

Southern Africa
REPORT

Vol. 1 No. 3

December 1985

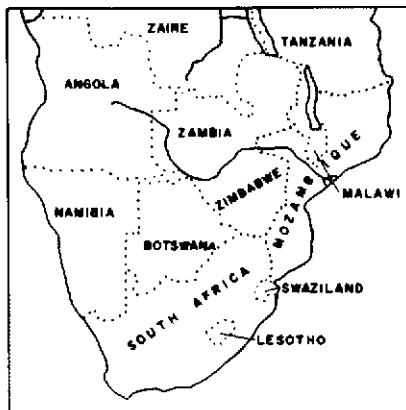


**THE QUESTION
OF POWER**

Southern Africa REPORT

Vol. 1 No. 3

December 1985



Southern Africa REPORT

is produced 5 times a year by a volunteer collective of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC),

427 Bloor St. W.
Toronto, M5S 1X7
Tel. (416) 967-5562.

Submissions, suggestions and help with production are welcome and invited.

Subscriptions

Annual TCLSAC membership and Southern Africa REPORT subscription rates are as follows:

SUBSCRIPTION:

Individual \$15.00
Institution \$30.00

MEMBERSHIP: (includes subscription)

Regular (Canada) \$30.00

Unemployed
Student \$15.00
Senior

Sustainer \$50.00
to \$200.00

Overseas add \$5.00

Contents

AFRI
L200,968
S1272
V.1
no.3-5

Editorial	1
One Person, One Vote, In a Unified South Africa	3
The Centre Cannot Hold, White Liberalism and Beyond in South Africa	7
Ja Toivo Calls for Sanctions Against South Africa	11
Divestment: Lessons from McGill	14
The Quebec Scene: Southern Africa in Quebec	17
SADCC Conference: Ottawa, November 13, 1985	18
Anti-Apartheid in the U.S.: Confronting Imperialism	19

Contributors

Jonathan Barker, Cynthia Barrett, Claudette Chase,
Jo Lee, Richard Lee, Mike Mason,
John Saul, Doug Sider, Heather Speers,
Joe Vise, Mary Vise.

Cover photos from NUSAS publication "Ruling the Townships"

THE QUESTION OF POWER

Even the most casual observer of developments in South Africa must suspect that something qualitatively new is afoot in that country. International banks refuse to roll over loans to the South African government and even President Reagan is forced to make a bow in the direction of sanctions; leading South African businessmen trek to Zambia to meet with the African National Congress; President Botha says his government is "committed to the principle of a united South Africa, one citizenship and a universal franchise". What is going on?

One thing is certain. The *apartheid* state, and indeed the whole racial capitalist system which stands behind it, is in severe difficulty. It faces economic crisis, but even more importantly (as the interview with which we begin this issue points out) it faces the militant resistance of the vast majority of the South African people, a resistance it quite simply cannot repress. Not that it isn't attempting to do so. The arrests and killings of black leaders continue apace. But the more fundamental drama is to be found in the amazing resiliency of the black population. Too often the images in the media - when, that is, the South African government were still permitting them to reach the outside world - have encouraged us to think in terms merely of angry mobs of Africans raging - however justifiably - against the *apartheid* state. Such a picture, even when it captured accurately the brutality of that state, has tended to obscure as much as it illuminates. For the fact is that much of the strength of the South African resistance is grounded in the high level of self-organization which the African population has managed to achieve in recent years. This is exemplified by a vast panoply of civic organizations, youth congresses and student groups, unions, national umbrella organizations of the UDF type, and the like. The combination of black



Afrapix

anger and black organization has proven to be a potent one. What we find in South Africa is a mass movement that refuses to be decapitated.

This reality has caused, on the other side, a real crisis of confidence. How else to explain the astonishing death-bed conversion of leading Afrikaner businessman Louis Luyt, once a notorious bag-man for the South African government at the time of the Muldergate information scandal and an international apologist for *apartheid*. Hear him now: "We want to do away with a system that had been wrong for forty years". He follows this up with a pretty good Marxist analysis of South Africa's racial capitalism:

"Whether business likes it or not, it has benefited from apartheid. It is only now that apartheid has turned against them that they are seeking its removal. For years big business did not want the situation changed."

The conclusion? *"For far too long the private sector has paid lip service to real change. The big companies could have done much more to influence change."*

So far so good. But the catch for capital is that it doesn't quite know how to deal with the situation. Suppose for the moment that it could steer a fairly substantial reform package past the more right-wing members of the (white) electorate, what would that package look like? Not quite democracy, in all probability. Here's Louis Luyt again, this time citing an erstwhile liberal opponent fondly: *"I agree with the comments made recently by Mrs. Helen Suzman that we are not going to give this country away. There is no point in exchanging a bad white government for a bad black government."* But perhaps we should also examine the thoughts of a rather more respectable spokesman for big business, Gavin Relly, chairman of the powerful Anglo-American Corporation, writing in the *Washington Post* at about the time of his Lusaka meeting with the ANC. His formulation deserves careful reading, we believe.

"South Africans must now turn their minds to thinking about how to create a new, coherent society that offers reasonable equity to all

... (T)here seem to be two fundamental approaches. The first is to modify the present system ... (This) approach seems to take into account ... the necessity of a form of power-sharing which at least would recognize various real power centres in the country, some of which may be tribal, such as the powerful Zulus, some of which may be the independent homelands (which can by no means be disregarded), some of which may be urban and multiracial, and some of which may even be white.

"In our highly complex society I would by no means reject this line of thinking as impractical, and provided it were able to establish a balance of power in a free society shared by everyone, I would not regard it as morally offensive. Nor would it exclude everyone's having the vote, though not necessarily in a single, directly elected assembly. There are of course many possible models within this reformist approach, but whichever one is chosen will have to take account of vast cultural diversity, basic communications problems flowing from the fact that a large part of the population uses a vernacular language rather than English or Afrikaans and traditions in Africa are not always democratic.

"The other approach stems from the view that any modification of the present structure would be simply serving the same pie in a different dish. It bluntly declares that nothing short of immediate universal suffrage with no protection for minorities or safeguards for institutions is acceptable. This attitude is supported by the African National Congress. I myself have no hesitation in believing that an implementation of such a policy would have a devastating effect on the country and the subcontinent."

We think that most readers of Southern Africa REPORT will be able to read between the lines of this slippery text for themselves. Clearly, it lends force to Sheena

Duncan's warning to anti-apartheid activists (cited elsewhere in these pages) to keep their eye on the main target, what she calls the "transfer of power". As the struggle for South Africa enters a new and far more complicated stage, new and far more subtle schemes may be launched in order to coopt that struggle and to deflect it from a full and genuine democratization. In short, we must opt for Relly's "other approach"; we should say as loudly and vigorously as possible that he is indeed attempting to serve the same old capitalist pie - and to serve it, when all is said and done, in much the same old racist dish.

Of course, Relly's statement also suggests - since he is supposed to be one of the voices of reason on the side of established power! - that South Africans are still a long way from the kind of serious bargaining which will define the end game of their struggle for liberation. As other articles in this is-

sue make clear, far more pressure must still be mounted against that established power before real negotiations about essentials are placed on the agenda. This raises crucial questions in its own right. Moreover, there is a whole range of questions with even more long-term implications, questions regarding the precise content of that "transfer of power" when it does come - its class content, its gender content, its policy content in so many areas. As the interview with which we lead off this issue concludes, it is not too early, even as we raise crucial questions about the movement for liberation in South Africa, to also ponder the possible nature of post-liberation society there. "Rest assured", our interlocutor stated, "that people inside South Africa are beginning to discuss such matters". And not merely Gavin Relly, fortunately. We at Southern Africa REPORT will attempt to plug into this discussion too, in future issues.



Elijah Barayi, president of the newly formed, 500,000 member, 34 union, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), December 1, 1985.

One Person, One Vote, In a Unified South Africa

Southern Africa REPORT spoke recently with a well-informed South African critic/activist and since the responses to our questions were particularly informative about the deepening crisis of the *apartheid* regime we thought it useful to reproduce the highlights of that interview here. For various good reasons our interlocutor chose to remain anonymous. We began by asking what remained of the Botha government's *total strategy* in the wake of the virtual explosion of resistance inside South Africa during the past year.

Answer: It's in complete shambles. You can find it lying in the smoke and flames of the townships. The social restructuring – in the name of *reform* – which it has involved continues: recent examples are the scrapping of the Mixed Marriages Act and the proposed elimination of the hated pass-laws which control the movement of Africans. But *reform* has never been more than an attempt to reorganize and make more subtle (and thus also more legitimate) the mechanisms of white (and especially white business) power. Its chief sticking-point, therefore, has always been the question of genuine political representation for the black population.

