

BAOBAB NOTES



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South African Winds of Change Continue to Blow

By Heetan Kalan

Entering its fourth year of democratic rule, South Africa is undergoing rapid changes on many levels. While the new government settles into running a country that caters to all its citizens, it has to deal with the burdens of the previous regime. Further, the change in government is not complete as many of the ministries are filled with "old" employees. All civil servants from the previous regime were guaranteed their jobs until 1999 as part of the negotiated settlement towards the all-race democratic election. The apartheid debt also places enormous strains on the country's financial resources and thus impedes on appropriate budget allocations. President Nelson Mandela commented to the South Africa Parliament in the Spring of this year that South Africa was "burdened with the legacy of decades, indeed centuries, of deliberate division, conflict and hostility," he said. "Today, in some ways, the old fault lines in our society are showing more sharply."

The ANC-led Government has embarked on an ambitious Government Economic and Reconstruction Strategy (GEAR) to provide jobs and economic development for the country. GEAR is pitched as the implementing arm of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). There are concerns that this strategy has strong aspects of the infamous trickle down model of development. GEAR is an attempt to deliver the promises made to the South African electorate in 1994.

One gets a distinct sense of political change in the country. People are openly talking about national, provincial and local politics. Newly formed representatives in local councils grapple with local mandates and issues with few resources and almost no capacity and experience. The local jurisdiction now includes formerly excluded black areas and townships which challenges all the previous planning models.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is yet another vehicle for political transformation. Despite the many obstacles the TRC faces in terms of deadlines and lack of full disclosures, the hearings provide a forum for healing and reconciliation. In mid-July, various victims of torture openly confronted their torturers about the heinous methods used upon them. Time and time again, the victims' openness and their spirit of reconciliation was clearly jeopardized by the torturers' intention to cover up for their former bosses. Many are convinced that a lot of truth is emerging from the TRC, a lot of reconciliation as well. Some concede that the TRC's duty is to grant amnesty; forgiveness on the other hand is a more personal challenge.

The economic change in the country is a slow process and many are frustrated with the lack of job opportunities. With approximately 50% of our population of 39 million unemployed, South Africa is in a volatile economic position. Unfortunately, this has also led to an increase in the nation's xenophobia - fear that foreigners will take the limited jobs. South Africa currently has refugee laws that make it extremely difficult for asylum seeking refugees and for those denied status. Since 1995, the state has exercised greater and greater powers of expulsion. More and more undocumented immigrants and non-South Africans live in a state of fear comparable to that which Mexican workers endure in various parts of the United States. Currently, there are new immigration laws being drafted. It is hoped that these new laws will reflect an effort to end the growing xenophobic climate.

In order to speed the economic change, the government has identified nine Special Development Initiatives (SDIs) around the country which concentrate industrial and economic development. In order to attract the necessary investors, the SDIs are offering many incentives. There is growing concern that these initiatives have not been through any thorough form of regional planning. Environmentalists are concerned that some of the areas are not targeting appropriate developments and technologies that cater to the ecological sensitivities of the region. There is a strong need to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessments that will provide a regional strategy for development with minimum harm to people's health and the environment.

The winds of change continue to blow in the country. While one can understand the growing frustration due to the lack of economic delivery, one can also understand the various constraints facing the new government in which certain elements continue to stall the delivery of programs and in which uncooperative elements tend to dominate the thinking. Despite this, the country continues to offer hope of a truly non-racial society.

Baobab Notes collective member Heetan Kalan writes to us from South Africa.

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US Policy Toward Southern Africa

Africa Advocates Challenge Denver Summit: CBC and NGO's Say Africans Must Have Voice in Economic Policymaking

The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and twenty-two religious and secular organizations issued a statement denouncing the failure of the leaders of industrialized nations to consult with African officials and grassroots representatives before making policy decisions which affect African nations.

The heads of government of the Group of Seven (G7) countries, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, held their annual economic summit in Denver, Colorado from June 20 to June 22. Russian leader Boris Yeltsin was included in most of the summit deliberations.

In spite of the fact that Africa will be high on the summit agenda, no Africans have been invited to take part in the discussions - not leaders of African governments and certainly not those likely to be most affected by decisions made in Denver: ordinary citizens in urban and rural communities across the continent.

(Washington Office on Africa, Summer 1997)

Oxfam Responds to US Africa Initiative

The US government has drawn up proposals for a new initiative, *Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity in Africa*, aimed at addressing the development crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. Recognizing the opportunities created by economic and social reform programs in many countries, *Partnership* aims to provide trade, aid and debt relief incentives for governments seeking to accelerate economic growth. The Clinton Administration has indicated that it will be seeking international support for the initiative at the G7 Denver Summit.

US recognition of the need to address aid, trade and debt problems within an overall strategy is particularly welcome. So, too, is the proposed use of investment guarantees to mobilize private foreign investment for Africa, which currently accounts for less than one percent of global private capital flows. More broadly, the US initiative is rooted in recognition that the risks posed by Africa's marginalisation are exceptionally high, with deepening poverty and economic decline intensifying national and ethnic rivalries, contributing to environmental problems, and undermining the capacity of governments to provide basic social services.

Encouraging as the US initiative may be, it is flawed in a number of crucial areas. It will provide support to a small cluster of countries regarded by the US as success stories, threatening to undermine region-wide initiatives. US proposals offer relatively minor concessions on trade, mainly in the form of enhanced preferences, allied with insignificant US aid flows. US support for debt relief rests uneasily with US efforts to delay implementation of IMF and World Bank initiatives to do so.

The term "Partnership" implies dialogue and joint action to achieve shared goals. Unfortunately, African governments and UN agencies have been conspicuous by their absence from the process of dialogue behind the US initiative.

(Oxfam International Advocacy Office, 6/17/97)

US Investment Fund Set Up

The growing US interest in Africa as an investment opportunity was illustrated with the announcement of a \$120 million fund aimed at boosting southern African businesses. Though small by Wall Street standards, the New Africa Opportunity Fund represents the largest single direct investment in southern Africa by a black-owned US financial company. The fund is run by Sloan Financial Group of Durham, North Carolina and two of its most prominent supporters, Republican Senator Jesse Helms and Citicorp, who were once known as supporters of South Africa's former apartheid regime.

