

third world

*The Church
of the Poor*

Bimonthly • Number 5 • December-86/January-87



SOUTHERN AFRICA AFTER MACHEL

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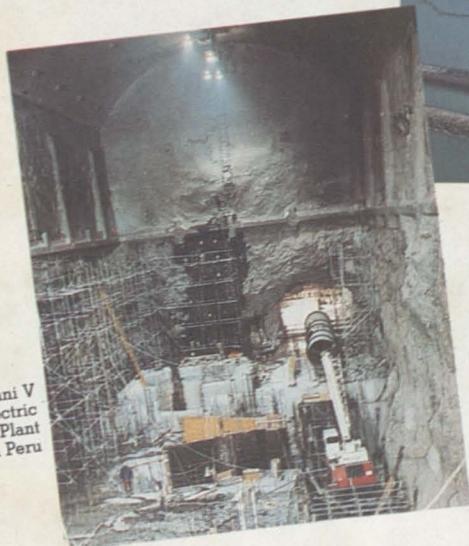
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To the Reader

Farewell Aquino Bragança



Aquino Bragança - 1928-1986

We at "third world" magazine were doubly saddened by the plane crash that killed Mozambique President Samora Machel because

it also caused the death of one of our earliest contributors, Aquino de Bragança. Aquino, a member of our editorial staff, was among the 34 casualties in the unexplained accident which occurred October 19 near the South African town of Komatipoort as the presidential aircraft attempted to land in the Mozambique capital of Maputo.

Aquino was one of the original proponents of the concept of "third world" magazine - a publication written in the Third World for the Third World. He was a steady contributor from the beginning when we launched our Portuguese edition over ten years ago.

Born in what was then the Portuguese colony of Goa, India, Aquino eventually adopted Mozambique as his home and became one of the country's most creative intellectuals. He contributed through his writings to the battle against Portuguese

colonialism, and after Mozambican independence in 1975, Aquino founded the Center for African Studies at the

University of Maputo. The Center produced several important socio-economic studies of the South African apartheid regime and the rest of southern Africa.

His impassioned criticism of apartheid made him a natural target for Afrikaner radicals. In 1982, a letter-bomb addressed to him exploded and killed his secretary, South African journalist Ruth First, an anti-racist militant who was living in exile in Mozambique with her husband Joe Slovo, a leader of the African National Congress. Though he escaped unscathed on that occasion, the death of his longtime friend and co-worker shook Aquino deeply.

This time, however, it appears that the South African racists have finally achieved their goal. But while Aquino is no longer with us, we will remember him for his contributions and continue the struggle to which he dedicated his life.

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third world contains information on and analyses of the conditions and aspirations of emerging nations, with the aim of consolidating a New International Information Order

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Publisher: Tricontinental Editora Ltda., Calçada do Combro 10, 1st floor, 1200 Lisbon, Portugal

Letters to: Rua da Glória 122 gr 105, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil, CEP 20241, Phone (021) 242-1957, Telex (021) 33054 CTMB-BR - Printed by: Gráfica Europam Ltda., 2726 Mem Martins (CODEX), Portugal - Circulation: 2,000 copies Registered under number 789/82

• Portuguese Editions

Angola, Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique and Portugal

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Propriety of: Tricontinental Editora, Ltda. Administrative Headquarters: Calçada do Combro, 10, 1st floor, 1200, Lisbon, Portugal; Phones: 32 06 50/32 07 51; News Desk & Advertising: Rua das Salgadeiras, 36, 2nd floor, E, 1200, Lisbon, Portugal, Phones 36 38 04/37 27 15; Telex: 42720 CTM TEP; Printed by: Gráfica Europam, Ltda. 2726 Mem Martins (CODEX). Circulation: 21,000 copies. Registered under number 789/82.

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Printed by: Ebano Gráfica e Editora Ltda. - Rua Gal. Bruce 799, Phone 580-7171.

• Spanish Editions

La Plata River, South Cone

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Subscriptions: Berta Arrufe; Distribution: Gustavo Leyva; Mailing Address: Apartado Postal 20572, 01000, México, D.F. Printed by: Litográfica Cultural, Isabel la Católica 922, México, D.F. Editorial Periodistas del Tercer Mundo, California 98A, Colonia Parque San Andrés, Coayacán, Phone 689-17-40, 04040 México, D.F.

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Cover: Abasté Propaganda

Our readers are invited to write to our magazine, expressing their opinions and criticism. Letters on specific themes will be welcome, provided they are of general interest to *Third World* readers. Such material may be reproduced also in our Spanish and Portuguese editions. Please address your correspondence to *third world* magazine, Rua da Glória 122, gr 105, Rio de Janeiro 20241, Brazil.

TO THE EDITORS:

It was a pleasure to receive a copy of the English edition of *third world* magazine here at the the Finnish Peace Research Institute.

I think it is very important for you to have an English edition that will call the attention of Anglo-American, European and Scandinavian peoples to Third World problems.

By all means go on stressing Third World viewpoints on world issues while keeping your quality high, both politically, culturally and morally.

Tuomo Melasuo - Tampere Peace Research Institute, Finland.

ASIAN COVERAGE

I have read your first issue of *third world* magazine (March 1986) and wish to offer the following comments.

I find it more readable than other magazines that tend to be overly academic. Your political stance is also more acceptable and relevant to the Third World. However, your coverage of Asia



is very superficial and limited in scope, while Africa gets a disproportionate space. Your sections on Culture, Economy, Communications, etc., are very interesting and useful.

Neville Jayaweera – World Association for Christian Communications, England.

MUSICAL EXCHANGE

I would like to correspond with English-speaking people who can exchange musical material from Africa, the Caribbean, etc., for pieces of Brazilian music. My interest is not commercial. I simply like to research other countries' music, and I thought it would be of help to appeal to other readers of your magazine.

Gildo Simões – Rua C nº 211, Atalaia, Aracaju, Sergipe, Brazil.

A ZAIREAN ACCUSES

Mobutu has tried to convert Zaire into a reign of silence, much in the same manner as the Belgian colonial rulers. The latter never succeeded. From beginning to end, the colonial regime had to cope with our people's stubborn resistance, including King Msiri's expeditions against the Belgian invader, the Bapende insurrection, the Bate-tela rebellion, and politico-religious opposition (*kimbanquism, kaiawalism, mpadism*, etc.), as well as the mutinies of January 4, 1959, in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa).

This strife led to the recognition of the indigenous political parties by the colonial power. Outstanding among these parties was the National Congolese

Movement (MNC) led by Patrice Lumumba, which galvanized the people's struggle for independence throughout the country.

The hard-won independence which came on June 30, 1960, was lost only five months later, on January 17, 1961, when Patrice Lumumba, then Prime Minister in the first government of an independent Congo (Zaire), was assassinated by Mobutu under orders of his CIA bosses, in an act of abject complicity which his people will never forgive.

Mobutu has thus become an irreconcilable enemy of the Congolese, now the Zairean nation. And to reduce it to silence, Mobutu, who staged his second coup d'état on November 24, 1965, against the then-President Joseph Kasavubu, proclaimed himself as the indisputable lord of the Zairean people.

Yet, despite his repressive practices and his intense reactionary propaganda, Mobutu has not succeeded in morally disarming the Zairean people. Ever since Lumumba's assassination, our people has not ceased to affirm its obstinate intent to recover its independence and dignity.

Only the western powers' decisive intervention managed to stifle the 1963-65 revolutionary struggle known by its Mutelist rebellion. Only through Western intervention in the two Shaba wars of 1977 and 1978 did the government recover the country's south then controlled by the Congolese National Liberation Front (FLNC). It was also through Western intervention that the sub-region of Tangan-

yika, in southeast Zaire, controlled by the People's Revolution Party (PRP), was finally recovered in the two battles of Moba.

The world never heard of the grim battles of early 1981 in Uvira, in the Kivu area, between pro-Mobutu forces and the Mwamko guerrilla fighters. But Mobutu has been unable to silence the Kinshasa urban guerrilla bombings in 1983 and 1984, responsibility for which has been claimed by the People's Revolutionary Front (FPR), nor the demonstrations staged by militants of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS).

Gregório Igulu Maliba, Matadi, Zaire

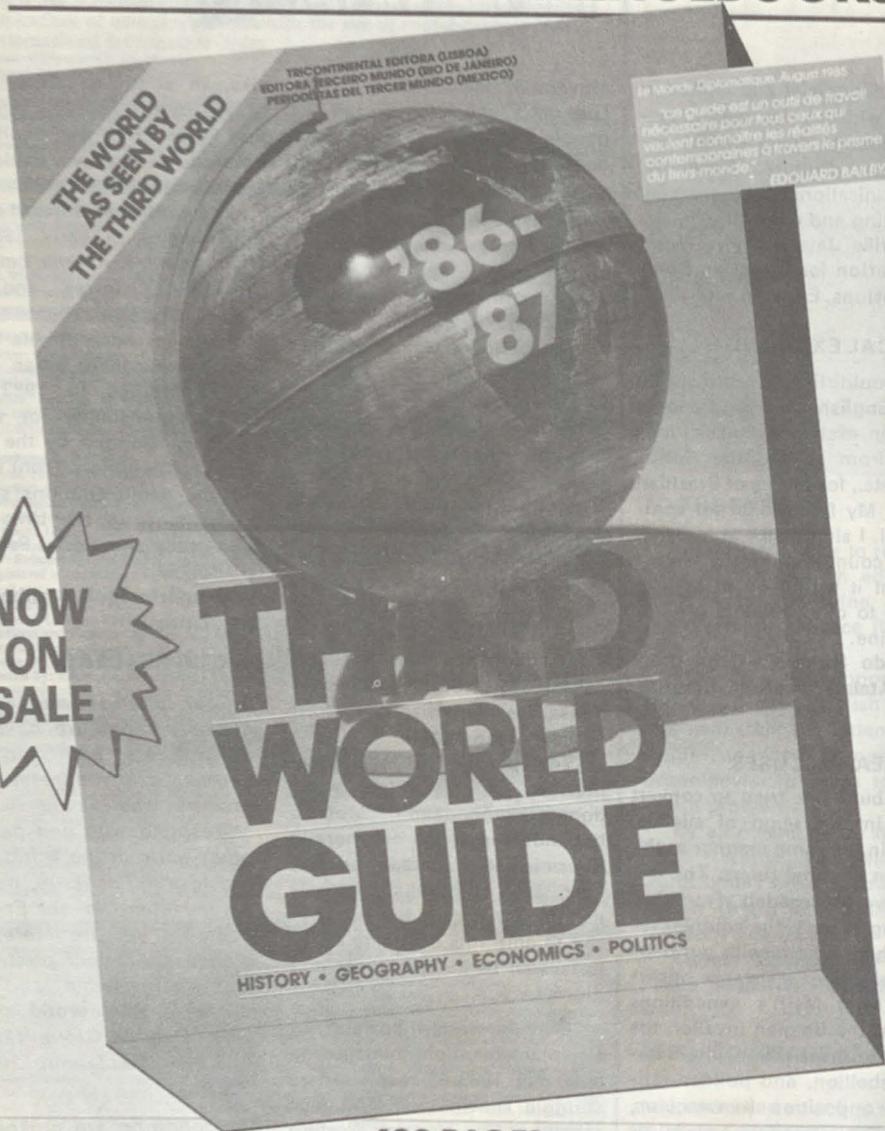
TO OUR READERS:

*In our Spanish and Portuguese editions we have for many years published the names and addresses of readers who would like to correspond with pen pals in other parts of the world. Beginning with this issue, we will do the same in our English edition. If you are interested, please send your printed or typewritten name and address to **third world magazine, Rua da Glória 122, gr 105, Rio de Janeiro 20241, Brazil.***

The following are prospective pen pals:

Martin Alberto
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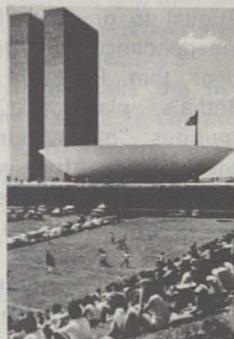
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SOUTH AFRICA

Apartheid's New Trick

□ When the Legislative Assembly of the KwaNdebele bantustan rejected Pretoria's proposal last August to grant it "formal independence", it became clear that President P.W. Botha's plan to create spurious "black countries" within South Africa was on its death bed. To date, only four bantustans have been declared independent" under the 1971 Bantu Homelands Constitution Act. None of the four - Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana - has received international recognition, not even from South Africa's closest allies.

The defeat of Botha's scheme was made more significant by the July decision of the South African government to abolish the pass law. The law restricted the movement of black citizens outside areas assigned to them by the white minority and in practice prevented black workers from moving from the countryside into cities in search of employment.

The rollback of the pass requirement, one of the most hateful instruments of racial segregation in the country, was announced by

Botha as a concession. In fact it amounted to a tacit recognition of the government's inability to control the continued inflow of impoverished Africans from the bantustans into urban areas. Over the past ten years, none of the four independent bantustans have been able to develop the infrastructure required for the survival of their populations. Conceived in the 1960s, the bantustan scheme was designed to force blacks to live in isolated areas, where inferior farmland prevented the local population from supporting itself. The resulting migration ensured urban industry a permanent supply of cheap manpower. Blacks holding jobs in metropolitan areas were regarded as "foreigners" and thus prevented from taking up residence and bringing their families from the countryside.

The system, however, never worked. Overpopulation in the bantustans made rural-urban migration a matter of survival, and the government could not impede the emergence of huge black shantytowns that began to sprout on the periphery of major cities. Thousands of workers and clandestine immigrants converged on these slums, the most notorious of which are Soweto, near Johannesburg, and Crossroads, in Capetown.

Repression proved impotent against the wave of black workers flowing into white cities, but it provoked the black population and was a key factor leading to the domestic state of war that emerged in August 1984.

In 1980, the Presidential Council - the country's most powerful executive body, - estimated that one-third of the country's 24 million blacks were living on the periphery of urban centers. The council's updated projections show that nearly 40 percent of blacks now live in shantytowns and that by the year 2000 their numbers will grow to include half of the African population. Estimates made by some academic institutions have gone even further, predicting that between 60% and 75% of African blacks will be concentrated in urban areas by the turn of the century.

In reaction to this bleak scenario, the Botha government has attempted to adapt the rural bantustan scheme to an urban environment, in the form of proposed "city-states." The idea, officially aired for the first time in August at a congress held in Durban by the ruling National Party, is to grant partial self-government to shantytowns such as Soweto and Crossroads.

The opposition newspaper the *Weekly Mail* reported

Tricontinental Panorama

that the government plans to institutionalize three other huge, Soweto-type slums near Johannesburg, with a combined population easily reaching five million. The newspaper added that with the addition of three new shantytowns that are expected to emerge by the year 2000, the total number of such communities will reach eight or ten, all of which would be transformed into city-states by the apartheid regime. According to the plan, each city-state is to have its own government and will appoint representatives to a State Council in which black delegates will sit side by side with white delegates from the urban areas inhabited by European descendants. These delegates will make "decisions in their common interest on a con-

sensus basis," as Botha put it at the Durban congress.

Although this new twist on the bantustan idea is still being discussed within the National Party, the government has already announced a plan to create a giant black community north of Johannesburg. The new community, with a projected population of 250,000, already has a name - Norweto (for Northwest Township).

However, even government experts admit that Norweto will not be able to withstand the enormous demographic pressure of blacks in the area: its population is expected to quickly climb to 1.5 million and they have already proposed the creation of another giant district nearby.

The city-state proposal

does not alter the principle of white tutelage of blacks which is at the basis of apartheid. Although little is known about the future "independent" shantytown administrations, Botha has already made it clear that delegates from city-states will not have control of the State Councils, and they will not have veto power over government decisions. The *Weekly Mail* calls the new apartheid tactic "a compromise with irreversible demographic trends." Other anti-racist leaders perceive the city-state concept as a new version of "separate development," a theory previously applied to the rural bantustans. While enjoying local autonomy, black urban communities would continue to be subject to the white government at the national level.

Just as bantustan autonomy proved impossible because the homelands lacked a tax base that would allow for financial independence, the Gordian knot of the city-states will probably be the low income levels of their populations. Rather than resulting in an improved position for urban blacks, the plan will probably only produce a shorter distance geographically between prosperous white communities and a growing number of black shantytowns. ●



Soweto: an urban bantustan?

SIERRA LEONE

Shattering the Sanctions

In an attempt to circumvent international trade sanctions against South Africa, a South African firm plans to use a name incorporated in West Germany to export and import goods through the Republic of Sierra Leone. Evidence of this "laundering" of trade was first brought to light in late September by *For di People*, a newspaper published in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. The newspaper reported that the LIAT corporation plans to expand its operations in Sierra Leone into foreign trade and exchange, having already taken control of such key sectors of the country's economy as urban transportation, the diamond industry, civil construction and agriculture.

Although LIAT is legally registered as a corporation in Frankfurt, West Germany, its production headquarters are in the South African bantustan of Bophuthatswana, where it has a subsidiary named Bophuthatswana Mankelsuertretung, whose directors are mostly white South Africans and Israeli citizens who travel with British passports. *For di*

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People published several memos in which officials of the Sierra Leone subsidiary refer to the South African branch of LIAT as the "parent company."

LIAT has rapidly expanded its operations in Sierra Leone with the help of President Joseph Momoh, who seems intent on reducing the influence of Lebanese businessmen who



Sierra Leone President Momoh

for years have controlled the country's economy. Among them is Sierra Leone's leading entrepreneur Jamil Said Mohammed, who was considered to be the power-behind-the-throne during the administration of former President Siaka Stevens. While trying to free himself of Jamil's influence, Momoh seems to have fallen into the hands of LIAT's South Africans and Israelis. Changing course would be difficult now that the strong

Lebanese bourgeoisie in Sierra Leone has begun to transfer its investments to other African countries.

Freetown political activists are beginning to organize a campaign against LIAT. A coalition of anti-racist groups known as Pan African Union (PANAFU) is mounting an effort to oppose the eventual transformation of Sierra Leone into a South African entrepot designed to circumvent international sanctions against the racist regime. One of PANAFU's major complaints is the intention of LIAT and Lebanese millionaire M.K. Suma to establish an organization called the FOREX Trading Company, which would assume virtual control of Sierra Leone's imports and put an end to the prosperous, Lebanese-controlled currency black market. In turn, the government would give FOREX control of the duty-free shops in the country's major airports, in addition to granting it unlimited rights to import and export and retain the resulting dollar revenues, which would remain tax-exempt for a period of five years. The government of Sierra Leone would own 25 percent of FOREX.

Control over imports and exports would allow LIAT to import South African

Frank Kposowa

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products for repackaging, renaming and reexporting as Sierra Leone goods. Violation of international sanctions by LIAT and FOREX would be most evident in the case of diamonds, since the South African firm De Beers controls a significant share of LIAT stock and has kept a covetous eye on Jamil's control of the illegal trade in precious stones. Momoh has tried to silence internal and external protest against his ties with LIAT by making concessions to Arab countries and even the PLO, but his diplomatic gambit was quickly countered by the pro-South African lobby in Freetown. The president seems to be increasingly tangled in his own net.

FOREIGN DEBT

Huge Capital Drain in Latin America

□ In servicing their foreign debt, Latin American countries have been drained of a total of about US\$ 100 billion in capital over the last four years, according to a report recently released by the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB). However, the region is no closer to paying-off the principal, which is currently estimated at US\$ 370 million.

Ironically entitled "Eco-

nomics and Social Progress in Latin America," the report notes that the region's capital drain is greater still if non-registered transfers of capital are taken into consideration.

The IDB maintains that countries have generally paid the interest on their debt by drawing from resources acquired through favorable trade balances generated by drastic reductions in imports. This led to a reduction in the export of capital goods by industrialized countries, which caused the loss of millions of jobs in those nations.

In order to reverse this process, the document suggests a recipe that would include increases in exports, the receipt of a net positive balance of external financing, and a strategy to take advantage of lower interest rates. It pointed out that although the region's eco-

nomies grew at a rate of 3.9 percent between 1980 and 1985, the expansion was not sufficient to compensate for the population increase over the same period. As a result, the Latin American per capita Gross National Product (GNP) fell by about eight percent.

Nevertheless, indicators showed evidence of an economic recovery in 1985, due primarily to the rapid rate of growth registered in Brazil. The largest country in Latin America, Brazil contributed 82 percent of the regional increase last year.

Latin American political leaders have been attempting to coax creditor nations into an agreement that would make the foreign debt more manageable. However, according to one expert, Latin America is "reaching the limit" of its patience in face of the intransigence shown by Western leaders.



MALVINAS

Tensions Rise again in South Atlantic

□ The British decision to impose a 150-mile fishing limit around the Malvinas Islands did more than stir the ire of Argentina and its Latin neighbors. It also torpedoed a Brazilian project designed to create a South Atlantic Peace Zone, according to Latin American diplomats in Washington.

The Brazilian proposal, which was co-sponsored by 12 African and Latin American nations, won the support of the United Nations General Assembly by a vote of 124-1 just two days prior to the British announcement

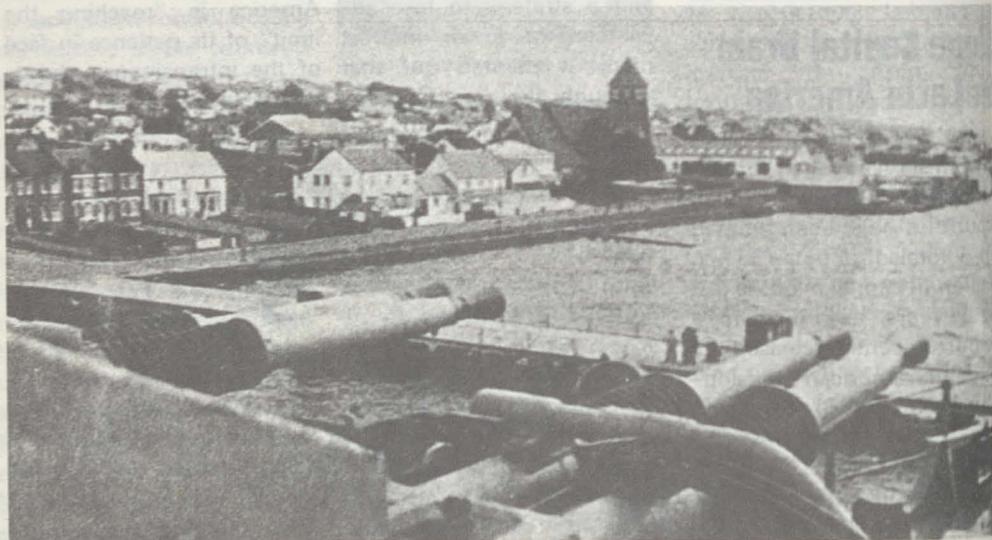
regarding the Malvinas. The sole vote against the resolution was registered by the United States, although seven European countries and Japan abstained.

Britain voted in favor of the resolution, and it denied that the new policy in the Malvinas represents a reversal in its position. The British Foreign Ministry maintained that it is a "pure coincidence" that its announcement on the fishing limit came just days after the U.N. vote. However, diplomats from Uruguay and Argentina claimed that the British move is linked to a desire by Western powers, led by the U.S., to block any international efforts that would impinge on their freedom to act militarily around the globe.

The U.N. resolution re-

quests that powers outside the region respect the South Atlantic as a peace zone and that they cooperate with a plan to reduce and eventually eliminate foreign military presence in the region.

The U.S. opposed the resolution as an attempt to limit the "the right to free navigation" in the region. It also objected to the section requesting that nations from outside the region desist from "acts against the sovereignty and territorial integrity" of the nations in the area. The pretext for this objection was the presence of Cuban troops in Angola. On the other hand, the U.S. failed to mention its support for UNITA, the rebel force which is attempting to overthrow the Angolan government.



The Malvinas: can a fishing limit destroy a peace proposal?

Tricontinental Panorama

U.S.

Personal Fortunes Overtake GNP

□ After six years of Reaganomics, the U.S. economy is beginning to show the negative effects of economic liberalism. A new type of society — one with increasingly skewed class difference — has begun to emerge thanks to the policies of the current Republican administration. While the country's GNP continued to grow at 2.7 percent in 1985, the personal fortunes of the 400 richest North Americans expanded by more than 20 percent. The poverty rate increased from 11.7 percent in 1979 to 14.4 percent in 1984, while economic concentration reached a level unheard of in U.S. history: one percent of all North Americans now control 60 percent of the stock of the country's leading corporations.

These data were made public following a debate in the U.S. media over this year's list of the 400 largest U.S. fortunes, published annually by *Forbes* magazine. Besides an unprecedented acceleration in the rate of economic concentration, the current list of the top U.S. millionaires shows that

the largest fortunes often do not result from productive activities. No less than 14 of the 51 newcomers to the list merely inherited existing fortunes.

Another trend reflected in the *Forbes* list is the astronomical increase in profits "earned" by financial speculators through mergers of large companies (see *third world*, Oct./Nov. 1986). One of the biggest winners was John Kluge, whose personal fortune, estimated at US\$ 300 million two years ago,

jumped to US\$ 3.9 billion thanks to financial transactions made possible by bank loans which he procured for stock speculation.

Several U.S. economic analysts claim that Ronald Reagan's economic liberalism has changed the nature of capitalism as practiced in the world's wealthiest nation. Rather than benefitting U.S. society as a whole, economic concentration in megacompanies has brought wealth to only a few speculators.



The Chicago skyline: the sky's the limit for the wealthy few

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Machel's Legacy

The death of Mozambican President Samora Machel brought to light a weak point in the armor of the apartheid regime, and one that still remains to be fully explored. In the weeks prior to his death, Machel had embarked on a diplomatic and military offensive aimed at neutralizing Malawi's support for the South African-backed terrorist group, the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR). Machel's efforts provoked a sense of uneasiness among the South African military, which was beginning to feel the effects of the political and economic isolation of its old ally, Malawi President Hastings Banda.

Unable to confront South Africa directly, Machel decided to attack from the rear — taking advantage of the fact that Malawi is landlocked and depends on supply routes running through Mozambique and Tanzania, two of the Front Line states who have united to oppose apartheid. In one sense, the Banda dictatorship finds itself in the same predicament as Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana and Zambia — landlocked countries who rely on transportation routes through South Africa. In giving the apartheid regime a taste of its own medicine, Machel became a key leader among the Front Line states — and therefore the principal target of the apartheid regime in an intense psychological war.

