Editorial: Resistance, Resettlement and Reconstruction in Southern Africa

This issue of the Review focuses on several interrelated themes, each of which have been important in shaping the history of South Africa and current political developments in that country and in the region. The first is the continuing resistance of people to domination by the racist South African state. The second is the process of dispossession and resettlement to which they have been, and continue to be, subjected. The third is the strategy of reconstruction through which the state seeks to meet the changing needs of the dominant class alliance. Beyond South Africa itself, we look at policies since independence in Mozambique and Zimbabwe regarding food production and the rural population.

Historically, the South African region has been integrated by a combination of conquest, transport systems and labour migration — and by the support of nationalist movements and governments for the liberation struggle in other countries. The South African regime seeks to impose its own terms of ‘co-operation’ on its neighbours and, in particular, insists that they should deny support to the ANC and to SWAPO. In this they have enjoyed the explicit support of the Reagan administration who have, in effect, given them carte blanche to invade their neighbours, murder their citizens as well as exiled South Africans, and provide mercenaries, arms and logistic support to stooge opposition movements, as Fauvet demonstrates in a Briefing on the MNR in Mozambique. South African Newsletter (February 1984), distributed by the South African Embassy in London, cited Mr Liechtenstein, United States Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations:

We do not perceive South Africa to constitute an external imperialistic threat to even its close neighbours.

Destabilisation will remain in force until Angola and Mozambique do not permit their territory to be used by terrorists to attack South Africa.

We do not regard the ANC as engaged in a legitimate quest for power. Nine out of 10 deaths inflicted by ANC terrorist action in South Africa are Blacks.

And the Pretoria government is certainly a more legitimate government than the Soviet government — at least Pretoria represents 15 per cent of South Africa’s population democratically. As far as the 15 per cent is concerned, South Africa is a model democracy.

Agreements with the governments of Lesotho, Angola and Mozambique will not end acts of armed resistance by the ANC and SWAPO — though we may expect these governments to be held responsible for such acts so that they will continue to be vulnerable to arbitrary ‘retaliation’ by South African forces.
The central dilemma of the South African government is its inability to gain the consent of the people of South Africa to racial discrimination, capitalist exploitation and state repression, 'reformed' or not. Davies' and O'Meara's essay follows J. Saul and S. Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa* (Monthly Review, 1981) in identifying the current situation as an 'organic crisis', stimulating an 'attempt to reconstruct the political, ideological and economic conditions of stable capitalist rule.' Arguably, this is the latest in a continuing series of crises and strategies of reconstruction by which capitalists and the state have sought a solution to what they used to call the 'native' (read labour) problem. They have had to create a supply of wage labour; to share their labour-power out among competing employers; to shift the costs of reproducing labour-power away from themselves, through wage payments, to the workers themselves and their families, on the farms and in the 'reserves'; to secure control over workers, over their movements and over their capacity to organise, politically and industrially. This has required the appropriation of land by white landowners and the control of land in the reserves, and of land and housing in the urban areas, by the government and its agents.

People have continued to resist being turned into mine workers or farm labourers and have tried, in urban and in rural areas, to maintain an element of independence from the demands of mine owners and white farmers — struggles which are dramatically illustrated in Charles van Onselen's two volume *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914, New Babylon; New Nineveh* (Longmans, London 1982) and the essays in Belinda Bozzoli (ed.) *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal* (Ravan, 1982).

The first period of capitalist reconstruction in this century took place under the British administration which ruled the Transvaal after the South African War — a process outlined by S. Marks and S. Trapido 'Lord Milner and the South African state' *History Workshop Journal* 8, 1979. The state negotiated agreements to enable mine owners to recruit labour from Mozambique and, temporarily from China. It culminated in the alignment of Boer notables with 'randlords' (the so-called 'marriage of maize and gold'), the Act of Union in 1910 and the Land Act of 1913. Like subsequent attempts at reconstruction it involved a renegotiation of relations within the ruling class, changes in the system of political representation and in the control of land and labour. These 'reforms' gave rise to organised opposition from the Indian Congresses, the African People's Organisation and the foundation of the African National Congress.

Neither the problems of controlling labour, white or black, nor the problems of allocating labour among capitalists had been solved, as shown by the dramatic strikes of black miners (1920), white miners (1922) and the spread of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in the 1920s, and by the failure of the National-Labour Pact government under Hertzog (1929-33) to carry through its 'native' policies. As Marian Lacey demonstrates in *Working for Boroko* (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1981), mining and farming capital finally reached agreement on how to meet their respective labour needs in 1932. Their agreement was embodied in the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act which sought to convert 'squatters' into labour tenants, to satisfy farmers, and expand the 'native reserves' to protect the labour supply of the mines.

The 1936 Act was passed by a government uniting Hertzog's National Party with Smuts' South African Party — a 'remarriage of maize and gold'. A rump
reformed the National Party under Malan, a story told in Dan O'Meara's *Volkskapitalisme* (Cambridge University, 1983). The government combined its solution to the land, and thus labour, problem with the removal of the remaining African voters in the Cape from the common roll. It provoked a wave of opposition from different organisations brought together in Bloemfontein at the All-African Convention in 1935.

The new dispensation began to break down almost as it was being established. New problems arose over the allocation of labour power, giving rise to a dramatic polarisation of political forces. The rise in the gold price in 1933 and then the Second World War boosted the expansion of secondary industry. Movement of labour to the towns was regulated by the municipalities, who were responsible to urban employers' needs for a pool of cheap labour. The Fagan Commission, appointed by the Smuts government in 1946, recommended a combination of migrant labour for the mines with an urban labour force for industry. This did not satisfy the needs of farmers. Section 10 of the 1945 Urban Areas Act limited residential rights in towns to Africans who had been in continuous employment for 15 years (or with one employer for 10) and their dependents, or to migrant workers on annual contracts. Attempts to eliminate squatting in the Lydenburg district led to a flight of squatters to other districts. The government tried to deal with the problems of the overcrowded reserves by subjecting them to 'betterment' planning, the reallocation of their land into arable, grazing and residential blocks, combined with the culling of stock and imposition of cultivation practices. 'Betterment' was extended to Rhodesia under the Native Land Husbandry Act and Kenya under the Swynnerton Plan. Bush and Cliffe discuss its implementation in their essay on Zimbabwe in this issue. Williams has suggested (*Africa* 52, 3, 1982) that the same ideas are revived in the Riddell Report to the Zimbabwe Government in 1981.

The war saw the emergence of a militant trade union movement, culminating in the 1946 mine strike; opposition to anti-Indian legislation and the establishment of the Coloured Affairs Council, discussed in Abrahams' Briefing; rural resistance to 'betterment' schemes, discussed in this issue by Bundy and Murray; and the militant nationalism of the ANC Youth League. In 1947 Dr Xuma of the ANC signed a pact with Dr Dadoo and Dr Naicker of the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses. In 1948 white farmers and mineworkers shifted their votes to the National Party in sufficient numbers to bring Dr Malan to power.

The NP's first concern was to repress radical opposition — the Communist Party, militant trade unionists and sundry other opponents included in its all-embracing definition of 'communism'. It then began to establish, over two decades, the basis for its programme of apartheid. All Africans were, in theory, to be converted into migrant workers, allowed in the cities only as long as their labour was needed. The mining industry was to provide the model of labour recruitment for the whole economy. As the Stallard Commission had argued in 1922, the African 'should only be allowed to enter the urban areas, which are essentially the white man's creation, when he is willing to enter and administer to the needs of the white man, and should depart therefrom when he ceases so to minister' (Report of the Transvaal Local Government Commission, para.42). Farm labour would be provided by stricter application of pass laws and the use of prison farms. Passes were extended to women, despite bitter resistance. Government took control of African housing and moved Africans into newly-built
townships, such as Soweto. Later, housing and influx control were consolidated under Bantu Administration Boards. New migrants were limited to annual labour contracts to prevent them acquiring permanent residence rights under Section 10.

'Coloureds' were removed from the voters' roll and, later, ‘Coloured’ and African representatives from parliament (Indians were never represented). Education was brought under a new Department of Bantu Education, followed by similar departments to control the education and administration of ‘Coloureds’ and Indians. Segregationist regulations were extended into every aspect of public and private life.

This extended assault on the lives of all black people — women, peasants, workers, teachers, traders — generated a decade of popular resistance, discussed in Tom Lodge Black Politics in South Africa since 1945 (Longmans/Ravan). The Congress Alliance (ANC, Indian Congress, Coloured People’s Congress and, for white sympathisers, Congress of Democrats) organised the Congress of the People which adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955. In 1958, an ‘Africanist’ faction formed the Pan Africanist Congress, which accused white and Indian communists of holding back African resistance. The government responded to mass demonstrations in 1960 by the massacre at Sharpeville and banning the ANC and the PAC who turned to underground resistance which was suppressed by draconian security measures.

Resettlement and Resistance
In the 1960s and 1970s, millions of people were resettled in accordance with apartheid policies, a process documented in the five-volume report of the Surplus People’s Project, Forced Removals in South Africa (1983) and analysed in Bill Freund’s essay. ‘Superfluous appendages’ (mainly women and children) were ‘endorsed out’ of cities; squatters and farm labourers expelled from white farms as machines replaced their labour-power; African freehold farmers were removed from ‘black spots’; urban residents were removed to their appropriate ‘group areas’; people were transferred to their newly-designated ethnic homelands; urban squatter settlements were bulldozed; peasants were moved to ‘betterment’ villages; political activists were exiled to remote places. All of these processes continue in the 1980s. They are an integral part of the government’s ‘reform’ programme.

Murray’s essay examines the whole history of this process of securing the conditions of capitalist accumulation as it affected the Thaba ‘Nchu district of the Orange Free State. He shows how ‘a substantial territory of more than a thousand square miles of valuable wheat, maize and pasture lands’ was transformed into ‘one or two very small and grossly overcrowded black reserves in the OFS.’ The incorporation of Thaba ‘Nchu into the Bophutatswana Bantustan, combined with the pressure of meagre resources, created bitter ethnic conflicts in a once peaceful community, ending with the movement of local Basotho to a refugee camp outside what was now a Batswana enclave. A similar story of dispossession of a once-prosperous people, culminating in the flight of refugees from the ‘independence’ of the Transkei, can be told for Herschel in the north-east Cape. Freund refers to other expulsions from the Transvaal Bantustans. Incorporation into Bophutatswana will bring to Thaba ‘Nchu a southern version of the notorious Sun City casino and hotel complex.
As Bundy points out in his essay, there is a long and bitter history of rural resistance on white farms, in the reserves and, as recent defiance of removals shows, on black freehold farms. Rural struggles have gained support from the ANC and other nationalist movements. But generally the rural struggle has been seen as secondary to the main focus of political consciousness and organisation in the cities. Bundy's essay focuses on the activities of the Transkei Organised Bodies and the All-African Convention in the 1940s who organised opposition to 'betterment' and to the 'Bantu Authorities' who were required to enforce it. The danger of neglecting rural issues have been recognised time and again by national liberation movements but it is not clear that they have ever learnt and acted on them. Even now discussions of political strategy, from different points of view, tend to focus exclusively on the relative importance of urban workers and armed guerrillas and consider rural people, if at all, as migrant workers or, possibly, as assisting guerrillas, but not as political actors in their own right.

In the 1970s new forms of popular resistance and political and industrial organisation developed both in Namibia and in South Africa. The Ovambo strikes against the contract labour system in Namibia were followed by strikes for better wages in Durban and elsewhere. A number of independent unions came into existence in all the main industrial centres, some organised as general unions and others on an industrial basis. The forms of union organisation and activity varied according to the nature of the industry, the character of the workforce (migrant or permanent) and their geographical location. Most Transvaal unions have organised on an industrial basis. In East London, the South African Allied Workers' Union, most of whose members there live in Mdantsane which is administered by the Ciskei 'government', has organised on a community basis and become the main opposition to, and target of vicious repression by, that 'government'. The independent unions have forced both government and employers to recognise their significance. They have explored ways of incorporating the unions; repression, though it continues in various forms, was no longer enough. Unions have been divided amongst themselves on the questions of whether to register under the new industrial relations dispensation or not, and more recently whether to participate in industrial councils. In the last year they have taken different positions on whether to affiliate to the United Democratic Front. The history of union struggles and debates among unions has been recorded in successive issues of the South African Labour Bulletin.

The Black Consciousness movement gave a new unity and new directions to students and to intellectuals, who developed new forms of political action, discussed in Sam Nolutshungu's Changing South Africa (Manchester University, 1982). School pupils initiated the demonstrations throughout the country in 1976 and bore the brunt of the murderous repression with which the regime met their challenge (documented in a Briefing in ROAPE 7). The students, like the workers' movement, continued to counter repression, to learn from past events and to find new ways of organising.

**Reform and Repression**
The state responded to this challenge first by brutal repression and then by attempting to develop a package of reforms, each initiated by commissions of enquiry into labour relations (Wiehahn), influx control (Riekert), 'coloured' affairs, education, monopolies, foreign exchange control, internal security and constitutional reform. Central to the government's strategy of 'reform' are the
proposals for regulating trade unions and influx control. The Wiehahn Commission explicitly argued that the independent trade unions, which had arisen outside the legal framework of industrial relations legislation, should be brought under state control. However, the government has not been able to impose its terms on the independent unions or prevent them organising workers, despite its apparatus for regulating industrial relations and its even more formidable capacity to imprison and torture trade union activists.

The Riekert Report recognised the need for a permanent urban labour force, in addition to migrant workers. The Fagan Commission had accepted this in 1946 and so in practice had the National Party government. Despite their ideological commitment to abolishing any right of permanent residence for Africans in white areas, they had not abolished Section 10, even though they had restricted the acquisition of ‘Section 10 rights’. ‘Frontier commuters’, i.e. workers resident in dormitory towns within Bantustans, to whom the Urban Areas Act no longer applies, continue to include a category of ‘administrative Section Tenners’, who are treated, for purposes of regulating access to urban jobs, as if they still had Section 10 rights. On the other hand, citizens of ‘independent homelands’ cannot acquire Section 10 rights unless they have them already; children born after ‘independence’ will not acquire them. So if the government succeeded in persuading all Bantustan governments to accept ‘independence’ (or amalgamation with neighbouring states), within a generation there would, as Connie Mulder once said, be no black South Africans. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Riekert sought to deal with practical as well as ideological problems. Employers complained at restrictions on the mobility of labour, while at the same time taking advantage of the control over cheap labour which these restrictions provided. Even ‘Section 10’ workers could not seek employment outside the area where they worked. Despite rising urban unemployment, employers were encouraged by existing arrangements to employ migrant workers rather than urban residents. Rural impoverishment led many women and men to work and house themselves illegally in the cities and evade the government’s system of registration and control. The Riekert proposals allow workers to exercise Section 10 rights throughout the urban areas, as long as employment and housing are available. Given the shortage of urban housing, this concession is limited to employers who are able and willing to provide housing to recruit workers — as in some of the open-cast mines in the Eastern Transvaal. Urban residents are to be given priority in employment over migrant workers, many of whom have worked in cities on annual contracts for a decade or more. However, experience in the Western Cape, where it is government policy that preference in jobs be given to ‘Coloureds’ over Africans, shows that employers can continue to get permission to employ migrant workers. After Riekert the government raised the fine for working illegally and extended it to employers and plans a massive fine for housing people illegally. A moratorium was declared during which illegal workers, many of them domestic servants, could be registered by their employers, thus bringing them within the system of control. Plans to systematise these reforms have been put forward in a series of bills, the latest ominously named The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill. In practice the government’s priorities are to meet the needs of capitalists for a more flexible supply of labour and to extend their own administrative control over the whole African workforce.
As Davies and O'Meara point out, government reforms are bringing about changes, but not in the direction of a liberal, capitalist society. The Riekert reforms, combined with the legal transformation of Africans into foreigners in their own country, are designed to change the influx control system from one based on race and on pass controls to one based on citizenship, housing and employment. In practice, controls will still require raids on commuters, midnight raids on houses and destruction of squatter communities to separate out 'legal' from 'illegal' Africans. Freund points out that South Africa is not unique among capitalist economies in its use of unfree forms of labour; as Bush and Cliffe say 'forms of racialism and of non-free labour are readily compatible with the continued development of capitalism', even if these forms have to be adapted to the changing, and often contradictory, requirements of capitalism.

Neither can the constitutional changes of the last year be regarded as introducing a more democratic orientation, despite the pretensions of apologists around the world. The proposals for the new constitution, which Charney discusses in his Briefing, are designed to incorporate 'Coloured' and Indian voters into the electoral process as subordinate shareholders in the apartheid system. This has provoked the defection of Andries Treurnicht from the National Party to form the Conservative Party. It also divided the voters of the parliamentary opposition, the Progressive Federal Party. And it has produced serious dilemmas for the 'Coloured' Labour Party. Abrahams argues in his Briefing that its acceptance of the new constitution will destroy what credibility the party had. However, had it rejected the constitution and the arena of 'Coloured' politics, it would have denied itself access to the limited patronage which local government and, now, ministerial office will enable it to dispense. Not surprisingly, the government, with the agreement of the 'Coloured' Labour Party, has decided not to follow its success in the 'white' referendum by holding similar exercises for 'Coloured' or Indian electorates.

More fundamentally, the new constitution is important less for whether or not it extends political and franchise rights to 'Coloureds' and Indians than for its consolidation of all important decision-making powers in the hands of the President and State Security Council. This, as Charney's analysis implies, and as Davies and O'Meara point out, will reduce the effectiveness and significance of white political representation. The method by which the appearance of legislative participation is created for some groups is the termination of its reality for all groups. Nolutshungu in Changing South Africa (pp.80-81) has argued that the disgracing of Vorster only slowed down a process of 'autonomisation of the office of the Prime Minister' which was well under way and which replaces the old focus of white rule on mobilising white electoral support with control by a 'semi-military oligarchy' in which the participatory institutions of the state are reduced in significance and substance.

The National Party leadership has always stressed those elements of the state and political apparatus it felt were necessary to combat the primary problems it identified at any particular time. Under Verwoerd the key area of state activity became 'native affairs'. The structure of apartheid was consolidated, the Bantu Administration apparatus was set up and the key political figure was W.M. Eiseleen, Verwoerd's appointee as Secretary for Bantu Administration. Under Vorster, the former Minister of Justice, the key problem was identified as internal revolution. Vorster's tenure was characterised by the consolidation and
expansion of a formidable repressive apparatus, the police state being formalised even while external policies took on their 'outward looking' aspect. The key innovation during this period was the creation of BOSS, the Bureau of State Security, and the key figure was General van den Bergh, its first head. Under Botha, the main challenge was seen to be the loss of the friendly buffer territories to the north and the success of the African revolution in the frontline states. Botha was imported into the premiership from defence, just as Vorster had been chosen from the main police ministry before him. Under Botha's leadership, ferocious military action and an avowed policy of destabilisation of neighbours has been promoted. The military has become a central element in the making and implementation of policy through the State Security Council. General Magnus Malan, the Defence Minister, has become the characteristic military figure and government spokesman. The new constitution will give this tendency to 'autonomisation' legal and institutional form. The white legislature will now formally become a talking shop and will be joined by two subordinate talking shops for Indians and 'Coloureds'.

Reconstruction, War and Destabilisation
The security apparatus has not only achieved greater political importance but has also a key economic role derived from the value of the war effort to private capital, as the Briefing by Wood indicates. Wood argues that counter-insurgency efforts against SWAPO in Namibia have incorporated capital and given it a stake in the war, either through the private forces they have raised or through the profits found in supplying contracts. The military power of the South African government, its control of critical transport routes and its position as the main industrial producer and food exporter in the region have all combined to enable it to disrupt the economies of its neighbours, destroy important facilities and also to take lives. In the manner of the Mafia, South Africa offers its neighbouring states 'protection' from its own attacks on them. The South African military forces have demonstrated the penalties it can impose on any government which resists its demands and refuses such 'protection'. Sabotage of road and rail links by the Pretoria-supported and armed MNR, discussed by Fauvet, has not only cut Mozambique's transport links with Zimbabwe and Malawi but has made it more costly and more difficult to provide food to drought-stricken areas.

South African aggression exacerbates the problems which the region inherited from the colonial era, from the brutalities of previous regimes (demonstrated again in the discovery of mass graves in Zimbabwe), from the costs of the independence struggle, and from problems created by policies followed after independence. Thus, Raikes argues that FRELIMO subsidised high-value grains, expanding the demand for crops which could not be produced by peasant farmers. State farms failed to meet this demand, adding to the burden on foreign exchange reserves and causing food imports to rise. FRELIMO is now committed to shifting resources from state farms to peasant co-operatives, but it is not yet clear that this will be sufficient to solve the problems of food production.

The Mozambican government has sought to tackle the scarcity of imported goods by expelling unauthorised people to the rural areas and imposing penalties against 'economic saboteurs'. But they have been unable to prevent the black market from displacing the state marketing system as the main means of acquiring many commodities. Nor have they been able to move goods to the rural
areas to encourage farmers to increase the production of commodities for sale. Rural areas have suffered successively from the loss of a large part of the earnings of migrant workers, from MNR banditry and from inappropriate policies. The savage drought of recent years has produced famine conditions.

Zimbabwe's strategies for reconstruction involve trying to end the system of migrant labour by establishing full-time workers in the towns with their families and developing a class of full-time farmers on the resettled land and in the former 'reserves'. Bush and Cliffe show how these policies fail to recognise the dependence of many people for their income and security both on earnings from wages and on incomes from agricultural production. Few plans to resettle peasants make provision for a large residue of women and men who would be left without jobs or land. Feasible reconstruction policies must 'take account of the reality of the “farmer-housewife” as well as the “worker-peasant”.'

In Zimbabwe the political rivalries of the nationalist parties were not resolved by the resounding victory of ZANU(PF) at the polls and the integration of the liberation armies and the former Rhodesian armed forces into a national army. Armed 'dissidents' continue to perpetrate acts of pillage and murder, particularly in southern Matabeleland. In 1983 the government's counter-measures appear to have been directed more against some of the rural population, and particularly against ZAPU supporters, than against the armed bands. It has recently been alleged that rural stores have been closed to prevent the dissidents' access to them. Consequently, at a time of severe drought, rural people have been unable to get sufficient food. This strategy of 'draining the pond to catch the fish' is more likely to alienate rural people than to destroy armed bands. The continuing situation can easily be exploited by South Africa, which has already inherited the Muzorewa irregulars and soldiers from the Rhodesian forces capable of undertaking sabotage and armed intervention.

Indeed, it will be surprising if the South Africans do not now turn their attention more to Zimbabwe. They have forced Lesotho to expel ANC cadres. They have imposed a constraining 'agreement' on Mozambique, one which will permit Pretoria to attack that territory whenever it needs to account for continuing ANC activity but gives no similar 'remedy' to Maputo for the future activities of the reportedly well-supplied MNR. And they are in the process of demanding another from Angola, seemingly in the hope of thwarting SWAPO while winning recognition for the claims of UNITA. The State Security Council must fancy its chances of using the many problems confronting Zimbabwe to win further advantages to those gained in 1982 when they allowed oil into Zimbabwe. Clearly, the South African military and police machine has won this round and is likely to win several more in the near future — particularly if the Reagan regime is re-elected in the United States. But it has won many rounds in the past and it is clear from the experience of southern African history that its problems have not gone away as a result of such victories. Whenever one form of challenge to the power of racist capitalism has been suppressed, the challenge has returned in a new, often more vigorous form. If there is any lesson to be learnt from South African history, it is that the fundamental contradictions on which oppression and exploitation rest cannot be resolved by coercion and brutality. State strategies to perpetuate the structure of power, either by attempting to co-opt petty bourgeois opportunists or by deploying massive repressive force, have tended instead to produce new forms of struggle throughout the region.
New Questions

As Mafeje pointed out (ROAPE 11) the 1976 student revolt raised new questions about revolutionary strategy in South Africa and the exiled liberation movements. First, replying to him, recognised that the relation of the military to the political struggle required that a liberation movement have the ‘capacity to respond to struggles even those it does not initiate.’ The ANC clearly recognise that the liberation struggle does not depend only on the armed struggle. Oliver Tambo recently said that the ANC operates ‘on three fronts: the labour front, the front of mass popular actions, as well as the front of armed actions,’ which ‘have become part of the same broad front of action’ (AIM, Facts and Reports, Maputo, 16 September 1982; Journal of African Marxists, 5, 1984). There is no doubt, too, of the mass popularity of the ANC — opinion polls conducted within South African confirm this, as Charney’s Briefing shows. ANC has strong supporters among workers and within the trade union movement. However, as several independent unions have made clear, trade union action and political resistance are not just all of a piece. The relation of trade unions to broader political organisations and to the liberation movement raises central issues of democracy, organisation and revolutionary strategy.

These issues were raised in Joe Foster’s address to the 1982 FOSATU Congress. Davies and O’Meara and, from a different standpoint, Martin Plaut, have taken them up in contributions to Debates which, for reasons of space, we have had to hold over to our next issue. They are also being debated directly within the South African labour movement. These have arisen out of the formation in 1983 of the United Democratic Front to co-ordinate opposition from a broad range of community, student, worker and political organisations to the government’s constitutional proposals and Koornhof’s plans for further removals of people and their ‘orderly movement and settlement’. The UDF has not adopted the Freedom Charter (or any specific platform) in order not to exclude any body committed to resisting the structures of the apartheid state. However, it clearly draws on the tradition of the Congress movement and the Freedom Charter. An alternative alliance, the National Forum, draws on the ideas of the Unity Movement and the Black Consciousness Movement (see Neville Alexander’s address ‘Nation and Ethnicity’ to the inaugural meeting of National Forum; in Work in Progress, Johannesburg, 28, 1983).

In the South African Labour Bulletin 9, 2, 1982, the General Workers Union explain why they decided not to affiliate to UDF, and Municipal and General Workers Union of South Africa explain why they did. The debate resembles the debates between Lenin and Luxemburg, among other European socialists in the period of the Second International, though with some significant twists and differences. MGWUSA argues that ‘the Apartheid capitalist system can continue to exploit workers by continuing to oppress all black people’. Hence the need for black workers to ‘stand together with all people willing to fight for a free and just South Africa’ in opposition to Bantustan ‘independence’; the new pass laws; the elections for community councils and the constitutional reforms. Since trade unions are not political parties, they must ally with other organisations. In this way, trade unions can oppose the tendency towards economism and influence the direction and goals of the wider political struggle. Lenin argued, similarly, that, in the struggle for the democratic revolution, revolutionary socialists could not concern themselves only with the interests of the workers, but had to be ‘tribune(s) of the people’, fighting on behalf of all oppressed classes and nationalities. Hence the need for the Soviets formed in the 1905 revolution to
organise support on the broadest possible basis. Because the revolutionary movement needed to go beyond the immediate demands of workers, Lenin argued that the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party had to be directed by a central leadership of committed revolutionaries (see Lenin, What is to be done?; Two tactics of Russian Social Democracy; S.M. Schwarz The Russian Revolution of 1905, Colombia University Press).

GWU argued that there is a fundamental difference between an organisation of political activists and a trade union. Union leaders can only act on the explicit mandates of their members. This does impose some limitations on their activity, but is also their political strength:

... in the democratic unions, the workers have also in addition to their economic gains won a new pride and dignity, a self-confidence in their ability to take and implement decisions.

Every minute of a worker's time is controlled, he's told when and how and where he'll work, he's told when and how he'll sleep, he has no control over whether he is employed one day and unemployed the next day. All workers have, in a sense, is their unity. This is why workers tend so naturally to take and implement decisions en masse, and conversely why other groupings in society are so comfortable with taking decisions individually or in small groups ...

GWU questioned whether the style, tone and programme of the UDF encouraged working class participation. The GWU has never found any need to set up sub-committees, let along a highly sophisticated and complex structure, like that of the UDF. The language of the launching of the UDF was English, which many GWU members who attended had not understood, and workers did not wish to be drawn into an organisation in which they would not be able to participate in decision-making. Finally, GWU, like other unions, particularly in the Western Cape (where there is strong support both for UDF and for National Forum), would risk divisions by aligning themselves with particular political organisations. Like Rosa Luxemburg, GWU emphasises the need for workers to take their own decisions and learn from their own political experience (see Organisational Questions of Russian Social-Democracy; The Mass Strike, Political Parties and Trade Unions; The Russian Revolution, all in M.A. Walters, ed., Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, Pathfinder, New York). However, whereas Luxemburg identified the German trade unions as the main barrier to radical mobilisation of the workers, GWU regard democratic unions as formative organs of workers democracy and political development.

It is not our business to resolve these issues from Britain. They can only be resolved in the struggle of South African workers — and other South Africans, female and male, rural and urban.

Morris Szeftel
Gavin Williams


Colin Bundy

This paper asks how the national movements viewed rural issues between the 1920s and 1960s, what attention they devoted to rural mobilisation, and how their perceptions and efforts altered over time. It suggests that, given a society which saw wars of conquest and territorial dispossession in the 19th century, given the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, and given the different forms of expropriation and exploitation historically visited upon peasants, labour tenants, farm labourers and migrant workers, the agrarian question has not been accorded the theoretical or practical attention one might have anticipated.

The central focus of this article is a little-reported episode in South Africa’s recent history — the rural struggle in the Transkei against aspects of state policy in the 1940s and 1950s. More particularly, it discusses the role played in this resistance by competing political organisations: the African National Congress (ANC) and the All African Convention (AAC). The ANC, the oldest nationalist movement in South Africa, had never — since its formation in 1912 — established a significant presence in the Transkei; in the 1940s, however, it commenced more effectively than hitherto to reach certain groups and individuals. Much of the new impetus came from the energetic political organiser, Govan Mbeki; through his contacts with the national leadership, organisation in the Transkei was at least placed on the ANC’s agenda. As the narrative will show, Mbeki’s organisational base, the Transkeian Organised Bodies (TOB), became affiliated instead to the AAC.

The AAC was a constituent body of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM). The NEUM was a numerically unimpressive wing of the movement for national liberation; it was then and has subsequently usually been characterised as Trotskyist; it was bitterly critical of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA); and it disputed with the ANC that body’s claim to be the African national party. The NEUM’s theoretical claims to being a nationwide movement were considerably more developed than its actual organisational strength, which was largely located in the urban Western Cape. It effectively failed to survive its opposition to the 1952 Defiance Campaign, and as the Congress Alliance gained in membership during the 1950s in pari passu did the NEUM lose ground and credibility. In 1958 an already depleted movement spent much passion and energy on an internal feud that split its ranks into a number of warring camps.
Nevertheless, between 1945 and 1958 the AAC/NEUM not only identified the African reserves as areas of potential revolutionary mobilisation, but also acted upon this premise, establishing political links with a number of disparate and localised rural movements. Both in its theoretical stand and in its practical involvement in the rural struggle the NEUM stood apart from other nationalist and revolutionary movements, until in the late 1950s an awareness of and commitment to a rurally-based struggle manifested itself more broadly in the national liberation movement. The success of the AAC in the Transkei, relative to its meagre numbers and resources, prompts a number of questions for students of the history of political resistance in South Africa. Why did the AAC decide to work within the peasantry? Did other movements decide not to, and if so, why? Might they have done so, and with what consequences? To what extent, that is, did events in rural areas suggest that with revolutionary political leadership peasant grievances and 'primitive rebellions' might have played a weightier role than they did in the struggle against domination and exploitation?

The Agrarian Question in Theory and Practice, 1920-1945

There are two main reasons for commencing this survey in the 1920s. In that decade the first attempts were made to theorise the nature of class struggle in the South African countryside; and there existed during the latter half of the decade a stage of generalised class conflict and resistance in the South African countryside — a phenomenon that has recently attracted scholarly attention. This conflict (and the political forms it took) was in several senses analogous to the wave of urban protest of 1918-24. Between about 1926 and 1930 there was not only an increased level of resistance, but also a search for new and appropriate forms of resistance amongst farm-workers, labour-tenants, reserve peasants and peasant migrants. The reasons for this heightened conflict are complex, but they appear to include the following: acute and explicit pressures upon labour-tenants and squatter-peasants; responses to the 1925 legislation which (for Natal and the Cape) raised taxation and to Hertzog's 'Native Bills' of 1926; economic privations due to drought and rising consumer prices; and possibly a relocation of radicalism from urban into rural areas consequent upon the entrenchment by 1924 of a conservative petty bourgeois leadership in African urban areas.

The late 1920s saw the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), the ANC, and the CPSA increase their involvement in rural areas; the CPSA and ANC adopted policies denoting a considerable shift to the left. The first organisation to expand its membership and to dramatise rural grievances in the second half of the decade was the ICU. In 1925, of twenty-seven branches twenty were in the Cape. Even then, the ICU was not exclusively urban; small town Eastern Cape branches had a strong, even predominantly, agricultural membership; but its activities were very largely confined to the cities and larger towns. In evidence to a 1925 Commission, the ICU stated that most of its members were 'drawn from urban and detribalised natives and also from the coloured workers' (cited Wickens, 1978: 117). But by mid-1927 the major element of the ICU's massive growth in Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal was new rural support. Of about 100 branches, fully two-thirds were in small towns.

Natal was the area of the most dynamic growth — and the reasons are clear. In
northern Natal and the midlands the extension of capitalist agriculture (especially with the wattle and sheep booms) meant that 'rural relationships were now radically restructured for the first time' (Marks, 184). Crucially, acute pressures were applied to squatters and labour-tenants in the form of mass evictions, prosecutions for dipping and rent arrears, tougher tenancy terms, and maltreatment. One way in which resistance from those thus affected expressed itself was in the mushrooming sales of the ICU's red tickets. A young Zulu teaching in Vryheid left a graphic account of an ICU recruiting meeting there: rumours and discontent fused to bring veterans of the Zulu war, young and old men from farms, middle aged men from the mines, workers from the town 'all marching column upon column, towards the venue of assembly'. Speeches were made and membership cards issued ('I wrote till my arm ached') — 'And those people flocked to the ICU as to the ark which would convey them to safety.'

Although at one point Wickens asserts that the ICU 'became a rural protest movement' and elsewhere that 'the movement became a peasants' revolt' (Wickens: 118, 204-5) neither he nor Sheridan Johns gives any indication of precisely how rural membership grew so fast. Did ICU leaders, nationally or locally, identify farm workers or labour-tenants as the targets for a membership drive? Or did the demand for membership stem from disaffected rural dwellers, calling in as it were the ICU, already the most visible and potentially the most potent organ of the subordinate classes? Henry Slater has suggested that in Natal the ICU served as 'a channel for existing discontent which has already produced widespread unrest and thrown up its own local institutionalised forms. The ICU can be seen as capturing what was already something approaching a popular movement' (Cited in Bradford, 1980: 24-5). It was definitely among labour tenants and farm workers that the movement gained most support — and analysis of those ICU recruiting speeches that have survived does not support Ballinger's sneer that 'farms were promised to all and sundry' for three pence a week. Rather, as Helen Bradford (1981: 8-9) has argued,

an important ideological element in the ICU's discourse was a nationalist agrarian element . . . present in its radical form only in the initial stages. This element represented the lived relations of the African peasantry in the transition to capitalism in the countryside along the Prussian road, through the articulation of grievances concerning land, concerning the oppressive nature of the state and farmers in the countryside and through promises that land and national autonomy would be restored.

In the Transvaal and Orange Free State too ICU activists held mass meetings, set up new branches, distributed literature, and sought redress over specific grievances.

In addition to the struggle of farm workers and labour tenants, the 1920s also witnessed unrest and a rash of localised peasant movements in the Reserve areas. In the Transvaal, a number of chiefs joined the ICU, bringing their followers with them; but in Zululand, the Transkei and Ciskei and the northern Transvaal reserves the ICU's gains were limited, sporadic, and unsustained. The ICU did not — indeed probably could not — become an effective vehicle of reserve peasant discontent. At the union's special conference of December 1927, the Eastern Cape delegate Theo Lujiza insisted that the land question was crucial to the future of the ICU, and called for something to be done. Nothing constructive was. Kadalie's hubristic scheme for mass land purchases was only one of the casualties of the next two years, as the ICU fell apart at the seams.
These rural tensions and developments formed part of the background against which the CPSA arrived at its ‘Native Republic’ policy in 1928/9 — in terms of which policy the party adopted the slogan of ‘An Independent South African Native Republic as a stage towards the Workers and Peasants Republic, guaranteeing protection and complete equality to all national minorities’. The debates which led to this new departure have been extensively reviewed elsewhere, and will be summarised very baldly here, except to illustrate particularly how the national and agrarian questions intersected, the major role envisaged for the peasantry, and the emphasis placed on rural mobilisation.

The sources of the new policy were two-fold: on the one hand, they stemmed from local experience in the 1920s and the growth in black membership of the CPSA; on the other hand, they were a local reflection of changing policy within the Communist International movement. To take the first of these: by 1928, of a total party membership of 1750 about 1600 were Africans. They came (Roux told the Comintern Congress) ‘largely from the smaller semi-rural locations’. The 1928 Comintern Congress was that at which the relationship between Communist Parties and nationalist/anti-imperialist movements was reviewed for the first time since the adoption of the Lenin/Roy debate in 1920.

In 1920, Lenin had urged Communists to seek close alliance with national and colonial movements involved in struggles against imperialism; whether the alliance would be proletarian/communist or bourgeois/democratic would be determined by objective conditions in the country concerned. In backward countries, Communists must be prepared to aid bourgeois-democratic liberation movements, and especially to support the peasantry against large landholders and all ‘relics of feudalism’. Roy distinguished sharply between bourgeois-democratic nationalist movements (led by the national bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie) and ‘struggles of landless peasants against every form of exploitation’, and insisted that the Communist movement must support the latter rather than the former. Lenin’s theses became the accepted basis of theory; Roy’s supplementary theses were largely forgotten. The ambiguity in Lenin’s theses — that the allies of today were the class enemies of tomorrow — remains an ineluctable dilemma for theorists of a revolution in stages.

At the 1928 Congress the desirability of alliances with anti-imperialist movements was urged even more emphatically; in a general resolution on colonies a paragraph on the CPSA called for an independent native republic. Some months earlier, the CPSA Central Executive Committee had discussed a longer version of the resolution: it had contained these sentences:

The bulk of the South African population is the black peasantry, whose land is owned by whites. Hence the National Question in South Africa, which is based on the agrarian question, lies at the foundation of the revolution in South Africa. The black peasantry constitutes the basic moving force of the revolution in alliance with and under the leadership of the working class. (Cited Bunting: 33).

The draft resolution also criticised as inadequate the existing (1925) CPSA policy on land, which called for the expropriation of large estates and their redistribution to the landless. ‘The party must show’, adjured the 1928 resolution,

that the basic question in the agrarian question in South Africa is the land hunger of the blacks and that their interest is of prior importance in the solution of the agrarian question.
Efforts should be made immediately to develop plans to organise the native peasants into peasant unions and the native agricultural workers into trade unions, while attention to the poor agrarian whites must in no way be minimised (Cited Hirson, 1982: 15).

After Moscow, the CPSA was committed to participation in embryonic nationalist movements like the ANC. The new programme was adopted and published. It called for the abolition of the colour bar, for franchise and civil rights for all, and for 'expropriation of the expropriators, restoration of the land ... to the land workers and the poor peasants'. It advocated the seizure of 'Big Estates and company farms' and the distribution of Crown Lands among 'landless squatters, poor peasants and labourers, black and white ...'. It did not call for the abolition of private property in land, nor for an end to wage labour on farms. The Party newspaper called in an editorial for the 'mobilisation of the agrarian masses, who constitute the great bulk and potentially, owing to land hunger, perhaps the most revolutionary section of the oppressed race'.

In 1930, a directive from the Executive Committee of the Comintern spelled out exactly what the new policy called for, in practical terms. The proletariat must organise the peasantry and agricultural workers; in 'white areas' the Party must 'immediately organise the poor peasants, share-croppers, labour tenants and establish separate Trade Unions for farm workers'. All organisations thus created were 'to be based on the immediate demands of the respective sections of the population in the various districts'. The CPSA should form organisations in the Transkei and see to it that landless peasants played a leading role; their need to migrate for wages should be used as a way of extending activities amongst mine workers.

The Party's responses to these policy changes and directives was to undertake more work than previously in the rural areas — but still not very much. It established links with the League of the Poor in Lesotho; launched the League of African Rights in some rural areas as well as in the cities; supported the left wing in the ANC in the Western Cape (see below); and Bunting ran for Parliament in 1929 for the Transkei seat of Tembuland. Yet a number of mutually reinforcing tendencies blunted or deflected the CPSA's involvement in rural areas immediately after the adoption of the 'Native Republic' Policy. The party's founders had accepted unconditionally the proletariat as the only revolutionary class; most industrial workers in the 1920s and the overwhelming majority of urban trade unionists were white; and many CPSA members found it difficult or impossible to accept the 'Native Republic' policy: they considered the policy as excessively racial over class issues. The tenets of orthodox Marxism, the involvement of leading members of the party in trade union work, and their prior conviction that the white working class had to be 'won over' all combined to emphasise the centrality of urban areas in the class struggle, and to rule out any re-examination of this assumption.

It thus seems doubtful that, even in more favourable circumstances, the CPSA would have moved more effectively into rural organisations during the 1930s. In the event, the party hove to at the end of 1930 on a left-wing tack at the direct behest of the Comintern. The 'bolshevisation' of the party, with its concomitant dogmatising, wrangles, resignations and expulsions, left it ideologically purer but immeasurably weakened as a potential radicaliser of a national liberation movement. Estimates of its total membership by 1935 vary from 150 to 300. The only two country branches (according to Roux) that remained active were...
Cradock and Tarkastad (and these, as he did not mention, were primarily the creation of the Independent ANC). In the mid-1930s, the policy of the CPSA swung sharply again, this time to the politics of the United Front. It was not until after World War II that further analysis of the National Question and Agrarian Question was resumed in CPSA publications.

The years 1927-29 also saw the ANC pursue a decidedly more militant and left-wing policy than it had in earlier years. Under Gumede’s leadership, and with a number of CPSA members holding office in the ANC, the organisation was committed, in theory, to becoming a mass movement. Walshe has characterised the period as a clash within the ANC leadership between moderates and radicals; at the dramatic April 1930 conference it was the moderates who emerged victorious, dropping mass action and political assertiveness in favour of consultation, ‘responsible’ leadership, and the courting of (white) public favour. The land policy of the ANC was not actually altered under Gumede’s leadership, even if challenged implicitly. The ANC opposed the 1913 Land Act on juridical and civil right grounds, but at the same time effectively accepted it by demanding enlarged ‘reserved’ areas: ‘rural land segregation safeguarding and extending the tribal areas was not seen as an obstacle to equal opportunity for educated South Africans in the wider South Africa’. ANC policy was ‘designed to retain the reserves as minimal tribal homelands, but to permit individual Africans . . . to participate in freehold or leasehold tenure throughout South Africa’ (Walshe, 1970: 48). Perhaps understandably, the ANC failed to make headway in rural areas, either within the Reserves or on ‘white’ lands occupied or worked by Africans.

A more radical approach to agrarian issues was evinced by a group of younger radicals in the western Cape ANC in 1929-30. They mounted a rural campaign attacking the ‘tot’ system of payment of part of the wage in cheap wine and calling for higher wages for farm workers. Ndobe and Tonjeni were expelled from the ANC, and set up the Independent ANC, calling for agitation, mass demonstrations, and civil disobedience. Their programme was well to the left of the ANC on three counts: a demand for universal, free education; full franchise rights for all; and the return of land to the African people. The Independent ANC continued to win a modest following in the western and eastern Cape, especially in Cradock and Tarkastad.

During the 1920s there was a considerable increase in rural conflict in South Africa. None of the political movements mentioned so far was entirely insensitive to this: all sought more effectively than previously to give voice to rural grievances, to win rural support, and to provide some political leadership in the countryside. The ICU, spectacularly if briefly, came closest to attracting large-scale support from the rural popular classes; the CPSA arrived (although it soon departed) at a policy which identified landlessness as a central issue and rural political work as a priority.

The 1930s, however, saw the ICU, the CPSA, and the ANC in decline. None was organisationally capable of enlarging its membership, let alone of extending the area of its activity into rural areas. There was little public discussion of rural issues, except in the agitation centering on the 1936 Lands Act — which again was predominantly concerned with legal and political rights. The ‘left wing groups in the country were unable to intervene effectively in the clamour over
Baruch Hirson has documented the recrudescence of rural unrest in the aftermath of the 1936 legislation — especially in the northern Transvaal, as the anti-squatting measures were applied. With the doughty exception of the Communist Party’s Alpheus Maliba, no effective links appear to have been established with any of the local movements thrown up by the agitation against the Act. The impetus within the political movements towards rural mobilisation was dissipated; protest and struggle in rural areas remained parochial, disjointed, sporadic, and isolated.

The AAC, the ANC, and the Transkei

There was, during the 1930s, an exception to the overall lack of enthusiasm for rural work. A Marxist discussion group in Cape Town — the Lenin Club — was composed of the ‘Left Opposition’: expelled CPSA members, anti-Stalinists of various hues, and avowed Trotskyists. In 1933, this grouping split into two factions. On the one hand were the Spartacists (or the Minority, the Workers Party); on the other, the Communist League (or Majority, which became the Fourth International of South Africa, FIOSA). They split on three main issues: whether there was a significant difference between British and Boer imperialism; whether a Marxist-Leninist party should remain visible or go underground; and the place of the agrarian and national questions in the liberation struggle. The Spartacists held that ‘The Native Problem is mainly the Agrarian Problem’ and that, given the concentration of land in white hands and the large proportion of landless peasants, ‘The only solution of the Native Problem is the Agrarian Revolution’. The crucial element in any South African revolution would be the demand for land; a class alliance of revolutionary workers and the ‘potentially great revolutionary reservoir’ of the peasantry would lead the struggle. Again, it was asserted that ‘Only the Revolution can solve this agrarian question, which is the axis, the alpha and the omega of the revolution.’ The Spartacists held that even ‘wage dependents’ among the black population were characterised by a peasant consciousness; and that after a national democratic revolution land must be redistributed on a basis of private ownership (see Gentle 1978: 21-34; Hirson, 1982).

These emphases eventually found expression in the Ten Point Programme of the NEUM: Kies, Dladla, G. Gool and I.B. Tabata were members of the Spartacist/Workers Party persuasion who surfaced in the leadership of the revitalised NEUM/AAC in 1943. The Ten Point Programme called for universal suffrage, free and compulsory education, the guarantee of basic civil liberties, the reform of the criminal, tax, and labour laws, and (Point 7) ‘revision of the land question’. This was broadly construed to mean ending ‘relations of serfdom’, abolition of the Land Acts, and ‘a new division of the land in conformity with the existing rural population living on the land and working the land’ as the ‘first task of a democratic State’. As the NEUM/AAC policy is frequently dubbed Trotskyist it is worth briefly recapitulating the objections to this programme, and especially to the stress on the peasantry, by FIOSA. FIOSA insisted that the urban and rural struggles must be linked; and argued that ‘reserve dwellers are, in fact, tribal proletarians, and the centre of their livelihood lies in the towns and cities . . . even their peasant outlook is steadily being changed into a proletarian one’ (Cited Gentle 1978: 67).

Tabata and his associates in the AAC leadership after 1943 adhered closely to the
Spartacist position. In 1954, Tabata virtually restated the ‘alpha and omega’ thesis:

Let me repeat once more: the agrarian problem is the fundamental problem in this country. It is the pivot and axis of the national movement. Anyone who intends to take his politics seriously must understand this fact... Whoever flounders on the agrarian question is lost.

All active participants in the struggle must acquaint themselves thoroughly with the land question. They must learn to know how to approach the peasant and how to link up this land problem with the national question. In order to draw the landless peasantry into the movement we must unreservedly throw in our lot with them in their struggle.

Given this perspective, it is not surprising that the NEUM/AAC sought to extend its activities in the reserves in the 1940s. In practical terms, this meant that Tabata turned particularly to the Xhosa-speaking Transkei and Ciskei. This approach by the AAC intersected with certain social and political developments in the Transkei. During the 1930s, the Transkei’s underdevelopment and impoverishment intensified; so pronounced was this process that during the 1930s and 1940s different elements in the South African ruling class came to accept certain broad ideas about the ‘needs of the reserves’, and there emerged a policy of ‘betterment’ and ‘rehabilitation’. In its immediate post-war form, the rehabilitation scheme envisaged an improvement of the methods and resources of a stratum of ‘full-time peasant farmers’, with residential concentration, deprivation of land and stock and thorough proletarianisation of the majority. This policy was launched in the Ciskei and Transkei in 1945-6. Within the Transkei, three political responses are of particular importance: the resistance to rehabilitation, and especially to its stock-culling provisions; the radicalisation of Transkeian local politics, and especially the TOB; the radicalisation of the Cape African Teachers Association (CATA), the salience of this body in the Transkei, and the impact of the political activities of its members. These factors are essential to an understanding of AAC tactics and advances.

One of the main features of rehabilitation was stock-culling — and probably no other aspect of the policy excited such concerted and deep-rooted hostility. Surveys, fencing, and the removal of families from their homesteads also met with opposition in the period under review, but fears about compulsory loss of livestock remained the most potent source of peasant discontent. As a political issue in the Transkei, cattle-culling predated rehabilitation. In 1937, the General Council’s decision to carry out a mass castration of scrub bulls provoked angry popular opposition; in 1941 a Committee on Overstocking reported that in the Transkei ‘at nearly every centre visited the voice of the native people was unanimous in its opposition to any suggestion of compulsory limitation’, and that in many places ‘the attitude adopted was definitely hostile’. Agitation on this issue adversely affected the government’s recruiting effort for labour during the war. In 1946, unprecedentedly, half the Bungha (General Council) members lost their seats, and this was ascribed to the Bungha’s support for stock-culling.

