

LETTERS

THE CITIZEN 12-09-89

Capitalist versus socialist argument was too simplistic

IN reply to Student of Economics in *Echo*, August 17, I wish to set the record straight on a distorted perspective of Capitalism and Socialism.

The political economies under analysis are indeed complex. A failure to grasp such complexities through idealistic simplifications can result in misguided and superficial perceptions.

In your effort to evaluate the potential wonders of capitalism by subjecting socialism to a degenerated bureaucracy of tyrannical rulers, you negate the vital historical aspect in either system — that the present is a product of the past and a determinant of the future.

CAPITALISM is not driven by human need. On the contrary, it thrives off human greed. Unwarranted accumulations of wealth in the form of surplus value (profits) inevitably becomes the order of the day, with the capitalists declaring relentless war against the masses, periodically stripping human dignity of its worth through exploitation and oppression.

Under the guise of farcical slogans such as "private initiative" and "creative potential" the capitalists expound creative individualism as the essential stimulant of creative initiative which contributes to the constructive development of humanity. Such is the logic of those in powerful social positions — not the vast majority of wage slaves.

The owners of the means of production create luxuries for themselves through numerous exploitative methods:

- By freezing wages in crises of rampant inflation.
- By extending conventional hours of work (overtime) without a commensurate rate of payment to workers.
- By discriminating between race, creed, etc.
- By lowering commodity prices to keep competitors at bay.

An example of the last method is large competing retailers who lower prices to attract powerful consumer markets. To remedy the imbalance created by low prices they would have to extend conventional hours of work with a corresponding freeze on wages. Some lower their prices below the threshold of surplus value and fall victim to liquidation. Others join forces to overcome the impact of competition and frequently mushroom into syndicates and cartels to enjoy exclusive monopolies.

It follows that Rainbow Chickens did not necessarily extract substantial profits because some remotely innovative scheme (machines) facilitated more rapid production than before. Production is human-related; if the means of production constituted machines (dead labour) only, which are quick and efficient, then commodities would lose their social value because the consumer market would have been destroyed. A producer cannot produce more chickens than is affordable on the market. If it did so, their market value would plummet and the capitalist would incur loss. Hence "excessive" commodities are dumped in the face of abject poverty to maintain a consistent rate of inflation.

The baker, farmer, factory owner produce for profit, not by "seeing needs". Needs (human requirements) are obliterated by an insatiable appetite for luxuries. So the leader in his or her field will be the one with the best monopoly on market forces.

SOCIALISM was indeed sparked by "compassion and pity" for the oppressed and exploited, sentiments borne out of the harsh conditions of the imperialist epoch. A consequent division of humankind into antagonistic camps of "gluttony" and "poverty" ushered socialism into the order of things to rescue

humanity from fading into oblivion. History makes this possible by replacing the old and jaded with the new and innovative.

Paramount to our understanding of socialism is the element of "worker control". There is a tendency, however, to surround the question of worker control with a layer of twisted slogans such as "fascist dictatorship" and "secret henchmen". The Student of Economics tends to structure his argument against socialism along these lines. This needs to be clarified.

Contrary to populist stereotypes, worker control implies decisive participation of those actively involved in the means of production. Power is wielded by the masses under the guidance and discipline of accountable professionals, not the "comrade president" or "head of the table" so to speak.

"Secret police" are offshoots of the Hilters and Stalins of this world, the products of political opportunists and violent dictators bent on extracting political power for personal enrichment. Stalin's Russia was in the grips of a degenerated bureaucracy which functioned for the whimsical fancies of Stalin and his lackeys while betraying the masses. One can interpret the Russian situation today as a perpetuation of the Stalinist era. Vicious upheavals, ethnic strife, wildcat strikes etc bear testimony to the prevailing discontent perpetrating Russian society. Hence the introduction of perestroika and glasnost in desperate efforts to liberate Russia from oppression.

"A kombi has been expropriated from its 'owner' because it belongs to the government", rephrased, would read; "A kombi has been retrieved and restored to its rightful owners for the benefit of all, not the selfish monopoly of a few."

