

ARMAG-SARP-14-2-1

Southern Africa REPORT

Vol. 6 No. 2

November 1990

Economic Restructuring Who Calls The Shots?

"We Will Restructure"

Debating the Post-apartheid
Economy

Old Recipes, New Rhetoric
Structural Adjustment in 1990

The Killing Fields

Who is Gatcha Buthelezi
and
Why is he killing people?

Namibia:

Five Months After

CA 06L0
Lichtman's
\$ 3.50

price: \$3.50



Miners, Welkom, South Africa

Linic/Impact visuals

“We Will Restructure”

Debating the Post-apartheid Economy

Apartheid South Africa encapsulates much more than a racially-hierarchical and authoritarian political system. Legalized racism in South Africa has also been wedded to a profoundly exploitative economic system, one that has produced grinding poverty for the vast majority of inhabitants of that country. In consequence, the current flood-tide of democratic demands must inevitably spill over into the economic sphere. As Nelson Mandela himself phrased the point when speaking to Canada's House of Commons, “therefore we will restructure the South African economy so that the wealth should be for all the people, black and white, and that all the people enjoy a decent and rising standard of living. We do not seek to impoverish anybody or to redistribute such

poverty. But a new democratic society will obviously address the issue of the impoverishment of millions of people as a matter of urgency.”

But what does it mean to “restructure the South African economy”? Already the question of what this “next phase” of the struggle in South Africa should look like is being hotly debated there. Canadian anti-apartheid activists got some taste of this debate this summer when a key member of the ANC's Economic Affairs Unit, Max Sisulu, and the well-known progressive South African economist, Steve Gelb, spoke at workshops in Ottawa, Toronto and elsewhere. More recently, several Canadian visitors to South Africa have

sought, quite specifically, to monitor the on-going debate regarding the post-apartheid economy inside the country and to report back on its substance and on some of its possible implications for solidarity work here in Canada. We have drawn on a number of such sources in setting out the following preliminary account of this economic debate.

As one talks to various protagonists of the debate about a post-apartheid economy, there does seem, at least superficially, to be some consensus regarding the overall goals of a new South African economy. As senior business figure Gavin Relly points out: “That the economic imbalances in South Africa are enor-

mous is common cause ... This poses a particular challenge as we look to creating economic structures and policies which will lead both to rapid economic growth and more equitable distribution of wealth." There seem few left to quarrel with ANC leader Walter Sisulu when he says: "The expectations of the people are for: a living wage which guarantees for every worker and his family a decent diet and an adequate shelter; the extension to all our people of the basic requirements of social security, medical facilities and a safety net for the unemployed; and free and equal education for all with facilities for adult polytechnical education." Thus, for Anglo-American's Bobby Godsell, "economic growth cannot be a national objective in itself. Growth is important to produce the resources needed to tackle poverty and underdevelopment." A Democratic Party economic advisor, Sampie Terreblanche, is prepared to go even further: "It is both desirable and necessary that whites acknowledge explicitly the huge 'apartheid debt' which has accumulated on their backs and make a major effort towards repaying it."

There are even some apparent areas of agreement on the question of means towards these ends, including an eschewing of any very straightforwardly radical agenda for change. To be sure, some relatively marginal political groups are occasionally heard arguing for maximal state intervention in the economy under the banners of, variously, "scientific" or African socialism. But faced with the complex economic situation of a South Africa deeply embedded in the world capitalist economy, the popular movement has begun to conceptualize its economic programme far more gingerly. Thus at a November 1989 meeting of the ANC, the MDM and South African business leaders in Paris, Alec Irwin of the National Union of Metalworkers suggested that "our solutions lie neither in free market

capitalism nor in centrally-planned command-economy socialism. We have to open out the agenda of debate beyond ideological clichés, if we are to avoid a future economy where mass poverty exists side by side with minority wealth." As one observer (Patrick Bond) sums up, "the left has acknowledged that it can't run an industrial economy by itself, and big business leaders concede that the apartheid legacy needs to be redressed by affirmative action beyond the normal function of a free market."

Market and plan

Yet the question remains: how far beyond "the normal function of a free market"? What is to be the balance between the "free play" of market forces on the one hand and hands-on planning to realize progressive outcomes on the other? It soon becomes apparent that the polarization of the debate on such issues is still considerable – something that should not surprise us very much, of course, given the vastly different class positions that the various contributions to the debate represent. Indeed, when looked at closely, it is evident that for all its wringing of hands about existent inequalities and the like, there is not really very much shifting of position at all from the camp of capital.

