



# SOCIAL CHANGE and development

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who are the

## DISADVANTAGED?

- POOR
- PEASANTS
- EX-COMBATANTS
- OLD



# contents

# Number 11 1985

The Journal on Social Change and Development  
is a collective publication which aims to promote discussion on current issues of importance to our readers. We welcome comments and contributions

EDITORIAL	1
THE UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF BINGA AND THE OVERDEVELOPMENT OF AID ... part 1	2
THE POOR IN MBARE	5
NEED WE WORRY ABOUT THE ELDERLY IN ZIMBABWE?	7
THE LIBERATORS OF ZIMBABWE	10
THIRD WORLD COLUMN: Troubles in Sri Lanka	13
WOMEN'S PAGE: Book Review	15
FOCUS ON SOUTH AFRICA: 'Interim Government' or UDI?	17
MARXISM: Classes and Poverty	19
LETTERS	22



## FUTURE FOCUS



The focus for our next two Issues will be 1) An Election Post-Mortem and 2) Women  
We welcome contributions for these and issues further into 1985/86, which include Youth, Culture and the Arts, and Food and Farming.

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# EDITORIAL -

Zimbabwe has been independent now for five years. Since 1980 a lot of good changes have taken place in the lives of the people of this country. Many things that used to be enjoyed by a few, the whites, are now being enjoyed by more people of all races. In the civil service the racial imbalance has been virtually done away with. More black children go to school now; minimum wages have been introduced; political rights are being enjoyed by more people than before.

Nevertheless, a number of things have not changed much. As a result a lot of our people are still underprivileged. The economic system as a whole has not changed at all, it is still the same old capitalist system dominated by the country's white bourgeoisie and the multinational companies from Western Europe. Blacks still find it difficult to get senior jobs in the private sector. The difference is that now these things are taking place when the country has gained political independence.

In capitalism no one can do away with the underprivileged, capitalism breeds them, and it survives on them. In other words, as long as capitalist ownership and distribution predominate in our society, we shall continue to have underprivileged groups, classes and individuals in Zimbabwe. This will continue no matter how many times we may try to tinker with the system in order to make the condition of being underprivileged more bearable.

We have not yet seen any real transfer of power or ownership of the country's resources to the people. Different groups are unequal, and many people feel powerless. This powerlessness and underprivilege is felt differently by different groups of our people. In this issue we look at how it is experienced by some of the underprivileged groups in our society.

Peasants in remote areas are often mentioned as an underprivileged group. We have a long article on the peasants in

Binga which we have split so that a second part will appear in Issue Number 12. The first part, in this Issue, examines the disadvantages which the people of this particular remote area experience.

Poverty, misery and powerlessness are not restricted to rural areas; our article on the homeless in Mbare examines the situation of those who are at the bottom of the pile in town.

Need we worry about the elderly in Zimbabwe? This question is answered in our article on the old and their problems.

The article 'The Liberators of Zimbabwe' is a cry from the heart of an ex-combatant who feels that the needed social changes for which he fought have been side-stepped and those who fought for those changes are being forgotten.

The Third World page explains the situation of some of the underprivileged in Sri Lanka - about whom we have heard a lot recently.

We review a new book about Women in Zimbabwean Industry on the Womens Page. 'Internal Settlement or UDI?' - what does the settlement in Namibia mean for the underprivileged there? The Marxist Column looks at the question of Classes and Poverty.

The Issue therefore deals with the question of social policy. What is our social policy? On what economic relations is it based? or should it be based?

We take this opportunity to thank all the contributors to this Issue for a job well done.

Cain Mathema  
Brian McGarry  
Tafi Chigudu  
ISSUE EDITORS

# THE UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF BINGA AND THE OVERDEVELOPMENT OF AID .....

## part I

### Introduction

The valley Tonga numbering about 60,000 people may be cited as one of the most disadvantaged groups in Zimbabwe. However, many of the problems they experience mirror those of other communal area inhabitants, particularly those in similarly inaccessible, inhospitable regions. What is different about the Tonga is their history - their massive resettlement on account of the building of Kariba Dam and the threat this posed to their rich cultural heritage. What the Tonga share with many other Communal areas is the mismanagement of development efforts. There is a lack of co-ordination among Ministries and non-governmental agencies. Many decisions affecting the area are made at national and even international centres with minimal consultation with the people concerned.

This article will outline events leading to the present sorry plight of the Tonga and will then analyse current development approaches being adopted in the Binga District. The latter analysis will provide a basis for recommendations for more relevant development strategies which hopefully could be applicable in other areas as well.

### The face of underdevelopment

Before 1957 and the commencement of the work on Kariba Dam, the Valley Tonga lived in lake villagess on both sides of the Zambezi River. They had a distinctive culture and a rich religious life centred around the river, which formed no formidable barrier since there was



ALL PHOTOS BY GUY LAWRENCE

much visiting back and forth between the north and south banks. As the river rose the two groups were torn apart, and with growing political differences between Zambia and then Rhodesia exchanging visits became almost impossible.

Between 1957 and 1962 all the Valley Tonga on the south side of the Zambezi river were relocated inland to the dry hot plateau areas between 500 and 600 meters above sea level. Some chiefs and their clansmen were persuaded to move voluntarily after a poor rainy season in the valley. Others resisted, notably Chief Singatenke's people, who refused to dislodge until their houses were flooded.

The passing of time led most to regret their departure from the River which in various ways had provided an ample livelihood. Not only was fishing worthwhile but most villages were sited near tributaries which supplied rich alluvial soil to the flood plains. Double and sometimes even treble cropping therefore occurred with riverine agriculture on the banks, dry land farming on the plateau and intermediate fields in between. Agricultural production which was evenly spread throughout the year, was supplemented by hunting and collection of wild fruits abundant on the river banks.

Obviously, the land of "milk and honey" also had its drawbacks. It is estimated that 60-80% of children died before the age of five of malaria and diarrhoea. Tuberculosis, leprosy and bilharzia took their toll on the adult population. Life expectancy was low.

### The present situation

However, life on the plateau was to prove even more difficult. The worst aspect is probably the non-viability of agriculture. 58% of the present Binga District falls into Natural Region V with such poor soils and rainfall that it is unsuitable for cropping, cattle or game ranching. 34% lies in Natural Region IV, some portions of which do have some irrigation potential (though it is usually expensive and difficult to utilise such potential). However, the high salt and mineral content in the underground water supply present a further problem because the very hot dry climate and certain soil types would result in rapid salt crust formation.

Apart from water problems, major difficulties also arise from lack of draught power. The digging sticks used on the flood plains are ineffective for preparing the hard dry soils on the uplands and there are hardly any cattle owing to the tsetse fly prevalent in the area. A few cattle are maintained under vaccination cover but the mass of the population have no access to ploughs. Consequently Binga District is still a food deficit area. For the first two years after resettlement full flood aid was supplied, and ever since supplementary feeding has been necessary, particularly in severe drought years which are frequent.

Food aid has had a very harmful effect on the area. Firstly, the population has started concentrating along the roads near distribution points, thus far exceeding the carrying capacity of the nearby land and secondly, people are developing a preference for maize over sorghum and millet which are the drought resistant crops more suitable for the area. An Agritex report estimates that 25% of the total cultivated area is now under maize.

Not only is food aid creating dependency and undermining agriculture. It also has negative psychological effects which rebound on other development efforts. Until basic needs for food, clothing and shelter have been met, people cannot afford to be interested in the "higher" needs for education, participation and self actualisation etc. Thus lack of food security results in an apathetic response to the development programmes. What the Tonga need is not food aid but investment in water supplies and solar-powered desalination to make agriculture viable.

The state of dependency and underdevelopment to which the Tonga have been reduced is particularly galling when one considers that the benefits of the hydro-electric scheme that dislodged them go straight to the modern sector. The Tonga are not even allowed to live and farm on the banks of Kariba, except in small designated fishing camps since the flood area has been declared National Parks land! Only a few hundred of the population of 60,000 are now involved in fishing, and most of the profits from fishing are syphoned off by middlemen with transport and/or refrigeration facilities both of which the fishermen lack.



PHOTO COURTESY S. SWIFT

In fact transport is generally a severe problem in Binga District. The only truck which travels regularly to Hwange belongs to the privately owned Rest Camp. This means that marketing of goats, chickens or cash crops is virtually impossible! It also means that acquisition of inputs such as seeds and fertiliser, and purchase of day old chicks, animals and animal feed is extremely difficult. Availability of basic goods is very limited and prices very high. Furthermore there are no vocational and technical training facilities in the area bar one small agricultural training centre. There is no electricity in the area, on the shores of a hydro-electric scheme! With such a scarcity of resources no wonder that the average annual per capita income is only \$15.00.

Such are the practical problems faced by the Tonga in Binga. Little mention has been made of the social disruption linked to their resettlement. The move from the former large villages to more dispersed settlements has constituted a strain on the familial and clan ties so important to the Tonga. What is surprising is that development programmes in the area pay little heed to social structures. Often programmes are directed at individuals, rather than acknowledging and strengthening existing social networks.