The first district in the Transkei to undergo a ‘betterment’ programme was Butterworth, and a survey of a single location undertaken in December 1947 provides valuable details of the scheme and its reception. Rehabilitation was ‘one of the most burning questions’ and had met with ‘spirited opposition’; cattle culling and the coercive nature of the policy had provoked particular bitterness. Local people ‘smashed fences by night and drove their cattle in’; they had also broken politically with their location chief and Bungha councillors, who, it was
felt, had misrepresented popular feeling. Opposition was voiced through a Vigilance Association (iliso lomzi) which had ‘sprung up as a check on Bungha representatives’ at ‘the initiative of the people themselves’.

Tabata responded to these aspects of popular resistance to stock-culling and rehabilitation. He toured the Transkei in 1945, and at the end of that year issued his pamphlet (in English and in Xhosa) entitled The Rehabilitation Scheme: The New Fraud. This direct and powerful polemic opposed the call for cattle culling thus:

Today our people are disease-ridden because of malnutrition; they haven’t the oxen to plough; the majority of the babies do not survive the first year because the mothers are too starved to be able to feed them . . . . [Africans] have far too few cattle for their requirements. It is not that the cattle are too many, but that the land is too small. There is an appalling shortage of land.

The second factor shaping local responses was the radicalisation of politics in the Transkei. This was a complex phenomenon: it certainly involved the transmission of radical ideas and issues from urban areas through migrant workers, but the focus for the moment is the local dimension and some of the institutional forms taken. One of the most immediate effects of the stock-culling and rehabilitation issues was a deepening of hostility towards chiefs, headmen, district councillors and Bungha spokesmen. Local popular associations opposed to councillors and chiefs sprang up in several districts between 1945 and 1948; and some of the larger of these came to be represented in the TOB. The TOB was the first political body to command support throughout the Transkei: it represented a significant departure in scale and (within a few years) in militancy. Founded in 1943, it initially brought together a number of disparate organisations: Voters Associations, the Chiefs and Peoples Association, Vigilance Associations, an African Workers Union, various welfare societies, a social studies club, and two women’s organisations. Govan Mbeki played a major role in the formation of the TOB: he was elected as General Secretary in 1943 and held this post until 1948.

At this juncture, the TOB was informally aligned — through Mbeki — with the statements or the advocacy of specific reforms in favour of educated Transkeians. There seems to have been no TOB policy with respect to land or livestock before 1945. In 1946 the TOB conference offered several indications of mounting radicalism. There was a collection for victims of the miners’ strike, support for a boycott of the Natives Representative Council, and a call for ‘full citizenship rights to all the people’ (Torch, 26 October 1946).

At the juncture, the TOB was informally aligned — through Mbeki — with the ANC. Mbeki, himself a Transkeian, was a well-educated journalist cum political activist. He had been involved in Transkei politics in several capacities prior to the formation of the TOB: as editor of the Territorial Magazine, as secretary to the Transkeian African Voters Association, and at one point as a (dissident) Bungha councillor. Apart from his local efforts to involve Transkeians in national political issues, he also sought to impress on the ANC the need for the nationalist movement to give effective leadership to rural people. A number of Mbeki’s letters to Dr Xuma (president-general of the ANC, 1940-49) survive and they illustrate clearly both of these concerns.

In May 1941, Mbeki described the Transkei as ‘to be frank, politically in midnight slumber’ — but argued that much could be achieved there. He had been
encouraged by an approach from younger men to invite Xuma to the region to
launch the Congress there, and advised that first influential elders should be won
over. In 1946 Mbeki gave an account of the activities of the Voters Association
and TOB, and reiterated the call for a clear lead from the ANC:

We need to prepare for a national struggle in this regard. No doubt you are aware that
organisation in the Reserves is sluggish and a long softening up process is necessary if we
must play our part in the national struggle. We have not tired of struggling to raise funds for
the Anti-Pass Campaign. What a joy it is to be alive these days when history is being made
all around us (Mbeki to Xuma, 1 September 1946).

Nine months later, this note of committed optimism was sounded again. He and
his colleagues (wrote Mbeki) were very busy, ‘throwing everything into the fire’;
the Transkei was ‘up and doing’ (although ‘remnants of the Victorian Age are
still to be found’); and again he appealed for ‘the lead of a national organisation in
questions of a national character. What plans’, he asked Xuma,

are you developing to clamp down on Advisory Boards, Councils, and individual chiefs?
These groups have to be worked up before October next. Writing a letter like this I feel I
must be frank. Our fears here are that we may work up the people only to find that the rest
of the country does not attach much significance to its resolutions. Country folks have a
way of being honest. We have already lost face in the Anti-Pass Campaign which was just
dropped when we were working up the people, and that was immediately seized upon by
the gradualists as one of these ‘paper fires’ which do not last . . .

He had been, he continued,

struggling all these years to reconcile different groups and to build an organisation of some
sort. We are too few yet in the Reserves and the problem of organisation is by no means
easy. We cannot afford to split the spearhead we have at present. To cover the need for
concerted action in questions of national interest we have provision in the TOB constitution:
‘to co-operate with or follow the lead of a national organisation in questions of a national
character’. That is why we joined the Anti-Pass Campaign and now the boycott move. Time
will soon settle this, and in the meantime we are doing all in our power to keep the Transkei
abreast of the national effort (Mbeki to Xuma, 27 June 1947).

There is little evidence that Mbeki’s clear-headed urgings elicited any notable
response from the urban leaders of the ANC. Xuma’s own lack of enthusiasm for
rural mobilisation was observable at several points during the 1940s.

The third development which shaped the AAC’s intervention in the Transkei was
a radicalisation of CATA. This had been an almost ostentatiously respectable and
moderate body in the 1930s, but between 1943 and 1948 became riven with a
prolonged internal tussle between factions who became known in the CATA
journal Teacher’s Vision as Progressives and Reactionaries. As this terminology
suggests, it was the former group who controlled the publication — and from
1948 it was they who led CATA. At the 1948 CATA conference, the radicals won
support for a policy markedly realigning the association, committing the teachers
to ‘co-ordinate their struggles in the fight against their common oppression — the
fundamental oppression of the Black man.” A number of the militants came from
the Transkei, and had joined CATA in 1941. These men — L.L. Sihlali, N.
Honono, C.M. Kobus, W.M. Tsotsi, and others — were or became AAC activists,
and CATA became the most important single constituent element within the
federal structure of the AAC.

Writing in a different context, Tom Lodge has shrewdly observed that ‘teachers
in rural communities during the 1950s were potentially natural leaders of opposition to authority . . . When teachers were politically motivated, they could be a very important element in rural opposition movements’ (Lodge: 119). In the Ciskei and Transkei, he points out, ‘the dense network of mission schools long established in the region’ provided a ready-made organisational base. Lodge suggests several reasons for the radicalisation of teachers at this time: their relatively high status as educated people coupled with poor pay and lack of formal power, and the threat to their security and status posed by the Bantu Authority and School Board systems. Of equal or greater importance must have been the wave of school ‘strikes’ (as the disturbances were usually known) that rocked some of the largest African schools and colleges between 1945 and 1947. These posed acute political questions for black teachers, either directly in the form of pressure from student organisations or indirectly in the harsh light they shone on the inadequacy of educational provision and the increasingly untenable stance of moderation and gradualism.

The strategic importance of politically radicalised teachers was also discussed by Tabata, looking back in exile upon the years under review. CATA was represented in every district of the Transkei, he said, and as a member of the AAC it was obliged to carry the ideas of the Convention (AAC) to the peasantry. They served as centres for disseminating knowledge. There were many of the teachers, naturally, who were afraid of losing their jobs, or some of them who didn’t want to have anything to do with politics, but the truth of the matter was, the peasants go to the teachers afterwards and say, look, what does this mean? This law, now, what does it mean? And if a teacher wasn’t interested he found that he was forced to go and read up our literature in order to explain to the peasants. And if he didn’t explain then the peasantry wanted to know what the dickens was up with the teacher . . . So in this way, for the first time, there was a dynamic connection between the educated sector and the peasantry (Carter-Karis microfilms, reel 14A).

By the mid-1940s, the AAC leadership was convinced of the desirability of intervention in the rural struggle, and in 1947 I.B. Tabata toured the Transkei again, together with R.S. Canca. They addressed a number of meetings, and invited the TOB to attend the 1948 conference of the AAC. They were fortunate in their timing. In 1948, active opposition to rehabilitation was on the increase. In the Ciskei and Transkei there were clashes between police and armed peasants; militant local groups were formed in a number of districts, including Glen Grey, Idutywa, Middledrift, Mount Ayliff, Mount Fletcher, Qumbu, and Victoria East. Tabata’s involvement in an organised movement in Mount Ayliff, his arrest, and subsequent acquittal, won him and the AAC a good deal of popularity. Mount Ayliff was the third district in the Transkei to be designated as a rehabilitation area. The local chief’s support was given to the measures, but in Brooks Nek location the meetings he held to publicise the scheme were boycotted. Police were sent in; the headman refused to give up the boycott organisers; and these men and some followers armed themselves and moved into the surrounding hills. There they formed a secret movement, the Kongo, and attracted some support from neighbouring locations. Tabata arrived in Mount Ayliff early in 1948 where he was arrested in March or April and charged with incitement to public violence. Tabata’s defence, which turned on a technicality, succeeded; the case also appears to have established that the inhabitants of any location had the right to refuse to participate in rehabilitation measures. Not surprisingly, in these
circumstances, Kongo affiliated with the AAC.

In a number of other Transkei districts, AAC and CATA members were politically active between 1948 and 1958. For the most part, the available evidence comes from sources sympathetic to the AAC, and must be viewed and used accordingly. Nevertheless, the overall impression is clear. The fight against rehabilitation and cattle-culling broadened and meshed with resistance to the Bantu Authorities scheme and to the introduction of Bantu Education. AAC members offered active political leadership in a number of local campaigns; their educational and legal skills were valued by Transkeians in their struggles against chiefs, magistrates, and police. Implementation of rehabilitation was harried and delayed by boycotts or disruption of meetings; attacks on government personnel, headmen and chiefs; by the hiding and removal of livestock, the destruction of fences, and so on. The annual reports of the Native (later Bantu) Affairs Department between 1948 and 1952 speak each year of ‘considerable organised opposition’, ‘semi-secret organisations’, ‘alarming reverses, serious retardation’ of policy due to ‘malicious agitators’ — until a blanket of silence was draped over the topic by Verwoerd.

There is as yet little evidence available for the internal organisation or dynamics of these peasant movements, nor of the actual extent of the political work by the AAC activists; but some of the available fragments make suggestive reading. *Inkundla ya Bantu* (the only African newspaper to support the NEUM) reported that the Transkei ‘progressives’ had

made a definite bid to win the support of this [peasant] section of the population. They go into the houses and huts of the people; they sleep and eat and chat together with them and condition their mode of thinking in this intimate way (29 November 1947).

In Glen Grey district a peasant organisation called *Amadyakopu* (Jacobites) was ‘formed for the purpose of co-ordinating resistance’. In each of the 24 villages in the district local committees were set up which elected two members to a central committee. The latter met once a month at a legal office of W.M. Tsotsi, the President of the AAC. ‘This form of organisation became so effective that it was extended to the neighbouring district of Xalanga, and joint meetings were occasionally held.’ Hammond-Tooke conducted his fieldwork in the 1950s in Tsolo district, and consequently we have more detailed information about the *Makhuluspani* (‘big team’) movement than of any other: originally a stock theft vigilance movement, it became radicalised and acted as a militant and clandestine organisation in opposition to the Rehabilitation and Bantu Authorities policies. Similar movements existed in a number of other districts; details of their activities are naturally very hard to come by.

In the later 1950s, while the influence of the AAC declined in the Transkei, the fight against Rehabilitation and especially against the Bantu Authorities intensified. The best known instances of open conflict in the countryside between 1957 and 1960 took place in Zeerust, in Sekukuniland, and in Zululand; in the Transkei the most concerted expression of this resistance was in Pondoland in 1960-1, while a more diffuse lower level ‘Thembu Revolt’ has been chronicled by Lodge. This article has tried not to exaggerate the achievements of the AAC in the Transkei, nor to over-state the level of unrest in the reserve. But it has argued that the level and range of struggle in the Transkei during the 1940s and 1950s was considerable; that the links established by AAC/CATA activists with
local movements were important, both in what they achieved and as an instance of a national movement’s sensitivity to rural struggle.

The Agrarian Question in Theory and Practice after 1945

Rural class conflict coincided with an upsurge in urban struggle between 1945 and 1955. This decade saw the radicalisation of the ANC and its development into a mass movement based on a class alliance of urban workers and petty bourgeois elements. The publication in 1944 of *African Claims*, the emergence of an Africanist group, and especially the provision of a new manifesto and a new generation of leaders by the ANC Youth League are fairly well-known milestones in that journey. In 1948 the Youth Leaguers called for a mass movement, the use of boycotts, strikes, and civil disobedience. The 1948 manifesto and the 1944 *African Claims* both called for ‘fair redistribution of land’, although the earlier document adhered to the earlier approach of insisting on equal access by Africans to land throughout the country. Although in the late 1940s an ANC presence of sorts was established in the Ciskei and in Rustenburg, Pietersburg, and Sekukuniland, Walshe (1970: 385) concludes that until 1952 the ANC encountered ‘virtually insurmountable difficulties in extending its activities to the rural areas.’ In 1952, however, when the Defiance Campaign was launched, one of the Six Unjust Laws that constituted its specific targets was the Stock Limitation Proclamation of 1949. A page from Tabata’s book? Or perhaps more directly a reflection of the concerns of Transkeians Mandela, Mbeki, and Sisulu, now all on the National Executive?

Certainly, one of the most striking aspects of the strategy and tactics of the Congress Alliance during the 1950s was the increasing weight and emphasis that came to be given to rural struggle, frequently coupled with frank criticisms of the liberation movement’s prior weakness in this regard. Insofar as there was a fundamental reason for this important shift, it appears to have been, simply, that the incidence and intensity of rural resistance in the 1940s and 1950s made it impossible for the urban based movements not to respond.

Lodge (268) has characterised the period between the early 1940s and early 1960s as providing ‘a generalised background of unrest which affected almost all African rural communities’. Disaffection assumed its most dramatic forms in the Zoutpansberg and Sekukuniland (1941-44), in Witzieshoek reserve (1950-51), Marico reserve (1958), Sekukuniland again (1958-59), the Natal reserves (1958-59), and Pondoland (1960). Throughout this period, as he puts it, ‘the Ciskeian territories were in a state of almost constant ferment’ — and the preceding section of this article sought to establish the extent to which the Transkei too seethed with discontent for a decade-and-a-half prior to the Pondo Revolt.

Time and again in the 1950s, elements of the ANC leadership warned that the movement was neglecting the rural areas. In 1954, the National Executive Committee (NEC) reported there was ‘a danger of the African National Congress becoming an urgan-based and urban-oriented organisation’; in 1955, after the Congress of the People at Kliptown, the NEC lamented ‘the great gap in our organisation ... on the farms and in the reserves’, and asserted that ‘the question of organising the peasants must be tackled with resolve and energy’ (Karis, Carter & Gerhart, 146, 235). In 1956, Mandela observed that despite prolonged resistance in the Transkei, paradoxically that reserve was ‘the least
politically organised area in the Union’. Without co-ordination, ‘isolated and sporadic outbursts’ would not be sharply felt by the regime: ‘The problem of organisation in the countryside poses itself as one of major importance for the liberatory movement’ (Liberation, February 1956). Despite these urgings, the reorientation of the ANC and its allies took some time. In 1956, the ANC provincial executive in Natal noted that the Peasants Comittee in that province had not yet been set up. Mbeki (1964: 130-1) argued that it was not until the Pondo Revolt that full recognition of the potential of rural struggles was achieved:

The Pondo movement succeeded by example in accomplishing what discussion had failed to do in a generation — convincing the leadership of the importance of the peasants in the reserves to the entire national struggle. The leaders realised at last that a struggle based on the reserves had a much greater capacity to absorb the shocks of government repression and was therefore capable of being sustained for a much longer time than a struggle based on the urban locations. ... The struggles of the peasants start from small beginnings, build up to a crescendo over a much longer time, are capable of pinning down large government forces, and are maintained at comparatively much lower cost.

Retrospectively, and a little ruefully, another ANC leader (Moses Mabhida) has commented on the ANC involvement in the women’s protests in Natal in 1959. His comments indicate ‘that perhaps the leadership of the ANC did not understand very well the problems of the people’. He said ‘Unfortunately for our people, we didn’t realise the extent of the organisation of the people which was at that time very high, and the women formed a very strong nucleus for a powerful organisation’ (cited Luckhardt & Wall: 305-6).

By the early 1960s, the reorientation of the ANC — now a proscribed organisation, operating underground — towards a championing of rurally-based struggle is plain. In a 1963 leaflet the ANC said:

The Government have chosen the Western Cape and Transkei as the battlefields ... We accept this challenge without regret ... The time has come for us to adopt a new attitude towards rural areas ... Peasant committees of migrant workers in the cities and of people in the countryside must be formed promptly to co-ordinate activities. We must fight the culling down of stock, rehabilitations, landlessness, forced removals ...

A broadly similar shift took place within the SACP (as the CPSA became after regrouping as an underground party in the early 1950s). In 1954 the veteran organiser Kotane wrote a pamphlet entitled The Way Forward, which may fairly be taken to represent the Party’s position at the time. It is a call for a radicalised African-led liberation movement; at one point Kotane notes that although the majority of the people of South Africa lived on the land,

as yet the democratic movement for liberation has barely begun the task of arousing and mobilising the tremendous potential forces for progress among the landless millions in the countryside ... The peasants are crying out for land, freedom, and a better life. It is the duty of the national liberation movement ... centred mainly in the bigger towns, to reach out a brotherly hand of assistance to those millions of people and to help them organise themselves ...

More recently, the SACP has continued to place great tactical stress upon revolutionary armed struggle in the shape of a rurally-launched guerilla war. It speaks of the ‘new peasants’ who have ‘awakened the countryside, transforming the African peasantry from a reserve of conservatism into a powerful ally of the working class’. Indeed, so closely did both the SACP and the ANC harness their
strategy during the 1960s to the concept of a rural guerilla war that in their critique of 'the radical nationalist wing in Southern Africa' two British Trotskyists (Callinicos and Rogers: 193) have accused the ANC and SACP of 'a flight from the towns'.

Retrospect

The available evidence suggests that from the 1920s until the late 1950s the various organs of the national liberation movement linked only fitfully and unsystematically with a wide range of localised rural movements. Without political leadership, without any class alliance, peasant unrest (in South Africa as elsewhere) was unlikely to transcend its isolated and sporadic nature and to pose an effective political threat. Although class conflict in rural areas was present throughout these years, the national movements were for the most part insensitive to them — until by the middle and late 1950s their intensity demanded a response — and were unable to build the lessons of the rural struggles into the organisations. Alan Brooks' comments on the CPSA prior to 1950 applies with equal force to the ANC: 'The failure of the party to attract peasants may have been partly a failure of the party to attempt to attract peasants ...' (1967: 53).

Yet the measure of success attained by the AAC in the Transkei seems to indicate that there was a good deal of scope for such linkages — as did the level of rural response in the 1920s to the ICU's 'agrarian nationalism'. The peasant committees of the Transkei were parochial and small-scale, but they also displayed a readiness to accept tactical links with and leadership from other classes and movements. The AAC failed signally to combine its efforts in the Transkei with an urban movement: as a recent student of the NEUM puts it, 'It was the failure of the AAC leadership to link the rural and urban struggles that prevented them from ... becoming a mass organisation' (Gentle, 1976).

Even at those points when programmes were adopted that allotted some role to a mobilised rural population — by the CPSA briefly in the early 1930s, the Cape Town Trotskyists in the late 1930s, the AAC in the 1940s, the ANC and SACP in the mid-1950s and subsequently — the level of theoretical analysis has tended not to run particularly deep. Programmes have not been fully articulated with the concrete demands of the various sections of the rural population. At worst there has been a tendency to refer to the 'toiling masses' of the countryside in a general and non-specific manner: the slogans of Leninism without the detailed analysis of local situations that Lenin insisted upon. Despite the realities of resistance and unrest in the countryside, the nationally organised movements — physically located as they were in the urban centres, ideologically concerned either with the vanguard role of the proletariat or with wringing political concessions for the 'modernising' section of the black population, structurally ill-equipped to respond to the inchoate and murmurous patterns of peasant resistance — failed to lead (or follow) them.

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B. Bunting, Moses Kotane — South African Revolutionary.

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Land, Power and Class in the Thaba 'Nchu District, Orange Free State, 1884-1983

Colin Murray

This paper offers a parochial illustration of the complex and inter-related processes of dispossession by which Africans were first deprived of their own lands; then deprived of independent productive opportunities on white-owned land; and finally concentrated in grotesquely small, over-crowded and impoverished reserves. On the one hand, the story of Thaba 'Nchu further illustrates a dominant theme of modern historiography: the dissolution of a relatively independent peasantry into an agricultural proletariat on white farms and a migrant wage labour force domiciled in the African reserves. On the other hand, by comparison with processes of dispossession elsewhere on the highveld in the late 19th century, the story of Thaba 'Nchu arguably represents a peculiar variation on the theme: for here political incorporation was accompanied by the formal constitution of a black land-owning class. Alienation of land took place to some degree directly through conquest but more significantly through the conversion of 'traditional' administrative rights into freehold titles and the consequent vulnerability of these to successive incursions of speculative capital. Nevertheless, within the confines of political incorporation and direct subordination to the South African state, there has been a striking continuity of dominance by a local black elite. All the inhabitants of the district were incorporated within the political structures of 'separate development', which gave rise to vicious ethnic antagonisms in the 1970s with a massive influx of Basotho refugees in the 'land of the Barolong'.

This paper is intended to present a brief outline of changing conditions of political and economic subordination in one district of the Orange Free State (OFS) over a period of 100 years, from the mid-1880s to the present day. The modern Thaba 'Nchu district is an enclave of 'independent' Bophuthatswana, situated hundreds of miles from the other constituent fragments of Bophuthatswana in the northern Cape and western Transvaal. It is one of two very small and grossly over-crowded black reserves in the OFS province, the other being Qwaqwa, the tiny, barren and mountainous South Sotho Bantustan (see Map 2, inset). At the beginning of the period considered here, however, the Thaba 'Nchu district was a substantial territory of more than a thousand square miles of valuable wheat, maize and pasture lands, strategically adjoining the 'Conquered Territory' taken by the OFS from the Basotho of Moshoeshoe during the second Sotho-Boer war of 1865-58. The Barolong under Chief Moroka had settled at Thaba 'Nchu in 1833, initially as vassals of Moshoeshoe, but for three decades from 1854, with the founding of the Boer Republic, they maintained a precarious political
Barolong freehold farms defined as 'addition areas' by Beaumont Commission
(The farm numbers correspond to those in U.C. 29-1916, Volume I, pp. 19-40)
independence. Moroka died in 1880. His country was annexed by the OFS in 1884 (hence the point of departure for this paper); much of the land was appropriated by the OFS and much of the rest passed rapidly from black ownership to white ownership. A process of partial, creeping re-aggregation took place under the terms of the 1936 Trust and Land Act, so that the modern Thaba 'Nchu district, although it is less than half the size of the original Moroka territory, consists of one consolidated block of somewhat bizarre shape (see Map 2).

The Moroka territory was annexed by the OFS after a bitter succession dispute within the Barolong aristocracy which came to a head in July 1884 through the murder of the incumbent, Tshipinare, by his rival Samuel. The political community disintegrated and rapid alienation of land took place, under circumstances which may be explained partly in terms of the deep recession that immediately preceded the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, and partly in terms of the flurry of speculative investment in land that immediately followed that discovery. After the Anglo-Boer war the district was one of the main centres of concentration of Lord Milner's Land Settlement scheme, which represented a significant imperial intervention in the reconstruction and capitalisation of white agriculture on the South African highveld. Partly as a result of deliberate state promotion of white agriculture in this way, African tenants and share croppers on white-owned land in Thaba 'Nchu district were severely affected by the 1913 Land Act which both prohibited share-cropping contracts with white land-owners and confined African rights of land occupation to small reserves, already over-crowded. Meanwhile the Barolong aristocrats who had retained their freehold titles were heavily in debt, and for many the final loss of their lands was precipitated by the economic depression and severe drought of the early 1930s. Nevertheless, it may be argued in retrospect that it was precisely their privileged access to finance capital (relative to other Africans), through the successive bonding of their properties, that facilitated heavy investment in education and the corresponding conversion of many of their sons and daughters from a land-owning aristocracy into a professional, commercial and bureaucratic elite. This elite was well placed to dominate the better employment opportunities for Africans in Bloemfontein, as the principal urban centre within easy reach of Thaba 'Nchu, and in the 'local state' of Bophuthatswana when this emerged in due course.

The constitution of the South African Native Trust (SANT), under the terms of the Land Act of 1936, significantly restructured the land, in two ways: firstly, through the purchase and partial consolidation of lands between the black reserves and the surviving fragments of Barolong freehold farms; secondly, by enforcing the 'planning' of settlements on Trust-owned land, which involved new demarcations of arable and grazing land, the culling of livestock and the destruction of established communities. There were several, barely-recorded, episodes of resistance. Within the framework of the Bantu Authorities Act, imposed in the 1950s, this newly-consolidated area was constituted as part of the territory associated with the Tswana 'ethno-national' unit, and it thus emerged in 1977 as one of the seven separate regions of 'independent' Bophuthatswana. Tens of thousands of refugees poured into the district in the 1970s, mainly Basotho from 'white' towns and white farms all over the OFS. The acute pressure on resources and services which resulted, together with vicious harassment by the Bophuthatswana authorities, generated an unfamiliar antagonism between Basotho and Barolong and led to the establishment of a vast
new slum known as Onverwacht or Botshabelo just outside the western boundary of the modern Thaba 'Nchu district (see Map 2). This rural slum contains the greatest local concentration of poverty and unemployment, but the repercussions of its establishment have been considerable throughout the district, in the form of an exodus of Basotho from the Trust villages, the exploitation by some private landowners of further waves of refugees into the district, and sharply increased social tensions involving neighbouring white farmers and the respective authorities of Bophuthatswana and Qwaqwa.

Disintegration and Alienation, 1884-1901
Political disaffection between the time of the old chief’s death in 1880 and Tshipinare’s murder in 1884 had been actively fuelled by the ‘earth hunger’ of Free State burghers and by speculation in the aftermath of the Gun War (1880-81) that the Basotho would renew their claims to Moroka’s territory. President Brand’s annexation of Thaba ‘Nchu on 12 July 1884 therefore served the double purpose of opening up the territory, potentially, for white settlement and of forestalling further Sotho claims. The problem of the disposition of lands within the newly-proclaimed Moroka district exercised the Volksraad for a full year. A series of commissions of enquiry was appointed to investigate the matter, culminating in two reports by Judge Gregorowski in June 1885.

During 1882, politically insecure and with his administration’s finances in considerable disarray, Tshipinare had commissioned a trigonometrical survey of the country into farms, rights to which were then granted to senior members of his own family and other prominent sub-chiefs and headmen. It is unclear whether his intention was to ‘secure the ground-right’, in the interests of his own supporters, primarily against a possible takeover and redistribution of the land by Samuel, or against the consequences of annexation by the OFS. In the light of President Brand’s double commitment to recognise all ground rights obtained from Chiefs Moroka and Tshipinare and to ensure that the common people retained their residential rights, the Volksraad had to determine whether the individual titles granted were to be construed in practice as alienable property rights or as inalienable administrative rights. The following arrangements, made on 30 June 1885, reflected a crude compromise: 95 farms were granted to individual members of the Barolong aristocracy, amongst whom Tshipinare’s close relatives were overwhelmingly the principal beneficiaries; 15 farms were granted to individual whites, two to the Wesleyan mission society and one to the Anglican church; two separate areas were set aside for occupation by Africans not otherwise accommodated — these became known as the Thaba ‘Nchu location, around the white village, and the Seliba location in the north of the district, consisting of seven farms; and 29 farms, representing unsurveyed land or land in respect of which Gregorowski found insufficient evidence of its allocation to individual Barolong, were reserved for the government of the OFS. The Barolong understood that these government farms, which included some of the best land in the district, were to be reserved for Barolong occupation. But the government evicted the inhabitants and leased the farms in subdivided lots, for periods of five or 10 years, initially to white persons in general and latterly, from 1895, only to white bywoners (i.e. established residents of the state who did not own property). Many of these bywoners were eventually squeezed off the land because the Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902) made it impossible to fulfil their conditions of lease — in particular personal occupation and payment of rent in
MAP 2
Thaba 'Nchu, 1981

ONVERWACHT

KEY
■ Trust villages
■ black town
■ white town
• railway

approximate area purchased by Trust 1979-1981 and 1983

0 10 20 kms
advance — and the new Orange River Colony (ORC) administration appropriated the government farms for Land Settlement (see below). The arbitrary expulsion of Barolong who had been established residents on these lands was bitterly resented at the time and was later invoked repeatedly by Barolong witnesses to the Beaumont Commission in 1913 as an act of betrayal by the OFS.

The Volksraad also provided that grants of land to whites were to be subject to personal occupation; that farms granted to Africans were to be inalienable for a period of 15 years, after which they might only be sold to whites, subject to a government right of pre-emption; that Barolong owners had to permit existing settlements to remain free and unhindered on their farms (i.e. a legal servitude was attached to the titles); and that they could not lease their ground for longer than six months at a time. The imposition of the 15-year non-alienation clause appears to have emerged as a compromise between the implicitly contradictory commitments made by Brand in July 1884 — both to confirm the ground rights of grantees (effectively freehold, subject only to the payment of quit-rent) and simultaneously either to protect existing residents from eviction or to provide ‘sufficient’ ground for them elsewhere.

Despite the 15-year non-alienation clause, the most prominent grantees had sold their land within six years of the Volksraad settlement and left the country. Richard Maramantsi was Tshipinare’s eldest surviving half-brother and, before the land grants were confirmed, principal spokesman of the Barolong in defence of the inalienability of land. In May 1887, however, he petitioned the Volksraad for permission to sell his farms (Daggafontein, etc.), and this was granted on condition that he released his titles and all his followers left the district or that he left enough land for them to remain. A similar application from Michael Tshabadira, a son of another of Tshipinare’s half-brothers and simultaneously his son-in-law, quickly followed. Richard and Michael left the district and bought farms in the Setlagole reserve in British Bechuanaland. Richard died there in 1895 but Michael went on to become headman of a section of Samuel’s refugees at Ramokgwebana in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. His son Percy Tshabadira (of whom more below) succeeded to the chieftainship of Samuel’s refugees on the latter’s death in 1932 after nearly 50 years of exile. Robert Tawana, Tshipinare’s eldest son and heir who succeeded to the chieftainship at Thaba ‘Nchu, although the office retained very little substance of authority, is described in the following terms by Moroka’s biographer Silas Molema: ‘Fear, hesitancy and diffidence took possession of his mind … the unrest and discord in the tribe became exaggerated in his timid mind … [he] therefore sold his farm[s] and ignominiously left his town, his tribe and troth for Bechuanaland …’. Other sons of Tshipinare, including John Phetogane, Isaac Motshegare, Solomon and Joel also sold their farms in this period. In addition, the six farms allocated to Tshipinare’s private estate had been sold, partly in discharge of the chief’s debts at the time of his death.

By 1892, then, about 36 farms, together comprising more than half of all the land granted to individual Barolong, had passed from black ownership to white ownership. The reasons for this were complex. Firstly, the prominent grantees were profoundly demoralised by Free State rule. The Barolong chieftainship had been effectively destroyed, much of the land had been directly appropriated by the OFS, and the people had been dispersed. Secondly, the landowners were unable to farm successfully: they lacked the necessary capital; grain prices in the
arable districts were severely undermined by the deep depression before 1886 and by competition from imported grain via the new railway to Kimberley; and new regulations were introduced in the Moroka district in 1887, governing relations between landowners and the occupiers of their farms. They provided for annual payments to the owner for grazing rights, provision by the owner of at least two morgen suitable for arable cultivation, and payment to the owner of one fifth of the crops harvested. Together with the degree of immunity from the sanction of eviction embodied in the servitudes attached to the titles, this form of share-cropping contract, if at all widespread, implies a balance of power in favour of the share-cropper and against the landowner.

Thirdly, however, and in the light of the above circumstances, it is likely that the backwash of speculative capital which swept over the district in the immediate aftermath of the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand proved an overwhelming incentive to the senior Barolong notables to realise their assets in the short term and to try to establish a better life elsewhere. No less than 75 per cent of the produce sold on the Rand in 1888 came from the OFS, much of it across the border from Basutoland. Grain merchants and traders in the Conquered Territory were principal beneficiaries of this boom. All of Richard Maramantsi’s extensive lands in the south of Moroka district, and Michael Tshabadira’s four farms in the east, were bought by James Robertson, grain merchant and miller of Jammerberg Drift, in 1887 and sold by him in 1888 to Charles Newberry, a director of De Beers at Kimberley and himself a large landowner at Clocolan near the Basutoland border. Robertson also bought two of Robert Tawana’s farms in 1892 and one from Joel. D.&D.H. Fraser, traders of Wepener, bought three large farms, respectively from Robert Tawana and Solomon. Other buyers were white farmers who now found mortgage loans readily obtainable.

An immediate question that arises is whether or not, in view of the rapid rate of alienation of land, the transfers of ownership from black to white decisively affected existing servitudes. The severe ‘anti-squatting’ legislation passed by the OFS in the 1880s and 1890s nominally precluded more than five black families from living on a white-owned farm. In the first place, however, the legislation does not appear to have been effectively enforced in this period, and Keegan notes ‘little response’ to it in the arable districts of the Conquered Territory. In the second place, a commission of 1890 appointed to investigate ‘squatting’ in the Moroka district specifically recommended that the regulations should in any case only be applied over and above the people qualified under the servitude to reside in the district. Nevertheless the commission also pointed out the possibility of harassment arising out of transfer of ownership:

natives resident on farms sold in the district could have matters made so unpleasant for them by the owners, that they would rather waive their rights and simply reside with persons of their own tribe on farms such as Newberry’s, where they would not be daily interfered with.

Significantly, in the light of Keegan’s argument about class differentiation among white farmers themselves, the Newberry estates are singled out here as presumably representative of the large holdings of absentee landlords with no interest whatever in applying the anti-squatting regulations.

The State Attorney Sir J.G. Fraser’s official opinion on the question was
published in 1899. He concluded that servitudes applied for the lifetime of the individual as a personal right, i.e. the rights of bona fide residents at the time of annexation in 1884 survived the 15-year non-alienation clause but could not be transmitted to descendents. This view scarcely coincided with the haphazard practical interpretation of the servitudes that appears in the evidence given to an ORC commission of inquiry in 1901 by both black and white landowners. Most of them stated either that they did not know of such rights; or that they did not know who did and who did not have such rights; or that they assumed such rights lapsed after 15 years. By 1901, however, irrespective of the precise legal position, the onus of proving residence rights was thrown on to those who wished to assert them, owing to the total disruption caused by the war. The commission itself observed, in justification of this:

It has been quite impossible for this Commission to ascertain what servitude holders are now in the Moroka district. Owing to the unrest caused by the war and to recent military operations the native question in that part of the country is in a state of hopeless confusion. Natives have in some cases been compulsorily taken off the farms occupied by them and cannot now be traced, while in other cases they have left the farms voluntarily and gone to reside on others owing to the insecurity of their position. To add to the confusion thereby caused, about 10,000 natives have been established in refugee Camps in the district...

Nevertheless, a number of test cases of the validity of evictions by white landowners did arise under the ORC administration.

Land Settlement: Imperial Intervention in the Capitalisation of White Agriculture

One of Lord Milner's immediate priorities in the post-war reconstruction period was to establish ex-soldiers and other settlers of British stock on the land in the two new colonies. The economic aim of the Land Settlement scheme was to introduce a 'progressive' farming element into a 'backward' countryside, which had in any case been largely devastated by the war. Its political aim was to 'dilute the Dutch influence' in rural districts and to promote better relations between Boer and British. Much of the most valuable land available for settlement in the ORC lay in the Thaba 'Nchu district. It comprised on the one hand the government farms inherited by the ORC from the late OFS; and on the other hand two substantial blocks of land (45,446 morgen*) bought by the ORC government from Charles Newberry in October 1901 for £90,891. The government farms had been leased before the war to Boers many of whom, by 1901, were prisoners-of-war in Ceylon or elsewhere. They either could not afford or were not allowed to resume the arrangement after the war. The Newberry estates had been worked by black tenants and share-croppers who, similarly displaced by the war, were seldom able to re-establish themselves on the same terms, because of uncertainty over the expiry of servitudes and over the terms on which the new settlers would require black labour.

The government farms (now including the Newberry estates) were sub-divided into farms of roughly 500 morgen each, and three concentrated blocks of British settlers were established, most of whom brought their own capital of about £500: on the Daggafontein lands in the southwest of the district, towards Dewetsdorp:

Note: For convenience I have retained the use of morgen as the unit of measurement which appears in all the earlier sources, and of hectares which is the modern unit. The conversion factor is 1 morgen = 0.857 hectares.
in the southeast corner, bounded by the Leeuw river; and on the open flat lands in
the east of the district between Thaba 'Nchu and Thaba Phatshwa mountains.
There was also a party of settlers from the eastern Cape — the sons of farmers
from the Cathcart district — established in the northeastern corner, towards
Excelsior. Three farmers' associations were formed which brought pressure to
bear on the ORC administration on three key issues: firstly, the shortage of black
labour, which meant that many settlers depended in practice on black share-
croppers; secondly, the alleged over-valuation of their farms, which meant that
many settlers were critically over-burdened with capital repayments and loan
interest during a series of very bad seasons in the early years; and thirdly, over
the granting of 'Responsible Government' to the new colonies in 1907, which the
settlers regarded as a direct threat to the long-term success of their enterprise.

To the first problem, the administration responded by attempting to enforce the
OFS anti-squatting law. For example, in 1905 the new settlers on the
Daggafontein farms had complained of too many Africans crowding on to the
large, black-owned, adjoining farm of Gamabetoe 102 (see Map 1), who 'had no
apparent means of livelihood' and who were not entitled to be there. So we find
Joel Moroka, as owner of Gamabetoe, having to authorise the arrest of 20
Africans on his farm for contravening the anti-squatting legislation. To the
demands for re-valuation of their farms, the Land Settlement Board was on the
whole unsympathetic. But, for all the early difficulties, it is clear that the settlers
here as elsewhere were decisively assisted by state provision of loans for fencing
and dam-building, by the establishment of a creamery and experimental farm at
Tweespruit, by grants of seed and equipment, by the formation of the Land Bank
in 1908; and, perhaps above all, by the extension of transport and marketing
facilities. The third problem, that of Boer domination of Responsible
Government, was partially resolved by the constitution of a Land Board in 1907
which was responsible for administering the settlers' affairs and which was
accountable to the imperial and not to the colonial authorities. On the expiry of its
five-year term of office in 1912, the new Union government passed an act giving
settlers in the OFS the absolute right to a Crown grant of perpetual quitrent
tenure (virtual freehold), provided they entered mortgage bonds in favour of the
government to cover repayment of the balance of the purchase price of their
farms. In this way most of the new settlers in the Thaba 'Nchu district obtained
title to their farms in 1913, the same year which precipitated the dispossession of
so many black share-croppers of their access to productive opportunities on
white-owned land (see below). In the early years of struggle, many of the settlers
had been able to survive on the land at all only through relationships with black
share-croppers who had built up or retained their own substantial holdings of
livestock and ploughs or other capital equipment. By no means all did survive.

Thus, despite the failure of Milner's scheme in its own political terms (it did not
attract sufficient settlers with adequate capital of their own), a vigorous and
enduring English-speaking presence on the land was established in the Thaba
'Nchu district. This particular form of imperial intervention represented a
strategic boost of major importance to the capitalisation of white agriculture.
Correspondingly, it helped to ensure the ultimate destruction of the black share-
cropping peasantry, and it finally squeezed many white bywoners off the land,
although some of the men who had rented government farms before the war
were able to rent black-owned farms under the ORC. Capital assistance available
to white farmers on a large scale in this period throws into sharp relief the frustrations experienced by a farmer such as John Mokitlane Nyokong of Maseru 64 (see Map 1) who, exceptionally among Barolong land-owners, developed his agricultural operations in a manner and on a scale that should properly be described as capitalist. He bought a threshing machine for £1,000 shortly after the war but was prevented from using it except under the supervision of a white engineer whom he could not afford to employ all the year round.

**From the Land Act 1913 to the Trust and Land Act 1936**

The Land Act of 1913 prohibited share-cropping contracts between white landowners and black peasant farmers. Although it did not formally require the eviction of Africans from white-owned land except as already provided for under the earlier anti-squatting legislation, many OFS farmers interpreted its several sections as requiring them either to force African share-croppers to leave the farm with their stock, or to sell their stock as a condition of remaining as farm labourers. The resulting distress is graphically described by Sol Plaatje in his book *Native Life in South Africa* (1916). The Thaba 'Nchu magistrate variously estimated, in evidence to the Beaumont Commission, that the number of families in the district who would be affected by the prohibition of ploughing on shares would be about 90 per cent; and that ‘with locations dotted about on so many farms the system of ploughing on shares is carried on on probably 90 per cent of the European farms’. He later reported that about 1,050 households were driven off white farms in the district as a direct result of the law. On the basis of Beaumont’s estimate of 9,350 Africans resident on white-owned farms, the magistrate’s figure would suggest that approximately half of the total black population resident on white farms were displaced as a result of the 1913 Land Act. Some of them undoubtedly drifted into the Thaba 'Nchu and Seliba reserves, which were already the most congested in the Union. Beaumont estimated a population of 12,500 in the reserves; the OFS Land Committee of 1918 estimated 15,000, but also noted of Seliba that many adult sons were away as migrant labourers ‘for two to five years’ before they returned to the reserve, and that there had been a recent substantial exodus of 290 heads of families (approximately 1,300 persons) to Bechuanaland.

The Land Act required the designation of ‘scheduled’ areas outside which Africans could not acquire land and inside which non-Africans could not purchase land. It also provided for the setting apart of further land for African occupation in the future. The Beaumont Commission, established for the purpose, recommended that the Seliba and Thaba 'Nchu 'locations', together amounting to 24,290 morgen, should be ‘scheduled’ areas; and it identified the surviving black-owned farms in the district, comprising 82,677 morgen, as ‘additional’ areas to be ‘released’ in due course for African occupation (see Map 1). Beaumont’s recommendations in the latter respect were never implemented; they were superseded by those of the OFS Local Land Committee of 1918, which excised Beaumont’s ‘additional’ areas from every other district of the OFS, apart from Harrismith containing the Witzieshoek reserve, and cut the total area to be ‘released’ from 148,316 morgen to approximately 79,000 morgen, to be concentrated entirely in the Thaba 'Nchu district. The recommendations were that the area ‘released’ should be partly consolidated, through the purchase of land between certain of Beaumont’s existing ‘additional’ fragments, and through the excision of other ‘additional’ fragments. Thus the Committee envisaged the
formation of two consolidated blocks of land in the Thaba 'Nchu district, consisting together of just over 100,000 morgen.

Pending legislative arrangements for the implementation of these proposals, the status of black-owned land which fell outside the two 'scheduled' areas was subject to considerable uncertainty. Under the terms of Chapter XXXIV of the OFS Law Book, which remained in force after the passage of the 1913 Land Act, such land could not be sold or transmitted to Africans unless the prospective buyer or inheritor was shown to be a 'blood relation' of the seller or transmitter. Several witnesses to the Beaumont Commission clearly presumed that Beaumont's intention would have immediate effect, namely that black-owned farms could no longer be disposed of to whites. The Thaba 'Nchu magistrate pointed out that only 10 of the 54 farms were not bonded, and in view of this the Act as then interpreted undermined the position both of Barolong owners who could not redeem their mortgage bonds and of white bond-holders who could not realise their speculative investments.

When existing bonds on Native farms are called up the mortgagee is in the position that he is unable to procure money from Native sources, he is prevented by law from obtaining it from Europeans, and in many instances he cannot sell as there is no Native who can purchase.

The value of the land would accordingly be drastically reduced. In practice it appears that the immediate threat to the interests of both parties was suspended until the passage of the 1936 Trust and Land Act, which eventually gave effect to the recommendations of the 1918 OFS Local Land Committee. Meanwhile the position of black land-owners was marginally relieved by the Herzog government's passage of the Moroka Ward Land Relief Act (No.28 of 1924), which repealed the highly restrictive provisions of Chapter XXXIV of the OFS Law Book and allowed the sale or lease of black-owned land in the Thaba 'Nchu district to bona fide members of the Barolong tribe.

At any rate, it is quite clear from the evidence of the Deeds Registers that the majority of Barolong land-owners fell deeper and deeper into debt during the 1920s and 1930s: sub-divisions repeatedly took place; existing bonds were called up, debts consolidated and new and heavier mortgage bonds taken out. Notoriously, the predicament of the owners opened up substantial opportunities for speculative investment and personal gain on the part of local attorneys such as John Henry Faustmann, who with one hand, so to speak, represented his Barolong clients in their efforts to consolidate their debts and arrange further mortgages, and with the other hand called up the mortgage bonds which he held himself. In 1937 the magistrate reported that there were 117 black-owned farms in the district — the great increase in numbers reflecting the successive sub-divisions that had taken place, mainly through inheritance and the selling off of portions of these farms — 97 of which were in the 'released' areas. 'A large majority of these farms are bonded and a good proportion of these are, with arrears interest involved, almost up to straining point.' Many of them were leased to whites.

The process of deepening indebtedness and the forms of investment that must have been facilitated thereby are best illustrated through examples of individual cases. Chief Walton Zacharias Fenyang was a friend of Solomon Plaatje and a highly influential figure in the Barolong political establishment throughout the
first half of the present century. His mother Elizabeth Nkhabele Fenyang, one of Tshipinare's daughters, was registered owner of three properties: Dakpoort 117, Mooiplaats 118 and Rietfontein 119 (see Map 1). Dakpoort was mortgaged from 1907 onwards and the interest payments were probably met through the rent that accrued from leasing Dakpoort and Mooiplaats and part of Reitfontein to whites. Dakpoort and Mooiplaats were jointly mortgaged in 1912 for £2,600 in favour of the South African Mutual Assurance Society. Further mortgages were taken out and the whole of Rietfontein (6,000 morgen) was bonded for £2,000 in 1924. All of these bonds were cancelled in 1929 when a division of the estate took place between Elizabeth Nkhabele's children and grandchildren, and one property — Mooiplaats — was sold in two portions to whites, presumably to meet outstanding liabilities of the estate. All the sub-divisions of Rietfontein were bonded for substantial sums either immediately or very soon afterwards. By 1937 W.Z. Fenyang required £15,000 to rid him of his accumulated liabilities, and his bond-holders were pressing him for payment. He therefore negotiated with the South African Native Trust (SANT), established under the 1936 Act, to sell a large portion of Rietfontein (2,000 morgen) to the Trust at £7 per morgen. He also sold 300 morgen of his own remaining portion privately to Rev Z. Nyokong of Bothaville, who paid for the land by means of a loan of £1,260 from the SANT representing 60 per cent of the purchase price and a first mortgage bond over the property in question. Fenyang arranged with the Department of Native Affairs that all the residents on his own remaining portion who had lands on the portion purchased by the SANT should be moved to the SANT portion. Taking over this land on behalf of the SANT in June 1939, the Agricultural Officer noted that, of 83 families listed as having lands on the Trust portion, 31 were resident on the Trust portion and 52 on Fenyang's private portion; but that there were a further 45 families, presumably landless, resident on the Trust portion. All these people were instantly converted from share-croppers on privately-owned land to tenants of the SANT, paying rent on the same basis as 'squatters on Crown land' in the Transvaal, pending the implementation of 'planning' which followed the establishment of a Trust village at Rietfontein in 1940.

The point here is that the lives of Fenyang and his immediate relatives followed a very different trajectory from the lives of the common people who found themselves caught up in the 'rehabilitation' and 'betterment' schemes associated with Trust villages. The latter were confined thenceforth to these depressed little settlements, many having no access to land at all. Fenyang and his wife, on the other hand, accompanied their eldest daughter to Britain in 1936 where she trained as a nurse from 1936 to 1938. His other two daughters were trained as teachers. They inherited his surviving properties on his death in 1957, and the youngest of his daughters, who is today a school headmistress in Thaba 'Nchu, leases her land to a white farmer from Dewetsdorp. W.Z. Fenyang had one full sister, Naomi Keikelame, married to another prominent landowner, and two half-brothers: Israel Tlale Setlogelo was correspondent of the Free State Advocate in Bloemfontein; Robert F. Setlogelo returned in 1938 from medical training abroad and established a well-known medical practice in Bloemfontein. One of Israel Tlale's sons, Moutloatsi Setlogelo, became Bophuthatswana's first Minister of Education and died in 1981. The Setlogelos are probably the most influential family in Thaba 'Nchu today.

