationals or citizens; a South Africa that cannot be accused of denying civil and political rights to its black nationals for the simple reason that there will be no black South Africans, only millions of migrant laborers (or guest workers, as the fantasy sees them) linked by nationality to a collection of unrecognized, economically dependent mini-states on the periphery of South Africa.

The full import of this development has been overlooked partly because of its political audacity and also because of its legal complexity. Inevitably any discussion of the subject starts with the legal terms "nationality" or "citizenship," and it is this recourse to legal technicalities that obscures the real issue and conceals the fraudulent nature of the exercise.

The terms "nationality" and "citizenship" are used loosely and interchangeably in both political jargon and statutory enactments. The two must, however, be distinguished. "Nationality" is essentially a term of international law and denotes a connection between individual and state. In practical terms, the main advantages of nationality are that a national may travel

on the passport of the state and claim protection from that state should he be injured abroad. "Citizenship," on the other hand, is a term of constitutional law and describes the status of an individual and more particularly his civil and political rights within a state. At first sight, citizenship would appear to be more important, but this is not so, because nationality is a concept that encompasses citizenship. If a person is a national of a state, he may be accorded civil and political rights — that is, citizenship — by that state or he may be denied such rights, depending on the level of democracy within the state. On the other hand, if he is not a national of that state, he does not qualify for any political rights in that state, or for any of the attributes of citizenship. He is then a foreigner who lives on sufferance within the state.

The South African government stands accused of denying full citizenship rights to its black nationals on grounds of race. If South Africa is to rebut this charge and hence secure relief from international pressure, it has two options. It can either extend equal political rights to black South African nationals or take steps to ensure that there are no black South African nationals with any claim to such rights. It has chosen the latter course.

Apartheid has evolved from a policy of white domination to one of territorial

---

John Dugard is a professor of law and director of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. He has published widely on issues of international law and human rights law and his most recent book is *Human Rights and the South African Legal Order* (Princeton University Press, 1978).

---

fragmentation. In 1948, when the National party first came to power, apartheid was conceived simply as a policy of racial discrimination and white domination. In the late 1950s, however, it became clear to the South African government that apartheid in this form was totally unacceptable to the international community. Consequently it set about restructuring apartheid in accordance with principles of self-determination and decolonization that had already come to dominate United Nations approaches to Africa. Apartheid now became "self-development" and legislation was introduced to pave the way for the creation of "self-governing Bantu units," to correspond with the main ethnic division in South Africa.

Transkei was granted self-government in 1963, but thereafter there was little further movement on this front. In the early 1970s, it became clear that Pretoria was determined to grant self-government to the "Bantu national units" as a matter of urgency, and that all black South Africans were to be allocated political and citizenship rights in these "units." In 1970, the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act (now the National States Citizenship Act) was passed, which provided that every black person would become a citizen of the "homeland" to which he was attached by birth, language, or cultural affiliation. Thereafter, the homelands advanced rapidly towards self-government; by January 1977, Bophutha-Tswana, Ciskei, Lebowa, Venda, Gazankulu, QwaQwa, and KwaZulu had become self-governing. In 1981, KwaNdebele joined the ranks of self-governing states.

In 1976, when Transkei was granted independence, it became clear that independence and not merely self-government was envisaged for the homelands. Prior to the granting of independence to Transkei, it was generally believed that international recognition of the homelands was of fundamental importance to the South African government. Transkeian independence was primarily aimed at the assuaging of world opinion. Recognition must therefore have constituted one of the major objectives of independence. One of the obstacles in the way of recogni-



Photo: Africamera

**Former Prime Minister Vorster at QwaQwa legislative assembly opening: Granting "self-government" to Bantu national units**

tion was, however, the issue of nationality. If all blacks associated with Transkei were to be summarily deprived of South African nationality on independence, this deprivation would provide clear evidence of the government's intention to use independence as a means of achieving the ultimate goal of "Grand Apartheid" — a South Africa with no black South African nationals. Consequently, recognition was impossible if independence involved the compulsory deprivation of nationality — denationalization — of all persons connected, however remotely, with Transkei.

Pretoria's decision to denationalize four million persons connected with Transkei as part of the independence package deal, and thereby to forgo recognition, demonstrates convincingly that denationalization is the ultimate goal of separate development. In 1978, this goal was enunciated in unambiguous language by Dr. C.P. Mulder, in his capacity as minister of Bantu administration and development. On February 8, 1978, Dr. Mulder stated in Parliament:

If our policy is taken to its full logical conclusion as far as the black people are concerned, there will be not one black man with South African citizenship. . . . Every black man in South Africa will eventually be accommodated in some independent new state in this honorable way and there will no longer be a moral obligation on this Parliament to accommodate these people politically.

Dr. Mulder has since fallen from political power. But his formulation of National party policy remains unchanged, despite frequent demands, particularly from black leaders, for its repudiation. Moreover, subsequent events confirm that it is the cornerstone of apartheid ideology. Since 1976, BophuthaTswana, Venda, and Ciskei have also attained independence accompanied by denationalization. Eight million black South Africans have to date therefore been deprived of their South African nationality and been allocated the nationality of one of the "independent homelands." That the government is determined to denationalize black South Africans as rapidly as possible is further illustrated by the proposed transfer of South African territory to the Kingdom of Swaziland. By this scheme, some 800,000 Swazi South African nationals, at present linked with the homeland of KaNgwane, will cease to be South African nationals and become nationals of Swaziland. Self-governing homelands that continue to oppose independence — notably KwaZulu, Lebowa, Gazankulu and QwaQwa — are, moreover, being subjected to pressure to opt for independence by land excisions in favor of independent states (Swaziland) or self-governing states well disposed toward independence. Hence the attempt to excise the Ingwavuma district from KwaZulu and to cede it to Swaziland, and the fear that parts of Lebowa will be handed over to the minuscule KwaNdebele, which has announced its intention of becoming independent in 1984.

In many quarters, it is fashionable to deny Prime Minister Botha's allegiance to the policy of denationalization and to regard it as a hangover from the days of Verwoerd and Vorster, which has been overlooked in the process of positive constitutional reform for Coloureds and Indians. But the evidence that the present government adheres to the philosophy expounded by Mr. Mulder in 1978 is overwhelming. Two homelands have become independent since Botha assumed office and the denationalization of persons associated with KwaNdebele and KaNgwane is around the corner.

The truth is that the fantasy of South

Africa with no black South African nationals remains central to National party constitutional planning. Hence the failure of the government's constitutional proposals to make any provision for black participation in the political decision-making process of South Africa itself. Coloureds and Indians are to be accommodated in some new political order with whites because they are less in number than the white population, but the numerically more powerful blacks must be content with political rights in "independent" homelands.

Denationalization has been legislatively effected in the tersest manner possible. The South African statutes conferring independence on Transkei, BophuthaTswana, Venda, and Ciskei all contain a common provision that states, "Every person falling in any of the categories of persons defined in Schedule B shall be a citizen of the Transkei (BophuthaTswana, Venda, or Ciskei as the case may be) and shall cease to be a South African citizen." Schedule B attached to all statutes varies slightly in each case. In essence, the schedule lists the following categories of persons as nationals of the new state and hence as persons automatically deprived of their South African nationality:

- Every person designated as a citizen of the homeland in terms of the 1970 National State Citizenship Act, that is, every black person linked by birth, language, or cultural affiliation with the homeland.
- Every person born in or outside the homeland if at least one parent was a citizen of the homeland in terms of the 1970 National States Citizenship Act.
- Every person domiciled in the homeland for at least five years.
- Every South African national who is not already a citizen of another homeland who speaks a language used by members of any tribe that forms a part of the population of the homeland in question, including any dialect of any such language.
- Every South African national who is not already a citizen of another homeland "who is related to any member of the population contemplated in above section or has identified himself with any part of

such population or is culturally or otherwise associated with any member of such population."