President Bill Clinton announced on Tuesday a number of incentives aimed at promoting investment and growth in sub-Saharan Africa. The continent's economic potential also is on the agenda for the first time at the upcoming Denver summit of rich industrialized nations later this week.

The Overseas Private Investment Corp., a US government agency, has guaranteed \$80 million of the fund's total investment capital. The remainder of \$40 million has been put up by a range of US investors that includes wealthy families, life insurance companies and Citicorp, the big New York bank.

(Southscan, Vol. 12, No. 23, 6/20/97)

FY 98 Foreign Assistance Bills May Ignore Africa

Prior to 1987, the Cold War priorities that shaped US foreign assistance programs in Africa and elsewhere provided little support for poverty eradication and long term development. In 1987, Congress created the Development Fund for Africa (DFA) to guarantee funding for sustainable development initiatives throughout Africa. For the next eight years, the DFA had its own budget line which prevented funds earmarked for Africa from being diverted to other accounts.

In 1995, the 104th Congress began to make increasingly deep cuts in US foreign assistance programs. The appropriations bills for FY96 and FY97 abandoned the DFA earmark. Africa aid programs suffered disproportionately large cuts. In an effort to appease critics, Rep. Sonny Callahan (R-AL) offered an alternative: a clause in the bill that stipulated that the DFA should receive a comparable "proportion" of development assistance funds as it had in the previous year. This weaker "proportionality" language has been the only thing protecting development funds for Africa in the past two years. Now even this protection may be lost. The FY 98 appropriations bill passed by the Senate does not contain the "proportionality" language, nor does the version currently pending action on the House floor. In a year when Congress may expand overall foreign assistance funding with most line items holding steady or achieving modest increases, Africa looks set to lose out once again.

Ironically, Congress may abandon Africa-specific aid programs at the very moment when both the Clinton Administration and Congress have begun to acknowledge that effective US support for broad-based economic growth in Africa must involve complementary action on multiple fronts. In particular, ordinary Africans are unlikely to derive any lasting benefits from new initiatives to promote trade with and investment in Africa without simultaneous provision of substantial debt relief and development assistance.

(Washington Office on Africa, August 1997)

The Clinton Administration Should Stop Savimbi Now

By Prexy Nesbitt

It is very clear that Jonas Savimbi, the leader and founder of UNITA, Union for the Total Independence of Angola, is about to go to war again. Indisputable evidence is mounting that Savimbi is readying his forces for another destructive attack on Angola, despite a so-called demobilization which Savimbi and his forces have been conducting for the last two years. Reports of escalating UNITA attacks on government-run towns correspond with United Nations announcements that more than 30,000 former UNITA soldiers have deserted their UN-run demobilization camps. More significantly, perhaps, mercenary officers once employed by Savimbi have revealed that Moroccan, Zairian and South African mercenaries have been recruited and deployed in Angola as far south as Mussende and Andulo. The ex-UNITA mercenaries also revealed that some of the "mercs" had seen action in the Luanda Province during the May-July clashes between UNITA forces and the government troops. They were also playing a key role in off-loading and readying the huge quantities of war material flowing into clandestine UNITA sites in Angola from South Africa and earlier from Zaire.

Jonas Savimbi is a product of the United States and its policies towards Africa since the early 1960's. Like Mobutu Sese Seko, Jonas Savimbi was molded and financed as a Cold War anti-communist killer-gadiator by successive US administrations, especially the Reagan and Bush Administrations. Savimbi is a ruthless killer-politician, and I do not use these words lightly. No less a source than his biographer, journalist Fred Bridgeland, long a leading apologist for Savimbi and his actions, now highlights the viciousness and harshness of Savimbi's role in Angola, noting his executions of his close advisers in the early 90's.

Hundreds of thousands of civilians, largely young people, women, and children, have been wounded in Angola's wars. Landmines, millions of them, yet lie in deadly wait all over Angola. The blame should not be placed entirely on UNITA. Others must be placed on the stand. But no single individual has played such a destructive role for so long a period as Jonas Savimbi. And except for maybe the apartheid government of South Africa in its worse years, no single government has wined, dined and trained Savimbi as much as the United States. US hosts included leaders from Ronald Reagan through Roy Innis and Jessie Helms. Besides clearing the minefields and helping to rebuild the bridges, schools and hospitals built with such love and sacrifice by ordinary Angolans, at a minimum, the US needs to restrain, muzzle and re-train their pet.



The *Review of African Political Economy* has since 1974 attempted to provide radical analysis and commentary on trends and issues in Africa. It has paid particular attention to class and gender analysis, and to marxist interpretations of change in Africa. The *Review* has also been, and remains, especially concerned with the problems of Africa's economic, political and intellectual marginalisation; with the rationale for and imposition of 'free market' development strategies, notably structural adjustment programmes, and with their social and political impact; with the continuing existence of and external support for repressive and violent regimes and movements; with the economic and political role of the African bourgeoisie; and with questions of regional, national and community conflict.

Of equal concern is the nature of popular responses to these problems, and the examination of the actions needed to overcome them. Thus the *Review* promotes and publishes analysis and debate on democratic struggles and grassroots movements, on the organization and actions of women and other subordinate groups, and on popular resistance to repression and exploitation, including religious and cultural movements. The *Review* also, therefore, encourages and publishes writing by African scholars and activists, both those based on the continent and those outside Africa. This is a substantial resource for scholars and activists alike.

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Angola

Increased UNITA Attacks Fuel Fears of Renewed War

Attacks by UNITA have increased dramatically in recent weeks, leading hundreds of people to flee for the shelter of Government-held towns. This is being read as a clear sign of the military leadership of UNITA's determination to fiercely resist the agreed process of the expansion of state administration to all parts of the country. This expansion was expected to follow the formation of the Government of Unity and National Reconciliation in April, of which UNITA is a partner.