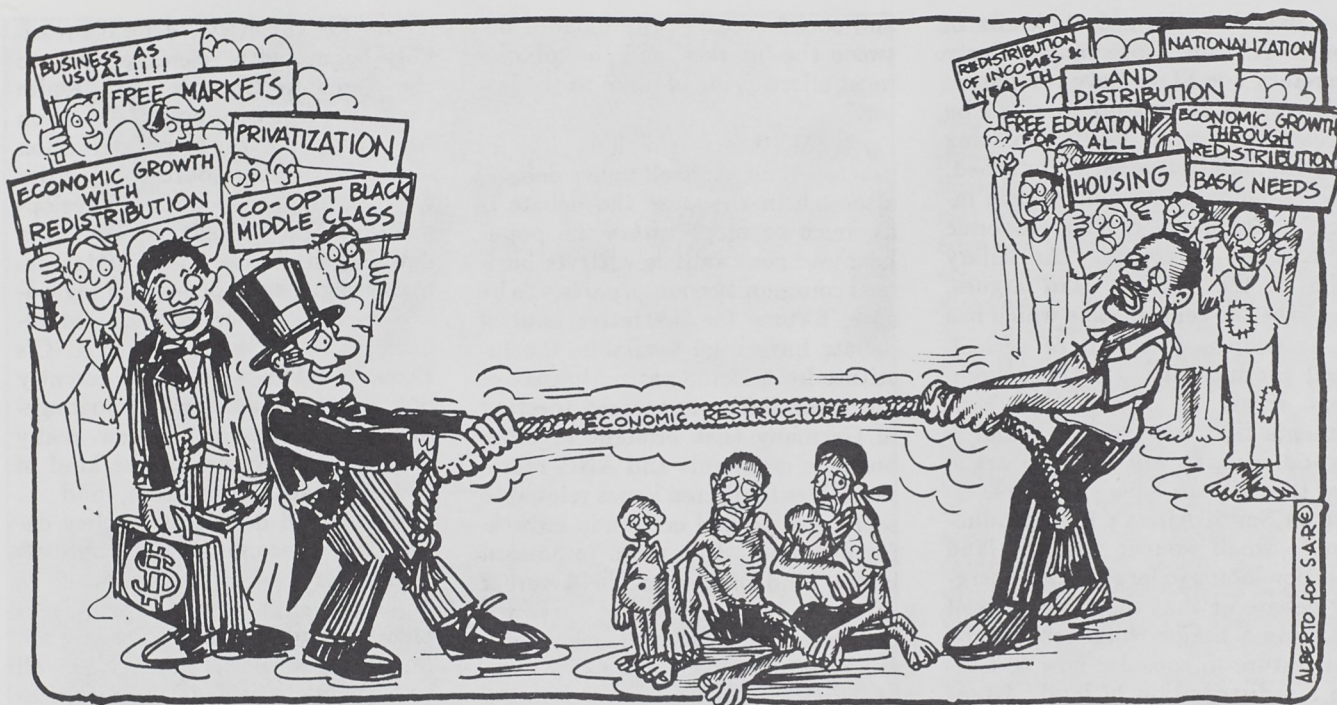
In the words of the Chamber of Mines, for example, "ample evidence, both real and theoretical, now exists to show that the best way (indeed the only way) to achieve ... this economic growth is through an open market-based economic system where resources are allocated, prices determined, information gathered and value judgements made by individuals." Or take the recent publication of the Anglo American corporation asserting that "a high degree of economic freedom is characteristic of prosperous societies. This is most clearly expressed in the freedom to acquire private property. Other features include a broadly-based and non-punitive tax system, sound fis-

cal policy, prudent management of the money supply and proper recognition of the power and place of the market in allocating economic resources." In short, it would seem that there is far less give from the right than from the left in much of the present debate.

Moreover, the rich and powerful are already using every means at their disposal to tilt the balance of the future policy towards as unadulterated a free market outcome as possible. The De Klerk government, for example, is pushing forward with schemes for further privatization and deregulation, various corporations are pushing ahead with retrenchments and with the movement of some of their capital out of South Africa, the better to gain leverage in the next round. Efforts are being made to attract Africans – especially middle-class Africans – away from militant political organizations by means of managerial upgrading and the opening of some new business opportunities for them.

The media is also seeking to narrow the terms of the debate with its attempts to undermine the credibility of such progressive economic solutions as are in the wind. Most specifically, the notion of nationalization has been a red flag for the establishment press. Prominent columnist Ken Owen's measured comment in *Business Day* to the effect that it "is at heart the policy of the hooligan" is merely the most extreme version of the refrain. Indeed, the mainstream press generally – largely owned, as it is, by the conglomerate Argus Corporation – has been severely criticized for its one-sided coverage of the debate on this issue, Adj Kumalo being prompted to write in the *Free Press* earlier this year that "the media 'debate' has thus been little more than a monologue."

This in turn is a slight exaggeration. Radio and television talk shows are facilitating some exchange of views, the progressive *Daily Mail*



and the corporate-leaning *City Press* have both published special supplements on the future economy. The anti-apartheid Afrikaans paper, *Vrye Weekblad*, is planning a similar supplement while the *New Nation* has, among other things, unveiled in its pages a key document arising from the Harare meeting on the future economy held between the ANC and the leading trade union central COSATU. And the best of the left periodicals – *Work in Progress*, the *South African Labour Bulletin* and *Transformation* – have offered very sophisticated analyses of numerous novel economic questions.

Liberal posturing

In doing so, they seek to counter the weight of such heavy-duty apologists for existing economic structures as the Chamber of Mines whose own thoughts on nationalization, if more subtle than Ken Owen's, are equally definitive: "nationalization of the gold mines would almost certainly reduce profits and therefore lessen tax receipts, the redirection of dividend payments to central government coffers would create an enormous financial burden for the state

apart from seriously undermining both international and domestic investor confidence." And they must confront the widely-publicized views of an array of intellectual hired-guns, right-wing liberals like John Kane-Berman of the South African Institute of Race Relations who trumpets the "silent revolution" that free markets and the rise of the black consumer is said already to be bringing into existence in South Africa: "Post-apartheid South Africa is not something that is going to be legislated into existence by some future government under a new constitution. It is already being created on the ground" through "a total integration of the economy", a natural movement – in the spheres of urbanization, education, health and industry – of "ordinary people, rank and file South Africans, men and women."