South Africa's response came also in the

form of intensified military preparations which led officials in most southern African capitals to believe that war was imminent.

The airplane crash that killed Machel did not fundamentally alter this picture, but it added new factors to an already complicated situation. The death of a charismatic leader like Machel did not bring about the dismantling of FRELIMO as the apartheid strategists had hoped. Mass mourning in Mozambique and widespread suspicions of South African interference in the airplane crash helped to mend internal divisions and provided the necessary cohesion for the unanimous appointment of Joaquim Chissano as the new president.

Instead of a feeling of powerlessness, what resulted from Machel's death was a renewed willingness to resist on the part of all segments of the population, including those outside of FRELIMO, like the church and Indian communities which had in the past clashed with the president. The FRELIMO came out of the episode with renewed strength and was able to contain scattered outbursts of popular hatred which might have given South Africa the pretext it needed to launch attacks on Mozambique. With Chissano, Mozambican leadership will be more collective and less based on a strong personality than it was under Machel. But all indications are that there will be no

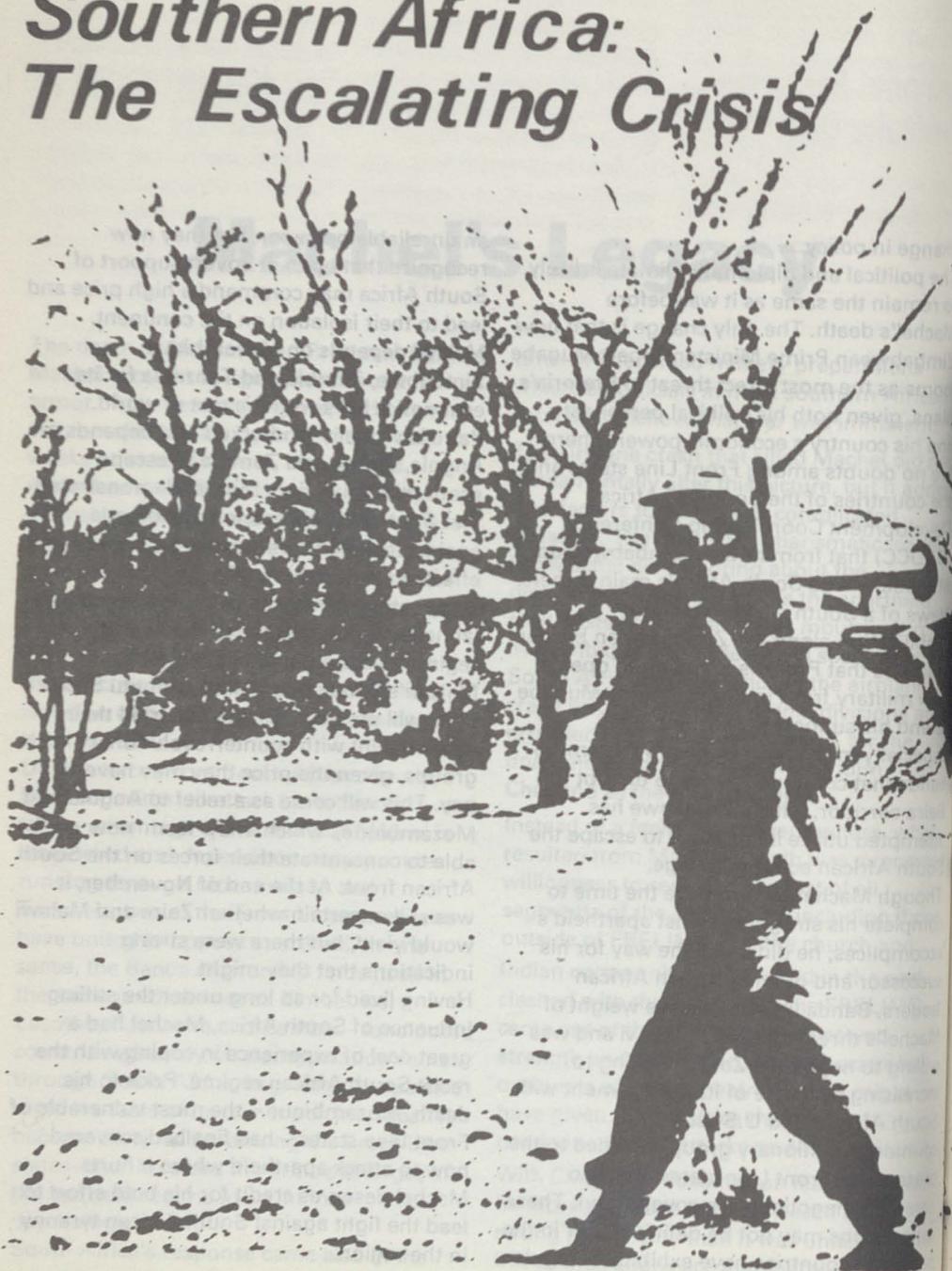
change in policy.

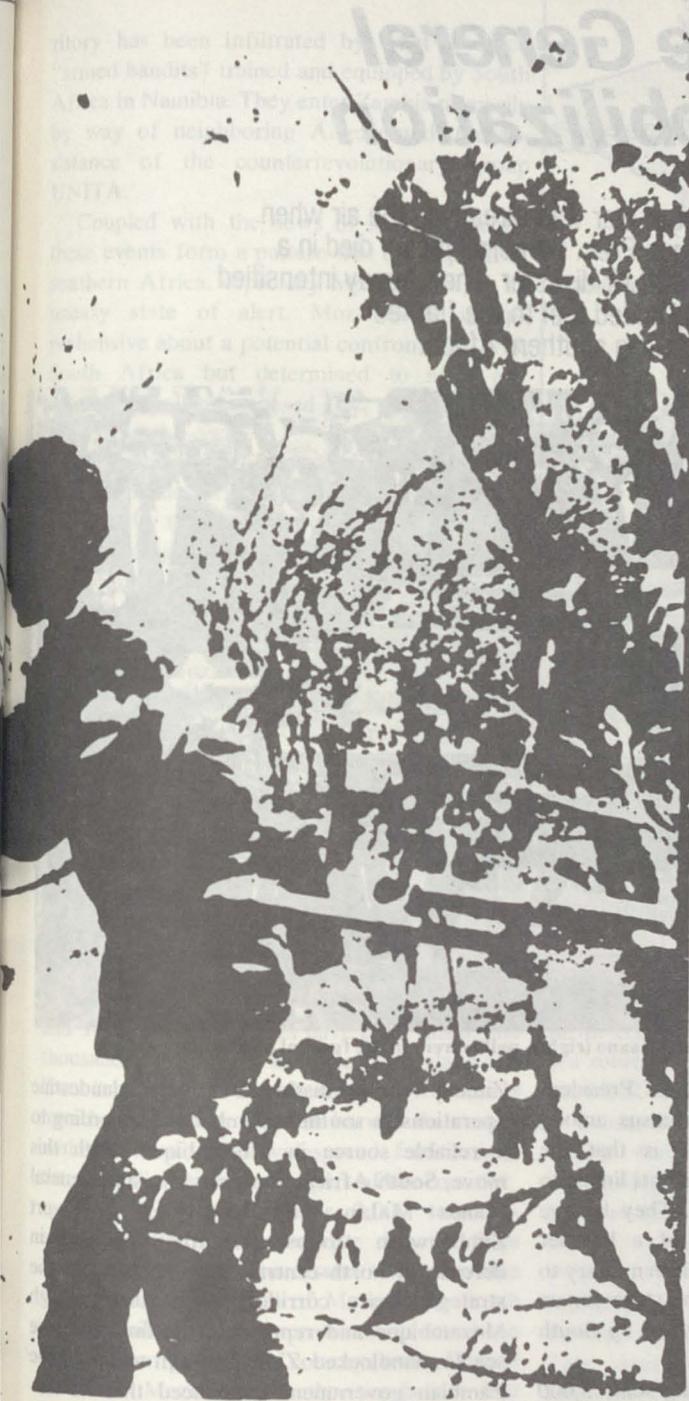
The political and diplomatic climate is likely to remain the same as it was before Machel's death. The only change is that now Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe looms as the most direct threat to Pretoria's plans, given both his political personality and his country's economic power. There are no doubts among Front Line states and the countries of the Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) that from now on Zimbabwe and Mugabe will be South Africa's main targets. News of a South African military mobilization along the Zimbabwean border indicates that Pretoria is willing to open a new military front in order to force Mugabe to end his support of Mozambique, especially in the fight against MNR armed bands that continuously try to disrupt the Beira corridor, which Zimbabwe has attempted to utilize in an effort to escape the South African economic siege.

Though Machel did not have the time to complete his struggle against apartheid's accomplices, he did show the way for his successor and other southern African leaders. Banda was feeling the weight of Machel's threat to isolate Malawi and was willing to negotiate. Zaire, reacting to increasing evidence of its involvement with South African and U.S.-supported counterrevolutionary groups, yielded to the pressure of Front Line states and also agreed to negotiate (see cover story). These concessions may not be definitive, for in the past both countries have exhibited irregular

an unreliable behavior. But they now recognize that open or covert support of South Africa may command a high price and lead to their isolation on the continent. Malawi depends on Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania for its economic links with the rest of world. Zaire is virtually landlocked and depends on Angola, Congo and Zambia to escape economic asphyxiation. Machel demonstrated that South Africa's economic blockade against its neighbors can have a boomerang effect. Now Pretoria's allies and sympathizers may be stifled by a policy launched by the victims of the apartheid regime's economic retaliation. Both Malawi's Banda and Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seku will probably decide to curtail their involvement with counterrevolutionary groups, given the price they may have to pay. This will come as a relief to Angola and Mozambique, which may from now on be able to concentrate their forces on the South African front. At the end of November, it was still uncertain whether Zaire and Malawi would yield, but there were strong indications that they might. Having lived for so long under the stifling influence of South Africa, Machel had a great deal of experience in coping with the racist South African regime. Prior to his death, Mozambique – the most vulnerable of Front Line states – had finally discovered how to attack apartheid where it hurts. Machel deserves credit for his bold effort to lead the fight against South African tyranny in the region.

Southern Africa: The Escalating Crisis





Two new battlefronts are emerging along the already tense

borders of South Africa and its allies in the region. There are reports that Pretoria is concentrating troops near its border with Zimbabwe and that South

African-sponsored terrorists are intensifying their operations in Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Meanwhile, there is increasing evidence of an imminent clash between Mozambique and Malawi, a government aligned with the apartheid regime. The growing hostilities in the region pre-date the death of Samora Machel in a controversial air accident.

Although the cause of the crash has not been determined conclusively, indications point to foulplay on the part of the South African government. Machel was the leader of a military-diplomatic movement destined to isolate the racist regime.

The presidential succession in Mozambique does not alter this picture.

The South African military is no longer content with invading neighboring countries: it appears disposed to assassinate heads of state, thus escalating its effort to destabilize the regional alliance against apartheid.



The General Mobilization

The scent of war was already in the air when Mozambique Pres. Samora Machel died in a controversial air disaster. The tragedy intensified antagonisms in the region and added fuel to the flames of the struggle against apartheid in southern Africa.



Dos Santos (left) and new President Chissano (right), pallbearers in the funeral procession

In the wake of the death of President Samora Machel, the consensus among officials in Mozambique is that the president was assassinated by elements linked to the South African government. They believe that his elimination was part of a broader scheme devised by the South African military to destabilize the region and set the stage for an eventual direct military intervention by South Africa in the Front Line states.

South Africa has been training some 5,000
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Zimbabwean "dissidents" for clandestine operations in southern Zimbabwe, according to a reliable source in Mozambique. With this move, South African Defense Minister General Manus Malan may be trying to divert Zimbabwean troops currently deployed in defense of north-central Mozambique and the strategic Beira corridor, which runs through Mozambique and represents the link with the sea for landlocked Zimbabwe. In addition, the Zambian government announced that its ter-

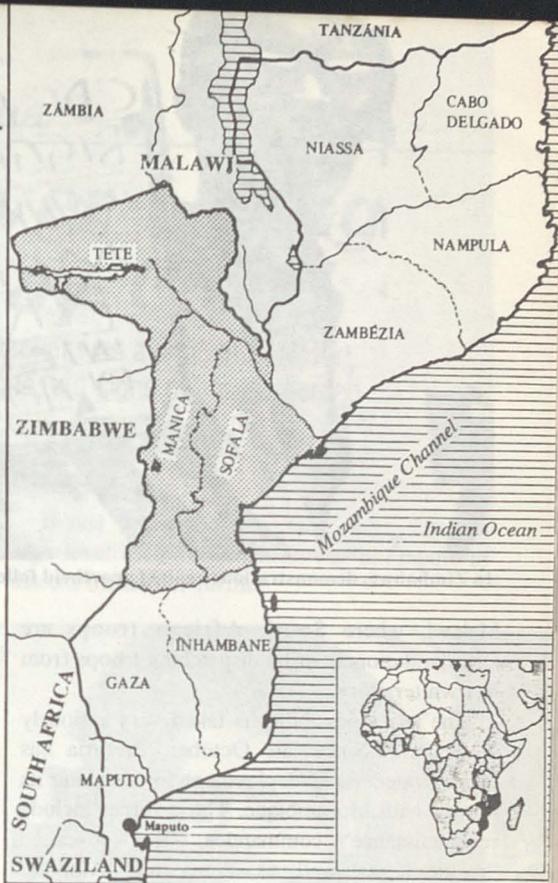
ritory has been infiltrated by what it called "armed bandits" trained and equipped by South Africa in Namibia. They enter Zambia primarily by way of neighboring Angola with the assistance of the counterrevolutionary group UNITA.

Coupled with the news of Machel's death, these events form a pattern that has kept all of southern Africa, especially Mozambique, in an uneasy state of alert. Mozambique is apprehensive about a potential confrontation with South Africa but determined to meet any military challenge posed by the apartheid regime.

Mozambicans expect a confrontation sooner or later, particularly in light of the escalation of activities by the National Resistance Movement (MNR), a group of racist mercenaries and pro-colonialists operating in Mozambique with South African support. In late September, between 6,000 and 10,000 MNR armed bandits crossed into Mozambique from bases in Malawi to invade the provinces of Zambezia and Tete. Both Mozambican security reports and eye witnesses attest to the fact that the MNR bands were coordinated by South African soldiers. MNR operations have been extended recently to the province of Sofala which is crossed by the Beira corridor and its railroad and oil pipeline, both of which supply Zimbabwean industry.

The MNR armed bandits have brought wholesale death and destruction to Zambezia and Tete. Several villages have been razed, and thousands of refugees have fled to Malawi and Zambia. Hundreds of thousands of peasants have been unable to plant or harvest their crops with the result that widespread famine now threatens the north-central part of the country.

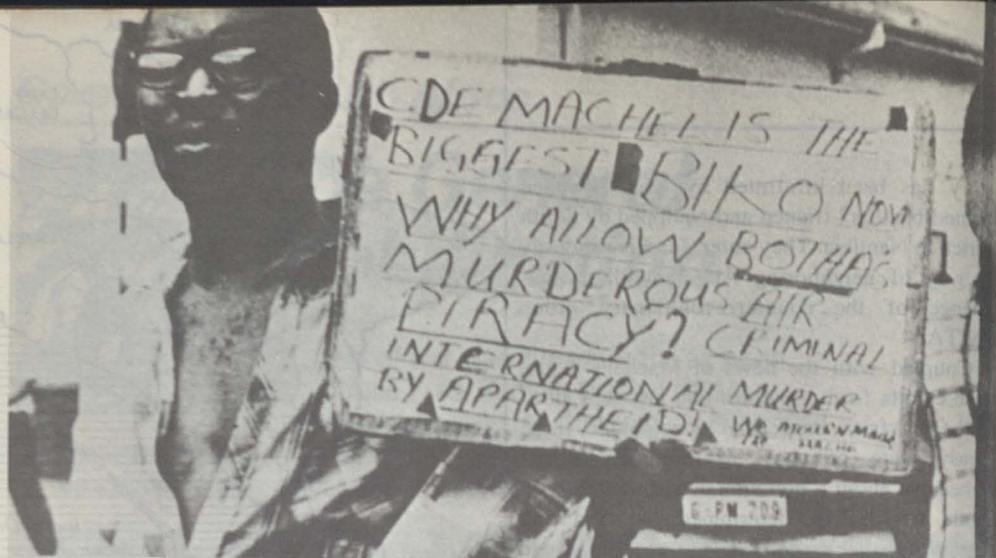
Since 1984, when over 2,000 terrorists entered southern Mozambique directly from South Africa in an unsuccessful attempt to take the Mozambican capital of Maputo, the South African military has concentrated its attacks in the northern part of the country, using Malawi as a base. Mozambican authorities believe that



Shaded areas indicate those Mozambique regions which have suffered most from MNR attacks. More recently the province of Zambezia has also been attacked by armed bands which use Malawi as a support base, in line with the South African strategy of destabilizing the Mozambican government.

Pretoria wants to consolidate MNR positions in north-central Mozambique in order to secure a sea route for arms and ammunition supplies to the MNR forces deployed there.

Mozambican officials believe that South Africa was hoping for the collapse of the ruling FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) Party with the loss of Machel. Now they think that South African generals may be interested in testing the strength of the Mozambican Armed Forces. Mozambican authorities are sure that, should the Zambezia and Tete operations fail, South Africa will intervene directly by crossing the border from



In Zimbabwe, demonstrations against apartheid followed Machel's death

Malawi, where South African troops are already stationed, or by dispatching troops from its own territory.

The latter possibility is taken very seriously in Maputo. Since late October, Pretoria has concentrated rapid-deployment forces along its border with Mozambique. Those forces include reconnaissance commandos, the so-called "reckies", as well as Puma and Alouette helicopter squadrons and Impala MK-II fighter groups.

Meanwhile, the belief that the South African military is intent on destabilizing the area has given rise to fears that other prominent southern African leaders may become assassination targets in the near future. In addition, Front Line countries are trying to develop a strategy to counter South Africa's persistent efforts to promote a generalized conflict in southern Africa.

The day following Machel's funeral, Front Line leaders met in Maputo. Two days later it was announced that Zimbabwean Deputy Prime Minister Simon Muzenda was in Moscow heading a delegation of Zimbabwean military and security officials. The implication was that Zimbabwe and other countries in the area that have cooperated closely with the West are no longer willing to let ideological barriers interfere with their military and defense needs.

All other Front Line states have sent 20 - third world

delegations to friendly countries. Their mission is to stress the urgent need for a clear international stand against the apartheid regime, as well to secure the assistance required to bolster their defenses. As this report was going to press, it appeared that the Soviet Union and India were willing to extend military aid to the Front Line states.

For Mozambique, there are only two ways to prevent South Africa from escalating the war. Either the West will send very clear signals to Pretoria that it must abandon its current destabilization plans, or the Front Line countries will use all the help they can get to oppose South African aggression.

Machel had a vision of a peaceful southern Africa, of a South Africa ruled by patriotic forces and integrated into the the South African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC), the regional economic body. Samora dreamed of a region capable of fully realizing its potential wealth and helping to change the tragic economic unbalance between the industrialized countries and the Third World. The coming months will be pivotal in determining whether such an outcome is likely: will South Africa remain intact as apartheid breaks down, or will it be destroyed by the destabilizing momentum of the policies adopted by General Malan and his peers? •

Carlos Cardoso, Mozambican Journalist



The Silver Lining in a Gray Cloud

The death of Samora Machel was a difficult blow for the people of Mozambique, but signs of hope emerged despite the tragedy.

Mozambican officials feared that South Africa was plotting against President Samora Machel, but Machel's death on the night of October 19 still came as a tragic surprise. In the weeks preceding the fatal airplane crash, Machel had launched into an intense diplomatic effort aimed at changing the entire political, diplomatic and military environment in southern Africa. His goal was to neutralize and isolate South Africa's allies in the region.

His efforts began following the Harare summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in September, during which the NAM extended full support to anti-racist countries in southern Africa. Shortly after the meeting Machel traveled to Blantyre, the capital of Malawi, along with Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe. The three met with Malawi President Komazu Banda, whose administration has consistently refused to break political ties with South Africa.

During a tense two-hour meeting, the Mozambican, Zambian and Zimbabwean leaders accused the Banda government of turning Malawi into an operational base for the South African-supported National Resistance Movement (MNR) that has launched destabilizing attacks against the Mozambican government over the last ten years. Machel reportedly challenged Banda to accompany him to the border between the two countries for an on-the-spot check of the MNR military bases assembled by South Africa.

Banda refused, but two days later a high-level Malawi delegation was in Maputo to discuss the matter further.



Machel's portrait on display at his funeral

Machel was determined to neutralize Malawi's alliance with South Africa. His next step was to attend a second meeting of southern African heads of state in Mbala, Zambia. In addition to Kaunda and Mugabe, Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seku also attended this summit. Seku's presence was not officially explained, but it is reasonable to assume that he was there to discuss the arms and ammunition traffic crossing the Zairean border destined for the forces of UNITA, a South Africa-sponsored group acting in Angola. Once again

Mozambique

Machel berated those governments in southern Africa that have catered to or sympathized with the apartheid regime.

All of this activity aroused apartheid leaders who responded by threatening to transfer troops to the border with Mozambique. Echoing such threats, the Johannesburg press turned Machel into the number one target of South African retaliation. In concrete terms, the South African military decided to send terrorist commandos across the Mozambican border, 50 miles from the capital of Maputo. At the same time, it deployed 8,000 soldiers, along the border between Malawi and Mozambique.

It was in this hostile climate that Machel's airplane crashed in South African territory, near the Mozambican border, as it prepared to land in Maputo on its return from Zambia. The disaster occurred at 9:30 p.m. on October 19, but it was over seven hours later when South African authorities confirmed the crash of the presidential aircraft.

Mourning in Maputo

Very few African leaders were as deeply respected and loved inside their own countries as Samora Machel. For small children who were

"Uphi Samora?"

□ Vasco Langa was one of the survivors of the airplane crash that killed Mozambican President Samora Machel. An officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was sitting near the rear of the Tupolev 134-B during the fatal flight from Mbala to Maputo.

Recovering from the shock amid the wreckage a few minutes after the crash, he spied a group of nine South Africans approaching the site. "Some of them came around the right wing, where I sat bleeding. They were carrying pistols and stepped over bodies, not paying any attention to the moans of the wounded. They were speaking in Afrikaans and Zulu and one of them kept repeating 'Uphi Samora, uphi Samora?' (which, in the Zulu language, means 'where's Samora?'). It took them a while to locate the man they were looking for because the president was wearing civilian clothes. Meanwhile, another group came by the left wing, rummaging through everything they came across. They were looking for documents,

and they ignored the wounded survivors who were crying for help."

Langa spent the next ten days in a South African hospital. In declarations made upon his arrival in Maputo, he added that the group left after picking up the documents they were looking for, leaving both dead and wounded behind. Another survivor, Almeida Bruno, said that the number of dead would have been lower if immediate attention had been given to the wounded. Both Langa and Bruno reported that, nearly one hour after the accident, helicopters flew the site. Some time later, several vehicles arrived, formed a circle around the wreckage, and turned on their headlights. According to Langa, the lights soon went out, and groups of policemen using flashlights began to attend to the survivors, who were taken to a hospital in the nearby town of Nelspruit.

Langa said he was interrogated from October 20 to 24 concerning his relations with Machel and the subject matter of the president's meeting with other Southern African heads of state in Mbala, Zambia. "At first I tried to deny everything because I didn't know who was questioning me. But later they said: 'We

born after independence in 1975, Machel was a cheerful, spontaneous man who spoke the language of the people and liked to sing at public rallies. For teenagers, the deceased president was a man sincerely concerned with providing schools for all, as well as food and clothing for students. For the adult population, Machel was the very symbol of the struggle against racism and discrimination in Mozambique.

Because of Machel's popularity, South Africa launched a misinformation campaign immediately following the controversial crash. The South African version, designed to spread

already know that you work for the Ministry of Foreign Relations.' Even then I went on claiming I didn't know anything about the meeting or about the president's habits."

Both Langa and Almeida revealed that the South Africans had offered them health treatment and employment if they agreed to desert and act as informants. But what hurt Langa most was the way in which he learned of Machel's death. "Someone, I think it was an air force officer, came to my bedside and said in a loud voice: 'The Marxist is dead, did you know that?'"

Declarations made by most survivors indicate that, even before the first groups arrived at the accident site, South African officials knew that the downed airplane carried the Mozambican president. This evidence implies that the accident may have been deliberately caused by electronic interference with the airplane's communications system, which would have led the pilot to stray over South African territory and spend fuel which would normally have been sufficient to arrive in Maputo.

The fact that the airplane did not burn

doubt among Mozambicans, affirmed that the aircraft had been shot down by the MNR and that street demonstrations and internal fighting

Reuters



South African official inspecting the rubble

after hitting the ground indicates that there was little or no fuel left. But the definite cause of the accident remained unclear as of late November. South African authorities delayed as long as possible in handing over the black boxes containing the flight recorders of the presidential Tupolev, a Soviet-made jet which was purchased less than four years ago and was equipped with sophisticated navigation equipment.

The black boxes were finally sent to Maputo and forwarded to Moscow for decodification. At first, South African authorities tried to blame the accident on "bad weather", but Maputo tower operators said that weather conditions were good throughout the entire flight. Another piece of misinformation passed on to the South Africa press was that the pilot was drunk. This proved to be false. In fact, Pretoria even misidentified the pilot in its reports. The person who it claimed was intoxicated was a flight engineer who had no role in what turned out to be a fatal approach to landing.

Mozambique

would arise in Mozambique following the burial of Machel. Some South African radio stations even voiced fears of an eventual massacre of Mozambican whites in retaliation for the president's death.

But none of this came to pass. Instead, the entire population joined to mourn the death of the president in an impressive show of solidarity and unity. The day the president died, a cold, persistent drizzle fell over Maputo, breaking a drought that had lasted several months. This was perceived by many Mozambicans as a good omen, since according to African tradition, rain on the day an eminent man dies indicates that he was deeply revered, that his country's future will be bright, that the deceased will join his ancestors and will go on blessing his people, bringing peace and prosperity to the land.



