

THE MAYIBUYE CENTRE

University of the Western Cape Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 SA

tel: (021) 959 2954

fax: (021) 951 3627

February 18, 1993

Dear Delegate,

In the past years you have been actively campaigning against apartheid. Those activities in your own country are linked up with the history of South Africa. And naturally,

the people of South Africa will want to know about this history.

The Mayibuye Centre was recently launched at the University of the Western Cape as an archive/museum on the history of apartheid, resistance and social life in South Africa.

In addition to 70,000 photographs and over 1,000 film and video productions, the Centre also

has a growing collection of historical papers, including material relating to the work of anti-

apartheid organisations from all parts of the world. Among our collections are the archives

of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF); the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) and the Irish AAM. We have also received material from KZA, AABN, Kairos, Shipping Bureau, Omroep voor Radio Freedom (all in the Netherlands), AWEPA, the Austrian AAM, New Zealand Defence and Aid, and personal papers from Enuga Reddy, Peter Hain and others.

The people of South Africa have until recently been relatively isolated from what happened elsewhere and we want them to know about the work of individuals and organisations who dedicated themselves to the liberation of South Africa.

The Mayibuye Centre, which is supported by the ANC and other democratic organisations in South Africa, is anxious to receive material you and your organisation have

produced over the years. We would particularly welcome posters, dossiers, archives, magazines, books, photographs and audio-visual material. Please help us if you can, with material or financially if possible.

It should be noted by the way that the Mayibuye Centre is not only available for academic research purposes. An important part of its work consists of involving the general

public via community-oriented activities such as workshops, exhibitions, lectures and the publication of books, brochures and occasional papers.

For further information and any other matter relating to the above, please contact conference delegate Dr. Karel Roskarn, who is a Fellow at the Mayibuye Centre, or get in touch directly with me at the above address. We hope also that you will be able to visit the

Mayibuye Centre sometime.

Yours sincerely,

JAM Live C ZZZCMLI (")Ubve

Dr. Andre Odendaal, Director Mayibuye Centre

(Please turn over for a recent newspaper cutting on the Centre.)

SA' '10

Decades ()fviml histozy
wniltcdfroln official
records are heing restored
in mi nmhirious' pm/Url
(Int! (.11 not only nfim/mr-
I(IIlt't' m I'('X4'(IHillt'liY. but
is a poignant ct'um/iun
afour past.

By GAYE DAVIS

()l(_vc:lrs1:rctlu licvmm trial It)
interest publishcrs in hcr lztte
huslmrxl lcnn's vast mllccticm
ol phntogmphx (lncumcnting
African his in South Africa tlu i he
19-10399 B'til-his'tlmusztntlsnl'nc I 1 cs
rt'mzlimttl unxcun in huxcs under htzr
hutl in London.

Smith A-ftica-ns will snnn get a
chuncc tn SCL' fur the First time 5mm: til
chsnn's cvncative images: the
University (tf lhc WcutcrntC'apc's
nttwly csttthlishcd Mnyihuyc ('cntrc
for History 4lnd Culture is wrnking on
an exhibition featuring work by
chson and other "lost" photogrm
phers.

It's just one project Hmong: many
planned by the centre in :l hid It) bring
back history nificiztllly tlctllctl l'm
cluuadcs. Only rcccttly named, the
centre is Iwcttcr known as the 'tstruggle
museum" UWC announced it would
establish aftar acquiring thc'cnlirc
plmtngraph'rc,lilm,villm:lnnlpublica-
tinns cullectinn nf the lnndnn-hatscd
lttluntutitttml Dcl'unu: :md Aitl Futitl
(ltlui).

lxvmnis phntngraphs l'urm part nt'
thnt cnllcclinn, huilt up nver the 1 'lll)'
yours ltlzil funcliuncd us the m:nt n-
trc of the internatinnztl solidarity
muvcmcnt. So do those ()I' lili
Weinberg. :l listed communist whn
spam much of his life under house
arrest or in prison. but who neverthe-
less rcchrtlctl key cvcnts in the history
nf lltc Alli Nzitiutml (imtgr
hcl'un: guilt Into cxilu itt W71). Must
()l' his ncgtltivcsglcl't behind when he
fled. were lost or (lctroycd; those sal-
vaged haw: hccn sccn nny ttbmzid.
Thu lust of the ldulicnttcs -- tilled
with mine Mm 000 photngraphs.