Botha's constitutional experts have formulated a variety of proposals over the past several years, most recently that announced on September 30 which offered Africans a few seats on the non-elected, advisory President's Council. But they are no nearer a solution: all their schemes have fallen so far short of the central demand of black opposition groups – one person, one vote, in a unified South Africa – that they have been decisively and immediately rejected by those they are intended to appease.

Even worse for the government, an earlier (1983) attempt to deal with this issue – the tricameral parliament for legally defined “whites”, “coloureds” and “asians”, and the Local Authorities for African Townships – did a lot to stimulate open resistance from late 1983. At the local level community organizations and, importantly, organizations for unemployed youth were formed – in some cases, revived – to counter the new Local Authorities and, where appropriate, to organize boycotts of the tricameral elections held in August, 1984. In many townships, these groups developed in a mutually reinforcing relationship with the local branches of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), which organized school boycotts to win educational demands such as democratic student councils for black high schools and an end to physical assaults on students. As in previous student revolts, such demands quickly broadened into opposition to *apartheid* in general, particularly as students worked more closely than ever before with the organizations of their elders, the trade unions for example.

Southern Africa REPORT: What about the government's attempts to deal with the economic dimensions of the crisis in which it finds itself?

Answer: Unable to deal with the deeper structural dimensions of that crisis, the government has instead chosen to import its own version of the monetarist practices which are rampant in certain other, more developed capitalist centres. The government's ham-handed attempts to reshape the economy and restore growth along these lines has actually served further to fuel township organization. As in several advanced in-

dustrial countries, inflation was seen as the key obstacle to growth, with excessive government spending and intervention fingered as the culprit. Policy action included raising interest rates, resulting in a massive increase in black unemployment; freeing up the exchange rate which promptly began to slide, boosting import costs; slashing subsidies on basic food items and fuel, as well as to the black Local Authorities, many of which were forced to raise rents in consequence.

The resultant severe economic squeeze, coming at the same time as the implementation of the new Constitution, provided township organizations with an endless supply of issues, each able to be linked to the broader question of the black population's lack of any voice in the political system which so determined their fate. Considerable focus to opposition forces was also provided by the formation in 1983 of the United Democratic Front (and, to a much lesser extent, the National Forum) as coordinating national bodies for local and constituency-based organizations.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that active opposition has developed not simply in the large townships serving the industrial areas but in dozens of tiny country towns right across South Africa. Faced with the constantly-repeated and basic demands of these organizations, it was impossible for the various half-baked “reform” manoeuvres to win any legitimacy among black population.

Southern Africa REPORT: But the “total strategy” has all along seemed to be at least as much about repression as about “reform”.

south africa

Answer: That's right. Repression is seen, quite self-consciously by the regime, as being the reverse side of the reform coin, the way to deal with opposition. As Botha lucidly expressed it on September 30, "official security action was to protect the process of peaceful reform and to ensure the necessary stability without which reform will be undermined by violence and revolution". Such "security action" had already moved to a new level in August and September of 1984 when the army began to occupy townships in the Transvaal industrial area in response to widespread rent strikes and school boycotts. As resistance spread across the country in subsequent months, so too did the actions of troops in the townships. In other words, the State of Emergency declared in July (1985) was in many ways merely a formalization of the already existing situation.

The catch was that neither repression in general, nor the Emergency in particular, has proven to be the short, sharp death-blow to resistance that the government, and most of big business, had hoped it would be. Their model was the previous Emergency in 1960 when popular resistance collapsed like a pricked balloon. This time, however, the militancy among township-dwellers, especially amongst youth and students, hasn't been so easy to quell. The actions of the ANC guerillas and the large number of protesters who have been shot by the police over the past decade have developed a certain sense of fatalism amongst young blacks; death has become simply a part of the struggle, a possibility - likelihood even - that they face with a certain equanimity.

After all, they've attended the funerals of their friends and com-

rades almost as long as they can remember, and with no employment prospects, nor even the smallest stake in the system, they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. It is hardly surprising that a recent survey of township blacks found a substantial majority under age 25, and many older, who felt that "unrest" was the appropriate form of opposing township conditions. Nor is it any wonder that the police and army presence, involving considerable harrassment of residents in their homes, in schools, on the streets, even in hospitals and clinics, has hardened attitudes and increased militancy, rather than breaking it. The declaration of the Emergency ignited outbreaks of school boycotting and street confrontation in previously quiet areas, such as Cape Town. And the violence of "official security action" - the armoured cars, bullets, tear-gas



Paul Weinberg/Afrapix

- has produced its counter-attacks with petrol and stones on those seen to be defenders of the *status quo*. These have been well publicized in the western media, often presented as "blacks killing each other" in some atavistic way. Township youth see it differently - they see themselves as being involved in a civil war. Those opposing them, whether white or black, are their enemy.

That's the real irony then. Repression, far from being the armour of "reform" the ruling groups hoped it would be, has actually helped to destroy it. The determination of the black population to win their demands has meant that the security forces have been unable to reimpose their authority in the townships. In other words, the ANC's call earlier this year, to "make the townships ungovernable" (see *Southern Africa REPORT*, I, 1) has been fulfilled, even if the situation on the ground must still, perhaps, be called a stalemate since the troops remain too strong actually to be forced to quit the areas.

Southern Africa REPORT: Stalemate?

Answer: Well, stalemate or not militarily, I'd say the township situation, underscoring the collapse of total strategy, is a major advance for the opposition movement and has produced a substantial shift in the balance of power away from the government. In fact, one could argue that the Botha government has lost the initiative and is slowly being squeezed into a corner from which the only exit is likely to be negotiations over the transfer of power to the African National Congress and other representative opposition groups. Certainly, the government's support base is rapidly crumbling beneath it. It lacks both the imagination and the political courage to formulate and implement a new approach and, as we've seen, is stuck on the same dead-end path - *total strategy* - it's traveled on for a decade. But now with that dead-end now clearly in view, others

in the ruling group - especially in the business community, world-wide and local - have recognized that some other route, and a different vehicle, are probably necessary if they're to survive the trip.

Clearly, the government's in disarray. Take Botha's recent speech proposing to include blacks in the President's Council, for example. On the one hand the gesture was so weak, so far from universal suffrage, that it was tantamount to an admission of failure of the *total strategy*. On the other hand, the *language* he used was very revealing. Claiming that the National party was "committed to the principle of a united South Africa, and citizenship and a universal franchise", he called it "the party of hope, of democracy . . . of freedom"! The key question, he continued, was how the African majority could "share in a liberated South Africa".

Such phrases are more usually found in the pages of *Sechaba*, the ANC's journal. They must have left a bitter taste in Botha's mouth. His use of them reflects the fact that the ANC has already won the war in South Africa, at least at the level of ideas. It is not simply that the banned movement has widespread and massive legitimacy in all sectors of the black population, as expressed, for example, in the support for the Freedom Charter, its basic document, as well as in the close similarity of its objectives with those of the UDF. Its influence extends far beyond this, through the entire society: as the cracks in the ruling class alliance have widened, the ANC's agenda for change has displaced *total strategy* as the central locus of struggle, negotiations and compromise among the various social forces at work in South Africa. The highly publicized meetings the ANC has had, first with big business, and more recently with the centrist white Progressive Federal Party, are the most visible signs of this development.

Southern Africa REPORT: But surely if, in this broad sense, the *apartheid* state can be said to have lost, the forces of resistance are still very far from having won.

Answer: Yes, I don't want to give false impressions here. It's probably true that an ANC military victory remains remote. The government holds, and will continue to hold for the foreseeable future, a massive advantage in fire-power, and it still commands the loyalty of the security forces (although draft resistance has been of increasing significance during 1985). While urban militancy seems unlikely to decline, it is not certain that it will be able to raise its level and increase its focus to the point where actual defeat of the security forces is on the agenda. Partly this is a question of the ability of the ANC itself to give such focus and provide fire power to the resistance along the lines which apparently were discussed at the movement's National Consultative Conference in Zambia in June (*Southern Africa REPORT*, I, 2). Much also depends on the ability of the organized working class, through its growing trade union movement, to turn its economic clout to ever greater political account. After all, South African capitalism is crucially dependent on black labour for its functioning.

Regarding this latter point, it's worth emphasizing that the past year has seen the far more forceful emergence of a working-class politics, one which raises nationalist/political issues but gives them a more working-class orientation. A particularly dramatic example of this was last November's stay-away in the Transvaal, with no fewer than 800,000 workers out and 400,000 students boycotting classes for several days. This year, in the same province, the work of the May Day Coordinating Committee and activities around the funeral of Andries Raditsela, the murdered trade union leader, were also important.



Students marching to a neighbouring school near Cape Town.

More recently, the wave of consumer boycotts has been another kind of trade union political activity of significance. This kind of escalation makes businessmen particularly uneasy with the government's handling of things since they would like to quarantine labour-management relations away from what they may consider to be the unpredictable passions of politics.