As stated earlier, the popular movement has by and large been much less messianic in its pronouncements than this, taking the likely constraints upon its future actions seriously while being visibly sobered by the recent failures of the more grandiose state-

centric "socialisms" of Eastern Europe and some other African countries. Yet even on the question of possible nationalizations, the left refuses to be intimidated by establishment rhetoric. Marcel Golding of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), among others, has gone to some lengths to explain the economic advantages of the nationalization of the mines, for example.

State control, he maintains, would allow for the mining of lower grade ore and therefore prolong the value of the resources, would help develop downstream processing of minerals within South Africa and permit proper care of the environment. None of these, he continues, are highly profitable activities and are therefore not of major interest to the mining companies. Furthermore, Martin Nicol (also of the NUM) emphasizes, South Africans see nationalization as a key political move in gaining control of their nation: "Control of mining is a social and political issue as well as an economic one."

The same applies, even more forcefully, in the case of land. Here,

in particular, the recent words of South African Communist Party Secretary Joe Slovo have resonance: "If every racist statute were to be repealed tomorrow leaving existing property relationships undisturbed, white dominations would remain intact." There are crucial economic dimensions, of course. As Hilary Joffe of the *Weekly Mail* argues, "perhaps the central issue which has to be addressed is that of agricultural productivity. If the government wants to convince its constituents that desegregating land is a good idea, it will want to argue that this will not have an adverse effect on South Africa's food production." Small wonder that the land question looms so large in the emerging debate or that the ANC is itself planning a major workshop for the near future to consider how to handle a redistribution of land. Issues of training, credit, marketing and appropriate technology will be discussed, as well as the likely strengths and weaknesses of various possible future forms of land holding – freehold, traditional, state leasehold, cooperative and/or parastatal.

State control

What bears emphasizing is that, in this sphere as in others (witness the fierce debate over possible strategies for overcoming South Africa's severe housing crisis, for example), the strongest voices within the popular movement see clearly the weakness of mere market solutions – in marked contrast with the consensus of opinion in the business milieu. If, realistically, the movement accepts the inevitability of a "mixed economy," it seems probable the bulk of its members do so in agreement with Joe Slovo's formulation that "the resources which have to be generated to correct the inherited imbalances and deprivations of the majority demand, in the first place, a necessary degree of state control (involving selective forms of ownership and participation) over the strategic sectors of the economy. In the second place, the necessary coexistence of private

and social sector – the balance between the 'market' and the 'plan' – must afford pride of place to the latter."

What this might look like in practice remains itself under debate, although in this case the debate is as much or more *within* the popular movement as it is with its business community counterparts. To be sure, forums for the latter kind of debate have been available, the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa-sponsored meeting in Germany that brought together business, academic and ANC representatives to discuss issues related to social justice and economic growth, for example. But more important is the kind of meeting held earlier this year in Maputo that convened health workers from South Africa and elsewhere to talk about a post-apartheid health service.

Most crucial of all, perhaps, are the discussions taking place both within the the trade unions and within the ANC. COSATU has integrated such debate with its other educational and informational activities and with various working groups set up to coordinate planning around the Workers' Charter and Living Wage campaigns. Formal discussions have occurred within COSATU as to the future role of unions within a new economic planning process, the merits of breaking up the vast conglomerates that are so much a feature of the South African economy, and the manner of ending the discrimination against women within the economy-now-in-the-making. The Metalworkers Union (NUMSA) has been particularly active in spawning Research and Development Groups as "an attempt to involve workers in these complex issues" (in the words of the union's Adrienne Bird). And then there is COSATU's Economic Trends Group, through which the union seeks to draw on the expertise of a number of progressive and informed academics in conceptualizing more clearly the "big economic questions", present and future.

As for the ANC, debate invariably begins with reference back to the Freedom Charter but despite that document's emphasis upon the centrality of a redistribution of power and resources in order to "(promote) economic development for the benefit of all" in a new South Africa the Charter remains vague and open-ended regarding specific undertakings. Moreover, as Max Sisulu of the ANC's Economic Affairs Unit has recently put it, proposals for the management of the economy can really only be the product of the kind of "wide-spread consultation, and ... informed and democratic policy debate" that becomes possible once official apartheid is removed and a popularly elected government is in place. Nonetheless, discussions are taking place within the ANC at all levels, while alongside the organization's Economic Affairs Unit a new Centre for Developmental Studies is taking shape in order to coordinate research and planning for a post-apartheid South Africa. And discussion of economic restructuring will be a key theme at the crucial Congress of the ANC to be held in December.