The Setlogelo family lands were otherwise concentrated in the northeast of the
district: the farms Moroto 68 and Somerset 55 (see Map 1). The experience of Isaac Setlogelo, who owned Moroto, illustrates another aspect of the process of deepening indebtedness and eventual sale to the SANT. By 1933 no less than five mortgage bonds had to be serviced and repaid, and Isaac Setlogelo had no prospect of meeting his liabilities. He was forced to sell a substantial portion of the farm in order to defray his liabilities, and this in turn was sold by the purchaser to the Trust in 1938. In 1937 he applied for a loan from the SANT of £2,250 in order to pay off his outstanding debts, and a substantial correspondence developed over this application between Messrs Faustmann & Paver, Thaba 'Nchu attorneys acting on his behalf, and the Department of Native Affairs. The Department refused to sanction the loan, under Regulation 60(1) of the Trust and Land Act, because Isaac Setlogelo was not a ‘reliable farmer’ and he had a long record of cumulative debt. The main question of principle was whether sales of black-owned land in ‘released’ areas were to take place: (1) in execution, i.e. under circumstances of negligible competition, confined in practice to the SANT and the mortgagee, since blacks could not afford to buy the land and whites were generally inhibited from purchasing ‘released’ land which they would in any case have to sell to the Trust; or (2) at a fixed valuation, as in the case of white-owned farms, giving the seller the ‘proper’ market value of the land. Faustmann & Paver expressed ‘alarm’ on behalf of their client that he might be forced to sell at a substantially reduced value. It appears, in summary, that after the great drought of 1932-3 combined with the deep depression of the period, many Barolong owners could no longer sustain the regular payments of interest on their bonds. Their lands were bought by white speculators relatively cheaply at that time and then sold at relatively high prices to the SANT in 1938 when the bulk of transfers took place. It also appears that in any case mortgagees tended to foreclose their bonds after 1936 because they did not wish to be saddled with land which they would have to sell to their SANT. Black landowners then had no option but to sell directly to the SANT themselves, so that the formal establishment of the Trust may be seen in retrospect to have precipitated the final loss of many freehold titles.

Episodes of Popular Resistance, 1928 to 1968
In his long addendum to the report of the Natives Economic Commission in 1932, F.A.W. Lucas observed that the two reserves in the district were grossly overcrowded and over-stocked, vegetation was scanty and land erosion very bad. So desperate was the shortage of land that, in 1938 and 1939 when many farms were acquired by the SANT from both black and white owners, there was a widespread spontaneous movement on to these lands. This was technically illegal, since from the official point of view only already established residents were entitled to remain on a farm after transfer to the Trust.

The Barolong Progressive Association (BPA), which clearly encouraged the movement on to Trust lands, experienced a dramatic resurgence of activity in this period. It had been formed in 1928, with the expressed objects of making representations on behalf of the Barolong people, building tribal solidarity and raising levies for the purchase of land. At that time, it specifically opposed a regulation approved by the Reserve Board which deprived anyone who had been away for more than seven years of residence rights in the reserves. The women of the BPA took up the issue with an impassioned plea ‘for ourselves and for our children, who are scattered all over the industrial centres, a homely residence in
the land of our fathers’. The BPA sought to give expression to the resentment of those who had lost residence rights through long absence and of those who, having been turned off white farms in the district, were unable to gain access to the reserves under the criteria administered by the Reserve Board, of which the magistrate and the chief were ex officio members. The demand for more land thus became closely linked with opposition to the weak and ineffective regime of John Phetogane Moroka, one of Tshipinare’s sons, who held office throughout the 1930s. The administration’s attitude to the BPA was one of consistent refusal to sanction its activities.

Chief Percy Tshabadira Moroka, Samuel’s successor at Ramokgwebana and Matsiloje in the Francistown district of Bechuanaland, visited Thaba 'Nchu in 1935 and Bloemfontein in February 1939, provoking a flurry of official anxiety about unrest in Thaba 'Nchu. Chief John Phetogane reported to the Assistant Native Commissioner that ‘tribal matters are suffering’, as his authority was being undermined. In 1938 the leaders of the BPA held a series of meetings without the chief’s approval. Agitation continued through 1939 and the early part of 1940 over two issues: firstly, access to newly-acquired Trust land; secondly, the installation of Percy Tshabadira as chief at Thaba 'Nchu in place of John Phetogane. Matters came to a head with the delivery of a ‘threatening’ letter from the BPA to the magistrate:

'We are fed up with the rule and administration of the Government. We want nothing from them seeing they are against the taking over of the released areas from them. The land is ours and we are taking it...'

Despite official warnings, the BPA leaders held a public meeting on 25 March 1940 which was attended by about 500 people and addressed by Elisha Ramagaga as Chairman, Kali John Matsheka as President and Jeremiah Soldaat as Secretary.

According to a joint statement by six Barolong witnesses at the subsequent trial, Matsheka had asserted that the released areas had been bought with the money contributed to the BPA; that the ‘whole district’ was available for the people’s free occupation; that he would personally arrange the expulsion of the Assistant Native Commissioner; and that Percy Tshabadira would be coming to Thaba 'Nchu as chief. The three were arrested and charged with holding an illegal meeting. Their conviction was upheld by the Judge President on appeal. Later, as a result of an enquiry into the affair in October 1940, Matsheka was deported to the Transvaal for eight years, and allowed to return to Thaba 'Nchu in 1948. Ramagaga could not be deported as he was a private landowner.

The BPA sought primarily to express the desperate need for land. One of the members who gave evidence to the 1940 enquiry explained its object in these terms: 'The country has been occupied by white people, I mean the District of Thaba 'Nchu, and we wanted to settle the Barolongs, all of them the people of Moroka, in this District, to round them up from other districts and put them here'. The letters and complaints of the BPA over the years are characterised by a strong rhetorical invocation of the status quo ante 1884. What were the terms on which Moroka’s country was taken over by President Brand and then broken up? Was it intended to perpetuate a division within the tribe between the followers of Samuel and the followers of Tshipinare? Why was Trust-acquired land not immediately available for occupation by the people who needed land,
when the whole district, not merely the ‘released’ areas, properly belonged to the Barolong?

The acquisition of land by the SANT was officially publicised in Bloemfontein after the illegal meeting on 25 March 1940. The Bloemfontein magistrate wrote to the location manager as follows: ‘additional land has been acquired in the Thaba 'Nchu district and has been reserved primarily for the accommodation of such Barolongs, who may form part of the surplus Native population in this and other towns’. This was forwarded to the BPA in Batho Location, Bloemfontein, which presumably had close ties with the BPA at Thaba 'Nchu. The demands of the BPA, then, and official strategy need not have been wholly irreconcilable, apart from their respective emphases on the over-crowding of black reserves and the over-crowding of ‘white’ urban areas. But it was the methods and style of the BPA, operating entirely outside approved channels and in deliberate antagonism to them, that proved so offensive to the official mind.

Resentment over the terms of access to Trust land was therefore keenly felt even before any direct attempt by the state to re-structure the established population and their methods of arable cultivation and livestock management. The Assistant Native Commissioner noted that soon after the BPA meeting of March 1940 ‘a large number of Natives turned their stock on to Trust land without permission’; and he attributed the Seliba people’s refusal to accept the Department’s proposal in regard to the control of land to advice from the BPA which told the people that the land belonged to all the Barolong. Opposition to the rehabilitation scheme in Seliba came to a head the following year with the summary dismissal of Andries Setouto, headman of the Seliba location. He refused to co-operate with the Assistant Native Commissioner’s attempt in October 1941 to enforce the Department’s policy of cutting the lands into four morgen (for summer crops) and two morgen (for winter crops) for each holder of a residential certificate. Thereafter, there are merely occasional hints of active resistance. In January 1951 a large number of prosecutions were pending against people in Seliba who resisted the culling of their cattle. Similar cases arose at Thaba 'Nchu in March 1951. Apparently culling was being administered in a thoroughly haphazard manner.

By the late 1960s between 30 and 40 villages had been re-planned on Trust lands all over the district. People were forced to move, as the only way of keeping some arable and grazing rights, but they complained that they lost land in the process. Cosmas Desmond summarised the popular response on his visit in 1969:

Objections to the resettlement in Trust villages have been both strong and vocal. Most people, however, eventually resigned themselves to their fate and moved peacefully, some being encouraged by having their houses knocked down for them by the Government.

He wrote of particular resistance at Morago in the north, another part of the Seliba reserve (see Map 2). The residents of the old village had refused to move; 20 men were arrested on 5 December 1968 for still living there. They lost the subsequent court case on 11 March 1969. None of the Morago people who had moved to Trust villages had been allocated any land.

The inhabitants of two Trust villages have recently been uprooted once again. At the end of 1981 the Bophuthatswana government converted 2,000 hectares around the Groothoek dam, south of Thaba 'Nchu mountain, into a game reserve which will entertain tourists at the Southern Suns casino to be completed near
this site by December 1984. Two communities — Groothoek and Morokashoek (see Map 2) — have been destroyed. About 90 families had to disperse in January 1982 to establish new homes in other Trust villages. It was reported at the time that the Bophuthatswana government would move their window frames, roofing and furniture, but that people would have to dismantle their homes and move the bricks or other materials themselves.

**The Refugees of the 1970s and the Politics of ‘Ethnic Nationalism’**

The prominent Barolong families have ‘married one another’ for generations. This reflects both Tswana custom of preferential marriages between close kin and also the obvious interests of a landed aristocracy in property conservation, especially where sons and daughters inherit equally. But ethnic identities amongst the common people have been inextricably confused for 150 years, reflecting the presence of a Sesotho-speaking majority in the OFS as a whole and complex patterns of movement in and out of the Thaba 'Nchu district throughout the period considered here. The original provision of the Volksraad in 1885 that residence in the Thaba 'Nchu reserves should be confined to bona fide members of the Barolong political community was never effectively enforced, and observers have noted significant influxes of Basotho, Xhosa and others at various times. Relations between Basotho and Barolong were notoriously harmonious. A press report of 1977 reflected on this:

There used to be a joke that the tiny dorp of Thaba 'Nchu was such a peaceful place that for many years the local police station was staffed by one bored constable. He was eventually transferred because there was no need for him, there were certainly no ‘tribal’ differences between the local Tswana and the local Sotho.

All this has changed. The imposition of Bantu Authorities in the 1950s meant that all inhabitants of the black area — the two reserves, the Trust villages and private farms — were politically subordinate to the Barolong Tribal Authority. In line with the drift of official policy, census practice since 1960 has been to define all black South Africans in terms of their membership of one or other ‘ethno-national’ population group. The 1970 census recorded 24,000 Tswana, 12,000 South Sotho and 3,600 Xhosa in a total population of 42,000. The construction of discrete ‘ethno-national’ political identities received a new and vicious twist in Thaba 'Nchu in the 1970s as a result of a massive influx of refugees, mainly Basotho, into the district, and an insistence on the part of local officials and politicians that these people had no rights in ‘the land of the Barolong’. The specific stimulus to the antagonism which developed was the movement of a large number of people onto an area of land in a kink of the railway line near Thaba 'Nchu station (see Map 2). It had been declared a grazing area by the Bophuthatswana authorities who regarded the immigrants as ‘illegal squatters’.

This place, Kromdraai, expanded rapidly into a sprawling slum of mud-brick huts and corrugated sheeting, where by 1978 nearly 40,000 people were living in poverty and squalor. People also flooded into three close settlements known as the Bultfonteins, into the Trust villages all over the district and on to some of the Barolong private farms whose owners were willing to accommodate them, usually in exchange for rent.

By the mid-1970s Basotho living in Thaba 'Nchu substantially outnumbered Barolong, and the acute pressure on resources and services sharply intensified the anxieties and resentments which were inevitable in such circumstances.
Judging from the correspondence columns of the Bloemfontein newspaper *The Friend*, as well as from individual reminiscences, the issue became clearly articulated in terms of a conflict between Barolong and Basotho. J.R. Ngake, then Qwaqwa Minister of Education, repeatedly claimed that Basotho immigrants in Thaba 'Nchu were being systematically discriminated against in respect of access to the labour bureau, residential sites, permits of all kinds and language of instruction in the schools. S.O. Seata, an MP for Thaba 'Nchu in the Bophuthatswana Legislative Assembly, strongly rejected the allegations but, in any case, asserted the primacy of Barolong rights in the district. The inhabitants of Kromdraai were repeatedly harassed by the Bophuthatswana police, and this pressure was intensified shortly after 'independence' in December 1977 through a series of massive raids in 1978. Hasty negotiations took place between the Qwaqwa government on behalf of the Basotho, regarded as its political constituents, the Bophuthatswana government and the central government over the provision of land elsewhere for the resettlement of the Basotho refugees in Thaba 'Nchu. A block of white farms was compulsorily purchased on behalf of the Trust by the South African government, and the vast new rural slum of Onverwacht/Botshabelo was launched: since mid-1979 about a quarter of a million people have been dumped there, under circumstances which have been fully described elsewhere (see SPP Report Vol.3). It is supposed to become part of Qwaqwa. Kromdraai was razed to the ground, but erstwhile residents of Kromdraai now in Onverwacht expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Mopeli of Qwaqwa for having led them ‘out of the land of Egypt into the land of Canaan’. Such are the ideological distortions of Separate ‘ethno-national’ Development. People who wished to remain in Thaba 'Nchu had to commit themselves explicitly to citizenship of Bophuthatswana as a prior condition of their daily struggle with the bureaucratic maze which governs allocation of permits, licences, residential sites, pensions, etc. Correspondingly, the minimal qualification for the conduct of daily life in Onverwacht/Botshabelo is a Qwaqua citizenship card.

Meanwhile the dusty little ‘white’ town of Thaba 'Nchu experienced an unprecedented consumer boom. However, rapid development of commercial infrastructure in Bophuthatswana half-a-mile down the road — in particular, the opening in 1983 of a large modern shopping complex, not subject to 6 per cent General Sales Tax levied in South Africa — concentrated the minds of the white residents of Thaba 'Nchu on the advantages of incorporation into Bophuthatswana. More than 80 per cent of them voted to this effect in a referendum at the end of 1982.

The modern Thaba 'Nchu district thus comprises the two original reserves, established in 1885; land bought by the SANT from both white and black owners in ‘released’ areas; a fragmentary patchwork of black freehold farms in which rights of ownership have been successively sub-divided through inheritance patterns and testamentary dispositions; and two additional blocks of land added since ‘independence’ in 1977. Apart from Onverwacht/Botshabelo, which is not part of Bophuthatswana, the densest local concentrations of settlement are the old Thaba 'Nchu ‘locations’, the three Bultfonteins established in the late 1960s and 1970s, and the ‘new’ town of Selosesha, supposed to be a focal point of regional decentralisation. The Trust villages are stagnant backwaters. All these people depend largely on the wages of daily commuters who work in Thaba 'Nchu.
or Bloemfontein and of migrants who work in Bloemfontein or the OFS mining towns of Virginia and Welkom or further afield. Unemployment is very high. Pensions are an important, although inadequate, source of household income.

Privately-owned lands are 'farmed' in diverse ways. A very few Barolong landowners today may be identified as 'progressive' farmers in the sense that they farm intensively for their main livelihood, employing local labour at very low wages. The majority of private land-owners would probably describe themselves as 'farmers' in the sense that they claim thereby the associated status of rural gentry, or in the sense that they may pretend to the outside observer that they are directly engaged in productive operations on the land; whereas in fact they are dependent on salaried or wage employment in the Bophuthatswana local state or in Bloemfontein and derive a more or less substantial supplementary income from leasing their land either to black tenants or, more commonly, to white farmers from the Dewetsdorp and Excelsior districts. Although rents are low, reflecting the 'unimproved' condition of most of these lands, leasing or share-cropping arrangements with white farmers are seen by the owners as most desirable, for these white farmers have politically facilitated access, through the administration of the Land Bank, to agricultural capital on a large scale. In this way extensive tracts of modern Bophuthatswana are farmed in a capital-intensive manner by white farmers who in many cases are already large landowners. In this way, also, the conservation of a Barolong land-owning class specifically subverts the nominal purpose of segregating rights of access to land along racial lines that was notoriously inscribed in the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936.

A further category of small landowners extracts rent from successive waves of recent refugees who, evicted from white farms, have drifted into the district in the desperate search for somewhere to live; they find temporary refuge, without any security and without any local means of livelihood (hence complaints from white farmers on the border about stock theft), in small settlements such as those dotted all over the original large farm of Ha Ntsieng, along the railway line in the eastern part of the district (see Map 2); and they are in due course expelled, some to Onverwacht, others elsewhere to destinations without names. At least three of these settlements were cleared in the first week of September 1983, as a result of an ultimatum from the Thaba 'Nchu magistrate. It is part of the vicious legacy of 'ethnic nationalism' that the Bophuthatswana local state should be specifically and actively engaged in the forcible relocation of hapless refugees who do not qualify as its 'citizens'.

Bibliographic Note
The principal resources used here are the OFS Archive and the Deeds Registry, Bloemfontein. Useful reference classes are DLS (Land Settlement), NAB (Native Affairs) and LTN (magistrate, Thaba 'Nchu). Items of particular interest are the ORC Commission Report on the Moroka District (ORC 46, 1901) and a substantial file on the Barolong Progressive Association (LTN 2/1 N1/16/5). Published official material of relevance includes the report of the South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-5 (HMSO, Cd. 2399, 1905); the Beaumont Commission report and evidence (UG 22-1914, UG 19-1916); the OFS Local Land Committee report (UG 22-1918); and the report of the Natives Economic Commission 1930-32 (UG 22-1932). Otherwise S.M. Molema's biography Chief Moroka (Cape Town, 1951) and S. Plaatje's Native Life in South Africa (London, 1916) contain much valuable information.

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Forced Resettlement and the Political Economy of South Africa

Bill Freund

Apart perhaps from the direct confrontations that take place between capital and labour, the most significant social process in recent South African history has been the continued and massive population removals. The South African government has at times insisted that such removals were fundamentally voluntary in character. Since the often bitterly resisted removals of the 1950s from both urban and rural areas, however, force has at least potentially been at issue and often directly applied. Consequently it seems appropriate to refer to a policy of forced resettlement.

In their recent important analysis of South African conditions, John Saul and Stephen Gelb described the population removal programme as the ‘ugliest of all aspects of apartheid’. This justifiable assertion follows on sporadic, often journalistic, coverage of removal that goes back to Cosmas Desmond’s remarkable book, The Discarded People. Desmond’s account was largely narrative and concerned with the unpleasantnesses of removal itself and its immediate consequences. Saul and Gelb, by contrast, only devote a short if valuable amount of space to discussing forced resettlement. Between these two poles there is a need for a generalised and analytical assessment which places the programme in a political and historical context and this is the aim of the following discussion.

Resettlement policies need also to be considered together with urban segregation and with the rise of the so-called Homelands which have in general been considered separately in the literature. Assessment of forced resettlement must be aligned to the radical analysis of South African society more generally. In particular this analysis has tried to re-assess apartheid in its various manifestations as related to an historical and distinctive South African process of capital accumulation. While the South African state has never represented a single capitalist interest in any simple sense, it has been convincingly argued that it allowed for and has furthered the continued reproduction of ‘racial capitalism’. South African ‘racial capitalism’ has unique features but it will in places be argued that it can also be illuminated through reference to comparable industrialising societies such as Brazil and the Philippines on the one hand and to strategies characteristic of advanced, and apparently ‘normal’, non-racial capitalist countries such as the USA.
The Scope of Forced Removals
There are essentially two types of resettlement, urban and rural, which fit a primary delineation. Forced urban resettlement resulted from legislation consequent upon the Group Areas Act (1950, with later amendments) that created racially defined zones for the existing and foreseeable city population. This well-studied legislation directly hit South Africans labelled as Asian or Coloured. According to one set of figures, it set into motion the removal by 1976 of 305,739 Coloureds, 155,230 Asians and a mere 5,898 whites.

African urban removals, typified by the destruction of squatter and freehold settlements such as Sophiatown giving way to the construction of Soweto as the dormitory for Johannesburg's African population in the 1950s, has been a closely allied development. Urban removals of this type have sometimes been described as a form of slum clearance. This is not entirely untrue but it represents more accurately a principal means by which the South African state deals with an impoverished, potentially militant sector of the working class.

The destruction of black communities in big cities was very apparent to interested observers and a focus of press coverage as soon as it began to occur. This was not true in the countryside where most of the removal process has actually occurred. Here it has received far less publicity and took place far from the gaze of sympathetic reporters and researchers. When Cosmas Desmond's account appeared in 1971, it startled most of its readers. The raw material for assessing rural forced removal is now available in the recent six-volume report of the 'Surplus People Project', released in 1983.

During World War II, Prime Minister Jan Smuts in a famous speech suggested that 'segregation has fallen on evil days ... Segregation tried to stop it [the movement of Africans from countryside to town]. It has, however, not stopped it in the least. The process has been accelerated. You might as well try to sweep the ocean back with a broom.' Remarkably, the scale of state-organised forced resettlement has begun to do just that. In 1960, only some 40 per cent of the African population was resident in the 'homelands'. By 1980, these dispersed territories, amounting to but 13 per cent of the land area of South Africa, held some 54 per cent of the African population. To 'achieve' this (in a context of rapid industrialisation!), according to the careful extrapolations from census material derived by the economist Charles Simkins, required a net exodus of some three-quarter million people from the urban areas and some one-and-a-quarter million from the white-owned farms of South Africa. The burden of resettlement has fallen disproportionately on minors and other dependents. Cherryl Walker of the Surplus People Project team has proposed an even higher figure, between two and three million people. These figures exclude intra-urban forced removals which certainly bring the total to at least 15 per cent of the present population of South Africa — and removals continue.

Before turning to an analysis, it is necessary to break down further into a variety of categories the process of resettlement towards the 'homelands' (following the schema of G. Maré and M.S. Badat). First, there are those 'endorsed out' of South African cities, whom the state views as surplus or unnecessary residents. A minority of Africans, perhaps 10-15 per cent of the South African population, have been born in towns, are dependent on those with such a claim or have resided long enough in urban areas to acquire the right to live there permanently.
(Africans with ‘Section Ten’ rights under Sections 10(1) a, b and c of the 1945 Urban Areas Act). Contract workers have been practically unable to join their ranks since the tightening of legislation in 1968. The arbitrariness of such a mammoth bureaucracy concerned with managing endorsements often condemns even those who have a claim to Section Ten rights. While there appears to be a continuing increase in the number of legally acknowledged working adults, and certainly of working African males, in South African cities, the goal of state policy is to push out divorcees, widows and children and, to that end, it runs endless arbitrary searches and checks on the African urban population. Often the pass courts then endorse individuals out of the area as part of the ‘sentence’ although it is still difficult to prevent them from speedily returning. In the Langa (Cape Town) magistrate’s court, Martin West recently observed no less than 38 cases handled in 90 minutes, the coarse police dragnet having seized up minors, the obviously physically handicapped and Coloureds with the legal right to reside in Cape Town. These fish, after a humiliating experience, are released from the nets as are those who can produce relevant work and residence related passes. The rest are intended for reshipment to the eastern Cape ‘homelands’ — Ciskei and Transkei. Between 1971 and 1979, no less than 3,579,055 Africans were brought to trial or had their cases investigated under the pass laws. Other urban residents simply succumb to ever greater inducement and pressure from the state and leave ‘voluntarily’.

Rural forced removals themselves can be considered in the context of several rubrics. The largest represents the response of the state to the decline of pre-capitalist and semi-capitalist social and economic relations through much of the South African countryside, where they have given way to mechanised, corporate agribusiness with far less need for African labour. As the rural white population falls, this often leaves large areas inhabited solely by African tenants and residents of ‘white’ farms. Thus removal of such populations is both political and economic in intent. During the 1960s traditional landlord-tenant agreements began to be severely restricted. The last loopholes with reference to Natal, the province with the strongest tenancy tradition, were eliminated through legislation in 1980. Pressures on ex-tenants were coupled with those on squatters, who historically performed desired services for white farmers. Their precarious access to land now constitutes, in the words of a president of the Natal Agricultural Union, ‘sanctuary’ for hundreds of thousands ‘not really needed by the agricultural industry’. Some 300-400,000 Africans in these categories were pushed into the ‘homelands’ in the 1960s and a perhaps diminishing number during the 1970s.

During the 1970s, removals from the type of land holding known as ‘black spots’ became more and more extensive. ‘Black spots’ are, as the name implies, islands of black tenure in supposedly white zones. They have in general belonged to the more prosperous strata of African peasantry who have been able, when it was legal before the land division of 1913, to purchase freehold property, often through companies of ex-wage workers or the agency of the missions. Some 97,000 black spot victims were pushed out of their homes in the 1960s and into the ‘homelands’ with a considerable increase during the subsequent decade. According to the Association for Rural Advancement (Pietermaritzburg), the difficult task of estimating remaining ‘black spots’ scheduled for future removal has yielded perhaps 189 farms inhabited by some 230,000 people in Natal alone.
The 'homelands' present a problem to the South African state's plans for coherent political or economic planning because they are scattered through many isolated geographic units in the eastern half of the country. One response has been consolidation, and this has occasioned a massive spate of removals. Even once consolidated, the 'homelands' often continue to contain a heterogeneous population mix, unsuitable for the ethnic politics that this kind of social engineering is orientated to foster. Thus, population transfers on a considerable scale have been made, expelling for example Venda from Bophuthatswana and Gazankankulu homelands in the Transvaal with reciprocal removals from the Venda homeland. This reshuffling of people has been particularly dramatic in the rural Transvaal but one might note here also the flight of perhaps 30,000 Sotho-speakers from the Transkei on the eve of 'independence' there.

In some parts of South Africa, the 'homelands' abut right onto industrial and urban areas. This is notably true of two of the four big cities, Pretoria, the administrative capital and a large centre of heavy industry and Durban, the principal industrial port. Urban removals here have led not to endorsement of Africans out to distant domiciles but to the creation of huge commuter zones within Bantustan territory (Bophuthatswana and Kwa Zulu) just over the 'border' and, in the case of Durban, the transfer of African locations to Kwa Zulu jurisdiction. Numbers of 'homeland' commuters were estimated at 290,000 in 1970, up to 718,900 in 1979. Removals on a large scale have swept small town African locations. Much of the African populations of such Transvaal towns as Pietersburg, Rustenberg, Potgietersrus, Ellisras, Naboomspruit, Vaalwater, Louis Trichardt and Nylstroom have been transported a long distance away into Venda, Bophuthatswana, Lebowa and Gazankulu, requiring two hours' travel and more to work. There are equivalent towns to these in the Cape and Natal.

Within the Bantustans, there goes on yet another form of important (and under-researched) kind of removal known as agricultural betterment. Betterment schemes are intended to redistribute property rights and access to rural resources, the 'planned redivision' of the land. Substantial numbers of people have also been forced from their homes for strategic and infrastructural reasons, such as the construction of missile test ranges or the clearance of 'unreliable' populations from the international borders of South Africa. Thousands of Natal Africans are being obliged currently to vacate the region of the new port of Richards Bay. Others have been pushed out for the sake of big dam projects such as those of Woodstock and the Upper Tugela. A whole category of expulsions that is difficult to explore but clearly deserves mention is the use of resettlement as a form of political punishment, a means of dealing with dissent. The exile of Winnie Mandela to the Orange Free State town of Brandfort where she is confined to living, is a well-known example.

In trying to comprehend the complexity and scale of removals, it is particularly important to recognise that they do not follow a pre-determined and predictable blueprint. Potential victims cannot entirely count on the next move of the state. Government removal plans, such as those proposing the resettlement of more than one million Africans in the interests of 'homeland' consolidation in 1976, constantly fluctuate or appear in contradictory form in different official publications. The South African state is rife with social architects and engineers whose exigencies are constantly changing. Thus removal is really a constant threat and a process, not simply a once and for all event.
Forced Resettlement, Economic and Social Retooling

What is the significance of forced resettlement in South Africa and why has it occurred? What, other than an apparently perverse racism, accounts for the systematic segregation of cities and land and the creation of African homelands out of the old labour reserves? The most obvious answer is narrowly political. Potentially hostile foreigners must be impressed with the extent to which South Africa offers a full autonomous development for each race in their own sphere. Thus partition was necessary. In 1973 former prime minister B.J. Vorster intimated in a newspaper interview that, ‘if I were to wake up one morning and find myself a Black Man, the only difference would be geographical.’ Whether they are being sincere or not, sympathisers with the regime and its spokesmen justify separate development in terms of the creation of national states for all.

It is possible to argue with the legitimacy and chances of viability for such units as well as over the fairness of the distribution of resources in quantity and quality between racial or ‘national’ groups. Patently whites get very much of the lion’s share. However this is largely beside the point as one starts to understand that partition, viable or unviable, is itself not the real aim. In South Africa nobody has ever intended ‘development’ to be really ‘separate’.

Separate development needs to be placed squarely in the course of South African history. The intensification of segregation was pursued with unprecedented system and direction during the first half of this century. Far from being a throwback to archaic colonial society, it went together with the early industrialisation of South Africa and the effective welding of state power in such a way as to further the accumulation of capital. The fundamental land and labour policies of the various Union governments from 1910 revolved upon the harnessing of a cheap black labour force, holding residual access to the means of production in the countryside but obliged to work for a wage either in industry, the mines, in domestic service or for the white farmer by a variety of control mechanisms. Segregation was an ideology which justified this dual economy as it was often termed and won over to the support of capital a critical segment of the workforce that could feel themselves (admittedly following massive struggles of their own) as relatively full partners in a racially-identified white-only democracy. Simultaneously it involved harsh forms of control over an oppressed, impoverished and repressed black labour force.

Forced resettlement has had as its main purpose putting teeth into a further elaboration of segregation mechanisms since the 1950s. To some extent the Afrikaner Nationalist ideology does contain an additional element of exclusivism, part of the intensely defensive posture which, arising in reaction to British imperialism, claims national hegemony but can embrace only one-tenth of the South African people. Thus in 1973 the Afrikaanse Studentebond resolved that ‘all the black women and children in the white areas must be shipped back to the homelands and only the men should be left in the white areas for as long as we need them’.

However separate development has more to do with the changing needs of capital in South Africa on the one hand and the need to react politically to the growing resistance of blacks — notably in the explosions of 1959-60 and 1976 — linked to an often unfavourable international conjuncture on the other, if we seek to follow how it actually is developing and the forms it takes. Cosmas Desmond has got it precisely right in perceiving resettlement as ‘a complex, comprehensive
and effective way of exercising political control, arising from the present form of South African capitalism as a whole.' What resettlement does then is to reproduce the South African social formation as a whole and, at its very heart, to reproduce certain forms of control over labour.

Broadly speaking, in the first half of this century the principal goal of South African 'native policy' was to force the worker out of the fields and pastures and onto the mines, farms and factories that provided the mechanisms of accumulation. Master and servant legislation, pass laws, the division of the land and the raising of obstructions to the growth of the once significant African cash crop peasantry all formed elements in the attainment of this goal. Then the tide began to flow irredeemably the other way. The ability of the reserved African lands to serve as havens for the reproduction of the African population crumbled all round and the stream of Africans flowing into the towns, implicitly claiming new rights and making new social demands, grew into a river.

Resettlement has been a weapon to fight this flood and prevent its consequences. The boom of the 1960s coincided with the capacity of the reserves to support African workers reaching new lows. The large majority of the reserve population now depended for subsistence purposes on remittances from town and increasingly on the meagre social benefits, including pensions, that began to be doled out to Africans. At the same time, the needs of capital in mine, factory and farm was increasingly for semi-skilled and skilled workers only; cutbacks actually went hand in hand with the expansion of productive capacity. Black unemployment rose and continues to rise rapidly. Estimates from the late 1970s suggest that it has reached 1½-2 million, the same as in the Federal Republic of Germany with more than twice the South African total population. For many years, South African gold mines relied on Africans from other territories to work at the poor wages offered; now, admittedly with higher wages from the 1970s, Marion Lacey reports that 'to be a mine worker in the Transkei today you are considered to be a privileged person.' In a striking analogy, Simkins has suggested that Johannesburg (or more appropriately, Cape Town) would look much like Rio de Janeiro soon if influx control were lifted now as people migrate to job opportunities and high wages.

Historically it may be that African unemployment and its effect on wages was a key condition for the growth of South African secondary industry. In recent years, there has emerged a population genuinely 'surplus' from the perspective of South African capital which must try as best it can to compete with trends in the most developed and labour-efficient economies — Japan, Western Europe and the USA. Thus population removals are important in organising the ‘location and relocation of the unemployed’ bringing what the Europeans once called the dangerous classes with their crime and violence out of the ken of the segregated neighbourhoods of the bourgeoisie.

It is instructive to continue for a moment Simkins’ line of thinking and to consider the process of urbanisation in Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilian bourgeoisie do not, in fact, look with equanimity on the favelas, the slums that overlook their flat buildings from the slopes. Favelados are feared and hated and state policy is to destroy their unsightly and inconveniently central communities and to expel the population to distant and hopefully more controllable quarters, sometimes in bleak state housing projects. This aim became more realisable after 1964 when a
military regime, orientated both to authoritarian methods of dealing with dissent and to bolstering efficient accumulation, came to power thus bearing a structural resemblance to the South African state across the South Atlantic.

The Brazilian analogy is most transparent in the South African city. However misery, unemployment, dependence and minimal survival welfare services can also be transported to the countryside and, if possible, to a different governmental authority, as in the Bantustans. In Britain deteriorating needs for most labour categories has been accompanied by increasingly harsh anti-immigration legislation. In the USA, as economic conditions deteriorated in 1982-83, Congress considered legislation aimed, according to *Mother Jones* magazine, at 'sanctions against employers who hire illegal aliens, an ID system for immigrant workers, a ceiling of 425,000 new immigrants annually' and specific provision to favour more politically desirable or amenable individuals, to name only the most noxious comparable elements.

However it would be a profound error to see forced resettlement purely as a means of removing those undesired in the labour market just as *favelados* in Rio are quite wrongly classified as 'marginal'. Most of those removed will continue to seek South African jobs and are indeed expected to do just that. As South African capitalism develops, it requires some workers (increasingly including Africans) who have considerable skill and freedom of movement and others who do not; in recent years, both are being considered and differentiated to the extent that appears politically expedient. Migrant workers continue to be particularly desirable for capital due to their cheapness, their dependence and difficulty to organise. Problems with the state in securing the right to live where one works places one in a particularly vulnerable position towards capital.

The South African 'migrant' worker of today typically returns year after year to the same job; his visit annually to his 'homeland' in between contracts is more of an essential respite than an opportunity to plough cash back into a non-capitalist household economy still ticking over. Authorities use every chance to get 'illegal' workers to re-register as migrant contractors, even household domestics. The newest proposed controls legislation, discussed and deferred in 1983, the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, amounted to a new declaration of war on 'illegals' with further limits on the rights of the undocumented to remain in town, hefty employer fines for hiring 'illegals' and perhaps a curfew. For certain categories of employer, notably in agriculture, forced resettlement creates a pliable pool of particularly malleable labour. This is especially true when it is possible to sign up workers on lists available for farm work only or when resettlement places workers in remote areas where the victims cannot find the means to search for alternative employment.

In more sophisticated economic sectors, an ideal solution is the commuter-worker, who is now a central figure in the workforce of Pretoria, Durban and numerous small cities. Cape Town, at a great distance from any 'homeland' can rely partly on a Coloured working class with permanent residence rights at the Cape (although a large African population is quietly and contradictorily admitted to be permanently essential there from time to time). Only on the Witwatersrand itself does Bantustan commuting offer little solution for the labour requirements of business in the biggest centres. Those African workers with Section Ten rights thus have a particular importance there. In Pretoria and Durban, Lacey has
claimed, commuter-workers have been consistently favoured over those with Section Ten rights.

Central to the entire process has been the rise of the independent Bantustans. In response to the independence movements elsewhere in Africa and the political crisis at the end of the 1950s, the Nationalist regime embarked on a strategy of political devolution to the consolidated 'African homelands', as they began to be known. In the wake of the urban revolts in 1976 and the successful ascendancy to power of FRELIMO in Mozambique and the MPLA in Angola, the Transkei region agreed to accept the South African gift of 'independence'. The Transkei is the most sizeable, consolidated and populous of the 'homelands'. Three others have followed in its wake: Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei.

In the outside world, Bantustan 'independence' has been greeted as a fake. Elaborate studies have challenged South African government sources on the question of the viability of the putative national economies of the Bantustans. This is justifiable insofar as it goes but it is gradually being recognised by both radicals and liberals that the Bantustan regimes are taking on a real significance notwithstanding. In practice one can, following Roger Southall, acknowledge that 'the Homelands, however inadequate they may be in satisfying the aspirations of the broad mass of blacks, may be assuming a momentum and dynamism of their own which could serve to stabilise and perpetuate white domination in South Africa.' In all the Bantustans, an elaborate security structure has been created with nascent armies, special security branches and repressive legislation. This, together with examples of wealth and corruption on the part of a small political elite, has been well-documented.

Of great importance as well, though, has been the extension in the Bantustan administrations of South African social services. Health and education facilities are being farmed out to them. Some are becoming able to control the distribution of pension and social security benefits. There is a highly significant tendency for Bantustan regimes to become involved in the job procurement and labour contract process with the attendant possibilities for coercion, control and shakedown in this era of mass unemployment. The process is best attested in Ciskei. In most Bantustans, ill-defined groups of youths are used to terrify opposition to the dominant clique. Such thuggery exists within Kwa Zulu's Inkatha and has parallels in the less well-known Inyandza organisation of ka Ngwane and Intsika ye Sizwe in Ciskei. Bantustan patronage is a necessity for producing favours of any sort such as access to land in the commuter zones.

Control over a burgeoning service sector and the state machinery has been essential to the rise of a new ruling element within the Bantustans. Agricultural betterment programmes are intended to squeeze part of the Bantustan peasantry off the land entirely and to create a small prosperous black class of agriculturalists, inevitably those with access to state office. This is the upshot of irrigation schemes and those projects prepared under the auspices of agricultural development corporations. The victims of betterment programmes are almost always denied significant land access or the right to keep livestock in their new homes. Joanne Yawitch has traced a process through which youth has been frozen out of new land allocations and the elderly pushed to accept tiny pensions as an alternative to land rights in Lebowa. On the Bantustan peripheries of Durban and Pretoria, the new bourgeoisie has preferred urban landlordism to
agricultural improvement. Here it is possible to own land in freehold.

The abruptness and drain on services of forced resettlement is resented by many Bantustan authorities. They deny collaboration with population dumpings. Yet the controls over population on an unprecedented scale tempt them. There are two small areas on the fringe respectively of Lesotho (Basotho Qwa Qwa) and Swaziland (Ka Ngwane) which are being turned into dumping grounds on a massive scale for people described as speaking Southern Sotho and Swazi. They are so tiny and unviable that one can only assume that South Africa intends to convince Lesotho and Swaziland, whose sovereignty is recognised by the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations Organisation, to do a deal and annex them. In 1982, the Swazi king indeed agreed to accept Ka Ngwane, by then more populous than his entire country, together with a strip from Kwa Zulu giving to him a sea-coast, in exactly this way. His death appears to have halted the controversial transfer for now while Lesotho expansion awaits better times and a more malleable regime than that of chief Leabua Jonathan.

**The Fate of the Resettled**

The actual process of relocation has rarely brought government invitations to the press or scholars. Indeed it often occurs in deliberate secrecy. It has frequently involved episodes of confrontation and occasionally of violence. In a recent study protesting forced resettlement of Navajo from land declared to be Hopi in Arizona (a kind of American Hopistan), a team reported that:

... the result of over 25 studies around the world indicate without exception that the compulsory relocation of low-income rural populations with strong ties to their lands and homes is a traumatic experience. For the majority of those who have been moved, the profound shock of compulsory relocation is much like the bereavement caused by the death of a parent, spouse or a child.

From the slums of Rio, Perlman records a removed *favelado* as saying, ‘everyone who had a little sickness got worse and died’.

In South Africa, the actual removal process has frequently been traumatic. The first stage of removal is generally to tents or temporary shacks that may turn into permanent arrangements. Actually the new sites are almost invariably poorly provided with the most basic amenities — clinics and access to doctors, schools, electricity, good water supply, etc. The process towards construction of a physical and social infrastructure is a slow one.

Perhaps at least as significant is the social trauma involved in removals. Cherryl Walker has stressed that forced removal can be related closely to a process of social breakdown, demoralisation, disorganisation, family and community fragmentation. Part of the whole history of black forced resettlement that needs to be emphasised is that it is often a process through which people have passed before, that it represents a *continual* threat whereby the state exerts naked force over the poor and dependent.

It is probably true that the worst resettlement conditions prevailed in the 1960s in such locales as Limehill in Kwa Zulu and Sada in Ciskei. The Zulu called Limehill ‘Mshayazafe’ (beat him until he dies) according to Desmond. Resettlement is, however, a differentiating process. It tends to reflect and to intensify existing inequalities within the black labour market. In Dimbaza, once
one of the most notorious resettlement camps, a real dumping ground marked by
disease and death, or in Mdantsane, which serves as the African township for the
Cape border city of East London, there are now amenities and access to jobs.
Many settlers are voluntary and housed in better conditions than before. In such
places life has most likely more to offer for the man kicked off a white farm to
which he was tied and now able to obtain a contract to work in a city. For the
African middle class in Durban or Pretoria or the Coloured middle class in Cape
Town, the quality of new housing and the right to freehold property sometimes
makes the pressure to move to the Bantustan or racial Group Area more of a
carrot than a stick. While continuing to raise a searchlight to appalling conditions
such as those found by Desmond and which can still be found, it is worthy of
notice that there are different levels of stress and suffering involved, that
resettlement often underscores growing black stratification and that forced
resettlement is partly accompanied by inducements.

Resettlement projects in the Bantustans involve the people in essentially urban
settings, however deficient they may be in the necessities of urban life.
Researchers report consistently that forced resettlement involves the
dispossession of those with herds and that retained access of any sort to land for
agricultural use is exceptional. The result is a process of forced urbanisation on a
remarkable scale. In the middle of the 1950s, the Nqutu district of Natal was
scheduled by the segregation planners of the Tomlinson Commission to carry
optimally perhaps 13,000 Zulu cultivator-pastoralists. According to Maré, the
population in reality was 46,000 by 1960 and now runs to an estimated 200,000.
The Witzieshoek district of 141 square miles in the Orange Free State (Basotho
Qwa Qwa) was already overcrowded with an agricultural population of 20,000 in
1970; in 1978 it held some 120,000 people and estimates today exceed twice that
figure. Ka Ngwane, the Swazi ‘homeland’ covers a ludicrous 818 square miles.
Into this space were crowded some 117,000 people by 1970 and 214,000 by 1977.
It is hardly surprising that the first evidence of cholera in recent years in South
Africa occurred here in 1980.

Commuter agglomerations are also a substantial category. The Bophuthatswana
area northwest of Pretoria contains far in excess of 500,000 people. Umlazi,
Inanda and Kwa Mashu around Durban are certainly as extensive. In both areas,
squatters predominate over those living in state-built housing. Inanda has been
the scene of site-and-service squatter schemes from 1980 eminently suitable to a
regime with a limited purse for the construction of public housing to serve the
poor. This too has been an area where cholera made an appearance. Mdantsane,
within the Ciskei, serves East London’s employers and housed at le? -t 120,000
people by the middle 1970s.

Simkins has tried to document and quantify these changes. In 1960, he estimates
that some 1.2 per cent only of the ‘homeland’ population lived in urban
communities. Out of a much increased total, this proportion rose to 17.1 per cent
by 1980. Yet this apparently gigantic growth is actually an underestimate:
another 41.6 per cent reside in virtually agriculture-less ‘closer settlements’.
Thus the whole resettlement programme, it is extremely important to note, has
not taken Africans from white-owned cities and farms to return them to a rural
setting, however limited in viability. They have been expelled to bleak and
isolated but essentially urban and proletarian settlements where no farming or
stock herding is possible. Half the ‘homeland’ population is now effectively urban.
The worst elements of black urban life have passed into these settlements. They experience particularly acute poverty, faction fighting and dependence on various criminal activities for survival. In this setting, those with work are obliged to spend much of their time and money commuting sometimes great distances. Where, as is usual, the state is now the landlord, rents, often for the first time, are a very substantial expense.

The economic possibilities that present themselves in the new settlements are usually very limited. Investment in the 'homelands' and subsidized border growth points has been relatively small in terms of the growth of the South African economy as a whole. These categories perhaps each account for 75,000 new jobs over 20 years, according to Lacey. Few residents, let alone the newly resettled, are able to sustain themselves from the local economy. Hirsch & Green estimate for Ciskei an unemployment figure in the neighbourhood of 35 per cent.

Consequently, forced resettlement, far from confining a growing proportion of the black population to their 'own' national territories or bringing forth the emergence of coherent national states, has created new armies of migrants, both contracted workers and 'illegals' heading for the cities and particularly liable to exploitation. This process has been most carefully observed for the city of Cape Town. National Party policy from 1948 stressed that the Western Cape was not 'naturally' the home of any Bantu-speaking Africans and that economic development should rest upon the Cape Coloured working population. Yet in reality social and economic pressures have long brought Africans to the Cape. From less than 2,000 in 1911 (1 per cent of the population), the African community expanded to 31,000 in 1946 (8 per cent) and 73,000 in 1959 (12 per cent). In 1954, state planners drew the Eiselen line through the province, west of which African community life was to be destroyed and the African population entirely eliminated when no longer necessary in the 'Coloured Labour Preference' zone. Ever since, the application of influx controls in Cape Town has been especially severe although Africans have continued to come to live there. According to Piet Koornhof the Minister of Co-operation and Development (formerly Bantu Administration, then Plural Relations!) more than 40 per cent of the Cape Town Africans, now estimated at just under 200,000 people, are living illegally and are subject therefore to extreme harassment. Each year thousands are deported eastwards but few make their stay in the Ciskei or Transkei a long one. Innes & O'Meara estimated that 83 per cent of Transkei labour is employed outside the Transkei.

One consequence at Cape Town has been the expansion of squatter settlements housing both 'illegals' and those unable to live otherwise with their families. Andrew Silk, an American reporter, has produced an important account of one known as Modderdam. More well-known is Crossroads, known at first in Xhosa as Mgababa, the place free of regulations. After an intense and internationally-publicised struggle, Crossroads residents legally at the Cape in 1978 were permitted to remain although Modderdam and other sites had been destroyed. More recently struggles have focused on the Nyanga squatters' site in 1981, leading to massive deportations to Transkei. The scattered workers no doubt soon find a way back to the Cape. The state is trying to work out a new master-plan for Cape Town Africans centred on massive resettlements planned for coming years.
Cape Town's squatter problem is not confined to Africans. While the regime devotes resources and minute attention to the segregation-orientated removals of so-called Coloureds from white areas, poverty and apartheid restrictions have created a housing shortage for at least 300,000 people. John Western estimates that perhaps one-quarter of the Coloured people in greater Cape Town live as squatters in shanties, a problem so severe that it has forced the state to give it priority over resettlement from 'proclaimed' white areas. Despite the obviously parlous nature of the situation in Cape Town, scholars studying the Durban metropolitan area consider it worse off, 'the most serious African housing problem in South Africa' — a problem now technically wished upon Kwa Zulu through its incorporation of the African townships of Kwa Mashu and, more recently, Umlazi. In both cities, the analogy with the favelas of Rio is already quite apt for the present.

The resettlement has intensified the basic economic problems of the black working class. It has been admittedly turned to the advantage of a small minority but it has made the large majority more vulnerable and confronted more brutally by the state than ever before while the problems of the most economically disadvantaged and unemployable are exported from the gaze of the whites. To this aim the South African government has spent and continues to spend very considerable sums. Indeed the fiscal constraints are perhaps the principal limitation for removals not proceeding even further and faster.

**Resistance**

Forced resettlement is closely linked, not only with the developmental needs of various sectors of South African capital but with political decisions within the Nationalist regime as to how dissent can be channelled onto safe paths. It is a policy meant to harmonise the sophisticated demands of 20th century capital while trying to keep under raps a working class that by and large is unincorporated and profoundly resentful of the entire system. South Africa is not on the whole a backward state; the devices its rulers choose for self-preservation and reproduction are not dissimilar to those in the most advanced capitalist states when faced with an equivalent, apparently weak antagonistic class. Thus forced resettlement brings strongly to mind the 'villagisation' and 'forced urbanisation' that the USA wished on Vietnam in the late 1960s while the 'homeland' strategy (part of South Africa's so-called total strategy) is reminiscent of 'Vietnamisation'. Although there continue to be disputes within ruling class circles over these matters, a striking tendency among American academics has been to dissociate the need for political participation and democracy from the 'modernisation' of such rapidly 'developing' countries as South Africa, as Colin Leys has pointed out.

In Vietnam, of course such strategies failed miserably. What about South Africa? If one accepts much of the literature on forced resettlement, one is forcibly struck by the extent to which the resettled appear traumatised, unable to reorganise community life or to create effective structures of resistance. At the same time, instruments of force and of patronage passed on to the Bantustan authorities are wielded to effect and becoming more and more significant.

The whole structure of forced resettlement is aimed at, and clearly does, threaten to drive a wedge through the oppressed by giving a minority a stake in the system and through pressing forward with ethnic identification as the essence of
nationality and nationalism in South Africa. A black researcher has written that 'enough stress cannot be laid on the serious damage being done by the mobilisation of people on an ethnic basis and the fostering of ethnic divisions.' He is particularly referring to tensions between ethnically differentiated and differentially privileged Africans within the Transvaal 'homelands'. There is as well the gulf between the minority with Section Ten rights and the majority of contract workers, so skilfully played upon by the state in undermining the urban insurgency of 1976. Resistance to resettlement itself has been long, at times impressive, but largely ineffective except perhaps in ameliorating aspects of the circumstances of removal.

The build-up of repression within the Bantustans suggests, however, that the political elite there has failed generally to secure much popular acceptance. By contrast with the pre-Bantustan system, it is of the essence that Africans come to believe in the new structures for them to work. Because of this international legitimation or delegitimation of the devolution process is of considerable significance.

Moreover, despite the general literature cited above, there is some reason to think that the resettled do show a capacity to resist and are indeed that much more militant potentially because they are that much less incorporated into older social networks that cradle within given power relationships. This potential for resistance depends almost entirely on the strategic weight among the resettled of those who are actually working effectively, as opposed to their dependents. Scattered reports of resistance have begun to be reported that range from bus boycotts over fares to ANC activity aimed at instruments of Bantustan power such as the 1981 attack on the Sibasa police station in Venda.