Young mourners: "The struggle continues"

The good omen helped to alleviate the pain and emotional shock that had struck all Mozambicans. On the days preceding Machel's burial, the entire country stood united to grieve for and revere its leader. Endless queues formed in front of the Executive Council building in Maputo, where a vigil was kept over the president's body. Conspicuous among the crowds were white-robed women belonging to the Pakistani and Indian communities, two ethnic groups that since independence in 1975 had never joined a ceremony in honor of a Mozambican leader. The only time they

participated in an official demonstration was during the visit of the then Portuguese President Ramalho Eanes. However, they joined all other social groups in demonstrating their deep sorrow over the death of Machel.

Their presence had a significant political implication. The two communities, popularly known as *munhés*, play a prominent role in the country's domestic trade, and more than once they have been charged with illegal foreign exchange operations. Three years ago a Pakistani businessman was publicly executed after being convicted of economic sabotage. This naturally gave rise to mutual distrust between the government and *munhés* — yet past differences were definitely forgotten as the latter joined the crowds to mourn Machel.

Muslims and Hindus also attended both the vigil and the funeral, as did adherents of the Baha'i sect. At the traditional seven-day Catholic mass attended by cabinet members, the Archbishop of Maputo said that Machel was "perhaps the world's only head of state who had ruled over all races, tribes and religious creeds, adding that the airplane crash that killed the Mozambican president may have been "the work of a fearful enemy who resorted to killing in order to achieve his own goals."

The burial

Marcelino dos Santos, a veteran of the independence struggle and the number two man in the FRELIMO hierarchy, gave the farewell speech at the president's burial on October 28. Delegates from 70 countries, including 20 heads of state, and a crowd of over 200,000 heard his emotional but firm words. As the coffin was carried out of the Executive Council building at 10:30 a.m., the whole country stood for a minute of silence.

Again under a cold drizzle, the funeral procession marched along the streets of Maputo to the Hall of Heroes. Ignoring security precautions, political leaders, cabinet members, foreign delegates and visiting heads of state

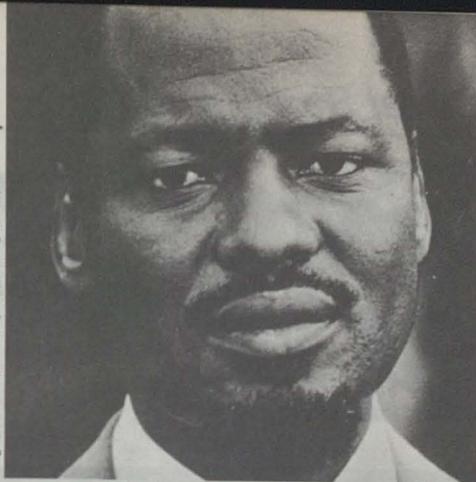
mixed with the crowd. Machel was buried under the monument erected in honor of national heroes, next to the tomb of Eduardo Mondlane, the FRELIMO founder who was killed in 1969 by a bomb-package addressed to him by Portuguese secret servicemen. After a simple, exclusive ceremony attended only by members of the Machel family and FRELIMO and military leaders, the foreign delegates and heads of state laid their wreaths on the president's tomb.

A few hours later, thousands gathered at a camping site near one of Maputo's most popular beaches for the traditional hand-washing ceremony. African tradition requires friends and relatives to wash their hands and gather for a meal after the funeral of a beloved dead.

Chissano's inauguration

Interior Minister Joaquim Chissano, a former prime minister and an old friend of Machel, was elected president of Mozambique on November 3 by the Political Bureau of FRELIMO's Central Committee. In his inauguration speech, Chissano emphasized the need to proceed with the struggle against South African-sponsored armed groups, and called for a full national mobilization against the MNR. "The entire people must join in this struggle, mobilizing all of our human, material and financial resources to ensure victory, so that our revolution may continue to build socialism in Mozambique," he said.

The presidential succession occurred in an atmosphere of heightened animosity toward South Africa. The Pretoria regime had just charged the Mozambican government with promoting "armed assaults" along the border. The South African government claimed that the African National Congress (ANC) was responsible for the attacks, and that they had been planned and organized in Mozambique. Maputo vehemently denied these charges, denouncing them as a South African pretext for launching a potential new military invasion, or



New President Joaquim Chissano

an attempt to divide and intimidate the new government.

Chissano's rise to power is not expected to bring any changes to the political and diplomatic positions adopted by Mozambique under Machel. A member of the FRELIMO Central Committee since 1963, the new president belonged to his predecessor's inner circle, having directly participated in all major political decisions. He did military training abroad and participated directly in the fight against Portuguese colonialist forces, and therefore has the military credentials to lead the battle against the MNR. In addition, he has extensive diplomatic experience, having served for many years as minister of Foreign Affairs.

Following Machel's death, some observers had speculated that a succession fight might flare up between Chissano and dos Santos. Yet it was dos Santos himself who proposed Chissano for the presidency and chairmanship of the party, and his proposal was unanimously approved by the central committee.

During the new president's public inauguration ceremony, it rained again in Maputo — and Mozambicans took this as another good omen. And just as Machel used to end his speeches with a song, Joaquim Chissano closed his inauguration speech by chanting a traditional refrain: "*Hi ta famba, hi voninguela*", which in the Shangalla language means "We shall move ahead and spread the light before us."

Etevaldo Hipolito from Mozambique



"Reagan Prevents Peace in Africa"

According to the Angolan Minister of Defense, it is Reagan's support of apartheid that has enabled South Africa to launch its military and economic attacks on neighboring countries.



Defense Minister Coronel Pedalé

Since their country won its independence in 1975, Angolans have not known a single day of peace. In the early 1980s, the virtually permanent war struggle came under the command of Defense Minister Pedro Maria Tonha, or Colonel Pedalé, as he became known to Angolans during the anti-colonialist war. Born in the northern province of Cabinda, Colonel Pedalé was still a teenager when he first took arms against Portugal. Now, at 45, he has an impressive thirty-year war record and much experience in all sorts of combat, from classic guerrilla action to sophisticated modern warfare against

Africa's most powerful military force, the South African Army.

Colonel Pedalé seldom grants press interviews, both out of temperament and because of his position in the Angolan government. Last October, however, he made an exception to **third world** Editor Beatriz Bissio, as military tensions mounted in all of southern Africa. Following are excerpts of her interview with him:

UNITA forces have lately extended their action to northern Angola. How do you explain such mobility, considering that UNITA's known logistic bases are in the south, near the

Namibian border where they are bolstered by the South African Army?

—Small UNITA groups have indeed infiltrated northern Angola. Don't forget that, in the past, ammunitions and explosives were parachuted by South African military aircraft for use by UNITA bands operating in Central Angola. We even captured a large number of these supplies, which were exhibited to the media at the time; they were of the type employed in sabotage work. But UNITA activity in the north is neither very intense nor alarming.

The fact is that there is a lot of enemy propaganda concerning UNITA. Remember that just before the meeting of Non-Aligned Country ministers held in Luanda last year there was a surge of propaganda intended to make Angolan officials believe it would be impossible to hold the event here because of enemy action against the capital and other areas of the country. As everyone knows, nothing of the sort ever happened.

I can assure you that only small groups are active in the north. They cross the border here and there, especially in distant areas. They are fought by the local populations themselves, although they still manage to carry out their acts of banditism and murder a lot of people.

Are Zairean authorities aware that these groups are crossing Zairean borders?

We still don't know for sure, but it is possible that some UNITA groups have come into Angola by crossing the northern Zairean border. We have so far sought to settle this border-crossing business through negotiations with our neighbors. If we eventually determine that this is actually happening, we will of course keep world public opinion informed and take whatever action is needed to stop it.

Do you believe the military situation prevailing in 1975, when Angola was invaded by Zaire in the north and South Africa in the south, could repeat itself?

—I don't think so. But when decisions are

Mario Ruiz, Picture Group



Jesse Jackson recently visited Angola

made by U. S. imperialistic forces, anything can happen.

UNITA's inner conflicts

Declarations made by captured mercenaries leave us with the impression that they are a bit tired of this war, which seems endless despite all of the previous talk about immediate results.

—Judging from the type of war they have been waging against us, it is understandable that they should see no alternative other than rebelling against their superiors, killing each other or surrendering themselves. The ones we have captured seem physically exhausted, undernourished and largely demoralized. There are inner conflicts within UNITA which have an adverse effect on their morale. Many mercenaries end up as deserters.

The war in southern Africa may come to an end either militarily or diplomatically. A military solution seems unlikely, while a diplomatic solution isn't easy to come by. President Reagan has recently rejected negotiations proposed to him by the Front Line countries. Will this refusal have reflections on a military level?

—It is bound to have. Firstly, because Reagan and the U.S. have never recognized

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Angola *or Angola*

Angolan sovereignty or independence. Secondly, because Reagan directly and overtly backs UNITA. And thirdly, because the U.S. supports South Africa's racist regime.

No wonder then that Reagan isn't too eager to negotiate with the Front Line countries. Nevertheless, we have insisted on the need for a meeting, so that he can see for himself the reality faced by our countries.

However, even if the U.S. accepts our proposal, we are not overly optimistic. We don't trust Reagan to change his position. Ever since



Prensa Latina

...“we have now found the adequate formula for defeating both the South Africans and the UNITA bands”...

he rose to power, the world has experienced a number of very serious problems.

You are referring to Reagan's position, to that of his advisers in the White House and the Pentagon. But don't you think it might be possible to mobilize U.S. public opinion, to call public attention to the danger of an all-out war in southern Africa?

— Some outstanding U.S. personalities have recently been in Angola. Jesse Jackson, for example, visited not only Angola but also other Front Line countries. Other important U.S. delegations have also been here. And we have business relations with major U.S. capitalist groups. At present, some influential U.S. companies are established in Angola, and we

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believe our relations with them are getting better all the time. We trust that all this will eventually contribute to ensure good relations with the U.S.

In addition, certain official U.S. institutions have recently been trying to change the nature of Reagan's foreign policy, and we have invited some of their members to visit Angola.

Our desire is to establish good relations between the U.S. and Angolan peoples. We know that the war waged against Angola by the present U.S. authorities does not reflect the will of the majority of Americans. So we trust that the situation may change in the future in the direction of better U.S.-Angolan relations.

The armed forces and the various wars

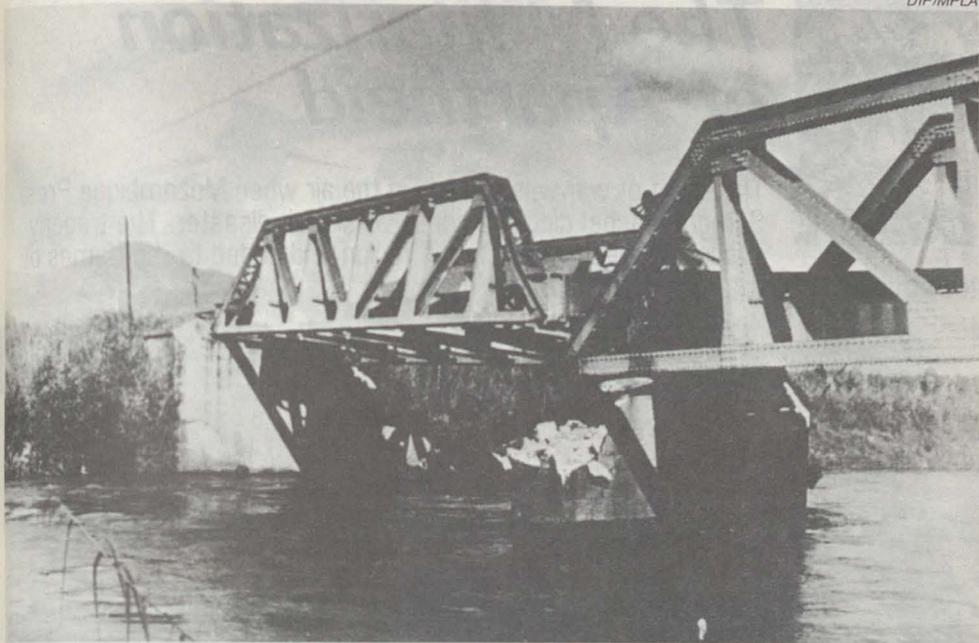
Angola has been at war for over ten years now, practically ever since it became independent. The MPLA guerrillas who fought against the Portuguese have lately organized themselves into a regular army — the People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA). Yet, South African aggressions and especially UNITA's military operations have forced FAPLA to review its tactics and create a number of easily deployable, anti-insurreccional corps. How is FAPLA currently organized?

— Like you said, FAPLA was born out of the guerrilla army which had fought Portuguese colonialism for so many years. On the eve of our independence, our country had been invaded by an organized army — the South African army — and this forced us to adapt to another kind of war. It wasn't easy, but we managed to expel them from our territory and liberate every square kilometer of Angolan soil.

Then came the more permanent aggression of the UNITA bands that had been armed and trained by South Africa and other imperialistic powers. They caused us much material damage, killed men, women and children and destroyed part of our economy.

It is a different war from the one waged by us against colonialism, and also from the war

DIP/MPLA



Since 1975, Angola has suffered US\$ 20 billion of material losses as a consequence of foreign aggression.

we had with South Africans during their first invasion. Consequently our armed forces have had to adapt themselves to a new style of combat. We can confidently say that we have now found the adequate formula for defeating both the South Africans and the UNITA bands. We have acquired considerable experience in the past years, and this certainly has helped us withstand heavy enemy attacks from within and from abroad.

The role of the Air Force

Taking into account the dimensions of your territory and the low population density in southern Angola, your country evidently needs air defense. Has Angola made any progress in organizing an air force?

– Yes, our regular armed forces now include an army, a navy and an air force. The latter is needed for land troops support in any war. We have continually sought to develop our air force by training pilots and other technicians, since an

air force is a complex organization requiring advanced technology.

Training a pilot or a flight engineer is a time-consuming task. Yet, in the short time we have existed as an independent nation, we can say we have created the nucleus of an Angolan air force. It is still not decisive in combat, but in this early stage it has been instrumental in deploying troops and equipment and keeping our military units well supplied.

In the near future, we may have a strong air force. A nation that is being subjected to aggression has to arm itself. As the late President Neto said once, “Angola may someday become one of the best-armed African countries”.

When you talk about training personnel, are you referring to foreign training?

– We have trained air force personnel in friendly nations, yes, but also in our own schools. ●

Interview conducted by Beatriz Bissio



The Militarization of Apartheid

The scent of war was already in the air when Mozambique Pres. Samora Machel died in a controversial air disaster. The tragedy intensified antagonisms in the region and added to the flames of the struggle against apartheid in southern Africa.



The defense of the nation's borders is but one role of the South African military

The attacks on frontline states, the intensification of the war in Angola, combined with the state of emergency and the heightened use of troops in urban and rural areas has called attention to the role of the military — not just in the prosecution of war but in the running of the South African state itself. Increasingly, the regime is relying upon the military to maintain white racial dominance.

Raids on the frontline states are not maverick behavior but the actions of a military organization integrated with civilian politicians at the highest levels. However, this military machine, the most powerful on the continent, is

geared not only to defend its borders or mount attacks in the region, but to manage, control, and direct the growing ferment inside the country.

The SADF

The South African Defense Force (SADF), the combined South African military forces, includes a Permanent Force, a Citizen Force and a Commando organization. The Permanent Force consists of professional soldiers; the other two are reserve forces. The Permanent Force and Citizen Force consist of Army, Air Force



Peter Marlow, Sigma

South Africans in Namibia: 200,000 troops are deployed, mostly in Namibia and Angola

and Naval components; the Commando organization is an army and air organization.

The largest component of the SADF is the army, which comprises over 80 percent of its total manpower. Most of its strength is centered in the Counterinsurgency (COIN) infantry force, which has both full-time and part-time units, backed by over 200 commando militia units spread throughout the towns and countryside of South Africa and Namibia. The militia represents the first line of defense in an "area defense system."

The SADF's conventional forces consists of six brigades, which are not suitable for counterinsurgency work. They have been employed mainly in the war on Angola. There are a parachute Battalion and reconnaissance (Reece) commandos, organized into five regiments, which undertake covert operations and specialist raids.

The South African Police (SAP), mainly equipped for counterinsurgency warfare, has two large reserve formations, and a riot squad at each divisional headquarters. There are a variety of other police organizations, and around 3,000 paramilitary troops in the

"independent" bantustans.

The total SADF mobilizable force has been estimated at 404,500 with a standing force of 83,400 by the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies. However, other calculations based on official South African sources have given a total of 639,000 (with a standing force of 178,000). Adding the bantustan force and the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF), total apartheid forces reach 755,000. At any one time a force of around 200,000 is deployed, mainly in Namibia and Angola.

The State Security System

Within the South African constitution, even under the new "reforms", one power, parliament, is supreme; theoretically the police and the army are arms of the state for use by the supreme power. However, the reality is far removed from that.

Back in 1909 the *Cavalry Journal* asserted that "the question of defense can never be an insignificant one in South Africa for the enormously preponderating native populaion

South Africa South Africa

forbids neglect of military forces." The history of South Africa from the 17th century has been one of war – white settlers fighting blacks, Boers fighting the British. It is in this historical context that the thinking of the present officer corps of the SADF, and of the government, has its roots.

Most specifically, the notion of the army being the people armed was part of Boer history; a complete disjuncture of a professional body from the *volk* is a foreign concept. Regular forces in the republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State at the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899 consisted solely of about 1,000 *Staats Artillerie* and 1,400 state police. The two governments possessed 75 guns; all other military resources were drawn from the civilian population which as the war progressed increasingly organized itself into bands of partisans living off the land.

After the Boer War, a Union Defense Force, a body of professional soldiers with pro-British



Prime Minister P. W. Botha

32 – third world

officers was established, but following the victory of the National Party in 1948, there was a concerted move to break the hold of the English-speaking whites on this important element of the state. The officer corps was gradually purged and Afrikaners put in place. But not yet was it integrated into the overall apartheid scheme.

An important step toward achieving this integration was taken with the passing of the 1957 Defense Act which expanded compulsory military service for whites. These recruits were integrated into what was then the newly-created SADF. When this new structure was functioning in the 1960s, then-Minister of Defense Jim Fouché remarked that "It is the defense policy of the Union first of all to concentrate its defense organizations upon the implementation of the internal security tasks."

Enforcing internal security was not to be solely the task of the Permanent Force, as young citizen force draftees learned in the early 60s when they were sent into the townships in armored cars to crush the black rebellion. They kept their weapons at home and were activated in batches.

The repression mounted by the army and the police brought down the silence of the grave on the 60s, but despite the successful quelling of internal resistance, theorists within the armed forces were working to further improve the security apparatus. In 1970, the Potgieter Commission recommended the formation of a centralized intelligence organization, the Bureau of State Security (BOSS).

This was partly related to empire building within the ruling National Party, but also to the perceived need to unify different and rival groups, both civilian and military. Two years later came the formation of the State Security Council (SSC), a body which today is regarded as the real authority in the land and the power behind the government.

During the regime of John Vorster (1967-78), the SSC was one of 11 cabinet committees, though the only one established by

law. Its powers were limited, but it gave a voice at the highest levels to the officer corps of the SADF, who since 1966 had "their" man, P. W. Botha, as Minister of Defense. In 1975 Botha spelled out in a Defense White Paper the thinking of the top brass: "Defense strategy embraces much more than military strategy. It involves economy, ideology, technology, and even social matters... all countries must, more than ever, muster all their activities - political, economic, diplomatic and military - for their defense. This in fact is the meaning of 'total strategy'."

The total strategy concept was designed to allow the SADF to react to the alleged "total onslaught" by "the communists" and the Soviet Union who are said to be involved in every area of national life. Military theorists used the concept to justify the expansion of their influence beyond its already wide reach. After the Soweto rising of 1976, according to a U.S. military authority, officers sent a memorandum to Botha attacking the manner in which the police handled the crisis. They implied that some sort of military takeover might be necessary to bring about the social and political changes needed to stabilize the situation.

A year later, in 1977, another Defense White Paper further broadened the concept of state security, which found powerful sympathizers in the world of finance and business. They, after all, had for years been advocating some of the central notions now proposed by the SADF - particularly a form of *verligte* (enlightened) apartheid which would bring about stability without threatening the existence of capitalism in South Africa. An important element of this strategy was the separation by social engineering of black migrant workers from permanent urban residents.

Also in 1977, the Strategic Planning Section of the SADF was formed, and Lt. Gen J.R. Dutton developed the total strategy idea further: it "would appear to favor a system of unified command, joint central planning, decentralized execution and sustained vertical

and horizontal coordination... Conventional organizations in democratic system do not as a rule lend themselves to these procedures."

The SADF was able to realize its goal of independence from civilian bureaucrats and politicians as a result of the Information Scandal, Muldergate. Vorster's chosen successor Connie Mulder was displaced after revelations (fortuitous or not) of corruption and squandering in covert Information Ministry operations. Vorster was swept aside and P.W. Botha installed in his place.



A casualty in Namibia

In 1979, Botha enunciated to a meeting of 300 businessmen his "constellation of states" plan, involving a southern African region interlocked and under the hegemony of Pretoria. At the same time he made clear his intention to involve the SADF in the administrative process and to apply the management system of the SADF in the public service generally. Power was shifting from parliament to the National Security Management System (NSMS) which grew out of the concept of "total strategy." The then-head of the SADF and current minister of

South Africa

defense Magnus Malan described the system as "the management of South Africa's four power bases (the political, economic, social/psychological and security bases) as an integrated whole".

In 1983, in a bid to counter the widespread belief that there had been a quiet, creeping military coup in the land, the Secretary of the State Security Council declared that the body had no executive authority and that its recommendations were subject to cabinet approval. The military journal *Paratus* subsequently published a chart outlining the structure of the cabinet committee system, showing the SSC on a par with the cabinet committees for economic, social and constitutional affairs. Its caption was "State Security Council: Not Sinister!"

However the SSC heads the National Security Management System, and a glance at that system's structure provides a contrasting view. The NSMS has five levels, with tentacles extending down to Joint Management Centers and their sub-groups, whose functions are secret. They are believed to execute and monitor the strategies of the SSC in all major cities and towns.

A detailed look at the NSMS structure reveals the following:

Level One – The SSC itself, the only one of four cabinet committees established by law. It meets twice a week and makes recommendations on "total strategy" to the cabinet and heads of the NSMS. The state president sits as chairman, and the other members include the ministers of defense, foreign affairs, justice and police – along with the heads of police, military and intelligence.

Its full-time staff of 87, based in Pretoria, coordinate the country's security system and evaluates the work of the entire intelligence system.

The SSC is thus not a solely military committee. It is believed to be directly responsible for state policy in internal security and foreign affairs, and especially regional affairs – including the conduct of the war in the

frontline states. It would be capable of taking over control of the state if parliament were dissolved.

Level 2 – The Work Committee of the SSC, which coordinates the activity of government departmental heads and chairmen of the other cabinet committees. Its 13 interdepartmental sub-committees encompass the entire spread of the political, cultural and economic life of the country.

Level 3 – Eleven regional Joint Management Committees (JMCs). At present they conform with SADF command boundaries, but they will soon be reduced to nine to conform with the country's nine economic development areas. The JMCs are based in the main towns and are headed by senior army and police officers. Their membership is limited to the armed forces and civil servants, and all departments of government with the exception of the justice ministry are represented. They were believed to run the "re-education camps" for detainees in the current state of emergency, which were denounced by the opposition as centers for the development of an informer network.

Level 4 – Sub-JMCs, 60 of which operate at the level of regional authorities.

Level 5 – Mini-JMCs, 448 of which operate at the level of town councils and other local authorities.

Each JMC, along with its sub and mini offshoots, has an intelligence committee, a political committee, and a communications committee. Local intelligence is gathered through a pool of intelligence services, including the police, the military, the National Intelligence Service, and military intelligence.

Though the JMCs have no executive power or budgets, they can make recommendations for action on security matters to government departments – and they consider almost anything as coming under the scope of security. They are believed to be engaged in preparing extensive plans to break the countrywide rents boycott.

Technocracy

There has been no popular white outcry about the increasing influence of the military in civilian life; manifestly, the SADF was engaged in securing the future of white domination. For the Afrikaner, in addition, it fit in with the old mythology of the *volk* under arms. But another mythology was becoming popular among the top officer corps, that of a modernizing technocracy.

The notion of social management by experts, who combine the use of force and psychological warfare, has long been in vogue among western military strategists. And it was in the staff colleges of the West, and particularly the U. S., that the SADF's top officers were educated.

The present Minister of Defense, and former head of the SADF, Gen. Magnus Malan is a case in point. The son of an Afrikaner banker, he began his career attached to the French forces fighting in Algeria, and then studied at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, where he learned the U.S. "indirect" approach to counterinsurgency warfare.

Again and again, he and his senior officers stress what they refer to as the 80-20 percent formula. It calls for fighting the war in South Africa with only 20 percent physical force; the rest is covered by the broad area of psychological operations. "Militarily we can win the war; we can win it tomorrow. But this is the type of battle you can never win on the military field", says Malan.

He and his officer corps study the theories of French strategists Roger Trinquier, and Andre Beaufre and the North American military thinker Lt. Col. John McCuen. According to Beaufre, "indirect warfare" which uses "international terrorism" is a third World War between the forces of communism and capitalism. It is "total" war, fought globally in every conceivable way.

Borrowed from the U.S. is the "hearts and minds" theory used in Vietnam. One of the theory's main proponents is Gen. Johan

Geldenhuis, the new head of the SADF. He stressed "hearts and minds" - a strategy designed to win over support of the population - during his tenure as head of the army, and during his command of the army in Namibia prior to 1980.

It is in Namibia that the SADF has applied these theories most fully; it is in most respects the *de facto* government of much of the territory. As in South Africa itself, the penetration of the military into black civil society since 1978 has been extensive, with military experts working in widely differing fields - in medicine, education, agriculture and in the civilian bureaucracy, but always answerable to Military Intelligence.