The main area of tension is along the border with Congo. UNITA attacks along the border are an attempt to clear a path for returning UNITA troops who were defeated in Congo.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 11, 8/1/97)

Angolan Army Integrates Ex-UNITA Elements

On July 10, the Angolan army completed the integration of former UNITA fighters into its ranks. Under the Lusaka Protocol and subsequent agreements, UNITA was to provide 18,000 men, but in the end only over 11,000 volunteers joined FAA. The majority - over 15,000 - of fit soldiers in the UNITA demobilization camps have deserted, many rejoining UNITA's military machine. Most of those left were either young, disabled, or forcibly recruited by UNITA to make up the numbers.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 11, 8/1/97)

UNITA Isolated as Mobutu Flees Congo

The rebel movement UNITA has lost its final major international backer following the flight of ex-President Mobutu Sese Seko from the Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire. UNITA has survived its abandonment by its previous backers, the United States and apartheid South Africa. It had grown increasingly reliant on the Zaire regime for breaking international sanctions as well as arms and petroleum supplies. UNITA also used Zaire as its main conduit for the smuggling of diamonds, mined by UNITA in areas under its military control.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 9, 6/5/97)

Sealing the Border with Congo

Movement along the border with Congo is the latest in a series of actions by the Angolan government to seal off its borders. Interior Minister Andre Pitra warned of the need for border controls to stop the large number of Rwandan Hutu refugees and armed men from crossing into the country, in view of the conflict in Congo. The sealing of the border has also blocked the escape route of the 10,000 UNITA soldiers estimated by the Angolan government to be in Congo.

Amnesty International (AI) reports that at least 500 refugees have crossed into areas under the control of UNITA. AI says that the Angolan government is breaking its international obligations by keeping out Rwandese Hutu refugees. The UN High Commission for Refugees suggested that a humanitarian corridor be set up in Angola to help Rwandan refugees to return to Rwanda.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 9, 6/5/97)

Fighting Prelude to Big Clash Over Diamonds

Despite the significant escalation in fighting in Lunda Norte province, commentators warn that it was very limited compared with a possible full-scale confrontation. The diamond-rich province is likely to be a focus for the Government in its attempts to regain control of the country - of which UNITA controls over two-thirds at present. Lunda Norte is also of the highest strategic importance for UNITA. Apart from UNITA's crack-troops returning from Zaire, there have been reports that 2,000 of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi's "Presidential" guard have been flown to the area.

UNITA controls 80% of Angola's diamond areas, and earns an estimated \$600 million a year from its illegal mining operations. UNITA has failed to reach an agreement to hand over the diamond regions in spite of a Government offer to turn over five mining concessions to UNITA.

During recent clashes, UNITA lost some 10-15% of the areas it held in the diamond region. Angolan commentators warn that unless a formula for the disarmament and quartering of UNITA's army is found, a large scale return to war is likely.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 10, 7/8/97)

Angolans Accused in Congo-Brazzaville Violence

Both the Angolan Government and the rebel UNITA movement have been accused of having a role in the present violence in its northern neighbor Congo-Brazzaville. The London-based newsletter, *Africa Confidential*, reports that UNITA is fighting alongside the current President Pascal Lissouba's militias. UNITA has moved its main African office to Brazzaville following the downfall of Mobutu in Zaire. *Africa Confidential* also accused the Angolan Government of channeling arms to the Cobra militia led by General Denis Sassou Nguesso, who was President from 1979 to 1992.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 10, 7/8/97)

New Arms for UNITA

According to the South African-based *Mail and Guardian*, large quantities of new arms have been entering the country destined for UNITA, including new Stinger missiles. There have also been detailed allegations by the Institute for Security Studies in South Africa that east European and South African arms for UNITA have recently been smuggled into Angola via northern Mozambique.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 10, 7/8/97)

Coca Cola for Angola

Coca Cola and Indol International, a subsidiary of South African Breweries, announced that it is to build a \$20 million plant at Bon Jesus, 60 km from Luanda.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 9, 6/5/97)

Book Reviews

By Robert McLuhan, *Africa Book Center*

The Destruction of a Nation: United States' Policy Toward Angola Since 1945 by George Wright

(London Pluto 074531029X, 246pp)

Angola: Promises and Lies by Karl Maier

(London: Serif 1897959222, 216pp)

Angolans under thirty can barely remember a time when they were not at war. This critical study by an American academic analyzes the way that their fortunes have largely been shaped by the concerns of a foreign power of which they know little, and in particular by that power's dependence on a seemingly insignificant chain of islands thousands of miles to the north.

As with other victims of cold war politics, Angola's local quarrels were fought by the superpowers, who turned the country into an international battlefield. But Wright shows how the United States was involved at a very early state in laying the basis to the tragedy. Dependent on the Azores refuelling base for its military capability, the Truman and Eisenhower administration treated the occupying power Portugal as a friendly ally, rather than as the most oppressive of all the European colonisers in Africa. There seems to have been no particular sacrifice here: Africa was at this time strategically unimportant and the US had few economic interests there. Eisenhower provided Portugal with military assistance; a secret clause in the agreement even allowed it to be used in the colonies.

This cosy arrangement changed in the early sixties, as the Salazar regime ran into violent dissent in Angola and hostility from liberals in the Kennedy administration. Embarrassed about the possible use of American military equipment to suppress colonial opposition, the liberals sought to put pressure on Portugal to withdraw from Africa altogether. But with the lease on the Azores air base coming up for renewal, they were in conflict with cold warriors in the foreign policy establishment: strategic needs again proved paramount. US pressure was limited to support for United Nations resolutions against Portugal and a reduction of military assistance. Under Johnson, liberal policy was compromised by the Vietnam debacle, and the arrival of Nixon reversed it altogether. The administration now bypassed the arms restrictions by providing training, aircraft and defoliants, and ingeniously denying any knowledge of their use against Angola. In return, it was guaranteed use of the air base, providing a crucial link during the 1973 Israeli-Arab war.