You say; "The drive to work hard is subdued by socialism." Capitalism in its relentless thrust to manufacture super-profits leaves millions devastated by an existence which fosters poverty by denying its inhabitants the tools to their livelihoods.

Africa is burdened by a peculiar politico-economic system known as African Socialism — a social order rooted in traditional society. This is not socialism in its true sense. At independence many African states arbitrarily adopted the doctrines of Marxism/Leninism in frantic attempts to escape the patent injustices of the colonial era. African Socialism was supposed to afford a root to justice through the adaptation of traditional institutions to the modern world.

Unfortunately, the communalism of traditional African societies and the socialism of modern society do not amount to the same thing. The attachment of both these concepts was clearly an effort to arrest a process set in motion by Africa's historical march into the capitalist economy via imperialism. The normal path of development had therefore been disrupted by a premature intrusion of socialism into Africa. Furthermore, African Socialism is confined to the artificial boundaries of nation states. Socialism can only triumph on a world scale, transcending the fundamental contradictions in humanity yet preserving its diversity into a cohesive unit.

The effort to build socialism in Africa has failed; individual aggrandisement subverted communal solidarity. This failure can be attributed to the utopian thinking of individuals. The practicability of capitalism or socialism does not "depend on people" but on the socio-economic conditions in existence.

Can so-called free enterprise guarantee real freedom? Minority freedom, yes. Freedom for the masses, no. The masses are strapped to an inexorable production chain geared towards minority privilege.

STUDENT

ANC purge N. MERCUAY - 12 SEPT. 1989 of top militants

LONDON—The ANC has detained one of its most powerful military commanders in a drastic purge of 'wrongdoers' and suspected South African spies, according to the respected journal *Africa Confidential*.

The ongoing clean-up of the ANC is reported to be part of its 'diplomatic initiative' masterminded by its Foreign Secretary Thabo Mbeki to gain credibility with the West, particularly British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in advance of the Commonwealth heads of government meeting, opening in Malaysia next week.

It said Thami Zulu, who rose from head of Natal operations to become commander of the Swaziland-Mozambique front had been detained with a number of ranking officers and 'some have confessed to being agents of Pretoria'.

The report added that investigations had also been opened into serious financial discrepancies that were embarrassing the ANC.

Candidate

The journal said Thami Zulu's detention followed the 'suicide' last year of the ANC's Natal Military Command operations chief Comrade Cyril, after he confessed that he was a double-agent working for Pretoria.

Following Cyril's exposure and death ANC security units, led by Iscor Chikane and Joe Nhlanhla, conducted the investigation of the entire operation on the Swaziland-Mozambique front that led to the new detentions.

Ian Hobbs

Thami Zulu had even chaired key ANC central committee meetings and had been a candidate to become chief of staff of the military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe.

The journal said many in the ANC cannot believe that Thami Zulu is an 'enemy agent'.

They say he had lost his dynamism and turned a blind eye to the activities of 'the

boys', as his deputy Comrade Cyril and his clique were known, and attempted to shield them from investigation.

The reported detention of Thami Zulu corresponds with the increasing isolation from central power in the ANC of military extremists, notably Umkhonto chief-of-staff Chris Hani who had advocated attacks on soft targets, and SACP hardliners.

Africa Confidential said financial investigations centred on R500 000 missing from treasury funds and, most embarrassing, the failure of the ANC's New York office to account for R674 000 raised in the US (illegally so according to the US Justice Department).

The journal said financial scandals were rarer in the ANC than they were in South Africa but the issue had placed pressure on the 'unpopular' ANC treasurer-general Thomas Nkobi, who is considered the third most powerful man in the movement.

An ANC spokesman yesterday said they would comment after headquarters in Lusaka had had a chance to see the claims made by *Africa Confidential*. He said the journal had recently appeared to reflect the views of Western intelligence organisations rather than hard facts.

Nation/world

Apartheid foes find a hero among police

By Tom Masland

Chicago Tribune

CAPE TOWN, South Africa—Lt. Gregory Rockman couldn't be better for the antiapartheid movement if it had invented him. And he keeps improving.