Trish Swift &  
Martin de Graaf

This article will be continued in the next issue of Social Change and Development.



# THE POOR IN MBARE

This article is based on my experience of work amongst the poor in Mbare. Who are the poor there? Who are those at the bottom of the economic pile? My work in Mbare spanned from 1978 to mid 1983 when I stayed at St. Peter's, by the Shawasha Hostels, near Musika. Many changes have taken place since then but much of what I say still applies. Also, it must be noted that the period I was there was a particularly difficult one, covering both the war years and the drought years after Independence. I will however restrict my comments mainly to the post Independence years since these relate more closely to our present situation.

There are a great variety of poor in Mbare but I wish briefly to say something about two groups who deserve particular attention. These are the homeless foreign people (mainly from Malawi and Mozambique) who squat in various places round Mbare, and the widows, or deserted women, who lodge in the Matapi, Nenyere and other hostel blocks in Mbare. Apart from the numerous mentally disturbed people and tramp-like characters who sleep out in the open and rummage around Musika for food, I would say these two groups are amongst the poorest in Mbare.

Most of the foreigners are men who came to Zimbabwe many years ago seeking employment. Having obtained jobs on white farms and mines, they were only to lose these jobs during the liberation war when many farms and mines closed down. They were consequently driven into the towns in search of food, shelter, security and hope of work. As jobs were unobtainable and accommodation either unavailable or beyond their economic reach, they were forced to squat in whatever shelters they could find. Some settled at the Mukuwisi river; others in plastic shelters around Musika, or in the filthy cellars of the Matapi Hostels and the kitchens, washrooms and storerooms of the Mbare and Shawasha Hostels. Others again had simply no shelters they could find and made do with trees or verandahs of the Machipisa shops around Musika, or the hedges in the courtyard of the Mbare Hostels.



Picture by Alexander Joe

The source of livelihood of these people varies a good deal. A few find the odd temporary job cutting a hedge, or mowing a lawn, etc. Some go about begging. Others scavenge about rubbish dumps for odds and ends (bottles, wire, string, boxes, etc.) to sell at Musika. The few lucky ones who have a skill might make pots or rubber sandals to sell at Magaba.

In addition to their material hardships and poverty, these people suffer great emotional and spiritual poverty and alienation. They are appropriately referred to as 'aliens'. Cut off from their families, relatives and their roots in Malawi or Mozambique, they have no one to turn to for support and help. They are separated too from their former friends and work-mates on the farms and mines. Despite the near slave-labour conditions and the exploitation of their former work, they are now stripped of even the small shred of dignity they derived from being at work. In a society which generally accords respect and dignity to the employed and regards those out of work as nuisances and lazy good-for-nothings, and harshly rejects their appeals for acceptance, for work and even for assistance, these foreigners are deprived of whatever sense of dignity

and worth they may once have enjoyed. Small wonder that so many seek to drown their misery by drink whenever they can get hold of kachasu.

During 'Operation Clean-Up' many of these foreigners were removed from their squatting places and attempts were made to either repatriate them or resettle them. Some of these attempts were successful and people either returned home or were well settled on new plots of land or on co-operatives. But many could not return to their countries. Having been uprooted from home for many years and having lost contact with relatives and friends, they would be quite lost and uncared for if they were sent back. For some, like a group squatting at the Mukuwisi river, 'Operation Clean-Up' turned out to be a total nightmare and a typical example of the inhuman treatment to which these people are so often subjected. According to them, they (women and children included) were herded into lorries and dumped like objects at mundu murefu in Mashumbi Pools. They were given scant shelter and food and no means to cultivate. They claim that a couple were even killed by lions. After whiling away their time in these terrible conditions for a few months, the authorities decided that the plan was not working out so they herded them back onto lorries and dropped them at Musika leaving them to fend for themselves. They returned to squatting in plastic and cardboard shelters, this time by the Mbare hostels.

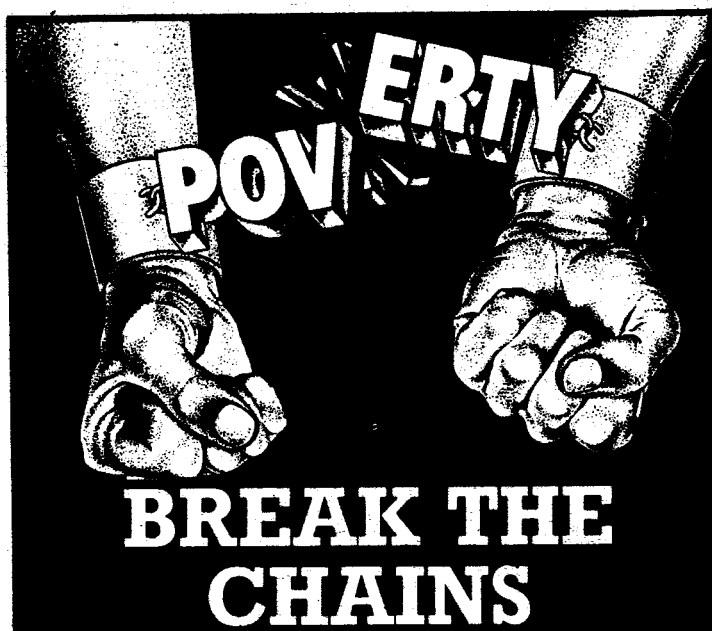
### The Widows and Deserted Women

The other group of poor I would like to mention is that of the widows and women deserted by their husbands. Many of these women live in the hostels in Mbare, or in the small concrete shacks near Musika. A number of these women are war widows who fled to town during the liberation war. Others are the abandoned wives of unemployed husbands who simply walk out on their wives when the burden of looking after a family becomes too onerous.

Economically life is extremely difficult for these women, most of whom have numerous children to care for. They eke out a meagre living by selling such things as vegetables, plastic bags, grass brooms, bits of scrap wood, etc. This barely covers their expenses and so many are forced into prostitution or into becoming mapoto wives. Those renting the small hostel rooms can barely afford the rent and hence are forced to

take in lodgers. This makes for terrible overcrowding; many rooms accommodate two, sometimes even three, families.

Spiritually and emotionally, they too, suffer great poverty and alienation. They feel very insecure; failure to pay rent might result in their eviction and if they are hawkers, as many are, they might be driven away by police, and have their goods confiscated, for selling in an unauthorised place. In addition there is the drudgery and tedium of their working lives. I have often wondered at the sheer boredom of the women sitting all day long behind little piles of tomatoes and bundles of muriwo, in order to scrape together a few cents.



Life is simply a matter of economic survival.

During my time in Mbare, a good number of these women have been assisted by Government or other agencies to return home or to resettle. But there are many others who because of family difficulties, or for economic reasons (this was particularly true during the drought years) could not return home. These women are still to be found in the hostels and other rooms round about Mbare today.

### Conclusion

I have briefly outlined some of the hardships of two groups within the urban community. What are the solutions to these problems? I think first of all we need to change out attitudes towards the poor. People like those I have mentioned, do not generally freely opt for a life of poverty and squatting. They are forced into it by



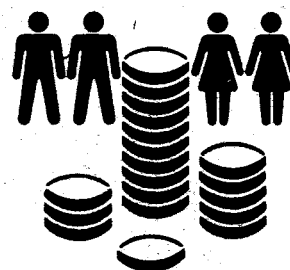
economic circumstances. To regard them disparagingly as lazy economic parasites, or as the causes of urban problems such as overcrowding and health breakdowns only compounds the problem. It enhances their feeling of alienation and loss of human dignity, things which a socialist system professes to abolish. Furthermore, simply to say 'go away' or 'go home' (as they are often told) is of little use unless you give them a place to go to and help them to start a life there.

Still on the immediate level, an extension of the Government's resettlement schemes and co-operative programmes is urgently called for. The one project of which I have some first-hand experience, the Melfort Project, which places former destitutes and squatters into a farming co-operative, seems to be very successful.

But ultimately the only radical solution lies in going to the root of the problem and tackling the root causes. When Mother Theresa recently visited China in search of 'the poorest of the poor' she was firmly told that in a Socialist country there are

no poor such as she is accustomed to see in the West and in India. The existence of such poor and marginalised people in our towns suggests that, despite all the rhetoric, Zimbabwe is still a long way from true socialism. Life in our towns is still essentially capitalist and people are expected to be duly employed and be wage earners. They derive their value and dignity and even their right to reside in the town from this. In these days of high unemployment, anyone unlucky enough not to fit into this system is duly relegated to the rubbish dumps of society. The only lasting hope of these poor lies in the true socialist transformation which is the proposed aim of Zimbabwe.

Roland von Nidda SJ



# Need we worry about the ELDERLY in Zimbabwe?

We may think that old people's issues are not serious problems in our region, because our population growth rate is one of the highest in the world, and our population is one of the world's youngest - over half are under 15 years old. In contrast with the West and the U.S.S.R., where there are enormous and expensive programmes for caring for the elderly, we think of Africa and our own country, as showing how communities can care for their own needy members - as long as the extended family functions reasonably well. Our complacency is strengthened by these beliefs:

- i) There are only a quarter of a million people over 60 years old in Zimbabwe - an insignificant number.
- ii) Rural communities, where most old people live, are undifferentiated in income, wealth, food consumption etc. and recent rural development strategies will help all households and individuals in an equitable way.
- iii) Though the bonds of the extended family are weakening, they can still care for their elderly members.