Southern Africa REPORT: You mention the ANC initiatives and those of the trade unions. Are these initiatives mutually compatible?

Answer: It's true that there are different tendencies inside the country. This was already made clear last year by the reluctance of a number of important unions to join the UDF. Such unions argued that their own chief role must be to consolidate their shop-floor presence, their power at the point of production, rather than to rush into top-heavy organizations of the UDF type, organizations whose high-profile po-

litical activity would almost inevitably make them less democratically linked to their base than the unions themselves. Moreover, some unionists have apparently worried that the UDF and possibly also the ANC - were just a bit too petty-bourgeois in their make-up and too exclusively preoccupied with the mere transfer of formal political power to push big business on the questions of socialism and working-class power in post-liberation South Africa. For such unionists, further consolidating a working-class base on the shop-floor is crucially important, not only in order to make possible a continuing confrontation with capital but also to help pull to the left any ANC-led alliance which might eventually rise to power.

In this and other respects, the newly-formed Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) may be of particular importance. Not only does it encompass a wide range of the indepen-

dent trade unions in South Africa, but it also encompasses an interesting diversity of opinion about the nature of working class politics. There are unions of what might be called a *politician* tendency, those which have been closest to the UDF (and perhaps to the SACTU/ANC tradition of trade union activity as well). There are also unions of the more *workerist* tendency that I've just described. There are even unions and unionists of quite narrowly *economistic* bent. However, as I've said, I don't think that this kind of diversity is likely to prove a negative thing. Such tensions within the new union will throw up crucial questions about the very nature of the movement for liberation in South Africa, as well as about the nature of post-liberation society. Although there is still a long way to go before we get to that latter stage, it is certainly not too early to begin to talk about it. You can rest assured, in any case, that people inside South Africa are beginning to discuss such matters.

The Centre Cannot Hold

White Liberalism and Beyond in South Africa

Recent weeks have seen visits to Toronto by three prominent and articulate white South Africans, all of whom are vocal critics of *apartheid*: Sheena Duncan of the Black Sash, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, leader of the Progressive Federal Party, which forms the official opposition in the white South African parliament, and Beyers Naudé, head of the South African Congress of Churches. Yet it was soon apparent that the differences between them were far greater than the premises and practices which united them. These differences were also instructive as regards the current situation in South Africa - as will be apparent from a brief recounting of the presentations the three made in Toronto.

Sheena Duncan

Sheena Duncan came quickly to the point. Make no mistake, she said; violence in South Africa is coming primarily from the state whose claim to be restoring law and order is, in reality, "*an attempt to entirely crush black opposition and resistance*". But she underscored the point which has also been made in the lead article of the present issue of *Southern Africa REPORT*: this is not 1960. This time resistance and popular mobilization is so deeply rooted that no Emergency can stem it. Moreover, the resistance is more profoundly and sweepingly political than ever before. Ironically, the government itself has contributed greatly to this deepening of the popular struggle. For the new constitution of 1983 made more blatant than ever before the disenfranchising of the African population and mobilization against that constitution cut very deep indeed. It has placed the issue of what Duncan called "*the transfer of power*" particularly firmly on the

agenda. And correctly so, in Duncan's opinion.

Indeed, her main message to the church-workers and other anti-apartheid activists who met with her seemed to lie precisely here: don't take your eyes off the key target, off the question of power, off the question of the genuine democratization of South African politics. With the South African government in some disarray, beginning to lose the support of the business community both world-wide and local, with even arch-ally President Reagan forced to accept some kind of sanctions initiative, one can expect some movement from Pretoria. In fact, Duncan apparently would go further than many other informed observers of South Africa in seeing recent statements regarding the proposed re-citizenization of Africans and the possible dropping of influx controls as "reversals" (her term) of *apartheid*. But even if they were to prove to be so, she warned, the very best that Africans can hope for politically in the foreseeable future is a token (and totally subordinate) black parliament or some other constitutional gimmickry designed to deny them real power. Blacks won't accept this. Nor should Canadians. Stick to that fundamental point, the question of power, she said, and overseas supporters of the anti-apartheid struggle need not fear being thrown into disarray by the tinkering - even quite dramatic tinkering - that Pretoria may engage in.

Duncan was equally outspoken regarding other aspects of the South African situation, clearly sympathetic to the imposition of sanctions, though arguing that they be "selective" and carefully focussed to have maximum effect. She was appropriately scornful, however, of

"codes of conduct", seeing these as marginal to the most important aspects of corporate participation in the *apartheid* system. And she was more scornful of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of Kwazulu, often presented quite sympathetically by other South African liberals. Portraying him as a bully-boy and an ambitious, ruthless opportunist, she went so far as to say he was "*the most dangerous person in South Africa ... the only one I am really frightened of!*" Something for *Globe and Mail* editorial writers to contemplate, perhaps, the next time Buthelezi comes to town. Indeed, Duncan's essential liberalism only really surfaced around the question of socialism, as she professed a fear of the rise of "class analysis" and ultra-leftism within the liberation movement. Better the Freedom Charter and the ANC, both of which she characterized as acceptably moderate and not particularly socialist, urging on the Canadian government an early embrace of the latter organization, in significant measure for that very reason. A controversial reading of the ANC, of course, but then Sheena Duncan was nothing if not bravely provocative during her stay in Toronto.



Sheena Duncan

David Goldblatt/N.Y.T.

Frederik van Zyl Slabbert

Frederik van Zyl Slabbert set out to be equally provocative on his own visit to Toronto (he was in Canada in the first place to address the Liberal Party's convention in Halifax), announcing to the Toronto press that his stand against economic sanctions would probably make him "the punching bag of the trendy left" at the Harbourfront meeting he was to address the next evening. This was a bit of pre-emptive red-baiting that carefully avoided mentioning the fact that this stance is also the reverse of the position taken on the question of sanctions by most significant black political organizations in his country and, according to recent polls, by 75% of the black population. But then Slabbert, engaging speaker though he was, never did play entirely fair with his audience in Toronto - in large part because he sought to have it both ways on the question of defying *apartheid* in South Africa.

Of course, many in the audience did find his concern to avoid further violence attractive. Invoking the precedents of Beirut and Northern Ireland, he expressed fear of a continuing and ever-deepening cycle of repression and revolt that would merely produce a long and wasting period of inconclusive violence. *Apartheid* may be in profound ideological crisis, he said, but given the military strength and the determination of the *apartheid* state there is not yet a crisis of what he termed "coercive stability". Not an irrelevant point, certainly, yet there was something just a little bit demagogic in his manner of making it; he seemed to imply that others who saw aggressive resistance to the *apartheid* state as necessary were less sensitive than he to the potential costs of revolutionary violence. Not true, said a number of critics in the hall, pointing out that Slabbert had made things a bit too easy for himself by not answering the real \$64 question. Thus, for all his talk concerning the ne-

cessity to bring "pressure" to bear on the *apartheid* government to begin "negotiations" Slabbert denied legitimacy to precisely the two kinds of pressure which seemed likely to have any real effect: resistance and sanctions. Yet he in turn failed to specify with any clarity just what range of alternative pressures might be expected to bear fruit.

Slabbert was no more convincing in his somewhat half-hearted defense of Buthelezi - the only significant black ally he has managed to find for his proposed "Convention Alliance", that limping attempt to claim a moderate "middle ground" in South Africa. Even more dubious, perhaps, was his fancy footwork around the question of "one-man, one-vote in a unified South Africa". For Slabbert's Progressive Federal Party, in its stated preoccupation with what it euphemistically calls South Africa's "plural society" and with the danger of "majority domination" (!), has long been one of the main protagonists of precisely the kind of "confederal" and "consociational" models of South Africa's future which we have seen Sheena Duncan to be warning us against. In fact, Slabbert gave his audience little reason to feel that his main preoccupations are not still cast in quasi-*apartheid* terms - black vs. white - rather than in terms of non-racialism. His constitutional gimmickry, if ever enacted, seemed most likely to have the effect of so dividing and counter-balancing black political inputs - in the name of democracy - as to blunt any eventual challenge to white social and economic power. Though some in the audience at Harbourfront seemed comfortable enough with this brand of liberalism, there were many more who were not.

Beyers Naudé

Beyers Naudé, head of the South African Council of Churches and one of the most impressive and highly respected figures in all of South Africa, brought a very differ-

ent kind of message to Toronto. In his own person, of course, he represents a certain kind of hope for the future. For he had been raised in the narrowest traditions of the Dutch Reformed Church and soon followed his father into membership in the sinister Afrikaner secret society, the *Broederbond*. Only in his forties did he begin to rethink fundamentally his position; then, slowly but surely, he followed his own conscience to the point where now, in his seventies, he finds himself firmly and courageously on the side of liberation. Finally freed from a recent eight-year banning order, he spoke eloquently, if sombrely, of the past, the present and the future.