I (XXI l'ihns illltl vitlctl..t'qttipntclll :tntl
criuntlcss hunks -- have now hccn
ttntpic'kcd, Crtntrprising u rcsnurcc not
THE weiEKLv MAIL. FeSmay 710131399
st' history 15 recoVered
n

Photographing the photographer A sllce at life trom Sophlatown recorded by Leon Levson
only vast but immensely valuable to
researchers. A unique computer catn-
lt)guing system means :tnyonc seeking
material on linrcctl removals. for
instance, will immediately be uhlc I(1
5&6 listed every picce-of footage and
every photograph in the archive.
But the ldaf collection is not all
there is. Daily an assortment of boxes.
Cralcx and cnvchmcs arrives at the

ccntnt, (runtninim, m:nlcrinl ranging
from an :lctit . usured collection
(tliistrugglciil'shtmtntitctsofthc
Ruhbcn lslnnd Rccrcntinn Cummittcc.
h'l'hurc'x sn much It) be done.
Welvc been working 204mm (lays.
raising l'undx. cnllccting :md collating
mnterinli Now for the First time we can
say wcivc got a physical presume, this
is what we've got so far," said histori-
an Dr Andrc Odendnal. the ccntrc's
L'u-ortlinntur.

Whti. uptirt from his l'cllmv primit-
crs, knuw that the lulu lttu Africunist
Congresti leader Jeff Masemola was a
deft woodworker? One Of his cre-
ations wtut a trophy Rnhhcn lslztnd
prisnncrN soccer teams would com-
putt: lnr :llltl which now fnrnts pnrt of
lhcnrvhivu

Thcrs :l telegram Mam tsc T ung
sent to Bill Andrews, ackn0wldgcd
as the grand old man of the South
African (Runntuttist Pttrty whodid in
t952, wishing him well on the occu-
sion ufhis birthday, and a framed front
page of The World's last edition,
which escaped confiscation by the
security police the day the newspaper
was banned in 1977.

This is the stuff of which not only
memories but also history is made --
and it hus come from all over South
Africa and abroad.

Some of it, like Ahmad Kathratln's
X (XX) pages recording every letter hc
wrote and remivcd during 25 ykurs in
jail or the archives of the South
African NonVRacial Olympic
Committee undyothcr anti-amrthcid
organisations, is of prime histotical
importance. 3 researcherls paradise.
Othcr material is intensely personal,
rclevttnt fur its puigmuty :tml cvnczt-
tion of a time past and never adequate-
ly recorded.

Sometimes that relevance has to be
explained. like the white cap donated
by a former Rttbbcn Islander. "We
only ttmlcrsltxxl its significance when
we found prisoners made thcsccaps to
set themselves apart. expressing an
individuality otherwise denied them,"
said Odendaal.

Despite tlu: wcnlth quNC mntcriztl
:tnd ldztf's historic links with the
organisation, the centre is intcntlcl IO
be non-sctturian and the'PAC has
already expressed its support. It was
established to balance a badly skewed
past: "Wclre not going to make the
same mistake," said Odcndmtl. Hence
the name Mnyibuyc (let it return). a
slogan common to most liberation
bodice.

"We're collecting all artefacts.
pttpcrsund othcrmatlcriul related to the
struggle. We're not turning up our
noses at anything. We're hoping to
share any duplications with other insti-
tutions. Thereis ll lot of enthusiasm,"

said Odcndnal.

Just an idea five years ago, the centre's task is enormous. Three former ldustttffcm. it" returned exiles. atre in charge of the film, audio and photographic archives. Eventually, artefacts will be on permanent display, but a proper museum depends on space and funds. Said Odcndaal: "Our immediate print is collating: till the documents and papers. We're taking things step by step."

The centre has copyright to about 20 titles. many banned and never freely available in South Africa. In May. the UWC Mnyihuyc History Series will release the first, featuring reprints of these and some new publications. including ANC national executive member Ronnie Kasrils' autobiography written while he was in the prison during the apartheid crackdown on the anti-apartheid struggle. It's tentatively titled 'I Am and Dangerous', which is how he was described on an SABC television programme.

"The most important thing about this archive. beyond the political importance. is to preserve the history of the ordinary person," said Odcndaal. "Until a year or so ago. people couldn't see or read any of this. A blank of 30 years needs to be filled." To this end. the centre will be engaging in a variety of projects involving communities, institutions and organisations. It will also approach the government to arrange the retrieval of material confiscated by security police or used in evidence in trials. "There should be a mountain of it somewhere," said Odcndaal.

WW