

Southern Africa **REPORT**

Vol. 1 No. 2

October 1985



THE QUALITY OF SANCTIONS

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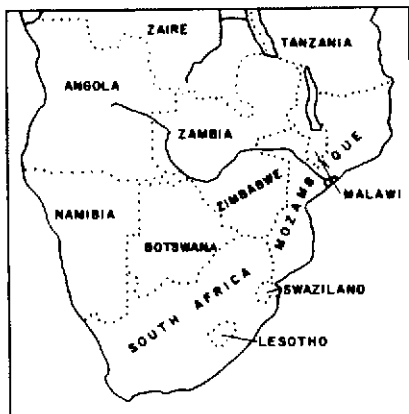
BREAK ALL TIES WITH APARTHEID!

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Southern Africa REPORT

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Southern Africa REPORT

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

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Our lead article in this, the second issue of *Southern Africa REPORT* highlights the sorry response of the Canadian government, over the years, to the growing global movement for economic sanctions against South Africa. As readers will observe, this article takes for granted the case for such sanctions and we suspect that most readers of *Southern Africa REPORT* will not need to be convinced of it. However, it may be important to remind ourselves of at least some of the major arguments for sanctions in order to help us better meet the resistance to them which still exists in many influential circles in Canada - in circles ranging from the Canadian government through the Canadian business community to the Governing Council of the University of Toronto (see the report on this latter body which is also included in this issue).

To begin with, a few myths need laying to rest. Racial prejudice - the straightforward expression of white racism - does have a life of its own in South Africa. Yet it is simply not true that, historically, the logic of the market-place and of corporate profit-making in South Africa has been in any fundamental contradiction with the structure of racial oppression which has emerged there, not true (though South African liberals have sometimes chose to argue otherwise) that it is an "irrational" racism which has distorted the workings of what would otherwise be a colour-blind capitalism. In fact, it is clear that racial oppression has fed South African capitalism, guaranteeing, in the form of cheap black labour, the source of far above-average profits for firms operating in that country. Note, too, that as profits and multinational corporate involvement have risen in South Africa since the Second World War, the living conditions of the vast mass of the black population have deteriorated.

Moreover, the inflows of foreign capital and sophisticated technology

which, until very recently, have kept the private sector buoyant in South Africa have also provided a firm economic underpinning for the efforts of the apartheid state to defend both itself and the racial capitalist system. Former South African President John Vorster put this point much more frankly than corporate apologists care to do when he asserted that "each trade agreement, each bank loan, each new investment is another brick in the wall of our continued existence". This has been the real bottom-line of multinational corporate involvement over the years in apartheid South Africa and it is merely disingenuous to pretend otherwise.

Nor, for all the recent talk of reform, is continued corporate involvement in South Africa likely to facilitate any fundamental changes in that country in the near future. True, there are segments of capital which begin to suspect that the link between racial oppression and capitalist vitality has become somewhat more contradictory than had been the case previously. Racial barriers can contribute to such economic problems as market constraints, shortages of skilled labour and the like, while politically the class distinctions inherent in capitalism can stand out much too visibly as targets for revolutionary change when, as in South Africa, they are also etched in colour.

Yet even the most enlightened spokespersons for capital in South Africa (eg. Harry Oppenheimer) can come up with no convincing reform programme that could move South Africa towards the relatively colour-blind liberal democratic system which in Western Europe and North America has proven to be well suited to capitalism's defense. Still less can they conceive how to implement such a programme vis-à-vis their fellow whites who have even deeper fears than they of a "liberal solution". The inequalities in South Africa are just too deeply rooted to permit a transition

there which is not *revolutionary* in both the political and the economic sense. In consequence, "reform" in south Africa remains far more notional than real, and the main engines of South Africa's cruel laws - the pass laws, the group areas acts, disenfranchisement and decitizenization - grind on. As Bishop Desmond Tutu has phrased the relevant point: "...foreign companies should stop kidding themselves that they are here for our benefit. That's baloney. Whether they like it or not, they are buttressing an evil system."

Obviously, in light of these facts, the most straightforward reason for attacking Canada's trade with and corporate presence in South Africa - and our government's facilitating of such economic linkages - is on moral grounds: it is, quite simply, immoral to wrench profits from a system of institutionalized racial oppression. Beyond that, however, there do exist differences of emphasis regarding the precise strategic and tactical implications of their anti-apartheid actions even amongst those who seek to bring pressure to bear on corporate Canada and its links to South Africa.

Thus, some anti-apartheid activists - this is the argument in some church circles, for example - see certain kinds of sanctions and other such measures as being, primarily, a prod upon corporations actually to assert in practice the reforming influence they so often claim to have in theory. Not that those who take this line are usually so naive as to settle for mere "codes of corporate conduct" (which, at best, could benefit only a handful of workers in the firms concerned) as being sufficient to this purpose. They do seek to force such corporations, and also the Canadian government, to press for a far more *structural* reform than that. Nonetheless, it is reform, rather than revolution, which tops this kind of agenda.

Our earlier point regarding the inevitable limits to reform would

seem to lead in another direction, however. For the (wholly honourable) tendency of some anti-apartheid advocates to present sanctions and other related actions as an alternative to violent change is, quite simply, not very convincing. Unfortunately, it is extremely unlikely that the situation in South Africa can be resolved without a fight, a fight which, in any case, is already joined as resistance by the vast mass of the disenfranchised continues to grow. In such a context, policy towards South Africa becomes, at least for the immediate future, less a question of finding a "peaceful alternative" than of demonstrating which side one is on. And since, in such a fight, the manner in which links of trade and corporate involvement between Canada and South Africa underpin the *apartheid status quo* far outweighs any conceivable reformist impact they are likely to have, the conclusion follows ineluctably: all such ties must be attacked as vigorously as possible and, if possible, cut. In this way the ability of the defenders of *apartheid* to resist change may be weakened, in this way some contribution might be made from outside to a shortening of the period of last-ditch white

defense against the inevitability of change in South Africa. As long ago as 1959, Nobel Peace Prize winner Albert Luthuli, then President of the African National Congress, put the case for sanctions in just such terms:

"The economic boycott of South Africa will entail undoubted hardship for Africans. We do not doubt that. But if it is a method which shortens the day of bloodshed, the suffering to us will be a price we are willing to pay" (emphasis added).

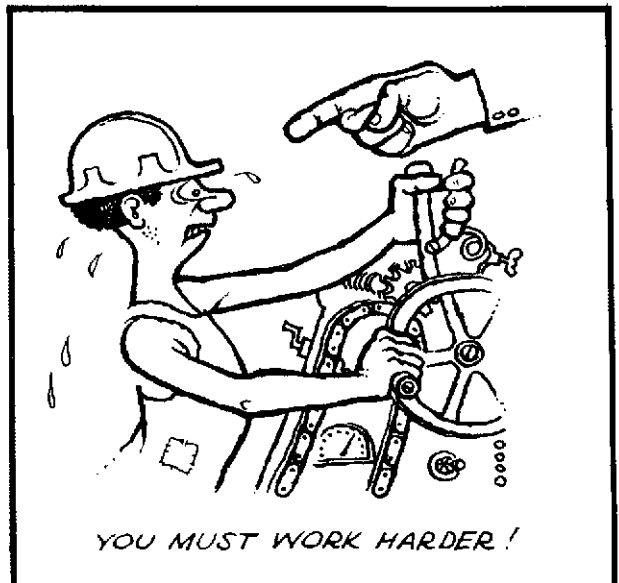
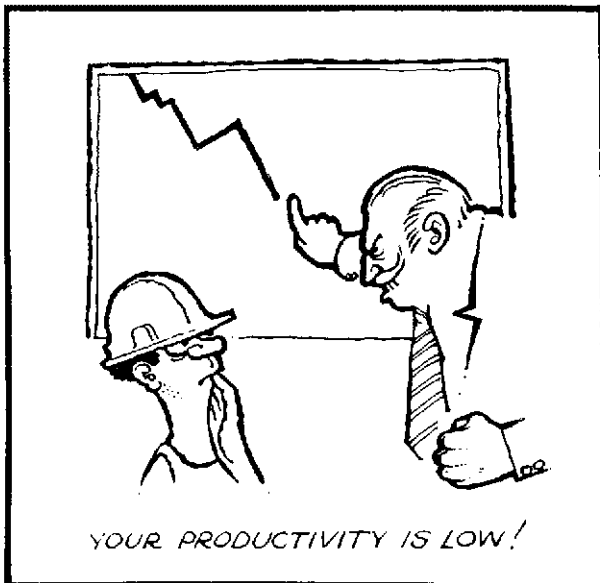
International capital is not a force for meaningful change in South Africa and its presence there must be resisted. This conclusion lays to rest one persistent myth deployed by the critics of sanctions against South Africa. But Luthuli was also attacking another myth - the claim that the vast majority of Africans in South Africa (and in Southern Africa more generally) oppose such sanctions. Once again, the evidence seems to be to the contrary.

We might take recent poll data to confirm this fact, though we should probably do so sceptically, even when the polls support our position. After all, when opponents of sanctions some months ago made extensive use of a poll car-

ried out by Laurie Schlemmer (and sponsored by the U.S. Department of State) which purported to document considerable black opposition to sanctions, anti-apartheid forces attacked it, not only because of its highly-skewed sample but because of the fact that speaking out in favour of sanctions is actually against South African law. On the other hand, precisely this latter fact may lend added credibility to the results of two, more carefully conducted recent polls which come up with precisely the opposite finding to that of Schlemmer.

Thus a poll conducted by the Institute of Black Research, located in Durban, finds nearly three-quarters of South Africa's urban blacks supporting some form of disinvestment by foreign businesses as part of the struggle to end *apartheid*, while a poll conducted by Gallup for the London *Sunday Times* showed that 77% of blacks believed that other countries should impose sanctions unless the policy of *apartheid* was ended.

But polls aside, much the same story is apparent on the more solid terrain of organized public expression from the black community. To be sure, the business community



can still trot out the all too familiar, if increasingly discredited, Chief Buthelezi to present an anti-sanctions line. But surely a considered statement like that issued by the United Democratic Front in June provides a far more credible voice:

Mr. Murphy Morobe (UDF Publicity Secretary, presenting the organization's stance on disinvestment as formulated at a national committee meeting) said that the UDF could not directly support the call for disinvestment because of legislation which criminalized such action. But he pointed out that while "the State, its apologists and imperialist friends have been straining at the leash, trying to show how blacks will suffer when foreign capital is withdrawn", none of the liberation organizations in South Africa had voiced opposition to disinvestment. "Neither have any of the credible leaders of our people joined a queue to propogate the merits of foreign investment in our country." Mr. Morobe said that UDF demanded the right to free discussion of the topic of disinvestment, adding: "Until then the assumption must be that the majority of our people supports the disinvestment call."