But the military brass do not operate as a separate elite; total war in defense of the state, which is a capitalist state, also involves leading capitalists. Sitting on the Defense Advisory Council, a key body in military-industrial relations, are business leaders Mike Rosholt, chairman of Barlow Rand; Basil Hershov of



Former Prime Minister Vorster

Anglo-Vaal; and Gavin Relly of Anglo-American. They are calling for internal "reform", the modernizing and restructuring of apartheid, and it was Relly who led the team of businessmen who visited the banned, anti-apartheid African National Congress (ANC) in Zambia.

South Africa

Under the concept of "strategic economic programming for national defense", the country's modern economy has been subsumed into a local variant of the military-industrial complex found in the U.S. For example, officials of Armscor – the privately-run, state-owned arms producer – sit on the boards of directors of private manufacturing companies, and vice versa.

Rivalry?

The key question is whether there is any substantial difference between the top military brass and government ministers and civil servants. The one place the Afrikaner monolith still holds together is in these senior reaches of power. There is little hard evidence of actual splits.

However, some indications that the military may have been operating independently from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were found in the Gorongosa Papers. These documents were uncovered as a result of the taking of the headquarters of the rebel Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) in Gorongosa, Mozambique, by government forces. More specifically, the documents provided evidence that South Africa was maintaining its support for the MNR – despite the apartheid regime's public adherence to the Nkomati agreement, the non-aggression pact it signed with Mozambique in March 1984.

Combating the people's war

Military theorists are constantly at work, revising their ideas to keep pace with the rebellion – particularly the more organized forms of struggle being developed by the ANC. They have clearly been successful with proxy forces such as UNITA in Angola, the MNR in Mozambique and the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) in that country. Now they are using proxies inside the townships of South Africa itself.

Here the disunity they are exploiting may

have ethnic or generational bases – as in the Crossroads squatter township in the Cape where the "fathers" are aligned with the SADF and SAP against the "young comrades", the



Minister of Defense Malan

magabane. But the vigilantes, regardless of how they arise, are quickly integrated into the security apparatus; in Queenstown in the Eastern Cape they now form part of the Queenstown Commando.

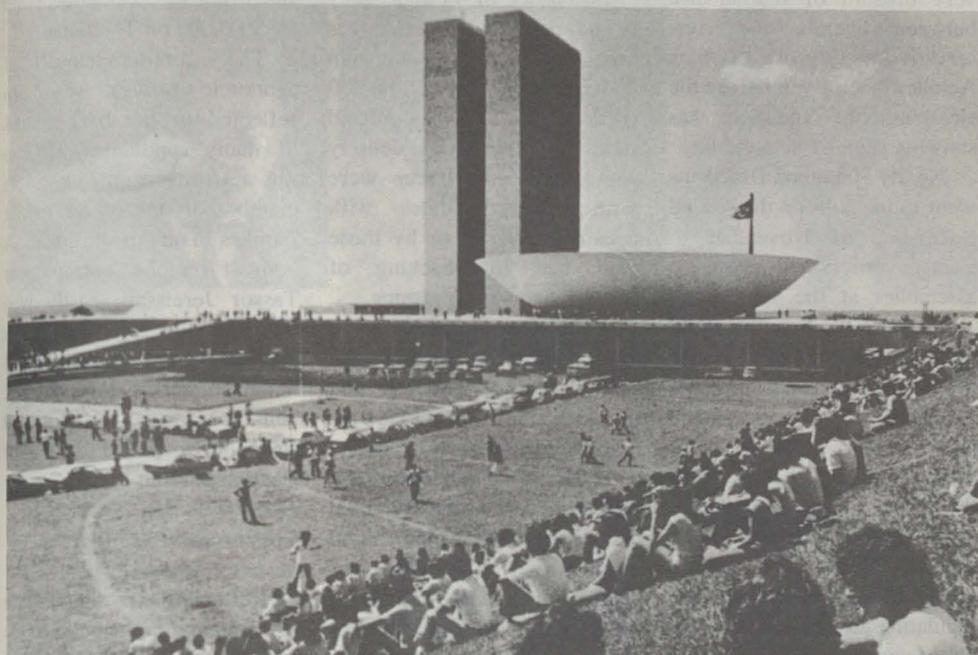
These new forms are being pitted against the ANC's new strategy of People's War, which one ANC leader described to this correspondent as the following: "Our own units of MK *Umkhonto We Sizwe* will find a base within the community. The community won't be spectators in the struggle but participants in the armed struggle. This is our concept when we talk of a People's War. Our people must begin to understand the necessity to create the conditions where they either join MK or they begin to form what we call self-defense units, and mobile units, not only to defend themselves but to go on the offensive."

The prospect, then in South Africa is of the military taking an increasingly open role in forcing through the modernization, or "reform" of apartheid, for the preservation of the Afrikaner *volk*, of white domination, and of the capitalist state. It remains for united mass rebellion, combined with the now visible internal fragmentation, to overwhelm it. •

David Coetzee

South African journalist based in London

18 December 1988



Brasília: a Constituent Assembly dominated by the PMDB and PFL

Mônica Leme

Election Sweep in Brazil: Will Coalition Hold Firm?

The PMDB and President Sarney's PFL scored the most impressive electoral victory in Brazilian history, but unpopular post-election economic reforms are already threatening their coalition of diverse political forces.

The Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), a wide agglomeration of disparate political forces, won a clear victory in the nationwide elections November 15. The party won 22 of the 23 contests for state governor, and when the ongoing vote count is complete, the PMDB and its coalition partner the

Liberal Party Front (PFL) — a conservative party made up of former sympathizers with the military dictatorship — are expected to lay claim to three-fourths of the seats in the National Congress, the body charged with writing the country's new constitution.

The coalition dominated by the PMDB and the PFL,

known as the Democratic Alliance, rose to power with the fall of the authoritarian regime two years ago, and its recent electoral victory is the most impressive in Brazilian history. This would theoretically strengthen the civilian regime of President José Sarney (PFL), but political commentators in the pro-

government press have expressed concern that the very breadth of the alliance between liberals and conservatives may prove to be its Achilles' heel. Even before the elections, the coalition was showing signs of vulnerability.

Nearly 70 million Brazilians went to the polls on the second Saturday of November to elect governors and legislative assemblies at the state level, and part of the Senate and all of the members of the House of Representatives at the national level. The 30 political parties that contested the elections agreed that this was the most expensive campaign ever. It was also the most rigidly controlled in recent years. Drastic campaign laws regulating advertising in public places and the use of radio and television proved more restrictive than those imposed by the military regime. The electoral process itself was extremely muddled – beginning with voter registration and continuing on into the vote count. All Brazilians had to re-register for the election, and the process produced several mix-ups; finally, a complicated ballot with an overabundance of names of candidates and parties confused both voters and vote counters.

The influence of economic power

To have a shot at winning a seat in the House, a candidate had to spend at least US\$ 1 million. Left-wing opposition

parties charged that at least half of all candidates had little or no chance of victory. They lacked the financial resources necessary to run a campaign that would attract 60,000 votes in heavily populated states or 15,000 in less densely populated areas. Races were won by candidates with personal fortunes or by those who had the backing of powerful economic groups.

Mining companies, as a group, spent the most in the campaign. It is believed that they contributed some US\$ 40 million to the coffers of Senate and House candidates who promised in the constitutional debate to keep an open mind regarding the role of transnational corporations in the national economy. Another large campaign contributor was the automotive industry, also dominated by transnational corporations. It hoped to elect between 30 and 40 representatives to the Constituent Assembly. In the state of São Paulo, industrialist Antonio Ermírio de Morais spent US\$ 50 million in his campaign for governor. Ermírio, the owner of the Votorantin group, Brazil's largest private economic conglomerate, still placed second to the PMDB candidate.

In some states, two minutes of television time in the daily hour-long block reserved for political messages cost each candidate US\$5,000 per appearance. TV proved to be the most effective advertising medium, as results showed that the candidates who won were

the ones who were on the air the most. In the state of Rio de Janeiro, a PFL candidate spent US\$ 80,000 on TV alone.

The predominance of economic power was also reflected in the backgrounds of many candidates. Ermírio ran a strong campaign, and a member of one of the richest families in one of the country's poorest regions, entrepreneur Tassor Jereissati, easily won the race for governor in the state of Ceará. Never before have so many businessmen, bankers, large farmers and financial officials run for elective posts in Brazil.

Conservative trends

Reflecting the importance of campaign contributions, the new Brazilian legislature will have a clearly conservative tone. Three-quarters of the seats in both the Senate and the House went to pro-government candidates. Of the 72 seats in the Senate, the PMDB will hold 37 and the PFL 15. The Social Democratic Party (PDS), the leading party during the dictatorship and now in the right-wing opposition, elected but five senators, and the left-wing Democratic Labor Party (PDT) elected only one. The remaining minor parties, most of which are sympathetic to the Democratic Alliance and the Sarney administration, are not expected to hold more than four seats.

The House and Senate, with their pro-government conservative majorities, will



President Sarney



Leonel Brizola

EBN



Governor-elect Arrais

Walter Santos

form the Constituent Assembly that will write the new Brazilian Constitution. The ideological makeup of those bodies will obviously be reflected in the document. However, the outcome was somewhat different in the state elections. Even though it was the same PMDB that walked away with all but one governorship, voters chose the least conservative candidate in every state except Rio de Janeiro. As a result, the new state governors are likely to be more liberal than their predecessors. Leaning farthest to the left is Governor-elect Miguel Arrais (PMDB-Pernambuco), who lived in exile for nearly 20 years during military rule. Another victim of military repression, Waldir Pires (PMDB), won the governor's race in Bahia, but he is not as clearly defined ideologically as Arrais. In most states, voter preference tended toward middle-of-the-road candidates.

The race in the state of Rio de Janeiro was unique. Rio is Brazil's most politicized state and is traditionally regarded as

a center of political opposition to conservative federal governments. However this year, the PDT candidate for governor, anthropologist and writer Darcy Ribeiro, faced the most powerful party coalition ever constructed in Brazil. Twelve parties, led by the PMDB and the PFL (and including two communist parties), united to back the candidate favored by the federal government, Moreira Franco. This concerted effort was designed to take the wind out of the sails of the opposition movement headed by Leonel Brizola, Rio's outgoing governor, the leading figure of the PDT nationally, and a sharp critic of the Sarney administration.

All against one

The governor's race in Rio became a matter of life or death for the federal government and its supporting coalition. The full strength of the liberal-conservative Democratic Alliance was deployed to prevent the advance of the left-wing opposition headed

by Brizola. According to *Folha de São Paulo*, one of Brazil's largest newspapers, the federal government shaped the rules of the electoral campaign so as to prevent Brizola from appearing on radio and television, thus limiting his ability to support the PDT candidate. Some PMDB politicians admitted prior to the elections that a Ribeiro victory would be tantamount to a national defeat for the Sarney government—even if Democratic Alliance candidates won in every other state.

The Sarney government raised the stakes in Rio, transforming the contest from a race between two candidates for governor into one between the president and Brizola. This fact was evident in the media's coverage of the campaign, which favored the candidate of the Democratic Alliance. With restricted access to the mass media, Brizola and Ribeiro relied on street rallies and direct contact with voters. The PDT's final campaign rally, just days prior to the election, drew a crowd of 500,000

which filled the streets of downtown Rio, but it was not enough to elect Ribeiro.

The Cruzado Plan

The outcome of the elections in Rio de Janeiro brought considerable relief to the federal government. As the initial returns came in, Sarney said that Brizola's defeat signified a victory for the Cruzado Plan, the economic reform program launched last February to combat inflation. From the outset, Brizola had criticized the plan, claiming that working people would be hard hit. He pointed out that wages were frozen based on an individual's average salary between October 1985 and March 1986, while consumer prices remained stable at the levels they had reached by the date the economic reform went into effect.

In fact, the Cruzado Plan did much more than that. It caused shifts and realignments in the economic interests of large domestic and transnational private corporations and among liberal and conservative political sectors, which faced losing control of the situation in view of the financial and social effects of runaway inflation that had been expected to reach 500% in 1986.

Using the price freeze as a smokescreen a group of young PMDB-associated economists proposed a technical solution that amounted to economic deindexation. The plan was enthusiastically accepted by

Sarney, whose administration seemed on the verge of collapse in early 1986. The plan was also acclaimed by the Brazilian public, and by March the government had recovered its lost popularity.

But while the population enjoyed the euphoria resulting from stable prices and enthusiastically monitored price lists at every supermarket, labor unions began to note the effects of a nominal reduction in wages stemming from the manner in which prices were calculated. Nevertheless, the magic of the price freeze did prevent dozens of labor strikes. In the following two months, local industry began to react to some of the inequalities of the Cruzado Plan. Prices were frozen at the consumer level only; wholesale and producer prices remained uncontrolled. Many industries which had failed to update their prices before the plan went into effect began to curtail production, while distributors withheld delivery of products which were later sold at higher prices on the black market.

Most noteworthy was the case of beef. Rejecting the prices established by the government, cattle growers simply stopped delivering cattle for slaughter, thus creating widespread shortages of beef at official prices and the emergence of a prosperous black market. Echoing the claims voiced by other economic sectors that had curtailed production, cattle growers alleged that demand

had grown too quickly as a result of increased consumer purchasing power.

To be sure, demand had increased, not so much because of additional purchasing power resulting from the price freeze, but because many inflation-wary Brazilians had adopted the attitude of "buy now before prices go up again." Misgivings about the price freeze were justified in June and July, when small, 1% to 2% increases went into effect at the retail level, causing the population to give up its price monitoring efforts.

Pressed on the one hand by the widespread scarcity of products and, on the other, by recent, moderate price increases, consumers eventually accepted violations of the freeze in the case of basic goods—thus gradually refueling inflation. From a negative rate in March, inflation rose to an official monthly rate of 1.9% in October. Even government economists admit that this rate does not reflect real inflation, since the administration has been readjusting the way it calculates the inflation rate so as to eliminate major increase components.

Independent research institutes such as the Inter-Union Studies Department (DIEESE) in São Paulo maintain that real inflation stood at about three to four percent per month in later November.

When it was first announced, the Cruzado Plan was intended to eliminate the wild financial speculation

which was being promoted by Brazilian banks, a sector that profited the most during the period of runaway inflation. At the time, Sarney announced that a radical banking reform was soon to be unveiled, and he promised that all forms of speculation would be eliminated in favor of productive investments. Here again the government was successful initially, but it was later forced to retreat. The promised banking reform never materialized, and although speculation in public securities was drastically curtailed, it was soon replaced by speculation in dollars, real estate, telephones and automobiles.

rate of six to seven percent – considered essential if the country's economy was to avert a new recession and produce new employment opportunities.

To bridge supply gaps, the government resorted to the easy solution of liberalizing imports to meet the population's demand for food items such as beef and to relieve industrial bottlenecks generated by the scarcity of certain commodities. As a result, the country's foreign reserves dropped from US\$ 10 billion to somewhere between US\$ 6 billion and US\$ 7 billion. The trade balance, which was hovering at US\$ 12 billion annually, may not reach US\$

government would have liked to see the private sector adjust to the price freeze, but when this proved impossible, public officials resorted to direct intervention, which rekindled the traditional right-wing complaints about economic interference. In the absence of private investments, the Sarney administration resorted to compulsory savings in the form of "loans" to the government, hoping to marshal US\$ 20 billion for investments in energy, land reform, communications and agricultural credit. But the compulsory loans imposed on the purchase of automobiles, dollars, fuel and air travel abroad amounted to only a small portion of what the government needed.

As a result, the expansion of the domestic consumer market resulting from the partial price freeze led to the exertion of intense pressure on the country's productive infrastructure.

To be sure, the price freeze did improve income distribution, and this in turn led to increased consumption. But according to economists at the Brazilian Institute of Analyses and Social Studies (IBASE), of Rio de Janeiro, the increase in the purchasing power of Brazilian workers represented only a fraction of what they had lost in the previous recession and inflation-plagued years. Estimated at 25% the gain comes nowhere near to offsetting wage losses over the past five years, which the DIEESE estimates at over 500%.



Vidal da Trindade

The anti-inflation Cruzado Plan led to shortages and a blackmarket

The banks lost their sources of abundant profits, but investments in productive activities came reluctantly and did not represent more than a small fraction of what the government needed to finance an annual economic growth

7-8 billion in 1986.

By September and October, it became evident that the Cruzado Plan was full of holes. The government had not managed to persuade wary farmers and businessmen to invest in production. The

Nevertheless, the little income redistribution that did occur was sufficient to exert serious pressure on the productive infrastructure. No short-term solution is in sight, since investments in basic sectors, if made immediately, would take three to four years to produce results, and the government cannot enforce its price freeze for that long.

The economic dilemma and the political future

This economic scenario made it imperative to adopt certain remedies that would prove bitter for the population at large especially for the middle-class, which has lost the most with the Cruzado Plan. The remedies, however, were postponed until after the elections to avoid a drop in the popularity of the government which would have favored Brizola. As the year comes to a close, the country stands at an economic crossroads. In January, the Brazilian government is scheduled to meet with international creditor banks to renegotiate part of its foreign debt, currently estimated at US\$ 120 billion.

The negotiable part is nearly one-half of the total, and the Sarney government intends to reach an agreement with the banks without the interference of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In January of this year, the government was able to do precisely that because foreign reserves were sufficient to

allow the government to meet interest payments for the subsequent twelve months. This scenario has changed, however. Reserves are lower and the trade balance has been negatively affected by the considerable growth in imports. Brazil's current foreign exchange position is not likely to inspire the confidence of bankers.

To accept interference by the IMF means to accept the classic remedy of recession, which will mean the death of the Cruzado Plan. Should foreign banks insist on IMF approval before negotiating, the price freeze will be impossible to maintain, especially in such public services as energy, communications and transportation. On the other hand, there is little chance that the country will break with the international financial community by suspending debt payments. At present, the government would like to limit interest payments on the debt to 2 or 3% of the GDP, which means paying the banks only US\$ 6 billion to US\$ 7 billion per year, instead of the US\$ 12 billion it has paid in recent years. This might have been a feasible target in early 1986, but now the country's creditors are much more demanding.

In such a context, the electoral victory of the PMDB and the PFL may entail a loss of popularity for the elected candidates even before they take office. The PMDB, which emerged as the strongest member of the Democratic

Alliance, seems inclined to play a larger role in determining economic policy, especially with regard to renegotiating the foreign debt. The party had only a marginal participation in the preparation of the Cruzado Plan, an initiative admittedly centered around Sarney and conceived by a mixed alliance between opposition economists and the country's economic elites. The plan was not discussed, it was decreed. Now the PMDB has little time left to participate in the adjustments that are to be introduced before the end of the year, since the renegotiation of the debt would conflict with efforts to discuss the new constitution. And international bankers will very probably demand an agreement before the new government takes office in order to avoid future uncertainties.

There is thus a grave risk of a confrontation between the new political leadership, which was elected virtually in the wake of the price freeze, and the economic elites which since September have pressured the government to reduce domestic demand. The accommodation of political forces which until now has bolstered the Cruzado Plan may soon fall apart. The Sarney-PMDB alliance will run great risks, and the overwhelming victory in the November 15 elections may be reduced to nothing more than a sweet memory in less than six months.

Carlos Castilho

The "Cabildo" Revolution

A political framework dating from colonial times is revived by the Sandinista Revolution, leading to a surprising popular participation in the debates over the country's new constitution.

In order to increase popular participation in the recent debate over its new constitution, the Sandinista government employed a framework first developed by Spanish colonial authorities. The idea is that of the *cabildo*, an open forum that encourages citizen input. The original colonial *cabildos* were convened by local leaders,

usually members of the wealthier classes, to discuss regional issues. However, in the beginning of the 19th century, the bodies transformed themselves into centers of resistance to colonial rule.

The goal of the modern day *cabildos abiertos* was to advance a revolutionary experiment unique to Latin America, while attempting to

marshall public participation in the writing of a new national constitution – all at a time when the country is at war with counterrevolutionary groups armed and trained by the United States.

Participation in the *cabildos* was open to all. Of the 3 million Nicaraguan voters, one hundred thousand intervened directly in discussions held in 73 *cabildos* organized by the working classes (urban workers, peasants and public servants), as well as religious, women's, ethnic and military groups. Throughout the entire country, even in the war zones, *cabildos* were in operation over the past four months to discuss the country's new basic laws. Aproximately 2,500 Nicaraguans utilized them to offer their opinions and, as a result, some 1,800 written suggestions (some in the form of



Miriam Goldenberg

The constitution: for the equal participation of women



Miriam Goldenberg

In Esteli, the July 19th celebration of the anniversary of the revolution

simple messages, others as elaborate as legal treaties) have been submitted to the Constitutional Regulatory Committee, the body in-charge with preparing the new charter which will go into effect in early 1987. National Assembly Speaker Comandante Carlos Núñez, who also presides over the Special Constitutional Committee, conceded last September that the revival of the open cabildos was "one of the most fruitful and original achievements of the Sandinista Revolution since the overthrow of Somoza."

For Natán Sevilla, who represents the ruling Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN) in the National Assembly, the revival of people's cabildos amounted to "a literacy campaign in political affairs, in which both the people and legislators exerted their democratic rights." Added

Sevilla: "The people suggested alternatives that had never occurred to National Assembly members, forcing many to change their political approach and undertake a new apprenticeship on how to legislate according to the wishes of the people."

The constitutional marathon

This "revolution within a revolution," as many Sandinistas called the constitutional debate, actually started in November 1984, shortly after the election for a six-year term of Daniel Ortega Saavedra and Writer Sergio Ramírez to the functions of President and Vice-President, respectively. At the same time, a total 1,170,142 Nicaraguan voters (75% of all voters above 16 years of age) also elected a new National Assembly which gave the FSLN

61 of the total 96 available seats.

Also-rans were the Democratic Party, with 14 representatives, followed by the Liberal Independent Party with nine. The Communist Party managed to elect only two representatives.

One of the first tasks assigned to the new assembly was to prepare a Revolutionary Constitution of Nicaragua within two years. In May 1985 a Special Constitution Committee made up of National Assembly members began consultations for preparation of a first draft. All political parties were consulted and presented their suggestions, while a special subcommittee sent a group of delegates to the Soviet Union, France, Yugoslavia, England, Bulgaria, Sweden, Hungary, West Germany, East Germany, Spain, Poland, Argentina, Cuba, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama and Costa Rica in search of assistance in developing the new Constitution.

Early in the discussions, the Independent Liberal Party withdrew from the Special Committee, on the grounds that the state of emergency decreed in 1982 would pose an obstacle to free political debate. A total of six parties, however, stuck with the committee: the FSLN, the Democratic Conservative Party, the Social Christian Party (six seats in the National Assembly), the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the People's Marxist-Leninist

Action Movement (two seats each). In two months they had prepared a first draft (see box), which included a total of 56 rejected articles, in addition to the 165 that had been unanimously approved so far.

The text of the new constitutional draft was then submitted to the open cabildos by a National Consultation Sub-Committee. The rejected proposals were included in the document so as to invite further public discussion.

Over 150,000 copies of the draft were printed and distributed among the population. The media joined in a massive information campaign. In addition, the Nicaraguan administration had the help of such foreign organizations as the West German Eberth Foundation, the Dutch Ecumenic Solidarity

with America and the Finnish Finnida, as well as the governments of Hungary, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and East Germany.

The final draft

The original draft's ten sections, 28 chapters and five special addenda were considerably altered after discussion at the cabildos. Suggestions received from the population were submitted to a special National Regulatory Committee, made up of the same members as the Special Constitutional Committee with the exception of the delegates of the Liberal Independent Party and the Democratic Conservative Party. The latter withdrew from the committee while the discussion was still going on at

the cabildos, claiming that popular debate was unnecessary since the people was already sufficiently represented in the National Assembly.

The second, changed draft included a preamble, eleven sections, 25 chapters and 198 articles (see box). This text was finally submitted to the National Assembly, which began its voting process in mid-September 1985.

In the first 20 days of debates, 30 articles have been approved without any relevant change in relation to the text prepared by the Regulatory Committee. All of the seven parties represented in the National Assembly (including the Liberal Independent and Democratic Conservative Parties) joined in the debates,



Miriam Goldenberg

The constitution: to guarantee the freedom of religion



The first meeting of the National Regulatory Committee, which wrote the second draft constitution

and may present new objections or insist on proposals which have already been defeated in previous voting sessions, as well as new ones.

Concomitant with the National Assembly debates, the Sandinista Front has begun a discussion with all political parties on such fundamental issues as national defense, the role of the media, and freedom of expression.

Despite the predictable conflicts between the parties represented in the National Assembly, the Sandinista Front has surprisingly succeeded in establishing a consensus on such sensitive matters as abortion, presidential reelection, profit sharing for employees, the freedom to organize political

parties and the functions of the army.

During the debate over the constitution, opposition political parties split into two distinct camps. On one side were the parties of the right (the Democratic Conservative Party, the Liberal Independent Party and the Christian Social Party); on the other were the parties of the left (the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and the Marxist-Leninist People's Movement). The right-wing parties tried to instill in the constitution a capitalist spirit and a reformist character, while the left called for a more clearly socialist position, particularly on questions relating to the means of production and in its call for a

single revolutionary party.

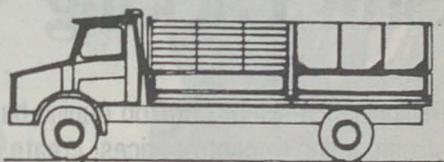
Between these two extremes, the Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN) managed to impose its will, based on its stand for the principle of non-intervention in foreign policy, pluralism in domestic politics and a mixed economy. By late November, over 60 percent of the items in the draft constitution had been discussed and approved by the National Assembly. By January, Nicaragua is expected to have its first revolutionary constitution — a constitution written in wartime, but one that is more open and liberal than many others in the region that were written in peacetime.

Miriam Goldenberg

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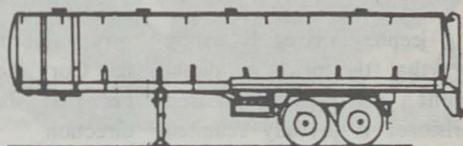
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Asia/Philippines I

Basic Reforms Still Lacking

Philippine President Corazón Aquino has taken strong action to control prices, create jobs and dismantle monopolies. But free market policies seem to have taken priority over promised redistributive reforms.