Whereas Slabbert conjured by the prospect of "negotiations" more or less by sleight-of-hand, Naudé sorrowfully saw only increased polarization. True, the pilgrimage of businessmen to meet the ANC suggested some shift in the locus of power and moral authority to the latter movement's headquarters in Zambia, but one need have no great illusions about the businessmen's intentions: ever higher levels of investment in the past have merely paralleled a worsening of the situation for blacks in South Africa. Moreover, Naudé sees the vast majority of his fellow whites as being willfully blind to what is happening in their country and morally obtuse. Nor could he share Sheena Duncan's hunch that some real "reversals" of *apartheid* were in the wind; he would remain profoundly sceptical until he saw the legislation. But he did agree with her on the more fundamental point: that whites, in their "folly", will not soon accept "one-person, one-vote in a unified South Africa", nor indeed any system in which white dominance is jeopardized. Since blacks rightly will accept no less - we are "past the point" for constitutional gimmickry which seeks to blunt full democratization, Naudé insisted - it is inevitable that the conflict will escalate.



David Goldblatt/N.Y.T.

Allan Boesak and Beyers Naudé (behind him) being carried to the funeral of four black leaders in Cradock.

Indeed, the recent by-elections, with parties even more conservative than the National Party registering significant gains, demonstrated a further pull to the right – despite the extreme modesty of any gestures in the direction of moderation by Botha and company. But the relevant choice is not between Botha and any other right-wing groups in any case. Here Naudé pointed with pride to the Kairos document, *The Challenge to the Church*, “the most significant theological document to come out of South Africa in 30 or 40 years”. Prepared by a broad range of South African church people, it invokes scriptural authority and contemporary evaluation to define the present South African government as being “illegitimate”. Against that government, Naudé explained, the South African Council of Churches sets “the legitimate demands of the majority”, including demands for the withdrawal of security forces from the townships and,

most importantly, for “full political rights”. Naudé also set against the status quo an awareness that the level of black anger and determination to bring about change (as manifested in strikes, boycotts, even the throwing of sticks and stones) is so high that mere repression will not succeed in crushing it, as it did in 1960 and 1976-77.

This situation does create genuine moral dilemmas, however. Traditionally, for example, the SACC has taken a strong stand against violence, against the graphic violence of the *apartheid* system but also against the counter-violence as might be directed against that system. The question is now being raised in church circles as to whether this is any longer a relevant position: “How can we call on the victims of *apartheid* to take the present situation lying down?” In fact, Naudé feels, the churches are inching their way towards the position that it is

not a question of choosing between violence and non-violence but, in the face of governmental repression and intransigence, of choosing between greater and lesser violence. Even much of the so-called “black-on-black” violence of which the media make so much would not be condemned by Naudé, particularly when it is directed against blacks involved in government structures: black police, informers, councillors. It is clear that the pent-up anger of the black community has reached the point where it is no longer prepared to accept such things. Moreover, these collaborators have actually had as much as five years of warning not to get caught on the wrong side. Now, as the struggle escalates, “what else are young people to do” but to attack these “visible symbols” of government repression. In fact, the only way to end the more legitimate forms of violent resistance is for the government to end its violence first and come to the

negotiating table. Otherwise, South Africa is in for a long drawn-out, painful struggle indeed.

In sharp contrast, Beyers Naudé was anything but sympathetic towards the violence perpetrated by Gatsha Buthelezi and his Inkatha "impis" against the UDF and others in Natal, scathingly describing Buthelezi as increasingly lacking in credibility and as another "seed sown by apartheid". Naudé did see some hopeful signs that resistance to apartheid authorities - black and white - was beginning to spill over from the townships into the rural areas of the Bantustans. In the meantime, he found it absurd that van Zyl Slabbert and the PFP, in its search for the centre, should so underestimate the feelings of black bitterness towards any meetings with Bantustan leaders as to allow its latest Convention initiative to become twinned to closely with Buthelezi. Where are the UDF, the unions, the youth and students? Most importantly, Naudé said, "there is no way the future of South Africa can be settled without the full involvement of the ANC".

Nor did Naudé have much in common with either Slabbert or Buthelezi on the question of external sanctions, noting the poll figures cited above and much other evidence to document the massive support from blacks - he marked with interest the recent statement of the National Union of Mineworkers, for example, against all loans to South Africa - for such actions in order to facilitate their liberation. Citing the fact that Bishop Tutu had earlier that same week shortened his own grace period before calling for full sanctions from two years to six months, Beyers Naudé reminded his audience that he and Tutu had also called upon international bankers to demand the resignation of the present South African government before agreeing to reschedule South African debts! So few whites had any real sense of where their black fellow countrymen are on such issues, Naudé lamented. But not all whites, his audience was tempted to say in admiration. Certainly Naudé's preoccupation with bringing genuine and effective pressure to bear in order to force the pace

of change in South Africa seemed a million miles away from the calculated blandness of a van Zyl Slabbert. Part of the problem or part of the solution? There is little doubt that Beyers Naudé is in the latter camp.



JOINT STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY

Members of the Executives of the A.N.C. and the P.F.P. met for a day on Saturday 12th October 1985 and discussed a wide range of issues relevant to the current South African situation.

Apartheid lies at the heart of the present crisis. Both sides share the urgent need to dismantle apartheid and to establish a united, non-racial, democratic South Africa. Both are deeply concerned to conserve the human and natural resources of our country and to remove one of the most potent factors affecting the stability of the whole Southern African region.

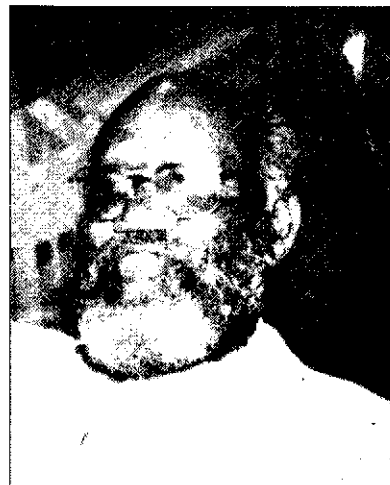
Areas of differences were discussed in a frank and cordial atmosphere. In particular there were differences on the role and centrality of the armed struggle in bringing about fundamental change.

On the question of a national convention as a basis for devising a constitution for a united, non-racial, democratic South Africa, the PFP explained its position that such a convention could only take place when certain conditions were met. The ANC stated that it does not consider that there has come into being at the present moment a climate under which it can begin to consider a negotiated resolution of the crisis. At the same time the ANC does not rule out for all time either a convention as a means of devising a constitution or negotiations as a means of resolving the crisis. Both believe that one of the urgent issues is to secure the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners and detainees. Both sides agreed that the meeting was extremely useful and if necessary would happen again.

Signed by: Frederick van Zyl Slabbert
Chairman - PFP

Alfred Nzo
Secretary-General - ANC

Ja Toivo Calls for Sanctions Against South Africa



Aigls Kemezs/Now

Herman Toivo ja Toivo

"Because of Reagan's policy of constructive engagement ... the war continues in northern Namibia ... and while it is true that we do not control territory physically, psychologically we are controlling the whole country."

One of the founding fathers of the Namibian liberation struggle came to Toronto recently. The legendary Herman Toivo ja Toivo, Secretary General of SWAPO is one of the generation of Mandela and Sisulu whose personal history is closely linked to the origins of the mass struggle for the liberation of southern Africa. And like Mandela, Toivo has spent much of the last two decades in South African prisons; he was released in March 1985 after eighteen years on Robben Island.

Born in Ovamboland, ja Toivo grew to maturity during the 1930's the period when South Africa was tightening its economic grip on South West Africa, and turning the territory into a vast labour reserve for the farms, mines and fisheries of the region. Wages paid to migrant labourers in South West Africa were half the pitifully low wages paid to migrants in South Africa itself. After service in World War II ja Toivo became one of the premier organizers of contract workers, during the 1940's and '50's in Namibia and in 1957 he moved to Cape Town to organize Namibians there. It was there that ja Toivo founded the Ovambo Peoples' Congress (O.P.C.), later to become the Ovambo Peoples' Organization, one of the three organizations that merged in 1960 to form the South West Africa Peoples Organization - SWAPO. Ja Toivo was one of 37 Namibian defendants who went on trial under the notorious Terrorism

Act in Pretoria in August 1967, after a mass roundup of SWAPO leaders following the launching of the armed struggle by SWAPO in August 1966. In February 1968 ja Toivo and 33 others were convicted and given sentences ranging from 20 years to life. Ja Toivo was subjected to systematic and repeated beatings, sleep deprivation and other forms of torture. Speaking from the dock, ja Toivo and others denounced in eloquent words the kangaroo courts that convicted them.