And in September the leaders of the "Front-Line States" which

neighbour South Africa gave the lie to South African claims that they oppose sanctions because of the cost their countries might have to pay; instead they "hailed the growing condemnation of apartheid by Western countries taking the form of different types of pressure, including economic sanctions". The 1984 advice of FOSATU, one of South Africa's leading black trade union federations, seems entirely germane here: "It is FOSATU's considered view that the pressure for disinvestment has had a positive effect and should therefore not be lessened".

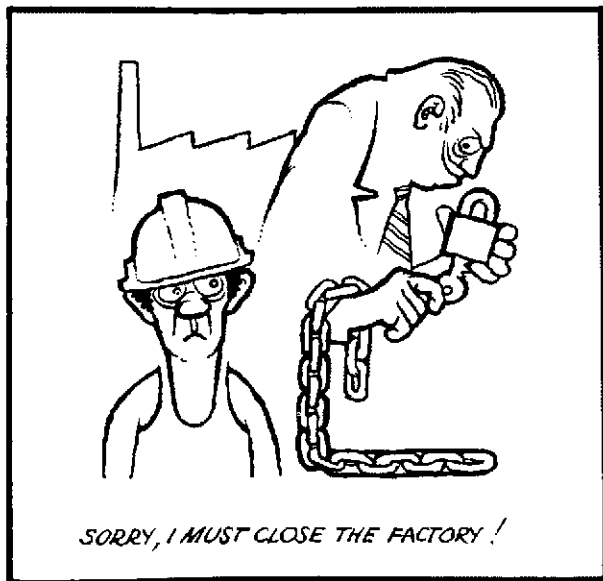
Such statements are not surprising, of course. The major road block to the development of South Africa's neighbours is South Africa's policy of political and economic manipulation and destabilization. In other words, they pay a price for apartheid far beyond any short-term cost that might have to be paid as part of the struggle to end it. Domestically it is much the same story. Even were the short-term costs of sanctions to be high for Africans inside South Africa - and this is by no means clear given the high levels of unemployment that already exist in any case and given the often labour intensive sectors in which foreign capital tends to operate - how heavily

do they weigh in the scale against the staggering human price which the apartheid system already exacts from the black population?

Another myth: sanctions don't work. The Rhodesian case is sometimes cited, but it is less often emphasized how important to Rhodesian survival was the proximity of a friendly South Africa - to keep open its back door! The "failure" of sanctions against Italy over its occupation of Ethiopia in the 1930's is often mentioned as well, although as Professor David Baldwin, writing recently in *The New York Times*, has noted, "Mussolini's reported remark to Hitler that he would have to withdraw from Ethiopia in a week if sanctions had included oil suggests that they came closer to working than is generally recognized". Indeed Baldwin cites a number of ways in which sanctions can and do work, economically and psychologically, even if they are rarely sufficient in and of themselves to alter outcomes.

But then we would not claim they are likely to be sufficient in the South African case either. As argued above, even if sanctions were implemented, in whole or in part,

(continued on page 23)



FOSATU Worker News

Keeping Up With The Joneses

Canada And South Africa 1985

BY LINDA FREEMAN

Linda Freeman is a professor of political science at Carleton University.

In this dramatic year of struggle, suffering and protest in South Africa, the official Canadian response has been to talk tough and yet to take only those measures against South Africa which will prevent Canada lagging behind most other Western states and, in particular, the United States. In keeping with the past, the approach has been more symbolic than substantive and therefore fraught with ambiguity and contradiction. Witness: throughout the year, there have been strong statements against South Africa by Conservative leaders (see box), a set of mild reforms to existing Canadian policy on South Africa in July, a disavowal of stronger measures, especially economic sanctions in August and then a commitment to "invoke full sanctions unless there is tangible movement away from apartheid" in September. To understand these confusing signals, one has to keep in mind the two cross pressures which have been most influential in shaping Canadian government policy: the interests of national and international corporations based in Canada which are involved in South Africa on the one hand, and on the other the pressure of developments in the West and in South Africa itself. The first set of influences were paramount until the end of the summer in keeping the Conservative government in a firm anti-sanctions position. The second, external set of factors has set the pace more recently, prompting some reassessment of the initial stance.

However, it remains to be seen whether the September statement

ON THE ONE HAND

"There is a rising tide of revulsion in Canada - and elsewhere - at the injustices of apartheid." (Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, Baie Comeau, 6 July 1985.)

"The Canadian Government cannot but vigorously condemn the use of repressive measures to counter protests against injustice and inequality." (Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs James Kelleher, Ottawa, 23 July 1985.)

Apartheid is "unacceptable to Canada in every way." (Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, Vancouver, 22 August 1985.)

"Canada has a responsibility to provide moral and practical leadership. The Government of South Africa should have no doubt that we will invoke full sanctions unless there is tangible movement away from apartheid ... If the government of South Africa remains unbending to ... pressure, then Canada will be left with no resort but to end our relations absolutely." (Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, House of Commons, Ottawa, 13 September 1985.)

AND ON THE OTHER

"Our preference at the moment ... is to pursue routes other than sanctions because sanctions have very broad implications." (Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, Vancouver, 23 August 1985.)

"... we will have to reflect upon other options (than economic sanctions) because there are loud voices now coming to us from South Africa that say these policies may very well cripple ... the people you're trying to help." (Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, interview on Global television, aired 2 September 1985.)

AS OTHERS SEE US

"We in Africa welcome these moves (of Canada regarding South Africa) but like Oliver Twist we ask for more." (President of Tanzania Julius Nyerere, Ottawa, 24 September 1985.)

represents the high-water mark of Canadian opposition to South Africa's system of apartheid or a fundamental change in Canadian policy. Until then, official statements had indicated a preference not to use sanctions. The previous Liberal government had taken a remarkably similar position when Trudeau, shortly after becoming Prime Minister, said that it was

hypocritical to continue Canada's approach - that we should either stop trading or stop condemning. Yet a decade later he made it clear that he did not intend to interfere with the private sector's involvement in South Africa. In both cases, it seemed that the original human instincts of political leaders had been brought sharply under control by other considerations.

POWERFUL FORCES

Indeed, powerful political, economic and bureaucratic forces did work this summer to keep Conservative policy on South Africa consistent with the previous Liberal approach. The most directly involved were a conservative group within the Department of External Affairs who fought hard and successfully to maintain the policy of trading and condemning. Prominent among these officials is Eric Bergbusch, formerly Director of the Anglophone Africa division of External Affairs and now heading up a special Task Force on South Africa. Although Bergbusch's approach has not gone unchallenged - with at least two officials on his Task Force sympathetic to stronger action against South Africa and with Stephen Lewis providing direct pressure on Mulroney from the United Nations - his point of view has been extremely influential.

The Conservative Caucus is divided on the issue of South Africa, though leaning towards opposition



Clark/JUPC

"hypocritical ..."?

to sanctions. Despite official pronouncements against *apartheid*, a number of M.P.'s have been outspoken in their support of the current South African regime. At least eight M.P.'s - including three members who have been or are in the Cabinet (John Crosbie, Jake Epp

and Robert Coates) have travelled to South Africa, with Crosbie and Coates travelling at the expense of the South African government. Coates returned to write articles praising South Africa's homelands policy and its approach to Namibia, while Crosbie responded to critics of his pro-apartheid sympathies by declaring,

"I have gone there and seen, you big loudmouth. Have you been there? You keep your mouth shut till you go and learn for yourself, you professional bleeding heart."

Beyond the activities of individuals, since 1982, a strong trading interest has been included as a central aspect of foreign policy with the incorporation of international trade functions under the aegis of the Department of External Affairs. Groups like the Canadian Export Association and the Canadian Manufacturers' Association have lobbied against sanctions, and the Deputy Minister of International Trade, R. Richardson, is clearly opposed to them. Such views are a reflec-

THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND SOUTH AFRICA

"Even if we had the means to reduce the ability of the South African whites to become more economically and technologically self-sufficient, which we do not, we would certainly not be inclined to do so. Like all other peoples, they have a perfect right to self-preservation, and like all other respectable nationalities, they should be commended for having the collective pride and motivation to defend themselves." (Conrad Black, letter to TCCR cited in their *Annual Report 1979/80*, p.6.)

Groups inspired by "misguided idealism ... seem to believe that they serve the common man ... if they attack the work and motives of Canadian and other entrepreneurs who, in fact, are creating jobs and social progress in Canada and abroad." (Thomas Bata, cited by Paul Knox, "External Affairs reviews conduct code," *The Globe and Mail*, 15 February 1985, p. 10.)

"... I don't believe in the scorched-earth policy where you have everything break down and have no infrastructure left and no jobs, and put all those people out of work until they settle their question on rule in South Africa ... as you know, the chief of the Zulus said when you close down a mine, the people who get hurt worst are the blacks ... And I say our 392 rand a month is better than nothing." (William James, Chairman Falconbridge, at its annual general meeting, 17 April 1985.)

"We're too busy fighting for our survival to worry about the churches. To hell with them!" (Massey Ferguson official cited in Sheldon E. Gordon, "Pricking Corporate Consciences," *The Globe and Mail Report on Business Magazine*, July/August 1985, p. 42.)

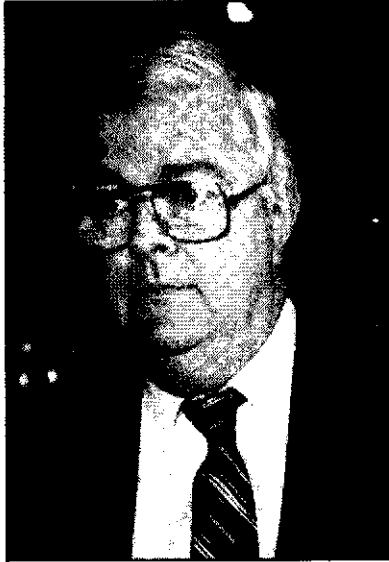
"While the church's opposition to apartheid (is) ... commendable ... it (is) simplistic and unchristian to pressure Canadian business and banks operating in South Africa because that (will) ... only hurt black workers there." (John Craig Eaton cited in Frank Jones, "This business view of South Africa is so wrong," *Toronto Star* November 1984.)

tion not only of Canada's generally open and trade dependent economy, but also of the special interest which South Africa's market holds for Canada. In contrast to Canada's over-all deficit in its trade of manufactured goods, about 70% of our exports to South Africa consist of largely unsubsidized, manufactured and semi-processed products. Trade officials have always been loath to give up this market and also promote exports to cover a deficit which has existed in Canada's trade with South Africa since 1972. With such interests coming to bear at the heart of the decision making process in External Affairs, a vested interest has been created against the use of economic sanctions against South Africa.

Outside the formal institutions of the state, another strong set of anti-sanctions pressure has come from the corporate sector in Canada. Canadian companies, underwriters and banks doing business in South Africa constitute a highly concentrated network characterized by a maze of cross-directorships. Interwoven in this cluster are South African corporate interests in Canada, most prominently subsidiaries of Anglo American and Rothmans. American interests are also involved, as about three-quarters of Canadian direct investment in South Africa is made by subsidiaries of U.S. corporations. Canadian companies have made handsome profits in South Africa, quite often double their returns from comparable ventures in Canada. Accordingly, many corporate leaders have been outspoken in their opposition to economic sanctions against South Africa and some have gone so far as to support the interests of the white minority. (See box.)