A jeepney driver is happy that the price of diesel went down; a released prisoner is joyfully reunited with his family; action groups are working in the slums without fear of arrest; a housewife is relieved that rice is a little cheaper.

Most Filipinos feel some immediate benefit from the collapse of Marcos and the accession of the Aquino

government. But how much has Cory Aquino achieved in her first six months in the direction of substantial economic change?

President Aquino on April 30, 1986 vowed to give top priority to alleviating poverty, providing employment and redistributing income and wealth. Her concerns could not have been more appropriate. More than 70

percent of Filipinos today live in poverty. Over 2.6 million people are out of work, and 35 to 40 percent of those working are underemployed.

On June 4, the Cabinet approved in principle an economic recovery program that will be implemented "with or without IMF (International Monetary Fund) approval."

One of its main components is a 10-billion peso (approx. US\$460 million) emergency employment program in the countryside, which aims to provide jobs to over one million people through rural infrastructure projects. The Cabinet has approved a P109.4-billion (approx. US\$5 billion) budget for 1986, P30 billion more than the 1985 budget, in opposition to the IMF preference for a low-budget, high tax program.

The recovery program also eyes reforms in the tax system,



President Corazón Aquino reviews troops

specifically a shift towards direct rather than indirect taxes. It also accedes to the import liberalization program imposed by the IMF on the Marcos administration, in exchange for a rescheduling of debts.

The recovery program was based largely on a report by a task force appointed by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). The report, entitled "Economic Recovery and Long-Run Growth: Agenda for Reforms", outlines several themes for the economy in the short and medium term.

Aside from higher public spending, the report recommends easing credit to the private sector. In May 1985 the Central Bank reduced the reserve requirement of banks, making available P600-million (approx. US\$28 million) in funds for lending to cash-strapped businessmen. Interest rates have dropped from 35 percent in January to 15 percent in October.

In many ways, however, the NEDA report echoes the economic policies of the past. The emphasis on agricultural and rural development through agribusiness is nothing new.

Moreover, the draft program encourages production for export, a long-standing thrust initiated under Marcos. It urges the government to abolish export taxes and to adopt a flexible exchange rate policy, meaning the peso will not be prevented from being devalued.



International Labour Office

Economic gains for working people have thus far been minimal

Furthermore, the report envisions free market competition in the economy. Deregulation – dismantling of monopolies and limiting the government's role in business – is a major thrust, especially in agriculture. Selling public firms to the private sector is another aim. Minimum wage setting, according to the report, should be abandoned by the government, and should be decided in bargaining agreements between workers and employers.

For the man or woman on the street, the best news is the drop in the inflation rate which fell to 2.1 percent in April, compared to almost 40 percent in the same period last year. The fall in the world price of crude oil and lower retail prices for petroleum products have triggered a slight rollback

in transport fares and electric power rates.

Many of the price drops that occurred were beyond the new government's control. International crude oil and urea prices have been falling. Palay and vegetable prices, which were also down, reflected an abundant supply. The oversupply of rice was also due to an overimportation by the Marcos government.

But where the new government could have deliberately acted to bring down prices of some essential products, it failed to do so. During the campaign, Aquino had vowed to repeal the new turnover tax imposed by her predecessor, as well as reduce the energy tax on fuel and electricity, and exempt agricultural inputs from all taxes.

But a huge budget deficit and an enormous foreign debt put an end to those promises. The May oil price rollback was reduced by half as the government increased the specific tax on oil. To finance a budget deficit expected to swell to P38 billion (approx. US\$2 billion) by the end of the year, the finance ministry may rise taxes on cigarettes, liquor and yet again petroleum products.

Aquino did, however, live up to some of her other campaign promises. She lifted the export ban on copra and cut the export tax. She replaced the sugar monopoly with a board with much less power. Its marketing arm, the Philippine Sugar Marketing Corporation (Philsuma), the sole buyer of sugar in the country, was given until the end of the year to wind up operations. The producer price of sugar was raised to P400 (approx. US\$18) from P300 (approx. US\$14) a picul to give producers breathing space.

The dismantling of monopolies and return to free trading in sugar and coconut signal the government's intention to deregulate agriculture and attract investment in the area. Finance minister Jaime Ongpin has proposed the creation of a National Agricultural Corporation to provide capital for joint ventures between Filipino and foreign investors.

Export crops such as cacao, oil palms, tropical fruit trees, among others, will be given

priority. Already, agribusiness corporations such as San Miguel, Tagum Development, Dole, Del Monte, Sime-Darby and NDC-Gurthrie, are being eyed to take part in this project.

The government's agribusiness export thrust seems to place as a far second its policy of encouraging food production to alleviate poverty and hunger. Moreover, leasing agricultural lands to big corporations could undermine the land reform program. Nor can the government easily allow corporations to use public lands. As economist Mahar Mangahas points out, most public lands already have tiller-occupants, and it is only the law that labels them squatters.

The steps taken to dismantle agricultural monopolies have yet to make an impact on the lives of farmers. Despite the lifting of the ban on copra exports, for example, copra prices remain low — in some areas, as low as prices 20 years ago.

And the farmers' biggest dream to own the land they till has yet to be realized. Government efforts to redistribute land have not gone beyond Aquino's order to distribute some 9,000 hectares of foreclosed sugarlands to 3,000 families of sugar workers in Negros Occidental.

According to agrarian reform minister Heherson Alvarez, the government is considering expanding land reform to cover all agricultural lands, including coconut and

sugar plantations. This has also been recommended by a government task force and the scope of land reform is still being debated by the Constitutional Commission.

While farmers waited for their land, the first six months of the Aquino government saw the return of the old elite displaced by Marcos in 1972. Several prominent families hope to recover properties and assets appropriated by the dictator from them. For instance, the Jacintos reacquired all of the 14 companies confiscated from them by the military when martial law was imposed 14 years ago. (Three of the 14 folded several years ago.)

Big business has not been stirred enough by euphoria surrounding the ouster of Marcos to invest in amounts that bring the economy back to life.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) reports that in March and April this year, investments amounted to P539 million (approx. US\$25 million), compared to over P1 billion (approx. US\$46 million) during the same period in 1985. Investments did, though, pick up in April.

Largely responsible for this pick-up in business activity are small ventures (those with capital of P5 million and below). For big business, local and foreign, the rule was still "wait and see."

Some businessmen point to the perceived instability of the new government and the

persistent threat of a coup. Still others fear that the president's stated policy of giving "preferential treatment to the poor" will supersede government efforts towards privatization and free enterprise.

A presidential speech on Labor Day prompted business leaders to convene an emergency meeting. They criticized Labor Minister Augusto Sanchez for his pro-labor and 'socialist' leanings.

Yet the labor minister can boast that since his appointment on March 10, his office has settled 150 strikes, or 67 percent of 228 ongoing-strikes. Moreover, the average duration of strikes has been shortened to 10 days compared to 35 days for the same period last year.

A real problem for business lies in the expected influx of cheap imports. After a two month postponement, the Central Bank began implementing the liberalization program on May 1, when it lifted import restrictions on 143 items. Another 437 items were recently added to the list.

By the end of this year when the program is scheduled to be completed, import duties on 1,267 items will have been lowered to an average 28 percent from the previous level of 48 percent.

Import liberalization comes at a time when local industries are operating at 30 to 40 percent capacity, hardly sufficient to survive against foreign competition.

Not all the old ways of

doing things have fled with Marcos to Hawaii. Reports of anomalies within the new government have begun to filter to the press, sparing not even the Cabinet. A cabinet member has been linked to one of the firms owned by Marcos crony Antonio Floirendo.

Political appointees abound in the new government. Elpidio Macasaet, a pharmacist and now the National Food Authority's (NFA) provincial manager in Palawan is said to have been sponsored by agri-

Hector, to corner rice harvests. Ong claimed that, for lack of funds, the NFA stopped buying rice all over the country. But there have been no reports of the NFA stopping its rice buying operations.

Even more sinister are the reports from a human rights group denouncing continued human rights violations, despite the clean-up in the army and the abolition of the notorious National Intelligence and Security Agency.



International Labour Office

Import liberalization poses a serious threat to local industry

culture minister Ramon Mitra. He reportedly got a P50-million (approx. US\$2 million) budget without going through the NFA administrator.

A farmers' group in Northern Samar also charged that Emil Ong, an NFA administrator, stopped rice buying operations of the NFA in their province to allow rice traders led by his brother,

The Task Force Detainees (TDF) has documented 137 cases involving arrest and detention, torture, murder, arson, and forced evacuation. As of May, 7,479 political detainees remained in prison, awaiting the release which was granted to 501 other political detainees.

Teresa Diokno
Third World Network

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Philippines II

Life in Hills a Struggle for the NPA



Der Spiegel

NPA rebels continue their struggle on behalf of the poor

Badang knows the Samar Island mountains very well. She walks effortlessly down the muddy trails, demonstrating her familiarity with the path of rivers and the location of hidden springs.

To the people of the mountains, she is a daughter and a friend. Like them, she is of peasant stock, made strong and hardy by having to survive the harshness of the elements and the poverty of an island bypassed, it seems, by progress.

Badang is 23 and barely five feet tall. Even with an Armalite rifle slung across her shoulder and a heavy pack on

her back, she does not look like a soldier. But she is a veteran of six years of armed struggle, having joined the New People's Army (NPA), the military wing of the Communist Party (CPP), at the age of 17. Two years later she married Basyo, now 30, who commands an NPA company in western Samar.

Basyo stands ramrod straight. Even as a child, he wanted to be a soldier, and he was in fact a cadet commander of his high school class in eastern Samar. His parents were farmers trying to support a large family with the yield of a small plot of land, and they could not afford to send him

beyond high school. So at 18, soon after graduation, Basyo ran away from home and joined the guerrillas in the hills.

Badang has borne four children, two of whom died of chicken pox. Infant deaths are quite common in Samar, and the loss of her babies did not pain Badang as much as her current separation from her two young daughters who live with her mother. Using the language of war, she describes the struggle within herself and her effort to overcome an invisible enemy—the pain of separation.

Fertile ground for revolution

An early morning mist covers Camp Bukang Liwayway, an NPA training camp hidden among the trees deep in the hills, accessible only through the mountain trails that Badang knows so well. Five platoons of guerrillas, who range in age from 12 to 47, stand at attention and sing the "Internationale" in their native Waray language as a red flag with three gold stars is raised. The banner represents the National Democratic Front (NDF), a rebel movement allied with the NPA.

It is not difficult to understand why these people are here. Any of the 200 peasant guerrillas of Company 2 will tell you. Basyo, for example, proudly proclaims



The guerrilla forces consists mostly of poor peasants

that he is fighting "because I come from the class of the oppressed."

Samar is fertile ground for revolution. The Philippines' third largest island, it is also the poorest. Its primitive agricultural economy is controlled largely by landlords who have traditionally demanded two-thirds of the harvest as land rent. The average annual income on the island falls far below the poverty level, and malnutrition is one of the ten leading causes of death. The island's literacy rate is one of the lowest in a country where 11 percent of the population cannot read or write. As a result, the island has one of the highest outmigration rates in the Philippines. In the 1960s, 77 percent of the population left Samar in search of a better life.

The first communist cadres started organizing in Samar in 1971 with one squad of ill-equipped guerrillas. In the 1970s, their numbers grew despite massive counter-

insurgency operations. Those military attacks actually increased support for the NPA among the population. Today, rebel leaders claim that the island is infested with hundreds of rebels NPA fighters, in formations of either platoons or companies. Ninety percent are peasants and most are armed with high powered rifles. Rebel leaders assert that two-thirds of the island is under their control, and that 70 percent of Samar's 1,600 villages (which are called "barrios") maintain revolutionary mass organizations.

Life in the hills

Ka Koy was a member of that original squad of NPAs in Samar, and at 47 he is the oldest guerrilla of Company 2. The color of rich earth, his skin is reminiscent of his peasant background, and he carries his Armalite as naturally as he would a plow. Ka Koy fled to the hills in the

early 1970s when, as an active member of the peasant organization in his barrio, he caught the military's ire.

Allen, at 12 the youngest in the company, plays with toy soldiers when he is not out in the grounds drilling with the rest of the guerrillas. An orphan, he refused to part with a group of rebels who visited his barrio, so they brought him to the camp where he works as an orderly and joins in the drills.

The life and spirit of Company 2 is Ka Atong, the political commissar. He walks around the camp wearing beach shorts and a smile. Before the declaration of martial law, he was a newsboy for *The Manila Times*. After becoming active in the labor movement, he was detained by the government. While in jail, he shared a cell with former MP and TV personality Orly Mercado. He remembers watching Mercado, taken by a fit of madness and desperation, planting mango seeds in

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Manila's Fort Bonifacio.

Life at Bukang Liwayway, where rebel soldiers return once or twice a year for brief training sessions, starts at dawn, when the guerrillas are awakened by the clanging of a bell. They begin to emerge from their quarters, which are made of palm leaves and banana stalk and are positioned around the camp according to platoon. The rebels gather in formation for their morning drill, which consists of an hour of marching and exercise, performed to the rhythmic

stationed, each guerrilla is allowed only two-thirds of a can of rice per meal.

The flag ceremony is at eight, after which the guerrillas get down to their daily chores: some tend the vegetable plot; others staff the mess hall. Some get physical training on obstacle courses, while others attend lectures on political theory or military strategy. The women fighters take lessons in herbal medicine or staff work, such as handling finance and intelligence gathering.



The NPA is negotiating a cease-fire accord with President Aquino

chanting of "Bagong Hukbong Bayan."

Next is a bath in the cold waters of a running stream which cuts through the camp. Breakfast consists of rice and fish or, as in other meals, of whatever is available: snails, frogs, wild game or cobras, even monkeys. While in training, the guerrillas get additional rations of rice—the equivalent of four milk cans for every five persons. In the field, where they are generally

At day's end, after the evening meal, everyone gathers around for singing and dancing. The songs in Waray tell of life in the hills, of the oppression of the peasantry, of waging revolution. Dances are interpretative, performed with guns and other props, and they are often used as tools for politicizing communities. There are skits, too, and the guerrillas are enthusiastic performers.

Life in the hills is Spartan.

The budget for each guerrilla, says Badang, who is also the finance office of Company 2, is only P185 (about US\$10) a month. The bulk of that goes for food, the rest for other necessities like soap, toothpaste and medicine. Only when a platoon is able to save part of its budget can it afford extras like briefs, shoes, bullet pouches, packs and pants made of taffeta—the same cloth used to make umbrellas—which the guerrillas prefer because it is light and dries easily.

For funding, the rebel movement relies on the support of organized communities, which is supplemented by the taxes it imposes on the large companies operating on the island.

Ka Larry, a former seminarian and one of the CPP's leaders on the island, recounts the difficulties of doing political work among hardly literate peasants. Often, the cadres themselves had to launch literacy campaigns to facilitate their political organizing and military work, which were being delayed because illiterate peasants had difficulty grasping abstract concepts like imperialism or military strategy.

Before long, the cadres developed a basic course for party recruits which included Marxist theory as well as Philippine history. The course was simple, yet comprehensive, and it has now been adopted for use by party cadres throughout the country.

Party activists also entered into the productive sphere,

teaching peasants new farming techniques and urging them to diversify their crops. For guerrillas and barrio organizations, they conducted health courses, emphasizing acupuncture and herbal medicine. These courses have advanced the medical skills of NPA health teams in Samar to the point that they can now perform basic surgery and amputations, although Ka Larry admits that they are still often unsure about when to amputate.

Rebel governments

In many of the organized barrios, a rebel government sets policy on health, education, defense and the local economy. Local militias, composed of peasant volunteers armed with rudimentary weapons like the *pugakhang* (a home-made shot-gun) defend the barrios. Each of the community's major sectors—farmers, women and youth—is well organized.

In barrios where no such councils exist, the local peasant organization usually takes the lead.

Organized peasant communities, with the support of party cadres and the NPA guerrillas, have forced a reduction in land rent to one-third of the harvest, Ka Larry claims. This is accomplished at first by farmers secretly withholding from the landlord his traditional share of the crop. Then, as the peasant association increases in strength, it confronts the landlord directly. In some



A wounded rebel headed for treatment

cases, peasant associations have seized the land.

Rebel leaders cite this "land reform" as the principal achievement of their movement. And, they add, they will never surrender their arms if it means forfeiting this and other victories they have won.

Resistance to cease-fire talks

The February uprising which overthrew the Marcos regime hardly touched Samar. Indeed, from these harsh hills it is difficult to imagine such a carnival revolt in Manila. The reality here remains one of hunger and war. Villages razed by military search-and-destroy operations are only beginning to be rebuilt. Battles continue to be fought; a new battalion of government troops has moved in.

Rebel leaders say they welcome the ongoing cease-fire negotiations. A cease-fire would mean a respite from the

war, time for training and education, and time to help peasants to increase production.

But there is resistance among rank-and-file guerrillas and even in the organized villages. "Our difficulty," says Ka Larry, "is trying to make our people understand that a cease-fire is good, that the leadership is not making a mistake when it goes through cease-fire talks."

Having achieved a certain amount of power and pride using a gun, the peasant is understandably reluctant to put it down. As Ka Larry explained, armed struggle has achieved for him many of the basic necessities long denied to the peasants of Samar: land, basic education, good health, and above all, a sense of self-worth. ●

(Reported and written by
Sheila S. Coronel/Third
World Network Features;
edited by G.R.)

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Changing Patterns in Burkina Faso

Seven women have ministerial positions in the revolutionary government of Captain Thomas Sankara. One of them heads the strategic Finance Ministry. The new role of women in one of Africa's poorest nations is outlined in this interview with Catherine Traore of the Burkina Faso Women's Union

Catherine Traore, a 33-year-old married woman without children, is a member of the board of the Women's Union of Burkina Faso, an organization that since its inception in September 1985 has been instrumental in mobilizing the country's female population in the struggle for equality of rights

with men, as well as for women's participation in local politics. In addition to the Women's Union, Burkina Faso also has a Federation of Women, founded prior to the inauguration of the current revolutionary government, but which is now limited to a group which calls itself apolitical and prefers to

distance itself from the government and social reforms.

Having completed a course in journalism in Strasbourg, France, Ms. Traore worked for several Ouagadougou newspapers, but gave up her profession because of her disillusionment with the policies of the country's official press before the Sankara revolution in 1983. She represented her country in The Pan-African Women's Congress held last September in Luanda, where she was interviewed by **third world** magazine.

What major changes have occurred in Burkina Faso as regards the position of women since the installation of the revolutionary government?

— Many things have changed



Burkina Faso women play an outstanding role in the country's armed forces and revolutionary government

in the past three years. Women in my country were much discriminated against before Captain Sankara rose to power. They had to do everything, they were real economic motors, but their efforts were never acknowledged. Women existed only to bear children, cook and do the housework. They were never called upon when it came to political decisions. They were forever behind men. Men were diffident, and although they agreed they needed the help of women, they feared this help might grow into a much more active form of participation. Well, all this came to an end with the revolutionary regime. The enormous tasks facing the new government made women's participation mandatory, and hence men's resistance has receded. Now, three years later, Burkina Faso may take pride in the fact that it is one of the few countries in the world where no less than seven women are Cabinet members. Women control the ministries of Finance, Culture, Health, Environment, Family Affairs, Tourism and National Solidarity.



Women still face many difficulties in the countryside

holding jobs in government were confirmed in their positions. Our government has made a strenuous effort to recover the country's economy, which was in a deplorable state before President Sankara rose to power. We have begun to solve the external debt problem, and are now settling our obligations with domestic enterprises, so as to reestablish confidence and be able to invest in basic areas. We are very proud of everything women have accomplished in the government so far. In the area of health, for instance, each province has been equipped with at least two ambulances. Hospital care is free, thanks to a system of quotas. Thus medicine is no longer a privilege of the rich, and the people again trust the quota system, which had been previously demoralized by the bourgeoisie, which collected money from the taxpayers but never really accomplished anything. These changes have

taken place in all of our thirty provinces.

Are there any women provincial governors?

— Yes, three, I believe. But this isn't all. We have three women as ambassadors — to West Germany, Ghana and Mali. And there is also the Motorized Presidential Guard, which is made up exclusively of women.

When things change so fast as they have in Burkina Faso, it is usually easier to change the written law than the customs, especially in the countryside. What has really happened in your country?

— Introducing quick changes is, of course, more difficult in rural areas. Educational levels are low in distant agricultural areas, and even lower among peasant women. African women have their role in society spelled out for them the moment they are born. They are seldom given

Which of these is the most important in your view?

— The Ministry of Finance, I think. Don't they say that whoever controls finance controls everything else? In my opinion, the fact that a woman should head such an important ministry is a huge demonstration of confidence. During a recent Cabinet change, nearly all women

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education; most families prefer to send their boys to educational institutions. This entire scenario has been changing since March 1985, when we promoted a national women's meeting to discuss educational problems. We had delegates from virtually all over the country. At the time we decided that the national women's day should be celebrated not with dances and food, but with meditation. Among the re-

but also by increased popular awareness of the problem. By making rural populations sensitive to this issue, we were able to convince our people that forced marriages are undesirable.

Have you reached any decision on the problem of women's circumcision?

— Yes, we called for abolishing circumcision. This habit is physically damaging to women. Medical experts lecturing

addressed and solved in everyday life. We decided to travel to the countryside to discuss the matter of circumcision with as many villagers as possible.

What about polygamy?

— Here I will have to refer to an analysis of last year's meeting. We had divided our agenda into four main subjects: the juridical situation of women, the matter of education, women's participation in economic development, and women's participation in political life. These major topics were divided into subtopics, one of which was polygamy. We had to be very careful here, because the problem of polygamy is very common in the countryside. We are still a very young revolution, and cannot propose to solve all problems at once. To assume a radical position against polygamy would almost certainly arouse very strong reactions and would meet the opposition of many people. Thus we decided to begin with a propaganda campaign. We went slowly at first, letting it be known that in practically all revolutionary regimes in the world polygamy was never seen as a good thing, because it gives rise to discrimination among women. Within a polygamous household, one talks of a favorite wife, a first wife, a second wife, and so on. This has a reflection especially on the education of children, because the favorite woman's children will usually get a better treatment than those of the other



Jan Stegeman

Women have traditionally been at the basis of agriculture

commendations approved at the meeting was the banning of forced marriages. In my country, families have traditionally decided whom their daughters should marry. It doesn't matter whether the woman loves her future husband or not. Family interests come first. We decided we had to eradicate such a custom, not only through a decree or law, 58 — third world

during last year's women's meeting were able to show how objectionable the practice is. Yet, for many years, women have passively let themselves be circumcised. The banning of female circumcision is already being discussed at a governmental level, but we know that, even if a law is passed on this matter, the problem will have to be

wives. We started from the principle that any woman is free to accept or refuse a polygamous marriage. If she accepts, she must be aware of the resulting problems. In the same manner, we tried to convince men that they must not discriminate among the various wives they eventually plan to have. We proposed that before a man decides to take a second wife, he should secure his first wife's express consent. We thus gradually introduced difficulties for polygamous marriage, especially in the economic area. Now, what with their increasing participation in the quotas and cooperative system, men find themselves with less available money to buy two, three, four or even five wives. We believe, for instance, that by insisting on the first wife's consent, the number of polygamous marriages will drop considerably, because a woman seldom accepts to divide what she has with another woman who will necessarily have the same rights as she has.

Have these proposals been accepted?

- A family law code has been proposed by the Ministry of Justice, but we don't want the matter to remain on a legal level only, we want it to be discussed more democratically. Jurists are not necessarily the most involved with the process of women's emancipation. We plan to have the code discussed by an ampler commission including women, workers, peasants, labor unions, and



Werner Gartung

Reforestation is now a national priority

other ministries. This ample commission has already been put together and is bringing all problems relative to the family to public debate. The family bill is near completion now, but the discussion on a village and peasant community level is still going on. Once the code is ready, I believe emancipation of women in Burkina Faso will have advanced by at least ten years. It will also give us a special opportunity to make people realize that our government is sincere in all its decisions, especially those that relate to women.

How would you assess President Sankara's performance?

- Right now our government is deeply involved in extending support to peasant communities and small villages in the countryside. This includes the construction of schools, maternities, health centers and nurseries. All of this work is being accomplished in a communitarian, participatory way, through the quota and cooperative systems. A basic concern is local self-financing, leading people to take the initiative instead of adopting the traditional attitude of relying on the government for everything. We are a poor country, some say we are the poorest country in the world. We therefore have to show

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Access to public jobs increased women's self-reliance

that we are capable of doing something for ourselves, before we win external credibility. Thus we have been building maternities, small hospitals and schools. Later we can go to the government and say, "We have done this and that, now what are you going to do about supplying us with medicines, hospital beds and schoolbooks?" Women have contributed to accomplish all of this work. Another important ongoing program is a railway extending from the interior of Burkina Faso to the border with Niger. This work is being accomplished on a solidarity basis. People turn over to the government a certain amount of money at the end of each month to help finance the purchase of essential imported equipment. They later offer themselves up as volunteer workers, replacing foreign manpower which would have to be paid for in dollars. In the struggle against desertification, women have been playing an out-

standing role, both in reforestation and with regard to the use of agricultural practices that will preserve the fertility of the soil.

How is the campaign against desertification progressing?

- This is one of the main programs launched by the revolutionary government. Every foreigner visiting our capital is invited to plant a tree. Each visiting head of state is asked to do the same. Each ministry, each governmental office and mass organization keeps woods or orchards where trees are planted on national holidays. But our effort goes much further than that. We are trying to persuade the population in the countryside to abandon the habit of clearing land by burning the existing vegetation in agricultural areas. A popular belief in Burkina is that burning woods in agricultural areas helps to ward off the evil spirit of

winter while inviting rain. We have attempted to show that burning woods causes more evil than good. When woods are burned, trees that protect the soil are destroyed and the desert is made to advance. We are also promoting visits by peasants to the more fertile areas in the north to demonstrate the consequences of desertification. The south and west of Burkina are still green, while in the north the Sahel desert sands render agriculture and cattle raising virtually impossible. Many of the southern peasants, once they have visited the north, go back to their lands convinced that they cannot go on burning their woods, otherwise desertification will destroy their plantations and pastures.

