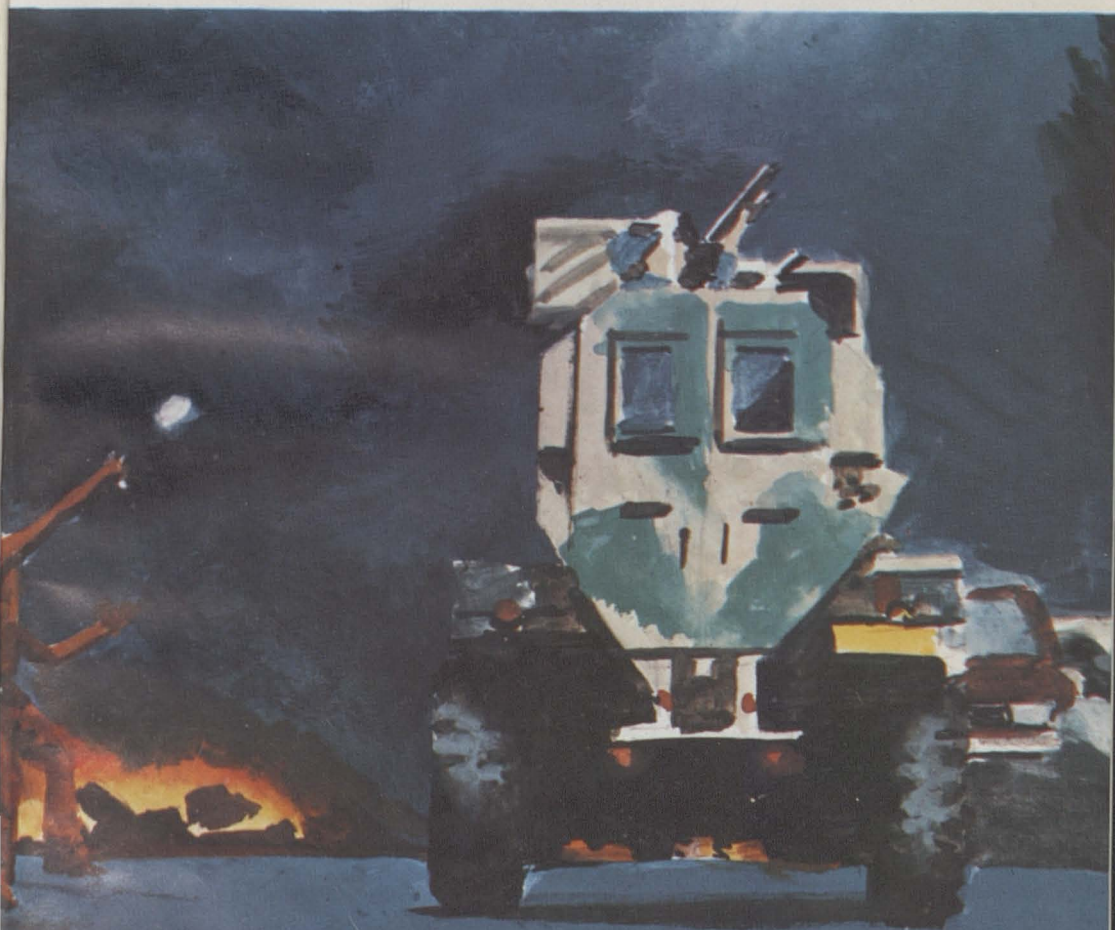


# Third World

Nº 0 • January • 1986

**FAMINE VS.  
FOOD ABUNDANCE**



# SOUTH AFRICA

**A CRUMBLING REGIME**



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To the reader

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## Our New English Edition

Founded more than a decade ago, *third world* magazine now resumes publication of its English-language edition. A first effort in this direction was started in Mexico in 1979, but unfortunately had to be interrupted when the magazine's central offices were transferred to Rio de Janeiro. For us in *third world*, circulation in English means a lot more than just having a further edition to add to those we print for Brazil, Portugal, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (all in Portuguese), and for South and Central America (in Spanish). With this pilot issue in English we are introducing a qualitative change which, we hope, will considerably improve all of our current editions.

At present, a total of over 80,000 copies of our magazine circulate in more than 70 countries in two languages and four editions. By adding an English publication, we aim to further our intent of providing a vehicle for the exchange of political, social, cultural, and economic experiences between Third World countries. In addition, our annual supplement, the *Third World Guide*, has been circulating in English since 1984.

The experience cumulated along these years has made it possible for us to realize one of our oldest aspirations. Our English edition, which will come out on a bimonthly basis in 1986 to become a monthly publication as of 1987, is imbued with the same spirit as its four twins in other languages: to serve as an instrument in the struggle for the political and economic independence of Latin American, Asian, and African peoples. The Portuguese version, for instance, emerged from a commitment with the struggle against the Brazilian dictatorship and with the preservation of a recently-won

independence in former Portuguese colonies in Africa. The Spanish edition joined the fight against military rule in various South American countries, and lent its support to the Nicaraguan revolution. The English edition will, among other things, join the struggle to eliminate apartheid in South Africa and to win Namibian independence.

The materials included in this pilot issue are mostly articles that have come to light in previous editions in other languages, and are meant to enable the reader to evaluate our recent past activities. As of March 1986, when our number one English issue will be on the newsstands, we will be dealing with current affairs and the immense task of helping to build a new world information order. By then we will be in a more privileged position to accomplish such task, since ours will be the only magazine in the Third World to be published simultaneously in three languages and five editions.

The qualitative change referred to above has to do with the expansion of our material infrastructure, an increased network of correspondents and contributors, and an improved response to the challenge of reflecting the views of Third World journalists on their countries and continents of origin. The past ten years have taught us that these are not easy tasks. And to correct our errors and imperfections, we welcome the criticism and suggestions that our English-speaking readers may send to us, just as our Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking readers have been doing for years.

Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon, January 1986

Neiva Moreira  
General Director

Carlos Castilho  
Editor



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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Cover: Abaeté Propaganda





#### 4 Letters

#### 7 Tricontinental Panorama

#### 0 Editorial — Apartheid: The Role of International Solidarity

#### 2 Cover Story — South Africa: A Crumbling Regime

3 The Bungling of the "Global Strategy", *Carlos Castillo*

9 The Government in a corner, *Govin Reddy*

3 Alfred Nzo: "We will make apartheid ungovernable"

7 Racist Relocations, *Laurine Platsky*

#### Africa

34 Angola: Digging in for a Long War

38 Nigeria: Return to Economic Liberalism, *Oje Orié*

#### Latin America

41 Costa Rica: Leaving Neutrality Behind, *Sybille Flaschka*

44 Peru: Garcia Locks Horns with the IMF, *Cesar Arias Quincot*

#### Asia

48 Vietnam: Healing Kim Phuc's War Scars, *Carlos Pinto Santos*

#### Economy

53 Undoing the Debt Mess — A call for Latin American Unity,  
*Alberto Couriel*

57 Free Trade Zones: Losing their appeal, *Khor Kok Peng*

59 Economic News

#### Culture

60 Preserving a Pure Aesthetic, *Mario Trindade*

62 Mozambique's "White Wood" Artistry, *Sol de Carvalho*

65 The Revolutionary Murals, *Albie Sachs*

67 Cultural News

#### Communications

68 Sakina vs Dallas: A new model of Muslim women, *Fatima Mernissi*

73 Communications News

#### 74 Third World Books

#### 75 Third World Publications

#### 76 Special — Famine Despite Food Abundance

78 Bumper Crops but for Export Only

84 Transnationals: Turning a Profit through Hunger

89 Africa: Bearing the Brunt of the Crisis

#### 96 Humor: António



Angola: a war of aggression



Vietnam: healing its war scars



The famine disaster



## Letters

### Opposition in Zaire

I am a Zairian citizen and I live in the People's Republic of Congo, where I hold a job as a secondary school teacher. I decided to take advantage of my vacations to visit the Angolan province of Cabinda as a tourist. It was here that I became acquainted with the Portuguese edition of *third world magazine*, which I read with some difficulty because of my inadequate knowledge of the Portuguese language. Nevertheless I read with great interest your October 1984 issue and the *1984/1985 Guide*. The first carries an interesting article on Zaire under the title of "OAU: Mobutu's divisionism" (page 7), while the second makes an accurate and rather complete description of Zaire.

After such reading, I can only rank your publication on the same level as *Afrique-Asie*: an earnest and pugnacious magazine. Having always lived in French-speaking countries, I hardly expected to find a similar magazine in the Portuguese language. I must say I was greatly surprised. And I can only regret that your magazine is not published also in French, along with your Spanish and English editions. For all of us Zairian intellectuals engaged in political affairs a French edition of your magazine would make very useful reading.

Gregório Igulu Maliba — Cabinda, Angola.

### Banning Nuclear Weapons in the African Continent

This is the second time I write to *third world* (Portuguese edition) to ask for some clarification on the belligerent policy of South African racists. After all, who is helping South Africa to produce nuclear weapons?

As divulged by the press in general, at least 40 US nuclear experts are currently at work in South Africa in a clear violation of the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons signed by the United States. According to incomplete data, a total of 265 US experts have been sent to South Africa since 1973, and around 90 South African physicists have been in the US for training. In addition, the Washington government actively participated in the creation of an atomic research center in Pelindaba by supplying two powerful nuclear reactors.

It should also be noted that the US and South Africa have

signed a secret agreement on the supply of enriched uranium to Pretoria until the year 2007. One hundred kilos of uranium have already been supplied under the agreement, an amount sufficient to build ten atom bombs. In September 1983, the US government signed a second secret agreement whereby US companies will be in charge of installing and operating two nuclear reactors in the Koeberg center.

When the US press revealed that at least 40 US atomic energy experts were at work in nuclear facilities in South Africa, the US State Department and Department of Energy claimed to be unaware of the fact. However, André van Hoerden, a spokesman of the South African electric energy department admitted in Capetown that US nuclear physics experts are active in South African nuclear centers; adding that the US is helping South Africa to prepare "emergency plans" — whatever these are.

How can one explain the fact that, having refused to sign the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, Pretoria also refuses to submit its nuclear reactors and facilities to the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency?

Notwithstanding, the US continues to cooperate with South Africa in nuclear affairs. By eliminating a number of restrictions, the current US administration has permitted Pretoria to rank third in the list of US clients receiving nuclear technology, according to official statistics for the period 1981-1983.

The help extended by the US and other Western powers for the creation of South Africa's nuclear potential was vehemently condemned at a recent meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York.

African heads of state, meeting in Addis Ababa in 1984, once again advocated the preservation of the African continent as a nuclear-free zone. The Soviet Union has also repeatedly urged Western powers to cease cooperating with the apartheid regime, but the West has been deaf to such appeals. Meanwhile, nuclear weapons at the disposal of South African racists pose a threat to peace, not only in Africa, but in other areas as well.

Plácido João de Almeida — Luanda, Angola.

### From a reader in the Soviet Union

My sincere compliments to the staff of *third world magazine*. I am a

young Angolan currently studying in the Soviet Union. Back in my country of origin, I was a permanent reader of the Portuguese edition of *third world*, and could obtain most of the magazine's issues in spite of some difficulties. However, this reading stopped since I arrived here. Please let me know if and how I can obtain your magazine in this country, whether or not as a subscriber... I wish you full success in your task of divulging the truth about Third World countries. Very few publications tell the truth about them, preferring to engage in dirty propaganda against them.

Paulo Jesse — Soviet Union.

### From a reader in Italy

Would it be possible for me to subscribe to your magazine from Italy? How much would a yearly subscription cost? In what form can it be paid for?

Divina A. Marçó — Reggio Emilia — Italy.

### Solidarity towards Nicaragua

The following message addressed to the people of Nicaragua was recently mailed from Lisbon to our Rio de Janeiro offices:

"The mural painting shown in the enclosed photograph is an expression of our solidarity towards your people and your country. We are the Youth Commission of Alverca, an organization of the young people of Alverca do Ribatejo, Portugal. We fully sympathize with the struggle of your people as represented by the Sandinista FSLN, both in the somber days of the Somoza dictatorship and at this crucial moment of Nicaraguan history.

"We are continually aware of the brave example you are giving us.

"For a free, sovereign, and independent Nicaragua."

The Youth Commission of Alverca — Portugal.

### From a reader in Czechoslovakia

Receiving a letter from Czechoslovakia may come as a surprise to you. I would like to make contact with collectors of postcards in other countries. I am a 37-year-old mining engineer, and would like to exchange postcards with other readers. Anyone sending me three or more postcards in one batch will receive the same amount of Czech postcards. I can write in Spanish, English, and some Portuguese.

Stefan Rumpler — Czechoslovakia.





# A Third World Viewpoint

Ronald Reagan, Margareth Thatcher, Augusto Pinochet, Ferdinand Marcos, Pieter Botha, and other less prominent people were certainly not much pleased to learn that third world is again available in the English language.

And do you know why? Because our magazine focuses on Third World conditions from a Third World viewpoint. It reports on Third World countries' aspirations and struggles in line with their most legitimate interests.

third world does not "visit" foreign countries looking for local news which are then interpreted from preconceived standpoints. It is in the Third World, living with it, sharing its day-to-day experiences. It is the only magazine in the Third World issuing five editions in three languages, and circulating in over 70 countries in five continents. That is what makes us different.

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# third world

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## Tricontinental Panorama

### Cuba: Castro seeks Better Relations with Church Leaders

Following his meeting with chief Christian church hierarchs, including all of the local Catholic bishops, Cuban President Fidel Castro said he hoped to improve his government's relations with religious organizations.

The Cuban President met last November with Catholic prelates and Christian church leaders to review their current problems. "We are seeking to build up a mutual understanding, not for political reasons, but in an honest attempt to solve our problems", he said at a meeting with top leaders of the island's Protestant churches, according to Adolfo Ham, President of the Cuban Ecumenical Council.

"We must do more than just coexist and live in peace", insisted Castro. "We must build a relationship free from any underlying problems". The Cuban leader's meeting with the seven Catholic bishops was his first with religious high priests in the past 25 years. According to Catholic observers, the meeting was a demonstration of the Cuban government's interest in overcoming major differences with the Catholic Church.

The meeting held by Castro with thirteen outstanding leaders of Protestant churches, an event that had no precedents in the past 20 years, had a similar purpose. When asked about Christians eventually joining the Communist Party, the only party existing in Cuba, Castro is reported to have said that "This is a historical issue that we are not prepared to discuss at this moment". He did, however, make it clear that "this may happen in the future", adding that he hoped his book on

religion will help to overcome prejudices against religion and believers, "both in Cuba and elsewhere".

Joining Fidel in the meetings were Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, Vice-President of the Cabinet Council, who is also a member of the Party's political bureau, and José Carneado, head of the Communist Party's Religious Issues Department.

The Cuban President told the Protestant leaders that the publication of some of the works by outstanding liberation theologians is being contemplated in Cuba, so that the Cuban people may get acquainted with this facet of religious thought. In a retrospective analysis of the role of Protestant churches in Cuba, especially in

the past 25 years, Castro pointed out that "We had no problem with Protestant churches. If any problems arose, they were of an individual, not of an institutional nature".

The president of the top Protestant organization in Cuba said the conversations with Castro had been "very positive". "It is the beginning of a dialogue that must proceed regularly, every four or six months", he added.

During the meetings, Fidel Castro read excerpts from a collection of interviews with a Brazilian Dominican monk, Frei Beto (Alberto Libanio Cristo), published under the title *Fidel Castro and Religion*, which has just been published in Brazil and of which a Cuban edition is scheduled to appear soon.



Fidel to the Catholics:  
"We are seeking to build up a mutual understanding not for political reasons, but in an honest attempt to solve our problems... We must do more than just coexist and live in peace"



## Bangladesh: The US presses for a Return to Civilian Rule

□ President-General H.M. Ershad's military regime is under strong pressure on the part of the US government for a return to civilian rule through general elections.

According to diplomatic sources in Dacca, US Under-Secretary of State John Whitehead had already brought the matter up when he met with President Ershad during his two-day visit in Bangladesh in October.

The political situation in Bangladesh is believed to have been the focus of conversations between Ershad and Whitehead, the number two man in the US State Department.

Talking to the press before he left Dacca for Katmandu, Whitehead said, "I reaffirmed our conviction that a return to representative political insti-

tutions through elections is the best way to achieve the stability and the economic growth which Bangladesh needs."

On their turn, political observers point out that the public declarations made by both Whitehead and the US Ambassador in Bangladesh, Howard Schaffer, are a positive indication that Washington has ignored the controversial referendum called by President Ershad on March 21.

The country's major opposition forces mounted a boycott against the referendum, which Ershad had called after banning all political activities, enforcing martial law, and shutting down schools. The US exerts considerable influence on Bangladesh, as on other Third World countries, due to its massive economic power.

Since it separated from Paki-

stan 14 years ago, Bangladesh has received over US\$ 3 billion in economic aid from the US. Economic subsidies granted by the US last year alone amounted to roughly US\$ 200 million.

"The coups and countercoups, contrived by the CIA to topple democratically elected governments in the Third World have been intended only to safeguard US interests", said a local Marxist leader.

Most leaders of the Awami League, Bangladesh's major opposition party, publicly held the CIA responsible for the overthrow of the government headed by the country's President-Founder and League member, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in an August 1975 bloody coup. Political observers point out that, if it persists, martial law in Bangladesh will eventually silence once and for all those political segments that still believe in the values of a constitutional system. If this happens, they warn, radical solutions and violent struggle may ensue.

## Burma: The Forgotten War

□ The death of three Europeans late last October in a confrontation between Karen guerrilla fighters and Burmese soldiers focused Western attention on the political situation in Burma, where for years nationalist Karen guerrillas have put up a fierce opposition against the Rangoon central government.

Jean Courrèges Clerq, 28, died in combat in East Burma, not far from the Thai border, during an attack launched by some 150 guerrillas against 500 Burmese soldiers. One of the young men whose bodies were photographed was a French

national, and reportedly carried an automatic rifle, one hand grenade, and a two-way radio set when he was killed.

Other Westerners militating side by side with the rebels also participated in the encounter, according to images shown on Burmese TV. The TV station claimed to have filmed them at a location the guerrillas call Tiker-Ney, in the Maelah zone, on the other side of Thai department of Tha Song Yang, in the province of Tak, 500 km northwest of Bangkok (the Thai capital), and 150 km east of Rangoon.

Sonny Wingate, 23, from Australia, a legal resident of Manchester, England, was identified by Burmese military authorities as another of the three foreigners who died in the confrontation with the Army at the guerrilla camp of Tiker-Ney.

Having gathered in that region of Burma in 1948 — when Burma won its independence from Great Britain — the Karens have ever since fought for an independent territory within the country. Burma covers an area of a little over 670,000 square kilometers, with a population of 37 million, and has oil, tin, coal, lead, zinc, silver, antimony, tungsten, and ruby reserves, plus abundant forests, agriculture, and cattle herds.

The Karens — one of the country's four main ethnic groups — make up some 40 percent of



the Burmese population, and claim to have 4,000 men in arms. They are believed to buy their ammunition in the black market in neighboring Thailand — where some 2 million Karens live — and receive no foreign military aid.

Strict adherents to the Christian morality and overtly nationalistic, the Karens have been more bitterly persecuted over the past two years by the Burmese Army, which keeps two light divisions in the area in permanent combat against smugglers and drug dealers.

Instead of the tactics of launching constant assaults, which they employed until 1983, the Burmese authorities said they intend to surround the rebels, taking the offensive only to preserve their bases in Mae Ta



Having rebelled almost 40 years ago, the Karens command some 4,000 guerrilla fighters

Wah, Mao Po Kai, and Wong Kha.

Karen guerrilla leaders claim to control an extensive area, some 700 km long and a few scores of kilometers wide, along the border with Thailand, in a wild mountain region.

In addition to its ethnic origins, as in the case of Karens and Kashins, the guerrilla war in Burma has also ideological roots, as in the case of combatants belonging to the Communist Party.

## South Yemen-Oman: Solving border problems

South Yemen's Prime Minister Haider Attas said that both the Aden and Oman governments are proceeding with their efforts to solve their border disputes. In an interview with *Al Ittihad*, a United Arab Emirates newspaper, Attas said that both countries, which resumed diplomatic relations last year, are intent upon "solving all their border problems and difficulties."

Negotiations were started at the initiative of the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf, of which Oman is a member, together with the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar.

The South Yemen government seems eager to cooperate more closely with the Council in every area to "preserve the stability and security in the region and in every Arab nation against imperialist de-

sions", said the Yemenite Prime Minister.

## Pakistan: Unjust arrests denounced by Amnesty International

More than 130 political detainees await sentences of up to 40 years in prison in Pakistan following "unfair legal treatment" by military courts, said New York officials of Amnesty International, a worldwide organization devoted to the protection of human rights.

Many of the prisoners have been tortured to "confess" their crimes, added the AI in a memo addressed to officials of the martial law regime of President Zia Ul-Haq, of Pakistan, which was released last November in New York.

Amnesty International deplored "the use of the death penalty and cruel forms of punishment (in Pakistan)", having disclosed that over 140 people received maximum sen-

tences between 1983 and 1984, usually on criminal charges. Political prisoners, most of them civilians, have been sentenced to between 7 and 42 years in prison by the military courts. The courts' proceedings usually take place in private sessions at the prisons. According to the AI memo, prisoners are not given a fair trial and are denied the right to appeal.

The AI demanded new trials for prisoners who have been condemned for political offenses or crimes, and for the end of the military courts, which were created when Zia Ul-Haq rose to power in Pakistan after the 1977 military coup. Under the martial law, the civil law establishment has no jurisdiction over military courts.

The AI added that hundreds of political prisoners have been sentenced to over 3 years in jail by lower military courts handling lesser political offenses.



# Apartheid: the Role of International Solidarity

The South African black majority's rebellion against the racist Pretoria regime is indicative of a qualitative change in the popular resistance against apartheid, and signals that, sooner or later, the struggle for racial equality in South Africa is bound to win.

Resistance against racism in South Africa is as old as racial segregation itself, and over the years it has experienced the ups and downs that are typical of such processes. Evidence suggests, however, that the South African movement has both cumulated forces and come of age politically. This would explain the massive response to the appeals against apartheid made by the movement's forefront, as represented by the African National Congress (ANC), and its calls for all forms of struggle against the regime and continued popular resistance, no matter how harsh and bloody the reactions of Mr. P.W. Botha's government have been.

Both the large number of casualties among blacks and the intensity and duration of the black majority's movement throughout the country indicate that the oppressed have reached a high degree of political consciousness, having decided that, since they have nothing to lose but the yoke of submission, they must fight until freedom has been achieved.

South African and Western moderates remain aloof as a repressive Pretoria government makes brutal use of violence against the black population; and having reviewed the government's military power, they conclude that apartheid cannot be defeated by an unarmed population. While the conclusion may be correct, it is out of context. The dilemma of South African blacks was clearly expressed by ANC leader Nelson Mandela — who has been in jail for over two decades on a life sentence — as he refused to renounce the use of violence as a condition for his release. "Our aim", said Mandela in his Pollsmoor prison cell, "is quite simple: a united South Africa, a single Parliament,

and equal voting rights for all. What to say of the whites? In contrast with what one sees in the rest of Africa, the South African whites belong in this country. They are in their own homeland, yet they must share power with the blacks. Yes, we will use violence as long as we have no other alternative. The whites may be formidably strong militarily, but we can make life impossible for Europeans in this country".

Apparently this is just what is happening. Resistance has crystalized into action at a time when the South African economy is experiencing a serious crisis. Since the local economic model is capitalist, its survival depends on domestic stability and on the confidence of both local and foreign investors who can provide the capital required to put the South African industry back on its feet.

An equally essential requirement is discipline among black workers, who are outrageously underpaid, especially in comparison with their white counterparts. Their extremely low salaries have helped to provide attractive profits for local investors, as long as the apartheid regime operates smoothly. Yet black rebellion has converted the South African economy into a quagmire that keeps foreign capital at bay, devaluates the rand, and undermines Pretoria's relations with exactly those Western powers that might provide badly needed capital flows.

To some extent, the government's use of rifles and gas bombs have not proved as effective as its attempts to promote antagonism between blacks and Indians via police omission. However, this very attempt at sowing the seeds of discord among communities which should hold together in the strife against a common enemy was a gesture of despair, and one which contributed to aggravate an already deep socio-economic instability.



Under these circumstances, and given the need for increased resources to feed the military and police apparatus, Mr. Botha's government has no other immediate or foreseeable alternative than to try to live with the crisis for as long as it possibly can. Popular resistance is telling the white rulers that apartheid may not be such a good business after all; that, unless the apartheid structure is dismantled, popular rebellion will continue to weaken and eventually destroy the material foundations of the whole system; that life may become impossible for South African whites, as Mandela has promised.

In the meantime, the Botha government will probably offer to introduce further superficial changes in the apartheid system — a strategy which is doomed to fail. If it is true that the quality of the resistance effort has improved, and that it now has the support of vast segments of the Indian community and white liberals, it will not be stopped by artificial reforms. Such maneuvers may, at best, buy the regime some additional time. One of the chief aspects of the heroic resistance of South African blacks is the fact that it is being carried out in isolation.

It has been said that all peoples must rely on themselves to achieve their liberation. While this is essentially true, it does not absolve the international community from the obligation of fulfilling its responsibilities. Racism is not a domestic South African issue. It is a scandal that insults all of mankind.

The South African regime is one of the consequences of ruthless European colonialism. The white minority's monopoly on government and power blatantly contradicts the liberal, democratic system adopted in Western capitalist powers. To be consistent with themselves, these Western powers must seek to isolate Pretoria and push towards the abolishment of the apartheid structure.

To be true, there are certain forces in the West which repudiate racism, and a number of governments, such as those of France and Sweden, have suspended economic relations with Pretoria and are willing to cooperate with an international

movement aimed at dismantling apartheid. As a group, however, the Western powers, led by the United States, still keep good relations with Botha's racist regime, and this makes them jointly responsible for much of the suffering of South Africa's black majority.

Washington views Pretoria as vital for its strategy of detaining the "Communist threat" in Africa, and its resulting alliance with South Africa has helped to strengthen apartheid. Economically, the Western industrial nations view Pretoria as a good trade partner, a supplier of strategic raw materials, and a good market for their products. Without the backing of economic sanctions, their sporadic verbal condemnations of apartheid have failed to conceal their complicity with the racist regime.

To claim that economic sanctions would bring no practical results but would only aggravate the plight of South African blacks is hypocritical; to say so is to ignore the facts and the desire of the oppressed communities, while safeguarding Western economic interests. By now, a firm show of international solidarity could have forced the apartheid system to change substantially. The lack of a definite, unanimous international response has given the Botha regime additional breathing space and borrowed time.

In every country, the forces which can be mobilized to demand a new approach from those governments that have abstained from imposing sanctions on South Africa go far beyond those labeled as "progressive" sectors. They range from religious circles and humanitarian movements to pluralistic social and political organizations. If they unite in the struggle for such a universal cause as racial equality, they can bring down the South African white minority's regime.

This is the task at hand for all of us in the West: effective solidarity with the South African people in its fight against segregation. The option is simple and transparent; there is no standing in-between; you are either against racism or for it.

Those hesitating nations which have failed to act against the Botha regime are helping to promote it through omission.




## South Africa: A crumbling regime

Over one thousand blacks have been killed by South African police since September 1984. The number of labor strikes has quadrupled in comparison with 1983. A number of "white" cities have been turned into real war fronts, and many entrepreneurs, politicians and intellectuals of European origin have challenged their country's racist regime by seeking contact with black organizations that fight apartheid. South Africa is facing the longest and worst political crisis in its history. Religious leaders have broken off with President Botha, and 70 percent of the white population believes that the racial discrimination system which became institutionalized in 1948 has no validity. The increased black struggle for racial equality is rendering apartheid ungovernable. The new situation has caused divisions throughout the local white society, in its efforts to find a solution which will at least preserve white economic interests. The impasse has failed to reduce the intransigence of ultra-racist sectors, making it very likely that the crisis will deepen in the near future.







8000000 HAVE NOTHING TO LOOSE BUT THEIR CHAINS

## The Bungling of the "Global Strategy"

*As the South African government attempts to replace racial  
by "capitalist" supremacy, its global strategy scheme meets fierce  
domestic and foreign opposition*

**T**he apartheid system, officially introduced in South Africa in 1948, is undergoing the worst crisis in its history, a crisis affecting all sectors of the white society which settled in Africa's southern tip in the 17th century. The situation undermines not only the government's political and economic superstructure, but also the country's legal institutions, reaching deeply into



Some of the most clamorous aspects of apartheid have already been eliminated, but rebellion goes on



the very rationale of the Afrikaner mentality, and the culture, religion, language and customs of 2.7 million whites who believe they were chosen by God to ensure Christian supremacy over heretics.

The current crisis has destroyed the solid unity forged along the years by what was once called "the last white tribe" of Africa. It has eliminated the economic foundations of a colonialist model marked above all by racism, and has prompted a change of unforeseeable consequences in a highly vulnerable period of South African history. Even the major spokesmen for racism admit that apartheid is no longer what it was two decades ago. But no one knows what will replace it. South African whites still have no idea what kind of system they will have to create in the future in order to preserve their dominant position. Ruptures in the old system have undermined the "separate development" structure and made it possible for a black movement congregating 27 million Africans to make considerable headway in its struggle for equal rights. At least in theory, the black majority never had such a chance of dismantling and destroying apartheid as it has now.

### The origins of the crisis

Apartheid was institutionalized in South Africa in the late 1940s. At the time, the political group of Dutch colonialist descendants, enriched by the increased world demand for food and gold exports, took the opportunity offered them shortly after World War II by a momentarily weak trade and financial oligarchy of British origin to rise to power on a nationalistic platform, in a sort of belated revenge for the defeat imposed on their ancestors by British interests in the Boer War of 1889-1902. The political group which seized power after the victory of the National Party in 1948 felt its troubles could be blamed particularly on two other groups — the financial oligarchy of British blood and the black majority.

Two major features characterized the system established in 1948: apartheid (as the scheme for separate development of white and black societies became known, whose main purpose was to ensure job security for European-blood citizens), and the State's active intervention in the economy. With the State apparatus finely attuned to Boer economic interests, the South African economy experienced a period of growth thanks to the concentration of economic assets accumulated over the years by the agricultural and mining sectors. The State became a sort of super-enterprise ran by racists, something which did not quite please the British-minded financial oligarchy since it went counter to classical liberalism. However, the financial system's post-war



General Magnus Malan was one of the fathers of the so-called "global strategy"

crisis prevented the latter from asserting its viewpoints, and the financial capital had to adapt itself to the new set of circumstances.

The system began to change in the 1960s and 1970s, mainly because the Boers in the National Party were too parochial to outgrow their notion of "a tribe besieged from all sides." Its almost atavistic colonialist mentality prevented them from changing the old agricultural production system. At the same time, cheap manpower made possible by the cruel domination of blacks by apartheid laws relieved most Boer entrepreneurs from the need to seek new forms of production. As a result, the Afrikaner economic sector gradually lost its competitiveness vis-a-vis the aggressive, British-minded trade and financial oligarchy concentrated in Capetown and along the coast. As large transnational capitals took control of all the Western block's economic mechanisms, the Boer bourgeoisie was gradually forced to subordinate itself to a sector it had always intended to dominate. This reversal of roles was accentuated during the 1970s. It was the Afrikaners' turn to accommodate to the new international situation in order to survive in a world where racism was increasingly condemned in capitalist industrial countries and in the new black States which had become independent since 1960. In the transnationals' opinion, the apartheid system works now in South Africa much in the same manner as slavery did in the 18th century. It is seen as an obstacle to market freedom, which is the number one dogma of Anglo-Saxon capitalist liberalism.