If Portugal's NATO membership caused a blind eye to be turned to its atrocities in Angola, its precipitate withdrawal in 1974 created even deeper confusion. Wright drily details the cold war logic that informed the United States' policy of hostility to the Soviet-backed MPLA and its corresponding support for Holden Roberto's FNLA and Jonas Savimbi's UNITA. Ford and Kissinger, motivated by the need to 'stand up to the Soviet Union' provided covert CIA support to their clients, helping to

lay the basis for two decades of civil war. Congressional opposition to US involvement led to the passing of a measure to embargo military aid, but succeeding administrations found ways of subverting it. Even Carter, who was initially keen to normalize relations with Angola, quickly became embroiled in attempts to counter Cuban interference, providing covert support for the South African destabilisation.

With Reagan, all pretense of normalization was abandoned: the struggle was increasingly seen in terms of Savimbi the gallant freedom fighter heroically resisting the wicked proxy of the 'evil empire'. Wright states boldly: "Angola was targeted for destabilization by the Reagan administration as part of the revived Cold War militarist project that was unleashed on the Third World to rollback revolutionary regimes and prevent nationalist movements coming to power." Part of the objective was to avenge the Vietnam defeat. Covert support was given to a destabilisation program unleashed by UNITA and the South African invasion force. The human cost was enormous: during the Reagan years, 60,000 combatants and almost half a million civilians died; 40,000 people - mostly women and children - lost a limb after stepping on landmines; and one million people - 12 percent of the population - were displaced. Every infrastructure whose destruction would weaken the government and terrorize the population was targeted; health clinics and classrooms were burned, bridges and hydroelectric dams blown up, fields sown with landmines to disrupt food production. The cities swelled with refugees and industrial production was seriously affected.

The end of the Cold War might have brought peace, had Savimbi accepted his electoral defeat. But as Wright demonstrates, American policy during the Bush administration was directed by the general belief that their man would win. Under Clinton, for the first time, the MPLA won a degree of recognition, yet was still blamed for having provoked Savimbi. UNITA meanwhile, was pressured by America to respect the result, yet received nothing like the approbation that would have been directed at the MPLA if the roles had been reversed. In the meantime, the renewed fighting, some of the most vicious of the whole war, led to a further 100,000 deaths, 350,000 refugees and a million facing starvation. With Bosnia and Somalia in the headlines, the tragedy in Angola was ignored by the media and the American public was largely uninformed.

Wright's book is excellent on the chronology and detail of Washington power politics and implicitly critical of the destruction they have wrought on an innocent foreign population. The outlook, he concludes, is gloomy: Savimbi, he considers, will continue his stalling, calculating that eventually, the government will buckle under the strain of resuming the conflict. In the long term, hopes of rebuilding are slight: hampered by a ruined infrastructure, massive debt, and the largely American insistence on unrealistic economic liberalization.

For the sheer horror of the war turn to Karl Maier's *Angola: Promises and Lies*, a western journalist's account of the election process and its bloody aftermath. In Luanda for the election, Maier was frequently asked if they would bring peace, offering

(continued on page 12)

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mobutu is Buried in Exile

Mobutu Sese Seko, shunned by the powers that once backed his despotic reign over Zaire, died in Morocco after a long battle with prostate cancer. He had been living in exile in Morocco after fleeing Zaire following a 31 year reign. He was ousted in May by the forces of Laurent Kabila, who restored the country's former name, Congo.

South African President Nelson Mandela has criticized Mobutu's former allies for deserting him in his dying days. "Those who helped him for 30 years and benefited from association with him, during his last day on Earth, they did not want to know him," Mandela said recently.

(Associated Press, Chicago Tribune, 9/14/97)

Congo's Civil Society Meets

The Civil Society of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the support of the National Council of Non-Governmental Development Organizations, Synergies Africa and the International Human Rights Law Group, met from June 16-20 on the subject "Reconstruction and Democratization of the Congo." These meetings are taking place at a particularly important historical moment for the Congolese people.

The Civil Society analysis concluded that the catastrophic situation that the Congolese people are currently experiencing is the legacy of thirty-two years of dictatorship and pillage of the nation's resources and the absence of a state of law. The consequences of this sad situation are felt at all levels and in all sectors of national life.

The analysis further noted that the war that the country lived through was experienced initially by the people as liberation and was met with great enthusiasm. Unhappily, it has also been accompanied by great suffering for the people, notably for refugees and the displaced. Today, the Congolese feel two contradictory sentiments with respect to this situation: hope and fear.

The Civil Society conference concluded that civil society should work in this particularly sensitive context by remaining faithful to the principles of independence and responsibility and by affirming the necessity of constructive dialogue with authorities. In order to involve the grassroots in the process of reconstruction, civil society suggests holding provincial reconstruction conferences involving local authorities that can serve as opportunities for dialogue among the government, the people and civil society.

Other specific recommendations include:

- A large campaign of civic education, stressing tolerance, peace and inter-regional consciousness.
- Reconstruction of public infrastructure.
- Promotion of new policies of health, education and environmental protection in both urban and rural milieu.
- Reinforcement of systems of social development.
- Definition of food strategies for urban centers that do not damage the interests of rural development.
- Definition of regulatory and ethical codes for media and religious groups in defense of freedom of expression.
- Reformation of Congolese administration.
- Inventory and improved management of state property.
- Restoration of banking system, strengthening of small and

middle-level business, and aiding base communities.

- Promotion of consumer rights.
- Mobilization of youth to involve them in public works.
- Aid for the return of refugees and displaced Congolese.
- Promotion of women as essential agents of change.
- Rehabilitation and civil rights for the disabled.
- Promotion of new security policies definition and limitation of roles of the police and the military.
- Promotion of good governance and the gradual development of the electoral processes at all levels.
- Financing reconstruction through internal and external means; reformation of state fiscal policies to prevent abuse by individuals in power; renegotiation of foreign debt.
- Development of conflict resolution mechanisms taking into account the role of traditional chiefs.

(Africa Policy Information Center, 7/5/97)

Annan Explains Congo Reluctance, Calls for Regional Strategy

"We are dealing with new regimes which, to some extent, are fragile and not very well established. We must also remember, psychologically, that President Kabila himself and some of the people who are with him were involved in Congolese politics in the early 1960s. Some were with Lumumba when he was killed. For some of them, they believe that the international community deprived them of a chance to rule Congo and they are very mistrustful that if they are not careful, it can be done a second time. We need to understand this mistrust and have a certain patience with a regime that is trying to take over in a country that has more or less collapsed, with no infrastructure and very serious and difficult problems.