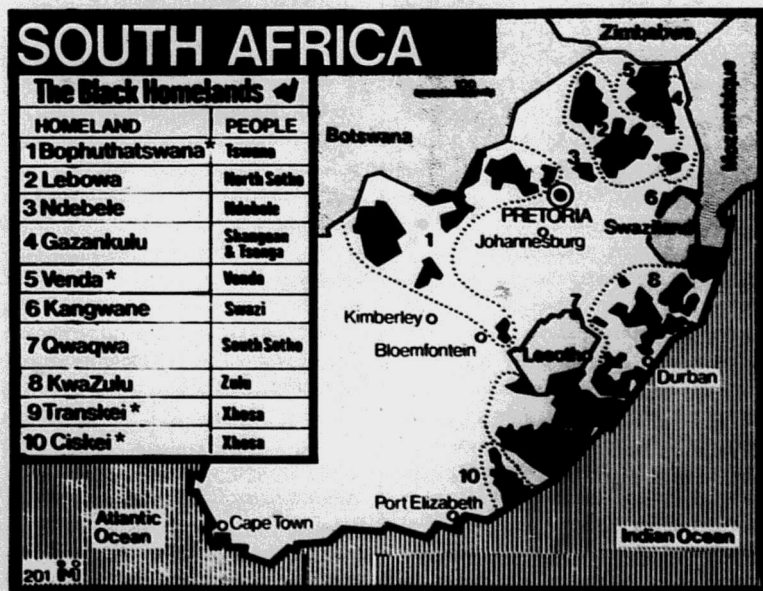
The categories listed in Schedule B are broad, and it is difficult to contemplate a case in which a black South African national could escape its tentacles. They ensure, in the words of Dr. Mulder, that "every black man in South Africa will eventually be accommodated in some independent new state."

The statutes carefully refrain from depriving persons of South African nationality on grounds of race. Instead, they prescribe language and culture as the criteria for denationalization. There can, however, be no doubt that in practice they are intended to apply to blacks only, since this accords with declared government policy. Certainly there is no known instance in which a white, Coloured, or Asian person connected with Transkei, BophuthaTswana, Venda, or Ciskei has been deprived of his South African nationality since the conferral of independence upon these states.

When a homeland becomes independent, its new nationals are not summarily deprived of their rights in the Republic, for each independence-conferring statute has provided that no homeland national residing in the Republic at

the time of independence shall, "except as regards citizenship," forfeit any existing rights, privileges, or benefits. This provision creates the illusion that blacks residing in the Republic have little to fear from independence. But this is not so. The following are some of the disadvantages already experienced by nationals of the newly independent states residing in the Republic.

The national of an independent homeland-state qualifies for a passport of the homeland in question. Since no homeland-status is internationally recognized, such a passport is not accepted abroad. Consequently, such a homeland national must generally forgo travel outside South Africa. A homeland national living in South Africa is an alien. Consequently, he may be deported in the same way as a German or Italian residing in South Africa may be deported to his state of nationality. Since 1981, over 4,000 blacks with Transkeian roots have been deported from the Western Cape to Transkei on the grounds that they are undocumented aliens and not South African nationals. Although homelands' nationals residing in South Africa at the time their homeland achieved independence do not forfeit "any existing rights" other than citizenship, this does not extend to their children born in South Africa after independence. Consequently, such



\*Homelands granted "independence" by South Africa



children will not qualify for any right to permanent residence in an urban area acquired by their parents.

Blacks living permanently in the urban areas of South Africa have not been deprived of political or citizenship rights by denationalization for the simple reason that they have never enjoyed the right to participate in the central South African body politic. However, they have long cherished the ideal that, as South African nationals, they would ultimately qualify for the full rights of citizenship, particularly the franchise, that normally accompany nationality. These hopes are now destroyed. This objection to homelands independence was eloquently stated by Bishop Desmond Tutu shortly before Transkei became independent:

Overnight, they will become foreigners in what for many of them has been the land of their birth and be forced to adopt the citizenship of a country that many do not know at all and in whose creation they have played no part at all. They have contributed in their various ways to the prosperity of their beloved South Africa and now it seems at the stroke of a pen they will forfeit a cherished birthright.

Some 10 million blacks live outside the homelands, and this figure is unlikely to decrease. Herein lies the flaw of Grand Apartheid; many of these persons are urbanized with few, if any, roots in a homeland. Moreover, it is clear that homelands nationals living in the urban areas of the Republic do not identify politically with their homelands or see much point in exercising their political rights in the homeland. This is illustrated by the October 1982 elections to the BophuthaTswana National Assembly, in which special arrangements were made for nationals of BophuthaTswana to cast their votes in Johannesburg and Soweto. Of the estimated 300,000 BophuthaTswana nationals living in Johannesburg and Soweto, only 480 bothered to register as voters; and of these, only 135 actually voted in the elections. Commenting on this, Dr. Nthato Motlana, himself a Tswana-speaking black categorized as a national of BophuthaTswana, declared: "It means no mad planners in Pretoria are going to foreignize us by drawing lines on a

map. It means Tswanas in Soweto remain firm in their view of themselves as South Africans, in spite of five years of propaganda."

That the government's policy towards blacks is intended to exploit international fictions and not to come to terms with the realities of international usage is demonstrated by its failure to treat homelands nationals in South Africa as real aliens. Under international law, a state is required to accord a certain minimum standard of treatment to aliens admitted to its territory. This means that where a state has a low standard of justice towards its own nationals, an alien's position is a privileged one. Although the precise limits of this standard are not clear, it is generally accepted that a state violates its international obligations when it denies an alien basic human rights on the grounds of his race.

While the "minimum standard of treatment" is scrupulously observed by the South African government in the case of aliens from most states, it is certainly not respected in the case of Transkei, BophuthaTswana, Venda, and Ciskei, for the nationals of these states are still subject to all the discriminatory laws that dominated their lives while they were South African nationals. Denationalized blacks from the independent homelands, therefore, get the worst of both worlds — loss of their "birthright" to participate in the government and power processes of South Africa at some future date, and denial of the standards of fair treatment that normally accrue to aliens.

Independent homelands and their necessary concomitant denationalization were conceived as a method of pacifying a hostile international community. The National party government saw this policy as being in line with the decolonization process in the United Nations and as giving effect to the principle of self-determination, which has received so much attention in the resolutions and rhetoric of the General Assembly.

But in constructing such a policy, Pretoria failed to consider the growing belief among states that denationalization measures based on race are contrary to international law. Although some South African jurists dispute this

view, there is wide support for the notion that contemporary international law prohibits denationalization on grounds of race. This rule of international law is premised on the widespread opposition to the 1941 Nazi decree denationalizing German Jews; on Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which declares that "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality"; on Article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which guarantees the right to nationality without racial distinction; and on Article 9 of the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, which expressly prohibits deprivation of nationality on racial grounds.

Instead of alleviating the South African government's position in the international community, denationalization has exacerbated it. Denationalization has contributed substantially to the decision of states not to recognize the homelands as independent nations, and it has been hailed as the ultimate form of race discrimination, which far outweighs any minor efforts to move away from discriminatory law and practice.

In essence, the South African government is trying to solve its constitutional problems and overcome its international isolation by resorting to international law fictions. It is set upon carving a number of ministates out of the body of South Africa, to one of which every black in South Africa will ultimately be attached by the bond of nationality. The international law concepts of statehood and nationality are invoked to rid South Africa of its major population group.

It is often said that there must be some connection between law and morality if law is to command respect. Similarly, there must be some connection between law and reality if it is to have any credibility. No intelligent person can seriously consider the policy of denationalization as a solution to South Africa's political problems. Ten million black people will not disappear simply because Parliament says they are aliens, nationals of dismembered parts of South Africa. Politics is generally viewed as the art of the possible; for Pretoria it seems to have become the art of the impossible. □

# Combating Apartheid

---

BY MONIQUE RUBENS

---

**A**s international frustration and anger with the South African government's continuing policies of apartheid and the deadlock in the negotiations for Namibia's independence mount, attention is once again turning to the United Nations as a focal point for hopes of achieving a breakthrough in what appears to be a stalemated situation. The UN has long been and is uniquely suited as a locus of anti-apartheid activity. It brings together national governments, southern African liberation movements, and nongovernmental organizations (known in UN parlance as NGOs) and provides them with a forum. In tandem with various UN bodies, their forces are marshaled to serve as vehicles for disseminating information and effecting change.

But how effective are these groups — the UN organizations, representatives of the liberation movements, the NGOs, and national governments — in their fight? What progress has been achieved? What are the pushes and tugs among them as they work together to combat apartheid and to achieve Namibia's independence?

An examination of these dynamics reveals a host of underlying criticisms, charges, and countercharges, all swathed in semisecrecy. "Loyal" criticism is "often misunderstood," remarked several people in the UN arena, and so there is a desire not to

tread too publicly on anyone's toes. But this also stems from a sincere motivation to work together as harmoniously, efficiently, and successfully as possible. And any group within the UN system must by nature contend with a great diversity of national groups and interests, rendered all the more difficult by complex bureaucracies, insufficient budgets, world politics, and, above all, by a government that steadfastly maintains its harsh policies despite international censure.