## The Afrikaner scandal

The alteration of the balance of power in the South African economic scene took on a political meaning in 1978 with the so-called "Muldergate" scandal, which pointed to corruption both in the government and its National Party. The scandal, involving key figures of the Boer political elite, burst forth after the discovery of conspiracies and questionable deals aimed at securing the unconditional support of certain newspapers for orthodox apartheid against those reformist sectors known within the party as the *verligte* (enlightened) faction. The public exposure of such corruption was a deadly blow to the Boers' Calvinist morality. Strictly speaking, "Muldergate" (named after the main accused, Minister Connie Mulder) was not in itself a scandal capable of toppling a government, and much less of deeply changing the white society's political and ideological relations. But it was cleverly handled by those linked to national and transnational financial capitals. Prime Minister John Vorster stepped down and was replaced by Minister of Defense Pieter Wilhelm Botha, the "bald eagle", also known by his initials P.W.

The whole affair amounted to more than a mere switch of names. Botha represented the alliance between the great economic interests and the military summit. The old predominance of the agricultural and mining sectors, referred to as "the alliance of corn and gold", gave way to the hegemony of financial capitals and the military-industrial complex. The latter's prestige and power had grown as a result of the war waged against guerrilla movements in Namibia and the

*Umkhonto we Sizwe* ("the Spear of the Nation"), which is the armed section of the black anti-racist movement, the African National Congress (ANC). The new government launched its "global strategy", a project designed to "modernize" apartheid by eliminating the most brutal laws of black oppression and replacing them by less cruel forms, in the hope of attaining a minimum of economic liberalism. The main objective was to expand the domestic market by incorporating black consumers so as to ensure the profitability of local companies and boost South African capitalism.

Botha's global strategy unleashed a passionate debate between the *verligte* reformists and the *verkampt* ("cramped") hardliners as to the future of apartheid. Though weakened by the Muldergate scandal and the deterioration of their economic basis, the *verkampt* still retain their key positions in politics, in Parliament, and in large State monopolies. Their discourse still carries a strong emotional impact by evoking the ancient mythology of Boer pioneership and the nostalgia of the "good old days". Both are ponderous arguments in a society that has always lived in *laager* (isolationism) and now has in nostalgia a substitute for bright future prospects.

## The "global strategy"

Two fundamental elements, however, operate in favor of the *verligte*. The first is the integration of South Africa with the transnational capitalist system, in which credit plays a crucial role. In modern economic life, nearly everything is done through loans and financing, since the savings accumulation capacity of productive activities in non-manufacturing sectors usually falls short of

About 40 percent of the people detained in street demonstrations in the last few months are black youths





investment capital requirements. This was especially critical in the Boer agricultural sector, but the mining sector has also faced similar problems. South Africa plays a central role in the supply of mineral ores to the US and Europe. Together with Brazil, the country has perhaps the largest mineral ore reserves in the so-called Western capitalist group. Local production could not compete with the large transnational companies which eventually settled in the country and gradually dominated the sector. Local companies increasingly yielded to the penetration of international capital, as was the case with the now huge *Anglo-American* group. Domestic capitalism as it existed in the 1940s and 1950s was unable to stop the advance of transnationalization.

In South Africa, such large enterprises would like to use the existing infrastructure, as well as white qualified labor and cheap black manpower, to create an industrial complex such as will allow them to extend their influence over all of Southern Africa. In other words, their aim is to replicate in Africa the relatively developed, "dependent" form of capitalism practiced in Brazil, among other nations. On the other hand, transnationalization of the South African economy would secure the mineral and agricultural reserves necessary for supplying cheap raw materials to Europe and the US.

The other fundamental element is the question of militarization. For P.W. Botha, apartheid can be liberalized only concomitantly with the installation of a heavy security scheme which will minimize the risks of the government losing control over the situation in the critical transition phase. Between 1940 and 1960, the security apparatus guaranteeing apartheid was basically the police, whose major aim was to suppress protest movements among the black majority, to envisage an armed struggle against racism, at a time when the guerrilla war for Namibian independence was intensifying, and socialist, self-reliant governments were being established in neighbor countries with a commitment to national sovereignty.

As of the late 1960s, however, the South African Army began to replace the police as the key element in the security apparatus. The military used increasingly sophisticated methods in their war against the Namibian guerrilla movement, though they were never able to suppress it. From sophisticated weaponry they turned to other means, known in the military jargon as psychosocial, and ended up supplying the basic ideas for the so-called "global strategy". P.W. Botha, then Minister of Defense, participated in this entire

process. As he rose to the premiership in 1978, in the aftermath of Muldergate, he brought with him the entire elite of the military-industrial complex, who thereafter shared the power with him. General Magnus Malan, now Minister of Defense, became Botha's right arm. Security doctrines and strategic issues were the dominant topic in Cabinet meetings. Militarization became the number one question in the early 1980s, when all key issues were no longer discussed in Parliament nor in ministerial meetings, but in the State's Security Council. Marginalization of the traditional powers became institutionalized in 1984 when the constitutional reforms approved in the November 1983 plebiscite (restricted to white voters) went into effect.

### Botha's reforms

The reforms introduced in 1984 created two new but largely powerless Parliament houses for coloreds and Indians. They were more radical, however, with regard to concentrating power in Botha's hands. In September of last year, Botha gave up his position as Prime Minister to become State President, and as such he heads his country's Security Council. The new legislation also created a Presidential Council with a minority participation of coloreds and Indians, whose function it is to advise the State President. The result is that, as part of the "global strategy", P.W. Botha now commands more power than any other head of government in South African history. He is not accountable to Parliament or to the Judicial Power, but instead rules his country on the basis of "councils", most of whose members are appointed by himself. Certain local newspapers have called the new system "a de Gaullist dictatorship".

The truth is that, in addition to the concentration of power — much to the military's taste — the reforms had two other major goals: to side-track the opposition put up by the *verkampt* hardliners, who are still strong in Parliament and stand for the traditional status quo, accusing Botha of "betraying apartheid", and to attempt to divide the marginal, oppressed segments of South African society by extending imaginary benefits to coloreds and Indians, as part of a strategy to favor the emergence of a "black bourgeoisie" or a "non-European middle class" capable of controlling the black majority. Thus the military-industrial complex and the financial oligarchy determine the future destinies of the South African government, while the Botha/Malan duo carry out the regime's policies, all in the name of national security.

On a regional level, a key element of the "global strategy" is to create "a constellation of





Dimit Macquarrie

Bad faith on the part of the South African government led to failure of the Nkomati agreement signed by presidents Botha and Machel in 1984

States", grouping not only the Bantustans, but also such neighbor countries as Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi and even Tanzania. The "constellation" concept lost some of its momentum after the rise to power of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe and the creation of the Southern Africa Development Cooperation Conference (SADCC) by anti-racist governments in the region. But it was back in the headlines in 1984 when P.W. Botha candidly proposed to sign non-aggression pacts with neighbor countries.

The South African military had been directly responsible for using armed forces to destabilize border country governments. They had sponsored the Unita anti-communist movement's attacks on Angola. They had armed and financed the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo) bandits who harassed Samora Machel's government in Mozambique. To preserve the illegal occupation of Namibia, they had even invaded Angolan territory and controlled a strip of land along the Cunene River. Militarily, General Magnus Malan's justification was to undercut the SWAPO's foreign support bases. But the economic justification was more important. Terrorism and banditism promoted by South Africa was addressed against strategic installations and economic projects, and aimed above all to force neighbor countries to divert to defense the scarce resources available for urgent projects in the areas of education, health and economic development.

Because military destabilization tactics never succeeded in overthrowing governments nor suppressing socialist experiments in any of the countries attacked, Botha changed his mood in mid-1983. Pressed by the domestic economic crisis and by continued military expenses in Namibia, he turned to proposing non-aggression pacts, including economic packages by means of which the South African industrial and financial establishment hopes to open fissures in the SADCC. In the diplomatic area, these pacts also aim to put an end to Pretoria's isolation, not only in Africa but also in the rest of the world.

On the other hand, Botha is very much aware of the mounting action of anti-racist groups in the US which has created enormous embarrassments for US transnational companies and placed them under strong pressure on the part of stockholders, religious groups, civic organizations and even congressmen to curtail investments in South Africa.

#### The global strategy's weak points

However, Botha's global strategy has major weaknesses. It can be successful only if his government manages a short-term reversion of the South African economic crisis, by promoting some kind of "miracle" capable of generating sufficient resources within the country and then distributing them for the benefit of the average population. A "miracle" of this type can happen only through



a change in the world economic situation, causing an increase in the price of commodities, especially gold, or opening up neighbor country markets for South African products. In either case, a revival of the South African economy might confer greater bargaining power to the military and financial oligarchy, giving more social leverage to the adepts of the Botha/Malan duo.

But neither the international nor the regional situation provide any indication that the team now in power can expect such relief in the near future. There is hardly any evidence that the price of gold may again jump to great heights in the world market, and much less that the price of mineral ores will return to their level of five years ago. Botha has invested heavily in developing new markets, especially in Mozambique; but though a few agreements have been signed, South African investors have not accomplished much, no matter how noisily they publicize their bold moves. Thus the current economic squeeze is likely to persist. Of course, another possibility would be a domestic redistribution of income, but this is directly against the interests of the local capitals and would be particularly intolerable for ultra-racist groups.

With no economic relief in sight, Botha will have to navigate very heavy seas, not only because of the growing black militancy and the increasing number of whites who no longer accept racism, but also because of the intransigence of *verkampt* Afrikaners who stubbornly cling to their traditional privileges. Though they no longer monopolize political power, apartheid ultra-rightists are still very strong, especially in the government's structure and in economic conglomerates such as *Sanlam*, *Volkscas* and *Rembrandt*, all of which have historically been closely tied to classic racism. Similarly, considerable power is still held by the agricultural and mining sectors, which rely on the intensive exploitation of poorly paid workers and are bound to reject any concession implying the notion of bargaining for wages with black labor.

The South African economy embodies a "backward" sector which resorts to oppression in order to obtain cheap labor, and a more dynamic sector which relies on manufacturing, technology and automation. Because the latter is more profitable, it is gradually overcoming the more backward sector. The problem is that this advance is being achieved through mechanization and automation, both of which lead to increased unemployment. Already well established in industry, this phenomenon is now becoming visible in agriculture, where it begins to replace Boer farmers and their semislave laborers with mechanized agro-industry. The trend is for black unemployment to increase

from the current rate of 20 percent (roughly 2 million people) to 35 percent (or six million people) in the next decade.

The inevitable rise in black unemployment as a result of the need of large transnational capitals to dominate the South African economy, and the growth rate of the African population which is ten times faster than that of whites, will tend to divert to urban areas a growing number of destitute, exploited men who will be controlled only by increasingly violent repression. In part this repression is already taking place with the forced removal of millions of black people to locations distant from white urban centers, in a huge operation which only contributes to increase the revolt and misery of ever-growing sectors of the African population. Thus the State is likely to become increasingly militarized, which will generate conflicts with the more liberal sectors, especially with intellectuals of European extraction, and with the black middle class.

The struggle for further political and ideological support between these two strata of society is now crucial for South Africa. Here is the main arena for the contest between the Botha government and the African National Congress, the ANC being the leading, most powerful organization of the oppressed black majority. The government hoped to make some allies when it proposed the constitutional reform which, for the first time in South African history, granted parliamentary representation and voting rights to coloreds and Indians. It also tried to win the sympathy of liberal whites when it revoked a few apartheid laws.

But Botha's strategy backfired. The black majority was outraged by its exclusion from voting rights. African workers resorted to labor strikes in a desperate attempt to avoid further impoverishment, and the white middle class was largely shocked by the violent repression against demonstrators. The Church, a traditional ally of South African racists, finds itself now in open confrontation with the Botha regime, opposition being especially fierce on the part of the South African Council of Protestant Churches. White university students and teachers no longer conceal their frustration and begin to militate actively in anti-racist organizations. As a result of the Namibian war, which many South Africans regard as unjust and unnecessary, a movement has also taken shape against military service — and the emergence of so-called conscientious objectors is highly significant among whites in a country where the defense of white society has historically been a sacred duty for Afrikaners. (Carlos Castaneda)





## The Government in a Corner

*The Botha government has proved unable to handle the crisis and begins to lose the support of its allies*

Two words dominate discussions about contemporary South Africa: change and reform. All actors (except perhaps the neo-Nazi Afrikaner right wing) in the South African power struggle agree that apartheid in its present form is unacceptable.

However, enormous differences emerge when the various actors put their cards on the table and spell out solutions that would, firstly end the present spate of violence, and secondly ensure permanent peace in a just socio-political system. In this article we will briefly examine the positions of the most important actors currently involved in the South African problem.



A growing number of South African whites are now rejecting the National Party's racist policies

### The ruling National Party

The National Party, representing the Afrikaner people, came to power in 1948 on a platform of white domination and apartheid — racial segregation. Over the next 30 years these policies were



implemented in a most ruthless manner. It is not within the scope of this article to describe the implementation of apartheid. Basically, the African majority was denied even the most fundamental of human rights — ranging from the right to vote to the right to live with one's family.

Not surprisingly such a policy met with heroic resistance from the country's non-white people who include one million Indians and two million coloreds. The current unrest which began a year ago and has claimed over 650 lives is the latest and most intense phase of this resistance.

In the face of internal resistance and external pressures, the National Party under President P.W. Botha has been compelled to introduce some reforms which, instead of appeasing the black majority, have served to fuel black anger. The most significant of these so-called reforms was the introduction last year of a tri-cameral parliament which gave a limited number of seats for Indians and coloreds in segregated chambers. But less than 25 per cent of Indians and coloreds bothered to vote, thus thoroughly discrediting the new parliament.

In mid-august Botha announced his much anticipated reforms after his foreign minister Pk Botha held talks with U.S. National Security Advisor Robert MacFarlane. The Western press set the stage for everyone to expect Botha to announce major reforms to the apartheid system. But the event was a damp squib. In a broadcast that was carried live on U.S. radio and TV, Botha defiantly told the world that South Africa will not be pushed. He added that reforms would be made but gave no further details.

Whatever reforms are envisaged by the racists they are most unlikely to veer from the principle of racial segregation and from the premise of power remaining in white hands.

### The United Democratic Front (UDF)

The UDF is the largest opposition movement in the country. Formed in August 1983 to oppose Pretoria's new tri-cameral parliament, the UDF is a coalition of some 600 political, social, community and religious organizations. It enjoys massive support throughout the country and is branded by the regime as a front for the outlawed African National Congress (ANC). Indeed, 16 UDF leaders are currently on trial for treason with one of the charges being that they furthered the aims of the ANC through their writings and speeches.

The UDF subscribes to the Freedom Charter, a mildly socialist document drawn by the ANC and its affiliates at a Congress of the People in 1955. The charter, which sets out the basic goals of a future non-racial South Africa, has grown in popularity over the years, and is today the rallying point at the many mass meetings and mass funerals that are taking place in the black townships.

In the eyes of the UDF leaders, change means nothing less than one man, one vote in a unitary state. As the UDF is a front of many organizations rather than a unified political party, it has not spelled out what kind of economic system it envisages in a free South Africa. The UDF believes it more important to unify the oppressed masses in a total onslaught to destroy apartheid as the first and essential step in creating a non-racial South Africa.





It rejects outright Botha's reform package as an attempt to reform apartheid which it believes is beyond reform and therefore must be destroyed.

There is much speculation that the UDF may be proscribed. While this remains a possibility, it is more likely that individual leaders will be detained or murdered by agents of the regime — both processes appear to be set in motion already as evidenced by the scores of detentions and by the murder or disappearance of at least a dozen UDF members this year.

### Other black opposition groups

Two other black opposition movements are the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO) and the Zulu-based Inkatha movement led by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi.

Much smaller than the UDF, AZAPO differs from the UDF in that it objects to the latter's non-racial approach. While the UDF accepts whites who share its goals as members, AZAPO rejects whites of any political persuasion joining the struggle with blacks. The AZAPO philosophy, derived from the Black Power of the 60s in the United States, does however accept Indians and coloreds as members.

AZAPO also advocates majority rule in a unitary state and calls for a socialist state based on Marxist-Leninist principles. But it has yet to map out clearly what it means by such a system in the objective conditions of South Africa. It has nothing like the Freedom Charter to present to the people as an alternative to the present racist structure.

Inkatha, a predominantly Zulu movement, is led by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. Considered a moderate by the government, Buthelezi is one of the most controversial figures in the country. As head of the Kwa Zulu Bantustan, receiving a salary from Pretoria, he is rejected by the ANC, the UDF and AZAPO as an ally of the regime.

Buthelezi opposes the armed struggle being waged by the ANC, is against the disinvestment campaign in the United States, and rejects the imposition of economic sanctions. His position on these crucial issues places him firmly in the Botha camp.

However, he does reject the idea of independence for the Bantustans and wants to see racial discrimination abolished at all levels. But he is prepared to negotiate with Pretoria a solution that stops short of majority rule. He suggests power-sharing with whites in a federal system.



ANC's president and top leader Oliver Tambo

As the liberation struggle advances and Pretoria is forced to negotiate, Buthelezi will most likely be their man. He also enjoys good relations with Washington, London and Bonn.

However, as leader of an ethnic group and without national support, any deal made with Buthelezi will not only fail to end the conflict but could lead to inter-ethnic violence between the six million Zulus (not all of whom support Buthelezi), and the other ethnic groups.

### The African National Congress

Formed in 1912, the ANC is the unquestioned standard-bearer of the South African struggle. Its internal support and international standing have never been higher. Its jailed leader, Nelson Mandela, despite 23 years in prison, is the undisputed leader of the majority of South Africans. Few will deny, even in Western capitals, that there will never be an end to the conflict without Mandela's release and participation in talks.

The ANC itself continues to wage a two-pronged attack on the regime, combining the armed struggle with underground work in the black townships.

In the absence of rear bases, the ANC has increasingly come to realize that greater emphasis





must be placed on internal work making the black townships ungovernable and leading eventually to a popular insurrection.

Although talks have been held in private between members of the ANC and members of the National Party, the talks have been unofficial. ANC leaders say they will only talk from a position of strength and, while acknowledging that the struggle is making rapid advances, especially in the last 12 months, they do not feel sufficiently strong to have their demands met.

The Freedom Charter remains central to the ANC demands and nothing short of the complete dismantling of the apartheid system and a declaration of intent to move towards majority rule is likely to bring the ANC to the negotiating table.

### The Progressive Federal Party

The main white opposition party, the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) represents the interests of

big business — most, but not all, of which is still controlled by English-speaking white South Africans. The biggest and most well-known of these is the giant Anglo-American Company. The PFP advocates power-sharing with blacks in a federal system. It is, needless to say, strongly pro-capitalist and rejects the imposition of sanctions.

Although supported by a substantial number of English-speaking South Africans and more liberal Afrikaners, it is unlikely to win a general election. However, as the reform process advances, it could play a crucial role in forming a coalition of liberal whites and conservative blacks to de-racialize the political system and safeguard capitalism.

### The Conservative Party

Formed by die-hard racists who broke away from the National Party in 1980, the Conservative Party represents traditional Afrikaners who still cling to the old school of white domination and apartheid in every sphere of life. It enjoys strong support in the rural areas and among white farmers. Though unlikely to win power in an election, the CP is the main obstacle to Botha's reform plans. As far removed from satisfying black aspirations as they may be, the CP considers such reforms at the thin end of the wedge which will eventually lead to integration.

### Conclusion

The South African situation is an extremely complex one and making predictions is always a hazardous game. But as internal and external pressures intensify, the regime is likely to make more and more concessions. In the process it is likely to talk to Buthelezi and possibly Bishop Tutu who, although is seen now by Pretoria as too radical, is in reality a moderate. Politically inexperienced and committed to non-violence, Tutu may be willing to enter into negotiations that envisage some sort of power-sharing stopping short of majority rule. Although widely respected by a wide spectrum of blacks now, he will win a great deal of credibility if he enters into talks before Mandela is released.

In short, the South African conflict will only come to an end when the ANC is unbanned, Mandela and other prisoners released, exiles allowed to return and negotiations begin on how to dismantle apartheid and give Africans a meaningful role in decision-making. But much more violence and many more lives will be lost before that day dawns. (Govin Reddy)





## Alfred Nzo: "We will make apartheid ungovernable"

*An old hand in the struggle against racism in South Africa and ANC's second in command, Alfred Nzo discloses the strategy to be adopted by black resistance*

**A**frican National Congress Secretary-General Alfred Nzo is an old hand in the struggle against racism in South Africa. Born in Capetown, he became involved as a youth in the black effort against racial discrimination, and is now a member of the ANC Old Guard. After Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela, Nzo is the most outstanding political leader in the ranks of the foremost anti-apartheid movement. A short but impressive man, pausing deliberately between sentences, Nzo has become an undisputed leader among younger ANC members as a result of his talents as an organizer and political coordinator.



Alfred Nzo headed the ANC delegation to the Non-Aligned Countries Conference in Luanda

**Q** — How do you view the current situation in South Africa?

**A** — The crisis that hit South Africa last year is the worst in its history. It is both an economic crisis compounded by growing unrest among the





The release of Mandela is being demanded by blacks and a growing number of whites in South Africa

discriminated groups, and a political crisis insofar as the regime refuses to relinquish its privileges at a time when the white minority proves unable to solve the problems it has created. It is impossible for the white minority to go on ruling the country as before. Apartheid is trying to live on borrowed time. The so-called constitutional reforms proposed last year were thoroughly rejected by the population. The overwhelming majority of blacks saw the proposed changes for what they were — a maneuver to further discriminate against them and an attempt to divide non-white sectors of the South African population. They made it even clearer that Mr. P.W. Botha's regime is illegitimate, as it denies South African blacks the right to vote — an inalienable right of every citizen in the rest of the world.

The crisis has also cut across extensive sectors of the population of European descent. They sense imminent disaster if Mr. Botha and his followers remain obdurate. Many no longer believe the regime will be able to solve this situation peacefully. An exodus of whites has started as some found it safer to leave the country. Others felt it necessary to remain here and fight for a better society. Those are the ones who made it possible for a democratic undercurrent to emerge among the white population.

On the other hand, the ruling class itself seems hopelessly divided. Some circles no longer believe their interests can be protected, and blame the

crisis on the persistence of apartheid. They have organized into groups and demanded a dialogue between the government and the true leaders of the black community. At the time, the ANC was already recognized as the black majority's most representative organization, and we demanded that our leader Nelson Mandela be released. For this sector of the ruling class, the government's intransigence poses a serious threat to their vested interests. It should be noted that, not long ago these same groups had organized into a South African Foundation, whose original aim was to put an end to the isolation into which international pressure against apartheid had forced the white minority. They viewed such international pressure as jeopardizing their markets abroad. Many travelled abroad to say that apartheid wasn't really as bad as people in the US and Europe said. Now, in a meeting held last March, this same South African Foundation arrived at the conclusion that the crisis is getting worse, and that the government is wasting too much time promoting irrelevant reforms. As the mass struggles continue to grow, contradictions will tend to become more acute within the ruling class. Thus for the ANC the only alternative is to intensify the struggle against apartheid.

From an economic viewpoint, South Africa is now in a curious situation. International financial circles never dreamed they would see the day when the racist South African government would admit it could not pay its foreign debt. The domestic crisis deteriorated after a catastrophic drop of the rand, which not only caused a temporary disruption of exchange markets, but also forced the South African Central Bank to seek help from its allies. The financial situation improved a bit last August, only to experience a new downturn while the Central Bank president visited Europe and the US, black workers went into strikes all over South Africa, especially in the gold mine sector. This brought new alarm to apartheid's international partners, who would like to prevent any kind of world pressure or sanction against the racist regime. Yet, in spite of them, sanctions are being imposed from within the regime itself. Foreign capital, which once believed racism created a safe investment climate, is now beginning to reduce investments in South Africa, and this in itself is a sanction of sorts.

To return to the political arena. I would say that our people's number one task is to achieve unity — a unity which is already assuming very definite forms such as the United Democratic Front (UDF). When it was founded only two years ago, the UDF congregated some 500 organizations. It now totals over 600, involving about two million people of all kinds of origins, trends,



and social strata. In addition, the country's religious community has come to realize that man cannot just sit and pray, but must actively pursue his material achievement and freedom. As for the ANC, its political strategy has always been to combine mass action with an effective, armed underground struggle. This strategy was restated at the ANC's second conference held in Zambia last June.

**Q** — In that conference, the ANC decided that black townships should be rendered unmanageable. How does it intend to reach that goal?

**A** — Our goal is not only that the black townships be rendered unmanageable, but that all of South Africa reaches a point where it no longer can be controlled by the racist minority. In an attempt to neutralize the black majority's bid for power, the regime has introduced arrangements intended to create an appearance of self-government in certain areas. The Communal Councils it created were quickly seen by the black townships' population as an attempt on the part of the apartheid regime to divert people from a real struggle for power. In fact these councils do not represent the people's will, but are tools for expanding white domination. Most of them have now disappeared throughout the country because of popular resistance.

**Q** — Does the ANC intend to create its own communal organizations?

**A** — We are telling the population that, instead of such communal councils, people should become organized in such a manner as to lay the foundations of real self-government. Obviously these popular committees cannot hold full power in their respective areas, since whites are still the predominant power. But these autonomous organizations must become the basis for the people's mobilization and for legitimizing such structures as are eventually created.

**Q** — Will these organizations or committees take any specific form?

**A** — We have consistently encouraged the population to adopt all possible forms of structures, either for self-defense or self-help, in the areas where they live and work. There is no predetermined model.

**Q** — Will they be underground or mass organizations?

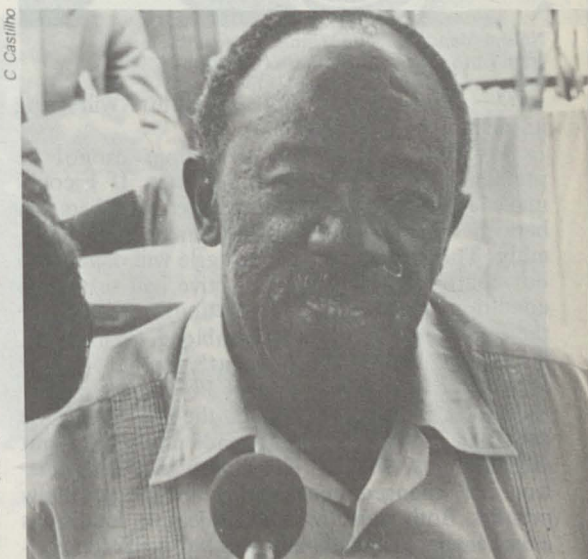
**A** — Most of them will act both ways. Because of the situation prevailing in the country, organizations should arise that act openly in mobilizing people for the power struggle, while forms of underground resistance are created as a backup to mass mobilization.

**Q** — Do you believe the South African government may establish a fourth legislative house for South African blacks?

**A** — The ANC is not demanding a fourth house. Some people argue that, since there is parliamentary house for whites, another for Indians, and another for coloreds, why not create one for blacks? Let them demand a fourth house if they have to, but we stand for one house where all ethnic groups will have equal privileges. The ANC position is that this house system must be destroyed together with apartheid. A fourth house, as some people want it, would not realize our basic one-man-one-vote claim.

**Q** — It has often been said in Europe and the US that the South African crisis is headed for a blood bath. Do you think this can happen?

**A** — Don't forget that a blood bath is already going on in South Africa. Blood has been shed on the streets of our black townships every day. Only when Europeans and Americans talk about a blood bath, they refer to *white* blood. In fact, what is at stake here is the future envisaged by the mass struggle for my country. As early as 1955, the ANC made public its program on the future of South Africa. This program is part of the Freedom Chart and its aim is non-racist democracy. Even after the ANC was outlawed, the Freedom Chart won increasing support, though black massacres were committed daily by the whites. Nevertheless, we still say that there is no reasonable alternative outside of a non-racist democracy in which whites will have the same rights as blacks. We do not advocate any type of revenge or social exclusion such as has been imposed on us by the South African whites.



Nzo: "Since last year, South Africa has been going through the worst economic, social, and political crisis in its history"



When these people talk about a blood bath, what they are really talking about are the future prospects of the national liberation struggle in South Africa. The emphasis for the ANC is on the prospects of creating a really democratic society. This means that, once the present crisis has been solved, we will be concerned with the kind of society we want to build, a society that will rid itself of apartheid's discrimination and oppression. In spite of all the blood baths perpetrated by whites against blacks in the past, we do not envisage retaliation after the backbone of racism has been broken. We will have to dedicate ourselves to national reconstruction.



Nelson Mandela's wife Winnie is already referred to in Europe as "the mother of a nation"

**Q** — What do you think the future will bring in the next twelve months?

**A** — The outcome of revolutions cannot be predicted in terms of specific dates. If I could make a wish, I would like to see our liberation happen tomorrow. But things can happen differently. The outcome of our struggle will depend on our ability to create the objective and subjective conditions to make our revolution succeed. Take the case of FRELIMO in Mozambique, for instance. In January 1974, the movement's combat strategy anticipated a long war against Portuguese colonialism, yet a few months later the Salazar regime collapsed. It is impossible to make predictions, but one thing is certain. The South African situation has changed considerably in the past few months. Both objective and subjective conditions are changing very fast, and this will help to accelerate the revolutionary movement in this country. International pressure is rising; the domestic struggle is intensifying; yet much remains to be

done. It is necessary, for instance, to apply further international pressure, to bend those governments that still believe in a so-called "constructive engagement". They are the governments that are nurturing apartheid.

**Q** — The South African white regime was forced to admit last August that it can no longer repay its foreign debt regularly. This has placed a decisive weapon in the hands of international bankers to force the racist government to yield. Do you believe they will rescue apartheid, or instead try to negotiate with the ANC?

**A** — It is difficult to say. We know for sure that international bankers are not trying to save the lives of South African blacks victimized by apartheid. They are basically concerned with protecting their investments. If they think they stand to lose, they may simply leave the country to itself. But they can also approach the white government for new guarantees on their assets. When the South African Central Bank went asking for help in the US and England, its contention was that the white regime was not on the verge of a financial disaster. The president of the Central Bank said the problem was not financial, but political. This means that, for the apartheid proponents, what matters at this time is to ensure the political survival of Mr. Botha's regime. The minority government is now eagerly trying to find out if it still has supporters abroad. Such a support is more crucial right now for the racists than financial help. Thus the problem is essentially political. The international bankers may help apartheid if this suits them politically, just as the whites may contact the ANC for the same reason.

**Q** — During the meeting of non-aligned countries' ministers in Luanda, a motion was passed which extended solidarity to Nelson Mandela, who has now been kept a prisoner of the racist regime for 22 years. What does Mandela stand for in the ANC struggle?

**A** — He is a symbol of our resistance against racism. Any expression of solidarity with him is a powerful incentive to our struggle, since Mandela is now one of apartheid's worst problems. The white government offered him his freedom in exchange for a renunciation of violence. Mandela refused, clearly because he is more concerned with the black struggle than with his personal safety. His resistance lends force to our movement. The only alternative will be for the regime to release him unconditionally, and this will be a major defeat for racism. To keep him in prison will considerably wear out the position of ultra-fascists in the government. Even in jail, Mandela keeps the political initiative in his hands. In fact it can be said that it is he who holds the government prisoner, since the latter has no alternative.





## Racist Relocations: Banishing the Blacks

*Emulating Hitler's pogroms, the South African white majority plans to remove 5 million blacks to far-off, unproductive lands between now and 1990*

Since 1960, 3.5 million black South Africans have been forcibly removed from their traditional dwelling places. Another 2 million are currently threatened with removal under the government's resettlement policies. The history of these forced populational transfers can be traced back to before 1948, when racism was institutionalized by the local white minority under the banner of *apartheid*. That the black majority should be forced out of their own land is the result of a long history of racial segregation in South Africa.