The toughest struggles so far have occurred in Ciskei. Here the Sebe regime has intervened actively against the South African Allied Workers' Union militants who live in, and sometimes work in, Mdantsane. SAAWU, in step with the independent black trade union movement, has been able to advance despite depressed economic conditions. For the Ciskei regime, it is an unwelcome rival and 'Communist party front'. According to 'President' Lennox Sebe, the Bantustan state is a trade union and any other kind has been made illegal! Workers have been attacked and killed in Ciskei while intense confrontations with students at Fort Hare have revealed how Ciskei authorities have now taken charge of repression. Most of the strength of this resistance depends on the situation of the resettled as industrial workers.

In the poor Coloured settlements of the Cape Flats, Cape Town, the last years have seen unprecedented defiance of state authorities in violent outbreaks (1976-1980). Despite the harsh anti-social conditions that prevail, it is striking that resistance seems more possible than it ever did in the old Coloured neighbourhoods such as District Six. It is difficult not to connect forced resettlement and the creation of government-owned housing projects on a massive scale with intensified resistance and the rise of radical community organisations concerned with a broad range of issues. On the one hand, with resettlement, the class divide among Coloureds becomes notably sharper, isolating the poor from moderate leaders. On the other, there is the evidence from Modderdam of a potential alliance between Coloured and African squatters. Cape Coloured willingness to work with the ANC today is much greater than at any time in the past.
A number of writers have suggested that the weight of forced resettlement in Cape Town potentially brings about precisely the opposite of its intention; it awakens powerful and less controllable forms of resistance to the state. Can this also occur in the 'homelands'? A South African revolution could be ignited another time not among the youth of Soweto but among the resettled and dumped working class of the dozens of bleak new tin towns dotting the Bantustan horizons. Given the political importance of the Bantustan strategy and the economic importance of resettlement in labour policy, such places are rapidly becoming less marginal and more pivotal to South African society. It may be there in particular that future developments are hammered out in struggle.

Bibliographic Note

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The southern African region today is a battleground. In two broad interrelated struggles the mass of the population of the region are ranged against the South African ruling class and its apartheid regime. The first of these is the advancing national liberation struggles inside South Africa and Namibia, led by the ANC and SWAPO. These struggles are assisted in the region by attempts to co-ordinate the policies of the six African states grouped together as the frontline states.

The region is characterised secondly by the struggle to advance different processes of economic and social development which are largely blocked by the linkages between the economies of the states of the region and South African capitalism. In 1980, on the initiative of the frontline states, nine southern African states formed themselves into the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). SADCC has as its principal objective the extrication of its member states from the negative effects of the domination of the regional economy by South African capitalism. The effective implementation of this objective is closely tied to the development of the national liberation struggle in Namibia and South Africa.

This paper focuses on the state of analysis of one of the central sets of questions posed by these struggles — i.e. the nature of the enemy; the elements of his strategy and tactics; their limits and possibilities. These questions are frequently absent in analysis of the Southern African region.

Since September 1978, the apartheid state under P.W. Botha has organised its internal and external policies through the concept of ‘the Total Strategy’ first used in the 1977 Defence White Paper. The meaning of this ‘Total Strategy’, and its limits and possibilities, are crucial elements in the development of strategy and tactics both for the liberation struggle and for the co-ordination of SADCC’s attempts to reduce dependence on South African capitalism. Yet the Total Strategy is no immutable plan, but rather a relatively flexible counter-response by the regime to a series of crises. To assess both its meaning and limits, it is essential to grasp the conditions which first produced, and now sustain this strategy.

This paper, firstly, seeks to review some of the literature on the ‘Total Strategy’ and its implications both within South Africa and the region. Secondly, it attempts a brief and schematic analysis of the development, meaning, limits and
possibilities, and implications for struggles in the region of the Total Strategy.

**Analyses of the ‘Total Strategy’: Different Problematics**

It seems to us that within the relevant literature three broad analytical frameworks or problematics have emerged. The first of these focuses on the modifications of overt forms of racial discrimination and on attempts to create a supportive black middle class. Its fundamental proposition holds that the ‘Total Strategy’ represents a decisive shift from what might be described as capitalism based on national oppression towards non-racial or ‘normal’ capitalism. Clearly, located within this problematic are the analyses of apologists for the regime as well as of liberal reformists, such as Lipton and Adam, favouring constructive engagement, political moderation etc. To the latter, the ‘Total Strategy’ is seen as a vindication of the basic liberal thesis that apartheid and capitalism are two completely separate and opposed forces. Exploitation (usually conceived of in terms of inequality of opportunity or income distribution) would remain, but the repressive superstructure of apartheid (seen as the major source of black oppression) would disappear.

There has also emerged a certain leftist position advanced by Callinicos and Rogers which, we would argue, located itself within the first problematic. This would agree that the ‘Total Strategy’ represents a decisive shift away from capitalism based on national oppression, but it would not want to derive from this reformist political conclusions. Rather it would argue that the measures introduced under the ‘Total Strategy’ will succeed in buying off the black petty bourgeoisie, which will increasingly ally itself with monopoly capitalism against the working masses. The implication of this is that all strategies based on an alliance between black workers and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie cease to be viable. The liberation struggle in South Africa will have to become an exclusively working class struggle. At the regional level, this position tends to argue that most, if not all, of the states in the region are ruled by bureaucratic bourgeoisies. These have no interest in breaking links with South Africa since, in the last analysis, they depend on these links to maintain their own positions. Until workers’ and peasants’ states can be established in these countries, no significant support for the liberation struggle can be mobilised in the region. The South African liberation movement can expect nothing other than a series of betrayals, while projects like SADCC will be doomed.

The basic proposition of the second problematic holds that the ‘Total Strategy’ has not and is not designed to eliminate the most fundamental aspects of capitalist exploitation and national oppression. Arguments within this problematic, such as Seidman’s or CEA/CEDIMO’s paper reprinted in *ROAPE* 19, tend to describe the measures introduced under the ‘Total Strategy’ as merely ‘cosmetic’ or a ‘facelift’. This rests on a conception of ‘the regime’ as basically unchanged in social composition and ideological posture since 1948. It is also argued that the Total Strategy offers too little too late and has no possibility of making many inroads on the generalised cross-class African opposition to Apartheid. In other words, the nationally oppressed black petty bourgeoisie can in no sense be won over to even lukewarm support for South African capitalism. Likewise in the region, although differences in the degree of commitment by various states to the liberation struggle are recognised, all SADDC members are conceived of as being majority ruled, e.g. by the C.I.I.R., and thus sharing in the generalised abhorrence of Apartheid. The regional strategy of the South African
ruling class cannot therefore succeed in winning allies for itself, although there may be different degrees of willingness on the part of individual states to break existing links.

A third position has also emerged. This argues that while in no meaningful sense does the 'Total Strategy' represent an amelioration of Apartheid oppression and exploitation — and on the contrary has involved their intensification — nevertheless it does mark a limited but real strategic shift by the ruling class in a situation of deep crisis. In response to heightened mass struggle a new alignment of forces within the ruling class is attempting to recast the conditions of racial capitalist rule in a number of important respects. Unlike the first position this view does not see in the 'Total Strategy' the wholesale abandonment of national oppression as the basis of capitalism in South Africa, but rather a change within limits. Unlike the second, however, it argues that the changes do have a real content and real possibilities which have to be taken into account.

The first of the above problematics is perhaps the easiest to dismiss. In its rightist form it amounts to an apology if not for the present regime and its policies, then at least for South African capitalism in general. In its leftist form, it is a formula for sterile workerism internally, long since overtaken in the actual practice of workers' struggles in South Africa where mobilisation of support from other nationally oppressed class forces (through community organisation etc.) has been a notable feature. At the regional level it is a formula for inactivity and disengagement, providing no basis for the development of tactics capable of mobilising that level of support for the liberation struggle which is actually or potentially available.

The second problematic has the considerable advantage over the first of focusing on the conditions of the masses and showing the way in which exploitation and oppression continue to characterise the 'Total Strategy' phase of Apartheid, and indeed have in a number of respects been intensified. In refuting the claims of reformists, such analyses have played a positive role. However it is not longer adequate merely to negate the propositions of ruling class ideology. The over-emphasis on continuities and what has not changed failed to grasp the complex set of social forces constituting the enemy. In particular the second problematic seems to us inadequate in its failure to take account of the vacillating character of the petty bourgeoisie, and the need to respond to new moves by a ruling class with new tactics. At worst it could even play into the hands of those class forces among the nationally oppressed which self-consciously seek to confine the liberation struggle within narrow nationalist limits and prevent it developing into a broader struggle for socialism.

Thus, the third approach seems to us to offer the most useful starting point for an analysis of the current conjuncture — one which permits the location of the real limits and possibilities of 'reform' under the 'Total Strategy', thereby facilitating an evaluation of its implications for the strategy of mass struggle in South Africa and the region. Within this position a number of more specific questions arise:

a. What were the conditions and struggles giving rise to the 'Total Strategy'?
b. What does this new alignment of class forces represent?
c. Which are the strategic shifts embodied in the 'Total Strategy'.
d. What are its limits and possibilities, and implications for the strategy of mass struggle?
Conditions Giving Rise to the 'Total Strategy'
The 'Total Strategy' emerged as the basis of state policy after 1978 as a response by a new alignment of forces within the ruling class to the gathering crisis during the 1970s. This crisis can be broadly characterised as the product of the collapse of the economic, political and ideological conditions which had hitherto sustained a form of capital accumulation based predominantly on forms of cheap, unskilled black labour. This crisis had a number of dimensions, both internal and external.

For much of the 1960s, the South African capitalist economy experienced a sustained period of unprecedented expansion. However by the end of the decade the now overheated economy was beginning to exhibit some of the features of the world capitalist crisis — particularly high rates of inflation and the beginnings of severe balance of payments problems. This put growing pressure on the living conditions of black workers. From the early 1970s black workers began to organise themselves. First manufacturing and then the mining industry were shaken by a sustained strike wave between 1972-5. Out of these actions emerged a growing independent African trade union movement, engaged not only in a struggle for higher wages, but also fighting for the right to organise. The growing challenge of black workers, fuelled a more generalised upsurge in resistance by all oppressed class forces, culminating in the Soweto uprising of 1976. Increasingly these struggles took on an openly anti-capitalist character.

Thus by 1976 the internal economic and political conditions which had sustained the boom of the 1960s had been decisively shattered. Within South Africa the ruling class faced not only a severe economic recession, but also an acute political and ideological crisis. These crises severely weakened South Africa's position internationally. The period after Soweto saw a massive outflow of the foreign capital which had played a key role in sustaining the boom of the 1960s. International capital markets became chary of South Africa, and the government had severe problems in raising international loans. The installation of the Carter administration in the United States in January 1977, and the extremely hostile encounter between Vorster and Vice-President Mondale a few months later, further isolated the regime from its major international ally.

During the early 1970s the South African ruling class likewise encountered a vastly changed and threatening situation in the southern African region. The Portuguese-ruled buffer states of Mozambique and Angola had collapsed. In settler-ruled Rhodesia the growing war of National Liberation had forced the Smith Regime onto the defensive and presented South Africa with the spectre of another hostile neighbour. The collapse of Portuguese colonialism gave rise to a hasty reformulation of regional strategy on the part of the Vorster regime in 1974, known as the Detente exercise. This was accompanied by very minor internal modifications such as the scrapping of some forms of 'petty apartheid'.

Despite important initial successes, and a strong bond of co-operation with Zambia, the South African detente initiative began to collapse as a result of the South African invasion of Angola in 1975, and its eventual expulsion by MPLA and Cuban forces by March 1976. While there still remained some impetus from Zambia and other southern African states to maintain dialogue with South Africa, this was finally destroyed by the brutal repression of the Soweto uprising.
Not even the most moderate African regime could now afford to be seen to be allied with the apartheid regime which slaughtered schoolchildren in the streets.

Thus by the end of 1976 the collapse of both internal and external dimensions of state policy in the context of heightened mass struggle and deep recession gave rise to what Gramsci characterised as an 'organic crisis'. Stuart Hall has defined this as follows:

Gramsci insisted that we get the 'organic' and the 'conjunctural' aspects of the crisis into a proper relationship. What defines the 'conjunctural' — the immediate terrain of struggle — is not simply the given economic conditions, but precisely the 'incessant and persistent' efforts which are being made to defend and conserve the position. If the crisis is deep — 'organic' — these efforts cannot be merely defensive. They will be formative: a new balance of forces, the emergence of new elements, the attempt to put together a new 'historical bloc', new political configurations and philosophies, a profound restructuring of the state and the ideological discourse which construct the crisis and represent it as it is 'lived' as a practical reality; new programmes and policies, pointing to a new result, a new sort of 'settlement' — 'within certain limits'. These do not 'emerge'; they have to be constructed. Political and ideological work is required to disarticulate the old formations and to rework their elements into new configurations.

We would agree with Saul and Gelb then that the 'reforms' of the 'Total Strategy' represent precisely such a response to an organic crisis and attempt to reconstruct the political, ideological and economic conditions of stable capitalist rule. These policies did not simply emerge. They were produced out of deep political conflict within the ruling class and the consolidation under P.W. Botha of a new political alignment of class forces.

The New Political Alignment of Forces
The organic crisis of the mid-1970s posed the pressing political question of how to organise the ruling class and its historic class to achieve such a reconstruction of the conditions of stable capitalist rule and prosperity. Concretely this raised the central political question of the capacity of the ruling Nationalist Party to implement the required reforms.

The Nationalist Party came to power in 1948 resting on an alliance of capitalist agriculture, non-monopoly industrial, commercial and finance capital, white labour and the Afrikaner petty bourgeoisie. This political alliance effectively took direct charge of the organisation of state policies towards the oppressed masses after 1948. However, during its period of rule the character of the class forces represented in this Afrikaner nationalist alliance changed. Most significant there was the emergence of Afrikaner monopoly capital from the petty undertakings of the 1940s. This class force was the major beneficiary of Nationalist Party rule. The largest of the Afrikaner monopolies, Sanlam, controlled in 1981 assets of over £19 billion, or an equivalent of two-thirds the total value of foreign investment in South Africa. Sanlam is the second largest monopoly in South Africa after the Anglo-American Corporation, whilst the two other Afrikaner monopolies, Rembrandt and Volkskas, are amongst the eight conglomerates which today dominate South African capitalism.

With the emergency of this organic crisis in the mid-1970s the Afrikaner monopolies loosened their links with their traditional class allies in Afrikaner nationalism and began to organise together with non-Afrikaner monopoly capital to effect specific forms of economic and political restructuring strongly opposed
by the other class forces of the Afrikaner nationalist alliance. These monopoly capitals sought the relaxation of controls on the mobility of labour and on the training of labour to permit its more productive utilisation in more capital intensive forms of production. With a view to securing the conditions of capitalist rule, the monopolies began to advocate the abolition of certain specific overt forms of racial discrimination. The latter had first been implemented to advance the position of white labour and the petty bourgeoisie. These class forces opposed the initiatives of monopoly capital, as a threat to 'the interests of the white man'. The old nationalist class alliance was split. It was unable to sustain its old policies and unable to implement the reforms so desperately required by the monopolies. The result was a two-year paralysis within the Nationalist Party government under Vorster.

Monopoly capital was not the sole important political force within the power bloc pushing for reform. The top echelons of the military, well schooled in the theory of counter-insurgency and alarmed at the collapse of social and ideological controls over the oppressed masses, and the growing military threat from the ANC, had come to see some of these changes as necessary in order to secure a 'militarily defensible state'. The period after 1976 saw growing political cooperation between monopoly capital and the military. These forces coalesced in a campaign to eliminate the strongest opponent of such 'reform' in the government, the Minister of Information and leader of the Transvaal Nationalist Party, Dr Connie Mulder, in the so-called Information Scandal or Muldergate. This made possible the election of the Minister of Defence, P.W. Botha, as national leader of the Nationalist Party and, hence, Prime Minister in September 1978. The election of Botha marked the consolidation of a new political alliance of monopoly capital and the military, which provided the impetus towards 'reform' within the ruling class, concretised in the 'Total Strategy'.

**Strategic Shifts Embodied in the ‘Total Strategy’**

As enunciated by the military strategists who first formulated it, the ‘Total Strategy’ is aimed to protect ‘free enterprise’ in South Africa from ‘the Marxist threat’ and ‘total onslaught’. It involves the mobilisation by the military-monopoly alliance of the full range of economic, political, ideological and social-psychological as well as military resources of South African capitalism against its perceived enemies. Shorn of its jargon, it puts forward a new constellation of economic, political and ideological policies with the aim of reconstructing the basis for stable capitalist rule in South Africa in such a way as to defuse mass struggles and incorporate specific strata of the oppressed masses into a new ‘historic bloc’, but clearly within the ‘certain limits’ specified by Hall. The strategic shifts embodied in the ‘Total Strategy’ have both an internal and regional dimension.

At the internal level these strategic shifts are to be seen firstly in state policy towards the black working class. In response to the demands of monopoly capital, specific controls over the vertical and horizontal mobility of black labour have been relaxed. This was concretised in legislative proposals following the reports of two crucial commissions of enquiry, Wiehahn and Riekert, which recommended change to aspects of job reservation and the pass laws. Moreover, the struggles of the independent trade unions for the right to organise forced a concession from the state. New industrial legislation has conceded this right, but in a manner which attempts to incorporate African trade unions into an
industrial relations system which would isolate and contain the work place struggles of black workers to levels and forms which would not threaten the basic structure of the capitalist system. These policies have been marketed by the regime and its apologists as a 'new dispensation' for black labour. Embodied in this is the assumption that all the 'reasonable' demands of black labour have been met, and that racial discrimination within the industrial relations system has been abolished.

This points to a further significant strategic shift. Under the rubric of 'doing away with discrimination' and 'hurtful legislation', the 'Total Strategy' has sought to make economic and ideological concessions aimed at winning support for capitalism from the burgeoning black petty bourgeoisie to reverse the prevalent tendency in South Africa for this class force to become increasingly hostile not only to the structures of national oppression, but also to capitalism itself. In the words of the influential Johannesburg Financial Mail: 'If South Africa is to enter an era of (relative) stability and prosperity, government must ensure that as many people as possible share in that prosperity and find their interests best served by an alliance with capitalism' (1 February 1980). Such 'reforms' hold out the possibility of real, though limited, social mobility to the black petty bourgeoisie, and an ideology which stresses movement towards equality of opportunity under the 'free enterprise' system, in opposition to the prospect of 'Marxist tyranny'.

This policy has ambiguous aspects. It appears firstly to seek to weaken the national liberation alliance by dividing the nationally oppressed black petty bourgeoisie from the working class. At the same time it also seeks to utilise the ideological leadership role of the petty bourgeoisie with respect to the working class to limit and contain workers' struggles within the parameters of 'acceptable' trade unionism.

The Botha regime has sought, not very successfully, to win over the historic mass base of Afrikaner nationalism, i.e. white labour, the Afrikaner petty bourgeoisie, and smaller farmers, for the necessary 'reforms'. This has involved an insistence that the days of unbridled white domination are over and that 'healthy power sharing' is necessary if 'the white man' (i.e. capitalism) is to survive. This has involved something of a tightrope act. The regime has sought to persuade groups whose relative privilege has historically rested on intense forms of discrimination and ideologies that these privileges can only be protected against 'the Marxist threat' through timely (and minor) concessions. However, the 'adapt or die' slogan has not won wide support amongst these class forces.

The consolidation of 'free enterprise' has likewise seen the first moves to reduce state ownership in key productive sectors of the economy. Thus far this has been limited to the sale of shares in the state-owned oil-from-coal undertaking, SASOL, but the Botha regime remains pledged to extending this process. This forms part of the aggressive promotion of an ideology of 'free enterprise', which clearly separates the (allegedly positive) economic structures and bases of South African capitalism from the (not so healthy) political apartheid forms, and promises slow reform of the latter.

These modifications further extend to 'a new political dispensation' which has unfolded in fits and starts since 1978. In effect the implementation of the 'Total Strategy' has seen a far-reaching reorganisation of the form of the state. This
has taken place gradually. It first involved a reorganisation of the machinery of government, with a slow shift away from a Cabinet form of government responsible to a (whites only) elected legislature, and its replacement by a State Security Council appointed and responsible to the Prime Minister. The period 1978-82 saw a marked centralisation of powers in the office of the Prime Minister and a striking militarisation of the administration of the state. Hand in hand with this went the establishment of the Presidents' Council, a body of appointed whites, Indians and coloureds to 'advise' on all matters. Its recent report, accepted in a modified form by the government, has called for a dictatorial executive President, not accountable to the three separate legislatures it envisages. This so-called 'de Gaulle' option is explicitly designed to achieve two objectives. Firstly it aims to enable the ruling class to push through 'reforms' now blocked by strong opposition from class forces in the previous nationalist alliance, which oppose such modifications to Apartheid as a 'sell out' of the 'white man'. Secondly, this new political dispensation has the explicit objective of dividing the nationally oppressed groups by incorporating some elements into attenuated representative state apparatuses.

The growing militarisation of the South African state points to a further central aspect of the Total Strategy. The 'reforms' introduced all rested on new forms of intensified repression in response to growing mass struggles — and in particular the development of the armed struggle after 1976. The result has been an insidious escalation of state terror.

One significant development here has been the use of the puppet regimes of the Bantustans, and the Ciskei and Venda in particular, to implement crudely vicious attacks on opponents of the Apartheid regime. At the same time, however, the growing strength of internal opposition and a strong revulsion in some ruling class quarters against the more sanguine aspects of state terror — such as unexplained deaths in detention, widespread use of torture etc. — has led to a recognition of the need to gain a wider consensus within monopoly capital for its use. This has resulted in an attempt to restructure repressive laws to bring them more into line with the 'norms' in other countries and to modify some of the practices which had drawn severe international criticism. Changes at this level are distinctly limited, but have been adopted in principle by the acceptance by the government of the report of the Rabie Commission.

South Africa's Regional Strategy
At the level of regional policy a number of aspects of the 'Total Strategy' are significant. On the one hand this period has seen a build-up of military forces and new kinds of military capabilities directed at the neighbouring states. This not only includes incursions by regular military forces, but also the sponsoring of dissident armed movements in a number of countries coupled with acts of terrorism against members of the ANC resident in these countries. There has also been the mobilisation of economic, political and ideological resources in pursuit of regional strategic objectives. The ultimate objective of regional policy has been defined as the creation of a 'constellation' of anti-Marxist states allied to, and economically dependent upon South Africa. A more immediate objective has been to attempt to reduce support amongst political forces in the region for the liberation struggle.

Certain economic incentives particularly in the areas of trade, infrastructure and
transport services but more recently also including land transfers and finance for 'development' projects have been offered to those states prepared to collaborate with the Pretoria regime. On the other hand, South Africa has used its position of control over existing economic resources against neighbouring states acting contrary to South Africa's perceived interests. Three distinct phases in the application of these policies can usefully be identified.

The first phase covers the period from the early part of 1979 until the Zimbabwean elections of February 1980. This phase saw the Botha regime launching its new offensive in the region, following the collapse of the so-called detente strategy of the Vorster regime. Economic incentives were offered in the hope of persuading neighbouring states to join a pro-South African 'Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS). Although this 'Constellation' was potentially seen as embracing 11 African states 'stretching to the Equator', particular attention was focused on Zimbabwe, Malawi and the BLS countries seen to be the essential core members. This first phase came to an end with the defeat of the Muzorewa forces in the Zimbabwe elections. This put an end to hopes that a 'black ruled' Zimbabwe would become a key member of the Constellation and thus attract other 'moderate' states.

The second phase ran roughly from February 1980 until the end of 1981. It saw the formation of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) on the initiative of the Frontline States, and the adhesion of all states in the region to SADCC. The field of operation of the 'constellation' was reduced to the so-called 'inner constellation' embracing white South Africa and the 'independent' Bantustans. The South African regime initiated destabilisation tactics generally drawing on both economic and military resources. Their application was assisted by the growing support for South African intransigence by the new Reagan regime in the United States.

The third phase runs from mid-1981 to the present. It has seen the selective use of both economic incentives and threats. Specific economic concessions, including land cessions, support for key 'development' projects and the provision of allegedly more efficient transport services, have been offered to states in the region in an attempt to persuade them to collaborate with Pretoria. At the same time, however, the apartheid regime has intensified its economic destabilisation and military aggression against states seen to be hostile to it. Lesotho, Mozambique and Angola have borne the brunt of these assaults, and are further harassed by Pretoria-sponsored insurgent groups.

This combination of increased incentives and more drastic coercion seems to focus on two specific objectives — the eradication of any form of ANC presence in the southern African states, and an undermining of the SADCC project.

The Limits, Possibilities and Implications of the 'Total Strategy': Internal Aspects

As indicated above, within the literature two polar extremes have emerged on the limits and possibilities of the 'Total Strategy' at the internal level. Although these locate themselves at opposite extremes, both share an inability to grasp the complex and contradictory character of the social process brought into being by the 'Total Strategy'. Both positions proceed from an undialectical methodology. The first one-sidedly stresses possibilities at the expense of limits, whilst the second similarly emphasises limits at the expense of possibilities.
However, the third problematic identified above conceives of the ‘Total Strategy’ as a strategic shift made by a beleagured and reorganised ruling class in response to the gathering mass offensive of the 1970s. It therefore emphasises the need to analyse the ‘Total Strategy’ as a complex and contradictory set of processes having both limits and possibilities. Our own view is as follows.

Given the balance of forces in contemporary southern Africa, the South African ruling class will be unable to restructure the conditions of national oppression and capitalist exploitation sufficiently to overcome the organic crisis it confronts. On the other hand, however, the strategic shifts contained in the ‘Total Strategy’ could have real effects on the alignment of political forces and thus call for the development of new tactics.

The limits of potential ‘reforms’ and the possibilities for the political incorporation of nationally oppressed class forces can be analysed at three levels.

Firstly, various blockages arise at the level of the basic relations of exploitation. Although South African capitalism exhibits certain advanced features, it also remains characterised fundamentally by a number of backward and highly coercive forms of labour exploitation backed up by a high level of state control. There are few, if any, prospects of this altering even if the manufacturing sector, which is technically advanced in a number of ways, were able to make sufficient ‘reforms’ to break fundamentally from its current dependence on relatively cheap black labour power (doubtful in view of the current economic crisis); this sector would remain a net absorber of foreign exchange earned by the agricultural and mining sectors. These latter two sectors have been, and in the foreseeable future can only continue to be, dependent on a cheap labour force subject to intensive forms of state control. Furthermore, there are signs of centralisation of capital in agriculture and of further mechanisation of production in agriculture and mining. Their impact on increasing mass unemployment is likely to outweigh any effects at the level of ‘modernising’ the relations of exploitation in these sectors. Mass unemployment (estimated by Simkins and Clarke at two million or 20 per cent of the workforce and expected, according to Kane Berman, to rise to six million or 35 per cent by the year 2000) will itself require a high level of state control and regulation over the exploited masses. The recently tabled ‘Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill’, which would introduce the most extreme controls yet imposed by Apartheid, vividly illustrates this point. Both in the present and in the foreseeable future, therefore, the Basic relations of capitalist exploitation necessitate the maintenance of rigid forms of state control which preclude the development amongst the exploited classes of a sufficient degree of support for the basic institutions of South African capitalism to permit a generalised democratisation of the South African state. As we shall argue below, this critically affects the position of the black petty bourgeoisie.

Reforms are also limited by important class forces critically dependent for their current ownership positions within the economy on a racially exclusive form of state, as well as on specific forms of intervention by that state to benefit them at the expense of potential competitors. These include non-monopoly agricultural capital, small industrialists and traders, and a number of monopolies (Sanlam, Volkskas, Rembrandt etc.) historically and presently closely identified with the Apartheid regime and Nationalist Party. So close is the identification of such forces with national oppression, that they would be likely to suffer adversely
under even a moderate African nationalist government.

Finally, blockages to reforms arise from the particular political alliances which underpinned the development of capitalism in South Africa. Historically South African capitalism depended on a high level of support from a mass base of white petty bourgeoisie and white labour. These latter class forces have derived extensive socio-economic 'privileges' from this relationship which they would stand to lose from any process of 'reform' which substantially altered the system of national oppression. Even though the 'Total Strategy' implies the subordination of certain of the interests of these classes to the perceived strategic necessities of the monopoly/military alliance. The capitalist ruling class continues to need their support and cannot ignore their interests altogether. This imposes further limits on the extent and scope of any process of 'reform'.

The current ruling class cannot concede the basic democratic demands which unite the popular classes, particularly equal political rights in a unitary state, and the resolution of the land question. The 'Total Strategy' seems to devise formulae which will incorporate specific elements among the oppressed classes on a selective and restrictive basis. The acceptance of incorporation on the terms of the 'Total Strategy' would require the black petty bourgeoisie to abandon its political trump card — its real and potential leadership role with respect to the masses and its ability to use mass struggles to advance its own position. Moreover, it would require this to be done in a phase of heightened mass struggle when the present ruling class can be seen to be vulnerable. The black petty bourgeoisie remains subjected to enormous array of brutally oppressive and restrictive measures which continue to sustain capitalism in South Africa. While it may introduce modifications, and has already opened up limited avenues of social mobility for the black petty bourgeoisie, these remain very petty improvements in the context of this class force's continuing 'total experience' living under apartheid. The 'Total Strategy' will thus be unable to attract sufficient support among the black petty bourgeoisie to permit the ruling class to restructure and stabilise its rule on the basis of a new alliance with strata of the black petty bourgeoisie.

The 'Total Strategy' as per Davis and O'Meara constitutes an ideological offensive against the black masses, emphasising the 'superiority' of capitalism, while simultaneously offering real though seriously limited channels of social mobility to the black middle classes. Its limits imply that the alliance between the working class and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie remains viable and, indeed, we would argue, must be maintained. At the same time, the possibilities inherent in the 'Total Strategy' have to be taken into account. This implies that the questions of the class leadership of the liberation struggle and ideological clarity will assume greater importance. In essence, then, the political task posed anew at the present conjecture is for the working class to win the oppressed petty bourgeoisie into its side on its own terms, rather than to have its struggles and particular interests subordinated to a petty bourgeoisie-led struggle for non-racial capitalism.

The importance of the question of the class leadership of the liberation struggle has long been recognised by leading militants within the liberation movement. Moreover, earlier formulations which assumed that working class leadership would develop as an automatic consequence of the fact that national oppression could not be finally eliminated until capitalist exploitation was abolished, are now increasingly giving way to formulations which specify the need for the active assertion of working class leadership. But the crucial question remains — how is
this to be ensured in concrete struggles and organisation. We do not pretend to have any final answers. What is of fundamental importance is that these questions are being posed and grappled with at various and different levels of workers' struggle in South Africa. Within the trades unions, community organisations and a number of organisations, the issues of the class leadership of the struggle and the forms of democratic working class organisation are being posed and fought out.

The Limits, Possibilities and Implications of the Total Strategy: Regional Aspects

As was the case with the internal aspects, two polarised positions have emerged on the question of the limits and possibilities for the 'Total Strategy' at the regional level. The first depicts all SADCC members 'majority-ruled' states, by definition, as characterised by a high level of active hostility to Apartheid. All have therefore immediate interests in breaking links with Apartheid wherever possible, and the problems of SADCC thus consist merely of finding sufficient funds to finance projects and of solving various technical problems. The second argues that most, if not all, of the SADCC states are ruled by bureaucratic bourgeoisies with no real interest in breaking links with South Africa. SADCC will thus inevitably be doomed, and the bureaucratic bourgeoisies of the Frontline States will inevitably betray the liberation struggle.

In our view neither of these positions offers any basis to confront the real struggles in the region. The first is a formula for complacency, the second for defeatism. The reality is rather more complex. The states of the region all have different class characters with their own internal contradictions. They also have certain contradictions with South Africa and are under pressure from their own masses not to collaborate with the Apartheid regime. The key question which emerges then is the definition of the objectives of SADCC and its character as an alliance aimed at progressively breaking links with South African capitalism. This raises the need to develop tactics to ensure the maximum degree of unity and to create real alternatives to links with South Africa in areas of vulnerability.

This in turn poses the question of the limits and possibilities of South Africa's regional policies. It seems to us unlikely that any of the SADCC states will openly affiliate to CONSAS. Yet the possibility does exist of a series of specific agreements on particular issues, for example, the acceptance of economic concessions in return for a crackdown on ANC refugees. A number of ruling classes in the region are particularly susceptible to such approaches. Thus, from South Africa's point of view, there is real possibility, not that SADCC is destroyed, but that it may be reduced to merely another development programme, complementary to, rather than in opposition to, CONSAS.

SADCC cannot succeed in achieving its strategic objectives if it becomes merely another project financing body, but only if it defines a long-term strategy and tactics capable of producing the types of restructuring envisaged in SADCC policy documents, namely:

i. restructuring of internal economic relations of each of its nine member states;
ii. restructuring of economic relations between the nine;
iii. restructuring of relations between the nine and the world economy.
Each of these is a site of struggle. Moreover, each involves not only struggle against the South African ruling class, but also struggle as between contending class forces within each of the nine SADCC member states. The efficacy of the SADCC ‘alternative’ will be determined by the course of these struggles.

Bibliographic note
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This conference was the last public function organised by Ruth First before her brutal murder by agents of the Apartheid regime.


The second problematic is implicit in much of the solidarity literature, including J. Seidman Facelift Apartheid, London, IDAF, 1980, and CEA/CEDIMO ‘South Africa: Is Botha’s Total Strategy a Programme for Reform?’, ROAPE, 19, 1980. Whatever its deficiencies much of this literature has the legitimate political objective of combatting the ideology of the Total Strategy, often abroad, in contexts where it has a certain credibility.


Finally, a number of these themes are developed further in the CEA’s ‘Southern Africa Dossiers’ series and in CEA, The Struggle for South Africa: A Guide to Movements, Organisations and Institutions, London, Zed Press, 1984.
Agrarian Policy in Migrant Labour Societies: Reform or Transformation in Zimbabwe?

Ray Bush and Lionel Cliffe

This paper deals with one basic problem that southern African countries will have to face in any transformation of their agriculture: if these societies are ‘labour reserves’ can they be easily transformed so as to eliminate labour migration. Zimbabwe seems to have an official policy of ending ‘divided families’ by pushing some into being unambiguously working class families with no land and others into a settled, non-migratory peasantry. Thus former white-owned land is only distributed to those without jobs. But this could be only a more radical variant of plans that were attempted in the 1950s to end migrant labour. Are today’s plans for separating out worker-peasants into separate classes any more realistic? Isn’t there some danger of creating a landless, unemployed stratum in between, and of ignoring the needs of women heads of households? May it not be better to recognise that combining paid work and farming may have to continue for some time as Mozambique and Nicaragua seem to have done?

It is now commonplace to characterise the societies of southern Africa as ‘labour reserve economies’. Rural areas reserved for Africans are in no sense still ‘traditional’, but provide for the reproduction of labour power, used elsewhere in the economy in capitalist production, on terms that make it available especially cheaply as some form of migrant labour. This essential relationship gives rise to the well-known phenomena of the ‘worker-peasant’ and of ‘split families’. It is one of the main contributions of recent radical scholarship to use such conceptualisations of cheap, migrant labour reproduction to assert, in the teeth of the liberal arguments, that forms of racialism and of unfree labour are readily compatible with the continued development of capitalism. The task of this paper will be to try and take such thinking further and to ask what follows, from this analytical point of departure, for the prospects of a socialist alternative.

The normal issues debated about agriculture in socialist transition can be subsumed under the heading ‘collectivisation’: How much? How soon? How organised? But in settler colonial societies much of the land is farmed in ‘collective’ units and there is ‘co-operation’ in the labour process, although private appropriation of surplus value. Clearly in such societies one set of issues that must be on the agenda relates to the redistribution of this land and of the surplus produced on it: how far will the existing farm units remain? How will production on any redistributed land be organised? Who will reap the benefits? Different answers have been given. In Mozambique, most of the settler farms
were abandoned and were taken over and run, on more or less the same lines as before (see Raikes' article in this issue) but as state farms, whereas in Algeria in similar circumstances the settler farms were at first self-managed by the labourers. Kenya took over only perhaps a third of the land and divided it into individual, though sizeable, peasant plots. Zimbabwe, which is our main focus in this article has so far done likewise in a carefully controlled land redistribution, up to now only affecting one tenth of the land formerly reserved to whites. Zambia, on the other hand, has left its small number of white-owned farms intact.

But another set of issues has to be faced in transforming these settler societies: what is to happen to that other (peasant) sector of agriculture? In some senses the same policy issues can be posed here that come up in discussing agrarian transformation elsewhere in Africa: to collectivise or not, and how soon? But to raise these issues in quite the same fashion would be to ignore the strategic issue of the relation between two sectors of agriculture that have been organised on radically different lines and historically been faced with very different opportunities and yet have been complementary. Strategy has then to pose another range of issues: how will price policy, research and extension, marketing arrangements be re-allocated between the two? Will some element of a dual structure be retained in the long run? Too often, however, such discussions are reduced to seeking answers to the question of what to do on and with the land in the two sectors — neglecting the people involved. Viewed in human terms, one key issue ought to be the fate of the agricultural labourers. But even more fundamental, if one bears in mind the labour producing character of peasant sectors of these societies, is the question of whether they will retain that essential characteristic. Will the peasant sector continue to be a producer of labour power rather than agricultural commodities? And conversely will much of wage labour throughout the economy and not just in agriculture, continue to be super-exploited, made cheap by being migrant?

It is these issues that are our concern here. We shall explore what answers have been offered to these questions in Zimbabwe, where we shall find a surprising continuity in some aspects of the thinking about policies in agriculture from the days before UDI. We shall then critically examine other strategies that might address some of the problems in the early stages of transformation in a more realistic way — in part by a comparison with other countries, like Mozambique and Nicaragua that have inherited situations where peasant agriculture provides migrant labour to a large scale commercial agriculture and to the rest of the economy.

A useful point of departure in exploring such an alternative, more appropriate transformation is, first, to examine what any ‘socialist’ strategy would be alternative to. It is commonly implied that there is a ‘neo-colonial’ variant to existing structures and that this would take the form in southern Africa of a removal of racial obstacles to the entry of blacks into the bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie (including a commercialised rich peasant stratum) and the skilled, technical labour force but otherwise the retention of the cheap labour system. Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland are given as instances of ‘flag independence’ where dependence on labour export and/or internal labour migration continues. Recent ‘reforms’ in South Africa can be pointed to as offering support for the same reasoning: modifications to apartheid that would end migration and insecurity of urban residence for petty bourgeois and skilled
labour elements but only by confirming the majority of blacks in an even more repressive and institutionalised migrant system. In contrast the ‘radicalising’ impact of protracted guerrilla warfare, reputedly, fosters a social as well as national revolution — and that social revolution, it is implied, would involve changing the society’s character from one of the reproduction of cheap labour power.

Such reflections might lead to a simplistic conclusion, from the recognition that capitalism in southern Africa takes the form of migrant labour reproduction, to the effect that the cheap labour system cannot be basically transformed short of an overthrow of capitalism, and conversely, a strategy for transformation, must, whatever else, put a swift end to migrant labour. It is clearly important to discuss what the implications of the cheap labour form of capitalism are for any transition strategy in any part of southern Africa. Indeed that is exactly the focus of this paper. However, such discussion might well be informed by a recognition, first, that a liberal, reformist prescription for ending or at least seriously modifying labour migration — and obviously thus within a capitalist system — has been offered over many years in various parts of southern Africa. It was evident in some ‘reformist’ thinking in South Africa from the 1940s on. Harry Oppenheimer, ex-boss of the Anglo-American Corporation has called for the abolition of migrant labour by giving permanent urban residence to some categories of African workers, proposals echoed in the late 1970s by the official Riekert Commission. But earlier another official Commission (Tomlinson) had offered a proposal for social engineering on the basis of ‘separate development’, which through ‘betterment’ of peasant farming and industry in the reserves would gradually end migration to the white areas. However, it is the continuity of such proposals in Rhodesia from the 1950s up to the present in Zimbabwe that we shall chiefly examine. We shall see how, then as now, there are on the agenda plans which aim to end a migrant labouring peasantry, by ‘freeing’ those with jobs from the land and by fostering on the other hand a segment of the peasants as a more settled peasantry capable of sustaining itself by cultivation alone. Of course, the mere specification of such projects does not mean that the end of migration is realisable under capitalism. And we shall in fact see that one fundamental flaw in such proposals for social engineering in any realistic context tends to leave a residual impoverished population for whom there is no provision for livelihood from either wage labour or peasant commodity production. But we shall also attempt to show that even though there is an important quantitative difference between the so-called ‘radical’ development strategies that are being touted for Zimbabwe in recent years and the liberal or ‘evolutionary’ ones, the same basic prescription, of separating out the worker-peasant migrants into settled proletarians or settled peasants, lies at the root of both proposed paths. Moreover, we shall see that though the ‘radical’ strategies would put more resources in the hands of the peasants and give more income to workers, their proposals also fail to cater for all the worker-peasant families and consign some, even if a much smaller number, to final impoverishment.

Plans for Ending Migrancy: The Reforms of the 1950s
The racial division of land in Zimbabwe began in the 1890’s with the first white settlers. The Land Apportionment Act in 1930 formerly established exclusive European areas which accounted for more than a half of the total land area, Africans were forced into Native Reserves which accounted for about 21 per cent
of the country. This division was later adjusted to give equal African and white areas. An effect of the restrictions placed upon African settlement was to make necessary a transformation from shifting to continuous cultivation. Central government demarcated land in the reserves into permanent arable and permanent grazing land but this division was unsuited to African techniques of farming and consequently hastened soil erosion. The major aim of the division of land was to ensure a steady supply of labour to white farms, mines and industry through the partial displacement of Africans from the rural areas. Competition in product markets was no longer tolerated as the white central government imposed a barrage of legal restrictions on African productive activity and discriminatory pricing policies, like The Maize Control Act, 1931.

The 1930s saw the earlier supremacy of black farming production eroded by white settlers. Discriminatory legislation bolstered white agriculture against black food production and had the desired effect of increasingly forcing Africans to look for wage employment in the towns. An effort was made to buy off the dissatisfaction of a privileged minority of Africans with the simultaneous provision of Native Purchase Areas. Here, land could be bought by Africans but was allocated only by the government which thereby controlled the development of an African agricultural petty bourgeoisie. Access to NPAs was to become the prize for a substantially richer peasant group who had more land and equipment—a strategy that recurs in agricultural policy debates.

As the interests of industry and in particular multinational capital grew the need for a more permanent and cheap African wage labour force to work in the urban areas also grew. The agrarian policies of the 1930s and 1940s had been to placate white settler concerns by ensuring that African farmers should not compete fairly in the market. Instead two-tier pricing policies were developed, thereby protecting the inefficient white farmers. Such a policy, although suiting the settlers, was not conducive to stable, profitable industrial development. The cost of food to feed workers in the towns was too high. Large quantities of foodstuffs had to be imported at inflated international prices, as settler farmers were turning increasingly to producing tobacco for export. Industrial capital recognised that the reserves would have to be able to produce more foodstuffs for market, but this must be done without posing an ‘unfair’ disadvantage to white settler farming interests. Moreover, such efforts to give peasants cash incomes would stimulate the internal market for manufactured goods. It was a result of such calculations that the first efforts at ‘reform’ of Rhodesian agriculture were taken. They represent an early attempt to erode a migrant labour economy by establishing a permanent urban proletariat and a full-time peasantry. In particular by denying urban workers access to the reserves this legislation sought to solve an irregular and inadequate supply of labour to the towns and an ‘over-population’ (land shortage) difficulty in the reserves, while at the same time generating an expanding market for manufactures among African peasants. There was also the provision for a rural petty bourgeoisie whose interests in the land could ensure greater stability although the development of such a group had to be shielded from economic attacks by white agricultural interests.

Plots of land in the reserves were to be standardised. Allocation of land by chiefs was to end with each man cultivating land during the current or past year being given an individual title to a standard area of land. No plot could be subdivided below this size, which varied according to rainfall areas, but titles to other land
could be purchased as long as no one held more than three times the standard size. One intended result was that better off farmers, usually the Master Farmers who might also be village notables, could acquire even larger holdings of land.** In the process of granting titles some became landless and those absent or left out of registration, especially women, were left without access to means of subsistence. Because of immense land pressure in the reserves any aggregation into larger plots through buying up land could only have occurred with further depopulation. Moreover, where livestock numbers were more than the prescribed number for the area, farmers were to be forced to destock.

These proposals were to be the downfall of the Todd government. Coinciding with a downturn in the Rhodesian economy more anger than usual was directed towards what was perceived as forced racial integration. Dissatisfied members of the ruling United Federal Party formed an opposition party — the Rhodesian Front — which was to win the election of 1962 and to begin at once the dismantling of previous attempts at multi-racialism. The subsequent defence of white agricultural interests took the immediate form of the creation of Tribal Trust Lands from what were previously known as reserves. Major legislation was to follow in 1967 and 1969 which formed the basis of the land division up to the present. The 1967 Tribal Trust Land Act replaced the NLHA and basically returned the allocation of land to the chiefs and kraal heads. This Act firmly rejected solutions to ending an economy based on migrant labour and tried to turn the clock back. As Duggan has commented, thereafter secondary industry was to follow the dictates of white farmers and wages workers who feared an African bourgeoisie in the towns or the countryside and needed Africans only as labourers, not as consumers.

There is little evidence of what actually happened to land tenure after the 1967 Act and during the war, but it seems those allocated individual arable plots in the 1950s under NLHA retained them; other arable plots were thereafter allocated from the communal grazing.

Reform Proposals for Post-Independence: ‘Land Husbandry’ Rides Again

In 1978 and 1979 a number of proposals for land ‘reform’ were put forward, from within the government of ‘Rhodesia-Zimbabwe’, by aid agencies and outside consultants and academics. Many were based around some minimal land redistribution and the need to focus efforts within the communal areas on a group of ‘true’ farmers as distinct from ‘mere cultivators’, as a way of redressing the increasing imbalance in the productive performance between white and black agriculture. The Muzorewa government recognised the need for removing the racial division of land but basically wanted to make only a limited redistribution of land between large commercial farms and the peasant areas. This strategy corresponded well with the views of the leaders of the Rhodesian National Farmers Union. But as well as some ‘orderly’ and limited transfer of white land, these groups did agree that more resources should be directed to the communal areas, and re-echoed NLHA in urging that ‘ultimately all this land can be reclassified and held under freehold title’. Such ideas found expression at the

**Actual purchases of land titles under the Act were few however. By 1963 less than 0.15 per cent of reserve land titles and less than 1.08 per cent of grazing rights had changed hands, see Weinrich.
time of Smith's handover to Muzorewa, in the *Integrated Plan for Rural Development*.

Relations of production in the communal and 'commercial' areas were to be left untouched, although greater security of tenure was to be developed in the communal areas for the most productive farmers, while it was intended that many of the 'cultivators' would leave (permanently) for wage employment in the towns. This was its strategem for social engineering; large numbers of non-farmers . . . occupy extremely unproductive large areas of agricultural land . . . a high percentage of the Africans (therefore) currently residing in the TTLs will have to be absorbed into the wage economy. Land pressure will thus be relieved and farming land will be productively utilised by true farmers'.

We can make a number of criticisms of the *Integrated Plan for Rural Development* just in its own terms. Costed at 1977 prices the government would have needed to pay out R$115 million a year to operate the scheme, mainly to buy land at inflated prices, which was twice the 1974 level of the government's capital expenditure. Moreover the 27 per cent of European land that was proposed for redistribution was wholly inadequate to reduce the population density in the TTLs. Irrigation schemes would provide only 56,800 permanent jobs after ten years. So there would still have been a massive residue of people in the TTLs who would be completely impoverished.

In a more conciliatory, but nevertheless similar fashion to previous programmes for agricultural reform, the Whitsun Foundation — a 'liberal' think-tank set up by an ex-World Bank economist in Salisbury in the mid-1970s — has offered perhaps the most detailed blueprints for a more distinct separation of rural and urban populations in Zimbabwe. Their strategy was dependent upon the bolstering and further encouragement of a class of African 'commercial' farmers with a 'permanent stake in the land in the communal areas through security of tenure'. This group of 'aspirant commercial farmers' is to be drawn from the 'true' farmers — 25 per cent of the total population in the TTLs they estimate (how?) numbering at most 170,000 farming families, almost one million people. They are supposed to emulate the most successful African farmers in the 'African Purchase Areas', now numbering some 170,000 people on 8,500 farms to which they have individual title, who had an estimated *per capita* income of $59 in 1976, twice the usual income for a cultivator in a TTL. However, the Whitsun reports admit that there will remain three groups which cannot be so easily swept under the carpet by the tidy planners: 'Urban dependents', an estimated 750,000, mostly women, who rely upon people working in the towns for a money income to live; unemployed and underemployed school leavers unable to get work in the wage sector; plus an amorphous group of 'Others', who are 'traditional dwellers in the sector . . . who are economically active in only a casual fashion but who do farm the land'. *Per capita* income for this group was estimated at only $22 in 1976.

Whitsun talks of the need for a two-pronged rural development strategy. One of these is based on a *transfer* principle involving the shift of labour from low productivity peasant farming into higher income wage employment. A second strategy and paralleling this is the development of a programme to *transform* farming methods and so improve conditions within the residual peasant sector. This is all in the context of only a limited recourse to resettlement. Of course,
little scope is offered for alternative forms of productive organisation, like co-operatives, except as limited experiments in the communal areas. Land resettlement must rather be concerned with settling only the most productive African farmers and then on land presently 'vacated or unused rather than on land that is already productively farmed'.