At the center of the anti-apartheid movement at the UN is the Special Committee Against Apartheid. Set up in 1963 at the request of the General Assembly and responsible to it, it presently is composed of 18 permanent member states, who were nominated by the president of the General Assembly and endorsed by the Assembly. Of the 18, six countries are African, three Latin American, six Asian, and three are eastern socialists. The original General Assembly resolution calling for the creation of the committee was linked to a call for sanctions against South Africa, and thus was immediately boycotted by the West. Nonetheless, when Western countries were consulted as the resolution requested, with a view to setting up the committee, not one was willing or prepared to serve on it.

Responsible to the General Assembly, the committee works together with governments, liberation movements, and NGOs in its aim to end apartheid. The Center Against Apartheid, an organ of the UN Secretariat, administratively serves the special committee and works under its guidance and direction. It helps to organize research, publicity, fund raising, liaisons with other groups, as well as conferences,

seminars, and other events. The question of Namibia's independence is largely handled by three UN offices: the United Nations Council for Namibia, the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Namibia.

The special committee's mandate is to review all aspects of South Africa's apartheid policies and their international repercussions; to promote a wide dissemination of "information on the evils of apartheid and the legitimate struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa"; to encourage full implementation of relevant UN resolutions by all governments and organizations; to promote public action and campaigns supporting the national liberation movements of South Africa as outlined by UN resolutions; and to promote concerted action by governments and intergovernmental organizations in the international mobilization against apartheid.

In accordance with General Assembly resolutions on South Africa, which it helps to formulate, the committee seeks political support for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions, arms and oil embargoes, the cessation of all military, nuclear, and economic cooperation with South Africa, and sports and cultural boycotts. It also encourages assistance to victims of South African apartheid policies and the South African liberation movements, encourages the release of South African political prisoners and solidarity with the South African black trade union movement, and devotes special attention to women under apartheid.

"The committee," says Enuga S. Reddy, the dynamic assistant secretary-general of the Center Against Apartheid, "is unusual in that it's very

---

A freelance writer specializing in African affairs, Monique Rubens covers African issues at the United Nations and in New York. She is a frequent contributor to *West Africa* magazine.

---

action-oriented." Its multifaceted objectives are carried out by spearheading draft General Assembly resolutions on the above issues and by a massive information campaign. The committee publishes a dazzling array of reports and documentation, distributed worldwide; sponsors international conferences and seminars on various aspects of apartheid; and sends missions to governments, parliamentarians, and nongovernmental organizations to secure support for their efforts. A tall order, indeed, and one that immediately invites criticism against both the committee's substantive goals and its approach in attaining them.

The struggle to impose economic sanctions against South Africa, for example, is controversial. Explains Alhaji Maitama-Sule, permanent representative of Nigeria to the UN and the committee's chairman: "Because of the stubbornness, intransigence, and refusal on the part of South Africa to listen to the words of wisdom or appeals to implement UN resolutions, we thought perhaps the best way was to apply sanctions. This is not to punish South Africa, or for revenge, but to force change, not only in the interests of the majority of non-whites in South Africa, but also in the interests of the white minority." "And," he added, "we believe that sanctions can work."

What it takes, he maintains, is the political will of South Africa's trading partners to apply sanctions, an action that in the long run would benefit them both politically and economically.

Many Western and even some African countries oppose sanctions, and thus far the vetoes of the United States, Great Britain, and France on the Security Council, the only UN body empowered to enact sanctions, have held sway. Calling for sanctions, knowing they will never be passed, is, some argue, an easy way for countries to avoid the problem. Furthermore, they genuinely fear South African retaliation should sanctions be adopted.

Other questions surrounding sanctions concern their efficacy. Do they really work? A case in point is the arms embargo against South Africa, passed by the Security Council in 1977. Its language, open to interpretation, provides loopholes through which the em-

bargo may be transgressed, such as by the delivery of embargoed equipment through third parties or sales of dual purpose (civilian and military) materials. A committee, put together by the Security Council, examined the problem and in its report cited charges of violations, by, among others, American, British, and West German companies, as well as their governments' responses to the charges. It also recommended ways of closing the embargo's loopholes. Submitted in 1980, the report remains before the Security Council, but has yet to be adopted by it. The committee, continuing to receive information on the arms embargo by the UN Secretariat staff authorized to serve it, lay dormant until this year when the council, after a one-year hiatus, re-elected officers to serve on its bureau. One recommendation is to establish a list enumerating all dual purpose and other items to be proscribed for sale to South Africa. But, contend nonenthusiasts, a mechanism that would dictate to member states what they can or cannot sell would be an expensive and highly political operation that few countries really want.

The committee's tendency to single out certain Western countries and Israel for public condemnation of their collaboration with South Africa provokes further dismay. The 1982 General Assembly resolution calling for sanctions, for example, specifically "deplores" U.S. and Israeli "political, economic, and other collaboration" with South Africa and expresses "serious concern" over increased investments in and loans to South Africa by Britain, the United States, West Germany, and Switzerland. The issue of naming countries divides not only Western countries, but also African ones, where it has struck sensitive nerves. Those in favor of this tactic maintain that an informed public opinion will then be able to pressurize specific collaborating governments. Publicly naming countries, argues the other side, only makes them more intransigent. Those against are also extremely uncomfortable at the prospect of openly criticizing countries with whom they might have economic and political ties. Selectivity in naming countries becomes a political handball. During this year's General Assembly

debate on South Africa, U.S. representative Gordon Luce called the habit of "condemning the United States for trading with South Africa, while continuing to do so oneself," a "hypocrisy."

The committee's endorsement of the armed struggle in South Africa is yet another sticky issue for its critics and even some supporters. The UN is dedicated to peace, they say, not violence. "We didn't ask South Africa to go to armed struggle," responds Reddy. "There is no other choice. There are certain situations in which nonviolence doesn't work. The only way to establish peace is to pick up arms. In that sense, it is armed struggle for peace." He pointed out that support for the armed struggle is but one facet of the committee's work. "We believe in peace," Reddy declared, "and talked about sanctions as a peaceful approach, but that has been blocked by the West."

Clearly, many of the committee's stands make it difficult, if not impossible, for Western countries, even those who support its work, to back it. The issues are often perceived as, and politically boil down to, divisions between the East and West. Western nations complain that the committee has become a vehicle through which the East can nigger or harass the West. This view is further buttressed by the fact that there are no Western countries on the committee, nor have there ever been.

This raises the very real charge that although Third World countries feel so indignant about apartheid, they are not prepared to act within the rubric of politics as the art of the possible, preferring instead to strive for the impossible, outside the framework of Western political exigencies. Or, on the other hand, has the committee deliberately gone out on a radical limb to make its goals that much more unattainable so that any progress towards them becomes both a real achievement and more of a political victory?

Furthermore, the deliberate Western boycott of the committee defined it right from the start. "Everyone thought the committee would be useless without the West," explained Reddy. But it used the lack of Westerners to become more united. The committee quickly

evolved into an "action committee" and not a "debating society."

From the beginning, the committee recognized that it will be the South Africans themselves who will fight their revolution. What the committee could do was help by keeping the issues alive and by seeking political support for them. It decided, therefore, "not to be too radical," and to concentrate solely on antiapartheid issues. Within "two or three years," said Reddy, "the committee got the support of a few of the Nordic countries, and then one by one the Western countries. And then even the big Western countries had to recognize the committee and deal with it with some respect."

Acknowledging both that it needed the West's support, but also that there are limits to what Western governments would back in the antiapartheid struggle, it sought concrete ways to enlist their assistance. It created and manages, for example, two funds. One, the Trust Fund for Southern Africa, for prisoners and their families, provides money for legal aid, family assistance, and a little for refugees. The other, the Educational and Training Program for Southern Africa, provides scholarship money. Both funds receive the bulk of their contributions from the West.

Secondly, it opted to win over public opinion in the West, realizing that public opinion could be very influential in changing government policies. This was carried out by deliberately courting and coordinating a wide variety of all the existing and potential antiapartheid groups, to increase their direct political and monetary support against apartheid, and to help them get their governments to do the same. "In terms of solid work of organizations," said Reddy, "no UN committee has done better... in terms of developing day-to-day contacts with groups, supporting them, encouraging them, and helping to coordinate their actions in support of the liberation struggle."