At present 2 million blacks face possible "removals"

The 1913 Land Act allocated a meager 13 percent of the country's total area for occupation by the African population. The rest — 87 percent — was generously handed over to whites. As a



result, 73 percent of the 30 million blacks now living in South Africa are forced to live in the small territories that comprise this 13 percent of land. Initially these small territories were called "reserves"; afterwards they became known as "Bantustans", or isolated lands where the Bantu-speaking population should be confined; some time later, they were called "homelands", and are now referred to as "national states". Some of these national states have become "independent", which means that their citizens have lost their South African citizenship and, of course, any rights or claims to the wealth of the country they have helped to build. "Independent" Bantustan people are no longer entitled to live or work in South Africa; they are not entitled to old-age pension or other types of social benefits granted by the South African government. They are allowed to move into South Africa only if they can prove there is a job or a house there for them. In short, they have been evicted from their true homeland and deprived of all rights under South African laws.

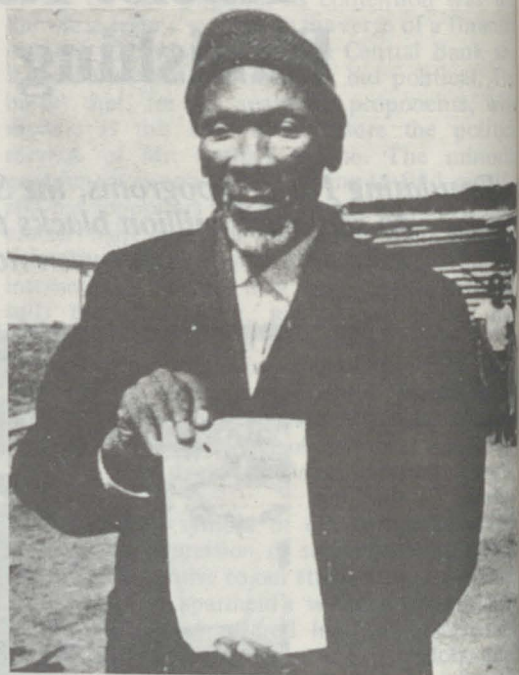
The 13 percent of land reserved for Africans has further been divided into ten ethnic units. Four of these (Tanskei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskei) have become "independent", while the remaining six are in various stages of the process of becoming so. In theory, when all ten are declared "independent", "there will no longer be any black South Africans", as Connie Moulder, then Minister of African Affairs, put it in 1978. This is the most outrageous form of racism that can be conceived. From that day on, whenever black manpower is needed in South Africa, black workers will be "imported" from "neighbor states" without the need for the government to feed, educate, lodge or care for them or their families. After all, reasons the white government, Germany is not responsible for providing social security and housing for Turks in Turkey just because a number of Turkish immigrants hold jobs in Germany.

The transfer of black people to the Bantustans has made considerable progress in the past ten years. In 1960, only 39 percent of all Africans lived there; in 1980, 54 percent of black South Africans were living in one of the ten ethnic states. On the one hand, a strict system of migration control prevents the transfer of black people to "white" cities; on the other, a brutal relocation process uproots them from "white" urban and rural areas and confines them to the Bantustans. In absolute numbers, however, the governmental policy looks less successful: according to economist Charles Simkins, 9.9 million Africans lived in "white" South Africa in 1980, while this number was only 5.2 million in 1950. Thus, though a larger proportion of blacks now live in Bantustans,

the growing number of Africans in "white" land continues to be a reason for official concern in South Africa.

### The role of colored peoples

To make sure that power and wealth remain in white hands, the government keeps the majority of the country's population as divided as possible. The division into ethnic groups affects not only Africans, but also coloreds and Indians (the descendants of Indian workers and merchants brought into the country under contract in the past). Kept until recently equally separate and deprived of legal rights, they have now been admitted into a tricameral Parliament together with whites. However, only 17 percent of all coloreds and Indians have exercised their voting rights, in a clear indication that they refuse to be assimilated by whites into a front against the black majority.



The growing number of Africans living in "white" South Africa is a matter of concern for Pretoria

Though coloreds and Indians have recently been incorporated into the white parliamentary system — not as equals, but as inferiors — they are still subject to discriminating laws. They are not spared removal from white-occupied zones in the cities and villages, but are sent to their own "group areas" on the periphery of urban communities. Instead of being able to walk or take a short bus



or train ride to work, they are forced to spend a large share of their time and money in transportation, even though their salaries have not been raised to meet such costs.

Since 1960, over 850,000 people have been transferred under the law that created the Group Areas. Practically all of the colored and Indian families in South Africa have been subjected to this form of residential control. Though the people most affected by it have supposedly been incorporated into the government, the law has not been revoked.

The largest single category of removals is that of people evicted from white-owned farms. In the past twenty years, over 1.1 million people have been forced out of farms by all sorts of economic and political pressures. Having lost their jobs because of mechanization and the concentration of croplands, rural workers are evacuated from productive lands, and nothing is left for them but to go to the Bantustans. While in other countries they could migrate to urban areas, South African laws controlling populational movements forbid that. Their only choice is to move to a Bantustan, where they will have to beg the chief for a piece of land they can build a hut in. Since the Bantustans are already overpopulated and overcultivated, he may have to bribe the chief into letting him have part of the land belonging to someone else. The government provides these evicted workers neither with the transportation required for their transfer nor with any kind of housing, no matter how inexpensive, as is granted to other categories of transferees. They are forced to pay for their own transportation and lodging.

Evicted farm workers are evacuated as family units, so that there is no community organization they might turn to for support; as a result, their chances of opposing removal are nil. Having lived on the farms for generations, most of them know no other way of life. Many are illiterate, so that their chances of finding work in the cities through the government's employment system are also nil. While many of them had access to a small plot of land where they raised a cow or a pig, none are allowed to carry their animals with them upon transfer to a Bantustan. In other words, they are denied both the possibility of earning a salary and of subsisting by tilling the land or raising domestic animals.

### The "black spots"

In a slightly better situation are those threatened with evacuation from the so-called "black spots". These are small isolated areas owned by blacks in a region that has been declared "white". Small farms that have been bought before the 1913 Land



In the past 20 years, over 1.1 million people have been forced out of farms through all sorts of economic and political pressures

Act went into effect, as well as areas that have been declared off-limits for the Bantustans as a result of various "consolidation" plans, are now threatened with expropriation if they haven't been expropriated already. Many of them have belonged to the same family for years. Family members working in the cities usually returned there upon retirement, since they are all strongly attached to the land. Many owners used to hire cropsharers, whose survival depends on agriculture. Nowhere else might they find a piece of land to till.



In the black spots, proprietors owning more than 17 hectares of land each are entitled to compensation in the form of a piece of land in the Bantustan upon removal. Those owning less than 17 hectares, as well as cropsharers, are entitled to a mere 15x30-meter tract in a transfer area or in a Bantustan. Though the State provides them and their families with free transportation, they are not allowed to take their cattle along since they are not entitled to pastureland. One of the tactics most often used by the authorities to persuade them to move "voluntarily" is to promise them free land in the Bantustan — a promise that is never kept. Though cropsharers used to pay a rental to the landowners, the rental amount was minimal, and at least they had access to land; after they are transferred, they have no land at all. Yet, unaware of their own rights, they fall into the trap and let themselves be transferred.

Owners in these small black spots are also in a better position to oppose removal, since they have a moral title to the land. Because they belong to traditional landowner families, they command greater sympathy from the public. (In South Africa's socioeconomic system, those who have lived and worked for generations on white-owned farms are less morally entitled to remain on the land because they do not *own* it.)

In the Natal province alone, there are 189 black properties pending on "removal" under the government's latest plans. Many others have already been removed. In some of them, profitable mining operations are now in place, though their former black owners receive little or no compensation for the land or the mineral wealth which once belonged to them.

The Umbulwana "black spot" in the province of Natal will probably be removed by force as so many others

Moreover, part of the population is removed for strategical or infrastructural reasons, such as the building of dams and roads or the establishment of wild-life reservations. All over the world people are removed for infrastructural reasons; in South Africa, however, they have never benefitted from the new infrastructure. Dams are built to cater to cities and a strong agro-industrial sector.

Several wild-life reservations have been established along South African borders. One of the reasons for this is that anyone caught walking or running in such protected areas can be taken for clandestine hunters and shot on the spot. Due to the increasing guerrilla activity, South African defense forces have to take every precaution to protect the nation's borders and apartheid system.

### The problem in urban areas

People are not being removed in rural areas alone; the same is going on in urban areas. Because of the government's attempts to control urbanization, Africans unauthorized to reside in urban areas are forced to withdraw. They do not necessarily leave the cities; often they simply move to other locations in the same area. During the last twenty years, South African authorities have often loaded people into buses and trains and transferred them from the cities into the Bantustans. In the slums of Capetown, many a woman will tell how they got off the train at the first stop and went to live as squatters in the woods, in a desperate attempt to cling to a city in which they can earn their family's subsistence. The slums are periodic







In the province of Natal alone, 189 black properties await "removal"

cally raided and destroyed, but the residents build them up again, determined to remain where at least they have a chance of finding a job.

In several smaller towns in "white" South Africa, African families are not permitted to live in the proximity of workplaces, which means that only workers are allowed to remain. These are lodged in quarters for men and women only, while their families are sent to the Bantustans. But if the town is as close as 100 kilometers from the nearest Bantustans, workers have to take the train to work every day. This is the cause of enormous inconveniences; workers often lose their jobs and are replaced by single men and women who can more easily adapt themselves to living in an inn. An example is Onverwacht, 50 km from Bloemfontein. Onverwacht was started in the winter of 1979, when the government ordered the dumping of large numbers of people in the open *veld*, where they were exposed to low temperatures and could take shelter in only one tent per family. The only facilities made available to them were septic tanks and waterspouts. More than 250,000 people are now living there. Most of them are still exposed to the original conditions, but a few model houses have been built by the government where they can easily be seen by drivers speeding on the asphalt road nearby.

Onverwacht remains hidden from most people's eyes in South Africa. Because of its location behind a hill, no one can see the large rural slum from the road. Those few who find a job have to travel a

full hour by train in order to go to Bloemfontein. A few schools and clinics have been built by now, though they are absolutely inadequate to meet the needs of such a vast and poor population. The area is to be soon turned over to QwaQwa, the smallest of all Bantustans; it will be up to QwaQwa to supply all the required facilities, if it can.

This is the Pretoria government's idea of urbanization: people evicted from the farms are not allowed to live near the cities, but are instead diverted to the Bantustans. Ironically, many of the victims still thank heavens for being able to live in the Bantustans; they claim to have escaped the brutal control imposed on them by the Boers (white settlers) who, in exchange for paying them a meager salary — usually one *rand* (half-a-dollar) a day — used to strictly oversee their entire life.

In June 1984, at a press interview in Bern, Switzerland, President Pieter W. Botha claimed his government forced no one to change their current dwelling places. He added that his government only "coerced" them, but hastily corrected himself; the government, he said, merely "persuaded" people to move from one place to another.

Indeed, the methods employed by the South African government for implementing its resettlement policy range from clever subtlety to sheer violence. In case the subtler approach of dividing, pressuring and intimidating the populations bears no fruit, violence is increasingly used at each





Evicted people are not allowed to live near South African cities

subsequent step. Strategies designed to make people move "voluntarily" include shutting down schools, health clinics and old age pension offices, cutting off or poisoning water supply systems, suspending bus service and allowing buses to circulate only between workplaces and the areas where people ought to be upon transfer, and promoting divisions among people and group leaderships.

As a result, South Africa is now divided not only between whites and blacks, but also between workers and employers, between the employed and the unemployed, between landowners and cropsharers, between men and women, between young people and elderly people, between illiterate and illiterate people, between traditional and democratic organizations, and so on. If there is a way of dividing people, the authorities will not let it go unexplored. For example, if a member of a tribal council can be bribed into moving away with the offer of a new house or car, the government will do just that, in the hope that he will persuade his people to move away also. African communities spend most of their time trying to prevent such divisions, letting people know what their rights are and what they can expect if they are transferred. Sometimes this takes years. Usually, however, the government prefers to transfer people immediately, giving communities no time to organize themselves.

Since it does not side with the people, the law provides no protection. Now and then, appealing to court may delay a particular removal thanks to some legal resource, but the people have to learn that they cannot fight the law: they must rely on themselves to organize resistance. A community may have the support of external groups in terms of publicity and information access, but victory will ultimately depend on the people themselves.

A few victories have indeed been recorded: in some cases, the government was forced to revert a removal decision. But the triumph was unclear in many instances. The government sometimes



In Carter's days, Crossroads slum dwellers forced the government to cancel its decision to "remove" them

accepts not to transfer part of the people, such as those who "legally" inhabit a certain area (in terms of the law controlling populational inflow). This creates further divisions, since those who do transfer lose the support of their friends who remain in a more comfortable "legal" position. A clear example of this is the Crossroads slum near Capetown. From 1975 to 1979, this community of over 30,000 people joined in a struggle against transfer to the Bantustans. Unlike other slum dwellers, they were well organized and had considerable support, including that of the international community. At the time, Carter was president in the US, and Margaret Thatcher had not yet risen to power in the United Kingdom, so that Pretoria was forced to make a concession. Most of the Crossroads slum dwellers were told they could remain in Capetown and that housing would be provided for them. Now, five years later, they are again being threatened with removal, together with the remaining Africans in Capetown — to a total of some 250,000. It is the government's intention to transfer them all out of there. The "legal" ones (68 percent) will go to Khayelitsha ("New Home"), 35 km from the center of Capetown, while the "illegal" ones will be removed from the urban area to the Ciskei and Transkei Bantustans. (Laurine Platsky, co-author of "Forced Removals")



## "I don't know where I am"

□ Maria Zotwana can't say when she was born. She believes it was sometime during the Boer War, some ninety years ago. Neither can she read or write. She is very old, her face carved by deep wrinkles, with stooped shoulders and trembling hands, but still much of a clearheaded woman in spite of all the hardship she has gone through. All her life she had lived in Tsitsikama; the farthest she had ever travelled was to Humansdorp, no more than fifty kilometers away. Now Maria Zotwana lives alone in Elukhanywnt, very far from Tsitsikama, in an area where the apartheid system has been "relocating" black families it regards as superfluous. She is virtually paralyzed by fear and uncertainty, in a place she had never been in before. She told her own story to the authors of *Forced Removals*:

"I was born in Tsitsikama. We lived on a farm. My father tilled the soil. We had our own land, which had belonged to our ancestors. We planted tomatoes, potatoes. When I was a little child, I had been nowhere. Now I am a little child again, for I know nothing of my surroundings. I got married when I was 15 years old. I liked my man, he is long dead now. He worked the field and chopped wood for the white men. I stayed home. I had three daughters, who are also dead now. Only one granddaughter has survived.

"Then they came by. It all happened so quickly I hardly knew what was going on. They brought guns with them. They said nothing. They didn't

tell us why we were being taken away. Nor where we were going. We had a plantation there, and a cow, and a dog and chickens. Here we have nothing. We can do nothing. All I know is the sand in front of where I live. What place is this, can you tell me?

"They dumped my things here. They are still here. What can I do? I don't know this place. I can't do anything. I can't do anything. This is a very sad place. People do not live here. I don't know who brought me here. It must have been the Boers. Or it could have been the Zeloos. I don't know, maybe it was the government. The only thing I know is that I don't belong here. This is not my people's place. There is nothing here but the rocks and the dust. There is nothing here but death. I liked to watch the sea where I was. But there is no sea around here. Even the animals die here.

"Here there is no food. I go to bed hungry every night. I am hungry right now. I have no money, and nobody gives me any money, because nobody has any money around here. I know I will die soon. Everybody here gets tired of you. They are all dead now, my man, my daughters, my animals, my friends. Even the Lord has abandoned me. He doesn't like this place. There is nothing but rocks here. Children can't live here. They get up in the morning, they get sick, and many die at night. I will die too in this foreign land. I don't understand. I don't understand anything. I am very lonely."

Maria doesn't speak English, but expresses herself in a rustic Afrikaner dialect. She was too frightened and too confused to make an orderly narrative of her own life. Rather than the words, it is the emotional impact of her feelings that counts.



"Here there is  
no food...  
I am hungry  
right now.  
I have no  
money... I know  
I will die  
soon... There is  
nothing but  
rocks here.  
Children can't  
live here... I am  
very lonely"



## Africa/Angola



The hardening of the US position suggests that Angolans will have to cope with protracted war

# Digging in for a Long War

The Luanda government has set about reorganizing the country's economy under the assumption that the South African aggression will last as long as Reagan is in power

**A**ngolan top officials are all but convinced that the state of war resulting from South African aggression will persist at least until the end of the Reagan administration, unless future events take some unpredictable turn. Evidence coming from the White House and the State Department behavior in the diplomatic area have caused MPLA-PT leaders to dismiss the likelihood of an early détente in southern Africa or of an agreement on Namibian independence in the terms of Resolution 435 of the UN Security Council.

Accordingly, the studies being prepared by Angolan economic

planners for presentation at the Party's Congress late this year reflect the virtual certainty that national mobilization against the external enemy must proceed, while domestic production and supply mechanisms will have to be reinforced. Nevertheless, the prospects for continued hard times are viewed with relative ease of mind by the Angolan leaders: contrary to what might be expected, their emphasis is on going ahead with current projects rather than anticipating any harsh austerity and contention measures.

Angola enjoys a reasonably good financial situation right now, with monetary reserves

estimated by Western sources at US\$ 6.5 billion. For a country at war, and with a population of approximately 10 million, the Angolan position is almost comfortable in comparison with that of other Third World countries that run high external deficits (such as Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina). In addition, adjustments made in the past five years both in agricultural, mineral, and industrial production have enabled the country to adopt solutions which, though they are not complete, have already begun to eliminate some basic bottlenecks.

Signs that the situation almost back to normal,



"normality" can be attained during war, are the results produced by the government's new supply plan. Part of a more encompassing ten-year project, the plan has been in force for the past twelve months. The first step was to take a census to determine the numbers of workers and their families in the country's major urban centers. Cards were later distributed to family heads stipulating basic food rations to be obtained at public or private supermakerts and grocery stores. To avoid long queues, the cards can be used on alternate days only; the quantity of food is calculated to nourish a family of five.

### Buffer stocks

To ensure normal food distribution, the government has established a buffer stock system that eliminates food shortages, thus discouraging speculation

or the emergence of a black market. Though a number of staple items have to be imported to replenish these stocks in Luanda, local food production upcountry is sufficient to take care of people's needs. Angolan authorities are satisfied that the system has worked properly, in spite of occasional problems brought about by enemy sabotage and attacks against highways, railroads, and public facilities. Resulting disruptions are quickly corrected, say official sources, thanks to the decentralized nature of the distribution system.

For food supply purposes, the size of the basic family unit has been limited to five people. This has caused certain problems which the government is seeking to solve with the experience obtained so far. The next step will be a survey to determine the actual size of extended families, with ampler food quotas being

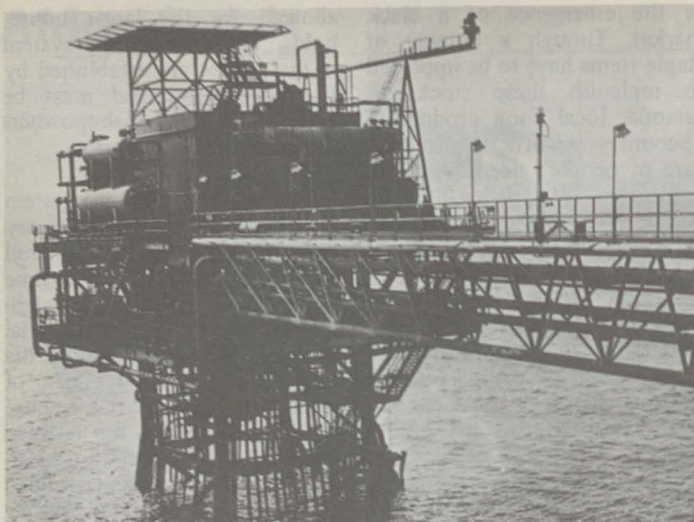
allowed for the larger households. The crux of the system is that prices are established by the government and must be adhered to, whether shopowners are private retailers or not.

For the new rationing system to work well, it was necessary to reorganize the entire food marketing structure. At the time of Angolan independence, roughly 98 percent of all commercial activities were controlled by the Portuguese. However, most of these businessmen left the country since 1975, and the network came apart. In such an emergency, the government decided to concentrate all retail trading in large State units, which in time failed to produce the desired results because of excessive bureaucracy, misled planning, or lack of qualified personnel. At present the marketing sector is again shared by a large number of private businessmen, and

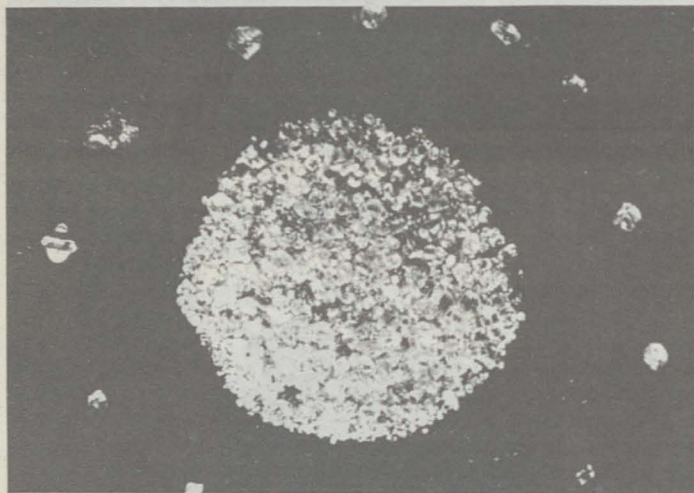


Promotion of household and communal agriculture has ensured self-supply inland





The Angolan economy still relies on its oil exports



The government is trying to diversify Angolan diamond sales

reorganization has reached twelve of the sixteen Angolan provinces.

#### The new rural strategy

Yet a successful food distribution and marketing scheme would have been impossible without a reorganization of the agricultural sector and the enforcement of a price policy consistent with the needs of the peasant population. Now, in addition to State-run farms, cooperatives and small properties, a large

number of household farmlands of no more than one hectare in size are being cultivated exclusively for subsistence purposes.

This new structure has been largely enforced in the coffee sector, with State-owned farms and cooperatives operating as a hub around which a number of small, household units are grouped. These small units play a key role in supply, especially up-country where women provide most of the family needs through

small-scale crops and cattle raising, thus dispensing with supermarkets and grocery stores. As a result, the flow of food products from large urban centers to remote areas inland is now limited to a mere supplement of local availabilities.

Production of coffee, however, which is the third most important export product after oil and diamonds, is still low. The last harvest remained at a modest 29,000 tons, though plans are for an increase to 60,000 tons and then to 80,000 tons in the early 1990s. The coffee sector is only now beginning to recover from losses due to the disorganization of production since independence, and from damage caused by Unita terrorist attacks against the government's agricultural facilities. Yet, thanks to cumulated stocks, Angola has been able to fulfill its quota as established by the International Coffee Organization.

In the oil sector, which now accounts for 90 percent of Angola's foreign exchange earnings, government officials are prepared for a slight decline due to low world fuel prices. This decline may, however, be offset as new oil fields go into operation as a result of the prospecting work being performed by various Western companies, among them the Brazilian Petrobrás in a joint effort with the Angolan State-owned Sonangol.

Not long ago, groups of saboteurs sponsored by South Africa failed to destroy oil facilities in the province of Cabinda. The Angolan government had expected the attack, since both Unita and South Africans had indicated that they would strike at the country's basic economic sector. In fact, number one in the casualty list had been the coffee sector, followed by the diamond mines. The attack on Cabinda indicated that the oil fields would





Urban supply improved after the creation of "strategic" stocks, but a few products are still occasionally scarce

be next. For Luanda authorities, the systematic selection of these targets shows that the South African aim is to destabilize the Angolan economy, under the pretext of trying to eliminate terrorist bases kept in Angolan territory by SWAPO, the organization fighting for Namibian independence.

### Diamonds and Lomé III

In the case of diamonds, production is returning to normal after the terrorist offensive against the Kafufo region. For Angolans, a major concern right now is to renegotiate the agreement signed with CSO, a company associated with South African millionaire Harry Oppenheimer's mining conglomerate which virtually controls diamond exports.

The government intends to diversify its trade contacts. In the upcoming negotiations, which promise to be hard and drawn-out, Angola will also try to use

its diamonds as a kind of financial reserve asset. Angolan diamonds are highly priced in the world market; over 80 percent of total production goes to the jewelry making sector, which requires the highest-quality stones.

Neither oil nor diamonds are covered by the Lomé Agreement, of which the third version has just been co-signed by Angola. Adherence to the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) group of countries that maintain preferential relations with the European Common Market was justified by Angola as dictated by the need to diversify trade contacts abroad. Though they recognize that certain clauses of the Lomé Convention still smack of European neo-colonialism, Angolans feel they have little to lose since their exports are made up mainly of mineral products not covered by the Agreement. In addition, they claim that diversification will not rule out barter agreements such as the ones recently made

with Brazil and the German Democratic Republic.

These recent changes in the Angolan economic strategy are warranted by the need to cope with a protracted war with South Africa and a hostile US posture. Angolan ministers have made it clear that the new orientation does not mean that the government has abandoned its original principles, and much less does it imply a "liberalization" of the Angolan economy as suggested by the Western press. As one minister pointed out, "European and US newsmen do not know how the Angolan economy operates in detail, and prefer to view it as one-hundred percent controlled by the State though the private sector has never been excluded. As the private sector now resumes its major influence on the economy, they claim that liberalization has occurred. In sum, they substitute one cliché for another as each model they build is proven wrong by the facts."



## Nigeria

# A Return to Economic Liberalism

The new government headed by General Babangida — the fifth military regime since 1960 — tries to force an IMF "package" on skeptical Nigerians

The hurrah that greeted the coup which ousted the regime of Major General Muhammadu Buhari on August 27 is gradually dying down as the people adopts the "wait and see" attitude. Indeed, coups are no longer new to Nigerians, who had five coups and eight governments since independence in 1960.

However, there is no doubt that the last coup was popular among Nigerians who were progressively being introduced to life under a fascist regime promoted by the top leaders in the ousted military leadership. The major cause of the coup was the disagreement bet-

ween the members of the top ruling body, the Supreme Military Council (SMC).

When the civilian regime was ousted on December 31, 1983, it was a collective responsibility and all the former service chiefs in the ousted civilian regime of Shehu Shagari were retired while the fresh corps of top officers shared posts among themselves and formed a supreme military council to govern the country. In time, however, the ousted head of state and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, together with his second in command, Major General Tunde Idiagbon, ran away with the powers, and the SMC gradually

became redundant.

In the words of the Army spokesman on the morning of the coup, Brigadier Joshua D. Gonyaro: "Any effort made to advise the leadership met with stubborn resistance and was viewed as a challenge to authority or disloyalty, while energies were directed at an imaginary opposition rather than at effective leadership".

The Sunday Sept. 1 edition of *The Concord* said the situation was such that the present military leader and president of the country, Major General Ibrahim Babangida, was to be retired on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Nigerian independence in October.

From statements made since the coup, some areas of disagreement were: counter trade, the intransigence in releasing top politicians and government functionaries in the civilian administration who remained in jail though no case had been established against them, and the approach to solving the country's economic woes.

In his maiden address to the nation, President Babangida said that counter trade led to fraud, especially in the area of price hikes and overinvoicing. Nigeria was trading its oil for certain essential commodities in counter trade as a way to beat the credit squeeze being applied by the international financial market, while 44 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings was going to debt servicing.

On detainees, Babangida pledged to uphold fundamental human rights, and in fact the Nigerian Constitution presumes a man innocent until he is found guilty. True to that promise, the new regime released 87 detainees against whom nothing had been proved so far, with the proviso that they would be arrested



General Babangida (right) is the new Nigerian president after the coup which ousted General Buhari



again if something was found against them.

As concerns human rights, the ousted leader had brought personal considerations to bear on the conduct of government. He had said on coming to power that he "would tamper with the freedom of the press" because his name had been somehow associated with the disappearance of US\$ 2.8 billion of oil money during the civilian administration, especially as he was the last Minister of Petroleum before the return to civilian rule. The charges were that US\$ 2.8 billion had been stowed away in a British bank while Buhari was head of the Nigerian Oil Corporation (NNPC) before the hand-over to civilians.

True to his word, Buhari's regime enacted a decree which made it a criminal offense to publish any story that was not true "in every particular", or whose disclosure might embarrass the government or a public official. In July of last year, two Nigerian journalists were jailed for one year each under the terms of the decree.

President Babangida also promised to pursue the matter of the IMF loan more realistically, and to improve the country's economic situation.

The euphoria is now over and Nigeria is still faced with the same problems which the last two governments had failed to tackle. It is only fair to admit that the last government made genuine attempts to improve the Nigerian economy and to instill discipline into the Nigerian body politic, but their main handicap was that they believed they had the monopoly of answers to the country's problems.

People were being thrown out of jobs while factories closed down because of lack of raw materials to keep them going. The president of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Professor Ayo Ogun-



Nigerian troops occupy the governmental palace in Lagos



Former President Buhari believed he held a monopoly on the solution of his country's problems

sheye, had argued during the life of the ousted government that 44 percent was too much to allocate to debt financing out of foreign exchange earnings. He said the percentage should be lower so that funds would be available to bring in raw materials that would boost production, create jobs, improve the economic performance, and generate more exports.

Opinions had been divided on IMF loans to Nigeria, with

bankers and economists taking opposite positions, and the new regime decided to throw the debate open to all Nigerians before taking a stand on the issue. Opinions are now divided on devaluation of the Nigerian currency, liberalization of imports, and the lifting of petroleum subsidies.

On devaluation, opponents argue that it would lead to inflation as foreign debts would be readjusted in line with the devaluation, while proponents said it would prevent currency smuggling and stabilize the Nigerian currency, which they argue is overvalued.

On imports liberalization, opponents argue that it would allow for dumping and prevent backward integration, which the government is advocating for Nigerian industries, urging them to use local raw materials. Proponents say that some marketing houses have closed and imports liberalization will create jobs.

On petroleum subsidies, opponents argue that the country's transportation system is inefficient and that the people will



be made to bear the brunt of the end of subsidies, since costs of goods and transportation will rise. Proponents say that cancelling subsidies will discourage inordinate purchase of cars which glut Nigerian traffic and will force the government to plan for mass transit.

Nigerians have come to learn that the new government has not completely broken with the ousted administration, except in areas where there was disagreement, although the new government had promised to keep Nigerians in the reckoning.

In fact, Commodore Larry Koinyan, a member of the top ruling body, the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC), said recently during a dinner he hosted for the British Foreign Minister, Sir Geoffrey Howe, that the government would not allow those who flouted the country's laws and contributed to the suffering of Nigerians to go scot-free. The government had also vowed to continue its war against indiscipline, with an emphasis on environmental pro-

tection, sanitation, patriotism, and the end of economic sabotage.

However, the main problem with Nigeria is that oil is its major foreign exchange earner, and the fortunes of oil in the international market are dwindling, and the prospects are not bright. In addition, Nigeria had been importing food in the last seven or eight years, and stringent efforts are now being made to feed the country from within.

What in the final analysis will make all the difference to Nigerians is the improvement of the economic situation and the creation of jobs, as well as renewed availability of essential commodities which are still hard to come by, and even when available are too expensive.

Nigeria's external debt is put at about US\$ 9 billion, while the internal debt is estimated at about US\$ 20 billion. A combination of both is making credit facilities difficult to obtain, while foreign creditors insist that Nigeria reach an agreement with the IMF, which

they say would open the door to more credits.

Although the new government has not said it would do away with counter trade, it has said it will review the existing contracts to ensure that Nigerian interests will be protected from price hikes, overinvoicing, and fraud.

Happily, the government has come up with a Cabinet that has popular approval, since it is believed that men with practical approaches to problems have been brought into the government. This team and the will to succeed may make all the difference if the government continues to monitor the yearnings of the people through a free press.