CANADIAN - SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY

In 1979, these interests were given an organizational form with the establishment of the Canadian-South Africa Society whose three hundred



Paul Chlasson/Maclean's

"Loudmouth ...?"

members come mainly from large corporations but also include some academics, churchmen and even a Quebec Superior Court Judge. Its directors include Conservative Senator Heath Macquarrie, Paul Leman (director of Alcan Aluminum and several other major Canadian companies), David Beatty (a prominent Toronto businessman) and, significantly, until July Maurice Sauvé, the husband of Canada's Governor-General. The Society is financed almost entirely by the South African Foundation, an organization which itself is almost entirely funded by the South African corporate sector to promote South African interests internationally. Not surprisingly, the Canadian-South Africa Society was set up to promote investment in South Africa and to lobby the Canadian government to encourage pro-South African policies. Its President, James McAvity, a former President of the Canadian Export Association, responded strongly to the federal government's initial reforms in July. He is reported to have said that the Society

"could deal more competently with South Africa than that goddamn Canadian Government which is just trying to incite hard feelings. Why should the South

African Government be influenced by what that pipsqueak Mulroney says?"

It is very telling that it was precisely the Canadian private sector to which Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark turned to carry out Canadian policy on South Africa. When he was justifying not pursuing economic sanctions, Clark insisted that the Canadian corporate sector was better placed than the Canadian government to act as an agent of reform within South Africa, burrowing from within the economy and lobbying South African officials and businessmen about their policies. To this end, Clark organized a series of meetings with the private sector - suggesting to the bankers that they voluntarily make no new loans to South Africa (although they haven't done so for several years) and encouraging companies to take the Code of Conduct more seriously.

Ironically, the Canadian private sector did undertake a form of "sanctions" this summer - divesting from South African gold funds and other stocks - albeit for purely economic rather than political reasons. Still, the overriding reality is continuing Canadian business involvement and, there, is another kind of irony. For Clark's initiative to make Canadian corporations with subsidiaries in South Africa agents of reform would require them to act against their own self-interest, since they have profited handsomely from the maintenance of the status quo and, in particular, from the *apartheid* system which has enabled them to pay low wages and offer few benefits to their non-white labour force. Clark's selling point is that reform will pre-empt revolution, a condition which corporate leaders like even less. Therefore, his policy implicitly encourages Canadian companies to remain in South Africa or even to invest in South Africa so that they can play the role he has selected for them. However, this approach does not ensure that Canadian companies will ei-

ther fulfill Clark's purposes or be effective even if they tried. Non-compliance with the Code of Conduct in the past, the interests and views which corporate leaders have put on the record, and the nature of the Canadian-South Africa Society all cast doubt on the likelihood of compliance with Clark's voluntary approach. There is a much greater probability that Canadian corporations will continue to be co-opted as a support for the *apartheid* system rather than that they will act as agents for change. In the past, Canadian corporations have been subject to strict South African legislation which prohibits the release of financial information which it considers prejudicial to state security. Moreover, a number of subsidiaries of Canadian corporations have been required in the past to act as Key Points industries, which meant that they had to store weapons on their premises and to organize an all-white militia reserve unit to defend their plants. Through their South African-based subsidiaries, Alcan, Ford and Massey Ferguson all make products which they sell to the South African military and police. At best the Canadian government's reliance on voluntary actions by the private sector is somewhat naive for it seems that until their economic interests are threatened far more sharply, Canadian companies will continue to buttress the status quo. A straw in the wind revealing their attitude to government initiatives was the failure to find a prominent Canadian businessman to administer the Code of Conduct and the resort instead to a retired Canadian diplomat, Albert Hart.

There are also some additional dimensions to this pull towards the status quo. Central to the anti-sanctions, pro-economic relations viewpoint is a set of ideas put forward by newspaper editorials and government officials which are deeply conservative, anti-democratic and even racist. Common to both many officials of the



Berger/Saskatoon Star Phoenix

"pipsqueak...?"

Canadian state and members of the corporate sector is a firmly rooted fear of rapid change within South Africa, especially as it might lead to a less staunchly pro-Western, anti-Communist government. Thus one sees the spotlight being placed on the tribalist leader of Kwazulu, Gatsha Buthelezi, by Canadian government officials, newspaper editorials and corporate leaders, in the hope that this "moderate" leader with his pro-capitalist, pro-Western orientation will emerge ultimately to safeguard their interests. Similarly, one sees the fundamental principle of liberal democracy - universal franchise - being criticized as premature in a country where the non-white population does not have sufficient "education, upward economic mobility and political experience" (*Globe and Mail* editorial, 21 August 1985). The External Affairs official, Eric Bergbusch, put it this way: "One doesn't want to create chaos and call it victory". Given that life in Soweto now has been described as a combination of Beirut and Belfast, the chaos already exists in South Africa - except for the white population, still largely secure in their suburbs, whom Bergbusch presumably had in mind!

COUNTER PRESSURES

Despite these perceptions and despite the corporate pressures against strong action against South Africa, the Conservative government has shown signs that it is feeling its way forward to a new policy on South Africa, setting a new standard for its rhetoric and even taking a few modest steps to reform Canadian actions. In April, Joe Clark met with corporate leaders, labour union officials, academics and the Canadian Export Association, along with the Ambassador to the United Nations, Stephen Lewis, and a number of officials from the Department of External Affairs, to discuss the possibility of new directions. The impetus for the meeting had come from the strong legislation the U.S. Congress was considering which intended to enact economic sanctions against South Africa. Apparently, at the end of the meeting, Clark was impressed with some of the arguments and suggested, to Bergbusch's visible dismay, that he had been badly briefed. However in the next few months, Clark became a strong proponent of the predominantly anti-sanctions view within External Affairs, so much so that the first draft of his proposals for Cabinet on new measures to take against South Africa which appeared at the Baie Comeau Cabinet meeting in July was rejected by the Prime Minister as too mild.

In fact, it is becoming increasingly clear that Mulroney and his advisers have been attempting to play a role in pioneering a much stronger Canadian policy on South Africa which has forced them, at times, to circumvent the Department of External Affairs. Apparently, Mulroney had developed anti-apartheid feelings in his university years and certainly, in December 1984, Archbishop Desmond Tutu had made an enormous impression on him. The insistence on tougher reforms in Canadian policy at Baie Comeau and an off-the-cuff remark in Vancouver on 22 August suggested that he might push for a

stronger Canadian policy. In Vancouver, he stated that he would order sanctions against South Africa within the week because he was dismayed at the country's failure to deal with the growing racial problem. However, on this occasion, Clark was able to contradict the Prime Minister, and insisted that there were no immediate plans to impose new sanctions against South Africa. By 2 September, Mulroney had backtracked completely, preferring not to be in open dispute with Clark again. In an interview on Global television, he stated that his earlier remarks had been a first reaction to the situation and that he now felt that sanctions might do more harm than good, that he hadn't taken into account their ramifications for black South Africans. He concluded by praising Clark's "moderation and maturity" for opposing economic sanctions. The External view had won, temporarily.

Since then, a series of events has shaken this initial accommodation between Mulroney and External Affairs. The failure by South Africa's President to offer any sign of openness to significant change in his Durban speech, the continuing repression of blacks in the townships and the arrest of a number of UDF leaders prompted not only the EEC countries but also the United States and even Britain to adopt mild sanctions against South Africa. Accordingly, Clark delivered his toughest statement to date on South Africa on Friday 13 September, albeit to an empty House of Commons. For the first time Clark suggested that Canada might, under certain circumstances, invoke full diplomatic and economic sanctions against South Africa; outside the house, he dropped the hint that Canada might even, at some point, consider discouraging South African investment in Canada. This tougher rhetoric was accompanied by a second set of mild measures: the government announced a voluntary ban on loans (which Canadian banks

have not provided for several years) and on the sale of crude oil and refined products (which Canadian companies have not sold). An embargo on air transport meant little beyond the cancellation of a few charter flights though it would have been important had Canada actually co-ordinated international action on this measure. Significantly, the government did not offer direct assistance to the African National Congress, the principal South African liberation movement, but instead provided assistance for families of political prisoners and detainees in South Africa.

That the government moved forward, however timidly, can be attributed to a vanity factor - the conceit that Canada is somehow out in front on the issue of South Africa (a strong conviction of most External Affairs officials) had been belied by the actions of Australia, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and even France and the United States. In fact, the pressure within the U.S. Congress to pass strong legislation supporting economic sanctions against South Africa and Reagan's compromise on this issue have been central factors in forcing the pace in Canada.

At the same time, Mulroney is anxious to capture the international limelight and wants badly to play a major role at the Commonwealth Conference in the Bahamas in October - so much so that, at this point, he does not plan to take Joe Clark with him. Much has been made of the legacy of former Conservative Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's part in persuading South Africa to withdraw from the Commonwealth in 1961. Now, Mulroney wants to play the role of intermediary between Britain and Third World members. Accordingly, he warmly welcomed the visit of President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania to Ottawa several weeks before the meeting to discuss strategies for Commonwealth action on the South African issue. In addition, Mul-

roney bypassed External Affairs and sent his own envoy, Bernard Wood (President of the North-South Institute, an independent research institution), to meet with leaders of the front line states in Southern Africa. Wood will both further the discussions started with Nyerere and begin a detailed practical study of contingency plans for assistance to the front line states should South Africa carry out its threats to impose hardship on them.

Given the Mulroney administration's sensitivity to popular opinion (as witnessed on the issues of Star Wars and deindexing old age pensions), popular actions and protests are needed to counter the national and international corporate influences which have acted as a brake on stronger action by Canada on South Africa in the past. There has been movement from the position that sanctions are not useful, that they hurt blacks, to the proposition that the slow introduction of sanctions will have a useful psychological impact. At least now there is a clear commitment to use sanctions "unless there is tangible movement away from *apartheid*". However, the government has not been specific about what a "tangible movement" will mean; nor have they set out any timetable for change. Therefore, it still remains to be seen whether tougher actions will follow the commitments made in September and whether Mulroney's government will actually be prepared to tread on corporate toes. So far we have seen policies of a timid and cautious nature, certainly not those of "moral and practical leadership" which Clark said Canada had the responsibility to provide. If, in the words of Tutu's daughter, South African blacks don't want their chains made more comfortable but want them removed, there is a long way to go not only in ending the system of *apartheid* in South Africa but also in adding substance to Canada's commitment to this goal.

Going Through The Motions:

Divestment at U of T

Much of the following account is based on a report contributed by the University of Toronto Divestment Committee and written before the divestment motion was amended and voted.