Politically, the committee treads the delicate tightrope of publicly radical views and accommodating tactics. In consultations with the liberation movements, African groups, and the nonaligned, and in accordance with recommendations in its annual report to the General Assembly, it composes the

first drafts of resolutions on South Africa. These drafts, like most UN draft resolutions, circulate among different groups of UN member states and go through changes before they are introduced in the plenary for adoption by the General Assembly. Maitama-Sule consults with various Western countries, a move greatly appreciated by them, on the first drafts of the resolutions for the General Assembly, in an effort to establish a dialogue and make accommodations. Nonetheless, as there are a few positions the committee will not back down from, it tries to put forward several resolutions to separate the issues. In that way, the West can vote for a maximum number of resolutions and thus electorally support elements of the antiapartheid struggle, while one or two more "radical" resolutions are left for other member states. Yet many would claim that the "difficult language" is present throughout most of the resolutions, again making it hard for the less radical countries to vote their approval without first expressing their reservations on certain clauses.

The committee also publicly continues to offer reconciliation with the West. Said Maitama-Sule, "I have been told several times that the Special Committee Against Apartheid is an unreasonable committee, a crazy committee, that their language is extravagant, that their resolutions are irresponsible, unrealistic, unreasonable, and so on. It's all very well to say this. Please come and join us and make us responsible. Please join the committee and make our language less extravagant. I, as chairman of the special committee, would only be too pleased to see a balance in my committee." Echoed Ghanaian Ambassador James Victor Gbeho, a dedicated antiapartheid activist and chairman of a subcommittee on the committee, "Ghana will pioneer the resolution in the General Assembly to change the terms of the special committee," which would permit it to increase its numbers and allow Western member states in.

As laudatory as this sounds, it is unlikely to occur. In the words of another observer, "Frankly, it may be too late." The lines are drawn. But a more powerful argument made by people both within the committee and out is

that having Western countries on the committee would merely hamper its efforts. As it now stands, it has long reached an internal consensus on the issues it considers important, as well as a modus operandi on how to deal with them. Although it may well be a thorny radical burr for some, the committee well serves its purpose.

Another key element in the committee's strategy is the NGOs upon which it relies for much of its local support. NGOs are the vital linchpin in the committee's efforts to reach international public opinion. NGOs, in particular church organizations, have traditionally played a great role in amassing public support for the antiapartheid movement. Groups such as the Lutherans, Methodists, Quakers, and Baptists, to name but a few, serve as informal international lobbyists, organizing conferences, rallies, and demonstrations, publishing a wide variety of information, keeping their congregations aware of recent events, and urging them to support the struggle against apartheid. Other organizations, geared specifically to Africa, such as the International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa and the American Committee on Africa, play an equally significant part both in providing assistance in southern Africa and in aiding the public to apply pressure to bring about change.

One place at the UN for NGOs concerned about apartheid to play an active role is the Southern Africa Subcommittee of the NGO Committee on Human Rights. Meeting once a month, it serves as a clearinghouse for information and as a workshop on southern African affairs. In addition to these meetings, NGOs can also report as individual organizations to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and channel out UN Department of Public Information material, and act as consultants to organs like the Council for Namibia and the special committee.

The Southern Africa Subcommittee has had several recent successes. It circulated to over 600 NGOs a letter appealing for funds to supplement the UN budget for emergency relief for Namibia. By NGO standards, it received a favorable response, although considering Namibia's needs, it was a

drop in the bucket. Members also wrote the U.S. government requesting that it plead for clemency for six African National Congress patriots condemned to death. The government complied. Subcommittee members plan to brief their constituencies more fully about the issues surrounding International Monetary Fund lending to South Africa in an effort to ensure that the next time the subject comes up, their constituents will pressure their governments to oppose such loans. The subcommittee is also responsible for organizing the first seminar at which American labor unions met with the special committee to discuss boycott strategies against South Africa.

While an NGO representative commented that NGOs were "catalytic agents of growing independence," he admitted that the subcommittee's work was "small beer." But he noted, "It is substantially better than nothing." Yet of the hundreds of NGOs at the UN, only 20 were listed at a recent subcommittee meeting. Is it that South Africa has such a low profile in NGO thinking?

That southern Africa is not the key issue for every NGO is part of the answer. A more fundamental difficulty arises from the nature of NGOs, who theoretically represent tremendous grass-roots power, but whose influence at the UN, although it is paid much lip service, is sometimes questioned. Indeed, despite the committee's claim that the NGOs are their allies, some would maintain that it is selective in the NGOs it chooses to deal with, and sometimes ignores suggestions made by the NGOs, complaints that no doubt may be leveled against national governments too.

Similar to the difficulties involved in combining the various views of diverse national governments into a united anti-apartheid stand are those faced by some NGOs who are international in scope and thus represent a varied group of worldwide constituencies. NGOs on the subcommittee confront sticky issues. One problem was the anti-Zionist stance taken by the liberation movements and their condemnation of Israeli cooperation with South Africa, which put some NGO leaders in an uncomfortable position. Equally touchy were

the differences between the liberation movements, the African National Congress (ANC), and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), differences that everyone, particularly the special committee, is working to iron out.

In a further category are the southern African liberation movements themselves — the ANC, the PAC, and the South-West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO), who in conjunction with the UN and NGOs publicize the plight of their countrymen and seek assistance for them. Within the UN framework, both the ANC and PAC have observer status in the special committee and, in many ways, it is through the committee that their forces are channeled. They participate in its meetings and in the formulation of draft resolutions. They also lobby other members of the UN, notably the African Group, keep them informed of the situation in South Africa, and participate in General Assembly and, if the situation warrants, Security Council debates. They liaise with specialized UN agencies with projects relating to South Africa, particularly those concerned with refugees. Working with the special committee in its efforts with NGOs, and bilaterally with them as well as with local communities, they strive to inform the public of their positions and gain assistance and support on such issues as boycotts, release of political prisoners in South Africa, refugees, and divestment from South Africa.

Both the ANC and the PAC spoke of the strides they have made through the UN in effecting change in the situation, for example, the ousting of South Africa from the General Assembly. They also noted their success in publicizing and altering political prisoners' situations. Remarked David Ndaba, member of the ANC Permanent Observer Mission to the UN, "Through the UN, we have succeeded in reaching out to the international community in exposing who the real terrorists are, in improving the ANC's international image, in mobilizing tremendous support for our struggle in South Africa, and more than anything else, through the UN we succeeded in working toward the total isolation of racist South Africa." Commenting on the PAC's

efforts both in and outside the UN, Lesaona Makhanda, assistant to the chief PAC representative to the UN, said, "The point is for people to understand the situation in South Africa exactly as we understand it so that we get support for our positions and are not regarded as terrorists."

The UN Council for Namibia is enjoined to carry out its work with the full participation of the Namibian people themselves. SWAPO, recognized as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people, thus fulfills that function within the council. It has permanent observer status at the UN, a standing invitation to participate in the UN's work, and a permanent seat in the General Assembly, where it participates in all questions that arise. It is consulted as may be required by the secretary-general on matters relating to southern Africa, and works with the specialized UN agencies in their assistance programs to national liberation movements. It also spearheads resolutions for the General Assembly and the Security Council in intricate, well-organized, and lengthy processes of consultations that involve and proceed from, for example, the Frontline states, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the African Group at the UN, and the nonaligned. Theo-Ben Gurirab, SWAPO's permanent observer to the UN, said: "We have a situation in the UN in which it is absolutely inconceivable to have any action on Namibia without our knowledge, initiative, and participation." In addition, SWAPO works at the UN and through its other offices with NGOs, solidarity groups, and liberation support movements.

SWAPO has delineated three fronts for activity: (1) its home front — the national resistance of Namibians, and (2) the international front, which includes the UN. The first two, Gurirab said, have enabled SWAPO to mobilize support and assistance for the third, the armed struggle. "This third front becomes the most important at this stage," he said, "not as an alternative to negotiations, but because it is the continued intensification of the armed struggle that creates the necessary conditions for negotiations. What we come to the UN for and seek to achieve here and in international conferences is

moral and political support by the overwhelming majority of humankind. We are our own liberators."

Many of the complaints against the Special Committee against Apartheid were echoed by sources interviewed concerning the various UN bodies created to deal with Namibia. Many of their problems, however, stem from an inability to carry out their original mandates. The Council for Namibia, for example, is legally responsible for administering Namibia until its independence, but since its inception it has been denied access to Namibia by South Africa. South Africa also charges that the UN is too biased toward SWAPO to supervise and ensure fair elections. Like the special committee, the council has mounted an international information campaign to expose the policies of the South African regime and the activities of foreign economic interests in Namibia, and to mobilize support for the Namibians and SWAPO.