The bottom line with Nigerian is not who is in power, but who will deliver the goods. So far, the present administration seems to be putting the right foot forward and is enjoying all the goodwill it needs to succeed, but Nigerian economic problems are still daunting. (Oje Orie)

### DEVALUATION OF THE NAIRA

☐ If the Nigerian military government had any hopes of negotiating its position vis-a-vis the International Monetary Fund with local politicians and labor unions, such illusions had all but vanished as General Babangida entered his second month in power. The debate opened by the General only helped to bring to light the deep contradictions underlying the Nigerian society, with two opposing factions wielding powerful arguments. On the one hand, influential governmental sectors such as Minister of Finance Kalu I. Kalu, and such representatives of private enterprise as Ayo Ogunsheye, President of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce, rigidly stand in favor of accepting the Fund's impositions. On the other, labor unions and former government officials, claim that the austerity program prescribed by the IMF may lead to a chaotic situation and to a civil conflict of unpredictable consequences.

The debate over the pros and cons has become increasingly complex. Those who favor the agreement argue that the subsidies which the Fund wishes to abolish have created enormous economic distortions — one liter of gasoline, for example, costs less than a bottle of Coca Cola. In addition to increasing fuel prices, the IMF demands that the Nigerian government devalue the national currency — the naira — by some 130 percent, according to unofficial sources.

Toward the end of 1985, the military regime expressed its fears over the consequences of a sudden devaluation of the naira. Certain sources insist that any movements in the exchange rate will occur gradually, possibly in three stages involving devaluations of 60, 30, and 40 percent over a period of eight to ten months. Even if the impact of a drastic devaluation is diminished, the government seems convinced that it is bound to face extremely difficult times in the months ahead, when the benefits of the political overture following the coup which ousted General Buhari may be quickly eroded.



## Latin America/Costa Rica



Costa Ricans demonstrate for genuine neutrality in the Central American conflict

# Leaving Neutrality Behind

Costa Rica's growing militarization and continued submission to Washington's interests contradict Monge's alleged support to the Contadora Group

**“We have favored the removal of all foreign military and security advisers stationed in Central America, whatever their nationality and whichever the ideological pretext for their involvement in Central American affairs”** (*Luis Alberto Monge at the inauguration of Western European, Central American and Contadora Group Chancellors' Conference in Costa Rica, in September 1984*).

In May 1985, 24 US military advisers arrived in Costa Rica from the Panama Canal Zone's US Army South Command to deliver a training course in “Counterinsurgency and Development” to some 800 members of

the Costa Rican Police Force. According to Pentagon spokesman Fred Laster, the “green berets” trained a “quick deployment force” in a basic, three-month course including general military skills, patrol activities and mobilization in mountain areas.

The “El Murciélagó” (Bat) Farm where this training effort took place — located 20 kilometers from the border with Nicaragua, in the Department of Guanacasta, and formerly belonging to Nicaraguan Dictator Anastasio Somoza — had previously been changed into a military base under the supervision of US military engineers, who had monitored the construc-

tion of military campsites and barracks.

According to US officials, the “quick deployment forces”, outfitted as combat units with M-16 rifles, machine guns, grenade launchers and antitank weapons, would retain their formal status as part of the 9,000-troop Costa Rican Police Force.

### How the ground was broken

The creation of “quick deployment forces” marked the end of a long, peaceful historical period when Costa Rica was the only Latin American country without an army<sup>1</sup>. With the triumph of the Sandinista revolution in 1979 and President Ronald



Reagan's rise to power in the US in 1981, Costa Rica was to play a decisive role in US policy towards Nicaragua. Costa Rican territory became indispensable for military action against major Nicaraguan industrial and cattle-raising centers, since the long border strip allowed for the concentration of thousands of men who could be used in a war of attrition against the Sandinista revolution or launch a major military assault should the opportunity arise.

To bring about the gradual occupation of Costa Rica by US military forces while changing the country into a military corridor for an eventual US intervention in Nicaragua was not an easy task for the Reagan administration, mainly because of Costa Rica's professed neutrality. However, since 1982, a US-influenced Costa Rican press had assailed the population with reports on the Nicaraguan "totalitarian regime" which had repeatedly "invaded" Costa Rican territory and thus posed a threat to Costa Rican security and sovereignty.

On the other hand, the arrival in April 1983 of 16 US officers and 188 marines in a "civilian mission" — distributing toys, medicines and clothes in Puerto Limón — and of parachutists who entertained the public with their daring jumps, bearing interlaced Costa Rican and US flags on their parachutes, was intended to generate sympathy for US military troops and gradually accustom the public to seeing US uniforms around.

Costa Rican officials have admitted that, since 1982, the government had been pressured by the Reagan administration to provide military training and

<sup>1</sup> Since Costa Rica dismantled its military units in 1949, the country had kept only a paramilitary force, the Police Force and a Rural Assistance Guard, comprising a total of 13,000 members.



equipment to police units. In that year, for instance, a Special Intervention Unit (UEI) was created with the advisory help of US, Israeli and West German officers, allegedly to fight terrorist action. Until then the US presence had been limited to the "infrastructural development" sector, although nine US Army officers had settled in the country as early as December 1983 to supervise the performance of their former students in the School of the Americas.

Since early 1983, the Reagan administration and US financial agencies, especially the Agency for International Development (AID), had expressed considerable interest in the "infrastructural development" of the Costa Rican border with Nicaragua. Costa Rica signed a US\$ 14.2 million loan agreement with AID for "communal development" investments in the area. Yet only 10 percent of the funds allocated to the project — implemented by US military engineers under the supervision of South Command Chief Paul Gorman — went to

communal and ecological improvements; the other 90 percent was used in the construction of roads extending as far as possible into regions along the Nicaragua border, a number of airports and for "other purposes not explicitly mentioned" in the project. Towards the end of 1983, the Costa Rican press had news on the construction of military barracks with a total capacity for 2,000 men in La Chiles, Barra del Colorado and El Limón<sup>2</sup>.

In February 1984, the Costa Rican government cancelled negotiations with the US for still another US\$ 12-million project which would provide for the supply of 1,000 military engineers and support personnel for road, bridge and airport construction.

Faced with a growing US pressure, Costa Rica insisted on its "active, permanent, unarmed neutrality" in November 1983. Six months later, however, the US *Washington Post* disclosed a secret State Department paper which mentioned that a recent Costa Rican demand for US\$ 7.6 million in US military aid in addition to the US\$ 2.2 million already supplied, "provides an opportunity for tipping the balance in our favor in the Nicaraguan southern flank, and might lead to a significant reversal of Costa Rica's neutral stance capable of yielding major political and diplomatic dividends". The document suggests that from then on, "the story could be Nicaragua against Costa Rica, not Nicaragua against local opponents". Indeed a "significant reversal of Costa Rica's neutral stance" was observable from then on in the conduct of Costa Rican policy.

In May 1984, the Costa Rican paper *La Nación* reported that

<sup>2</sup> US aid to Costa Rica, which was nonexistent in 1980, totalled US\$ 9.2 million in 1984.





The US-financed Radio Costa Rica began broadcasting in early 1985

the South Command Staff had provided for the air lift into Costa Rica of 1,500 US troops stationed in Honduras and Panama in the event of a Nicaraguan "intervention". Three months later, a US destroyer, the *USS King*, and a battleship, the *USS Iowa*, the latter equipped with 32 nuclear warheads, entered the Port of El Limón in a clear violation not only of Costa Rica's alleged neutrality, but also of the Tlatelolco Treaty whereby the Caribbean had been declared a nuclear-free zone. Later on, aboard the *USS Iowa*, Costa Rican officials were to attend to a US naval maneuver in Costa Rican territorial waters.

Meanwhile, the San José government had yielded to US pressures and agreed to provide military training to the local Police Force. A training course in "antiguerrilla warfare", directed by US military advisers at the Honduran Army Staff Center, was attended by 45

Costa Rican police officers. An announcement was made at the time to the effect that other Costa Rican personnel would be sent to the US and Venezuela for training on such specialties as "night navigation, antiguerrilla warfare and aviation mechanics". Later, with the delivery of two Hughes 500-E helicopters as part of US military aid to the Monge government, US pilots were provided to train their Costa Rican counterparts.

### The "balance" between neutrality and war

The increasing militarization of Costa Rica and the gradual transformation of its security forces into a military apparatus have not only caused domestic dissent<sup>3</sup>, but also led the social-democratic government to reject the proposals of the Socialist International with regard to Nicaragua and Central America. Both facts have also cast doubts



Costa Rican President  
Luis Alberto Monge

about the sincerity of Costa Rican support to the Contadora Group's Declaration, which calls for the removal of all foreign advisers from the isthmus.

<sup>3</sup> A disagreeing former President José Figueres helped organize the Patriotic Forum for Peace and Sovereignty on May 24, 1985.



According to Monge, there is no such thing as a militarization process in Costa Rica, but only a "preparedness" to cope with urgent situations arising from "domestic subversion, terrorism and the possibility of foreign aggression". He insists that the presence of US advisers was made necessary by the infiltration of ETA, PLO and North Korean groups, as well as of Italian Red Brigades in Central America.

Yet, for quite some time now, all decisions on the future of Costa Rica have been made in Washington. The economic crisis — among other things, in the form of a US\$ 420-million external debt (in a country with a 2.5 million population) and a currency devaluation of 400 percent — led President Monge to admit that his country "is economically unfeasible without US aid". Accordingly, the US has taken steps to refinance the Costa Rican debt, while Monge has given the "go ahead" sign to White House projects and allowed the increasing mobilization of counter-revolutionary groups of the Democratic Alliance (ARDE) along the Nicaraguan border.

Finally the ambush of a Costa Rican patrol attributed to members of the Sandinista People's Army (EPS) in May came at a most convenient time. On the one hand, it served to justify the US presence in Costa Rica in the eyes of local and international public opinion; on the other, it had an immediate effect as the US Congress approved a "logistic" aid proposal of US\$ 38 million for Nicaraguan *contras*. Five Costa Rican left-leaning organizations, for which the incident was a clever trap laid out by ARDE's anti-Sandinistas, have rightly observed: "The only beneficiaries were obviously the forces in favor of militarizing the country". (Sybille Flaschka) •

## Peru

# Garcia Locks Horns with the IMF

Alan García takes a tougher stand vis-a-vis the IMF and international banks, in an attempt to resume growth and meet external debt obligations without sacrificing his country further

In 1985, as APRA rises to power for the first time in history, Peru is in an extremely difficult situation: its serious economic recession is compounded by an inflation rate of over 280 percent per year, widespread violence and corruption, and a hopeless external debt.

There is no doubt that the Peruvian society of the 80s is vastly different from that of 1968, when General Velasco led his military coup. At the time, the old oligarchy no longer existed; the industrial establishment had expanded under the protection of a succession of military governments; the State played a more prominent role in the country's economic life; and labor unions and people's organizations had grown considerably.

The ambiguous speech delivered by former President Belaúnde Terry during his electoral campaign, as well as his paternalistic style, had earned him an electoral victory in 1980. The country staggered under a world financial crisis, but Belaúnde had inherited a situation which tended to improve as a result of the measures adopted towards the end of the military regime.

Inflation was running at manageable 70 percent per year with a trend to decline slightly; exports of manufactured products had reached US\$ 1 billion and the country's productive structure was showing signs of recovery.

Belaúnde and his team refused to accept these facts; neither seemed willing to admit that Peru had changed. Conservative



General Morales Bermúdez (left) turned over the Peruvian presidency to Belaúnde Terry (right) in 1980. Since then the economic situation has continually deteriorated



who had been severely hit by the military reforms struggled again to the surface with a spirit that an observer of Peruvian life described as "similar to that of the Bourbons in 1815."

On the economic side, Belaúnde's government adopted a line regarded as neo-liberal: a declining role for the State, free imports, tariff cuts, declining incentives to industry, a legislation that favored the transnational oil companies, minidevaluations of the currency, higher interest rates (both official and nominal), elimination of subsidies, and price control.

The effects brought no positive balance. In August 1980 the government had announced its intention of bringing the inflation rate down to 40 percent. In 1985 inflation was projected at 280 percent a year. Under the joint impact of foreign competition, reduced incentives, and high interest rates, industry collapsed. The ensuing recession was extremely serious. By 1983, the economy had shrunk some 13 percent; it has never recovered.

The result was that, in spite of its intention to pursue a policy more in line with IMF dictates and to repay a huge US\$ 13 billion debt, the Belaúnde government in fact suspended all payments.

Under Alan García, the new government has put together an economic team made up of Aprista Party members and independent politicians. Most of them are 35 to 45-year-old men who had served as technocrats under the military regime.

The Prime Minister, who is also Minister of Economics, is representative of the Aprista generation; he had been responsible for the Governmental Planning Commission which resorted to the help of independent specialists. The Vice-Ministers of Economics and Finance had exercised specialized functions



For President Alan García, a government's foremost obligation is toward its people, particularly the poorest classes

in the National Institute of Planning under the regime of General Velasco Alvarado, and had completed post-graduate courses in France.

The new government believes that inflation and recession must be tackled simultaneously, and that resuming production is fundamental. Since it rose to power, the García government has taken the following measures:

- increased minimum wages, along with a moderate increase of all wages and salaries;

- introduced a strict price control, with the price level being frozen for 90 days;

- reduced interest rates by over 50 percent, the reduction being greater in the case of agricultural loans;

- devalued the currency by 12 percent and put an end to minidevaluations, the dollar remaining frozen for 90 days;

- established exchange control and created a free, parallel market subject to the fluctuations of supply and demand;

- introduced new export incentives and import restrictions.

Other significant announcements have been made: Peru will not buy any more *Mirage* air-

craft; legal procedures regulating mining and oil prospecting will be introduced; Peru will pay its foreign debt, but payments must not exceed 10 percent of its export revenue; and Peru will no longer negotiate with the IMF.

All these steps were generally welcomed by the population. Businessmen accepted the wage and salary increases, considering that they would be favored by lower interest rates; labor unions found the wage hikes insufficient, but decided the new regime deserved a chance. The poorest sectors welcomed price controls, provided they are effectively enforced.

For most analysts, the major difficulty lies in keeping prices frozen in a less than formal economy and society where speculating with inflation is a pervading habit. If the government manages to keep basic prices under control through popular mobilization, the program will succeed.

### Debt: a political problem

Under President Alan García, the government holds that the foreign debt is a political problem



and should be treated as such. When a country is forced to pay its debt at a rate exceeding its total annual revenues, a problem arises that is beyond solution by bankers or technocrats. In taking this stand, the Peruvian government agrees with the views expressed in the past by former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Peru is willing to pay its foreign debt, but not in a manner that will compound the already dramatic difficulties

experienced by the Peruvian people. The government emphasizes that both the "North" and "South" have a responsibility in the debt, and that a leader's first obligation is toward his people—especially those millions of people who barely manage to survive, the hungry people, those who lack even basic social goods as water supply, sewage systems, light services, and aid to the unemployed.

Given that the responsibilities are mutual, and since countries

in the North have adopted protectionist measures against Peru, the country will limit payments to 10 percent of exports revenue—a point that was made clear as early as June 28 by President Alan García.

The Peruvian government has also made it clear that it will no longer negotiate with the IMF, since the Fund has come up with a policy package that is incompatible with the Aprista government program. Government spokesmen point out that

### THE TRANSITION TO A NEW PERU

□ Until the 1940s, Peru was predominantly rural. Population was less than 10 million, industry was incipient, and both political and economic power was concentrated in an agricultural and exporting oligarchy.

The situation began to change in the 1950s. New export products (fish meal, for one) helped make fortunes outside the oligarchy; industry expanded, and so did the urban population. Essential public services grew; the mortality rate

fell; population growth accelerated to roughly 3 percent per year; rural-urban migration intensified, and Lima turned from a capital of less than one million people into a city of 6 million with all the ensuing urban problems.

Such changes had an inevitable impact on Peruvian political life. A central problem being debated in the late 1950s was how to introduce the required changes in order to modernize Peru and do away with the old remains of an "outdated social regime" which hindered the advent of a 20th century-style capitalism. The failure of civilian governments to bring about the needed changes led to an Armed Forces attempt at social reform under General Velasco Alvarado's government (1968-1975).

The Velasco regime spelled the end of the old landowners' oligarchic system through a radical land reform, and increased the economic role of the State through nationalization of oil companies (IPC), mining enterprises (Cerro and Marcona), banks, and such services as railroads, electricity, and telephones. At the same time, it adopted a non-aligned and independent foreign policy, and reinforced national security by purchasing weapons abroad.

But the changes introduced by the Velasco government had an impact also on the country's social psychology: for the first time the Armed Forces could act independently from the upper classes and adopt their own projects. Also for the first time the government proved hostile to traditional power élites. Such concepts as "social change", "revolution", and "down with reactionary forces" took on official colors and were no longer regarded as subversive.

In 1975, however, under the impact of a world crisis, Velasco was ousted, and the radical features of his social program were abandoned by his successor, General Morales Bermúdez.



General Velasco: a new government sensitive to the aspirations of the Peruvian people





Peru's new President Alan García: "To support regional monetary organizations"

the Fund had been quick to agree with measures taken by the previous regime which led to catastrophic results.

In fact, the IMF views mini-devaluations as indispensable; lower interest rates are unwelcome; and import restrictions are repugnant to the Fund bureaucrats. As the Vice-Minister of Economics told us, to try to negotiate with the Fund would be like talking to a deaf man.

The Peruvian government prefers to negotiate with its creditors, and intends to submit to them a consistent program which will reactivate the economy, control inflation, allow for export growth, and consequently generate the additional foreign exchange required to liquidate the debt.

Both in public statements and in private conversation, high officials of the Peruvian government have let it be known that

the decision not to negotiate with the IMF is final: there will be no backing away from it.

Having been elected by more than 50 percent of the votes, and having the support of the United Left (UI), which is the number two political power in the country, the García government has the backing of over 80 percent of the population, according to recent estimates. The President's economic measures, as well as his moralizing action against the drug traffic which had infiltrated police ranks, have contributed to consolidate popular support of a government which already had a majority in Parliament.

This makes for a political climate that will enable the government to firmly ignore the IMF. According to current government experts, a realistic approach would be for the US and other developed countries to heed Kissinger's advice in dealing

with the touchy debt problem.

Its vigorous attack against the drug traffic will give Peru a bargaining advantage, especially vis-a-vis Ronald Reagan. The US President has expressed concern over the scourge which the former conservative government proved unable to eliminate due to its tolerance of police corruption.

Thus APRA — a center-left organization associated with Social Democracy — is now trying to cope with Peru's secular evils. If it finds no support and cooperation, the country may slide into chaos and all-out violence. This in turn might favor ultra-leftist extremists in the Ayacucho Mountains, who believe themselves to be definitely on their way to power, where they could establish a creole, Pol Pot-like version of Maoist Marxism known to Sendero Luminoso guerrillas as the "Fourth Sword". (César Arias Quincot) ●



# Healing Kim Phuc's War Scars

The story of the Vietnamese little girl burnt by napalm and of a young lady who tried to become a doctor

June 5, 1972. Installed around the doomed little village of Trang Bang, some 50 kilometers north of Saigon on National Highway (the "Mandarin road", as it was known since French colonial days), a battery of loudspeakers urged the 2,000-odd villagers to evacuate the place within two hours. By a decree of the US military command, Trang Bang was to become a "white zone", which in the war jargon meant it would soon be razed to the ground.

Soon the bombers roared by. It took them only a couple of passes over the village to turn it into a pile of rubble and burning wood. Three days later, in the morning of June 8, two US Air Force Skyraiders came by to make sure nothing was left. They also dropped a few 500-kilo napalm bombs for good measure. One of the bombs fell close to the pagoda. The frantic adults told the children to get out of there and seek refuge with South Vietnamese

yards followed by her brother and cousins. Then she dropped unconscious on the pavement.

A photograph of the running group, taken by Associated Press reporter Nick Ut, made the front page in newspapers all over the world. In the next months, she was to appear in thousands of magazines and on TV, becoming one of the best known and most touching testimonials of the inhumanity of the Vietnam War. The usually moderate *New York Times* said in a caption: "It is hard to keep one's faith in mankind after watching scenes such as this".



The famous photo of a tragedy: badly burned by napalm, a 9-year-old Kim Phuc runs dazedly away from the bombs

## The real meaning of war

Twelve years later, Kim Phuc was back in the headlines. Retrieved from newspapers' files, the 1972 photograph was printed along with another showing a young lady recovering from plastic surgery in a well-known West German clinic.

Then, in a warm noon in May, sitting in the terrace of the Rex Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City, Kim Phuc told us the story between the two photos.

She is now 22. The napalm that burned 75 percent of her body had left her face intact and now, wearing a long-sleeved shirt to hide her scars, she might be taken for one of the dozens of healthy, attractive young ladies who strolled on the sidewalks below. In paused, breathless sentences, she began to recall the nightmarish day when she first

The village families hurriedly gathered what they could — clothes, cooking pans, some precious food — and trod down the road towards the "strategic hamlet" assigned to them by the US Army. Some one-hundred people, dozens of children among them, chose to take shelter in a pagoda a little more than half-a-mile from Trang Bang.

troops stationed nearby. As they were leaving the temple, a Skyraider let fall a last load of napalm, barely missing them.

Phan Thi Kim Phuc, 9, found herself enveloped in a ball of sticky napalm fire. Her clothes burned away almost immediately. In excruciating pain, her torso and arms aflame, she managed to run a few hundred



realized what war was really about.

She remembers the terrible pain, her dashing along the road in a ball of flames, and regaining consciousness in a Saigon hospital, her flesh raw where the napalm had completely destroyed her skin. Her half-paralyzed hands felt numb, her left arm seemed shorter than the right, her neck had lost most of its mobility.

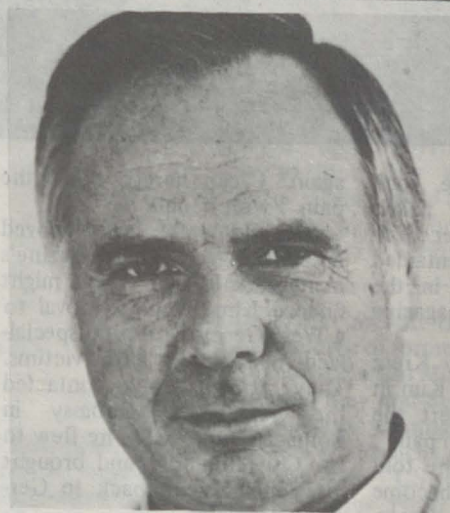
She lay in that hospital bed for eight months, then she returned to her parents and eight brothers in Trang Bang, which had been rebuilt by the obstinate villagers. In the next fourteen months, her mother took her weekly to Saigon for recovery exercises. After a two-year treatment, she was permitted to continue her exercises at home as her hands and fingers began to regain their mobility.

Because her skin pores had been destroyed, her wounds had a way of breaking open again during the warm months or every time the weather changed — and the pain was almost unbearable.

When she finally recovered part of her former strength, she felt ready to resume her education. She graduated from high school at the top of her class. In 1982 she prepared to take the entry examinations at the Saigon Medical School. "My own condition, plus all the terrible things I saw at the hospital and my gratitude towards the medical personnel made me wish very much to become a doctor", she explains.

That year, however, Kim's health deteriorated again, and she failed her exams. "I had a continuous headache", she says, "I couldn't concentrate". She tried again the next year and came through with flying colors, only to interrupt the demanding course because of her failing health. She is now concentrating on her English lessons.

1986 — January — n° 0



Kim Phuc (above), back in Ho Chi Minh City in 1985, remains grateful to photographer Perry Kretz (left) though her medical treatment has been interrupted by *Stern* magazine, on the ground of financial difficulties

### A hospital in the Baviera

Kim smiles as she begins to tell us how she managed to go to West Germany. "Phuc means luck in Vietnamese", she says. "In a way, I was lucky that the napalm spared my legs. That is why I was able to run. Otherwise, there wouldn't have been that photo, and..."

In that fateful 1972 morning, the Associated Press photographer was not the only foreign correspondent to cover the

bomb raid. Also working around Trang Bang were at least three US TV crews, plus one from the Netherlands, and two *Stern* magazine photographers — Klaus Littke and Perry Kretz. All of them were aware of the US Army plans for that small South Vietnamese village.

As eye witnesses of the air raid, and having had close contact with the villagers, the two German photographers were deeply disturbed by the sight of the suffering little girl. Long after

Third World — 49





Dr Zellner was responsible for Kim Phuc's partial recovery, but many burn scars may remain forever

they returned to Europe, Nick Ut's photo showing a naked 9-year-old Kim Phuc, her flesh devastated by napalm, remained as a haunting memory in the minds of the two *Stern* magazine newsmen.

One year later, Perry Kretz and Klaus Lidtke visited Kim in Saigon. She had just left the hospital. "She was still in pain", says Perry Kretz, "but she told us she wanted to live and become a teacher or a doctor". Kretz, who went on covering the war in Indo-China after the re-integration of both Vietnams, visited Kim on various occasions, and in the next two years developed a strong affection for the little girl.

In March 1983, when her doctor told her she had to quit medical school, Kim wrote a letter to her friend in Germany. "You are so far away", she said, "you have no idea how sad and destitute I feel. It has been very hot here in the last few months. My wounds have burst open

again. I can hardly stand the pain. I wish I could die".

Her desperate letter moved Kretz to suggest to his magazine's management that they might finance Kim Phuc's removal to a West German hospital specialized in treating burn victims. They agreed. Kretz contacted the Vietnamese embassy in Bonn. In June 1984, he flew to Ho Chi Minh City and brought his young friend back to Germany with him.

Kim underwent a four-month treatment in a hospital in Ludwigshafen, Bavaria. Dr. Rudolf Zellner restored her neck muscles; her hands were made to function properly again; the length of her left arm was corrected, and to a large extent Kim recovered from her war drama.

Kim is now back in Ho Chi Minh City where she lives with an aunt and takes her English lessons. Her parents and brothers are still in Trang Bang, where her mother keeps a small food

store. By living with her aunt Kim feels she is relieving her family from a dead weight. She feels they have made enough sacrifices for her already.

Her deep scars have not fully disappeared in spite of the extensive skin transplants received in Ludwigshafen. She is still weak, too weak to hold a knife and cut a slice of meat. Painful red spots and large boils emerge often on her poreless skin when the weather is hot. She can barely stand in the sun during the few minutes required for our photos. Her headache recurs often, making it hard for her to concentrate. Talking is a tiresome task, but her smile is still there.

In April this year, Kim Phuc was much sought by US television newsmen who flew to Ho Chi Minh City to cover the celebrations of the Vietnamese reunification. The NBC, CBS and ABC crews showed her the three filmed versions of the Trang Bang bombing which the



had brought along with them. For the first time, Kim saw herself as she looked like in those early days — as a naked little girl who cried as she ran along the road, and as a critical patient in a Saigon hospital bed. The cameraman made sure he recorded Kim's expression as she watched herself on the video. "It was as though I was watching somebody else", she said later. "I couldn't sleep that night".

Dr. Zellner had warned her that other surgical interventions would be required before she could fully recover. Her neck, for one, is still severely covered by scars. Her medical treatment, however, has been interrupted. *Stern* reportedly told the Vietnamese ambassador in Bonn — where Kim stayed for one week before returning to Vietnam — that it could not sponsor her treatment's second phase due to the financial difficulties the magazine was going through as a result of the Hitler's fake memoirs affair.

However, in a phone conver-

sation held later between Lisbon and Hamburg, Perry Kretz told us that the much publicized fiasco had in no way interfered with *Stern's* ability to finance the latter part of Kim's treatment, though he confirmed the medical declarations on the need of further skin transplants.

Yet Kim Phuc may not have a second chance. The luck which the famous photograph brought her has apparently run out in Ludwigshafen. And there are too many Kim Phucs in Vietnam to allow the country's officials to grant her a privileged treatment.

#### A young lady's dreams

Over the luncheon which prolonged our interview, Kim Phuc talked to us eagerly about what she would like to do: to continue her treatment, to fully recover from her ugly wounds, to be able to look at herself in the mirror again without crying, to be strong enough to go to school and

become a doctor. As things stand now, however, Kim may continue to lock herself up at home, to shun sunlight and mirrors, and to see herself again as a helpless, naked little girl running along the Mandarin road, as in the images which the US TV people brought to her.

"I do not hate the airplane crewmen who dropped the napalm", she says, "nor do I hate Americans. I know that many of them stood against the Vietnam War. But I do hate war deeply, and I hate those who ordered and commanded it."

For a brief, thoughtful moment, her smile vanishes from her face. She excuses herself and goes to the ladies' room to fix her hair. Now she is ready for a photograph, and asks us if we could send her a copy later on. "I would like to give it to a boyfriend, if I ever have one", she says, her smile returning once again.

The copy has been sent to her. (Carlos Pinto Santos) ●

### THE "AMERASIANS"

□ Roaming the streets of Ho Chi Minh City, the Vietnamese capital, are a surprising number of children with markedly Western traits. Most of them are over ten years of age, and some are quite dark-skinned, very nearly black. They are all natural children of former US soldiers, and have become known in the West as "Amerasians", an expression coined by US journalists.

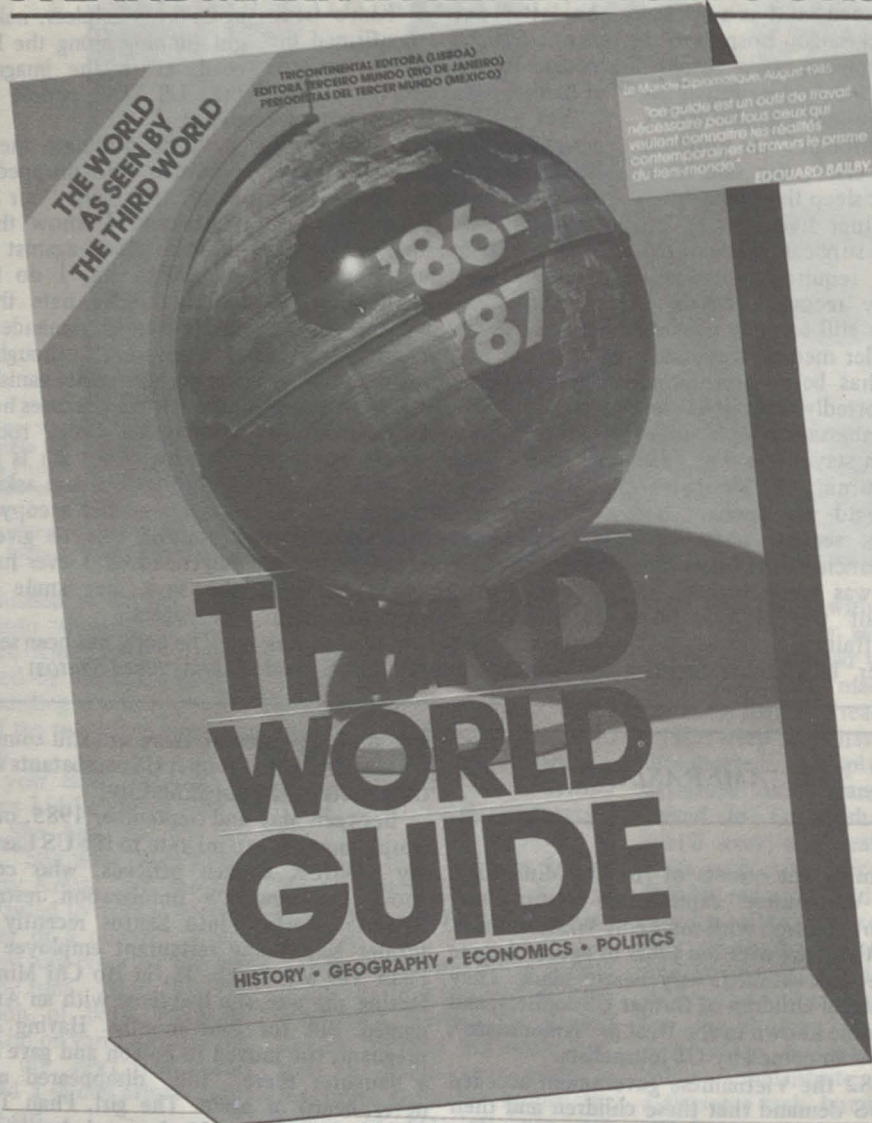
In 1982 the Vietnamese government acceded to the US demand that these children and their mothers be allowed to migrate to the US, under the condition that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) handle their transfer. Between 1983 and March 1985, over 4,700 families with Amerasian children migrated to the US thanks to the intermediation of the UNHCR. Each child has been accompanied by either its mother, a brother, or in some cases a stepfather. Most of the mothers are very young

and poor. At present there are still some 3,000 natural children of former US combatants strolling the streets of Ho Chi Minh City.