How have neighboring countries reacted to the reforms introduced by the revolutionary government in Burkina?

- With the exception of Ghana, we are surrounded by governments that do not share our revolutionary ideology. This renders our work more difficult by generating tensions. As far as we are concerned, we try to be as straightforward as possible with regard to our positions. If our ideological beliefs prevent us from agreeing with certain things, we let our stance be clearly known. This has resulted in a number of enmities, because diplomats in general prefer not to face truth straight in the eye. We do not use half words when we de-

defend our revolution and foreign alliances. All of our neighbors, except Ghana, have criticized us because of our relations with Libya. Well, we see Libya as a friendly country, but it doesn't follow we are guided from abroad. We are a poor country, but we want to be dignified and responsible, and strongly reject certain insinuations made in West African countries to the effect that we are terrorists. Whoever carries out a revolution is intent on changing an unjust state of affairs or solving a class problem. Some people don't agree that they should give up their privileges, and some governments feel threatened by our process of change, because our effort to eliminate injustices frightens those who don't wish to alter inhuman living conditions.

What about the war against Mali?

- We have had problems with Mali. In December 1985, our two countries came very near to an armed conflict, which we deeply regret. The border conflict is a colonial heritage. Among us Africans borders are not taken so seriously. Thousands of Burkinans live on the other side of the border. I myself was born in Mali, but my entire family comes from Burkina. For the people, there are no borders. For them, borders are an illusion. There are always those who try to draw limiting lines, but these lines are rejected by the people. What really exists is a



U.N.

In the countryside women are encouraged to repel submission and economic exploitation

very old history, throughout which people have moved over territories which once belonged to them and were divided by colonial rulers. We don't want to be in the same situation as southern Africa, where a country supported by imperialistic powers makes it impossible for its neighbors to develop economically in a revolutionary way. We cannot ask a starving and thirsty population to contribute with money to buy arms. Yet, if our project is threatened, we will have to defend ourselves. Of course we prefer to invest

massively on works that will directly benefit our citizens. The quota system has permitted us, for instance, to immunize all Burkinan children, between zero and 14 years of age, against measles, meningitis and yellow fever. We plan to continue improving health, educational and economic conditions, and will do everything we can to prevent these plans from being interfered with by military or political provocations from abroad. ●

Beatriz Bissio
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Banking with Islam

Some modern-day Islamic banks, which charge low, "non-usurious" rates of interest, are nearly a decade old. The debate today is over the structure of an economic model based on the Koran.

Discussion of the nature of Islamic banking reflects closely the progress of the arguments on the nature of Muslim society as a whole. Thus, as recently as two decades ago, a prime topic for discourse was the distinction between usury and interest. Much effort was devoted to

showing how 'modern' rates of interest were fair and consequently not usurious. Interest-based banking was thus seen as perfectly allowable from the point of view of the Sha'riah. To be fair, Muslim governments were then busy removing the application of Islamic laws

from the few areas like marriage, divorce and inheritance, where secularization had not yet encroached. In the circumstances, the debate on usury was in a very real sense a considerable advance on this dismal scene.

Since then, we have come a long way. Not only have most Muslim jurists and economists come to the view that any interest is *riba*, many are actively trying to elaborate the concept of *riba* in its widest sense. People who talk of usurious and non-usurious rates of interest are few and far between and are not taken seriously by the majority of the Muslim economists and jurists.

If one looks at the develop-



The Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt, with one million depositors, is the biggest non-*riba* bank

ment of Christianity, it is possible to identify the basis of present day capitalism in the successful wedge driven between usurious and non-usurious rates of interest. Thus the conscience of Christian morality was assuaged, by banning usurious rates of interest – a stipulation which still persists in the banking statutes of many European countries. It would appear that the 70s provided a watershed for this critical debate among Muslim jurists and economists. Against a backdrop of re-surgent Islam, the hurdle of banishing all forms of interest by categorically branding it as *riba* was successfully overcome. However, much time and a great deal of rigorous effort will be needed to work out the concept of interest from the totality of Muslim economic thinking. Indeed, if care is not taken, the near-consensus reached on equating interest with *riba* may be sabotaged by notions related to the idea of the 'Time Value of Money' slipping in through the back door. Much hope for this critical breakthrough thus rests on the continuation of the quest for a reassertion of Islamic values throughout the Muslim world.

Today, in view of the global revival and resurgence of Islam, it is only to be expected that the theory of Islamic banking will increasingly become a part of the debate on the Islamic economy as a whole. Already the latest literature on the subject is showing distinct signs of this



A non-riba bank in Malaysia

trend. Studies like Umar Chapra's *Towards a Just Monetary Order* (The Islamic Foundation, Leicester 1985) and Waqar Masood Khan's *Towards an Interest-Free Islamic Economic System* (The Islamic Foundation, Leicester 1985) concentrate on the macro-economic impact of an interest-free economic order rather than on the techniques and operations of individual Islamic banks. These and other studies have begun to question the institution of banking *per se*, and suggest modifications which would alter the nature of financial intermediation traditionally performed by banks. It is only a matter of time before institutions radically different from present day banks emerge to facilitate the kind of financial intermediation required in an Islamic economy. What then are the salient features of

banks which render them unsuited to the needs of the Islamic economy?

Riba-banking, as it has developed in the West and then transported across the globe, is an institution whereby a large number of small depositors' funds are channelled to a small number of big investor industrialists. This intermediation is done by way of paying a fixed interest to the providers of funds and charging a higher – but still fixed – interest to the users of funds. The difference is the margin, or profit, of the bank. Three features of this structure are important to grasp. Firstly, entrenched interests find it almost effortless to perpetuate the status quo, since the banking system will provide them with all the capital they need at a fixed cost against the security of their capital base. Newer groups seeking to enter this fraternity would be handicapped by the lack of collateral security which they can offer. They will thus be at the mercy of the entrenched groups to provide the same. Secondly, the institution of interest allows this financial intermediation to be carried out without the bank getting involved in the business affairs of the capitalist. Only in the event of default does the bank take any interest in the management of the business. Finally, the granting of finance by the bank is not necessarily tied to any underlying real transaction. For all the bank is concerned, the money may be used to gamble or for spurious

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consumption. This last point has important implications for consumer behavior in a society.

Muslim jurists, on the other hand, have outlined instruments of financial intermediation which run counter to these fundamental banking practices. For instance, it would appear that the order of preference among the commonly available modes of financing is as follows: *mudarabah*, *musharaka*, *ijara*, and *murabaha*.

Mudarabah is an agreement between two or more persons whereby one or more of them provide finance, while the others provide entrepreneurship and management to carry on any business venture, whether trade, industry or service, with the objective of earning profits. The profit is shared by them in an agreed proportion. *The loss is borne only by the financiers in proportion to their share in total capital.*

Shirkah or *musharika* as it is sometimes known, is a partnership between two or more persons whereby, unlike *mudarabah*, all of them have a share in finance as well as entrepreneurship and management, though not necessarily equally. This is akin to equity participation and both profits and losses are shared according to agreed proportions.

Ijara or *Bay al-Mu'ajjal* is sale against deferred payment, either in lump sum or in installments. This instrument yields similar facilities to leasing and hire-purchase contracts, with important qualifications which will be

elaborated below.

Murabaha is now used to refer to a sale agreement whereby the seller purchases the goods desired by the buyer and sells them at an agreed marked-up price, the payment being settled within an agreed time-frame, either in installments or lump sum.

There are many other financial instruments, particularly in relation to agricultural transactions, which Islamic banks can utilize, but the above four will suffice for the purpose of highlighting the points at issues.

It is clear from the very definitions of the four operations that *mudarabah* and *shirkah* will involve the sharing of risk between the providers and users of capital. *Ijara* and *murabaha*, although not totally risk-free, are much more readily acceptable to people used to operate on *riba*-banking principles.

Because of the nature of the risk taken, the providers of capital or the manager of capital – the banks – cannot afford to take a back seat in *murabaha* and *musharika* contracts. They have to become more actively engaged in the management of the business, particularly as regards monitoring the progress of the venture. This is especially so in *mudarabah* where any loss is exclusively borne by the providers of capital. Thereby the whole nature of the client-bank relationship is transformed.

Even in cases like *murabaha* and *ijara*, the bank can provide

finance only if there is an underlying *real* transaction. Thus all financing and spurious consumption are excluded by definition.

The nature of the risk involved and the need for underlying real transactions makes the operations of an Islamic 'bank' qualitatively different from those of a *riba*-bank. And the involvement of banks in the monitoring of business profitability is a concept alien to capitalist ethics. It is thus that, as the Islamic banking movement progresses, more and more Muslim economists are coming to the conclusion that a novel institution will have to evolve to take care of the needs for financial intermediation in an Islamic society.

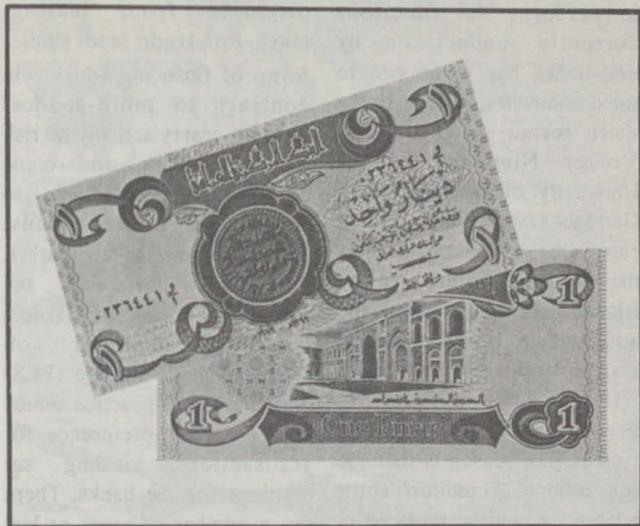
All are now agreed that Islamic banking cannot operate in a vacuum. The operating environment has a critical bearing on the proper functioning of an Islamic bank. Many more Muslim economists have developed the ideas first mooted by Sayyid Nawad Haider Naqvi in his study, *On Replacing the Institution of Interest in a Dynamic Islamic Economy* (Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad, 1981) and subsequently elaborated with his colleagues in *Principles of Islamic Economic Reform* (Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad, 1984). In particular, the studies of Dr Umar Chapra and Waqar Masood Khan, noted above, offer differing

viewpoints within the same operational framework.

With the introduction of 'total' interest-free banking in Pakistan and the root and branch Islamization of the economy in Iran, these theoretical contributions will find a ready ground for experimentation and implementation. Pakistan is bedeviled by its foreign aid-related economy and this will continue to cast a shadow on any attempt to usher in a comprehensive Islamic economic program, as post-Numeiri Sudan is already finding to its cost. Iran is more fortunate. Not only does it not have any debt to worry about, the country has also gone through a momentous Islamic revolution and hence its people are more receptive to ideas of thoroughgoing change in the direction of conformity with Islamic principles.

While it is too early to predict the outcome, given the favorable operating conditions, the Islamization of the economy in Iran and the development of banking in such a context is likely to change the shape of Islamic banking in the next decade.

It is vital to remember at the outset that most Islamic banks have evolved in an environment where they have sought to provide the services currently offered by *riba*-banks. Even in the case of Iran and Pakistan, the existing *riba*-based banking system is being adapted to perform similar functions under Islamically valid financial instruments. There is thus the



classical problem of what social scientists call "the transition phase". The evils of the present system are well catalogued, the merits of the Islamic system are also adequately understood. Increasingly, the requirements for a successful operation of an Islamic economic and banking system are also being delineated. The problem remains of how to get from the present system to the Islamic one. There are conceptual problems in delineating the priorities in such a manner that movement is made towards the final objective. Thus, for instance, the elimination of *riba* may not be the first step to be taken in all instances in order to arrive at an Islamic economic system. Other parameters of the economy may have to be corrected before the question of *riba* is tackled. Once these conceptual priorities have been sorted out, the enormous problem of manpower motivation and training

to run the new system begins. Only then the evolution of the system towards the desired Islamic solution can begin.

Fortunately, the Muslim masses seem more than prepared to give Islamic banking a fair chance of success. Most of the Islamic banks which operate in secular environments do so because of irresistible popular pressure. This is borne out by the enthusiastic welcome accorded to the introduction of Islamic banking in Pakistan, Sudan and Iran and also by the large number of depositors of such banks as the Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt (over one million) and the Faisal Islamic Bank of Sudan (over two hundred thousand). Indeed, Egypt, in the past, has actually shut down Islamic banks in order to eliminate the popular pressure for general Islamic reform which they used to generate.

The idea of harnessing Islamic financial instruments

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to perform the functions currently undertaken by *riba*-banks has given rise to some anomalies, at least in the short term. As Professor Volker Nienhaus of the University of Bochum (West Germany) states in a recent paper, "It is commonplace in the academic literature on Islamic economics that the interest-free Islamic financial system would be both more efficient and just than the present day interest-based system. The reason is that the conventional creditor/debtor relations would be replaced in the Islamic system by partnership relations where entrepreneurs and banks share the profits and losses.

However, if one looks at the practice of operating Islamic financial institutions, one does not find much profit-and-loss sharing. By far the best part of the earnings of most of the Islamic banks

originate from leasing, mark-up trade and similar forms of financing which – in contrast to profit-and-loss sharing – carry actually no risk for the bank and come economically very close to conventional interest-loans. Thus there is a marked discrepancy between the theory or ideals of Islamic banking, centered on profit-and-loss sharing (PLS) and the actual practice which shows a clear preference for transactions yielding set earnings for the banks. There are a number of more or less obvious macro-economic reasons for this discrepancy: among the factors militating against PLS are the uncertainty of the bank's future earnings in absolute terms, the danger of accumulating bad risks, the problem of identifying and judging market opportunities from among the proposed entrepreneurial projects,

problems of evaluating profit assessment, supervision of the partner's management of the financed enterprise, etc. In the light of problems such as these, several Islamic banks have in a sense imposed self-restrictions with regard to the amount of PLS financing they will undertake.

In the long run, this would mean a very serious limitation and defect of Islamic banking because it implies that the Islamic banks would only finance specific 'real' transactions like the purchase of raw materials or of machinery, and that they have no suitable instruments to provide an enterprise with funds to be used at the discretion of the management, i.e. with free or unconditional liquidity."

Indeed, most Islamic banks have shied away from *mudharabah* and *shirkah* and have concentrated on *ijara* and *murabaha*. This is also the case



The mass-based Islamic banks have a good record while small elitist institutions have suffered huge losses
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with the Islamic Development Bank set up by the Islamic Conference Organization. Those which have ventured into the realm of *mudarabah* and *shirkah* have had their fingers badly burnt. The Islamic Banking System International Holdings of Luxembourg and the Islamic Development Bank are replete with write-downs of equity participation projects.

The operation of this tendency to fit round pegs into square holes is seen clearly in the case of Pakistan. The banks there have evolved an instrument which incorporates the benefits of both but leaves out the pitfalls of either. This is the PLS or profit or loss sharing scheme. This is not a true *mudarabah* in that the bank does not bear the losses exclusively as required by such a contract and it is not a *shirkah* (partnership) as the bank does not provide equity financing. It is a typical compromise to accommodate the risk management ideas of bankers brought up in *riba*-banking tradition.

Careful analysis of the literature on Islamic banking will reveal that there is a plethora of such adaptations. The hope is that instead of ossifying and restricting their operations to leasing and mark-up type transactions, the Islamic banks will evolve new instruments and methods to incorporate the spirit of *mudarabah* and *shirkah* transactions.

Be that as it may, a survey of Islamic banks and their



Small businessmen are the main clients of Islamic banks

results shows the chequered history of the movement. One can see why the euphoria of three years ago has given way to more sober assessments of the prospects of Islamic banking. We have had chastening news from gold losses at Dar al-Maal al-Islami to property losses at the Kuwait Finance House. In a sense, neither are in the mainstream of Islamic banking, in that they rely on a small number of big depositors for their source of funds. The mass-based banks

like the Faisal Islamic Bank of Sudan, the Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt and the Dubai Islami Bank, have a more solid track record.

As soon as results from Iran and Pakistan become more widely available, it will be possible to further analyze Islamic banking and its influence on the future of the entire Islamic economic system.

●
M. Iqbal Asaria.

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Innovative Drug Policy Under Attack

The Bangladesh essential drug policy addresses many of the distortions found in Third World pharmaceutical markets. Multinational producers are concerned that other countries might adopt similar reforms.

Four years ago, the Bangladesh government used World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines as the basis for reforming the country's manufacture, distribution and marketing of drugs. Adopted despite a strong lobbying effort by drug companies, the policy is coming under increasing attack by those same firms and their allies connected to

the WHO.

The policy, which reduced the number of drugs legally available in Bangladesh from 4,500 to 2,500, has actually led to increased profits for drug companies — albeit at lower profit margins. But as one drug company executive explained, the industry is concerned about the potential multiplier effect of such a pol-



Doctors and professors of medicine lobbied for the essential drug policy

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icy on the rest of the Third World. For example, Dr. Zafullah Chowdhury, one of the architects of the Bangladesh policy, met recently with Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi to advise him on India's attempt to formulate a rational drug policy. Today, some 65,000 drugs are marketed in India.

The Bangladesh Drug Policy, promoted by a concerned group of doctors and professors of medicine, is not particularly ambitious in scope. The WHO maintains an Essential Drug List that includes 250 medications that it believes are sufficient to meet a majority of the needs of Third World countries. Of the 4,500 drugs marketed in Bangladesh prior to 1982, 1,700 were banned after being declared useless or harmful by an eight-member government committee of experts. The list of 2,500 drugs now legally available in Bangladesh is, then, ten times larger than the WHO list.

The more salient aspect of the drug policy is its attempt to alter the nature of the drug industry in Bangladesh. The market prior to 1982 displayed many symptoms common throughout the Third World. Several drugs banned in many developed countries were being produced; vitamins and tonics with high added value received priority over antibiotics; and the market was carefully parceled between leading companies which rarely produced more than one antibiotic. Thus 84 percent of the

market was controlled by eight leading multinationals.

The Bangladesh drug policy is attempting to address these problems through the following major provisions:

- Companies are allowed to make only single-ingredient products (except in exceptional cases). This facilitates monitoring.

- Companies are required to have a manufacturing base inside the country.

- The number of liquid preparations is limited. They are found to be more expensive, less effective and unsuited to the country's environmental conditions.

- No multinational company is allowed to manufacture vitamins, tonics or antacids. These are now the exclusive domain of local companies.

- Drugs that were banned were required to be destroyed rather than rechannelled to other Third World markets.

The effect of the policy has been dramatic, as evidenced by 1985 figures. The total pharmaceutical market increased to 3.4 billion takhas (about US\$ 113 million) from 1.5 billion takhas (about US\$ 50 million) in 1982. The market share of local companies jumped to between 35 and 40 percent, compared to 16 percent three years earlier.

More companies were producing a multiplicity of antibiotics, and prices had actually fallen. Although inflation had cut the value of the takha in half, the price of one commonly used drug, Septrin,



Consumers enjoy lower prices as a result of the drug reforms

dropped to 1.3 takha from three takhas in 1982. Comparable reductions were achieved for other drugs.

However the pharmaceutical industry, concerned that the example would spread to other Third World nations, began to mount a campaign to reverse the policy. Meanwhile, the WHO, which had enthusiastically promoted the original idea, got cold feet early on. Dr. Hafdan Mahler, WHO director general, gave only belated and lukewarm support.

Last year, the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, an organization of multinational drug companies, recruited a Sri Lankan lawyer connected to the WHO to write a book attacking the policy. D.C. Jayasuriya used his former WHO consultancy status to lend an air of legitimacy to his sponsored study, "The Public Health and Economic Dimensions of the New Drug Policy of Bangladesh."

Jayasuriya's book is being

presented as if it were a WHO document on the Bangladesh drug policy. Copies of it were mailed to drug controllers, health ministers and other influential administrators throughout the Third World.

In April, the Third World Network, based in Penang, Malaysia, sent a letter to the WHO's Mahler, warning him of the drug industry's campaign to discredit Bangladesh's new policy. It urged the WHO to distance itself from the Jayasuriya study and to conduct its own independent evaluation.

The Bangladesh drug policy is not perfect. It is afflicted with administrative problems, and the government has been unable to control the smuggling of banned drugs from India. However, it is a bold start by a poor Third World country to address its health problems. ●

Reported by M. Iqbal Asaria, Third World Network;

written by G. Raymond

Third World Books

CRISIS: THE IMF AND NEOLIBERALISM

Rafael Urriola

Centro de Planificación y Estudios Sociales (CEPLAES), Quito, Ecuador, 1984.

In this study, the author highlights the origins of the current world crisis and the role played in it by transnational corporations and the economic strategies of developed countries. A considerable portion of the study is dedicated to the effects of such strategies on the poorest areas in the world, especially Latin America. As the author makes clear, the region's current situation and the feasibility of any economic strategy can be better evaluated if one takes into account the complex inter-relationships of the world economy.

By quoting an impressive amount of data and deliberations contained in IMF official documents, the author reveals the role played by the International Monetary Fund in "managing" the crisis, i.e., the Fund's evident collusion with transnational companies and industrial country governments.

The neoliberal model of economic policy is examined in depth, including the utter disaster it represented to the Chilean economy and the contradictions inherent in its theoretical formulation.

DESTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT: SOUTHERN AFRICA AT WAR

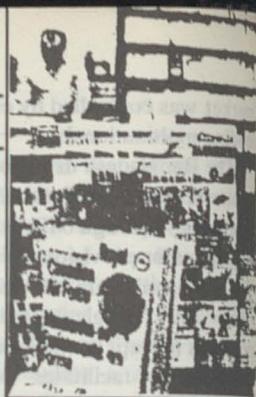
Phyllis Johnson and David Martin

Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, Zimbabwe, 1986.

This is the most updated and complete study appearing



in recent years on the destabilizing actions of the South African apartheid regime against neighbor countries. Phyllis Johnson and David Martin head the Southern Africa Research and Documentation Center in Harare. The SADRC is an independent organization whose patron is former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, and whose aim is to study the causes and effects of South African military, economic and political aggression on Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland. A major tenet in



the book is that the Pretoria regime began imposing general sanctions against its neighbors long before the international community decreed its first sanctions against apartheid.

WORLD HUNGER: TWELVE MYTHS

Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins
Grove Press, New York, USA, 1986.

Despite the over 30 billion dollars in food aid from the United States over the last 25 years, hunger has increased worldwide rather than decreased. Over 500 million people are chronically undernourished in the world today. In *World Hunger: Twelve Myths*, Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins, two of the world's foremost experts on the problems of food and agriculture, go beyond Live Aid and USA for Africa to address the issue of world hunger — shattering myths, examining causes and most importantly, suggesting solutions that go beyond revaluations and band-aid help. Lappé and Collins

examine head-on the policies and politics that continue to keep hungry people from feeding themselves, while showing that hunger is not inevitable.

THE CAPITALIST INTERNATIONAL: STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS (1918-1986)

René Armand Dreyfuss
Editora Espaço e Tempo,
Rio de Janeiro, 1986.

The title's play on words implies that capitalistic elites

beyond national borders in coordinating their activities in Third World countries. The author exposes the behavior of transnational corporations in Latin America, dedicating special attention to the interplay between its economic and political aspects, especially when the aim was to destabilize a nationalistic government, as was the case with Salvador Allende in Chile and the crisis which preceded the 1964 military coup in Brazil.

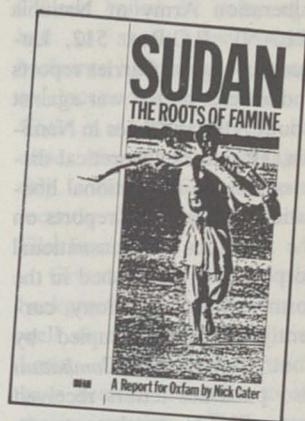
WOMEN, MEDIA, CRISIS: FEMININITY AND DISORDER

Michèle Mattelart
Comedia Books, London, U.K.,
1986

In her book, Michèle Mattelart looks into the relationships between the present crisis of Western societies and the changing position of women, and examines how women's movements have contributed to this interplay; how the media have adapted to better exploit the new markets created by these movements, and how the current recession has driven women back into the family where they are increasingly asked to take on the functions of a shrinking welfare state. The author argues that, both in the 'First' and Third worlds, the current economic crisis can be understood only from a moral and political viewpoint.

SUDAN: THE ROOTS OF FAMINE

Nick Carter
Oxfam, Oxford, U.K., 1986.



In a report prepared for Oxfam, Nick Carter explains why the Sudanese poor starved in 1984, continued to starve in 1985, and will need a lot of help if they are not to starve in the near future. The research work coordinated by the author provides background information on the economic, political and developmental factors which have brought millions of Sudanese to the brink of survival. International help in the form of short-term handouts, argues the author, cannot hope to solve the long-term problem, since they merely postpone the inevitable recurrence of famine. The author argues that only an understanding of the causes of Sudan's current crisis can prevent a return of the devastating famine of the past three years.



are more internationalized and more thoroughly organized than the controversial Socialist Internationals of the past. Armed with abundant historical documentation, René Dreyfuss, a Uruguayan professor now living in Brazil, demonstrates that the Western powers' ruling classes organized themselves since the beginning of the 20th century into a solid block that goes

Third World Publications

THE COMBATANT - Published monthly by the SWAPO's armed wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), P.O.Box 512, Lubango, Angola. Carries reports and articles on the war against South African forces in Namibia, as well as theoretical discussions on the national liberation struggle and reports on the activities of transnational corporations established in the former German colony currently illegally occupied by South Africa. *The Combatant* also publishes letters received from PLAN combatants, as well as poetry and SWAPO communiqués. (In English.)

VIVA - A bimonthly magazine issued by the Peruvian Women's Center, Parque Hernán Velarde 42, Lima 1, Peru. Carries reports, surveys and theoretical studies on the situation of women in Latin America, especially in Peru. (In Spanish.)



VISTAZO MENSUAL - Issued by Centro Exterior de Reportes Informativos sobre Guatemala, Apartado Postal 74206, CP 09080, Delegación Iztapalapa, Mexico DF, Mexico. An anti-imperialistic publication containing information on the political, economic and social situation in Guatemala.