In my own discussions with them, they do realize that they need the international community, and that for them to get the cooperation of the international community, certain things have to happen...If the international community is going to make a difference, we need to come up with a strategy that will lead to regional stability...We need to work on the regional basis and also helps the individual countries with their reconstruction, and political reconciliation and set them on the road to democracy and prosperity, because there are resources and the region is quite rich."

(Africa Policy Resource Center, UN Press Conference Transcript, 9/11/97)

UNHCR Suspends Congo-Kinshasa Operations

Geneva - High Commissioner Sadako Ogata announced that the UNHCR is suspending its operations for Rwandan refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), saying that the most basic conditions for protecting them have now ceased to exist. The announcement came following the expulsion of more than 700 Rwandan and Burundi refugees in a predawn military operation at UNHCR's transit centre in Kisangani in central DRC on September 4. The High Commissioner said resumption of UNHCR will depend on the government's willingness to provide UNHCR with concrete guarantees it will treat Rwandans according to humanitarian standards and allow due process in the examination of refugee claims. She said staff security must be ensured.

(Africa Policy Information Center, 9/10/97)

International Campaign to Ban Landmines

New British Government Bans Mines

The recently elected labor government announced a complete ban on the manufacture, transfer, import and export of anti-personnel landmines, with a pledge to destroy British stockpiles by 2005 or sooner if an international ban is agreed. They also placed a ban on landmine use by British forces, except with prior approval by Parliament. Included in the ban are "smart mines" which destroy themselves after a given period.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 9, 6/5/97)

OAU Works Towards Banning Mines

A three day conference on landmines, sponsored by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), opened in Johannesburg on 19 May. OAU General Secretary, Salim Ahmed Salim stated, "It is imperative that Africans should devote efforts to the total global banning of mines." At present, only South Africa, Mozambique and Congo have announced national prohibitions on landmine use.

According to a recent report by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), surgical care and the fitting of an orthopedic appliance costs at least \$3,000. The ICRC estimates that one out of every 334 people in Angola is an amputee as compared to one in every 22,000 in the United States. A US humanitarian agency estimates that there are between 50,000 and 100,000 amputees in Angola. An estimated 15 million landmines are still in the Angolan earth.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 9, 6/5/97)

UNITA Remining

UNITA has started to plant mines, which flies in the face of demining efforts. Mines have been planted on roads which had been cleared and reopened by the United Nations. Lieutenant-General Marques Correia said that UNITA was mining the road to the provincial capital of Lunda Norte. Meanwhile, the Angolan Minister for External Relations announced that Angola would sign the Ottawa convention banning the manufacture, distribution, use, and storage of anti-personnel mines.

(Angola Peace Monitor, Vol. III, No. 10, 7/8/97)

Clinton Under Pressure to Support Landmine Ban

Senator Leahy, with the support of 57 other Senators, introduced the Landmine Elimination Act in June, and continues to add new co-sponsors. In introducing the bill, Leahy noted that there is no substitute for US leadership. "There is only one way to stop this, and that is to stop it. And the sooner the US does that, as others have done, the sooner the world can sweep these weapons into the dustbin of history."

Also in June, 164 members of the House of Representatives released a letter to the president calling on him to support the Ottawa process and move rapidly to a comprehensive landmine ban. Subsequently, Representatives Evans and Quinn have developed and are seeing co-sponsorship for companion legislation in the House.

(Washington Notes on Africa, August 1997)

US to Oslo in Bad Faith

Apparently the US policy position HAS NOT CHANGED at all. From our understanding, the US is going to go to Ottawa and try to ram existing US policy down the throats of the collective world. From what we have learned so far from more than one source:

- 1) The US is going to ask for an explicit exception for Korea and if they can't get that, a Korea-specific transition period.
- 2) The US is going to ask for a major shift in the basic premise of the treaty - they want to separate out conventional and smart mines. They want smart mines excepted from the treaty all together and from everyone. If they can't get that, they want specific exception for US mixed mine systems.
- 3) The US is considering other "unfortunate" negotiating positions, such as a nine-year delay period for entry into force and strong provisions for withdrawing from the treaty.

Obviously, the Clinton Administration has not heard our message strongly enough - our message is: If you are not going to negotiate a complete ban of all arms with no exceptions, no reservations, and no loopholes - stay home!

(Jody Williams, International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 8/18/97)

Landmine Conclave Urges Global Ban

OSLO - Delegates to a global conference on land mines stood silently Monday to pay tribute to Princess Diana, the world's most visible advocate of banning the deadly devices. Some who share her goal accused the United States of threatening a pact that could achieve it.

The intention of the conference is to hammer out a global ban against landmines. The process differs from past efforts because less-influential nations have taken the lead. Russia, China and India are not participating in the talks, and the United States joined the negotiations only two weeks ago. The United States wants exceptions to any ban for certain areas, including the heavily mined border separating communist North Korea and capitalist South Korea. Finland also is seeking an exemption, saying that landmines are integral to defending its 800-mile border with Russia.

(Associated Press, Chicago Tribune, 9/1/97)

US Rejects Pact to Ban Landmines

Risking scorn from US allies and humanitarian groups, President Clinton rejected a draft treaty to ban landmines citing Pentagon concerns that phasing out the weapons too rapidly would endanger American troops.

Clinton's decision to withdraw from the negotiations in Oslo came after other countries rebuffed a month-long US effort to insert exceptions and delays in the treaty. The other nations said the changes would gut the treaty, known as the Ottawa initiative.

(Chicago Tribune, 9/24/97)

Women in Southern Africa

Women Intensify Efforts to Gain Political Power

A project that seeks to increase the number of women in politics and decision making in cabinet, local government, parastatals, non-governmental organizations as well as in the churches has been launched in Zimbabwe. The two-year project, launched by the Ministry of National Affairs, Employment Creation and Cooperatives, shows the country's efforts to address one of the Beijing 12 critical areas of concern: inequality between men and women in power sharing and decision making at all levels.