On 19 September the Governing Council of the University of Toronto passed - by a vote of 32 to 5 with 2 abstentions - a motion to divest itself of holdings in Canadian companies and banks which fail to adhere to Canadian government guidelines on corporate conduct in South Africa or which fail to report on their adherence. The motion, presented as an amendment to a straightforward motion to divest companies and banks doing business in South Africa, was opposed by supporters of the original motion as an evasion of the issue of the University's economic support for *apartheid*.

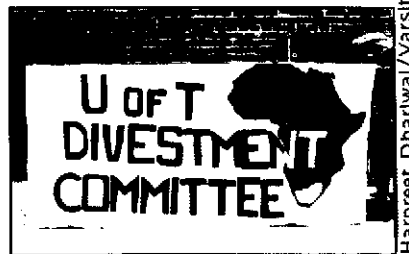
Their success in bringing the issue to a vote in the highest body of the University and the support they have won from many important University constituencies are taken as victories by the University of Toronto Divestment Committee (UTDC). The Committee intends to keep the issue of real divestment alive and active on the campus.

For the past two years the UTDC, comprised of undergraduate and graduate students, has led the campaign for divestment. The holdings they want the University to sell are significant. Currently about 23 percent of the University's stock holdings (a total value of \$3.7 million) are in corporations with interests in South Africa, corporations like Alcan, Noranda, Exxon, Xerox, Bank of Montreal, Bank of Nova Scotia, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, and Royal Bank.

The Divestment Committee has sought campus support by circulat-

ing a petition, holding educational sessions, setting up information tables, and soliciting the endorsement of campus groups for divestment.

The UTDC complied with the University's policy of investment review when it submitted in November 1984 a concise statement of the argument that corporations and banks that do business in South Africa engage in "socially injurious" behavior as defined by the Governing Council's own policy document. The statement was backed up by the petition supporting divestment with over 1400 signatures representing all University constituencies.



Haipreet Dharwal/Varsity

It took the President's Advisory Board a long six months to present its comments and recommendations on the issue of divestment:

- verbal condemnation of the apartheid system
- Canadian companies doing business in South Africa are not socially injurious and therefore divestment is an inappropriate action
- Governing Council should strongly urge the federal government to complete its current review of its Codes of Conduct for Canadian companies operating in South Africa and make the reporting requirements of this code mandatory
- reaffirmation of the "prudent man" rule of investing which does not consider political, social, moral and other non-business factors as proper considerations to influence the exercise of a trustee's judgement and discretion in investment matters

•the Vice President of Business Affairs should be asked to monitor the federal government's policy and actions with respect to South Africa and keep the President informed.

President Connell supported the Advisory Board's recommendation not to divest, stressing the "apolitical" role which the university must play. The June Governing Council meeting was the forum for debate around the issues of foreign investment, social injury, divestment and the nature of the university. The meeting culminated with a motion to divest which was put forward by part-time students representative, Claire Johnson. It is this motion that was supposed to be debated by Governing Council on 19 September.

The Divestment Committee tried to keep up the public pressure through the summer by launching a letter writing campaign directed at Governing Council. Perhaps responding to such pressures as well as to the multiplying international and Canadian actions against apartheid and the rising tide of opposition within South Africa, President Connell in early September changed his tune. Instead of opposing divestment squarely as a political act inappropriate for the University as he had done in June, Connell now proposed an amendment to the divestment motion which would have the University follow the political lead of the Canadian government in its evaluation of the behavior of Canadian companies in South Africa.

In the 90 minute debate on 19 September, Claire Johnson, mover of the original motion, opposed the amendment as contrary to the sense of the original motion. Now corporate behaviour and not support for a racist and violently autocratic regime had suddenly be-

(continued on page 23)

Walter Sisulu Honoured At York University

It is a long way from Soweto to Downsview but for one day in June Toronto's York University managed to bridge the gap. The University's president Harry Arthurs had chosen as the unifying theme of the several talks he gave at York's spring convocations the couplet "Men and Machines" and on that day he linked his theme to the struggle in South Africa:

Machines exist in politics as well - guns, prisons and the state's whole apparatus of repression. . . But as Walter Sisulu's own experience shows us, even the malevolent machines of politics may in the end be transformed by the power of the human mind. The apparatus of repression may become an embarrassment for its proprietors; guns may recoil against those who fire them; and prisons may become a place where a country's finest men and women are to be found - because of the conscience of those who, like Walter Sisulu, bear witness to the highest ideals of the human mind.

Arthurs was referring to the man who was to receive, a few minutes later, an honorary doctorate from York's Bethune College, the first member of the African National Congress of South Africa to be so honoured in Canada. As with the degrees which have been presented in other countries to such stalwarts of the South African liberation struggle as Nelson Mandela and Govan Mbeki, the York degree had to be presented in *absentia* since Walter Sisulu is in a South African jail where he has been, since being sentenced for treason in 1962. As Professor Peter Harries-Jones put the point in a moving citation, "For the black people of South Africa Walter Sisulu's imprisonment is evidence of the far reaching nature of political oppression in South Africa and of the inevitable suffer-



Sechaba

Walter Sisulu - ANC leader serving life sentence in South Africa

ing which any leader attempting to moderate or transform *apartheid* in South Africa must confront. For many he is also a living example of the capacity for human beings to triumph over unjust laws and systematic degradation".

Sisulu's career began in the 1940's when, as a founding member of the ANC Youth League, he joined with others to press the ANC itself towards offering a more forthright and militant challenge to

South Africa's system of racial oppression. As Harries-Jones noted, with Sisulu's appointment in 1949 as the full-time secretary-general of the ANC, the Congress entered into more than a decade of dramatic campaigns against the repressive legislation which was being imposed upon the African population by the National Party government. Banned, house arrested and detained, Walter Sisulu was ultimately given a sentence of life imprisonment. During the follow-

ing years, spent primarily on the notorious Robben Island, he "refused to abandon his political principles. It is typical of his dignity and dedication that recently he declined an offer of conditional release from imprisonment (since) this release would have required him to give up militant opposition to the government".

While stating that in honouring Walter Sisulu "we are honouring all those leaders who have fought racial oppression in South Africa... knowing that they will be cut off from their families and that their lives will be totally disrupted through arrest, imprisonment and exile", Harries-Jones suggested that, among these latter, the University was honouring, in particular, Sisulu's wife, Albertina. "Albertina Sisulu has lived longer under government bans imposed on the political activity of individuals than any other person in her country. Yet she continues to play a major part in the struggle for freedom in South Africa by protesting detention of political prisoners without trial and (protesting) torture and murder of political detainees." Indeed, because of her role in recent years in the leadership of the United Democratic Front she is, at this very moment, a defendant in another of the *apartheid* government's trumped-up treason trials!

In concluding his citation, Harries-Jones noted that "other universities, wishing to recognize those fighting racism in South Africa, have chosen to honour friends and colleagues of Walter Sisulu, who are better-known in the public eye. Our request is to honour their guide and first mentor, the acknowledged father of their freedom struggle. Like the person after whom our own college is named (Norman Bethune), Walter Sisulu is an inspiration, adamant as to the correctness of his fight against injustice. As he declared at one of his trials, many years ago: "As long as there is a spark of life and energy in me, I shall

fight with courage and determination for the abolition of discriminatory laws and for freedom of all South Africans irrespective of colour and creed."

That June day was a proud one for York University, but one group of students took advantage of the moment to remind the university community that the presentation of an honorary degree could not absolve York of its responsibility to put its own house in order as far as its links to *apartheid* South Africa are concerned. The students, representing the York Student Movement Against Apartheid, wished in no way to detract from the importance and solemnity of the occasion, and made only a brief and respectful appearance with their placards. But their presence was effective, promising a more militant querying of university investment and purchasing policies in the coming academic year.

Moreover, the students had already claimed one victory only a few weeks earlier, when Sonja Bata announced that she would not seek re-election to the York Board of Governors. Armed with information about the treatment by Bata Shoe Company (of which company Ms. Bata is a director) of its black employees in South Africa the York Student Movement Against Apartheid had obtained over 1000 signatures on a petition calling for Bata's immediate resignation. The Board chairman argued that Bata had made known to him her decision not to run well in advance of the launching of the petition, while the students argued that she had merely seen the handwriting on the wall in acting as she did. The precise truth of the matter may be of less importance than the momentum the precedent of the petition itself can lend to anti-apartheid mobilization at York this fall. Although Ms. Bata has been a particularly worthy target of anti-apartheid attack, she is not the only one at York.



Peter Harries-Jones delivers citation of Sisulu at York University

The Lives Of South African Women

BY
LINZI MANICOM



Lesley Lawson

Members of the FOSATU women's group

The "facts" about Black South African women's lives are impossible to absorb in one sitting. The litany of their burdens - pass laws, forced removals, barren settlement camps, dismembered families, slave work, political repression - on and on - leaves one numbed and unable to imagine their daily-lived reality. Unable as well to discover the points of connection between women living and struggling in South Africa and women elsewhere in the world. One obstacle to empathy is the wordy abstraction: "bottom of the pile", "triply oppressed", and other such characterizations of the "position of women under apartheid". Another is the simplistic media image: African women as "victim" (helpless, passive, despairing) or as "hero" (defying demolition, detention, death), unidimensional and unable to bring home a sense of the

wholeness and complexity, the ups and downs of their lives.

These abstractions and stereotypes, intended to promote identification and solidarity with the women of South Africa, can in fact distance readers from the "problems over there" which seem so far outside the experience of women elsewhere. In this way, the links between women internationally around the issues of racism and sexism can get buried. Real solidarity and support are not easily or lastingly generated on the basis of incomprehension and awe, or worse, pity and guilt. But as liberation activists have long recognized, there's been little written material available on South African women which allows an appreciation of how the stark strictures of apartheid are woven into the daily texture of their lives.

In this context, a recent theatre performance and some new publications on South African women are to be welcomed, for they proffer, through vignettes, visual images and voices, a fuller, richer and more vivid picture of their lives. Using various cultural forms - interviews, autobiography, narratives, song, photographs, poetry and drama, women share their worlds. Implicitly and explicitly they speak to the kinds of questions that occur to overseas readers who want to touch the vitality and reality of South African women in struggle. How do South African women make sense of their circumscribed lives? What are the daily pressures, preoccupations and problems? How do they cope, feel, think, survive? How do they relate to employers/employees, state officials, organizations, families, children, other women and men? For it is not just the grand marches on Pretoria that testify to what is sometimes (patronizingly) depicted as women's "contribution" to the liberation struggle. It is equally the everyday resistances, the personal and private persistences of women, that show them to be integrally, some would argue fundamentally, part of a struggle not only to end apartheid, but also to establish new, cooperative, non-oppressive, socially-committed relations between people.

The answers and sharings reveal the diversity in experience, the differences and divisions, between black and white, young and old, urban and rural. Yet because in the



Lesley Lawson



Lesley Lawson

Work in a clothing factory

books and theatre women are not rendered as statistical constructs, but give their own interpretations of what exploitation, racial and sexual oppression means to them, readers are able to glimpse, sometimes grasp, the continuities and unities between South African women and women elsewhere.

... IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Vukani Makhosikazi / Overcoming Despair and *Working Women* are similar in many ways. Both books are clearly laid out, simply written, and a special treat, richly illustrated with some quite wonderful photographs. Both books were produced by white intellectual women and directed at a popular readership. *Vukani* was written by a collective whose members have all done research on women in South Africa and who wanted to rewrite their "academic work in an interesting way, accessible to others who were also concerned with change in South Africa and women's position in it". *Working Women*, which was prepared and co-published by Sached, a progressive institution providing supplementary and continuing education for black South Africans, is written as an educational text, primarily for working people in South Africa. In content, both books concentrate exclusively on African

women, with *Working Women* focussing on the conditions and experience of their work in servicing jobs, in factories and on farms, and *Vukani* looking at a broader range of women's issues, including health and shelter. *Vukani* emphasizes the theme of women organizing around the special problems that we face as women in trade unions, agricultural cooperatives, urban women's organisations, church groups and more politically defined women's organisations.

A few women came together because they had problems which they felt were

not being attended to We women decided to do something about these problems. Firstly doing it practically, eg., childminding, learning to sew, sewing to help ourselves financially ... That was not the end. Since we are discriminated against, we must speak out if we have a problem. If we do not speak out those who are in power will always say that we are satisfied. We must make those in power aware of what we want and what we do not want. We want nobody to decide for us without consulting with us. We have to liberate ourselves. ... The best idea was to form an organisation of women

An account of the formation of the Vaal Women's Organisation in 1984, Vukani Makhosikazi p. 248/50.

The personal accounts of work and home life given by the many women who speak in these two books suggest parallels in the kinds of issues confronted by African women under *apartheid* and those faced by working women everywhere. Sexual harrasment in the workplace is one such issue:

When you reach a factory, you find the induna (foreman) and you ask him. If you like the job the induna will tell you that you must sleep with him before you get that job. And you've got no choice. You want to work and your children are starving in Soweto. So some women sleep with those men. Some women sleep with the bosses because they want



Lesley Lawson

more money or easier work. They do it because they want to live, not because they are mad or what.

Nomvula, a night-shift cleaner, *Working Women* p. 26

The shockingly inadequate measures for industrial health and safety, and the constant anxiety of working mothers about the consequences of maternity and the provisions for child care are extensively dealt with, in various contexts, in both books. Another issue that will resound with women in all parts of the world is the presumption that women are solely responsible for those labours loosely termed "domestic". Quotes from African women show them assuming the "double shift" (which is extraordinarily onerous under the conditions of the paucity of services available to Africans under *apartheid*) with a mixture of resignation and resentment.

My husband he just look. He is reading the paper while I cook. He says he is tired. I am also tired but I must cook. I am used to it because it is our custom.

Woman in urban township, *Vukani*, p.135.

The only work that a man will do around here is to get up and take the cattle to the veld. If you ask him to make the fire, he'll say no, he won't do that. After he's taken the cattle, you see him sitting with a big dish of food. Besides that, all he knows how to do is to get up and go and look for beer. I don't see a man doing anything at home. No, nothing.

Woman in rural Transkei, *Working Women*, p. 102

The insecurity and precariousness of family life and heterosexual relations under the conditions of *apartheid* is matched by the rugged independence and coping capacity of many African women. Despite the fact that marriage is a precondition to a woman's right to stay in the urban areas or to get housing in the township, many women are increasingly reluctant to relinquish control over their lives and earnings



Pauline, a domestic worker in Johannesburg.
 Sat work
 at home

Lesley Lawson

in a formal marriage which is seen to jeopardise, rather than ameliorate, their struggles for survival.

I'm not married. I'm afraid to get married. My granny didn't want me to, but I also don't like marriage. Because men are so hard when you are married. Men drink and they hit you. I see it everywhere ... I don't like men. Life would be harder if I was married - yes.

Factory worker, *Working Women* p. 86.

My ex-husband does support the children ... but I am not prepared to marry again. It creates more problems for me. What if I get another irresponsible husband?

Rose, urban-dweller *Vukani* p. 138

Vukani and *Working Women* assume a familiarity with the ABC's of *apartheid*, and neither book is particularly well edited for a non-South African readership, leaving untranslated a number of specifically South African referents. But this hardly detracts from the value of these two books for educational work with women's groups, unions and educational institutions in North America.

We Make Freedom and *Cry Amandla!* also have similarities. Both books were written by journalists resident outside of South Africa, and comprise a series of interviews with various (and in some cases, the same) South African women. Both writers interestingly explain their writing about women in terms of a perceived social centrality - the



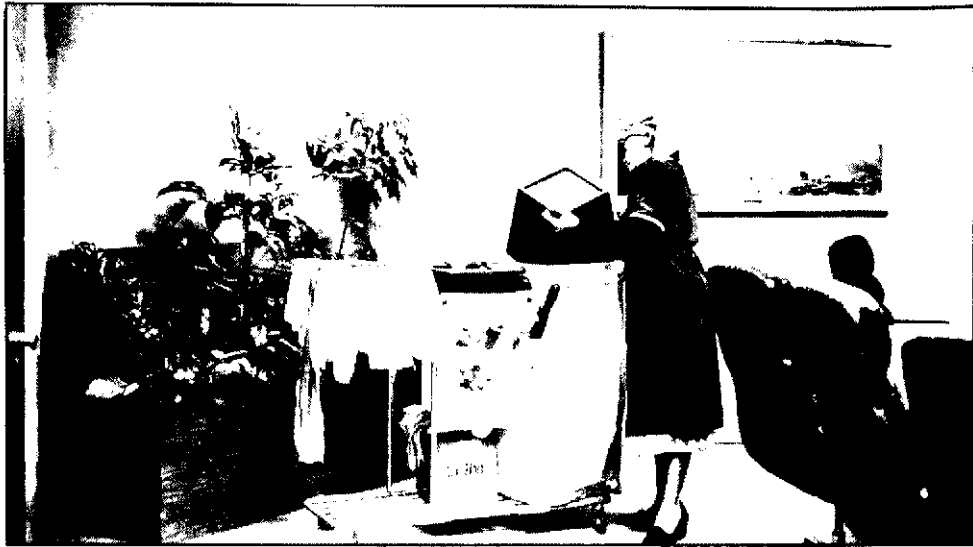
Lesley Lawson

'survival' of the community for Lipman; the 'heart of society' for Goodwin. But there the similarity ends. Beata Lipman's earlier, pre-1963, involvement in the liberation movement clearly informs the short and skillfully written *We Make Freedom*. Brief but trenchant explanations of various contexts - townships, squatter camps, rural areas, worker-, student-, and political organisations - situate and introduce ten specific women with whom she spoke, many of them political and community figures and very articulate. Their words and experiences illustrate various facets of *apartheid* in the lives of women, conveying an immediate and powerful impression. *We Make Freedom* gives a good and readable overview of the issues for women in South Africa.

The full title of June Goodwin's *Cry Amandla: South African Women and the Question of Power* is misleading. The book is less about women's specific relation to the struggle for popular power represented in the cry: "Amandla!", than about individual women's feelings and attitudes about white racist power and domination over blacks. Concerned to get all points of view, Goodwin interviewed Afrikaner women, White liberal, and a few Black Women, the most prominently featured being a former Black Consciousness activist with whom Goodwin had particular sympathy. Those views are in themselves quite interesting but the book is not very illuminating about the actual material struggle of black women in South Africa. Implic-

itly, for Goodwin, *apartheid* is about certain (nasty) people's racist attitudes, and the liberation struggle is oversimplified by being presented purely as an African reaction to racism. Her conception of the black struggle for an unspecified symbolic power does not appear to take into account or reflect the struggles being fought in unions for more democratic forms of organizing, in women's groups for communal and collective forms of labour and assistance, in the broad liberation movement for a revolutionary "people's power".

LIP from Southern African Women is an anthology of creative work - short stories, poems, etchings, photographs - organised around such themes as "everydays", "endurance" and "war". The edi-



Lesley Lawson

tors note, and regret, the disproportionate representation of the work of white women in the collection, an index of their privileged access to time, training and leisure. But the most powerful work is not by the stereotyped white suburban, ever-so-middle class "madam" (as in domestic service relations, not brothels). It is by angry, paining, loving women, trying to see themselves as women in the context of South Africa's omnipresent violence. For many of the contributors this means reflecting the lives of the most oppressed and vulnerable women. This book could be useful in stimulating an awareness about South African women amongst new constituencies - eg, feminist cultural workers - and teachers might find the short stories and poems provocative of questions and discussions.

Finally, there's *Call Me Woman*, the autobiography of Ellen Khuzwayo, prominent Soweto community activist, who has been centrally involved in women's self-help projects in the Transvaal region. Khuzwayo's telling of her story - her physical, psychological and political movement from an upper-class, Christian, rural African home in the Orange Free State to the Soweto ghetto and the intense political fer-

ment of the 1970s onward - is both intensely personal and intimate, and resolutely political and social. She discusses in rich detail various aspects of the lives of women like herself and those very differently located in the social matrix of Soweto. Her honest, open and sensitive observation, conditioned by a staunch traditional and Christian morality and by what is called, in feminist terms, a woman-centredness, yields a perspective, shading and tone rare in literature.

In the first section of the book she tells of women's involvement in illegal beer-brewing, in shop-lifting, in "other vices" and in the violence in the townships. But as she does so, she contextualizes that vice and violence, historically, culturally, and socially, calls upon the reader to imagine herself in that ghetto context and poses piercing moral questions. In this way she stunningly indicts, not the inherent savageness and corruption of African people - as the South African government would have us see things - but the brutalizing, criminalizing situations in which African men and women have so rapidly undergone a process of proletarianization.

Black women have been challenged to the point where they have developed in

some areas ingenious defence mechanisms and a very subtle sensitivity in handling some of the hideous and humiliating situations to which they have been subjected in their daily living in the foreign town life. This has been interpreted as dishonesty in some quarters.

Call Me Women p.32

The picture of Khuzwayo's life is different from those which *Vukani Makhosikazi* and *Working Women* focussed upon. Her class background, education, professional status, indeed, her choosing to list as an appendix, the names of South African Black Women qualified as doctors and lawyers, presumably as an index of their achievement, show her to be relatively privileged. Her autobiography militates against a common tendency to see black women as a homogeneous category. Nevertheless, being African, living in Soweto, she has been subjected to many of the same daily and lifelong oppressions and vulnerabilities (as evident in her five month detention at the age of 63) as all black women in South Africa. No doubt this is one reason that she, and other black women such as Winnie Mandela, "privileged" in class and cultural terms, have maintained such a militant connection and sensitivity to the struggles of working class women.

I'm disturbed by the fact that black women are making a tremendous contribution in their communities and in this country - and there seems to be a vendetta to stifle this, to blot it out; the men, somewhere, are not playing a fair game. They don't give the black women an opportunity to honestly realise their potential and to recognise that potential when it does come forth. They're doing everything to thwart it, and the government has gone further: it has capitalised, in the legislation of this country, on the traditions and customs which all the communities have had. People have gone on, adapting their way of life to the life that is suitable now, for today ... but the things retarding the progress of the black woman have been highlighted ...