Since his release from Robben Island, ja Toivo has reoccupied the position of Secretary-General of the party. Perhaps more than any other living person, Herman Toivo ja Toivo embodies the fighting spirit and indomitable will of the Namibian people.

As the number two cadre in the SWAPO leadership, Toivo speaks authoritatively on SWAPO's position on the current situation in Southern Africa. During his meetings in Toronto, ja Toivo made a number of comments, giving *Southern Africa REPORTS* readers insight into the current thinking of the SWAPO leadership.

"Because of Reagan's policy of constructive engagement which I call destructive engagement the war continues in northern Namibia. The oppressors have 100,000 troops on our soil. The Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia is still scoring victories, and while it is true we do not control territory physically, psychologically we are controlling the whole country."

On the question of the so-called *internal solution*, independence for Namibia under a puppet regime, ja Toivo said:

"On June 17 the South African racists

introduced what they call the Interim Government; this is just a continuation of the old manoeuvre of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) Ministers' Council, and National Assembly, none of which had any credibility among the Namibian people. We are sure that this one like the others will crumble very soon. The principals are the old collaborators, representing no one but themselves and their bank accounts."

On the question of *linkage* (the linking of South African withdrawal from Namibia to the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola), ja Toivo saw it clearly as a stalling tactic designed to give South Africa breathing space to impose an internal solution. And ja Toivo was extremely critical of the role of the U.S. government and Reagan's special envoy, Chester Crocker, propping up the South African regime in Namibia. And despite the March 1984 Lusaka Accords between Angola and South Africa, ja Toivo documented the continued attacks by the latter on the former.

"In June, South Africa invaded Angola in hot pursuit of SWAPO. They claimed to have killed 50, and later in another incident, 61 SWAPO soldiers. These

stories were lies. In both instances there was no contact with SWAPO because we have no forces in that area. The truth of the matter is that the South Africans went to defend UNITA; in the most recent incident, to save the UNITA headquarters, which were on the verge of being encircled by Angolan troops."

Ja Toivo applauded the resolute actions of the South African people and the tremendous upsurge of resistance in the last twelve months. And he predicted dramatic future changes in the form and intensity of the South African liberation struggle. But he also rejected the view that the people of Namibia must await a revolutionary victory in South Africa before achieving their own liberation.

We must always tackle the weakest link and at the present, Namibia is that link. You know, when South Africa withdrew forces from Southern Angola, it was not really because she wanted to fulfill what she promised the Angolans in the Lusaka agreement; it was due to pressure of the crisis brewing in South Africa. She wanted to deploy those forces in the townships. And so, in this case as well, if the pressure of incidents keeps on mounting and accelerating, South Africa will be forced to withdraw her forces from Namibia to concentrate on protecting South Africa itself."

The major purpose of ja Toivo's visit to Canada was to press for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa and for divestment.

"The changes you see going on in South Africa today are merely window-dressing. The Bothas are not really going to bring about changes unless we stand up and push them from inside and outside. That is why we are here in Canada appealing to our friends to demand comprehensive economic sanctions against South Africa. We ask you to make the Canadian government come out clearly and show the world where they stand. This in-

volves first, withdrawal from the Contact Group, the Group of Five. France has come out by saying it will no longer participate in meetings of the Contact Group. Then they went further and gave SWAPO diplomatic status and material assistance in the form of food and trucks. We are grateful to France for the concrete moves and we are also appreciative of the stand that Canada has taken at the U.N.. For example, at the recent Security Council debate



on Namibia, my comrades were saying that Canada's statement appeared as if it came from SWAPO itself! But we don't want to see only statements. We want to see work. We want the Canadian government to come out and stand on the side of the oppressed and fighting people of Namibia!"

The meeting with ja Toivo also offered us a fascinating glimpse into the man behind the statements. During the meeting with TCLSAC ja Toivo spoke movingly of his years on Robben Island and the solidarity of the political prisoners in South Africa's Alcatraz. Located on a barren island in the south Atlantic near Cape Town, Robben Island has long been the maximum security home of South Africa's greatest patriots. When ja Toivo was finally released in March, there was intense speculation that South Africa's motive in

giving up one of their most prized catches was to sow disunity and strife within SWAPO; or somehow to 'turn' ja Toivo. We now know that this didn't happen. Ja Toivo's reintegration with the outside leadership was instant and complete, and his presence added to SWAPO's strength and unity. Southern Africa REPORT asked ja Toivo if there were any attempts by the prison authorities to manoeuvre him in some way according to a hidden agenda:

They had been manoeuvring long before I was released. In 1976 they sent me someone, a white man who introduced himself as coming from the University of South Africa. He said he had been trying to come and visit me for years, but he was not allowed. And then finally they agreed, they allowed him to come and see me. And he said - but since you have been in jail for such a long time, perhaps you don't know what is taking place; let me brief you first, as to what is taking place outside. Then he said, South Africa has also recognized SWAPO, like the United Nations, and there are changes taking place in Namibia as well as in Transkei - And I said oh! Is that how it is? And in Rhodesia, remember this was 1977. So I asked him, what is your work, you said? He said, No, I'm a researcher at the University of South Africa. I continued to ask him: are you a professor or what? He said, No, I'm just a researcher. Then I said, Well, I don't want to talk to you. He said, That's all right; I'm not going to force you. If you don't want to talk to me, it's fine. Perhaps we will meet again. So we parted. Then, after I left, he called in another Namibian comrade from his section. So he went there, and he told him the same story, saying that he wants to talk to him. This comrade said No, I'm not versed in English, I want an interpreter, so one was brought. He repeated his story, saying that they (South Africa) had recognized SWAPO, and this man said, if you want to talk to SWAPO, SWAPO is outside. We are in jail; go ahead, go talk to SWAPO. (laughter) So that was the end of that.

"In 1977 it was the first time the Group of Five went to South Africa with Prime Minister Vorster. A man came to me named Mumurumba Ke-

rina; he was a friend of mine who became a chairman of SWAPO and who was expelled from the organization in 1963 for having written a letter to American Metal Climax saying he was prepared to work together with them for the good of Namibia. We believed that he also got money from them. When DTA started he came back to Namibia from Brooklyn, N.Y., where he was living. We used to hear in prison almost every day about his doings. When the South Africa-Namibia Foundation was formed Kerina got involved in it. He often came to Cape Town on Foundation business. He wrote me and said that Namibia was about to obtain independence under the DTA. And he said please feel free to apply to the prison authorities to allow me to come and see you. He enclosed a picture of himself and a long list of names of SWAPO members whom he claimed were killed by SWAPO.

"I was called to the governor's office to read this letter. I said I wanted to discuss this letter with eight of my Namibian comrades. The governor agreed and we assembled. But there were only seven. So I said no, this is not sufficient. If we don't get all eight we won't discuss the letter, the meeting will not go on. So they brought the eighth man. I told them, here is the letter from Kerina. I don't want to see him, but we can take our time to discuss this letter, it may take three or four days (laughter). So we spent three days appearing to discuss the letter when we were covering our own agendas. Then I told them, you must take the letter back to your own sections. Take three, four or five days to discuss it, take more time if you need it. That's how we managed to meet inside the prison while appearing to consider weighty offers from DTA collaborators.

"These were just two of the many incidents that occurred. Also they have been writing in their newspapers that, if I am released, there will be a struggle for power in SWAPO, and secondly, they used to say if I am released before the elections my charisma will disappear! And I heard also some speculation that they were thinking that if I am released they will be able to persuade me to be on their side. They already tried such a trick, because on

the day of my release from Robben Island, I was called into the governor's office and a man was standing in the shadows whose face I could't make out. As I came near him he turned around and I recognized Andreas Shipanga who had been expelled from SWAPO and who was now part of the MPC. I refused to talk to him but I learned later that before my release he had gone to my mother in Windhoek and told her: "I have brought your son



here from Robben Island". She replied, "No, I don't want to see you, please go away."

For the members of TCLSAC it was a privilege and an education to meet a man whose name has meant so much to the liberation struggle in southern Africa. It gave us a better sense of the reservoirs of courage and fortitude that energize the people of Namibia enabling people like ja Toivo not only to survive the years of prison but to continue to hold fast to the goals of liberation. Moreover, this knowledge lent a special quality to ja Toivo's appeal for support for SWAPO students in Cuba, a specific request with which he chose to close our session with him:

"As the time goes on, the needs of the struggle are also increasing. We are

appealing to our comrades and friends to redouble their efforts in giving us whatever they can in the way of material, food, clothing, or medical and agricultural equipment and transport. Please contact our New York office, and they will redirect these contributions. And don't be surprised if you get word from our office in Cuba. We have two schools in Cuba, which accommodate over 1,000 students. When they are in the hostels, these kids are looked after by the Cuban government. But when they go to university the government pays only for their academic tuition. Clothing, they must provide themselves. So when you get word saying send these goods to Cuba to go to Namibian university students, don't be surprised. I must also express our gratitude and thanks for the work you are doing over the years; and I hope that the distance we have covered in the struggle is longer, and the one we are facing now will be shorter. Without your support we wouldn't be where we are today. I hope that you will continue struggling, comrades and friends."