Toward these aims, the council represents Namibia at international or-

ganizations and conferences, produces documents, and goes on missions to consult with governments to find ways to exert pressure on South Africa. Organized by the secretary-general in consultation with the council was the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, held in Paris in April. Convened under a General Assembly resolution of December 1982, 136 governments attended the conference. Presenting a very detailed declaration and program of action, it called for, among other things, a meeting of the Security Council to consider further action to implement the UN plan for Namibia's independence, which it considers the only basis for settlement. It recommended that the council impose immediate comprehensive sanctions against South Africa and firmly rejected any continued American-South African attempts to link Namibia's independence with "extraneous and irrelevant issues, in particular the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola."

At times, the council's dual role as propagandizer and administering/authority has produced disagreements within its ranks. Comments one observer, "The council is of two minds at times. It can't decide whether it's an antiapartheid committee or a government in exile."

The role of the commissioner for Namibia has occasionally presented difficulties. Charged with executing and implementing the council's policies, his office is physically separate from the council, at times creating coordination problems. In addition, there is the secretary-general's special representative for Namibia, who is to ensure the conditions for free and fair elections in Namibia. But since the actual transition process as outlined in UN resolutions and the elections have yet to occur, that particular mandate is in abeyance. Yet, these offices are organizational necessities, given that South Africa's mandate over Namibia was terminated and the UN given responsibility for the territory.

## FOUR NEW PERSPECTIVES ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Afrikaner Political Thought

Analysis and Documents, Volume 1: 1780-1850  
by **André du Toit and Hermann Gilliomee**

This is the first volume in a major effort to gather and present in English the essential documents of Afrikaner political thought. The editors here assemble and analyze politically significant discussions and disputes among early Afrikaner settlers, and between them and colonial authorities, over slavery, labor, trade, frontier conflicts, law and order, and independence from colonial rule. Volume 22. \$37.50

### The House of Phalo

A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of Their Independence

by **J. B. Peires**

In this first modern history of the Xhosa, Peires relates the story of one of the most numerous and important indigenous peoples in contemporary South Africa. He covers their consolidation, an interlude of cooperation and conflict with whites, and the frontier wars that led to their subordination in the modern South African state. He incorporates the Xhosa oral and written testimony into a modern historical and ethnographic framework. Volume 32. \$27.50

Available at bookstores or order from

1893  
90  
1983

**University of California Press**

**Berkeley 94720**

Ninety years of scholarly excellence

### Soldiers Without Politics

Blacks in the South African Armed Forces  
by **Kenneth W. Grundy**

Despite their axiom that blacks should not be armed, South Africa's white government has been forced to open the armed services to blacks. In this first book-length study of the South African Defence Force and of non-white service in the South African military and police, Grundy probes relations between military leaders and Nationalist Party politicians, race relations in a racially stratified military, and the impact on society of black military service. Volume 33. \$24.50

### Education, Race, and Social Change in South Africa

Edited by **John A. Marcum**

A shortage of skilled manpower has forced whites to expand education for South African blacks. As black enrollments grow, so do opposing clusters of hopes and anxieties about the social and political impact of this change. To gain knowledge of these developments American educators, sponsored by the U.S.-South Africa Leader Exchange Program, interviewed South African educators, students, and civic leaders. This book presents their findings. Volume 34. \$25.00

Despite the difficulties, the council performs vital and practical tasks. It is the trustee for the United Nations Fund for Namibia, which covers the Nationhood Program, providing manpower education and training and preparing surveys and analyses of Namibia to help identify development priorities. Closely linked to the Program is the United Nations Institute for Namibia, a training and research center. The fund also offers scholarships and food, medical, and other assistance to SWAPO refugee centers. Finally, the council is yet another important factor in promoting international concern and support for Namibia's independence.

International frustration and impatience with the situation in southern Africa, focused at the moment on Namibia, is reaching a boiling point. Disappointment with the Western Contact Group's lack of progress and anger over the U.S. and South African insistence on linking Namibia's independence with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola brought the Namibian question once more to the Security Council in late May, following resolutions of the nonaligned meeting in New Delhi and the Paris Namibia conference.

Speakers at the Security Council debate, many of them foreign ministers who traveled to New York specifically for the occasion, expressed their support for the UN plan for implementing Namibia's independence. Condemnation of the linkage issue was strong. Angola's foreign minister, Paulo Jorge, termed it a main obstacle to settlement. Kamanda wa Kamanda, foreign minister of Zaire, questioned whether the Contact Group negotiations on Namibia were meant to accelerate or delay independence. He urged the council to draw up a timetable to implement UN Resolution 435. Other countries strongly condemned the recent South African attacks against its neighbors.

During the debate the president of the Council for Namibia, Paul Lusaka, Zambia's permanent representative to the UN, said everyone spoke in "moderate and restrained" tones. This was echoed privately by a representative of the Contact Group who remarked that despite criticism of that group, there was a genuine effort by most countries

to be moderate and arrive at a resolution that could be adopted by all members of the council.

This was indeed achieved. The resolution, adopted unanimously, condemned "South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia." Noting the results of the 1983 Paris conference on Namibia and the "protracted and exhaustive" consultations engaged in since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 435, which thus far had not led to its implementation, it urged South Africa to "make a firm commitment" to comply with Resolution 435. In two important political moves, the final resolution emphasized the role of the UN in the negotiations by mandating the secretary-general to "undertake consultations with the parties to the proposed cease-fire" with a view toward Resolution 435's implementation. It also further underscored the international community's sense of urgency and desire for concrete action by requesting the secretary-general to report the results of his consultations to the Security Council no later than August 31, 1983.

"The question of Namibia is now back where it belongs," stated Lusaka, "in the framework of the UN." SWAPO president Sam Nujoma, speaking of the "high-level debate" and its results, declared: "To us, this is a moral boost to our struggle for freedom and independence."

Those with long histories at the UN are not overly optimistic that a quick solution will be found. The more cynical among them see the debate simply as a way to vent pent-up frustration. The more hopeful believe it will further pressure the parties involved to reach agreement.

But whatever the outcome, if international concern is mounting, it is due in no small measure to the UN bodies, the liberation movements, and NGOs, which have kept southern African problems near the top of government and public agendas. The internal wranglings described in the interaction among UN organizations, national governments, and NGOs arise in part from the normal jostlings for power, turf, and influence, as well as from different approaches to the same ends. This is further complicated by the tremendous numbers and diversity of the

participants. In these ways, their problems resemble those inherent in any international negotiations or organizations.

None of these groups will single-handedly change the situation in southern Africa. Their power is limited. They must work with time, the march of events, influential governments, and liberation movements, which have wrought elements of change in the situation. Given their limited force, the more doors of communication they can open, the more effective they will be.

But what they do achieve is to bring the issues before the public and to international forums. As a result of their concentrated and well-organized efforts, the General Assembly and when necessary the Security Council regularly debate southern African issues. Much consultation takes place bilaterally and multilaterally at all levels, among governments, public leaders, and other organizations, to arrive at a consensus on the goals to be reached and how to achieve them in order to end apartheid and the South African occupation of Namibia. The General Assembly can only express its opinions and recommendations. It has a moral authority that relies on the good will of member states to enforce its resolutions. Under special circumstances, it can, with a two-thirds majority only, adopt a resolution that would have the legal force of a Security Council resolution. Under the UN charter, the Security Council resolutions are legally binding and the council can impose a graduated system of sanctions. Thus far, UN resolutions have not convinced South Africa to end apartheid or to withdraw from Namibia. But they have demonstrated international positions on these issues and their decisions carry the force of international opinion behind them.

Although their work may not proceed as efficiently or smoothly as one would like, in small but important ways each group contributes toward ameliorating the conditions of those in South Africa and Namibia, and, most importantly, each group is helping to keep these crucial issues alive. Slow going it certainly is, but in the words of one NGO representative, "Sometimes the longest way around is the shortest way home." □

# The Myth of Reform

BY BARRY STREEK

There is plenty of talk about change and reform in South Africa these days, and there have been some changes in Nationalist policies, but is it real change? Certainly, the breakaway of 16 Nationalist members of Parliament last year from the party that has ruled South Africa uninterrupted since 1948 has created the appearance that government-initiated change has begun to open up cracks in white minority rule. This, it is argued both inside and outside South Africa, is a process that must be supported because it is perhaps the only way towards peaceful, or relatively peaceful, reform in South Africa.

It is this very assumption that provides the rationale for the U.S. government's policies of "constructive engagement" with the five-year-old administration of Prime Minister Pieter Botha. It is, however, an assumption that is strongly disputed by a wide range of groups.