Meanwhile, there is some attempt by the ANC to carry the discussion to the community level, even though such discussion remains rather "top heavy", in the words of one editor of the woman's magazine, *SPEAK*. Similarly, at least one union activist has noted that even in the unions, and despite some good efforts in this respect, much of the substance of the debate has not yet filtered down adequately to the rank and file membership. There also is far too little discussion "with the poor and homeless", she continued, with the attendant danger that "some people will be left out of the debate and any redistribution of wealth that may take place." Such observers express concern that the ANC has moved rather more rapidly to engage the black businessmen's organization, National African Feder-



Roger Meintjies/Afrapix/Impact Visuals

Men's Hostel, Guguletu, Capetown

ated Chambers of Commerce (NAF-COC), in dialogue. Thus after NAF-COC's four day national conference in July on "Hastening the Process of Black Participation in a Mixed South African Economy in the 90s", a working panel of three ANC and NAF-COC representatives was set up to make recommendations on how black business could become an ever more active agent within a post-apartheid economy.

"Growth through redistribution"

Still, the key link for the ANC within the on-going debate remains with the unions – and this is a particularly important source of progressive promise. Notable was the

April meeting in Harare when about 60 progressive economists (including a number linked to the Economic Trends Group) and representatives of the ANC and COSATU came together. In the resultant document, "The Economy Beyond Apartheid", recommendations for a set of post-apartheid policies that included fresh perspectives on state intervention, land ownership, the nationalization of industry, gender-related issues, agriculture, foreign investment and basic goods and services were roughed out. According to the document, "a non-racial and democratic state would follow an economic strategy that aims to achieve economic growth through a process of increasing equality in the

distribution of incomes, wealth and economic power."

Note the emphasis on the "(re)distribution of ... economic power." The basic position of those businessmen (and liberal intellectuals) who, as we have seen, acknowledge the unacceptability of existing economic inequalities, has been to attempt to reduce the problem to one of a redistribution of incomes and services along rather conventional welfarist lines. "Growth with redistribution" is probably the way they would choose to present the position, with growth to be linked to a manufacturing sector regenerated by massive investment of a capital intensive nature and by the supplying of intermediate manufactured products to the international market – and with the basic structure of economic power to remain more or less unaltered in the process. What seems to be emerging from the ANC/COSATU camp is something different, however: a "basic needs approach."

In contrast to the free-market idealism of Kane-Berman's "silent revolution", this approach does not take as the starting-point for growth a set of autonomous capitalist decisions made in response to the "spontaneous" imperatives of the market, world-wide and local. Rather it highlights, in the words of the ANC's Max Sisulu, "investment in social overhead" and "vastly increased allocations for housing, education, training, health care, public utilities, as well as investments in economic infrastructure." As economist Stephen Gelb of the Economic Trends Group further elaborates, this implies not merely a different version of welfarism but an alternative (and potentially much more effective) economic development strategy to that suggested by the business community. It would mean, in Gelb's words, not "growth with redistribution" but rather "growth through redistribution." "The broad objective of this strategy", he writes, "is to expand

both employment creation and the production of basic consumer goods. In other words, rather than separating redistribution and economic growth, the aim would be to achieve growth through the more extensive and rapid redistribution of incomes and wealth." The result: a "focus upon absorbing the labour surplus by expanding relatively labour-intensive industries producing basic consumer goods to supply domestic and foreign consumers."

Gelb and others are quite clear that such a growth path will not happen "spontaneously." Rather, it will have to be willed into existence by state and community action. If not displacing the market, it must at least judiciously reshape its imperatives; if not abolishing private ownership of the means of production, it must at least aggressively qualify, in the collective interest, capital's power. The need, in sum, is actively to shape capital's investment decisions in such a way as to ensure a production pattern that meets those needs that are being identified as "basic" to the betterment of the lot of the mass of the population. And to do this – the point is crucial – not merely on welfare grounds but, equally importantly, because production so defined provides, precisely, the most promising fly-wheel for long-term economic growth! It is in some such way that the real flesh of practical economic policies might begin to be put on the bones of Slovo's assertion, cited earlier, that in South Africa's mixed economy "the necessary coexistence of a private and social sector ... must accord pride of place to the latter."

Forces at work

The precise set of tactics that might ensure the success of such a strategy are by no means clear, of course. Gelb and others talk of the possible benefits of breaking up the huge concentrations of capital (notably the Anglo-American corporation) that dominate South Africa in order to realize the existence of units

sufficiently small and self-contained to give the mechanisms of state direction some greater chance of exerting leverage. There is also discussion of the possible expansion of state control over the financial sector and/or refining the tax system, the better to guide investment decisions along "growth through redistribution" lines. It may be, in this regard, that too little has yet been discussed within liberation circles about the implications of South Africa's inherited debt, of foreign investment and of the perils of the international financial system (the World Bank and the IMF, for example) for restricting the kinds of strategic options a post-apartheid South Africa might seek to pursue. Perhaps, as some on the left fear, such international pressures, together with the weight of the internal capitalist class (black as well as white), may yet prove too powerful and the leadership of the popular movement too weak to resist following the line of least resistance in future economic decision-making. Still, enough has been said to suggest that the premises of a new and promising creativity in the economic sphere – the first steps towards a long-term strategy that is far more socialist than not – are beginning to be forged within the movement itself.

Moreover, there are other forces at work that will also influence the outcome of the struggle to consolidate a progressive line of economic advance within the popular movement. Thus, community- and factory-based groups and organizations are already going beyond the realm of idealized projections and are making their voices heard in quite practical ways. A range of concrete initiatives in the economic sphere begins to signal to planners and politicians the existence of a groundswell of popular energy eager to shape the building of a genuinely democratized economic system. Space does not permit an inventory of all such initiatives but mention might be made of current

attempts (emanating from Soweto, for example) to redirect (and deracialize) local tax systems, or of squatters' groups to invade land and attempt to redefine titles. Or of those unions who seek to spawn housing schemes and economic cooperatives and others who seek to gain greater control over their own pension funds and over the investment decisions of their companies (the Chemical Workers Industrial Union *vis-à-vis* foreign investors, for example).