Tendari Bare, the senior secretary for National Affairs, Employment Creation and Cooperatives, urged Zimbabwean women to have confidence and take up decision making positions in the public sphere. "If we manage homes, fields and families, why then can we not manage towns and countries?"

In some countries in the region, women's caucuses, coalitions and trust funds that go beyond the boundaries of party politics, are being formed to provide solidarity and financial assistance to female candidates for general and local government elections. Women in the region believe their caucuses provide solidarity, cooperation, and a possible solution to political divisions that hinder the struggle for equal participation with men in decision making.

In South Africa, for instance, women were drawn together prior to the first democratic elections in 1994 by the Women's National Coalition which drafted the Women's Charter for effective equality. This activity preceded the elections and produced an interim constitution which committed itself to equality. Today, South Africa has a 33% quota of women parliamentarians and holds the distinction of being one of the seven countries in the world with the highest numbers of female members of parliament.

In Botswana, a national Caucus for Women Councillors and Parliamentarians has been established to encourage women to take up council and parliamentary positions. In Zambia, a trust fund has been established to support female candidates contesting parliamentary and local government elections. In Mozambique, where women account for 25% in decision making representation at the national level, the Association of the Mozambican Women for Peace (AMWP) is working to improve on this in all areas. Membership in AMWP is open to all women regardless of party affiliation.

(South African Research and Documentation Centre, 7/16/97)

International Tribunal in Rwanda Includes Charges of Rape

Consideration of an amicus brief, filed by a group of women's and human rights NGOs, has caused the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to add rape and other crimes of sexual violence to charges against Jean-Paul Akayesu. This represents a significant achievement in efforts towards accountability and prosecution for gender-based violence and for the overall protection of the human rights of women. The amendment of the charges to include rape and inhumane treatment is notable in that it recognizes rape as a crime against humanity and as a war crime which brings to the forefront gender-based crimes in war and conflict situations.

(Impunity-Info, International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Vol. 2, No. 1, 7/97)

South Africa: Women and Violence

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports that female victims of rape or assault in South Africa face a criminal justice system that is too often unable or unwilling to assist them in their efforts to seek redress. In a report released on August 8th, HRW raised concerns about the treatment of rape victims by the police, medical, legal and judiciary systems in South Africa.

Since 1993, the number of rapes reported has nearly doubled, to 50,481 in 1996; of these 21,863 were prosecuted, yet only 8.1% of the cases reported led to a conviction. While the percentage of cases prosecuted has increased, the rate of conviction has fallen.

The South African government has taken a number of steps to improve the response of the criminal justice system to violence against women. On August 9, the Department of Justice, which ran a campaign on violence against women between November 1996 and March 1997, is scheduled to publish a major new set of guidelines for handling sexual assault cases, addressed to all professionals in the criminal justice system including district surgeons. Health care is also undergoing radical reform, while the role of the health professionals, district surgeons in particular, in the human rights violations of the past has come under scrutiny from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

(Human Rights Watch, 8/8/97)

Region Under Pressure to Review Discriminatory Laws

Women in southern Africa are increasingly pressing governments to review laws which discriminate against them. In Botswana, the Unity Dow case, where women fought against the Citizenship Act which denied Botswana citizenship to children born of Botswana women and foreign husbands, set a precedent in the region for women to fight against other discriminatory laws. The government of Botswana, giving in to pressure from women's groups, has launched an official review of all the laws that affect them. The women are currently lobbying for change in the law on marriage which, they say, treats them like children. Other laws they want changed are the Affiliation Proceedings Act, customary inheritance laws and the Deeds Registration Act.

In Zimbabwe, women are also lobbying for change in marriage laws. One of the aims of this long term process of law review is to see the extent to which laws can be reformed. "We want to know what people think," says Sheila Kanyangarara, coordinator of the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association. "We do not want to seem to be imposing our views on people. This is why we want to engage in discussions and debate at all levels of society, with men and women." In Zimbabwe, it is hoped that changes to the Deceased Estates Administration Act will positively affect other laws which discriminate against women.

In South Africa, the Department of Labour has begun a legislative reform programme to improve women's position in hiring, dismissal, training, reenumeration and equal pay for equal work. This legislative reform will include looking at the employment and occupational Equity Act aimed at removing discrimination against women in the workplace.

(South African Research and Documentation Centre, 7/16/97)

US Conference of Mayors calls for US Action Against Nigerian Dictatorship

The 1,000 member US Conference of Mayors adopted a resolution on June 24, 1997, calling for swift restoration of human rights and democracy in Nigeria, as well as the release of political prisoners. The resolution urges the Administration and Congress to take all practical steps, including economic measures, to achieve the early restoration of democracy and human rights in Nigeria. The resolution welcomes the measures adopted by cities across the US in support of Nigerian democracy.

The resolution notes that "the United States can have significant impact on the Nigerian government because the US annually purchases nearly half the oil exports on which the regime depends for economic survival."

(The Africa Fund, 6/24/97)

St. Louis Committee Supports Ogoni Struggle

by Chris King, St. Louis Support Committee for the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)

Nigeria and St. Louis grew unexpectedly close this past year. In February of 1996, a handful of Nigerian exiles from MOSOP arrived in our town, including Noble Obani-Nwibari, vice president of the movement. MOSOP is an environmental justice struggle that materialized in the oil-rich Niger Delta in 1993. Led by much-loved author Ken Saro-Wiwa, MOSOP organized the Ogoni people to protest the Nigerian military government and Shell Oil, which has operated in Ogoni since 1958 and, according to a slew of independent reports, severely devastated the environment there.