When the government announced Monday that whips will no longer be used to break up protest rallies, Rockman, 30, was right back on foreign television claiming credit, ignoring orders to keep his mouth shut.

"They are listening," he said.

He also reported having received his first death threat—from an anonymous caller identifying himself as a policeman who belongs to the shadowy "White Wolves" vigilante group.

Then he announced that he would confront his fellow officers directly Wednesday by joining Cape Town's mayor in a protest march to parliament that the regional police commander already has said he will block. Rockman said he wants to prove a demonstration can be peaceful.

He is demanding meetings with Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok and Acting President F.W. de Klerk, who is to be formally elected president on Wednesday, the day of the protest.

"What I've got in store for them can bring about a whole new era of police in South Africa ... to assure the public they are not enemies but protectors," he said.

Rockman first went public with accusations of police brutality last Wednesday. He put his 12-year ca-

reer on the line by charging that white riot-control units beat blacks "like wild dogs." He said the police "feasted on the people" with their whips, attacking nonviolent protesters indiscriminately.

Perhaps what most amazes South Africans is that he still goes to work every day at the Mitchell's Plain police station as the government ponders what to do about him.

When police used live ammunition to break up Election Day crowds in black and mixed-race suburbs Wednesday, it gave them a big public-relations problem. Rockman compounds it.

With the zeal of the newly converted, the 30-year-old community relations and crime-prevention officer has set about making up for 12 years of silence in which he said he "tolerated a lot" from white officers he accuses of brutalizing blacks.

"At this point in time they're fed up with me because I'm revealing the truth," he said. "... They will try to arrest me.

"This is the norm, actually, in South Africa," he said Monday in his new, ranch-style bungalow in one of the city's more distant

mixed-race neighborhoods, where his wife and two children are to join him.

"If you're outspoken, you must be taken away and put somewhere nobody can see you," he said.

About half of all police officers in South Africa are classified as

black, "colored" (of mixed race) or Indian. The department offers recruits attractive training and salary packages in townships where there are few other opportunities.

By going public, Rockman has become an instant hero in the Cape Flats, the ring of tract suburbs that house nearly 2 million mixed-race people. He validated and gave voice to their deeply held resentment of police.

"Viva Rockman, Viva!" chanted 1,000 mourners at the funeral of Ricardo Levy, 12, one of at least 15 people shot on election night.

"He stood up for the truth and explained exactly what the riot police have been doing in this country," said Cameron Dugmore, a regional officer of the banned United Democratic Front.

In the aftermath of Rockman's revelations and the shootings, the antiapartheid movement is demanding the resignation of Law and Order Minister Vlok and the removal of riot police from duty.

Rockman made his first broadside the same night police turned to lethal force in a month-old upsurge of protest that began in mixed-race high schools, long a focus of resistance to race discrimination.

Township witnesses say police used buckshot and live bullets from rifles and pistols, as well as the usual tear gas, whips and birdshot, in breaking up crowds that had gathered around hundreds of burning street barricades. Activists say 29 people died; police say 10 were killed and five other deaths are under investigation.

Rockman said he had decided to speak his mind after seeing four riot police beat and injure an innocent woman who lived near the site of a street protest.

"The police were hitting like mad, they were falling over each other the way they were trying to get to the people," he said. "They were like wild dogs."

"I'm not willing for the regulations to bind me anymore; I'm defying them," he said Wednesday.

His decision echoed the spirit of the ongoing "Defiance Campaign," in which dozens of restricted groups last month unilaterally declared themselves unbanned.

"Our people have been oppressed enough," Rockman said. "It's time somebody comes forward and speaks about police brutality."

Police violence stirring uproar in South Africa

Chicago Sun-Times Wires

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—Police were ordered Monday to stop using whips against anti-apartheid demonstrators because of "negative reactions" at home and abroad.

The move came as Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok called a meeting of the state security council that was expected to focus on the bloody repression of protests against last week's general election in South Africa from which the black majority was excluded.

Anti-apartheid activists say up to 29 people were killed when security forces moved against protesters with birdshot, buckshot, tear gas and shotguns. Police put the death toll at 15.