In fact, the little evidence that is available contradicts all these beliefs in fundamental ways.

## NUMBERS

Yes, very few Zimbabweans are more than 60 years old, about 3% in fact. But the population of elderly in Africa is expected to more than double by the year 2000. Thanks to improvements in medicine and health care, the numbers of elderly Zimbabweans are increasing faster than any other group.



On the other hand, most elderly black people live in rural areas, and even in urban areas very few retired workers have pensions. Very few live in any of the country's 50-odd old peoples homes. Those who do live in homes such as Bhumidzo, SODA, Melfort Batanai and Entumbani, are mainly destitute foreigners.

## RURAL AREAS

Most elderly black people live in communal areas. We tend to believe that new clinics, VHW's (Village Health Workers), increased grain production by peasant farmers etc. benefit all communal areas, all households, and all household members equally. We also tend to believe that all suffer equally from economic depression, drought, lack of transport etc.

None of this is true. Although arable plots do not vary much in size between different communal lands, most other indicators of wealth show considerable differences between regions, households and classes. For example, although cattle have great economic, social and religious significance, it seems that nearly half the country's households do not own any. The government programme of making tractors available for hire is expensive and uneven in its spread. Lack of draught power is

one cause of differences in agricultural output. Some areas did not suffer too much from the drought but others were devastated. Evidence is scanty on whether the elderly were worse hit than others, but it does seem that elderly heads of households are less likely to cultivate large fields, less likely to have credit, less likely to own oxen or a scotch cart. This is particularly so when the household head is a widow.

In a famine the elderly are almost as vulnerable as children, and in chronic drought calorie-protein deficiencies are a major problem for all members of poor rural households. Figures are difficult to come by, but high-income rural households may spend more than ten times as much per head on food as do poor rural households. In the poor households, elderly people can be severely malnourished - in one area badly affected by drought, they were reduced to boiling poisonous roots so that they could have something to eat eventually. No research has been done on the nutritional status of the elderly in Zimbabwe, but in general in three West African countries the rural elderly are so malnourished that they need feeding programmes.

Rural households are helped by cash remittances from family members with jobs in town but this does not benefit the elderly as much as might be supposed. Not all rural households get remittances, and obviously it is the poorer families who do not have any members in urban jobs. Such households tend also not to own scotch carts, tend to get less credit, and tend to have fewer home improvements, such as pit latrines and protected wells. Two thirds of all rural households do not get remittances; even as many as one third of the elderly people who have children employed in town say they get nothing from them.

## EXTENDED FAMILY

Although the extended family was believed to care for all its members, family ties are certainly loosening, but we cannot be sure how far things have changed already or how fast the change is. One survey showed that 5% of elderly rural people live away from their children; another showed that widows ( of all ages ) cannot expect much help from their families. Means of sharing and caring that may have worked in the past cannot overcome poverty and inequality which hits the rural elderly especially hard.

## OTHER CATEGORIES

Others besides the rural elderly are disadvantaged and suffer poor health and poor nutrition. Poor aliens who are either commercial farm workers, or, in town, informal sector workers or unemployed, are another sizeable and visible group. Many worked for years in formal employment or domestic service, but have no pension or source of income except selling at Musika.

Another group of elderly people at risk have mental or physical handicaps and their condition is worse if they are also becoming senile. The health system is, understandably directed to mother and child care programmes and cannot provide the much needed care, prevention or rehabilitation for elderly handicapped people.

## THE FUTURE

*"When an elder dies, a library is in flames".* This saying reminds us powerfully of the role of the elderly in passing on African values and beliefs. But as people live longer, more of them are elderly and each individual old person's status seems reduced. Yet they could be a great force for good in Zimbabwe's development. We need to be aware of the elderly as a group rather than e.g. helping formal sector employees with a pension scheme and neglecting the farmer. Government, municipal and NGO agencies are making moves to set up a national committee of aging. Some other African countries have a Day for the Elderly: what about us? The country is full of agencies and experts investigating everything from accountancy to zymurgy, but why don't we listen to our old folks so that we can help meet their needs. Becoming old exacerbates the class divisions of our society giving the poor an even bleaker future unrelieved by financial or family support. We need to direct some of our expertise towards improving the prospects of disadvantaged old people.

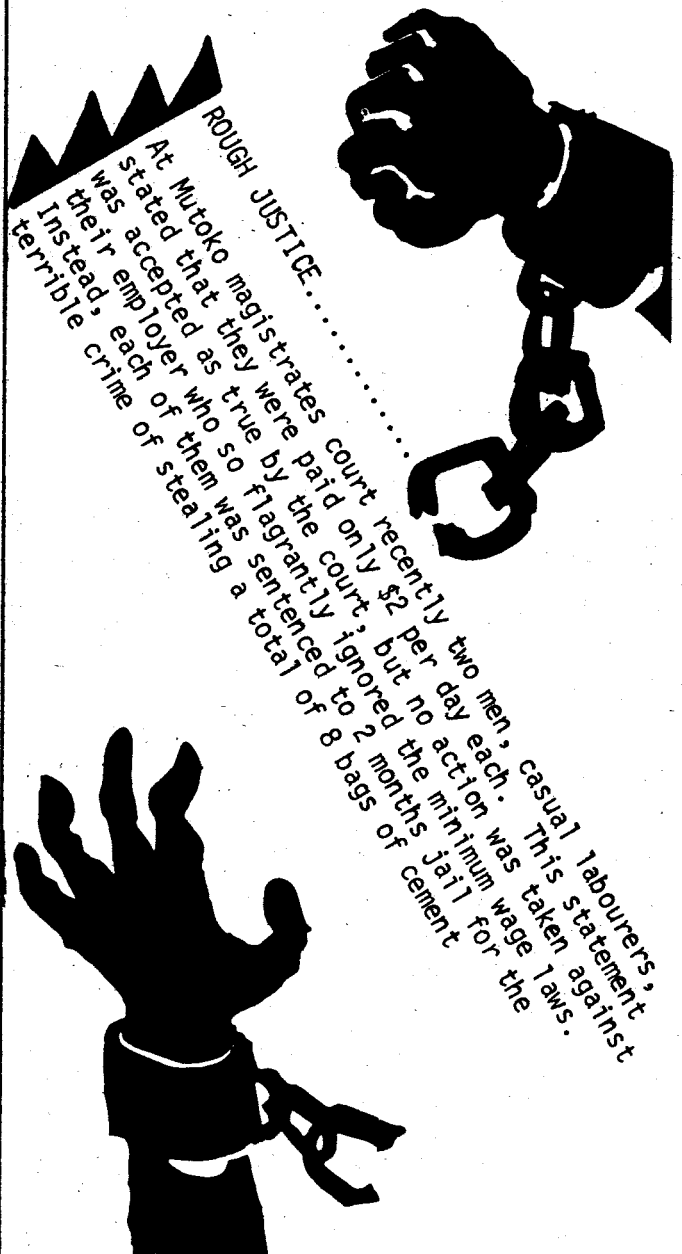
Joe Hampson



# fillers —

WE CARRY A HEAVY LOAD.....

Musami hospital, in Murewa district, has a nutrition village where sick and undernourished children are rehabilitated and their mothers are taught how to know, grow and cook the most nourishing foods for them. Most of the sick children who come to the hospital are undernourished, and all the chronic cases are children who are being cared for by their mother alone, that is, children of unmarried, divorced or widowed women.





# THE LIBERATORS OF ZIMBABWE



The Zimbabwean people launched many political struggles to free themselves from British settlers who had colonised our country and monopolised all the resources of our economy. All these attempts failed.

Then, as from 1962, ZAPU changed the nature of the struggle from negotiation to armed struggle. After the break of ZANU from ZAPU, the ZANU comrades decided the same, and this continued all the way up to the formation of ZPRA and ZANLA by the two liberation movements based in exile: ZAPU in Zambia having ZPRA, and ZANU in Mozambique having ZANLA. These armies were formed specifically to destroy oppression and all the means of support of the settler system on the soil of Zimbabwe. The armed revolutionary cadres made victorious operations from time to time. Some targets were selectively destroyed by the gallant fighters.

The Zimbabwean masses applauded when they heard of such operations: *"a troop carrier with 15 soldiers detonated a landmine and everyone died"*, *"Salisbury is burning"*. These made quite impressive news for the people because they knew that their sovereignty would be restored by their sons and daughters.

Young men and women had sacrificed their lives to liberate their motherland from the British settlers and to set up a new society where all Zimbabwean citizens would benefit equally from the wealth of their country.