To be sure, there are those who are nervous about these trends. They suggest the dangers that will arise if a leadership, even a left leadership, finds itself ringed about by such popular assertions (and by such additional pressures as might arise with the realization of more direct workers' control both within and without the state sector). Will such a leadership then find itself being held hostage to a revolution of rising post-apartheid expectations, with this, in turn, serving to distort its more judicious calculations as to the imperatives of progressive economic change? Let's admit that, indeed, the challenges of the next round will be complex. And that the emergent leadership of a post-apartheid South Africa will have the tough task of explaining clearly its choice of national priorities, its preferred allocation of scarce resources, and of rallying people to support its programme. But the evidence of recent African history suggests that, in so planning the development process, the benefits of pressure from below are likely far to outweigh any costs of such pressure. How else is a leadership cadre to be held true to its (ostensible) progressive purpose, in South Africa or elsewhere? The best guarantee of the continuance of a debate about the post-apartheid economy that places the most fundamental of questions on the table must surely be the continuing and deepening empowerment of the South African people themselves.



Binder/Impact Visuals

Gatsha Buthelezi talks with Jean Kirkpatrick of U.S. Foreign Policy Association, New York, 1986

The Killing Fields

Who Is Gatsha Buthelezi and Why Is He Killing People?

Too sensationalist a sub-head? No indeed. For it seems necessary to underscore, as graphically as possible, a few home-truths about the grotesque slaughter that has been occurring in South Africa in recent months, first in Natal and now in the Transvaal. Necessary because so much media coverage of these events has tended to miss the main point, using time-honoured clichés about “tribal warfare,” “black-on-black violence” and the like to mask a reality that, at least in certain of its crucial particulars, is much more straightforward than that. Thus Toronto’s *Globe and Mail* talks glibly of “internecine conflict between two distinct ethnic groups” while ridiculing “the ANC [suggestion] that the violence has been orchestrated solely

to bring Mr. Buthelezi more prominently into the political picture.” Yet the ANC’s explanation is substantially correct, certainly far closer to the truth than the *Globe*’s “orgy of tribal bloodletting” synopsis of events.

At the root of the troubles is, indeed, Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief Minister of the Kwazulu homeland and principal leader of the Kwazulu-based political movement, Inkatha. Accepting participation in the government’s Bantustan scheme in 1970 (though consistently refusing “independence” thereafter), he revived a moribund Zulu nationalist organization, Inkatha, in 1975 in order to provide a political base for himself. Painted as a moderate because of his capitalist leanings (in-

cluding a firm rejection of any form of sanctions) and his rejection of armed struggle (and indeed of most other militant forms of confrontation with the state), he and his cronies proved, more or less from the outset, to be anything but moderate in their brutal manner of consolidating their hold on power in Kwazulu. (Inkatha’s extraordinary rape of the university campus at Ngoye in 1983 is merely one particularly graphic example of a far more general pattern in this respect.) It is from this Bantustan base that Buthelezi, a man of infinite personal ambition, then sought to make himself available for any political outcome which could further this ambition.

In particular, he sought to position himself as a possible compro-

mise candidate for the day when the contradictions of the apartheid system would seem to dictate some kind of reform option. The discussions around a power-sharing model for Natal (orchestrated around the "Buthelezi Commission" and within the KwaNatal Indaba) represented one earnest of this intention. Yet such was the strength of pan-South African nationalism within the black community that Buthelezi could never convincingly carry his tribaltinged and conservative politics beyond Natal. Moreover, it became increasingly apparent throughout the 1980s that the rising "Mass Democratic Movement" – the chief protagonist of a broader national project – was also winning increasing support amongst the Zulu people themselves. Faced with the possible eclipse of its position, Inkatha slashed back brutally at ANC/UDF/COSATU supporters in Natal.

Take careful note: the violence that surfaced so dramatically in Pietermaritzburg and elsewhere in 1988 and 1989 was between political groupings *within* the Zulu community. (It was not, that is to say, "tribal violence" in any meaningful sense.) And it was largely initiated as a political tactic by Inkatha, now increasingly on the political defensive and attempting to reconsolidate its position by force of arms. Of course, 1990 brought even more bad news for Buthelezi: the clear recognition by President F. W. De Klerk of the ANC's primacy within the black community and of its claim to co-equal status with the government in negotiating the future of South Africa. Buthelezi thus saw himself being shut out from the crucial early rounds of bargaining over a new constitution. He was no longer a preferred intermediary and, indeed, became increasingly fearful of a democratic constitution that promised not only to ignore all his mumbo-jumbo about "power-sharing" but even to sidetrack the prospect of recycling the Bantustan system – so long the chief underpinning of his power, – in some kind of "federal" system.

How, then, to get to the bargaining table before having to face the none too tender mercies of the ballot box? There was an answer: if no longer quite credible, he could at least try to make himself indispensable. If you want a peaceful transition, he seemed to say, include me in, include me in or a great many more people will die. In some such mood, Inkatha carried its bloody tactics beyond Natal and into the Transvaal.