Whitsun’s proposals for separating out a productive group of African commercial farmers is unsubtle. Less visible but implied in their plan is the dumping of a ‘residual’ African population in the communal areas. The latter follows because of the inability of the urban sector to cater for strata for whom an agricultural strategy offers nothing — leaving them to fall between the stools of increasingly commercialised peasant areas and the commercial farming areas. Whitsun’s proposals were concerned with the need to privatise farming activities in the African areas by introducing a system of individual tenure which will provide sufficient motivation for African farmers and security for acquiring credit facilities.

The Whitsun proposals are the best documented of those which invite strategies for limited redistribution of unused white-owned land, the promotion of a stratum of African kulaks and the conversion of most of the TTL-dwellers into an urban proletariat (or, for many, landless unemployed). Proposals along similar lines can be found in the outpourings of aid agencies, of liberal academics, and even some of the thinking that informed the early post-Independence thinking, like the ‘Chidzero Report’, prepared by the UN for the incoming Government, under the direction of the present Minister for Planning.

The Foundation itself has in fact done some rethinking in the post-Independence period which it has offered in a recent report (Land Reform in Zimbabwe, 1983), in which it throws its weight behind a reduction in Government’s plans for resettlement, in the interests of ‘maintaining production’. But it has modified its proposal for individualised land tenure, in the Communal Areas at least — seemingly recognising the problem of absorbing those who would be disrupted by private land ownership. And interestingly enough in the context of this paper, it questions the rigid insistence on ‘full-time farming’ on the resettlement schemes — but for more on this see later sections below.

The Riddell Commission is probably still the most comprehensive assessment since Independence of development problems, and specifically those of the rural areas in Zimbabwe. This commission represented a ‘radical’ perspective in contrast to the liberal-reformist ones considered above. The commission found that the ‘tremendous pressures on land’ in African rural areas have led to the use of grazing areas for cultivation and a significant increase in soil erosion both of which are major causes of discontent among the African population. In many areas the subdivision of grazing land into arable land led many villages to drive their cattle to graze on neighbouring commercial farms. One basic conclusion they drew is that much land should be made available to the African farming community. But, still they argued that this resettlement must, and (here they did differ from Whitsun and its like) indeed need, in no way affect the present level of productivity in the ‘commercial’ European farms.

At the time of the Commission report the government’s plan was for only an additional 1.1 million to 2 million hectares of land to be bought in three years, of
this most would be in the poorest quality areas, Natural Regions IV and V as they are termed, which are only recommended for semi-intensive and extensive livestock production rather than crop husbandry. The pace and extent of this resettlement was considered to be woefully inadequate.

One of Riddell’s basic concerns is in fact with reducing the numbers of ‘split families’, an estimated 235,000, which live in the reserves but are in some way dependent upon urban wage employment from the male head of household. The need to erode the basis of a migrant labour system is at the core of the agrarian reform proposed. Even given the more radical context and the more extensive land resettlement embodied in these proposals, again the numbers do not work out. That is to say even after subtracting those to be resettled to 1984, Riddell is left with an excess number of 185,500. The urban areas cannot absorb the residue of rural poor quickly enough let alone cope with the growth in population estimated at over 3 per cent per annum.

The report cannot find a solution to the ‘excess’ families as long as plans for ‘restructuring’ the rural sector are dependent upon: first, the purchase of ‘European land on a willing, buyer and willing seller basis thus restricting the pace of resettlement and the type of land being acquired and secondly, the general context for rural as well as urban reform is one where the immediate concerns are to maintain the short term profitability and levels of productivity of the inherited political economy’. As we shall see, these limitations have continued to plague resettlement in its early stages, but to our minds a more basic issue is that this Report too was premised upon a division being made between either a life in urban employment without a stake in the land or a plot in rural areas. It thus does offer a blueprint for changing the economy from dependence upon migrant labour. And to be sure, there is a range of policies recommended which give a much greater boost to peasant agriculture through increased market opportunities, more accessible marketing facilities, vastly increased extension staff and attractive producer prices. Significantly, too, a more extensive redistribution of land is envisaged than in the liberal proposals. And cooperatives in resettlement and peasant farming areas are identified as the most desirable form of production — envisaging these as self-governing rather than government-promoted. It urges that peasants themselves must have more say in the allocation of land and farming practices and this can only be done with the development of village committees which involve villagers in the planning of their own lives. However radically the Riddell Commission recommendations depart from those of the Whitsun foundation, both are strategies based on one common prescription for getting rid of migrant labour: a division of the existing peasant-worker population of migrant workers and their rural dwelling families into an urban proletariat cut off from the land, on the one hand, and a settled, full-time peasantry on the other hand. What is more, even though the ‘radical’ alternative would settle more peasants on more former white land and with more inputs and supporting services, any realistic assessment of the radical variant of this strategy in the context of Zimbabwe’s present potential is going to leave in the middle of this divide a residue of poor for whom there is no provision of neither land nor jobs.

Social Engineering — by Numbers!
To illustrate this common element in ‘reform’ proposals of the 1950s and of today
and ‘radical’ thinking and how they all accept the inevitability of an impoverished residue, neither peasants or workers, it is instructive to follow the kind of ‘numbers game’ that is played in the course of this social engineering. The limited reform proposals around the Land Husbandry Act of the 1950s were put forward during the heyday of an industrial boom in Rhodesia in the wake of World War II, post-war expansion and the Central African Federation’s creation of a wider market. No great difficulty was foreseen in balancing the equation. Those inevitably displaced from the reserves as a result of individual titles and an emerging market in land would be absorbed easily into wage employment. The then Prime Minister, Garfield Todd, stated it clearly:

We do not want native peasants. We want the bulk of them working in the mines and farms and in the European areas and we could absorb them and their families.

His calculation was that if 100,000 families were moved from the rural areas ‘... we can begin to cope with what is left ... and give each family 150 or 200 acres on a 99 year lease’.

A most ingenious bit of arithmetic was offered by a geographer, George Kay, who though writing in 1980 about a population policy for ‘Zimbabwe — Rhodesia’, bases his calculations on 1969 population figures. His article makes no apology for its ‘social engineering’ and is replete with diagrams showing how he would syphon off population from the reserves and thus put an end to migrant labour. ‘... Those employed in the money economy should live there with their families; and they should be required to do so’, he admonishes. And so his diagrams show 500,000 women and children, dependents of migrant workers, out of a 1969 population of the TTLs of three million, could be ladelled out of the reserves into the town and white farms. But the land pressure in the TTLs would be further eased by the removal of a further 930,000 people, menfolk with families who would be made landless. His two steps would reduce the population of the reserves by 50 per cent — and, in his model, all without any massive job creation or land redistribution. And how was this magic to be achieved? The first half million simply by requiring ‘dependents’ to join ‘their’ menfolk (which makes a lot of assumptions about the nature of families) the opposite of the apartheid strategy. But how would the second almost million be absorbed? Just get rid of the 230,000 ‘aliens’, the Mozambican, Malawian and other workers in agriculture and other sectors. That many jobs would become available to rural Zimbabweans who would bring their dependents with them!

The Riddell Commission’s numbers are different. It envisaged two million hectares of land being transferred by 1984 — for 35,000 families from the Communal Areas (CAs). Nor do the Commissioners contemplate any savage policies of repatriating non-Zimbabweans. But though the numbers vary, the kind of calculation is not markedly different.

| Estimated total in CAs | 780,000 families in 1980 |
| Carrying capacity of CAs | 325,000 families |

So what to do with the excess of 455,000 families?

But the number of split families is 235,000 — so for them the answer is do nothing or hope (plan?) they will quit the land when wages are high enough. Planned resettlement will take care of another 35,000 families but that still leaves a residual of 185,000 ‘too many’ families in CA’s (if one accepts the highly ideological concept of ‘carrying capacity’) — and just like Todd in 1957 it is hoped
that industrialisation will gradually mop them up. And one basic intention is there: of ‘uniting’ the ‘split families’. Unlike Kay, the Report envisages that this will be achieved by not ‘requiring’ it but by the incentives offered by higher minimum wages, social security provision and improved urban housing.

**Land Distribution and Resettlement in Independent Zimbabwe**

Debate about any land reform tends to revolve around the issue of what to do with the *land*; and how many of the large private estates should be appropriated? On what terms should they be acquired? Should they be divided up or redistributed or be run as co-operatives or state farms? And so it has been in Zimbabwe. As our earlier discussion implies, there are differing answers of course. The straight neo-colonial answer was to propose that only a small proportion of white-owned land, and that the uncultivated or non-profitable areas should be taken over — and that in turn often meant in the regions of lower potential on the edges of the former ‘white reserves’ bordering the African ‘communal areas’. The land transfer was to provide generous compensation, thus preserving the sanctity of property and property values, and was to be essentially ‘orderly’. The land was to be largely individually owned, and kept, as far as possible, in ‘economic’ sized holdings, which, if it has any meaning, means capable of generating a marketable surplus. These provisions were in fact written into the Lancaster House Constitution by Britain, who had these patterns well worked out after their experience with Kenya and Swaziland. And in fact this has been basically the pattern that has been followed in Zimbabwe up to now.

There is another question that has to be answered about land reform, however: *who* is to benefit? Putting this question last, or ignoring it completely, points analysis in a direction that inexorably leads to the kind of ‘dualist’ social engineering that we have been criticising. In the conventional neo-colonial strategy in former colonies, identifying beneficiaries is derived from the concern for ‘orderliness’ and for maintaining levels of production of agricultural commodities: land should go to more capable peasants with knowledge and resources enough to handle plots that can yield a marketable surplus, apart, that is, from some gesture of providing land for the landless to let the political ‘steam out of the kettle’, to quote Kenyatta’s famous phrase. The ‘radicals’, if they also start by defining the issue as a ‘land question’, want more and better land to be given out, and may well favour co-operatives, and in addition, may want land to go to the poor rather than the better-off peasants; land should be given out to solve the problem of landlessness not just to safeguard productivity. At least we should be glad that this view of who should get land has prevailed in Zimbabwe, within the minimal land distribution programme so far implemented, avoiding the Kenya pattern where land, after the very first stage, was not given to landless but to those who could put down a deposit for land for which they would have to make considerable repayments. Zimbabwe has not required payment, and for the most part has recruited new settlers on the basis of need. A problem arises, however, as we shall argue in a moment, when it comes to the definition of this ‘need’. Although it must also be noted that like the situation in Kenya immediately after Independence, there has in Zimbabwe been a growing rush of African party officials, bureaucrats and businessmen to buy former European farms through the market.
Before discussing the Zimbabwean strategy further it is worth indicating the grounds on which we criticise this posing of the issues in terms of the question of what to with the the land and who to put on it — irrespective of whether the answers are ‘reformist’ or ‘radical’. Put briefly, the discussion often smacks of a fetishism, a concern with a ‘thing’, the land, rather than a recognition that one is concerned with social relationships. At root the issue should be how to provide for people not how to use land; not what to do with the land — except as a means to solving the more basic issue of how to secure a livelihood for people denied one; how to change the nature of society, not how to redraw the map. A perspective which, thus, prompts us to think in terms of people, their class categories, and their needs, in turn provides a more accurate picture of the social realities of a country like Zimbabwe — and others in southern Africa. It reminds us that most people are not ‘workers’ or ‘peasants’, but what are variously described as ‘worker-peasants’, ‘labour migrants’ (plus their families), or ‘semi-proletarians’. And, consequently, any discussion of a transition to socialism, or even land reform of any sort, has to raise the question of who is to benefit from agrarian transformation. Answers restricted to the rich peasants or even to the ‘landless’ ignore the overwhelming majority of rural dwellers.

In Zimbabwe, a realisation of the slow pace of settlement in the first two years led to proposals for a much accelerated programme of land acquisition and distribution in late 1981. The target announced in March 1981 at the Zimbabwe Aid Donor’s Conference had been for 35,000 families to be resettled over three years. Actual progress was much slower. Only 6,400 families had been resettled by the end of January 1982. This slow rate was, of course, due in part to the teething problems of building up an organisation to handle the resettlement. The target itself was then dramatically revised — to 162,000 families in the three years up to the end of 1984. The attainment of this number of families for resettlement is still a long way off but by May 1983, 21,000 families had actually taken up their holdings on schemes that would in time settle 33,886 families on 1,656,740 hectares of land.

To identify those considered to be in need, a thorough exercise of distributing forms for registration was pursued by resettlement officers through the newly-elected District Councils, working often through local party committees. The criteria for eligibility for registration and used for selecting some to be settled on the settlement schemes at first excluded those with more substantial or what could be considered ‘adequate’ holdings, although recently pressure has mounted — in the 1983 Whitsun report and even among bureaucrats — to cast the net wider to include ‘proven communal farmers’, justified as making ‘more effective use of larger farms’. But there were two other conditions: those who had jobs were not considered eligible; and although women could apply with their families this was limited to ‘widows’. Thus the structuring of recruitment even for the expanded resettlement programme has implicit in it the intention that new land should not be allocated to dependents of migrant workers. It can be seen as part of a strategy of eliminating migrant labour. Put in other terms, the beneficiaries of the projected land redistribution are the near landless and jobless poor peasants, a kind of ‘sub-proletariat’, and excludes the most numerous element of the rural areas the dependents of migrants, the worker-peasant or semi-proletariat class.

There is no doubt that these measures do have the virtue, if this is to be only the
first stage of an even more extensive land distribution, of giving priority for the most part to those in the rural areas with the most urgent needs. However, we should note that there is a danger of excluding one element of those in direct need: those households headed by women who are not classified as 'widows', or women on their own for some other reason. The generations of labour migration and the disruption of war have left many women in these positions. For instance in a small village survey of 54 households that we conducted in 1982 there were eight (13 per cent) in these categories one of three former wives of a polygamous herbalist with 16 children between them — that was not registered for resettlement. But even insofar as the criteria were widened to include all jobless and land poor, questions would arise about the appropriateness of an approach to resettlement seen as ignoring or quickly eliminating migrant labour, and about the form of settlement provided. To take this latter objection first, the near landless have their immediate needs met by being allocated individual resettlement plots, but resettlement if it were, at a later stage, to provide some security and additional livelihood for dependents of migrants let alone be part of a transition to socialism, would have to have some co-operative dimension — at least so as to provide a collective entity to which a man returning when out of work or for a family or members of it leaving to live in the town.

But there are other objections to this approach to settlement. Politically, it means that the benefits of land — the object of struggle in the war of national liberation — are to be denied the largest class or sub-class in the countryside, the worker peasants. There may also be the possibility of a situation where restricting settlement to the near landless-jobless may not yield enough settlers for the new accelerated programme, or at least an extension of it. Our village study of 1982 cannot be more than indicative as it was a small sample and not representative of the whole country. However, we were intrigued to find that only six existing households out of 54 had in fact registered for resettlement — plus three sons of existing households — in what was classed as an ‘extreme’ to ‘desperately’ overcrowded area. Of course part of the answer might be maladministration, though we only found two households who said they would have registered but had not. The problem does seem to be partly a matter of the restrictive nature of eligibility. Fifty-two percent of all households had a head who was a migrant worker or had a local job, and would have been ineligible for settlement. Over 20 per cent were non-migrant (but usually former migrants) with adequate land, who for the moment would also not qualify. Those resident and without jobs or enough land, amounted to only 22 per cent, but of these twelve families, two were women on their own, four were women-headed households, who would also not be eligible.

What must also be considered is not just the issue of settler selection, but how much sense do present resettlement plans make as part of an overall development strategy, that would end labour migration? The Riddell Commission’s approach, it could be said is to make no provision for migrant families other than wage increases, and hope the problem will disappear. But is this even realistic? If more land is provided for families through resettlement or by more elbow room in the CAs, and they do produce more crops, doesn’t it make even more sense for them to do so and still have members working outside? Or conversely, even if jobs are better paid why isn’t it even better for the family to also retain a plot of land? This latter issue is of course tied up with social security.
There have been two rises in minimum wages since Independence, but as a spokesman of the new Congress of Trade Unions stated in late 1981 any exclusion of workers' families from resettlement before adequate old age, unemployment, sickness and other social security benefits are guaranteed is unfair — and, one might add, unrealistic. In addition, one might ask what is the logic of a policy that would massively inflate the urban population and require better urban housing for them, at this state of reconstruction and transition?

Comparative Perspective on Agrarian Strategy in Labour Migrant Societies

Mozambique. In the colonial period the 'peasantry', in differing ways in different regions, was engaged in some wage (or forced) labour as well as subsistence production. Out of over 1 million workers less than a quarter were permanent. Ruth First's study of the southern region that supplied the contract labour to the South African mines concludes with an exploration of what it terms the 'worker-peasant'. The report stresses how extensive contract labour was and how most men spent a large proportion of their working lives as mine workers. Moreover, the study, and even the very term, bring out the interdependence of wage labour and peasant economy. The income earned from wage labour is what made possible the original setting up of a household and what provides the means to obtain ploughs, oxen and other improved means of production in agriculture. At the same time domestic production of food for subsistence and other use values subsidised the wage, which was in turn so small that families had also to produce crops for sale. The mine earnings also provide the stimulus for artisan and handicraft work by petty commodity producers in the rural areas. It is because of such linkages and because the agricultural system has got locked into a pattern of labour supply that the closing up of the labour market in South Africa has been associated with a crisis of agricultural production — both of subsistence crops and cash crops. These consequences point to the unviability of the inherited agriculture once deprived of incomes from migrant labour — a conclusion that would, we believe, apply as much to Zimbabwe, if it had to face such a problem.

The Mozambique government thus had to respond to an enforced situation: it wasn't eliminating migrant labour as a matter of choice, as in Zimbabwe. The exodus of settler farmers and the debilitation of plantations in all parts of the country, and the general running down of the economy vastly reinforced the loss of employment opportunities resulting from the reduction in mine contracts to South Africa. At the same time, the Government responded to the Portuguese exodus by taking over vacated land, and ran them as state farms. The equation of putting unemployed former migrants to work on state farms might have seemed an easy answer to the two problems of using vacated land and unemployed people. Whatever the calculations, the early policy of emphasis on state farms involved converting the former worker-peasants into an agricultural proletariat. Since 1978 the emphasis has changed — away from state farms to co-operatives (communal villages). Moreover, it is our understanding that in these villages there is no attempt to exclude the dependents of migrant workers or to preclude some members from taking work — and that women are members of the co-operatives in their own right. Contrast this with Zimbabwe where it is family units that are given household plots on the settlement schemes. Ruth First also recommended that the former mine workers' skills be recognised by providing
for repairs and other non-farming work and an appropriate division of labour in the communal villages — though we don't know how far this has occurred.

Of course, in other respects too, Mozambique differs from Zimbabwe. In the latter, the migrants are not working outside the country so much, employment opportunities have not so far been massively reduced, and enough of an embryo industrial base and minerals exist so that agriculture (and agricultural exports, particularly) are not the sole source of capital accumulation as it is in Mozambique (and Nicaragua). But it is still doubtful whether, even in Zimbabwe's better conditions, resettlement or communal areas can be sufficiently productive and industry grow enough to make families turn away from seeking security by diversifying their life chances.

Nicaragua. Despite the absence of racist and colonial forms, the structures of production and of classes in Nicaragua are not so different from those in southern Africa. The revolution of 1979 inherited an economy heavily dominated by large scale agro-export capital. Moreover the state inherited the half of this agro-export sector that had been in the hands of the family and close associates of former dictator Somoza. Rapid development of this capitalist agriculture had been at the expense of the peasantry which had been turned increasingly into what is now officially referred to as a 'semi-proletariat', seasonal workers with sub-subsistence plots, and a somewhat smaller 'sub-proletariat' of seasonal agricultural workers who were landless — the two groups together making up 53 per cent of the agricultural labour force.

In working out policy toward the acquired land, the Sandinista revolutionary movement (FSLN) debated whether to initiate state farms or co-operatives. There was no question of dividing up the existing farm units. This was because although the FSLN came to power on a 'land to the tiller' reform there was the concern that if Nicaragua's rural poor suddenly became landowners insufficient workers would be available to produce export crops so necessary to earn foreign exchange — the problem that in fact arose in Angola. One view of land reform would have concentrated on state farms in the estate sector — for reasons of the priority of agricultural exports for accumulation, and politically because it would create a proletariat, disciplined and capable of defending the revolution. This strategy would have involved drawing a clear line of (social) distinction between those who would work on the state farms and a food producing peasantry that would be increased by some of the semi-proletariat, who would be encouraged to cultivate more land — there being no land shortage. It was thought co-operatives could even be encouraged in the peasant areas. But this strategy would, like Riddell, have attempted to polarise the semi- and sub-proletariats into workers or peasants.

An alternative view was sensitive to the needs of the semi- or sub-proletariats and the other masses that supported the revolution and so urged priority be given to co-operatives formed in the peasant sector while stabilising state farms on the confiscated lands. In this strategy the agro-export sector was not to be cut off from the food-producing peasant sector: migration of 'semi-proletarian' labour seasonally would continue, and so in turn food as well as export production as a whole would not be sacrificed by hiving off a sizeable proportion of such families. Moreover land hungry campesinos wanting extra land to plant food crops persuaded state farms to 'lend' unused acreages, theoretically on a season to
season basis. Idle private farms were also taken over in the spring of 1981. This approach was in fact adopted when studies showed that, in Nicaraguan conditions (of work on the peasant plots largely in the hands of ‘dependents’, but also relative abundance of extra land to expand production), food production by co-operatives in the peasant sector (for subsistence and sale) would expand without drawing labour away permanently from export agriculture, at least up to the point where the co-operatives would have to hire labour. At that point rather than pay for hiring labour they would hold back on sending labour to the state farms or estates in the export sector. This strategy has been accompanied by a policy of paying high food prices, as a way of stimulating production in peasant co-operatives and also avoiding the classic ‘scissors problem’, experienced in Soviet agriculture, in Mozambique and elsewhere, where peasants have no incentive to produce surpluses when they cannot afford to purchase manufactures, or these are unavailable.

Again, the same equation will not necessarily fit conditions that differ from those in Nicaragua, where there is not the severe land shortage there is in Zimbabwe, which in turn prevents easy expansion of production in the existing peasant sector. In Nicaragua the problem is more of allocating labour, which is the scarce commodity, not land. This has meant that a policy of partial socialisation of production and of increasing production and incomes has been possible in the peasant areas without the need to redistribute land, as is necessary in Zimbabwe. But for our purposes here, what is worth noting is that the expanding peasant co-operatives do not preclude seasonal work elsewhere and moreover, a ‘dual’ strategy of dividing the ‘semi’-peasantry (the worker-peasants) into a proletariat on the one hand and a settled peasantry on the other was rejected.

Conclusions
This paper has raised one major issue linked to the possible social transformation of labour migrant societies in southern Africa: how will their class character be transformed? Does the transition to socialism require or should it seek to achieve the most rapid conversion of the inbetween class of migrants and their dependents into full proletarians? Is such a transformation in fact feasible in any foreseeable time scale? We have tried to cast some doubt on easy affirmative answers to these questions.

In the case of Zimbabwe we have shown how would-be capitalist restructuring proposals seek to hasten the full proletarianisation of a portion of “worker peasants” but only in a manner that would reduce that section to dependence on what would be likely to remain an inadequate wage, reduce another section to a permanent smallholder peasant status, and would create between the two classes a permanently impoverished residual group without land or job. We also sought to show that so-called ‘radical’ alternative strategies that might give better terms for workers and peasants and reduce the residual poor could produce a class structure of the same sort. The peasant resettlement scheme as long as it is based on individual holdings and on barriers to those with jobs or women getting more land, could also have the same effect of trying to divide the migrants into workers and peasants.

In contrast we have sought to ask whether the employment prospects and the urban environment could bear such a dividing line being draw, or indeed whether the people would in fact accept having to make the choice. And by whom and how
would it be policed anyway? Moreover, as we have seen from the Mozambique case, the development potential from linkages between agriculture and outside employment would be reduced. We have also sought to show from other experiences that alternative strategies that build from the persistence of a worker-peasant class during some transitional period are possible and worth examining.

Further thought is necessary to illumine these options. One prior task is the matter of the appropriate conceptualisation of the migrant or seasonal worker class. 'Worker-peasant', 'labour migrant' and 'semi-proletariat' are all variously used. Ruth First felt that such terms stress the fact migrants are 'both workers and peasants'; some of the Nicaraguan literature argues that they are 'neither workers nor peasants'. There has also been a tendency in writing about southern Africa to dismiss such complications and insist that they are essentially 'proletarians', exploited by capital — the truth but not the whole truth. Such a simplistic formulation does not help to understand the particular dynamic that there is or may be in such situations — both for (inadequate) reform or for revolutionary transformation.

More generally it is our belief that the differing conceptualisations cannot be shown to be 'correct' or not in the abstract; they can only be shown to be more or less 'appropriate' in illuminating the possibilities for action, for change. The chore of exploring different possible terms that are imprecise and ambiguous is useful because it is trying to capture a reality that is itself ambiguous. Which aspects of the combined existence are stressed is surely contingent on the context of struggle: is the task to mobilise support for the liberation cause? To chart agrarian or industrial strategy in a transition to socialism — or as a prelude to such transition? But in all contexts the combined characteristics can only be forgotten at the risk of over-simplification and ineffective strategy.

One final word might be made about the conceptualisation itself. As labels for a class as a whole, 'semi-proletariat' and 'worker-peasant' both suffer from the shortcoming of characterising the class by a term which describes the adult male members of it (a tendency that is common in contexts other than just southern Africa). But a recent study by the Zimbabwe Women's Bureau reminds us that it is equally valid to talk about 'farmer-housewives'. Such a conceptualisation reminds us that it is this other, female kind of dual, ambiguous role in social production, not the 'worker-peasant', that guarantees the reproduction of this class and of the whole of the cheap, migrant labour social formations of southern Africa. In turn the role of 'farmer-housewife' in social reproduction also helps to define the prospects for transforming such social formations, a transformation which will in turn redefine these social relations of reproduction, including whether women will remain with this dual role.

This formulation now opens the way to revealing another difficulty with a strategy that would divide away the worker-peasant/farmer-housewife in such countries as Zimbabwe. Such a strategy, if viable, might 'reunite' families, and thus help to limit a number of social problems — prostitution, drunkenness, the impoverishment of migrant widows — but it would in the process certainly do nothing to assert the rights of women to have access to means of production or to end their legal status as 'minors', and it might reduce them to the status of mere domestics and dependents, as 'housewives' looking after urban workers or full-
time peasant farmers. The women’s survey mentioned above in fact reported ‘quite vocal disappointment’ that it was men who completed forms for resettlement, that only men without waged jobs could apply, and that women other than widows were not eligible in their own right. The thinking that is used to justify such policies argues, in the words of the Minister responsible:

We cannot give land to the employed since they will not have time to work and develop that land . . . At the moment we have a lot of land which belongs to the unemployed, lying idle . . .

We think the facts would show that there is no land ‘lying idle’ in the former reserves of Zimbabwe; the workers may not have the time to farm it but the women certainly have to try to find that time. They are hard pressed and often these households are short of labour, but lack of access to land and instruments of production also curtail their production. Strategy must take account of the reality of the ‘farmer-housewife’ as well as the ‘worker-peasant’ if it is to be feasible and to be a step towards the liberation of the whole of society, and in the transition to socialism. Plans for restructuring must therefore allow them access to labour, which again suggests some degree of (appropriate) co-operation, to means of production. But it also means plans for land reform have to be co-ordinated with the social policies on the family, marriage, inheritance and other matters that could redefine women’s role.

Bibliographic Note
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Food Policy and Production in Mozambique since Independence

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Mozambique's food crisis is one of the most disastrous in Africa. Undeniably a result of systematic South African destabilisation, and made worse in the last years by drought, it has its origins in the colonial structure of agriculture and the shock of the sudden Portuguese exodus at Independence. But the paper explores, as Frelimo's 1983 Fourth Congress did, whether policy choices have not made matters worse. Attention is drawn to the last few years' emphasis on the former settler sector, its conversion to complex, costly and not very productive state farms; to low prices of food, to sustain an essentially Portuguese urban diet — all to the detriment of peasant farming.

Mozambique is currently in a food crisis of desperate proportions as a result of the severe drought which has affected large areas of southern and central Africa. This has been the worst for decades and there are reports of widespread starvation. Efforts to cope with this situation have been made much harder by the activities of MNR terrorists. But even before this latest series of blows the food situation was very serious and increasingly so. Food production has stagnated or declined since Independence in 1975, while urban demand increased very substantially. Thus even a four-fold increase in net cereal imports (ten-fold in money terms) has been insufficient to prevent increasing food shortages.

All agree that the external obstacles have been enormous, ranging from a massive exodus of Portuguese with crucial skills and harassment from South Africa to an unusually poor series of rainy seasons from 1978-80.

Even so, many of the problems have been exacerbated by government policies, both in the agricultural sector and elsewhere. Probably the most important of these has been the almost exclusive emphasis to date on the modern sectors in both agriculture and industry, implying heavy concentration of funds, materials and skills upon large-scale, complex and 'system-dependent' units of production, whose gross product has grown slowly while their net product is probably not much above zero. This in turn has starved the peasant sector of resources, markets for products and infrastructure. In combination with a policy of subsidising food for urban consumers, it has also kept prices to producers low, the disincentive factor being further emphasised in recent years by serious shortages of goods to purchase with money received from crop sales.

It is often claimed that the choice of a state-farm line was forced upon the Mozambican Government by the disruption of production occurring in the wake
of the Portuguese exodus. While there is some truth in this, I will seek to show
that the decision also rested on certain assumptions about what crops should be
given priority and upon a particularly over-simplified conception of agricultural
modernisation. The paper will also consider briefly some of the effects of
centralised physical planning in exacerbating the problems.

In recent years, increasing concern about the effects of this policy have
generated a greater expressed concern to encourage peasant production. Indeed,
at the Fourth Frelimo Congress in April 1983, the state-farm sector was selected
as the one agricultural sector not to be expanded. Co-operatives, peasants and
private farmers were to be expanded — the state farms were to be consolidated.
But, as discussed below, it is not clear how rapidly this can be done and
significant amounts of resources released to the peasant sector. There also
remain questions about what the policy is for peasant encouragement and how it
is to be implemented.

The Portuguese Exodus
Crucial to any understanding of Mozambique, and especially its agriculture, is the
disruption occurring in the years after 1974. After the coup in Portugal and
especially when it became clear that power in Mozambique would pass to
Frelimo, the next three or four years saw a massive exodus of Portuguese, taking
with them most available formal skills down to the level of (say) taxi-driver or
mechanic's assistant. Even by African colonial standards, the Portuguese had
been notorious for how little encouragement they gave (and how much
obstruction they imposed) on even minimal advancement for the vast mass of the
African population. But even more important than the loss of individual skills
was the near total collapse of the marketing, transport, supply and service
systems and sectors.

Of particular relevance to agricultural policy was the exodus not only of
commercial farmers, producing for the Maputo and other urban markets, but also
of the agricultural marketing systems within which they had operated and
systems for the supply of agricultural inputs and equipment, spare parts and
services. This collapse and the resulting crisis of food supply to the cities were
among the major reasons for the decision first to nationalise abandoned farms
and later to invest in new large-scale agricultural and agro-industrial projects.

Colonial Agriculture in Mozambique
The most salient feature of Portuguese colonial agricultural policy was an almost
total lack of assistance or encouragement for the development of peasant
commercial production. Almost the sole exception to this was the enforced
cultivation of certain export crops. The term 'family-sector', which was and still
is used to cover the peasantry, has much the flavour of 'subsistence sector', and
where own-farm production was concerned, policy was to keep it that way. There
was (and broadly speaking still is) no extension service for the family sector, no
state agricultural credit and no infrastructural investment except in Portuguese
settled areas. Input-supply was restricted to what private traders would stock.

But beyond the lack of encouragement, there was considerable outright
obstruction of peasant commercialisation, since it would have offered alternative
uses for the labour which was normally in short supply. Forced (chibalo) labour
continued to be widespread right up to 1974 and to reinforce an already strong
tendency in southern Mozambique for males of working age to migrate to South Africa (at the same time as being a response to the labour-shortage provoked by that migration). During the decade before Independence when rapid growth of Portuguese commercial farming in southern Mozambique made the competition for labour particularly sharp, African commercial agricultural production was further discouraged by rules restricting transactions to barter and thus giving every opportunity to the trader to depress the terms of trade. The only Africans to receive any assistance were the very few ‘assimilados’ who, in the process of becoming honorary Portuguese were (legally) redefined from ‘family-producers’ to ‘farmers’. This made them eligible both for credit and for allocations of chibalo labourers from the state, though they seem to have received lowest priority in both cases. (Alpheus Manghezi, personal communication).

Nevertheless, in spite of this obstruction, there was some growth of African commercial production of staple foods, notably maize, beans and groundnuts. Since the marketing system was private and statistics virtually non-existent, it is impossible to know the extent, but it does seem likely to have produced a significant proportion of supplies of these foods for the African urban population.

In the 10 to 15 years before Independence, there occurred a major development in Portuguese commercial agriculture, notably in the south of the country and near to major cities. The city of Lourenço Marques grew very rapidly during that period, with major, officially encouraged immigration from Portugal and state encouragement and financial assistance for industrial development. This enormously increased demand for food in the capital and other major cities — and quite specifically for ‘European’ and high-income foodstuffs: wheat flour, meat and dairy products, rice and fresh vegetables. In response to this demand — and to vigorous governmental support — commercial farming of such products developed rapidly, and with it a network of marketing, supply and service firms and agencies. The speed of this development was probably enhanced by the fact that many of the firms and farmers came from South Africa, where the Portuguese were already dominant in vegetable farming for some of the major towns.

Apart from the labour involved in production, this development was very tightly circumscribed within the Portuguese population. The farmers were almost all Portuguese, the marketing and supply system was Portuguese or South African and the consumers almost all white. Not only were such products too expensive for most Africans, but they could usually not buy them even if they had the money. Shops were in European areas, preference given to regular customers purchasing daily and in some cases sale to Africans forbidden outright.

Independence and Urban Food Supply
Among the first actions of Frelimo on Independence and assuming power, was to freeze the prices of major commercialised foodstuffs and, of course, to get rid of the previous sumptuary rules. Thus, just at the time when the commercial farming sector was falling into disarray with the exodus of farmers and collapse of the marketing and supply systems, urban demand for its products rocketed. Prices of high-income foodstuffs had already contained an element of subsidy before Independence and this was much increased by fixing their prices while all others, and wages, were rising in money terms. The result was predictable enough, shortages and increasing imports — and pressure upon the government
and state agencies to do something about the situation.

In responding to this situation, those who made the decisions took the pattern of consumption more or less for granted. It is not especially surprising that they did so. Most of those involved within the bureaucracy and planning machinery took this pattern of consumption for granted for themselves. Frelimo had also committed itself to a policy of spreading the consumption of ‘better’ types of food to all.

But this is certainly not the only basis which could have been taken for decision-making. The composition of the cities, and especially Lourenço Marques/Maputo had changed radically, high- and middle-income whites having been replaced by much poorer Africans. It would thus have made as much, or more, sense to aim at adequate supplies of their normal basic staple foods (maize, cassava, beans and groundnuts) before aiming at the more luxurious end of the scale. However, even had any significant part of the decision-making machinery favoured such a line, it would have been extremely difficult politically to put through a policy so redolent of the most depressing bourgeois economic ‘good-sense’ — and most especially in the first years after Independence when hopes and optimism were high, political aims broad and generous and the constraints had yet to show how severe they would become.

Priority Crops and Choice of Technique
To a very considerable extent, the decision to try to maintain production of meat and dairy products, wheat and rice, potatoes and fresh vegetables, pre-judged the issue of choice of technique and scale of production. With the exceptions of some rice and slaughter cattle, these products had been produced almost exclusively by Portuguese prior to Independence. The techniques in force (and encouraged by the colonial state) were generally ‘modern’, that is chemical input and machinery-intensive. For the same reason, they were heavily dependent upon the effective functioning of marketing and supply systems — and of course upon foreign exchange for the imports of inputs and equipment.

While maize, cassava, beans and groundnut production for sale had certainly not been encouraged under colonialism, they were crops known to the majority of peasants, with techniques of production adjusted to their farm-size, labour, skill and financial capacity. But wheat, for example, was grown in Mozambique only on large fully-mechanised farms, methods for hand or ox-cultivation being unknown to any but a few small Portuguese farmers from memories of peasanthood in Portugal. Potatoes and vegetables were grown under irrigation and with seeds and a complex array of different chemicals to be imported and distributed. Dairy production for the urban market had also depended largely upon large farms with grade or exotic animals, importing feedstuffs and drugs and even more dependent upon timely arrival of supplies and services and regular collection of products.

To some extent then, the choice of these commercial crops almost automatically implied an emphasis on the modern sector.

Modernisation and the Family-Sector
But this was by no means the only reason for a large-farm emphasis and there would certainly have been strong pressures in that direction in any case. Most
significant decision-makers in post-1974 Mozambique were united in holding a strongly modernisation-oriented notion of development. That is, development is seen as the process of building a new and separate modern sector in both agriculture and industry, marked by the use of the most modern available techniques and organisational structures. This is seen to be rooted in scientific knowledge, initially imported and later generated locally through institutions of formal teaching and research. This knowledge takes its point of departure in formally learned principles of scientific farming and is in no way based upon traditional practices, from which there is nothing to learn. In such a vision, the role of the 85 per cent of the population who form the family-sector is to provide a surplus for the investment process (through accepting poor terms of trade for their labour and products) and to await the time when they can be integrated into the modern sector as wage-labour or members of co-operatives.

While there is doubtless an element of caricature in the above account, there is no doubt that such a simplified version of modernisation ideology has been quite influential in Mozambique. The general notion is, of course, very widespread, but Mozambique seems to have adopted a more than usually 'pure' form.

Among the more important reasons for this would seem to be the Portuguese heritage. By this I mean, not only that such an extreme version of modernisation was closely connected to the virtually exclusive colonial emphasis upon (white) 'farmers', but that the effects of this policy had been to produce a peasant sector which was more than usually technologically backward and less than usually integrated into the national economy through sale of crops or livestock. A further point of considerable importance is the legal and political distinction which was maintained between 'farmers', who were 'modern', could get credit and various other forms of assistance including forced labour to work for them, and the 'traditional' family-producer who in addition to lacking the above, could not even dispose of his or her own labour-power freely since subject to chibalo labour. The contrast was probably most marked in southern Mozambique, whose labour-force had in effect been rented out to South Africa since before the turn of the century as migrant labour. With over 50 per cent of able-bodied males away at any one time in some places — and with others engaged in or avoiding chibalo labour on Portuguese farms — the family-sector was to a large extent composed of female-headed households. That is, a large number of family-farms were in fact composed of women with children and old people trying to produce enough to eat and to get by, while relying to a greater or lesser extent for cash income on remittances from a husband working in South Africa. Starved of labour and cash, with overall control and land rights still in the hands of a largely absent male, and facing the risk of forced labour for herself or older children, it is hardly surprising that family-farms were generally somewhat unimpressive considered simply as production units.

It is however entirely wrong to attribute this situation to 'stagnation' or conservatism when it obviously derives from external constraint. It would make as much sense to attribute the forced immobility of a prisoner to lack of interest in the outside world.

State Farms and Socialist Development

While, in its purely technical aspects, Mozambican agricultural policy bears a strong resemblance to modernisation elsewhere, one of the major forces behind
its specific form has been a particular notion of socialist development. Whatever the general nature of Mozambique's relationships to east and west, this has strong roots in the policies of the USSR and Eastern Europe and takes as one starting point the 'dominant and dynamizing' role of the state-farm in socialist agricultural development. In some versions, the state-farm is also said to be the 'highest form' of socialist production unit in agriculture.

This in turn relates to a general strategy for socialism which lays great emphasis upon the development of the forces of production as a necessary condition for a (subsequent) transformation of social relations. While there are many formulations of this line which seek to deny the aspect of 'production now, transformation later', it seems to me both undeniable in practice and built into the whole hierarchical structure of state farms and the planning structure which lies behind them.

I would strongly question whether the state farm should be considered a specifically socialist production form at all — other than because it is a form found in most existing state-socialist countries. Control of the labour-process differs relatively little from that of the large capitalist farm in formal terms, while the very real differences in operation seem to relate more to bureaucratic snarl-up and the rigidity of the planning process than to internal democracy or participation.

The notion of the state-farm as highest form or leading edge seems to derive from an analogy with the predictions of some leading Marxists (including Lenin) that the dominant and adequate form of production unit under developed capitalist agriculture, would be the large commercial farm, the 'firm in agriculture'. This prediction has not been fulfilled in Western Europe or large parts of the USA, where by far the most important form of production unit is the commercial family farm, dominated and controlled by capital from the outside, in the form of agribusiness and finance.

Nor, come to that, is there any obvious reason on productive grounds for the choice of the Soviet model. While low productivity on state farms is certainly not the only reason for the current position of the USSR as by far the world's largest grain importer, it has certainly been among them. Nor, with the possible exception of North Korea, are there many successful examples from elsewhere. But whatever the rights and wrongs of the matter, there is no doubt that notions relating to the leading role of state-farms have been influential in determining the direction of Mozambican agricultural policy.

State Farms and the Development of Agricultural Production

Given the available data, it is not possible to say very much precise about the development of food crop production in Mozambique. Figures for overall production are little better than guesses, based on crude estimates from officials and estimates of average calorie intake. Cassava is generally considered to be the most important staple food, followed by maize — though more of the latter is estimated to be sold. Figures from FAO Production Yearbooks indicate a decline in overall food production, but this reflects no more than the general impression among people one meets in Mozambique that there has been a decline, it is in no sense independent corroboratory evidence.

Figures for marketed production are usually difficult to find. Prior to
Independence, the marketing system was mainly private, and statistics dependent upon voluntary reporting from traders and were thus extremely incomplete. Ole Stage (1982: Appendix 1) presents a figure from a 1970 agricultural census of 99,000 tons of cereals sold in that year, but there is no reason to place any particular trust in this figure, which is probably for the modern sector only. Such figures as are available for the late 1970s, indicate that the state farm sector sold between 70-100,000 tons of maize and rice, by far the major cereals grown. Stage's own best guess is that sales of basic staples from the modern sector (private, state and co-operative) had recovered to a level roughly similar to that of 1970, though with a major change from private (100 per cent in 1970) to state (75 per cent of modern sector in 1980). There has also been a change in composition since in spite of considerable emphasis and investment, production of meat and dairy products, potatoes and fresh vegetables, and wheat are all way below the 1970 level. Thus it can be 'estimated' with some caution that modern sector sales of basic staples by volume have recovered to roughly the pre-Independence level, this being achieved through heavy investment in the state (and co-operative) sectors and through some change in the composition of produce. At the same time, Stage estimates that the urban population has increased by around 100 per cent. Meanwhile deliveries to official markets from the family-sector have declined considerably. Given the almost total absence of aggregate data, it is not easy to document the extent of this. Stage cites various sources to the effect that sales of food through official channels have declined to half the previous level in Nampula and Zambezia Provinces, the two largest and most important in terms of food production. In the south of the country, they also seem to have declined steeply.

The gap has had to be filled by increased imports of basic staple foods which, despite some concessiory aid, are mostly purchased on commercial terms and which account for some 60 per cent of all imports of consumer goods (in turn only 21 per cent of total imports). The larger part of the import bill (and gap) is also related to the state farm sector, and rather more directly. It uses a significant proportion of the imports of machinery and equipment, which takes 19 per cent of imports, as well as of tools and spare-parts which take 15 per cent, not to mention the fuel, which is an important category within 'raw materials', the largest single import heading, with 45 per cent of the total.

State Farm Production
No precise figures are available, but it has been 'guesstimated' that the state-farms receive 90 per cent of investment in the agricultural sector (with over half of the remainder going to the minute co-operative sector) Whatever the actual figure, it is certainly by a long way the major portion.

In terms of gross production, it is hard to assess the achievements of the sector. It has fairly consistently fallen below targets, but since there is good reason to suppose these to have been over-optimistic, this is no necessary cause for concern.

More importantly, Stage estimates that the net product of the state-farm sector is around zero — that the value of gross output does not cover costs of production. If amortisation is included, it seems highly likely that the net product would be negative, and given the rapid expansion of the sector and the high level of new investment in large projects, this is almost inevitable. On the other hand,
studies of specific state-farms tend to show that it is quite unusual for them even to cover operating costs and administrative overheads, let alone amortisation. In one case, studied by myself, costs of production, excluding amortisation, seemed to amount to some 3-4 times the value of output, and with fairly conservative assumptions. Once again, one has to be very cautious in using such figures, since the only prices available are those set by the state, and they could be set in such a way as to make positive returns impossible. But there is plenty of other evidence to indicate poor operation. This is mentioned (no more) below in the process of considering some of the reasons.

a. Choice of Technique: by and large, state farms operate with a more mechanised and chemical input-intensive system of production than their Portuguese predecessors. Since the previous system was based on pre-1974 oil prices, one might (on purely micro-economic grounds) have expected a change in the opposite direction.

The effects of this, obviously enough, have been to increase the input and foreign exchange cost of production. Even more importantly, it has increased dependence upon the efficient functioning of various supply and service systems (for seeds and chemical inputs, fuel, spares and service for equipment, transport for all of the above, paperwork for its organisation etc.) For the state-farm system to operate without disruption to the production process, the above and others must be delivered in sufficient quantity and at the right time.

These requirements are loaded onto a supply and service system which broke down almost completely between 1974 and 1977, whose recovery is far from complete and which is quite simply not adequate to the task imposed upon it. It seems highly likely moreover, that its recovery has been delayed by the requirements for expansion in line with investment in state-farms. At present, exchange control regulations and procedures for allocation and ordering impose a minimum one year delay from first ordering of any item and its final delivery. In short, the supply system functions poorly and the delays incurred disrupt the production process on the state-farms significantly.

b. The Planning System is highly centralised in Mozambique, for agriculture as for other sectors. Production targets are set at national level in volume terms, then translated in areas cultivated and divided up between sectors, provinces and districts until they come finally to the unit of production. While there is some discussion at this level, it seems largely to be confined to issues of physical ability to comply (that is, if some important piece of equipment is not available, for example, targets may be adjusted).

Since the targets (are intended to) reflect national priorities, they do not take account or such niceties as crop-rotation, economic viability, or even whether the pattern of products chosen is feasible in terms of labour requirements.

The targets are rounded out by a system of 'norms of production' which are coefficients for yields per hectare and for the input and machinery time required for the production of one hectare of every crop. The dual function of these norms is to assist the planners both to disaggregate volume targets into hectare requirements and to assess input and import requirements for given production, and on the other hand, to specify the system of farming to production unit managers, many of whom have limited training and less experience.
There are many problems with this ‘farming-by-numbers’ approach. Firstly the norms themselves are (or were in 1980/1) set entirely without regard to economic viability. In that year, of 48 sets of norms for different crops, over half led to losses. That is, direct costs per hectare exceeded the value of expected output. It was characteristic that machinery costs and costs of chemical inputs were very high and often (so far as could be seen) far higher than either necessary or even beneficial from a strictly agronomic point of view (notably with regard to the amount of soil movement and in relation to erosion/pulverisation). Secondly the norms are made nationally and are supposed to be valid for the whole country. Since Mozambique stretches from Tanzania to the latitude of Johannesburg and has a wide variety of climatic and soil conditions, it is fairly obvious that the specifications must be wrong for many areas.

But even if these specific problems could be solved, more basic problems would remain. The system involved imposes a series of rigid rules of operation upon a form of production which depends crucially on flexibility in the face of uncertainty. Mozambican agriculture is subject to all the usual uncertainties which affect any agricultural sector — variations in climate (amount and timing of rainfall), insect and pest attack etc. But in addition there are all the uncertainties about supplies of inputs and servicing of machinery mentioned above. To this situation, the system of planning is peculiarly ill-suited, since it imposes a rigid ‘executive responsibility’ upon local managers to follow a fixed sequence of activities whatever the conditions. One thus finds cases in which, for example, a farm or block manager plants (say) maize, several months after the last date on which a reasonable harvest could be expected, because the seeds arrived late and because ‘the plan must be fulfilled’.

c. Executive and Economic Responsibility: One absolute pre-condition for imposing economic responsibility upon farm-managers is that they should have at least some degree of discretion in deciding what to grow and how. One cannot at the same time expect a manager to be cost conscious and to carry out orders which themselves militate against cost consciousness. Another essential condition is that farm managers should have the information available to make cost calculations.

Neither of these is normally present. The system of targets and norms tends to impose executive responsibility (to carry out orders) which precludes adjustment in the face of changing conditions (late rains, for example, or late delivery of seeds). The system of collecting and keeping records is also highly centralised (to the extent that it is done at all) so that local level managers often know little or nothing about the economic situation on the farm or block which they are running. In the case mentioned above, for example, the manager did not know how much had been produced of the different crops, in volume terms, let alone its value. He knew absolutely nothing about the cost of inputs, the wage-bill, the costs of machinery hire from MECANAGRO (the agricultural equipment hire company), and, of course, nothing whatever about investment costs or amortisation. All of this information was (we were told) kept at the state-farm level (this was only a block of a state-farm). In reality it was not available at state-farm level either, nor even at the ‘accounting entity’ level in Maputo. This case is probably worse than normal, but does say something about the difficulties in imposing any sort of economic accountability.
d. Use of Available Skills: The system of targets, norms and centralisation of decision-making is justified by reference to the scarcity of trained manpower, which is indeed very serious. But it also derives from what seems to me an entirely incorrect series of assumptions about what is relevant knowledge for agricultural production. That is, it is based on the assumption that there is something called 'scientific farming', which is learned in formal training institutions and which consists of a series of agronomic rules which can be applied to virtually any situation. In reality, successful farming depends on a more complex and flexible, but normally implicit series of decisions which are very closely tied to observation of specific conditions and changes in them.