Ellen Khuzwayo, interviewed by Beata Lipman p. 19



Call Me Woman is a self-conscious tribute to the many remarkable black South African women named and described in its pages, and an unconscious tribute to its author. It is also the kind of book that intensifies our frustration about the thin images and simplistic stereotypes that pervade so much of the other available literature on South African, and particularly black South African, women; it makes us long for more accounts like

the present one, with women speaking at length about their own lives.

... ON THE STAGE

In Toronto recently, the play, *Poppie Nongena*, enjoyed enormous

popular acclaim. It reached audiences normally only barely touched by the occasional images on their TV screens and the mainstream print media. Through skillful integration of drama and song, the play dramatizes the story of a woman whose life is torn from her control by the web of *apartheid* laws that confront and at times confound her. Her story is not exceptional, many thousands live it every day. But for almost all of the people who saw the performance, it was their most vivid exposure to how those *apartheid* laws are actually lived and experienced, the suffering, pain and fear that are their toll on daily existence. The impressions left were lasting ones. As one Toronto high school student put it: "It really gave me a picture of a woman ready to fight, and why she had to." Other reactions: "You ask me about women under apartheid? That's my image of it - Poppie Nongena making sure she and her kids survive, going, going, even when the system tears down everything she has built." "It seemed right for her to hold on to the place she finally won in town. But her kids who were going out to attack the police and everything, seemed right too."

BOOKS ON SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

Jane Barrett and others (1985): *Vukani Makhosikazi - South African Women Speak*, Catholic Institute for International Relations, London.

To be published for distribution in England by Zed Press and in Canada by Between the Lines, under the title *Overcoming Despair: South African Women on the Move*. Expected date of publication: December 1985, approx. \$13.00.

Helene Perold (Ed), Text and Photographs, Lesley Lawson (1985): *Working Women - A Portrait of South Africa's Black Women Workers*, Sached Trust / Ravan Press, Johannesburg.

D.E.C. Bookroom, Toronto.

Beata Lipman (1984): *We Make Freedom: Women in South Africa*, Pandora Press, London.

D.E.C. Bookroom, Toronto; Toronto Women's Bookstore; Robarts Library (University of Toronto).

June Goodwin (1984): *Cry Amandla! South African*

Women and the Question of Power, Africana Publishing Company, New York.

Toronto Women's Bookstore; Robarts Library (University of Toronto).

Susan Brown, Isabel Hofmeyr, Susan Rosenberg (Eds) (1983): *LIP from South African Women*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg.

Toronto Women's Bookstore; Robarts Library (University of Toronto).

Ellen Khuzwayo (1985): *Call Me Woman*, The Women's Press, London U.K.

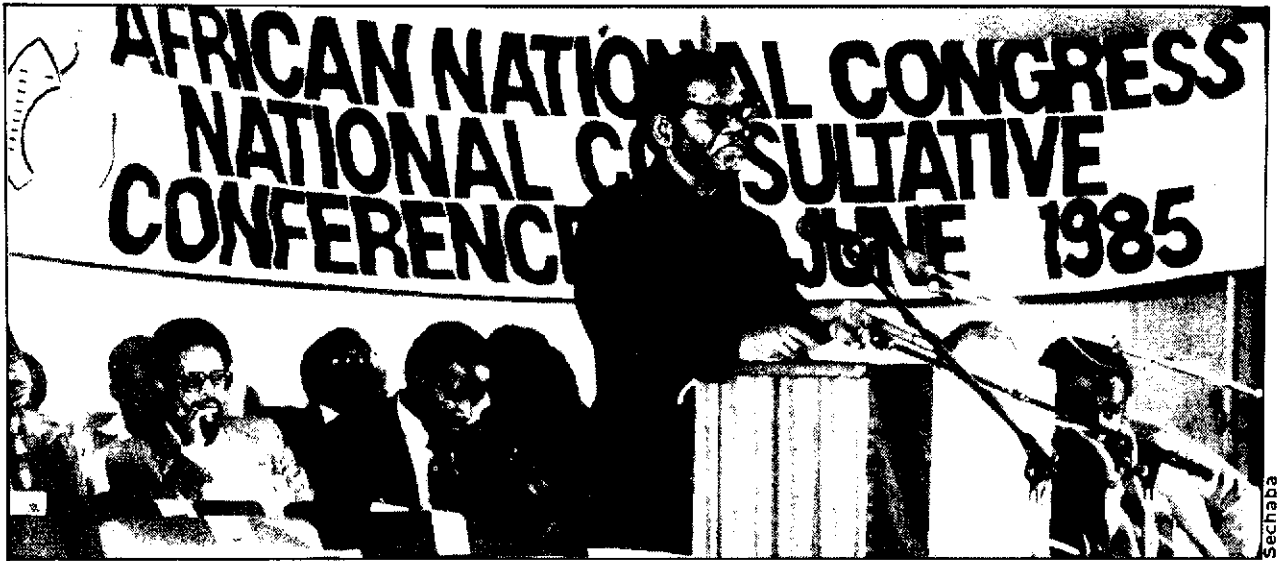
Toronto Women's Bookstore.

Not reviewed here, but recently revised and enlarged is Hilda Bernstein's (1985): *For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears: Women in Apartheid South Africa*, International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, London.

Toronto Women's Bookstore; D.E.C. Bookroom, Toronto.

Planning For Victory

The ANC's National Consultative Conference



The African National Congress of South Africa held its Second National Consultative Conference (the first took place in Morogoro, Tanzania, in 1969) in Zambia in June of this year. Necessarily, there have been severe limits to the amount of detailed information which has been made publicly available concerning the deliberations at this important meeting. However, the following account which TCSAC has pieced together from public statements and interviews with some of the participants gives enough of a picture to confirm that the Conference holds considerable promise for the future of the on-going struggle in South Africa.

These are momentous times in South Africa. Certainly, there can be no denying the impressive scope of the popular energies which have been bubbling up so dramatically in recent months; they have gone a long way towards making the African National Congress' current slogan - "Make Apartheid Unworkable, Make the Country Ungovernable" (see *Southern Africa*

REPORT, June 1985) - a reality. The apartheid state no longer retains the same ability to keep one jump ahead of events, shaping and steering them as it once did - even if, for the time being, it does retain the power to suppress, by means of sheer brute force, many of the challenges which confront it.

Still, it is equally true that the revolutionary energies which are afoot in South Africa need far more focus and direction if they are to raise the struggle to a new level and actually to challenge the apartheid state successfully for power. In this regard what the ANC can achieve appears to be crucial. Of course, there can be no doubt as to the ANC's current prominence, both on the ground and, to an unprecedented degree, in the coverage provided by the mainstream media; Nelson Mandela, the man and the symbol, is very much to the fore in the minds of the rebellious populace, while even prominent businessmen troop to Lusaka - much to the

disgust of President Botha - to meet with ANC leaders there.

Yet the question remains. Can the ANC provide the kind of focus and direction, alluded to above, which is now so essential to the further success of popular resistance in South Africa? Fortunately, this is precisely the question which the ANC has been asking itself.

The occasion? The movement's historic Second National Consultative Conference in Zambia in June of this year. The conference was attended by about 250 delegates who, in the words of the conference's official communiqué, "came from every country in the world where we have members", "were drawn from all the national groups in our country" and came from every sector of the movement's activity. Delegates seemed to agree that only a full and frank discussion of the complexities of the terrain of struggle offered the ANC by developments both without (the Nkomati Accord!) and within

South Africa would serve. And by all accounts this is precisely what occurred.

A number of important background documents had been circulated for discussion within the movement in preceding months and at the conference itself various presentations, most notably President Oliver Tambo's exhaustive opening address and the section of the National Executive Committee's Report on Strategy and Tactics, laid down a challenging agenda. The debate which ensued was a remarkably open one, with Tambo, in particular, facilitating by example from the chair the democratic cut and thrust which came to characterize the conference. Younger cadres, from such locations near the front-lines as Angola and Zambia, played an important role as ginger group in this respect, and searching self-criticism, especially regarding ANC practice within South Africa itself, became a central focus.

Certainly the new terrain in South Africa dictated serious reflection about strategy and tactics. On the negative side, South Africa's aggression against its neighbours had been partially successful - most notably with the so-called "Non-Aggression Pact" signed at Nkomati between South Africa and Mozambique early in 1984 - in undermining some of the ANC's freedom of manoeuvre in the region. Positively there has been the previously-cited escalation of the combativeness of the oppressed inside South Africa itself. Clearly, now more than ever, the centre of gravity of the ANC's activities must be in the country, embedded in the day to day struggles of the people. But the conference took as a frank point of departure that the ANC was still far too weak in this respect. Although much had been accomplished, there was still not a sufficiently strong ANC underground presence inside South Africa or a sufficiently large contingent of units of *Umkhonto we*

Sizwe (the ANC's military wing) there!

Needless to say, only the broadest of outlines of the ensuing discussion have been made public. The point was certainly underscored that in this, the year that the ANC has officially designated "the Year of the Cadre" a first priority would be the strengthening of the ANC's political network in order to bring it into even closer contact with all the various focusses of resistance in the country. But, beyond that, the military and political dimensions of underground work within South Africa also would have to become more effectively meshed than in the past. Thus the strengthened political network which is envisioned could serve, in turn, as a springboard for the ANC to move past the stage of "armed propaganda" (although the exemplary sabotage and other actions to which that term refers have had an extremely positive impact on the struggle in recent years) towards the development of a capacity to lend fire-power and paramilitary clout to popular actions in the townships and the workplaces in any confrontation with the South African army and police.

Events since June suggest that the ANC is still a long way from being able to provide enough of this kind of clout to the resistance movement. Government bullets still tend to be met by sticks and stones; defenseless Africans die while white policemen escape reprisal and the rest of the white population remains cocooned in its comfortable suburban life-style. But the conference took more seriously than ever before the complexity and challenge of arming the resistance, of making more effective the confrontation with the *apartheid* state such that the large majority of the white population who continue to support that state either actively or tacitly will begin to comprehend clearly the scope and seriousness of the black challenge. Much depends on the

ability of the ANC to deliver on its promise in this regard.

It is also evident that in these discussions the major emphasis was being placed on the revolutionary role of the working-class; this suggested, in turn, that old debates within the movement regarding the relative primacy of class or national struggles were being overtaken by the imperatives of the ANC's own popularly-based practice inside the country. It is true that an ultra-left faction - the self-styled "Marxist Workers' Tendency" - which had emerged within the ANC in the mid '70s was formally expelled from the movement at the conference but this had never amounted to anything very much more than a small and adventurist handful in any case. True, too, that the question of the precise relationship between the ANC (and SACTU) on the one hand and the extremely vital trade unions active above-ground in South Africa will provide on-going challenges for the resistance movement. But, to repeat, the conference seems not to have ignored such complexities.