True, Buthelezi does have some social base, especially in the remote rural areas of Kwazulu where Inkatha's machine-style politics can dispense its patronage, where its closed and aggressive methods can serve to intimidate dissenters, and where its ethnic sloganeering can have some added resonance. This kind of politics has not played nearly so well in the more sophisticated urban townships of Natal, even if, in the mushrooming shanty-towns that now begin to ring the formal townships, the notorious Inkatha "warlords" have been able to establish some similar patterns of social control amongst a desperately impoverished and marginalized population. Moreover, this kind of warlord system seems to have found some echo in the tribally-exclusive and isolated migrant-labourer hostels of the Transvaal cities. It is from these hostels, of course, that Zulu men have been mobilized as the cutting edge of Inkatha terror.

Where are the denizens of the white power structure while this terror tactic has been playing itself out? White politicians have never been unduly worried by the fact that Buthelezi is not quite their creature. By and large, his ambitions could be absorbed in such a way as to reinforce their own, especially when he chose as his role to be the hammer of the popular movement. The evidence is strong that the police played, at the very least, a facilitating role on Inkatha's side in the Natal violence of the past several years. Now, perhaps, De Klerk and company (including his friends in

the business community) may be less sanguine about Buthelezi's utility – if they have, indeed, begun to define a new strategy, one premised on accepting the ANC as the primary interlocutor for (controlled) change. Yet it is also clear that there have been whites up to their elbows in the recent violence. Who are they?

They are right wing whites, needless to say, who have a brief both to undermine the ANC and, more generally, to panic other whites, presented with the spectre of "black anarchy," away from support for democratic reform. But are these right-wingers minions of the state or do they represent some shadowy "third force"? In fact, this latter distinction cannot be easily made, given the well-documented degree of police participation in ultra-right political groups. What can be confirmed more unequivocally – from numerous first-hand accounts – is the fact of active police involvement in the Transvaal killings, working alongside Inkatha to mobilize and transport the death squads within the townships.

Indeed, the involvement of the security forces in the violence may cut even deeper than that. A recent report in the *Weekly Mail* (September 21, 1990) documents the fact that, on at least one occasion (in 1986), an elite unit of Inkatha fighters was trained in guerilla warfare by a division of the South African Defense Force at the Hippo Base in the Caprivi Strip. Further evidence points to the on-going training of Inkatha "hit-men" by the SADF at camps in Kwazulu itself. And there are signs, too, of collusion, in training and in general logistics, between these Inkatha forces and Renamo (the South African backed wrecking crew that has inflicted such damage upon neighbouring Mozambique) – including suggestions that some Renamo units may actually have been actively involved with Inkatha in the recent township offensives!

We return, inevitably, to the question of De Klerk's role in all

of this. Opinions differ, and no one can know for certain what that role is. Some see him as following a two-track policy, negotiating with the ANC while giving Inkatha just enough space to chip away at the ANC's credibility and bargaining power. This is plausible, though it would be a dangerous tightrope for De Klerk to walk – at least as likely to produce a kind of social anarchy unattractive to De Klerk's cronies in the business community as to soften up the ANC to be more pliable interlocutors. More likely, some argue, is that De Klerk cannot fully discipline his security apparatus which may now, to some degree, be operating at cross purposes from him. Whatever the case, the current situation certainly places the ANC in a particularly awkward position. They are inclined to accept De Klerk's *bona fides* for purposes of getting on with negotiations but must remain uncertain of them, nevertheless. And they are inclined to call for state intervention to keep the peace but must continue to underscore, simultaneously, the fact that the state cannot be trusted to be even-handed in doing so.

These complexities suggest, in turn, another question. Could Buthelezi have been coopted to the

popular movement by more political means before things had degenerated to this point? Could he even now be so coopted? A gesture by Mandela in this direction earlier this year was apparently ruled out of order by the ANC when Buthelezi tried to force his own extreme terms upon any such reconciliation. Was Mandela merely being naive about Buthelezi's agenda on this occasion (or, to take another example, on the occasion of his Ted Koppel Town Hall appearance when he refused an opportunity to expose Buthelezi's complicity in the violence as aggressively as he sought to expose the complicity of the South Africa police)? If so, there now seems even less excuse for such naiveté regarding Buthelezi's role and intentions, but, with the possibility of Mandela's meeting with Buthelezi now being revived, there may also be less room for manoeuvre. Buthelezi is, in effect, holding a gun to Mandela's head, and one fears he may be having some success in his attempt – running far beyond any legitimate claims he might otherwise have – to bully his way to the centre of the negotiations table.

Alternatively, could the MDM – the ANC in particular – have

been more successful in grounding its political presence in the townships in such a way as to erase the social tensions that Buthelezi and the security forces now seek to manipulate? For cooler heads have not always prevailed in the townships: Inkatha's invocation of Zulu identity has sometimes triggered counter-ethnic claims, for example, and the radicalized youth has not always acted with the kind of political deftness and diplomacy that might help diffuse tensions rather than exacerbate them. Perhaps one can say that the ANC, deeply hostile to "tribalism," deeply committed to a smooth transition to democracy, has been less effective than might have been hoped in establishing its active leadership on the ground – including within the hostels! – inside South Africa (cf. Anton Harber, "The ANC begins to wobble as it nears the home straight," *Weekly Mail*, September 21, 1990). But one makes such criticisms gingerly, and at some risk, if only by implication, of permitting an underestimation of the ruthlessness of the enemies – those who seek to turn the townships into "killing fields" – who still block the road to establishing the premises of a peaceful democratic politics in South Africa.