On Sunday, Winnie Mandela, wife of the imprisoned leader of the African National Congress, Nelson R. Mandela, said the toll could be as high as 60 dead.

Meanwhile, Anglican Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu and Allan Boesak, president of the World Council of Reformed Churches, met with six ambassadors and seven consuls general here to discuss the bloodshed.

The two church leaders urged the diplomats, who included U.S.

Ambassador William L. Swing, to "unequivocally and categorically" condemn police violence and the arrests of hundreds of activists. They also asked them to monitor a planned march against police violence tomorrow and a mass burial Saturday of those killed in last week's clashes.

Swing said after the Monday meeting that the U.S. government was "saddened by the reports of the deaths and we deplore this and all violence."

Police and demonstrators have clashed almost daily since a nationwide campaign to defy anti-apartheid laws began Aug. 2. The protests were designed to mobilize opposition to the segregated parliamentary elections, but activists have vowed to continue the campaign.

In the dispute over exactly how many people died on election day, Boesak said Sunday: "Whether 10, 20 or 100 people died is not the point. The fact is police opened fire on a peaceful crowd . . . that is the issue."

"Mr. Vlok thinks we are playing games. When a 3-year-old girl playing in her yard has to have nine pellets removed from her head, is he [Vlok] going to say she stopped people from going to the



Associated Press

Recalling a fallen black leader, members of the Azanian People's Organization march Monday in Johannesburg, South Africa, to commemorate the 1977 death of Steve Biko in detention. Today is the anniversary of his death.

polling stations?"

The two churchmen said they had called off a planned tour of seven countries aimed at highlighting South African police violence. They said they preferred to stay in the strife-torn areas where they were needed.

Colin Eglin, a leader of the white liberal Democratic Party,

has called on the government to set up a committee of inquiry to determine responsibility for the bloodshed.

He also urged acting President Frederik W. de Klerk to meet Tutu and Boesak. "If Mr. de Klerk is earnest about reform and reconciliation, I call on him to start right here this week."

THE CITIZEN COMMENT

DP leader

IT will be interesting to see how the Democratic Party resolves its leadership problem. It cannot go on having three co-leaders, Dr Zach de Beer, Dr Denis Worrall and Mr Wynand Malan, each with a different set of supporters and each with a different emphasis on policy.

Those who favour the troika believe it did well in the election and was the reason for the party winning 33 seats.

We don't think so.

Having three leaders firing off statements individually on some issues, and together on others, weakened, rather than strengthened, the leadership.

Newspapers, as happened in our case, got tired of receiving faxes of three speeches in one day from the three co-leaders.

One didn't know which of the three was the real leader, or which viewpoint was the one that best represented DP policy.

Of the three, the weakest in leadership terms was Mr Malan, whose constant harping on talks with the African National Congress and the right to peaceful protest by the Mass Democratic Movement, when peaceful protest was resulting in violence, must have done the DP some harm, since it didn't reach its target of 35 to 40 seats which Dr Worrall had set for it, nor did it achieve a hung Parliament.

Certainly if Mr Malan had been the sole leader, the party would not have achieved anything like 33 seats.

Besides that, Mr Malan brought the smallest dowry to the shotgun marriage of his National Democratic Movement, the Progressive Federal Party of Dr De Beer and the Independent Party of Dr Worrall.

He clings to the idea of the troika because he wants to remain a co-leader knowing full well that if the party chooses one leader, it will not be him.

Dr Worrall addressed more election meetings than the other two co-leaders. As he stood in Natal and the DP did well in that province, he will have a strong claim to the leadership. DP-supporting newspapers suggest he is the most popular of the three, drawing the biggest meetings.

That does not mean the party itself is as enamoured with him.

Dr Worrall is regarded as a most ambitious man, with a rather peripatetic history in politics.

Ex-Progressive Federal Party members, who brought much more into the party's organisation than any other party, are generally not keen on having him as their leader.

Besides, he is too much of a cold, political scientist and not enough of a political idealist, whereas the Progs always had idealism as well as principle.

He is also somewhat of an abrasive personality and did not always come over well on TV.