Between May and September 1985, only 250 people managed to migrate to the US East Coast, say UNHCR French officials, who complain about the new US immigration restrictions. Reporter Carlos Pinto Santos recently met a former Nha Trang restaurant employee named Phan Thi My Dung, 38, in Ho Chi Minh City. During the war, she had lived with an American named Bill for four months. Having become pregnant, she moved to Saigon and gave birth to a daughter there. "Bill" disappeared and was never heard of again. The girl, Phan Thi Thu Huong, is now 14. Mother and daughter share their relatives' house in Ho Chi Minh City. They all face daily hardships, and sell cigarettes and small bowls of soup for a living. Phan attended up to the second grade in secondary school, when she began to learn English in preparation to migrate to the US. Her application has been pending since 1982, and it is quite likely that "Bill" will never be located by the UNHCR.



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### Undoing the Debt Mess

# A Call for Latin American Unity

Caught in the debt trap, Latin American countries may have no alternative except to unite and deal politically with its creditors

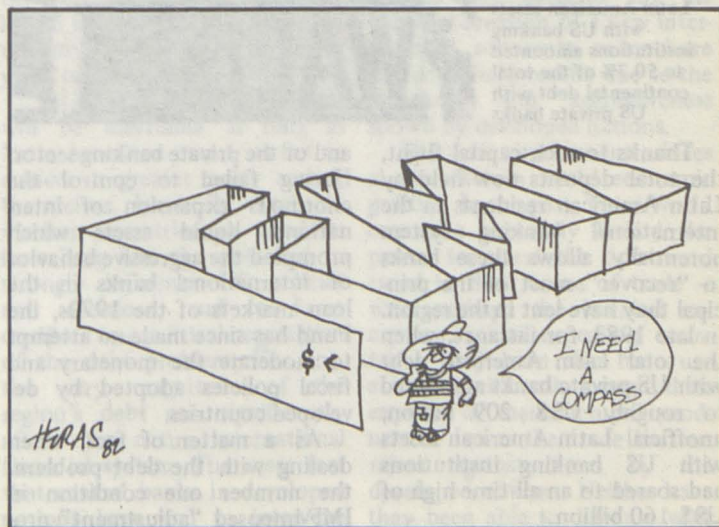
For the Latin American nations, no other problem can be as serious and pressing as the foreign debt. Its magnitude and potential political consequences have sent shock waves throughout the world, from the Andes to the Appalachians to the Alps. It is by no means a merely junctural or short-lived predicament. In fact, if a satisfactory solution is not found in the short term, the entire future of the continent, as well as of North-South relations and the well-being of millions of people in both hemispheres, will be in serious jeopardy for the rest of this century.

It is widely recognized that the problem would not have assumed its current formidable dimensions were it not for a set of circumstances affecting the world economy, over which Latin America has no control. Indeed the problem evolved into a major crisis only because of certain difficulties experienced in the past ten years or so by the developed economies. As it now stands, short-term prospects are bleak in regard to their dynamic growth and the extent to which they will be willing to lower their barriers against their Latin American trade partners. In

addition, a trend toward increasing fiscal deficits in all developed nations now make it unreasonable to expect substantial declines in interest rates in the predictable future. The financial restrictions recently imposed on Latin America in the international money market — at the initiative of both official and private banks — are only an example of the close link between the region's current problem and alien factors, and point to the extreme unlikelihood of a satisfactory solution in the short or medium term.

Yet the debt crisis has served to emphasize a need that has long been felt in the region as a whole — the need for greater unity among Latin American countries. Indeed the debt crisis may well prove to be the starting point of a joint effort by all debtor countries, not only where the debt is concerned but in other areas as well.

In the North-South discussions of the debt, an often disregarded point is the role played by both sides in the magnitude and character of the problem. Having actively promoted the granting of new loans to developing countries in the hope of quickly boosting their own profits, private banks overextended themselves in the region and charged unusually high premiums and commissions. Yet, when renegotiating the debt, they consistently ignore their share of the responsibility and charge even higher fees for what they now perceive to be even higher risks. The various forms of guarantees they have demanded put intolerable pressures on debtor countries. For one, they have managed to "statize" the private sector





debt in some Latin American countries by demanding governmental guarantees on loans which had originally been generously extended to private borrowers. In the case of Uruguay, transnational banks transferred to the Central Bank of a dictatorial regime a whole portfolio of bad debts, thus avoiding huge losses by putting the monkey on *their* backs. No thought was given to the fact that the loans they had financed — and the facilities they had extended to the borrowers — had helped encourage a capital flight which quickly eroded the country's capacity to pay for its foreign obligations.

Economic policies unilaterally adopted by developed countries have also served to undermine Latin America's capacity to repay its debt by reducing both the physical volume and relative prices of the region's exports. On the other hand, a number of monetary and fiscal measures taken by the US have exacerbated Latin American difficulties by inflating interest payments on the debt.

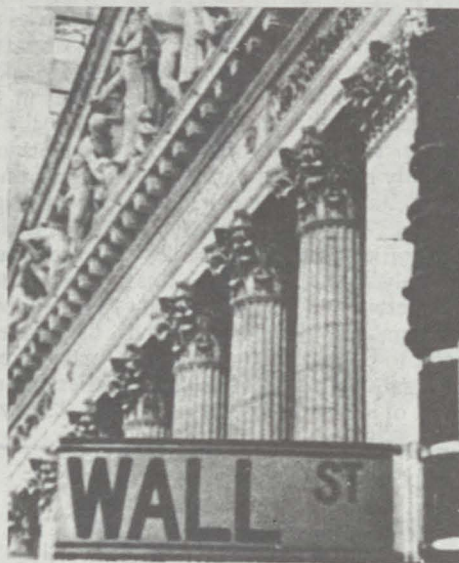
In such circumstances, it is extremely difficult for any side to arrive at a sensible solution of the debt problem. The intermediate role played by the IMF clearly reflects the financial interests of developed nations

grams is that indebted countries pay back what they owe. An admission of a joint responsibility of debtors and creditors for the massiveness of the debt problem is bluntly ignored. The truth is that, if the debtor countries failed to control the volume and maturity schedules of the private and public debt, and allowed borrowed funds to be used for unproductive purposes, or indulged in short-lived buying sprees, this was largely due to the fact that international banks had been eagerly promoting their lending operations, since only by lending money can they make more money.

A frank admission of the mutual responsibility of creditor countries, debtor countries and the IMF itself would allow for more equitable ways of negotiating the foreign debt. At present, the Fund's "adjustment" programs focus primarily on debt repayment, regardless of the social price to be paid by debtor countries. For the IMF it is imperative that the principal and interests be handed over to the creditors, even if this will mean the total elimination of indebted countries as potential borrowers in many years to come.

Latin Americans, however, begin to see the problem under a different light. They argue that the debt has become an essentially political problem that must be solved through joint political efforts and joint political responsibility. This new approach promises to produce solutions which will not jeopardize the economic recovery of debtor countries. Only by continuing to develop socially and economically can they repay their current debt and establish their future creditworthiness. Latin Americans are convinced that the debt problem can be solved satisfactorily only with the joint participation of the governments of both creditor and debtor nations.

In 1983, unofficial Latin American assets with US banking institutions amounted to 50.7% of the total continental debt with US private banks



Thanks to such capital flight, the total deposits now held by Latin American residents in the international banking system potentially allows these banks to "recover" most of the principal they have lent in the region. In late 1983, for instance, when the total Latin American debt with US private banks amounted to roughly US\$ 209 billion, unofficial Latin American assets with US banking institutions had soared to an all-time high of US\$ 160 billion.

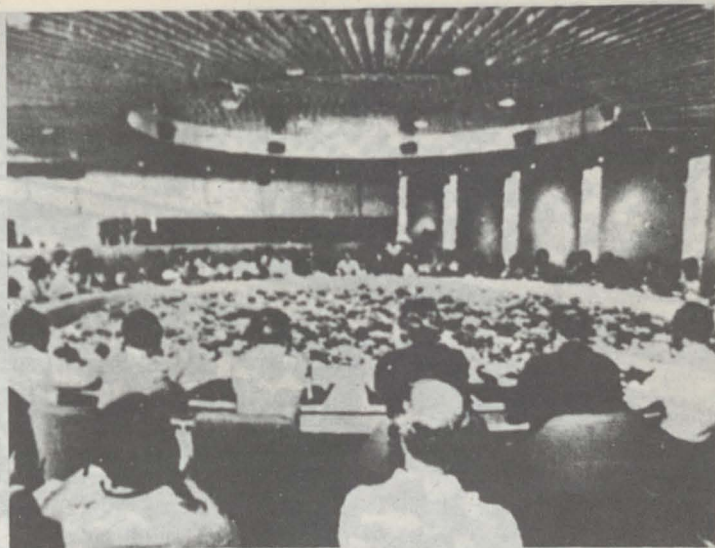
and of the private banking sector. Having failed to control the enormous expansion of international liquid assets which prompted the aggressive behavior of international banks in the loan markets of the 1970s, the Fund has since made no attempt to moderate the monetary and fiscal policies adopted by developed countries.

As a matter of fact, when dealing with the debt problem, the number one condition in IMF-imposed "adjustment" pro-



So far the attitude of developed countries has been one of complete inflexibility and harshness towards debtor countries. Led by the US, they have to date failed to show any willingness to discuss the problem from a political angle. On the contrary, where the debt is concerned, the US has set the tone of the discussions by requiring that negotiations take place in what they see as their natural forum: the IMF and the World Bank. In other words, where the Latin American debt is concerned, there seems to exist a high degree of consensus and unity among capitalist nations: they unanimously reject a political discussion of the problem. Their insistence is on a case-by-case approach under the tutelage of the IMF, an institution evidently influenced by US policy.

A clearly unbalanced situation has thus evolved in which only the Latin American countries stand to lose. On one side, creditor private banks and creditor country governments, with the IMF as a go-between, act in a concerted and unified manner. On the other, each debtor nation must come to the negotiations table on its own. Thanks to this case-by-case procedure, highly recessive adjustment policies have been imposed on debtor countries, and a huge transfer of resources is ensured from developing countries to the creditor nations, largely in the form of interest payments. As a result, resources are subtracted from debtor countries that might pay for crucially needed imports and strengthen their debt-paying capacity by developing their own economies. Because a high share of their domestic savings must go into interest payments, their capital cumulation and economic growth processes are stifled. The "adjustment" programs prescribed by the IMF as bitter remedies for the debt situation



For rich countries, the IMF and the World Bank are convenient forums where they can avoid political discussions of the debt problem

tend only to generate recession, higher unemployment and dwindling real wages. The region's endemic problems are aggravated by increased malnutrition, illiteracy, and poor health services.

In other words, adjustment policies as dictated by the IMF's old orthodoxy generate precisely those conditions which prevent the consolidation of a prosperity that would enable the region to pay for its debt. They also threaten to undermine those few liberal regimes that have managed to survive the past turbulent years on the continent.

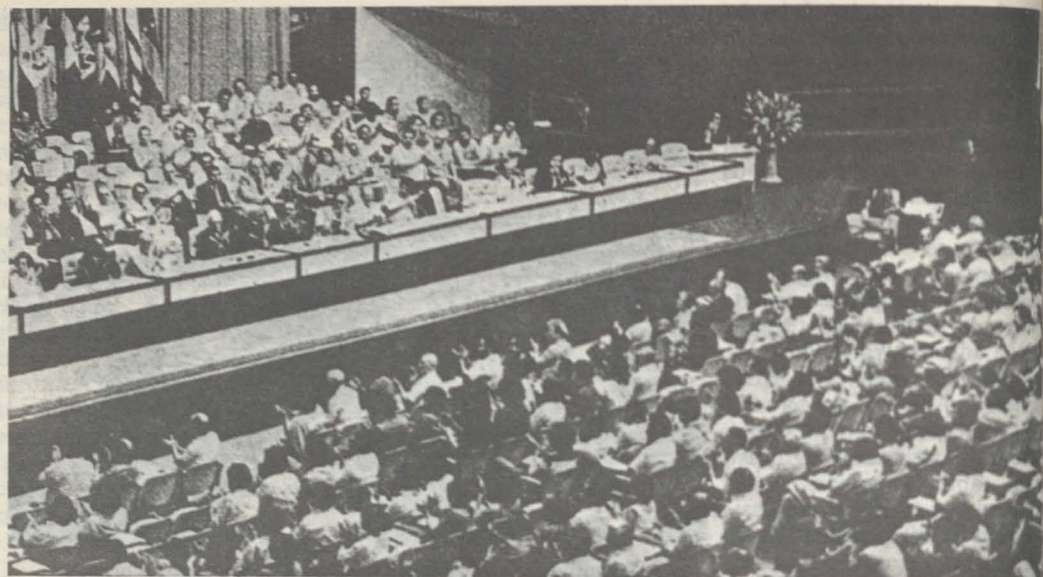
Yet this case-by-case approach will be inevitable as long as Latin American countries fail to achieve a greater unity among themselves. Ironically, Latin American countries as a whole have long had the potential to strongly influence US policies and decisions, and to force creditors to a political negotiation of the debt problem. For one, the very magnitude of the region's debt can significantly affect the entire international financial system. The mere fact that central banks in developed nations have had to intervene

as lenders to protect private bankers is indicative of the potential bargaining power which Latin American countries have so far failed to take advantage of.

For the past thirty years, countries in the region have repeatedly tried to persuade the developed world to change the unjust conditions prevailing in international economic relations. Discussions at UNCTAD, at the North-South roundtable and at various UN agencies for the eventual creation of a new international economic order have failed to yield results due to the arrogance and aggressiveness shown by developed nations.

The debt situation introduces a new fact in world economic politics. In the past, Third World countries obviously lacked the power to revert the downward trend in their terms of trade — with perhaps the isolated exception of oil-exporting countries. They have also been unable to significantly expand their exports of manufactured products or lower the trade barriers raised against them by the developed nations. Neither have they been able to dispense with





Latin American politicians and experts met last July in Havana in search of a global strategy against obdurate credit

the inadequate development model based on ruthless exploitation by transnational corporations.

With the debt situation, this scenario has changed substantially. The transfer of power resulting from the massive inflow of financial resources to the Third World, unwittingly promoted by profit-seeking international banks, will prove to have been irreversible. In spite of some capital flight and a number of misguided investments, those resources have gone largely into promoting real economic growth. Countries such as Brazil, Argentina and Mexico no longer depend on a few export crops as they did some time in the past. The very existence of a huge debt that must be repaid one way or another opens new avenues of action for debtor countries: it gives them the ability to influence the very operativeness of the financial system of developed economies, which is something they would never have been able to do through trade alone. For this bargaining potential to be realized, the only requirement is for Latin American

countries to unite in discussing the debt, with the largest debtor countries taking the initiative in the new unity.

One of the tragedies of history is that conquerors have always succeeded in disuniting in order to conquer. The disunity which for ages has plagued the Middle East has proved a boon to Western powers and transnational oil companies. Throughout the world, in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas, one nation after another has fallen an unsuspecting victim of the deliberate strategy of conquest through disunity. With this kind of hindsight, it would be unforgivable if Latin American countries were themselves to permit the use of such a strategy in the case of the foreign debt.

A united Latin America will be powerful enough to put together an overall proposal for renegotiating the region's debt — a proposal which will take into account each party's rights and obligations, which will find a more equitable solution than that suggested by IMF "adjustments", and effectively

contribute to restore the region's growth and creditworthiness.

A united Latin American front will add bargaining power and strength to the region as a whole. This may imply a certain degree of political confrontation with the US and such agencies as execute US dictates in the economic area, and is one more reason for Latin American countries to extend the range of the alliances in the world arena, both among capitalist and socialist nations.

The fundamental requirement is unity between Latin American countries. If the disastrous character of the Latin American debt problem has any good side at all, it is the historical opportunity it affords for a new sense of unity and common destiny to develop among the long-suffering peoples in the hemisphere. Though creditor nations and the IMF remain adamant, never have the conditions been so favorable for a renewed feeling of unity on the continent. Let us hope that this opportunity will not be missed by Latin American governments and peoples. (*Alberto Corriel, Uruguayan economist*)



# Free Trade Zones: Losing their Appeal

A few years ago, free trade zones, or Export Processing Zones, were believed to be the best short-cut to industrialization in the Third World. Now the doubts outnumber the hopes

Critics point out that EPZs do not contribute significantly to foreign exchange earnings, technology transfer or long-term industrial development in the host countries. A recent study by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development confirms some of these misgivings. The UNCTAD report says that the contribution of EPZs is "disappointing" when measured against earlier expectations.

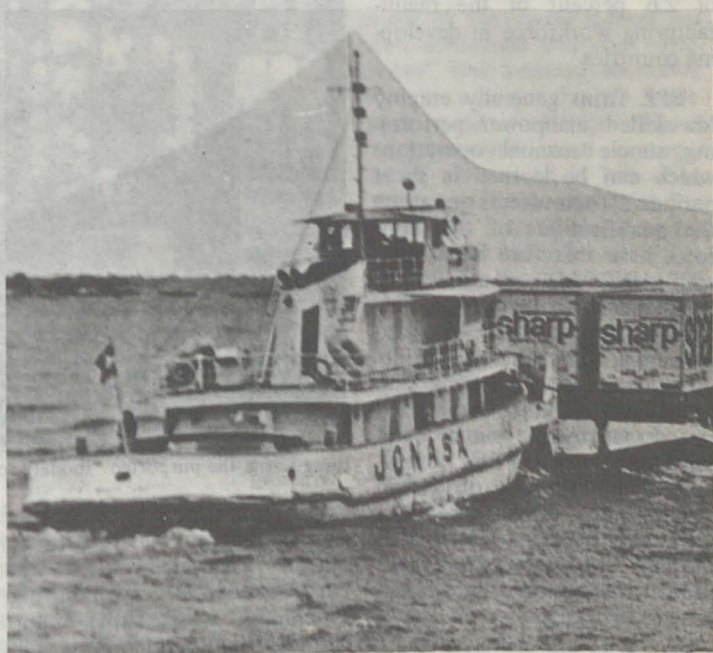
Export Processing Zones are a relatively new phenomenon. The first EPZ in a developing country was established in Kandla, India in 1965. By 1980, some 55 EPZs had been set up in 30 developing countries. Twenty of these zones were in Asia, another 20 in Latin America and the Caribbean, while Africa and the Middle East had six each. The growth of EPZs in the Third World is still continuing rapidly. In 1980, another 33 zones in some 20 countries were being planned or developed.

An export processing zone is an enclosed industrial area within which factories are exempted from paying import duty on raw materials and components used for the production of export goods. The EPZ enterprises also enjoy attractive incentives such as tax holidays and access to cheap credit, and need to follow very simplified import and export

procedures. These privileges are granted to the EPZ companies, most of them foreign-owned, in the expectation that they will bring in capital and advanced technology and generate employment and foreign exchange to the host country. These high expectations have not been entirely fulfilled, and that's why UNCTAD calls the performance of EPZs "disappointing".

First, there is very little real transfer of technology from foreign companies to local workers and professionals. Most of the work in EPZs are assembly-type operations and simple processing activities which require little skill. Raw materials and components are imported by EPZ firms from their parent companies in developed countries. After processing or assembly, products are exported back to the parent company or a subsidiary in another country.

The more sophisticated technical processes of production are usually carried out by the parent company in the developed countries. Research and development is also done at the headquarters, and the marketing and distribution is also controlled from there. Thus, EPZ companies



Goods made in the Brazilian EPZ in Manaus are "exported" to the rest of the country



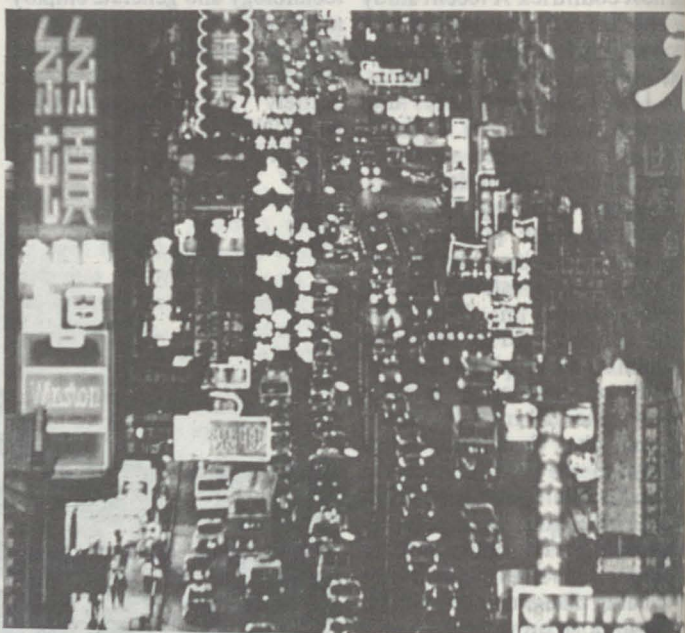
in developing countries do not have direct control over the actual technology, research and development, or over access to export markets. This situation prevails even if EPZ companies are joint-ventures between transnational companies and local firms, since foreign enterprises have control over the major activities in the project.

Second, there is minimal linkage between the EPZs and the domestic economy. Most EPZ firms import their supplies from their head-offices or branches abroad. As a result, there is little backward linkage with domestic industries supplying production inputs, except in the case of basic utilities such as electricity and water.

Third, although the EPZs do create jobs they do not significantly dent the unemployment problem nor upgrade labor skills. The UNCTAD study points out that employment in all EPZs in developing countries is currently estimated to be slightly less than one million persons, or 2.6 percent of the manufacturing workforce in developing countries.

EPZ firms generally employ low-skilled manpower performing simple manual operations which can be learned in short periods. "Their effects on raising the qualifications of the labor force have therefore been minimal", UNCTAD points out. The typical EPZ firm offers few managerial positions to local personnel. Many managerial functions, such as marketing and production planning, are carried out abroad by the parent company. As a rule, foreign companies fill the key posts of general manager and treasurer with their own expatriate personnel, although local staff are given middle management and engineering positions.

The study finds that the main benefit of EPZ is the net foreign



Hong Kong, the purported "model" for all EPZs in the world

exchange inflow in the form of export earnings and investment capital. However, even here the performance is disappointing. The share of EPZ firms' export earnings that is retained by the host country is usually below 25 per cent, and may be consider-

ably lower. Most of this domestic value added consists of wages paid to EPZ workers. These wages, plus some additional expenses for local services, constitute the net foreign exchange earnings generated for the host economies. The balance of export



earnings goes to pay for imported inputs, and also for the high profits of foreign investors. Most of these foreign profits are repatriated abroad and not reinvested in the host country.

Moreover, the net foreign exchange income from EPZs may even be smaller because of the domestic resources which have to be used to make the EPZs operational. The host governments have to spend substantial amounts to build the industrial structure, and to promote the country's industrial image abroad. The governments also lose revenue because of subsidies and incentives granted to EPZ firms.

The UNCTAD report concludes that EPZs do not result in significant positive spin-offs.

"Training for skilled workers takes place only on a very limited scale and is confined to the requirements of the particular job in question, usually being restricted to the needs of the partial processes performed", says UNCTAD.

"EPZs have not, therefore, created a trained workforce which would be available for work in the domestic industrial section when it leaves the EPZ. The enclave character of EPZs and differences between production processes in EPZs and in the domestic sectors have also greatly constrained the development of learning and demonstration effects in the host economies."

Given this analysis, UNCTAD advises governments of develop-

ing countries to clearly define the role they wish EPZs to play in their industrialization policies. Export processing zones should be considered a means to increase foreign earnings and job opportunities. But they should not be expected to significantly enhance labor skills, transfer technology or develop linkages with the domestic sectors.

The UNCTAD report adds that EPZs should only be planned as one component of industrialization, and host countries should not grow to be too dependent on them. Other aspects of industrialization, especially those which build up local industries and improve domestic technological capacity, should instead be given more emphasis. (*Khor Kok Peng - Third World Network*) ●

## Economics News

### GRAIN HARVESTS: AN ALL-TIME HIGH

The world production of grains is expected to reach an unprecedented volume of 884 million tons this year, up 8 million tons from last year's harvest.

The forecast has been announced by *Food Prospects*, a monthly bulletin issued by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The editors note that their estimate is based on sustained good weather conditions prevailing in major agricultural areas.

According to the bulletin, cultivation conditions have improved in both West and East Africa, where the harvests in 1985 will certainly be much more plentiful than they were last year in most countries hit by the drought. Some of these countries may even experience some exportable surpluses.

In the case of sugar, FAO's preliminary estimates are that the world production will drop 2.5 percent to 97.8 million gross

tons as a result of production declines in Brazil, Cuba, the European Economic Community (EEC), and most East European countries.



Current supply and demand forecasts indicate that the world consumption of sugar may exceed production by over one million tons in 1986, according to a FAO report. The huge stocks which currently threaten the market, however, would not be significantly reduced.

### THE UPS AND DOWNS OF COMMODITY PRICES

"The recovery of sugar prices in the world market has been confirmed and even revived", read a discreet economic note in a major French newspaper some weeks ago. Indeed the downward trend in sugar prices, announced in late June 1985, had been checked. Towards the end of July, prices had reached 1,290 French francs per quintal (approximately 58 kilos) in the Parisian market, up from 1,180 French francs in the previous week.

South-North exports of commodities and raw materials provide the basic purchasing power of some 70 nations. In early 1983, these products had reached their lowest level at constant prices in the past 30 years. The slight increase in trade experienced in early 1984 came to an end by the middle of the year. In other words, one-product exporter countries remain as vulnerable as ever.



# Preserving a Pure Aesthetic

In all African cultures, to a greater or lesser extent, art as a form of language and expression seeks to strengthen man's links with his environment



Seen until recently as minor artistic expressions, decorative art and artisanship have lately commanded a great deal of attention. Whereas painting and sculpture ranked at the top in the traditional hierarchy, there has been an increasing awareness of the importance of artisanship. Indeed it seems reasonable to ask why a functional piece, whose wrought materials reflect both the environment in which it evolved and the creative talent of a people, should be less meaningful than a non-functional work of art.

Yet *art* may not be the most appropriate word to use here because of its semantic conno-

tations. The concept of art as a creative process varies greatly between Europeans and Africans. The latter tend to express and translate a part of their own universe into the forms they mold, whether they are artists or artisans. African art fascinates the viewer because of its emotional intensity, the beauty of its shapes, and its overwhelming power and spiritual quality.

Above all, African art is functional. Functionality is its *raison d'être*, whether its purpose is economic, magic or religious. Yet the shapes it assumes, be they masks, sculptures, domestic utensils, pottery, music or dance, seem to involve the perennial confrontation between the real and the imagined, between the

down-to-earth and the transcendental. Paul Klee, one of many Europeans who were influenced by African art, said once that art's purpose is to render the invisible visible.

## Art as a communal endeavor

Supernatural forces that seek to mold the destinies of mankind are the main source of inspiration for African artists, who try to convey them directly into shape. This is in sharp contrast with the endeavor of European artists who, under the influence of Greek tradition until the 19th century, sought to express the divine by means of concrete known shapes, such as the human figure.

African artists belong to a specific social class. They may be peasant sculptors, or iron smiths endowed with magical powers. The formal meaning of divine forces is accessible to any sensitive individual in communal religious rites. Thus a sculptor may reproduce the work of another without necessarily becoming a plagiarist: his copy will be seen as a complement.

African art has a collective quality in contrast with the individualistic quality of European art. For Africans, the community comes before the individual, who is no more than one link of a long tradition. In this sense, the community extends itself to embrace Nature, the soil and the land its ancestors belonged to. Mores are perpetuated through rites and traditions and thus the social balance is preserved. This pattern of behavior involves all of the visible expressions and manifestations of the individual artist; his artistic production is regulated by communal praxis and morality.



As a result, African art is forever in harmony with Nature. It is nearer to life, and interpreting its forms is always possible to all members of the society that produces them.

### Foreign influence

Because of its communal nature, African art tends to reflect the past. It expresses a certain established way of being in the world; it helps man to communicate with the supernatural.

In all African cultures, to a greater or lesser extent, art as language or expression abstains from challenging or breaking away from established values, though traditional modes of expression keep continually evolving: exceptionally gifted individuals may surpass the limits dictated by tradition and contribute to extend the range of artistic expression. The pace and intensity of this evolutionary process may depend on foreign pressures.

The advent of foreign migration and the introduction of mercantilist values, which placed Africans in contact with European habits, have pushed them away from their original culture. Artists seem no longer motivated by the telluric forces peculiar to their social and cultural environment.

New consumption habits have a way of immediately threatening the survival of traditional artisan-ship. Beautifully ornamented wooden spoons are replaced by ordinary metal spoons; wooden cups give way to enamelled ones; carved wood plates and decorative pottery are replaced by European, Indian or Japanese bric-a-brac; finely decorated tobacco horns are superseded by stamped tin boxes; and the youth, disdaining the traditional *tihuhlo* fat, oint their bodies with European or Indian-made scented oil.



By placing African man in contact with urban centers, migration and mercantile values have taken him away from his original culture

However, if virtually all utilitarian production is quickly replaced by commercial items, African artists can still survive through the mass production of souvenirs for foreign tourists.

### The law of supply and demand

Thus sculptors become mere woodcarvers. Traditional models will often be reproduced mechanically, without much care or conviction. African artisans will no longer be guided by a desire to give expression to their culture, but by the law of supply and demand. Indeed, to produce in large quantities, as easily and quickly as possible, pricing their products no longer on the basis of artistic merits but of material costs, may be the unfortunate option now left to many artists on the African continent.

Nevertheless, in spite of their new social conditions, African

artists remain the holders and perpetuators of aesthetic values and concepts inherited from their ancestors. Even when shapes are new, when objects no longer refer to local traditions in their details or finishing, the signs of the force and vitality of an entire culture are always there.

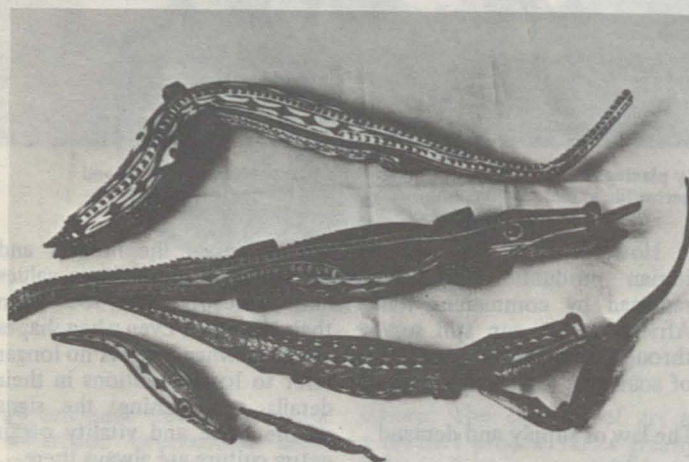
African art had a revigorating impact on European art. Modigliani, Picasso, Klee, Lipchitz and many others were inspired by it. On the other hand, one should recognize that European and other influences on African art have not necessarily been disastrous.