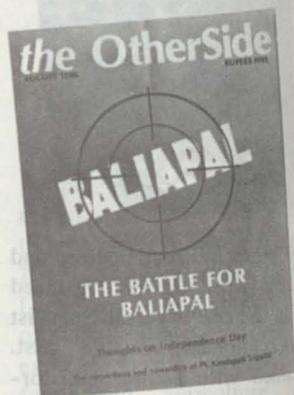
Carries a 30-day summary of major events in the country, with special emphasis on popular causes and the political-military action of movements belonging to Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional de Guatemala (URNG). (In Spanish.)

CONTACT - A monthly bulletin issued by the INTREDOC world network of non-governmental organizations, with the support of the Chilean ILET and the Canadian CIID. Contact/ILET, Casilla 16637, Correo 9, Santiago, Chile. *Contact's* goal is to exchange experiences with the



use of alternative information technologies, as well as to debate and research the use of microcomputers in Third World countries. (In Spanish.)

THE OTHERSIDE - 6/15 Kaushalya Park, Hauz Khas, New Delhi 110016, India. A monthly publication carrying articles, reports and documents on the situation of several Asian countries, especially In-



dia, from a Socialist viewpoint. Special emphasis is placed on conservation of the environment, workers' claims and the effort toward disarmament. (In English.)

Independent Filmmakers in Search of Unity

Latin American independent filmmakers are joining together to promote the distribution of their films.

Latin American filmmakers labor under the difficulties typically facing local producers in Third World nations, and they confront a common enemy - local theater chains that are monopolized by North American movies. However, the region's filmmakers are organizing themselves in an attempt to open space for their films in their countries. Although the process has been painfully slow, it is beginning to show results.

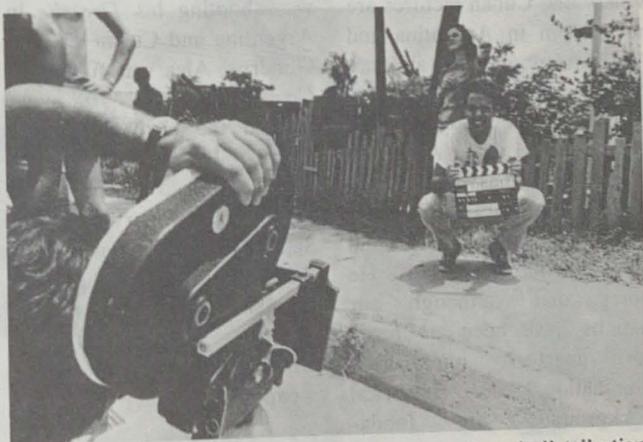
In Brazil, for instance, a 1976 law requires every feature film showing to open with a locally produced short film. For many years, theater chain proprietors have resisted the requirement and largely circumvented it by producing themselves brief, poor quality shorts intended to fulfill the letter, if not the spirit of the law. In the process, they have taken work away from independent filmmakers and created among local moviegoers a profound dislike

for Brazilian-made pictures. Meanwhile, at least 100 good-quality, professionally made shorts, produced and directed by highly qualified filmmakers are currently shelved in Brazil. Their producers are awaiting action by the Brazilian Cinema Council (Concine) to force their release and distribution.

Concerned with national liberation struggles at home and with the preservation of local cultural values, Latin

American filmmakers have often had to make heroic efforts to produce their movies. Miguel Littin, a Chilean exiled 12 years ago, had to sneak clandestinely back into his country to shoot on location *Acta general de Chile*, a documentary on life under the Pinochet dictatorship. *Acta General* was recently shown at the Venice Film Festival.

Given their similar background and interests, as well as obvious cultural ties, Latin American filmmakers have decided it is time to end their isolation. They have begun to meet at festivals and to create their own organizations, such as the Latin American Association of Filmmakers (ACLA) and the Latin American New Cinema Foundation, which was inaugurated last year during the Havana Festival under the chairmanship of Colombian novelist Gabriel García Márquez. The



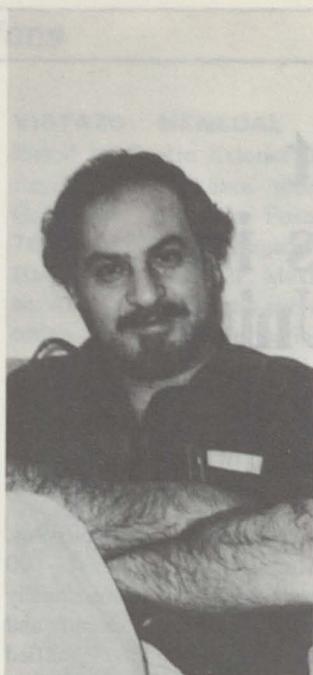
Over one hundred good quality Brazilian films still await distribution

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Chiquito Chaves

Brazilian Nelson P. dos Santos



Chilean Miguel Littin



Anauri Alves

Cuban Pastor Vega

organizers' hope is to increase the exchange of information and improve the distribution of their work in Latin America. "Unfortunately" says Pastor Vega, president of the Cuban Film Institute, "our isolation is still considerable. Brazilian motion pictures are not seen in Venezuela, Cuban pictures are not shown in Argentina and Argentinian movies are not exhibited in Mexico".

Despite such isolation, the work of Latin American filmmakers has much in common. Littin attributes this to "a sort of underground communications channel". He notes that "although our nations have been arbitrarily torn apart by imperialistic domination, our historical backgrounds are fundamentally the same." Among

the evidence for his position is that in the 1960s, three innovative films with similar ideological perspectives were produced independently in three different countries. While Nelson Pereira dos Santos was shooting *Rio 40 graus* in Brazil, Fernando Birri was shooting his *Tire die* in Argentina and Cuban Thomas Gutiérrez Alea was filming *El Compañero*. *Rio 40 graus* marked the birth of *Cinema Novo* in Brazil; in Argentina, *Tire die* marked the emergence of the revolutionary school of Santa Fé; Alea's movie marked the birth of post-revolutionary filmmaking in Cuba.

Cinema as a political weapon

This new genre of movie,

which subverted the Hollywood-oriented aesthetics of the past, allowed Latin American filmmakers to work with modest budgets and without sophisticated equipment. And obviously their movies more closely reflect the realities of their peoples and countries than their foreign counterparts. Latin American dictators staunchly opposed the development of this new form of Cinema, yet it has survived and helped to increase popular resistance, for instance in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panamá and Puerto Rico, where cinema is being used as a weapon in local liberation efforts.

Before the advent of television, cinema served as a sly but powerful means of "selling" imperialistic values to

Latin American audiences. "We have always been satellites of a system which is alien to us", said Cuban Pastor Vega. He believes that interaction at cinema festivals is insufficient, and stressed the need for Latin American filmmakers to join forces so that cinema can play a role in the region as part of a common, mixed culture.

Argentinian filmmaker Alejandro Doria (author of *Esperando la Carroza*) agrees. "Of course we have problems with raw materials, distribution and the domestic market", he said. "But on top of this, we are too fragmented". In his opinion, a collective effort should be made to expand the market for Latin American motion pictures. Carlos Álvarez, a Colombian documentary producer, says he learned about the Brazilian Cinema

Novo movement from *Cahiers du Cinema*, the avant garde French film magazine popular in the sixties. For him, the only way to put an end to such isolation is to create alternative distribution networks. "For years we lived in fear and were unable to produce movies that were addressed to the average Latin American. Now we are trying to find our own way under a more democratic rule", Doria noted.

Puerto Rico movies are largely unknown to their own people, since most theaters are dominated by U.S. distributors. "We've been a U.S. colony since 1898", says Puerto Rico filmmaker José García. "We get no support whatever from the Puerto Rican government, which merely administers a colony on the behalf of the U.S.. And for the U.S., Puerto Rico is only a convenient location for

shooting cheap films". As a result, Puerto Rico filmmakers are looking elsewhere for partners in co-production efforts. Still the products of such joint efforts are shown only at universities and labor union halls - when they are shown at all.

Mexican cinema is also struggling through a serious crisis. Tied to the state since its inception, Mexican cinema had its heyday in the 1940s. In an article published in the Mexican weekly magazine *Proceso*, critic Hector Rivera noted that "there aren't very many theaters and those few that exist show 90 percent North American movies. The official industry, controlled by the National Cinema Institute, is politically manipulated and its films are of poor quality."

Independent Mexican producers have been trying to change this deplorable state of



Co-productions, like Ruy Guerra's *Erendira*, may be an alternative for Latin American filmmakers

affairs. Paul Leduc's *Frida* won the award for Best Film at the 1986 Havana Film Festival and was highly acclaimed at several other international festivals. Unfortunately, as if this indifference



Bolivian director Jorge Sanjines filming among Andean Indians

toward local cinema were not enough, a fire recently destroyed 7,000 films stored in the Mexican Cinema Library, thus all but obliterating the memory of Mexican filmmaking.

A peculiar situation prevails in Chile: its films are mostly produced abroad. In the past ten years, 176 Chilean films – including 56 features and 86 shorts – have been produced. Miguel Littin, who now lives in Mexico, is among the most prolific producers. In Uruguay, cinema is “a business like any other, with production and distribution monopolized by the same interest groups” according to Manoel Carril. He deplores the fact that films are shown in Uruguay by only two dominant commercial

distributors while a third subjects the few independent theaters to various sorts of pressures.

Carril added that there is no Uruguayan movie industry to speak of, with the exception of

a few isolated efforts by independent or exiled filmmakers who work on joint productions in other countries. It is much the same in Paraguay, although a few filmmakers have succeeded in sustaining a national motion picture industry. Among this group is Hugo Camarra, who produces and directs his own films, the most recent a documentary entitled *Peregrinación a Caacupe*, about the catholic pilgrimages to the sanctuary of the virgin of Caacupe.

Cinema and national sovereignty

In Panama, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador and

Nicaragua, cinema is linked to national liberation efforts. In Panama, the objective of the Experimental Cinema University Group is clear: to use cinema as a tool for dissemination of political ideas, or, in the words of Pedro Rivera, “to create a cinema that will stand for national sovereignty and the recovery of the Panama Canal Zone”. Rivera blames the U.S. presence in his country for the stunted development of the Panamanian film industry. “The U.S. military stationed in Panama resort to several means to dominate the media, and have among other things prevented the emergence of a genuine local cinema”, he said. According to Rivera, Panamanian moviegoers have been brainwashed and conditioned by U.S. patterns of interpreting reality.

In El Salvador, Radio Venceremos, the rebel radio station, has produced films and videotape documentaries such as *El Camino de la Libertad* and *Mira como lucha mi pueblo*, portraying the struggle of the population against U.S.-supported government death squads.

Argentinian producer Octavio Gettino estimates that, with an alternative distribution system stretching throughout Latin America, films produced in the region could be seen by hundreds of millions of spectators. “Latin America is a very important market and we should be able to play a larger role in it”, says Venezuelan filmmaker Mario Handler,

who proposes both increased joint production and distribution. He believes that, under joint production schemes, Latin America could produce an average of 250 films per year.

It is against this background, that the Latin American New Cinema Foundation will inaugurate a film school in Havana next January. The school's purpose is to reform Latin American cinema and create a meeting place for cinematic studies. The foundation will admit Latin American, African and Asian students, 80 of whom have already been selected from 19 countries. Among the Brazilians who will attend are students from two of that



A film school for Third World students opens in Havana in January

country's poorest areas, Ceará and Piauí. In addition to the school, the foundation will also raise funds for the production of films based on stories

submitted by prospective scriptwriters. ●

Maria Thereza Azevedo

Brazilian Journalist who specializes in cinema



THIRD WORLD BOOK REVIEW

- ☆ is a bi-monthly magazine for all those interested in the Third World; it offer topical and informed discussion of issues and people in the Third World, but above all it offers the most comprehensive available review of all literature and publications about and from the Third World.
- ☆ is a forum for authors from the Third World, but at the same time takes an aggressive and radical stance toward all literature — past, present and future — from and about the Third World.
- ☆ is a service for both general and academic readers; our contributors write in a clear and precise style that eschews jargon.
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THIRD WORLD BOOK REVIEW, Kwame Nkrumah House, 173 Old Street, London EC1V9WJ.

Schoolmaster Controls Weed, Scares Industry

A rural school teacher found an insect that would attack a weed that was threatening Himalayan agriculture. As a result it was the pesticide industry which felt threatened.

Chandrasekhar Lohumi was a schoolmaster in rural India with an eighth grade education, but armed with a stick, a flashlight, a cloth bag and a used microscope, he was able to discover an ecologically safe means to control a weed whose proliferation was posing a serious threat to Himalayan agriculture. However, a pesticide industry publicity

campaign frustrated all efforts to implement his findings, thus demonstrating how potent economic groups can scuttle appropriate technology when it runs counter to their interests.

Lohumi began his research in the 1960s, when local farmland was being overrun by a rapid-spreading weed called "lantana camara". Farmers

who axed the weed found that doing so only promoted its growth. Pesticides, besides presenting dangerous ecological side-effects, were too expensive for the region's small farmers.

Searching for an alternative strategy to curb the spread of the weed, Lohumi recalled reading an article about the successful control of a similar problem in Australia. Scientists there discovered an insect which fed on the offending plant, and they released it in the affected area. Lohumi resolved to find a similar biological method to control lantana.

After several years of research, the teacher discovered, on the basis of extensive trials, an insect which fit the bill. He then undertook to determine whether the insect posed a threat to other types of vegetation. If so, its release on a large scale would simply sub-



Himalayan agriculture was being seriously threatened by a rapid-spreading weed.



Chandrasekhar Lohumi, the schoolmaster who put fear in the hearts of pesticide manufacturers

tute one problem for another.

Based on painstaking experiments conducted on 276 different varieties of plants, Lohumi proved that his insect had a taste only for lantana and did not attack other forms of vegetation.

As news of his discovery spread, the Indian government appointed a committee of scientists to review his research. The committee praised the teacher's work and his thorough compilation of notes and field observations. Eventually, Lohumi's research earned him several awards, including the prestigious Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Award for agricultural

research. He began to be invited to participate in gatherings of prominent scientists.

Lohumi, however, was more interested in seeing that the Himalayan villagers benefited from his work. But pesticide manufacturers, recognizing the threat that such inexpensive "low-tech" solutions could pose to their industry, conducted a campaign to discredit Lohumi's research and thwart attempts to apply his findings. When Lohumi died in 1983, large-scale biological control of lantana had not yet been implemented.

Undeterred, Lohumi focused on other projects, beginning

with research into the inexpensive and ecologically safe control of pests. He discovered the utility of the cob of the maize plant in controlling several species of insects that attack India's agricultural crops.

He found that burning the cob, which is generally wasted after the grain has been separated, yields an ash that is effective in destroying pests but is harmless to humans and livestock. The ash is most effective when it is mixed with water, boiled and sprayed on crops. And instead of dangerous side effects, the homemade pesticide has some curative properties for cattle, and the wash proved effective in washing clothes and cleaning utensils, thus presenting an alternative to detergents.

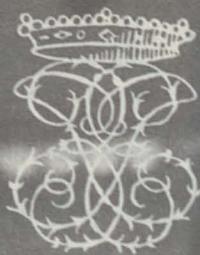
Lohumi also conducted research on bacteria that promote decay of aging buildings. His work on identifying such bacteria and the means to destroy them opens up new possibilities for the inexpensive conservation of India's crumbling historical monuments.

Lohumi's work received recognition despite the attempts by some technocrats to undermine the implementation of his discoveries. Eventually, he gave up primary school teaching and moved on to the Pant Agriculture University, where he passed on to his students his perspective on appropriate and affordable technology. ●

Reported by Bharat Dogra and Vir Singh

Third World Network; written by Guilherme Raymond

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Joh. Enschedé en Zonen

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LIBERATION THEOLOGY:



Religious News Service Photo

A NEW ROLE FOR THE CHURCH



Since the late 1960s, the Catholic Church has undergone a radical change in Latin America. Having "opted for the poor," hundreds of bishops, priests and pastors have broken

away from the ruling classes and questioned the established order. The social and political practices of Latin American Catholics provided the basis for the emergence of the Liberation Theology and, more recently, the phenomenon known as the People's Church. Nowhere has this new concept of the role of the church in the Third World been more widespread than in Sandinista Nicaragua, where many priests not only participated in the actual fighting but are now active members of the revolutionary government. However, since the early 1980s, Liberation Theology has found new followers in Africa, where an emerging new religious

outlook and social practice has not been limited to Catholics alone.

This issue's special feature is comprised of two articles. The first describes the ideological struggle which has led to the creation of a "Church of the Poor" in Nicaragua. The second is an interview with Zimbabwean President Canaan Banana. Just as Nicaraguan priests Ernesto Cardenal and Tomás D'Escoto, President Banana has placed himself as "a man of God" at the service of the revolutionary cause.

The recent history of the Nicaraguan Church can be divided into three broad phases. The first phase extends from July 19, 1979, with the victory of the Sandinista revolution, to March 4, 1983, when Pope John Paul II visited Managua. The second goes from March 4, 1983 to July 7, 1985, the date of the

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Religious News Service Photo

The second phase began with the visit of Pope John Paul II to Nicaragua on March 4, 1983. Both in his speeches and gestures, the Pope clearly favored a hierarchical, absolutist Church system, and this had two immediate consequences. One of them was that the Bishop of Managua, Monsignor Obando y Bravo, acquired the self-confidence to launch an offensive against the government and the revolution; the other was that the Church of the Poor lost much of its prestige and legitimacy vis-a-vis the established Catholic hierarchy.

Yet, if a papal visit to Nicaragua was necessary to discredit the Church of the People (and that was the only real motive for the Pope's visit to Central America), it provided sufficient proof of its existence and of the "potential menace" it might represent.

The enthusiastic reception that Nicaraguans gave the Pope — who, on the one hand, defended the revolution by shouting "We want peace!" and "Power to the people!" but on the other continued to lend his full support to the traditional church — would be difficult to explain if the revolution did not already contain a known and explicit alternative to the traditional Church. Had this alternative not existed in the minds of the people, Nicaraguans would have divided themselves by either standing with the Pope against the revolution or standing with the revolution against the Pope. No such rupture occurred, however. The overwhelming majority of Nicaraguans — especially the poor and the campesinos — remained Catholic and revolutionary.

The third phase began July 7, 1985, with a month-long period of fasting and prayers promoted by Father Miguel D'Escoto, the country's foreign minister. His campaign kicked off the "evangelical insurrection." From that point on, the Nicaraguan Church underwent two basic changes. On the one hand, the political conflict between the Catholic hierarchy and the government escalated. In the center of the dispute stood Monsignor Obando y Bravo, Archbishop of Managua, who had been

"evangelical insurrection". That insurrection gave rise to the third, ongoing phase.

In the initial period following the overthrow of Somoza, the conflict between the Church and the government remained at a low level. More relevant were the internal clashes within the Church itself, although these did not yet foreshadow any fundamental breach between what were becoming two distinct perspectives. The Church of the Poor was not yet clearly defined. It lacked a structure and a strategy of its own. To be sure, there were indications of a radical change in the Nicaraguan Church — such as the participation of priests in the government, the declarations issued by the base communities, etc. — but it remained impossible to discern a real alternative to the traditional Catholic institution.



ordained Cardinal on May 25, 1985. On the other side stood the Church of the Poor, which reemerged with an ecclesiastical identity and a pastoral program of its own, not as a direct response to the political conflict between Obando and the government, but as a result of the spiritual experience it had accumulated during the revolutionary process.

The clash between Cardinal Obando and the Sandinistas

In 1985 the Nicaraguan government was faced with two serious confrontations: one with the *contras* (the external aggression), and another with the institutional Church as represented by Cardinal Obando y Bravo (the internal aggression). This led Nicaraguan Commandante Tomás Borge to remark that, "When we are attacked at the border by 10,000 FDN (*contra*) troops, we know what to do, but when we are attacked at home by a group of bishops, we are at a loss as to how to react."

The conflict with the Catholic Church intensified with Monsignor Obando's appointment to the post of cardinal, for it was widely known that he was a key figure in the Nicaraguan opposition. Obando maintained relations with opposition parties, business groups, *contra* leaders and U.S. government officials. He was, among other things, decorated by the Institute for Religion and Democracy, a neoconservative organization in the U.S. It is widely believed in Central America that the Archbishop of San Salvador, Monsignor Arturo Rivera y Damas, would have been a better choice for the job. Damas had better religious, ecclesiastical and theological qualifications than any other bishop in the region as a result of his pastoral work, his ability to negotiate, and the fact that he has a doctorate in canon law. Furthermore, according to merit, two other archbishops — those of Costa Rica and Panama — would rank ahead of Obando.

Yet, the Pope chose to name the region's

most controversial, questionable and ambiguous bishop as cardinal of Latin America. Nicaraguans joke that Monsignor Obando y Bravo was promoted to the rank of cardinal thanks to the revolution. Making light of this ironical twist helped them accept the bitter reality.

Initially, the government received the news of the bishop's promotion with nationalistic pride — pleased that a Nicaraguan had been chosen. But that attitude shifted as Obando's political role became more clearly defined. One of the first scandals was his first mass as a cardinal — celebrated in Miami on June 13, 1985, before a crowd of 5,000, mostly Nicaraguan and Cuban exiles. In attendance were two prominent counter-revolutionaries — Adolfo Calero, a former Coca-Cola manager in Managua who was the head of the then newly-formed Frente Democrática Nacional (FDN), and former Sandinista leader Eden Pastora. On his return to Managua, the cardinal was welcomed by his followers with the same pomp and circumstance as the Pope in 1983. But his political involvement was so evident that no Central American archbishop attended the solemn mass that was said in his honor. Several



The Pope's visit to Nicaragua in 1983 was intended to discredit the Church of the People

Special

Nicaraguan bishops were also conspicuously absent.

The mass's sermon elaborated on an excerpt from the Apocalypse entitled "The war between Michael and the red dragon," the implication being, of course, that "Michael" was Miguel Obando, and the "red dragon" was the Nicaraguan government. The FDN's official radio station, "September 15," urged Nicaraguans to "stand by the side of our cardinal. Here is a new opportunity to show that we have not been conquered by the communist enemy. No one can defeat us if we stand united in our faith."

On June 20, 1985, Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo began a tour of Nicaragua, giving special attention to the three provinces of his own archdiocese. In all of his public appearances he behaved more like a politician than a religious official. The following excerpt from an editorial published by Nicaragua's opposition newspaper, *La Prensa*, on July 14, 1985, offers a vivid example of the degree of frenzy prevailing among the Nicaraguan right wing at the time: "Thousands shall perish to his right and left, but he (the Cardinal) shall not be touched by his enemies, because the Lord has chosen him. The life of Cardinal Obando mirrors the glory of God. He does not speak in his own name: it is the Lord who speaks through his mouth."

In his sermons, the Cardinal repeatedly proposed a "reconciliation" along the same lines as Ronald Reagan. For the U.S. president, reconciliation must result from negotiations between the government and the *contras* under the condition that the Sandinistas abandon their revolutionary program. In other words, peace may be possible only if and when the revolution is defeated. As long as the revolution prevails, there will be war in Nicaragua.

The strategy adopted by the Nicaraguan



Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo

Church officialdom could not be stated more clearly: given that the external aggression was proving unsuccessful, it was necessary to create a domestic military front, and no organization seemed better suited for the purpose than the Church. Hence the renewed interest of overthrown bourgeois groups in the power of the Church. This connection between the Church and a domestic military front was so notorious that the government eventually decided to intervene, with President Daniel Ortega declaring the state of emergency on October 15, 1985.

Under military dictatorships such as exist in Chile and Paraguay, the state of emergency is a legal way of institutionalizing political repression. In Nicaragua, however, where there had been a revolution of the people, the state of emergency was designed to defend the people against attacks originating from outside as well as inside the country. This was clearly recognized in a document signed by over 100 priests and nuns: "This measure (the state of emergency), even if it may be objectively wrong, was taken not to repress the population, but to protect its interests in view of the forces that threaten the revolution" (*Amanecer*, No. 38-39, December 1985, pp. 10-12).

The government's intent was precisely to avoid the arrest or expulsion of church members who merely sympathized with the counterrevolution. To date, only those who opposed the revolution by illegal or terrorist means have been affected by the measure, since there is a legitimate, officially organized political opposition within Nicaragua. Daniel Ortega has promised to lift the state of emergency as soon as the U.S. stops attacking or threatening to attack Nicaragua.



The "miracle of the revolution"

In many Latin American countries, people have resorted to the social refuge offered by the Church to defend their rights or save their lives (especially under military dictatorships). It is quite another thing, however, when such haven is used by a minority against a revolution undertaken by the overwhelming majority of the people.

The irony of the situation in Nicaragua was that those who had previously oppressed the people and despised the Church now presented themselves as profoundly Christian and fond of the poor once they had been overthrown by the revolution. Nicaraguans jokingly call this the "miracle of the revolution," a fake miracle which apparently converted all Somozistas into good Catholics and ardent champions of Christianity.

The political nature of the conflict between Cardinal Obando and the Sandinista government also became evident during the Cardinal's visit to the U.S. Reagan quoted from one of Obando's speeches to bolster his effort to obtain congressional approval of a US\$ 110 million aid package for the *contras*. The Cardinal never denounced the attacks on his own people, which have already caused 12,000 deaths while subjecting most of the population to the cruel privations of a war economy. The Bishop of Juigalpa, Monsignor Pablo Antonio Vega, who shares Cardinal Obando's ideological views, conceded that "There is military aggression, but there is also ideological aggression, and it is obviously a greater evil to kill souls than to kill bodies" (*Amanecer*, No. 36-37, p. 36).

The "evangelical insurrection"

The third and ongoing phase of the evolution of the Nicaraguan Church began with a month-long "Fasting and Prayer Campaign for Peace on behalf of Life and against U.S. Terrorism" that was held from July 7 to August

6, 1985. Its main proponent was Father D'Escoto, the minister of Foreign Relations in the revolutionary government. This "evangelical insurrection" was the outcome of the following set of circumstances:

1. The determination on the part of Reagan and the U.S. government to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution through terror, armed attacks and lies;

2. The attempt to justify the attacks on Nicaragua in terms of a holy war between good and evil, God and the Devil, the U.S. and the Soviet Union, a war in which Reagan was presented as the champion of evangelical and Christian values;

3 The conscious, permanent silence on the



Father D'Escoto was the main proponent of the "evangelical insurrection"

part of official Nicaraguan Church with respect to the continued attacks on Nicaragua and its theological justification;

4. The need to turn to the spiritual force of the oppressed and the incalculable force of which the weak are capable of exerting when faced with a powerful enemy.