Any contributions for SWAPO from our readers can be directed to SWAPO, 801 2nd Ave., #1401, New York, N.Y., 10017 USA. If you wish a tax receipt for your contribution both OXFAM and CUSO have projects with SWAPO. Send your contribution, earmarked for SWAPO, to OXFAM, 251 Laurier Ave., #901, Ottawa K1P 5J8, or to CUSO, 135 Rideau St., 3rd floor, Ottawa K1N 9K7.



Divestment:

Lessons From McGill

By Monday, November 18th, McGill University had accumulated 45 million dollars worth of securities in firms which were either South African-owned or had direct investments in South Africa. On Tuesday, November 19th, it began to unload them. Although the Principal of McGill and the Board of Governors may be congratulating themselves on having taken the high moral road which has led McGill to become the first divested university in Canada, the real credit belongs elsewhere. The motivating force behind McGill divestment was the students' 'South Africa Committee'. Founded in 1979, not a good year for any kind of progressive mobilization, the SAC had weathered half a decade of student apathy and political reaction to find itself, in the spring of 1985, sufficiently well organized and experienced to begin the final push for divestment.

The time was right; events in South Africa, however haphazardly covered by the local media, had transformed the question of *apartheid* from a minority to a mass concern. Student politicians, who had shown indifference to the issue in earlier years, had quite suddenly become tuned in to the struggle and were ready to include the question of divestment in their campaign platforms. In the spring 1985 elections for four student seats on the 44 member Board of Governors, Amy Kaler, an English major and the candidate of the SAC, won a place.

When September came around and the students showed up for registration, they found SAC everywhere with its posters and pamphlets. Student hostility to *apartheid*, kept simmering over the summer, returned to the boil. At

the October meeting of the McGill Board of Governors, Hugh Hallward (Montreal Expos, Southam Inc., Coles Books, Canadian Imperial Bank, Argo Construction, cement, shopping centres), Chairman of the Board and notable within Montreal's *Anglo laager*, showed his hostility to divestment by attempting to keep it off the agenda for November. Part of his concern was over the number of his fellow governors who were clearly caught up in a conflict of interest. When the question of divestment had first come up, in 1981, and the Board was pressured into shedding two million dollars of shares invested in sanction-breaking Mobil and Royal Dutch Shell, his predecessor had sidestepped the wider issue by appointing a committee (the Committee on Matters of Social Responsibility-COMSR) which sought 'constructive engagement' with firms involved in South Africa. The committee took the step of writing to the firms to ask whether they were going to follow federal government guidelines on investment. It got several replies - mainly from firms with no involvement. At the October Board meeting the current head of COMSR, D.J.A. McSween (Director General, National Arts Centre, formerly of Howard, Gate, Ogilvy, Bishop, Cope, Porteous and Hansard, now Ogilvy, Renault) indicated that the committee would recommend in favour of divesting from Canadian banks loaning money to South Africa and from South African-owned companies in Canada, but not from Canadian companies installed within South Africa itself. This was to be known as the '10 per cent compromise'.

Then came November with escalating repression in South Africa. On Wednesday, November 13, a few blocks from McGill, Concordia Students Against *Apartheid* organized



a 12-hour anti-*apartheid* marathon to protest Concordia's thousands invested in South Africa through the Bank of Montreal. Seven hundred students marched to the South African Consulate chanting "Freedom Yes, Apartheid No!" and "Free South Africa, Divest Now!". This story was headlined in the *McGill Daily* on Monday, November 18, the day the Board of Governors were to meet to vote on divestment. Below it was the appeal: "Demonstrate Today".

The day was bright as over a thousand McGill students assembled outside the F. Cyril James Administration Building where the Governors were scheduled to meet at 3 o'clock. Hoping student interest might dissipate in the sharp autumn air, the Governors rescheduled their meeting for 4:30. However, student interest grew, as much in reaction to this clumsy bit of manipulation as to the refusal of the university to allow the SAC to use McGill electricity for its loudspeakers. Alas for the Governors, the School of Social Work had voted to close down for the afternoon in sympathy with the campaign. Their building provided the power the loudspeakers required.

Inside, then, the Governors, or at least most of the Governors. Nine of those with the most glaring conflict of interest stayed away entirely. Outside, 1200 students, including preppies. (The sight of preppies chanting "*Ngawetu*" to SAC co-ordinator Nigel Crawhall's "*Amandla*", may be taken as one of the more optimistic signs for the future.)

At 3:30, just prior to the Governor's meeting, McSween let it be known that his committee had

switched its position and that he now would recommend full disinvestment. Excitement rose.

At 4:30 the Governors got down to business. Principal David Johnson of McGill spoke movingly of the Great Men of the University. The loudspeakers outside played Peter Gabriel's *Death of Stephen Biko*. Inside a Governor rose to defend investment. A signal was carried outside and the chant went up: "Asshole, Asshole". Chairman Hugh's brother John added his support for the *contras* and was surprised to hear an extramural chorus of "Hallward Go Home" followed by the old divestment favorite, "Three Piece Suits and Bloodstained Hands". Then, at 5:00, the Governors moved to adjourn for refreshments. A blockade was set up and only the secretaries were able to negotiate their way out. (It was rumoured that one Governor crept out in disguise). By this time the chanting outside had reached such a volume that the Governors had to shout to one another. By 6:10, when it seemed like only the 10 per cent solution would be accepted, the students, still numbering in the hundreds, took up the chant "10 per cent Is Not Enough". As this subsided, Amy Kaler appeared in the doorway of the administration building, illuminated by the glare of television spotlights. She announced that the Governors had passed two more motions supporting complete divestment. The crowd raised a deafening cry. The struggle had been unconditionally won!

Events inside went something like this. The two '10 per cent' motions favouring divestment from "financial institutions which have not adopted a policy of making no further loans to the government of South Africa or its agencies" and in favour of the disposal "in an orderly and responsible fashion of the University's holdings in corporations which are controlled directly

or indirectly by South African interests" were passed unanimously. Then two more motions, moved by Amy Kaler, calling for divestment from "corporations with direct investments in South Africa" and for no future investment in such corporations and financial institutions until they themselves divest from South Africa were passed 17 to 4. A motion to review the question of divestment next October and every October thereafter was also passed without being put to the vote.

It was the third motion that John Hallward, in company with Principal Johnson and A.D. Hamilton (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Dominion Textiles, Inco, Total Petroleum, Sandiwell) tried to stonewall. Their objections were disputed by Amy Kaler and Governor Gretta Chambers, a well-known Montreal journalist. Mc-

Sween's shift was vital in swinging the vote.

The end of the road has not yet been reached. Divestment in an 'orderly and responsible fashion' means letting bonds go with as little prejudice to McGill capital as possible. Although the process is supposed to have begun on the day after the Board meeting, it could take a year or more.

A number of lessons may be learned from the McGill victory. The clearest and most important are that the campaign was not organized overnight, nor did it take place in a vacuum. The McGill students' External Affairs Committee on South Africa (the SAC) has existed for six years. With a budget of up to \$1,000 a year it was able to maintain a constant visibility. In 1981 it cut its teeth on a campaign (the first successful attempt



"Constructive Engagement" - Nigel Crawhall, coordinator of SAC at McGill

Ezra Greenberg

in Canada) which led to divestment from Mobil and Royal Dutch Shell. By the spring of 1985, when student elections for the Board of Governors were held, and later at registration in September and in November it had the means and the experience to mount an effective campaign. A week before the Board meeting in November, SAC had printed 4000 four-page leaflets (*Say NO to Apartheid: Make McGill Divest Now*) which it distributed in all the major buildings on campus. It had allies in the student radio and newspapers. These ventilated stories of atrocities that had been committed in South Africa and of the violence and intimidation which characterized the divestment campaigns in American universities. The SAC also had a large number of friends among the progressive faculty.

There is also a question of *conjuncture*. The campaign at McGill could not have taken place without the visible upsurge of popular resistance in South Africa itself. The

media for once could not ignore the fact that *apartheid* is a matter of black and white; there are no reds. Other events may also have affected the consciousness of students and governors alike; the *anti-apartheid* movement in the U.S., race riots in Britain, the French attack on Greenpeace.