Early in their exile, Obani-Nwibari met local activist Bill Ramsey, who runs the St. Louis Human Rights Action Service and members of the American Friends Service Committee. The MOSOP cause, promoted through documentary videos and speaking engagements, quickly attracted activists from Amnesty International and other groups. A MOSOP support committee took shape around monthly protests at local Shell stations. These protests attracted the attention of one of the world's most profitable corporations. Representatives of Shell-USA and even Shell-Nigeria have flown here to meet with members of the support committee (and used these meetings to falsely claim they are in dialogue with Obani-Nwibari, who did not attend the meetings). The support committee spearheaded a lobbying trip to our nation's capital, which was reported in the Nigerian press, inspiring excitement among activists who remain in-country. Local Ogoni people, with the help of studio engineer Adam Long, also record programming for Radio Kudirat, the clandestine Nigerian pro-democracy radio station. From his couch in south St. Louis, Obani-Nwibari talks once a week to Nigerians, delivering scathing condemnations of the government that keeps him exiled.

Here in the US, oil sanctions are deemed the principal means of pressure against the dictatorship, given their almost-total reliance on petrodollars.

(Africa Policy Information Center, 6/12/97)

Ogoni 20 Detained Without Trial

"Abacha knows that executing them or even trying them will draw unwanted attention. Instead, he seems prepared to let them die in jail untried." (New York Times, 8/6/97)

In 1995, internationally acclaimed writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa was executed along with eight of his colleagues. The Ogoni Nine's only crime was their success in exposing Shell Oil's role in destroying their homeland, dismantling their communities, and killing their brothers and sisters. Since the Ogoni began a nonviolent campaign against oil destruction, over 2,000 people have died at the hands of a military that is armed by and paid for by Shell.

Today, another 20 Ogoni men are in prison in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, awaiting "trial" - framed for murder on the same charges that the Nine were killed for last year. Some have been in jail for over three years, and still the Nigerian government refuses to grant them bail, much less bring them to trial. Testimony by the 20 implicates Shell in their arrest and subsequent torture. As the most powerful entity in Nigeria, there is no doubt that Shell could choose to spare these men's lives, but instead, they are choosing to sit idly by as they waste away in prison.

The Nigerian military regime has gone to extreme lengths to keep the Ogoni 20 out of court. They know that another trial on the same charges for which Saro-Wiwa was executed will attract unwanted attention. They have repeatedly changed venue and used legal technicalities to keep the 20 in jail.

The Ogoni 20 remain in jail under appalling conditions. The men are kept in severely overcrowded cells, each with dozens of prisoners. All must sleep on the floor. Torture, denial of medical care, starvation, and poor sanitary conditions are all listed as complaints. All of them are currently in poor health. On August 11, the 20 began a 10 day hunger strike. They are calling for international solidarity and support.

The Ogoni 20 are in prison because they, like Ken Saro-Wiwa, opposed Shell's dirty operations in Nigeria and the devastation of Ogoni land through 30 years of oil drilling activities. Like Ken Saro-Wiwa, these men stood up for their rights when death squads began to sweep through their homeland in response to their nonviolent protests.

(Project Underground, 8/13/97)

Sierra Club Calls for Action Week - September 15-19

During the week of September 15, call or fax your Representative to urge support for H.R. 1786, "The Nigeria Democracy Act". The phone number for the US Capitol switchboard is (202) 224-3121. In addition to codifying sanctions already imposed by the Clinton administration, the bill would ban new US corporate investment in Nigeria until such time as the country has demonstrated progress toward restoring democracy. The bill's other key provisions include: a ban on US arms sales; denial of visas to members of the military government; a ban on direct air travel between the US and Nigeria; denial of US economic aid except for human rights and democracy programs; a freeze on personal assets of members of the regime; and US opposition to loans from the IMF and the World Bank.

(Sierra Club, 8/18/97)

Draft Law to Ban Mercenaries is Finally Published

A draft law to prevent the organization of mercenaries in South Africa has finally been published. It has been promised since the mercenary organization Executive Outcomes came to public notice some years ago after its involvement in Angola, but has been substantially delayed. The bill will now be referred to Parliament's defense committees for scrutiny before plenary debates in the Houses.

The Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Bill, introduced by Defense Minister Joe Modise, gives effect to a prohibition in the Constitution on mercenary activities unless specifically permitted by legislation. The bill expands the present functions of the Arms Control Committee by including the regulation of all forms of military-related assistance abroad by South African individuals or juristic persons as well as companies such as Executive Outcomes, whose men have been involved in many theatres of war in Africa in recent years. Under the terms of the new bill, South Africans who act as mercenaries abroad could in future face ten years in jail and a million Rand fine if they have not obtained the necessary authorization from the Minister of Defense.

"Foreign military assistance" is defined as engaging in armed conflict or providing military advise, training or cooperation, various forms of support, recruitment, medical or paramedical services, procurement of equipment and also providing security services for individuals or in respect of property. Individuals or companies who wish to provide military-related services abroad will in future be obliged first to obtain approval from the government to market these services and, second, to receive authorization to enter into contract with a third party to provide such services.

If the law comes into effect, the Pretoria-based Executive Outcomes (EO) may simply move house and establish itself elsewhere, or accept being taken over by another country. EO chairman Eeban Barlow commented earlier this year that an offer had been made to him by an unnamed foreign government to purchase EO "as a means of boosting their interests in Africa." EO has already sought to "project itself over strategic distances" through its "logistical infrastructure" - meaning that it sought business further afield, and out of Africa, such as in Papua New Guinea earlier this year, or in the Middle East. EO has a number of subsidiary and allied companies in African and other countries which could become its headquarters. While such a move would not protect future South African mercenaries working for EO, it could protect the organization itself from punitive fines.

It is uncertain how large EO's force really is. EO has been stepping up recruitment in South Africa, according to reports. Executive Research Association, a company considered to be an EO proxy, is reported to have recruited a further 500 men for new operations and there may be up to 2,000 men on call. EO chairman Eeben Barlow says there are between 200 and 7,000. However Laurie Nathan, Executive Director of the Cape Town based Center for Conflict Resolution, notes that Barlow's former job was in the Military Intelligence Civil Cooperation Bureaus and "one of his tasks was to feed false information to the press."

(*Southscan*, Vol. 12, No. 27, 7/18/97)

Lapsley's Attackers Identified

Father Lapsley is an Anglican priest who has been living in southern Africa for over 20 years. In April 1990, a letter bomb was sent to his home in Zimbabwe. The blast took both of his hands and an eye. Today, Father Lapsley is a chaplain at the Trauma Center for Victims of Violence and Torture in South Africa.