The Afrikaans writer, Andre Brink, for example, reacted angrily to this approach this year when he received an award for English literature. He said:

---

Barry Streek is a freelance journalist, based in Cape Town, South Africa. The former political correspondent of the *East London Daily Dispatch*, he is the co-author, with Richard Wicksteed, of *Render Unto Kaiser* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1981), an expose of developments in Transkei since it was granted "independence" by the South African government in 1976.

---

"[Neil] Aggetts still die and security police are still allowed a mandate to do unto others what may be done to them under another regime. [Saul] Mkhize are still shot when they dare to publicize the fact that their people are uprooted from their traditional homes, and hundreds of thousands of people are still dumped in pseudo-concentration camps in the wastelands of allegedly independent states. Beyers Naude and Winnie Mandela and the Reverend Maquina of Port Elizabeth are still silenced. The place of one's abode and the choice of one's marriage partner are still determined by one's pigmentation. If black trade unions are now legal their leadership is still being harassed and persecuted and driven into exile or death. If the new dispensation allows Coloureds and Indians the vote (on separate rolls of course), they will still remain second-class citizens."

"Above all, secrecy and the proliferation of lies still determine the actions and decisions of an increasingly militarized society, under the cloak of the greatest lie of all, the total onslaught," he said. Referring to the role of the writer, Brink continued: "The suggestion of change is also a matter of sophistication. Any authoritarian regime feels the need, from time to time, to justify its repressive apparatus, and how can it be done better then by revealing to the world the existence of dissidents?"

If someone like Andre Brink can react so strongly and with so much bite to the appearance of change, what on

earth is really going on in the land of apartheid? There can be and is much academic argument about the meaning of "change" and "reform," particularly in the context of a divided and painful South Africa, but the essential question in the end is whether Botha government policies are opening the way towards legitimacy — a government regarded by the majority of South Africa as just, as their own. Are the government's reforms and its recently released constitutional proposals, despite Nationalist denials, the first hesitant steps towards fundamental structural change with majority legitimacy? Or are they the moves of a sophisticated machine, shaken by the 1976 disturbances, to modernize and entrench its control?

The right-wing perception of those changes — that they are basically the first step to major change and they are selling out the white man — and the government's defense of the proposals, in which it has stressed that it is a party of change, have served to reinforce the view that a positive answer to the first question is what the reforms are about. The reality, however, may be very different.

Many Western governments, particularly the American, with the Reagan administration's constructive engagement approach, hope perhaps desperately that the reforms could lead to peaceful change, spearheaded by moderate leaders, and preempt the Moscow-backed African National Congress and its guerrilla strategies. This in-



terpretation of developments in South Africa is supported by a number of establishment-oriented groups like the business-backed South Africa Foundation, and, often off the record, the South African Department of Foreign Affairs and Information.

But not a single African leader, not even from the homelands, endorses this view. Not even Paramount Chief Kaiser Matanzima, the president of the Transkei, which gained its "independence" from South Africa in 1976, has supported the constitutional reforms as a means of change. Matanzima, who called for a black federation to counter the white, Coloured, and Indian proposals, said there could be no hope in South Africa unless one parliament for all South Africans with majority government was formed.

The chief minister of KwaZulu, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, who uses the homeland system as a means of change and who heads Inkatha, which claims a membership of 750,000 people, has been even more emphatic: "White South Africa does not mind white domination with a few Coloured and Indian faces as tokens to change and reform, which whites are incapable of introducing alone." Buthelezi said it was "nonsensical" to interpret white support for the constitutional proposals as evidence of enlightenment.

If the Matanzimas, let alone the Buthelezis, cannot be persuaded that the government is embarked on the road of reform, then it is extremely unlikely that any of South Africa's blacks, who form the majority of the population, are going to be convinced that this is the case. Indeed, the government itself has stressed in a number of important by-elections this year, where it faced a determined right-wing onslaught, that its policies for black people were unchanged: they would be citizens of one or another homeland, which it now likes to call "national states," and they could only exercise their political rights in those impoverished places.

The minister of manpower, Fanie Botha, reputedly a *verligte* (enlightened), whose resignation from Parliament after a challenge provoked the by-elections, said at one campaign meeting that black people would "never" be incorporated into Parliament. One of the key figures behind the

plans, Chris Heunis, the minister of constitutional affairs and a confidant of the prime minister, does not go as far as Fanie Botha; when the constitutional proposals were announced, he stressed that black people could not have the same system as whites, Coloureds, and Indians, but he added, perhaps significantly, that he could not speak for future generations.

Whether blacks are excluded from Parliament for the present or forever, the basic point is that those in power are not even trying to devise a system that could be acceptable to the majority of South Africans. In short, the fundamental aim of "Grand Apartheid" — to prevent black majority rule over the whole of South Africa — is inherently maintained in whatever reforms are being proposed. While many observers of the South African situation like to point out that the former Rhodesian prime minister, Ian Smith, once said there would "never" be majority rule in his lifetime, implying that what Nationalist politicians say in 1983 may not be a guide to what will happen in the future, government strategies have not changed for the majority. Indeed, the opposite may be true.

After the 1976 disturbances, via various commissions of inquiry such as Wiehahn into labor and Riekert into urban blacks, the government accepted that at least some blacks were permanently resident in the urban areas. This decision, welcomed as a "reform," was certainly a change in official policy, which has led to increased rights and privileges for those people regarded as permanent urban people, such as those with 99-year leasehold tenure for property and black local authorities. But officially, all black people are meant to be citizens of one or another homeland and they are still not entitled to any political rights outside the homelands.

In line with the Riekert proposals, the penalties against "illegal" blacks — those without permanent rights and without labor contracts — have increased. And the number of pass law arrests in 1982 rocketed by more than 20 percent. Last year, one black person was arrested every two-and-a-half minutes for being illegally in so-called white South Africa, and 206,022 people were arrested by the police and the

administration boards under the influx control measures. In Cape Town this year, officials have continually raided the KTC squatter camp to prevent any housing structures from being erected, an action that the normally cautious *Argus* newspaper called "a siege."

The euphemistically named Orderly Movement and Settlement Bill, which raised a storm of protest, was referred to a parliamentary select committee, but its clear aim was to toughen influx control laws. Significantly, the *Rand Daily Mail*, quoting "informed sources" in a report that was never questioned, said the government's security arm — the police, defense force, and national intelligence service — had a major role in drafting the controversial measure. One of the clauses pushed by the security services was a 10 pm to 5 am curfew on "unqualified" blacks in the urban areas on the grounds that it would ensure effective combating of urban terrorism.

At the same time as the increasing measures aimed at keeping blacks out of the urban areas, the relocation policies aimed at "resettling" blacks in the homelands have continued unabated, as the 2,500-page report of the Surplus Peoples Project has documented.

The point is clear, that whatever "reforms" have been introduced, basic Nationalist policies have not changed. Grand Apartheid, with its dream that 10 independent Bantustans will satisfy the political aspirations of the majority of South Africans and prevent one man/one vote, is still very much alive. What has changed are the strategies of control, in which new allies from the Coloured and Indian communities, as well as the black middle class, have been sought. Although white voters, particularly in conservative rural areas, have not grasped the significance and importance of this strategy, as recent by-election results have shown, the government is determined to push ahead, even dividing Afrikaner political power to do so.

The clearest analysis of the new strategy has come from the former Robben Island prisoner, Dr. Neville Alexander, when he addressed the annual conference of the black consciousness Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO) earlier this year. Alexander

is something of a political maverick. He was expelled from the Trotskyite Unity Movement in the early 1960s, has never linked up with either the African National Congress or the Pan Africanist Congress, and has now identified himself with AZAPO. But he is widely acknowledged as a perceptive political analyst and his assessment of new government strategies reflects this.

He said pressures were building within the system so that "it can no longer be run in the same way as before." Alexander continued: "The acquisition of productive skills and strategic leverage, as well as the dramatic increase in their purchasing power, have imparted to the black workers and their children a self-confidence and a historic optimism that makes them demand ever more insistently their human rights to equality and liberty. Daily, in factories, in mines, and even on many white-owned farms, they prove that they are not the simple moronic labor units of Verwoerdian mythology, but normal flesh and blood human beings who are becoming ever more conscious of their historic mission to liberate the entire population of South Africa. . . . A Whites-only government cannot represent this surging mass of humanity, nor can it hope to repress them forever. Hence the political and social crisis of the ruling class."

In response to this crisis, the *verligte* wing of the ruling group had opted for a strategy of enlightened despotism. The government claimed it was moving away from discrimination based on color. It talked about "nations" and "states," but decoded this meant that the 10 Bantustans and the government were to be brought together through their respective elites.