There have also been a number of important local shifts. The right wing students at McGill, who had exposed themselves for 1983 in Linda Frum's reactionary *McGill Magazine* had become disorganized. (Their bag man had exercised his sense of possessive individualism and run off to B.C. with their funds.) The far left had crumbled, too, removing the possibility of splits from that direction. And the governors must have been aware that Canadian capital, which most of them represented, had already shown signs of cold feet on the subject of further investment in South Africa. So the *contras* on the Board had few reinforcements. When nine of their number refused to attend

the November 18th meeting out of fear that their conflicting interests would be exposed, the *laager* was further depleted.

The real lessons from McGill are organization and optimism. The South Africa Committee, seldom numbering more than a couple of dozen students, refused to go away. They turned a lost cause into a victory.

References

- McGill Daily*, vol. 75, no. 30, Monday, 18 November 1985 and no. 31, Mercredi, 20 November 1985.
- McGill Tribune*, vol. 5, no. 12, Tuesday, 26 November 1985.
- The Reporter* (McGill University), vol. 18, no. 11, 21 November 1985.
- The Gazette*, Tuesday, 19 November 1985.
- Report on Divestment*, The McGill External Affairs Committee on South Africa, no date.
- Canadian Who's Who*, Toronto, 1985.
- Directory of Directors*, Toronto, 1984.



John Mahoney/Montreal Gazette

McGill students outside the administration building before the University governors voted on November 18.

The Quebec Scene Southern Africa in Quebec:

Making Friends

BY CIDMAA

CIDMAA, the Centre d'Information et de Documentation sur le Mozambique et l'Afrique Australe was created in 1981 to provide resources for NGO's, unions, churches, women's and student's groups interested in Southern Africa. It is the de facto Quebecois network on Southern Africa. CIDMAA publishes a quarterly, *Afrique*, with analysis and information about Southern Africa (\$10 for 4 issues), a monthly news bulletin, *Afrique Informations*, with updates on recent events (\$10 for 10 issues), and *Umama*, the publication of CIDMAA's women's collective (\$5 for 6 issues). For more information about publications, write to CIDMAA, 3738, rue Saint-Dominique, Montreal, Quebec H2X 2X9, Canada, requesting a catalogue.

The Southern Africa network in Quebec is creating links with those popular movements looking for a political and social alternative – the trade unions, youth and students groups, the women's movement and others. It appears that anti-imperialism, particularly in relation to the southern Africa context, is assuming more importance. This is in positive contrast to the present reality of much of the progressive forces in Quebec, with many social movements experiencing rough times (eg. the trade unions) and many political organizations turning to the right (most spectacularly shown by the PQ's neo-conservative image) or coming to an impasse.

Direct Links

Most of the activity in the past months has been centred around the establishment of direct links

between popular organizations in southern Africa, particularly South Africa, and Quebec. These linkages provide direct access to African organizations, permitting the sharing of information and political and organizational experiences, the development of joint projects, etc. Two important recent visits by South African trade unionists were very successful. The tour of a delegation from the National Union of Mineworkers, organized by the CLC, met and exchanged ideas with many Quebec union locals. There was as well a longer visit of a Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) – (FOSATU) – delegate from Natal. MAWU is involved in various campaigns in Natal, including one at Richard's Bay Minerals. Richard's Bay Minerals is owned by Quebec Iron and Titanium (QIT), a subsidiary of Kennecott Corporation. In Quebec, the militant CSN-affiliated union of QIT workers is planning to adopt the MAWU local in Richard's Bay as their main international counterpart. Another delegate from the National Education Union of South Africa, an organization of progressive teachers, has worked for more than three weeks with the main teachers' federation, the CEQ. During all these visits concrete support projects were established. As well, the Quebecois and South African trade unionists exchanged invitations for further solidarity tours.

Students Against Apartheid

A visit by a delegate from the National Union of South African Students, NUSAS, was very successful. The original plan for a delegate from AZASO was disrupted when the *apartheid* state denied him a visa. Nonetheless, NUSAS suc-

ceeded in sending a delegate, who visited more than 35 colleges and universities. More than 10 anti-*apartheid* committees are organizing as a result of these meetings. A new national organization, *Jeunes contra l'apartheid* (Youth Against Apartheid) is planning actions and demonstrations such as the October 17th occupation of ALCAN headquarters in Montreal, in which more than 200 people demonstrated and 23 were arrested.

On the 18th of November the McGill Students South African Committee mobilized a demonstration of 600 students, who encircled the Board of Administration's meeting chanting "Divest now!" and "Free Mandela, Jail Botha!". Of the 44 Board members, 21 finally voted to divest more than \$45 million from corporations involved in South Africa, such as IBM, 3-M, Moore Corp and the Royal Bank. In many other institutions boycotts of South African products are planned. Carling-O'Keefe, the South African-owned brewery, will likely be one of the targets. The re-emergence of student activities is giving new energy to larger coalitions such as the Free South Africa Committee in Montreal, a joint effort of student, community, NGO, and Black groups.

Network Building

More than ever, the main trend is to establish working relationships between various organizations, overcoming certain traditional political boundaries in order to act in a concrete and vigorous fashion. However, certain political groups continue to try to use or subordinate solidarity work to their own cause.

(continued on page 21)

SADCC Conference:

Ottawa, Nov. 13, 1985

Dr. Simba Makoni, Executive Secretary of SADCC – The Southern Africa Development Conference – spoke to a group of NGO's, solidarity committees, university, CIDA and External Affairs officials in Ottawa, Nov. 13, 1985.

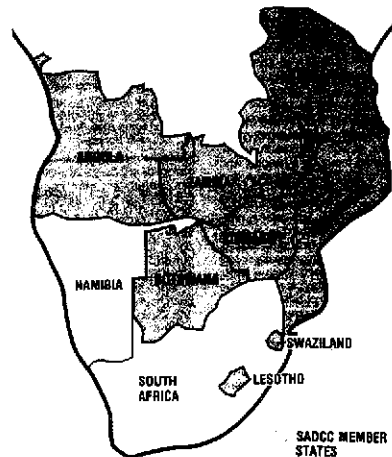
He outlined the history of SADCC's formation, its objective of ending dependence on South Africa and developing cooperative projects among the nine member states, focussing on transportation and communications, energy, and agriculture and food security.

Makoni referred to SADCC as an "economic liberation movement", representing a coordinated attempt by its members, in spite of fundamental political differences, to break South Africa's stranglehold on Southern African economies and change the flow of trade and infrastructure to the South.

Much of his discussion centred on international sanctions – the question not being one of *whether* but of choosing effective ones, "ones that will bite". Regarding arguments about sanctions causing increased suffering for blacks both inside South Africa and in neighbouring states, Makoni answered that their suffering is already tremendous, thousands and thousands of lives and billions of dollars are lost every year. "How much more can we suffer?" If sanctions "bring a quicker end to *apartheid*, then it is worth it." Support for SADCC projects within the countries most severely affected by South Africa's war of destabilization, said Makoni, is one way to cushion the impact of sanctions. For SADCC it is sanctions *by* South Africa rather than *against* South Africa that are the concern. Already, attacks on member states and the repatriation of black workers have increased in response to the intensification of the

liberation struggle. International pressure against South Africa on these issues must be addressed by the international community.

Canadian government support for SADCC, in spite of a somewhat self-congratulatory litany by government officials at the meeting, is an embarrassing pittance – \$125 million (80% of which is bilateral) over the next five years. Surely Canada's role at the Commonwealth Conference as a self-proclaimed leader in the struggle to end *apartheid* would be a more credible if its contribution to SADCC were truly reflective of its professed commitment?



Anti-Apartheid in the U.S.:

Confronting Imperialism

BY JAMES CASON AND
MICHAEL FLESHMAN

NEW YORK — After forcing President Reagan to enact sanctions, however mild and temporary, against South Africa this September, U.S. anti-apartheid activists were stunned in October to see Congressional liberals sponsoring legislation to aid Jonas Savimbi's UNITA terrorists in Angola. The administration, in line with its *Reagan Doctrine* of sponsoring and promoting counterrevolutionary movements in the developing world, has already begun shipping covert military assistance to UNITA, but the spectacle of Congress — which had so recently voted overwhelmingly for sanctions against Pretoria — considering legislation to aid South Africa's Angolan surrogates, points up critical weaknesses and areas of future work for southern Africa liberation support work in the U.S..

During the last year the Free South Africa Movement has dramatically expanded the anti-apartheid movement in the US.



FOSATU Worker News

Demonstrators outside the South African Consulate in New York.

Building on years of divestment and other anti-apartheid actions and spurred on by the growing rebellion in South Africa, the movement has made *apartheid* a household word and *constructive engagement* a mainstream political issue. A mid-November New York Times/CBS News poll found that nearly half of the people surveyed supported stronger measures against South Africa, and that an even greater number of Americans supported divestment. It was this momentum which pressured Congress and ultimately forced President Reagan to take executive action against Pretoria in September.