Styles evolve with history. Throughout Africa one can now find new clothing patterns, new types of fabrics, embroideries, jewels, hairstyles which, though they are not traditionally African, are not recognizably European or Asiatic. They are merely pan-African. (Mário Trindade) ●



## Mozambique's "White Wood" Artistry

A typical artistic expression of South Mozambique, Psikhelekedana refers to artifacts made from the so-called "white wood"



Crocodiles: a pervading theme in this brand of artisanship

**P**sikhelekedana is a corruption of the English word crocodile, as transliterated into one of the national languages of South Mozambique. In the early days of the colonial "pacification" undertaken in the beginning of this century, South African colonists and visitors used the word to designate a vast range of artifacts where crocodile shapes abounded, but which were soon to diversify into many other shapes and objects.

The word caught and is now currently used in South Mozambican bazaars and streets where artisans peddle their newly-made souvenirs. Its meaning is now so generic that the word applies both to utilitarian objects, such as wooden spoons, and artistic sculptures representing the human figure — of which the most ubiquitous is "King Zulu".

Those who make a distinction between art (sculpture) and

artisanship are forced to admit that both are present in Psikhelekedana. Either in individual shops or cooperatives, the sculptors/artisans produce all sorts of objects, ranging from mass-produced artifacts to fine sculptures where the personal touch of the artist is clearly visible.

### Origins

The origins of this type of work are difficult to ascertain. Artifacts believed to date from the beginning of this century were recently assembled in Psikhelekedana exhibit in Mozambique. Henrique Junod, renowned anthropologist who dedicated considerable attention to South Mozambican culture (*"Bantu Usages and Habits"*) refers to artifacts in the Psikhelekedana style, though he did not use the word by which they were to become generally known.

The earliest forms of sculpture and artisan work in Bantu societies were typically functional. Thus spoons, mugs and other household articles were so beautified and ornamented, acquiring an artistic quality that has been preserved to this day. Other artifacts had a magic or religious value, and were used in initiation rites or wedding ceremonies and in the liturgical practices of witch doctors. Even though they have lost their original purpose, these artifacts have survived as artistic and decorative objects that are now sold to domestic and foreign tourists.

The original forms were soon joined by others, possibly to fill mercantile needs or simply intended for household use by South African colonists. Colonial artists thus increasingly became professionals. At present Psikhelekedana comprises essentially





ally three kinds of artifacts: domestic utensils, animals, and the human figure.

#### Domestic utensils

It is in this area of Maputo art/artisanship that one can more directly establish a connection between household utensils and traditional, magic/religious values. A case in hand are wooden spoons, many of which have an obvious ritual purpose.

At the very early stages, artists ornamented their spoons with various decorative elements (especially friezes). Though wooden spoons are still bought for mere utilitarian purposes, they are increasingly decorative, as artisans explore all possible ways of rendering them visually interesting.

One of the most curious artifacts from an artistic viewpoint consists of two spoons held together by a chain of rings. Henrique Junod informs us that these were used to consecrate an alliance between

two community members, the rings being placed around the men's necks while they shared a meal. Apparently this social purpose has disappeared over the years; for many artisans we contacted in Mozambique, the only significance of the piece lies in the fact that "it is difficult to make" (if one ring breaks, the work is rendered useless).

Psikhelekedana includes many other domestic utensils, such as gourds, which were traditionally ornamented with glass beads and made exclusively by sorcerers or by *madodas* they entrusted with the job. These gourds were filled with honey used in traditional "medicines". On the other hand, clubs and ornamental bunches of feathers, now seldom produced, were made for use by sorcerers and witch doctors. Whitewood "pillows", which are among the earliest objects, often ornamented with trophies, were originally intended for use by tribal chiefs.

#### Animals

Though ancient animal sculptures can be found in African artwork, the study of anthropologists and historians suggests that they were mass-produced only in recent times, coinciding with the arrival of colonists in Mozambique. Quick urbanization contributed to increasing the number of the animals depicted. Birds (toucans, quails, wild fowl), crocodiles (certainly the most frequent theme), snakes (usually in association with other animals), elephants, hippos, turtles and monkeys are often found. These animals are often related to communal ceremonies, beliefs and taboos. Because of their size, elephants, for instance, are believed "to fetch and carry the spirits given up by villagers" with the mediation of witch doctors.

Hippos are associated with abundance. The act of catching a hippopotamus is believed to





presage abundant food. Crocodiles, the real leitmotiv of this type of artisanship/sculpture, are related to several beliefs. The number of stones found in the animal's stomach has to do with the number of years the village chief is expected to live. Thus the animal's body is quartered in his presence. The chief will also keep any metal objects eventually found in the crocodile's entrails, which it may have swallowed as it killed peasants bathing in or crossing the river. There is a taboo against eating the animal's head, which must be burned to ashes.

#### The human figure

Next to domestic utensils, depicting the human figure seems to be one of the earliest forms

of art in South Mozambique. Human figures were apparently the first products of this peculiar type of sculpture/artisanship that were completely devoid of any functional purpose. A projection of artisanship into art, they were intended merely as sculpture work. Some of them are associated with everyday objects, such as walking sticks, but are not known to have any magic-religious function.

*King Zulu*<sup>1</sup> is the most common and widely known. The figure is usually carved out of a single whitewood block, to which the typical warrior's objects — often disproportionate and obviously symbolic — are then added.

Sometimes the shapes and emphasis seem to derive from the artists' inward universe and to have found inspiration in such visual deformities as occur in

dreams. Somehow they are reminiscent of *makonda* art (particularly those in black wood) and of foreign influences.

It is in this southern art that the first attempt is made to reproduce the figure of the colonist. African sculptors try to depict their foreign models as carefully and faithfully as possible. This type of work, mentioned by anthropologists and historians, but has now practically disappeared. Such images of the white man are highly valuable pieces of art, both because of their rarity and fineness of detail.

Masks are also a specific kind of representation of the human figure. They are believed to be of merely commercial origin, though masks are common in all Africa. At present they are produced in large quantities, often poorly finished, and are the most widely marketed artifacts.

#### A peculiar artistic expression

*Psikhelekedana* has not enjoyed the same fame as other forms of Mozambican art, nor has it been the object of such minute studies as have been dedicated to sculpture work from other parts of Africa. One of the reasons for this is that the raw material employed is cheaper than that used in other areas. Indeed, the commercial value of whitewood is considerably lower than that of rosewood or sandal, to mention only two examples.

Yet *Psikhelekedana* is a peculiar expression of the cultural universe of African man in general and of Mozambican art in particular. (*Sol Carvalho*)

<sup>1</sup> Zulus are well-known for their pugnacious spirit, and *King Zulu* symbolizes the resistance struggle so dear to Mozambican memory.



# The Revolutionary Murals

Mozambique's greatest achievements in plastic arts now call for careful conservation efforts

Public art as expressed in posters and mural paintings is one of the areas where the public mind most often gives vent to its yearning for freedom. Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, Angola and Mozambique are countries where such public art has reached significant heights.

In the first years of Mozambican independence, local popular art went through a phase of euphoria. Covering entire walls were paintings associated with the order of the day which mobilized the population, reflecting a wide variety of emotions and pictorial styles. Such art was typically unplanned, wherein resided both its strength and weakness. If on one hand it was extremely varied and creative, on the other the paintings soon faded or were washed away, their messages becoming fragmented and lost.

The fragile work of this initial phase was soon replaced by another type of mural painting belonging to what might be called a "second movement". Its essential characteristic was that it had been performed by a professional artist or group of artists who, motivated by the national revolution, were intent on leaving behind a more universal and enduring message. The compositions are larger, executed in a broader range of colors, often with the prior authority of local officials.

## Optimism and humor

Typical of this second phase is the participation of exiles who, having returned to Mozambique after years of involuntary absence, once again felt they could make a contribution to their homeland. In 1977, approximately 100 volunteers finished the first of this series of murals on a wall of the country's largest hospital complex. The work had the general coordination of Moira Thoa, a Chilean painter, but Mozambican artists — and even part of the hospital's staff — cooperated in it.

Claudio Reis, another Chilean, and his Mozambican wife Madalena, also painted an enormous mural in the capital's *baixa*<sup>1</sup>, at a strategic spot where thousands of port workers pass by daily.

Both murals have a clearly revolutionary content. Its elements convey a lyrical and optimistic vision of a revolution which was to prove more difficult than their originators had imagined. Both are delicate and generous anticipations of a brighter future. The central theme of one of them is the human hand, "the only source of miracles in any revolutionary process" (Samora Michel); the second is a combination of industrial and agricultural elements, symbolizing the fundamental alliance which the Mozambican movement is expected to bring about.

A third mural covers the entire side wall of a low building belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture. Its humorous composition is animated by curves suggesting a rainbow, but some of the human figures wear a grave look and fixed stare, conveying a more serious message on the real conditions facing all Mozambicans. These apparently contradictory elements are harmoniously brought together by the mural's unique process of execution.

This third mural's upper

<sup>1</sup> The word *baixa* is applied to the lower section of the Mozambican capital, along the port and not far from downtown Maputo.





section was executed by Moira Thoa, a Chilean exile whose paintings have a thoroughly optimistic overtone. The lower part is the work of a well-known Mozambican painter named Malangatana Nguenha, whose intense and pathetic style is responsible for the mural's dramaticity and tension.

Malangatana would later make an even greater contribution to mural painting as he tackled the execution of a huge mural in one of the gardens surrounding the Museum of Natural History. Its theme is "Man's Struggle in the Context of Nature" and, unlike the other murals mentioned above, its political message is more subtle and concealed.



The result of a collective artistic effort, the mural at Praça dos Heróis is almost one-hundred meters in length

It is a brilliant afresco showing human and animal figures that gaze at the viewer from three adjacent walls. There are no poles or perspectives, so that the viewer's eyes wander from left to right and from right to left, responding rather to the detail than to the overall composition. Fortunately the men then in charge of enforcing the new cultural policy did not require Malangatana and others to express an optimism which did not exist in their pictorial universe.

On the same level as Malangatana is his contemporary Mankeu, another well-known Mozambican painter. Until inde-

pendence, Mankeu was known for his somber canvases, often showing skeletal figures in dry, brown tones. Thenceforward, however, he took to using more varied and bright colors, such as those of a mural he painted on one of the walls of the Popular Fair, a location visited by thousands of Mozambican citizens on weekends. The mural shows people frolicking and engaging in Mozambican traditional dances — an entirely new theme in the painter's work.

Another mural in this new phase of Mozambican art was painted in the gardens of the presidential palace by a number of artists who, while preserving

long, 5-meter high wall.

When Eduardo Mondlane was killed, the Frelimo leaders pledged to transfer his body from Tanzania to Mozambique. After independence, steps were taken to build a monument in honor of Mozambican heroes who died for the cause of freedom. A simple tomb was designed, shaped like a five-pointed star in the middle of a large public square. As a visual and emotional counterpoint, a long, wavy wall was built where a mural was to be painted. The mural was to describe the odyssey of Mozambican people from the early days of colonial submission through slavery, forced labor, fascism, the emergence of armed struggle, the war of liberation, to triumph and the new society.

The mural was the result of collective effort on the part of such artists as José Freire, João Craveirinha, José Forjaz, Malangatana Nguenha, Eugénio Lemos and António Quadros. For all participants, the work was an unforgettable experience, a triumph in mutual interaction; the work produced has quality and scale that surpass anything else ever achieved in the country in artistic terms.

## Conservation

Mural art seems to have attained a privileged position in Mozambican plastic art. Plans are being made for painting a large collective mural at the Port of Maputo and for the construction of a public square whose surrounding walls will be decorated by some of the most outstanding national painters.

The problem is now preserving such works of art, some of which may be damaged by the weather. Mozambican authorities are aware of the problem, and support is being sought for conservation purposes. (Albie Sachs and Sol Carvalho)

their individual styles, achieved a wholesome assembly. It is a giant afresco showing a multitude of human figures; tortured faces are set side by side with smiling ones, as if conveying the wide emotional response of an entire people.

## Mondlane's tomb

The greatest achievement of the Mozambican revolution in the area of plastic arts is also the most important landmark in its "third movement" — typified by the fact that building walls were planned to receive murals. We refer to the mural in Praça dos Heróis, on a curving, 96-meter



### MOZAMBICAN PUBLICATIONS

Mozambique is one of the African countries where the output of children books is exceptionally high, says the local Books and Recordings Institute (INLD).

Approximately 56 different children book titles, with average printings of 20,000 copies and written by Mozambican authors, have been issued by the country's publishers since independence in 1975. This output, however, still fails to meet the local demand of a young population of several millions.

Elementary school books, including first readers, are also written by Mozambican authors. Last year, 83 primary school books were made available, with a total printing of 8 million copies.

Economic difficulties experienced by the Mozambican government have seriously affected the country's capacity to import books, and officials in the publishing sector have given priority to the production of textbooks and children books. In spite of these difficulties, however, efforts are also made to encourage Mozambican writers to publish works in other areas.

The INLD and other publishing companies — for instance, the Association of Mozambican Authors, the "cadernos" of *Tempo* magazine, and the daily *Notícias* — have produced new prose and verse collections, comics, and political essays.

INLD officials deny that Mozambican workers have no opportunity to have their works published. They explain that the works chosen are those with good literary quality, a requirement that is not met by 60 percent of the total originals submitted to the INLD.

According to INLD esti-

mates, some 400 works have come out of the country's presses in the past decade, including six stage plays, six comic books, and five poetry collections.

In colonial times, there was no publishing house in Mozambique. Any local author with an original he would like to see in print was forced to send it to Portugal, where his work would undergo screening by a fascist regime's censorship.



Yet, a strong literary tradition has always existed among Frelimo members. Several Frelimo leaders have recently published poetry collections, notably those of Marcelino dos Santos, a member of the political bureau, and Minister of Security Sergio Vieira. Outstanding Mozambican journalists also often indulge in literary endeavors. Poetry collections by Albino Magaia, Mia Couto, and Carlos Cardoso, directors of *Tempo*, *Notícias*, and the Mozambican Information

Agency respectively, have appeared in Maputo.

### THE UNRWA BUILDS SCHOOLS IN THE WEST BANK

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) is currently building three new schools for Palestinian children in the occupied West Bank with resources donated by the United Nations Development Program of the Persian Gulf. The new schools will replace older ones installed in rented buildings.

The UNRWA renders education, health, and welfare services to nearly two million Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank alone, the UNRWA has built 98 schools which now offer education to 40,000 children.

The UNDP for the Persian Gulf was created in 1981, and is funded by Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain.

### AGREEMENT

A major cultural agreement was recently signed between the third world publishers and the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation, of Recife, Brazil, as represented by its Director of Planning Josué Souto Maior Mussalém.

Under the agreement, data contained in the *Third World Guide* will now be recorded by the Foundation in magnetic media for consultation via computer terminals. Thus the whole of the Guide's valuable information can be made available to users of the file system maintained by that traditional cultural center of Northeast Brazil.



## Communications

*Sakina vs. Dallas*

# A new model of Muslim women

Arab youth reject new cultural patterns impinged on them by US TV serials



A new power in Arab politics: young demonstrators

As IMF and World Bank officials have discovered, an Arab Minister's signature on a letter of intent doesn't always mean its provisions will be enforced. On December 28, 1983, Tunisians heard that, following a World Bank decision, the price of bread would rise from F 0.80 to F 1.70. But eight days later, on January 6, President Bourguiba cancelled the price hike. What had happened in the meantime? A new power, hitherto unheard-of in Arab politics — youth — had suddenly

taken to the streets. Demonstrations took a toll of 80 dead, 500 wounded, and thousands of political arrests. A few months later, a similar chain of events took place in Morocco.

Young people between 15 and 24 years of age comprise one-fifth of the entire Arab population (19.3 percent of all Egyptians, 20.9 percent of all Tunisians, and 19.5 percent of all Moroccans, for example). Their extremist political stance is largely the result of their rebellion against consumerism.

Lacking democratic means of expression, the youth movement finds vent through nonconstitutional outlets: violence in the streets, underground organizations, and extremist opposition to the political apparatus in power. And since religion is the basis for legitimizing political power in theocratic Muslim states, it has provided the arena where the young challenge the ruling classes and voice their need for new values, a new outlook and a new way of life. Arab and Muslim cultural values appear vulnerable to the advance of imported consumerist concepts, and the youths respond by resorting to Muslim fundamentalism or ultra-leftist trends.

For young people, the contradiction between what Arab policymakers say and do is much too obvious. In their daily appearances on TV, government officials call themselves Muslim, nationalist, and pledge to defend Muslim values. When it comes to action, however, one of the things they do is authorize import of US movies and videotapes. To be sure, not those depicting the ideal struggle against consumerism, but the part of the political life (which also exists in the US), the more sophisticated products of the US cultural industry such as *Dallas* and *Dynasty*.

Not long ago, a high-school teacher distributed one-hundred questionnaires among his students in Rabat so as to hear their opinions on the *Dallas* series. His conclusion was that Arab young people are not in the least impressed with the TV soap opera. Asked "What do you like best about the lifestyle depicted in *Dallas*?" a 23-year-old replied, "I'd rather have people who lead clean lives, not people like J.R."



"What don't you like about *Dallas*? 'Too much money, too many cars', answered one student. 'Too much drinking. They seem to be forever in a bar', answered another. And to the question 'Why do you think *Dallas* commands such a large audience in Morocco?' most of the answers were of the type 'There is little else on TV', or 'What choice do we have?'"

It is not by mere accident or inadvertent mistake that *Dallas* is now so conspicuous on Arab TV. Neither is it the result of some casual choice made by TV station managers. Given the strict censorship exercised by governments over TV, no such accidents are really possible. TV programs reflect the deliberate choice of a number of technocrats whose function it is to promote on TV those values that are consistent with the cultural and philosophical preferences of the ruling group.

In most Arab countries, TV is State-controlled. In fact, there is no such thing as commercial TV.



Arab State-owned TV programming is dictated by technocrats who have opted for US cultural influence

Most Arab nations maintain that their religion is Islam, even though the openly capitalist countries call themselves anti-imperialistic and strongly nationalistic. No Arab country, not even those more involved with capitalist markets via arms purchases and oil sales, purports to be a defender of "Western" or US cultural values. No economic or financial arrangement forces them to import US movies.

Neither is there an economic

bonus to showing *Dallas* on Arab TV. In the US, if we are to believe *Time* magazine, CBS pays US\$ 650,000 to the producers of *Dallas* for broadcasting rights, and then sells advertising time at one-half million dollars a minute. CBS thus makes some US\$ 2.5 million each time *Dallas* goes on the air. Of course, CBS managers aim to make a profit, not to provide cultural entertainment to US audiences. If Arab TV stations were making

### FATIMA MERNISSI: AN ISLAMIC WOMAN

From Morocco to Indonesia, in the four corners of the Islamic world, young female university students who until recently came to classes in blue jeans and holding a *walkman* to their ears, now conceal their faces behind a veil, their bodies chastily wrapped in nun-like, wrist-to-ankle dresses.

Much like the Western hippies of the 1960s, Arab youth's dressing habits and behavior express their rejection of consumerist attitudes and their desire to return to what is believed to be Islam's fundamentalist values. Unfavorable criticisms of fundamentalism are branded as pro-Western, which many of them are.

In this article, extracted from a lecture delivered by the author at a seminar on "The Third World: development or crisis?" held recently by the Consumers' Association of Penang, Malaysia, Fatima Mernissi challenges both the consumerist frame of mind and their extremist repudiators as she proposes prophet Mohammed's great granddaughter Sakina as a model of Islamic femininity.

The author was born in Fez, Morocco, only a few yards from the Karawiyeen University, a centuries-old Islamic educational center which became a bulwark of nationalist resistance against French colonialism. Fatima Mernissi managed to avoid illiteracy when nationalists opened Moroccan schools to women, who had traditionally remained veiled and secluded. A graduate in Political Science and Sociology, she won international renown for her studies on the status of women in Islamic societies. (*Roberto Remo*)



such huge profits by showing *Dallas*, it would be easier to understand their choice. But that is not the case. They are not commercial enterprises. Arab TV technocrats, whose creativity is limited by an obtuse censorship and personal preferences, are paid by taxpayers. Why then is *Dallas* featured on Islam TV? If we have the answer to this question, we will understand why young people are resorting to fundamentalism in their strong rejection of consumerism.

### Consumerism and Arab ruling technocracy

US movies account for over one-third of imported TV features in Arab countries, and this share can be as high as 60 percent in oil-producing countries. Unesco estimates that nearly two-thirds of all motion pictures imported in socialist Libya come from the US, the same as in the capitalist United Arab Emirates. Thirty percent of all movie production brought in by such politically different countries as Algeria, Tunisia and Iraq also comes from the US.

Countries that haven't been able to agree on such vital issues as unemployment, the failure of agricultural policies, the Palestinian question or a common strategy for mastering foreign technology have surprisingly reached a consensus on the matter of importing US movies.

Why not Soviet or Chinese movies? Why not prefer movies produced in other Muslim countries? Why not invest part of the fabulous oil revenues to promote an Arab movie industry capable of counteracting Western influence? Why should Arab movie-makers be chronically unemployed, forced to borrow funds from abroad, or up to their ears in debt in order to produce motion pictures, when no protection exists for local production?

If Arab TV stations are such avid consumers of US movies it is because there is much in common between the materialistic, consumerist and fetishist viewpoints of Arab technocracies and US managers in the movie and advertising business. Both tend to turn everything into objects. For both a human being is an instinctive, brainless entity. Arab economic technocrats favor this model in their economic policy-making, as do US media by promoting their heroes and the values they cherish: submissiveness and self-esteem.

Arab technocrats know they cannot run a democracy in which fully competent citizens are allowed to criticize and change the course of governmental action. Censorship and the imprisonment of political foes are signs of this hidden fear nurtured by leaders who dictate how their citizens should live. If we look to the choices made by Arab technocrats, rather than to their speeches, for clues to their real cultural identity, we will conclude that they haven't the slightest regard for one of Islam's fundamental values: *az-zuhd*, at *tagashul*, i.e., frugality, austerity, moderation — in other words, non-ostentatious behavior, dignity and self-respect.

Islam has made a valuable spiritual contribution to the world in this age of "Dallasmania": sufism. Sufism is a painstaking, centuries-old attempt to overcome selfish and consumerist impulses, to rise above racial, religious and social differences and open new avenues of understanding in the world.

Al-Hallaj, a 9th century sufist, was sentenced to death at the stake in Bagdad for having maintained that the dignity of a Muslim citizen cannot be dissociated from the dignity of God. If Arab TV stations show no movies on the life of Al-Hallaj or other enemies of

consumerism it is because the men were also opposed to political oppression and advocated respect for human dignity, the is, condemnation of fanaticism and of the usurpation of the decision-making process by a minority.

Decision on such things as what cultural goods should be imported and exported can tell us much about our leaders' choices, trends and psychological fads. "Psychopolitics" shows that economics can also be a cultural discipline, for no economic decision is unrelated to cultural values. Even a trivial gesture such as that of a viewer who turns on his TV set somewhere in the Third World has to do with psychopolitical choices, for the simple fact that the TV medium is not controlled by him: it belongs to the State, often to a State with which he shares no viewpoints whatsoever. Though it purports to be a national institution, TV actually belongs to someone else.

Let us take an example. A simple psychopolitical exercise can demonstrate that the reader's idea of a beautiful woman is not a banal idiosyncratic choice, but a politically determined concept resulting from his being historically located on the periphery of an ubiquitous cultural influence.

### The psychopolitics of plutocracy: what is a beautiful woman?

Most Arab societies are currently run by plutocracies, i.e. by a minority of wealthy and powerful people who monopolize political power and place it at their own service. This plutocracy's ideal female model is a consumerist notion which reduces woman to her physical dimensions and denies her any



intelligence. Yet this is not the traditional model prevailing in past Arab culture.

In the culture now prevailing in Arab countries, the ideal beautiful woman is a silent person; no signs of much intelligence or strong character are required of her. If she happens to be intelligent and have a strong personality, she is better off hiding these attributes and pretending to be the woman powerful Muslim-Arab plutocrats of our times dream about.

What surprises the student of Arab and Muslim tradition is that this ideal of femininity is altogether alien to Islam culture. If we refer to the times of the victorious Islamic Empire (between the 7th and 10th centuries, since most historians identify the beginning of Islam decadence with the reconquest of Andalusia by Christians in the 8th century), we find that the ideal of female beauty combined both physical and intellectual attributes. No mighty Arab in triumphant Islam would ever have dreamed of wasting his love and affection on a stupid woman. Ingenuity, quick reasoning and firmness of opinion went hand in hand with aristocratic beauty and were regarded as qualities the ideal woman should have. A case at hand is that of Sakina Bint Al-Hussein, the granddaughter of Caliph Ali and prophet Mohammed's daughter Fatima.

#### **Sakina, a non-foreign beauty ideal**

Sakina was the daughter of Fatima's son Hussein. Born probably in 671, when Islam was less than one-half century old, she died in Medina in the 111th year of the Hegira (738 A.D. in the Christian nomenclature) at the age of 67. Great contemporary Arab historians

were fascinated by her, and describe her beauty, articulateness and humor, as well as her frequent challenge of such authorities as caliphs, judges and governors. The Arab language has preserved to this day some words associated with her name, such as *barza* and *nachiz*.

According to her biographers, Sakina was *barza*, i.e., she refused to wear a veil, an attitude which was not exceptional in Hedjaz

ful man in the Islamic Empire refused to question Sakina's right to rebel, even when she rebelled against that most legitimate of authorities — her husband.

Sakina attended meetings of the council of notables and welcomed poets to her house. She was extravagant and elegant. Her characteristic hairstyle was imitated not only by other women but also by men, lead-



In the early years of Islam culture, the ideal woman was both beautiful and intelligent

aristocratic circles. *Barza* was also Aicha Bing Talha, the granddaughter of Caliph Abu Bakr, who reasoned that "if God has given me beauty, why shouldn't people see it?"

*Nachiz* designated any woman who rebelled against her husband or Islamic marriage laws. Sakina *nachized* against her husband Abdalla Ibn Othman. Abdallah's mother, Ramla Bint Az-Subair, complained to Caliph Abd-al-Malik, the Emir-al-Muminin ("Price of the Faithful"), and begged him to help her troubled son recover his authority over his wife. "What can I do?" said the Caliph. "Don't you know Sakina?" Even the most power-

ing an outraged Caliph to order his "police" to shave the head of any man who did so.

Sakina's gifts as a poet and critic often led the intellectuals of the time to quote her ironical remarks and sharp evaluations. No "star" of the first decades of Islamic poetry was spared her scrutiny and quick detection of inconsistencies. Among them were Jarir, Al-Farazdag, Nusaib, Khatir, Oman Ibn Abi Rabia and others, with whom she met at Majalis (the equivalent of our modern literary "workshops").

She married four times, according to some historical records — five according to others — all of her husbands having the same





At the service of the ruling classes, the Imams deliver subjective lectures on Koran rules to a largely illiterate body of followers

aristocratic background as she. When one of her husbands died fighting Caliph Abd-al-Malik Ibn Marwan (the same man who had refused to condemn her disobedience), the victor asked her in marriage. "My husband's murderer will never have me", she answered, much to the prince's amazement.

Any man who married an Arab beauty during the early centuries of Islamic history was certain to marry a rebel. Therefore no one was surprised when Sakina rejected the polygamy and obedience clauses then prescribed by Imams in marriage contracts. In our days, Imams preach on holy law and tradition to the Muslim faithfuls, most of whom are illiterate. Sakina and other paragons of femininity, who evidently attempted to preserve their dignity, have been banished from Islamic memory by pragmatic Imams at the service of the ruling classes.

As a rebel wife, Sakina became famous for the conditions she imposed on her marriage contract with Zayd. Mohammed's great-granddaughter stipulated that her husband "shall have no right to another woman, shall not interfere with her own free will, shall not object to living close to her female friend Ummu

Manchuz, shall respect her wishes".

Once, against her will, Sakina's husband decided to spend a weekend with his concubines. Sakina took him to court in Medina and told him before the judge: "Take a good look at me, my friend, for you will never see me again."

Islam women's rights to challenge any article of matrimonial law they considered outrageous or degrading were exercised by our ancestors, but have been completely deleted from the memory of modern legislators and judges.

#### Sue Ellen of Dallas: a transnational beauty

"The Dallas women", says Gloria Emerson in *Vogue*, the modern woman's publication par excellence, "are seldom occupied during the day and always well dressed in the evening. Sue Ellen is J.R.'s favorite victim. She is forever being humiliated by her husband or trying to regain her control, instead of leaving him for keeps with her son. Thanks to her voluptuous and empty face, her apathetic posture, her futile attempts at insulting J.R., Sue Ellen has her own specific audience and retinue of followers."

But who needs an empty, idle, boring wife like Sue Ellen? According to CBS, she is a perfect match for an important and busy husband. Writing *The New York Times*, William K. Stevens says that her husband, J.R., known worldwide by his initials, is "the most obnoxious man on TV, a smiling snake, the grass, a man so low, so sort of so ignoble and so devilish as to fascinate 250 million female fans the world over. He is a phenomenon".

#### Technocratic values

But what has this criminal hero from Dallas, Texas, the last bulwark of individualism, free enterprise", to do with the technocrats as run Arab TV stations without any popular support and impinge their desires and aspirations on Arab viewers as if they were legitimate national choices? What has made Islam officials in our TV stations select the Dallas couple as commendable cultural products?

As we have seen, these men are not after a profit, since Arab TV is financed by the State. The only possible explanation is that these technocrats, as well as the power apparatus that backs them up and controls them, share the values and motivations which find an expression in *Dallas*.

In fact, the manipulative and corrupt Dallas hero has his counterparts in Arab power circles in general and in the technocracy in particular. As a result, the men and women whom the oil wealth has been promoting as models since the 1970s are not honest, hard working, educated individuals but servile, submissive, and materialistic to their bones.

Expansion of prostitution among women in Casablanca, Cairo or Tunis slums was one of the "cultural" consequences of the oil boom. A hypocritical



silence has helped to de-emphasize the phenomenon, yet it has its roots in the very essence of the plutocratic philosophy of present-day Arab societies: money is something desirable in itself, and consumerism is the system's code of behavior.

That a stupid woman should be considered beautiful tells us much about the man who courts her: he is a man who feels more comfortable with things than with ideas, a fetishist by psycho-analytical standards. To force a woman to behave as an idiot as a precondition for being considered attractive is to revile a human being to the status of an object. And the man who enjoys consuming this female beauty, entirely dissociated from intellectual functions, is certainly a consumerist.

The same plutocracy that accepts this female ideal curtails men's right to think, to express themselves and to move about freely. Violations of human rights are now so common in the Arab

world that a whole culture of protest and prison camps has emerged since the 1980s.

In the same countries where *Dallas* is impinged as a cultural paradigm on TV viewers, thousands of young people meet in Tunis, Beirut or Rabat to listen to their prophet-poet's verses about how alien they feel in their own land. When Mahmud Darwish, the ever-migrating Palestinian, tells of how he feels as an Arab in Arab land, thousands of Casablanca youths repeat his verses as if they were their own, even though their countries are not under foreign occupation:

O, my ceaseless suicide,  
Halt at the top of the dream  
and fight!  
This time is not mine,  
This country is not mine,  
This is not my body.

#### A double-edged sword

The current female beauty ideals are not innocent. They represent subliminal values and forces operating in the very core of the power elites — concepts that cannot be nakedly

exposed because they fully contradict the feelings of the people governed by such elites. To show *Dallas* on a State-owned TV station, Arab technocrats find it necessary to daily declare themselves utterly Islamic, in the hope that this will hide what their cultural options so clearly reveal.