Which leaves Dr De Beer, re-elected until the October congress as Parliamentary leader, as the most likely candidate.

He has the support of Big Business, of which he was a prominent member, having been an Anglo American executive.

He also has the support of the ex-Progs, having been a founder member of the Progressive Party.

More than that, he did exceptionally well in television debates and interviews, giving a clear and incisive exposition of DP policies.

We cannot recall one occasion when he put a foot wrong.

In commending his leadership qualities, we are not suggesting that the DP should choose him.

But we do know, after his performance during the election, that the party would not do better than have him as its sole leader.

The DP has a difficult task ahead of it.

In the absence of a hung Parliament, it will not have the say in government policies for which it had hoped.

If the State President-elect, Mr F W de Klerk, fails in getting his reforms on the road, it will go well with the DP. But if he succeeds in creating a new South Africa, the DP won't have much relevance in five years' time when the country next goes to the polls.

Shebeen owner gunned down in bedroom

COPS GET

SOWETAN - 12 SEPT. 1989

11 YEARS

TWO riot squad policemen who gunned down a woman when they raided shebeens in Orlando East, Soweto, were yesterday sentenced to a total of 11 years by a Rand Supreme Court judge.

An earlier charge of murder was converted to culpable homicide when they were convicted on Friday. Mr Justice Swart, sitting with two assessors, said this was a borderline case between murder and culpable homicide.

Head

The murder charge arose from the death of Mrs Matilda Shibe who was shot in the head in her bedroom by Constable Willie Scheepers on the night of September 18 last year when the two policemen raided her shebeen.

The judge found that Scheepers did not intend to shoot Shibe, nor had a motive to kill her.

He then found Scheepers guilty of culpable homicide. He found

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Constable Nico van der Merwe, who was searching the other room in the house for liquor, when the shot was fired, also guilty of culpable homicide and not murder.

Scheepers (23) of Forest Hill was then sentenced to five years for culpable homicide and robbery and two years for extortion and theft of which one year was suspended for five years. He will serve an effective six years prison term.

Van der Merwe (21) of Florida was sentenced to four years for culpable homicide and robbery and two years for extortion and theft of which one year was suspended for five years.

He will serve an effective five years prison term.

They were acquitted on a charge of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm. The judge found there was no evidence to support this charge.

A State witness, Mrs Joyce Ramela, wept on Friday soon after the judge had given his verdict.

According to evidence, they threatened one shebeen queen during the raid and demanded R150 and beer from her. Both were armed with service pistols. They went to another house across the street which they thought was also a shebeen and woke up Mrs Shibe who denied there was liquor in her house.

Scheepers did not believe her and pointed his pistol at her and pulled the trigger to emulate a clicking sound to frighten her, it was said.

He did not realise that the gun was loaded and Mrs Shibe was shot in the head and died later.

Cosatu denies calling for general strike

Citizen 12-09-89

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions said yesterday it had not called for a general strike today, the 12th anniversary of the death of Black consciousness leader Steve Biko.

"There is no truth in this rumour," general secretary Jay Naidoo said in a statement.

"We have made no call, nor have any other formations of the MDM, on our members and supporters to stay away.

Mr Naidoo said the Mass Democratic Movement had planned to begin a boy-

cott of White businesses on Wednesday but the day had been moved to September 22 to give employers an opportunity to meet workers' demands on amendments to the Labour Relations Act.

The date had also been changed to give MDM members adequate time to prepare and discuss guidelines for the boycott.

The action, he further said, would last two weeks and not one month as originally announced. — Sapa.

IN a television interview Steve Biko emphasised that liberation would be close at hand once the major entities of the struggle - the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress, the Black Consciousness Movement and the Unity Movement - united in principled action.

"What I would like to see is these groupings coming together and setting a co-ordinated and principled agenda for the struggle," he said.

Biko spread this message among his comrades and contemporaries in the mid-1970s and bridged the political generation gap between the young BCM activists and members of the ANC and PAC whose organisations were banned in 1960.

This attitude created political co-operation in those years and there was none of the antagonism so prevalent today.