Namibia: Five Months After

BY COLIN LEYS

Colin Leys is a professor of politics at Queens University and a long time observer of the southern Africa scene.

In November 1989, UN-monitored elections brought a victory for SWAPO, the South West Africa People's Organization, with 57% of the popular vote and 41 out of 72 seats in the Constituent Assembly. This was less than the two-thirds majority needed to pass the independence constitution, and so SWAPO progressively accepted virtually all of the constitutional provisions originally proposed by the

Contact Group (of which Canada was a member) in 1981, guaranteeing many civil and human rights and the independence of the public service, etc. – guarantees the opposition parties were united in demanding. SWAPO induced two opposition leaders to join the new government and reassured the white population by appointing a white businessman (Otto Herrigel) as Minister of Finance. The Constituent Assembly was converted into the new National Assembly without a further election, SWAPO President Sam Nujoma became President of Namibia,

and the country became independent – minus Walvis Bay, which South Africa refused to give up – on March 21 1990. Recently Colin Leys visited Namibia and brought us back a report.

Within hours of arriving in Windhoek in July, I met a SWAPO MP and asked him how he felt things were going. He replied, "People are frustrated. They know that it takes time to make changes, and they want to give the government time, but they wonder what is really happening. They don't know whether to start making demands



S.A. police guarding Rebel English cricket tour, Johannesburg, January 1990

BY BRUCE KIDD

Bruce Kidd, who has competed for Canada as a long distance runner in past Olympiads, teaches physical education at the University of Toronto. His articles appear regularly in SAR.

"Send me a tour" is apparently the first thing South African president F. W. De Klerk said to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl during his visit to Bonn last spring. Both men need to be reminded that the sportsworld is not interested in playing the legitimization game.

There is no question that the quarantine of South African sports should be maintained and strengthened for the immediate future. To do otherwise would be an "affront to the oppressed majority" and would "send the wrong signal" to the apartheid regime and its powerful friends, as Sam Ramsamy of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) told several audiences in Toronto in June.

Nevertheless, the dramatic breakthroughs of the last year and the hopes raised by the beginning of "negotiations on negotiations" have put the question of lifting sanctions clearly on the agenda. At the Fourth International Conference Against Apartheid Sport, held last September in Stockholm, activist athletes expressed radically different points of view.

The discussion revolved around the conditions under which the boycott should be dismantled. To what extent must this decision await the "profound and irreversible" destruction of apartheid as an entire system? Might sanctions be lifted on a sport-by-sport basis, as individual federations meet the tests set by the non-racial movement and the international community? If so, what should those tests be? How can the leverage provided by the moratorium be used to optimum advan-

Hilton Barber/Afrapix/Impact Visuals

Not Yet De Klerk: Defending the Sports Boycott

tage in the interim? How can the international community assist in the post-apartheid reconstruction?

The Conference Against Apartheid Sport is unique in the overall sanctions campaign, because it brings together all the major players – liberation movements and anti-apartheid organizations, the United Nations, governments and the major NGOs meet with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the major international and national sports bodies. In Stockholm, for the first time there was direct representation from the non-racial sports movement from within South Africa and participation from Namibia.

The conference began in a mood of guarded celebration. Since the last such get-together in Harare in 1987, there have been significant victories on almost every front. Sanctions have been tightened in the Olympics, and in cricket, tennis, and professional boxing – all popular South African sports. A number of countries, including Canada, have taken steps to deny visas to South African athletes, and where governments still allow them to play, activists have made their lives miserable. There was much affectionate sharing of battleline experiences and the solidarity movements' unwritten history.

The most gratifying news came from the leaders of the non-racial National Olympic and Sport Congress (NSC) from South Africa. The NSC's successful opposition last January to the "rebel" English cricket tour has proved an important watershed. It used to be that no matter how much criticism and censure those athletes who flouted the boycott received in their own countries, once they stepped off the plane in South Africa, they could expect a hero's welcome, first-class all the way, with little contact with apartheid's foes. But the mobilization against the English "test" has changed all that. Everywhere they went, the cricketers and their

sponsors were directly confronted by thousands of demonstrators. In Kimberley (where the first game was moved to avoid a protest) and Johannesburg, the players were forced to cook their own meals and clean their own rooms because the hotel workers refused to serve them. The series had to be cancelled prematurely.

As a result, South Africa has probably seen its last lavishly financed "rebel" tour. If another is tried, NSC leaders are confident that

establishment of the moratorium on international competition. The goal is the creation of single, democratic, non-racial bodies for every sport, i.e., the unification, according to a one-person one-vote constitution, of the presently racially-defined bodies with their non-racial counterparts. This will be no mean feat: in most sports there are separate white, coloured and black bodies in addition to the non-racial federations. To make these new organizations effective, a broad measure of redistribution will be necessary.



Anti-rugby tour demonstrations, Durban, S.A., August 1990

they can stop it. The Congress now effectively controls the route to international competition, and a growing number of people from the once haughty white sports establishment have begun to realize this. In the last few months, the still-functioning white Olympic association and several of their member sports, notably swimming and track and field, and the establishment bodies in cricket, rugby and soccer, have sought out the NSC, effectively suing for peace.