But to proclaim oneself Islamic is a double-edged sword. Through mass education and the growing weight of youth, new citizens have continually replaced their illiterate parents in the social scene. Decodifying Islam becomes the prerogative of every Muslim man and woman; and even as oppression begins by monopolizing the interpretation of Islamic writings and tradition, it is quite possible that Sakina Al Hussein, now obliterated from our memory and replaced by the *Dallas* ladies, will eventually find her way back to light. She is very likely to become a female model in a democratic Arab nation where force is not mistaken for fetishistic possession nor dignity for ostentation. (Fatima Mernissi)

## Communications News

### ANGOLA AWARDED UNESCO PRIZE

Because of its experience with the broadcasting of radio programs associated with social and economic development, especially in rural areas, the People's Republic of Angola was recently awarded a prize by UNESCO. Angola had presented a study on the potential role of rural broadcasts in the social and economic development process of rural communities at a sub-regional seminar which sought to lend support to national development and population programs for Portuguese-speaking African countries. Held from November 12 to December 7, 1984, the seminar was sponsored



by UNESCO and the UNFPA, and had the participation of the Mozambican government.

### AGREEMENT BETWEEN ANGOLA AND GUINEA-BISSAU

The directors of news agencies in Angola and Guinea-Bissau signed an agreement last November in Luanda for technical

assistance, information exchange, and staff development.

ANG Director Francisco Barreto, who traveled to the Angola capital for the occasion, said his efforts had contributed to improved cooperation in the area of communications, since the first concrete steps had been taken on decisions made in Maputo by the Information Ministers of the "Five".

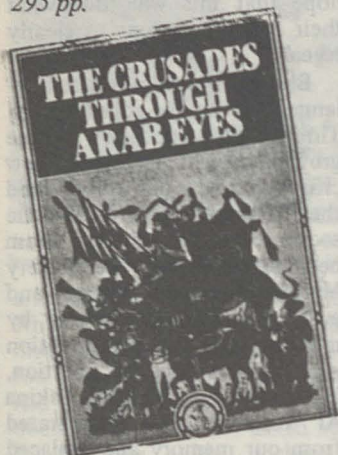
On his turn, ANGOP Director Raimundo Sotto-Mayor said the meeting had strengthened the existing solidarity between Angola and Guinea-Bissau by making it possible to assess the current capabilities of both countries in the area of communications.



## Third World Books

### THE CRUSADES THROUGH ARAB EYES

Amin Maalouf. Al Sagi Books, distr. Zed Books, London, 1984, 295 pp.



European and Arab versions of Crusade history have very little in common. For the Arabs, the 12th and 13th century did not represent the awakening from medieval slumber, but years of tough struggle to repel barbarian hordes whose brutal invasion threatened to destroy their land. When, on the inspiration of prophets and poets, Saladin headed a mighty Muslim army and defeated the most powerful Western kingdoms in a memorable campaign, he achieved the greatest and most enduring victory ever won by a non-European society against Europe. Millions of Arabs still remember that feat.

Amin Maalouf researched the testimonials of a number of Arab chroniclers, Crusade contemporaries, eye witnesses, and participants in the events. In this intriguing book, he retells the story in the lively style of the chroniclers themselves, painting a vivid picture of a society torn by a traumatic encounter with an alien culture. The result is a careful restoration of two

critical centuries of Middle Eastern history, with a fascinating approach to some of the forces which mold present-day Arab and Islam awareness.

Though the book is written from an Arab standpoint, Maalouf does not overlook the flaws which weakened Arab society nor its rulers' mistakes. A tantalizing question in the book's epilogue is: why, soon after their victory, did the Arabs sink into decline, while the center of world history was transferred to Western Europe? His answer suggests that relations between the Arab World and the West still bear the marks and hangovers of a titanic struggle which tore them apart seven centuries ago.

A Lebanese author and journalist, Amin Maalouf was the international editor for Beirut's influential *Al-Nahar* daily paper, and editor-in-chief of the weekly *Jeune Afrique* magazine.

### TIERRA, ALIMENTO Y POBLACION

UN Food and Agricultural Organization. Rome, 1984.

British economist P. Harrison coordinated the preparation of this volume on the basis of technical data supplied by FAO on the population-supporting capacity of a number of Third World countries. The book tries to arrive at an estimate of the maximum population sustainable by several areas of the underdeveloped world by the beginning of next century, given full utilization of agricultural areas. By providing statistics and projections, FAO intends to contribute to the wide debate now in course on what agricultural policy should be pursued in the world between now and the year 2000. The book's analysis is rather detailed, but the exces-

sive importance attributed statistics in the conclusions call for a word of caution. The reader should be reminded that political and social factors also have decisive weight in establishing future conditions in the Third World. However, the chapter analyzing the benefits to be reaped through land reform deserves special praise.

### CUBA: MUDANÇA ECONÔMICA E REFORMA EDUCACIONAL

Jorge Wertheim and Martin Carnoy. Editora Brasiliense, São Paulo, Brazil, 1984, 164 pp.



The revolutionary process begun in Cuba in 1959 has changed virtually all of the country's institutions. Until then, Cuban economy and society had been fully dominated by US influence, a relationship which was quickly severed by the revolution.

The major goal of the reforms undertaken in the area of education was to change Cuba into a well-qualified work force. Cuban schools have become centers where students learn to work collectively, and where children and adults alike become aware of their respective roles in the new Cuban society.



## Third World Publications

### REVISTA DO BRASIL — Nº 3

— Published by the Secretariat of Science and Culture of the State of Rio de Janeiro. In this issue are articles on the interplay between football and art, the status of blacks in Brazil, Carmen Miranda and Third World music.



REVISTA DO BRASIL, *Travessa Euricles de Matos 17, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil.*

### KO'EYU LATINOAMERICANO

— Nº 36 (May/June 1985) — A political and social studies magazine specialized in Latin American issues, the *Ko'eyu* includes in this issue an interview with Tupamaro leader Raúl Sendic; an analysis of the Nicaraguan literacy campaign; a study on the status of women in Paraguay; articles on the Latin American theater scene; and a document on the militarization of Guatemala. *KO'EYU LATINOAMERICANO*, *Apartado de Correos 18.164, Caracas 1012/A, Venezuela.*

1986 — January — nº 0

### CASA DE LAS AMÉRICAS —

Nº 147 — Published every two months by Casa de las Américas, in Cuba. This last 1984 issue carries articles on the Central American crisis, a critical contribution to the study of Cuban poetry, and literary works by various Latin American authors. An additional feature is a reproduction of chronicles and poems which won the 1984 Prize awarded by Casa de las Américas. *CASA DE LAS AMÉRICAS, 3ra. y G, El Vedado, La Habana, Cuba.*

**RIXAKA** — Nº 1/85 — Published by the Art and Culture Department of the African National Congress (ANC). The aim of this magazine, whose title means *nation* in the Shangalla language, is to promote the cultural debate and an exchange of artistic experiences between those who militate in the antiracial struggle in South Africa. A quarterly publication, this first issue includes an interview with ANC President Oliver Tambo; poems by South African intellectuals



and militants; a report on video documentaries covering racism in South Africa; and an article on the possibilities of concerted action of workers and artists, both in political strife and in leisure, and the self-financing of cultural activities. *RIXAKA*, Editorial Board, P.O.Box 31781, Lusaka, Zambia.

### ESTUDOS INTERNACIONAIS

— Nº 1 — The first regular publication to be issued quarterly by IURI (Instituto Unificado de Relações Internacionais). The inaugural issue includes articles on Brazilian-African political and economic relations, and on co-operation between Third World countries. *IURI, Rua Senador Dantas 75, salas 1901 e 1903, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil.*

### CIÊNCIA HOJE — Vol. 3, nº

18 (May/June 1985) — A monthly popular science magazine published by Sociedade Brasileira para o Progresso da Ciência (SBPC). The cover article in this issue is a survey of the socio-economic situation in the Brazilian Northeast, the poorest region in the entire Western Hemisphere. The survey includes articles by two eminent intellectuals with opposing political views: Economist Celso Furtado and Sociologist Gilberto Freyre.



Other specialists address social, economic and ecological problems in the area, with emphasis on the situation of the peasant populations and the scourge of droughts. *SBPC, Avenida Wenceslau Braz 71, fundos, casa 27, CEP 22290, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil.*

Third World — 75



# Famine Decade Food



*Secretary of State had failed: efforts to increase food production through the use of more advanced technologies had also gone awry. Kissinger's pompous optimism has now given way to the somber forecasts of institutions and policymakers throughout the world who propose slowing population growth as an instant solution for starvation.*

*Between the two extremes, however, an alternative course of action is taking shape, especially among nongovernmental organizations in the West, in favor of a complete overhaul of the agricultural system now prevailing in the capitalist world. Priority should be given to subsistence agriculture, not to export crops.*

*To the use of techniques attuned to each developing country's needs, not to accelerated mechanization. Full employment should come before automation. Human needs have preference over market prices. Relative self-reliance is better than absolute dependence.*

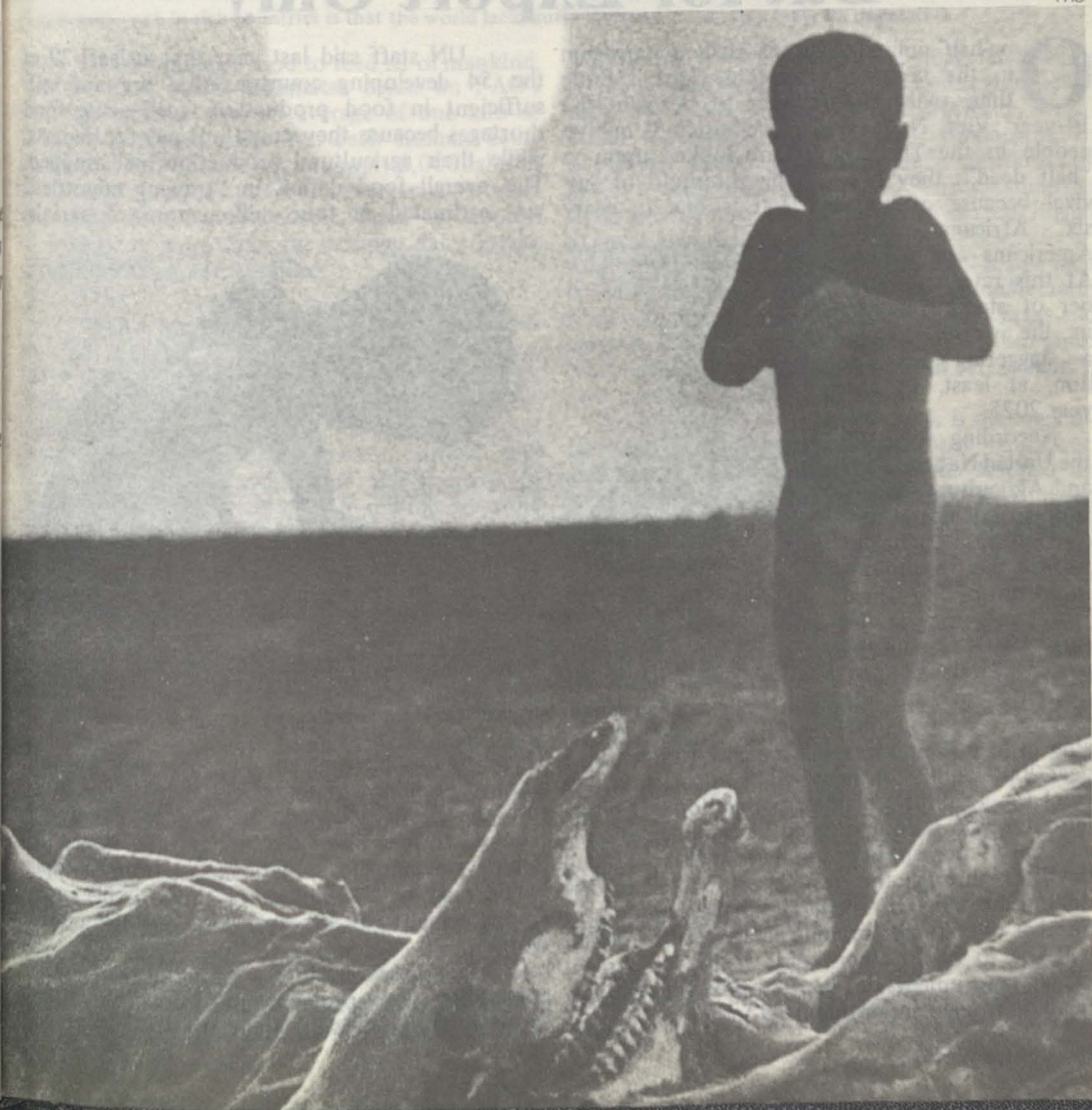
**I**n 1974 a straight-faced US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told his audience at the FAO Conference that launched the Food Decade: "Within ten years, starvation will disappear from the Earth". The tenth anniversary of Kissinger's utterance went unperceived last November as the world recoiled at new images of starving people in Ethiopia. Not only the prediction of the former US

Carlos Castaneda



# spite Abundance

FAO







*No longer an issue for international aid programs, the problem of mass starvation should be the starting point for restructuring the agricultural system inherited from a colonial past and perfected to suit the purposes of transnational corporations*

## Bumper Crops - But for Export Only

**O**ne-half million Africans died of starvation in the last twelve months. This is more than twice the number of dead in the 14-year Viet Nam War. Five-hundred million people in the Third World are looked upon as "half dead": they live on the threshold of survival because of hunger. That is one in every six Africans, Latin Americans and Asians. At this rate, the number of starving people in the world will be a staggering 1.3 billion, at least, by the year 2025.

According to FAO, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, agricultural production was insufficient to feed the populations in 54 out of 117 Third World countries in the early 1980s. Should the current levels of productivity persist, the number of nations unable to feed themselves will increase to 64 by the year 2000, and 38 of them will be unable to secure food for a full half of their populations. If population growth is compounded by land depletion — a loss of 19 percent in productive lands is predicted by FAO, through the near desertification of 544 million hectares of formerly fertile land — the number of countries running an agricultural deficit will rise to 99. In other words, nearly 84 percent of all governments in the Third World will depend on foreign aid or imported food.

UN staff said last year that at least 29 of the 54 developing countries that are not self-sufficient in food production faced acute food shortages because they could not pay for imports while their agricultural production had dropped. The overall food deficit in "starving countries" was estimated at four million tons of cereals.



Five hundred million human beings in the Third World barely manage to survive

These figures have given rise to a new wave of alarmist warnings to the effect that, in the short run, the Earth will lack the physical conditions required to feed all of the human race. Hence the famine shown in the dramatic images from Ethiopia would only be the prelude of an inevitable catastrophe which will affect at least one-half of the world.

Behind these warnings are a number of myths concerning the problem of starvation. Foremost among them is the argument that, right now





A common myth in rich countries is that the world lacks sufficient arable land to sustain its population

there just isn't enough food to feed all of mankind. Yet the food exists. Estimates based on FAO's statistics indicate that an average of one kilo of food is produced daily for each human being on Earth. One kilo of food can supply 3,000 calories and enough proteins to sustain every man, woman and child alive on the planet. Such an amount of calories is more than the average daily intake of well-fed European peoples.

While four million tons of food products were not available to feed starving people in Africa, US cereal stocks totaled 140 million tons in 1983, leading the White House to introduce a million-dollar program aimed at deterring agricultural production, safeguarding market prices and preserving the profitability of US farmers. In 1984 the UN estimated at 3.5 million tons the food aid required to forestall a catastrophic famine in Africa, but until now only 2.2 million tons have been secured.

A second myth, much in vogue in rich countries, is that there just isn't enough land available for agriculture. The truth is that, of the 1.5 billion hectares of arable land in the world (11 percent of the total land surface), less than one-half is actually used to produce food. In Africa and Latin America, only 20 percent of the fertile land available is cultivated — and statistics on agricultural areas in the Third World mask other grave distortions.

A recent World Bank study has shown that 3 percent of landowners control 79 percent of all existing agricultural units in 83 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. From the viewpoint of food production, this overwhelming presence of large landowners is a strong negative factor: the World Bank noted in a 1975 report entitled

*Assault on World Poverty* that small landowners are, in average, three to four times more productive than their larger counterparts in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Guatemala. In Thailand, small agricultural units produce 60 percent more rice than large farms, while in India productivity per hectare is 35 percent higher in small than in large plantations.

According to FAO, the world's total arable land could be increased from 1.5 to 3.0 billion hectares if an effort were made to drain swampy areas and irrigate semi-arid lands, especially in the Third World where only 36 percent of all fertile land is now used for food production.

Another much widespread myth is that agriculture can no longer absorb additional manpower, and hence industrialization must be stepped up if unemployment is to be curtailed. This notion has the support of policymakers in industrial countries, and has largely been responsible for the little attention food production has received since the 1950s.

The facts disprove such notion. While investments in industrial projects increased fifteen times in India and Brazil in 1950-70, the number of urban jobs only doubled, because most new manufacturing units adhered to modern, capital-intensive, not labor-intensive, technologies after the fashion of transnational companies. In other words, there was a huge mobilization of financial resources with very little impact on total employment.

### The democratic dispute

Last is the great myth of population pressure. Prospects are that the Third World will have a population of 5.1 billion by the year 2025. Africa,



for one, will have to put up with 1.1-1.5 billion people. For European experts this will mean an additional pressure on fragile economies, compelling them to create additional jobs in order to accomodate an unemployed and underemployed mass which already amounts to 20-30 percent of the current labor force. Population growth would thus lead to an inevitable increase in the numbers of starving and underemployed people in the periphery of large cities.



When shepherding was introduced in Europe, the agriculture changed radically and the result was overpopulation. The same situation occurred later in Africa

Accelerated population growth certainly affects the food balance in some areas, but an increase in the number of the underfed and underemployed is not a direct consequence of population growth. The problem of overpopulation first occurred in England in the 16th century, when farmers chose to raise sheep instead of food crops. Shepherding required much less manpower than agriculture, and the result was the emergence of "urban drifters", as they were called by the bourgeois chroniclers of the time. In the 16th century the entire population of England was less than that of an average city in modern Great Britain, and the way to solve the "urban drifters" problem was to send them to colonies in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Actually the problem was not that the population had grown above a desired or feasible rate, but that change was needed in the economic production structure.

A few centuries later, the same problem would also hit former European colonies the world over. By changing the agricultural system of Third World countries (see next article) with the introduction of a limited number of export crops,

foreign interests contributed to the unemployment of massive numbers of workers who traditionally found permanent work in a diversified agriculture for subsistence purposes.

Crop specialization restricted the need for large labor groups in the fields to one or two short periods each year. In Cuba for instance, more than one million workers could find a job only once a year in 1950, at the time of the sugarcane harvest. In Brazil the same phenomenon has led to the emergence of "bóias frias" (roughly "cold chasers") — seasonal workers who migrate from one crop area to another in search of employment.

Agricultural mechanization has also brought unemployment to a huge number of rural workers. A 1975 Pakistan government survey indicated that the use of tractors in medium and large farms would mean unemployment for 600 to 700 thousand rural workers in the next fifteen years. In Latin America, each tractor replaces three or four rural wage-earners; and the number of unemployed has already risen to one-half million in the entire continent as a result of agricultural mechanization alone. In India, modern seeding and harvesting machines caused the demand for seasonal laborers to dwindle to zero in 1980.

"Population bomb" is a controversial expression coined by rich nations whose real meaning took on an apocalyptic hue in a speech delivered by US President Lyndon Johnson in 1966: "The total world population is (now) 3 billion human beings, while (US citizens) number only 200 million. This is a one-to-fifteen odd. If force comes to prevail against right, the US can be taken over and all that we have will be snatched away by the hungry masses of the world." In the name of an alleged "right to be rich", Johnson conjured the ghost of a universal rebellion of the poor to justify a worldwide campaign to reduce birth rates in the Third World. In a more sophisticated tone, the World Bank has adopted a similar strategy and advocates birth control in all poor countries that knock on its doors for a little aid.

In a book entitled *Food First*, authors Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins have gathered evidence that none of the forceful campaigns to reduce population growth has worked. They show that the only countries in the world where population growth has declined are those where the purchasing power of the poorer classes has improved. Population control has come about almost spontaneously in such countries, without any traumatic effects or impositions.



In contrast to the much ballyhooed scenario put forward by pessimistic European observers in the 1970s, the per capita increase of world agricultural production was just above the rate of population growth until 1982. According to FAO's *World Food Report 1984*, per capita food production has remained three percentage points above the population growth rate since 1974, dispelling catastrophic predictions of a widespread food shortage.

### The cold facts

If there is enough food in the world to feed the existing population, and if at least in theory there is sufficient land to ensure food for all mankind, then the reasons for endemic famine must be sought elsewhere — especially in land distribution. The myths spread by rich societies omit the fact that both food and land are unevenly distributed in the world, an inequality resulting above all from political factors. The entire agricultural structure now existing in most Third World countries was shaped in colonial times and later refined to meet the needs of consuming centers in rich Western countries for a constant supply of inexpensive raw materials. Strictly speaking, the entire food production structure in the capitalist system is organized in this manner; not even Third World socialist countries have managed to free themselves from such structure, though many have attempted to do so.

Until recently, the predatory exploitation of natural and human resources went unpunished in Africa, Asia and Latin America. However, the swift multiplication of starving hordes and of the number of deaths attributable to malnutrition eventually began to frighten even the best-fed Europeans and US citizens. In the heat of the Viet Nam War in 1966, then US Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara said in a speech in Montreal, Canada: "The gap between rich and poor countries is continually widening. As of the 1970s, more than one-half of the world population will be living in independent countries in the Southern hemisphere. These peoples will be hungry and will have access to less than one-tenth of the stock of goods and services produced by mankind... Our (the rich peoples') security will be directly related to that of the underdeveloped world. Security means development, for without development there will be no security."

### A false start: the "green revolution"

Yet, instead of addressing the difficult political problem of inequality, the rich nations found it more expedient to resort to technological remedies.



The "green revolution" was once advertised as a miracle solution for the Third World

Among these, the most publicized was the so-called "green revolution", which was heralded as a miraculous solution for Third World famine and which earned US geneticist Norman Borlaug the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize. Fifteen years later, the grandiose promises of putting an end to starvation through intensive, modern cultivation of high-yield hybrid cereal varieties are now all but forgotten.

In essence the "green revolution" was an attempt on the part of transnational corporations in the food business to increase the productive capacity of those who already enjoyed a favorable status in agriculture. The "revolution" did not attempt to create plant varieties more adequate to the needs of poorer regions; it did not bother with the development of labor-intensive technologies; it did not provide for the improvement of traditional crops; it did not advocate the diversification of crops so as to compensate for adverse climatic conditions; and it certainly had no intention of balancing the food diet of people living in less productive areas. What the "green revolution" was after were record-type harvests in the shortest possible time, using as few plant varieties as possible, by resorting to a few genetic tricks, mechanization and artificial fertilizers.



Predictably, the "green revolution" favored only the most advanced farmers. It exacerbated crop specialization; worse still, it made Third World farmers dramatically dependent on imported seeds, machinery and fertilizers. In the end, the much publicized revolution proposed by Borlaug failed to reduce world famine, but it did considerably increase profits for the large corporations that dominate world agriculture. An increased production of certain cereals such as corn, soybeans, wheat and sorghum provided copious surpluses to rich countries for use as cattle feed — in a vast waste of protein energy, since beef is much poorer than vegetable food in nutrient content.

In 1974 FAO decided to promote a world discussion of the starvation problem at a conference to be held in Rome in November. The purpose of the meeting was to find universal solutions for the chronic and growing scarcity of food on the planet. But the makeup of the delegations, consisting largely of members of the so-called agribusiness, ultimately turned the meeting into a succession of lofty, empty statements such as that of Henry Kissinger's, who bombastically announced that "in ten years, no child will have to go to bed hungry and no family in the world will have to worry about its daily bread." Nevertheless, the meeting served its warning, and launched a "Food Decade" during which efforts were to be made to eradicate hunger from the Earth.

Ten years later, in November 1984, the decade was over and its balance was a tragic one. Kissinger's prediction was ridiculed by poignant images of starving children in Ethiopia in the world's mass

media. The participants of the 1974 conference declined to comment on the failure of the promises, and the event's tenth anniversary would go unperceived if a group of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) had not taken the initiative to hold a World Meeting on Food, in Rome, in November of last year. With FAO's support, but without any direct link with governmental policies, the Meeting was a turning point in the discussion of the world food problem, thanks to the decisive participation of the NGOs.

### The NGO efforts

The NGOs came to the fore in the mid-1970s when US and European religious groups began to show a sharper awareness of misery in the Third World. Initially intended as aid organizations, the NGOs became more deeply involved as a result of their direct contact with the stark realities of famine and poverty, and their perception that many governments were more concerned with personal susceptibilities than with a real effort to distribute food.

Approximately 120 delegates participated in Rome's World Food Meeting, and for the first time the number of representatives from the Third World was equal to that of Europe and the US. In addition to denouncing inequality, the meeting analyzed the world agricultural structure in the resolutions. The meeting's final declaration was especially harsh with respect to IMF-imposed policies in Asia, Latin America and Africa, and it criticized international development agencies for

Ten years ago Henry Kissinger announced no child in the world would have to go to bed hungry





giving preference to great projects in detriment to basic efforts to put an end to hunger. It urged development country governments to reduce their incentives to export crops in favor of subsistence crops. It called for greater participation of popular organizations, especially of women groups, in the formulation of national agricultural policies.

The NGOs are the great new phenomenon in the worldwide struggle against famine. They have popped up everywhere, especially in Latin America and Africa. Some 300 groups exist in Peru alone, while more than 200 are very active in Brazil. Because they are not organized into rigid structures, it is impossible to say how many NGOs exist at present in the world. British newsman Robin Sharp, one of the proponents of Rome's Food Meeting, believes that, by the end of the decade, they will be a major instrument of pressure on the problem of famine and food on a global level — a problem which has much less to do today with the provision of aid than with down-to-earth agricultural issues.

According to Susan George, author of several books on the world food problem, the theme of food production will mobilize the opinion of the entire population in the poorest countries by the year 2000, and will increasingly bring forth an uncomfortable *mea culpa* on the part of industrial nations. The facts and truths that until now had been purposefully hidden by large transnational corporations are beginning to come forth to the public, thanks to the denunciations and investigations of an increasing number of nongovernmental groups. The problem is no longer a matter of managing supplies in order to meet emergency situations. Food redistribution is no longer a matter of simply displacing stocks. What is at stake is the food production structure on a worldwide basis — and especially the manner in which the available land is used.

A "race against time" is how specialists increasingly call the attempts to prevent an irreversible situation between now and the end of this century. In a report entitled *Agriculture — Horizon 2000*, FAO does not leave much scope for optimism and ease of mind as to the problem of the future productivity of available land. No less than 544 million hectares of fertile soil will become unproductive by the end of this century unless something is done to stop erosion and the depletion of nutrients. Otherwise, the area available for cultivation by Third World peoples will shrink from 0.37 to 0.25 hectares per person.

According to FAO, the population in developing countries will grow by 50 percent between now and the year 2000, while the arable land available



What is at stake today is the structure of food production on a world level

in the 117 countries in the Third World, minus the portion used for non-food purposes, can support a population only 7 percent larger than that projected for the end of the century. FAO goes on to say that, from then on, prospects are even worse: a further 43 percent growth is projected for the developing world's population by the year 2025. According to experts, mankind will be on the verge of a food catastrophe on a worldwide scale if nothing is done until that fatal year.

Of the 64 countries that will face a critical food situation by the year 2000 if nothing changes until then, 28 may reverse their predicament if they manage to increase their use of agricultural inputs (fertilizers, erosion protection techniques, technology) to an average level by then (they are: Bhutan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, the Bahamas, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, the Windward Islands, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Burkina Fasso, Benin, Botswana, Comores, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe). Another 17 may leave the list if they use a high level of inputs, as is the case of Bangladesh, Antigua, El Salvador, Haiti, Martinique, Puerto Rico, the Reunion Islands, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, Burundi, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Niger, and Somalia. But the remaining 19 will still be in a critical situation even with a high level of modern inputs; for these, in FAO's opinion, the only way to achieve food balance is to reduce their rates of population growth.





*European and US interests have radically changed food production and consumption patterns throughout the Third World, leading to food scarcity, undernourishment, famine and high profits for the foreign monopolies*

## Transnationals: Turning a Profit through Hunger

**A**round 1850, the Governor of then British Guiana, together with British Secretary for the Colonies Earl Grey, decided the possession should dedicate itself to the large-scale production of sugar. Accordingly, all "unusable" land went under the direct control of the British Empire, which was soon to face the problem of a local labor shortage. The "solution" came in a roundabout manner. The British reduced the prices of imported food to a point where it was cheaper than locally produced food. Small peasants who traditionally produced food for their own consumption and for the village markets found themselves in a difficult situation. They lost buyers to the unfair competition of imported goods, and were unable to pay for their taxes. Eventually, most of them left their plots of land and applied for jobs in the large sugarcane farms administered by the British. On their turn, the lands they had abandoned were eventually absorbed by the large colonial plantations.

A similar phenomenon happened in Jamaica,

with the country becoming totally dependent on imported food following the destruction of local crops. In the 18th century, when the thirteen North American colonies which would later form the United States fought for their independence, the Jamaican food supply was suddenly interrupted. Unable to resume their subsistence agriculture



British Secretary for the Colonies Earl Grey and the Governor of the then British Guiana decided for large-scale production of sugar

some 15,000 peasants starved to death between 1780 and 1787 in Jamaica alone.

In the former Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso, colonial administrators raised their taxes on cattle and land used for subsistence crops fivefold as a means of forcing peasants to work



large, export-oriented cotton plantations. In 1929, following the collapse of the commodities market brought about by the Great Depression, dozens of cotton plantations were deactivated throughout the country. Over 80,000 peasants found themselves unable to pay taxes. Lacking land to cultivate, they eventually migrated to the then Gold Coast (now Ghana), where they went into a real war with the local people for jobs in cocoa plantations.

The story of the systematic destruction of the Third World's agricultural structure in colonial times is told in hundreds of examples by such authors as Walter Rodney and Alan Adamson. Short of outright destruction, disruption came via trade. India, for example, had traditionally been an exporter of grains until the 1940s. In 1943 the British determined that India's wheat production should be destined, above all, to the United Kingdom so as to offset British losses in rice imports from Burma, then occupied by the Japanese. All of Indian wheat stocks were to be marketed, including the country's reserves. As a result, 1.5 million Indians died of starvation when the droughts came the following year. Yet India had never experienced food shortages in its entire colonial history, even in prolonged dry periods; during the long 1876-77 drought, India had actually exported record amounts of wheat to England.

#### The false "vicissitudes"

At the time, the British let it be known that the high mortality rate had been caused by "climatic vicissitudes". They said nothing about the fact that the grain reserves kept annually in India throughout the centuries had been the main reason for the absence of mass famine in the country.

In neighboring China, "vicissitudes" had been even worse, yet historical records point to no massive mortality among the Chinese as a result of hunger. Chinese reports going back almost two thousand years reveal that the country experienced 1,621 floods and 1,392 droughts in the period, confirming statistics prepared in 1928 by British author Walter Mallory showing that the Chinese had faced more than one climatic catastrophe per year since the beginning of the Christian era. More recently, in 1972-73, when 18 nations with one-third of the world population faced one of the worst droughts in the century, China was going through its third consecutive dry year without having to resort to a single ton of external aid to feed its population of nearly 1 billion people. The difference was that, among the Chinese, food had always come first, even in colonial times.

The most outrageous case of agricultural disruption via foreign interference occurred in the Sahel desert zone in Africa. During the past

century, the region was severely depopulated by the slave traffic undertaken by Europeans. It is estimated that, in the Sahel alone, more than 15 million negroes were forcibly displaced by three centuries of slave traffic, when European powers used African slaves to implement their economic system in America. Later, when French colonists arrived at the desert's edge, they immediately introduced a regime of forced labor in large cotton and peanut plantations. Cotton fibers fed the French textile industry, while peanuts provided the vegetable oil most widely used in European kitchens.