Nicaragua had been coping with all sorts of imperialistic attacks – military, economic, political, diplomatic and juridical. It had become necessary to take the battle to the theological field and, in this case, the only forces Nicaragua

Special

could count on were the faith of the poor and religious people and whatever instruments the Church of the Poor might have.

On July 14, 6,000 members of the base communities gathered in León under the slogan: "Christ the Lord of life gives us hope to face the aggression." It was this massive mobilization that launched the evangelical insurrection. Fasting and prayer demonstrations took place throughout the country, and July 26 was proclaimed the "National Day of Fasting for Peace." The campaign drew support not only from organized Christians, but also from the country's vast popular and official segments. Shops did not sell food, and even the president kept a strict 24-hour fast. The message proclaiming the day of fasting read, "We are depriving ourselves of food today as a joint expression of the suffering brought upon us by the war waged against us by the

imperialistic devil."

Solidarity from the Latin American Church

On July 23, Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns, Cardinal of São Paulo, Brazil, addressed a letter to Father D'Escoto in Nicaragua, lending his support to the evangelical insurrection and adding a Latin American dimension to the protest. One of the paragraphs stated that: "Under the present circumstances, your fasting calls the attention of the entire ethical world to the predicament of your people. Your prophetic gesture is a denunciation of the attempt to kill the seed of the new life sown by the Sandinista Revolution."

On July 28, Dom Pedro Casaldáliga, Bishop of São Félix do Araguaia, Brazil, arrived in Nicaragua. "I do not come alone," he said. "I represent 23 Brazilian bishops and 200 human



"...The Nicaraguan Church of the Poor discovered the spiritual force of Latin American ecclesiastical solidarity..."



The Church of the Poor, through the action of the people, succeeded in coordinating its energies and resources

rights organizations, labor unions and Christian associations in Brazil.”

Actually Dom Pedro represented much more than that. He represented the clamor of all the poor Latin American Christians who have had to struggle for survival. Dom Pedro visited seven of the country's eight provinces, going to all corners of Nicaragua to comfort people and to demonstrate his hope and faith in the Church. He tried to reach an understanding with the Nicaraguan bishops, but to no avail. The people, however, welcomed him as a universal pastor on a mission of solidarity.

Also visiting Nicaragua during the evangelical insurrection and the International Peace Week (September 8-15) were Brazilian theologians Leonardo Boff, Clodovis Boff and Fra Betto, and Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel. All these visits helped to underline the evangelical and ecclesiastical nature of the insurrection.

The revival of the Church of the Poor

Following the campaign of fasting and prayers and the evangelical insurrection, the Nicaraguan Church of the Poor radically revised its strategy. Indeed, a new ecclesiastical and pastoral *modus operandi* came into being

and, moreover, there clearly emerged in the country a new Church style.

The Church of the Poor adopted a new religious scheme as a result of its own purpose and identity. Until then, it had restricted itself to reacting to a chain of events triggered by either the official Church or the government. It was forever answering other people's questions while remaining unable to raise its own. Now it emerged with the ability to take the initiative. Its language and symbolism took on a unique spiritual, theological and ecclesiastical character. The new Church acted and spoke in a manner which distinguished it from other social and political organizations.

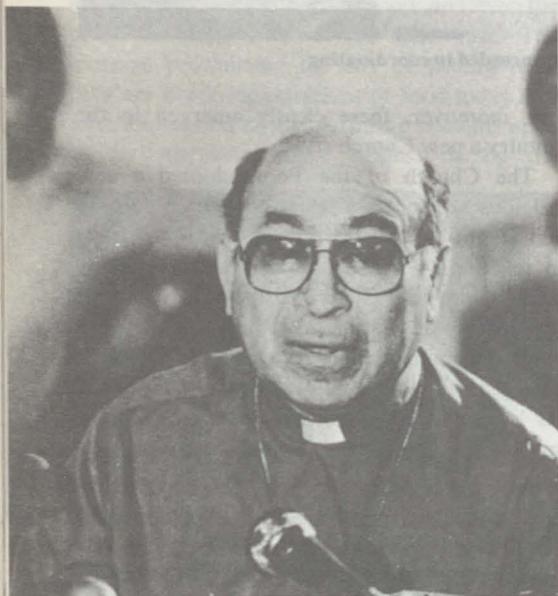
The lack of response by religious authorities to the theological interpretation of U.S. aggression was one of the major factors leading to the evangelical insurrection, but the new Church did not seek to take action against the church hierarchy. Its purpose was to counter the aggression.

The Nicaraguan Church of the Poor discovered the spiritual force of Latin American ecclesiastical solidarity, nurtured on it and assimilated it. In particular, the cooperation of the Brazilian Church had been decisive. This profound solidarity between churches in the hemisphere may prove significant for the future

Special

of the Church in Latin America.

Through a continuous, highly popular campaign, the Church of the Poor was able to extend itself beyond its basic limitations. Through the action and presence of the people, it succeeded in coordinating its energies and resources. Self-serving local leaderships were forgotten, as were institutional egotisms and personalistic jealousies that were typical of an ecclesiastical heritage that the Nicaraguan people would no longer tolerate. With the evangelical insurrection, Nicaraguans were able to preserve the unity of the new Church on the basis of their own faith and hope.



Bishop Vega, from Juigalpa, supports the *contras* for peace and life, against imperialism

On February 14-28, 1986, the Church of the Poor organized a "station of the cross" ceremony which was to deepen and broaden the evangelical insurrection. The pilgrimage was held along a 326 kilometer stretch from Jalapa (near the Honduran border) to the capital city of Managua. It culminated with a religious service celebrated on the steps of the cathedral in the Plaza of the Revolution by 72 priests (one

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third of the total number of clerics in the country), before a crowd of approximately 15,000 people, many of whom volunteered to speak. An 80-year old man, a former combatant in Sandino's army who had marched along the entire route, told the crowd how his four sons had died as heroes while his grandchildren were doing military service.

After a number of such testimonials, torches and fireworks lit the sky in a genuine popular celebration. Then came the moving sermon delivered by a grave and tired Father D'Escoto. During the relentless 15-day march, news had reached the pilgrims that Cardinal Obando y Bravo and Bishop Pablo Vega had joined Reagan's campaign to aid the *contras* with US\$ 110 million. Now, deeply moved by the religious climate of the ceremony, hurt by the tragedy of U.S. and *contra* aggression, and spiritually wounded by Obando's and Vega's attitude, D'Escoto's sermon turned into an incisive, hard-hitting speech. His words were heard throughout the entire country, broadcast by a network of 17 radio stations. Addressing himself directly to Obando, he said the cardinal's hands were stained with blood, for he had betrayed the Nicaraguan people by siding with those who sought to aid the *contras*.

What caused the emergence of the Church of the Poor?

The current world crisis has its origins in the North-South conflict, that is, the confrontation between the world's poor majority and the countries of the metropolis, located primarily in the northern hemisphere. It is not a confrontation between world powers like that which characterizes the differences between East and West, but a battle between the popular majority and the centers of power. The very existence of the poor sets the parameters for the North-South conflict, which is one of life and death. That is why the Church of the Poor emerged as an expression of faith and of



"...The time of the revolution of the poor is also a spiritual time..."

the spiritual life of the world's poor. It cannot be defined by an ideology, as a Sandinista or Socialist church, but as a church that acts in favor of the poor who are struggling to earn a living. The purpose of the Church of the Poor is to represent the spiritual force of the Third World in its life and death struggle – not the spiritual force of the West in its struggle against Communism.

Throughout history, crises of world systems have manifested themselves economically, politically and militarily. The current crisis includes not only these aspects, but also ethical, spiritual and religious dimensions. What is at stake today is the very life of the planet and the future of humanity. The dominant system – with its technological and military sophistication, with its consumerism and materialism, with its life-destroying behavior – is increasingly imposing a completely irrational development model. That is why the poor of the Third World – as well as those, in an incipient

manner, of the First World – are proposing alternatives not only politically and economically, but also spiritually and ethically.

We cannot understand the popular revolution in Nicaragua in exclusively economic and political terms. We must introduce as well criteria of analysis that follow a spiritual and theological logic. The revolution that defeated Somoza, that brought literacy to the Nicaraguan people, that is increasing production, improving health conditions, and successfully defending its territory, is beginning to taste the fruits of victory as well in terms of faith and religion. Nicaragua today not only exhibits improved production and security, but as a result of the evangelical insurrection, people are playing and celebrating better – with all of the joy that stems from the presence of God on the side of the poor. The time of the revolution of the poor is also a spiritual time. ●

Pablo Richard, *Chilean theologian now living in Costa Rica*

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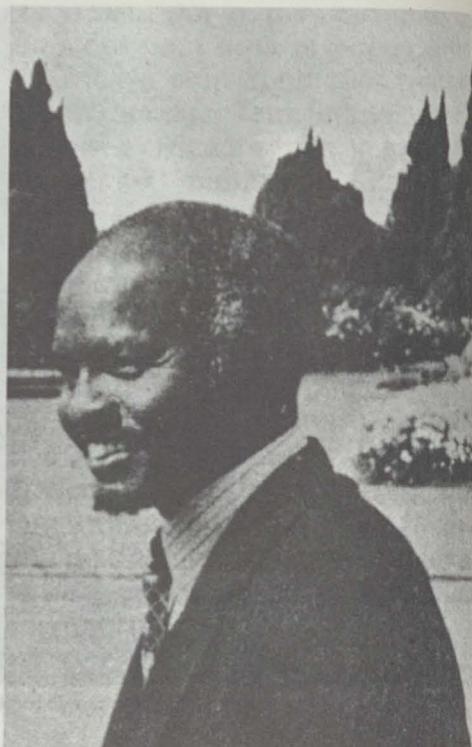
Religious Imperialism

Zimbabwean President Canaan Banana is that rare Third World figure who spans the gap between literature and politics on one hand, and applied agrarian reform on the other. A Methodist minister and author of several books, among them *The Gospel According to the Ghetto* (1974) and *Theology of Promise* (1982), he is also the founder of Zimbabwe's highly successful agricultural co-operative movement, and the nation's model pedagogue.

Born near Bulawayo in 1936, Rev. Banana was ordained a minister in the British Methodist Church in 1962 and earned a masters degree at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington D.C. in 1975. He joined Bishop's Muzorewa's African National Council (ANC) in 1972, but soon broke to form the People's Movement, the internal wing of the banned ZANU party in 1976. He was variously imprisoned, detained and restricted by the Smith regime from 1975 to 1979, and took vocal exception to the findings of the British Pearce Commission.

Comrade President, how would you compare the place of religion in Zimbabwean, as compared to, let's say, American society?

—The fundamental difference is that in the U.S. religion rather legitimizes capitalism; there's no real contradiction or controversy between religion and the state in that respect. In Zimbabwe the new philosophy of socialist transformation seems to be frightening many churches. There has been ambivalence in the churches' position vis-à-vis the political 90 — third world



Reverend Canaan Banana

direction in which the state is moving. I think the Gospel must relate to the socio-economic conditions of the people. In America religion stresses private salvation, whereas here we are trying to apply religious principles to broad social conditions.

How do you view the trend in Latin American liberation theology? What are the prospects for analogous developments here in southern Africa?

—Liberation theology is born out of a situation of oppression. Latin America has a long history of political struggle, so understandably, the development of this kind of thought is more advanced there than in the African context. Our struggles are more recent, hence theology has yet to catch up. This also reflects the quality of religious leadership here, and the lack of sufficient scholars who would write of theology of the continent. There is also



the matter of the political climate. It was not easy to write in a situation such as we had here. The very recent independence of this region is the principal condition, however, so I expect we will see much new writing along those lines soon. Liberation theology legitimizes revolutionary struggle, it articulates the experience of indigenous peoples and the positive elements in their past, their efforts against negative forces. Much of what Latin Americans have written is relevant here, but there will be differences due to variations between the two cultures. Latin America represents an amalgam of cultural influences; the descendants of plantation slaves who form the bulk of some American societies have lost their identity, their roots. There is a dichotomy between European and local native cultures. African culture's originality lies in its unitary quality, its consistent "Africanism" if you will. But in both cases liberation theology serves to project the traditional values of a people's culture.

The Vatican seems now to have identified an acceptable and an "unacceptable" strain of liberation theology. Both embrace Marxism, but the latter is rebuked for preaching "class

struggle." How does this strike you?

— As an observer, all this intrigues me. The Church practices a socialist life style in its convents and monasteries. It defends the poor and preaches social justice and equality. Then it condemns those who try and put theory into practice. How can they accept the liberation philosophy while rejecting class struggle? That's nonsense, because one is a product of the other. To pretend there's no class struggle or to define it as evil — I can't understand. If we in the churches are to support brotherhood and equality, we obviously must defend those who strive to break down the artificial barriers of class difference.

And still, the Catholics supported the insurgency here to a far greater extent than any other group.

— You must distinguish, again, between officialdom and the action of the individual faithful. The official position of the Catholic Church here was not one of support for the guerrillas as such, though it was one of tolerance. Individual Catholics did extend themselves to help us and hence some, like Bishop Lamont, were deported. The mainstream of

South Africa's Bishop Desmond Tutu is leading the Liberation Church against apartheid



the Church was more progressive than official policy. Compared to the more evangelical churches, the Catholics were more sensitive to the economic plight of the people – that much I must credit them. The various sects tended to shun politics. They felt that politics are a product of God – the apartheid government or whatever – you ought to accept the powers that be. If you began talking politics, you were un-Christian. The Catholics were certainly more liberal than the fundamentalists, who resisted any talk of change.

What of the connection between fundamentalist sects and counter-revolutionary politics?

– Since religion, as I suggested already, tends to support the status quo in the capitalist system, some American-based churches opposed liberation, recognizing that change would threaten Western dominance here. You'd be surprised. Some sects appeared to be apolitical by day, but by night were among the most subversive politicians I've ever known! While I attended a religious conference in the U.S. one missionary confessed, "Look, I feel proud to have had a hand in the overthrow of Allende." They were part of the CIA network. So sometimes this opposition to social change may be more than feigned neutrality. It may be actively partisan.

What concept of life did the missionary churches bring to Zimbabwe over the past century?

– The churches came here with preconceived ideas of what was good for the "natives." These derived from their own experience – you can't hold that against them. One can only speak from one's experience. But they made Christian synonymous with "Western," which misrepresents history. We were taught to condemn our own culture – to lock down upon our humanity. We were urged to hero-worship the missionaries, the British governors, and to some extent the white settlers. They were the model for excellence. To wear a tie, use a fork

and knife, were more Christian than wearing a safari or eating with your hands.

Certain customs had to give way. The question of lobolo (bride-price) is debated to this day. The churches tended to discourage (female) circumcision, though it was not practiced widely in Zimbabwe. And we have a tradition that one of each pair of twins had to be killed. This was rightly discouraged. Other things they should have preserved. They tended to discourage the extended family system, wherein your relatives are your responsibility. They emphasized individualism. What is more Christian than caring for your brother, loving your neighbor? That means looking after them, and not just pronouncements by mouth. The churches condemned polygamy, which was not actually an institution devoid of social responsibility.

Of course the churches introduced the notion of equality, a Christian philosophy, which later became a political slogan, in itself a positive contribution. They also brought development in agriculture, medical improvements, the wealth of the people. But the churches also were patronizing allies of the colonial system until very late. When we went to synod, the white missionaries would have their own tea separately from the Africans. The church would have a missionary house, car and salary; then an African minister's house, salary and bicycle.

Liberation theology is usually associated with conditions of abject poverty. Doesn't Zimbabwe's advanced development obviate the need for liberation theology?

– The bulk of our advancement is still concentrated in sections of the population. Most people still get by at the subsistence level, so as a country we do not enjoy the standard of living a visitor might suppose. Although the government is moving to narrow the gap between the haves and have-nots, the greatest number remain condemned to actual poverty.

After independence, the message of liberation theology changes, takes other forms.

Once it illuminates and alters the master-slave relationship within the country, it must be directed to international relations and the patron-client association in which big powers exploit the resources of small states, actually bullying and intimidating them to extend the former's sphere of influence. We ourselves have been intimidated. Now, after we have sacrificed so much for independence, do you think we can allow outsiders to dictate our policies, our destiny? We cannot expect everyone to support what we do, but we insist on the right to make our own decisions. Our independence must be respected. As to liberation theology, it must finally address the dynamic between haves and have-nots on a global scale. There are tensions to be resolved between hierarchy and laity; and remaining islands of colonialism, like Namibia. We must be awake as Christians, to dehumanization in any place or form. We cannot be indifferent to oppression in South Africa. No matter what the state of affairs in Zimbabwe, the need for liberation theology will persist. The level of development makes no difference. In Washington D.C., I was amazed to see affluence alongside real poverty. You even need it in America.

How has missionary-religious education contributed to the development of revolutionary consciousness among Zimbabwe's present leadership?

- We are all products of mission schools. And much of the leadership has been motivated by the Christian teaching of human brotherhood and equality, or at least by the contradiction between those teachings and what they experienced in the society outside the schools. Unfortunately, many missionaries chose to live in white suburbs - not with the people. The mission experience did contribute to the development of African nationalism. But what it meant exactly is not so clear. It both encouraged and retarded it. Christian hypocrisy in some cases turned people off religion. The whole process of mission socialization was a



contradictory one, politically, and in personal terms.

In my own case, whenever I criticized the Smith regime the missionaries said "Every time Banana stands up, he makes an inflammatory political statement. He's devoid of theology." I was abused in several main church committees because I was too controversial. At that time, the World Council of Churches had decided to aid the liberation struggle, which soon became a

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"...The Church must be directly involved in national reconstruction..."

hotly debated issue. I declared this a grand gesture, a response to human suffering by the WCC. It was a source of hope for Africans. My own church condemned what they considered the aiding of terrorists and encouraging violence. I couldn't accept the Church's position, so I resigned. We have since been reconciled.

What of Che Ghevara's concept of the "new man" created by socialist institutions? Do you envision any such transformation of Zimbabwe's people?

— Interdependence is crucial in the development of this new person. We must create a human being no longer bound by racial restrictions. Not a black person as such, but one freed from racial, regional or tribal identities — foremost a Zimbabwean. Once such people emerge and become nationally conscious, they will lose their individualism. Competition is a central tenet of capitalism. The individual accumulates wealth at the expense of others. This is repugnant to the Christian faith. Some argue that accumulation is tolerable if through legitimate means. That's impossible. It is argued that if workers were not employed (in capitalist enterprises) they'd be destitute. At least they're getting something. But if a farmer employs a hundred people, paying ten per cent to workers and retaining the rest, where is justice?

In the collective farm there is at least some fair return for one's labor. Where possible we

encourage shareholding among workers and collective management of co-operatives — where people work together and share the proceeds. We've established a minimum wage structure. We emphasize traditional values over negative western cultural imports that destroy motivation, such as drugs, alcoholism, abortion, things previously unheard of.

We are not saying we want to wipe out private African farming. But we had a slave labor force in this country. Workers were even paid in rations instead of cash. We don't want to destroy the economy's viability, but if people feel a sense of belonging, they will increase productivity. If not, employers will be undermined. We have an untenable situation here, where the profits of industry go to South Africa and the U.S. instead of being channelled for local development. We want the broad masses of people to benefit.

What about the place of religion in the development of a "new person" or a new Zimbabwean consciousness? Isn't Christianity too bound up with imperialism to play such a role? Doesn't the dramatic success of Islam in black Africa suggest this?

— A comparative study of the works of Christianity did, of course, facilitate mental colonization. We now need a strategy to decolonize the people's minds. Marxism really uses materialism to counter materialism. What is needed is an ethic that stresses the dignity of



African people and the positive elements of their traditions – “black power” comes closer than Marxism to what I mean. But of course racism must be avoided. We have to wash the people clean, to clean their mentality from the concept of inferior or superior race. We must accept our own culture before we can accept others. This task must be directed as well to white Zimbabweans. While the African was deformed by a sense of self-rejection, the whites were deformed by a sense of superiority. They too must be liberated. It's a pity when you see how well the children play together in our schools, while some of the old folk refuse to bend. Our hope lies in the youth.

**Our father which art in the ghetto,
Degraded is your name,
Thy servitude abounds,
Thy will is mocked,
As pie in the sky.**

**Teach us to demand
Our share of gold,
Forgive us our docility
As we demand our share of justice.**

**Lead us not into complicity,
Deliver us from our fears,
For yours is the sovereignty,
The power and the liberation,
Forever and ever,
Amen.**

Canaan S. Banana (1974)

How do religion and popular culture interact in Zimbabwe?

– Christian religion is not synonymous with culture in Zimbabwe, but it has become a way of faith. Christianity is not as culturally defined as Islam. Though it cannot and ought not to develop into an ideology as such, it must inform

the reigning political and economic systems. Christianity is essentially socialist; that's my understanding. But Christianity can become redemptive, can redeem the dominant ideologies and transform them.

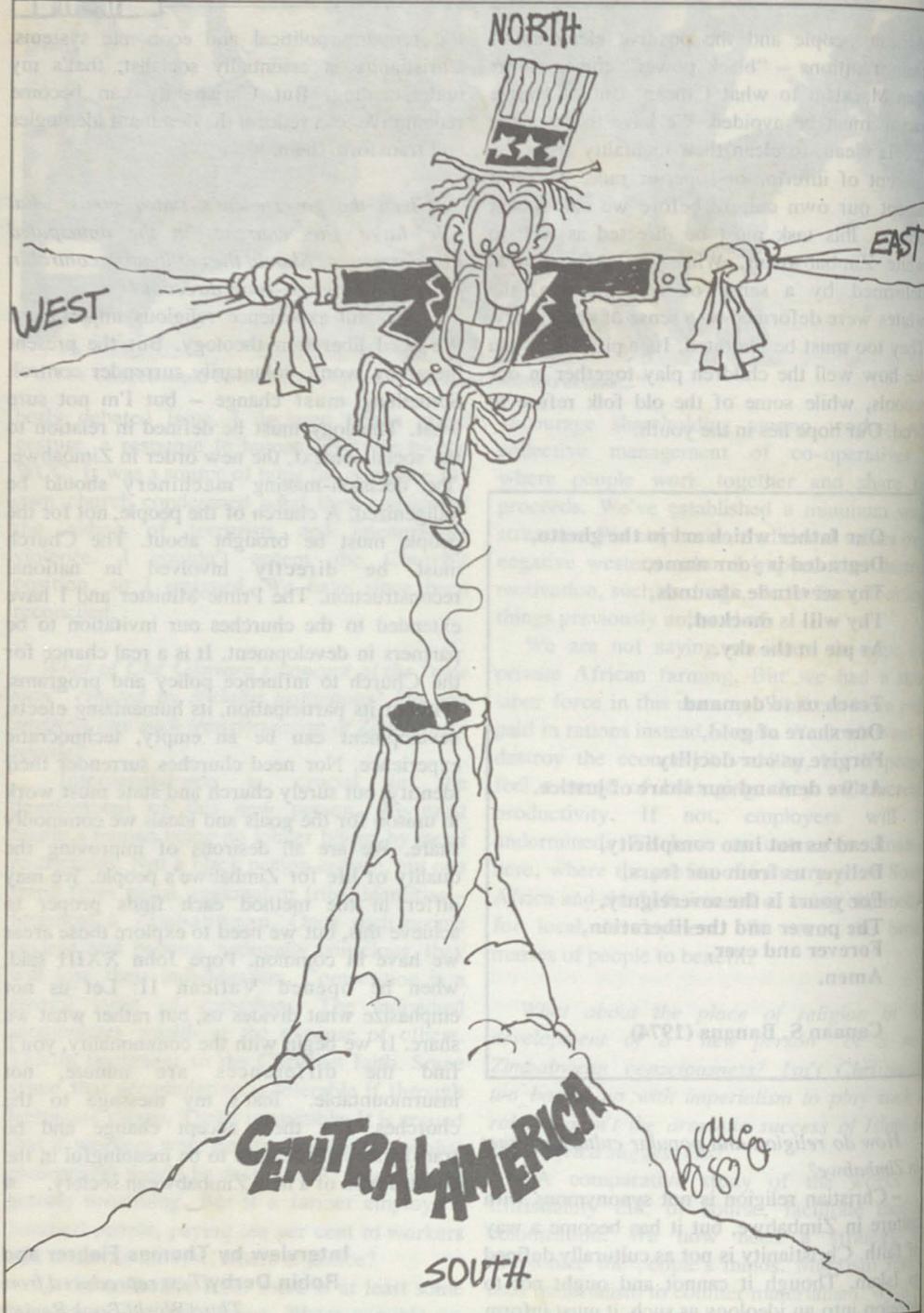
Given the government's stated goals, what role have the churches in the anticipated transformation? Should they relinquish control in favor of more grass-roots direction?

– We still experience religious imperialism. We need liberation theology. But the present hierarchy won't voluntarily surrender control. Something must change – but I'm not sure what. Theology must be defined in relation to the social context, the new order in Zimbabwe. The decision-making machinery should be indigenized. A church of the people, not for the people must be brought about. The Church must be directly involved in national reconstruction. The Prime Minister and I have extended to the churches our invitation to be partners in development. It is a real chance for the Church to influence policy and programs. Without its participation, its humanizing effects, development can be an empty, technocratic experience. Nor need churches surrender their identity, but surely church and state must work in unison for the goals and ideals we commonly share. We are all desirous of improving the quality of life for Zimbabwe's people. We may differ in the method each finds proper to achieve this, but we need to explore those areas we have in common. Pope John XXIII said, when he opened Vatican II: Let us not emphasize what divides us, but rather what we share. If we begin with the commonality, you'll find the differences are minute, not insurmountable. That's my message to the churches. Let them accept change and be transformed if they are to be meaningful in the construction of a new Zimbabwean society. ●

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Humor



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