In keeping with the evolving "two-track" strategy discussed previously in these pages ("Adjusting the Sports Boycott", March 1989), the NSC has viewed these negotiations as a stepping stone to a strengthened non-racial sports sector, in preparation for a post-apartheid South Africa. The precondition the NSC has set is an immediate acceptance by the sports es-

This process has the blessing of SANROC and the IOC, through the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA). Both have indicated that democratic unity is a minimum condition for South African entry into international competition. (Language is instructive here: Ramsamy and his African colleagues stress that the real South Africa has never competed in international competition.) In August, ANOCA sent Ramsamy to South Africa (his first return in 18 years) to make these terms clear to the government and the white sports establishment and to consult directly with the non-racial leaders. In Stockholm, Ramsamy reinforced NSC President Mluleki George's judgement that the willingness of many white leaders to enter unity talks is "genuine" and "encouraging."

Mayet/Afrapix/Impact Visuals

This strategy was also largely endorsed at the conference by the two representatives of the South African Council on Sport (SACOS), the older non-racial umbrella federation which up until now has been polemicizing against it (see "Old Ploys vs. New Players", *SAR*, Dec. 1989). Although the issue of "non-alignment" has yet to be settled – SACOS is opposed to the NSC's close public association with the ANC – it would seem that the chances for unity among the anti-apartheid sports community have significantly improved.

But the buoyant optimism generated by the activists' and the non-racial leaders' reports was tempered by a fear that some long-standing supporters of the campaign may be pushing the process too quickly, encouraging a widespread expectation that whatever the outcome of the ANC-De Klerk negotiations, sporting exchanges with South Africa are imminent. While the Africans stressed that "the pillars of apartheid remain firmly in place", "the unity talks have barely begun", and "it would be dangerous to relax the boycott now", several prominent Europeans likened the international campaign to a race and suggested that the "finish line is very, very near."

U.N. Assistant Secretary-General Sotirios Mousouris gave the impression that the U.N. is impatient to wind down the boycott campaign, predicting that the Fourth International Conference would be the last. IOC President Samaranch said that since the Olympic Movement was "the first to say 'no' to South Africa, it would be proud to be the first to welcome its return." Was this an awkward translation, or a straw in the wind? While Samaranch has long been committed to an African solution, the next Games are in his home town of Barcelona and a non-racial South African team would give him a striking diplomatic triumph. Spain has resumed the

practice of giving visas to South African athletes. In the corridors, delegates also worried about the unannounced relaxation of cultural sanctions by the nordic countries (who have always been the forefront of international solidarity) and the loss of the Eastern European communist governments' unbending support.

To clear up any confusion about the timetable, the conference's final – and unanimous – declaration emphasizes that the road ahead will be long and difficult and that "there remained a yawning gap between hope and achievement." It calls upon the international community to extend and intensify the boycott. The conference rejected the idea of uncoupling the sports campaign from the overall struggle – and with it, the prospect of lifting sanctions on a sport-by-sport basis – and renewed the pledge to maintain the moratorium until apartheid is completely eradicated. At the same time, it endorsed the "unity talks" between the NSC and the sports establishment, indicating that even after sanctions are withdrawn, only united, democratic, and non-racial sports bodies would be admitted to international competition.

It is to be hoped that such unambiguous language will restore the resolve of the "sanctions weary." It is expected that these resolutions will form the basis of the ANOCA advice to the major South African sports bodies (both establishment and non-racial) when they meet in Harare in November.

While the moratorium prohibits international competition, the international community is being encouraged to provide financial and technical assistance to the non-racial movement (and to the front-line states). The conference also addressed this challenge. Though white facilities and programs are superb, the historic pattern of centuries of racism has left black athletes woefully disadvantaged, and in the rural areas opportunities do not

exist at all. The NSC is anxious that the pattern of Zimbabwe and Namibia not be repeated: when those liberation movements won their independence, the whites still monopolized the best opportunities. The first Zimbabwe Olympic Team, in Moscow in 1980, was entirely white.

There is a heady ambition among the non-racial leaders, one we might well emulate in Canada after the neo-conservative decade of shrinking expectations. They speak of sport for all as if they mean it, and they are determined to extend opportunities to girls and women, and take sport to the oppressed peoples of the rural areas and bantustans. But the task will be enormously difficult. Economic development, education, health care, and housing will properly be higher priorities for any democratic government.

Continuing residential segregation will significantly reduce the effect of open access laws, and if more pro-active policies are tried, such as busing township athletes to the best white clubs, they will be bitterly resisted. Most sponsors will continue to concentrate solely on the popular stars, effectively boycotting projects of grass roots development. (Sponsors are still giving most of their money to the elite white sports.)

The non-racial movement has begun to receive some international assistance (Canada has contributed about \$50,000; Sweden is training swim coaches), but so far it's been a drop in the bucket. Sam Ramsamy has suggested that there be substantial international reparations for the superprofits extracted under apartheid, some of which could be used for sports, but this and similar proposals need to be followed up. The good news is that for the first time in this series of conferences, the international community was able to take an active interest in non-racial sports as they are being developed at the grass roots. That's another measure of the advances of the last year.