To exemplify, the norms specify for each crop grown under irrigation, how many cubic metres of water should be applied per hectare. In seeking to compare these levels with the practices of existing commercial farmers, it emerged that none of them used any such form of calculation. Firstly all of them referred to time of watering and frequency rather than cubic metres/hectare. But even more importantly, none was willing to state even an average time or frequency for watering. As almost all said, it depends on the weather, the soil-moisture prior to watering and the state of the crop. By contrast, on some state-farms, delays in watering, caused by pump-breakdown, were followed by compensatory overwatering sufficient to drown a significant proportion of the crop.

While much of the skill and experience of the previous Portuguese farmers was embodied in the farmer himself, a significant proportion was not. That is, many field-operations were directly controlled by experienced workers on the basis of their experiential rules of thumb. In the period after Independence, a highly efficient commercial farm operated almost entirely on this basis, since the farmer himself was relatively seldom present on the farm. In this case, by stabilising and organising the labour force, a capitalist farmer achieved yields up to eight times those on neighbouring state-farms (and on the farm itself when nationalised on his departure) and apparently at considerably lower cost.

The purpose of these examples is to indicate firstly that the current approach to state-farm planning and organisation simply ignores a considerable fund of relevant skill — largely because it is unaccompanied by paper qualifications, scientific explanation or even literacy. Secondly it is to indicate that the rules which are intended to replace experience in fact fail to do so. When one considers the problems above, it is hardly surprising that the state-farm sector has not produced to plan targets and that it has been grossly uneconomic. More surprising perhaps is that it has produced anything at all.

Production from the Family Sector, as indicated earlier, has fallen significantly, at least as far as deliveries to official marketing channels are concerned.

There is no doubt that the major reasons for this have been low producer prices and, more recently, the absence of goods to exchange for crops sold (which can be seen as yet further lowering of the real producer price). Since production is well below peak levels, by definition it cannot be attributed to low technological levels, in the sense of absence of knowledge about improved methods. It can however be attributed to some degree to limits imposed by the non-availability of even the most basic hand-tools.

While there is no doubt of the importance of economic price response as such,
there is good reason to suppose that it operates in a somewhat more complex way than in the textbooks. In the first place, unavailability of tools and inputs inserts an aspect which cannot be analysed in terms of incentives. Secondly, it seems likely that over and above strict economic calculation, low prices, non-availability of basic consumer and producer goods and disruption in the marketing system cause peasants simply to 'lose heart', unscientific as the phrase may sound. Even more important is the fact that many peasants spend enormous amounts of time trying to get hold of basic requirements, while others learn in the process that it is easier to get by through engaging in black-marketing than by producing crops for official sale.

This general analysis seems to be fairly widely accepted in Mozambique, including tacitly by official bodies and decision-makers. It seems, furthermore, to be generally accepted that with the peasant sector responsible for some 70 per cent of gross agricultural production, it is crucial to improve prices and supplies. But at least until very recently, there has been quite strong resistance to any link between the situation in the peasant sector and the emphasis on state-farms and 'large projects'. In reality, the link is strong and direct. Given a very serious shortage of foreign exchange and its rationing according to the plan, the enormous preponderance of machinery, equipment, spare parts and fuel for the industrial and state-farm sectors, in total imports, this leaves very little for consumer goods for the peasantry, especially since over 60 per cent of imports of consumer goods are of basic foodstuffs for the cities.

Recent Changes: The IVth Frelimo Congress
For some years, official statements have been stressing the need to encourage the co-operative and peasant sectors, though generally avoiding the corollary; that with great scarcity of resources, this implied taking them from the state-farms. At the same time, there have been a number of efforts to improve the system of planning on state-farms. While the formal contradiction between executive and accounting responsibility has not been solved, in practice a number of state-farms have shifted over to emphasising the latter so far as possible within the accounting and supply system.

This trend has been given a considerable further push by the IVth Congress of Frelimo, held in April 1983. New investment in the state-farm sector was to be virtually halted and the aim to be consolidation. On the other hand, the private, co-operative and family sectors are to be encouraged and expand as rapidly as possible, though the Congress did not spell out clearly by what means.

There is no doubt that this has had a significant effect. A number of the major state-farm complexes and large firms have been broken up into smaller units, and in some cases land has been turned over to private farmers. Of sheer necessity, even investment in replacement of equipment has been pared to the bone, though given the way in which production requirements are defined in planning terms it will be very hard to achieve savings here. That is, with technique defined according to norms, unless the hard decision is taken actually to close certain units, they will continue, almost automatically, to absorb further amounts of equipment, fuel, spare-parts and service — a process which one might call the 'steamroller effect'.

Of some concern is how the peasant sector is to be encouraged. So far as can be told, the privatisation of state-farm land, where it has occurred, has been mainly
to private 'farmers' — that is those larger operators who, following Portuguese tradition, are able to get access to credit. Nor do references to 'projects' inspire much confidence. It is only too easy to imagine repetition of the sorts of aid-donor-sponsored 'peasant projects', to be found in neighbouring Tanzania and elsewhere in tropical Africa. I would argue that among the major effects of such projects have been to increase import requirements and to overload already strained administrative structures and distributive systems to breaking point. Given that system breakdown is already a serious problem in Mozambique, a project-oriented approach could have rather serious consequences. To make matters worse, Mozambique has virtually no extension service, so that projects are likely to be designed and implemented by officials without technical training. To take the example of Tanzania, the record of the extension service is far from good (as Andrew Coulson has shown in ROAPE 10) but it is arguable that the worst effects from state intervention in the peasant sector come from the activities of politicians and administrative officials — modernisers without technical knowledge of modern farming. One extremely worrying sign is that there are reports of the use of compulsory minimum acreages in at least two provinces. There is absolutely no doubt that this form of forced production through administrative order has contributed significantly to the decline of Tanzania's agricultural production and no reason to expect different results in Mozambique. Nor do such policies seem well calculated to bolster the morale of a peasantry battered in recent year by a goods famine of major proportions, by attacks from MNR and now by outright famine in many parts of the country.

The shortage of goods raises another problem, for it has been so severe and for so long that time and considerable quantities of consumer goods and basic producer inputs will be required to 'flush the system'. That is, the black-market is so pervasive that when goods can be got moving into the rural areas, a large proportion will inevitably disappear into hoards of one or other sort. In this context, the recent campaigns to punish hoarders, black-marketeers and other 'economic saboteurs' are likely to have no effect except to generate short-term populist enthusiasm (and perhaps job satisfaction for policemen and similarly inclined others).

All available evidence shows that they tend actually to worsen shortages, since goods which were previously for sale at inflated prices become absolutely unavailable. The campaigns never uncover more than a small proportion of the missing goods and seldom attack those behind theft and black-marketing, concentrating on the small fish. At present in Mozambique there must be few, if any, of the population who do not have recourse to the black-market of sheer necessity, while hoarding is a standard 'survival strategy' for anyone with enough money to purchase more than for immediate requirements.

On the positive side, one can refer to the enormous resilience of peasant agricultural systems in the face of both natural catastrophes and harmful government policies. One can also refer to the fact that, contrary to what state modernisers tend to assume, peasants are generally only too keen to engage in market-oriented agricultural production, given even minimally reasonable conditions for doing so. Hyden (1980), writing about Tanzania, refers to peasants as 'exercising an exit option', from production for the (official) market to subsistence, and this notion has achieved a certain currency. In my opinion this flies in the face of abundant evidence firstly that peasants are pushed out of the
door by poor terms of trade or sheer lack of goods to exchange for their produce, and secondly that their flight, if such it may be termed, is less to subsistence than to the black-market. In Mozambique (as elsewhere) it is often hard to see what the state can do to ‘develop’ the peasants, but sometimes easier to see how it can stop hindering them.

It may seem odd that an article on Mozambique should make so little reference to socialising the countryside or to the development of co-operatives. Clearly these are important themes, though with co-operative membership at below 0.05 per cent of the population, their development is hardly a solution to current problems. Of course the development of commercialised agriculture among the peasantry cannot be a sufficient goal for a socialist government. But in the current situation of Mozambique, the satisfaction of basic material needs is agreed by all to be the current priority. With the peasantry comprising some 85 per cent of the population and producing about 70 per cent of total agricultural production (if not more) the need to assist that sector cannot be in doubt. Experience from Mozambique itself and elsewhere in the world would point to making it easier for the peasants to develop themselves as the most hopeful option.

Bibliographic Note
This is a slightly revised version of a paper presented to a workshop on ‘Food Systems in Central and Southern Africa’ at the School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London in July 1983. I am much indebted to members of the Centro de Estudos Africanos, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo for useful and interesting discussions, as also to many others including Jan Birket-Smidt, Jørgen Sams Knudsen, Oscar Marleyn, Ole Stage and Kristi-Anne Stølen. None of the above should be held responsible for my opinions, which some would disagree with strongly. Reliable quantative data on Mozambican agriculture is hard to come by. The colonial Estatistica Agricola ceased publication seven years before Independence (the publishing delay in Lisbon!) and in any case devoted no more than a few out of nearly 300 pages to African agriculture. For the post-Independence period a variety of sources cover particular topics and periods, often disagreeing where they overlap and also leaving large gaps. The best compilation I have seen (Bo Westmann’s Landanalys 1982, written for SIDA) is, unfortunately for English readers, in Swedish. Marc Wuyts’ ‘Peasants and Rural Economy in Mozambique’ (Mimeo, CEA, 1978) provides a good structural overview of the agricultural economy before and shortly after Independence, making clear the importance of the peasantry, generally unrecognised by officialdom. Ole Stage’s ‘Peasant Marketed Production in Mozambique’ (Mimeo, Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen) puts together some of the more recent data. Data on the operation of state farms tends to be either anecdotal or confidential so it is not easy to find references. A more general reference on peasants and migrants in southern Mozambique is Ruth First, The Mozambican Miner, (Harvester, Brighton 1982).

On the more general issue of agricultural development and structure under capitalism, I found Göran Djurfeldt’s ‘What happened to the Agrarian Bourgeoisie and Rural Proletariat under Monopoly Capitalism?’, Acta Sociologica, 24(3), 1981 thought-provoking. A comment in the following number of that journal indicates some of the thoughts which it provoked.
Briefings

ROOTS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION: THE MOZAMBIQUE NATIONAL RESISTANCE

This article sets out to trace the historical roots of the organisation calling itself the ‘Mozambique National Resistance’ (MNR). It was founded by the secret services of Ian Smith’s Rhodesia, and, after the independence of Zimbabwe, it was revived by the South Africans who have been running it ever since. But neither the Rhodesians, nor South African Military Intelligence, worked in a vacuum. They availed themselves of Mozambican material that was already there, ready to be moulded into an anti-Frelimo force.

Collaboration with the Portuguese
FRELIMO was born of a coalition. Three groups had been formed in exile: the Makonde African National Union, UDENAMO (Mozambican National Democratic Union), and UNAMI (Mozambique National Independence Union). The blending of these three groups in June 1962 into the Mozambique Liberation Front — FRELIMO — was the work of Eduardo Mondlane, who had the advantage of belonging to none of them. Internal rivalries almost tore the young Front apart and 1963 saw the first formal split when some of the former UDENAMO leaders withdrew from FRELIMO. These included FRELIMO's first General Secretary, David Mabunda, the former Deputy President of UDENAMO, Fanuel Guideon Mahluza, and two other prominent figures, Adelino Gwambe and Paulo Gumane.

In 1965, Mabunda, Mahluza and Gumane founded COREMO (Mozambique Revolutionary Committee). A part of the new organisation swiftly mutated into UNAR (African National Union of Rombezia). Amos Sumane, originally Deputy President of COREMO, became President of UNAR. COREMO opened an office in Lusaka, and spent most of the liberation war in Zambia and Malawi. Its occasional sallies across the border were enough for the Portuguese to refer to it as a ‘second terrorist group’. At the height of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and the Sino-Soviet split, COREMO cultivated an ultra-revolutionary image, and picked up a few supporters among Western Maoists. In response to FRELIMO’s alliance with the African National Congress of South Africa, COREMO cultivated links with the breakaway Pan-Africanist Congress. UNAR was openly separatist.
FRELIMO was not concerned with these exile antics. It has new problems of its own to deal with as a result of its growth. In its growing liberated zones, a fierce conflict raged, as opposing views on the organisation of society confronted each other within FRELIMO. The issues at stake in the clash between the Mondlane/Marcelino dos Santos/Samora Machel leadership and the 'new exploiters' grouped around figures such as Lazaro Nkavandame and Uria Simango are described in considerable detail in the Central Committee Report to the Third Congress of FRELIMO and in Munslow's book.

Lazaro Nkavandame's treason was the most complete. He had been a dominant Makonde politician, and head of FRELIMO's organisation in Cabo Delgado. After flirting with the idea of an independent Cabo Delgado ('another Biafra', as he openly declared), he went over to the Portuguese and proved a great asset to the colonial psychological warfare department. Uria Simango had expected to succeed Mondlane after the latter's assassination in February 1969. Instead, he found himself a member of a presidential council on which he could always be outvoted by his two colleagues, Samora Machel and Marcelino dos Santos. After he had broken every rule in the book by distributing a bitter document entitled 'Gloomy situation in FRELIMO', he was suspended from the Presidential Council. In May 1970 he was formally expelled from the movement. But by this time he was already in Malawi, where he eventually joined COREMO. Mateus Gwengere, wreaked havoc in the FRELIMO Secondary School promoting racist ideas. 1974 would find Gwengere too in Malawi. Some of the lesser figures involved in the crisis of the late 1960s ended up in the United States. This was particularly the case with Mozambican students abroad, many of whom refused to return to the harsh conditions of the liberated areas. Also taking refuge in New York was Dr Artur Vilanculu. A Simango supporter, he soon became the COREMO representative in the US.

The Portuguese army also generated forces that would prove irreconcilable to a FRELIMO victory. Blacks were enrolled into the army and some of them into elite units, which quickly earned a reputation for ferocity. There were, for instance, the GEs (Special Groups), the GMEs (Very Special Groups), used for covert operations in Tanzania and Zambia, and the GEPs (Special Paratroop Groups). Outside the authority of the Portuguese army was a fourth group, perhaps the most sinister of all, the flechas (arrows). They were run directly by the PIDE Secret Police and were responsible for some of the worst atrocities of the war.

The 'Special Groups' were basically the idea of Jorge Jardim, a prominent Beira industrialist and godson of the Portuguese dictator. Jardim was well connected with the PIDE. Two PIDE agents who were to feature prominently in the history of the MNR came to work for him. Orlando Cristina became Jardim's private secretary. He was also an adventurer, a big game hunter and an assassin. He was one of the first PIDE agents to infiltrate FRELIMO (in 1963). According to José Ramalho, a journalist in close contact with the MNR, Cristina made contact with FRELIMO Central Committee member Leo Milas 'who made arrangements for him to be sent to Algeria for terrorist training'. Now Milas was not Mozambican at all, but a black American who had cajoled his way into FRELIMO, and succeeded in deceiving Mondlane for a time. Cristina was protected by Jardim and the PIDE from the wrath of the Portuguese army (who apparently wanted him on a charge of desertion). In 1965 he and Jardim organised in Niassa
province something that Ramalho delicately refers to as 'a system of self-defence'. These were some of the first 'Special Groups'. Cristina then became a leading figure in the organisation of the GEPs and the Flechas. A second agent, Evo Fernandes, was of Goan origin, and had allegedly been recruited by the PIDE while studying at Lisbon University, where he was asked to spy on other students from the colonies. Returning to Beira with a doctorate in law, he first worked as a legal adviser for the colonial police, and was later placed by Jardim in his own newspaper, Noticias da Beira.

Jardim also got along very well with President Hastings Banda of Malawi, and had a hand in arranging Banda's state visit to Mozambique in 1971 (the one and only occasion when the head of an independent African state paid an official visit to any of the Portuguese colonies). Banda appointed Jardim as Malawi's honorary consul in Beira. Orlando Cristina was employed by the Malawian government in the late 1960s in training its paramilitary force, the Young Pioneers.

There seems to have been a three-way communication between Blantyre, Jardim in Beira, and PIDE officers in Niassa. 'I would greatly appreciate it', wrote Jardim in late 1970 to a PIDE inspector in Niassa, 'if you could send me complete details and addresses of the most important members of FRELIMO inside Malawi'. Jardim intended to travel to Malawi soon 'to deal with the matter', he explained. In Blantyre, Jardim and Cristina would doubtless have had the opportunity to meet other friends of Banda, such as the military attaché posted to the South African embassy in Malawi in 1969. Or the South Africans who delivered four plane loads of military equipment to Malawi in 1971. Jardim also maintained regular contacts with South Africa, not only because of his business interests, but also as part of the discreet military co-operation between the colonial authorities and the apartheid regime.

**Neo-Colonial Manipulation at Independence**

By 1974 FRELIMO was militarily active over more than a third of the country, and was within striking distance of Beira. To the clearer heads among the colonialists it was clear that victory was not to be had by purely military means. Ideas for a possible neo-colonial solution began to take root, particularly among Jardim's circle. The overthrow of fascism in Lisbon on 25 April 1974 provided the chance for a change in strategy. If FRELIMO could not be beaten on the battlefield, perhaps it could be cut down in the political arena. It had to be 'proved' that FRELIMO did not represent the majority of Mozambicans. That implied that, in a great hurry, alternative political organisations had to be created, and that a referendum should be held on the future of the country. This latter idea, cherished by General António de Spinola, the first post-coup President of Portugal, never really got off the ground. But the first part of the plan worked. Mozambique was suddenly full of political parties.

However, the plans of men such as Spinola and Jardim depended on parties which could claim black support. Such parties had to present a nationalist facade and mouth nationalist rhetoric. They were duly created and thrived for a few months under colonial sponsorship, benefitting from the fact that, in the towns, FRELIMO was still a clandestine organisation. In the north, Lazaro Nkavandame suddenly discovered that fascism was a bad thing after all, and emerged at the head of UNIPOMO (Union of the Peoples of Mozambique — the
name was a give-away as to the tribalist perspective of this organisation). Mateus Gwengere re-entered politics as a leader of FREINA (African Independence Front), a short-lived outfit sponsored by the Companhia Industrial de Monapo, one of the major colonialist enterprises in Mozambique. But the most important of these organisations was GUMO (Mozambican United Group). Its propaganda was reasonably clever: it did not attack FRELIMO, instead it presented itself as a less bellicose version of FRELIMO — FRELIMO without the guns. Its public line could be summed up as 'We are in favour of the same things as FRELIMO, but they really ought to stop fighting'. Titular head of GUMO was one Maximo Dias; more important was his Number Two, Joana Simiao.

The scenarios dreamed up in Lisbon, or among the settler community, all assumed that FRELIMO would accept a ceasefire. Pleas (from many quarters, including some friendly ones) were made to that effect, and were flatly turned down. By demanding unconditional independence and the transfer of power to itself, FRELIMO short-circuited all neo-colonial schemes.

FRELIMO's radio station had attacked Joana Simiao as a former PIDE agent. Her failure to come clean on her past provoked a split in GUMO. In June, Simiao was suspended from the GUMO executive. She retaliated by expelling Maximo Dias — a move null and void in terms of GUMO's statutes. Chaos reigned in the organisation, and in July Dias wound it up. Simiao and her faction merged with a smaller organisation, CNAM (African National Congress of Mozambique) to form FRECOMO (Mozambican Common Front). Her main political platform was now the call for a referendum, plus a demand that an ill-defined 'Congress of the Mozambican People' should be held in Nampula almost immediately.

On 1 July 1974, Simango travelled to Malawi for talks with COREMO. As a result, a week later Uria Simango returned to Mozambique. He was greeted by Simiao at Beira airport. After six weeks of frantic negotiations, COREMO and FRECOMO formally merged, along with three minor groupings, to form PCN (Party of National Coalition). Its leadership consisted of Simango, Gwengere, Gumane and Simiao. FRELIMO's enemies were drifting together.

Simango also extended the hand of friendship to the most serious organisation set up by settler politicians. This was the Convergencia Democratica (Democratic Convergence), based in Beira, and with strong links to Jorge Jardim. Amongst its leadership was Antonio Pires de Carvalho, who had been an official of the Portuguese Red Cross in the north-western province of Tete. He had been of great use to the PIDE, although not actually on their payroll. He was a close friend of the PIDE commander in Tete, and of the local head of the Commandos.

The local bourgeoisie in Beira was the major social base for a neo-colonial alternative to FRELIMO, and it found political expression in the Convergencia Democratica. The Convergencia was dominated by settlers, but had a good sprinkling of black faces. These included Miguel Murrupa, a FRELIMO turncoat, who had become one of Caetano's main propagandists, and Dr Joao Unhai, one of the signatories of a text entitled 'Position of Mozambicans who do not support FRELIMO', which included the gem 'we believe in the good faith and sacrifice of General Spinola and of the armed forces who have fought for the well-being of this country'.

Attempts to find a neo-colonial solution had come years too late. By late August a
wave of pro-FRELIMO enthusiasm was sweeping the country. The war was
grinding to a halt with Portuguese units openly fraternising with FRELIMO
guerrillas.

Two weeks after the PCN was formed, it was all over. The independence
agreement signed in Lusaka on 7 September met all of FRELIMO’s demands.
The question of power was resolved unambiguously — power would pass in its
entirety to FRELIMO as sole legitimate representative of the Mozambican
people. In the fortnight or so following the Lusaka agreement, the leaders of the
PCN were arrested, and all the parties created to oppose FRELIMO were
outlawed. Simango Nkavandame, Simio, Gumane — all were sent to re-education
centres in the north of the country. Thus the ‘historic’ opposition to FRELIMO
was beheaded.

Settler opposition to FRELIMO rule flared violently, and then collapsed. The
Lusaka Accords were followed by a short-lived revolt, in which the radio station
in Lourenco Marques was seized. The ‘Dragons of Death’, as they called
themselves, held out for rather less than 48 hours. But as the revolt crumbled,
some of its leaders scurried over the borders. One, Daniel Rosso, known as the
‘white devil’, died fighting against MPLA in Angola. Pires de Carvalho, of the
Convergencia Democratica, had spoken from the studios of the occupied radio.

The Elements that Formed MNR
Jardim’s close associates also fled the country. Evo Fernandes was involved in
bitter struggles with the journalists on Noticias da Beira, who eventually
managed to kick him off the paper. In 1975, he fled to Portugal where he took up
residence in the casino town of Cascais, and found a job with the publishing house
Livraria Bertrand. Little more was heard of him until 1980. Orlando Cristina was
made of sterner stuff. He fled to Rhodesia, taking with him the files on the
Special Groups. A fair number of these men had quietly abandoned their
uniforms, and tried to merge back into Mozambican society. From Salisbury their
past reached out to trap them. They received threatening letters: either they
collaborate with Cristina and the Rhodesian secret services, or their past would
be denounced to FRELIMO. Thus Cristina’s files were used to for some of the
initial recruitment for what would eventually be called the MNR.

In June the new Portuguese authorities moved to arrest Jardim, but he took
sanctuary in the Malawian embassy, and on 14 June slipped across the border. In
the next few months Jardim was rumoured to be in Johannesburg, Rhodesia
(both of which he publicly denied), Malawi (where he allegedly met mercenary
leader Mike Hoare), and Swaziland. After reports of a further meeting with
Hoare in Mbabane, the Swazi authorities declared Jardim a prohibited
immigrant. Jardim eventually resurfaced in Spain. General Franco was still alive,
and Madrid was a haven for fascists from all over the world. Portuguese
journalists discovered that here Jardim was keeping the company of the former
second-in-command of the PIDE, Barbieri Cardoso, Caetano’s Interior Minister,
Goncalves Rapazote, and members of the Chilean and Brazilian secret services.
Jardim’s main activity against Mozambique was in the literary field. In 1976 he
published his book Mocambique — Terra Queimada (Scorched Earth) and
followed it up with a string of interviews with right-wing Portuguese
newspapers.
Jardim’s name at this time was repeatedly linked with that of the only black Mozambican lawyer trained under colonialism, Domingos Arouca. Arouca had set up his own organisation, FUMO (Mozambican Democratic United Front), in Lisbon. At such length did the quasi-fascist press in Portugal drool over Arouca and Jardim that many supporters of FRELIMO jumped to the conclusion that these were the men who were heading the attempts at a Mozambican counter-revolution. In fact, neither Jardim nor Arouca seem to have had much to do with the foundation of the MNR. It is worth putting this bit of the record straight. The most serious plotting against FRELIMO was taking place in Salisbury — yet as far as we know, neither Jardim nor Arouca set foot in Rhodesia. Indeed Jardim was persona non grata with the illegal regime — he had fallen out with Ian Smith over a shady deal involving oil in the 1960s. Orlando Cristina visited Jardim in Madrid, and seems to have obtained useful information, including lists of names, from him.

Arouca was a landlord in Inhambane province, and one of the handful of Mozambicans who acquired a university education in Portugal. He also acquired an extraordinarily right-wing Portuguese wife — a member of the Movimento Jovem Portugual (Young Portuguese Movement). This was a neo-fascist organisation that opposed the regime from the right. On returning to Mozambique after completing his law degree, Arouca tried to join the exclusive ‘Lourenço Marques Club’. Despite his credentials as a trained lawyer, settler racism did not relent and Arouca was refused membership. He then joined a Lourenço Marques ‘black Association’ which had anti-colonial overtones. He fell foul of the PIDE, and was clapped in jail. After spending several years in a Lisbon prison, he was allowed to return to Mozambique, but kept under house arrest in Inhambane (where, however, he was permitted to practise law).

By now he had convinced himself that he was not only vitally important to the liberation struggle, but was also the obvious choice for Prime Minister in an independent Mozambique. When, in 1974, he made his way to Dar es Salaam and explained this to the FRELIMO leadership, they were not impressed. A year later, with the nationalisation of the land, he lost his holdings in Inhambane. Arouca then abandoned Mozambique and set up FUMO in Lisbon.

FUMO was a member of a shadowy outfit, again apparently based in Madrid, called the Organisation of Free Africa (OAL). The OAL was run by António Batica, who had been a member of the Salazarist political party, the União Nacional (re-baptised the ANP by Caetano), and had represented the ‘province’ of Guiné in Salazar’s dummy national assembly. The OAL claimed that its membership included opposition groups from Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Burundi, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Guinea-Conakry, and Equatorial Guinea. Its credibility was not enhanced by its first press release which located Congo in East Africa! After a couple of declarations the OAL sank without trace. But it left behind one endearing phrase — *Africa Livre* (Free Africa). The phrase is scarcely original — it presumably derives from the CIA’s ‘Radio Free Europe’. And one of the slogans used by the ‘Dragons of Death’ occupying the Lourenço Marques radio station on 7 September had been *Mocambique Livre! Africa Livre!*

The final component of the MNR derived from elements within the victorious guerrilla army itself. Even during the independence war some members of FRELIMO had turned bandit, either on their own account, or working for the
PIDE. Large numbers of FRELIMO troops (2,000 according to Samora Machel) deserted in Zambezia province. They crossed into Malawi, and the PIDE organised them into bands who made sorties back across the border, committed atrocities, and then tried to pin the blame on FRELIMO. A clandestine struggle between FRELIMO's own men, led by Bonifacio Gruveta, and these deserters/PIDE agents took place in the late 1960s inside Malawi.

Perhaps the most notorious FRELIMO commander to turn bandit was Zeca Caliate, who earned the nickname *Arranca tudo* (rips up everything). He defected to the Portuguese in 1973, and was put in charge of a unit of *Flechas*, acting in Manica province. As the colonial authorities crumbled in 1974, Caliate turned his skills to straightforward armed robbery. In late August he was reported to be heading towards the Rhodesian border with 150 men. This band of *Flechas* and PIDE agents was one of the early nuclei for the MNR. Caliate would return to northern Manica as an MNR commander in the later 1970s.

Corruption also took its toll. The transition from waging a guerrilla war to running the country went to the heads of some of FRELIMO's troops. There was a feeling that those who had won the war now had the right to a soft life. Why should they pay for anything? Why should they join queues? The ethic that the army exists to serve the people was not accepted by all the former guerrillas. This discontent reached its head in a brief mutiny in Maputo in December 1975. But well before that, some commanders of FPLM, of the guerrilla army, had been surrendering to the particular problem. Here former servants of the colonial state apparatus were quick to ingratiate themselves with the newly arrived FPLM commanders. 'These were the people who received FRELIMO here in Beira', declared Samora Machel in 1980. 'They offered cars and houses, they organised parties and they organised women for the FRELIMO commanders'. Disciplinary measures were taken, and to their surprise young officers who considered that, since they liberated the country, they were entitled to some of the spoils, were arrested and sent to re-education centres.

André Matade Matsangaiza was one such individual. He had joined FRELIMO in 1972, and with victory he became a quartermaster at Dondo, near Beira. The local population soon complained of his behaviour. When he was investigated, he was found to have his fingers heavily in the till (more specifically, he had stolen a Mercedes saloon car). He was sent to a re-education centre elsewhere in Sofala province — but the Rhodesians attacked the camp in 1976, freeing its inmates. Matsangaiza, and others were taken into Rhodesia. Similarly with Afonso Dhlakama. He had joined the FPLM in October 1974 (i.e. after the fighting was over), but the following year was also arrested as a petty thief. Dhlakama too escaped from jail, slipped back to his home village (in Chibabava district in southern Sofala), and then he too crossed the border.

Here then were all the elements of a force to fight against the newly independent state: white settler politicians in exile, former members of elite units in the colonial army, the embittered losers of political battles within FRELIMO, disgraced members of the FPLM. Naturally, as the years of independence progressed, more individuals would appear with grudges against FRELIMO, ready to switch allegiance to FRELIMO's enemies. By 1976, these elements were still scattered — some in Portugal, some in Malawi, some in Rhodesia. Rhodesia looked the most propitious place from which to launch an anti-FRELIMO offensive.
Rhodesia and the Origins of MNR
Initially the illegal regime in Salisbury took no action against Mozambique. It waited to see whether or not Mozambique would implement United Nations sanctions, and whether the support which FRELIMO had extended to Zimbabwean freedom fighters during its own armed struggle would continue. By March 1976, the answer was clear — Mozambique closed the border with Rhodesia, and stepped up its support for the Zimbabwean guerrillas. From Maputo a radio station The Voice of Zimbabwe broadcast in their support. The Rhodesians reacted in two ways. First, they replied to The Voice of Zimbabwe with daily anti-FRELIMO broadcasts from Gwelo. They gave this new station the name Voz da Africa Livre (Voice of Free Africa). Among the initial broadcasters were the former 'Dragon of Death', António Pires de Carvalho, and Jardim's sidekick, João Maria Tudela. Pulling the strings, however, was Orlando Cristina, who had established himself as the link man with the Rhodesian secret services.

The early Voz da Africa Livre broadcasts were full of overt colonialist nostalgia, and admiration for the Ian Smith regime. 'Rhodesia has a government that works, and which carried out policies to improve the lives and happiness of millions of Rhodesians', burbled Voz da Africa Livre gleefully on 12 July 1976. Later a note of sophistication would creep in — a theory of 'two FRELIMOs', the 'good', 'real', 'nationalist' FRELIMO of Eduardo Mondlane, and the 'evil', 'totalitarian' FRELIMO of Samora Machel. Until 1979 no attempt was made to disguise Voz da Africa Livre's Rhodesian connections — its address was given, quite unashamedly, as PO Box 444, Salisbury.

A couple of months after Voz da Africa Livre had gone on the air, the first groups of what would be called the MNR were formed, and began to receive training at Bindura, north-east of Salisbury. The Rhodesian intelligence services (under Ken Flowers, who now admits his role in the whole affair) worked with Cristina to launch the operation. The South African intelligence services were kept closely informed of what was going on, and BOSS agent Gordon Winter launched the first publicity for the MNR through the pages of the Johannesburg Citizen. His pictures of 'MNR guerrillas inside Mozambique', he admits in his book, were in fact, photographs of black soldiers in the Transvaal.

Some role in the creation of the MNR seems to have been played by the most notorious commando unit in the Rhodesian armed forces, the Selous Scouts. They were closely linked to the Flechas. Selous Scout commander Ron Reid-Daly remarked of the Flechas that they were the best African marksmen he knew. He went to Chimoio in Manica province, apparently in 1974, 'to study their methods and tactics'. There Reid-Daly met a Flecha commander called Oscar Cardosa (doubtless a misspelling of the common Portuguese name Cardoso), and was duly impressed by his 'iron discipline'. After the overthrow of Caetano:

Colonel Cardosa with some of his men forced their way across the Mozambican border at gunpoint and made their way into Rhodesia. For a time he served under my command with the rank of Captain, and with some forty of his men, both black and white. It was hoped the remainder of his men would slip across the border too and a company of Flechas formed, under the umbrella of my overall command within the Selous Scouts, to be used for cross-border operations in Mozambique.

Reid-Daly claims in his memoirs that this unit never materialised. Yet in 1980 one South African report estimated the MNR at 2,000 'highly trained warriors, most
of whom were members of the crack Flechas unit established by Portugal to fight FRELIMO'.

By 1977 a basic command structure was beginning to appear in the MNR. The Rhodesians appointed Matsangaiza as commander-in-chief. Dhlakama emerged as his deputy, but only after murdering his most prominent rival, Orlando Macamo, a prominent Maputo criminal, turned police informer, turned bandit. But even before MNR operations began out of Rhodesia, armed actions on a small scale had been seen in another part of the country. The former PIDE agents based in Malawi continued to strike across the border into Zambezia province, just as they had done during the liberation war. Now they linked up with former COREMO and UNAR members under the leadership of Amos Sumane for their sorties into the district of Milange. These bands would come to be known as 'Africa Livre', thus adding to the confusion surrounding this term. Initially they seem to have had no link with the MNR. Their activities rarely extended beyond Milange district, and were not viewed as particularly serious until August 1982, when their character changed dramatically.

The South African Connection
Details of the MNRs military activities need not concern us here. Suffice it to say that the MNR flourished in more or less direct proportion to Rhodesian aggression against Mozambique. It had no independent existence, relying on the Smith regime for its weaponry and logistical support. It was tightly controlled by the Rhodesians — something that Dhlakama complained of when giving his version of MNR history to his 'soldiers' in late 1980. The Rhodesians also kept the 'political' wing, Voz da Africa Livre, organisationally separate from the 'military' wing, the MNR. The Rhodesians certainly did not envisage the MNR as an alternative Mozambican government, and had no intention of installing Matsangaiza in the Presidential palace in Maputo. For them, the MNR was just a convenient weapon with which to harass ZANLA guerillas and create difficulties for Mozambique in its border areas.

A change of strategy began to take shape in 1979, when the Rhodesians ordered the MNR to set up bases deep inside Mozambique — this corresponded to the general sharpening of the war in this year. But in November 1979 Matsangaiza died in an ill-judged raid on the town of Gorongosa, and the MNR was thrown into chaos. While an FPLM offensive cleared the MNR from northern Manica and northern Sofala, an acute leadership struggle gripped the organisation. From this Dhlakama, thanks largely to Cristina's backing, emerged victorious. By the time Dhlakama was undisputed 'Supreme Chief', the MNR had been driven out of everywhere north of the Beira-Zimbabwe railway. In June 1980 they lost their most important base, in the Sitatonga mountains of Manica province. It is doubtful if there were more than a few hundred MNR men inside Mozambique then — mostly concentrated in the mountainous areas of southern Manica, with some in southern Sofala, and a few filtering across the Save river into northern Gaza and northern Inhambane.

But a transfer of paymasters was in the offing. When it became clear that an independent Zimbabwe was going to be run by Robert Mugabe's ZANU, Cristina opened negotiations with the South Africans. They agreed to evacuate the MNR from Zimbabwe and install it at new rear bases in the Transvaal. This operation
was more or less complete by October 1980. It coincided with the MNR setting up a new internal ‘headquarters’ at Garagua in the southernmost part of Manica province.

The South Africans took a number of important decisions which were to make Dhlakama’s MNR altogether more formidable than Matsangaiza’s outfit. First, Pretoria pledged major logistical support. Over the preceding few months they had taken over aerial supplies from the Rhodesians, but now they wanted to switch to supplying the MNR by sea as much as possible. This was cheaper — and many more guns can be carried, even in a small fishing boat, than in a helicopter or light plane. The MNR’s drive to the Mozambican coast in 1981-82 can be partly explained by this consideration. Secondly, the South Africans wanted the MNR to act as a credible political movement, rather than as a simple military tool. They may have hoped that they could transform the MNR into something more like Jonas Savimbi’s UNITA — something which, in the final analysis, was under Pretoria’s control, but which had an international projection and image of its own. This means that the MNR had to have a properly structured leadership, it had to have publications, it had to have an international presence.

Evo Fernandes was now brought back into play. He seems to have been named the MNR’s ‘delegate in western Europe’ in mid-1979, and the postal address for *Voz da Africa Livros* was transferred to his home at Cascais, a few miles from Lisbon. But initially Fernandes’ profile was very low, and Dhlakama seems to have been unaware of his existence. (It seems that co-ordination between Cristina, Matsangaiza and Dhlakama had been less than perfect). Cristina and the South Africans set out to rectify this, and elevated the importance of the MNR representation in Lisbon. Fernandes’ first task was to arrange a tour of western Europe for Dhlakama - up until this time Dhlakama, like his predecessor, had never left southern Africa. Some of the documents captured by the FPLM when they seized the MNR’s Garagua base in December 1981 are minutes of meetings which took place during this tour.

Dhlakama spent eight days in Europe — in Portugal, France and West Germany. His meetings with politicians were not very productive. The nearest Dhlakama came to a promise of actual support was from an unnamed adviser to French President Valery Giscard D’Estaing. However, the fall of Giscard the following year put paid to any hopes from that direction.

It is doubtful whether the South Africans had ever expected any big promises of aid to result from that trip. Its *raison d’être* was propaganda, to give the impression to certain political and journalistic circles that the MNR existed as a serious movement in its own right. The immediate follow-up was that Evo Fernandes became extremely active as an MNR spokesman. He showed a firm grasp of the significance of information (or mis-information) and soon had half the journalists in Lisbon eating out of his hand. Material was wired to him directly from South Africa, and would be all over the Portuguese papers the following morning.

**Giving MNR a Leadership**

The problem of providing the MNR with a credible leadership was not yet resolved. Dhlakama was President of the organisation (though he preferred the appellation ‘Supreme Chief’), and Cristina was General Secretary, but the rest of
the MNR’s ‘Executive Council’ did not yet exist.

The South Africans wanted to recruit some of the other exiles in Lisbon. Articles began to appear in Portuguese right-wing papers about ‘unity talks’ amongst Mozambican exiles. The big catch for the MNR would have been Domingos Arouca — at least he was reasonably well-known, and his imprisonment by the PIDE could be used as nationalist credentials. But he did not come across. Nor did his successor as leader of FUMO, Joao Khan (Arouca resigned in 1981, allegedly for reasons of health). Indeed FUMO even made a mild criticism of the MNR’s South African links. The MNR responded by slamming FUMO in its irregular publication _A Luta Continua_ (The Struggle Continues — a slogan shamelessly taken from Frelimo).

Other organisations were more responsive. One, MONAMO (Mozambique Nationalist Movement) had signed an agreement with the MNR as early as September 1979. Under this agreement MONAMO would readily supply material for _Vox Africa Livre_. MONAMO’s leadership consisted of a three-man directorate, one of whom was Maximo Dias, one-time President of GUMO.

Individual defectors from the FPLM have been eagerly snapped up by the MNR, and the most promising have immediately been promoted to high positions. The most notable example was Lieutenant Adrian Bomba of the Mozambican air force, who defected to South Africa in mid-1981 in spectacular style by flying his MiG-21 to an air base in the eastern Transvaal. After a spell working as a translator for the South African army (from Portuguese and Russian), he ‘disappeared’. The South Africans claimed to have no knowledge of his whereabouts. But he resurfaced in mid-1982 as a member of the MNR Executive Council — he was the head of the MNR’s Information Department. His brother, Boaventura, followed him into South Africa, and he too is now on the MNR Executive — as ‘National Political Commissar’.

The most important strengthening of the MNR came about through negotiations with the COREMO/UNAR/Africa Livre bands operating out of Malawi. They were the only other armed opposition group, and the history of some of their leaders gave them tenuous connections to the liberation struggle. A merger with them would thus add a certain ‘legitimacy’ to the MNR. But they had hit hard times. Hastings Banda had finally decided, in 1979, it would seem, that revolutionary Mozambique was there to stay, and had begun to normalise relations. An agreement was reached whereby Malawi quietly consented to halting armed attacks from its territory. The Malawian government, however, found it difficult to put this into operation, since its control over its own state apparatus is far from complete. 1979 and 1980 also saw the FPLM capture a number of key Africa Livre leaders in Zambezia province, including Amos Sumane himself. Several of these were brought to trial in February 1981 — four were sentenced to death and 27 given prison sentences. A second trial, in June 1982, sentenced two other prominent Africa Livre figures to death — Matias Tenda, who had deserted FRELIMO in 1967 to join COREMO, thence becoming a founding member of Africa Livre after Mozambican independence; and Joaquim Veleia, who had been FRELIMO Commissar for Gurue in Zambezia in 1974-75, but joined Africa Livre in 1979.

These reverses did not stop the Africa Livre bands from continuing small-scale raiding across the Malawian border. But the loss of much of their leadership may
have impressed on those who remained the need for uniting with a larger, stronger force. It is unclear whether some kind of joint MNR/Africa Livre command war was formed — but in practice, the MNR simply absorbed the Africa Livre bands. This change was felt with a vengeance in August 1982, when a major three-pronged assault was launched from Malawi into Zambezia province. The MNR, of course, claimed that their men has moved northwards from Manica and Sofala. Malawian diplomats contradicted themselves on the subject, some denying that Malawi could have been used as a base, others admitting the possibility, but excusing it on the grounds of the difficulty involved in patrolling the frontier.

One result of the merger with the COREMO/UNAR/Africa Livre bands was that the MNR acquired a Foreign Secretary, Fanual Guidon Mahluza, the early FRELIMO dissident encountered in this narrative. Mahluza reappeared in Lisbon in August 1982 as a member of the MNR Executive, and head of its Foreign Relations Department. He was number three in the MNR hierarchy, after Dhlakama and Cristina. He claims to have been arrested by FRELIMO after independence and sent to a re-education camp in Cabo Delgado, from which he subsequently escaped. This story is regarded in Maputo with some scepticism, and it is perhaps more likely that Mahluza divided his time since independence between the United States and Malawi.

The MNR Executive Council, as announced through the Lisbon right-wing daily, O Dia, in September 1982, consists of 12 men. They come from all three of the main strands of opposition to FRELIMO that we have discussed. We have already met Dhlakama, Cristina, Mahluza, Evo Fernandes and Adriano and Boaventura Bomba. Of the others, the Chief of Operations is named as ‘Commander Marques’. This is presumably the same Marques who appears in the Garagua documents, where he is described by Dhlakama as a ‘Portuguese’. Marques is a common Portuguese name, so identification of this character cannot be certain — however, there was a Major Marques in the colonial army in the early 1970s who was liaison officer with the Flechas and the GEs. He deserted from the Portuguese army in 1975, and fled to Rhodesia. The head of the Defence and security Department is given as Raoul Domingos. He appears earlier in MNR history as Chief Secretary to Dhlakama, and his signature is on many of the Garagua documents.

The merger with COREMO/UNAR/Africa Livre seems to have revived interest within the MNR in those opponents of FRELIMO still held in re-education centres. When the MNR captured six Bulgarian technicians in Zambezia in late August 1982, they announced that they would release them in exchange for twenty-eight named political prisoners. This was the first time that the MNR had made this sort of demand, though kidnappings have been relatively common. The MNR’s list interestingly enough, includes the entire top leadership of COREMO, Paulo Gumane, Arcanjo Kambau, Valentino Sithole and Joaquim Naua, as well as Nkavandame, Simango, Gwengere, and Simiao. Among the other figures on the list are Joao Unhai of the Convergencia Democratica, Basilio Banda, Gwengere’s right-hand man inside FRELIMO’s Nachingwea base in Tanzania in the 1960s, and Veronica Namiva, one of Nkavandame’s followers and personally implicated in the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane. FRELIMO ignored this demand.

By the end of 1982, the South Africans had managed to mount a substantial
counter-revolutionary force, and had given it much more sophistication than it had possessed under the Rhodesians. That is reflected in the current propaganda that the MNR produces — glossy, attractive, expensive stuff, a long way removed from the crude cartoons that they were putting out in 1979. Highly effective colour posters (in three languages — Portuguese, English and French) were produced in 1981 to mark the second anniversary of Matsangaiza’s death. Guerrilla motifs pioneered by FRELIMO were hijacked and made to serve thoroughly reactionary ends. The posters talked of a ‘second war of liberation’, and the MNR deliberately portrayed itself as the inheritor of the ‘good’, ‘nationalist’ parts of the FRELIMO tradition. Evo Fernandes’ bulletin *A Luta Continua*, started life as a less than inspired, indeed rather shoddy, duplicated publication. Now it is printed on glossy paper, with a multi-coloured cover, and fulsome use of photographs. Wisely, it declines to indicate where it has been printed, though it is interesting to note that some copies that turned up in Maputo were posted in Malawi. Well-produced pamphlets from JUMO (*Juventude Mofambicana*), the MNR’s youth wing, presumably printed in South Africa, have been distributed in Maputo. They include such calls as ‘Death to Frelimo and to the co-operantes’ (foreign workers). *Voz da Africa Livro* broadcasts on shortwave from the Transvaal, and can be picked up loud and clear in Maputo. The broadcasts last for an hour every evening, half in Portuguese, half in vernacular languages. It is less crude than in its Rhodesian days.

**Postscript**

In December 1982 Orlando Cristina did a bit of globe-trotting. He appeared in Lisbon to attend Jorge Jardim’s funeral, after he died of a heart attack in Gabon, and naturally took the opportunity to transmit orders to Evo Fernandes. More importantly, he travelled to the United States to recruit Mozambicans living there into the MNR. Some of those had abandoned FRELIMO in the 1960s, and had settled in America. They were mostly intellectuals enjoying a comfortable life, integrated into American society, and, unhappily for Cristina, with no desire to return to the perils of southern African politics. The MNR only netted one significant catch on this trip — Artur Vilanculu, one of those who had deserted from FRELIMO at the time of the Simango crisis of 1969-70. He was quickly made into a leading MNR spokesman.

Vilanculu was considered so useful that he was elevated onto an MNR ‘government in exile’ (or ‘shadow cabinet’ — both terms have been used in reports). This body, according to *Voz da Africa Livre*, was set up at a meeting held in Geneva in March 1983. At the time of writing, there is still no list of the members of this body available. Press reports, however, say that Vilanculu is the equivalent of a ‘Prime Minister’, and that Fernandes holds the planning portfolio. It is unclear what he is supposed to plan. It appears that the ‘government in exile’ does not replace the MNR Executive announced in September 1982.

The whole structure of the MNR seems to have been thrown into confusion with the death of its founder. Orlando Cristina was shot through the head by unidentified attackers on his farm near Pretoria on 19 April 1983. Naturally, the MNR accused ‘Frelimo agents’ of responsibility for the assassination, but have been unable to provide any evidence for this. In the light of subsequent events, it seems more likely that another round of savage leadership struggles within the MNR is under way.
Artur Vilanculu attended a gathering of reactionaries from all over the world in Paris in mid-May 1983 to set up something called 'Resistance International'. Interviewed in Paris, he said that Adriano Bomba had been appointed to replace Cristina, and that an announcement would shortly be made to that effect. Reports of Bomba's promotion were also carried in the South African press. But weeks slipped past, and there was still no official MNR announcement. Vilanculu is still living in the United States. He flew back to New York from Paris and nothing has been heard from him since. Evo Fernandes disappeared immediately after Cristina's death — apparently in fear of his life. He was out of circulation for two months, but seemed to have resurfaced in Lisbon in late June.

The MNR's main problem is probably the loss of its main channel of information. *Voz da Africa Livre* went off the air a couple of weeks after Cristina's death. The most prosaic explanation for this is that Cristina was the main script writer — with his death there was simply no material to broadcast. Alternatively the silencing of *Voz da Africa Livre* may reflect deep divisions inside the MNR, or it may have been a decision taken by the South African authorities, who may well be taking the opportunity of Cristina's death to reorganise the whole operation. The Johannesburg *Star* speculated that *Voz da Africa Livre* may have been a victim of the two meetings held between Mozambican and South African officials at Komatipoort, in December 1982 and May 1983.

These events certainly do not indicate the demise of the MNR. MNR bands continue to operate in large parts of the country, although they suffered heavy losses in Maputo and Gaza provinces in the first few months of 1983. The South Africans are still providing them with their weapons and ammunition. Recent activities in coastal parts of Zambezia province seem to indicate that many of these supplies reach the MNR by sea. Several thousand more MNR recruits are believed to be in bases in the Transvaal. The future of the MNR will depend partly on the efficiency of Mozambique's defence forces, and partly on the outcome of debates on strategy inside the South African armed forces.

Paul Fauvet

This article was submitted in 1983 before the recent meeting at Komatipoort between President Machel and Prime Minister Botha.

**Bibliographic Note**


THE POLITICS OF CHANGING PARTNERS — CONTROL AND CO-OPTION IN THE NEW SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION

With the enactment of the new South African constitution in 1983, the Botha Government imprinted its strategy for the defence of South African capitalism upon the country’s political system. The deepening, organic crisis had led the dominant classes to seek new allies and policies, and efforts were already under way to reorganise the labour process and restructure the provision of governmental services. To complement and further these initiatives, the political framework which had prevailed since Union in 1910 was abandoned, as the state itself was restructured. The new dispensation established a dominant executive President chosen by whites, and a tri-cameral parliament including whites, Coloureds, and Indians, while continuing the denial of any say in central government to the African majority. Liberal commentators praised the set-up as a breach in the political colour bar.