As militant cadres of ZPRA and ZANLA we were educated to be capable of carrying out all the tasks of the revolutionary struggle by synthesising theory with practice; how we were going to build a new nation in Zimbabwe, where there would be no foreign investment extracting our raw materials for the benefit of other nations, but to build a nation where the land belongs entirely to the Zimbabwean people, for them to

benefit equally from its potential; a nation where unity is not doubted, a nation where exploitation is not attempted, and a nation led by the working class.

Due to the escalation of the war the enemy forces were demoralised and lost hope of winning. They only succeeded in raids on refugee camps. This made the freedom fighters harden their resolve and they gained confidence that they would win the war because they realised the operations of the enemy were too expensive and poorly planned. Sanctions were hitting the economy. Hired mercenaries from Israel, Australia and South Africa, as well as people who had to fight to earn money to support their families could not resist the accurate fire power of the gallant fighters. The freedom fighters were strong because from the transit camp to the training camp, from the training camp to the fortified garrisons, they were always in the bush. This made the freedom fighters used to bush



Biddy Crewe

life. They had more experience of bush fighting and were always in combat readiness. Politics was a daily topic in the revolutionary forces. Commissars had programmes almost daily to teach cadres about the ideology of the party, to teach them socialist principles and to discuss the entire struggle

## Independence

The victory of 1980 came at the cost of life, cost of blood, and cost of time. It was a victory of political power. The nationalist leaders received massive cheers from the masses of Zimbabwe for their leadership to victory in the lifetime of Ian Smith, the man who had sworn that not in his lifetime, not even in a thousand years, would Africans rule. The freedom fighters were praised by their families, friends and the entire nation and the rest of the progressive forces of the world for the heroic work they had achieved.

As freedom fighters we still reserved a question: *"What is to be done now?"* As soldiers, we had the task of defending what we had achieved. We thought that there would be a uniting of ZPRA and ZANLA under one command to form an army of a new type, that us, a political army, socialist oriented. We never thought of integration with the army of the enemy. Those should have been screened so that we could accept only those found innocent.

We thought our socialist allies would be called to assist in the formation of an army capable of defending the people's power and Zimbabwe's wealth. But the contract with the British shocked us and demoralised us. We realised that the revolution was diverted by the politicians.

When we were in the assembly points integration started and our importance decreased for the government and in the public eye. Division between ZPRA and ZANLA was promoted by some politicians and this resulted in the Entumbane battles. Those who remained above the 43,000 men the army wanted were demobilised with \$4,500 over two years to start a new life. It would have been rather better if our leaders had decided to open training institutes in the main assembly points to educate their great heroes in academic subjects and in various industrial skills. If at all our socialist allies had been asked to help on such projects, they couldn't have refused the idea, or we could have used some of the

ZIMCORD funds. This retained manpower could then have had great potential for government stability and in government projects.

Imagine you have suffered for ten years in the bush where you can not even rear a chicken and then you are given \$4,500 to start a new life when somebody who was in the former army defending the colonial system is now getting something like \$1,000 a month in the ZNA!

Those who were demobilised face unemployment which is a disease of all capitalist countries. Their demob payments are finished and they have no work. What to do then remains a question.

Some of the demobilised comrades resorted to forming socialist-oriented co-operatives, which is in line with government policy. But their problem is that they get moral support from the government and very little else. That is like a doctor who says *"You will be OK"* when you are ill without giving you the medicine that is needed. So some of these co-operatives have failed because of failing to get financial support from the government.

We hear of people who say they ran away from home in the southern part of the country because of harassment by armed men. One man came carrying a G3 rifle and said: *"You are still earning some demob money: you are a sellout"* and beat the comrade



very hard. Another time, somebody in uniform came and said: "You were demobilised. you must be a dissident" and beat him up again. That made him leave home and go to stay in town where he rented a room and lived the town life, depending entirely on his demob money. Today the demob pay is finished. What is he to do?

Land is still a question for the peasants who were promised good land in the new Zimbabwe. People are randomly squatting all over the country because of the lack of land. Some don't have pastures for grazing. Others don't have anywhere to make fields.

And what of the workers? There is no union in this country which can organise a strike against an exploiter to solve grievances of the workers. Workers feel that pay increments are decided in government offices without consulting trade unionists about their needs. Where is the freedom of the workers?

Officials in government offices make decisions 'for the good of the people' but these decisions don't come from the workers at the grassroots. As I remember when we were in the bush, Tanzania, Zambia or Mozambique, those young boys were not there. What is happening to what we fought for?

Nkosana Mavale-a-vule



Those who were disabled in the struggle could well feel that life has passed them by. They get a disability pension, but the size of the pension depends on their army rank, and ranks were not as well defined in the bush as in the colonial army, and so former ZIPRA and ZANLA unit commanders might get the same pension for the same disability as a common soldier in the Rhodesian army because they cannot prove the rank they held to officials.

There is a National Rehabilitation Centre, and a lot of money has been spent on it, but rehabilitation and training are going very slowly. Very few of the men who entered it five years ago have yet left with the ability to support themselves.



## Unfair on disabled ex-fighters

LETTER  
IN

**MOTO**

MAY '84

SIR,

I am the parent of a disabled ex-combatant, and I am worried about his welfare. As far as I can see, this problem does not affect me alone, but every parent whose son or daughter was a victim of the war.

My son joined the Chimurenga war in 1976 and returned in 1980 with his leg amputated below the knee.

What worries me now is that my son is only getting \$89,10 per month for his life-pension. This is nothing when one considers his physical condition. While not making a demand, shouldn't the government consider adding \$2,00 to \$5,00 annually to the existing pensions of disabled ex-combatants?

It is disheartening also to note that

disabled ex-soldiers of the then Rhodesia Army are being paid more than our bush fighters.

I feel it is also unfair to employ these disabled people formerly in industry. Instead of such punishing employment, why can't the government give them special jobs like driving army or police vehicles?

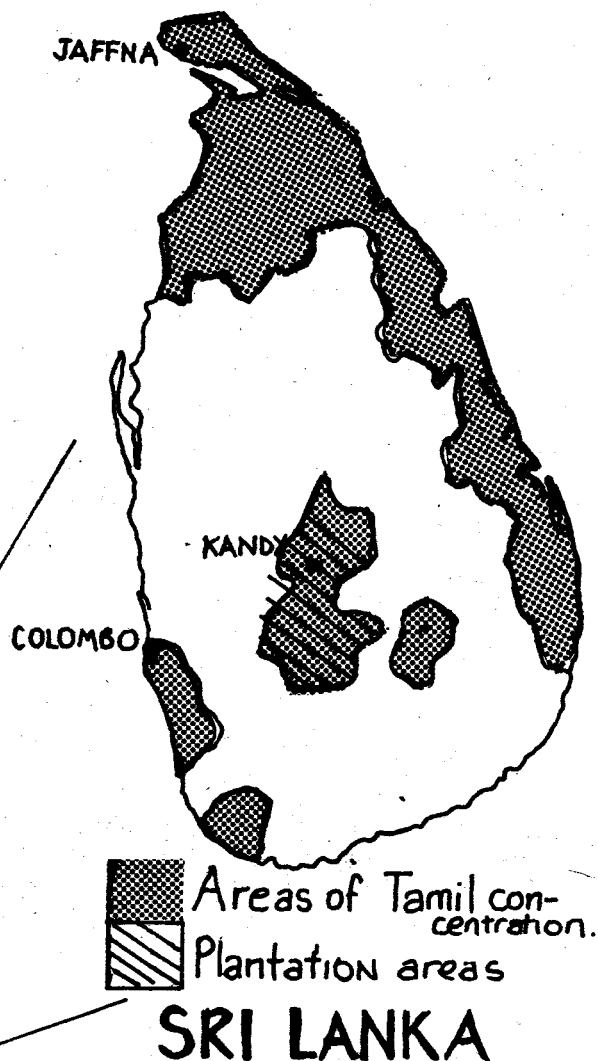
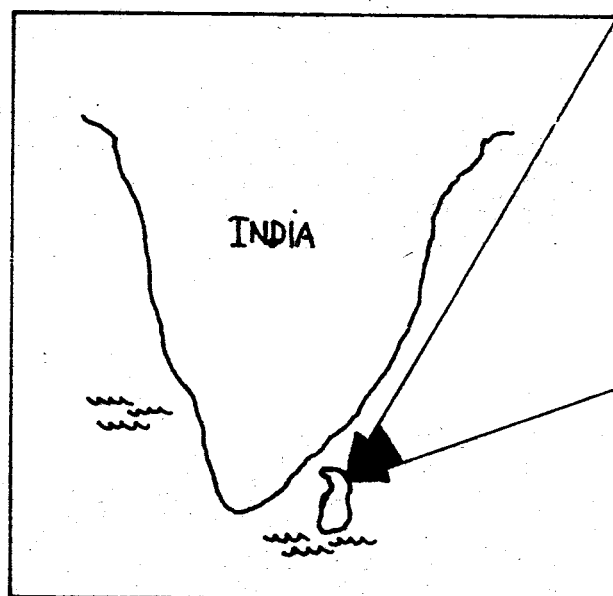
Let us thank our disabled cadres for their contribution to our freedom by being fair to them.