Forced to abandon its open support for white minority rule in South Africa, the Reagan team has already begun searching for other ways to continue its alliance with Pretoria by shifting the discussion away from racism and onto the safer ideological terrain of *fighting the Russians* in Angola.

In October the administration began considering ways of providing assistance to Savimbi's UNITA terrorists and by November sources in Congress reported that the CIA was sending two shipments of covert aid to the South African-backed rebels, one from Israel and another through Zaire. The US Congress, which had only just recently voted for sanctions against South Africa, was also getting into the act with no less than three bills calling for open support for UNITA.

Florida republican Bill McCollum has introduced legislation calling for a trade embargo against the ruling MPLA government and Michigan Republican Mark Siljander has his own bill calling for \$27 million in direct military aid. The bill most likely to succeed, however, came from liberal Florida Democrat Claude Pepper. Pepper's bill, which has chalked up a bi-partisan coal-

ition of 26 co-sponsors, called for \$27 million in *humanitarian* aid to UNITA (the same amount sent to the *contras* in Nicaragua) and, according to hill lobbyists, will probably pass the House if it reaches the full chamber (lobbyists are attempting to prevent the bill from reaching the floor for a vote). Pepper's own support for the bill can be explained by the large population of anti-Castro Cubans in his Miami district, but most supporters, including many anti-apartheid Democrats, see the legislation as a chance to combat *Soviet expansionism* in Africa.

To be fair, the anti-apartheid lobby and their progressive congressional allies have launched a major counterattack against the aid proposals. In an effort to mobilize public antipathy to Pretoria, opponents of aid to Savimbi have argued, rightly, that a military alliance with UNITA is a military alliance with *apartheid*. "Any such assistance," the Congressional Black Caucus asserted in a "dear-colleague" letter, "would definitely ally the United States with South Africa's white minority." Others have raised the specter of a divisive "Vietnam-style" intervention in the drawn-out Angolan conflict.

But ultimately, many of these arguments still accept the premise that it is in the US national interest to oppose socialist governments in Africa, including Angola. They argue only that aiding Savimbi will not do this, but rather will force the Cubans and Soviets to remain in Angolan longer and reinforce the Angolan government's socialist leanings.

The challenge for the US anti-apartheid movement is to begin to confront this view of "strategic" American interests and differentiate the interests of the American people from those of an American rul-

ing class trying to protect corporate profits and ultimately, US imperialism. It will be no easy task with an American people saturated with decades of anti-communist rhetoric, and the movement must continue to insist that the fundamental issue in southern Africa is the right of self-determination – the right of a people to choose their own system of government – even one out of fashion in Washington.

Significantly, the *firm rear base* of US anti-apartheid organizing – the black community – has historically been strongly anti-imperialist and there are signs that other constituencies are moving beyond mere anti-apartheid politics to positive support for the forces of liberation. The tour this fall of college campuses by young people from SWAPO, the ANC and the Nicaraguan students' union organized on the theme *Boycott South Africa not Nicaragua* by the American Committee on Africa and a number of other central American solidarity organizations was one

step in this direction. The student movement, in fact, appears to be making rapid strides toward an antiracist, anti-imperialist analysis. At a national conference of students in early November a surprisingly large number of panels and workshop featured discussions of Angola and the front-line states as well as the "links" between southern Africa and the issues of domestic racism and Central America.

In pressing that attack against white minority rule, anti-apartheid activists are beginning to expand their focus beyond an unreliable congress and the elite that determines US government policy and toward a "people's" diplomacy that targets local links with apartheid, like corporations, and supports more directly those fighting for justice and freedom. The movement as a whole has long been involved in fighting for divestment on campuses, in churches, trade unions and state and local governments, but activists are looking for ways to bring the masses of people mobilized by the Free South Africa Movement

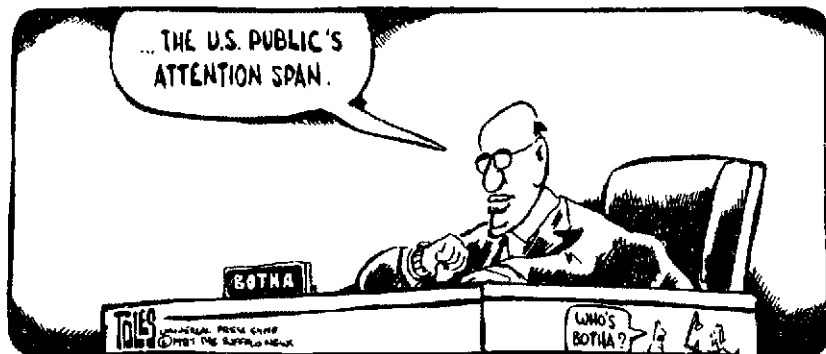
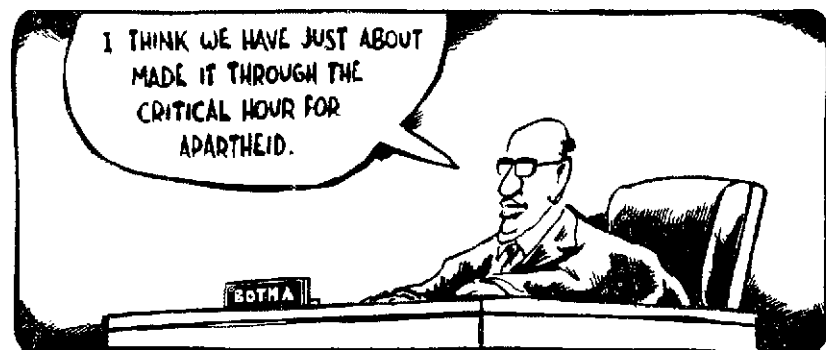
over the past year into this kind of work.

Signs that this move is already beginning came early this fall when a group of local activists, "Brooklynites against Apartheid," took over the offices of the state-owned South African Airways. Shortly after that action, the local Free South Africa Movement's daily demonstrations shifted from the consulate to a picket at the airway's office.

Trade unions have also begun to develop direct ties with their South African counterparts and local "Labour Committees" are now active in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco. The United Mineworkers of America recently set up a humanitarian fund to aid South African miners and, this fall, sponsored a tour of US mines by South African mineworkers.

With American television and newspaper coverage of South Africa sharply reduced by the introduction of rigid censorship by Pretoria in November, it remains to be seen whether the anti-apartheid movement can keep the public focused on the growing insurrection against apartheid. But there are some encouraging signs.

The divestment campaign, for example, continues to pick up steam. Since July four states, nine cities and fifteen universities have adopted policies calling for at least partial divestment, according to a recent tally by ACOA, and similar legislation is pending at dozens of state and local governments across the country. But at least as important in an age when Ronald Reagan continues to score high in the polls while embroiling the United States in counterrevolutionary wars around the world, the movement appears to be inching toward a more comprehensive understanding of events in southern Africa, and in the world. If they succeed in taking the American people with them, it will be a journey of historic and global dimensions.



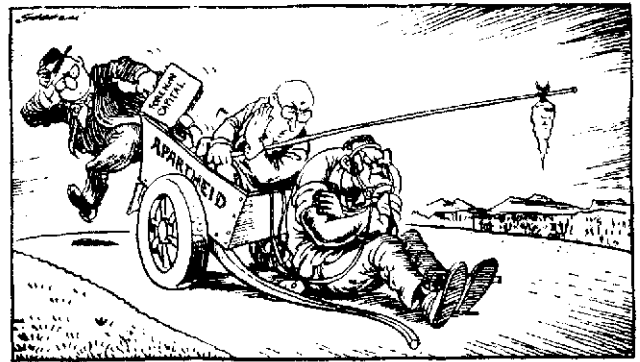
Quebec Scene

(continued from page 17)

These attempts at manipulating the growing anti-apartheid struggle are being more and more countered by the grassroots organizations, which seek NOT to keep politics out of the solidarity dossier but to keep political debates in perspec-

tive. Solidarity work cannot be used as a surrogate for political organization; it has a purpose of its own. Nor should political support for struggles in the third world necessarily mean a blind acceptance of any political position from the various African organizations. The mood within Quebecois organizations is to develop multiple relations, based on concrete projects, rather than

starting from a theoretical framework. Such a position is invaluable both for our relations with the South African organizations - ANC, UDF, trade unions, student organizations, churches, etc. - and for the relations among ourselves, in the vast spectrum of organizations and movements that are now acting in the solidarity with the peoples of Southern Africa.



"Believe me, man, I do sympathise with your position... what say I bring the carrot a bit closer?"



Gamma/South

An African township comes to remember its dead at a funeral - a rallying point for protest.

Northwestern University
Library

JAN 14 1983

Africana



Surplus Peoples Project

Raids against Crossroads people - September 1983.