Alexander said that the people laboring at the bottom, "the vast majority of the people, are to be trapped in a divisive and debilitating ethnic consciousness. In this way, the South African state is to be remolded." "Sixty years after the compromise of 1924 (after the strike on the gold mines by white miners), which led to the cooptation of the white working class, a new alliance is being forged to broaden the base of the South African state and thus to strengthen it. . . . Just as the Rand revolt of 1922 signaled to the ruling classes the urgency of the times,

so the Soweto uprising of 1976 signalled to the National party the lateness of the hour."

"Consequently," Alexander stated, "the alliance with the white workers is to be downgraded in importance. Instead, the junior partners in the new alliance are to be the black middle class and their political representatives whether or not they are at present collaborating in the political institutions created by the South African state. A class of blacks is to be nurtured in and through a slightly modified apartheid system so that they will have a vested interest in the perpetuation of that system. From this group of people, the so-called leaders of the oppressed will have to go forth and be coopted by the system. They will be advertised and put up as the models for the black workers, and unless the workers produce and maintain an independent leadership, they, the vast majority of our people, will in effect be rendered leaderless and defenseless."

"Already the Bantustan misleaders, of whom the Sebe brothers (the president and security chief of the "independent" Ciskei) are only the most vulgar and brutal specimens, are showing that a small section of black people in South Africa are prepared to imprison and perhaps even to kill other black people for the maintenance of the apartheid status quo. Let us have no illusions: the vulgarity of the Bantustan leadership should not make us forget that there are other more subtle ways in which a middle class can be tied head and foot to an oppressive system," Alexander said.

When the government's constitutional proposals were finally released days before the by-elections in the Transvaal, the practical effects of the new strategies were unfolded: no black participation; three separate houses of parliament for white, Coloured, and Indian people; entrenched white control of the new system; and an executive president with vastly increased powers. A four (whites) to two (Coloureds) to one (Indian) ratio has been incorporated throughout the proposed constitution to ensure effective white control. If there are any disputes between the different houses of parliament, they will be resolved by the President's Council, which will have 25 of its 60 members

nominated by the president and 20 elected by the white house of parliament.

The government has promoted this system as orderly reform; the right-wing has bitterly attacked the proposals for surrendering white political power; and the U.S. administration has praised the (Coloured) Labor party's decision to participate in the proposed constitution. But even the moderate Progressive Federal party (PFP), whose very rationale is reform through existing structures, has condemned the proposals because they exclude blacks and because of the authoritarian powers of the president.

A liberal academic, Professor David Welsh, a University of Cape Town political scientist, has said: "I am definitely not to be counted among those who believe that the new proposals are 'a step in the right direction.' All I can see is their massively alienating and polarizing effect on a black majority with whom white South Africa will have to reach an accommodation if it is to survive as a vigorous and free community."

Although he was prepared to concede that he could be wrong, pointing out that history was littered with the unintended consequences of politicians' dreams, Welsh added: "I have maintained all along that the fundamental aim of the new proposals is to strengthen white hegemony, not to dilute it, or, even less, abandon it. Nothing said by any Nationalist spokesmen this year has caused me to modify this view."

Indeed, the talk about reform by government spokesmen appears to have bamboozled many, including the proponents of constructive engagement. But it has not confused those desperately hoping for signs of real change in South Africa, not even moderate groups like the PFP, the Buthelezi, and the Welshes. The PFP leader, Dr. Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, spoke for many when he opposed the constitutional plans in the South African Parliament: "It is as much a step in the right direction as is a step in a dark tunnel towards the light of an oncoming train." Sadly, that tragedy of 1976 has yet to move the government to stop that train. It is, rather, putting up stronger barricades. □

# Drought Plagues Southern Africa

BY DAVID ROBBINS

There are towns in the coal-mining areas of Natal, traditionally South Africa's green province, where purified water is no longer reticulated. Residents must queue with containers at emergency tanks set up in the streets, but they are allowed only 50 liters at a time. A man in one of the water queues looked resignedly at the cloudless winter sky and told me: "Water is a funny thing: it's not like electricity or tarred roads. These things we can always make more of, but there's only one person who can make water — and at the moment he's not making it." This is a sentiment that could easily be echoed by many millions of people throughout the southern African region. Nearly everywhere the skies are as mercilessly clear and unyielding and have been for far too long. It is the great southern African drought of 1983.

As early as March 4, South Africa's minister of environmental affairs, Sarel Haywood, imposed up to 50 percent cuts in agricultural consumption from certain irrigation schemes and described the situation as "possibly the most severe drought this century."

Since then, matters have deteriorated to almost catastrophic proportions. Summer rains over a huge area stretching from the Kalahari to the normally moist east coast of the subcontinent have failed, and millions are attempting to sit out a dry and thirsty winter, their livelihood and health becoming increasingly at risk, if not already lost in the arid dust bowl that is now southern Africa.

In Mozambique, a country that even in good years struggles with a 400,000-ton annual grain deficit, it is estimated that over four million people are living in hunger and misery because of the drought. Zambia and Botswana are languishing under weather that has been described by meteorologists as "the worst climatic disaster in the recorded history of the subcontinent." And in Zimbabwe, previously one of Africa's few food-exporting countries, nearly half the population of seven and a half million is surviving this winter off emergency government food, while in Namibia, the *karakul* (sheep) industry has virtually collapsed. The economic effects of the drought are disastrous. In Zimbabwe, for example, the cost of relief and lost income will probably amount to \$506 million, roughly equivalent to the country's entire balance-of-payments deficit in 1982.

Inevitably, it is the underdeveloped countries that suffer most. For the householder, higher prices, lower incomes, and even unemployment are the order of the day, hardships that inevitably carry with them increased crime and health risks. And the already en-

demical Third World problem of urban drift is being accelerated as families stream away from drought-stricken rural areas to congregate on the perimeters of towns, where conditions are not much better and sometimes worse. Commercial and industrial concerns face heavy losses due to reduced water supplies and turnover, while havoc is being wreaked at the state balance-of-payments level as imports soar to the accompaniment of plunging exports.

The developing countries of the region that are struggling to make ends meet and to achieve a measure of economic independence are now being forced to turn to increased foreign aid and even welfare handouts to survive. In May, for example, Zimbabwe accepted \$5.5 million from the European Economic Community for the development of a rural water scheme in Matabeleland. Even wealthy South Africa, often referred to as the breadbasket of Africa, is not immune to the social and economic effects of the drought, and the expected climb out of the recession next year could be seriously hampered. South African farmers have run up debts of well over \$9.2 million, and the country has just produced its smallest maize crop since World War II, a mere 4.9 million tons as against 14.3 million tons two years ago. And for the first time in many years, South Africa will have to import to meet domestic needs for the crop.

Traveling in the ravaged northern Natal and eastern Transvaal areas, one sees thousands of acres of dwarfed

---

David Robbins is a South African-born writer who, after living abroad for an extended period, returned home to specialize in southern African social and community problems. His work has been published in southern African countries and in the United States. He is currently on the staff of the South African independent daily newspaper *The Natal Witness*.

maize plants literally blackened by the sun. Farmers report losses up to 70 percent, and most of the wasted crop is being cut down and used as fodder for hungry animals. Natural grazing has been described as "poor to very poor," and soil erosion is becoming a major problem in many areas. A senior agricultural extension officer based in northern Natal told me that "in many cases farmers had been inclined to overstock" but that with the effects of the drought they were now realizing that the "asset of the veld" should not be taken for granted. "They've had to reduce the size of their herds, often selling off animals at a loss," he added.

Near the Swaziland border, the Pongola canal scheme, which normally irrigates approximately 30,000 acres of white farmland, has run dry. Even worse off are people dependent on the Pongolapoort Dam, which currently contains hardly more than 1 percent of its capacity. The level has fallen below the inlet to a canal system that normally waters 3,400 acres of arable land in economically depressed northern KwaZulu. There can be little doubt that KwaZulu and other so-called national states, or homelands, are among the worst-hit areas. Toward the end of March the South African government made available \$18.4 million for drought relief in the homelands, an amount KwaZulu's outspoken chief minister, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, described as "peanuts."

At the best of times, subsistence-level farming offers few luxuries in these crowded and underdeveloped rural areas. So far this year, nearly 150,000 cattle have died in South Africa's homelands, typhoid has flared up in some KwaZulu townships, and the cholera threat simmers on. It has been estimated that the increase in the vitamin-deficiency disease, pellagra, and malnutrition due to the drought could contribute to the deaths of thousands of young children before the weather becomes kinder. In Ciskei, hundreds of ruined farmers are being paid \$1.85 a day from the homeland government's modest coffers for such work as repairing roads and fences, desilting dams, and fighting soil erosion.