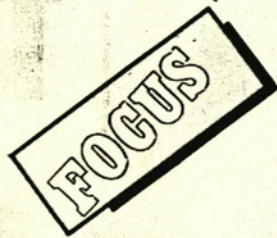
In his autobiographical *On Your Own*, the chairman of the exiled Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA), Mosibudi Mangena, says that in view of the fact that the BCM was unaffected by conflicts among the older movements, it was felt then that the BCM was better placed to initiate moves towards unity.

"During the tumultuous political events of 1976 and 1977, the feelings grew stronger among BCM elements that efforts towards unity be actively pursued.

"Biko, being one of the leading figures within the BCM and indeed in the whole country sought to play a role in this direction. The general idea was to sound out all the organisations, separately, on the unity question before concrete plans could be drawn to bring about formal negotiations.

"It was with this in mind that Biko and Peter Jones undertook the trip to Cape Town on August 16 1977. Their primary objective was to meet representatives of the Unity Movement, one of the older formations in the history of political thought and struggle in Azania.

"On arrival in Cape Town, the two received puzzling and negative signals from UM elements who, apparently, did not wish to meet Steve. After spending a disappointing day of unhonoured appointments in Cape Town, and realising from their contacts with UM elements that their mission was known by too many people, Biko and Jones decided to abandon the UM project and hurry



One of the ideals that Steve Biko cherished before he died brutally in detention 12 years ago today was principled unity in action among organisations of the oppressed - particularly the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress, the Black Consciousness Movement and the Unity Movement. It is an ideal that had a bearing on his death.
MICHAEL TISSONG reports.



Steve Biko . . . strived for unity

A FATEFUL ENCOUNTER

SOWETAN - 12 SEPT. 1989

Roadblock on the road from Cape Town

back to King William's Town.

"They encountered a police road block between Port Elizabeth and King William's Town where they were arrested.

"It is not that they were betrayed, but it is probably true to state that the road block was simply there because August 18 1977 was the first an-

niversary of the start of uprisings in the Port Elizabeth area.

"This anniversary was being marked by the black people in the townships with services, meetings, demonstrations and other revolutionary activities.

"It is also reasonable to state that, had it not been for the inappropriate behaviour of the UM elements in Cape Town which tended to compromise Biko in particular, the pair would not have been on the Cape Town - King William's Town road on August 18."

In separate interviews before Mangena's book was published, Jones and another BCM activist

who was close to Biko, Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu, said that they felt Biko was "sold out."

Biko was certified dead at a prison hospital in Pretoria on September 12. Inquest records show that he was brutalised over a number of days and died of his injuries.

The inquest magistrate exonerated the policemen in whose custody Biko was held.

Mangena said that at the time of Biko's detention and death, a medley group of people belonging to different interests groups were attempting to take Biko out of the country, ostensibly for purposes of assisting the pro-

cess of unity in the ranks of the broad liberation movement.

Mangena says one of the international groups involved in the unity initiative was the International University Exchange Fund (IUEF).

Interviews

"It is of course common knowledge now that the IUEF was a den of South African spies, the most notorious among them being Craig Williamson."

Mangena said the circumstances surrounding Biko's death raised interesting questions:

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1. Did the security police know the exact purpose of Biko's visit to Cape Town and its wider implications?

2. With the involvement of the IUEF, there is no doubt that South African intelligence groups were well briefed about attempts outside the country to take Biko out of South Africa, but did the security police who interrogated him have that information at the time?

3. What role did this unity initiative play in the decision of the Government to outlaw the BCM organisations on October 19, only a month after Biko's death?

Mangena says that Biko's death and the banning of the BCM organisations killed a major political project which might have had important positive results for the struggle for liberation.

Different

"The size, shape and temperament of the Azania liberation movement might have been different today had the initiative been given a chance to flower."

Biko, who was at different times an executive member of the South African Students Organisation and the Black People's Convention, was banned and restricted to King William's Town.

He disregarded the restrictions placed on him because, in the words of his wife, Ntsiki, he "regarded the whole of South Africa as his home."

All the organisations Biko helped found were banned by government decree on October 19 1977.

A FATEFUL
ENCOUNTER.
FROM Pg 1