There was also considerable soul-searching regarding the question of strategy in the rural areas. It was felt that, as the struggle becomes more firmly grounded in the cities, it is from these cities, rather than from an increasingly shaky rear-guard outside the borders of South Africa, that resistance can be carried back into the Bantustans (via the migrant labour network, for example). The need for more subtle readings of the differing opportunities available in the diverse Bantustans was also stressed; in particular (after some self-criticism of earlier errors in working, however gingerly, with so venal a figure as Chief Buthelezi) the need to make more direct political contact, as an underground, with the people of Kwazulu was stressed.

Discussion of strategy and tactics formed the core of the proceedings, then - even if, subsequent to the conference, media attention

tended to focus on another issue, the inclusion of non-Africans on the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress. In his opening remarks Tambo spoke of this question, reminding the delegates that, while the Morogoro meeting had, in 1969, opened membership in ANC's external mission in this way, it had been felt that the time was not ripe for a move to establish a fully non-racial ANC right up to the leadership level. In part, he noted, the Morogoro compromise reflected the continuing prominence at the time of a cultural nationalist faction within the movement, a faction which was subsequently to break with the ANC (to surface briefly in public in the 1970's under the name ANC - African Nationalist).

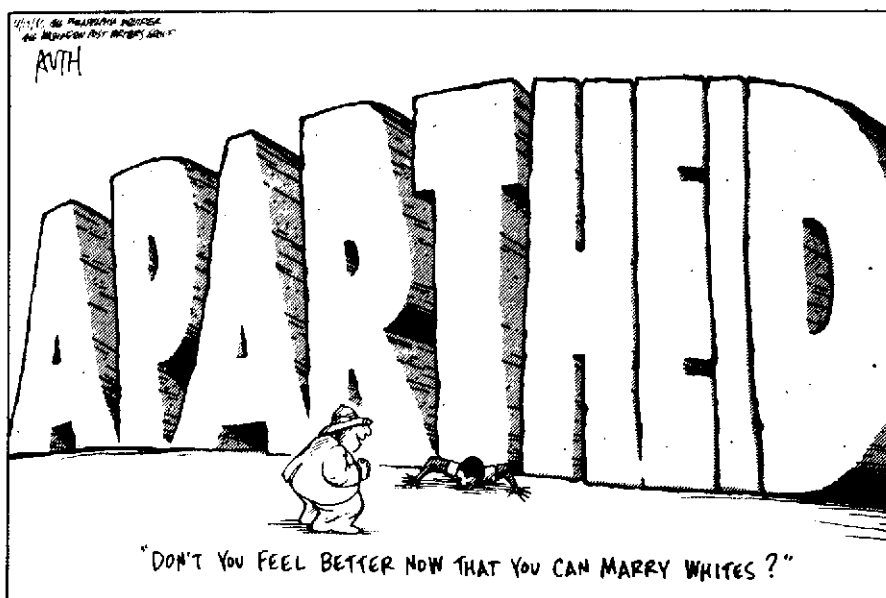
A handful continued to argue at the Zambia conference that the national oppression of Africans remained a sufficiently salient dimension of the South African situation to dictate some kind of racial criterion for leadership eligibility, that many Africans in South Africa might not be ready to accept a change in this respect. But many more - especially some of the

younger cadres mentioned above - argued that it was more necessary than ever, given the pace of events at home, that the ANC begin to exemplify ever more clearly the embryo of the future non-racial South Africa in its own practices. And wasn't it immoral, one black delegate argued emotionally, to have non-Africans ready to die for a cause and not be allowed to sit on the National Executive Committee? Besides, the new policy would constitute a signal to the United Democratic Front, a movement already working self-consciously inside South Africa along lines laid down by the Freedom Charter, that its own non-racial practices are fully in step with ANC intentions. In the event, the vote was overwhelmingly in favour of the change, and five non-Africans - Joe Slovo and Mac Maharaj prominent among them - finished high in the polls for the new 30 person N.E.C.. (Less positive, however, was the fact that only three women made it to the N.E.C.!)

Other issues surfaced too: a searching discussion of cultural policy, for example. And there was some discussion as well of the proper tactics to be followed in the months

ahead regarding possible contacts with international actors, with the South African business community, even, if such should transpire, with the South African government itself; in this area, however, the leadership was given a strong vote of confidence to deal with opportunities as they arise.

As stated, these are momentous times in South Africa, promising and perilous by turns. The ANC is determined not to fail to arrive at the Finland Station as the revolutionary process unfolds. Of course the movement's presence inside South Africa is already a major term in the political equation there, but for the health of the South African revolution it seems imperative that it be on the ground ever more centrally, to lend coherence, direction, clout to that process. In light of this historical imperative, the National Consultative Conference seems, by all accounts, to have been an impressive achievement. Only the coming months and years will tell us how effectively the spirit and insight manifested at this conference have been translated into practice.



Mozambique: Celebrating Ten Years Of Independence

IN TORONTO

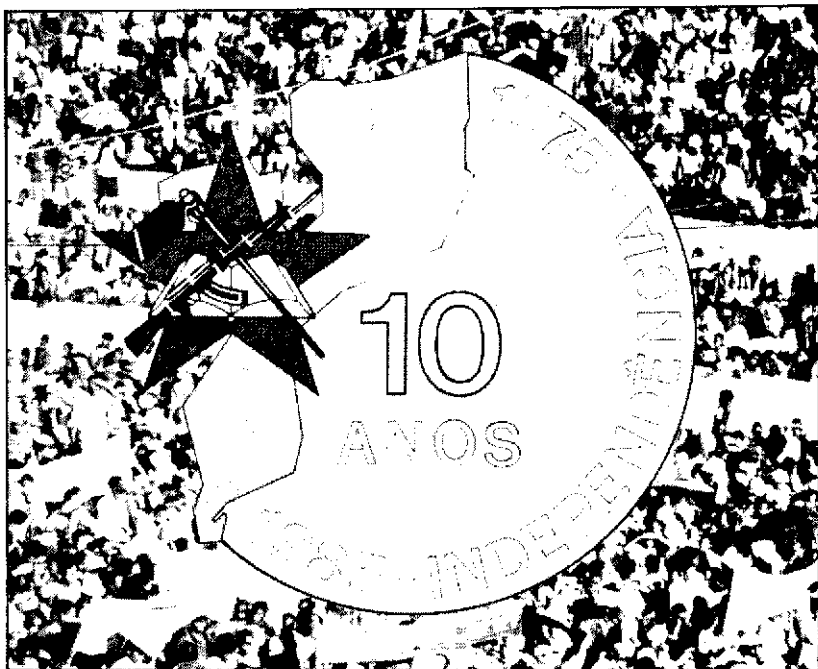
Ten years ago a large group gathered in Toronto for a joyful celebration of Mozambique's independence from Portuguese rule. On June 25, 1985, we were back. The euphoria of the first event had long since evaporated; on this day the subject of celebration was the resilience of the Mozambican people and the survival of their revolution.

Back in 1975 the slogan "*A Luta Continua*" rang through the length and breadth of Mozambique (and far beyond). It captured the understanding that the hardest battle for reconstruction was still to be fought and expressed the dedication to fight that battle. This dedication has undergone a severe test, the cruelty and complexity of which has been detailed in previous issues of *TCLSAC Reports* and *Southern Africa REPORT*.

This June we celebrated the many gains that have been made: in education, health, housing and working conditions. We expressed our deep admiration for the courage of the Mozambican people and their leaders and we reaffirmed our support for their continuing struggle towards peace and development and the full realization of their revolutionary goals.

The event included poetry readings (both Mozambican and original works of solidarity), dance by the ANC Youth Section, music, photo displays, the film *A Luta Continua*, the national anthem and a rousing round of "vivas" and "abaixas".

Solidarity messages were presented by the Mozambique Solidarity Committee (the ad hoc committee which organized the



event), TCLSAC, OXFAM, the Inter Church Coalition on Southern Africa, SACTU Solidarity Committee, the Portuguese Democratic Association, Canadian Action on Nicaragua and the Latin American Working Group.

IN MAPUTO

John Saul returned to Mozambique for a second time this year (see the report of his previous visit in *Southern Africa REPORT*, I, 1), on this occasion as a guest at the Tenth Anniversary Celebrations, and filed the following report:

"Now, in the early minutes of June 25, the flag-raising ceremony proceeds, the vast crowd cheering as Samora Machel, briefly but eloquently, proclaims the country's independence. We're together, representatives of various western sup-

port groups, and we embrace one another enthusiastically. Embrace, too, Mozambicans, strangers and old friends. I greet Janet Mondlane, wife of Eduardo, FRELIMO's first president, assassinated by the Portuguese in 1969, greet Felisberto, a FRELIMO comrade from the days when the movement's headquarters was a dingy office on Nkrumah Street in Dar es Salaam, greet two militants with whom I travelled to the liberated areas of Tete province in 1972. Was that really only three years ago? Enthusiastic guerillas fill the sky with tracer bullets. Too much like the real thing for my taste, but who can blame them? Independence Day."

So I began an account of my participation in Mozambique's first independence day ("Invitation to

mozambique

a Celebration", *This Magazine*, November-December, 1975). And here I was, back in Mozambique, to celebrate the tenth anniversary. *Uma boa festa*, too. On the evening of the 24th, an impressive *gala*, staged by Mozambique's national dance troupe. In the morning hours of the 25th itself President Samora Machel is joined by five other African presidents (from Tanzania, Zambia, Cape Verde, Angola and Botswana) and one Prime Minister (Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe) who are guests for the celebrations in laying wreaths at the Heroes' Monument in Maputo. Then a mammoth, impressively organized, march past of thousands of Mozambicans, from schools, from youth and women's organizations, from various work-places. That afternoon, a reception at the Polana Hotel, the President speaking briefly, members of the Politburo leading the dancing as a giant birthday cake is cut and distributed. Later in the week: the premiere of Mozambique's first feature-length film, *The Time of the Leopards*, a film which evokes the days of armed struggle against the Portuguese, and another premiere, the production of a

play by the noted Angolan writer, Pepetela, by the country's leading theatre group.

Yet, inevitably, there is also a more sombre counterpoint to the week's events. It serves to remind us, even in the full flush of celebration, of just how harsh are the realities of the current moment in Mozambique. Thus independence day in Manhiça district, less than seventy kilometres from the capital, finds the "armed bandits" of the MNR - South Africa's principal contribution to Mozambique's first ten years of independence - attacking a bus and clubbing 27 people to death. A few days later, in much the same locale, a convoy is hit, five busses come under heavy fire, thirty-nine killed, over one hundred wounded. More prosaically, though no less importantly: even as we eat our fill at the Polana we know that, given the depths of the country's economic crisis, few others in Maputo will have enough to eat this week. Beyond survival - although under the circumstances in which Mozambique finds itself this latter is no small accomplishment - there seemed little enough, in all conscience, to celebrate. A decade

which had begun with so much hope had become, by its end, a long and very difficult one.