Genesis of the Constitution
The explosion of anger in South Africa’s black communities during the 1976 uprisings made it clear even to B.J. Vorster’s government that some sort of political change was necessary. The initial response was an unwieldy scheme, produced in 1977, for separate parliaments for Coloureds, whites, and Indians, each with its own Prime Minister and cabinet. Each would have had full legislative authority over its ‘own’ group’s affairs, while a consultative council of cabinets would have operated under an executive President to decide ‘joint’ matters. Rejection of this scheme, which would have left control outside the bantustans totally in white hands, was so unanimous that the government was forced to rethink. The issue was handed to the Schlebusch Commission, which pondered it for two years, only to recommend the creation of a President’s Council, as envisaged in Vorster’s plan, to consider the constitutional issue still further.

The President’s Council was established in 1980, following the abolition of the Senate, as an official, multi-racial advisory body on political and economic issues. Because Africans were left off, it was boycotted by the official white opposition, the Progressive Federal Party (PFP), and by every movement with any standing among Coloureds and Indians. A majority of its 54 members were consequently white supporters of the National Party, including a collection of technocrats, out-to-pasture politicians, and businessmen. The Coloured and Indian members were largely figures plucked from obscurity, such as a Port Elizabeth social worker, and a few reliable wheelhorses from the established Coloured and Indian political machinery. From its membership, it was difficult to escape the impression that the Council had been set up to produce an intellectual fig leaf to cover the NP’s political designs. This impression was reinforced by the timing of its report. According to press accounts, the Council originally intended bringing constitutional proposals out only in 1983 or 1984. It promised to provide them in the first half of 1982 after being called sharply to order by Chris Heunis, the Minister supervising constitutional revision.

The Council’s obedience was confirmed when the proposals of its Constitutional Committee were released in May 1982. The main points included:
The creation of a single legislature to represent whites, Coloureds, and Indians, with Africans still voteless.

Transfer of authority to an indirectly elected executive President, with power to appoint a multi-racial cabinet whose members could not retain seats in the legislature.

Replacement of the four provincial governments with eight multi-racial regional authorities, shorn of legislative power and reduced to purely administrative bodies.

The maximum possible devolution of authority to racially segregated local authorities for whites, Coloureds, Indians and Africans. These bodies would control so-called 'soft' functions with 'cultural content': schools, swimming pools, town amenities, etc. Multi-racial metropolitan authorities would control 'hard' (less controversial) functions such as sewerage and electricity.

While these recommendations received great publicity, they amounted to little more than a public relations exercise in aid of the National Party's ideas for constitutional reform. Even before the release of the report, NP members of Parliament already knew how the government would respond and what its final plans were.

The haste with which the Council drafted the report, along with the need to give its masters room for manoeuvre, probably explained the remarkable vagueness of its contents. A number of points crucial to the determination of the true seat of power under the new plan were not spelt out. The omissions included:

- Whether whites, Coloureds and Indians would sit in one parliamentary chamber or in racially separate chambers.
- How the powerful executive President was to be elected.
- Whether the provinces should have appointed or elected executives.
- How the proposal for weighted voting in municipal elections (one vote for ordinary citizens, two for property owners, three for corporations) would distribute votes among races or classes.

Most of the blanks were filled in by Botha at the NP's extraordinary Federal Congress at the end of July 1982. He sketched the outlines of the new constitution, based in large part on the National Party plan of 1977. They provided for:

- One Parliament with separate chambers for whites, Coloureds and Indians. The numbers of MPs in the three chambers will be in a ratio of four whites to two Coloureds and one Indian. Thus, the white chamber will have more members than the other two put together.
- An Executive President, elected by an electoral college. The college is to be composed of members elected by the controlling party in each of the three chambers of Parliament. Since the three races will be represented in the same proportions in the college as in Parliament, the candidate backed by the white chamber will win;
- A multi-racial cabinet, whose members may retain parliamentary seats if they wish; Joint committees of the three chambers to iron out differences in their versions of legislation;
- The chamber of each racial group is to have sole power to legislate on its 'own' affairs, while all three will have to consider any legislation on 'common' matters;
- Disputes not resolved by the joint committees will be referred to a revamped President's Council, also indirectly elected. Some 25 members will be appointed by the white President, and 20 by the white chamber of Parliament, while the Coloured and Indian chambers will choose 10 and 5 members respectively.
Decisions on provincial and local government were deferred, so this article looks primarily at the changes adopted at national level.

The implementing legislation, the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act, was introduced during the 1983 session of Parliament. The revised bill was passed in a special parliamentary session during August 1983, and approved by the white electorate at a referendum in November. The election of the Coloured and Indian chambers and the executive President, expected in 1984, will mark South Africa's final break with the Westminster tradition of responsible parliamentary government.

White Politics: Government by Default

The new constitution reflects the NP's thinking on how to retain political control despite the intense resistance its reforms have generated among the whites who will have to bear the costs. It is aimed as much or more at the white right as at white liberals or black opponents. It will enable the National Party to lose elections yet retain power. Such measures are required by the intensification of class struggles among whites over the past decade. As the maturation of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie and the increasing centralisation of capital made themselves felt, strains developed in the class alliance which had been organised to back the National Party. As Dan O'Meara noted, 'the verligte phenomenon was a response to the emergence, particularly in the 1960s, of a class of aggressive, self-confident Afrikaner capitalists, whose interests now went beyond those of the narrow class alliance out of which they had emerged'. As their economic interests converged with those of English speaking and multinational monopoly capitalists, old policies and ideologies such as job reservation, restrictions on the black petit bourgeoisie, and Afrikaner solidarity, became stumbling blocks rather than assets.

However, the reforms they sought were fiercely resisted by representatives of white workers, small farmers, and the rural petit bourgeoisie, whose institutionalised strength gave them veto power within the NP, Parliament, and the bureaucracy. The organic crisis which was signalled by the 1976 uprisings, followed by deepening economic and manpower problems, sharply intensified these clashes. After the Information Scandal was used to put the verkramptes off balance, P.W. Botha's victory in the 1978 NP caucus election for Prime Minister established the hegemony of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie within the National Party. Botha's victory precipitated a profound realignment in white politics, as the Afrikaner NP monolith fractured along class lines. His reformist rhetoric produced a powerful backlash among working class, rural, and petit bourgeois Afrikaners in by-elections. These trends were confirmed in the 1981 white general election, when the far-right vote rose from derisory levels to respectable 20 to 30 per cent showings in scores of farming and mining seats.

After the Conservative Party (CP) broke off from the NP in February 1982, opposing Botha's acceptance of 'healthy power-sharing', President's Council-style, as NP policy, the defections became even more menacing. National Party support among the white electorate slumped from its 55 per cent level in the 1981 election to 44 per cent in two polls taken in April 1982 (Rapport 2.5.82; Sunday Tribune, 2.5.82). The Rapport poll found the far-right to be leading the Nationalists among Afrikaners in the Transvaal. This conclusion was dramatically confirmed in the Germiston District by-election in August, and in a
succession of others which followed (the large 'Yes' majority in the November 1983 referendum did not fundamentally alter the government's disquieting situation, since much of the margin of victory came from opposition voters, most of whom were likely to revert to their old parties at the next election).

Thus, whilst the split strengthened the representatives of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie within the NP, it also intensified the threat to Nationalist control of Parliament and the state machine. As Nationalists have feared since Vorster's day, even a modestly reformist line has meant that the NP can no longer be certain of winning either a majority among the white electorate or in a white Parliament. Although Botha came to power closely tied to the military, using them to help formulate and promote his policies, the small Permanent Force lacks both the size and the tradition required to substitute military rule for a popular base. The fate of Dirk Mudge in Namibia, who destroyed his support among whites through military-backed reforms without winning the loyalty of blacks, is before the NP. A new political power base is called for.

Nevertheless, the Nationalists have consistently rejected the liberal option: an alliance with English-speaking capitalists and their political representatives in the PFP, leading to the extension of the franchise (with restrictions) to blacks in a common Parliament. This reflects the fact that although the economic interests of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie have become similar to those of English capitalists, their political interests continue to diverge. As state (or state-supported) capitalists, the Afrikaner bourgeoisie cannot afford to share state power with an aspirant black bourgeoisie. Furthermore, because the NP depends upon subordinate classes of whites (civil servants, skilled workers, etc.) for its mass base, it is also obliged to maintain preferential access to the state for whites, with the corollary of unequal citizenship for Africans.

Liberal thinking aims at creating a political and economic system accommodating enough to co-opt aspirant bourgeois elements from all races, thus attempting to defuse the revolutionary threat to South African capitalism posed by the African National Congress (ANC). However, the verligte Nationalists are merely seeking to gain some black allies for a civil war against the ANC through limited economic and political reforms, without sacrificing political control. After years of hesitation and deliberation, the verligtes moved to institutionalise their strategy through the new constitution, which devalues the position of the white opposition while enabling the NP to reach out to certain classes of blacks.

The new dispensation formally broadens political representation, but it actually dilutes the already restricted power of representative institutions in the South African system of government. Had the Prime Minister lost a parliamentary majority under the former Westminster-type system, he would have been obliged either to resign or to form a shaky minority government. However, in terms of the new constitution the NP will be able to exercise full power as long as it remains the largest single white party, even if it has just 34 per cent of the seats in the white chamber. The key to the new system lies in the manner in which the President and the President's Council are to be chosen. The electors who vote for the President are in turn to be selected by the three parliamentary chambers. As long as the unlikely event of the PFP and the far-right agreeing on a single candidate is excluded, NP electors will enjoy the most support, assuming the party retains the largest single bloc of white MPs. Consequently, the NP should
be able to choose all the white electors. Since these electors will constitute a majority of the electoral college, they will ensure the election of a Nationalist President.

Once in, those who assume power will be able to use the new system to perpetuate their rule. The executive is not responsible to Parliament, and thus can no longer be unseated by a legislative defeat or the denial of finance. Short of impeachment, the President can be removed only by the passage of a motion of censure in all three houses. This is a virtual impossibility, given that measures which would provoke censure among whites would probably be popular with Coloureds and Indians, and vice versa. Constitutionally invulnerable, the President will also have the whip hand on the legislature. He will be able to play the various parties against each other if his own party lacks a majority, using the right on some issues and the left on others to pass his legislation (this is the respect in which the new constitution represents the 'de Gaulle option', recalling how a politically invulnerable President de Gaulle formed shifting coalitions in the French Parliament during the first years of the Fifth Republic).

The division of parliamentary competence between 'own' and 'joint' affairs provides another check on the legislature. The white chamber will control most services and decisions directly affecting white South Africans (e.g. white education or local authorities), ensuring the maintenance of white privilege. On the other hand, the requirement that broad policy measures (e.g. the Group Areas Act) receive consideration by all three houses ensures that the two black chambers cannot 'gang up' and impose their will upon the white one. Divergences between the three chambers which the joint committees cannot resolve (likely on controversial bills) will be referred to the President's Council, which will act as a safety net for the executive. Although at committee stage of the consideration of the Constitution Act, the government conceded the opposition parties minority representation (of 10 members) on the Council, the President seems sure to retain a majority. In the unlikely event he were to lose this, he would still have one more chance to secure approval for his proposals, relying on elements from right or left to complete his majority in the revising body according to the subject.

The new constitution will thus make it possible for the minority to retain control of the South African state. The old way of doing this, loading electoral divisions in favour of the rural platteland, is no longer possible now that the country is aflame with Conservative Party sentiment. The leaders of the ruling party have instead been forced to revamp the institutions to beat back the growing challenge on the right. The new constitution will make possible a government with less popular support than any before in the history of South Africa.

Black Politics: Co-option on the Cheap
While the new constitution will enable the government to do without some of its former white supporters, it also represents a bid to incorporate segments of the Coloured and Indian populations into the white political fold. Botha's strategy hinges on preventing the alignment of these groups with the revolutionary nationalism of the ANC, and using them instead to bolster the existing regime. The means to accomplish this will be institutional mechanisms granting Coloured and Indian representatives little real power, but offering the trappings of equality and sufficient patronage to enable them to construct followings.
To a significant degree, these steps are possible because the NP has succeeded in implementing many of the apartheid policies it has pursued since 1948. The 'Age of the Social Engineers', as T.R.H. Davenport called it, is largely over. Coloured and Indian people have been removed from many desirable residential and trading areas, often to the benefit of Afrikaner workers and petit bourgeois elements. Likewise, disenfranchising the Coloured and Indian populations seemed urgent to the Nationalist government in the 1940s and 1950s, when it feared their votes could have helped oust it, but the NP is now confident enough of its ability to co-opt certain sections that it is willing to re-admit these groups to a subordinate political role. However, if the search for a new approach towards Coloureds and Indians was made possible by greater self-assurance, it was precipitated by the breakdown of the old methods of controlling them at the same time that threats to the regime were growing rapidly.

The National Party government has never enjoyed much popularity in Coloured and Indian areas, but it kept control through a sprinkling of patronage and heavy intimidation. The cornerstone of the system was the intense social disorganisation prevailing among the two groups. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, when many Coloured and Indian communities were disrupted by relocations under the Group Areas Act, residents were dumped in unknown communities without familiar neighbours or a sense of cohesion. This disorganisation was reinforced by repression, which sent most leaders into exile or jail. Fear of a banning order, detention, or a visit from Security Police was enough to keep most potential non-conformists in line. In such circumstances, where mass action appeared impossible, the ability of those working in officially sanctioned consultative bodies to dangle even minor benefits like houses or business permits was a real source of influence over isolated atomised populations.

In the Indian areas, the official machinery grew from the Local Management Committees and the South African Indian Council (SAIC). These institutions developed no real class base, but positions within them gave certain petit bourgeois individuals patronage power, which they used to mobilise members of their extended family and language or religious groups. This mobilisation was supported by the collaborators' involvement in the networks of ethnic, religious, charitable and school bodies, used to divide and pacify the Indian community in the same way that apartheid encouraged tribalism among Africans. A classic example of this process took place in Actonville, Benoni, where S.A. Mayet used positions in local associations, on the Indian Consultative Committee, and on the South African Indian Council to become a powerful figure in the community. Most other Indian townships have similar 'kingpin' figures. In Natal, the petit bourgeois Reform Party used the Local Affairs Committees and the SAIC as its base. In the 1960s and early 1970s, these devices deflected much of the political energy of the Indian community.

The position was similar in principle in the Coloured areas, if different in detail. The Labour Party, founded in the mid-1960s to oppose the pro-apartheid Federal Party in elections to the Coloured Persons Representatives' Council, enjoyed widespread popularity for its stand. It won clear majorities of the vote in the Council elections of 1969 and 1975. Its refusal to allow the Council to operate smoothly eventually led the government to abolish the toothless body.
However, at the local level, the Labour Party was difficult to distinguish from its Indian counterparts. It took hold of the Management Committees in the Coloured townships, and used their patronage powers (along with those of the Coloured Council) to establish a power base, earning the same sort of criticism within the community as the Reform Party has done. There were also parallel social and cultural supports for the system, though they reflected the mostly Christian and working-class composition of the Coloured group.

These structures began to fail as the wounds of the 1950s and 1960s healed. With time, the new communities developed a new sense of identity. As these sentiments emerged, so did a new generation of youth, who had not lived through the earlier crackdowns and refused to be intimidated by their elders' fears. By the mid-1970s, the capacity of the system to contain popular discontent was also in decline. The most important stream of patronage, housing, was drying up, as the tiny group areas allocated by the apartheid planners filled up. The burgeoning shortages of school facilities and township amenities also angered residents. Repression alone could not hold the line, once many began to speak out. Though the resources of the state were large, it could not detain the entire Coloured and Indian communities.

Resistance was rekindled in this situation, particularly among the young. The South African Students Organisation brought Coloured and Indian university students into step with their African colleagues, and the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was re-established. Indian workers were alongside Africans in many of the 1973 Durban strikes and subsequent emerging trade unions, while young Coloureds participated vigorously with Africans in the 1976 uprisings in the Cape. In 1980, student boycotts paralysed the Indian and Coloured educational systems (along with many African schools). After the boycotts, civic organisations grew rapidly in the Cape Town and Durban townships, where the largest concentrations of Coloureds and Indians respectively live.

Recent election results for the official consultative bodies bear witness to the loss of consent — and control. An NIC-led boycott campaign held the turnout in the 1981 SAIC election to a mere 10 per cent, and boycotts by Coloured and Indian community groups have kept participation in recent management committee elections hovering around the 10 per cent level. A recent review of survey data on South African Indians by the author suggested that no more than this small proportion was in favour of groups operating 'within the system' (Post Natal 16.6.82).

Achieving government's objectives, however, does not require unanimous or even necessarily majority support among the Coloured and Indian populations. The support of an influential minority could make divide-and-rule work, while shifts in labour demand will seem more the consequence of the market than of policy. The wholesale incorporation of the Coloureds and Indians is not on: not only is it not necessary, it is also too expensive, given the limited resources available for redistribution in terms of National Party thinking. Eliminating housing waiting lists running in the tens of thousands and equalising educational expenditures would present enormous costs, to say nothing of other areas of social inequality.

Nevertheless, the new processes will probably produce some differences in political outcomes, which are likely to enable the government to bid for support
among certain strata of the Coloured and Indian groups. The 'demands' of Coloured and Indian representatives in the new Parliament will afford the NP the excuse to push through *verligte* policies stymied by right-wing resistance under the old parliamentary system. As well as advancing the government's programme of reform in other areas, the sort of gesture towards Coloureds and Indians the new set-up will probably allow was illustrated by the recommendation of the existing President's Council that District Six and Pageview be returned to them without challenging the notion of group areas themselves. The limit to the adaptations possible will be the limit to the sacrifices demanded of whites.

These should still leave a substantial margin to offer to the Coloured and Indian petit bourgeoisies. This could include racially integrated, subsidised private schools (proposed in the de Lange Report), more places at white universities, 'grey' areas in terms of the Group Areas Act where they can rent or build houses, trading rights in the cities, help from the Small Business Development Corporation and the Industrial Development Corporation, and the repeal of the Immorality and Mixed Marriages Acts. There could also be measures to strengthen among workers, particularly the unskilled, the sentiment that a position has been marked out for them above that of Africans: more money for education, state services, and community amenities (the price of such measures will be the phase-in of conscription for Coloured and Indian men, the 'obligation' corresponding to their new 'civic equality').

The proposals to devolve power to ethnic local authorities also offer temptations, even while limiting the redistributive capacity of the new political system. Current thinking seems to be to give each such authority a fixed claim on local tax revenues. Coloured and Indian municipalities would thus control thousands of jobs, housing allocation and zoning, and other forms of patronage (though with no influence whatsoever on their financial resources or those of white areas). 'The result would be something that looks like South Africa today, but with black and Coloured communities developed to the fullest', according to one Nationalist MP (*Post Natal* 12.2.82).

What are the likely consequences of these manoeuvres for political alignments in the Coloured and Indian communities? The size and vigour of the opposition generated to the new constitution is striking. Some 12,000 people attended a rally to mobilise opposition in Cape Town in August 1983. Another some weeks later in Durban up-staged the Prime Minister, drawing a larger crowd than he attracted to a pro-constitution meeting for Indians the same day. A *Sunday Times* (15.8.82) opinion survey found majorities of Coloureds in Cape Town and Indians in Durban would have opposed the new constitution at a referendum. However, it would be a serious mistake to under-rate the potential for co-option. The Coloured and Indian groups are in an ambiguous position, politically and economically in between the dominant white minority and the oppressed and exploited African majority. In both groups there has been a traditional aspiration towards integration in white society, as well as impressive records of mass opposition to white domination. Now this tension is revealed in opinion surveys which show that majorities of both groups feel serious reservations about majority rule, despite their abhorrence of apartheid (*Post Natal* 9.6.82). In these circumstances, the determination of alignments is primarily political: whether individuals or groups seek to throw in their lot with the whites or the Africans.
Because of their permanent minority status, all classes and ethnic sub-groups of Coloureds and Indians have an interest in good relations with the dominant group, but the consideration is whether to ally with that of the present or of the future. Who seems to be winning, and what they are offering, are the most important questions, and responses are strongly influenced by political events and mobilisation.

Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest tendencies which may appear among certain classes or groups, with the caveat that these must be regarded as hypotheses. The commercial petit bourgeoisie, the small manufacturing bourgeoisie, and the 'new' (administrative/teaching) petit bourgeoisie employed by the state may all be influenced to favour the new dispensation by their dependence on the authorities. Educated, independent professionals and the 'new' petit bourgeoisie in the private sector may feel free to reject the new set-up as offering inadequate opportunities. Many skilled and semi-skilled workers may be opposed for the same reason. The unskilled, who often express racist attitudes similar to those of poor whites in the 1940s, may see the new constitution as ensuring themselves a niche above unskilled Africans.

In demographic terms, a division is also likely between town and country, farm workers being more dependent in every sense on their white employers than those in the cities. A cleavage seems likely according to age as well. Many of the young have been moved by the mood of resistance of the Congress and Black Consciousness movements to identify themselves and their interests with the African majority, but the middle-aged grew up under the influence of repression and the ideology of 'trying for white'. Thus, there may well be a sizeable minority at least potentially available for co-option. Already the new set-up appears more popular than the old status quo. The Sunday Times survey found that while 54 per cent of Durban Indians opposed the new constitution, 41 per cent would have voted in favour. Among Coloureds in Cape Town, though 57 per cent were opposed, around 30 per cent were in favour. Among Coloureds in Cape Town, though 57 per cent were opposed, around 30 per cent were in favour.

In the Coloured group, the key question is how much support the Labour Party can rally to its politics of 'Coloured nationalism'. At the time of writing Labour had not held a public meeting around Cape Town since deciding to participate in the new Parliament, fearing disruptions like those which erupted in Stellenbosch and near Johannesburg. However, a 1981 survey for The Star (27.9.81) put its Cape Town support at 24 per cent and its platteland strength was probably greater. The decision to co-operate with Botha doubtless cost support, but the Star data suggested that two-thirds of Labour's urban supporters were fairly conservative. Moreover, Labour may attract new adherents once the new dispensation is in operation, drawn by its new respectability, largesse, and media exposure.

The position is somewhat different for Indians, among whom no conservative party enjoys even a glimmer of credibility. A well-organised Congress Movement enjoys 30 per cent to 35 per cent support, drawn from all classes (Post Natal, 16.6.82). However, the Star and Sunday Times surveys suggested that as much as half the Indian group had no party identification. There is evidence that a credible liberal party not tainted by the SAIC could find support in this group (perhaps the PFP, if the government repealed the ban on mixed parties in the Prohibition of Political Interference Act) (Post Natal, 23.6.82).
Conclusion

Although the new constitution does not cede genuine political power to the blacks, it does represent an attempt to secure the organised consent of the Coloured and Indian communities, as well as to re-assert control among whites. The recognition of the need for consent, however, implies the possibility of dissent. Although repression is envisaged to ensure that dissent is not manifested too powerfully, the new institutions could not function if consent were merely orchestrated rather than freely given by the co-opted elements.

There will also necessarily be somewhat greater tolerance of overt, peaceful political opposition to those participating in these institutions, as complete elimination of the opposition would render them useless as devices for demonstrating support. This attitude was already shown in the decision of the authorities to permit the anti-SAIC campaign of 1981, despite its open support for the ANC’s Freedom Charter programme. Though some detentions and bannings followed, merely tolerating such a campaign would have been unthinkable a decade ago. However, doing so in the context of the SAIC election campaign would have rendered the vote an obvious farce.

Thus, the new dispensation creates new opportunities to mobilise opposition. Progressive organisations will be offered a chance to rally support, and to attempt to show up the new system’s unpopularity through a boycott drive when elections are held. A potentially crucial role may be played by the civic groups who have rallied against the new system under the banner of the United Democratic Front, as well as progressive trade unions and the Black Consciousness Movement’s National forum, if the latter participate at grassroots level. While the new constitution will let the government seek new partners, it also crystallises the political contradiction inherent in Botha’s policy of reform: between the need to seek genuine black support and the imperative of white control.

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'COLOURED* POLITICS' IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE QUISLINGS' TREK INTO THE ABYSS

I've learned to fear reforms, because it always happens that behind reforms, there is repression. We are not interested in reforms. We want liberation. The constitutional proposals and the President's Council are frauds and the people who accept this fraud go into it for their own personal benefit. (Curtis Nkondo, past president of the Azanian People's Organisation. (Cape Herald, 9/7/83).

Much of the international indignation at the abhorrent system of Apartheid has focused on the granite-like and unchanging nature of this racially ordered society. Recently a great deal of effort has been spent at creating an image of flexibility and moderation. Most of these efforts can well be dismissed as 'window-dressing', designed to placate or diffuse the growing international condemnation of South Africa's racial policies. However, the increasing tenacity of the struggle against the Apartheid regime has thrown the South African authorities into a desperate scramble for a 'new political dispensation' to diffuse the growing Black unity among disenfranchised South Africans. While the stillborn creation of the 'independent Bantustans' has done little to legitimise or stabilise the long-range Apartheid blueprint set out by Verwoed, the recent President's Council (PC) proposals of the Prime Minister, P.W. Botha, reflect the desperate efforts of the regime to cling to its power and privilege. As Dr Allen Boesak, the President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, commented:

The PC proposals are trying to co-opt 'Coloureds' and Indians to make the Apartheid machine run more smoothly, and were a move by the government to meet the economic, military and political crisis it faces (SASPU National, March 1983). And now, all of a sudden, the government's problems have become our the 'Coloured's' problems. Apartheid's crisis has become our crisis. All of a sudden we are told that we are not longer 'lepers', that we too are people with dignity, that we 'belong with' the Whites (New York Times, 2/23/83).

The significance of the PC proposals for 'Coloured Politics' and the decision of some of the 'Coloured' Labour Party (LP) to participate in the PC must be seen in the context of the inglorious history of 'Coloured Politics' in South Africa. The Labour Party was formed in 1965 to contest the 'Coloured' People's Representative Council elections. The founding constitution stated that the party would 'strive for the effective participation of all workers (later amended to people) in the government of the country, by participation in the councils of the nation'. A clause saying the party would strengthen the Trade Union movement was also later removed. A clause which still remains reads: 'The party is dedicated to vigorously opposing communism in all its forms' (SASPU National, March 1983).

The roots of 'Coloured Politics' extend well back into South Africa's colonial era. The proclamation of Ordinance 50 in 1828, abolishing the 'Hottentot Laws', was significant in two respects: (1) it introduced the principle of legal equality before the law for all citizens of the Cape Colony as was reflected in the qualified male franchise (which resulted in, among others, 'Coloured' votes in Cape Town

*Coloured* in the South African context is widely viewed as derogatory or as a White government-imposed system of classifying and dividing the disenfranchised. I have thus placed it in quotation marks to draw attention to this connotation. An earlier draft of this paper appeared in *Ufahamu*, and it is reprinted with the kind permission of the editor of that journal.
constituting some 20 per cent of the electorate); (2) it reflected not only the moral concerns of British liberalism but, as Trapido suggests, it was also intended to address the numerical imbalance between English and Dutch in the colony at that time. The extension of the Cape franchise thus bore a highly manipulative element in the British Colonial administration's efforts to woo non-White support to counter the numerical clout of the Afrikaner settlers.

This manipulative element was to recur throughout the history of the 'Coloured' franchise though involving different puppeteers and adversaries. The 1828 franchise qualifications largely remained intact till 1910, though with Union, the qualified franchise immediately became the target of White political attack, led by the representatives of the ex-Boer republics. A series of discriminatory laws ushered in by the Act of Union and during the period up to World War Two, systematically eroded the relative strength of these political rights in the Cape and Natal (the Transvaal and OFS retained the racial franchise of their republican days). The South Africa Act 1909 restricted the right to be elected to persons of 'European Descent' only, the 1930 Women's Enfranchisement Act was only extended to White women; the 1931 Franchise Laws Amendment Act removed franchise qualifications for Whites only in the Cape and Natal (it had already been applied in the Transvaal and Orange Free State); and by 1945 the registration of White voters became compulsory, while similar requirements did not apply for 'Coloured' voters.

It was the formation of the 'Coloured' Advisory Council (CAC) in 1943 by the Union Government which created the distinctive arena of 'Coloured Politics' as a political sphere formulated by successive White governments, as well as fomenting the growth of vociferous opposition to such racially segregated politics among the disenfranchised. Thus, while some of the African Peoples Organisation (APO) decided to split off and form the Coloured People's National Union in order to co-operate fully with the CAC proposals as a means of 'securing improved conditions for "Coloureds"', the other major faction of the APO formed the famous Anti-CAC movement 'to canalise all non-European sentiment and endeavour ... into one mighty stream that would expunge from the statute book all discriminatory legislation' (The Sun, 3/2/43). The battle lines were drawn and 'Coloured Politics' was irrevocably defined as collaborationist involving people who were seen as quislings (referring to the Norwegian leader, Quisling, who co-operated with the Nazis during World War II), or 'sell-outs' by most of the disenfranchised. The opposition to CAC thus mobilised on a non-racial, non-collaborationist platform, rejecting segregated political institutions, and used the boycott of these institutions as their primary political weapon.

The success of the Anti-CAC movement and the patently fraudulent and racist intentions of the White government resulted in the resignation en bloc in 1950 of those who had earlier seen fit to participate in the CAC. Meanwhile, the Nationalist Party, which had obtained a narrow victory in the 1948 general elections, wasted no time in implementing its version of racial segregation. Legislation such as the Separate Representation of Voters Act — which provided for a separate voters roll for 'Coloureds' in the Cape and Natal — was clearly bent on removing 'Coloured' input from 'White' politics. Similarly, the decision in 1959 to create an advisory Union Council for Coloured Affairs (UCCA) consisting of 15 government nominees and 12 elected members, sought to retain 'Coloured Politics' as an arena discreet from the politics of the rest of the disenfranchised
people of South Africa. Once again the strength of the Anti-CAC movement frustrated these political designs of the Pretoria regime. Anti-UCCA and anti-government opposition caused the cancellation of elections, forcing the Union government to appoint all the members of the UCCA.

Notwithstanding these setbacks, Pretoria pursued its strategy for the 'Coloureds' with increasing vigour. Besides the more general forms of political repression, legislation such as the Prohibition of Political Interference Act of 1968 (prohibiting non-racial political parties), the Separate Representation of Voters Amendment Act of 1968 (abolishing 'Coloured' representatives in the White parliament) and the Coloured Person's Representative Council Act of 1968, were designed to remove the 'Coloured' presence in White politics, as well as demarcating novel forms of segregated political activity. The creation of the Coloured Person's Representative Council once again aroused a massive anti-collaborationist movement among the very people the CPRC was supposed to serve. The ideological polarisation of the campaign was well indicated by the local term for the CPRC offices: 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'.

While some parties and personalities who participated in the CPRC at its inception were closely aligned to previous factions in 'Coloured Politics', the first CPRC election in 1969 was somewhat different in that it included the Labour Party, whose avowed claim was the dismantling of the discriminatory racial order in South Africa. Despite the CPRC possessing some limited executive and legislative powers and notwithstanding the media and government-sponsored fanfare introducing the 1969 elections, the CPRC failed dismally in attracting popular support. The CPRC elections only attracted 49 per cent of the registered voters (estimated to constitute less than 10 per cent of the 'Coloured' population) in 1969 and 38 per cent in 1975 (by when registered voters had declined by 116,030 since 1969). Many of the voters in the rural areas were bused to the polls by their employers. In many urban constituencies, candidates were only able to attract less than 10 per cent (some as low as 3 per cent) of the registered electorate.

The actual history of what became known as the 'Circus in Uncle Tom's Cabin' can only be described as a tragi-comedy. The White government was forced to intervene in the 1969 elections via appointments to the CPRC to guarantee a pro-government majority. The Labour Party 'victory' in 1975 appeared hollow as it became evident that the Labour Party (LP) supposedly opposed Apartheid while practising de facto segregated politics. Faced with an increasingly radicalised popular revolt in South Africa, the LP decided to sabotage the CPRC and bring its operations to a halt. The LP leadership increasingly engaged in vicious attacks on the apartheid government from the chambers of the CPRC.

The Pretoria regime responded in its characteristically high-handed manner to such a 'crisis' in 'Coloured Politics'. It appointed a political non-entity, Alethea Jansen, to administer the CPRC under the powers provided in the CPRC Amendment Act of 1975. Meanwhile the LP tried to sneak out of the back door of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and rid itself of the odour of collaborationism. A number of LP members leapt onto the groundswell of popular resistance which swept South Africa, often incurring the wrath of the Security Police. Detentions and police harassment were soon used as an absolution for their collaborationist sins. For example, lashing out at critics of his party's decision to embrace the PC
proposals, David Curry, the National Chairman of the LP, responded that his party was 'not a sell-out one because, by way of example, the Rev. Allen Hendrickse had spent 60 days in detention in 1976' (Cape Herald, 2/5/83).

The constitutional proposals of Prime Minister P.W. Botha should be seen both in the context of the history of collaborationist/anti-collaborationist struggles around 'Coloured Politics' and the current political and economic crises facing the Pretoria regime. Thus, the relative privileges the 'Coloureds' enjoy by comparison with the rest of the disenfranchised have not produced the wholesale political collaboration sought by the White minority regime. Particularly since the 1976 revolt, the political crisis has manifested itself in an ever-increasing unity and militancy among all the oppressed people in South Africa, and in a new clarity of vision. As Rev. Allen Boesak recently stated,

The Black people of this country know what they want, and it is not this PC proposals. We shall not be satisfied until we have our full human rights... which will be fought for right here in this land by the suffering, struggling oppressed whose determination to be free shall not be undermined by the violence of Pretoria, nor by the thinly veiled cynicism of Washington (New York Times, 2/3/83).

The endorsement of P.W. Botha's PC proposals by the White electorate in the 2 November 1983 referendum cut across South Africa's traditional Afrikaner/English-speaking cleavages. Professor Kleynhans noted that notwithstanding the diversity of political persuasions among the White yes-vote, the driving force behind the acceptance of the constitutional proposals had been White fear of the Black opposition. The designs to co-opt 'Coloured' and Indian participation (albeit as junior partners) in a form of central government, reflects a novel twist to the Apartheid separate development strategy of divide and rule. This new form of segregated politics has once again attracted its share of collaborationist elements among the disenfranchised and has also ignited a tremendous opposition to these 'reform measures'.

The decision of a part of the LP led by David Curry and Allen Hendrickse to accept the PC proposals did not even enjoy unanimous support within the LP. David Curry himself recently resigned from the position of National Chairman of the LP after a dismal campaign to 'sell' the LP decision and differences with the Hendrickse faction over the latter's persistent conciliatory public posture towards Botha's government. The seemingly absurd position of the LP can only be fully understood if we recognise that the very phenomenon of 'Coloured politics' in South Africa is in crisis. As Dr Mohamed, chairman of the Ad-Hoc Anti-PC Committee stated,

I think that the Labour Party was faced with a problem at Eshowe where the LP National congress was held. It was not sufficient just to reject the proposals. To gain credibility within the country it would have to throw its lot with the whole democratic struggle. And I think it has not got the stomach for that difficult struggle ahead. The easiest way out was to go in, to delude people and to say we are going in, in an attempt to produce changes from within. (Speak, March 1983).

The LP had rejected the government's constitutional proposals when they were first introduced in 1977. Hendrickse, leader of the LP, described the proposals, which are not fundamentally different from the 1982 proposals as 'indicative of decadence, immorality and a sick society and an attempt to entrench racism in the constitution'. Curry also commented on the second report of the President's Council Constitutional Committee by calling its proposals 'a clever and
sophisticated scheme for entrenching *baaskap*, which he did not believe would be acceptable by the "Coloured" community. Forty-two days later he said at the Eshowe Congress: 'we in the Labour Party have decided we are going inside the President's Council' (*SASPU National*, March, 1983).

This breathtaking about face contradicts almost all of the earlier positions of the LP. Thus, for example, Rev. Hendrickse, referring to the PC proposals announced in 1980, stated that 'the LP as a whole would remain loyal to the party executive's decision not to take part in the President Council unless certain conditions are met. Among these were that Blacks be included and that laws such as the Group Areas Act and Mixed Marriages Act be scrapped'. David Curry's comment in the same report is even more damming: 'I have no hesitation in saying that we will keep our word on this' (*Argus*, 9/9/80).

The LP's fickle attachment to the popular resistance could not tide the LP over the current political crisis as the very ground for 'Coloured Politics' has been increasingly carved away. As Boesak declared to the congress called to form a United Democratic Front in opposition to the government's reform initiatives,

Most of the churches and all democratically minded organisations in our communities have unequivocally rejected the proposals, because we are all committed to a non-racial, unitary and democratic South Africa; these organisations must unite on this issue ... and inform the people of the fraud that is to be perpetuated in their name (*SASPU National*, March, 1983).

Ethnic or racially based politics has thus become increasingly marginalised and irrelevant to the contemporary struggle in South Africa. Confronted with the demise of the political domain which in the past had constituted their stomping grounds, the LP chose to shed its radical veneer and exposed its anachronistic opportunism and racial political leanings.

The popular response to the LP decision has been an unparalleled outburst of condemnation from a broad spectrum of the disenfranchised communities. As the *SASPU National*, reported,

The Labour Party is on the run. After the decision in Eshowe to go inside, they have met with condemnation from all sides. The peoples' message has been blunt — you are sell-outs and stooges and you are not our leaders.

The president of the Islamic Council of South Africa declared that, 'Muslims would not allow themselves to be stampeded into organising themselves on an ethnic basis. We stand for the abolition of privileges of any kind that are discriminatory. We demand full rights for everyone' (*Argus*, 2/2/83). The Cape Areas Housing Association stated that 'we believe this decision does not represent the views of the majority but only a small fraction of the so-called "Coloured" community' (*Cape Herald*, 1/15/83). Similar statements have come from a vast range of community organisations such as the Azanian Peoples Organisation, the South African Council of Sport, the Western Cape Civic Association, the South African Black Alliance, The Cape Town Municipal Workers Association, etc. The Food and Canning Workers Union which claims more than 100,000 'Coloured' members, stated that it 'was resolved to resist any attempt to mislead the people into accepting the governments' constitutional proposals. We can't fight for the unity of all the workers on the factory floor and at the same time allow a constitutional dispensation which discriminates against people of different races and excludes the majority' (*Cape Times*, 2/1/83).
Even more striking than these condemnations has been the pattern of LP ‘report-back’ meetings with its ‘constituents’, meetings designed to sell the PC proposals. These meetings have been characterised by violent confrontations between LP members and anti-PC groups, often resulting in the LP summoning the South African Police to disperse their ‘dissident constituents’. As a local newspaper reported,

The Labour Party could only hold such meetings with the backing of the South African Police ... at the Eldorado Park Transvaal meeting the police were out in force. Plain clothes, uniformed riot police, tear gas — holding the community at bay (Speak, March, 1983)

The Transvaal Ad-Hoc Anti-PC Committee also accused the LP of ‘encouraging racial hostility by advocating “Coloured” nationalism’ and pointed out that ‘it is ridiculous for the LP to claim it has the community’s support when less than 150 people out of a population of approximately 90,000 in the Eldorado Park complex passed a vote of confidence in them’ (Star, 2/2/83).

The violence accompanying the LP’s spreading the word of the new political dispensation has reached such levels that numerous of the planned public meetings had to be cancelled. Even more sinister, the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Le Grange, in response to a suggestion by Mr Jac Rabie, Transvaal leader of the Labour Party, has authorised the LP to form its own military wing to contain such violence during its campaign to sell the PC proposals. Not only does the LP’s resort to these tactics reflect the total bankruptcy of its programme, but the introduction of such a coercive element as a vehicle for intimidation will probably alienate the Labour Party from disenfranchised South Africans even further.

The LP also recently reversed its previous stand and decided not to hold a referendum on whether to participate in the tri-cameral parliament. Extensive anti-PC mobilisation by local community groups and the broader UDF and National Forum have clearly shattered the LP’s credibility and confidence in posing as representatives of the ‘Coloureds’. Prime Minister P.W. Botha appears to have played no small part in persuading the LP to abandon its hopes in a ‘Coloured’ referendum. Fred Peters, the LP secretary, was reported to have stated in his annual report that Botha had ‘spoken out against holding a referendum’ among the the ‘coloureds’ during his recent meeting with the LP leaders. Hence, fearing the community backlash, the LP has unshamedly chosen to align itself with Botha’s Apartheid designs.

The Labour Party has clearly set a course which inevitably will plunge it into the abyss of infamy in South African politics. The sun is rapidly setting on the realm of ‘Coloured Politics’ and, like Bishop Muzorewa in Zimbabwe before independence, the LP’s acceptance of a slice of power and privilege offered by the regime clearly identifies the LP with its Pretoria Baas. The order of this opportunism and collaborationism will most certainly relegate the LP to the ‘dustbin’ of South African history.

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Bibliographic Note
See P. Hugo, Quislings or Realists: A Documentary Study of 'Coloured' Politics in South Africa, Ravan Press 1978, for a more detailed documentation of the history of 'Coloured Politics'. The March 1983 edition of SASPU National also has a useful analysis of the contemporary situation in an article titled, 'Party Labours to Sell its Line'. I wish to thank Mark Beittel and William Martin from the Fernand Braudel Centre for their useful comments and recommendations on an earlier draft of this essay.

THE MILITARISATION OF NAMIBIA'S ECONOMY

This paper seeks to highlight a process under way in Namibia which is often overlooked during wars of national liberation, namely the militarisation of the colonial economy. It is not concerned with the overall militarisation process in that country — Western military collaboration, mercenarism and so on — but with the restructuring and reorientation of the Namibian economy on a war footing.

Since the research for this paper was undertaken, events have tended to stress its relevance for any analysis of future prospects and problems. The attempts of the South African state to defeat SWAPO militarily and to destroy its support amongst the frontline states has led to the permanent occupation of large parts of southern Angola by Pretoria's army, mercenary units (including UNITA) and air force. Troops and military hardware have been deployed on a scale not seen in the region since World War II. Despite this, the Angolan army appears to have checked the South African advance in January 1984 and the SADF admitted its largest casualty figures since 1976. Moreover, the SADF reported subsequent clashes with SWAPO's military wing, PLAN, deep inside Namibia in February 1984. On the political front, Pretoria's rulers are still anxious to avoid implementing the UN plan for Namibian independence (Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978) and are trying, yet again, to concoct an anti-SWAPO alliance of white settlers and tribally-based leaders to replace the failed DTA. At the same time, they continue to suppress overt SWAPO political activity in Namibia.

There is no space here to analyse these political and military developments in detail. Nor can we assess the latest US diplomatic pressure against Angola which seeks to link Namibian independence to a prior removal of Cuban assistance to Angola. The Angolan and South African governments, under US auspices, were reported to have agreed a cease-fire and South African withdrawal from Angola on 17 February 1984 in Lusaka, but it is not yet known whether or not this was directly linked to agreement to implement the UN plan for Namibia. It is clear, however, that military domination of the sub-region is what the Botha regime, under its inner cabinet, the 'State Security Council', is aiming for, whether this is achieved by open aggression, destabilisation or 'security pacts'. With Namibia a veritable South African political and military laboratory, the stage would be set for a further massive militarisation of the South African political economy.

In 1980, Chester Crocker, the chief US negotiator, in an article produced at Georgetown University, asserted the 'reformist' role of the South African military leadership; since then the trajectory of the 'constructive engagement'
Bibliographic Note
See P. Hugo, Quislings or Realists: A Documentary Study of 'Coloured' Politics in South Africa, Ravan Press 1978, for a more detailed documentation of the history of 'Coloured Politics'. The March 1983 edition of SASPU National also has a useful analysis of the contemporary situation in an article titled, 'Party Labours to Sell its Line'. I wish to thank Mark Beittel and William Martin from the Fernand Braudel Centre for their useful comments and recommendations on an earlier draft of this essay.

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policy of the Reagan regime has served to back this process of militarisation. Indeed, expanded US-South African military co-operation, most dramatically expressed in the activities of the client UNITA organisation (see, for example, The Observer, London, 22 January 1984 on a US, SA, Zaire and UNITA meeting in Zaire in November 1983), is now one of the most important elements in the politics of the area. As the following analysis shows, international and South African capital is reaping considerable short-term profit from this situation, regardless of the long-term consequences.

Militarisation in Namibia's Economy
The so-called South West Africa - Namibia Information Service, an apartheid propaganda body, published a pamphlet in 1980 ('Counter-Insurgency — A Way of Life') which called for a 'Total Strategy' to uphold 'Western Christian civilisation' as developed by white South Africa. 'Total Resistance' requires a continuous and controlled reciprocal relationship between the economic, political, military, diplomatic and cultural facets of the state'. A section on the economy states 'war is a costly process ... the soldier fighting at borders threatened by insurgents (sic) provides a safe climate for internal economic growth ... In this climate, for instance, a farmer who is experiencing problems with his labour force is still prepared to contribute by doing military service or making it possible for his son to do so ... firms must make employees available for military service without any detriment regarding their financial welfare ...'

With the war legitimised in this way, Namibia has become not only what one local newspaper called 'in proportion to number of citizens ... the world's greatest military occupation' (Windhoek Observer, 21 December 1979) — there is one South African soldier to every six Namibian adults — but also a country where the entire white population and an expanding number of paid black allies are heavily armed. 'G3s (the standard NATO assault rifle used by most SADF ground forces) are to be found everywhere ... wherever you cast your eyes' (Windhoek Observer, 6 March 1982). Apart from the 80,000-odd troops under SADF and SAAF command, the 10,500 police, and the reserves of these forces, there are a growing number of mercenary and vigilante groups used by the regime. While the official forces depend on state finance and infrastructure, into which multinational companies in Namibia and South Africa inject enormous contributions, the other, 'private', armed units are sustained mostly by 'private enterprise' and individuals encouraged by the regime. These include extreme right-wing vigilante units or 'white terror groups' (Wit Weerstandsbewing, Blankswa, Eenheidsfront, ERA and Turnhalle Teenstand) as well as the security guard forces of private companies. In between the mainstream state forces and the privately organised groups are the South African state's clandestine or secret units (UNITA, 32 Battalion, Koevoet) and the 'commando units'. These commando units are white volunteers organised into local militias in towns, parastatal companies and on farms and receive training and equipment from the SADF (Windhoek Observer, 22 March 1980 and Windhoek Advertiser, 23 April 1980). These forces, in particular, have mushroomed since 1980 transforming Namibia's white population, as well as growing numbers of blacks, into a fragmentary auxiliary army, perhaps more than half the size again of the official army of occupation. This has clear implications for any UN-supervised elections since such groups have great potential for intimidation.
The foreign companies operating illegally in Namibia sustain all these forces through direct and indirect contributions to state revenues, contracts for military and security forces and infrastructure, by arming their own staff and contributing employees to the military, and by generally sustaining the economy as a whole. The South African state also performs these functions: in 1981/82, for instance, it provided about R600 million directly to the SADF and SAAF forces in Namibia, R134 million for the SWA Territorial Force and R330 million in support grants to the SWA Revenue Fund (within a total defence budget of R2,800 million for South Africa and Namibia as a whole). Companies in Namibia provided R233 million in total taxes and duties (SWA Revenue Accounts 1981/2).

One example of private commando units raised by multinationals is the 69-strong Rossing Uranium Ltd ‘Security Force’. The existence of this force and its arsenal came to light when SWAPO obtained a copy of a secret Rossing security document in 1980. This was about the same time that the National Key Points Act came into effect (1 July 1980) empowering the South African Ministry of Defence to designate major installations as ‘key points’ subject to commando ‘protection’ financed by the parastatal or private company concerned. SWAPO presented the document to the UN Council for Namibia Hearings on Namibian Uranium in that year, but the majority owner of Rossing, Rio Tinto Zinc, only acknowledged the scheme to the Namibia Support Committee in May 1982. The Rossing manager claimed, in reply to questions asked at the Rio Tinto Annual General Meeting, that the security measures were no different from those at any other major installation in Namibia. The Rio Tinto chairman ascribed the action to ‘civil strife’ in Namibia, but the security document indicates a wider brief: ‘to maintain a state of preparedness against civil or labour or terrorist attack . . .’.

Mining
Unlike many other sectors of the economy, the products of mining are of no direct use to counter-insurgency. But the major mining companies still manage to play a supportive role in the ‘total strategy’. For example, when the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) put Windhoek’s Van Eck power station out of action on 1 January 1982, Tsumeb Corporation (TCL) and Rossing provided engineers and cranes respectively to repair the damage (Windhoek Observer, 9 January 1982).

However, the mining companies are also vitally important to the war for the revenues they contribute to the South African state. Of the total revenue generated inside Namibia, 40 per cent came from taxes on Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM). The other mining giants, particularly Rossing and TCL, contributed very little directly (neither, for special reasons, paid any company tax) but they contributed significant amounts in non-residents’ shareholder tax, income tax and sales tax. Rossing alone boasted an expenditure of R100 million in Namibia’s economy, underlining its tax as well as its strategic value. Revenues from Rossing and TCL will be a major factor in the regime’s ability to fight on in 1984 (Rossing is now the largest single source of revenue in the economy).

As noted, the provision of their own commando forces places these key companies in a direct relationship with the militarisation process. TCL, for instance, has advertised for ‘security guards’ with at least two years experience in the South African armed forces (Windhoek Advertiser, 20 October 1980). Other mines north of Windhoek owned by Bethlehem Steel (US), Consolidated
Goldfields (UK), and ISCOR (SA) are also likely to have such schemes. A recent example of security co-operation between the state and multinationals was the case of the consultant computer analyst working for Rossing whose home was raided by two Rossing security officers and three security police looking for sensitive material (Windhoek Observer, 6 March 1982). One former union organiser at Rossing, who was subsequently detained, alleged in 1982 that there was close collaboration between Rossing security officials, the South African Police and armed white employees against black workers, especially during periods of industrial unrest (interview with Arthur Pickering of SWAPO, 1982).