"On Wednesday, 16 July, I was informed by the Truth Commission that three members of the Civil Cooperation Bureau, which was one of the death squads paid for by the military, Mr. Joe Verster, Mr. Weouter Basson and Mr. Abraham 'Slang' van Zyl, were believed by the Commission to be responsible for the letter bomb attack on me in 1990. They are to be subpoenaed to an in-camera hearing by the Truth Commission on 17, 18 and 19 August. Their subpoena under Section 29 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act means they have not asked for amnesty and presumably believed that they would not be detected.

I congratulated the TRC for discovering those they believed to be responsible. Whilst I did always want to know who was responsible, it is another burden to come to terms with the reality of three actual human beings who are supposed to have tried to kill me."

(*Father Michael Lapsley*, SSM, July 1997)

Mandela Balks at Involvement in East Timor

The African National Congress government has opened itself to a flurry of criticism after President Nelson Mandela, on a visit this week to Indonesia, said he would supply arms for external defense "without hesitation" and would not press the Indonesian government over East Timor. Mandela acknowledged that the former Portuguese colony was spoken about in "every corner of the globe" but said he would not take advantage of the two countries' friendship to say what should be done - though in a circuitous way he called for dialogue. Mandela said South Africa would abide by the UN resolutions on East Timor.

Indonesia annexed the former Portuguese colony of East Timor in 1976, but the UN still considers Lisbon to be its official administrator. East Timor remains a key foreign affairs issue in Angola and Mozambique, and for years the Angolan government gave support to Fretilin, the underground East Timor opposition party.

Mandela's statement that South Africa would be prepared to sell arms to Indonesia was "very regrettable", the Ceasefire Campaign said. "We should not be contributing to the abuse of human rights there." The organization noted that South African produced shock batons had been used against demonstrators in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital.

(*Southscan*, Vol 12., No.: 27, 7/18/97)

Mozambique

What the Executioners of Yesterday are Doing Today...

"Beach and Beast" Resort Planned for Mozambique

The government of Mozambique has given the go-ahead for American millionaire James Ulysses Blanchard III to make about 900 square miles of southern Mozambique, including a 56-mile swath of white sand dunes, a "beast and beach paradise" - that is a reserve where tourists could see everything from elephants to flamingos and also swim, sail and scuba dive in warm Indian Ocean waters. Right now, the area is sparsely populated and fairly pristine, despite being just south of the capital, Maputo, and a day's drive from Johannesburg, the crowded economic hub of South Africa.

The human and animal populations were both devastated by Mozambique's 17 year civil war - most of the big mammals in Maputo Elephant Reserve were killed for food or for their horns and tusks. Most of the people around the reserve were driven away by the back-and-forth fighting between Frelimo, the dominant party in current government, and Renamo, the rebel movement that opposed it. About 10,000 people have returned to the area in helter-skelter fashion: two small coastal towns have revived with residents living off fishing and scuba tourists from South Africa. Subsistence farmers have chopped and burned tiny plots in and outside the elephant reserve.

Mr. Blanchard's plans include million-dollar homes, game lodges, golf courses and marinas. His architects are musing about a floating casino, seaside hotels in the shape of beached cruise ships, and an elegant steam railway on a 100-mile loop. The whole project as envisioned will take more than 10 years and \$800 million to finish.

Mr. Blanchard, a 53-year-old Louisiana native, is a controversial figure in Mozambique, but certainly good at raising money. Starting as a numismatist who wanted to buy and sell gold coins at a time when private ownership of the metal was illegal for Americans, he made a fortune in newsletters, mutual funds and

conferences for gold investors. An outspoken libertarian and supporter of anti-Communist causes, he donated money, medical supplies, and radios to Renamo, the rebel movement.

He has made his peace with the Frelimo-dominated Government and is now one of a handful of foreign investors seriously interested in Mozambique, which is desperately short of simple things like electric power and drivable roads.

"I'm accused of being a naive visionary, but I don't think the world can stand by and write off Africa," Blanchard said. "The amount of money needed to create jobs and property is so small." (New York Times, 6/15/97)

US Soldiers Arrive for Training

Members of the US Special Forces of the Third Airborne Group arrived in Maputo this week to conduct a six-week training course for the Mozambican Army. The 12 soldiers will carry out conventional tactics and basic leadership training exercises for small units of the Mozambican army in Boane, in the southern part of the country. The training is part of the Joint Combined Exchange Training program that started in 1996 in Maputo. It allows US Special Forces to enter a specific area and operate alongside local troops to exchange experiences and train the troops.

(Southscan, Vol. 12, No. 19, 5/16/97)

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Southern Africa

Book Reviews (continued from page 5)

the stock response of hopeful westerners: surely the people are tired of war. "But Senhor," was the usual retort, "it is not the and the *donos* never die." This pessimism, Maier ruefully acknowledges, proved entirely justified, as UNITA plunged the country into a vicious new round of fighting. The election process had brought supporters of both sides out in the open and the sudden resumption of hostilities made many people vulnerable. Maier describes how in their respective strongholds, armed posses of both sides toured the *musseques* (the shanty town areas) dragging off political opponents to summary execution. His discovery of a burial site with human limbs sticking above ground made world headlines.

This is a gripping read: a perceptive, detailed and deeply felt account of the nightmare experienced by a people bewildered by war yet stoically doing their best to survive. It contains much factual information concerning the day-to-day political shifts and military movements, but is also notable for its vivid depiction of war and the people caught up in it. There are the harassed UN officials and confused or duplicitous soldiery; the traumatized orphans, and the doctors and nurses working without equipment or medicines. There is the heroism of women who search for food in fields they know to be mined, and of truck drivers who risk their lives delivering supplies to isolated cities in war zones. There are the greedy white traders profiting from the he war, and the British mercenaries masquerading as 'security experts'. At times tension gives way to bathos, for instance when Pik Botha, South Africa's foreign minister on a futile peace mission, lurches drunkenly around his hotel after air hostesses. But humour in this grim situation is generally in short supply.

(Africa Book Center Magazine, London, Summer 1997)



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