"God Bless Africa"  
Mutare





## THE TROUBLES IN SRI LANKA...



Racial violence in Sri Lanka has been much in the news lately, and outsiders would like to know why. From our own experience we know that such a level of hatred as is seen there does not come naturally to most people. What experiences have the people of Sri Lanka been through to provoke the present level of violence?

Before colonial times there were two main racial groups of people in Sri Lanka, the Sinhala and the Tamils. Both had migrated from India over the centuries: the Sinhala people are related to the Aryan peoples of northern India, while the Tamils are one of the main nationalities of darker-skinned

people in southern India. Although Arab traders, Portuguese, Dutch and British colonialists all visited and stayed on the island for lengths of time and left descendants there, these descendants are few in number compared to the two main groups, and are fairly well integrated into society. They are not concerned directly in the present inter-communal troubles.

The roots of these troubles go back to the 1820's, when the British began to set up plantations in Sri Lanka, which was then called Ceylon. First they tried to grow coffee, and then, when the climate proved unsuitable for coffee, they planted mainly tea and rubber. Tea became the island's main export, so some 90% of the plantations are now tea estates. The Sinhala peasants of the central part of the island were willing to earn a reasonable wage by clearing jungle for the planters, but they refused to live as permanent plantation labour, under conditions similar to those of commercial farm labour here. The British

therefore had to look elsewhere for estate labourers, and found that they could persuade poor Tamils from southern India to come and work for them on the estates. At first these labourers possibly considered the work as temporary and aimed to return to India when they had earned some money, so they may not have minded living separate from the villagers and townspeople of Ceylon, separate even from their fellow Tamils who were already established as the largest minority on the island. Plantation labour conditions might be considered tolerable by temporary labourers, but not by people who will have to live permanently on the plantations. As estate labourers, these later Tamil immigrants became an isolated group of second-class citizens - or rather, an underprivileged group because they were never allowed to be recognised as citizens.

It is easy to show that not all the people of Ceylon had equal rights, and the situation became worse when the island gained independence: inequalities were increased and entrenched, instead of being abolished. When the British colonial government gave universal franchise to the island in 1931, 'universal franchise' proved not to mean 'one man, one vote'. The law stated that all British subjects permanently settled in Ceylon were entitled to vote. All the people living on the island were British subjects, but proving permanent residence was made more difficult for estate Tamils than for the others. An estate Tamil, and only an estate Tamil, needed to get a certificate of permanent residence' in order to be registered as a voter. Although many Tamil families on the estates had by then already been living 100 years in Ceylon, these certificates were not easy to obtain. In fact, less Tamils had such certificates in 1948 than had them in 1931, although in 1931 only 50% of the estate Tamils considered themselves 'permanently settled'. So less estate Tamils had the vote in 1948, the year of Ceylon's independence, than in 1931.

The first independent government of Ceylon introduced a Citizenship Act which made it more difficult for estate Tamils to become citizens. To be registered as a citizen, an estate Tamil (and, in practice, only an estate Tamil) needed to produce, not only his own birth certificate, but those of his father and grandfather as well, to prove that they had all been born in Sri Lanka. Although more people were literate at that time in Sri Lanka than in most colonies, complete birth records were not kept throughout the nineteenth century, so

it was often impossible to get certificates from that time. 825,000 families applied for citizenship under this law, but only 134,168 families got it. Then, a year after the Citizenship Act, a new Parliamentary Elections Act became law, and this stated that only citizens could become voters. This deprived many estate Tamils of the vote: they were permanently settled on the island, but they had not been accepted as citizens.

After a large number of estate Tamils had lost the vote in this way, the next step was to deny them the right to live in Sri Lanka. Two agreements between the governments of India and Sri Lanka provided for most of the estate Tamils to be 'returned' to India. The first agreement was signed by Sri Lanka Prime Minister Mrs. Banderanaiké and Indian Prime Minister Shastri in 1964, and the second by Mrs. Banderanaiké and Mrs. Gandhi in 1974. Under these agreements, India agreed to accept 600,000 Tamil families and their descendants who might be born before the resettlement was complete, while the remaining 375,000 estate Tamil families were to be given Sri Lanka citizenship and would be allowed to stay in Sri Lanka. One snag in the arrangement was that 700,000 of the estate Tamil families wanted to be Sri Lanka citizens and stay in Sri Lanka.

So the Sri Lanka government had a problem; having decided that they wanted to get rid of most of the estate Tamils, they found that the majority of estate Tamils did not want to go. After all, they did not have much to go to. They have been up to 150 years in Sri Lanka, so they do not even have relatives to welcome them back to India, and India is a country not significantly richer than Sri Lanka. Life in India did not attract them, so to encourage them to leave Sri Lanka life had to be made unpleasant for them there.

In the early 1970's, Sinhala replaced English as the official language of Sri Lanka. This put all Tamils at a disadvantage, but affected those on the estates most, because they are less educated.

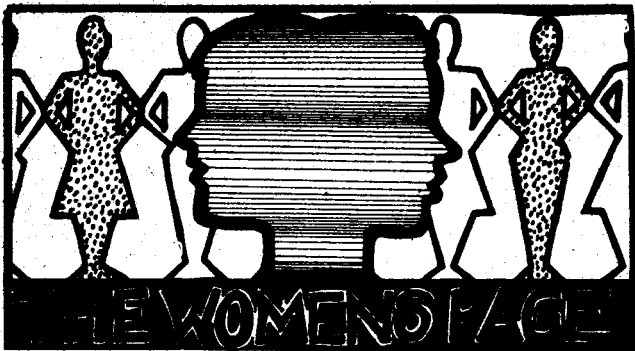
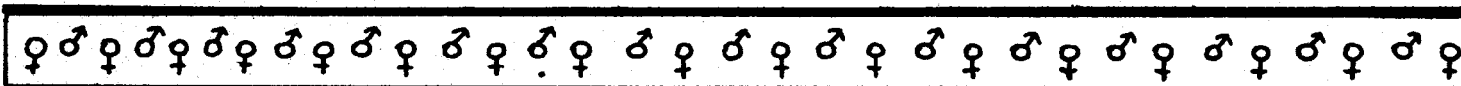
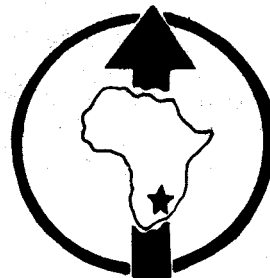
Although the estate workers had bad housing, low wages, poor education and no opportunities for their children to find jobs outside the estates, even the little they had could be taken from them. This was done in many cases by a series of 'land reforms', sometimes called nationalisation, in which the tea estates were taken over and given to

Sri Lanka citizens - in practice to Sinhala Sri Lanka citizens only. In one example, Choisy estates near the town of Punduloya, which was an estate of 350 acres with 375 families working on it, the land reform gave 50 acres to the original owner and 300 to the Sinhala peasants of the surrounding district. The estate workers, even the 95 families who were Sri Lanka citizens, got nothing. Even the workers' vegetable gardens were given away, and in some cases the boundary fence put up by a new Sinhala owner of a plot separated the Tamil worker's house from his latrine. Of course, the estate school was closed and the teachers moved away. So did the officials who had served the estate, including the midwife and even the man who cleaned the latrines. But still only 25 families applied for, and obtained, Indian citizenship. The rest had lost their jobs, had not even a little land of their own to grow food, and 255 out of the 375 families had legally no home and no citizenship. They have nothing where they are, but they have nowhere else to go. There are many more like them.

When oppression reaches this degree, the oppressed are likely to become desperate. When the victims of the oppression all belong to one racial group, all members of that group are likely to resent what is happening. In this case, other actions taken by the government, such as the

decision to make Sinhala the national language, in place of English which had not favoured one race over another, made all Tamils feel they were being discriminated against. Even the name 'Sri Lanka', which was adopted at about the same time, would reinforce this feeling, as it is a Sinhala name. As the economy of Sri Lanka suffered from the recession of recent years, like that of most 3rd World countries which depend on exporting a single crop, the sufferings of the oppressed became worse.

The history of the formation of Tamil separatist movements in the north of the island is not important in itself. It is enough that some Tamils feel so oppressed and see so little hope of peaceful change that they have turned to violence. They may be only a small minority, but every act of violence, by Tamil or Sinhala, only aggravates the tensions which are rooted in a colonial 'divide and rule' policy and a neo-colonial continuation of divisions.



ZIMBABWEAN WOMEN IN INDUSTRY  
BY P. MADE & B. LAGERSTROM  
(Zimbabwe Publishing House \$4.03)

A new book in the Women in Africa series has recently been published in Zimbabwe. The title 'Zimbabwean Women in Industry' is self-explanatory.

The book, which makes extensive use of large photographs, is a welcome contribution to this series. It sets out to

present the situation of women workers in Zimbabwe to-day. The photographs taken by Ms Lagerstrom whilst she was in Zimbabwe (she is Swedish) are very effective. A large print size has been used which makes the text clear and very easy to read.

This book is invaluable as a study aid for an adult literacy group, in particular women's literacy groups and trade union literacy groups.