An official of South Africa's National Maize Producers' Organization

(NAMPO) told me that maize production in the homelands had "totally collapsed" and that stiff price increases to the consumer were inevitable. The same is doubtless the case in countries like Swaziland, Lesotho, and Botswana, which — although actual export figures are regarded by the South African government as highly confidential — are, according to the NAMPO official, "almost wholly dependent on South Africa for maize." South Africa has, however, made regional arrangements with these countries and has assured them of equal access to imported maize supplies, an action United States Ambassador Herman Nickel described recently as commendable. "I wish to assure you of United States co-operation," he said when opening an agricultural show in Natal recently, "to help you in meeting the needs of the region from our own bountiful harvests." Even so, the hardships are likely to be severe.

Nor are the effects of the drought confined to agriculture and the rural areas alone. City populations face restrictions and even water rationing, such as in the large Durban area on the east coast, where households are limited to a mere 400 liters a day (in the United States, average consumption is in the region of 250 liters a day per person), and where reservoirs are down to only 14 percent of capacity.

The threat to South African industry and employment is ominous. Already a major northern Natal power station has shut down, and alternative sources of power for the giant Iscor steel works in the area have had to be found. A second power station near Durban stopped production late in May. The supply of electricity is likely to be affected as the dry winter drags on, and blackouts and rationing are inevitable. Although the nationalized Electricity Supply Commission is capable of generating 21,000 megawatts against an expected demand of 16,000 megawatts, this capacity has already been temporarily cut by well over 2,000 megawatts because of the drought, and heavier cuts are expected in spite of a \$30.4 million plan to transfer water to the thirsty power stations in the eastern Transvaal, where 80 percent of the country's power is generated.

To make matters worse, an early end to the drought does not appear likely. Writing in the *South African Journal of Science* in 1978, two scientists from the University of the Witwatersrand, P. Tyson and T. Dyer, analyzed rainfall data for northern and eastern South Africa and came to the conclusion that "an extended period of drought in the eighties" was likely. Studies of this nature have shown that rainfall in South Africa follows a roughly 16-to-20-year cycle — 10 years of above-average and 10 years of below-average rains; and Tyson and Dyer have predicted that the current below-average rainfall period will get worse until 1985, after which it will gradually improve until the early 1990s, when the next extended wet spell is expected to occur.

Work in the field of dendroclimatology has tended to support the theory of a 16-to-20-year rainfall cycle. A notable study by another scientist, Martin Hall, of the growth rings in the trunk of a 596-year-old yellowwood cut down in Natal in 1916 suggests that these cycles have probably been occurring, although with some variation, since the early fourteenth century. Although Hall is careful to point out that his study is "only a first attempt" and that it will be necessary to obtain a large number of specimens before accuracy can be assured, he is nevertheless able to state that the years of exceptionally low tree-growth in the nineteenth century all correspond with the severe famines (almost certainly caused by droughts) that afflicted Natal and Zululand at the beginning of that century, in the early 1820s, in the late 1840s, and in the early 1860s.

The unlikelihood of a quick end to the drought is further reinforced by the theory that river flow is determined by the water table in the catchment area and that the level of the water table is related more or less directly to the cumulative departure (either a deficit or surplus) from the rainfall average. Although the actual rainfall deficit, which began to develop during the summer of 1979-80, varies widely from area to area, a probable average deficit for the region as a whole would be equivalent to an entire 12 months of normal rainfall. The sobering conclusion is that until this sizable deficit has

been wiped out, something that might not even begin to happen before Tyson and Dyer's predicted 1985 turning point, little or no improvement in the present water shortage can be expected.

To this problem must be added the steady increase in demand that will be necessary if the region is to continue to develop economically. It has been estimated that the water needs of the sprawling urban-industrial conurbation of the Reef, scene of 80 percent of South Africa's industrial and gold mining activity and easily the most important commercial center on the subcontinent, will increase by many billions of cubic meters a year between now and 2020. Where is this water to come from?

Already nearly a million cubic meters from the Tugela River in Natal is being pumped up over the Drakensberg mountain range en route to the insatiable Reef each day. Proposals have been made to increase this off-take of over 300 million cubic meters a year to almost 3 billion, an amount that represents two-thirds of the Tugela's average annual flow. When it is remembered that the lower reaches of the Tugela flow through the homeland of KwaZulu, the political implications become immediately apparent.

But before considering these implications, we must examine in more detail the long-term proposals for the provision of water to the Reef, recently described as "the workshop of southern Africa." The most detailed exposition of the proposals has been made in a doctoral thesis by Philip van der Riet at the University of the Witwatersrand. Entitled "Cooperative Water Resources Development in Southern Africa," van der Riet's work has been called a "magnum opus" and is being seriously considered by South African government water resource planners. Looking at southern Africa as a whole, van der Riet has argued that it would be very much in the interests of adjoining territories to take advantage of South Africa's spiraling demand for water and power, a demand that results from its lead in economic development, to advance themselves more rapidly towards a similar stage of development than they would otherwise be able. Van der Riet has suggested a many-faceted scheme, costing just under \$9.2 billion,

which would ensure the continued development of the Reef, and which is based on the cooperation of neighboring states. The main elements of this scheme are:

- The Lesotho Highlands project, which will divert 1.1 billion cubic meters of water a year from the Orange River near its source in Lesotho to the Reef. Construction could start as early as 1986.
- The Tugela-Vaal project, which will include dams and pump stations deep in KwaZulu and provide a further 2.6 billion cubic meters a year and would need to be started in the early 1990s to ensure continuity of supply to the Reef.
- The construction of canals from the Zambezi River to the Okavango swamps and from there to the Hartheespoort Dam outside Pretoria, which could provide billions of cubic meters a year by 2010.

But without the cooperation of neighboring countries, the Orange River would have to be tapped after it left Lesotho and the Tugela utilized before it entered KwaZulu, both of which would greatly reduce potential off-take. As an alternative to the Zambezi/Okavango project, and for the purpose of making up the shortfall from the other schemes, several giant desalination plants would have to be constructed at Richards Bay and pipelines laid to transport the water to the Reef. But at what cost? Van der Riet has calculated that the price to South Africa of "going it alone" in this way would amount to a staggering \$50 billion but would at least ensure the continued economic development of the Reef even though water would become an extremely expensive commodity. Van der Riet has further calculated that the economic benefits that would accrue directly to the subcontinent as a whole, if the cooperative approach could be achieved, would be in the region of \$4 billion.

He continues: "These economic benefits, though truly enormous by any standards, do not by any means reflect the full advantages to be gained. . . . For South Africa, there is not only the direct economic benefit resulting from the availability of sufficient water, being return flows (effluent) from the Reef, to irrigate an additional 1.6 mil-

lion acres of land in the Vaal and Limpopo basins, but also the inestimable strategic benefit of prolonging self-sufficiency in food production by 20 years or more beyond the close of the century. For Lesotho there is the chance, by slightly modifying the proposed water diversion project, to generate sufficient hydroelectric energy to ensure self-sufficiency in this commodity until after the close of the century. For Botswana there is the chance to canalize Okavango water to the mineral-rich eastern sector of the country at a very much lower cost than could be achieved in a smaller, independent project. And so it goes on and on. . ."

But will the southern African states cooperate with the South African regime in this way? It seems unlikely, when politically they are so implacably opposed. Lesotho has recently opened friendly relations with the People's Republic of China, and the entire region is wracked with destabilization claims and counterclaims. Yet in the face of the frightening economic problems caused by the current drought, South Africa's neighbors might well be tempted into cooperation. In this way, and largely by means of South African capital, they would acquire the basic infrastructure for water supply schemes in their own territories that would not only render them less susceptible to the ravages of drought, but also ensure a steady flow of revenue from the finance-generating machinery of the Reef. According to a South African agricultural expert and opposition politician, Mike Tarr, who has traveled extensively in southern Africa: "Cooperation on this scale would be possible only if South Africa eliminated racial discrimination. It is this, above all, that stands in the way of developing a southern African economic power block of incredible potential." It is impossible to tell what the future holds. Even officials of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, an organization specifically created to work toward freeing the Frontline states from economic dependence on South Africa, are reluctant to comment one way or the other. Meanwhile, the end of the drought seems a long way off, and the people of this dry and dusty region can do little but wait and pray and hope. □