Natural "vicissitudes" have been more serious in China, where mass starvation has never been a problem

Until then, the local agriculture had been able to prevent mass starvation. Sahel peasants planted several sorghum varieties simultaneously. Usually one variety survived until the rains came. After a good harvest, the local people could store food for at least two years. When the French decided to expand cultivation of export crops, however, virtually all subsistence agriculture was eliminated. Eventually the French reduced to only one the number of sorghum varieties to be cultivated for food purposes. The decision proved disastrous: the variety chosen had the yield required by commercial interests, but it lacked the resistance to withstand the harsh Sahel climate.

#### Desertification

Intensive cultivation in low-fertility areas eventually destroyed the topsoil. Large regions became sterile not so much because of lack of rainfall, which had always been scarce and erratic, but because of the predatory manner in which the soil was handled. Upcountry in the Republic





Accelerated growth of export crops in Niger was attained at the expense of subsistence agriculture

of Mali, formerly regarded as one of Africa's largest granaries, the sight is now desolating (see next article).

In pre-colonial times, Mali agriculture had consisted basically of small, rural household plantations and small cattle growers. There was a measure of harmony between the two, since products were exchanged and a food balance was achieved. The introduction of large colonial plantations drastically reduced the number of small properties and the area available for pasture in dry periods. Trade between farmers and cattle growers ceased, and malnutrition emerged as farmers fed on a diet made up almost exclusively of vegetable proteins, while only animal proteins were available to cattle growers.

Soon after World War II, when cotton and peanut prices dropped in the world market, the French decided to go all the way into the cattle business. The small Mali herds quickly increased many times. After four or five years of good results, however, a severe drought came. The cattle concentrated in fewer and fewer oases where water and pasture could be found; inevitably, thousands of head of cattle gathered around only

half-a-dozen water wells, destroying and uprooting all vegetation.

As the rains came, the soil was reduced to sand, the herds were one-sixth of what they had been, and the pastures never recovered. At present Mali has less cattle than it had 50 years ago, while its population is ten times larger and, of course, undernourished. The French left, having given cattle-raising for another activity; the population remained in a land which could no longer produce enough food for their livelihood.

In Niger, also in the Sahel zone, there were thousands of hectares of peanut-planted land in 1949. Twenty years later the area had doubled, and was five times larger in 1961. During the great 1960 drought, peanut plantations absorbed some 432,000 hectares, while some 30,000 hectares were being used by cotton growers. All this accelerated growth of export crops had been achieved at the expense of subsistence agriculture. Revenue from cotton and peanut exports reached US\$ 18 million in 1971, but the Nigerian government had to spend US\$ 20 million in food and clothing imports. In Senegal, one-half of the foreign exchange earned in 1974 with peanut exports was spent on US wheat to keep French mills going in Dakar.

### The "global farm"

In the 1950s the disruption of the agricultural structure in Third World countries took on a new dimension with the arrival of transnational food companies. The great aim of these huge enterprises — and no less than ten of them are operating in the Third World — is to create a "global farm" capable of supplying a "global supermarket". Translation: to tap to the utmost the agricultural potential of developing countries, where land and manpower are cheap, so as to produce food which will later be sold in US and European consumer markets.

Mexico was one of the first Latin American countries to be incorporated into this complex and sophisticated transnational network. Traditionally, vegetable products sold in New York during the winter had been cultivated in the hot Californian climate. Now the supply of vegetables and fruits in major US consumer centers comes largely from Mexico. Until recently, asparagus consumed in Manhattan came from Central California. Now they come from a small Mexican village named Irapuato, 150 km north of Mexico City. Two US enterprises, *Del Monte* and *General Foods*, control 90 percent of the Mexican asparagus production. In addition, *Campbell* and the *Safeway* and *Grand Union* supermarket chains are also established in Mexico.





B. Basso



The transnationals' exports to affluent markets have led to an enormous transfer of food items that could have been consumed by Mexicans

Transnationals' exports to affluent markets represent an enormous evasion of Mexican-produced food. Mexican onion sales abroad have grown five times, reaching 47,000 tons in 1974. During the 1970s, Mexican cucumber exports grew from 4,000 to 66,000 tons in only six years. One-half of all tomatoes consumed in the US come from Mexico. The same can be said of strawberries and eggplants. After only fifteen years, Mexican strawberry exports to the US now amount to nearly 75,000 tons. Seven US companies control the entire Mexican strawberry production, using varieties unsuited for local consumption but which are palatable to US East Coast consumers.

The export-oriented specialization of Mexican crops was made possible by reducing to one-third the area used for raising beans and corn — two traditional staple items in the Mexican food diet —, a move which led to higher prices for locally consumed food and lower nutritional standards. Mexican rural workers are now paid one-seventh of the wages earned by their counterparts in California, and feed on ten times less calories per day, while companies such as *Pet Milk*, *Ocean Garden*, *Imperial Frozen Foods*, *Griffind & Brand*, and *Better Foods* have seen their profits rise some 250 percent in the past six years.

### The "global herd"

The same process which disrupted the agricultural production patterns of Third World countries has also affected the beef market. Between one-third and one-half of all beef produced in Central America is now exported. In 1975 Costa Rica, with a population of some three million people, exported 30,000 tons of beef to the US. Beef consumption per capita in the country has dropped from 25 kilos to less than 17 kilos per year. According to the US Brookings Institute, had Costa Rica consumed all its beef locally, consumption per capita would have risen to 50 kilos per year, one of the world's highest. The

large profits earned in the export business led Central American farmers to all but abandon milk production; this in turn led to increased milk prices and a widespread shortage of the product.

Increased cattle slaughter for export has also stepped up activities of transnationals in the animal ration business. Thus Brazilian soybeans are processed by the US *Cargill* company, which manufactures cattle rations for Costa Rica; on its turn, Costa Rican beef is processed in Philadelphia and later consumed in Europe and Japan. No less than a global farm producing for a global super-market.





Through heavy advertising, transnational companies have altered food habits in the Third World. Above, a Peruvian Indian girl from food-deficient Huancayo enjoys a popsicle

*Ralston Purina*, a maker of poultry rations, decided to begin a "chicken producing industry" from scratch in Colombia, moved largely by generous fiscal incentives and very cheap labor. *Purina* first provided growers with the credits needed to import young chickens. Soon the chicken population had grown so much that *Purina* extended credits for sorghum production (used in the rations), and sorghum plantations replaced vast areas where corn had traditionally been planted. In the 1960s, the area used for food crops for local consumption had decreased, while the area assigned to soybeans and sorghum had increased six times. Chicken production for slaughter and export grew from 11 million to 25 million head in less than six years. For small Colombian peasants, the changes introduced by *Purina* meant a two-thirds reduction in their diets' protein content, since each hectare of land used for bean or corn production for local consumption supplied 16 times more protein than the meat of chickens fed with these products.

88 — Third World

In Pakistan, corn had always been a staple food among the poorest classes. Corn prices were low and the commodity could be exchanged for other products, both food items and work tools. But in the 1960s *CPC International* bought control of Pakistan's largest cereal producer, the *Rafha Maize Products*, and proceeded to industrialize corn production. Corn prices increased five times and the product became inaccessible to the poorest consumers. As a result, their food diet deteriorated, and the country now ranks among the most underfed in Asia, though less than 30 years ago it was self-sufficient in food and its population was well fed.

### Ice cream for the hungry

Besides radically changing national production systems, the transnational enterprises have also altered the food habits of millions of people in the Third World with the creation of its "global supermarket". Instrumental in this respect was advertising, which mobilized billions of dollars to present the new industrial products as superior to traditional, natural ones.

Statistics quoted in *Food First* suggest that only one-tenth of the price of industrial food products now sold in low-income countries correspond to raw material costs. The balance goes for advertising (roughly 20 percent), marketing, transportation, and administration. In addition, the average nutritional value of food processed by transnational companies is 40 percent lower than that of the same food product consumed *in natura*.

As an example of how food transnationals operate, *Food First* reproduces a news item which appeared in the March 1973 issue of *The Financial Times*: "New markets for ice cream, sausage and frozen foods manufactured in England are currently being opened by *Unilever* in Liberia and Sierra Leone. At present the company has installed freezers in small upcountry villages where electricity is available for storage of frozen products imported directly from Liverpool and London. In Zaire, these products are unloaded at the Port of Matadi and transported in cooled wagons upcountry, or flown in refrigerated containers".

Incidentally, *Unilever* controls 80 percent of all palm tree plantations in Zaire, and has invested heavily in Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon and Congo. It is also the largest food processor in the world.





*Africa is having to pay the heaviest price for its colonial legacy and the disruption of its agricultural production brought about by Western agrobusiness complexes*

## Bearing the Brunt of the Crisis

For the World Health Organization, the survival of some 160 million of a total African population of 550 million is currently threatened by starvation and undernourishment. Disturbing statistics prepared by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in 1984 and recently published in Rome indicate that twelve countries on the African continent are on the threshold of a food catastrophe the like of which is unheard-of in all African history.

Six West African nations have been worst hit by drought and by the relentless advance of the Sahel desert. Mali has suffered the most: after ten consecutive years of scarce rainfall, the land available for agriculture and cattle growing has continually receded. FAO officials estimate that the average Mali population gets less than 75 percent of the minimum calorie intake necessary to keep a human being alive in the long run. The 1984 harvests were 30 percent below the average in the past four years, requiring the import of some 410 thousand tons of cereals to prevent mass starvation.

Two of Mali's neighbors, Mauritania and Niger, are also in a dramatic situation due to food short-

ages. In 1979-83, harvests fell 50 percent below the previous years' levels. The food deficit amounts to 465 thousand tons in Niger and 155 thousand tons in Mauritania. In Burkina Fasso, former Upper Volta, prospects are for a third consecutive year of poor harvests. The food shortage was made more critical with the arrival of some 100 thousand

Peter Magubane



160 million people in Africa may die of hunger or undernourishment

refugees from neighbor countries, increasing Burkina Fasso's food deficit to 185 thousand tons.

In Mali, Mauritania and Niger, government officials are finding it hard to increase food production by reducing export crops, a project which has been relatively more successful in former Upper Volta. Here, several cotton plantations have been deactivated and the land is now being used for subsistence crops, though results



are still insufficient to cover the large food deficits.

In Senegal, the local agriculture is largely dominated by major peanut exporters. IMF "conditionalities" have prevented Senegal from changing its agricultural structure. In the eyes of the Fund, the country must continue to export huge amounts of peanuts in order to adjust its balance of payments position, which has been adversely affected by rice imports. The Dakar population alone (1 million people) consume more rice than the country's plantations can produce. Two years of scarce rainfall in Senegal have created a cereals deficit estimated at 540 thousand tons, though crop yields were up 35 percent in 1983-84. The average calorie intake of the Senegalese population is below the minimum prescribed by FAO.



In Burkina Faso (former Upper Volta), food scarcity has been aggravated by the arrival of nearly 100 thousand refugees from neighboring countries

In Cape Verde, rainfall has been practically nil in the past fifteen years. The situation improved somewhat in late 1984, but harvests have not fully recovered and should reach at best 3 thousand tons, down 25 percent in comparison with the previous five years. FAO experts predict that the former Portuguese colony — a cluster of islands in the Atlantic Ocean — will have to import some 65 thousand tons of cereals in 1985.

The situation in the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo and Benin is less critical than in other West African countries. The four had a reasonable amount of rainfall in the latter half of last year, after a severe drought in 1982-83. The Ivory Coast's agricultural activities are dominated by export products (coffee, cocoa and unprocessed wood). Food production increased 7 percent in the past few months, but the country remains dependent on rice imports. The acreage assigned

to subsistence crops has increased in spite of drought, but President Jerry Rawlings' effort to reduce food shortages were frustrated when million Ghanians living in Nigeria were expelled and sent back home, in 1983 and 1985.

A similar plight has affected food stocks in Togo and Benin, where reserves are insufficient to cope with migrants expelled from Nigeria. In Ghana, Togo and Benin, agricultural prospects for 1985 are optimistic, meaning that the situation is not expected to deteriorate, though all three will have to import cassava and sorghum.

In Guinea, favorable climatic conditions were offset by crop failures in the North. As a result, the country will face its sixth consecutive year of declining food production per capita. Production has declined by almost 15 percent since 1980, making it necessary for Guinea to import 65,000 tons of cereals. The country's food needs were increased with the return of some 150,000 exiles who began to move in since the April 1984 coup. By contrast, agricultural production has returned to normal levels in neighboring Guinea-Bissau, thanks to the increased assignment of land for subsistence crops, but the export sector remains in crisis.

Though Sierra Leone and Liberia experience no droughts in the past two years, both countries are now facing food shortages. The reason is the change in local food habits introduced by massive imports of rice since the 1960s. Both countries import an average of 100 thousand tons of rice each year to meet a consumption encouraged from abroad, as a result of incentives extended in the past to Asian exporters and US transnational companies. Attempts have been made both in Sierra Leone and Liberia to develop rice production for local consumption, yet poor soil conditions, poor irrigation and an unfavorable climate have kept yields at less than seven tons per hectare, or only one-fourth of Asian standards.

Though Nigeria is the richest country in West Africa thanks to oil exports, it is nevertheless facing food shortages. Local food production per capital has declined by 8 percent since 1981, according to FAO. The drought in the North has contributed to the unbalance, forcing Nigeria to reduce its exports of cereals and other food items to neighbor countries, while a continued migration from rural to urban zones has reduced productivity in the more fertile areas. The ready availability of foreign credits with European and US banks in the 1970s helped to foster export-oriented farming and largely discouraged subsistence agriculture.





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After many years of drought, the rains returned in late 1984, bringing some respite to countries in Southern Africa

## Southern Africa

After nearly three years of relentless drought, nations in Southern Africa experienced some relief in the beginning of last year, thanks to a rainy period which extended into January and February. The relief, however, was short-lived. In Mozambique, for instance, the drought was soon replaced by floods. Six Southern African nations were in last year's FAO list of countries facing food shortages. In spite of the rains, they will still have to import 2 million tons of food to counteract the effects of the long drought.

Mozambique has suffered most. Around 2.5 million Mozambicans are undernourished, and 100 thousand died of starvation and diseases last year. The long drought, coupled with the sabotage work of South African-supported terrorists, has made self-supply increasingly difficult and rendered the country dependent on foreign aid to feed most of its population. Food aid received last year from abroad met only 58 percent of local needs, but spared the country the tragic consequences of a food disaster.

Zambia was the second worst victim of the drought in Southern Africa. Cereal production has dropped to 60 thousand tons; it may be necessary to import 200 thousand tons for consumption this year, 160 thousand tons of which have already been secured. In 1984 agricultural production per capita dropped by 6 percent for the fourth year in a row, exacerbating the country's economic difficulties. Zambia is currently negotiating its outstanding debt with the IMF, and is having difficulty allocating resources to subsistence agriculture. The Fund is willing to reschedule the Zambian debt if the Lusaka govern-

ment concentrates its efforts on reorganizing copper production; for the IMF, the difficult agricultural situation is only secondary.

Botswana, a major beef supplier in Southern Africa, has also experienced a sharp drop in agricultural production. Harvests were 30 percent lower in 1984 than in previous years, forcing the government to import 150 thousand tons of food. According to the UN, 31 percent of all children under five years of age are undernourished in Botswana, up 25 percent from the totals recorded in the country by the World Health Organization since the early 1980s.

Droughts have also hit Angola, where agricultural production dropped by 7 percent last year. In the most affected areas, cassava, rice and corn harvests decreased by as much as 50 percent. The problems brought about by climatic conditions were compounded by the activities of South African-supported guerrillas who have systematically undermined the Luanda government's efforts to feed the populations most affected by rain shortages. Being an oil producer, Angola will be able to finance as much as two-thirds of the imports envisaged for 1985, but will still need 83 thousand tons in food aid, of which 71 thousand have already been secured.

The small South African enclave kingdom of Lesotho experienced an 8 percent drop in agricultural production in 1984 in comparison with normal years. Harvests remained at 140 thousand tons, making it necessary for the country to receive 60 thousand tons in food aid. Prospects for 1985 are that harvests will resume growth, but whether or not they will return to normal levels remains to be seen. Preliminary surveys made immediately after the recent storms and floods indicate losses of up to 50 percent in the kingdom's lowland crops.



In March 1985 Zimbabwe, Malawi and Swaziland were taken off FAO's list of countries most adversely affected by the drought. The recent rains had reverted the agricultural situation, enabling Zimbabwe and Malawi to run exportable agricultural surpluses. Malawi suffered little from the drought, rain shortages having added only marginally to undernourishment. Malawi's major problem continues to be a structural poverty deriving from unequal income distribution and economic opportunities. As for Zimbabwe, its case was seen as a real economic turnaround. From a food deficit of almost 200 thousand tons, the country evolved to an 800 thousand-ton surplus shortly after the rains returned in 1985.

Last year, still suffering from the effects of the drought, the Harare government was taken by surprise when nearly 400 thousand tons of cereals produced by small farmers were offered in the market. The Ministry of Agriculture had failed to forecast such production due to lack of statistical surveys. Most of these small farmers were former guerrilla fighters and refugees who had gone back to their lands after an eight-year independence war. In 1980 the country established a black majority regime committed to socialist reforms. The white farmers who had remained in the country after independence secured a harvest of a little more than 1 million tons, with communal agriculture accounting for only 500 thousand tons.

With the return of refugees and guerrilla fighters, communal production grew by at least 1 million tons last year, and is expected to reach 2 million tons in 1985.

The drought has also affected Angola, whose agricultural production was down 7% in 1984



The quick recovery of communal and household agriculture was the result of a government incentives policy, and of an incipient redistribution of land. Because of reorganization of the agricultural sector, the number of small rural units in Zimbabwe is now estimated at 900 thousand. Until recently, cereal production had been dominated by the 4,000 white farmers who owned large plots of land in the most fertile areas. 1985 prospects materialize, one third of the corn harvest will go for local consumption, one third for export, and one-third for a stockpile to be used in the event of crop failures. Zimbabwe will thus become the first country in Southern Africa to hold a food reserve.

Though it is seen as the richest country in Africa, South Africa had serious food problems in the past two years. South African food production declined by 35 percent since 1981, making it necessary for the country to import 2.7 million tons last year. The deficit is expected to remain at around 500 thousand tons in 1985. Most of the drought's burden was transferred to the black population under the racial discrimination policies adopted by South Africa. Data published by New York's Carnegie Foundation indicate that one out of every three South African blacks under 12 years of age suffer from malnutrition; food deficiency victims already number 3 million people. In 1984 nongovernmental organizations provided food help to 600 thousand South African blacks who otherwise would have died of starvation. The total of aid recipients was 30 percent higher than in the previous year, but even so 200 thousand people failed to receive any assistance because of a shortage of resources.



## East Africa

Seven of the thirteen East African nations are in FAO's list of "starving countries". The aggregate food deficit of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Ethiopia amounts to 1.5 million tons and is three times larger than it was last year. Food production in these seven countries declined to less than 2.6 million tons in 1984, making it necessary for them to import some 3.4 million tons this year, or twice last year's imports.

In Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia, agricultural harvests have been slashed by droughts for ten consecutive years. Ethiopia, for example, had to import 118 thousand tons of food in 1974; in 1982 the country's import needs had risen to 273 thousand tons. Sudanese food imports increased fourfold in the same period, totaling 611 thousand tons in 1982. In Somalia, the increase was even more spectacular: food imports grew from 42 thousand tons in 1974 to 406 thousand tons in 1982.

The five-million-ton Ethiopian harvest in 1984 was 1.3 million tons below the 1983 record and 20 percent below the 1979-82 average. The country now faces a food deficit of the order of 917 thousand tons. Famine in Ethiopia has also endangered the precarious food balance in Sudan, following the arrival of 350 thousand refugees (from Ethiopia, Chad and Zaire). Sudanese agriculture — strongly influenced by the World Bank's policies that promote export crops such as cotton — experienced a 40 percent crop failure last year. The country will thus have to import 1.5 million tons of food products in 1985, four-fifths of which in the form of grants, since Sudan cannot pay for them in normal commercial terms.

Somalia is no better off. The country's north went through several long dry periods in the past decade; its camel and sheep herds have been reduced to one-half. Banana plantations in the Shebele region have also suffered from erratic rainfall. In the south, the climate was less harsh on agriculture, but the crops spared by the dry season have been partially destroyed by a number of caterpillar plagues. Nevertheless, harvests were better in 1984 than in the previous year, totaling 418 thousand tons. Yet Somalia will have to import some 220 thousand tons of food in 1985 to accommodate 1 million refugees who left the desert after the Ogaden War and have settled in the south.

While Somalia is yet to solve its refugee problem, the small former French colony of Djibouti has managed to send refugees back to Ethiopia, thus reducing its food deficit in 1984. The country is

still suffering from the effects of the drought which decimated most of its herds in 1981-83. Another East African country experiencing relief in the domestic food situation is Uganda, where dramatic famine prevailed in the late 1970s — not as a result of droughts, but because of armed conflicts and political persecution. Most likely the Ugandan case was the only instance of mass malnutrition in Africa arising not out of lack of food but lack of access to food, as in the Karamoja region. Ugandan agricultural surpluses were sufficient to feed the local population in 1984; only the lack of quick and safe means of shipping them abroad prevented the country from making a good profit on them.



Agricultural problems are shared by all African countries, both because of a harsh climate and the legacy of a distorted production structure

In Rwanda, the rainy season was shorter than usual in 1983, leading to almost total crop failures. The same thing happened again in 1984; a total harvest of 250 thousand tons was 50 percent below the previous year's levels. As a result, the country will have to import approximately 90 thousand tons of food in 1985, or three times as much as it imported in 1983. In neighboring Burundi, the situation is no less dramatic. This year's harvests are estimated at 323 thousand tons, well below the country's present needs.

In Tanzania, irregular rainfall distribution resulted in a curious phenomenon. In the south, harvests totaled as much as 2.5 million tons; in the north, droughts have decimated crops, leaving an overall food deficit of 430 thousand tons for the country. This led FAO to place Tanzania back in the list of countries where the food situation is critical.



The fact that it is the richest country in East Africa hasn't spared Kenya the tragical lot that has befallen its neighbors. Until 1983, Kenya was one of the few African countries where agricultural production was sufficient to feed the population. In 1984, however, a rain shortage reduced Kenyan harvests to a level unheard of in the past 50 years. The rains finally returned in October of last year, bringing hopes for a 1.85 million-ton harvest in 1985. Even if this materializes, however, the country will still run a deficit of 900 thousand tons of cereals, according to FAO's latest estimates.

For the Indian Ocean countries of Comores, Mauritius, the Seychelles and Madagascar, the scarce rainfall did not particularly exacerbate food problems. All of them are traditional importers of food products, especially rice. Deterioration of the food situation in these four African countries results largely from world trade fluctuations. By exporting commodities whose prices have fallen in the world market, they have had to pay increasingly higher prices for what they buy. In addition, Madagascar and the Seychelles were hit by at least two cyclones in 1984 which largely destroyed their banana plantations.

#### Central and North Africa

After a three-week visit in Chad last year, a Unicef official admitted that "Famine in this former French colony is the most serious in all Africa. Nothing can be compared to the drama of Chadians; the mortality rate attributable to starvation is higher among them than among Ethiopians. If they haven't made the headlines in the world press, this is only because the total number of people affected by starvation is not as great as it is in the African Northeast."

Chad is, beyond any doubt, the extreme case of food shortage on a continent that is now having to pay the price of past colonial exploitation and for the neocolonialist legacy of the old powers. The country combines all the prerequisites for mass starvation. Having gone through the turmoil of an 18-year-long civil war, Chad is located in the Sahel, a desert zone which expands at an average rate of 5 km per year; its agriculture is hand-tied by political conflicts; and no transportation is available for distribution of the scanty food production of small household units. One-half of the total Chadian population of 4.5 million people have little access to food. Of this half, between 200 thousand and 1 million people get only 23 percent of the minimum calorie intake prescribed by FAO as indispensable to ensure survival.



Ethiopian crop failures brought additional hardship to a long-suffering population

In 1984 Chad produced approximately 330 thousand tons of cereals, or 155 thousand tons less than in 1983. For 1985, the country is expected to need some 320 thousand tons of food aid. It is very unlikely that Chad will receive all this food in due time: food shipments have to cover an average distance of 3,000 km along rough and often unsafe roads before reaching the critical areas. Chad is landlocked, and the most optimistic projections are that only one-half of the required food will reach its destination.

Other Central African countries are somewhat better off than Chad. After an acute drought period in 1983, the Central African Republic showed signs of recovery last year, and its agricultural production is again on the rise. The problem, however, is that the Central African government has invested over US\$ 70 million from loans contracted with foreign banks in the expansion of such export crops as coffee and cotton, instead of supporting subsistence agriculture.



**FOOD DEFICITS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES**  
(In thousands of tons)

Country	Cereals production		Required aid	Secured aid	Deficit
	1984	As % of previous years			
Ethiopia	5,000	80	1,500	583	917
Sudan	1,650	55	950	566	384
Niger	780	58	475	140	335
Mali	700	73	410	92	318
Burkina Fasso	1,100	96	185	17	168
Chad	315	57	280	113	167
Tanzania	2,450	100	256	123	133
Mauritania	20	41	155	52	103
Mozambique	378	85	500	425	75
Morocco	3,715	96	400	334	66
Kenya	1,850	72	425	364	61
Senegal	680	92	120	68	52
Burundi	323	80	65	16	49
Zambia	920	95	206	163	43
Rwanda	249	83	63	25	38
Cape Verde	3	75	60	26	34
Botswana	8	30	33	19	14
Somalia	418	111	150	137	13
Angola	335	93	83	76	7
Zimbabwe	1,628	80	212	210	2
Lesotho	140	82	61	61	0

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> FAO data, January 1985.

<sup>2</sup> Food production as a percentage of previous years will indicate the total decrease in production. In Ethiopia, for example, the 1984 food production was only 80 percent of the 1983 level, according to FAO. This means that production declined by 20 percent.

In the Cameroon, Zaire and Gabon, oil reserves have secured the foreign exchange required to pay for imported food, while a reasonable amount of rainfall has afforded household agriculture the minimum conditions necessary for the subsistence of inland populations. But all three, with the possible exception of Cameroon, may again experience acute food shortages since the food supply balance depends largely on the price behavior of such exports as oil and diamonds. Benevolent French policies towards cereal imports have prevented them from becoming self-sufficient in food production.

FAO statistics show that, in North Africa, only Libya and Tunisia have experienced increases in their per capita production of food since the 1970s, by something like 27 percent. In Egypt and Morocco, food production has declined by 15 percent; in Algeria, food production per capita is 25 percent lower than in 1975. The energy content of the daily diet of the average

population in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia is only 16 percent above the minimum prescribed by FAO. In Libya, the average calorie content is 47 percent above this level; in Algeria, the average is lower. These countries have been able to avert starvation problems because they earn sufficient export income to pay for food imports.

Household agriculture, particularly that of nomads and small peasants, does much to ensure the self-supply of rural areas, but none of the five North African countries is self-sufficient in overall food production. In addition to the dependence on imported food, the most serious obstacles to achieving a minimum food balance are the high population growth rates prevailing in the area (between 2.7 and 3.1 percent per year), and the accelerated pace of urbanization (between 2.9 percent in Egypt and 8.1 percent in Libya), both of which are bound to cause serious food shortages by the year 2000. (*This article is based on an Africa News report.*)



## Humor





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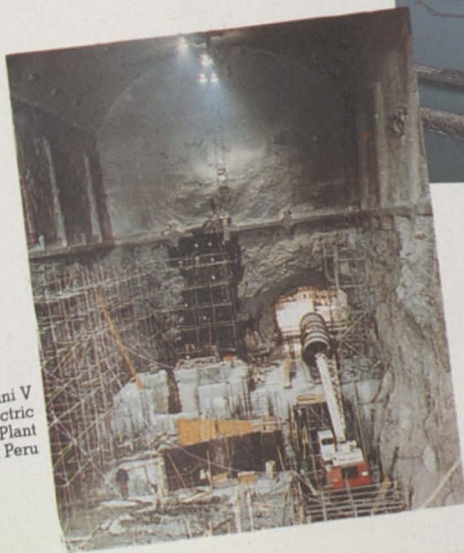


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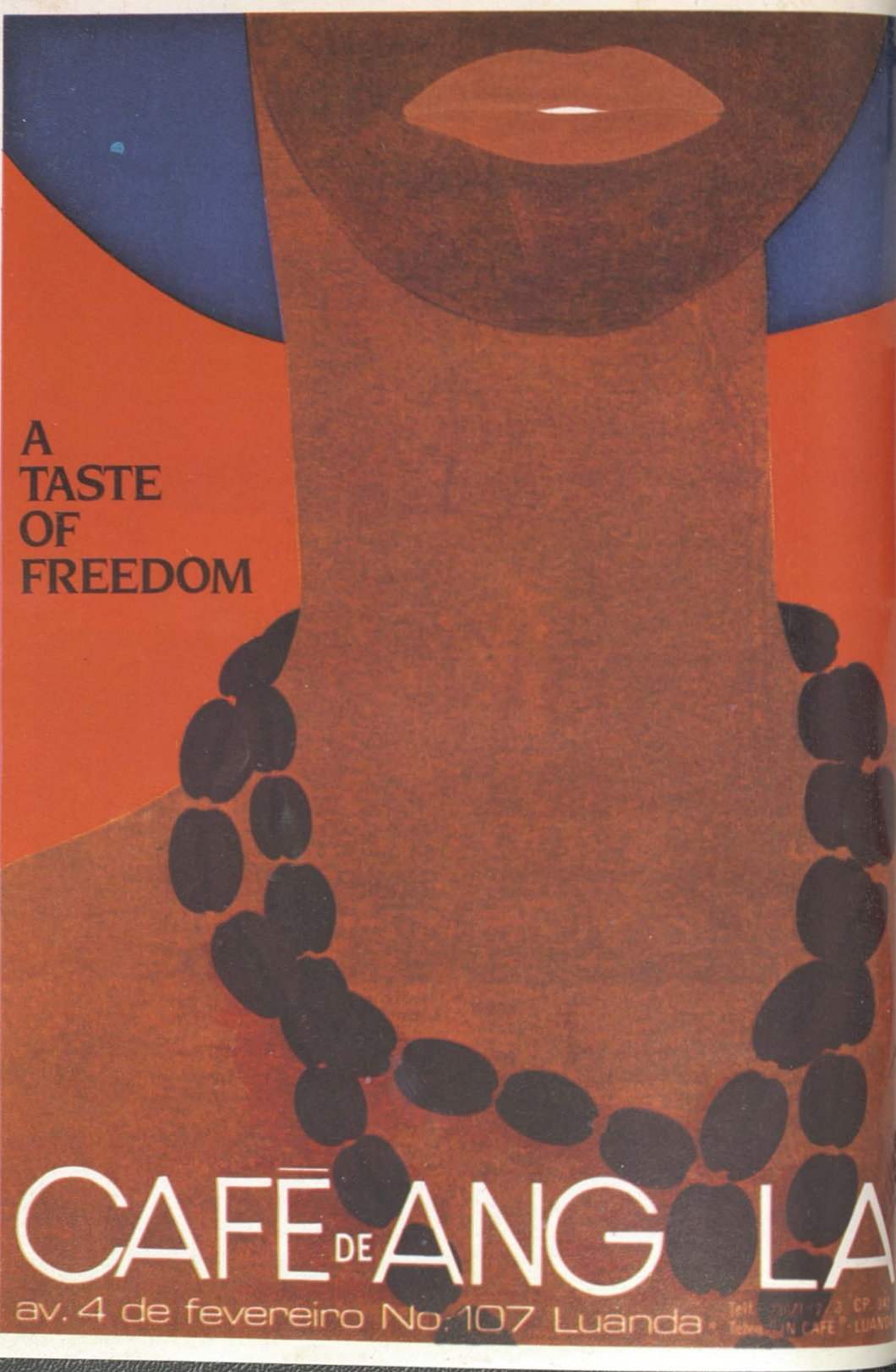
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