There is no doubt that women suffer certain unique disadvantages at their work places simply because they are women e.g. sexual harrassment. But excluding men from supervisory roles over women, one solution that is suggested, is surely a very short sighted way of solving the problems. It is vital that women are seen as workers, not as women, thereby removing the preconceived notions that



exist about women. Men have to be forced to change their attitudes, and to see their fellow workers as fellow workers, and not as women and sex-objects.

In the section entitled 'Some fighters - profiles' one gets the impression that, with one notable exception, the women fighting for basic rights in their work places are women who are living separated from their men. The exception has a husband 'from Zambia' who doesn't mind his wife's work and organising activities. This is an indictment on the men of Zimbabwe whose male chauvinism has once more been exposed.



Another interviewee says:

*'We women are divided...If we should start something together as women, the men start coming in to stop it and then, instead of gaining strength from each other, many women side up with the men...'*

In my eye this further emphasises the need for women in industry to see themselves primarily as workers, and in that way organise as workers, with the male workers. The workplace should not be turned into a battleground between the sexes, thereby splitting the workforce, instead of them being united against their common enemy, the exploiters.

In fact the authors make this very point when they say, 'The mobilisation of women as workers is the first step towards change'. But I find that to say that women should negotiate for women for industrial agreements is a sign of a confusion. Are we now looking towards separate unions for men and women?

I have certain reservations about some of the statements made in the book but I can only put them aside and hail this as a valuable contribution to Zimbabwean history. It will certainly go a long way towards making women visible on the pages of both Zimbabwean and African history. Buy it!

#### A VICIOUS CIRCLE.....

Members of rural bread-baking co-operatives find that they can only expect to make a profit if they can buy flour wholesale.

They can only buy flour wholesale if they hold a retailer's licence.

They can only get this licence if they are registered with the Department of Co-operatives.

But the Department will not register them until they are making a success of their business.

....and their business can't succeed unless they can buy their flour wholesale.....(start again from the top)

# NAMIBIA: INTERIM GOVT. OR U.D.I.?

The South African regime has announced that it will establish yet another 'interim government' in Namibia. Making the announcement in the whites-only parliament on April 18 this year, South African President Pieter Botha said the move would not interfere with an internationally recognised plan for the disputed territory. The announcement was described as a neo-colonialist ploy aimed at thwarting the settlement plan for the Namibian problem and was condemned world-wide. Many political analysts regard the move as yet another step to create effective conditions for a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in Namibia.

Others regard the move as a delaying tactic for strife-torn South Africa, for it to have enough time to consider the internal strife it is facing. These two factors combine with the ever increasing international pressure being exerted as the objectives behind Pretoria's move. According to Botha's announcement, the so-called government will have legislative and executive powers but with the defence and foreign affairs portfolios under Pretoria's belt. The interim government will be established without any elections or referendum. It will be hand-picked from among the Namibian puppets from the sell-out Multi-Party Conference (MPC), a group of puppet parties organised by Botha's government in 1983.

At the beginning of 1983 the then Prime Minister Pieter Botha dismissed the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) regime claiming that they were ineffective and unrepresentative. However, reports say that the so-called MPC consists of approximately 70% of the old DTA stalwarts. A report published recently by the Windhoek Advertiser reveals some squabbling among the MPC members. Issues such as the proclamation of the Administrator-General, known as A.G. 8, and the premiership have been described as contentious issues which have caused the deepest division among the puppets.



DR SAM NUJOMA,  
PRESIDENT OF SWAPO

The Administrator General proclamation (A.G. 8) is legislation that provides for the establishment of a bantustan government in Namibia. Under the legislation the bantustan administration will be known as the 'second tier government' where the 11 bantustans in the country are given a semblance of self-government. Such issues are the same that compelled Botha to dismiss the Turnhalle Interim Government in 1983, alleging that they were not effective and representative.

One wonders how long the puppets will last with the same problem, before becoming ineffective and unrepresentative in the eyes of Botha. The only difference between the puppets the regime intends to install and the previous ones is that there is a Black man at the top of the show - a Namibian Muzorewa, Moses Katjiuongua. The other point that has meaning with the establishment of an interim government in Namibia is the announced withdrawal of South African occupation forces from Angola. Ironically this announcement came a few weeks before Pretoria announced the sell-out interim government plan.

Botha has also announced that the multi-billion dollar Kudu Gas Field belongs to Namibia and will remain so. Later his government announced its intended hand-over of Rossing Uranium to the Namibian government. And the notorious Koevoet killer squad was handed over to the Namibian stationed squad at a ceremony in Windhoek attended by Louis le Grange, Minister of Law and Order.

All these developments confirm what one politician in Windhoek described as 'a dress rehearsal for UDI during the second half of 1987'. Presently many politicians in Namibia from progressive parties, including SWAPO, view the MPC regime in Namibia as a dismal failure. Political analysts see the future under this scheme as very bleak. Some predict mismanagement of the economy, rising inflation, growing unemployment and wholesale violation of human rights will increase uncontrollably.

In an urgent plea to Botha, the leader of the right wing conservative Herstigte National Party (HNP), Sarel Becker, asked the racist president not to instal the MPC government in the country because it would be 'a shaky government that would create more problems than answers'. This clearly shows how the puppet government is being rejected by those who are supposed to benefit from it. In another report from Windhoek, Kosie Pretorius, leader of the National Party - one of the member parties of the MPC - refused to participate and appointed another member of his party, Eben van Zijl to represent the party - a clear disregard for the proposed interim government.

In a statement from its Luanda Head-Quarters, the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) 'unreservedly and strongly condemned the move as yet another illegal act of the occupying regime.' The SWAPO statement said,

*"We totally reject South Africa's right to decide on behalf of the Namibian masses as to who should be their leaders."*

The statement went on to say that SWAPO would fight both the puppets of the MPC and racist South Africa through thick and thin until Namibia is free and genuinely independent.

During the extra-ordinary meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries on Namibia in New Delhi, SWAPO President, Sam Nujoma, called on the international community to reject and denounce Pretoria's latest scheme. In Windhoek, SWAPO's acting president Cde Nathaniel Mahuillili said, *the puppet government would be stillborn*'. In Lusaka, SWAPO secretary for information and publicity, Cde Hidipo Hamutenya said the MPC government would not be able to do anything of consequence or essential to change the present injustices in the system.

Internationally, the announcement was met with world-wide condemnation. The United Nations Secretary-General described the move as null and void. The Organisation of African Unity called it a 'slap in the face' for United States President Ronald Reagan's policy of constructive engagement with the Pretoria regime.

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said the plan was aimed at fabricating the possibility of the declaration of independence by the puppets. Britain warned South Africa against going it alone in any settlement which was not based on the key United Nations Resolution 435. Very surprising was the statement from Washington, Pretoria's main ally. It categorically informed Pretoria that it would not recognise any transfer of power in Namibia to bodies established by South Africa itself. France, another of the five members of the Western contact group followed suit by announcing its opposition to South Africa's plan.

Similar statements emanated from many countries, governments, non-governmental organisations, newspapers and individuals



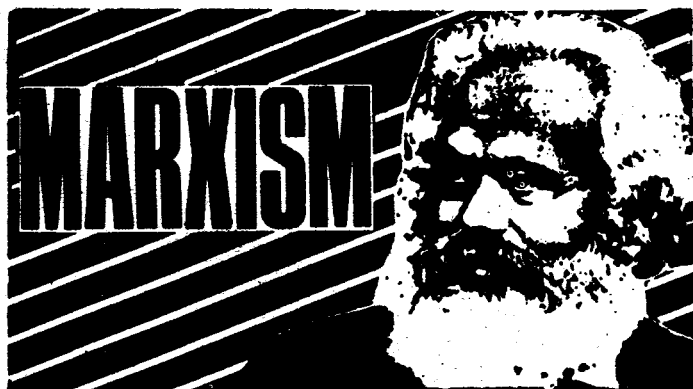
SWAPO supporters inside Namibia.



the world over. For the Namibian people, who have witnessed this arrangement and preparation of a puppet government in their country and who will continue to bear the brunt of misdeed, the road ahead will be more bleak, and the future ominously dark. On the other hand, SWAPO is confident that in the confrontation the masses will rise to the occasion and exert their decisive pressure as they have done in the past. They have always said

ALUTA CONTINUA, A VICTORIA ASERTA, without looking back and that is as it should be until the day of victory!

KAUKU HENGARI



# CLASSES AND POVERTY

The debate on classes and class struggle has intensified and continues to intensify as the contradiction between the capitalist system and the socialist system ever sharpens. Bourgeois sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists are always coming up with definitions and explanations of what classes are. All these definitions seek to oppose, even at the expense of scientific analysis, the Marxist-Leninist explanation of classes.

The main focus of discussion is, have classes always been there and will they always be there? Will the rich and the poor always co-exist and finally, at an international level, is it destined that some nations will be rich and others poor. The main thrust of bourgeois thinking, or rather interpretation, is to give a static picture of society. The historical approach to the development of society is ignored and the motive force behind all development distorted. The poor classes

according to bourgeois thinking are poor because of some historical accident and/or because God wanted it so. They are poor because they lack initiative, achievement, motivation and are just caught up in a vicious circle of poverty. The implied solutions to such a situations are definitely false and misleading, and have been prescribed to the poor for centuries now without being effective.