◇ ◇ ◇
Did you see it?
It passed
near enough
to touch
a whisper of the future.
Red sky in the morning,
oppressor's warning.

A dream,
so beautiful.
You know it when you touch it
here and there
in the cracks of a society
scorched by the past,
charred in the present
by a thousand pyromaniacs.

Is it gone
with the sun?
No, but it's a cold night
and we must build a fire of our
own:
to drive away the wild animals,
to warm the people.

◇ ◇ ◇



Maringué, near the Sierra da Gorongosa, destroyed twice by MNR

In fact the efforts to "build a fire of our own", to reignite the Mozambican revolution, which were itemized in the previous issue of *Southern Africa REPORT* (June, 1985) do continue; such efforts are being mounted by FRELIMO on both the international and the domestic fronts. As I noted in that earlier article - and had confirmed for me during my most recent visit - FRELIMO sees the domestic front as being primary, seeking to regroup economically, politically and militarily. And with the beginnings of success. Thus the most recent reports from Mozambique (September) bring news of a particularly dramatic victory in the field, the smashing, with help from Zimbabwean forces, of the substantial central base of the MNR, known as

"Casa Banana", in the Gorongosa mountains of Sofala Province.

But the diplomatic initiatives are also continuing in an attempt, by that route too, to lift some of the weight of South African aggression from Mozambique's shoulders. A second article in the June issue of *Southern Africa REPORT* spoke of FRELIMO'S efforts to exploit a possible division "both in South Africa and in the international capitalist world ... between one group of policy-makers who think they can now ensnare a severely weakened FRELIMO in the toils of neo-colonialism and another group who prefer to pursue the overthrow of the present government by force". If able to use judicious concession to strengthen the case of the former group, Mozambique might at least hope to survive in order to continue the fight for its progressive development strategy - albeit on a terrain only slightly more promising than that of imperialist aggression, that of neo-colonial penetration.

Dramatic evidence of the existence of just such a split in the imperial camp surfaced soon after that *Southern Africa REPORT* article appeared. Thus, even as right-wing Senator Jesse Helms worked in the Senate to severely qualify proposed American aid to "Marxist" Mozambique, no less a figure than Melvin Laird, a former U.S. Secretary of Defense, penned an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* (June 17, 1985) calling for a much more active American "opening to Mozambique", a "balanced relationship that includes diplomatic contacts, private investment, trade, economic and humanitarian assistance and a modest military training and assistance program". As Laird elaborated the point:

"I recognize there are those who argue that the United States should have nothing to do with a self-styled Marxist state. I disagree. The only way we can advance U.S. strategic goals in the Third World is if we compete in relevant ways - on



Anti-aircraft gun at Casa Banana

Kok Nam/Tempo

the ground, through our programs, our presence, our diplomacy. The United States should be ready to respond constructively to openings that advance our interests whenever they occur."

Just where the Reagan administration actually stands with respect to this policy divide over imperial strategy towards Mozambique is less clear. But when President Machel met with Ronald Reagan in Washington in late September it was the delicate game of attempt-

ing to tilt the American government in the direction of Laird's "liberal-imperialist" option that he came to play. He did bring with him strong additional evidence (some of it captured at Casa Banana) of South Africa's continuing complicity with the MNR - despite the signing of the Nkomati Accord in March 1984, and Mozambique's subsequent compliance with the Accord's main terms. (Indeed such evidence soon forced South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha to admit publicly that his government had built an air-strip for the MNR and had made supply drops from planes and had taken MNR officials in and out of Mozambique by submarine, though Botha termed these merely "technical violations of the Accord"!)

But just what kind of response Machel could expect to have from the U.S. government - which many suspect, in any case, of having its own links with the MNR - is just one of the many questions left unanswered as Mozambique's second independence decade begins.



President Samora Machel and Zimbabwean Brigadier Agnew Kambewa, commander of the special troops that captured Casa Banana

Kok Nam/Tempo

CUSO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

In April of this year CUSO - East, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) Region - organized a unique and timely regional meeting in Lusaka, Zambia. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together CUSO staff and workers in the region - Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique - with CUSO Canada and representatives of the Canadian Southern Africa solidarity network - including representatives of church, labour, and anti-racist groups. The workshop was also attended by representatives of the ANC, SWAPO and SACTU.

The main agenda items were:

- An evaluation of Southern Africa solidarity work in Canada; clarification of our forces today and options and strategies for the '80s.
- An evaluation of CUSO's liberation support programme and projects, leading to new directions for future CUSO programming.

The workshop was more than merely another meeting. The delegates from Canada were divided into 3 teams as "attachments" to the ANC, SWAPO and SACTU - a unique opportunity to meet and discuss and build stronger ties with the liberation movements and SACTU.

The discussions began in Ottawa in March with a three-day meeting. This included a meeting on the front-line states with Ferdinand Ruhinda, the Tanzanian High Commissioner, a briefing with External Affairs, and a session with the Latin American Working Group (LAWG) on the lessons and experiences of the Latin American solidarity network.

In Lusaka, reports updated us about developments in the front-line states and the impact of South Africa in the region - once again underscoring the necessity of a regional perspective in our work in Canada.

Four smaller working groups developed scenarios for action in Canada. Possible campaigns such as: a Krugerrand boycott, an ed-



Canadian delegates visit the ANC farm, north of Lusaka

Prabha Khosla

ucation and material aid project on women in South Africa and Namibia, a political prisoners support fund, a youth exchange and a health care linkage programme.

These ideas were discussed in the context of regional variations, resources and politics. Meeting people from across Canada reinforced what we already knew - that most groups across Canada are volunteer based, with a lack of money and resources; most groups do not have access to consistent and current information about or from the region; but most definitely have a lot of commitment to the struggle!

The workshop was very successful, and follow-up meetings in Canada are addressing issues and themes from Lusaka. Many thanks to CUSO!

AND IN CANADA ...

The follow-up conference was organized in Ottawa September 12th to 15th. Members of solidarity groups, churches, unions and NGO's met to share resources, ideas and information and to discuss concrete plans of action.

An excellent line-up of resource people covered a range of topics from the *Free South Africa Movement* in the United States (Jean Sindab - Washington Office on

Africa) to the liquor boycott in Newfoundland (Lee Seymour - *Oxfam Newfoundland*). Other speakers were Linda Freeman (Carleton University), Yusuf Saloojee (ANC) and Dan O'Meara.

A central theme which emerged was the need to make the transition in our work from a reactive, anti-apartheid focus to a pro-active pro-liberation one. Education and long term planning and coordination were seen as key to this process.

Concrete proposals which emerged were the production of a communication bulletin for groups across Canada, an up-to-date, basic educational kit on South Africa, a package on the ANC and the Freedom Charter and assistance to the ANC in their fundraising campaign. March 21st and August 9th were chosen as national days of action for 1986.

The intense three days were characterized by a great deal of information, exchange and unity. We felt we were in a strong position, created by the urgency and drama of events inside South Africa, to seize the initiative in our educational, lobbying and solidarity work. CUSO should be commended for organizing the event and providing the forum for such empowering communication.

Editorial

(continued from page 3)

they can merely serve as one factor in facilitating the victory of those who must, nonetheless, fight for their freedom. Nor need we pretend to ourselves that sanctions will ever be implemented by western governments and corporations to the extent that we might hope; the lead article on Canadian policy which follows should be enough to induce some necessary humility on that score!

Nonetheless, even the effort to implement sanctions can make a difference, both here in Canada and in South Africa. One advantage of political work in this area - linked to sanctions, divestment, trade boycotts and the like - is that we need not wait on Mulroney, Clark & Co., to act in order to articulate a Canadian voice on this issue. We can make foreign policy ourselves, directly, becoming part of the struggle for a free South Africa wherever we are: vis-à-vis our workplaces, our pension funds, our universities,

our municipal governments. In this way we really can hope to have a visible impact for our efforts - even as we use the opportunity provided by such campaigns to mobilize and educate a wider constituency in Canada about the realities of the South African situation. Nor need we doubt that our voice will be heard in South Africa by those who need our support and will take strength from it. It is, as stated earlier, a matter of demonstrating which side one is on.

Divestment

(continued from page 9)

come the issue. The argument for full divestment was strongly put by Johnson, Cathy Laurier, Fawn Curry and others. They were supported in statements to the Governing Council by representatives of the University of Toronto Faculty Association, the Arts and Science Students Union, the Students' Administrative Council, the Anti-Apartheid Coalition, and the Uni-

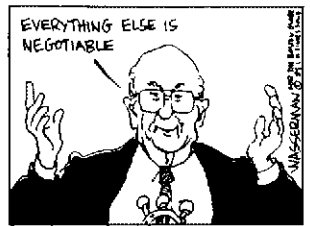
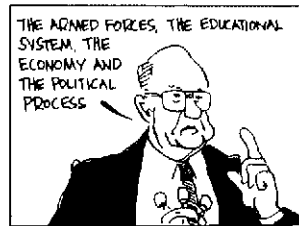
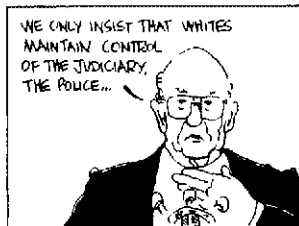
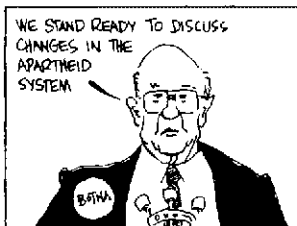
versity of Toronto Divestment Committee. (The University of Toronto Staff Association had also declared its support for full divestment.) Connell's answers to pointed questions from divestment supporters revealed how uncertain it was that conditions required to trigger divestment would ever be ascertained.

After the vote UTDC members made it clear that the Divestment Committee does not accept the George Connell cop-out as the

last word on the issue. It will keep working to enlarge support for full and honest divestment.

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Southern Africa REPORT, through this column, will continue to carry news of divestment campaigns across Canada. We invite submissions from our readers on campaigns at universities, municipalities, unions, etc.



EVEN THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT

Ontario Minister of Tourism and Recreation, John Eakins, has called for provincial governments to review the appropriateness of the sponsors of athletes and athletic events. The Minister's statement took the form of an amendment to a resolution on corporate sponsorship presented by Alberta at the Federal Provincial Meeting of Ministers of Sports and Recreation in Calgary. Ontario's amendment, after discussion, was carried unanimously.

"I welcome and encourage corporate sponsorship, but I believe we must determine the viability and impact of potential sponsors. For example, companies with interests in South Africa may be considered inappropriate as sponsors of athletic events," the minister said. The amendment requires that provincial governments, in consultation with the federal government, will consider guidelines for reviewing potential sponsors.

In Ontario, the minister will be asking the provincial sport governing bodies to provide the ministry with input and recommendations concerning the review.

(From *Background*, 85/38, publication of the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, September 1985.)

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