**Settler Agriculture**

Since 1975, the SADF and the SAP have regarded the roughly 5,000 white settler farmers as a second line of defence and have placed a premium on keeping them in the countryside. The generals are aware that the white population of Namibia has fallen nearly 35 per cent since the war intensified in the '70s, falling to around 71,000. White farming families have been integrated into the military and police command as reservists, commandos and auxiliary intelligence and communications personnel. Since 1980 the authorities have subsidised the fortification of farmhouses and the SAAF has formed 'Air Commando Squadrons' out of farmers with light aircraft (Guardian, London, 16 June 1981). In May 1979 martial law was extended over the whole white farming area north of Windhoek, although the Chief of SWA Command admitted in February 1980 that he could not guarantee the safety of transport for white farmers. Confronted by recent drought, low commodity prices for produce, market restrictions and increasing activity on the part of PLAN (especially the mining of roads) a growing number of northern ranchers have opted to live in town and even to sell up altogether. In 1980 the number of ranchers registered with the SWA Meat Board dropped by 404 or 12 per cent. This exodus has reached crisis proportions in some outlying areas: 40 per cent of farmers, for example, had left the Grootfontein district by May 1979. The South African government has responded by providing heavy subsidies in the hope of stabilising the settlers. But these measures do not appear to have stemmed the tide. By August 1981, for example, only 32 per cent of Outjo's 273 empty farms had been resettled. The price of rural property close to military bases (e.g. near Okahandja) has rocketed, leading to increased speculation in such land. But in general even the basing of SADF forces on key farms and the recruitment of mercenaries abroad by white farmers has not substantially reversed the tide of departing settler ranchers.

**Banking and Finance**

Two British-owned banks — Barclays National Bank Ltd with 26 branches and Standard Bank SWA Ltd with more than 30 — hold over 70 per cent of all bank deposits in Namibia and are the major private financiers of the economy, for both public and private sector projects. They are followed by SWABANK, an associate of the Dresdner Bank of West Germany and the Bank of Windhoek (formerly the Volkskas). There is also occasional overseas-based financing from groups like Hill Samuel of the UK, Citibank from the USA and Credit Lyonnais of France. Quite apart from revenue collected through taxes (Standard paid R1.3 million in 1981), duties and general financial services, there was a direct contribution of R755,000 to the 1981/2 budget in loans and interest from private finance companies. And in addition to the banking sector, finance capital is also
represented by insurance companies and building societies, mostly either British or South African in origin.

Secrecy makes it difficult to obtain a clear picture of the relationship between this sector and the military project of the regime, but some examples do indicate important links. Volkskas Insurance, for example, have provided personal life cover for members of the infamous 32 Battalion (Windhoek Observer, 30 January 1982). Standard and Volkskas participated in a R20 million loan to the ‘SWA government’ in February 1980 (Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, February 1980) and, in response to questions raised at their Annual General Meetings, neither Standard in 1981 or Barclays in 1982 was prepared to give an assurance that their loan financing in Namibia would not be for military related projects. Barclays advertising in the South African media even made their facilities for processing the pay of national servicemen in Namibia a selling point.

Transport and Communications
The SWATF and SWAP spent over R14 million in 1981/2 on transport and communications and the central authority spent nearly R130 million. This excludes such expenditure in Namibia on the part of the SADF or on the part of private companies and individuals as it relates to security matters. The various South African security forces and other groups sponsored by them use a wide variety of trucks in Namibia, including such makes as Ford, Toyota, Land Rover, Datsun, Suzuki and Isuzu. Sales and some servicing are undertaken through various retail outlets and workshops in Namibia and maintenance requires the use of imported spares — including tyres from companies such as Dunlop. Fuels and oil products from BP, Shell, Mobil and Caltex are used. A Washington Post reporter, Richard Harwood, who visited UNITA hideouts, was impressed by the 10-ton Ford trucks and Land Rovers used by UNITA who, he reported, received diesel fuel supplies from the SADF in Namibia (Guardian, London, 29 July 1981). Apart from supplies brought in by rail from South Africa (much of it delivered by BP and Shell) the supply of petroleum products through the BP and Shell installations in Walvis Bay is distributed through a national network of service stations by tankers. This distribution occurs in the war zones as well and travels under SADF protection and in army convoys (Daily Telegraph, London, 30 July 1981).

In the war zones north of Windhoek it is often difficult to separate ‘defence’ from ‘civilian’ transport and communications. This applies to the road transport of whites (usually in civil defence and commando units) as well as to air transport. The proliferation of private light aircraft used for security began after 1975 when the war intensified, mainly because of the growing problem of landmines. This is despite the massive expansion of roadbuilding in the areas north of Windhoek. Cessna, Titan and Piper aircraft and even small Bell helicopters have been incorporated into the ‘Air Commando Squadrons’. Large companies like TCL, Rossing and CDM, as well as the main parastatal companies, increasingly use medium light aircraft. The electricity corporation, SWAWEC, owns the largest fleet and justified the purchase of a new aircraft from the USA for R2.2 million on the grounds that ‘it is no longer possible to travel by road in present conditions’, especially to the north where installations are often rendered inoperable by PLAN, requiring repairs to be made by skilled white personnel (Windhoek Observer, 24 April 1982 and The Combatant, organ of PLAN, January
This has become such an acute problem that companies and individuals use SAAF Dakotas to transport cargo and passengers in the war zones (Windhoek Observer, 30 January 1982).

Construction and Manufacturing
A wide range of locally supplied services are required by the South African army, airforce and police, but contracts are guarded by the Official Secrets Act. For example, on 31 October 1981 it was announced that the SADF had tendered for another six military bases to be constructed (Windhoek Observer, 31 October 1981). The value was concealed. However, a bush clearing ‘security zone’ contract worth R630,000 at Ruacana was given without tender to ‘a civil engineering firm’. The firms’ names are usually not disclosed. An exception was Karoo Meatpackers, one of the two largest South African based meat processing firms in Namibia, which was given a R250,000 contract to supply meat products to the SADF (Windhoek Advertiser, 18 May 1982). The same firm imported 2,800 tons of beef from Belfast’s Slaney Meats International and other firms in Northern Ireland. Once again we find military and civilian projects interwoven: for example, the upgrading of some low volume roads and culverts to farms and villages in the north to facilitate movement of both conventional forces and settler reservist units; the provision of generators for farms (advertised as being useful during ‘blackouts’); security fencing and lighting; water supplies and drainage, and so on. Much of this work is done by small local firms, but multinationals often supply the technology, equipment and spares (e.g. Kohler generators, Babcock International roadmaking equipment, GEC refrigeration) and occasionally do the work as well (e.g. William Bain of the UK providing extensive security fencing (Windhoek Observer, 1 May 1982), and Galion SWA, operating under US licence, using armour-plated Galion graders and cranes in the north).

The SWA Tender Board continually issues contracts for public works and stores, ranging from prefabricated buildings for government offices in the north to essential items like footwear and blankets, much of its related to security operations. In this way a great variety of firms in Namibia benefit from the escalating war and therefore have an interest in sustaining it.

Liability for Reparations
According to UN General Assembly Resolution 32/9D of 4 November 1977, the United Nations declared that South Africa was liable to pay reparations to Namibia for the damage caused by its illegal occupation since the termination of the South African Mandate in 1966. In view of the above preliminary evidence, the question arises about the liability of those companies operating in Namibia which have materially supported South Africa’s military campaign there. It will be important for a future lawful government of Namibia to consider the liability of such companies.

Brian Wood

Bibliographic Note
An earlier version of this paper was presented to a seminar in Vienna, organised by the United Nations Council for Namibia from 8 to 11 June 1982, under the title ‘The military situation in and relating to Namibia’. Other dimensions of the conflict — such as Western military collaboration and the use of mercenaries — are taken up in other seminar papers, a set of which can be obtained from the UN Council for Namibia in New York. Brian Wood was formerly Co-ordinator of the Namibia Support Committee in London.

**Abbreviations**


**SOUTHERN AFRICA 1984**

This Briefing is a kind of ‘Stop Press’ item. Most of the material in this Issue was commissioned in 1983 and most of it had been typeset before the agreements that South Africa concluded with some of its neighbours began to change the whole face of the southern Africa region. A thorough analysis of the manifold consequences of the Nkomati Accord South Africa signed with Mozambique, of the understanding about a troop disengagement with Angola, and of the now acknowledged security agreement concluded with Swaziland in 1982 will have to await a future Issue. But what can be offered here is an initial attempt to isolate what the key effects are and to refer to some of the positions that African states and movements have been taking on these issues.

As a stark summary we can offer the following list of issues which are likely to be affected by the agreements of early 1984:

— the nature and extent of African states’ backing of the liberation struggles;
— the (now necessarily internal) form of the struggle in South Africa;
— the character of SWAPO’s struggle in Namibia and the prospects for independence along the lines laid down in UN Resolution 435;
— the viability of SADCC’s goal of independence from South Africa;
— the pattern of development possible in the southern African states.

The extracts below from some key recent documents and policy statements address these issues and indeed offer differing perspectives on them. However, we believe that those throughout the world who are committed to the cause of liberation from the apartheid regime in South Africa and Namibia must face up to the difficult realities of this moment, but not be demobilised by them. It is also important to avoid dwelling on the different positions taken on the issues to the point where we ignore the increased need for the ‘active participation in the struggle by all nations, other organisations and institutions’, that the front-line leaders call for in their Arusha statement below.

**Front Line States Summit Meeting, Arusha, Tanzania, 29 April 1984; Final Communiqué**

... The Heads of State and Government and the leaders of Liberation Movements reaffirmed their total and unqualified commitment to the liberation struggles of the people of Namibia against colonialism and of the people of South Africa against apartheid. They reasserted their conviction and that of the Organisation of African Unity, that the total liberation of Africa from colonialism and racism is essential for the security of all the independent states of the continent and in particular of the Front Line States.

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Further, they reiterated that the root cause of the problems in South Africa is apartheid itself; apartheid is the cause of Africa's hostility to the South African racist regime and of the existence of South African and Namibian refugees. None of these things is caused by the Front Line or other States neighbouring South Africa. Apartheid has been condemned in categorical terms by the United Nations, and by the leaders of Europe, America, Australasia and Asia as well as by Africa. It cannot be made acceptable by the use of South Africa's military power and economic strength, nor by the use of mercenaries and traitors.

The Heads of State and Government and the leaders of the Liberation Movements discussed the understanding reached by the People's Republic of Angola and the Pretoria Regime, and they hoped that South Africa will honour its commitment to withdraw its troops from Angola. This withdrawal will constitute an opportunity for the immediate and unconditional implementation of Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978. They welcomed Angola's reaffirmation of its continued commitment to the struggle of the Namibian people under the leadership of SWAPO. The Heads of State and Government expressed their support for the Angolan actions against the externally supported armed bandits who are causing death and misery to the Angolan people and destruction of the economic infrastructure of the State.

The Heads of State and Government and the leaders of the Liberation Movements exchanged views on the Nkomati Accord between Mozambique and the South African Government. They expressed the hope that the South African Government will live up to the commitment to cease its acts aimed at the destabilisation of Mozambique through the use of armed bandits, and gave their support to the Mozambican actions aimed at the total elimination of these vicious bandits. They expressed appreciation of Mozambique's commitment to continued moral, political, and diplomatic support for the ANC in the struggle against apartheid and for majority rule in South Africa.

The Heads of State and Government and the leaders of the Liberation Movements declared that the immediate objective for Namibia is and must be the rapid implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978, in order that Namibia may attain full and internationally recognised independence on the basis of self-determination by all people of that country. They reiterated the continuing role of the UN Security Council and Secretary General in the implementation of Resolution 435. The leaders of the Front Line States again reaffirmed their support for SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people.

For South Africa, the objective of the Front Line States and Liberation Movements is the abolition of apartheid by whatever means are necessary. The Leaders present again reiterated their strong preference for apartheid to be brought to an end by peaceful means. This can be achieved only through a process agreed upon in free discussions between the present South African regime and genuine representatives of the people of South Africa who are unrepresented in the present government structure of that country. A prerequisite for any such discussions would be the unconditional release from prison, detention, house arrest or 'banning' of Nelson Mandela and all other political leaders. Difficult as this step may be in the eyes of the present South African Government, there is no way to peace in southern Africa except through discussions between the South African Government and the African people of South Africa.
To avoid any misunderstanding, they stressed that the phrase 'African People' includes all those who have been classified as being citizens of the so-called independent homelands in South Africa; the denial of their South African citizenship is not recognised in international law, nor by any independent state apart from South Africa.

The alternative to free negotiations within South Africa aimed at the ending of apartheid will inevitably be continued struggle against that system by other means, including armed struggle. This struggle is being waged and will be conducted and led by the people of South Africa themselves, on their own initiative and within their own country. However, their struggle is, and is seen by Africa to be, a struggle for the freedom and security of all the peoples of this continent, and for the human dignity of all men and women regardless of colour. It therefore receives, and will continue to receive, the full support of the peoples and the nations represented by the Heads of State and Government of the Front Line States.

Involved in this struggle for the total liberation of Africa from colonialism and racism is the consolidation of the freedom and the security of the states which have already achieved independence. To that end, and in the light of the difficult circumstances which do from time to time confront such states, the leaders of the Front Line States and the Liberation Movements reaffirmed their understanding of steps which are taken for this purpose by states which are fully committed to the liberation struggles. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the internationally recognised boundaries in southern Africa as these were defined when the free states achieved their political independence.

The Heads of State and Government of the Front Line States and the leaders of the Liberation Movements condemned without reservation the open and the covert aggressive actions of South Africa directed at the destabilisation of African states, and those aimed against refugees from Namibia and apartheid South Africa. There is no excuse in international law or civilised practice for these actions. The Heads of State and Government and the leaders of the Liberation Movements also repeated their rejection of the attempt to link the freedom of Namibia with any Angolan Government decisions relating to its security requirements and its internal political structures.

The political and the armed struggles being waged by the peoples of Namibia and South Africa led by SWAPO and ANC respectively, are taking place inside those two countries. The struggle is between the people of Namibia and the occupying power, and between the people of South Africa and the apartheid regime. Therefore, the strategy of the Liberation Movements is that of internal struggle, firmly based on the people’s will and determination.

As the denial of human rights, and the ruthlessness of the oppressor, has made it impossible for many active leaders of the Liberation Movements to live and work inside their own countries, it has been necessary for both SWAPO and ANC to have an external wing. The international implications of the problems with which the Liberation Movements are contending also require international diplomatic and political activity, together with offices and representatives in other countries.

The Front Line States reaffirm their recognition of these external operations of the Movements, and reassert their intention to give shelter to them. The Front
Line States also reaffirm their right and duty under international Conventions to accord hospitality to refugees from Namibia and apartheid South Africa. They appeal to the international community for diplomatic and economic support and protection as they carry out these international responsibilities.

The Heads of State and Government of the Front Line States and the leaders of the Liberation Movements represented at the Arusha Meeting, in reasserting their commitment to the struggle for freedom in Namibia and South Africa, also draw attention to the burden they are carrying on behalf of the world conscience and the international condemnation of colonialism and apartheid. They therefore appeal for active participation in the struggle by all other nations, other organisations and institutions, and all people who accept the principles of human dignity and equality.

In particular the leaders of the Front Line States and Liberation Movements appeal for political, moral, material and diplomatic support to be given to the Liberation Movements. They appeal also for concrete support to be given to the efforts of the Front Line States aimed at the consolidation of their independence and their fragile economies, as these are of direct relevance to their ability to play a constructive role in the search for peace and freedom in southern Africa...

Statement of the African National Congress National Executive Committee, meeting in Lusaka, 16 March 1984

... Over the last few weeks, the racist and colonial regime of South Africa has been involved in a frantic diplomatic, political and propaganda counter-offensive in southern Africa.

Some of the principal objectives of this offensive are:
— To isolate the ANC throughout southern Africa and to compel the independent countries of our region to act as Pretoria’s agents in emasculating the ANC, the vanguard movement of the South African struggle for national emancipation.
— To liquidate the armed struggle for the liberation of South Africa.
— To gain new bridgeheads for the Pretoria regime in its efforts to undermine the unity of the Frontline States, destroy the SADCC and replace it with a so-called constellation of states and thus to transform the independent countries of southern Africa into its client states and
— To use the prestige of the Frontline States in the campaign of the white minority regime to reduce the international isolation of apartheid South Africa and to lend legitimacy to itself and its colonial and fascist state.

In pursuit of these aims, the Botha regime has sought to reduce the independent countries of our region to the level of its bantustan creations by forcing them to join the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei bantustans in entering into so-called non-aggression pacts with Pretoria.

Such accords, concluded as they are with a regime which has no moral or legal right to govern our country, cannot but help to perpetuate the illegitimate rule of the South African white settler minority. It is exactly for this reason that this minority has over the years sought to bind independent Africa to such agreements.

The African National Congress is profoundly conscious of the enormous political, economic and security problems that confront many of the peoples of our region.
The blame for many of these problems must be laid squarely on the Pretoria regime which has sought to define the limit of independence of the countries of our region through a policy of aggression and destabilisation.

We are convinced that this regime, which is dripping from head to foot with the blood of thousands of people it has murdered throughout southern Africa, cannot be an architect of justice and peace in our region.

Neither can the ally of this regime, the Reagan administration of the United States, with its pro-apartheid policy of ‘constructive engagement’, by an architect of justice and peace in this region, while it is an angel of war, reaction and repression other regions of the world, including the United States itself...

The Pretoria regime is acting in the manner that it is, to try to extricate itself out of the crisis that confronts its racist and colonial system of apartheid. It hopes that after it has ‘pacified’ our neighbours and driven the ANC out of our region, it will then have a free hand to suppress the mass democratic movement of our country and thus create the conditions for it to spin out its intricate web of measures for the refinement and entrenchment of the apartheid system.

Our principal task at this moment therefore is, and must be, to intensify our political and military offensive inside South Africa. This is the urgent call that we make to the masses of our people, to all democratic formations and to all members and units of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Relying on our own strength, through action, we will frustrate the schemes of the enemy of the peoples of Africa and continue our forward march to the destruction of the system of white minority colonial domination in our country.

The central and immediate question of South African politics is the overthrow of the white minority regime, the seizure of power by the people and the uprooting by these victorious masses of the entire apartheid system of colonial and racist domination, fascist tyranny, the superexploitation of the black majority and imperialist aggression and expansionism.

This question will be and is being settled, in struggle, within the borders of our country and nowhere else. We are entitled to expect that all those anywhere in the world, who count themselves among the anti-colonial and anti-racist forces, will join hands with us to bring about this noble outcome...

Extracts from Statement by Thabo Mbeki, Director of Information, on behalf of ANC of South Africa, International Hearings on South African Aggression, Oslo, March 1984

We have an obligation to ourselves to liberate ourselves. We have thought it was a very important thing that in the course of that effort to liberate ourselves, that we should do as little as possible that would serve as a provocation to the South African regime to attack the neighbouring states. To the best of our ability I am sure we shall continue to do that. But we nonetheless have an obligation to liberate ourselves.

We know this regime and its activities and have lived with colonialism for centuries. We know the nature of this regime and know that it does not seek peace. It forced us to take up arms. And for us to abandon armed struggle would be to surrender...

We certainly shall not surrender. And the South African regime will, as before,
when we carry out an operation in Cape Town, thousands of kilometres from the nearest border, point its finger for instance at Botswana and say that these people came from Botswana. But this regime will not answer the question as to how these people travelled 800 kilometres from the border of Botswana to Cape Town, and they didn't catch them. They will say it is the duty of Botswana to catch them as an excuse to invade Botswana, to try to compel Botswana (or any other country in our region) to bend to the purposes of South Africa, which, in our view remain unchanged.

Botha, racist Prime Minister Botha when speaking last week at the signing of the 'Nkomati Accord' said very boldly and very plainly that here was being taken one of the steps towards the formation of a constellation of states. This was a confession that Pretoria is continuing to pursue an old policy. The racists want to dominate the countries of our region. So long as they feel that these countries are insufficiently dominated then so long will they continue with their policy of aggression against them. They want to destroy ANC and the democratic movement in South Africa. So long as they feel the movement is active in a political way, in a military way, in all sorts of ways, so long will they point a finger at the independent states of the region as people who are harbouring this movement . . .

Two Comments from the Mozambican Media: 'Agreement Opens Prospects for Peace'

... Welcomed by President Samora Machel as a victory for our country and for the region, this agreement creates, in the short term, the possibility that the origins of the instability that has worsened in southern Africa thanks to the aggressive policies followed by Pretoria, can be neutralised. Though the South Africans and initially let it be known that a successful outcome would depend on a total withdrawal of Mozambique's diplomatic support for the ANC, in the end this question has been excluded from the agreement . . .

Mozambique has remained on the diplomatic offensive, continually stressing the need for coexistence so that peace can be established, without however, dropping its opposition to apartheid, to the bantustans, and its moral, political and diplomatic support for the ANC. This also guaranteed that the climate inside and outside Mozambique was favourable to the dialogue that had been established.

As for South Africa, as a result of its international isolation, it had to negotiate without being able to rely on Western support. The facts that after the negotiations last May, the South African armed forces carried out a fresh attack against Matola, and that the spy plane shot down over the bay of Maputo proved to be of South African origin, led potential allies to accept that it was Pretoria that held the initiative when it came to aggression.

Thus at the negotiating table interests coincided, out of the need (always defended by Mozambique) to create a climate of peace and stability in the region, as against the already weak position (weakened by the military and economic realities that South Africa is also living through) of those who were advocating the policy of aggression.

In this way, the conclusion of the ministerial talks in Cape Town constitutes a victory for Mozambique's 'socialist peace policy', and a guarantee that a new dynamic is being generated within which apartheid may be confined to its own
borders. A clear sign of this are the recent declarations of South African politicians, businessmen and analysts who see in this agreement 'the best opportunity for the regime to turn inwards and push forward as rapidly as possible with the promised reforms against racial discrimination'. A reading of reactions inside South Africa indicates also that a regime that up until now was living according to a strategy of 'how to destroy Mozambique' will now have to think about acting along lines of 'how to get along with Mozambique'.

Alves Gomes

'The Nkomati Accord and SADCC'
What does the Nkomati Accord mean for the SADCC? This question has brought two diametrically opposed responses. Some say that the SADCC will be strengthened. While others assert that the SADCC will have to quit its policy of reducing economic dependence in relation to South Africa. Before attempting any speculation on the future, we should first look at growth in the SADCC, in spite of four years of destabilisation, both military and economic, carried out by South Africa against the region ... In SADCC as a whole there are $3,000 million of financing invested over the four years in which growing destabilisation by South Africa has been witnessed. However, only tranquility in the region will enable the countries of SADCC to reach their full potential. Donors obviously prefer to invest their money under conditions that will guarantee continuity of projects. Thus it was not by chance that Prime Minister Mugabe of Zimbabwe welcomed the talks between Mozambique and South Africa that resulted in the Nkomati Accord as something positive for this country. He may have had in mind the railways linking his country to ports in Mozambique. These have been under constant attack and sabotage by the armed bandits. The medium term possibility that Mozambique will eliminate the armed bandits is good news for the key sector in SADCC strategy: Mozambique's transport system . . .

Attacks against the transport system in Mozambique which forced Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi to use South African ports put these countries in a real position of dependence upon South Africa. The Accord of Nkomati will help to end this dependence. Thus we can conclude that the accord is not a threat to SADCC. Quite the contrary, the principles of SADCC have become operative for the first time.

(A Mozambique Information Agency feature by Carlos Cardoso)
Reviews


The distinctive feature of Tom Lodge’s study of black politics in South Africa, apart from its wide scope and considerable detail, is its emphasis on local conditions and concerns in explaining the major episodes of mass political action since the Second World War. The book opens with a discussion of the pre-1945 background, followed by chapters on the Defiance Campaign and political organisations up to 1960, but the rest of the discussion is on particular struggles, or waves of resistance, with the emphasis on popular involvement and action rather than leadership. This latter part ranges over a wide variety of episodes, from bus boycotts to Poqo, women’s anti-pass agitation to rural revolts against Bantu Authorities and the ‘Trust’.

Of necessity, the African National Congress and its alliances and divisions provide the dominant theme, having remained throughout the period the principal means by which a mass movement embodying a progressive consciousness could be built. Yet the ANC emerges from this account as an overwhelmingly urban movement with little active contact with the rural masses among whom, nevertheless, dispossession and oppression periodically produce armed rebellion. One of the most valuable chapters of the book is the one on ‘Resistance in the countryside’. Until the 1940s the ANC was conservative, championing distinctively petty bourgeois causes, but industrialisation, the growth of the urban proletariat and intensifying labour struggles had the effect of radicalising it. The emergence of the Youth League confirmed that trend, pushing the movement further towards populism, mass mobilisation and militant action. The Youth League itself was divided between those who wanted a non-racial nationalism, democratic and anti-colonial, and others who spent a great deal of their energy fighting the influence of white communists, not so much on account of their communism as their whiteness. After a phase of militant defiant action, the ANC and its allies turned, from 1953, to a policy of protest without mass disobedience and emphasised the task of building an organised mass support base ‘which would allow it to exercise the decisive weight in a crisis of political authority which was only vaguely conceptualised but which all were sure would shortly come’.

However, what did come was an intensification of racist rule, to some extent a
parallel diversion of some black middle class militancy toward racial exclusivism, and the entry of a small but nonetheless visible Liberal Party into black politics against the communists. When black political organisations eventually turned to armed struggle it was as much a response to the foreclosure of alternative means of non-violent struggle as a culmination of their previous development.

Lodge’s account is sympathetic to the ANC rather than the PAC and accords the All-in-Action Council and its affiliates no more than the customary also-ran acknowledgment. In all this he is quite justified though he does miss an important point. However weak in their own right, these oppositions did have an impact on the Congress intelligentsia (and on subsequent Black consciousness thought). After all Congress intellectuals had much in common with their opponents, in many cases preserving strong personal ties.

There is no extended discussion of class struggles within the nationalist movement though the theme of conflicting class interests in the various situations of protest and resistance is a recurring one. The difference of views among the various leaders seems to be explained in terms of their personal backgrounds, though this does not in any way mean that they represented in a strong empirical sense different class forces in the movement. What appears distinctive about the movement is that although it was led by that ubiquitous amorphous class, the petty bourgeoisie, it had no definite class identity. It was eclectic and represented practically all categories of blacks. The reason is that there was no class among blacks in the 1950s and 1960s that was strong enough to make such a movement its own: capitalists and would-be capitalists were weak politically largely because they were weak economically. Many years would pass before an ascendant Afrikaner bourgeoisie could carve out a space for them to accumulate and collaborate. The working class, complex in structure and fragmented, was only beginning to develop the organisations through which it could eventually dominate mass politics if the state did not act so decisively to foreclose that development. The issue of the political formation of the black working class and its place in the national struggle is one that would have deserved more extended discussion than it obtains in the one, rather racy chapter it gets. The question is whether the nationalist movement was on its way to acquiring a revolutionary class character in the manner hoped for in the Communist Party report of 1950, which Lodge takes to show that party’s definite recognition that the road to socialism was through the national struggle. If it was, then the second stage was already contained in the first.

On the transition to armed struggle Lodge goes over the available material which he brings together very effectively. Particularly enlightening is the discussion of the Poqo movement and Leballo’s approach to armed revolution. Despite its impact at the time, the intervention of the PAC emerges as a truly tragic episode. Lodge’s account of exile revolutionary politics is much less well informed and although his judgement is that the ANC showed remarkable resilience which would win it an important influence in the post-Soweto period, he does not examine the ideological and political impact of the struggle on blacks within South Africa, or, indeed, its transformative impact on South African politics as a whole. It internationalised the struggle decisively, accelerated the process of ideological radicalisation in the ANC, established the option of revolutionary armed struggle as a permanent feature of popular black politics and, for a considerable period, hampered South African diplomacy in Africa and with it the
harmonisation of imperialist interests in the continent.

Lodge's book provides ample evidence of the expectation of armed struggle in the 1950s and the increasing readiness of ordinary people to fight. A striking difference emerges as between town and country, whether one contemplates Witzieshoek in the early 1950s or the rebellion in Pondoland, or migrant workers in the Western Cape. If armed struggle is an intrinsic part of the revolutionary process then it also was clearly not the instinctive mode of urban revolt. That may have far-reaching implications for the future. In this regard one wonders why Lodge omitted the resistance in the 'self-governing' Bantustans from his review for, surely, these most miserable duchies are a definite weak link in the chain of domination.

Still even as it stands this book is a remarkable achievement and will prove to be an immensely valuable contribution to the political debate going on within South Africa.

Sam Nolutshungu


Afrikaners have too long been treated as special and their Nationalist triumph as fulfilling their mysterious destiny. A major aim of O'Meara's book is to provide an alternative view of Afrikaner nationalism based on class analysis. Afrikaner nationalism after the period of Fusion was a new movement deliberately conceived and mobilised and not a continuation of previous Boer struggles. The new movement was led by the Transvaal intellectual petty bourgeoisie who gave it a detailed, contrived, ideology and a specific economic content, and above all, organisation. The economic movement in Afrikaner nationalism was an attempt to transform the Afrikaans-speaking petty bourgeoisie into a bourgeoisie through the use of the savings of farmers and workers. In its success it subordinated both the workers, who never had a lofty place in it, and the petty bourgeois Utopia of a luxuriant republic of small capitalists — the people's capitalism of the title.

Most of the book documents these claims, though there is also some informative discussion of the national and international context at various points. O'Meara goes into considerable detail in identifying the various groupings within the Afrikaans-speaking petty bourgeoisie and their different, often conflicting, interests. The lines of cleavage are overwhelmingly regional, reflecting the different economic circumstances in the different provinces of South Africa. Through this emphasis on cleavages O'Meara explains both the divisions in Nationalism and the eventual unity. All this is impressively done and convincing, but there remain some questions.

The account that is given and for which evidence is presented relates primarily to the motivation of the most self-conscious leading activists of the movement. It does not tell us much about the reasons why the people who were 'interpellated'
as the volk were so receptive to Nationalist appeals. Why, for example class, rather than interest differences within the petty bourgeoisie did not vitiate the project of unity? Why there were no significant left Afrikaners, and why this extraordinary racist utopianism was effective among Afrikaners and virtually no other settler group in the whole colonial world? Surely culture and history worked heavily in the Broederbond’s favour. But there was another factor, probably more decisive.

The South African state was extremely congenial to Afrikaner nationalism which for the most part refined and systematised what was already there. More importantly, the entire political project was to win elections which demographically the nationalists could win if they mobilised on ethnic lines. This was no nationalist revolution but electoral tribalism. To be sure there were in the late 1930s and 1940s strongly anti-parliamentary forces like the Ossewa Brandwag, but had they prevailed the subsequent context of nationalism and the volksseunheid would have been drastically different. But they were never near succeeding.

The mere existence of a racialist political process created Afrikaner nationalist mobilisation as an obvious and compelling option. The truth is that 1948 was just an election victory even though one that determined the outcome of subsequent elections too, and made many things possible. Afrikaners were distinguishable, by language and economic circumstances, by history and a one-sided awareness of it, or else the ‘British’ certainly were.

One must also doubt the severity of the political and economic ‘crises’ which the state and capitalism are said to have been facing and which leap out of every other page of this work. The sense of impending doom is a feature of developing capitalism and of colonial society but, objectively, capital and whites in general had an exceedingly strong position in the balance of forces and that is the only reason why they could afford the luxury of apartheid which, economically, retarded the development of productive forces, and politically, was a provocation to the overwhelming majority of the working class.

It is a measure of the power of the state and of Hoggenheimer, and not only of the successful embourgeoisement of Nationalism, that once in power the ‘anti-imperialist’ and ‘anti-capitalist’ themes were played down and apartheid dutifully took its place in the service of imperialism. Virtually all parliamentary parties are deradicalised in office for very obvious reasons.

The subsequent divisions in Afrikaner nationalism reflected conflicts of economic interest between the ascendant bourgeoisie and its erstwhile allies, but the purely political conflicts of competing political machines and personalities were also important. Herein lies a fecund source of strife in all nationalist movements, indeed, all bourgeois political organisations, especially where, as in Afrikaner nationalism, so little conflict between classes seems to occur both in politics and in the economy. A ‘crisis’ like the Vorster-Muldergate one on which the book concludes is quickly followed by the landslide endorsement of Botha’s constitutional proposals. ‘Crises’, one is tempted to conclude, are not so important after all — or else we need a fuller, more restrictive definition of crisis and its consistent application, and a more direct relation of the central class struggles in the wider society to the endless gyrations of Afrikaner nationalist factions.
All these are, perhaps, side issues and quibbles about an historical monograph of evident value. O'Meara succeeds very well in removing the masks of Afrikaner nationalism, and the reverential mystification of it by some scholars is well discredited.

Sam Nolutshungu

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The two collections of essays that Shula Marks has co-edited on South African history, one with Anthony Atmore and the other with Richard Rathbone, are milestones in the writing of South African history. In the opening sentence of the first collection, the editors refer to a ‘revolution in the historiography’ of South Africa, and it is by this standard that these books deserve to be considered. The revolution in historiography, as it looked a decade ago when the various contributors to Marks and Atmore were inspired, contained these elements above all:

1. Fundamental political developments in South Africa and notably the development of a racial order required an explanation founded in social and economic circumstances;
2. ‘Race’ and ‘racial attitudes’, disembodied from those circumstances, explained very little;
3. The development of capitalism in South Africa has at various stages depended upon the coercion and control of black workers, which in turn is fundamental to comprehending the rise and vagaries of the South African state;
4. Thus, at the very least, business and the apartheid state have not been historically antagonistic.

The English language social science and historiography dominant at that time in South Africa rather transparently reflected the bitterness that liberal intellectuals felt at being rejected from the corridors of power after 1948 where their opinions had previously at least earned respect from those in command. Their views on managing the development of industrial society in South Africa, strongly tinged by corporate thinking and the imperial heritage, were largely rejected by the Nationalist Party. Much of their subsequent analysis blamed South Africa's problems on the archaic, primitive Boers, their irrational racism and the greedy white working class. By contrast, they saw laissez-faire capitalism through rose-coloured glasses with a retrograde, racist state as the enemy of progress. Such liberals as Hutt, Doxey, Houghton or Horwitz were on such matters far more dogmatic than the more balanced and far-reaching work of pre-war liberals such as C.W. De Kiewiet or H.M. Robertson. The one new contribution of the post-World War II liberals that influenced the writing of
history was the insistence of some that Africans must be brought into the mainstream of South African historiography as *actors* with full respect for their customs, traditions and heroes. This corresponded to the gradual emergence of a militant African nationalism in South Africa and a nationalist-tinged new history through the remainder of the African continent.

The political environment of the late 1960s dulled these perspectives. The African initiative school could not explain development on South Africa where the nationalism that was sweeping aside colonialisms elsewhere failed to gain the upper hand. Capitalism, enjoying conditions of unprecedented growth, could hardly be viewed as stunted by the rules of apartheid. The apparent political failure of both African nationalism and the liberal world-view suggested a turn towards more radical analytical departures and a search for entirely new kinds of influences that could infuse South African scholarship. A new generation of scholars could find rich pickings as they gleaned for material and ideas in the history of other parts of the world. In their introduction, Marks and Atmore refer to the impact of economic anthropology, of the French *Annales* school, of British and American social history. These in turn reflected the break-up and refraction of classic Marxist historiography frozen during the Stalin era.

Until the 1960s, the use of class and the relationship of economy to society in almost all historical scholarship had followed fairly fixed patterns. Even non-Marxist writers, if they considered these issues at all, were apt to stick to these patterns for parts of their analyses or in the cause of refutation. With reference to South Africa, Marxist writing had typically shown a commitment to popular struggle, to workers' movements and to socialist party building that was quite distinctive from bourgeois scholarship but it did not use a different set of analytical tools in constructing its view of the subject. Probably the most important Marxist history is Jack and Ray Simons' richly incidental *Class and Colour in South Africa*. For the Simons, capitalist development in South Africa can be explained fairly readily through the application of models from other societies and is essentially unproblematic; the historian's task in large measure is to fill in names, dates and events with accuracy and narrative skill. The one special feature of South Africa that does require explanation is the special *distorting* heritage of racism.

Between such work as that of the Simons or Eddie Roux's moving *Time Longer than Rope* and the historical revolutionaries there is a gap wide enough as to make earlier committed work seem not so dissimilar to that of liberal historians. It is not just that Marxism influenced the new South African history and social sciences; Marxisms and indeed Marx himself, were the influence. Of the pieces written by Harold Wolpe, Frederick Johnstone, Stanley Trapido and Martin Leggassick which particularly heralded the revolution one, written by Leggassick on the frontier tradition in South African historiography, has never previously been published and is used to kick off the Marks and Atmore collection. This essay couples with the fact that '... for all their regional and temporal diversity, these essays are, in general, concerned with the socio-economic basis of societies and its relationship to ideology and politics' to give the book a powerful unity.

Ever a decade after its initial construction, Leggassick's essay is immensely refreshing in its consideration of 19th century South African social relationships rid of the baggage of *a priori* assumptions about whites and blacks and frankly
undercutting the nationalist traditions of both. With race as a causative force removed, one begins to come to grips with the environmental limitations and possibilities for economic development in southern Africa before the Industrial Revolution. Jeff Guy's essay on the causes of the Mfecane, lays great stress on ecology while others, such as Tony Kirk's work on the Kat River settlement, skilfully relate environment back to economy and politics. Agrarian-pastoral societies in southern Africa exhibited forms of clientage and complex social dominance that cross-cut the racial dividing line. The reader encounters the same social problems with variations occurring to different ruling classes of the region. In the colonial and colonially derived territories, it is within these various imperatives that a comprehension of racism can be derived.

Sharp light is cast in particular on the responses of different classes and regions to the intensification of merchant capital in the 19th century, a theoretical area where surely this book must be of outstanding interest. Peter Delius helps to explain the conjuncture that brought Pedi males, well before colonial conquest, to labour in the Kimberley diamond mines. William Beinart delinates the changing pattern through which the demands of the Pondo chiefly elite and the Cape wage economy intersected and diverged. In the Transvaal, Stan Trapido considers the construction of feudal set of social relationships in response to the impact of early capitalist influence. For the Cape, by contrast, he focuses on the role of merchant capital in underpinning the dominant local ideology of 'Cape liberalism'. This he rescues from the conventional wisdom of South African conservatives who have always claimed that all liberalism was foreign to South Africa and imperial in origins. The forms through which conflicting classes and strata struggle to make use of new opportunities in the South African region are richly varied in their ramifications in the merchant capital era.

The least successful part of the volume is the early section on African states. Phil Bonner's Althusserian consideration of 'classes, production and the state' in Swaziland poses important questions but suffers in the telling from a functionalism that is as noticeable among the Marxist anthropologists with whom his work is here aligned as among many non-Marxist anthropologists. The whole problem of the 'state', if that is what it really was in southern Africa, and its relationship to the 'household', remains imperfectly understood. Yet this piece, highly stimulating; the general quality of essays in Marks and Atmore is extremely good. Moreover, the majority convincingly take on the classic big subjects of 19th century South African history, enhancing their pedagogic impact.

The new school of South African historiography became, in the course of the 1970s, a multiplicity of schools. As the introduction to Marks and Rathbone notes, the most salient event to which radical historians felt bound to attend was the revival of a black labour movement in South Africa. When the decade began, the South African system seemed to be a juggernaut, able to destroy any opposition forces in its path. A decade later, sympathetic observers increasingly saw in black labour the hope of a countervailing force that held the promise of socialism in South Africa. The response of engaged historians or social scientists was by no means uniform. Some scholars have nurtured the efflorescence of a labour history that has often followed rather classic institutional and party lines, previously extant but very underdeveloped for South Africa. Luli Callinicos's didactically important A People's History of South Africa places to the fore the
classic elements of political economy, systemic analysis and workplace resistance. David Hemson is an outstanding example of an historian who has insisted on the centrality of showing a class-conscious working community and fighting union movement in his work on the Durban dockers. Other writers have placed far more emphasis on the need to examine other aspects of South African popular life and culture, notably the remarkable and evocative studies of early Johannesburg created by Charles van Onselen in *New Nineveh, New Babylon*. Marks and Rathbone refer to the important collections that appeared in South Africa at the end of the 1970s edited by Eddie Webster and Belinda Bozzoli. Webster has put together a union-orientated labour history selection while Bozzoli has pushed us in the direction of community, culture and consciousness.

These divergent reactions are due to the very successes of the historiographic revolution of the early 1970s. The paradigm with which this essay began has achieved wide acceptance among many if a new generation of writers who have been forced, as a result, to move on to new questions: How did the mineral revolution and industrialisation change the social interactions characteristic of the merchant capital era? If economic change engenders class formation, how does the language of class help to explain 20th century South African history? How can we move convincingly beyond the established bourgeois models of African social change — acculturation, modernisation, detribalisation, etc?

Such questions lie at the heart of the Marks and Rathbone collection, which is much narrower in focus than its predecessor; it concentrates on the period 1870-1930, specifically emphasising the themes of industrialisation and social change and limiting itself to the world of the African population. Despite this, it coheres less well. The stimulating introduction seems more like a reasoned attempt to steer a judicious path through warring factions than the herald of a sustained revolution in thinking. Through no fault of the editors, Marks and Rathbone suffer ironically from the range and self-confidence of relevant sociological and historical literature now available in books or articles; the collection, precisely because of the growing variety and sophistication of the field, is far less hegemonic in scope.

Three points in the introduction are perhaps the most controversial. One was the decision to give to Africans a defining focus. It is both true, as Marks and Rathbone insist, that the black working class has so far received much too little attention in the literature and that links between that class and other groups in the African population, peasant and petty bourgeois, have historically been very close. It is not however really clear from this why the racial ‘fault-line’ should be the perimeter of new interpretations. The neglect of the black communities usually classified as Coloured and Asian in South Africa underlines this limitation.

Secondly, the editors critique the functionalist structuralism that is to be associated with the impact in South African intellectual circles of Althusser and Poulantzas. They are right to question rigid formulae that explain all social phenomena in terms of the needs of the state and the instrumentalism that reduces the state to an agency of capital or popular activity to an automatic reflection of class consciousness, all of which can be found in the range of recent writing on South Africa. However, they provide no real answer to the question of how to conceptualise society without structural and causative categories and, in
abandoning the high ground of the state and political economy, make it very
difficult to follow their more processual outlook to the end.

Thirdly, Marks and Rathbone focus on historians’ task as one of unveiling the
social specifity of South African industrialisation. ‘The process of
proletarianisation was therefore incomplete, often violent, always uneven and
idiosyncratic’ (p.13). This presents exciting opportunities for exploring social and
political life. The door is opened to consideration of a cultural history of South
Africa linked to the study of political economy. This promise is the strong suit of
the introduction but it is not very well realised in the body of the test.

It is not to take away from the considerable interest of the individual
contributions to suggest that: (1) there is much less underlying cohesion than in
Marks and Atmore about priorities and approach; (2) many, if not most, of the
contributors find it difficult to break meaningfully with earlier paradigms about
Africa and social change; (3) most of the work is, at any rate, only marginally
concerned with either industrialisation or class and theoretical considerations are
too studiously avoided.

No less than six of 14 chapters concern agrarian society and, despite their
generally good quality, show little qualitative or temporal break from the work of
Delius, Bundy, Beinart, Slater or Trapido in the earlier volume. Ted Matsetela’s
family history of an Orange Free State sharecropper suggests, but only suggests,
how rural history must be integrated with a sense for the changing demands of
capital and the state. The weight of rurality (and the de-emphasis on cultural
issues) of this long section is so heavy as to leave such connections
underdeveloped and to make the process of industrialisation part of a hazy
economy ‘background’.

The final selections appear to redress the need for an emphasis on consciousness
and to fulfil the stated commitment to cultural issues. Tim Couzens presents with
elegance a discussion of American-South African connections linked up to ideas
both on social control and on social resistance. Deborah Gaitskell considers
women’s organisations and David Coplan discusses artistic, particularly musical
and dance, forms. None of these essays tries, however, to connect culture to
economic forms or to class. Coplan in particular uses class terminology that lacks
any real explanatory power. When J. Clyde Mitchell looked at kulela on the
Copperbelt or Terence Ranger wrote about beni, using urbanisation and
colonialism as models, they really were just as convincing as Coplan trying to
apply a class model to dance in the South African townships.

While Brian Willan’s attractive portrayal of Sol Plaatje’s life in the Kimberley of
the 1890s has the personalised stamp of social history, his discussion of the local
African petty bourgeoisie is not only instrumentalist, with its outlook rather
narrowly defined according to their function, but it is unclear that they actually
were much different from imperial contemporaries of the same class in Karachi,
Kingston or indeed King’s Lynn. Van Helten and Richardson’s short overview of
labour in the gold mines, apart from a few nods at the end to African worker
‘resistance’, is in a different sense functionalist, a capital-determined economic
account which makes a very useful survey but is exactly what the introduction
seems to disavow.

Two essays only seem to share Marks and Rathbone’s aspirations substantially.
One is by Phil Bonner, who traces the relationship between working class and petty bourgeoisie during and just after World War I on the Rand. Both classes are etched with unprecedented clarity because of this stress on interrelationship. Bonner convinces us moreover that this period had a particular rhythm, a sense of crisis that relates to what we know of the ICU and the Rand Revolt of 1922 and thus makes an original and powerful contribution to the historiography. Rob Turrell, who has written some very interesting pages connecting social and economic development at Kimberley, South Africa's first major mining community, succeeds in producing an essay of equivalent merit that feeds back to the emphases of the introduction and suggests changes in our perception of an important period and subject.

One hopes that the contradictions and lacunae in Marks and Rathbone will spur historians and researchers on as much as the more finished strengths of Marks and Atmore. The 1870-1930 period was, after all, a powerful crucible for forging the present features of South African society. The reconstruction of South African history, and particularly that of the black working class, is far and from stably settled into a new paradigm; it will require continued innovation and the application of new historical and theoretical insights.

Bill Freund

Bibliographic Note

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Catholic Institute of International Relations Series: A Future for Namibia.
No.4 — Education, Repression and Liberation: Namibia, Justin Ellis, 1984.

The CIIR set out in 1981 to address the 'fundamental problems of the Namibian economy which has been distorted by years of colonial rule'. To date it has produced an introductory text representing its position on the contemporary political situation, and four subsequent texts focusing more specifically on the individual areas of agriculture, mining, education and fishing with a further publication on 'the role of women' promised for the future. The publications, produced as part of the CIIR education programme to promote a better understanding of international justice and peace issues, are fairly short booklets averaging around 100 pages each and are aimed more generally than at academics alone.

Each publication has two objectives; firstly to present an outline analysis of, and historical explanation for the current situation; and secondly, to discuss alternative paths for development open to a future independent Namibian government. To a greater or lesser extent the authors have relied on SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) policy statements as a starting point for a discussion of future developments on the basis that 'observers are agreed that SWAPO commands popular support nationwide, and, barring an unforeseen and serious reverse, it will form the independence government' (No.2, p.68). This is complicated however, by the acceptance that on some issues SWAPO policy is little more than a 'wide political preference rather than a precise guideline for action' (No.1, p.55) as for example in mining, where 'SWAPO has said it wants to encourage mining' and 'has indicated its willingness to deal with Western mining companies' but 'has deliberately not prejudiced negotiations by going into detail about possible arrangements' (No.3, pp.68-69). By comparison education policy is more clearly articulated. The picture is further complicated however, by the authors' general acceptance that constraints will exist at a number of levels; the 'experience of Zimbabwe', the harsh constraints of the world economy and South Africa's economic control over the area, as well as pressures from groups inside the country whose 'expectations have been moulded under present colonial society' (No.4, p.62). Whilst the post-independence constraints are more obvious than SWAPO policy statements, there is general acceptance by the authors that SWAPO is committed to a 'socialist path of development' (No.1, p.55) in which 'purposive action by the party and the state is called for to transform the present race — and class-divided society and to eliminate mass poverty', although SWAPO 'believes this will be a long and arduous process' (No.2, p.68).

Such problems of definition have not confronted the authors in the more extensive analytical and historical sections of their texts. Here the impact of colonialism and the effect of South African illegal occupation is made explicit in the first of the five publications and represents the framework for analysis in the subsequent texts. This becomes particularly clear in the studies of the industrially productive sectors where the authors have drawn widely on the existing research material to produce a valuable and critical, albeit concise, view of their research topics. In an area where documentation is severely limited and primary research material restricted, the authors have pieced together a picture of colonial exploitation under a racist coloniser with international collusion — the agriculture of theft, Namibia as a back yard for South Africa's private sector, the
political economy of over-fishing and education for apartheid — and have drawn attention to the resultant impoverishment of black Namibians, their resistance and their brutal suppression.

The last of the CIIR booklets draws particular attention to one of the most dubious of South African political manoeuvres, the annexation of Walvis Bay, an area of 434 sq miles and Namibia’s only deep water port geometrically situated some 500 miles north of the border with South Africa. Perhaps due to limitations of space, Moorsom has discussed this key ingredient in Namibian independent development at greater length in a separate booklet of similar format published by the IDAF. Post-independence control of Walvis Bay, as Moorsom points out, is of profound importance; without it ‘Namibia is virtually a landlocked country, a position which would leave a future independent government wide open to South African economic manipulation’. This, like the CIIR booklets, represents a welcome addition to the literature available on a vast area of southern Africa which has attracted so little attention from serious and critical writers in the past. The forthcoming book addressing the role of women should be a further welcome addition to the series, hopefully correcting the noticeable lack of explicit discussion of this important topic, to which only four pages are devoted in the series to date.

Hans Schröder

B. Bunting, Moses Kotane — South African Revolutionary.

Other works quoted in the article include:


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