Lenin aptly defined what a social class is. *"Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."* Thus the relationship of this group to the means of production is the crucial factor in determining what type of a class it belongs to. The Leninist definition has a historical approach to the emergence of classes and how they will finally disappear. It starts from a time when society was not divided into classes, when people lived in clan families under what one would call "primitive communism"; a time when there was no special apparatus (the state) for subjugating others, when the means of production were publicly owned. The level of development is very low under this system, but it is followed by the slave owning system which is the first historical form of class society. Society continues to develop through the feudal system and the capitalist system which is full of all sorts of social ills such as unemployment, chronic poverty for some strata of society, ill health, etc.

The capitalist system which is predominant in the greater part of the world today has failed to solve these problems, instead they are on the increase. The capitalist system is not the last socio-economic formation in the development of society. There is socialism which is the first phase of communist society,

which is already in existence, and born from capitalism. It is a system that has already almost rid itself of the social and economic problems that once afflicted its people. Socialism is different from all other preceding systems in that it rules out the exploitation of man by man.

There is planned management of the national economy in the interest of the entire people. The working people have power and become producers and consumers of the products of their labour. There is equality among sexes: unemployment and poverty are eliminated.

The public ownership of the means of production which is the economic basis of socialist society means that the capitalists are no longer able to appropriate the surplus value created by the working people. For the first time it becomes possible to centrally plan the economy in the interest of all people. Private ownership of the means of production makes it difficult to plan the economy because the capitalists are guided by profit interests with each one trying to outstrip the other and in the process creating economic crises and impoverishing the lower classes.

Public ownership of the means of production makes it possible for the state to accumulate resources which will be available for free medical assistance, free education at all levels, social maintenance in old age and in case of disability.

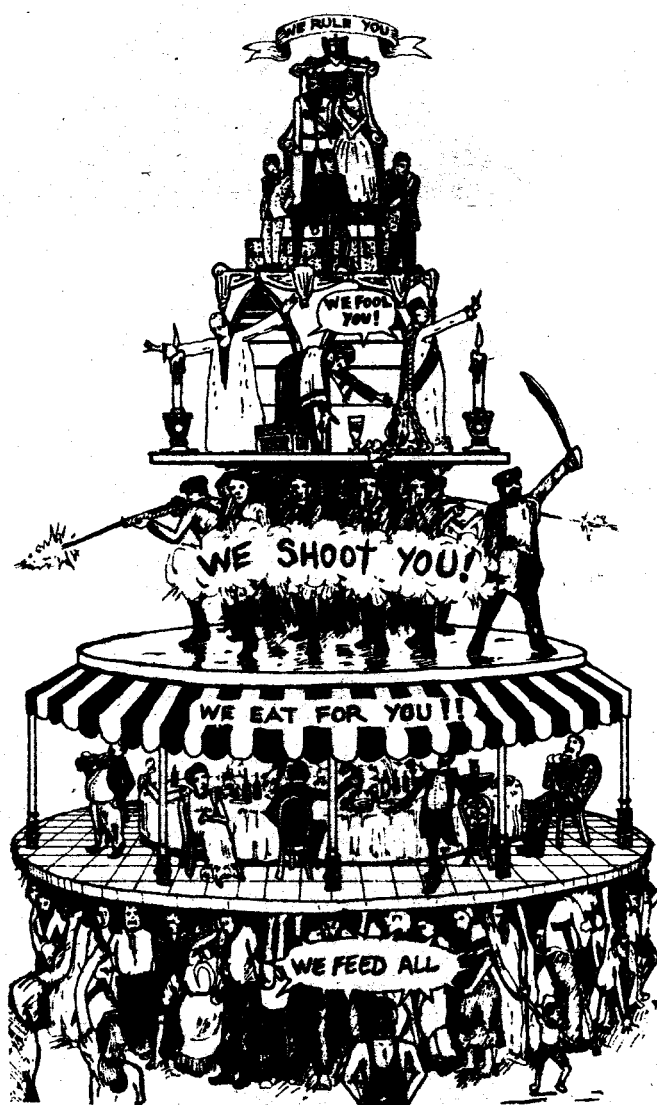
### Social Consumption Funds

These are important funds for continuously improving the material and social lives of all the people in a socialist society. These are funds distributed *"in the form of benefits and services for the purpose of more fully satisfying the material and cultural needs of people, irrespective of the quantity and quality of the work done"*

Among the other uses of social consumption funds are the provision of disability allowances, maternity benefits, allowances to single mothers and mothers of large families, and the maintenance and education of children in pre-school establishments.

## Equality

The capitalist society is characterised by gross inequalities among its population and the disadvantaged people are normally left to the mercy of charitable organisations. Public ownership of the means of production is the foundation of equality, it abolishes the division of society into those who own private properties and those who labour for them. To talk of equality when such divisions exist is hollow. Under socialism both legislation and material resources back the principle that there should be equal pay for equal work, free medical services, free education and social security (in old age, sickness, disability or upon the death of the breadwinner).



This cartoon shows the classes in Russia before the revolution. It was used as a poster in 1901.

### Social Security under Capitalism

Attempts are always made to distort the

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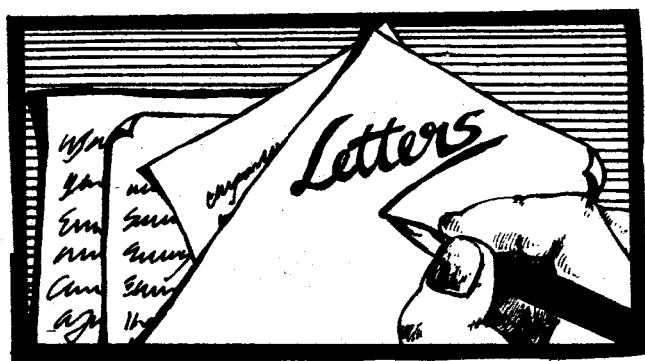
nature of social security schemes in the capitalist societies and present them as showing the socialist character of these capitalist countries. Sometimes it is even claimed that Britain is one of the best "Socialist" countries because its unemployed population is always put under social security. Two things need to be pointed out: First it should be borne in mind that the working people themselves over centuries have struggled for whatever little benefit they get. More importantly, it is within the interest of the capitalist rulers themselves to cater for the large population thrown into unemployment by the system of capitalism. Hence when certain funds are put aside for the unemployed, it is not for their well-being but to delay and neutralise revolutionary uprisings that will signal the end of capitalism. Unemployment is the inherent source of poverty and part and parcel of capitalism, it is therefore inconceivable to solve the social and economic problems of the poor without the replacement of a capitalist system by one of socialism. A proliferation of charitable and welfare organisations to look after the old people, the disabled and other disadvantaged people does not guarantee security for all these people, neither will it cope with or solve the ever increasing numbers of the disadvantaged.

## The Way Out

A lot of reforms and measures, palliative in nature, have been prescribed and carried out in many capitalist countries to alleviate the plight of the poor, but the problem has remained. Under socialism, for the first time it has become possible to solve the problems of poverty and catering for the disadvantaged.

The struggle for the well-being of all people cannot be seen outside the context of the struggle for socialism. This puts the socialist revolution on the agenda and all that it demands for its accomplishment, that is, an organised working class with its party (guided by Marxist-Leninist theory), allied with the peasantry and progressive intelligentsia. Only such a party will be able to fiercely contest and oust the bourgeoisie and create a new social system that promotes the welfare of all people.

Tafi Chigudu



Dear Editors,

Commenting in your Editorial (No 10, 1985) on my article "Rural Observations on Equality and Self-Reliance" you "suggest that promoting self-help as an alternative to redistribution in a situation of unequal and unjust access to assets amounts to exploitation".

I did not say that "self-help" was "an alternative to redistribution." I made it quite clear that "redistribution of

existing wealth...is also necessary at times in the form of some well-aimed subsidies" for efforts at self reliance to become effective.

I am aware that efforts at self-reliance can turn exploitative; when talking about schoolchildren being used as cotton pickers to raise school funds, I asked: "Where does Self-Reliance end and Child Labour begin?" (p.7)

I mentioned a clinic down in the Zambezi Valley that "was finished over a year ago, but has not yet been opened for lack of water." (p.6) Making the bricks and building the clinic was a successful self-reliant effort of the whole local community. Now "redistribution" in the form of Government funds to install a pump and buy the necessary equipment is very much needed. I never suggested that the local people should be left entirely to their own resources. The whole thrust of my article was the question: "Why is there not a greater 'redistribution of assets'?"



in favour of the disadvantaged rural people? I quoted the Catholic Bishops of Zimbabwe (Socialism and the Gospel of Christ, 1984): "At this point generous and quick assistance from the authorities will not paralyze, but further stimulate the self-reliant efforts of the people."

This, of course, implies that redistribution alone won't do the trick either. Moving a peasant farmer from his arid, exhausted little field in the Communal Lands to a resettlement area with good productive soil will not benefit him, unless he joins in the new co-operative venture working hard, using the chance offered him.

When I stress "productive self-reliance from below" over anything coming "from above through a redistribution of existing wealth", I am not saying the latter is not necessary. I am saying, that human labour, i.e. the human person and his/her individual as well as communal efforts, is the prime factor in all our development work.

(Fr.) Oskar Wermter S.J.

Dear Sir,

The Government policy of making secondary school education available to the vast majority of Zimbabwean people is surely a welcome achievement. Now that this policy is well under way it may be appropriate to examine at least one aspect of this policy.

Parents, particularly in the rural areas, are determined that all their children, regardless of ability, will get 'O' level. To this end they are making huge sacrifices. The suffering and self-denial involved in finding fees and the 'O' level examination fee is really heart-rending. Justice demands that their suffering be not in vain.

Are the Education Authorities being fair to parents? Surely it is clear that many pupils in Grade 7 have not got the ability to attain 'O' level. Parents do not understand this. Should not some criteria be required for a child to enter Form One. To proceed as we are doing is to sow the seeds of frustration, disappointment and anger in both children and parents.

The emphasis on academic 'O' level is too one-sided. Can we find alternatives to fit the talents and abilities of our children and thus be more just and helpful to parents and children and teachers.

'Concerned'  
Chivhu.

Comrades,

Issue 10 showed a welcome openness of debate on topics that had been raised in previous issues. To help the debate along, I would like to expand on a point made by Dr. Norbert Mugwagwa in his article on Health in that issue.

Dr. Mugwagwa quotes an editor as saying that health cannot be transformed without transforming the whole of society, and adds that the reverse is also true; health care reform can be an instrument on social transformation. I would agree, as long as we remember that both statements are true and are two sides of the same question. To transform society, we must start somewhere and health can be a good place to start. This was in fact done here in Zimbabwe, but after five years we can begin asking whether the failure to transform other areas of our society will, in fact, limit or threaten the gains already made in health. Dr. Mugwagwa rightly criticises planning for health by the previous regime, but he seems to suggest the alternative is better central planning. One question raised in Issue No.4 was whether there wasn't too much central planning; the people's initiatives seemed to be threatened by it. Readers might have liked to see a discussion in Issue 10 of whether that apparent threat had proved real or not in the two years since Issue No.4 appeared.

Leo Bronstein  
Harare.

Dear Comrades,

In his letter Martin de Graaf makes certain accusations and criticism of my letter on Imperialist Aid. Given the nature of my title and the fact that it was a letter which, by its very nature, imposes certain limits to full ideological expression, I felt the criticism should have been given in a comradely fashion rather crude and unjustified, because it was not the brief of my nor its scope to go into the issues of the internal class contradictions.

I fully share with him misgivings over the contracts into which our nationalistic and comprador bourgeoisie have gone into with international finance.

To understand this I think we better analyse the national liberation movement itself and the ascendancy into government of, in the words of de Graaf, the Zimbabwean authorities. The liberation movement was composed of the petit bourgeoisie, the progressive intelligentsia, the workers and peasants. They went into the national struggle for different class interests and class objectives. It was not always possible that the leadership should be retained by the revolutionary class - the workers.

The enormity of the threat that imperialism and its surrogates pose can not be overemphasised. The deaths of Cde J.Z., Cde Tongo, Cde Chitepo, always benefitted that class with divergent interests from the ever toiling masses. The so-called unspecified imperialists whom de Graaf accuses me of pointing finger at, are indeed a powerful force if one takes into account their internal class allies. For whose long term interests does the imperialist cultural mission of the British Council, IMF, USAID, ZIMCORD, British Military Advisory Team, serve?

The unspecified imperialists and their internal class allies who have waxed fat from Zimbabwe's resources.

It was not my intention to castigate expatriates. Indeed the fact that our government at times recruits the kind of teachers I described, reflects the ruling class interests and aspirations, and reinforces my point of the need to

critically examine the nature and long term effect of the 'aid' we are getting. There are many progressive expatriates whom I love and admire. They are the ones who have experienced serious problems with the same conservative and bureaucratic education authorities over some innovations into the curriculum. These authorities are the same that have given indigenous Zimbabweans serious problems. This I think reinforces my point about education and background. Are they not the products of those Western institutions of higher learning which Frelimo has succinctly termed 'institutions for forming more slaves'. I agree that at times many progressives have come from these institutions despite this.

All the same it is my contention that no foreigners no matter how progressive can be expected to bring about innovations in the Zimbabwe curriculum and certainly not the British Council. That is the work of the indigenous Zimbabweans.

The left in Zimbabwe is in every respect certainly not in a strong position and cannot afford to be further divided on mechanical issues. Our Journal should therefore be used for further critical debate and not to cast aspersions on fellow comrades.

Benny Moyo,  
Maphisa.

The Editor,

In this world where we so much aspire to be just, the writer or artist needs his fair share of justice. It is to be doubted that the Government has an important role to play in this regard. That there is literary piracy is a silent fact. Much as one would like to give this fact a blind eye, its recurrence has reached such provocative proportions that it would appear unbecoming to pretend all is well inside the house of our local printers.

That we have competent writers goes without saying, what happens to their written material remains a miragic mystery. Nobody is obliged to give any explanation to our potential writers. The law seems too idle to

protect the writer who, in fact, is at the mercy of the publisher. Needless to name the culprits in this infant trade. The victims in the whole foul racket know that better, and so do the saboteurs who hi-jack the literary material of mushrooming writers - very often the original. Sooner or later, usually later, it finds its way to the bookshops with the wrong writer's name and more often than never, with the name of the member of the intended publishing company. The latter individual reaps reward heaven knows whose. It is no wonder the artist in Zimbabwe, be it musician or writer, remains forever a pauper or a 'beggar of his own written material'.

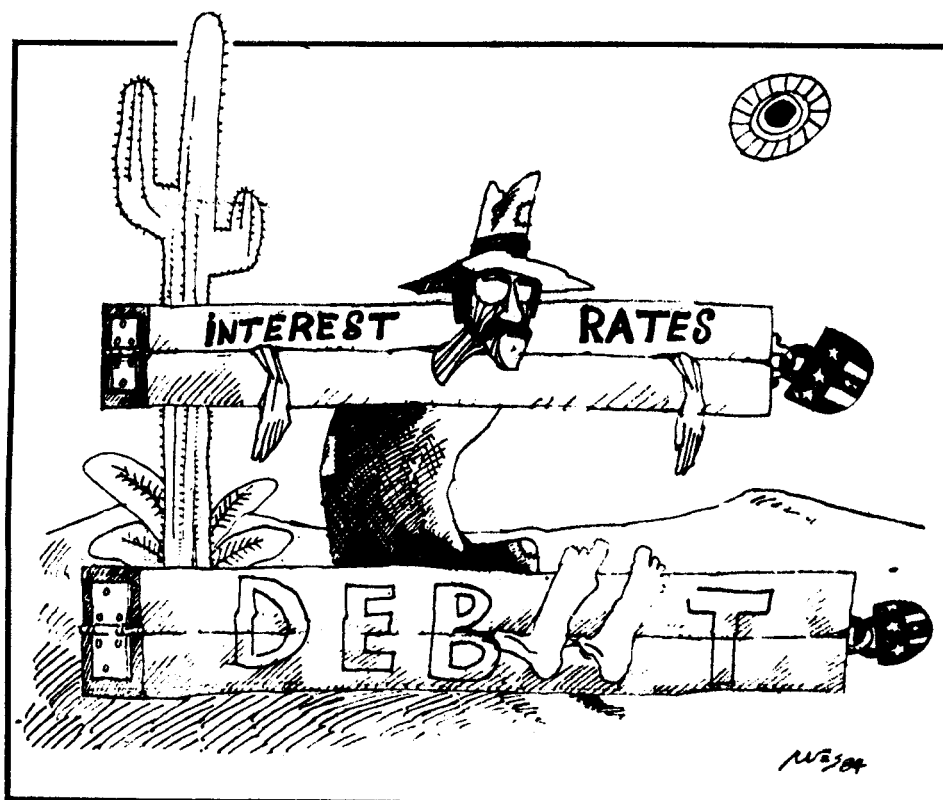
It is hoped that the Government will in good time introduce laws to eliminate this under the surface piracy.

How many more "PAWENIS" do we need before we open our eyes wide to see what's what. Why it usually seems that after

several writers have submitted their infinitely suppressed material - an editor often comes up with a good story - with sandwiches of the various stories. The only consolation for the writer being the return to them of their mutilated creation. Is this not a more recent type of oppression? One wonders whether this is a way to promote the readings of novels and plays etc. by writers from beyond our borders.

It is tragic that even visits by established authors like NGUGI are not widely publicised, as if to imply they are privileges to which only a cluster of editors are entitled, in the fashion of birth rights. It would seem it is the potential writers who should make the most of such audiences - or do you disagree?

Patrick Nangirayi Majo  
Highfields.



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